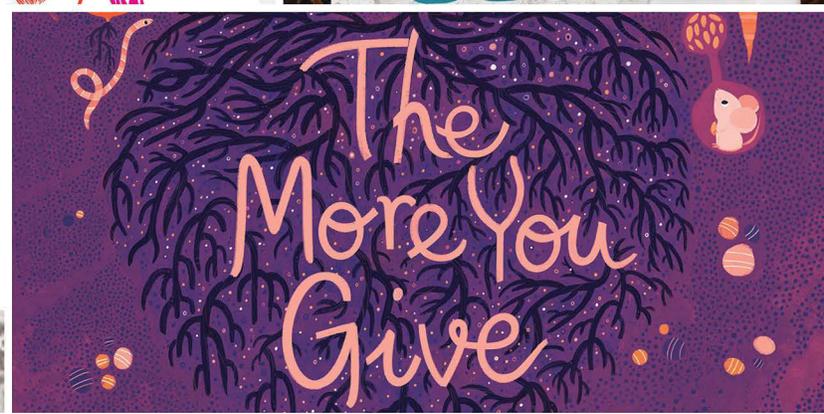
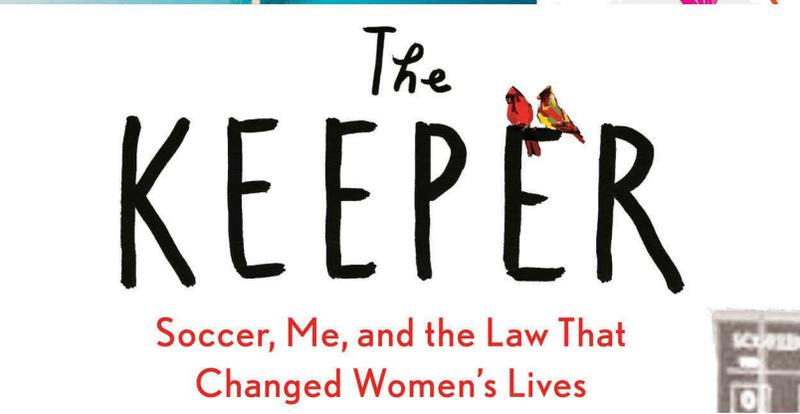
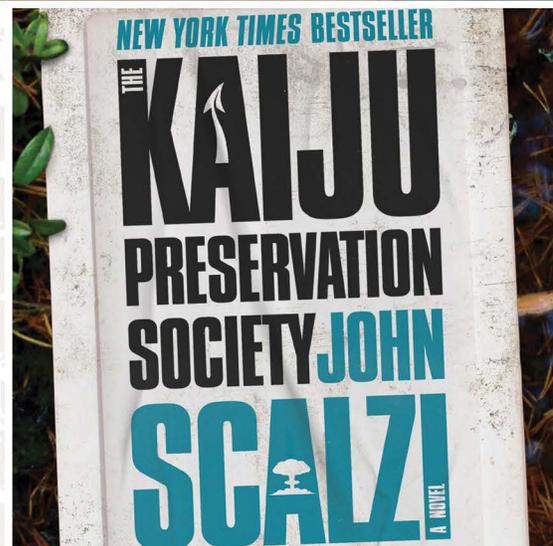
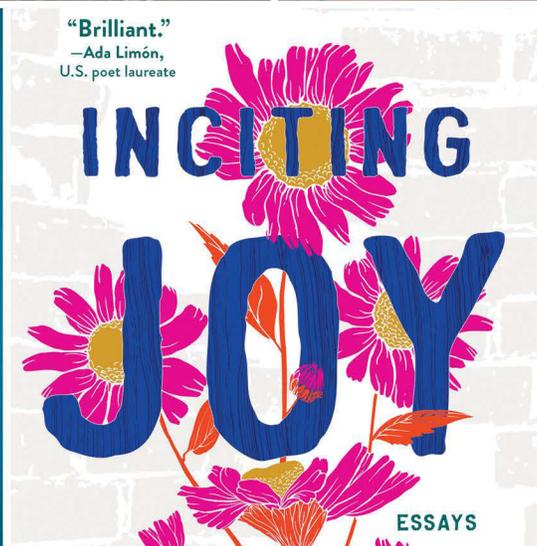
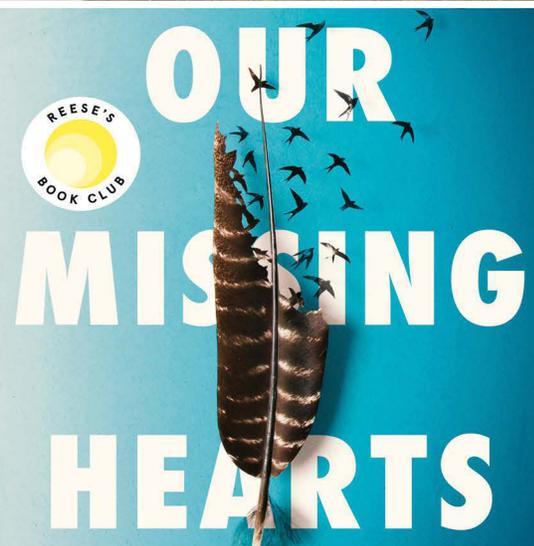
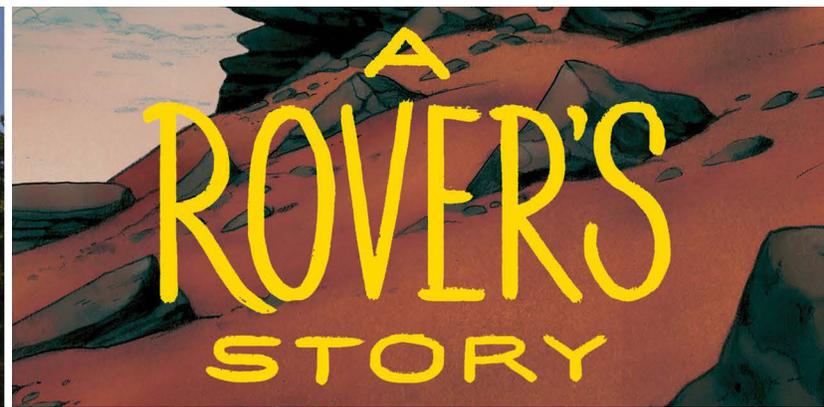
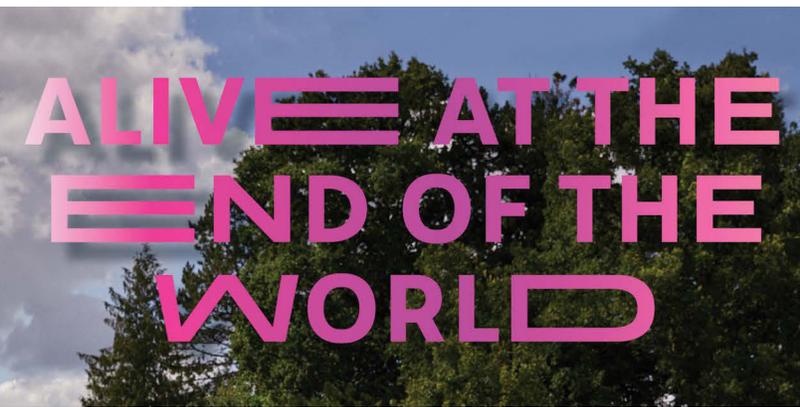


OHIOana QUARTERLY

FALL 2023 | VOL. 66 NO. 4



Collecting, Preserving, and Celebrating Ohio Literature

Contents

FEATURES

- 4 Celebrating the 2023 Ohioana Awards**
10 “The Care & Keeping of You”
by Kortney Morrow

2023 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant Winner

BOOK REVIEWS

- 14 Nonfiction**
17 Fiction
20 Poetry
21 Middle Grade & Young Adult
23 Juvenile

BOOKS AND EVENTS

- 24 Book List**
29 Coming Soon

OHIOana QUARTERLY

FALL 2023

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HONORARY CHAIR
Fran DeWine, Columbus

ELECTED

President: John Sullivan, Plain City
Vice-President: Katie Brandt, Columbus
Secretary: Bryan Loar, Columbus
Treasurer: L. Bradfield Hughes, Columbus

Amelia Adams, Logan
Gillian Berchowitz, Athens
Ashley Bethard, Dayton
Rudine Sims Bishop, Columbus
Helen F. Bolte, Columbus
Dionne Custer Edwards, Columbus
Mary Curran Hackett, Cincinnati
Negesti Kaudu, Columbus
Helen Kirk, Maumee
Todd Kleismit, Columbus
David Siders, Cincinnati
Caroline Stevens, Columbus
Emily J. Taft, Columbus
Kerry S. Teeple, Findlay
Deborah Urton, Westerville
Rekha Voruganti, Dublin
Betty Weibel, Chagrin Falls
Jay Yurkiw, Columbus

APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Carol Garner, Mount Vernon
Amy McClure, Dublin
Brian M. Perera, Upper Arlington
Tracey S. Monroe-Winbush, Youngstown

TRUSTEES EMERITUS

Ann Bowers, Bowling Green
Christina Butler, PhD, Columbus
Cynthia Puckett, Columbus
Daniel Shuey, Westerville
Robert Webner, Columbus

OHIOANA STAFF

Executive Director.....David Weaver
Assistant Director.....Kathryn Powers
Librarian.....Courtney Brown
Program Coordinator.....Miriam Nordine
Mount Intern.....Charlotte Houghton

The *Ohioana Quarterly* (ISSN 0030-1248) is currently published four times a year by the Ohioana Library Association, 274 East First Avenue, Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio 43201. Individual subscriptions to the *Ohioana Quarterly* are available through membership in the Association; \$50 of membership dues pays the required subscription. Single copy \$6.50. U.S. postage paid at Columbus, Ohio. Send address changes to Ohioana Quarterly, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus, Ohio, 43201. Copyright © 2023 by the Ohioana Library Association. All rights reserved. Printed by PXPOHIO.

From the Director

Dear Friends,



I remember my first Ohioana Awards—it was 2006, and the ceremony was held at the State Library of Ohio. How wonderful, uplifting, and inspiring it was! And what a thrill to meet George Bilgere, James Cross Giblin, and Jacqueline Woodson, three of that year’s award-winning authors. Since then, I have eagerly looked forward to each awards event and meeting the winners, who over the years have included stellar authors such as Rita Dove, Paula McLain, Douglas Brinkley, and David McCullough. This year’s event at the Ohio Statehouse on September 21 was extra special for me as it marked my final Ohioana Awards before I retire next spring.

Our fall cover story features the 2023 Ohioana Awards event. More than 500 books have been honored with an Ohioana Book Award since they were created in 1942, and this year we added seven more titles to that distinguished roster. We also presented the annual Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant, a competitive prize that goes to an Ohio writer age thirty or younger who has not yet published a book. This year’s recipient is Kortney Morrow of Cleveland. A talented poet whose work has appeared in a number of prestigious publications, Kortney is definitely a writer to keep your eye on, as you’ll see when you read her prize-winning essay, “The Care and Keeping of You.”

As always, you’ll find reviews of new books and a list of titles recently added to the Ohioana collection. Don’t forget to check out the calendar of coming events, too. Autumn in Ohio brings not only a burst of beautiful colors, but also a burst of exciting literary happenings throughout the state. Make plans now to see some of your favorite Ohio authors at these events.

Autumn also brings the start of the holiday season, including my personal favorite—Thanksgiving. Here at Ohioana, one of the things we are most thankful for is people like you, who share our love of books and reading. It is your support that makes everything we do possible, from our collection to the Ohioana Awards; from the Ohio Literary Trail to the Ohioana Book Festival. *Thank you.*

Our best wishes to you and yours throughout the season. We’ll see you in 2024!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Weaver".

David Weaver
Executive Director

ON THE COVER

This issue’s cover, designed by Kathryn Powers, celebrates the 2023 Ohioana Book Award winners. To learn more, see the article on the next page.

Celebrating the 2023 Ohioana Awards

by David Weaver



A beautiful setting, wonderful food, nearly one hundred and fifty book lovers, and a gathering of some of the best Ohio writers made for a truly memorable celebration of the 82nd annual Ohioana Awards. The event took place in the atrium of Ohio's historic Statehouse on September 21.

Opening with a video welcome from Governor Mike DeWine, the program included the presentation of book awards in seven categories, as well as the Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant for an emerging Ohio writer. Award winners delighted the audience with their remarks, at turns inspiring, touching, and humorous. Following the awards ceremony, Dr. Dan Shellenbarger, Executive Director of Ohio Government Television and host of the Ohio Channel's series *Book Notes*, led a roundtable discussion with the winners.



The Ohio Channel streamed the awards ceremony live; it can now be seen at <https://ohiochannel.org>. Thanks to all who attended, and a special thanks to the sponsors and contributors whose generous support made the event possible. Finally, thanks and congratulations once again to this year's winners!

