

# OHIO *ana* QUARTERLY

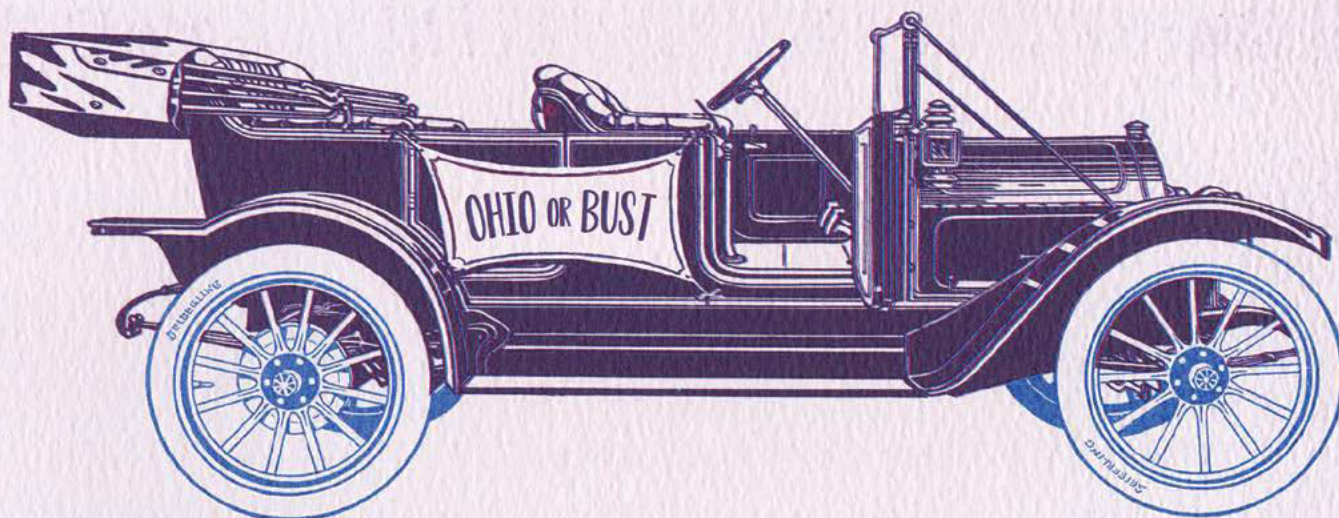
SUMMER 2023 | VOL. 66 NO. 3

## OHIOANA



OF OHIO AND OHIOANS

### SUMMER • 1960



Collecting, Preserving, and Celebrating Ohio Literature

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# OHIOana QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2023

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# From the Director

Dear Friends,



## *Ohio—The Heart of It All*

There was excitement in the air as Governor Mike DeWine spoke these words on May 10, announcing our new state slogan during the annual Ohio Tourism Day celebration. But as the governor admitted, it really isn't entirely new. It is actually a revival of the popular tagline that was the state's slogan from 1984 to 2001. I always thought that was a great slogan, perfectly embodying all the many ways in which Ohio is unique.

One of those ways is our state's rich history, as you'll discover in our summer feature story: "Ohio Tales and Trails." We interviewed six bestselling authors who write on a fascinating range of topics from Ohio's past and present. You'll learn how they select their subjects, conduct their research, and what inspired them to start writing local history books. These talented authors have also all had titles published either by Arcadia Publishing or its sister imprint The History Press—the two largest publishers of regional and local history in America. Be sure to check out our spotlight on these renowned publishing houses on page 16.

Continuing a tradition that began several summers ago, we also showcase the winner of the Floyd's Pick Book Award. Named for the late children's librarian and advocate Floyd Dickman, this special honor is awarded to the year's most outstanding children's picture book written or illustrated by an Ohioan. The 2023 recipient is Andrea Wang for *Luli and the Language of Tea*. Andrea was the winner of last year's Ohioana Book Award in Juvenile Literature for her picture book *Watercress*. I know you'll enjoy learning more about Andrea from her conversation with Ohioana's Assistant Director, Kathryn Powers.

This season is a fantastic time for reading, and we present a number of reviews of current books, plus a list of titles recently added to our collection. We hope you find several new books you want to take along on your summer travels!

When planning your trips, don't forget the terrific destinations in your own backyard. Which brings us back to Ohio's old-but-new slogan. From big league sports to historic small towns, from wonderful state parks to a thriving arts and culture scene—including Ohioana's own Ohio Literary Trail—Ohio truly is *The Heart of It All*.

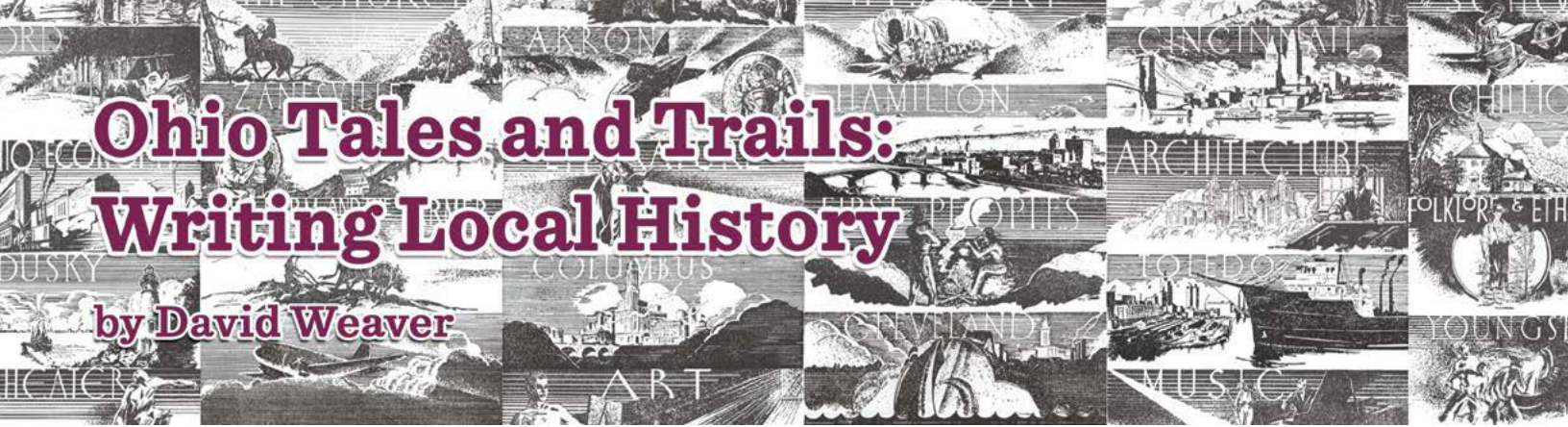
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Weaver".

David Weaver  
Executive Director

## ON THE COVER

Celebrating local history and summer travel, Kathryn Powers gives a fresh look to a classic *Ohioana Quarterly* cover from 1960.





# Ohio Tales and Trails: Writing Local History

by David Weaver

The great historian David McCullough once said, “There’s no secret to making history come alive: *tell stories*.” Few writers did this better than him. Among his many honors, McCullough, who died last year at the age of eighty-nine, won the Ohioana Book Award in the About Ohio or an Ohioan category for his final two books: *The Wright Brothers* and *The Pioneers*.

Ohio history is rich with stories. Its storytellers write about almost every subject imaginable from around the Buckeye State. Whether you’re interested in the Underground Railroad, department stores, ice cream, literary sites, jazz, true crime, or a dearly departed Tiki-themed restaurant, chances are you can find a book about it in the local history section of your neighborhood library or bookstore. (And if you can’t, maybe this article will inspire you to write a book on *your* favorite topic or curiosity.)

The *Ohioana Quarterly* recently talked with six authors whose nonfiction books on Ohio people, places, and events exemplify the value and breadth of the local history genre. Bios of each author can be found at the end of the article.

## **Q: Were you always interested in local history? What got you started as a writer?**

### **Renee Casteel Cook**

Upon relocating to Columbus from my hometown of Chicago in 2014, I was impressed by the mobile food scene and had an opportunity to explore the city’s diverse neighborhoods and cuisines in writing my first title, *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook*. Writing has been a lifelong, passionate hobby for me. I paired this with my background in advertising to share the stories of entrepreneurs of Columbus in that first book, and then throughout the state in my subsequent titles, *Ohio Ice*

*Cream: A Scoop of History* and my newest release, *Ohio Buckeye Candy: A Sweet History*. These latter books have given me the opportunity to broaden my exploration of the full state.

### **Conrade C. Hinds**

I was born and lived in Nashville, Tennessee, and later Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in the 1950s and 1960s, which means I was living in the negative Jim Crow South. As a person of color, local history was centered around the Civil War, slavery, lynching, and widespread discrimination. Fortunately, my parents relocated to the community of Wilberforce, Ohio, which was like a garden of Eden to me. Instead of living in fear of my place in the world, I discovered and adopted the rich local Ohio history with its Native Americans, pioneers, inventors, and inventions. This was positive food for my youthful imagination and curiosity about the world around me. In my mind, everything from trains and planes to steel, tires, and astronauts came from Ohio. For me, these were great discoveries—and with every great discovery, there is a story worth telling.

I started writing when I worked for the Columbus Division of Water. Reading one-hundred-year-old annual reports, I discovered that Columbus was a world leader in the development of modern drinking water and wastewater treatment. I started writing articles for the Division newsletter that were very well received. Upon my retirement in 2010, I was given the opportunity to write a book about the Columbus water treatment heritage.

### **Jane Ann Turzillo**

On my mother’s side, my family was all born in Michigan. My grandmother was from the little town of Coleman, and from the time I was old enough to remember, she would take my sister and me to the old cemetery for a picnic lunch and stories of the town. She walked us

around to all the tombstones and told us about who the people were and what they did. I learned the history of that town—and of that part of Michigan—from that cemetery. After that, I was in love with local histories. When I first moved to Summit County, I visited all the cemeteries, large and small. Just like when I was a child, I was in love again—only this time with Ohio’s history and its people (good and bad). I found the best way to share these great stories was to write about them.

#### David Meyers

When I was in elementary school, my mother bought me a copy of Samuel Harden Stille’s *Ohio Builds a Nation* and I took the title of the book to heart. I believed—and still believe—that Ohio built this nation. I wanted to visit every site the author mentioned and learn more about the historical figures he discussed.

However, my real childhood interest was in the Wild West, owing to the influence of the Golden Age of TV westerns during those years. When I came across a book titled *Cattle Kingdom in the Ohio Valley 1783-1860* by Paul C. Henlein, I suddenly realized that Ohio had cattle drives, cattle towns, wide open saloons, and shootouts long before Wild Bill Hickok and Wyatt Earp were even born.

I began writing my own stories almost as soon as I learned to read. But once I realized there was so much history in Ohio that had been neglected, I turned my attention to researching it and setting it down, beginning with the local music scene in Columbus.

#### Elise Meyers Walker

I grew up wanting to act in the theater. Fortunately, my father supported and encouraged my interest and, at the same time, developed an interest himself. When I was a child on WCBE radio’s *Kids Sundae* program, he would write scripts. And when I was performing on stage at the Davis Center, he went so far as to write a musical for me—*The Last Christmas Carol*—that was later published by Dramatic Publishing.

However, it wasn’t until I was a student at Hofstra University that I developed an interest in writing, when my roommate asked me to write theater reviews for the *Hofstra Chronicle* newspaper. Not long afterward, I was asked to write articles for a couple of national magazines. It was then that I decided writing was something I really wanted to do.

Of course, I came by my interest in local history naturally. As far back as I can remember, I read all the

Ohio titles on the books in my father’s library and wondered what they were about. When he later asked me if I wanted to write books with him, I jumped at the opportunity.

#### Betty Weibel

History was never on my radar, but my interest in preserving stories and details from the past soared after I joined the Board of Trustees for the Ohio History Connection, and later wrote my first

nonfiction book. In school, history seemed so dull in textbooks. But when I started visiting historic sites, seeing displays and stories of artifacts, and meeting the curators who managed them, my interest changed.

Writing was always my love. I wrote family newspapers and mini books in middle grade. After college, I took a job as a newspaper reporter. This really sparked my love of research, conducting interviews, and reporting. I put that experience to work when I entered the public relations profession and started my freelance book projects and travel writing.

“I believed—and still believe—that Ohio built this nation.”

—David Meyers

#### Q: How have you picked the subjects you’ve written about?

**Renee:** I have a deep background in the food and beverage industry, having worked with household brands including Burger King and McDonald’s on the agency side of my career. I’m passionate about travel and exploring cultures through cuisine, and I enjoy

uncovering often-untold stories of generational family operations, as well as trendsetting small businesses.

In 2014, I came across the Trailer Food Diaries series while on a trip to Austin, Texas, and reached out to its author, Tiffany Harelik, about shining a spotlight on Columbus' burgeoning food truck scene. The subtitle of that series, "Serving Up the American Dream One Plate at a Time," resonated with me and she graciously offered a co-authorship opportunity. After a successful release under the altered title, *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook*, we decided to bring Columbus back into the Trailer Food Diaries family and she afforded me sole authorship of *The Best of Trailer Food Diaries*. This compilation featured Columbus alongside major mobile food markets such as Austin, Texas, and Portland, Oregon, and was published under Tiffany's new boutique label, Spellbound Publishers.

In 2021, our original publisher, Arcadia/The History Press, reached out to me directly about authoring another Ohio culinary travel title which became *Ohio Ice Cream: A Scoop of History*. Following its 2022 publication, I began work on another treat, *Ohio Buckeye Candy: A Sweet History*, releasing August 2023.

**Conrade:** Regarding local Ohio history, there are many topics to choose from. The challenge is to find a subject that sparks public interest. For me, I begin by looking for a historic subject of significance that has been widely forgotten. I particularly search for overlooked events that were crucial to Ohio's heritage in building this nation. Three generations have passed away in my lifetime, and a lot of that local history has been lost because its value was in competition with the radio, cinema, and television entertainment age of both the twentieth century and the new millennium.

An example might be Ohio during the era of the Great Depression. The grandparents, parents, and many of the children of that time are now deceased. The fragileness of that era was often talked about and respected as common knowledge just a few decades ago. But given the recent post-pandemic scarcity of many goods, coupled with inflation, such a topic may attract a new audience today.

**Jane Ann:** Naturally, the subjects must be interesting to me. I can't pinpoint exactly what grabs me, but I know

it when I see it or hear it. It also needs to be historical in some way—at least prior to 2000. I love to write about people. Sure, I've written about train disasters, but what interested me the most was who was involved, how did that train wreck affect them, and what happened to them afterward. When I write about a crime, I want the reader to know who the victim was—about their life, their family, and how the crime impacted those who were left behind. There also has to be enough information out there to do the victim and their family justice.

**David:** My first book, *Columbus: The Musical Crossroads*, was directly inspired by Randy McNutt's *The Cincinnati Sound*. I had become good friends with Randy and his wife, Cheryl, after reviewing their books for the *Ohioana Quarterly*. Knowing how much information I had compiled on the Columbus music scene, Randy encouraged me to contact Arcadia Publishing. He assured me they would be easy to work with, and they were.

For my next book, I decided I would like to work with my daughter, Elise, who had just graduated from Hofstra University. We kicked around a couple of ideas and ended up co-writing *Central Ohio's Historic Prisons*. We landed on this topic because I had worked in adult and juvenile corrections for thirty years.

