

Island Booknotes 2023-24

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 1

CELEBRATING OUR STORIES



Published by the Johann Fust Library Foundation

Featured Inside

*Louise Amory – Kathy Auman – Simona Balzer – Dave Barry – Tom Brokaw – Monte Burke
Robert Caro – Patricia Christakos – James B. Cowperthwait – Linda Fairstein – Dod Fraser
Susan Goodman – Alice Gorman – Robert Gottlieb – Aaron Hamburger – Davis Hammond
Susan Hanafree – Samuel S. Hobbs – Sam Holt – Candice Shy Hooper – Chrissy Kolaya – Lee Major
Lindsay Major – Bobbie Marquis – Cleyvis Natera – Cappy Powell – Sally Bedell Smith
David Sparks – George Stevens, Jr. – Lucinda Dixon Sullivan – John Thomas – Toni Vanover
David Von Drehle – Daly Walker – Nancy White – Emerson Wickwire – Janet Williams*

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NEW BOOKS BY ISLAND AUTHORS PAGE 3

Dear Reader,

Welcome to *Island Booknotes 2023-2024*, the fourth edition of the Johann Fust Library Foundation's publication. Within these pages, you will find information about our Literary Series Events. We are excited about the talented authors who will speak to us this season. You will also find poetry, essays and book reviews by local writers.

Boca Grande is a rare community – a love of books, whether as readers or writers distinguishes our members. This issue is dedicated to our stories. Each of us has a story to tell, and we are grateful to the contributors within these pages for sharing their writing with us.

Cappy Powell



Cappy Powell reading to her granddaughter Virginia Louise Powell

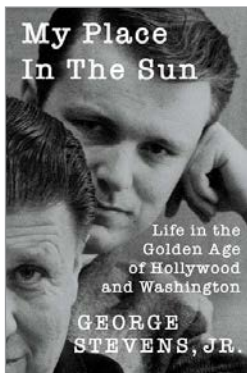
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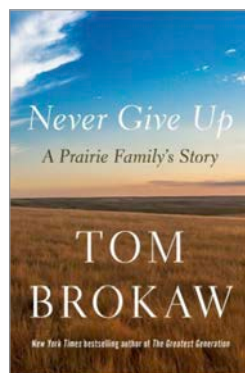
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The cover features the library boat *Papyrus* circa 1950.
The vintage photo from the Johann Fust Library Foundation archives has been stylized.
For more about *Papyrus*, turn to page 20.

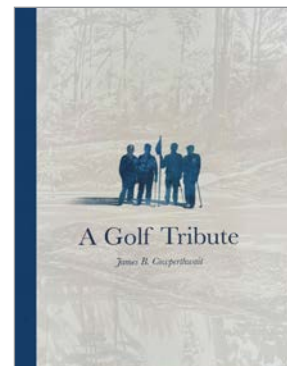
NEW BOOKS BY LOCAL AUTHORS



My Place In The Sun
by George Stevens, Jr.
Published by University
Press of Kentucky
May 2022



Never Give Up
by Tom Brokaw
Published by
Random House
June 2023



A Golf Tribute
by James B. Cowperthwait
Designed & Published by
Alexander J. Pérez
2021



Help is on the Way
by Kathy Auman
Published by
Dorrance Publishing
April 2023

Johann Fust Libray Foundation

2023-2024 Season of Events

NOVEMBER

Thursday, Nov. 9, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

Award Winning Journalist & Author David Von Drehle - *The Book of Charlie: Wisdom from the Remarkable American Life of a 109-Year-Old Man*

DECEMBER

Thursday, Dec. 14, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

Hermitage Fellow & Author Cleyvis Natera – *Neruda on the Park*
In Collaboration with The Hermitage Artist Retreat

JANUARY

Thursday, Jan. 25, 4 pm
Community Center Auditorium

Screening of the Documentary - *Turn Every Page – The Adventures of Robert Caro and Robert Gottlieb*

Friday, Jan. 26, 2 pm
Library Loggia

Discussion of the Documentary - *Turn Every Page – The Adventures of Robert Caro and Robert Gottlieb*

FEBRUARY

Thursday, Feb. 8, 4:30 pm
Community Center Auditorium

JF Library Foundation Annual Benefit
Bestselling Author Dave Barry – *Swamp Story*

Thursday, Feb. 29, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

Literature in the Courtyard
New York Times Bestselling Author Sally Bedell Smith
The Marriage That Saved the Monarchy: George VI and Elizabeth

MARCH

Thursday, Mar. 14, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

The Art & Science of Literary Research - A Roundtable Discussion
for Readers & Writers with Linda Fairstein, Susan Hanafée,
Candice Shy Hooper and Bobbie Marquis

Tuesday, Mar. 26, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

Author Monte Burke – *Lords of the Fly: Madness, Obsession and the Hunt for the World-Record Tarpon*

APRIL

Friday, Apr. 5 - Sunday, Apr. 7
Library Foundation Offices

Short-Form Fiction & Nonfiction: A Hands-On Seminar
with UCF Creative Writing Professor Chrissy Kolaya

Thursday, Apr. 18, 4 pm
Library Loggia & Courtyard

Author Aaron Hamburger - *Hotel Cuba*

Friday, Apr. 19, 10 am
Library Foundation Offices

Telling Your Story: Fiction & Nonfiction Personal Narratives
with Professor and Author Aaron Hamburger

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS.

PLEASE DON'T READ THESE BOOKS

BY CANDICE SHY HOOPER



Candice Shy Hooper's second book, *"Delivered Under Fire,"* was released in March 2023, and she narrated the audio version of it this past summer.

Candy and her husband Lindsay, who live in Boca Grande in the winter, often listen to audiobooks on long drives. One of the most informative, humorous, and memorable was Bill Bryson's *"A Short History of Nearly Everything,"* in which he was describing in great detail the apocalyptic possibilities of volcanic activity in Yellowstone just as they were arriving in Jackson Hole in 2005. Fortunately, since they spend each summer in Lindsay's home state of Wyoming, it hasn't happened – yet.

No, I'm not advocating banning any books – I would never do that.

But there are two recently published books that I am begging you not to read:

1. *The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece* is Tom Hanks's first novel, and it's truly novel. Your favorite movie star takes you inside the real world of Hollywood in a way no one has ever done before in a story that spans nearly eighty years, from WWII to the present.

Don't read it.

2. Jesse Q. Sutanto's newest offering, *Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers*, debuted to rave reviews and has been optioned for television.

Don't read it.

Please don't read them.

Please, please, please - listen to them instead!

I'm old-fashioned when it comes to books – I much prefer the hardback versions. But I admit that I've read many books on my Kindle, and I've listened to a lot of them, too. Back in the day that meant cassette tapes; now I can listen on my iPhone. And I've listened to some books and later read them, too, and from that experience, I know that some books are better when you hear them than when you read them.

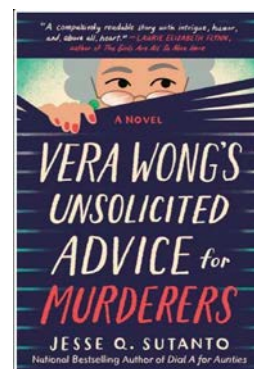
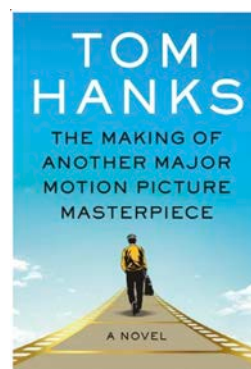
Tom Hanks's book has been praised for its ingenuity and criticized for its

complexity, but that is exactly why it works so well as an audio book. Hanks has assembled a talented cast (including his wife Rita Wilson), and the actors bring the imaginative story alive with their voices and vivid sound effects. To listen to this book is to be taken back to the golden days of radio.

I downloaded Vera Wong's *Unsolicited Advice for Murderers* because of my love of murder mysteries; I hadn't heard of Jesse Q. Sutanto before I saw the book on the audible.com website. Now, I can't wait to listen to her other books. Not only is the plot a delicious brainteaser, but the characters are an engaging mix of funny, poignant, and compassionate. And the narrator, Eunice Wong, is absolutely fabulous – especially when she voices the main character Vera Wong.

SO, please listen to these books!

Find these and more at the Johann Fust Community Library or its online catalog, Libby. You will love them!



RISE TO GREATNESS: ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND AMERICA'S MOST PERILOUS YEAR

BY DAVID VON DREHLE

VINTAGE BOOKS 2003

There have been some 15,000 books written about Abraham Lincoln, and when David Von Drehle, columnist and editor for the Washington Post, began the research for his New York Times bestselling book, "Rise to Greatness," he noted that it was like "falling into the sea." He chose to focus on the newly elected President, month by month, during one tumultuous and extremely significant year. Lincoln is shown not as a god but as a man with human failings who rose to greatness just when greatness was needed most.

The story begins on a beautiful spring-like New Year's Day, 1862, in Washington, D.C. The most festive day of the year, when the doors to the White House were thrown open to all, was to be followed by one of the most terrible and eventful years in American history. On that glorious day, the country was split in two. The Treasury was broke, but spending was growing exponentially, and the North was rife with conspiracies involving further secessions and military coups. England and France, rarely acting in concert but desperate for the blockaded southern cotton needed to feed the machinery of the industrial age, were seriously considering entering the war on behalf of the Confederacy. The people yearned for a strong leader who would bring the country together. Instead, the Union was led by an unschooled country lawyer and a party that had never governed. Lincoln lacked the confidence and respect of many in his cabinet of rivals, his top generals, and most of the public. The odds for success were bleak.

