

# Johnson County Library Monthly Book Report



May 2018

## Young Readers POV:

Max Killoren, 11 years old, answers a few questions about his love of reading and which book's character he wishes he could trade places with for a day:

Why do you love reading?

*It takes you into a different world.*

If you could trade places with any character from a book that you've read, who would it be and why?

*Percy Jackson! He's brave, never gives up and I'd want to be the son of a mythical God!*

Why do you love going to the library in general and what is it about the Johnson County Library that keeps you coming back?

*I like seeing so many new books and, if I want one that isn't at my school library or store, I can just go to the library. My favorite part about the Johnson County Library is the Friends of the Library Book Store because it's like going to the library and Barnes & Noble at the same time.*

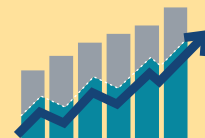
Do you think reading makes you a better writer? Why?

*Yes, because reading stories lets you see into how an author thinks. When you're writing, you can remember how they wrote something and learn from that.*



Max enjoys a quiet afternoon with a good book.

## Top Ten



### Top Ten April Holds

**The Great Alone** | Kristin Hannah

**The Woman in the Window** | A.J. Finn

**A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies and Leadership** | James B. Comey

**The Fallen** | David Baldacci

**The Flight Attendant** | Chris Bohjalian

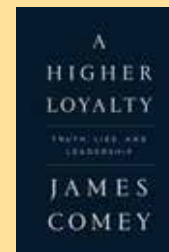
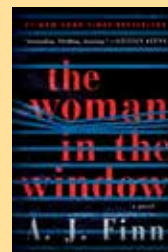
**Little Fires Everywhere** | Celeste Ng

**Educated: A Memoir** | Tara Westover

**Before We Were Yours** | Lisa Wingate

**An American Marriage** | Tayari Jones

**I'll Be Gone in the Dark: One Woman's Obsessive Search for the Golden State Killer** | Michelle McNamara



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JOHNSON COUNTY  
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Favorite book of all time...and why?

*I have a lot, but Wonder is one of my favorites because it showed how the main character transformed throughout the story by just being himself.*

Favorite author quote

*"The two most important days of your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why."*

*~Mark Twain*



## Mark Your Calendars

A sample of upcoming events at Johnson County library branches:

### June 5

***Meet the Author: Megan Bannen***

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Central Resource Library

### June 12

***Meet the Artist: Monica Dixon***

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Cedar Roe Library

### June 15

***Meet the Authors: Dhonielle Clayton, Zoraida Cordova  
and Justina Ireland***

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Blue Valley Library

### June 20

***Meet the Artist: Fally Afani***

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Shawnee Library

# Event Spotlight

## Kansas City Artists Discuss Their Work and Processes at Central Library Event

Art, in any form, means different things to different people. Its beauty lies in subjective interpretation, touching outsiders in varying ways based on their life experiences and unique perspectives. As part of its popular *Time After Time* series, the Johnson County Library recently hosted a panel discussion with four area artists to explore their creative processes and what they have learned about themselves through artistic expression.

Moderator Ebony Johnson guided the discussion with Stan Kessler, musician and UMKC professor; Maura Garcia, dancer and choreographer; Heidi Van, actress, producer, writer and founder of the Fishtank theater; and Miguel Rivera, KC Art Institute professor and print maker artist. And, just as their artistic focuses differ, so do the artists' approach to their craft and processes.

Kessler describes music as offering listeners an immediate and visceral experience, while Garcia considers herself a storyteller, incorporating historical themes and life lessons into her choreography. Miguel's art captures his perspective in moments of time, the materials he chooses and print's form reflecting how he sees architecture and people in life at any given time.

Similarly, the concept of time factors differently into their process depending on the artist. As a musician, Kessler develops trust with other musicians as to timing and describes it as a pulse that everyone has to agree upon. Although Van uses time through repetition during rehearsal, she is sensitive to the risk of a performance becoming stale if it is over-rehearsed, an actor's performance a combination of elements that can't be found on any script.

In his artistic process, Rivera allows time to guide him, typically working on 20 to 30 prints at any given time and devoting his energy to those pieces that call to him in the moment. Unlike others on the panel, Rivera's art does not require his presence to be appreciated and he enjoys remaining anonymous as viewers take in his art, free to draw from it what they need without being influenced by the artist himself.

At the end of the moderated discussion, attendees asked well thought-out questions and stayed to view Rivera's latest print drafts that he was kind enough to share with the group. These four artists may differ in

artistic focus, but one thing became clear during this presentation. The power of art – like an interpretative dance, original score, stage performance or abstract work of art – may be subjective in interpretation, but will always be universal in impact.



