

February  
2026

# Bookends



## Friends of the Library



# INDOOR YARD SALE



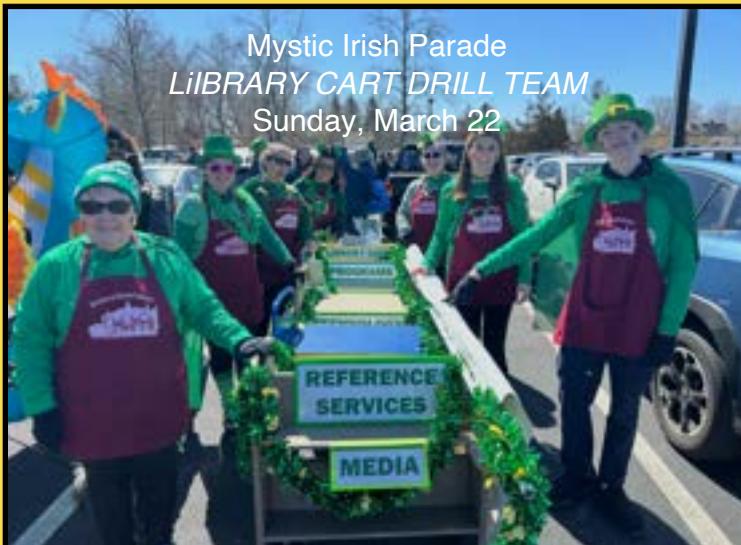
**Friday, March 20**  
**10:00 - 5:00**  
**Saturday, March 21**  
**10:00 - 2:00**



- Jigsaw Puzzles
- Games
- Vintage Items
- Toys
- Household Items
- Music CD's
- Pottery
- DVD's
- &

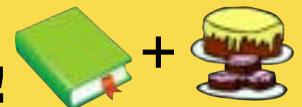


## Lots More!



Mystic Irish Parade  
LIBRARY CART DRILL TEAM  
Sunday, March 22

## Edible books Edible what?!



The Friends of the Groton Public Library and the Mystic & Noank Library are seeking books with a bite for the 17th Annual Edible Books Festival.

Dream up a cake or any yummy culinary treat based on a book and share it with fellow book-o-eaters at the Groton Public Library on Saturday, March 28 at 1:00pm. Entry forms available at each library. The more the munchier! Join us for this family event.



## Friends of the Library Co-Presidents Kathy Busse & Patricia Menno-Coveney

The Friends exist to support the Mystic & Noank Library. We value the services and programs that libraries provide in general (libraries are such amazing institutions) and especially what our Library provides to our respective towns of Groton and Stonington. And these services and programs are free!

But “free” still means there are expenses. We, the Friends, are proud to be able to offset some of the expenses related to various activities.

For instance, we cover all or part of the cost of various museum passes to:

- The Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center
- Avery-Copp House Museum
- Custom House Maritime Museum
- Florence Griswold Museum
- Lyman Allyn Art Museum
- Mashantucket Pequot Museum
- Mystic Seaport Museum
- Old State House
- Slater Museum
- Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art
- The Connecticut Science Museum

We support the movie nights with a license that allows the Library to show feature films.

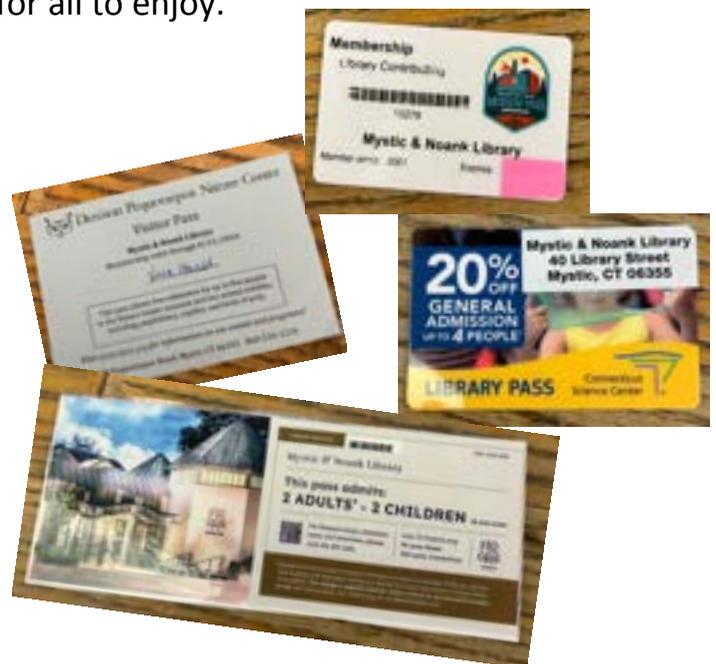
We have provided funds for some unexpected landscaping needs.