Thus begins the year that led to Lincoln gradually and sometimes painfully becoming an effective commander-in-chief and our greatest president in spite of the crushing personal tragedies of losing his favorite son Willie, and then watching his wife's implacable grief progress to bizarre and troublesome behavior. Lincoln, no stranger to bouts of depression himself, managed to teach himself the art of war and finesse a fractious and occasionally hostile cabinet and an impatient Republican Caucus. He also had to deftly walk a political tightrope between the moderates and border state southern sympathizers who thought him too radical and the abolitionists who thought him feckless and insufficiently committed.

Using heavily researched letters, journals and newspapers as well as myriad secondary sources, the author turned a well-known story into a gripping and compelling narrative. An example is the description of "Little Napoleon" or "Little Mac," George McClellan, whose letters to his wife and others express his utter contempt for Lincoln ("the Gorilla"),

his corps commanders ("stupid and worthless") and various members of Lincoln's cabinet. He wrote his wife that if he were to win some small success, he could become dictator. He considered his military plans "none of the (President's) business." McClellan appears to be an almost amusing blend of Walter Mitty and Ignatius. During the year, Lincoln made many futile attempts to get his military leader to stop his ceaseless training of the best-trained peacetime army ever to serve during the middle of a war, and just start fighting.

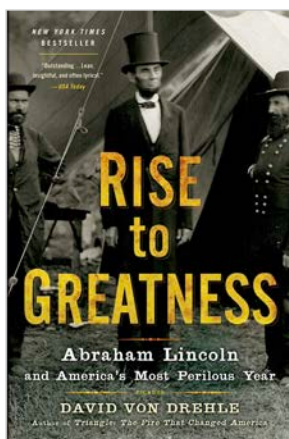
The reader can feel the tension build and actually experience the desire for McClellan's replacement even though we all know it's coming. After the Confederate General J. E. B. Stuart and his contingent of 1200 soldiers took their second unmolested trip around Little Mac's army of 100,000, resulting in the looting of a critical Union supply depot, Lincoln commented "three times around and out is the rule," referring to an early version of baseball.

In the meantime, the well-led Confederate Army was winning increasingly bloody battles and even threatening Washington itself. The Union's few successes were led by then-minor characters such as Grant, Sheridan, and Sherman, who, of course, became the decisive military leaders of the coming years.

Lincoln wrestled with the question of slavery and the development of the Emancipation Proclamation during the year, fending off continuous pressure from all sides and going down several blind alleys before writing out the final version and signing the document on January 1, 1863, after a sleepless night. The end of 1862 was not the beginning of the end of the war as the author points out, but the end of the beginning. Much had been accomplished; much more was to be done.

As to the pleasure of reading this book, David Von Drehle is an excellent writer. Who but a very skilled and entertaining writer could turn out a book about his elderly neighbor in Flyover, Kansas, and land it on the New York Times Bestseller List?

David Von Drehle will be featured in the Library Foundation's Literary Series on November 9, 2023. See page 7.



In the past 29 years, Lee Major, a former attorney and businessman, along with his wife, Lindsay, have been winter residents of Boca Grande. When not in Boca Grande, they reside in Kansas City where Lee is an occasional book reviewer for the Kansas City Star.

DAVID VON DREHLE
AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST & BESTSELLING AUTHOR

David Von Drehle (DRAY-lee) is a versatile writer with great depth and range. He is an editor for *The Washington Post* where he also writes occasional columns on a wide range of topics.

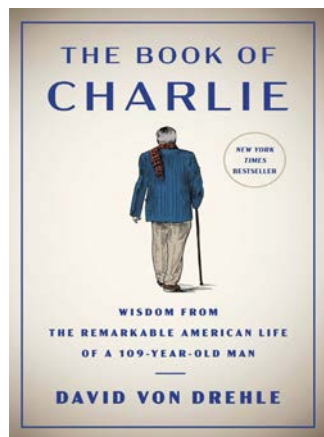
In his newest book, *The Book of Charlie*: Von Drehle tells the life story of his 109-year-old neighbor, exploring how he coped with the century of change during his lifetime. Against a historical backdrop, Von Drehle draws on the teachings of ancient and modern philosophers as he explores Charlie's remarkable resilience.

Von Drehle is the author of several award-winning books, most recently *Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year* (see Lee Major's review



on page 6). His book *Triangle: The Fire That Changed America* is "social history at its best," according to the *New York Times*, and *Among the Lowest of the Dead* is "perhaps the finest book ever written about capital punishment," in the words of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Author and commentator George Will has said, "No one writes as well on as many subjects as David Von Drehle." A winner of Harvard University's Nyhan Prize for Political Journalism, Von Drehle has also served *The Post* as New York City Bureau Chief, national politics writer, and Assistant Managing Editor.



Between 2006 and 2017, he was Editor-at-large for *TIME* magazine, where he wrote some 60 cover stories on topics from the death of Osama bin Laden to the rise of Donald Trump, from Michael Jackson to killer tornadoes. Von Drehle's essay on forgiveness after the church massacre in Charleston—the

longest single work ever published by *TIME*—was honored as the best magazine feature of 2015 by the Deadline Club of New York.

A native of Aurora, Colorado, David was educated at the University of Denver as a Boettcher Scholar and at Oxford University as a Marshall Scholar. He lives in Kansas City, where he serves on the Executive Committee of the Truman Library Institute. He has four children with his wife, journalist Karen Ball.

We are honored to welcome David Von Drehle to kick off our Literary Series this season. His talk will be followed by a Q&A and book signing.

DAVID VON DREHLE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2023 AT 4 PM
JOHANN FUST LIBRARY LOGGIA & COURTYARD

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

EXODUS

BY SIMONA BALZER

Don't we all see the landscape of war,
each day on our screens,
the horror that spreads like fire in the wild?
Not a tree or a plant
or anything green,
no color is left
in the ravaged cities.

Not a stray dog, not a beggar,
not a rag or a shoe
or any reminder of human existence.
Dust, crumbling ruins,
staring at us like corpses,
with empty eye sockets
in their skeletal heads.

Don't we hear the cry
of desperate masses,
forced out of their lands?
Once proud of their history,
now derelict victims,
escaping the slaughter,
with nowhere to go.

In prosperous countries,
just across the sea
visions of hate and doom
are playing each other
on a public stage.
Instead of hope and good will,
indifference, fear.
All the while on those beaches,
bodies of men, women, and children
wash ashore every day.

Spring 2011



Simona (Simonetta) Balzer is one of the Live Poets of Boca Grande. She was born in Rome, Italy, and received her degree in Classics and Archeology at the University of Rome. She joined the Live Poets' Society of Boca Grande 13 years ago. She and her husband Giorgio divide their time between Boca Grande and New Jersey.

"THE PEOPLE AND PLACES THAT MAKE US"
FEATURING HERMITAGE FELLOW CLEYVIS NATERA
Presented in Partnership with
THE HERMITAGE ARTIST RETREAT



In our third collaboration with The Hermitage, we are excited to present a literary talent whose first novel is receiving rave reviews. Cleyvis Natera is an essayist, short fiction writer, critic, and novelist. Her debut novel, *Neruda on the Park*, speaks to the weighty issues of immigration, gentrification, and race. As serious as these themes are, the book is also entertaining and, at times, funny. It is a passionate romance and a story about the love of family and community.

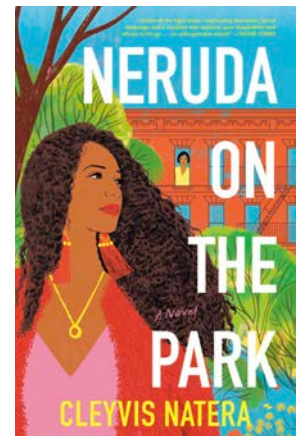
Neruda on the Park was an anticipated book of 2022 by *TIME*, The Today Show, Good Morning America's Zibby Owens, *ELLE*, *Ms Magazine*, *Bustle*, *Goodreads*, *Book Riot*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *The Millions*, *Electric Literature*, *Lit Hub* and *The Rumpus*.

Upon publication, *Neruda on the Park* was selected as a May 2022 New York Times Editor's Choice and the June 2022 pick for Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai's Fearless Literati Book Club.

Cleyvis was born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New York City. She's received honors from PEN America, Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Hermitage Artist Retreat, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and Voices of Our Nation Arts Foundation (VONA).

Her fiction, essays and criticism have appeared in *The New York Times Book Review*, *URSA Fiction*, *Alien Nation: 36 True Tales of Immigration*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *TIME*, *The Rumpus*, *Gagosian Quarterly*, *The Washington Post*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Aster(ix)* and *Kweli Journal*, among other publications.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Skidmore College and a Master of Fine Arts from New York University. Cleyvis worked a corporate job in insurance for two decades, ascending to the executive level before pivoting her career to become a full-time writer. She lives with her husband and two young children in Montclair, New Jersey.



"This novel speaks to so many of our current challenges with moral imagination, grace, and wickedly good, page-turning storytelling."

