

## **Deb N.'s Story**

You might say that I am competitive. I am – particularly with myself. I also love to read, so when I saw the number of books a friend had read, posted on social media in 2019, I challenged myself to read 100 books in 2020.

I keep lists of books I want to read, and I keep track of those that I have. I love "falling" into a book, and biography, history, politics, and fiction all lure me in. Mysteries? I love them!

Naturally, I counted on the Howe Library to be the source for much of my reading. Then the pandemic struck. As Hanover began to shut down in early 2020, I found myself in the library during its very last open-to-the-public hour. My children had warned me to avoid public places, but I was determined to find companionship for what I thought would be a few weeks. Like crazed shoppers at the Co-op, I was impulsively, even gleefully, grabbing books off the shelves.

I began to worry about meeting my goal as the weeks turned into months, and neighborhood friends began swapping books with each other. Then the librarians at Howe began on-line ordering and curbside pick-up of books as well as virtual gatherings of patrons with similar interests. With relief, I managed to complete my challenge of reading 100 books and even joined a “read Shakespeare out loud” Zoom group.

I cannot say “thank you” enough to the library team. During the pandemic, I solved mysteries, traveled widely, escaped reality, explored social challenges, and fell in love with new authors. My soul was sustained by the books I read, and you shouldn't be surprised that I have set a new goal for 2021. Because I admire former President Obama who is a voracious reader, I am going to read all of the books on his Best of 2020 list!