



Friends
of the
St. Pete Beach
Library

SPRING 2022

TIDINGS

Roberta Whipple Memorial Statue Unveiled May 11

Story by STEVE TRAIMAN

The Friends Board co-sponsored with the Library the unveiling of a memorial sculpture May 11 dedicated to Roberta Lamb Whipple, Library Administrator from 2000 until her death from cancer in 2009 at age 57.

The bronze statue, by noted sculptor Randolph Rose, depicts young boy and girl readers, who were close to Roberta's heart.

A St. Pete Beach native, Roberta graduated from Lakewood High School and Florida State University, then taught at Gibbs High School before returning to FSU for her Masters in Library Science.

She began her library career in Jacksonville, then Hillsborough County, and finally got her dream job as Administrator of our Library.

She was active with other library groups, and in the community. Before her death, she accomplished another lifelong dream of being published as the author of "St. Pete Beach's Corey Avenue", a copy of which is on the stand next to her memorial.

Friends president Steve Traiman hosted the event, welcoming Mayor Alan Johnson City Commissioners Grill and Friszolowski, City Manager Alex Rey, Library Director Betcinda Kettells and other Board members Alice Thomas Ron Waters and Bill Thompson. He warmly thanked Elizabeth Britt, whose earlier presentation on her "History of St. Pete Beach" included a nice reference to Roberta's contributions and book.

Steve then introduced Jon Whipple, Roberta's husband, and sister Mary Carolyn Wachsmuth. Jon then said some nice words about Roberta and her



At May 11 unveiling of Roberta Whipple memorial sculpture, are Library Director Betcinda Kettells, front, and l-r, Friends Board members Bill Thompson, Rob Waters, Steve Traiman and Alice Thomas.

love for the library and the children. His comments, and the sculpture unveiling, were videographed by WTVT Fox 13 and broadcast on the 11 pm news.





Director's Report

It goes without saying that the past year has been eventful for all of us. We've faced tough times and situations, but we've also found ways to be joyful and thankful. I am thankful to have been able to celebrate one of the city's biggest achievements of the year, the renovation of the historic library building, the heart of our community.

The Library is still located on the site of the original library established in 1951 as a part-time project inside the St. Petersburg Beach Community Club. In March of 2021 we celebrated the renovation of the original library building that was built in 1969.

The generosity and spirit of the St. Petersburg Community Club should never be forgotten. The gift of the deed to the land from the organization allowed the Library to become what you see today. I am proud to state that the City duly honored the gift with the construction, and subsequent renovation, of the library, which, since its inception has been used for educational purposes and much more. It has been a place of discovery, curiosity, invention, reflection and celebration and will continue to be so in the future.

The City of St. Pete Beach can be characterized as a community that works together toward a common goal and this renovated library is a fine example of that. With the full support of the mayor, the commissioners, the city staff, and residents we united in the need to preserve this historical landmark and important asset to the community.

Much work and help was given by the many but I must specifically acknowledge the support of the Friends of the Library. Together with membership dollars, bookstore and basket proceeds and financial investments, the Friends have supported the renovation with funding to the tune of OVER \$41,000 and growing! I say "growing" because I have not finished asking for items that will enhance the library and they generously continue to say "Yes!" The Friends of the Library supported this organization before there was a Library and they continue today to help us grow and better serve our community, as they have for the last 60+ years.

The year has not been without its challenges and sadness. We lost two great library friends and supporters. Long-time employee Ann Garrison, and the Friends of the Library Board President Muriel Desloovere, have passed away. Three staff members have gone on to other opportunities and the continuing COVID and staffing issues have created some tough times.

We look forward to recovering as much normalcy as possible in the coming year. We have a great new facility and parking lot, we have fantastic residents and visitors to serve, and we have a wealth of supporters including the Friends, Library Advisory Committee, and City Administration. With all these assets on our side, we're sure to make the most of the coming year!



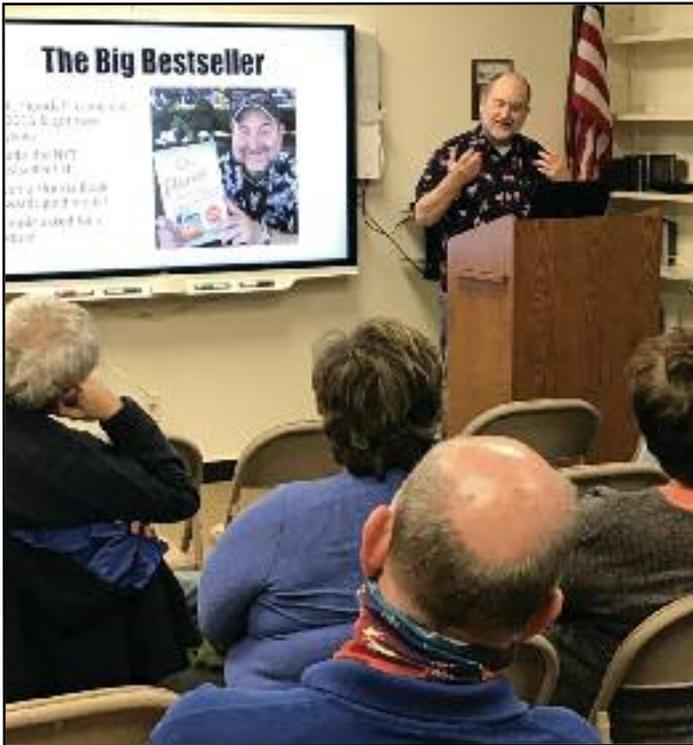
New Amazon Program Enables Shoppers To Easily Donate To Their Favorite Nonprofits

