



Friends of the Mansfield Library

# NEWSLETTER

Vol. XXXVII, No. 2  
August 2023

# BOOK sale

**Saturday,  
September 9th**  
9am - 4pm

**Sunday,  
September 10th**  
9am - 3pm



*This will be an inside sale in the auditorium!*

## A SMOOTH TRANSITION

Most library patrons know that Leslie McDonough, until recently, the Director of the Mansfield Public Library, has retired after ten years in that position. Her leadership brought many exciting and creative programs, materials, and innovations to the library. The Friends enjoyed a good working relationship with Leslie and we will miss her.

Change is often difficult but this one is made easier because Kaithlin Epling is filling the position as Interim Director. Kaithlin has been a longtime employee of the library, having filled a variety of positions. People tend to call all library staff “librarians” but only a handful in the Mansfield Library are Capital L Librarians, and Kaitlin is among them. The Friends wholeheartedly welcome her and look forward to working with her.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership dues are due in September. We hope you will continue to support the many programs, events, materials and technology made possible by the Friends of the Library. You can mail in the form on the back of this newsletter, renew online on our website: [friendsmansfieldlibraryct.org](http://friendsmansfieldlibraryct.org), or use the cash box on the sale shelf in the library. Please be sure to include all your information, including an email address if you would like to receive the newsletter by email.

**Thank you for your support!**

## Help Needed for the Book Sale

We will be setting up the sale on Friday, September 8. There is a program in the auditorium in the morning so we will be starting at 1pm and will need all the help we can get in order to finish by 5pm. If you can spare some time that day to help we'd love to have our regular helpers and hopefully some new faces (and hands). No lifting is required, but if you are able to lift we will certainly take advantage of that! Anyone who volunteers can purchase up to 10 regular priced books that day.

We also need help cleaning up after the sale at 3pm on Sunday. This is a much faster process and usually takes about an hour if we have a lot of help. This also does not require lifting unless you are able.

Cashiers are needed on both days. We schedule 4- hour shifts with 2 people at each of 2 stations, so you never have to work alone. No experience is necessary and all books are priced at 50 cents or \$1.00 or multiples thereof so no complex math is required. Email Anne at [FriendsoftheMansfieldLibrary@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsoftheMansfieldLibrary@gmail.com) if you would like to cashier or would like to work on Saturday putting out new books.

## Book Donation Days

We are endeavoring to establish a schedule of having donation days on the first Saturday of each month, beginning tentatively on October 7. Tentatively because there may be construction in the auditorium at that time. If that date has to be changed we will post it on our website: [friendsmansfieldlibraryct.org](http://friendsmansfieldlibraryct.org), so check there before coming. The August donation day is scheduled for the 19th from 9am-noon. There will not be a donation day in September due to the holiday weekend and to allow us to prepare for the book sale on the 9th and 10th.

We accept used books, DVDs, CDS, puzzles and games in good condition. We cannot accept video or audio tapes, records, magazines, or moldy/dusty books. In order to have time to process the many donations we receive, we must limit quantities to two (reasonably sized) boxes or bags per household.

Volunteers are needed to help sort the donations as they come in. Donations are accepted from 9:00 until noon and we work until 1pm cleaning up. No experience is necessary and lifting is not required unless you are able. We will provide on-the-job training. Please email [friendsofthemansfieldlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthemansfieldlibrary@gmail.com) if you would like to help or have any questions.

We would like to thank the volunteers who have helped at previous donation days. It has been great meeting members and putting faces to names that we may only know from our membership list. The response to our requests for help has been wonderful. Thank you!

## Celebrate Your Right to Read

Several months ago, I read [The Library Book](#) by Susan Orleans, a fascinating exploration of the evolution of libraries. Orleans begins her story with a disastrous fire in the Los Angeles Public library in 1986 that incinerated more than 400,000 books and deprived the community of the many services the library provided. She then expands her topic to include the history and evolution of libraries and notable librarians. It is not a dry topic! For example, the historic challenges that libraries have faced include a long list of attempts at censorship and book burnings. Among the most extreme examples is that of a Chinese emperor in 213 B.C.E who burned over 400 Confucian scholars so that he could claim that history began with his reign. Orleans describes systemic book burnings by the cleric Savonarola and Hitler as examples of attempts to erase culture.

