



Rutherford County Library System's

# Library Link

**FROM THE BOSS**  
**Rita Shacklett**

Volume 27 Issue 1  
January 2024

**Welcome, 2024!** I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday time and is ready to start off the new year. For me, I found the following "7 Rules of Life" to be a great reminder.

## In the News

There is no library board meeting in January; it is combined with February due to the January and February holidays that fall on the 3rd Monday. Their next meeting is Monday, February 5, at 5 PM at City Hall (Murfreesboro).

I was scheduled to present our action plan to the Rutherford County Steering Committee on Wednesday, January 10, at 5:30 PM in the county courtroom. As of the writing of this article, the Steering Committee has now rescheduled us to February but on the same day as the board meeting. We are hoping to get it moved to the March meeting. Stay tuned!

On Thursday, December 21, 2023, the Murfreesboro City Council voted unanimously to repeal the decency ordinance. This was the first reading. It will not be final until the second reading on Thursday, January 11, 2024. While this is great news locally, we still have to follow the state laws, so things will probably continue as they are until state legislators see fit to make changes at the state level.

We have been working on the budget for 2024-25 and will present it to the Library Board's Budget and Finance Committee in mid-January so that it will be ready for the full board's approval at the February meeting. In case anyone asks, with the newer laws in place, the committee meeting will be advertised, have a formal agenda, and time for public comments. The agenda and meeting notice will be posted on our website and social media once a meeting date/time has been set.

In the words of Elmer Fudd, "That's all folks!"

## 7 RULES OF LIFE

1. **Make peace with your past**  
so it won't disturb you.
2. **What other people think of you**  
is none of your business.
3. **Time heals almost everything.**  
Give it time.
4. **No one is in charge**  
of your happiness, except you.
5. **Don't compare your life to others**  
and don't judge them, you have no idea what their journey is all about.
6. **Stop thinking too much.**  
It's alright not to know all the answers.
7. **Smile.**  
You don't own all the problems in the world

2024

# Linebaugh's Stream of Consciousness



RYAN: The lights drew dim, as the shadows covered the crowd of faces. There it was, a single light, shining through the darkness. While the clocks had changed, we remained the same. Shorter days, longer nights, always running from the ticking clock of time. We did not know the end was near. "Highways don't just dead-end", she said, from the passenger seat. Can this really be the end?

HAYLE: We drove toward the light hoping to get further to the music. We went further and further, yet it felt as if we were not moving. "The time felt so different in this world." I spoke, hoping for someone or something to acknowledge the situation at hand. The music continued to blast to the point where I wished I had a pair of earplugs.

KHYLAH: Suddenly, the smell of nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon slowly faded into peppermint and the faint aroma of gingerbread. I began to panic. The bright light dimmed and the music seemed to stop at the will of my thoughts. I wasn't in a car at all, for it was just the old (still amazing) Kone. The button blinked and there I was; back at Linebaugh in my human form. There, I realized Pumpkin Spice Season was over. Peace in CafeLand had yet to be restored, and the Bagel Oligarchy would continue to rule. I was too late. For now, all I could think to do was to bring donuts to work every day and slowly, but surely, weaken the system from the Human world. The knowledge of these otherworldly events has become a burden on my conscience so I must leave you with a final message. The power lies in the donut.





## Smyrna Spotlight Ginger Graves



The Smyrna staff experienced a relatively busy and successful December. The Friends of Smyrna Library (FOSL) did so much for the library staff by giving each staff member a gift card for Christmas and providing us with a bountiful breakfast. We are grateful for all they do. FOSL also provided many volunteers to work at the Scholastic Book Fair from November 27 through December 6. The total fair sales exceeded \$3500. This sales amount benefited our library by allowing us to acquire several new books for the library. These new Scholastic books will be added to the Youth Department collection or given away as prizes to youth patrons in the upcoming Summer Reading Program.

FOSL also recently received a grant from the local Rotary Club. The Rotary grant funds will go towards purchasing new furniture for the Youth Services Department. A portion of the furniture order arrived early and has already improved access to the Board Book collection. Smyrna's Board Books were previously stored on an old, shallow-depth shelf that was awkward and inconvenient for browsing. Small children, for whom the board books are for, could not reach the top shelves. But, as shown in the photo of the new shelving, the ease of access and browsability are evident.

