



Connections

Volume 9 · Number 5 · May 2026

2026 North Dakota Great Read Selections

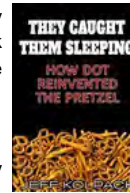
The North Dakota State Library's Center for the Book is delighted to announce the North Dakota Great Read titles for 2026 - "They Caught Them Sleeping: How Dot Reinvented the Pretzel" by Jeff Kolpack and "July 4, 2026: The Tenacious 10 Celebrate the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence" by Paulette Bullinger and Kevin Kremer.

"Great Reads from Great Places celebrates literary works across the states and U.S. territories," says Literacy Specialist Tammy Kruger. "We are excited to showcase the works of Jeff Kolpack, Paulette Bullinger, and Kevin Kremer this year!"

Every year, the Library of Congress asks each state Center for the Book to select titles that represent the state's literary landscape to highlight at the National Book Festival, an event showcasing the importance of books and reading. This year's festival will be held on Saturday, August 22, in Washington, D.C. For 2026, Center for the Books were asked to make selections that highlight America 250 or the American spirit.

"Each year, the North Dakota Great Read selections give us an opportunity to celebrate the stories that reflect our state's history, creativity, and spirit," says State Librarian Mary Soucie. "This year's titles beautifully highlight both North Dakota's entrepreneurial heritage and our nation's journey toward independence. We're proud to share these books with readers across the country as part of the National Book Festival."

The North Dakota Center for the Book invites North Dakotans to read "They Caught Them Sleeping: How Dot Reinvented the Pretzel" by Jeff Kolpack and "July 4, 2026: The Tenacious 10 Celebrate the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence" by Paulette Bullinger and Kevin Kremer.



About "They Caught Them Sleeping: How Dot Reinvented the Pretzel"

This title is a success story of American entrepreneurship! Meet Dorothy Henke, rural North Dakotan native. With a combination of determination, steady work-ethic, creativity, and help from friends and family, Dorothy became known as Dot by Americans across the country! Dot's Pretzels were a smash hit and continue to be a favorite today!

About "July 4, 2026: The Tenacious 10 Celebrate the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence"

Readers join nine teenagers and their friendly robot -- the Tenacious 10 -- on a historic adventure to celebrate America's 250th birthday! This time, they are traveling to each state capital, showing talking holographs of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence. Over the course of three weeks, readers follow their journey, learning our nation's history along the way!



[More Information about the National Book Festival](#)



2026 Young Adult Fiction

Cozy fantasy has a long reach these days and Sarah Beth Durst's *The Faraway Inn* seems like a great addition to the trend. Calisa thought she was going to escape her recent heartbreak with a summer spent at her aunt's inn but when she arrives, she finds that Aunt Zee not only doesn't want her there but something strange is going on with the aging bed-and-breakfast. Calisa decides she's going to tough it out and with the help of a handsome young groundskeeper, she begins to discover the magical secrets surrounding her.



[Continue Reading](#)

NOW HIRING



Library Programming Specialist

Apply by May 25

New Items At The ND State Library

Nonfiction E-Books



"The Mineral Encyclopedia" by Geology Encyclopedias; "Through Mom's Eyes" by Sheinelle Jones; "The Fossil Encyclopedia" by Geology Encyclopedias; "The New Perimenopause" by Mary Claire Haver; "The Rock Encyclopedia" by Geology Encyclopedias

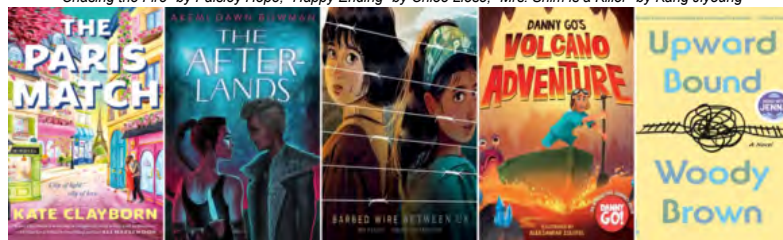
Fiction E-Books



"Ms. Mebel Goes Back to the Chopping Block" by Jesse Q. Sutanto; "The Lumber Baron's Wife" by Lynn Austin; "A Woman's Place" by Danielle Steel; "Burn of Summer" by Rebecca Zanetti; "Cherry Baby" by Rainbow Rowell



