



# Book Report

MAY 2019  VOLUME III

## Elected Officials Meet Constituents at Central Legislative Coffee



 Kansas 22nd District Rep. Nancy Lusk (D), 2018 candidate for 3rd U.S. House District Jay Sidie (D), and Kansas 21st District Sen. Dinah Sykes (D)

**W**ith national politics dominating the news, Legislative Coffees provide citizens an opportunity to engage at the local and community level, with discussions held in a safe and supportive environment. Ashley Fick, JCL's Civic Engagement Librarian holds meetings at libraries around the JCL system in partnership with the League of Women Voters. The April 13 Legislative Coffee at Central Resource Library drew nearly 130 attendees.

Five elected officials sat on the panel: 24th District Rep. Jarrod Ousley (D), 22nd District Rep. Nancy Lusk (D), 20th District Rep. Jan Kessinger (R), District 21 Sen. Dinah Sykes (D) and 19th District Rep. Stephanie Clayton (D).

Attendees wanted to know about Medicaid expansion, gun control legislation, improvements to the foster care system with a new DHS director, SB22, which would have reduced the food tax by 1¢ if passed, the education budget and more.

The panelists were asked how they worked to combat the gear-clogging partisanship in the Kansas House. As they explained their strategies, some common themes emerged.



Clayton emphasized the need to keep a cool head and communicate respectfully, even (or especially) when others do not.

"I spend a lot of energy trying to get everyone to get along," she said. "Sort of like a middle-school teacher urging the kids to play nice. Putting out emotional fires so people can work together is important. The well-being of Kansas is at stake."

Kessinger, a moderate Republican, said he works with both parties on many issues. "Some Republicans criticize me for it, but the passing of the Medicaid expansion demonstrated that both sides can work together."

"I was asked to be the chairman of the weekly Prayer Breakfast, and I hesitated at first," said Lusk, "but I'm glad I accepted because I'm building bridges across the aisle."

When asked to recommend the best news sources for keeping up with what's going on in Kansas government, Lusk said, "With newspapers either employing fewer reporters or shutting down, we get less and less coverage. You can go to livestreams from [kansaslegislature.gov](http://kansaslegislature.gov) or subscribe to our newsletters for updates."



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April 2019

## BRANCHING OUT

## Oak Park Library – A Community Resource in Any Language

In the heart of Johnson County, Oak Park Library serves a diverse community that includes speakers of Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and other languages from around the world. And many are eager to learn English. They can learn for free in ELL, or English Language Learning classes.

The weekly Saturday classes taught by community volunteers and retired teachers draw people from miles away. And for English speakers who want to learn Spanish, there's a twice-a-month class called Español a la Carta.

Roxanne Belcher, Oak Park Branch Manager since July 2018, says ELL is one of the branch's most popular programs; so popular that space for it is tight.

"We're kind of outgrowing it now, with our two meeting rooms."

Library staff may expand the program to Antioch Library, whose service area has similar demographics.

Oak Park offers many popular programs in addition to ELL, including storytimes for babies, toddlers and preschool-aged children. The branch also hosts other activities to spark children's interest in learning while having fun.

For example, Belcher says, "We hosted a Canine Courage program -- a young police officer brought his young German shepherd to visit with the kids. They looked very engaged -- anything with a dog is popular with the kids."

What's new? In May, the Kansas City Arts Coalition will install original art at Oak Park and Blue Valley Libraries, transforming walls into creative visual landscapes.



*Roxanne Belcher,  
Oak Park Branch Manager*

When she's not working, Belcher enjoys spending time with her three grown children. Her 25-year-old daughter is a full-time Youth Services Information Specialist at Monticello Library.



## TOP 10 HOLDS



## APRIL 2019

940 **Where the Crawdads Sing**

Delia Owens

532 **Educated: A Memoir**

Tara Westover

353 **The Silent Patient**

Alex Michaelides

353 **Becoming**

Michelle Obama

246 **Run Away**

Harlen Coben

240 **Nine Perfect Strangers**

Liane Moriarty

226 **The Tattooist of Auschwitz**

Heather Morris

217 **Redemption**

David Baldacci

217 **Daisy Jones & the Six**

Taylor Jenkins Reid

203 **An Anonymous Girl**

Greer Hendricks



For Belcher, library work is a family tradition that started with her grandmother, who was a librarian at the Topeka library and often took her along. As a child Belcher enjoyed exploring the shelves and choosing books to read.

