



FEBRUARY 2024

Hello Friends,

The words from a Christmas song, “And the weather outside is frightful” come to mind as in some areas of North Carolina “Let It Snow!” is the refrain. As we hunker down by our delightful fires and have no place to go, it is a good time to consider the status of Friends – local and statewide.

Those in leadership positions know just how hard it is to keep the group moving forward. Some Friends have been working on correcting years of noncompliance as FONCPL sheds light on legal obligations in addition to more effective and professional management practices. We applaud those who have tackled those thorny issues! FONCPL has had many of those same challenges.

We were gratified that our 2023 group membership was back up to pre-COVID levels (78). We hope you have renewed both as groups and as individuals. We continue to reach out to those Friends groups that are non-members as well, in hopes that they will join us. We are stronger together!

At our January Open Mic night, we had seven participants-most of whom were regulars.

We had really hoped that this would catch on and that more would listen in. It is somewhat disappointing that more don’t participate. In this newsletter edition, I will cover the key points from the discussion on the legislative update. Please be sure to read this article.

So, while sipping on your hot chocolate, we challenge you to create a plan of work for 2024 and see just how much more you can accomplish by working from a written plan.

I don’t know what the Prognosticator of Prognosticators, Punxsutawney Phil, who will once again appear at sunrise on February 2nd at Gobbler’s Knob in the Pennsylvania Wilds is going to predict, but I advise you to stay warm!

Yours in Friendship,

Judy Hills.

FONCPL President

Christmas spirit cheers all ages during drive-thru event

Lexie Carroll alexis.carroll@wataugademocrat.com

Dec 18, 2023



The Watauga County Sheriff's office poses with Santa during the Christmas Drive Thru.

- Photo by Lexie Carroll

SUGAR GROVE — The Western Watauga Senior Center spread holiday cheer through hot chocolate, goodie bags and memorable moments with Santa during its third annual Christmas Drive Thru.

“We’ve been doing Drive-Through Christmas since the pandemic started, rather than an in-house Christmas party as we did before,” said Cheryl Angel, president of the Friends of the Western Watauga Branch Library. “The community response has been great. Everyone loves it!”

The senior center, the Friends of the Western Watauga Branch Library and the Watauga County Sheriff's Office joined forces to make the holiday season a little more special for those involved with the senior center and their friends and families.



Santa and Mrs. Claus pose with the Elf and the Grinch in front of the new library van.



The Friends of the Western Watauga Branch Library decorated their new van for the holiday event.

- Photo by Lexie Carroll

The sheriff's office passing out goodie bags during the drive thru event.

- Photo by Lexie Carroll



The hot chocolate and sweet treats were enjoyed by many of the Christmas Drive Thru attendees.

2023 Legal Compliance Update

by Judy Hills, President

The following is not legal advice, just reminders so that your Friends can ensure that important requirements are met and/or updated. Not every item is going to apply to every Friends group.

- Are you incorporated as a nonprofit with the State of North Carolina?
- If you are incorporated in North Carolina, is your listed registered agent and his/her address current?
- Nonprofits with gross receipts of \$5,000 or more than that will want to receive tax-deductible contributions. Have you filed with the IRS for 501(c)(3) status? (IRS form 1023)
- If you are a 501(c)(3), have you filled the appropriate 990 form yearly as required by the IRS? This form must be filed electronically. If you don't file for three years in a row, you will lose this status.
- Have you changed your name, address, or made any other major structural or operational changes? If you are a 501(c)(3), these must also be reported to the IRS on your 990 form.
- Do every one of your Board members understand their fiduciary responsibilities?
- 2024 is an election year. Every nonprofit should refrain from endorsing candidates, contributing money to partisan elections, or coordinating activities with political campaigns. Do not allow members to use your organization's email or mailing list to solicit campaign contributions or to endorse candidates. Under federal law 501(c)(3) organizations are prohibited from these actions.
- Provide donors with letters of acknowledgment for "quid pro quo" gifts of \$75 or more and all gifts of \$250 or more. It is good practice for nonprofits to send timely acknowledgments for ALL contributions.
- If you do not currently have an NC Charitable Solicitation license or an exemption, apply for one. If you already have the NC CS license or exemption, remember that you have to renew that yearly. **A new law took effect October 1, 2023—the filing deadline for charitable solicitation renewals now coincides with your Form 990 filing deadlines and extensions. You are also now allowed to use your 990N form as evidence of eligibility when before you had to fill out a cumbersome financial form.**
- Have you applied for refunds of state and local sales and use taxes that you have paid for purchases?
- Have you collected sales tax on items that you sell and remitted those funds to the state as required? This includes books. You also must charge admission for entertainment activities. This is a complex subject so do reference the NC Department of Revenue site for details. Note: You do not have to pay sales tax for books you sell to online retailers who resell them (e.g., Sellbackyourbooks or Booksrun). Those retailers are required to collect and remit that sales tax.
- There are specific state laws regarding raffles (yes—even your baskets), bingo, game nights, and serving alcohol at fundraising events. They are too complicated to go over here so do reference state law.
- If you offer alcohol in the manufacturer's closed container (e.g., bottle of wine or spirits) as a prize for a raffle or auction, you are required to get a special one-time alcohol permit for the event. Check your local ABC website for that form.
- Be sure that the name of your organization is consistent in the following: your Articles of Incorporation, your Bylaws, your tax ID number, your IRS 501(c)(3) application. If you are using a name other than your legal name, you are required to file for an assumed business name certificate with the register of deeds in one NC county where you conduct business.
- Be sure your bylaws contain a provision allowing you to hold remote meetings and remote voting.

