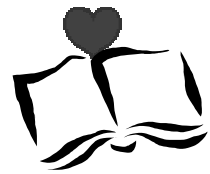


FRIENDS of the LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

Volume 15 Issue 2

Summer 2008



FRIENDS of the LIBRARY
NORTHUMBERLAND

FROM THE PRESIDENT—*Jay Walker*

Friends of the Library certainly does not take the summer off. As you can read inside this Summer Newsletter, there's a lot going on.

The Super Raffle is in full swing. We've done well with a variety of prizes. Proof of that is in the sales: \$3,266 as of July 5. We have taken the Super Raffle to the Heathsville Farmers Markets, the Strawberry Festival/Library Book Sale, and out in front of the Heathsville Food Lion. Other venues are in the offing.

As always we need your help. I know it sounds crazy, but working the raffle sales is fun. Of course you have to be prepared for the rebuffs. You know, it's those people who don't make eye contact. On the other hand, you also get to chat with friendly people who want to a) win a prize and b) help the library.

Sometimes helping the library is the only motive. I was impressed by the number of people at Food Lion, July 5, who simply handed me money -- \$5 and \$10 -- for the library without signing the tickets.

So when Eve Jordan calls for volunteers, please take some time to join. Because, as I said, Friends of the Library does not take the summer off.

Other programs are moving ahead for the fall. Books Alive resumes in September. The English Tea will also be back. Planning for the Christmas organ concert at Burnt Chimneys in Village is underway as well.

Finally, we are organizing a membership drive to renew the expired memberships and to improve outreach to new members.

I must add a note about the Volunteer Appreciation Day on that hot June Sunday. Lien, Earline, and I were honored as Outstanding Library Friend for 2008 presented by the Virginia Public Library Directors' Association. It was our Library Director, Jayne McQuade, who nominated us in the category of Libraries Serving a Population Under 25,000. That was a great surprise.



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FOL Board Members

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Vice Pres: Lien Groenwold
Treasurer: Judy Burgess
Secretary: Bob Lindsey

Committees

Publicity: Jay Walker
Ways and Means:
 Lien Groenwold
Books/Songs Alive:
 Earline Walker
Hospitality: Jinny Estell
Membership: Eve Jordan
Newsletter: Rita Johnson

FROM THE DIRECTOR—*Jayne McQuade*

Summer time, and the living is busy at the library. Every day kids are coming in to get books to read, get their reading “passports” stamped and attend great programs. The program, a cooperative effort with the wonderful folks at Northumberland Elementary School, requires kids to visit a library five times during the summer. The theme this year is “Catch the Reading Bug” so we’ve had lots of buggy books, buggy programs and even buggy songs at the kickoff program at the school. We’ve cooperated with other libraries, too, in booking entertainers for the programs, and our own Nancy Webster, Children’s Librarian, transformed herself into Bonnie Bugmister and told stories for kids in Northumberland, Richmond and Essex Counties.

We’ve got a new library intern. Her name is Molly Robinson and she’s a student at Northumberland High School. Be sure to say “hi” to her when you see her at work.

Also notice the picture of John Heath that was recently unveiled in the magazine area. We plan to put up pictures of more prominent Northumberland people.

We’ll be launching a library volunteer drive soon, so watch for stories in the newspaper. We’re seeking desk workers for evenings and Saturdays and also Homework Center helpers, so watch the local papers for information.

I attended the American Library Association’s Annual Conference in Anaheim, CA, at the end of June. I attended an excellent session on advocacy for small and rural libraries, and had an Amtrak adventure. Ask me about my train story!

THE BOOK REVIEW CORNER—*Bob Lindsey*

Tough Gal

Review of *Short Straw*, by Stuart Woods

My recent audio book traveling companion has been has been delightful listening. Read by Michael Kramer, whose variety of voices helps distinguish the characters, *Short Straw* easily holds the driver’s interest, and the story is uncomplicated enough so that the rewind button is seldom required to get back on track when distractions of the road intrude.

It seems that rising Santa Fe lawyer Ed Eagle, smart as he is, has a weakness for beautiful, capable blonds. He married one who proves capable of helping herself to the greater part of his sizeable bank account and running for Mexico, wherein she intends to disappear, safe from extradition. To track her down, Eagle separately hires two men, Cupie and Vittorio whose individual sleuthing skills complement each other’s as they find her and lose her along the twists of her trail and the story.

