February is African-American History Month

In February 1926, historian and educator Carter G. Woodson, director of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, launched the celebration of Negro History Week to commemorate the achievements of African Americans. This event evolved into the establishment in 1976 of February as “Black History Month.” In recent years, February has increasingly been referred to as “African-American History Month,” and both names are currently in use. In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education Commission, “Brown vs. Board of Education” is the theme of this year’s celebration. This landmark case established that separate public schools for blacks and whites was unconstitutional, and it set the stage for the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s. Some good web sites to visit to learn more about African-American history include:

www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html  Infoplease.com celebrates Black History Month with a great collection of features, biographies of notable African Americans, reference links, a Civil Rights Timeline, quizzes and a crossword puzzle. Be sure to check out the fascinating biographical information on Oscar Charleston, Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige and other legends of the Negro Baseball League. This site also features a good reading list and a compendium of quotations by famous African-Americans.

The African-American History and Heritage Site at www.AfroAmericanHeritage.com is another great site to bookmark. It’s full of useful links to resources for Black History Month, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Kwanzaa, and lists current resources such as music, art prints, videos and DVD. Popular searchable topics include Underground Railroad, Slavery and Slave Narratives, Food, Folk Tales & Urban Legends, Children’s Booklists, and Cool Sites. This site is definitely worth a look.

The U.S. Department of State’s web site at http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/blackhis/ gives a terrific annotated list of 57 titles that, it predicts, are “sure to garner a great deal of attention for African-American collections in most libraries.”

The CEF Audiovisual Department features a large and popular collection of Black history titles. We especially recommend one or more segments of “Jazz”, a 10 part VHS series. For a complete listing, check out CEF’s audiovisual holdings on our web site (www.cefls.org) or contact Barb Deyo or Kathie LaBombard at 563-5190 x 13.
Web Site Potpourri

Knowledge Hound: the How-to Hunter (http://www.knowledgehound.com)
A huge directory of free how-tos. Searchable and browsable by subject and includes links to tutorials and tips for holidays and events.

FactCheck.org: Annenberg Political Fact Check
http://www.factcheck.org
Self-described as a “nonpartisan, nonprofit consumer advocate for voters,” this site claims to clear up deception and confusion in American politics today. A must-visit during these turbulent political times.

Government Views of Iraq
http://www.cny.cuny.edu/library/Divisions/Government
A list of links arranged by subject, this site includes government documents as well as other primary resources relating to current information on Iraq and the war.

Winter traveler advisory system
http://www.dot.state.ny.us
This is the NY State Dept. of Transportation’s homepage, and from here you can find out what local road conditions are, based on reports phoned in by snow plow operators on a regular basis. This is a great treat to check and you can zoom in on your neighborhood to find out just what awaits you on your ride home or your ride to work in the morning.

-- Elizabeth Rogers, Head of Reference & ILL, CEF

Akwesasne Library Selected to Participate in National Leadership Grant

The Akwesasne Library has been selected to be a model participant in a National Leadership Grant project funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Sciences. “Preserving Our Language, Memories and Lifeways” is part of a larger effort to facilitate communication among tribal and non-tribal library, archive, and museum professionals. The project also aims to develop models that may be used to encourage and sustain collaborative partnerships.

Akwesasne Library Director Carol White has just returned from Phoenix, Arizona where she attended an intensive two day planning conference. Carol reports, “Last year I was contacted by the planning group from the University of Arizona Library and invited to participate in this project that will help us to preserve and access unique materials in our collection by reformatting (i.e.: digitization). Some of the materials we discussed were: glass plate negatives, old videos and reel to reel tapes in the Mohawk language, and vertical file information that relates directly to our community. Our projects will be showcased at a national conference in Arizona during Spring 2005. I will visit the New York State Museum and Library and the Ottawa archives by the end of February to gather information that may help in making a decision on format and a possible change in project initiative.”

Healthy Families – Healthy Kids
On the Internet

Those of us who have been wondering if our cold noses and those of our loved ones might warrant staying home from work or school (see A Mug of Hot Chocolate and… later in this issue) have benefited from checking out www.noah-health.org (New York Online Access to Health) and www.kidshealth.org. Both award winning sites provide accessible and reliable general health information to families. Search terms like “cold” and “flu” fared well in both sites’ powerful and straightforward search engines. These are just two of the recommended consumer health information sites that are featured on an annotated list of sites that was prepared as an activity of CEF’s MedWeb project. Check out our other recommendations on the CEF web site at www.cefsls.org.

