



# 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

April 2025

Dear Friends,

It's April! Daffodils are blooming! Spring is here, and there are so many fun things to think about and celebrate. We start with April Fools Day, which may end up being the theme of this message. We'll get to that in a moment. More importantly, we celebrate National Library Week with Library Workers Day embedded and Drop Everything and Read Day! (See the list at the end of this newsletter.) Those are followed by Good Friday and Easter. What a beautiful month - except for some disturbing news from our federal government.

If you have been watching or listening to the news, you have probably heard that the President threatened to eliminate the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This is the primary federal agency that supports libraries and museums across the country. Naturally, the American Library Association and the American Alliance of Museums have expressed opposition to this action - as should we. However, the situation is very fluid and all of us should be constantly monitoring respected news sources. For instance, the following appointment by the President of Keith E. Sonderling as the Acting Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services was announced on March 21, 2025, by the Institute. What follows is Mr. Sonderling's statement of acceptance:

*"It is an honor to be appointed by President Trump to lead this important organization in its mission to advance, support, and empower America's museums and libraries, which stand as cornerstones of learning and culture in our society. I am committed to steering this organization in lockstep with this Administration to enhance efficiency and foster innovation. We will revitalize IMLS and restore focus on patriotism, ensuring we preserve our country's core values, promote American exceptionalism and cultivate love of country in future generations."*

It remains to be seen exactly HOW Mr. Sonderling plans to "revitalize" and "restore." It behooves all of us to be vigilant and advocate for our state, county, and local library services. Contact legislators at all levels by phone or letter. Plan events to share this news with Friends members and the public. Get your supporters involved. Know, too, that you have the support of the Board of the Friends of North Carolina Public Libraries.

Yours in Friendship,

*Joyce Speas, President*



## Media Literacy: Reading Press Releases by Karen Robbins

Critical reading is a skill practiced in schools all over the country, but in the age of mis- and dis-information, it is a good idea for adults to re-fresh their memories and apply those skills to reading press releases or news articles in order to understand the context of the writing.

Some simple steps are basic journalism 101:

- Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How—use these basic questions to establish a starting place for deeper understanding of the writing.
- Try to identify the author's tone, organization, message, syntax, etc. Even the genre matters. Is the story to inform? to entertain? to state an opinion?
- Context—the most important clues to understanding the purpose of the writing, helping to make sense of the language and “the conditions within which something exists.” Literary Activism Kelly Jensen, 1/31/25.
- Take time to find out what preconceived ideas or biases the writer may hold. Those can affect the context.
- Find out what organizations the writer belongs to, or who is paying for the service. What news outlets are celebrating.

From the Stevenson University website there are a few easy steps to check your sources:

- Currency: Sources should be up to date, especially if your topic evolving.

- Authority: Who is the author and what are their credentials, experience, and reputation?
- Accuracy: Compare the author's information with what you know is reliable. Look for citations and bias. Decide if it affects the research conclusions.
- Coverage: Is the information relevant? Does it meet your needs, with facts, statistics, charts, or graphs?

Another journalism/research skill is noting the source for any information you may read. The days of choosing “.org” or “.gov” or “.com” alone as a hedge against disinformation are past. Once a story comes to your attention, whether on social media, TikTok, or through your email, you should take the time to consider the source. In fact, if no sources are cited within the information you are getting, that is a red flag.

Take time to check whether or not you can find out a source, or better yet, several different sources that can illuminate the information you have. Headlines that are repeated in every story again and again should alert you to possible misinformation. Those phrases may simply be from one story, spread

## Dates set for StoryWalk Week 2025

Source: Let's Move in Libraries

We're thrilled to share that [StoryWalk Week 2025](#) returns in November! The fun takes place **November 9 - 15, 2025**.

For the fourth consecutive year, the [Association of Bookmobile & Outreach Services \(ABOS\)](#) teams up with Let's Move in Libraries for this celebration of StoryWalks. We'll be circulating a call for participation in October 2025. To participate all that you need is a photo of your library's StoryWalk and a short caption.

