

Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library Newsletter



Co-Presidents: Marcy Lechner and Michael Miller

March 2021

www.fwmlnj.org

WELCOME

To our new and renewed Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library Members.

As spring approaches we look forward to warmer weather, longer days and continued activity from The Friends. Even though we were limited to what we could offer this past winter we took many of our programs online. Hopefully you were able to join a book discussion, visit a Little Free Library, watch a Saturday Morning Children's program or benefit from a Books-on-Wheels delivery. Our Museum Pass program will resume as with a limited number of museums. While in the future, the Metropolitan Opera just released their Fall 2021 in-person season.

This spring we have some new additions to our virtual programming as well. The Friends are sponsoring a Women's History Program on March 10 and launching a new program with the Westfield High School's Community Service Club, **Reading Buddies**, focusing on reading with elementary school children. We have other new events in the works as well. Get ready for a Book Recycling Day early this summer, a joint event with the Westfield Historical Society at the Reeve House on April 24 and our upcoming YouTube Channel funded by the H.E.A.R.T. grant we received from Union County.

Learn more about all our upcoming events in our Newsletter and for ongoing updates check out our website at FWMLNJ.ORG. It's going to be a fun spring at the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library. Thanks to all our volunteers for planning and supporting our programs. Do you have an idea for The Friends or want to join an event. Reach out to one of the event - chairs or our general mailbox at info@fwmlnj.org.

Marcy and Mike

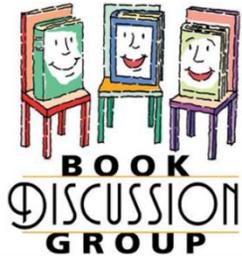


LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

Even with the snowy weather, the Little Libraries remain popular, especially in the parks. People out for fresh air, a walk through town or just doing errands can visit the six Little Libraries sponsored by the Friends to "Take a Book, Leave a Book".

Volunteer monitors visit each library at least once during the two-week period of assignment. During the visit, the monitor restocks the Little Library, as needed, from books kept for that purpose by the Friends. The monitor also removes any damaged, moldy books or any inappropriate for general audiences. The monitor is also responsible to tidy the area around the Little Library and examine it for any damage. Unfortunately, there have been a couple instances of damage discovered recently. The plexiglass on the door of the Little Library on Walnut Street was broken but before we could arrange to have it repaired an unknown friend of the Friends stepped in and made the repair for us. The Children's Little Library at the Mindowaskin Playground had the plexiglass window in its door dislodged and this time we know our benefactor, Sam Veltri, who repaired the window. We want to give a shout of thanks to Sam and our unknown hero for getting the Little Libraries back in service! We also want to thank all the monitors who make sure the libraries are well stocked and all who patronize our Little Libraries and those of others throughout Westfield. If you are interested in volunteering to serve as a monitor or for any of our other volunteer opportunities, email us at info@fwmlnj.org.

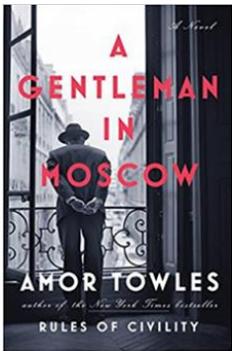




Join us to read and discuss two great books this spring. Our Zoom sessions have been popular, lively and easy to join. If you have questions about Zoom, we're here to help. To

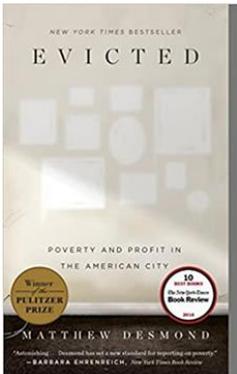
receive updates and information about our selections, meetings and Zoom links, write to us at info@fwmlnj.org. New members are always welcome.

A Gentleman in Moscow: A Novel by Amor Towles.
Zoom discussion on **March 17th at 2:00 pm**.



In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is put under house arrest in the Metropol Hotel in Moscow for writing a revolutionary poem when he was a university student. Despite his greatly reduced circumstances and status, he encounters an expansive world of emotional opportunities. The Wall Street Journal says: "The novel buzzes with the energy of

numerous adventures, love affairs,



Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond.

Zoom discussion on **May 19th at 2:00 pm**

The author follows eight families in Milwaukee as they struggle to keep a roof over their heads. His in-depth reporting has been hailed as "wrenching and revelatory" (The Nation), and

"vivid and unsettling" (New York Review of Books); readers also call it a page-turner that reads almost like a novel. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize; named one of Time's ten best nonfiction books of the decade.

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 Beekeeper 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.

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson *****
1930's Kentucky -- based on a true situation and includes pictures of the rural south.

