



WOODS HOLE LIBRARY NEWS

Fall 2017

Volume 11, Issue 10

More Than Your Average Library *Woods Hole Public Library members are fortunate that our library goes beyond the normal call of duty to offer its patrons creative and innovative programming. In this newsletter, we highlight just a sampling of some of the special features that make the Woods Hole Public Library unique.*

Summer Social Justice Book Club

By Ruth Gainer

In Summer 2016, Ruth Gainer began the Woods Hole Social Justice Book Club with a discussion of Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*. This memoir tells of a young lawyer's efforts to obtain justice for many who have been unfairly imprisoned, including some on death row and others sentenced to life without parole as juveniles. The book club discovered how Stevenson's growing awareness of dire practices in the American justice system inspired him to create the Equal Justice Initiative, which challenges racial and economic injustices throughout the country. While discussions about the large-scale impacts of this broken system were engaging, Peggy Shulman, a book club member, shared a letter from her son, Andy, relating his experiences while incarcerated and his continuing difficulties trying to reenter society since his release. This personal connection to the issues raised in the book made the group conversation more urgent and immediately felt, and the book club continued throughout the summer with a dedication to becoming more informed on issues of racial justice.

In Summer 2017, the Social Justice Book Club reconvened and began reading narrative nonfiction, including Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* and Erica Armstrong Dunbar's *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave Ona Judge*. Both Wilkerson and Dunbar are professors of history, and while they base their work

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The Cookbook Club

By Nan Logan

Rejecting expectations of strict librarians tisking, "SHHHHH" and "no food or drink," Woods Hole librarians developed the idea of a book club focusing on cookbooks. Participants sign up to prepare a recipe from the selected book. On the chosen evening, members bring their prepared dishes to the library along with a plate, utensils, and a beverage to share. A lovely tablecloth, napkins, and candles, with the group gathered around the long table in the Ratcliffe Room, make the evening feel like a special occasion.

The selection criteria for a cookbook are that it be interesting, that the recipes be possible for the group's skill level, and that copies are available in sufficient quantity in CLAMS. Books that are filled with tales of the markets and kitchens from the locales of their inspiration are especially appreciated.

The first cookbook selected was *Jerusalem* by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi. It is a beautiful book with its enticing full-page photos, and the authors provide recipes common to the city's many cultures that are delicious and manageable. Many members happily added new spices and herbs to their kitchens to try out the recipes, and now they enjoy incorporating these flavors in their more mundane dishes.

Success with the first attempt led to a second round, and in the spring *My Paris Kitchen* by David Lebovitz was selected. This cookbook is rooted in Paris and the way Parisians eat today, but it is a bold departure from the world of Julia Child! It includes unexpected

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Library Hours

Mondays Noon - 5:30, 7 - 9

Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 3 - 5:30

Wednesdays 10 - 5:30, 7-9

Saturdays Noon - 5:30

Woods Hole Public Library

PO Box 185 • Woods Hole, MA 02543 • 508 548 8961

woodsholepubliclibrary.org

Summer Social Justice Book Club

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on extensive research, they also manage to write with such intimacy that their readers feel they know the people in the stories personally.

In one session this summer, the book club compared James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* with *The Fire This Time*, Jesmyn Ward's compilation of essays and poems by young black writers. The group invited Dr. George Langford and Dr. Sylvia Langford, who have been active community members for many years, as guests for this discussion. We were grateful for the opportunity to learn about their childhood experiences and perspectives on the issues as African-Americans.

In addition to book discussions and guest speakers, the Social Justice Book Club also incorporated Ava DuVernay's documentary, *13th*, to supplement the group's activities. This powerful film explores the link between slavery and the American criminal justice system by describing how the wording in the 13th amendment of the Constitution led to development of mass incarceration, mandatory minimum sentencing, and private prisons.

