Dear Friends:

Summer—what better time to kick back with a good book or two? Well, you know where to find your favorite titles. That’s right. Del Ray’s own Duncan Library which has all the latest fiction, nonfiction, and just about every other genre.

During the spring, Alexandria’s library patrons were faced with a preliminary city budget that would have reduced the hours of operation. With the help of the Friends of Duncan and other groups throughout the library system petitions were distributed and signed; city councilors were contacted; and budget sessions were attended. At the last minute, the Mayor and City Council decided not to cut the library’s budget. What does that mean for us? Happily, Duncan will now remain open on both Monday and Wednesday evenings and the collection will continue to grow. Thank you one and all for participating in this campaign to maintain our library.

More good news. After a five month hiatus, Duncan has a new Youth Services Manager and not a minute too soon as our children are no longer in school and have plenty of time on their hands.

Do you know where these photos were taken? To find out, see pg. 10!
President’s Letter—continued from page 1

Elisabeth Murray came on board earlier this month and is already on top of things. If you haven’t met Elisabeth, please drop by and make her feel at home. She has some great ideas and programs that she would like to share with kids of all ages.

Linda J. Walker has joined your Board of Directors, filling the vacant Vice President, e-communications position. Luckily for all of us, Linda is very savvy in the ways of social media and websites. She is overseeing the redesign of the Friends website and assures us that the content will be kept up-to-date going forward.

The Spring Book Sale was a resounding success thanks to the organizational ability and oversight of Peggy Sweeney (dlsweeney@comcast.net) and the many volunteers who so ably assisted her. By the way, it’s not too early to begin thinking about the Fall Book Sale (October 16–19). October nineteenth is a Saturday, and we plan to have an all-day tent sale in the parking lot located between the library and the school. Based on our previous tent sale a couple of years ago, it should be fun. But, yes, here I go again. We will need many volunteers. So when Peggy puts out her call for volunteers, please sign up. The proceeds from our twice-annual book sales help fill the gaps in the library for which there are either insufficient or no funds at all.

And speaking of volunteering, Membership Chair, Gay Hurst has resigned from the Board. She and her family moved from the area on the first of June. Her position on the Board of Directors is currently vacant. The Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, so please volunteer to fill that vacancy. The time commitment is minimal, but the position is vitally important. If you would like to find out additional details, please contact Friends Treasurer, Carolyn Harris at cdharris3@gmail.com.

We do have a new volunteer, Elaina Palincsar. Elaina, who has worked tirelessly for Duncan Library over the years, has taken on the responsibilities of chairing the Landscaping Committee. Of course, she needs help, so please consider joining her, either as a member of her committee or as the chair of the parallel Beautification Committee. The community is rightly proud of Duncan Library and would like it to be surrounded by appropriate gardens, trees and shrubs. Elaina can be reached at palincsare@comcast.net.

The very successful film in the noir series had its final showing in June. Fear not. The film legacy of Alfred Hitchcock will be showcased in July, and I encourage you to attend. What a perfect way to spend a few hours on a Wednesday evening each month. And it’s free! To find out the dates and starting times of each month’s selection, please contact Walter Gross (wgross3@comcast.net).

For more information about the Friends of Duncan Library and the various programs and activities we support, feel free to email me (LCharles.FitzGerald@gmail.com).

Enjoy the summer!

Friar
President, Friends of Duncan Library

Friends Election on the Horizon
This is the year we hold election of officers for the next two-year term—2014 through 2016. A slate of candidate must be prepared by late summer and presented to the Friends membership in early fall. There are several openings, so PLEASE CONSIDER PUTTING YOUR NAME FORWARD FOR ONE OF THE BOARD POSITIONS. Contact any of the current Board members (names and contact information are listed on the last page of the newsletter).
From Stephanie Clark, Branch Manager, Duncan Library:

Southern Cross the Dog by Bill Cheng
This is Cheng’s first book, and it is phenomenal (in my opinion)! He follows the main character, Robert, from the 1920s when a major flood destroys his family and home through the 1940s when he reconnects with two childhood friends—and an awful lot in between! The Washington Post reviews compared the book to Faulkner’s The Sound and the Fury, but I think there are also a lot of links to be made to Zora Neale Hurston’s work. This is the first fiction book I’ve picked up in quite a while, and I had a hard time putting it down. An excellent read!

