



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

May 2025

Dear Friends,

It's MAY! Finally! After the crazy winter weather North Carolina has experienced, we are due for a break. The door on my coat closet might have stayed open the entirety of February, March, and April. One day a raincoat was required. The next day might require a sweater or winter coat! We did have on-and-off snow here in the mountains and ICE! My beautiful trees really took a hit. Luckily, downed branches didn't hit the house. What the crazy weather did permit was more time for pleasure reading than I might have otherwise had time to do. I hope you had some time to read, too.

Our past president and current newsletter editor, Judy Hills, assisted the Friends of Rube McCray Memorial Library in Lake Waccamaw, NC, with getting their Friends group reorganized. Judy and her husband spent the day in that lovely part of our state. While Judy was working, her husband had a guided tour provided by the wife of the group's chair. Please see the letter Judy received on page 3 of this newsletter to understand the services Judy provided this Friends group. If other groups would like similar services, let us know. If Judy isn't available, we'll try to find someone who can assist.

Another event that both Judy and I were able to arrange was a Zoom meeting with Rishara Finsel, Library Director of the

Transylvania County Library in Brevard, NC. Rishara is also President of the North Carolina Public Library Directors Association (NCPLDA). While it wasn't the first time our two organizations have connected, we felt the need to discuss how our two organizations can work together to benefit local libraries across the state. The current plan is that I will attend their fall meeting in Brevard to talk about our state organization and encourage directors to form Friends groups if they don't currently have them; and, if they do, encourage them to join our state organization. We believe there is strength in numbers to influence legislation that affects our local libraries.

On page 3 you will note an appeal from the NCPLDA for advocacy funding, which we need more than ever. Please be generous as so far this year they have received less than half the amount from prior years when they need twice the amount.

Our board is your board. If there are issues you would like to have addressed in the newsletter, let us know. If there are ideas that you would like to share, let us know. We want to be of service to you.

Yours in Friendship,

Joyce Speas, President

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Funding Update

For those who may not know, "In 1995, Dolly Parton launched an exciting new effort, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee, USA. Dolly's vision was to foster a love of reading among her county's preschool children and their families. The new program gave each child a specially selected book each month. By mailing high quality, age appropriate books directly to their homes, Dolly wanted children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create. Moreover, she could ensure that every child would have books, regardless of their family's income.

Since its launch, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has set and surpassed many goals and milestones. National replication, which started in 2000, allowed more and more communities to adopt the program. State-wide coverage was established in Tennessee in 2004. Furthermore, international growth provided expansion in Canada (2006), United Kingdom (2007) and Australia (2014).

The first book order in 1995 totaled just over 1,700. Today, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library sends more than one million books per month to children around the world inspiring them to Dream More, Learn More, Care More and Be More."

Smart Start and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library are working together to get books into the hands of North Carolina's youngest children. In 2017, North Carolina's state lawmakers included \$3.5 million in the first year and \$7 million in the second year of the state budget for Smart Start to administer Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL) across North Carolina. Over the years, the state

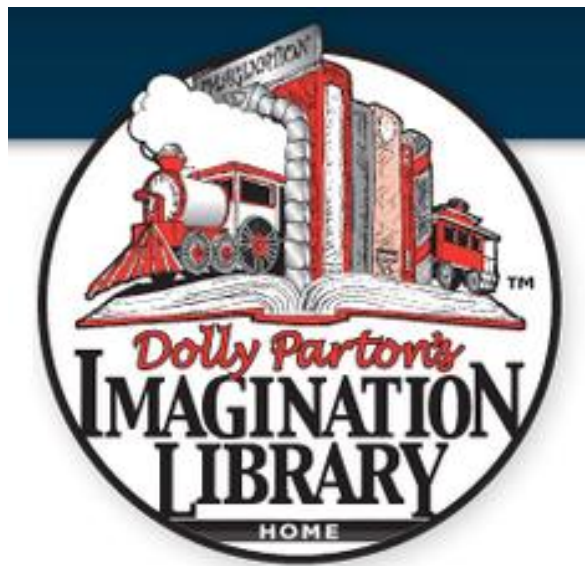
has provided additional funding to help bring DPIL to children and families across North Carolina.

Since 2017, over 21 million books have been put in the hands of North Carolina's youngest; and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library continues to serve children in every Zip Code of North Carolina!

The state-funded DPIL program has been so successful and we have

reached capacity with our state funding. As a result, some North Carolina counties have closed NEW DPIL enrollment as of February 1, 2025.

