



# Sunset Series to feature Mark Mathabane

♣ Internationally acclaimed author Mark Mathabane will inaugurate the 2025 Friends of the Library Sunset Signature Series at the historic Sunset Theatre in downtown Asheboro.

Mathabane will talk about "How Books Saved My Life" at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 15. His appearance is free and the public is invited.

The series is sponsored by the Heart of North Carolina Visitors Bureau, the City of Asheboro and the Friends of the Library. Its goal is to bring culturally significant speakers and performers to Asheboro.

Mathabane touched the hearts of millions with his sensational memoir, *Kaffir Boy*, about his coming of age during the apartheid era in South Africa, and how he escaped to freedom in America by winning a college tennis scholarship. The book won the prestigious Christopher Award for inspiring hope, was a finalist for the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, rose to no. 3 on *The New York Times* bestsellers list and to no. 1 on the *Washington Post* bestsellers list.

*Kaffir Boy* has been translated into more than a dozen languages. The book is required reading in high schools, colleges and universities across the U.S., and is on the American Library Association's List of "Outstanding Books for the College-Bound."

In his talk, Mathabane will reflect on how reading influenced him as he grew up under apartheid, weaving in the theme of humanity. His grandmother's white employer, who gave him his first tennis racket, also supplied him with books banned by the South African regime about African American heroes including Frederick Douglass and Malcolm X, whose lives were liberated and horizons broadened by learning to read and a love of books.



Mark Mathabane

Mathabane graduated *cum laude* with a degree in Economics and English Literature from Dowling College in New York, where he was the first black editor of the college newspaper.

After studying Journalism at the Poynter Media Institute and the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, Mathabane published *Kaffir Boy* and went on to write other popular nonfiction books, *Kaffir Boy in America*; *Love in Black and White*; *African Women: Three Generations*; *Miriam's Song*; and *The Lessons of Ubuntu*, which are also widely used in schools.

He also is the author of the thrillers *Unbunu* and *The Proud Liberal*.

Mathabane has appeared on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," "Today," The 700 Club, CNN, NPR, "The Charlie Rose Show," "Larry King," and numerous other TV and radio programs. His articles on the

importance of education, race relations, the value of books, freedom of speech and our shared humanity have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsday*, *U.S. News & World Report* and *USA Today*. Mathabane has been featured in *Time*, *Newsweek* and *People* magazines.

A sought-after lecturer, he was nominated for Speaker of the Year by the National Association for Campus Activities, and also has been a featured speaker at Renaissance Weekend events. He completed a one-year assignment as a White House Fellow at the U.S. Department of Education, where he helped implement several education initiatives aimed at helping impoverished and marginalized youth across the country. He received an honorary doctorate from Wittenberg University.

The Sunset Theatre is located at 234 Sunset Avenue. For further information, call the Heart of North Carolina Visitors Bureau at 800-626-2672.

## Archdale

336-431-3811  
Fax 336-431-4619  
10433 S. Main St.  
Mon-Thur 9-8;  
Fri 9-6; Sat 9-1

## Asheboro

336-318-6800  
Fax 336-318-6823  
201 Worth St.  
Mon-Thur 9-9; Fri 9-6;  
Sat 9-1

## Randolph Room

336-318-6815  
Mon-Fri 9-12:30; 1:30-5:30  
Sat 9-12:30

## Franklinville

336-685-3100  
111 Sumner Place  
Mon-Thur 10-6; Sun 1-5

## Liberty

336-622-4605  
Fax 336-622-2665  
239 S. Fayetteville St.  
Mon, 9-7, Tues 11-7,  
Wed, 9-5, Thur 11-5  
Fri 9-5, Sat 9-3

## Ramseur

336-824-2232  
Fax 336-824-2232  
1512 S. Main St.  
Mon-Fri 9-6  
Sat 9-1

## Randleman

336-498-3141  
Fax 336-498-1139  
142 W. Academy St.  
Mon-Fri 9-6  
Sat 9-1

## Seagrove

336-873-7521  
530 Old Plank Rd.  
Tues-Fri 10-6; Sat 11-3

## Extension Service

336-318-6816 or 336-318-6817; Mon-Fri 9-5

from  
the  
director



**Ross A. Holt**

# Staff to gather on February 21

♣ With the advent of the library's 2021-2026 strategic plan four years ago, staff development took center stage as one of four strategic priorities.