Julia Alvarez, author of *Afterlife* and *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*

A LITERARY SERIES EVENT | JOHANN FUST LIBRARY
THURSDAY, DEC 14, 2023 - 4PM | COURTYARD AND LOGGIA

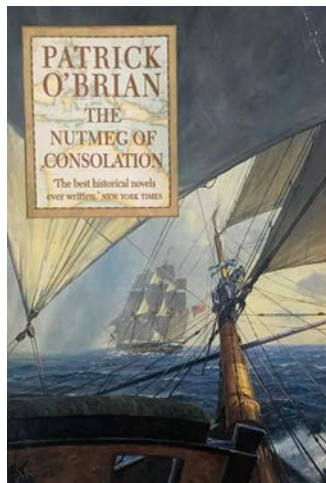
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REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

THE AUBREY-MATURIN NOVELS
BY PATRICK O'BRIAN

D. H. Lawrence called *Moby Dick* “the greatest book of the sea ever written”—it may be so, but one might well argue Joseph Conrad’s novels have an equally valid claim, and I want to propose still another claimant to this honor: Patrick O’Brian’s Aubrey-Maturin novels. There are twenty (plus three chapters of a twenty-first) of these, and they are filled with gorgeous descriptions of the sea in all its varieties as settings for great naval battles and maritime explorations of the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Indian, and the Pacific oceans.

Two vast themes animate the great saga unfolding throughout these lovely pages—a political and historical one, England’s struggle against Napoleonic France, and a social and psychological one, the friendship of Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin. The historic achievements of the British Navy are incarnate in the person and career of Aubrey, and his exuberant life is vividly served up as he grows from a young man to an admiral.

The rich story of the era’s splendid advances in all the natural sciences is adumbrated in the equally vivid life of his particular friend Stephen Maturin, ship’s surgeon, intelligence officer, and naturalist. These two stupendous characters and the women they love and court, Sophia and Diana, are the equals to anything in world literature.



There are many other fascinating people to be met with in the novels of Patrick O’Brian. In one of these novels, *The Nutmeg of Consolation*, Stephen Maturin is asked if he, the philosophical naturalist, ever deigned to read novels. Here is his very pertinent response:

“I look upon them—I look upon good novels— as a very valuable part of literature, conveying more exact and finely distinguished knowledge of the human heart and mind than almost

any other, with greater breadth and depth and fewer constraints. Had I not read “Madame de La Fayette,” the Abbé Prévost, and the man who wrote “Clarissa,” that extraordinary feat, I should be very much poorer than I am; and a moment’s reflection would add many more.”

If one looks on the internet at an item with the minatory label of “the five most difficult to read novels”, here is the list:

Bleak House
War and Peace
Moby Dick
Ulysses
Gravity’s Rainbow

Well, thankfully Patrick O’Brian’s novels are not here, and indeed they are not at all difficult to read! They are brisk, dramatic, often violent, lyrical often, always stylish (Jane Austen was his model), witty and funny, and obliquely deep like the sea itself.



Davis Hammond was born in Boston. He was educated at St. Paul’s School and Harvard College where he earned a BA and a Ph.D. He taught Romance Languages and French and Italian Literature, first at Brandeis University, then at Dartmouth College, and ultimately at Exeter Academy.

After retiring to Boca Grande, an old family haunt since 1947, and where he and his wife, Corinna, honeymooned in 1966, he continued to teach at the Pierian Spring Academy and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Ringling College in Sarasota. He served on the Board of Directors for the Johann Fust Library Foundation, where he is now a Literary Advisor.

TURN EVERY PAGE

THE ADVENTURES OF ROBERT CARO AND ROBERT GOTTLIEB

A DOCUMENTARY & DISCUSSION

Behind every great writer and every great book is an unsung hero – the editor. Tom Wolff, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ernest Hemingway had Max Perkins. For 50 years, famed biographer Robert Caro had Robert Gottlieb. This documentary, directed and produced by Mr. Gottlieb's daughter, Lizzie Gottlieb, is their story.

Robert Caro is known for his biographies about powerful political figures. Among his many honors are two Pulitzer Prizes: in 1975 for *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* and in 2003 for *Master of the Senate: The Years of Lyndon Johnson*.

Robert Gottlieb, who was Robert Caro's editor, passed away on June 14, 2023. He was a prominent editor at Simon & Schuster, Alfred A. Knopf, and *The New Yorker*. He was an author himself, but his most significant impact was as an editor. His contributions to literature, publishing, and the arts are profound. In addition to editing Mr. Caro's work, he edited novels by Toni Morrison, John le Carré, Salmon Rushdie, Michael Crichton, Ray Bradbury, and many others.

Turn Every Page explores the remarkable fifty-year relationship between these two literary giants. In the film, Mr. Caro is working to complete the final volume of his masterwork, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*. Mr. Gottlieb, 91, waits to edit it. The task of finishing their life's work looms before them – a fact made more poignant in light of Mr. Gottlieb's recent death.

With humor and insight, this unique double portrait reveals the work habits, peculiarities, and professional joys of these two ferocious intellectuals at the culmination of a journey that consumed both their lives and impacted generations of politicians, activists, writers, and readers.



Turn Every Page will be shown in the Boca Grande Community Center Auditorium on Thursday afternoon. On Friday, in the library loggia, Lindsay Major will facilitate a discussion for those who wish to explore the film further.

Lindsay is the author of the biography *Lindsay Hughes Cooper: A Portrait*. She served as President and Board Member of the Library Foundation where she has been instrumental in developing the Literary Series and in screening literary documentaries.

"TURN EVERY PAGE"
THURSDAY, JAN 25, 2024 - 4PM
BOCA GRANDE COMMUNITY CENTER AUDITORIUM

DOCUMENTARY DISCUSSION
FRIDAY, JAN 26, 2024 - 2 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

ROAD TRAVELERS

BY SUSAN GOODMON

Dedicated to the sound, the beat,
the thump, thump, thump and the ones they love
Little by little
And the music plays along to the beat of their hearts

Traveling friends, in a bigger little deuce coupe,
know what they have.
They're switchback ladies crisscrossing a colorful map
A journey through our land and yours

Lug nuts, they are a spec on a horizon of vast blue sky,
heavy with ever changing white puffy clouds,
It's a place set in time

Sunflowers, grasslands, worn out buildings,
and automobiles all idle but living for
decades,
Beautiful reminders,
That life is not a lie,

Wheels roll in the darkness of night,
A valley of death surrounds,
Yet, hearts beat faster, a strength blowing in
the wind,
A snow bomb, and a landscape suddenly
transformed,
Moonlit valley, in the midnight hour,
Love is in the air.

July 14, 2023



Susan Goodmon is a native of Laurinburg, North Carolina, and has resided in Raleigh for most of her life. She has a bachelor's degree in history and political science and a master's in landscape architecture.

During the winter, she and her husband, Ray, reside in the Cost Cottage at the Johann Fust Library on Boca Grande. They also have a home in Livingston, Montana.

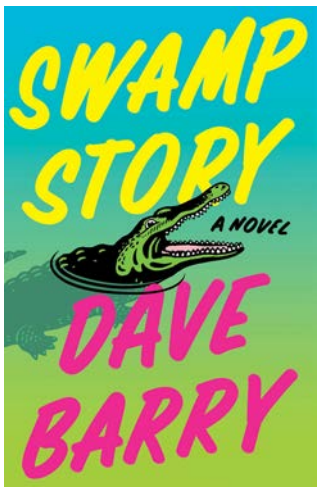
Susan and Ray's golden retriever, Murray, is pictured here with Susan when he was just a pup.



Johann Fust Library Foundation
2024 ANNUAL BENEFIT
featuring
DAVE BARRY

Everyone agrees that we need more laughter in our lives, so to remedy that, the Library Foundation invited Dave Barry to speak at our 2024 Annual Benefit. He accepted, and we are thrilled. If laughter is the best medicine, then Dave Barry is the doctor.

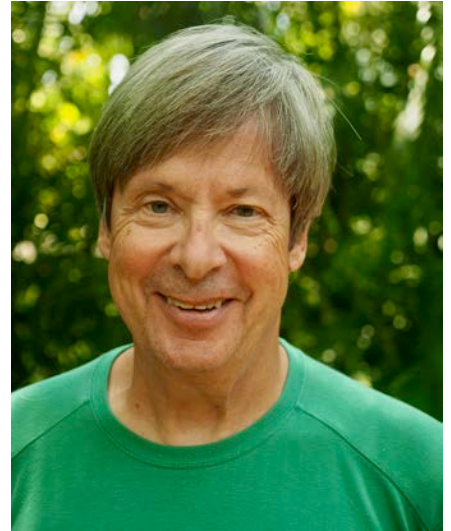
Comedian Steve Martin and Author Carl Hiaasen agree that Dave Barry's newest novel is funny. *Swamp Story* is set in the Florida Everglades. It features a giant hog, gators, buried treasure, and a shop in a shack called Bortle Brothers Bait & Beer. Dave dedicated the book to "the state of Florida, which has its flaws, but which is never, ever boring."



Dave wrote a syndicated humor column that was published in more than 500 newspapers.

He also:

- Won a Pulitzer Prize.
- Had a CBS sitcom based on his columns.
- Wrote more than a dozen New York Times bestselling books.
- Co-wrote a novel that was made into a Broadway play, which won five Tony awards.



Dave belongs to an all-author rock band. They once performed with Bruce Springsteen, who sang backup to Dave.

