



Festive Annual Meeting Planned!

Please join us on Tuesday March 27th as the Friends hold their Annual Meeting and elect new members to the Board of Directors.

There will be the Cajun band, Snakesauce, for musical fun, plus we'll have refreshments along with the opportunity to meet new friends and greet old ones at this event, scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

The Friends have contributed more than \$50,000 in gifts, including public computer workstations and software, special performances and programs, furnishings, reference tools, bi-lingual and ESL materials, and more than 1500 lanyards for children's library cards.

Member or non-member, all are invited to join us on March 27th. Bring family and friends!

Election of Officers

Positions open for re-election this year include treasurer and two member-at-large positions. Members of the Friends whose dues are current are eligible to serve on the Board and vote in the election. New and renewed memberships will be accepted at the meeting. If you are interested in being part of the Library's future by serving on the Friends Board of Directors, contact Nominating Committee member Karen Petersen at 301-891-2588 or by e-mail at kkpeters@earthlink.net

Friends Befriend Katrina Damaged Library in Mississippi

A Mississippi public library, damaged by Hurricane Katrina, has found a new friend in the Friends of the Takoma Park Library.

Half of the proceeds or about \$600 from our May book sale was sent to help Long Beach Public Library in Long Beach, Mississippi get back on its feet after severe flooding caused by the 2005 storm. Long Beach is a small community of about Takoma Park's size on the Gulf coast just west of Biloxi. The library has a spunky history of overcoming not just floods but two devastating fires over a history running back to 1895 and like Takoma Park's library, the Long Beach facility is independent of its local county system.

Long Beach's second floor reference and non-fiction collections were salvageable after Katrina, but virtually all of the fiction and nearly the entire children's wing of books were lost because of water and wind damage. "It's never too late to begin right where you are" is the Website motto for its rebuilding efforts now, and the library was scheduled to reopen last November.

"What can we say but thank you," wrote Peter Psikogios, treasurer for the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library. "No gift is too small especially for our library...It is the generosity of people like you that will help us rebuild."

Join Us for a Friendly Read

By Merrill Leffler

Who has time to read books? Our waking hours are subject to temptations galore — the internet, sports, movies, computer games, magazines — or the daily demands: work and commuting, shopping, making meals, paying the bills, fixing the faucets, cleaning the bathrooms. And this is only a short list! Where are the hours left for that solitary time, no distractions, to slip into a world of words and sentences.

Few as those hours may be, people are finding or, more accurately, setting them aside. How else to account for the immense book sales at Amazon, Borders, Barnes and Noble, at Politics & Prose, Chapters and other first-rate independents? And for many, reading has become more than an end in itself: all around the U.S. readers have also been gathering together to select books they want to read and then to talk about them.

Some groups have been meeting for years. Takoma Park has several I know of — in our neighborhood the Sherman Avenue You-Don't-Have-to-Clean-Your-House Book-Club meets bimonthly to discuss classic works of American literature. While some clubs are “closed,” others have *opened* their doors: bookstores such as Politics & Prose, for example, and libraries especially. A year-and-a-half ago, the Friends organized a Reading Group that has been meeting every two months.

Friends Reading Group

The Friends welcomes everyone and asks participants to select the books we read. With a core of regulars and new people each time, the group has been wide-ranging in its choices. We began with James McBride's *The Color of Water*, a non-fiction story about the author's mother and her struggles to raise a family of many siblings — it was only as an adult that McBride, a former journalist for *The Washington Post* and an accomplished musician, discovered his supposedly Black mother was a white woman raised in an Orthodox Jewish family in Virginia. A powerfully moving narrative, it is the only non-fiction book we've read so far. Since then, the group has chosen modern or contemporary novels, among them T. Corghessan Boyle's

The Tortilla Curtain: set in southern California, the novel dramatizes the conflicts between upper middle-class whites and poor Hispanic migrants — some illegal, many not — who are trying to grasp for a better life, for a small piece of the so-called American Dream.

We have read other social novels, most recently John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the epic-like story of poor farmers who during the Thirties were dispossessed of their blighted land and in abject poverty went seeking the promises of a better life in (where else!) California — this panoramic novel follows the plight of one family, the Joads, representatives of the scores of thousands, derisively referred to as Okies, driving west during the Dust Bowl Thirties into the midst of hatred and social conflict.

