



The Friends of the Island Library Report

Spring 2021

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LBI Welcomes Youth/Teen Librarian

Summer Gahles (*pronounced Gales*) is the new Youth Services and Young Adult Librarian at the LBI branch of the Ocean County Library System. Starting at LBI in mid-April, Summer replaced Kristen Crepezzi, who moved to another post within the OCL system.

"I'm really excited to get summer reading programs started," Gahles said. "I realize that things will be a little different this year, with Covid, but I can't wait to meet the children and get to know them so that, when the situation eases and things get safer, we'll be ready to go with programming."

Late last year, Summer earned her Masters of Library Science at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. At the same time, she was receiving significant training at the Brick library, she explained. "The staff there was aware that I intended to make a career in library science, and they gave me leadership opportunities that enabled me to grow."



"When I started at Point Beach, which is where I grew up, it was just a part-time job, but as my responsibilities increased, my interest grew. It dawned on me that this is what I wanted to do. By the time I graduated from Georgian Court with an English degree, I was committed to pursuing library work as a career."

Healing Words

When the LBI Library reopened on July 2, 2020, I rushed to the new books section. It was a browse I had been awaiting more than 100 days, and I was hungry to be fed healing words. I soon spied *One Long River of Song*, the final volume of essays by Brian Doyle. Doyle, who died of a brain tumor in 2017, had a heap of wonder in his prose and, like Walt Whitman, found grand ways to present that wonder to his readers' hearts. In his essay, *an leabharlaan*, Irish for *the library*, Doyle wrote a stellar tribute to the local library. "Your library is where the community stores its treasures," he noted. "It's the house that imagination built. It's where the stories that matter are gathered together and celebrated and shared. It's exactly like a church, it seems to me. People come to it communally for something that's deep and ancient and important beyond an easy explanation."

A year later, as millions of shots of vaccines were distributed, and optimism about our future began to rise, I found another treasure in our library's new books section. Not surprisingly, it was written by a clergyman. Enter *Some Glad Morning*, a volume of Yankee wisdom (no, not *those* Yankees), by Rob McCall, Pastor Emeritus of The First Congressional Church of Blue Hill, Maine. The title of his book of essays is the first three words of the spiritual, "I'll Fly Away."

McCall's volume covers the passing of the seasons, from summer to the next spring, finding hope and promise in every season. It's a healthy prescription for those scarred by the epidemic and unnerved by the possible consequences of an overheated planet.

With topics such as 'All Animals and Plants Have Their Purpose,' 'Your Neighbor is Yourself,' 'New Same Old Earth,' and 'Whose Earth Is It?,' Pastor McCall's essays combine, says the book's back cover, "daily rations from Nature, reflections on ancient texts and contemporary culture, and practical action."

In an essay titled "Hope," McCall invites the reader to ask: "Does my day go better when I go out with hope in my heart, or with fear? Am I more happy, creative and productive when I see the universe as a cruel and heartless dead machine, or when I see it as a miraculous and soulful living being? Get practical. Try it for a couple of days and see. It's free."

Armed with Doyle's "pep talk" and McCall's "country wisdom," we return to the library and sample its treasures. We are alive. We are refreshed. Welcome Home. *~JC*



Friends' Activities

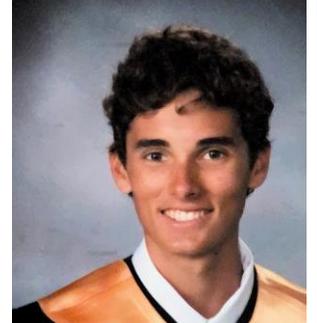
Although the Friends of the Island Library haven't been very visible, we have remained active behind the scenes. We have been holding our monthly board meetings by Zoom, our Membership Chairman Ann Barkey puts out a newsy bimonthly email on Constant Contact, and our Newsletter Chairman Jim Curley compiles a quarterly newsletter that goes to all out our members. Read below to see how your membership dues and contributions have helped our library and members of our community.

Friends Award Scholarships

The Friends of the Island Library reported that Thomas John Deakyne, a graduating senior at Southern Regional, has been awarded the Kay Jones Memorial Scholarship for 2021. Deakyne reported that he will enroll at Penn State University and "will be studying Food, Science & Technology."

Deakyne reminisced about his experiences in our local library. "My mom used to bring my sister and me to the library for Story Time and take part in arts and craft activities. As I grew older, the library was a great place to do research for school assignments and participate in teen activities."

Deakyne also was an eager volunteer in the LBI Library's S.A.I.L. (Service and Achievement in the Library) program. At Southern, he also played on the school's volleyball team and hopes to play at the club level at Penn State. This summer Deakyne expects to serve as a lifeguard at Long Beach Township beaches for a second year.



SRHS graduate
Thomas Deakyne

In addition, this year, the Friends of the Island Library awarded two Eleanor C. Smith Memorial Scholarships, which are given to students matriculated in an ALA-accredited library and information services master's degree program. One went to Dan Fitzgerald, a graduate of Clarion University, Pennsylvania. He works at the Barnegat Branch of the OCL. The other was awarded to Wing Man Tang, who attends Clarion University and works at the Stafford branch.



The Friends also purchased furniture for the branch that has already been put to work. Branch Manager Toni Smirniw requested replacements for the old DVD rack in the children's department, and the adult CD rack that had seen better days. Three spinner racks arrived recently; two are holding children's DVDs, and one is holding the CDs in the adult area. They're more visually appealing and make browsing easier.

LBI Library Update

New branch hours:

Monday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tuesday & Wednesday: 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Masks are not required.

Seating is temporarily limited in the library, but social distancing is not required.

The status of the meeting room is being updated after publication of this newsletter, but programs and meetings have not resumed as of this writing.

Morgan Issues Poetry Guide

In 2018, Richard Morgan and wife Pat left LBI for the hills of North Carolina. Morgan spent more than a dozen years teaching writing to LBI Library patrons. Recently, Morgan sent a note that indicated that his love for writing and teaching poetry has not waned. "In September 2020, I was scheduled to teach an online course on writing personal poetry," he wrote. "The class was cancelled at the last moment, and I had six hours of unused material that I had 'slaved' over. What to do?"

"With an abundance of time on my hands, I have reworked and revised my notes into my new book, *Poems of Your Own - A Guide to Writing Personal Poetry*," Morgan added. It is my effort to coach and encourage others to write their own poetry with all the benefits I believe it renders.

"There is delight in both the poems one writes and the process in writing them," he concluded.

Morgan's guide is available through [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Be sure you sign up for Amazon's Smile program when you order Morgan's book so that the Friends of the Island Library will receive a portion of the proceeds.

