

**Making Learning Fun**

**New additions to library aim to teach kids while they play / Page 3**

**Take This Deep Dive**

**'Sea of Tranquility' is a complex novel that's worth the voyage / Page 6**

**Pina Colada Pie**

**This easy-to-make dessert is bound to become a summer favorite / Page 8**

# Full Steam Ahead

With the pandemic doldrums behind it, RHL is sailing into a busy summer

The doors will be wide open at Rolling Hills Library for the 2022 Summer Reading Program, which is coming up June 1-July 31.

It makes "Oceans of Possibilities" an appropriate theme for the annual reading campaign that also includes a variety of craft, musical and educational events along with the featured Monday performers.

"We have a lot of programs this year," Belt Branch manager Kelly Morris said. "We've recovered from the pandemic, so come check out some books."

Youths of all ages and adults can read to earn a variety of prizes, including grand prizes of \$100 Walmart gift cards. All they need to do is read or listen to nine books or complete a combination of nine books and activities.

The books must be read in June and July, unlike past years when participants could count books read in previous months and complete their challenge in the first weeks of the summer. There's a reason for the change.

"It's important for kids to keep reading over the summer to prevent the summer slide and the loss of reading skills," Morris said.

Savannah Branch manager Jill Weaver offers this advice: "Summer reading should be more relaxed and fun, meaning no quizzes or required reading like in school. Reading something, whether it's a book, magazine, graphic novel or comic book or the newspaper, is better than reading nothing."



## OCEANS OF POSSIBILITIES

For youths ages 6-17 who want to read more than nine books, there is the Summer 2022 Badge Book Challenge. The first 300 participants will receive a log book to track their reading toward the goal of 600 minutes. If they reach that mark, they will earn a \$5 gift certificate to Books Revisited and be entered into a drawing for a new 3Doodler Start kit.

Youths can sign up for the Badge Book Challenge simultaneously with the regular reading challenge or after completing the main reading challenge. Readers younger than 6 can continue their summer reading with the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge.

Participants can register online using the library's reading challenge platform, Beanstack, or in person at the library branches to get a reading log. The Beanstack app allows users to scan publisher barcodes to enter the books they've read and

search for books by title or author. It also allows parents to have all the readers in their families in one file.

**Something new, something old**

While June and July are meant to keep youths and adults reading, the months also are packed with craft, musical and educational events with the featured Monday performers getting special attention.

"I think this year's line-up is terrific," Morris said. "We've got some returning favorites and some new faces."

**Continued on Page 7**

# Seasonal Smarts

Join in on the chorus: Summer reads, make me feel fine ...

When the sun still shines at 8 o'clock at night, it's kind of hard to squeeze in some before-bedtime reading. That's why summers are so great for reading any time of the day. If you are lucky enough to have unencumbered time during daylight hours, what a joy it is to sit outside in a shady spot with a cool beverage and a light breeze while you read something for pure pleasure.



This is one reason why we started including adults in our Summer Reading Program. Reading is a life-long activity, and grown-ups love games and prizes as much as anyone else. Plus, what a great opportunity to model this behavior for our young companions. Children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and neighborhood kids all should be encouraged to read by seeing adults make it an important part of our day. If we make time for it, then they will too. Maybe. Eventually.

Kids also will be kids, and stubborn is as stubborn does. That's another reason why we need to be creative in ways to keep our brains and theirs stimulated throughout the year. One fun thing to try is an audiobook on a road trip. It doesn't have to be a long drive. Even a trip to a Royals game and back is enough time to listen to a story together. That way there's no fighting over which music to play, and they can still have their tablets and devices while the audio plays over the car speakers. If you have multiple age ranges to satisfy, try an elementary age book so everyone can enjoy the story.

As we move into a busy primary and election season this fall, you can use the summer to catch up on politics and read a few biographies or social commentaries. Informed voters are better voters, which is another behavior we want to model for children. They need to see us care about our community and participate in the process, even if our chosen candidates don't always win. Children need to see that conflicts can be resolved, in real life and in stories, without violence or mayhem.

Kids need reasons to have hope for the future, and readers understand that happy endings are possible. Us grown-ups might need to be reminded of that from time to time as well. One of my favorite quotes is from author Neil Gaiman who said, "Fairy tales are more than true: Not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten."

