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Santa Claus will visit both library
branches before Christmas / Page 4

An Unusual Character

Octopus offers an unique view
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Moving into the Future

New library will have features that are unavailable in current Belt Branch

By Michelle Mears

Rolling Hills Library Director

As you may have heard, the Rolling Hills Library Board of Trustees has voted to engage in the design and building of a new library location to replace the current location on the Belt Highway in St. Joseph. Some of you may be wondering why this is happening and how it will be done. Hopefully, this article will answer most of your questions about the project.

Why is a new building needed?

There are multiple reasons, but one of the main ones is a desire to have our facilities located in our own taxing district. Our district serves all of Andrew County and all of Buchanan County outside of the 1965 city limits of St. Joseph, which is established by state law. The current location used to be the edge of town, but now it is the primary retail corridor for the city and also is in the St. Joseph Public Library district. Though we serve all residents of both library systems, it seems as if we ought to prioritize our own taxpayers first and be closer to where they are, as much as possible.

What's wrong with the current building?

The Belt building (which we own) was not designed to be a library. It is a long, narrow space with no natural lighting, and it does not have the computer or electric infrastructure we need for a modern library. We no longer have non-library tenants in the upper level storefronts, but there are no convenient internal stairways or elevators to make these spaces a part of Belt Branch operations.

We have looked into renovating the building, but the retrofitting needed to support the weight of both people and books on the upper level would cost nearly as much as building new. With the current layout, it would be too difficult to supervise library activities on two floors.

One of the things we learned from COVID was that we also need a modern HVAC system to control the flow of fresh air and sanitize the air in shared spaces. Demand for public meeting space continues to increase, so we also want more and better meeting rooms for both library programs and community meetings.

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Resisting Censorship

Proposed rules to protect children would harm everyone

Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft has proposed a new set of administrative rules to apply to how state aid to public libraries is distributed. This in itself would not normally be news, except for the fact that it ties funding to a spurious position about parent involvement and control.

Parents already have as much involvement and control as they want to invest in their children's access to library resources. Using libraries as scapegoats for hot button social issues is not the way to win friends and influence people.



Make no mistake, this is an attempt at censorship even though Secretary Ashcroft denies it. Any time you restrict access to materials or services for everyone based on the concerns of a small group of people, you are making a declaration that people should not be allowed to decide for themselves.

He dances around it, saying only that state funds should not be used to purchase materials that appeal to the prurient (sexual) interests of minors and implying that libraries are not prevented from using other funds to buy "those type" of books. But he also proposes that every item in the library must

have an age designation, and locating age-inappropriate items where minors could access them would be a rules violation.

The proposed rules are described as not censoring but protecting children and giving parents more control. The problem is that by restricting access for one child you are restricting access for all. Libraries resist attempts at censorship because we believe individuals can be trusted to make their own decisions. Parents make these choices on behalf of their children and should not expect a library to parent for them because there is no way for us to know what each family finds acceptable.

Only a parent knows what their child is ready to learn about. Age is not in direct correlation with maturity level. We fully support parental rights to choose what their children can access, but ONLY THEIR OWN CHILDREN. If a parent has concerns, they should monitor their children's library usage, and if they are really concerned then they should not apply for library cards for their children but instead filter access through their own accounts.

We're not here to judge your parenting choices. In fact, we would be happy to help you avoid the things you don't want your children to be exposed to. But that can't be a blanket ban on everything you find objectionable. We all have the right to read.

Michelle Mears, *Rolling Hills Library Director*
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

 facebook.com/RollingHillsLibrary

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Browse

a quarterly publication from
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Rolling Hills Library

Rolling Hills Library

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

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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.



Teen Tech Take-Apart

Ever wonder what's inside the computer, phone or other electronics you use? Now's your chance to find out. We'll provide the tech items and the tools to take them apart. If you're feeling crafty, you can make something out of those parts. Open to ages 12-18. Register at events.rhcl.org/events. 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6, Belt Branch

A Reading Take Two

2023 Adult Winter Reading Program revives the movie theme of 2008 program

Hollywood does it all the time, so why can't a library?

