

ALL IT TAKES IS A LIBRARY CARD!

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Lawson McGhee Library and the L&N STEM Academy: The LML Staff's Perspective



As recounted in [last month's issue](#), the partnership between **Lawson McGhee Library (LML)** and the **L&N STEM Academy** began when the downtown high school opened in August 2011. **Bess Connally**, a reference librarian at LML, has been involved from the start. She and other librarians come to campus near the beginning of the school year for Library 101, an orientation for incoming freshmen prior to their first class visit. One of their goals is to make the new students' experiences as unintimidating as possible. They understand that LML is the largest library many of the students will have ever visited.

Another initial objective is "It's your library." Connally emphasizes ownership to STEM students. "It's their library as much as it is anyone else's, and I want them to feel comfortable here." Moreover, Connally conveys that **a public library is a safe place**, not only physically but also intellectually, where patrons are not judged for materials checked out, read, or researched. As teenagers are sensitive to the scrutiny of adults, this sense of security is crucial to their academic success.

Encouraging STEM students to approach LML staff for help is a fluid situation; however, Connally has noted success with the students whose classes have met in the conference room the past two years. As co-instructors **Tressie Norton** and **Derek Griffin** stated, posing

and STEM is the addition of this life skill to their academic portfolios.

Fortyish teenagers milling about on a weekday was an unusual sight during the 2014–15 school year. Other LML patrons were naturally curious. Many favorable impressions and comments have been formed and expressed over the past two years. Taxpayers like to see their tax dollars used productively, and the innovative partnership between LML and STEM is appreciated by downtown regulars.

Connally says students came to LML on their own even over summer break. A student from one of the classes volunteered there this past summer.

In the 2016–17 school year, two new classes are being added to the lineup, making the schedule a class on each day Monday through Thursday. **The partnership continues to flourish!**

Next month: interviews with STEM students to gain their perspectives about the partnership between their school and LML. Teaser: "I think we did a good job of using these resources this year. We used all of them frequently, and I found them all extremely useful."

A Wilma Dykeman Celebration



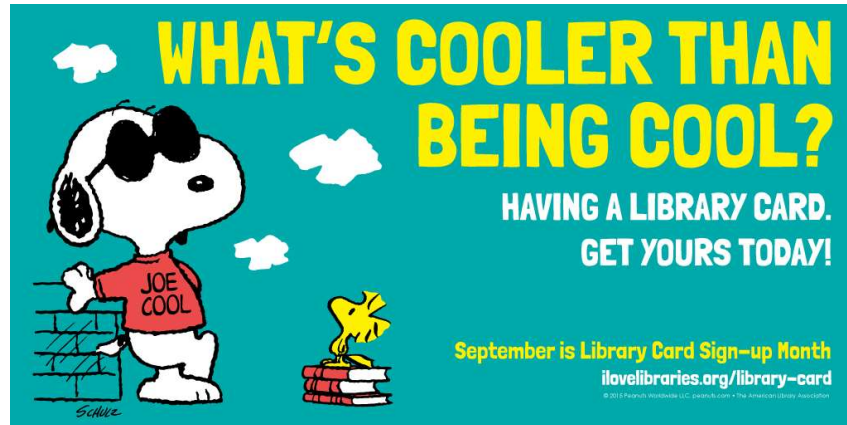
When author **Wilma Dykeman** died in 2006, one of the great voices in Appalachian literature was silenced. Thus it's no small wonder that the publication of ***Family of Earth: A Southern Mountain Childhood*** is being met with so much joy.

On **Sunday, September 11**, a **special event** to celebrate the publication of *Family of Earth* will be held at the East Tennessee History Center at **3 p.m.** Dykeman's sons, Jim and Dykeman Stokely, will talk about their late mother's memoir and the story behind it. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

Dykeman wrote this memoir while living in a stone cottage in the English Mountains of Cocke County during the final months of World War II. In the foreword to the book, **Robert Morgan**, who presented the 2016 **Wilma Dykeman Memorial Lecture**, writes, "For those of us who have known Dykeman's work for decades, and for those just discovering her fiction and nonfiction, the memoir *Family of Earth* is a treasure."

This event is made possible by a partnership of Friends, [Union Ave Books](#), the [Library Society of UT](#), the [East Tennessee Historical Society](#), and the [Knox County Public Library](#). It will be free and open to the public, but donations will be accepted so that Friends can continue to sponsor such events for the community.

It's Library Card Sign-up Month!



According to the American Library Association (ALA), a library card just may be a kid's best back-to-school supply. That's why the ALA has designated September as **Library Card Sign-up Month**.

