

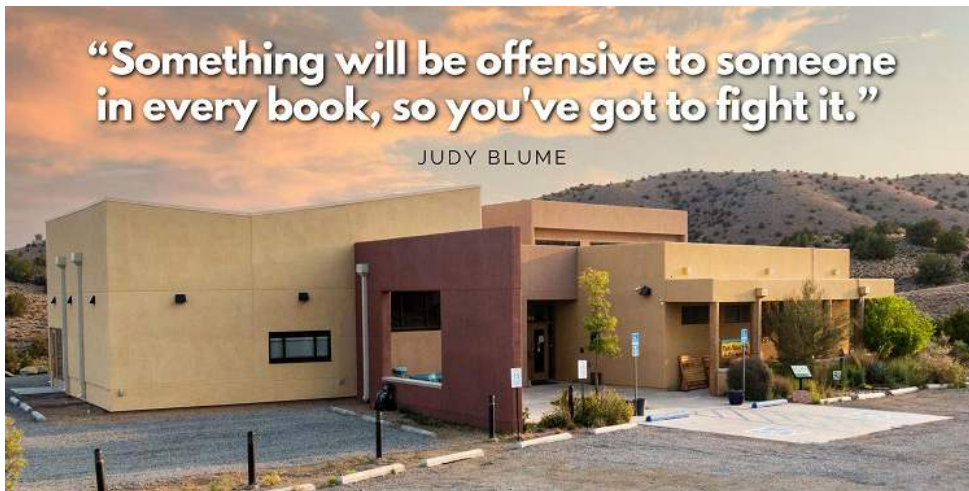
# PLACITAS *Community* LIBRARY



## NEWSLETTER SEPT/OCT 2025

**“Something will be offensive to someone  
in every book, so you've got to fight it.”**

JUDY BLUME



### **PLACITAS COMMUNITY LIBRARY HOURS**

**SUN: 1 - 4  
TUES: 10 - 7  
WED/THURS/SAT: 10 - 5**

### **ADULT PROGRAMS**

- **SEPT 5 (5:30 PM):** *Dance Out!* featuring Ken Grimes
- **SEPT 7 (9 AM-4 PM):** Placitas Garden Tour Open House and Placitas Community Library's (PCL) Fall Book and Media Sale
- **SEPT 13 (2 PM):** *Protecting Yourself from Financial Scams* with Kelley and Ric Tredwin of Altalune Wealth Advisors
- **OCT 4 (2 PM):** *Talking About Money: Can It Be Easier?* with Kelley and Ric Tredwin of Altalune Wealth Advisors
- **OCT 11 (2 PM):** *Roadside Geology of New Mexico* with Magdalena Donahue

## ARTISTS' RECEPTION & EXHIBITS

- **Through SEPT 21:** Placitas Garden Tour Artist Exhibition
- **OCT 3 (5 PM):** Artists' Reception: *Poetrees* (exhibit runs 9/23 – 10/13)

## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- **SUN, SEPT 7 (10 AM–3 PM, or until supplies run out):** Make Seed Balls
- **TUES, SEPT 9 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time – *Nature Whispers: A Journey Through Leaves and Trees*
- **SUN, SEPT 14 (1–3 PM):** *To Bee or Not to Bee* – Honeybees with beekeeper, Kamyar Rahimian
- **TUES, OCT 13 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time with children's author, Kyle Hollingsworth
- **SUN, OCT 26 (1–3 PM):** Annual Halloween Party with special guest KUPR DJ, Patrick Vanderwyden, who will play your musical requests while you dance in your Halloween costumes!

**HELP NEEDED!** PCL is inviting Santa to visit our children on **SUN, DEC 14 (1–3 PM)**. If you would like to be one of Santa's helpers, please leave a message for Nora at the library at (505)–867–3355.

## RECURRING EVENTS

- **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!
- **La Parranda: Club de Español** (Every Wed at 10 AM): Enjoy the opportunity to experience español with Diane Herrera Shepard and other guests. The Club is open to anyone who wants to learn, use, practice, or converse in Spanish.
- **Drumming Circle** (1st Sun of each month at 4 PM): Bring your own drum or use one of the many we have!



## NEWS FROM YOUR LIBRARY BOARD

By Lynnette Fields, PCL Board Chair

The PCL Sustainability Committee advises the Board on financial matters including fundraising and the library's investments. Sustainability for PCL is not just about cash resources. It is also about: increasing communication and relationships with current and prospective donors, maintaining a system of stewardship and financial accountability, and recruiting, training and managing a cadre of volunteers to operate the library, serve patrons, and manage events. To do all these things, PCL must continually enhance its relationship with all its constituents.

The quickest and most effective way to do this is to use the expertise of the professionals who have worked with customer relations over several decades and who have developed online programs to manage all aspects of these elements of sustainability. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) refers to a comprehensive strategy and technology used by not-for-profits to manage and analyze interactions with donors, volunteers, and patrons. The goal is to improve customer relationships, increase loyalty, and ultimately support and drive financial growth, outcomes that support the goals of our recently completed three-year strategic plan.

