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NEWSLETTER

The Friends of the Spring Branch-Memorial Library

Winter 2021



Our Spring Branch-Memorial Library—A gift to us all!

Where have we been? Where are we now? Where are we going?

An interview with our Branch Manager, Jennifer Finch

Edited for clarity and brevity.

The Friends: *You have been in Houston for 13 years. We are lucky to have you here. How is our library different than other libraries where you have worked?*

Jennifer: Every community is a little bit different--different socioeconomic background, different expectations for programming; for example, the teens for Spring Branch are very focused on educational-style programming, which is not the case in any of the other libraries where I have worked. But I do think that in this Branch I've had a little bit of a different experience. Two out of the almost three years that I've worked here have been during the pandemic so I can't really compare that to any other experience I've had.

The Friends: *How do you see the mission of the libraries and especially of our library at this point as libraries change from focusing on books to becoming more of a community center?*

Jennifer: The mission of libraries has always been to allow free access to information. For a long time, books, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers were the methods of providing that information. Libraries provided those. Increasingly that mode of information expanded to include the internet. Libraries realized not everybody would have access to the internet so began to include internet connection as an additional way of providing information.

Our understanding of brains and child development evolved. We now understand that literacy—being able to read and gain information—improves when started young. So we started story times and activities to help create a

love of literacy and to be an information gateway for kids starting as young as possible.

For teens we provide them a place to go and gain information from their peers with book groups, board games, help with homework, cooking classes, self-care, and games. It's fun and educational and a way to gain information that will help them later—like being able to form social groups that are not necessarily at school.

So it's just what we consider information has expanded. While the role of public libraries in the past has been to provide access to information through books the goal was always to provide information. We're just continuing to do that in different ways.

The Friends: *How do you see our Library going forward?*

Jennifer: We would like to expand our outreach beyond the Villages. There're not many other Harris County libraries in our area and we have a rather large section (five zip codes!) that we need to serve. But people may not realize we're even here or that we're here for them. Our goal is to go out to them to try to make sure that they do know what we provide—and if they can't make it into our branch that they know what we are and what we can do for them.

We want to go into the wider community to provide more information opportunities for people who currently lack those resources and eventually hope to be able to narrow the digital divide. We have made a start. We have farther to go.

The Friends: *How do The Friends fit in?*

Jennifer: Thankfully we also have a very great Friends of the Library here that mainly pays for most of our programs. About 99% of our programs are paid for by *The Friends* of the Spring Branch Memorial Library! That support allows us the freedom to offer so much more for our patrons than what the County can support!

Without libraries what have we? We have no past and no future.— Ray Bradbury, American author and screen writer

Inside...

- Our Library is a gift—an interview with our Branch Manager
- In-person programs are coming!
- Special events ahead
- Why Buy-A-Book!
- Our amazing Library—and funding....

AND



The Friends Plant and Book Festival RETURNS!
April 1 and 2, 2022
More in the Spring newsletter...

LIBRARY HOURS

For Curbside checkout, please call at LEAST ONE HOUR ahead to schedule pickup.

SUN	CLOSED	MON	10AM - 6PM	TUES	10AM - 6PM	WED	10AM - 6PM
		THUR	10AM - 6PM	FRI	1PM - 6PM	SAT	10AM - 5PM

Holiday closings: December 22 at 5 pm reopens Monday, December 27. and December 30 at 5 pm reopening January 3.

Spring Branch-Memorial Library Website

www.hcpl.net/location/spring-branch-memorial-branch-library

...and on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pg/springbranchmemoriallibrary/posts/?ref=page_internal

Between newsletters, keep up with *The Friends* on our website at www.friendsofsbml.org or email us at friends.sbm@hotmail.com



The Friends of the Spring Branch-Memorial Library
<http://www.friendsofsbml.org>

STILL VIRTUAL for now, BUT....we are still thankful for the gifts our Library offers all year!

Gifts for us all throughout the year!



FOR OUR YOUNGER PATRONS....

Baby Time—a weekly “FUN Time” on Thursdays at 10:15 am. *Still virtual only. Virtual until January—then...In-person is coming!*
Kid’s Corner for grades K-6 — Wednesdays from 5-5:30. The current monthly rotation includes **Write On:** a creative writing club; **Young Artists Workshop** with crafts that explore famous artists; and **Fairytale Theater:** puppet shows. **NEW! Wild Card Wednesday**—a variety of activities that may include cooking and crafts!
Pre-registration required for all in person activities.
Outdoor Story Time—Fridays at 10:15 am
(Read with a Furry Friend moves to one Saturday a month outside. Check the [website](#) for dates and to pre-register.)

FOR TEENS AND TWEENS—Teens earn

teens volunteer hours with the Teen Leadership Council that meets the third Thursday of each month virtually via [Discord](#).
Bakers & Makers led by one of the Teen Leadership Council members—meets third Saturday each month at 2:00. *A VERY popular program!*
NEW AGAIN! The Tournament of Books—Sponsoring a team of high schoolers to compete with teens county-wide for a chance at prizes. Open to any interested high school teens!
Questions about any program? Contact [Jackie](#) at sm@hcpl.net



... and more things NEW! SAVE THE DATES!

