

PLACITAS *Community* LIBRARY



NEWSLETTER
JAN/FEB 2023





REGULAR LIBRARY HOURS ARE *BACK!*
SUN: 1 - 4
TUES: 10 - 7
WEDS/THURS/SAT: 10 - 5

ADULT PROGRAMS

- **JAN 21 (2 PM):** "What Price a Human: Indian Captives in New Mexico" by Robert Torrez
- **JAN 22 (2 PM):** "Understanding Abstract Art" by Dianna Shomaker
- **JAN 28 (10 AM-10 PM):** Placitas Skies: A Cosmic Experience
- **FEB 4 (2 PM):** "Investigating Ghosts of New Mexico" by Benjamin Radford
- **FEB 18 (2 PM):** "Silent Voices of WWII in the Pacific and in New Mexico" by Nancy Bartlit
- **FEB 25 (2 PM):** Calligraphy Demonstration by Escribiente, Albuquerque's Calligraphic Society

ART SUBMISSIONS, RECEPTIONS & EXHIBITS

- **Through JAN 5:** Exhibit: "STITCHED...WOVEN...APPLIQUÉD...EMBELLISHED...PIECED..."
- **JAN 20 (5-6:30 PM):** Artist Reception: "Dianna Shomaker - A Retrospective" (exhibit will be displayed Jan 7-Feb 2)
- **FEB 5:** Submission Deadline: "New Mexico - Sense of Place"
- **FEB 17 (5-6:30 PM):** Artist Reception: "The Love of Calligraphy" by Escribiente, Albuquerque's Calligraphic Society (exhibit will be displayed Feb 4-Mar 16)

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- **JAN 28 (11 AM-12 PM):** "Explore the Universe" with Explora Science Center & Children's Museum
- **FEB 11 (1-3 PM):** Valentine's Day Party
- **FEB 14 (10 AM-12 PM):** Kids Day Out at the library!

RECURRING EVENTS

- **Volunteer Coffee & Connect** (2nd Sat of each month at 9 AM): Meet our volunteers, enjoy coffee and snacks, and learn about all the different ways you could be part of the library
- **Social Justice Discussion Group** (3rd Tues of each month at 1 PM): Meet to discuss issues of social justice and how we can make a difference in the world today!

Library BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meetings are held the
3rd Thursday of each
month at **6:00 PM** in the
Collin Meeting Room.
The public is invited
and welcome to attend.
Agendas are posted [here](#)
and at the library.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS:
THURS, JAN 19, 6:00 PM
THURS, FEB 16, 6:00 PM



Photo by OC Gonzalez on Unsplash

Sunsets and Sunrises

by Doris Fields, PhD

Chair, Board of Directors, Placitas Community Library (PCL)

One might ask, “Which comes first: the sunset or the sunrise?” Of course, that depends on perspective, and all are beautiful in their time. Now is a time for sunsets and sunrises, and I appreciate both. The sun is setting on my tenure as Chair of the Board of Directors for PCL. The library had just completed a Capital Campaign, raising funds to build a much-needed extension and was already a community gem when I was elected to serve as Chair. Still, living by two major principles, *Kuumba* and *Tikkun Olam*, I made a commitment to do what I could to make what parts of this community gem better than I found them. I have done my best to honor the library’s history, the commitment and work of volunteers, and the generosity of our community overall. Of course, this has had its challenges but has brought far more joy and growth.

There are two other bright suns setting from the Board at this time: Dennis Bumgarner and Andrea Cohen are completing two terms of service, and my, how each has served! Dennis served as Secretary and produced minutes for Board Meetings in a way that makes it very easy to track anything that occurred throughout the year. Andrea served as Chair of the Nominating Committee and Coordinator

of the Brick Campaign. She has helped bring on new Board Members and elevated the Brick Campaign to new heights – see the Honorary Brick Path she coordinated at the southwest front of the library. Both will be missed sorely, as both continue to give extra time to the various support services requested of the Board, in addition to their specific roles. We are grateful!

Harriet Neal has been a stalwart supporter as Vice–Chair of the Board of Directors. Frankly, I relied on her knowledge, leadership skills, gentility, and professional demeanor, and consulted on every decision that had to be made. Harriet is not leaving the board but is stepping down as Vice–Chair and moving to another productive role, PCL Board Treasurer.

As I have noted in previous articles, the concept of library in Placitas has a long history, including a few shelves in the narrow halls of the two–room school house in the Village of Placitas and now a newly–enlarged space for meetings, and community involvement. Opening of the current iteration of PCL rose from the hearts and minds of dedicated volunteers, mostly retired professionals from varied backgrounds and perspectives, who were willing to crawl on their hands and knees to lay donated carpeting in the Children’s Area, and to climb high to rebuild the roof to prevent leaks! What a dream come true! Thank you to our generous community!

PCL has been a collective and communal gem. At one point, prior to the COVID pandemic, PCL boasted approximately 105 volunteers serving in a variety of roles. I have been honored to work with and am immensely grateful for the support of the staff and volunteers, including the Board of Directors, who continue to share their time, talents, and treasure with this little gem in the hills of New Mexico. I am exceedingly grateful to the many volunteers for fabulous art exhibits, environmentally–friendly landscaping, the wide array of Adult and Children’s educational programming, careful maintenance of the building and surrounds, our award–worthy newsletter, persistent and user–friendly website, efficient room scheduling, financially–beneficial donated book processes, exceptionally reliable Help Desk coordination, and so on (please accept my apology for any support I have missed – any omission was unintentional). Also, I am grateful for the support of talented and generous staff who make the constantly growing operations of the library look easy. I know it is not. Because of its collective and communal nature, this library has confounded many; mostly, we have jumped in to understand who we were, who we are, what we need to do to become who we aspire to be. We LOVE our community.

