

BLANDFORD

Library Director chosen for ALA outreach consultant position

By Mary Kronholm

BLANDFORD — Porter Memorial Library Director Nicole Daviau has been selected to be one of six outreach consultants for the American Library Association.

The position is short-term, from September through December this year and involves informing libraries in often underserved areas of an ALA grant opportunity. Under the grant heading Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries, nearly \$2 million dollars will be awarded to small and rural libraries to help address their community's concerns. This focus on small and rural libraries will grant \$3,000 to empower these libraries to "tackle issues ranging from media literacy to COVID-19 safety to unemployment."

As an ALA outreach consultant, Daviau is responsible for contacting

and connecting with other rural libraries in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. The Institute of Museum and Library Service defines a rural library as being more than five miles from an urban area and having a population of 25,000 or less.

"The ALA is so committed to reaching small and rural libraries that they enlisted real librarians from small towns to help with the process of applying for this grant," said Daviau.

She is reaching out to help other small libraries with anything from figuring out qualifications, assisting with the application, and helping with grant writing tips.

Daviau has contacted 378 libraries in her four-state area with an additional 250 in the works.



Nicole Daviau

She has established an on-line forum for accessing information. Already, four libraries from Connecticut and New Hampshire have expressed interest.

LTC is part of ALA's long-time commitment to preparing library workers for the expanding role of libraries. The initiative is offered in partnership with the Association for Rural & Small Libraries. It is supported by a private donor and the IMLS.

According to the ALA, "Selected libraries will develop their facilitation skills through online training, talk with community members virtually or in-person about local needs, and undertake a project that benefits their community. Grant funds may cover a range of expenses, from hotspot purchases to personal protective equipment to staff time to

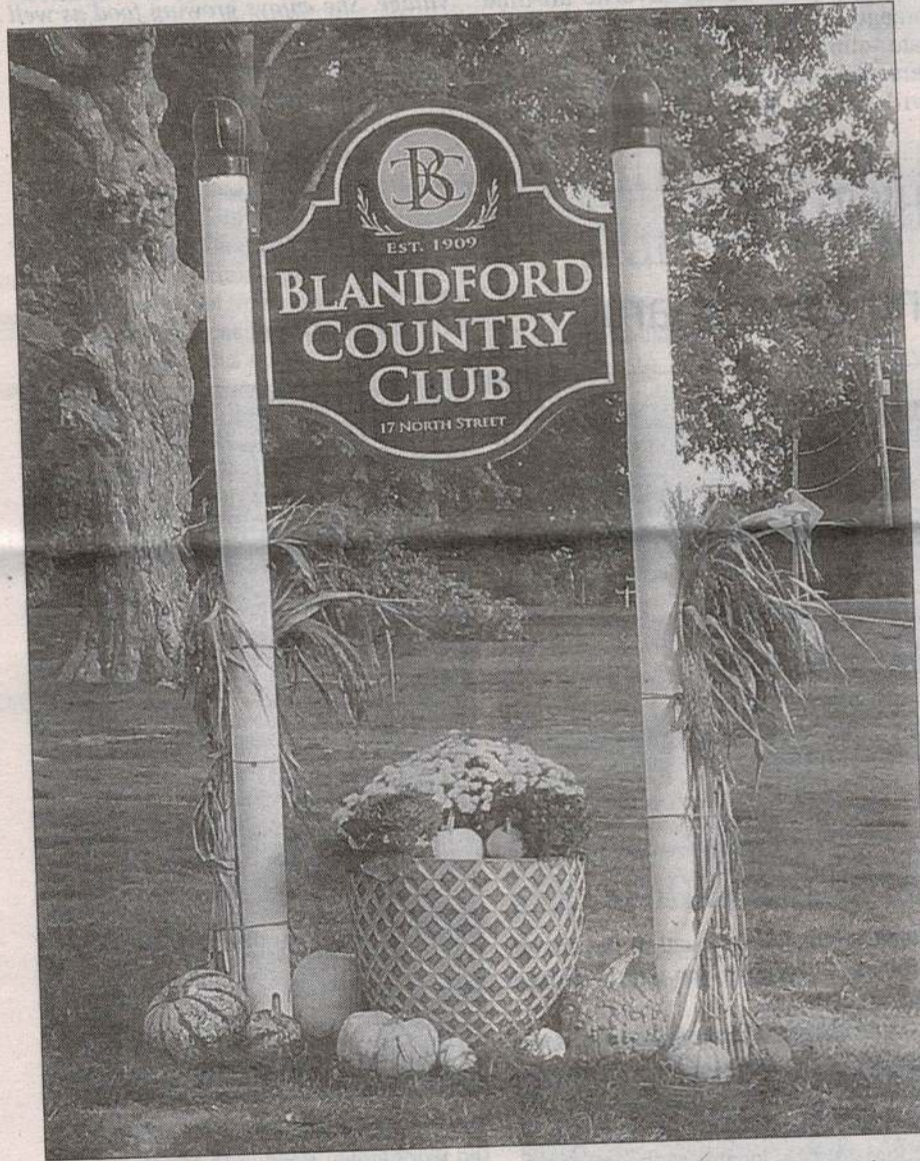
undertake community engagement work." Grant deadline is Dec. 2 and up to 650 grants will be awarded. The ALA considers community engagement the process of working in collaboration with community members to address issues for community betterment.

