



jeffclf.org
Spring 2026

FRIENDS

Footnotes



Fall Whale of a
Used Book Sale
(Page 5)

Naming rights at
Arvada Library
(Page 8)

Spotlight on
Evergreen Library
(Page 10)

Welcome

Welcome New JCLF Board Members



Arvada resident **Patricia (Patsy) Pfaff** joined the JCLF Board of Directors in December 2025 and comes to us with “a passion for books and reading.” In her own words: “I believe education is a natural result of reading for both children and adults, and I have given a lot of thought to where and how I can make a difference.” Patsy is a member

of P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization), she is active in the First United Church of Arvada, and she is a long-time volunteer at Miner’s Alley Performing Arts Center in Golden.



Dan Larson is a Wheat Ridge resident and was also elected to serve on Wheat Ridge City Council, District IV. Now retired, Dan was previously a corporate Communications and Public Affairs professional for Enerplus Corporation, and was the journalist/editor/publisher for Hunter Publishing Co., located in Des Plaines, IL.

In Dan’s own words: “Libraries must continue their vital role in communities and the Jeffco Library Foundation remains an essential element in sustaining the county’s public library as an essential destination.”



With over 30 years of experience as a mortgage broker, **Scott Moore** brings a strong foundation of financial expertise and client advocacy. A father of four grown children, parenthood has shaped his values around responsibility, long-term planning and community. He stays actively involved in supporting initiatives that strengthen the community and

those it serves. He is honored to contribute his experience and perspective in service as a JCLF board member.

Welcome New JCLF Staff Members



Please join us in welcoming **Renee Bergstrom** as our new Office Coordinator. With over 15 years with Big Red Bike Consulting, Renee has helped at a variety of Denver businesses and nonprofits grow programs and community engagement to support all ages from school children through seniors across the Denver metro area, including the production of the

People Behind the Music educational series. Renee is excited to lend her support in delivering quality programming and services as part of the JCLF team. Welcome Renee!



Welcome **Sam Marko** as our new Marketing and Communications specialist! Sam has spent his career working in communications and advertising copy, contributing to projects ranging from local government outreach to national brand campaigns. Sam got his Jefferson County Library Card from the Evergreen Library when he was six years old, and he’s excited to work with the JCLF because, as he says, “reading is punk rock.”

Interested in volunteering at JCLF?

Visit <https://jeffclf.org/how-you-can-help/volunteer/> for more information on volunteer and employment opportunities!



We are grateful for the outpouring of support for our Jefferson County Public Library this Colorado Gives Day!

\$22,491 RAISED!

Director's Notes



Author Lewis Carroll once wrote: "I wonder if the snow loves the trees and fields, that it kisses them so gently? And then it covers them up snug, you know, with a white quilt; and perhaps it says, 'go to sleep, darlings, till the summer comes again.'"

Now that we are nearing the end of winter – even though our usual snowfall seems to have missed us this year – what better time to snuggle up (just like the trees and fields) and read a good book! You'll find lots of inspiration on what to read by subscribing to JCLF's Shelf Awareness, a monthly on-line review of good reads presented by our bookstore, Whale's Tale Books & Gifts.

Appropriately, one of the latest novels on our list is *The Land in Winter* by Andrew Miller. This novel was a finalist for the 2025 Booker Prize and unveils a "smoldering drama of two couples in rural England" in the early '60s where "emotions rise and the snow falls." If you are looking to engage in international mind travel, you should check out *Return* by Raharimanana, a tale of the impact of colonialism in Madagascar, or *Supersaurio* by Meryem El Mehdati set in the Canary Islands.

No matter what your choice of reading might be, I encourage you to keep at it! According to the 95 Percent Group (an organization focused on literacy training), "*Reading is a lifelong skill that improves memory, builds a robust vocabulary and foundation of knowledge, and adds a richness and depth of meaning to life for all those who can access true, deep comprehension.*"

Please know you can always find good reading material and bargain prices at JCLF's Whale of a Used Book Sales, held each spring and fall at the Jeffco Fairgrounds, and year-round at our Whale's Tale Books & Gifts storefront in Colorado Mills Mall. Plus, your local Jefferson County Public Library offers a landslide of books and materials available for you and your family at no cost!