The Sustainability Committee reviewed four CRM providers and chose Bloomerang to recommend to the Board as the CRM provider that best fits the needs of PCL. The Board approved the proposal at the June Board meeting and began negotiations with Bloomerang in late June. We signed a subscription agreement in early July.

A CRM Implementation Committee was formed and is charged with getting us started and making decisions on data migration, data input, and general set-up of the CRM. The Implementation Committee met with a Bloomerang representative on July 8 for our initial meeting to get the ball

rolling. We hope to have the CRM functional by early November. I will keep you posted on our progress.

### Strategic Planning

Implementation of our Strategic Plan continues to move forward. Progress made since the last report:

#### Goal 1: Create a Library Resource Center

- Currently working on determining the physical location of the Resource Center
- Lynne continues to evaluate resources to be included in the Resource Center

#### Goal 2: Create a patron technology needs assessment

- Lynne is continuing work on the patron technology needs assessment

#### Goal 3: Streamline operational processes to grow PCL's mission services

- The Management Team has almost completed work on all Committee chair job descriptions and volunteer job descriptions, and are currently getting job descriptions signed and turned in to the Library Director. Procedures for maintaining job descriptions have been established. Job descriptions will also be used in volunteer recruitment.
- A volunteer exit survey and a volunteer satisfaction survey were presented to the Management Team at the August meeting. The surveys will be discussed in depth at the September meeting.

#### Goal 4: Deepen the value of our reciprocal partnerships with donors and community partner

- Work on a prospectus for fundraising is in progress
- CRM will be instrumental in this goal and goal 5

#### Goal 5: Enhance marketing communications

- Work continues on identifying community partners



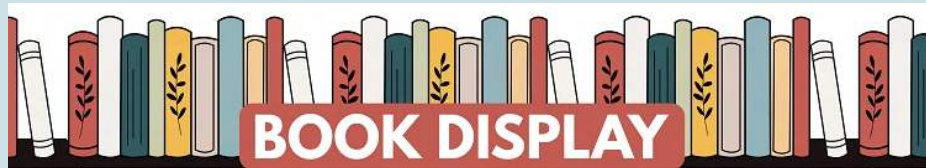
Library  
**BOARD  
OF  
DIRECTORS**

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

**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS:**  
**THURS, SEPT 18, 6:00 PM**  
**THURS, OCT 16, 6:00 PM**



***We Have a Few New Items!!!!!!***



### **OPRAH'S BOOK CLUB**

Each month we pull a selection of books to put on display from Oprah's complete list of 117 books from two decades of her book club. Come check one out!!!!



**GetSetUp**

GetSetUp is a new database provided to us by the New Mexico State Library. This database includes free classes and resources on topics such as technology, finance, health and wellness, lifestyle, and many more. This database can be found in our Online Catalog under Electronic Resources on our website at <https://placitaslibrary.com>.

All the best,  
*Lynne*

**BANNED BOOKS  
WEEK** OCT. 5-11, 2025



**~~CENSORSHIP~~  
is so 1984**

**READ FOR  
YOUR RIGHTS**

**ALA.ORG/BBOOKS**  
ALA American Library Association





**KUPR 99.9 FM**  
from the **Heart** of Placitas  
connecting communities

The  
*Placitas*  
Artists  
Series

**PLACITAS Community LIBRARY**



**YOU'RE INVITED TO BOOGIE AT**

**DANCE  
OUT!**



**FRIDAY, 9/5/25**

**Drop In 5:30 - 7:00 PM**

**CLUB GLCR**

Gracie Lee Community Room  
at Placitas Community Library

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**JUST COME AND DANCE  
AND MOVE TO THE MUSIC!**

**FEATURING:**

**Music provided by  
KEN GRIMES  
from 89.9 KUPR**

ALL AGES (ADULTS & CHILDREN). ALL STYLES.  
WITH PARTNERS. WITHOUT PARTNERS.  
NO COVER CHARGE. NO RESERVATIONS.



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**SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Artwork created by pikasuperstar at www.freepik.com



**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](mailto:annegrey3@gmail.com) for more information

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



### **Help Desk Volunteers**

*by Dianne Gonano, Volunteer Coordinator*

Though not exactly hidden, the 30 dedicated volunteers who work at the Help Desk allow the library to be open to the public. These volunteers open and close the collection room and library building every working day, unless there is an off-hour meeting when the library meeting rooms have been booked. In those instances, a Help Desk volunteer checks out the meeting room key packet to the meeting organizer. With an average of 93 shifts a month, the library is open for 33 hours a week. The Help Desk volunteers keep the library open for over 1,700 hours a year.

Over 18,000 items were circulated by volunteers last year. This number does not include all the electronic resources, such as Libby e-books and Kanopy streaming. It is not just books that are checked out, but also DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, laptops, audiovisual equipment, museum passes, magazines, language kits, seeds, and more!

Outstanding customer service and interactions with all our patrons are central to the job. Patrons are greeted, and social interactions are the norm, making a positive interactive environment for both volunteers and our community.