"Library staff are empowered, engaged and connected" was the aspiration.

One of the steps called for is to "establish annual opportunities for all employees to connect and learn together."

With all the activities going on each week at each library, it had become difficult to maintain routine staff meetings. Last year, we instituted a Staff Development Day, during which all the libraries closed and the staff came together for learning, sharing and bonding. Our intent was for it to be an annual event.

It's time once again for this crucial day in the life of our library. On Friday, February 21, the libraries will close and all staff will convene at Asheboro. The libraries will reopen as usual on Saturday, February 22, or in Franklinville, Sunday the 23rd.

Last year's event was a huge success. It gave the staff a day to take stock and reset.

Dr. Leisha DeHart-Davis of the School of Government provided the keynote, "Emotional Labor for Librarians." At the end of the day, Health Coach Beth Knott engaged the staff in a mindfulness activity.

In between, staff met with their strategic planning implementation groups; got refreshers on Reference techniques;



Countywide library staff at last year's Staff Development Day. This year's event will take place on Friday, February 21.

learned about NC LIVE resources; and talked about safety at work.

This year's event promises to build on last year's. Keynote will be retired Randolph Community College President Dr. Bob Shackleford, now a leadership consultant. Dr. Shackleford will present interactive talks on "Communicating Effectively in the Workplace" and "Understanding and Resolving Conflict."

Other activities will include idea sharing sessions among library branches; a discussion of how to assist unhoused patrons, those with substance abuse issues and/or those in mental health crises; and a review of progress toward strategic planning goals. Knott will return at the end of the day for a mindfulness exercise.

As I noted last year, we are reluctant to close the libraries when we aren't forced to (especially after recent closures due to weather and, at Asheboro, construction).

We believe, however, that the one-day pause will benefit the people we serve in the long run. As I wrote last year, please grant us this indulgence and we will use it every day to polish up our service.



# Liberty launches gardening series

♣ Gain skills in gardening techniques as the Liberty library offers a series of workshops at 3 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, February 13 through October 9.

The classes will be presented by the Alamance County Master Gardeners with North Carolina Cooperative Extension. For more details and to sign up, visit <https://go.ncsu.edu/libertygardening>. Sessions include:

- February 13: Pruning Woody Ornamentals;
- March 13: Landscape Planning Basics;
- April 10: Preparing Your Garden for Planting;
- May 8: Container Gardening;
- June 12: Tending Your Garden — Weeding, Insect Management;
- July 10: Growing and Using Herbs;
- August 14: Fall Vegetable Gardening;
- September 11: Successful Shade Gardening;
- October 9: Fall is for Planting — Trees and

Perennials.

## Seed saving at Liberty

Liberty also will host a Seed Savers Meet-up for adults and teens at 11 a.m. Saturday, February 22. Learn about the Seed Library and how to save seeds in the coming season.

## Seed Swap at Seagrove

Bring some seeds, take some seeds, share tips with other local gardeners, and enjoy fun activities for the kids in a “Seed Swap,” 1-3 p.m. Saturday, February 22 at the Seagrove library.

## Small fruit at Randleman

The Randleman library will host “Small Fruit Gardening” with Randolph County Cooperative Extension, 3:30-5:30 p.m. Tuesdays, February 4 and February 18. Call 336-498-3141 to sign up. In the first session, learn the basics of growing fruit. In the second session, find out about pruning and training, and get answers to general questions.

# Asheboro to host Black History Festival ...and other activities around the county

♣ A Black History Festival in the Asheboro library Children’s Room will introduce kids and their families to two African American inventors and an aviator, at 4 p.m. Friday, February 14.

An interactive slide show will feature each individual, followed by hands-on experiences related to what they are famous for. The free event is fun for the whole family. Those being showcased are:

- George Crum, inventor of the potato chip; taste test uniquely flavored chips.
- Bessie Coleman, the first African American woman to hold a pilot license; craft an airplane.
- Garrett Morgan, inventor of the stoplight;

construct a traffic light and play Red Light, Green Light.

## Book clubs for kids, teens

**Liberty: Kids Club**, 4 p.m. Tuesday, February 4. Crafts, snacks, activities and sharing about what you like to read.

**Liberty: Manga Meet Up at the Library**, 1 p.m. Saturday, February 15. Crafts, activities, treats and videos; teens 11-up.

