

Pam Pilla, Louise Uchaczyk Nominated to Serve On Friends’ Board



Louise Uchaczyk (l) and Pam Pilla (r) are the nominees to fill positions on the Board of the Friends.

Two new members have been nominated to serve on the Friends Board: Pam Pilla for the new position of Vice President of Special Events and Louise Uchaczyk to replace Marion Morra as Vice President of Public Relations. Both candidates, who will be voted in during the Annual Meeting on January 28, have demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing the mission of the Friends and are excited for the opportunity to further serve.

Pam Pilla, a long-time Milford resident, began volunteering with the Friends almost immediately following her retirement from a thirty-eight-year career at AT&T as an IT specialist. Knowing “...the library as a welcoming place,” Pilla quickly offered her time and talents. As chair of the Welcome to Milford committee, Pilla coordinated the members

in assembling bags given by librarians to new patrons. The bags contain pamphlets and other literature on a wide range of topics and from many organizations and non-profits like the Milford Garden Club, Open Spaces, Chamber of Commerce and local and state museums. In addition to serving as chair, Pilla also volunteered at the Friends desk in the library lobby and worked on this year’s Party in the Stacks! gala by assisting with the silent auction, decorations and other tasks.

Pilla’s experience will serve her well as she assumes responsibility for the 2018 Party in the Stacks. She’s taking the time now to get prepared and one of her goals is to identify a working theme early in the year to aid planning. In addition, Pilla will also be responsible for two more fundraising events with Barnes and Noble in 2018.

After teaching history for forty-seven years, Louise Uchaczyk retired. Now she’s readying herself for the role of Vice President of Public Relations. A life-long Milford resident, the library holds a special place in Uchaczyk’s heart. She recalls when there was a separate Children’s Library located in a cozy, three-room house across from City Hall. As a child, Uchaczyk was “in love with books” and cherished the freedom of being dropped off with her sister while their parents shopped at the grocery store in town. She fondly remembers walking back to the store with her sister and their weekly book haul in hand.

Uchaczyk’s teaching career took her to a number of schools in Milford including Jonathan Law High School and the Orange Avenue School but she spent the majority of her time at Foran High School. In her first year of retirement, she has volunteered her time with the Friends by assisting with the preparations for the Party in the Stacks! and joining the baking committee. With communication skills honed by decades of professional experience, Uchaczyk, like Pilla, will be a valuable addition.

We look forward to the arrival of these talented and experienced members to the Board!

Friends of the Milford Library Newsletter



Because a Great City Deserves a Great Library

57 New Haven Avenue, Milford, Connecticut

Exciting events to brighten your winter

Sunday, January 28, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Thank you Party and Annual Meeting. Join us to celebrate our accomplishments of the past year and to hear what we are planning for 2018.

Friday, February 2, First Friday With Friends. Nancy Abbey, Assistant Librarian of the Milford Public Library, will give her insightful perspective, discussing recently released books as well as previewing some upcoming releases.

Saturday, February 10, Barnes and Noble Event. Just in time for Valentine's Day, the Friends will be partnering with Barnes and Noble to celebrate local authors. The Friends will earn money with each purchase made when a voucher is provided at the time of the sale. More information and the vouchers will be available prior to the event.

Wednesday, April 25, 6 pm. High School Awards. The 2018 high school awards ceremony will be held in the library program room, with Milford Superintendent of Schools Dr. Feser as the featured speaker.

Hope to see you at these special events!

Get Involved!

Please consider joining our volunteer corps – there are lots of diverse ways to contribute:

Library Friends Table: Greet patrons, accept books

Public Relations: Design graphics for events and webpage, write news releases, write newsletter articles, maintain FOML bulletin board and clippings book, work on social media projects

Welcome to Milford!: Gather contents from organizations and assemble packets

Book Sales: Organize, set up, and sell books at our special book sales

Party in the Stacks: Party planning and decorations

President’s Report: State of the Friends

2017 was another banner year for the Friends of the Milford Library. Thanks to the enthusiasm, creativity and boundless energy of our amazing membership, we gave our library tremendous support and provided multiple meaningful and popular services to our community.

Proceeds from our membership contributions, public donations, second annual *Party in the Stacks!*, the September Barnes and Noble event, our two special book sales as well as our ongoing book sale allowed us to pay for the fantastic line up of adult and children’s programs offered free to the public by the library each month.

