



# DIAMOND BAR FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

December 2013

## President's message:

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous support of the Friends of the Library this year. With your support, 2013 was an amazing year!

The 20th Annual Wine Soirée was the BEST Wine Soirée! The Wine Soirée Committee lead by Co-Chairs Rick Rogers, Nancy Lyons and Tony Torng produced the western-themed party that brought out all the local cowboys and cowgirls. Enjoying delicious foods and wonderful wines while participating in the spirited auctions, our community raised a lot of money for the Diamond Bar Library.

We welcomed Community Librarian Manager Pui-Ching Ho to our library in March. Under her leadership, the library had 59 programs for children, teens, and adults that were attended by over 3,000 library patrons this year. In addition, children's librarian Julie MacCaslin was busy with story time and other children's activities. Teen Librarian Josh Murray set up special programs on Teen Tuesdays and chose special material for young readers. Everyone who par-

icipated in The Summer Reading Program had a fun and exciting time. The Diamond Bar Library is a vibrant and bustling center of exploration and learning, all made possible by your support. The Friends of the Library is projected to give over \$40,000 to the Diamond Bar Library for books, materials and programs this year.

The Friends continued operating the BasicallyBOOKS bookstore in the Library as well as at our location on Golden Springs Blvd. Under the dedicated and creative leadership of Manager Mary Hackett, our team of over 50 volunteers processed over 50,000 books this year. All of the proceeds go to support our library and its programs. Thank you for your continued support of our bookstore -- recycling is wonderful on so many levels.

Our Board of Directors were inspired, dedicated and fun-loving. For me, it was truly a pleasure and an honor to serve with this tireless group of giving and selfless individuals and friends.

To you, dear Friends, wishing you the best of this holiday season.

See you at the library next year,

*Ruth Low*

## Librarian Appreciation Luncheon

The Diamond Bar Friends of the Library honored our librarians at The Windmill Room of the Diamond Bar Library on November 6 at the 14th annual Librarian Appreciation Luncheon. Diamond Bar school librarians and principals, along with the Diamond Bar Library staff and the Friends gathered for a delicious Indian lunch. Los Angeles County Library Chief Deputy Yolanda De Ramus, PUSD Superintendent Richard Martinez and WVUSD Superintendent Robert Taylor joined in the recognition of our valuable resource, our librarians. Mayor Jack Tanaka and Mayor Pro Tem Ron Everett spoke and lauded all of the educators for

their dedication to literacy in our community.

School Liason Kiran Kumar spoke about the new Literacy Circles for middle school students, and Community Library Manager Pui-Ching Ho launched Read Together Diamond Bar 2014 by urging everyone to vote for the favorite book of four presented as finalists for the one book we will read in October 2014. Ballots will be available at the Diamond Bar Library until January 5, 2014 for everyone to cast their ballot. Please stop by and make your choice. One entry will win a \$25 Basically BOOKS gift certificate. With our exceptionally low prices, you can buy and enjoy many treasures with this prize.

# READ TOGETHER DIAMOND BAR RETURNS!

We need your vote, not for an election but for literacy. President Ruth Low recently announced that the Diamond Bar Friends of the Library is again sponsoring Read Together Diamond Bar. Four books have been selected as finalists and we need your vote to choose the book we will read together in October 2014. The four finalists are *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom* by Amy Chua, *On Gold Mountain* by Lisa See, *The Soloist* by Steve Lopez and *True Notebooks: A Writer's Year at Juvenile Hall* by Mark Salzman. All four are outstanding books that will be enjoyable reading and will create avenues for discussion.

You will find more information on the books and voting forms at the Diamond Bar Library. Please cast your vote for the book of your choice between November 6 and January 5 at the Diamond Bar Library. You can find more information at the Friends' website,

[www.dblibraryfriends.org](http://www.dblibraryfriends.org), or at the Diamond Bar Library website, <http://www.colapublib.org/libs/diamondbar/>. A \$25 gift certificate to Basically BOOKS will be awarded to one of the entries.

Whether it is called a city-wide book club or a state-wide reading campaign, communities of all shapes and sizes are adopting the concept originated in 1998 by the Washington Center for the Book: people coming together through the reading and discussion of a common book. There are now statewide, citywide, countywide reading programs all over the world.