The sun also rises and I am excitedly looking forward to the future Board and tenure of the new Executive Committee – the new Sunrise. Knowing I wanted to set as the sun does and exit as Chair, I saw a need for further library professionalism and growth; thus, I asked Lynnette Fields, a retired librarian and PCL volunteer, if she would be willing to serve as Chair; I was grateful when she said “yes.” The incoming Vice–Chair, Nancy Southern, brings a wide range of professionalism in communication and relationship–building. Jillian Gonzales has agreed to serve as Board Secretary. Jillian grew up in the Village of Placitas, her father served on the Board of Directors, and her daughter currently serves as a Help Desk volunteer – so, we see it is a family affair! Jillian brings a wide range of expertise in intercultural inclusion and relationship–building. Harriet Neal has stepped up as Treasurer, lending her background in finance to organize and present our finances clearly and concisely; she is helping the Board understand and fill its fiduciary responsibility. What a mighty sunrise we have to which we may look forward. After all, we are growing in many directions and becoming even stronger to support and be supported by community, perhaps to become a brighter GEM! As the sun sets on my tenure chairing the Board of Directors for PCL, I look forward to the rise of the new. I will remember my time as Chair with fondness and gratitude. I look forward to seeing and working with everyone.

In Peace, Love, Wisdom, and Harmony,
Thank you for the days,

~ Doris

PLACITAS COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Volunteer Coffee & Connect

SATURDAY, JAN 14 and FEB 11 at 9:00 AM

Gather to learn more about volunteering at the library every 2nd Saturday of the month at 9:00 AM. Meet our volunteers, enjoy coffee and snacks, and learn about all the different ways you could be part of the library.



Artwork by studiostock at www.freepik.com



Happy New Year! I hope you and yours enjoyed the season of feasting and light. As we begin 2023 and you are making resolutions, I hope you will consider a reading challenge.

A reading challenge is a goal you set for your reading over a certain amount of time. The goal can be related to the number of books you read; a set of themes, genres, or types of books you read; or even how often you read. Many readers take on a challenge because it's a fun way to add variety to their favorite hobby and ensure they read diverse books and authors. There is no one-size-fits-all reading challenge; they vary in style, intensity, and purpose – which is why it's important to find or create a challenge that works for you. A reading challenge is a great way to grow as a reader and push your boundaries. Book lovers often use reading challenges as motivation to try something new or just because they want to read more.

In looking into reading challenges, I found a couple of websites that you might find inspirational and interesting if you are creating a challenge for yourself. One is Audry Fryer. She offers 22 reasons why you should do a reading challenge:



Her 2023 Reading Challenge provides a different theme each month. You can [sign up](#) for free at her website to receive book lists each month to complete a year-long reading challenge.

Kian How challenged himself to read 52 books in 2019 and succeeded. Read about his reading challenge experience [here](#). He says some of the benefits of completing a reading challenge are:

- It builds discipline
- You will discover new interests/paths
- It improves focus
- You will be a positive influence

There are many exciting books coming out. Our Tech Services team is hard at work getting them ordered and processed. Come to the library and find your next great read!

Happy reading!

~ Mary Sue

SOCIAL JUSTICE

DISCUSSION GROUP

Meet to discuss issues of social justice and how we can make a difference in the world today!

Please contact Anne at annegrey3@gmail.com for more information

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1 PM in the Collin Meeting Room

Artwork created by philsuperstar at www.freepik.com



What Price a Human

INDIAN CAPTIVES IN NEW MEXICO

JANUARY 21 | 2 PM

presented by Robert Torrez



What Price a Human: Indian Captives in New Mexico

Join Robert Torrez on Saturday, January 21 at 2 PM in the Gracie Lee Room as he reviews the practice of incorporating Indian captives into Hispano households in Spanish, Mexican, and Territorial-era New Mexico. He will review the process by which Indian captives were acquired and how they were valued — ranging from those who were regarded as adopted children, to those who were considered chattel to be purchased, sold, and even given away as inheritances and as parts of commercial trade.

Robert J. Torrez was born and raised in northern New Mexico. He received his undergraduate and graduate education at New Mexico Highlands and University of New Mexico, and served as the New Mexico State Historian from 1987 until his retirement in December 2000. In addition to the more than three hundred columns he has published under his *Voices from the Past* byline in *Round the Roundhouse*, he is author of dozens of scholarly and popular articles in regional and national publications, and contributed to nearly two dozen anthologies, including a recent New Mexico history textbook used in New Mexico schools. He has a special interest in the judicial systems of Spanish, Mexican, and Territorial-era New Mexico, Spanish-Indian relations, and land grant issues.

He is an award-winning author of *UFO's Over Galisteo*, *New Mexico in 1876-1877: A Newspaperman's View*, *Rio Arriba: A New Mexico County* (with co-author Robert Trapp), *Myth of the Hanging Tree: Stories of Crime and Punishment in Territorial New Mexico*, and *Voices from the Past: The Comanche Raid of 1776 and Other Tales of New Mexico History*.

This event is sponsored by the Historical Society of New Mexico.

UNDERSTANDING ABSTRACT ART

WITH DIANNA SHOMAKER

JANUARY 22 | 2 PM

This hands-on activity will lead to ideas that can become a guide for understanding an abstract's internal consistency and grace. Abstract art doesn't have to be your love, but just stand back and ask some questions that will illuminate what's worthy within it. Bring an open mind and explore a new way of appreciating art.

Dianna's art will be on exhibit from Jan 7-Feb 2 in the Gracie Lee Community Room. The public is invited to a reception for the artist, 5-6:30 PM, Friday, Jan 20.

