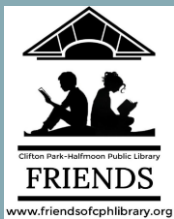


# BOOK FRIENDLY



SEPTEMBER 2024

## THE TTOB CONTENDERS LINDA CONKLIN



Five contenders have been selected by our summer readers for your review and vote. Voting is open now and will end on September 8th. You may cast a ballot online at <http://www.twotownsonebook.org> or in person at a ballot box located in the library. The winning book will be announced on Thursday, September 12th, the day of the Library Budget Vote.

Our summaries are from Good Reads. For your consideration:

### **BLACK CAKE**

*Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson was nominated for Best Debut Novel (2022).

In present day California, Eleanor Bennett's death leaves behind a puzzling inheritance for her two children, Byron and Benny, a black cake made from a family recipe with a long history, and a voice recording. In her message, Eleanor shares a tumultuous story about a headstrong young swimmer who escapes her island home under suspicion of murder. The heartbreaking tale Eleanor unfolds, the secrets she still holds back, and the mystery of a long-lost child, challenges everything the siblings thought they knew about their lineage and themselves.

Charmaine Wilkerson's debut novel is a story of how the inheritance of betrayals, secrets, memories, and even names can shape relationships and history. Deeply evocative and beautifully written, "Black Cake" is an extraordinary journey through the life of a family changed forever by the choices of its matriarch.

### **GOOD NIGHT, IRENE**

*Good Night, Irene* by Luis Alberti Urrea follows in the tradition of "The Nightingale" and "Transcription", an exhilarating World War II epic that

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A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.

Henry Ward Beecher

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chronicles an extraordinary young woman's heroic frontline service in the Red Cross.

In 1943, Irene Woodward abandons an abusive fiancé in New York to enlist with the Red Cross and head to Europe. She makes fast friends in training with Dorothy Dunford, a towering Midwesterner with a ferocious wit. Together they are part of an elite group of women, nicknamed Donut Dollies, who command military busses called Clubmobiles at the front line, providing camaraderie and a taste of home that may be the only solace before troops head into battles.

Taking as inspiration his mother's own Red Cross service, Luis Alberto Urrea has delivered an overlooked story of women's heroism in World War II. With its affecting and uplifting portrait of friendship and valor in harrowing circumstances, *Good Night, Irene* powerfully demonstrates yet again that Urrea's gifts as a storyteller are prodigious.

### **LADY TAN'S CIRCLE OF WOMEN**

*Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See is an immersive historical novel inspired by the true story of a woman physician in 15<sup>th</sup> century China.

According to Confucius, "an educated woman is a worthless woman," but Tan Yunxian – born into an elite family, yet haunted by death, separations, and loneliness – is being raised by her grandparents to be of use. Her grandmother is one of only a handful of female doctors in China, and she teaches Yunxian the pillars of Chinese medicine, the Four Examinations – looking, listening, touching, and asking – something a man can never do with a female patient.

From a young age, Yunxian, learns about women's illnesses, many of which relate to childbearing, alongside a young midwife-in-training, Meiling. The two girls find fast friendship and a mutual purpose, despite the prohibition that a doctor should never touch blood while a midwife comes in frequent contact with it, and they vow to be forever friends, sharing in each other's joys and struggles. No mud, no lotus, they tell from adversity, beauty can bloom.

But when Yunxian is sent into an arranged marriage, her mother-in-law forbids her from seeing Meiling and from helping the women and girls in the household. Yunxian is to act like a proper wife, embroider bound-foot slippers, recite poetry, give birth to sons, and stay forever within the

walls of the family compound, the Garden of Fragrant Delights.

How might a woman like Yunxian break free of these traditions and lead a life of such importance that many of her remedies are still used five centuries later? How might the power of friendship support or complicate these efforts? A captivating story of women helping each other, *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* is a triumphant reimagining of the life of one person who was remarkable in the Ming dynasty and would be considered remarkable today.

