

April 2008



# Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library

Member Newsletter

## Next Meeting Dates

- April 23 (4th Wed)
- May 14 (2nd Wed)
- June 18

Meetings usually take place the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM in the library Community Room. ALL WELCOME! Subject to cancellation one week prior. Check at the Circulation Desk for information.

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## President's Message by Beth Ulman

Dear Friends,

It will be a busy spring at Edith Wheeler Memorial Library! Coming soon on April 6 is our David Merrill Mural Celebration and dedication of the William Ehlers Meeting Room and Marie Lederer Children's Department. Families are welcome. There will be music, refreshments, children's activities, and a "mural tour." Come and meet our library's famous citizens!

April 6 is also the last day of Rob Simon's directorship of the library. Rob has served us faithfully and well for the past several years and we will miss him. We wish him the best of luck in his new job as director of the Canton Library. We also wish Margaret Borchers, our current children's librarian, well, as she steps in as interim director.

We are planning two special events for the first weekend in May. On May 3, we will unveil a staff-designed and sewn original quilt, which will hang in the lower hallway of the library. The quilt is patterned after a bookshelf and features the names of Monroe authors, past and present. We hope some of the authors will attend and

mingle with us Friends. Thank you to our great staff members for their vision and hard work on this beautiful quilt.

On May 4, we present the first installment of the Friends of the Library Concert Series. Theater professional Leo Meyer will grace our community room with his singing talents. We will host a reception after the concert. Please mark your calendars and plan to come to a free cultural event in your own community library!

If you know anyone who would like to perform a future concert, please contact us. We are open to all genres of music.

Preparations are in full swing for the annual book sale. Please mark your calendars for our new dates and location: June 28-July 2 at Masuk H.S. As in years past, we will offer books half-price on Monday and a bag of books for \$5 on Tuesday. All books will be free 10-1 only on Wednesday. Volunteers are always needed to work at the book sale and to sort books between now and then! Contact us if you would like to help.

Renewal notices have gone out to many of you. Please renew

your membership promptly and save us the cost of mailing a reminder. Also, we are trying to collect e-mail addresses from all our members who have them. We would like to send the newsletter electronically when possible to save our precious resources. Please remember to provide your e-mail address on your renewal form. If you have misplaced your renewal letter, you may use the form in the newsletter. If you upgrade to a \$50 membership level, you will receive a free EWML tote bag!

At our April meeting, we will be accepting nominations for next year's officers and in May, elections will be held. New officers begin their terms in June. This is my last column as President of the Friends. Thank you for supporting the library with your patronage, donations, and membership in the Friends. Together we have made our new library a true community asset. Enjoy it often!

See you at the library,

Beth

**You can email Beth at [ulmans@alumni.princeton.edu](mailto:ulmans@alumni.princeton.edu), or call 452-9070 or 209-4255.**

## Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library

### Focus on Friends: Joan Verniero, Writer by Beth Ulman

Visit the library and check out these books by Joan Verniero:

***You Can Call Me Willy***

***Victory or Death***, co-authored with Doreen Rappaport

***United No More***, co-authored with Doreen Rappaport

***101 Asian Read-Aloud Myths and Legends***

***101 Celtic Myths and Legends***

***101 Read-Aloud Myths and Legends from Around the World***, co-authored with Robin Fitzsimmons

***101 Read-Aloud Bible Stories***

This summer, young writers in Monroe will once again have the opportunity to learn creative writing techniques from a local wordsmith with a distinguished career in education and writing. Joan Verniero is a Friend of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library and the published author of several highly regarded young adult books.

Joan started writing when she was a child and by now has published numerous books and short stories. She is also a lifelong teacher. She was the director of an alternative school in Manhattan and has also taught at the graduate level. The title of her course at University of Bridgeport is "Writing is Hard Fun!" Currently, Joan teaches creative writing in the Language Arts Department at Masuk High School.

Joan's first children's book was published in 1995. *You Can Call Me Willy* is about a child with AIDS who wants to play baseball. The acclaimed picture book was selected by Good Morning America for its time capsule. Monroe residents

can find it more easily in the library!

