



## **Holiday book sale kicks off the season**

*By Susan Alexander*

The Friends' board said thank you to its many volunteer members last month when it hosted a members-only holiday book sale at Cedar Bluff Branch Library. Board members decorated the library's meeting room, baked cookies and supplied appropriate Christmas tunes. Sheryl Hulse, Friends' administrator, created holiday bookmarks to give away. Books offered for sale were nearly new and gently used. Many were holiday related.

"Scott (Muir) and I got to watch our members enjoying refreshments, talking together and buying books. You could feel the happiness in the room," said Cindy Gibson, who organized the sale. "This event was never about selling books, although we sold \$536 in three hours. The event was to honor our members for their support of FOL through monetary, volunteering or both."

The board wishes all Friends' members and supporters, as well as Knox County Public Library staff, a happy holiday season and a wonderful new year!



## Santa Claus is coming to town!

Gather the kiddos and head to a Knox County branch library for a visit with the jolly old elf himself! Friends of the Library help support bringing Santa from the North Pole to visit with book-loving kids of all ages. Click [here](#) to see which branches he'll visit and when.

Burlington Branch and Bearden Branch libraries also will host Polar Express Storytimes. Geared to preschoolers and elementary aged kids, they will feature a reading of the famous holiday story, cookies and hot chocolate, and each child will go home with a Christmas bell! Registration is required for the Burlington storytime. Click [here](#) to register for the Burlington event on Dec. 12. and [here](#) for info about the Bearden program on Dec. 20.

## Share your Imagination Library story

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Knox County will celebrate its 20th anniversary on January 15, 2025. Since its beginning, the program has mailed out more than 4.1 million books to 100,000 children from birth to age five. The final book, mailed on a child's 5th birthday, is "Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!"

To help celebrate the anniversary, Imagination Library invites families who've received books over the years to share your stories. Send us your memories of Imagination Library. As parents, tell us what the program meant to you. If you were a child who received the books, how'd they make you feel? What are your memories? Send us photos, films or stories!

Just fill out this form: [Share Your Story](#)

## Meet Me at the AJ



Friends hosted an evening at the soon-to-be renovated Andrew Johnson Building downtown for a night of music and nostalgia before work begins. The evening raised approximately \$13,600 for TAMIS (Tennessee Archive of Moving Image and Sound).

Guests viewed renovation plans with project architects from MHM, Inc. The *Party in the Ballroom* featured music by the Absinthe All Stars and vintage footage evocative of the era provided by TAMIS.

## TAMIS shows 1930s films

*By Deanne Charlton*

John Morton, archivist at the [Tennessee Archive of Moving Image and Sound](#), housed at East Tennessee History Center, recently shared Dr. Walther Barth's 1930s home movies with an audience at ETHC.

Dr. Barth was a skilled amateur filmmaker known in 'orphan film' circles for his 1929 composition *Fee*. He immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1931, eventually settling in Knoxville. His son donated the trove in 2006, just a year after TAMIS was founded, and a search for grants for restoring the footage began. Friends of KCPL contributed \$15,000 to augment a \$70,000 grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation.

When they went to Colorlab in Rockville, Maryland, one of the few labs capable of the project, archivist Eric Dawson said that Barth's films (1927–1943) "would provide researchers a broad array of subjects to explore." Morton predicted it would be as "if you were looking out a

window, and you thought you had a pretty good view, and then someone came along with a cloth, wiped off smudges, wiped off fog, wiped off dirt, and then everything was just crystal clear.” The returned restoration does not disappoint! He now says, “I’m thrilled that this project not only faithfully preserves the brilliance of the Barth films, but also safeguards them for years to come.”

Morton will lecture on Vardy, a small community with Melungeon heritage on December 12. TAMIS will host a screening of holiday-focused selections from its collection at Central Cinema ([1205 N Central St, Knoxville](#)) on December 19, at 6:30 pm.