Now that our Foundation is celebrating its 60th anniversary year, I wish you many good opportunities for reading and enjoying the written word throughout the coming months!

Sincerely,

Jo Schantz Hall, MNM, CFRE, GPC
JCLF Executive Director



Foundation Board 2026

President **Ron Benson** Vice President **Deborah Deal-Blackwell**

Secretary **Jeannie Mann** Treasurer **Cleo Arellano**

Members at Large

Neal Browne Tyrenny Hidy Dan Larson
Richard Kehmeier Jeannie Mann Scott Moore
Rebecca Olchawa Patsy Pfaff Tim Rogers

JCPL Board Advisors

Renny Fagan Donna Walker

Foundation Staff

Executive Director **Jo Schantz Hall, MNM, CFRE, GPC**
jo@jeffclf.org

Office Coordinator **Renee Bergstrom**
renee@jeffclf.org

Bookseller/Warehouse Coordinator **Neil Thoreson**
neil@jeffclf.org

Warehouse Assistant **Oscar Guerrero**
oscar@jeffclf.org

Bookkeeper **Kristi Mladenovic**
kristi@jeffclf.org

Marketing Specialist **Sam Marko**
samuelr.marko@gmail.com

Bookstore Manager **Kirstin Kraig**
kirstin@jeffclf.org

Bookstore Assistant **Janet Spaeth**

Volunteer & Events Coordinator **Megan Fessenden**
megan@jeffclf.org



@JeffcoFriends
jeffclf.org

The mission of JCLF is to support and enrich the capabilities, resources and services of Jefferson County Public Library through fundraising and advocacy efforts that benefit our diverse community.

Footnotes is a newsletter for Friends of Jefferson County Public Library, and we welcome your input.

Please contact the Friends office at 303.403.5075 or friends@jeffclf.org with comments or submissions.

Photo this page courtesy of Steve Hostetler Photography.

Front cover photo courtesy Susan Spring.

JCLF'S BOOKSELLER AND WAREHOUSE COORDINATOR

If you have ever dropped off book donations at our Foundation, if you are one of our warehouse volunteers OR if you've shopped in Bert's Weathered & Treasured corner at our semi-annual Whale of a Used Book Sales, you've undoubtedly met Neil Thoreson, JCLF's Bookseller/Warehouse Coordinator.

Neil has been a mainstay at JCLF since November 2019. Previously, he was the warehouse manager at Green Sheen Paint, a paint recycling operation in Denver. Prior to that, Neil was a Program Director at Sustainability/Parker Personal Care Homes in Arvada, an organization that provides housing and job training for developmentally disabled individuals. Neil also worked as a firefighter for many years at the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District in Bailey, CO.

Not only does Neil oversee our warehouse operations, he is also the driving force behind our online book selling platform, Jeffco Friends, where he sells rare and collectible books on Amazon and eBay.

"I've been with the Foundation for six years now, and every day is a new adventure!" he says. "I'm beyond proud to work for JCLF because of the important work we do to better our community. I'm also very passionate about donating books to many organizations in the Denver area, and around the world! We have provided books to homeless shelters, rehabilitation and physical therapy hospitals, schools in Costa Rica and Nairobi, Kenya, as well as nearby assisted-living facilities, a refugee assistance organization, and local schools and nonprofits."

Neil adds, "I'm always learning and coming up with more ways to connect folks with the books they're looking for."



IN HIS OWN WORDS....

A large and very entertaining part of my job is looking up older books that do not have an ISBN (International Standard Book Number). I do my due diligence on each book to assess its condition, price, and whether I want to sell the book online, at the Whale Sale in Bert's Corner, or send it off to our store at Colorado Mills Mall. Online sales are done on eBay and Amazon—which can be found under "JeffCo Friends". Over the years I have sold some pretty incredible books—including an 1885 first edition two volume set of *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, a 1942 first edition/first printing of John Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*, and an eight volume Easton Press lot of *The Greek Tragedies*.

