



WINTER 2025 NEWSLETTER



www.tuscliteracy.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear reader,

Happy holidays and Happy New Year! I hope this newsletter finds you warm and cozy, celebrating with friends and family. The holiday season is among us. We see the decorations adorning the streets of Dover, New Philadelphia, and the towns throughout Tuscarawas County. Walking through the town streets, I always think of the classic Christmas song Silver Bells, as I see red and green lights twinkling above.



The holidays can be a time of reflection as well. Many people look at the year that has passed and begin to take stock of accomplishments. Perhaps you or your friends are taking stock and sharing the number of books read, or milestones reached, or weight that was lost. Remember it is not fair to compare- and perhaps the greatest thing we can reflect on are 'yards gained.' So many times in life we are searching for the touchdown moment—the big break or achievement—to celebrate. We have to remember that touchdowns don't happen without gaining yards along the way.

Instead of focusing on the great achievements, I encourage you to look for the places where you have gained yards towards a goal. Maybe you sent a card to an estranged friend or family member. Maybe you picked up a book to read for the first time in a long time. Maybe you skipped dessert yesterday. All of these are examples of yards gained and worthy of celebration.

Throughout our newsletter, I hope you notice the yards gained towards literacy within the Tuscarawas Valley. From the One Book, One Community event to tutoring at the Bolivar public library, we have made gains and are hopeful to continue that work in 2025.

Wishing you the very best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise Cooley".

Denise Cooley, TCLC President

SUPPORT LITERACY! BECOME A LITERACY COALITION MEMBER

Want to support literacy efforts of all types in Tuscarawas County? Invest in a Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition membership! We have a variety of membership options that match your needs. Join today at tuscliteracy.org or scan the QR code with your smart device.





2024 ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY WRAP-UP

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year’s One Book, One Community program across Tuscarawas County! It was such a joy to see our community come together to celebrate the importance of literacy.

Here’s what the community said about this year’s book, *Things Seen from Above*:

- “What a great message for kids and adults.”
- “My students actually want to read this book—without me even asking them to!”
- “This has given me a different perspective on what middle school is like today.”
- “This was a great One Book pick for our community.”
- “SO BEAUTIFUL. It’s seriously the perfect middle-grade book.”

Congratulations to winners of the art contest winners. All students were from Claymont Middle School.

- 1st Place: Makayla Bickford
- 2nd Place: Camden Wright
- 3rd Place: Kenadie Wease

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR’S PROGRAM:

- **1,100 copies distributed:** Copies of *Things Seen from Above* were shared throughout the community, sparking meaningful conversations and fostering a love of reading. A special thank-you to Dave at The Bibliophile in Dover for coordinating the book orders for the entire county!
- **Literacy Connection Day:** We hosted students from Tuscarawas Central Catholic Middle School, with 35 students participating. Activities included a Zoom session with author Shelley Pearsall, a Spiral Stories writing lesson, a Perspective Art lesson, book trivia, and lunch. Each student also received a signed bookmark from Shelley!
- **Final Culminating Event:** We welcomed community members to a live Zoom presentation by Shelley Pearsall, who joined us all the way from Scotland. One attendee shared, “I could have sat and listened to her for another 30 minutes. She was so engaging, even on Zoom.” Shelley generously sent a signed copy of the book to be given away, along with bookmarks for all participants.

2024 ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY SPONSORS:

Thank you for making One Book, One Community a success!

Blair E. & Anna L. Zimmerman Foundation
 Dennison Rotary Club
 Dewey & Irene Moomaw Foundation
 Dover Exchange Club
 Dover Tank and Plate Co.
 DoverPhila Federal Credit Union
 First Federal Community Bank
 Friends of Claymont Public Library
 Friends of TCPL New Phila
 Friends of the Dover Public Library

