



NEWSLETTER

Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301

duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com

FRIENDS OF DUNCAN LIBRARY ELECTION OF OFFICERS

By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Duncan Friends

It's time for an election of officers for the next two-year term, 2012-13. Watch for your ballot via email or snail mail, and PLEASE vote and return your ballot. The slate of officers is:

President: L Charles FitzGerlad (Friar)
VP & E-Communications: Martha-Helene Stapleton
Secretary: Linda Morefield
Treasurer: Carolyn Harris

Please note that the following Friends have volunteered to serve as committee heads:

Membership Chair: Gay Hurst
Newsletter Editor: Polly Morrison
Author Talks Chair: Lenny Goldstein

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: If you are interested in becoming a more active Friend, we need a Beautification/Landscaping Chair, Teen Programs Chair, and Social Activities Chair. Please contact duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com.

Annual Holiday Open House

Please join the staff and the Friends of Duncan Library for a Holiday Open House!

Wednesday, December 7th
6:30pm to 8:30pm

Featuring The Irish Breakfast Band
and Paul Ryder

In the spirit of the season, please consider bringing a new, unwrapped toy for Community Partners for Children.
Thank you!



Duncan Library Branch Manager Pat Ryckman is shown at left and above during a welcome reception held for her in September. Learn more about Pat and her reading interests on pages 3-4.

President's Letter: Year's End and New Beginnings

It has been a great privilege to serve as President of the Friends of Duncan Library for the past 6 years. Our organization is composed of neighbors and friends who believe in the importance of our local library. You demonstrate this by generously contributing your time, money, books and other media. We succeed because of your support and our library is able to offer additional services that would not otherwise be available.

If you haven't already done so, please renew your membership or become a new member. Come to the upcoming holiday party and meet friends who share your interests. Perhaps you can even find the person who donated that fascinating book that you purchased at the last Friends Book Sale just because it looked interesting and the price was right. Haven't we all found some treasures there

that we would otherwise have missed? You will also have an opportunity to visit with the library staff and tell them how much you appreciate their work. If you haven't yet had the opportunity to meet our talented new manager, Pat Ryckman, the holiday party is the perfect opportunity to do so.

Many members of the board will be completing a rewarding tenure at the end of 2011. We encourage you to vote to elect our new board members. We thank all of the members for your support during our tenure and we want you to know that our success while serving on the board of the Friends of Duncan Library was because of your support and your friendship.

Tony Springer, President, Duncan Friends

Friends' Funds at Work

By Carolyn Harris, Treasurer, Duncan Friends

Here's a summary of income through November 2011 and how the Friends have used funds in 2011 to support Duncan Library:

Income

Membership Donations	3,900
Other Donations	1,700
Book Sales	15,000
Grant	300
Bank Interest	250
Total	\$21,150

Expenses

All Alexandria Reads	1,000
Adult Programs	460
Author Talks	210
Juvenile Programs	3,150
Library Requests	2,500
Staff Recognition/Open House	740
Librarian Scholarships	125
Newsletter	240
Beautification	250
Operating/Fundraising Expenses	4,290
Total	\$12,965



The Duncan Friends sponsored a Beading Workshop in November for interested community members. Instructor Shannyn Snyder provided beads, supplies, tools, and know-how. After she showed the participants how to do some of the basics, she let them loose to make what they desired - bracelets, earrings, and necklaces were the outcome. Lot of laughter, talking, and admiring of other's handiwork took place!

Hello Friends!

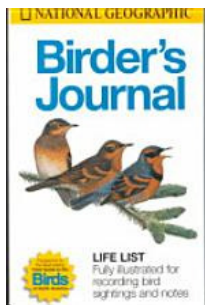
By Pat Ryckman, Duncan Library Branch Manager

My first three months on the job have been an amazing learning experience. I've discovered that:

- Del Ray is a fun and friendly community.
- Duncan Library is blessed with a dedicated and enthusiastic staff.
- Our Friends organization is one of the most active and involved support groups I've ever had the pleasure to work with.

