Friday, January 6, 7:30 p.m.—African Kora performance by Sean Gaskell
Monday, January 16, 10:30 -11:30 a.m.—Family Celebration Day in the Children’s Program Room
Wednesday, January 18, library hours—Happy New Year Book Sale begins.
Friday, January 20, 7:30 p.m.—Salt Creek Bluegrass Band
Saturday, January 21, 3 p.m.—Coffee with the Chief, hear what Allen Police Chief Brian Harvey has to say about Allen today.
Saturday, January 28, 12:30-4 p.m.—Illustrator E.B.Lewis
12:30-1:30—meet and greet with Mr. Lewis
2:00 p.m.—Mr. Lewis will speak, followed by a book signing.
Thursday, February 16, 7:30 p.m.—"What I Believe" interfaith presentation
Wednesday, February 1, 12 noon—Book discussion, brown girl dreaming, 2nd floor program room
Sunday, February 12, 3:30 p.m.—African American gospel music
Friday, February 17, 7:30 p.m.—celebration of Ella Fitzgerald’s 100th birthday
Tuesday, February 21, 7:00 p.m.—Book discussion, brown girl dreaming, 2nd floor program room
Friday, February 24, 7:30 p.m.—Allen Community Band mid-winter concert
Saturday, February 25, 3:00 p.m.—U.S. Army’s only Female Buffalo Soldier

Click on any item above and it will link you directly to the article.

Always forgetting events you want to see? Print this page and stick it on your fridge!

ALLen Reads programs start in January, with Family Celebration Day on January 16, then many more programs throughout January and February. See page 2 for all the ALLen Reads programs coming up.

Then in February, in addition to more ALLen Reads programs, we have a full set of Black History Month programs. I hope you have had a chance to enjoy some of our programs at the library. We feel like it offers such a unique opportunity to see these programs, and all are free!

We hope to see you soon at the library.

“A little learning, indeed, may be a dangerous thing, but the want of learning is a calamity to any people.”
-Frederick Douglass

Be sure to “like” us on our Facebook page—https://www.facebook.com/friendsoftheallenpubliclibrary and follow us on Twitter: @AllenFriends.
Happy 10th Anniversary ALLen Reads!

As Allen Reads begins its 10th year, we’re ready to celebrate. Not just for 10 amazing years, but because the line-up of this year’s books is so beautiful.

The main book for 2017 is *brown girl dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson. In vivid poems, Woodson shares what it was like to grow up as an African American in the 1960s and 1970s, living with the remnants of Jim Crow laws and her growing awareness of the Civil Rights movement. Touching and powerful, each free verse is both accessible and emotionally charged, each line a glimpse into a child’s soul as she searches for her place in the world and joyfully finds her voice through writing stories, even as she struggled to read as a child. Her love of stories inspired her and stayed with her, creating the first sparks of the gifted writer she was to become. Recommended for Grade 5-Adult. Discussion questions available for families, teachers, and book clubs online and in the brochure, available at the library.

The two companion books reflect the same themes as the main book, and they are also written by Woodson. Both are illustrated by E.B. Lewis. In *Each Kindness*, Chloe and her friends won’t play with the new girl, Maya. Every time Maya tries to join Chloe and her friends, they reject her. Eventually, Maya stops coming to school. When Chloe’s teacher gives a lesson about how even small acts of kindness can change the world, Chloe is stung by the lost opportunity for friendship and thinks about how much better it could have been if she’d shown a little kindness toward Maya. Recommended for Grades 3-4. Talking points available online at allenfriends.org

In *The Other Side*, Clover’s mom says it isn’t safe to cross the fence that segregates their African-American side of town from the white side where Anna lives. However, the two girls strike up a friendship and get around the grown-ups’ rules by sitting on top of the fence together. Parents will recognize the symbolism of the fence between the yards. Children will love the story of how a new friendship is built and the beauty of the watercolor illustrations. Illustrator E.B. Lewis does an amazing job communicating not only the story, but the feeling and emotions in it. *Come meet him on January 28!* Recommended for Grades K-2. Talking points available online at allenfriends.org

See the ALLen Reads January programs on the next page.
ALLen Reads Programs
January and February

Monday, January 16, 10:30 -11:30 AM - Family Celebration Day
in the Children’s Program Room

The kids are home from school. Come by the library for a Poetry Bash, drop a pebble in water and see what happens, and get to draw, too. Sign out the ALlen Reads books to enjoy at home.

