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 communities. 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 allenfriends@gmail.com and see how you can help!
History of the Choctaw

For centuries, the Choctaw pursued peaceful agricultural endeavors in the southeastern United States. The Choctaw tribe contributed soldiers to the United States in every major war since the Northwest Indian War (1785-1795) and the War of 1812. Choctaw Code Talkers provided crucial intelligence by communicating in the Choctaw language during World Wars One and Two, dumbfounding the enemy. Deemed one of the five “Civilized Tribes” because they adopted many colonial practices, the Choctaw were forcibly relocated to Indian Territory in 1830 by the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Despite the adversities faced, the Choctaw nation made vast contributions that resulted in a stronger America.

Representing the Choctaw nation, Ryan Spring will discuss the History of the Choctaw up to the Trail of Tears at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, January 21. A GIS/GPS Specialist for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Historic Preservation Department, Spring received his Bachelor’s Degree in Anthropology from the University of Arkansas in 2011. He was hired by the tribe to implement GIS (Geographic Information System) and GPS (Global Positioning System) technology to aid in protecting sites important to the Choctaw people, creating cultural maps for education and conducting Choctaw cultural presentations, research, and advisement. Spring emphasizes, “Being a member of the Choctaw Nation means I have the duty to respect my ancestors, do my best to aid my family and tribe, and make the future culturally and environmentally sustainable for future generations of Choctaw people.”

Spring is currently enrolled at Southeastern Oklahoma State University for his Masters in Native American Leadership. He also enjoys playing Choctaw stickball for the Choctaw Nation’s Stickball Team as well as helping coach stickball to youth and adults in his community.

Bluegrass Festival

Ready for an unforgettable knee-slapping bluegrass experience? Then come to the Library’s annual Bluegrass Festival that will feature two outstanding bands this year.

On stage for this evening of downhome entertainment will be both the Cooke Brothers and Quibble Brothers. The event is hosted at 7:30 p.m., Friday, January 22.

The Cooke Brothers began performing bluegrass in Ellis County in 1946, the year that Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys electrified America. The Cooke Brothers shared the stage with Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt, Grandpa Jones, Ricky Skaggs, Vince Gill, Mary Stuart and many more, including a performance at a banquet where President Reagan was the keynote speaker.

The late Bob Wills’ daughter Carolyn Wills, in the Waxahachie NOW, made this observation about the Cooke Brothers: “To love music is to be part of a community, and to play in a band like the Cooke Brothers Bluegrass Band is to be part of a very special family.”

The band is comprised of Reggie Cooke on banjo and guitar, Larry Cooke on banjo, Wendell Cooke on guitar, Billy Joe Cooke on mandolin, and Randall Dyess on upright bass. All band members provide vocals.

For the second set, The Quibble Brothers offers a mix of energy and talent. Bandleader Patrick Bouldin will captivate the audience with his mandolin. He studied under respected industry greats Mike Marshall (David Grisman Quintet), Shawn Lane (Blue Highway), and others. Bassist Liz Patton was Best Female Bluegrass Instrumentalist at South Plains College under Joe Carr and Alan Munde. Twenty-year-old fiddler Jake Mills captivates while thrashing his bow in harmony with the other musicians. Songwriter and guitarist Richard Gilbert has written numerous bluegrass and folk songs and carries a lasting legacy in Texas Grass with the “Southern Comfort” and “Here and Now” bands. A regular at Collin County chili cook-offs, church functions, and fundraisers, banjo and fiddle player Chris Plumlee is also a firefighter for the City of Allen.

Free tickets will be issued on a first come, first served basis beginning at 7 p.m.
To kick off this year’s ALLen Reads program series, Mariachi Rosas Divinas, an all-female mariachi group, will perform 7:30 p.m., Thursday, February 11. An all-female mariachi group is a rarity in the almost exclusively male world of mariachi. This musical form traces its roots to the indigenous tribes, Spanish colonialists, and African slaves. It is an exciting and enchanting musical genre. Mariachi lyrics frequently describe country life, especially the plants and animals of a region. Imagery of animals such as roosters and chickens often are metaphors for human relationships.

Having received classical and informal training, Mariachi Rosas Divinas will feature trumpets, violins, guitar, viheula, and guitars. Instrumental and songs are combined with dance routines that symbolize the lyrics. The viheula is a lute instrument that provides a special ambience to mariachi music. The heartbeat of the modern Mariachi group is the Guitarron. The strings of this six-string bass instrument are often plucked in pairs to provide octaves.

Popular Mariachi favorites will be performed, including “La Negra,” “Mariachi Locs,” “Volver Volver,” “Besame Mucho,” “Cielito Lindo,” “Tu Solo Tu,” “Si Nos Dejan,” and “Dulce Nina” (from Los Kumbia Kings).

Founded in 2004 and directed by Tabitha Sanchez, Mariachi Rosas Divinas has performed at the Gaylord Texas Resort, Dallas Museum of Art, Amarillo Opera House and Dodge Chrysler Show Room at the State Fair of Texas. Ms. Sanchez states, “We concentrate heavily on the Maricahi style because that is what sets us apart from an orchestra or acoustic band.”

Vellamo

Delight in the haunting melodies and ballads, vocals and virtuosic guitar stylings of Pia Leinonen and Joni Tiala, the Finnish folk duo Vellamo, at 7:30 p.m., Friday, February 12, at the Allen Public Library. In addition to performing in the Finnish, Celtic and Scandinavian folk traditions, they also compose memorable original songs.

