

Check It Out!

What Is Media Mentorship?

by Hilary Verheggen and Joy Wentzel

Libraries are known as helpful places to find resources and knowledgeable staff. As our world becomes more digitized, librarians are expanding their skills to help families navigate various media, both digital and print. The term “media mentor” describes this new role of your neighborhood librarian. Much as families go to the library to find a book, they can now ask for advice on useful apps and websites too.

Media mentorship creates opportunities for librarians and caregivers to connect on how to best help our children maneuver this ever-evolving, and often stressful, digital world. Our partnership creates a conversation around guiding our children to use technology in a healthy, effective, and balanced way. Parents are the heart of this effort. They are their child’s first teachers and, through daily connections, serve as role models on media use. Self-reflection, modeling, communication, and engagement with children are paramount.

Because we all come from different families, our media use also differs. When considering your family media plan, it is important to create a “just-right” fit, and to think flexibly. This plan should evolve as your children grow and new media and technologies emerge. We need to recalibrate our parenting skills as our children grow, and we must also recalibrate our parenting skills regarding technology.

Consider a few common factors when looking at digital habits: balance, quality, and engagement. Carisa Kluver, author of the blog “The Digital Media Diet,” refers to a pyramid when looking at these factors. All three factors can be addressed when making media decisions with your child. For balance, one might ask, “Has my child been staring at a screen all day, or has she been outside and physically active?” For quality, one might ask, “Is this media program of good quality, educational, or meaningful?” For engagement, “Will using this media type help connect my child to family or expand his social world positively?” By considering this pyramid, parents can help their children

use media for their benefits; they can believe in their reasons for saying yes or no to a media request.

With the rise in new technologies, parents often worry about “screen time and the digital environment.” These concerns are compelling, but let’s look for a minute through a different lens. Consider screen time as plain old time and the digital world as an extension of the world in which we have always lived. The same logic applies in both worlds: regulate screen time as you would other time. Parents have the same goal they have always had: to raise kind, responsible children in a safe environment. In everyday life before technology, we considered factors such as balance, quality, and amount of engagement in determining how our children spent their time. These factors are just as relevant when we focus on technology use.

The digital ocean can be stormy at times. Thankfully, resources exist to help navigate the waters, including Common Sense Media (commonsensemedia.org). Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Model responsible, safe, and kind digital behavior.
2. Help children identify healthy media behaviors.
3. Identify media that encourage active engagement.
4. Watch, play, and engage together with media.
5. Create screen-free times and zones.
6. Explore parental controls.
7. Check privacy settings on social media.
8. Treat media as you would any other environment.
9. Create a family media plan with clear limits and rules.
10. Turn mistakes—which will happen—into teachable moments.

Hilary Verheggen is Youth Services Library Manager at the Port Townsend Public Library. Joy Wentzel is Librarian at the Port Townsend School District, K–12. This article first appeared in the Port Townsend Leader, October 31, 2018, A11.

Little Free Libraries Are Neighborhood Gifts

BY LYNN NOWAK

Take a book, leave a book.

—Todd H. Bol, founder

Read. Return. Repeat.

—A Little Free Library slogan

What book lover can walk by a Little Free Library and not peek inside to discover the treasures that lie within?

Happening upon a Little Free Library is like finding “a present that’s waiting for you to unwrap,” said Keri French, a Friends volunteer who also curates one of these tiny, charming cabinets of wonder in front of her Port

Townsend home.

Whether small and rustic, brightly painted, chalet inspired, adorned with whimsical artwork, or styled as miniature replicas of their host homes, little libraries are as varied as their custodians.

Some offer good-quality magazines, greeting cards, dog biscuits, or a poem of the week. Others

house books only, but those titles awaiting discovery are diverse, too. They might include a well-loved copy of *Exodus*, by Leon Uris, the slim paperback *Morality for Beautiful Girls*, the third volume of the *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* series by Alexander McCall Smith, or the hardback *How Dogs Think: Understanding the Canine Mind*, by Stanley Coren.

Books in these streetside browsing libraries are gifts that someone has thoughtfully given to complete strangers, French believes. They serve as a neighborhood welcome mat, a warm

invitation to stop, explore, and perhaps linger for a chat with fellow bibliophiles.

“It’s such a pleasant surprise to find one! It just feels good,” said Jeni Little, another local Little Free Library host. An avid reader herself, she has an abundance of tiny libraries in her uptown neighborhood. “When I need a book, I can shop within a half-block radius of my own house.”

