

the Crab

The Digital Magazine of the Maryland Library Association  Volume 53, Number 3 • Spring, 2023

LEVEL UP

MLA/DLA 2023 CONFERENCE
MAY 10-12

HYATT REGENCY CHESAPEAKE BAY
CAMBRIDGE, MD



The Digital Magazine of the Maryland Library Association • Volume 53, Number 3 • Spring, 2023

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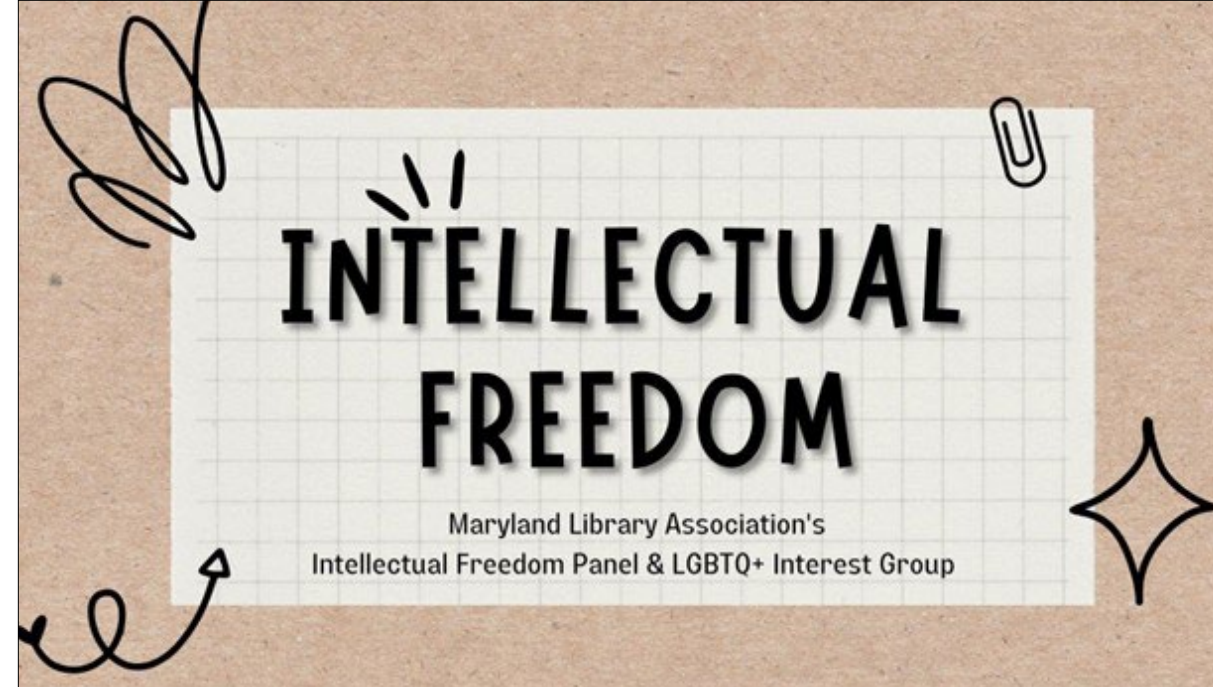
January 2023 marked the first-ever Howard County Seed Share, an idea borne (or planted, if you please) from interactions at the Enchanted Garden at the Miller Branch of Howard County Library System. This gathering brought people together to share seeds saved from the garden, excess purchased seeds, and donated seeds, along with information on planting and growing.

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Have you ever witnessed a total solar eclipse? What about an annular solar eclipse? If not, then you are in luck if you live in North America: the next twelve months will see two solar eclipses darken the skies for observers in the continental United States, Mexico, and Canada!


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Editor's Note

I'm pleased to write this on the first full day of spring, with so much exciting news for the Maryland library community as the 2023 MLA/DLA Conference approaches. One annual event that many of us look forward to is the presentation of the MLA Awards.

Awards committee chair Catherine Hollerbach has written an exceptional summary of the award winners, which will be shared in the Summer issue after the presentations are made at Conference. In the interest of focusing on Library People in our quarterly feature, the individuals who nominated the Volunteer Award winners all graciously agreed to write about their respective nominees for this issue. The three winners share so many stellar qualities: passionate dedication to their libraries, years of pertinent experience, a willingness to share their considerable talents and expertise with the community, and a steady, consistent contribution of their valuable time to make libraries a better place for all. Please join me in congratulating Tamea Bowen, Sharon Hafner-Yingling, and Jim Meckley on their volunteer awards!

A full list of this year's MLA award winners appears on this page . I hope you will look forward to reading more about them, as well as the winners of the Marketing awards, in the Summer issue.

Our Spring issue also focuses on intellectual freedom, which is certainly in the news these days. Along with several excellent features written by members of the Intellectual Freedom Panel and the LGBTQ+ Interest Group, we also have an update from MLA President Nay Keppler on MLA's work with the Freedom to Read Foundation and Unite Against Book Bans. My thanks to all who contributed these articles for keeping us updated on issues both timely and critical to our profession.

You may already be aware that MLA has two new logos!  We're pleased to have MLA Executive Joshua Stone share a bit about the background and development of

| MLA AWARDS 2023 | |
|--|--|
| CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023 AWARD WINNERS! | |
| AWARD | PLAYER |
| OUTSTANDING MEMBER AWARD | CONNI STRITTMATTER Baltimore County Public Library ASHLEY TEAGLE Southern Maryland Regional Library Association |
| PRESIDENT'S CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD | STEPHANIE WIAINT Washington County Free Library |
| MARGARET CARTY EMERGING LEADER AWARD | KEVIN JAYCE Baltimore County Public Library JAKE CIARAPICA Baltimore County Public Library |
| OUTSTANDING SUPPORT STAFF AWARD | TEONJA JUNG Baltimore County Public Library |
| DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD | SIMMONA SIMMONS Anne Arundel County Library Board Trustee, Retired UMBC Librarian BRIAN FROSH Maryland Attorney General and Maryland Attorney General Office team |
| OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARD | JIM MECKLEY Friends of the Ocean Pines Library, Worcester County Library TAMEA BOWEN Friends of the Calvert Library Board, Calvert County Library SHARON HAFNER YINGLING Carroll County Public Library |
| HONORARY MEMBERSHIP | MICHAEL GANNON Prince George's County Memorial Library System |
| MARKETING WINNERS | HOWARD COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM Brave Voices, Brave Choices Stories Exhibit WESTERN MARYLAND REGIONAL LIBRARY Our Library Campaign |

these with us. And, in one of my favorite pieces this issue, MLA/DLA Conference co-chair Kelsey Hughes provides her "Top Ten" hints for a successful conference. Kelsey and her committee have put a lot of hard work into preparing, and we look forward to sharing more about the amazing results of their team's efforts in the Summer issue. If you're attending, presenting, and/or volunteering at Conference, we invite you to submit articles and features about what you see, share, experience, and learn. Hope to see you there!

Julie Fitzpatrick, MLA Crab Editor
Howard County Library System



President's Message

HAPPY SPRING EVERYONE! Traditionally, winter is a slower time for libraries, but it has certainly been busy for the Maryland Library Association!

We were finally able to reveal our new logo, including two special Centennial logos, all designed by Baltimore-based graphic designer, Max Canner. Thank you all for the positive feedback on these, as well as on the Strategic Vision we shared in the winter issue of *the Crab*. We are already using the Strategic Vision to guide us in our decision making going into 2023.



*Nay Keppler, MLA President
Baltimore County Public Library*



For instance, we just reaffirmed our organizational stance to support Maryland library users according to the Library Bill of Rights, in addition to striving for continuous improvement, as we renewed our membership with the Freedom to Read Foundation. MLA is a member-driven organization, and your feedback directly impacted this decision and will continue to impact our decision-making as we move forward together. As another example, we have heard so much about the difficulties individuals have in financially supporting their MLA memberships.

MLA Director Josh Stone put together a proposal for Affiliate Memberships in which organizations could choose to pay dues based on their organization's budget, and every member of that organization would be provided individual membership benefits. You all voted YES and we are now putting the pieces in place to make this a reality. Stay tuned in the coming months to see how this could impact you and your organization.