From top left: Award winners Marcy Campbell, Celeste Ng, Kortney Morrow, Jasmine Warga, and Kelcey Ervick with Ohioana Executive Director David Weaver; the awards on display; overhead view of the audience in the Statehouse Atrium; the award winners roundtable discussion. (Photos by Mary Rathke.) On pg. 8, a photo collage of the 2023 Ohioana Book Awards finalist covers. (By Miriam Nordine.)



FICTION

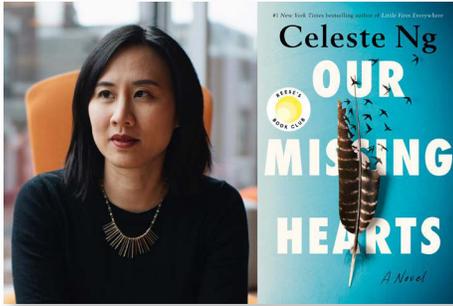


Photo by Kieran Kesner

Celeste Ng, *Our Missing Hearts*, Penguin

Celeste Ng is the *New York Times*–bestselling author of *Everything I Never Told You*, *Little Fires Everywhere*, and *Our Missing Hearts*. *Little Fires Everywhere* won the 2018 Ohioana Book Award in fiction and was adapted into a hit miniseries on Hulu. Ng is the recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Guggenheim Foundation. Ng spent much of her childhood in Shaker Heights, Ohio, and currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

In *Our Missing Hearts*, twelve-year-old Bird Gardner lives a quiet existence with his loving father, a former linguist who now shelves books in a university library. His mother Margaret, a Chinese American poet, left without a trace when he was nine years old. Then one day, Bird receives a mysterious letter containing only a cryptic drawing, and soon he is pulled into a quest to find her. His journey will take him back to the folktales she told him as a child, through the ranks of an underground network of heroic librarians, and ultimately to New York City, where he will learn the truth about what happened to his mother and what the future holds for them both.

NONFICTION

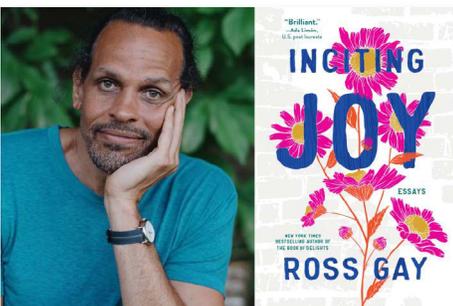


Photo by Natasha Komoda

Ross Gay, *Inciting Joy*, Algonquin Books

Ross Gay is the *New York Times*–bestselling author of the essay collections *The Book of Delights* and *Inciting Joy*, as well as four books of poetry. His third book of poetry, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, and was a National Book Award finalist. His fourth book of poetry, *Be Holding*, won the 2021 PEN America Jean Stein Book Award. Gay is a founding board member of the Bloomington Community Orchard, a nonprofit food justice project. He has received fellowships from Cave Canem, the Bread Loaf Writer’s Conference, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He teaches at Indiana University and was born in Youngstown, Ohio.

When divisive voices take up so much airspace in the current era, *Inciting Joy* offers a vital alternative: What might be possible if we turn our attention to what brings us together, to what we love? In these gorgeously written and timely pieces, prizewinning poet and author Gay considers the joy we incite when we care for each other, especially during life’s inevitable hardships. Through an eclectic examination of zucchinis, skateboarding, caring for an elderly father, and other poignant experiences and anecdotes, Gay explores how we can practice recognizing connection, and also, crucially, how we can expand it.

POETRY

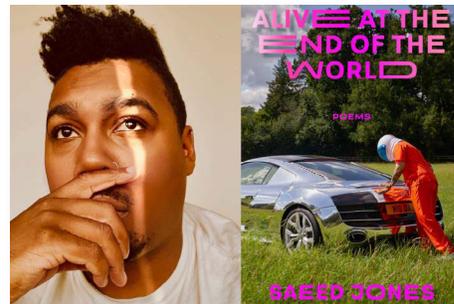


Photo courtesy of Saeed Jones

Saeed Jones, *Alive at the End of the World*, Coffee House Press

Saeed Jones was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and grew up in Lewisville, Texas. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, and *GQ*, and he has been featured on public radio programs including NPR’s

Fresh Air, *Pop Culture Happy Hour*, *It's Been a Minute with Sam Sanders*, and *All Things Considered*. His second book, the memoir *How We Fight for Our Lives*, won the 2019 Kirkus Prize in nonfiction. Jones lives in Columbus, Ohio, and tweets @TheFerocity.

In haunted poems glinting with laughter, *Alive at the End of the World* is an exploration of the public and private betrayals of life as we know it. Drawing from memoir, fiction, and persona, Jones confronts the everyday perils of white supremacy with a finely tuned poetic ear, identifying moments that seem routine even as they open chasms of hurt. Viewing himself as an unreliable narrator, Jones looks outward to understand what's within, bringing forth cultural icons like Little Richard, Paul Mooney, Aretha Franklin, and Diahann Carroll to illuminate how long and how perilously we've been living on top of fault lines.

ABOUT OHIO OR AN OHIOAN

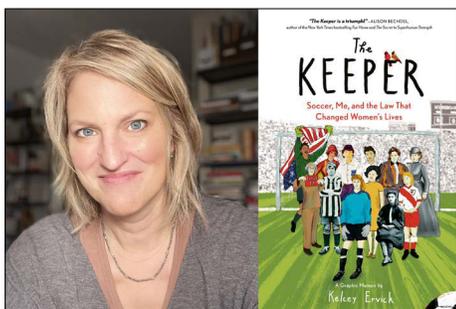


Photo courtesy of Kelcey Ervick

Kelcey Ervick, *The Keeper: Soccer, Me, and the Law That Changed Women's Lives*, Avery

Kelcey Ervick is the author and illustrator of *The Keeper: Soccer, Me, and the Law That Changed Women's Lives*. She has written three previous books and co-edited *The Rose Metal Press Field Guide to Graphic Literature* with Tom Hart. Ervick's stories, essays, and comics have appeared in *The Rumpus*, *The Believer*, *The Washington Post*, and *Lit Hub*. She has received grants from the Indiana Arts Commission, the Sustainable Arts Foundation, and New Frontiers in Arts and Humanities at Indiana University. A Cincinnati student from grade school to grad school, Ervick earned her PhD from the University of Cincinnati and is a professor of English and creative writing at Indiana University South Bend.

The Keeper is a coming-of-age graphic memoir chronicling how sports shaped one young girl's life and changed women's history forever. Growing up playing on a top national soccer team in the 1980s, Ervick and her teammates didn't understand the change they represented. Title IX was enacted in 1972 with little fanfare, but to seismic effect; between then and now, girls' participation in organized sports has exploded more than 1,000 percent. Braiding together personal narrative, pop culture, literature, and history, Ervick tells the story of how her adolescence was shaped by this boom.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE



Photo by Lillian Nour Warga

Jasmine Warga, *A Rover's Story*, Balzer + Bray

Jasmine Warga is a *New York Times*-bestselling author of books for young readers. Her first middle grade novel, *Other Words for Home*, earned multiple awards including a John Newbery Honor, a Walter Honor for Young Readers, a Charlotte Huck Honor, and a 2020 Ohioana Book Award. *The Shape of Thunder* was a *School Library Journal* and Bank Street College best book of the year, and won her a second Ohioana Book Award. *A Rover's Story* was a Junior Library Guild selection and named a best book of the year by *Publishers Weekly* and *The Washington Post*. Warga teaches in the MFA program at Vermont College of Fine Arts. Originally from Cincinnati, she now lives in Chicago.

In *A Rover's Story*, Resilience is a Mars rover determined to live up to his name. Res was built to explore Mars. He was not built to have human emotions. But as he learns new things from the NASA scientists who assemble him, he begins to develop humanlike feelings. Maybe there's a problem with his programming? When launch day

comes, Res blasts off to Mars accompanied by a friendly drone helicopter named Fly. But Res quickly discovers the planet is a dangerous place filled with dust storms and giant cliffs, and the mission tests him in ways that go beyond space exploration. As millions of people back on Earth follow his progress, will Res have the determination, courage, and resilience to succeed?

JUVENILE LITERATURE

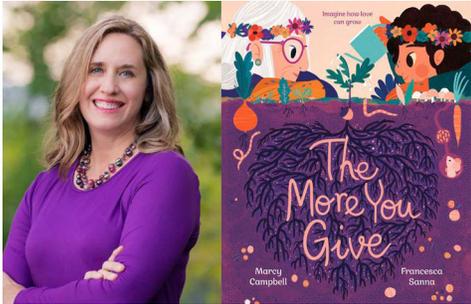


Photo by Sprouted Acorn Photography

Marcy Campbell, *The More You Give* (illus. by Francesca Sanna), Knopf Books for Young Readers

Marcy Campbell is an award-winning author of picture books and middle grade novels. Her books have earned praise from *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *School Library Journal*, *The Horn Book*, *Kirkus*, and many others. She is the recipient of the Comstock Read Aloud Award, the Crystal Kite Award, and the CLC Book Award from Frostburg State University, as well as the Huckepack Prize in Germany. Her picture books have been selected for the Junior Library Guild and named a best children's book of the year by Bank Street College and National Public Radio. *Rule of Threes*, her debut middle grade novel, was selected for the 2023-2024 Choose to Read Ohio list. Campbell lives in Wooster, Ohio, with her family.

The More You Give begins with a wide-open field and a boy who loves his grandmother, who loves him back. The boy's grandmother gives him many gifts, like hugs, Sunday morning pancakes, acorns with wild and woolly caps, and all her wisdom about how things grow. When the boy becomes a father, he gives his daughter piggyback rides, the bedtime stories his grandmother told him, acorns, and the wisdom he learned about how things grow. His daughter continues the chain, passing

down gifts of her own. A modern-day response to *The Giving Tree*, *The More You Give* shows how a family passes down love through generations, leaving a legacy of growing both trees and community.

READERS' CHOICE AWARD

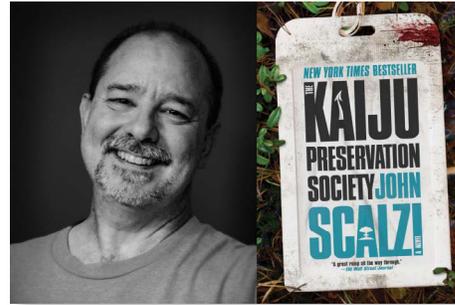


Photo courtesy of John Scalzi

John Scalzi, *The Kaiju Preservation Society*, Tor

John Scalzi has written nearly all of his science fiction from a home office in Bradford, Ohio, where he can look out the window and see Amish buggies clopping by. *Old Man's War*, his debut novel published in 2005, was a finalist for the Hugo Award for Best Novel and helped him win the John W. Campbell/Astounding Award for Best New Writer. His *New York Times*-bestselling novel *Redshirts* won the Hugo Award for Best Novel in 2013. *The Kaiju Preservation Society* is a 2023 Alex Award recipient and has been optioned for television.

When COVID-19 sweeps through New York City, Jamie Gray is a driver for food delivery apps until he makes a delivery to an old acquaintance, Tom, who works at what he calls "an animal rights organization." Tom's team needs a last-minute grunt to handle things on their next field visit. Jamie, eager to do anything, immediately signs on. What Tom doesn't tell Jamie is that the animals his team cares for are not here on Earth. Not our Earth, at least. In an alternate dimension, massive dinosaur-like creatures named Kaiju roam a warm, human-free world. They're the universe's largest and most dangerous pandas—and they're in trouble. It's not just the Kaiju Preservation Society who have found their way to the alternate world. Others have, too. And their carelessness could cause millions back on our Earth to die.

Congratulations also to the 2023 Ohioana Book Award finalists! These books have appeared on numerous bestseller lists, and the writers have won many prestigious literary awards. All have made an impact on the literary life of Ohio, and we are proud to support their work. Look for these titles at your local library or bookstore.