We financed improvements to the program room including the purchase of a podium and sound system that have greatly enhanced the library’s presentations and six new tables that should arrive by the end of the year. Also new this year, thanks to the Friends’ funding, are a season pass to Long Wharf Theater that provides two free tickets to each performance and the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program that encourages the youngest members of our community to develop a love of reading early in life.

The programs which we not only fund, but also manage, continued to grow this year. The Welcome to Milford committee chaired by Pam Pilla distributed over 200 packets of information on the City and area non-profits to new library card subscribers. In April, five book awards and two scholarships were presented to outstanding students by Peggy Bolger and the High School Awards Committee. Our Little Libraries Committee, chaired by Lisa Thornell Gargiulo, distributed hundreds of books to readers all over town. Our very popular Friends Table with its amazing staff of welcoming and helpful committee members chaired by Carm DeVito expanded its hours this year so that we now have coverage from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. nearly every day.

Our efforts have not gone unnoticed. For the second year in a row, we received an award from the Friends of Connecticut Libraries, this year for our creation of *Party in the Stacks!*, beautifully imagined and chaired in 2016 by Lois Barr-Button and Lisa Thornell Gargiulo. And in March, Alderman Frank Smith and his wife Diane gave us all a remarkable performance of *Love Letters* to thank the Friends for all they do for Milford and to encourage new members to join us.

We had a lot of fun this year, too. In addition to pulling together to make all of the above happen, we also met regularly at our Fridays with Friends to catch up with each other and enjoy a wonderfully varied season of programming, thanks to committee chair Linda Sheehan. Author Janet Barrett came to speak about her book *They Called her Reckless*, and Hedda Kopf kept us all mesmerized with her discussion of Virginia Woolf. Square One Theater gave us a preview of their season, Dick Platt told us about Milford in the Revolutionary War, Nancy Abbey suggested enticing 2017 titles for every reading taste and Suzanne Harrison-Thomas spoke to us about the importance and positive impact of reading to little children. We took a trip to Yale’s West Campus for a tour of their conservation labs and in June we enjoyed a Blind Date with a Book.

We can be proud of our 2017 accomplishments and we hope that you will join us on Sunday, January 28 from 2:00 p.m.to 4:00 p.m. for the annual Thank You Party – not only to get your well-deserved pats on the back, but to hear about the fun that’s in store for 2018!



Sharon Kaville and Arlene Painter were among the many guests who dressed in costumes at this year’s *Party in the Stacks!*

Successful Holiday Book Sale



Scores of browsers found treasures at the Friends Holiday Book Sale.

The Friends Holiday Book Sale December 8 and 9 in the library’s program room was a big success! There was holiday music, warm cider and of course the books: thousands of hardcover and trade paperbacks, a great selection of children’s books, books signed by the author, a special collection of art books, along with CDs and DVDs. A crush of people was waiting to get in when the sale opened on Friday afternoon, with their book lists for gifts, themselves, as well as teachers adding to their classroom library. The first snowfall in Milford on Saturday did not deter the book lovers looking for a bargain. Many people shopped both days.

Our book sale volunteers are the best! Thank you to the library’s Teen Advisory Group for help the evening before setting up the program room and staging the book boxes. Friends volunteers unpacked books Friday morning and put the finishing touches on the decorations. Foran Key Club students moved the packed boxes of leftover books after school on Monday and reset the program room.

The proceeds from the book sale will be used to fund programs at the library for adults and children. Thank you for supporting the Friends and the library!

Amazon Smile

Do you order from Amazon? If so, you can donate to the Friends at no charge to you by ordering through Amazon Smile and selecting Friends of the Milford Public Library as your non-profit of choice. Amazon will donate a percentage of each purchase to the Friends.

Newsletter Staff

Editorial Contributors: Margaret Bolger, Anne Bolin, Amy Bringardner, Karen Fortunati, Marion Morra, Linda Sheehan

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Contact Us:

Email: milfordlib.friends@gmail.com

Friends of the Milford Library page on the Library website

Little Libraries

All of the Little Libraries sponsored by The Friends of Milford Library are now open.

