

FRIENDS of Decorah Public Library

– Fall 2021 Issue –

THANKS FOR YOUR “FRIEND”SHIP!



By Karla Brown, Friends of Decorah Public Library Board President

I got a library card as soon as I moved to Decorah and started attending the Happy Hour Book Group and the Friday Book Group, which is how I met

some of my first friends here. When an appeal was made at one of those meetings to become a Friend of the DPL, I had a minimalist mindset and joined at the lowest level I could. Four years ago, when I was asked to serve on the Friends Board, I increased my giving level and started to understand much more fully why Friends is so important to support. I gradually learned that while city and county funds pay for such things as employee salaries and benefits, building maintenance, new materials, and some programming, most of what I really love about the library are the special additional things funded by Friends. During the year-and-a-half of COVID, I came to rely on the library even more and started paying attention on my book check-out slip to the dollar amount of the books I've read this year—currently at over \$3,500! The original intent of public libraries—to make reading affordable for people—is still very viable today.

I have learned that the biggest challenge we as a Friends Board face is that most people, including most new members of the Board when they join, do not really understand what we do or that some of the most interesting and fun things which happen at the library would not be possible without our funding. We help pay for children's programming offered, both traditional face-to-face and also innovative ideas such as the take-and-make projects and book bundles. Friends purchases the book sets for a variety of book groups: the Happy Hour Book Group, Friday Book Group, History Book Group,

Speculative Fiction Book Group, and even a new Cookbook Book Group. Once our local groups and patrons have read those books, DPL lends them to other libraries across the state for their book groups. The Friends assisted with the financial transition when the library went fine-free for children's and youth materials, as well as helping to upgrade the library's computer resources.

Decorah has an exceptional public library with a creative and committed staff in a unique building that used to house the post office. I encourage you to visit and see the recently completed renovations and upgrades if you have not yet had the opportunity. We have the biggest large print collection in Iowa, and we share those materials with people across the state. It is so easy to take the community resource of our library for granted, but it is thanks to the Friends 501(c)3 group that some of our most-loved programs and materials are available.

October is our Friends membership renewal month, so I ask you to reflect on the value added to your life and to the lives of others in the community because of Friends funding. If your membership has lapsed, please renew. If you are currently at a basic level of membership, please consider increasing your giving level, perhaps by converting from a once-a-year gift to monthly online giving through PayPal or credit card. Talk to friends who are readers about joining; person-to-person conversations are the best recruiting tool! Also keep us in mind for memorials or in your estate planning.

[Cue the “Golden Girls” theme song—“Thank you for being a friend.”] Members of the Friends Board very much appreciate your support in the past, and we hope to increase our membership numbers and levels of giving as we continue to work to make the Decorah Library as vibrant a community resource as it can possibly be! Please look at your next checkout receipt for the dollar amount the library has saved you in 2021 and consider increasing your annual giving for the next year.

DPL INTRODUCES NEW CIRCULATION MANAGER

By Cynthia Peterson

There's a new face at the library: Tricia Crary has been named Circulation Manager. She describes this position as the manager of front desk services, which means she will be a resource person for all front desk staff. Her goal is to make sure that user experience at Decorah Public Library is as welcoming and helpful as possible. She is excited to meet library users and encourages everyone to introduce themselves.

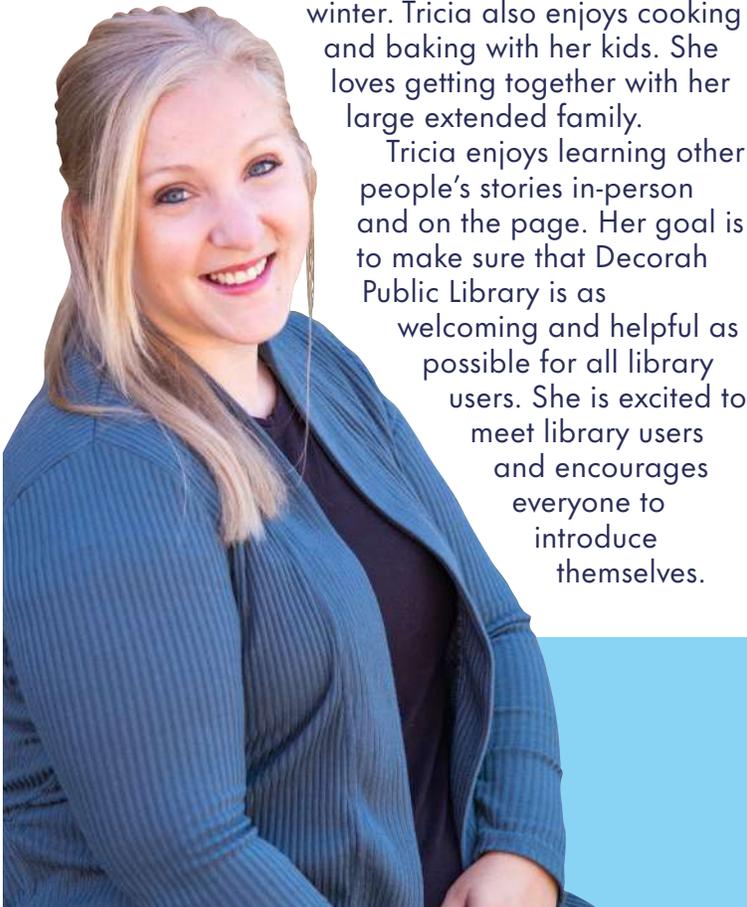
Tricia describes herself as a "people person" who values meeting people on their terms to better fulfill their needs. She has a passion for literacy, which she bases on her own early experiences having trouble with reading. Special help in reading made a big difference to Tricia and started a love of reading which continues to this day.

