

Volume 22 Issue 1  
February 2026

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



# BOOKMARK



Dear Friends,

We are glad to welcome back our winter residents and visitors. It is a great time to stop by the library and see what is going on with programs and activities, and visit the Friends bookstore.

The Friends Board is delighted to welcome Jan Brady as a new Director. Jan has been volunteering in the bookstore for many years and is enthusiastic about our mission. Jan will assist with communications on social media and with membership.

Did you know the Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library has a Facebook page? Director Jenny Anderson administers the page and has welcomed Jan's assistance with this task. We encourage you to follow us on Facebook and share our page with others.

Last year, Jenny also started writing a monthly email bulletin and sending it to Friends members on the first of each month. We hope you are receiving it and reading it. If we have your up-to-date email, and you don't remember seeing the monthly email, please check your spam and/or trash folder. This email is a way to remind members when it is time to renew memberships, notify members of upcoming events such as the Literary Luncheon, and see pictures of events and activities around the library. Jenny will also send an email with notifications on library holidays and closings. We will never overwhelm your inbox. The Friends have received positive feedback on letting everyone realize why it is good to be a Friends member. We never share or sell anyone's personal information and if you choose not to receive our friendly and fun emails you can certainly opt out.

The Friends Literary Luncheon featuring New York Times Bestselling Author Therese Anne Fowler is scheduled for February 24, 2026 at the Isles Yacht Club. (see page 6 for details).

This is a members-only event and several people are returning to Punta Gorda for the season who want to attend, so we have been able to add some seating. You only have a few weeks to purchase a ticket, so fill out the form and drop it off with your payment at the Friends bookstore. If you know someone who is not a member but would like to attend, we welcome them to join the Friends (see page 7 for details) and purchase a ticket.

The library provides a place to check out books, movies, and music, attend programs, and participate in activities. It is a great place to visit.

See you around the library,

**Katie Mazzi**

The Friends are not updated by the post office when you move. To stay informed, send an email to: [info@friendspg.org](mailto:info@friendspg.org) with your updated mailing address and email address.

## 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](http://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](mailto: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



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Website: [www.friendspg.org](http://www.friendspg.org)

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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 is operated by volunteers who enjoy being surrounded by books, talking about authors, and comparing notes with other readers. We welcome our regular patrons and are always happy when new people stop by to see who we are and what we do. Everyone is encouraged to browse even if they don't buy anything. Our hope is that they will return another time.

The bookstore revenue is a vital source of income for the Friends. It helps us meet our mission of advocating on behalf of the library, funding programs, and purchasing equipment, games, and furniture for the library. When our library opened in 2019, the Friends paid to furnish the children's and teen rooms as well as the bookstore. Over time, items have been added, upgraded, or replaced. The Maker Space room is an area where we have made major contributions for new and updated equipment.

The Friends also invest by subscribing to the excellent monthly publication *BookPage*. We offer it for free to library patrons in a print version or a digital version online through the Friends website. Over the years, we have increased the number of printed copies we order in our yearly subscription due to reader interest.

If you are not familiar with *BookPage* and are always looking for something new to read, you will like this publication. The copies are located inside the library on a table near the door. It introduces new authors as well as anticipated bestsellers across all genres, including historical fiction, literary fiction, popular fiction, mysteries and thrillers, nonfiction, biography & memoirs, romance, cozies, audiobooks, lifestyles, children, young adult, and more. There are book reviews with recommendations and author interviews.

Each month, I read the *BookPage* and make notes about books I want to read or find out more about featured authors. I follow up by going online to the [Charlotte County Library](http://CharlotteCountyLibrary.org) page and checking to see if the books are available to put on hold. If a new book is not in the system, I will put a request in for the library to purchase the book. If you aren't sure how to navigate the Charlotte County Library website page, stop by the library and talk with one of the library employees. They are always glad to help.

We look forward to seeing you in the bookstore.