**Michelle Mears**, *Rolling Hills Library Director*  
[mmears@rhcl.org](mailto:mmears@rhcl.org)

## Other ways to reach and follow us

Text the library at **816-287-9828** using these keywords, and we'll help with your account:


**Status** for account information      **Renew all** to renew everything on your account

**Renew due** to renew overdue items      **Help** for a list of available commands  
or text anything else to start a conversation with a librarian.

 [www.goodreads.com/group/show/397463-rolling-hills-library](https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/397463-rolling-hills-library)

 [facebook.com/RollingHillsLibrary](https://facebook.com/RollingHillsLibrary)

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 [www.pinterest.com/rollinghillslib](https://www.pinterest.com/rollinghillslib)

## Browse

a quarterly publication from  
Rolling Hills Library that is  
sponsored by the Friends of  
Rolling Hills Library

## Rolling Hills Library

[rhcl.org](http://rhcl.org)

### Belt Branch

1904 N. Belt., St. Joseph

816-232-5479

HOURS: 9-8 Mon-Fri  
12-6 Sun

### Savannah Branch

514 W. Main, Savannah

816-324-4569

HOURS: 9-7 Mon-Fri  
9-5 Sat/12-5 Sun

### Business Office

1912 N. Belt, St. Joseph

816-236-2106

### Bookmobile & Outreach

1912 N. Belt, St. Joseph

816-205-7100

### Michelle Mears

Library Director

### Alan Stolfus

Browse editor

## Board of Trustees

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*The board generally meets  
at 5:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday  
of each month.*

## Friends of the Library

The Friends support the library through  
volunteer and fund-raising efforts.  
The Friends board meets monthly.

## Rolling Hills Library Foundation

The Foundation strives to provide  
financial support for large  
endeavors and future growth of the  
library by seeking substantial gifts from  
patrons and supportive foundations.





## Orrick Acres Petting Zoo

All ages are invited to meet some soft and furry friends and feed them, too! Just hold out your hands. 5-6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 14, Savannah Branch parking lot and 6-7 p.m.

Thursday, July 28, Belt Branch Bookmobile Garage

# Making Learning Fun

New PLAY tables let kids and adults share the experience of learning while playing

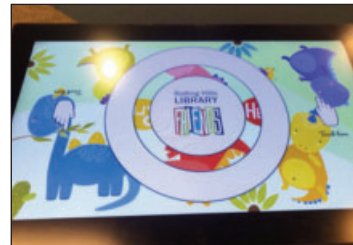
They look like coffee tables or side tables you'd find in a living room except for the colorful computer screen tops, which are meant to entice children and adults to stop and ... play.

It's long been known that playing is a form of learning, so libraries try to make children's areas places of learning by making them fun places to be. That's why three new PLAY interactive game tables have been added to the Belt and Savannah branches.

Learning computers for children have been a part of the library for many years, but usage of them had fallen off, leading library staff to believe kids were bored with them. Library Director Mi-



**A crowd quickly gathered around the PLAY tables the first day they were put out at the Belt Branch.**



chelle Mears likes the PLAY tables because more than one person at a time can use them, unlike the learning computers.

The Friends of the Library contributed \$18,000 to purchase the tables from the company After-Mouse.com, which has sold the tables to libraries and hotels around the world.

The tables are loaded with 14 games and activities for various ages, including painting, tic-

tac-toe, table hockey, car races, and a matching game.

"The great thing about PLAY tables is that parents can play games with their kids and kids can play with other kids, making the tables truly interactive," Mears said. "We want people to play and learn together."

## 76 STEAM kits coming soon thanks to federal grant

STEAM Kits to Go from the Penworthy Co., a book distributor to schools and libraries.

The library has ordered 76 kits that include books and activities families can do together to encourage critical thinking. Topics include dinosaurs, magnets, food and nutrition, green energy, space, letters, rocks and fossils, colors, engineering and electricity.

Summer is upon us, and the library is about to get a bit steamier.

Rolling Hills is one of 43 Missouri public libraries benefiting from a \$293,975 federal Library Services and Technology Act grant to promote science, technology, engineering, arts and math education. The library received \$10,000 to buy

"Kids love learning when it doesn't feel like a chore," Library Director Michelle Mears said. "These kits are a great way for parents to make connections with their kids and encourage exploration of science and the arts."