Dave is largely responsible for popularizing International Talk Like a Pirate Day, has a sewage lifting station named for him in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and once set fire to a pair of underpants with a Barbie doll on national television.

He lives in Florida but is not responsible for what goes on there.

When Dave Barry, the most notable humorist of our time, takes center stage at our 2024 Annual Benefit, be prepared for a healthy dose of laughter.

THURSDAY, FEB 8, 2024 – 4:30 PM
BOCA GRANDE
COMMUNITY CENTER
AUDITORIUM

This event is our Annual Benefit.
There is a fee for attendance and registration is required.

THE CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

BY DOD FRASER

It was a beautiful late spring day in Boca Grande when those who are royal-watchers or just curious, rose early to watch the Brits celebrate the coronation of their king in typical British weather—rain.

It was fortunate that the Royal Air Force was able to execute their fly-by despite the weather. Fortunate not only for the pageantry but also for the historical significance.

As author and historian Andrew Roberts explained in his lecture on our island a few years ago, World War II was a very near thing for the British; they almost succumbed to Hitler's attack. The RAF held on by a thread in the Battle of Britain until the United States entered the war. Brits who know their history hold the RAF dear.

It was also a poignant moment when, on leaving Westminster Abby, King Charles stepped over a large, black stone embedded in the floor that honors Winston Churchill. To paraphrase Lord Halifax, Churchill unleashed his rhetoric against the legions of the Third Reich; it was not a fair fight.

Without Churchill, it is a real question if there would have been a monarchy when Charles' mother was crowned in 1953. At his mother's coronation, Churchill was again Prime Minister. Ignoring protocol, he arrived late, just before the Queen—no doubt so he could enter the Abby alone.



As he walked down the aisle, seated nearest the throne in a place of honor was General George Marshall—Army Chief of Staff during the war. Eisenhower and MacArthur reported to him.

FDR never felt he could do without Marshall in Washington, so he never had command in the field. At the coronation, he represented the United States as Eisenhower's personal representative. Moving slowly down the aisle before all the dignitaries of the United Kingdom and the world, Churchill stepped out of the processional, took Marshall's hand, and spoke to him privately. It is not recorded what Churchill said.

Sally Bedell Smith, author of four books on the Windsor monarchy, including *George VI and Elizabeth: The Marriage That Saved the Monarchy* is the featured guest for "Literature in the Courtyard" on February 29th. See page 15.



Dod and Susan Fraser started vacationing in Boca Grande in 1987. They purchased their home in 1994 and have spent the winters in Boca Grande over the last numbers of years.

They spend their summers in Sonoma, California, near two of their sons and their families. A third son and family are in Bozeman, Montana. Originally from Ohio, Dod spent fifty years in the New York area working on Wall Street. He is on the board of the Johann Fust Library Foundation and active in the lecture series of the Friends of Boca Grande.

Literature in the Courtyard 2024
PRESENTED THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF COTTON HANLEY
featuring
SALLY BEDELL SMITH
IN CONVERSATION WITH LINDA FAIRSTEIN

We are honored to present New York Times bestselling author and historian of the royal family Sally Bedell Smith as this year's featured speaker at Literature in the Courtyard 2024. A generous grant from Cotton Hanley funds this flagship event, now in its third year.

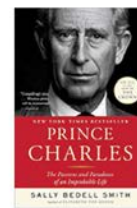
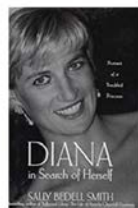
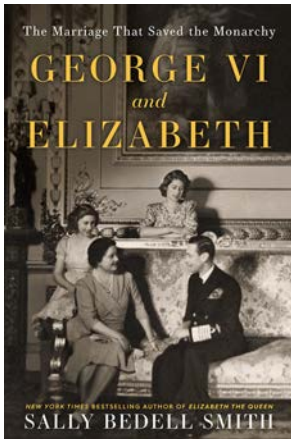
Readers of Sally's work agree that she is a skilled biographer who brings her subjects to life, sparing no detail in telling their profoundly human stories.

Sally will speak about her new book, *George VI and Elizabeth: The Marriage That Saved the Monarchy*. The royal couple was introduced to new generations in the movie *The King's Speech*, which focused on George VI's debilitating stutter. Sally delves deeper, producing a sweeping picture of their extraordinary lives.

She is the first biographer of the couple to get exclusive access to their letters and diaries in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle, a privilege granted to the author by their daughter, Queen Elizabeth II.

Sally sheds new light on their dramatic and little known love story, how they rescued the monarchy after the abdication of King Edward VIII, earned widespread admiration for inspiring the British people with their courage and compassion during World War II, and trained their elder daughter through example and instruction to be an exceptional monarch for more than seventy years.

She will offer an intimate perspective on a remarkable royal partnership for twenty-eight years, going behind the scenes in the royal palaces as well as their private residences, where the King, Queen, and their two daughters found joy in their family life as "us four."

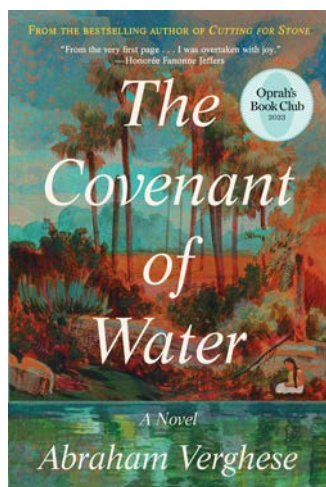


Ms. SMITH WILL BE JOINED IN CONVERSATION BY LINDA FAIRSTEIN. Ms. FAIRSTEIN IS A BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND SERVES ON THE JOHANN FUST LIBRARY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS. READ MORE ABOUT HER ON PAGE 17.

THURSDAY, FEB 29, 2024 4 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA & COURTYARD

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

THE COVENANT OF WATER
A NOVEL BY ABRAHAM VERGHESE
GROVE PRESS 2023



If you've seen Abraham Verghese on stage or video, you know that there is a gentle quality to his presence. He exudes tenderness. Those attributes, as well as elegance, are also the hallmarks of Dr. Verghese's writing. But there is nothing sedate about what's in store for his readers or the characters he brings to life in this magnificent novel, *The Covenant of Water*.

It is not too much to say the book is a masterwork, as rewarding as it is weighty. Be warned: the reading of it is an undertaking, a journey back and forth in real time across the southern subcontinent of India from Travancore, at the edge of the Arabian Sea, to Chennai (née Madras) on the Bay of Bengal. Your itinerary crosses between and over the waters of this covenant, with every lush detail of scent, and scenery, and sound, and people on lavish display as you traverse. The exotic locale sets a tone of eroticism much like the one in E.M. Forster's brilliant *A Passage to India*, though in ... *Covenant* ... the sensuality is fully explored. It is the essence of life lived and exposed to the limits that this author captures. Here you have the very opposite of stifling cultural narrowness and colonial repression that was Forster's target.

We set off from Travancore in 1900 on the eve of a twelve-year-old girl's arranged marriage to a middle-aged bachelor who owns land in Kerala, near the Malabar coast. In the opening scene, the child and her mother lie close on a sleeping mat, faces touching, cheeks glued together with tears. The reader plunges in, heart first, and soon learns that there is and will be nothing predictable going forward except for the random terror and exhilaration of unbound existence, as with our own lives. Within a few pages, the writer leaps ahead for a brief visit to our young bride as a

grandmother. "Happened is happened," the aged woman tells her granddaughter when asked for a "story about their ancestors."

In spite of the grandmother's reticence the tale begins. It is a story, or history, if you will have it so, of a particular group of St. Thomas Christians and their experience of water. At least one member of each branch on a certain family tree would die by drowning. From there, the ripples spread, widening as they do to encircle other lives, settings, loves, deaths, diseases, politics, and religions, until the earth is covered once again as if by unparted waters, and we are all as one people in the relentless mercy of the swirl.

It is a tale told so well, with such humanity and compassion, that some 30 or so reading hours and seventy-seven book years later, the length of a lifetime, we are still alert to every word, ailment, passion, art and artifice.

If it was not the author's quest, it is nonetheless his accomplishment that the literary conceit of his narrative, the extended metaphor of branching streams of water, blood, and genealogy, has ultimately married superstition, lore, and spiritual quest under a canopy of science. After a ride that along the way has taken on the climb and thrill of a roller coaster, the destination astounds as completely as it satisfies. You are only left to miss or mourn the characters you've taken to heart along the way.

It doesn't surprise that one deeply dedicated to medical science and its practice, moved by close witness to suffering, would wish to write. As Auden said of Yeats, "Mad Ireland hurt you into poetry." What astounds is Dr. Verghese's luminous ability to filter the full arc of his experience, expertise and depth of feeling through his imagination and, by that route, fully animate the art of healing.

The Sun Valley Writers' Conference awarded its 2023 "Writer in the World Prize" to Dr. Verghese "in recognition of his contributions to literature and medicine and our understanding of the profound link between healing, the humanities, and storytelling." Justly so.

Lucinda is originally from Kentucky. She went to the University of Kentucky and graduated from the University of Louisville. She later attended Vermont College, where she received her MFA in writing focused on fiction. Her novel, "It Was the Goodness of the Place," was published in 2003 by Fleur-de-Lis Press. She has also written essays and short stories and has had an active life as an editor.

