

Event-Full Summer

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A Wise Read

Adults could learn a lesson from this Juvenile novel / Page 6

Bookmobile Love

Young reader shows his feelings for library on wheels / Page 7

A Constructive Summer

Building readers is our goal this summer! (*Nevermind that nosy chicken*)

When it came time to choose a theme for this year's Summer Reading Program, it was an easy pick: tie it to the new library being built to replace the Belt Branch.

"It's especially important for children to keep reading over the summer to keep *building* their reading skills," Belt manager Kelly Morris said, with emphasis on a certain word.

The Building Readers program starts June 1 and runs through July 31. As usual, the summer is open to all ages – babies to adults – with a variety of events to make the summer fun and educational.

Prizes, including gift baskets that contain games, toys and books, will be awarded to participants who reach the reading goals. To qualify, they need to read or listen to 10 books or complete a combination of 10 books and activities in June and/or July.

It is important for youths to read in June

and July to prevent the summer slide of their reading skills while they are away from school.

For those wanting to read more than 10 books, there is an extra reading challenge to earn more prizes. For every additional five books read, participants will earn beads to add to a necklace and

entries into a special prize drawing.

"The extra reading challenge has been well received by all age groups, including the adults," Savannah Branch manager Jill

Weaver said. "It's really fun to see the readers come in with their extra challenge log sheets and be excited to earn another bead for their necklace."

Participants can register online with the Beanstack reading challenge platform or in person at the Belt and Savannah branches and Bookmobile to receive a reading log. Beanstack allows users to scan publisher barcodes to enter the books they've read, and parents can



Libraries Under Siege

Efforts at federal, state levels could cut our library funds

While it may be floating underneath your daily radar, public libraries are definitely in danger at this moment. Between a complete elimination of all federal funding for libraries and efforts to quietly reduce state property tax assessment rates, the public library as you know it may not look or feel the same if some of these changes come to fruition.

The federal budget crisis will not be solved on the backs of public libraries.



**HANDS
OFF OUR
LIBRARY
FUNDING**

The relatively small amount of funds allocated for Missouri libraries pays for statewide services like courier delivery, inter-library loan, and summer reading grants. We may have to limit or eliminate borrowing from other libraries if we can't afford the connection fees or the postage to borrow and lend items to libraries across the state and across the country. This service is one of the things that has always made libraries special.

This year, we applied for a summer reading grant to help cover the costs of providing a reading program for all ages. But the State Library first told us that half our grant was gone, then said that it was back, and now we don't know what to believe since the courts have put an injunction on the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the federal department that distributes funds to the states.

State legislators have also been busy wanting to lower tax rates, which would give away local tax dollars that have been approved by voters. It may seem like small potatoes, but assessing personal property, like motor vehicles, at 31% instead of 33.33% will put a significant dent in our expected income if this passes and is signed into law. Residents of our library district approved a tax rate based on the valuation of property and the kind of services they wanted from their public library, which we will be hard pressed to provide as revenue shrinks.

For those who have never lived anywhere but Missouri, you need to understand taxes here are not high compared to other locations. You won't get clean, safe, and educated communities without spending public tax dollars to get them.

As we get ready for our new fiscal year to begin on July 1 and we prepare to move to our new facility in St. Joseph in 2026, it is only prudent that we look at how and where we can tighten our belts. If it turns out that things are fine, then it was just a precaution. If not, then we will be in a good position to keep providing the best library service possible.

We won't fade away. We are here to help you in any way that we can. We're building the kind of library we can be proud of and that you deserve, because the right to read is for everyone.

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.



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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

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*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.



