

Volume 21 Issue 1
February 2025

A PUBLICATION OF *FRIENDS*
PUNTA GORDA CHARLOTTE LIBRARY, INC.
PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA



BOOKMARK



Dear Friends,

From time to time, Board members are asked about our purpose and why being a Friends member is important.

The Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library is a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporation, chartered by the laws of Florida since 1977 and is a legally distinct entity from the County or its library system. Our mission is to promote awareness of and appreciation for and use of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library. We actively engage with the library supervisor and staff as well as other community and government entities which include the Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, and schools.

The Friends raise money through membership dues, special events, grants and the Friends bookstore. In recent years the Friends contributed money to help pay for the current building including furnishing the children and teen rooms. We now provide funds to upgrade equipment, help with educational opportunities and fund programs and other items. Our goal is to help financially where needed.

The Friends Board of Directors are dedicated volunteers who donate their time to support our mission. The Friends Board extends our thanks to Minerva King who served on the Board from 2017 to 2024. She served as the *BOOK-MARK* editor, Board Secretary and President. Minerva and her husband have moved to another part of Florida but they are Life Members. We look forward to having them join us for events when they are in Punta Gorda.

We are pleased to announce that Pam Nelson has joined the Board.

Every person who joins as a Friends member contributes to our success. We have some people who choose to join as Life Members while many of our long-time members renew their memberships yearly. We cannot continue to

survive and grow without new members. Our membership continues to thrive, and we offer our thanks to everyone who is a member.

From time to time, we read about other Friends groups who are struggling to stay in existence. We are grateful to have our local community support, memberships and volunteers.

On a personal note, I did serve as President from 2014 through the completion of our new building in 2019. I was off the Board for a year but continued in my other role as Bookstore Manager. I was honored to be asked to come back on the Board in 2021. When the Board accepted Minerva's resignation effective at the end of 2024, I agreed to serve as President again for a year while other Board members consider taking on this role in 2026. And yes, I will continue as the Bookstore Manager. I love our Friends group and I love our library. See you around the library.

Katie Mazzi

Membership Renewal

Only Friends members can purchase tickets for the Literary Luncheon. If you wish to become a member, please use the Friends Membership Application in this newsletter. You may also pick one up in the Friends book store or download one from friendspg.org.

Annual memberships last the entire calendar year. Forms received after October 1 will validate memberships for the rest of that year and the following year.

Business patrons will be contacted directly with renewal information. If you wish to become a business patron, please email the membership committee at friendsofthepglibrary@gmail.com for more information.

We appreciate your support!

BOOKMARK

2013 Award Winning
Newsletter publication of

Friends

Punta Gorda Library, Inc.



BOOKMARK Editors:

LeAnn Beckwith

Tony Farina



Email: info@friendspg.org

Website: www.friendspg.org

Board of Directors

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Bookstore Manager

Katie Mazzi

Librarian Supervisor

Jonathan Westbrook

Punta Gorda Charlotte

Public Library

401 Shreve Street

Punta Gorda FL 33950

941-833-5460

Library Hours:

10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday & Tuesday

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Wednesday - Saturday

From The Bookstore

by Katie Mazzi, *Friends* President & Bookstore Manager

The Friends Bookstore sells donated books, audiobooks, CDs, puzzles, current magazines, and greeting cards.

There are guidelines on what is accepted. Due to the size of the bookstore and the lack of storage space, the bookstore volunteers cannot accept large donations. There are many instances when homes are being cleaned out and we are asked to take large collections. Although we appreciate a donor's consideration to give to the bookstore, we have to say no. We can accept up to two bags or small boxes at a time with donations that meet our guidelines.

So what do we need and what will sell?

We need and accept recent fiction and non-fiction books in hardcover and paperback format. They must be in good to new condition. Our Patrons are always looking for the most recently published books while not usually buying older published books no matter if they were once on the best-seller list. Also popular are large print books, cookbooks, art books, crafting books, and children's books.

The Bookstore does not accept vinyl records, VHS tapes, free publications, encyclopedias, textbooks, workbooks, service and professional journals, and out-of-date computer/technology books. Membership publications/magazines are not sold. Advanced readers copies (ARCs) of books, homemade DVDs, or CDs are also not accepted or sold.

Donors are asked not to bring in boxes that have been stored in attics or garages without opening and checking to make sure that the books are clean, in good shape, and free of insects, etc. Books that are in poor condition or are dirty cannot be sold. As a general rule, the donated items should be in good enough condition for you to gift to someone. The Bookstore reserves the right to refuse donations.

Donations are accepted Monday through Saturday from 10:15 to 4 pm. If you have questions about donations you may stop in the bookstore or send an email to info@friendspg.org.