We are so incredibly lucky to work closely with our used book vendor Dream Books Co., who purchase books from us, and they also take all the books we don't want, which is a great for our organization because all those books are either sold, or they are recycled and stay out of the landfill. Dream Books provides weekly pick-ups for us, and they also take all the leftover books from our Whale Sales at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. Dream Books Co. has a large warehouse in Denver where they process all the books they take in.



NEIL SPENDS HIS HOME LIFE WITH HIS PARTNER, RACHEL, AND A MENAGERIE OF SENIOR PETS INCLUDING 3 DOGS—BIRDY, COPPER, AND DOROTHY, AND ONE CAT, AVI.

IT WAS TRULY A WHALE OF A SALE!

We are proud to announce that our fall 2025 Whale of a Used Book Sale generated more than \$88,000 in gross sales, which included ticket sales, donations, and our Friends of the Library membership fees. We also topped our numbers as far as attendance, with over 3,600 shoppers filling the Jefferson County Fairgrounds exhibit halls for the 4-day event.

The sale began on Thursday evening, Oct. 16, with our Friends-Only Preview Night occurring from 6 to 8 p.m. The sale opened to the public from Friday through Sunday, Oct. 17-19.

As in previous years, JCLF offered an Early Bird opening on Friday, from 8 to 9 a.m. for a fee of \$10 per adult, giving those same shoppers admission to the exhibit halls all throughout the day, up until 5 p.m. Open hours on Saturday were 9 to 5 p.m., and Sunday the 19th featured our usual "Bag Day" from 11 to 3 p.m. On Bag Day, shoppers were able to collect full bags of books and other sales materials for just \$10 per bag and \$12 per box.

This year, we also added something special—a pancake breakfast on Sunday morning made possible by the South Jeffco Rotary Club. And that wasn't all! Colorado State University Extension produced its free Fall Family Fun Day that same morning, featuring hands-on crafts for families, pumpkin bowling, a bouncy castle and a candy giveaway.

Admission to the Whale of a Used Book Sale was \$5 per adult daily, with children (up to age 18) free. We also waived the admission fee for adults who produced their SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) card or showed proof that their children receive free or reduced lunches at school. These admission fees help us cover our cost for use of the Jeffco Fairgrounds and they help us purchase the brightly colored giveaway shopping bags at each sale.

We are grateful to our Friends Community Partners who helped support this stellar event:

BANK OF COLORADO
CITY OF GOLDEN
DREAM BOOKS CO.
ENT CREDIT UNION
COMCAST INTERNET ESSENTIALS
CONFLUENCE COMPANIES
DENVER 7
CLIMB CREDIT UNION
LAKEWOOD FOOTHILLS ROTARY CLUB
NATIONAL LABORATORY OF THE ROCKIES
ROCKY MOUNTAIN SAFETY AND SECURITY



2026 Whale of a Used Book Sales
May 28-31, 2026
October 22-25, 2026

60 YEARS STRONG

This year, 2026, marks our 60th year in partnership with Jefferson County Public Library and our mission remains the same: to support and enrich the capabilities, resources and services of Jefferson County Public Library through fundraising and advocacy efforts that benefit our diverse community.

It has been a privilege to serve and support our public library, and we look forward to celebrating our partnership throughout 2026. Check our website—jeffclf.org—for more information on our anniversary



ONE MORE BOOKLOVER

By Denver7 Chief Meteorologist Lisa Hidalgo

If you're reading this... you're likely a booklover. If not, then maybe I can convince you to become one. One of my proudest moments as a mom was convincing my daughter that books are magical. Trust me...it wasn't easy. Early on, neither of my girls were big readers...especially on vacation. They of course wanted to swim, shop or make TikTok videos. About three years ago, I asked (more like bribed) my daughter to pick out a book at the airport before we left for vacation. I told her that I wanted to read the same book and thought it could make for some good mother/daughter bonding. And if that didn't sell it, the over-priced, sugar-filled coffee bribe did. She ended up picking out *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros. A more than 500-page hardcover book wouldn't have been my first pick to travel with, but she seemed pretty excited about it. So, I bought two copies and lugged them onto the plane with the other two books I had checked out to read.