Backyard Birds for Summer

Bird watching is not just a winter hobby. Missouri Western biology professor Dr. Julie Jedlicka will discuss summer bird care and identification. The program includes a make-and-take craft. 5 p.m. Thursday, June 5, Savannah Branch

An Event-full Summer

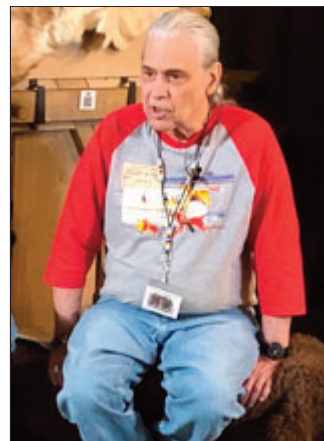
These events stand out in the long list of happenings coming in June and July

Local history, Native American stories, fossils, gentle movement exercises and a canoe highlight several summer events at the Belt and Savannah branches.

Author Suzanne Lehr and photographer Megan Wyeth will discuss their new book, **Voices of the Past: Mount Mora Cemetery**, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 12, in the Belt Community Room. The book is a collection of scripts and background information about the "residents" of the cemetery.

Mount Mora is the oldest cemetery in St. Joseph, founded in 1851 by Simeon Kemper, Israel Landis and Reuben Middleton. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places – an unusual honor for a cemetery – it is the burial place of three Missouri governors, two Pony Express riders, architects, musicians, writers, gardeners, inventors, an English baronet and soldiers of many wars.

At 10 a.m. Fridays, June 13 and 27, at Savannah, Jessica Bledsoe of the Andrew County Health and Safety Coalition, will teach low-impact exercises for seniors that improve flexibility, strength, balance and joint mobility



Clockwise from top left: Mount Mora Cemetery, the 1929 Old Town Canoe Co. canoe, Lakota storyteller Dixon Leavers and geologist Dr. John Pope.

while seated or using a chair.

Savannah also has tai chi classes at 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays. Instructor Al Garbag-nati teaches a gentle style for adults that builds strength and flexibility and improves balance and posture.

“Boat fanatic” Greg Hatten will present a story of discovery, restoration and adventure with ties to historic St. Joseph families regarding a 1929 Old Town Canoe Co. boat. The canoe will be on display at the event, which starts at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 26, in the Belt Upper Story.

Hatten is a consumer products consultant and micro influencer in the outdoor adventure space. He builds handcrafted wooden boats and for more than 25 years has rowed them in National Parks and on wild and scenic rivers in North America.

Those river adventures are described in feature articles, social media, blogs, Instagram posts, podcasts and on the speaking circuit around the world.

Local Lakota storyteller Dixon Leavers brings history and some hands-on artifacts in this event at 11 a.m. Thursday, July 10, at the Belt Community Room. The

Turn to Page 8

TUMBLE
BOOK
LIBRARY

Children can develop reading skills using interactive eBooks that include more than 1,200 animated, talking picture books! The site also features Spanish and French books, read-along chapter books, non-fiction books and exciting games and puzzles. Find Tumblebooks for Kids under Ebooks at rhcl.libnet.info/online-learning.



Library Scenes

March - May 2025



Samantha Mullen (left) and Karen Yang were the winners of the prize baskets in the Drop Everything And Read reading challenge in April. The same number (141) of people registered for this year's challenge as last year, but twice as many finished – and read 10,000 more minutes to total 39,990 minutes.



The Verschueren family had the fastest time in helping the Cat find its hat in the Dr. Seuss Escape Room on March 29 at the Savannah Branch. They solved the puzzle in 34:13 minutes and went home with a new furry green friend.



Congratulations to Miss Lucy for completing the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge in April at the Savannah Branch. Way to read!



Sisters Naomi Delaney (left) and Mary Hook come to the Belt Branch once a month to pick out more books to read. They always take a turn at the jigsaw puzzles in the Reading Room. "We love puzzles, so we always work the puzzles before we leave," Naomi said on a recent visit. However, they never complete them. "We're going to leave something for somebody else to do."



On April 3 and 5 at the Belt Branch, children could read to rabbits from the Creatures by Theresa small animal rescue organization. This family is getting to know Eeyore, an English lop who weighs 11.7 pounds.



Lauren Conrad leads participants through an introductory lesson for painting with acrylics on April 14 at the Belt Branch.