At Masuk, Joan is co-advisor to Panther's Pen Literary Magazine, which was one of only 10 student literary magazines recognized for excellence by the National Council of Teachers of English out of a pool of 450. Copies of the magazine can be ordered by e-mailing Joan at [jverniero@monroeps.org](mailto:jverniero@monroeps.org).

The summer creative writing workshop, scheduled for four afternoons on June 26, 27 and 30, and July 1 (see calendar on page 3), will focus on process, not product. Each writer in the class will have a voice and will be encouraged to respond positively to others' writing to help them improve. The workshop will focus on individual style and voice in addition to writing standards. Many genres will be explored, including poetry, short fiction, and nonfiction. Kids who are serious about writing should watch for the sign-up sheet in the children's department.

### New Chess Club Is Wildly Successful by Beth Ulman

More than 50 young chess players have participated in the Monroe Chess Club since the February 2 inaugural meeting. Kids are learning from teacher Jeff Lawrence and honing their skills with multiple games every Saturday.

The Chess Club is open to school-age children from kindergarten through high school and meets every Saturday from 10 AM to 12 PM in the Children's Room of the library. Newcomers to the game and players of all levels are welcome. During Spring sports season, the Chess Club will run until 1 PM. Kids are encouraged to come before or after their games. No previous knowledge or equipment is necessary. Teenage players are welcome. If enough interest, a separate teen chess club will be established.

### Children's Department April Vacation Week Programs by Margaret Borchers

**Two Authors Visit:** On Monday, April 14 at 2 PM, A.C.E. Bauer and Karen Day, two exciting new authors, will talk about their new books. Don't miss this chance to visit them, ask questions and get your book signed. Both books are suitable for children in grades 4 – 6 and will be available for sale that day.

**Origami:** Children ages 9 and up are invited on Tuesday, April 15 at 10:30 AM to learn the ancient Japanese art of paper folding. Registration is required and space is limited. Call 452-2850 to register.

**Movie Matinee:** *Water Horse – Legend of the Deep*, rated PG, will be showing on Wednesday, April 16 at 2 PM. The movie features a lonely boy who discovers a mysterious egg that hatches a sea creature of Scottish legend. Running time: 112 minutes.

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## Upcoming Events at the Library

The Library hosts a wide range of **FREE** activities for all members of the family. Call the Circulation Desk at 452-2850 to register for programs. Ask for the Children's Room to learn more about Children's programs. For a listing of exciting activities and events for children, teens and adults, visit [www.ewml.org](http://www.ewml.org), and click on **Calendar**. \* indicates a Friends-sponsored activity.

April 4	Congressman Shays (see sidebar)	3 – 4:30 PM
April 5, 12, 19, 26	Chess Club	10:00 AM
April 6	David Merrill Mural Celebration	2:00 PM
April 9, 16, 23, 30	Read to Gracie, registration required	5:00 PM
April 10	Teen Meeting	4:00 PM
April 14	Children's Program: Two Authors Visit	2:00 PM
April 14	Stealing Lincoln's Body (see sidebar)	6:00 PM
April 15	Origami, ages 9 and up, registration required	10:30 AM
April 16	Children's Movie	2:00 PM
April 21	CT Piecemakers	10:00 AM
April 23	Friends of the Library Meeting	7:30 PM
April 29	Movie Night	7:00 PM

May 3, 10, 17, 25, 31	Chess Club	10:00 AM
May 3	Quilt Dedication/Authors	2:00 PM
May 3	Reception for Rob Simon	3:00 PM
May 4	Friends' Concert Series	2:00 PM
May 7	Book Discussion	7:00 PM
May 8	Teen Meeting	4:00 PM
May 14	Friends of the Library Meeting	7:30 PM
May 19	CT Piecemakers	10:00 AM
May 27	Movie Night	7:00 PM