We hope this information helps your Friends to ensure they are operating legally and professionally.

FREE PEOPLE READ FREELY™



ALA & © American Library Association

For the Freedom To Read statement...

<https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/freedomtoread/#signatories>

FEBRUARY CALENDAR!

- **February 2** is **Groundhog Day**—the day we find out whether winter will last six more weeks or call it quits early. How did this quirky tradition get started? Find out [the meaning of Groundhog Day](#).
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- **February 10** is the **Lunar New Year**. Celebrated widely throughout East Asia, this holiday begins with the first new Moon after the Winter Solstice and is associated with the Chinese Zodiac.
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- **February 11** is the Super Bowl in 2024. [See some tasty Super Bowl recipes!](#)
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- **February 12** is **Abraham Lincoln's Birthday**. The 16th president of the United States was born in a one-room, 16x18-foot log cabin with a dirt floor.
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- **February 13** is **Mardi Gras** (aka “Fat Tuesday” or Shrove Tuesday), which is the final feasting day before the Christian tradition of Lent begins on the following day, Ash Wednesday.
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- **February 14** is **Ash Wednesday**, which marks the start of Lent.
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- **February 14** is always **Valentine's Day**. Heads up, lovebirds! Today, the holiday is celebrated with love, flowers, and chocolate, but how did this holiday get its start? [Learn all about Valentine's Day](#).
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- **February 15** is **Susan B. Anthony's Birthday**. How much do you know about this women's rights leader?
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- **February 15** is also **National Flag of Canada Day!**
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- **February 19** brings **Presidents' Day**, a federal holiday also known as Washington's Birthday that is celebrated on the third Monday in February. (George Washington's actual birthday is February 22!)
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- **February 29** is **Leap Day!** Happening once every four years, we are given an extra day in February. Some think this day brings good luck. [Learn more about leap years](#).


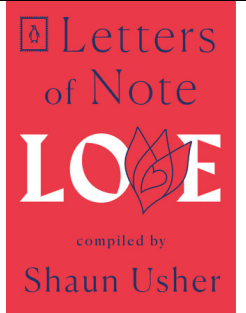

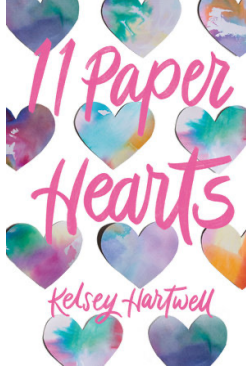

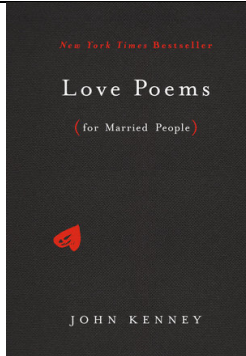
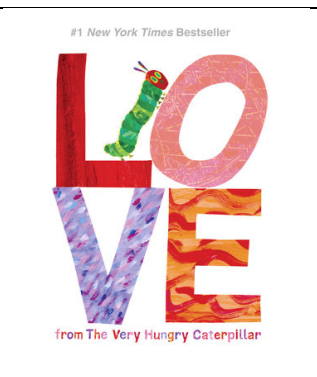
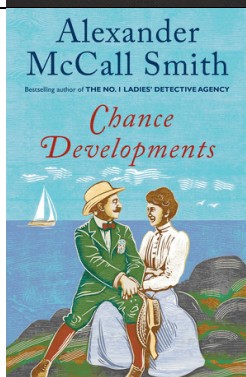