Live Wire! in Concert

Members of this Americana group have performed throughout the Midwest on fiddle, banjo, mandolin and bass for decades. Enjoy lively music that will have feet tapping and moving. 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 24, Belt Branch



Left to right: Jugglers Jay and Leslie, storyteller Will Stuck, an EpicStyle Reptiles critter and Jetpack Jason from Mad Science.

Summer Mondays will have animals, puppets, juggling and more

From Page 1

have all the readers in their families in one file.

Several events this summer are influenced by the new library project:

On Tuesday, May 27, the last steel beam to be placed in the new library will be on display for the day at the Belt so library users can sign their names on it to become a part of the building's history. Library staff members will be outside with the beam to provide markers to write with. The beam will be placed in its final position at the construction site on Wednesday, May 28.

June events will have kids building with giant blue blocks at Belt and Savannah. In July, they have the chance to build using only newspaper, tape and staples at the Belt; build with giant magnetic tiles at Belt and Savannah; and use a variety of blocks on four weekend days

at Savannah. Belt kids will mark the end of a constructive summer building with cardboard boxes in another event.

The Monday line-up of performers starts with the Orrick Acres Petting Zoo at Savannah on June 2. Three days later, the Belt will kick off the summer with a soapy, sudsy foam party.

What If Puppets brings a new story to town on June 9, followed by EpicStyle Reptiles on June 16, Mad Science of KC on June 23 and the Fishin' Magician on June 30. Storyteller Will Stuck brings laughter on July 7, Theresa's Creatures brings a variety of mammals on July 14 and jugglers Jay and Leslie bring more fun on July 21. The Orrick Acres Petting Zoo will be at the Belt on the morning of July 28 while Savannah will have its foam party that evening.

"I am looking forward to the petting zoo on June 2," Weaver said. "I am *not* excited for the reptile program!"

Library shows it has a LOT



Libraries have books and movies to borrow, but there are other things that can be checked out. It's just a matter of knowing what kinds of things are available and how to find them.

We are now giving those "other things" more exposure with a new Library of Things (LOT) section in the library catalog. Library users will be able to find items that are not books more quickly with a visual guide that separates items into categories.

Among those items are cake pans, fishing poles, pickleball sets, metal detectors, gold prospecting equipment, disc golf sets, board games, ukuleles, early

learning kits and more.

"Libraries have always had a variety of things to check out," states Michelle Mears, library director. "We are always looking for unique items that can improve the quality of life for our users, as well as things that you may need to use once or twice but don't need to own."

Suggestions for adding other things can be submitted on a comment form or over email to info@rhcl.org.

The Library of Things can be found by clicking on its library website slide or the link found on the blue bar along the bottom of the Library Catalog website page.



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting books FREE of charge to children from birth to age 5, through funding shared by Dolly and the State of Missouri. Every child birth to age 5 in Missouri is eligible! Sign up now using this QR code.





Dr. Seuss Escape Room Returns

Not again?! Yep, the Cat has lost his hat and needs help in finding it. Can you help him? Test your puzzle solving skills in this escape room for all ages. Advance registration required. **11 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, July 11, Belt Branch.** **11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday, July 22, Savannah Branch.**

J novel carries a lesson for all ages

What is the meaning of life? Why am I here? Does my life matter? How will people remember me when I am gone?

These are questions I often ponder. When someone sends a message that I don't matter, whether in word or deed, I feel invisible, my sense of self diminishes.

Not Nothing by Gayle Forman, a J novel aimed at 10-12-year-olds, addresses these

questions, as well as the assumptions we make about other

people's lives from just a casual meeting, their looks, where they live or an action they took in a moment of frustration.

The story is told from the perspective of Joseph, a 107-year-old resident of the nursing home where 12-year-old Alex is assigned to do community service for the summer because of a hate crime charge. The stakes are high: if it doesn't work out, Alex will have to go to a juvenile detention center.

Forman weaves Alex's present-day reality with that of Joseph and Olka, who fell in love in Poland in 1939. Joseph was Jewish and Olka a Catholic. The reader sees how some of what Alex has experienced in his young life mirrors the trials Joseph and Olka experienced so long ago in the Holocaust. Joseph initially judges Olka based on mistaken impressions, just as Alex judges Maya-Jade, another 12-year-old volunteering at the nursing home that summer but for entirely different reasons.

