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Among Friends

FRIENDS OF THE LARKSPUR LIBRARY

Friends of the Library Newsletter

April 2019

Dear Friends of the Library,

Have you renewed your membership? We must rely on your financial support to continue our work in providing programs and facilities through services, from story times to community outreach at The Sassafras Cottage, to our Friends of the Library website, video of our library users, we have programming, materials, digital access, and community outreach. Please help us continue these services!

The New Larkspur Library Community Center

www.thecommonsatlarkspur.org

The Commons at Larkspur
Larkspur Library Community Center Foundation
501(c)(3)

The new home of the new Larkspur Library Community center will be at Rose Lane and Magnolia Avenue. The Commons at Larkspur will be a community gathering place, merging the traditional function of knowledge/information seekers with meeting and maker spaces, and by offering digital technology, the new facility will serve a wide range of ages and interests. There will be outdoor landscaped gathering spaces and ample parking.

The Seeding Campaign will pay for the first year's fundraising, administrative and architectural planning costs. It was launched in December 2018. The goal is to raise $512,000. Received as of April 2, 2019: 170 more till donors.

On February 6, the Larkspur City Council approved providing the LCCC Foundation with $100,000 in Measure RR2020 investments. In addition, the Larkspur City

Foundation approved a $65,000 grant to the LCCC for start-up costs. The LCC has received Partnership Resources Group (PRG) as fund-raising advisors. PRG's strengths include experience in library community capital campaigns; Marin County, and private-public partnerships.

Prospective volunteers and donors are invited to access the LCC website www.thecommonsatlarkspur.org. The website is frequently updated, so check there for the latest news.

Save the Date! Saturday, June 1, 2-4 pm

A Friends of the Library Member Appreciation party

Marin Monsoon: Shining Light on The Families
Fred Joseph Martin, a recent film submission from Marin Monsoon, tells the inspirational Californian Peter Pine and Michael Casey leading from their memoirs, California Bound and Henry E. Bohlar: Theprodrayal of Steel

Come for the memoirs, stay for the Strawberry Social! The event will be held upstairs in the City Council chambers. And, as always, come for the Knee Co. Community, Camaraderie, and Cookies.

Close-up: Helyse Hollander

Helyse Hollander has lived in Larkspur for more than 40 years. Her neighborhood, near Redwood High School, "used to be called the Greenbrae Marina. Now it is the Larkspur Marina." Helyse is an avid environmentalist, and a second generation Marin Native.

It is the "small town environment" that has kept Helyse happily in Larkspur for 40 years. "There are no commercial chains, no big box stores." She is involved with the new Neighborhood Response Group (NRG), community emergency prepar- "NRGs are solidified the community, and give you to know your neighbors."

She lived in the city but "when I started having kids" she found it "easier in Larkspur." She has three sons, who now live in San Francisco, Davis, and Israel.

Helyse taught grades K-8 in San Francisco public schools. Post-teaching, she was "looking for volunteer opportunities" and heard that Lagunitas Elem. She offered to volunteer if she could make her own hours and days. "They loved that I had been a teacher and couldn't be happier with any arrangement I made." She did all kinds of things at the library, including leading children's storytime "before this era of professionals."

Then the library asked Helyse if she would become a paid employee of the staff, with the same hours/days arrangement as when she was a volunteer. She remains a part-time employee, 20 hours a week. Helyse: "I'm the lucky one, I'm so grateful that I was first approached her about joining the Friends board as secretary and treasurer, one has done jobs Helyse believed. But when Carrie Burroughs joined the board as treasurer, Helyse happily signed on as secretary.

Her first grandchild was born in San Francisco, and when he retired, an event that "filled up my retirement time." Now there is a coast of four grandchildren, two in San Francisco, two in Davis.

Helyse is an experienced traveler, when we spoke she was just back from a three-and-a-half weeklong trip to Bhutan and India. Her favorite destination: "Definitely Africa, primarily Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda. Her trip to Mauritu Prunia is another great memory along with her most recent trip.