Movie moguls will look back in time to find a successful film they believe needs to be introduced to a new audience. Then they'll use the same title, cast new actors and add a few new plot twists. Voila! Another hit movie.

For the 2023 Adult Winter Reading Program, the library is reviving the Lights! Camera! Read! theme featuring books that have been made into movies or have some ties to movies that was first used in 2008.

In the 15 years since movie-related books were the winter theme, a whole new cast of characters has been released so there will be plenty for adults to read.

"There are so many movies based on books," Belt Branch manager Kelly Morris said. "Even the shows on streaming services – they're all based on books."

The program begins Jan. 1 and ends Feb. 28. Adults can sign up using the Beanstack app or in-person at the Belt and Savannah branches and the Bookmobile. They can read any four books they prefer during that time but will earn extra rewards if they use the book themes suggested on the program bingo card.

Anyone who completes four books will receive a plastic library snack bowl, choice of a free book or Books Revisited coupon, be entered into the grand-prize drawing for a \$100 Walmart gift card and receive an invitation to an end-of-winter party featuring book talk and refreshments.

If they score a bingo on the bingo card, they also will get their choice of a movie-box size of candy or a bag of microwave popcorn. Complete a blackout of reading 16 books in two months, and they will earn the bowl, candy or popcorn, party invite and a Regal Cinema movie ticket.

Some of the topics suggested on the bingo cards

include Documentaries (non-fiction books), Big Screen Debut (new-to-you authors), World Premiere (new books), Animation (manga or graphic

novels), Rom Coms (which are currently popular with publishers and readers), Golden Age of Hollywood (historical fiction) and adult or children's books made into movies.

If participants need help finding something to read, suggestion sheets will be available at the branches.

During January and February, the Book Groups at the Belt Branch will feature books related to movies. The evening group will discuss what they learned from reading celebrity memoirs at their meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 31. Their next meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21, will feature the novel **Beautiful Ruins** by Jess Walter that partially takes place in Hollywood.

The noon group will discuss the sci-fi novel **The Humans** by Matt Haig

at their Wednesday, Jan. 18, meeting and on Wednesday, Feb. 15, will

review the award-winning young adult novel **The Hate You Give** by Angie Thomas that was made into a movie.

And what would a movie-themed program be without some actual movies? Friday Movie Matinees will be offered at 4 p.m. twice each month at the Belt and Savannah branches.

The Belt will show movies based on books, including the 2019 version of **Little Women** on Jan. 6, **Breakfast at Tiffany's** on Jan. 20, **Hidden Figures** on Feb. 3 and **News of the World** on Feb. 17. Savannah will show movies meant to warm up viewers in winter, including **Blue Hawaii** on Jan. 13, **Soul Surfer** on Jan. 27, **Mamma Mia!** on Feb. 10 and **Under the Tuscan Sun** on Feb. 24.



Felted Snowfolk

Fiber artist Sandra Keiffer will lead you through making this cute snow figure even if you've never felted before. All supplies provided. Two two-session classes are being offered and require advance registration at event.rhcl.org/events. 3-5 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 24 & 31, or 10 a.m.-noon Wednesdays, Jan. 25 & Feb. 1. Belt Branch

Holiday Happenings

Visits by Santa Claus, crafts and painting classes highlight the Christmas season

Is it just us or did it seem like 2022 flew by this year? Wasn't it the Fourth of July just a few weeks ago ... and now it's time for Christmas?

Good thing librarians are good at planning ahead. They made sure Santa Claus knows when and where to drop in for library visits, and they planned some craft programs to create holiday decorations.

The fun starts Friday, Dec. 2, and Saturday, Dec. 3, when families of all ages can have milk and cookies with Santa in the Belt Branch Upper Story. Friday's event is planned for 2-4 p.m. and Saturday's event will be 10 a.m.-noon. Children and families can have their pictures taken with Santa and make holiday crafts, too.

