

Spring 2017

Newsletter



Helping our library do more

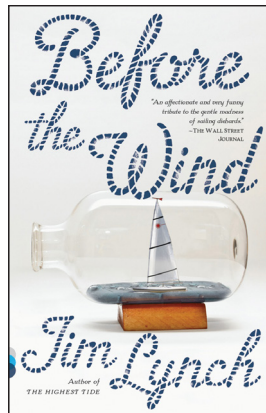
Community Read 2017: Before the Wind

by Melody Sky Eisler, Library Director

MARCH has always been one of my favorite months because it marks springtime, and now I enjoy March even more because our city proclaims March its official Reading Month. A whole month dedicated to reading and building community—a librarian's dream come true! Community Read is designed to promote closer ties among community members through reading, sharing, and discussing the same book, along with ideas related to topics the book raises.

This year's book, *Before the Wind* by Jim Lynch, will inspire the community with its charmingly quirky narrative celebrating regional sailing, maritime culture and trades, a family saga, and even Albert Einstein. It's the perfect choice for our library's twelfth Community Read. Jim is a master storyteller, who writes beautifully captivating novels about the Pacific Northwest. His love of sailing and maritime culture are palpable, and he treasures his visits to Port Townsend. What's more, he is a joy to work with and to hear speak.

The richness of this book has helped the library plan a wonderful lineup of programs with community partners in March. When I let Jim know his book was selected, he said, "I'm honored and thrilled that you all have selected *Before the Wind*! And I look forward to meeting many Port Townsend readers. ... From my vantage, it'd be hard to invent a better venue for explaining and presenting this book than Port Townsend." ☺



ABOUT THE BOOK:
Before the Wind, which is set in Seattle, was named by the American Library Association and



Canada's *National Post* as one of the best books of 2016. *The Florida Times Union* has praised it as "a grand and idiosyncratic family saga that will stand alongside Ken Kesey's *Sometimes a Great Notion*."

Protagonist Joshua Johannssen has spent all his life surrounded by sailboats. His grandfather designed them, his father built and raced them, his Einstein-obsessed mother knows why and how they work (or not). For Josh and his two siblings, their backyard was Puget Sound and sailing, their DNA. At 31, Josh—who repairs boats of all kinds in a Steinbeckian marina south of Seattle—is pained and confused by his volatile family. When the Johannssens unexpectedly reunite for the most important race in these waters—all of them together on a classic vessel they made decades ago—they will be carried to destinies both individual and collective, and to a heart-shattering revelation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: A native of the Pacific Northwest, Jim Lynch graduated from the University of Washington before working as a reporter for newspapers across the country, including in Alaska, Virginia, Washington, and Oregon. He is the author of four award-winning books: *The Highest Tide*, *Border Songs*, and *Truth Like the Sun*. He lives and sails in Olympia, Washington, with his wife and daughter. ☺

Community Read Events

Community Read kicks off with a screening of *Sea Gypsies*, in partnership with the Port Townsend Film Festival, at Fort Worden's Wheeler Theatre, Thursday, March 2, 7 PM. Director Nicholas "Nico" Edwards holds a Q & A after the screening.

Programs throughout March include **live readings**, with PT Shorts, of *Before the*

Wind; a Northwind Arts Center juried show, "Wind & Water," with artwork the book has inspired; and community book discussions all around town.

Author! Author! For the first time, Port Townsend Public Library and Northwind Arts Center hold a ticketed fundraiser for the Friends and the arts center. Join us Sunday evening, March 26, when local author Erica Bauermeister interviews

Jim Lynch about his work and writing process. Buy your \$50 tickets in advance at brownpapertickets.com.

Lynch wraps up the month with an **author talk** on Monday evening, March 27, at the Port Townsend High School Theater.

Program information, brochures, and discussion guides are available at the library and local bookstores. ☺

Your Landscaping Team Needs You

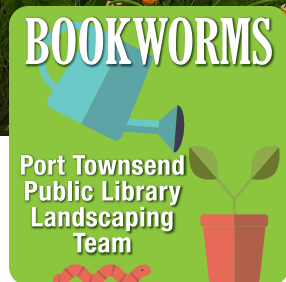
Polly Lyle, Team Leader

THE BOOKWORMS, your library's landscaping team, has recently launched its 2017 season. Currently comprising nine friendly, fresh-air-loving women and men, we need more volunteers. Can you join us to further improve our library's landscaping? Volunteers

- may work with the team or on their own (flexibility is our mantra),
- may use the team's tools (no need to haul things from home, unless you prefer your own favorites), and
- are required to be registered library volunteers (see Lynn Ring at the library).