"My first job in high school was working as a page at Corinth Library," she says. "My two sisters and my brother became pages and it looked like a good gig to me, so I became a page, too. Then I worked in the Watson Library at KU during my undergrad years."

Belcher especially enjoys recommending materials to patrons. She says, "When I'm helping patrons, I love to talk books."





# MEET A FRIEND

## Rich Cook, Johnson County Library Foundation President: Making the Library Shine

It takes many resources and committed individuals to offer the diverse range of services available at Johnson County Library.

“While your tax dollars provide most of that money, the Johnson County Library Foundation helps to provide additional dollars to make that car really shine,” says Foundation president Rich Cook, a real estate lawyer with Stinson Leonard Street in Kansas City.

“The Foundation provides funding for crucial Library programming and services and has built an endowment to help support the Library collection. We do that with private dollars donated by corporations, foundations, individual Library lovers and patrons.”

“ Knowledge requires access to information, and public libraries provide access to people from all walks of life. ”

With those dollars, the Foundation supports collection enrichment, homework assistance for youth, art programs, early literacy initiatives, youth-at-risk programs, technology enhancements at the Library and more.

Last year, Cook became the Foundation’s President-Elect, and this year, he is President. Next year, he will



*Rich and Morgan Cook with children Henry, 10, Charlotte, 8, and George, 5*

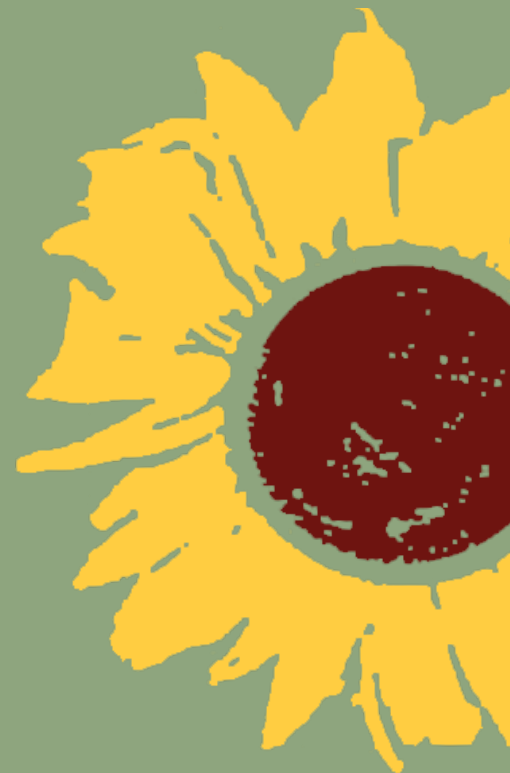
serve as Past President. He appreciates the ability to help the Foundation because he believes libraries are vital to a functioning and vibrant democracy.

“The public should know how its government works and have an informed view of history,” says Cook. “Without that knowledge, it’s hard to preserve democracy. Knowledge requires access to information, and public libraries provide access to people from all walks of life.”

Looking back on his time on the Foundation Board, Cook says, “It’s a high-functioning Board that does a lot. I’ve learned a lot and have enjoyed serving.”

Cook, his wife, Morgan, and their children enjoy the great outdoors and have camped in national parks across the U.S. All are also avid sports fans.

“KU basketball and football, Sporting KC, Royals, Chiefs, whatever it is, we’re into it,” he says. Henry, 10, Charlotte, 8, and George, 5, are active in scouting, soccer, basketball and baseball.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## Ben Sunds, Associate Director for Customer Experience



*Ben Sunds, Associate Director for Customer Experience*

**A**s Associate Director for Customer Experience, it's his job to make patrons' every experience at JCL as easy and pleasant as possible.

He says, "I enjoy seeing the result of helping people every day."

Retired from the Army as a Colonel after 32 years, Sunds tried a few unsatisfying jobs in the private sector before he realized his true passion was back in public service. That's what led him in 2018 to his position at Johnson County Library.

Retailers know a positive customer experience is vital. Today, so do libraries. A survey of more than 15,000 community members identified convenience and access as two things patrons valued about JCL. Sunds's job involves initiating and helping to implement processes that improve them -- for instance, by streamlining holds and pickups.