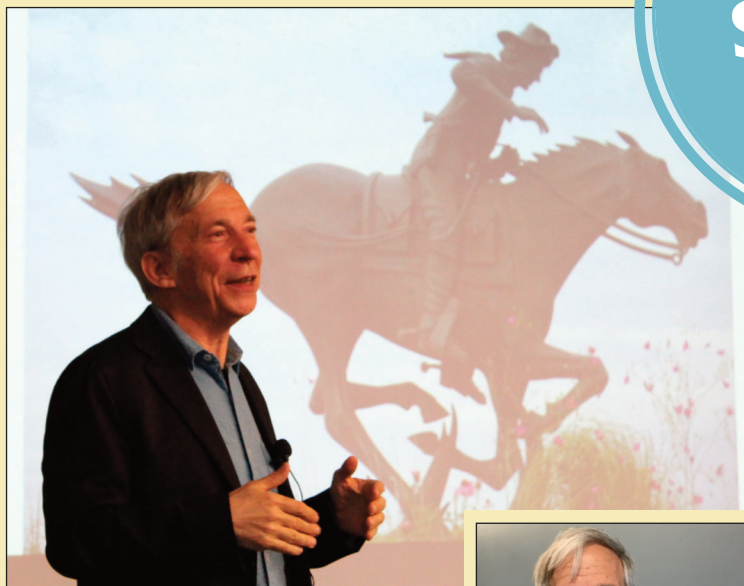
The new kits will join the 27 early learning kits the library already has, bringing the educational kit collection to more than 100 kits. They will be made available for checkout soon after they arrive.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services provided the LSTA funds to the Missouri State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State.



# Library Scenes

March - May 2022



**TOP:** Jim DeFelice, author of the New York Times bestselling book "West Like Lightning: The Brief, Legendary Ride of the Pony Express," spoke about the Pony Express in an appearance April 1 in the Belt Branch Upper Story. More than 40 people turned out to hear his talk on the 162th anniversary of the mail service from St. Joseph to Sacramento, Calif. **RIGHT:** What better treat to serve that night than pony cookies?



May 17 was the last night of Adult Bingo at the Savannah Branch until



Amber Wilcox (left), events manager at the Albrecht Kemper Museum of Art, presented a class April 28 on easy cake and cookie decorating techniques at the Belt Branch. **RIGHT:** This fast-learner placed a



The Belt Branch staff look for any reason to spice up the library by dressing alike. This time it was to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday on March 2. Theodor Seuss Geisel would have been 118 years old.

You know that old saying that if you give kids toys at Christmas they have more fun playing with the boxes? Well, it's true. Kids proved it in two Box Play for Kids programs on May 12 and 14 at the Belt Branch. Staff put





September, so the players wanted to mark the occasion with a group picture. This is almost everyone who squeezed into the Community Room for an evening of fun and prize surprises.



a monster face on her cupcake. Thirteen library users attended the class in the CreateSpace.



Library volunteer Dennis Steeby fills his plate April 21 at the Volunteer Luncheon in the Belt Upper Story. If you needed a reason to become a library volunteer, this picture is it: A couple times a year you will eat like royalty as a thank you for your effort helping the library.



out a bunch of boxes for kids to build with, sit in and color.



Congratulations to Savannah Branch regulars Eldon and Dorothy Mitchell, who celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary in May. They visit the library weekly to check out books.





## Friday Afternoon Movies

We found a treasure chest full of movies that feature the ocean to show this summer. Here's the lineup in order they will be shown: **Finding Nemo, Finding Dory, The Pirates! Band of Misfits, Moana, Muppet Treasure Island, Lilo & Stitch, Song of the Sea, The Little Mermaid** and **Luca**. 3 p.m. Fridays, June 3-July 29, Belt Branch Upper Story

# Not So Tranquil

New novel's twists and turns and complex story is a gratifying read in the end

Hold onto your pages, dear reader, when immersing yourself in Emily St. John Mandel's new and absorbing novel, **Sea of Tranquility**.

