

Carlow Mayo Public Library spurs interest in its new books

Feb. 24, 2021

By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Carlow Mayo Public Library has a great new initiative on its Facebook page. Lori Cooper Padgett, who is a library technician at the library, has been posting synopses of some of the library's new book offerings, so their patrons can get a better idea of what the library has in stock while it is still only doing curbside pickup due to COVID-19. This allows patrons to discover the library's new books and perhaps even find a new favourite author.

Carrie McKenzie is the CEO and head librarian of the Carlow Mayo Public Library, and says that Cooper Padgett came up with the idea to choose works from the library to write synopses about.

"We are struggling to get patrons to use the library since we are only allowed to open curbside because we are in the school [Hermon Public School]. It's really hard to pick a book of interest if you can't browse the shelves anymore," she says.

McKenzie says that Cooper Padgett thought of a way to offer a chance to learn about the materials they have waiting to be explored by doing the synopses. She says that some of the materials chosen even get patron replies, along the lines of they enjoyed the book or they can't wait to try it.

"We are doing everything we can in these times to offer the best we can for our patrons," she says.

Cooper Padgett says it's difficult for their patrons to choose materials that might be new to them, especially since they are only offering curbside pickup at this time.

"Many that are still using the library during our curbside situation tend to rely on taking out books by authors they're familiar with. So, I decided to randomly take a book off the shelf and provide a synopsis of it, along with a link to the author's website, to hopefully provide more options to our patrons and maybe get them interested in an author or genre they haven't previously explored," she says.

So far, Cooper Padgett has posted synopses on books like Jim Carrey's *Memoirs and Misinformation*, Ethan Lou's *Field Notes from a Pandemic*, Sebastian Faulks' *Where My Heart Used to Beat* and Denise Mina's *The Red Road*. She is planning on posting them on an ongoing basis and will aim to do two books a week. She says she is currently selecting the books she writes about, but once McKenzie gets back from her maternity leave in March, she may also select some of the books and help write some of the synopses. So far, her synopses have been seen by over 100 people on Facebook, and have gotten several likes and comments.

"Either way, we'll be sure to keep sharing our great books. I've just started recently so the books I've reviewed haven't been checked out yet, but people are definitely seeing our Facebook posts," she says. "I know not every post will appeal to our Facebook audience but even if one or two do, then we've succeeded."