If you can't volunteer, please consider donating to support library landscaping, at Port Townsend Public Library Foundation, P. O. Box 857, Port Townsend, WA 98368. Want more information? E-mail bookworms@ptpubliclibraryfoundation.org.

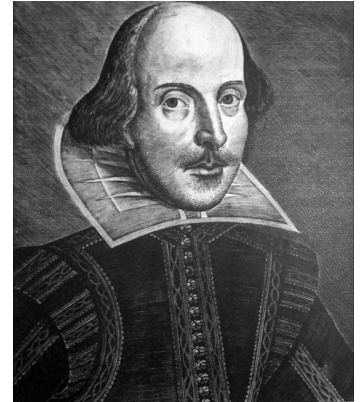
Thank you! ∞



Smiling Pat Grainger
Bookworm extraordinaire

Changeling: A Shakespeare Reading Group

Owen Rowe



AT THE PORT TOWNSEND Library, a new group is gathering to speak some very old words. Changeling is a group dedicated to reading the works of William Shakespeare aloud. The group, coordinated by Bob DeWeese and Libby Palmer, launched in December of last year. Enthusiasm and attendance were so high at the first meeting that the group agreed to meet twice each month rather than once, as originally planned.

Readers choose parts by going around the table, with a new reader each time a new character enters the scene, to ensure that everyone gets a fair shot at the "good parts." All the parts are good, of course—this is Shakespeare!

The name Changeling, explains Bob, recalls *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where a human baby is exchanged for a faerie one (a changeling). "Changing worlds turns anyone into a different person," says Bob, "and sustained involvement with Shakespeare is a kind of equivalent experience." Bob taught Shakespeare for many years, and Changeling was the name of his troupe of student actors.

Libby adds, "Seeing the commitment, energy, and understanding those young people brought to their parts encouraged me to rethink Shakespeare's applicability to modern life."

According to Bob, "Shakespeare, even more than most great writing, is practice for life." When readers speak the plays aloud, they transform from passive audience members into vicarious participants in classic moral dilemmas and comic situations.

Changeling meets from 5 to 7 PM on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month in the Library Learning Center (a.k.a., Pink House). The group read *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in January and *Macbeth* in February, along with some sonnets for Valentine's Day; *Twelfth Night* is coming in March. Bring your *Complete Works* (any edition), or just look on with a neighbor. ∞



TERRAPIN ARCHITECTURE^{PC}

Richard Berg, Principal Architect
Amy I. Dahlberg and Tamara Halligan, Associates

What Have Friends Read?

◆ *Before the Wind*

Jim Lynch (2016)

This novel—a quirky story of a dysfunctional family who, for several generations, has built racing sailboats on Seattle’s Lake Union—is a must-read for anyone who has either a nodding familiarity with or deep love of sailboats.

If you’ve spent any time around boaters, you’ll recognize the many stereotypical characters portrayed here. Dad lives, eats, and breathes sailboats. Mom idolizes Einstein and knows the why of all sailing physics. Eldest son is a wanderer; youngest daughter, a magical sailor. Middle son Josh, who lives aboard in a funky boatyard-marina in the South Sound, can fix anything on a boat and tries to do the same for his family. Soon, we readers become acquainted with a parade of characters who live aboard or hang around the marina. If you don’t recognize these folks, just hang out in Port Townsend’s own Boat Haven for a while. I’m not a boat enthusiast, but my husband is—and we both enjoyed this book tremendously.

—Geraldynn Rackowski

◆ *Mad Enchantment: Claude Monet and the Painting of the Water Lilies*

Ross King (2016)

As a gardener preparing to visit Paris, I decided I should know more about Claude Monet and his fellow artists who created the revolutionary movement called impressionism. Then I discovered this biography. Several years ago, I’d read and thoroughly enjoyed King’s book, *Brunelleschi’s Dome*, about the fifteenth-century creation of the magnificent domed cathedral in Florence. I now anticipated hours of pleasurable immersion in Monet’s garden at Giverny.

Once again, I delighted in King’s ability to draw me into someone else’s life and times, with extraordinary attention to detail. A document supported with quotes and facts about numerous French people who figured prominently in the times around the Grand War (World War I),

the book is also a moving story, suffused with suspense and drama. Would Monet’s donation to the French government of hundreds of meters of painted canvas actually come to fruition? Or would the master, in his eighties, frustrated with blindness, bad weather, and his own stubborn perfectionism, end the project with knife slashes through the lilies, irises, and weeping willows?

