

Marble Columns



Newsletter of the Friends of the James Blackstone Memorial Library

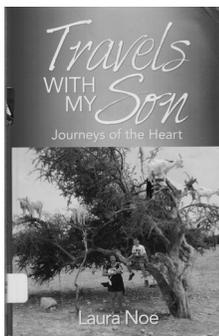


Spotlight on Branford Author

Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. *Samuel Clemens*



Laura Noe



Author & Son

Residing in the area of Indian Neck is a Branford author who reaches into the depth of her life experiences and writes from her heart, revealing her personal thoughts and actions. Laura Noe working for a small weekly paper in the Atlanta, Ga. area was the first time she was exposed (outside of a history book) to the Ku Klux Klan where she met and interviewed David Duke, then the Grand Wizard. She attended a Klan march and was confronted with their toxic hate speech. Noe wrote the story and called home, speaking with her mother, telling her she wasn't cut out for this work as it was difficult to remain 'objective' while reporting on the KKK and David Duke. She hit the wall of reality that she had her opinion, not one imposed by others, and could not pretend otherwise.

Her mother shipped her a copy of *What Color Is Your Parachute?* a book that influenced Laura in identifying her interests and strengths and channeling her direction. After transitioning from NYC and Westchester, she got married and gave birth to her son, Hudson. Laura left the corporate world in 2012 on her 50th birthday. By then,

she was divorced. She had judiciously saved some money and decided to start to travel with Hudson.

For the next five summers, they journeyed to four continents. *Travels with My Son: Journeys of the Heart* is the story in which she shares details of their travels to Turkey, Morocco, the Czech Republic and more. These I can personally relate to as I have traveled to their same destinations and relished each one of them.

Noe developed her belief that her young, white, American boy should be exposed to other cultures, beliefs, life styles, food, and languages. She wrote the book to encourage other parents to do the same, thinking that if she could do it as a single mom, anyone could, and allow their offspring to discover an authentic world not Disneyesque.

Her son, Hudson, recently returned to McGill University for his final semester. He's looking into graduate schools and intends to apply to University of Amsterdam to continue his international development studies. Apparently, his worldly travels with his mom successfully broadened

his personal horizons and career goals.

Last year, Laura created four First Amendment Walls out of plywood and chalk. Her intent was to create a space where people could share their opinions and where the tension of opposites could co-exist in a setting that encouraged diversity of thought, the library. Prompt questions such as "what is courage?" were posted to elicit open ended responses. Three of these First Amendment Walls were installed in Branford, one of which was in front of Blackstone's other marble columns.

Noe is currently finalizing a second book called *Tree Man*. It's also nonfiction and tells the heartbreaking and heartwarming story of her brother Ed's journey into, through, and out of homelessness and his challenges with mental illness. His relationship with nature, and specifically trees, sustained him and connected him to the people in his community of New Milford where he lived outside.

Travels with My Son: Journeys of the Heart is available on Amazon and in the stacks of the Blackstone Library.

Book Sale Surpasses Expectations

Looking back 100 years from now, what will be written about the year 2020? The year is not quite over yet, but there is certainly a lot that we can say has happened. The COVID-19 global pandemic that we are living through has caused over 1 million deaths. Our way of life has been drastically changed with no imminent return to 'normalcy' soon. Facemasks have become a mandatory requirement along with social distancing and stay-at-home orders from our government officials. Distance and hybrid learning models are the new normal for students. Hospitals at times were overrun trying to keep up with the heavy demand placed on the healthcare system. Businesses globally are struggling with airlines impacted, travel halted, restaurants, theaters, gyms, schools, library services, etc. curtailed. There have been shortages in the grocery stores. While the race to develop a vaccine is underway, life has gone on though altered in so many ways.

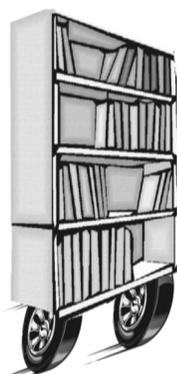
During this pandemic, the Friends of the Blackstone Library were not to be deterred in trying to raise funds for our library. Through creative thinking and careful planning, our annual Tent Sale on the Green was reengineered to become a series of small, safe mini-sales over 5 weekends to provide some normalcy to our residents and an opportunity to purchase gen-

tly used books, movies, music, etc. It was a resounding success raising over \$23K for the library. This would not have been possible without our customers trusting our COVID-19 safety procedures and safeguards and coming out to shop. Our volunteers, listed below, were outstanding, energized and essential to our success. There is no stopping Friends of the Blackstone Library!

