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**Notes from editor (not for publication):**

Nice work, G.



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Perrin named new library director in Brattleboro

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2 Former New Hampshire Library Director of the Year to  
3 start here May 11

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4 TEXT BODY:

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5 Julie Perrin has been named the new director of Brooks  
6 Memorial Library.  
7 Perrin, who has spent the past nine years leading the  
8 Jaffrey (New Hampshire) Public Library, brings extensive  
9 experience in library program development, grant writing, and  
10 operations management. She will replace outgoing director Starr  
11 LaTronica, who is retiring, starting Monday, May 11.

12           Asked why she wanted the job here, Perrin told *The*  
13 *Commons* she enjoyed meeting library staff members and town  
14 department heads when she visited.

15           “They seem to be a dedicated and compassionate team  
16 of public servants, and I look forward to working with them,” she  
17 said. “I’m eager to hear from the community about what they  
18 love about Brooks and their ideas for the future, and am really  
19 excited about working together.”

20           “We’re excited to have someone with Julie’s clear  
21 passion and original thought to pick up the thread and help write  
22 the next chapter at Brooks Memorial Library,” said Brattleboro  
23 Town Manager John Potter.

24           He described her “an experienced leader with a proven  
25 track record that includes efficient management, capital  
26 fundraising, and facility project management, which is especially  
27 important as Brooks undergoes renovations over the next year.”

28           A lifelong New Englander, last fall Perrin and her  
29 husband made a 200-year-old farmhouse here their “forever  
30 home.”

31           “I have had chickens for nearly 30 years and am  
32 enjoying the beautiful peace and quiet of rural Vermont,” Perrin  
33 told *The Commons*.

## 34           **A diverse and future-focused** 35 **vision**

36           When she was first hired at the Jaffrey Public Library,  
37 Perrin was essentially asked to bring a traditional institution into  
38 the 21st century.

39           Part of that work involved expanding the scope of  
40 literacy to include not only reading and writing skills, but also to  
41 provide opportunities for patrons to become well-versed in a host  
42 of other subjects, including technology, finance, science, health,  
43 and the environment.

44 In 2020, Perrin was named Library Director of the Year  
45 by the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association for being  
46 among the first directors to develop a robust pandemic policy  
47 during the Covid outbreak. Shared widely with the Association's  
48 membership, that policy became a model throughout the state.

49 In the ensuing years, Perrin has initiated numerous  
50 learning opportunities that range from coding classes for children  
51 to personalized, one-on-one assistance for older adults needing  
52 help with online forms.

53 "Public libraries not only enhance the social and  
54 economic vitality of a community but also serve as a safety net  
55 for our most vulnerable populations," Perrin said. "As the biggest  
56 library in southeastern Vermont, Brooks has an amazing  
57 opportunity to continue building a lasting positive impact, both  
58 for Brattleboro and other rural communities throughout the  
59 region."

## 60 **A good fit**

61 Brattleboro's Human Resources Director Sally Cruz Nix  
62 said of the 22 applicants in the competitive hiring process, all  
63 stakeholders felt Perrin was the leader who most aligned with the  
64 values and culture of the community here.

65 Jennifer Rose, Brooks Memorial Library Board of Trustees  
66 treasurer and a member of the hiring team, said Perrin stood out  
67 not only for her enthusiasm for Brattleboro, but also due to her  
68 diverse skill set.

69 "Julie has a background in developing imaginative,  
70 compelling activities and offerings at the library, and has  
71 experience in reaching out to the community and collaborating  
72 with different entities in town," said Rowe.

73 For example, under Perrin's leadership, the Jaffrey Public  
74 Library focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering,  
75 arts, and mathematics) programming, which was bolstered by a  
76 local manufacturing company that provided money for science  
77 education.

78 While Perrin found science intimidating as a youth, she  
79 said working with local scientists opened her eyes to the way the  
80 subject can introduce children to the natural world.

81 "I've focused on being a strong community collaborator,  
82 which I think is an essential function for this position at Brooks,"  
83 Perrin said, "especially since Brattleboro is teeming with  
84 wonderful community members, organizations, and groups to  
85 partner with."

86 In her farewell letter to folks at Jaffrey, where she was  
87 known as "Ms. Julie," Perrin wrote that "librarians have the honor  
88 of sharing in the heart of a community."

89 "As a librarian, a good day in the library is busy and full,  
90 knowing our work made a difference in someone's life today,"  
91 she wrote. "Our goal each day is to leave the library and the  
92 community better than we found it the day before, and I am  
93 proud of all we have accomplished together here in Jaffrey."

94 Asked about the role of libraries in today's AI world,  
95 Perrin said that role has "changed dramatically in practice while  
96 staying true to our core mission."

97 "Libraries are now and have always been centers for  
98 lifelong learning. The key to a strong future for libraries is to think  
99 beyond the books and redefine literacy for a modern age to  
100 include not only traditional literacy but also technological and  
101 digital literacy, health literacy, financial literacy and eco-literacy,"  
102 she told *The Commons*.

103 "Libraries create stronger communities by supporting all  
104 their citizens and being a free and accessible space for everyone  
105 to come together to learn and connect in a safe, respectful  
106 environment," Perrin said. "A vibrant library is one where you  
107 hear many languages, serve every generation, and celebrate  
108 diversity."

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