Friends continue to be a generous sponsor of our Reading Programs. They received a grant from Ingram that supports funding for the upcoming 2024 Smyrna Winter Reading Challenge. One small change this year is that Smyrna's Winter Reading Challenge is now open to participants of all ages. The Winter Reading Challenge begins on January 16 and lasts six weeks, ending on February 27. Participants must read six books within the six-week Challenge to receive a completion prize and be entered into a random drawing for several grand prize options. Participants may read four additional books during the Challenge to increase their odds of winning a grand prize. We are grateful to have the opportunity to offer this year's Winter Reading Challenge to all of our patrons and guests.



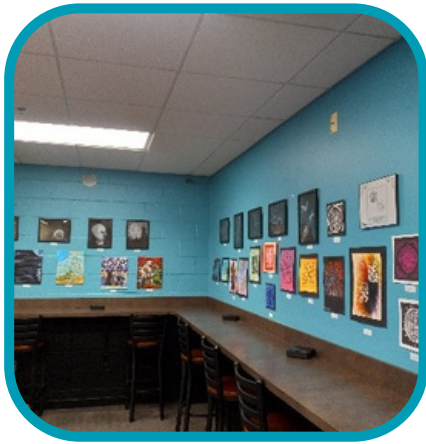
The January calendar of events is full. With free programs for children offered each day of the month and multiple teen and adult programs offered throughout January, the staff looks forward to an exciting and engaging start to 2024. Happy New Year from Smyrna Public Library!



# MGL Relay Kristen Birckholtz



This December was full of passive programming, competitions, new staff, and lots of children visiting for their Winter Break. MGL was glad to display the Holloway High School Art Gallery this month. Many students and parents came to see their artwork, and are looking forward to another showing in May. We are always excited to build the partnerships between MGL and the local community. The competition for Ugliest Sweater was fierce. Kids and adults alike turned in their entries, hopeful for the chance to win the coveted Squishmallow. This is certainly going to be a yearly event!



Maddie Hicks

Finally, we are excited to welcome Maddie Hicks to the MGL Branch for our Youth Service Department. She brings with her years of library experience as well as creativity, warmth, and enthusiasm! She was happy to answer some of our "Get to Know You" questions:

**1. How long have you worked at RCLS, and what are you excited about for your new position at MGL?** I've been here for about a month, and I'm brand new to RCLS! I have previously worked for Millersville Public Library in Sumner County and the John P. Holt Brentwood Library.

**2. If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go first?**

Italy is really high up on my list!

**3. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

I would love to have Inspector Gadget-style hands that could transform into scissors, a hot glue gun, wire cutters, markers, and pom pom shooters for the ultimate arts and crafts abilities.



# MGL Relay Kristen Birckholtz



## 4. What is your favorite book, or alternatively, who is your favorite author?

It's too hard to choose an all-time favorite book, but my favorite book this past year has been "Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow" by Gabrielle Zevin. I usually go for thrillers and nonfiction, but that book was incredible.

