

President's Notes

The Friends fiscal year runs from April 1 through March 31, which means we have just finalized our new budget. Last year Friends funded almost \$22,000 in gifts to the Maplewood Library. Thanks to generous special gifts and successful book sales, we are able to repeat funding at that level.

Over half the budget is for items that are funded annually: summer reading programs for children, teens, and adults; museum passes; the Ideas Festival; art and music programs; staff scholarships; books. The Frick Collection will be added to the Museum Pass Program and will join the Guggenheim, Montclair, Morris, Newark, and Intrepid Museums, as well as the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. Last year we began funding the annual renewal fee for the 11 mobile Wi-Fi hotspots that are used by students who do not have internet access in their homes, and we will continue funding this program..

New budget items this year include a Haitian Flag Day celebration at Hilton; a fall child-oriented multicultural program for families; puzzles, toys, and board games; funds for publicity; and Literacy Backpacks. The refurbishing of the Hilton staff lounge begun last year will be completed with funding for a table and chairs. Friends like to “spread the love” to all aspects of the library—Main and Hilton, and children, teens, and adults. The new budget continues that tradition.

We've also given an old Friends standby a new look: our tote bags have been redesigned with the Friends of the Maplewood Library logo and a bright, eye-catching color. They're available at both library locations for just \$3!



The last few newsletters have included information about plans for renovating the Main Library. Currently, the Building Committee is waiting to receive the criteria for applying for a grant under the Library Bond Construction Act. I will continue to keep you advised of developments.

Friends' Annual Meeting and Board Election will be held on Monday, April 30, at 7:30 pm in Memorial Hall. The speaker will be filmmaker Bob Pusateri, who will screen his latest short film *PEZZONOVANTE (Big Shot)*. I hope to see you at the Annual Meeting as well as at the Spring Book Sale.

-Laura Nial, President

SPRING BOOK SALE: APRIL 21-22

Once again our community has been very generous with book donations. Friends have been sorting for many weeks to get everything organized and ready for the Spring Book Sale. The variety of books on art, cooking, sports, history, science, self-help, etc. is incredible. The selection of books for children, tweens, and young adults never ceases to amaze.

Friends are very grateful for all who donate books. And we are especially grateful to all who buy them! We look forward to seeing you, your family, friends, and neighbors at the sale.

- **Saturday, April 21: 10 - 5**
- **Sunday, April 22: 11 - 5**

(Bag of Books Sale: entry through back door by parking lot only.)

-Laura Nial and Rae Paltiel, Co-Chairs

FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Maplewood Library Foundation kicked off its Capital Campaign to raise funds for a renewed and reimagined library on February 22 when the Woman’s Club of Maplewood presented the first major gift to the campaign in the form of a check for \$300,000.



The Woman’s Club of Maplewood has always shown a strong commitment to lifelong learning and has supported the mission of the Maplewood Memorial Library to provide free and equal access to information. For many years the Woman’s Club has supported children’s programs and has been a major sponsor of the Maplewood Ideas Festival.

The Woman’s Club has helped shape our town during periods of growth in the 20th century and is continuing to offer support in the 21st century. As Library Foundation President Ben Cohen said, “The strength of Maplewood, and what I love about this town, has always been its people—people like you, the members of the Woman’s Club. We intend to build this 21st century library for all the people of Maplewood, but it’s more than that. We’re building it for our children, our grandchildren, and our great-grandchildren. Your generosity will help us create a space that will enhance our community for generations.”

With this tremendous gift and the support of many others in our community, the library will be accessible, inspiring, and technologically advanced for years to come.

-Sarah Lester, Director

HILTON UPDATES & UPGRADES

In 1959, the Hilton Branch moved from the upper floors of the firehouse to its new home on Springfield and Tuscan Street. Flash forward 60 years later, and we saw many important updates to the Hilton Branch throughout 2017 and into 2018. New windows and a new front door were installed in the spring. The main public area, vestibule, and Quiet Room all got new coats of paint in the fall.

One room that had seen only minor updates since the building first opened is the staff lounge. Staffing and schedules have seen significant changes over the last year at Hilton, making the lounge even more important to the staff.

