

Second Annual Literary Trivia Night a Huge Success!

Sixty book loving participants attended this event, with an impressive knowledge of all things literary. This year's categories included: Children's Books, Books Made into Movies, Famous First Lines, Mysteries and Film Noir Movies, Recent Books, What Colors are Missing from These titles, and more. Refreshments and libations were available throughout the evening.

Yolie Lopez, one of our board members, had fun announcing the correct answers and revealing scores. Members of the winning team each received a bottle of wine. **Many thanks to all of the people who helped support programs and book purchases at the Santa Barbara Library by attending this fundraiser.** We especially enjoyed having two teams from the library staff attend!



Team Literati proudly displays their bottle of wine after their win at the Literary Trivia Night.

Become an Orton-Gillingham Tutor

If you believe the ability to read is fundamental to success and you enjoy working with elementary school children from 1st-4th grades, this is the program for you.

You just need to commit to one hour of tutoring time per week and some prep time. The training is offered by the library. Please contact OGReaders@SantaBarbaraCA.gov, or call 805-564-5619.

Left: A photo of one of the students I tutor. We are playing a game of word dominos.
— Barbara Cronin Hershberg



Become a Board Member of the Friends of the Santa Barbara Library

This is a busy town with no shortage of non-profits in which you can become involved. However, we like to think that we're special in the sense that we serve the entire community free of charge. We have a core group of board members, one of which as been involved for twenty years, but we are always looking to add new members.

Do you have writing skills? Can you speak as a voice for the needs of your community? Do you like to advocate for our library? Do you like to take minutes? (Our secretary of three years would love to step down.) Then please join us at our next board meeting at the Eastside Library on May 15th. We are a hands-on board that enjoys working together.



President's Message

Are you aware that only three percent of the City of Santa Barbara's General Fund supports our Santa Barbara Library? This makes it even more astounding that the library offers the extensive free programs and services that it does. In just one year the library received almost half a million dollars in grant funding from federal, state, local, and private organizations

as a direct result of its staff seeking out such grants and applying for them. These funds help supplement the library's offerings and enhance its services.

However, this is not a sustainable approach. Each year the library's budget is cut, and this year the cuts will impact the collections budget. There is a long-term solution if we follow the approach that San Francisco city libraries have adopted. Since 1994, this city's voters have passed the Library Preservation Fund. This fund was last voted for in 2022 with a vote of over 80%. The funds are generated by charging residents 2.5 cents for every \$100 worth of property tax they pay. The San Francisco Library system—made up of 28 branches that are open seven days a week—also was the first to provide social worker services to their patrons.

The residents of San Francisco acknowledge that there are many poor people and houseless people that need a place to go in inclement weather or when temperatures are high and they don't have access to air conditioning. More than anything, San Francisco's support of its libraries shows the compassion for people less fortunate and also shows how beneficial all of its free resources are to everyone in the community.

My dream is that by 2026, we too can have a measure on our city ballot that would support our Santa Barbara Libraries to this extent. If you need inspiration, drop by the Eastside or Central libraries and witness some of the outstanding daily programs that are being offered.

With hope and appreciation,
Barbara Cronin Hershberg

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Thank you to our Spanish Translator Bonnie Blakley

We wanted to create a Friends of the Library informational brochure in both English and Spanish. We asked Bonnie Blakley, a Spanish teacher for SBCC to translate it into Spanish and she agreed. She said how much she used and appreciated the library when she was a young and poor mom staying home with her kids when her husband was just starting his career, so she was glad to help support our work. We appreciate her time, expertise, and support.

Do you know someone interested in becoming a friend? You can download a copy of our new membership brochure in English and Spanish on our website at: friends-sblibrary.org/be-a-friend.



Financial Report

It is Spring and time for a financial update! **Thanks to your generous support, we have been able to make our contributions to the library's wish list of \$70,000!** Donations to Friends of the Santa Barbara Public Library can be broken down into the following categories with the amounts received: Membership Renewals: \$16,855; New Members: \$2,390; Events: Book Sales - \$566; Trivia Evening - \$920; and Spring Appeal - \$24,307.



Our membership hovers around 640, and we always welcome new members. We appreciate ALL donations, large or small, because it all adds up to support literacy in our community.

A big THANK YOU to our most generous donors from October, 2023 through April, 2024.