Learn more at the [StoryWalk Week 2024 webpage](#), and get inspired by checking out submissions from [StoryWalk Week 2023](#), [StoryWalk Week 2022](#) and [StoryWalk Week 2021](#).



## Student Reading Comprehension — Lacking According to Evidence

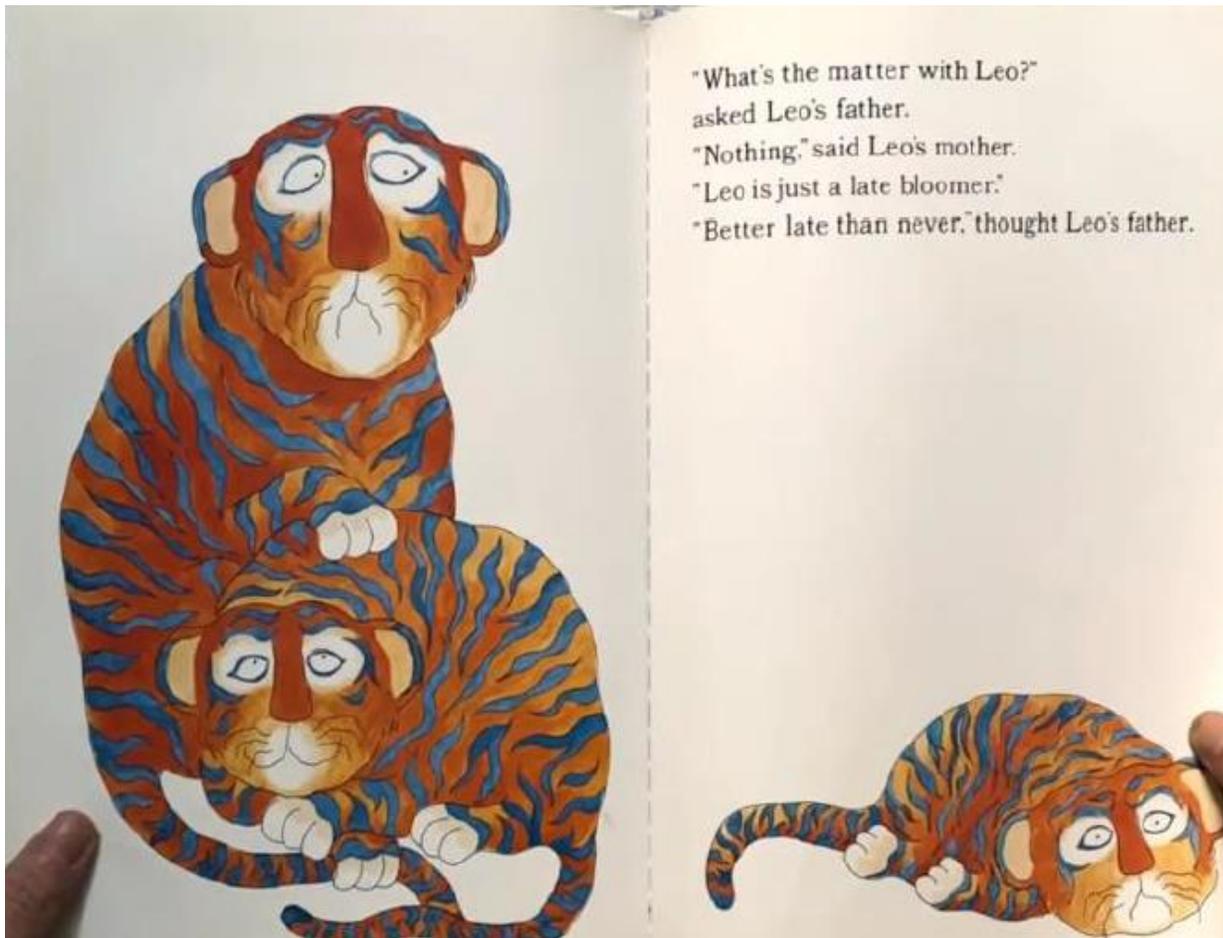
Source: The Hechinger Report

Nearly 50 years ago a landmark study showed that children were not being taught reading comprehension in the classroom. Although remedial actions were identified, a paper published in 2025 in the peer-reviewed journal of *Scientific Studies of Reading* shows that few, if any of those remedies were implemented.