Her husband Jim and son Forrest built her Little Free Library as a Christmas gift just over a year ago. Little has enjoyed her role as its caretaker ever since.

With no fewer than 18 registered Little Free Libraries in the area, Port Townsend is well represented in this phenomenon that has swept the globe and keeps gaining popularity. The movement began in 2009 with founder Todd H. Bol, who died late last year. At the time of his death, there were an estimated 75,000 registered small book-sharing sites in 88 countries.

“I really like the idea of getting books into people’s hands,” said Pamela Murphy, a former schoolteacher and Friends volunteer. She had a customized bookcase built for her friend and fellow Friends volunteer Wayne Shaver. He lived in her neighborhood but was unable to host a little library of his own since his home was a rental, so she opted to put one at her house instead. Sadly, Shaver also died last fall, but his tribute Little Free Library lives on.

For Friends President Ellen Dustman, establishing a Little Free Library in front of her home seemed like an excellent way to share with her neighbors and a perfect match with her Friends role. After all, both little and big libraries promote reading.

People have many choices for installing a Little Free Library, including resources ordered through the nonprofit organization’s website, littlefreelibrary.org. They can opt for any number of kits online, or they can build their own, personalizing their libraries as they like. Little Free Library hosts say it’s easy to get started. For \$40, anyone can register, acquire a



Keri French and Jake keep dog biscuits and fresh water for visiting canine friends at their Little Free Library. Passersby can also craft a verse on the magnetic poetry board.

unique number and sign for his or her library, and add it to the online map of tiny libraries all over the world.

Little Free Library stewards get a thrill from serving as their own librarians. After they've read something they enjoy, they tuck it into their own little libraries, although books that are too worn are not suitable. Fiction is the most popular genre, but memoirs move well, as do cookbooks. Murphy noted that children's books and young adult books also disappear, "which is interesting in this graying community."

Since Little strongly believes in promoting literacy for kids, she said she purposely hunted down some titles suggested by a middle-school-age girl who stopped by her little library.

Although not much fault can be found with Little Free Libraries, they have sometimes been disparaged for concentrating in affluent areas that are almost “arrogantly literary,” as one critic observed. To some extent, Murphy acknowledged, that’s likely true, but she and Dustman prefer to think that the wealth of Little Free Libraries here reflects the community and its reading habits.

French suggests that Little Free Libraries might be the missing link in a continuum of avenues to reading. On the one hand, people undeniably use e-readers now, and on the other, they can frequent the Port Townsend Public Library for books, other reading materials, and a myriad of services. “Little Free Libraries aren’t a gadget or an app. They’re low-tech, sweet, and simple.”

Their personal, neighborly aspect is one reason for the appeal of these tiny public bookcases. Another, says Little, is that they're "hands-on," which is a pleasure in this digital age.

Besides, like their bigger counterparts, they are full of free gifts to the community.

Lynn Nowak is a Port Townsend writer and regular contributor to the Friends' newsletter. All photos by Lynn Nowak unless otherwise noted.



Above right, from top: Pamela Murphy with her Little Free Library, a miniature of her home; Wayne Shaver at Murphy's library last winter; Ellen Dustman keeps Friends' brochures, as well as books, in her library.

Right: Jeni and Jim Little with their library, which happens to be a geocache site; Jim also built a chalet-style tiny library for a neighbor.



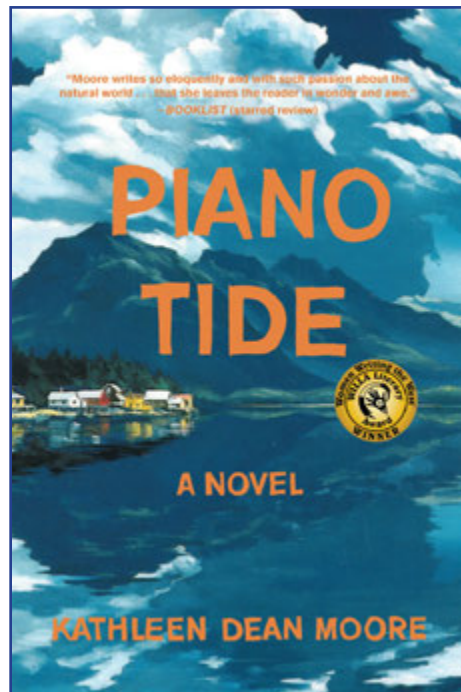
What Friends—and Community—Read

Some Big Ideas run through this year's Community Read choice, the debut novel ***Piano Tide*** (2016) by philosopher-essayist-naturalist Kathleen Dean Moore—topics sure to invite lively discussion throughout this March's events (see sidebar).