*Kansas City artists discussed their creative processes during a panel discussion at the Central Resource Library in April (seated left to right: moderator Ebony Johnson, Stan Kessler, Maura Garcia, Heidi Van and Miguel Rivera.)*



# Branching out

## The Summer Always Looks Bright at Blue Valley

Like other locations, the beginning of the Blue Valley branch started out small. A self-service library with 200 books in 1953, the library grew and opened its first official “home” 30 years later. It soon became clear, however, that the site was too small to accommodate the number of patrons who regularly used the library, and plans to build a new facility in its current location began in the 1990s.

Opened since July 2000, the Blue Valley branch in Overland Park sees over 300,000 visitors annually and is, once again, busting at its seams with loyal patrons. “This area has just exploded,” explains Stephanie Bailey, branch manager. “Our claim to fame is that we’re the busiest branch in the system in terms of circulation,” adds Matt Hammes, Assistant Branch Manager at the Blue Valley library.

Visit the Blue Valley library and you’ll notice something immediately – it’s always busy and visitors who come to the library do so to get things done. “Here, everyone’s pushing themselves all the time in terms of study, study, study,” Hammes explains, describing the library’s use as educational for patrons, rather than simply recreational.

Mindful of how the library is being used by patrons, some of the library’s computers were removed to allow additional personal work space because data showed that, although wireless internet access usage is increasing, visitors are bringing their own laptops. By removing these computers, the library was able to provide more quiet study space that best serves patrons’ needs.

Bailey recalls visiting the former Blue Valley library as a child and watching as the current building was built, never imagining that she would someday become its branch manager. Although there are a lot of details that make the Blue Valley branch unique, she says that one that might surprise people involves four-legged friends.

“We have a drive-up window, which no other building in the system has,” Bailey says. “My favorite part is, when people come to pick up their book holds, we have dog treats that we give out to our patrons with dogs.” And, as any pet owner will tell you, dogs’ memories tend to be particularly sharp when food is involved, regulars now excitedly anticipating a treat as soon as their owners pull into the parking lot.

Ask Charlou Lunsford, Youth Services Librarian, what she believes is the most popular activity at the branch and she answers immediately – the Summer Reading Program. “It’s one of those valued programs in the community,” she explains. “It’s huge; we usually have 3,000 kids who come in at the beginning of summer to pick up a prize book and log. It’s important to the parents here because it has educational value.”



*Colorful tile art greets you in the entrance of the Blue Valley Library.*

## Branching Out continued

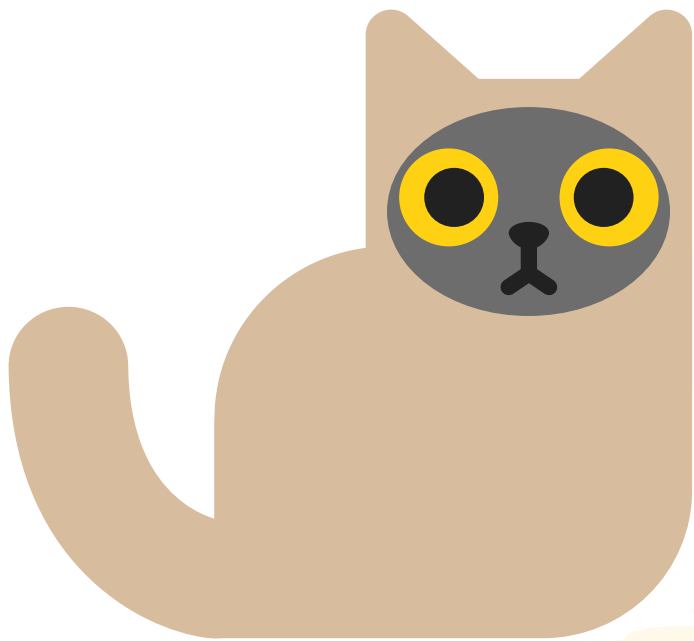


*The world awaits you among the stacks of the library where there is always someone available to help you find the perfect book.*

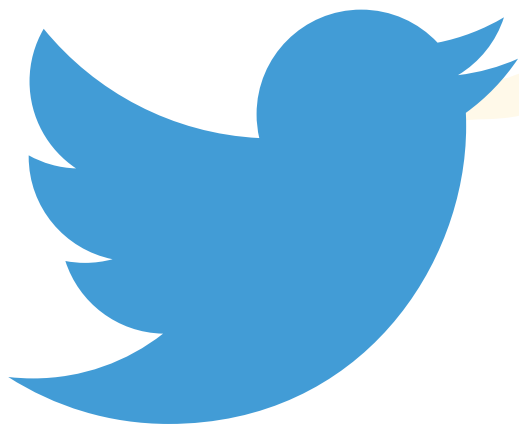
The library's teen volunteer program is another proud achievement. "The teen volunteer program is so well-known and so well-managed throughout the system," Bailey says. Because summer is the busiest season for the library, teen volunteers provide additional help while earning volunteer service hours. The volunteer program is so popular with teens that the library received 40 applications the day they were open and manage a group of 70 volunteers.