When I see Monet’s *Grande Décoration* in the Orangerie, I will remember these paragraphs from *Mad Enchantment*, which quote from Gustave Geffroy, Monet’s contemporary and friend:

As a stern riposte to anyone who believed Monet’s paintings were simply about shadows, ripples, and reflections, [Geffroy] wrote that, *au contraire*, Monet inserted himself at the point “where there blossom without ceasing the phenomena that last both an instant and an eternity.” And to anyone who thought Impressionism a pleasant recreation involving little more than setting up an easel beside a river on a sunny afternoon and slopping bright colors onto a canvas, he memorably described Monet as a tortured, obsessive artist who pursued his dream of form and color “almost to the point of self-annihilation.” ... [Geffroy] repeatedly stated that Monet’s paintings captured nature’s mix of the ephemeral and the eternal, its magnitude and its minutiae, its glittering appearances and its dizzyingly fathomless depths.

—Phyllis Marckworth

◆ *Small Wonder*

Barbara Kingsolver (2002)

◆ *The Hidden Half of Nature*

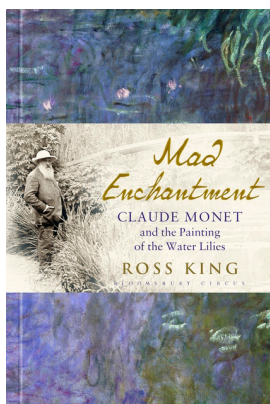
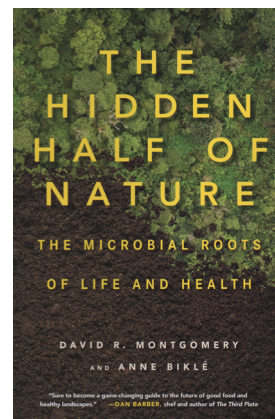
David R. Montgomery and Anne Biklé (2016)

Small wonder that these two books appeal to me: I’m a biologist, and both books are about small natural wonders. Kingsolver is also a biologist, but she’s a novelist, essayist, and poet too. Montgomery and Biklé are geologist and biologist, respectively; both are elegant writers (they spoke at our library last spring). Each of these books is a compendium of small miracles—from a “free breakfast” gathered from garden and chicken coop; to a hummingbird nest built “in the slender shoulders of [a] myrtle tree”; to the billions of bacteria that keep gardens, forests, and human digestive and immune systems healthy.

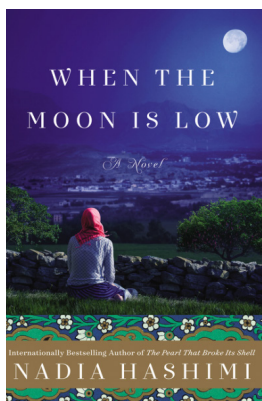
Kingsolver’s book is her second essay collection, a celebration of the natural—including human—condition. Writing to help herself climb out of our shared agony after 9/11, Kingsolver dives deep into family, ethical dilemmas, and many of the painful contradictions we Americans live every day. Can we look back at the nearly 16 years since 9/11, she asks—or toward the next 16, I ask—and avow “that mean times did not render us mean spirits”? Now, as then—perhaps even more now—Kingsolver’s lyrical, and beautifully scientific, prose reaches straight to our hearts and makes us think.

Montgomery and Biklé’s book, too, is a celebration of life, plus a story of science and discovery. In creating a garden around their Seattle home—and in navigating a path to health after Biklé received a cancer diagnosis—the couple learned and shares with us the vital role played by tiny, invisible life-forms called microbes. Literally more than half the weight of life on Earth, microbes turn “dead dirt” into living soil that feeds us and sustains all life above ground. Specific bacteria train our immune systems to know friend from foe and help our digestive systems turn the foods we eat into the lives we lead—and all this is no small wonder.

—Ellen W. Chu



You might expect Friends' Board members to be devoted readers and sharers of books. And you would be right. Board president Ellen Dustman and her husband Oliver Henry have built a Little Free Library outside their Uptown home, where neighbors can exchange favorite reads. Here are some of the gems Ellen has discovered there recently.



◆ *When the Moon Is Low*

Nadia Hashimi (2016)

When I found *When the Moon Is Low* in our Little Free Library, I had no idea what a gem I was getting. Early in her prologue, Hashimi writes, “I am no longer a new bride or a young woman. I am a mother farther from Kabul than I have ever been. My children and I have crossed mountains, oceans, and deserts to reach this dank hotel room, utterly unsophisticated and unfragrant. This land is not what I expected. Good thing all that I coveted from a youthful distance is no longer important to me.”