We decided to start the book together at the pool. I quickly whipped through the first chapter and then nervously watched her. It felt like the first time I fed her solid foods...worried that she wouldn't like it, wouldn't digest it, would just spit it right out. But about 10 pages in, I saw a small change in her demeanor. She sat up a little straighter, pushed her face a little closer into the book and then started biting her nails. She. Was. Hooked. That huge and heavy book went EVERYWHERE with us on that trip...to dinner, to the bathroom, to the amusement park lines. At one point my husband told her to put it down and I gently smacked his leg and said, "Shhhhhh." She was in another world, and it was beautiful to watch.

I think that may have been the first and last time that we read the same book at the same time. My daughter tends to pick up a good romance book, where I lean more towards coming-of-age and character driven books. Either way, browsing the library shelves for our next read makes for some of our favorite time together. My current top five list is:

- *The Heart's Invisible Furies* by John Boyne
- *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving
- *Go as a River* by Shelley Read
- *All the Colors of the Dark* by Chris Whitaker.

That being said, I really enjoyed *Fourth Wing*. Mainly because it's the reason there's one more booklover in the world and why we have a new family tradition...the pre-vacation-airport-bookstore-(or-local library)-stop!

Lisa Hidalgo is Denver7's chief meteorologist. A Colorado native and graduate of Green Mountain High School and University of Colorado Boulder, Lisa loves reading, knitting and running. You can watch Lisa on Denver7 and The Spot Denver 3 weekday mornings from 4:30-9:00am.

Denver7 is a proud partner of Jefferson County Library Foundation and the Whale of a Used Book Sale events.

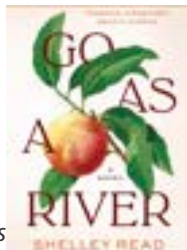


SHELLEY READ HEADLINES 2026 FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING

On March 13th, more than 60 guests filled two ballrooms at the Wheat Ridge Rec Center for our Friends Annual Meeting featuring the acclaimed and award-winning author Shelley Read. Shelley's debut novel, *Go as a River*, is an international bestseller that has sold over a million copies worldwide. The book has also been translated into thirty-four languages and is now in development for film with the Mazur Kaplan Company.



AUTHOR SHELLEY READ



Winner of the High Plains Book Award for Fiction, the Reading the West Book Award for Debut Fiction, and le Prix de l'Union Interalliée, *Go as a River* is also a *Sunday Times* bestseller, Goodreads Choice Award finalist, Amazon Editors' Pick for Best Debut Fiction, Indie Next Pick, and a Colorado Public Radio Books We Love selection, among other national and international accolades.



JCLF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JO SCHANTZ HALL WITH SHELLEY READ.

Shelley has been an award-winning senior lecturer at Western Colorado University for nearly three decades, where she taught writing, literature, environmental studies, and honors. She is a mom, mountaineer, world traveler, and fifth-generation Coloradan who lives with her family in the Elk Mountains of Colorado's Western Slope.

Her book was available for sale and for signing after the luncheon where our guests also enjoyed a buffet lunch catered by Bono's Italian Restaurant in Golden. Her book was available for sale and for signing after the luncheon where our guests also enjoyed a buffet lunch catered by Bono's Italian Restaurant in Golden.

CRITICAL PRAISE FOR GO AS A RIVER

"With delicate precision, Read evokes both Colorado's rugged wilderness and the landscapes of her characters' troubled hearts. An auspicious debut." — **Kirkus Reviews, Starred Review**

"A story of love and independence, sacrifice and one woman's quest to set the past right, Go as a River flows easily and unforgettably." — **Amazon Editors' Pick, Top 20 Debuts of 2023**

"As beautiful as it is devastating." — **Library Journal**

"A lush tale of female resilience. Evokes the awe-inspiring beauty of the Colorado landscape with affection." — **Sunday Times**

Go as a River is available now at Barnes & Noble, Amazon, and wherever books are sold!

BOOKS ON FILM – THE ODYSSEY JULY 17

For the past five years, JCLF has selected a movie based on a popular book to be featured at our annual Books On Film benefit. This year, we have selected *The Odyssey* as our featured film. We will premiere the film on Friday, July 17, at Harkins 14 Cinemas in Arvada.