ALA President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr. said in a prepared statement, "With its core values of access, education, social responsibility and the public good, the library field is uniquely situated to lead local change in this time of crisis, and ALA is proud and excited to offer the funding for them to do so."

Daviau has garnered experience in organizing the local libraries in the Gateway Regional School District and has taken the lead on how libraries will support the district's students.

She is a member of ALA and ARSL and is enthusiastic about this new, short-term, responsibility.

FALL FINERY



The Blandford Country Club sign is adorned for the Halloween season with gourds and pumpkins. Photo by Mary Kronholm

Veteran's Appreciation Dinner RSVP needed by Oct. 24

BLANDFORD — The Council on Aging is pleased to announce its annual Veterans' Dinner. This year the COA is partnering with the Delaney House to offer "to go" turkey dinners to Blandford Veterans as well as Blandford Seniors on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 4:30 p.m. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the dinner will be a drive through event.

Blandford veterans will be sent an invitation. The veteran will call the COA phone number, 413-848-4279, ext. 400, to RSVP by Saturday, Oct. 24 and bring

their invitation to the town parking lot to exchange for a meal.

Seniors in town are also invited to RSVP to order a meal for \$5. The Delaney House has very generously offered these turkey, mashed potato, and vegetable dinners to be warmed at home, to, in a small way, say "thank you for your service".

"Certainly, we all hope and pray, to be able to honor you all in person next year," said COA Board Member Judith MacKinnon.

Fire dept. assists during storm

BLANDFORD — The violent thunderstorm on Wednesday, Oct. 7, kept the Volunteer Fire Fighters busy. There were multiple calls of downed wires, some with fire. Most of the calls were west of the town center.

Many homes were still without power until Saturday, Oct. 10. Eversource employees in town Saturday

morning said that they had found additional instances of downed wires deep in wooded areas, again, west of the center.

Then, on Friday, Oct. 9, the department was put on mutual aid standby at the station house while the Otis Fire Department was out fighting a fire at Norton Road Extension in the area of East Otis.

Early voting polls open this Saturday

BLANDFORD — Town Clerk Doris Jemiolo reminds registered voters that early voting begins this weekend. Polls will be open at the Town Offices of Saturday, Oct. 17, from 10 a.m. to noon and on Sunday, Oct. 18, from 3 to 5 p.m.

The office will be open for early voting on Monday Oct. 19, from 5 to 7 p.m. as well.

Voting hours repeat the following week, October 24, 25, and 26 with additional hours on Thursday, Oct. 29 from 5 to 7 p.m.

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