

KIDS

Community journaling at home with Twirl and the Taos Public Library

BY KATE ALDERETE

AS WE ALL HUNKER DOWN, celebrate (at home) the holiday and the passing of another year, Taos Public Library asks you to reflect on 2020.

This year presented unique challenges to everyone from the very young to the very old. We are being asked to stay home at a time when we should be gearing up to celebrate with our families, gather around a holiday table, shop for last-minute gifts in a crowded Taos Plaza, and enjoy a cup of cheer with our very dear friends.

AT HOME WITH TWIRL
and Friends

We spent the summer masked up, canceling trips and time with family and friends. We got creative with our kids over Halloween and we

gathered at a partially empty table at Thanksgiving. Some relished the time at home with our little ones, others worried about social isolation and making ends meet.

We mourned and we protested the deaths of our black brothers and sisters at the hands of law enforcement. We watched as wildfires raged. We watched as our country, deeply divided, chose our next president and vice president. For some, a celebration of the diversity that the next administration brings to the White House.

And while all these things, the chaos and the struggle will be well-documented in the history books, we want to know what it was like for you.

For me, libraries have always been places to explore and understand the world around me. I grew up in a small town in New Mexico with a family who deeply valued education. Like many people, going to the library was a weekly routine encouraged by both of my parents that later became a habit that I carried with me into adulthood.

I've had the opportunity to live and work in many different places in my life and career. I've been a patron of every library in every city I've ever lived. I love



COURTESY PHOTO

Libraries have always been places to explore and understand the world around us.

libraries. There is something familiar, something comforting and frankly something that feels like home in every library I've stepped foot in.

I'm a public librarian. Before any other job title, that is how I define myself. Like all librarians, I've had to figure out what being a librarian means in 2020. My profession has guided me to the belief that information is key to understanding the world; information that is not altered by bias, information that is accurate, information that represents truth and information given to you freely with no expectation of what you might do with it.

Because of that core value, I believe that all libraries are living, breathing organisms. They evolve and grow around the needs of their communities. For me in 2020, letting go of the idea of a library being a building has

been key to understanding my responsibility to you and to our community. The library is so much more than a building. The library's story is really a story of the community it serves.

We invite you to help us tell that story. Let's tell the story of the year 2020 when everything shut down, when our lives changed, when the world around us became confusing and maybe even a little scary. Let's tell the story of our personal struggles, our triumphs, our worries and our joys. Let's tell our story together so we can pass our story to the next generation of Taosers.

The library is collecting community journal entries until Dec 21. You can email them to librarian@taosgov.com or drop them off in our book drop, open Thursdays from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. The library will preserve this collection of community stories in our Special

Collection Room and will curate a digital collection to be enjoyed by all. Entries should be 500 words or less (about a page). Anonymous entries are welcomed, but we'd appreciate it if you include your name, age and zip code. Entries from outside the Taos area are welcomed.

We hope you find some time at home to share your story. The library is excited to help document the history that we are all living through. This year has impacted everyone in different ways. If you have a story, we encourage you to tell it. All ages are welcome to participate and contribute. For more information call the library at (575) 737-2590 or email librarian@taosgov.com.

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