But what really makes this book sing is the rugged and ragged souls who populate the tiny hamlet of Good River Harbor, Alaska, and the vibrant landscape that surrounds and supports them. Moore tells the story of their lives, here on the margins of civilization, with a satisfying mix of humor, pathos, and tension.

When Nora Montgomery arrives in town with little more than her dog and an upright piano, she's looking for a quiet life in this last-chance place at the end of the ferry route. She's burned some bridges (not just metaphorically, as it turns out), and knows she ought to mind her own business and keep her mouth shut. This proves easier said than done as she comes into increasing conflict with Axel Hagerman, the closest thing Good River Harbor has to a man of industry.

Hagerman sees the town's surrounding land, trees, fish, and water as riches free for the taking and selling—until they run out. His latest plan is to dam a local stream and bottle its water, imperiling an abundant coho salmon run and changing forever a place that even longtime residents find magical.



Several of Good River Harbor's more colorful characters are bent on stopping Hagerman, hoping to sabotage not only the water project, but also his new scheme for a dubious tourist attraction called Good River Harbor Bear Shelter—"rescue" wild problem grizzlies foraging at the dump; house them in a "habitat restoration" project in an old water tank; charge admission!

When construction of the bear enclosure proves deadly for one of the town's inhabitants, Nora is done keeping her head down. A mighty confrontation is brewing, and the community will never be the same.

Make no mistake, however. One of the most remarkable characters

in this book is the natural world itself, speaking with a voice alive with the exhalations of passing whales, the yawping and clonking of ravens, and the constant wash of the tides. That voice suffuses everything in the book, a reminder that, even if we sometimes forget to listen, the natural world is always with us.

But back to those Big Ideas. Several discussion-ready themes flow throughout *Piano Tide*, from the balancing act of living in and from nature to the overwhelming desire to find a place to call home. Although Moore has set her story on the remote shores of Alaska, she might just as well be talking about our lives, right here on the Salish Sea.

—Kristine Kaufman

Community Read Events 2019

Northwind Arts Center Juried Exhibit

March 2 Reception 5:30–8:30 PM
Exhibit, "Response/Ability," through
March 31

Film, *Alone in the Wilderness*

March 3 Uptown Theatre 1:00 PM

Earth Repair Song and Science with permaculturist Michael Pilarski

March 14 Carnegie Room 7:00 PM

Story Trail for Kids and Families

March 16 Kah Tai Lagoon 12:00–4:00 PM

PT Shorts, Reader's Theater, Key City Public Theater

Readings from *Piano Tide*

March 21 Northwind Arts Ctr 7:00 PM

Music, "A Call to Life," with Kathleen Dean Moore and Pianist Rachelle McCabe

March 27 Trinity United Methodist
Church 7:00 PM

Meet the Author, Kathleen Dean Moore with Rachelle McCabe

March 28 PTHS Auditorium 6:30–8 PM

Writers' Workshop, "The Work of a Writer in a World of Wounds"

March 29 Library Learning
Center 1:00–3:00 PM

Support for Community Read 2019 comes from Friends of the Port Townsend Library, Port Townsend Public Library Foundation, and Richard Tucker and Walter "Henry" Logan and from Imprint Books, Port Townsend School District, Port Townsend & Jefferson County Leader, Peninsula Daily News, Northwind Arts Center, Key City Public Theater, KPTZ 91.9 FM, Uptown Theatre, Trinity United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church, Discovery Bay Brewing, and Counterpoint Books. More details at ptpubliclibrary.org/library/page/community-read.

◆ *Fortune Smiles*

Adam Johnson (2015)

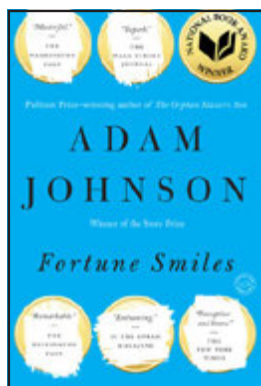
After reading *The Orphan Master's Son* (2012) years ago, I wanted to read everything else Adam Johnson had ever written. *Fortune Smiles*, a collection of Johnson's short stories, had been sitting on my bookshelf since then—that is, until I happened on it a few weeks ago. It was like discovering an unopened present on my own bookshelf.