Cross Her Heart by Sarah Pinborough ****
A thriller, swift and entertaining.

The Cuckoo's Calling; The Silkworm; Career of Evil; Lethal White; Troubled Blood by Robert Galbraith (aka J.K. Rowling) *****
Comoran Strike crime series, Books 1 to 5. Intricate and character-driven.

Deacon King Kong by James McBride *****
A rich, often hilarious and heartbreaking portrait of a Brooklyn community and its ethnic evolution. Through the antics of the town drunk, Blacks, Irishmen, Italians, and Jews reveal their hatred, mistrust and surprising support for each other in a past and present that makes way for a hopeful future.

Dead Wake by Erik Larson *****
The sinking of the Lusitania -- not a new book but very informative and well researched.

Evening by Ken Follett ****

Prequel to *Pillars of the Earth*, and which I did not find as good, but did make me want to reread *Pillars*.



The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell
by Robert Dugong *****

Everyone in my book club loved it. A coming of age tale about a boy whose classmates call him Sam Hell because of his disability. He survives because of his family and friends, but he is an adult before he can see what truly matters.

The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyers *****
Similar to *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*. A very pleasurable read!

Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell *****
Hamnet is the best book I've read in a long, long time, for the story and the utter beauty of the language. In 1580's England, during the Black Plague a young Latin tutor falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman in this "exceptional historical novel" (*The New Yorker*) and best-selling winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction.

The Huntress by Kate Quinn **** ½*
Post WWII, Boston area: a search for Nazi spies.

Morning by Ken Follett ****
Prequel to *Pillars of the Earth*, and which I did not find as good, did make me want to reread *Pillars*.

The News of the World by Paulette Jiles *****
Rural Texas, 1800s. Traveling man visits small towns and holds meetings where he reads the news from many different areas of the world to his audience, some perhaps may have been illiterate. Recommended by a friend in NM whose husband's book group read this.

The Rent Collector by Camron Wright ****½*
Takes place on a giant garbage dump in Cambodia, a prescription for a miserable life, but the book itself is surprising, gentle and up-lifting.

The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz by Erik Larson *****
Churchill's family and the Blitz. Courage and leadership in a time of crisis.

Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library and the Westfield Historical Society to Hold Joint Event



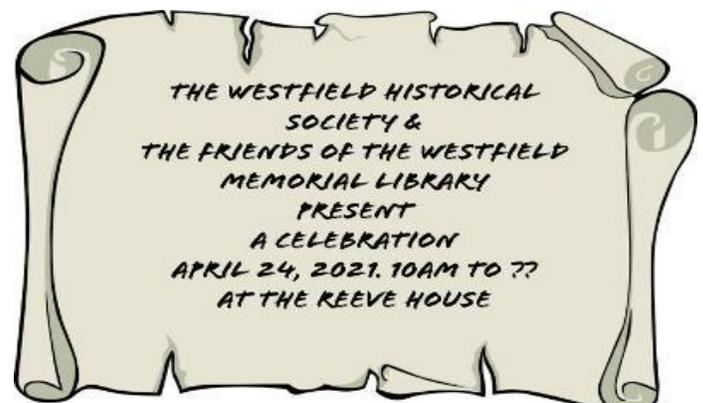
Mark your calendars for April 24, 2021! The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library and the Westfield Historical Society are planning a fun-filled day for Westfielders of all ages on the grounds of the Reeve House on Mountain Avenue.

The morning will have events for children, including Story Time, games and activities for children, information on the Friends-sponsored program for children, and fun things to do at the library.

In the afternoon, Westfield resident Eva Lesko Natiello, author of *The Memory Box* and *Following You* will speak about her books and her inspiration for them. There will be information and presentations on the various offerings sponsored by the Friends, including the Museum Pass Program, the Opera subscription plan offered, the system of Little Libraries throughout town, Books on Wheels, our Book Discussion Group, our Scholarship Program and much more.

The price of admission will include a 2021 membership on the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library (current members will receive as discounted admission). Food and beverages will be available for purchase and there will be live music!

So Save the Date and plan to join us, meet new Friends and shake off the Pandemic Blues!



