NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.
BIG READ KICK-OFF & KEYNOTE
WITH ADRIAN MATEJKA
Vigo County Public Library · Main Library · Lobby
Friday, March 1 · 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Welcome Adrian Matejka, author of the NEA Big Read 2019 selection *The Big Smoke* and keynote speaker for this year’s NEA Big Read programming. Born in Nuremberg, Germany, Matejka holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation (2014), the Lannan Foundation (2014) and United States Artists (2015).

*The Big Smoke*, focusing on the life of Jack Johnson, the first African American world heavyweight boxing champion, is Matejka’s third collection of poetry. It was a finalist for the 2013 National Book Award and the 2014 Pulitzer Prize. In 2014, *The Big Smoke* won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award which honors written works that make significant contributions towards understanding racism and the diversity of human culture.

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DRAWN BLOOD: GEORGE BELLOWS AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY BOXING
Education Gallery · Swope Art Museum
Friday, February 1 to Sunday, March 24

“A fight, particularly under the night light, is of all sports the most classically picturesque.” —George Bellows

George Bellows is best known for his depictions of boxing in the early 20th century. While he felt that accuracy of the placement of the boxer’s hands and feet were of little importance, he focused on the more difficult task of capturing the brutality, physical energy and human drama inherent in prize fighting.

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TABLESCAPES
Sycamore Banquet Center · 550 Chestnut Street
Friday, February 22 & Saturday, February 23
Daily Viewings · 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Cocktail Party · 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Enjoy Cocktails on the ‘Scapes with entertainment inspired by *The Big Smoke* from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Friday, February 22. Entry is $20.00 at the door. Daily viewings will be available Friday, February 22 and Saturday, February 23 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Entry for viewings is $5.00 at the door.

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BIG READ FILM: THE HURRICANE
Vigo County Public Library · Main Library
Monday, March 4 · 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Denzel Washington is Rubin “Hurricane” Carter, a young black boxer who is on the verge of becoming the world’s greatest boxing champion until he is wrongly imprisoned for a triple murder. Carter is set to serve a lifetime in prison until help comes from an unlikely source.

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SECOND SATURDAY STUDIO
Swope Art Museum
Saturday, March 9 · 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Draw boxers from Terre Haute’s Sweatbox Gym in a fun and relaxing environment. Need inspiration? Visit the galleries and see the exhibition of *Drawn Blood: George Bellows*. Free and open to the public.

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SINFONIETTA CONCERT
Cecilian Auditorium · Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
Sunday, March 10 · 2:00 p.m.

*The Big Smoke* concert will feature music related to the dominant themes of *The Big Smoke*. The audience will hear torch songs like “The Man I Love”, blues songs like “St. Louis Blues” and jazz with Duke Ellington’s “Sophisticated Lady” as well as selections from Jack Johnson’s favorite opera, Verdi’s *Il Trovatore*. Copies of the book will be distributed to the audience.

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BIG READ FILM: CREED
Marshall Public Library
Thursday, March 14 · 6:30 p.m. CST

In this spin-off and sequel to the *Rocky* film series, Adonis Johnson, the son of the deceased heavyweight champion Apollo Creed, asks his father’s friend and former rival Rocky Balboa to become his trainer. *Movies at the Library* are shown in the Dale McConchie Meeting Room. Rated PG-13.
SMART SNACKS FOR THE ATHLETE  
Parke County Public Library  
Friday, March 15 · 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
What does your body need to perform well in athletic competitions? Parke County Extension Educator Gail Wright will present healthy and nutritious snacks for the student athlete.

HARD-HITTING CONVERSATIONS: SPORTS IN OUR COMMUNITY  
Vigo County Public Library · Main Library  
Friday, March 15 · 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Bradley Sage, Program Director of the Professional Athletic Training Program at IU, will discuss ways to reconcile the increasingly negative effects with the positive aspects in regard to sports. Sylvester “Coach” Edwards, Terre Haute’s NAACP President, athlete, coach, teacher and community volunteer will discuss changes we can make to create a positive outcome for our athletes, schools and spectators.