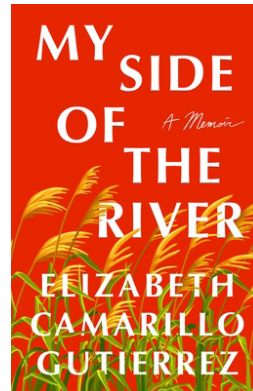
Haman Family Foundation
 Jeanne Souers Garcia Foundation
 McInturf Realty
 New Philadelphia Elks #510
 Progressive Foam
 ProVia
 Springer Orthodontics
 Tuscarawas County Community Foundation
 United Way of Tuscarawas County

2025 ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY: *MY SIDE OF THE RIVER* by Elizabeth Camarillo Gutierrez

ABOUT THE BOOK

A *New York Times* Editor's Pick
A *People Magazine* Best Book to Read in February
A Goodreads Most Anticipated Book of 2024

Elizabeth Camarillo Gutierrez reveals her experience as the U.S. born daughter of immigrants and what happened when, at fifteen, her parents were forced back to Mexico in this captivating and tender memoir.



“*My Side of the River* is both fierce and poetic. It brilliantly reframes border writing while embracing nature and familial history. There are moments one sees greatness appear. This is one of those moments.”

—Luis Alberto Urrea, New York Times bestselling author of *Good Night, Irene*

Born to Mexican immigrants south of the Rillito River in Tucson, Arizona, Elizabeth had the world at her fingertips. She was preparing to enter her freshman year of high school as the number one student when suddenly, her own country took away the most important right a child has: the right to have a family.

When her parents' visas expired and they were forced to return to Mexico, Elizabeth was left responsible for her younger brother, as well as her education. Determined to break the cycle of being a “statistic,” she knew that even though her parents couldn't stay, there was no way she could let go of the opportunities the U.S. could provide. Armed with only her passport and sheer teenage determination, Elizabeth became what her school would eventually describe as an unaccompanied homeless youth, one of thousands of underage victims affected by family separation due to broken immigration laws.

For fans of *Educated* by Tara Westover and *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande, *My Side of the River* explores separation, generational trauma, and the toll of the American dream. It's also, at its core, a love story between a brother and a sister who, no matter the cost, is determined to make the pursuit of her brother's dreams easier than it was for her.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Camarillo Gutierrez was born and raised in Tucson, Arizona, as a second-generation immigrant. She graduated from high school at the top of her class and, in 2018, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in philosophy, politics, and economics. She worked as a banking analyst at Wells Fargo and is now a product manager at a big tech company, where she uses her background and knowledge to empower communities. She has been featured on NPR's *Latino USA* and delivered a viral TED Talk on finding opportunity and stability in the United States while examining flaws in narratives that simplify and idealize the immigrant experience. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

The 2025 One Book, One Community programming begins September 2025. Author Elizabeth Camarillo Gutierrez will speak at KSU Tuscarawas on Monday, November 3, 2025. More OBOC details coming soon!

TCLC'S ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP 2025 LITERACY SCHOLARSHIP

The Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition offers two \$500 scholarships to eligible high school seniors in memory of Keith Rathbun, a former board member, friend of literacy, and past publisher of *The Budget Newspaper* in Sugarcreek, Ohio. Rathbun also served as president of the Ohio Newspaper Association.



These one-time scholarships support Tuscarawas County seniors who reside in the county or are enrolled in a Tuscarawas County high school or homeschooling network. Recipients can use the funds to pursue a certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree at an accredited post-secondary institution in any field of study.

The scholarship submission deadline is March 1, 2025. Visit www.tuscliteracy.org for more information and the 2025 application form.

"BOOKS HAVE A UNIQUE WAY OF STOPPING TIME IN A PARTICULAR MOMENT AND SAYING: LET'S NOT FORGET THIS."

- Dave Eggers

FRIEND OF LITERACY SPOTLIGHT – LEE ELLIOTT

Lee Elliott graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a degree in journalism. She is a retired creative writing and theater teacher with 30 years of experience. Her first major feature article, covering the launch of Sputnik, was published in the *Alliance Review*. Since then, Lee's work has been featured in national publications such as *Reader's Digest*, *Grit*, and *Parent*, among others.

"I am so honored to be the Friend of Literacy person for 2024," said Elliott. "It has made my day, month – actually, my whole year! It's so nice to be recognized for something I just love to do."