February 15th marked Maryland Library Day in Annapolis, and the Maryland Library Association traveled to Annapolis to celebrate. In addition to thanking them for their support, we spoke with many legislators about important issues and legislation impacting libraries. Thank you to all of the Maryland Library Community members, library staff, board members, and citizens, who showed up to make that day such a success. A special thank you goes out to MLA's Legislative Panel for their incredible organization of the day.

The 2023 MLA/DLA Conference brochure has been revealed, and registration is officially open! I love the theme, "Level Up," as not only am I a huge nerd, but the core of the conference has always been self-improvement. Sure, it's going to be a lot of fun—karaoke, trivia, vendors, dogs (yes, dogs!), friends, and food—but looking through the sessions, there are going to be so many brilliant minds kind enough to share their knowledge to strengthen the Maryland Library Community as a whole.

At the conference we will be exuberantly celebrating 100 years of MLA. And looking forward to a Centennial Social this summer and our big Centennial Bash in the fall. I can't wait to see many of you there and together celebrate all we do! ■



This page and previous: Senator Sarah Elfreth and Delegate Eric Ebersole sponsored the resolution to make February 15th Maryland Library Day. Pictured with Nay Keppler and Maryland State Librarian Irene Padilla.

Top Ten Tips for a Successful MLA/DLA Conference

*Kelsey Hughes, MLA Conference Chair,
Howard County Library System*

The 2023 MLA/DLA Conference is right around the corner. We'll be gathering at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge MD from May 10-12 to learn and reconnect together as a library community. Get ready to "Level Up" your experience by following these top 10 tips to make your conference a success!

Haven't had a chance to register yet? Find more information at <https://www.mladlacon.com/> then register at https://www.mdlib.org/Files/docs/conference/MLA-DLA_2023_Registration_FINAL.pdf

🎁 Learn all the tips and tricks and get a full conference preview before you go by attending our virtual orientation live on May 2 at 2 pm, or catch the recording which will be posted on our conference site as the big day approaches.

🎁 Start the conference party a little early by registering for one of our excellent pre-conference sessions on Wednesday morning or afternoon. Topics range from hands on skill-building, such as "Adobe Express for Beginners" or "Sign, Baby, Sign!," to big-picture conversations about topics affecting your library, such as "What Can Organizations Do when EDI Initiatives go Terribly Wrong" and "Introduction to Political Power Theories." This is just a small sample of the great range of topics available!

🎁 Take a field trip! We have two bus tours leaving from the conference. Wednesday afternoon, attend a guided tour of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and Visitor's Center, sponsored by Black Caucus of MLA. You can reserve a spot on the bus while spaces last

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



JUSTINA IRELAND
WEDNESDAY KEYNOTE
4:30-5:30 PM



TRAVIS MCELROY
THURSDAY
BANQUET KEYNOTE
6:00-7:30 PM



KAETRENA DAVIS KENDRICK
FRIDAY KEYNOTE
9:30-10:30 AM



ELLEN OH
THURSDAY AUTHOR LUNCH
12:00 - 1:00 PM



when you register, or plan to drive yourself. On Friday, limited seats will be available to take a tour of the Kent Island Branch of Queen Anne's County Library to learn about some of the features of their new building. Lunch provided, sponsored by Becker Morgan. Register for this tour in the vendor hall at Becker Morgan's booth during the conference.

🎁 Download the Sched app. Did you know that the conference schedule is available online? You can use Sched to view and sort events and add them to your personal calendar, so you never miss a session.

(Bonus Sched tip: you can use the search bar to sort programs by their sponsors. Interested in academic

library programs? Search for ACRL. Looking for Children's programs? Search for CSD. See the MLA website for a full list of division acronyms.)

🎁 Attend a talk by one of our incredible keynote speakers. This year conference goers will be fortunate to hear from four wonderful keynote speakers. Wednesday evening, hear from Maryland's own Justina Ireland as she discusses her books for children and teens and ongoing challenges in the publishing industry for authors of color. Thursday afternoon, accomplished young adult author Ellen Oh will accept the 2023 Maryland Author Award. Thursday night, podcaster, writer, and Dungeons & Dragons expert Travis McElroy will combine his

signature humor and heart in a keynote talk during our banquet dinner. Rounding it all out Friday morning, Kaetrena Davis Kendrick will discuss her impactful and important research examining burnout in the library profession, particularly for library staff of color.

🎮 Be social! We have tons of social events happening all conference long, from longstanding favorite trivia night hosted by our own Michael Gannon, to a recent favorite, Karaoke (now running later by popular demand). We'll have plenty of opportunities for happy hour and networking both evenings. Black Caucus of MLA will also bring back their signature meet and greet event Wednesday night so current and interested members can get to know one another. Pets on Wheels will also bring therapy animals for a stress break on Thursday afternoon. We aim to have a little something for everyone!

🎮 Try your luck for a good cause. Help support MLA's scholarships, professional development funds, and key advocacy initiatives by participating in one of our fundraising activities, whether it's trying your luck with the 50/50 raffle, bidding on (or instant buying) something in the silent auction, or just making a donation.

🎮 Spark your conference experience by attending an Ignite session. Every day we'll have a one-hour ignite talk series. These programs are a collection of mini "lightning talks" on a wide range of topics that didn't require a full conference session but were just too good to miss.

🎮 Try your hand at some new technology with our tech petting zoo. Bryan from the Evolve Project will be on hand in the vendor hall throughout the conference with a wide range of tech toys and gadgets for you to take for a test drive. Learn about tools you may want to bring back to your library or use in a new way with your customers!

🎮 Volunteer! We have lots of opportunities to sign up to help make the conference great, either by working the registration desk or helping run the silent auction during the conference. You should have received a link to sign up for a slot in your email after you registered. Attend the conference and feel so inspired that you want to have a hand in creating it next year? Email md.la.conference@gmail.com to get on our planning team! We are always looking for new voices to make each conference great. ■

CONFERENCE SPONSORS

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS. THE MLA/DLA CONFERENCE COULD NOT HAPPEN WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT!



PLATINUM

Carroll County Public Library | *Pub Quiz, Conference Brochure, On-site Posters*
Frederick County Public Library | *Ice Cream Break*
Eastern Shore Regional Library, Southern Maryland
& Western Maryland Regional Libraries | *Conference Tote Bags*



GOLD

Harford County Public Library | *Black Caucus of the Maryland Library Association Reception*



SILVER

GALE | *Thursday Afternoon Coffee Break*
Anne Arundel County Public Library | *Conference Mobile App*
Library of Congress Federal Credit Union | *Wednesday Welcome Breakfast (Co-Sponsor)*
Prince George's County Memorial Library | *Conference Equipment Transportation*
Cecil County Public Library | *Wednesday Welcome Breakfast (Co-Sponsor)*



BRONZE

Caroline County Public Library, Queen Anne's County Public Library | *Pens & Giveaways*
Southern Maryland Regional Library Association | *Lanyards & Badge Holders (Co-Sponsor)*
Charles County Public Library | *Lanyards & Badge Holders (Co-Sponsor)*
Calvert County Library | *Lanyards & Badge Holders (Co-Sponsor)*
St. Mary's County Library | *Lanyards & Badge Holders (Co-Sponsor)*
Somerset County Library System | *Conference Website and Domain*
Montgomery County Public Library | *S'Mores Break*
Talbot County Free Library | *Ribbons and Buttons*
San Jose State University | *Friday Morning Vendor Coffee*
TechOps Specialty Vehicles | *Thursday Cocktail Reception*
Worcester County Library | *Banquet Flowers*
Dorchester County Public Library | *Karaoke*



New MLA Logos Point to the Future

Joshua Stone, MLA Executive

I am thrilled to announce that the Maryland Library Association has a brand-new logo! The goal was to create a modern-looking logo that points to the future, while highlighting the classic Maryland aesthetic we know and love. I hope you will agree that this new logo does exactly that! Since 2023 marks our 100th anniversary, we didn't just stop with ONE new logo. In addition to our new standard logo, we have commissioned a commemorative centennial version as well as redesigning a logo we used in the 70s and 80s. A huge thanks goes out to our Centennial Planning Committee for digging that up in the archives!