Did You Know?

New York Times book reviews are available online at the newspaper’s web site. Readers can browse recent reviews and search for information on more than 50,000 books and authors dating back to 1980. Registration is free at www.nytimes.com.
MEMBER LIBRARY NEWS

In Clinton County:

Chazy Public Library

For the third year, the trustees of the Chazy Public Library conducted their annual fund drive, CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR THE LIBRARY. Contributions of $25 or more are solicited to buy "gifts" (books) for the Library. Donor names are recorded on book plates placed in books purchased from the drive. Just over $1,500 was collected in this year’s drive.

--Fred Smith, President, Board of Trustees

Dannemora Free Library

We have several changes to report from the Dannemora Free Library. First, we have transitioned from dial-up to broadband Internet access. (It's soooo much better!) Our fax number is now the same as our library telephone number (492-7005). And our hours have changed. We've increased from 20 to 21 hours per week, and we're now open 4 days instead of three days per week. Our new hours are: Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Tuesday from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

-- Gene Butcher, Director

Mooers Free Library

Mooers Free Library was one of the lucky recipients of money from the Champlain Telephone Company and now we have the joy of deciding how to spend it! This gift was unexpected but so nice. The library held an open house on Saturday Jan 31 to thank the phone company for their generosity.

Our homework help activities have stalled because of lack of a volunteer tutor and hopes run high that someone will come forward to continue this great program. We still have had trouble with a witch in the basement! The kids are forming ideas on how to get rid of her. This is truly lots of fun. One idea was to send her to Mars to look for water! Wishing everyone a very happy, healthy and safe 2004!

-- Edie Morelock, Director

Peru Free Library

Autumn was a busy time at the Peru Free Library. In September our friends group held their annual book sale during Peru’s Applefest Weekend. An extensive weeding this summer coupled with generous

Senator Betty Little Nets $95,000 For Local Libraries!

Senator Betty Little has secured $50,000 in state funding for the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System. Two member libraries, Saranac Lake and the Keene Valley Library Association, have also received member item awards from Senator Little.

CEF’s award for “Reader Empowerment” will provide funds to help automate ten member libraries. The grant will cover costs of a computer and scanner, bar codes, and library cards, which will open the door to the library’s collections and resources. Costs will vary based on the size of each library and its community, but will average approximately $5,000 per library.

Senator Little’s generosity to local libraries has extended to the Saranac Lake Free Library, which received $40,000 and the Keene Valley Library Association, which received $5,000. Both awards will be used for construction projects.

Books that you may carry to the fire and hold readily in your hand, are the most useful after all.

-- Samuel Johnson
Stamp Out Cabin Fever!

This winter’s “Cabin Fever” ice-breaker program is worth shoveling a path for! We are pleased to sponsor a program series by Bob Bearor, author of The Battle on Snowshoes and French & Indian War Battlesites: A Controversy. Bob’s latest, largest (and he says the last) book is due out in January 2004, just in time for the 250th anniversary of the French and Indian War throughout the U.S. and Canada.

In historically accurate 18th century dress, Bob uses slides, music and personal experience to transport audiences to the legendary battles of the French and Indian War. He is dressed and armed as the famous French partisan Ensign Jean Baptiste Leverault de Langis de Montegron, the victorious French commendant at the “Battle on Snowshoes”. Bob explains the equipment, tactics, and weapons of the day with the help of his wife, Holly, who is also dressed in period costume. The Bearors have created two programs that come highly recommended for all library audiences. Program One is a book seminar with slide show presentation and is of particular interest to adult history buffs. Program Two has widespread appeal for younger or family oriented audiences.

CEF will offer three programs this winter at no charge to host libraries. For more information or to book a program, please contact Julie at CEF by telephone (563-5190 x 18) or e-mail (wever@cefsls.org).

book donations from our patrons led to our largest book sale ever and over $900 was raised.

Our ever changing Art Exhibits continued throughout the fall with shows by the retired Peru art teachers, followed by the current art teachers. Our Winter Holiday Exhibit featured ceramics, photography and paintings by local artists.