We were then recruited by The History Press. After a librarian friend pointed out to me that true crime was the most popular section in the library, Elise and I decided to write *Historic Columbus Crimes: Mama's in the Furnace, The Thing, & More*. The subject of our follow up book, *Look to Lazarus: The Big Store*, was actually suggested to us by our editor at the time. It turned out to be immensely popular.

**Elise:** When my father worked in juvenile prisons, I tagged along with him on "Take Your Daughter to Work Day." When he was closing down one institution, I even got to drive an electric scooter up and down the hallways. Working on *Central Ohio's Historic Prisons* was just an extension of the good times we had together.

There is a lot of curiosity about how a father-daughter writing team functions. Many women have told us that they couldn't imagine doing something like that, but I don't recall us having a single conflict. And when we added my mother as a co-author for *Look to Lazarus*,



she provided us with something we probably would have missed otherwise: the perspective of the wives of Lazarus employees.

For our true crime books, my interest in the subject has been a driving force behind those titles. Although my father knows quite a bit about the topic, he is not as obsessed with it as I am. After all, he has known many more convicted criminals than I have.

**Betty:** I have written three nonfiction books, all related to my work with nonprofit organizations and my desire to increase awareness of their rich history and unique contributions. My first book, *The Cleveland Grand Prix: An American Show Jumping First*, detailed Ohio's role in the international equestrian world. *Little Victories: A True Story of the Healing Power of Horses* focused on therapeutic horseback riding. *The Ohio Literary Trail: A Guide* accompanied the launch of the trail on behalf of the Ohioana Library.

It is easy to write about topics you are connected to, and my personal involvement in the equestrian world was the inspiration for my first two books. The idea for *The Ohio Literary Trail* came after I became an Ohioana Trustee and learned that my childhood hero, Nancy Drew, was penned by Ohio author Mildred Wirt Benson (also known as Carolyn Keene). This led me to wonder about Ohio's role in shaping culture and literature worldwide. I was thrilled to discover the state's rich history on this subject, and I wanted to promote tourism and encourage visitors to plan literary-themed outings to landmark destinations and historical literary markers around the Buckeye state via the trail.

My main writing motivations have been to learn about new subjects and to improve my craft. Writing a book is so different than writing a newspaper article, annual report, or news release. As a professional, I also like to keep developing my knowledge and skills.

**Q: What kind of research do you do? How much of it is going through archival material such as documents and photographs? Do you travel much as part of your research?**

**Renee:** My research involves lots of taste-testing! It's the best part, and my three young daughters haven't

complained much about joining me for treats and sweets. I had the great pleasure of visiting the library at the Ohio History Center and accessing its incredible resources for *Ohio Ice Cream: A Scoop of History*, down to original texts of recipe books and molds from an early purveyor of ice cream in Columbus, R. H. Erlenbusch's Son Co., which dated from the late 1800s. The staff there is beyond helpful and knowledgeable, making the visit a treat itself.

In terms of photography, I typically rely on each business to provide both historical (if applicable) and current images of everything from products to storefronts, as well as the owners themselves. For *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook*, we had the opportunity to work with a local photographer to capture a variety of images around the city and at food truck events, such as the annual Columbus Food Truck Festival.

I've certainly traveled throughout the state for my last two titles, both during the research process, as well as for events at launch and afterward. Summer is, of course, a perfect time for *Ohio Ice Cream* with marquee festivals like the Utica Sertoma Ice Cream Festival hosted annually on Memorial Day weekend by Velvet Ice Cream. There is also the ever-popular Young's Jersey Dairy, a fantastic family-friendly day trip in Yellow Springs. Fall brings us Buckeye season, so I am excited to share *Ohio Buckeye Candy* with enthusiasts of both the football team and the treat throughout the end of the year.

**Conrade:** My mother was a librarian, so I am very partial to using the State Library, the wide range of metropolitan libraries, and the Library of Congress. There are also so many great history museums and local historical societies with an astounding wealth of knowledge that is just sitting on shelves in files and on microfilm.

I was very lucky when I wrote *Lost Circuses of Ohio* because one extraordinary private collection supplied 90 percent of the photographs and posters for the entire book. Vintage newspaper files were such a valuable resource, too, because they served as a time-machine and introduced me to the culture and values of people who lived over 250 years ago. Life was not easy for the general class of people. Even in 1900, the average life span was only forty-seven years.

For the most part, my travels take me to Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Toledo, and the Akron/Canton metro area. On occasion, I have found myself going to Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, Charleston, and as far as Sarasota, Florida, to do research at the Ringling Circus Museum.

**Jane Ann:** It depends on the subject. I usually start out with newspapers. I subscribe to Genealogybank.com and Newspapers.com, but I also use many others. Some are free, and some are available through libraries. (I have six library cards.) Chronicling America is through the Library of Congress. I use practically all of the genealogy databases and, of course, I use Google. I use Ohio Public Records Request for Ohio police files, and the Freedom of Information Act for the FBI and other governmental agencies. I try to talk to police detectives and family members. I use maps, both recent and past. I go wherever the research takes me—whether it's by computer, phone, or car. I found information on Ohio's first female sheriff down a dusty one-lane road back into the woods. I've gone through records in courthouses, churches, a prison (one time), historical societies, libraries, and more. It's a treasure hunt; it's the thrill of the chase for me.

**David:** To begin with, I have a fairly decent personal library, especially on topics that interest me the most. Over the years, I have picked up a number of volumes that are very hard to find today. I continue to add to my collection, hoping my grandson will appreciate them when he is older.

We are also grateful for the assistance we have received from libraries around the state and the various historical societies that have opened their archives to us. However, many of the really interesting items are privately owned. In some instances, we discover that the custodians don't even know what they have.

Locating good images and photographs is always a challenge. Sometimes the holder wants to charge you a small fortune to publish a photo, and other times they are just happy to have it be used in the furtherance of local history. Many people don't seem to realize that most local historians aren't getting rich off their books.

Depending on the topic of the book, we may travel a lot or very little. For *Historic Black Settlements of Ohio*, we traveled from one corner of the state to another. We

have even gone out of state in pursuit of an elusive bit of information.

**Elise:** My job involves conducting online research on a daily basis. I am adept at accessing, organizing, and analyzing data, then presenting my findings in an easily understandable manner. That draws upon my technical skills, my ability to think creatively, and my talent as a presenter. It's basically researching and writing, but in another arena.

Both my father and I enjoy traveling to unusual places and tracking down obscure facts. Someone once said that researchers dig up bones in one cemetery only to bury them in another. Well, we spend a lot of time in old cemeteries—and libraries, museums, and other repositories of forgotten history—trying to shed some light on the past. Increasingly, those repositories are being moved online, although it's still necessary to do a lot of searching.

Whenever we go on a trip, I map out every curiosity along the way so we can stop if we have the time. There is nothing too trivial.

**Betty:** Each book is a very different process, which is what makes it so interesting. *The Cleveland Grand Prix* involved deep archival research at libraries and historical societies in Cleveland, Columbus, Chagrin Falls, and Gates Mills. I spent several years digging into newspaper archives and photo libraries. It was hard to know when to stop researching and start writing.

*Little Victories* was heavy on in-person interviews and piecing together old newspaper coverage to document the dates and details. I had hoped to do more travel research for *The Ohio Literary Trail*, but the pandemic shut down so many sites. Luckily, my reporter resourcefulness kicked in and I collected info by phone, email, and the internet. This book was the fastest research turnaround—less than a year—and we keep adding to the trail as new subjects come to light.

**Q: Why do you think local history is such a popular genre with readers?**

**Renee:** I think many people are seeking ways to connect to their community and roots in a deeper way, especially



in recent years. They're supporting longstanding businesses, memorializing institutions that have made an impact on the community (whether past or present), and looking to learn from those who have struggled towards success, often to inspire their own entrepreneurial aspirations.

We have a section in *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook* titled "Tips from Food Truck Owners" for those who are interested in getting into the business themselves. (Spoiler alert: most say to either be a mechanic, or have one on speed dial!) Small business owners in Ohio have developed a legacy and culture of hard work and ingenuity. That culture serves to connect history with modern times, both in celebrating those who have stayed true to traditions, as well as those who have been inspired by the innovators of the past to create something new today.

**Conrade:** Generally, everyone wants to have a sense of place and belonging in their community. Fads don't last, and not everyone is into sports. Over the last forty years, post-industrial America has seen the productive glory of countless communities fade; in many cases, the main streets and boulevards have deteriorated beyond recognition.

Many people—particularly the post-World War II baby-boom generation—find contentment in being able to look back to a time of youth and prosperity, and even further back to the times of their parents, grandparents, and possibly great-grandparents. This is because the older generations are no longer around to answer the multitude of questions that come with age and a mature sense of curiosity.

Knowing local history can also increase the value in how a person views their community. For instance, many towns have an old railroad depot in need of preservation. An old brick and mortar depot is of little value as a standing building. But when the knowledge and stories of events that happened there are brought to light, a new appreciation starts to grow. Such an event could be anything: maybe President Harry Truman's train made a campaign stop and he spoke to a crowd of local citizens. Only research and curiosity can unearth long-lost knowledge.

**Jane Ann:** I think folks like to read and learn about the brave men and women who set out for the unknown land of what is now Ohio to build new homes, new lives, and a new town. What were their struggles? How did the town grow to a city, and who grew it? What was it like back then? Where do our traditions come from, and what do they mean? It helps people connect to and have pride in their community. It's like genealogy: people want to know who and where they came from. It's always about the people.

**David:** Is local history popular? I have no concept of how it compares to other genres. In fact, I am always surprised when one of our titles seems to find an audience. For example, when we wrote *Kahiki Supper Club: A Polynesian Paradise in Columbus*, we were hopeful that it would connect with the growing subculture of Tikiphiles around the country. Fortunately, it did. Nine years later, we hope our follow up book, *The Kahiki Scrapbook*, will be popular as well. However, I doubt that many of the people who buy those two books would be interested in some of the unrelated histories we've written.

We do have our "fans"—a handful of readers who make a point of buying every book we write. But that's expecting a lot of them when we release at least one, and sometimes two, new books a year. It's not like we're writing a series of mysteries or romance novels.

**Elise:** I think personal history is becoming more important to people, and local history is an extension of that. The explosion and popularity of home DNA testing proves that people want to know more about who and where they came from. Local history is a big piece of that puzzle. Not everyone's great-grandmother was a nationally known suffragist like Matilda Gage, but the suffragist movement was made up of many, many great-grandmothers who made meaningful impacts in their local communities. We frequently meet people who are interested in our books because their family member is mentioned.

**Betty:** There is no doubt that readers wouldn't be as interested in local history if the authors didn't pick compelling topics and present them well. The best writers can turn a dull history report into a fascinating story, and that is why the genre has become so popular. Whether they are lifelong residents or transplants to

Ohio, most people are curious. When it involves history close to home, they are fascinated to learn all that has happened in Ohio and the “treasures in their own backyard,” as I describe the Ohio Literary Trail. I think these local stories build pride and community as well.

**Q: Of the books you’ve written—or subjects you’ve written about—is there one that is a particular favorite?**

**Renee:** Books become a bit like babies, and unboxing day is equally as exciting the fifth time as it was the first.

Each title has brought its own surprises. For *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook*, gathering recipes from the food truck owners and testing them to ensure they were translated for the home cook was a fun but formidable challenge. With *Ohio Ice Cream*, I was fascinated to learn the depth of the dairy industry throughout the state, from stories of the Swiss cheesemakers who pivoted to ice cream and built the once empire-status Islay’s, to the historic accomplishments of female leaders like Regina Graeter—the young widow who kept the business going and growing—and Luconda Dager and Jeni Britton Bauer, two of today’s most inspiring ice cream pioneers. For *Ohio Buckeye Candy* and my research on the humble peanut butter ball, my misconception that a buckeye is a buckeye was quickly dispelled when I tried the original stuffed version from The Buckeye Lady and delightful creations such as “buckeye pizza” from Sweetie’s Chocolates; each version and recipe is delicious and unique.

While not Ohio related, an honorable mention for my favorite book must go to my children’s book, *Meet Maddie*—a passion project inspired by my oldest daughter and her hilarious toddler fashion preferences. It’s still a family favorite as my younger two (twins!) are in a similar phase at the moment. They want me to work

them into the story now, so perhaps it’ll turn into a series!

**Conrade:** *The Great Columbus Experiment of 1908* is my favorite manuscript on local history. In writing this book, my first mission was to document a series of forgotten local events that impacted the entire world over a century ago and continue to impact it today. During my research, I discovered the City of Columbus hired an expert water treatment engineer named John Gregory. Gregory was trained by a forgotten woman chemist at MIT named Ellen Swallow Richards, who also developed ecology as we know it today into a science. Gregory

surveyed Columbus, which was suffering a region-wide typhoid epidemic in the early 1900s. He then designed a water supply reservoir and a new, innovative water and wastewater infrastructure for the city. The system was placed in service in 1908; occurrence of typhoid fever was immediately reduced by 85 percent and vanished completely within a few short years.

For several years, the Dean of the College of Public Health at The Ohio State University

gave the book as a present to the doctoral graduates. In 2017, I had the honor of being the commencement speaker for OSU’s College of Public Health. I have been told that the book is required reading for the Columbus Division of Water environmental compliance section.

**Jane Ann:** My newest book is usually my favorite. Right now, that’s *Wicked Cleveland*. My favorite people come from different books. They are Maude Collins, the first female sheriff in Ohio (*Wicked Women of Ohio*), Bill Mason, a jewel thief (*Ohio Heists*), and Ted Conrad, a bank embezzler (*Ohio Heists* and *Wicked Cleveland*).

**David:** The short answer is no. However, I am immensely pleased with how well *Historic Black Settlements of Ohio* is being received. Our purpose was to focus attention on a topic that has generally been neglected: the creation of more than one hundred settlements in Ohio prior to

“Books become a  
bit like babies . . .”

–Renee  
Casteel Cook

the Civil War by free Blacks, fugitives from slavery, and emancipated slaves.

My mother grew up not far from Carthagena in Mercer County, Ohio—the largest of all of the Black settlements—and used to tell me stories she had heard about it. Consequently, it has been on my radar since childhood and I would squirrel away bits of related information that I stumbled across over the years. When I read a slave narrative that contained several chapters about Carthagena, I knew I had to do a book.

My daughter and I undertook writing the book with some trepidation because we are not African American, and we did not want people of color to think that we were representing ourselves as the final word on Black settlements. We emphasize that there is still much more research to be done and encourage everyone to dig into their own histories. Hopefully, many more facts and stories will be unearthed over time.

**Elise:** I am a true crime buff. My favorite out of all of our books continues to be *Historic Columbus Crimes*, followed by *Wicked Columbus, Ohio*. However, we have also written several books devoted to one particular crime, such as *Ohio's Black Hand Syndicate: The Birth of Organized Crime in America* and *A Murder in Amish Ohio: The Martyrdom of Paul Coblentz*.

What I like about our recent books is that we are using them to provide an overview of how particular racial and ethnic groups were assimilated into our society. In *Ohio's Black Hand Syndicate*, we took the opportunity to highlight the challenges of overcoming cultural, linguistic, employment, educational, and other barriers among Italian immigrants that initially prevented them from adapting to the American way of life.

Interestingly, we have had the opportunity to meet descendants of both the victims and the victimizers during our presentations. We were surprised to learn that both groups appreciated the fact that we had written these books because the whole truth had not been handed down in their families.

