



NewsLetter

Meet Barbara Brescia – New Friends of Pickens County Library Board Member

By Carol Hagadorn

We would like to welcome a new board member, Barbara Brescia. In her own words, she tells us some details about her life.

“After graduating from college, I taught and worked in gifted education for a northern Illinois school district for ten years. After too many severe winters, I moved to Florida, went back to school, then took a position with a publishing company. Twenty years later, I retired and, with no regrets, moved from hot, humid Florida to the mild climate of the north Georgia mountains where we get to experience all four seasons. I enjoy reading, kayaking, hiking, quilting, knitting, and traveling with family. I am most grateful to be living in the mountains with my loving husband.”

We are excited that she has expressed an interest in helping the Pickens County Library become a better place for all of us. Welcome, Barbara!



A Message *from* Brent Turbeville *President, Friends of the Pickens Library*

Dear Fellow Book Lovers,

Winter in the North Georgia Mountains brings a quieter pace and a sense of reflection. When the days are short and the air is crisp, it's a perfect season to slow down, enjoy a good book, and appreciate the simple comforts that make our community special. The Pickens County Library continues to be a welcoming place to do just that.

This past year was an especially meaningful one for the Friends of Pickens Library. In 2025, we were able to donate \$16,000 to support the library's collection of new materials, books, and resources. This significant contribution helped ensure that the library can continue meeting the needs and interests of readers of all ages throughout Pickens County.

We also launched our **Business Patrons' Program**, and welcomed generous local supporters such as **The Community Bank of Pickens County**, **The Community Thrift Store**, and **Amicalola Electric**. Their involvement strengthens our ability to give back to the library while building partnerships that benefit the entire community.

Our events and programs continued to bring people together. **The Fall Used Book Sale** was a great success, and our author events which featured **Christopher Feldt** and **Patsy Payne Benson** offered fascinating insights into local history and storytelling. These gatherings reflected the library's role as more than just a place for books, it is a center for learning, conversation and connection.

Throughout the year, our **Book Sale Shelves** inside the library and the **Little Free Library** at the Pickens County Administrative Building remained popular as ways for the people in the community to discover books while supporting library programs. These ongoing efforts were made possible through the dedication and generosity of our supporters.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to supporting the library, encouraging literacy, and strengthening community engagement. Whether you are a longtime member or new to the Friends of the Pickens Library, your involvement makes a real difference.

Wishing you a warm and peaceful winter season filled with good books and meaningful moments.

kindest Regards,
Brent Turbeville

History of the Pickens County Library: 1947-1952



*These photos are from the book, **A Pictorial History of Pickens County, Georgia** found in the Georgia Room at the Pickens Library.*

This information comes from a document of unknown authorship found in the vertical file of the current Georgia Room. My comments are in italics.

By Carol Hagadorn

While the present courthouse was under construction, the County Library was housed in the Pickens County High School (now Jasper Elementary.) This situation existed until the new courthouse was finished in 1949. At that time the library was given a small room in the basement of the newly constructed courthouse.

When the WPA program was phased out by the Federal Government, the County Board of Education (Tom Holly, Superintendent of Schools) picked up the tab and paid a very small salary. This source of funds continued until 1952, when J. S. Darnell was elected County Commissioner. Whether he saw the value of a good county library or he listened to the urging of his wife, Henrietta, the county joined the

Board of Education in paying the librarian's salary. *Thank you, Tom Holly, J. S. and Henrietta Darnell!*

(This is the second installment in a series that is meant to inform current library patrons about the early history of the Pickens County Library.)

Become a Member

Today



friendsofpickenslibrary.org

You are invited to visit the Friends' website. On it, you can become a member online, read past newsletters, and check out the latest news from the library. It also has a link to our Facebook page and our mission statement.

Come join us, and become a member today!

Friends of the Pickens Library • 100 Library Lane • Jasper, Ga 30143

What are the Friends' Board Members Reading Now?

By Carol Hagadorn

Winter is prime time for reading. Board members often ask each other for book recommendations. The following are an assortment of books from which to choose! Happy reading everyone.

Susan Gooch — **Olive Kitteridge** by Elizabeth Strout*

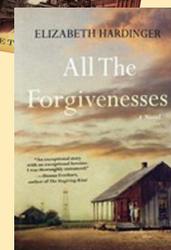
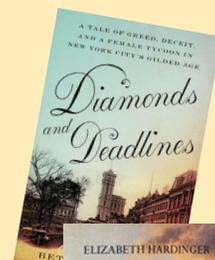
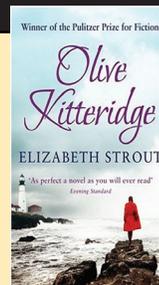
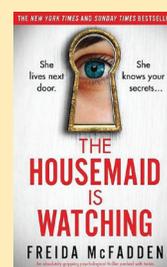
Carol Hagadorn — **The Rose Code** by Kate Quinn. It is about people who worked at Bletchley Park in England and decoded messages from the Germans and Italians during WWII.*

Kathy Hanofee — **All the Forgivenesses** by Elizabeth Hardinger. The All the Forgivenesses book is about a family who live on a farm at the turn of the century. They faced enormous challenges and tragedies. One family member became a beacon of hope and showed how the power of love can be victorious when faced with extreme circumstances.

Barbara Brescia — **Agent 355** by Marie Benedict. It is about a young woman who was a spy during the American Revolution. Also, Barbara read **Diamonds and Deadlines** by Betsy Priolesu. It is about Miriam Leslie (Mrs. Frank Leslie) who became one of the richest women of the Gilded Age by heading a publishing company. She had a very complicated life.