Thanks to Our Most Generous Donors

Leslie & Ashish Bhutani

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Sally & Curt Coughlin

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Thanks to Our Business Friends

Please look at these names and give them your business! They too are supporting literacy in Santa Barbara.

Balanced Wealth Planning Inc.

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Book Review:

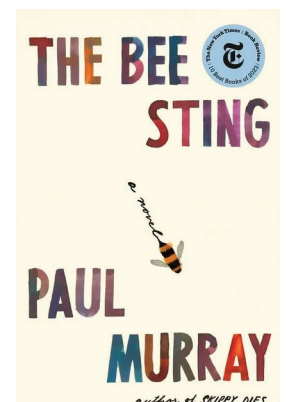
The Bee Sting by Paul Murray

Let me say right off that this novel is long—656 pages—but shorter than *The Covenant of Water*! The setting is Ireland in modern times with cell phones and social media. It is a tragedy on steroids, and that is not a spoiler because the first sentence sets the tone. However, don't let that scare you away from this beautifully written book that is full of surprises, including the "bee sting." It has moments of comedy and moments of pure love.

This Barnes family of four includes Dickie, Imelda, Cass, and PJ, and they will all touch your heart in some way. PJ, the 12 year-old, is bullied and worried about his parents, and you worry about him. Cass has just graduated from high school, is insecure in her main friendship, and Trinity college in Dublin is a brand new world. The flashback to Dickie's college days in Dublin are wonderfully wrought, both wildly exciting and confusing before he comes back to take over the family business. "The most beautiful girl in the four provinces," Imelda comes from an impoverished background and when she speaks, the author uses no periods, which is quite an effective way of portraying her lack of education. The marriage circumstances of Dickie and Imelda are sad and complicated.

There are minor characters who are equally unforgettable, specifically a mechanic in the Barnes' car business and Dickie's weird doomsday friend who talks him into building a bomb shelter.

This book was shortlisted for the 2023 Booker Prize, and was included on the year-end list of the best books of 2023, published by *The New York Times*. Life is full of tragedy and joy, and *The Bee Sting* brings those contradictions home.



— Linda Love, Board Member



The Library's 2024 Summer Programs Need Your Support

"Read and Shine" is the theme for the Santa Barbara Public Library's 2024 Summer Reading Program. "Read and Shine" is the theme for the Santa Barbara Public Library's 2024 Summer Reading Program. **Last year 1,570 readers participated in Summer Reading** and 170 readers returned to tell library staff that they completed their reading goals. Staff love seeing the shining faces of summer readers and having daily conversations about what they've been reading throughout the summer. Children collect beads for every reading conversation they have with library staff, which builds their narrative storytelling skills and increases their engagement with other readers. Children earned about 2,740 beads last summer. It's incredible to see the amount of excitement kids feel as they tell staff about their reading and string up their beads! In addition to beads and conversation, many of the participants also received prizes that the Friends of the Library solicited from local businesses and museums.

The Summer Reading kick-off will be held at Alameda Park on Saturday, June 8th.

There will be all sorts of fun activities to celebrate the beginning of our Summer Reading journey! The Friends will have a table where they will hand out a free book to each participant.

Summer Programming at the Santa Barbara Public Library will also include a full schedule of fun and educational events at both the Central Library and Eastside Library:

- **Library Lab** featuring hands on learning opportunities with science, engineering, and coding drop-in activities to fit families' busy schedules
- **Outdoor events** throughout the community in conjunction with the **Library On the Go van**
- **Storytimes** in parks and in the libraries
- **Cooking, art, maker, and robotics classes**
- **Pop-up learning activities** at Free Summer Meal sites for youth
- **A Health and Nutrition Faire** to connect the community with vital resources and education
- **SBPL will also provide learning experiences for summer campers** in partnership with United Way, Santa Barbara Unified School District, Santa Barbara Parks & Recreation, People's Self-Help Housing, the Turner Foundation, and others!



Here is my donation to the Santa Barbara Public Library's Summer Programs!

Enclosed is a gift for: \$25 (book prizes) \$50 (10 arts/crafts kits) \$200 (materials)
 \$300 (summer camp experience) Other - \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Thank you for your gift! Please make checks out to Friends of the Santa Barbara Public Library.

Mail this form to: P.O. Box 1019, Santa Barbara, CA 93102 or donate online at friends-sblibrary.org