

F\*R\*I\*E\*N\*D\*S TALK

August 2024



#### Hello Friends,

This month I was again asked by Lynda Reynolds, the State Library Friends Liaison, to hold a training session with new(ish) library managers and directors. My presentation has two parts. In the first, I orient them to FONCPL. In the second, I provide information on how Friends function to ensure that the directors and managers understand the basics. I doubt that many have ever had an orientation to Friends done by Friends. All many of them know is what they have read in Sally Garder Reed's 2017 article, "When Friends Go Rogue." This is a great opportunity to set that record straight. I am thankful that Lynda gave and continues to give us this opportunity.

Also, this past month I had the opportunity to review a set of Friends' bylaws. One clause was particularly concerning. It gave the library director a voting seat on the Friends' board. We advise against this practice as the library director will probably have a conflict of interest on almost every vote taken by the board. What we strongly advise is that the library manager or director be an exofficio, non-voting member of the Friends of the Library Board.

During the library director training session, one attendee mentioned that they rotated the staff that attended the Friends meeting so that staff had an opportunity to interact with the Friends. This is a good way to get to know the staff better.

I hope you are all reading the material that our Board member Karen Robbins is writing each month. There is so much going on regarding banning, challenges, and advocacy. She is reviewing current issues and providing you with updates. If something like this is happening in your area, we'd like to know about it.

October will be upon us soon. October 20-26 is National Friends of the Library Week. You have plenty of time to plan one or more events to celebrate your Friends—and we sincerely hope that you do.

I hope the severe summer storms and those twisty things bypass North Carolina this year. Stay safe!

Judy Hills, FONCPL President



# BANNED BOOKS WEEK Sept. 22-28, 2024

ALAAmericanLibraryAssociation

#### THIS IS NEXT MONTH! START PLANNING NOW!

Banned Books Week was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to books in libraries, bookstores, and schools. By focusing on efforts to remove or restrict access to books, Banned Books Week draws national attention to the harms of censorship. Typically (but not always) held during the last week of September, the annual event highlights the value of free and open access to information and brings together the entire book community — librarians, educators, authors, publishers, booksellers, and readers of all types — in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas.

In a time of intense political polarization, library staff in every state are facing an unprecedented number of attempts to ban books. ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom documented 1,247 demands to censor library books and resources in 2023. The number of titles targeted for censorship surged 65% in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching the highest levels ever documented by OIF in more than 20 years of tracking: 4,240 unique book titles were targeted for removal from schools and libraries. This tops the previous high from 2022, when 2,571 unique titles were targeted for censorship. Titles representing the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC individuals made up 47% of those targeted in censorship attempts.

The theme for Banned Books Week 2024 (September 22-28) is "Freed Between the Lines." We can find freedom in the pages of a book — but book bans and censorship threaten that freedom, along with many other rights and institutions. During Banned Books Week 2024 and beyond, let's share our love of right to read and the freedom found in books. Let's be Freed Between the Lines!

#### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

https://www.ala.org/bbooks/bannedbooksweek/ideasandresources/activity

#### **DISPLAY IDEAS**

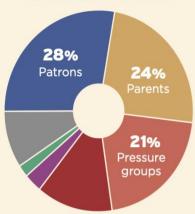
https://www.ala.org/bbooks/bannedbooksweek/ideasandresources/display

# CENSORSHIP

#### BY THE NUMBERS

In 2023, the American Library Association documented the highest number of titles targeted for censorship since ALA began compiling data more than 20 years ago. 4,240 unique titles were challenged last year, up from 2,571 targeted in 2022. Learn more at ala.org/bbooks

#### WHO INITIATES ATTEMPTS **TO CENSOR BOOKS?**



13% Board/administration

3% Librarians/teachers/staff

2% Elected officials/ government

9% Other/unknown

Statistics based on 954 cases.

