

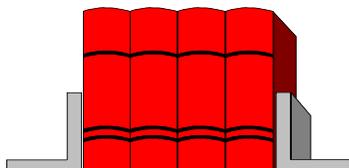
Winter, 2012

## Inside this Issue

### Pages

- 1-3 **President's Corner**  
by Sue Ann Barnes
- 3-4 **Friends of the Library**  
**Winter Programming**
- 4-6 **Interview with**  
**Elaine Christian**
- 7 **Interim Director's**  
**Report**  
by Arlene Griffin
- 7-8 **News from the**  
**Library Board**  
by Brandon  
McWherter
- 8-9 **Children's Activities**  
by Jennifer Hansman
- 9-10 **New Website**  
by Zoe Pride
- 10 **The Tennessee Room**  
**and Backyard History**  
by Jack D. Wood
- 11 **Foundation**  
**Honorarium**
- 12 **Noon Book Reviews**

# Bookends



## The President's Corner

by Sue Ann Barnes, President  
*Friends of the Library Board*

As I write my contribution to the newsletter, fall is definitely in the air and the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays are just around the corner. Headed in our direction are cooler and wetter weather, and many changes not only in the weather, but in your library. On Monday, November 6 your Library Board had a called meeting to vote on recommendations presented by their Management Review Committee. From the Board of the Friends, Margaret Rucker and I were in attendance at this meeting. My sketchy notes were amply reinforced by Margaret's excellent ones which are, in large part, duplicated below. The result of the meeting is that management of the JMC Library System is to become local again, with a director who reports to the Library Board. This transition should be completed by early March.

Library Board members present: Brandon McWherter, Jerry Bastin, Charles Baldwin, Elaine Christian, Terica Smith and Glen Vaultx. Mike Stone was unable to attend, but voted in absentia.

The purpose of meeting was to vote on recommendations from the Board's Management Review Committee (McWherter/Bastin/Christian).

### Management Committee Recommendations

1. The Committee recommends that the contract with LSSI be terminated, effective on March 8, 2013 or such other date as the Board and LSSI may later mutually agree.

## New A/V Materials at the Jackson- Madison County

**Library:**  
(from Mike Baker)

### Music CDs

*Bob Dylan in Concert*  
1963  
Bob Dylan

*The Very Best of*  
*The Doors*  
The Doors

*2120 S Michigan Ave*  
George Thorogood

*Take A Back Road*  
Rodney Atkins

### DVDs

*Dark Shadows*

*Pushing Daisies*

*50/50*

*Dream House*

### CD Audio Books

*The Oath*  
Jeffrey Toobin

*Cast A Blue Shadow*  
P.L. Gaus

*The Book Of Job*  
Harold Kushner

*The Third Gate*  
Louis L'Amor

2. The Committee recommends that the Board Chairman be authorized to give notice to LSSI of the termination of the contract, and that such notice be given on November 6, 2012, to accommodate the required 120 day notice provision.

3. The Committee recommends that, upon termination of the contract with LSSI, the management of the Library be returned to the Board via the Library Director to be appointed by it.

4. The committee recommends that, upon termination of the contract with LSSI, all present LSSI employees working at the Library become Madison County employees at their option.

McWherter noted that passage of these recommendations would require that the board be more active and hands-on during the period of transition in management, but the committee felt that, absent this move, more support from the funding bodies was not going to happen. While early in LSSI's management a number of positives occurred (increase in circulation, opening of Library North) of late there has been a decline and growing dissatisfaction (lack of director, unspent funds, lack of transparency) He feels return to local management would be best for the library now and in future.

Christian cited financial reasons, feeling investment of resources should be kept as local as possible. LSSI's lack of transparency was troubling. From contractual standpoint: failure of LSSI to provide a director in place for considerable time periods during their tenure and a cut in the hours the system is open. She stressed importance of stability and continuity of leadership and thanked Arlene Griffin for her efforts to provide some of this during this latest director-less period.

Bastin said: "It's all about the money." He cited the fact that it's impossible to determine how much of the money paid to LSSI is profit. Cutting library services during this period has been painful—to the library and its patrons—but LSSI did not face any consequences. Repeated searches have meant a substantial amount of time without a library director. He wants the library moving in the direction of being more responsive to the community.