This will be a community-wide project open to individuals, companies and other organizations with many opportunities to participate. We encourage you to be part of this exciting community project. For more information on participation, please call 909 629-2711.

## Friends Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for something to do in your spare time? Something that contributes to the community welfare? That gives you a chance to meet new people? That won't put any extra cash in your pocket but will reward you with fulfilling activity and the smiles from those you're helping? Consider volunteering with the Friends of the Library.

The Diamond Bar Friends of the Library is a completely volunteer organization. We operate two bookstores and produce events throughout the year in support of the Library and of literacy in the community. For example, each October we host a Librarian Luncheon (please see the article nearby about this year's Luncheon). This year we are producing Literature Circles, in which high school students meet to discuss significant books while in the mentoring, supportive presence of experienced (retired) English teachers. Read Together Diamond Bar/One Book, One City will be a year-long series of events tied to a particular book; this year's book is yet to be determined – cast your ballot at the Library for one of the four finalist books being considered. And of course there's the Friends big annual fund raiser – the one, the only, the Wine Soirée and Benefit Auction, held each spring for

the past 20 years.

Each of these activities happen only through the collective efforts of volunteers, volunteers like YOU. We'd love to talk to you about opportunities for you to contribute your time and talent to the Friends! Please send us an email through our web site at [www.dblibraryfriends.org](http://www.dblibraryfriends.org). We would be happy to email you back, or call if you give us your phone number. Or you can always stop by at one of our Basically-BOOKS book stores and strike up a conversation with one of the volunteer Staff.



# ALICE MUNRO

## Nobel Prize Winner

By: Gordon J. Van De Water

Alice Munro has had a high profile in recent literary news. She won the Man Booker prize in 2009 and now, in 2013, has won the Nobel Prize for Literature. It isn't often a Canadian-born writer wins such a prestigious award (Saul Bellow in 1976), and it is an even rarer thing for a short story writer to do so. She is the first! Once she'd won I went through my library shelves and found a copy of her 2009 book *Too Much Happiness*, which contains ten stories "that shed light on the unpredictable ways in which men and women accommodate and often transcend what happens in their lives." A bit of research tells me that she often deals with people in crisis, exploring human despair, exploitation and alienation. Most of her stories explore man/woman betrayals in Ontario, Canada. Canadian writer Margaret Atwood describes Munro's fictions as having "the combination of obsessive scrutiny, archaeological unearthing, precise and detailed recollection, the wallowing in the seamier and meaner and more vengeful undersides of human nature, the telling of erotic secrets, the nostalgia for vanished miseries, and the rejoicing in the fullness and variety of life, stirred all together."

Not having previously read Munro, I was at a loss as to what might personally be discovered. I did recall a conversation with a well-read lady who praised the author's ability to create a short story which might have led another kind of writer to compose a full length novel. And so I started reading ...

The first Munro story I picked up, *Face*, was masterfully written, but spoke of disturbing, unsettling things in a casual conversational way that invited intimacy with the reader. A male narrator tells the strange tale of a baby boy born with a birthmark that covers half his face and how that birthmark affects his life and the lives of others. His hate-filled father sees his son as "a hunk of chopped liver," and his mother, though caring, is at times frightening. As he matures, the boy enters into a friendship with Nancy, who, in a horrific act, mutilates her face with a razor blade she so can draw closer to him. She is then forced to move from the neighborhood and he never sees her

again, but realizes that if he did bump into her in the future, there would be nothing between them.



*Some Women* takes account of many characters, including a man dying of leukemia, but the focus is on a strange old woman and a young and uninhibited masseuse who pounds her skin, which is vividly described as being "yellow-white, like wood freshly stripped of its bark." What follows is a peculiar, enigmatic, love story of two women chasing after this stricken man who dies "sometime before the leaves were off."

I then read a few more Munro stories that show her full power as a writer. Memorable is *Fiona*, once a happy small town girl, who slowly slips into the depths of Alzheimer's disease in the 1999 story, *The Bear Came Over the Mountain*. We see how Fiona coped with declining mental powers by posting yellow sticky notes on kitchen drawers to identify the contents, and eventually comes into a world of her own as she drifts deeper and deeper into mental confusion and flickering memories. The story is, however, primarily about her marriage, with full emphasis on the casual infidelities of her husband Grant, a retired college professor.