#### WHERE DO CENSORSHIP ATTEMPTS TAKE PLACE?



54% **Public libraries** 



School libraries



5% Schools



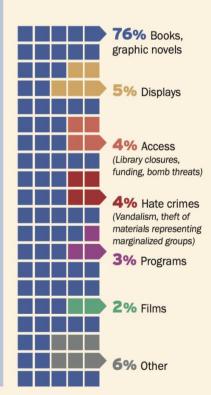
2%

Higher education/other

Statistics based on 1,247 cases with known locations.

#### **BOOKS AND BEYOND**

ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 1,247 censorship attempts in 2023. Here's the breakdown:



#### **CENSORSHIP ON THE RISE**

The unparalleled number of unique titles targeted in 2023 marked a 65% increase over 2022. During the two decades prior to 2021, the average number of unique titles targeted per year was 273.

**CENSORSHIP** STATISTICS COMPILED BY:





### TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2023

The American Library Association documented **1,247 attempts to censor** materials and services at libraries, schools, and universities in 2023. Of the **4,240 unique titles** that were challenged or banned in 2023, here are the top **10** most frequently challenged.







#### **GENDER QUEER**

by Maia Kobabe

**REASONS:** LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit



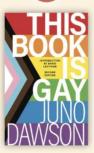


#### ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE

by George M. Johnson

**REASONS:** LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit





#### THIS BOOK IS GAY

by Juno Dawson

#### REASONS:

LGBTQIA+ content, sex education, claimed to be sexually explicit





#### THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER

by Stephen Chbosky

**REASONS:** claimed to be sexually explicit, LGBTQIA+ content, rape, drugs, profanity





#### FLAMER

by Mike Curato

**REASONS:** LGBTQIA+ content, claimed to be sexually explicit





#### THE BLUEST EYE

by Toni Morrison

**REASONS:** rape, incest, claimed to be sexually explicit, EDI content





#### ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL

by Jesse Andrews

**REASONS:** claimed to be sexually explicit, profanity



#### TRICKS

by Ellen Hopkins

**REASONS:** claimed to be sexually explicit, drugs, rape, LGBTQIA+ content





#### LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan

**REASONS:** claimed to be sexually explicit, sex education, LGBTQIA+ content



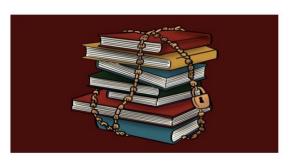


#### SOLD

by Patricia McCormick

**REASONS:** claimed to be sexually explicit, rape





# Our Monthly Censorship Update by Karen Robbins, President, Friends of the Library Rourk Branch

August is a perfect time to begin planning for Banned Books Week September 22-28. Although Friends are not typically involved in book challenges, or in developing library policy regarding book challenges, we can educate ourselves and have data and facts at the ready to advocate for our libraries when and if necessary.

- \*Public libraries experienced a 92% increase in challenges to books.
- \*The ALA says Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin have all seen more than 100 book censorship attempts.
- \*ABC news did a piece on the top 5 books banned "Book ban efforts spike across US, new data shows: By the numbers." The number of books targeted by critics surged 65% from 2022 to 2023." by Kiara Alfonseca, March 14, 2024, 11:06 AM. Here is a link to watch two of those authors discuss their books, and why they are continuing to oppose book bans at the high school level. <a href="https://abcnews.go.com/US/book-ban-efforts-spike-across-us-ala-data/story?id=108113763">https://abcnews.go.com/US/book-ban-efforts-spike-across-us-ala-data/story?id=108113763>
- \*WBTV in Charlotte published an article in March: "Books on race, sexuality among most targeted across N.C. schools". These books are increasingly coming under scrutiny by small but vocal groups. A collaboration of North Carolina media outlets found that discussed public school book bans across North Carolina." By Whitney Clegg and Nick Ochsner Published: Mar. 15, 2023 at 4:00 PM EDT. Although the article is not focused about public libraries, it is important to keep in mind the context of Senate Bill 49, the "Parents' Bill of Rights," and House Bill 187, which sets guidelines for teaching about gender, race, and U.S. history. Being aware of current NC laws that impact reading and information is important for public libraries as well as Friends groups. <a href="https://www.wbtv.com/2023/03/15/books-race-sexuality-among-most-targeted-across-nc-schools/">https://www.wbtv.com/2023/03/15/books-race-sexuality-among-most-targeted-across-nc-schools/</a>