THE HALE SPEAKER SERIES



The Anne M. Hale Speaker Series was established in 2007 with a grant from The Thomas Glasser Foundation to the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library. The grant came with a request that the Friends establish an ongoing program in memory of Anne M. Hale. Anne was

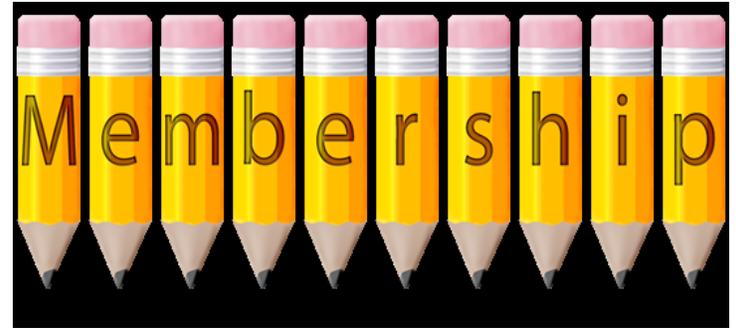
an active member of the Westfield community and a lifelong patron of the library. Lee Hale worked with the Friends and then-president Linnea Rhodes to establish a speaker series in his wife's name. Additional grants from The Thomas Glasser Foundation and from The Anne and Lee Hale Fund have enabled the series to grow. It evolved from one speaker in 2008 to four speakers each year in 2010. The focus of the series has also evolved to feature "the Westfield connection" presenting topics relevant to our town and/or speakers who are or have been Westfield residents. In 2013 the series was renamed The Anne and Lee Hale Speaker Series to honor the passing of its creator and guiding force, Lee Hale. The name of the series was shortened to the Hale Speaker Series in 2015. The popularity of the series has grown over the years as the community looks forward to its prestigious speakers and their high quality, thought-provoking presentations.

Over the past twelve years 39 different people have spoken. We like to have the speakers talk about their area of expertise in relation to their own history. What is their relation to Westfield? How did they get where they are today? Who were their early influences? What was their past education and early employment and how did that evolve into their career today? This look at personal background and the speaker's relation to our town is one of the elements that makes the Hale Speaker Series unique. The speakers are chosen based on their connection with Westfield and because they are very successful in their careers. The list of accomplishments is impressive: author, historian, state assembly representative, catcher and baseball manager, New York City Health Commissioner, NJ state senator, professor, CEO, Lincoln Center Chair, volunteer coordinator for the Met, sports announcer, editor, conductor, quarterback, college president, band leader, doctor, museum curator, real estate broker, artist,

technology officer, stage manager, coach, founder, reporter, restaurant owner, and chief medical officer.

After the speakers share some insight into their background, they speak on a topic related to their profession or volunteer position. In most cases the actual presentation focuses on a topic of general interest; in about 20% of the talks the topic is Westfield. After a 45-minute presentation, we allow 15 minutes for questions from the audience. This can be the most interesting and lively portion of the evening. For that reason we have not gone virtual during the pandemic.

Members of the Hale Committee are: Barb Hale, Tina Leshner, Sherry Cronin, Mary Orlando, Ellie Albertson and Linnea Rhodes. Our goal is to find speakers and topics that will appeal to a broad audience. We love it when teens are present because our speaker has a cool job. We like to see neighbors of the speakers come to catch up after the presentation. We value our regulars who just like to hear an interesting talk. We look forward to resuming live presentations in 2022!



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our 2021 Membership Campaign was a success. We are 240 members strong. We welcome our new members and welcome back our renewals. Your dedication to the Friends is much appreciated. Be sure to visit our website FWMLNJ.ORG to stay up-to-date on what's going on. Membership opportunities are still available. Feel free to pass on our information to those that may be interested. Here's to a great year for the Friends.

**Friends of the Westfield Memorial
Library
Metropolitan Opera Subscription
Series
with convenient
Charter Bus from Westfield**



Yes! The Met Opera will open again in October 2021 for the 21-22 season and the Friends will again sponsor a subscription series!

Registration for the 2021-22 season is now open for any person from Westfield or surrounding communities. For as little as \$35 a night plus bus fare you can experience one of the best opera houses in the world. Transportation is by charter bus from Westfield to Lincoln Center. Choice of ticket prices range from \$225 (Family Circle) to over \$2,000 (Orchestra) per series - your choice! With the subscription you get a 15% discount over the single ticket price, no fees!

Two or more persons may share one subscription series and a subscriber can change one or more operas to other ones to enjoy them together with a friend or spouse. Several people have expressed an interest in sharing a subscription and are waiting for others to join. If a participant cannot attend an opera, the subscription ticket may be exchanged through the Met subscription office (no fees!) or sold to someone else. The opera group maintains a "Standby List" of people who have expressed an interest in buying tickets for individual operas.

The bus will leave between 4:30 and 5:15 PM (depending on curtain time) from Westfield and will cost approximately \$40 per performance, based on on the number of participants.

If you are interested in participating as subscriber or a Standby and would like more

information, please see our web site www.fwmlnj.org – culture – opera – or contact Ulf Dolling at 908-347-3563 or uhdoll@aol.com.