Last year, approximately 300 new library cards were issued, and the job goes beyond just issuing a library card. Volunteers explain all the benefits that a new cardholder can access, but they also welcome new residents by acting as ambassadors for the library and the surrounding community, often highlighting the many opportunities Placitas offers – from nature to the Arts.

Sometimes, a long-time Placitas resident comes into the library for a meeting or an event and decides it's time to join the library. The volunteers are quick to update the new patron about the library services, including the electronic resources that are becoming more and more of a benefit from having a library card.

At times, you will hear a Help Desk worker proudly telling a new patron our story of operating the library largely on volunteers and how well it works for both the volunteers and the community.

The Help Desk helps patrons search the catalog, reserve materials, request new materials for the library, renew books, and much more. We also help visitors with their print, copy, scan, and fax needs. The library is one of the few places a Placitas resident can access these services locally. The Help Desk serves as support staff for art sales, lobby book sales, the donated books program, and signups for upcoming events, to name a few.

The Help Desk volunteers are the front line and at many times the face of the library. Duties vary on any given day. Our Help Desk volunteers adapt easily and are natural problem solvers. It is not unusual for a volunteer to assist a patron in applying for a job online, printing out resumes and boarding passes, or directing visitors to the correct meeting room. It is the central place for library operations. Through all the long hours and hard work, the Help Desk volunteers help us live up to our motto:

**Una Placitas Para Todos- A Place for Everyone**



PLACITAS Community LIBRARY  
**DONATED BOOKS TEAM**

invites you to *leaf* through our selection at

Used PCL's FALL  
BOOK + MEDIA  
SALE

Sept 7  
9 - 4

Featuring:

**FREE WILL PRICING!**

1000s!

BOOKS

DVDs

PUZZLES

CDs

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DRUMMING  
CIRCLE



**JOIN US!**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF  
EACH MONTH AT 4 PM**

**Bring your own drum or use  
one of the many we have!**

\*Children are welcomed but parents should be  
aware this is an adult, meditation-like experience

# CENSORSHIP

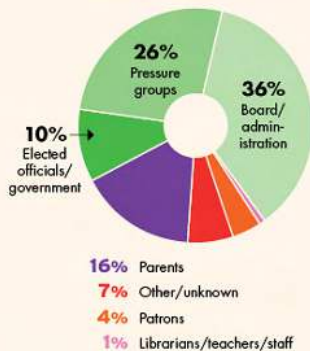
## BY THE NUMBERS



The American Library Association documented another year in an unabating deluge of efforts to censor library materials in 2024, continuing an extremist campaign to suppress access to books that began in 2021. Last year, **2,452 unique titles** were challenged, the third highest number ever documented by ALA and significantly exceeding the annual average of 273 unique titles over the period from 2001–2020. [Learn more at ala.org/lbbooks](https://ala.org/lbbooks)

### WHO CHALLENGES BOOKS?

Nearly **72% of censorship attempts** in 2024 were initiated by pressure groups and decision makers who have been swayed by them.



Statistics based on 5,813 book challenges.

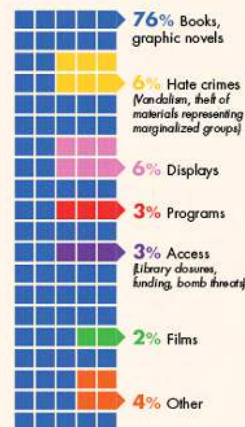
### WHERE DO CHALLENGES TAKE PLACE?



Statistics based on 804 cases with known locations.

### BOOKS AND BEYOND

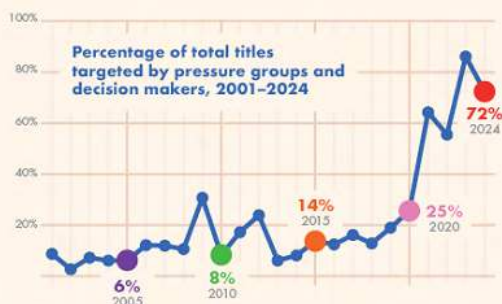
ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked **821 censorship attempts** in 2024. Here's the breakdown:




### CENSORSHIP TRENDS

The majority of library censorship can be tied to organized campaigns. Pressure groups and the administrators, board members, and elected officials they influenced targeted 4,190 total titles in 2024. From 2001–2020, this constituency attempted to remove an average of 46 titles per year.

CENSORSHIP STATISTICS COMPILED BY:  OFFICE FOR Intellectual Freedom American Library Association









invites you to attend

# FINANCE WORKSHOPS


presented by  
**KELLEY & RIC TREDWIN**  
ALTALUNE WEALTH ADVISORS

*Kelley and Ric will lead us through these programs. Currently, they are advising PCL about long-term investment strategies and building a legacy plan for our library. Their mission is to alleviate financial worry when it comes to investing, retiring, and sharing wealth. They want everyone to embrace a confident financial future. Join us to raise your financial awareness and savvy!*

## PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM FINANCIAL SCAMS


**SEPT 13 | 2 PM**



We are all worried about financial scams - with good reason. They are on the rise and are also getting more sophisticated. Why do people fall for them and how can you protect yourself from financial scams? The more you know, the more discerning and proactive you can be to protect your financial information and accounts.