### **THE PERSONAL LIBRARIAN**

*The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and co-author, Victoria Christopher Murray, is the little-known story of Belle da Costa Greene, J.P. Morgan's personal librarian, who became one of the most powerful women in New York despite the dangerous secret she kept in order to make her dreams come true.

In her twenties, Belle da Costa Greene is hired by J. P. Morgan to curate a collection of rare manuscripts, books, and artwork for his newly built Pierpont Morgan Library. Belle becomes a fixture on the New York society scene and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works as she helps build a world-class collection.

But Belle has a secret, one she must protect at all costs. She was born not Belle da Costa Greene but Belle Marion Greener. She is the daughter of Richard Greener, the first Black graduate of Harvard and a well-known advocate for equality. Belle's complexion isn't dark because of her alleged Portuguese heritage that lets her pass as white. Her complexion is dark because she is African American.

"The Personal Librarian" tells the story of an extraordinary woman, famous for her intellect, style, and wit, and shares the lengths to which she must go for the protection of her family and her legacy – to preserve her carefully crafted white identity in the racist world in which she lives.

Contenders continued on page 3

Contenders continued from page 2

### ***WEST WITH GIRAFFES***

*West with Giraffes*, by Lynda Rutledge, is an emotional, rousing novel inspired by the incredible true story of two giraffes who made headlines and won the hearts of Depression-era America.

Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to the grave.

It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy, Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes*, explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

The summaries of the five contenders hopefully sparked your interest. Even if you have not read any or have read all of them, vote for the one you think would be the best choice for a community read. The winner will be revealed on September 12<sup>th</sup> and programs will begin in January 2025.

[Click here to vote for a Contender.](#)

### **FIVE CONTENDERS FROM 25 GREAT READS**

Our five Contenders were selected from a list of 25 great reads that were nominated by our Clifton Park and Halfmoon communities.

[Check out that list on the TTOB website.](#)

## **TRAVELS WITH RHONA RHONA KORETZKY FORMAN**

The FOL travel group continues to offer opportunities to see the world! At the end of August, a group of 25 headed north of the border to the Canadian Rockies along with a visit to Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes International Peace Park. Look for photos and stories in the next edition of this newsletter.

The 2025 international trips are scheduled. The Christmas Markets on the Danube River cruise departing November 29, 2025, is full. We have a waiting list, so no further registrations can be taken.

There are still a few places left for our Scandinavia trip that departs on October 3, 2025. If you are interested, I urge you to contact the FOL travel coordinator Rhona Koretzky Forman. Call or text her at 518-505-1303 or email at [busplus1@gmail.com](mailto:busplus1@gmail.com).

Finally, here's the first announcement of an exciting bus trip to New York City! The featured activity will be a visit to the Morgan Library for a major exhibit about Belle da Costa Greene, the first librarian at the Morgan. If you haven't yet read the book *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict and co-author, Victoria Christopher Murray, I highly recommend it. This trip will be on December 7th departing by bus from the library parking lot. It is a beautiful time to visit New York. The department store holiday windows will be aglow, the famous tree will be lit, and the holiday markets will be open. Join us for the museum tour or have the full day on your own. Further details will be forthcoming, so watch for an email in the fall providing, pricing and timing.



Photo by Jo Anne Robbins

## VOTE EARLY AND OFTEN ANTHONY MCCANN

With the current manic media focus on ‘Voting Rights,’ that old slogan “vote early and often” has acquired new meaning, beyond the humor. Today’s digital monitoring makes it more difficult to get out the Machine’s ‘graveyard vote’. In every State ‘Voter Turnout’ has become an obsession. Below the Mason-Dixon, it is a war.

Let us hope that this “I must vote” phenomenon is contagious and our CPH Public Library September ‘24 vote becomes an outstanding example of Community caring. I envision droves of book lovers on long lines stretching out to Moe Road. Shen students will be out front, helping with the traffic and reciting poetry to voters as they wait, hopefully, to cast a YES vote for Knowledge.

