



Friends of the
Long Beach
Public Library

Friends of the Long Beach Public Library

Winter 2024 Newsletter



Master Slave Husband Wife Author Event

Ilyon Woo and Peggy Trotter Dammond Preacely held the audience enthralled when they discussed their histories and friendship on Saturday, February 10, during the Friends of the Library presentation of “Public History, Private Memory: The Legacy of Ellen and William Craft Through the Collaborative Viewpoint of an Author and a Descendant.”

The two became fast friends while Ilyon Woo was researching her book *Master Slave Husband Wife*, which tells the true story of how Ellen and William Craft escaped slavery in a unique way – Ellen passing as a sick white man and her husband William her enslaved servant. Peggy Preacely is the great, great-granddaughter of the Crafts, a Long Beach resident and former “early” Freedom Rider, and she remains a working member of the historic Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). These two women had been introduced to each other by Honorary Academy Award winner and documentary film director, Charles Burnett, who was also in the audience.

Ilyon and Peggy told their separate stories about learning the history of the Crafts; Ilyon from her reading of the Craft’s own story *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom*, and Peggy from listening to her mother’s stories and the archival items she left behind. The program was moderated by educator and immediate past-president of the Long Beach Public Library Foundation Ryan Ballard. Woo and Preacely were engaging, thoughtful, and respectful of the story they told. Over 180 people attended the free event held at the Bob and Barbara Ellis Auditorium on the LAC campus of Long Beach City College and gave the duo a standing ovation. Copies of the book were sold at the event (many thanks to Gatsby Books) followed by a book signing. If you have not read the book or listened to the audio book, consider adding it to your reading list.



From left, Ryan Ballard moderated the discussion of *Master Slave Husband Wife* with author, Ilyon Woo and Peggy Preacely .

Several notable guests were in the audience including District 5 Councilwoman Megan Kerr, Vice President of the LB Board of Harbor Commissioners Bonnie Lowenthal, Director of Library Services Cathy De Leon, Harbor Commissioner Sharon Weissman, MSHW audio book narrator Leon Nixon, and Barbara Ellis, the benefactor for whom the auditorium is named.

The event was underwritten by the Friends of the Library’s Blanche Collins Forum, an endowment fund named for the city librarian who stood up to the city council against censoring the library. It was sponsored in partnership with the African American Heritage Society, and the Long Beach City College Foundation.

An Afternoon with Shelby Van Pelt and a “Remarkably Bright Creature”

Sunday, March 10th 2-4 pm

LB City Hall Council Chambers
Free admission & parking



Sponsored by Friends of LBPL

From the Director

Hello, Friends! A belated Happy New Year and Happy Lunar New Year to you from all of us at the Long Beach Public Library.

We've started off the year with lots to celebrate. Kudos to the Friends and the staff at Billie Jean King Main Library for successfully relocating and reopening the Friends Bookshop. Its new, more prominent location just to the left of the main entrance is sure to please both longtime bookshop browsers and regular library visitors. Congratulations also to the hardworking Friends Board for relaunching the Blanche Collins lecture series. I'm excited to see both the Library and the Friends collectively highlight literature and prominent authors through its various programs, further enriching Long Beach's vibrant literary scene.

Library staff is working hard year-round to reach all parts of our community through its collections and programs, and February is no exception. To celebrate Lunar New Year, local artist Stacy Wong led a series of workshops where participants created red envelope wall charms. This February we also commemorated Black History Month through a series of programs that began with a Black Excellence Professional Development Day. Attendees received resume support and had professional head shots taken.

In partnership with the Health Department, Youth Services staff is hosting a series of early learning and child development workshops for parents at several library locations. The series began in January and will continue through spring. Topics include special education, healthy speech development, and encouraging emotional awareness.

Thank you, always, to our generous Friends for helping to make programs like these possible. Every program is an opportunity to meet and foster new library patrons and to provide services that meet the needs of our wonderful Long Beach community.

Cathy De Leon, Director of Long Beach Public Library

President's Message

Dear Friends,

The Friends of the Library are looking for a few key Board members...Are you interested in volunteering for

the Friends? Have you experience in organizing events? Or do you love children and their books?

The Friends of the Library wants you!

We have two openings for Board of Directors that require special skills. Both positions are in charge of endowment funds with a specific mission. Both require organizational abilities, enthusiasm, and a love for libraries.

