



# FRIENDS

## OF THE MATHEWS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

October 2008

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Fellow Friends of the Library,

We are moving into another Fall season - an eventful one with the Presidential election coming up shortly. I'm sure everyone will be glad when it's over, having had to live with the campaigning for so long. Please do not neglect voting and encourage your family and friends to do so too.

As I write this, I am in New York with a front-row view of some very shaken nerves as a result of the falling stock markets, the drying up of credit, and the Congressional efforts, wise or not, to bring some stability. How might these national and even global events affect the Friends and our library in Mathews? It seems virtually certain that, for at least the next year, state and local funds will be scarcer. As Bette Dillehay, our Library's Director, points out, libraries are traditionally near the end of the queue when funds are allocated.

It would seem that the Friends will see a) decreased library funding and, consequently, increased requests to the Friends from the Library to make up at least some of the shortfall (as we did to a small extent this year) and b) contrary to an increased demand for funds, a reduction in donations and grants to the Library and to the Friends. We have already experienced a reduction in the yields on our CDs in the lead-up to this crisis. Also, plans for a youth wing are likely to continue to be on hold until healthier financial times. What the magnitude of increased demands, decreased funding, and the duration of lean times will be, we have no way of knowing yet.

### FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

OCTOBER 21  
10 A.M.

MATHEWS MEMORIAL  
LIBRARY

LEARN WHAT THE  
FRIENDS HAVE BEEN  
ACCOMPLISHING

HEAR A  
PRESENTATION BY OUR  
LIBRARY DIRECTOR  
ON "ENGAGING LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AS  
LIBRARY PARTNERS."

To find a tiny silver lining, we may have even more used book sales as people try to stretch their dollars.

On the subject of used books, or as Volkswagen terms their used vehicles, "pre-loved" books, I had an interesting experience in the summer that I mentioned to the Executive Committee. I was in Boston (where I lived for a period in the sixties), and I decided to revisit the famed and beautiful Boston Public Library. It was Saturday and their Friends had a used book sale in progress. In visiting the sale, I noted that they had fewer books for sale than we do and a much poorer selection at that. In talking with some of the Friends who were staffing the sale, I found that they have used book sales one day every two months - this during the summer when our sale was open two days a week every week. Even during the winter, we have a sale once a month. We truly have an excellent facility, collection, and staff directed by Jane and Dave Abbott. Amazingly, donated books continue to pour in at a rate that is difficult to fathom given the small Mathews population. I hadn't fully realized how well we do until my visit to Boston!

There's an old Jewish curse – "May you live in interesting times!" Let's hope that our times get less interesting soon! In the meantime, continue the good work of supporting our wonderful library.

*Neil Webre  
President*

## **FROM THE LIBRARY**

### Keeping the Community Connected

Public libraries have always been part of the fabric of American life, and as our society has evolved, so have our libraries. Today, more than ever, public libraries serve as a fundamental social institution and play a critical role in the educational, economic and cultural fabric of communities.

Mathews County is a small, somewhat isolated community, but it mirrors American society in its diversity. We believe it is important that

everyone in the community share a sense of ownership of Mathews Memorial Library. A community in which everyone has access to library resources is better in countless ways. Its members have more opportunities to join together in efforts to make the place they live better. If you look closely you'll discover that our library, as it continues to play an increasing role in the life of the community, is no longer just a place to get books and quietly study. The old model for the library was an inward-focused reading room while today it is more like a community 'front porch.' From bridging the digital divide to offering solutions to a multitude of issues, it is the essential "go to" facility for young and old.

In addition to the outstanding support we receive from the Friends of the Library, the degree of success the library has in achieving its potential depends, in large part, on the support we receive from local government. Just over a year ago, ICMA (International City/County Management Association), in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, convened a meeting that brought together librarians and local government managers. Steve Whiteway and I were invited to participate in the two-day discussion, which explored the role of managers as advocates for libraries and the roll of libraries in sustaining quality of life in the community. The meeting, in turn, prompted a review of how well we do at the Mathews library in aligning our mission with the goals of local government in meeting community needs. Some areas where we think we are appropriately aligned are the following:

The Third Place. The library is a neutral space between work or school and home that provides services for people of all ages and needs. Adults and teens alike use the library as a social center. Adults meet for book discussions and music programs. Young children learn about their community and about new places, and teens come to study and use technology.