Much wisdom is imparted throughout the book, re-



volving around opportunities and people rising to the occasion. Not everyone rises to every occasion or takes advantage of every opportunity, but as long as one is still alive there is the possibility of it.

Hindsight is 20/20. In sharing his story with Alex, Joseph tells how he asked Olka to teach him to sew as a way of spending time with her. Little did he know how important it would become and how in the end it saved his life. He concludes, "Some things you only know in retrospect."

When Maya-Jade admits to being a know-it-all, Alex responds, "It's OK to be a know-it-all if you don't think everyone else is a know-it-nothing." Words are important.

I enjoyed reading this novel. I found myself identifying with Alex and rooting for him. I laughed and cried. I found myself reflecting on the times in my life when I have risen to an occasion or squandered opportunities. I often pick up Juvenile novels to read with my daughter or because they are an easy read. This book offered more than what I was looking for and drew me into the story from the start.

In the Author's Note, Forman writes she wanted to show "what happens when we don't judge someone solely for the worst thing they have done but give space and grace and yes, opportunity, to do a better thing, even a best thing ... I wanted to invite Alex to rise to the occasion of this life. I want anyone reading this to do the same."

– Stephanie Mefford, interlibrary loan specialist

- The Ashfire King by Chelsea Abdullah
- The Keeper of Lonely Spirits by E.M. Anderson
- Thunder Game by Christine Feehan

- Ember-claw by L.R. Lam
- A Dragon

of Black Glass by James Rollins

- A Drop of Corruption by Robert Jackson Bennett

- Galaphile by Terry Brooks
- The Ragpicker King by Cassandra Clare
- Boudicca by P.C. Cast
- A Harvest of Hearts by Andrea Eames
- Cursebound by Saara El-Arifi
- Dark Hope by Christine Feehan
- The Starlight Heir by Amalie Howard
- The Book That Held Her Heart by Mark Lawrence
- Greenteeth by Molly O'Neill
- Future's Edge by Gareth L. Powell

- The Legend of Meneka by Kritika H. Rao
- The Gate of the Feral Gods by Matt Dinniman
- The Witch of Whispervale by R.A. Salvatore
- Grave Empire by Richard Swan
- Immortal by Sue Lynn Tan
- Twice as Dead by Harry Turtledove
- The Icarus Coda by Timothy Zahn
- Death of the Author by Nnedi Okorafor

New Science Fiction & Fantasy @ the Library



Fun & Healthy Cooking for Kids

Jessica Bledsoe with Andrew County Health & Safety Coalition will teach kids ages 6-11 how to prepare simple and nutritious meals and snacks. Children must have an adult present. Sign up is required. 10 a.m. Friday, July 11, or 10 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 5, Savannah Branch

2nd annual library chess tournament set for June 14

Organizer Bridgid Reeves was looking forward to the Second Annual RHCL Chess Tournament even before last year's successful inaugural event was finished.

That time has arrived. The tournament is set for Saturday, June 14, in the Belt Branch Upper Story.

The event will have a U.S. Chess Federation-rated section and an open section for everyone else. The rated section could be divided into two sections based on USCF ratings if more than 20 players register in advance.

The first of four rounds, Swiss style, of this free event begins at 10 a.m. Doors open at 9 a.m. for players to register if they have not done so already at events. rhcl.org/event/12731760.

USCF memberships can be purchased on site if needed.

Awards are first, second and third place medals.

The library tournament is the only USCF tournament in the St. Joseph area and last year attracted local players and some from Joplin, Springfield and Kansas City.

"I'd love to have people from all over who play different styles just to make things more interesting for the players," Reeves said.

Bookmobile finds love at one-of-a-kind learning center

Tucked away on Corporate Drive in the industrial area of east St. Joseph is a half-day early learning center that teaches kids ages 3-5 to read and write ... and tumbling. Teachers there put a strong emphasis on reading and writing.