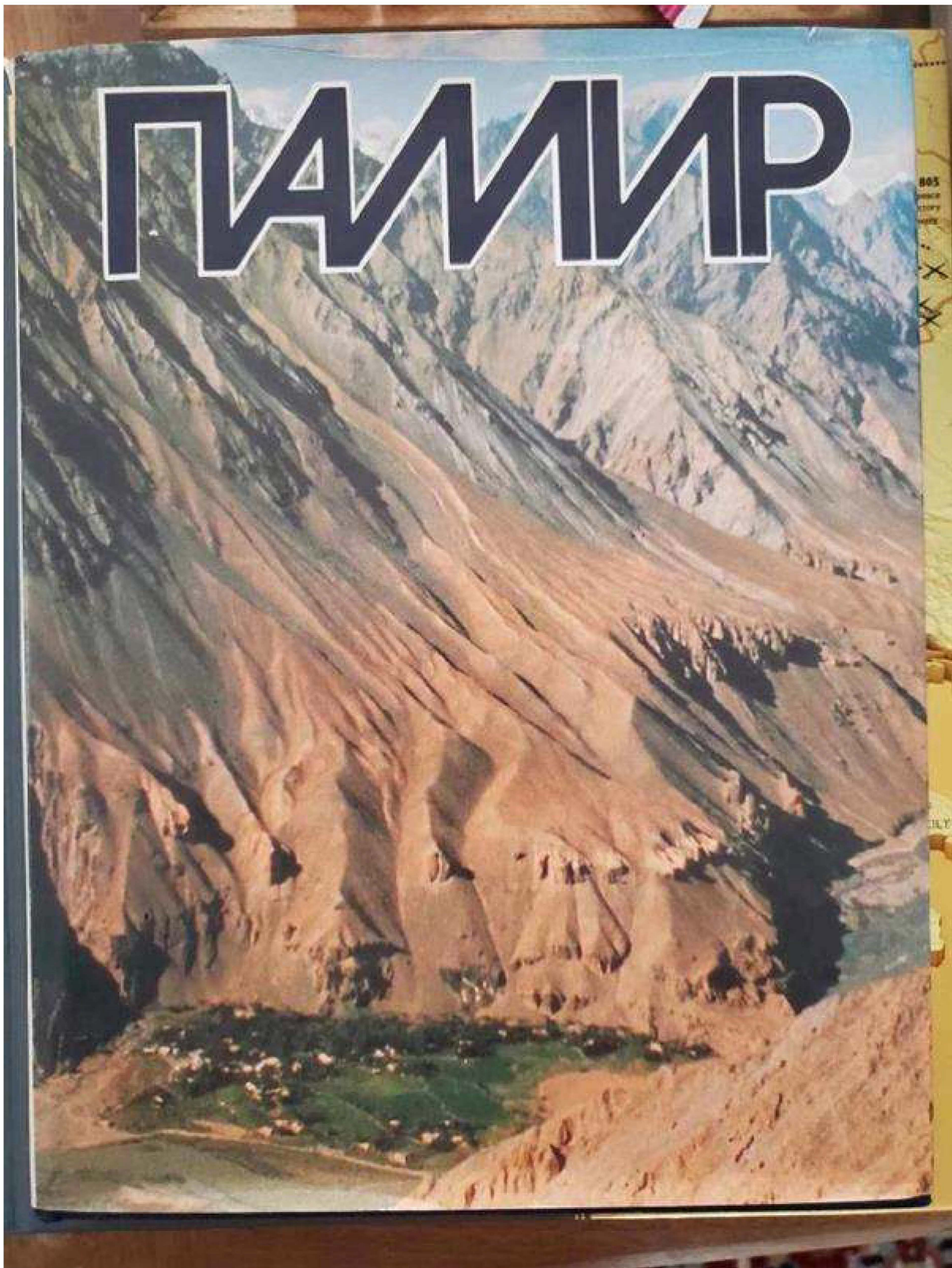
The library page featuring Barth’s films is at this [site](#). A local TV article on TAMIS’s ongoing preservation efforts is [here](#). TAMIS’s McClung Historical Collection is at [601 South Gay Street](#). The archivists can be reached at 865-215-8856.

