

FY2025 Annual Report

See the 10 titles checked out more than any other books / Page 3

Looking Back on Summer

It was another fun and successful Summer Reading Program / Pages 6 & 7

Two Different Cookbooks

How Midwestern folks and prisoners cook are way different / Pages 4 & 10



The Riverside Branch will be known for its 20-foot tall windows facing north and in the library entrance (below).

Belt Branch has been in a basement since 1983. The Riverside Branch will ...

Let the Sunshine Shine In

To say that Belt Branch manager Kelly Morris is excited about the new library being built to replace her current work site is an understatement.

“WE ARE SO EXCITED ABOUT WINDOWS AND DAYLIGHT AND GRASS AND TREES!!!!” was the opening line of an email she sent when asked about her thoughts on the move.

“Having green space around the library means lots more options for programming,” Morris said. “We can have outdoor concerts, gardening programs, water play for littles on the fenced-in back patio, etc. – all things we could NOT do in our current space.”

Library director Michelle Mears also emphasizes the wellness aspects of natural spaces.

“We know that people are happier and healthier when they have a connection to the outdoors,” she said. “The design of our new building was made for the enjoyment of both library users and library staff.”

If you have been looking at the construction camera photos on the library website – it’s under About/Library Building Project – they don’t provide the best view of what is being built.



Outside coming inside

Windows, windows and more windows. The north side of the Riverside Branch will have a curtain wall of 20-foot, 6-inch insulated glass that stretches from the Administration Office on the east side to Books Revisited on the west. The library entrance also will have windows that size.

Twelve-foot windows that run along the south and southeast sides of the library will bring natural light into the library collection, study rooms and a conference room. Windows also will light up the children’s StoryHouse, CreateSpace and Community Room.

The windows are going in now (late August into September) and the roof is finished, said Jon Whaley, JE Dunn Construction superintendent. The beginning of March 2026 is when the site should be turned over to the library.

September brings outside work such as sidewalks, curbing, light pole bases and then asphalt for the parking lots. By the end of the month, the building should be sealed off from the weather, according to Whaley.

With trees on the south and west sides, nature is being added inside and outside the library.

Continued on Page 11

Investing in Ourselves

Communities get what they pay for, and we're going all in

How do you define "community?" Is it physical, by proximity or distance between groups, or relational, through the people you choose to be surrounded by? Is it a choice or externally shaped by forces out of your control?

Bear with me while I connect the touchy-feely approach to community to the bottom line of daily living. Everyone is good about giving lip service to the concept of community, looking to leadership to provide a positive vision and goals of how a community should look and act. There are also plenty of voices who will point out what is wrong while simultaneously pointing to some other place as being a perfect example of what their community should be.



I will argue, however, that a community is only as good as ... what you pay for it, in both cash money and sweat equity.

People living near each other form communities in towns, cities, counties, and regionally by states. The people who benefit from the amenities within a community are the ones who should pay for them, both individuals and businesses. This is why we look to property tax to fund schools and libraries, because these things are for the people living there. The people driving on the roads are the ones who should pay for the roads. The businesses who need a workforce should pay to make the community an attractive and safe place for their employees to live.

The sticky wicket is that everyone wants a beautiful, thriving community but not everyone is willing or able to provide the funds needed to make that a reality. So we look to make a wider "community" to spread the burden of financing the cost of "community" a little thinner and make it better for all.

The residents of our library district (Andrew County and Buchanan County outside the 1965 St. Joseph city limits) agreed to tax themselves at a certain level to provide library services they believe are important. But the state of Missouri keeps trying to change what people pay for community by messing with the tax structure, from rolling back the library's levy amount every year with the Hancock Amendment to committees looking at lowering or eliminating property tax altogether.

One of the downsides of relying on property tax to fund community is there are limits and very obvious inequities in the kinds of services offered. Rich communities have more money to spend on their schools and libraries than poor communities. Sometimes good management can make things nicer without raising taxes, but sometimes a community needs to invest in itself and make sacrifices in the short term for the long-term health and prosperity of its residents.