Another power classic novel we read was Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*, a 1940s National Book Award winner. Warren created Jack Burden, the narrator who reveals much about his own moral journey in giving us the story of the rise and fall of Willie Stark. Warren, who drew his inspiration from the life of Huey Long, populist governor of Louisiana in the late Thirties, brings us into a complex world of power and its corruption of a man whose aim was to alleviate the poverty in his state by taking on the big money interests.

Fiction and American Life

Each of these books gives us a unique lens on American culture, past and present — from Edward P. Jones's *The Known World*, about slavery in Virginia, and more controversially, Black ownership of slaves, to Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*, with its unique dramatization of two sisters who react to American culture in diametrically opposite ways: one is driven by a need for order and domesticity, the other for flight from a sometimes fierce society.

Coming up on April 13, we will be discussing Tim O'Brien's *July, July*, a novel about a group of former college friends of the late 1960s who come together for a 30-year class reunion,

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What's the little white ball for?

A first-hand account of the annual *Friends of Mike Morrissey Mulligan Madness Golf Tournament*

By Gene Miller

When my Takoma Park Library colleague Dave Burbank and I received the gracious invitation to help make up a foursome in this past year's *Friends of Mike Morrissey Mulligan Madness Golf Tournament*, an annual memorial tournament that benefits the library, our first reaction was of course, "Well, we'd better get some books about golf out of the library first." But no matter how much fun it might be to read John "Junior" Feinstein's *A Good Walk Spoiled*, we knew that, inevitably, we had to pick up a club and hit a ball.

Our prior experience: I had played a few rounds of golf in the name of quality time with my father-in-law, while Dave had never played any golf that didn't involve windmills and clowns' noses. So we repaired first to the Paint Branch driving range, then to the nine-hole course behind the driving range, and then, a few weeks later, to the Sligo Creek Golf Course for another nine holes. After those experiences, we were in some sympathy with President U.S. Grant, who reportedly said of golf, "It looks like good exercise. What's the little white ball for?"

Thus fortified, our October date with destiny arrived in the form of our 9 a.m. tournament tee time at the Redgate Municipal Golf Course near Rockville. We were pleased and honored to join with more than eighty other golfers, all gathered to have a good time figuring out what that little white ball was for, while raising money for the Library in the name of the late Mike Morrissey.



From left to right, the golfers are: Jake Walsh, Dan Morrissey, Dave Burbank and Gene Miller.

Dave and I were doubly honored by being invited to complete a foursome that included Mike Morrissey's brother Dan, who flies up from Houston, Texas, every year just to play in this benefit tournament.

When the golf balls flew for Dave and me that day, they flew like birds: variously high, low, fast, slow, straight, aimless, with some fluttering up and then dropping to earth like a stricken quail. Dave did bail us out once by rattling a 30 foot putt squarely into the cup and, in the end, our score put us somewhere in the middle of the pack. We didn't win, but we didn't embarrass ourselves or our foursome either, so for that we are thankful.

But not so much as we are thankful for the opportunity to have played with our partners, Jake Walsh and Dan Morrissey, as well as the opportunity to help celebrate Mike Morrissey's continuing gift to our Takoma Park Library.

Join Us for a Friendly Read

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where they rediscover each other in recounting their common struggles.

With support of the Friends, the city library has ordered multiple copies of *July, July* — pick one up and join us. If you want to be on the mailing list for announcements, send your email address to merrilleffler@gmail.com. Or for information about the Friends Reading Group, please call the library at 301-891-7259.

The Friends Reading Group has discussed:

- *The Color of Water*, James McBride (11/05)
- *The Tortilla Curtain*, T. Corghessan Boyle, (2/06)
- *Housekeeping*, Marilynne Robinson (4/06)
- *The Known World*, Edward P. Jones (6/06)
- *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini (8/06)
- *The Life of Pi*, Yann Martel (10/06)
- *All the King's Men*, Robert Penn Warren (12/06)
- *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck (2/07)

Children's Programming

By Karen MacPherson

From toddlers singing “Hickory, Dickory Dock” at Circle Time to middle-schoolers talking about favorite books at meetings of the Teen Book Club, children’s programming is alive and well at the Takoma Park, Maryland Library.

Our New Programs

Building on the firm foundation of high-quality programming created by former children’s librarian Jillian Hershberger, we’ve recently added a monthly Teen Book Club, a monthly “Spanish Storytelling Saturdays” program, holiday craft nights, and a weekly activity where elementary school children can practice their reading skills on specially-trained dogs.

