



# Friends of the Stoughton Public Library Newsletter

2021 No. 1 Winter/Spring

## A GIFT TO THE LIBRARY

Friends president Lesley Johnson presents the Friends' annual donation to library director Jim Ramsey. Despite the pandemic, this year's gift is \$8,000! Each year the donation from the Friends helps make possible and enhances many library services. These include Lucky Day books and DVDs, large print books, craft kits for children and teens, books for children and teens, magazines, and more. Thank you to everyone who made this year's gift possible!



## FRIENDS FALL FUNDRAISER RAFFLE THANK YOU!

Thanks to YOU: our sponsors, members and supporters for your generosity during these difficult times. Your support of our raffle and donations makes the Library stronger, more capable of innovation and more responsive to our community. You truly make the difference for us, and we are extremely grateful!

### Event Sponsor

Main Street Kitchen & Catering

### Raffle Sponsors

Culvers-Stoughton

Stoughton Trailers

Pizza Pit

### Raffle Donors

Merlin Luschen

Stoughton Country Club

Stoughton Opera House

Van Horn Auto of Stoughton

McFarland State Bank

Verizon - Stoughton

Main Street Kitchen & Catering

Hanson Electronics

Stoughton Health

Nauti Norski

Pizza Pit

St. Vincent de Paul – Stoughton

Lotus Salon

The UPS Store – Stoughton

Fosdal Bakery

Viking Brew Pub

### Donations

Asleson's Hardware

Edward Jones – Thomas Fendrick

Blue Moon Community Farms

Rock Realty

RHD Properties Inc

And Thank You To The Many Very

Generous Individuals Who

Donated and Helped Out!

## Congratulations and Thank You To All The Raffle Winners!

Cherry Nesting Tables – Lilly Melch

Cherry Nesting Tables – The Jarmuz Family

Stoughton Country Club Golf Carts & Fees for Four – Judy Luschen

\$300 Cash – Erin Meinholz

Stoughton Opera House, Two Tickets of Choice – Tim Rusch

Van Horn Auto of Stoughton Auto Gift Bag – Shirley Abel

McFarland State Bank Gift Bag – Ruth Wilson

Verizon-Stoughton IFROGS Wireless Earbuds – Helen Leikness

Hanson Electronics \$50 Gift Certificate – Christy Tupper

Stoughton Health Gift Basket – Glen & Wendy Hellwig

Main Street Kitchen & Catering \$40 Gift Certificate – Christy Tupper

Nauti Norske \$25 Gift Certificate – Kim Slava

Pizza Pit \$25 Gift Certificate – Kim Slava

St. Vincent de Paul \$25 Gift Certificate – Denise Duranczyk

St. Vincent de Paul \$25 Gift Certificate – James Miller

Lotus Salon \$25 Gift Certificate – Kim Slava

Lotus Salon \$25 Gift Certificate – M Bolstad

The UPS Store \$25 Gift Certificate – Nancy Onder

The UPS Store \$25 Gift Certificate – Kim Slava

Fosdal Bakery \$20 Gift Certificate – Steven Rybeck

Fosdal Bakery \$20 Gift Certificate – Tim Rusch

Viking Brew Pub \$50 Gift Care and Growler Refill – James Miller

## WELCOME TO NEW FOL BOARD MEMBER



Lynn Perez-Hewitt has volunteered to join the Friends Board as our Fundraiser Event Chair. Thank you, Lynn! Lynn and her husband Jim, recently moved to Stoughton from Grand Junction, CO along with their 2 dogs, Willie (an Australian Shepherd named after Willie Nelson) and Maddie (Miss Madeline, a rescued Miniature Border Collie).

Lynn's education includes a BA in Communication and English—Bradley University, Peoria, IL and a Master of Education in Educational Leadership—Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ. Her career experiences include: consultant to nonprofit organizations, executive director of an Arizona State Park Friends group and a director of a food bank. She is accredited in public relations and has many fundraising professional affiliations.

Lynn's interests include reading, writing, baking and canning. She has written one book, *Measured Time: Book One, The Traveler* and is currently working on her second book. She describes herself as a "book person." Since her single digits, books have been her friends. In 1997, she started a reading journal to log her reading. Some of her recent reads include: *A Long Petal of the Sea*, *The Midnight Library*, *Lady Clementine: A Novel*, *The House in the Blue Cerulean Sea*. Welcome, Lynn!

## FACEBOOK

If you are on Facebook, you can "like" the Stoughton Public Library Facebook page. You'll receive posts from the library to help keep you in touch with news. In fact, the library recently posted a great thank you to us! Please check it out! It's a short slideshow listing how our 2020 donation was used in their programs. Thank you for your generosity and support during these difficult times!



## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Kate Hull has been honored by the Friends as the 2020 Volunteer of the Year. She was recognized in appreciation for her essential technical assistance during the pandemic, her generous fundraising support and assistance, and her hard work and commitment to the organization.

