



F·R·I·E·N·D·S

OF NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Supporting Friends of the Library Statewide

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

JANUARY 2025

Happy New Year to All Friends,

As was noted in the December issue of this newsletter, Judy Hills has "signed off as President." It is with much trepidation that I attempt to follow her in this role. As a member of the Board, I have had the pleasure of watching Judy in action. Her dedication to the organization, her knowledge of statewide issues, her creative programming, and her attention to the needs of individual chapters has been paramount throughout my tenure. She is a "hard act to follow." I am thankful she will continue to be available for "advice and counsel" and as our newsletter editor/writer.

To give you a little background on me, I am a lifetime reader. Growing up in Melbourne, Florida, we lived within two blocks of our local library. My mother walked us to that library about once a week. When she wasn't reading to my siblings and me, we were usually reading ourselves - inside or outside. One of my favorite genres was biographies, and our library

had a collection of them for young readers - ME! I started with Abigail Adams and went through the entire alphabet. The first book of each week's withdrawal was usually finished before I went to bed that night! When I was teaching in the elementary grades, reading to my class followed lunch each day. I treasure my collection of children's authors to this day. Pop-up books are favorites, and our Alleghany County library featured a display of most of my pop-up books last year.

Know that you have a listening ear, a willing partner, and an enthusiastic volunteer at your service. Please do not hesitate to contact me at joyce.speas73@gmail.com or 336.601.6118 (c) if I can be of service to you personally or to your organization. Judy has promised to be my backup, and I will be leaning on and learning from her!

Smiles,

Joyce Speas, "signing on as President"
Sparta, NC



"I am simply a 'book drunkard.' Books have the same irresistible temptation for me that liquor has for its devotee. I cannot withstand them." ~ L.M.

Montgomery.



Group Membership in FONCPL: IT IS TIME TO RENEW OR JOIN!

Note: We do not offer multiple year memberships as we wish to update our member information each year due to changes.

Basic Level of Membership—Group \$35

While the basic group membership is only \$35 we invite you to make an additional contribution to support FONCPL.

- Your group membership helps support and develop FONCPL services to Friends across the state of North Carolina;
- Your group's name is listed on the FONCPL website;
- Your group has access to information exchange about Friends groups throughout North Carolina;
- Up to four members of your group receive an electronic copy of the FONCPL newsletter which is filled with ideas and projects from Friends;
- Your group has access to the FONCPL website resources;
- Your group has opportunities to help develop the FONCPL website and newsletter through your contribution of library photographs and other material;
- Your group receives information about the FONCPL Board and its activities and plans;
- Your group is eligible to apply for both the group and individual member awards (if available that year);
- Your group is eligible to apply for a challenge grant (if available that year);
- Your group is eligible for phone or electronic consultation (upon request) with a FONCPL Board member about questions and concerns involving Friends development and organization;
- Your group is eligible to establish networking connections among North Carolina Friends groups.

Click here for the group membership application:

[Group FONCPL MEMBERSHIP fillable 8Jan2022](#)



Individual Membership in FONCPL: IT IS TIME TO RENEW OR JOIN!

Note: We do not offer multiple year memberships as we wish to update our member information each year due to changes.

Basic Level of Membership—Individual \$15

While the basic individual membership is only \$15 we invite you to make an additional contribution to support FONCPL.

- Your personal membership helps support and develop FONCPL services to Friends across the state of North Carolina;
- Your name is listed on our FONCPL website;
- You have access to information exchange about Friends groups throughout North Carolina;
- You receive an electronic copy of the FONCPL newsletter which is filled with ideas and projects from Friends;
- You have access to the FONCPL website resources;
- You have opportunities to help develop the FONCPL website and newsletter through your contribution of library photographs and other material;
- You receive information about the FONCPL Board and its activities and plans;
- You have an opportunity to become a member of the FONCPL Board and work toward the improvement of Friends' services.

We look forward to receiving your application for membership.

[Click here](#) for the Individual Membership fillable form. Complete, print, and mail in with your check.



**Join
Now!**

Your Fundraising Event: Is It Educational or Entertainment? By Judy Hills

Last month we published a legal compliance checklist. Betsy Mercer, President of the Friends of the Bogue Banks Public Library asked for a clarification on one of the items. "I do not understand, 'You also must charge admission for entertainment activities.' The word 'must' has thrown me for a loop. Does that mean we have to charge admission for an author presentation?"