The Social Justice Book Club is going strong with fifty people on the mailing list and thirty-five members usually in attendance. At a time when matters of justice are more and more threatened, coming together to discuss each of these informative and deeply touching books has bolstered participants' commitments to just causes and our connections to each other. Although the group will not meet in person until next summer, Andrea Rugh has compiled a packet of articles considering the issue of reparations which will be forwarded to club participants for winter reading. Tim Snyder's *On Tyranny, Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* is also recommended. If you wish to be added to the Social Justice Book Club's mailing list, please contact Ruth Gainer, gainerru@earthlink.net.

The Cookbook Club

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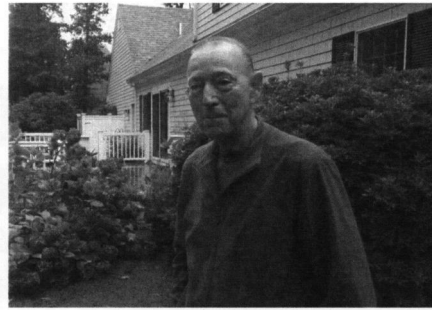
recipes such as smoky barbecue-style pork, lamb shank tagine, dukkah-roasted cauliflower, and salt cod fritters.

The Cookbook Club has been such a hit that there are plans for more meetings in the coming year. The group will meet seasonally, with as many cooks as there are seats around the Ratcliffe Room table; 12 seems to be a good number.

Many book clubs seem to center around friends enjoying a meal together as much as discussing the books they read; this group boldly embraces and celebrates that tendency!

Introducing Peter Collom

By Dan Voorhis



Peter Collom has charted a life of rough seas and serene gardens. The presence of both together drew him to Woods Hole and Falmouth, where he and his wife, Edna, have lived and served the community

for the last three decades. In July, Collom was named to the Board of the Woods Hole Public Library.

Collom grew up in Warwick, RI, the son of a medical doctor, and learned to sail during the summers in nearby Narragansett, RI. He loved the sea as a youth and, during his senior year in high school, took entrance exams for both the Naval Academy and the Coast Guard Academy. He wasn't selected for the Naval Academy but did get into the Coast Guard. He spent his career both on the water and behind a desk, moving to new posts around the country every few years.

Looking back on it, he says he is happy with the direction his life took. He liked the military structure and discipline, but he preferred the Coast Guard's mission to serve and protect more than the Navy's combat role.

Rescuing endangered boaters may be what the Coast Guard is best known for, but it also enforces drug, fisheries and immigration laws, patrols the coasts and harbors for homeland security and even occasionally helps with science data collection.

Collom experienced one of his most memorable rescues in Freeport TX, between Galveston and Corpus Christi. He captained a 125-foot cutter with a crew of 32. They were called out amid 20-foot seas to bring in a fishing boat whose engine had quit. Most of the crew became seasick in the nasty swells. After reaching the stricken boat, a small crew transferred over. The first attempt to throw a line to the fishing boat missed and the line fouled one of the cutter's twin propellers, leaving the cutter underpowered in the punishing seas. A second attempt succeeded, and the cutter slowly towed the fishing boat toward the ship channel and safety. As the cutter struggled in, Collom saw with dismay that the current had dragged a buoy and its line into the channel, blocking the way. With a quick right, left, right on the rudder, the ship was able to slip past the buoy and into safety.

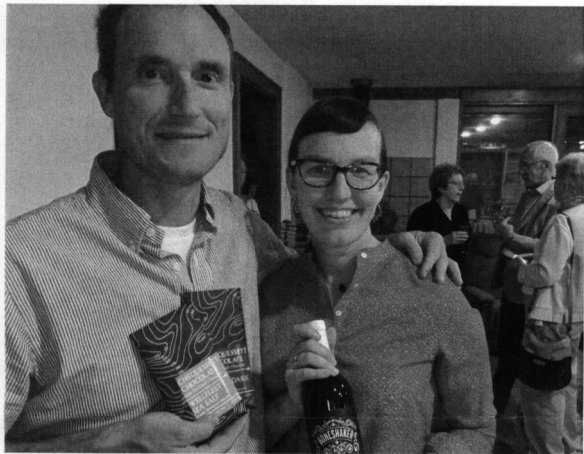
In 1984 Collom moved to Woods Hole late in his career for one of his dream assignments: Captain, Group Woods Hole, where he oversaw Coast Guard operations between Westerly, RI, and the north end of the Cape Cod Canal. He and his family moved into the refurbished lighthouse-

