

Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library Newsletter



Co-Presidents: Marcy Lechner and Mike Miller

December 2020

www.fwmlnj.org

WELCOME

The Holidays are upon us and fill us with a much needed and appreciated sense of joy and good cheer at the end of a bleak year. With the coming of the New Year we are hopeful that during 2021 we can return to our normal lives, where we can meet with friends and neighbors, enter stores and public buildings without fear and the discomfort of wearing masks and maintaining social distance, return to school and our places of employment, dine out and share holidays with family and friends in person and not over a computer screen.

But until the pandemic is declared over please remember that the Westfield Memorial continues to offer a wide range of services to our community. You can order books through the Library's website (www.wmlnj.org) for next day curbside pickup at the library; sign up for children's programs offered via ZOOM by both the Library and those sponsored by the Friends; access and download books, magazines, music and movies, information on arts and crafts, and take advantage of educational programs, all through the Library's digital subscription services and attend lectures and programs remotely from the comfort of your own home. Please visit the Library's website for information on available services. The staff of the Library have worked throughout the pandemic to provide the highest level of service possible under the circumstances and we would like to express our gratitude and that of all the Friends for their continuing efforts!

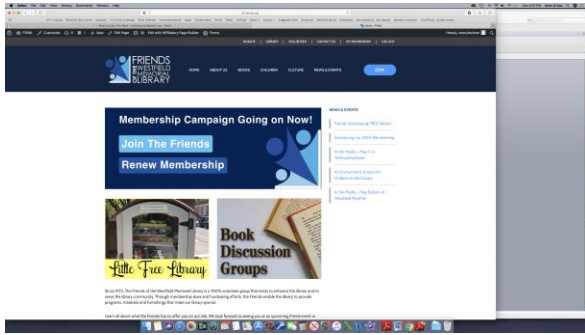
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE FRIENDS



The Corona Virus Grinch may have forced the Westfield Memorial Library to temporarily close to in-person visits this holiday season, but that does not mean the Holiday Spirit is not alive and well. Once again this year the Friends have provided wreaths to decorate the building for the holidays! These wreaths are a traditional holiday gift from the Friends to help make the Library a little more festive, even in times like these. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza or Festivus, the next time you are picking up or returning books or near the Library check out the wreaths and have a great Holiday Season!





Membership Update

It's time for the Friends Annual Membership Appeal. This is your opportunity to support the Friends so we can provide the programs, materials, furnishings and everything else we do that makes our library so special. Your continued membership is more important than ever.

Look for our 2021 membership mailing in your mailbox. You can learn all about the membership campaign and even join via the membership brochure. Follow the instructions to ensure that we receive both your membership form and your payment at the Library.

This year we also offer online membership via our Friends website. New to the site, click on Join The Friends. Visiting the site again, click on Renew Membership. With both methods to become a 2021 member, we will send you a membership card within one month of receiving your payment.

We encourage you to share this information with folks new to the Friends. Pass on the website information or we can send a brochure to them. Joining the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library is a wonderful investment in our Westfield community.



A Look Back at The Friends in 2010

The year 2010 was an active one for the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library. The Book Discussion Group met on January 20th to discuss *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout. In March, the group discussed *The Commoner* by John Burnham and *Ruth* by Elizabeth Gaskell in May.



In March, Linnea Rhodes was awarded the Kenneth S. Gaston Award. This award was named in honor of the first President of the Library Board of Trustees who passed away in 1975. The award was established to recognize those who supported and furthered the activities of the Library. Linnea was recognized for her service as Co-President, for initiating and promoting the Museum Pass Program, her efforts at the Annual Spring Book Sale and for being instrumental in the Museum Project which saw framed posters of museum posters put on permanent in the Meeting Room at the Library.

On April 8th, Assemblyman Jon Bramnick delivered the first Anne Hale Speaker Series talk of 2010. His topic was "Trenton: An Inside Look at State Government Decision Making". Other speakers scheduled later in the year included former Major Leaguer Jeff Torborg and NYC Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley, both Westfield residents and author and researcher Arthur Lefkowitz.

Donations to the Annual Spring Book Sale were accepted from April 15th through the 17th and the sale began on Wednesday, April 21st and ended with Bag Day on Saturday, April 24th.