Her Hopes for the new library? "I hope we are able to build it. I'm very excited about it. With the LCC heading up the effort, I see a lot of promise."

Library Personnel Close-up: Rob Gordon

Although Rob Gordon is a San Francisco native (he grew up in the Outer Sagrich), he was living in New York City when he moved back to San Francisco in 1985. "I was an art restorer in New York City, and I came back to San Francisco to work for Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in Lincoln Park, and I'd needed to find a better place to live." He lives now on Fifth Avenue, and if I needed to "a lot, at the angle of 19th Valley."

He started working with Frances in the library at a private school in San Rafael where she was a librarian (yes, that Frances Gordon who is now Larkspur Library's Director from 1989 until her death in 2016). Although he says he mostly "worked with the kids, I helped her with everything else." Although he never thought of as he never suggested he take courses in Library Science in San Francisco City College. He did and started working at the Larkspur Library as a Junior Page in 1986. When there were an opening for a Library Director in Larkspur, Frances encouraged him to apply, she spearheaded the transition to an automated library system.

Rob calls his 20-plus years (and still counting) at the Larkspur Library "the best job I've ever had. Working at the library has helped me to catch up and keep up with 20th and 21st Century technology. I'm not a tech person, I'm a Renaissance man." Rob's three decades spent in Larkspur "has allowed me to see the community and the library develop over a long period of time." Rob's favorite part of his job is "helping people, helping them find what they were very young organize their college applications.

At the library, Rob's role, he says, is "back-up." which includes repair, packing books for delivery to the Tamalpais, checking books in and out, putting books away, answering phone calls, waiting on the next day, and closing. "I am ready to step up for reference librarians Laura Cellman and Tamara Calaiacco. "I know where all the stuff is. I've been here long enough. I'm the guy who can say, 'I know where that is, I know who has it, and what do you need that job?' The city calls it Library Tech Assistant 1. He calls it "an entry-level." Library Director Janice Abel says "Larkspur Library would not be the same without Rob. He is the glue that holds our library together. He is extremely dedicated, he is resourced. He also creates a very good job of training staff."

Rob's #1 travel destination is New York City, where he lived for many years. "It's a real New Yorker. I take the subway rest-bears from the airport." His girlfriend, a retired flight attendant, "lives in New York City, and I can travel anywhere I want to travel for free (easier for her (and) to everyone). Rob's hobbies are writing and photo discovery. "I am not nor for 10 days or so, and she will come to Larkspur for a day or a month "every few weeks." Visiting New York, he prefers the West Side. "It's more bohemian."

Rob sometimes plays the after-sign/inner man of Larry, the Larkspur Library's mascot (Rob says Lark/Larkspur is the only library in Marin with a mascot), on school visits (more about Larry in the next issue). "The kids get so excited, and such is such a fresh play. I feel like a rock star."

In the 1980s, in New York, Rob thought he would become a rock star, playing electric guitar in his band, called King, King, then Dingaling, and finally Propeller. He describes their style as "Blue Fresh meets the New York Dolls." He is still playing, but "not as much as I should." He practices "everything my various years of platform boots from the famous 'Rainbow Cobbler' store in North Beach from the 1970s and 80s. I'm still wearing some of those platform boots! (which point from our New York punk rock days that are still in my possession." I haven't been in a band since 1980, but I'm still playing, I'm still practicing, I'm still playing. I do sing a Beatles song at the Valentine poetry reading every year at Larkspur Library for fun. Musician, artist, and librarian. Rob Gordon is a true Renaissance man.

On January 30, librarian Teresa Capasso and Lanky librarian Rob Gordon read books to students at Hamilton Elementary School to participate in their Readathon.

