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love your library
FRIENDS OF THE LARKSPUR LIBRARY

Among Friends

April 2023

At The Top

Nick Stone, acting/interim Larkspur Library director, told the Friends of the Library board that recruitment for a permanent director will begin April 19, and a second round of interviews scheduled for late April and May will involve the community. After a new head librarian is hired, Nick will return full-time to Parks & Rec.

More news: Ann Solner has come to Larkspur from the Mill Valley library as a full-time librarian. Ann has already started a Friendship Club that meets on Saturdays. Teresa will re-start the Book Club at The Tamalpais. Jessica Reosch plans to start a Romantic Novel Book Club. The summer reading program for children and adults will continue this year.

The Commons at Larkspur
Larkspur Library Community Center Foundation
www.thecommonsatlarkspur.org

Updates from Ann Morrison, President The Commons Foundation

- **Larkspur City Hall – Move or no Move**: The City Council voted 3-2 on Wednesday March 1st to seek contractors (for just) a library on the vacant lot at Rose Lane and Doherty Drive. So, like it or not, Larkspur will not include city offices in its plan to construct a new library. Separately, the city will seek experts to begin planning the rehabilitation of the 109-year-old City Hall at 400 Magnolia Ave., where the city offices and council chambers will remain. The RFQ for the library will go out at the end of March.

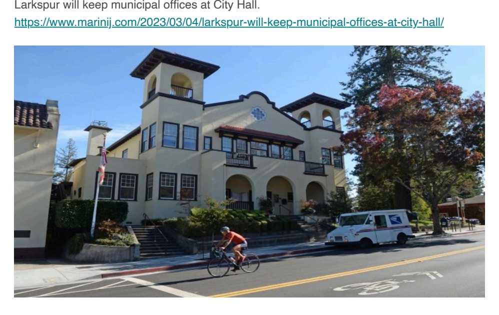
- **Toward a New Library — Next Steps: Design** The process to choose a development team for the new library will include public presentations to the City Council by those firms/groups that are selected as finalists through earlier, technical phases. These presentations will take place on Saturday, July 15, 2023. The selection and award of the project will occur at a later date so that everyone has time to reflect on what is presented. Please mark the date and plan on attending if your schedule allows.

- **Bon Air Center Community Spring Fair:**
- **Saturday May 20, 11 am - 2 pm**

Come visit the TCF and other Larkspur library groups, at this free, family-friendly community event to highlight our shared heritage and history.

Media File: Local News

Larkspur will keep municipal offices at City Hall.
https://www.marinij.com/2023/03/04/larkspur-will-keep-municipal-offices-at-city-hall/



A quote from the story expressing the majority opinion:

"This isn't '400 Magnolia,'" said Joan Lubamersky, a former council member. "This is City Hall." Lubamersky said the community came together to raise money for the library, "and I think the community can do it for City Hall."

From Friends of the Library President Barbara Friday

Dear Friends and Library Lovers,

Despite or because of our plentiful rains, I'm very hopeful of a lovely spring right around the corner. I've been keeping my spirits high with spectacular books from the library. I hope that you too have been taking joy from our local treasure. May you and your loved ones enjoy a safe and joyous spring holiday season.

The reason for my note is to encourage you to renew your annual membership in the Friends of the Larkspur Library. For some reason, our renewal rate seems lower this year with library lovers slower to renew their membership. Although Love Your Library membership flyers were mailed to homes in February, you can always support your library with a contribution mailed to 400 Magnolia Avenue or at the Friends of the Larkspur Library website at https://www.friendsoflarkspurlibrary.org/donate. And to those who have promptly renewed their 2023 membership, thank you so much for your support.

The focus of our spring activities has been planning the second Touch Trucks - a fun family event and fundraiser for the new Larkspur Library. You'll read more shortly about this wonderful event but do consider sponsoring a family by buying tickets on-line at: Touch Trucks to Benefit the new Larkspur Library. I hope that you can join us on Sunday, May 7. Who doesn't love big trucks?

We are also preparing for the Summer Reading Program which begins in early June. We encourage both adults and children to participate in this enriching program sponsored by the Friends of the Larkspur Library.

Thank you most sincerely for your membership. Sending my heartfelt best wishes,

Barbara Friday
President

Touch Trucks II

Friends of the Larkspur Library is bringing back the popular Touch Trucks event, so mark your calendars and get ready for another day of family fun! Free parking at the east parking Lot, Redwood High. Tickets $5 each, including kids in strollers. On sale now at **Eventbrite** and at the door. New this year: a dump truck, a moving van, a taco truck, and better coffee.