Our response: Good catch, Betsy! The word "taxes" was left off—my error.

There is a difference between educational and entertainment events.

Per NC Department of Revenue: "Gross receipts derived from an admission charge to an entertainment activity are subject to the general State and applicable local and transit rates of sales and use tax."

Per NCDOR: An "entertainment activity" is an activity listed below:

- a. A live performance or other live event of any kind, the purpose of which is for entertainment.
- b. A movie, motion picture, or film.
- c. A museum, a cultural site, a garden, an exhibit, a show, or a similar attraction.
- d. A guided tour at a museum, a cultural site, a garden, an exhibit, a show, or a similar attraction."

Per NCDOR: Exception related to an admission

charge: "Tuition, registration fees, or charges to attend instructional seminars, conferences, or workshops for educational purposes, notwithstanding that entertainment activity may be offered as an ancillary purpose of an event listed in this section."

An author event is education—you are educating those in attendance about this author and his/her books. Entertainment is an ancillary purpose. Our Friends do not pay sales tax on tickets to authors' events. In our case most of the ticket price was for a lunch that we paid a restaurant to provide. The restaurant was responsible for the sales tax on the food and beverage and was included in the price they gave us.

And one more thing about our authors' luncheon, of the \$40 ticket price only \$13 was an actual "donation" as the meal cost was \$27.

Your Friends may also use events such as a puzzle competition to educate the public about your organization and to recruit new members.

So when you are considering what events you will charge for, remember that if the event is strictly entertainment, you must pay sales tax and remit to NCDOR.

For additional information, [click here](#).



13 Publishing Trends to Watch in 2025

Given the explosion of book bannings in the United States, we can be assured that the dynamic publishing industry is tracking trends, adjusting to new technologies as well as shifting customer demands. Here are some trends to watch for in the coming year.

1. The Continued Rise of Digital Publishing

Digital formats are on the rise and are expected to dominate the market even more.

2. AI and Machine Learning in Content Creation

AI will play an increasing role in content creation, editing, and distribution.

3. The Evolution of Self-Publishing

This trend will continue to grow as distribution channels expand and quality improves.

4. The Growth of Audiobooks and Podcasts

Audio content is emerging as a major component of the publishing industry.

5. Sustainability and Eco-Friendly Publishing

We may be seeing the advent of digital-first strategies, and even on-demand printing.

6. The Impact of Social Media on Publishing

Social media is shaping how books are marketed, discovered, and consumed.

7. Niche Markets and Specialized Content

These are gaining traction—catering to specific audiences with targeted content.

8. Subscription Models and Reader Communities

This model will continue to evolve, offering new opportunities for publishers and readers alike.

9. The Role of Blockchain in Publishing

Blockchain is a technology that allows for the secure, transparent, and permanent recording of data and transactions across a computer network. Blockchain technology is poised to disrupt the publishing industry by providing new ways to manage rights, royalties, and distribution.

10. Globalization and Localization of Content

As the world becomes more interconnected, the demand for both global & localized content is rising.

11. Interactive and Immersive Content

There will be more experimentation seeking to engage readers in new and innovative ways.

12. The Future of Print Publishing

With digital on the rise, publishing companies may focus more on print on demand, special editions/collectibles, bookstores as community hubs, and the nostalgia of holding a book with sensory appeal.

13. Regulatory Changes and Copyright Issues

The legal landscape is also changing: copyright reforms, data privacy regulations, AI & copyright, and global copyright challenges.

Conclusion

It's a Brave New World out there! This industry is on the brink. Those that adapt will flourish and those that do not will fold.

To read this entire article, [click here](#).

Huge Book Trends in 2025

On the last page we discussed trends in the publishing sector. Here we will cover book trends.

1. Growth of Genre Fiction

New subgenres will be prevalent. These include hopepunk (celebrates optimism, kindness & collaboration), solarpunk (envisions a sustainable future where people live in harmony with nature), climate fiction, (e.g., *The Water Knife*), fantasy, and science fiction.