Building Community. The library is a partner in numerous community projects. It was a partner in the initial stages of developing a new

comprehensive community plan, following its own look at the community in the series of “Mathews Matters” programs. It provides a means for individual citizens and organizations to connect through the use of the public space and through partnerships such as that with the Historical Society and our relationship with the Mathews Maritime Foundation.

Education. Early literacy and storytime programs reach out to children, teachers and parents to help prepare children of all income levels for school and through the availability of resources for study. Computer classes help older adults bridge the digital divide and help local residents learn new skills and apply for jobs.

Electronic Service Center. An emerging role for our library lies in the growing change in the means of service provision by both the public and private sectors. Increasingly, government services must be procured through electronic gateways and access to jobs, both local and non-local, are accessible primarily through the Internet. This change in the means of service provision is resulting in the use of the library as an electronic service center. For the library to be successful in this role, funding strategies for additional technology as well as staff training must become a high priority issue for local government.

The Mathews Memorial Library is an important partner for local government in improving the quality of residents’ lives. For the partnership to be successful, both must be willing to work cooperatively to provide services to the community. We must ask ourselves what is at stake in the changing environment of library service in the community and whether we are making the right decisions to ensure the future of the library as an integral part of the community of Mathews.

*Bette Dillehay, Library Director*

*The richest person in the world - in fact all the riches in the world - couldn't provide you with anything like the endless, incredible loot*

*available at your local library. ~Malcolm Forbes*



*Missy Bauby, New Youth Librarian*

### **ORRELL BUILDING FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOKSTORE**

Open the first Saturday of each month,  
Oct. 4, Nov. 1, and Dec. 6

Where did the summer go? Sales were great this summer and we probably sold at least 5500 books. Our success was due to generous donations of books and great volunteers with support from the Friends and the community.

Last Saturday the Book Store was not “open” for business but we were there to clean the building and put books on the shelves. No signs were out nor was our Open flag, yet several dozen “regulars” came to search for books. The vacuum cleaners on the floor and their noise did not discourage anyone. In addition, seven boxes of books and two boxes of magazines were donated. We turned a bit less than \$100 for the day and completed our work in preparation for the Oct. 4 opening.

Donations of used books are welcome any time at the main library desk, the book drop at the Orrell Building or during a sale day. We always need paperbacks and large-print books. Thanks to friends, volunteers and the citizens of Mathews County who recycle their books at the Orrell Building. All proceeds benefit the library.

The FOL book cart is available in the library. Books prices are the same as in the Orrell Building.

What's in the back room?? We always get this question. The books are older, mostly outdated, of limited interest, and perhaps a little dusty. There is a little bit of everything: fiction in hardcover and paperback, cookbooks, science, travel, textbooks, magazines, classics, foreign language etc. etc. etc. Someone always finds an old favorite, so take a look around after you do your front room shopping. By our ongoing policy the back room books sell for ONLY one dollar a bag.

Christmas is coming. We have many books in new condition that would make nice gifts. Gift certificates are also available.

*Jane & Dave Abbott, Co-Chairs*



*In Memory of Pam Machen  
Orrell Building Garden*

## **BRICK WALKWAY AND PATIO**

One of the most recent brick donations was made by a resident of New Jersey, who was in Mathews for a short visit with relatives. When I called her after the installation of the brick, she responded with great glee, but noted that she had already returned to New Jersey so she had not seen it. I took a picture of it to send to her. The picture and the Certificate of Donation, which Neil Holmberg prepares and sends to each donor, will certainly add to her fond memories of Mathews.

I hope all of you will take your visiting relatives and friends to the Library and Walkway and give them the same opportunity that wonderful lady from New Jersey had.

*Roger Gamble, Chair*

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to our new Life members: Diane James and Charlotte Williams. It is also nice to have the return of Life member, Ken Scribner. Thank you for your support.

