

BERKELEY BOOKMARK

VOL. XVIII, NO. II

WWW.BERKELEYLIBRARYFRIENDS.ORG

EARLY SPRING 2019

Sparking Joy

by Friends President Sandy Bails

Maybe some of you have watched the Marie Kondo series on Netflix? If you've been living in a cave incommunicado for the last two years you may have avoided the Marie Kondo tsunami, but in all likelihood, you've at least heard of her decluttering prowess and her admonition that if possessions do not "spark joy" they should be dispatched. There are some of us bookstore volunteers who would like to wring her neck—not actually, of course, because that wouldn't be nice at all, but figuratively.

Assorted thrift shops and stores that sell used books have been inundated of late with wave upon wave of stuff—clothes, toys, kitchenware, mismatched china, and books as people have ransacked their homes, purged their cupboards, emptied their closets, and swept their bookshelves clean. In the circles we run in, this has come to be called "The Marie Kondo Effect." And the effect it has had on our inventory has been staggering. Bags of books, boxes of books, piles of books on our sorting pallets, jammed into our shelves, stuffed under tables. Almost—but not quite—more books than we know what to do with.

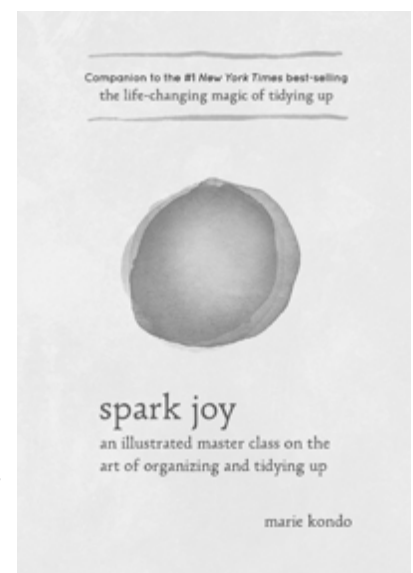
It is inevitable that some of the books that make their way to us never get to the shelves in the store. We end up with lots of books that are too worn, too old, too obscure (I'm not talking interesting-obscure here, the kinds of books that we often list on Amazon, but rather of-no-interest-to-anyone obscure, like the enormous volume of *Books in Print* circa 1973, the 1980s guide to wise investments, the 1968 lesson plans guaranteed to create a dynamic classroom).

In the interest of full transparency, these are the kinds of books sent off to a book recycling service we use. No one who donates to us should be under the impression that we will find a happy home for her college textbooks of yore or the manual that was handed out at the workshop he attended decades ago. We understand that some people cannot bear the idea of actually throwing away a book, but we've become hardened, and we can. We'd rather encourage all our donors to toughen up a little, be a little more steely-eyed about the books they send off to us. Consider that the books that no longer spark joy with you may not spark joy with anyone. Nothing bad will happen to you if you throw away a book that has had its day in the sun.

The force of the initial flood seems to be abating somewhat, which is a good thing. The day I write this, the volunteers at the Channing store could actually take some breaks during their shifts from the mad unpacking, sorting, pricing, and shelving frenzy we've been on for months now. There are customers at the stores, after all, not just books. And those customers have been buying the books we're putting out. In fact, along with the flood tide of books, we're seeing more new faces at the stores. When I first started as a volunteer—maybe eight or nine years ago—it seemed that the vast majority of customers were recognizable from the week before. That is no longer the case. While we still look forward to seeing the customers who discovered us early on and return regularly to see what's new on the shelves, their numbers are challenged by lots of new faces. And all those customers, old and new, are buying books in greater numbers than ever.

For the Friends, more books translate into more book sales which in turn translate into more money to give to the Library for programming, increased ability to contribute to the Library Foundation's capital campaigns, the pleasure of being able to provide a scholarship to a member of the Library staff who is pursuing a degree in Library Science. We expect to continue to fund the school district's Summer Slide program, which provides small personal libraries to children who have been identified as being at risk of losing academic ground over the summer, and who will benefit from having books of their own.

Now, *that's* something that sparks joy. So, rather than wringing her delicate little neck, maybe we owe Marie Kondo a (grudging) "Thank you." □



Supporting the Friends = Supporting the Library

Creating a great public library requires support from many sources. The Berkeley Public Library is fortunate to have many community supporters who firmly believe in the power of libraries. Your individual donations help keep Berkeley's library system vibrant and responsive.