The Blanche Collins Forum is named after the courageous city librarian who stood up to censorship in 1962, which was the basis for the founding of the Friends. The mission of the Forum, which has its own endowment fund, is to provide cultural programming for the community, generally in the form of a speaker program. Past speakers have included astronaut Sally Ride, authors Ray Bradbury and Susan Orleans, and LA Poet Laureate Luis Rodriguez. Dormant since before the pandemic, this year the Forum is making up for lost time with two events – the recent February 10 appearance of Ilyon Woo and civil rights activist Peggy Trotter Dammond Preacely discussing Woo's book "Master Slave Husband Wife", and the upcoming March 10 event with author Shelby Van Pelt and her "Remarkably Bright Creatures".

The Director of the Forum is in charge of organizing the event, from procuring the speaker to developing the promotion and arranging the venue. It is not a solo effort; although the Director is in charge, all Friends Board members help accomplish the many tasks.

Perhaps you enjoy children, children's literature, and children's programming? Our Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel (HFCC) might be your favorite volunteer activity. The HFCC, with its own endowment fund, is responsible for the Library's Summer Reading Program performance activities and the annual Essay Contest for our library patrons aged 5-18. In addition, the HFCC Director meets with children's librarians from across the city to discuss how best to enhance their education and training.

These positions are members of the Friends Board of Directors and require some time commitment, including attend monthly meetings September through June. If you are enthusiastic, dedicated, and a library supporter, please consider volunteering. You will not be sorry, and we would love to have you!

Please reach me at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com if you are interested or have any questions.

Welcome New Library Friends

We would like to welcome the following new Friends of the Library members.

Melissa Bahmanpour	Gordana Kajer
John Blasco	Derrick Muska
Stephanie Boone	Jill Rubalcaba
Sharon Diggs-Jackson	Salvador Sanchez
Laura Graves Smith	Bob Slawson

Super Friends of FOLBPL

We would like to thank our new and renewing Super Friends since June 2023. We appreciate your generosity and support.

Gordana Kajer	Mary Lamo
Claudine & Paul Burnett	Alan Coles & Janet Phun
Deborah Chankin	Jay Glaser
Allan Abrahamse	Phyllis Cominsky
Patricia Benoit	Greg Wade
Kaye Briegel	

Use This QR Code → Friends Website



President: Barbara Sosa

Editor: Diane Riska-Taylor

Contributors: Ellen Butler, Cathy De Leon, Jan Jackson, Caroline Martin, Lisa Moore, Sydney Simon, Barbara Sosa

The Friends of the Library newsletter is usually published three times annually for members in good standing.

Visit our website at www.lbplfriends.org

Contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com

Remembering Mary Lamo-Putnam

Our friend, Mary Lamo-Putnam, died on January 11, 2024, after a years-long struggle with cancer. She was 64.

Mary was a member of the Friends and the LBPL Foundation for many years. She served as liaison between the two organizations from 2019 to 2020; she was an enthusiastic participant in all our activities and programs.

Mary especially loved the *Celebrate Our Librarians* event, the annual party hosted by the Foundation and the Friends for all our librarians and library assistants. She helped organize and was hands-on in all the preparations, and she developed a task outline that we still use for planning the occasion today.

We will miss our Mary. Our hearts go out to her family and many friends. In her honor, the Friends of the Library will donate a memorial book to BJK Main Library. Her family suggests that donations in her memory be made to Ros1ders (ROS1+ lung cancer research), or a charity of your choice.



Mary Lamo-Putnam (left), with Friends President Barbara Sosa and Susan Redfield, at the librarian celebration.

Memorial Books

Since June 2023, the following individuals were honored with Memorial Books donated in their name and selected by the library staff:

Cheryl Bryan and *Junior League Sustainers Book Club* remembered Sheri Beebe.

Linda Johnson remembered Henrietta Olsen.

Linda and Richard Katz have honored Roy Rocklin.

Friends of the Library Annual Meeting and Luncheon to Feature Erskine and Seales

Please plan to join the Friends of the Library for our Annual Meeting and Literary Luncheon on Saturday, May 25, 2024. We will meet at The Grand, 4101 E. Willow Street, Long Beach.

This year we will feature Chris Erskine, longtime L.A. Times columnist and blog writer, and Steve Seales. They will be discussing their book, "What the Bear Knows." Doors open at 11 am.

Information about reservations coming soon, so watch for an email and check our web site:

www.lbplfriends.org

Changes at our BJK Main Bookshop

Long time Book Sales Chair, Beverly Stunden, has decided to retire from her longtime voluntary position. In her words, "I'm too old to do this stuff anymore". She does plan to continue to stock the carts or shelves when she is at Main, and to give us advice.



Beverly Stunden also managed the Silent Auctions at our Annual Meetings.