Nay Keppler (MLA President) and I worked with Max Canner (<https://maxcanner.com>), a Baltimore-area graphic designer, to bring these new logos to life! Max was so incredibly easy to work with, and it was just as important to them as it was to us that these new logos capture the look and feel of our organization.

In the coming weeks, we'll be launching new merch options featuring all three of our new logos. So, keep an eye on your inbox for more details soon! We will also have a limited number of exclusive buttons and pins featuring our new logos available at the 2023 MLA/DLA Annual Conference. If you haven't registered for this year's conference, there's still time! Registration is available [HERE](#).

I hope you love our new logos as much as I do, and I'm looking forward to seeing many of you May 10th–12th in Cambridge for our Conference! ■



Intellectual Freedom and MLA

The Freedom to Read Foundation and Unite Against Book Bans

Nay Keppler, MLA President, Baltimore County Public Library

In February, the Maryland Library Association renewed our membership with the [Freedom to Read Foundation \(FTRF\)](#), an organization that protects and defends the First Amendment to the Constitution and supports the right of libraries to collect—and individuals to access—information.

FTRF also partners with Unite Against Banned Books, which MLA [joined](#) earlier this year. Our decision to support these organizations coincides with our goal to collaborate with nationwide organizations to further support Maryland library users according to the Library Bill of Rights, in addition to striving for continuous improvement, as outlined in our new [Strategic Vision](#). We will continue to support intellectual freedom and fight censorship.

Thank you all for your support! ■

Emerging and Resurging Genres

EcoFiction, Gothic, Hopepunk, and Quoizes

Monica McAbee, Prince George's County Memorial Library System

What are some good novels that explore climate change issues? What does gothic fiction look like to today's readers? What the heck is Hopepunk? Can you recommend cozy mysteries with queer representation?

If these questions intrigue you, please register to hear presenters from the Readers' Advisory Interest Group explore the typical characteristics, appeal factors, and some representative titles for the new (or evolving) genres of ecofiction, gothic, hopepunk, and quoizes.

You will learn what appeal factors are, how to identify them, and how to employ them in reader's advisory interactions. The presenters will demonstrate how to use pop culture media to make connections between the customers' fandoms and potential reading interests. You will also see examples of how to booktalk titles from genres that are in the current zeitgeist. By learning about four current reading trends, you will be prepared to entice readers with representative titles, introduce new genres to book clubs, and connect media fans with reading material that has similar appeal. Attendees will receive a list of ten to twenty further titles to explore in each genre. Stay informed about the latest trends and keep the reading conversations going!

Thursday April 27, 2023, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Online via Zoom

MLA Members: \$12.50

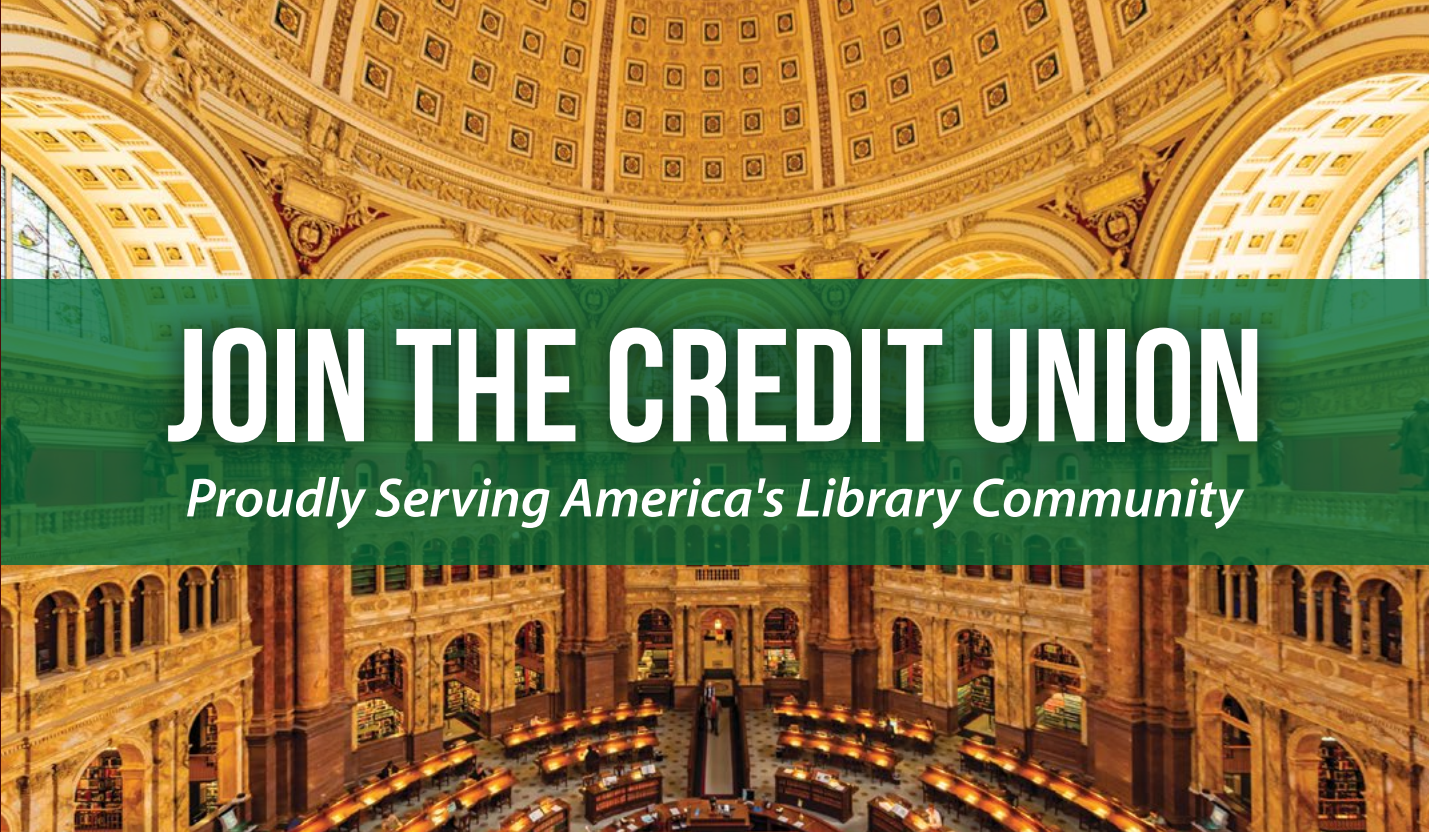
Non-members: \$18.75

Student/Retired/Unemployed/Friend: \$6.25

This program has been approved for 2 contact hours of continuing education.

Registration deadline is Thursday, April 20.

Register here: [RAIG Emerging and Resurging Genres: EcoFiction, Gothic, Hopepunk, and Quoizes](#) ■



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\$100

+

FINANCE YOUR AUTO LOAN

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\$100

=

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*Not all applicants will qualify for membership. Member must be 18 years or older and open a savings account with a \$10 deposit and open a checking account with a monthly direct deposit of at least \$300 that remains open for at least 60 days to qualify for the new member incentive. The new member incentive will be paid into the member's savings account after 90 days provided both the savings account and checking account remain open and meet the qualifications. The \$100.00 new member incentive will be reported as interest income on the Form 1099-INT year-end. Other terms limitations and conditions may apply. **For qualifying members with approved credit. Minimum loan amount is \$10,000.00 and the vehicle must be a 2015 or newer model. Auto loan finance incentive will be paid into the member's saving account after the first auto loan payment is made to the Credit Union on time. Members may qualify for both offers, earning up to \$200.00 in incentives. Offers are for new members only. Library of Congress FCU retains the right to cancel these offers at any time without notice.

Defending Our Collections

An Intellectual Freedom Panel Discussion Series

Monica McAbee, Prince George's County Memorial Library System

IN FEBRUARY 2022, the Maryland Library Association (MLA) [released a statement](#) condemning nationwide attempts to remove books from schools and libraries. Since then, matters have only gotten worse, as various states seek to enact legislation enforcing these practices. To give library staff a chance to share experiences and suggestions, MLA's Intellectual Freedom Panel (IFP) created a discussion series addressing the current censorship situation.

