To our Henniker family, friends, neighbors, and patrons:

Tucker Free Library (TFL) is very much a place for gathering, education, learning, sharing, playing and meeting. Out of an abundance of caution, we closed our doors in response to the COVID 19 Corona Virus. It was not an easy decision to close the library. Every question that was raised during the decision-making process was answered, “we just don’t know, we don’t have the science, we don’t even know who could be carriers.” While we always love to see our patrons, TFL’s highest priority is the health and well-being of library patrons, staff, and our community.

One thorny question was whether to offer curbside pickups and/or home deliveries. This has been an ongoing discussion among NH library directors, trustees and also our library staff. It was decided early to err on the side of caution, and close physical services entirely for the following reasons.

1. “It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other coronaviruses. Studies suggest that coronaviruses (including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).” World Health Organization

2. COVID 19 is more contagious than the flu, and the reason seems to be “presymptomatic transmission”–when people who have been infected are not yet showing symptoms but in fact could be contagious.

It is for these same reasons and the lack of accurate scientific information that we chose to lock the book drops and not accept library materials until we have guidance on how to safely accept and handle these materials. There has been talk of the necessity to quarantine returns and there has been no real directive from health officials on the threat that these items may pose. Once that information is known then we will reevaluate our options including curbside deliveries and returns.

Your library staff immediately coordinated to adapt from a “physical service” model to a “virtual and digital” model. They have been working remotely to create a virtual experience for the Henniker community at www.tuckerfreelibrary.org. If you require assistance using ANY of these virtual alternatives please contact tuckerte@comcast.net. We will funnel your question to appropriate staff members and they will respond to you directly.

TFL will track and follow guidance from public health officials to keep our staff and community safe by playing our part to help slow the spread of this virus. We will continue these safety measures until a decision has been made by the Tucker Free Library Board of Trustees that the spread of Covid-19 has abated (in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services).

We profoundly look forward to resuming “business as usual” but will do so only when there’s an abundance of evidence that it is safe for our community. In the meantime, we look forward to continuing our customary level of service, just in an online forum.

Wishing you utmost safety and good health.
FROM MICHAEL YORK, THE NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE LIBRARIAN

It seems to me that when we get into times like this commonsense is the most important characteristic we all need to cultivate. We all agree that libraries are critical institutions in our communities. They help every day to make our patrons happier, better informed and part of our communities. There is the natural tendency of librarians to PITCH IN do what is needed to help. Libraries and most importantly librarians are always in the first wave to help during difficult times.

The difference with the situation we face now is that this is a medical emergency; the WHO has determined it is a pandemic. Commonsense dictates the our only real concern needs to be keeping our staff safe and to do as much as we can to not expose them to the virus. Keeping the library doors shut and not exposing our staff to individuals who may carry the Coronavirus is most important.

If we listen to the health professionals, who know the most about pandemics Dr. Fauci for example they tell us what we need to do is limit exposure to other human beings; social distancing and washing our hands constantly!

Any New Hampshire Libraries still providing any type of in person services for patrons should carefully weigh the costs and benefits of these services. It makes you feel good that you are doing your part during this difficult time, but is it the best way to flatten the curve. Health professionals tell us flattening the curve is critical in keeping the health care system functioning.

We need to keep the system robust enough to get past this pandemic we need to limit the number of patients the system has to handle so protecting people from exposure is necessary.

March 18, 2020

NHLA calls on all public libraries to close their doors in alignment with their Governor Sununu’s Emergency Order #1 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 to transition all K-12 public schools to remote learning through April 3, 2020 and Executive Order 2020-04 declaring a state of emergency in NH. We stand in complete support of the libraries and local officials who have already done so.

As the Center for Disease Control is now recommending that the best way to slow the spread of the virus is to engage in work from home whenever possible, avoid gatherings, and avoid discretionary travel, we urge the immediate closing of all of our public, school, and academic libraries in New Hampshire and recommend that they remain closed to the public until medical professionals, the World Health Organization, and The Center for Disease Control deem it prudent to re-open and resume regular services.

March 16, 2020

NELA is using our role as a leader and advocate of New England libraries to call on all public libraries to close their doors in alignment with their state's Executive Order to close all K-12 public schools.