This is the story of a young Afghani widow’s desperate escape from Taliban-controlled Kabul with her three young children. She and her children witnessed her husband, a well-respected water engineer, hauled away in handcuffs, never to return. Told alternately from the point of view of the young mother and her preadolescent son, the story paints a vivid picture of the life of a fleeing refugee family.

Mother and son try to be courageous in their journey, but their underlying fear is palpable. And neither can share this fear with anyone, not even each other, for doing so would acknowledge the inherent and unknown danger they face with every choice they must make along the way. Should the son go out in search of food for the family’s empty bellies or remain momentarily safe in the alley and catch a moment’s sleep? In any case, they must push on toward London, where they hope their relatives will welcome them. Yet the mother’s hardest choice comes when the family becomes separated.

When the Moon Is Low is especially timely now. Writes Hashimi, “The frightened and distressed faces on your television screen are not that different from the one you see in the mirror. They are husbands and wives, children and grandparents. They are teachers, doctors, engineers, students. ...

We can welcome them all to safety and all be witness to their recovery.”

◆ *The Giant’s House*

◆ *Here’s Your Hat, What’s Your Hurry?*

Elizabeth McCracken (1996 and 1993)

“He was just three months past twenty, eight foot seven inches, four hundred and fifteen pounds.” This is James, the boy who couldn’t stop growing. In *The Giant’s House*, McCracken tells us the story of Peggy Cort, a not-yet-spinster librarian in a small Cape Cod town, who finds herself falling in love with James. It’s a complicated relationship—unique and unexpected for both of them. While reading of librarians’ woes and idiosyncrasies (which could only be told honestly by a fellow librarian like McCracken), I laughed out loud. Is this book a must-read for librarians?

But it’s the compelling story of the love that develops between two misfits that kept me fascinated. Elizabeth anticipates that this may be the only real love of her life, although it may be unrequited until James’s short life span becomes evident. The sensitivity behind this love story no doubt helped make the book a finalist for the 1996 National Book Award.

Here’s Your Hat, What’s Your Hurry?, another Little Free Library gem, is a collection of nine short stories, all with quirky main characters. My favorite is the title story, about a resourceful woman who goes about the country inserting herself into people’s lives by claiming to be their long-lost aunt.

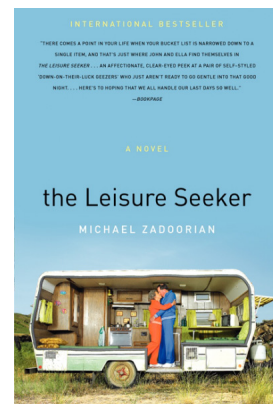
Thank you, neighbors, for introducing me to a new author!
—Ellen Dustman

◆ *The Leisure Seeker*

Michael Zadoorian (2009)

The protagonists are a husband and wife in their early eighties who venture from Detroit to reach Disneyland in Southern California in their campervan—the Leisure Seeker. Pivotal to the story is the fact that the wife has terminal cancer, and her husband has dementia. The story is told through the voice of the wife, Ella, who knows that this trip would be opposed by her adult son and daughter, as well as her oncologist. Despite their concerns, she throws caution to the wind and sets off (without their “permission”) with her husband John on their last road trip. Both hilarious and incredibly poignant, *The Leisure Seeker* is a real page-turner. Zadoorian has captured the essence of a feisty old lady who comes to life in this journey down Route 66. This is a heart-warming and thought-provoking story about the joys and pains of aging and reflecting on one’s life.

—Cheryl Bentley



◆ *Darktown*

Thomas Mullen (2016)

This book blew me away as I learned the history of the first black cops in Atlanta. (Disclaimer: it's historical fiction based on comprehensive research.) It's just after World War II, and Atlanta, Georgia, is perhaps the most segregated Jim Crow region in the country. Nevertheless, a couple of important white officials decide it's time to get white cops out of black 'hoods and let some rookies take a shot at cleaning up the gambling, bootlegging, and brothels, many of which are patronized or supported by the city's wealthy and influential white men.

Several of the eight black men chosen to serve in this pilot program are veterans. The black officers are not allowed to meet at the white headquarters and are forced to make a functional office out of the basement of an old YMCA

building. They are not allowed to wear their uniforms to and from work, and they are never allowed to call on their white colleagues without an invitation to headquarters. They are called "beat cops," so no squad cars. If they can't resolve a situation and need assistance, they are forced to find a phone and call for white backup—white uniformed cops and detectives who arrive in cars and make the official arrests. The officers' written reports are frequently altered to protect informants and others who are involved in the overall corrupt milieu.