Currently, Lee writes a weekly column for *The Bargain Hunter*, where she advocates for seniors. She recently published a children's book titled *Asparagus*, a delightful rhyming picture book. When she's not writing, Lee stays active as a member of The Little Theater, sings in her church choir, and enjoys gardening. She firmly believes that reading and writing have the power to change lives and should always be cherished.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

FREE TAX RESOURCE | VOLUNTER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)

Hosted by United Way of Tuscarawas County

Starting February 6 thru April 8, get your federal and state taxes done for free through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. VITA is open to households earning \$60,000 per year or less. This program is open to all ages and no geographic restrictions. Schedule your appointment online at www.tuscunitedway.org or by calling 330-994-VITA (8482).

CONTINUED - COMMUNITY RESOURCES

TUTORING RESOURCES

Subject(s): Reading | Grades: K–5th

Does your child need help with reading? Schedule a one-on-one, 30-minute session with certified literacy tutor Lana Schrock, PhD in Hispanic Languages and Literature.

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM - BOLIVAR BRANCH

Select Tuesdays from January 20 - April 22 from 6:00PM - 8:00PM

Sponsored by Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM - MAIN LIBRARY

Every Wednesday, March 5th through May 7th from 4:30PM - 7:30PM

Sponsored by Friends of the Library - New Phila

DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 4:00PM - 6:00PM

Sponsored by the Friends of the Library - Dover

TUTORING SUCCESS STORY

One of the students working with Lana Schrock, the reading tutor at Bolivar, was thrilled about his progress in school. Excitedly, he came skipping in to show Lana the great grade he received on a recent paper. He wanted to share his achievement with her before showing it to his parents. His parents later remarked, "We're not sure what Lana is doing, but it's working. Our son's reading has improved significantly!"

FAVORITE READS OF 2024 & READING PLANS FOR 2025 - TCLC BOARD PICKS

TOP PICKS FOR DENISE COOLEY, PRESIDENT

Top Read(s) in 2024

***The Eye and The Impossible* by Dave Eggers**

The Eyes and The Impossible won the Newbery Honor Award in 2024, and I have to say that Newbery Honor Award winners rarely disappoint.

MY FAVORITE QUOTE?

"I could go. I could go. I could go. I could go. I could go. I could go. I could go. I could go.

And perhaps I was meant to go.

'You could run as much as you like,' Helene said.

And this was true. By her telling, there would be all the land I could ever want- I could run for a million days and never find a boundary."

Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

***My Side of the River* by Elizabeth Camarillo Guterrez**

I am really excited to read the One Book One Community Book, *My Side of the River* by Elizabeth Camarillo Guterrez. The book is about the love between a brother and sister and the fight to live the American dream.

CONTINTUED - FAVORITE READS OF 2024 & READING PLANS FOR 2025

TOP PICKS FOR RACHAEL BOWERS, VICE PRESIDENT

Top Read(s) in 2024

***The Art Thief* by Michael Finkel**

I LOVE non-fiction. This story was crazy when I thought it was fictional. After researching, it became even more bizarre when I learned it was completely non-fiction. Very strange indeed!

***Missoula* by Jon Krakauer**

This story chronicles the elitist attitude in a football driven college town that led to the inevitable downfall of many individuals who were involved with committing and covering up multiple heinous crimes.

***Where Men Win Glory* by Jon Krakauer**

The true story of NFL star Pat Tillman's journey to becoming an Army Ranger and his untimely death. While very editorialized, it evokes a wide range of emotions from the reader, from anger, to frustration and sadness.

***Where the Deer and Antelope Play* by Nick Offerman**

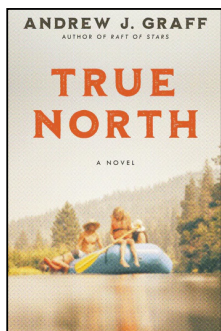
Quick witted and humorous, Offerman takes the reader on the journey of his Covid-19 shutdown adventures as well as offering commentary on the life we can live outside of our mainstream expectations.

Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

All of them!!!

I am finding myself intrigued by the library of books published by Frieda McFadden. They are mysterious and gripping. I have also quite a few books by Katherine Center on the list for 2025. They are easy fictional reads, yet speak to everyday real life. I enjoy her writing style and conceptual frameworks in her novels.

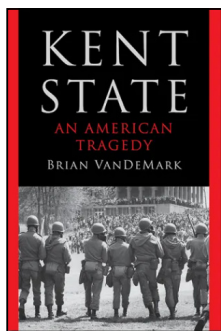
TOP PICKS FOR JIM GILL, TREASURER



Top Read(s) in 2024

***True North: A Novel* by Andrew J. Graff**

This novel resonated with me because it is the story of a family, a couple, a community, and their connection to a river and how each of those face the challenges and turbulence of a summer in the early 1990's. I liked the setting in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. It was a great summer book!



Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

***Kent State: An American Tragedy* by Brian VanDeMark**

The story of the shootings at Kent State in 1970 is a tragic, yet iconic, part of our nation's history. I am looking forward to reading this definitive account of what happened at Kent State. I am also intrigued about how the events of May 4, 1970 continue to impact not only the people who were there, but a town and a community that will forever be defined by its past.

CONTINTUED - FAVORITE READS OF 2024 & READING PLANS FOR 2025

TOP PICKS FOR COURTNEY WALLACE, SECRETARY

Top Read(s) in 2024

The Archived by Victoria E. Schwab

The Archived was my first read of 2024, because my coworker recommended it as fantasy that I might really enjoy reading. I am still thinking of this book at the end of the year, so clearly it was a really good fantasy book. I have since read the second book in the series and am waiting for the third one to be published someday.

Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

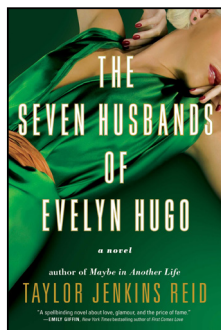
The Bletchley Riddle by Ruta Sepetys and Steve Sheinkin

Ruta Sepetys is one of my favorite young adult historical writers and I can't wait to read her most recent release, *The Bletchley Riddle*. Ruta Sepetys always finds a historical story that isn't well known and brings it to life. She writes in a way that you don't feel like you are reading a middle school book.

"LITERACY IS THE MOST BASIC CURRENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY."

- Barack Obama

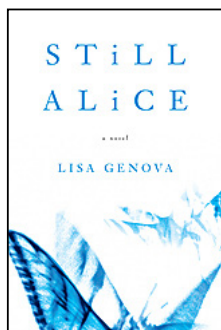
TOP PICKS FOR KELSEY MCCONAHA, MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR



Top Read(s) in 2024

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid

I absolutely loved this book! The golden era of Hollywood has always fascinated me, and this story offered so much more than I expected. It provides a unique exploration of intimacy, showcasing diverse relationships that nearly every reader can connect with on some level. It was an emotional rollercoaster—in the best way possible!



Still Alice by Lisa Genova

This wasn't my usual type of read, but it was recommended to me after a loved one was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's. While it was a tough and, at times, frightening read, it had such a profound impact on me that I had to include it in my top picks for 2024. The book sheds light on a devastating disease by taking readers through its journey with thoughtful and educational writing. Heartbreaking yet beautiful, it's a truly remarkable read. Don't be afraid to pick it up!

Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

The Seven Year Slip by Ashley Poston

I've been craving a light read, and a few people have recommended this book. I'm told it offers a unique take on relationships, timing, love, loss, and self-discovery. I'm excited to dive in and see if it lives up to the hype!

