



GALE FORCE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF GALE FREE LIBRARY FGFL.ORG

Gale Free Library: Opening doors for 131 years.

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Editor's note

For some time, we've been meaning to devote a series of articles to the different departments at Gale Free Library so that you can know a little about the people who make the library run. In this issue, we profile the circulation staff. You can be a self-sufficient recluse, never interacting with the reference or children's staff, never chatting with the director or assistant director or exchanging pleasantries with technical services; but, if you check out books, you can't avoid the friendly people behind the circulation desk. Therefore, they are our first portrait. Look for more department profiles in future issues.

On page 3 of this issue we say farewell to Kim Challenger, retiring children's assistant who was also GFL's chief costumer and set designer. How can that be? Read the article, and you'll see what we mean. Taking over for Kim is Kevin McDonough, who will be profiled in an upcoming issue.

Please Join or Renew Your Membership for 2019

If you received this copy by mail, please use the enclosed envelope to join FGFL or renew your membership for 2019. Membership dues are an important source of the Friends' support for the library, helping make Gale Free Library the finest library of its size in the commonwealth.

Meet the GFL Staff: Circulation

BY JANET FOLEY

Did your new puppy tear apart a library book? Has your library card expired? Having problems with the CWMARS online access? Does a request for an item seem to be taking "forever" to arrive from another library? The staff at circulation can help you with these things and many more. The staff members of circulation issue new and replacement library cards; handle all library materials being borrowed, renewed, and returned at the library; and process all fee transactions for overdue or damaged items. They are responsible for the maintenance and management of the adult collection on the main and lower levels of the building as well as the receipt, processing, and return of materials through shared resources from CWMARS and Commonwealth Catalog libraries. They also ensure that all Gale Free Library materials are back on the shelves in a timely manner for patrons to browse.

Rachel Mimms, Head of Gale Free Library's Circulation



WAY BACK IN 2006, Rachel began her career at GFL, volunteering twenty hours a week, advancing to paid page in 2008, assistant circulation manager in 2014, and since May 2017, head of circulation. A true success story! According to Library Director Susan Scott, Rachel immediately made herself indispensable. When asked how, Rachel thought about it and replied, "As a volunteer, I learned everything they let me learn. I set up systems in children's and kept on learning! I took classes for library employees through the Massachusetts Library System and got my paraprofessional certification." Rachel enjoys teaching both patrons and staff and especially likes seeing when patrons learn that they can do so much more, such as getting a museum pass or requesting materials online. She likes reading memoirs and other nonfiction.

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Danielle Yanco, Assistant Circulation Manager

When she was only four years old, Danielle participated in her first GFL story time. She has worked in local libraries since 2001, periodically taking time off for her family. In 2014, her mother found a posting for a part time GFL reference position in *The Landmark* which led to her employment at GFL (moms know best!). Now a full-timer in circulation, Danielle reports that she likes to track down hard-to-find and requested items and make sure things run smoothly. According to Danielle, something people may not know about GFL is that if your loaned materials are four weeks overdue, you might just get a phone call and have your account shut off! So, try to get your borrowed items back on time (or even better, learn how to renew them online).



Kathy Cargill, Circulation Assistant

Cruising in on three years at GFL, Kathy retired from the Worcester Public Library after thirty-three years and couldn't stay away from libraries.... Six months after being hired as a GFL page, Kathy was promoted to circulation assistant. She "works the desk," meets patrons and enjoys interacting with the public. "I enjoy processing materials, pulling slips, looking for books for Holden or other libraries, and seeing what's available." When asked what she likes about her job, Kathy replied, "Great hours and great people. I couldn't ask for a better job! It's like living with a family. Everyone cares about each other." A voracious reader and movie watcher, Kathy loves mysteries, thrillers, straight fiction — romance to action. Her favorite author? A Scot, Jennie Colgan. She loves shopping and animals, especially her mini poodle Star Baby.



Spencer Perry, Circulation Assistant

For thirteen years, Spencer has been one of the faces of the GFL circulation desk, helping people, always with a smile. Spencer says, "My favorite part of the job is finding patrons what they like and want. Patrons get excited and share their enthusiasm, their ideas, and their

recommendations. I enjoy when they like to tell me about their book experiences. When patrons come to the desk with a huge stack of items to take out, sometimes they apologize! I think they're wise for using library resources." Ultimately, Spencer likes to cheer people up, no matter what kind of day they've had. He says that he is glad to see just about everyone. "That's my strength," he says. "People find me happy."



Magda Szemiot, Circulation Assistant

First a library page, now a library assistant, always busy checking books in and out, placing holds for patrons, locating holds, and shelf tracking (making sure the materials are all in order on the shelves), Magda says, "I love to look for missing books. It's like a treasure hunt when items are misplaced or on the wrong shelf. Finding one is like finding a prize." She enjoys chatting with patrons and the overall environment at GFL. At home, Magda loves to knit and reads absolutely anything but science fiction.