On Recommendation One, to terminate contract, vote was 7-0 in favor.

Recommendation Two, vote was 7-0 in favor.

When Recommendation Three was introduced, Baldwin raised the question about the \$95,070 in unspent materials funds from the past 2 budget years. McWherter said George Bateman of LSSI, with whom the board will be dealing during the transition process, has assured him it is the board's money and they will have no problem getting it back. Smith asked if there was a plan for the board's selection of a new director. McWherter stated the Management Committee was already working on it and that they intended to have a plan ready to present at the December board meeting.

On Recommendation Three, vote was 7-0 in favor.

Recommendation Four, vote was 7-0 in favor.

Bastin: Moved that Management Committee develop a process for the director search to be presented at the December board meeting.

Bastin's motion seconded & carried.

Bastin: Moved that Management committee develop a management transition plan for the library to be presented at the December board meeting.

Motion seconded & carried.

Bastin: Moved that the board remove \$95,070 (the unspent materials funds) from the line item in the budget and require LSSI to return the funds to the board within 60 days.

Motion seconded & carried.

McWherter stated that the board would prorate other budgeted monies by line item so that any unspent funds would be returned to the board.

McWherter also said that Christian was working on a list of things to be done during the transition period. Coming up soon:

Brandon to meet with library staff and inform them of developments.

Representative from County finance office to talk with staff and provide them with information about county benefits, answer questions.

Elaine has talked with Chuck Sherrell of State Library & Archives. The state will be consulting with the local library regarding the transition from Polaris.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting December 5.

It seems clearly the intention of the Board of our Library to retain the good things, like the establishment of Library North that happened under LSSI, but to reverse the growing disconnect between the needs of our community and a distant and opaque management group. The JMC Library will need your Support during this transition. Please give it to your Library and add to that a Thanks to the Board members and a Smile to the staff members. Change takes a lot of effort but this is one change that I think is going to be worth it.

**Support the Jackson-  
Madison County Library**

## Friends of the Library Winter Programming

**Noon, December 6, Hosted by Tyler Swindle**

We hope to be among your first holiday activities when Lee Warren, Executive Director of the Jackson Symphony, brings the Carbonell Boys to entertain us at our December meeting. Lee plans to read “The Philharmonic Gets Dressed” and the boys will perform several selections. Lee says that she and the boys will speak about “music as a language and the importance of reading and the importance of music education and how it relates to good reading skills.”



**The Carbonell Boys**

Come and be entertained and enjoy holiday refreshments with the Friends.

**Noon, January 3, Hosted by Annette Cooley**

Virginia Conger comes to talk to us about the book *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand. Virginia said that the book was recommended to her by

her granddaughter Harper. Isn't it wonderful how books can provide a way for us to bond with our friends and families? Come and join us for a cup of hot coffee and some warm companionship in the new year.

### **Noon, February 7, Hosted by Sue Ann Barnes**

This is part of a very special constellation of events that center on Hispanic author and poet Benjamin Alire Sàenz. Prof. Sàenz is on the faculty of University of Texas, El Paso in their Creative Writing Department. The FOL board (with a grant from Jackson Arts Council and your support) is bringing him to Jackson for three days of literary events.

The plans are to have an evening reception at St. Mary's Church on Wednesday with Prof. Sàenz reading some of his children's books to youth, their families and guests. On Thursday and Friday mornings he will read to the children at the story hours at the Library and Library North.

At noon on Thursday he will be the guest at the regular meeting of the Friends of the Library. I have asked him to talk about his writing and to read from one of his novels.

Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m. he will be at Union University to talk to their Spanish students and the public about his work.

All of these events are open to the public. FOL will mail postcards in mid-January with the dates, times and places of these events. Please share them with your friends, as we would like to give Prof. Sàenz a big Tennessee welcome.

These events are wonderful reasons to come on down to the library, but remember a library is a great place to get a book, get connected, bring your children or grandchildren, or just spend a bit of time reading. Please remember it is your Library and so use it well.