We contribute to the Children’s Summer Reading program and to some Teen programs

Through our fundraising efforts, we supply some funds for unrestricted uses as the Library sees fit.

We are here to help.

With that in mind, we want to thank you, our Friends and our community, who support our fundraising activities so that we, in turn, can sustain some of these special Library activities for all to enjoy.





## History in the Reading

Did you know there is a book club at Mystic & Noank Library that focuses on non-fiction, specifically history? We meet the second Tuesday of each month, at the Library, 2:30pm, for an hour or more of discussion.

The group selects its own books and agrees on the next 3 or 4 books to read. We submit the requests to the librarian who sets up the schedule and acquires the books from the CT state library system.

What books have we read? What categories? We've just completed *Freedom's Dominion: A Saga of White Resistance to Federal Power* by Jefferson Cowie. This well-written book was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in the History category. Our reading group got involved in a good deal of serious discussion over this book.

Next up is *Genius of Place: The Life of Frederick Law Olmsted* by Justin Martin. Olmsted had such an impact on our lives, even today. He didn't only design landscapes; he was an abolitionist, a social reformer, a conservationist, and of course designed Central Park in New York City, among many other outdoor parks.

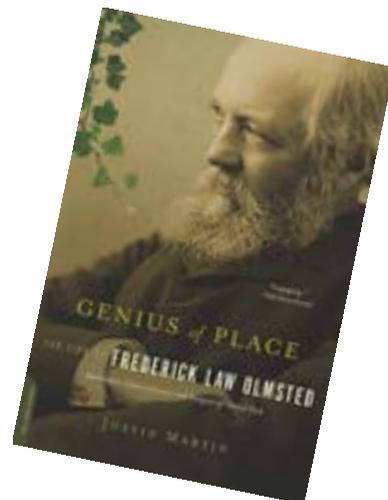
Following that, we'll read *American*

*Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House* by Jon Meacham. This book was also a Pulitzer Prize winner.

We've been reading and sharing our thoughts and opinions for more than a decade. There's a core group that assembles regardless of the book itself, and some who attend because they are interested in specific books. You should know that most every book that we read results in discussions of current situations and how the lessons of History apply, resulting in fairly lively sessions.

We welcome your input. We hope to see you there!

by Stephanie Thorp





*Christine Bradley,  
Library Director*

*The New York Times* 100 Best Books of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century! We are taking them on, right here in Mystic, a nation of readers.

Every fourth Monday (save for a snowstorm or two) the intrepid among us gather to talk about one book which we have chosen from this list. Some of those 100 titles we have already read, some we have always meant to read, and some we never even heard of before they made the list.

Mystic is fortunate to have so many active book clubs, which are ably served by MNL's Philip Kuepper who retrieves the chosen titles for us



from libraries all over the state. We have the History Book Club, Lola's, Mason's Island, CLAMS, Ocean's 8, Pippin's Choice, Unfancy, Stonington Harbor Yacht Club, and now Revolutionary Reads, a new club for the 250th.

I don't know what all the clubs have in store for spring, but the votes are in for the 100 Best Books' choices ahead:

March 30 - *Year of Magical Thinking*  
by Joan Didion,

April 27 - *Salvage the Bones*  
by Jesmyn Ward

May 18 - *On Beauty*  
by Zadie Smith.

This month's Best Book Club (BBC) title is Michael Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*, a title I've always meant to read, but had never gotten to until the book club chose it. I guess that's what book clubs are all about!

It's been a dull winter, so book a trip with a good book.





## The Library Development Committee

*While January may still have us bundled up, spring is right around the corner. We're excited to invite the community to two upcoming events that offer great opportunities to get out, connect, and enjoy some memorable evenings together- all while supporting our beloved Mystic & Noank Library!*

*First up is **Reading on Tap** on **March 9** from 5:30–7:30pm at Milestone Restaurant in downtown Mystic. This laid-back night out features readings by local voices, food, cash bar, good conversation, and plenty of laughs. With a suggested donation of \$25, it's an easy and enjoyable way to spend an evening with friends while soaking up some local community charm.*



*Looking ahead to late spring, mark your calendar for the...*

## *2nd Annual Spring Soirée*

*on **May 28** at the beautiful Haley Mansion.*

*After a fun and successful inaugural event last year, we're thrilled to bring this evening back. Guests can expect a stunning setting, great company, and plenty of food and fun activities throughout the night. Tickets are \$125, and sponsorship opportunities are also available for those interested in being part of the event in an additional way.*