2. Impact of BookTok

TicTok for books—Books that went viral on BookTok have received the maximum amount of sales. Reader communities help to highlight a book and lead to more success.

3. Reduction in paperback publishing

Books will be published in digital format and only the most popular ones will be available in paperback.

4. Increasing audiobook subscriptions

Better narration, music, and soundscapes are capable of offering a much more engaging experience.

5. Rise of self-publishing

Increasing quality of these books has led to huge success and recognition.

6. Rise of non-fiction

Readers are becoming more interested in data-driven content.

To read this entire article, [click here](#).



What Might These Industry Trends Mean for Friends? By Judy Hills

Here are some thoughts for you to consider based on these trends:

1. When will the rise in digital publishing begin to seriously impact the donation and selling of books to raise funds?
2. How might Friends influence the purchasing of books?
3. How might Friends engage readers in more immersive and interactive ways?
4. How might Friends take advantage of the nostalgia trend or special collections?
5. If your Friends has a physical book store, how might you create an inviting community gathering space?

6. What other emerging trends might the Friends capitalize on?

Like the publishers, we, too, are at a fork in the road. If we don't pay attention to the trends or if we see them and choose to ignore them, we may find that our organizations become obsolete.

We encourage you to give serious thought to the questions posed. Discuss them at your board meetings. Make some decisions and then act on them. **John F. Kennedy said, "There are risks and costs to action, but they are far less than the long range risk of comfortable inaction."**



Here's an idea that is fun and has the potential to improve relationships. Have your Friends form a trivia team and challenge another group to beat yours on points. The loser has to do something needed or desired.

For example, your group could challenge the library staff, the regional staff, the library board of trustees, the regional board of trustees, another Friends group, or ???.

The loser would do something like providing lunch for staff, providing desserts for staff, providing a BBQ for staff, help decorate the

library for a holiday, participate in a reading event, or ????. The list is endless.

Here is one real-life example. The Friends of the New Bern Library challenged the library trustees to form a team and compete against them at the January library trivia night. The loser has to do "something sweet" for the library staff on Valentine's Day. The challenge was wholeheartedly accepted. We'll report the outcome with pictures in the next edition of this newsletter.

Annual Reports—Don't Underestimate Their Value

Your Friends' annual report is a great marketing opportunity to develop new and long-standing relationships not only with your members and supporters, but also with community decision-makers, media and others you want to inspire with your work and join your efforts.

Southport/Oak Island Friends of the Library have been doing Annual Reports for many years. [Click here](#) for to review their 2023/2024 report. In January, the FONCPL's 2024 Annual Report will be posted.

FRIENDS of the LIBRARY
SOUTHPORT & OAK ISLAND, NC

ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024



Kelly Jensen's Censorship Column Submitted by Karen Robbins

Is fighting censorship important to you? Then don't sit by while books in libraries and schools are being challenged and removed across the country. Educate yourself, and then speak with others, attend meetings where books are a topic, and show your opposition to censorship.

Kelly Jensen, a former librarian, is a writer who keeps us well-informed about censorship. She has been reporting and posting for a long while, both as a blogger and as editor for @Book Riot. Check out her articles [here](#). She covers breaking news and follows up with ongoing stories about censorship.

Know what it means to ban books. Attempts to restrict access to books and information violates the First Amendment. Removing books from schools and libraries means they become inaccessible to many people and hurts the entire community. For example, in North Carolina the legislature passed the Parents Bill of Rights, which in reality means that instead of trusting professionals to make decision regarding books and materials, parents can demand materials be removed from everyone's children, not just their own. Parents have always had then right to speak to teachers and librarians, and to question anything they were concerned that concerned them. Now one parent's concern may deprive all children of the books or materials, especially those from marginalized backgrounds. Jensen states, "Removing a book from their local library or school library means they lose out on the ability to access, read, digest, and discuss materials available to wealthier peers." As a result, many classrooms have no books on display or available in a classroom library.

Most People are against book bans. Websites to research data include EveryLibrary, Book Riot, and the American Library Association. According to day [from the American Library Association](#), "Large majorities of voters (71%) oppose efforts to have books removed from their local public libraries, including a majority of Democrats (75%), independents (58%), and Republicans (70%)." Even so, many states are trying to pass laws that would let librarians be arrested for having books deemed "obscene" by politicians.