Strategies identified included: "checking yourself for understanding after reading a paragraph, identifying the author's main point or summarizing what you have just read. Knowledge building, by contrast, is helpful because it's easier to comprehend something you are reading if you can connect it to something you already know."

Think about how **Friends** might use **those strategies** in developing material for **StoryWalks**. Just pasting up pages from the stories is certainly a start, but we encourage you to develop literacy tips. For example, here is a page from the book, "Leo the Late Bloomer." Literacy tips might include: What is a father? What is a mother? What does "a late bloomer" mean? What does "better late than never" mean? Describe what you see in this picture. At the end, you might ask, "In a few words, tell me what this story was about" or "Make up a new ending to this story" or "Why is it important to learn how to read and write?"

[Click here](#) to read the full article on reading comprehension.



## Is your Friends group on this list? Going, going, gone!

If you are, you paid FONCPL dues in 2024, but have not yet paid for 2025. Don't let your membership lapse! Support your state organization. Mail your renewal form and check in today! [Click here](#). If you have paid your dues and are on this list, [click here](#) to alert our Treasurer.

Alamance County

Ashe County

Bladen County

Burke County

Carrboro Branch

Concord

Cove City

Cumberland

Eden

Graham

Harrisburg Branch

Haywood County

Iredell

Kernersville

Kinston-Lenoir

Lewisville

Madison

Malloy/Jordan

Marianna Black

Mountains Branch

NC Accessible Books & Library Services

New Hanover

Sherrills Ford-Terrell

Transylvania

Walkertown

Watauga

## FONCPL Challenge Grants—Project Ideas

FONCPL offers the opportunity for member Friends to apply for a challenge grant each year. The **deadline is September 15th**. In the past, we have had the rule that your Friends could only apply every three years, but since so few have been applying, we have changed that rule so that any member Friends group can apply every year for up to \$250. The number of grants awarded will depend on the FONCPL budget.

We remind you that the project or program being proposed must align with the mission and purpose of your Friends group and must directly benefit the Friends.

**Award funding may not be used to purchase goods or services for the library or library system.**

**Here are some examples of things we have funded in the past:** commemorative reading benches, portable table, table cover with logo, -way display board, business cards, foyer display, promo items, swag bags, customized Friends merchandise, gift cards with Friends logo for bookstore, Veterans Commemorative Coin, update Friends brochure, purchase vendor book carts, banner, canopy tent, postage & printing to mail membership brochures, swag, and puzzles.

We encourage you to identify an appropriate expenditure and apply. [Click here](#) for the application.

# Friends of Mt. Pleasant Library Literary Festival

Submitted by Karen Cobb:

Twenty-five years ago, Mt. Pleasant, NC, had no public library. The Friends of the Mt. Pleasant Library formed and raised the money, often going door-to-door collecting donations, to build the town's first library. The community outgrew the facility and in October 2024, Cabarrus County cut the ribbon opening a new library, active living center and public park, all on one site. It's one of the first such sites in the state and offers many opportunities for multi-generational activities and learning, all in one location.

The Friends of the Mt. Pleasant Library has taken their next step and organized the first-ever Mt. Pleasant Literary Festival featuring 11 outstanding authors including New York Times best sellers Mary Alice Monroe, Craig Johnson and Target Author of the Year Terah Shelton Harris. The festival is April 24-26 at the Mt. Pleasant Library and Active Living Center, 1111 N. Washington Street, Mt. Pleasant. Thanks to the generosity of individuals and businesses and a grassroots grant from the N.C. Arts Council and Cabarrus Arts Council, the festival will be free for everyone attending. The Friends partnered with independent bookstore, Goldberry Books, to have books for sale at the event in case those attending would like to have books signed by the authors. Seating is limited and those who'd like to attend are asked to reserve a seat by visiting the Friends of the Mt. Pleasant Library website at [www.mpfol.org](http://www.mpfol.org)

This is an example of something your Friends might do.