Currently, Lucinda is working on a collection of stories, including a novella. For "Island Booknotes 2020," she wrote a review of Colum McCann's 2020 book, Apeirogon. Lucinda was featured as one of the "Authors Unmasked" at the 2021 Virtual Literary Series produced by the Library Foundation. In 2022, she taught a class called "Focus on Fiction" for the Johann Fust Library Foundation.



THE ART & SCIENCE OF LITERARY RESEARCH

A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION FOR READERS & WRITERS

On March 14, 2024, local writers Linda Fairstein, Susan Hanafée, Candice Shy Hooper, and Bobbie Marquis will gather in the loggia to talk about how they approach research as it pertains to their writing. They invite you to join them for a lively discussion.

Whether you are reading nonfiction, historical fiction, mystery, or literary fiction, you enter a world created by the author. For the writer, the challenge is to make it feel authentic for the reader. Research is an essential element that provides insight and truth in fiction and nonfiction, but the approach to research and documentation will differ.

Linda Fairstein is the author of the New York Times bestselling series of crime novels featuring Alexandra Cooper, a Manhattan Prosecutor. In each of her books, she deeply develops the setting. She has set her mysteries in Rockefeller University, the New York Public Library, the Central Park Zoo, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She researches each place thoroughly and depicts them accurately in her novels.

Susan Hanafée, a mystery writer, has set her novels on Boca Grande. She features an amateur sleuth and her reporter friend. She has often written fictional adaptations of actual historical incidents, and Boca Grande residents will recognize the landscape and the community.

Candice Shy Hooper is the author of two historical nonfiction books: *Lincoln's General's Wives* and *Delivered Under Fire*. Both of these works involved in-depth historical research. Candy is about to plunge into writing her third Civil War biography.

Bobbie Marquis is an MFA student at Spalding University. She received her bachelor's degree in Creative Writing from the University of Central Florida. She is the Executive Director of the Johann Fust Library Foundation and has written poetry and short stories. She is currently working on a historical fiction novel.



LINDA FAIRSTEIN



SUSAN HANAFEE



CANDICE SHY HOOPER



BOBBIE MARQUIS

THURSDAY, MAR 14, 2024 4 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA & COURTYARD

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

"SUNFLOWER"

BY SAMUEL SEABURY HOBBS

My first memories of my life took place in the beautiful Johann Fust Community Library in Boca Grande, Florida, in 1967 when I was two years old.

Our family spent every spring break of my childhood in the cottages on the oceanfront at the end of 10th Street, just down the block from the library.

In 1926, my grandmother, Deo Dupont Weymouth, built her houses on the ocean on 11th Street. Every morning, we would walk the beach from 10th to 11th Street and have breakfast with her and her husband, George.

Willie Mae, who cared for my grandmother for 50 years and who was the matriarch of the black community at the south end of the island, would prepare the most delicious perfectly peeled oranges "without sinew" in a large bowl of freshly squeezed orange juice. Our family still joyfully visualizes Willie Mae ladling in a bowl, the most delicious Florida orange breakfast.

Deo, with a little help from her son George "Frolic" Weymouth, both amazing artists, also painted the murals in the Temptations Restaurant back in the 1950s.

My parents, Patty & Andy Hobbs, were avid golfers, and thus, as children, we spent many hours alone in Boca with our nannies while our parents were pursuing their passion and fun in life. One day, when I was two years old, my nanny Jenny and I spent too many hours on the sunny Boca beach without sunblock. Being a towhead blue-eyed boy, that night, I blew up with huge bubbles on my back, arms, chest, legs and face!

The next morning, my most fresh first memories of my childhood occurred: I clearly remembered being patted with milk of magnesia and then put in a baby carriage. I also reminisce about the sound of the broken sea shells crunching on the wheels of the carriage as I was pushed down 10th Street. Most importantly and vividly, I recall the cool breeze and the sense of calmness that came over me as I lay for hours in my carriage in the entrance breezeway of the Fust Library, looking up at the Pecky Cyprus's ceiling, burnt to a crisp, but happy and alive as a lamb. In time, I would come to learn that my first memories sprang up in the most exquisite library I have ever known. I love those first memories of my life! I can only treasure that fifty-five years later, I would be honored, and again be overcome with joy, in the lovely Johann Fust Library when the Foundation decided to hang my shell mirror "Sunflower!"



In 2007, I came down to Boca Grande for spring break with my family, Lisa, my lovely wife, and my two boys, James and Brett. And there was my mother Patty in her, and our future open garage studio, making one of her first shell mirrors. I decided, at that moment to try and make a mirror, so I began waking up very early with "first footprints on the beach" right around sunrise and would walk from 7th to 17th Streets on the beach looking for beautiful shells.

In my shell mirrors, I only use Boca Grande shells and a few Cayo Costa sand dollars. "No bought or living shells ever – ever." The hunt for beautiful, amazing Boca shells is the best and most peaceful pastime and will always be my true love of Gasparilla Island. As I've said, for the last 15 years, "I made a shell mirror or two every spring break," and as you should know, "gloriously, you get a little bit better every year!" I make art with the shells I find on the beach to inspire people to use the shells they find in a fun, inspirational way and give a second life to the beached sea shells.

Then, in 2022, in honor of my mother Patty's shell mirror inspirations and her 88th birthday, we boated the "Sunflower" mirror down to Sanibel Island for the 85th Anniversary Shell Show. Five days later, we returned by boat and were honored with a magnificent blue ribbon! The director of the Sanibel show told me that it was one of the best mirrors she had ever seen in her entire life! Tears of joy overcame us all.

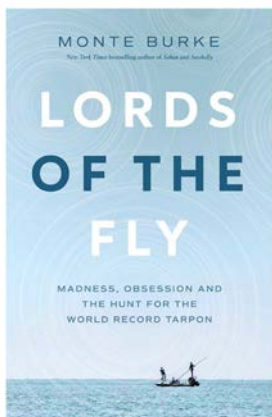
We are truly honored to have a shell mirror hanging in such a very special place, where my first memories of life were experienced and where a page from the first movable type printing press, the Gutenberg Bible, resides. All in God's Glory!

Samuel S. Hobbs is a board member at Shakespeare Integrated Health Services, a next-gen primary care medical service. He has been the founding partner of many businesses over the past 30 years and spent time at Kidder, Peabody & Co., Morgan Stanley, and Six Plus, Inc. He earned his undergraduate degree at the University of California, Berkeley, and his MBA at the University of Cape Town, RSA. Sam has deep historical family roots in Delaware.

MONTE BURKE
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
LORDS OF THE FLY:
MADNESS, OBSESSION, AND THE HUNT FOR THE WORLD RECORD TARPON

We are thrilled to welcome Monte Burke to our Literary Series this season. His latest book, *Lords of the Fly: Madness, Obsession and the Hunt for the World-Record Tarpon*, was described by the *Wall Street Journal* as “wonderful...a lush, panoramic book.”

Lords of the Fly takes its place among the best fishing books of all time. In this well-researched work, Monte tells captivating stories about the history and culture of fly fishing for tarpon. It is a story about archetypal battles in which the players are guides, fishermen, and the powerful silver king. It is a story of how human beings are changed and challenged by going up against the ancient Megalops. The quest for tarpon is a timeless tale of drama, or as Monte’s subtitle reads, “madness and obsession.”



Monte Burke is the author of the New York Times bestseller, *Saban: The Making of a Coach*, a biography of Alabama head coach, Nick Saban. He is also the author of *4TH and Goal: One Man’s Quest to Recapture His Dream*, which won an Axiom Award and has been optioned for a feature film, and *Sowbelly: The Obsessive Quest for the World Record Largemouth Bass*, which was named one of the best books of the year by *Sports Illustrated* and Amazon, and was chosen for Barnes and Noble’s “Discover Great New Writers” program.

After a 14-year stint as a reporter, staff writer and editor at *Forbes*, he is now a contributing editor at the magazine. He is also a contributing editor for both *Garden & Gun* and *The Drake*.

Monte grew up in New Hampshire, Vermont, North Carolina and Alabama, and graduated from Middlebury College with a B.A. in Religion. He lives in Brooklyn, NY with his wife and three daughters.

TUESDAY, MAR 26, 2024 4 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA & COURTYARD
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

PAPYRUS

THE LAUNCH OF THE LIBRARY BOAT

The cover of this issue of *Island Booknotes* features a stylized photo of the first *Papyrus*. The photo, which was taken in 1950, shows the library boat parked in front of the Knight Brothers Boatyard in Boca Grande.

Residents of Boca Grande and visitors to the Johann Fust Community Library have heard the story of the boat that delivered library books to the surrounding islands. On Monday afternoons, *Papyrus* would stop at Bokeelia, Useppa, Cabbage Key, and Mondongo, and on Wednesday at noon, she docked in Captiva.



In her journal, Louise Amory tells the story of when she and Roger came up with the idea for a library boat.

I have just switched off the radio which says "Life can be beautiful – even after thirty-five" because I am thinking happily how lovely it can be at sixty – and even I trust after sixty-five. And it isn't that I am looking forward to my old-age pension either. It's because of something very exciting – we are going to buy a boat!

I forgot to say that not only are we going to buy a boat, but also, just for the fun of it, which is far more important, we are going to build a small public library in the little town of Boca Grande, Florida, where we spend our winters. He [Roger Amory] and I are going to be the librarians, and our boat is going to be a library boat and take books around to the islands.