### **Interview with Elaine Christian, President of the Jackson-Madison County Library Foundation**



#### **You are the President of the Library Foundation. Could you explain what the Foundation does?**

The Foundation is the fundraising arm of the Library. The most recent effort by the Foundation was the second annual Books of Madison County event.

The Books evening started with dinner at Lower Larue then transitioned to the JMC Library where 25 local authors were featured. The event not only brought a number of people to the Library but also generated much needed positive publicity for the Library.

The Foundation also supports the Imagination Library project which provides books to pre-school children.

The Foundation provides financial support for special projects including children's and arts programming as well as furniture or equipment needs.

#### **You were very active in the Vision process that provided a vision for the future of the Jackson-Madison County Library. Can you tell us what parts of that vision most appeal to you?**

Members of the Vision Committee invested almost 20 hours in focusing on moving our Library forward. It was interesting to learn from different thoughts of each member.

The Financial security of our Library concerns me most. The loss of funding in recent years has severely impacted the operations of the Library. Hours as well as staff have been cut therefore impacting essential services to the patrons.

Steps need to be taken by the Library Board as well as the support organizations - Friends and Foundation - to stabilize funding and seek additional funding sources that will allow us "to provide high quality desirable programming, maintain our facilities, and continually improve our collection."

Another important goal of the Vision process is to provide additional programming for the community and to address trends in technological advances.

### **Why are you so involved with the Jackson-Madison County Public Library? You could do many other things, but you chose to help the library?**

Growing up on a farm in rural West Tennessee I would look forward to the weekly trip to the Library. My mother made sure we had access to books. Reading exposes us to so many cultures, perceptions and thoughts creating an endless curiosity of the world around us.

The local library is the "House of the 100%" Everyone in the community can use the services of the Library. Providing that service to the residents of our community is something I believe in passionately. I have also just been appointed to the Library Board. An important goal for the Board is to provide the highest quality of service while being fiscally responsible.

### **What are your favorite books?**

I'm in two book clubs – which really helps me stay contemporary. We are reading *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn for November.

I love the fast paced action stories of John Grisham, Vince Flynn and Craig Johnson. Also the traditional love stories of *Pride and Prejudice* and the *Twilight Series*. I have enjoyed books written by the author's featured in the Books of Madison County including Harbert Alexander, Billy King, Tom Reed, dn English and Larry Rietcheck.

Most of my reading though tends to be historical or biographical. Stephen Ambrose and David McCullough are beloved authors. One important area of interest for me is ancient civilizations. I read three newspapers daily.

### **Do you have an ebook reader?**

Yes – I have a Kindle and also an iPad. I enjoy the dictionary found in the ebook readers. And there is also the convenience of not carrying around a heavy group of books. But I'm still very traditional – I love the feel of a book in my hands. And I have a very hard time parting with any book.

### **What other libraries have you used extensively besides the Jackson-Madison County Library?**

The Obion County Library in my hometown of Union City, as well as the Libraries of our local colleges both at Jackson State and at Union. In addition, I have used the Gordon Browning Library in McKenzie and the Collier County Library in Naples, FL.

The Naples Library provides many interesting programs every week for the community. I am hopeful our library can offer more diverse programming in the future.

### **What do you see as the strong points of the Jackson-Madison County Library?**

The Tennessee Room and staff are truly a treasure for our community. Jack and Evelyn are extremely knowledgeable and helpful.

An important role for a Library is to serve as a Treasure House holding the archives of our community's history. Also The North branch of the Library has really benefitted our community. The children's programs in the library are outstanding.

### **What are some areas of improvement for the Jackson-Madison County Library?**

Increasing the hours of service is important. Many groups that had been using the Library have had to find other locations because of the loss of evening hours. In addition, the lack of evening hours impacts students and patrons. Improvements in perception of safety and security for patrons of the Library also needs more attention.

### **What is the Books of Madison County program and what does it benefit?**

The Books of Madison County has turned into the signature event for the Foundation. The evening starts with dinner and entertainment and then transitions to the Library for programs. This year we had the dinner and entertainment at Lower Larue inside The Suites of Larue.

The event showcases the programs of the Library. Local authors are invited to attend. Guests can visit with the authors to learn about the books they have written and why they were inspired to become writers. We had 25 local authors this year.