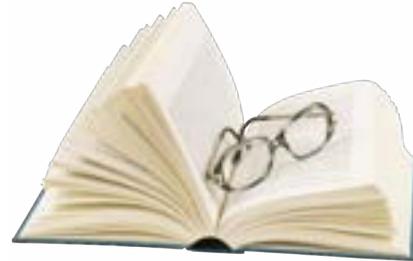
*Whether you're stopping by for a casual night out or dressing up for an elegant evening, these events are all about coming together, enjoying the season, and supporting MNL. We hope to see you there!*

*Mary Tullis Engvall and Caitlin McEachern Wroblewski  
Co-Presidents,  
Mystic & Noank Library Board of Trustees*



**Michael Grater,  
Children's Library Associate**

## OPEN BOOK



Every time I am introduced to another staff person at the Library, I am amazed at how many really special and wonderful people we are privileged to have here. Michael Grater is one of those very special people.

Michael is a soft-spoken, gentle soul who loves working with children, which he has been doing for the past three years at the Library. Having been born and raised in Mystic, he was very familiar with the Mystic & Noank Library, especially the Summer Reading Program. At age 7 or 8, he won the Beanie Baby contest, which was a huge deal at the time! (He thinks he then gave it to his sister, who also wanted to win it. That tells you a lot about the heart of this young man.) His parents still live in Mystic, while his sister is in NJ, and his brother in NH. He has six nephews and two nieces, ages 6 months to 6 years, and enjoys engaging with them when they visit. His brother inspired him to read *Harry Potter* last summer, and to his surprise, he discovered how good it really is!

Michael's skills and activities with children run from storytime with the toddlers to running the chess club for all ages. He especially loves it when some of the chess players get better than

he is. He feels a fulfillment in their sense of accomplishment and likes to see their interest take off!

After attaining a Bachelor's Degree in Education and Special Education from Providence College, he completed a Master's Degree in Library Science at Southern Connecticut State University. He is not only well qualified, he cares about each of the children. Interacting with them as well as with their parents and families is particularly meaningful to Michael. He says that all these relationships are what 'give him his energy.' What a beautiful motivation.

Michael has also put energy into his writing. He has published four short stories in *Conceit Magazine*, which showcases up-and-coming writers, and he is working on a motivational speech based on his autobiography.

While he loves to read aloud to the children, he and Roberta, the Assistant Library Director, are thinking about developing more programs for children. For instance, he thinks starting a chess tournament would be "very cool!"

*by Dana Semeraro  
Friend of the Library*



## Moved By Stillness

Throaty woodpigeons  
 sounded unseen from the wood  
 in a morning so still  
 not a leaf moved,  
 a whole wood so still  
 it appeared pasted on the air.  
 What appeared to move was sunlight  
 from leaf to leaf.  
 But that was the earth itself  
 moving a still wood standing  
 atop it. The sun hung still.  
 The song of the woodpigeons  
 moved through the still air  
 on waves that drew it  
 within my hearing. I stood and listened  
 until their song so moved my heart  
 it moved me beyond hearing it.  
 Too deep the melancholy sound of it.  
 My heart beat raw with loss.  
 The wood: If only it would  
 move, its leaves laugh,  
 and lift my heart.

## **POETRY PONDERINGS**

### My Rebel Offspring

My mind refuses to agree  
 to allow me write anything  
 it has no interest in.  
 I will suggest a one-act play,  
 a short story,  
 a murder mystery.  
 My mind doesn't even bother  
 to listen to me,  
 unless it concerns poetry.  
 I don't force the issue.  
 I have trouble enough  
 to get my mind to focus.  
 Off on tangents, is my mind,  
 the minute my back is turned.  
 At such times, I think my mind  
 too intelligent for its own good.  
 Then I do become concerned  
 about what other minds  
 my mind runs with.  
 It never brings them home  
 for me to meet, and know  
 what they are getting up to.  
 I know I must learn to trust my mind,  
 not be overly inquisitive,  
 not be thought a snoop.  
 But, after all, I do  
 have to live with my mind.  
 Really, raising a mind in this day and age,  
 is not for the faint of heart.

*by Philp Kuepper  
 Resident Poet & Librarian*

## **Irony**

**The first flower  
 to bloom in spring  
 is the snowdrop**





## Did You Know?

Well hidden in plain sight are the “Hall Books” or newly renamed “Under the Stairs” books because that is where they are located.

These books are provided by the Friends of the Library at an extremely reasonable price: \$1 or FREE!

Each month the bookshelves are replenished with new selections. You never know what you’ll find - history, biography, fiction. Children’s books too!

These books, donated to the Friends, are well used but still looking for one more reader. It could be YOU!

Sneak a peak at these hidden gems. You could give one of these deserving books another chance. Look “Under the Stairs!”