In December our library board and the friends held our first Holiday High Tea. Freshly baked scones with clotted cream and cucumber sandwiches were served on a lace covered table in front of a roaring fire and ear grey flowed from our silver tea service. This was so popular it may become an annual event!

Beginning the middle of January two of our patrons will be teaching an adult computer class. The class is held from 3:00 - 5:00 on Wednesday afternoons and will run throughout the winter. There is no fee.

The interior of the library has recently been painted and our next art show will be up soon. If you are in the neighborhood, stop by and visit.

-- Becky Pace, Director

Dodge Library, West Chazy

Hello from the Dodge Library in West Chazy! It has been so cold and snowy over here that I find that I am doing a lot of shoveling to keep those walkways open for our brave patrons. That same cold weather has already led to frozen water pipes as well. In spite of these seasonal woes, we have had a great winter so far. We started our adult book discussion group a few months ago, and we have had a good response to it. We started with the Laura Ingalls Wilder series, as some of the members wanted to do children's books that dealt with the area. At the last meeting, we all agreed that we would expand on that theme and concentrate on some adult local books. To that end, we are starting with the Anne LaBastille books. We are all pretty excited about this series.

I had a little slack time during the school vacation and did some pretty serious cleaning in here. I rearranged a lot of the children's room and some of the adult areas, as well. I can still find things and hopefully, the patrons can, also.

It was so exciting to receive the Outreach Mini-Grant from CEF! We purchased many early reader books due to the high number of children in the 3-7 year age range who use our library. The books have been very well received, to say the least. We also were grateful to receive over $300 worth of books from the West Chazy FSO through their fall book fair. Gifts like these make our library work!

Enjoy what remains of winter!

-- Cindy Pytlak, Director
**In Essex County:**

**Sherman Free Library, Port Henry**

In January, Dave Donahue, a local author, visited the Sherman Free Library to sign his book, *Port Henry High School—the Early Years*. Dave compiled this book from the yearbooks of the school for the years 1918-1933. There are many pictures in the book and writings by the students.

During the February school break, we will offer four one-hour sessions for pre-schoolers based around Ezra Jack Keats’ books. We received a grant to host these sessions which will feature books by this beloved children’s author, as well as a craft associated with the books.

   -- Jackie Vistenz, Director

**Schroon Lake Public Library**

Upcoming events at the library offer something for all ages. The library hosted a winter story time on Saturday, January 17th, 2003 at 10:30 a.m. Children of all ages are invited to join volunteer Sheila Yanko for stories, crafts, songs and snacks. Our Quilt Club meets on the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 a.m. in the downstairs community room. All interested quilters are invited to bring a piece to work on or share. Our Book Discussion Group meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. January's book was *The Secret Life of Beer* by Sue Monk Kidd. February's book will be *Jester* by Richard Patterson.

Hopefully by the time this edition of Trailblazer goes to press we will have almost all of our collection barcoded and ready for automation on the new system that will be available in March. It was a lot of work but we can’t wait! Our patrons are very excited too, and are looking forward to placing their own requests from home.

With a generous Grant from the Schroon Lake Lions Club and International Paper, we have been able to reserve a corner of the library for *The Lion's Den* which now houses our large print collection and books on audio. These funds enabled us to purchase many new large print books as well as many books on CD. We hope that funding will continue so that we can upgrade this high-demand area. In addition, with a mini-grant from CEFLS, we were able to purchase Young Adult and Children's Books on CD/Book sets. This supplement to our audio collection really brings us up-to-date! Thanks Julie.

Our newly formed Friends of the Library has continued to very supportive of our small library - we don't know what we'd do without them! They have enabled us to purchase $2,300 in new books,
Summer Reading Program 2004 Theme/Workshop Announced

The theme for the 2004 Summer Reading Program has been announced. This year’s theme will be “Read, White, and Blue” for a very patriotic summer! Since this is an election year, there’s a lot we can do with the theme for both kids and teens. CEF is expecting delivery of our summer reading manuals any day now and they will be sent out to each library as soon as they arrive. Please watch for them and check them out when you get them. The time to start planning is now!