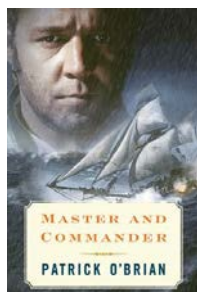
For my first article in the newsletter, it was suggested that I tell you a little about my background. But the bio facts have already been scooped by the Packet: I've lived most of my life in North Carolina, I have a journalist husband, three children (one a librarian!), and I've worked in libraries forever (actually, just since I was 14 years old). So instead, I thought I'd share a bit about my reading life. I'm one of those people who always sneak a peek at the bookshelves when I visit someone's home. Although it's not quite true that "you are what you read," the books we choose do say something about our lives.

So, I invite you to join me on a walk down the hall of my tiny apartment in 16th Street Heights, DC. Here on the first shelves: my gardening books. I left my garden of 21 years behind in North Carolina and I don't have a smidgeon of dirt to dig in the Heights, yet I couldn't part with my collection of gardening how-tos, guides and esoterica. In the latter category, one of the oldest books on my shelf: **My Summer in a Garden** by Charles Dudley Warner, published in Boston in 1871. It's full of advice on battling the dreaded "pusley" weed and the best methods for staking lima beans. Someday, I'll have another garden and this tome will come in handy!



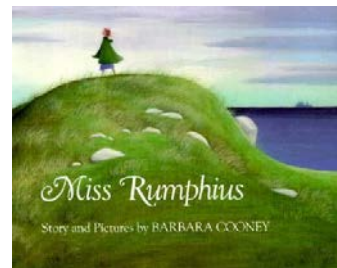
Close by the gardening books is the bird-watching collection. Here is the birding journal (purchased years ago at a Friends' book sale) where I've recorded sightings from three continents. My husband and I have been hiking and exploring our new environs every weekend and have been thrilled to spot bald eagles at Mason's Neck National Wildlife Refuge, kingfishers at Harper's Ferry and wood ducks in Rock Creek Park. History and biography line the next few shelves.

I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to combine my love of history with my library work over the years – collecting and digitizing historic photographs and oral history interviews and coauthoring one of the books on my shelf, **An African American Album**. This book, the result of a grant-funded project to document Charlotte, North Carolina's black history in images, is also the source of one of my favorite library stories. The copy residing on the shelves at our venerable Library of Congress has been cataloged with a misspelled word in the subtitle.

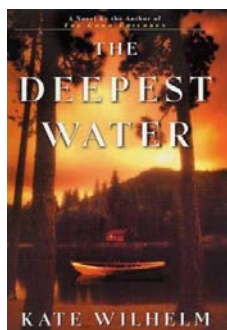


My fiction section is small since I usually borrow novels from my public library, but one shelf is filled with 21 volumes of Patrick O'Brian's Jack Aubrey-Stephen Maturin novels which I occasionally reread and loan to friends. These historical novels, set during the Napoleonic Wars, have it all – adventure, mystery, domestic travails and plenty of nautical trivia. Check out volume one, **Master and Commander**, from the Duncan Library – the audiobook is available, too.

Finally, in the very last bookshelf, at the end of the hall, is just a sampling of my favorite children's books. Most are in storage but a few made the cut and came along to my new home – **Miss Rumphius** and **Island Boy** by Barbara Cooney, each book capturing a lifetime in just a few pages of lovely and evocative illustrations; **The Gunniwolf**, my favorite old folktale retold by Wilhelmina Harper and perfect for sharing with three- and four-year-olds; and books by my favorite British children's authors, Hilary McKay and John Burningham.



End of the hallway, but there's a pile of books on my nightstand. I'm currently reading **The World Without Us** by Alan Weisman, a fascinating speculation on what would happen if people suddenly disappeared from the earth (think virus or rapture, all of us gone without a trace). How long would it take the natural world to erase the hand of man on the landscape? A very long time in the case of plastics but quite quickly, as it turns out, in other areas. Weisman describes in excruciating detail a scene to make homeowners cringe – the surprisingly rapid crumbling of the family home, from that first leak near the chimney to a grass covered mound.



Finally, there's my iPhone where I'm halfway through an audiobook, the perfect read for my Metro commute. **The Deepest Water**, a mystery by Kate Wilhelm, features a smart amateur sleuth, Abby Connor, investigating her novelist father's murder in an appropriately spooky setting in the Oregon woods. Are the clues to his death hidden in his last novel? I'll be finding out soon and you can too. Look for this title and other great reads in our eAudioBooks collection. Just click the eBooks link in the menu on the left side of our library web page at <http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us/>.