With two new branches opening in two years, both JCL and Sunds have been busy. At the new Lenexa City

Center Library, patrons can pick up and return materials after hours at the Holds Lobby. For access, they'll swipe their Library card affixed with a special sticker. Patrons will also return and pick up books at a drive-thru in the parking garage. Sunds supervises operations teams coordinating these features and he planned the logistics for opening day on June 2.

**“You'll never make a fortune working in libraries, but the good working experience more than compensates.”**

Opening ceremonies began with a 1 p.m. ribbon cutting, assisted by Girl Scouts, and a flag-raising by Boy Scouts. Lenexa Mayor Michael Boehm, city council members and other public officials participated, followed by tours, a recitation of a work commissioned for the occasion by the emerita poet laureate of Kansas, Wyatt Townley, and an opportunity to see a new work of public art by children's book illustrator Stephen T. Johnson.

Lenexa City Center's development complex offers some advantages. By using the complex's many meeting spaces, the library will be able to offer more events, and Sunds said shared maintenance will reduce operating costs, and the shared parking lot will accommodate more patrons.

At work, Sunds is infamous for telling dad jokes and recalling useless trivia. He appreciates the people he works with at JCL. "They're intelligent, empathetic people. You'll never make a fortune working in libraries, but the good working experience more than compensates."



*The Lenexa City Center Library*



# EVENT SPOTLIGHT

## Veterans Reader's Theater – War Stories

In April, Central Resource Library hosted Now Presenting: Veterans Reader's Theater, featuring veterans and family members reading their stories about experiences in war and coming home. The Theater is a segment of the offerings for veterans and military family members by the Kansas City Veterans Writing Team.

The group began six years ago, the brainchild of H. C. Palmer, a United States Army battalion surgeon in Vietnam, and Cindy McDermott, a retired Commander in the United States Navy.

"I knew the positivity a person could get from writing their stories," said McDermott. "It's a way of healing through the arts."

The program offers classes, writing workshops and critique groups. Since it began, veterans have had more than 1,400 opportunities to write and read their poetry and prose.

Before joining the group, Nick, an Iraq War Marine veteran, had only written in his journal. For Mel, a Vietnam War Army veteran, writing was post-war therapy. Will, a Vietnam War Army veteran and pastor, attends the critique groups to sharpen his writing.



The veterans shared writings about fear, loneliness, despair, loyalty to comrades and love for family, in stories that needed to be written -- and heard.

## Reading with Miss Pickles



Miss Pickles holds court in the children's area of Corinth Library. Tucked into a quiet corner, children read to her as she relaxes on her soft blanket. At the branch's biweekly Read to a Dog events, she's the star -- a laid-back Basset Hound who's good at calming kids who are anxious about reading.

Miss Pickles is a therapy dog trained to be a Reading Education Assistant Dog by Heartland Therapy Animals. Other therapy dogs participate in the program, but most often it's Miss Pickles who comes to the branch's children's area, and she's the best-loved.

"Miss Pickles is kind of a local celebrity," says Diana Spencer, Youth Information Specialist at Corinth. "The kids love her."

Of course, Miss Pickles doesn't understand the stories, but that's not what Read to a Dog is about. Spencer says, "The program promotes confidence in reading, building vocabulary and getting kids excited to read."

Ten to 15 moms bring kids to each hour-long event. Most are ages five to seven, but some younger siblings are excited about getting into the act, too.

"The program is really designed for kids over age six," says Spencer. "But if a younger child wants to sit with a dog and just point at the pictures, that's okay."

It's clear that practicing reading skills with a gentle dog is less scary than reading to a mom or a teacher: A dog is endlessly

patient and won't interrupt you to correct a wrong word. And how could anyone be afraid looking into those soulful brown eyes?

"My seven-year-old son has been diagnosed with a learning disability, and he loves dogs, so Read to a Dog is the perfect combination for him," said one mother. "He's come several times, and the school librarian says he's gaining a lot of confidence. It's wonderful to see how he's improving."

When love for a dog translates into love of reading, Miss Pickles has done her job.



## TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

## Social Media Highlights

## One Location: One Genre



It can be overwhelming when there are so many great books to read. So, we're helping you by narrowing down your choices. We're rearranging our collection! Now, there will only be one genre at each location. **Take note:** if you are a regular patron at a particular branch, you may only check out that location's genre.