FICTION

Hyde, Allegra. *Eleutheria*
 Okorafor, Nnedi. *Noor*
 Umrigar, Thrity. *Honor*

NONFICTION

Brinkley, Douglas. *Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening*
 Macy, Beth. *Raising Lazarus: Hope, Justice, and the Future of America's Overdose Crisis*
 Millard, Candice. *River of the Gods: Genius, Courage, and Betrayal in the Search for the Source of the Nile*
 Mufleh, Luma. *Learning America: One Woman's Fight for Educational Justice for Refugee Children*

ABOUT OHIO OR AN OHIOAN

Celeste, Richard F. *In the Heart of It All: An Unvarnished Account of My Life in Public Service*
 Dyer, Joyce. *Pursuing John Brown: On the Trail of a Radical Abolitionist*
 Jarrett, Gene Andrew. *Paul Laurence Dunbar: The Life and Times of a Caged Bird*
 Schulz, Kathryn. *Lost and Found: Reflections on Grief, Gratitude, and Happiness*
 Schwartzman, Nancy, and Nora Zelevansky. *Roll Red Roll: Rape, Power, and Football in the American Heartland*

POETRY

Fagan, Kathy. *Bad Hobby: Poems*
 Freeman, Siaara. *Urbanshee*
 Hindi, Noor. *Dear God. Dear Bones. Dear Yellow.*
 Wagner, Sara Moore. *Swan Wife*

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Brown, Echo. *The Chosen One: A First-Generation Ivy League Odyssey*
 Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *The School for Whatnots*
 McCarthy, Cory. *Man O' War*
 Nelson, Marilyn. *Augusta Savage: The Shape of a Sculptor's Life*
 Van Vleet, Carmella. *Nothing is Little*

JUVENILE LITERATURE

Hale, Shannon. Illus. by Tracy Subisak. *This Book is Not for You!*
 Hoefler, Kate. Illus. by Jessixa Bagley. *Courage Hats*
 Kuo, Julia. *Luminous: Living Things That Light Up the Night*
 Wang, Andrea. Illus. by Hyewon Yum. *Luli and the Language of Tea*
 Woodson, Jacqueline. Illus. by Rafael López. *The Year We Learned to Fly*



Award Sponsors



Event Sponsors

*Larry & Donna
James*

*Michael & Sharon
Curtin*

*Deborah & John
Urton*



Media Support & In-Kind Contributions



The Care & Keeping of YOU

The Body Book for a 25-Year-Old You

Kortney Morrow, 2023 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant Winner

Your mind and body are on the brink of some major changes. Your dysmorphia is likely running rampant, and your depression is probably fully grown. You may start to notice shifts in the way your body recovers from all the alcohol you put in it. Due to sleep paralysis, insomnia, and 24/7 allergy medication, your general affect may be sluggish. The only thing that's not tired is your thoughts. Caffeine is a lifesaver in that it's helped you to function on little to no sleep for exactly two hours at a time. It's likely your workplace does not provide health insurance in full, and even if it is in full, you probably have to pay out of pocket for certain things sometimes. But which things, and which times? You have no clue. Your doctor has made it clear that you can only have one health question per appointment. As for your mental health, the therapists you've met seem to have been trained in how to absolutely gut a person in less than thirty minutes, which is exactly what they do. Like many people your age, you probably spend the majority of your week sitting in a non-ergonomic chair, slowly misaligning every single part of your body. So here you are, well into adulthood, every day on the brink of not really wanting to live, but also trying to make the most of your life. But whatever you're feeling, just remember, it's never too late to place your health into your own hands! Wellness is a lifelong journey. You are the boss of taking care of you. Just get up off the couch, and get moving!

Body Basics.

You are slumped on the couch in your living room after a long night out, and your body is talking to you. Can you hear it? You can hear everything. The clouds drifting across this fishbowl horizon, your little shotgun home sitting on bricks slowly filling with humidity, the cockroaches scurrying back into their crevices as you both try to hide from the light. You can hear the sinking pavement on the New Orleans streets, how the swamp claims the land, crumbling every molten mix poured onto it.

You remember that sudden onset of rain that fell from the sky on your birthday, the one that filled the roads in thirty minutes, soaking the insides of cars, and stopping traffic. You had a plane to catch and tried to craft a makeshift wetsuit out of garbage bags before realizing you were stuck inside of a land that didn't care about you or your plans.

You are reminded that the land you live on was never meant to be inhabited. You are reminded of an old map showing that the first people ever living on this land already knew this, only settling on the portions of the Crescent City with higher elevations. You are reminded of a map that shows a football field of land vanishing every hour and a half due to oil production. You know that if you keep disregarding the Earth and every map and every sign, that you don't get to be surprised when nature disregards you. Everything is connected.

On this couch, there are other voices. You can hear them asking you why you moved here in the first place. You can hear the skepticism as they ask how you're finding it so far. You can hear the word *transplant* in contrast with the word *native* in contrast with *history*. Last night, you curled into a ball on the floor of the tub and drunkenly cried that you wanted to go home. Your best friend cuddled with you until you fell asleep. Your body keeps telling you to go home, and you keep chasing for what that means. In the morning, you try to forget about it. Time to get up and get moving!

Heads Up.

Your smile is no longer your own. Your upturned mouth is an invitation for others to enter. You hide your teeth.

Growing up, your friends taught you how to be more uninviting to the threats around you. Put headphones in, ignore anyone talking to you, just keep walking, look straight, don't smile. In the Midwest, you learned to desire anonymity, to blend into the landscape, to be

vulnerable only to those who have earned it. Your dad used to ride around on Sundays with the windows down, blasting *Back Stabbers* by The O'Jays. "Smilin' in your face / all the time, they wanna take your place / the back stabbers." Mistrust can enter through the gaps of a grin.

Your own mouth has been a source of pain. As a kid, you bit the inside of your lip swollen every day, grinding your teeth in your sleep. Another kid in your school told you that you were only Black if your gums were black. You couldn't figure out why pieces of your flesh were mismatched colors, pink in some spots, brown in others. You went home and tried to scrub the brown skin off your body, rubbing until the skin fissured. This is what it's like to try and erase your body. The pink connective tissue between your teeth reminds you of this moment.

The words coming out of your mouth have always caused trouble, too. Your first detention came about in the third grade after you called a fight with your friend *like a war*. Your teacher snapped—*nothing is like war*. Your first introduction to poetry was failing to memorize a poem. Words float outside of you and you cannot always grab them quick enough. Often, you say nothing. At work, in New Orleans, you get in trouble for saying nothing. At work, when you finally say something, nobody listens to you, which feels worse. The greatest pain you have ever known was the year your grandmother died, when the novocaine in your mouth failed to function mid-root canal and the dentist had to shoot anesthetics directly into your nerves. The numbness lasted half a day.

One of the first things you notice about the streets of New Orleans are the warm greetings. The greetings are the kind of warmth that goes beyond Midwestern cordiality. On the streets of New Orleans, people really want to know how are you doing, how are you living, where are you at, are you good? Strangers will ask you a mix of these things, and you must ask them in return. You must be prepared for a story or two that could take anywhere from two minutes to two hours. You must be prepared for follow-up questions.

The first time you learn this is in an Uber on the way from the airport to your new home in the 7th Ward. The Uber driver keeps asking you questions about where your new home is and where you're moving from and what the work is that you're going to be doing and how you got into that line of work and so on. This flurry of

questions from a complete stranger feels invasive. You want to be a girl with no smile, a complete threat. But in New Orleans, people care for everything, even the threats. Soon, you'll stop hiding how much you care. You'll learn to love the world enough to smile in it. You'll learn to put your best face forward. For now, you just grin and bear it.

Reach.

You remember the freedom you found in a sports bra. The year was 1999 and it was the World Cup final. Brandi Chastain had just scored the game-winning penalty. To celebrate, Chastain ripped off her shirt to wave it around her head, revealing her black sports bra to the world. Every muscle in her body tensed up and she tilted her head back to scream in an outburst of glory. After seeing this, you begged your mother to buy you a sports bra and to start soccer practice. You practiced this goal celebration over and over, but you quit soccer promptly.

As a preteen, you used to dig out your mom's bras from the laundry basket and stuff them with rolled-up socks. You used to crumble at your reflection in the floor-length mirror, laughing at the performance of it. When your mom caught you, she bought you a training bra. You had no idea what you were training for.

In New Orleans, your favorite part of going out is the care you and your friends take to get ready. You toss outfits, dance close, sip mezcal, descend into another night with a lot of hope and not a lot of places to put it. You reach for your purple painter pants and an oversized Raptors jersey. Your clothes swallow you, which is your preferred fit. Your jersey lays flat across your chest, thanks to your one-size-too-small sports bra, making what's small even smaller. Your friends compliment you. You feel protected. Here, there is no such thing as measuring up to anybody or anything. You alone are enough.

Belly Zone.

You crack the body and suck the head of the crawfish, the cajun spices soaked in from the daily boil of spring. You cool your mouth with potato and corn and go at it again, one of the only New Orleans delicacies you can stomach.

Your stomach is sensitive. It's the place in your body where your anxiety resides the most. As a kid, every day before school you cried because your stomach was sour, you did not want to go to school, you did not want to get

called on, you did not want to sit in a class, or please a teacher, or be around some of the other kids. After getting tutored for the fourth grade math test, which you were told was very important for the funding of your school, you threw up all over the Scantron bubbles out of stress.

Sometimes, you eat a meal and double over in a pain that you cannot predict. Food is a challenge more often than an adventure.

You never took the time to learn how to prepare meals with your grandmother, even when she asked you to. You regret this, among other elements of your material culture that are now lost to you. Growing up, you never learned that enslaved people brought the seeds of okra and black-eyed peas by hiding them in their braids—the agency of a plait and a seed. You never learned that soul food has strong connections with many of West Africa’s vegan dishes. Growing up, your grandparents stayed trying to feed you, bringing you food, always trying to put some meat on those bones.

At twenty-five, you learned to cut out all the variables that could make you sick. Cut out gluten, cut out dairy, cut out added sugar, cut out meat. Cut out more. On stressful days, you stop eating completely.

The thick creams and dairy and meat in New Orleans’ meals often wreck you, though you wish they didn’t. Gumbo, crawfish étouffée, jambalaya, po’boys, boudin, muffulettas, doberge. The wrecking is a reminder. You thought you could make a home out of the past, reverse migrate your way back to your own history and be met with open arms. But time does not work this way. Neither does your stomach.

You are tired of having a belly and a body, but you have them. Out of all your body parts, you talk to your stomach the most. You apologize to it. You tell it to keep going. You tell it that you’ll do better next time, okay?

Big Changes.

A few years before you moved to New Orleans, you spent the entire day on the couch as your brother and his fiancée, Jimena, were off at work, one being a professional soccer player and one being a senior financial analyst. With similar-sized ambitions to them, you watched an entire season of *Breaking Bad*

on the couch. You spent twenty minutes slow crawling to the bathroom in pain because your insides felt like they were being stabbed repeatedly. At one point, it felt like all the eggs in your ovaries were exploding one at a time. Somehow, you are grown and still not used to your period.

It was spring break, and your friends were probably in some Florida town getting drunk on the beach. You were deep in a depression, so you stayed in the apartment almost the whole time. At the end of the trip, Jimena will look you in the eyes and tell you a few simple words that you have yet to believe. *You deserve to be happy.* You wondered what happiness looks like, what it will take to get there, and if you’re willing to try.

In New Orleans, you eat lunch at a fancy restaurant with your best friend. You order three twenty-five-cent martinis immediately, which is the cap. At every restaurant, you make sure to visit the bathroom to see the interior design and the general layout. In this one, there are free tampons everywhere. You are tipsy, and you make sure no one else is in the ladies’ room, then you pull out your phone, taking about fifty photos of the tampon display from different angles. Look at what luxury can get you! Scented tampons, sports-level coverage, supers with shiny applicators, and fun prints on the wrapper. You’re reminded of the hundred ways you learned how to hide a tampon in a notebook, in your pencil case, in your pocket, in the folds of your shirt. You laugh at how you now just hold it out in the open, like *yes, I’m bleeding all over myself, now what?* Surrounded by free tampons, you think to yourself, *this is a kind of bliss. Maybe happiness looks like this.*

On the Go.

Every year, you make it a New Year’s resolution to stretch more, and every year, you fail. Across from your shotgun home in New Orleans is a bright pink building called the Church of Yoga. It is owned by a White woman from New York who drives a Vespa up and down your street at seven a.m. screaming “good morning” at the top of her lungs. The gentrification in New Orleans is particular in this way. There are little to no Starbucks or box brands (the traditional markers of a shifting neighborhood), but there’s this.

On the side of the building are silhouette-style portraits of MLK and Frida Kahlo, neither of whom you know of

having a strong yoga practice. Maybe it's an attempt at cultural relevance, or maybe when you own a building you can do whatever you want. Your neighbors explain that the space itself used to be a Black Baptist church until they sold it to the yoga lady at a loss.

On opening morning, the Church of Yoga introduces hundreds of people to their trademarked flow. You wander across the street and go inside. The stage of the church remains. There are fifty people crowded in a sanctuary, standing on mats. Bright pink electric prayer hands glow with LED lights where Jesus and the cross once hung. Musicians are onstage full-on performing. The yoga lady begins the flow with a few stretches at a faster pace than you're used to. She then encourages everyone to turn around and hug the person behind them. You turn around and walk out the door. You continue to walk around the block, down the street, past your friends' houses. You let your feet take you wherever they want to go. You'll restart your resolution again tomorrow. Today, you fold.

The Girl Inside.

The girl inside you is being pulled in new directions. You're learning to flow with it.

