



Save the Date!
The Friends Board Meeting is usually the third MONDAY of each month.
Our Next Meeting is October 18 at 7:30PM at the Library.

Volume 3, Issue 2
 Fall, 2010

Our Annual General Meeting Is Tuesday, November 16 at 7:30PM

Footnotes



Dear Friends,

With the coming of Fall and brisker weather, the pace of activity picks up. Friends is launching its 2010-2011 Membership drive. Having recently completed our fiscal year—the most successful ever—and as we embark upon our new membership campaign, we think it is appropriate to look back over the last year and look ahead to the coming one.

The 2009-2010 membership year was our most successful to date. With over 500 households currently members we are hoping for 100% renewal and striving for a double-digit increase in new members for the upcoming membership year. As a member of Friends, you probably are well aware of our three-fold purpose: (i) to communicate with our constituents as a means to encourage the fullest use of the Library, (ii) to help raise funds for the Library to cover programs and materials not otherwise funded by the Library’s budget from the Town, and, (iii) to support the development of programming.

We believe we made significant strides on all three of these goals. We returned to a regular schedule of quarterly publications, developed a website—<http://livingston.bccls.org/friends.html>, joined Navigator, and set-up our own direct phone mail at [973-992-4600 X505](tel:973-992-4600) to enable members and the public at large to reach us. We introduced useful and (we hope) enjoyable social/fund-raising venues, such as the ongoing book sale and the Spring Wine Tasting & Raffle/Auction. These are in addition to our Fall BookFEST! In the realm of programming, Friends is involved in two ways. First, we “sponsor” (i.e., fund) programs and series developed by the Library’s excellent Adult Programming Department (see article on page 2) as well as the Youth Department (such as the Summer Reading Program). In addition, Friends “presents” original programming developed by Friends such as the Guest Writers/Speakers Series. (See page 3 for more detail about upcoming Programs and Events.)

All of this, of course, is enabled by the strong support which you as our members have shown. As a member of the leadership team of Friends, I hope we have earned your confidence. With your continued and renewed support in the year ahead, we will seek to complete our \$100,000 Capital Pledge to the Library, expand our program sponsorships, and continue our commitment to original programming.

As always, we strongly welcome active participation and hope you will consider volunteering in ways large and small. You are also cordially invited to our Annual General Meeting to be held Monday, November 15, 2010 at 7:30 in the Library’s Program Room.

In Friendship,
Sheree Link
 President

Meet Thea White and Chris Demidowich

“Opera.” “Film.” “Authors.” “Recitals.” Has a new entertainment complex opened in Livingston? No, this is just a sample of the wonderful programming available to Livingston residents—free of charge—at our Library. The richness and variety of programming is due to the efforts of two remarkable people in our Library—Thea White, Outreach Specialist, and Chris Demidowich, Coordinator of Programming for Adults.

Chris and Thea each have programming areas to which they bring their unique skills. Chris is the primary driver of the Library’s Authors programs. Thea has long been associated with Senior Happenings. Nevertheless, they can often be found bouncing ideas off of each other. As Chris noted “there is a certain art and intuition to sensing what will work.” Nevertheless, experience and hard work are key factors to their success. Together, Thea and Chris have more than 30 years experience at our Library—in addition to the wealth of experience they had prior to joining the Library. Both also maintain professional communications to stay abreast of trends. This includes contacts with publishing houses and networking with other Library Program coordinators. They also get to know new residents by attending the Livingston Newcomers Picnic every year.



The work of programming includes decisions about what types to pursue and which artists within each genre will be most popular. As Thea says, “there are many talented individuals and we cannot provide a forum for all. Saying ‘no’ is difficult but we must make choices.” Once decisions are made, comes the task of determining what is the appropriate schedule (evening/afternoon, season, days), followed by the publicity efforts including flyers, press releases, and the Library’s electronic newsletter—a electronic service whereby programming and other news about the Library is delivered to your email address. (Chris and Thea encourage Library patrons to go the Library’s website and sign up for this useful service as a means to obtain the most comprehensive and fastest news about events. Further, the transition from high cost mailings to electronic distribution has enabled the Library to devote more scarce resources to programming itself.) Finally, after all the pre-event work, comes the coordination of the event itself.

The Programs that Livingston residents enjoy are the result of these efforts. These may range from the recently introduced foreign film series—offered both in the afternoon and evening—to the opera offerings which, as Thea remarks, was “a plunge that worked especially well.”

In addition to their responsibilities for programs, Thea can also be found staffing the Help Desk while Chris has provided support at the Reference Desk. An initiative that Thea is responsible for is the Library’s Homebound Delivery Service which allows Library patrons who have a library card to receive home delivery and pick-up of books.