To help you along, CEF will be offering a Preparing for the Summer Reading Program workshop on Monday, March 22. This year, we will put more emphasis on teen reading clubs. Details and a registration request will be sent out in early February, but save the date and plan to attend or send a representative!

-- Kathie La Bombard, Children’s Services Consultant

Adult Literacy Grant Program Announced

The New York State Library/Division of Library Development has announced the 2004-2005 Adult Literacy Library Services grant program. Public Library Systems and Public Libraries may apply for one or two year grants ranging from $5,000 to $20,000. This year’s application deadline is April 19. Visit the Library Development web page at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/literacy/index.html for more information and an application form. Watch your van delivery for an application packet which will be coming your way in the next few weeks. If you are interested in working on a collaborative project with CEF and a local literacy provider, or to discuss your project, contact Julie Wever at 563-5190 x 18.

a beautiful circulation desk, a two-computer workstation for our public access computers, a high-low station for our OPAC, four new chairs for our picture book area, four Stickley chairs for our children's/YA area as well as a plethora of odds and ends. We are now focusing on adding to our building and I'm sure the Friends will be instrumental in pulling this off.

The wheels are already turning for this year’s Summer Reading Program (yes, it’s that time already). We are planning weekly story times, weekly craft classes and hopefully, with some help from the Friends of the Library, we will also have some great programs too.

-- Jane Bouchard, Director

Black Watch Library, Ticonderoga

We surveyed patrons in Fall 2003 to find out what programs they would like to see at the Library. Based on the results, we have come up with a few new activities for the upcoming year. This winter and spring, will be starting public computer training classes. Our first classes will be centered around basic understanding of Windows, basic Internet/e-mail and family history research on the computer. In February, we will be forming two youth advisory committees. We are asking for students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 to join. Activities will include advice on our young adult collection, planning for the summer reading program, decorating and publicizing events at the library and much more.

-- Heather Johns

Wells Memorial Library, Upper Jay

In October and November, the library sponsored a “great pumpkin” contest. A pumpkin weighing 138 lbs. was donated as a fund-raiser by a resident. For $1.00, a person could guess the weight. The correct guess was by a youngster, Zachary Allen, who received half of the receipts.

On November 15th, the library hosted a 90th birthday celebration for Arto Monaco, noted North Country artist and designer of theme parks. Many friends attended to honor Arto. Part of the celebration was videotaped by Home Town Cable, Calvin Castine and Gordie Little. Arto passed away on November 21st; the gathering after the funeral and burial was held at the library, again with many friends attending.

In December, we held a Christmas sale of “gently used” ornaments and decorations as a new fundraiser. The sale
proved to be so successful that we are considering doing it again.

Our Annual Meeting will be held on February 5th. At that time we will draw the winning raffle ticket for the antique hand-pieced and hand-quilted red and white basket quilt. Our “Tea and Talk” programs held on the second Wednesday of the month continue to be popular. We also hold a discussion group on the third Wednesday of the month called “What’s bugging you?” - issues of current interest.

-- Silvia Norton, Trustee

Paine Memorial Library, Willsboro

The Paine Memorial Library had a wonderful holiday season that featured Santa’s visit to our Friday story hour on December 13th to see of the children of Willsboro were being naughty or nice. He appeared with sleigh bells ringing and ho, ho, hoing. The children at age three where unsure if Santa’s appearance was a good thing. They received gifts and had the opportunity to talk to Santa. They all were a bit shy. Santa also enjoyed a visit with some of the adults at the library.

One of my favorite holiday events was listening to the holiday stories read during December by Gretchen Boardman, our Library Trustee. Gretchen knows wonderful children’s stories that touch the heart and warm the soul. With her many years of practice as a school teacher, Gretchen reads with enthusiasm and joy. The story I enjoyed most was The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey by Susan Wojciechowski. It has magnificent, poignant illustrations by P.J. Lynch that celebrate the richness of this moving tale. This is a story that will be read and treasured for many Holidays to come.

Other Upcoming Events

April 6   Tea & Talk 1 pm
April 27  Reader’s Circle 1pm
May 11    Friend’s Meeting 1pm
June 12   Founder’s Day BOOK SALE
July 15    Ellie Campbell Golf Scramble
July 31    Old Time Folk CRAFT FAIR
Aug 14    Annual BOOK SALE

-- Cheryl Blanchard, Director

Mark Wolfe is the new librarian at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora (which some TV shows have referred to as “the ice box of the north”). Mark is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and spent two years working in the University library prior to accepting his current position. He is coping admirably with his first north country winter! Welcome, Mark.

