

# Between the Lines

*The Charlotte County Libraries & History Official Newsletter*

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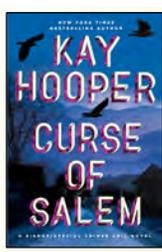
*Staff Picks of the  
Month*

December 2021



# Coming Soon to Our Collection

Browse through the hundreds of items that are on order right now: [tinyurl.com/ComingSoon](https://tinyurl.com/ComingSoon)



## **Curse of Salem**, by Kay Hooper

The small town of Salem has been quiet for months--or so Bishop and his elite Special Crimes Unit believe. But then Hollis Templeton and Diana Hayes receive a warning—in Diana's eerie gray time between the world of the living and the realm of the dead—that a twisted killer is stalking Salem.

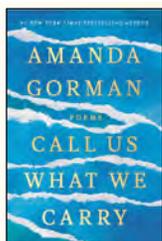
Release date: December 28<sup>th</sup>

## **Bright Burning Things**, by Lisa Harding

Haunted by her failed career and lingering trauma from her childhood, Sonya fell deep into an alcoholic abyss. What kept her from losing herself completely was Tommy, her son. Addiction amplified her fear of losing her child; every maternal misstep compelled her to drink. Tommy's precious life was in her shaky hands. Eventually Sonya was forced to make a choice. Give up drinking or lose Tommy—forever.



Release date: December 7<sup>th</sup>



## **Call Us What We Carry: Poems**, by Amanda Gorman

#1 NYT bestselling author and presidential inaugural poet laureate Amanda Gorman captures a shipwrecked moment in time and transforms it into a lyric of hope and healing. Gorman explores history, language, identity, and erasure through an imaginative and intimate collage.

Release date: December 7<sup>th</sup>

## **South of Heaven [DVD]**

Convicted felon Jimmy gets early parole after serving twelve years for armed robbery. Upon his release he vows to give his girlfriend Annie, who is dying of cancer, the best last year of her life. But when Jimmy gets into a freak accident that puts him in the crosshairs of local crime boss Whit Price, he must stop at nothing to fight for whatever time they have left.



Release date: December 11<sup>th</sup>

*Join the wait list! Although on-order items are not yet available for checkout, you can still place holds on them.*

# Library Bulletin

## Charlotte County Centennial Celebration Comes to an End

As we come to the end of Charlotte County's centennial celebration, Libraries and History staff would like to thank our patrons and our community for supporting us throughout 2021. We hope you enjoyed our centennial programming; some of the highlights include The Centennial Exposition, This is Our Charlotte, Charlotte County Through the Decades, History Comes Alive, and Telling Your Story: History in the Parks. All these programs, along with many others, are available virtually through our YouTube channel, which you can access directly from the main Libraries and History webpage. We look forward to seeing you in the new year as we return to in-person programming and outreach.



All library locations will be **closed** on **Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>** and **Saturday, December 25<sup>th</sup>** in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas.

Your checkouts will **NOT** be due during our closure!



Did you know that the library is always accepting donations for our local food pantries? Not only can you bring in non-perishable food items to clear your library fines, but you can also bring in donations simply to help our community—especially during the holidays.

For more information about Food For Fines, call 941.613.3200 or your local branch.



Keep track of the things that matter most to you with *Morningstar!*

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Access for free at home with your library card:  
[tinyurl.com/5b2fk4zv](https://tinyurl.com/5b2fk4zv)

## A Deep-Dive into the History of Our Celebrations

As we enter the holiday season, Libraries and History would like to share past traditions and experience as seen through our newspaper collection. Available on microfilm at Mid-County Regional Library and through our online resources, these newspapers offer a unique glimpse of the people of Charlotte County and their holiday celebrations.

One element of the holiday season that has changed little in nearly 100 years is the presence of advertisements. Although in black and white versus color, and limited to newspapers rather than across television screens, historic ads offer “Christmas Suggestions” such as “Fine Xmas Candies” and “Gifts for the Golfer,” complete with both picture and item descriptions to ensure positive sales. The *Punta Gorda Herald* would also devote entire issues, usually the week before Christmas (due to the newspaper being published weekly versus daily at the time), to discussing the importance of the holiday spirit in both civic and religious tones as well as providing information about local holiday activities.



While older issues of the Herald centered on Christian holiday traditions, post-World War II issues of the newspaper, known as the *Herald-News* by the 1960s and 1970s, illustrate a more diverse range of holiday traditions. The December 7, 1974 *Herald-News*, for example, features an article titled “Chanukah...The Feast of Lights” that not only provides readers with historical information on Hannukah but also publicizes the Temple Shalom, also known as the Jewish Center of Port Charlotte. There are also articles and advertisements for the holiday celebrations and activities of local organizations like the Kiwanis Club, the Charlotte County Friends of Music, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Punta Gorda Boat Club—all of which speak to the growth of Charlotte County.