The event also generates positive publicity for the Library. We are hopeful that the event can continue to evolve and grow in the future.

### **What is your career and educational background?**

I have an Associate's Degree from Jackson State Community College, I also have an undergraduate Degree in Business Administration and MBA from University of Tennessee at Martin; I am a Certified Public Accountant.

Most of my career was spent managing nonprofit organizations including over 18 years of managing Chambers of Commerce and Workforce development organizations in Jackson, Dyersburg and Memphis. Organization management, marketing and financial management were areas of expertise. I am now retired.

### **What are your hobbies?**

Besides reading - Travel - My husband and I are fortunate enough to travel and I enjoy reading about the history of the area that we visit.

Golf and hiking are fun outdoor activities that I enjoy. And I have a new grandson Miles. I really enjoy spending time with my family.



## Interim Library Director's Report

by Arlene Griffin

It's been a very busy, tiring, but productive Fall already. Vendors are falling into place as we are transitioning from BWI to its new company Baker & Taylor. We will also be using Ingram and that account is almost ready to launch. These vendors will also be pre-processing our collection.

An account is in place with DVA for audio books and DVDS. Ingram and DVA are both used by Hatchie River Regional and come highly recommended and with great prices!

The State of Tennessee has received all the required statistics up to and including September. A big thank you to staff who worked on this!

The Trustee Workshop was a great seminar. Thank you to the two Board members: Elaine Christian and Dr. Baldwin for attending with me.

Our van was in an accident and luckily Mike received only minor injuries. Until further notice, delivery has been distributed between several staff members. We cannot do more than deliveries between Main and Library North and the other book drops. All other services will be on hold until further notice.

The Main Library provided the location and the staff helped with the second Books of Madison County fundraiser.

Carpeting at Library North was cleaned again. This company guarantees their work. They are also responsible for removing some stains in the Main Library's carpeting.

Several staff meetings have been held. Staff had some great ideas while brainstorming how to improve the library and its function in the community. For example, the coffee shop could be used to hold PC classes. No smoking signs

seem to have made some improvement. Security cameras could be very beneficial inside and outside the library. New programs are being assessed and scheduled. Staff meetings are going to be held on a regular basis.

Interviews are in progress for two part-time library associate jobs due to changes in staffing hours. The library should be full staffed by the time this goes to print.

The page position has been closed. Shelving is to be done by all staff when and as required.

The new self-check machine is still a work in progress. No definite date of arrival at this point.

There is much more to say, but I will keep this short by saying that there have been changes with more to follow. Tweaking has been done among staff to utilize their strengths and increase our team capabilities to provide the patrons and library with the best service possible. The library staff will continue to operate the libraries to the best of their abilities in the oncoming months. Thanks to the staffs at Main and Library North and all the others who have been aiding me in my time as the Interim Director.

## News from the Library Board

by Brandon McWherter, Library Board Chair

It has only been a few months since my last article, but we as a Board have had quite a busy fall. We were all very excited about the progress made by the Vision Committee over the summer, and we eagerly presented the approved vision plan to the County Commission, the City Council, the Friends of the Library, and the Library Foundation. It was met with great enthusiasm and we felt like the Board was finally developing some traction in moving the Library forward.

Unfortunately, the Library suffered a few setbacks early in the fall. Specifically, Mr. Bill Johnson resigned as Director after only six months, leaving us without a Director yet again. Thankfully Arlene was able to step in as Interim Director, and is doing a fantastic job. However, the timing of Mr. Johnson's departure negatively impacted the excitement of the community surrounding the vision plan.

Most importantly, the Library Board voted at a special called meeting on November 5, 2012 to terminate the management contract between the Board and LSSI and to return the management of the library to the local level. Specifically, the Board unanimously voted to terminate the contract on March 8, 2012 or at such other time as LSSI and the Board may mutually agree. This decision was obviously a tough one, but was made after much consideration and thought. We believe the move will be very positive for the Library moving forward, although the transition process itself will likely be difficult. Board members Jerry Bastin, Elaine Christian, and I (acting as the Management Committee) have been tasked with the responsibility of developing a transition plan to be presented to the Board at combined November/December meeting scheduled for December 5, 2012.