Becky Pace, Director of the Peru Free Library, will represent the CEF Library System at the Public Library Association Conference which will be held in Seattle, Washington in late February. Becky is one of three representatives selected from libraries throughout New York State to attend the conference courtesy of the Gates Foundation. While at the conference, Becky will attend a one day workshop on “Sustaining Public Access Computing in Rural Libraries.”

We are rather late in introducing Ron Brunelle as the newest member of our delivery team. Ron has been helping out with van deliveries during the past few months since driver Bob Welch traded the delivery van for the bookmobile driver’s seat.

CEF will turn 50 years old on June 25, 2004. Plans are underway for a really special Annual Meeting which will be held on Wednesday, July 14 at a location to be announced in Clinton County. Be sure to save the date and stay tuned for more information!

Donna Hanus has taken over the gavel as President of the CEF Board of Trustees. Donna is the Director of the Franklin-Essex-Hamilton School Library System, and is also a member of the Wead Library, Malone Board of Trustees. She has represented Franklin County for nine years.
on the CEF board. Ms. Hanus replaces outgoing president Fred Smith who will continue to serve on the board as a member at large representative of Clinton County.

Incoming CEF Board President Donna Hanus (center) with newly appointed Essex County Trustees Virginia LaPointe (left) and Barbara Stowe (right).

Wilmington E.M. Cooper Memorial Library

The Cooper-Wilmington Library has been busy this winter. We completed two large book orders for children's and youth books, using two memorial funds. We used some of these funds to start a children's audio collection. A mini-grant from CEFs then doubled our children's audio holdings. We now have a high quality collection of books on CD and cassette for ages 5 through high school. We are promoting this collection vigorously as a way to interest youth in books and to help them develop a love of reading. The audio books are especially helpful for those who are delayed in attaining reading skills.

The Library's youth space is nearly complete. We just received a major grant from a local family so we can now buy the rest of the furniture, bulletin boards and other furnishings. One of our library trustees arranged for the donation of a computer for this space from NASA! We started holding workshops for youth in this space in December, using volunteer crafts people from the community. The first two were a success and we are planning several more. These workshops are co-sponsored with the Wilmington Youth Center.

We are very pleased that a volunteer from the community offered to organize a monthly evening program for adults. We hope to start these sessions in February. The Friends of the Library held a successful "Christmas Cookies by the Pound" and craft sale in December.

-- Anna Court, Director

Franklin County:

Wead Library, Malone

During the more than four decades I knew Frederica “Jonnie” Passino Purdy, she always had the well-being of the Wead Library in mind. She served as a member of the Board of Trustees and initiated and assisted in maintaining a rose garden on the lawn. That garden would still be there, were it not for an annual infestation of Japanese beetles in recent years, which caused the garden to be planted with perennials. She died in November, 2003. “Jonnie” Purdy thought enough of the Library to remember it in her will with a $1,000 bequest. Her kindness will be remembered and she will be missed.

One insight gained from the Community Survey conducted by the Library in the autumn of 2003 was that people are unaware of certain services offered. For instance the question “why can’t the Library’s catalog be accessed on line?” was
asked. Well, it is accessible on line. Anyone using the URL http://216.130.226.171/WelcomeVNP.html will find themselves facing the library’s catalog. Interested patrons can obtain a bookmark with this address either at the Library, or by mail if they ‘phone. Another question concerned handling certain aspects of patrons’ accounts via the Internet. Patience. These services are coming. They are part of the package of the Horizon/Dynix System that the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System will be instituting in the near future. As part of the change, URL’s will be different. Perhaps that constant shift is a part of the changing world. Whiz-bang services appear quickly in cosmopolitan areas. Those who appreciate the civility of semi-rural living realize that it sometimes takes awhile for things to reach geographically isolated, less populated areas. Online services are offered through certain websites subscribed to by the Library. Learning Express, for example, has had 35 site visits in 2003, for those interested in civil service and other types of examinations. Users have examined or tested themselves in such subject areas as Basic skills, college prep, graduate school entrance, law enforcement, military, and technical and career college examinations.