VALENTINE BOOKS

-excerpt from Penguin Random House

For Children:

For Adults:

Love Counts by Jo Parker		Letters of Note: Love by Napoleon Bonaparte, Frida Kahlo, Nelson Mandela, Ayn Rand, . . .	
Love Is My Favorite Thing by Emma Chichester Clark		11 Paper Hearts by Kelsey Hartwell	
The 12 Days of Valentine's by Jenna Lettice		Love Poems for Married People by John Kenney	
Love from The Very Hungry Caterpillar		Chance Developments by Alexander McCall Smith	

Black History Month at the Library!

ALSC Blog 2/23/23

It's February! And that means it's Black History Month, a time set aside for reflecting on and honoring the contributions of generations of Black Americans.

Most children living in the United States are exposed to Black History every February. They learn about the most famous African-Americans of history like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. I would argue that librarians should use this time and other opportunities throughout the year to do what we do best: inform and educate. I'm a firm believer in fun learning. Might I suggest some fun ways your library can teach both children and adults about Black History in February and all year long.

Wall Display

Creating a wall display is a great visual effect for any available real estate you may have. An excellent source for historic posters can be found at <https://Blackhistorymonth.gov/>. There you will find [letters](#), [announcements](#), and other paraphernalia that transport the viewer back in time.

Book Display

Be sure to pull or purchase reputable books for check out. Include African-American authors that provide accurate information. Check out Marley Dias' expansive list of [1,000 Black Girl Books](#) featuring Black girls front and center.

Activities

There are a ton of activities for children to do when celebrating Black History Month. You will find plenty of crafts on the internet. I'm a big believer in providing children with inexpensive crafts they can do on their own or as part of a library program. [Click](#) to watch a video on how to make the Diversity Heart Art Activity created by art teacher Cassie Stephens. This activity is great for older children and would be a good accompaniment to a Black History library program.

Digital

The Smithsonian's [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) (NMAAHC) launched a digital initiative called the [Searchable Museum](#). The Searchable Museum reaches beyond the walls of the museum to provide a rich digital experience that includes a multimedia presentation of NMAAHC's historical narratives, collections and educational resources. Both children and adults are given access to interactive exhibitions that explore fascinating parts of African-American history that are not commonly known. Turn some of your dedicated computers in the children's area into interactive screens by making the Searchable Museum site the main page.



Catawba County Library Celebrating Black History at the Library

1/26/24

The 2024 theme is "African Americans and the Arts" spanning the many impacts Black Americans have had on visual arts, music, cultural movements, and more.

Keeping with this year's theme, the Main Library in Newton will be hosting a month-long art exhibit, *Francis Simeni: Examining Self-Image and Identity*, from February 15 through March 15. The exhibit opening will be Thursday, February 15 and the community is invited to join us from 5:30 - 7 pm. This will include a meet and greet with the artist, and time for him to share his process and inspiration for his work. Born in Nigeria, raised in Poland, and settling in America, Francis Simeni has had to examine who he was in relation to his environment and culture. His works are about finding truth, beauty, self-love, defiance, complexity, and all the things that make us human, through the lens of portraiture.

Open

Mic Night

with Judy!



Tuesday February 7
7:00 pm

Discussion:

*Software: organization
management, online payments,
retail sales, event
management, signups.*

To join in the discussion by computer:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89371220434?pwd=QlVQWUVtVG1RSEdURmp6TVZAbk83dz09>

To join by phone:

+1 309 205 3325

Meeting ID: 893 7122 0434

Passcode: 092529

Recipe For A Successful Winter Reading Challenge

By Angela Hursh, NoveList



Winter reading programs are relatively new. While summer reading programs tend to focus on getting children to read and visit the library, winter reading programs are usually aimed at adult readers. These programs are a chance to encourage your readers to try new formats, like eBooks or streaming movies that don't require a trip to your branch. And your winter reading challenge can demonstrate the role your library plays in building community during a time of year that can be isolating for some.