Our new Riverside Branch is an investment in ourselves, a vision of what this community needs and deserves, and we can't wait to share it with you!

Michelle Mears, *Rolling Hills Library Director*
mmears@rhcl.org

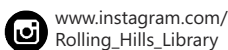
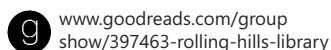
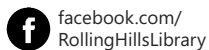
Other ways to reach and follow us

Text the library at **816-287-9828** using these keywords, and we'll help with your account:

Status for account information **Renew all** to renew everything on your account

Renew due to renew overdue items **Help** for a list of available commands

or text anything else to start a conversation with a librarian.



Browse

a quarterly publication from Rolling Hills Library that is sponsored by the Friends of Rolling Hills Library

Rolling Hills Library

rhcl.org

Belt Branch

1904 N. Belt, St. Joseph
816-232-5479
HOURS: 9-8 Mon-Sat
12-6 Sun

Savannah Branch

514 W. Main, Savannah
816-324-4569
HOURS: 9-7 Mon-Fri
9-5 Sat/12-5 Sun

Business Office

1912 N. Belt, St. Joseph
816-236-2106

Bookmobile & Outreach

1912 N. Belt, St. Joseph
816-205-7100

Michelle Mears

Library Director

Alan Stolfus

Browse editor

Board of Trustees

Lynn Hudson

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Mary Beth Thomas

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Deborah Birr

Easton

Keith Ferguson

Cosby

Elbert Turner Jr.

St. Joseph

Julie Valasek

Savannah

The board generally meets at 5 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Friends of the Library

The Friends support the library through volunteer and fund-raising efforts. The Friends board meets monthly.

Rolling Hills Library Foundation

The Foundation strives to provide financial support for large endeavors and future growth of the library by seeking substantial gifts from patrons and supportive foundations.

FY2025 | YEAR IN REVIEW

July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025



285,362
Items Checked Out

Plus 78,581 e-books and digital audio!



20,684 uses of library computers



164,629
Library Visitors

The library averaged over 460 visitors each day!



2,317
New Cardholders

Including 554 E-Cards for Digital Checkouts



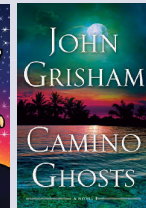
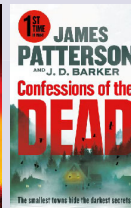
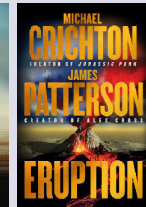
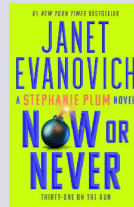
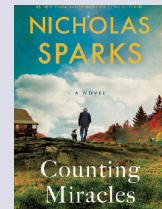
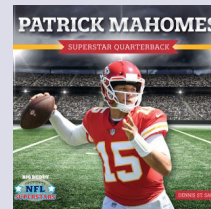
63,261
Premium Resources Accessed Online



8,823
New items were added to our collection of 155,465 holdings

6,516
Miles driven by the Bookmobile

Top 10 Most Checked Out Titles



Top Highlights

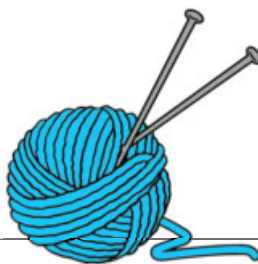
- ▶ 2,179 passport assistance appointments
- ▶ 9,004 uses of our Wi-Fi network
- ▶ 1,659 reservations of our meeting rooms, physical and virtual
- ▶ 42 volunteers gave 1,936 hours of their time to the library and bookstore
- ▶ New location under construction and named Riverside Branch

567

Events were held

14,649

People attended our events



Drop In Knitting

Drop by the library with your current knitting (or crochet) project and talk all things fiber art! Swap patterns and take the opportunity to learn new techniques. Great opportunity to learn knitting basics. No need to register. **11 a.m.-noon, Thursdays, Sept. 18 & Oct. 16; and Friday, Nov. 21, Belt Branch CreateSpace**

Book Review

Midwestern author shines a light on Midwestern cooking

For people who grew up in the Midwest or with Midwestern parents or grandparents, blogger Kaleb Wyse's new cookbook, **There's Always Room at the Table**, will likely be familiar and nostalgic.