The Master of Us All: Balenciaga, His Workrooms, His World by Mary Blume
Balenciaga was notoriously private (to the point that some journalists questioned if he really existed), but Blume connects with his top vendeuse, Florette Chelot, to tell his story. She was the first he hired and witnessed his first collection. They worked together for 30 years. Blume met Florette when she was a college student, and they developed a relationship that led to the book. This is a quick read and very enjoyable.

From L Charles "Friar" FitzGerald, President, Friends of Duncan Library:

Heart of the Hunter by Deon Meyer
It was a rather cool and rainy spring so I had more time than usual to devote to reading. Fortuitously, I discovered this previously unknown South African author (at least to me). His novels—or at least eight of them—have been translated into English from the original Afrikaanz. Since none of the characters reappear from book to book, you can pick any one of them to start. My most recent choice was Heart of The Hunter, a thrilling epic adventure. While Mr. Meyer’s works would be a tad more reader-friendly if maps of South Africa were included, I have had the advantage of having traveled extensively in South Africa, so I had a fairly good idea about the many locations where the action takes place. If you want exciting escapism novels, give him a try.

Our Kind of Traitor by John leCarre
The brilliant author of 21 novels, John le Carre, has reinvented the spy novel. His most recent book, takes us back to his earlier works set in Russia. The story involves a guileless British couple and the Russian Mafia. Stunningly written with very believable dialog, Mr. le Carre also describes the ruthless internecine warfare among the British intelligence agencies. Although the novel starts out slowly, it quickly picks up the pace and makes this book one of Mr. le Carre’s best. A good read for the lazy days of summer.

Grief by Andrew Holleran
This short novel is a reflection on the nature of loss and yearning. The story takes place in Washington, D.C. as a middle-aged bachelor having recently lost his invalid mother tries to work his way through his loss and yearning. Surprisingly, he finds solace in the journals of Mary Todd Lincoln, which show him the unexpected truths and confusion one feels after losing a loved one.

The Dinner by Herman Koch
Translated from the Dutch, The Dinner is a dark, suspenseful and chilling novel about two brothers and their spouses who, while dining in a high end Amsterdam restaurant, are struggling to make the

Continued on pg. 4
hardest decision of their lives. The book is divided by the courses of the meal, and each course serves up carefully calibrated—if not nasty—revelations. The dinner conversation runs the gamut from banal and trivial to how far a person would be willing to go for a loved one. If you enjoyed *Gone Girl* then this is a book for you.

**From Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Friends of Duncan Library**

*The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey

I found this a sad but mesmerizing story—as I guess befits a fairy tale-like world. Set in the 1920s, Mabel and Jack are homesteaders in the Alaskan territory. The childless couple makes a snow child one day in their front yard, and that sets off the imagination (or not) of a feral-like girl and red fox sidekick, who come and go between their cabin and the snowy winter forest. I don’t want to give away too much because it was so much fun to discover the “rest of the world” as the tale continues. If you can handle some suspension of belief, I recommend this quirky, captivating story.

*The Magician’s Assistant* by Ann Patchett

I am totally drawn to Ann Patchett’s writing—the rhythm of the words that pulls me into the story (*Bel Canto* was one of my favorite books). This is a 1990s tale of Sabine, the wife and assistant to Parsifal, a magician. The story deals with the impact of Parsifal’s death and the revelation of his secret life—a family living in Nebraska. After a tentative start, I found the characters compelling. I had moments when Sabine’s behavior frustrated me, and I did not like the Midwestern stereotyping, but the book is well-written and the story absorbing.

**From Linda Walker, Vice President, Friends of Duncan Library**

*Midnight Come Again* by Dana Stabenow.