**Betty:** I loved learning about Ohio's literary treasures and am so happy when writers tell me how inspired they have been after reading *The Ohio Literary Trail*, or that they keep the book in their glove box as a reference when they are traveling around the state.

However, the personal interviews that went into *Little Victories* left a major impression on me. The heroine, Debbie Gadus, shared her inspiring life story about a traumatic riding accident that transformed her from able-bodied to paraplegic. She went on to become an instructor, teaching from her wheelchair at a major therapeutic riding center and helping countless others. I asked Debbie numerous uncomfortable questions that were difficult topics to address, and even more uncomfortable for her to answer and relive. This book is my favorite because of the impact it has had on readers.

**Q: What is your latest book? And do you have another one in the works?**

**Renee:** *Ohio Buckeye Candy: A Sweet History* is my newest title and releases this summer. I'm looking forward to sharing the stories of roughly twenty confectioners throughout the state and their take on this signature treat. I hope it will appeal to both football fans in the fall and shoppers looking for books on local history to give as gifts during the holiday season.

I don't have any projects currently in progress, but I'm open to ideas in the culinary history/travel space!

**Conrade:** My latest book, *Made in Ohio*, came out in March 2023. It's about the history and heritage of Ohio as a great state for invention, inventors, manufacturing, and especially innovation. It highlights the beginning of commerce during the post-revolutionary war era to the development of north-south water transportation canals and the east-west National Road. Ohio became a major manufacturer of everything from steam locomotive engines, automobiles, trucks, and bicycles to sewing machines, glassware, toys, and cash registers. The first powered flight was at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, but the Wright brothers' plane was designed, built, and improved upon in Dayton. The state was not only the birthplace of powered flight, but also the birthplace of two groundbreaking men: the first to orbit the earth and the first to set foot on the moon. The future is still bright as Ohio is gearing up to be a major manufacturer of microchips that were previously produced offshore.

The jury is still out on the subject for my next book. One interesting topic is Ohio's impact on early Hollywood and the motion picture industry.



**Jane Ann:** My latest book is *Wicked Cleveland*. I'm currently working on a cold case book of unsolved murders and disappearances in northern Ohio. I don't have a definite title yet.

**David:** Because we publish at least one book a year, I always have to remind myself which is our most recent title. In this case, it is *The Kahiki Scrapbook*. But even as we are out promoting that book, I am also doing presentations on earlier books such as *The Reverse Underground Railroad in Ohio*, *Historic Black Settlements of Ohio*, and even *Historic Columbus Crimes*. Podcasters also contact us for interviews on the variety of topics we've covered in our books.

As far as our next book is concerned, we just submitted a proposal to The History Press and should learn soon whether it is accepted. Fortunately, we've never had one turned down, but we have been asked for additional information on occasion if it is something they haven't dealt with before.

However, at any given time, we have a half dozen or so books we are working on, any one of which could be completed in a month or two if necessary. We've discovered that while researching one subject, we often turn up information on another, sometimes unrelated one. So, it's more efficient to work on more than one book at a time.

**Elise:** Only after we wrote the first Kahiki book did my husband develop an interest in Tiki culture. Since then, we have traveled throughout the United States, visiting Tiki bars along the way and learning that the memory of the Kahiki is honored wherever you go—and that there is still a hunger for more information about it. That is why we felt there would be an audience for *The Kahiki Scrapbook*. It is not unusual for a reader to buy copies of both books at the same time.

One of the books we are currently working on is a chronological history of various communities in Ohio. It is the closest thing to a travel guide we have written because there are actually things to see. Since so many of the places we write about have been razed, we felt it was time to provide our readers with a book they could actually carry with them on day trips around the state. After all, it's only 220 miles between the most far-flung corners of the state.

**Betty:** I feel that I am not done with *Little Victories* yet; I want to share Debbie's story with more audiences and introduce them to the world of therapeutic riding. Due to the timing when it was ready to publish and a desire to get it out quickly, I self-published the book and learned a lot about that process. But now I am rewriting and adapting the book for the young adult audience.

After years of research and working on nonfiction adult titles, I decided to take a different path in my writing and pursue children's literature because it has been a personal interest for some time. I have been learning a lot as a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, attending conferences and workshops, and getting feedback from writers/editors in this field. My current book project is related to horses and written for my middle grade self.

### **Q: Do you have any advice for aspiring writers of local history?**

**Renee:** Cast a wide net when researching, find old news articles, promotional videos, and advertising, and interview a variety of people in and around the topic. For me, that has included not only business owners, but also customers, both old and new. Dig deep into archives and use your resources, both statewide institutions and the smaller local/regional museums and historical centers. Find the stories that have either slipped through the cracks or that surprise you, then share them; they deserve to be recorded, and you never know who else will be sparked by them. I've received feedback from customers ranging from excitement at gifting a book to a relative who simply adores a particular ice cream shop, to one who used it as a basis for starting their own small business. Whether light reading or resource manual, learning about the lives of those who came before us is both enjoyable and inspiring, and the opportunity to capture a piece of history for future generations is an honor and a privilege.

**Conrade:** Local history generally presents factual events that occurred in neighborhoods (small or large), communities, or regional areas. Often these events have had some impact on many individuals. Don't overlook the wide range of factors and circumstances that led to the local event itself. For example, the Great

Flood of 1913 in the Ohio Valley happened because of an enormous volcanic eruption in Alaska the previous year that affected weather patterns. Another example is the Columbus Experiment of 1908. It eradicated a local typhoid epidemic, but the technologies and sciences to do so were developed over the previous fifty years in other places.

In America, the industry of people is often inspired by where they originally migrated from, such as the coal miners of southern Ohio, who were previously employed in their native Wales. Looking at local history as an influence on the present and finding connections to one's heritage makes the past much more than just boring dates and events associated with wars, royalty, and powerful men. Taking this approach will help the writer produce a manuscript that is more comprehensive and relevant to the reader.

**Jane Ann:** All writers tell an aspiring writer to “sit down and write.” I want to add to that to join a writing group or organization that has published writers in the membership; they will help you. And, of course, get out to the cemeteries where the local history is buried.

**David:** Write. Write every day. A writer must learn discipline. In my case, there are few things I would rather do, so writing is never a chore for me. Since I work on several books at one time, I never have writer's block because I can simply switch from one project to another.

Elise and I have a motto: We write the books we wish someone else had written. Because if they had, we would be happy to read them. This is just another way of saying you should write for yourself. We write with the hope (but not the expectation) that other people will want to read our books—that way, we are happily surprised when they do.

That doesn't mean we aren't disappointed when a book doesn't sell as well as we thought it might. But we have also learned that sometimes it takes a year or two for the right people to find it. This is especially true now that most local newspapers no longer have their own book reviewers; word of mouth has become more critical.

**Elise:** Do it because you have to, not because you want success. You will not become famous writing local history. You will not become rich writing local history. (If

you do become rich and famous, please come back and tell me I was wrong. I would love to be friends with a rich and famous local historian.) But if you are going to write, you have to do it now.

While researching, we have met so many people who don't want to share stories or pictures because they plan to write their own books someday. They never do, and when they die, whatever they were going to write is lost forever. The pictures get thrown out and the memories disappear, and we all lose. So, get your story out there. Getting published has never been easier, but can still be tricky. Self-publishing has also never been easier, and your opportunities to reach audiences are exponentially increased and democratized through social media.

**Betty:** You should take your writing seriously if you want to accomplish anything; it requires time and commitment. It also takes discipline to commit that time—both before and after your book is complete—especially if you have a full-time job. It helps to have realistic goals, too. I try to find happiness by learning about the publishing world, new topics, and skills in writing, rather than making book sales my number one criterion for success (which of course, is the ultimate goal). My best advice is to invest in learning your craft and study other writers who will inspire you . . . perhaps, take a drive on the Ohio Literary Trail!

*Page 4: Images and art from the WPA Guide to Ohio, produced by the Federal Writers Project for the Works Progress Administration, 1937-1941.*

## Meet the Authors

**Renee Casteel Cook** is a Buckeye not by birth but by choice. She is a Columbus-based author of culinary history and travel titles including *The Columbus Food Truck Cookbook* and *Ohio Ice Cream: A Scoop of History*. Her passions for writing and chocolate are equally matched, making her latest book, *Ohio Buckeye Candy: A Sweet History*, a labor of nothing but love. Eternally impressed at the drive and dedication of food-focused entrepreneurs and the continuing commitment of generational family-run businesses, she strives to successfully share their stories, capturing a curated selection of legacies both established and developing. Her hope is to inspire future creators of all types to take the leap toward what they love. Visit her online at [www.reneecasteelcook.com](http://www.reneecasteelcook.com).

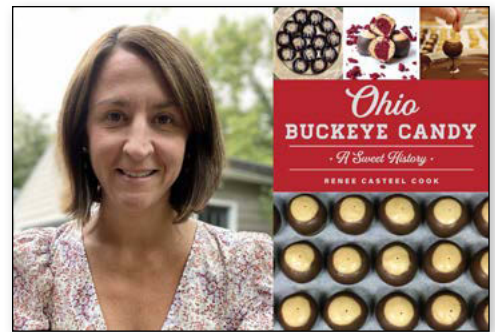


Photo courtesy of Renee Casteel Cook

**Conrade C. Hinds** is originally from Nashville, Tennessee, and a graduate of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, where he studied architecture and industrial technology. He has lived in central Ohio for over forty-five years and is a registered architect licensed in Ohio and New York, a retired Facilities Project Manager with the City of Columbus Department of Public Utilities, and served as an adjunct faculty member in the Engineering Department at Columbus State Community College for twenty-eight years. Hinds and his wife Janet have four adult children and five grandchildren. They enjoy visiting historic sites in America and Europe. As an author, Hinds enjoys researching and writing about forgotten history.



Photo courtesy of Conrade C. Hinds

**Jane Ann Turzillo** is a several-time National Federation of Press Women award winner and double Agatha Award nominee. She has published nine books on Ohio history and true crime and is working on her tenth book on cold cases. As one of the original owners of a large weekly newspaper, she covered police and fire news. When she is not digging up history in cemeteries, she enjoys photography and playing with her German Shepherd, Doc Holliday, and her Border Collie mix, Pretty Boy Floyd. Visit her online at [www.janeannturzillo.com](http://www.janeannturzillo.com).

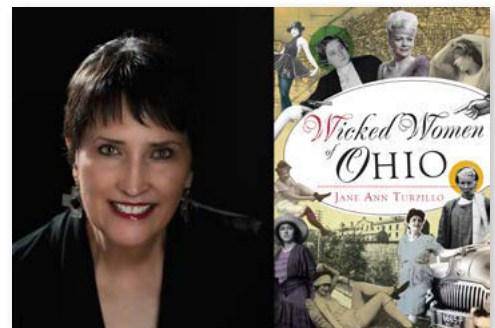


Photo courtesy of Jane Ann Turzillo



**David Meyers** is a lifelong resident of Columbus, Ohio. A graduate of Miami University and The Ohio State University, he has been interested in history since childhood. This has led him to write a number of nonfiction books on a variety of topics, many of which have been overlooked by others. He often works in collaboration with his daughter, Elise. David has also written several historical novels (*Hello, I Must Be Going* and *Ball of Confusion*) and a handful of works for the stage, including the full length musicals *The Last Christmas Carol* and *The Last Oz Story*. In 2019, he was inducted into the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame in recognition of his work. Visit him online at [www.explodingstove.com](http://www.explodingstove.com).

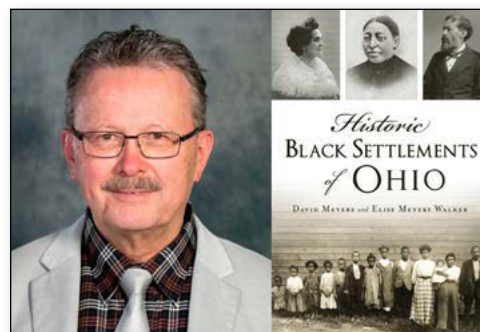


Photo courtesy of David Meyers

**Elise Meyers Walker** earned degrees from Hofstra University and Ohio University. A former board member of the Columbus Historical Society and the Ted Lewis Museum in Circleville, she describes herself as an analyst, researcher, performer, author, organizer, project manager, event planner, teacher, saleswoman, LEGO artist, mother, and adventuress. Her particular interest is true crime. Visit her online at [www.explodingstove.com](http://www.explodingstove.com).

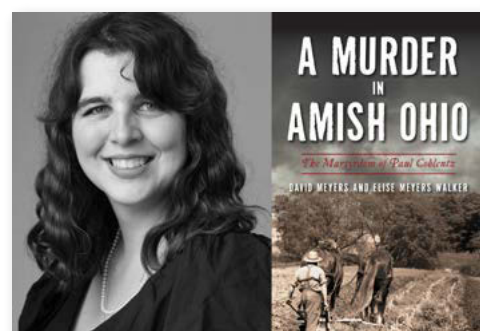


Photo courtesy of Elise Meyers Walker

**Betty Weibel** is a resident of Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Her career as a journalist and public relations professional has spanned more than thirty years. Weibel volunteers her time as a board member for both the Ohioana Library Association and the Ohio History Connection. Her love of travel writing and her home state were inspirations for *The Ohio Literary Trail*. She is also a lifelong equestrian and has published two nonfiction titles celebrating horses: *The Cleveland Grand Prix: An American Show Jumping First* and *Little Victories: A True Story of the Healing Power of Horses*. Visit her online at [www.bettyweibel.com](http://www.bettyweibel.com).



Photo courtesy of Betty Weibel

# Bringing History to Life: Arcadia Publishing and The History Press

by David Weaver

The publishing world, like the field of medicine, has many specializations. Some publishers are known for science fiction or romance, others for poetry or children's books. When it comes to books about local and regional history, two imprints are the recognized leaders: Arcadia Publishing and its sibling, The History Press.

For more than twenty years, these two South Carolina-based publishers have produced books that reconnect people to the memories, people, places, and events that define communities across America—including Ohio. Arcadia is best known for its pictorial format books, each containing more than two hundred images and accompanying captions. From small towns to Civil War battlegrounds, from postcards to amusement parks, Arcadia's richly illustrated books bring history to life.

The History Press publishes local and regional history and culture from coast to coast. The subjects range from narratives of local heroes, tragedies, hometown recipes, historic mysteries, and everything in between. The six authors we interviewed for our cover story have all had books published by The History Press.

We recently talked to two key people at Arcadia and The History Press for a behind-the-scenes look at these distinguished houses and their publishing processes: Publicity Director Katie Parry and Ohio Acquisitions Editor John Rodrigue.

**Q: How do you choose the subjects of your books? Do you develop them in-house, or are they brought to you by authors?**

**John:** We find book ideas and subjects both ways. In addition to determining what series match with certain locations and then seeking out local authors and

experts—either directly, or with the help of historical societies, libraries, chambers of commerce, and so forth—I also research communities individually to see what stories might fit into our different series or might work as a standalone title. *The Akron Sound: The Heyday of the Midwest's Punk Capital* is a good example of a standalone title unique to its location.



**Q: If you come up with a subject or idea you would like to develop, how do you pick the authors?**

**John:** I usually hunt for them individually through blogs, newspaper columns, library events, local tours, and so on. I also ask for help from the groups mentioned earlier. I have even found a few authors via their social media.