**Randleman: Teen Talk Book Club**, no February meeting due to library Staff Development Day; resumes in March.

**Seagrove: Books and Banter**, 4:30 p.m. Thursdays. Talk about what you’re reading with other teens.

**See more events and activities, next page.**



## Book discussions

**Asheboro Reads, Afternoon Edition:** *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhorn, 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 25.

**Archdale Book Break:** *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig, 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 18.

**Franklinville: Snippets Book Club**, 12:30 p.m. Monday, February 17.

**Liberty Book Club:** *American Queen* by Vanessa Miller, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 20.

**Liberty Readers Meet-Up:** *Symphony of Secrets* by Brendan Slocumb, 1 p.m. Monday, February 17, Liberty Senior Center.

## BYO book groups

Talk about books that you’ve read recently.

**Archdale: Book Bites**, 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 11.

**Archdale: Silent Book Club**, 10 a.m. Saturday, February 22.

**Ramseur Page Turners**, 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 4.

**Randleman Readers Recommend**, 3:30 p.m. Friday, February 7.

**Seagrove: Un-Book Club**, Books by Jodi Picoult, 6 p.m. Tuesday, February 25.

## Tech classes

“Computer Basics,” 6 p.m. Thursday, February 6 and 1 p.m. Thursday, February 20.

## Acme-McCrary continues Mobile Library support

For the third year, the Acme-McCrary and Sapona Foundation has continued its support of the Mobile Library with a gift for maintenance of the vehicle. The foundation initially provided a five-year,

\$60,000 gift which, combined with a like contribution from the Asheboro Public Library Foundation, Inc., funded the conversion, stocking and initial operation of the Mobile Library.



# Archdale to host Valentines disc golf tournament ...and more activities around the county

♣ Test your skills in the “Valentines Doubles Color Challenge Disc Golf Tournament,” hosted by the Archdale library and Archdale Parks and Recreation, Saturday, 2 p.m. February 8.

To sign up or for more information about the nine-hole event, call the library at 336-431-3811.

## Catch the ‘Creative Bug’

Discover the art of Macrame in Archdale and Liberty using Creativebug, the libraries’ new online resource for crafting.

Archdale’s event takes place at 4 p.m. Friday, February 28, for ages 13 and up. Get step-by-step guidance to make a Macrame keychain. At Liberty, 5-6:30 p.m. Monday, February 10, adults and teens can watch a Creativebug demonstration for making a Macrame keychain, then make one, or work on a personal craft already in progress.

## Bird Beak Buffet

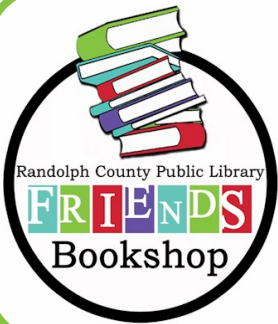
Randleman’s Kindergarten Friday at 3:30 p.m. February 14 will be a “Bird Beak Buffet” with Kathryn Reis of Randolph Soil and Water. Through storytelling and role play, kids can learn about birds by the shape of their beaks.

## Randolph County Public Libraries

201 Worth Street  
Asheboro, NC 27203

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**10 a.m. -2 p.m.**  
**Tuesdays,  
Thursdays and  
Saturdays**  
*226 Sunset Ave.  
Asheboro*  
*randolphfriends.org*

## memorials & donations

**In Memory of: Juanita Kesler**  
By: Col. Andrew Balfour Chapter,  
Daughters of the American Revolution

**In Memory of: Wayne D. Thomas**  
By: Ed and Nancy Bunch

## Learn to grow shiitake mushrooms

♣ Join Cody Craddock of North Carolina Cooperative Extension for “Log Grown Shiitake Production for Beginners,” 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 27, at the Asheboro library.



mushroom production, and leave with your own shiitake log.

Wear clothes you don’t mind getting dirty.

A limited number of logs is available, so registration is required; call 336-318-6803 to sign up, or visit the library.

In this hands-on class, learn the basics of growing mushrooms on logs in your garden, develop a strong understanding of log-grown

Craddock is the Agriculture-Horticulture extension agent at Cooperative Extension’s Randolph County Center.