

# Encouraging reading in all different forms and levels

**M**y son started kindergarten as a young 5 year old; his birthday was

## BIBLIOFILES

Ann Evans

just two days before the school year began. I worried about how he would do socially and academically. He did well that first year, he loved math and made a lot of friends, but reading was difficult.

The summer between kindergarten and first grade was rough. Afraid of the “summer slide,” the learning loss that can occur during summer break, we read every day. He loved to listen to me read, but when it came time for him to do so, it was a struggle.

The fall semester of first grade was much of the same. Struggling myself, I began to check out anything and everything I thought may interest him from the Georgetown Public Library.

First, we checked out one of the Library sets of Bob books. Packaged in kits of about 10 books, these early readers start with simple words and gradually increase in difficulty. The main goal of Bob books is for kids to gain confidence in their reading abilities. My son enjoyed these books; and they did increase his confidence, but they were also too easy at this point in his reading journey.

We tried again, checking out some beginning reader books, which are labeled BR in the Children’s Room. He could get through these books, but sometimes grew frustrated and reading didn’t excite him. It was a chore that mom made him complete. To make reading fun, we tried again.

We hit gold with the talking book Max Attacks by Kathi Appelt. Talking Books, labeled TALK in the Children’s Room, are read-along books that read the text and signal when to turn the page. He loved it, especially the part when Max attacks a bowl of crunchies (food).

It was the perfect balance of assistance, control and indepen-

dence. He could follow along as someone read to him, but he didn’t need mom and could read at his leisure (including after he was supposed to be asleep).

He gained confidence and began to read it to me with great inflection and expression that he adapted from the voice actor but made his own. Most importantly, this is a moment I can pinpoint when reading became fun for him.

The cost point for talking books is high, so without the library, we may have never tried this medium. The library provided access to different types of books for us to explore and figure out what worked for him.

“Developing early literacy skills helps with language development and that leads into every other skill: social skills, phonetic awareness and print awareness (recognizing print has meaning and order),” said Linda Lam, who leads the Library’s story-times. “By trying different types of reading, or different mediums, that helps adapt children to the multitude of media that they encounter in a day.”

This factors into the library’s summer reading program. The library does not ask children or teens to count the number of books or minutes they read, simply track each day you read. It doesn’t matter if someone reads to you or the type of book you read — graphic novels and audiobooks count. The goal is to get kids and teens reading and to enjoy doing so.

This summer, my son loves reading. The final week of school his class watched The Wizard of Oz. When he came home talking about the film, I mentioned it was a book first. He asked to read it, so we checked out an audiobook version and began listening together while we played outside and did chores around the house. He paid very close attention to the details of the book and asked

## What’s going on in the library?

June 18 - September 15: Texas Society of Sculptors 15th Annual Show

June 20-July 23: Shruti Mehta: Namaste India, café gallery

June 20-July 23: LaWann Tull: It’s All About the Lights, upstairs gallery

July 25, 10 a.m.: Kid’s Summer Reading: Lucas Miller the Singing Zoologist; Best for ages 5+. Tickets are required and will be available at the Kids Desk one hour before program start. Line up starts 10 minutes before program start.

July 25- August 31: Sherilyn Vineyard: Hidden in Plain Sight, café gallery

July 28, 4-6 p.m.: Reception for Sherilyn Vineyard: Hidden in Plain Sight, café gallery

For more information about Library events, visit [library.georgetown.org/events-calendar](http://library.georgetown.org/events-calendar) or call 512-930-3551.

a lot of questions. My explanation for the color change of the slippers from silver to red in the film was readily accepted. However, when the book Oz appeared as four different forms to Dorothy, the Lion, the Tinman and the Scarecrow, that was a bridge too far. He promptly declared he would like the movie remade, to be a more accurate depiction of the book. Now he’s struggling with something familiar to many readers — movie adaptations.

See you soon at the Library!

Ann Evans is the Adult Services Librarian at the Georgetown Public Library.

## BOOK BRIEFS

# Flatline: One Man’s Search for the Afterlife

BY ABBEY ARCHER

Georgetown resident Hank Haliasz’s most recent book, *Flatline: One Man’s Search for the Afterlife*, is now available on Amazon. *Flatline* is a sci-fi novel that follows Dr. Erwin Little, CEO of the Center for Life Sciences, who is getting ready to perform the world’s most risky scientific experiment.

Dr. Little’s goal is to determine whether there is life after death, and he’s in need of a willing participant. Although he had conducted the experiment on his chimpanzee, Lulu, he needed a human who was willing to be put to death and then brought back to life. In doing this experiment, Dr. Little also hopes to determine what life actually is.

The author, Hank Hailasza, was the chair of the Sun City Astronomy group for 10 years. Since 2004, he has been an instructor for Senior University, presenting programs on various space and science-related subjects. Mr. Hailasza has published three other books: *Martian Year 500: The Second Beginning*; *Mars II: A Tale of Two Planets*; *The Doomsday Plant – Global Warming and the Next Ice Age*.

In his career, he was an Air Force officer and IBM executive project manager. Mr. Hailasza was also the former mission director for the National Reconnaissance Office low altitude



intelligence satellite operations and Department of Defense related Space Shuttle missions.

Since retiring, his interests continue to be about science and space. Mr. Hailasza is specifically interested in astronomy, cosmology and space exploration. Mr. Hailasza is a member of the International Mars Society and the Space Development Steering Committee. These are advocacy groups for putting humans on Mars.

Mr. Hailasza has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M and an MBA from the University of Dayton. He and his wife Judith have resided in Sun City since 1999.

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## Taylor Moon

A full moon peeks through the clouds over the Raesz family farm along County Road 369 on July 2.  
— Photo by Andy Sharp

Please join me in praying  
for our country and for  
the people of Ukraine.

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