The staff at Hilton are very grateful to the Friends of the Library for funding the updates to the lounge. The 1950s-era compact kitchen unit was removed and replaced with a new sink, cabinets, microwave, and fridge. The Department of Public Works completed the work for us, which helped save money and allowed us to replace the couch (from the 1960s!) as well.

-Irene Langlois, Hilton Branch Head

Board

The Friends of the Maplewood Library’s annual meeting and election of the 2018-2020 Board will take place on **Monday, April 30, 2018, 7:30 p.m.**, in Memorial Hall, Maplewood Memorial Library, Baker Street. The following list of Officers and Executive Board Members is submitted for approval by the membership:

President	Laura Nial
Vice President	Rae Paltiel
Secretary	Martha Deephanphongs
Treasurer	Nancy Denholtz
Executive Board	Bernadette Albertson
	Emily Bibbins
	Donna D’Amato
	Mimi Fogel
	David Nial
	Anne Smith

Nominating Committee: Donna D’Amato (chair),
Rae Paltiel, Mimi Fogel

friends@maplewoodlibrary.org
Newsletter Editor: Brian Glaser

Q&A: JAMES “JIM” FRANCOEUR

If you’ve ever visited the Children’s Room on a Thursday or a Friday, then you’ve likely seen James “Jim” Francoeur busy behind the desk. He has been at the library for over 10 years and is the only gentleman working in the Children’s Room. Amalia Butler, Children’s Room Librarian, had some questions for Jim.



What did you do before working at the library?

Through a co-op program at my high school in the Bronx, I got a job at the Port Authority of New York and continued to work there for almost 40 years. I worked in many different capacities, starting in the mailroom, and retired as a Coordinator of Construction at the Bus Terminal. I also worked at LaGuardia and JFK Airports, the Bayonne and George Washington Bridges, and the Lincoln Tunnel. A few months after retirement I trained to be an EMT, volunteering for the South Orange Rescue Squad for 6 years. Our daughter was born in 1995, and I volunteered in the library at Marshall and Jefferson.

How long have you worked at the library? What do you do in the Children’s Room?

I applied for a position at Maplewood Library in 2005 and was hired in 2006. When I arrive in the morning, I clean up, take care of the fish tank, and prepare for opening. I greet the patrons, help them find books to the best of my ability, and refer them to a librarian when I cannot be of assistance. I check books in and out and converse with all the patrons.

How do you envision the future of library services, in Maplewood and beyond?

I envision more space for adults to read to their children, designated computers for homework, increased facilities for the training of children in electronics and science, a daily Story Time program to increase children’s love of reading, and programs for seniors to help them with the ever-changing computer applications.

How has the library changed over the years?

We have an increasingly young population, and more and more people are coming to the library for their children to attend all of the programs offered. I see an increasing number of adults taking advantage of newspapers and magazines and other literature.

What do you do when you’re not here?

I take advantage of downloading free audiobooks from our system and listen to them daily. I volunteer as a court-appointed special advocate (CASA) looking after a child in foster care. I play bridge, bicycle, attend a gym, and play golf.

What else would you like to share with us?

I have two sons, a daughter, and three grandchildren, and I try to spend as much time as I can with them. I also have a wife who I like to spend time with, but she works too hard as a municipal advisor.

TRIBUTES

Friends’ Tribute Cards make wonderful gifts to honor a lover of books or the Library.
Stop by the front desk at Main or Hilton for more info.

TEENS TAKE ON ISSUES OF RACE

One of the things I love about working with this community is how open everyone is to trying new things. In the fall, our library partnered with the South Orange Public Library and the Community Coalition on Race to offer a program we called Giving Teens a Voice: Open Discussions on Race for Teens.



The first session was held in December at the Main Library for middle school and high school students. Teens met in small groups with a trained teen facilitator over pizza and soda and launched into discussion over our opening question, “Have you ever felt that your race played a part in how you were treated?” About 30 teens participated in this lively exchange, and I knew we had hit on something important when one teen came in the next day and, when asked his thoughts on the program, replied: “Ms. Emily, that program was lit! I never get to talk about that stuff with anyone besides my brother.”

