

Friends

of the St. Louis County Library Foundation



St. Louis County Library
Foundation

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Fall 2020 / Volume 19, No. 4



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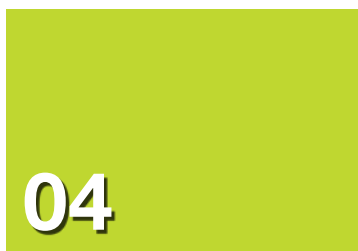
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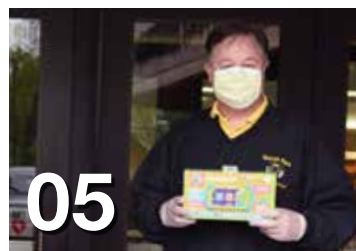
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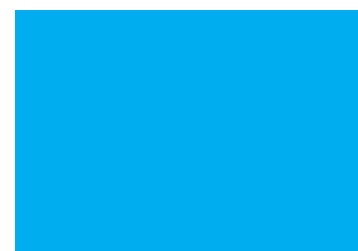
New and renewing Friends



Gifts and Tributes



Upcoming virtual author visits



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Friends Newsletter

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St. Louis County Library
Foundation

In memory of cherished library staff member, Julie Lynn Cruise

by Kristen Sorth, Director and CEO



Julie Cruise started her employment at St. Louis County Library on November 17, 1981 at the Eliza Heidbrink branch as a Paraprofessional. She transferred to Data Processing (now ITS) on June 1, 1984 as a Paraprofessional. She transferred to Administration as a Library Planner on November 24, 1997 working with Marie Conlin. On July 1, 2000, she

became an Administrative Analyst and worked to develop the SLCL Friends group. Then on December 1, 2006, she transferred to Communications as a Publications Coordinator.

Julie Cruise was one of the first people to make me feel welcome when I started at the Library in 1998 as a 27 year-old in my second grown up job. What I didn't know and Julie would tell me later was that the Library Director at the time had asked Julie and Marie Conlin to befriend me. Lucky for me, our relationship went beyond those first few weeks because "she decided I was a keeper." I have a list with all of the things that I want to talk to Julie about from politics to our pets. There are many days when I pick up the phone to ask her a question about the history behind a decision or why a building functions the way it does and then I have to hang up because she is gone.



Julie had the ability to see the good and bad of most situations. She often used this ability to send me very timely excerpts from the history of the Library. Here are two that I keep in my desk drawer. Both were about previous Library Directors and had the subject title of "Something You Might Find Amusing."

Librarians opt pants suits...

Jane Knost, Technical Processing, broke the ice and wore a pants suit to work Monday, Oct. 5. It was a library "first" and Don Gaertner approved. He commented that tailored pants suits are certainly in style and that there was no objection to the staff wearing them provided they exercised good judgment. "I don't want staff members to wear slacks and a shirt of outfits that look like they are going to a library picnic. However, a tailored pants suit with a becoming tunic is a better choice for library work than mini skirts and reveal too much stocking and underwear," he said.

Chronicle, November 1970, Vol 3, No 11

In the first ever issue of the Chronicle, there was an interview with Stewart Smith. This is a quotation from that interview.

"He (Mr. Smith) does say that his greatest satisfaction has been the unusual opportunity to start a new library from scratch, unhampered by 'the dead hand of tradition.'"

I miss her. I miss her sense of humor, her sarcasm, her voracious knowledge of everything and her unwavering love of the people that worked here and of the Library itself.

Grants Received

The Foundation was awarded several grants in 2020 for a variety of programming. Below is a list of funds received from January through August 2020. First time contributors included First Bank and Neighbors Credit Union. Thank you to all our sponsors.

January

- **Dana Brown Charitable Trust**, \$20,000 for Wi-Fi Hotspots for area high schools.

March

- **Josh Seidel Memorial Foundation**, \$10,000 for Coding 101 for children 10–14 years of age.
- **PNC Foundation**, \$60,000 over three years for Born to Read.

April

- **Opportunity Trust**, \$5,000 for COVID Response, books for distribution.
- **Saigh Foundation**, \$5,000 for Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring.
- **Neighbors Credit Union**, \$2,250 for COVID Response efforts.
- **St. Louis Community Foundation**, \$25,000 for COVID Response efforts.

May

- **First Bank**, \$3,600 for STEM kits to be distributed at drive-thru meal sites.
- **Citi**, \$10,000 for partnership with Oasis for tutoring. This year it has shifted online.
- **Citi**, \$10,000 for partnership with Eye Thrive to provide a mobile vision clinic at several branches.