If your county is one of those that have had to close NEW DPIL registrations, your Friends might contact the local Smart Start office to see how your Friends might help. [Click here](#) for a complete list of these offices with contact information.



NCPLDA Appeal for Advocacy Funds

FONCPL urges all Friends and Foundation groups and individual members to contribute generously to this NCPLDA appeal. Advocacy at the Federal and State levels are more important than ever!!! And contact your state and Federal Senators and Representatives.



Dear Library Friends and Foundations,

The North Carolina Public Library Directors Association (NCPLDA) is dedicated to strengthening public libraries across our state. We work tirelessly to support library leaders, staff, services and resources because strong libraries build strong communities. But we can't do it alone—Friends, Foundations and advocates like you are essential partners in this mission.

NCPLDA advocates for legislative action in support of funds for public libraries. In 2023, these efforts led to a historic \$3.8 million increase in recurring State Aid to Public Libraries funding – the largest increase in recurring funding ever. This additional funding will be provided annually for the foreseeable future and is distributed to every public library in the state. While all libraries saw increased funding as a result, the impact on rural, small and regional libraries, as well as those in economically distressed areas, has been especially significant.

This success was only possible because NCPLDA engages professional lobbyists to represent our legislative requests and priorities. Their work is **entirely funded** by contributions from Friends and Foundation groups like yours. We need your support to continue this critical work.

Please consider making a financial contribution today. Your gift helps not just your local library, but libraries across North Carolina. Every contribution, big or small, fuels the fight for better libraries and stronger communities. A donation form is attached with details on how to give. If you have any questions about NCPLDA or your contribution, please ask your local Library Director.

Thank you for being a champion for public libraries. Together, we can build a future where every library in North Carolina has the support and resources it needs to thrive!

Sincerely,

Rishara Finsel
President, NC Public Library Director's Association
Director, Transylvania County Library

[CLICK HERE](#) FOR THE DONATION FORM

FONCPL Consults with Friends of Rube McCray Memorial Library

The following is from a press release drafted by the Friends of RMML's publicity chair, Stuart Davis.

On Monday, April 14th, 2025, the Rube McCray Memorial Library at Lake Waccamaw, NC was honored to welcome Mrs. Judy Hills, former President of the Friends of North Carolina Public Libraries, as a distinguished guest. The Friends of North Carolina Public Libraries is a statewide volunteer organization that provides a network for sharing ideas and resources with library groups, thereby strengthening public libraries across the state.

Mrs. Hills, with her extensive experience and profound knowledge of public libraries, acted in the role of Consultant for the RMML Board. Her observations and guidance were invaluable to the group here at Lake Waccamaw. A brief question and answer period was held at the

end of the session. The Board would like to thank Mrs. Hills for her time and commitment not only to RMML, but to all North Carolina public libraries.

Mrs. Hills is currently the Vice President of the Friends of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library. We wish her the best, and consider her not only a friend, but a wonderful resource for public libraries in North Carolina.

President David Scott, sent this email to Judy after the consultation, "Our board met immediately after the consultation this afternoon. We all were in resounding agreement that the session with you was enjoyable, informative, and actionable. Thank you for the effort you made to help us improve our library and our community!"

Judy sent a follow-up report detailing options for the Friends of RMML.



News from FOL of Henderson County by Jenny Rickell

The FOL of Henderson County, NC had a really big celebration for The National Library Appreciation week. Not only were we able to spread the love with cookies and fresh cut flowers held in beautiful "book vases" to each of our SIX local branches but we celebrated BIG in our store too! The Hendo FOL decided to launch our first quarterly membership incentive program with a \$5 off coupon in our local Illuminations newsletter just during this celebratory week! We are proud to say we have 46 NEW FOL members! What a great week it was online as well... giving fun library facts each day gathering more followers as we went. We are so proud of our amazing li-



brary system and librarians. It was pure joy to be able to pay our respects to ALL who support one of our greatest national treasures! "Friends" forever! For sure!



Friends: Money Matters

One of the most important resources on the FONCPL website is the 20-minute, YouTube video, *Money Matters*. Every Friends board member should view this video to understand how Friends funds can be spent and how to supplement the library's budget with Friends funding. We suggest using this video as part of the orientation for a new Friends' board member. [Click here](#) to view.



