7:30 p.m. Thursday, January 21, History of the Choctaw
7:30 p.m. Friday, January 22, Bluegrass Festival
7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 11, Mariachis Rosas Divinas—ALLen Reads Kickoff
11 a.m. to close on Tuesday, February 23, Allen Reads Spirit Day at Two Rows Restaurant
7:30 p.m. Friday, February 12, Vellamo
7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18, Mark Twain’s Jim
7:30 p.m. Friday, February 19, Soul Legend Bobby Patterson
7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 25, Bill O’Neil talks about WPA and Texas Eats
7:30 p.m. Friday, February 26, Hungrytown

Our website is under re-construction, it will hopefully be up and running by February 1:  [http://www.allenfriends.org/](http://www.allenfriends.org/). Meanwhile, all programs can be found on the library interactive calendar: [http://www.cityofallen.org/900/Allen-Public-Library](http://www.cityofallen.org/900/Allen-Public-Library) then select “Calendar” on the right-hand side.

**Happy New Year, Friends!**

We are so excited about our 2016 ALLen Reads book (see article, page 2), a history of the different peoples that settled Texas, with recipes from those cultures. We Texans have settled here from all over. Following is an excerpt from our 2016 book, *Texas Eats*.

“Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic didn’t exist when the first ‘Czechs’ immigrated to Texas in the mid-1800s. Many Czech Texan immigrants came from the villages of Bohemia and Moravia, but there were Slovaks, Silesians, and Ruthenians, as well. The migration of Czechs to Texas started as a trickle in the 1850s and accelerated in the 1870s. The largest influx arrived just before World War I, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire took over the Czech homelands of eastern Europe.

The Czech families who migrated to Texas were attracted by news of the thriving German population, the cheap farmland, and the growing Czech community. Tight-knit families and small family farms remain the most distinguishing characteristic of Czech Texan communitites. Whereas the German settlers gathered in secular groups like singing clubs, garden clubs, and rifle clubs, Czech settlers were all Catholics and their social events revolved around the local church.

...The unique fluffy pastries called kolaches are the most famous Czech contribution to Texas cuisine. Buying kolaches at a combination Czech bakery/gas station is a Texas road-trip tradition …

Texas kolaches have evolved into something different from their central European originals, which were – and still are – large fruit pastries traditionally served at weddings. In Texas, the kolache is closer to a Danish pastry.”

Be sure to join us at one of our many ALLen Reads programs!

**Remembering Gayle Boon**

Gayle Boone, who many of you may know, has passed away. She was passionate about our library. She was a charter member of Friends of the Allen Public Library, a major contributor to the new library, and a charter board member of the Friends of the Allen Public Library Endowment Fund. Gayle will be fondly remembered. From typing catalog cards at Allen’s first library on Main Street to being a charter member of the Endowment Fund, everything she did on behalf of the Allen Public Library was truly a labor of love.

Be sure to “like” us on our Facebook page—[https://www.facebook.com/friendsoftheallenpubliclibrary](https://www.facebook.com/friendsoftheallenpubliclibrary)
Allen Reads 2016 takes a slightly different path than past years. The main book is Texas Eats by Robb Walsh. It is a history of Texas cuisine and culture with recipes interspersed. It grew out of a WPA (Works Progress Administration, a Depression era program) project called "America Eats" that was never completed, because World War II began. Mr. Walsh, a journalist and historian, came across it and fell in love with the idea of documenting the history of a region culturally and geographically through the foods people eat.

Robb Walsh will be at the Allen Public Library on April 9 to speak and sign books as a culmination of this year's programs. Before that, you'll have the opportunity to attend a cooking demonstration, learn about the history of Tex-Mex in Dallas, and more. The 7th grades will be incorporating this book into their study of Texas history this year, too.

Join the Friends of the Allen Public Library to kick off ALlen Reads 2016 on Thursday, February 11, 7:30 PM, with the music of Mariachi Rosas Divinas. Students from the drama classes at the Lowery Freshman Center will read excerpts from Texas Eats preceding each musical number. Both ALlen Reads books for 2015-16 will be on sale.

On Monday, February 15, the kids will be home from school for President’s Day. Bring them to the library between 11 AM - 2 PM for Family Celebration Day. There will be activities across the library for all ages. If you join the Friends that day, you'll get a coupon for $2 off food at the Food for Thought Cafe in the library - plan to have lunch there and make a fun day of it... for all the family!

Stop by Two Rows Classic Grill from 11 AM to close on Tuesday, February 23, and say you support ALlen Reads when you place your order. 20% will go to support this program!

