



Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301

duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com

Thank You and Best Wishes for Renée DiPilato

After five years, Renée DiPilato has left Duncan Library to join the Beatley Central Library as Branch Manager, where she will oversee the Circulation, Children's, Adult Services and Talking Books departments. We will all miss Renée's cheerful presence at Duncan, her enthusiasm for making the library a key part of the community, and her creativity in designing new programs to interest readers of all ages.

When asked about the highlights of her tenure at Duncan, Renée said working in the Del Ray neighborhood was a very positive part of her experience because of the real sense of community that exists here. She also mentioned the opportunities she had to develop new programs, both for Duncan and for the greater Alexandria Library System.

Along with her children's staff, she initiated the early literacy program entitled "Baby Time" at Duncan, designed for caregivers and infants 0 to 11 months in age. In 2007, the Duncan Library also piloted Summer Quest Jr., funded by the James M. Duncan, Jr. Library Foundation, Inc., which focuses on fostering a love of reading for children ages 0 to 5. Due to its success, the program was introduced at all Alexandria libraries the following year. Finally, Renée started the "All Alexandria Reads" program in 2008 a one book one city initiative that has been very successful.

On behalf of the Friends of Duncan Library, we thank Renée for her dedication and her excellent work at Duncan. Renée—we already miss you, but we congratulate you on this new challenge and wish you all the best.



Renee DiPilato, shown in the center, together with Duncan librarian Kyle Maier (right) and library patron Oliver Springer.

Mark your calendars! Duncan Library Spring Book Sale – April 27 to April 30th, 2011

The Friends of the Duncan Library Spring Book Sale will be held Wednesday, April 27 to Saturday, April 30th. Wednesday will be a special Duncan Friends' members-only preview (you can sign up for membership at the sale). On Saturday, we'll have children's entertainment and food vendors to make it a fun community event, coordinating with the Mount Vernon Big Flea.

We need volunteers to help organize the sale, in particular an energetic person to take on publicity and outreach. We also need volunteers to do all the things that make the sale go—book sorters, cashiers, book wranglers, and strong arms and backs (preferably together) to get all the books out on the sale tables. Please come and help make the Spring Book Sale memorably fun! Also, we are now accepting donations of books, DVDs, and CDs. So give your old treasures a chance at a new life and drop them off anytime the library's open.

President's Letter: Spring Changes

As the spring arrives, please include a trip by the library as you walk or run to enjoy our grounds. Each week brings changes as new bulbs bloom. We hope that you will be encouraged to join our Beautification Committee. We work for a few hours on occasional Saturdays and can accommodate with your busy schedule.

We miss Renée DiPilato, who has been promoted to Branch Manager at the Beatley Library but congratulate her on her well-deserved success.

The spring Friends book sale is coming up in April and will be combined with the Mount Vernon Big Flea during one of the sale days. You can shop for books and engage in lively discussions with avid readers in our neighborhood. Please consider being an active volunteer—we need your help to sort books and to man the sale. Also, we need your donations of books, DVDs and audio books

to stock the sale. Please drop them off at the library soon. This is the ultimate recycling opportunity—you can buy a bag of books, enjoy many hours of reading, and then donate them back to the library for the fall sale.

After completing a lengthy process our organization is now a separate tax exempt entity. You can read about the benefits of this change in this Newsletter.

Finally, please consider volunteering to be our new Membership chairperson. Our organization is an easy sell with low membership fees, active members who are willing to help, a supportive and talented library staff, and a great group of people just like YOU!

Tony Springer
President, Friends of Duncan Library

Library News and Notes

By Renée DiPilato, Duncan Library

The Duncan Library was full of activity these past few months, beginning with our holiday Open House in December. The Open House is held annually to commemorate the branch's opening in December of 1969. This year, the event featured holiday jazz music by Project Natale and an author talk with award-winning writer Thomas Kaufman. Best of all, we were able to catch up with our many Friends, staff, and patrons.

Recently, you may have noticed our new self-check machine at the front desk. This was graciously funded by the James M. Duncan Foundation and will certainly help our staff during busy periods. If you are short on time or simply want to test this new gadget, please try checking out a book by yourself—it really is easy to use!

Finally, at the end of February, I will be moving to the Beatley Central Library to be the new Branch Manager at that location. The past five years at



Nate Kysilko was the first library patron to use the new self-check machine in February 2011.