## **DICTIONARY PROJECT**

On October 6 a group of Friends, Library staff, and volunteers will visit Lee-Jackson Elementary School to deliver dictionaries to every third grader. This is the fifth year that the Friends have provided funds for this very worthwhile project. The students are allowed to keep the dictionaries through their school years and they are given instruction on how to use them.

## **ELECTRONIC BOOKS – PART 2**

In the January issue of the Friends Newsletter, I wrote an article on the availability of books online on the Internet in digital form. One can go to an appropriate web site and download a book. Many are free of charge. See the January article for details.

A problem with electronic books has been the lack of a facility for reading them. A desktop or laptop computer is perfectly able to display the text of books, even technical ones with non-text images and symbols. As wonderful as computers can be in many respects, reading long documents such as full-length books on them is not a very user-friendly exercise. It's hard to curl up in the window seat or easy chair with a computer. Newspaper articles or technical papers are about the maximum length one would wish to read.

Given the obvious need for some device to use to comfortably read an e-book, there have been a number of attempts at developing book-like portable devices for downloading books from the Internet and reading them. One of the early ones is the Sony Reader. It is about the size of a large paperback, a form it tries to mimic. This is not the place to go into detail, but you can find out more about the device at both [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sony\\_Reader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sony_Reader) and <http://www.sonystyle.com> (click Read).

A more recent and very impressive development is Amazon's new offering - the Amazon Kindle. It can hold about 200 non-illustrated titles, which would make it great for traveling. It is connected to the Internet by Sprint's wireless cellphone service (U.S. only), so you can download a book instantly anywhere there is a Sprint cell signal. Talk about instant gratification! The Sprint connection is free. New releases and New York Times bestsellers are about \$10 apiece, and classics can be had for about \$2. Online newspaper service is available for between \$6 and \$15 per month, and magazine subscriptions are between \$1.50 and \$3.50 per month. Budding authors can publish Kindle books themselves. For more information, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kindle> and <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B000FI73MA>.

How successful the Kindle will be remains to be seen, but it is selling well and has some well thought out features. Locally, Friends Jane and Dave Abbott have one, so you might ask them for a first-hand account of their experience with it.

*Neil Webre*

## TRUSTEES MEETINGS

The Board of Trustees of the Mathews Memorial Library meet the second Tuesday of each month at 5:15 p.m. These meetings are open to the public and are a good opportunity to voice any concerns that you might have.

## AUTHOR FORUM

Thursday, October 23, 7 – 8 p.m.

Charles “Chip” Jones, a former staff writer for the Richmond Times-Dispatch, will discuss and sign his newly released book *Red, White, or Yellow*. In 2007 he was embedded with a U.S. Marine Corps public affairs unit in Baghdad. In *Red, White, or Yellow* Jones applies more than 25 years’ worth of reporting experience to write a detailed, in-depth chronicle of the media’s coverage of the war.

## FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES, U.S.A.

October 19-25, 2008 has been designated as the third annual Friends of Libraries Week. FOLUSA provides resources, services, and networking opportunities for Friends, Trustees, and Library Foundations to increase and enhance their efforts on behalf of libraries of all types. FOLUSA is a national organization with approximately 3,500 members representing hundreds of thousands of library supporters. For more than 25 years FOLUSA has offered training, support, and idea sharing for library supporters around the country. Our Friends organization has benefited from being a FOLUSA member.

## BANNED BOOKS

According to the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, the “10 Most Challenged Books of 2007” were:

1. “And Tango Makes Three,” by Justin Richardson/Peter Parnell
2. “The Chocolate War,” by Robert Cormier
3. “Olive’s Ocean,” by Kevin Henkes
4. “The Golden Compass,” by Philip Pullman
5. “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,” by Mark Twain
6. “The Color Purple,” by Alice Walker
7. “TTYL,” by Lauren Myracle
8. “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,” by Maya Angelou
9. “It’s Perfectly Normal,” by Robie Harris
10. “The Perks of Being A Wallflower,” by Stephen Chbosky