This is the 10th book in the author’s Kate Shugak series. Kate is an Alaskan native who can typically be found with her half-wolf, half husky dog, Mutt, by her side. She used to be an investigator for the District Attorney’s office in Anchorage, but experienced burn out after investigating child abuse/exploitation cases for five years. She packed up and went back to her 160 acres in the Alaska wilderness and now occasionally works as a private investigator. She is a voracious reader, and extremely self-sufficient. I guess you have to be when you pretty much live in the middle of nowhere. The author lives in Alaska and I love the detailed descriptions she provides of the Alaskan territory and animals. I read the series some years back. Last year I went on an Alaskan cruise, and I decided to re-read the series again. I’m enjoying it just as much (if not more!) the second time around! The first book in the series, *A Cold Day for Murder*, is available for Kindle free through Amazon.

*You Can Buy Happiness (and It’s Cheap)* by Tammy Strobel

About a year or so ago, I discovered this author’s blog, “Rowdy Kittens,” and considering I have two cats, how could I not be drawn to this blog title! I’ve become an avid follower, and when her book came out, I think I was first in line to check it out of the library! The book talks about her journey to a simplified life. She stresses relationships over things and money. She shares lessons she has learned, such as “money can buy happiness, but it depends on how you spend it.” At the end of each chapter, Tammy includes a micro-actions section that sometimes asks questions for you to think about, such as what is your definition of happiness? Or she may give advice such as waiting for 30-days before buying stuff or adopting a one-in, one-out rule. One of the reasons I like this book is because the author offers advice, but doesn’t shove the advice down your throat like some books do. I think she sums up the book quite well when she states, “In essence, the book is an invitation to rethink your relationship with money, time, and stuff, to reconsider the things that make you happy.”
The Friends of Duncan Library and St. Elmo’s Coffee Pub present

A monthly series starting in July featuring nine films from the master of suspense

The Films of Alfred Hitchcock

Screening at 8:30 PM July 10, March 14 and thereafter on the first Wednesday of the month
Duncan Library 2101 Commonwealth Avenue in Del Ray
Call 703 746 1795 for more information
One Big Book Sale Down, a Bigger One to Come! (And thank you, Don)

By Peggy Sweeney, Book Sale Chair, Friends of Duncan Library

The Spring 2013 sale was a great success: as usual, a wonderful selection of books, eager shoppers, one of the best groups of new and returning volunteers that I’ve seen, and finally, total sales of almost $5,000!

Next up is the Fall 2013 Book Sale, and we’re making plans already. The sale is scheduled for October 16-19. Wednesday through Friday will be held in the library as usual. But, Saturday we are having a tent sale outside the library, probably from 10 am to 3 pm. It will have more books for sale than our regular sales but won’t have the entertainment that was at the last tent sale a couple of years ago.

We need to beef up donations now, in anticipation of the fall sale. If you have books you can donate, please don’t hesitate, and pass the message on to your friends and family. And, be prepared to volunteer your time, as well—it’s always fun, and none of this would be possible without volunteers.

Speaking of making things possible, I want to make Don Walsh’s role in book sales known. Don has taken the primary responsibility for processing donations. This is a bigger job than you may realize. Don moves donations from the entrance to the “sort room.” There, he separates out the items we don’t sell (magazines, encyclopedias, textbooks, etc.), recycles damaged books, and shelves on-going sales books that qualify as 4/$1. Then, he can sort the remaining items by type or subject matter, shelving them in the sort room for final review, and then boxing and labeling them for storage. It seems like he’s there almost every day! Don, we truly could not do this without you. Thank you!

The Duncan Library Book Discussion Group

By Ruth Hailu, Librarian, Duncan Library

The Duncan Book Discussion Group took off in November 2005 and it continues to enjoy its successful journey toward what soon will be its eight year anniversary. In the last year alone, the group has discussed books about almost everything under the sun! We’ve discussed the lives of artists, explored different cultures and nationalities, and read across many genres.

Books are suggested by participants, and selections are voted on by the group. As a bonus, the person whose book has been selected gets to moderate the discussion! Discussion can be very heated and critical at times, as some participants have very strong reactions and opinions about the book being discussed. But, all come to listen and hear what others think, which always makes for a lively evening. We try to find a good diversity of titles to keep everyone interested. It’s always interesting when someone suggests a title with the warning that the writing isn’t as good as the plot or there are too many clichés—you would be surprised how many times the group has voted to read those very titles!