Duncan have been extremely rewarding for me, and it has been a privilege and a true joy to serve and get to know the Del Ray community. I would like to thank the Friends of Duncan Library for your support of our branch—the library is fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people. I will miss working with the staff, library patrons, and Friends, so please stay in touch! Wishing you all the best—
Renee

Friends Funds at Work

By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Duncan Friends

The Duncan Friends mission is to raise funds and public awareness in the community to support the services and programs of the Duncan Branch Library. Specifically, we provide funds to Duncan for programs and items that are not covered by the City budget. Here's a summary of how the Friends have used funds in the first two months of 2011 to support Duncan Library:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Adult Programs: | Tea Tasting Class & Author Talks | 250 |
| Library Requests: | Microwave & Kitchen Supplies | 115 |
| Hospitality/Staff Recognition | | 130 |
| Professional Services: | QuickBooks Software | 290 |
| Total | | \$785 |

Friends of Duncan Library Now an Independent Tax Exempt Entity

By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Duncan Friends

The Friends of Duncan Library is pleased to announce that it has completed the process that establishes it as a separate, independent tax exempt entity. Prior to this the Duncan Friends was a part of the All Alexandria Friends, which also is a tax exempt group. This new status for the Friends of Duncan Library is primarily one of paperwork and wanting to take complete responsibility for the operations and financial health of our organization. Duncan Friends should not notice any difference in the day-to-day interactions and overall operations of our

organization. If you would like more information feel free to contact Carolyn Harris, cdharris3@gmail.com.

Duncan Friends want to offer huge thanks to local Alexandria attorney, Mark Allen, who has so generously given his time to guide us and complete all filings for the Friends to incorporate and reach the tax exempt status. Mark's support is invaluable to us in getting every part of our organization established properly. Thanks!



Author Talk: by Michael Green and Roger Launius
Charlie Finley: The Outrageous Story of Baseball's Super Showman

By Leonard Goldstein, Chair, Author Talks/ Adult Programs

In early February, Michael Green and Roger Launius shared their book about the unabashed self-promoter, Charley Finley, who bought the moribund Kansas City Athletics in January 1961 and transformed major-league baseball. Michael and Roger work at NASA and the Smithsonian in aerospace exploration and both are avid baseball fans.

Charley Finley, a working-class southerner, was a self-made millionaire by 1950. He could be generous and charming or devious, ruthless, and a bullying megalomaniac. As a youngster he got 10 neighborhood kids to mow lawns by offering them 50% of the take. In World War II, he sold insurance to coworkers in an arms plant. After a bout of TB left him hospitalized for 18 months, he sold disability insurance to doctors and other professionals with quick success.

He decided to invest in a losing baseball team, believing that promotions would draw fans. He bought the Kansas City Athletics, best known for stratagems like trading up-and-comers like Roger Maris, for has-beens.

It was said that he'd always do the right thing--after trying everything else. He put the A's on the road to success. Promising not to move them...he moved them to Oakland in 1968 and won three consecutive World Series from 1972 to 1974.

Bowie Kuhn, Commissioner of Baseball from 1969 through 1984 and an eastern elitist, became his

nemesis, ending baseball's reserve clause and instituting free agency for players. Kuhn blocked Finley's attempt to send rebellious Reggie Jackson to the minors in 1970. In 1972 he forced Finley to pay star pitcher Vida Blue, who had signed a very low-paying contract, \$63,000 instead of \$14,500, citing the "best interests of baseball." Finley overused Blue damaging his arm. Kuhn fined him \$75,000 for claiming that Mike Andrews was "disabled" and trying to throw him off the 1973 World Series team.

By 1976 Kuhn ended an owners' lockout forcing the opening of spring training camps. Finley called Kuhn a village idiot, then apologized to village idiots, redefining Kuhn as the nation's idiot. He sued Kuhn for \$10 million, claiming he overstepped his bounds as commissioner and lost. The Supreme Court refused to consider his appeal.

His insurance business slumped and he was hit with financial setbacks and an expensive divorce. He appealed to Kuhn for help in selling the A's. By 1980 he was out of major league baseball. He invested in junk bonds and was wiped out in the crash of 1987. He died on his farm, penniless, in 1996.

Washington Post sports writer Shirley Povich summed Finley up by asking, "Was he a genius or a crackpot, a career maverick or buffoon...good for baseball or bad for baseball...? He was all of the above." We thank Michael and Roger for sharing with us the life of this fascinating and SUPER showman.

Beautification Committee Update

Like the library flower beds, the surface of the Beautification Committee may appear dormant. But beneath the surface plans are sprouting for a gorgeous spring. In addition to daffodils and grape hyacinth, we'll also see the Duncan grounds adorned with crocuses and hyacinths. The Potomac Ward of the Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter Day Saints has scheduled a service project with us in June to help with summer planning. All Friends interested in helping with a weeding day in early spring please send a message to duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com.

Author Talk: by Thomas Kaufman

Drink the Tea

By Leonard Goldstein, Chair, Author Talks/Adult Programs

Thomas Kaufman, award-winning cinematographer and author, spoke at Duncan Library in December. His appearance rounded out a book tour which began in March in support of his first novel, *Drink the Tea*.