## TALKING ABOUT MONEY: CAN IT BE EASIER?

**OCT 4 | 2 PM**



Conversations about money don't have to be nerve-wracking. Whether to parents, children, your employer, or potential donors, getting the courage to talk about money can be tough. Even facing your own internal thoughts about money can be hard. Avoidance all together is often our default setting. So let's get rid of some of that anxiety and make it a bit easier. We will spend this time talking tips and tools building confidence around money conversations.

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### Financial Tips from the Experts

PCL is lucky to have Kelley and Ric Tredwin on our team. Each year, they offer a couple of educational programs to facilitate financial awareness and savvy. The programs for this Fall will be:

#### Protecting Yourself from Financial Scams

Sept 13 at 2 PM

We are all worried about financial scams. And we have good reason to be nervous. We are wired to fall for scams, and they are on the rise and getting more sophisticated. We are going to talk about research on scams, why people fall for them, and how to protect yourself from financial scams. The more you know, the more discerning and proactive you can be to protect your financial information and your financial accounts.

#### Talking About Money: Can it be Easier?

October 4 at 2 PM

Conversations about money don't have to be so nerve-wracking. Whether you have to talk to parents, children, your employer, or potential donors for your favorite cause, getting the courage to talk about money can be tough. Even facing your own internal thoughts about money, and taking positive steps can be hard, and that only involves you! When you have to talk to others, often sweaty palms or avoidance all together are our default setting. So, let's get rid of some of that nervousness and anxiety about money conversations and make it a bit easier. We will spend this time talking tips and tools for building confidence around money conversations. For more information, visit

Altalune Wealth Advisors, Kelley and Ric Tredwin, will lead us through these discussions. Currently, they are advising PCL about long-term investment strategies and building a legacy plan for this library. Their mission is to alleviate financial worry when it comes to investing, retiring, and sharing wealth. They want everyone to embrace a confident financial future. Please join us on September 13 and October 4 to learn a bit more about how to handle yourself around finance.



PCL is grateful to have Magdalena Donahue present a talk on her most recent book, *Roadside Geology of New Mexico* on **October 11 at 2 PM in the Gracie Lee Community Room**.

Whether you're an amateur rockhound, seasoned geologist, or curious traveler, *Roadside Geology of New Mexico* is your passport to understanding the state's rich and varied geologic history. From the southern desert lowlands to the towering northern peaks, New Mexico reveals a stunning tapestry shaped by ancient seas, tectonic uplift, and explosive volcanism.

This recently-released second edition is a full-color, cover-to-cover overhaul of the beloved original. The book has several new highway descriptions, with a focus on scenic roads and popular travel destinations. There have been a lot of advances in geological thinking in the decades since the first book was published, which have been incorporated into this new edition, providing readers and travelers with an updated resource to decode the amazing landscapes of New Mexico. It has been updated with new geologic interpretations, hundreds of vivid photos, cross-sections, and maps, including detailed milepost-keyed geologic maps for each featured route. This book is both an educational resource and an irresistible invitation to hit the road. You'll discover bottomless lakes, fossilized dinosaur trackways, lava tubes, limestone caverns, tent rocks, cinder cones, and sweeping gypsum dunes—stories of the Earth's past unfolding right outside your car window.

The author, Magdalena Donahue, grew up in northern New Mexico and earned her BS in Geological Sciences and Fine Arts from the University of Oregon, and her MS and PhD in Earth & Planetary Sciences from the University of New Mexico. Along with *Roadside Geology of New Mexico*, Magdalena has also authored *Colorado Rocks: A Guide to Geologic Sites in the Centennial State* (2021) and is also in the process of preparing *Hiking the Highpoints of America*. If you enjoy geology or roadtrips please join us at on October 11 at 2 PM. This is the book and talk for you!



# TOP TEN MOST CHALLENGED BOOKS OF 2024



★ ★ ★ ALA.ORG/BBOOKS

ALA American Library Association



## Fire-Resistant Plants and Their Use in Landscaping

Choosing the right plants and caring for them properly can make your garden more resistant to wildfires. In general, deciduous trees and shrubs (drop their leaves annually) are usually more fire-resistant than evergreen plants. Fire-resistant plants tend not to ignite easily, and their foliage and stems do not contribute to fire intensity. (1) But keep in mind that "fire-resistant" doesn't mean "fire proof"!

