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**NEWS  
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## El Paso Public Libraries Launches Book Club Aimed at Examining the Importance of Empathy

**EL PASO, Texas** – The City of El Paso Public Libraries received a grant from the Texas Center for the Book (TCFB) to facilitate reading and discussion opportunities exploring what empathy means within communities.

The Public Libraries will host a book club at the Clardy Fox Library Branch inviting participants to read *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt.

The book club will meet virtually starting Thursday, May 25. Limited copies of the book will be provided free of charge through the TCFB grant.

“Book clubs and book discussion groups are a great way to bring people together, not only to encourage reading, but to provide healthy discussions,” said El Paso Public Libraries Director Norma Martinez. “We are grateful to receive a grant that will help explore people’s ability to understand and share the feelings of another person, especially during a time when there is a lot of focus on our mental health. Empathy can help improve our community’s overall mental health.”

The grant hopes to convene individuals and groups to explore the unique questions, challenges and solidarity that can occur in communities throughout the state. During the recent years of difficulties, division, isolation, and loss, the TCFB recognizes the importance of sharing our stories to build understanding and support. Literature—by definition a way of sharing in a story other than our own—can be one of the many routes to empathy.

Residents who are interested in being part of the book club can call the Clardy Fox Library at (915) 212-3263. To learn more about the El Paso Public Libraries, including programs and services, visit [www.elpasolibrary.org](http://www.elpasolibrary.org).

### **About the Texas State Library and Archives Commission**

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission provides Texans access to the information they need to be informed, productive citizens by preserving the archival record of Texas; enhancing the service capacity of public, academic, and school libraries; assisting public agencies in the maintenance of their records; and meeting the reading needs of Texans with disabilities. For more information, visit [tsl.texas.gov](http://tsl.texas.gov).

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