June 4	Book Discussion	7:00 PM
June 7, 14, 21, 28	Chess Club	10:00 AM
June 18	Friends of the Library Meeting	7:30 PM
June 20	Guitar Hero (see sidebar)	2:00 PM
June 23	CT Piecemakers	10:00 AM
June 23	Movie Night	7:00 PM
June 25 - 28	Book Sale Setup	Masuk H.S.
June 26	Children's Program: Bee Man (see sidebar)	10:00 AM
June 26, 27, 30, July 1	Creative Writing Workshop	2 PM - 4 PM
June 28 - July 2	BOOK SALE : Masuk H.S.	
June 28	Book Sale (Early Bird 9 AM - 10 AM)	9 AM - 6 PM
June 29	Book Sale	10 AM - 6 PM
June 30	Half Price Day	10 AM - 6 PM
July 1	Bag of Books \$5 Day	10 AM - 6 PM
July 2	Free Day	10 AM - 1 PM

### April 4: Congressman Shays

The Congressman will participate in a "town meeting" style discussion session with any Monroe residents who are interested in attending. Any topic is welcome. Meet with him in the Ehlers Meeting Room and discuss federal, state or local concerns.

### April 14: Stealing Lincoln's Body

Author and Bethel resident Thomas Craughwell will speak on his recent nonfiction book, a true story of how, in 1876, a group of counterfeiters tried to steal the body of Abraham Lincoln from his grave in Springfield, IL, and hold it for \$250,000 in ransom. The program is free, but registration is preferred. Call 452-2850, option 6 to register.

### June 20: Guitar Hero

The popular video game "Guitar Hero III" will be on loan from the CT State Library. Teens in grades 7 – 12 are invited to come try it. Refreshments will be served. To register (required), call 452-2850, option 6.

### June 26: Bee Man

Stuart Woronecki, the "Bee Man," from Stonewall Apiary, LLC in Hanover, CT, will present "The Art and Science of Beekeeping" outside on the lawn next to the gazebo. The presentation will be oriented toward children and will include the demonstration and explanation of typical equipment used in beekeeping. A question-and-answer session will be included and honey and beeswax samples will be available. If it rains, the presentation will be indoors in the Ehlers Meeting Room.

# Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library

## Annual Friends Book Sale by Beth Ulman

The annual Book Sale of the Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library will take place June 28 – July 2, 2008 at Masuk High School on Route 111 in Monroe. This indoor, air conditioned location will accommodate the large number of books and other media for sale, as well as provide ample space for shoppers and browsers. It is handicapped accessible.

Quality books of all kinds, as well as audio books, videos, CDs, DVDs, computer software, records, cassettes, music scores, puzzles and games will be available at the sale. Notable types of books include recent hardcover fiction, books signed by the author, and a substantial assortment of children’s and young adult books. Popular non-fiction categories such as cooking, crafts, sports, and biographies return, and new categories such as new age/inspirational, short stories, true adventure and local history have

been added.

The sale features approximately 25,000 items, fully sorted into over 90 categories. Hardcover and trade paperback books are priced \$2 and up. Mass market paperbacks remain \$1. Most children’s books are \$1 and \$0.50, or as marked. Prices will be reduced Monday through Wednesday. All proceeds benefit the library.

Donations are still being accepted for the sale. Books may be brought to the new library during regular hours or placed in the Friends’ donation shed in the back, overflow parking lot behind the police station anytime.

Hours of the book sale are as follows: Saturday, June 28, 9 AM-10 AM: early bird admission \$10. Free admission Saturday – Tuesday, June 28 – July 1, 10 AM – 6 PM; Wednesday, July 2, 10 AM – 1 PM. Call (203) 452-2850 for more information or to volunteer.

**Discounted tickets to Old Sturbridge Village are available at the Circulation Desk, courtesy of the Friends. They must be used by the end of May, so please plan your visit today!**

### Friends Board Members

<b>President:</b> Beth Ulman Email: <a href="mailto:ulmans@alumni.princeton.edu">ulmans@alumni.princeton.edu</a>
<b>Vice President:</b> Lorraine Riedel Email: <a href="mailto:littleonelar@earthlink.net">littleonelar@earthlink.net</a>
<b>Secretary:</b> Anita Papp
<b>Secretary:</b> Adria Pearlman
<b>Treasurer:</b> Katie Young
<b>Treasurer:</b> Henry Knoth
<b>Membership Chair:</b> Anita Papp
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Cathy Kurzbacher