"The Mother-Daughter Book Club" by Susan Patterson & James Patterson; "Japanese Gothic" by Kylie Lee Baker; "Chasing the Fire" by Paisley Hope; "Happy Ending" by Chloe Liese; "Mrs. Shim is a Killer" by Kang Jiyoung



"The Paris Match" by Kate Clayborn; "The Afterlands" by Akemi Dawn Bowman; "Barbed Wire Between Us" by Mia Wenjen; "Danny Go's Volcano Adventure" by Danny Go; "Upward Bound" by Woody Brown



"The Thorn Queen" by Sasha Peyton Smith; "I Could Give You the Moon" by Ann Liang; "Wild Darling" by Alexandra Moody; "Deathly Fates" by Tesia Tsai; "Dawn on the Coast" by Ann M. Martin & Arley Nopra

Nonfiction Books

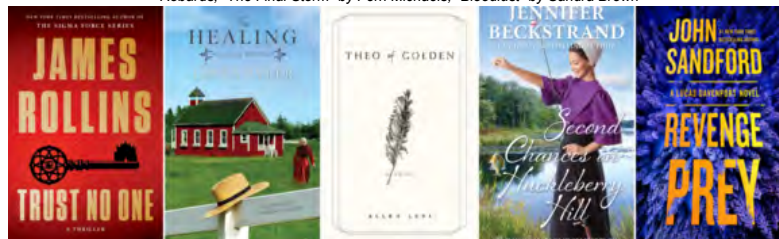


"Family of Spies" by Christine Kuehn; "The Westerners" by Megan Kate Nelson; "Parks and Rec" by Jennifer Keishin Armstrong; "The Weeding Handbook" by Rebecca Vnuk; "The Legendary Lady Medora" by Anderson & Donlin

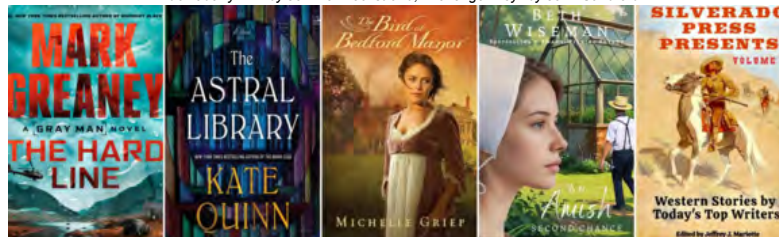
Fiction Books



"The Rancher" by Peter Brandvold; "Rambling Down the Range" by Dusty Richards; "The Moonlight Runner" by Karen Robards; "The Final Storm" by Fern Michaels; "Bloodlust" by Sandra Brown



"Trust No One" by James Rollins; "The Healing" by Linda Byler; "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi; "Second Chances on Huckleberry Hill" by Jennifer Beckstrand; "Revenge Prey" by John Sandford



"The Hard Line" by Mark Greaney; "The Astral Library" by Kate Quinn; "The Bird of Bedford Manor" by Michelle Griep; "An Amish Second Chance" by Beth Wiseman; "Western Stories by Today's Top Writers, Vol 1" edited by Jeffrey J. Mariotte

Nonfiction E-Audiobooks



"This Land is Your Land" by Beverly Gage; "Black Dahlia" by William J. Mann; "How a Bear Became a Book" by Annette Bay Pimente; "You Better Believe I'm Gonna Talk About It" by Lisa Rinna; "The Rolling Stones" by Bob Spitz



"Small Town Girls" by Jayne Anne Phillips; "London Falling" by Patrick Radden Keefe; "Joyful Anyway" by Kate Bowler; "I Choose Me" by Jennie Garth; "Famesick" by Lena Dunham

Fiction E-Audiobooks



"Last One Out" by Jane Harper; "Last Night in Brooklyn" by Zochitl Gonzalez; "Mad Mabel" by Sally Hepworth; "How to Cheat Your Own Death" by Kristen Perrin; "Hope Rises" by David Baldacci



"The Auction" by Sadie Kincaid; "The Ending Writes Itself" by Evelyn Clarke; "Yesteryear" by Caro Claire Burke; "Rites of the Starling" by Devney Perry; "The Faith of Beasts" by James S.A. Corey



"Beneath" by Ariel Sullivan; "The Subtle Art of Folding Space" by John Chu; "The Witch" by Marie Ndiaye; "Starside" by Alex Aster; "We Would Never Tell" by Ann-Sophie Jouhanneau