Donations in Honor ...

In honor of the hardworking Friends volunteers at the Central Library Workroom from the Estate of Dorothy Bryant

In honor of Morgan Baum from Abdul Soltani

In honor of Andrea & Bill Foley from Anne Foley

In honor of Irene Martens from Robert Keevess

Donations in Memory ...

In memory of Alan Bodine from Eloise Bodine

In memory of George Goldman from Ann Goldman

In memory of Yuri Kodani from Bessie Chin

In memory of Madeline & Joe Mixer from Christine Codding & John Ricca

In memory of Betty Olds from Susan Wengraf

In memory of Nicole O'Hay from Barbara O'Hay

In memory of Wanda West Rector from Evelyn Gahtan

In memory of Rhoda Slanger from Barbara Alesandrini

In memory of Jenny Spitzer from Marian Wolfe

Membership Renewals

Barbara Barbour	Barbara Loebel
Morgan Baum	Margaret McGarrahan
Marjorie Bissett	Anne-Marie Miller
Judy & Burt Calder	Patricia Nagamoto
Lawrence Cotter	Vicki Oswald
Leah Emdy	Harriet Patton
Jeri Ewart	Anna Presler
Charlotte Ferrey	Tom Reilly
Charlotte Gray	Harry Robertson
Helen Green	Harry & Dorothy Rubin
Miriam Gross	Jane Scantlebury
Blossom Hofmann	Eva Schlesinger
Naomi Janowitz	Carole Schloz
Jean Johnson	Yvonne Shawver
Lois Karp	Frances Tauber
Michael Katz	Patricia Walker
Robert Kevess	Carolyn Weinberger
Gerda Korner	Ralda Lee

Membership Renewals (\$25) plus Donations \$26 to \$75

Vernon Ambrose	Richard & Janet Hack
Marcia Anderson	Natalie Hahn
Sharon Anderson	John Hannan
Francesca Archer	Phoebe Janes
Judy Barmack	Billy Karp
Keith Barton	Kristi Kenney
Dan Bellm	Louise Lidicker
John & Debra Bennett	Suzanne Masuret
Jacqueline Beth	Laura McCrea
Adrienne Bryant	Luana Morimoto
Phyllis Calechman	Andrea Mullarkey
Rosemary Campos	Lynn Murdock
John Caner	Roger & Jean Moss
Mark Chaitkin	Judy Nakadegawa
Landy & Elizabeth Chapman	Jan Pardoe & Cathy McIntosh
Ron & Susan Choy	Therese Powell
Barbara Conheim	Martha Rabkin
Robert & Judith Davis	Linda Schacht
Dick Duker	Renata Schmitt
Grace Fawcett	Breanne Slimick
Marsha Feinland	Margaret & John Sparks
Sabina & Michael Frank	Bess & Steve Sternberg
Jake & Freya Fuchs	Richard W. Stevens
Judy Fujimoto	Wendy Simon
Barbara & Kevin Galvin	Carol Starr & Regina Minudri
Terry Gillen	Neda Tomasevich
Elsa Glines	Thomas Trippe & Kirsten Berg
Ann Goldman	Vita Wells
Mary Gomes	Charles Wollenberg
	Sandra Young

New Members

Emmaline Campbell	Suanne Masuret
Eric Cho	Claire McGowan
Edward Cullen	Pascale Miller
Amy Finkel	Joan E. Peters
Marcia Flannery	Rob Walker
Elisa Gaytan	Judith Ann White
Mary Gomes	Adam Wilks
Kevin Mann	

Membership Renewals (\$25) plus Donations \$76 to \$200

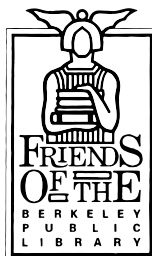
Peter & Nancy Bickel	Steve & Linda Lazzareschi
Michael & Waltraud Buckland	Robert Marsh
Richard & Christine Colton	Linda Perkins
Thomas & Jane Graly	Karen Rosenbaum
Charlene Harrington	Patricia Shanks
	Lily Shih
	Kristin Stromberg
	Adam Wilks

Membership Renewals plus Donations \$201+

Gary Brown	Mark Lillge
Amy Cho	Robert & Ann Lynn
Morris Friedell	Eddie & Amy Orton
Judith Justice	Elizabeth Overmyer
Peggy Kirihara	Rob Walker
Madan Kumar	

THE FRIENDS MISSION

The Friends of the Berkeley Public Library is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to support and expand the educational, cultural, and outreach programs of the Library. The Friends work with Library staff to build collections and stimulate interest in the Library.



