

How the 'Friends' Started – & Its Legacy 50 Years Later

Story by STEVE TRAIMAN

Our present day library began in 1950 when brothers Curt and Clyde Wilbur, living in the Don CeSar area, donated 350 books to the Beach Community Club on Blind Pass Road, which donated \$25 for shelving, cards and a date stamper.

Volunteers actively solicited other books and the Long Key Library opened May 12, 1951 in the Club building, with 450 books and 15 charter members, who paid the 25 cents annual “dues” for a library card. Mrs. E.C. (Dorothy) Heath was Librarian, assisted by Club volunteers.

With the Library literally bursting at its seams, in 1968 the City Commission approved plans for a new building by noted architect Glenn Q. Johnson. Getting the new Library built wasn't easy, but a \$100,000 Federal grant and \$130,000 from the City and other local sources got the job done, including more than \$26,000 raised by the newly formed Friends of the Long Key Library. Official opening was October 6, 1969 – so our Library will celebrate its Golden Anniversary this year!

This past April marked the 50th anniversary of the organization of the Friends of the then Long Key and now the St. Pete Beach Public Library, coinciding with the City's decision to build the new, expanded 8,000-square-foot Library at its present site. At that time, the advisory Library Board endorsed a Friends of the Library group to supplement the construction costs and maintenance through fund-raising. The first Friends group materialized from the Board, and the community.



Alice and Muriel blow out the candles as Steve tends to the bubbly.

An initial \$1,000 donation from Manny Sferios to Mrs. Charles (Helen) Weber, Chairman of the first Friends group, has grown substantially over the past five decades.

In a March 1968 talk to the Civic Association Districts 1 & 2, excerpted below, Mrs.

Weber presented the purpose, goals and activities of the Friends, which are just as relevant – if not more so – in today's difficult economic climate.

“The key to a successful small Friends of the Library group is interest in the community and its cultural development,” she said. “Those within the group should have a broad interest in the welfare of the community, plus a specific interest in reading—and books.

“Who are Friends? A Friends group is a cross-section of the community. All regard the Library as an international and cultural force, a source of inspiration and a means of not only furthering individual, but [also] civic and national

development. What is our purpose? Among the many purposes: To create public interest in the Library ... To promote and increase the knowledge of Library services, functions, resources and needs ... To foster a closer relationship between the Library and the citizens ... To maintain an organization interested in the Library and the many services it offers the community ... To assist in obtaining special needs beyond the budget ... To encourage gifts of books, manuscripts, records, etc. ... To cooperate with the Library and its Board in creating a closer relationship with the public.



Betcinda's Space *By BETCINDA KETTELS, LIBRARY ADMINISTRATOR*

We'd like to officially welcome back our friends from up north as they enjoy the Florida weather and all that we have to offer here in St. Pete Beach. Remember though, the city is not just for "fun-in-the-sun." There are great reasons to visit the Library. Programs are free and you don't need a library card; we also offer "honor books" for all ages so that everyone who wants to read on the rainy days has that option. Visitors who rent in the city are eligible for a library card for the very reasonable fee of \$25.00 fee for three months residents or \$50.00 for six months. Here are just some of the reasons to stop in-

Great Programs: The library has free programs for all ages including movie nights, music and history lectures, author events (Tim Dorsey appears January 16!), tech classes, a new drop-in stitching group, free tax aid from AARP, and more. Upcoming special monthly events will include a performance from a classical guitarist and an "Antiques Roadshow" type of program.

Online Materials: With your library card you can access many materials and loads of information

online from SPBLibrary.com. E-books, audiobooks, movies, comics, music, art and music lessons, historical military records, newspaper articles from around the country (your hometown newspaper is likely included!), magazines, and foreign language lessons are only some of the offerings.

Cool Things to Check Out: Besides having a great collection of books, audiobooks, and DVDs, we also check out passes to area museums which allows two adults and three children to visit the museums for free! Included are the Museum of Fine Arts, the Chihuly Collection, the Holocaust Museum, Great Explorations Children's Museum, and the Imagine Museum!

We also have iPads to check out and use in the Library. This is a great way to explore new technology if you've never had the opportunity to use one or as an alternative to using our public computers.

Bookstore: The Friends of the Library sell gently used books and DVDs at great prices with the selection always changing. Stop in often to find great bargains on your favorite titles!



FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Muriel Desloovere

VICE PRESIDENT Lance Peterson

RECORDING SECRETARY TBD

TREASURER Moon Metz

DIRECTORS: Judy Cohan (membership, book reviewer), Donna Dowden (publicity), Jeanne O'Hanlon, Alice Thomas (assistant, transportation), Bill Thompson (bookstore assistant, email), Steve Traiman (writer), Zeldia Troiano (membership, email, publicity), Ron Waters (bookstore)

EDITOR Lorrie Bellinger

Contact the Friends: Phone (727) 363-9238
stpetebeachfriends@yahoo.com

Tidings is published by the Friends of the St Pete Beach Library to provide the community with news about the library's and the Friends' activities. New members are always welcome. To join, please use the membership form on the back of this newsletter.

