



## Free Return Postage For Kits

During February 1-7, all ND State Library kits will include free return postage for libraries and patrons. This special limited-time perk gives cardholders the opportunity to discover and explore our unique kits that include everything from space science, book club, fairy tales, robots, giant board games, and other STEAM-related subjects.



## Themed Book Bundles

Are you looking for books based on a theme? Check out a book bundle from the ND State Library!

### About the Book Bundles

- There are ten themes to choose from: Fantasy, Music, Mystery, North Dakota, Poetry, Time Travel, TV and Radio Personalities, Vietnam War, Western, and World War II.
- Each bundle contains three printed books and three e-book and/or e-audiobook suggestions.
- Bundles can either be picked up in person at the ND State Library (located on the Capitol Grounds) OR requested at <https://forms.office.com/g/BPpfV0watH>.
- Bundles can be checked out for 8 weeks.



[Request a Book Bundle](#)

## Ask A Librarian

Do you have questions for the North Dakota State Librarian and other library staff? Join us on Tuesday, February 3, at 7:00 PM or Wednesday, February 4, at 2:00 PM to get answers. We will be going live on Facebook for these events.



Ask your questions in the comments during the event or send an e-mail to [ndsipa@nd.gov](mailto:ndsipa@nd.gov) in advance, and we'll make sure to get them answered during the livestream.

[RSVP For the Live Event](#)

## State Library Tours

Go behind-the-scenes during a guided tour to learn more about the State Library and the Liberty Memorial Building. Tours will be a half hour long.

There are two days/times to choose from:

- Wednesday, February 4, at 10:00 AM
- Thursday, February 5, at 2:00 PM



[Sign Up For A Tour](#)

## 2026 Blind Date with a Book Program

The annual Blind Date With a Book program is back! Be adventurous and read a book that you may not have checked out otherwise. Who knows, maybe you'll find your new favorite book or author!

### About the program:

- The books are all wrapped, so you won't know what title you are checking out.
- The only information you will be given is the first line of the book, whether it is fiction or nonfiction, and the format (large print or regular print).
- Check out titles by filling out the form at [https://bit.ly/NDSL\\_BlindDate](https://bit.ly/NDSL_BlindDate), checking them out in person at the ND State Library (located on the Capitol Grounds), or visiting our booth at the Capitol in the hallway by the Cafe on Thursday, February 5 (9:00 AM - 1:30 PM).
- Titles can be checked out for eight weeks.



[Request a Blind Date](#)

## #NDLIBRARYJOY

Share photos, videos, and stories about how your North Dakota library impacts you and your family or community using #NDLibraryJoy. Let's flood social media with examples of how wonderful North Dakota libraries are!



## New Items At The ND State Library

### Fiction E-Audiobooks



"Dear Debbie" by Freida McFadden; "The Poet Empress" by Shen Tao; "You Watched in Silence" by H. Lee Justine; "Meet the Newmans" by Jennifer Niven; "It Should Have Been You" by Andrea Mara



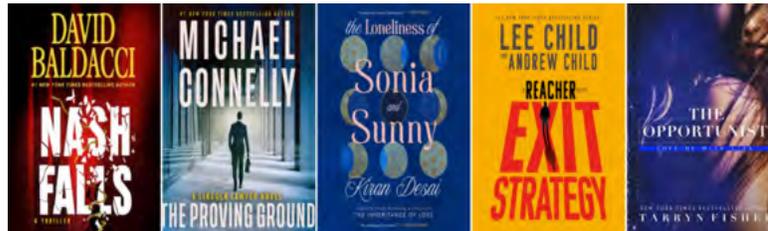
"Daughter of Genoa" by Kat Devereaux; "The Swan's Daughter" by Roshani Chokshi; "Dragon Cursed" by Elise Kova; "I Don't Wish You Well" by Jumata Emill; "Vortex of the Chaos Dragon" by Tracey West

## Nonfiction E-Audiobooks



"Strangers" by Belle Burden; "Attensity!" by The Friends of Attention; "Well Endowed" by Vivian Tu; "Be Your Own Bestie" by Misha Brown; "Weightless" by Rocio Sala-Whalen, MD

## Fiction Books



"Nash Falls" by David Baldacci; "The Proving Ground" by Michael Connelly; "The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny" by Kiran Desai; "Exit Strategy" by Lee Child & Andrew Child; "The Opportunist" by Tarryn Fisher



"The Pretender" by Wanda E. Brunstetter; "Apostle's Cove" by William Kent Krueger; "Return of the Spider" by James Patterson; "Songs for Other People's Weddings" by David Levithan; "Skylark" by Paula McLain



"The Portrait" by Danielle Steel; "The Hunt for Big Cat" by Robert Vaughan; "Rings of Fate" by Melissa De La Cruz; "Daikon" by Samuel Hawley; "The Lady on Esplanade" by Karen White