We started off in December with "Responding to Collection Challenges in Politically Turbulent Times," facilitated by Monica McAbee of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System. Participants shared examples of challenges in their libraries, and we explored the effectiveness of the responses to various scenarios. Along with providing a strong selection policy, reconsideration process, and staff training, other best practices include thinking strategically about how to promote controversial materials or programs, remaining on the lookout for coordinated efforts by certain groups (like "Hide the Pride") to hide or steal materials that they don't want the library to carry, and remembering that libraries are never "neutral" when it comes to the rights of our users. We must provide materials that represent a diversity of viewpoints and experiences. Many library reconsideration policies include a limit on how often an item can be challenged within a stipulated period of time.

In February, we discussed "The Importance of Diversity and Difficult Topics in Children's Literature," facilitated by Heather Matthews of Salisbury University's Department of Early and Elementary Education. Attendees expressed concern about organized censorship attacks making their way to Maryland, the need for library and school administrations to support their staff in the face of materials challenges, and potential attempts to impose "parental advisory" labels on materials. Libraries and schools need to get ahead of attacks by publicizing all the positive things they do for the community. MLA's Legislative Panel is watching out for any legislation that could impact users' access to our collections. Finally, there was concern that increasing attacks could lead to self-censorship. Apropos of that issue, by the time this article is posted, IFP will have hosted a discussion on "Combatting Soft Censorship." Check the Summer issue of *the Crab* for a summary!

IFP recommends these resources for information and support:

ACLU overview on the issue: [Defending Our Right to Learn](#)

ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom: [Fight Censorship resource page](#)

ALA Unite Against Book Bans [action toolkit](#)

[ALA United for Libraries](#) for support and advocacy

[Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs](#)

MLA IFP's [LibGuide on intellectual freedom](#)

PEN America report: [Banned in the USA](#)

[Selection Policy Toolkit](#) from ALA

South Carolina Center for Community Literacy: [Get Ready Stay Ready toolkit](#)

Recent MLA actions defending access to libraries and library materials:

Released [statement](#) condemning nationwide attempts to remove books from schools and libraries

Released [statement](#) opposing proposed Missouri rule 15 CSR 30-200.015

Signed on as partner organization with [Unite Against Book Bans](#)

Renewed membership with the [Freedom to Read Foundation](#)

GLSEN Intellectual Freedom Workshop

A partnership between IFP and MLA LGBTQ+ Interest Group

By Andrea Boothby Rice, Lloyd Jansen, and Kennedy Jackson

ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, Andrea Boothby Rice (Washington College; Intellectual Freedom Panel Chair), Lloyd Jansen (Charles County Public Library; IFP) and Kennedy Jackson (Prince George's County Memorial Library System; LGBTQ+ Interest Group) gathered in Baltimore at the GLSEN Youth Summit and spoke with a dozen students on intellectual freedom, censorship, and advocacy.

Catering to middle school and high school students, the significance of this program was to showcase the importance of defining our right to intellectual freedom and knowing how to advocate for the right to read. The presenters introduced the timeline of the evolution of Intellectual Freedom beginning at the Age of Enlightenment up to the Book Ban Explosion. The Book Ban Explosion has been taking place more often between the years of 2021 with 729 challenges and 2022 with 681 challenges through August. According to the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, 1,651 unique titles have been challenged and PEN America has reported 2,532 individual challenges that have impacted 1,648 separate titles in the 2021-2022 academic school year.

Following an activity that encouraged students to think about their position on issues related to their First Amendment rights, which encouraged activity by getting the students to move around the room, the next subject dived into defining and recognizing censorship. A guessing game activity that asked why certain books have been banned or challenged provided a fun way of contextualizing book banning and led to a deeper discussion on the aspects of the titles that some find offensive.

Lloyd Jansen and Kennedy Jackson presenting at the GLSEN Youth Summit in Baltimore, MD.

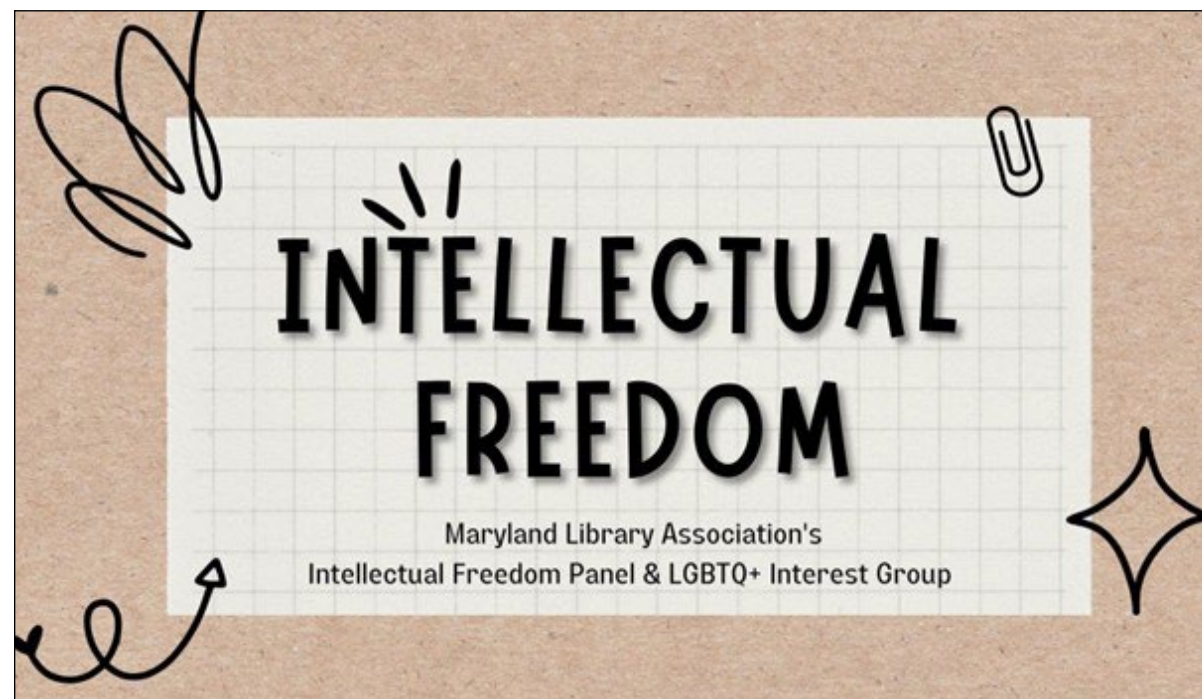


...the final piece brought home how to protect your right to read and library collections...

Some of these examples of books were *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White, *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier, and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* by Bill Martin Jr. The purpose of this activity was to demonstrate who tries to censor materials, and why.

Following censorship and the history of intellectual freedom, we outlined why intellectual freedom is important and historical challenges that have framed our current definitions and rights. This section explored *Tinker v Des Moines Independent School District* (1969), the Board of Education, *Island Trees Union Free School District v Pico* (1982) as well as the *Sund v City of Wichita Falls* (2000) court cases which gave more legal context and background and explanation of students' rights to expression and to read.

Tying all of these concepts together, the final piece brought home how to protect your right to read and library collections through advocacy, alliances the students can make and where to find support, as well as defining and defending their values to root the importance of fighting for your right to intellectual freedom in their own lives and communities. The engaged students provided plenty of insightful and thoughtful feedback, making for a stimulating hour-long program.



Seed Sharing in Howard County

January 2023 marked the first-ever Howard County Seed Share. Seeds have been saved and shared since people began cultivating plants. Seed Shares are one way to continue that tradition.

These gatherings bring people together to share seeds saved from the garden, excess purchased seeds, and donated seeds, along with information on planting and growing...

Kelly MacBride-Gill, Howard County Library System

Seed share photos courtesy of Geoffrey Baker, Howard County Library System.

LIBRARIES, WHILE NOT AT FIRST AN OBVIOUS HOST for seed shares, naturally fit the role of supporting the open sharing of resources and knowledge.