Kelly Jensen's list of what to do to fight against book bans:

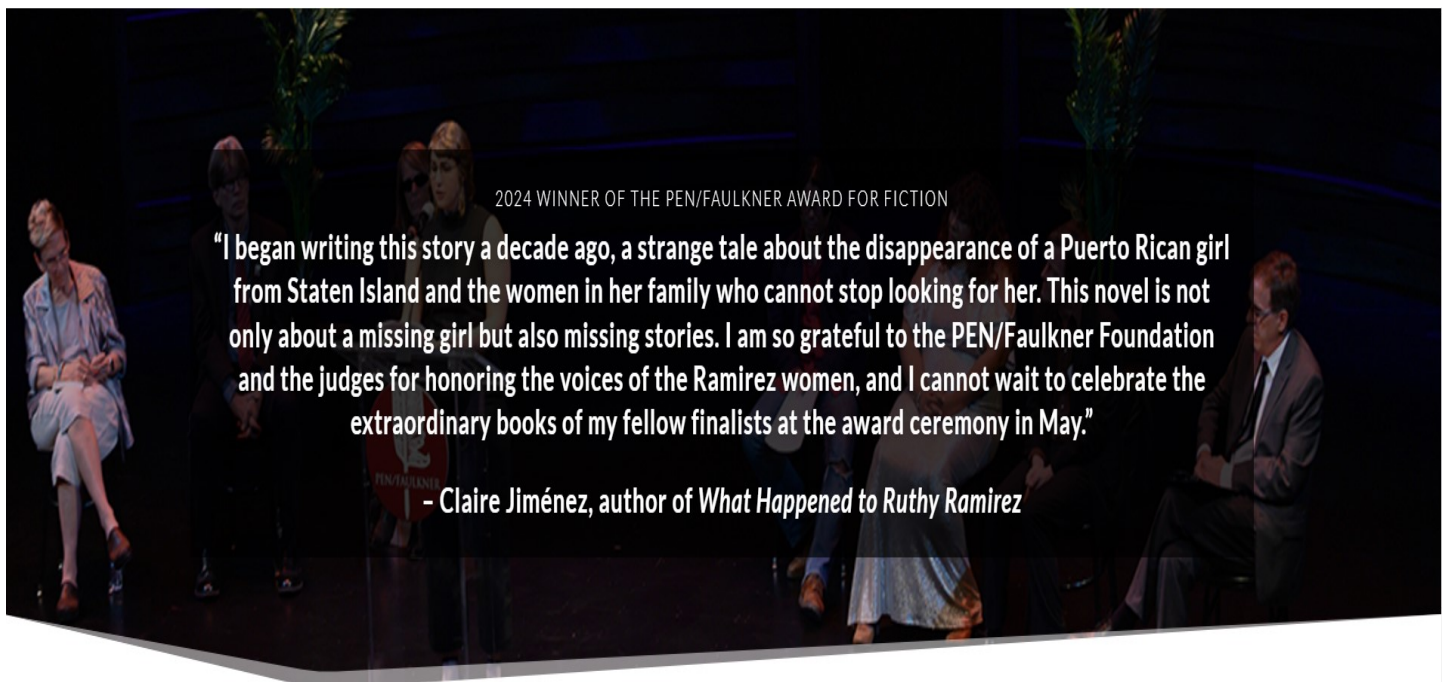
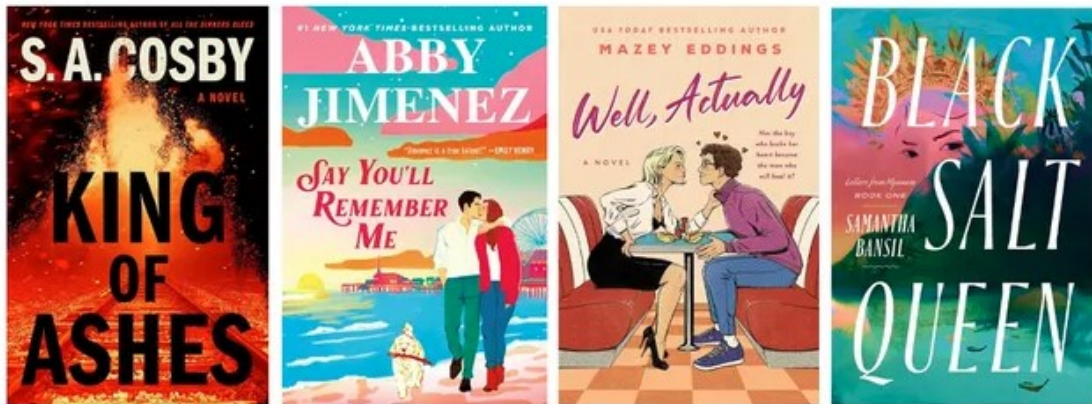
Here's a toolkit for [fighting book bans and censorship in 2024](#).

