

March 18, 2024

Dear Library Patron,

**National Library Week** (April 7-13) is a good time to reflect on the role libraries play in today's world and consider the role of the Roeliff Jansen Community Library in our community.

The global COVID-19 pandemic accelerated a dramatic shift in how people live, learn, and work while magnifying the fault lines that already beset economies and societies. While the world is more interdependent than ever, technology has catalyzed the transformation to a digital society that allows for "remote everything" – a benefit for some, a calamity for others. These complex and uncertain times are testing the adaptability and resilience of governments, institutions, and society itself.

*Amid these momentous changes, it can feel like we are overwhelmed by a nonstop tsunami of global information and disinformation. What role do libraries play in helping make sense of it all? Literacy is the most basic currency of today's world. As Washington Post writer Linton Weeks wrote, "Librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim."*

More so than a recreation center, town hall, or public park ever could, libraries connect their communities in ways that benefit everyone. They aggregate resources – from educational offerings to job-skills coaching to ESL learning to homeschooling – and put them all under one welcoming roof for everyone to share.

*Star Trek star and best-selling author John Cho, who emigrated from Korea to the US at age six, praises libraries as a place where everyone can be "an equal citizen." "Being there costs nothing. Those places where money doesn't buy you status is where democracy lives."*

Whether you're a family looking for a fun story time, an immigrant in need of language resources, an unemployed individual searching for job help, a senior

citizen needing an internet tutorial, or someone just searching for a good book to read, you can go to one place: the library.



*Kids made their own snow globes and other crafts during winter break.*



*Homeschool Wednesday participants looked for animal tracks along the Roe Jan Kill with help from the Columbia Land Conservancy.*

Libraries truly are remarkable places, and in today's confusing times we need them more than ever. Thank you for valuing the Roeliff Jansen Community Library: we hope you will continue to protect and support one of our most important public institutions. You can use the card included in this mailing to donate and – if you donate \$50 or more – dedicate a bookplate to a friend or family member. If you choose to donate with the PayPal link on the library website, would you consider also paying the minor PayPal fee so that your entire donation can support the library?

Thank you so much for your support of our wonderful library.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Placona  
President, Board of Trustees