**BUY FROM AMAZON =
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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



Best-selling author Craig Pittman gave a fun-filled talk at his Jan. 24 book signing for "Oh! Florida" with stories of outlandish local characters.



Friends Book Store manager Ron Waters (l) & President Steve Traiman give Tom Quinn basket of autographed Florida author books for his very generous donations to the Library.



Kerry Kriseman gave a nice talk April 17 on her book "Accidental First Lady. On the scene (and behind the front lines) of Local Politics.", with husband Rick, foreground, St Pete Mayor from 2014-2022.

Tidings News

New Staff

Alexa Sawyer:

Born and raised in the Sunshine State, I earned my MLIS from the University of South Florida in 2017. When I'm not slinging books, you can find me hanging out with my cat or making delicious baked goods. My cinnamon rolls are life changing. "He who controls the spice controls the universe." I'm an eclectic reader who'll devour anything from charming cozies to atmospheric horror.



Matthew O'Neil:

Matthew O'Neil has experience in corporate, academic, and public libraries. He comes to us from a defense firm, prior to that he was an associate professor at St. Lawrence university, administrator of the library system for the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative, and an IT Consultant for the Government of Dubai's newest library. He holds graduate and undergraduate degrees in Library Science, having obtained his MLIS from Florida State University.



Carly Haines

I was born and raised in Delray Beach, Florida. I played college volleyball at SPC and taught English. I enjoy boating, marine life, traveling, and promoting early literacy. I live with my boyfriend and adorable cat in St. Petersburg.



Library Clerk, Lianna Grimes

Lianna was raised right here on St. Pete Beach and is so happy to be back serving this wonderful community. She has a background in nonprofit work and working with children of all ages. She lives in St. Petersburg with her husband and three children and loves being active in the community, visiting local coffee shops and sharing her love of books and reading with friends and family by stewarding a little free library at her home.



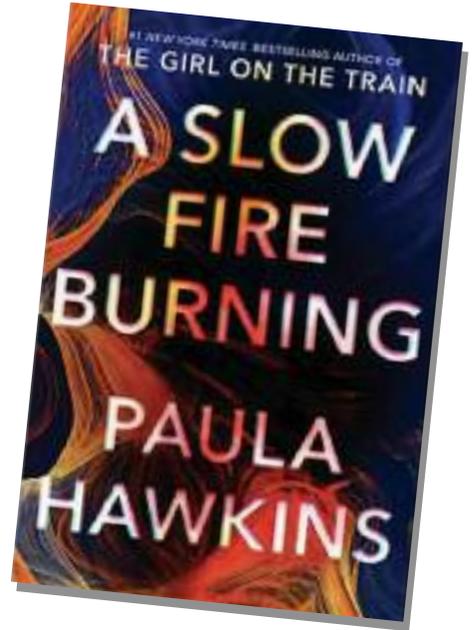
Tidings Book Report *By JUDY COHAN*

‘A SLOW FIRE BURNING’ by Paula Hawkins

If you love a good murder mystery, Paula Hawkins latest book is written just for you. Set in a towpath canal area of London, a grisly murder takes place on a somewhat shabby and derelict live aboard boat. The victim is a young man whose body is discovered by the woman who lives on the adjacent boat.

The motley cast of characters, who are all related in some fashion, by kinship or misadventure, all of whom have a reason to have murdered the young man, range from a troubled young woman to a sophisticated aging novelist. And all, at one time or another, are suspected by the police as having committed the gruesome murder.

As the plot twists and turns its way through the mystery, you will not want to put this book down.



FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT Steve Traiman (also writer)

VICE PRESIDENT Susan Lorenz

RECORDING SECRETARY Bill Thompson (also bookstore assistant, email)

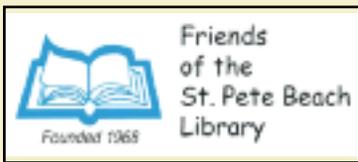
TREASURER Moon Metz

DIRECTORS: Judy Cohan (membership, book reviewer), Charlie Kabbash, Alice Thomas (assistant, transportation), Ron Waters (bookstore)

EDITOR Lorrie Bellinger

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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.



2022 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:

Single \$20 • Couple or Family \$35 • Business \$75

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