Mt. Pleasant Library & Active Living Center  
1111 N. Washington St.  
Mt. Pleasant, NC 28124

The Friends of the Mt. Pleasant Library present  
**Mt. Pleasant Literary Festival**  
April 24-26, 2025

**Craig Johnson**  
NY Times Bestselling Author  
of the *Longmire* series

**Eric Litwin**  
Creator of *Pete the Cat* series

**Mary Alice Monroe**  
NY Times Bestselling Author  
of *Where the Rivers Merge*

**Terah Shelton Harris**  
Target's 2024 Author of the Year

**Lauren Denton Megan Shepherd Andy Runton**  
**Maurice Manning Emily Francis**  
**Dr. Sadie Leder Elder Kimberly Wilson**

<b>THURSDAY</b> <b>4/24</b>	6:00 pm	NY Times Bestselling Author <b>Mary Alice Monroe</b> will open the festival
<b>FRIDAY</b> <b>4/25</b>	11:00am	<b>Dr. Sadie Leder Elder</b> reads <i>Boopers the Bad Cat</i> at story time and leads a craft activity
	3:30pm	<b>Kimberly Wilson</b> takes young book lovers on a read aloud adventure with Q&A and crafts
	6:00pm	Inspirational author <b>Lauren Denton</b> will speak and share
<b>SATURDAY</b> <b>4/26</b>	10am, 11am, 12pm	Sing and Dance with <i>Pete the Cat</i> creator <b>Eric Litwin</b> --3 SHOWS!
	10:00am	Local author <b>Emily Francis</b> shares stories from <i>If You Only Knew</i>
	12:00pm	Illustrator <b>Andy Runton</b> leads interactive workshop for all ages
	12pm, 2pm, 4pm	NY Times bestselling author <b>Megan Shepherd</b> leads teen workshop
	2:00pm	Celebrated Kentucky poet <b>Maurice Manning</b> shares and sings
	3:00pm	Author chat with Target's Author of the Year, <b>Terah Shelton Harris</b>
6:00pm	Keynote Speaker <b>Craig Johnson</b> will culminate the festival	

**\*Books will be available for purchase and signing\***  
All events are FREE--but registration is required since seating is limited.  
Please scan the QR code or register online at [www.mpfol.org](http://www.mpfol.org)



Platinum Sponsor: Cabarrus Arts Council Gold Sponsor: Clint Miller Exterminating & Lisa Miller in honor of Rachel Miller, Karen Cobb Silver Sponsors: Ryan & Brandy Shaver, Cabarrus Literacy Council Bronze Sponsors: Zebe's Bookkeeping & Tax Service, Thyme 2 Bloom, Bonnie McDonald Real Estate, 73 & Main, Cabarrus Import Service, Buddy's Place Restaurant, Johnna & Dale Ritchie



This project is supported by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.



## Pie on Pi Day—March 14th

The Friends of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library partnered with the library to host Pie on Pi Day at the library. From noon to 2 PM, pie and drinks were served to patrons, Friends, prospective Friends and library staff. We had 26 pies contributed—some were home-made and some were store-bought. We had 80 people attended. Those attending had the option to make a donation to the Friends and to become members. To make it easy for those who did not have any cash, we had our Square Point of Sale system ready for them to tap or swipe. Next year we plan a more elaborate event.

**TIP: If your Friends are not yet using a credit card payment point of sale system we encourage you to get one set up. Few people are carrying cash these days.**



### Friends Tips

- \* Establish a Point of Sale Account (like Square)
- \* Take it to every event to be able to collect credit card donations & memberships on the spot
- \* Set it up so that the customer pays any fees for use & any sales tax due



## Nonprofits and Use of Creative Common Images (Part 2 of 2)

In the March edition we discussed the use of images and copyright issues. Remember use of material by a nonprofit is considered “commercial” use.