Saturday, January 21, 4 PM - Coffee with the Chief in the library auditorium

Hear what Allen Police Chief Brian Harvey has to say about Allen today and then ask any questions you may have.

Saturday, January 28, 12:30 -3 PM - Illustrator E.B. Lewis in the library auditorium.

Drop by between 12:30 -1:30 for a Meet & Greet with the illustrator of the two companion books. Then stay to hear him speak at 2, followed by a book-signing. Bring your own books, or the Friends of the Library will have books on hand for you to purchase.

Thursday, February 16, 7:30 PM - "What I Believe" in the library auditorium

Representatives from Islam, Judaism, and Christian faiths discuss their religions. Audience participation is encouraged.

Book Discussions about brown girl dreaming at the Library, 2nd floor program room

12 p.m., Wednesday, February 1 Page Turners
7 p.m., Wednesday, February 15 Ladies Night Out
7 p.m., Tuesday, February 21 Let’s Talk Dewey

And that’s just January & February - programs for 2017 ALlen Reads will continue through April. Watch future newsletters and check on the website, allenfriends.org, for new information and updates. You can , and like us on Facebook, https://www.facebook.com/friendsoftheallenpubliclibrary or follow us on Twitter: @AllenFriends.

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* If you are in a book club and would like to join others in reading and discussing brown girl dreaming, call the information desk, 214-509-4913, and give them your information. ALlen Reads participating book clubs get a special bag with the brochures/discussion questions, book marks, and a little treat. We can also send a discussion leader to your book club gathering if requested. Or your group can join one of the three opportunities for discussion of this book scheduled at the library.

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Illustrator E. B. Lewis

Award-winning children’s illustrator E.B. Lewis kicks off this year’s ALlen Reads on Saturday, January 28, a the library. Drop by the library’s Meeting Room between 12:30-1:30 p.m. for a meet and greet with the illustrator of Each Kindness and The Other Side. Stay to hear him speak at 2 p.m., followed by a book-signing. Bring your own books, or the Friends of the Library will have books on hand to purchase.

E.B. Lewis has illustrated over seventy books for children, including Nikki Grimes’ Talkin’ About Bessie: The Story of Aviator Elizabeth Coleman (2003 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award winner), Tolowa M. Mollé’s My Rows and Piles of Coins (ALA Notable Book and a Coretta Scott King Honor Book), Garvin Curtis’s Bat Boy and his Violin (Coretta Scott King Honor Book), and Jacqueline Woodson’s The Other Side (2002 Notable Book for the Language Arts).

Inspired by two artist uncles, Lewis displayed artistic promise as early as the third grade. Later, he enrolled at Temple University School of Art League where he discovered his medium of preference was watercolor. During his four years at Temple, Lewis majored in Graphic Design and Illustration and art education. After graduating, he taught art in public schools for twelve years. Presently, Lewis teaches at the University of Arts in Philadelphia, continues to paint and illustrate, and is a member of The Society of Illustrators in New York City.

E.B. Lewis’s illustrations enhance the reading experience by bringing the story to life. When asked about his impressive ability to relate with children, Mr. Lewis explains, “The reason I am able to connect and inspire the youth of today is because of the struggles, fears and failures I experienced in my own childhood.”
**Music of the West African Kora**

Sean Gaskell will give a performance and educational demonstration on the Kora, a 21-stringed harp from West Africa, at **7:30 p.m. Friday, January 6**, at the library. Featuring traditional songs that are the heart and soul of the Kora’s musical repertoire, he will also perform his own personal compositions.

Native to the Mandé peoples who live within the countries of Gambia, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau, Kora music is traditionally played by oral and musical historians known as Griots (Gree-ohs). The Kora is a melodic and seemingly peaceful instrument, which is somewhat contrary to its musical repertoire. Many songs tell ancient stories of war and hardship, while others praise people of high political status and those who helped expand the Mandé Empire. While the Kora is only 300 years old, some songs commonly played on the instrument can be traced back 800 years to the Mandé empire’s founding. Gaskell has studied extensively under the instruction of Malamini Jobarteh and Moriba Kuyateh of Brikama, The Gambia, and Kane Mathis of Brooklyn, NY. Gaskell has been featured at numerous festivals in the US, Gambia, and Senegal.