*Another beautiful scene from the David Merrill mural*



April 2008

*Scenes from the*

*Monroe Public Library*

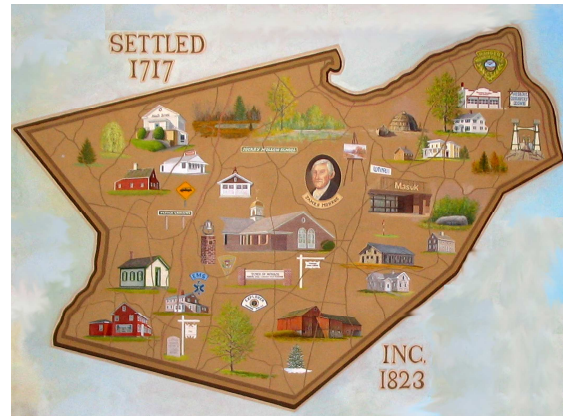
*David Merrill Mural*

1958—1972



*Edith Wheeler Memorial Library*

2007



*Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library*

*and the*

*Monroe Historical Society*

*Cordially invite you to attend the dedication of the*

*David Merrill Mural*

*William J. Ehlers Meeting Room*

*Marie P. Lederer Children's Department*

*Sunday, April 6, 2008*

*2 pm - 4 pm*

*Library lower entrance*

*Music, Refreshments and Children's Activities*

# Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library

## A Brief History of the David Merrill Mural by Nancy Zorena

Over twenty-five years ago, Monroe artist David Merrill spent 18 months planning and painting a wonderful, historical mural in the Masuk High School library where the only wall suitable in town was available. He painted at the school from September 1981 until its dedication in the spring of 1983.

Masuk students and teachers who were there in the early 80's remember watching Mr. Merrill paint the 29-foot wide mural of historic Monroe. Often students stopped to view the work in progress and many spoke with the artist. A girl was particularly sad one day and told him about the loss of her pet horse. David asked her for a photograph and added the horse grazing in a Monroe meadow to the mural.

Using a map of the town as a centerpiece, the original mural contained views of Monroe, most of which represent a bygone era of country stores, working farms and open fields. The town's greens, churches, schools, early homes, and old barns are depicted in the four seasons, at different times of day and night and with different moods of the sky. David included aerial views of the Stepney and Monroe Center Greens, which he photographed from a Masuk student's plane in preparation for his mural.

When the mural was first painted, several civic groups in Monroe helped raise over \$10,000 to make the work a reality. Masuk's Industrial Arts teachers Joe and Doug Fedorko and their students framed the mural in 1983.

In April, 2007, the panels of the mural were carefully moved to the new Edith Wheeler Memorial Library to allow a wider audience and greater access for this town treasure. David spent a year restoring the mural and adding several additional scenes to the right side of the mural and above the doorway to the Children's Department. Many additional icons were also added to the map and the Veteran's Memorial was added to the left of the door way. The original mural increased in size to 49 feet with 28 new subjects added. Doug Fedorko framed the newly enlarged mural as well as helped David move the panels from Masuk to the EWML.

The move of the mural to our new town library was made possible because of the generosity of the Monroe Women's Club. Their Community Impact Grant of \$10,000 was awarded to the Monroe Historical Society for its proposal to have David Merrill restore and add to the mural as long as the Library Board, Town Council and Board of Education were willing to see David Merrill's mural relocated to a more central location.

Countless people were able to experience the artist's restoration and painting many more subjects on the mural over the many months of work. Children on their way to the Children's Department made suggestions to David and he added a heart, butterfly, flowers and a cat. Patrons and library staff have had a rare opportunity over the last year to witness Monroe's native son so lovingly paint scenes of our town.

