



BLAKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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To Our Loyal Supporters and Patrons:

November 29, 2020

2020 has been an exciting and challenging year for Blake Memorial Library. The Board of Trustees are deeply grateful for the continued support of our staff, volunteers and community.

Funded by a generous contribution from the Holland Family and a Vermont Community Development Grant, Blake Memorial Library completed an extensive interior renovation in late spring 2020 updating mobility access, safety, energy efficiency and interior space. Our library premises are now bright and airy. There are photographs on our website and we hope that you will stop in during the library open hours to see the changes.

Blake Memorial Library's mission of serving our community under the COVID Pandemic continues under guidance from the Vermont Department of Libraries, the CDC, and Board of Trustees. Our dedicated staff and volunteers use ingenuity, thoughtfulness, and hard work to keep the library safely operating with virtual book discussions, speakers, topic-related craft kits and children's programs, and by providing curbside and limited open hours, along with safe outdoor activities as weather permits. Many of our successful offerings include:

- A well-participated All-Ages Summer Reading Program sponsored by Kai's Cones
- Virtual Children's events: a magic show, an interactive story-teller, and a fairy-focused read-a-loud
- Outdoor activities such as Friday Night Movies on the library lawn, an ice-cream social celebrating the summer reading program, and a story walk and fairy house building event in the FX Shae Town Forest
- Virtual book discussions sponsored by the Vermont Humanities Council, including the series: "Borderlands" and currently, "Systemic: Racism in America" led by Suzanne Brown
- Ongoing electronic resources including computer and WIFI access for the community

The COVID pandemic has brought financial challenges to the library because our most successful fundraising events such as the spring book and plant sale, garden tour, and fall plant sale could not be run. To try and make up for this difference we were able to secure some funding from grants and discretionary spending has been reduced wherever possible without compromising Blake Memorial Library's ability to serve our community safely. Thankfully a few of our vendors have provided pro-bono services, and some of our operating expenses have been reduced due to renovation efficiencies. All these efforts have enabled Blake Memorial Library to remain solvent for 2020. However, 2021 remains uncertain.

While COVID-19 has created hardship and insecurity for many of our supporters and patrons, and while we are aware and sensitive to this, without being able to rely on our usual fundraising activities the Library is even more dependent on your support this year. Therefore, if you are able to continue, or perhaps even increase your usual gift, we would greatly appreciate it. Because so many of our patrons rely on library resources we will continue to do everything we can to remain the community space you all know and love while following the guidance and direction passed down from the State. We thank you in advance for your support in making that happen.

Sincerely,

Shirley Montagne, President
Blake Memorial Library Trustees