The idea was borne (or planted, if you please) from interactions at the Enchanted Garden at the Miller Branch of the Howard County Library System. The Enchanted Garden is a natural gathering spot for members of the local Master Gardeners and local greening groups. Ann Hackeling, the Enchanted Garden Coordinator, grew the connections to start a partnership that included the University of Maryland Extension Howard County Master Gardeners, the Howard County Bureau of Environmental Services, Columbia Association Yards Alive!, the Community Ecology Institute and Freetown Farm. Ann had led a seed share at the library several years ago and knew that to run a successful event, collaboration was key. A planning committee was formed in August 2022, and all decisions going forward were made with consensus from this team.

National Seed Swap Day is celebrated on the last Saturday of January. To avoid overlap with a major seed share in the D.C. area on that date, we set our event for Saturday, January 21st. Our initial meetings focused on answering fundamental questions such as the purpose of the event and how to bring as many people as possible to the table. One thing we decided was that attendees would not need to bring any seeds to take part. We chose 'Share' over 'Swap' to recognize that this would be an open event, inviting new gardeners into the community. The goals of the Seed Share were for attendees to acquire new varieties; save money; reduce seed waste; and learn and share with fellow gardeners.



As we moved forward, the focus shifted towards promotion and logistics. The work was done through monthly in-person meetings and many emails and shared documents. Promotion materials were designed by HCLS Communications Team, based on the guidance of the planning committee. The Communications Team worked with us throughout every step of designing and sharing. As part of our intentional efforts to reach beyond the typical audience for a gardening event at the library, we chose language and images that would have broad appeal. The planning committee members then shared with all their distribution networks, allowing the event to gain greater visibility.

RSVPs began to pour in once registration opened! We were excited, and now focused on going over day-of plans in detail to make sure we could offer a top-quality event. Donations requested from national seed distributors came in. Seeds collected from the Enchanted Garden, Freetown Farm, and local backyards started to be sorted and packaged up in envelopes. Planning committee members confirmed their attendance, and over a dozen Master Gardeners were lined up as volunteers.

The Seed Share was envisioned as an opportunity to share knowledge and seeds, so we planned demonstrations, information tables, and activities for young ones. The Share took place in a large open room at the Miller Branch, with tables around the perimeter and space left open in the center for movement and mingling. Seed donations were dropped off by the entrance, then taken to one of the seed distribution tables: Perennials/Natives, Annuals, and Vegetables & Herbs. Between each of the three distribution tables were booths for each partner.

All the preparation paid off! We had a lively crowd start arriving early for the opening, and a steady flow continued throughout the two hours of the Seed Share. We estimate around 200 attendees took part overall.



People were generous with their donations, and everyone was able to go home with some seeds in hand. Even waiting in line at the seed distribution tables, attendees were in high spirits. They struck up conversations not only with the experts at the booths, but with one another, to ask questions and learn. Several people asked me on their way out when the next Seed Share would be, saying they couldn't wait to do this again.

We are indeed planning on a Seed Share for this coming January. Our partners have expressed interest in working with us again next year, and now that we have the structure in place we can build upon that foundation. We encourage other libraries interested in holding a seed share. While we are still learning, we are happy to share details on the process to help you take off in your own planning.



OutRAIGeous Reviews

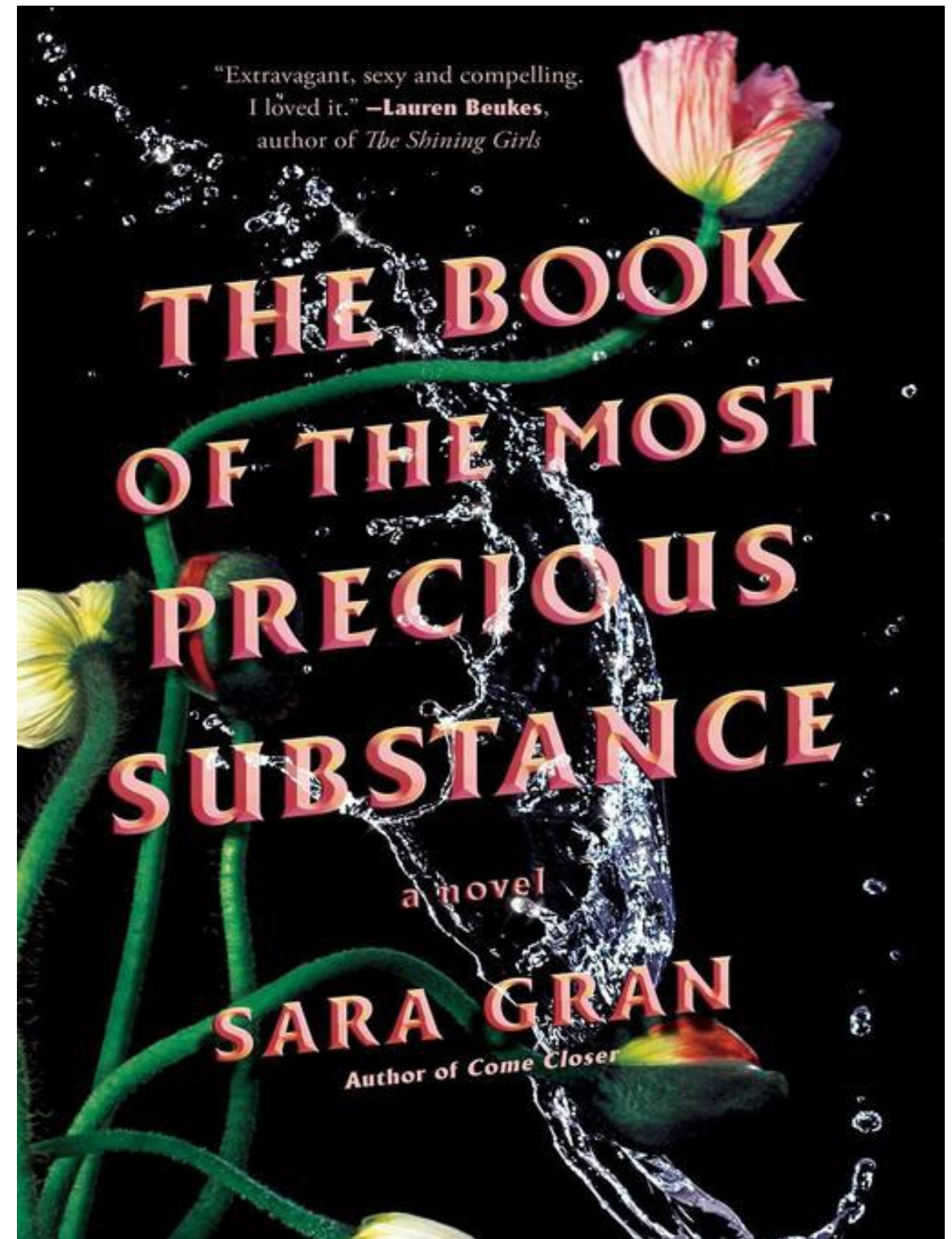
*Books recommended by members of
the Reader's Advisory Interest Group*

***The Book of the Most Precious Substance* by Sara Gran (Dreamland Books, 2022)**

Review by Meg Faller

Author Sara Gran is weird. In a good way. Her books defy genre, and *The Book of the Most Precious Substance* is no different. It's about marriage, rare books, money, dark wishes, and sex magic. "Sex magic" you say? Yes! Sex plus ritual equals power for the practitioners, and Lily needs something that's going to take some power. Her husband has early-onset dementia and his care needs have put her plans for her next novel on hold while her money needs quadrupled, plus she just misses the man she married! While at a bookselling event, she's approached by a friend looking for information about a mysterious book, *The Book of the Most Precious Substance*. He's got a buyer willing to pay serious money, but no one knows anything about the book! Then her friend turns up dead and there's still a book to be hunted.

What follows is a bizarre adventure filled with bluffing through big money negotiations, overseas travel, and self-discovery involving a lot of sex. No one said life was fair, but sometimes you can get what you want...but will it be what you need?