The American Library Association is sometimes looked at as a radical organization by those wanting to control people's access to books and information. Instead, <u>ALA</u> is a professional organization that supports and continues to educate librarians throughout the country. The ALA Office of Intellectual freedom is a good resource for keeping up with current trends and being familiar with options for advocacy. At this link <a href="https://www.ala.org/bbooks">https://www.ala.org/bbooks</a> you will find links that will supply data, book resumes, and other groups who are working toward the goal of protecting the right of people to read.

A good resource is the UABB – United Against Book Bans organization. Their website <a href="https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/">https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/</a> provides book resumes that offer parents, community and librarians ways to defend challenged books, action toolkits to help people find ways to be a positive force in the community, and news articles that keep up to date about what is being done with organizations who are partnering with UABB to support the freedom to read.

And as always, the NCFOPL has many links that will help. Just click on the link for FONCPL Advocacy Kit https://foncpl.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/FONCPL-Advocacy-Kit.pdf>

# First edition of Mary Shelley's 'Frankenstein' auctioned for \$843,750 by Ben Hooper



The only privately-owned first edition of Mary Shelley's pioneering horror novel *Frankenstein* was auctioned for a hair-raising sum of **\$843,750**.

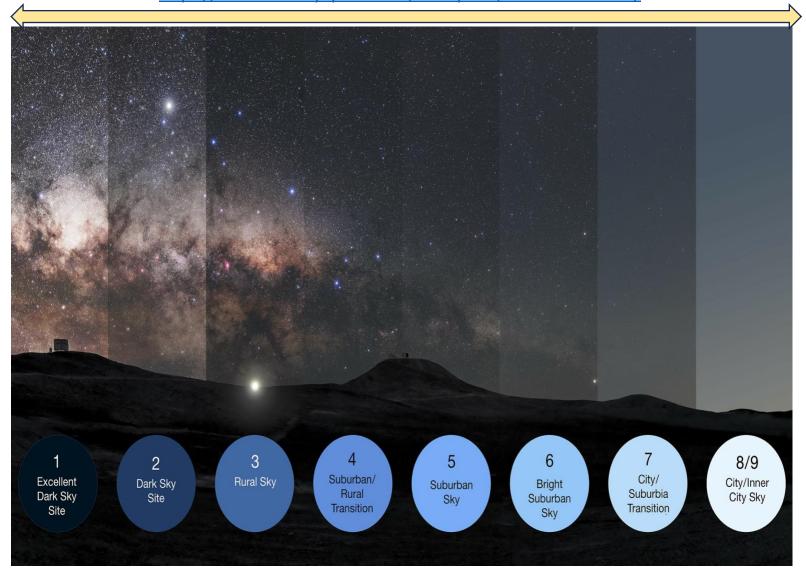
The 1818 first edition was published anonymously in 3 pink-boarded volumes. The copy of *Frankenstein* is one of only tree pink boarded first editions known to still exist, and the only one in private hands. The other two reside in the Pforzheimer and Berg Collections at the New York Public Library.

#### How to pick a good watermelon: Here's how to tell if a melon is ripe

https://www.usatoday.com/story/graphics/2024/07/05/how-to-pick-a-watermelon/74246645007/?utm\_source=join1440&utm\_medium=email&utm\_placement=newsletter

#### Would you do this?

https://www.thedailyupside.com/fun-upside/close-encounters/



## Fiscal Controls and Reporting for Small Nonprofits (1 of 4) By Judy Hills, FONCL President

This is a series of four articles which will tackle financial topics a few at a time over the next few months. The basis of this material is taken from the State of Oregon Department of Justice Law & Guides for Charities. Although written for Oregon nonprofits, the basics are the same. <u>Click here</u> to read all the recommendations.