As a kid, you came home from school one day, and your entire collection of Bratz and Barbies was missing. Your parents took them away and said you were too old to play with dolls. In high school, your parents threw away your *Teen Vogue* collection because they said you moved past it. In college, your parents threw away all of the clothes you left in your childhood closet, which was filled with high-quality vintage garments you adored. When your grandmother died, your father threw away what seemed like half her house into Glad trash bags. When you moved to New Orleans, you picked up this habit and gave away most of your things, narrowing down your life to three boxes. You gave away your books and threw out your notebooks, vowing to give up writing forever.

But the things meant for you will come back to you. And the rest, you'll shed.

On the couch of your shotgun, the morning after you cried in the tub and begged to go home, your head is throbbing. You don't know that in six months, you'll quit drinking. In six months, you'll give the writing thing a go. In six months, you'll find home is not a place but an

allegiance to a people. You'll learn to abandon the idea of ever being whole. You'll learn that you've always been fighting for everything you've ever loved. You'll learn that it's okay to show how much you care.

Right now, though, you just pick your body up off the couch. You bike a few blocks and buy your best friend breakfast as a way to say thank you without using any words. You are learning how to use your words, even when you're at a loss. You don't know what happiness looks like, but you are learning to move in that direction. You are listening to your body, listening to the way that *thank you* fills your whole mouth. Your smile is an offering. Pick up your chin. Hold your head up high. This is how you move forward into the future.



Kortney Morrow spent her early years making up stories, and she never stopped. Her writing has been featured or is forthcoming in *The Academy of American Poets*, *Obsidian*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Transition Magazine*. When she's not writing, you can find her daydreaming on her front porch. Kortney lives in Cleveland, where she was born and raised.

Book Reviews

NONFICTION

Brinkley, Douglas. *Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening*. New York, NY: Harper Books, 2022.

The Great Awakening, which is referenced in the title of this substantial book, refers to several periods of spiritual awakening led by Jonathan Edwards and other evangelicals, beginning in the eighteenth century.

One must presume that the environmentalists quoted by Brinkley were hoping for a great awakening regarding the care of the planet. The practice of mostly ineffectual policies regarding the environment—done for the benefit of lobbyists, legislators, investors, and politicians holding leadership positions—would hopefully be replaced by the most important focus of all: planet Earth. We can worry about what constitutes a good education, about affordable housing for all people, and about food for those in dire need; we can worry all we want, but we can only try to deal with these things as long as our planet is habitable. Without the Earth, there will be no people left to worry.

That's the message that comes across in Douglas Brinkley's latest history, *Silent Spring Revolution*. He has created a trilogy, linking US presidential history to three waves of twentieth-century environmental progress and policy: Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the "Long Sixties" triumvirate of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon. Brinkley's first book was *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*, which was followed by *The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom*.

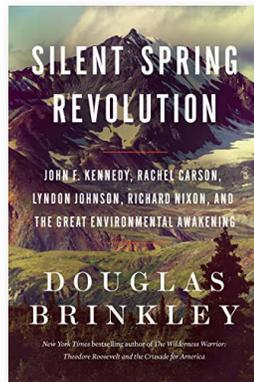
In *Silent Spring Revolution*, Brinkley covers the years 1960 to 1973, from Kennedy to Nixon, and what each president of those years did—and didn't do—regarding environmental matters of the day. Americans reacted

strongly to the bombing of Hiroshima (1945) and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962); activists launched a network of conscientious, postwar anti-nuclear and environmental advocates. The public demanded a greener, less toxic America, and three presidents embraced green legislation as administrative hallmarks (although some did this more assiduously than others). Brinkley writes that the *Silent Spring* generation "inspired three presidents to heroic environmental action and moved Americans of all stripes to stand up to protect the only planet we have from defilement."

The chemical industry tried to discredit Carson's book and its findings, but President Kennedy used his bully pulpit to tamp down that industry's outrage over Carson. Taking an even broader approach to conservation, President Johnson established thirty-five new national parks to not only give Americans more opportunities to visit beautiful landscapes, but also to protect the land from development by corporations, which put profit before proper stewardship of the planet and human health. He said, "We must maintain the chance for contact with beauty."

Even President Nixon got in on the act, albeit reluctantly, by supporting the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a major accomplishment which requires an evaluation and public disclosure of a potential environmental impact statement for any federal action. Brinkley writes, "The EPA was a godsend for a nation struggling with how to juggle the competing interests of economic growth and proper environmental stewardship."

However, Nixon—a pro-business president who was backed into supporting the EPA—was overall unhappy with the agency because EPA regulations often angered the business world. He called environmentalists "left-wing liberals who believe in it," and he suspected that environmentalism was a left-wing attempt to "system destroy" capitalism. In 1971, Congressional Republicans managed to circumvent NEPA regulations to approve the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, putting the *Silent Spring* revolutionaries on the defensive for the first time since Kennedy was elected president in 1961.



“Up until 1980, environmentalism was bipartisan,” writes Brinkley. “That all changed with Reagan. It became fashionable to attack serious environmentalists as socialist fools.”

Brinkley’s research is excellent; the amount of detail he offers on how governments have dealt with the tensions described in this book is mind-boggling—capitalism vs. environmentalism, profit vs. the planet, political expedience vs. new legislation to benefit the Earth, and, in turn, us citizens of the planet.

Many familiar environmentalists within presidential administrations appear throughout this book: William O. Douglas, Steward Udall, Gaylord Nelson, Edward Abbey, John Muir, William Ruckelhaus, Ralph Nadar, Barry Commoner, and another Barry—Barry Goldwater, who wrote, “Although I am a great believer in the free, competitive enterprise system and all that it entails, I am an even stronger believer in the right of our people to live in clean and pollution-free environments.”

Brinkley believes that clean air, clean water, and unpoisoned land are what most citizens of Earth desire, which would please Rachel Carson, as would the substantial (though incremental) progress which has been made during most presidential administrations since the 1960s. But today, Carson would be fighting desperately against those who promote and work toward monetary and political gain at the cost of a greener, and thus safer, planet.

In *Silent Spring Revolution*, Brinkley takes us on a roller-coaster ride of joys and setbacks for readers who, along with the author, have a “deep-seated passion for national parks, ecology, and wildlife.”

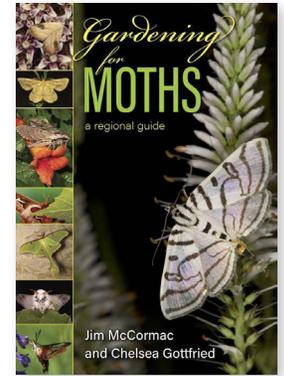
A FORMER OWNER OF THE ACORN BOOKSHOP IN GRANDVIEW HEIGHTS, GEORGE COWMEADOW BAUMAN NOW SPENDS HIS TIME READING, WRITING, TRAVELING, AND HANGING AROUND THE HOUSE WITH LINDA AND THE CATS

McCormac, Jim, and Chelsea Gottfried.
Gardening for Moths: A Regional Guide.
Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2023.

The most popular moths found in the Midwest region (represented by the map in the book), as well as other moths chosen based on aesthetics, use of common host plants, likeliness of occurrence in suburban and urban areas, and “general coolness,” are discussed in this guide.

It isn’t a moth identification guide and doesn’t claim to come close to including all the thousands of moth species.

The goal of *Gardening for Moths: A Regional Guide* is conserving moths by promoting a new model for gardeners and gardening that focuses on the needs of the moth, rather than the popular trend for a manicured lawn and tidy garden of non-native plants. The case is made that our yards are an opportunity to increase moths’ odds of survival by choosing to grow the native varieties of floral plants the moths have adapted to eating. By doing so, we can help repair our damaged ecosystems.



The book’s introduction provides an excellent explanation of the coevolution of moths and floral plants, making it difficult for moths to digest non-native plants. The moth itself, even with an arsenal of defenses at its disposal—including poisons, venoms, and physical attributes like hairy spines—is decreasing in number. This affects our larger ecosystem: there is less food for our birds, who eat enormous amounts of moth larvae and caterpillars, and other creatures that depend on the caterpillar for food including deer, wasps, and spiders.

Besides the basic information about what moths are and how they compare and contrast to butterflies, interesting sidebars and fun facts are included throughout the book. Ever wonder why moths fly so erratically or why moths are drawn to light?

The first section of the book covers more than 2,500 native plant species that are recommended for attracting moths. Organized under sixty families, though not alphabetical, the flowers highlighted are based on availability at nurseries, aesthetics, value as a nectar source, ease of growing, and host plants for moths. If you want to know what moths your violet is attracting, this is the guide for you.

Moth profiles make up the second major component of the book, describing 155 species and the plants they prefer to frequent, listed in taxonomic order. If you hope to attract the *Pandorus sphinx*, you’ll know to acquire a plant from the grape family. If you’re looking for a specific moth, it might be easier to look up the name in

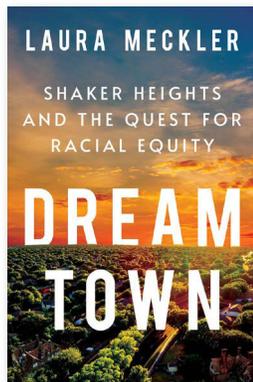
the index to find the page number—unless you know your aquatic moth from your twirler moth, of course.

An index, glossary, appendix, and list of sources and resources are included at the back of the book. The beautifully detailed color photographs are part of what makes this a valuable resource. Plus, some of the moths are so doggone cute, you'll just want to scratch their fuzzy little heads! It is useful for gardeners who are already restructuring their lawns and gardens to accommodate native species of plants, guiding them to the best matches of plant and moth. For the beginner gardener, this book has all the information you need to get started. For those still on the fence, encouragement and reasoning are here at your fingertips.

REVIEWED BY JENNIFER SOMMER, FORMER CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN, CHILDREN'S AUTHOR, AND GARDENER

Meckler, Laura. *Dream Town: Shaker Heights and the Quest for Racial Equity*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2023.

When Laura Meckler became the national education writer for *The Washington Post* in 2018, she found her hometown, Shaker Heights, a compelling subject for reporting, including the people, politics, and policy impacting America's schools. Extensive research and hundreds of interviews resulted in her first book, *Dream Town: Shaker Heights and the Quest for Racial Equity*, a comprehensive look at the pursuit of integration, first in housing and then the public schools, in the Ohio suburb.



The history of Shaker Heights has, from its earliest days, been marked by the pursuit of utopia. In the nineteenth century, the unbroken wilderness was cleared for farms and the site of a religious colony of Shakers, who practiced a level of gender and racial equality uncharacteristic of their times as they sought to establish heaven on earth. The colony, abandoned before the turn of the century, became the site of the Van Sweringen brothers' exclusive garden suburb, where their vision of "ideal," marked by beautiful architecture and quality schools, was designed to last, unchanged forever. Through deed restrictions designed to keep

out minorities and people with lower socioeconomic statuses, the Van Sweringen Company controlled not only the appearance of Shaker Heights homes, but who would live in them. While the history of the Shakers and the Van Sweringens' Shaker Heights have been detailed in numerous books, it is the second half of the twentieth century, during which the exclusivity of Shaker Heights was consistently and intentionally challenged, that is chronicled in *Dream Town*.

Beginning with the citizen-led Ludlow Community Association established in 1957, Meckler tells the stories of individual citizens who worked to establish and maintain an integrated neighborhood. They fought redlining and blockbusting and resisted the trend of white flight. Meckler demonstrates how their efforts resulted in the opening of the Shaker Heights Housing Office in the 1960s to promote further neighborhood integration. In 1970, the Shaker Schools Plan aimed to integrate the public schools. Bussing in Shaker Heights was different from other communities faced with dismantling segregation. It was pursued without the order of a court by citizens who advocated for and voluntarily enrolled their children in the two-way bussing of both Black and white students. Long known for academic excellence, Shaker Heights was emerging as the nationally-recognized image of successful integration.

When Meckler graduated from Shaker Heights High School in 1986, I was completing my first year at Mercer Elementary School. A year later, in the fall of 1987, I witnessed the successful integration of Shaker Heights' elementary schools. Students from the predominantly Black neighborhood of Moreland were bussed across town to the overwhelmingly white Mercer, as four of the district's nine elementary schools were closed and lines were redrawn to effect integration. By all accounts, it was a success. As I advanced towards graduation, the message was clear: Shaker Heights was a "model for racial integration" in the United States. Along with this was the implication of "all is well in Shaker Heights, where race is no longer an issue." However, in reality, all was not well.

Through the personal stories and experiences of a diverse range of students, teachers, administrators, parents, and experts (over 250 people were interviewed for *Dream Town*), Meckler delves deeper into the story

of race in Shaker Heights. She discovers that successful integration of school buildings, achieved and maintained to this day, did not solve inequity in the schools. An economic divide emerged along racial lines that, when combined with the powers of privilege, influence, bias, and the school district’s longstanding leveling system, produced an achievement gap. Systemic racism was at work, and segregated classes emerged within the integrated school buildings with the highest-level classes overwhelmingly white and the lowest Black.