This year, we are also delighted that Lisa Hidalgo, Denver7's chief meteorologist, will be our event emcee.

The film is being touted as an "epic action fantasy film" written and directed by Christopher Nolan. The story is an adaptation of Homer's ancient Greek tale chronicling Odysseus, the king of Ithaca, and his perilous years-long journey home after the Trojan War as he attempts to reunite with his wife, Penelope. The cast includes Matt Damon as Odysseus, Tom Holland as his son, Telemachus, and Anne Hathaway as Penelope, as well as Lupita Nyong'o, Robert Pattinson, Charlize Theron and Jon Bernthal in supporting roles.

Theatre doors will open at 6:00 p.m. The film will begin at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$50 per person and include the movie premiere shown in a reserved theatre, popcorn and a beverage, entry in a door prize drawing, and a post-film audience discussion led by Dr. Laurialan Reitzammer, Associate Professor of Classics at the University of Colorado Boulder.

For details, please visit www.jeffclf.org, or call 303.403.5075.

JCLF'S SHRED-A-THON!

Many of our Friends, volunteers and book shoppers are familiar with our annual Shred-a-Thon – this year, we made some changes! First, we moved the Shred-a-Thon to spring! The date was Saturday, April 18, from 9 a.m. to noon. Second was the location. The spring Shred-a-Thon took place in the parking lots of the Jefferson County Fairgrounds at 15200 W. 6th Avenue in Golden.



THE LINE OF CARS AT THE APRIL 18 SHRED-A-THON

The suggested donation for shredding sensitive personal documents was \$30 per vehicle, and more than 300 cars circled through the maze of parking lots, helping us raise nearly \$8,000!

This year, we partnered with Goodwill Industries to also accept old electronics. There was no cost for recycling electronics, including computers, computer monitors, radios, etc, although TVs and large appliances were not accepted. Our thanks go to members of the South Jeffco Rotary Club who joined us to help direct the many lines of traffic at the big event.

Stay tuned to our website – www.jeffclf.org – for more information on our next Shred-a-Thon!

ARVADA LIBRARY UNDERGOES RENOVATION

For nearly 20 years, Arvada Library has been serving residents and patrons from its location at 7525 W. 57th Avenue in Olde Town Arvada's historic district. On January 7, the popular branch location closed for approximately 14 months of renovation as part of JCPL's 2024 Strategic Plan to expand services and to better meet community needs. According to the Library: "The project vision is to redesign this urban/suburban library to reach more people" and to "focus on building literacies."

By renovating the 34,200 square foot building, JCPL hopes to boost card sign-ups, foster increased circulation, enhance current programming in the Children's Area, increase classes and activities in flexible spaces, promote more computer use and availability, provide collaborative areas for conversations, and increase the public's use of meeting and study rooms. The new site will also install a modern security system to provide improved safety measures.

During the library's closure, patrons can still enjoy limited services at the Arvada Balsam Temporary Library located at 5741 Balsam Street in Arvada, which a former location of the Arvada K-8 school. This temporary location offers ample parking and is a short drive or walk from the current Arvada Library building.

For more information on the Arvada Library redesign, visit <https://jeffcolibrary.org/arvada-redesign/>

NAME THAT SPACE!

Do you want to show your support for Arvada Library? We have naming opportunities for you! Library naming rights are available for local residents and businesses to claim this library's rooms, areas, and amenities ranging from bike racks to elevators and from study rooms to technology access sites.

The cost for naming rights runs from \$1,000 to \$50,000 and offers donors a way to not only show their support but also gain public recognition in return for their gifts.

For more information, please contact Jo Schantz Hall, JCLF's executive director, at 303.403.5077 or reach out via email to jo@jeffclf.org.

COMMEMORATIVE GIVING

The following individuals were recognized by JCLF donors with recent gifts given in their name.

Rebecca Bahnemann
in memory of Harvey "Butch" Cook

Kelsey Bigelow
in honor of Paul and Susan Doak

Anna Bilyeu
in honor of Sarah Ampleman

Suzanne Collings
in honor of Andrea Stroy

Kathi Crum
in honor of Kathi, W. Penn and
W. Elison Crum

Amanda D'Ambrosia
in honor of Jim D.