It could happen. IF we remember what our Library means to OUR COMMUNITY; an intellectual refuge for the ‘older and wiser’ and a bright promise for the very young discovering the mystery in words that take them to future planets and ancient ‘faraway places’ with strange sounding names; where Harry Potter lives in the Temple of Zoom and a single sentence can be the key to old and new worlds; where “AI” makes the 8-hour week the norm and there will be endless TIME for reading.

If the adults vote “early and often” the children will know what is at stake: something immeasurable, beyond the data generated by the ‘omniscient’ tyrannical cell phone.

Yes, there will be ghosts, watching: the deceased pioneers who had the intellectual vision to see beyond their time and build a bridge of books to Halfmoon and beyond. They went, too soon, to Read in Peace. Our record breaking YES vote on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, will be an enduring epitaph for those absent Booklovers...Dreamers.

Anthony “Tony” McCann is legendary on the “Great Plains of Shenendehowa” and Clifton Park with colleagues, former students and their parents. You can imagine, while reading his editorial, that he did an excellent job teaching kids to love reading, writing, and books! I am grateful for his insight and his dedication to the WORD! Jo Anne

**A library is  
infinity  
under a roof!**

### WHY I VOTE “YES” ON THE LIBRARY BUDGET

KATHY ADAM-BROWNE

Below are just a few of many reasons to support our library. It is the place to:

Attend a free program

Have an AARP volunteer complete your taxes

Take a computer class

Download an eBook, movie or magazine

Join a book discussion group

Be part of an English language class

Sign out a telescope, games or a backpack

Enroll a child in the Summer Reading program

Use the services of a notary

Pick up a pass to go to a museum for free

Enjoy the outdoor Reading Garden

OR simply

Borrow a good book!



## Advocate and Vote

### WHY I VOTE

JO ANNE ROBBINS

Do you remember the first time you voted? How about the first time you voted in a presidential election? Why did you vote? What was memorable about it? When I voted for the first time, I was 21 years old and in my first year as a teacher in a public school in Toledo, Ohio. I remember being excited and motivated. My parents always made a celebration around voting. During our dinner table conversations, we planned a special supper in a favorite local restaurant on vote day. It was 1959. I remember the supper with my family, but honestly, I do not remember the vote.

It was the next year – 1960 – that I remember vividly, the presidential contest between the Democrat ticket of Senator John F. Kennedy and, his running mate, Lyndon B. Johnson. They were running against the Republican ticket of the current Vice President, Richard Nixon and his running mate, U.N. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. This was the beginning of a very different way of campaigning, especially the use of media in politics. I remember well watching candidate Kennedy and his rousing speeches with huge crowds of supporters broadcast on TV. I remember their first debate – September 26, 1960. That debate forever changed the political landscape, the first nationally televised presidential debate, and for me, the way I processed politics and voting.

Kennedy was unknown until that first debate. Three more debates followed before the vote. That second vote I will never forget. I remember not deciding until the last minute how I would vote. Going into that voting booth was exciting, and ever since, I have felt that voting is so important. Voting is a privilege and a responsibility. The most important thing I can do to be part of the action as a citizen, is to show up on election day and vote. I still have those same feelings each time there is an election, especially when it's a presidential election.

What about our CPH Library budget vote and Trustee election? I appreciate and value our Library – and I show up on vote day each year in support of our community center for life-long learning. If I am going to be away on vote day, I take the time to apply for an absentee ballot. It is a commitment and a way to express my appreciation for services that many take for granted. When you show up to vote, you are saying that YOUR VOTE COUNTS.

### BECOME AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUR LIBRARY!

Becoming an advocate for YOUR library is easy. To receive e-mail alerts when your action is needed to act on behalf of libraries, provide your information below.

Now advocating for your library services can be quick, simple and timely, plus there is no cost to you.

To receive e-mail alerts when your action is needed to act on behalf of libraries, provide your information by clicking on the link below. Now advocating for your library services can be quick, simple and timely, plus there is no cost to you.