I was able to download the 1968 story *Boys and Girls* and so give attention to a story from early in Munro's career. This is a slice of life story of living on a hard-scrabble fox farm somewhere in Ontario where a young unnamed girl, something of an inquisitive and at times rebellious tomboy, describes the daily events, and interaction with people, and animals, that are central to her being, all mingled with the life and death that are always a part of farm life. Eventually she comes to the painful realization that she is "only a girl" in a male dominated society.

The essential strength of Munro's stories, to my mind, comes from the vivid descriptions of character and place. She manages to pack an entire novel into about 25 - 30 pages. And she does this without giving a sense that her material is

continue on page 4....

# Bookstore Manager Mary Hackett Retires



Beloved BasicallyBOOKS manager Mary Hackett and her husband Jim are retiring from bookstore operations after eight years, and are heading off to enjoy the peaceful life in the scenic mountain community of Oak

Glen. The Friends will miss them dearly.

When Mary stepped into the Friends first bookstore located on Cold Springs Road, in 2005, she thought it might be a fun way to do some volunteer work. However, Mary brought with her over 30 years of retail experience, a keen eye for details and organization, and a deep love for people and books. She immediately became our bookstore manager! It turned out to be a package deal - with her she also brought along Jim and the rest of her family.

Basically BOOKS lost its lease at the Cold Springs location in 2007, and Mary (and Jim) supervised the move to the new location on Brea Canyon Road, where the store remained for the next three years. In 2010 a new location on Golden Springs Boulevard became available, and Mary (and Jim) again organized and managed the big move. She and her

volunteers packed and unpacked over 8,000 books! She also designed the new store (known informally among the Friends as BB3), making it a warm and friendly place where the community could feel comfortable and welcomed. In 2012, Mary organized and opened our second bookstore (BB4), located inside the new Diamond Bar Library. The County Library design team for the new library consulted with Mary about the details of the Friends' in-library bookstore. They were so impressed with her managerial abilities and accomplishments with BB3 that they greatly increased the amount of space they were allotting for the bookstore; BB4 is the biggest Friends bookstore in the entire 88-library LA County System!

Mary has organized a team of over 50 volunteers that receive, process and sell hundreds of books each month. She has also organized monthly book sales, created on-line sales, decorated the stores for special occasions, and has always had a ready smile and kind words for anyone visiting or working at BB3 or BB4.

Mary and Jim's dedication and contributions to the Friends of the Library and the community of Diamond Bar are immeasurable! They will be deeply missed, but we wish them a wonderful retirement!

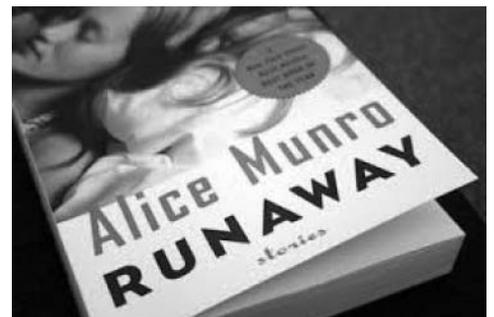
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## ALICE MUNRO

forced or anything important left out. Her characters come to life on the page. Growing up in Ontario I can easily relate to many of the locales and scenes she presents - the sandy but sometimes stony beaches surrounding the multitude of lakes that grace the province, the snow forts (and snowmen) built and then destroyed in childish mock wars, and the many little towns I recall from family driving excursions on Sundays.

Alice Munro is a penetrating explorer of the lives of ordinary people, often women. As a writer of "modern" short stories, however, she is quite different from

the writer of more traditional stories that captivated me in my youth – W. Somerset Maugham; but I fancy that I'm not too old to stretch my mind and appreciate the work of this latest winner of the Nobel Prize. If you enjoy short stories, I would certainly urge you to pick up a volume of Alice Munro's stories. Her insight and artistry are well worth experiencing.



# The Library Endowment Fund

*“Plant a tree today, and our children’s children will enjoy its shade.”*

The old proverb quoted above explains the reason behind the Friends’ creation last year of the Diamond Bar Library Endowment Fund. The Endowment Fund is intended to grow steadily over the years, and to be a perpetual source into the future of additional funding for the Library’s books and materials collections, as well as to help upgrade the Library’s technological resources when needed.