In 2003, 65,991 items circulated. The average daily circulation was 225. During the year 5,507 reference questions were recorded. Eight hundred six interlibrary loans were requested, 610 received. Seven hundred fifty-seven point-to-point requests were filled. Additionally 57 books were lent to the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System to assist them in filling a need. During 2003, total attendance at the Library’s story hours and summer reading programs was 894. In addition, 705 attended as classroom visits, and 125 people interacted with the Children’s Librarian at Families R Us.

The Wead Library, located at 64 Elm St., Malone is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from Noon until 9 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, the hours are from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. Saturdays, library service is provided from Noon until 5 p.m. Quick facts are obtainable by ‘phone at (518) 483-5251. The Library will be closed February 16th in observance of the Presidents’ Day holiday. Remember to try http://216.130.226.171/WelcomeVNP.html to search the Library’s catalog from home.

--- excerpted from David Minich’s January 2004 Director’s Report

Saranac Lake Free Library

More than 80 bibliophiles and outdoor enthusiast enjoyed a fascinating and fun slide trip to the top of many of America’s summits presented by outdoor writer Joe Glickman at the 7th Annual Literary Feast, November 7, at the Hotel Saranac, with proceeds benefiting the library. In the picture below, Chairperson

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NYS Talking Books & Braille Library

Many people in the North Country have taken advantage of services provided by the NYS Talking Book & Braille Library. Losing your sight may keep you from reading a book but you can still enjoy your favorite reading materials on tape. This service provides you with audio tapes of any book you may be interested in reading. There is a great selection of books to choose from -- best sellers, westerns, romances, non-fiction and biography. You can also sign up for magazine subscriptions. You will be surprised at what is available to you.

If you qualify for this service, we will provide you with a cassette player and get you registered with the agency in Albany. Books on cassette will be sent directly to you through the mail -- no postage is required.

For more information on this free service or for an application, call Barb in the Outreach Dept. at 563-5190 x 20.

New “Great Sites For Kids” Brochure Available Online

“The Librarian’s Guide to Great Web Sites for Kids” is now available online at www.al.org/greatsitesbrochure. The two page guide offers tips and guidelines to help children, parents and caregivers safely enjoy the benefits of the internet. It includes special sites for parents and caregivers, suggested family Internet safety guidelines, suggested rules and “Netiquette” for children when using the Internet, and definitions of Internet terminology in an easy to read, accessible format. Libraries and other organizations can download the PDF version of the brochure and distribute it to patrons and clients. The ALA is encouraging libraries to share the brochure in order to proactively assist in the positive, safe use of the Internet by children. Check it out at the address above and contact Barbara Deyo at CEF (563-5190 x 20) if you would like copies to give to your patrons.
Happy Birthday, Dr. Seuss!

Get your stripy hat on and hold the ham: Dr. Seuss is turning 100! In commemoration of Theodor Seuss Geisel’s 100th birthday on March 2, 2004, “Seussentennial” is a yearlong tribute to the man known and loved by generations of Americans as Dr. Seuss. Beginning this month, Seussentennial activities will celebrate all aspects of Geisel’s life and work. Check out www.seussentennial.com for everything you’ll need to celebrate (except the hat). The site includes activities for families, teachers and librarians, various reproducible items such as a sticker page of the illustration above, and links to web sites such as the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA and partners will bring readers across American “under one hat” on March 2 for “a flurry of reading excitement. More information may be obtained from the NEA site at www.nea.org/readacross.

Grace McDonnell, of the Board of Trustees, and Joe Glickman, hold up a fabric banner made by Merle Smith to advertise the occasion.

Continental Construction has completed most of the work on the front entrance, children’s room, adult reading area, staff work space, bathrooms, elevator and Adirondack Room. The next phase of the construction will be work in the Dickert Wildlife Museum which will include the addition of walls, ceiling, flooring and cabinetry.

Our 15th Annual Winter Book Sale was held in the Cantwell Community Room on Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. On offer was a large selection of hard cover and paperback books, along with a bigger than ever section of special books individually priced.