"We read every day and make sure they have books in their hands and understand the importance of reading," said Katie Denton, a pre-kindergarten teacher at MEGA Flip & Learn Academy. "They're learning to read at Flip & Learn."

The school started 10 years ago when the owners of MEGA Gymnastics & Cheer were looking for an additional use for their building. Three years ago, the school became a Bookmobile stop.

Part of teaching about books is how they are created, from the story idea to publication, Denton said. The young students learn those steps to prepare for creating the pages of their yearbook.

Their theme for the yearbook is what they like about school. On one page, they

write their favorite things and create corresponding pictures on another page. The books are printed with hardback covers.

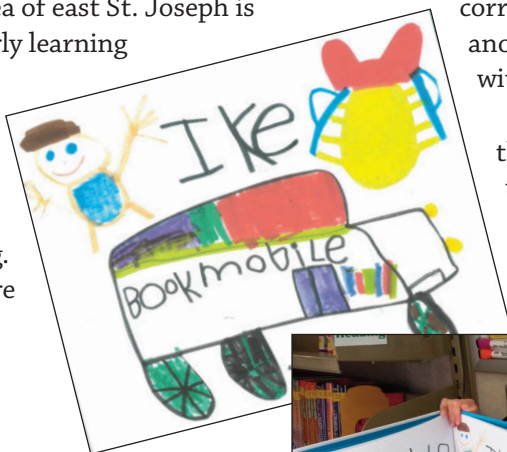
Thanks to Denton's son, Ike, the Bookmobile was a feature of the 2023-24 yearbook. "I love the playground and Bookmobile," he wrote and drew a large Bookmobile.

Why does he love the Bookmobile? "Because it has so many books I like," he said.

Others like it, too. The Bookmobile is mentioned by another student in the new 2024-25 yearbook.

"I would say all of the kids out here love the Bookmobile, and the families love having the Bookmobile here, too," Denton said.

Becoming aware of Rolling Hills Library through its traveling branch, families have learned about library events and have signed up for their own library cards so the kids – and adults – can keep reading.



Ike Denton shows off his pages in the 2023-24 Flip & Learn Academy yearbook.



Books Revisited
The Friends of the Library Bookstore

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

Barb Dalrymple is The Cake Lady

Pineapple Right-Side Up Cake

Ingredients

1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened

¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened

1¼ cups sugar

2 eggs

¼ cup milk

1 tsp vanilla extract

1¾ cups flour

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp baking soda

¼ tsp salt

1 12-ounce jar pineapple preserves

1 10-ounce jar maraschino cherries, drained and chopped

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, blend the cream cheese, butter and sugar together with an electric mixer on high speed.

Reduce the speed to low and add eggs, milk and vanilla; blend until smooth. Mix

in the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Do not overmix.

Pour half of the batter into a 9x13-inch baking pan that has been coated with nonstick baking

spray. Spread the preserves evenly over the batter. Pour the remaining batter over the preserves. Sprinkle the chopped cherries evenly over the top and bake for 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove from the oven and let cool for 1 hour before cutting.

Enjoy!



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

Fossils, historic building are topics of two summer events at Belt Branch

From Page 3

event is open to all ages and geared especially towards elementary-aged children.

Retired geology professor Dr. John Pope is returning to the **Belt Community Room** with more fascinating facts about fossils of many kinds, including dinosaurs, at **6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 23.**

Pope, who taught at Northwest Missouri State University and was curator of the school's Geoscience Museum, gave a program last October at the Belt that drew a roomful of guests.

Explore the history and ongoing programs of "St. Joseph's first motel" from Robidoux Row board members at **6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 30, in the Belt Community Room.**

Joseph Robidoux, the city's founder, would let families stay at the Row rent-free while their houses were being built. Westward travelers stayed at Robidoux Row while waiting for their wagons to be ferried across the river or during long winters.

Archaeological diggings and restoration of the Row took place in the 1970s, a new gallery was constructed in the 1980s and the museum now has numerous galleries and displays highlighting St. Joseph history.