We followed up in January at the South Orange Library with a similar session for parents and teens. I already have teens who are regulars at Hilton asking me to bring this program to them. Clearly this touched on something important with our teen population, and I look forward to this continued partnership.

We also tried a new parent college-prep program that was a success. While following parent discussion threads online, Columbia High School parents posed an idea to get together and share their tips and tricks for preparing and sending their children off to college. I offered the library as a space for parents to gather, and we had over 70 adults show up to discuss college visits, applications, financial aid, and so much more. Many parents expressed appreciation for the library’s willingness to host and gather everyone, and it gave me an opportunity to share the resources we already make available, such as upcoming SAT programs, test prep books, and college resource guides.

The best programs and resources are the result of listening to our communities, and the Friends allow us the opportunities and support to be flexible and take chances to better serve our communities.

-Emily Witkowski, Teen Librarian

CHILDREN’S VOICES, LOUD & CLEAR

Listening to the voices of children and offering them an opportunity to be heard is an important goal for the Children’s Department.

Children’s voices were the focus of our third annual Kids Speak Out exhibition this February. Kids from our local school district were invited to create works of art or poetry expressing their views on social justice, civil rights, and identity.

The projects, created in the school libraries in partnership with school librarians, were put on display in the Children’s Room. Each work expressed a child’s view of the world. Many kids wrote about hunger, poverty, equality, and peace.



We opened the show with a reception, where kids could come up to the microphone and talk about their work. It was a great opportunity for the world to hear what our kids have to say—and what these kids had to say was deeply moving and profound.

-Jane Folger, Children’s Librarian

OLD NEWS MEETS NEW TECH

When I write for the Friends' Newsletter, I usually talk about what's new in terms of library services, programs, and technologies. This time, I thought I would focus on what's old! By that I mean the library's collections and services relating to the history of our town. One of the library's most important missions is to preserve and share Maplewood's history.

The library has a wealth of precious historical resources. The Maplewood File is an extensive collection of newspaper clippings, brochures, photos, and other printed material dating back to the 1800s. We have collections of real estate maps from the early years of the 20th century and local city directories from 1888-1970. The Hilton Branch houses an additional Maplewood archive, the Robert H. Grasmere Local History Center, overseen by the Durand-Hedden House and Garden Association.

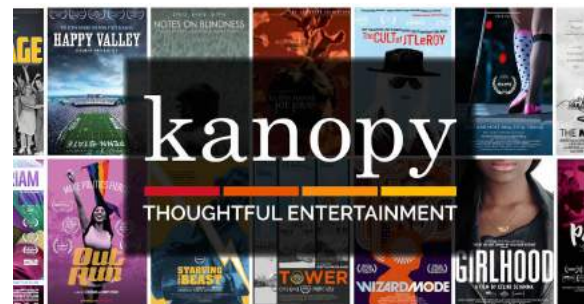


In recent years we have digitized many of our most important resources—and they are now available online. Most are available to you at home, though some are limited to use within the library buildings (due to copyright restrictions). Our Digital Archive includes over 100 years of our local paper, the *News-Record*. There are over 100 years' worth of Columbia High School yearbooks. We have City Directories dating from 1888-1970. These directories were the predecessors of the telephone books and contain street-by-street information on who lived in Maplewood and the neighboring towns.

One of the most popular collections is our Real Estate File, which contains sales listings and photos for almost all the houses in town. People love to look up their address and see what the place used to look like—and what it sold for in the past. A link to the

library's Digital Archive can be found on our website under "Digital Resources."

The library can also help you explore your personal history, with Ancestry Library Edition. Ancestry is the world's most popular genealogy resource, with unparalleled coverage of U.S. and UK census, immigration, and vital records, as well as extensive records from Canada, Europe, and other areas of the world. You've probably seen the ads for Ancestry on TV, but you can use it for free when you come into the library.