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A Delicious Fundraiser

By Dan Voorhis

Dan is a Woods Hole native who has moved back after being a reporter at newspapers in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and, for the last 22 years, Wichita, Kansas. He is married to Stacie, a hard-working speech language pathologist, and spends his time working on the family house and volunteering at the library as a new member of the Board.



Can a chocolate bar reach the rarified heights of a fine wine, generate the difference of opinion about its 'notes of cherry,' or merit the advice about the need to 'cleanse your palate'?

Josiah Mayo and Katie Reed, founders of Truro's Chequessett Chocolate, made a pretty compelling case that it can - if made right - during the library's chocolate tasting/wine pairing fundraiser in October. The couple have devoted more than five years to building a craft chocolate business, first in Truro and now extending beyond the Cape. They've grown intimately familiar with the process of chocolate making, from how the beans are grown, to fermenting, roasting, sweetening and finishing the chocolate, and to developing an audience. They have a cafe at 8 Highland Road in Truro.

About 50 people attended the talk and tasting at the home of board member Prosser Gifford, on Penzance Point. Before the attendees got to sample pieces of Chequessett-made single-origin chocolate paired with two wines selected by Falmouth Wine and Spirits, they learned something of the exacting nature of high-quality cacao beans.

Small family farmers in places such as Guatemala, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic have focused on the crop, taking on the laborious job of growing the cacao pods, harvesting the seeds and fermenting them. Mayo highlighted the key role that tiny midges play in pollinating the cacao tree flowers, which in turn produce the pods that hold the trees' seeds. These seeds are the cacao beans.

Mayo said that most of the world's cacao comes from plantations in West Africa, grown under conditions extremely difficult for the workers. But Chequessett's sources in the Caribbean and Latin America grow cacao in a more socially and environmentally sustainable way. They pay their farmers well over twice the \$2,000-to-\$2,500-per-ton commodity price for cacao in return for the careful treatment needed for premium chocolate. Rather than "fair trade," (which means paying a high enough price to sustain farmers,) they say the proper term for their relationship with suppliers is "direct trade," since they are buying almost directly from the farmer, Reed said. The farms are primitive and the harvest and processing inherently difficult and uncertain. If something goes wrong - "It goes to Hershey's," quipped Mayo.

"The travel is what really brought us into this," Mayo said. "Through the travel we learned about this unique relationship that chocolate makers form with cacao producers. That is something that initially drew us to the work and something that continues to be a really compelling part of specialty small-batch chocolate making." Both Mayo and Reed have a background in anthropology, which they also credit with playing a pivotal role in their interest in the industry.

The October tasting matched two of Chequessett's chocolates with two wines: a 72 percent Dominican chocolate with an Argentinian Syrah-Malbec blend called Callia Bella; and a 72 percent Ecuadorian chocolate with a California Zinfandel named Boneshaker. The chocolates had a rich, not-too-sweet taste that was legitimately complex enough to have several flavor notes in it. The wines were full, fruity, and sweet - Mayo said the wine should be at least a little sweet to keep from "being blown away" by the chocolate.

Chequessett Chocolate now sells about 50,000 bars per year, through its cafe, online, at 80 stores around Cape and beyond, and through speaking events. Mayo also works on a lobster and tuna boat that sails out of Provincetown.

keepers' quarters at Nobska Lighthouse a year later. In 1987, he started commuting to Boston for the Coast Guard, and he finished his career as Chief of Staff of the First Coast Guard District, which oversees Coast Guard operations from New Jersey to Canada. He retired in 1991. He and Edna remained in Woods Hole after retirement, living on Nobska Road, where he could see Vineyard Sound and tend a large garden. He became known around the community for his volunteer work. He served on the board of the Woods Hole Foundation for 10 years, 8 as president.