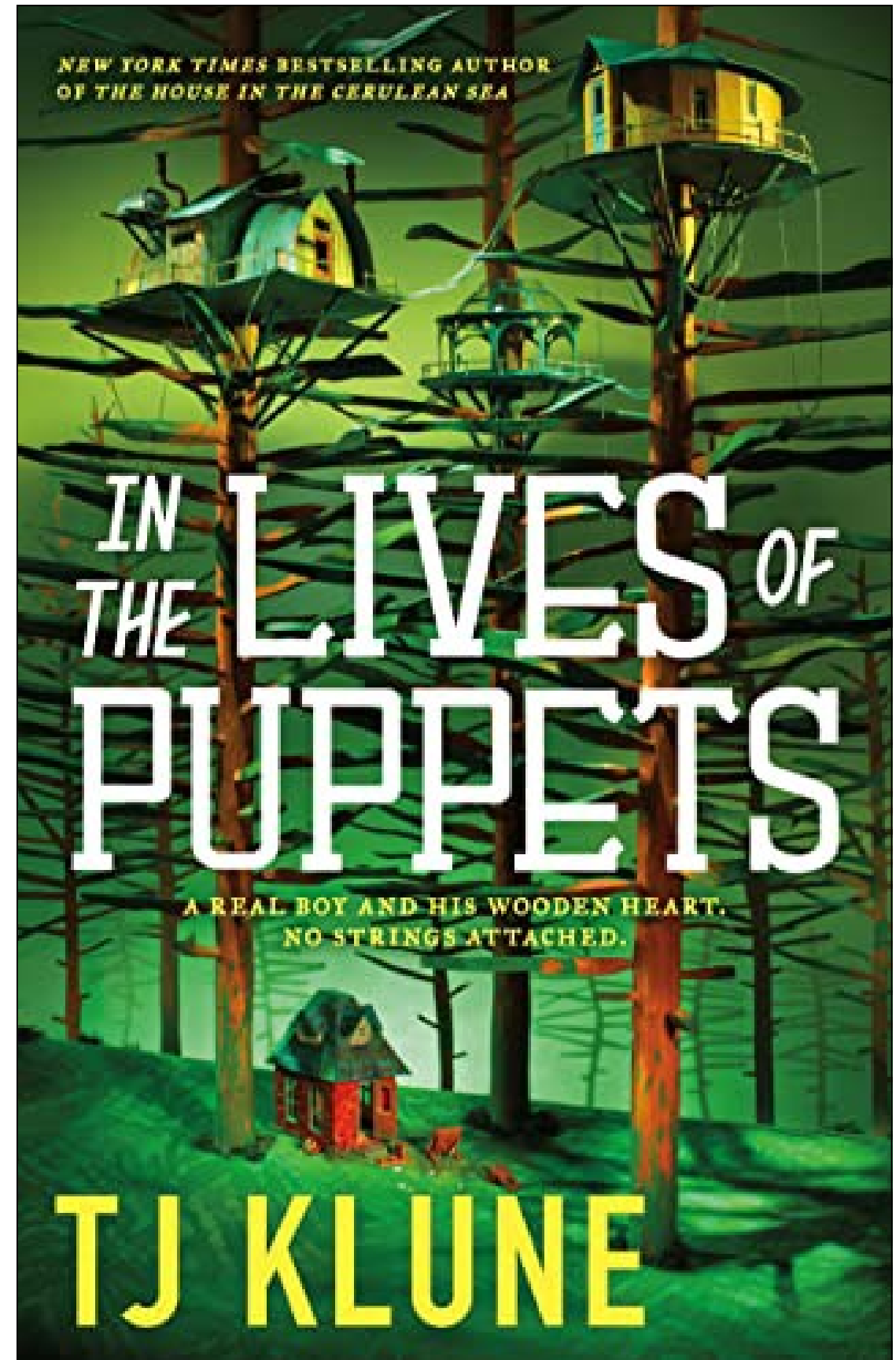


***In the Lives of Puppets* by TJ Klune (Tor Books, 2023)**

Review by Chloe Scully

In a strange little home built into the branches of a grove of trees, live three robots – fatherly inventor android Giovanni Lawson, a pleasantly sadistic nurse machine, and a small vacuum desperate for love and attention. Victor Lawson, a human, lives there too. They’re a family, hidden and safe. The day Vic salvages and repairs an unfamiliar android labelled “HAP,” he learns of a shared dark past between Hap and Gio—a past spent hunting humans. When Hap unwittingly alerts robots from Gio’s former life to their whereabouts, the family is no longer hidden and safe. Gio is captured and taken back to his old laboratory in the City of Electric Dreams. Together, the rest of Vic’s assembled family must journey across an unforgiving and otherworldly country to rescue Gio from decommission, or worse, reprogramming. Along the way to save Gio, amid conflicted feelings of betrayal and affection for Hap, Vic must decide for himself: can he accept love with strings attached?

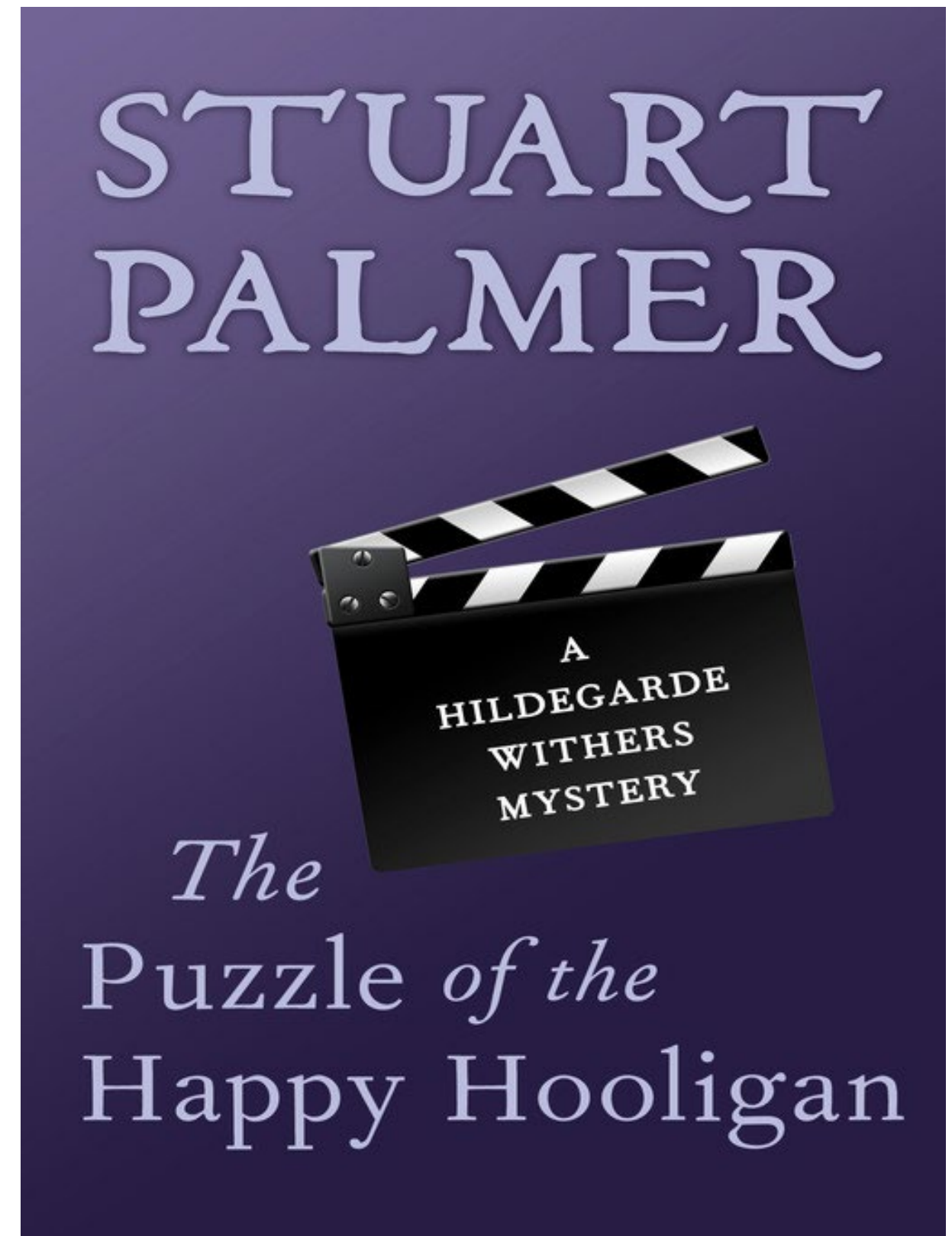
In the Lives of Puppets is a reimagining of the classic story *Pinocchio* with a little mixing of *The Wizard of Oz* and *Swiss Family Robinson* to add some spice. Don’t worry—there are no creepy puppets like the title suggests. The author, TJ Klune, is known for writing beautifully complex stories about chosen family, and *In the Lives of Puppets* is no exception. The writing is filled with heart, humor, and hope, the plotting and world-building is fantastic, and the characters are incredibly memorable. If you want a story that includes adventure, romance, diverse representation, and a little bit of inspiration from the classics, then you will want to seek out *In the Lives of Puppets*.