Thea’s and Chris’ backgrounds provided an excellent foundation for their current work. A Livingston resident now, Chris hales from Philadelphia where she attended LaSalle University. It was there, while working at the University’s Library, that she made a decision to pursue a career in library science. After attending Columbia University for her Masters in Library Science, Chris worked as a researcher in NYC in the Editorial Department at *Parade*, the weekly news magazine supplement. While there Chris also reviewed newspapers—national and local from throughout the nation—to spot interesting trends. Indeed, she spotted (*cont’d on Page 5*)

Mark Your Calendars!

PROGRAMS

Authors/Speakers

The Friends Guest Authors/Speakers Series continues:

 *Thursday, October 7, 2010, 7:30 PM*

Linda Cardillo, award winning author, returns to her exploration of growing up Italian in America, in her latest book, *Across the Table*.

 *Monday, November 15, 2010*

Elliott Engel, noted lecturer, returns with an exciting program about Dr. Samuel Johnson.

Music, Music, Music!

Tuesday, October 26, 2010

Friends Sponsors Shenole Latimer: Known for his intense performances and commanding stage presence, saxophonist, composer, and educator Shenole Latimer captivates his audiences with a compelling fusion of great music, excitement, and informative discussion.

Coming in February, 2011


Friends Sponsors "Capturing Prometheus' Fire," a brilliant play about Beethoven starring Ralph Petraca and directed by Ed Schiff of Apples & Oranges Productions, who presented the highly successful "A Eulogy for Vincent".

Coming in 2011

Friends Sponsors Dr. Robert Butts for a return visit.

Stay Tuned for more exciting developments

SOCIAL EVENTS*

 *Thursday October 28-Sunday October 31, 2010*

BookFest! 2010: Thousands of books and non-print media in all genres at bargain basement prices.

Thursday, April 28, 2011

2nd Annual Wine Tasting & Raffle/Auction: Wine and hors d'oeuvres in a convivial setting.

Thanks to:

Presidential

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Laurence & Deborah Bergmann

Kenneth DeGhetto

Francis Lai

Sheree & Martin Link

Caryn & Joel Mollin

Patrick Po Shun Ng

Nadia & Achilles Perry

Meet Library Trustees—Cynthia Vallario and Mickey Lam

“Words” and “Numbers.” Cynthia Vallario and Mickey Lam are, respectively, the Board Secretary and Treasurer, of the Library Board of Trustees. Together with Co-Presidents Peggy Slatkin and Larry Bergmann, they comprise the officer team of the Board. The Trustees set the tone, policy, and overall direction for the Library. As members of the Board and with their specific responsibilities in their respective officer capacities, Cynthia and Mickey play an integral role in shaping the vision and future of our Library. In addition they have vital Committee roles. Under the auspices of the Board, the standing Committees are Policy, Finance and Personnel.

Cynthia, who as Board Secretary is responsible for the review of minutes and Board-related correspondence, sits on the Policy Committee. This important Committee establishes policies over the full gamut of Library activity—ranging from the use of the Program Room to the handling of disruptive youths. Cynthia is also the Trustees’ representative on the Library Endowment Board.

Mickey runs the Finance Committee in her capacity as Treasurer. The review of monthly expenditures, the periodic assessment of all banking relationships, oversight of the annual audit, presentation of annual budgets, and supervision of the Library’s Annual Campaign, all come under her purview.

As Trustees, Mickey and Cynthia are also participants in the current Three-Year Strategic Planning process. Thus, they guide in the development of objectives along the strategic dimensions of Community Outreach, Technology, and Funding.

In the realm of community outreach, the goals are to focus (i) on the ethnic/demographic diversity of the community, such as the recently introduced Foreign Film Program and expansion of the World Language Collection, and, (ii) on those constituencies which currently under-utilize the Library through a broadened array of programs and services such as speaking engagements by business authors. On the technology front, the objective is to foster the vitality of the Library as a center for education, reference, and entertainment through a multiplicity of channels. Last, but most importantly, is the fiscal responsibility to ensure the continued financial health of the Library by exploring opportunities for new sources of revenues and by cultivating new donors.

With their knowledge of Livingston, their prior work experience, and their time serving as members of the Board, each bring a unique skill and perspective to their roles. One thing both share, is a willingness to make the really big commitment of time and energy it takes to be a volunteer in community service. They also share the recognition that the chief resource of our Library, in addition to the wonderful facility, is the dedicated administration and staff who see to it that the Library is always humming. Accordingly, Cynthia and Mickey work cooperatively and pro-actively with Director Judy Kron and Assistant Director Amy Hyfler.