None of us know what the future will bring, but we can be reasonably sure that Library budget and funding challenges will always be with us. Just as we can be sure that children will continue to be brought to the Library by their parents and grandparents, to experience the joy and wonder of books and the world of the imagination.

A donation to the Endowment Fund is in effect a gift for the Library today, as well as a gift for the future. At this time of year in particular, many people consider their plans for charitable giving, in consultation with their accountants or tax advisors. A contribution to the Library Endowment Fund is tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Perhaps you might consider

making a donation to the Library Endowment Fund in the name of a friend or relative, as your Christmas or holiday gift to them?

Donations are very welcome any time of year, of course. Please call Jim Hackett, the Chair of the Friends Endowment Fund Committee, at (909) 573-6811, or contact him via email through our web site at [www.dblibraryfriends.org](http://www.dblibraryfriends.org), with any questions on the Endowment Fund or how to make contributions.



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## **BASICALLY BOOKS!**

### **BOB DUNBAR, Meet the Volunteer,**

Gordon J. Van De Water

Bob has been a volunteer for nearly five years at Basically BOOKS, a most commendable run. He is a genial gentleman and is more than willing to assist buyers of books as they search for a particular title or author. You will find Bob behind the counter working the late shift on Tuesday afternoons/evenings. Bob receives pleasure from meeting and greeting customers as they enter the store and by doing so, knows he is doing something towards the betterment of the community.

He has many interests including reading novels dealing with the West, and particularly enjoys the writings of Clive Cussler, an American Adventure

novelist. Bob is a veteran of the Korean War. He tells of how he went to the Brown Derby once back in the States and met and chatted with a foursome of movie luminaries like John Wayne, Clint Walker, Chuck Connors, all tall men, and the shorter Alan Ladd. When it comes to movies he greatly enjoys those “B” Westerns that include some action-filled scenes and features heroes such as Lash Larue, Hopalong Cassidy, Gene Autry, and a favorite side-kick, Smiley Burnett. Bob also enjoys woodworking, listening to 1950’s rock ‘n roll music, and camping with his family in places such as Oak Glen. He and his wife once took a year-long vacation travelling some 26,000 miles around the United States and Canada. There are not many of us who can do that!

When you next come by Basically BOOKS, please drop in to say “hello” to Bob. He would appreciate it, and you would be the winner in knowing this fine fellow.

**Diamond Bar Friends of the Library**

*www.dblibraryfriends.org*

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## **Librarian's Message: from Pui-Ching Ho...**

Online learning anytime, anywhere... just a click away! There are a wide range of interactive courses, led by expert instructors, that can be taken entirely over the Internet through "Learn4Life". All "Learn 4 Life" courses through the County of Los Angeles Public Library are free with your library card. The most popular courses include Accounting Fundamentals, Microsoft Excel 2010, Medical Terminology and Project Management Fundamentals. There are also fun and interesting courses such as Secrets of Better Photography, Drawing for the Absolute Beginner, Write Your Life Story, etc. You can take up to five courses per calendar year at no cost. All courses run for six weeks and new sessions begin every month. To enroll in a course, go to <http://www.colapublib.org/learn>. For more information, please contact us at the Diamond Bar Library.

### ***The 21st Wine Soirée is Coming!***

The most fabulous event in Diamond Bar is coming again. The 21st annual Wine Soirée and Benefit Auction will be held **Sunday, April 27, 2014** from 4 to 7 pm at the Diamond Bar Center. Mark your calendars and save the date.

And contact us today to volunteer to help with the Wine Soirée! Volunteers are needed to sell ads in the Soirée program, to help with the decorations, to approach businesses and individuals to request donations of items for the silent and live auctions, to help sell tickets, and for a host of other jobs. Some jobs are large, some are small, but all are important. Contact us through the Friends web site at [www.dblibraryfriends.org](http://www.dblibraryfriends.org) and we'll get in touch. Or, come to our first Soirée planning meeting of 2014, which will be held in the Windmill Room of the Diamond Bar Library at 7 pm on Monday, January 13th.