[ADVOCATE](#)

**Join the NYLA Library Advocate Sign-up!**



### WHY I VOTE

LANNA LANGLOIS

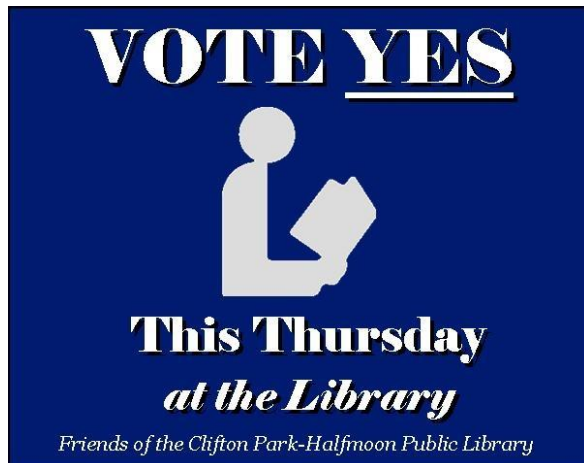
While there are many reasons that I vote, one of the primary reasons is to show my appreciation to those who sacrificed so much to establish and protect my right to do so. From those who first established the United States to those who fought for my right as a woman to vote to the many service members who defended all of our rights, voting is a way of saying that I do not take what they have done for granted.



### WHY I VOTE

WILMA JOZWIAK

To me, voting is both a privilege and a responsibility. That I am given the opportunity to vote means my voice and my positions on things matter. That I DO vote means I take none of it lightly.



**On Library Vote Day, Thursday, September 12th**, these roadside vote signs remind our community to take a few minutes to stop at the CPH Library and vote. Our Library is a treasured resource. Please make voting a priority this year!

Dear Friends of the Library,

Please mark your calendar for Thursday, September 12th, when the Annual Library Budget Vote and Trustee Election will be held at the library. We ask your support to help keep this valuable community asset flourishing.

Your Library's resources, programs and services offer opportunities for lifelong learning and growth. It's a valuable resource for those doing research, studying, seeking employment or just looking for a quiet haven to read, work, or think. Its programs provide opportunities to learn new skills, cultivate interests, and you can access anytime, anywhere, audiobooks, music, digital magazines, movies or TV shows. In so many ways, it's a magical place for children, teens and adults alike.

The Annual Budget provides funding to sustain and enhance the quality of staffing, materials, programs, facilities and technology provided by the Library. We believe the proposed 2025 budget reflects the responsible approach the Board of Trustees takes in

addressing the needs of both the Library and the residents of our community.

We ask for your continued support of this vital community asset.

Information regarding the proposed 2025 Library Budget is available to all residents at the Ask the Librarian Desk and on the Library website. Click on the link below:

<https://cphlibrary.org/your-library/library-vote/>

Please join us at the Library on Thursday, September 12, between 7 am and 9 pm, and VOTE for the 2025 Budget Proposal. After voting, please visit our Hospitality Table in the Library café for an autumn treat – cider, cider donuts, apples and brownies.

Your Friends of the Library Board,

Ellen Burns – Kathy Adam Browne – Linda Conklin –  
Judy Corigliano – Tom Corigliano – Michele Gorab –  
Jamie Hanley – Allison Holland – John Jozwiak –  
Wilma Jozwiak – Rhona Koretzky – Lanna Langlois –  
Trish MacEnroe – Jo Anne Robbins – Lisa Totaro –  
Mary Fran Verostek

## Important Messages from the Friends of the Library

### CRAFTING SUPPLIES GIVE AND TAKE

We have had two increasingly successful Crafting Supplies Give and Take events at our library, bringing in nice proceeds to assist the Library. These events are very intensive in that all intake, organization of materials, the event itself, cleanup, and disposal of any remaining materials take place within a five-day period. To do the event again in 2025, we need more volunteers! If you are a crafter (or are just willing to help), have good organizational skills, have time available to serve, and are willing to give this project a go, please contact us by clicking on the box below.