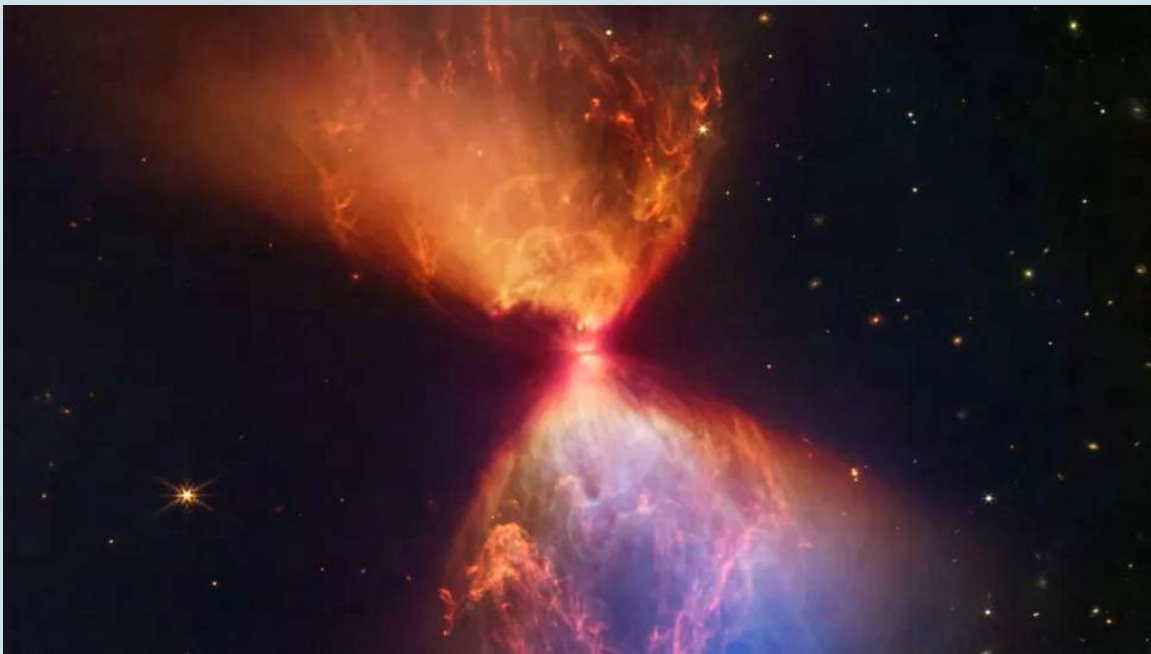


James Webb Space Telescope

Seeing to the Beginning of Time!

by Tony Hull

We are envisioning the universe as never before with the spectacular early images from the James Webb Space Telescope. This is not just an ordinary telescope. Nobelist John Mather describes it as the most complex science machine in the history of humanity! The Hubble telescope has been a miracle and Webb is even more so. Envisioned even before Hubble flew and recognizing that it must be much larger, it was called in 1989 The Large Deployable, then The Next Generation Space Telescope. An unwritten rule about NASA going to space is that the next mission must be *at least 10x better than the prior*. Webb is *“the first telescope to see the first light of the first galaxies in the emerging universe!”*



Webb revealed this fiery cosmic hourglass concealing a fledgling star, or protostar, at its heart. The blazing scene had been previously hidden from telescopes by a dense, dark cloud of gas and dust and is only visible in infrared light. [Image credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, and STScI, Joseph DePasquale (STScI), Alyssa Pagan (STScI), Anton M. Koekemoer (STScI)]

While there is some overlap of science between Webb and Hubble, there are profound differences. To peek into the earliest moments of the formation of the universe means looking back in time. Since the universe is expanding, that means all the phenomena we know (for example, the spectral emission of the elements), will be seen at a longer wavelength than if the universe was not expanding. This means that Webb must be optimized for the infrared, not the usual visual part of the wavelength spectrum. And infrared energy is the same as heat energy. For the telescope not to see itself, it must be very cold, just 35° Kelvin above absolute zero temperature. Because it will look into the early and far reaches of the universe, it must be very large.



When Webb turned its attention to the iconic Pillars of Creation, the observatory showed the famous dust clouds in remarkable detail. Famously photographed by Hubble in 1995, Webb's new photograph reveals hundreds of previously invisible stars, some born only a few hundred thousand years ago. [Image credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, STScI; J. DePasquale, A. Koekemoer, A. Pagan (STScI)]

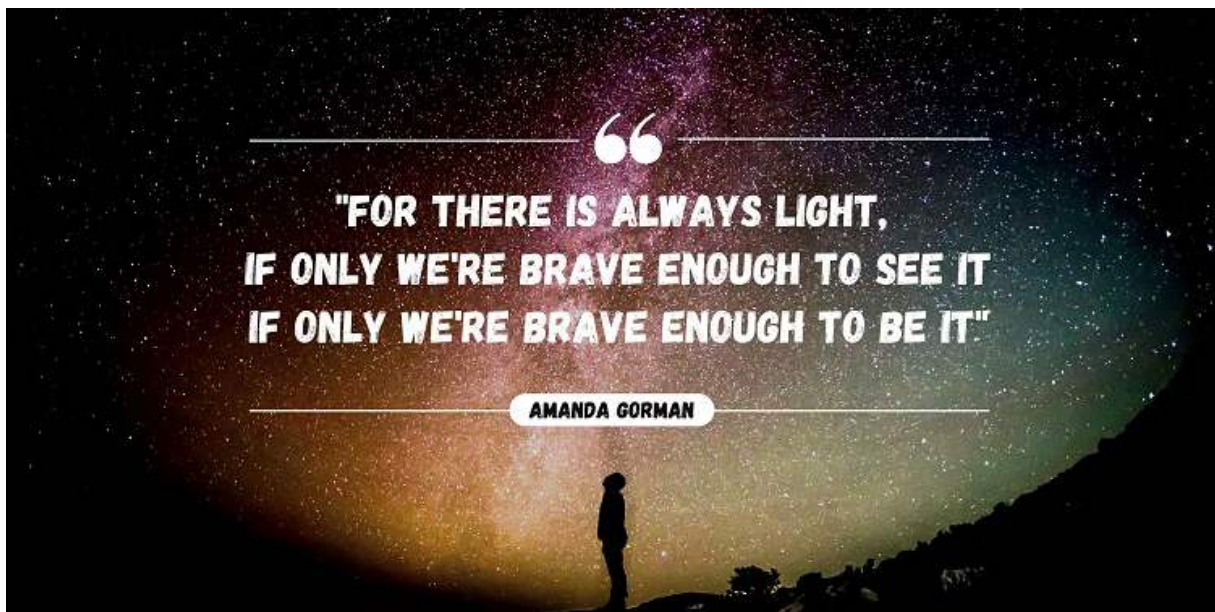
The challenges were huge in making this very large telescope — with a mirror much larger than can be accommodated with a monolithic mirror — even by the world's largest launch vehicle, and must be operated with stability at a very cold temperature. This was a challenge on the level of the Apollo mission to the moon. Risk factors were huge, and failure was not an option!