Despite the realization that Shaker Heights had not overcome racism, Meckler still experiences what she calls “Shaker magic”—the value of growing up in a racially integrated community where diversity is not just a benefit, but a challenge. Since the first Black family moved in some seventy years ago, Shaker Heights has developed an image of a racially progressive community not by solving every challenge of living in a diverse society, but by continually trying new approaches to achieve greater equity.

Dream Town fills a gap in the history of Shaker Heights. The depth and intimacy of Meckler’s reporting make this a must read for any Shakerite, and a worthy addition to the expanding literature on the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

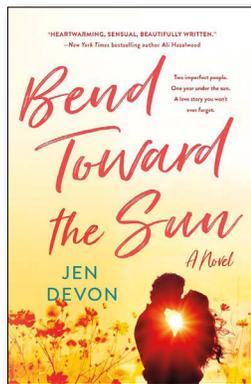
DAVID DISTELHORST IS THE LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARIAN AT BEXLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN BEXLEY, OHIO, AND A 1998 GRADUATE OF SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL

FICTION

Devon, Jen. *Bend Toward the Sun*. New York, NY: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2022.

Jen Devon’s *Bend Toward the Sun* is a tale of romance that reminds readers there’s always a chance to remake or reimagine your life.

Meet Rowan McKinnon, who holds a PhD in botany, enjoys sex without strings, and has a passion for plants. She is in a bad place after being rejected by her fiancé and told that the research behind her dissertation is faulty. Rowan takes



on a job as a vintner at a new winery owned by the Brady family, where she can test her theories and make the old vines flourish.

Harrison “Harry” Brady, who is an obstetrician, returns home after he loses a patient. He throws himself into restoring the farm and vineyard along with his family.

On his arrival, Harry falls head over heels for Rowan. Sparks fly, and fly, and fly. Unfortunately, arguments do, too. Harry wants a serious relationship with Rowan; Rowan just wants friendship with benefits. Can they work together to make both the vineyards and their relationship blossom?

Devon crafts a romance with all the important elements: passion, drive, and a good amount of give and take. The tale is filled with broken hearts and yearning for something more, so much more. Along the way, you’ll also learn about the process of restoring a vineyard and making wine.

In *Bend Toward the Sun*, family and friends nurture emotions, dreams, and plants.

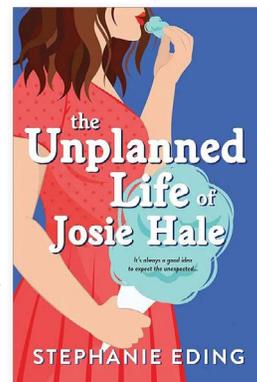
REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

Eding, Stephanie. *The Unplanned Life of Josie Hale*.

Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Casablanca, 2022.

Sometimes life throws you a curveball. That’s one way to describe the swerves and turns of Josie Hale’s life.

At twenty-nine, Josie returns to her parents’ home after a messy divorce from her cheating husband, and leaving her job teaching history in a Chicago high school. To top it off, she realizes she’s pregnant and will now be facing motherhood as a single parent.



Josie is an emotional mess. She’s fighting with her parents and barely keeping it together. Then comes the worst news: her parents are moving to a small apartment without a room for Josie. What else could go wrong?

Hunger pangs, part of her unplanned pregnancy, draw Josie to the county fair for deep-fried corn dogs and funnel cakes. While munching, she runs into her old high school buddy, Kevin Lawrence, and her teenage crush, Ben Romero. Even though Josie, a.k.a. JoJo, hasn't seen them since high school, they offer her an unexpected haven amidst the emotional and physical upheaval.

Kevin and Ben invite Josie to share their house. They make a pact to “turn their lives around” before the youngest turns thirty. Will it work? Will they get their lives on track despite the U-turns, upsets, and normal twenty-something crises?

Stephanie Eding crafts a clever tale featuring supportive friends, a messy house with one bathroom on the ground floor (with pregnant Josie on the second), laughter, tears, and more junk food than anyone should eat.

The Unplanned Life of Josie Hale is a romcom with lots of emotion, not much sex, and a large helping of humor. You'll chuckle and chortle, you'll sigh, and maybe weep. No matter what, you'll be rooting for Josie, Ben, and Kevin throughout this story and hoping they fulfill their pact as they navigate their “unplanned” lives.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

Flower, Amanda. *Because I Could Not Stop for Death*.

New York, NY: Berkley, 2022.

If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

—Emily Dickinson, “If I Can Stop One Heart From Breaking”

In *Because I Could Not Stop for Death*, Amanda Flower has done a masterful job giving readers a rare glimpse into the life of the very real Emily Dickinson and her determination to help her fictional house servant solve the murder of her last living relative. Willa Noble joins the Dickinson staff shortly before her brother, Henry, dies in what is determined to be an accident at

the stables in Amherst where he recently started a new job.

Willa is convinced his death was no accident. She soon discovers others share that conviction. Emily, true to her poignant poem, assigns herself the role of detective in guiding Willa on the hunt for the truth.

The adventures of this unlikely team of a famous Amherst citizen and a poor servant girl keep the pages turning until the murderer and the truth are uncovered. The two learn that those they suspect of evil are not, while one person they believe to be an ally has deceived and betrayed many.

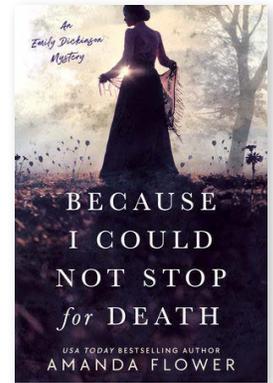
The story is set in the years immediately preceding the start of the Civil War. Several characters actively participate in the Underground Railroad that runs through the heart of Amherst. Emily's father is a congressman, and the story includes a fascinating visit to young Washington, DC, when Emily and Willa pay him a visit there.

It is easy to understand why Flower has been designated a *USA Today* and Agatha Award-winning author. This combination historical fiction/whodunnit story is the first in a new series. If the following novels are as fascinating and well written as this one, readers will be hard-pressed to complete their own household chores should there be a Flower book nearby.

Most of us think of Emily as a virtual recluse, but in this book, she is a determined, vibrant, strong-willed young woman with gumption and passion. This insight into her personality is made all the more intriguing by the dog that is her constant companion and a racehorse that gives clues about Willa's brother's death.

Though Willa Noble is not a real person, this novel gives readers a realistic glimpse into the life of a servant living with the rich and influential of the nineteenth century. Kudos to Flower for creating a captivating story, as well as a more complete understanding of the famous poet.

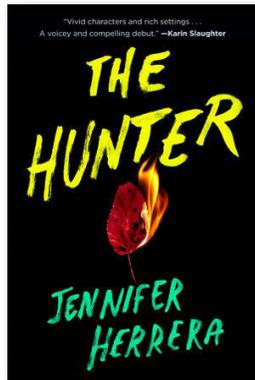
KATHRYN HAUSEISEN WRITES FICTION AND NONFICTION STORIES ABOUT GOOD PEOPLE DOING GREAT THINGS IN BLOGS, PUBLICATIONS, AND BOOKS FROM BLACKLICK, OHIO, WHERE SHE ENJOYS RETIRED LIFE



Herrera, Jennifer. *The Hunter*.

New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2023.

In her debut novel, *The Hunter*, Jennifer Herrera introduces readers to the dauntless Leigh O'Donnell, who emerges as the embodiment of the many hats modern women wear. Returning to Ohio after several years away, Leigh shifts between the former NYC detective, the loving mother, the possible divorcée, the older sister, and the orphaned daughter.



In the wake of losing her job, Leigh is convinced by her younger brother, also a cop, to investigate a possible murder case in their hometown of Copper Falls, Ohio. She faces her personal demons and unravels the town's greatest mystery.

The action begins with Leigh aiming her gun at her partner's head. With quick-hitting chapters and page-turning cliffhangers, Herrera keeps readers guessing about the causes of death of three young men found in the waterfalls and three similar deaths that occurred years earlier. As Leigh works through the case, readers also become invested in the personal struggles of the detective. Diving into the history of the caves near the waterfall, Leigh tries to balance the relationships with her brother and uncles, the loss of her position at the NYPD, and the long-buried truth of her parents' deaths.

With the old family home, twin sisters, and a prophetic dream, this thriller evokes elements of a gothic tale. At the same time, Leigh is reminiscent of a hard-boiled detective, as she works on instinct and is not afraid to literally skin a rabbit. Herrera also constructs a recognizable small-town northwest Ohio world full of quaint cobblestone, old-growth trees, and buttery sunlight. Readers will find this engaging mystery entwined with family drama hard to put down.

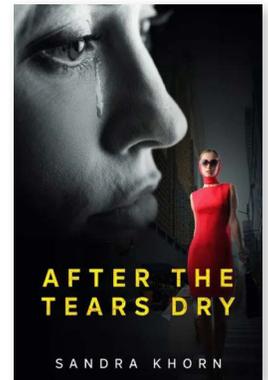
Herrera, raised in northwest Ohio, now lives in Philadelphia with her family. According to an interview with the author, another book is under contract featuring the detective Leigh O'Donnell, this time set in Pennsylvania.

REVIEWED BY BECKY HIRN, WRITER, TEACHER, TRAVELER, GARDENER, AND NATURE ENTHUSIAST IN COLUMBUS, OHIO

K-Horn, Sandra. *After the Tears Dry*.

Columbus, OH: Charmel Publishing, 2022.

Sandra K-Horn's protagonist, Marcie, poignantly sums up what it's like to be divorced after spending years faithfully assisting an ambitious husband achieve his political goals. In this coming-of-age-again novel, *After the Tears Dry*, Marcie struggles to absorb the shock of being set aside just as her role of raising their children is winding down. She asks what many divorced women wonder: "What does one do with wedding pictures when the marriage ends?"



When Marcie is still stuck in self-pity mode several chapters later, her long-time hairdresser and motivational coach admonishes her, saying, "Pull yourself together. You are no different from who you were before. You are still strong, and you're still you."

While that may be true, it's hard not to be frightened and overwhelmed when one's life goes from bad to much, much worse. Marcie starts to feel like she's getting over the devastation of her mayor husband walking out when the police station where she previously worked wants her back. She had sacrificed her own career helping her husband launch his political one, but now the station offers her a way to rebuild her life. She quickly forms a whole new network of friends and colleagues. The future looks promising, but within weeks Marcie's situation turns toward conflict, danger, and trouble. A civil servant tips her off about an unfolding scandal in a city contract. Her role as the former first lady of the city lands her in unwanted spotlight and potential danger.

K-Horn weaves together an all-too-realistic depiction of life after love gone sour, with a fascinating behind-the-scenes look into how easily even otherwise-principled people are wooed by temptation to the ruin of their careers, their families, and their primary friendships. K-Horn's background in media shines in her detailed descriptions of what it takes to get stories from leads to leading features on the nightly news.

This is a good book for anyone wanting a word of hope after the demise of a marriage, and also for readers

who are fascinated with how politics and mass media interface.

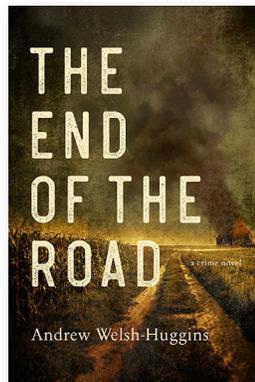
KATHRYN HAUSEISEN WRITES FICTION AND NONFICTION STORIES ABOUT GOOD PEOPLE DOING GREAT THINGS IN BLOGS, PUBLICATIONS, AND BOOKS FROM BLACKLICK, OHIO, WHERE SHE ENJOYS RETIRED LIFE

Welsh-Huggins, Andrew. *The End of the Road*.

New York, NY: The Mysterious Press, 2023.

Ohio author Andrew Welsh-Huggins crafts a standalone mystery set just outside of Columbus, Ohio, for fans of amateur detective stories.

The End of the Road is a complex tale of revenge and retribution between former partners-in-crime, Pryor and Myles. After a bank robbery gone wrong, Pryor gets off free and Myles, the getaway driver, is sentenced to time in prison despite his testimony against Pryor. On the day Myles is released, he's shot and lies in critical condition at the local hospital. Still living the life of crime, Pryor and his small gang are on the lookout for another getaway driver for their upcoming bank robbery.



Penny is an amateur sleuth and Myles' girlfriend. She's following clues as she tries to prevent the robbery and take down Pryor. She's also trying to avoid the cops (including J. P., another point of view character), who are investigating Myles' shooting and consider Pryor the prime suspect. But Penny doesn't think the police will do enough and is desperate to take matters into her own hands, fearing that as long as Pryor is alive, she, Myles, and their son will never be safe.

The End of the Road's pacing is suspenseful, but Welsh-Huggins doesn't forget to include time to build backstory and character motivation. Readers will be on the edge of their seats until the end of this satisfying thriller.