"The Keeper" by Tana French; "Magnitude" by Jennifer A. Nielsen; "Powerless" by Lauren Roberts; "Where Ella Went" by Laurie Morrison; "The Book Witch" by Meg Shaffer



"Love by the Book" by Jessica George; "Release Me" by Tahereh Mafi; "Infinite Shores" by Pascale Lacelle; "The Gravewood" by Kelly Andrew; "The Escape Game" by Marissa Meyer & Tamara Moss

Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon

Submitted by Monica Struck

Have you ever felt the urge to shut out the world and see how many books you can plow through in a 24-hour period? I used to think it was just me, but then I heard about Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon. This extravaganza was started by blogger Dewey from [The Hidden Side of a Leaf](#). Though Dewey passed away shortly after instituting this daylong book party, others took up the task of organizing bibliophiles of the world for communal binge reading.

Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon is held twice a year (in April and October) with occasional Reverse Readathons held in summer. The traditional Readathon begins at 8:00 AM ET on a Saturday and ends at 8:00 AM ET the following day. Reverse Readathons run from 8:00 PM ET Saturday to 8:00 AM Sunday. Participants are encouraged to read as much as they can in that period and post about their reading on their favorite social media platform. There is an active presence on [Facebook](#), and you can find the group on other social media platforms ([Goodreads](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#)).

[Continue Reading](#)

BITS OF TRIVIA

By Stacey Goldade

North Dakota Blue Book

Are you familiar with the North Dakota Blue Book? This book is all about North Dakota and was first published in 1887. The books were intended to help legislators make decisions. They are also for the public, to learn about their government and elected officials. Since the officials that serve in various offices change periodically, the book is currently published every two years. In the past several years, there is also a special chapter that is not repeated in the next edition. Therefore, all the issues are unique and different, with information on topics that have ranged from ND state parks, Theodore Roosevelt, state historic sites and museums, 150 years of Bismarck, North Dakota's part in the 250th anniversary of America and more. These books are a great resource to have and the 2025-2027 one is available now.



For more information, go to <https://www.sos.nd.gov/about-office/north-dakota-blue-book>. For many recent editions, there is a list of ND authors and poets included as well. As a side note, ND State Library staff have often been involved in the creation of these books, with staff assisting with writing, editing and indexing the book over the years.

New Items Added to Digital Horizons

A highlight of the items added to the various digital collections of the North Dakota State Library.

North Dakota Histories

- 50th Anniversary, Carson, North Dakota, 1910-1960
- 60th Jubilee, Flasher, North Dakota: 1902-1962
- Fredonia Golden Jubilee, 1904-1954
- Golden Jubilee, Gackle: 1904-1954
- Hazen, 1913-1988
- Kulm diamond jubilee, Kulm, North Dakota, June 26 & 27, 1967: supplement to 1957 jubilee book
- Lehr Golden Jubilee, 1898-1948
- Seventy-fifth anniversary of the dedication day of St. Anthony's Catholic Church, 1905-1980, Donnybrook, North Dakota
- Strasburg alumni reunion, July 2, 3, 4, 1965, Strasburg, North Dakota
- Venturia Golden Jubilee, 1901-1951
- Wishek Diamond Jubilee, 1898-1973



North Dakota Memories

- Augedahl Confectionery in Davenport, N.D., circa 1885-1910
- Augedahl Confectionery interior, Davenport, N.D., circa 1885-1910
- Davenport, N.D., High School Band, 1940
- Emmett Salberg in a sailor uniform, 1943
- Exterior of the Myhra store, Davenport, N.D., circa 1886-1908
- Letter from Norton Salberg to Lillian Schmidt, 1918-10-14
- Northern Pacific Railway ticket, 1942
- Two men machine gun training for Army, Georgia, circa 1918



North Dakota School for the Blind

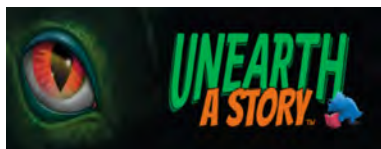
- North Dakota School for the Blind Report, 2023-2025

Political Prairie Fire

- Invitation to North Dakota inaugural ceremonies, Nov. 1921

Unearth A Story Reading Challenge

This summer, unearth a story at your library! Log the books you read to earn badges and rewards.