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The *Bookmark* appears quarterly; we welcome your letters and your ideas for articles. Contact us at *Friends Bookmark*, 2090 Kittredge, Berkeley 94704, or via e-mail: berkeleylibraryfriends@gmail.com

Archival Trolling

Your editor was asked recently to track down information about a long-ago Friends member—likely a Board member. Checking our archival stack of old Friends newsletters seemed the most efficient method, but instead of efficiency, I was so totally sidetracked by fascinating Friendly minutiae that, honestly, you're lucky this newsletter ever went to press. Here are a few tidbits:

1964: Friends annual membership is \$1. The annual budget is \$700.

1969: The outdoor annual book sale had been established and raises about \$3,500; the Gift Committee allocations include \$75 for the purchase

The February 1978 newsletter included a Q&A interview with newly appointed library director Regina Minudri:

Q: Now that you are duly appointed, warmly welcomed, and in office for some three or four months, what do you think of your new job?

Gina: I love it. I am fortunate in having a most responsive staff, and great cooperation on all sides. Busy, I am. Not everything is rose petals. But I'm having a good time.

Incidentally, Gina would start writing a regular column for the *Bookmark*. She called it "Out of the Frying Pan." □

The local Snake Lady brings her reptiles to a Friends-sponsored children's program at the Central Library "to demonstrate how interesting and lovable they can be." Children's Librarian Connie Kidder is described as "wary."

1976: Every issue now includes extensive listings of "Better Books for Sale." Eventually about three-fourths of each issue will be given over to book listings.

1978: Familiar names begin to appear on the Officers and Directors list: Beth Edelstein, Mary Kraetzer... and Regina Minudri is Library Director.

1981: The Friends reinstate the Idea Awards for library staff members who submit the best suggestions for improving library services.

Trish Hawthorne continues her historical walking tours on campus and in Ocean View, and at the Annual Meeting presents a slide show and talk on the history of the Berkeley Public Library.

1982: Barbara Alesandrini and Andy Washburn join the Friends. Barbara eventually serves as Friends president, and Andy eventually (and currently) works as a bookstore manager.

Don Foley is elected treasurer.

A notice appears, in rather large print: "To the Friend Who Requested *Realities*: We have found the copy featuring a monkey using a calculator. Please call if you are still interested."

1987: More familiar names appear: Anita Navon, Natalie Hahn, Ethel Manheimer....

Annual receipts are about \$40,000, from dues, donations, the annual book sale, and the sale of posters, postcards, and T-shirts.

1988: The intrepid Trish Hawthorne is still offering walking tours sponsored by the Friends. The newsletter notes, "Trish has been giving these walks since 1979 and she threatens this is her swan song."

An article about the BIN—the Library's Berkeley Information Network—appears, written by librarian Sayre Van Young.

The Library's Berkeley Reads Literacy Program takes off.

Malcolm Margolin speaks at the Friends Annual Meeting on "Indian Stories and Folklore: or How Knowledge Was Preserved in a World Without Books."

Diane Davenport joins the Friends, as do several other Berkeley librarians.

Local musician Sarah Cahill joins the Board, following in the footsteps of her mother, longtime Friends volunteer Dorothy Cahill.

1990: Late in the year, the format of the newsletter changes from a small 4-page booklet to the size it currently is. Better Books listings now take up over half of each issue.

1991: The *Bookmark* editor experiments with cream-colored paper and red print. It is not successful. A phonograph record sale is held in the Library and nets about \$2,700 in 6 hours. Toni Klassen donates to the Friends, as do Schuyler Bailey, Nancy Bickel, Pam and Elmer Grossman, Anna Rabkin, Jeanie Rucker, and Phoebe Watts. All are still members in 2019.

Whew, I'm beat... and I still haven't found the name I seek. Only 27 more years of issues... 4 issues a year... that makes just 108 issues to go. Watch for more interesting FOL trivia in the next *Bookmark*! □



Little Free Libraries—Need Books?

If you've been paying attention over the last several years, you've seen scores of little free libraries popping up outside people's homes. "Take a book. Share a book" is the Free Library movement



motto, and the people who install and maintain the libraries are known as stewards.