Many of the plot twists may be predictable, but of the kind that evoke a happy, “Oh, I just *knew* that would happen!” At least none of the twists are of the miraculous kind that some writers fall back on to get out of a tale jam.

The characters are believable in their strengths and amusing in their weaknesses, and in the hands of Woods they interact to produce a humdinger caper.

BOOKS/SONGS ALIVE—*Earline Walker, Chairperson*

The Books Alive spring program was a big success, capped by full-house attendance in May and June for Anne Hobson Freeman's review of *Learning to Fly* by her close friend Mary Lee Settle and Barbara Shine's review of *Timekeeper* by her friend John Atkinson, who attended the review. People who knew the late Mary Lee Settle attended and related stories about the author. A special treat in June was hearing John Atkinson read his own words. Later Atkinson told Shine how touched he was by the warm reception he received.

The fall program promises to be something from everyone. In September John Fea will review his full-length biography of Philip Vickers Fithian. It tells the story of Fithian's career in Colonial Virginia, including his experience as a tutor on the plantation of Robert Carter III in the Northern Neck, his missionary tour of the backcountry, and his service as a chaplain in George Washington's army.

Mystery fans will not want to miss the October Books Alive. Author Del Staecker will review *The Muted Mermaid* which has been compared with the best works of Raymond Chandler and Elmore Leonard. In addition, Staecker will preview his works in progress.

And for something completely different, Books Alive in November will have Kenny Wayne Fields reviewing his true adventure, *The Rescue of Streetcar 304*. The title refers to his Navy helicopter's code name. He was shot down in Laos during the Vietnam War and experienced "forty hours on the run."

Songs Alive will have another Christmas at Burnt Chimneys organ concert by Dennis Stephens. Because of the success of last year's program, we plan to have two, back-to-back presentations in December. We had to turn away people last year, so adding another performance will make it possible to accommodate everyone.

Look for more details as the planning continues. It promises to be another hit for the Friends of the Library, thanks to the generosity of Dennis.

WAYS AND MEANS—*Lien Groenwold, Chairperson*

We have had the super raffle going since April. It has been going great. We have taken in over \$3200 so far. I have to agree with what all of you have been saying "This is the best quilt yet". How does one top that for next year. Of course we are already thinking about that now and ideas have germinated. The fact that we have a laptop computer this year does not hurt either.

Mark your calendars for "The afternoon Tea". It will be the last Sunday in Sept. Should we have as much interest as last year we will have a second tea in early Oct. Susan Anthony Talbot has agreed to play the harp for us again. So we are in for a treat.

I want to thank all of you for buying the raffle ticket. Without you the "Ladies of the Night" could not quilt all they could and wanted, we could have lots of other interesting prizes, but it would amount to a heap of beans.

I was working in the library with Jayne last night and she was cataloging some book. So I asked if she had gotten new ones and she said: "Yes, I had some extra money". You all know that budgets are tight and Jayne had extra money. The Friends were able to give her a \$10,000 check a few months ago. That is all because of you. This whole community makes it happen. Some people make something, other support it by buying and our library thrives for the benefit of the whole community. I just love it.

So thank you again everyone, for making it happen.

YTD 2008 Raffle Sales are \$3266.75. That includes the fantastic \$577.00 from Saturday's Food Lion.

THE BOOK REVIEW CORNER—*Bob Lindsey*

Virginia's Fall from Greatness

Review of *Dominion of Memories: Jefferson, Madison, and the Decline of Virginia* *Dominion of Memories*, by Susan Dunn

The colony of Massachusetts is where the radical idea of American independence was born, but it was Virginia that provided most of the intellectual and political leadership for the country's emergence, and more than any other state, the money that financed the revolution.

No other state produced as many of the "founding fathers" as Virginia: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison, James Monroe, John Marshall, and George Mason come quickly to mind.

At the time of the Revolution, Virginia was the wealthiest and most populous of the original thirteen states, and Virginians furnished four of the first five American presidents. In the 1780s Virginia's prosperity led the new nation.