The Amorys purchased the 54-foot yacht *Trim Fore* from Stanley W. Ferguson, a Boston coffee and tea merchant. They renamed her *Papyrus* and extensively renovated her at Quincy Adams Yacht Yard.

Louise Amory recorded their maiden voyage in her *Log of Papyrus*.

OUR MAIDEN VOYAGE JUNE 4TH '50

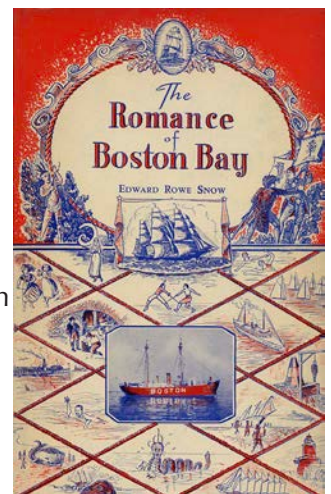
We gathered together all the last essentials, piled them in the Crosley, and arrived at the boat yard about 10 a.m. (Quincy.)

Papyrus, looking immaculate in every detail, was moored to a float surrounded by a cluster of boats of every size and sort. Capt. J. [Del Johnson] wore his new hat and blues, and a brand new American flag waved at our stern and the Eastern Y. C. [Yacht Club] flag at our bow.

After stowing away our luggage, we watched the shipyard men clear a passage for us and [they] started our engines and backed out. Not since I was a child have I been as thrilled. A dream come true.

As they motored into Boston Bay, Mrs. Amory held a copy of *The Romance of Boston Bay* by Edward Rowe Snow. The book, published in 1944, takes the reader on a tour of the islands in Boston Harbor. As *Papyrus* slowly made her way through the bay, Mrs. Amory referred to the book and wrote about the history of each island they passed.

The maiden voyage of *Papyrus* was a three-month round-trip tour from Boston along the Maine coast and up the St. John River in New Brunswick, Canada. Along the way, they visited friends, and Mr. Amory stopped for business meetings.



On November 15, the Amorys met Capt. Johnson in Charleston. They rode *Papyrus* to Boca Grande, finally arriving on December 3, 1950 – and so the saga of the library boat began.

SHORT-FORM FICTION & NONFICTION: A HANDS-ON SEMINAR

GUEST INSTRUCTOR: CHRISSY KOLAYA

The Johann Fust Library Foundation is honored to present author and professor Chrissy Kolaya, who will teach a hands-on seminar in short-form fiction and nonfiction. Over two and a half days, students will read examples of the form and use prompts to get started on writing their own short-form work and explore what they can learn through the practice and study of short stories, flash fiction and brief memoir.

Brevity, concentration, restraint, striking imagery, economy of language, playfulness, and experimentation are all hallmarks of the form. Because of that, the practice of reading and writing short-form fiction and nonfiction can help hone and develop craft techniques not only for the short form but for longer pieces of creative work, as well.

Your Instructor:

Chrissy Kolaya teaches in the MFA program at the University of Central Florida. She has designed and taught graduate and undergraduate courses on contemporary fiction, the history of prose style, editing for creative writers, and a range of other topics.

Chrissy's own short-form writing has appeared in *New Sudden Fiction* (Norton), *Crazyhorse*, *Electric Literature*, and elsewhere. She is the author of a novel: *Charmed Particles*, and two books of poetry, *Any Anxious Body* and *Other Possible Lives*.



To learn more about Chrissy Kolaya and her work, visit chrissykolaya.com.

Chrissy is passionate about collaboration and has worked with filmmakers and composers on adaptations of her work. Her work has been supported by grants, fellowships, and awards from the Fiction Meets Science Program at the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg Institute for Advanced Studies in Germany, the Norman Mailer Writers Colony, the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, the Loft Literary Center, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Lake Region Arts Council, and the University of Minnesota.

FRIDAY, APR 5 - SUNDAY, APR 7, 2024
LIBRARY FOUNDATION 2ND FLOOR OFFICES

THE FEE FOR THIS CLASS IS \$300.

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

*"Writing these short shorts
in such an intense flash helps
make the story focus on the most
important moments ... moments
one can build on."*

Lex Williford

HOTEL CUBA

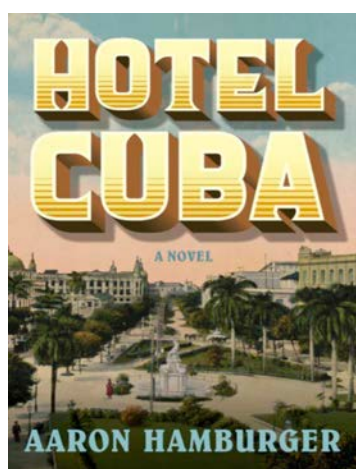
BY AUTHOR & PROFESSOR AARON HAMBURGER

Aaron Hamburger will speak in the library loggia and courtyard on Thursday, April 18, 2024. His novel *Hotel Cuba* is a heartbreaking, epic family story. It explores the profound courage of two women who strive to create a new future in an enticing and dangerous world far different from anything they have ever known. Hoping to come to the United States from Russia in the 1920s, they end up in Cuba because of immigration restrictions. Aaron paints a vivid picture of Cuba filled with the wild and colorful sights and sounds of prohibition-era Havana.

Aaron is the author of four books: the story collection *The View from Stalin's Head*, winner of the Rome Prize in Literature, and the novels *Faith for Beginners* (a Lambda Literary Award nominee) and *Nirvana Is Here* (winner of a Bronze Medal in the 2019 Foreword Indie Awards),

His writing has appeared in such venues as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Tin House*, *Crazyhorse*, *Boulevard*, *Poets & Writers*, and *O, the Oprah Magazine*. He teaches writing at George Washington University and the Stonecoast MFA Program.

Aaron has also won the Jim Duggins Ph.D. Outstanding Mid-Career Novelist Prize from Lambda Literary and fellowships from Yaddo, Djerassi, the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Edward F. Albee Foundation.



THUR APR 18, 2024 4 PM
LIBRARY LOGGIA & COURTYARD

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT NO CHARGE
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

Childhood's frozen time:
At crack of bat, racing back
Dreams balls always caught

SAM HOLT

Among his many talents, Sam Holt was a poet. He was a treasured member of the Live Poets of Boca Grande. Sam passed away on October 11, 2023.

TELLING YOUR STORY: FICTION & NONFICTION PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Guest Instructor: Aaron Hamburger

The Johann Fust Library Foundation is honored to present Professor and Author Aaron Hamburger, who will teach a class for writers at all levels.

This is an active learning workshop in which participants will explore different approaches to storytelling based on autobiographical material, whether in the form of a memoir or a work of fiction. It will include learning how to choose the right story to tell and what to consider in crafting and writing it.

Attendees will look at and discuss examples of published works. Then, they will work individually on writing exercises, trying out new strategies and techniques. The session will also incorporate participant insights, learning, and questions in a discussion format. There will be the opportunity for individual writing practice.



Some of the techniques addressed in the class may include:

"World-building" – suggestions for creating the time and place within which your main character lives (real or imagined).

"Character creation and development" – how to make your main character real and believable.

"Framing the story" – Choosing where to begin and end, book-ending your plot, so as not to let the drama leak out.

"Research" – how to do it and how to use it effectively.

For more information about Aaron Hamburger, see the previous page.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2024 10 AM TO 12 PM
LIBRARY FOUNDATION 2ND FLOOR OFFICES

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED TO 20. THERE IS A \$60 FEE FOR THIS EVENT.
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.



Though inked, slender reeds
Appear to freeze their motion
Haiku for the eye

SAM HOLT

THE HEALING POWER OF STORIES

BY DALY WALKER

People often express surprise that I, a retired surgeon, am also a writer. I respond by telling them that there is a long literary legacy in medicine and many acclaimed authors were also physicians. The list includes Anton Chekhov, John Keats, William Carlos Williams, Oliver Sacks, and Adam Verghese, to name a few.

There is a relatively new movement in healthcare, found at the intersection of art and medicine, that says yes, stories do have healing power.

So why are physicians drawn to writing? I think it is because they reside in the kingdom of the ill that Susan Sontag called the “night-side of life.” In that existential domain, doctors see patients at their most conflicted times when they are suffering or facing death and difficult choices are required. Examples of these gut-wrenching decisions made at the bedside are found in my collection of stories, *The Doctor’s Dilemma*.

In “India’s Passage,” a surgeon tries to come to grips with a mistake he made in the operating room that will end a young patient’s life.

Standing in the ICU beside the victim of his error, the surgeon is trying to decide whether to take her off life support or let her linger in a vegetative state. “She’s way too young to die,” he says to Helen, a consulting neurologist.

“My God, the incompleteness of her life.”

“Yes, it’s a great tragedy.” Helen is backlit by gray moonlight shining through the window. “Try to look at it as a form of palliation, like sedating someone in pain.”

‘Except it’s forever,’ the surgeon says.

Another dilemma is the focus of the story, “Boots on the Ground,” when an army surgeon is confronted with saving the life of an enemy soldier in Afghanistan.

“The phone in the morgue rang. Sergeant Martinez answered it. He covered the receiver with his hand and called to Major Stone, “Trauma bay, Sir. They need you. They’ve got a wounded Taliban.”

“Oh, good,” Stone said. “He stable?”

