



## New Castle Library Friends

### Footnotes

*News for enthusiastic supporters of the New Castle Public Library*



*"What I need is the dandelion in the spring. The bright yellow that means rebirth instead of destruction. The promise that life can go on no matter how bad our losses. That it can be good again."*

Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*

DON'T FORGET TO  
REMEMBER

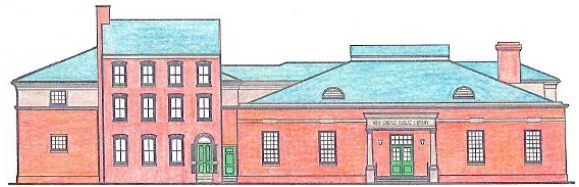
To all who renewed your membership during our start-of-the-year annual drive, we send out sincere thanks. Your support and generosity in these distressing times is appreciated.

If you have not renewed your Friends' membership, we ask that you please take a moment to do so at your earliest convenience. Membership envelopes are available outside the library along with a secure drop-off box. Or, click on [BE A FRIEND](#) to print out a membership form.

And, if this year has left you confused and stressed, which is completely understandable and relatable, and you have no idea as to whether or not you have renewed, please email us at [nclibraryfriends@gmail.com](mailto:nclibraryfriends@gmail.com), and we'll get back to you with your status.

Again, thank you.

## ***Event Recap: Annual Meeting***



Again, this year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we could not hold an in-person NCLF Annual Meeting. So, as in 2020, we instead held an **Email Annual Meeting**. The email meeting included a brief report on our previous year's activities, along with a summary of our financial standing, and the proposed slate of 2021-2022 Governing Board members.

Last year both of our primary fundraising events were canceled. We have recently learned that this year's A Day in Old New Castle has been cancelled, but we are cautiously planning to hold our annual Separation Day Book Sale. Given continuing uncertainty, we have not planned any major projects/expenses in 2021 but will re-assess as the year progresses.

We began our 2020 fiscal year with net assets of \$16,528.93, so although we ran a deficit for 2020 and are anticipating a small deficit in 2021, our financial position remains strong with net assets as of December 31, 2020, of \$13,108.57. Details can be found in the report of NCLF 2020 2021 Financial Activity.

Votes on the proposed slate for the 2021-2022 Governing Board were received by phone and by email. The 2021 slate was unanimously approved - or in this case, re-approved. Since the NCLF Board was virtually inactive over the past year, we asked the 2020 board members to "re-up" for another year.

### **NCLF 2021-2021 Governing Board:**

Amy Bishop-Ryan, President  
Irene Biggs, Vice-President  
Suzanne Souder, Treasurer  
Susan Swansbrug, Secretary

Matthew Alexander  
Irma Benedek  
Jeanne-Marie Camac  
Indumathy Jayaraman  
Angela Marconi

Connie Reese  
AdithCharan Thyagarajan  
Kim Wipf  
Vera Worthy



With the help of Friends and the community, NCLF has raised nearly \$700 to support our mission through this year's #DoMore24DE Day of Giving! While we fell short of our deliberately ambitious goal, we more than doubled our performance over last year's Giving Day in terms of both number of donors and total donations.

Thanks to a well-timed late-night donation from Friend Rob Wingle, part of our total includes a \$100 bonus prize awarded to the first 20 organizations who got donations in the 3AM hour of the fundraiser. We also earned nearly \$50 in additional funds from the event's "stretch pool" for this year, based on our total contributions!

This year's event has also shown us the potential to Do (Even) More next year by organizing harder to take advantage of the schedule of bonus prizes (such as that won for us by Mr. Wingle) and fund matching. With organizers looking to "gamify" the event even further next year while reducing competition between small non-profits and larger, endowed organizations, #DoMore24-2022 looks to present an even better chance for groups like the Friends who organize right to do very well.

To every Friend who took the time to share posts, talk up the event, and especially those who made an extra gift to the Friends as part of the Day of Giving; your help enabled us to blow past last year's numbers and make the most of this event, and the funds raised will be so helpful in this lean time. Thank you!

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Thank you to Matt Alexander for organizing this event.

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## ***Patty O'Brien - Retirement Take Two***

Ten years ago, Patty O'Brien joined the staff of our library, after retiring from a career at Citibank. She moved from her "big job" to her new "little job" and found her passion. April 15, 2021 will mark Patty's second retirement.

A native of Staten Island, New York, Patty worked for Citibank in Manhattan. She was a Project Leader in technology assigned to international projects. After the 9/11 attacks, she was charged with overseeing the task of moving Citibank's data centers off the East Coast. In 2002, she was sent to Dover, Delaware, to fix a problem. That same year, Patty bought her house in New Castle.