***The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan* by Stuart Palmer**
(American Mystery Classics, 2018)

Review by Amy Jenkins

The Golden Age of mysteries spanned from the 1920s to the 1940s. Stuart Palmer, a renowned but often forgotten author, created a mystery series featuring the amateur sleuth Hildegard Withers, a spinster and schoolteacher with a panache for solving crimes. Her character was very popular with readers who devoured the books. In this eighth installment, Hildegard's vacation plans for going to the Mediterranean are ruined because of the war, and she instead finds herself in Hollywood, California. Her plans for sightseeing are interrupted when she is recognized by Harry Wagman, a fast-talking agent who wants her to be a technical advisor on a movie set. Soon Hildegard finds a dead body and has to scrutinize many people who have the means to commit the crime. Hildegard enlists the help of Inspector Oliver Piper, of the New York City Police Department. Can they figure out the identity of the murderer before it is too late? You will have to read this book to find out.





Solar Eclipses Are Coming!

David Prosper

HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE? What about an annular solar eclipse? If not, then you are in luck if you live in North America: the next twelve months will see two solar eclipses darken the skies for observers in the continental United States, Mexico, and Canada!

Solar eclipse fans get a chance to witness an annular eclipse this fall. On Saturday, October 14, 2023, the Moon will move exactly in front of the Sun from the point of view of observers along a narrow strip of land stretching across the United States from Oregon to Texas and continuing on to Central and South America. Since the Moon will be at its furthest point in its orbit from Earth at that time (known as apogee), it won't completely block the Sun; instead, a dramatic "ring" effect will be seen as the bright edge of the Sun will be visible around the black silhouette of the Moon. The distinct appearance of this style of eclipse is why it's called an annular eclipse, as annular means ring-like. If you are standing under a tree or behind a screen you will see thousands of ring-like shadows projected everywhere during maximum eclipse, and the light may take on a wan note, but it won't actually get dark outside; it will be similar to the brightness of a cloudy day. This eclipse must only be observed with properly certified eclipse glasses, or other safe observation methods like pinhole projection or shielded solar telescopes. Even during the peak of the eclipse, the tiny bit of the Sun seen via the "ring" can damage your retinas and even blind you.

Just six months later, a dramatic total solar eclipse will darken the skies from Mexico to northeast Canada, casting its shadow across the USA in a strip approximately 124 miles



This detailed solar eclipse map shows the paths of where and when the Moon's shadow will cross the USA for the upcoming 2023 annular solar eclipse and 2024 total solar eclipse, made using data compiled from multiple NASA missions. Where will you be? This map is very detailed, so if you would like to download a larger copy of the image, you can do so and find out more about its features at <https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/5073>.

Credits: NASA/Scientific Visualization Studio/Michala Garrison; eclipse calculations by Ernie Wright, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center.

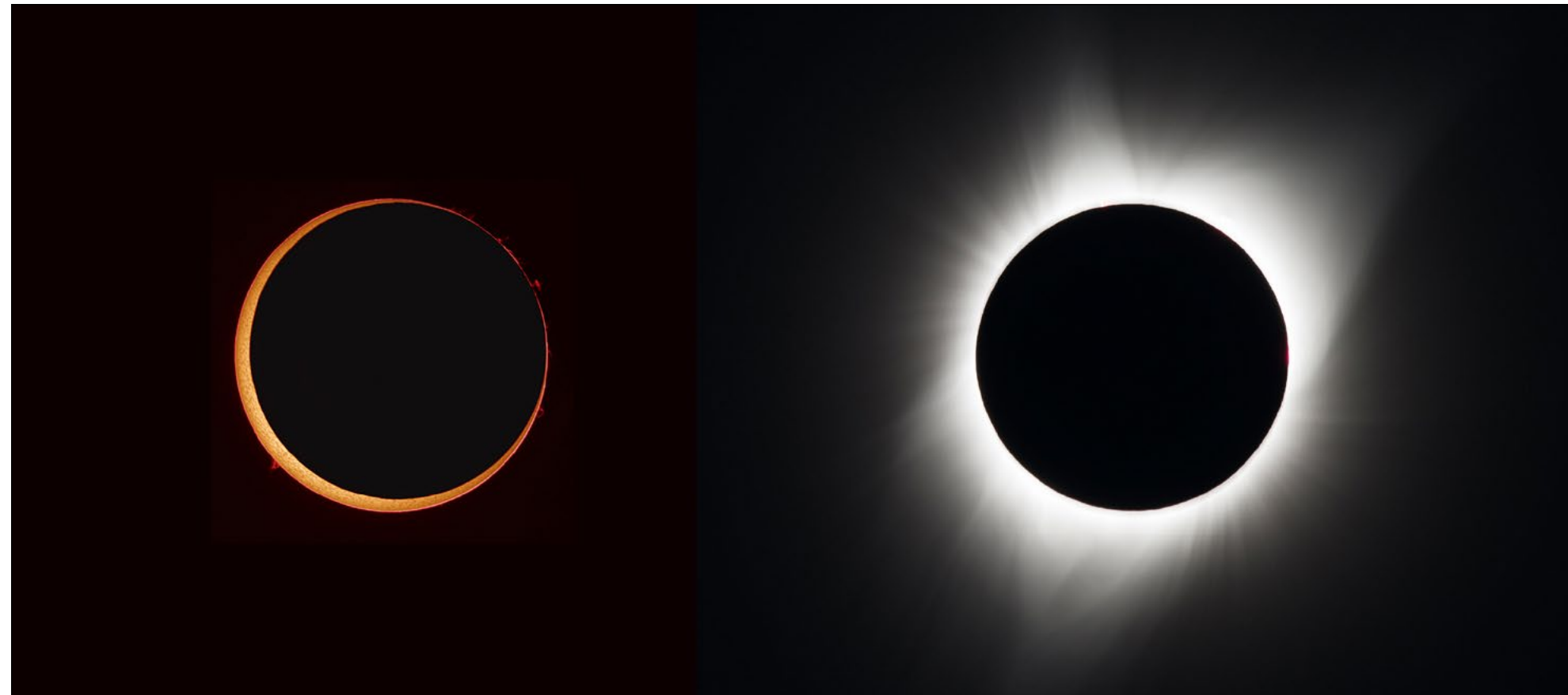
(200 km) wide, on Monday, April 8, 2024. While protection must be worn to safely observe most of this eclipse, it's not needed to witness totality itself, the brief amount of time when the Moon blocks the entire surface of the Sun from view. And if you try to view totality through your eclipse viewer, you won't actually be able to see anything! The



Moon's shadow will dramatically darken the skies into something resembling early evening, confusing animals and delighting human observers. You will even be able to see bright stars and planets - provided you are able to take your eyes off the majesty of the total eclipse! While the darkness and accompanying chilly breeze will be a thrill, the most spectacular observation of all will be the Sun's magnificent corona! Totality is the only time you can observe the corona, which is actually the beautiful outer fringes of the Sun's atmosphere. For observers in the middle of the path, they will get to experience the deepest portion of the eclipse, which will last over four minutes - twice as long as 2017's total solar eclipse over North America.

While some folks may be lucky enough to witness both eclipses in full – especially the residents of San Antonio, Texas, whose city lies at the crossroads of both paths – everyone off the paths of maximum eclipse can still catch sight of beautiful partial eclipses if the skies are clear. The Eclipse Ambassadors program is recruiting volunteers across the USA to prepare communities off the central paths in advance of this amazing cosmic ballet. Find more information and apply to share the excitement at eclipseambassadors.org. NASA has published a fantastic Solar Eclipse Safety Guide which can help you plan your viewing at bit.ly/nasaclipsesafety. And you can find a large collection of solar eclipse resources, activities, visualizations, photos, and more from NASA at solarsystem.nasa.gov/eclipses.