2021-2022 Performances

October 13 at 7:00PM Bus at 4:30PM
FIRE SHUT UP IN MY BONES (BLANCHARD)
Nezet-Seguin; Blue, Moore, Liverman

November 3 at 7:30PM Bus at 5:00PM
PORGY AND BESS (GERSHWIN)
Wilson; Blue, Bruggger, Moore, Graves, Ballentine, Owens, Walker, Green

January 19 at 7:00PM Bus at 4:30PM
RIGOLETTO (VERDI)
Rustioni; Feola, Abrahamyan, Beczala, Kelsey, Mastroni

March 2 at 8:00PM Bus at 5:15PM
TOSCA (PUCCINI)
Nezet-Seguin; Kurzak, Alagna, Lucic, Carfizzi

April 13 at 7:30PM Bus at 5:00PM
LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (MOZART)
Nezet-Seguin; Lombardi, Garifullina, Cook, Bishop, Finley, Van Horn, Muraro

May 4 at 8:00PM Bus at 5:15PM
MADAMA BUTTERFLY (PUCCINI)
Weigle; Rae, Graham, Klink, Watson, Siegel, Reuter, Soar, Morris

May 25 at 7:30PM Bus at 5:00PM
AKHNATEN (GLASS)
Kamensek; Larusdottir, Chaleb, Costanzo, Blake, Liverman, Bernstein, James



Meet Eliza Blackwell Duprey via Zoom



Sponsored by the Friends, the Library is hosting a night with historian Alisa Dupuy as a Civil War Lady.

History comes to life during this lively program! Please join us as we meet Eliza Blackwell Dupree, a lady of the Civil War who lost a son at the battle of Gettysburg. She will talk a little bit about her life, the time, and some

women of the Civil War whom you may or may not have ever heard of. She will also discuss fashions of the time and we will have a singing of the Battle Hymn of the Republic.

Alisa Dupuy began Ladies of History in 2006. It was called Historical Teas and her main clients at the time were Tea Rooms. Since then, however, Alisa has branched out and her list of clients has grown to include historical societies, libraries, bed and breakfasts, book clubs, social clubs, church fundraisers and schools. To attend log on via the Zoom Meeting information below:

opic: Alisa Dupuy presents Civil War Ladies

Time: Mar 10, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85881085604>

Meeting ID: 858 8108 5604

Friends' Receive a Union County H.E.A.R.T. Grant

The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library received a grant under the Union County H.E.A.R.T. (History, Education, Arts, Reaching Thousands) Program, which will allow us to purchase the equipment necessary to record our program offerings, including the Hale Speaker Series Talks, and to create informational videos that can be posted to our new YouTube channel. This will give us a platform to expand our reach beyond those who attend our events in person

New - Reading Buddies Program

A Reading Buddy is someone you can enjoy a good book with. Reading Buddies, a new program sponsored by the Westfield High School Community Service Club and the Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library in partnership with the Youth Services area at the library, is a one-to-one virtual reading experience. Each high school buddy will be paired with a student buddy to read a book together. During each twenty minute session students will listen to a book and have the benefit to practice reading to their high school buddy. Recommended for ages 5 to 10, the Reading Buddy program is a fun way to share a story and foster the love of reading. This virtual program is supported via Zoom and students can participate right at home. If you know someone who would like to register please tell them to go to info@fwmlnj.org and include your Student Name and Age, Elementary School, Parent/Guardian Name and Phone Number. The WHS Community Service Club members are looking forward to reading to their new buddies.

The graphic is a vertical poster for the Reading Buddies program. It features a green background with white and yellow text. At the top, it says 'THE WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY SERVICE CLUB AND FRIENDS OF THE WESTFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY PRESENT...'. Below that, in large yellow letters, is 'READING BUDDIES'. To the left of the text are three illustrations: a woman reading on a laptop, a stack of books, and a stack of three books. To the right of the text, it says '20 MINUTE AFTERNOON SESSION @3:30' and 'MARCH 9TH, 18TH, 23RD'. At the bottom, it says 'STARTS MARCH 9TH!' and 'A program in which high school students read books with children ages 5 to 10 virtually! Parents reach out via email to info@fwmlnj.org and mention' followed by a right-pointing arrow. To the right of the arrow, there is a list of required information: 'Child's Name', 'Elementary School', 'Grade/Age', and 'Parent's Phone Number'.

THE WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
COMMUNITY SERVICE CLUB
AND FRIENDS OF THE
WESTFIELD MEMORIAL
LIBRARY PRESENT...

**READING
BUDDIES**

20 MINUTE
AFTERNOON
SESSION
@3:30

**MARCH 9TH,
18TH, 23RD**

STARTS MARCH 9TH!

A program in which high school students read books with children ages 5 to 10 virtually!
Parents reach out via email to info@fwmlnj.org and mention →

- Child's Name
- Elementary School
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