Our newspapers are not the only window into the holiday past, however. To learn more about how Charlotte County has celebrated the holiday season, please visit our Online Archives, where you can view images of Christmas cards, holiday parades and local organizations' Christmas parties. From all of us at Libraries and History, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Visit our Online Archives and more!

[tinyurl.com/OnlineArchives](http://tinyurl.com/OnlineArchives)

# Managing Stress Over the Holidays



Although the holiday season is a time of joy and gratitude for many, we know it can also be challenging. This year, set aside some time to consider how you can support your mental health before you face the stress of the season. We've put together a specially curated list of titles (and their best tips!) perfect for developing the tools you need to make it through anything life may throw at you.

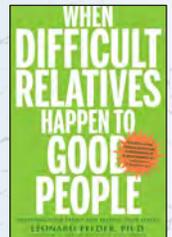


## Mindful shopping

To avoid a January “debt hangover,” rein in the gift-giving. Unsubscribe from the promotional emails that fill your inbox. When shopping in person, stick to a list. Pay with the cash you’ve brought rather than impulse-buying with credit. Finally, ask yourself, “Who are you going to release from a social gifting contract this year?” — *Calm Christmas and a Happy New Year*, by Beth Kempton

## Peaceful gatherings

Do your family celebrations tend toward the combative? Think about past gatherings and ask yourself, “How long were things relatively peaceful before they began to turn sour?” Try a shorter celebration this year. Where a single large table might be dominated by a few opinionated relatives, try setting smaller tables. — *When Difficult Relatives Happen to Good People*, by Dr. Leonard Felder



## Soothing snacks

In this season of feasting, include some stress-relieving foods:

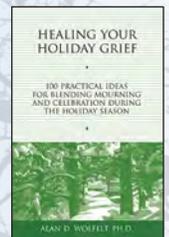
- “Holidays got you riled up? Try eating 1 cup of low-fat yogurt or 2 tablespoons of mixed nuts. The amino acids in these foods will help you calm down.”
- “Watermelon can help relieve stress and anxiety, keep you energized, and boost your metabolism.”
- “Indulge in some chocolate. There’s no shortage of it this time of year, and it contains phenylethylamine and tryptophan, which release serotonin (your body’s natural ‘happy drug’) to your brain.”

— *Holiday Hacks*, by Keith Bradford



## Make space for grief

If you’re grieving, lonely, or estranged from family, December can be the hardest time of the year. It can help to have something to look forward to. “If you’re worried about making it through the holidays this year, plan a reward for yourself in early or mid-January...What restores and renews you? That’s what you’re looking for.” — *Healing Your Holiday Grief*, by Alan D. Wolfelt

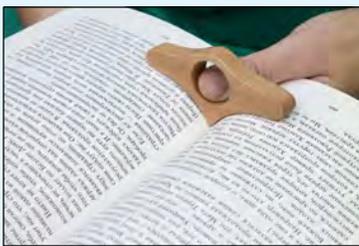


(Hoopla)

# Great Gifts for the Bookworm in Your Life

Finding just the right presents for your loved ones can be a daunting task. If you have a fellow book-lover in your life, use our curated gift guide to show them you care. Or, grab some ideas for your own wish list! If you decide to do your shopping online, check out last month's Tech Tips column, where we break down all the best advice for protecting yourself during digital transactions.

## For the all-day, every-day reader



### Book Page Holder

If you do a lot of reading, you know that holding your book open for extended periods of time can cause hand fatigue or thumb cramping. We know the perfect solution!

Due to its ergonomic design, wearing a book page holder on your thumb will allow you to read comfortably for as long as you wish. This makes an especially useful gift for a reader on-the-go, since a book page holder also enables you to read with a single hand!