Webb's high-resolution infrared camera revealed never-before-seen young stars in the Tarantula Nebula. The nebula has a similar chemical composition to star-forming regions from when the cosmos was just a few billion years old, giving astronomers a unique view into how stars formed in the relatively early universe. (Image credit: NASA, ESA, CSA, STScI, Webb ERO Production Team)

Tony Hull left NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory to lead a key effort on Webb, going to East Bay to be Director of the team of 60 experts that would polish all the mirrors over a 5-year period. These were mirrors unlike any made before. Rather than using glass-like materials, they were made of beryllium, a gray metal stronger than steel, lighter than aluminum, and exhibiting great stiffness and thermal stability at these low temperatures—yet brittle and poisonous. At one time, the mirrors were regarded to be the highest risk on Webb.

On January 28 at 2 PM, as part of *Placitas Skies: A Cosmic Experience*, Tony will walk us through both the exquisite science and images coming from Webb, and the back story of dancing under the national limelight in the unique optical polishing endeavor that had over 300,000 opportunities to fail. When starting this role, having sold his house in Southern California, he bought his present home in Placitas. He says this was his refuge and hope at times during the ongoing, grueling 80-hour work weeks. Tony will also give us a glimpse of the next great telescope envisioned for 2050, a topic of his present lectures in U.S. and Europe.

The poster features a vibrant image of the Carina Nebula (NGC 3324) in the background. The text is arranged as follows:

**PLACITAS SKIES:
A COSMIC
EXPERIENCE**

**JANUARY 28
10 AM - 10 PM**

We invite you to explore
the marvelous skies over
Placitas during the day and
our wonderful dark nights

**CELEBRATING OUR
GLORIOUS SKY**

Image: The Carina Nebula (NGC 3324), captured in infrared light by NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, reveals previously invisible areas of star birth for the first time

Placitas Skies: A Cosmic Experience, begins at 10 AM on Saturday, January 28. This day will offer a host of programs for all ages exploring the marvelous skies over Placitas, during both the day and our wonderful dark nights.

Beginning at 10 AM and lasting through the day, astronomer Tony Hull will teach us to track the sun's shadow along the ground using a gnomon, a simple stick projecting upwards. This simple, powerful device Tony has analyzed in his work in cultural astronomy, may well have been what the builders of great public architecture (for example, The Great Pyramids and Chaco Canyon's Pueblo Bonito) used to align the buildings accurately to the cardinal directions, thus referencing the sky. To help you follow the sun, there will be opportunities for you to paint smooth 2-4" stones either before, or during the day. You could even find your own stones and paint them at home.

As a major part of the library's *Placitas Skies* theme, the Collin Room will feature an artistic and educational exhibit showing significant elements of our everyday environment—such as clouds during all hours, and stars at night that many of us take for granted. Yet, everyday occurrences of clouds seem to be changing while the stars seem constant! What about our sunrises, sunsets, and moonrises? The beauty seen against our Sandia Mountains or Cabezon Peak backdrops is seldom equaled anywhere on Earth!

Meteorites will be available for everyone to touch and examine, allowing us to connect to these amazing objects from space. While the likelihood that a major meteor might land near Placitas like that producing the Barringer Crater in Arizona may be small, its effects would be devastating! This exhibit will last from early January through all of February and be available during normal library hours.

Explora will join us at 11 AM for *Exploring the Universe*. Activities will include: Cloud in a Bottle, a Model of the Distance in the Solar System, a Gravity Well, Creating a Moon Crater, and Finding the Hidden Moon (using binoculars). Both children and adults will find this Explora program fascinating. The Pearl Children's Room will offer activities throughout the day, including rock painting for the gnomon.

At 1 PM, The Albuquerque Astronomy Society (TAAS) will set up telescopes outside the library to allow safe viewing of the sun, the details of which very few people ever see. Features such as sunspots and sunstorms *that affect everything we do* will begin to make more sense. Astronomy is not just another word we hear in school, but may be the most mysterious element in our daily life! Every day, the sun and moon rise along the eastern horizon, yet closer examination of the universe reveals mysteries that scientists have yet to explain!

At 2 PM, astronomer Tony Hull will present, "*The James Webb Telescope: Seeing to the Beginning of Time!*" Tony will walk us through both the exquisite science and images coming from Webb, and the back story of dancing under the national limelight in the unique optical polishing endeavor that had over 300,000 opportunities to fail.

To top it all off, at 6 PM, members of TAAS will put on a Star Party at the library. The parking lot may have as many as 30 sophisticated telescopes aimed at a variety of night sky phenomena. We will see the richness of the surface of the moon, galaxies, and the light which originated from before Columbus discovered the New World! Please dress warmly and enter the driveway carefully. You will want to turn off your headlights as soon as possible. Volunteers will be on hand to direct parking with red flashlights to help maintain night vision. To ease the night chill, hot cider and cookies will be available inside the library.

You will not want to miss *Placitas Skies: A Cosmic Experience* on January 28 from 10 AM – 10 PM!