When looking for fire-resistant plants, check for the following characteristics:

- Supple leaves that are wide, flat, moist, or have high water-content
- Minimal sap/resin, or watery sap with little odor
- Plants with an open-growth structure (space between branches)
- No dead wood, and tend not to accumulate dry, dead materials
- Thick bark that does not peel away from the trunk (2)

Even though some plants are labeled as "fire-safe" or "fire-resistant," their actual risk of burning can vary greatly depending on care and environmental conditions, like:

- Environment matters: A plant's surroundings and how it's cared for play a big role in its flammability.
- Watering makes a difference: Well-watered plants tend to be less flammable, holding onto their leaves longer and maintaining a healthier growth.
- Stress increases risk: Plants under stress from drought or poor conditions may become more flammable due to stunted growth and dead material buildup.
- Growth changes over time: Plants like lavender can change from lush and green to woody and flammable as they age.
- Watch for thatch: Some plants can develop a layer of dead material under their green surface, which can catch fire easily.
- Vertical clearance is key (1)



Happy gardening!

1. Cal Fire, "[Fire Smart Landscaping](#)," accessed June 24, 2025
2. Oregon State University Extension Service, "Fire-resistant plants for home landscapes," accessed June 24, 2025
3. FireFree, "[Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes](#)," accessed June 24, 2025

# PLACITAS GARDEN TOUR

## 2025 Garden Artists



Garden #1 David & Karen Croxton



Garden #5 William O'Brien



Garden #2 Katie Thomas



Garden #3 Lisa Avila



Placitas Community Library  
Tom Salazar



Garden #4 Laura Robbins

## ART EXHIBITION

AUG 16–SEPT 21, 2025

The 2025 PLACITAS GARDEN TOUR has invited a select group of local artists to create their magic in each of the gardens. Get your tickets at [PlacitasGardenTour.com](https://PlacitasGardenTour.com) or at the Placitas Library and join the artists in the gardens around Placitas.

This same day, be sure to stop by the OPEN HOUSE in PCL's Gracie Lee Community Room, where the public can view examples of their work in a gallery setting.

## OPEN HOUSE

SUN, SEPT 7, 9am-4pm



453 Hwy 165, Placitas, NM (505) 867-3355 [placitaslibrary.com](https://placitaslibrary.com)  
A % of sales support the Placitas Library and the Placitas Garden Tour.

### POETREES

Artists' Reception: Oct 3 (5 PM)

Exhibition: Sept 23 – Oct 13

"Trees are poems that the earth writes upon the sky."  
~ Kahlil Gibran

Artists were asked to create a portrait of a tree or trees, or to explore the abstract essence of trees in their work. May it be a poetic rendering of a favorite tree or a visual expression of concern for the future of forests around the world, this is the opportunity to



"hug a tree" with your eyes. Join us on Oct 3 at 5 PM for the artists' reception, or view the exhibition from Sept 23 through Oct 13.



#### SEPTEMBER

**SUN, SEPT 7 (10 AM-3 PM,** or until supplies run out!): Make Seed Balls – Come get your hands dirty by making seed balls for children and adults. This is one of the many activities which are part of The Placitas Garden Tour.





The  
PLACITAS Community LIBRARY  
Children's Committee

invites your children to

# GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY

## LEARN HOW TO MAKE SEED BALLS

**SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER 7  
10:00 to 3:00**

**Or until supplies run out!  
Come early!**

*The Placitas Garden Tour is the perfect occasion to get your hands dirty and learn how to make SEED BALLS!*

Children (accompanied by an adult, please), are invited to make seed balls! All supplies will be provided, as well as Garden Tour green thumbs (helpers) to advise. Participants will be able to take home one or two seed balls to place in their own yards next spring. Let them dry out over the winter, then throw them into your yard come springtime. And, be sure to come back to the library in spring to throw the library's seed balls onto the open areas of the grounds!