There is a definite vintage feel to the recipes, such as brown butter frosting and bierocks, but also nods to modernity with salmon frittata and the inclusion of ground beef and ground pork in meatloaf.

Wyse has slightly tweaked some recipes in a healthy manner. The cake recipes make one layer, the salads are green (no gelatin here!) and many other recipes include whole grains, lower fat meats, garden fresh ingredients and scratch made dressings.

The introduction, family biographies and recipe commentary add a great deal to the book. While none of the recipes are labeled as gluten-free or dairy-free, readers can easily tell when a recipe falls into one of those categories.

This is comfort food for those with Midwestern connections and a delightful addition to our library.

– Miss Sarah, Belt Branch youth services librarian

Ghosts and monsters must mean fall is coming our way

A change in seasons means a change in library events with Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas coming on the calendar before we know it.

Sock Pumpkins – 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 10, Belt Branch. All ages can create mini pumpkins for holiday decorating. All materials provided, but you can bring socks if you like. Kids 11 and under must be accompanied by an adult. Registration opens Aug. 27.

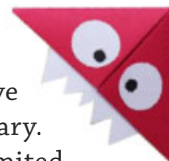
Fall Sensory Bins – 2 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 17, Belt. Ages babies to 5 can dig into our simple sensory bins filled with the jewel tones of fall, exploring textures and vibrant colors through play.

Monster Bookmarks – 4 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 24, Belt. Kids ages 6-11 will create a friendly monster to mark the pages in their books. All supplies provided. (That's one looking down on this article right now.)

Pet Ghosts – 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 15, Belt. Kids will listen to a story about a girl searching her home for ghosts before they make their own pet ghost. Register each child that is attending. Registration opens Oct. 1.

Uncle Fester's Costume Closet – 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18; noon-6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 19; 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday, Oct. 20, Belt. Uncle Fester is giving away free Halloween costumes to kids in need. Come check out the

gently used costumes, costume pieces, masks and other items that have been donated to the library. Supplies and sizes are limited and will be given out on a first come, first serve basis. Children must be accompanied by an adult to browse the costumes.



Yarn Monsters for Kids – 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 22, Belt. Children from toddlers to 11 years old can explore our yarn collection and create their own special monster.

Puritans in Horror Films – 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 23, Belt. Presented by Dr. Dominic DeBrincat, assistant dean of the MoWest College of Liberal Arts. This adult and teen program is presented in partnership with MWSU's Pop Culture Club.

Halloween Scavenger Hunt – 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, Belt. All ages can take a spooky walk through the stacks to see how many "tricks" they can find then have some "treats" when finished.

Family Art Night – 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 6, Belt. Families with young to tween children will create mixed media "JOYful" snowman canvases. Sign up all family members so everyone has a canvas. Registration opens Oct. 23 at events.rhcl.org/event/13731708.



Library of Things

Books and movies aren't the only things you can check out. We have board games, cake pans and gold pans, Pickleball sets and disc golf sets, STEAM kits and Early Learning kits, educational tablets, metal detectors, fishing poles and more. Find them at rollinghills.bibliionix.com/catalog/?lot=1





Touch-A-Trucks

Kids can see and touch numerous hard working construction vehicles in the lower lot of the **Belt Branch 10-11:30 a.m. Friday, Sept. 19.** The **Savannah Branch** parking lot will be full of trucks, tractors and equipment for kids to explore **5-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 14.**

Second Halloween chess tournament is scheduled to draw more young players

Chess players can participate in a USCF-rated event this fall and not miss trick-or-treating on Halloween in the library's second Frightful Fast Chess Frenzy.