PLACITAS Community LIBRARY

invites you to a special AM to PM event:

Placitas Skies

A Cosmic Experience

SAT, JAN 28
10 AM to 10 PM

ALL DAY
THE GNOMON
with astronomer Tony Hull
out front, by red wall
Bring a 2-4" stone if
you'd like to track
the sun's shadow!

11 AM
EXPLORA!
EXPLORING THE UNIVERSE
Gracie Lee Community Room
Cloud in a Bottle; Solar System
Model; Gravity Well; Moon
Craters; Find the Hidden
Moon with binoculars
(provided)

1 PM
SOLAR VIEWING
with TAAS telescopes!
front courtyard
2 PM
SEEING TO THE
BEGINNING OF TIME:
JAMES WEBB TELESCOPE
with astronomer
Tony Hull

6 PM
STAR PARTY
with TAAS
★ 20+ telescopes!
★ Please TURN OFF
headlights
★ Only RED lights
permitted

ALL DAY
DISPLAYS
★ Our Glorious Skies -
Collin Meeting Room
★ Annular Eclipse -
10/14/23, 10 AM Placitas
★ Total Eclipse
2024



453 hwy 165 | www.placitaslibrary.com | 505.867.3355



Investigating Ghosts of New Mexico

with Benjamin Radford

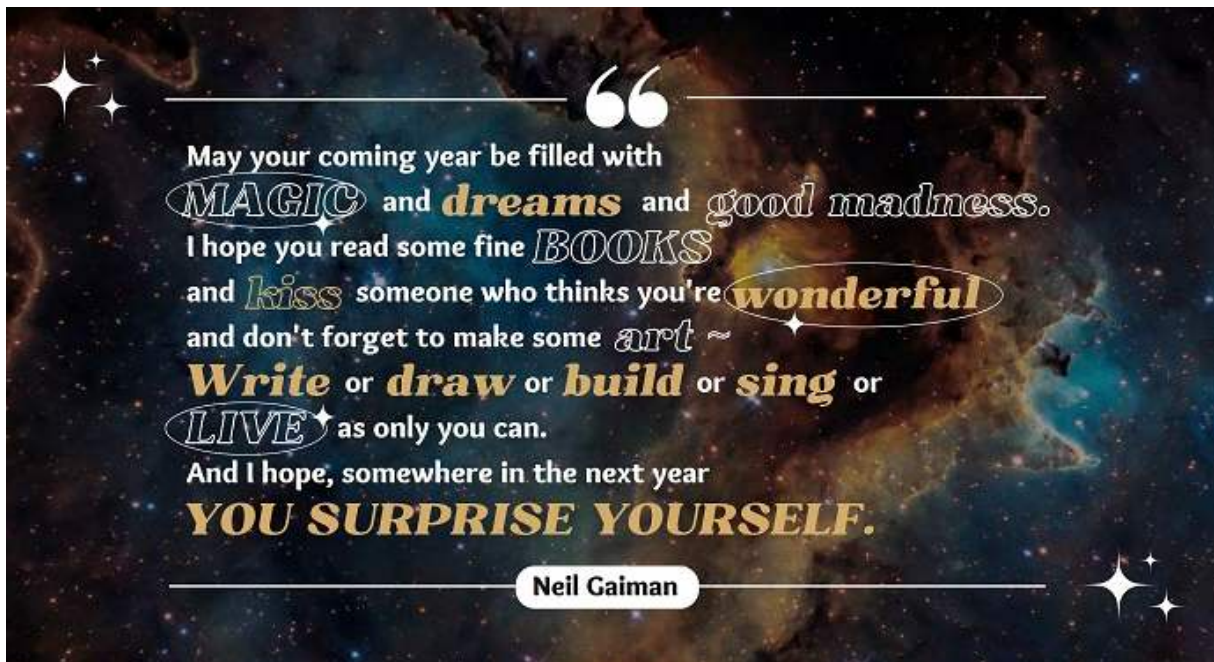
FEBRUARY 4 | 2 PM



Join folklorist and researcher Benjamin Radford on Saturday, February 4 at 2 PM in the Gracie Lee Room as he describes his first-hand investigations into some of New Mexico's most famous and bizarre ghosts, from Albuquerque's famous KiMo Theatre, to the Santa Fe courthouse spirit, to the legend of La Llorona. How much of these stories is fact, and how much is fiction? Come find out!

Benjamin Radford is the long-time deputy editor of *Skeptical Inquirer* magazine and a Research Fellow with the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, a non-profit educational organization. Over the past twenty years, he has investigated dozens of mysterious and unexplained phenomena including crop circles, ghosts, lake monsters, exorcisms, and psychics. He is author of fifteen books including *Mysterious New Mexico*, *Tracking the Chupacabra*, and *Investigating Ghosts: The Scientific Search for Spirits*.

This presentation is sponsored by the Historical Society of New Mexico.





