



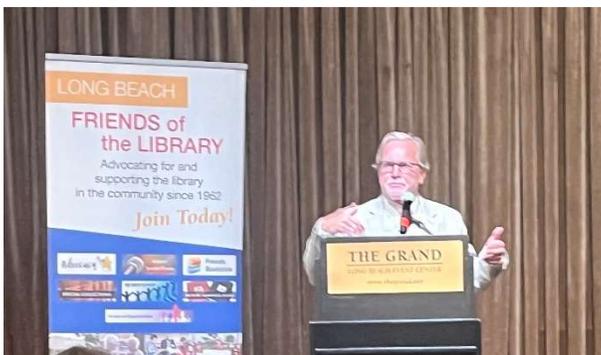
Friends of the
Long Beach
Public Library

Friends of the
Long Beach Public Library
Spring 2024 Newsletter



Chris Erskine Stars at Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Chris Erskine, former LA Times and nationally-syndicated columnist and author, had the crowd chuckling and out-and-out laughing during his talk at our Annual Meeting and Literary Luncheon at the Grand on Saturday, May 25.



Annual Luncheon Speaker, Chris Erskine, entertained guests with bear stories.

Chris spoke about his new book, "What the Bears Know", written with "The Bear Whisperer" Steve Searles, who was unable to attend. He described how he originally met Searles just to do a feature column on his unique, non-lethal methods to deal with the bears in Mammoth Mountain. Searles pitched him his idea for a book, with a chapter dedicated to each bear and what he learned from them. They wrote the book during the pandemic, sharing updates over the phone – Searles on the mountain and Erskine at his home in LA. Copies of the book were available at the luncheon from Gatsby Books, and Erskine signed copies for attendees.

During the Annual Meeting portion of the event, Arlene Gale was re-elected Vice President of Membership; Carol Quinlan and Sydney Simon will share the office of Treasurer; and Ellen Butler and Dawn Mendelson will share the office of Recording Secretary. Their roles run until 2026.



Save the date for the 2025 Annual Meeting and Literary Luncheon – Saturday, May 17, 2025 at the Grand. See you there!

From the Director

Hello, Friends! Spring has definitely sprung at Long Beach Public Library, and staff have been busy as bees delivering wonderful services and programs for the entire Long Beach community.

In April, the Library partnered with the Parks and Recreation and the Health and Human Services Departments to host the Annual Celebration of the Young Child at Billie Jean King Main Library and Lincoln Park. We welcomed hundreds of young families for a day full of entertainment and activities. We also hosted a graduation ceremony for children ages 0-5 years who completed the 'Dive into Reading' challenge of reading 1,000 books before kindergarten. Some of our littlest patrons donned their graduation caps and walked across the stage to "Pomp and Circumstance." It was a site to behold!

In early May, Long Beach Public Library selected the 2nd City of Long Beach Youth Poet Laureate, Helena Donato-Sapp, as well as four youth poet ambassadors at a ceremony at the Edison Theater on Broadway. Inaugural Youth Poet Laureate Claire Beeli along with two local accomplished poets selected the new cohort of youth poets and helped to kick off the second year of the program. We look forward to seeing Helena in action as she represents the City and grows as an artist.

Also in early May, thanks to the support of the Friends, we hosted our 3rd Festival of Asian American Pacific Islander Books at the Michelle Obama Library. 2016 Pulitzer Prize winning author Viet Thanh Nguyen and 2022 Rome Prize in Literature author Gina Apostol closed out the event with an amazing conversation on writing, identity, and the Asian American diaspora. Nguyen's novel, *The Sympathizer*, was recently adapted into a series that's currently airing on HBO.

Thank you again to our wonderful Friends! You truly inspire us with your dedication and kindness.

*Cathy De Leon, Director
Long Beach Public Library*

President's Message

Greetings! The 2023-2024 Friends of the Library year is wrapping up, and it's been a busy and productive one – more so than any year since the pandemic. So please

bear with me while I brag a little.

The original draft for this article was too long when I described the circumstances of each event we hosted. Many of the events were covered in our past two newsletters this year, and in these pages. So instead, I'm just going to list our activities...