Thursday, February 25, 7:30 PM, in the library auditorium, you'll want to come listen to Bill O'Neil, Texas' State Historian, talk about the WPA in Texas and more. A teacher, writer, and wonderful raconteur, he's one of those people who can make history come alive.

The picture book for 2016 is Cook-A-Doodle-Doo, written by Texan Susan Stevens Crummel. Many of your children saw her in person last year. This month she'll be visiting some of the schools in Allen she did not go to on last year's tour. It's a fun book for all ages - and includes a delicious recipe for Strawberry Shortcake. "Celebrity Readers" will be reading to the third grades this year. Both books will be available in the all school libraries thanks to a grant from the Foundation for Allen Schools.

Brochures and bookmarks with information are available at the library, and you can find details and updates on the Friends’ and library's websites: www.allenfriends.org and www.cityofallen.org/library.

Ongoing Book Sale
Now that the presents are all opened and seen, It’s time to get organized, sort clutter, and clean. So what do you do with those books you have read, Just what do you do with that pile by your bed? Well here’s an idea that we’d like to share, The info’s below and it tells you just where. Friends of the Library accepts new and old, We pay for our programs with the books that we’ve sold.

Small quantity donations (bags) can be dropped off at the front checkout and boxes (1-3) can be dropped off at the dock on the southeast side of the Library during business hours. For larger donations of more than three boxes please call ahead to make arrangements. Thank you for your generous donations!

Looking for a way to help your community? You obviously love our library or you wouldn’t be a “Friend”. Ever think of getting more involved? Email us at allentx-friends@gmail.com and see how you can help!
Celtic Night at Library

Lift your spirits and celebrate life with The Irish Rogues at 7:30 pm Friday, March 11, at the library. Formed by John Hodgins, an accordionist from County Offaly, the band has entertained crowds at pubs and festivals with the infectious style, good humor and raw energy of the Irish pub tradition. Today, The Irish Rogues appears regularly at Dallas’s renowned Trinity Hall, and members have been featured performers at the annual North Texas Irish Festival since its inception in 1982.

Playing a rich collection of favorite sing-a-longs and ballads with brilliant instrumentals that include fiddle, guitar, bouzouki, tenor banjo, mandolin, five string banjo and accordion, the group’s three part harmonies reflect the beauty of the music while retaining that rough edge of the Irish pub. The current members of the Irish Rogues are Earnie Taft, David Sparks and Steve Harrison.

Dallas Highland Dancers will join The Irish Rogues and take the stage with rocket-speed leg and foot movements. Dance director Fiona Robertson Alpaugh is an active member of the Daughters of Caledonia and the Scottish Society of Dallas.

Texas-born with Irish roots, Steve Harrison blends southern soul with the timeless joy of Irish music. Owning years of experience playing with such greats as The Blarney Brothers, Jiggernaut and The Celtic Cowboys, Steve delivers polished and lively music in his own special way. He plays guitar, hammered dulcimer, accordion, banjo, bouzouki, and whatever else the music demands.

Earnie Taft has been an active veteran of the Texas folk music scene for almost fifty years. He was a founding member of Fort Worth’s Saltlick, an eclectic group that haunted the Fort Worth Stockyards and the White Elephant Saloon for over twenty years. In the late 1970’s, he started the New Dallas String Band, a “hillbilly orchestra” that became renowned as the most unlikely artists ever to be featured in Fort Worth’s esteemed Van Cliburn Concert Series. He joined the Irish Rogues, Dallas’ Premiere Irish Pub Band in 1993, where he continues to perform today.

David Sparks began his musical career on trumpet but learned the guitar as he became interested in folk music. As a founding member of the Blarney Brothers, he devoted 14 years performing at pubs and festivals nationally, including the famous Milwaukee Irish Festival.

Book of Kells

Celebrate St. Patrick’s Day in grand green fashion by learning about the deeper meaning of Ireland’s most valued treasure.

The Book of Kells is the oldest and most lavishly decorated of a series of gospel manuscripts produced between the 6th and 9th centuries. Those who have tried to describe it betray almost a sense of disbelief, as though it had emerged from another world. The 13th century historian Giralduus Cambrensis said the work was “not of men, but of angels.”

Join Dr. Donna Cozort as she discusses the universal meaning of the symbols in the Book of Kells at 7:30 pm, Thursday, March 17, at the Library.