Orlean's concerns about the challenges libraries face have become even more relevant as media reports the increasing pressure felt by schools and libraries to remove books from their shelves. Efforts to ban or restrict books set a new record, 1477, from July to December 2022, double the high set in the previous year. PENN America, a free speech organization, used publicly available data to count more than 4,000 instances of book removals since 2021 (NYTimes 4/20/23)

We've seen politicians use book banning to frighten voters or advance their political agendas. The American Library Association (ALA) reports that parent groups like Moms for Liberty challenge books more than any other group. They want to protect others from what they believe are difficult ideas and information, ones that don't align with their beliefs. Libraries provide resources so that patrons can form their own opinions about issues that interest them. Celebrate your right to read.

**Want to read from the list of 12 most banned books?**

[Gender Queer](#) by Maia Kobabe, [Lawn Boy](#) by Jonathan Evison, [All Boys Aren't Blue](#) by George M. Johnson, [Out of Darkness](#) by Ashley Hope Pérez, [The Hate U Give](#) by Angie Thomas, [The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian](#) by Sherman Alexie, [Me and Earl and the Dying Girl](#) by Jesse Andrews, [The Bluest Eye](#) by Toni Morrison, [This Book Is Gay](#) by Juno Dawson, [Beyond Magenta](#) by Susan Kuklin

## *Mystery Series*

An urge to find answers seems to be a human trait. We gather and store information, whether it is about black holes or canning tomatoes, and seek to apply it in practice and theory (and sometimes conspiracy theory).

This may explain the enduring popularity of mystery novels, where the answers, hidden and elusive, are the point of the story. If information is withheld and the mystery is solved by a fact not previously presented it provokes frustration--as can too obvious a solution. However, if an author is adept at sprinkling clues and hints and can involve the reader at some level the result can be golden (readability and style count too).

Reader involvement is tricky—what’s good for the goose isn’t necessarily good for the other geese. Suspense is a big factor for many people, but I read some pretty boring mysteries because I like the setting. Emotional involvement is often cited as a strong attraction (which seems to explain the popularity of romance novels, the number one genre), but sometimes I actively dislike the sleuth and wouldn’t mind if he or she were to fail (they never do...).

One thing is certainly true--when we find an author that for our taste does it all, we are likely to read more, even everything, featuring that sleuth and that setting, hence the publisher’s dream, The Successful Series. My husband and I have both read all 23 of Ian Rankin’s Rebus books (I understand there’s a 24th, but I’m waiting for the paperback, as I am cheap). The novels have a great (gritty Edinburgh) setting, a hero who’s endearing without being sappy sweet (or sweet at all), suitably intricate plots involving interesting secondary characters, and good, coherent sentences.

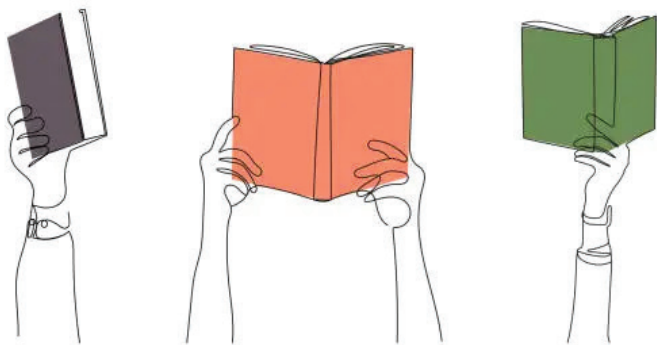
The Colin Cotterill Dr. Siri series is lighter in spite of its setting (the 1970’s newly formed country of Laos—fascinating but brutal) and its hero, a geriatric coroner. I’ve read 11, have two more to go.