[CONTACT](#)



## i love my librarian AWARD • 2025

Has a librarian made a difference in your community? Nominate them for a **2025 I Love My Librarian Award**. They could receive \$5,000 and the recognition of a lifetime. Nominations are open through September 30!

Find out more about this award and how to submit your nomination here.

[NOMINATION](#)



## Support our Library! Vote!

*Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library District*

## 2025 Budget Vote & Trustee Election

*Thursday, September 12th - 7 am to 9 pm*

Voters who are registered in New York State and who live within the Library District boundaries 30 days prior to the vote are eligible to vote. Absentee ballot applications are available at the Circulation Desk for those who will be outside of Saratoga County on the day of the Library's Budget Vote and Trustee Election.

Check the Library website for additional information  
[www.cphlibrary.org](http://www.cphlibrary.org)

Stop by the Friends' TWO TOWNS - ONE BOOK table and our exhibit in the "around the corner" display case.

Explore our TTOB history and find out which book has been selected for our 2025 Community Read.

Enjoy refreshments in the Library cafe compliments of the Friends of the Library.

## Don't miss our September Used Book Sale!



### Friday, September 27

- FOL Members only 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM
- No shopping 12:45 PM - 1:00 PM
- Open to the public 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

### Saturday, September 28

- 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

### Sunday, September 29

- 12:15 PM - 4:00 PM
- "Dime Day" - all books 10 cents!

Help a local nonprofit with your donation of children's books. See us at the sale for more information.



## YOU CAN WIN A NY TIMES BEST SELLER!

Become a member (or renew your membership) of the Friends of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library at the \$10 level or higher and be eligible to win a NY Times Best Selling Book of your choice! A winner is randomly selected each quarter from new and renewed memberships.

[MEMBERSHIP FORM](#)

## NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLERS LISTS

The New York **Times Best Sellers** are up-to-date and authoritative **lists** of the most popular books in the United States, based on sales in the past week, including fiction, non-fiction, paperbacks. Check out the lists using the link below.

[NY TIMES LISTS](#)

## WHAT MAKES A BOOK A BEST SELLER

Best Sellers – and bestseller lists – have two functions: economic on the one hand, and ideological or social on the other. Their role is to make money for authors, publishers and retailers. But they also mirror prevailing cultural and societal norms. They can influence public discourse and foster a shared reading experience.

Want to know more about what makes a book a best seller. [Visit this link to find out more.](#)

## NEW YORK TIMES BEST SELLER PROMOTION - AND THE WINNER IS . . . !

On July 1, the second quarter FOL membership promotion to win a New York Times best-selling book ended. Using a random number generator, we selected a winner. And . . .



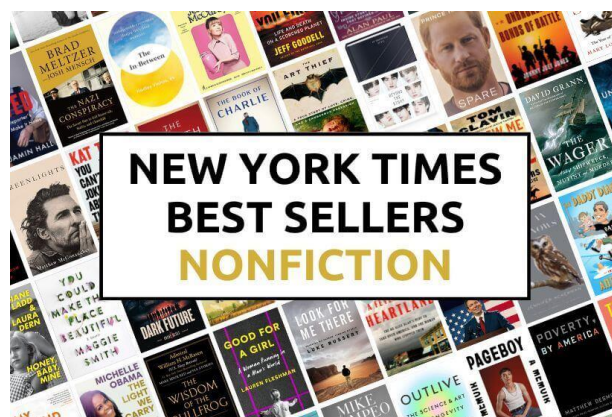
The winner is Barbara Oberdieck, of Clifton Park! We contacted Barbara and she chose *On Call: A Doctor's Journey in Public Service* by Dr. Anthony Fauci.

We secured a copy of *On Call*, and met with Barbara on July 11<sup>th</sup> to present her with the book.

The New York Times Best Seller promotion runs quarterly in the “Book Friendly Newsletter.”

The third quarter winner will be selected at the end of September. If you haven’t renewed your FOL membership yet, do it now! You could be our next NYT winner!

