



GOOD NEWS!



Read all about it

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF EAST LAKE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

NOTABLE DATES

April 20

- Library Closed

April 23

- Community Concert—
Pinellas String Quartet—2 pm

May 4

- FOELCL Meeting—10 am

May 8

- ELCL Advisory Board—6 pm

May 29

- Library Closed

June 8

- FOELCL Meeting—10 am

June 13

- ELCL Advisory Board—6 pm



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Did You Know



What's in a name? Can a word here or there really bring home a message? Yes, I believe it can.

For me, the word "community" in East Lake Community Library's name captures so much of what ELCL is all about. When I think of all the programs and all the people who make East Lake Community Library such a special local resource, destination and asset, I know the word "community" is truly integral to what the library is and how it consistently manages to deliver excellence.

ELCL Director Lois Eannel frequently states, "ELCL is not just a library; it's a community center!" As I watch individuals from toddlers to teens to adults and seniors come and go through the library's doors, I know this is certainly true. These patrons don't just check out books! They participate in a wide variety of interesting programs, use the computers, gather in groups, apply for passports, play games, listen to concerts, purchase gift baskets and other items, enjoy special events, take in art displays....the list goes on and on! All this learning, bonding, researching, gathering and enjoyment would not be possible without input and action by various segments of the greater East Lake area. While each and every one of the library's staff members are knowledgeable and highly capable, staff alone could not generate the number and on-point nature of the library's menu of services, programs and amenities without contributions from volunteers, donors and other supporters.

In 2022, ELCL recorded 4,438 volunteer hours. I am certain the actual total of volunteer hours for that year is likely an even higher number as not all volunteer hours get logged. When the library's new Strategic Plan was being developed, hundreds of patrons completed surveys to guide the staff's efforts in determining a roadmap for the future. Each year, businesses and organizations in the East Lake area sign on to be ELCL Community Partners, supporting the library financially. Dedicated area residents serve on library boards and committees, and many area residents choose to donate to the library, either directly or through Friends of ELCL or the ELCL Foundation. ELCL simply could not shine as bright without these contributions from the community of time, talent and treasure.

I hope, like me, when you hear "East Lake Community Library", you will think of all the hearts and hands which make that name a reality.

Barbara Cole
President, FOELCL



DIRECTOR'S DASHBOARD

Behind the scenes at ELCL

There are ALWAYS things happening at YOUR community library, but sometimes changes occur that are not always evident. In the past few months, there has been a major restructuring of the library's staff to bring you better service and improved staff development.

Heather Brown, who will continue to be Outreach Coordinator for ELCL, has been promoted to Circulation Supervisor. Heather's personality, customer service skills, library experience and corporate background bring a fresh look to this position.

Since long-time staff member **Colleen Davis** is changing her status and cutting back dramatically on her hours, the library has a new Volunteer Coordinator—**Mirant Vyas**. His ideas for recruitment, incentives, using technology, expanding volunteer opportunities to different areas of library services and outreach, etc. already indicate a bright future for our volunteers, who are an integral part of our library. Colleen will continue with planning adult programs and coordinating art exhibits as Art Liaison.

Veena Jais, in addition to her other responsibilities, will now oversee the Locker System and has become a Notary Public, and **Shawn Bissessar**, who seems to wear many hats besides his position as Marketing Coordinator, will also assist Susan Schuler as her Senior Passport Assistant. **Patty Ann Wieczorek** will add a few more things to her plate: Senior Programs (e.g. Senior Meet and Greet, AARP Smart Driving, and SHINE Medicare Help) as well as meeting room scheduling for outside groups. You will also be seeing some new faces as we replace several staff members who have left, but in spite of the changes, ELCL will continue to strive to always put customer service first!

Several NEW things that might be more noticeable than staff changes are also happening in the next few months. Thanks to input from staff and patrons, we have just unveiled our new four-year **Strategic Plan for East Lake Community Library—A Roadmap for the Future**. Please pick up a copy at the library. We are very proud of the goals and objectives set forth as well as the accomplishments over the past four years.

A beautiful aluminum canopy, courtesy of the Friends of the Library, will be installed over the cement slab adjacent to the new shed so that outdoor programs and events can be planned. In fact, we're waiting for a completion date to have a ribbon-cutting and return performance by the St. Pete Sax Quartet. We're also offering an Adults Summer Reading Program this year, based on requests from adult readers who felt left out in previous years. After all, they like incentives and prizes, too! Enjoy springtime in East Lake and take advantage of all your community library has to offer!



—Lois Eannel
ELCL Director

Focus on Foundation



By James Cuomo
ELCL Advisory Board & Foundation President

East Lake Community Library aspires to provide innovative programming, relevant collections and responsive services in order to support lifelong learning, the joy of reading and cultural and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages. For many of us, ELCL is a cherished community resource that brings these things to our lives. If you have thought about how you can support these missions, please consider leaving a legacy gift to the East Lake Community Library Foundation.

Legacy gifts, also known as planned gifts or bequests, are gifts arranged in advance which take effect after a donor's lifetime. They can take many forms, including bequests in a will or trust, beneficiary designations in retirement plans or life insurance policies and charitable gift annuities or trusts. These gifts can be a powerful way to ensure ELCL has the resources it needs to continue serving our community.