From time to time stewards—and maybe you are one of them—find that more books have been taken than shared. What to do? We'd like to let library stewards in on a little secret: The

Friends of the Library Channing store puts a cart of free books outside its backdoor every day the store is open, i.e. Tuesday–Saturday. Most days you'll find

a wide selection of good quality paperbacks and hardcovers, fiction and nonfiction.

Insider tip: Tuesday is a particularly good day to check out the Free Cart* because sorters have been at work on Monday, going through boxes of donations and putting items we can't use on the cart. "That can mean slightly dated travel books, older cookbooks, textbooks of all sorts, duplicates (even triplicates!) of sellable books that we just don't have shelf space for. Every two months we look through the store and remove books that have been on the shelves for 10+ months. Some of those books we mark down, some we save for the Annual Big Books Sale in May, and plenty of those books end up on the Free Cart.

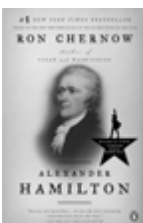
In the event you are not the steward of a little free library but are interested in the Free Cart, come to the Channing store and take a look. The books on the cart outside the store's backdoor are free, no questions asked. □

—Sandy Bails

*Editor's note: Be aware that the cart itself is not free, just the items on it. We've "lost" at least one cart to someone who took "Free Cart" all too literally.

Friends Don't Let Friends Miss Good Books

Editor's Note: Just two book reviews this issue, both featuring historical nonfiction; both books are owned by the Library, so check 'em out if you're interested. And if you'd like to review a book (i.e., write conversationally about something you loved to read), just e-mail your "review" to berkeleylibraryfriends@gmail.com.

 Kathy Huff (Foundation executive director) writes: Having already read the book by Lin-Manuel Miranda on the making of the musical *Hamilton* quite some time ago, it only seemed right that I finally "read" (or rather listen to the audio) book it was based on by Ron Chernow. I'm glad I finally did because there's nothing dull about this very big book.

Chernow knows how to skillfully weave the details of Hamilton's life with the shaping of the Republic. All the people in the book, mostly men, whose names we remember from our high school

textbooks, come vibrantly alive in Chernow's excellent telling of the founding of our nation. His treatment of the social movements that informed the times resonate with the contemporary reader. No easy task for historians. Surprisingly, when reading/hearing this book with today's political scene in mind, there's an alarming sense of familiarity. I found the whole book absolutely fascinating and oddly comforting.



Lucia Blakeslee (FOL volunteer coordinator) writes: [I've been reading] *Munich* by Robert Harris. It is the story of the days when Chamberlain went to Munich to try to appease Hitler. The facts and history are accurate but Harris, who is a wonderful writer, has added two fictional character, one English, the other German. It's beautifully crafted, I was on the edge of my chair even though I knew how it was going to turn out. □

Fun-raiser as Fundraiser

Regular readers of this newsletter will remember that our late early Spring issue usually includes a report on the Authors Dinner, the bigtime fundraiser put on by the Library Foundation. This year will be no different, though we'll let this year's attendees tell you the most about the evening.

This year the Friends sponsored two tables at the February 9TH event, and seated 6 lottery-winning volunteers (and two library staff members) at each table. Friends volunteers who attended included Lucia Blakeslee, David Duberman, Sandy Jones, Peggy Kirihara, Lily Montoya, Donna Rabin, Shereen Rahman, Harry Robertson, Barbara Schram, Dennis Shambaugh, James Stenquist, and Hildred Yost. And here's what they had to say about the elegant evening:

One guest (who shall remain nameless) commented "It was a fabulous evening and a thrill to be among so many revered wordsmiths, plus I partied too hardy!!!"

Peggy Kirihara writes "What a privilege, to attend such a joyful affair. The three hosts graciously moved the program along without making anyone feel rushed. it was good that they talked about their achievements so the writers themselves didn't have to speak. Everyone gushed about the food—the appetizers were unique and beautifully presented, and the dinner was fantastic. I had a great discussion with the poet's (Chavez) publisher and met a library staffer at our table. Kathy Huff and her board and staff did an amazing job—couldn't get better than this event!!!"

Harry Robertson adds "Everything about the Authors Dinner was just splendid. It was so well organized, the decorations were great, and the food was spectacular." *Editor's note:* That's Harry, with volunteer coordinator Lucia Blakeslee, in the photo.