**Q: How do you decide if a book is going to be published under Arcadia or The History Press?**

**Katie:** We have certain series on The History Press side and on the Arcadia side. For example, the Images of America series on the Arcadia side is image-heavy, which requires the involvement of an organization or person with a large collection of images. Whereas The History Press has more text-driven series like Haunted America, American Palate, True Crime, etc.

**Q: What have been the most popular subjects you've published?**

**Katie:** The Images of America series is our core series. Since 1998, we have published 342 titles in the series about Ohio. People love reading about true crime and spooky subjects, too.

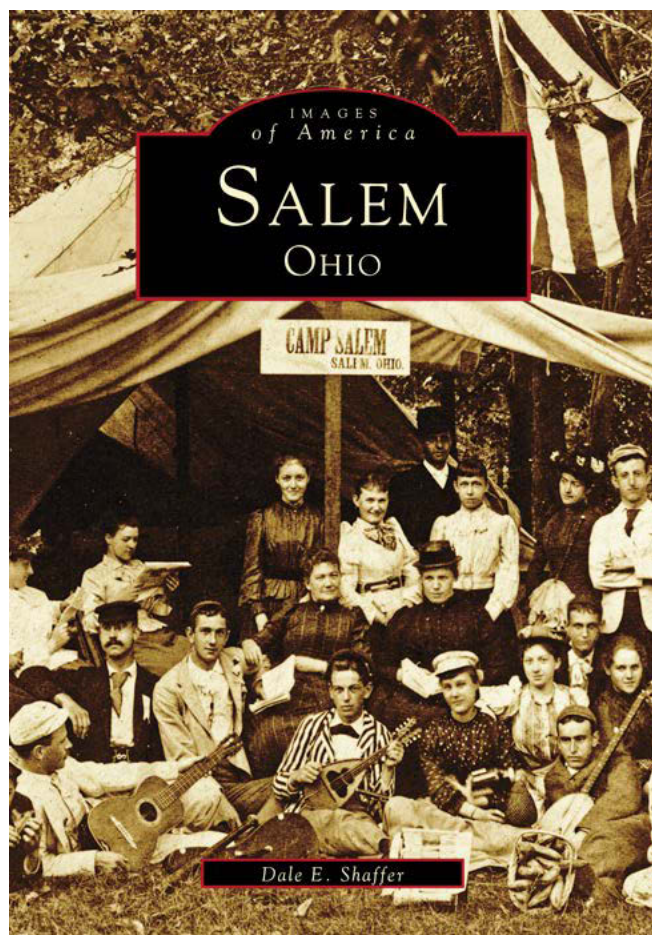
**John:** Like Katie says, our Haunted America and True Crime series are both quite popular. In my experience, so are books in the Lost series and American Palate series. *Akron Family Recipes*, I understand, has been quite a sensation in that city.

**Q:** A question I asked the authors, and we would love to hear your thoughts on, too: Why do you think readers enjoy local history so much?

**John:** Seven years ago, a professional acquaintance shared the job posting for what is now my position. I had no idea who The History Press was. Naturally, I went to their website to find out. I saw those sepia-toned Images of America books and knew instantly: “Oh, those books!” I had seen them before on my grandmother’s coffee table. The experience of thumbing through those books, especially when grandma was in a talkative mood, is hard to describe. It’s an experience that is part browsing a family album and part time travel; I can best sum it up with that exhilaration of seeing something partially recognizable and thinking, “This happened here.” I think it’s that closeness to the past that is most appealing. Regular people are part of history; we live it every day. At its best, local history embodies that belief.

*Special thanks to Katie Parry and John Rodrigue.*

*To learn more about Arcadia Publishing, The History Press, and their submissions processes—as well as their other imprints—please visit [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com).*



The first book about Ohio in Arcadia’s Images of America series was published in 1998. Compiled by author and local historian Dale E. Shaffer, the book features more than 230 historic photographs of what life was like in the small Quaker town of Salem between 1850 and 1956.



# A Conversation with Andrea Wang: 2023 Floyd's Pick Book Award Winner

by Kathryn Powers



Photo credit: Evan Wang Photography

Andrea Wang is an acclaimed author of children's books. Her book *Watercress* was awarded the Caldecott Medal, a Newbery Honor, the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, the Ohioana Book Award, and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor, among other accolades. Her other books, *The Many Meanings of Meilan*, *Luli and the Language of Tea*, *Magic Ramen*, and *The Nian Monster*, have also received awards and starred reviews. Her work explores culture, creative thinking, and identity. You can visit her online at [www.andreawang.com](http://www.andreawang.com).

*Luli and the Language of Tea* is the winner of the 2023 Floyd's Pick Book Award. Created in 2015 to celebrate the legacy of children's librarian and advocate Floyd Dickman, Floyd's Pick is given annually to a book written or illustrated by an Ohioan that is representative of high-quality literature for children. Each year's winning title is selected by the Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) Advisory Council.

**Q** Your book, *Luli and the Language of Tea*, is the 2023 Floyd's Pick Book Award winner. What inspired you to write this story?

**A** I came across a snippet of information that the word for "tea" was very similar across many languages and was immediately intrigued. I wondered if it was true. At the same time, I wanted to challenge myself to write a picture book with a circular structure. Both of these ideas merged and reminded me of the children's game of "telephone," where kids sit in a circle, and one whispers a word or sentence into the ear of the next child. That child then whispers what they think they heard to the next person, and so on until the last child says aloud what they heard, often with amusing, incorrect results. I thought it would be fun to invert the game—to take the words for "tea" in multiple languages and have the children all understand each other instead.

**Q** Did you get to collaborate with Hyewon Yum on the illustration process for *Luli and the Language of Tea*? Do you have a favorite illustration in the book?

**A** Hyewon's illustrations are a product of her own talent and brilliance, with no help from me! I would love to work with her again in the future, though, and we've already been sharing some ideas. I have two favorite illustrations in the book. The first is the one where Luli pours hot water into the teapot with her teacher supervising. The teacher, Miss Hirokane, is named for a dear friend of mine. I found out from Hyewon that her illustration of Miss Hirokane honors her own good friend. I love that both our friends are depicted in this illustration! My other favorite illustration is the one where all the children have come together and are sharing tea, smiles, and new friendships.

**Q** What is your favorite part about creating books for children? On the flip side, do you have any least favorite part(s)?

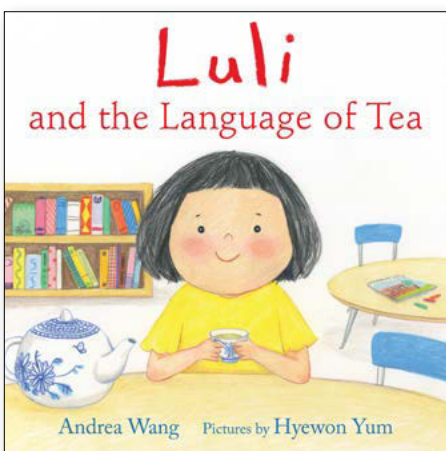
**A** I love hearing from readers (of all ages) that my books resonated with them in some way, that they made a personal connection to the book and felt seen or understood. My least favorite part is writing the first draft, which for me is always a jumble of too many ideas, sloppy sentences, and endless second-guessing.

**Q** Throughout your life, you have lived in many places around the United States: Massachusetts, Indiana, and currently, Colorado. But your childhood years were spent in Yellow Springs, Ohio. In what ways did growing up in Ohio influence your writing?

**A** I lived in Yellow Springs from ages two to thirteen, and those years comprise some of my most vivid memories. I had some incredible teachers who nurtured my love of stories and writing, and the freedom I had to roam the fields and woods sparked my curiosity about the world. On the other hand, the racism—both subtle and overt—that I endured as one of the few Asian Americans in town was very damaging. Much of my writing is in response to these experiences.

**Q** You are a multi-talented writer and have published books for both picture book and middle grade audiences. Does your creative process differ when tackling novels or picture books? Do you prefer writing for one age group over the other?

**A** My creative process for both picture book and middle grade formats is largely the same, starting with a thematic idea and a lot of overwriting. From there, it is an iterative process of revising until I feel like I've found the heart of the story. With picture books, I continue to pare away and refine individual words. With novels, I have a higher word count to play with but no illustrations to rely on, so I get to do more world-building, which is fun. I don't have a preference regarding writing for a particular age group—I actually like to switch back and forth between writing picture books and middle grade novels (and fiction and nonfiction) because it keeps my brain engaged in different ways.



**Q** Floyd Dickman was a passionate advocate for children's literature. How does it feel to be a representation of his legacy in supporting literacy for children and families?

**A** It's such an incredible honor! I'm especially thrilled and thankful that *Luli and the Language of Tea* was chosen since it includes ten non-English languages in their own scripts and shows different types of literacy.

**Q** What message do you hope young readers take away from *Luli and the Language of Tea*?

**A** I hope that young readers are inspired to reach out and make new friends with simple acts of kindness. I also hope they see that people from all different backgrounds have things in common that can bring them together.

**Q** I've heard you were a voracious reader as a child! Were there any books or authors who inspired you the most? Are there any contemporary books, writers, or illustrators you particularly admire today?

**A** I read everything I could get my hands on, but I remember being engrossed by Andrew Lang's Fairy Books of Many Colors series. They were among the few children's books available in my town that I can remember showing people from other countries, including China. I was also inspired by L. M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables series and wished I could be more outspoken and confident like Anne. I admire far too many contemporary authors and illustrators to be able to choose just one, but in terms of adult fiction, I will always read the works of Jean Kwok, Amy Tan, Celeste Ng, and Lisa See.

**Q** Can you share anything with us about book projects you are currently working on?

**A** Thanks for asking! I'm finalizing both a picture book and a standalone middle grade novel, which are both being published in 2024. The picture book is called *Worthy: The Brave and Capable Life of Joseph Pierce*, based on the life of Chinese American and Civil War veteran Joseph Pierce. The middle grade novel is titled *Summer at Squee* and it's an exploration of what it means to be "Asian enough" in the setting of a Chinese heritage summer camp.

# Book Reviews

## NONFICTION

### Denny, Guy L. *Peatlands of Ohio and the Southern Great Lakes Region.*

Photography by Gary Meszaros.

Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2022.

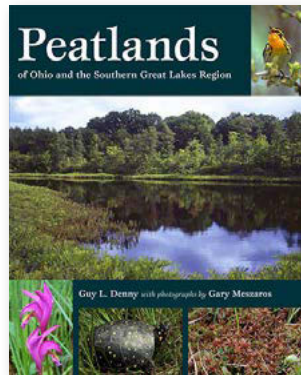
*Peatlands of Ohio and the Southern Great Lakes Region* is a beautiful study of peatlands, bogs, and wetlands that grace our northern inland seas. Guy Denny takes this complex topic and focuses on the evolution of peatlands and why they are an important aspect of the environment and our wetlands. Beginning with the glaciers and the ways they scoured the land, Denny explores kettlehole sphagnum peat bogs, the presence of ferns and mosses, and the varied wildlife found in these rich areas.

Photographer Gary Meszaros' images are stunning. They include close-ups of plants, waterways, and the various peatlands in the southern Great Lakes Region, all in gorgeous detail.

Denny is a retired chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. He was also a director of the Ohio Biological Survey and currently works with the Ohio Natural Areas and Preserves Association. With those credentials, you might think the prose would be like reading a textbook, but you'd be greatly mistaken. The text is clear, concise, and compelling, encouraging readers to learn more and to travel to some of these precious landscapes as they drive the byways of the region.

This is the perfect coffee table book for nature lovers, naturalists, and those passionate about beautiful photographs.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH



### Grabowski, John J., and Lauren R. Pacini. *Cleveland's Cultural Gardens: A Landscape of Diversity.*

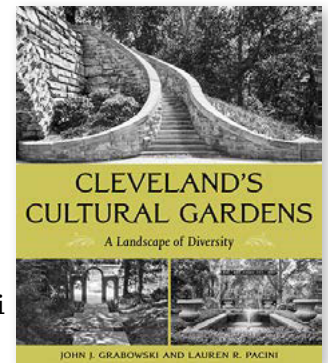
Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2022.

John J. Grabowski, Krieger-Mueller Associate Professor of Applied History at Case Western Reserve University and Krieger-Mueller Chief Historian at Western Reserve Historical Society, teams up with WRHS colleague and photographer Lauren R. Pacini to write about the wealth of statues and plantings in

Cleveland's Cultural Gardens. This fascinating book combines the history and development of Cleveland, Ohio, focusing on the rise of the city's Cultural Gardens that grace Doan Brook, a river that runs through the heart of Cleveland from Lake Erie, along Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, through University Circle, and beyond. Maps and drawings are skillfully inserted among stunning photographs that illustrate the diversity of the gardens and sculptures nestled within the city.

Cleveland's Cultural Gardens were first planted in 1916 with the Shakespeare Garden. The gardens and public spaces grew to include all the races and ethnicities who moved to the city from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, from before World War I to the present. Monuments reflect changes in the city. Today, thirty-three gardens showcase plants, trees, and statues, each representing and honoring the different cultures and people who call Cleveland home.

Grabowski's clear writing brings the history of Cleveland to life as he expounds upon the founding, expansion, and significance of the peoples who lived in this now-sprawling city on the southern shores of Lake Erie. The fertile land was home to Indigenous peoples and early European settlers, farmers, and traders. The city grew to house industries and commercial enterprises which shipped goods along the inland seas and Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. Grabowski tells





of how the city matured, planted trees along the rivers, and ultimately carved out green spaces and parks for the public to enjoy.

*Cleveland's Cultural Gardens* will delight historians and nature lovers across Ohio and beyond. You'll be inspired to visit the gardens, walk along the paths, and admire both plantings and sculptures. You can learn about visiting Cleveland's Cultural Gardens at <https://clevelandculturalgardens.org>.

Grabowski and Pacini's coffee table history book, replete with stunning black and white photographs, should grace every home and library throughout the region.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

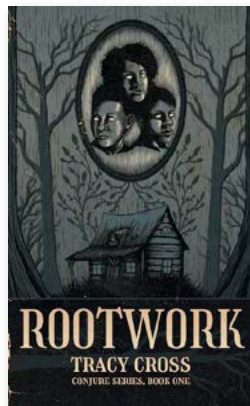
## FICTION

### Cross, Tracy. *Rootwork* (Conjure Series #1).

Wheaton, IL: Dark Hart Books, 2022.

*Rootwork* is an adventurous and, at times, dangerous excursion in the Louisiana swamp involving three young Conway sisters, Ann, Betty, and Pee Wee. As they race through the backwoods in the summer of 1889, the girls visit Teddy, their hoodoo aunt who works with medicinal plants, spiritual ceremonies, and protective spells from her cabin in the woods. Capturing the essence of this coming-of-age story, author Tracy Cross writes in an early chapter, "Everything was in bloom and seemed to be alive and moving." But in the same way that blooms wilt and wither, as the girls become increasingly engaged in Teddy's rootwork, the world they know is about to transform.

Told from alternating points of view, Cross evokes an assortment of southern parish voices, imparting an authentic sense of language. She captivates readers in time and place by providing an immersive sensory experience with everything from the sweet taste of "car'mels" from their Papa to digging in the soggy



soil of the cemetery with Aunt Teddy. Alongside this enchanting backdrop, the girls also witness difficult, even frightening, events that unfold for their family and community. Calling upon the ancient code of an eye for an eye, Cross manages to address racism, poverty, and oppression while still sharing a deeply felt familial, historical, and magical tale.