Even as we cherish our history, we're always on the lookout for new and better services, and as of 2018 we are offering Kanopy, a new video streaming service. Kanopy offers over 26,000 films, many of them classic, foreign, and indie films that you can't easily find anywhere else. There is also a large number of documentaries and educational videos, including The Great Courses. Users can access Kanopy through a variety of devices and platforms, including Roku, Apple TV, iOS, and Android, as well as desktop and laptop computers. Kanopy joins our Hoopla service, which offers music, e-books, audiobooks, and videos.

Speak to a Reference Librarian for help using any of these resources, old or new!

-Barbara Laub, Head of Technology and Adult Services

NEW BOOKBAGS!

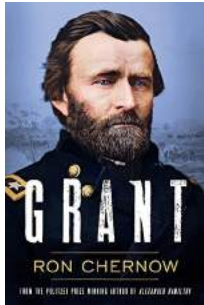
We have Friends of the Maplewood Library tote bags available in a brand-new style!

They're just \$3 each at the Main and Hilton front desks.

BOOK REVIEWS

Grant
by Ron Chernow

Ron Chernow, author of the Alexander Hamilton biography that served as the basis of the Broadway play and a biography of George Washington, now gives us the story of the life of Ulysses S. Grant.



Chernow starts with the young Ulysses, rescued from his dysfunctional family by West Point and the Mexican War, and rescued once more by his love for Julia, a plain, cross-eyed, slave owner’s daughter with whom Grant is smitten. When he is separated from Julia, he drinks, and drink is his downfall in his early life. Chernow treats Grant’s alcoholism more carefully and clinically than most biographers. Unlike many alcohol abusers, Grant was neither a daily nor a binge drinker, but rather someone incapable of a single glass of spirits without getting falling-down drunk. This handicap was a calamity for Grant that forced him out of the service early in his career and hounded his reputation for the rest of his life. The vigilance of his aide John Rawlins and wife Julia certainly helped, but Grant’s own eventual mastery is evidence of the resolute nature of this man.

Chernow’s book explores the complicated nature of Grant, who seems a bundle of contradictions. He could keenly recognize the opportunities on a battlefield and the outlines of grand strategy that led to victory after victory, and yet could not assess the character of associates who betrayed his trust.

Chernow explores the war years in depth, following Grant’s rise from a colonel of a unit formed in Illinois to eventually becoming general-in-chief of all U.S. armies. He was the first general Lincoln found who would take the fight to the enemy and ruthlessly prosecute it to the end, gaining the reputation of being “Unconditional Surrender” Grant. And yet at the end of the war he grants magnanimous peace terms to General Lee and his troops, for which many gave him their undying respect.

His presidency also highlights the contradictions of his life. His administration was a mix of men of

integrity and corrupt individuals (some of whom were personal friends). Although Grant himself was never implicated in any of the scandals, his reputation was tainted by them. On the flip side, Chernow explores Grant’s vigorous efforts during his presidency to protect and extend Reconstruction, including black voting rights and office-holders, while attempting to heal the rift with the South.

Perhaps second only to Lincoln, Grant led the effort to crush the rebellion, save the Union, end human chattel slavery, and extend the rights of citizenship to the freed slaves.

-Bill Donovan

Special Gifts

November 2017 through March 2018

We appreciate the generous gifts contributed by the following donors. Thank you all.

- Nathan Arnell & Heidi Hellring
- Emily Bibbins
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- Michele F. Davis
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- Marilyn & Weston White
- John & Marcia Zweig

-Rae Paltiel, Membership Chair

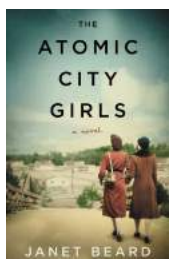
BOOK REVIEWS

The Atomic City Girls
by Janet Beard

Between 1942 and 1945, nearly 100,000 people worked at a secret site in East Tennessee, making enriched uranium for the atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Originally known as Site X and later the Clinton Engineer Works, the name was again officially changed to Oak Ridge after World War II.

This novel tells the story of three of the workers: June, a young farm girl who comes to know too much; Sam, a troubled physicist from New York; and Joe, an African-American construction worker facing the systemic racism of the times. It is a glimpse into a little-known piece of history during this time.