Book Reviews by the FOL Board

Janice Abel, Library Director

The Dakota Winters by Tom Rachman

An evocative and wholly absorbing novel about the Winters, a family living in New York City's famed Dakota apartment building in the year leading up to John Lennon's assassination. It's the fall of 1979 in New York City, and Dakota Winters is a senior at Columbia. Such is Dakota's life, that even in the midst of her senior thesis, returns to her childhood home in the Dakota. Victor's father, the famous late-night host Buddy Winter, is there to greet him, himself recovering from a breakdown. Before long, Victor is swept up in an affectionate, chaotic family reunion, which includes his sister Ivy, already of New York, to the utopia of the Lake Placid Olympics, to the Hollywood Hills, to the blue waters of the Bermuda Triangle, and brings him into close quarters with the likes of Yoko Ono, Andy Warhol, and Jerry Hall. Rachman's novel is a delicious, fast-paced read that finds himself entwined in his father's professional and personal remainders, the more he questions his own path, and features in the Winter family begin to threaten their close bond. By turns hilarious and poignant, The Dakota Winters is a family saga, a page-turning social novel, and a tale of a critical moment in the history of New York City and the country at large.

Carrie Burroughs, Treasurer

The Art of Flying Well: A Practical Guide to a Good End of Life by Katy Butler

Marin County author Katy Butler has meticulously researched and created a comprehensive guide for the journey toward the end of life. She provides extensive information on choices and pathways to consider, conversations to have, and practical and spiritual guidance throughout the book. Three of the six a guidebook for navigating the healthcare system as a loved one faces serious illness and aging. You will also learn how to prepare the proper documents, for end of life planning and have informed conversations with your healthcare team for life-sustaining care. Butler's book is a gift to readers, offering insights and know-it advance ways to be you or your loved ones over best advocates.

Dyan Pike, Vice President

The Library Book, by Susan Orlean

The Library Book initially focuses on the devastating 1986 fire at the LA Central Library and its suspected arsonist, Harry Peak. In the early chapters, Orlean heightens suspense by interweaving the story of Peak's life with the development of the library's history. The arson account of Peak's disturb, ever-changing tale is the perpetrator, on the day of the fire. One positive outcome of the tragedy was how the anger LA community rallied by gathering to marry of the damaged materials as possible for future restoration (who knew freezing water-logged books preservation?), as well as raising millions of dollars to replace books and to rebuild the iconic structure.

Orlean's scope broadens to include the essential and varied purposes and people served by libraries worldwide. Similarly, the services provided by libraries are astounding. From sending machines stocked with books in Beijing to a train filled with books for homeless children in Brazil to a donkey-powered Bibliotecas in Colombia to a camel delivering books to nomadic villages in Kenya, and even book boats in Norway, Finland, Sweden, Canada, and Venezuela.

Orlean suggests that with the increasing rise of library e-books such as those provided by Larkspur Library, libraries will not be "obsolete" as some have feared. "Books, of course, today's library will evolve from a storehouse of information to develop into a community center. "Perhaps in the future, libraries will become something more the our town squares, a place that is home when you aren't at home."

If you love libraries, this is must read.

Alice Kaufman, *Among Friends* Editor

Nobody's Looking at You: Essays by Janet Malcolm

The stars of this collection are the profiles Malcolm wrote for The New Yorker. Malcolm's subjects include Sylvia Plath's psychiatrist, supervisor Yugo Nyregi (thank her on the cover), and NYRMC host Rachel Maddow (she's a fan). Malcolm is a marvelous writer, and a keen observer of people, and she is a fearless, and, at times, quite corporate-speak. "I feel like what she was talking about." Also included: a charming essay on charming books by Alexander McCall Smith from the New York Times Book Review and essays on not-so-charming books about Ted Hughes and Norman Podhoretz from the New York Review of Books.

Jim Scheller, Emeritus President

Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Published in 1955 and still in print, this is a fine book that Lindbergh wrote while she and her husband were living on a small island off the Florida. Picking up seashells on the beach, she writes about the time, aging, peace, and solitude, using the shells as examples. I first read it in the early 1970s, when I was a teenager. It's the same today as it was then. The book is considered a "spiritual classic." I think anyone can read it and get something out of it.

Helyse Hollander, Secretary

The Midnight Rose by Lucinda Riley

The story takes place from 1911 to the present day, alternating from Lucinda's heroine and her descendants, who are the heroes of later generations. It contrasts the lives of two young girls, close friends and both from noble backgrounds, but different economic situations. Dark secrets are discovered within this novel of romance and recovery.