Meet Friend of the Library Board Member Susan Bryson

Susan Bryson, the newest member of the board of the Friends of the Larkspur Library, was born in Montpelier, Vermont, and lived in Cincinnati most of her young adult life. She moved to Chicago to work in risk management, where she met her late husband, Richard. He worked for Citibank, she for the Bank of America. But Richard was asked to relocate to a Citibank office in San Francisco, and the couple moved to Palm Hill in Larkspur in November 1983. Susan has lived in the same house for 40 years.

"Larkspur was very different then," she remembers. "Not as upscale, a sweet, somewhat funky town." But then, and now, I can walk out my front door and be hiking on Mt. Tam in 15 minutes. And I love hiking on Mt. Tam."

Susan was approached by FOL board member (and long-time treasurer) Carrie Burroughs, "who asked if I was interested. I've always loved libraries — one of the few places that are free and safe, and everybody is welcome. And who wouldn't support that?"

Her favorite library when she was growing up in Cincinnati was the Wyoming Library. She smiles when she remembers the cubbies in the children's room. "I liked nothing more than curling up in one and reading for hours. And my mother would leave us there for hours. I have fond memories of bringing my children to the Larkspur Library for Storytime."

Her three children, now grown, live nearby: Anna, who works in finance (like Mother, like daughter?) lives in San Francisco, as does Will, who works in construction management, and Lauren, a nutritionist in Petaluma. She served on the Redwood High School Foundation board while her children were at Redwood. Susan's hobbies include painting in acrylics and playing golf "both during Covid and since."

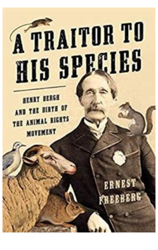
And with a love of libraries comes a love of books. My favorite recent book was *Bad Blood*, the Elizabeth Holmes story. "It was like real fiction — I couldn't put it down." Another recent favorite: *Rivers of the Gods*, about expeditions searching for the source of the Nile. "It's like reading fiction, I can read two or three at once." Another non-fiction fave - *Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Family.*

Of course, she reads fiction too. James Michener's The Source is a long-time favorite. Where does she find out about books? "NPR! I love *Fresh Air*, especially Maureen Corrigan's book recommendations.

Susan hopes the new library building will bring a larger audience and added appeal to more of the community. "It's in a great location — an easy walk from two schools." All Larkspur Library fans agree.

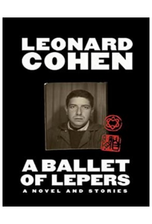
Friends' Book Recommendations

Jim
***A Traitor to His Species: Henry Bergh and the Birth of the Animal Rights Movement* by Ernest Freeberg**



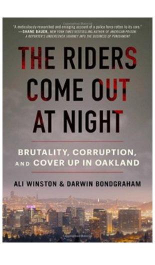
In this highly readable book, Freeberg describes several features of what life was like in the latter half of the nineteenth century. There is history, biography, society "norms," and government. Our country's first energy crisis came in 1872 when "horse flu" sickened thousands of horses and brought the economy to a halt. A cautionary note: some of the descriptions of animal cruelty are quite vivid.

***A Ballet of Lepers: A Novel and Stories* by Leonard Cohen**



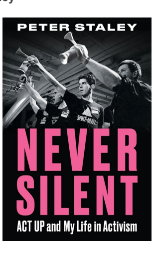
For those readers who are Cohen fans, you might want to read this book, which was published last year. The previously unpublished short novel was written by Cohen in 1957 when he was 21 years old and still living in Montreal. I liked his writing, which is sharp and concise. Initially, I liked his characters, but that changed as I read further along. The plot is what stopped me cold. I don't understand how a 21-year-old man who had a rather good childhood could come up with such a plot. That's for you readers to decide.

Carrie
***The Riders Come Out at Night, Brutality, Corruption and Cover-Up in Oakland* by Ali Winston & Darwin Bondgraham**



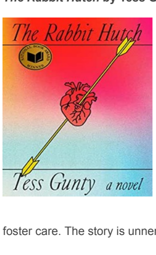
This well researched (ten-year project) of two skilled investigative reporters about the Oakland Police Department is extremely engaging and fast paced. Although distressing to read, it provides historical detail on police corruption and why it is currently so challenging to create meaningful change in any police department nationwide.

***Never Silent ACT UP and My Life in Activism* by Peter Staley**



Peter Staley's memoir captures the life of a young man in NYC as he finds his identity both as a bond trader and a closeted gay man. He describes the early days and horrors of the AIDS crisis and his own diagnosis of HIV. He became a leader of a powerful group of rights activists (ACT UP) and used his creative mind to plan unique grassroots protests on Wall Street and other venues. It is inspiring to read about someone who acted on his beliefs and changed government policies.

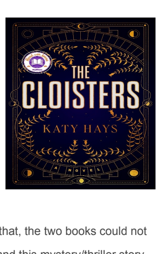
Susan
***The Rabbit Hutch* by Tess Gunty**



This debut novel is set in the Midwest where both the small town and apartment building the characters live in are in a state of decay. The writing is rich in rhymes and imagery although there are moments when the wordiness of Gunty's sentences can feel like she's taken them too far.