The simple concept is come and get a book and bring another to replace it. Each of the Little Libraries has volunteer stewards who are responsible for overseeing and checking on the stock of books. The four Little Libraries are located around Milford: the Yellow Little Library is at the Milford Y on Orange Avenue, the Commuter Library located at the Rail-road Station, another at the front of the Firehouse gallery in Devon at the intersection of Naugatuck Avenue and Monroe Street, and the final one at Gulf Beach.

The Little Libraries at the Y and the Firehouse Gallery were built and are maintained by Jack Button. The Gulf Beach Little Library opened for the season on April 17th. This li-brary was built in 2015 by Pat Simon and his grandsons, Julian and Tristan Sevillano and painted by local art-ist, Cathy Collins Liontas . They have made repairs and touched up the paint each year. This year the hinges were replaced and the door realigned by Simon and his grandsons, including the youngest, Adrian.



Julian, Tristan and Adrian Sevillano repairing the Little Library at Gulf Beach.

Walnut Beach Farmers Market

Look for the Friends at the Walnut Beach Farmers Market beginning Thursday, June 21st after 4:00 p.m. We will be there with an array of books for sale as well as information on *Party in the Stacks* and membership in the Friends organization.

Mark Your Calendars

July 6th, 10 a.m. Joan Wolf will present on how to get your book published. She has published 50 novels in-cluding romance, mysteries, and historical. She has lived in Milford 45 years and has two children. She wrote her first twelve books in long hand at the Milford Public Library. She loves horse back riding and has ridden at Spring Meadow Farms for over 40 years. She also ran St. Mary Parish's food pantry for 12 years and has been a parishioner there for 45 years as well.

August 3rd: Tour of the Milford Historical Society on High Street for a private tour of the Eels-Stow House, the Clark Stockade, and the Bryan-Downs House. The Eels-Stow House, c.1700, is believed to be the oldest house in Milford. The Clark-Stockade House, c.1780, was the first house to be built outside the stockade that surrounded Milford. The Bryan-Downs House, c.1785, now houses the Claude C. Coffin Indian Collection and a special exhibit, Threads of Milford History: Quilts from 1830-1990. There is also a country store which sells a large variety of items. Those Friends who are planning to attend the Historical properties in Milford and Party in the Stacks might want to shop for the popular felt eye patches, bandanas with pirate prints, and inexpensive (adjustable) pirate-themed rings! Visitors will also be able to enjoy the herb gardens planted around the houses. More information about attending the tour will be emailed soon to members. Only those who make reservations will be admitted.

September 7th: Hedda Kopf, retired Quinnipiac professor will lead the Friends in a discussion of Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*.

September 22nd: Barnes and Noble book fair. Stay tuned for details.

October 20th, 7-10 p.m.: *Party In the Stacks*

November: Watch for a special tie in with the West Haven Veterans Museum and Learning Center plus *Stubby the Movie*.

Friends of the Milford Library Newsletter



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57 New Haven Avenue, Milford, Connecticut

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten is an early literacy partnership between the Children's Department and the Friends of Milford Library. The public library wants to support all of our families to ensure that their children start kindergarten ready to learn how to read. Reading aloud to your child is one of the most important things you can do to start your child on their way to becoming a life-long reader. The goal is to read 1,000 books together before your child begins kindergarten. If you read just one book each night, you will have read 365 books in one year. That is 730 books in two years and 1,095 books in three years! So far, our participating families have read over 14,000 books!

The 1,000 Books program can take anywhere from a few months to a few years to complete. Each starter pack contains a family's first reading log and a free book to start everyone on their journey. Once the log is full, families can stop by the library to borrow more great books and pick up a new log for their next hundred books. We celebrate every child's 100 book milestones on the library Facebook page. It may sound daunting, but most families are already reading more than enough to reach 1,000 books by the time their child starts kindergarten. And all of those "repeat readings" count! So your child reads *Goodnight Moon* 10 times before bed- that fills 10 spots on your reading log.

Our 2nd Annual 1,000 Books Kickoff was held Saturday, June 16th. This year our special guest was musician Edward Leonard. Edward is well known for his "silly-sing-a-long" which gets children and their adults moving and jumping to familiar songs. Edward always travels with his guitar, drums and a bag full of musical surprises. Members of our Friends organization were there distributing 1,000 Books starter packs to new participants.