Tom Surowicz of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* declared, “Need more proof that music is the greatest international language? Listen to how eloquently Sean Gaskell, a young fella from the grunge and coffee mecca of Seattle, plays the 21-stringed West African Kora, a gourd-bottomed harp that delivers both acres of melody and gently rippling rhythms.”

Sean has compiled a CD, *Somanda*, which will be available at the concert.

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**Salt Creek Bluegrass**

January usually brings ice cold temperatures but the heat is on when Salt Creek Bluegrass Band performs its foot stompin’ music at **7:30 p.m. Friday, January 20**, at the library.

Although the roots of Bluegrass music are truly American, no two bluegrass bands offer exactly the same style. Like different amounts of cayenne will sure change your chili, the high-energy Salt Creek Bluegrass adds subtle twists to their standard bluegrass and contemporary tunes that will whet your appetite for more.

On mandolin, Al Stenzel began his career as a classical musician, and as early as high school, he became enthralled with the sounds of bluegrass. Al’s mandolin chops and punctuating solos help to keep the band on a firm turf.

A fiddle is a must in Texas music and Tommy Swan will not disappoint you with his exciting solos exciting and back-up licks.

Inspired by country and Texas swing, lead and harmony vocalist Terry Solomon also provides the lead with his bass. His creative vocal arrangements provide Salt Creek Bluegrass an old fashion but progressive style.

The lively rolls coupled with a tasteful delivery of melodic runs from Mark Shaffer’ banjo gives Salt Creek a distinctive sound. Mike Carpenter adds smooth vocals along with a dynamic guitar with a Texas slant. His arrangements keep the Salt Creek repertoire fresh and progressive. “I like the emotion behind Bluegrass music, and our approach to interpreting tunes helps create an exciting program,” Al Stenzel notes. “Due to the acoustic nature of the instruments, few chances exist to cover up mistakes but an extemporaneous jamming session can be achieved fairly quickly, which is the soul of bluegrass.”
Coffee with the Chief

Share coffee with Allen Police Chief Brian Harvey at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, January 21, at the library. Chief Harvey will discuss challenges that confront Allen, the impact of national issues on local law enforcement, and programs offered by the Allen Police Department. After this presentation, citizens can interact personally with Allen’s police chief by submitting questions, expressing concerns, and making suggestions. If the issue is confidential, the Chief can arrange a private meeting afterward.

Allen’s police chief since 2012, Chief Harvey leads a department of 126 sworn and 57 civilian staff that includes Dispatch and the Animal Shelter. Committed to community policing and emphasizing citizen engagement and collaboration with other stakeholders to resolve neighborhood issues, Chief Harvey observes, “There is tremendous support here in Allen for our police, and I am proud to be part of the Allen Team and serve the Allen community.”

Also an Allen Community Outreach Board member, Chief Harvey notes that “even in communities that have the appearance of affluence, some households are one paycheck away from financial crisis. So the client applying for services today may have been a donor in the past.”

Prior to coming to Allen, Brian Harvey had a distinguished 32-year career with the Dallas Police Department, with his last position being Deputy Chief of Police, assigned to Homeland Security and Strategic Deployment Division.

Holding a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice from Western Illinois University, Chief Harvey is also a graduate of the Southwestern Law Enforcement Command College and the Police Executive Forum Senior Management Institute for Police. He serves as liaison for the Allen Public Safety Recovery Fund and Regional Director for the Texas Police Chief’s Association.
Ella Fitzgerald is 100

Celebrate the centennial of the birth of Ella Fitzgerald at 7:30 p.m. Friday, February 17, at the library. This free tribute to The First Lady in Song will be led by Andrew Griffith and will feature selections sung by Dallas vocalist Leena Conquest. Accompaniment will be provided by Roger Boykin on keyboard and Jonathan Fisher on acoustic bass.