-- Story and Photograph by Pat Wiley

The CEF Barcoding Team took a “pause for the cause” on a recent visit to the Keene Valley Library. Pictured here with Director Karen Glass (at left) are Kim Fletcher, Tracey LaBarge and Elizabeth Rogers. Betsy Brooks, another member of the team is taking the picture. The team travels with laptop computers, accessing the CEF data base using the wireless network in the library to link bibliographic records in the data base to barcodes in the books on the shelves. The project is nearly completed and KVLA hopes to go online this spring with our new Horizon system.

Literary Feast Chairperson Grace McDonnell and Joe Glickman hold a banner made by Merle Smith.
A Mug of Hot Chocolate and…

We asked some readers we know to really stretch their imagination and pretend that the temperature is way below zero, and they are tucked up at home with one book to read. What would that book be?

I just loved Dan Brown’s *The DaVinci Code*. I had to re-read it to pick up on the codes in the book and cover. It was so interesting and puzzling at the same time - I couldn’t figure out what was factual that the author had researched and what was fiction. Many of my patrons have had the same experience and re-read the book 4 or 5 times. It is fun and a really good read.

-- Edie Morelock, Mooers

*Scabiscuit* by Laura Hillenbrand is one of the best pieces of historical story-telling that I have ever read. She makes you feel like you were there! The *DaVinci Code* and *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown are both thrilling murder mysteries that acquaint the reader with interesting tidbits about art history and Christianity.

-- Lorna Forester, CEF Board of Trustees

I’ve read a couple of good YA books lately. One was *Northern Light* by Jennifer Donnelly. It is about the 1906 murder of Grace Brown at Big Moose Lake in the Adirondacks, although it is a work of historical fiction. There’s lots of local interest in it, and it was an honor book for the Michael Printz Award for Young Adult Literature this year. The other was *The Strange Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* by Mark Haddon. In it, a young autistic boy tries to solve the murder of his neighbor’s dog and ends up finding the truth about his family. I also read *Lost Continent* by Bill Bryson. His view of the USA was a bit negative for my tastes, but I have to admit it was funny!

-- Kathie LaBombard, CEF

I would choose *Smoke Screen* by Kyle Mills. This is a fictional account of how the tobacco industry manipulates legislation and the public to keep smoking viable and profitable. The lead character is so likeable that I had to remind myself that I am opposed to smoking and would not want him to win in real life.

-- Donna Hanus, CEF Board of Trustees

Anna Katherine Green’s first novel, *The Leavenworth Case*, is a must and a joy for mystery readers. Green was the first fe-
Talking Points

Did your favorite books make these "Top 100" lists? Two of the lists below are found on the Modern Library’s web page and are the result of a project designed to get people talking about good books. They are great jumping off points for discussion and may guide you to new favorites!

www.mysterybooksellers.com/favorites.html - the 100 Favorite Mysteries of the Century as selected by the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association’s online members.


For “talking points” that can be used as a guide (or a referee) for a more structured discussion of great books, visit The Modern Library’s “100 Best” project page at www.randomhouse.com/modernlibrary/100best.html

“We twain
Discussed with buoyant hearts
The various things that appertain
To bibliomaniac arts.”

-- Eugene Field, Dibdin's Ghost

male mystery writer in the country. Published in 1878, it's rich in the settings and language of Victorian times. Readers will also discover how the work became a model for other writers in the mystery genre. For years, the book was used at Yale Law School to demonstrate the fallacy of circumstantial evidence. The book is so engrossing you'll forget how cold it is outside.

-- Fred Smith, CEF Board of Trustees

I really liked Monkeewrench by P.J. Tracy. This book kept me on the edge of my bed! It is written by a mother-daughter team and is their first thriller. I could not put it down. It certainly made it easy to forget that it is winter!

-- Cheryl Blanchard, Paine Memorial Library, Willisboro

I would love to be snow bound so I could have the time to read The Fiery Cross, the fifth novel in Diana Gabaldon's "Outlander" series. This series is the saga of a 20th century woman who gets sent back in time to 18th century Scotland. There is wide-ranging historical interest, plus romance and lots of excitement. Everyone I have introduced this series to has been really engrossed in the books.