First Friday with Friends

On May 4th Mathilde 'Gerry' Dumbrill, a self-published au-thor living in Orange, spoke to the Friends about her first novel "Makhorka: The Green Cigarette," based on real events. It is the epic story of Danya and Mikolai, two young lovers torn apart by the turmoil of turn-of-the-century Russia. Gerry's most recently published book is called 'My Bare Ladies' and is a memoir chronicling her career first as a fashion reporter in New York and later and current career designing and sewing clothing for women, such as Claire Booth Luce. She regaled the Friends with stories of her 'bare ladies'.



Friday with Friends Chair Linda Sheehan and Mathilde 'Gerry' Dumbrill.

Contributing Authors: Peggy Bolger, Karen Fortunati, Pam Pilla, Linda Sheehan, Louise Uchaczyk

Contributing Photographers: Anne Bolin, Kristen Twombly, Beth Hanson, Louise Uchaczyk

Meet Friends Table Chairperson Carmela DeVito and Board Member Amy Bringardner



Life often grants us the gifts we need at the time we need them and for **Carmela DeVito**, joining the Friends group was exactly that. After living in Brooklyn for her entire life, Carmela moved to Milford five years ago. At the time, she was deeply grieving the loss of her husband and while tackling these difficult adjustments, a good friend suggested that Carmela join the Friends. Doing so was more than a game changer for her – the “library saved her life.” By providing friendships, a greater connection to the community and a new focus, the Friends group eased Carmela through this difficult life transition.

A life-long lover of books and people, Carmela describes her role as a four-day-a-week Friends greeter at the library as a “perfect fit.” In

addition, her open manner and easy camaraderie encourages some patrons to confide in her. Carmela welcomes these interactions, no doubt based on her experience as a social worker. Her most recent position prior to retirement was serving an adult HIV/Aids population and that cause remains very dear to her. In addition to that interest, Carmela ranks her current loves as follows: 1. The Yankees; 2. Barry Manilow; and 3. Author Chris Bohjalian. One of her most favorite reads is his *Close Your Eyes, Hold Hands*.

A journalism major in college, Carmela also writes *Carm’s Corner*. *Carm’s Corner* contains both book recommendations and book reviews and can be found at the Friends’ greeters’ table on the ground floor. She’s gotten rave reviews on her recommendations and started her feature at the request of Friends’ President, Anne Bolin. Carmela’s passion for reading prompted her to start a monthly book club at Carriage Green. With most of her readers in their nineties, Carmela enjoys tailoring the book selections for this engaged group.

Like Carmela, **Amy Bringardner** is not a Milford native. Born and raised in northeastern Ohio, Amy moved to Boston to attend college and remained there several years for work. When questioned what brought her to Milford twenty years ago, she replied simply, “Love.” Settled in a home in the Gulf Beach neighborhood, Amy cherishes the location for its convenience and its quirks. The perks are abundant – walking distance to the beach, the train station, downtown with its shops and restaurants and of course, the library. One of the quirks is the several times daily house shakes – courtesy of the close proximity to the train tracks – that are mild and merely require the periodic straightening of pictures on the wall. The second is the echo of sirens from the fire department located around the corner on New Haven Avenue. But to Amy, the sirens are familiar, reminding her of her childhood home that was located not far from a fire station.

Becoming an integral part of the Friends family seemed to be inevitable for Amy. With a professional background in print production and project management, she worked at Fidelity Investments in Boston and GE Corporate Headquarters in Fairfield. She then moved from marketing to publishing when she assumed the position of Director of Manufacturing at the Weekly Reader Corporation. That job was tremendously satisfying as she witnessed firsthand the excitement and enjoyment of students of the weekly educational newspaper. Amy



began her volunteer work at the library as a “shelf reader” which required her to read the shelves, that is, go through every book in a stack and ensure that they were in order. While reading through countless call numbers might get tedious, Amy found that call numbers sometimes make intriguing shelf-fellows: two she took special delight in were the biographies on Aretha Franklin and Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter situated side by side. Amy’s volunteer work led her to a part time position at the library in the Technical Services Department where she repairs books in the library’s collection. And this job seemed to lend itself to one of Amy’s most important Friends’ roles of managing the Holiday and Spring Book Sale events as well as the daily book sales in the library’s lobby.