## MAGAZINES

Just a reminder that magazines can still be checked out from the Library. The Friends of the Library sponsor the following magazines through the Adopt-a-Magazine Program:

Highlights for Children	HGTV Magazine	Madison Magazine	Treasures
Mayo Clinic Health Letter	Our Wisconsin	Stoughton Courier Hub	People

Call the library at 608-873-6281 for more information about magazines.

## BOOK NOOK CART

The Friends of the Stoughton Public Library have worked with library staff to enable a Friends Book Nook Cart to be outside the library's front door. It will be there every day the library is open and the weather is good. That means no snow or rain, since we all know that rain and snow are not friends of

books. On the other hand, we are not only friends of books, but also Friends of the Library, so visit the cart often. We restock it twice weekly.

Even with the library closed we welcome your donation for the book cart. Specifically, we could use more donations of books for the birth to 8 age range. In addition, fiction is always popular: mystery, historical, romance, and general fiction. Of course, we wouldn't say no to science fiction or westerns either! Keep us in mind as you make more room on your home book shelves.

Rather than having to drop off your book donations at the library, Jeanne Burt is happy to pick them up. Call Jeanne at 608-469-7201 if you have a donation that you want picked up.

Good reading to you all! And thank you for your generosity and support during these difficult times!

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DRIVE

Friends membership renewal letters and forms were sent out in mid-February. You can return your membership renewal by mail or drop it off at the library.

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS

-  Spring Fundraiser Mailer → Watch your mailbox in mid-March for the Love Our Library fundraiser, which celebrates our love of books, creativity and community through your generous support.
-  Pie Place → The Friends are working with the Stoughton Chamber of Commerce. Plans will be finalized in March or April.
-  Summer Fundraiser/Garage Sale → June 18 & 19
-  Fall Fundraiser → October



## LIBRARIAN PROFILE



Ever since the second grade Zoe Zi Wei Thompson-Eagan has known that she wanted to become a librarian. She has worked at the Stoughton Public Library since 2010 as a shelver, and throughout the years she has worked as a substitute librarian. During the summer of 2019 she accepted the position of Technical Services Assistant. Zoe Zi Wei also works at the Monona Public Library as a Library Assistant. In addition to dividing her time between the two libraries she also runs her own business.

Zoe Zi Wei enjoys reading all different categories of books but her favorite genre is Young Adult. When not devouring books you can find her in the kitchen. Cooking is another hobby that she enjoys in her free time. She resides in Fitchburg with her significant other, Nik.

## AMAZONSMILE



Purchasing from Amazon? If so, part of your purchase can go to the Friends of the Stoughton Public Library. Shop Amazon and use AmazonSmile. Go to: <https://smile.amazon.com/> from your web browser and log into your Amazon account. If this is your first visit, before you begin shopping select The Friends of the Stoughton Public Library as the charitable organization to receive donations from your eligible purchases. Every eligible purchase you make will result in the Friends receiving a donation, it's a win-win transaction! Bookmark [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com/) for future Amazon shopping, so every eligible purchase you make on that site results in the Friends getting a donation.

## FRIENDS MISSION

*The mission of the Friends of the Stoughton Public Library is to promote library services to the Stoughton community; to stimulate gifts and bequests to the library; to provide support for library programs; and to encourage the broadest possible use of the library's facilities, materials and services.*

*-- Adopted: January 20, 1984*

Friends of the Stoughton Public Library  
2364 Jackson St #186  
Stoughton WI 53589

The Friends of the Stoughton Public Library is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.  
[www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org/friends-library](http://www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org/friends-library) or email: [friendsstolib@gmail.com](mailto:friendsstolib@gmail.com)

**Anyone can be a Friend of the library!**

For as little as \$10.00 you can become a member.

Download a registration form at [www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org/friends-library](http://www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org/friends-library)

**Stoughton Public Library**

304 South Fourth Street  
Stoughton WI 53589

608.873.6281

[www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org](http://www.stoughtonpubliclibrary.org)

Email: [storef@stolib.org](mailto:storef@stolib.org)

**Library Curbside Hours:**

Monday – Thursday 9am – 6:45pm

Friday – Saturday 9am – 4:45pm

Friends email: [friendsstolib@gmail.com](mailto:friendsstolib@gmail.com)

**Friends of the  
Stoughton Public Library**

**Board Members & Committee Chairs**

President.....Lesley Johnson  
Vice-President.....Judy Luschen  
Secretary.....Claudette Higgins  
Treasurer.....Jeanne Burt  
Book Nook Co-Chair.....Anne Marie Jarmuz  
Book Nook Co-Chair.....Lesley Johnson  
Membership Chair.....Nancy Fuhrman  
Newsletter .....Weatherford (Ford) Thomas  
Pie Place Chair.....Jeanne Burt  
Fundraising Events Chair.....Lynn Perez-Hewitt

If you have questions or would like additional information,  
please call the Friends at 608-873-4050 or email  
[friendsstolib@gmail.com](mailto:friendsstolib@gmail.com) .