Adults (18+)



Teens (13-17)



Children (7-12)



Early Literacy (0-6)

Start The Challenge

Kit of the Month

Giant Polydron Kit

Children as young as two can use the oversized interlocking pieces to build child-size 3D boats, blocks, and houses. The rugged textured blocks easily clip together and include Braille. Children will have fun learning shapes, colors, and engineering principles while replicating the designs on the box or inventing their own creations.



This kit includes 20 square pieces (5 red, 5 green, 5 blue, 5 yellow), 20 triangle pieces (5 red, 5 green, 5 blue, 5 yellow), and a folder containing an inventory guide and a beginning construction guide.

Learn more about this kit in this week's episode of Library Kits Unboxed at <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1D3ppiwRKV/>

Reserve This Kit

ND/SD ILL Network Name and Logo Contest!

Calling all the creative and talented folks out there!

The **North Dakota and South Dakota State Libraries**, in partnership with the **Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN)**, are thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of a region-wide **Interlibrary Loan (ILL) network supporting all libraries in North and South Dakota**.

We are still finalizing the RFP process and can't share too many details just yet, but we can't wait to get started! To that point, we are seeking submissions from the public to **help name and brand** the network with a look and feel that **reflects our region** and the spirit of **collaboration, resource sharing, innovation, and library joy**. The contest is open to anyone, and multiple submissions are allowed so share as many ideas as you wish! Whether you are a professional graphic designer, a librarian with a Canva account, a student with a great sketch, or a patron that loves libraries, we want to see your ideas.

The deadline for submissions is **June 5**.

While we can't offer a cash prize, the winning contributor(s) will receive **full public attribution (or remain anonymous, if desired)** and the satisfaction of seeing their work represent the network across the region for years to come.

Submit Your Ideas

North Dakota Battle of the Books

Submitted by Tammy Kruger

North Dakota Battle of the Books is a competition where students read pre-determined books and answer questions about them. Currently, students in grades 4 through 8 can participate. Each team is made up of 4 to 6 teammates and a coach.

During the 2025-2026 year, 15 middle schools and 8 elementary schools participated in North Dakota Battle of the Books. This was the first year with elementary, as well as the first year introducing a state competition.



State Champions

Middle School

Happy Little Dinosaurs (Minot's Erik Ramstad)

Elementary

Marauders (Williston's Bakken Ridge)



Regional Winners

Elementary

BCN Blue (Barnes Co. North)
The Herd (Hazen)
The Plot Twisters (Stanley)
Marauders (Williston)

Middle School

Happy Little Dinosaurs (Minot's Erik Ramstad)
Blue Jays (Jamestown)
Hold Up! We're Reading (Bismarck's Simle)
Hazen Green (Hazen)

A promotional graphic for the course "The Art of Breathing". It features a woman in a blue shirt looking up, a man in a pink shirt, and a green button that says "+ Join this Course". Below the button are four blue boxes with white text: "12 Lessons", "15 Exams & Assignments", "3 Hours average time", and "0.3 CEUs". The text "Self-Paced, Online Class" and "North Dakota State Library" is also visible.

The Art of Breathing

Submitted by Al Peterson

Breathing: an involuntary act so vital, but do we pause to truly understand its potential? Universal Class's *The Art of Breathing* delves deep into harnessing the full magnitude of this life-affirming act, transforming it into a tool that enhances every facet of our daily lives. Life's twists and turns, stresses and strains, often lead us away from this inborn mastery. Physical, mental, and emotional patterns set in, making us forget our inherent breathing prowess.

Most people, unknowingly, use merely a fraction of their breathing capacity. This 12-lesson course aims to shed light on this innate powerhouse within you. This series will journey through realms from traditional yoga and mindful meditation to techniques for peak performance and emotional equilibrium. *The Art of Breathing* endeavors to reignite this innate skill, empowering you to retake command of your body, thoughts, and emotions. The magic doesn't end at self-transformation; your newfound equilibrium will radiate, becoming a beacon of positivity for those around you.

[Start Learning Today!](#)

Connections is a monthly publication of the North Dakota State Library

Mary J. Soucie, State Librarian

This publication is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Grant to States Program as administered by the North Dakota State Library

Any mention of services or products in this newsletter does not constitute any endorsement or recommendation. The use of any services or products should be evaluated on an individual basis

The North Dakota State Library provides no guarantee as to the security, reliability, or accuracy of information provided herein.

www.library.nd.gov

To submit content ideas/articles for a future issue of Connections, please contact BreAnne at ndsipa@nd.gov.

Times referenced are Central Time.

Some of these resources and programs are funded under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