The library receives hundreds of donated books and evaluating and organizing these used items is a time consuming yet crucial task. The proceeds from the sales, along with other Friends’ fundraisers, fully fund all of the library’s programming including the “1000 Books Before Kindergarten” initiative. In addition to assisting with this vital work, Amy is also the Vice President of Membership on the Friends Board. Her responsibilities include new member welcome, membership renewal, and providing information about membership benefits.

Friends would not be Friends without the talent, skill and energy of both Carmela and Amy! Thank you for all you do!

Book and Scholarship Awards



The Friends of Milford Library presented the winners of this year’s Friends Book and Scholarship Awards on April 25th in the Program Room at the library. Winners of the Book Awards are members of the junior class at the five high schools in Milford.

The Friends Scholarship Awards were awarded to Frankie Terres (Jonathan Law) and Chania Chaisson-Fortin (Joseph A. Foran), one in each of the City’s two public high schools.

Left: Top row: Rachel Wywoda, Lauralton Hall; Frankie Terres, Jonathan Law; Monica Pydipati, Jonathan Law; Scott Zito, principal of Platt Tech; Jeffrey Burt, outgoing Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Mayor Ben Blake
Front Row: Chania Chaisson-Fortin, Joseph A. Foran; Rewas Muhajir, Joseph A. Foran; Henrique Errera, Platt Tech.

Right: Carmen Silva, The Academy, and friends at the Award Ceremony



Frosty Smith presented the award winners with a copy of *Only In Milford*.



Party in the Stacks

The 3rd annual *Party in the Stacks* will be held on Saturday, October 20th at the library from 7 – 10 PM. This year’s theme, *The Legends of Charles Island*, a celebration of pirates, shipwrecks, mermaids and other seafaring literature, is inspired by the colorful history and legends of Charles Island. Please join us and volunteer to help with a variety of tasks.

If you are interested in helping in some way, send an email to partyinstacks.milfordlib@gmail.com and tell us how you would like to help.

Coming Soon: Tote bags and mugs will be available for sale in the library with the Library’s new logo on them. Look for them near the circulation desk.

Friends Book Sale May 11-12th

Join us on Friday, May 11 from 1:00-5:00 p.m. and Saturday, May 12th from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for our Spring Book Sale in the library Program Room. We will have a great selection of nonfiction and fiction hardcover books, trade paperbacks, a limited number of signed books, and children's books. All of the books are best quality and priced reasonably. The timing is perfect to find a gift for Mom or add to a summer reading list for you and your children! The sale coincides with the Milford Garden Club's May Market at the Fowler Field Pavilion on Saturday May 12th.

Mark Your Calendars

Friday, April 6, 10 a.m. A representative of Bigelow Tea will entertain us in the Program Room with the history and benefits of tea. Samples will be provided. An RSVP is a must. Please email the Friends at milfordlib.friends@gmail.com or call the Library Business Office at 203-783-3291.

Wednesday, April 25, 6 p.m. The High School Scholarship and Book Awards will be presented in the Program Room. Everyone is invited to attend.

Friday, May 4, 10 a.m. Matilda "Gerry" Dunbrill of Orange will provide us with the background and synopsis of her 2014 novel *Makhorka: The Green Cigarette* as well as discuss her new novel which is in the process of being published. She will also explain the intricacies of the self-publishing process.

Friday-Saturday, May 11-12 Spring Book Sale in the Program Room of the Milford Public Library. This sale coincides with the Milford Garden Club's May Market which takes place under the Fowler Field Pavilion on Saturday. Hours: Friday 1:00-5:00 p.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Friday, June 1 Day trip to the Beardsley Zoo. Stay tuned for details.

Saturday, June 16, 10:30 a.m. The Friends of the Library sponsored program, *1000 Books Before Kindergarten*, will kick off its second year with a special program by Edward Leonard, a well-known musician and pre-school entertainer.

Book and Scholarship Awards

The High School Book and Scholarship awards will be presented by Friends President Dr. Anne Bolin at a ceremony on Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Milford Library Program Room. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Elizabeth Feser will be the featured speaker.

Friends High School Awards Committee members Peggy Bolger, Carrie Bryant, Stacy Kratt, Diana Preece, and Judy Salemme have been working with school personnel in all five of Milford's high schools .