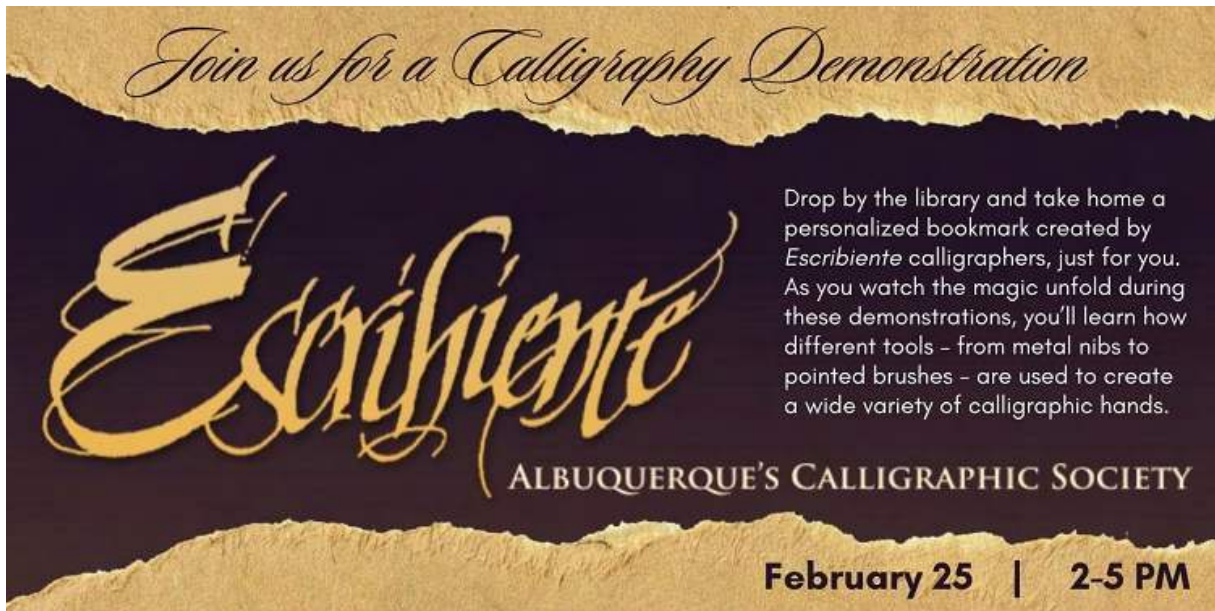
Historian Nancy R. Bartlit brings to life the voices of people who experienced WWII in the Pacific or in New Mexico. From teaching in and of Japan, to lifelong living in and teaching Los Alamos history (60+ years), Ms. Bartlit continues to gather stories of Japanese Americans and New Mexicans. Sharing their similar travels, she earns people's trust to re-tell their stories and to connect each to the larger known confrontation. Through her book, lectures, preservation work, and publishing, she helps instruct the war's history by sharing New Mexico's unique contributions to stop it.

Ms. Bartlit's presentation on February 18 at 2 PM, "*Silent Voices of World War II in the Pacific and in New Mexico*," will illustrate five aspects of New Mexico encounters with Japan. These include the Bataan Death March which 2,000 New Mexican National Guardsmen endured, and the Navajo Code Talkers whose innovative use of their language created an unbreakable code that was critical to our success in the Pacific. She will also highlight voices from the shameful history of the Japanese internment camp in Santa Fe, the secret Manhattan Project, and questions around the reason for the Japanese surrender.

Nancy Bartlit is well-known as a speaker, author, historic preservationist, and publisher on topics including WWII experiences in New Mexico. She has also travelled widely, visiting many WWII sites, and presided over the purchase of the cottage Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer lived in during WWII. She championed the Art in Public Places bronze, iconic statues of "Oppie," and General Leslie R. Groves. She was honored with the Los Alamos Historical Society's highest award and is a Los Alamos Living Treasure. She founded Pajarito Press LLC, and holds an M.A., International Communications (UNM) and B.A., History (Smith College). She is a former *sensei* in Sendai. Her book *Silent Voices of World War II: New Mexico's Fierce Encounters with Japan* (new edition) will be available in 2023. For more information, visit <https://nancybartlit.com> or <https://pajaritopress.com>.

This program is sponsored by the Historical Society of New Mexico.

Join us for a Calligraphy Demonstration



Drop by the library and take home a personalized bookmark created by *Escribiente* calligraphers, just for you. As you watch the magic unfold during these demonstrations, you'll learn how different tools – from metal nibs to pointed brushes – are used to create a wide variety of calligraphic hands.

ALBUQUERQUE'S CALLIGRAPHIC SOCIETY

February 25 | 2-5 PM



WOW! What a November morning for New Mexico gardening! It started out a bit on the chilly side, but we—all 13 of us—warmed up with our “efforts,” and the shining sun. In a true team effort, we accomplished all of the planned to-do items, and then some! We:

- Planted 11 plant specimens donated by Dennis Bumgarner, and from my and Linda Castrone's garden
- Removed/thinned numerous grasses from the High Country/Front Garden
- Weeded near the brick walk, and weeded/removed grasses from the East Garden
- Resurfaced the eroded labyrinth walkway
- Removed some chamisa and other deep-rooted natives from the leach field

Many thanks to the entire team of Landscape Committee volunteers for a very productive morning.

And many thanks to Karen Cox for taking on the effort to prepare identification labels for many of the PCL plantings...coming in 2023!

Volunteers: Karen Cox, Dawn Foster, Wayne Gordon, Donnie Hall, Linda Hardin, Linda & Furman Kelley, Rebecca Nolda & Gary Gima, Sue Ortiz, Reta Price, Betty Vreeke, and Stephanie & Walt Witkowski



DIANNA SHOMAKER

A RETROSPECTIVE

RECEPTION: JANUARY 20, 5-6:30 PM
EXHIBIT: JANUARY 7 - FEBRUARY 9



On January 7, PCL's Art Committee presents its second *Legacy Exhibition* featuring the work of artist and longtime Placitas resident Dianna Shomaker. Displayed in the Gracie Lee Community Room, the exhibit will feature a wide selection of Shomaker's oil, acrylic, and encaustic paintings, including both abstract and figurative works. Some of the work has been loaned by private collectors while others will be available for purchase with a percentage of the sale price benefiting the library.

The public is invited to a special reception for the artist, 5-6:30 pm, Friday, January 20, where she will speak about her work and her serpentine path from nursing student to prolific, award-

winning painter, master of encaustic monotypes, and enthusiastic participant in the community's art scene.

According to Anne Frost, coordinator of Adult Education Programs, the public is also invited to a free, hands-on learning program on Sunday, January 22 at 2 PM, in the library entitled "*Understanding Abstract Art.*" Shomaker promises a focus on "*understanding the internal consistency and grace present in abstract art*" and encourages attendees to bring an open mind and a willingness to explore a new way of appreciating art. No advance registration is necessary.