If you are hoping for an in-depth look at the history of Oak Ridge Tennessee in the 1940s, *The Atomic City Girls* is probably not the book for you. But as an enjoyable quick read and a fictional account of life in Oak Ridge, this book fits the bill. Beard depicts a hierarchical society with distinct classes and differing levels of privilege, security clearance, and hardships. She illustrates the book by inserting photographs from the U.S. Department of Energy Archives and provides a timeline of true events as a guide.

The title of the book is a misnomer, as it is about men as well as women, with both playing equally important parts in the story. This novel is not to be confused with *The Girls of Atomic City* by Denise Kiernan, a non-fiction account of Oak Ridge and the young women brought there unknowingly to help build the atomic bomb.

-Nancy Denholtz

The Muralist
by B.A. Shapiro

The Muralist, like B.A. Shapiro's *The Art Forger*, tosses together history, art, actual artists, and fictional characters into a single narrative. The novel focuses on two fictional artists, Alizee Benoit and Danielle Abrams, connected by a mystery.

Alizee is a muralist in the 1940s, living in New York and working for the Works Progress Administration. She becomes involved with her European family, Jews living in Germany who are trying desperately to escape Hitler and emigrate to the United States. They send pleading letters to



Alizee, and she tries hard to help. In her efforts to get her family out of Germany, Alizee encounters opposition from the United States' growing isolationism, anti-Semitism, and obstruction of refugees' efforts to enter the United States. Along the way, she meets and befriends Eleanor Roosevelt, who wants to

help the refugees. In the course of her attempts to help her family, Alizee vanishes.

The other main character is Alizee's grand-niece Danielle Abrams. Dani lives in current times and is an artist like her great aunt, working as a curator at Christie's auction house. She finds several small canvases glued to the back of some Abstract Expressionist paintings. Dani believes these small artworks were done by her great-aunt. She becomes obsessed with proving that Alizee did these small canvases and finding out what happened to her.

As the mystery unfolds, the novel moves back and forth between Alizee's world and Dani's, discussing historical events while moving the fictional plot forward. Some of the mixture works well, like the author's descriptions of the works of the Abstract Expressionists, their lives, and their artistic ideas. Other aspects of the novel are not as well fleshed out and seem derivative. And some events in the novel are unrealistic and jarring. Although Eleanor Roosevelt had sympathy for European refugees and did what she could to help, it's hard to believe that she would take an interest in and befriend Alizee and visit her apartment alone.

Despite the flaws, the novel is an easy read and brings to life an artistic movement that has appeal today. It raises issues that are relevant to current times and is likely to appeal to book clubs.

-Rae Paltiel

MAKING MOVIES IN MAPLEWOOD

Filmmaker Bob Pusateri, a longtime Maplewood resident, will be guest speaker at the Friends of the Maplewood Library annual meeting on Monday, April 30, 7:30 p.m., at the Main Library. The meeting will also include a brief business session and election of officers.

Bob's presentation will include a screening of one of his latest productions, PEZZONOVANTE (Big Shot), a short about a young girl who makes a deal with the mob. It was screened at the NY Short Film Festival at the world-famous Cinema Village in Manhattan last November, and it was presented at the Orlando Film Festival and other short film fests around the country.

Working with a host of local actors and crew members, Bob functions as writer/director/producer/sometime actor and general factotum on his film projects. "I just really enjoy making movies," he says.

The evening promises to be both entertaining and informative, and is open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Thanks to Program Chair Anne Smith for arranging Bob's presentation.



JOIN OR RENEW



A 501(c)(3) organization

Friends of the Maplewood Library support many of our wonderful Library's offerings and programs, and we rely on your help to do this! If you are already a member for 2018, thank you so much. If you have not renewed your membership or joined yet, please do so. We need you!

Please make checks payable to Friends of the Maplewood Library.

Mail to: PO Box 183, Maplewood, NJ 07040

- Membership for calendar year 2018: Individual - \$15
- Family - \$20
- Contributing - \$25
- Special Gift - \$_____

Name: _____

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YES, I would like to help with Friends' Book Sales.