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It seems like during the past year, it's been harder to make new friends than it used to be. Without the normal social gatherings where we used to meet new faces, it's virtually impossible to make connections and grow our circle of friends. However, despite the pandemic, the staff at the Kirkland Town Library has forged some new friendships.

Earlier this year, we received an amazing package of thank you cards from the students in Heather Cirelli's fifth grade class at Clinton Elementary School. We were amazed at the artistic talent, writing ability, and love of the Library expressed in these notes. Just seeing the bright orange paper the cards were written on brought a smile to our winter-weary faces.

Some of the best cards were shaped into books or outlines of the KTL building. Two of them featured books exploding out of a volcano and another had an amazing drawing of a mouse reading. Others thanked us for our collection of books, library programs (including a memory of our solar eclipse viewing party from 2017), and even the ability to have a birthday party upstairs! Dominic used his letter to tell us how much he liked sitting in a chair and reading, especially books about leprechauns. (We're looking into getting more leprechaun books for you, Dominic!) Most of all, we were touched that our young friends recognized the hard work we do to serve our community.

A few weeks later, we needed help with a project at the KTL. As part of our creativity-themed programming in March, we thought it would be fun to have our staff and patrons come up with definitions for some imaginary words. The problem was: who was going to come up with these wacky words? We immediately thought of the creative and imaginative minds from Ms. Cirelli's class and sent off the request. Our new friends did not disappoint! They sent back a list of eleven words that made us giggle just to read them aloud.

When it came time to make up definitions for the words, we were flooded with ideas. Our Facebook friends had some hilarious suggestions and our staff contributed, too. One of the members of our Friends committee, Sarah Gaetano, asked her seventh grade English students to work on the project. We could tell right away that we wanted to be friends with these teens; their definitions were colorful, evocative, and funny. In the end, we had at least twenty definitions for each word, a lot of new friends, and an ache in our side from laughing so hard.

Here are the words created by the fifth graders and some of the most popular definitions based on almost 50 votes from old friends and new friends.

The votes for the best definition for the word **PLURTLE** were overwhelmingly in favor of a purple turtle. "In today's science news, zoologists from the Galapagos Islands identified a new species. The purtle has a violet shell, amethyst head, and mauve feet."

Have you ever met someone cute and quirky and smart? I'm thinking of actresses Zoey Deschanel and Kristen Bell. It's hard to find a word to describe that person, right? According to our friends, you would describe those women as **WERTY**.

BLUNGLE is when you trip over something that wasn't actually there. "I'm so embarrassed! I hope no one just saw me blungle! I could have sworn the dog was sleeping on the rug in his usual spot."

If you've seen a baby eat a piece of birthday cake, you've seen someone **CABBOBBLE**. It means to eat something really fast and messy.

When it came to defining the word **HAGMAD**, we had two definitions tied for the winner. It's either the name of Hagrid's secret brother or a word to describe the feeling when you're really angry and frustrated and can't express how much. I don't think I'd want to see Hagrid when he's hagrid.

The next time you're shopping at IKEA, be sure to pick up some **PACKLEBERRY**, which is a Swedish jelly made from all kinds of berries.

There were a lot of good suggestions for the word **PLUP** but the top two winners were a little splash in water ("When I threw the stone in the creek, the plup scared the fish") or a glob of soap ("Rub that plup right in your hands, make some suds, and then rinse for 30 seconds").

Don't try to sneak up on someone in a swamp. The **SHMAUCH** noise of your feet walking through the mud will let everyone know you're coming!

Something about the word **FRIBZLE** inspired thoughts of winter. It either means freezing cold or a freezing February drizzle. Some other voters thought it was what happens to curly hair during a frozen drizzle.

Our staff member Yvonne came up with the winning definition for **SQUIRKLE**. It's a mad squirrel. The two definitions of mad (angry or crazy) are both apt!

Finally, our voters thought that **JIBNAY** was a brand new language. "Our foreign language department will be offering a new course next year," the principal said. "We are excited to teach our students how to read, write, and speak Jibnay."

If you are hagrid that you missed out on this activity, don't worry. Ms. Gaetano's students have already come up with a list of wacky words of their own; we'll be looking for definitions for those later this year.

In the meantime, take some advice from your friends at the Kirkland Town Library: don't be a slob and cabbobble your ice cream, use an umbrella to protect yourself from the fribzle, and watch out for squirkles.