The Love of Calligraphy

Reception: February 17, 5-6:30 PM
Exhibit: February 4 - March 16

Escribiente

Escribiente, Albuquerque's Calligraphy Society, celebrates its 45th anniversary with a member exhibition of calligraphic art. "The Love of Calligraphy" showcases a diversity of styles and techniques from delicate ornate flourishing to abstract mixed media art.

ALBUQUERQUE'S CALLIGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Drop by the library February 25, 2-4 PM, and take home a personalized bookmark created by Escribiente calligraphers.



"Desert Colors" by Alfons Schuster

NEW MEXICO: SENSE OF PLACE

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

MAGICAL, ENCHANTED, COMPLEX, AND AT TIMES TRAGIC - NEW MEXICO'S HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT IS AS DIVERSE AS ITS INHABITANTS.

WE INVITE ARTISTS TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR INTERPRETATION AND SENSE OF PLACE IN THEIR CHOSEN MEDIUM.

Accepting submissions
through Feb 5



KIDS' COLUMN

by Nora Timmons, Children's Program Coordinator

As part of *Placitas Skies: A Cosmic Experience* on January 28, the Children's Committee is providing a visit from the Explora Science Center & Children's Museum from 11 AM–12 PM. Come join us for several STEM activities including:

- Cloud in a Bottle
- Model of the Distance in the Solar System
- Gravity Well
- Moon Crater Creation
- Hidden Moon (using binoculars)

Explora provides activities for children and parents to work together, learn, and have fun! Children can also help to create a gnomon by painting a 2–4" smooth stone. You can paint the stone at the library or bring one from home already painted. Tony Hull, one of our wonderful astronomers, will show both children and adults where to place the stones so we can follow the path of the sun throughout the day. We will also have meteorites and meteor-wrongs for you to explore on loan from the Natural History Museum.



In February, we have reserved 2 dates to keep in mind. The first is Saturday, February 11, for a Valentine's Day Party with stories and activities from 1–3 PM. More details to follow.

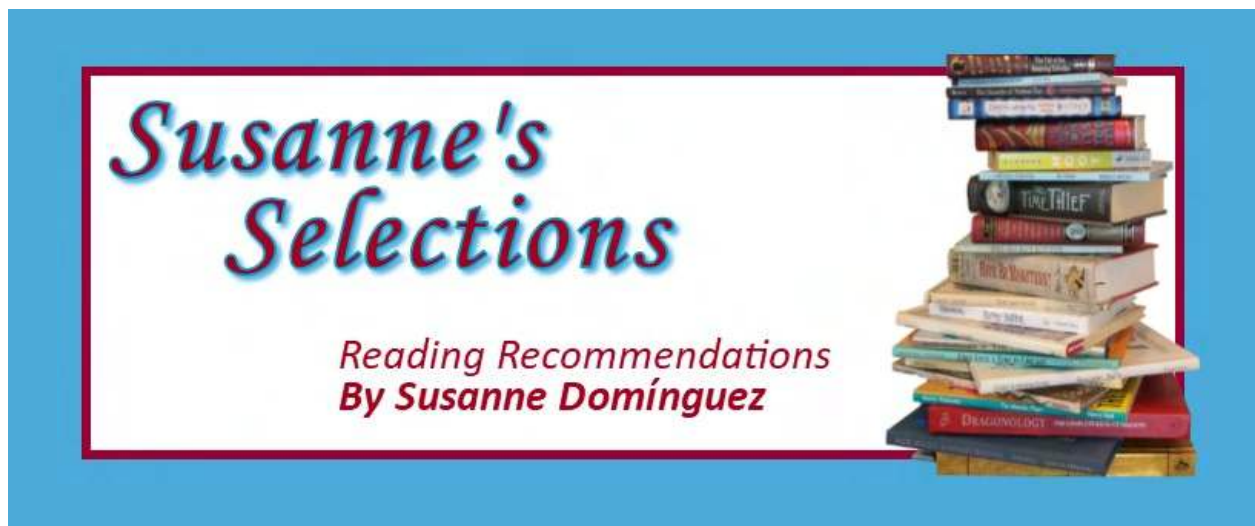


The second is Tuesday, February 14 from 10 AM–12 PM for a Kids Day Out field trip to the library. Once again the details for these two activities are still in the planning stage, so check your email for updates. Your friends, neighbors, and fellow parents can send their email to

childrens@placitaslibrary.com. Please pass this info on so they can also receive reminders.

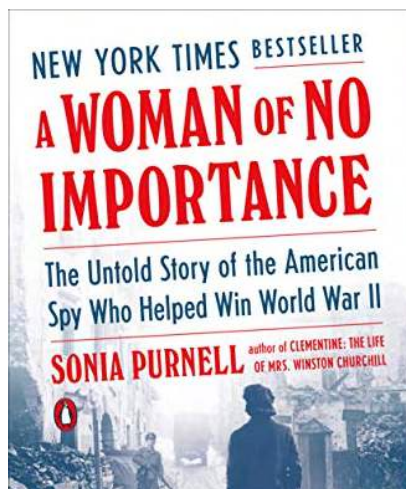


We enjoy working with your children and appreciate your assistance in keeping them on track while in the library and completing activities. It is always good for your children to check out books to read together at home. Funding for the library is based not only on the number of visitors and programs, but also book circulation. Thank you for all your support in 2021!



Available for e-Checkout!

The titles in *Susanne's Selections* have been added to our [Online Catalog](#) (which you can access with your library card).



A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II

by Sonia Purnell

"I'd give anything to get my hands on that limping Canadian bitch," one of her enemies, Klaus Barber, known as The Butcher of Lyon, reportedly said. Thousands of wanted posters were taped to poles with her picture on it and the caption: 'The Enemy's Most Dangerous Spy. We must find and destroy her.'