FEEDING YOUR STUDENT ATHLETE  
Parke County Public Library  
Saturday, March 16 · 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
Parke County Extension Educator Gail Wright will present healthy and nutritious meal plans for parents of athletic children. Parents will learn ways to support their children and help them perform their best.

BIG READ KNOCKOUT POETRY SLAM  
Clinton Public Library  
Tuesday, March 19 · 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Compete in this epic poetry battle and share a poem, haiku, rhythm or even short story. Each poet will have a three minute time slot to perform. This event is free and open to the public to view. To register to compete or for questions, please contact Ashley Wolfe at 765.832.8349 or ashley@clintonpl.lib.in.us.

BIG READ FILM: RACE  
Historic Ritz Theater · 201 W Ohio St., Rockville, IN  
Tuesday, March 19 · 7:00 p.m.  
Jesse Owens, African American track star faces discrimination both at home at Ohio State University and at the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany. Despite everything seemingly against him, Owens proves to the world that his race does nothing to hold him back. Rated PG-13.

BIG READ ART RECEPTION  
Vigo County Public Library · Main Library  
Thursday, March 28 · 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Join us for refreshments, conversation and a taste of the artistry in our community as awards are presented. Prizes will be awarded for Best of Show and People’s Choice, as voted by Library customers.

LOCAL WOMEN’S HISTORY BREAKFAST HONORING REBECCA MOORE  
Clabber Girl  
Wednesday, March 20 · 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.  
Celebrate the women that are making history right here in the Wabash Valley. Rebecca Moore, the Community Prevention Specialist for Council on Domestic Abuse, Inc. (CODA) and a victim advocate will be honored at this special event. Breakfast will be served. Refreshments will be served. Unless noted, all times are EST.
ABOUT THE BIG SMOKE

In his collection of biographically inspired poems in the NEA Big Read 2019 selection The Big Smoke, author Adrian Matejka chronicles the life of Jack Johnson, the first African American world heavyweight champion. Johnson rose to wealth and fame during the height of the Jim Crow laws and endured constant backlash as he pursued the world heavyweight boxing championship. Despite the racism that Johnson faced, he frequented lavish clubs, enjoyed fast cars and had multiple relationships with white women. Matejka addresses Johnson’s complicated career and lifestyle, from his earliest fights in Galveston, Texas to his pinnacle match in Reno, Nevada, dubbed “The Fight of The Century”.

ABOUT THE NEA BIG READ

NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) designed to broaden our understanding of our world, our communities and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Vigo County Public Library is one of 75 not-for-profit organizations to receive a grant to host an NEA Big Read project between September 2018 and June 2019. The NEA presents NEA Big Read in partnership with Arts Midwest.

BOOK CLUBS & DISCUSSIONS

“...I’m like / an automobile in the ring. My fists / work like cranked-up engines...”

— “Prize Fighter” from The Big Smoke (2013)
Adrian Matejka

The child of emancipated slaves, Jack Johnson fought violent segregation and the racism of white America during the era of Jim Crow to become the first African American heavyweight boxing champion of the world. In The Big Smoke, poet Adrian Matejka uses the voices of Johnson and the many white women that he loved to examine Johnson’s complicated legacy: his childhood in poverty, his flashy personality and wealth, his brutal relationships with his lovers, and his pinnacle match against the former undefeated world heavyweight champion James J. Jeffries.

Vigo County Public Library • Main Library
Wednesday, March 13 • 2:00 p.m.

NAACP
Vigo County Public Library • Main Library
Monday, March 18 • 6:30 p.m.

Marshall Public Library
Wednesday, March 20 • 10:30 a.m. CST

Sullivan County Public Library
Wednesday, March 20 • 6:00 p.m.

Vigo County Public Library • West Branch
Thursday, March 21 • 2:30 p.m.

Paris Public Library
Thursday, March 21 • 5:30 p.m.

Parke County Public Library
Thursday, March 28 • 6:30 p.m.

CODA: COUNCIL ON DOMESTIC ABUSE, INC.

The mission of the Council on Domestic Abuse, Inc., is the elimination of domestic violence and sexual assault through societal change and the empowerment of abused individuals and their minor children.

Contact CODA’s 24-Hour Crisis Line at 800.566.2632. Learn more at www.codaterrehaute.org or by searching #codacares on social media.

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