"Seven students are the winners of this year's Friends Book and Scholarship Awards," announced Peggy Bolger, Chair of the High School Awards committee. Winners of the Book Awards, given for the fourth year by the Friends, are members of the junior class at the five high schools in Milford: Henrique Errera, Platt Tech, Monica Pydipati, Jonathan Law, Maricarmen Silva, The Academy, Rachel Wywada, Lauralton Hall and Rewas Muhajir, Joseph A. Foran.

The Friends Scholarship Awards will be awarded to Frankie Terres from Jonathan Law and Chania Chaisson-Fortin from Joseph A. Foran. This is the third year that the Friends have been able to award \$500 scholarships to two deserving seniors, one in each of the City's two public high schools.

The winners were chosen by the staffs of their schools for their demonstrated strong and consistent love of reading, outstanding personal character, and positive impact they have made on their school and community. Please join us in honoring these worthy individuals.

Friends of the Milford Library Newsletter



Because a Great City Deserves a Great Library

57 New Haven Avenue, Milford, Connecticut

Annual Meeting



The friendly volunteer greeters honored at the Friends' Annual Meeting
Left to right, back row: Terri Pitt, Cheryl Cappiali, Laura Acri, Judy Kennedy, Carm Devito (Chair), Rhea Spiegel, Jeff Kiernan, Marilyn May, Charlie Cook, and Elizabeth Mocarski

Front row: Pat Onofreo, Peggy Bolger, Judy Salemme, Arlene Painter, Pam Pilla, Rose Bradley, Florence Munz, Ro Muscatelli and Carol Tavella

On Sunday, January 28 about seventy of us gathered in the library's Program Room for the Annual Meeting and Thank You Party. We recognized the Foran High School Key Club with a Community Partner Award and celebrated our twenty-three Friends Table volunteers, with special recognition of the eight volunteers who have been faithfully and cheerfully greeting library guests since we started the Table nearly four years ago: Peggy Bolger, Carm DeVito, Ellie Kopnick, Flo Munz, Ro Muscatelli, Pat Onofreo, Judy Salemme and Carol Tavella. Arlene Painter, Pam Pilla and

Contributing Authors: Peggy Bolger, Anne Bolin, Karen Fortunati, Pam Pilla, Linda Sheehan, Louise Uchaczyk

Contributing Photographers: Anne Bolin, Kristen Twombly, Louise Uchaczyk



Officers and Advisor of the J. A. Foran Key Club receive the Friends' Community Partner Award.

Back row (L-R) Emily Brennan, Cathy Ganun, Advisor

Front row (L-R) Meghan Kelliher, Heather Shea, Mikayla Perry, Mikayla Duhaime

Louise Uchaczyk were elected to our Board and Karuna Kasbawala was re-elected as Assistant Treasurer. Judy Kennedy will serve as our new Welcome to Milford Committee Chair. We are truly fortunate to have so many talented volunteers working with the FOML.

2017 was an exciting year for both the library and the FOML and 2018 promises even more innovation. Watch for the library's new strategic plan this spring and the beginnings of construction projects, both large and small. It's a great time to be a Friend of the Milford Library.

Meet Friends Board Members Karuna Kasbawala and Arlene Painter

For the past two years, **Karuna Kasbawala** has been assisting Treasurer Kathy Goldbach keep track of the Friends’ finances. Kasbawala is well qualified, having worked in the banking industry for years. Currently, she is the Customer Solutions Specialist (formerly titled Assistant Branch Manager) at The Milford Bank.



It was her job that brought Kasbawala into the Friends fold. The Milford Bank has a strong presence in the community, sponsoring numerous events and encouraging employee involvement in the city’s many non-profit organizations. Kasbawala leapt at the chance to volunteer with the Friends as she treasures both Milford and its library. Arriving in the United States over twenty years ago, Milford was Kasbawala’s first and ultimately only stop. The city’s small town charm, gorgeous beaches and historic Green were attractive but it was the sense of community, the family-focused orientation and the feeling that “everybody knows everybody” that compelled Kasbawala and her husband to plant roots here.