One of greatest female jazz singers in the United States, Ella dazzled her fans for more than half a century. Garnering 13 Grammy awards, she sold over 40 million albums. Singing sultry ballads, sweet jazz and even imitating orchestral instruments, Ella partnered with iconic jazz greats such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Dizzy Gillespie.

Raised in meager circumstances, her first major break was performing for a week with the Tiny Bradshaw band at the Harlem Opera House. In 1938, at the age of 21, Ella recorded a playful version of the nursery rhyme, "A-Tisket, A-Tasket." The album sold 1 million copies, hit number one, and stayed on the pop charts for 17 weeks. Ella was now a national sensation.

Ella collaborated with producer and manager Norman Granz on the "Jazz at the Philharmonic" tour. Under Norman's management, Ella worked with Louis Armstrong on several albums and began producing her infamous songbook series. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan awarded Ella the National Medal of Arts. It was one of her most prized moments.

Performing as Ella, Leena is a recording artist steeped in the jazz tradition. Her voice and presence has an ability to transcend from classic to modern jazz. A Texas native, her recordings include "Raining on the Moon" (thirstyear.com), "Cornmeal Dance," and "I Plan to Stay a Believer." She has worked with a host of jazz luminaries including trumpeter Doc Cheatham, pianist Mal Waldron and vibesman Roy Ayers. Her duo CD Dave Burrell Plays His Songs featuring Leena Conquest (Tracce), revisits Burrell's classic compositions “while Leena Conquest gives them fresh life,” notes Washington DC Radio WPFW's Bobby Hill.

Band leader Andrew Griffith played with the University of North Texas Jazz Repertory Ensemble and the 3 O’Clock Lab Band, Wynton Marsalis, Red Rodney, Doc Cheatham, Houston Person, Bucky Pizzarelli, and numerous others. In 2004, Andrew was recipient of the Sammons Jazz Artist of the Year Award. Andrew has recorded with Marchel Ivery, Joey DeFrancesco, James Gilyard, Sandra Kaye, Simone Jackson-Rodgers, Roger Boykin, Curt Bradshaw, Gregory Slavin, The Texas Gypsies, and others.

Founder of Soultex Records and Soultex Publishing Company, Roger Boykin has contributed to the Texas music scene for several decades, as a jazz musician, educator, radio announcer, composer, arranger, author and publisher of print music and songs. Performing in 1986 with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Roger wrote a jazz-oriented, orchestral piece called “Patience” on a commission from the Black Academy of Arts and Letters. With another commission from the Dallas Wind Symphony, he wrote “Freedmen’s Town Flourish,” performed at the Meyerson Symphony Hall.

Bassist Jonathan Fisher is a graduate of the University of North Texas Jazz Studies Program in Denton, Texas. Traveling to Paris, France, for studies with modern bass virtuoso and pedagogue François Rabbath, Jonathan’s approach to the bass is one of optimal ergonomic positioning and balance. Passionate about jazz, bass and music, Jonathan played with revered members of the national jazz and music scene such as Wynton Marsalis, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, and Bernadette Peters and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.

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.
African-American Gospel

Enjoy the enthusiasm and inspiration of African-American Gospel music with blues and gospel artist Sugar Boy Myers and his Praise Band at 3:30 p.m. Sunday, February 12, at the library. Walter Jackson will provide vocal accompaniment. Music historian Donte Ford will open the concert by giving a brief history of African-American Gospel music. A graduate of the Pennsylvania State University and Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, he is also a dynamic musician. Arrive early to view rare footage of gospel icons such as Mahalia Jackson, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Five Blind Boys of Alabama and more.

Origins of gospel music can be traced to American slavery. Combining the rhythms of African cultures with Christian theology resulted in the emergence of the spiritual, jubilee and sorrow songs. What most African Americans would identify today as "gospel" began in the early 20th century. In the 1920s, composers such as Thomas Dorsey and Sallie Martin Blues synthesized spirituals with blues and boogie woogie sounds to produce modern gospel music.

Sugar Boy Myers takes the stage to lay down high-energy gospel music. Sugar Boy played for the Freddie King band and accompanied Eric Clapton, Leon Russell and other iconic legends. Sugar Boy played on Freddie’s last record, which was produced by Leon Russell. He also participated in the “Music Under the Son” festival in Ennis, Texas.