It's evident from both these books that Johnson has an innate curiosity about the human experience and a strong desire to see through the eyes of people very unlike himself. In "Interesting Facts," he writes with the voice of a woman dying of cancer and of the isolation she feels among friends and family who will live on after she dies. It's poignant, but not without humor, and full of beautiful observations. Most of all, it is entirely convincing.

In our present world, "Nirvana" is only slightly futuristic in its depiction of interactive holograms and drones, but it suggests that Johnson has acute insight into the future of technology and human interaction. At the same time, *The Orphan Master's Son's* depiction of North Korea seems impossibly bizarre and otherworldly, with a story that is gripping and terrifying in equal measure. Yet within a year of reading the book, I was seeing real-life news accounts of situations that could have come straight out of that volume.

Many good writers can tell stories from their own perspectives. Johnson's talent lies in unearthing stories from other people's viewpoints and enriching his great storytelling ability with extensive research. Adam Johnson's debut short-story collection, *Emporium* (2003), is next up on my reading list. If I don't get to it right away, it will be another treasure to rediscover on the bookshelf.

—Christine Heycke



◆ *The Best Bad Things*

Katrina Carrasco (2018)

A review of a book by Kent Haruf in our summer 2017 newsletter began, "What a nice book!" I felt just the opposite on finishing *The Best Bad Things*—not that it's a poor-quality book, but it is a bawdy, lustful, fast-moving one, and even gruesome at times.

Set in Port Townsend in 1887, it is the story of Alma Rosales (a.k.a., Jack Camp)—detective, smuggler, spy—who's as eager for a fist-fight as for a lover's encounter. Alma has recently joined throngs of Port Townsend dockworkers, above- and below-board merchants, and Uptown ladies and gentlemen, almost all of whom are not what they seem. Her mission is to track down some missing "product"—read, opium—while working undercover for a beautiful mastermind of a West Coast smuggling operation. With varying degrees of success, Alma dodges among identities and plays one target—or co-conspirator?—against another until the book virtually explodes in a dénouement of passion and violence.

Surrounding Alma throughout Carrasco's multistranded plot are the scenes, sounds, and smells of late nineteenth-century Port Townsend. "At its south end Port Townsend withers. . . . The golden sandstone cliff stoops down, leaning eastward until it overtakes Water Street and plunges into the bay. . . . [T]he

sweat-and-outhouse stench of town gives way to seal dung and tide-line kelp." Today, the town smells rather sweeter, especially in spring, while a community proud of its natural and social heritage continues to thrive both uptown and down.

—Ellen W. Chu



◆ *The Library Book*

Susan Orlean (2018)

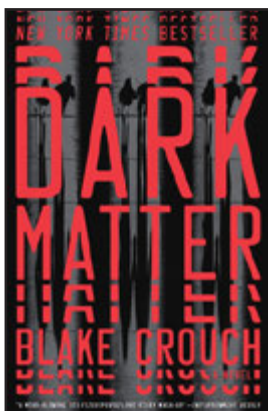
When I heard that *The Library Book* was written by Susan Orlean, I had high expectations, as I really enjoyed her award-winning *Orchid Thief*, as well as the memorable *Rin Tin Tin*. I was not disappointed. Although this book recounts the fire that destroyed the Los Angeles Public Library in 1986, the real story—a much broader one of libraries and librarians—goes beyond the quest to find the presumed arsonist and left me with many memorable lines.

Life was quite different when the library opened in January 1873. “Membership was five dollars a year . . . several days’ pay for the average worker, so only affluent people were able to join. Library rules were schoolmarmish and scoldy. Men were required to remove their hats . . . and patrons were discouraged from reading too many novels, lest they turn into . . . ‘fiction fiends.’ . . . Women were not allowed to use the main facilities . . . Children were not allowed in the library at all.”

Orlean is clear about the value of libraries: “Destroying the library is a kind of terrorism. People think of libraries as the safest and most open places in society. Setting them on fire is like announcing nothing, nowhere is safe.”

All in all, “A library is a good place to soften solitude . . . a conversation that has gone on for hundreds and hundreds of years . . . a whispering post. You don’t need to take a book off a shelf to know there is a voice inside that is waiting to speak to you.”

