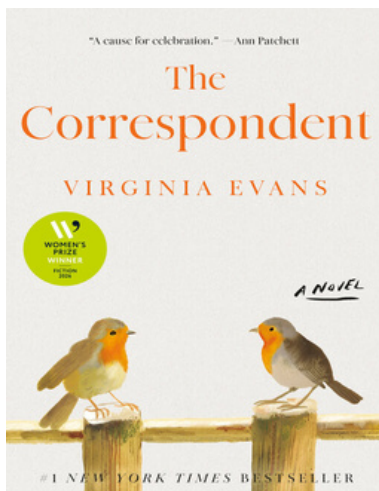


Hillsboro Community Library News

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Featured Book Review

The Correspondent by Virginia Evans

My favorite penpal calls letter writing an act of "willful anachronism," and yet it is the subject of 2025's *The Correspondent*, an epistolary novel by Virginia Evans. The book is written as a series of letters between Sybil Van Antwerp, beginning just a few days into her 73rd year, and everyone from her brother to her grown children to her ex-husband to, indeed, Joan Didion and Larry McMurty.

In Victorian times, the act of purposefully setting aside time to write a letter was known as "tending to your correspondence," or a correspondence hour. Sybil does it each morning after the bed is made and the dishes are done, arranging stationery and her favorite pens and a cup of tea, as she sits at her desk with a window overlooking the river and settles in to write.

Handwritten letters are Sybil's chosen form of communication, though she does occasionally send emails because, "it takes patience to say exactly what one means."

She describes "the letters one has sent out into the world, the letters received back in turn "are like the pieces of a magnificent puzzle making up a life. While she spent 30 years establishing a prestigious legal career, she started writing letters as just a child: "The clerkship was my job; the letters are who I am."

Like Sybil, I've loved letter writing since my first hand-passed notes in middle school. In college, my closest friends and I mailed around a shared journal in the midst of our far-flung summers. At 20, I sent letters to a boy in DC while I was living in Barcelona and learned just how much it costs to post an envelope across the Atlantic. I've debated politics with my dad through letters and cherished having my Aunt Sonja as a penpal in 2020, while she was quarantined in assisted living. Sybil shows us that you can write letters to anyone - an author whose book you've just enjoyed, the victim of a long ago mistake you made, even your neighbor if one might be trying to court you - and today I count among my penpals my favorite *New Yorker* writer, a dear friend in Dublin, and an old colleague in Rockville.

Sybil would concur, I'm sure, that the joy of a letter is that, unlike social media, it is meant for just one person: **you**, not everyone. Letters are slow; they don't demand your immediate availability like an email or text. Though a letter might be kept by its recipient forever, for the writer they are ephemeral - an envelope can only be sealed once, and you may never read the words you wrote again. This plus the space of time and distance between you and your

recipient lends letters an inherent sense of honesty. This honesty through letter writing is what allows Sybil to mend relationships, overcome fear, and finally share the weight of her longest-held and heaviest guilt. Even in the "winter" of her life - past the spring of childhood, summer of the "glorious, lively, interesting years of our "twenties, thirties, forties," and finally settling into herself in the "cool but not yet cold" autumn , "rich and aromatic" - Sybil makes unexpected new friendships and a million new discoveries by having sat down every morning for her correspondence hour.

The Correspondent makes a good case for this anachronistic activity; reading another's letters, you'll want to write your own. The real beauty of a letter is its self-fulfilling prophecy; the more you send, the more you receive.