The Book of Kells consists of a Latin vulgate of the four Gospels, written in ornate majuscule, an ancient script, and lavishly illustrated with brilliantly colored pictures. In a period of high illiteracy, illuminated manuscripts told the story to those who could not read. More than a religious manuscript, the age and design of the Book of Kells allow a glimpse into the art and style of ancient Ireland. Since 1661, it has been kept in the Library of Trinity College in Dublin.

While searching for meaning in the healing arts, Dr. Cozort traveled to the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich, Switzerland. She studied and lived in Zurich for six years. An active member of the Dallas Institute of Jungian Analysts and the Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts, Dr. Cozort is the former training coordinator for the Texas Seminar. She is a member of the International Association of Jungian Analysts and lectured on trauma in the most recent International Congress held in Copenhagen, Denmark. Both at home and abroad, she has lectured and led groups focused on symbolic manifestations of the psyche. A registered nurse and practicing psychologist, Dr. Cozort is the author of Out of the Whirlwind: PTSD and the Archetype of Job: The Journey of a Traumatized Combat Nurse to Meet the Divine.

Travel across the Atlantic and back over 1200 years with Dr. Cozort and learn more about the symbolism in the Book of Kells.
The History of Tex Mex Food
El Chico and the Cuellars, Mama and her Boys

Ever savored the aroma of sizzling fajitas arriving at your table or enjoyed digging into a platter of cheesy nachos? Are you aware that these, and many of our other favorite Tex Mex dishes, originated at a famed restaurant in the Dallas area?

A fascinating documentary on the culinary odyssey of Cuellar family and their famed El Chico restaurants will be featured at the Allen Public Library at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 22. Following this, John and Gilbert Jr. Cuellar and Carmen Summers will be on hand to share more family tales and answer questions from the audience. This is your opportunity to learn more about state treasures like tamales, guacamole, salsa and enchilada.

In 1913, the Cuellar family picked cotton and worked as cowhands on a Kaufman, Texas, ranch. In the 1920s, Mama Cuellar, a mother of 12 who needed additional income, set up a booth at the Kaufman County Fair to sell her delectable dishes. She earned more money during that weekend than the family had earned for the entire year. Not long after, she opened a café in Kaufman.

In 1940, the Cuellar Brothers moved to Dallas to open an El Chico restaurant in the Oak Lawn area. By 1950, five restaurants were thriving. Then in 1961, another was added to the fold when Angus Wynne Jr. opened the Six Flags Amusement Park in Arlington and invited them to open a restaurant in the Mexico section. Long lines began forming for this popular cuisine, and hundreds of thousands of gringo customers were introduced to Tex-Mex. By 1968, a publicly held corporation was created. Mama’s grandson John Cuellar notes, “That is when I knew we made it big time.”

That same year, the former American movie actress Princess Grace of Monaco threw a party to celebrate her country’s centennial anniversary. She wanted to feature an international cuisine and invited the Cuellars to serve Tex-Mex food. In 1971, Gilbert Cuellar Jr. introduced fajitas to the Dallas market and these soon became a favorite of Ronald Reagan. In the 1980s, then-President Reagan invited the Cuellars to serve a major White House event.

In one generation, the Cuellar’s moved from the Texas cotton fields to a royal palace to the White House. Mama’s granddaughter Carmen Summers observes, “Our success is attributed to hard work and our family working together as a cohesive unit.” John Cuellar laughs, “Dallas is the origin of the semiconductor chip and taco chip.”
Sam Houston

Meet Sam Houston, one of the legendary figures in Texas history, at 7:30 pm Thursday, March 24, at the Allen Public Library.

A hero of our state’s battle for independence from Mexico, Houston served as president of the Republic of Texas, governor of the State of Texas (as well as Tennessee), and U.S. senator for the State of Texas. He also has the distinction of being the only Confederate state governor to oppose secession from the Union and was thus removed from office. President John F. Kennedy even included a chapter on Sam Houston in his Pulitzer Award-winning Profiles In Courage.

Today, another Texan and namesake of Sam Houston presents "The Lion of Texas—A Conversation with Sam Houston," a two-act one-man play that allows the audience to step into the home of Sam Houston and "feel" the very substance and nature of the famous Texas legend.

As a young man, the modern Sam Houston saw Hal Holbrook perform his legendary role in "Mark Twain Tonight" and believed that, while Mark Twain was certainly an interesting subject, a presentation about the beloved General Sam would be something that would touch the hearts and souls of people everywhere. Years passed from the conception, allowing the writer and performer to excel in a career in the law, television and the performance horse industry.

Filled with observations about Texas and Texans, "The Lion of Texas" has a generous dose of humor, interesting anecdotes and stories about General Sam, and even includes his observations and attitudes about the Texas of today.