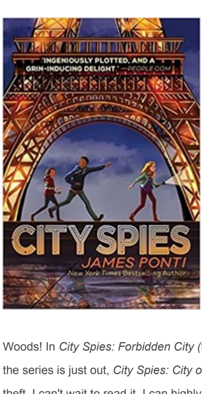
The novel takes place during one week in the summer and follows Blandine, an 18-year-old girl who has aged out of foster care. The story is unnerving, messy, and compelling all at the same time.

Diana
***The Cloisters* by Katy Hayes**



I picked up *The Cloisters* because I really enjoyed *The Personal Librarian* by Marion Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray about a black woman passing as a white librarian at the JP Morgan Library, part of the rarified world of historic art collections in the early 1900s. I wanted to read another behind-the-scenes NYC museum story. *The Cloisters* focuses on Ann, a young woman hired as an intern at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and assigned to *The Cloisters*, a gothic museum and garden that focuses on medieval and Renaissance art. After that, the two books could not have been more different. Ann's specialty area is divination, and this mystery/thriller story, set in modern times, is filled with intrigue, steamy summer heat, theft, deception, tarot card readings, and ultimately murder. While I prefer less edge-of-my-seat tension in my books, *The Cloisters* delivered a fascinating read.

***City Spies* by James Ponti**



The older kids at the elementary school library where I work love the *City Spy* series by James Ponti, and I wanted to check them out myself. Operating out of a castle in Scotland, the City Spies are five orphaned kids with unique talents. When they're not at the local boarding school, they're mentored by Britain's M16, and learn spy skills like sleight of hand, breaking and entering, hacking, covert observation, and explosives. They go all over the world, engaged in espionage in places where adults cannot go. *City Spies (#1)* takes place in Paris. In *City Spies: Golden Gate (#2)*, the kids travel to Sydney, San Francisco and even Muir Woods! In *City Spies: Forbidden City (#3)* features Moscow and Beijing. The latest book in the series is just out, *City Spies: City of the Dead (#4)* and focuses on an Egyptian treasure theft. I can't wait to read it. I can highly recommend these books for 9–12-year-olds to read on their own or 6-8 years old as an exciting read-aloud by an adult eager to help them learn to love books.

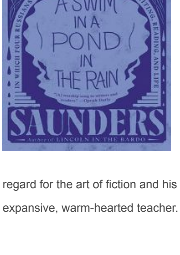
Dyan
***Small Things Like These*, Claire Keegan**

Set in a small village in Ireland, this is a small, exquisite story about Bill Furlong who, after his own young unwed mother died and he was orphaned, was looked after by a kind, wealthy widow and her stable hand.

As the current father of five young girls, he witnesses the mistreatment of orphans in a Catholic home. Realizing he must do something; Bill commits a small but significant act of kindness that reverberates throughout the village.

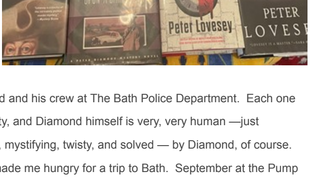
A worthwhile read.

Dulcy
***A Swim in the Pond in the Rain* by George Saunders**



Reading *A Swim in a Pond in the Rain* will certainly make you a better reader and perhaps a better person. George Saunders, author (*Lincoln in the Bardo*, *The Tenth of December*) and esteemed writing teacher (Syracuse University) guides readers through seven short stories by Russian writers (Turgenev, Gogol, Chekhov, and Tolstoy). His analysis of the stories which are included is deep and particular, but his focus is mainly on our responses as readers. Subtitled *In which Four Russians Give a Master Class on Writing, Reading, and Life*, the book displays Saunders' deep regard for the art of fiction and his talents, honed by decades in the classroom, as an expansive, warm-hearted teacher. It is itself a master class in clear, unpretentious prose.

Alice
***Any/Every Peter Diamond Investigation* by Peter Lovesey**



Peter Lovesey isn't new to the mystery/police procedural — he's published more than 30 books, not limited to Peter Diamond, but to me, Diamond is the star of the show. Admittedly, I've just read one stand-alone, but I craved the company of Diamond and his crew at The Bath Police Department. Each one of them has a distinct personality, and Diamond himself is very, very human —just smarter. The plots are intricate, mystifying, twisty, and solved — by Diamond, of course. And reading these books has made me hungry for a trip to Bath. September at the Pump Room?

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Mission Statement

The Friends are a dedicated group of members who raise money for library programs, plan events, and work as ambassadors to the community for the Larkspur Library.

The Friends of the Larkspur Library are committed to supporting the library's programs, cultural events, books, and materials. We strive to instill the love of reading and the excitement of learning in library patrons of all ages.

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