August

- **Blues for Kids**, \$5,000 for Born to Read.
- **PNC Foundation**, \$75,000 for COVID Response—Chromebook/Wi-Fi Hotspot bundles to circulate.



Chromebooks deliver to Library Headquarters.

COVID-19 Relief Efforts

This year the Foundation as seen an outpouring of support for the library's COVID-19 relief efforts. In May, Give STL Day saw more than \$20,000 raised for drive-thru meals and emergency diapers at library branches. Fund the Need Week held late August/early September surpassed the goal of \$100,000, raising more than \$175,000 for educational resources for use during the pandemic and beyond.



Partnerships with St. Louis Area Diaper Bank and Operation Food Search are two of the Foundation's many Covid-19 relief efforts.

The Foundation has given more than \$107,000 to support those most affected by the pandemic. Below are a list of donations distributed from March–October 2020.

\$30,000	Operation Food Search
\$20,000	St. Louis Diaper Bank
\$11,492	PBS Playtime Pads
\$6,300	Wi-Fi Boosters
\$11,069	Books
\$29,000	Chromebook/Hot Spot Bundles

The Foundation continues to distribute funds to the library as it remains at the forefront of COVID-19 relief. It's never too late to give to the relief efforts. To donate visit foundation.slcl.org/membership-support and note COVID relief or contact our Manager of Development at 314-994-3300 ext. 2156, foundation@slcl.org.



Fund the Need Week Raises Over \$180,000

by Courtney Wood, Friends Coordinator

The St. Louis County Library Foundation, just three months shy of their sit-down gala, switched gears to a week-long digital campaign. Fund the Need Week ran from August 29–September 4 in support of educational resources at St. Louis County Library.

The campaign featured celebrity support from former St. Louisans **Jon Hamm**, **Beau Willimon** and **Curtis Sittenfeld**. Donors purchased seats to an exclusive Zoom call with bestselling author **Chris Bohjalian**. **JoAnn Sandifer won the Golden Raffle**, which included seven nights of luxury accommodations at Hammock Cove Resort & Spa Antigua.



Jon Hamm



Beau Willimon



Curtis Sittenfeld



Chris Bohjalian

The Foundation was able to raise more than \$180,000 to purchase Wi-Fi Hotspots, Chromebooks, tutoring, PBS Playtime pads and books to help kids learn during the pandemic and beyond.



PBS Playtime Pads were distributed at Hancock Place Elementary.

A BIG THANK YOU

to our Sponsors, Board Members, Friends of the Foundation, patrons and new donors for your generous support.



From the Stacks

Fiction for the fall season

by Jennifer Alexander, Adult Collection Development Specialist

In mid-October, Rumaan Alam's latest novel "Leave the World Behind" had only been on bookshelves for one week and it was already a hit. It was selected as a finalist for the 2020 National Book Award in fiction, and many reviewers were calling it the book of the fall season. Alam's unsettling and mesmerizing story of a family in crisis would surely have been popular with readers any year. It is a book that makes you change your plans, either staying up all night or ignoring a perfectly beautiful day outside because you cannot stop reading. But this eerie tale seems to be resonating particularly well with readers in the fall of 2020. Perhaps the widespread anxiety and uncertainty generated by living with COVID-19 for seven months have left readers more receptive to this thought-provoking novel.

Amanda and Clay and their teenaged children Archie and Rose have left their home in Brooklyn for a vacation on Long Island. The spacious upscale house set in the woods has a pool and expensive features such as a marble kitchen island and a copper faucet over the stove. Amanda found the rental on Airbnb, in a blurb inviting "Step into our beautiful house and leave the world behind."

The ad's promise seems solid as the family begins familiar vacation routines. The kids immediately jump in the pool, Amanda buys way too much food at the local grocery store, and Clay happily prepares hamburgers for his family, enjoying the luxury of having level floors and central air-conditioning for a week.

Late on the second night there is a knock at the door. An older couple, G.H. and Ruth, explain that they are the owners of the house. They had been at the symphony in the city when something



PBS Playtime Pads assist community children to keep learning.

happened. The electricity throughout the city is out, and they decided that rather than try to make their way back to their apartment, they drive out to the Long Island house. They offer a refund of the rental fee and ask to stay in the basement apartment of the house until they can figure out what has happened.