By the mid-1820's, however, Virginia's agriculture, the foundation of its wealth was well into serious decline. Land values were sinking and plantation bankruptcies were on the rise. On a brief tour of Virginia in 1834, William Seward, President Lincoln's future Secretary of State, was disheartened by the scenes of poverty there; and a decade later, Frederick Law Olmstead decried the "poverty and dejection" he saw in Virginia.

The decline continued. By nearly every measure of progress and quality of life, Virginia had fallen from the very top rank of the original states to the bottom.

Why?

That is the question addressed by Williams College professor Susan Dunn in *Dominion of Memories: Jefferson, Madison, and the Decline of Virginia*. Based on well-documented research, Professor Dunn's account shows how the ruling elite of 18th Century Virginia, the Tidewater plantation and slave owners, manipulated the politics of the Old Dominion to further their own selfish interests, including the perpetuation of their dominance and cavalier way of life. Ultimately, the ruling elite proved the destructiveness of rule by aristocracy by bringing all of Virginia, including itself, to near-ruin.

Dominion of Memories details how the plantation owners concentrated power in their hands and established a structure of class and values that restricted industrial enterprise, limited infrastructure development, neglected public education, and exhausted the soil. The once genteel agrarian elite came to rely on the breeding and export of slaves to prevent bankruptcy. The small holders of eastern Virginia who didn't leave for the West were reduced to bare subsistence farming, and the mines of western Virginia looked to the Ohio Valley for marketing their coal and iron ore. All the while, many of the best and brightest of Virginia youth were denied a future at home by primogeniture governing inheritance of land and lack of opportunity in commerce or industry.

FOL members who are interested in the lives of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison will be rewarded by the amount of attention Professor Dunn devotes to these two icons of American history during the post-Revolution decline of the Old Dominion.

Although slavery and the great tidewater plantations are long gone, Dunn's closing pages note instances where the persistence of some Old Dominion social and political values has ill served Virginia in modern times.

Professor Dunn, a professor of humanities at Williams College, has written seven books on American History, two of which in collaboration with James MacGregor Burns

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOARD MEETING—March 21, 2008

Bob Lindsey, Secretary

The meeting was opened at 10 a.m. by FOL President Jay Walker. In attendance were Vice President Lien Groenwold, Treasurer Judy Burgess, Secretary Bob Lindsey, Earline Walker, and Wanda Allain.

Reading of Minutes

The minutes were accepted as published in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report

Judy Burgess reported a May 31, 2008 balance of \$4,491.76, to be amended when revenue from the Super raffle is tabulated.

Ways and Means Committee Report

Super Raffle — Lien Groenwold announced that Super Raffle ticket sales will be held at the Food Lion in Heathsville on July 5 instead of at the Reedville 4th of July Parade; the Farmers market, July 19, the Knights of Columbus event in Kilmarnock, date TBA; the Reedville Nautical Flea Market, date TBA; the Countdown to Christmas at St. Stephen's Anglican Church, and the Quilter's Gala, October 17-19.

English Tea --- Lien announced popular demand has prompted her to plan two dates, as yet undetermined, for of the English Tea this year.

Silent Auction — The Board agreed to begin soliciting items for the Silent Auction from local artists and craftsmen and to set out some of the items for display in the Library foyer a few weeks prior to the event, to arrange chairs in groups for the event instead of lined up against the wall, and to continue charging \$5 per ticket to defray to cost of the beverages and snacks.

Books Alive Report

Earline Walker reported a "good season" for Books Alive, with only one of its programs poorly attended. At Earline's suggestion, the Board agreed mailing post cards to remind FOL members of the Books Alive programs was not worth the expense and will be discontinued. Earline agreed to investigate the feasibility of email announcements to replace the mailed cards.

After the Summer hiatus, Books Alive will resume with the Fall schedule:

September — Dr. John Fea, author of a book about pre-Revolution American diarist Philip Fithian.

October — Mystery writer Del Stacker.

November — Kenny Wayne Fields, author of *The Story of the Rescue of Streetcar 304*.

Songs Alive Report

Earline reports the Christmas Organ Recital at "Burnt Chimneys" will be held this year on a date to be determined.

Chairman Jay Walker announced the next meeting will be held in September, and adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Volunteer Appreciation Day



Northumberland Public Library
FRIENDS of the LIBRARY
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