Expanded Programs

In addition, all seven 3rd grade classes and all six 4th grade classes at Piney Branch Elementary School — several hundred students in all — have been to the library for an introduction to the children’s collection. Hundreds of students also have signed up for library cards, and have been checking out books for school assignments and for fun reading. In February, the 3rd graders returned for a special Black History Month program on poetry highlighting African-American poets.

These programs are additions to the programming schedule established over the years by Jillian. Of course, there’s the weekly — and wildly popular — Circle Time, which attracts up to 75 babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their grown-ups each Tuesday morning. We also offer Spanish Circle Time with Senora

Lupe on the first two thursdays of the month. And, each season, we offer a special four-week program for “Two-sies.” There’s always a waiting list for this program, first established by Jillian’s predecessor many years ago.

Meanwhile, we’ve offered four special “Jillian Legacy” programs since September: a conversation salon led by “Socrates’ Café” founder Chris Phillips in September; scary tales told by storyteller Candace Wolf at Halloween; the celebration of American Indian culture with Tomas “Eaglebear” Shash in November; and the annual Winter Solstice drumming and dancing event. Then, in January, library assistant and Dungeons & Dragons master Dave Burbank presented an introduction to D&D to an enthusiastic group of parents and kids.

And Blogs

We’re also working to keep our blogs — “The Children’s Room” and “Teen Book Buzz” up to date. Patrons increasingly turn to these blogs for information about our programs. In addition, we will be offering community service hours (once we are approved by Montgomery County) to teens who write reviews of books that can be posted on our “Teen Book Buzz.”

Especially for Teens

On the other end of the kid spectrum, we’ve purchased a bookcase – courtesy of the Friends of the Library – to house our new, and burgeoning, young adult (YA) collection. Located just outside the Children’s Room, this collection has been a magnet for teens who seem thrilled to have a special selection of books focused on their interests and challenges. We’re also ordering subscriptions to six magazines aimed at teens, and will display these in a new magazine rack — purchased by the Friends — that will be placed next to the YA bookshelf.



Coming Events

But there's more to come! With funding from the Friends of the Library, we're creating a new program for babies up to 12 months old with their parents or caregiver. Modeled on the "Two-sies," this new "Lapsit" program will be offered for four weeks each season, and will include reading, singing and movement activities, plus information sheets for parents/caregivers with suggestions on continuing the fun at home. We hope to begin this program in April.

Bedtime Stories and More...

In addition, we're planning to offer a "bedtime story" half-hour, with reading and songs, on most Monday nights, and we also plan to offer more craft nights as well. Soon it will be time to plan the library's annual Summer Quest program (also funded by the Friends!), which we hope to "plug" via booktalks with the Piney Branch classes, the Teen Book Club and other venues.

We're also working on creating a brochure, with a map drawn by Dave Burbank, giving

people tips on finding books in our Children's Room. And we're creating special posters to help label parts of the collection for easier patron access.

Harry Potter Special Event

On July 21, when the seventh — and final — "Harry Potter" book is released, we're planning to host a special event, probably centered around listening to an audio version (by the wonderful Jim Dale) of Harry's final adventure. That way, everyone can share in the fun, whether or not they have a copy of the last book. To add to the fun, we're also asking kids for their ideas (costume party? Trivia contest?, etc.)

As you can tell, the Library's childrens and teen programming is hopping! Thanks to the Friends for your many contributions. Come on in and see what you've helped create!

Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park

By Merrill Leffler

When you're out and about in Old Town this April or around Takoma Junction, or if you're walking near a city park or are with children at a number of the city's playgrounds, look for "poem posters" that weren't there before! *Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park*, a project sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, will have in place more than 30 poems, each one individually designed in a large format, 13 x 19 inches, framed, and mounted on a pole.

What poems? A committee of four — Takoma Park poets Ann Slayton, Rosanne Singer, Matthew Salomon, and the author — chose the poems from more than 80 they initially selected. The aim was to choose work that represents the diversity of American poetic voices and that were readily accessible.

There are poems by poets from several generations, among them, Emily Dickinson ("I'm Nobody/ Are you Nobody too?"), e.e. cummings, William Carlos Williams and Langston Hughes; former poet laureates of Maryland, Lucille Clifton, Reed Whittemore, Linda Pastan and the late Roland Flint; and Chilean poet Pablo Neruda and Peruvian poet César Vallejo (in the original Spanish and English translations); and younger poets Alice Fulton and Rita Dove.