## For the lover of the little things

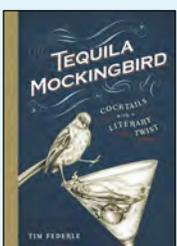


### Magnetic Bookmarks

There's nothing wrong with a traditional cardstock or ribbon bookmark, but have you ever tried a magnetic one? Never worry about your bookmark slipping out

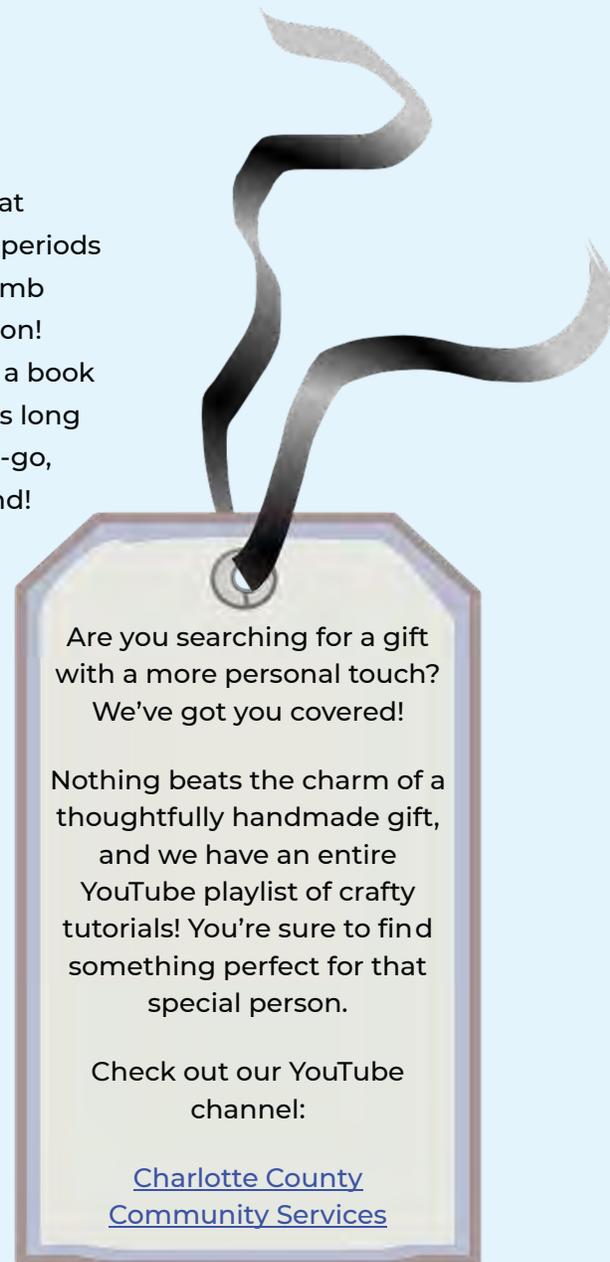
and losing your place again! Since each side of the bookmark has a magnet attached, the pages are tightly pinched together in place, budge-free!

## For the host of book club



### *Tequila Mockingbird: Cocktails with a Literary Twist*, by Tim Federle

This cocktail recipe book is sure to have all the ingredients for a fun night with friends! Try your hand at mixology and have a chuckle at the cleverly themed drinks.



## For the collector



### Personalized “Library of” Embosser

Does your recipient cherish their personal

collection of books? Or, do you want to make sure what you’ve lent out gets returned to you? This charming, easy to use tool will make all the difference! Many different customisable embossers are available online, especially from online marketplaces such as Etsy.

## For the always-put-together



### Sofa Pocket Organizer

Once you have one of these, you can’t go back! This practical gift is sure to be appreciated,

and it’s still unique enough that you can be pretty confident that your book-lover doesn’t have one yet. Books, magazines, tablets, remotes and so much more will be just a reach away!

## For the self-care expert



### Electric Mug Warmer

We can all agree: getting engrossed in a thrilling page-turner only to

realize you’ve been neglecting your coffee for the past hour is not ideal. Nobody wants to interrupt their book to make a trip to the microwave! Solve this problem with ease by getting an electric mug warmer. Simply plug into an outlet, and have infinitely warm joe. Or, some hot cocoa!

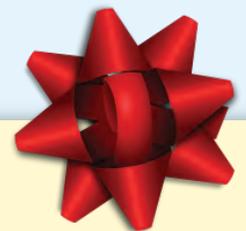
## For anyone



### Fun Bookends

Get creative! There is a themed bookend for seemingly just

about anything. If you or your person has a particular passion that would display nicely on a bookshelf, check online for a bookend with the same theme! Also, learn how to DIY below.