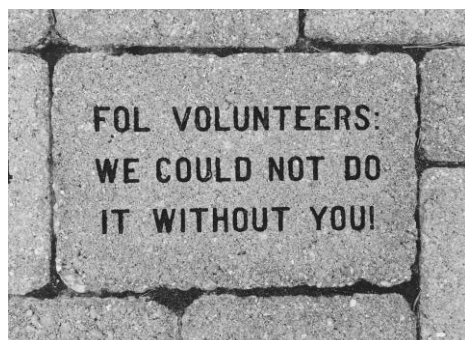
See you at the Library!





## ENGRAVED PAVERS: A GREAT WAY TO HONOR A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

JANICE JASKOLKA



There are many ways to say. . . "Congratulations! I'm sorry! I miss you. Happy Birthday!" Ordering an engraved paver is the perfect way to share your feelings and create a long-lasting reminder.

What special event or achievement can I commemorate – a holiday, a wedding, anniversary, graduation, retirement, or the birth of a grandchild?

Who in my life that I dearly loved has passed away?

Where are pavers available for engraving?

**FLAGPOLE:** The Flagpole area is reserved as a memorial to members of the United States Armed Forces. Pavers are placed in a circular pattern around the flagpole. These bricks may be engraved with "In honor of" or "In memory of."

**READING GARDEN:** This area in the rear of the library includes our reading garden, water feature and seating. The Reading Garden is the largest area where the engraved pavers can be located. These bricks may be engraved with a choice of a name and message or a favorite book or author.

**ENTRANCE:** This is the front atrium area where the obelisk is located. This has the most traffic of the three paved areas. These bricks may be engraved with a name and/or a short message.

What do pavers cost (they are one of very few special gift items that has never increased in price)?

### 6" x 6" PAVERS

Three lines maximum  
10 characters per line  
Spaces count as characters  
Flagpole - \$50.00  
Reading Garden - \$50.00  
Entrance - \$150

### 6" x 9" PAVERS

Three lines maximum  
15 characters per line  
Spaces count as characters  
Flagpole - \$76.00  
Reading Garden - \$100  
Entrance - \$200

Consider your options and get your order in!

[Download a paver order form.](#)

# Celebrate with a Paver

## FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DESK JUDY AND TOM CORIGLIANO

Wow! It has been a long hot summer! Yet, at the same time it seems to have flown by; the start of school and fall are on the horizon!

Having said that, we hope everyone is well and enjoyed an active and fun-filled summer and that the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library was part of those summer activities!

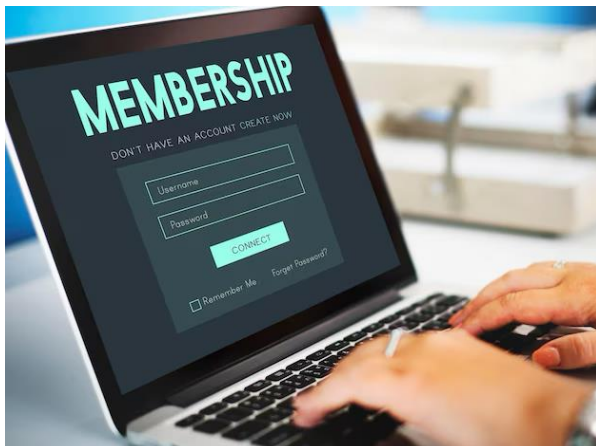
We are happy to report that the Friends of the Library membership is now approaching 600 members! We enjoyed a well-attended book sale in May, almost running out of books by the last day! If it isn't already on your calendar, please note the dates for the fall Used Book Sale from Friday, September 27 to Sunday, September 29. FOL members will have early access on Friday from 11:45 am to 12:45 pm. So, if you haven't renewed your membership yet, now is the time to do it! Renewing now will also make you eligible for the end of September drawing for a free book from the New York Times Best Seller list.

If you are an FOL member, we thank you again for your membership and your support! If you have time, consider volunteering to work with us. There is great satisfaction in helping the Library to provide funding for programs and events for the entire community.