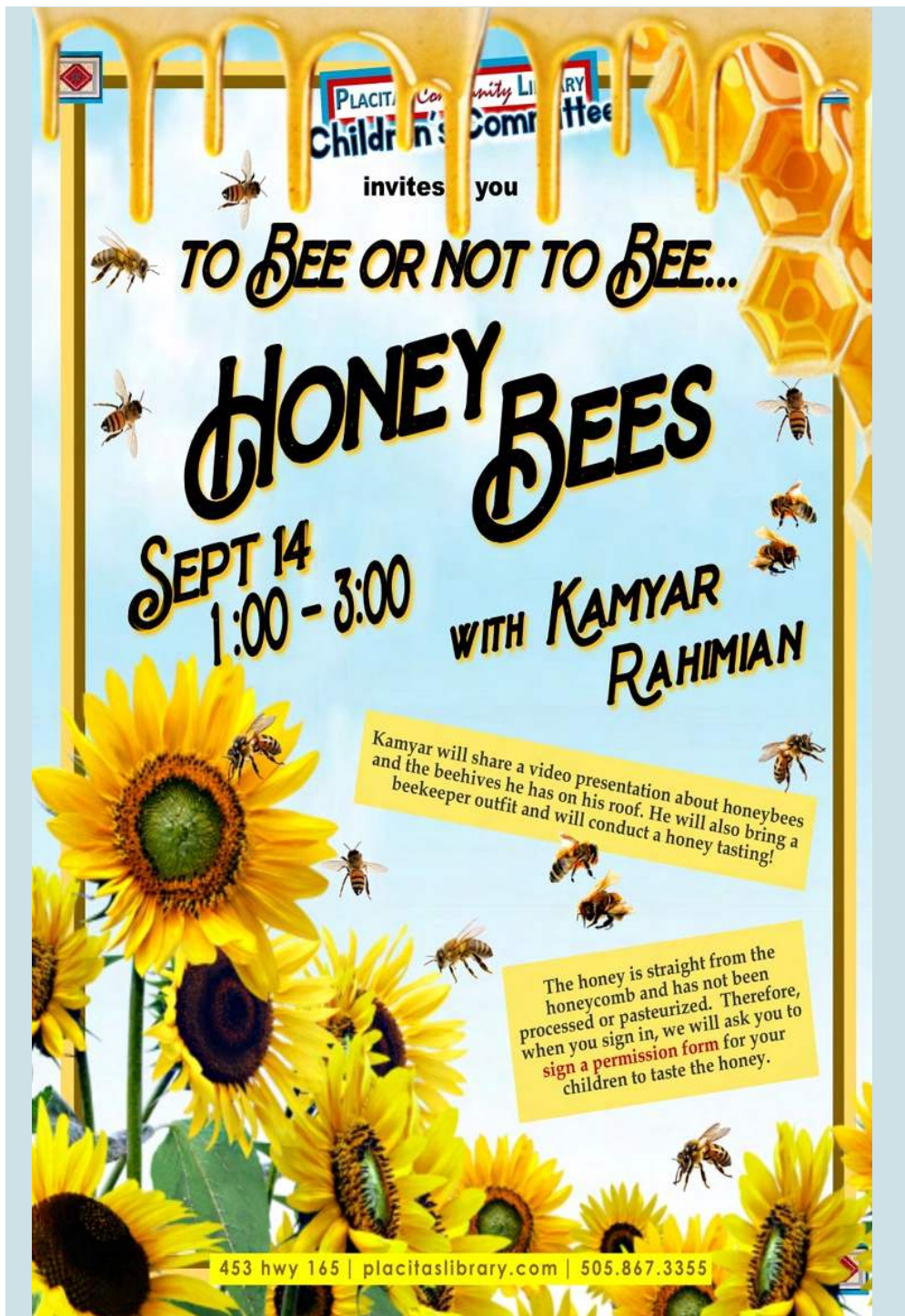
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**TUES, SEPT 9 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time – *Nature Whispers: A Journey Through Leaves and Trees*, featuring the story time books *One Day This Tree Will Fall* by Leslie Bernard Booth, *A Tree is Nice* by Janice May Udry, and *The Leaf Thief* by Alice Hemming. Children will engage in a leaf-rubbing activity, and enjoy a leaf-shaped snack!





**SUN, SEPT 14 (1-3 PM):** *To Bee or Not to Bee* – Honeybees with beekeeper, Kamyar Rahimian will present a video presentation about honeybees and the beehives on his roof. He will bring a beekeeper outfit and conduct a honey tasting. The honey is straight from the honeycomb so it has not been pasteurized or processed. Therefore, you will be asked **to sign a permission form** for your child to taste the honey when you sign in.



## OCTOBER



**TUES, OCT 13 (10 AM):** Pre-K Story Time with a special guest, children's author Kyle Hollingsworth, reading her new book. Come dressed in your Halloween costume if you like. There will be stories, treats, and activities! Kyle visited us in 2024 and we are excited to have her back.

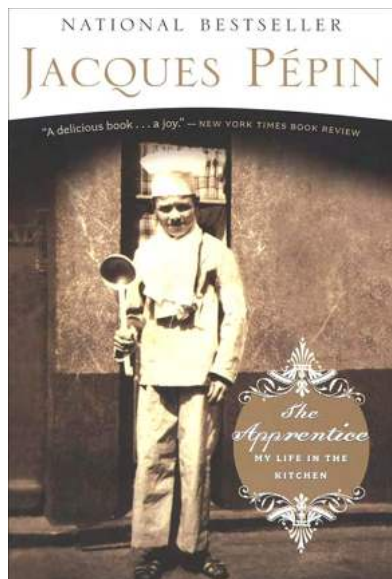
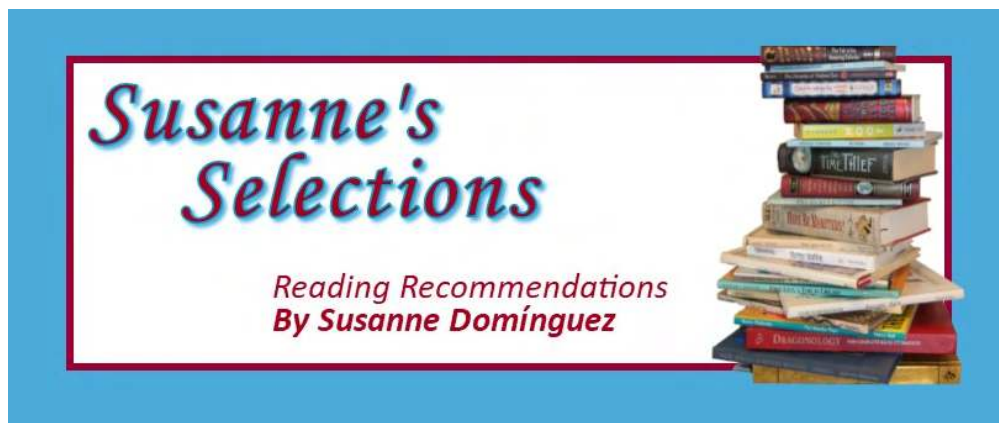
**SUN, OCT 26 (1-3 PM):** Our Annual Halloween Party with special guest, KUPR DJ Patrick Vanderwyden, who will play your musical requests while you dance in your Halloween costumes! You are invited to write down your musical requests and place them in a box on the Circulation Desk in the Main Library or in a box in the Pearl Room where the children's books are located.