Prior to getting involved with the Friends, Kasbawala spent many hours in the library enjoying the collections with her son, who is now a freshman at UConn, and also taking advantage of the quiet space to study for her professional certifications. Now, as an active Friends volunteer, Kasbawala assists with the book sales, the *Party in the Stacks!*, the Barnes and Noble fundraiser as well as faithfully attending all the monthly board meetings.

Kasbawala’s passion for the library is very evident. She sees the library as far more than a “source of books.” In this age of technology, the library is a safe haven in providing an environment to read and learn. But Kasbawala also understands the library’s other vital purposes – a welcoming gathering place and a reliable source of information enhanced by first-rate programming on topics that range from culture to politics to the environment. She understands that it is our library that connects our community. The Friends are certainly lucky to have Kasbawala’s professional experience, enthusiasm and vision energizing our mission.

Arlene Painter did not wait long after retiring from a twenty-six year career to join the Friends. After working as a school nurse at elementary schools in Rocky Hill and Newington and then at the Bailey Middle School in West Haven, Painter retired in June of 2015 and, by that November, was volunteering with the Friends. She’s been greeting library patrons at the Friends table, and has lent her time and talents to the Friends’ book sales and *Party in the Stacks!*



For Painter, the library was a natural as well as obvious choice. A born reader, libraries have always played a big role in her life. That plus the fact that Painter can look out the window of her home and see the library next door made it a very easy decision. But Painter has another passion: The West Haven Veterans Museum & Learning Center. The museum is a family labor of love: Painter’s parents were vital supporters in establishing the museum that originally focused on New Haven’s 102nd Infantry Regiment. Under their guidance, the museum was relocated to its current home, a 9000 square foot space generously subsidized by Painter’s parents. With Painter now at the helm as business manager, the scope of the museum has expanded and focuses on the role of West Haven, Milford and Orange from the Revolutionary War onward. In addition to its educational component and archives, the museum is a natural meeting spot for veteran-focused events. Last month, the museum hosted U.S. Senator Chris Murphy and U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro, among others, to address veterans’ health care concerns.

An invaluable community resource, the museum has also caught the eye of Hollywood - specifically the 1926 portrait of fully decorated Sergeant Stubby. (Yes, you read that correctly.) Sergeant Stubby, a mixed breed mutt, became the mascot of the 102nd Infantry Regiment. He met his human brothers while they trained on the Yale athletic fields in 1917 in preparation for World War I. Refusing to part with their canine comrade, the soldiers smuggled Stubby with them into France. Stubby proved himself far more than a comfort dog. He participated in battles, saved lives by alerting the men to the presence of poison gas, allegedly captured a German spy and saved a French girl from being trampled by a runaway horse and carriage. He was wounded twice in battle and was awarded the Purple Heart.

On April 13, *Sergeant Stubby: An American Hero* will be released. This animated movie has major star power with Logan Lerman of Percy Jackson movie fame, British mega-star Helena Bonham Carter and French legend Gerard Depardieu providing the voices. Painter is thrilled that Stubby’s story will reach a wider audience and especially loves the animated depiction of the familiar New Haven Green. She’s in the process of arranging a community screening. For more information on the movie and to view the trailer, check out: <http://www.stubbymovie.com/#movie>. Painter is also interested in planning a Friends field trip to the museum. For more information on the museum, please click on to: <http://www.whmilmuseum.org>

What makes the Friends group so dynamic is the synergy of our volunteers’ talents and interests. We thank Karuna and Arlene for all that they contribute.

Save the Date

Party in the Stacks! will return to the library on Saturday, October 20th. This year’s event will be chaired by our newly elected Vice President for Special Events, Pam Pilla. We are excited to announce this year's party theme: “The Legends of Charles Island, a celebration of pirates, shipwrecks, mermaids and other seafaring literature!” Preparations for the event have already begun. Please join us and volunteer to help with a variety of tasks. If you are interested in helping in some way, send an email to partyinstacks.milfordlib@gmail.com and tell us how you would like to help. Mark your calendar NOW with the date for this year's wonderful party. We’ll be updating you with additional details in the coming months!

Coming Soon

FOML recently purchased Library Insight to manage our museum pass system. Once the system is live, patrons will be able to reserve most passes up to three months in advance and will have the ability to print out some of the passes from home – which means no more trips to the library to pick up and return the pass, and no late fees! We hope to have the system up and running by April.