#### Legal status of NC Friends of the Library groups

Before we get into the specifics of financial management, there are a couple of things we need to bring to your attention regarding legal status. In June FONCPL took our list of 196 known or suspected list of Friends of the Library groups in North Carolina and updated the information we had on them regarding their incorporation status with the state. We also researched their Charitable Solicitation License (or Exemption) status. In addition to that we researched the IRS charitable nonprofit registry site to determine which ones had 501(c)(3) status as well as when they last filed the required 990. (CAVEAT: we had to trust that the information posted online was correct—that may or may not be the case which is why we recommend you do your own research. Due to different ways that the organization's name may appear—some might have been missed.) Here is a summary of those findings:

- 1. 83% of Friends are incorporated in the state. To protect the Board, every Friends group should be incorporated with the state. Check your status online with the NC Secretary of State <u>Corporations Search</u>.
- 2. 22% of Friends have or have had a Charitable Solicitation License or Exemption and of those 28% are showing as lapsed and one had theirs cancelled. Every Friends group should either have the license or the exemption. Your group must re-apply yearly for this status. The law changed recently so it is easier than ever to obtain the exemption for those with assets of under \$50,000. DO NOT RECYCLE OLD CSL FORMS!!! There are new forms. Check the online CSL registry to see if your Friends are in compliance.
- 3. 38% of Friends have IRS 501(c)(3) designations that are current on their 990 forms. 27% have as their last 990 filing 2014 to 2022, making them at risk of revocation. 6% of Friends currently have their IRS nonprofit designation revoked and a number that are currently in compliance have had their designations revoked in the past. IRS 990 forms MUST be filed yearly. Not filing for three consecutive years is cause for revocation of this designation. Click here to check your Friends' IRS status on the Tax Exempt Organization Search page.

What the above points out is that there are Board members who are not fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities and it may indicate a Treasurer who lacks knowledge of legal requirements or who isn't following through on them. FONCPL strongly recommends that every Friends group existing in NC should: 1) Be incorporated as a nonprofit in the state of NC; 2) have and keep current the group's Charitable Solicitation License or Exemption; and 3) have and keep current the group's 501(c)(3) designation.

Preserving charitable assets is one of the most important responsibilities of nonprofit board service. Many organizations experience asset losses related to thefts, embezzlements, or other diversions of assets and these trends are mirrored in charities throughout the country. We have found that most situations leading to charitable asset diversion are directly related to an organization's maintenance of reasonable financial records and implementation of meaningful financial controls.

Most financial losses could be easily avoided or quickly identified if organizations implemented basic financial controls, such as regular review of bank statements by other than just the Treasurer and/or following a proper expenditure review process. Financial controls are often referred to as internal controls. The following is a list of minimum internal controls that should be in place in any non-profit organization, <u>regardless of size</u>. Additional internal controls should be considered and adapted to the circumstances and operations of the nonprofit.

#### Separate financial duties

"Effective internal controls limit any single individual from having control over two or more phases of a financial transaction or operation. Generally, duties should be segregated into four categories: individuals with access to assets; individuals with access to accounting systems and accounting records; individuals in management or control positions; and individuals exercising independent oversight, such as board directors. For example, an individual that receives cash and issues a receipt for it (access to assets) should not also record the cash deposit in the receipts journal (accounting duties). An individual that makes accounting entries (accounting duties) should not be the same person that has check signing authority (management duties). The bank statement and cancelled checks should be received and reviewed by someone that is independent of all the steps in the above process (independent oversight). In this manner, no single individual has too much control and there is oversight for each step in the process. A similar system can be used for the expense cycle as well. Even if an organization has no staff, it can still ensure that there is adequate separation by assigning duties to board directors or volunteers."