Welsh-Huggins is also the author of the Andy Hayes Mystery series and the editor of *Columbus Noir*, a collection of short stories by Columbus mystery writers.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

POETRY

Jones, Saeed. *Alive At the End of the World*. Minneapolis, MN: Coffee House Press, 2022.

We should be grateful to Saeed Jones for compelling us to rethink the American experience with his many renditions and musings of being *Alive at the End of the World*, his award-winning and immensely well-reviewed book of poetry. "The end of the world was mistaken / for just another midday massacre . . ."



Jones urges us to seek our truths about broken social systems that contribute to daily perils, which have become generational trauma for many. In his poem "A Song for the Status Quo," Jones describes:

A white man stole the song
from the Black man she gave the song to as an act of
what she thought was
love but, of course, was devotion which, as many of us
but not nearly enough of us
now understand, is often mistaken for love but is
more akin to
unpaid labor . . .

Jones bares undeniable honesty concerning the cultural threads of our country's history. As the *Los Angeles Times* reflects, "The features that distinguish his poems from prose—brevity, symbolism, implication—let him investigate the almost unsayable." But Jones' words irrevocably conjure up familiar realities we all must reconcile—unspoken realities festering in the mythical tapestry of US history and folklore. We must listen with eyes wide open and hearts fully humbled. In a poem titled "Alive at the End of the World," the speaker's words form a poignant image:

I hear the sirens and run
a hand over my silhouette,
surprised not to find bullet
wounds, burns, or history . . .

As the book comes to a close, Jones generously provides "Notes at the End of the World," sharing influences

that drive various poems. For example, “Alive at the End of the World” is dedicated to the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting. “Extinction” is supposed to be a happy, *carpe diem* kind of poem. These small explanations provide meaningful context for many of the poems.

Saeed Jones is the author of the memoir *How We Fight for Our Lives*, winner of the 2019 Kirkus Prize for Nonfiction, and the poetry collection *Prelude to Bruise*, winner of the 2015 PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award for Poetry. His poetry and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Oxford American*, and *GQ*, among other publications. *Alive at the End of the World* received the 2023 Ohioana Book Award in the poetry category.

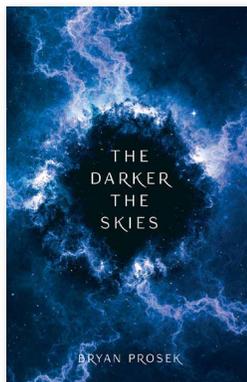
REVIEWED BY DAVID SIDERS, OHIOANA BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBER AND POETRY CHAIR FOR THE 2023 OHIOANA BOOK AWARDS

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Prosek, Bryan. *The Darker the Skies (Earth United Book 2)*.

Brentwood, TN: CamCat Books, 2022.

When a space fleet from a neighboring galaxy unleashes a weapon of mass destruction, a band of patriots battles pirates, political power struggles, and a rogue alien bent on turning the Earth into the crown jewel of his new empire. In *The Darker the Skies*, Bryan Prosek rockets his readers alongside a team of Earthen Legion soldiers on an epic adventure to save everything and everyone they hold dear.



Much like the constellations, many stars come together to paint this story, but the brightest star is Jake Saunders. Training as a Legion soldier forged him into a fighter, but his tenacious will, loyalty, and love become his best weapons.

Avid video gamer Cal Danielson flashes his tech-savvy skills to help his best buddy and soon-to-be brother-in-

law, Jake. They trade jabs and jokes with each other as they hunt for the mastermind behind the attack.

Oozing evil and selfishness, Mr. Sloan will stop at nothing until Earth is under his control. He barely masks his disdain for those he considers his underlings, like the pirates and Permadians. Utilizing fear and guile, he dupes them into forming an alliance to crush the strongest of the Milky Way Galaxy’s militaries as a preemptive strike.

In this epic space tale, Jake discovers the truth behind his father’s death. He also realizes his mistake of not expressing his true feelings for Diane, the woman he followed across the galaxy to be with. But he’s willing to risk everything to stop Sloan and preserve peace for those he loves.

An expansive cast of supporting characters from a multitude of cultures comes to life with quirks like speaking in riddles, having the attention span of a flea, and quoting John Wayne. Fans of Star Trek–type multi-species, interplanetary intrigue will enjoy this novel.

REVIEWED BY ANTHONY HOEHN, SCBWI MEMBER AND LOVER OF WEIRD SCIENCE FACTS

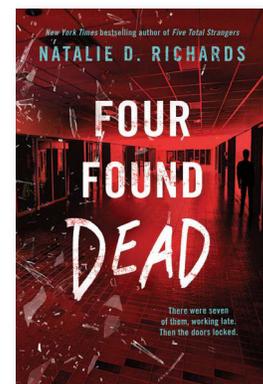
Richards, Natalie D. *Four Found Dead*.

Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2023.

Travel to Sandusky, Ohio, with central Ohio author Natalie D. Richards. The sleepy town of Sandusky is the site of a murder spree where three teenagers and one adult are killed.

It’s the night Riverview Theaters is closing for good. The movie theater is attached to a boarded up, abandoned shopping mall. As the last picture ends and all the moviegoers have departed, only the workers are left to clean up one more time. Jo and her coworkers sweep up popcorn, clean bathrooms and soda machines, and straighten the remaining candy. It’s all routine, until it isn’t.

First the manager disappears, with everyone’s car keys, phones, and purses sealed in the office safe. Then the doors all lock. Are they trapped? Is there a way out? As



the bodies pile up and the killer chases the remaining workers throughout the shopping mall, the tension rockets. Jo and her coworkers must work as a team, but can they really trust one another?

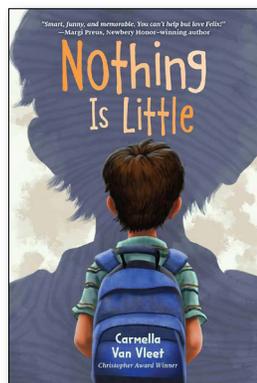
Four Found Dead reads like a horror film—the kind where you yell at the screen, “Don’t go in there!” But of course, the characters always do. You’ll be on the edge of your seat to find out what happens and who survives this tale.

Four Found Dead is definitely best read in one sitting, as are all of Richards’ other mystery thrillers.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

Van Vleet, Carmella. ***Nothing Is Little.***
New York, NY: Holiday House, 2022.

Nothing Is Little, written by Carmella Van Vleet, is a heartfelt story of Felix and his journey of trying to find his father. Instead, he discovers himself and where he is needed and truly belongs.



Felix, a.k.a. Short-lock Holmes, has hormone growth deficiency—so in other words, he’s short. But that’s never bothered Felix. In fact, he loves that about himself. Who wouldn’t want to wear a t-shirt that says, “You Gotta Hand It To Short People (Because They Usually Can’t Reach Anyway)”? Awesome, right?

Felix lives with his mom and stepdad, with a soon-to-be-born sibling on the way. His mother never really talks about his biological dad, but Felix has always wanted to know everything he can about him. One day, his mother mentions that his dad was also short. Bam! This tiny piece of information opens a huge gap in Felix’s life. Felix is determined to find his father. At this point, Felix doesn’t feel like he even fits in with his family. His mom has a new husband, and she’s about to have a baby. He feels like he is in the way of a happy new family—a family without him.

When school starts, Felix and his friend Ray start Forensics Club. They learn interesting skills that range from learning how to find fingerprints to solving an

entire staged crime scene. In the club, Felix meets Casey. Soon they become friends, and she helps him with the search for his father. With all the skills that he’s learning, his hunger to find his father grows.

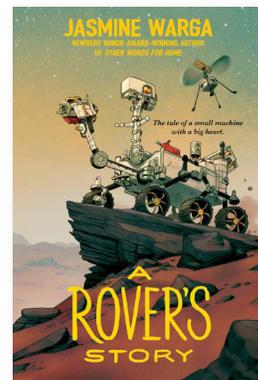
Along the way, Felix makes friends and mistakes. He finds out that things aren’t actually the way he imagined. And he learns that even though he’s made mistakes, he can fix them and undo the hurt that he may have caused. He learns that although his biological dad may not be part of the picture, the family he has in front of him is all he needs. In the end, Felix finds himself and his true family.

Nothing Is Little is a beautifully written book with hilarious and sad moments. Felix may not grow physically, but you’ll love his journey of emotional growth.

REVIEWED BY LARISA HOEHN, EIGHTH-GRADER, SPECIAL POWER: GETTING LOST IN BOOKS, BUT ALWAYS FINDING HER WAY TO THE NEXT ONE

Warga, Jasmine. ***A Rover’s Story.***
Illus. by Matt Rockefeller.
New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2022.

Jasmine Warga’s latest title may be written for middle grade readers, but every book lover would benefit from reading this novel. Ohioana Book Award winner *A Rover’s Story* follows the story of Resilience, a.k.a Res the Mars rover. Res has one job, and it is to explore Mars for scientists back at NASA. The more time that Res spends being built by the scientists, the more he begins to understand their human emotions—which technically shouldn’t be happening. While he cannot communicate with them, he certainly appreciates the humor of one of the scientists, even when he doesn’t fully understand the jokes.



Once Res gets blasted off to space with a drone helicopter named Fly, he is not prepared for what is waiting for them on Mars. It is a much scarier place than he was anticipating. Not only does Res have to deal with his newfound feelings, he must also learn how to understand them in a high-pressure environment.

Parallel to Res' story and space adventure, Sophie, a human girl, is on Earth having a hard time. She is tired of everyone fussing over Res, especially her mother. Her mom is a scientist who is a part of the team that builds Res. When she feels the most isolated, Sophie finds an unlikely friendship with Res after writing letters to him. With each unanswered note, Sophie begins to feel a little less lonely.

In addition to this heartwarming read, there are beautiful illustrations woven through the story that offer more of an insight into what Res and his journey look like. Any reader, young or old, will not be prepared to have their heartstrings pulled in the way that Warga does so effortlessly. Warga has a voice in middle grade literature that should be celebrated. Her grasp on the ebbs and flows of being a human (or a rover) is something that every person should hope to acquire one day. If this novel is not at the top of your to-be-read list or your child's, you are missing out.

REVIEWED BY ISA FERNANDEZ, BUYER AT THE BOOKMATTERS BOOKSTORE IN MILFORD, OHIO

JUVENILE

Campbell, Marcy. *The More You Give*.

Illus. by Francesca Sanna.

New York, NY: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2022.

The More You Give begins on a spread of a wide-open field. Here, a boy and his grandmother live, and they are happy. His grandmother gives him an acorn, which they plant in the field. As the years pass, the grandmother continues to share her knowledge, recipes, and gifts with the boy, and the acorn grows into an oak tree. After the boy's grandmother passes, the boy—now an adult—reflects on the important time he spent with her, and he shares his grandmother's lessons with his own daughter. The more he shares, the more trees grow.

Written by Ohioan Marcy Campbell of Wooster and illustrated by Francesca Sanna, Ohioana Book Award



winner *The More You Give* is a beautiful, pensive picture book that explores the ways in which our love and actions ripple down through generations. It is a reminder to step back and look at the wider picture of our lives and remember those who came before us. The history of how we all came to be is far deeper and storied than we imagine, and each of us has a special child or elder in our past who helped us get to where we are.

This book was written as a modern response to *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Rather than a message of self-sacrifice, *The More You Give* shows how acts of love can multiply. The boy and his grandmother plant one oak tree, but years later a whole forest has grown because of the wisdom and love they share with each other. While the story begins with just two characters, the final page shows a thriving forest with a long table full of friends and family.

Sanna brings these important messages to life in bold illustrations with a fall color palette reminiscent of the cyclical nature of the story and of autumn leaves. She creatively shows how each generation grows upon the experiences of the first by repeating scenes of the growing forest. The characters are inclusive with depictions of many different skin and hair colors. The world feels verdant and lush.

Campbell's poetic prose will pull on your heartstrings and leave you in a contemplative mood. This book is full of meaning and layers, and could be great for classroom discussion, especially if paired with *The Giving Tree*. It could also be a gentle conversation opener with a child experiencing grief for the first time, or a book to share with a beloved grandparent of your own.

REVIEWED BY JESSICA SMITH, YOUTH LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

Book List

The following books were added to Ohioana's collection between June and August 2023. Look for them at your local library or bookstore!

NONFICTION

Anderson, Timothy G., and Brian Schoen, eds. ***Settling Ohio: First Peoples and Beyond***. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2023. Scholars working in archaeology, education, history, geography, and politics tell a nuanced story about the people and dynamics that reshaped this region and determined who would control it.

Austin, Jerry. ***True Tales from the Campaign Trail, Vol. III***. Akron, OH: University of Akron Press, 2023. This third volume of *True Tales from the Campaign Trail* finds Democratic and Republican political consultants putting aside their differences to offer entertaining and honest insights into the art of the political campaign. The variety of funny foibles and lessons learned makes for an engaging celebration of the democratic process and the campaign trail.