For readers who like spunky women (both young and old), folk legends, and touches of horror, *Rootwork* delivers all three in less than 200 pages. Ten-year-old Pee Wee steals the show with her sassy comebacks and comments that are wise beyond her years.

In this first book in her Conjure series, Cleveland-born Cross pays tribute to the women in her bloodline, memorializing her grandmother's stories and keeping her family roots alive. Readers who long for more of Cross' folk horror will be happy to learn that, according to an interview with the author, the second book in the Conjure series is finished, sent to the publisher, and features the unforgettable Pee Wee Conway.

REVIEWED BY BECKY HIRN, WRITER, TEACHER, TRAVELER, GARDENER, AND NATURE ENTHUSIAST IN COLUMBUS, OHIO

### Erickson, Alex. *Death by Spiced Chai* (A Bookstore Café Mystery #10).

New York, NY: Kensington Books, 2022.

Alex Erickson has another suspenseful hit on his hands with *Death by Spiced Chai*, set in Pine Hills, an imaginary town in rural northeast Ohio.

Krissy Hancock, owner, manager, and super-sleuth, is plagued with mischief and crimes at her coffeeshop bookstore. In this installment, someone is out to ruin Krissy and her bookstore café. Who would put cockroaches in coffee and the bathrooms? Who would post bogus news and slanderous letters on the internet? If Krissy doesn't figure out who it is soon, her reputation will be ruined and she'll be out of business.

Once she starts investigating, Krissy finds her mystery is chock-full of suspects. But when she looks closely—



relaxing over a cup of spiced chai—she realizes the crimes and mischief are similar to cases she’s solved in the past. Of course, Krissy follows the clues, gets entangled in the investigation, and ties her police officer boyfriend Paul in knots.

You’ll have to read this one to find out whodunnit.

Erickson lives in Ohio with his family and cats, writing lots of clever, cozy murder mysteries. The Bookstore Café Mystery series begins with *Death by Coffee*. *Death by Spiced Chai* can be read as a standalone, but it is great fun to experience the entire series.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

**Herchenroether, Sara. *The Night Flowers*.**  
New York, NY: Tin House, 2023.

In *The Night Flowers*, Ohio author Sara Herchenroether crafts a multilayered mystery of crime and murder. The book is told from three points of view: a detective, a genealogist, and a dead woman/ghost. This tangled tale is filled with misdirection, misleads, and a truly complicated family, slowly coming together with shocking answers.



Laura MacDonald is a genealogy expert. Her favorite project is finding “lost” people and ancestors. While she’s recuperating from breast cancer surgery, she begins to explore cold cases, particularly a Jane Doe and two girls found in barrels in the New Mexico desert thirty years ago.

Jean Martinez is a detective working on cold cases for the Sierra County police force. For her last big case before retiring, Jean wants to solve the thirty-year-old Jane Doe murders—the same ones that Laura has started digging into.

The third point of view is the ghost of the Jane Doe. First, she appears to be narrating the story of her existence in the present. About halfway through, Herchenroether adds the ghost’s past as she reveals the story of her life before she was murdered.

Using investigative procedures, the police detective

and genealogist work together to identify the Jane Doe. When they run into stumbling blocks, they turn to solving her murder.

Herchenroether is adept at creating complex female characters. Protagonists Laura and Jean harness their skills and cleverness to investigate the cold case. At the same time, each woman must face her own challenges in life. Descriptions of Laura’s cancer and her internal struggle coping with life after surgery are intense, even sometimes overpowering. Laura grows stronger physically and constitutionally as the mystery progresses. Jean must bob and weave through police bureaucracy and politics as she investigates the cold case that her department considered long-shelved and forgotten, refusing to give up. Careful readers will pay attention to clues as the detective and genealogist work to solve the crime.

This tale takes its plot from a number of untold crimes against women who are abused, kidnapped, and/or have vanished—and are also rarely identified, if found at all. The ending leaves the reader hoping that Herchenroether has more stories and mysteries planned for Laura and Jean.

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM KAHN, LIBRARIAN, COLUMBUS, OH

## POETRY

**Freeman, Siaara. *Urbanshee*.**  
Minneapolis, MN: Button Poetry, 2022.

“*Urbanshee* was fifteen years in the making . . .” In a short video from WKYC Channel 3 on YouTube featuring Siaara Freeman and the release of her incredible book, the poet explains that she has been working on these poems for nearly half her life. This is likely part of why many people have commented that *Urbanshee* does not feel like a debut. Each line in this collection has been thoroughly considered.



The different chapters of the book each contain a title and quote to guide and prepare the reader, creating

a seamless reading experience. In the WKYC video, Freeman describes how this book is about carving out space for oneself and one's story. The book's speaker unapologetically shares her experiences, powerfully addressing racism, classism, homophobia, and the murder of her father—embodying the narrative power of authentic expression.

As I read through *Urbanshee*, I deeply enjoyed Freeman's technique of reimagining mythological creatures and tropes to solidify the overarching narrative; I found pleasure in how the poet creates her own lore in adapting her main character, Urbanshee. Freeman explains how she had to allow this character to become fully fleshed out, and this thoughtful development has made the book a massive success.

It must be stressed how beautiful this book is in terms of its visual aspects. This poet not only has an astute ear for poetry and spoken word, but she also has an eye for bringing shape and texture to how the lines fall on the page. Freeman creates unique imagery throughout *Urbanshee*, exemplified in poems such as "Haint Red," in which the speaker describes, "Someone made my jaw drop & I liked it enough to let them / do it again & again—until the ground beneath me wore hellish / lipstick in my shade."

After experiencing Freeman's poetic talents, by the end of this book, I found myself calling her the "Last Line Queen." The last few lines of each of her poems often left me speechless and amazed. In "The Such Thing as the Stupid Question," the poem ends with these few stanzas:

*I sound like my mama now,  
who sound like her mama who sound like her mama who*

*sound like her mama, who sound like her  
mama who sound like her mama who sound like her  
mama who sound like her mama, who sound like a  
scream.*

*& that's why I'm so loud remember? You wanna know  
where I'm from? Easy. Open a wound  
& watch it heal.*

These lines resonated in a way that stilled me instantly. Freeman has made magic in this collection with her distinct voice and rhythm.

Admired internationally, Freeman is the Poet Laureate for Cleveland Heights and University Heights. She is a teaching artist for Center for the Arts Inspired Learning and The Westside Community Sisterhood Project in conjunction with the Anisfield-Wolf Foundation. Freeman is also a 2021 Premier Playwright fellow recipient and the 2022 Catapult theater fellow with Cleveland Public Theater.

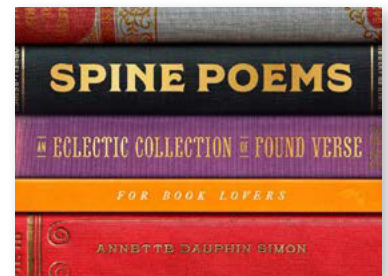
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmqohSwWkl8>

REVIEWED BY MIRIAM NORDINE, OHIOANA LIBRARY ASSISTANT

### Simon, Annette Dauphin. *Spine Poems: An Eclectic Collection of Found Verse for Book Lovers*.

New York, NY: Harper Design, 2022.

Annette Dauphin Simon has created a concept that's delightful literary fun: she stacks books up so that their spine titles tell a story, make a point, or are simply humorous.



Dubbing this art form

"spine poems," Simon discovered this way to play with books while working as a bookseller in Florida. She and her co-workers started pairing one book spine with another, then another, until the final result was cohesive or entertaining. The stacked books themselves are also an art form in their own way with the eye-catching mix of unique spine styles, colors, and lettering.

Here's an example: Simon found the book, *A Walk in the Woods*, then added a family touch with, *Dad by My Side*, imagined their outdoor ceiling with, *Above Us the Milky Way*, and capped the story with the observation, *Tender is the Night*. Those titles right there tell a little tale.





After enjoying Simon's photographed creations, readers will be motivated to browse for matchups in a bookstore, in stacks at the library, and especially their own shelves. Anywhere there are books, there are possible spine poems. At a dull party? Check out the host's displayed books for possible spine poems. And if you get caught? Show them the spine poem game, and you'll become their new best friend, "writing" spine poems together.

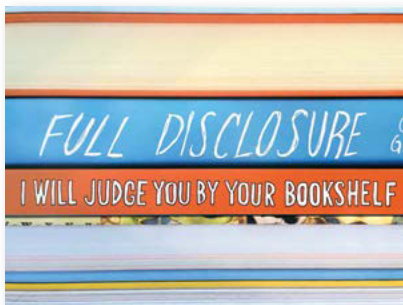
Children who can read and comprehend the word game would also be greatly entertained playing with spine poem matchups. How about this one from the book?



It didn't take me long to create my own found verse from my library:



You definitely won't be able to read this book without going to your shelves to create your own spine poems. Enjoy! And remember:



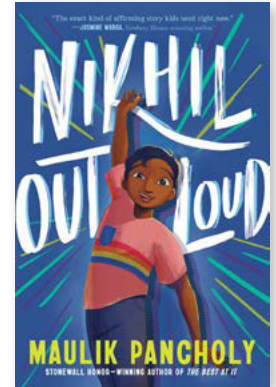
GEORGE COWMEADOW BAUMAN IS A RETIRED BOOKSELLER, NOW READING, WRITING, GARDENING, VOLUNTEERING AT THE UPPER ARLINGTON LIBRARY, WATCHING BASEBALL, AND HANGING AROUND THE HOUSE WITH LINDA AND THE CATS

## MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

### Pancholy, Maulik. *Nikhil Out Loud*.

New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2022.

Thirteen-year-old Nikhil Shah is the beloved voice actor for Raj Reddy on the hit animated series *Raj Reddy in Outer Space*. But being a star on TV doesn't mean you have everything figured out behind the scenes. Nikhil's mom decides to relocate them temporarily, from Los Angeles to her hometown in Ohio, to support Nikhil's sick grandfather.



At first, Nikhil is pleasantly surprised by his new town. He makes friends and grows closer to his grandparents. He's quickly recognized as a celebrity in school, and even wins the lead in the school musical, despite his overwhelming stage fright. But when some of the small-town conservative parents find out that Nikhil is openly gay, they begin to protest. Thrust into roles he did not ask for and can't understand, Nikhil wishes that he could be his cartoon character, Raj Reddy, at all times. To make matters worse, his voice is beginning to change, which means he can't continue voice-acting as Raj!

Nikhil's mother shares wise words with him that all readers can take to heart: "Even though you should always be proud of who you are . . . sometimes, there will be people who try to make you feel bad about the very things that make you special."

*Nikhil Out Loud*, a 2023 Lambda Literary Award winner in the middle grade category, is the kind of story that many young readers can identify with, even if they are not gay. An eighth grader's stress of trying to fit in at school, trying to understand his heritage and bond with family he barely knows, and struggling to deal with big changes as he grows up are things that everyone has been through or will go through in the future. Maulik Pancholy really brings all of his characters to life on the page; Nikhil's big moments of both fear and happiness ring true, and the story has a satisfying ending that will leave readers hoping to read more about Nikhil's further adventures.

Readers may be familiar with Pancholy from his acting work in TV shows like *30 Rock* and *Only Murders in the Building*. He is also a voice actor on *Phineas and Ferb* and has performed on Broadway. He co-founded the anti-bullying campaign Act to Change; many of the themes of that campaign can be found in his books, which also include the Stonewall Honor Book, *The Best at It*. He was born in Dayton to Indian American parents and grew up in a small Ohio town, much like Nikhil Shah.

REVIEWED BY COURTNEY BROWN, OHIOANA LIBRARIAN

## JUVENILE

**Hoefler, Kate.** *Courage Hats*. Illus. by Jessixa Bagley.  
San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2022.

Mae is nervous about her upcoming train ride. It goes through bear places, and bears eat small things like her. So, Mae crafts a paper bag hat to disguise herself as a bear. When the day comes for the big train ride, she picks a seat next to a friendly-looking grown-up. Little does she know...



Bear is also nervous about his upcoming train ride. It goes through people places, and people eat big things like him. So, Bear makes a paper bag hat to disguise himself as a person. When the day comes for the big train ride, he's relieved when a little cub chooses the seat right next to him...

*Courage Hats* by Ohioan Kate Hoefler is an adorable story about facing your fears and finding friends in unexpected places. Paired with Jessixa Bagley's sweet and humorous illustrations, kids are immediately in on the joke; Mae's human face and Bear's furry face are both easy to see via big cut-outs in their paper bag disguises. The characters, however, seem oblivious to this fact as they share their tea, nibble snacks, and look out the window together. Bear comforts Mae when the

train travels through the woods, and Mae reassures Bear when they chug through the city. They discover things together, too, like how the train feels like flying as it zooms along the track. By the end of the journey, Mae and Bear are comfortable enough to remove their disguises. It doesn't matter that Mae is really a person and Bear is really a bear; through the power of friendship, they've conquered their fears and are ready to face a new unknown together.

This book is perfect for children who are nervous about new experiences, stepping out of their comfort zones, or making new friends. It's also a timely reminder that despite our outer differences, we all have much more in common than we think.

REVIEWED BY KATHRYN POWERS, OHIOANA LIBRARY  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND SCBWI REGIONAL ADVISOR

# Book List

The following books were added to Ohioana's collection between February and May 2023. Look for them at your local library or bookstore!

## NONFICTION

Abdurraqib, Hanif. *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us: Five-Year Anniversary Edition*. Columbus, OH: Two Dollar Radio, 2022.

The five-year hardcover anniversary edition of this award-winning essay features new content by author Hanif Abdurraqib, an introduction by Eve L. Ewing, and an original afterword by Jason Reynolds.

Brinkley, Douglas. *Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2022. New York Times–bestselling author and acclaimed presidential historian Douglas Brinkley chronicles the rise of environmental activism during the Long Sixties (1960-1973), telling the story of an indomitable generation that saved the natural world under the leadership of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon.

Capuzza, Jamie C. *The Fifth Star: Ohio's Fight for Women's Right to Vote*. Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2023.

Unbeknownst to most people, Ohio—the fifth state to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment—played a key role in the national women's suffrage movement. Drawing on extensive historical records and

primary sources, *The Fifth Star* details the overlooked contributions of Ohio's forgotten suffragists.

Caracciolo, Matthew. *Moon Ohio*. New York, NY: Moon Travel Guides, 2022.

From cities with old-world charm to endless family adventures in the great outdoors, experience the best of the Buckeye State with *Moon Ohio*, a guidebook featuring sustainable and conscientious travel advice.

DeMott, Robert. *Steinbeck's Imaginarium: Essays on Writing, Fishing, and Other Critical Matters*. Albuquerque, NM: The University of New Mexico Press, 2022.

In *Steinbeck's Imaginarium*, Robert DeMott delves into the imaginative, creative, and sometimes neglected aspects of John Steinbeck's writing, illuminating the author as an experimental novelist whose talents will continue to warrant study and admiration for years to come.

El Elyon, Ah'Hava. *Stolen: The Book of Ah'Hava El Elyon*. Dayton, OH: Ah'Hava Publishing Company, 2023. In this autobiography, author Ah'Hava El Elyon takes readers on a journey of love, loss, and redemption as he shares the heartbreaking events of his life, including the murder of his mother by his stepfather who claimed to be his real father. In candid detail, Ah'Hava recounts his experiences with domestic violence, family secrets, and the challenges of uncovering the truth about his paternity.