Thank You For Your Understanding and Generosity!

BOOKSTORE
DONATIONS

www.friendspg.org

Youth

Literacy Outreach with Ruta Sepetys by Tony Farina, *Friends* Director



I didn't read Ruta Sepetys' first book as soon as it came out. Admittedly, I missed the boat and so by the time I read *Between Shades of Gray*, I discovered I had two more books that I could read immediately. I quickly devoured *Out of the Easy* and *Salt to the Sea* and then...I waited. A few years later, *Fountains of Silence* came out and I read it within a few weeks of its release and then I waited again. The great Floridan poet, Tom Petty, told us that the waiting is the hardest part. Truer words have never been sung, but, and this is the part Petty didn't tell us, that the waiting is worth it.

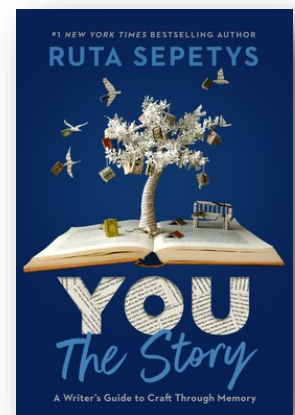
While Sepetys might be listed as Young Adult, she is one of those writers who transcends labels. Her books are rich in history and, as is often the case with works of historical fiction, give us an opportunity to learn something we should have known all along, but didn't because there "wasn't time" in our history courses in school. Every time I pick up one of her books, I feel as though I climbed into a time machine. They are intricately woven so that the reveals happen at just the perfect time. There is a reason she has won so many awards.

Still, for me, the two things that bring me back to her books time and again are the passion and the characters. As readers, we can tell she cares. When a character is bone-chilled, we shiver. When someone is scared, we feel terrified. It is through that passion that we care so much for the heroines in her novels. We care because she cares. We feel that we are on the journey with them because they jump off the page and invite us into their lives.

She reminds us that history doesn't just happen to countries, it happens to people. Countries don't really invade and take over other countries in the literal sense. One large landmass does not sprout legs and walk into another landmass. There isn't some erasure of the border between countries that suddenly makes one country disappear overnight. Human beings, at the behest of a tyrant, pushed their way into another country and moved other human beings out of the way. Human beings lose homes and possessions. They lose business. They lose loved ones.

You would think such a gifted writer would want to keep the secrets of her craft to herself, but that isn't the case. She spilled the beans on how she does it all in her spiritual sequel to Stephen King's seminal work on the craft, *On Writing* in her 2023 work of non-fiction, *You, The Story. A Writer's Guide to Craft Through Memory*. The next time I teach creative writing, this book will be the required text.

Her books are readily available in the library and on the library apps. Make sure you get them now because the hold list is about to get long due to the fact that Ruta will be the featured speaker as part of our literacy outreach program this year. She will be giving a talk at the high school, answering questions, signing books, and giving a creative writing workshop to 20 lucky students.



All Around The Library

Your Donations Make a Difference by LeAnn Beckwith, Editor

The items you donate to the Friends of the Punta Gorda Library bookstore play a vital role in supporting literacy and enriching our community. Proceeds from the bookstore, along with your dues and donations, provide funding to:

- fund programs for children, teens, and adults.
- purchase essential furniture and equipment for the library.
- assist with building maintenance and improvements as needed.

Every contribution helps ensure the library remains a vibrant resource for learning and growth in Punta Gorda and beyond.

Supporting Literacy Beyond the Library

Your donations go further than you might imagine. Some items that cannot be sold in the bookstore are donated to the Flybrary at the Punta Gorda Airport (PGD). This initiative not only promotes literacy but also helps reduce flight anxiety and creates a positive travel experience.

Launched in 2019 and inspired by the “Little Free Library” concept, the Flybrary is a 20-foot book exchange located at the north end of the Bailey Terminal in the Arrivals area of the airport. Here, visitors can:

- Leave a book for others to enjoy.
- Borrow a book for their journey.
- Trade a book that they have finished.

The Flybrary is completely free, with no obligation to return the books.

Spotlight on the Flybrary

Kaley Miller, Chief Marketing Officer, highlights the ongoing success of this program:

“The Flybrary at PGD is still hugely popular with visitors from all over the country. Punta Gorda

Airport staff is extremely thankful for your donations, as it is a great way to welcome new visitors to the area,” said Miller.

Thanks to the Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library and the Charlotte County Library System, anywhere from 60 to 200 books are donated to the Flybrary each month. This steady stream of books keeps the shelves stocked and travelers delighted.