Mandel's story transports readers through space and time and examines our

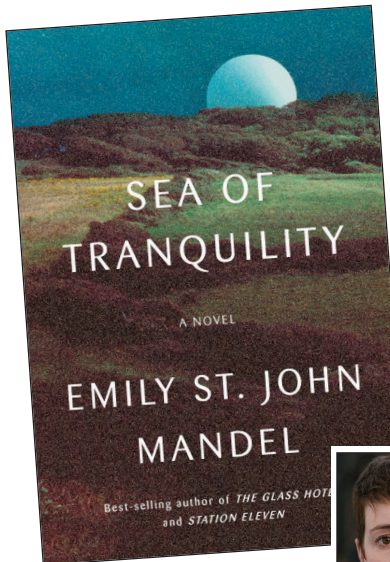
### Book Review

very being with a time anomaly that is the mystery plaguing the pages. The shifting timelines from 1912 to 2401 and alternating narrators and interconnected storylines remind me of David Mitchell's **Cloud Atlas**.

The novel opens in 1912 with a solo journey from England to Canada, where Edwin St. John St. Andrew encounters an inexplicable vision in a Vancouver forest: "a flash of darkness, like sudden blindness or an eclipse," "an impression of being in some vast interior," "notes of violin music," "then an incomprehensible sound." This is followed by a mysterious interview with a man named Gasperry, who is impersonating a priest so as not to alarm Edwin. Turns out Gasperry-Jacques Roberts is an agent from the far-reaching future who investigates time anomalies.

As the novel travels in and out of time and back and forth through perspectives of multiple narrators, Mandel makes it very clear which time period it is and which narrator is telling the story. But one must be alert!

Our second encounter with the inexplicable vision/time



Emily St. John Mandel



anomaly is with an author named Olive who writes a character named Gasperry in her novel about a pandemic. Olive, who lives on a moon colony, is on a book tour of Earth when an actual pandemic breaks out. Olive's novel takes place around Vancouver, where Mandel herself is from, during and after a flu pandemic, which borrows from the plague terror Mandel spun in her novel **Station Eleven** and the off-kilter perception tricks she played in the novel **The Glass Hotel**.

The 2020 timeline in her new book overlaps with her previous novels, and Mandel provides fans with Easter eggs from **Hotel** and **Station** but with marked changes. (Dare I say, written with an alternate reality?) The three are tied together with character and theme but are standalone reads.

**Sea of Tranquility** will surprise and confuse you until the end with its mysterious and interconnected characters and winding stories coming back around on themselves. Although this is a difficult book to categorize and review, I highly recommend this speculative novel, as well as Mandel's other books. I was engaged and surprised and completely fulfilled by the end.

– Jennifer George

Rolling Hills Library technical services manager

### New Picture Books @ the Library

- Bedtime for Bad Kitty by Nick Bruel
- Way Past Afraid by Hallee Adelman
- Color the Sky by David Elliott
- Not Enough Lollipops by Megan Maynor
- If You Were a Garbage Truck or Other Big-Wheeled Worker by Diane Ohanesian
- Bear Island by Matthew Cordell

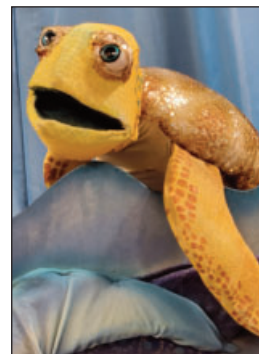
- Hamsters Make Terrible Roommates by Cheryl Klein
- Blue, Barry & Pancakes: Danger on Mount Choco by Dan Abdo
- Dancing with Daddy by Anitra Schulte
- Stanley's Library by William Bee
- Hello Baby! I'm Your Mom by Eve Bunting
- The Library Fish by Alyssa Capucilli
- Kid Scientist: Marine Biologists on a Dive by Sue Fliess

- Uncle John's City Garden by Bernette Ford
- It's So Difficult by Raúl Nieto Guridi
- Eyes That Speak to the Stars by Joanna Ho
- This Book Will Get You to Sleep by Jory John
- Sherlock Chick and the Giant Egg Mystery by Robert Quackenbush
- A Grandma's Magic by Charlotte Offsay
- Perfectly Pegasus by Jessie Sima



## Shark Week is July 11-15

What would summer be without Shark Week? Here's what's on tap: Scavenger hunts, **Tuesday, July 12, Belt Branch**, and **Thursday & Friday, July 14-15, Savannah Branch**; Family Night, 5-6:30 p.m. **July 12, Savannah**; Shark Week Extravaganzas for homeschoolers 10-11:30 a.m. and public 3:30-5 p.m. **Thursday, July 14, Belt**.