You've had a browse through my book shelves and now I'm curious about yours. Please look for me next time you visit Duncan Library and let me know your reading interests. Or drop me an email at pryckman@alexandria.lib.va.us. Reading books has always been one of my favorite activities but talking about books with other readers is even better.





Spotlight on Databases

By Phyllis Miller, Reference Librarian and Kyle Maier, Children's Librarian

We'd like to spotlight two of our online databases in this newsletter, one for adults and one for children. To take a look at these databases just click the **Online Databases** link in the menu on the left side of the Alexandria home page at <http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us/>. You'll need your library card number to sign in but then you can use and enjoy these resources 24/7. Our website never closes!

So, you've always wanted to learn to speak Arabic? Or perhaps you're planning a trip to Argentina and need to brush up on your Spanish? You can learn these and



seven other languages at your own pace using our Mango Languages online courses. Each language program offers three levels from basic to advanced and review lessons to test your skills. The languages are taught using actual conversations and the lessons are geared to real life situations.



TumbleBook Library is an online collection of TumbleBooks – animated, talking picture books which teach kids the joy of reading. TumbleBooks are created by adding animation, sound, music and narration to existing picture books suitable for beginning readers or for an adult to share with a child. For older students there are read-along chapter books and also selected non-fiction titles. In the Language Learning Section you'll find a growing selection of books in Spanish and other languages and many of these are bilingual. Share a TumbleBook with your favorite kid!

Author Talk: Gary Sarnoff

The Wrecking Crew of '33: The Washington Senators' Last Pennant

By Leonard Goldstein, Chair, Author Talks/Adult Programs

Major-league baseball was stirring the blood, and upsetting the digestion, of local fans long before the present Washington Nationals came on the scene. But it's been nearly 80 years since a Washington team was able to win the pennant and clinch the American League championship. On October 26, Gary Sarnoff presented an engrossing talk and slide show based on his book, *The Wrecking Crew of '33: The Washington Senators' Last Pennant*, that took us back to the early history of baseball in Washington, those golden (and sometimes leaden) days that were perhaps not so different from now.

The Washington Senators were the team that represented our nation's capital in the 1890s, but their owner, the Wagner brothers, sold off too many of their good players. In 1901 a new Senators team was formed and in 1905 was renamed...the Nationals. The new name did not bring a renewal of fortune, and even though they were officially the Nationals, or Nats, the name Senators began to come back into common use (they remained officially the Nationals until the mid-50s).

By 1909 Washington was being described, in a vaudeville joke that paraphrased George Washington's eulogy, as "First in war, first in peace, and last in the American League." They had some good players – Walter Johnson was a historically great pitcher – but as a team were awful. Still, in 1910 they managed to shut out the Yankees, even then a powerhouse, in three consecutive games, and their fortunes took a turn for the better when Clark Griffith, "The Old Fox," became manager in 1912. They started winning, as many as 90 games in a season, and in 1920 Griffith bought the team with another businessman. By 1925 they had won the pennant, though they lost the World Series. But their manager, Bucky Harris, lacked experience, and they were soon losing more games till Harris was let go in 1928. Some of their players were undeniably talented but

unmanageable. Left-fielder Goose Goslin was a power hitter but basically ruined his arm trying to put the shot during spring training, to the extent that when fielding he needed the shortstop to make his throws for him. Still, talented players like Walter Johnson and Joe Cronin assured that they did not stay losers. Cronin was named the American League's MVP in 1930.

But the Yankees were still the team to beat. In 1932, led by Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, the Yankees crushed the Cubs in the World Series (another situation not so different from now, except for the part about the Cubs being in the Series). The Senators added lefties to pitch to Ruth and Gehrig, and FDR threw out the first ball of the 1933 season at their opening home game. The Senators proceeded to do so well that by June the *Washington Post's* great sportswriter Shirley Povich named them the Wrecking Crew, for what they were doing to the other teams' chances. Two of their players were in the lineup for the Dream Game that summer (part of the Chicago World's Fair exhibition), which became the first of the All-Star games. The American League won.

By fall the Senators had done what many thought impossible, overcome the Yankees to win the pennant, and faced the New York Giants in the World Series. But here their luck, or skill, ran out. They won the third game, but it was all over by the end of the fifth game.