## 5. What are your hobbies outside of work?

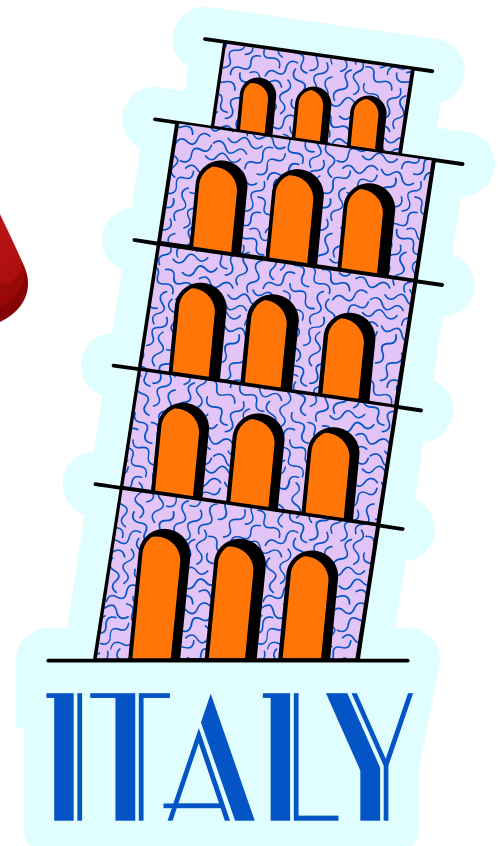
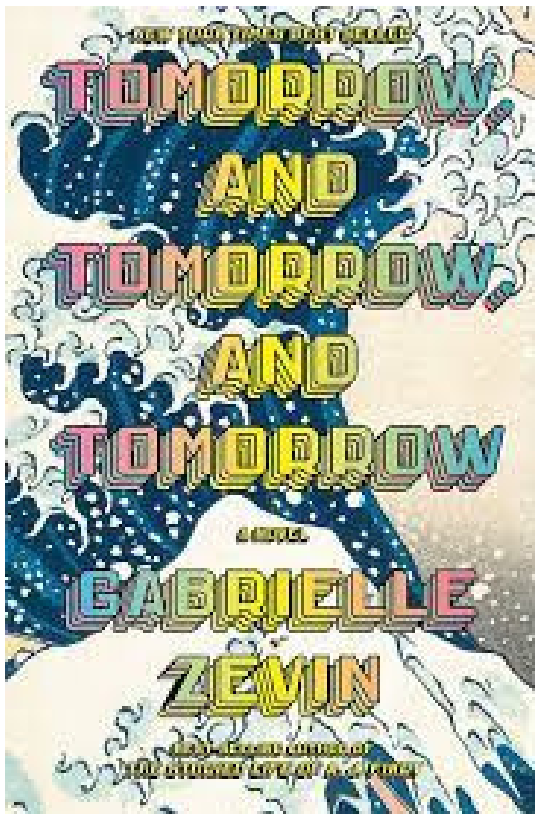
I'm a multimedia artist and primarily work in filmmaking, theater, and puppetry! I also enjoy wandering around antique shops, watching movies, and trying new restaurants.

## 6. Do you collect anything?

Rubber duckies and quirky salt and pepper shakers - highly recommend the Salt and Pepper Shaker Museum if you're ever in the Gatlinburg area.

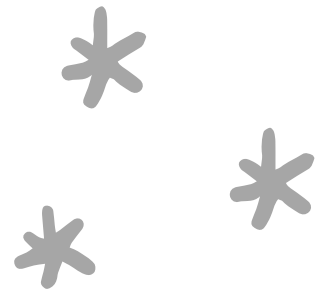
## 7. If you could go back in time, what year would you travel to? Where would you like to go?

I would visit the early 1960's as it's a fascinating time in history and I love the fashion and horrendous jello molds.



ho ho ho

## Eagleville Expressions Donna Jordan



Happy New Year to everyone at RCLS! The year 2023 may be over, but sadly, I believe the ripple effects, shock waves, and backlash resulting from countless political and social controversies across the nation will be ongoing well into the new year of 2024.

Storytime in December is always extra special and fun for the kids. Here at Eagleville we spend the whole month reading Christmas stories and making Christmas crafts. On December 13, we had Storytime with Santa!! A total of 65 children and 35 parents enjoyed Santa telling the story "Twas the Night Before Christmas." Afterward, they all lined up for a turn to talk to Santa and get their picture taken with him! Santa gave "magic peppermints" to all the children to help guarantee a merry Christmas! The last storytime day in December was all about celebrating the New Year and making "silly-mouth party horns" (I know the moms are still thanking me for that craft project).

Looking ahead into 2024, I'm hoping to add some new programs and do some community outreach with the help of Mike Cleaves and our new Bookmobile! Also, for the first time, I'm planning on bringing in some professional entertainment for our 2024 Summer Reading Program!