Now you may be wondering, are images downloaded from Bing online considered free use? Maybe. Note checked Creative Commons box.

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## Children Read More When Able To Access a Little Free Library

Little Free Library (LFL) commissioned an independent study on the impact of Little Free Libraries. The primary outcome: "When children have access to a Little Free Library (LFL), they spend more time reading."

Key Findings include:

- "92% of children reported having more access to books because of LFL book-sharing boxes.
- "Children who visit the LFL read an average of 1.1 additional days per week. 49% reported reading more frequently since

they began using a LFL.

- "88% of children said they now keep more books at home, helping them build personal libraries."

**So how might your Friends use this information?** Well, if your Friends are not currently stewards of a LFL, you could start there. **Apply for an FONCPL challenge grant** to get the money to either purchase or build a LFL and use your donated books to keep them filled.

[Click here](#) to read about the study. [Click here](#) for more LFL information.



# Little Free Library®

## Take a Book. Share a Book.

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### Library Routine Visit Ideas

You have probably never stopped to think about this before; but perhaps patrons, especially parents and guardians, may need to be prompted to use the library in more creative ways. Remember your library's funding may be partially dependent upon demonstrated usage. And given today's climate, some may be looking for a reason to shutter your library—under-utilization would be a key factor. **What can your Friends do to help?** Here are some ideas and there are more in the [article on Everyday Reading](#).

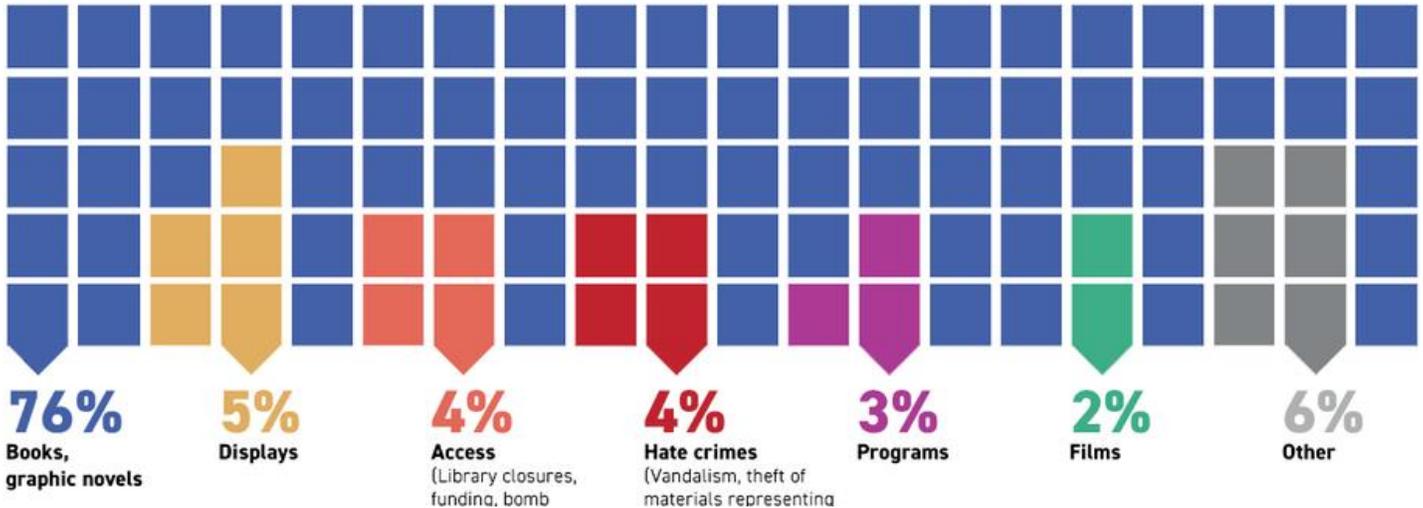
- Create a suggestion list (flyer) for parents of various age children to help them expand their selection of books.