- The year began, as it usually does, with our Essay Contest Award Ceremony in August, held this year at Mark Twain Neighborhood Library. We awarded 15 prize packages to essayists in all age groups from 5-18.
- At the same time, we awarded 3 Barbara Egyud Scholarships to library workers who are continuing their education.
- We worked at four different events during the week-long observance of Banned Books Week in September. Although we are fortunate to live in a tolerant community that has had little threat of the book bans that seem to be sweeping the country, the Friends are dedicated to educating Long Beach residents about the process and encouraging everyone to stay ever-vigilant to prevent it from happening in our city.
- In January, we had a booth at the MLK Festival, where we gave away children's books and informed attendees about the Friends.
- We were honored to host a conversation with Ms Peggy Preacely and author Ilyon Woo in February. The event, held at LBCC in conjunction with the LBCC Foundation and during Black History Month, was a first of its kind for us. Woo's best-selling book "Master Slave, Husband Wife" was recently awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Biography.
- We hosted author Shelby Van Pelt in March; her best-selling novel "Remarkably Bright Creatures" is still on the best seller lists after two years.
- The Friends of the Library made their annual 'wish list' donation to the LBPL; this year a total donation of \$12,000 was given to the 11 neighborhood libraries and eight departments at BJK Main. These are no-strings attached, discretionary funds that can be used by the

libraries and the departments for anything they like.

- And we recently wrapped up our year with our Annual Meeting and Literary Luncheon, where former LA Times columnist and author Chris Erskine discussed his new book.
- We also awarded two additional \$1,000 scholarships to LBPL employees to help with their continuing education.

Altogether, not a bad year. It has been my privilege to lead a passionate and dedicated board of volunteers for the last five years. Stay tuned – we’ve got more planned! Thank you for your support, and enjoy your summer.

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

Welcome New Library Friends

We would like to welcome the following new Friends of the Library members. If you have any questions or are thinking about volunteering for one of our projects or board openings, please contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com

Carol Van Alsten	Christina Johnsonthrift
Samantha Aviles	Sasha Lopez
Jess Baker	Elizabeth Louros
Sophia Carter	Chloe Merdrano
Gabriella Castaneda	Meghan Pinyan
Christine Cramer	Peggy Preacely
Linda & Jeffrey Freundlich	Lesla Wolf
Darcy Fudge	Kathleen Woods
Margarita Gajicki	

Super Friends of FOLBPL

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

Marianne Buchanan	Camille Lenhert
Gabriella Castaneda	Sylvia Navari
Deidre Cox	Patricia Reilly
Patrick & Trudi Curran	Linda Tam
Annette Gordon	Marie C. Treadwell
Rosemary Harks	Sharon Westafer

Membership Change: July 1-June 30

We have changed our fiscal year start and end dates. The new year now begins on July 1 through June 30, rather than June 1 to May 31. Membership dues are payable every year. The exception is a Lifetime membership.

How do you know when your member expires? Check your address label today - *the first line shows your membership expiration date*. Thanks to those of you who have already renewed via our website (<https://www.lbplfriends.org/membership-purchase>) or mailed in a check. The QR code and envelope are here in the newsletter for your convenience.

Questions about your membership? Email us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com.

Memorial Books

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

Richard and Janet Katz honored Janet’s late brother, Roy Rocklin. We apologize for the error in the winter issue.

David and Agnes Knight honor Dick Bamrick

The Friends Board, Ellen Butler, and Barbara Sosa all purchased books to remember Mary Lamo Putnam.

Barbara Sosa also honored her late husband, Edward, with a book donation.

Save the Date!
Banned Book Week
September 22-28, 2024

Congratulations to our Newest Scholarship Awardees

The Friends are happy to announce the two new 2024 winners of a \$1,000 Barbara Egyud Memorial Scholarship.

Michelle Sosa - Main library: Michelle expects to complete her Masters in Library Sciences next year. She has served as an adult literacy tutor and has a passion for bringing awareness to all our community about the resources available at the library. Her interactions with adults from all backgrounds gives her the opportunity to gather information on the ever-changing needs for resources, knowledge, and tutorials to continually improve library services for the library. She loves Long Beach and hopes to continue working in library services here.

Karina Mejia – Mark Twain library: Karina loves working with the Teen programming. Keeping them interested and participating at the library is a challenge she appreciates. Her current focus is on children’s programming, leading bilingual storytime and programs for the younger patrons. She has developed an understanding of how vital the cultural programs are in our diverse population.