If you're looking to increase circulation or get your current cardholders to use their cards more often, winter is the perfect time. Here are seven steps to make sure this year's winter reading challenge takes the cake at your library.

- 1. Pick a theme.**

Let's start with the fun step! You want a theme with a clear look that evokes an emotion that relates well to the winter reading season: warmth, coziness, and the pure joy of a good book. Your theme should include graphics that you can use both in print and digital marketing. You want something that is recognizable to a reader. When they see your theme, they should say, "Oh, this is part of the winter reading challenge at my library!"

- 2. Make participation simple, fun, and rewarding.**

Don't ask your participants to jump through complicated hoops to earn a prize.

- 3. Create themed reading lists.**

This is where your staff can really have some fun and show off their expertise. Use NoveList to search for books set in winter, in a variety of genres.

- 4. Drop the library card requirement.**

Dropping the requirement to get a library card sounds counterintuitive. But it opens your program up to a whole population of people who don't regularly use the library, particularly those in under-served communities. Instead of asking that participants have a library card, ask for email addresses. Compile those non-cardholder emails into a subscriber group and send them a series of emails during the winter reading challenge that showcases everything the library offers. Then, after the program, send them an email with an online library card application form and ask them to join your community of library readers.

- 5. Ask partner organizations to help you promote.**

Now is the time to "call in favors" with your partner organizations. Ask them to show support and help build your winter reading challenge.

- 6. Use your email list to its full potential.**

Send two to three suggestions to your cardholders every week during your winter program. Nope, that's not too many emails! Your readers will start anticipating your weekly recommendations.

- 7. Put good customer service on display.**

Even with the snow and ice, a winter reading challenge will boost visits to your library. You'll also get more visitors to your website. Make sure you are friendly and respond to all comments and questions.

IT'S TIME !! Join us now for 2024!!



Membership
runs from
January thru
December
each year



F·R·I·E·N·D·S

OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Supporting Friends of the Library Statewide

FONCPL offers two membership options:

Group membership is open to Friends organizations and public libraries.

The Group Membership form and the Individual Membership form are available on our website.

<https://foncpl.org>

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Don't forget to
join so you can
win a chance for
\$200 !

These are the Friends Groups that will be entered into our \$200 Membership Drawing. Remember that you have until the end of February 2024 to pay your 2024 dues and have a chance to win \$200!!

Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library
Alleghany County Public Library
Bogue Banks Public Library
Caldwell County Library
Carteret County Public Library
Caswell Library
Hickory Public Library
Lewisville Library
Mars Hill Public Library
New Bern-Craven Co Public Library
Orange County Public Library
Sherrills Ford-Terrell Library
Sneads Ferry Library
Southport/Oak Island Library

These are the Individual Friends that have joined FONCPL 2024.

Tim Como
Kim Eaton
Julie Flick
Judy Hills
Jack James
Katie Lake
Liz Martin
Karen Schrader
Joyce Speas
Tess Thais
Trisha Wilkins



Just visit
foncpl.org
 and fill out a
 membership form for
 Group and Individual.

Individual \$15
 Group \$35

Please make checks
 payable to **FONCPL** &
 mail checks to
Tim Como, Treasurer
1190 18th Ave. NE
Hickory NC 28601

We keep the list of paid group and individual members who have paid their 2024 dues updated on our website. If they have paid dues and their name is not in **bold**, they should email the FONCPL Treasurer, Tim Como.

Tim's email address is: 826mechanic@gmail.com



**Paddison Library Black History Month:
Author Face to Face with General J.R. Gorham**

Gen. Gorham will be speaking about his book *Sharecropper's Wisdom*, his writing process, and upcoming works. Winner of the Syliva Hamlin Literary Award, the first African American Brigadier General of the NC National Guard, Vice President of First Citizen Bank in Kernersville, and Commissioner of Juvenile Justice in the NC Department of Public Safety, J.R. Gorham is an inspiring motivational speaker. Copies of his book are available for checkout from Forsyth County libraries. No registration is required to attend.

