

# Big Read Grant awarded to Scenic Regional Library

Scenic Regional Library has been awarded a prestigious NEA Big Read grant. NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with Arts Midwest. The library is partnering with Washington Public Library, East Central College, East Central Area Literacy Council, and the Scenic Regional Library Foundation on the grant.

The NEA awards only 78 Big Read grants to non-profit organizations and public libraries throughout the entire country each year. The NEA Big Read grant is Scenic Regional Library's first federal grant and first community-wide read.

The objective of the NEA Big Read is to get as many people as possible in a community to read and discuss the same book. The NEA provides a list of 32 books from which applicants for the grant can choose. The library and its partners selected *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. The 2014 novel takes place in the Great Lakes region after a flu pandemic has devastated the world, killing most of the population. It won the Arthur C. Clarke Award, given for the best science fiction novel, in 2015.

The \$15,000 grant will provide funds for a wide range of programming based on the themes of the book. During the six-week period between September 24 and November 5, the library and its partners will present 77 free programs and book discussions throughout the three-county area (Gasconade, Franklin, and Warren). The programming will culminate with a visit from *Station Eleven* author Emily St. John Mandel at the John Edson Anglin Performing Arts Center at East Central College on November 5. She will be interviewed by Mike Thomas, host of *Livewire* on KWRE 730 AM in Warrenton, followed by a book signing.

Scenic Regional Library will purchase an additional 1,000 paperback copies of *Station Eleven* for the high schools and public through Neighborhood Reads in Washington. Free copies of the book will be available at the library's branches, Washington Public Library, and other locations

beginning September 3. E-book and e-audiobooks copies will also be available on the library's website.

All local media outlets in the library's three-county district have agreed to be sponsors for the library's NEA Big Read: *Missourian*, *Warren County Record*, *Sullivan Independent News*, *New Haven Independent*, *Gasconade County Republican*, *Hermann Advertiser-Courier*, KWRE (730AM), KLPW (1220AM), and KTUI (1560AM).

Other sponsors include United Bank of Union, Bank of Washington, Bank of Franklin County, and Neighborhood Reads.