-- Francie Fairchild, Chazy Library

If you're looking for something to both warm you and make you feel fortunate, try The Life of Pi, by Montrealer Yann Martel. It's a great story about a young man stranded in a life boat alone with a tiger, floating in the vast ocean for months on end. The ingenuity of the boy in dealing with the tiger's appetite, the issues of dominance and survival are both remarkable and entertaining. The story moves right along and leaves you wondering about the next crisis poor Pi will have to face. This is a great time to read about baking in the hot sun while bobbing in the ocean.

-- Elizabeth Rogers, CEF

Take a trip to Italy with Frances Mayes’ Under the Tuscan Sun and Bella Tuscany. These books are so evocative of place you can smell the lemon trees. Savor Mayes wonderful prose interspersed with local recipes. A lovely respite from the depths of winter.

-- Becky Pace, Peru Free Library

I would choose Stephanie Gertler’s The Puzzle Bark Tree. In the aftermath of her parents’ double suicide, daughter Grace is bequeathed a house she never knew existed. Leaving her penthouse in Manhattan, she travels alone to Sabbath Landing, New York to a log cabin house on Canterbury Island. Here the story weaves itself to expose a devastating secret buried in the cloudy memory of childhood.

-- Jane Bouchard, Schroon Lake

I finished Dan Brown’s DaVinci Code last week—what a thought provoking novel. I started Ann Rule's latest book Heart Full of Lies yesterday. It is the kind of reading that is not only interesting but quick. I really don’t want to put it down!

-- Lyn Dunf, CEF Board of Trustees & Whippleville bookmobile patron
Zeroing In on Libraries

*Libraries: How they stack up,* a report published by OCLC in 2003, provides an interesting and useful snapshot of the economic impact of libraries. The report illustrates meaningful comparisons of library activities to other sectors, professions and destinations in the worldwide economy. Some of the tidbits contained in the report may resonate with legislators and other key players in library funding decisions, although there are a lot of zeros to toss around. Some of the more memorable comparisons are:

- **Estimated worldwide library expenditures:** $31 billion annually
- **Estimated U.S. library expenditures:** $14 billion annually
  
  U.S. libraries purchase an estimated $14 billion in goods and services annually. This exceeds U.S. spending on videos and athletic footwear, and nears the level spent by businesses on magazine advertising. U.S. industries with similar approximate spending levels include: Video retail sales ($12.3 billion), Bars and Taverns ($13.2 billion and Athletic footwear sales ($13.6 billion).
- **U.S. libraries circulate more than 1,947,600,000 items a year**
  
  This number includes 39,500,000 interlibrary loan transactions made by public libraries and 13,100,000 interlibrary loan transactions made by academic libraries.
- **Libraries are a dot com rival:**
  
  Public library cardholders in the U.S. outnumber Amazon.com customers by almost 5 to 1. Amazon has 30,000,000 customers, while U.S. public libraries have 148,000,000 library cardholders. (Source: John Cox, “Amazon Dives into technology services.” Infoworld, June 10, 2003. (Source: State Library Data 2001-2002).
  
  Each day, U.S. libraries circulate nearly four times more items than Amazon handles. Amazon ships an estimated 1,500,000 items per day. (Source: John Cox, “Amazon Dives into Technology services.” Infoworld, June 10, 2003).
- **Libraries are a Prime Mover:**
  
  U.S. Libraries circulate about the same number of items as FedEx ships each day. FedEx ships more than 5.3 million items per day, while U.S. libraries are busy circulating 5,400,000 items per day.
- **Libraries are Valued Destinations:**
  
  One out of every six people in the world is a registerd library user. The total number of worldwide registered library users is 1.1 billion.
  
  Five times more people visit U.S. public libraries each year than attend U.S. professional and college football, basketball, baseball and hockey games combined. If library patrons were asked to pay the average sporting game ticket price of approximately $35 per visit, libraries would generate more than $39 billion in annual revenues.

_Excerpted from “Libraries: How They Stack Up” published 2003 by OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc._

[www.oclc.org](http://www.oclc.org)
Betsy Whitefield (center, light coat), Director of the Saranac Lake Free Library, hits the ice with fellow members of the Lake Placid Curling Club. Library-related curlers present include Tom LaBombard (third from right), husband of CEF Children’s Consultant Kathie LaBombard, and Amber McKernan (fourth from right), a long-time patron of the Gabriels bookmobile stop.