Books we’ll be discussing this summer include: Drift by Rachel Maddow (June); The Piano Tuner by Daniel Mason (July); and, In the Garden of Beasts by Erik Larson (August). We hope you’ll consider joining us!
I am thrilled to announce that our new Youth Services Manager joined Duncan Library on June 10! Her name is Elisabeth Murray, and she comes to us by way of the Williamsburg Library, the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, and the Kaimuki (HI) Public Library. She has an MLIS from the University of Hawaii, and a BA in Biology and Religion from Mount Holyoke College. We’re excited to have her as part of the Duncan team and doubly excited that she started just in time for Summer Quest!

Speaking of Summer Quest—“Dig Into Reading” is this year’s theme, and all the fun started June 17. See http://bit.ly/17Eokh7 for more details about signing up. There is also a link to the event calendar where you can see all the fun programs planned at all the Alexandria Library branches. Feel free to call with any questions—703-746-1705.

Duncan’s Summer Quest programming includes:
**Summer Quest Junior (ages 0-5)**
- June 18, 10am and 11am—The Great Zucchini (magician)
- June 24, 10am and 11am—Kaydee Puppets
- July 1, 10am and 11am—C. Shells (music)
- July 8, 10am and 11am—Uno, Dos, Tres, Con Andres! (music)
- July 9, 10am and 11am—Bill Jenkins (music)
- July 10, 10am and 11am—Music Together Alexandria (this program will be held at the Mt. Vernon Rec Center)
- July 15, 10am and 11am—Classic Tales N’Tunes
- July 27, 2pm—Bright Star Theatre
- July 30, 10am and 11am—Goodlife Theater

**Summer Quest (ages 6-12)**
- June 25, 3:30pm—Reptile World
- July 2, 3:30pm—Shazam Magic
- July 10, 3:30pm—Under the Sea
- July 11, 3:30pm—Storyteller Diane Macklin
- July 15, 3:30pm—Chris Fascione (mime, juggling, and storytelling – but not all at the same time!)
- July 16, 3:30pm—Barefoot Puppets
- July 17, 3:30pm—Joe Romano (magician)
- July 22, 3:30pm—The Green Golly Project
- July 24, 3:30pm—Raptor Conservancy of Virginia
- July 31, 3:30pm—Storyteller Gary Lloyd

Programming is funded through the Duncan Foundation, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the Friends of the Duncan Library. Many thanks to the Friends for their generous support of Summer Quest and Summer Quest Junior programs and giveaways!

For the grownups this summer, the Wednesday films continue. The Film Noir series wrapped up in early June, but July will begin the Hitchcock series. The Duncan Poetry Society will also continue to meet. We appreciate all the hard work that Walter Gross puts into these programs! The Duncan Book Discussion Group will also continue to meet, as well. Ruth Hailu has a great update in this newsletter on the books to be read and discussed this summer (see p.6). We hope you’ll join us!

I continue to be grateful for the support of the Friends! I very much appreciate their generosity in funding Summer Quest programming and prizes as well as behind-the-scenes needs that have allowed us to better organize staff work areas.
Getting to Know Elisabeth Murray,
Youth Services Manager at Duncan Library

Are you from Alexandria? If not, from where? What drew you to Alexandria?

I grew up in Connecticut and my parents still live in my childhood home. My husband’s work brought us to the D.C. metro area, and we were thrilled when we found a place to live in the Del Ray neighborhood of Alexandria. I love that I can walk or bike to work.

Who are your favorite authors? Favorite books? Why do you love them?

I could not put down Orson Scott Card’s Ender’s Game when I read it in middle school. It was the first book that kept me up all night. I felt the same way about Robert Jordan’s “Wheel of Time” fantasy series, but since each book is over 500 pages I forced myself to take a few breaks to eat and sleep. History came alive when I read the “Bloody Jack” series by L.A. Meyer, and I eagerly await each new installment. This series will be available soon at Duncan. I can’t wait to introduce new readers to this sassy heroine.

What are you reading currently?

I just finished reading Divergent by Veronica Roth. You may just see this dystopian novel being carried around by a teen you know.

What are your outside interests?

I love being outdoors. I enjoy hiking, kayaking and just started to learn how to sail. I just became a National Zoo member and head to see the animals every chance I get. When the weather gets too cold or too hot and humid, I head to the Smithsonian or to a historic site.