To attract more young players on a day St. Joseph public schools are not in session, the free tournament will start at 3 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, in the Belt Branch Upper Story, tournament director Bridgid Reeves said. Older players are welcome, too. Registration opens Monday, Sept. 1.



There will be two sections, one for U.S. Chess Federation-rated players and an open session for unrated players.

This blitz-style tournament will be a triple-round quad tournament, meaning participants will be placed in groups of four or less and play each other in two 10-minute games per round.

The Frenzy will be the fourth library chess tournament in 2024 and 2025. The 2025 free annual tournament took place Saturday, June 14, and attracted 26 players. Yathin Palavalasa won first place with Jenny Baranker in second and Asher Samuel Brunnert in third in the over 1200 USCF rating division. In the under USCF 1200 division, Ratul Rahula Krishnan took first place, Joseph Zelnick was second and Patrick L. Beaudry was third.

Son of Hans chosen for SO USA Games

Jaxson Bremer, son of Books Revisited manager Hans Bremer, has been participating in the annual Missouri Special Olympics Summer Games since 2013. Over the years, he has come home with many gold medals in swimming.

But he's never been chosen to take the next step – the USA Games. Until now.

"I'm very excited to look forward to this," Jaxson said. "It would be a great achievement for my whole family."

The USA Games will be held June 20-26 at the University of Minnesota. Three thousand athletes, 1,500 coaches, and 75,000 fans are expected to be there.

At the State Games this past May, Jaxson won the 50-meter freestyle and backstroke races. He was then invited to a week-long selection camp at the Missouri Military Academy where the athletes trained in their sports and took classes on leadership and other themes.

After a month-long wait, Jaxson



Jaxson with a few of his Special Olympics medals in swimming.

learned he was one of two swimmers from Missouri picked for the USA Games. He will swim the 50-meter and 100-meter freestyle and backstroke races.

If all goes well, he could be invited to the Olympic Village to train for the 2027 World Games in Santiago, Chile.

For now, he's just thinking about the USA Games, where

he is looking forward to swimming, "making new friends and learning how to go faster like all the other swimmers."

One step that still has to be met is for Jaxson to raise \$3,000 to help support the Missouri team's time in St. Paul. So far, he has collected more than \$1,100.

Jaxson isn't the only local-area athlete going to the USA Games: Darrin Ellis of Savannah was chosen for golf, Maggie Kelsey from Gower will play basketball along with Emily McGlothlin from St. Joseph and Nadalynne and Agnes Muse from Country Club. Mitch Curran of St. Joseph is going as a golf coach.

Two Belt events will look back at the '20s and '40s

A look back to century-old architecture and the World War II home front are the subjects of two fall events at the Belt Branch.

At 6:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 6, which is World Architecture Day, architect and storyteller Max Guenther will delve into the 1920s architecture of St. Joseph and how it shapes the city today.

At 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 20, Dr. Kaye Adkins, professor of technical communication at Missouri Western State University, will present her program "We're Proud of You Folks Too! The WWII American Home Front in Radio and Movies." This adult and teen program is presented in partnership with MWSU's Pop Culture Club.



**VetNow
by Brainfuse**

VetNow is an all-in-one suite of services designed for a range of veteran needs, whether it's updating a resume for civilian life, navigating the VA system, or seeking local resources for veterans and their families. Find VetNow under Research at rhcl.org/online-learning.

VetNow is made available by the Institute of Museum & Library Services and the Missouri State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State

Building Reading



She's reaching out for this giant bubble that children entertainer Will Stuck finished his Savannah program with on July 7. It looks like Will may be trying to pop his own bubble.