Positive News for May by Karen Robbins

Elizabeth Foster, Isabella “Izzy” Troy Brazoban and Millie Bennett, students in Beaufort, SC, became student activists when 97 books were removed from every school in the BCSD. They began attending school board meetings and met biweekly with other students to learn about book banning, and to plan remarks that they would speak about at the board meetings. They covered topics such as the history of book banning, the need for LGBTQ+ books for students who lacked resources in small, conservative communities, and books that touched on substance abuse or racism. They have now begun a national campaign, after Atomic Focus Entertainment approached them about making a documentary. They emphasize the joy of learning, and literature, and diversity and inclusion, and encourage all of us to join them in standing up for joy.

“...watching *Banned Together* is a great first step. You’ll learn more about the context surrounding book bans and censorship, and see how students and communities alike have fought back against these harmful policies.”

—Elizabeth Foster, “Students Fighting Book Bans Are the Focus of the New Documentary *Banned Together*”, *Teen Vogue*, April 16, 2025

More Positive News for May by Karen Robbins

Banned Together, a documentary, is out on Apple TV or Amazon Prime. Hold a watch party with Friends. The film follows three students from Beaufort, SC as they advocate against banning books.

The American Civil Liberties Union sued the Department of Defense's education agency and Defense Secretary, Pete Hegseth, for the removal of books from schools run by the Defense Department. The ACLU is arguing that students will be harmed by not learning about health issues, or abuse issues, or be prepared for AP Psychology tests that may have questions on sex and gender. This affects 67,000 children of military families. (Danika Ellis, "The ACLU and Pentagon School Students Sue Over Book Bans", *Book Riot*, April 18, 2025)

Mt. Lebanon Library became the first library in Pennsylvania to declare itself a book sanctuary, with the trustees approval. A book sanctuary is a place that "collects and protects endangered books." (Erica Ezeifedi, "Pennsylvania Mt. Lebanon Library Becomes Book Sanctuary", *Book Riot*, April 18, 2025.)

Tools for our advocacy toolkit. Nicola Wedderburn, Executive Director of the International Literacy Association (ILA), a [Unite Against Book Bans partner](#), has written about protecting children's right to read. Her blog found [here](#) describes the Children's Right to Read initiative, and has links for more information. The International Literacy Association has copies of the [Children's Rights to Read](#) list.

New Study Explores the Impact of Book Bans on Library Circulation: "Researchers at Carnegie Mellon and George Mason University have published a new study about the impact of book bans on the consumption of banned books." Studying library checkouts, the researchers found that book bans increase circulation, including books on race, gender, and LGBTQ+ issues. The bans increase exposure of readers to more inclusive content. While these stats are positive, book bans are bad for authors, and it is also clear that politicians raise money after a book banning event, so they continue to support such bans.

QR Codes: Use & Safety

Short for quick response codes, QR codes are a type of barcode that houses information that digital devices can read. Most often square-shaped and made up of black and white geometric patterns, QR codes store data of various types, including phone numbers, text and website URLs.

QR codes are now found everywhere from restaurant menus to billboards. Typically, QR codes are used to enable consumers to access a website or mobile application without needing to enter a web address.

Scanning a QR code is as easy as opening the camera app on your smartphone. Simply use the phone's camera to view a QR code up close, keeping the code in the camera's frame for a few seconds. The data stored within the QR code will soon appear on your screen, enabling you to tap to open the link, dial a phone number or read stored text.

Generally, QR codes are safe to scan as long as they're from a trusted source. The QR codes you find at restaurants, on direct mail pieces from companies you recognize, and even within television commercials are most likely safe to scan. While scanning codes from trusted sources is generally safe, scammers can use QR codes to trick people into opening unsafe web links. Just as you shouldn't click on a suspicious-looking link, it's best not to scan a QR code of unknown origin.

Consumers should be especially suspicious of QR codes embedded in emails and social media posts, even those coming from friends and family. Typically, emails and social media posts should contain visible website URLs since they are already digital formats. Scammers might add a QR code to an email or social media post in the hope of tricking recipients or viewers into scanning the code. [Click here](#) to read full AARP article.



FRIENDS OF THE HAVELOCK LIBRARY

Contributed by Dew Usa. Colonial Capital Humane Society and the Havelock Friends partnered with Elevate Studio to show off their cat yoga skills. A memorable event for both felines and humans.



NEW SEED LIBRARY AT NEW BERN LIBRARY

Contributed by Lisa Keesen. The Friends of the New Bern-Craven County Public Library are getting everything together for a Seed Library.