The Board is also beginning the process of searching for its next Library Director. We will actively solicit qualified applicants, all of whom will be carefully reviewed. We recognize the selection of a director is critical to the success of the Library and the Board is dedicated to making the best hire possible.

Finally, the Board was careful to advise all present employees of the Library that it is the Board's desire that all remain employees after the contract with LSSI is terminated. The Management Committee met with the

employees on November 9, 2012 to fill them in on the benefits offered to Madison County employees. I was pleased to sense their excitement and willingness to help as we enter into this new era at the Library.

The Board thanks you for your support. Should you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [bmcwherter@gilbertfirm.com](mailto:bmcwherter@gilbertfirm.com), or by phone at 731-664-1340.



## Children's Department News

*by Jennifer Brewer*

Autumn was a good season for the Children's Department. I'm all rested up from the busy summer and ready now to head into lots of winter fun. This coming holiday season will be a busy time for the library, too.

At Story Time the past couple of months, we've read many pumpkin books, sang songs about the leaves changing color and falling off the trees, and even made a spooky spider web together during Halloween week.

We even had a special visit from the Jackson Symphony and several of their students who performed for us and taught us about instruments and music. We love having special guests from the community share their talents with the library children, and we are hoping to schedule more. Story Times are every Tuesday and Friday morning at the Downtown location, and on Thursdays at Library North.

The older children in Library Club have been enjoying the *Little House on the Prairie* books. We've learned about the pioneers, sod houses, Native American games and traditions, and quilting.

Library Club is primarily for homeschoolers ages 5 to 12, but lately some smaller children have participated, too.

We're always happy to make new friends, so spread the word. We read the books at home and meet at the library on Tuesdays at 11:15 a.m. to discuss what we've read and to learn, craft, and play together.

We'll be having a Christmas movie showing in the Program Center for kids during the Christmas season, as well as some cute crafts and games to play during our Story Times.

If you know any little ones, please bring them to join us. We have lots of fun together. (I even heard that Santa will be paying a visit to both branches soon, so you definitely don't want to miss that!

Pick up a calendar of children's events at either branch each month to know specific dates and times.

One of best things about my job is that sometimes I get to open the boxes of new books that come in. The Children's Department has gotten some hilarious new picture books in as well as several good biographies and chapter books.

The best of the new books are always on display, so come in and check them out. I am also excited that we are working to revamp our YA section.

We should be getting new copies of favorites and books from school reading lists as well as many, many new popular novels for teens. Those boxes should be coming in any day now, so

encourage any teenagers that you know to come spend some time at the library and check out what we have to offer. If they have any questions, they are welcome to ask me and I will try my best to point them in the direction of something that will entice them.

Children of all ages can find something at the library. I love to see parents bringing babies into the library to look at books together. Even when they are too young to recognize the vocabulary or grasp the plot, it is still so important to expose their developing minds to the joy of reading. There is a definite advantage for children who have had the privilege of sitting in someone's lap listening to a good book throughout their life. Even if you don't have children of your own, I would encourage you to share the love of reading with a child you know. Let your friends and neighbors know about the library. You can even volunteer to help out in the Children's Department if you would like to. The more people committed to and involved in the library, the better it will be for everyone in the community, young and old alike.

## **New Website**

*by Zoe Pride*

The Jackson Madison County Library has a new website: <http://jmcl.tn.org>. The new website comes with a new color scheme and a new layout. We have added new sections, such as, Kidz Korner, Friends of the Library, Quick Picks, and What's New.

In the Kidz Korner and Friends of the Library sections, we have included event sections for each and you can also see the Friends of the Library Newsletters right from our website. Coming soon to these sections will be photo galleries of library and Friend events.

We have also included new ways to view our catalog and your library account. These features can now be accessed from any page on our library site. You will notice that the catalog now has the new color scheme and new buttons to help navigate and make things easier to lookup. To log into your library account to renew or reserve book, you would simply type in your library card number and your PIN at the top of any page and you will be directed to your account.

Our new website is now one-click friendly. We hope that you will check it out and send us feedback.