If you are not yet a member or need to renew your membership, it's easy! [Just click this link, to download the application form.](#)

See you at the library!

*Tom and Judy*



## STEWART'S SHOPS CORPORATION AWARDS TWO TOWNS-ONE BOOK A GRANT OF \$1,000

For the past 13 years, Linda Conklin, chair of Two Towns-One Book Steering Committee, has spent time and effort completing a grant application for the Stewart's Holiday Match program. Each year since 2012, TTOB has received a check to support the children's component of our community read, "Kids Read, Too!" Kudos to Linda for her excellent leadership and dedication to the goals of TTOB – **"Two Towns - One Book"** brings the community together through the shared reading of a common book. The annual book selection inspires rich discussion and community activities. Younger readers are encouraged to participate through companion books and related activities."

In the award letter Linda received with the check, Stewart's reported that this season, they received 1,861 applications requesting over \$5 million in support, while they had just over \$2 million to donate.

Since this program began, the Stewart's Holiday Match Program has allocated over \$38 million. They credit the success of their program to the generosity of their customers who donate half of the monies distributed to deserving not for profit organizations, and to Stewart's media partners who help spread the word throughout the region.

If you're interested in learning more about this outstanding program, click on the link below.

<https://www.stewartssshops.com/holiday-match/holiday-match-overview/>

If you want to find out more about Kids Read, Too! - visit the website below.

<https://friendsofcphlibrary.org/kids-read->

## IN MEMORIAM

## MARY ANN REDDINGTON CAMPE



On Saturday, August 17, 2024, members of the community gathered at Our Lady of Grace Church in Ballston Lake, NY, for a memorial service for Mary Ann Reddington Campe. The service included a lovely, and lively, eulogy presented by her youngest brother Rick Reddington as he fondly remembered the many contributions she made to her large Irish family and community. During one of their last conversations, he reminded her that physical “stuff” was not her legacy, but rather, that her legacy was her five core values that she had both lived and shared. These included: connection, kindness, wisdom, generosity and faith/spirituality. Indeed, all five values were visible in the large selection of her books on display that were available for friends and family to take as a remembrance. Each book contained a name plate “signed” by Mary Ann, and in some, a postcard from her travels.

She was an original member of the Two Towns-One Book Steering Committee, representing Shenendehowa Schools. For years, she was a reader with the TTOB summer readers. She also chaired a books and brunch event and helped with many TTOB community programs.

In lieu of flowers, the Two Towns-One Book Steering Committee ordered a library paver to be located in the reading garden.

JULIA CHILD – NIFTY COOK AND WENCH  
MARY FRAN VEROSTEK

The program “Julia Child – Nifty Cook and Wench” was presented by Kate Dudding and took place on Sunday, June 23, 2024, at the library. Kate’s storytelling of Julia’s life, presented under the soft glow of a nearby floor lamp, was a hit with the audience of over 65 people. Kate presented a timeline of Julia’s culinary journey which began in Pasadena, California before traveling east to Smith College, and then onto a career as a typist for the U.S. Information Agency in Washington D.C., and ultimately to Ceylon handling highly classified information where she met her future husband, Paul Child. After their marriage, Julia followed Paul to Paris, where she learned to cook. Kate’s stories were told alongside black and white photographs of pivotal events in their lives.

Kate closed the program with five vignettes, as tribute articles, from the Summer 2015 issue of “Gastronomica” which honored Julia and her friends. Finally, she shared Julia’s advice regarding any dish that goes horribly wrong: Julia instructed, “Never apologize. And if necessary, rename!”

Attendees were treated to samples of two cakes made from Julia’s recipes: an Orange and Almond Sponge Cake and her Reine de Saba Cake, a chocolate lover’s dream! Abby Shea, who performed the cooking demonstration for the January 2024 TTOB kickoff event, baked the cakes for the program; and both recipes were displayed alongside the cakes. The Hospitality Committee served the refreshments. All in all, it was a pleasant afternoon and enjoyed by everyone. A special thank you goes to Rhona Koretzky who made the connection between Kate Dudding and Two Towns-One Book for this program. It was a wonderful way to conclude our TTOB programming for 2024!