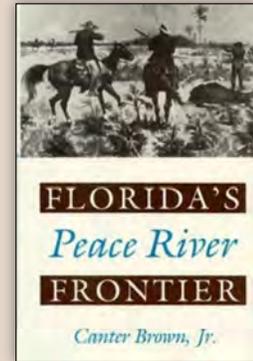
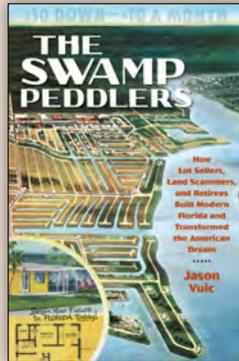
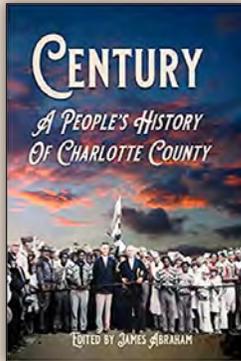


Did you know that the Charlotte County Libraries & History division has multiple makerspaces available for use? If you’re looking for the perfect place to get into the DIY zone for this year’s gift-giving season, look no further! Use one of our laser cutters to swiftly craft a beautiful wooden piece. Or, give your gift a sentimental feel by using our 3D printer to make something amazing! There’s a plethora of free, downloadable 3D print files to choose from online, including creative bookends. Here’s a resource that we often reference: [thingiverse.com](https://www.thingiverse.com) Cricuts and sewing machines are also available.

Learn more about how you can use a makerspace tool by calling **941.613.3200**, or call your favorite branch (currently available *only* at our Mid-County, Port Charlotte, and Punta Gorda branches).

# Continue the Celebration

Charlotte County's Centennial year is coming to a close, but we still have so much more to offer you!  
These 3 books will give you some intriguing insight into the history of our area.



***Century: A People's History of Charlotte County*, by James Abraham** | One of two new books on Charlotte County published during the centennial year, *Century* provides readers with an intimate and personal account of the past 100 years. Author James Abraham roots his research and analysis solely in family values and human individualism. This makes for history written with an appreciation for emotions and human frailty that will hold the interest of readers and listeners.

***The Swamp Peddlers: How Lot Sellers, Land Scammers, and Retirees Built Modern Florida and Transformed the American Dream*, by Jason Vuic** | Florida has long beckoned retirees seeking to spend their golden years in the sun, but, for many, the American dream of owning a home here was financially impossible. That changed in the 1950s, when the so-called "installment land sales industry" seemingly appeared out of nowhere to hawk billions of dollars of Florida residential property, sight unseen, to retiring northerners. For only \$10 down and \$10 a month, working-class pensioners could buy a piece of the Florida dream: a graded homesite that would be waiting for them in a planned community when they were ready to build. The result was sprawling, exurban communities with no down-towns and little industry but millions of residential lots. As historian Jason Vuic recounts in this fascinating book, these communities allowed generations of northerners to move to Florida cheaply, but at a price: high-pressure sales tactics begat fraud; poor urban planning begat sprawl; developers cleared forests, drained wetlands, and built thousands of miles of roads in grid-like subdivisions, which, 50 years later, played an inordinate role in the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis.

***Florida's Peace River Frontier*, by Canter Brown, Jr** | For most of the nineteenth century, southwest Florida and the Peace River Valley remained a frontier as wild as any in the American West. Brown records the area's economic, social, political, and racial history, telling the story through the individuals and families who participated in these events. *Florida's Peace River Frontier* will appeal to persons interested in Florida history, the Civil War and Reconstruction Eras, African American history, and the history of the American Frontier.

# Tech Tips: All About the AR System and How to Use it in the Library



Hey everyone, Youth Librarian Ms. Melanie here to share all about Accelerated Reader (AR) Reading Levels: what they are, how to find them, and how the library can help your children find books at their reading level! I spoke with Mrs. Colleen, the Media Specialist at Meadow Park Elementary, about Accelerated Reader and what it means to their school. She said that AR is so important because it encourages reading and allows teachers and parents to monitor their children's progress. Each student has a card tracking their current reading levels for fiction and nonfiction, so they can find books at the right level. Teachers provide fun incentives for those who meet their reading goals!

**What is AR?** AR stands for Accelerated Reader. It is a program that is used in several of our local schools. Children read books they enjoy and then take a test to ensure that they are understanding and engaging with what they read. Books are given an AR level based on their difficulty, so if the test is too easy, kids can read more challenging material and grow their reading comprehension. Books are also given point values; when a student passes the book's test, they can earn points in the program. A longer book might be worth more AR points than a shorter book, even if both have the same reading level.

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*According to the Renaissance website, "Accelerated Reader puts students in the driver's seat. You guide students, while engaging quizzes and activities help hone students' reading skills with authentic practice—encouraging growth."*

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**What does this mean for the library?** We're proud to support our students' Accelerated Reader goals. The reading level of each book included in the program is provided by the AR Renaissance website. A book's reading level in our library catalog matches the AR level given in this official database of AR titles.