Peter Feldman
in memory of Felice Feldman

Carol and Joe Glaser
in memory of Michele Heenan Salisbury

The Greene Family
in honor of Emma and Patrick

Nancy Hardesty
in honor of Sue Hurelle

Janice Hoeffler
in honor of Paul Hoeffler and Kim Landry

Martha Hughes
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Bruce Kenagy
in honor of Michael and Melody Roe

R. Kim
in memory of Michele Heenan Salisbury

Karen Kosten
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Megan Landau
in memory of Ethan Buyon

Carl Legleiter
in honor of Ann Toth

Alice Meadows
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Sherill Meroney-Schiff
in memory of Pat Merrill

Jessica Nichols
in memory of Paula Kafer

Tim and Gail O'Neil
in honor of fellow JCLF volunteers

Cynthia Palmer
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Ann Parlo
in memory of Connor Reddington

Mark Paterson
in memory of Pat Merrill

Jessica Pierce
in memory of Nancy Lucas

Lisa Quigley
in memory of Pat Merrill

Barbara Ramsey
in memory of Michele Heenan Salisbury

Ann Reirson
in honor of the "We Have a Literary
History Book Club"

Karen Sawyer
in memory of Margaret Ewell

James Smith
in honor MLK Jr.

Sue and Alex Speyer
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Eric Stroy
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Karen Widdifield
in memory of Andrea Stroy

Susan Wieland
in memory of Larry Wieland

The Ethics, Professionalism and
Leadership Seminar
in memory of Col. James "Jim" Ryan

Vicki Zeimen
in memory of Pat Merrill

DESIGNING TWO NEW JCPL LOCATIONS

Exciting expansions are coming to JCPL in the form of two brand new locations—one in the southern end of Jefferson County and one in the northwest part of the county. Both locations were selected in response to growing populations and an increased demand for library services. The two projects underwent extensive community engagement in 2024 and 2025 and are currently in the design phase. Each project has a dedicated team of JCPL staff working alongside architects to make sure that community feedback, patron needs and staff requirements are incorporated into the final schematics.

Also known as the South County Library Project, Deer Creek Library's name took inspiration from the nearby park and creek that flows through surrounding neighborhoods. The library will be built in a former beer distribution center at 11100 Bradford Road, Littleton. The beautiful 64,000-square-foot property will provide ample space for library services, outdoor connections and accessible parking areas. Although the destination library is not anticipated to open until early 2028, JCPL is already providing interim services at the building in response to community feedback. Weekly visits from the Bookmobile, Story Times and a brand-new book club are just some of the offerings available at the future Deer Creek Library.



NORTHWEST LIBRARY



The Northwest Jeffco Library Project will be built on an undeveloped 9.4-acre lot between Wilkerson Court, 92nd Avenue and Candelas Parkway in northwest Arvada. The rapidly growing region is primarily served by Standley Lake Library, which is a 15-minute drive for many patrons in this area. The new location will provide easier access to library services and will be adaptable for future growth. This library brings thrilling new opportunities for innovation, as it will be built from the ground up. While the building is being designed, ongoing programs and outreach are happening in the surrounding neighborhoods. Book groups, Story Time and creative technology programs are offered regularly at Freedom Street Social and Leyden Rock Clubhouse.

Both building projects further JCPL's mission to enrich lives and our community by providing equitable and free access to information, experiences and opportunities. The projects are fully funded thanks to the taxpayers of Jefferson County, but there will still be opportunities to support them both in the future! Be on the lookout for design renderings, programming and naming opportunities as the projects progress.

Get the latest updates about Deer Creek Library and Northwest Jeffco Library Projects delivered straight to your inbox by visiting jeffcolibrary.org/newsletter-sign-up, and visit jeffcolibrary.org/building-projects to learn more about these exciting projects.

CELEBRATING OUR 2025 SUMMER OF READING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT!