What is a seed library you ask? It is a place where people in the community can come and "check-out" seeds to be grown at home. They could be vegetables, flowers, or herbs. The seed library will consist of seeds donated by seed companies, local businesses, and others.

The seed library will accept donations throughout the year and continue to update the library. Each envelope of seeds will only consist of a few seeds to be able to grow a couple of plants. This way everyone will be able to have seeds to grow. There will be a set limit on how many seeds you can take but, it will also be set up as an honor system.

In the future, we hope to create interest

in the seed library by hosting adult's as well as children's programming on how to start your own garden and how to harvest your own seeds. [Click here](#) for the simple steps to start a seed library.

FUN FACT: some of the small seed packets we received from the seed companies contained as many as 3500 very, very tiny seeds! It was a challenge to include only a few in each seed packet.



Charitable Solicitation License or Exemption—Required

Generally, any organization or person that intends to directly solicit contributions in North Carolina, or intends to hire a person or business to solicit contributions in North Carolina, must first obtain a license from the Charities Division. Organizations must renew their licenses each year to maintain licensed status.

There are several statutory exemptions to this requirement. A person that qualifies for an exemption does not have to obtain or maintain a license. [Exemption List](#)

If an organization requires a license but operates without one, that organization may be subject to administrative penalties or fines in addition to civil and/or criminal prosecution.

The license or exemption is now easier to obtain as you may use your form 990 information instead of having to submit a financial statement.

A "Contribution"

- means a promise, pledge, grant of any money or property, financial assistance, or any other thing of value in response to a solicitation. This includes in-kind contributions of goods or services.
- "Contribution" includes, in the case of a charitable organization or sponsor offering a good or service to the public, the excess of the price at which the charitable organization or sponsor or any person acting on behalf of the charitable organization or sponsor sells the good or service to the public over the fair market value of the good or service.
- "Contribution" does not include bona fide fees, dues, or assessments paid by members if the membership is not conferred solely as consideration for making a contribution in response to a solicitation.
- "Contribution" does not include grants or awards applied for by a charitable or sponsor organization that are received from a government entity or an organization exempt from federal income taxation per §501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code and described in §501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

License Required but No Fee If applicant received less than \$5,000.00; DID compensate (in any capacity) any officer, trustee, organizer, or incorporator, fundraiser or solicitor in the immediate preceding fiscal year fundraiser or solicitor, in the immediate preceding fiscal year.

There may be additional fees if the applicant received more than \$5,000. License applications can be downloaded, completed and mailed to their office with appropriate fees and required documents or completed online using [Charities Division's OnLine filing portal](#). The application required a notarized signature page.

Friends Tip

If your Friends do not yet have a Charitable Solicitation License or Exemption from the NC Secretary of State, get one immediately.

[Click here](#) for details.

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Keep Your Registered Agent Current

If your Friends are incorporated as a nonprofit in the state of North Carolina, you must keep your Registered Agent current. The information below is from the NC Secretary of State's office https://www.sosnc.gov/divisions/business_registration/registered_agent_links. And, NO, an employee of the library CANNOT be your registered agent. Yes, you can use your Friend's PO Box to receive notices. Go to the NCSOS [business registration website](#) and look up your Friends.

Registered Office and Registered Agent Information

Registered Office and Registered Agent Information

- The sole duty of the registered agent is to forward any notice, process or demand to the last known address of the entity.
- The entity has a duty to keep the registered agent information updated.

A registered agent must

- Agree to act as your registered agent.
- Reside in North Carolina (You may be your own registered agent if you live in NC) **or**
- be a domestic or foreign **corporation, nonprofit or LLC**, that is: Registered on the NC Business Registry and authorized to transact business/conduct affairs in NC; and whose business office address is identical with the registered office address.

Registered Office

- Each registered agent must continuously maintain a **physical** registered office in North Carolina where the registered agent can receive notices, demands, and service of process on behalf of the entity.
- Acceptance of these documents at the agent's registered office is considered legal notice.
- The agent must then forward the documents to the business in a timely manner.
- It is important to provide the registered agent with up-to-date contact information.
- The entity must also provide the Secretary of State with up-to-date contact information about the registered agent.
- A registered mailing address may be a PO Box address.



Havelock Library Friends Purchase Book Binder Repair Machine

The Friends funded this nifty addition to the library's tools for saving books that experience heavy usage. It's a fast, easy and cost effective option for repairing books rather than replacing them. Photo: Library Manager Jeanne Holmgren with Cover One Book Repair Machine.