SRP 2025 by the Numbers

2,439 registrations
1,477 completions
38,338 books read

A young version of Dr. Wilbur McDonald looks out over Suzanne Lehr during the June 12 Belt program she and photographer Megan Wyeth gave about their new book, *Voices of the Past: Mount Mora Cemetery*. McDonald was a St. Joseph doctor who served in England during World War II and is buried in the cemetery. The book can be purchased through Amazon, and all proceeds will go to support the cemetery.



She came to Dr. John Pope's program about fossils and dinosaurs at the Belt on July 23 and left with this 300-million-years-old tree root she picked out as her door prize.



"Building" was the theme of this year's Summer Reading Program, and there were several events for kids to build things. Clockwise from the top: Building with giant magnetic tiles, with food, with big blue blocks and with boxes at the Belt Branch, and building paper sculptures at Savannah Branch.



He's got his eye on someone he wants to share foam with during the Belt's foam party on June 5 in the library parking lot.

2025 Summer Reading Program

Big Readers



Either the sheep is reaching out to kiss the girl for giving it a snack or is smelling what the girl had to eat on June 2 at the Orrick Acres Petting Zoo at the Savannah Branch.



Mom and daughter get a close look at a yellow-bellied slider on July 14 in the Creatures by Theresa program at Savannah. That's Theresa's arm, by the way.



Jetpack Jason shines a black light on this paper to show how the chemical in invisible ink reacts during his Mad Science program June 23 at Savannah.



On June 26, "boat fanatic" Greg Hatten (in white clothes) brought this 95-year-old canoe to the Belt Upper Story to tell the story about how it was made in Maine, used in Wisconsin for decades and eventually came to St. Joseph. The canoe had several holes, rotting wood and disintegrating seats, but he restored it to its new shiny glory.



Live Wire! performed traditional and old time songs on June 24 at the Belt. Left to right are Carl Cook, Gail and Steve Goeke.

Building Readers

2025
Summer
Reading
Program

Here are some
of this year's
59 prize
winners

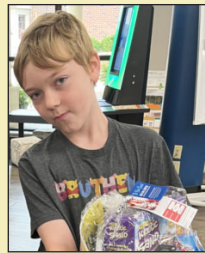


Tucker won the grand prize drawing for a cooler filled with ice cream toppings and a big blue ball.

Amarae,
Blaze,
Grace,
Harper,
Jase



MacKenzie,
William,
Emma,
Mia



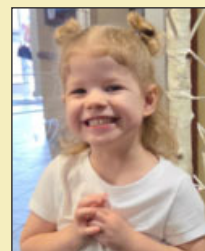
Solomon,
Ame,
Annalise,
Arnesha,
Caleb



Ember,
Jeremiah, Ky-
liss,
Leah



Liam,
Rowen,
Emma,
Jacob,
Stephen





Kids Can Compost!

Kids will learn the basics of composting for gardens from Region D Recycling & Solid Waste Management District. This event is best suited for ages 7-10 and they must have an adult with them, but all ages are welcome. Register at events.rhcl.org/event/14222836. 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 23, Savannah Branch

A book that makes the Constitution fun to read

The Year of Living Constitutionally by A.J. Jacobs takes readers on a romp through unexpected territory – the U.S. Constitution. One of the most contentious debates of our times, the interpretation of our nation’s supreme law of the land, is the focus of Jacob’s book.

But make no mistake, this is far from a boring lecture on U.S. history or politics.

Much of the debate surrounding the Constitution comes down to originalism versus living

Book Review

constitutionalism; or, the belief it should be interpreted based on the framers’ original meaning versus the belief it should be interpreted with modern sensibilities in mind and evolve over time.

Jacobs’ explores these ideas by committing to living one year of his life as if he were one of the Founding Fathers. That is, immersing himself in everyday 18th century life. That’s right, a 21st century writer living in New York City committed to living his life as if it were 1787. (He’s also the author of **The Year of Living Biblically**.)