What influenced you to become a librarian?

When I tell people about my job, the first thing that they often say is “I always wanted to be a librarian.” For all of the reasons that they give for wishing that they had become one is why I made this career choice: to help people, to be an educator, to be surrounded by books, to interact with people. Why not become a librarian? I still can’t think of a single reason not to join this profession.

What gives you the most satisfaction as a librarian?

It’s impossible to pick. The best compliment I can receive is when I suggest a book to a teen and they come back and say that it is the best thing that they have ever read. It is equally rewarding when you help a student find resources for a school project they are working on. Plus, who doesn’t love a good story time with stories, puppets, dancing, singing, and of course, a little bit of silliness?

How long have you been at the Duncan Library?

June 10 was my first day of work. The rain drove everyone indoors and every table and chair was filled in the children’s and teen sections of the library. I loved seeing how much the community uses the library.

Continued on pg. 9
Get to Know Elisabeth Murray, continued from pg. 10

What aspect of the Duncan Library do you think is particularly laudable?

What makes Duncan great is the people—both the staff that work here and the community members who come in to the use the library. The smiles and laughter of the kids are infectious.

What is your particular function at the Duncan Library?

I am the Youth Services Manager. You can find me at the children’s reference desk, assisting patrons browsing in the stacks or conducting a story time. Feel free to introduce yourself! I love to meet new people.

Do you believe that libraries primarily serve an educational function? If not, what is the primary function of a library?

A public library—like a librarian—fulfills many roles. It serves as a resource for students of all ages, for people hunting for a job, or for people looking for a good book to read or movie to watch. And that is just the tip of the iceberg! Libraries also provide a safe place to spend time, provide special programming and of course, the children’s department offers lots and lots of story times.

How does entertainment fit into the mission of libraries?

One of the greatest lessons I learned while earning my master’s degree was that there is learning in almost everything. For example, reading a fiction book teaches vocabulary and builds reading comprehension. Watching a DVD can expose someone to a new time period or way of thinking. Entertainment and education can and do co-exist.

Do you have any suggestions about how the community could make Duncan a better library?

Duncan is already a great library. Just keep on coming and using our resources!

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**Friends Funds at Work**

By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Friends of Duncan Library

Here is a 2nd Quarter (Mar 21-Jun 10) summary of income and how the Friends used the funds in 2013 to support Duncan Library:

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<tr>
<th>2013 2nd Quarter Income</th>
<th>2013 2nd Quarter Expenses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Donations 761</td>
<td>Adult Programs (Authors, Film &amp; Poetry) 669</td>
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<td>Other Donations 561</td>
<td>Newsletter 64</td>
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<td>Spring Book Sale 4,841</td>
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<td>Online Book Sales 1,099</td>
<td>Library Requested Materials</td>
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<td>Fundraising Expenses 626</td>
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Adopt-A-Garden

By Elaina Palicsar, Landscaping Committee, Friends of Duncan Library

Since the goals of the City’s Adopt-A-Garden program and those of the Friends of Duncan Library’s Landscaping and Beautification Committee are very similar, it makes sense for us to participate in the program to maintain the Duncan Library grounds. (For detailed information, Google: Adopt-A-Garden, Alexandria VA.)

Our existing landscaping plan is very simple, and there is hope that in future we’ll be able to add trees and shrubs to add interest and variety to the grounds. For now, to participate we would be maintaining existing plantings. This basic maintenance is now being accomplished by a City seasonal worker and it’s a lot of job for one person with responsibilities to other sites. Big thanks to her and to Darla Marburger, our previous Landscaping/Beautification Chair for her hard work.

To participate, we would need to commit to keeping the plant beds weed free; cutting back and mulching the garden at appropriate seasons; removing litter and debris, watering as necessary; reporting dead, damaged and diseased plants to the City Horticulturist; preparing a monthly progress report and sending it to Park Planning (Landscaping and Beautification Chairs with input from the Branch Librarian.) We might be adding annuals at the entry gardens and hope to refurbish the Green Roof Demo Garden by removing non Green Roof plants and adding appropriate sedums when they become available.