Our Winter Tic Tac Toe Reading Challenge for children, teens and adults will take place **December 12th - January 9th**. Prizes funded by *The Friends* will be given for completing the challenge and there will be a grand prize gift certificate drawing for each age group.

For the young—and the young-at-heart—Thanks to funds from *The Friends*, an outdoor performance of the children's book **Snowy Day** by Ezra Keats from HGO's Storybook Opera on **Friday, December 3 at 10 am**.



Crafts for December for all ages include an Artic Animals Kit using a handprint to create an artic scene AND a Centennial Celebration Tote for Future Library Visits kit to paint your own library tote. Both available while supplies last.

Pages and Stages Book Club! In partnership with Society for the Performing Arts (SPA) and the Library's own Book Club—Page Turners—the Library will offer a “book club” to discuss a book or media piece by one of four authors hosted by SPA—Neil deGrasse Tyson, Fran Lebowitz, David Dedaris, and Neil Gaiman—in January, February, April and May. At each event there will be an exclusive pre-show visit with the speaker with discounted (10% off) tickets for participants of the book club. If we can meet in person, the programs will be at an venue chosen by SPA and will include a pre-show cocktail event. (If they must remain virtual, you will have to provide your own pre-show cocktail, if desired.) The first date is January 4 with Neil Tyson. **An amazing “gift” in the new year!**



In February, for Black History Month, Tommy Terrific will present a magic show for kids based on the Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American military aviators in the U.S. armed forces. *Date TBD.*

Also in February, the Library has partnered with the Altharetta Yeargin Art Museum for an exhibit entitled "Young at Art: Selection of Caldecott Book Illustrations." The gallery will be open each Saturday in February, from 10 AM to 3 PM. Our own librarians will be putting on a story time and craft on one of the Saturdays (TBD). [More about the exhibit....](#)



The Library's [website](#) has updates and details on that current week's activities—or just call the Library. (See page 3.)

2 *In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim.*—Linton Weeks, NPR correspondent for Digital News



The Friends of the Spring Branch-Memorial Library
www.friendsofsbml.org

Membership Application—New or Renew *(Please circle.)*
We do not share any of your information with any other organizations.

Join us!
 ...and ask a friend to be a Friend!

*Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City, State, Zip: _____

Phone *(optional)*: _____

Email Address *(Authorizes email contact)*: _____

\$10 Sponsor \$25 Leader \$50 Benefactor \$100 Supernova Hypernova! \$_____

Email newsletters only Both email and print newsletters Print newsletters only

(Including your email address authorizes email contact either regularly or as occasional interim updates.)

Please note address change. I would like to volunteer with *The Friends*.

Please make checks payable to: Friends of the Spring Branch-Memorial Library

Mailing address: 930 Corbindale Road, Houston, TX 77024

OR pay with PayPal on [our website](#).

* Required for new or changes only

Contributions are tax deductible.

*In memory of Chris Van Passachen
 Lifelong library-lover and dedicated volunteer at our Spring Branch-Memorial Library.*

What people say about *The Friends' Buy-A-Book Program...*

"We are all thankful to have the Spring Branch-Memorial Library as a wonderful resource for our entire community. Buy-A-Book is an opportunity for us to fill the shelves of our own library... [and] provide a legacy for our friends and neighbors for years to come. As an added benefit, you can honor a family member, friend or fellow bookworm with your gift." —Nancy Polis

"With Buy-A-Book you get a two-fer that is a lot of bang for the buck. It is a great way to support our incredible library and, if you wish, honor or gift a loved one or friend." —Ben Hulsey

"My daughter gifts me annually with a donation through Buy-A-Book. She knows what is important to me." —Jill Rose

This holiday season of giving is a time to remember *The Friends' Buy-A-Book* program for gifting book-loving friends and family members. **If you haven't received a Buy-A-Book brochure in the mail, please contact the Library** to take part in this program while making thoughtful gifts to your family and friends and to the Library.

One of the goals of the Harris County Commissioners is to provide outstanding customer service. Our Library certainly does that!

Our Library is the 21st out of 26 Harris County libraries in size.

At the end of October (the latest data at this printing), it ranked:

- 5th** in number of Reference questions—2,621 questions asked
- 5th** in Overdrive check outs—21,704
- 6th** in Computer use—61,704 minutes
- 6th** in In-person visits—6,571 patrons
- 6th** in Holds—4,219 processed
- 7th** in Circulation—30,840 items checked out

Our Library and our librarians are an ongoing GIFT TO US ALL!

Links specifically mentioned and linked to sites in this newsletter:

Discord—sm@hcpl.net (Page 2)
 927-5510 (Page 2)

Library phone number: 832-

You see what our Library means to our community. Please consider contacting David Berry, our new County Administrator, and tell him how libraries and OUR Library make an impact on YOUR life. Your input can make a difference in this new funding year! Please email [The Friends](#) (see page 4) for what you can do and for contact information. Thank you!

Libraries always remind me that there are good things in this world.—Lauren Ward, American singer and actress.