Barbara Schram notes "I attended the 2019 Authors Dinner as a FOL volunteer and am very grateful for having had this opportunity. It was a very well-organized event from the reception thru the dinner itself. Meeting a few of the authors directly and hearing about all the others via the speakers—with the video screens so we didn't miss any of the talks—was a significant treat. I had read a few of the books by these authors in the past, but several works were new to me and I will seek them out now that my curiosity has been piqued. Thank you for this opportunity."

Finally, Hildred Yost covers it all: All of my boxes were ticked by this year's Authors Dinner. From

"glam" decor when entering, to an earlier ending, it was a class act. The reception configuration was more open and seemed less crowded. Bartenders and servers were pleasant and professional. The food was the



best ever with a delicious interesting menu. Having a scripted introduction of authors was a great idea and very well done by co-hosts Linda Schacht Gage, Venessa Hua, and T.J. Stiles. Charming, whimsical decor and print tablecloths added a warm informality.

Authors Dinner co-chairs Fredrica Drotos, Anne Marxer and their committee are to be complimented for a beautifully executed Berkeley party. I enjoyed their choices and decisions. Thanks also to my host the Friends of the Berkeley Public Library. □

Board Openings

Come June 19 at the Annual Meeting, the Board of the Friends will present a list of candidates to serve three-year terms on the Board. Just how many candidates will be put forward remains to be seen—somewhere between two and four. An ad hoc nominating committee will be at work considering possibilities. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving on the Board of the Friends, or in finding out more about Board service, please contact Barbara McPhail, the chair of the ad hoc committee, at bmcphail@gmail.com. □

Editorial Maunderings, Meanderings, & Mumblings

Our merry band of volunteers is working diligently to gather (and sort and pack) books for the upcoming annual **Big Book Sale** (May 11-12). Do not be confused—the books themselves are not big (i.e., oversized), but the sale is. This weekend-long bibliographical affair takes over the Library's community meeting room with two dozen tables covered with hundreds of books for sale. Thousands. And at this point, it feels like millions. Sale hours are 10-4 on Saturday, 1-4 on Sunday. This year's sale is particularly well-stocked with children's books, art, history, media, cookbooks, and a new category: "Fun Stuff." A "More Expensive Books" area will also feature... well, books priced a little higher than the 50¢ that most books will be selling for. The sale really is a hoot, and if you've not attended before (or even if you have), do drop in. Remember, you don't *have* to buy anything...but it's great fun to see just how very excited Berkeley can get over a book sale.

Bay Area Book Fest: The BABF is set for May 4-5 (the weekend before the Friends' Big Book Sale), and it promises to be another grand event. This is the fifth year of the festival, and we've participated every year. The Friends booth features some different topic arrangements than usually seen in the bookstores: classic movies, "All Things New Yorker," Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys books, "Sweet Old Books," and the ever popular "Really Good Books at Ridiculously Low Prices." Volunteers Lucia Blakeslee and Toni Klassen can be seen in the photo above from last year's sale.

It's All Process: Friends President Sandy Bails has long worried that Something Would Happen to one of the Board members, and thus that individual's knowledge of FOL policies and procedures would be lost...like how to put out the newsletter, or put on the Annual Meeting, or do the Amazon-ing, or even oversee T-shirt production. So 'twas decided that any member who does some sort of FOL-related procedure would "write up" the process. Thus the lateness of this issue. There's a scene in the movie

"Help" in which a character details his actions: "I'm moving my right foot, I'm moving my left foot..." That's a little of what writing procedures feels like. In the end, we'll all be glad we did it, but...

Clean Up, Clean Up, Everybody Clean Up: The annual gussying of the Channing Bookstore kickstarted the year. A cast of about 20 volunteers dusted, vacuumed, scrubbed, scraped, waxed, and washed tables, desks, floors, windows, and bookshelves—we even sharpened all the pencils—during the annual rite of renewal. The store was spotless when we finished; we were not. That's Bob Baty and Claudia Berger in the photo below.

Volunteer Updates: Longtime volunteer (over 12 years) Irene Mertens has recently decamped to Washington State to be nearer to her family. She reports that she is doing great and says

hello to all the store volunteers. For many years, Irene was the store manager for the Saturday afternoon shift at the Channing Bookstore.

Somewhat sadder volunteer news: we've lost two of

our longtime Friends. Rhoda Slanger died several months ago. A former Board member and a long-term and ever-willing volunteer substitute for both bookstores, she died of a sudden—and totally unexpected—heart attack.