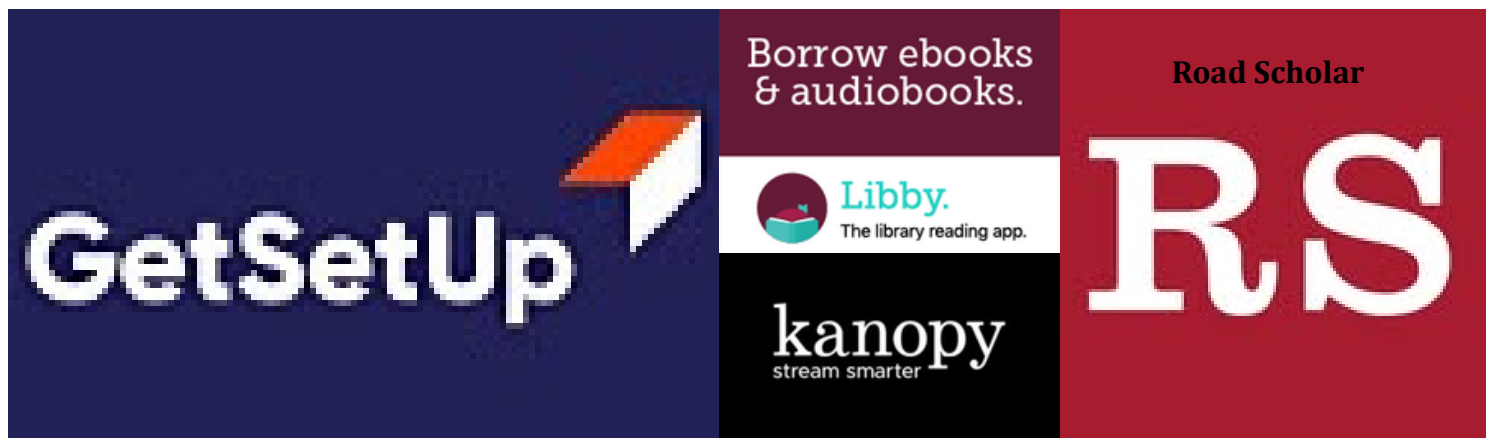
by Jordan Franklin

After all the recent hubbub about the release of the movie *The Devil Wears Prada 2*, I decided to watch the original 1982 release *The Devil Wears Prada*. So, I took a look at the Hillsbory Community Library website, hillsborolibrary.org , and there it was. No trip to Walmart to see if they still had a DVD copy, no searching Netflix or Amazon Prime, looking for a free download, just a quick to the Library. You can scroll through the website and see what other movies and books are available. If you aren't fully computer literate, and haven't investigated **GetSetUp** yet, our Librarians will be happy to show you how to access the online resources of our Library.

by Will Kinney

New Acquisitions at Your Library- (random selections) *Migrations* and *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy, *Dare You to Dance* by Rebecca Mock, *A Dark Music* by Robert Froese, *The Caves of Steel* by Isaac Asimov, *Enemy at the Gates*, *Total Power* and *Oath of Loyalty*, by Kyle Mills, *Magic Tree House Fact Tracker* graphic novel by Meika Hashimoto, *The Personal Librarian* by Victoria Christopher Murray, *Mr. Mercedes* by Stephen King, *The Twist of the Knife* by Anthony Horowitz, *Power Yoga Total Body* (DVD), and several children's books.

Free Technology and Other Online Films and Reading Material



**For a complete listing of
HCL materials, visit:**

<https://hillsborolibrary.org>

Library Hours:

Sunday, Monday: Closed

Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00am - 3:00pm

Wi-Fi available 24 hours a day

Notes from the Library Board

Would you like to update some of your technology skills or other how to do it skills? Checkout **GetSetup** on the library website **hillsborolibrary.org**. This **GetSetup** database has lots of professional quality videos classes to help you. We promise that they do not move at a pace where you have to rewind. You don't even need a library card - just click and play.

And a reminder- your Community Library has **New Mexico Family Pass** you can check out. The Pass allows you and up to 5 others to visit any of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs Museums and historic sites **free** of charge.

You can also view **FREE** online lectures every month at ROAD SCHOLAR. To sign up or learn more about upcoming lectures, visit **ROADSCHOLAR.ORG/LECTURE** 27. The September lecture is *Cosmovision of the Andean Civilization*. Upcoming lectures include *Santa Muerte & the Day of the Dead*, *Florida's Gentle Giants-Protecting Manatees Above & Below*, *Brexit-A Political Earthquake in Modern Britan*, and *Polar Bears-King of the Arctic*

Bake Sale

Library Bake Sale

The next Library Bake Sale will be on
Saturday, October 3, from
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
in front of the Post Office
Come and get your goodies!

Bookmobile Schedule

Caballo at Caballo Country Store and RV Park

Thursday, October 16
10:30 to 11:00 AM

<https://nmstatelibrary.org/bookmobiles/west-bookmobile/>

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