As the school year winds down and temperatures rise, two things are certain. The Blue Valley library is preparing for another busy summer and they will always have treats on-hand for furry friends in the drive-thru window.

# Taking a closer look



Lots of people visited the catalog  
due to the adorable booklist  
“made” by an adoptable  
Siamese from a local rescue



**9,463**  
followers on Twitter



Our Monticello announcement got  
**100+** comments, **100+**  
shares, and **40K** reach across social



Our blog posts continue to be  
some of our most popular content  
on social, and an effective way of  
gaining clicks back to our website.



## Jeanne Bucey Encourages Young Readers to Reach for the Stars

“Hold my paw.”

If you're lucky enough to have been at the Oak Park branch during one of Jeanne Bucey's popular spring morning storytimes, you've likely heard Chewy the Groundhog instruct little ones to hold his paw as they make their way to the front of the room to begin their adventure. An adventure is exactly what Bucey's story time is – an interactive and fun-filled morning that stretches listeners' imaginations and yoga tree poses.

In her heart, Bucey is a storyteller. Ask her family and they'll tell you that Bucey has always been, a lover of life and the beauty that awaits those willing to stop long enough to appreciate it. On this particular cold April morning, 40 kids of varying ages settle onto their yoga mats and ready themselves to embark on the latest story time excursion with Bucey, Chewy and a sweet little librarian puppet, aptly named Lily, who lives in a flower.

“We take time to understand different concepts,” Bucey says of her storytime routine. “Little brains are so exciting because they grow like they will never grow again,” she explains. “If you capitalize on this opportunity, you can set the tone for such wonderful things as they grow into teenagers and adults.”

Describing her 14-year-old daughter, Alora, as her “magnum opus,” Bucey has always been inspired to use what's available to transform the space around her. “Alora's my greatest gift and honor,” Bucey says. “Almost everything in my story time has been inspired by raising her.” When she was a baby, Bucey constantly changed things in Alora's environment to challenge her growing mind. She does the same thing at the library, moving items around so patrons have new experiences every time they come.

Bucey, who has been a Youth Information Specialist with the Johnson County Library for two years, hopes to earn her Master's of Library Science to continue expanding on the efforts that have already secured her beloved reputation among visitors. Basing her storytime program on principles that identify six pre-reading skills that children should develop by age six, Bucey expands on these principles to challenge young readers to learn in unexpected ways. Her storytime is where yoga mats turn into garden patches and listeners transform themselves into magical seeds, and she has only one rule – never give up.



*Jeanne Bucey and Chewy the Groundhog captivate young listeners during spring storytime at the Oak Park branch.*

“Preschoolers are so exciting,” Bucey says. “The more they move, the more they want to move. We go on this fantastic adventure.”

Bucey credits talented team members like Reina Nebeker with their help in transforming the library into everything from a candy land to one filled with farm animals and artistic masterpieces. And, sometimes, those farm animals are more than the creations of imaginative minds; Bucey recently arranged for baby chicks to make an appearance for her excited guests.

It’s not just the youngest library visitors who love spending time with Bucey. She has loved watching kids expand on their love of reading as they grow into their teen years. The affection goes both ways; Bucey was surprised by a birthday banner that a group of teens made for her, their efforts to wish her a day full of happiness more than she could ask for in a job that she already loves.

Hanging at Bucey’s desk is a quote by author Brooke Hampton that perfectly sums up her approach to life and teaching. “Speak to your children as if they are the wisest, kindest, most beautiful and magical humans on earth, for what they believe is what they will become.”



*Storytime animals wait for the next gathering under banners made by young readers to celebrate Bucey's birthday.*



# The Month in Review



(left) Young visitors age 3-6 enjoy preschool story time at the Blue Valley Library; (top) with so many books to choose from at the Blue Valley Library, it might be impossible to pick a favorite.



Students from nine area schools gather at the Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center in April to participate in the KC Segregation Bus Tour, an event organized by the Johnson County Library as part of its Race Project KC initiative.



# The Month in Review



*Joyce Hess presents to a packed room at the Central Resource Library in April, sharing her mother, Sonia Golad's, story about surviving Holocaust concentration camps during World War II.*



*We celebrated the release of issue xv with over 250 attendees, music, dance, readings from 15 authors, over 20 pieces of original art on display and a keynote speech from author A.S. King.*