Tidings News

THE SKY IS FALLING!

(Well, the roof and building are leaking)

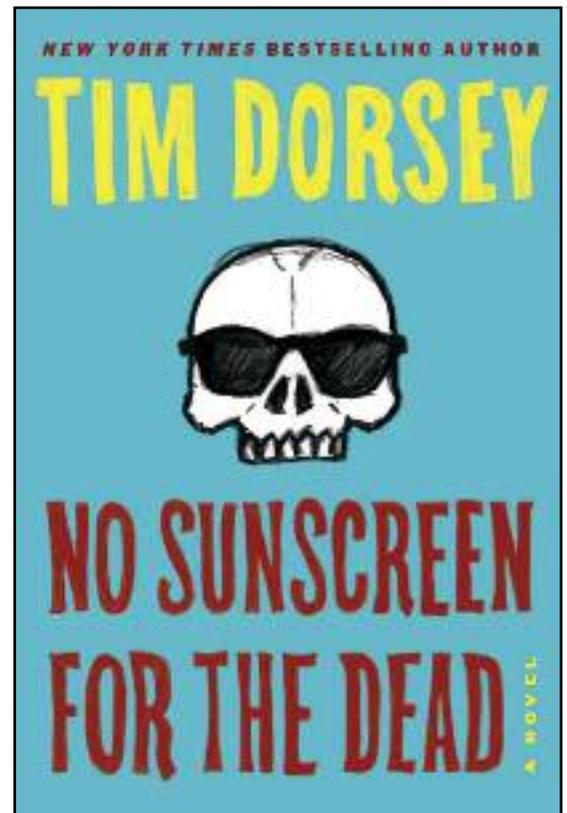
City commissioners have been talking about repairing the Library's now 50-year-old roof for years. For a while, it was always going to be included in the next fiscal year's capital improvement budget, and then the next. Then, it was removed from consideration once the decision had been made to build a new library. It wouldn't make sense to repair an old roof since there was going to be a whole new building, right? Oops, sorry, no new library building.

Back to repairs—maybe. First, let's get engineers involved, come up with a plan, get cost estimate ... And the beat goes on. Meanwhile

Contact your commissioner and the mayor, attend Commission meetings (2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month), make your concerns known. If these problems aren't addressed urgently, we may be left without a functional library. Can you imagine your life without the library?



**Tim Dorsey
is back at the
library
Wednesday,
January 16, 2019
at 6:30 pm**



Tim Dorsey is back at the library Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at 6:30 pm to sign the latest chronicles of Serge and Coleman and tempt you with goodies from their store. The Friends will provide goodies, too.

Tidings News

From LEGACY, front page

“But our greatest and most constant activity is the stimulating of interest in the Library and involving the community in a program of active support—financially and culturally, and hopefully both!”

[Excerpted and updated from Steve Traiman’s August/September 2009 Paradise News feature “40 Years for St. Pete Beach Library”.]



Betcinda Kettells explains the Little Free Library during the annual meeting.



Treasurer Moon Metz delivers the annual financial report during the meeting portion of the celebration



The St. Petersburg Sax Quartet struts its stuff



From left, Board members Zelda, Alice and Judy



Steve and Bonnie Traiman get into the swing as The St. Petersburg Sax Quartet sets the mood.



Tidings News

First Encounters of the Library Kind

Unlike most of my peers in the library profession, I have not always been a library user. Not that I didn't want to, but I had no access to libraries. I grew up in a small town. It was so small that there was not a high school, nor did our K-8 school have a cafeteria (or band, or football, or...well, you get the idea). We did have a tiny "library" in the school which we were only allowed to use when in class and as assigned. We could not free roam and take what we wanted, when we wanted it. And of course, when the school closed for summer there was no access at all. But wait, the story gets better from here.

One magical summer, a bookmobile came to our little town! I remember it fondly. There were tiny stairs that led inside, there were books lining both sides, and the nicest lady who asked me what I was looking for. I must have said some magic words... she beamed at me when I said "I'd like to read a classic please." Clearly not ready to hear that from a little girl, she had to think a minute. Then she led me to the back of the bookmobile (I can come in here!?) and handed me a copy of "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" by Betty Smith. How lucky I felt to hide from my three brothers and read about a girl from a



strange, faraway place with a father who wore funny sounding clothes like a dickey and a paper collar.

I think of the bookmobile as my first library and took full advantage of it when it came to town. It only came for a few summers but I felt grateful then, and still feel grateful that I had access to books. Maybe I'm a librarian because facilitating access to books is so important. They are escapism and adventure to foreign lands (even as foreign as Brooklyn). They are tools of learning and discovery. In "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" I learned of another great book. Mary Rommely said "Shakespeare is a great

book. I have heard tell that all the wonder of life is in that book; all that man has learned of beauty, all that he may know of wisdom and living are on those pages." It would be a few more years before I was able to read Shakespeare, and by that time I was going to high school in the big city—the city that had a library!