Mr. Houston is also the author of one of the hottest selling new books in Texas, "Texas Chili for the Soul...Who the Heck Needs Chicken Soup?" a collection of short stories based on unique Texas expressions that reveal a life lesson. When not writing or acting, the Gainesville resident enjoys sports, traveling, and spending time with his family.

Knights Templar

What was the Knights Templar? What is its legacy? Learn more about this order from the Middle Ages from Kevin Main at 7:30 pm Thursday, March 31, at the Allen Public Library.

A military order that began circa 1129, the Knights Templar remained active until the first part of the fourteenth century. Templar knights wore pristine white mantles that sported a bright red cross. Known for military prowess, these highly skilled fighting units reached prominence during the Crusades. A major financial institution, the Knights Templar managed a large economic infrastructure throughout Europe. At dawn on Friday, Oct. 13, 1307 (possibly the origin the Friday the thirteenth superstition), French King Philip IV ordered the arrest and execution of the Knights Templar Grand Master Jacque de Molay and scores of other leading knights.

Main observes, “Between their incomparable rise to social, political, and financial power, and their swift, dramatic, and unequivocal fall from that power, the history of the Knights Templar is replete with mystery, controversy, and conspiracy. Their legacy has shaped our understanding of chivalry, fueled the causes of revolution and liberty, inspired both heretics and those who oppose heresy, and even influenced the methods of modern banking. Everyone who encounters the story of the Knights Templar is affected by that story, and the success of recent novels and films demonstrates that their mystique lives on in the popular imagination.”

Kevin K. Main is an author and lecturer on the subjects of history, philosophy, and religious symbolism, particularly that of Ancient Greece and Europe during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment period. He has been a student of the history of the Knights Templar and early Christianity for over 20 years.

Founder of the Conference of the Middle Chamber, a quarterly conference of Masonic Education hosted by the North Texas Masonic Historical Museum and Library, Main currently serves as a principal instructor for the Dallas Scottish Rite University Symposium.
Hungrytown

Enjoy folk tunes arranged into a refreshing new style with Hungrytown at 7:30 p.m., Friday, February 26, at the Allen Public Library. Rebecca Hall and Ken Anderson, known as the duo Hungrytown, perform music with gorgeous vocal harmonies and compositions that sound as timeless as any traditional song.

Although based in Vermont, this popular folk duo have a trans-Atlantic following with tours in the United States, United Kingdom and New Zealand. Hungrytown's music has received extensive radio airplay and the pair have appeared on several television shows, including the Independent Film Channel's hit series, Portlandia.


Hall and Anderson met in New York City, where they had already been performing regularly--Hall as a jazz singer and Anderson as a drummer for a variety of garage bands. Inspired by the grit and true-to-life experiences she heard in traditional folk ballads, Hall was inspired to write the lyrics that later became her first songs, aided by Anderson’s flair for musical arrangement.

Workers Progress Administration

For Depression-weary and despondent Americans, the Workers Progress Administration (WPA) not only offered employment but also the restoration of dignity. Through the efforts of authors, artists and construction workers, the American landscape was altered for the enjoyment of millions of people.

Closer to home, the original Greenville Avenue (U.S. 75), the gymnasium located where First Baptist Church stands today, The publication of WPA Guide to Texas: The Federal Writers' Project Guide to Texas and Texas artist Frank Klepper’s mural that can be viewed at the Collin County Historical Museum in McKinney resulted from WPA funding.

Learn more about the WPA from the State Historian of Texas Bill O’Neal at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 25, at the Allen Public Library.

Currently serving his second term as State Historian of Texas, O’Neal has made a number of television appearances including documentaries on TBS, The History Channel, The Learning Channel, American Heroes Channel, CMT, and A&E. A retired professor from Panola College in Carthage, Texas, he has also been active as a part-time radio host KGAS-AM and KGAS-FM in Carthage for more than three decades.

The author of more than 40 books, including *Sam Houston Slept Here: Guide to the Homes of Texas' Chief Executives* (2004) and *Ghost Towns of the American West*, O’Neal was presented the A. C. Greene Literary Award at the West Texas Book Festival in Abilene last September. In 2012, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Wild West History Association, and in 2007, he was named True West Magazine's Best Living Non-Fiction Writer.

O’Neal notes, “The WPA was one of the most successful of the ‘Alphabet Soup’ agencies of the New Deal, providing employment for great numbers of Americans while covering America’s Depression landscape with new roads, schools, airports, gymnasiums, parks, as well as enriching culture with concerts, plays, guidebooks, and murals.”