Here's what you'll find at each location:

- Antioch: *Dinosaur Romance*
- Blue Valley: *Contemplating the Void: Depressive Literary Fiction*
- Cedar Rose: *Adventure on the High Seas: Books with a Curly- and Red-Haired Pirate Lady on the Cover*
- Central Resource: *Non-Fiction*
- Corinth: *Rumpunga and Rocketships: Amish Sci-Fi*
- De Soto: *Picture Books*
- Edgerton: *Highland Haikus: Scottish Poetry*
- Gardner: *The Books You Were Assigned in High School and Didn't Read*
- Lackman: *Hashtags and Holograms: Virtual Romance*
- Leawood Pioneer: *Westerns*
- Lenexa City Center: *Love Triangles All Over the Place: Young Adult Romance*
- Monticello: *Unread and Pretentious Literary Fiction Book Club Picks*
- Oak Park Cozy Knitting Mysteries with Charming Older Ladies as Protagonists
- Shawnee: *Audiobooks*
- Spring Hill: *Cooking with Orwell and Huxley: Culinary Dystopia*



145 views  
4,500 reach  
720 engagements  
217 reactions



31,000 reach  
9300 engagements  
784 reactions  
120 comments  
229 shares



2400 reach  
183 engagements  
2 comments  
7 shares

## Outdoor Shelving Now at Central



Now you can commune with nature – literally rain or shine – while you search for that perfectly moist murder mystery for your book club. Or, how about a wet western? Our new and inviting outdoor shelving at Central Resource Library is covered by nothing but sky!! What could go wrong? We think our books will enjoy the open air and you will too!

Yes, you can now browse our special collection of periodicals, historical fiction, non-fiction and graphic novels – all fresco! Beware through your favorite title on a picnic bench. If nature gets too close for comfort use that newspaper to swat away annoying insects or fashion it into a rain hat – how fun is that?

As you might imagine, these soggy titles in this special collection turn over rather rapidly – like the weather in Kansas. Patrons are encouraged to use creativity and resourcefulness in their selections. And, umm, no returns required.

Note: umbrellas provided on a first-come basis.



7,600 reach  
2200 engagements  
441 reactions  
25 comments  
36 shares

## New Checkout Limit!



It's come to our attention that sometimes you don't read all of the books you check out from the library before returning them. Outragously! Well, that stops today!! We simply must introduce a new policy: The "One at a time" checkout limit is now in effect!

Now you can focus and devote your full attention to ONE item. Check it out. Read it. Return it.

But before you return your book, there will be a short quiz. That's right, you **cannot** return your book until you've proven you've read it. Will fines be incurred during the extra time it may take you to read and re-read until you can pass this quiz? Yes. But why? That's just how we're gonna roll.



4,300 reach  
113 engagements  
441 reactions  
2 comments  
13 shares

## New Library AI!



Siri, Alexa, Cortana ... you've got nothing on our Virtual Assistant: Morgan Freeman. That's right, Morgan FREEMAN Freeman. Need to place a hold? Just say, "Morgan Freeman, place a hold on *Gone Girl* for me." Want Morgan Freeman to read a web page from our site? Just ask! Don't like the narrator for that audiobook you checked out? Let the soothing voice of Morgan Freeman take over!

"When will this happen?" you ask. "Soon." we reply (in the voice of Morgan Freeman.)

\*\*\*INTERNAL NOTE: (NOT FOR PUBLIC EYES!!!) HAS ANYONE ACTUALLY CONFIRMED THIS? I MEAN, SERIOUSLY? IS THIS A THING? DO WE HAVE A CONTRACT? HOW WOULD THIS EVEN WORK?\*\*\*



145 views  
4,500 reach  
720 engagements  
217 reactions



31,000 reach  
9300 engagements  
784 reactions  
120 comments  
229 shares



2400 reach  
183 engagements  
2 comments  
7 shares



7,600 reach  
2200 engagements  
441 reactions  
25 comments  
36 shares



4,300 reach  
113 engagements  
441 reactions  
2 comments  
13 shares

## The Library celebrated April Fools' Day with some fun website shenanigans.

## Dragon Delivery Service Discontinued



We regret to announce the discontinuation of our ever-popular *Home Delivery by Dragons Service (HDBDS)*. Inspired by both *How to Train Your Dragon* and *Kiki's Delivery Service*, this program has unfortunately proven to be inefficient, costly, and in some instances – downright dangerous to our Librarians and patrons! It has been **CANCELED** indefinitely.