Library-Related News

From the New York Review of Books, a library film review by Sue Halpern in the April 18 issue:

- **Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life**
  by Eric Klinenberg
  Crown, 277 pp., $28.00
- **The Library: A Fragile History**
  by Susan Orlean
  Simon and Schuster, 319 pp., $28.00
- **The Book**
  a film directed by Frederick Wiseman

How does the New York Public Library choose its books?
https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/25/magazine/nyc-library-books.html

How does the Larkspur Library choose its books?

Choosing Books for a Community: Selection of Materials at Larkspur Library Larkspur, by Librarian Laura Cellman

Larkspur Library selects about 600 books, DVDs and CDs each month. Some are requested by patrons, some chosen based upon a number of different criteria, first among them being what our community wants. This is a small, but very diverse community. Patrons have requested, but we select items based upon what we believe will best serve the community at large. Upcoming titles are advertised by purchase alert in advance of

their release, allowing patrons to place holds and be the first to borrow upcoming titles. Titles and series by authors that have been popular in the past are generally purchased and added, the list of popular authors is reviewed annually to make sure that they are still popular, and to add newly popular authors or book series. The most popular genres are: mysteries, romance, thrillers, biographies, memoirs, cookbooks, coloring, travel, health, self-improvement and gardening/home care. The librarians continuously read reviews for all materials from a variety of sources, from Entertainment Weekly to the New York Times, Kirkus, Publishers Weekly, Booklist, Amazon, and patron reviews. Our patrons are also a great source of recommendations for purchases, walking them in daily or submitting requests through the library catalog. Trends in popular culture drive surges in interest areas such as new political figures, economic downturns, new diets, Minecraft, movies inspired by books, spiralizing, or meal-prepping, and purchases are made in response to patron requests. We also purchase items based on current events, such as books by local authors, subjects of regional interest (Bay Area hiking guides, restaurants) and local history.

The quarter-side of selection includes the regular analysis of the collection for areas which need development, or reduction. For example, as our Hispanic population in Larkspur has increased, we have an interest in more Spanish-language materials, including items in the children's collection in Spanish and bilingual materials, and a newly purchased Spanish-language DVD collection. We also have a small collection of Spanish-language DVDs, and the percentage of purchasing is done in new stock fiction and nonfiction, and children's materials, followed by audio and visual materials. Priorities are adjusted throughout the year, based on patron requests, and trends. We also have a small collection of Spanish-language fiction. Our patrons are also a great source of recommendations for purchases, asking them in daily or submitting requests through the library catalog. Trends in popular culture drive surges in interest areas such as new political figures, economic downturns, new diets, Minecraft, movies inspired by books, spiralizing, or meal-prepping, and purchases are made in response to patron requests. We also purchase items based on current events, such as books by local authors, subjects of regional interest (Bay Area hiking guides, restaurants) and local history.

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Hit Parade

Marin's Top Ten Most Requested Books and DVDs as of March 31

#	Cover	Title	Author	# Holds	# Items
1		Where the Crawdads Sing	Owens, Delia	393	107
2		Educated: a Memoir	Westover, Tara	362	124
3		Becoming	Obama, Michelle	360	140
4		Green Book (DVD)		327	41
5		The Favourite (DVD)		276	34
6		A Star Is Born (DVD)		259	47
7		Vice (DVD)		247	0
8		Bohemian Rhapsody (DVD)		230	41
9		The Wife (DVD)		217	39
10		Can You Ever Forgive Me? (DVD)		216	33

The Friends of the Larkspur Library Board of Directors

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The Friends are a dedicated group of members who raise money for library programs, plant events, and work as ambassadors to the community for the Larkspur Library. To learn more about joining, click here.

Mission Statement

The Friends of the Larkspur Library is committed to supporting the library's mission by providing funds for library materials. We strive to instill the love of reading and the excitement of learning in library patrons of all ages.

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