In between conversing with legal scholars and other Constitution experts, Jacobs does things like don a tricorne hat and other period appropriate attire and join a New Jersey regiment of Revolutionary War reenactors. Other endeavors include eliminating most of his

electricity use at home, opting for candlelight instead, conducting all correspondence by quill pen and parchment, and attempting to receive a Letter of Marque from a congressman.

For those not up on their 18th century legal lingo, a Letter of Marque is legal permission to become a pirate for the government. Yes, Jacobs really requested written permission to become a pirate, suggesting his buddy’s jet ski stand in as his ship. The congressman regrettably turned him down.

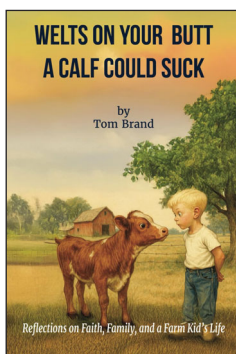
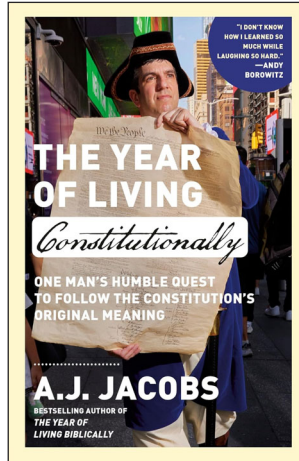
Jacobs never fails to entertain, but his objective to inform is never lost. He presents a clear representation of the views of both originalists and living constitutional-

ists without ever vilifying those on either end of the spectrum. He succeeds in offering up various interpretations but doesn’t convey complex information in a way that feels bogged down or difficult to comprehend.

Understanding the Constitution, the founding legal authority of our country, is made enjoyable in this book. This means Jacobs’ book is more than just another addition to constitutional canon, but a stand out, original experience that’s actually fun.

The Year of Living Constitutionally is a must-read for every American.

— Joelle Blair, Belt Branch public services librarian



Local author Tom Brand will speak on farm life, new book

Tom Brand is a veteran farm broadcaster, lifelong advocate for rural communities and a Missouri farm kid who never quite outgrew the stories that shaped him. He’s captured many of those stories in his book, **WELTS on Your Butt a Calf Could Suck**, which he will discuss and read from at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 2, at the Belt Branch.

Raised in northwest Missouri, Tom learned life’s

lessons in places where chores came before cartoons, livestock had more personality than most politicians and grit wasn’t optional, it was expected. He was a farm broadcaster at the Brownfield Network in Jefferson City, KMA in Shenandoah, Iowa, and KFEQ in St. Joseph. He went on to serve as the executive director of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ STAR Program

Our **Services to Adult Readers** Program provides homebound adults who can’t visit the library due to age, illness, disability or transportation challenges with library materials by mail or in-person delivery. Call us at 816-205-7100 for more information or to sign up.





Kitty Cat Storytime

Join us for a Storytime of cat books, a fun craft and a chance for little ones to adopt and care for a plush pet of their very own. **11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 18, Belt Branch**

Making Do in the Pen

An unusual cookbook shows how the incarcerated cope with being locked up

After recently reading **Letters from Marion: A Deadhead's Journey From Peace to a Super Max Prison** by Joel Blaeser, I found myself drawn to **Prison Ramen: Recipes and Stories From Behind Bars** by Clifton Collins Jr. and Gustavo "Goose" Alvarez. It was curious pick because I don't eat ramen and have never been in prison.

What sets this cookbook apart is the lack of pictures (other than the cover), that ingredients are obtained by unconventional means and cooking methods are by nature inventive.