Today, they live in Falmouth's Greengate development in a lovely home with a moss garden, sitting on a north-facing slope. They also spend 3-4 months each year in the fall and spring at their farm near Hopkinsville, KY, which has been in Edna's family for seven generations. They have two grown children, Liberty and Jennifer, and three grandchildren.

A Meeting in Egypt with Nobel Prize Winner Naguib Mahfouz

By Robert Pelletreau, WHPL Board President



In 1992, while in Cairo as the American Ambassador to Egypt, I was asked to present an honorary membership of the American Academy of Arts and Letters to Egypt's leading novelist, Naguib Mahfouz. Mahfouz won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, the only Arab writer so honored to date. His novels of life in Cairo have been widely read throughout the Arab World and have won international acclamation.

On the day of the presentation, I knocked on the door of a typical Cairo apartment building and was ushered in to a modest, traditional reception room. Mahfouz soon joined me, and over a customary glass of sugared tea, we exchanged views on life in Cairo at the time. After we enjoyed a friendly visit, I presented the Academy's impressive Certificate of Membership along

with an informal Arabic translation prepared by the Embassy. I asked permission to attach the membership pin to Mahfouz's lapel, and as I leaned forward, I promptly dropped the pin onto his lap. We enjoyed a good laugh, the moment captured in the photo above.

Although he died in 2006, Mahfouz's 34 novels and 350 short stories continue to be widely read and have been translated into the world's major languages. His portrayals of Egyptian urban life and culture remain unsurpassed. American readers often have some familiarity with the ancient civilization of the Nile, but Mahfouz's novels provide a window on Egypt today. His famous Cairo Trilogy as well as a number of his other titles can be found on the shelves of the Woods Hole Public Library, and many of his other works are available throughout the CLAMS network. The first volume of the trilogy, *Palace Walk*, is among the very few works of fiction that I look forward to reading again.

Check Out Our Library of Things

By Pamela Nelson

Woods Hole Librarian Kellie Porter manages to stay in the forefront of library innovations. She initiated the Cape Cod library craze of "Coloring for Adults" a couple of years ago, is the point person behind the Cookbook Club, and now she is curating a new collection for our Library.

For several years, the Library has been circulating nontraditional materials in a small way, with sewing machines and soil block makers for starting seedlings in spring. But when Kellie learned that some libraries have had success lending out other items like ukuleles, she thought moving further in this direction sounded like a perfect fit for Woods Hole and the Library's patrons.

Among the items available for checkout there are two sewing machines and a serger, a machine that finishes edges by wrapping the edges with thread, as an alternative to hemming. For would-be musicians, a ukulele and guitar are available, as well as a Stylophone, "the original pocket synthesizer," which is fun to play. In the last couple of years, pickle ball has become very popular, and now there is a pickle ball set for patrons who want to try out this game. It includes a backpack, two paddles, four balls, and an instruction sheet.

Some objects' uses are not as obvious at first glance. What might look like a rack for drying homemade pasta made by an ambitious chef, is in fact, a "yarn swift and ball winder." These two devices allow knitters to save time when transforming skeins of yarn into more user-friendly balls. The local yarn shop used to have this equipment for customer use, but now that it has closed, many knitters are happy to have access to one at the Library.

Other items in the collection include, a soil tester to determine soil pH, board games, and puzzles for both grown-ups and kids. The Library tries to carry games that are more unusual than the commonly owned classics like Monopoly. Popular titles include Ticket to Ride and Patchwork. Library patrons can try out a game or work on a puzzle for a week and return it when finished.

Let Kellie know if you have a suggestion or an item to consider, as the Library is looking for ways to expand the collection. She is interested in collecting unusually shaped cake pans, or other specialty pans like popover and madeleine pans. Last year a "wonderful work-horse of a flour mill" was donated, which demonstrated how beneficial it can be to have useful kitchen items on hand.