Despite its popularity among the 30 patrons we surveyed, after 6 months of service it was determined we could no longer sustain the program. Although these patrons reported their books were delivered rain or shine, they were often delivered with singed pages and torn covers rendering their beloved literary masterpieces unreadable.

As for the safety of our Librarians, Ms. Amy, former YS Librarian, commented that dealing with the often unruly dragons "set her hair on fire" and "made her blood boil." Back to drones perhaps?

"Never laugh at live dragons, Bilbo you fool!"  
— J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit or, There and Back Again*



## Sixty by Sixty: Ready to Retire



"Six by Six: Ready to Read," meet "Sixty by Sixty: Ready to Retire."

We work hard to make sure people are prepared with the skills they need to be successful and enjoy life. As a counterpart to our 6 by 6: Six Skills By Six Years early literacy program, we have developed our 60 by 60: Sixty Skills by Sixty Years program to help adults reach their full potential. Here are the skills every adult should master by 60 years of age:

First, know that the Six by Six: Ready to Read skills will carry you through life, whether you're practicing them with a young person you love, or just on your own.

Here are the rest of the skills we have identified.

1. Continue to notice print all around you
2. Still have fun with books
3. Keep talk talkin'
4. Tell stories about everything ... but know your audience
5. Look for letters everywhere: It'll help you win Words with Friends
6. Take time to rhyme
7. Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, know when to run
8. Be able to spell "commitment," "recommmend," and "acomodate"
9. Be able to explain Brexit
10. Make toast without burning it
11. Know you can't change the weather, but you can change your attitude
12. Know when expiration dates on food can be ignored... and when they can't
13. Know the difference: it's and its
14. Always say no to Nigerian princes' financial requests
15. Remember all your passwords (without them all being your birthdate)
16. Hold a coherent conversation about Bitcoin
17. Know which is which: dystopia and utopia
18. Resign yourself to the fact that flying cars will not happen during your lifetime
19. Cook a perfect hard-boiled egg
20. Taken a hard stance on "giff" versus "jiff" pronunciation
21. Know what the ancient terms "Betamax" and "VHS" refer to
22. Know the "difference" between a pound sign and a hashtag
23. Fold a fitted sheet
24. Know the 5 second rule is a lie
25. Realize your smart phone is not all that smart
26. The ability to not accidentally open the front facing camera
27. Resist the snooze button
28. Know that it's "Firefox" and not "Foxfire" (and that it has nothing to do with Fyre)
29. Know which Hogwarts House you belong to
30. Know not to get attached to any Game of Thrones character
31. The realization that Chuck Norris is just a mortal man
32. Your future great American novel will never be written
33. Know that puppy videos are superior to kitten videos
34. Know to renew your vehicle registration online
35. Santa, Easter Bunny, Tooth Fairy: all real
36. Be firm in your position on the debate about "The Dress"
37. Finally throw away all those Beanie Babies you were going to sell on eBay
38. Know the difference between the "flossing," "dabbing" and "nao nae-ing"
39. Participate in at least one flash mob
40. Have dabbed in at least one of the following fads: dancing the Macarena, the paleo diet, planking, fidget spinners
41. Know how many degrees you are away from Kevin Bacon



471 page views  
1120 engagements





# Book Report

MAY 2019  VOLUME III

## Month in Review April 2019



↑  
Congratulations to the winners of the  
Friends of Johnson County Library - KS bookmark contest!



↑  
Jacqueline Woodson, author of *Brown Girl Dreaming*, was the keynote speaker at  
elementia.  
elementia is Johnson County  
Library's Teen Literary magazine.



↑  
"Readbox" book display  
at Oak Park Library.



↑  
Web content developer, Dave Carson,  
interviews collection selector, Elena McVicar,  
for a recent, *Did you Hear?* podcast.



↓  
A sewing  
repair program in  
full swing  
in the  
Black & Veatch  
MakerSpace.



### NEXT ISSUE

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-  **Top 10 Holds:** June 2019
-  **Staff Spotlight:** Kinsley Riggs, Johnson Co. Library Manager of Adult Services
-  **Event:** Star Wars Takeover
-  **Branching Out:** Gardner Library

JOHNSON COUNTY  
KANSAS  
**Library**

### BOOK REPORT

A monthly publication for  
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