Patty retired from Citibank in 2009, and in 2011 was hired as a Circulation Aide. It did not take her long to realize she had more to give to her part-time job. As a "numbers person", Patty had skills to

share. When Julie was hired as Director of the Library, Patty was named Specialist (with many hats). In this position, she was able to apply her skill set as a bridge between technology and operations. She assisted Julie with the library finances and established automated Excel spreadsheets. Her other duties included purchasing and cataloging materials. Patty applied her management skills to rearrange space to accommodate the growing DVD and audio collections, and to track circulation trends.

As challenging as this past year has proven to be with the library closed to the public, Patty continued to work. In addition to her usual duties, she reached out to patrons with personal calls to check on their well-being. She took materials requests from community members she passed in the street, and she made porch deliveries, always following COVID protocols.

As mid-April approaches, Patty said her pending retirement is bittersweet. She will miss the patrons and staff, and her daily exposure to authors and information. However, retirement will now mean 100 monthly work hours will be free for more outdoor time: playing tennis, hiking, and cycling, along with short travel trips to the beach or the mountains. Spending more time with friends, is also on Patty's To-Do-List.

We wish Patty well on this new phase of life. We are comforted to know Patty's love for the library will continue to draw her inside its walls as a loyal patron. We can also look forward to seeing Patty about town walking Maisee, her 13-year-old Schnoodle.

We send our sincere best wishes to Patty on her retirement, and we thank her for her years of service.

### ***Wishes from the Library Staff...***

It is with great bittersweetness that the New Castle Public Library announces the retirement of our trusty Library Specialist, Ms. Patty O'Brien. While we will certainly miss her sense of humor and sparkling attitude, we know we'll still be able to spot her about town, enjoying her retirement and hitting the local tennis courts whenever the weather allows.

Patty joined the library as a Circulation Aide in 2011 and was quickly promoted to the role of Library Specialist around the same time Julie Kirk became our fearless Library Director. Accepting Julie's former duties, Patty took on the responsibilities of processing the library's collection, adding her own flair along the way.

Over the years, Patty brought her unique approach to other facets of the library, such as displays and

programming. She also took on the role of our unofficial safety officer, creating emergency plans and proper protocols for whatever might pop up. Using her talents from her previous career in project management, Patty was able to bring a team-centered approach to everything we do here in the library, helping strengthen our bonds not only as co-workers, but as friends.

Patty's cheerful smile, happy attitude, sharp wit, and stories about Maisee will be sincerely missed by not just her coworkers, but the patrons and community she served as well.

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## ***News from the New Castle Public Library***



The library will be reopening in the near future. Look for an announcement from New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer for the official news.

Here is a brief rundown of what you can expect in the beginning. New Castle Public Library will be open to the public on Tuesdays 10-7, Thursdays 2-7 and Saturdays 10-5. Other nearby libraries will be open the other days to give patrons an opportunity to use a library every day of the week. Our curbside services will still be available on the days we are not open.

We are making access to the building a one-way route. The Delaware St. doors will be open to enter the building. You may be greeted by one of our friendly staff, excited to welcome you back. You will be directed to the browsing area or computer area, stop at the service desks for help or checkout, then continue through the building to exit by the parking lot doors.

All libraries in NCC will be offering 45-minute computer use, by appointment. We may have the ability to accept an unscheduled computer-use visitor if stations and building capacity is available.

Patrons will be able to browse the NEW book section and ask staff to retrieve materials from the rest of the library. We are asking visitors to limit their browsing time to 20 minutes or less. All request pick-ups and checkout of materials will take place at the circulation desk. As always, staff will be happy to request any material you need from other libraries.

Please take note of these restrictions: all returns must still go in the outside book drop; masks are required, and social distancing must be maintained.

For more information, please call the library to talk to Julie or one of the reference staff at 302-328-1995.

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The New Castle Public Library would like to invite patrons and members of the community to a special musical performance that will be taking place virtually on Thursday, April 8 at 6:30pm. Jeff Cooper and Glenn Pearson, also known as Notes on the Beach, will be presenting "Broadway: The Golden Era," an entertaining revue of some of the greatest tunes from early Broadway and the Tin Pan Alley. Enjoy Jeff and Glenn's witty banter as they take you through this indelible period within the Great American Songbook, all from the comfort of your home.

To register for this event, please give the library a call at 302-328-1995. You may also e-mail our Adult Services Librarian Tyler Antoine at tyler.antoine@lib.de.us, or visit our [Virtual Events Calendar](#). Those who register will receive a Zoom link to the performance on the afternoon of the event.

Also on Thursday, April 8, at 8:00pm, the New Castle Public Library will be hosting a Disney-themed Virtual Bingo program. Participants will match images of Disney characters on their screens to the names on their bingo card, with winners of blackout bingo receiving a \$10 gift card to Amazon.com. Those who register will be e-mailed their respective bingo cards on the day of the event. To register for this fun, family-friendly event, please give us a call at 302-328-1995, or visit the website mentioned above.