At the Mid-County Regional Library (and coming soon to the rest of our branches), we use a color-coded system that makes it easier for children and parents to identify books at the right reading level when browsing. We have 5 colors that represent AR levels 1.0-5.9. We've added colored labels to the spines of many of the juvenile fiction books that are included in the AR system and associated with tests. Our website also has some amazing features that can help children find books at their level.

AR Levels:	Label color:
1.0—1.9	Green
2.0—2.9	Yellow
3.0—3.9	Red
4.0—4.9	Lavender
5.0—5.9	Blue

**Did you know that we have a library catalog specifically for kids?** From the main page of the library catalog website, you can click on the link on the left side titled “Kids’ Catalog.” You can tell you are in the right spot from the bright colors and adorable photo icons for easy browsing! These icons allow children to navigate the catalog using the pictures rather than having to spell things out. This also helps parents to easily find materials to match their kids’ interests. Just follow the picture prompts until you get to the results you want.



If you have a particular book in mind, you can enter the title or author into the search bar. If you’d rather see all books on a particular level, leave the search bar blank and click “Search” to pull up a list of all our children’s items. From here, use the filters on the right side of the screen to limit the results. If you are looking for books in your reading level or for a specific point value, or for anything that is in the AR database, those options are towards the bottom of the list of search filters. Don’t forget to click to expand “View All” in each section of search filters to see everything we have to offer for any level.

At the library, our goal is to foster a love of reading and help children read on their level and above. Here’s a fun tip that I learned from Mrs. Colleen about finding a “just right” book! Use the 5-finger rule: if a child struggles with more than five words on a single page, move to an easier book. If they know all the words on every page, it may be time to move up a level. A “just right” book contains less than five tricky words per page, allowing the child to develop their vocabulary without feeling like it is too hard for them.



# Staff Picks

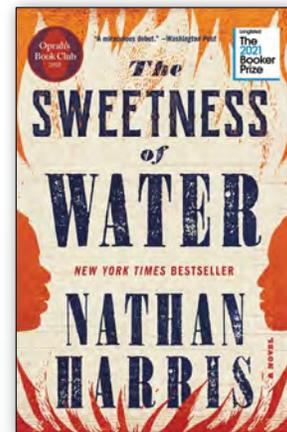


“*White Smoke* by Tiffany D. Jackson tells the story of Marigold, a track star who took a wrong turn in life. Her parents decide to move from California to a deserted Midwestern city. Little does Marigold know, the ghost town she now calls home really is haunted! A ‘ghost’ in their new house tries to force them out. This book shows a division between poverty and wealth and vividly displays contempt, greed, and corruption within the town. Parallels between real-life and fiction make this story delightfully creepy.”

— *Ellis Padilla, Library Technician*

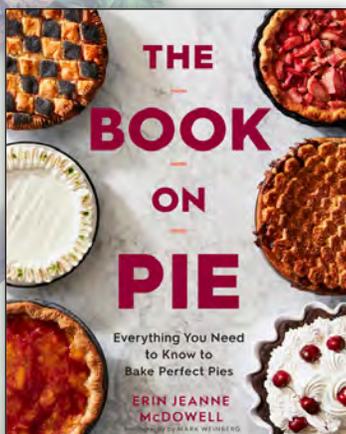
“*The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris begins at the end of the Civil War in a small town in Georgia. Two brothers (former slaves) have a chance encounter with George Walker, a second generation land owner who offers genuine employment for an honest wage, in a time where they are still looked upon as slaves. As you can imagine, this creates a lot of controversy which impacts all of their lives. This book invoked many different emotions as a reader. Character development was absolutely amazing. The characters felt like someone you knew; you could see their strengths and weaknesses as the story progressed. At the end of the book you could find redeemable qualities in most of the characters, whether they were primary or secondary. A very engaging book; definitely worth reading.”

— *Suzanne Wardell and Bryan Forsythe, Library Technicians*



“Now is a great time to fire up the oven and start rolling out pie dough. I have read many books on making pies. Erin’s book, *The Book On Pie: Everything You Need to Know to Bake Perfect Pies*’ is an excellent read as she takes you step-by-step in the process. Erin shows you how mixing can create either a mealy crust or a flaky one. One of the valuable tips I learned was folding the pie dough onto itself creates layers in the dough; the result is an amazing flaky pastry. The book is divided into different kinds of pies such as fruit, custard, cream and cold set just to name a few. Along the way, Erin gives you “Pie Pep Talks” on the best way to handle certain processes. The book is illustrated with many full color photos and the recipes are easy to read and follow. I have made a few pies from this book and they all have been incredible.”

— *Spencer Pullen, Library Technician*



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