There are numerous excellent books written about intrepid women spies of World War II, such as Nancy Wake, Odette Sansom, Vera Atkins,



and Marie–Madeline Fourcade. This electrifying book about Virginia Hall, who was an American citizen, is especially informative since it's based on newly–discovered information gleaned by the author, Sonia Purnell.

I'm not fond of the title. The author is understandably outraged about the treatment of women during the WWII era, but that unfortunately was the prevailing attitude regarding women. Readers need to consider the historical context. The primary focus of the book is what Virginia accomplished amidst overwhelming obstacles and the inconceivable, breathtaking challenges she experienced and overcame, especially since she had a prosthetic wooden leg. She was one of the most important and effective assets Britain had during the war. Fortitude, multi–linguistic abilities, perseverance – she possessed it all! Not only was she the first Allied woman deployed behind enemy lines, Virginia established and controlled extensive French resistance spy networks throughout France, including training men how to sabotage German communications and plant explosives on roads. Her network consisted of approximately 1,500 people.

Part of the espionage organization created by Winston Churchill and known as the “Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare,” she worked for the British Secret Service (British Special Operations Executive Services) from 1939–1942, and for the Office of Strategic Service (OSS, the precursor to the CIA) from 1943 until the end of the war. For the next fifteen years Virginia was employed by the CIA.

After the war, the U.S., the United Kingdom, and France recognized her remarkable contributions. President Truman planned to honor Virginia at a public White House ceremony, but she declined. She wanted to keep her low profile and avoid the limelight. Virginia was the only civilian woman honored with the Distinguished Service Cross, an award for heroism in World War II, which William Donovan, the legendary OSS chief, personally presented her. For her heroic actions in wartime France, France awarded her the highest honor their government awards a civilian, the Croix de Guerre.

Truly a heart–stopping and enlightening read about Virginia, spy craft, and WWII history. Don't miss it!

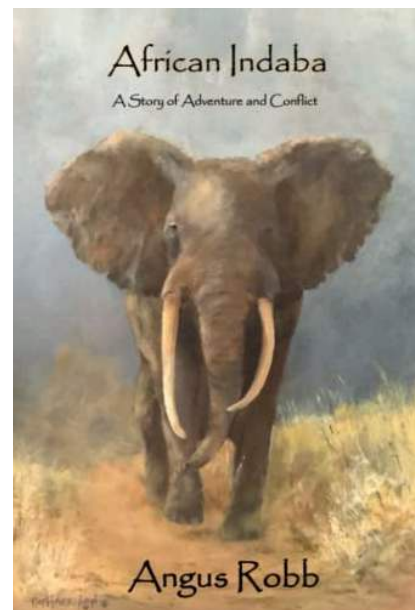
African Indaba: A Story of Adventure and Conflict

by Angus Robb

Robb has crafted a rich, compelling debut novel about friendship, loyalty, and justice. The story occurs from 1933 to 1964, primarily in southern Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) during the waning years of Britain's colonial rule. The protagonist, Rory MacKenzie, is the son of a Scottish refugee and a Boer mother.

Thrilled to accompany his grandfather, Oupa, on his very first safari, six–year–old Rory unfortunately witnesses the vicious attack and murder of his grandfather by Chola, a mystical elephant, known by the local populace as possessing magical powers. Inexplicably, Chola leaves Rory unharmed. Years later, Rory watches as Chola attacks his father, Callum, who had organized a hunt to avenge Oupa's death. And again, Chola ambles away from Rory, allowing him to live.

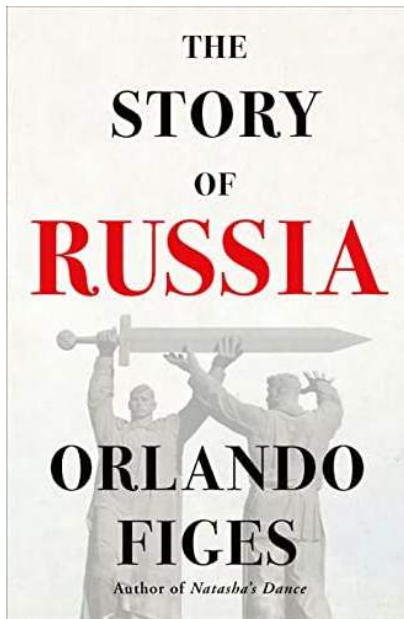
The rest of this riveting book chronicles Rory's life, from the challenges faced while attending a heartless boarding school in Scotland, to becoming an officer in the British military, weaving illuminating South African history along with it.



The masterful narrative shifts seamlessly between Callum, Rory, Chola, and James (Callum's trusted and dear friend), providing insight into each character.

An intriguing and perceptive read, I gained a deeper understanding of South Africa and the conflicts faced during the period of British colonialism. Together with Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Nyasaland (Malawi), and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), they formed British Central Africa. Rhodesia became a British colony in 1923 and gained independence in 1965.

Angus Robb was born and raised in various towns in Sub-Saharan Africa. He now lives in New Mexico. The elephant illustrations and book cover artwork were designed by Placitas artist Pat Harrison.



The Story of Russia

by Orlando Figes

"Contemporary Russian politics are too often analyzed without knowledge of the country's past."

I've admired Figes, writer extraordinaire and eminent Russian scholar, for years. A brilliant British historian and author of the outstanding books, *"The Crimean War: A History,"* *"Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia,"* and *"Just Send Me Word: A True Story of Love and Survival in the Gulag,"* his new book provides insight about this complex country, its "Russian Soul," and how Russia's thousand-year, intricate history has shaped it. Figes believes *"an understanding of the country's past is essential to make sense of the developments in Russia during the past thirty years."* He begins his commentary with Russia's creation in the 9th century, ending with the present time. Along with its diverse culture, he discusses how documented historical events have

been re-imagined into different versions of history and mythology, in order to legitimize the current ideology of the day and influence past history.

An informative and excellent analysis of both Vladimir Putin's governance and Russia, readers will find *"The Story of Russia"* an enriching read.

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