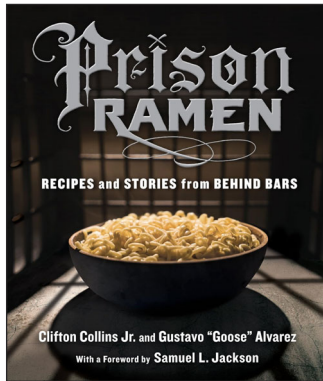
Book Review

Imagination is required to picture prisoners smuggling food out of the mess hall and prison kitchen – risking punishment if caught, cooking ramen in a garbage bag without the benefit of boiling water, making pancakes on a jury-rigged cell locker cooker and straining prison hooch through a sock.

Seventy-plus recipes range from ramen goulash to ramen bean dip, burritos to jailhouse popcorn and prison hooch to hard-time candy. Each is paired with brief accounts of the realities of prison life: lockdowns, beatings, hopelessness written by the author, anonymous inmates and celebrity prisoners.

Yet in the midst are stories of faith and hope. Danny Trejo reflected on how he became an actor as a result of being on a movie set to help a kid with an addiction

issue. He said, "Everything good that has ever happened to me has happened as a direct result of helping someone else."



I was particularly touched by the Rotten Pig story by Alvarez. He recounts a story about a village in Africa where people were suffering from a mysterious disease. Scientists sent to investigate found it led back to the carcass of a huge boar stuck in the opening where fresh water flowed from a river to the village. Once the pig was removed, fresh water could once again flow to the village.

With the help of a counselor, Goose was able to realize that a betrayal from years ago was still influencing his life and causing him problems dealing with other people. An old friend was the rotten pig affecting him and his village. Once he forgave his former friend, he was able to move forward. He advises "Check yourself. Who knows what rotten pig you may be dealing with and how it might affect others in your life. I have found that life is too short for grudges."

While I will likely never make any of these recipes, I feel it was worth my time reading this short book and learning a bit about prison life.

Perhaps college students may get some inspiration from these recipes.

– Stephanie Mefford, Interlibrary Loan

New Mystery Books

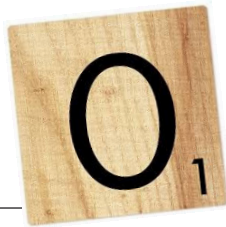
- Killing Me Soufflé by Ellie Alexander
- Bonded in Death by J.D. Robb
- A Dead Draw by Robert Dugoni
- The Frozen People by Elly Griffiths

- Whistle by Linwood Barclay
- A Murder

- Worth Dying For by Russell Cooper
- The Texas Murders by James Patterson
- Death of a Smuggler by M.C. Beaton

- The Gatsby Gambit by Claire Anderson-Wheeler
- This Is Not a Game by Kelly Mullen
- The Case of the Missing Maid by Rob Osler
- Letters in the Pines by A.J. Rivers
- Beast of the North Woods by Annelise Ryan
- Seven Secret Spellcasters by Lynn Cahoon
- Shot Through the Book by Eva Gates

- Death at the Highland Wedding by Kelley Armstrong
- It Happened on the Lake by Lisa Jackson
- Can You Solve the Murder by Antony Johnston
- History Lessons by Zoe B. Wallbrook
- A Dash of Deceit by Simone Stier
- One Death at a Time by Abbi Waxman
- Felix Grey and the Descendant by Mario Theodorou



Scrabble Tournament

Teams of two will play three 50-minute rounds against new opponents each round. The team with the most points at the end of the third round wins! Registration opens Sept. 13. 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, Belt Branch Upper Story

A romance novel with real-life issues

Justin has a curse; every woman he dates finds her soul mate as soon as they break up. When he realizes the pattern, he makes a blog post about it. Emma reads his bog and slides into his DM's telling him she has the exact same curse. They decide to break their curse by dating each other and then go on to find their forever love as soon as they break up.

Book Review

Just for the Summer by Abby Jimenez is not your ordinary romance novel. Yes, it has the meet-cute. Yes, it has a beautiful summer setting on Lake Minnetonka. It even has the romantic dates, but with a twist. Their summer fling is just going to be four dates, one kiss and one break up. Easy breezy.