Julia Kelly, Library Page

It's been a year since Julia joined the staff at GFL. Formerly employed at the Sterling and Auburn libraries, Julia can now walk to work from her home in Holden. She spends her time at GFL repairing and recovering books and organizing materials in young adult, non-fiction, and audio. Julia reports that she likes



everything she does at GFL, likes the atmosphere and loves that it's a community public space. "I especially enjoy organizing and shelving nonfiction because I read nonfiction and like to check it out and see what's new and popular." Julia loves animals and enjoys fiber arts like knitting and wants to get into embroidery, make macramé wall hangings, and own chickens!



Wendy Snow, Library Page

Previously a volunteer at the West Boylston library, Wendy can be found afternoons returning books to the shelves and shelf reading (making sure materials are in order so you can find them) or working on a variety of projects, resurfacing discs, applying new labels, or inventorying different departments. "I like that I do something different every day throughout the whole building," Wendy says. An avid DVD watcher, Wendy is the "house guru" for DVD recommendations. Something most library patrons do not know about Wendy is that she is a professional billiards instructor!

Farewell (but not Goodbye), Kim!

BY RICHARD MAURER

VISITORS TO THE CHILDREN'S ROOM this past Halloween said a sad farewell to long-time children's assistant Kim Chalenger. It was her last day, and, appropriately for Kim, she was in costume, dressed as a kindly witch.

Kim has been the Good Witch of GFL since she came to work here in 2001—mostly in the children's room but also for several years at the reference desk. Kim gave the whole building her creative stamp—from the displays in the alcove at the entrance, to decorations on the shelves and at the circulation desk, to the ever-changing wonderland in the children's room, which she adorned to fit the seasons and promote special events, such as summer reading and scavenger hunts.

Then there were Kim's homemade costumes, which she wore weekly during story time for preschoolers (picture her as a pirate, Dr. Seuss, Uncle Sam, or Mary Poppins). She also dressed up for grown-ups, wearing period garb during the library's 125th anniversary celebration and impersonating a less-towering version of Abraham Lincoln for his 200th birthday.

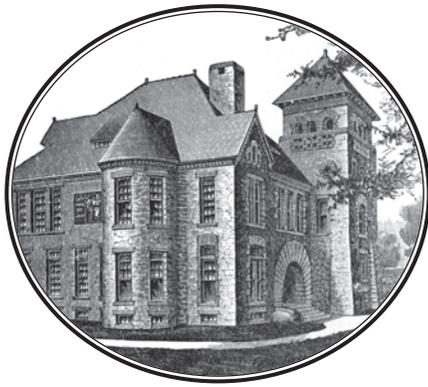
As talented as she is as an impresario, Kim's true vocation is fostering the love of reading in young and old alike. "Public libraries are one of the finest services a community can provide its citizens," she says. "My goal has always been to encourage people to make use of this marvelous resource. There are many people who don't realize all the wonderful things that libraries do—for free!"

Kim admits to being conflicted about retiring. "I love this building, I love my job, and I love interacting with kids. It's amazing what three-year-olds know. They surprise me all the time."

Fortunately, Kim won't disappear. She and her husband, Paul, intend to stay in Holden, and she is looking forward to being an enthusiastic GFL patron, Friend, and volunteer. We expect to see her arriving Mary Poppins-style, by flying umbrella!

Vampira (aka Kim) answers questions at the reference desk.





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Book in Hand

BY JAMES B. NICOLA

The author persists for ages after he is done atop the earth like a normal soul with legs and hands in daylight hours, and pursues potential acolytes such as us much like a vampire, only in reverse: Every tome's a tomb and when you jimmy one open especially at a midnight hour some dead soul's brought back to life not with sharpened fangs, but as a spray of blood, an offering to yours. And that is why, at book stores and in libraries, especially the vaulted stacks, I breathe so hard — and drool.

Holden native James B. Nicola is the author of three collections of poetry in addition to hundreds of other poems published in little magazines. He now lives in New York City, but when in Holden he always visits Gale Free Library and snaps up a few titles at The Book Cellar. He read this poem during his speech at Wachusett Regional High School's Class of 2017 Senior Day.

Gale Force Makes International News

The front page article in the last issue of *Gale Force* was covered by *Quarry*, Australia's number-one news source for the country's quarrying industry. Our readers will recall that the piece traced the history of GFL's building stone to a quarry on Kendall Road, which was briefly thought to have a rich gold deposit. Displaying great interest in the story, *Quarry* excerpted our article and interviewed Chuck Skillings of the Holden Historical Society. Watch for Aussie prospectors arriving in town!



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