Hieber, Leanna Renee, and Andrea Janes. *A Haunted History of Invisible Women: True Stories of America's Ghosts*. New York, NY: Kensington Books, 2022. Sorrowful widows, vengeful jezebels, innocent maidens, wronged lovers, former slaves, and even the occasional axe-murderess—America's female ghosts differ widely in background, class, and circumstance. *A Haunted History of Invisible Women* explores the history, stereotypes, and myths behind these paranormal tales and what the stories reveal about us.

Isaac, Teshauna L. *Blackout: Called Out of Darkness*. Atlanta, GA: Teshauna L. Isaac, 2022. After suffering through a childhood of abuse, Teshauna L. Isaac was diagnosed with Intermittent Explosive Disorder, experiencing episodes of rage so intense she would black out. The condition continued into her adult life as she faced domestic violence and later wound up in prison. *Blackout* describes how Teshauna was able to overcome her condition through the power of God and completely transform her life.

Jarrett, Gene Andrew. *Paul Laurence Dunbar: The Life and Times of a Caged Bird*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872–1906) was one of the first African American poets to garner international recognition in the wake of emancipation. In this definitive biography, Gene Andrew Jarrett offers a revelatory account of a writer whose Gilded Age celebrity



as the “poet laureate of his race” hid the private struggles of a man who, in the words of his famous poem, felt like a “caged bird” that sings.

Pellegrino, Danny. *How Do I Un-Remember This?: Unfortunately True Stories*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, 2022.  
Growing up as a closeted gay kid in small-town Ohio wasn't easy, and Danny Pellegrino has the stories to prove it. With honesty and absurdity, Danny invites readers to experience his most formative moments in life—from his hometown to his hit podcast and career in entertainment today.

Pink, Daniel H. *The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books, 2022.  
Drawing on research in social psychology, neuroscience, and biology, Daniel H. Pink debunks the myth of the “no regrets” philosophy of life. Packed with true stories of people's regrets, as well as practical takeaways for reimagining regret as a positive force, *The Power of Regret* shows how we can live richer, more engaged lives.

Schulz, Kathryn. *Lost & Found: Reflections on Grief, Gratitude, and Happiness*. New York, NY: Random House, 2022.  
After spending years looking for the right relationship, Kathryn Schulz was dazzled by how swiftly everything changed when she finally met her future wife. But as the two of them began building a life together, Schulz's beloved father went into the hospital with a minor heart condition and never came out. Newly in love yet also newly bereft, Schulz was left contending simultaneously with wild joy and terrible grief.

Those twin experiences form the heart of *Lost & Found*, a profound meditation on the families that make us and the families we make.

Zaleski, Annie. *Lady Gaga: Applause*. London, UK: Palazzo Editions, 2022.  
*Lady Gaga: Applause* is a celebration of a true artist of our time. Illustrated throughout with stunning photography and complementary fashion segments, this comprehensive history follows Lady Gaga's ever-evolving and often unpredictable career as one of the world's bestselling musicians.

## FICTION

Baker, Bree. *Pleading the Fish (Seaside Café Mysteries #7)*. Scottsdale, AZ: Poisoned Pen Press, 2022.  
In *Pleading the Fish*, the seventh and final book of Bree Baker's critically acclaimed Seaside Café Mystery series, Everly Swan's wedding plans are upended by a dead body. She'll have to run her teasshop, find a dress, and catch a murderer all before she can walk down the aisle.

Black, Lisa. *What Harms You (Locard Institute Thriller #2)*. New York, NY: Kensington Books, 2023.  
Dr. Ellie Carr and Dr. Rachael Davies team up to solve a chilling question: What happens when a serial killer goes to CSI school?

Collette, Abby. *A Killer Sundae (Ice Cream Parlor Mystery #3)*. New York, NY: Berkley, 2022.  
Bronwyn “Win” Crewse, owner of Crewse Creamery, has a new ice cream truck just in time for

Chagrin Falls' annual Harvest Time Festival. But when a festivalgoer is poisoned, Win gets into a sprinkle of trouble when the crime points to her. To clear her name before the chill of winter sets in, Win will have to investigate and hope that her detective skills won't “dessert” her.

Doench, Meredith. *Whereabouts Unknown*. Johnsonville, NY: Bold Strokes Books, 2022.  
Theodora Madsen is a homicide detective with the Dayton Police Department, eagerly awaiting the arrival of a new baby with her beloved partner, Bree. When an injury forces Theo into a lengthy recovery, she questions her future as both a professional and a parent. Stuck behind a desk with her cases going cold, can she find two missing teens before time runs out?

Everlee, Jess. *The Gentleman's Book of Vices (Lucky Lovers of London #1)*. Toronto, Canada: Carina Adores, 2022.  
With an impending marriage to a woman he can't love, Charlie Price is determined to have one last hurrah: meeting Miles Montague—the author of his favorite explicit novels—in person. More gifted as a smut writer than a shopkeep, Miles has been hiding behind his pen name and using his royalties to keep his failing bookstore afloat. When the two meet in 1883 London, can they find a happily-ever-after together?

Flinn, Patti. *Véronique's Journey*. Blacklick, OH: Gilded Orange Books, 2022.  
In eighteenth-century France, the choices for a young Black woman of modest means are slim. Véronique Clair loves her parents and their small home in the countryside of Burgundy but dreams of using her

talent for sewing and embroidery to make her own way, without having to rely on a man. When Véronique's well-meaning parents find her a suitor of elevated station, their happiness turns into her despair. Véronique must make the difficult choice between agreeing to an arranged marriage—with its promise of elevated status in society—or embarking on a journey across France into a world she's never known.

Flower, Amanda. *Blueberry Blunder (Amish Candy Shop Mystery #8)*. New York, NY: Kensington Books, 2023.  
Bailey King, star of TV's *Bailey's Amish Sweets*, is building her dream candy factory in Harvest, Ohio. But no sooner is the frame of the new building up than she finds the dead body of a surly contractor who has a long list of enemies—including people in the Amish community. Can she solve the murder as every move she makes is filmed by the crew for her upcoming show?

Graham, Evan. *Tantalus Depths*. Oakland, CA: Inkshares, 2022.  
The Tantalus 13 survey expedition goes off the rails as soon as Mary Ketch and the crew of the *Diamelen* discover that the thing beneath their feet isn't a planet. Instead, an impossibly vast and ancient artificial structure lies below. The expedition is accompanied by SCARAB, an AI that is supposed to aid the crew. When erratic behavior in the AI coincides with a series of deadly accidents, Mary faces the horrifying possibility that SCARAB knows more about the Tantalus 13 enigma than it lets on and is willing to kill to keep that information secret.

Gray, Shelley Shepard. *Christmas at the Amish Market*. Los Angeles, CA: Hallmark Publishing, 2022.  
Wesley is so busy running his family's Amish holiday market, he barely has time for Liesl, the young woman he's been courting for years. Liesl suggests her aunt Jenny could assist, but neglects to mention her aunt is charming and only twenty-six years old. Still healing after a painful breakup, Jenny welcomes the distraction of working at the market until she realizes she has feelings for Wesley. How can Jenny even think about romance with the man Liesl expects to marry? But recently, Liesl's feelings have become complicated, too. With humor, faith, and a little help from their friends in the community, everyone might just find what their hearts are looking for this Christmas at the Amish market.

Gray, Shelley Shepard. *Her Heart's Desire (Season in Pinecraft #1)*. Ada, MI: Revell, 2023.  
A wallflower in her Amish community, Mary Margaret hopes a trip will offer her the opportunity to come out of her shell. When a chance meeting brings new friends and a gentle young man into her world, she imagines a whole new life in Florida. But will it all disappear once vacation ends?

Hammond, Eileen Curley. *Murder So Fiendish (Merry March Mystery #7)*. West Jefferson, OH: Twody Press, 2022.  
Rob and Merry are determined to enjoy their all-inclusive honeymoon cruise. Even being seated with the dysfunctional Calhoun family at dinner won't sink their spirits. But when Rob and Merry stumble on the dead body of one of the family

members, Rob discovers a secret no one was meant to see, thrusting them into an investigation to find the killer—one that might cost them their lives.

Hieber, Leanna Renee. *Ghosts of the Forbidden (Glazier's Gap #1)*. Denver, CO: Castle Bridge Media, 2022.  
Welcome to Glazier's Gap—a romantic *Twilight Zone* in a beautiful, creepy town. When Lillian Anders travels to Glazier's Gap for a writer's conference hosted by a Gothic romance publisher, her life starts eerily reflecting the events of an early-'70s "women running from houses" book. Then charming journalist Nathaniel Lynd arrives in town, forging an immediate bond with Lillian as they share memories surfacing from another time period. But evil forces that killed star-crossed lovers in the past now seek to tear apart Lillian and Nathaniel in the present.

Kass, Linda. *Bessie: A Novel*. Phoenix, AZ: She Writes Press, 2023.  
Drawing on biographical and historical sources, Bessie reimagines the early life of Bess Myerson. In 1945 at the age of twenty-one, Bess became the first Jewish woman to win the title of Miss America. This intimate fictional portrait is a tender study of a bold young woman living at a precarious moment in our cultural history.

Knox, Jen. *We Arrive Uninvited*. Bowling Green, KY: Steel Toe Books, 2023.  
When Emerson was twelve, she believed that her grandmother Amelia had a misunderstood gift—not eccentricity or mental illness as others declared. Five years later,

hardened by her mother's suicide and worried that she might be destined for a similar fate, Emerson visits Amelia at The Lavender House, a mental health facility for the elderly. But as Emerson learns about the enigmatic women in her family who found either magic or madness in response to a closed-minded world, she is forced to confront her own magical thinking.

Markley, Stephen. *The Deluge*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2023. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, America is in upheaval, battered by violent weather and extreme politics. When Tony Pietrus, a scientist studying deposits of undersea methane, receives a death threat, his fate will become bound to a stunning cast of characters: a broken drug addict, a star advertising strategist, a neurodivergent mathematician, a cunning eco-terrorist, an actor turned religious zealot, and a brazen young activist named Kate Morris, who, in the mountains of Wyoming, begins a project that will alter the course of the decades to come.

Martin, Lee. *The Glassmaker's Wife*. Ann Arbor, MI: Dzanc Books, 2022.

This historical crime is inspired by the true story of Elizabeth "Betsey" Reed, who was accused of poisoning her husband in 1844. Lee Martin's latest weaves a tale of a pinch of white powder, a scorched paper, a community hungry for a villain, and a young girl's first taste of revenge.

Matthews, Olivia. *Against the Currant (Spice Isle Bakery Mystery #1)*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2023. Little Caribbean, Brooklyn, New

York: Lyndsay Murray is opening Spice Isle Bakery with her family. The bakery is her way to give back to the community she loves, stay connected to her Grenadian roots, and work side-by-side with her family. The only problem is Claudio Fabrizi, a disgruntled fellow bakery owner who does not want any competition. When Claudio turns up dead, Lyndsay becomes the prime suspect in his murder. Can Lyndsay prove her innocence under the watchful eyes of her well-intentioned but meddlesome family?

Roberts, Les. *Sheehan's Dog*. Lutz, FL: Down & Out Books, 2022. Former Irish mafia hitman Brock Sheehan lives quietly on a boat fifty miles from Cleveland. When his long-lost nephew, Linus Callahan, tracks him down and asks him for assistance in clearing his name for a murder he didn't commit, Brock agrees to help. But the victim wasn't so innocent himself: the high-profile athlete was convicted for running a dogfighting ring, and the murder occurred just days after his release from prison. The investigation leads Brock to an unexpected bond with a pit bull named Conor. It will take both human and animal instinct to track down the real killer.

Rosa, Emilia. *Finding Cristina: A New Life*. Norwalk, OH: Mystworks LLC, 2022.

In this sequel to *Finding Cristina*, the titular character is now married and living in the United States. Cristina travels to Rio de Janeiro with her husband and newborn son. But after a few days of blissful vacation, Cristina's husband disappears without a trace. Cristina must find him and care for her son despite the obstacles in her path.

Roth, Jerry. *Throwing Shadows: A Dark Collection*. Bucyrus, KS: Brigids Gate Press, 2022.

A woman develops an unhealthy obsession with a scarecrow. A boy plays with a Ouija board and receives a terrifying warning of murder. A down-on-his-luck father learns what happens when you die in your sleep. These stories and six more frightening tales await the reader within the pages of *Throwing Shadows: A Dark Collection*.

Rouda, Kaira. *The Widow*. Seattle, WA: Thomas & Mercer, 2022. Jody Asher had a plan. Her charismatic husband, Martin, would be a political icon. She, the charming wife, would fuel his success. For fifteen congressional terms, they were the golden couple on the Hill—until Martin's secret affair with a young staffer. If the secret gets out, Jody's reputation and legacy will be ruined. But when Martin suddenly dies, it's a chance to change the narrative. There's nothing the ruthless widow won't do to secure the future she's entitled to—even if she has a secret of her own.

Stowe, Robert Allen. *The Third Pitch*. Castroville, TX: Black Rose Writing, 2021.

Why does a church cardinal need a fixer to retrieve a package for him? Charlie Franklin's clients are usually unsavory denizens climbing from the underbelly of Cleveland, Ohio. He would like to believe the cardinal is different, but he has his doubts. As Charlie searches for the truth, a growing number of curious characters take a sudden interest in him: a local mob boss, the quirky T. K. Constantine, and a mysterious little man all dressed in black.



Winkler, Kyle. *The Nothing That Is*. New Philadelphia, OH: Kyle Winkler, 2021.

It's 1986 and Cade McCall is an assistant manager for a catering business. While he's driving to work one morning, part of the local graveyard explodes. Later the same day, Cade gets an odd message from a client who needs catering for an Extreme Food Club. He calls himself Mr. Dinosaur and he's paying \$11,000. Despite Cade's reservations, he takes the gig. Who's feeding whom is another question entirely.

Young, John. *Getting Huge*. Toronto, Canada: Guernica World Editions, 2023.

Beaten down by his affluent and perpetually disappointed deacons, six-foot-eleven Reverend John Crackstone finally cracks. What begins as a backyard diversion swells into an absurd obsession: to grow the world's largest pumpkin and, with the help of an entrepreneur friend, build a pumpkin empire that wins him fame and fortune. Crackstone is certain his pumpkins are his shot at greatness and escape, especially the giant one he's named Schwartz. While often comic, *Getting Huge* is a cautionary tale for our times.

## POETRY

Biddinger, Mary. *Department of Elegy*. Pittsburgh, PA: Black Lawrence Press, 2022.

*Department of Elegy* conjures dim nightclubs, churning lakes, and vacant Midwestern lots, meditating on moments of lost connection. With the afterlife looming like fringe around the edges of this book, Mary Biddinger constructs a view of heaven as strange as the world

left behind. These poems escort us from forest to dance floor, bathtub to breakwater, memory into present.

Boyer, Marion Starling. *Ice Hours*. East Lansing, MI: Wheelbarrow Books, 2023.

*Ice Hours* is a suite of poems set in majestic and severe Antarctica, chronicling the nearly forgotten story of the Ross Sea party. Weaving historical and scientific research into lilting verse, Marion Starling Boyer follows the adventurers who sailed on the Aurora to support Sir Ernest Shackleton's 1914–1917 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. These poems reveal the characters of the explorers and the conflicts they faced during the two years they labored to lay a chain of supply depots across the ice, unaware that Shackleton would never come because his ship, the *Endurance*, sank on the opposite side of the continent.