Funding for a Small Project—Youth Led



Application deadline: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1, annually

Grant amount: \$250 to \$1,000

Description: The Karma for Cara Foundation seeks to support young people throughout the United States in their efforts to contribute to society and help repair the world through volunteerism and community service. **Students 18 years of age and under may apply** for funds between \$250 and \$1,000 to complete service projects in their communities. The microgrants support a wide variety of projects and events, such as turning a vacant lot into a community garden, rebuilding a school playground, or helping senior citizens ready their homes for the winter. **Examples of library-related projects:** outdoor benches, meditation garden, children's play area, building and installing a Little Free Library, StoryWalk, etc.

[Click here](#) to read more about this grant from Karma for Cara Foundation.



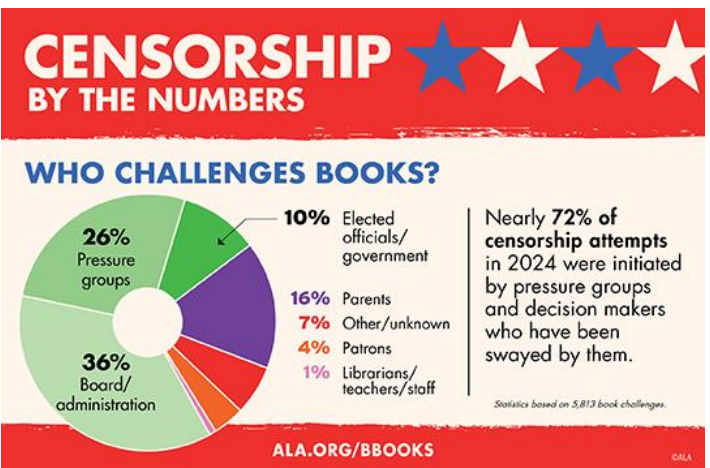
TOP 10 MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2024

The American Library Association documented 821 attempts to censor materials and services at libraries, schools, and universities in 2024. The most common reasons for challenges were false claims of illegal obscenity for minors; inclusion of LGBTQIA+ characters or themes; and dealing with topics of race, racism, inequality, equity, and social justice. Of the 2,452 unique titles that were challenged or banned in 2024, here are the top 10 most frequently targeted.