Other setting-heavy series are Martin Walker’s Bruno books (the Dordogne, starring Bruno the perfect man), the Louis Penny opus (very popular but too cloyingly cozy for me), Donna Leon’s books (rather plodding, but lots of Italian food), Tony Hillerman’s Four Corners Navaho series, and my husband’s favorites, Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe novels (1930’s—50’s Los Angeles). Actually, setting dependent series are legion—Dibdin’s inspector Zen (Italy), Andrea Camilleri’s (Italy), Simenon’s Maigret (France, especially Paris), Van Gulik’s Judge Dee (ancient China), Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes series (Victorian England). And so, so many more...

While an interesting setting is a basic requirement for me, there are other characteristics which may have primary appeal—suspense (thrillers and spy novels), character (Marlowe, Poirot, Jackson Brodie), plot hooks (cats, cupcakes), and even humor (Donald Westlake’s Dortmund Gang, Lawrence Sanders’ bookseller thief Bernie Rhodenbarr). If you have a favorite series please consider sending in a recommendation/review. Always good to latch on to a new series!

## *The Diagram Prize for the Oddest Book Title*

In 1978, at the Frankfurt Book Fair, Bruce Robinson and Trevor Bounford of the Diagram Group, proposed the idea of an award for the book with the oddest title. The award was meant to provide entertainment at the fair but has since become an annual award overseen by The Bookseller magazine. The winner of that first award was Proceedings of the Second International Workshop on Nude Mice.



### *Other notable winners include:*

**1979:** The Madam as Entrepreneur: Career Management in House Prostitution

**1984:** The Book of Marmalade: Its Antecedents, Its History, and Its Role in the World Today

**1992:** How to Avoid Large Ships

**1996:** Greek Rural Postmen and Their Cancellation Numbers

**2004:** Bombproof Your Horse

**2010:** Managing a Dental Practice: the Ghengis Khan Way

**2019:** The Dirt Hole and Its Variations

## *March 2023 Book Sale Results*

The March Book sale made \$4,677.7; quite a good result for a smaller, inside-only sale. Thank you to all who helped set up, restock, cashier and clean up. Thanks especially to Sawyer Smith and to the Town Maintenance department for their book moving expertise.

A special thank you to Boy Scout Troup 56 who help our clean up go so quickly and smoothly. A book sale requires a lot of effort from a lot of people and we are always appreciative of our workers:

Sarah Accorsi, Jane Allinson, Diane Benson, Pat Biggs, Terry Bitwinski, Irene Burke, Ann Charters, Sheila Quinn Clark, Rachel D’Antonio, JoAnn Goodwin, Anne Greineder, Jan Hilton, Careen Jennings, Barbara Katz, Rosemary Marcellino, Pat McMullan, Susan Meisler, Nancy Moriarty, Bronwyn Mott, Cynthia, Myers, Dennis Pierce, Meg Reich, Jean Sawicki, Julia Sherman, Lisa Soder, David Spencer, Judy Spencer, Mary Stanton, Leslie Turner, Chris Walsh Braheney, Liz Vitullo



Friends of the Mansfield Library  
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Return Service Requested

Membership dues now run from October to September for everyone. If you have not renewed yet, you can do so using the form to the right. As you fill out the form, please consider contributing to the Friends of the Mansfield Library Endowment Fund. Since its inception in 1999, we have received through stocks, donations, the Book Sale (\$1,000 has been deposited from almost all book sales since 1999), and interest on the Fund where it resides - over \$191,000. Contributing to this fund gives you an opportunity to support the Mansfield Library's mission of offering the highest quality of library services to the community.

**FRIENDS AND EDITORS**

Anne Greineder, President & Editor  
Sarah Accorsi, Treasurer  
Leslie Turner, Secretary

**MEMBERSHIP REQUEST FORM  
for the Friends of the Mansfield Library**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like to receive the Friends of the Mansfield Library newsletter by e-mail*

Enclosed is \$10.00 per address for dues and a tax deductible contribution of \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Friends of the Mansfield Library, Inc., and mail to:  
Sarah Accorsi, 284 Storrs Road, Mansfield Center, CT 06250.

*If you would like to make a separate contribution to the Endowment Fund, make your check payable to: THE FRIENDS OF THE MANSFIELD LIBRARY ENDOWMENT FUND and send it also to the above address.*

**Thank You!**