This summer's performers include musician Dino O'Dell (left to right), circus stunt woman Martika Daniels, Wings of Love with Yvonne Burbach, reptile handler Serengeti Steve and a sea turtle from Stonelion Puppet Theatre.

## Some of the summer shows are for the birds

From Page 1

"It's a nice variety."

Returning favorites include reptile handler Serengeti Steve (June 6), Wings of Love bird show (June 20 at the Belt Branch), Operation Wildlife rescued raptors (June 20 at the Savannah Branch), Mad Science of Kansas City (July 11), musician Dino O'Dell (July 18) and Stone Lion Puppet Theatre (July 25). The new faces are circus stunt woman Martika Daniels (June 13) and magic show Abra-Kid-Abra (June 27).

In her library shows, Daniels performs with hula hoops, silk fans, poi balls and other props while leaving her fire and sword-swallowing tricks at home.

"My favorite part of my show is when I bring kids up on stage, and

*"My favorite part of my show is when I bring kids up on stage, and they perform with whatever they want."*

— Martika Daniels

they perform with whatever they want to" of her circus props, the Kansas City-based performer said. "It's kind of like 'America's Got Talent,' but this is 'America's Next Circus Talent.'"

Daniels discovered circus acts when she was 7 years old and visiting Rome with her family. They saw a street performer who was juggling flaming torches so easily it seemed magical. Ten years later when she was in college, she saw a performer using hula hoops at a festival, and her passion for circus acts was reborn. She bought a hula hoop, attended a workshop and began her journey to master the circus arts.

Earlier this year, she published the book "The Amazing Martika" that tells her story of becoming a performer.

Copies of her book will be available to purchase after her shows.

While Daniels is new to Rolling Hills for the first time, Wings of Love is returning to the library. They were last here in 2009, so the show should be new to most everyone.

Yvonne Burbach will bring a menagerie of tropical birds that perform tricks such as roller skating, riding a bike, spelling words, talking and singing. Swoop, an Eurasian eagle-owl, also will be on display.

Burbach works primarily with rainforest parrots. The birds are more colorful and bigger than native American species, making it easier for audiences to see the birds. The birds also are smarter than most American birds.

"Their brains are like a 5-year-old's," she said, and they can remember their training for years. "It's quite amazing. I can put one on a table after six months, and they know what to do in a trick. They don't forget."



### Books Revisited

The Friends of the Library Bookstore

Offering used and rare books, music and more!  
1908 N. Belt 205-7125  
12-5 Monday, 9-5 Tuesday-Friday & 9-6 Saturday

# A Summer Treat for Adults

Save this recipe for a hot day. You'll only use the oven to toast the coconut

*The last couple of years, I've provided an unbaked recipe for the summer newsletter. I made this dessert for a former library co-worker's birthday and she loved it.*

## Pina Colada Pie

- ½ cup coconut
- 2 cups crushed graham crackers
- ⅓ cup melted butter
- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup cream of coconut (found in the liquor section)
- 1 teaspoon rum extract
- 1 8-ounce container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1 8-ounce can crushed pineapple, drained
- ½ cup maraschino cherries, chopped
- ½ cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread coconut evenly



onto a baking sheet and toast in pre-heated oven for 5 minutes, until golden brown. Watch the coconut because it could brown quickly. Remove it from the oven and allow it to cool.

In a medium bowl, mix graham cracker crumbs with melted butter. Press mixture firmly into the bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie plate.

In a large mixing bowl, beat together cream cheese and cream of coconut until fluffy. Mix in rum extract then fold in whipped topping, pineapple, cherries and nuts. Spread mixture onto crust, and sprinkle with toasted coconut. Chill several hours before serving.



Information about all library programs can be found at [rhcl.org](http://rhcl.org).

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Administrative Office  
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