

## Library Lines by Ruth Gilbert, Youth Librarian, Kirkland Town Library

There are so many things I love about my job, and one of them is the privilege of selecting children's books to add to the library's collection. Every year a wide variety of books cross my desk on their way to the shelves, and there are always a few that really stick with me. They might have had stunning artwork, or a beautifully written story, or made me laugh out loud, or even changed my perspective.

Many of these picture books would make great gifts, so if you're looking to buy books this holiday season, take a look at the suggestions below. And if you can, buy your books locally! Check out The Treehouse Reading & Arts Center in New York Mills, or the new Keaton & Lloyd Bookshop in Rome for adult and YA books. Online shopping at [bookshop.org](http://bookshop.org) is convenient and also supports independent bookstores.

"*Chez Bob*" by Bob Shea (say it out loud and you'll get the first joke) is one of the funniest and sweetest picture books of 2021. An alligator named Bob is very lazy and wants tasty birds to fly directly into his mouth, so he sets up a birdseed restaurant on his snout. He builds up a loyal clientele and decides it's finally the perfect time to eat them, but realizes he might have had a change of heart!

"*Everybody in the Red Brick Building*" by Anne Wynter and Oge Mora is a picture book treasure of gorgeous artwork and delightful writing. Everyone in the building is sound asleep until baby Lizzy howls, which makes a parrot screech, which makes some friends wake up to play flashlight tag, and on and on until the whole building is awake. But one by one they settle down to some more soothing sounds until everyone is asleep again. A wonderful bedtime book.

"*Amos McGee Misses the Bus*" by Philip C. Stead and Erin E. Stead is the second charming picture book about zookeeper Amos McGee, who is the kindest, most generous zookeeper in the world, and who has the animal friends to prove it. In this adventure he has a surprise planned for the animals, but he misses the bus to the zoo and thinks he has to cancel the whole thing. The day is saved with the help of his good friends.

"*The Midnight Fair*" by Gideon Sterer and Mariachiara Di Giorgio is simply magical. This wordless picture book shows what happens at a country fair when the humans leave for the night and the woodland animals are free to explore. You'll see deer in chair swings, a wolf winning a goldfish, a weasel eating a soft pretzel, and more delightful surprises.

"*Vampenguin*" by Lucy Ruth Cummins is a quirky, hilarious picture book about the Dracula family on a visit to the zoo. At some point the youngest member of the Draculas and a young penguin get switched, but neither family seems to notice as they go about their day. The text of the book doesn't seem to notice anything either, which makes the reader feel like you're in on a really funny secret.

"*Bodies are Cool*" by Tyler Feder is a sing-songy, rhyming ode to the beauty of human bodies. Each two-page spread shows a scene with many different people and all their different noses, hair, freckles, moles, skin colors, disabilities, sizes, scars, and more. It's amazing how many different physical characteristics the author fit into one picture book. Great for kids who love to explore detailed pictures.