Elliot Barber
Eva-LaRue Barber
Oliver Barber
Barbara Barrett
Jeff Barrett
Leslie Becker
Catherine Beach
Jane Bouley
Amy Bower
Frank Carrano
Ellen Carucci
Jon Clark
Alpha Coiro
Ann Davis
Jan Day
Frank Drago
Micky Fazzino
Joe Genua
Jonathan Grande
Paula Grimm
Fran Gwinnell
Moirra Healey
Rita Hennessey
Karen Jensen
Barbara Johnson
Andy McKirdy
John Mooney
Pat Mooney
Evelyn Moulton
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Erin O'Brien

Karen Osborn
Peg Piergrossi
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Maryetta Russell
Andrea Schieckel
John Smith
Kent Smith
Judy Stebbins
Alex Stein
Callista Stoddard
Jill Thomas
Carol Titcomb
Neil Titcomb
Terry Twigg
Susan Wallace
Curt Wendler
Diane Whalen
Helen Wong
Cathy Young
Jo Zaehringer

By Barbara Barrett



New Virtual Book Cart Launched

The Friends now have a way for you to purchase books online through a special link on the library's website. Hardcover are \$3 and trade paperbacks are \$2. These gently-read titles are mostly fiction, published recently. Pickup is at the library.





FLOW

Bathed in a sea of energies In
 a never ending upward spiral
 Learn to swim in the currents
 of potence
 As infinitesimal parts of the
 cosmos we too are energy
 Swim with the cosmic flow
 Submerge into it
 The unreasoned knowing In-
 tuition as perception Sensitivi-
 ty to the flow
 Energize and awaken into
 knowledge that life is inde-
 structible
 Birth into body Body into spirit
 Ad infinitum
 Let your life essence tune into
 the realm of awareness
 Some relate to dreams as
 nightmares
 Others look beyond the out-
 ward appearance to the inner
 qualities exposed
 Miracles become life energies
 as an operation of cosmic law
 If some were only to see the
 good they would find more of
 it
 Embrace the flow

David J. Apuzzo

SEA GLASS

WHAT DO I SEE IN SEA
 GLASS?
 EACH SHATTERED PIECE
 A TREASURE TO HOLD
 SO SMOOTH LIKE A
 WORN ROSARY BEAD.
 ITS COLOR - OPAQUE,
 AMBER, GREEN OR
 GOLD
 CATCHES MY EYE AND I
 CANNOT PASS EVEN
 THE
 SMALLEST PIECE BY.
 IT IS SO WONDROUS TO
 SEE - MAYBE ONLY TO
 ME.

Patricia Broughal

Dear Friends Member,
 It's time for your creative
 juices to flow again. If you'd
 like to see your original poem
 published in a future issue,
 forward it to **friends**
@blackstonelibrary.org by
 December 10. No more than
 one submission per person
 please. Format must be typed
 in Calibri font #10. No fancy
 spacing. Limit to 10 lines.
 Thank you.

Alpha Coiro, Co-editor

Untitled

Honey, put your phone
 away—
 You can catch up on the news
 later.
 Let's all go for a walk, your
 sister too...
 ...Just take in that fresh air,
 and look,

That's a such and such bird,
 and another,
 And there's our neighbors
 with their dog.
 Wow, mom, look,
 Other families are going for a
 walk,
 I never saw so many families
 Going for walks together,
 And is that Mr. So and So?
 Yes, and he's... jogging?
 I've known that man for 30
 years,
 (Never saw him move so
 much in my life)
 Now that's some real news!
 I think his wife is an essential
 worker,
 What is ahsenchal?
 Well...someone very im-
 portant, someone like you
 honey.
 Mommy, thank you for the
 walk—

Alex Stein



Photo by Diane Puchalski

The design of the Library's new entry received a 2020 Connecticut Preservation Award. The rear dome is now undergoing repairs that will be complete by December 2020.



**Friends of the James Blackstone
Memorial Library**
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Branford, CT 06405

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From the President

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John Smith
Callista Stoddard
Helen Wong

Karen Jensen, Library Director
Member Ex-Officio

It is a pleasure to have some space in the *Marble Columns* to keep you posted on activities and information about the Friends of the Blackstone Library (Friends). We thank the editors, Alpha Coiro and Hatsie Mahoney not only for this outstanding publication but also for the opportunity to connect with our members.

You may not know this, but prior to the beginning of our fiscal year July 1, the Library Director gives the Friends a ‘Wish List’ of Library programs and needs that the Library staff believe would be most beneficial for the Library in serving the needs of our Branford Community. The Board of Directors of the

Friends reviews this request, matches it to the revenues we believe we can raise, and concludes on our pledged support for the current year. This year’s pledge of support totals approximately \$38,000 and is broken down as follows:

Adult and Family Programs	55%
Children, Teen & Family programs	21
Staff professional development	13
Purchase of a Book Scanning Station	<u>11</u>
	100%

This is a significant contribution to the Library and the only way we can do this is through the support and hard work of our members and volunteers. I am grateful to you, the Board is grateful to you, and we all can take some pride in the fact that our contribution is making a positive impact on the Library and the Town of Branford.

Please send me your comments, suggestions and thoughts on how we can become the best we can be at friends@blackstonelibrary.org

Alfred Bertoline, President