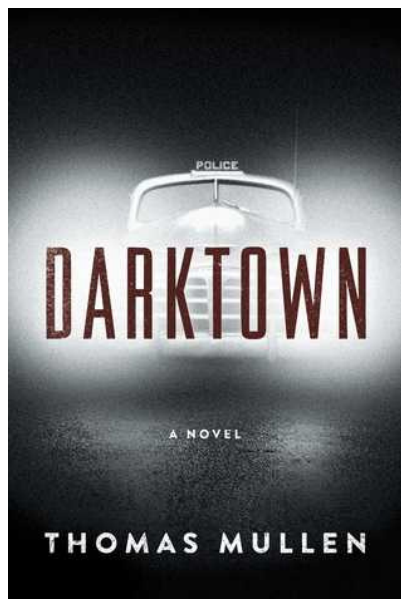
These near-impossible working conditions impose unbelievable limits on the black cops' ability to do their jobs, but some are committed to reforming Atlanta's corrupted law enforcement system while gaining

respect from both their black constituents and their white colleagues. Several of the black rookies have college degrees, including one who is a lawyer. In fact, they're much better educated than the openly racist white cops who make their lives so miserable. Some of the abuse these men tolerate from the "real" cops, as well as their black community, would drive most to resign. But they're proud and want to show Atlanta they are worthy of the badges they wear. It's hard to believe these conditions existed during our lifetimes, but Mullen makes it credible in every way.

Unless you were raised in the South after the Second World War, you may have trouble reading and believing that such an ugly Jim Crow environment could continue. My brother went to college in Memphis during the sixties, so I had occasion to visit him and see for myself. It was shocking to see "colored-only" drinking fountains and entrances—and even separate clinics, one for "colored, only."

Mullen is an excellent writer, having won *USA Today's* Best Debut Novel of 2006 and the James Fennimore Cooper Prize for excellence in historical fiction.

—Linda Martin



BOOK SALE

Gently used books and media

Saturday • March 4

9 AM to 3 PM

Open to Friends' members at 8 AM

Port Townsend Community Center
Corner of Lawrence & Tyler

Come browse with us!



Mark your calendars

New 2017 book sale dates
First Saturdays

March 4, June 3, and October 7

◆ *The Gig Economy*

Diane Mulcahy (2016)

The job market is increasingly precarious and undependable for even the most highly skilled workers fresh out of school, to say nothing of those looking to build on decades of experience. *The Gig Economy*, based on a course the author teaches in an MBA program, guides readers through creating their own stability around short-term and freelance gigs—good work rather than a single good job. She offers valuable insights about managing risk, addressing your personal priorities, defining which benefits actually benefit you, and making natural connections with the people and organizations that can create gigs.

Right now, these choices are available only to those who already enjoy economic privilege, cutting off those who have been shunted into a gig-based career against their will. Mulcahy's final chapter, "The Future Gig Economy," addresses this blind spot with a vision of a future world of fair pay for contractors, portable benefits, universal income support, and strengthened rights to collective bargaining. "The highly leveraged, high-overhead middle-class lifestyle simply isn't sustainable in the Gig Economy," she claims.

Let's hope she's right.

—Owen Rowe

Life Is Better with Friends

A WARM WELCOME to new members who have joined the Friends since last fall!

Mary Baker	Nels Peterson
Jean Baldwin	Roger Pick
Christine Edwards	Leo Pillifan T
Lisa Ferenz	Patricia Romel
Sherry Fleming	Theresa Shea
Carol Hardy	Barbara Stone
Christine Heycke	Mary Jane Swartz
Betti Kennedy	Leona Thomas
Honey Niemann	Gale Wallis

MANY WONDERFUL local organizations rely on Port Townsend businesses for support—which makes us Friends all the more grateful for our Business Sponsors. Please visit their websites and support them by sending your business their way. And join us in thanking them for being library supporters!