Check out a book while you are there! There will be games, activities, and trick or treat after the dance.







***The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen***  
by Jacques Pépin

*"More than anything in the world, I wanted to be a chef."*  
~ Jacques Pépin

Decades ago, I, along with many, many other people, was enamored with the iconic television cooking shows: Julia Child's *The French Chef*, Jeff Smith's *The Frugal Gourmet*, Graham Kerr's *Galloping Gourmet* and Jacques Pépin's *The Complete Pépin* and *Fast Food My Way*. Craig Clairborne, James Beard, and Julia Child were all close friends with Jacques before they all became famous. Julia Child called Jacques "the best chef in America." Pépin, who died last year, eventually became an Emmy Award-winning celebrity who taught Americans how to cook via his television shows and cookbooks. This engrossing memoir details chef extraordinaire, Jacques Pépin's life.

The narrative opens with Jacques as an impoverished 6-year-old

boy, working in exchange for food during World War II in a rural community in France. Since his father, a Resistance fighter, was captured by the Germans, his mother and his siblings were the "bread winners." Later he worked in his mother's cafe where he learned how to improvise with the available food sources. In 1949, at 14 years old, Pépin entered an apprenticeship of three years with Le Grand Hôtel de l'Europe in Bourg-en-Bresse, where he learned a highly exacting system of *brigade de cuisine*, traditional "Old World" cooking and training where aspiring chefs spend years learning about everything kitchen related. He began his apprenticeship as a cleaner, not of food, but of kitchens! Finally, after a year he was allowed to begin his cooking training in an "Old World" kitchen. Eventually he was hired to work at a legendary Parisian restaurant. He then became Charles de Gaulle's personal chef. Afterwards he went to the U.S. where he declined a position as John F. Kennedy's chef in order to work at Howard Johnson's.

In 1974, Pépin was in a devastating car accident which led to a terrible prognosis. He was advised he may never walk again. Ever determined and creative, he decided to teach. He wanted to share the classical techniques he learned through the years of his experience. However, he wanted to simplify the complex techniques, make the recipes easier for American cooks, and use local seasonal products.

This was such a joy to read. I was so impressed by Jacques's resolve and accomplishments. It's a charming memoir and even non-cooks will enjoy it.

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## An Immense World

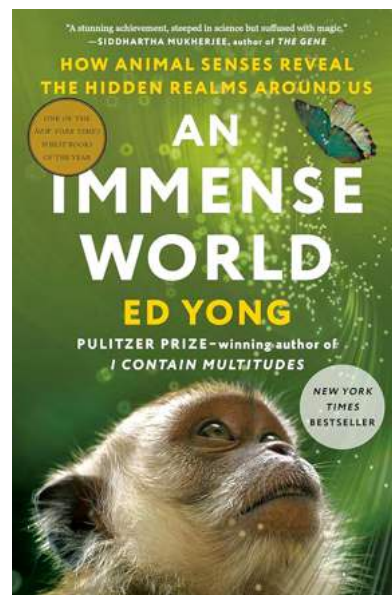
by Ed Yong

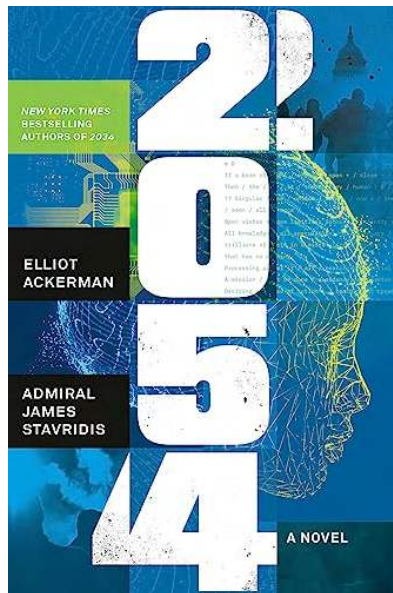
I was awed after reading the wondrous *An Immense World*, and completely changed my opinion regarding different non-human species' sensory abilities. As the author explains, many beings in the animal kingdom have greater capabilities in areas we aren't aware of and/or don't understand. The very brilliant and talented Yong, who is a Pulitzer-winning science journalist, writes how basic senses (scent, sight, etc.) act in other species, often beyond our abilities, and discusses species who possess extraordinary capabilities (elephants, octopuses, songbirds, turtles, etc.). This engrossing and illuminating book includes the scientific explanations about how these abilities were discovered and the science behind them.