Our community collectively reached an amazing 17,645,356 minutes of reading during the 2025 Library Summer Challenge! **We're proud that through our funding and partnership with the Library, these efforts were turned into tangible support for participants, local non-profits and schools.**

Nearly **12,000 participants**—half of all 24,227 total participating readers—earned their finisher prizes, celebrating their dedication and love of reading.

The **three non-profit organizations** to benefit from last year's program were: **Family Tree (\$500)**, **The Action Center (\$300)** and **The Center on Colfax (\$200)**.

The School Contest also produced some exciting winners! Each of the following **schools received \$800 each to support their school libraries: Weber Preschool, Lawrence Elementary, Deer Creek Middle School, Green Mountain High School and Bear Creek K-8.**

This year's reading program not only strengthened our community's literacy but also made a real difference for local organizations and schools. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make it a SUMMER OF READING!



SPOTLIGHT ON EVERGREEN LIBRARY

Driving into the mountains west of Denver, you'll likely come across the community of Evergreen. Go a bit further and you'll find one of the town's most popular gathering places—Evergreen Library.

More than a year ago, Jefferson County Public Library (JCPL) renovated this location, and according to the Library's Public Services Manager Jared Johnson: "Everyone loves the space, how open it is. We see more people coming to the library now compared to 2024."

Jared also noted that the entire space is brighter because all the shelving is lower. JCPL also reconfigured the community room, added one new study room, and the library now boasts a new outdoor reading area.

Nowadays, that large new community room is in high demand. "Everyone uses it," Jared remarked, citing a list that includes parent groups, town halls, music recitals, and one group that uses the space to play Dungeons & Dragons.



Focusing on adult patrons, Evergreen Library continues to offer many free programs that bring those individuals together. Adult programs feature a bi-monthly ukulele program where patrons can learn to use the ukulele, and hands-on leather working. Supplies (and ukuleles) are provided free to Library patrons. Adults can also enjoy board games and puzzles during their visits.



Looking at the children's area, Jared points out that kids' programs have gained even better attendance since the renovation, especially during story times. That additional space means that beyond story times, many more activities are offered in the Children's Area. Take a look and you'll see that the new room is filled with age-appropriate toys, coloring sheets on the tables, and child-friendly computers that offer up fun and educational electronic games for little ones.

Jared shared that "A child came up to the front desk on her way out to tell us that the library is her favorite place! She loves that it's quiet and you can get so many books."

For teens, Jared points out that the new teen space has become very well used, especially between 3 and 6 p.m. "Teens like using computers in that space for gaming and just hanging out," he says.

No place was more important for teens than during the recent school shooting that occurred last September at Evergreen High School, less than a mile away from the library. As Jared explains: "We had 50 to 60 teens come to the library to seek shelter. Our staff immediately jumped in to help, offering water and snacks and a safe place to stay. Our top priority was THEM."

In the weeks following this tragedy, the library participated in the city-wide Thank The Helpers Initiative hosting drop-off boxes where Evergreen and nearby Conifer residents could deposit letters of support to students, and letters of thanks to police, first responders and library staff members. "Over the course of a month, the library received about 100 notes of gratitude for our response that day," Jared adds. Later, and at a community-wide gathering, Evergreen Library received a plaque honoring the staff's quick response and assistance during the moments following the shooting.

Throughout that difficult time, Evergreen Library staff also worked with an organization known as Resilience 1220, a non-profit organization in Colorado's mountain communities (those west of Denver) that offers free, confidential mental health counseling and support for youth aged 12 to 20. At the library, Teen Services leadership set up on-site counseling for these high school students. All things point to the fact that Evergreen Library is more than just a place to check out books. That's why JCLF is proud to support the Evergreen Library as part of our mission and our commitment to JCPL and the community!

DINE AND DONATE FUNDRAISER

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **240 Union Creative Grille** for graciously hosting our **2025 Dine and Donate fundraiser** on September 17.

We are thrilled to share that the event raised over \$2,217! A sincere thank you also goes to everyone who joined us in enjoying a wonderful dining experience—all for a meaningful cause: supporting children's and family literacy programs at the Jefferson County Public Library. **Be sure to mark your calendars for this year's Dine & Donate on Wednesday, September 16.**



JOIN OUR LEGACY CHAPTER!