Curbside services will be postponed on Friday, April 2, in observance of Good Friday. Curbside services will resume on Saturday, April 3, at 10:00am. As of now, our regular curbside hours are as follows: 10:00am to 6:45pm on Mondays and Tuesdays, 12:00pm to 6:45pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and 10:00am to 4:45pm on Fridays and Saturdays. These hours are subject to change in the near future, so please give us a call at 302-328-1995 before dropping by, just to be on the safe side.

The New Castle Public Library's pick for April's Adult Book Discussion will be "The Storied Life of A.J. Fickry," by Gabrielle Zevin, which is widely available through the Delaware Library Catalog. The discussion will be taking place over Zoom on Wednesday, April 21 at 5:30pm. For more information or to register to attend, please don't hesitate to reach out to our Adult Services Librarian, Tyler Antoine at tyler.antoine@lib.de.us or see what other virtual [Upcoming Events](#) are happening this month.

Interested in learning a new language? [Transparent Language Online](#) (offers the most comprehensive language-learning solution for libraries. You can quickly and easily learn new languages using a wide variety of courses and activities.



***In Memoriam  
Joanne Davis  
1933 - 2021***

Joanne thoroughly enjoyed her many friends and activities at the New Castle Public Library. I was saddened when her daughter called to tell me of her passing. She was surrounded by her dear family at the end - what a blessing that was to her. Joanne and I shared many book discussions on the way to Sally Hatton's book club and then shared our views with our good friends. She loved various activities at the library such as book sorting that included lively conversations as well as the sorting. Her favorite activity at the library was the book sale which, of course, included conversations with her dear friends and the Parade! What fun times we all shared with Joanne. She will be definitely missed by all of us.

I hope this little memory of Joanne helps all of us as we remember her kind and gentle ways.

Blessings from Marlene Johnson

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***April Book Recommendations***

If there is a book you would like to recommend, email us at [nclibraryfriends@gmail.com](mailto:nclibraryfriends@gmail.com).

Irene Biggs

***Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents***

by Isabel Wilkerson

This non-fiction book by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America from its inception. This deeply researched text is supported by personal anecdotes by Martin Luther King, baseball's Satchel Paige, and Wilkerson herself along with many others. Wilkerson looks beyond race and class as she addresses how our caste system

influences our lives, our behavior, and our nation's fate.

In this time of heightened awareness of racism, the reader is informed and fortified as the book examines ways America can move past human divisions and toward the hope of common humanity.

Bruce Burk

***A Month in the Country***

by J. L. Carr

This slim, poignant novel is set in the 1920's, in Osgodby, a small Yorkshire town. The story is narrated by Tom, an artist charged with the task of uncovering and restoring a medieval wall painting in the local church. Over his month's stay in this quiet village, Tom befriends Moon, an excavator employed to recover a lost grave in the churchyard. Both men, seeking a sense of normalcy, bond through past and present experiences.

Through the lens of daily village life and budding relationships, the story captures a sense of nostalgia and tranquility, with an acceptance of one's life: its possibilities, disappointments, and its reality.

Roberta Yarker Smith

***The Last Train to London***

by Meg Waite Clayton

This is one of the best historical novels I have read in some time. It is well-researched and certainly illustrates the concept that "one person of integrity can make a difference." (Quote by Elie Wiesel, from his Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech.)

The seventh of M. W. Clayton's novels, this book is concerned with the Dutch woman, who organized the Kindertransport from Vienna (1938-1940). Geertruida Meijer (1896-1978) was known as "Tante Truus" to the children she rescued. She and her husband, who supported her work unreservedly, had no children of their own, but managed, with others, to enable some ten thousand children, mainly, but not exclusively Jewish, to escape Nazi occupation.

Clayton weaves her novel around real people, including Adolf Eichmann, and fictional characters, primarily Stephan Neuman, a young playwright and Zofie-Helene Perger, a mathematical prodigy, who eventually studies at Oxford, and their extended families. The construction of the novel is excellent with short chapters and excerpts from newspapers and reports of the time as well as material from survivor interviews.



It is a compelling and inspiring tale.

Roberta Yarker Smith

***The Daughters of Yalta***

by Catherine Grace Katz

The is a non-fiction work and an astonishing debut by its young author. It concerns the three women who accompanied their famous fathers to the Yalta conference in 1945: Kathleen Harriman (28), Sarah Churchill (30) and Anna Roosevelt (38). Stalin's daughter, Svetlana was only 19 at the time and did not attend.

It is well-written and meticulously researched using private and government archives, documentary collections and the diaries, journals, letters and conversations of these woman. It gives a fascinating insight into the decaying palace hosting the conference and the various ways, both official and unofficial meetings were arranged and developed.

As one reviewer has written, "The Daughters of Yalta" is as "informative as it is intriguing."