Get ready for an emotional roller coaster. Emma and Justin are complex and completely endearing characters. She is a travel nurse who grew up in foster care. Her toxic mother comes in and out of her life and Emma must learn

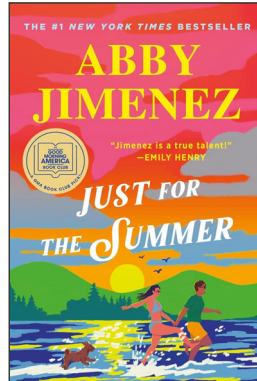
to deal with a lifetime of trauma. Justin is about to assume guardianship of his three younger siblings while his mother goes to jail. That's a lot of baggage to spring on a summer fling.

This book is a love story built on deep real-life issues. Emma and Justin are suddenly navigating a lot more than they expected, including catching real feelings for each other. But to break the curse they have to break up with each other so the next person they date can be their soulmate.

I highly recommend this read when you're missing your summer vacation if you want a lot more than a frivolous romance novel. This is a

love story with real life sprinkled in between the romantic gestures. It is thought provoking, and you just might find out, "The best kind of love doesn't happen on moonlit walks and romantic vacations. It happens in between the folds of everyday life."

– Jennifer George, Technical Services coordinator



Birding group sought for Riverside

Continued from Page 1

A large rain garden will be in front of the building with a variety of plants. The Northwest Missouri Master Gardeners are developing signage for the native plants around the building. Morris would like to partner with a local birding group because feeders are planned for the building's south side.

A retention pond for all of the Mosaic Court area is south of the library, which brings more opportunities for programs with the Missouri Department of Conservation, Morris said.

And the trees aren't staying outside. Two inside support columns will be dressed like trees, one in the children's area and one in the adult collections area.

As the time comes closer to move, Mears encourages Belt patrons to check out extra books in February to get them through the closed period.

The Savannah Branch and Bookmobile will be open throughout the closing. Books Revisited will remain open on Belt Highway until late April or early May.

Riverside Branch Tentative Moving Schedule - 2026

Belt Branch has limited programming Jan. 1-March 1 and no programs March 1-June 1

Belt room reservations suspended starting March 1

Close Belt to move to Riverside mid March to mid April

Riverside soft opening in late April with grand opening early to mid May

Room reservations available at Riverside starting May 1

Riverside programs begin June 1 with Summer Reading Program

Book Picks boxes suspended in February until later in the year



Books Revisited

The Friends of the Library Bookstore

Offering used and rare books, music and more!
1906A N. Belt 816-205-7125
12-5 Monday, 9-5 Tuesday-Friday & 9-6 Saturday



Administrative Office
1912 N. Belt
St. Joseph, Mo. 64506

Barb Dalrymple is The Cake Lady

Zucchini Cake w/Cinnamon Cream Cheese Frosting

Cake

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- ¾ cup milk
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- 2 cups coarsely shredded zucchini (about 2 medium sized zucchinis)
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts

Frosting

- 1 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1½ cups powdered sugar

Heat oven to 350 degrees. spray bottom only of a 13x9-inch pan with cooking spray. In large bowl, beat cake mix, milk, butter, eggs, cinnamon,

ginger and nutmeg with electric mixer on medium speed for 2 minutes. Stir in zucchini and walnuts then pour into pan. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until toothpick in center comes out clean.

Cool for about an hour

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter with electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. Beat in cinnamon and vanilla. On low speed, beat in powdered sugar until frosting is smooth and creamy. Spread frosting on cake. Enjoy!



Barb is a Rolling Hills Library retiree who has made cakes for her friends and former co-workers for decades.

Savannah Branch is a shady place to visit now



The Savannah Branch has a new look, but you may not see it unless you go around back. Three sun shades have been added to make the patio a more comfortable place to visit and have events. Benches are now waiting for you in the shade.