While that is certainly a best practice, we all know how difficult this can be to achieve given geographic distances and the small number of Board members willing to assume this responsibility. And for many small Friends, Board members believe that implementing these procedures means that they don't trust their Treasurer (who is probably a friend). Any Treasurer worth their salt, will welcome this oversight.

One way to do this in a small group is to have a second signatory on the bank account who is authorized to receive emails from the bank (disbursals, monthly statement, and other notices). Generally, this will be the President. If the President reviews every disbursal, they should be able to immediately catch an error.

#### Reconcile and examine bank statements monthly

"The organization's bank statements should be reconciled on a monthly basis by someone who does not issue or sign checks on behalf of the organization. In addition, copies of checks, wire transfer information, and other information relating to deposits and withdrawals should be maintained along with the monthly statement. Checks and other expenditures should be examined to verify that the payments are consistent with the organization's activities and that the expenditures were appropriate. Similarly, deposit activity should also be reviewed to ensure that it corresponds to expected revenues. For example, if the organization held a fundraising event that generated cash, the reviewer should ensure that there are cash deposits matching the amounts received at the event. If the organization banks online, it should still be sure it is regularly downloading or printing and storing its bank statements, deposit slips, check images, and similar documents. Banks routinely charge fees to access older records."

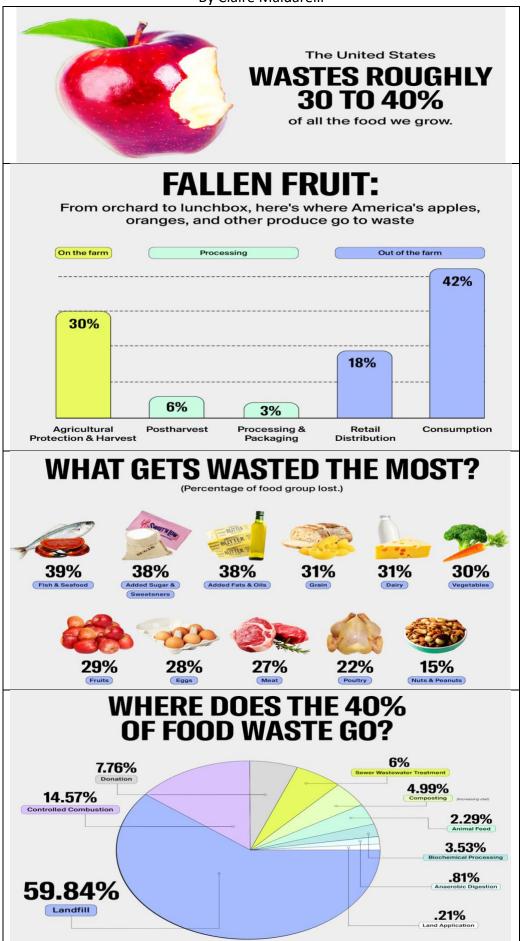
Regardless of how often the Board meets, the Treasurer should do a monthly account statement. They should email all Board members the financial statement (income/expenditures vis-à-vis the budget) AND a copy of the bank statement for that month. The balances should match or differences should be explained. The Board member MUST carefully review the financial report and question any expenditures or income that look incorrect or that are questionable.

In the coming months we will continue to explore financial best practices. If your Friends do not have a financial policy & procedure manual, we strongly urge you to create one using the material we are presenting. Just stop and think for a moment, what if your Treasurer were to be unexpectedly incapacitated to the point where they could not assist in transitioning to a new Treasurer? Having an updated financial policy & procedure manual would go a long way toward getting a new Treasurer up to speed.