- Create bookmarks or post-it notes—place them in or on a book where they can be noticed—give a short synopsis of the story or topic and why you liked it. Can do this for all ages.
- Host homeschooled families or groups to a weekly book or science club event. Serve refreshments.
- Create a flyer for every age group: If you liked this book (or author), you may also like this book (or author). Remember most libraries have fiction books alphabetically and not by genres.

The article has a bunch more ideas. Create a flyer with them and change it periodically.

## Books Are Not Sole Target of Attacks Against Our Freedoms

From ALA website: "Books are not the sole target of attacks orchestrated by conservative parent groups and right-wing media. Both school and public librarians are increasingly in the crosshairs of conservative groups during book challenges and subject to defamatory name-calling, online harassment, social media attacks, and doxxing, as well as direct threats to their safety, their employment, and their very liberty."



## Libraries Rock Worlds by Judy Hills

I'm not sure just how I started receiving this monthly email, but it always has interesting content—even though it seems to be primarily to market ALA publications. For example, in the section "Soundtracking February" the ALA Editions Staff picked out their song of the month. Here are a few selections:

- Jamie's Song of the Month: "Sunshine Day" by Osibisa
- Angela's Song of the Month: "I Had a Dream I Was Falling Through a Hole in the Ozone Layer" by Deee-Lite
- Team's Songs of the Month: "Pinball Number Count" by Thomas Marriott, "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars, "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace Love and Understanding" by Elvis Costello and the Attractions, "Break My Stride" by Matthew Wilder, "Show You the Way to Go" by The Jacksons, and "You Gotta Be" by Des'ree.

The edition goes on to promote publications for libraries. There was a [link](#) to some interesting vintage ALA merchandise. **Think door prizes or prizes for contests.**

Some libraries are told that the staff may not have ALA membership paid by the library. They could join as individuals, though. **Perhaps your Friends could gift an ALA membership to librarians who want to be ALA members. Or your Friends could offer to purchase ALA library management books for those librarians who would read and use the material from them.** For example Rebecca Hass wrote the book "101 Seeds for Library Joy." Its description: "Feeling burned out, dispirited, or just plain blah? Plant a whole lot of joy at your library using this little book's fun and inventive ideas!" How fun would that be for staff!!!

## Celebrating National Poetry Month—April

The following are ideas from the Academy of American Poets. [Click here](#) to read the whole article.

- Display the official [National Poetry Month poster](#)
- Learn how to [celebrate at home](#)
- Learn how to [celebrate in the classroom](#)
- Attend the [Poetry & the Creative Mind virtual gala](#) on April 24, 2025
- Find poetry readings and events on our [Poetry Near You calendar](#), and add your own
- Encourage students in grades five through twelve to participate in the [Dear Poet Project](#)
- [Sign up for Poem-a-Day](#), curated in April by [Willie Perdomo](#), and enjoy a free daily poem in your inbox
- Follow the thousands of celebrations taking place on social media with the official hashtag [#NationalPoetryMonth](#) and follow the Academy of American Poets on Twitter and Instagram [@POETSorg](#)
- Share a [#PocketPoem](#) on [Poem in Your Pocket Day](#) on April 10, 2025

## Haiku poems with library themes

The staff at the Bay View Library (Milwaukee) has been inspired to write their own library themed haikus. Haiku poems are a type of Japanese poetry that has 17 syllables arranged in three consecutive lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables respectively. Try it, it's fun!

### Story Time by Lisa S

Library shh shh  
Story time kids rushing in  
LIBRARY SHH GONE!

### Da Bomb by Fran G

Think books are da bomb?  
The library has them all.  
Come see us today!