Bev took over the position from former longtime manager and Friend, Barbara Hubbs, while we were still at the old Main branch. She managed the move of our operations and many donations from the old location to the new BJK Main, and that was a huge undertaking as it included both the bookshop and our several storage locations.

She worked to set up our new bookshop and storage area (we call it The Cave as it is down in the basement). Bev trained volunteers and helped set up systems to make the bookshop manageable. She has filled her SUV

with donations and lugged countless boxes of books over the years.

Her dry (some might say salty) sense of humor and her friendship have been and are appreciated by many Friends, volunteers and bookshop volunteers, and book purchasers. We want to acknowledge and thank Bev for her many volunteer hours that have benefited our Long Beach libraries.

Welcome Tom Ader, a longtime Friend and volunteer who is now managing the Main Bookshop. Tom will keep our bookshop stocked and eventually manage volunteers as well as the donations that flow through our system.

Caroline Martin will continue managing the resale portion of sales with Thriftbooks and large donation inquiries. Arlene Gale travels between our branches, ensuring that each has the right balance of donations to sell. Barbara Sosa manages our work with Discover Books, but eventually Tom will take on that job

When we have book/CD/DVD sales at branches, that is usually a combination of management efforts by all of them to get the materials to and from the sites. We are looking for a volunteer to manage these other tasks. It is rewarding and fun work, and keeps you physically active! If you are interested, please send us an email at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com

Board Member Highlights: Sydney Simon

Board Member Sydney Simon was born and raised in West Los Angeles during a time when everyone walked to school, mothers sent kids outside to play after school, and went to their local library to do homework. She has many fond memories of the Robertson Branch of the LA Public Library.

After getting a degree from SMCC/UCLA, she worked for 30 years at St. John's Medical Center in Santa Monica as a Critical Care Respiratory Therapist. Her daughter lives in San Diego as a medical social worker. Her son lives and works in Long Beach as a terminal manager at the Long Beach Port.

She moved to Long Beach in 2000 because LB was an affordable beach; however, the commute to and from Santa Monica drove her to an early retirement. Once retired, she soon became a board member of the Belmont Heights Community Association and served as Treasurer for four years. She led the project to get the

cable companies to address the wire blight issue in the neighborhood. She also organized and hosted an annual Belmont Heights Art Show and recruited artists to paint Belmont Heights signal boxes.



Sydney has traveled through Southeast Asia, Europe and the U.S. Through the CSULB Olli Program she learned to play the ukulele and belonged to two musical groups, the *Play It Again Jam* and the advanced ukulele finger picking class. She belongs to two book clubs, and her favorite genres are historical fiction and nonfiction.

Sydney stays active in local and national issues. While talking with her good friend and board member, Ellen Butler, at a book club meeting, she mentioned that she was interested in working with the Friends of LBPL on the Banned Book Week committee. Suddenly, she was a board member.

Sydney serves as a Friends liaison with Kristina Duggan, 3rd District Councilmember, to keep her apprised of the Friends and library activities. She is also the Branch Buddy for the Burnett Library and helped with their reopening of the African American Resource Area in August.

The Friends appreciate all that Sydney does for our community.

BJK Main Bookshop Has Moved

Our Main bookshop is still at BJK Main, but it has relocated, and it's not very far from the original. It is just inside the Main door, directly left on open shelves, near the Family Learning Center. Payment is made via the Honor Box that is currently near the Circulation Desk.

While new books and media are there for sale, it is still a work in progress. New signage is on the way, and the Honor Box that will soon be mounted directly next to the bookshop shelving.



Please drop by and use the membership coupon below. You can use for up to 2 books, plus 2 CDs, plus 2 DVDs. Parking is free for 30 minutes in the Civic Center Garage (332 W Broadway), next door to BJK Main. Additional time is \$2 per 30 minutes.

Clip and Save Coupon!

FRIENDS OF THE LONG BEACH LIBRARY
Bookshop COUPON for members



Friends of the
Long Beach
Public Library

Good for 2 books
and 2 CDs and 2
DVDs

Valid only at the Billie Jean King Main Library.
Please put coupon in the Honor Box by the
Circulation Desk.

Friends Celebrate MLK Jr Day

The Friends of the Library were one of 45 vendor groups on Saturday, January 13, participating in the Martin Luther King Celebration at MLK Park. We talked to library patrons of all ages and gave away children's books by the dozens, while promoting our February 10th event with Ilyon Woo and Peggy Precely at LBCC. It was a beautiful day for all!

SAVE THE DATE

Friends of LBPL Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Saturday, May 25th 11 am

Chris Erskine & Steve Seales discuss their
book: "What the Bear Knows"

at

The Grand

Watch for registration details