Ann Slayton and secondarily the author head the project. Ann has been in touch with a number of partners to get *Spring for Poetry* from idea to actuality. First, Michele Morgan, a graphic designer and a new Friends board member, did a typographical prototype

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Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park

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that her husband Clair Garman — active in the Friends of Sligo Creek — designed a frame for mounting laminated poems on metal poles to see how they would fare under the weather. With Morgan's poster-poem as an example, Ann asked Andrea Adams at the Maryland School of Art and Design at Montgomery College if her typography students could design each poem. Adams was enthusiastic. It was an opportunity for her students to work on a real-world public project. Meanwhile, Daryl Braithwaite, director of Takoma Park's Public Works Department, and Ann have been

working on how best to "plant" the poems around Takoma Park.

There are other elements as well! The author has spoken with students in Professor Wendy Ripley's English class at Columbia Union College about developing the material for a website that the Friends and the library's website can link to. The website would have each poem, a biographical note and perhaps something more about that poet's work. The city library is of course central here and will have a special cart of books to promote poetry during April, which is also National Poetry Month. For more information about *Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park*, write annslayton@gmail.com.

Join Us!

Read a Favorite Poem at the Takoma Park Maryland Library

Thursday, 7:30-9

April 26, 2007

For the last nine years, the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library has helped organize an evening reading of poems by city residents and friends. Is there a poem that's been meaningful to you over these years — have you recently read or heard one that you especially like?

The poem may be serious or comic or seriously comic, rhymed or not! The only "requirement" is that your choice be a published poem.

Send the title of the poem you'll read to Ellen Robbins at ellenr@takomagov.org by April 20, 2007, so that we can prepare a program brochure — and let us have a line about you for the program as well.

For more information, call the Maryland Takoma Park Library at 301-891-7259 and visit the Friends of the Takoma Park, Maryland Library at www.ftpml.org

Poems by Former Maryland Poet Laureates

The Dogwoods

I remember, in the week
of the dogwoods, why sometimes
we give up everything
for beauty, lose our sense
and our senses, as we do now
for these blossoms, sprinkled
like salt through the dark woods.

And like the story of pheasants
with salt on their tails
to tame them,
look how we are made helpless
by a brief explosion
of petals
one week in April.

— Linda Pastan

good times

my daddy has paid the rent
and the insurance man is gone
and the lights is back on
and my uncle brud has hit
for one dollar straight
and they is good times
good times
good times

my mama has made bread
and grampaw has come
and everybody is drunk
and dancing in the kitchen
and singing in the kitchen
oh these is good times
good times
good times

oh children think about the
good times

— Lucille Clifton

Become a Friend...

To become a member of the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library for one year, please fill out this membership form and send it, along with your payment, to:

FTPML
101 Philadelphia Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Please circle (above) where you prefer to be contacted, and indicate any restrictions on the day or time here: _____

Join e-mail list? Yes No (see below)

The e-mail list is for announcements only, and you can unsubscribe at any time. You will receive approximately 1-2 messages per month.

Please mark the membership category to which you wish to belong.

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$3.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$5.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter | \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Champion | \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor | \$10.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer | \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$500.00 |

Make your payment out to "The Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library, Inc." The Friends are a not-for-profit corporation.

If you're interested in donating time and/or expertise, please let us know:

- Publicity Committee (flyers, printing, mailings, etc.)
- 4th of July (helping with float, marching in parade)
- Book Sales
- Takoma Park Folk Festival
- Takoma Park Street Festival
- Grant Applications (helping to write grant applications for library projects)
- Table Staffing (staffing a table at the Farmers' Market or other event)
- Board of Directors (serving on the Board or chairing a committee)

May we include your name if we exchange our list of members with other Takoma Park community not-for-profit organizations? Yes No

News and Upcoming Events

Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library

Celebrate with the Friends at our annual meeting

It's A Party!

Tuesday, March 27th at 7:30 p.m. in the Library

Cajun music by *Snakesauce*

**Featuring Jim Schmidt on fiddle, Anne McCabe, vocals and guitar
and Don Henninger, fiddle**

Refreshments

Annual Meeting with the Election of new Board members

Member or non-member, all are invited to join us to celebrate the Friends.



101 Philadelphia Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Friends Reading Group

Please Join Us!

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Takoma Park Community Center

July, July

by Tim O'Brien

The year is 2002 when the class of '69 gets back together for a 30-year reunion and learn that the past is still with them and you don't stop changing as you grow older. Amidst the lamenting of their lost youth, vibrancy, ideals, looks and health, they find old friends, common struggles and rekindled passions.