Tricia is a Northeast Iowa native. When she is not reading or working, she and her husband and two young children enjoy being out in nature, hiking in the woods, or snowmobiling in

winter. Tricia also enjoys cooking and baking with her kids. She loves getting together with her large extended family.

Tricia enjoys learning other people's stories in-person and on the page. Her goal is to make sure that Decorah Public Library is as

welcoming and helpful as possible for all library users. She is excited to meet library users and encourages everyone to introduce themselves.



"SHAKESPEARE SAID WHAT?" NEW TECH AT THE LIBRARY

By DPL Technology Coordinator Jon Pankow

"Tis But Thy Name That Is My Enemy"

Bet you didn't think you would see a Shakespeare quote in an article about domain names. While never our "enemy," the library's domain name could be a mouthful—so when we saw an opportunity to improve it, we did what librarians do: we researched it. But first, a little background.

Think of a domain name as a physical address to a house. You could use a very complicated legal description of a building's location, or maybe a sixteen-digit latitude and longitude coordinate, to find it. But 202 Winnebago Street is easier to say and remember. Same goes for websites. Google has a location on the internet—74.125.136.139—but it is much easier to find and remember by its domain name, google.com. Your domain, in many ways, also becomes your online identity.

Decorah Public Library used the domain name decorah.lib.ia.us for our website and email addresses for many years. The domain name and email were provided to us by the State Library of Iowa. While we were grateful for the use of this service, we recognized the need for a more robust email service. At the same time, we saw an opportunity to improve our domain name and identity.

Decorah.lib.ia.us doesn't exactly roll off the tongue. We wanted our domain name to be something that was easy to remember, easy to type, easy to tell someone on the phone, easily identifiable, and easy to fit on a business card.

After quite a bit of research and more than a few meetings, decorahlibrary.org was born. We upgraded our email service and aligned our new email and website addresses with the new domain name. Decorahlibrary.org improves our online identity and is much less of a mouthful.

FRIENDS WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER

By Marilyn Rue

The Friends of Decorah Public Library are pleased to introduce our newest board member, Kirstie Bower.

Kirstie and her husband Jim settled in Decorah eight years ago. They are the parents of four daughters, two of whom are married and live out-of-state, and another daughter who is beginning her studies at the Chicago Art Institute. Kirstie's youngest daughter is a junior at Decorah High School.

As a grandmother of four, Kirstie especially appreciates the importance of children's programming and the joy it brings to the library's youngest patrons. Joining the Friends of the Library board is another way in which she is making a contribution to the Decorah community.



YES, DPL HAS A COOKBOOK GROUP!

By DPL Administrative Coordinator Zach Row-Heyveld

The Cookbook Group is the newest book group at the Decorah Public Library. I love cooking and love cookbooks, so starting a Cookbook Group just seemed like a natural fit. I'm also a pretty adventurous eater, but like many people, find myself stuck in ruts where I make the same thing over and over again. I created the group for local home cooks to meet new people, connect with one another over a shared love of food and cooking, and get recommendations for new recipes. Like all book groups at the library, this one is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Friends of Decorah Public Library.

We spend two months cooking through each cookbook and discussing it twice. The first meeting is primarily focused on first impressions, if you've made anything that is particularly good or would recommend, and what has or hasn't worked. Between the first and second meeting, participants can keep exploring the book and cook recipes recommended by other group members. The second meeting is a potluck where members bring dishes they've made from the cookbook to share with the group. Members can also learn new techniques at the second meeting—like when we learned to make homemade flour tortillas at the potluck for *The Mexican Home Kitchen*. Currently we're meeting in the large meeting room of the library, but eventually I'm hoping to do these in the kitchen classroom at the Oneota Community Coop so we can have one or two people cooking entrees in the kitchen while everyone else brings appetizers, sides, and desserts.

Decorah is lucky to have a variety of well-stocked grocery stores, but it can be hard to find ingredients for a lot of international cuisine. If they're interested, Cookbook Group participants can offer to share ingredients, equipment, or even extra food they've made. Members who are heading up to specialty grocery stores like Rice and Spice in Rochester or United Noodle in Minneapolis could offer to pick up items for people too.

Contact me (zrow-heyveld@decorahlibrary.org or 563.382.3717) if you're interested in signing up for Cookbook Group, and I'll get a book reserved for you. Plus, a huge thanks to the Friends of Decorah Public Library for their ongoing support of our book discussion groups!