The responsibilities of the Landscaping/Beautification job have been divided. The Landscaping Chair, is currently not up for heavy gardening so we’re seeking an able bodied gardener who would be available to work with groups of volunteers recruited from Friends, schools, Scouts, etc. as Beautification Chair. Friends who have indicated an interest in Landscaping/Beautification will be contacted but we’ll be putting feelers out in the community as well to elicit volunteers.

The term of adoption is two years but the committee need not be static nor do we need to have a full committee in place before submitting our application to adopt. Once our agreement is finalized a Park Planning representative will meet the Landscaping and Beautification Chairs and Branch Librarian at the grounds to discuss our needs.

While we are taking our small steps we’ll be dreaming big. Eventually a plan for including shrubs, trees and perhaps sculpture will be developed. That plan will need to be reviewed and approved by Library Administration as well as the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Park Planning Division before it can be implemented. Gardeners are patient.

The grounds have come a long way from the early days of digging up clumps of construction debris with every shovel load. In time, as the soil improves, the landscaping plan is designed and implemented the grounds will be as welcoming as the library itself. You can be part of making this happen.
In reaction to concern about the impact of cuts to the branch libraries' funding contained in the City Manager’s proposed FY 2014 budget, the City Manager eliminated proposed cuts to the branches’ evening hours from the final budget passed by the City Council on May 7. When news of the cuts was announced in February, the Duncan Friends Board of Directors initiated a campaign to preserve Duncan’s existing evening schedule. Specifically, the proposed budget would have reduced, among other things, evening hours (7:00 to 9:00 PM) at Duncan and other branches, from four hours to two hours a week.

Concerned over the cuts’ impact on working families and students, as well as persons needing evening access to the library’s computers and the meeting room, the Board took measures to convince the City administration and the City Council members of the importance of retaining the existing evening hour schedule. Specifically, the Board initiated a campaign to obtain signatures on a petition addressed to the City Council from members of the community served by Duncan Library. The Board also set up an e-petition to gather signatures on line. The Board publicized the petition through a poster, on list serves, and in an e-mail to the Friends membership list. Throughout April, Board members took turns collecting signatures during the library’s evening hours, and, on the evening of the City Council’s last markup session, delivered over 500 signatures on hard copy petitions and the e-petition combined to the City Council chambers.

The Board’s efforts were complementary to those of the Friends organizations at the other branches who mounted similar campaigns, and to those of the Library Board. Most importantly, the Friends owe a vote of thanks to the responsiveness of the Central Library administration in working with Council members to address the concerns of the public and arrive at a satisfactory resolution that preserved the evening hours.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer and Acting Membership Chair, Friends of Duncan Library

WooHoo! We have a total of 146 current Duncan Friends. We have 33 Friends memberships where donations were made in 2013, and we have an additional 113 Friends memberships that were made from May through December 2012.

PLEASE NOTE A CHANGE TO OUR MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN: Beginning in June 2013, we will go to an annual renewal system. This means, for example, that when you make your membership donation in June, you will be a “Current” Friend through June of the subsequent year, August through the next August, and so on. You will receive written communication one month prior to the expiration of your membership to remind you to renew.

Remember, that you must be a Current Friend to attend the Book Sale First Chance Nights, so keeping your Friends’ membership up-to-date is a very good thing to do. If you any questions about your membership status, feel free to contact Carolyn Harris cdharris3@gmail.com.
Huge Thanks to Mark Allen
Mark Allen is a local attorney, who generously provided Duncan Friends with advice and assistance in 2010 with our incorporation in Virginia and our application for FEIN and tax exempt status. In addition, Mark agreed to serve for three years as the Friends Registered Agent in Virginia. Now, we say our “good bye” to Mark and express our deepest thanks to him for providing his services to our group. Mark is truly a Friend of Duncan Library.

FRIENDS OF DUNCAN LIBRARY ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!

By Linda Walker, Vice-President, Friends of Duncan Library

Did you know we have Facebook and Twitter accounts? If not, please visit and “like” the Friends Facebook page so you can be notified of Friends events, such as upcoming book sales, film and poetry club meetings, and other fun activities. Search for us on Facebook at Friends of Duncan Library! The Friends Twitter account is @DuncanFriends.