David Chuljian, DDS, PS, www.chuljiandds.com
NW Discovery Lab, nwdiscoverylab.org
Terrapin Architecture, Richard Berg, terrapiarchitecture.com
Wallyworks Enterprises, Malcom Dorn, wallyworks.net
Waterbirth Solutions, waterbirthsolutions.com
Yoga Port Townsend, Heather Sky, yogaporttownsend.com

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Your Membership Dollars at Play

Fran Post

IT WASN'T UNTIL after I joined the board of the Friends of the Port Townsend Library that I realized just how many programs are funded by Friends' members. Did you know that, in any given month, the Friends sponsor or partly sponsor between 10 and 17 different events? Last fall, for example, we could all enjoy programs such as these:

- **Solstice Crafting:** Presented in December 2016 by librarian Kit Ward-Crixell, this event was attended by over 300 people of all ages. Participants enjoyed live music by Swami John Pickle; tasty treats; and crafts, including beaded snowflakes, pinecone people, solstice lanterns, Cheerios bird feeders, gift boxes, and a handprint wreath. A couple of days after the event, one grandmother came to the library specifically to tell Kit how much her granddaughter had loved the crafts and how much she, the grandmother, had appreciated the event because coming up with crafts for her granddaughter was not her strong suit. When she learned that the Friends had provided the supplies, she offered the Friends a donation.
- **Stuffed Animal Sleepover:** Also last December, and usually presented by Jeanne Simons and Kit Ward-Crixell about twice a year, this "animals' night out" brings adventurous stuffed animals to our library for a sleepover. Kids of all ages and their stuffies enjoy a cozy nighttime story and craft before the kids tuck their animals in for the night. Tween and teen volunteers then place the animals around the library and take pictures of their adventures. When the kids return next morning, they discover what adventures their furry friends had throughout the night and get to take them home, along with the pictures! About 110 participants enjoyed this event.
- **Canoe Journeys on the Salish Sea:** Thanks to an agreement between the City of Port Townsend and Northwind Arts Center, Northwind supplies art to the library through the center's Art in the Library program. The works are created by local artists and may be for sale at Northwind at each artist's discretion. Launched with an opening reception at the library, the shows are changed at four-month intervals. Canoe Journeys, the opening reception last October, was attended by more than 100 people and featured a special exhibit of photography and indigenous objects made possible by the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Tribal Elder Celeste Dybeck and her husband Don, and Northwind.



These are only a few of the programs the Friends sponsor throughout each year. Be sure to check the library's [online calendar](#) to learn about upcoming events. ~

We Can Always Use More Friends!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

☐ New member

☐ Renewing

Donation amount

☐ \$10

☐ \$25

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \$200

☐ \$250

☐ \$ _____

☐ \$100 Business

As a business member, you will have your business card displayed in each newsletter while your membership is current.

Friends of the Port Townsend Library qualifies for tax exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, and your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Our membership year runs from June 1 to May 31. Dues may be paid at the library, by credit card on the [Friends' section of the library's website \(www.ptpubliclibrary.org/SupportYourLibrary/FriendsoftheLibrary\)](http://www.ptpubliclibrary.org/SupportYourLibrary/FriendsoftheLibrary), or by mailing this form with your check made out to Friends of the Port Townsend Library (FOPTL) to

Friends of the Port Townsend Library
1220 Lawrence St., Port Townsend, WA 98368

Would you like to volunteer?

Please indicate your area(s) of interest:

☐ Book sales

☐ Processing book donations

☐ Computer/technical support

☐ Landscaping/gardening

☐ Publicity

☐ Special events



got books?

Is it time for spring cleaning yet? Time to clean off those bookshelves? Friends of the Port Townsend Library relies on you to donate books—in good condition, please—for our thrice-yearly book sales. Drop books in the donation box outside the library anytime.

Share your good reads!

FRIENDS OF THE PORT TOWNSEND LIBRARY
1220 LAWRENCE STREET
PORT TOWNSEND, WA 98368

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Don't forget the Friends'
BOOK SALES
Uptown Community Center
March 4, June 3, October 7

Who We Are

THE FRIENDS of the Port Townsend Library helps fund services and materials beyond what the library can offer through its city budget. We raise money primarily through memberships, donations, and book sales and support diverse reading programs to enhance the cultural and educational wealth of our community. Every year, we support activities for all ages, including Community Read, children's storytimes, author talks, and more. We also publish three newsletters a year—spring, summer, and fall—in print and online. Current issues are available in the library or at ptpubliclibrary.org/SupportYourLibrary/FriendsoftheLibrary.

Board meetings of the Friends of the Port Townsend Library take place on the second Wednesday of each month, 3:30 PM, at the Library Learning Center (corner of Lawrence and Harrison) and are open to everyone. To volunteer or join the board, please e-mail us at friendsofptlibrary@gmail.com.

Board Members

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Mike Burk