D'Amérique, Jean. *No Way in the Skin Without This Bloody Embrace*. Translated by Conor Bracken. Brooklyn, NY: Ugly Duckling Presse, 2022.

In Jean D'Amérique's book-length poem, each page is as brief as a hurricane's eye, glimpsing the eerie territory his speaker traverses like an apocalyptic flâneur. D'Amérique peers into the ruins left by the winds of colonialism, capitalism, war, and natural disaster. But what others dismiss as broken, he sees as a mirror in shards. The first of D'Amérique's books to appear in English, this work reclaims the visceral potency of poetry.

Fagan, Kathy. *Bad Hobby*. Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2022.

From Kingsley Tufts Award finalist Kathy Fagan comes *Bad Hobby*, a perceptive collection focused on memory, class, and might-have-beens.

Hindi, Noor. *Dear God. Dear Bones. Dear Yellow*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2022.

With poems that are lyrically complex, dynamic, and innovative, Noor Hindi explores and interrogates colonialism, religion, patriarchy, and the complex intersections of her identity.

Russell, Cat. *Kaleidoscope: The Poetry of Cat Russell*. Los Angeles, CA: Venetian Spider Press, 2022.

A collection and selection of poetry by Ohio-based poet, blogger, and flash fiction author Cat Russell.

Stever, Margo Taft. *The End of Horses*. Frankfort, KY: Broadstone Books, 2022.

This new collection by Margo Taft Stever offers up a fable of man-made ecological disaster. While it may be too late to avoid the consequences of our past environmental sins, Stever shows us a possible way forward into more harmonious and humane living in a world where there is still much beauty.

## MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT

Alpine, Rachele. *Recess All-Stars (Invincible Girls Club #5)*. Illus. by Addy Rivera Sonda. New York, NY: Aladdin, 2022.

It's career week in Miss Taylor's

class. When Lauren says that she wants to be a football announcer, some of her classmates laugh and ask how she could work in a sport she can't play. She feels even worse when she wants to play kickball at recess and the boys won't let her join their teams. Instead of backing down, Lauren, Emelyn, Ruby, and Myka challenge them to a game—boys against girls. The prize: control of the kickball field during recess. But when Lauren's competitiveness comes out at practice, the BFFs start to butt heads, and Lauren begins to wonder what she really wants out of this contest.

Anglen, Breshea. *Noni and the God Tree: A Shrouded Spark*. Cleveland, OH: Breshea Anglen, 2022.

Noni Grace always believed that her life was painfully average, if not exceptionally unlucky. After the tragic loss of her parents at a young age, Noni committed herself to leaving her hometown, and leaving behind all of the troubling memories. On the day of her graduation, a near-fatal accident changes everything, shattering the façade of the ordinary life she once lived. After meeting the man who saved her life, Noni realizes that nothing is as it seems—not even her.

Berne, Emma Carlson. *Shabbat Sabotage*. New York, NY: Yellow Jacket Books, 2022.

Welcome to Camp Shalom, a Jewish sleepaway camp that offers adventure and friendship! But when mysterious events start occurring, new friends Maya and Dani will need to use their brains and work together—with some occasional sneaking around—to figure out what's really going on.

Brown, Echo. *The Chosen One: A First-Generation Ivy League Odyssey*. New York, NY: Christy Ottaviano Books, 2022.

There are many watchers and they are always white. That's the first thing Echo notices as she settles into Dartmouth College. Despite graduating high school in Cleveland as valedictorian, Echo struggles to keep up in demanding classes. Dartmouth made many promises it couldn't keep. The campus is not a rainbow-colored utopia where education lifts every voice. Nor is it a paradise of ideas, an incubator of inclusivity, or even an exciting dating scene. But it might be a portal to different dimensions of time and space—only accessible if Echo accepts her calling as a Chosen One and takes charge of her future by healing her past. This remarkable challenge demands vulnerability, humility, and the conviction to ask for help without sacrificing self-worth.

Butler, Caron, and Justin A. Reynolds. *Shot Clock*. New York, NY: Katherine Tegen Books, 2022. Former NBA All-Star Caron Butler and acclaimed author Justin A. Reynolds tip off the first book in a new middle grade series about a young boy trying to make his mark on an AAU basketball team coached by a former NBA star in his hometown.

Chima, Cinda Williams. *Children of Ragnarok (Runestone Saga #1)*. New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2022. Sweeping adventure, breathtaking twists of fate, and immersive worlds based in Norse mythology are woven into this first volume of the Runestone Saga, from the award-winning, bestselling author of the

Seven Realms and Shattered Realms series.

Jones, Steph B., and Rachele Alpine. *Quilting a Legacy (Invincible Girls Club #4)*. Illus. by Addy Rivera Sonda. New York, NY: Aladdin, 2022. Myka's grandmother, Gammy, has always been the person who understands her better than anyone else. When Gammy comes to stay for a few weeks, she brings a special surprise—a quilt that was created by and added onto by the women in their family for generations. Myka is determined to carry on the tradition by signing her and Gammy up for quilting classes, but the activity turns out to be a lot harder than it seems. Myka is used to being one of the best at everything she tries, but now feels like she's the only one in the class who is struggling. Will she be able to complete the family quilt before Gammy leaves?

Kochan, Bernice. *How Santa Became a Toymaker: Christmas Lore Retold*. Pittsburgh, PA: Dorrance Publishing Co., 2022.

Many, many years ago, there was a little boy named Santa Claus who lived in the great north country with his mother, father, and homebound little sister. Santa wanted to do anything he could to make his sister smile. He would gather her colored stones and pick her flowers, but when Christmas came, their father had no money to buy real toys for the children. And that was when Santa had an idea...

Landers, Melissa. *Lumara*. New York, NY: Disney-Hyperion, 2022. Boarding school student Talia Morris has no idea her boyfriend, Nathaniel, is a Mystic, let alone second in line to the throne of a

secretive, aspirational magical community—one no mortal has ever been allowed to step inside. Until now. Nathaniel's cousin is about to be married in the biggest wedding the magical world has ever seen, and Nathaniel is allowed to bring a date. But when the entire wedding party suddenly falls into an unexplainable coma and the community goes on lockdown, Talia, the outsider, is pegged as the culprit. Now, she has to do everything in her meager non-power to prove her innocence.

Libenson, Terri. *Remarkably Ruby (Emmie & Friends)*. New York, NY: Balzer + Bray, 2022.  
Ruby and Mia are total opposites: Ruby is a little awkward, not a “joiner,” and loves to write poetry. Mia is type A, popular(ish), and wants to be class president. They used to be best friends. But now they have nothing in common anymore . . . Or do they?

Miller, Jeff. *Rare Birds*. New York, NY: Union Square Kids, 2023.  
Twelve-year-old Graham Dodds is no stranger to hospital waiting rooms, and waiting to see if they will finally get their miracle: a heart transplant to save his mom's life. When Graham gets stuck in Florida for the summer, he meets a girl named Lou at the hospital who needs a distraction as much as he does. She tells him about a contest to find the endangered Snail Kite, which resides in the local gator-filled swamps. Together they embark on an adventure, searching for the rare bird. Along the way, Graham might just find something else—himself.

Molebash, Wes. *Travis Davenport for the Win!* New York, NY: First Second Books, 2023.

Travis Davenport may be a genius, but he's always struggled to make friends. After his attempt to befriend new kid Juniper Reyes results in an epic fail, Travis takes his sentient flying robot, Travbot, out for a ride. But when Travbot malfunctions, the two take a nosedive into the woods. There, they discover a legendary sword, a wizard from another dimension, and a mysterious prophecy: Travis Davenport is destined to save the multiverse!

Pilkey, Dav. *Collaborations (Cat Kid Comic Club #4)*. New York, NY: Graphix, 2022.  
Excitement and imagination run wild as the Cat Kid Comic Club gets back to making comics with originality and laughter. Dav Pilkey employs a variety of techniques—including origami, gouache, photography, collage, watercolors, and more—to capture the creative and joyful spirit of collaboration.

Pilkey, Dav. *The Captain Underpants Double-Crunchy Book o' Fun*. New York, NY: Graphix, 2022.

Join George and Harold and their wedgie-powered superhero, Captain Underpants, as they show you how to make your very own comic books. Draw your favorite characters, tell cheesy jokes, solve Professor Poopypants' Preposterous Puzzles, race to the finish line in crazy mazes, read “Hairy Potty and the Underwear of Justice,” watch action-packed Flip-O-Ramas, and so much more—all in full color!

Quinlan, Skye. *Forward March*. Salem, MA: Page Street Kids, 2022.  
Harper “Band Geek” McKinley just wants to make it through her senior year of marching band—and her

Republican father's presidential campaign. That was a tall order to start, but everything was going well enough until someone made a fake gay dating profile posing as Harper. The real Harper can't afford for anyone to find out about the Tinder profile. But upon meeting Margot Blanchard, the drumline leader who swiped right, Harper starts to rethink everything. With her dad's campaign on the line, Harper's relationship with her family at stake, and no idea who made that fake dating profile, Harper has to decide what's more important to her: living her truth or becoming the First Daughter of America.

Reynolds, Justin A. *Miles Morales: Stranger Tides*. Illus. by Pablo Leon. New York, NY: Graphix, 2022.  
Miles Morales is slowly getting used to being Spider-Man. Keeping Brooklyn safe, taking down bad guys, and finishing his homework—he's got this! But when Spider-Man is invited to the launch for a brand-new video game, things go sideways fast. Anyone who plays the game is frozen, and it's all because of a villain named the Stranger. He's judged humanity and found it lacking, and his idea of justice is extreme. Left with the fate of the world in his hands, can Miles turn old foes to friends and find the answers he needs in time?

Rylant, Cynthia. *A Kitten in Gooseberry Park*. Illus. by Arthur Howard. New York, NY: Beach Lane Books, 2022.  
Kona the Labrador and Gwendolyn the hermit crab love how much it's been raining in Gooseberry Park. But the weather brings trouble to their home when a lost bobcat kitten is swept down from the mountain



and away from his family. Murray the bat rescues the cub, but to bring him home, Kona and Murray will have to venture beyond the comfort and safety of their beloved park and prepare themselves to say goodbye to their young new friend.

Sedita, Francesco, and Prescott Seraydarian. *The Legend of the Lost Boy (The Pathfinders Society #3)*. Illus. by Steve Hamaker. New York, NY: Viking Books for Young Readers, 2022.

In their newest adventure, the Pathfinders are in for a wild time—literally! Unwittingly transported fifty years into the past, Kyle, Vic, Harry, Beth, and Nate desperately try to find a way back to their own time while attempting to avoid questions about who—and from when—they are. A mysterious map takes them straight into danger and beyond, where the present and the past collide in otherworldly ways. Will the Pathfinders find their way home, or will they be trapped in this not-so-groovy era forever?

Van Vleet, Carmella. *Electricity: Circuits, Static, and Electromagnets with Hands-On Science Activities for Kids*. Illus. by Micah Rauch. Norwich, VT: Nomad Press, 2022.

Electricity is everywhere: in our homes, schools, offices, on the train, in our cars—even inside our bodies! By diving into the topics of static electricity, currents, circuits, electromagnetism, motors, and ways we might produce and use electricity in the future, kids gain a full view of how electricity works and why it's so important to human society.

Wyatt, Merrill. *Tangled Up in Nonsense (Tangled Mysteries #2)*. New York, NY: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2022.

Sloane and Amelia clash with rival detectives when they travel to a secluded mansion in search of a missing fortune in this second book in the fun-filled Tangled Mysteries middle grade series.

## JUVENILE

Berne, Emma Carlson. *Balto (Animals to the Rescue #1)*. Illus. by Francesca Rosa. New York, NY: Graphix, 2022.

In 1925, disaster struck the small town of Nome, Alaska. When a deadly epidemic begins affecting the children of Nome, their only hope is to relay life-saving medicine over 650 miles of snow-covered trails using teams of sled dogs. Across the long journey, one dog overcame nearly impossible odds to become a hero.

Berne, Emma Carlson. *Sergeant Reckless (Animals to the Rescue #2)*. Illus. by Francesca Rosa. New York, NY: Graphix, 2022.

Born to be a racehorse in Seoul, Korea, Reckless was always destined for greatness. Then the Korean War began in 1950, and those dreams were dashed. But when Reckless was bought by a group of US Marines to work on the frontlines, it quickly became clear that this little mare had the heart of a hero.

Berne, Emma Carlson. *Toys and Games (Past and Present)*. Minneapolis, MN: Bearcub Books, 2022.

From simple wooden dolls to talking toy robots, toys and games have

come a long way! Carefully leveled text and engaging historic images help readers explore the role of toys and games through the ages in this fun and informative series.

Berne, Emma Carlson. *What Do We Know About Atlantis?* Illus. by Manuel Gutierrez. New York, NY: Penguin Workshop, 2022.

The What Do We Know About? series explores the mysterious, the unknown, and the unexplained. Does the underwater kingdom of Atlantis really exist, or is it just a centuries-old myth? Find out all there is to know about Atlantis in this compelling and up-to-date addition to an exciting new series.

Brain, Erin Alon. *Periwinkle and the Absolutely Dizzy-Dazzling Day!* Columbus, OH: Dfmi Designs, 2023.

An independent girl sets off on an adventure through a fantastical forest, using her cleverness to overcome obstacles.

Brown-Wood, JaNay. *Grandma's Tiny House*. Illus. by Priscilla Burris. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2021.

This rhyming counting book introduces young readers to numbers one through fifteen as Grandma's family and friends fill her tiny house on Brown Street. Neighbors, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and grandkids crowd into the house and pile it high with treats for a family feast.

Burton, D.J. *DJ Baby*. Illus. by Andy J. Pizza. New York, NY: Little Simon, 2022.

This boogie-worthy board book with record-spinning novelties helps DJs-in-training practice their skills.

Featuring two turntables at the top of the book, young readers can spin, turn, and mix the moving records as they pump up the jams.

Carson, Mary Kay. ***The River That Wolves Moved: A True Tale from Yellowstone***. Illus. by David Hohn. Ann Arbor, MI: Sleeping Bear Press, 2022.

Long before its establishment as a national park in 1872, Yellowstone was home to the gray wolf, as well as other large predators. But when predator control programs were developed, the wolves were almost entirely eliminated from the region by the mid-1900s. Using the structure of “The House that Jack Built,” science writer Mary Kay Carson shows the interconnectedness of the wildlife that lives in a place and how the presence (or absence) of a single species can cause a ripple effect, impacting an ecosystem and even the physical land itself.

Coven, Wanda. ***Henry Heckelbeck and the Great Frog Escape***. Illus. by Priscilla Burris. New York, NY: Little Simon, 2022.

Henry Heckelbeck and his friends spend the day at Brewster Creek, a place where they can relax, run around, and catch frogs. But when Henry accidentally brings a frog home, it does not want to stay put! Will Henry be able to return the frog to the creek? Or will this great frog escape turn into an absolute disaster?

Coven, Wanda. ***Henry Heckelbeck Chills Out***. Illus. by Priscilla Burris. New York, NY: Little Simon, 2022. It’s winter in Brewster and Henry Heckelbeck is ready for fun!