Humans see color via wave lengths. Many other beings only see weaker light and shorter ultraviolet wave lengths, sometimes using multiple pairs of eyes. For example, some snakes have eyelike structures at the tips of their tails, while octopuses have them distributed along their tentacles, each arm with its own brain. Some animals hear at frequencies we can't detect, while some detect surface vibrations through their whiskers and antennae. Bats and dolphins use echolocation. Yong explores electric field generation detection by fish, some dolphins, and spiders. Bees sense electric fields around flowers! I was astonished at the ability of beings (salmon, whales, sea turtles, songbirds) to detect the earth's geomagnetic field and use it to navigate. Whales' low frequency song is so tuned into the sonic resonances of the ocean that they can be heard by other whales halfway round the world! Migrating turtles and birds detect the Earth's geomagnetic field and use it as a navigation tool in their travel to other destinations.

Sadly, Yong points out ways in which we humans are disrupting their sensory worlds with noise, excessive light, and other human made stimuli that we're unaware of. For example, "...the memorial event intended to honor those murdered at New York's Twin Towers in September 2001. Every year, utilizing 88 xenon bulbs, each with an intensity of 7,000 watts, the organisers fire a so-called *Tribute in Light* into the night sky, which can be seen from 100 kilometres away. Mid-September happens to be the peak period for migrating birds, and lights of this nature can have a huge impact on the avian navigational process. Across seven nights of its operation, the *Tribute in Light* has been proven to waylay more than one million birds."

From the National Book Foundation: Ed Yong is a Pulitzer Prize-winning science writer based in Oakland. He is the author of two bestselling books: *I Contain Multitudes: The Microbes Within Us and a Grander View of Life*, and *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*, which won the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction and the Royal Society Trivedi Science Book Prize. He was a guest editor of the *Best American Science and Nature Writing* anthology, a Guggenheim Fellow, and is a member of Liminal—a science communication collective, co-founded by his wife Liz Neeley.





## 2054: A Novel

by Elliot Ackerman and Admiral James Stavridis

Singularity is a theoretical point in human history where technological development grows uncontrollably, leaving the future of humanity uncertain. Not only will machine intelligence outpace human intelligence, but the Singularity will lead to a merger between the two.

2054 begins twenty years after the 2034 novel by the same authors. It is also a riveting political and sci-fi page turner, exploring the most significant geopolitical issues today, such as the potential consequences of emerging technologies including remote gene editing, quantum computing, and most momentously, Singularity, and how they may affect us in the future. The ethical challenges of future technology, just as important, are also examined.

The narrative initially focuses on the U.S. recovery from a devastating nuclear war with its rival, China (the plot of 2034, the first novel in the trilogy – a proposed third book will end the trilogy.). Then suddenly the President of the U.S., who held office for a decade, is assassinated. A cover-up ensues, and people begin to question what's actually happening amidst disinformation and social media, and start to demand transparency. The possibility of civil war appears on the horizon. Eventually, the country splits into two factions, "Truthers" and "Dreamers." I assure you dear readers this intriguing, thoughtful book will keep you reading far into the evening. It's not necessary to read the first in the trilogy, 2034, but ideally it would probably be best.

FYI: A fascinating non-fiction book, *The Singularity is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology*, by Ray Kurzweil about artificial intelligence and the future of humanity would be a perfect complement to this book. Kurzweil is an inventor and legendary computer scientist.

From Penguin Random House website: *Elliot Ackerman is the author of the novels Sheepdogs, Halcyon, 2034 (coauthor), Red Dress in Black and White, Waiting for Eden, Dark at the Crossing, and Green on Blue, as well as the memoirs The Fifth Act: America's End in Afghanistan and Places and Names: On War, Revolution, and Returning. His books have been nominated for the National Book Award, the Andrew Carnegie Medal in both fiction and nonfiction, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. He is a contributing writer at The Atlantic and a Marine veteran who served five tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star for Valor, and the Purple Heart.*

*Admiral James Stavridis, USN (Ret.), spent more than thirty years in the US Navy, rising to the rank of four-star admiral. He was Supreme Allied Commander at NATO and previously commanded US Southern Command, overseeing military operations through Latin America. At sea, he commanded a Navy destroyer, a destroyer squadron, and an aircraft carrier battle group in combat. He holds a PhD from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where he recently served five years as dean. He received fifty medals in the course of his military career, including twenty-eight from foreign nations. He has published fifteen other books and is the senior military analyst for CNN and a Bloomberg Opinion weekly columnist. He is currently partner and vice chair, global affairs, of the Carlyle Group and the chair of the board of the Rockefeller Foundation.*



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