From 2-4 p.m. Dec. 3, Santa will be available to meet with sensory sensitive individuals and their families in a quieter setting in the Upper Story. Families with concerns or questions about the event can call 816-232-5479 to share how the library can best serve their loved ones.

Two painting classes are planned at the Belt for participants to paint a fun gingerbread house on canvas with acrylic paints. The all-ages class will be at 5:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 5, while the adult class will be at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13. Register for the classes at events.rhcl.org/events.

Santa will be the special guest at Family Night from 5-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the Savannah Branch. The



Santa will return to the Belt and Savannah branches in December to hear what children would like to receive for Christmas. RIGHT: The Belt Branch will have an adult class and an all-ages class for participants to paint a colorful gingerbread house in December.



Andrew County Parents as Teachers will provide Storytime, crafts and snacks, and families will be able to take pictures with Santa.

If teens or adults are in need of a last-minute gift or two, they can make some craft items at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec.

14, at the Belt. All supplies will be provided, and participants must register in advance at events.rhcl.org/events.

In December,

cookies – especially gingerbread men – start trembling about their fate. Throughout the day Friday, Dec. 16, children can drop into the Belt to disguise paper Gingerbread Man cutouts so he doesn't get eaten this year. All materials provided.

Teens and adults can enjoy an evening of Christmas carols, decorating cookies and creating crafts from 5-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 20, at Savannah. They also will learn how to make a holiday bow using ribbons provided or ribbons they bring to the class. No registration is required.

The Belt staff will help children make Perler bead ornaments from 3-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 21, in a drop-in program. No registration is required.

And to give 2022 one last hurrah, all ages can drop into the Savannah Branch throughout Friday, Dec. 30, and Saturday, Dec. 31, to make crafts and play the Plinko board to win prizes.

Library Scenes

September & October 2022



On Oct. 25 at the Belt Branch, Maryville author Jason Offutt spoke about paranormal phenomena in the region, including sightings of ghosts on the Northwest Missouri State campus.



Teens and adults made cute witch gnomes in a craft class Oct. 5 at the Belt.



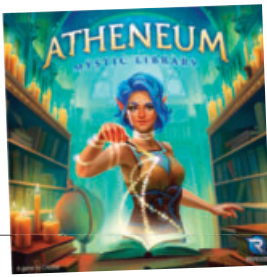
Bill Luce with Pony Express Therapy Dogs visits with a girl on Sept. 13 at the Belt Branch while she pets his pet greyhound. The dogs visit the library 4-5 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month to hear youths read books and for everyone to pet them.



In October, Orrick Acres provided the Belt Branch with a dozen eggs to hatch in an incubator at the Circulation Desk. Only four chicks emerged, and here they're shown touring the library's toy barn. Orrick Acres retrieved the chicks after a week but will provide more eggs to hatch next spring.



Big trucks filled up the Savannah Branch's parking lot during a Touch-a-Truck event on Sept. 13. For the kids, it was a big deal to sit in the driver seats of the big rigs.



Bored? Play board games at the library

Game Night at the Belt Branch at 6:30 p.m. **Thursday, Dec. 29**, will feature the Atheneum Mystic Library, but other board games also will be available. The Savannah Branch has declared **Monday, Jan. 16**, as Game Day and will have games and jigsaw puzzles set out throughout the day for all ages to play.

Creature Comfort

A very large octopus has a big role in this heartwarming novel about humans

"Humans. For the most part, you are dull and blundering. But occasionally, you can be remarkably bright creatures."

This quote comes from my favorite read so far this year, a sweet and heartwarming story, *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. The book is told from the point of view of its characters, and the opinion put forth in the above quote is from Marcellus, a

giant Pacific octopus, who resides in an

aquarium in Sowell Bay, Wash.

Marcellus is witty, very observant, cranky at times and an escape artist who loves to go in search of more interesting food choices around the aquarium. I looked forward to reading Marcellus' chapters and loved how his pages had their own design and font.