Our newest scholarship recipients with Linda Kimberly, Scholarship Chair: Karina Mejia (left) and Michelle Sosa (right).

Congratulations to both scholarship winners as they continue their education.

The Friends would like to thank Linda Kimberly for her dedication while serving as our Scholarship Committee Chair over the years.

Popular Lego Clubs are Looking for Donations

Several of our neighborhood libraries host very popular Lego Clubs. They are so well-attended that they are accepting donations of gently used Legos, particularly base boards, so that more youngsters may participate.

If you have any Lego materials that need a new home, please contact one of our branch libraries.

[Use This QR Code → Friends Website](#)



President: Barbara Sosa

Editor: Diane Riska-Taylor

Contributors: Ellen Butler, Cathy De Leon, Jan Jackson, Linda Kimberly, Caroline Martin, Liliana Roman-Shin, 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](http://www.lbplfriends.org)

Contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com

Banned Book Week 2024

Banned Book Week this year is September 22-28, 2024. Our efforts to inform our community of the current state of censorship at school and public libraries was a huge success last year, and we plan to expand our efforts this year. The Friends have tentative plans at this point to do outreach:

Sunday, September 22 in front of the Chase bank on 2nd St. in Belmont Shore

Friday, September 27 on 4th St. in Retro Row

Saturday, September 28 at one of our branch libraries

Friday, October 4 for 4th Fridays in Bixby Knolls in front of the Expo building



Donna Artukovic (right), a volunteer and former school board member from Los Alamitos, assisted the Friends at our Banned Books events.

The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom documented 4,240 unique book titles targeted for censorship, as well as 1,247 demands to censor library books, materials, and resources in 2023. The number of titles targeted for censorship at public libraries increased by 92% over the previous year, accounting for about 46% of all book challenges in 2023.

<https://www.ala.org/bbooks/book-ban-data>

If you would like to help us plan (our meetings are open) and/or participate (show up, hand out information, and engage with passersby), please contact Ellen Butler via text or call (562.396.2251); or via email (LNBLBC@gmail.com).

Shelby Van Pelt's "Remarkably Bright Creatures"

Shelby Van Pelt discussed aquariums and told octopus jokes during her presentation of her debut novel "Remarkably Bright Creatures" on Sunday, March 10 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

An audience of more than 80 people listened as Van Pelt told how her best-selling novel grew from a classroom writing exercise to a full-blown tale of the friendship between Marcellus, a captive octopus wanting to escape, and Tova, a compassionate widow working the night shift at an aquarium. The novel, partially narrated by Marcellus, is a captivating tale that has been on the bestseller lists for over two years.

The event, sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the Blanche Collins Forum, was free to the public, and featured a Q & A session and autograph signing by Van Pelt. Her book was available for sale from Gatsby Books.



Shelby Van Pelt and fans of Marcellus at the Author Event held in City Hall Council Chambers

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Our annual membership year is from July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025. Have you renewed your membership? *The date above your name on your mailing label shows when your membership expires.*

Your membership is important. Your contributions enable the Friends to purchase books and support other library programs and activities. As a member of the Friends, you show your concern for maintaining the resources and services of the Long Beach Public Library. You will be informed of the vital issues that affect the Library. We welcome contributions of any amount: both dues and contributions are tax deductible. A book will be donated to the library in the name of each Super Friend. Thank you for your support.

Please use this form for your renewal or give it to an acquaintance who might wish to join. Thank you for joining the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library. Or visit our new web site at www.lbplfriends.org

- New Member or Renewal
- Senior Membership \$10 Student Membership.....\$15
- Individual Membership..... \$20 Family Membership.....\$25
- Super Friend \$100 or more Patron Membership.....\$75
- Business Membership \$200 or more Lifetime Membership.....\$1,000 or more

I want to participate in the following way:

- Serve on the Friends of the Library Board of Directors
- Volunteer in the Book Store

Name.....Address.....
Zip.....Phone.....Email.....

Please join online using a credit card at www.lbplfriends.org or by mail: make checks payable to the *Friends of the Long Beach Public Library*, and mail to: Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, PO Box 15733, Long Beach, CA, 90815-0733. Either way, our membership card will be mailed to you.