They gradually declined until their name was a synonym for "loser," and when the 1950s Broadway show *Damn Yankees* needed to provide the least likely team to beat the Yankees for the American League pennant the choice was easy. The Senators moved to Minneapolis in 1961, their replacement team (also the Senators) to Texas in 1972, and baseball-loving Washingtonians were left with the Orioles and their dreams of what had been and might yet be, someday.

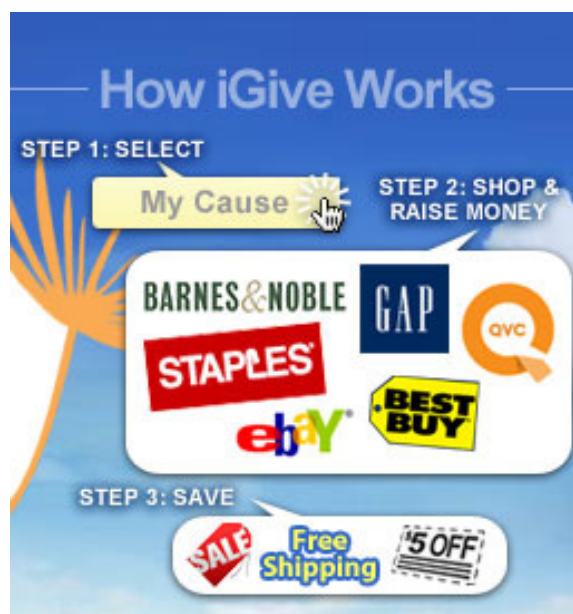
HOLIDAY SHOPPING? ONLINE SHOPPING? JUMP ON THE BANDWAGON TO HELP THE FRIENDS OF DUNCAN LIBRARY THROUGH iGIVE

iGive is a shopping portal with over 800 national retailers such as Barnes and Noble, Best Buy, eBay, GAP, L.L.Bean, and Nordstrom. Shoppers using iGive have raised over 3 million for selected charity. Now you can shop for the Friends—especially with holiday giving on the horizon. Every time you shop online, login to iGive.com first. Then, find your desired store from the iGive site, login to that's store site, and enjoy your shopping knowing that a portion of your purchase will come back to the Friends.

It's easy to register for a free iGive account:

1. Go to www.igive.com.
2. In the box for "Your Cause" type Friends of Duncan Library.
3. Click on Find Causes
4. Click on Friends of Duncan Library
5. Enter Your Information

Contact Carolyn Harris if you'd like help—
cdharris3@gmail.com.



We Welcome Your Donations!

The Duncan Library appreciates your tax-deductible donations of books, audiobooks, DVDs, and music CDs. Our librarians review the donations and add many items to our collection. Those we don't need in the library, such as multiple copies or outdated material, are sold at the Friends semiannual book sales with proceeds going to purchase new materials for Duncan Library. What a wonderful recycling project!

Below is a short list of titles we are particularly interested in receiving. The Alexandria Library system does own copies of these books but not enough to satisfy the current high demand. Each has a long list of holds and by donating another copy you can shorten the wait for our eager readers.

The Litigators by John Grisham, 4 copies with 62 holds

In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin by William Lar Dodd, 10 copies with 56 holds

Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson, 2 copies with 42 holds

The Paris Wife by Paula McLain, 6 copies with 35 holds

The Sense of an Ending by Julian Barnes, 2 copies with 34 holds

Boomerang: Travels in the New Third World by Michael Lewis, 3 copies with 34 holds

Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand, 10 copies with 32 holds

1Q84 by Haruki Murakami, 4 copies with 20 holds

The Best of Me by Nicholas Sparks, 3 copies with 19 holds

Duncan Library

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**Friends of Duncan
Library Newsletter:**

Editor: Polly Morrison,
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RENEW YOUR FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP!

Duncan Friends annual membership campaign is in progress, and you should have received your membership renewal letter. Please complete your form and return it as soon as possible, and think about increasing your donation amount. Duncan still has many, many needs that aren't covered by the City budget. Forms are available at the library or send a request to duncanlibraryfriends@gmail.com. It would be terrific to reach a goal of 200 Friends for the coming year. Let's make it happen!

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