In Finnish mythology, Vellamo is the goddess of the sea. Based in Kokkola, on the western coast of Finland, Pia and Joni combine the rich tradition of Finnish folksong with an appealing “retro” sensibility, creating an exotic and magical acoustic experience.

Raised in the arctic region of Lapland, Pia is Vellamo’s lead singer. Combining her love and vast knowledge of Finnish folk music with the western singer-songwriter tradition, her exquisite voice evokes creative expression.

Originally from the Finnish port of Kokkola, Joni Tiala’s eclectic musical background includes writing and performing for theater, progressive and alternative rock, and Finnish and western folk. In addition to his work in Vellamo, Joni is an accomplished theater and session musician and founding member of the renowned Finnish progressive rock band Moonwagon.

In early 2013, Vellamo released their first album, engineered and co-produced by Ken Anderson at his home studio Song Catcher Recording in Vermont. Vellamo released their second album in June, 2014. This folk-rock gem contains beautiful arrangements of traditional songs from the Finnish and Scandinavian traditions. You can hear how surf rock guitars and hillbilly country style is blended with the Finnish tradition.

Vellamo’s third album “Koskenkylä,” featuring all original material, was released in October 2015.
Mark Twain’s Jim (Daniel Quarles)

Learn the captivating story behind one of the most celebrated characters in American literary history, Jim from Mark Twain’s The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and The Gilded Age. Larry McCarty, a direct descendant of Uncle Daniel (Dan’l), the man who inspired Mark Twain to create the unforgettable Jim, will speak at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 18, at the Allen Public Library.

Mark Twain spent summers on his Uncles John A. Quarles’ farmstead in northeast Missouri. A slave there, Dan’l Quarles, was identified by Twain in his autobiography: “I have not seen him for more than a half a century, and yet spiritually I have had his welcome company a good part of that time, and have staged him in books under his own name and as “Jim” and carted him all around Hannibal, down the Mississippi on a raft, and even across the Desert of the Sahara in a balloon.”

McCarty traced his family line by intersecting the legacy of Mark Twain with his own family roots in Northeast Missouri. “The Quarles family and part of the Clemens family, even after emancipation, were together in California and Keokuk, Iowa,” he notes. McCarty, who lives in Grand Prairie, is the great-great-great-grandson of Dan’l.

McCarty’s genealogical quest began with Dan’l’s son, Harve Quarles, who was sold to one brother of John A. Quarles as a teenager, then to another, and eventually migrated with his owner to Texas, where the family put down roots.” Everyone knows of John A., they know of Samuel Clemens and Mark Twain, but there had not been an academic study of the black Quarles family on the farm until I started this study,” McCarty points out. “Quarles (were) separated by the bonds of slavery (and) reconnected after 150 years. Harve, who was sold and migrated to Texas, never knew of his family again. I have made the direct connection to Daniel, and now that family is whole.

During his presentation, McCarty will share important navigational tools for African-Americans to locate their ancestors.

McCarty’s book Mark Twain’s Jim (Daniel Quarles), From the Shadows to a Monument will be published in 2016.

A native Texan, Larry W. McCarty served our country in Vietnam as a member of the U.S. Army and retired from IBM after 30 years.

Soul Legend
Bobby Patterson

Legendary soul musician Bobby Patterson rips the stage at 7:30 p.m., Friday, February 19, at the Allen Public Library. Once featured on National Public Radio, Patterson has been singing R&B and southern soul for over half a century. Releasing countless singles in the 60’s and 70’s, his original tunes have been covered by artists as diverse as Little Willie John, Albert King, the Fabulous Thunderbirds, and Jeff Tweedy.

Having once performed at the Carousel Club owned by the infamous Jack Ruby, Patterson now is a favorite at Austin’s South By Southwest, Damrosch Bandshell in New York City, and at clubs throughout Texas. As a songwriter, he co-wrote “That’s What the Blues is All About” with Al King. Another of Patterson’s songs, “She Don’t Have to See You” was recorded by Golden Smog for their 1995 album Down by the Old Mainstream.

He recorded a live album at the Longhorn Ballroom in 2002 and released I Got More Soul in 2014. Commenting on this recent album, Patterson declares, “More soul than more soul. More means more.” Produced by Zach Ernst, formerly with Black Joe Lewis and the Honeybears and currently the Relatives guitarist, I Got More Soul is comprised of covers and songs inspired by Patterson’s witty radio punch lines. For years he was a disc jockey at KKDA-AM, Soul 73 in Dallas, where he was the voice for soul in Dallas. Patterson emphasizes, “Because, you know, a merry heart does good like a medicine. So I’d like for you, you know, to open up your ears and take your medicine!”

All Bach to Books performances are sponsored by the Friends of the Allen Public Library and the City of Allen. Sometimes others participate in sponsoring, and are noted accordingly. All Bach to Books presentations are free and open to the public, and most are available on Channel 16 and on youtube. For more information about any Bach to Books performances, please call 214-509-4911.
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.”

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.

The New York Music Daily declares their most recent CD Further West as one of the 50 Best Albums of 2015. This publication noted: “The most elegantly arranged and arguably best album by poignant Americana songstress Rebecca Hall and multi-instrumentalist Ken Anderson’s plaintive folk noir band. Hungrytown leaves you wanting more.” Hall released two solo albums, Sings! (1999) and Sunday Afternoon (2002). They released their first CD, Hungrytown, in 2008 and Any Forgotten Thing in 2011.

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.