#### AMERICA'S FAVORITE FRUIT REVEALS THE HIDDEN TRUTH ABOUT FOOD WASTE

Our food waste problem is hard to wrap your head around. These four charts help.

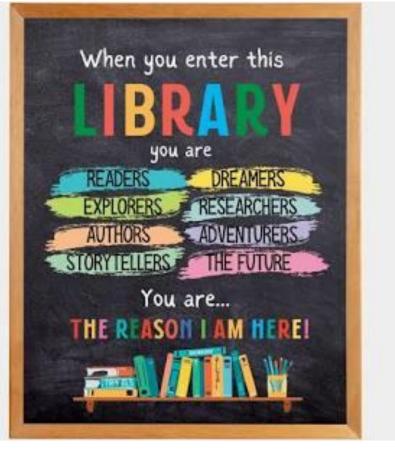
By Claire Maldarelli



#### **BACK TO SCHOOL IDEAS!**

Celebrate this season with intriguing library display ideas! Hook them into reading from Day One!









# HOW ARE THE LIBRARY AND FRIENDS DIFFERENT?

Library

Friends

Place to check out real/digital books

Offers kids tutoring and adult classes

Safe physical space to study/work

Offers computer access to community

Fantastic art collection

Hosts community events

Educates public on wealth of library services

Volunteer opoportunities

Raises funds to pay for additional library services

> Advocates for library politically

Community of library supporters

> Volunteer organization

Supports library's strategic goals

The Havelock Friends seek greater participation by its members – one of our members used AI to create this text.

#### Why Volunteer?

Impact: Lead initiatives that enhance our library's offerings and support literacy programs for all residents Community Engagement: Collaborate with like-minded individuals and local leaders to make a lasting difference Skill Development: Develop leadership skills while contributing your talents to meaningful projects.

#### **Opportunities Available:**

Board Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

Project Managers: Oversee specific activities, community outreach, and more

Specialized Roles: Newsletter Editor, Membership Manager, Hospitality, Media, and Fundraising Coordinators

**Get Involved Today!** Whether you can dedicate a few hours or take on a leadership role, your involvement is crucial to sustaining our efforts. Join us at our upcoming meeting to share your ideas and shape the future of our library. **Contact Us:** Email us at <a href="mailto:livetynamn53@gmail.com">livetynamn53@gmail.com</a> to express your interest or ask any questions. You can also reach out to the Friends at <a href="mailto:havelockfol@gmail.com">havelockfol@gmail.com</a>. Let us know how your unique skills can contribute to our mission.

**Act Now!** Help us continue our vital work by contacting us. Together, we can build a stronger community through literacy and lifelong learning.

#### **How Much Time Do Americans Spend Reading Per Day?**

By Kelly Jensen 7/17/24

The latest research on how Americans spend their time has been published in the annual American Time Use Survey. The survey, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, sheds insight that is likely not especially surprising—older Americans with fewer childcare or work responsibilities spend more of their leisure time reading than younger Americans.

In 2023, the average American age 15 or older spent .26 hours per day reading, or about 1.8 hours per week. Women averaged .32 hours a day reading, while men averaged .2 hours per day. These averages differed widely, depending on the age of the individual. Those age 15-13 and those age 33-44-demographics most characterized by demanding school, work, and caretaking responsibilities—averaged .13 hours of reading per day, while those age 75 and older averaged .76 hours of reading per day (or 5.3 hours per week). Twenty to 24 year olds averaged .2 hours; 25-34, .15 hours; 45-54, .19 hours; 55-64, .23; and those age 65-74, .48 hours per day. There is a clear trend that as Americans age and have access to more free time, they utilize more of that free time to read for leisure. The drastic rises begin between the ages of 45 and 54.

When it comes to racial and ethnic leisure reading, white and Asian Americans each recorded an average of .29 hours of reading per day. Black Americans recorded an average of .12 hours of reading per day, while Latine/Hispanic Americans averaged .10 hours of reading per day. These numbers shouldn't be especially surprising, given the ethnic and racial disparities in access to free time.