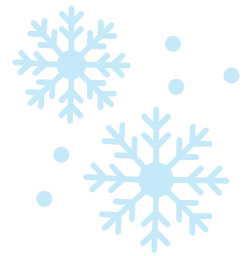
CHEERS to a new year full of fun, partnerships, outreach, and growth!

MERRY  
Christmas

Happy  
New Year  
2024



# Bookmobile Beat Mike Cleaves



Sometimes you never know what to expect. For example, when conducting interviews last week we asked many of our potential candidates what they would expect a job at the library to look like. If you've ever conducted interviews for the library before, you might be able to guess what the typical response was.

"I'd imagine it's quiet, and we get to read a lot."

Battle tested employees at Linebaugh certainly know better. However, it got me thinking about what my expectations were when I started out. They were largely the same. I envisioned a quiet, stress free environment. In reality, it's largely a pressure cooker that will test even the most imperturbable employee. It turned out that my expectations of Bookmobile were even further off the mark.

I could never have imagined that driving a bookmobile would demand the wearing of so many hats. It never occurred to me that I would be crawling around on wet asphalt looking for oil leaks or finding a short in the electrical work. I remember the first time I had to pull out the schematics for our onboard generator because it was burning oil, needed to be topped off, and I couldn't find the dipstick. One time, I took a ten-part YouTube course on how diesel engines work so I could make minor repairs if needed. Library work demands an expertise in mechanics? Apparently so.



Attempting to resuscitate an aged Bookmobile

Lately, I've been learning about public relations, another aspect of the job I had never envisioned. While there is satisfaction in learning the art of modern communication, it's a steep learning curve. Thankfully, I've had help over at the TEC from Amanda in IT. She had envisioned reenacting a popular meme that other library systems had used to poke fun at our barebones government vehicles. It was so much fun to film, but more importantly, it gained a lot of traction on social media. This has led to a noticeable uptick in inquiries about the Bookmobile. It was a wonderful lesson about the necessity of creativity and embracing modern technology and forms of communication. Do you need acting chops to work at a library? It certainly can't hurt.

# Bookmobile Beat

## Mike Cleaves



It turns out that we exercise those acting and creative skills all the time. Who'd have thought a job driving a Bookmobile would require the skills to read a story in a dozen different voices? Having the "stage presence" to capture the attention of a room full of rambunctious four year olds can take you a long way. Developing that stage presence to sing a silly song and do monster voices in front of a hundred parents and children can be enough to break the ice and turn a one off visit into a reliable weekly stop. It's important that we take wearing all those hats seriously. You never know when you will need them. Especially when those pesky public relations moments pop up.

In December I was asked to go on WGNS and discuss the arrival of our new Bookmobile. Who could fathom that a job at the library would lead to doing a live 30 minute radio spot broadcast to a county of 350,000 people. But we wear a lot of hats, and when duty calls, we get on with it. My biggest worry was filling airtime. You can't answer questions with a simple yes or no; you need to provide nuance, be prepared to answer unexpected questions, and, most importantly, remain focused enough to pitch the Bookmobile lucidly. It was a lot.



Live on WGNS; photo courtesy of Kevin Robertson

Thankfully, wearing a lot of different hats gives you a lot to talk about, and having the time to hone those different skills in so many different settings allows you to speak confidently. We may not always be able to anticipate the unexpected, but this job certainly prepares us to weather the storm. It also helps to have an entertaining co-worker join you; thanks, Kevin.

I'm not sure what I expected when I stumbled into this job. At first, I was so worried about crashing our Bookmobile in the maelstrom of Murfreesboro traffic that I never gave it much thought. But I'm not sure it matters outside of the context of an interview. Sometimes, when stumbling into a new journey, it's best to let the current take you because you never know where you'll go, what you'll learn, or how you'll grow.







**DECEMBER**  
**Birthdays**

Kayla Howard- December 6  
Al Brittain- December 20  
David O'Flaherty- December 30

**JANUARY**  
**Birthdays**

Allison Mays- January 22



**December**

Mindy Barrett- 14 years

Catherine Cone- 4 years

Ariel Walker- 2 years

Hope LaFever- 1 year

**January**

No anniversaries this month