On May 3rd, Gail Stavitsky, chief curator of the Montclair Art Museum, gave a talk on "A Force of Change: African-American Art and the Julius Rosewald Fund" which was a current exhibit at the Montclair Art Museum. Her talk had been postponed from February, due to inclement weather, and included the unveiling of the permanent exhibit of framed Museum Posters in the Library Meeting Room.

In June the Friends began accepting applications for the Opera Series that included *Rigoletto*, *Carmen*, *La Boheme*, *La Fanciulla 8Del West* in the Fall of 2010 as well as several additional operas



IN THE BOOK COMMUNITY

This pandemic has taken away many things. It has impacted all of us in different ways. On a positive note, it has often given us the opportunity to read more, try new hobbies and binge watch a few TV series. But it has also limited our ability to do things or go places that allowed us to get lost in experiences related to reading. Even a visit to our WML has become a somewhat desolate experience. We are grateful for curbside pickup, online programs and reading/ listening to books in different formats (Kindle, Overdrive and Libby).

We miss our Spring book sale and Children's sale and hope that one day soon we will experience again the fun in looking through a stack of books and feeling joy at finding a book treasure that we have always wanted to own or read. We miss the spontaneous camaraderie of discussing our love for books with friends. Gratefully, the book discussion group has continued to provide a virtual outlet for this. A Little Free Library may provide an expected find while out walking the dog.

However, the fact that live, in-person events are not currently available does not mean that there are no cultural opportunities open to those willing to attend virtually. Recently, Carol Skotnicki saw a notice for an event featuring Jane Fonda and Chelsea Clinton discussing their recent books, hosted virtually by the Montclair Literary Festival. She felt a pang for what we have been missing and decided to look for some literary events in NJ that are tentatively planned for 2021. This is what she found:

Collingswood Book Festival Likely October, 2021, Collingswood, NJ
Authors/speakers for adults and children, poetry, readings, storytellers. Longest running, largest literary event in Delaware Valley All events free

info@collingswoodbookfestival.com

Morristown Festival of Books October 8 and 9, 2021
Mayo Performing Arts Center, Morristown
Brings together acclaimed authors and book lovers.
Ticketed event.
info@morristownbooks.org

Montclair Literary Festival October 2021
Launched to celebrate the love of reading
info@succeed2gether.org

Maplewood South Orange Book Festival September 2021
Went virtual this year but planning their fifth annual festival next year.
Mapsobooksfest.org

New Kindles for the Library



Did you know that the Westfield Memorial Library has Kindle electronic book readers that can be checked out by full-service and MURAL cardholders for up to 14 days at a time? These e-readers are even loaded with the New York Times bestselling titles and are ideal for long periods of being quarantined! The Friends support this program and recently approved the purchase of four additional e-readers as a gift to the Library. These additional Kindles will allow the Library to keep several in circulation while updating others with the latest in fiction, mysteries and non-fiction. These e-readers are another service to the community that the Friends are proud to support!



The Book Discussion Group Recommends



Please note that our January book discussion (on Zoom) has been rescheduled to January 27. To receive updates on our selections and meetings, write to us at info@fwmlnj.org. New members are always welcome.

Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover
Zoom discussion on Jan. 27th at 2:00 pm

Born in 1986 to survivalists opposed to public education, Westover never attended her local schools. Instead, she spent her days on a rural mountain in Idaho working in her father's junkyard or stewing herbs for her mother, an herbalist and midwife. She was seventeen when she left home and stepped into a classroom for the first time. Her quest for knowledge led her to Harvard and Cambridge and a new way of life.

Named one of the top 10 books of the year by The New York Times.



When One Book Closes, Another One Opens

If you are looking for the next great book to read, here are some recommendations – and comments – from your Friends in the Book Discussion Group. Enjoy!

The Alice Network by Kate Quinn
Reading it now; I like the author. The story of two women, two wars and one nasty male traitor.

The Bee Keeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri

Middle-class Syrians finally flee the civil war and travel to Western Europe

Behind Her Eyes by Sarah Pinborough *****
Pinborough's characters are embroiled in deception and the tug of war between trust and sinister manipulation. I was fascinated by how her "villains" are able to lay such long, patient and intricate plots to get what they want.

Beneath a Starry Sky by Mark Sullivan *****
Northern Italy, WWII: a young Italian works against the Nazis.

The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate *****½
Historical fiction about a family lost and found, sibling love and the toll of secrets.