

Library Lines

By Laura Stoll, Assistant to the Director/Office Manager

One of the things we are most proud of at the Kirkland Town Library is that our unique collection includes a lot more than just books. Our mission is to provide materials that support literacy, intellectual, recreational and cultural interests, which can be found in a lot of ways. To that end, we have board games, jigsaw puzzles, tech toys, cake pans, and dolls.

Another special item that you can borrow are passes for free or reduced admission to local parks and recreational areas. Below is a list of all of the park passes available at the KTL; if you can't make the journey this summer, I've also included some books that will take you there in spirit.

The Clinton Pool Pass allows a family to use the pool, located on Norton Avenue, for three days. The community pool was built in the mid-1950s and has faithfully served residents ever since. The last day of the summer 2021 season is in late August so if you are planning to visit, don't delay!

If you'd rather spend the rest of your summer reading by the side of the pool, I recommend "The Guncle" by Steven Rowley. When Gay Uncle Patrick (the guncle) takes care of his niece Maisie and nephew Grant for the summer, they spend many hours floating around in the pool on pineapple, pizza, and pegasus-shaped floats. It's about the only thing that can beat the heat of Palm Springs. This funny and touching story defines another kind of family, one that you'll want to join yourself!

The New York State Empire Pass can be used at any New York State Park including some local destinations like Delta Lake, Verona Beach, Chittenango Falls, and Green Lakes. The pass is available for one week and gives free admission.

If you're looking to experience some of the natural world, borrow a copy of the book "World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments" by Aimee Nezhukumatathil. The short essays read like poetry but also manage to be informative. For example, in her chapter on the narwhal, she connects the "unicorn of the sea" to a childhood winter in Kansas.

The Fort Rickey Discovery Zoo is more than your typical zoo. There are opportunities to feed and pet the animals, a playground to let out some energy, and hands-on presentations. With our pass, visitors receive half-off admission for up to 4 adults and 6 children.

Another atypical zoo experience can be found in "The Elephant of Belfast" by S. Kirk Walsh. Inspired by true events, the book tells the story of a young zookeeper and her quest to protect an elephant during the blitz of Belfast during WWII. The book examines not only the tragedies of war but also to the tensions that still exist in Northern Ireland.

Onondaga County has a variety of parks with lakes, swimming areas, waterfalls, and even another zoo. Their Explore Outdoors Pass offers free admission to several areas that are fun to visit. Choose from the Beaver Lake Nature Center, Highland Forest, Oneida Shores Park, Pratt's Falls Park or the Rosamund Gifford Zoo.

If you'd prefer to travel to the Syracuse area through a book, "Wayward" by Dana Spiotta will take you there. In the novel, the main character faces a midlife crisis that is eased by the purchase and renovation of an old house in downtown Syracuse. In addition to the fictionalized

story, Spiotta writes about Syracuse's past and present, offering bits of information that even longtime CNY residents might not know.

The Wild Center is a museum with live animals, hands-on exhibits, and an elevated trail located in Tupper Lake, NY, about a 2 ½ hour drive from Clinton. If you're planning a trip to the Adirondacks, definitely plan to spend an afternoon here. Our pass admits two adults for \$10 each and gives free admission for four children ages 17 and under.

If you really want to get out and explore the North Country, check out Anne Stoltie's "Explorer's Guide Adirondacks." The book covers the area's history, things to see and do in its many regions, and has practical tips about where to stay and eat. According to Stoltie, the Wild Center is a must-see, noting "the live otters steal the show."

To see if one of the park passes is available, give us a call at 315-853-2038. We can hold it for you for a day. When you're done, please return the pass as soon as possible so others can enjoy it.