—By Betcinda Kettells

Do you have a "first encounter" you would like to share and have published in the Tidings? Contact Muriel Desloovere at desloovere.m@gmail.com



From left, Bonnie Traiman, and Board members Steve Traiman, Lance Peterson, Moon Metz, Muriel Desloovere, Ron Waters, Alice Thomas, Judy Cohan, and Donna Dowden.



Installed at the City's Recreation Center, the Little Free Library offers books for children and adults on the honor system.

Tidings News

Thank you, Shoppers!

The Friends are delighted to announce that, thanks to the generosity of the holiday bidders at the silent auction and purchasers of the Buy-it-Now book baskets, a total of \$1,243.00 was raised this season. The highest bids? – \$100 for the Paris basket,

\$88 for the autographed Florida authors basket, and \$80 for the Women at War basket. There were eight Buy-it-Now baskets, with the Chanukah basket sold at the highest price of \$50.



New Amazon Program Enables Shoppers To Easily Donate To Their Favorite Nonprofits

**BUY FROM AMAZON =
RAISE FUNDS FOR
FRIENDS OF THE
ST. PETE BEACH
LIBRARY**

AMAZON has a fundraising program that's really simple to use. Part of every \$\$\$\$ you spend will be donated by Amazon directly to the Friends of the St Pete Beach Library.

It's really simple...when making a purchase from Amazon, use this new address: **www.smile.amazon.com**

In the preference box, just type in Friends of St. Pete Beach Library and make this your permanent choice of a "Charity".

That way, every time you shop, the Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library will receive a donation from Amazon.

You can even install the app on your mobile device or pc.



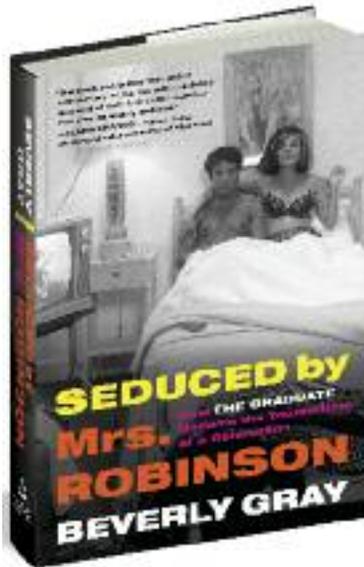
Thank You - And Happy Shopping!

Tidings News

On the Bookshelf 'Seduced by Mrs. Robinson' by Beverly Gray

Not only was 2018 the 50th anniversary of the Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library, but the year also celebrated the 50th anniversary of "The Graduate." It was a movie that changed the art of filmmaking, and became a cultural icon for multiple generations.

"Seduced by Mrs. Robinson" explores the way the movie was made, who in it became famous, cinematography techniques that were first used and are still in use, and the music of Simon and Garfunkel that pervades the background. This book is a behind-the-scenes "tell-all." Careers were made, culture was changed.



Young people today still relate to the disaffected feelings of its main character, Benjamin Braddock, newly graduated from college into a world that he cannot relate to, one of an avid consumer culture, values he finds hollow, the "generation gap", played so well by Dustin Hoffman, a then unknown and untried actor.

Truly a movie of the 60's, a radical departure from other movies of that era, one that explored changing attitudes towards sex, work, marriage. The message that still resonates for young people of today is that life is about making choices.

If you've never seen "The Graduate", both the movie and this book "Seduced by Mrs. Robinson" are available at the library.

It's Time to Renew

With the start of the new year, we want to remind you that it is time to renew your membership in the Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library. Memberships are based on the calendar year and are payable in January of each year. If dues are not paid by April 30, your membership will lapse. Please don't let that happen! Continue to show your support for your library and the Friends by completing the form on the back of this issue and forwarding it with your check by mail or by dropping it off at the library's circulation desk. You can always elect a lifetime membership and not have to worry about renewals!



Friends
of the
St. Pete Beach
Library

2019 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

_____ **New** _____ **Renewal**

Membership dues and other donations to the Friends may be tax-deductible.
Ask your financial advisor.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone and Cell _____

Email _____

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ (Payable to Friends of the S.P.B. Library)

Suggested Membership Levels:

Individual \$15 • Family \$25 • Donor/Business \$50

Life \$100 Individual/\$150 Couple • Business \$250

Mail completed form and check to:

Friends of the Library

365 73rd Avenue, St. Pete Beach, FL 33706

or bring to the library during business hours.

I would like to help with:

___ Book Store/Sales

___ Publicity/Promotion

___ Programs

___ Fundraising

___ Membership

___ Board Officer

Friends of the St. Pete Beach Library
365 73rd Avenue
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706