### Read by LaToya P

Read Read Read Read Read  
Reading can be lots of fun  
Grab a book and read

### Library Card by Abby O

new library card  
ticket to a different world  
what a joy it holds

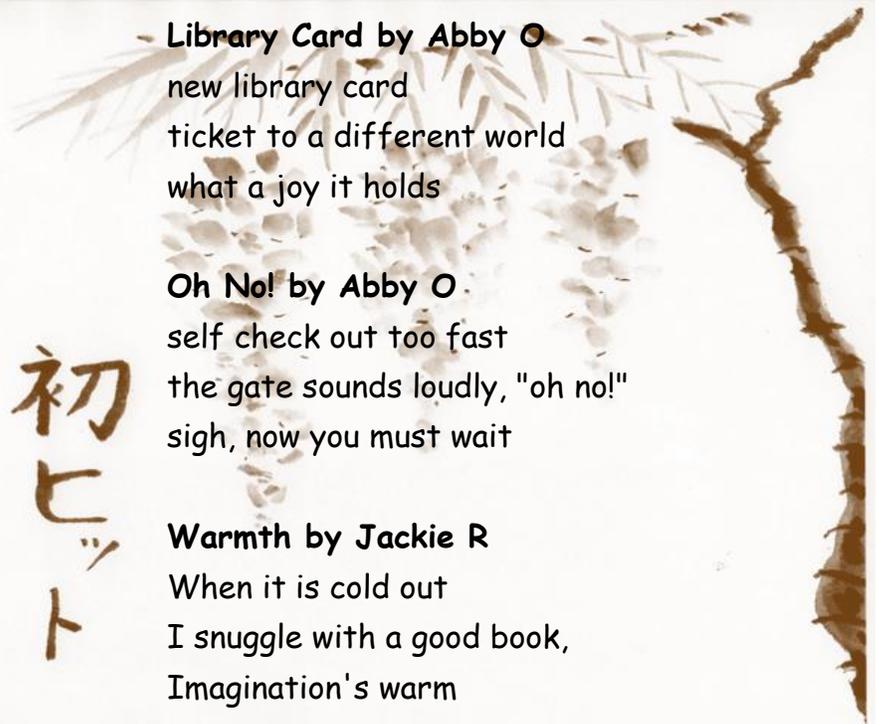
### Oh No! by Abby O

self check out too fast  
the gate sounds loudly, "oh no!"  
sigh, now you must wait

### Warmth by Jackie R

When it is cold out  
I snuggle with a good book,  
Imagination's warm

初ヒツト  
花までゆれて  
喜びを純子句





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Public Libraries**

Helping Friends Build Resilience

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**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: 5/10, 8/9, with annual meeting on 11/15.**

**Challenge Grant Applications due 9/15/25.**

**Friend of the Year nominations due 9/30/25.**

Here are a few dates of note:

**APRIL—National Poetry Month**

4/1 April Fools Day

4/2 International Children's Picture Book Day

Apr 5-12 National Robotics Week

Apr 6-12 National Library Week

4/8 National Library Workers Day

4/12 Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) Day

4/13 National Scrabble Day

4/17 National Haiku Poetry Day

4/18 Good Friday

4/20 Easter

4/20-26 National Volunteer Week

4/28 National Superhero Day

4/28 National Great Poetry Reading Day

**MAY**

5/1 Law Day

5/2 International Harry Potter Day

5/1 May Day

5/1 Mother Goose Day

5/1 National Day of Prayer

5/3 National Paranormal Day

5/3 Kentucky Derby

5/4 Star Wars Day (May the 4th be with you)

5/5 Cinco de Mayo

5-11 Choose Privacy Week (ALA Privacy Rights in the Digital Age)

5/6 National Nurses Day

5/6 National Teachers' Day

5/11 Mother's Day

5/12 Limerick Day (Edward Lear, the Limerick)

5/15 Peace Officers Memorial Day

5/17 Armed Forces Day

5/19 Military Spouse Appreciation Day

5/21 World Day for Cultural Diversity

5/22 National Maritime Day

5/24 National Scavenger Hunt Day

5/25 National Wine Day

5/25 National Missing Children's Day

5/26 Memorial Day