

What's in....

The Stacks

May 2020

A Message from Jack Martin

Dear PPL Conservators —
What a strange time we are all living through right now! So much is uncertain, but here at PPL I am happy to say we are certain of two constants.

First and foremost, YOU! We would not be able to continue to serve Rhode Islanders during this time without you— plain and simple. **You** make our work possible — and I am more grateful than I can ever express.

Our amazing PPL staff is the other constant! I'm pleased to tell you that we have been able to keep everyone working — from home — since mid-March.

PPL has continued to do what we do best — virtually! We are adapting, innovating and providing our programs and services (and even some new offerings) remotely. We are also partnering and collaborating with other libraries and community organizations to expand our reach and ensure that all Rhode Islanders have access to our resources, especially those who need them the most.

An example of this is the RI COVID-19 Archive, a joint project with the RI Historical Society, launched in mid-April to document our shared experiences during this time. (See more about this in this newsletter.) We also just concluded a completely virtual series of programs entitled “Adaptive Practices: Six Artists Redefine Isolation and Distraction” involving PPL’s six Creative Fellows. The project was so well received that we are now working on ways to build on it.

Finally, our Education team has achieved unprecedented success transitioning nearly all of our face-to-face classes and services to online/distance learning. Within the first six weeks, our adult and teen services staff were able to serve 560 students in our adult ESL, GED, Citizenship and technology classes, our teen tech classes, and our virtual Tech Hub for adult education.

Thank you for believing in PPL and investing in our work — especially now. We miss you and can't wait to see you at the Library again! Wishing you and yours health.

Conservator Society

In Tribute...

On April 1, we lost a beloved friend in Martha P. Sherman. Martha was a truly incredible woman who always kept PPL close to her heart. We are pleased to remember her by naming our beautifully renovated Mural Room in her honor.

Upcoming Events...

Please save these dates!

#PPLGiveDay 2020 Virtual Edition — June 10

Mark your calendar for **Wednesday, June 10, 2020** — for our second annual PPL Give Day. It will be a day full of virtual activities, challenges and games, and behind-the-scenes peeks at how we're getting ready for YOUR triumphant return to PPL!

Summer 2020 Conservator Event — July 23

We will host author Donna Harrington-Lueker (*Books for Idle Hours: Nineteenth-Century Publishing and the Rise of Summer Reading*) on **Thursday, July 23**. This event will likely be virtual. More details coming soon!

2020 Savor the Story—Grand Reopening Edition — Rescheduled to September 25

We have set **Friday, September 25** as our new date for our much anticipated Grand Reopening Savor the Story. Details coming this summer!

Support PPL During COVID-19 and become a part of PPL History!

We are thrilled to announce a brand new way to support PPL during COVID-19: purchasing a nameplate on a seat in the brand new Donald J. Farish Auditorium! Now is the time if you would like to etch your name or the name of a loved one into PPL history! You'll also be **directly helping us sustain our operations and continue to serve Rhode Islanders** during this moment of global crisis. To purchase a nameplate, please visit www.provlib.org/auditorium-seats or, if you prefer, please reach out to our Annual Fund Manager Kilian Webster at kwebster@provlib.org.

Nameplates make fantastic gifts for a loved one's special day — we can even email you a certificate to share with your loved one! And thank you! Funds raised from these nameplates will help to ensure PPL is able to meet our financial goals before the end of our fiscal year on June 30. **We appreciate your support at this time more than we can possibly say!**



PPL Alum Spotlight

Thanks to your generosity as a Conservator, individuals from all walks of life have experiences at PPL that exemplify the difference the Library makes in our community. We are thrilled to share these stories of achievement and to demonstrate the incredible impact you are making as a member of the Conservator Society. You make these alum stories possible!

A Special Distance Learning Success Story

All of PPL's education classes have transitioned to remote learning using various technology tools. We're finding that our teachers and students are adapting very well! This distance learning success story was shared by our ESL teacher Doug Norris... and made possible by PPL supporters like you!

Thin, a Cambodian woman, rarely missed a class when she participated in the twice-weekly adult intermediate ESL program at Auburn Library in Cranston. There, she

became familiar with Newsela, an online newspaper and website that offers stories, quizzes, vocabulary activities and writing prompts, all at a range of reading



levels. As the class transitioned to distance learning because of self-isolation practices necessitated by the coronavirus, a Newsela class was created, and Thin is easily its most enthusiastic student. She has completed

"When the spring comes, I am so happy to see the grass is green."

all 20 of the assigned readings and has read 20 additional articles on her own. She has also completed 31 quizzes and researched 168 vocabulary words, dedicating nearly 27 hours of practice time to the website. Additionally, Thin participates in the twice-weekly group email class, using Google Docs to submit her homework, which includes grammar activities, paragraph-writing prompts, surveys, and links to explore various topics online (including English practice, reading options, arts and culture, travel, food, etc.).

Rhode Island Spring — A Writing Prompt by Thin

When the spring comes, I am so happy to see the grass is green. When I wake up in the morning, I hear the birdsong in my backyard. Some flowers are blooming; the trees start to have leaves; the sunrise is at 6:20 am; the sunset is late. I like spring. The air smells fresh and clean. Now I am cleaning my backyard and I am starting to put in some seed to grow my garden.

Meet our New Database Coordinator

Rae Fotheringham (pronouns: they/them or he/him) joined PPL as our Database Coordinator in April 2020. After a decade of being a writer in various roles, Rae discovered a passion for data when they found the Non-Profit Development world. They have worked with databases for the entirety of their career so far, from grocery store inventory management to their most recent role managing the membership tracking service at the Boys & Girls Club of Pawtucket.



Rae loves showcasing the impacts of non-profits, in addition to feeding their fastidious obsession with accurate data. The combination of these qualities inspires Rae to streamline development processes so staff can fundraise efficiently. Rae's introduction to Non-Profit Development began through their one true love: Roller Derby. Outside of work, Rae plays roller derby with the Providence Roller Derby league and currently serves as Captain of the B Travel Team and Grant Writer.



A community collecting initiative hosted by PPL and the Rhode Island Historical Society

RICovidArchive.org is accepting contributions from the public that document their lived experience during the COVID-19 public health crisis. The goal is to create a virtual archive that documents the ways that individuals and their communities are affected by social isolation, quarantine and illness, and mutual aid. The archive hopes to serve Rhode Islanders now and in the future by providing a way to connect with one another as well as preserve the stories of this time for future researchers. Please visit and consider contributing!

Welcome New Conservators!

Welcome to our newest Conservators: Vincent Buonanno, Arnold "Buff" Chace, Jr., Robert W. Parsons & Susie Parsons, Micah Salkind & Ted McGuire, Dr. Meera Simoes, and Edwin F. Sherman & Sheryl Ash.

We would love to have email addresses and birthdays for all our Conservators. Enclosed you will find a return slip and envelope. Please consider sending us this information to help us stay in better touch!