Work plays a direct role in how much Americans are reading per day. Those who are unemployed turn to leisure reading more than those who are working either part-time or full-time. Unemployed Americans recorded .43 hours of reading per day, while those working part-time averaged .22 hours and full-time, .16 hours.

Likewise, those who make more money per week also read more per day–again, not surprising given that low-wage labor tends not to offer as much free time. Individuals who made a weekly average of \$1876 or more (over \$97,000) used .2 hours per day to read, compared to those making between \$1201 and \$1875 using .17 hours to read per day and those making between \$801 and \$1200 per day reading .15 hours. Those making the least amount of money per week, between \$0 and 800, read .13 hours day.

You can read the entire breakdown of American leisure habits on the <u>Time Use Survey</u> <u>website</u>. Information breakdowns there utilize binary categories on gender, race, and ethnicity.

# We the Friends of the Library.

# NATIONAL Friends of Libraries WEEK

OCTOBER 20-26, 2024

AN INITIATIVE OF UNITED FOR LIBRARIES

You have 2 months to plan for

## **National Friends of the Library Week**

This is a great time to promote your Friends!! Increase awareness about membership opportunities, goals, projects and more.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHERS ON HOW TO OBSERVE THE WEEK

~Visit your local library and volunteer.

~While visiting the library, learn more about programs offered through library friends groups.

~Support library friends groups.

~Find out how to become a member.

~Donate to their programs and support their efforts.

~Lib~raries that are supported by a friends group, consider hosting an event.

Thank your friends group and help promote their membership, too!

#### **Recipe for Book Club Success**

by Kimberly Burton 4/23/24 for NoveList

The only thing better than reading a book you love is talking about it with other excited readers (especially if there are snacks or beverages). While there are infinite variations possible, the basic recipe for book club success comes down to just a few essentials.

#### **Preparation**

Consult library staff active in programming and readers advisory services to learn what kind of book discussions your community craves. Some book clubs bond over a favorite genre. Others gravitate toward certain topics. Whatever type or topic you settle on, choose something you also feel passionate about. Enthusiasm makes you a better book club advocate, organizer, and discussion leader. If your library has **NoveList Plus**, check the dropdown menu under "Quick Links" for Book Club Resources. You'll find practical strategies on all things book club, from detailed tips on running your first book club to getting participants out of a reading rut. Stir up excitement among potential participants. **LibraryAware** customers have a range of templates to choose from and it's a snap to design and distribute coordinating book club materials, from emails to promotional flyers **like this one** from **Plainville Memorial Library**.

#### **Quality Ingredients**

A great story stokes your appetite for more, inspires you to share it with others, and leaves you on pins and needles until you can talk over all the little details that tickled your taste buds... or not. Choose fresh, discussion-worthy books that invite readers to draw differing conclusions or to adopt various perspectives. NoveList Plus uses the heading "Book Club Best Bets" to label titles excellent for book clubs as determined by reviews, celebrities, and media outlets, or NoveList experts. We've got a **whole guide** to searching for these gems. Variety is the spice of life! Incorporate inclusive titles all year long, not just during certain weeks or months. Choose books by authors from a variety of races, cultures, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, abilities, and religions. Use author characteristics in NoveList Plus to find options. At the **Advanced Search** page, just scroll down and select limiters like Author's Nationality, Author's Gender Identity, and Author's Cultural Identity. Similarly, NoveList **character appeal terms** will help you find books featuring characters from diverse backgrounds and/or marginalized identities.

#### **Modifications and Substitutions**

Making a book club experience your own is the best secret ingredient out there. Is there a genre your book club has never even given a chance? Enter **TI But My Book Club Doesn't Read** into the NoveList Plus search bar for 100 percent organic, non-GMO suggestions (including book recs!) that just might tempt them to take a nibble.





