

Off the Shelf – Favorite books of 2022

Kathryn Tatnall Youth Services Librarian

When asked if I have a favorite book my mind always goes blank. Not because I don't have one. It's because I have too many to choose from that I usually just say that they are all my favorites. I was called out by a five year old a few weeks ago at story time when I introduced the first book I was reading as my favorite picture book. He said, "Ms. Kathryn, you say that about every book you read!" It's true, if you ask me I will likely say that the book I am currently reading is my favorite. So here are some of the titles I've read this year and they're all my favorites.

The Best in the World is a Croc and Ally story by Derek Anderson (Junior reader). This beginning reader is one of three books that follow friends Croc and Ally through some everyday adventures. Croc is kind and reassuring for Ally who worries about not fitting in or not being perfect at something. You can find these books in the New Readers section in the children's room.

Moving and going to a new school are never easy but what if you started that first day by getting on the wrong bus? That's what happens to the boy in *Puppy Bus* by Drew Brockington (Junior picture book). He doesn't realize it until the puppy he is sharing a seat with licks his face and offers him a paw. Besides the fact that lunch was awful and the bathroom was really confusing, the puppies' acceptance made his day so much easier. By the time he stepped off the bus he was begging to return the next day. This is a hilarious tale about a boy letting go of his anxiety on the first day of school and fitting in just fine even though everything is different than it was before. What a charming story. You will love the surprise ending!

In *Garlic and the Vampire* by Bree Paulsen (Junior non-fiction) Garlic is a little anxious about everything and really anxious about most things. She is harder on herself than any of her garden friends would be, save for Celery. When an opportunity arises to prove to herself that she has what it takes, in the form of a bloodthirsty vampire, Garlic reluctantly takes a chance. She learns that she is braver than she could imagine and that things aren't always what they seem. This is a sweet little story about anxiety and not making assumptions. I love it!

Philip Bunting's *The World's Most Ridiculous Animals* (Junior non-fiction) is a collection of some of the strangest looking animals who have some really weird habits. It's all about adaptations and how these seemingly strange animals have evolved in order to survive. This book was highly recommended to me by a grandmother who says her nine year old grandson read it cover to cover, twice.

If you're lucky, there is at least one class during your eighth grade year of middle school that's your favorite. In Mylisa Larsen's new novel, *Playing Through the Turnaround*, (Junior fiction) several students find Jazz Lab taught by Mr. Lewis to be that class. When Mr. Lewis quits and the Jazz Lab is cancelled the students are devastated. When they discover that his leaving coincides with the budget cuts the school is facing they get together to find a way to fight the cuts and bring back their favorite teacher. Told through the voices of the students who are a part of the Jazz Lab. This book is about kids learning to speak up for themselves about the big issues they face.

YA author Stephanie Kuehn has started a series called *Murder, She Wrote*. It features a new heroine named Beatrice Fletcher, from Cabot Cove, Maine. She is the great-niece of Jessica Fletcher, the famous mystery writer. In the first book, *By The Time You Read This I'll Be Gone* (YA fiction), Bea's best friend, Jackson, fails to show up for a late-night meeting her obsession with unsolved mysteries kicks into high gear. Bea will do anything she can to find Jackson which includes teaming up with an unlikely trio of privileged private school students and ferreting out Cabot Coves old secrets before it's too late.

The library is located at 17 N. Broadway and is open to the public Monday to Thursday 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Library will be closed on Saturday, December 24 through Monday, December 26. We will reopen on Tuesday, December 27 from 9:30 am until 8 pm. Keep an eye on our Facebook page or the Events calendar at www.newulmlibrary.org to stay informed on closings, cancellations, holiday observances and upcoming events.