I hope that, like me, you discover passages in this book that speak to you.
—Ellen Dustman



◆ *Dark Matter*

Blake Crouch (2016)

Early one evening, physicist Jason Desson visits a neighborhood pub to congratulate a close friend on winning a prestigious award. One drink later, he heads home for dinner with his wife and teenaged son. Hearing steps close behind, Jason turns, and a masked man grabs him and forces him at gunpoint to drive to a deserted warehouse district. There he is injected with an unknown substance and loses consciousness. On awakening, Jason is surrounded by strangers who strap him to a gurney. As the gurney rolls toward an unidentified destination, Jason realizes that the strangers know him while he knows no one. So begins Jason’s journey through the multiverse in search of his family and his own time.

Dark Matter is a twisty science-fiction tale providing the reader both a well-crafted mystery and a sweet love story. Plucking on strings from quantum physics, Crouch transports the reader—and his characters—into the many layers of the multiverse. With the best aspects of a page-turner—excellent and well-paced writing, a solid plot with unexpected and complex twists and believable character development—this book was both thrilling and thought-provoking.
—Fran Post

WALLYWORKS
CONSTRUCTION

D. Malcolm Dorn

(360) 385-2771
contact@wallyworks.net

1037 Lawrence St.
Port Townsend, WA 98368

WA State Contractor #
WALLYEL979C8

www.wallyworks.net



Ranie Keithahn
ranie@olympus.net

Friendships Blossom in Spring

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Friends of the Port Townsend Library is qualified for tax exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Our membership year is June 1–May 31. Donations may be made at the library; online at the **Friends' new website**, friendsofptlibrary.org; or by mailing this form, with your check payable to Friends of the Port Townsend Library (FOPTL), to

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

☐ New Friend ☐ Renewing Friend

Donation amount

☐ \$10 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50
☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ \$_____
☐ \$100 Business *Business sponsors receive a business-card-sized ad in all current-year newsletters*

Newsletters are available online, at the library and Food Co-op, and elsewhere

☐ Check here if you want **paper copies mailed** to you

Would you like to volunteer?

Please indicate your area(s) of interest

- ☐ Book sales
☐ Help with book donations
☐ Publicity and outreach
☐ Occasional jobs
☐ I have an idea; call me!

New Friends

Welcome to all who have joined since fall 2018:

Pam Adams	Pinky Feria Mingo
Peggy Adkins	Guy Noyes
Normandie Anderson	Orris
Aimee Boulanger & Will Patric	Vicky L Owen
Kim Clark	Wendy Peterson
Faith Echtermeyer	Tom Piwowarski
Grace Gardener	Shannon Rapuano
James & Arlene Graham	Linda Rhines
Matthew Holland	Kim & Judy Simonelli
Anita & Ron Jahoda	Jeanette Stengal
Linda Jansen	Diane Vaux
Katy Johnson	Charlene & Don Vollmer
Laurie Levites	Barbara Walls
Polly Macomber	Ben Weintraub
Lou Manrique	V. Williams
Erin McCluer	Linda Zenner

Business Sponsors

Much-appreciated business support comes from:

Ranie Keithahn, ranie@olympus.net
Sound Storage, sound-storage.com/port-townsend
Terrapin Architecture, Richard Berg, terrapiarchitecture.com
Wallyworks Enterprises, Malcom Dorn, wallyworks.net
Waterbirth Solutions, waterbirthsolutions.com
Yoga Port Townsend, Heather Sky, yogaporttownsend.com



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

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

FIRST BOOK SALE
of 2019!

March 16, 9 AM—3 PM

Supporters' early entry 8 AM

Uptown Community Center



Who We Are

THE PORT TOWNSEND PUBLIC LIBRARY was founded in 1898 by volunteers and, thanks to continuing community support, has remained an active Carnegie Library since its present doors opened in 1913.

The Friends of the Port Townsend Library, established as a nonprofit organization in 1978, funds programs, services, and materials beyond what the city's library budget covers. Every year we support reading programs, events, and activities for all ages; we also hold three book sales and publish three newsletters. Newsletters are available in the library, around town, or at the Friends' new website, friendsofptlibrary.org.

Our funding comes primarily from supporters, donations, and book sales. We invite anyone to support us and attend our monthly board meetings, which take place on the second Wednesday of each month, 3:30 PM, at the Library Learning Center (corner of Lawrence and Harrison). E-mail us at friendsofptlibrary@gmail.com.

Board Members

President	Ellen Dustman
Secretary	Paula Zimmerman
Vice President & Book Donations	Deb Vanderbilt
Treasurer	Cindy Johnson
Membership	Fran Post
Editing, Design, & Newsletter	Ellen W Chu
Book Sales	Cheryl Bentley
At Large	Christine Heycke
	Geralynn Rackowski
	Jan Sprague