When the Monroe Historical Society

first began its quest to move the David Merrill Mural of Historic Monroe to the EWML, among the first people we spoke to were Library Board Chairman Bill Ehlers and Library Director Rob Simon. They both received the idea very positively and encouraged the Society. Marie Lederer, one of the Library Trustees, invited me over to her home to give me clippings about all of the groups in town that raised the funds to make the mural possible in 1981. Marie was part of the original David Merrill Mural Fund Committee and supported and encouraged the mural's move. She said that many people on the original mural committee were not happy with the selection of the Masuk wall so David painted the original mural on panels thinking that maybe one day another wall would become available. Twenty five years later, with the building of the EWML, we have the perfect location for our town mural. It was a community effort then and now as our town worked together to support native son David Merrill to paint an art treasure for us all.

Join the Monroe Historical Society and the Friends of the Library on Sunday, April 6th from 2-4 as we dedicate the David Merrill Mural, William J. Ehlers Meeting Room and the Marie P. Lederer Children's Department at the EWML. A new key has been created to explain each of the subjects in the mural and will be available in brochure form as well as on the wall adjacent to the mural. There will be children's activities, music, and refreshments to add to the celebration.

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## The Edith Wheeler Memorial Library aka EWML by Abigail S. Ulman

**Abigail S. Ulman is a 5th grader at Six to Six Magnet School, Bridgeport, CT**

Our library is the perfect place for me. I could spend all day there! It is large, new, and airy. EWML has tons of books, and the fresh smell of new books is always lingering on the shelves.

It is quiet. The quietness of the library is punctuated with the sound of keys clicking, the beep of books being checked out, and the hushed voices of mothers reading to their children.

The children's room is the best place for me to go. There are large windows on every side of the room, and the walls are painted cherry red. It is a fantastic place to do homework, go on the computer, play quiet games, or read on the comfy couches.

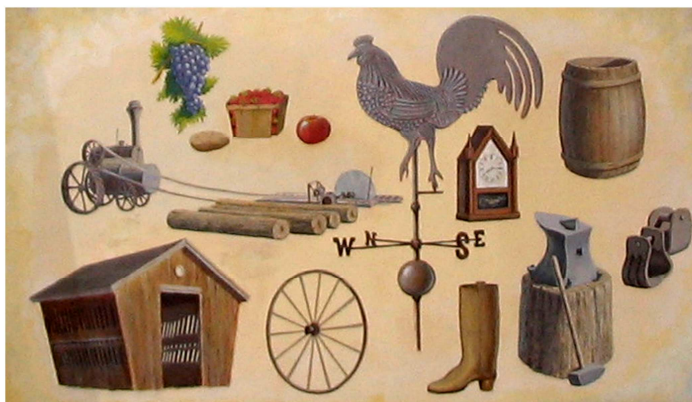
I love going there to pick out new books. My heart sings when my mom tells me that we are going to the library, and when we go there, I pick out a stack of books every time.

EWML would not be in existence had it not been for the Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library. They hold book sales every year, and that is how they raised enough money to build the library. The Friends raised enough money to buy the library a baby grand piano. They also give money to pay for programs the library holds. We go to almost all the programs.

Our library, any library, rather, is paradise to me. I could sit reading on the couch, a chair, or at a table for hours on end. Before I read, I roam the shelves, feeling the books, looking at titles, and I am in heaven.

The Edith Wheeler Memorial Library is the best!!!!

THE END



**Scenes from the David Merrill mural** →

# Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial

733 Monroe Turnpike  
Monroe, CT 06468  
203-452-2850

Non-Profit Org.  
U. S. Postage  
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Monroe Ct. 06468

## Board Members

**President:** Beth Ulman

**Vice President:** Lorraine Riedel

**Secretary:** Anita Papp

**Secretary:** Adria Pearlman

**Treasurer:** Katie Young

**Treasurer:** Henry Knoth

**Membership Chair:** Anita Papp

**Newsletter Editor:** Cathy Kurzbacher

Membership form: **Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, Inc.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Annual Membership Dues:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Senior     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50— \$99 Contributor/Free book bag! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100+ Benefactor/Get a Wheeler Pin!  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ Other                              |

I would like to be an active Friend.

Please contact me about:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising      | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Book Sale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> General          |

Please make checks payable to: Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, Inc.

Enclose your check with this form and bring or mail to:

Friends of the Edith Wheeler Memorial Library, Inc., 733 Monroe Tpke, Monroe, CT 06468  
(Contributions are tax-deductible.)