Keyboardist Lewis Fluellen is a former member of T-Bone & Ovid and has played with Percy Sledge and The Drifters.

Other band members include Kevin Von on bass guitar and Sammy Honey on guitar.

“What I Believe”

Are you curious about others’ belief systems? Come to the “What I Believe” program at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 16, at the library.

In our 2017 ALLen Reads book, brown girl dreaming, the last chapter is titled “what I believe”. An excerpt from that is,

“...I believe that there is good in each of us
No matter who we are or what we believe in.
I believe in the words of my grandfather.
I believe in the city and the South
The past and the present.”

In keeping with these thoughts, ALLen Reads is sponsoring an interfaith program. A Muslim imam, a Jewish rabbi, and a Christian minister will each briefly present their thoughts and feelings as a representative of their religion. Then we will open it up as a forum, and let the audience ask questions.

Imam Abdur Rahman Bashir was born and raised in Miami, Florida. In 1992, his family moved to Chalmette, Louisiana, where he received his elementary Quranic and Arabic education. He received his initial religious training from University of Islamic Sciences in Karachi, Pakistan, and then transferred to the Institute of Islamic Education in UK where he completed the remainder of 8 years of education in Islamic theology and jurisprudence. He has served as an Imam in Jefferson, Louisiana, for over 10 years. He is new to Allen, will move here in January, 2017, and will serve as Imam of the Islamic Association of Allen. He is happily married and is a father of two boys.

Rabbi Jeffrey Leynor attended Jewish Theological Seminary Rabbinical School, getting his rabbinical ordination in the class of 1989. He was the rabbi at Congregation Beth Torah in Dallas, 1989-2005, working closely with the young people there, and at Congregation Beth El Binah in Richardson, 2006-2010. He is rabbi/chaplain/counselor for a number of local organizations and counseling programs, including the Plano Police Dept. Rabbi Leynor also teaches at Collin College and Methodist Community Nursing Program and is president of the TOV Center.

In response what he describes as a "life-long desire to become a pastor", Pastor Gordon Illausky received a Master’s of Divinity Degree from Andover Newton Theological Seminary in 1994 after a successful 23-year career in computer science and business. Since being ordained in 1996, Pastor Illausky served three congregations in New England before accepting a call from Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Allen to serve as its Senior Pastor in 2006. He and his wife Susan are the proud parents of their adult daughter, her husband and - most especially - their grandchildren.
U.S. Army’s Only Female Buffalo Soldier

RosieLeetta “Lee” Reed portrays Cathay Williams, the first documented African-American woman to enlist in the U.S. Army and the only woman to serve in the U.S. Army as a man. She shares this amazing story at 3:00 p.m. Saturday, February 25, at the library.

Born in Missouri to a free man of color and a woman in slavery, Williams was legally a slave. In 1861, Union forces occupied Jefferson City, Missouri, where she worked as a house slave, and captured slaves who were designated by the Union as "contraband." At age 17, Williams was impressed into the 8th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

She traveled with the 8th Indiana, accompanying the soldiers on their marches through Arkansas, Louisiana, and Georgia, and witnessed the infamous Battle of Pea Ridge and the Red River campaign. Later, she was transferred to Little Rock, where she would have witnessed African-American men serving as soldiers, which might have inspired her to join the Army.

Williams enlisted in the United States Regular Army on November 15, 1866, at St. Louis for a three-year engagement, posing as a man. Then she was stationed in New Mexico. The post surgeon discovered she was a woman and she was discharged from the Army by her commanding officer, Captain Charles E. Clarke on October 14, 1868.

Ms. Reed is president of the Texas Buffalo Association, dedicated to preserving Texas history and the legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers. A founding member of the Lakeside Riders, she participates in rodeos, parades, and honor guards, and is a recipient of the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for “Outstanding Public Service Benefiting Communities.”

Presenting for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the National Cowboys of Color Museum, Panhandle Plains Museum and the George Bush Memorial Library, Reed specializes in presentations about Cathay Williams and Stage Coach Mary Fields, the first African-American woman to work for the U.S. Postal Service.

New and Returning Members—November