Snowball fights, building snow friends, and drinking lots of hot chocolate—what’s not to love? But when Max sets up a winter wonderland contest, Henry finds that fun in the snow can be no fun. Can he put the win in winter with the help of a little magic?

Franceschelli, Christopher. ***Merrytale: A Christmas Adventure***. Illus. by Allison Black. New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, 2022.

In this Christmas story, follow two children on their way to Santa’s workshop as they travel through the city, into a gleaming forest, and across the glittering snowscape. Young readers will delight in the clever die-cut surprises throughout and the dramatic quadruple gatefold at the end that folds out into a special, festive surprise.

Geist, Christina. ***Buddy’s New Buddy (Growing with Buddy #3)***. Illus. by Tim Bowers. New York, NY: Random House Books for Young Readers, 2022.

The newest picture book in the New York Times–bestselling Buddy series is about being yourself through-and-through while going back to school and trying to make new buddies.

Gerber, Carole. ***P is for Purr***. Illus. by Susanna Covelli. Sanger, CA: Familius, 2022.

Furry felines fill the pages of this ABC picture book, introducing different species, behaviors, and eccentricities of cats. Packed with everything you should know about your cat, from how fast they run to why they like to purr, *P Is for Purr* is the perfect book for kids and cat lovers alike.

Hillenbrand, Will. ***Mighty Reader and the Reading Riddle***. New York, NY: Holiday House, 2022.

When pup Inky can’t find the right book to read, super dog Mighty Reader comes to the rescue! He picks *The Sword and the Bone*, and soon Inky and Mighty Reader are transported to a medieval world filled with castles and creatures of legend.

Holub, Joan. ***I Love You a Latke***. Illus. by Allison Black. New York, NY: Scholastic, 2022.

Welcome the Hanukkah season with this punny board book full of dreidels, latkes, and more. Celebrate the holiday with rhyming text and touch-and-feel flaps.

Kiernan, Denise. ***Giving Thanks: How Thanksgiving Became a National Holiday***. Illus. by Jamey Christoph. New York, NY: Philomel Books, 2022.

All across the world, among hundreds of cultures and across centuries, people have come together to give thanks. But Americans didn’t have an official Thanksgiving holiday until the 1800s. The holiday Americans know today exists because of a woman named Sarah Josepha Hale, a spirited letter-writing campaign, a sympathetic president, and a civil war.

Kirk, Daniel. ***The Big Slide***. New York, NY: Nancy Paulsen Books, 2022.

Little Pup isn’t as little as he used to be, and he’d love to try out the playground’s big slide. Day after day he eyes it, but he just can’t seem to work up the courage. Fortunately, he meets someone in the same boat, Little Duck, and the two provide

each other with the bravery boost needed to climb that ladder and enjoy the slide.

Kuo, Julia. *Luminous: Living Things That Light Up the Night*. Vancouver, Canada: Greystone Kids, 2022.

From acclaimed author-illustrator Julia Kuo comes a picture book about bioluminescence, the light made from living things, and its many forms: fireflies and foxfire, fungi and glow-worms, deep-sea fish and vampire squids.

Lee, Chiquita Mullins, and Carmella Van Vleet. *You Gotta Meet Mr. Pierce! The Storied Life of Folk Artist Elijah Pierce*. Illus. by Jennifer Mack-Watkins. New York, NY: Kokila, 2023.

Based on the true story of Elijah Pierce and his community barbershop in Columbus, Ohio, this picture book includes cleverly collaged museum-sourced photos of his art and informative backmatter about his life.

Lee, Florenza. *Brooklyn Beaver Almost Builds a Dam*. Illus. by Eduardo Paj. Chagrin Falls, OH: Words to Ponder Publishing, 2021. Brooklyn is on a mission to gather the supplies she needs to help Bryceson build a dam. Join Brooklyn on a journey where the law of reciprocity and the power of words carry her home.

Lee, Florenza. *Who Made That Sound? Animals and Their Sounds in English, Spanish, and Mandarin*. Illus. by Debbie Richmond. Chagrin Falls, OH: Words to Ponder Publishing, 2022. Young readers are introduced to

the fascinating world of language through illustrated images of easily recognizable animals.

MacLachlan, Patricia. *My Poet*. Illus. by Jen Hill. New York, NY: Katherine Tegen Books, 2022.

Inspired by the life and craft of Mary Oliver, *My Poet* celebrates the joy of connecting perception and experience with words, with artwork by Jen Hill and text by Newbery Medal-winning author Patricia MacLachlan.

Manushkin, Fran. *The Birthday Party Mystery (Katie Woo and Pedro Mysteries)*. Illus. by Tammie Lyon. North Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2022.

It's nearly Katie's birthday, and she learns she will be getting a special present. She's too excited to wait patiently for the gift to arrive, so she decides to investigate ahead of time. The clues might lead her to her present, but is it better to let this mystery go unsolved?

Manushkin, Fran. *The Mystery of the Snow Puppy (Katie Woo and Pedro Mysteries)*. Illus. by Tammie Lyon. North Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2022.

Katie's new puppy, Koko, has run away, and now the white doggie is lost! Pedro and Katie pair up to investigate. They are hot on Koko's trail, but some clues lead nowhere. Still the detectives won't give up. After all, solving this mystery is the only way to bring Koko home.

Manushkin, Fran. *The Mystery of the Stinky, Spooky Night (Katie Woo and Pedro Mysteries)*. Illus. by Tammie Lyon. North Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2022.

Pedro and his dad are walking Katie home on a foggy night when they are seemingly pursued by something very smelly. Can Katie and Pedro solve the mystery of the big smell?

Manushkin, Fran. *The Rainbow Mystery (Katie Woo and Pedro Mysteries)*. Illus. by Tammie Lyon. North Mankato, MN: Picture Window Books, 2022.

When Katie's father loses his special rainbow ring while playing with the kids in the backyard, Katie and Pedro follow the clues to find the keepsake.

Snider, Brandon T. *What is the Story of Transformers?* Illus. by Ted Hammond. New York, NY: Penguin Workshop, 2022.

Since the 1980s, the Transformers toy line has been defining the lives of children with its mighty heroes. But the Robots in Disguise have morphed into much more than just a toy line! This biography for young readers tells the incredible story of the tiny toys that became blockbuster movie stars, comic book heroes, and more. Ride along with Optimus Prime, Bumblebee, and Megatron as you learn the history of the Autobots, the Decepticons, and their legendary battles.

Ultman, Suzy. *Friendship Carousel*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books, 2022.

Are you ready to ride? Part board book, part toy, the *Friendship Carousel* is complete fun. Readers are invited to flip the pages of this playful carousel book for a ride that celebrates friends, both big and small. Then tie the ribbon for merry-go-round fun that never ends!



Ward, Lindsay. ***The Capitol: A Meet the Nation's Capitol Book***. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2022.

This interactive book is for kids to learn all about the different people who work in and help maintain one of the country's most important and famous buildings. It includes educational backmatter, a glossary, counting prompts, and search-and-find elements.

Weller, Marie, and Paula Vertikoff. ***Cranium Critters: Paws at the Pause Place***. Illus. by Marina Halak. Columbus, OH: Cranium Kids Media, 2022.

In *Cranium Critters: Paws at the Pause Place*, children will meet Scout and Einstein, two lovable characters who represent different parts of the brain.

West, Nina. ***The You Kind of Kind***. Illus. by Hayden Evans. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2022.

Little Nina embarks on a boisterous day of exploration to find Kind. With a backpack full of her favorite things, Nina guides readers through the neighborhood to identify kindness in the wild. Along the way, she shines a light on the importance of loving yourself as well as others, revealing that sharing your unique form of kindness—the *you* kind of Kind—is the most wonderful gift of all.

Wheeler, Lisa. ***Dino-Easter (Dino-Holidays)***. Illus. by Barry Gott. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, 2022.

Celebrate with the dinos as they gather flowers for a spring bouquet, throw an egg painting party, pet newborn farm animals, visit a chocolate factory, and join an Easter

parade with Peter Clobbertail. At last, it's time for the egg hunt. Will Raptor finally get to eat his treats?

Wheeler, Lisa. ***My First Dino-Baseball***. Illus. by Barry Gott. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, 2022.

Batter up! Simple rhyming text highlights baseball essentials as dinosaurs play baseball in this board book.

Wheeler, Lisa. ***My First Dino-Soccer***. Illus. by Barry Gott. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, 2022.

Goal! Youngsters will cheer along as simple rhyming text describes how dinosaurs play soccer in this high-energy board book.

Whitney, Julie. ***Astra the Lonely Airplane***. Illus. by Michelle Simpson. Richmond, VA: Belle Isle Books, 2022.

Astra is a sleek, shiny airplane who loves to go flying with her best friend, Captain Dan. But when Astra and Dan suddenly find themselves out of a job, Astra must wait in her lonely hangar for a new owner to come along and give them somewhere to go. As the weeks turn into months and the right buyer still doesn't appear, Astra begins to wonder: Will she ever get to fly again?

# Coming Soon

## Author Event: *Cleveland Noir*

August 1, 2023  
7:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
Loganberry Books  
13014 Larchmere Blvd.  
Shaker Heights, Ohio

*Cleveland Noir* joins *Columbus Noir* as the Akashic Noir Series continues its tour of Ohio, navigating the dregs of the North Shore with fifteen new tales of murder and mayhem by authors including Paula McLain, Jill Bialosky, Thrity Umrigar, Abby Collette, D. M. Pulley, and Alex DiFrancesco. Join editors and contributors Miesha Headen and Michael Ruhlman and authors TBA for the launch at Loganberry Books. For more information, visit <https://www.akashicbooks.com/events/cleveland-noir-loganberry-books-shaker-heights-oh/>.

## Thurber House Summer Literary Picnics

June 7 – August 9, 2023  
Thurber House  
77 Jefferson Ave., Columbus, Ohio

The popular outdoor series that began June 7 wraps up with Ohio Poet Laureate Kari Gunter-Seymour (*Alone in the House of My Heart*) on August 2 and essayist and OSU Director of American Indian Studies Elissa Washuta (*White Magic*) on August 9. Held on the Thurber House Lawn. For information and tickets, visit <https://www.thurberhouse.org/current-events-programs>.

## Ohioana Book Awards

September 21, 2023  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Ohio Statehouse Atrium  
1 Capitol Square, Columbus, Ohio

Join us for the 82nd annual Ohioana Book Awards as we honor this year's winning authors and present the 2023 Walter Rumsey Marvin Grant. The celebration begins at 6:00 p.m. with a reception, followed by the awards presentations, roundtable discussion, and book signing. Tickets go on sale in late August. For more information, visit [www.ohioana.org](http://www.ohioana.org).

## Inkubator Writing Conference

September 22 – 23, 2023  
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Cleveland Public Library  
325 Superior Ave. East, Cleveland, Ohio

Presented by Literary Cleveland as part of Cleveland Book Week, Inkubator is one of the largest free writing conferences in the country. The center of the activity is a book fair with literary groups and organizations from throughout the region. For more information, visit <https://www.litcleveland.org>.

## Author Event: John Scalzi

September 25, 2023  
7:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
Joseph Beth Booksellers  
2692 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio

Inheriting your uncle's supervillain business is more complicated than you might think. From bestselling science fiction author and 2023 Ohioana Book Award finalist John Scalzi comes *Starter Villain*. Join Scalzi for a discussion and book signing. For more information, visit <https://www.josephbeth.com/event/2023-09>.

## Ohioana Book Club

September 27, 2023  
10:00 a.m. – noon  
Ohioana Library  
274 E. First Ave., Ste. 300, Columbus, OH

The title for September is 2023 Ohioana Book Award finalist *Inciting Joy* by Ross Gay. Free. If you would like to attend, email us at [ohioana@ohioana.org](mailto:ohioana@ohioana.org).

## Cartoon Crossroads Columbus

September 27 – October 1, 2023  
Multiple venues  
Columbus, Ohio

This annual festival spans multiple days and stretches throughout the city, connecting people with a passion for the art of cartoons. The culminating weekend expo at Columbus Metropolitan Library's Main Library on September 30 and October 1 draws more than 100 cartoonists, graphic novelists, and publishers selling their creations and meeting fans. Free. For more information, visit <https://www.cartooncrossroadscolumbus.org>.

# Thank You!

The Ohioana Library wouldn't be the unique organization it is without our many generous supporters. Listed below are those who have given from March 1, 2023, through May 31, 2023. Gifts marked with an asterisk were received during our "Friends of the Ohioana Book Festival" campaign. Special thanks to Governor Mike DeWine and the Ohio General Assembly for the state's ongoing support.

## **\$10,000 and above**

Greater Columbus Arts Council  
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## **\$25 – 49**

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## Why I Support Ohioana

The Ohioana Library celebrates Ohio's vibrant literary tradition and the many ways that coming from or spending time in a place can enrich writing of all kinds.

I am fortunate to have been involved with the Ohioana Book Festival from its beginning in 2007. Ohio University Press had just published *Good Roots: Writers Reflect on Growing Up in Ohio*, edited by Lisa Watts. Ten of the nineteen authors who contributed to *Good Roots* participated in a memorable day of readings and discussion. The audience had a great time at the festival that day, engaging enthusiastically with the authors and fellow attendees. I was particularly struck by the way the authors sought each other out between and after festival readings to exchange perspectives about growing up in Ohio, as well as their experiences of becoming writers. Having spent their childhoods in Ohio cities and small towns, these authors reflected many aspects of a complex state that defies easy categorization.

Among this group of distinguished writers who helped get the Ohioana Book Festival started were several who had won the nation's highest literary honors. Under David Weaver's leadership, the tremendous staff he has nurtured and a skilled and forward-looking board have built the festival into an event that welcomes hundreds of published authors and thousands of readers each year.

The annual Ohioana Book Awards, another ambitious and well-organized undertaking, succeeds because of the leadership's dedication to recognizing the value of quality writing. The organization is committed to an ongoing process of always striving to improve, acknowledging the critical challenges inherent in reevaluating what good literature is, and searching out who is writing it on the national stage and throughout Ohio. The results of their efforts present to the state and the world a treasure of ideas and hard truths, and a diversity of stories that chronicle our anguish, humor, and pride in books that we'll read again and again.

Ohioana gives writers and readers all this and more. The organization depends on our support to do the work of seeking out, archiving, and showcasing the breadth and depth of Ohio's literary tradition. With your support, we can ensure that Ohioana continues to be a thriving library and literary arts organization—one that benefits us all.



Gillian Berchowitz  
Director emerita, Ohio University Press

Yes, I want to support Ohio literature by making my tax-deductible contribution to Ohioana in the amount of:

☐ \$1,000    ☐ \$500    ☐ \$250    ☐ \$100    ☐ \$50    ☐ Other: \$\_\_\_\_\_

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Please send your donation with this form to Ohioana Library Association, 274 E. First Ave., Suite 300, Columbus, OH 43201. You may also make your gift online at [www.ohioana.org](http://www.ohioana.org). All donors of \$50 or more receive a print subscription to the *Ohioana Quarterly*, invitations to Ohioana events, and Ohioana's e-Newsletter. Questions? Call 614-466-3831 or email us at [ohioana@ohioana.org](mailto:ohioana@ohioana.org).



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**Save the  
Date!  
September 21,  
2023**

Join us for the 82nd annual  
Ohioana Book Awards  
reception and ceremony  
Thursday, September 21, 2023,  
at 6:00 p.m.  
in the Ohio Statehouse Atrium.

Watch our website and social media  
for details.