# **Tiny Museums**

N ART GALLERY may be popping up near you, maybe even in your own front yard. Free Little Art Galleries (FLAGs) are small structures similar to Little Free Libraries, only instead of books, they house paintings, textile art, homemade jewelry, etc. You can take home a piece of art and/or leave a piece of your own. Best of all, anyone can participate. So far there are about 415 FLAGs around the country and abroad. One of the first was started in 2020 by Seattle artist Stacy Milrany (the gallery below is hers). As one art lover told a gallery owner, "What a gift [your FLAG] is to our neighborhood."



#### Some Days to Remember in August:

- August 5th Campfire Day Create a camp read-a-lot display with adventurepacked books.
- August 9th Book Lover's Day Favorite books for each grade level
- August 26th Dog Appreciation Day Who doesn't love dogs? Hook students with adorable puppy books.
- Friendship Week (3rd week in August) Any book with friendships will work in this display.









If you wish to share some photos or an article with us for the September F\*R\*I\*E\*N\*D\*S TALK, please email your information to klambe@me.com by August 25, 2024.

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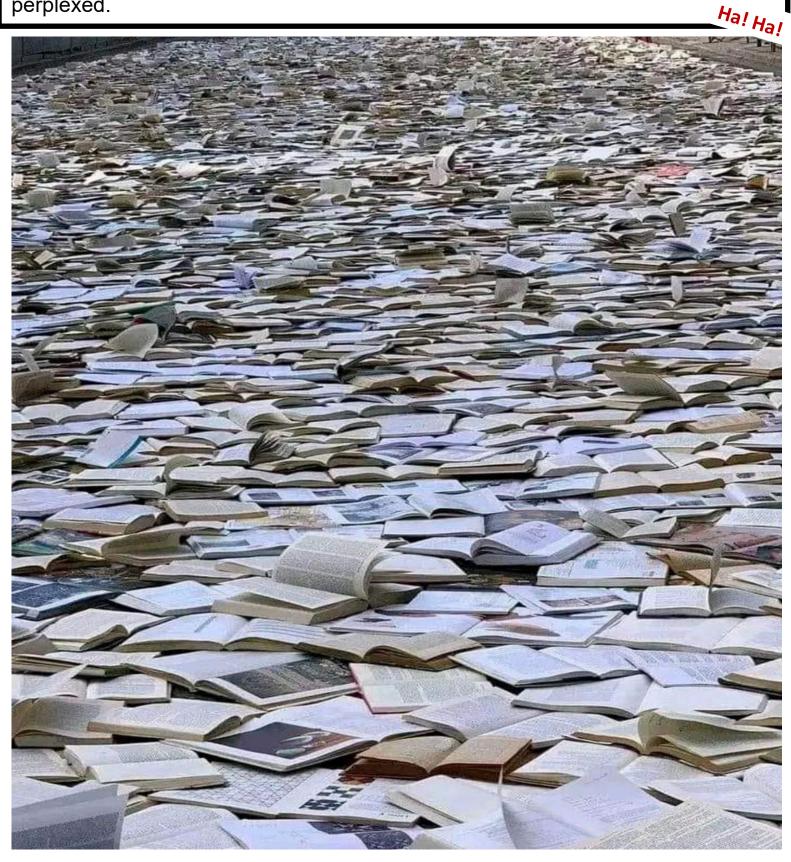
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A truck loaded with thousands of copies of Roget's Thesaurus crashed yesterday losing its entire load. Witnesses were stunned, startled, aghast, taken aback, stupefied, confused, shocked, rattled, paralyzed, dazed, bewildered, mixed up, surprised, awed, dumbfounded, nonplussed, flabbergasted, astounded, amazed, confounded, astonished, overwhelmed, horrified, numbed, speechless, and perplexed.



# TOOMANY BOOKS?

# YOU MEAN NOT ENGUGH BOOKSHELVES

pippi post