Studies show that kids who are read to at home and who use the library perform better in school. A library card can open a world of resources to kids — and not just books. Today's libraries offer access to magazines, CDs and DVDs, e-books, and computers as well as hands-on activities, speakers, and clubs.

Friends of Knox County Public Library invites you to be a part of the fun during Library Card Sign-up Month.

- Visit the Knox County Public Library and **get a library card** if you don't already have one.
- **Show us your card** on social media. Post a picture on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram with you and your card using the hashtag **#KnoxReads** along with the national hashtag, **#LibraryCardSignUp**.
- Help us **hug a library** on September 8 at 1:30 p.m. when we meet at the Fountain City Branch with students and teachers from Garden Montessori School.

Join us this month and show everyone that #KnoxReads. After all, having a library card is even cooler than being cool!

Pilot Program Makes Learning Fun



Every Tuesday morning at Lawson McGhee Library, **Erin Nguyen** tries to get four-year-olds ready for preschool. The unsuspecting kids think they're just having fun.

Tennessee has thought a lot about four-year-olds and has developed a [33-page document](#) on pre-kindergarten educational standards that is somewhat daunting to non-professionals. But Nguyen, head of the Children's Department at Lawson McGhee, puts the concepts into practice every week in a [pilot program](#) built on books, music, art, and other fun activities in a storytime format. Her [blog](#) details objectives and materials used in her lessons.

Based on the principle that "**All children are capable of learning, achieving and making developmental progress,**" the standards are cumulative. They integrate social and emotional development with language and early literacy as well as academic disciplines like math, science, social studies, creative arts, and physical development and health. Though Nguyen's program is closely aligned with the curriculum for four-year-olds, she welcomes all preschoolers and their siblings.

Watching Nguyen with little ones confirms one of the guiding principles of Tennessee Standards: "**Children are eager and active learners.**" The song "Shaking Out the Sillies" not only gives the youngster a chance to prance and gambol; it also subtly conveys the message that we are in charge of our feelings, for self-regulation "is vital for children's growth and development and strongly correlates with positive academic outcomes."

Nguyen reads the innovative alphabet books *Old Black Fly* by Jim Aylesworth and *Alphabet Soup* by Kate Banks to give the youngsters practice with their letters, and the alphabet soup craft literally puts the children in touch with their ABCs. The chance to bang on a toy drum introduces the creative arts as an outlet for expression.

As Nguyen refines the curriculum for this pilot program, she anticipates sharing it with librarians in other branches. With the addition of [Pre-K Read and Play](#) to the student's [backpack](#), the Knox County Public Library continues to define itself as an important element in our children's education.



Chrissy Johnson, Friends coordinator. In the photo at right, she was wrestling with the office stapler. She won.

There's a new face in the office: **Christine (Chrissy) Dano Johnson**, the new Friends coordinator. Chrissy lives in Maryville with her husband Gary and 11-year-old son Xander, a sixth-grader at Coulter Grove Intermediate School. A look at her [resumé](#) will tell you about her education and work experience. We asked her a few questions to get to know her better.

As a young girl, did you have a favorite author or book that you enjoyed? As a girl, I primarily read and reread my favorite books, which were typically fantasy novels like *A Wrinkle in Time* (when I wasn't reading the Sweet Valley High series and other fluff). As my tastes matured, I picked up Plath, short stories by Salinger and Atwood, and Tom Robbins novels.

As an adult, what are your go-to selections? Historical fiction (especially Tracy Chevalier, Emma Donoghue, and Geraldine Brooks), short stories by Jhumpa Lahiri and Atwood (still!). Also, I'm still wild about Harry Potter!

If you could take a vacation anywhere, where would you go? Iceland or New Zealand. I have a thing for extreme climates after living in Alaska!

Any favorite hobbies or pastimes you could share with us? I'm a writer primarily of nonfiction prose, though my husband and I created a children's book called *Deep in Alaska*, which I wrote in haiku, published by University of Alaska Press in 2013. I love to hike in the mountains and walk/bike the greenbelts in Maryville and to do research on Alaska native art for the McClung Museum.

Any other favorites in your life? I love television! My son Xander is named after a character on one of my favorite TV shows (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), and I'm about to rewatch *Stranger Things* with him; he's working on finishing *Lost*. (You'll not find me scoffing at the medium, though it does help that my husband is a director of photography for cable television!) Xander and I also love *Hamilton: An American Musical* and hiking when we're not watching *Parks and Recreation* on Netflix. My other favorite thing? Eating out at Rocky's Jamaican Sunrise (Maryville), Jai Dee for Thai on Melrose (Knoxville), or Smokies Cuban Café (Pigeon Forge) — worth the hour drive for Cuban coffee and tostones (fried plantains).