Born in Viet Nam, Mickey came to the United States as a youth, growing up in Astoria, NY. Fifteen years ago she and her husband moved to Livingston recognizing that it was a great community in which to raise a family. Trained in finance, Mickey worked in NYC in the insurance industry until she decided to devote more time to raising her son, now thirteen years old. Through her involvement with the Livingston Chinese School—she served as Principal from 2003 - 2005—Mickey became involved with the Library. She joined the Board of Trustees four years ago and became Treasurer this year.

Cynthia is an attorney and spent the first part of her career as a regulator at the New York Stock Exchange. The year 1991 marked a change for her, as she left the Exchange and began a career in business publishing. In 2005, when Cynthia was no longer working full time, she decided to make a serious (*cont’d on Page 5*)



Meet Library Trustees (cont'd from Page 4)

commitment to volunteer in a community capacity. Cynthia was already no stranger to community service—she had served with the League of Women Voters, HSA activities when her daughter was in the school system, a board member of the community advocates of Saint Barnabas Hospital, and was an active parishioner of St. Raphael's.

But she has always held a special passion for libraries. Born in Wallington in Bergen County, NJ, Cynthia notes that the town did not have its own public library when she was growing up. An avid reader, she would venture frequently to the Passaic Library. But the importance of a strong local, public Library always stayed with her. So active involvement with our Library was a logical choice for her, and indeed, she assumed the role of Board Secretary only one year after joining the Board of Trustees.

With the dedication, spirit, and skill that Mickey and Cynthia bring to their roles, Livingston residents are the beneficiaries of their efforts, and those of the entire Library Board, to foster a wonderful Library experience.

Meet Thea White and Chris Demidowich (cont'd from Page 2)

the Civil War re-enactment movement in its infancy and recommended a profile on the subject. After her marriage, Chris moved to New Jersey where she worked at the Dana Library at Rutgers, Newark and the Bloomfield Public Library before coming to Livingston. Chris jokes that she was a bit leery when she first saw the ad for the position—Adult Program Coordinator; it had the ring of an “R-rating,” fortunately for Livingston residents she pursued the position.

Chris and cardiologist husband George have two accomplished children. Son Andrew, having graduated from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and worked at the National Institutes of Health in genetics, is currently a second-year resident at Mt. Sinai Hospital in NYC. Daughter Lisa, a graduate of Richard Stockton College in New Jersey, now attends the New York College of Podiatry.

Thea's path to the Livingston Library was somewhat circuitous. Her first career was as an actress. Born in Newark, Thea studied at RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) in London. She has acted in off-Broadway plays, done summer stock, performed at dinner theatres, and has appeared at Drew University's NJ Shakespeare Festival. However, she is probably most beloved for her role as Grandmother of Courage, the Cowardly Dog which she did for four seasons and which can still be seen on the Cartoon Network. It is this role for which she still receives mail from devoted fans.

It is not surprising that Thea became an actress—it is in her genes. Her grandmother ran away from her Iowa home at the age of sixteen to join an acting company of Uncle Tom's Cabin, later set up the first movie house in Clarksville, Iowa, and put Thea's mother on the stage in vaudeville at age five. Thea's husband, Andy, now semi-retired, still teaches drums for pipe bands, and, has the distinction of having been the actual drummer on the first three Beatles albums—performing in lieu of Ringo Starr. During her career, Thea lived in Dallas, England, and Scotland before returning to New Jersey where she has been able to leverage her drama and acting skills in her role as Outreach Specialist.

Neither lady, however, is limited to their career spheres. Thea is a practitioner of yoga. Chris is as a collector of pysanky—beautifully decorated Ukrainian Easter eggs created using special techniques.

With their skills and backgrounds, Chris and Thea, together and individually, have taken Library Programming to new heights, reflecting the diversity of our community and the breadth of cultural experience. They hope you'll visit the Library—to attend a program, for a chat about book recommendations, or perhaps, if it is your first time, for just an introduction from the Help Desk



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Visit Friends online at: <http://livingston.bccls.org/friends.html>

Think Green: If you would like to receive the Newsletter electronically instead of via U.S. mail, please contact us at Liv_bookfest@yahoo.com

Bookplates honoring all Extraordinary Friends are placed in the Library. To identify the book recognizing your contribution, contact: Barbara Bye at Liv_bookfest@yahoo.com or 973-992-4600 X505.

Look for the Friends Membership Drive in the Mail