As a cinematographer, Kaufman has worked on campaign films for Barack Obama and FBI training productions as well as the “The FBI Files,” “The Prosecutors” and “New Detectives” for Discovery. Kaufman has also worked on hundreds of documentaries, including the Academy Award-nominated “Promises to Keep” a film centered around a man’s four-year struggle to help the homeless.

Drink the Tea is a crime novel set in Kaufman's hometown of Washington, DC. It follows a man named Willis Gidney who grew up homeless and without parents, making his rounds through the juvenile justice system before being taken in by a captain of the DC. police. Rising to become a private investigator, Gidney takes an assignment from a good friend asking him to find his missing daughter.

Kaufman pulled inspiration for his novel from several different sources. As a college student, he was given a copy of *Farewell, My Lovely* by Raymond Chandler, which started his love for private-eye novels. The back story of his main character was inspired by his work on “Promises to Keep.” He also interviewed friends who covered the juvenile justice system for the *Washington Post* to supplement Gidney's past.

During his talk, Kaufman read an excerpt of his novel and fielded questions from the audience about the book as well as his work as a cinematographer.

Andrew Sulavik, who ended up buying a copy of the book, was very impressed by the talk.

“I thought he was very, very good,” Sulavik said. “I’m a Raymond Chandler fan, big time.”

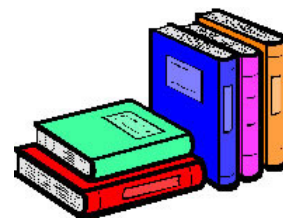
In 2008, *Drink the Tea* won first place in a competition put on by New York publishing company St. Martin’s Press for Best Private Eye Novel. The competition is held every year for unpublished writers in four categories. Winners receive a \$10,000 advance and the opportunity to have their book published.

Kaufman heard about the contest from a fellow student at the Writer's Center in Bethesda, Md. He researched the contest but was hesitant to submit his novel. “I thought, ‘Boy, you know, it’s going to cost me six dollars to mail this manuscript,’” Kaufman joked. “ sure it’s worth it.”

He ended up mailing it in and promptly forgot about it. Months later, he discovered he had won.

Drink the Tea is the first book in a series of three that St. Martin’s Press will be publishing, all featuring Kaufman’s protagonist. The sequel—entitled *Steal the Show*—will be released next summer and Kaufman has already completed the majority of the third book.

“There have been two parts of this that have been really fun,” Kaufman said. “One of them is getting to know my lead character...and the other is getting comments from people who have read the book. It’s been really great.”



All Alexandria Reads 2011

By Renée DiPilato

I am pleased to announce that *Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon is the selection for All Alexandria Reads 2011. This is the first work of fiction to be selected and we are excited about the fun and educational programs that tie-in with the novel. Multiple print copies will be available for check out or visit our website for access to the e-book and e-audiobook editions. More information about *Shadow of the Wind* and a list of our program offerings is below:

Review and Synopsis from Booklist

Call it the “book book” genre: this international sensation has books and storytelling—and a single, physical book—at its heart. In post-World War II Barcelona, young Daniel is taken by his bookseller father to the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, a massive sanctuary where books are guarded from oblivion. Told to choose one book to protect, he selects *The Shadow of the Wind*, by Julian Carax. He reads it, loves it, and soon learns it is both very valuable and very much in danger because someone is determinedly burning every copy of every book written by the obscure Carax. To call *Shadow of the Wind* old-fashioned is to mean it in the best way. Part detective story, part boy’s adventure, part romance, fantasy, and gothic horror, the intricate plot is urged on by extravagant foreshadowing and nail-nibbling tension. This is rich, lavish storytelling. (2001). *Keir Graff*. Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

May 4th—7:00pm

Movie Screening—*The Hollywood Librarian* (for adults)

Join us for a screening of this documentary that follows librarians and their ongoing quest to preserve the written word.

May 7th—11:00am

Silly Spanish Stories (ages 2 and up)
Storyteller Gary Lloyd will entertain the entire family with humorous tales from Spain and Mexico.

May 14th—11:00am

Bill Jenkins World of Music (ages 2 and up)
Your family will be entertained with Spanish music, while learning about instruments unique to the Iberian Peninsula.

May 14th—2:00pm*

Scrapbooking Workshop (adults and teens ages 13 and up, limited to 25 people*)
Get started preserving memories with basic scrapbooking techniques. Just bring your own photos and double-sided tape. All other supplies are provided free of charge

May 18th—4:00pm

Kaydee Puppets Presents “The Sheepdog Mystery” (ages 3 and up)

Enjoy this puppet show featuring the beloved character Ferdinand the Bull.

