**There’s Something About Mary**

Mary Eckert, our long time previous director current Head Librarian, will be retiring from the library on Oct. 1, 2020.

Mary’s service began before the library even became to be in the 1960s and steadfastly continued through the current year as she helped lead a team of devoted volunteers begin the community library. As part of the Library Committee for the Civic Club, she aided in finding possible locations and allocating the materials her community needed the most. She tirelessly helped to fundraise, advocate and run a library in a community that had never seen one before. Between the years of 1964 and 1969, Mary was part of a team that donated more than 6,000 hours, raised more than $16,000 through the Civic Club and donations, purchased more than $12,000 in books and furniture and furnished more than 6,000 volumes for patrons.

Mary was one of the individuals at the forefront of the Millstadt Civic Club’s mission to create a library. She was so successful in her efforts that she helped represent the organization and helped win the second-place award in the General Federation of Women’s Clubs’ Shell Oil Company Education Program of 1969-1970 for its involvement in a volunteer effort to help the young people of Millstadt further their education.

Mary’s leadership skills were invaluable on many projects. She has never been shy to lend a helping hand during children’s reading programs, guest speakers or even Food Truck Nights. She has always been helpful to patrons, especially children, in communicating with them, making them feel special and making their library visits a truly positive experience.

Mary served as Millstadt Library Director until 2019 and presided over many cultural and technological changes through the years. These included shifting from a humble beginning that included card catalog and operating mostly through donations, to becoming a public library in the 1980s and having digital collections, new technology and databases. The one guiding force throughout the Millstadt Library’s history has been Mary’s willingness and ability to ensure the library would always serve the community at the highest level.

Mary has not only been known as Library Director throughout her tenure, but also as an advocate and friend to patrons, her staff of librarians and the board of trustees. She has laid a foundation of excellence and left a lasting impact on librarianship through her fierce dedication to the library she helped to create, the knowledge she has shared with its patrons and the community she continues to serve.

On behalf of the Millstadt Library, librarians and board members, we would like to thank Mary Eckert for her decades of work and dedication. None of this could have been possible without her.

Be sure to take the time to say “thank you” when you see Mary around town, or come in and see her at the library as our No. 1 volunteer!