# Youth

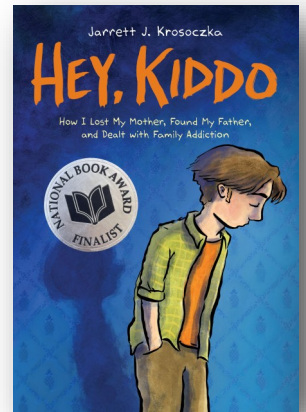
## Literacy Outreach with Jarrett J. Krosoczka by Tony Farina, *Friends* Director



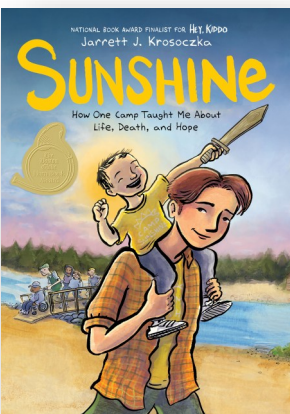
Jarrett J. Krosoczka (pronounced Crow-Sauce-Kah), known since boyhood as "JJK," is the New York Times bestselling author/illustrator behind more than forty books for young readers, including his wildly popular Lunch Lady graphic novels, select volumes of the Star Wars™: Jedi Academy series, and Hey, Kiddo, which was a National Book Award Finalist. Krosoczka creates books with humor, heart, and deep respect for his young readers—qualities that have made his titles perennial favorites on the bookshelves of homes, libraries, and bookstores over the past twenty years. He will be this year's literacy outreach speaker sponsored by the Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library and the Shively Charitable Foundation.

In addition to his work in print, Krosoczka produced, directed, and performed in the full-cast audiobook adaptations of his graphic novels. The Hey, Kiddo audiobook garnered both Audie and Odyssey Awards for excellence in audiobook production. The Lunch Lady audiobook, led by Kate Flannery (The Office), garnered an Odyssey Honor.

Krosoczka has been a guest on NPR's Fresh Air with Terry Gross, profiled in The New York Times, featured on Good Morning America, and delivered three captivating TED Talks that have accrued millions of online views. Krosoczka garners millions more views online monthly via the tutorials he produces for YouTube and TikTok. As well as working on his books' film and television adaptations, Krosoczka has also written for The Snoopy Show



(Apple TV+) and served as a consultant for Creative Galaxy (Prime Video), and appeared in live segments for the show.



Realizing his books can inspire young readers beyond the page, Krosoczka founded School Lunch Hero Day, a national campaign celebrating school lunch staff. A consummate advocate for arts education, Krosoczka also established the Joseph and Shirley Krosoczka Memorial Youth Scholarships, which fund art classes for underprivileged children in his hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts.

Krosoczka lives in western Massachusetts with his spouse and their three children, a pug named Frank, and a French bulldog named Bella Carmella.



# All Around The Library

## Pages From Our Library's Past by Katie Mazzi, *Friends* President & Bookstore Manager

When you drive to the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library one of the first things you notice is the thought provoking mural on the front of the building. This mural features a two page 'scrapbook' of images and newspaper clippings about the library dating back to its start in 1908.

When Charlotte County started designing the library on Shreve Street, the Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society reached out to county staff and asked for the opportunity to paint a mural on the new building that would celebrate the history of libraries in Punta Gorda. The Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library are proud to have been a sponsor of this mural.

Skip Dryda was commissioned to design and paint the mural. His vision included the backstory of the history of libraries in Punta Gorda which begins when the first library opened in April 1908 in the guild room at the rectory of the Episcopal Church. Over the years, the library expanded to meet the needs of the growing community, surviving multiple hurricanes, and moving five times to larger and larger facilities.

The Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society is a non-profit whose mission is to preserve the rich history of Punta Gorda through art and education. They are proud to be a part of the Florida Mural Trail.

The Mural Society is offering guided walking tours of the Punta Gorda murals through March.

The Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society also published the book *PAINTING THE TOWN, 30 Years of Murals, History and the Stories Discovered Along the Way*. It shares the 30-year history of the murals with photo and information about each mural and a summary of the local history it depicts, coupled with a few stories we have discovered along the way. The stories relate to the history and help to add a perspective to our past. It also contains lots of historic photos as well. It is available at Copperfish Books.

For more information about the walking tours or find out more information go to their website: [puntagordamurals.org](http://puntagordamurals.org).



**Mural: Pages From Our Library's Past**



**[Punta Gorda Murals](http://puntagordamurals.org)**



# In Other News

## Charlotte County Library System's 2026 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 2026 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](mailto:info@friendspg.org)

**Address:** 401 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Name

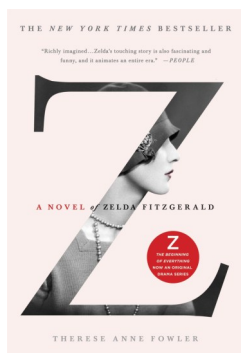
Email and/or Phone Number

## *A Members Only Event!*

*The Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library Present:*

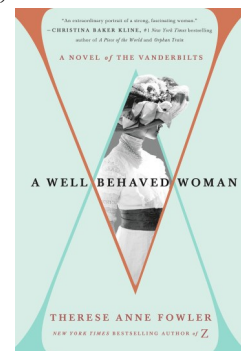
**Therese Anne Fowler Tuesday, February 24, 2026**

**Isles Yacht Club, 1780 West Marion Ave, Punta Gorda Doors open at 11 a.m., Luncheon at 11:45 a.m.**



Literary Luncheon Keynote speaker, Therese Anne Fowler (pronounced ta-reece) is the third child and only daughter of a couple who raised their children in Milan, Illinois. An avowed tomboy as a child, Therese protested her grandmother's determined attempts to dress her in frills, and then, to further her point, insisted on playing baseball even though Milan had a perfectly good girls' softball league. She was one of the first girls in the U.S. to play Little League baseball.

After several publishing disappointments she decided to forge her own path, against the "professional advice she was getting" and she wrote the 2013 biographical historical novel about Zelda Fitzgerald, *Z*. It was a best seller and was adapted into an original dramatic series for Amazon Studios.



Therese discovered that she has an affinity for strong women from history whose stories have been either mistold or are largely untold. Her 2018 novel *A Well-Behaved Woman*, is a kind of homage to Edith Wharton with a dash of affection for Jane Austen for good measure. *A Good Neighborhood*, published in 2020, explores the effects of class, race, and heartrending star-crossed love. Her most recent novel, *It All Comes Down to This*, was released in 2022.

Therese has been a visiting professor at North Carolina State University, a member of Phi Beta Kappa and PEN America, she is married to award-winning professor and author John Kessel.

To reserve your seats, submit this completed form, along with a check made payable to *Friends of the Punta Gorda Charlotte Library*, in person at the **Punta Gorda Charlotte Library Bookstore**, or by mail to: **Friends of Punta Gorda Charlotte Library, 401 Shreve St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950. ALL SALES FINAL.**

*Please submit a separate check if you are paying dues.*

Secured seating is assigned to tables of eight (8). Payment and a valid email are required to make a reservation and your confirmation will be emailed to you. 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**.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tickets \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$70 each (*Friends of the Library Members only*)

**Total Due** \_\_\_\_\_

**If purchasing multiple seats, please include a list of the names of the persons attending and include payment for everyone.**



***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 1<sup>st</sup> 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

U.S. Postage

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Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Permit No. 24

Current Resident or:

## ***Friends* of the Library Business Patrons**

Share this information with your business friends and encourage them to become a *Friends* Business Patron.

### **LIFETIME MEMBERS:**

**Andreae Group at ReMax Harbor Realty**

**Farr Law Firm**

**Gould Family Trust**

**Marianne Lilly, Re/Max Harbor Realty**

**Punta Gorda Coffee & Tea**

**Roth Family Foundation**

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