May 18th—7:00pm

Book Discussion Group (for adults)
Join the Duncan Book Discussion Group for a lively discussion of *Shadow of the Wind*.

May 21st—11:00am

Spanish Language Story Time (ages 1-6 with an adult)
Bring your children to this fun, interactive story time in Spanish.

May 21st—3:00pm

Basic Spanish for Adults
Learn basic Spanish pronunciation, phrases and words.

*To register, email Kyle Maier at kmaier@alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703.746.1783.

Author Talk: by Dr. Kurt Johnson
In My Back Yard: Natural History in the Suburbs

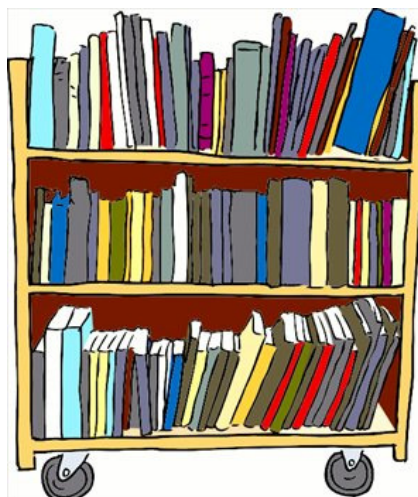
By Leonard Goldstein, Chair, Author Talks/ Adult Programs

Native garden plants can support a thriving community of mutually-dependent plants, insects, and animals. Dr. Kurt Johnson, a professor of anatomy at George Washington University School of Medicine, came to tell us how. As a child he was fascinated by the *Little Golden Book of Insects* and after moving into a house with over an acre of land near Episcopal High School he let the back yard return to its natural state. He stopped mowing the lawn and stopped using fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides. He now has grass, wildflowers, an aster meadow, a milkweed patch, and one section called the "jungle." Each has its own plants, animals, and insects. Johnson's striking photos catalog the wildlife in his back yard.

Every plant supports its own community. Milkweed is a champ with 470 species of insect. Insects avoid an alkaloid in its sap that tastes terrible or sickens predators. This avoidance may be partly inborn and partly learned. Brightly colored or boldly patterned insects like the monarch butterfly taste terrible. The pipevine swallowtail caterpillar ingests the pipevine's carcinogenic aristolochic acid without harm, but its bright red and black color scheme is instinctively avoided by birds. The viceroy butterfly tastes fine to birds but survives by adopting coloration similar to the monarch or other bad-tasting insects. Stinkbugs eat monarch caterpillars and use their chemical defenses for protection.

Creatures low on the food chain may survive by cryptic disguise, looking like something inedible like a leaf, or by looking like something scary. The larva of the spicebush swallowtail butterfly looks like the green tree snake that inhabits the same bush. A shiny cuticle on its black "eye" replicates the gleam in a serpent's eye.

Some insects depend on plants for survival and some plants depend on insects such as the obvious example of pollination by bees. Virginia bluebells depend on ants for dispersal, and trumpet vine seed pods are protected from hungry seed bugs by carpenter ants that benefited earlier in the season by eating both the trumpet vines' nectar and insects attracted by that nectar. It's a bug-eat-bug world out there as shown by the amphibian denizens of the Johnson's water garden, such as frogs and salamanders—but that's a whole other phylum. *In My Back Yard: Natural History in the Suburbs* can help you to enjoy the current inhabitants of your yard and welcome some new helpful and interesting new ones.



Duncan Library

2501 Commonwealth Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22301
703-746-1705

**Friends of Duncan Library
Officers:**

President: Tony Springer,
tony.springer@HQ.NASA.gov

Vice-President: Maureen Schweers
maureen.schweers@gmail.com

Secretary: Linda Morefield
linp@comcast.net

Treasurer: Carolyn Harris
cdharris3@gmail.com

For more information:

For more information:

Email:

duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com

<http://duncanlibraryfriends.intuitwebsites.com>

**Friends of Duncan
Library Newsletter:**

Editor: Polly Morrison,
pollyjmo@verizon.net

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR NEEDED

Are you interested in becoming one of Duncan Library's BEST friends? The Friends of Duncan Library is looking for a new Membership Chair. The Chair leads the Friends of Duncan Library's annual Membership Campaign in the fall, maintains membership records throughout the year and assists the Friends of Duncan Library Board in outreach efforts. Before moving to Palm Springs, our outgoing Membership Chair compiled all the documents from past Membership Campaigns to make jumping into this role a breeze—though we are always open to your new ideas!

If you're a detail-oriented and organized individual, this is a GREAT way to become more involved in your neighborhood library! For more information, please email duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com. Thank you!

Friends of Duncan Library
2501 Commonwealth Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22301