This bizarre circumstance creates a wave of wariness, suspicion, and doubt. Although Amanda received an alert about a blackout on her phone earlier, the electricity is working fine at the house. Because she made the reservations online, she would not recognize the owners. They have no cell service, internet, or television. G.H. and Ruth do not know what has happened and choose not to speculate out loud, but they are clearly frightened. Amanda and Clay find it difficult to believe that something catastrophic has occurred because their immediate surroundings appear so normal.

Soon the members of this newly formed family of six are tentatively working through how to navigate an emergency that remains mysterious. While the nature and scale of the disaster are revealed slowly and incompletely to the characters, readers are offered glimpses of what is happening elsewhere and of the future. The result is high suspense without much hope of resolution.

Like other accomplished works of art, this novel is open to multiple interpretations. Some may read it as about contemporary politics, or race, or parenting, or climate change. When asked about whether he minds if a reader thinks his novel is about X when he thinks it is about Y, Alam said that it is essentially none of his business. He feels that his job is finished when it is handed over to the reader, and the reader's experience is personal and independent of the creator's intention.

Whatever readers see in this novel, there is a question that is likely to remain with them. Are the things we rely on as solid as we believe? "Leave the World Behind" is perfect for a time when many are examining what is essential and what they can live without.



Perfect Time to Give a Gift



Drive-Thru Food Pick-Up for Kids at Weber Road Branch.

Still looking for a way to make a difference before the end of the year? Now is the perfect time to consider giving an additional year-end gift. There are many ways to make an impact with a donation of any amount to the Library Foundation.

Your friends will be thanking you all year long if you give them a Friends Membership. Recommended Reading lists from bestselling authors, reserved seats at Author Series events (when we are able

to gather again) and exclusive invitations to Author receptions are just a few of the benefits.

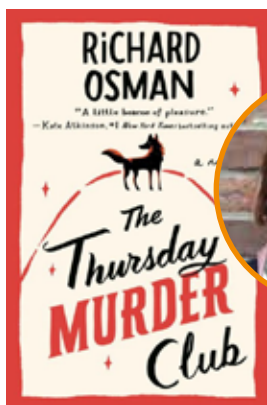
Honor a special someone this holiday season with a tribute gift in their name. A wonderful gift for the person who has everything. Remember a loved one with a tribute gift in their memory. A great way to honor their spirit by helping others in the community. It's never too early to start thinking about estate planning. One small sentence in your will, trust or insurance policy can make a difference in the lives of many, many people throughout the community. Consider stock sales, donor advised funds or charitable rollovers.

For a full list of options visit foundation.slcl.org/membership-support or contact our Manager of Development 314-994-3300 ext. 2156 or email foundation@slcl.org



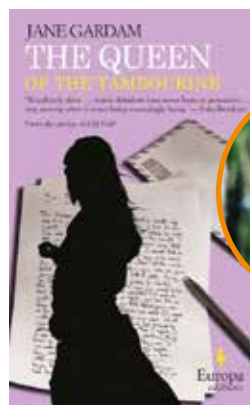
Distribution of emergency diapers and books for kids are part of the Foundation's ongoing Covid-19 relief efforts.

Friends Recommended Reads



Shari Lapena

Book of the Month Friends or higher should be on the lookout for a new perk. Each month, beloved authors, library staff and special contributors will share what books they would recommend to a friend. Our contributors were told their selections could be new or old, fiction or non-fiction just 10 books they enjoy. Their lists did not disappoint.



Gregory Maguire

that included **“The Thursday Murder Club”** by Richard Osman. Best-known as the author of “Wicked,” **Gregory Maguire** had wonderful selections for November that included **“The Queen of the Tambourine”** by Jane Gardam.

You won't want to miss December's list. If you are a Pageturner Friend, make sure to upgrade to Book of the Month to start receiving these curated lists. Not receiving our emails? Email us at friends@slcl.org to make sure you don't miss a Recommended Reading list.

International bestselling author of “The Couple Next Door,” **Shari Lapena** kicked off this exciting, new venture in October with a list

New and Renewing Friends

The following is a list of people who joined the Friends of the St. Louis County Library Foundation or who renewed their membership between the dates January 12, 2020 and September 30, 2020.

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Upcoming virtual author events

*Tuesday, December 15
7:00 p.m.*

Jane Smiley

"Perestroika in Paris"



*Wednesday, January 13
7:00 p.m.*

Ace Atkins

"Robert B. Parker's Someone
to Watch Over Me"



*Tuesday, January 26
7:00 p.m.*

Melanie Benjamin

"The Children's Blizzard"



*Tuesday, February 2
7:00 p.m.*

Vivian Gibson

"The Last Children of Mill Creek"

Go to www.slcl.org/authors for more information about these and other author visits.