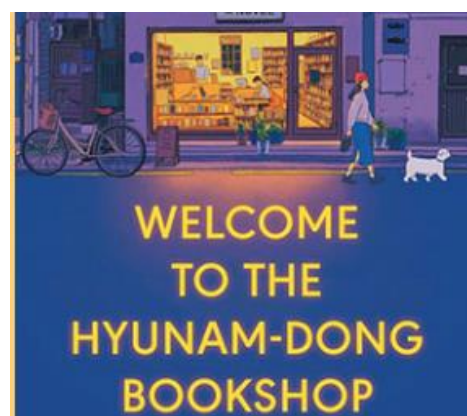
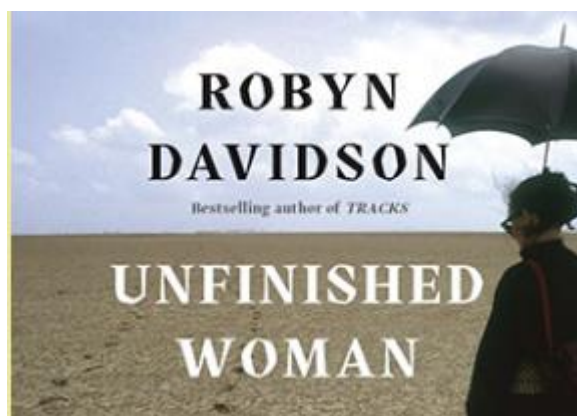
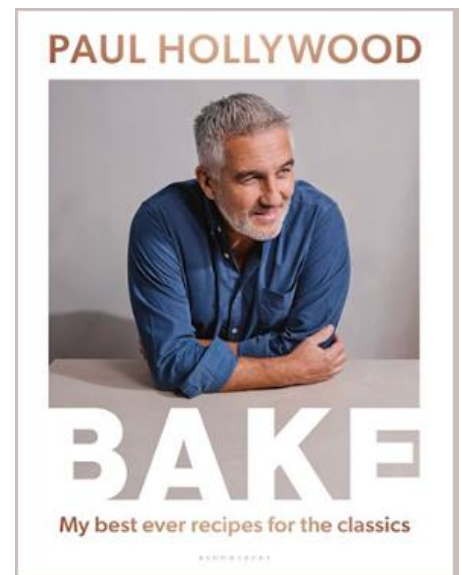
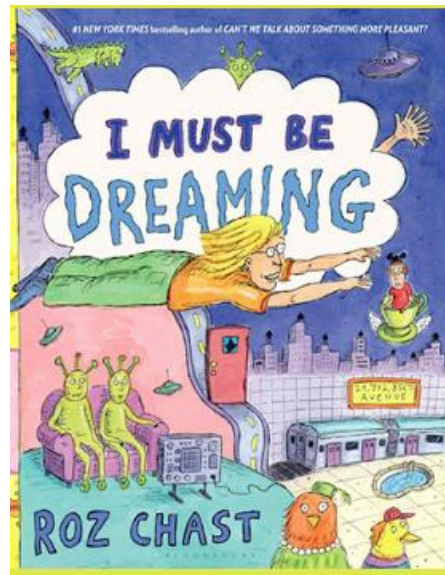
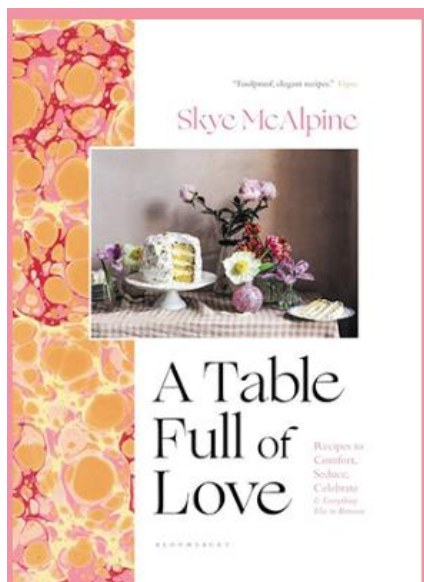
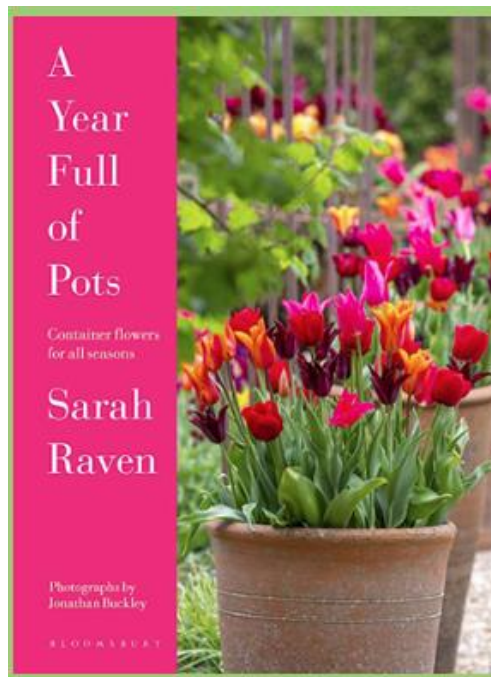
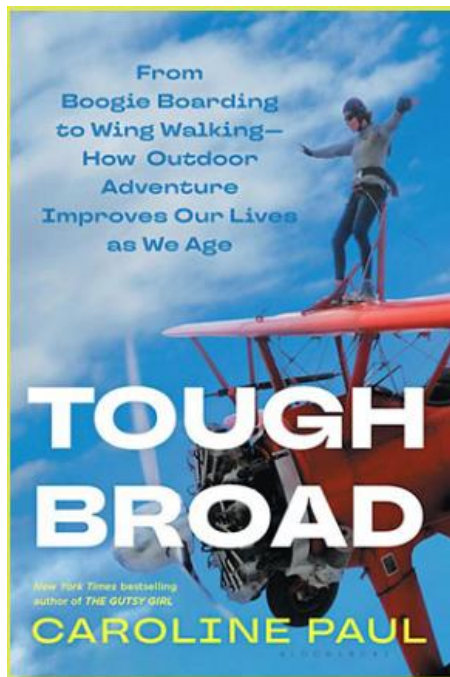


OFFICE FOR
Intellectual Freedom
American Library Association

ALA.ORG/BBOOKS



Perfect Books to Gift for Mothers' Day





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Public Libraries**

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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:

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
5/30 National Creativity Day
5/31 National Smile Day

**CELEBRATE
JANE AUSTIN'S
250TH BIRTHDAY**

December 16, 2025