

# Letters to the Library

**Describe yourself in a sentence or two, for example your age and occupation (or, if you do not have one, what you like to do). What is your household like?**

I'm 34 and am self-employed.

**What is your day to day routine like now? What has changed? What has not changed?**

In recent years I started two small home-based businesses with my husband. COVID-19 has meant that we can't continue our main work, so we've been using this time to start another business. Although we're working on something new, our day-to-day life hasn't changed much. We still work at home, all days/times of the week, juggling work and family life as we can. Regardless of whether this new project is financially profitable, it has kept us occupied and positive during this pandemic, and for that we are so grateful. We miss the library very much, though. Since we normally go there most days, the closure is a big change to our daily life. We also miss seeing family and friends. We are driving far less, taking (even more) walks around the neighborhood, and going to the supermarket once every ten days rather than every other day. Our two-year-old seems oblivious to any change; she tells us sadly that the library and the playgrounds are closed, but her mood is otherwise bright and she is still young enough to find amusement in household objects and twigs, etc, so she doesn't seem challenged by this. We have things easy with her!

**What precautions have you taken against the virus? How have you prepared? Were there any difficulties (shortages, high prices etc.)?**

We haven't taken any special precautions beyond self-isolating, which we've been very strict about. We wash hands a bit more. I am the only one in my household (of four) who goes shopping, and I wear a mask and one glove when I do. I am not cleaning our house more than usual.

**What have been the biggest challenges for you during this time?**

Maintaining mental health has been tough. Reading anything about the virus online makes me anxious very quickly.

## **How have you stayed busy?**

Starting a new business (which we decided to do when the lockdown started and we couldn't continue our main work) occupies all our "work" time and nearly all of our leisure time, too. This has helped keep us focused on something positive.

## **Have there been any positives to this situation?**

The streets are quieter, and I see many people out walking or jogging -- far more than before. One other positive for me is a new appreciation of all the resources and places and gatherings and wonderful things that are normally accessible. When this is "over", I hope to live more fully, taking advantage of those things.

## **What local Wallingford places/businesses do you miss most?**

Oh, the library! That is where we go to work, play, get out of the house...we miss the library so much. We also miss the YMCA and Wallingford Parks and Rec classes.

## **How have you stayed social while social distancing?**

We skype family several times a week -- about the same as before. We phone a friend once every couple weeks.

## **What is the first thing you are doing when things go back to normal?**

Honestly, it's hard for me to imagine what "normal" will look like after this pandemic! I don't daydream too much about it because I find it easier to accept things as they are if I don't have expectations. I'll try to do the things I miss most though: visit family, go to the library, go to the playground, visit farms, travel, attend community events... having everything closed certainly makes me realize how much goes on that I don't normally take advantage of; this is a good wake-up call to "get out and go places" once we have that privilege again.

**How did you celebrate the Holidays? Did you see family in person, digitally, or not at all?**

We simply didn't celebrate Easter this year.

**How will you be celebrating Wallingford's 350<sup>th</sup> Jubilee? If you were here for the 325th Jubilee, do you have any memories you would like to share?**

N/A

**What do you miss most about the Wallingford Public Library? What is the first thing you will be doing when you can come back into the building?**

I miss having a beautiful, free, quiet, indoor space to go to get out of the house, and I miss the librarians. The first thing I'll do when I come back is stand in front of the circulation desk and turn around, slowly, trying to take it all in and savor just being there.