“They said, ‘stat.’ It might be the guy who killed Private Nelson. I wouldn’t be in any hurry.”

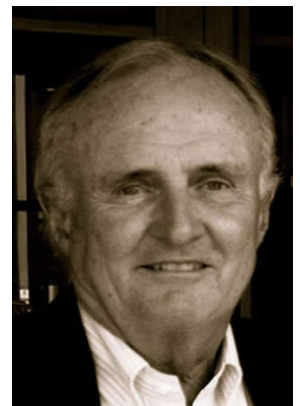
“Do no friggin harm,” Stone told himself. “Tell’em I’m on the way.”

Stone hurried out the door into a hot wind. He could feel ground heat rising through the soles of his combat boots.

So, physicians are privy to great material to write about, but do stories like those above serve a purpose other than to entertain the reader?

Continued on page 25

Daly Walker practiced general surgery in Columbus, Indiana before retiring and studying creative writing. Daly’s work has been short listed for Best American Short Stories and an O’Henry Award. He was nominated for a Pushcart Prize and was a finalist in The Best American Magazine Writing.



Now retired from medicine, he divides his time between Quechee, Vermont, and Boca Grande, Florida. He is a fiction editor of Columbia University’s “Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine.”

There is a relatively new movement in healthcare, found at the intersection of art and medicine, that says yes, stories do have healing power. Known as narrative medicine, this discipline originated at Columbia University in 2001 and is now part of the curriculum in many medical schools. It is the belief of the narrative medicine movement that by exposing clinicians to the humanities they will be better equipped to deliver more empathetic, higher quality health care. Certainly, this is a worthy goal. But does identifying with what a patient is feeling and feeling those emotions yourself really have therapeutic value? Also, can the ability to understand and share the feelings of another actually be acquired by exposing one's self to the art and literature that is the hallmark of narrative medicine?

To answer these questions, I turned to the medical literature and found that empathy had been proven to have healing power. Scientific studies confirmed that patients under the care of a doctor they considered empathetic were healthier, lived longer, and, when ill, got well quicker.

Convinced that a doctor's empathy can enhance patient outcomes, I then wondered if a resolve to help someone who was suffering was predetermined or could empathy be acquired by a caregiver's exposure to narrative medicine's art, fiction, poetry, and essays. Again, I found the answer in the medical literature.

Research demonstrated that through the fictional narrative experience, readers internalized empathy and thus enhanced their desire to help others. Also, studies have shown that participation in humanities coursework correlates with improved empathy scores in medical students attending schools where narrative medicine is part of the curriculum.

Albert Switzer once wrote that "underlying empathy is a reverence for life that can be a strong motivator to preserve it." I, too, am convinced of the importance of empathy in the healing process. Patients who perceive their caregivers to be motivated by empathy get well faster, and reading stories can influence healthcare workers to honor their patients and to share their pain and, in doing so, better help to relieve their suffering.

TONIGHT

BY LINDSAY MAJOR

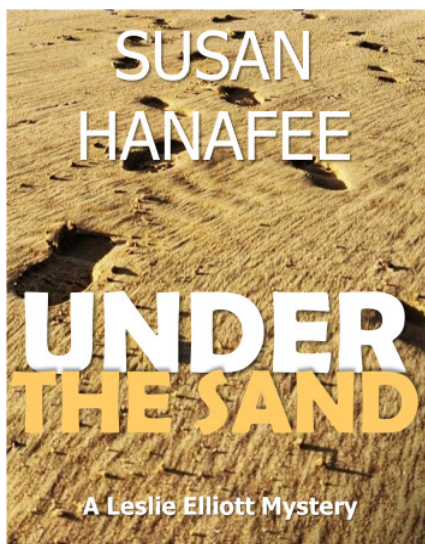
I often walk in the evening.
In early summer, a walk after dinner
is in daylight.
Now in late August, I walk
in deep darkness.
The cicadas song, sharp and strong.
Tonight the full, blue moon is near.
It casts a sacred aura
over this quiet lane.

For more about Lindsay Major, see page 11.

*UNDER THE SAND: TWO KIDNAPPINGS,
MURDER AND A RACE AGAINST THE CLOCK*

A NEW NOVEL COMING SOON

BY SUSAN HANAFEE



The actual cover is in development.

Local resident and author Susan Hanafee has written her fifth novel. This fast-paced mystery is set on an island that coincidentally looks like Boca Grande.

A woman is shot, while drinking champagne by her pool. Two wealthy brothers are kidnapped. A convicted murderer is running loose. Chaos reigns on a tiny island in southwest Florida after the bridge to the mainland is disabled and the lone cell tower blown up by a mysterious blonde woman.

Amateur sleuth Leslie Elliott and her reporter friend Wes Avery join forces with the local deputy, an iguana hunter, and a newspaper layout man in an attempt to rescue the missing men before the kidnappers make good on their threat to bury their captives alive. It is a nail-biter of a story.

Watch for *Under the Sand* early in 2024.

Read more about Susan Hanafee on page 17.



MEMORIES
BY JOHN THOMAS

Thoughts pop up unexpectedly,
exploding like Guy Fawkes fireworks
in surprising, scattered brilliance,
that fades and dies away.
How quickly they decay.

Surprisingly real, then surreal,
memories of the past
manifest, preserved in the aspic of our brain,
ghosts that haunt us,
uninvited and intrusive.

Odd that our heads contain
a potted history of our lives
that materialize as a surprise,
to take us to a past event
long forgotten, but ever latent.

Our lives are a dichotomy
embedded in present experience,
then transported to other times and places,
as real and tangible as the world we inhabit,
by the figments of our imagination.



John H. Thomas was born in Wales, U.K. he spent a 40-year career with Wedgwood, the British ceramic manufacturer. He and his wife Claudia live in Boca Grande.

He enjoys singing with Grande Glee, performing with Royal Palm Players, and is an avid reader of history and poetry.

THE HOUSE OF EIGHTY

BY ALICE GORMAN

From this threshold,
where I stand firm,
I wonder

if I am visible
through the windows
of my eyes.

Can you see
the many rooms?
Can you tell

that nothing
has been lost,
everything

has been used,
and a few things
transformed?

Do you see
the light in my living room
still shines—

and I am still at home?

This poem is also being published in The Louisville Review.



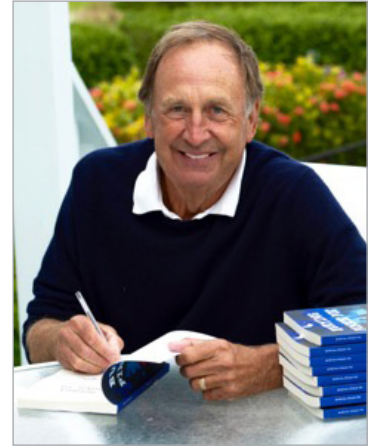
The above photo of Alice was taken by Patti Christakos at the dedication of Alice's Secret Garden at the Johann Fust Community Library.

Alice Bingham Gorman is a Johann Fust Library Foundation Board Member Emerita. She writes poetry, fiction and nonfiction. Her first novel, "Valeria Vose," was published in 2018. Her essays and short stories have been published in "Vogue," "Oprah Magazine," "The Louisville Review," and others. Alice divides her time between Boca Grande and Maine.

EULOGY

A NOVEL IN THE WORKS
BY DAVID SPARKS

David Sparks is working on a novel titled *Eulogy*. It is the story of a long ago campaign volunteer who was asked by the late president to write his eulogy.



In response to our question about its publication date, David answers with his usual humor, "Spring, 2024. That's if the electric dog collar works."

A common question posed to authors is "What is your writing practice?" David quotes Stuart Woods' response to the question.

"A couple of years ago, I cornered Stuart Woods (now deceased) at a cocktail party in Bar Harbor and pestered him with the typical questions about when he wrote, how many words, etc. While semi-desperately looking over my shoulder for his wife to get him out of this, he told me he wrote for an hour in the morning – 500 words – and he finished his books in four months. He added that those 500 words were 'lightly edited,' that is to say, they stayed as written. He said that with a smug smile. Then he took the rest of the year off. He smiled again and his wife whisked him away."

"Stuart, wherever you are, here's how long it took some other authors;

Catcher in the Rye – 7 years

Gone with the Wind – 10 years

The Lord of the Rings – 17 years

"*Eulogy* is making progress, but going slowly. We got a rambunctious dog, I'm still making hurricane repairs, blah, blah, blah."

Dave's readers are excited to read his next novel and suspect it will be worth the wait.

WHEN THE SUN ALSO ROSE (AFTER IAN)

BY EMERSON WICKWIRE

Warnings blared:

"Winds Rising. Storm Coming."

Most Islanders took heed

And fled.

Bridge closed. Birds gone.

Fish sounded deeper farther out in the bay

Stonewashing the heavens, cueing blue skies to gray.

Barometers dropped. Wind gasps gained voice.

Gloom glomming murky,

Melding, shattering, swirling air

With rain.

Falling. Flooding. Drenching all island land.

Winds from the south paused. Segued north.

Then grew more. And blew more.

What a storm!

She roars down the road,

Our main drag end to end.

Haplessly flattening all in its path,

Ripping roofs, trashing trees,

Clogging drenched air with branches and leaves.

A smash here! A pass there!

So unfair! So uneven!

Whidden's hit! Clinic fine!

Little left to believe in?

The sun set. T'was exhausted. Took a breather that night.