Longtime Friends members will remember Yuri Kodani, a woman of laughter and smiles, who was particularly active in the Friends in the 1980s. She died peacefully in her sleep at the age of 91.

Bylines: Close readers will note that much of this issue is written by FOL president Sandy Bails. After 50+ issues, your newsletter editor is beginning to fade a little. The editorial process will henceforth be shared with Sandy, and probably with other Board members a bit too. Really, it takes a village. □



Letters, We Get Letters

Dear Editor,

I have just now read your Fall 2018 *Berkeley Bookmark*. I am not yet a member of the Friends, but found a copy in the library, and will join the Friends when I can afford to. And I certainly enjoyed reading it! Thank you for the calendar of upcoming Friends events, etc., etc.

I would like to suggest that in relation to your "A New Year's Resolution" article, you might want to somehow tell potential donors how to recycle their unsellable items in the trash. Find out if hardbacks can be thrown in with paperbacks in the recycling bin. (I hope all surrounding cities have the same policy.) And which, if not all, of the following items can be recycled through the trash or a recycling center: LPs, CDs, DVDs, audiotapes, and other items they may want to donate.

Hopefully, this information might make them less likely to bring unsellable items to you, although as you point out, people are convinced that their own media are valuable. Oh, and also, you might tell them such things as how to tell that a book is water-damaged: the wavy wrinkled pages, and/or whether you accept musty books. (I have heard that mustiness can spread from one book to others if they are shelved together.) If you don't accept such books, then you could say that, if the whole box smells musty, don't bring it in.

I have no idea whether this would be helpful or not, but maybe it would discourage some unsellable donations.

Of course, I am looking forward to the next *Berkeley Bookmark*.

—Joan Peters

Editor's reply: Thanks, Joan, these are great suggestions. The Friends have a flyer that answers some of your concerns and we have lists of other recycling possibilities by our store phones to share with callers. The next *Bookmark* will feature a chart of recycling opportunities, plus answer some of your other questions (though do look at the article on page 1 of this newsletter).

A couple of YELP reviews have turned up lately on that online "reviews and recommendations" site. Not quite Letters to the Editor, but certainly letters to the Friends.

Amalia C. wrote about the Channing Bookstore: Good selection, fairly well organized, reasonable prices. Think Goodwill prices, not rummage sale. I bought four kids chapter books plus one adult paperback for \$3, no complaints. Convenient, cheap parking (literally overhead), and well placed to combine

with a trip to Top Dog or Yogurt Park. We'll be back!

Another bookstore visitor wrote:

I'm amazed that more people don't know about this treasure trove of books. The wide selection of books and the prices cannot be beat anywhere.

Where else can you find books for \$.50 to at the most \$5.00. I have found some books I've always wanted to add to my home library but I thought were too expensive. They have a huge collection of hardcover cookbooks priced at \$2 or \$3. The fiction, history, and biography sections include classics as well as recently published. All for just a fraction of the cost you would find elsewhere. All proceeds go to the funding of library programs. Truly a great service to the public.

And finally, a letter e-mailed to the Friends, with our response, and the letter-writer's reply.

Dear Friends,

I heard there's a waiting list to check out Michelle Obama's book at libraries all over. Would it be helpful if I bought some and donated to you all? Is there a demand? I could also just make a cash donation if that's more useful for the organization.

—Breanne Slimick

Dear Bre,

I am replying to your suggestion on behalf of the Friends of the Library, which is not a part of the Library itself but rather a support organization that raises money for the Library. So if you gave us copies of the book, we would sell them in our bookstores (we have 2) and give the money to the Library (*all* the money—we are a totally volunteer organization).

As for the Library itself: It has a rich and full book budget, and has already purchased over 55 copies of the book, which are busily circulating. There *are* a lot of reserves on the book, but I think that number will drop soon as so many people received the book for Christmas. (There were 4 copies exchanged in my family alone!) So I doubt the Library really needs additional copies. If you would like to donate copies of the book to the Friends, that would be lovely, as would any kind of donation. You can also become a Friend of the Library for \$25 annually.

I hope this answers your question. If not, please write again. We are grateful for your generosity and inspired problem solving!

—Sayre Van Young,
Friends Volunteer

To which Bre replied:

Thank you for the thoughtful response! I went ahead and made a donation online and I will go through some books to donate in the new year! I love this organization and the mission and look forward to supporting more in 2019!

Friends of the Berkeley Public Library
2090 Kittredge Street
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