CONTINTUED - FAVORITE READS OF 2024 & READING PLANS FOR 2025

TOP PICKS FOR CHRISTINE KENDLE, MEMBER AT LARGE

Top Read(s) in 2024

The Diamond Eye by Kate Quinn

I really enjoy historical fiction, and this book did not disappoint. It was rich with historical details of the life of Mila Pavlichenko, a Russian librarian who became the world's most deadly female sniper during WWII, earning her the title Lady Death. The book chronicles her training, her call to fight in the Russian Army and the eventual realization of her immense skill. Following the war, Mila, now a war heroine, was selected as a Russian delegate on a goodwill tour to the US where she developed an unexpected friendship with US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Looking Forward to Reading in 2025

The American Queen by Vanessa Miller

The American Queen is at the top of my 2025 book list. A historical fiction, the book takes place between 1985 and 1889 and tells the story of Louella and William, two former slaves who demonstrate great hope, love, and resilience as they face the turmoil of the post war south.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- Collected over \$1,000 to promote literacy during the annual Shred Day event
 - Awarded two \$500 literacy scholarships
 - Supported 28 tutoring sessions, assisting 17 students
 - \$550 donation to Lacey Performing Arts Center for the "Calming Corner"
 - \$150 donation to the Tuscarawas County Public Library System's "Bunny Run 5K"
-

TUSCARAWAS COUNTY LIBRARIES

Claymont Public Library
215 E. Third Street
Uhrichsville, OH 44683
Phone: 740-922-3626

Mineral City Nicole Donant
8503 S High Ext
Mineral City, OH 44656
Phone: 330-859-9100

TCPL - Emma Huber Memorial Library
356 5th Street N.W.
Strasburg, OH 44680
Phone: 330-878-5711

Dennison Branch Library
15 N. Fourth Street
Dennison, OH 44621
Phone: 740-922-5851

Newcomerstown Public Library
123 E. Main Street
Newcomerstown, OH 43832
Phone: 740-498-8228

TCPL - Sugarcreek Branch
120 S. Broadway Street
Sugarcreek, OH 44681
Phone: 740-852-2813

Dover Public Library
525 N. Walnut Street
Dover, OH 44622
Phone: 330-343-6123

Tuscarawas County Public Library
121 Fair Avenue N.W.
New Philadelphia, OH 44663
Phone: 330-364-4474

TCPL - Tuscarawas Branch
209 S. Main Street
Tuscarawas, OH 44682
Phone: 740-922-2748

Gnadenhutten Public Library
160 N. Walnut Street
Gnadenhutten, OH 44629
Phone: 740-254-9224

TCPL - Bolivar Branch
455 W. Water Street
Bolivar, OH 44612
Phone: 330-874-2720

Kent State Tuscarawas Library
330 University Dr. NE
New Philadelphia, OH 44663
Phone: 330-308-7471

MEET THE BOARD: SAME FACES, NEW ROLES



Rachael Bowers, Vice President

Rachael Bowers is an English Language Arts and yearbook teacher at Newcomerstown High School. She also serves on the One Book One Community committee through the Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition. She constantly strives to pass down the love of learning and desire to continue learning to her students. Rachael prays that each student entering her classroom recognizes their right and capacity to learn and grow as human beings. She believes in the value of learning about our careers, our interests, our families, our world. Rachael lives in Bolivar, Ohio, with her husband Rob and her son Bobby.



Courtney Wallace, Secretary

Courtney is the Bolivar Branch Supervisor for the Tuscarawas County Public Library System. Her passion in life is helping people and serving the community. As a student, she struggled with reading and writing, which is why she believes in the literacy coalition's mission statement. She understands how the right book and person can make all the difference in the world. She received the Trojan Pride Award from the Tuscarawas Valley Local Schools for outstanding service and dedication to the TV community in February 2023.



Christine Kendle, Member at Large

Christine Kendle is the 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator for Ohio State University Extension in Tuscarawas County. Additionally, she serves as an Area Leader for Area 14 which includes Carroll, Harrison, Jefferson, and Tuscarawas Counties. She is a graduate of The Ohio State University with a BS in Human Ecology with specialization in Dietetics and an MS in Human Nutrition. Her primary areas of programming emphasis include leadership development, camping initiatives, nutrition, and health related topics. Her passion is to impact lives through the work she does in the community. Chris is an avid reader and also enjoys scrapbooking and quilting. She cherishes the time she spends with her family, husband Todd and daughters Adeline and Allison.

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