What do you look forward to doing as coordinator? I'm looking

Reading Is Good For You!



Studies show that reading reduces stress, improves focus and memory, and increases vocabulary. And it's free entertainment if you're using your library card! Try one of these suggestions from KCPL staff members.

A Beautiful Question by Frank Wilczek

"This is a great read regardless, but since the subject is nature's apparent tendency toward beauty and many of the author's examples can be found at the beach, you can take this book along on your late summer vacation. If you've ever wished for a sequel to Hofstadter's Godel, Escher, Bach, this is probably as close as you're going to get."
– Chris Barrett, Lawson McGhee Library

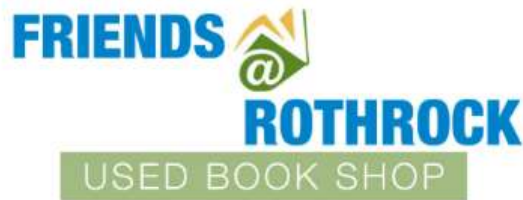
The Aviator's Wife by Melanie Benjamin

"This novel shares the story of the Lindbergh family from Anne Morrow Lindbergh's point of view. Because of the first-person narration, you feel like you're reading her diary. The events surrounding her life with Charles, her own accomplishments as an aviator and an author, and the harrowing tale of her child's kidnapping are presented in a very personal, behind-the-scenes way. The Lindbergh legend has diminished some over the years, but the impact they had in their time was truly epic."
– Mary Pom Claiborne, Lawson McGhee Library

The Lost Art of Reading Nature's Signs by Tristan Gooley

"If you're outside a lot, this book will enrich your experience in almost every setting. It's packed with interesting and useful information from, literally, the ground up — from earth to sky, from mosses to sequoias. There are tips about stars and constellations, clouds and the moon, and reading signs from plants and bugs. And it's written in an easy, casual, and entertaining style."
– Linda Helms, Burlington Branch

Rothrock in September ...



Something new is coming to the Friends @ Rothrock Used Book Shop in September: new hours! We'll be open from 10:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 1–4:30 p.m. on Sunday. **Click on the image above** to watch a short video, and **visit our website** for the latest information about our schedule and our monthly specials.

WHAT'S COMING UP

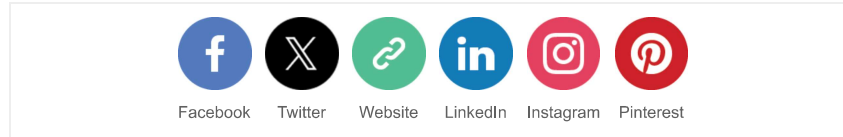
- **Family of Earth: A Celebration** – Sunday, September 11, 3 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **All Over the Page: H is for Hawk** – Monday, September 12, 6:30 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **Books Sandwiched In: Give Us the Vote: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America** – Wednesday, September 28, noon [MORE>>](#)
- **Farragut Branch Used Book Sale** – Friday, September 30, and Saturday, October 1, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **Powell Branch Used Book Sale** – Friday, October 7, and Saturday, October 8, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **All Over the Page: Station Eleven** – Monday, October 10, 6:30 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **Burlington Branch Used Book Sale** – Wednesday, October 19, and Thursday, October 20, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **Halls Branch Used Book Sale** – Friday, October 21, and Saturday, October 22, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. [MORE>>](#)
- **Books Sandwiched In: Rac(e)ing to Class: Confronting Poverty and Race in Schools and Classrooms** – Wednesday, October 26, noon [MORE>>](#)

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Friends♥KCPL is a monthly e-newsletter produced by the Communications Committee of Friends of the Knox County Public Library. Members of the committee who contribute to the e-newsletter include: Martha Gill (Chair), Peter Andreae, Deanne Charlton, Martha Edington, Beth Fisher, Paula Hickey, Rusha Sams, Suzanne Shea, and Joyce York.

About Friends of the Knox County Public Library: Friends is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster a love of libraries, books and reading in the Knox County area. The organization raises funds to sponsor community outreach programs, represent the interests of Knox County library patrons, and support a variety of services offered by the local library system that would otherwise not be available due to budget or staff restrictions.

Friends of the Knox County Library has this e-mail address either from our membership roster or from email sign-up sheets. If you are receiving this message in error, please accept our apologies and unsubscribe below. Thank you.

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