"To the Moon and Back" by Eliana Ramage; "The Librarians" by Sherry Thomas; "Immaculate Conception" by Ling Ling Huang; "A Daughter's Choice" by Kelly Irvin; "Gone Before Goodbye" by Reese Witherspoon & Harlan Coben

## Nonfiction Books



"Book of Lives" by Margaret Atwood; "The Devil Reached Toward the Sky" by Garrett M. Graff; "Chasing Evil" by John Edward; "The Sailing of the Intrepid" by Montel Williams & David Fisher; "Unseen" by Molly Burke

## Fiction E-Books



"My Husband's Wife" by Alice Feeney; "Make It Out Alive" by Allison Brennan; "Such a Perfect Family" by Nalini Singh; "Catch Her If You Can" by Tessa Bailey; "The Elsewhere Express" by Samantha Sotto Yambao



"Anatomy of an Alibi" by Ashley Elston; "The Storm" by Rachel Hawkins; "The First Time I Saw Him" by Laura Dave; "Remember That Day" by Mary Balogh; "The Shop on Hidden Lane" by Jayne Ann Krentz

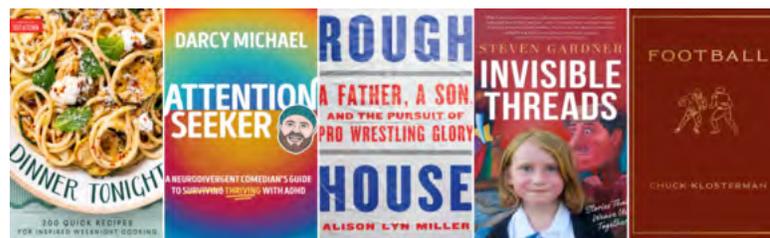


"Eva Saves the Day" by Rebecca Elliott; "The Roommate Arrangement" by Samantha Markum; "It Lurks in the Night" by Sarah Bass; "Love Goes Viral" by Camille Stochitch, Alexander Berman, & Estelle Laure; "Beth Is Dead" by Katie Bernet



"The Devil's Daughter" by Danielle Steel; "Pendergast: The Beginning" by Preston & Child; "Lost Lambs" by Madeline Cash; "Oxford Blood" by Rachael Davis Featherstone; "16 Forever" by Lance Rubin

## Nonfiction E-Books



"Dinner Tonight" by America's Test Kitchen; "Attention Seeker" by Darcy Michael; "Rough House" by Alison Lyn Miller; "Invisible Threads" by Steven Gardner; "Football" by Chuck Klosterman



"Fear and Fury" by Heather Ann Thompson; "Home Schooled" by Stefan Merrill Block; "Plant Powered Plus" by Will Bulsiewicz, MD; "We Do Not Care Handbook" by Melani Sanders; "Parenting Anxiety" by Meredith Elkins, PhD

## E-Magazines



McCall's Quilting; National Geographic Magazine; Country Living; Prevention; Us Weekly



HGTV Magazine; Good Housekeeping; Reader's Digest; Taste of Home; In Touch Weekly

## Public Domain Day 2026

Submitted by Trevor Martinson

As we welcome the new year, 2026 gives us another reason to celebrate: [Public Domain Day](#). It's better known as New Year's Day, but it is a celebration of copyrights expiring on certain works from the past (books, movies, music, etc.).



What is the public domain? According to the [United States Copyright Office](#), a "work of authorship is in the 'public domain' if it is no longer under copyright protection or if it failed to meet the requirements for copyright protection. Works in the public domain may be used freely without the permission of the former copyright owner."

On [January 1, 2026](#), copyrighted works in the United States from 1930 and sound recordings from 1920 entered the public domain. This included books from William Faulkner, Agatha Christie, T. S. Eliot, and Sigmund Freud, along with the first four "[Nancy Drew](#)" books, [The Little Engine That Could](#), and [The Maltese Falcon](#) (the book, not the famous 1941 film starring Humphrey Bogart).

[Continue Reading](#)



### "Octopus Moon" by Bobbie Pyron Reviewed by Tammy Kruger

Fifth grader Pearl Graham does not feel like herself. Everything seems to have changed over the summer, and she feels engulfed by a heavy, dark fog all the time. After speaking to a therapist -- against Pearl's wishes -- she is diagnosed with depression. That part of her that feels broken finally has a name...but what is she to do about it? As changes keep entering her world, the heaviness becomes harder to bear.



This middle grades novel-in-verse offers insight into mental illness and how "perfect lives" can disguise darkness underneath. The topic is a heavy one, but it is handled in both a realistic and hopeful manner. Pearl's family and friends do not always understand how to help her, but they continue to show up with love. (My favorite phrase from this book is "Love is a verb".)

The author, Bobbie Pyron, experiences depressive episodes herself, so this book is autobiographical in nature. It also comes with an Author's Note of how (and where) to get help for mental health struggles. *Octopus Moon* can be found on Libby.