Dear Friends,



No doubt about it: 2020 has been an incredibly challenging year—for our planet, our nation, and our community. Here at the Stoughton Public Library, we have tried to face these challenges head-on, shifting and adapting during the pandemic to continue providing services to the people of Stoughton while protecting the health and safety of everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us.

I couldn't be prouder of the way our staff have adjusted to our new normal in their efforts to deliver library materials curbside and create fun, engaging virtual programs to fill these lonely months.

The same can be said of the volunteers in our wonderful Friends organization, who have somehow found a way to continue fundraising and promoting the library during this difficult time. In particular, the members of our Friends Board of Directors deserve special recognition for their efforts to bring back the Book Nook book sale cart, transform the annual fall fundraiser into a safe, contactless event, and recruit new members.

I am profoundly grateful for the patience, support, and kind words so many in the community have offered over this past year. And, above all, I'm thankful to you, the members of the Friends, for all of the support you provide, both moral and monetary.

The decision to limit access to our building has been the hardest I've ever had to make in my professional career. Our staff misses the daily interactions with our friends and neighbors, and I know all of you miss being able to browse the shelves, attend a concert or program, or simply spend the day reading in the peace and quiet of the Library Mezzanine.

As winter turns to spring and the pandemic loosens its grip on our world, these activities will return—slowly at first, to be sure, but they will come back. If cases continue to decline and our vaccination efforts stay ahead of the new virus variants, we hope to move into the next phase of reopening this spring. Welcoming back the public back into our building will be a major step on the road to recovery. The future can be hard to imagine right now, with so much uncertainty in our daily lives, but it is the promise of a new beginning, of turning the page to a new chapter in which this virus doesn't rule every aspect of our lives, that sustains us and keeps us going through this long winter.

Until we see each other again in person, please know that your Stoughton Public Library staff are working harder than ever to educate, enrich, empower, and engage our community. Of all the things that have changed in the last year, this, at least, remains the same.

In gratitude and hope,

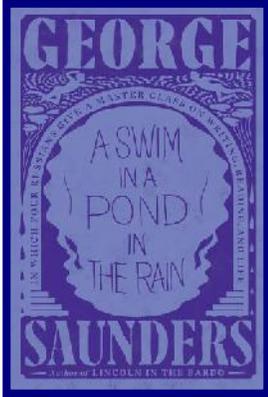
Jim Ramsey, Director

Stoughton Public Library



## ***A Swim in a Pond in the Rain:***

*In Which Four Russians Give a Master Class on Writing, Reading, and Life*  
by George Saunders



The phrase “national treasure” may be criminally overused, but I’m struggling for a better way to describe George Saunders, a contemporary American author who writes mostly in the form of short stories. Yes, his stories can be profoundly strange, and many of them veer into the realm of speculative fiction, which is one reason why many consider him the rightful heir to Kurt Vonnegut. (His wry, absurdist sense of humor leavened with tenderness and a stubborn belief in human goodness is the other reason.)

If you’re not familiar with Saunders, a good place to start would be his 2013 surprise-bestseller story collection, ***The Tenth of December***. From there you can move on to his other excellent, earlier collections like ***Pastoralia*** and ***CivilWarLand in Bad Decline***. Only after tackling some of his short fiction would I recommend picking up his 2017 Booker Prize-winning novel, ***Lincoln in the Bardo***, a farcical-yet-profound story about grief and American history that takes place mostly within the confines of a Washington, D.C., graveyard.

Saunders’s latest isn’t short fiction or a novel; instead it’s a series of essays about the art of short fiction based on his lectures at Syracuse University where he teaches in the MFA program. Included are seven essays examining short stories by the Russian masters of the form: Gogol, Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Chekhov.

The Russians often get a bad rap as dour philosophers who only write doorstep-size novels about war, fate, and the destiny of nations, but as Saunders shows here their fiction is some of the most profound, life-affirming, and, yes, optimistic, in the whole of world literature. (Occasionally, they’re also very strange: Gogol’s “The Nose,” about a middling civil servant who awakes one day to discover his nose has vanished from his face, is a story that Saunders could’ve written himself.)

Each essay is presented alongside the story itself, and I often found myself flipping back and forth. Along with his thoughts on the meaning of each story and what it can teach us about our lives, Saunders carefully examines the structure of each to show us how great fiction works, how it pulls the reader into its “fastidiously constructed scale models of the world,” as he puts it in his introduction. A very entertaining and accessible book that will make you appreciate the craft of writing (and reading) all the more.