TTOB Chair, Linda Conklin, with Storyteller, Kate Dudding – Photo by Mary Fran Verostek

*With enough butter, anything is good! - Julia Child*



## RUTH REICHL AUTHOR EVENT DRAWS AN ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD

### MARY FRAN VEROSTEK

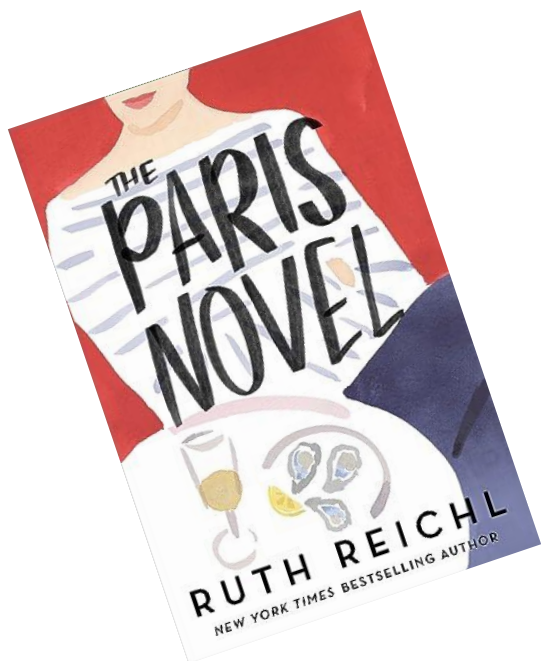
On Wednesday, April 17, 2024, Ruth Reichl presented stories and remembrances from her career as an American chef, author, food writer and Editor in Chief of “Gourmet” magazine, and two decades as a food critic, mainly at the Los Angeles Times and The New York Times. The program was held from 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM at the Gowana Middle School Auditorium. We learned that after obtaining her M.A. in Art History, Ruth moved to Berkeley, California, and began her food-writing career with [\*Mmmmm: A Feastyary\*](#), a cookbook. She then told stories of her years as food writer and editor of “New West” magazine, before moving on to the LA Times. Later, she explained that the “How” of connecting stories is by utilizing the “through line” of memoir, of which she has written several. When asked about her favorite comfort foods, two made the short list: spaghetti with tomato sauce and butter, and chicken soup! The evening closed with a line of audience members, holding both memoirs and cookbooks, waiting for autographs and photographs. Staff from The Open Door Bookstore in Schenectady kindly took preorders for her newest book, *The Paris Novel*, which could not be released early for the event; signed book plates were gratefully received.



Photo by Mary Fran Verostek



Photo by Michael Buchner



### THE PARIS NOVEL

#### GOODREADS – 3.84

Bestselling author Ruth Reichl takes readers on an adventure of food, art, and fashion in 1980s Paris in this dazzling, heartfelt novel

Stella reached for an oyster, tipped her head and tossed it back. It was cool and slippery, the flavor so briny it was like diving into the ocean... “Oysters, she thought, where have they been all my life?”

When her estranged mother dies, Stella is left with an unusual a one-way plane ticket and a note reading “Go to Paris.” But Stella is hardly cut out for adventure; a childhood trauma has kept her confined to the strict routines of her comfort zone. When her boss encourages her to take time off, Stella resigns herself to honoring her mother’s last wishes.

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- Book Friendly is published three or more times each year. We are in the process up updating our newsletter template. We are always looking for writers interested in taking on parts of our newsletter.
- Authors' writings do not reflect the views of the Friends of the Clifton Park - Halfmoon Public Library.
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Writers - Book Friendly is always seeking original writing. We accept book reviews, poetry, articles, memoirs, and short stories.

Email submissions to editor, Jo Anne Robbins:  
[cliftonparkjosie@gmail.com](mailto:cliftonparkjosie@gmail.com). Deadline for  
 submission for the next Book Friendly is November 15.

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