How You Can Make a Difference Today

Every book you donate is a step toward fostering a love of reading and building a stronger community. Whether it funds essential library programs or brings joy to a traveler at the airport, your contribution has a meaningful effect. Visit the Friends of the Punta Gorda Library bookstore today to donate your items and help us continue making a difference!



In Other News

Charlotte County Library System's 2025 Reading Challenge



Scan or Click the QR Code
for More Information.

Charlotte County Community Services presents...

BETWEEN THE LINES

READING CHALLENGE

What is the challenge?

Charlotte County Libraries and History 2025 Reading Challenge is an annual challenge made up of 24 unique prompts. Match one book to each prompt for a total of 24 books throughout the year. The goal is to try new authors or genres, push ourselves to read more, read differently, and most importantly... to have fun!

Legacy Gifts for the Friends

As a member of Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library (“*Friends*”) we know you value reading. *Friends* members also share the mission of promoting the use of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library (the “*Library*”), being a community advocate for the Library, and providing financial support to augment and maintain the Library collection and provide for Library improvements.

You can ensure your values live on by making a gift to *Friends*, as many other members have done and continue to do.

If you would like someone to contact you regarding possibly making a gift, either directly or through your estate plan, please provide the information below via email or the postal service.

Your privacy is important to us. It is our strict policy not to give, sell, or donate your contact information to anyone outside our organization without your permission.

Email: info@friendspg.org

Address: 401 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Name

Email and/or Phone Number



A Members Only Event!

The Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library Present:

The 2025 Literary Luncheon

Featuring Fiona Davis

Judi Roth
Platinum Sponsor



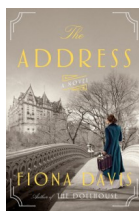
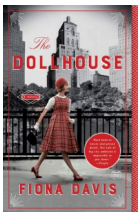
Photographer:
Deborah Feingold
Biography: Authors Unbound

Fiona Davis is the *New York Times* bestselling author of seven historical fiction novels set in iconic New York City buildings, including *The Magnolia Palace*, *The Dollhouse*, *The Address*, *The Lions of Fifth Avenue* (which was a Good Morning America book club pick), and *The Spectacular*. Her novels have been chosen as “One Book, One Community” reads and her articles have appeared in publications like *The Wall Street Journal* and *O the Oprah magazine*. Her newest book, *The Stolen Queen* (January 2025), is an utterly addictive new novel that will transport you from New York City’s most glamorous party to the labyrinth streets of Cairo and back.

Fiona began her career in New York City as an actress, where she worked on Broadway, off-Broadway, and in regional theater. After getting a master’s degree at Columbia Journalism School, she fell in love with writing, leapfrogging from editor to freelance journalist before finally settling down as an author of historical fiction. Fiona’s books have been translated into over twenty languages. She’s a graduate of the College of William & Mary and is based in New York City.

Secured seating is assigned to tables of eight (8). Your seat assignment will be given at the “check-in table” the day of the event. All paid reservations are final. Raffle tickets for the gift baskets will be sold at the event for **CASH ONLY**. If you have questions, please call **941-661-6679** or e-mail **info@friendspg.org**.

Copperfish Books will be at the venue selling Fiona Davis’ books and she will be available to sign copies.



Special Thanks to Literary Luncheon Basket Donors

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Twin Isles Country Club
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Visana Italian Steakhouse & Comedy Theater

Susan Graff Chair of the Gift Basket Committee



***Friends* of The Punta Gorda Charlotte Library**
401 Shreve Street
Punta Gorda Florida 33950

***Friends* Membership Application**

The mission of the ***Friends* of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library** is to promote the usage of, appreciation for, and provide support for the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library.

Please become a *Friend*! Annual memberships are January 1st through December 31st of each year. Forms dated after October 1st of that year will include the next calendar year as well.

Thank You for your continued loyalty and support!

PLEASE PRINT CAREFULLY



Use this form for a new membership or to renew your current membership.

You may drop the membership form off at the *Friends*' bookstore in the library or mail it to:

***Friends* of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library, 401 Shreve St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950.**

Date _____

Name (s) _____

Address _____

Phone (s) _____

*Email _____ @ _____

New _____ Renewal _____ Lifetime _____

Please make checks payable to: _____ Family Annual \$ 25.00

***Friends* of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library** _____ Lifetime \$250.00

Contributions are tax deductible - ***Friends*** is a 501(C)3 corporation. _____ Donation _____

Total _____

*Please be assured that the Friends will never sell your e-mail address or use it for any other purpose than to communicate ***Friends*** information to you.

By providing your e-mail address you are giving the Friends permission to send you e-mails.

BOOKMARK

Friends Punta Gorda Library, Inc.
401 Shreve Street
Punta Gorda, FL 33950-5906

Nonprofit Organization

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Permit No. 24

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