Aside from celebrating both Veterans Day and Thanksgiving, can you guess why the theme of this newsletter is “Giving Thanks”? For starters, giving thanks means different things to different people depending on their circumstances. When I look back over the last year, I'm thankful for the availability of the covid-19 vaccine. What also comes to mind is the irony of the book that I am currently reading and how it connects with recognizing reasons to be thankful. The main character's life is personified by a library. Each book in the library is the story of her life and each life is different depending upon which path she chose to follow. Central to the library is her Book of Regrets, compiled of actions she took and those she didn't. It's a good read.

Getting back on point, I found a great piece about being thankful on the Harvard Health newsletter blog. [https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier](https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/giving-thanks-can-make-you-happier)

Here's my interpretation. Each holiday season expectations are high but for many this year, especially those impacted by the pandemic, the holidays will no doubt be tinged with sadness and anxiety; however, the central tenet of Thanksgiving - being grateful - can actually lift one's spirits. The word gratitude comes from the Latin word, gratia, which means depending on the context: grace, graciousness, or gratefulness. With gratitude people acknowledge the goodness in their lives, and generally come to understand that the source of that goodness lies partially outside of themselves. Therefore, being grateful helps to develop a connection to something larger - other people, nature, or a higher power.

Indeed, research on positive psychology shows that expressing gratitude is consistently associated with greater happiness because it helps people feel more positive emotions, enjoy good experiences, enhance their health, manage adversity, and develop strong relationships.

The article goes on to say that there are many ways to cultivate gratitude. One is to write a thank-you note. So here is my thank-you note to everyone who reads this newsletter.

Thank you to the library staff who are the heart of the MPL, a place where I learn something new every day and where I find great literature that consistently expands my horizon.

Thank you to the Library Trustees, the Friends, the Town Council, my colleagues at Town Hall, and Middletown residents for your nurturing and financial support that makes public library service possible.

Thank you to everyone who patronizes our library, both the physical space and the virtual. Our relationship with you keeps us consistently moving forward.

In closing, thank you to our Veterans and Happy Thanksgiving.
Theresa

Theresa Coish is the Director of the Middletown Public Library
She is currently reading, *The Midnight Library*, by Matt Haig
What's New at the Library

New Adult Books

New Children's Books

New Teen Books

Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts.

Henri Frederic Amiel

We are so thankful when patrons express their gratitude!

Piglet noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude.

A.A. Milne
30 Days of Gratitude

1. Start a gratitude journal
2. Call an old friend and catch up
3. List 3 people you are thankful for
4. Say hello to your neighbor
5. Tell someone you love them
6. Indulge in your favorite food
7. Do a random act of kindness
8. What trait are you thankful for? Love yourself!
9. Mail a handwritten note to someone
10. What's the biggest challenge you've overcome? Celebrate it!
11. Celebrate family with game night
12. Tell someone you love them
13. Make a point to give 3 compliments
14. Listen to your favorite song
15. Do a favor for someone without them having to ask
16. Volunteer to do something you wouldn't normally do
17. Hold the door for a stranger
18. Say aloud 3 good things that happened
19. Reflect on one thing you're thankful for that money can't buy
20. Send a thank you note
21. If you had a positive experience at a business, write a kind review
22. Try a new craft, project or hobby
23. Do a random act of kindness
24. Go a day without complaining
25. Celebrate family with dinner
26. Say thank you
27. What exercise are you most thankful you're able to do? Do it!
28. Hold the door for a stranger
29. Tell someone you love them
30. Do something kind for yourself
Thank you Maggie B. for sharing your 2004 Apple Tree Day in Middletown items for our apple display!

A few of MPL's staff's favorite holiday recipes

**Julie:** from her childhood, she still makes it today!

**Microwave Fantasy Fudge**

**Kris:** these are addictive!

**Rosemary Gruyere and Sea Salt Crisps**
(from *The Smitten Kitchen Cookbook*, by Deb Perelman)

**Leslie:** a must have at a Latino Thanksgiving dinner!

**Arroz con Gandules**

**Arlene:** long time family recipe - Apricot Bars

- 3/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1 1/3 cups shredded coconut
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 jar (12 ounces) apricot preserves

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter, and sugar. Add egg; mix well. In separate bowl, combine flour and baking powder; mix thoroughly. Press two-thirds of dough in a greased 13x9x2 inch pan. Spread with preserves, crumble remaining dough over preserves. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until golden brown. Cool in pan on wire rack. Cut into squares. Yield: 36 bars.

**Chris:** Mom's Apple Cake

- 3 cups apples, peeled and sliced
- 3/4 cup + 2 Tbls sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 1/2 sticks margarine
- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs beaten

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In greased pie plate, mix apples with cinnamon and 2 Tbls sugar. Heat margarine to brown stage. Add 3/4 cup sugar, eggs and flour. Pour over apples. Bake 40 mins.

Tip from **Loraine:** portion and bake stuffing in muffin tins. That way everyone gets some crusty and some soft parts!

The Friends Corner

Thanksgiving will be upon us soon and as you prepare the turkey and all the fixings you may want to keep to the standard menu or vary it. Whatever you do, the Middletown Library Bookstore has the cookbooks you need to prepare a delicious dinner. Stop in and sample a wide array of cookbooks for sale.

The Friends of the Middletown Library support a wide variety of Library projects and events for the community. You can help lend your support by joining the Friends. Stop in at the library for information and an application or email FriendsoftheMiddletownRILibrary@gmail.com.