Get involved in [a local group against book bans and/or begin your own](#).

Stay informed through the [Literary Activism newsletter](#), through work done by [EveryLibrary](#) and [PEN America](#), through [Authors Against Book Bans](#), or [other groups](#) and [outlets](#) that you connect with.



Book Influencers' 2025 Book Recommendations



2024 WINNER OF THE PEN/FAULKNER AWARD FOR FICTION

"I began writing this story a decade ago, a strange tale about the disappearance of a Puerto Rican girl from Staten Island and the women in her family who cannot stop looking for her. This novel is not only about a missing girl but also missing stories. I am so grateful to the PEN/Faulkner Foundation and the judges for honoring the voices of the Ramirez women, and I cannot wait to celebrate the extraordinary books of my fellow finalists at the award ceremony in May."

- Claire Jiménez, author of *What Happened to Ruthy Ramirez*

2025 Reading Challenge—A New Years Resolution

Here are some reading challenges in which you may want to participate:

- **A Year of Discovery**
A year-long challenge with a unique prompt for each month to help you read more and discover new genres. [Click here.](#)
- **2025 Classics Reading Challenge**
A challenge with a specific book to read for each month, such as a classic from a used bookstore in January, a Russian novel in February, or a classic about immigrants in March. [Click here.](#)
- **Goodreads A-Z Reading Challenge**
An annual group reading challenge where members pledge to read a certain number of books over the course of the year. [Click here.](#)
- **Shelf Reflection's 2025 Reading Challenge**
20 prompts then a second 25 prompts in keeping with the theme of "25" with each prompt relating in some way to the number 25 or the year 2025. [Click here.](#)
- **The 52 Book Club's 2025 Reading Challenge**
Made up of 52 unique reading prompts. The goal is to match one book to each prompt, for a total of 52 books over the year. [Click here.](#)



FONCPL Board 2025



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Happy Reading!





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Public Libraries**

Helping Friends Build Resilience

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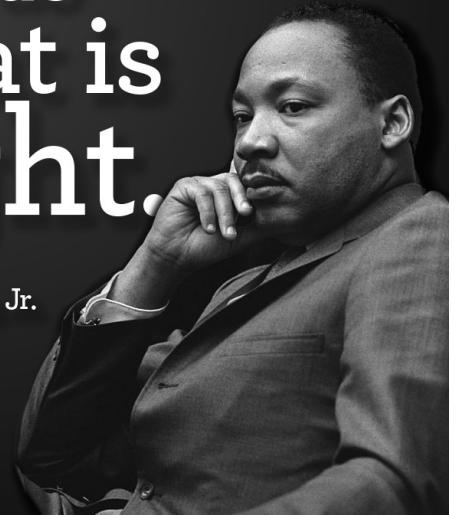
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The time is
always right
to do
what is
right.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



CALENDAR

All material for the newsletter is due to editor **Judy Hills** by the 25th of each month.

Click here for the 2025 Calendar of National Events—use these to plan your activities.

*FONCPL Board Zoom Meetings 10 AM on:
2/8, 5/10, 8/9, with annual meeting on 11/15.*

Here are a few dates of note for this month:

- 1/1 New Years Day
- 1/2 National Sci-Fi Day
- 1/4 Trivia Day
- 1/8 Stephen Hawking Birthday
- 1/18 National Thesaurus Day
- 1/19 National Popcorn Day
- 1/20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 1/25 National Compliment Day
- 1/28 National Lego Day
- 1/29 National Puzzle Day