## Marbling mania



Thanks to the funds earned by hosting a Friends used book sale, the Sequoyah Branch recently held a paper marbling workshop. “We had 17 participants, and everyone had a GREAT time!” says branch manager Jeff Ivey.

## Book connects across time and distance



*By Zoe Summer Dempsey*

Two years ago, my partner, David Wright, and I decided to check out the Friends of the Library used book sale. We both have a deep passion for reading and learning; he is a Social Studies teacher at Fulton High School and I am a former English major turned College Success Coach. We browsed the rows of books and picked up a few along the way. Before checking out, we peeked at the rare book section to see if we could find anything interesting there. The book that stood out most was ПАМИР (*Pamir*) by Alexander Gavrylyuk and Viktor

Yaroshenko. The book was full of beautiful pictures of Tajikistan and was entirely in Russian (a language in which neither of us have any background). We bought it regardless, figuring it would be an interesting coffee table book and something pretty to look at!

We spent months with the book on our coffee table, flipping through it occasionally to look at the landscapes and marvel at the beauty of a country we have minimal knowledge of. One night I happened to flip all the way to the back of the book and found a piece of old notebook paper taped onto the inside of the back cover. On this paper was a letter from August 1989. Here is a brief excerpt of the letter:

“Sir, last week I was in Russia on a business trip in the town of Dushanbe in Tajikistan. My translator was a very nice lady ... She remembers you very well and speaks highly of you. She asked me to send this book to you. If you wish, send me your phone number and what would be a good time and day to call you and talk about her.”

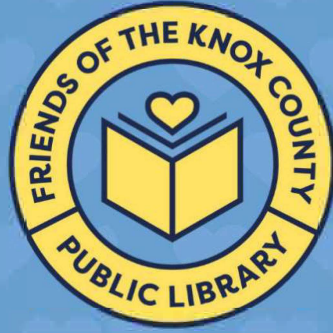
The letter was signed by the man who wrote it along with an address in Illinois. We figured we might as well use the technology available to us to see if we could find him on Facebook! While we couldn't find the author of the letter, we found a man named Russ with the same last name who was also from Illinois. On the off chance they were related, we sent him a picture of the book, inquiring if the letter might be from his father or another relative. One full year later, he responded.

“Wow,” he said, “that is from my dad, alright. Thanks for the help making a memory for me. He has been gone for nearly 20 years now... he worked training the Russians on operating and fixing earthmoving equipment. The company was International Harvester... He must have been there 6-7 times in the 80s. During the Cold War no less!” After seeing his messages and reading his (and his father's) story, we decided the best thing we could do with the book was send it to Russ to give him more of an opportunity to engage with his father's past, and create new memories and a deeper understanding of his late father's life experience.

I feel incredibly lucky to have played a part in the story and I'm so thankful for the Friends of the Library Booksale for initiating this experience. Books truly do have a unique ability to bring people together. Thirty-five years ago, this book brought two men together who were continents apart. Now, in 2024, this book helped bring together two 20-somethings in Knoxville and an older man in Illinois. We feel honored that Russ shared his memories of his father with us and that this book was able to bring him even closer to his late father. It is a true testament to the great power of books – they foster relationships, memories, and connections with the world at large.

## **Holidays books featured at Rothrock**

The Rothrock Used Book Shop at Lawson McGhee Library features holiday books, videos and CDs this month. Rothrock is open Monday to Saturday from 10:30am - 4:30pm and Sundays from 1:00pm - 4:30pm.



# Used Book Sale

To benefit the Library | Most items \$2 or less

**Bearden  
Branch Library**

**December 6-7**

**10:00-5:00**

**Sale info & more: [www.knoxfriends.org](http://www.knoxfriends.org)**

Support Friends Today

**Friends ♥ KCPL is a monthly newsletter  
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Public Library.**



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