While out on an excursion around the aquarium, Marcellus is seen by Tova, a recently widowed 70-year-old night shift janitor, who is still grieving and looking for answers to her son's disappearance 30 years ago. Tova finds comfort in cleaning and forms a bond with Marcellus after helping him get back into his enclosure.

Outside of the aquarium, Tova has a group of friends

called the Knit Wits, but you can sense her loneliness and you hope that someday she will find out what happened to her son. Marcellus comes to realize he has information about Tova's son and needs to figure out he can communicate with her. I enjoyed how the friendship developed between these two characters and came to care for them both.

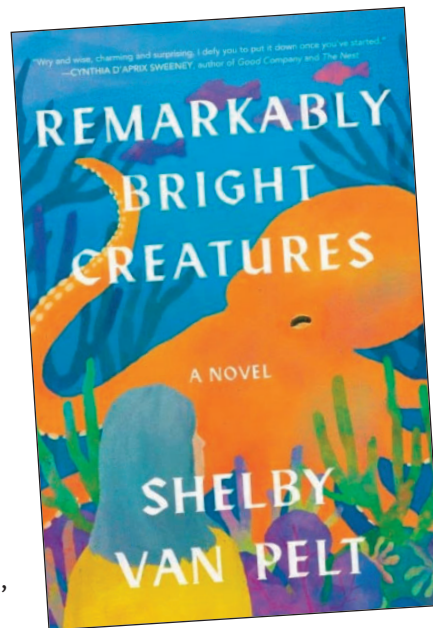
Another character, Cameron, a young man down on his luck, makes his way to Sowell Bay, in hopes of finding the father he never knew about. His only clues are a class ring and an old photo. Like Marcellus' and Tova's chapters, I came to care for Cameron's journey and enjoyed his character development and how his story intersected with the other characters.

This book takes you on a journey through loss, grief, friendship, trust, fate and hope, and I loved it. When I first read about this book in an article

before it was published, I knew I had to read it. I had to know how a giant Pacific octopus could form a friendship with a human. What I found was a story that touched my heart and had my eyes misting at times.

—Angie Holmes

Belt Branch library assistant



Book Review

New Large Print @ the Library

- Santa's Little Yelpers by David Rosenfelt
- The Last Chairlift by John Irving
- Cake That! by Heather Greer
- Thief of Fate by Jude Deveraux
- How Not to Drown in a
- Glass of Water by Angie Cruz
- Next in Line by Jeffrey Archer

- Home Sweet Christmas by Susan Mallory
- The Good Old Boys by Elmer Kelton
- Forever Texas by William Johnstone
- Triple Cross by James Patterson
- Death by Bubble Tea by Jennifer Chow
- Love and the Dream Come True by Tammy Gray
- Peg and Rose Solve a Murder by Laurien Berenson
- Treasure State by C.J. Box

- The 12 Topsy-Turvy, Very Messy Days of Christmas by James Patterson
- The German Wife by Kelly Rimmer
- The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave
- The Italian Ballerina by Kristy Cambron
- Anything But Plain by Suzanne Woods Fisher
- A Truth to Lie For by Anne Perry
- Queen of Our Time by Robert Hardman
- Going Rogue by Janet Evanovich



Tea Time

Alchemy Tea Company in downtown St. Joseph will present a program about the different types of teas, the best ways to prepare and serve them along with some interesting tea history. Tea samples will be served, too. **6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 10, Belt Branch**

Surprise Visit

Almost 50 years later, former Bookmobile librarian drops by to visit current staff

Back in September, one of Rolling Hills Library's earliest Bookmobile librarians stopped by the Belt Branch while passing through St. Joseph.

Carol Spaulding worked at the library from September 1970 to May 1972, after moving to St. Joseph from Tempe, Ariz., so her husband, Bob, could teach at Missouri Western College. She had previous experience as a bookmobile librarian for a regional library in St. Paul, Minn.

The Spauldings had a role in Rolling Hills getting a new bookmobile. The county had received federal funds to make improvements and libraries were one area to consider. They wrote the commissioners asking for funding for a new bookmobile, and the commissioners approved the request.

