

September 4, 2020

Dear Book Club members,

If there is one good lesson we are learning from the pandemic, it is how to adjust and adapt to changing conditions. As a board we have tried to determine how best to carry on the stated purpose of the book club as it appears in our bylaws. "The purpose of the club is to provide its members with a circulation of current books, book discussions, programs of interest and to promote the benefits of books and reading to the community."

As we move forward into a new era for the club, we have found many areas of our bylaws that need attention. In order to bring the document in line with today's world, past president Chris Dowhan-Bailey and I have given some serious attention to them and come up with proposed changes to the bylaws. The suggested changes have been approved by the board at our August 14 meeting. Sue Pizzimenti, our secretary, will send you the entire document with proposed changes. Please read them, prepare to discuss them, and vote on those changes at our September 18, 2020 annual meeting.

Now going back to the current bylaws, let's look at the 4 parts of our purpose as a club. We feel this statement of our mission needs no change. On the matter of passing books, we have researched the safety of passing books during the pandemic. The latest research has found the coronavirus lives no longer than three days on plastic and hard metal surfaces and only up to 24 hours on paper and cardboard. With this research in mind, we are continuing to ask all book-passers to follow the procedures we had set up when, with the guidance of our circulation chairman Beth Brick, we re-started passing books in June. We ask everyone to clean the plastic cover with a disinfectant and put it in a one-gallon zip-lock bag with a note inside stating the date the book went into plastic bag quarantine. This procedure for passing books safely will remain in effect until further notice. Please pass those books according to the schedule in the back of each book. Our book selection committee headed by Jill Craig has done a wonderful job this season and is hard at work choosing next season's selections. We'll look forward to reading them starting March 2021.

On the matter of book discussions, we plan to start the year with the postponed discussion of Tara Westover's memoir Educated led by our own Vice President Robin Brown. Leigh Krauss and Lynda Glutch, our hospitality co-chairs, have been paying special attention to the Governor's orders. Currently those orders do not allow us to meet indoors in groups of over 10 people. Consequently this first meeting of the year will take place out of doors under the roof of the Pavilion at the Centennial Farm. You will find lots of paved parking there with sidewalks right up to the Pavilion. Since there is no seating there, we will each have to bring our own lawn chair. The board members plan to bring extras for those who don't have or can't carry a chair. If the weather is inclement, we will still have the meeting. Just bring an umbrella for the short walk to get under cover. Masks will be required and no refreshments will be served for safety's sake. At our August board meeting Leigh Krauss, our book discussion chairman, proposed that the other book we might discuss later this year would be The Honey Bus by Meredith May. The board agreed it would be an appropriate selection.

On to the third phrase in our purpose, the book club will "provide programs of interest to the members." As much as we all had hoped that the COVID virus would no longer prevent our meeting face to face this fall, this is not the case. As of today, September 4, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's orders continue to restrict indoor meetings to 10 people or less. The board agrees the best solution to providing our programs in this environment is to set up Zoom meetings. Our program chairperson Kathy Campbell and committee are currently researching authors who do Zoom programs. Because of the uncertainty we are facing about meetings, we have not been able to send you the event card as we usually do in this letter. At this point we can only give you dates of programs that may either be outside under

a roof or online with the Zoom app. We will adjust and adapt if the orders change. Regarding our spring trip, our Vice President Robin Brown is working with the Dossin Museum to reschedule the trip that had to be cancelled in May because the museum was closed.

The dates for our meetings and the specifics that we have been able to gather so far are:

September 18 1PM. Centennial Farm Pavilion. Annual meeting, voting on bylaws changes and book discussion of Educated by Tara Westover. Bring your own chair and dress for outdoors.

BOOK EXCHANGE: If you wish, bring the book you own from the 2019-2020 season sanitized, bagged and ready to swap with another member's last year's book.

October 16. Program and location TBD

February 19, 2021. Dinner meeting if permitted by Gov. Whitmer. Program, Location TBD

March 19. Book Discussion. The Honey Bus: A Memoir of Loss, Courage, and a Girl Saved by Bees by Meredith May. Led by Flora Case Location TBD

April 16. Annual meeting. Program, Location TBD

May 12. Dossin Great Lakes Museum trip. Details to follow

The fourth phrase in our purpose statement, is to "promote the benefits of books and reading to the community." One way the board feels we can do that is providing a scholarship for a talented graduating senior from Grosse Ile High School who shows promise in literature and the arts. Julie Ellstrom will head a committee to select a student to receive a \$250 scholarship named in memory or honor of one of our members.

I have laid out what we know about the coming year to the best of our knowledge. Details of upcoming meetings will be via email or on our website <http://www.gibookclub.com> rather than on your printed folder, as we have done when our schedule could be nailed down well in advance.

Regarding dues, if you were a member this 2020-21 season, there will be a \$10 rebate for the programs we had to cancel because the pandemic curtailed our ability to meet in person. We were unable to replace those meetings in a timely manner with virtual programs. At this time, we now know we can pass books safely with certain precautions, we can have outdoor meetings while the weather is conducive, and we can enjoy Zoom programs without leaving our homes. Our dues will stay at \$50 per year (which includes the cost of a book for our active members) and \$25 for associate members. You may ask, why we have not lowered the dues? The club will still have ongoing expenses for PO Box, website, the Zoom subscription and to pay our authors for Zoom presentations so we have not reduced the dues. We have however agreed on a \$10 rebate for meetings that had to be cancelled last spring. When you get your dues form via email you can decide if you want to pass books or not next season. If you plan not to pass, you will register as an associate for the coming season. Your dues notice will make clear whether you owe \$40 or \$15 for returning members or \$50 and \$25 for new members. **Dues are due by October 5, 2020.** Please help us by remitting ASAP. Your treasurer Ilona Macek will love you for it!

Respectfully,
Katie Hartwell, President

PS. Please print your dues form when it arrives via email and remit by October 5 to The Book Club of Grosse Ile, PO Box 375, Grosse Ile, MI, 48138.