[Check It Out](#)

## LEGO Braille Bricks

LEGO Braille Bricks are 3-dimensional bricks with braille dots and printed letters or numbers designed to teach people how to read braille. A variety of number and letter bricks, along with mathematical operation symbols (plus sign, subtraction sign, etc.) and punctuation bricks (upper case, comma, period, etc.) are placed on the base plates to spell words and create mathematical problems.



Learn more about this kit at [https://bit.ly/NDSL\\_LibraryKitsUnboxed](https://bit.ly/NDSL_LibraryKitsUnboxed)

[Reserve This Kit](#)

## Did Santa Snub You?

Submitted by Stacey Goldade

Did you ask for an electric drill, a craft set, a certain board game, or a fishing pole for Christmas and did Santa ignore your request? Don't fret- try checking your local library for what you wanted! Yes, you'll have to return it after you're done using it, but maybe once you try that board game, you'll learn it's too involved for your young kids. Or once you're done with the drill, you'll realize that you like not having to find a place to store it!

Often, libraries call these kinds of collections "Library of Things," and North Dakota libraries have some exciting items being lent to their patrons.

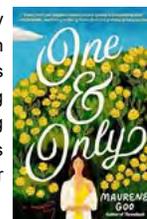
- Sports items like pickleball racquets, disc golf sets, fishing poles, and life jackets.
- Tools like wrenches, engravers, ladders, paint rollers, and wheelbarrows.
- Things for your home like framed art prints, radon detectors, power use monitors, ice cream makers, stand mixers, food dehydrators, apple slicer-peelers, cookie cutters, and air fryers.
- Fun things like giant and regular-sized board games, jigsaw puzzles, loom knitting kits, video games, and ghost detector kits.
- Items to help you be creative like sewing machines, knitting kits, ring lights, camera tripods, and mobile hotspots.
- Kits for kids that include NASA kits, flash cards, robot kits, fairy tale kits, rock tumblers, and STEM kits.
- Party items like banquet tables, slide projectors, blow up movie screens, canopy tents, and cake pans for fun birthday cakes.
- Outdoor use items like metal detectors, ladder golf games, outdoor exploration kits, tents, camping stoves, bike pumps, bike repair kits, and snowshoes.
- Health related items like blood pressure cuffs and light therapy lamps.
- Activity passes to enter state parks and museums.

Libraries loan so much more than just books, DVDs, and ebooks. Check your local library, or the State Library, to see what unique items are available!



## Most Anticipated Books of 2026

Maurene Goo's first adult novel, *One & Only*, is a unique romantic comedy centered around the idea of soulmates. Cassia's family has been matching people with their literal soulmates for centuries and she knows exactly who hers is—she just hasn't met him yet. Rapidly approaching middle age and still looking, Cassia starts up a fling with a charming younger man, only to meet his boss and discover that he's the man she's been waiting for. Now Cassia must decide if she wants to embrace her fate or take a chance on the man she chose for herself.



[Continue Reading](#)

The banner features a background of musical notes and a guitar. At the top, a dark grey box contains the text "Introduction to Music Appreciation". Below this, there are three colored squares (red, yellow, blue) and a green button that says "+ Join this Course". To the right of the button, it says "Self-Paced, Online Class" and "North Dakota State Library". At the bottom, there are four blue boxes with white text: "16 Lessons", "20 Exams & Assignments", "16 Hours average time", and "1.6 CEUs".

## Introduction to Music Appreciation

Submitted by AI Peterson

Music is an exquisite tapestry, interwoven with the threads of human emotion, history, and culture. Dive into the rich tapestry of musical evolution with "Music Appreciation." Discover how music has mirrored our triumphs, lamented our tragedies, and shaped the very essence of human existence.

Embarking on this musical odyssey, we begin with the fundamental building blocks of music with Lesson 1: Harmony and Melody. Understanding these foundational elements, you'll cultivate a refined vocabulary that illuminates the nuances of musical compositions, helps discern the distinctive attributes of various genres, and offers insights into the choices that composers and performers make.

We'll traverse the shifting sands of Classical music, observing its metamorphosis since the illustrious eras of Beethoven and Brahms. The twentieth century bore witness to a tapestry of innovative styles and audacious composers from both sides of the Atlantic. Visionaries like Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel set a provocative tone for the century, while Arnold Schoenberg's avant-garde techniques heralded a seismic shift in the musical landscape. Explore the vibrant heartbeats of Sub-Saharan Africa, the melodic tales of India, and the rhythmic whispers of Japan. Trace how music is linked throughout human history from Gregorian chants to Taylor Swift. Journey through time with melodies and rhythms, celebrating the luminaries whose musical masterpieces have been the ever-evolving soundtrack to humanity's journey.

As always, Universal Class courses are self-paced and taken at your convenience on your own time. You can find this class in the Crafts & Hobbies category.

Universal Class

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Mary J. Soucie, State Librarian

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[www.library.nd.gov](http://www.library.nd.gov)

To submit content ideas/articles for a future issue of Connections, please contact BreAnne at [nds1pa@nd.gov](mailto:nds1pa@nd.gov).

Times referenced are Central Time.

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