Spaulding left Rolling Hills when the couple wanted to take a month-long vacation to England, but the library would only allow her two weeks. A few years later, they moved to San Diego, where she was a volunteer in school libraries and was her church's librarian for 35 years. She also became the western states board member on the National Church Libraries Association. They now live in Washington, Utah.

Spaulding enjoyed her time as a bookmobile librarian here. "It's a very interesting job," she said. "It's very busy and you get to meet people and find them the right books."

"I would have still been there if they had given me that month off," she chuckled.



Bookmobile manager Deb Ezzell and library assistants Janis Curran and Rena Deckard visited with Carol Spaulding in September.

Building project

Continued from Page 1

How long will it take to build a new building?

We think it will take 18 to 24 months, but it could take longer. Finding a piece of property is the most important first step. There are features we would like to offer that will shape the kind of property we need. We would like to have outdoor program space, possibly including a community or demonstration garden. During the pandemic, many people took advantage of our curbside service (which we continue to offer), so we would like a drive-up window to improve this service.

One of the biggest benefits of building new is that we can remain open during construction. Renovation of the existing building had been projected to take 12 to 14 months and would have required a complete closure of operations. The cost of temporary relocation on top of renovation raised the price to nearly the cost of building new, and none of us wanted to stop serving our users for that long of a period.

How will the library pay for it?

Rolling Hills Library has been saving funds since the financing of the current building was paid off in 2017. In 2019, voters passed a renewal of our sunset levy to go through 2039, which should provide enough funding for this project. We also have the value of the existing land and building, which will be sold after we move. We won't need to have voters pass an additional bond issue, meaning no one's taxes will go up to fund this project.

A new and better designed library for Buchanan County is the best choice for our future. It will give us room to provide better service and the flexibility to change as needed when community needs and interests change. We can't wait to serve you in a new space and will chronicle the progress in a page on our website so everyone can follow along. Check it out at <https://rhcl.org/building-project>.



Books Revisited
The Friends of the Library Bookstore

Offering used and rare books, music and more!
1906B N. Belt 816-205-7125
12-5 Monday, 9-5 Tuesday-Friday & 9-6 Saturday

African American books, poetry to be featured Feb. 19 in Upper Story event

Local readers will share works of African American literature in the fourth annual African American Read-In at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 19, in the Belt Branch Upper Story.

Readings will include historical and contemporary pieces, poetry and children's literature. Refreshments will be served, and everyone is welcome at this all-ages event.

The National African American Read-In was established in 1990 by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English to make literacy a part of Black History Month by encouraging communities to read together the works of African American authors. Since then, the initiative has reached more than 6 million people around the world.

Hidden Taste

This cheesecake may not be green, but it has an Irish flavor

St. Patrick's Day is a ways off, but that shouldn't stop you from enjoying this dessert. It may be the surprise hit at your holiday gatherings.

Irish Cream Cheesecake

Filling:

3 8-ounce packages of cream cheese, room temperature

1½ cups sugar

¼ cup flour

3 large eggs

2 cups Irish cream-flavored coffee creamer liquid

Crust:

1½ cups graham cracker crumbs

¼ cup butter, melted

¼ cup sugar

Combine ingredients for the crust and press into bottom and half way up sides of a 9-inch, spring-form pan. Set aside.

Place room temperature cream

cheese into bowl of mixer and mix with paddle attachment on medium until creamy. Add sugar and flour, and beat until creamy and soft, about 5 minutes. Scrape down sides of the bowl several times.

Beat in eggs one at a time, mixing well after each egg. Scrape down the sides several times and beat until smooth. With the mixer running on low, slowly pour in the creamer until it's well incorporated. Scrape down and mix again.

Pour batter into the prepared spring-form pan and bake at 300 degrees for 1 hour, 10 minutes. Let cool before opening the pan.



Information about all library programs can be found at rhcl.org

St. Joseph, Mo. 64506
1912 N. Belt
Administrative Office
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