Brenda Wynn — **The Housemaid is Watching** by Freida Mc Fadden. It is a thriller with lots of twists and turns in the Housemaid Series*.

Sandy Tatum — **Trust** by Hernan Diaz. It is available at the Pickens County Library in either digital or hard copy.*



*Books or e-books found through the Sequoyah Library System.

Enjoy these or your own favorite books during the chilly days of winter 2026!

2025 Treasurer's Report

By Kathy Westbrook

In early 2025, Katie Dobson, head librarian, proposed that the Friends of the Pickens Library donate \$16,000 for books. With the beautiful new addition to our library, there were many empty shelves. This year's book purchases have started to fill those shelves. The money came from our fund-raising efforts-- which included used book sales, membership dues, and local grants. We also used some reserves to reach this goal.

In addition, we donated \$4,500 to purchase a vending machine for the new library. The profits from this machine will go back to the library.

We also spent \$860 on programs; this included our speaker programs, and the library programs where the Friends supplied refreshments.

This totals \$21,360 total donations in 2025. As a comparison, in 2024, the Friends donated \$7000 for books and subscriptions, and in 2023, the Friends donated \$4,500.

Thank you, patrons and Friends, for your continued efforts to make the Pickens Library a better place for all of us!

Check Out Our 2025 Wrapped

Curious about the top ten most checked out items at SRLS in 2025? Look no further! Check out what made the top ten list for physical and digital item check outs below:

Top 10 Physical Item Checkouts

1. Chromebooks
2. WiFi Hotspots
3. The Women by Kristin Hannah
4. Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites Pass
5. People Magazine
6. National Geographic Kids Magazine
7. Dog Man: For Whom the Ball Rolls by Dave Pilkey
8. Dog Man: Unleashed by Dave Pilkey
9. Ukuleles
10. Dog Man by Dave Pilkey

Top 10 Digital Item Checkouts

1. The New Yorker Magazine
2. New Scientist Magazine
3. US Weekly Magazine
4. The Week Magazine
5. National Geographic Magazine
6. Woman's World Magazine
7. The Crash audiobook by Frieda McFadden
8. Onyx Storm audiobook by Rebecca Yarros
9. The Women audiobook by Kristin Hannah
10. Guardian Weekly Magazine



I'm Not Just February

I'm not just February
 With winds that blow
 All day, and piled-up snow;
 I'm Washington and Lincoln, too,
 Who kept our country's flag for you!
 I'm Valentine of airy grace—
 With golden hearts and hearts
 And pretty cards that people send,
 Quite as a secret, to a friend
 Though I am short of days and small,
 I'm quite a big month, after all!

By **Annette Wynne (1889 - 1952)**



In the Foreward, found in her poetry book, For Days and Days; a Year-Round Treasury of Child Verse, Annette Wynne stated, "The aim of these verses is to please children – and others. They were written and arranged calendar-wise, for school children's entertainments." This poem, "I'm Not Just February," was also found in the book For Days and Days; a Year-Round Treasure of Child Verse, which was published in 1919.

Research about Annette Wynne brought up very little about her life. An entry by Earl Tucker (boards.straightdope.com) stated that she was born in Brooklyn, New York, and after graduation from college, she worked in Alaska. Ms. Wynne spent most of the 1910s as a newspaper editor in Portland, Oregon. She returned to New York and married Benjamin Steigman, a teacher. Census records show that they did not stay together and they also show that she possibly died in Westchester County, New York in 1952.

Books Written by Working People

Mailman: My Wild Ride Delivering the Mail in Appalachia and Finally Finding Home and All The Beauty in the World: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Me

By **Carol Hagadorn**

I read or listened to many excellent books in 2025. These two books were similar in that the authors shared behind-the-scenes workplace experiences. Stephen Starring Grant worked for the United States Post Office as a rural route carrier in Virginia and Patrick Bringley worked as a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Newly laid off from a job in corporate marketing, Steve Grant needed a job that provided a living for his family and health insurance to cover the bills of his cancer treatment. As this happened to Steve during the pandemic, securing a job was not an easy task. Steve found mail delivery to his old neighbors in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia gave him the job that paid the bills and reconnected him to the people and familiar land from where he came. Sometimes, he found himself in life-threatening situations where he was challenged to think quickly and creatively. Steve learned that he, too, might be called upon to come to a struggling neighbor's aid. The book gave many interesting and funny details about the job of a rural route carrier and the ups and downs of a sometimes tedious and sometimes rewarding job.

Patrick Bingley started a career with the New Yorker magazine shortly after graduating from college. Tragedy stuck his family and Patrick no longer thought that he could continue at the New Yorker. He felt that his soul would be better soothed and possibly healed at the beautiful Metropolitan Museum of Art

—and he was right! In his ten years as a security guard amongst some of the most beautiful artwork in the world, he learned to become comfortable with the patrons and his colleagues. Readers not only learn about his growth as a man, a husband, and a father, but we also get to find out about the various collections at the Met, and the job expectations of a security guard at the Met.

Books that delve into workplaces, like these, give readers fascinating inside views of what it takes for employees to excel in their job, and, who knows, you could decide to pursue a career as a result of reading about someone else's true-life job experiences.

Both books can be found on the Libby app, and in the stacks at one of the branches of the Sequoyah Regional Library.