Campbell, Michael D. ***Anecdotes of a Lifetime: Memoirs of a Professional Geologist***. Atlanta, GA: Westwood Book Publishing, 2023. *Anecdotes of a Lifetime: Memoirs of a Professional Geologist* is the remarkable journey of Ohioana Book Award-winning author Michael D. Campbell's eighty years of personal and professional experiences as a geologist.

Clevenger, Dan. ***Fate Stacked the Deck***. Columbus, OH: Pure-Pro Publishing, 2022.

Fate Stacked the Deck tells the story of the obstacles and successes Dan Clevenger has come across in life, as well as recognizing the people who impacted him within the communities where he has lived, including Tiffin, Upper Arlington, and Detroit, Michigan. The book also discusses Clevenger's worldview and how he has navigated the ups and downs presented by the economy.

Columbus Metropolitan Library: Celebrating 150 Years. Wilmington, OH: Orange Frazer Press, 2023.

A history of Columbus Metropolitan Library in Franklin County, Ohio, on the occasion of its 150th anniversary in 2023.

Dawidziak, Mark. ***A Mystery of Mysteries: The Death and Life of Edgar Allan Poe***. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2023.

A Mystery of Mysteries is a brilliant biography of Edgar Allan Poe that examines the renowned author's life through the prism of his mysterious death and its many possible causes.

Dixon, Athena. ***The Loneliness Files: A Memoir in Essays***. New York, NY: Tin House, 2023.

Living alone as a middle-aged woman without children or pets and working forty hours a week from home, more than three hundred and fifty miles from her family and friends, Athena Dixon begins watching mystery videos on YouTube, listening to true crime podcasts, and playing video game walkthroughs just to hear another

human voice. She discovers the story of Joyce Carol Vincent, a British woman who died alone, her body remaining in front of a glowing television set for three years before the world finally noticed. Searching for connection, Dixon plumbs the depths of communal loneliness, asking essential questions of herself and all of us.

McCormac, Jim, and Chelsea Gottfried. ***Gardening for Moths: A Regional Guide***. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2023.

This guide to moths, native plants, and their environmental roles is an indispensable resource for gardeners, conservationists, and nature enthusiasts across the midwestern United States.

McCoy, David B. ***Christopher Gist, Second Edition***. Massillon, OH: Spare Change Press, 2022.

An updated short history of the life of American colonial expansionist Christopher Gist, one of the first white explorers of the Ohio Valley.

McCoy, David B. ***The Life of Josephine Baker and Her 2021 Induction into France's Pantheon***. Massillon, OH: Spare Change Press, 2023.

An overview of the life and extraordinary career of legendary dancer Josephine Baker, including information about her induction into the Pantheon, France's mausoleum of heroes. Baker is the first performing artist, first American, and first Black woman to be inducted into the Pantheon.

Ragusa, Holly Brians. *Met the End: An Investigation of the Past, a Daughter's Duty to Herself*. Cincinnati, OH: Amused Moon, 2022.

This true crime survival memoir explores the life and death of John Powell, the first known victim of American serial killer Donald Harvey, through the eyes of Powell's daughter, Holly Brians Ragusa.

Scudder, Jillian. *The Milky Way Smells of Rum and Raspberries . . . and Other Amazing Cosmic Facts*. London, UK: Icon Books, 2023.

Astrophysicist Jillian Scudder knows the Universe can be a surreal place. In this lighthearted book, she delves into some of the more arcane facts that her work has revealed and tells us how we have discovered these amazing truths.

Tucker, Samantha, and Amy Spears. *Collective Chaos: A Roller Derby Team Memoir*. Athens, OH: Swallow Press, 2023.

Part sports autobiography, part cultural critique, this book offers the collective experience of a tenacious group of nontraditional athletes who play, officiate, plan, schedule, market, and manage the business of a (mostly) women's amateur sports team.

Waggoner, Tim. *Writing in the Dark: The Workbook*. Perrysburg, OH: Guide Dog Books, 2022.

A companion to Tim Waggoner's Bram Stoker Award-winning *Writing in the Dark*, a manual for how to write horror fiction, this workbook covers a wide variety of topics ranging from monster, idea, and plotline creation to avoiding clichés and developing the art of suspense. The workbook emphasizes

practice over discussion to help writers master these concepts.

FICTION

Beutner, Katharine. *Killingly*. New York, NY: Soho Crime, 2023.

Edmund White Award-winning author Katharine Beutner crafts a real-life unsolved mystery into an unforgettable historical portrait of academia, family trauma, and the risks faced by women who dared to pursue unconventional paths at the end of the nineteenth century.

Bollen, Christopher. *The Lost Americans*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2023.

A young woman finds herself in the crosshairs of powerful and dangerous enemies when she travels to Cairo to uncover the truth about her brother's mysterious death in this smart, atmospheric, and propulsive literary thriller from the acclaimed author of *A Beautiful Crime* and *Orient*.

Edmonds, David Allen. *Indirect Objects: A Joe Lehrer Mystery*. Medina, OH: Snowbelt Publishing Ltd., 2020.

Joe Lehrer and Lexan Warner's lives appear as perfect as suburban Stradford where they teach. Joe is hailed as a hero for thwarting a child abuse conspiracy. Lexan has found security in a man who loves her. But when retaliation and the violent opioid crisis overwhelm the community, they are forced to question their relationship and their very identities.

Edmonds, David Allen. *Personal Pronouns*. Medina, OH: Snowbelt Publishing, Ltd., 2017.

Joe Lehrer blames himself for the death of his wife in an automobile accident. He manages to return to his job as a teacher, but is rocked again by the suspicious death of a student. With the help of his colleagues and his own dubious faith, Joe puts aside his sorrow and investigates the connections between the two deaths. He finds the truth, but also a deadly secret leading from suburban Stradford to the governor's mansion.

Flower, Amanda. *In Farm's Way (Farm to Table #3)*. Scottsdale, AZ: Poisoned Pen Press, 2023.

When the biggest catch at the annual Ice Fishing Derby is the body of brewmaster Wallace, Shiloh Bellamy must reel in the killer before her farm goes belly-up.

Foster, Lori. *The Dangerous One (Osborn Brothers #1)*. New York, NY: HQN Books, 2023.

Hunter Osborn left his family, his friends, and his job as a park ranger after uncovering a disturbing crime scene. He relocates to an isolated property near Triple Creek, Colorado, where he keeps a solitary existence. Still, Hunter can spot trouble from a mile away, and when Jodi Bentley moves into the rundown cabin next door, he knows she's trouble of the most tempting kind. When Jodi's life is threatened, Hunter can't help being drawn out of his own darkness and into hers.

Gray, Shelley Shepard. *Sycamore Circle (The Rumors in Ross County #2)*. Ashland, OR: Blackstone Publishing, 2023.

New York Times-bestselling author Shelley Shepard Gray returns with the second novel in her Rumors in Ross County series. In Ross County,

love can stay the course—but first you have to know who to trust.

Hastings, Anastasia. *Of Manners and Murder*. New York, NY: Minotaur Books, 2023.

In 1885 London, Violet inherits the role as Agony Aunt “Miss Hermione” when her own Aunt Adelia runs off with her newest paramour. But the first letter Violet receives is full of portent, not of prissy pondering: Ivy Armstrong is in need of help and fears for her life. When Violet visits the village where the letters were posted, she finds that Ivy is already dead. She quickly discovers that when you represent the most popular Agony Aunt in Britain, both marauding husbands and murder are par for the course.

Haueisen, Kathryn Brewster. *Asunder*. Austin, TX: Blue Ocotillo Publishing, 2016.

After thirty years of marriage, Ellie is shocked and hurt when her husband leaves her. She realizes she must come to grips with her emotional journey to discover a new way to live. When she meets the charming Liam, she finds a glimmer of hope. Through a family crisis, Ellie soon learns that the post-divorce world means finding her own way with the help of family and friends.

Haueisen, Kathryn Brewster. *Mary Brewster’s Love Life: Matriarch of the Mayflower*. Brandon, VT: Van Velzer Press, 2023.

Step back in time and embark on a captivating journey alongside Mary Brewster, a steadfast Christian woman whose unwavering faith and indomitable spirit shaped the destiny of a new world. This gripping historical fiction delves into the extraordinary life of the wife of

William Brewster and the famous Mayflower landing of pilgrims in search of religious freedom.

Haueisen, Kathryn Brewster. *Mayflower Chronicles: The Tale of Two Cultures*. Brattleboro, VT: Green Writers Press, 2020.

For thousands of years, two distinct cultures evolved unaware of one another’s existence. Separated by what one culture called The Great Sea and known to the other as the Atlantic Ocean, the course of each culture’s future changed irreversibly in 1620, when the Mayflower delivered 102 refugees and fortune seekers from England to Cape Cod. This historical fiction book explores the English settlers of the Plymouth Colony and the Indigenous Pokanoket, with a forward written by descendants of Massasoit Ousamequin.

Hlad, Alan. *The Book Spy: A WWII Novel of Librarian Spies*. New York, NY: Kensington Books, 2023.

Inspired by true stories of the heroic librarian spies of World War II, this new book from Alan Hlad, the internationally bestselling author of *Churchill’s Secret Messenger*, transports readers from the New York Public Library to Portugal’s city of espionage in a riveting tale.

Kachuba, John. *Haycorn Smith and the Castle Ghost*. San Jose, CA: Paper Angel Press, 2023.

Twelve-year-old Haycorn knows all about Ohio ghosts, but even he is stunned when he and his friend see a ghost in a castle. The boys witness a meeting between two men involving a kickback scheme, putting their lives—and that of Haycorn’s mother—in jeopardy. But the ghost may have other plans for all of them.

McDaniel, Tiffany. *On the Savage Side*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2023.

Inspired by the unsolved murders of the Chillicothe Six, this harrowing novel tells the story of two sisters, both of whom could be the next victims, from the internationally bestselling author of *Betty*.

Rouda, Kaira. *Somebody’s Home*. Seattle, WA: Thomas & Mercer, 2023.

For a newly single mother and her daughter, a fresh start is the beginning of a nightmare when they move into a house still occupied by the previous owners’ son.

Snyder, Lucy A. *Sister, Maiden, Monster*. New York, NY: Tor Nightfire, 2023.

From Bram Stoker Award–winning author Lucy A. Snyder, *Sister, Maiden, Monster* is a visceral story set in the aftermath of our planet’s disastrous transformation, told through the eyes of three women trying to survive the nightmare.

Thai, Thao. *Banyan Moon*. Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2023.

This sweeping, evocative debut novel follows three generations of Vietnamese American women reeling from the death of their matriarch, revealing the family’s inherited burdens, buried secrets, and unlikely love stories.

Way, Ehmbee. *Compunction*. Akron, OH: Empty Box Publishing, 2023.

James Singer has lost his wife, his job, his home, and his subsequent place in the world. Now, with the appearance of a shadowy phantasm who has taken to terrorizing him every night, he’s beginning to fear that he, like his schizophrenic aunt,

is also on the verge of losing his ability to discern what is real and what is not. As James' condition continues to grow worse, he doesn't know if he's dreaming, overmedicated, in the throes of a nervous breakdown, or already dead.

White, Edmund, Brian Alessandro, and Michael Carroll. ***Edmund White's A Boy's Own Story: The Graphic Novel***. Illus. by Igor Karash. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf Productions, 2023.

A Boy's Own Story is a now-classic coming-of-age story of an unnamed narrator growing up gay during one of the most oppressive periods in American history. Set in the time and place of author Edmund White's adolescence, the Midwest of the 1950s, the novel became an immediate bestseller upon publication in 1982. For many readers, the book was not merely about gay identity, but the pain of being a child in a fractured family while looking for love in an anything-but-stable world. White is joined by co-writers Brian Alessandro and Michael Carroll and artist Igor Karash to bring this novel to life for today's readers in a stunning graphic novel interpretation.

POETRY

Adams, David. ***Hope as a Construction: New and Selected Poems***. Huron, OH: Bottom Dog Press, 2023.

In this new collection, real American places and subjects morph into symbols of the human desire for an answer to all questions.

Carpathios, Neil. ***Lifeaholics Anonymous: Poems***. American Fork, UT: Kelsay Books, 2023.

In this quirky collection, Neil Carpathios celebrates the small miracles of every day.

Carpathios, Neil. ***The Lost Fragments of Heraclitus: Aphorisms***. Searcy, AR: Resource Publications, 2022.

Neil Carpathios channels the great Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, who may be a distant relative.

Fagan, Kathy. ***Bad Hobby: Poems***. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2022.

From poet Kathy Fagan—finalist for both the Kingsley Tufts Award and Ohioana Book Award—comes *Bad Hobby*, a perceptive collection focused on memory, class, and might-have-beens.

Gold, Maxwell I. ***Bleeding Rainbows and Other Broken Spectrums***.