This article is distributed by NASA's Night Sky Network (NSN). The NSN program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov to find local clubs, events, and more!



Photos of an annular total solar eclipse (left) and a total solar eclipse (right). Note that the annular eclipse is shown with a dark background, as it is only safe to view with protection—you can see how a small portion of the Sun is still visible as the ring around the Moon. On the right, you can see the Sun's wispy corona, visible only during totality itself, when the Moon completely (totally) hides the Sun from view. A total solar eclipse is only safe to view without protection during totality itself; it is absolutely necessary to protect your eyes throughout the rest of the eclipse!

Credits: Left, Annular Eclipse: Stefan Seip (Oct 3, 2005). Right, Total Eclipse, NASA/Aubrey Gemignani (August 21, 2017)

Outstanding Volunteer Award: **Tamea Bowen**, Friends of the Calvert Library Board, Calvert Library

Robyn Truslow, Calvert Library

Calvert Library is pleased to report that the Maryland Library Association selected Tamea Bowen as Volunteer of the Year. Tamea has been a Calvert Library volunteer for over twenty years, taking on tasks as requested by library staff. Tamea joined the Friends of Calvert Library Board in 1998 and was elected Treasurer the following year. She has been an integral and important component of the executive team for the Friends since. In any volunteer organization it is always difficult to find the right person to be the treasurer because there is so much detail-oriented work involved. Her monthly reports are always well-organized and timely, and she accomplishes all the necessary tax filings for sales tax, income tax and other government paperwork to maintain the Friends' 501c3 status. This year she stepped down as Treasurer, but when the person elected had a long-term emergency, she stepped back in to take on the duties temporarily.

In addition to Treasurer duties, Tamea took on other administrative volunteer tasks like periodical organization and archiving. She helped the collection staff by checking book reviews to make sure we owned the ones well reviewed. She was in the library multiple times a week making regular deposits for Friends, paying bills and promptly reimbursing staff for library expenditures the Friends were covering. She managed the inventory of the Friends store items, and she helped at every Pub Quiz and every Book Sale. She rarely missed a Friends meeting in her 23 years of service. She is a quiet, steady, reliable volunteer. If a task is assigned to Tamea, you don't need to check on it because you know it will be done.

She shared her love of libraries with her family such that her daughter is now Assistant Branch Manager at Calvert Library Fairview Branch, her



kids perform at holiday concerts for the library, and they all help at Book Sales. Tamea inspired them to be “a library family.”

Tamea is not the type of volunteer who needs acclamation, but she clearly deserves it and Calvert Library is so pleased that she is being honored by the Maryland Library Association as Volunteer of the Year.

Outstanding Volunteer Award: **Sharon Hafner Yingling**, Friends of Carroll County Public Library

Kati Townsley, Carroll County Public Library

Sharon Hafner Yingling is a staple in the Carroll County community and has served the Carroll County Public Library as an official and unofficial ambassador in various capacities for over a decade. In 2011, the Friends of Carroll County Public Library was established to support the library in its mission to deliver lifelong learning for all ages through advocating for public funding for libraries, promoting awareness of public library services and needs, and enhancing library program resources in partnership with staff and trustees. Sharon was one of the very first members of the Friends and went on to serve as the President and Vice President for several terms. Sharon was instrumental in establishing the “I Love My Library” campaign, capturing testimonials from library patrons as to why they loved CCPL.

Sharon has always been a strong lifelong advocate for the library. She is a regular participant in and promoter of library events and a voracious reader. Sharon was instrumental in establishing fundraising initiatives to support CCPL’s annual Battle of the Books competition. Other notable fundraising events she helps or has helped to run include a mini-golf event inside the Eldersburg Branch Library, which raised funds to purchase books for CCPL’s Battle of the Books; the renovation of the Mary Lou Dewey

Sculpture Park; the Annual Friends Meeting every December; and the Davis Day celebration in the Westminster Branch, honoring W.H. Davis, the benefactor who funded the first free library in Carroll County.

Most significantly, Sharon led the fundraising for Exploration Commons at 50 East, which was the largest fundraising campaign in CCPL history. The first challenge was to convey to the community the opportunity a makerspace could provide. At the beginning of the project, Sharon did her homework in order to educate the Community regarding the concept of a “makerspace.” She was always willing to meet with and provide tours of the empty space and inspire community stakeholders as to the benefit Exploration Commons would provide. To start the fundraising project, Sharon and her husband John committed a substantial financial gift, stating, “John and I are proud to do our part in making Exploration Commons at 50 East a reality. We believe this exciting project will transform Main Street and benefit all of Carroll County.” When COVID hit, Sharon did not allow the pandemic to derail the fundraising efforts. While the project hit roadblocks and supply chain issues, Sharon’s resilience and persistence were key to forward motion. Sharon ensured that the project stayed on course, using her own influence, connections, and stature in the Community; she was always willing to reach out to potential donors and make connections to CCPL. Her love and vision for the library proved to be a highly effective tool in convincing donors to join in the effort. Sharon’s leadership and efforts led to the establishment of an extraordinarily strong network of Friends of CCPL and a campaign that raised over \$1.1 Million for the building fund for Exploration Commons at 50 East. Sharon is and always has been one of the best advocates for CCPL in our community.

Sharon is a lifelong resident of Carroll County and lives in Westminster with John, her husband of 50 years. She is a graduate of Towson State University with a BS in biology and received a master’s degree in management from Notre Dame College of Maryland, graduating first in her class. She enjoyed a remarkably successful career working for the State of Maryland in public health before retiring in 2011 with over 39 years of service.



Outstanding Volunteer Award: **Jim Meckley**, Friends of the Ocean Pines Library, Worcester County Library

*Alicia Blake, Eastern Shore
Regional Library, and Jennifer
Ranck, Worcester County
Library*

If you visit the Ocean Pines Library there's a good chance you'll run into James "Jim" Meckley. Since joining the Friends of the Ocean Pines Library in 2016, Jim has become a special part of the library team. Almost immediately he used his previous bookselling expertise to grow the annual Friends book sale. Last year he volunteered over 1,000 hours.

He comes to the library almost every day to sort through donated books and arrange them by author, genre, etc. for the annual Book Sale held every July. Book sale funds have helped the branch purchase new technology, acquire new furniture, and offer additional programs for all ages.

Always on the lookout for other fund raising opportunities, Jim recognized the opportunity to sell books through Amazon, raising additional funds for the Friends Group each month. Book sales were also expanded to the local Ocean Pines Farmers Market. This is not an easy undertaking as it involves the set-up and



breakdown of many boxes and multiple tables each Saturday. Jim not only sells the books, but also sells the library and the services we offer.

Jim shares his talents with the community by hosting trivia programs for the library throughout the year. People enjoy the trivia, but it is his personality that is the real draw. He has a way of making everything fun and making everyone feel welcome.

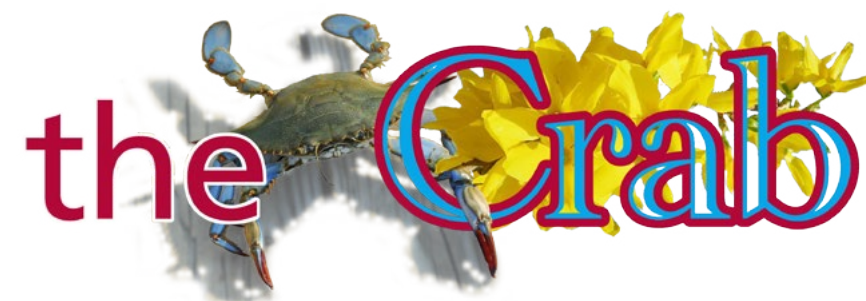
Last year, library staff found an abandoned kitten outside the branch. Jim adopted the kitten and named him Stacks. ♦

Jim's—and Stacks'—boundless energy and generous spirit are unmatched. When Jim is not involved with library business, he serves on the board of the Worcester County Arts Council.



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