A recent article from the Bank of America website describes what is known as the Five Stages of Philanthropy—increments of maturity that span an entire lifetime of giving.

The article highlighted that charitable giving can start at any age, ranging from small children to nonagenarians. “For many of us,” the story states, “the desire to give back to our communities and the world is what gives our lives a sense of purpose.”

Even the youngest of children can become philanthropists when they pass along to others the toys they no longer want or play with, or—if they receive allowances—they can choose to share a portion of those monies with a charity or a cause they believe in. For teenagers, cash gifts given for birthdays or coming-of-age events (graduations, bar or bat mitzvahs, quinceaneras, etc.) can be earmarked for a charity at the request of the young benefactor or in lieu of gifts. At this stage of life, those charitable dollars can also be teamed with voluntarism, helping young adults demonstrate their personal values while also fulfilling critical community needs.

Reaching college age or launching into early careers can also be a springboard to engaging in philanthropy. If an individual’s family is active in a family foundation or has a Donor Advised Fund (DAF), it’s a good time to involve these maturing adults in choosing beneficiaries for charitable dollars or perhaps gaining experience as an advisor, board member, or grants administrator.

Stage Four refers to the “prime career years” between ages 31 and 60. This is when most people are reaching their personal and career goals that often include marriage, children, and professional growth. Again, this is a stage when volunteering and giving of one’s time, not just money, is an important way to contribute to society at large.

When donors reach Stage Five, they are typically retirees ages 60 and over. It’s a good time to assess accumulated wealth, consider philanthropic wishes, and make plans for the future of those funds. It’s also a good time for many retirees to give back via voluntarism, helping to “bridge the gap” between working full time and being fully retired. Most of all, “It’s gratifying to know that the journey you’re on and the values you hold are shared by the people you love.”

Is it time for you to make your own plans? Would you like to leave behind a legacy for your public library? **You can do this by joining JCLF’s Legacy Chapter—a select group of thoughtful donors who have placed JCLF in their estate plans and who know they will be helping to support their public library even after they are gone.**

For more information, please contact Jo Schantz Hall at 303.403.5077 or send an email to jo@jeffclf.org.

RAISE A READER FESTIVAL 2025

Each year for the past five years (excluding 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic), Jefferson County Public Library has hosted the popular Raise A Reader Festival at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden. This event is the culmination of a month-long series of literacy-building activities for children based on reading, writing, singing, playing and dancing.

While the main purpose of Raise A Reader is to promote early childhood literacy, the festival itself also encourages family engagement, community building and overall library resource awareness.

The 2025 Festival was held on September 27th, and more than 1,600 children and families participated in this free library event. Various stations around the Museum grounds helped to engage visitors in the five literacy-supporting structures, including train rides, bubble making, art easels, puppet shows, dance/movement, and scavenger hunts.

When adults were asked what they liked best about the Festival, they responded:

- ▶ *The activities encouraged creativity and engagement for my granddaughter and her grandparents.*
- ▶ *Our daughter loved seeing the trains that she had only seen before in books in person.*
- ▶ *This event is just so fun! Thank you for providing such a wonderful day every year for the family.*
- ▶ *One of our favorite yearly events - spreads the joy of learning and reading and gives us a fun family memory!*
- ▶ *All the volunteers were amazingly friendly. The train ride and the information they gave as we were riding it.*
- ▶ *There was do much to see and do, and I still can't believe it was free!*

Check the Library website—jeffcolibrary.org—for details on this year’s Raise A Reader Festival on August 29.





Jefferson County Library Foundation
10790 W. 50th Avenue, Suite 200
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
303.403.5075
jeffclf.org

SAVE THE DATES!



Spring 2026 Whale of a Used Book Sale—May 28-31, Jeffco Fairgrounds

Books on Film - July 17, Harkins 14 Theaters Arvada

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon—July 31, Wheat Ridge Rec Center

Dine & Donate - September 16, 240 Union Restaurant

Fall 2026 Whale of a Used Book Sale - October 22-25, Jeffco Fairgrounds