## **The Tennessee Room and Backyard History**

*by Jack D. Wood  
Tennessee Room Librarian*

The approach of the holidays in November and December invokes nostalgia in most people. We participate in national, local, religious, and family activities often based on that which we remember from our own past. Many of these traditions, however, originate further back in time than our own memory. They have been handed down orally or in writing, often accompanied by objects or pictures. It is a perfect environment for teaching young people about history.

Tucked away in its place (973.07) on a bookshelf in the Tennessee Room is an intriguing little book entitled, *My Backyard History Book*, by David Weitzman. It was published in 1975, but we did not add it to our collection until 1990. *My Backyard History Book* is part of the *Brown Paper School* series of books which are described as "small books about big ideas, written and designed for kids and grownups together."

This little volume is exactly that. It is an activity book with 34 short chapters about

different ways to explore history. The chapter headings are inviting. "Whatshisname" explains the origins of names and why we have them. "Wow, Have You Got Ancestors!" and several other chapters look at the topic of generations, family trees, and inherited traits. "Hand-me-down History" encourages collecting documents, photographs, and artifacts. "History That Talks" explains how to record oral history. "Clark Kent, decoder rings, and Ovaltine" emphasizes the significance of the little material things that explain what a particular time period was like. "History at the Cemetery" explains how cemeteries are filled with information about people in a community, and "History on a Park Bench" encourages young people to learn from older adults.

Although it is only 128 pages, *My Backyard History Book* is absolutely packed with ideas, information, and illustrations designed to encourage children (and their parents) to explore the clues in the present physical world in order to understand the past, which, in turn, may help them understand the present. Each chapter emphasizes active rather than passive learning. In "Eating Your Way through History," for example, the author tells the reader, "The next time you are visiting your grandparents...ask them what their favorite old recipes are and which one is the oldest." He further prompts the reader to collect old recipes and reproduce them on calendars for gifts.

Most of the project ideas are familiar ones from a time before the rise of the computer/digital age, but all of the activities could easily be modified using computer technology. This little book is still profoundly relevant because it focuses on teaching the values of preservation and collecting historical evidence. The message here is very loud and clear: Without recording and preserving historical evidence, any understanding of the past is not possible.

## The Friends of the Jackson-Madison County Library—Who, What and Why We Are

When the Friends were formed back in the 60s the Library was very different, it was a place for books, information, activity and intellectual pursuits. Our Jackson Madison County Library System is still all of those things, but in addition to books we have computers, DVDs, and audio books in our library on Lafayette and our Library North on Highland.

There were children's programs then and there are children's programs now at both libraries and they draw children and parents as they used to but, at least at the Main Library in a dedicated space, that the Friends help keep bright and current.

The Tennessee Room has grown its collection and now includes varieties of materials and ways of accessing records and preserving them that did not exist then. The Friends help provide support to add to and preserve the collection.

The Friends still hold monthly book reviews and work to support visits by authors and poets, both local and from other parts of the state and country. We also support other programs at the library and work with the staff, Library Board of Trustees and the Library Foundation to promote the Library.

The Library is now going through a transition and the Friends urge you to visit and support your library and to be vocal in letting the staff and trustees know how your library can better serve you. It is after all your Public Library as it has always been. We have a staff that would benefit from knowing that you support them at this time of change.

The Friends can also use your support:

- come to our events (upcoming ones are listed in this newsletter),
- read our newsletter (well you must already be doing that) and share it with someone when you are done,
- maintain your membership or become a member, by mailing your contribution and the form below to the Friends at the address on the form.

**Return or Mail to  
Friends of the Jackson-Madison County Library  
433 E Lafayette, Jackson, TN 38301**

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\_\_\_\_\_ SPONSOR \$100 or more

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feel free to contact us

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Ray Tanner  
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James Cherry  
422-2524

### Publications Editor

Scott Cohen  
425-2615

## Friends of the Library Thursday Programs Main Library Program Room • Noon

**December 6** - Jackson Symphony presents the *Carbonell Boys*

**January 3** - Virginia Conger *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand

**February 7** - Benjamin Sàenz. Check him out at  
<http://faculty.utep.edu/Default.aspx?alias=faculty.utep.edu/bsaenz>

### Friends of the JMC Library

433 East Lafayette Street  
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