Awaited next morning to assess the mess.

The sight. The blight.

When the sun also rose, the destruction proved real.

Birdless skies. Missing roofs.

No phones... Kinda nice.

No water... Now that was the worst.

Tree trunks twisted, then burst.

Sopping mounds of growth,

Lightly laced with metal

Strips of fascia.

Roadways crisscrossed with powerline downings,

Some not dead yet, jumping, sparking.

Telling the tale that hell had come calling

And this was its card.

Where to start? Where to stack?

Pile upon pile.

You could not stand idle. You could not stay clean.

Groomed ground to greasy, to slimy and grimy.

Hygiene a lost dream.

Few cared. All toiled. Some cried

And raked and piled and sawed and raked.

Publix held sway: internet access, chilling ice.

Power still elusive for most.

Potable water a word from some past, just a ghost.

Slowly, ever slowly progress grew visible.

Stacks shifted. Trucks came. Trucks loaded and left

Then returned to reload.

Roads filled with workers, with out-of-state helpers.

Then tractors and forklifts, a van just for showers.

Drinking water in bottles!

The Inn fed. Neighbors pitched in, led.

Our bridge finally, fully reopened.

Swimming pool buckets kept the loos flushing,

Sending pail sales at Home Depot upwardly gushing.

Doubtful success swelled to maybe, then likely.

Odds shifted up to heavy from slightly.

And with help, oh such help, the Island's resolve

Restored habitation, a near recreation.

Not to an identical restore

('twould not be possible),

But one familiarly similar once more.

In the storm's aftermath I question:

Did we ever seek Nature's approval

'Fore invading, restyling this Isle that she'd molded?

Or, did we simply bull our way in?

Our original sin?

Did we cause injury which led to her fury?

Was Ian a fluke?

Or a slap, a rebuke

And a warning?

Perhaps she sent her storm

As a test for our mettle:

"If you want it. If you love it,

"Can you take what I send?

"Cause what's mine is not yours forever.

"To you I don't give, I just lend."

Treasure it!



During his long professional career in banking and finance, Emerson always made time for painting and creative writing. He and Barbara came to Boca Grande 20+ years ago seeking a sunny escape for a few winter months. This winter escape led to a rich island life paralleling lengthy times spent in northern Italy. These two locales inspired him to focus on his retirement passions: poetry, interpretive work on the Renaissance arts of Florentine cofanetti, and creative writing.



ODE TO BOCA GRANDE

BY NANCY WHITE

To step out into the cool night air
and be comfortably cosseted against the cold,
count yourself blest.

To have heard a trio performing clear and
lingeringly lovely music
of a kind rarely to be heard in live performance,
count yourself blest.

To be with others you know,
near and across the many tabled room,
count yourself blest,

To get into the magical confines of an automobile
willingly moving at your command,
count yourself blest.

To float along home the couple of miles
of moonlit two-lane road,
count yourself blest.

To come to rest in a place you call your own,
safe and sound and away from anything
resembling a throng,
count yourself blest.

For it should be no surprise,
that it could be otherwise.

*Nancy White is one of the
Live Poets of Boca Grande.
This poem was written on
the occasion of attending
a jazz trio concert at the
Crowninshield House
February 14, 2022 – and
perhaps more relevantly –
post-lan.*



POWER OF PLACE

BY JANET WILLIAMS

“...the moss and the ground cover yearned toward the spears of light.”

And so author Alice Elliott Dark describes the coastal woods of Maine – the setting of her new acclaimed novel *Fellowship Point*. This summer, while reading this beautiful and very setting-specific book, I reflected on the power of place in fiction.

In addition to featuring well-developed and oh-so-appealing characters, Ms. Dark both grounds her story and makes it soar with her descriptions of this unique place in Maine.

Some books draw us in with their strong depiction of place. Many stories could not have been told without their distinctive settings. Can we imagine Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* without the setting of the dark manor house on the barren and windswept Yorkshire Moors? Or could E.M. Forster’s *Room with a View* overlook anywhere other than Florence with its marble churches and the Arno below? In *Where the Crawdads Sing*, author Delia Owens weaves the setting of a living, breathing marsh inextricably into her story. Even her heroine is called “marsh girl.” And let’s not forget about our lovely Boca Grande as a setting in the works of several of our local authors!

Whether the location of the tale is real, like Havana in Hemingway’s *Old Man and the Sea*, or fantasy as in Middle-earth from Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, the setting often is a character, as well defined as any in the book.

Like people, places have physical characteristics, personalities, and a mood. Each of those factors can impact the story and the reader’s engagement with the plot. Authors use their descriptive skills to make their story’s location feel unique and vivid for the reader while at the same time bringing out the universal themes that connect all places.

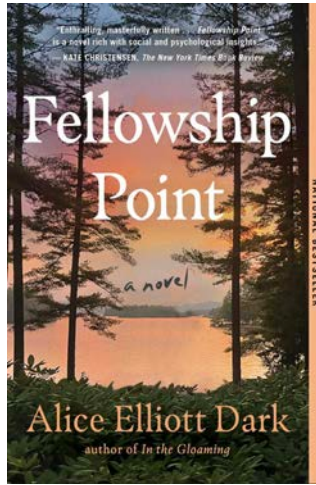
Certain places seem to have moments in history during which they become popular backdrops in literary works. The aforementioned novel *Fellowship Point* is only one of a flush of newly published books set in Maine.

In a different time, the Lake District of England became a popular setting for many 18th and early 19th-century poems, including some of those by William Wordsworth.

The settings of books not only can heighten the reading experience but also introduce and lure the reader to experience new worlds. Paul Scott’s *The Raj Quartet* gave me my first youthful exposure in the 1970s to far away India and began a lifelong love for that country. My favorite Rumor Godden work, *Green Gage Summer*, with its descriptions of the “gold-green” of the French countryside, encouraged me to study in France. And ever since long ago reading Naguib Mahfouz’s trilogy, including *Palace Walk*, I

have dreamed of visiting Cairo and floating down the Nile.

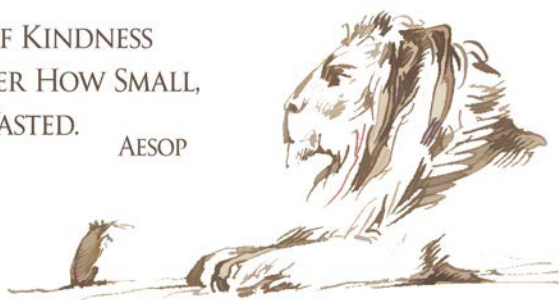
For now, while awaiting my next literary travel adventure, I happily will sit on my lanai with the ceiling fan laboring in the humid heat, eagerly reading novels set in new and unknown places. Such is the power of place in literature.



Janet Williams believes life can have many wonderful chapters. After a career in marketing at IBM and in marketing consulting, she stayed home to raise her children. Later she obtained a masters specializing in child therapy and opened a private practice in Connecticut. Now retired, Janet is enjoying the time to write, read, travel, hike and serve her church and community. A second generation Boca Grande resident, she also spends time in midcoast Maine.

A NOTE FROM TONI VANOVER

NO ACT OF KINDNESS
NO MATTER HOW SMALL,
IS EVER WASTED.
AESOP



Kindness was the Lee County Library System Summer Reading Program theme. Everyone enjoyed playing kindness bingo, making kindness-themed crafts, and watching live performances. Participants included 120 children and teens who received a free book and 277 attendees who watched fun, educational in-person programs. Highlights of the summer included Mad Science of Greater Tampa Bay and their interactive sound experiments, Logan Light's imaginative magic show, and Adam's Animal Encounters with Southwest Florida animals. During season we presented a hands-on science program, weekly family storytimes, and hosted visits from The Island School and Boca Grande Preschool.

We were happy to welcome back Chris Prybylowski, our part-time seasonal library assistant. Since January 2020, Chris has worked during season. Originally from Minnesota, she has a background in publishing and libraries. Chris enjoys spending time with her family and friends, boating and dancing. She welcomed her first grandchild last year. Chris is a valued, energetic team player.



Toni Vanover

This March, Chris and I welcomed Stacie Bak, our full-time library associate specializing in youth services. Having grown up in upstate New York and Canada, Stacie is enjoying Florida. She is fluent in French, loves to travel with her boyfriend, and is a Star Wars and Lego fan. An avid dog lover, Stacie has her hands full with her 4-year-old labradoodle, Charlie, who believes he is a lap dog. Previously, Stacie worked for Sarasota County Library System, where she was manager of the Friends of the Library bookstore. It's great to have Stacie on our team. She is thrilled to work here.

There's more than meets the eye at our library. Beyond the books, magazines, newspapers, audiobooks and DVDs that are on the shelves; items from other Lee County Library System branches can be reserved and delivered to Boca. If our library system doesn't own the book you are looking for, we can borrow from public and academic libraries worldwide.

Our extensive digital collection is available wherever you are with your library card and an online connection. Lee County Library System's online library features movies and television series, eBooks and audiobooks, music, magazines, comics and more on the Hoopla and Libby apps. Libby offers a variety of extras including Craftsy, IndieFlix, The Great Courses and other fantastic streaming content.

These resources and so much more are available at leelibrary.net/online. Library services, both in-person and online, are all always served with kindness. We look forward to seeing you at the library!

Toni Vanover
Senior Librarian/Branch Manager
Lee County Library System



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