

May 28, 2021

Dear Brianna,

I can't thank you enough for writing to the Trustees about your library-related concerns. Your letter was received yesterday and distributed to the other current board members and also to Glynis Hart, the library Director. (FYI, Heidi Nelson is no longer on the board, so it was not sent to her.)

By NH law, the Trustees will need to meet in a duly noticed session before we can reply to you as a board, which I hope will happen next week. In the meantime, these are my personal comments which I wanted to share with you right away, again conveying my deep appreciation for your contacting us about these important issues.

First, about today's event: the library is participating in response to an invitation extended from the church next door. As I understand it, a group at the church has been reading the book "Let's Talk Race" and has enlisted a diversity educator from Simmons College to lead the one-hour workshop. The facilitator is also a Wilmot resident who I know well and regard highly. The workshop is all about getting people to share in very small groups their personal experiences with race -- e.g., growing up -- as a starting point for learning how to discuss this important topic. I know this is ridiculously short notice to extend an invitation to a mother of four children, but I am inviting you to attend along with me, and/or to invite one of the other concerned parents you mentioned to come.

Next, about the word "white" in the Newsletter: I don't remember noticing it back when I read it. Thank you for pointing this out! What I remember is being so interested in the book "The Story of Ruby Bridges" that I went to the library the next day to read it myself. I was delighted to read that Ruby's family went to church every Sunday (complete with an illustration of them doing so) and this was what gave Ruby the wherewithal to pray for the people trying to block her from going to school during an exceedingly difficult chapter in our country's history.

Personally, I will categorically state that the library is not advancing any politicization or social narrative, especially one that would present white people as oppressors and inherently racist, or any Marxist ideology, and I would not serve on the Trustees if this were so. I regret that somehow what has been publicized has led you to this conclusion, and I hope that in future exchanges and conversations we can discuss this together. The library policies posted on our website (www.wilmotlibrary.org) are, I believe, in line with the goals for libraries you mentioned in your letter.

I'm glad you included in your letter that you are an author about local libraries as that clued me in to why your name seemed familiar to me! I remembered reading some of your articles (in perhaps Kearsarge or Image magazine), so I googled you and found an article you wrote about Aurora Bakery. We had the Aurora Bakery/Road to Independence donkeys outside at the library last fall (I wonder if you were there) and are having them back again this coming September. My deep desire is that by then you will be open to participating in library events, particularly this one which seemed to be especially wonderful for all ages. Those donkeys are so lovable!

I think those are my main thoughts for today, and as I mentioned previously, you will be receiving a reply from the Board once we've had a chance to legally meet. In the meantime, both Glynis and I would welcome hearing from you either by email or phone and our contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Margaret Doody

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