Illus. by Martini. Denver, CO: Hex Publishers, 2023.

From flesh gods and cyberlust to cosmic orgasms, Pushcart and Rhysling Award nominee Maxwell I. Gold takes readers on a surreal expedition across a vast, prismatic spectrum of homoeroticism.

Ragusa, Holly Brians. ***Inverse: Informed Thoughts by an Unfit Poet***. Cincinnati, OH: Amused Moon, 2023.

A debut poetry manuscript comprised of forty-four selections that weave through wonder, navigate fear, question conformity, and even taunt tradition. The author ruthlessly explores her diminishing world through an observant, experienced lens of loss in search of brighter horizons.

Ransdell, Emily. ***One Finch Singing***. Tillamook, OR: Concrete Wolf Press, 2023.

In poem after deeply felt poem, Emily Ransdell shows us that grief is a measure of love, and the two are inexorably linked. Winner of the 2022 Concrete Wolf Louis Award, *One Finch Singing* looks back in grief and forward in hope.

Russell, Timothy. ***In Plena Vita – The Full Life: The Collected Poems***.

Huron, OH: Bottom Dog Press, 2023. The collected works of Timothy Russell, *In Plena Vita* features over one hundred poems, twenty photos, a timeline, and an introduction by Marc Harshman.

Santer, Rikki. ***Resurrection Letter: Leonora, Her Tarot, and Me***. Illus. by Julia Lipovsky. Cincinnati, OH: Cereal Box Studio, 2023.

In this homage to the vision and joy of surrealist painter Leonora Carrington, Rikki Santer casts herself as fellow traveler, artist, magician, and liberator, sweeping the reader across time and space as she follows Leonora through sequined tunnels and sister moons, gothic mansions, and the shaman's cloak of the Tarot.

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Arnett, Mindee. ***Riven***. New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2023.

From acclaimed fantasy author Mindee Arnett comes an epic, adventurous story of a young mercenary magic-user trying to escape the oppressive island of Riven—and a young noblewoman trying to change it forever.

Cowan, Ryan. *Mr. Moonbeam and the Halloween Crystal*. Hawthorne, CA: Ryan Cowan, 2019.

Elliott attends third grade like any other boy—except that Elliott isn't like any other boy. Endowed with magical powers, Elliott belongs to a secret world called Moonstone. When the evil witch, Noir, steals the Halloween Crystal, it's up to Elliott and his teacher, Mr. Moonbeam, to stop Noir from invading the non-magical world on Halloween night.

Pancholy, Maulik. *The Best at It*. New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2020. At the start of seventh grade, Rahul Kapoor's grandfather gives him some well-meaning advice: find one thing you're really good at and become the best at it. Rahul is convinced that once he accomplishes this task, bullies will stop bothering him, and he'll finally fit in. But what if he isn't the best at anything? This Stonewall Honor Book from award-winning actor Maulik Pancholy is a hilarious and heartfelt middle grade novel about a gay Indian American boy coming into his own.

JUVENILE

Bonilla, Lindsay. *The Note Who Faced the Music*. Illus. by Mark Hoffman. New York, NY: Page Street Publishing, 2023.

This hilarious, offbeat tale of sheet music in treble will strike a chord with anyone who's felt out of sync, ringing with reassurance that everyone has a part to play when working as a team. At the coda, readers can develop their ear with a glossary of musical terms.

Chrappah, Afia. *The Journey of Ama Ketewa*. Illus. by Jessica Robinson. Columbus, OH: Ketewa Storytelling, 2021.

Ama Ketewa is a nine-year-old who lives in Accra, Ghana. Ama's life is full of food, games, fun activities in her town, and love from family and friends. Join her on her journey in this beautifully illustrated book for children around the world.

Davis, Marchánt. *A Boy and His Mirror*. Illus. by Keturah A. Bobo. New York, NY: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2023.

Chris loves his long, curly hair, so why do his classmates tease him about it? When he looks for answers in his mirror, something wonderfully wild and weird happens: a lady appears with wise words that make him feel like a king! But when he starts acting like a king at school, it's time for another visit to the mirror.

Geist, Christina. *Buddy's New Buddy (Growing with Buddy #3)*. Illus. by Tim Bowers. New York, NY: Random House Books for Young Readers, 2022.

The newest picture book in the *New York Times*-bestselling Buddy series is about being yourself through-and-through while going back to school and trying to make new buddies.

Howes, Katey. *Woven of the World*. Illus. by Dinara Mirtalipova. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2023.

Told from the perspective of a young girl learning to weave, *Woven of the World* is a lyrical meditation on the ancient art of weaving and what this beautiful craft can teach us.

Mitchell, J. P. *Sweet Fire*. Illus. by Fuuji Takashi. Columbus, OH: FreedomSong Press, 2023.

Generations of girls have grown up believing they can only be one thing—sweet or strong, pretty or passionate. Unlearning these ideas and living freely becomes a whole job. Who will sing permission—permission to live in joy? Permission to love oneself and others—to be complex and amazing? Enter *Sweet Fire*.

Muth, Jon J. *Stillwater and Koo Save the World (A Stillwater and Friends Book)*. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2023.

When Koo wants to fix all the things that are wrong in the world, he discovers that little acts of kindness can make a big difference. *Stillwater and Koo Save the World* is the first of four new books for young readers featuring the beloved Zen panda, Stillwater—star of the Caldecott Honor Book, *Zen Shorts*, and of the Peabody Award and Emmy Award-winning Apple+ TV series.

Ward, Lindsay. *Jessie: Queen of the Road*. Seattle, WA: Two Lions, 2023. Inspired by seven women who rode motorcycles and achieved notable distinctions in an era when they faced numerous barriers, this story is a reminder of the possibilities that await us and what we can accomplish, even against the odds.

Coming Soon

Author Event: Ross Gay

November 14, 2023
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Joseph Beth Booksellers
2692 Madison Road, Cincinnati, Ohio

Poet and essayist Ross Gay, whose *Inciting Joy* won the 2023 Ohioana Book Award in nonfiction, shares his latest collection of essays, *The Book of (More) Delights*. Join Ross for a discussion and book signing. For more information, visit <https://www.josephbeth.com/event/ross-gay-discussing-and-signing-book-more-delights>.

Books by the Banks

November 18, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Duke Energy Convention Center
525 Elm Street, Cincinnati, Ohio

This day-long festival features national, regional, and local authors and illustrators, book signings, panel discussions, and activities for the entire family to enjoy. Free and open to the public. For more information, visit <https://booksbythebanks.org>.

Author Event: Kerry Winfrey

December 1, 2023
5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Gramercy Books Bexley
2424 E. Main Street, Bexley, Ohio

Join romance novelist Kerry Winfrey as she discusses her newest novel, *Faking Christmas*, with Gramercy's Romance Book Club. A social hour at Kittie's will precede the program at 5:00 p.m., with the book discussion beginning at 6:15 p.m. A ticket to this program includes a copy of the book and a beverage at Kittie's. For more information, visit <https://www.gramercybooksbexley.com/event/kerry-winfrey-joins-gramercy-books-romance-book-club-discuss-her-latest-romcom-faking>.

Author Event: Jessica Strawser

December 7, 2023
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Cuyahoga County Public Library
North Royalton Branch
5071 Wallings Road,
North Royalton, Ohio

Bestselling author Jessica Strawser discusses her new novel, *The Last Caretaker*, which has been called "an empowering and provocative page-turner." Books will be available for purchase and signing courtesy of Mac's Backs - Books on Coventry. For more information, visit <https://attend.cuyahogalibrary.org/event/9430860>.

Storytime with Will Hillenbrand

December 10, 2023
1:00 p.m.
Cover to Cover Books for
Young Readers
2116 Arlington Avenue,
Upper Arlington, Ohio

Join Cover to Cover as it welcomes back author and illustrator Will Hillenbrand for a fun afternoon storytime! Enjoy a reading of his two newest titles, *The Voice in the Hollow* and *Little Red*. For more information, visit <https://www.covertocoverchildrensbooks.com/event/storytime-author-and-illustrator-will-hillenbrand>.

Sesquicentennial Author Series: Jason Mott

December 10, 2023
2:00 p.m.
Columbus Metropolitan Library's
Main Library
96 S. Grant Avenue, Columbus, Ohio

Continuing its 150th anniversary celebration, Columbus Metropolitan Library welcomes Jason Mott, a *New York Times*–bestselling author and winner of the 2021 National Book Award. Free to the public, but registration is required. For more information, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sesquicentennial-author-series-with-jason-mott-tickets-504718565817?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.

Thank You!

The Ohioana Library wouldn't be the unique organization it is without our many generous supporters. Listed below are those who have given from June 1, 2023, through August 31, 2023. Special thanks to Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly for the state's ongoing support.

\$10,000 and above

Estate of Joan V. Schmutzler
Estate of Ronald L. Stuckey

\$5,000 – 9,999

The Columbus Foundation
– Walter Rumsey Marvin Fund
– Theodora Roberts Fund
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Ohio Humanities
Vorys, Sater, Seymour & Pease

\$2,500 – 4,999

Ohio Arts Council
Vernon Pack

\$1,000 – 2,499

Michael & Sharon Curtin
The Myers Y. Cooper Company
Porter Wright Morris & Arthur
Thomas Schiff
Margaret Wong & Associates
Jay & Heidi Yurkiw

\$500 – 999

Anonymous
Drs. James Bishop &
Rudine Sims Bishop

\$250 – 499

Todd Kleismit
David & Aina Weaver

\$100 – 249

George Bauman
Shirley Bowser
Richard & Marilyn Doerr
Chiquita Mullins Lee
Peter & Betsy Niehoff
John Sullivan
James & Barbara Tootle

\$50 – 99

Anonymous
Kathleen Burgess
Chuck Comfort
David Edmonds

H. Drewry Gores
Robert Greer, Jr.
Daniel Hall
Toni Harper
Miriam Kahn
Christine Knisely
David & Regie Powell
Soros Literary Club
Brian Stettner

\$25 – 49

Robyn Deavers
Diane Fink
Kathy Lamancusa
Steven T. Pryce
Sharon Schnall
Jeanne Sullivan-Guerin

In Memory of Ralph Ramey

Jean Ramey

Why I Support Ohioana

I serve on the Ohioana Board of Trustees and support the organization not only because of my own love of Ohio and literature, but also to honor my late father, James Michos Hughes, a Trustee Emeritus and prior Chair of the Ohioana Book Awards Committee. Dad was a founding faculty member at Wright State University near Dayton, where for more than three decades he taught thousands of students to enjoy great books and develop their own writing skills. I grew up surrounded by Dad's books. He always made sure to have a substantial library inside every home we lived in. Wherever we happened to travel, Dad included a stop at the local bookstore on the itinerary.



(L-R) Former Ohioana Director Linda Hengst, James Hughes, and Brad Hughes at the 2011 Ohioana Book Awards. Brad is a partner at Porter Wright Morris & Arthur, where he represents clients in a variety of litigation contexts.

Both of my parents instilled in me a love of poetry. Dad had a lifelong interest in Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, and my mother, Betsy Hughes—a founding faculty member of the Miami Valley School—continues to publish award-winning sonnets from her Dayton home. Her collections, *Forest Bathing* and *The Sixth Sense of Loss*, are on my bookshelf—and available at bookstores. My sister Hilles also inherited my parents' love of literature, and my holiday and birthday gifts to her have often included works by Ohio authors I have learned about from Ohioana's events.

When I attend Board meetings, purchase signed works at the Book Festival, or listen to the insightful remarks of Ohioana Book Award winners at the annual celebration of their talents, I feel proud. I am proud that Ohioana's dedicated staff maintains such an important archive of our state's literary history. I am proud of my dad's longtime support of the organization, and of my mom's award-winning poetry as an octogenarian. And I am proud that Ohio's General Assembly, as well as local businesses, continue to support Ohioana so that it may be enjoyed by all the Buckeyes yet to come.

Brad Hughes

Yes, I want to support Ohio literature by making my tax-deductible contribution to Ohioana in the amount of:

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other: \$_____

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Email/Telephone

My check payable to Ohioana is enclosed.

Please charge my:
 Visa Mastercard Discover Amex

Card #

Expiration date

CVV

Please send your donation with this form to Ohioana Library Association, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43201. You may also make your gift online at www.ohioana.org. All donors of \$50 or more receive a print subscription to the *Ohioana Quarterly*, invitations to Ohioana events, and Ohioana's e-newsletter. Questions? Call 614-466-3831 or email us at ohioana@ohioana.org.



Ohioana Library Association
274 E. First Avenue
Suite 300
Columbus, OH 43201

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLUMBUS, OH
PERMIT NO. 1069

www.ohioana.org

**CALLING
OHIO
AUTHORS!**

Nominations and submissions are now open for the 2024 Ohioana Book Awards and the Ohioana Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant. For more information and forms, visit www.ohioana.org/programs/ohioana-book-awards/.