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit."

— Nelson Henderson

A key benefit of leaving a legacy gift to the ELCL Foundation is that it allows you to make a significant and memorable impact in your community without affecting your current finances. By setting aside a portion of your estate for the library, you help provide the means to continue delivering vital programs and services. You create a lasting legacy to ensure future generations have access to the same resources and opportunities that you've enjoyed.

The ELCL Foundation supports our Library, and 100% of the funds raised go directly to projects that augment funding from Pinellas County. We hope you'll consider donating to the Foundation to give back to your community.

Learn more at <https://www.eldfoundation.org> and create **your** library legacy through charitable giving!

Fund drive is over half way home

Donations still being sought to help fund drop box

Game on! At the time of this newsletter's publication, the 2023 Annual Fund Drive has accrued \$5,550 in donations, leaving \$4,450 to go in order to reach the fund-raising goal of \$10,000. A big thank you goes out to everyone who has gotten the ball rolling in such a great way!

Monies raised through the Annual fund Drive will be used principally to fund the purchase and installation of a drive-up book drop. The drive-up book drop is something many ELCL patrons have been requesting for years.

The Annual Fund Drive timeline has ben extended beyond its original April 15 deadline in the hopes more donors will come forward. There is no gift too small; all donations are vital and appreciated and, when added together, have the power to do wonderful things.

Library patrons are asked to think about how nice it would be to have a convenient drive-up book drop available on rainy days and after hours or just when there is a need for a



quick book return without having to park and enter the library.

If you haven't donated to the Annual Fund Drive, or even if you have but might be able to increase your gift just a little, please consider making a donation today. Who knows? Your contribution just might be the buzzer beater that sends the thermometer over the top! Donations to the Annual Fund Drive are tax deductible. Gifts

may be made by check or by credit card and may be mailed, dropped off at the library or made by going online to www.eastlakelibrary.org and then clicking on "Annual Fund Drive".

A form should accompany the donation so donors can receive credit for their contribution. If mailing or dropping off a donation, please clip the following form, fill it out and include it with your contribution.



My gift to the 2023 Friends of ELCL Annual Fund Drive:

- \$25 \$50 \$100 \$200
 Other

Payment information:

- Check enclosed payable to: FOELCL Annual Fund
 Credit card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Discover— Please no prepaid credit cards)

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ CVV _____

Signature _____

Friends of East Lake Community Library is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Donations are tax-exempt to the extent allowed by law.



Learning to love the library



In February, East Lake Community Library hosted "Beyond Books Open House & Edible Book Contest" to better inform community members about the many services and programs the library offers. More than 250 people attended the fun and educational event. Shown manning the Friends of ELCL table at the open house are, right photo, from left, FOELCL Board members Joan McCarthy and Barbara Cole.

Concert Series draws large crowds

Tickets now on sale for last performance on April 23



Left photos, Doug Deming wails a blues song and is accompanied by the rest of the Doug Deming & the Jewel Tones band. Above, Peter Fletcher strums his classical guitar for the enjoyment of a sold-out crowd.

Turnout for each of the first three concerts in the 2023 Friends of ELCL Concert Series have drawn large, enthusiastic crowds.

The series kicked off in January with a high-energy, rollicking performance that had toes tapping throughout the room as Doug Deming & the Jewel Tones rocked the house with jazz, swing, soul, R & B but, most of all, blues numbers.

In February, the incredibly talented and charismatic Peter Fletcher showed once again why his is deemed a virtuoso on the classical guitar. His eclectic program featured classical selections as well as

The Mungos, a talented trio of ukelele players took the ELCL stage in March, led by Norine Mungo who is Tampa Bay Ukelele Society's event leader. Those who attended were amazed at the quality and variety of music the humble instruments could deliver. The program featured very familiar tunes as well as new compositions created by Norine.

The fourth and last concert of the 2023 series will take place starting at 2 pm on Sunday, April 23. The featured

ensemble will be Pinellas String Quartet which is comprised of highly skilled musicians from the Tampa Bay Symphony. The April concert program will include selections from classical composers including Vivaldi, Hyden, Mendelssohn, Dvorak and others.

Tickets for the April 23 concert are on sale now for the nominal price of \$10 each. To purchase tickets, either stop by the ELCL's front desk or call 727-773-2665 with a credit card number.

Tickets for the April concert are selling quickly, and seating for the event is limited, so delay is inadvisable.

In memoriam: **Deanna Bennett**



Long-term, ardent East Lake Community Library supporter Deanna Bennett passed away February 22. For over 20 years, she was a tireless advocate for ELCL. Deanna gave generously of her time and talents as an author, bibliophile, actress and community supporter to bring unique programs and services to ELCL patrons. She was also a generous donor, providing much needed funding for special projects and capital improvements, including the library's extensively used Community Room.

An author who published three books of fiction and two of non-fiction, Deanna enjoyed helping aspiring writers. As an actress, she appeared in several ELCL murder mystery fund-raising plays and, along with her

late husband Tom Bennett, who predeceased her in 2018, performed as Santa and Mrs. Claus at the library's annual holiday celebrations for years and also at other times as Charles and Catherine Dickens, pirate captains, sorcery teachers and other characters.

Deanna's vibrant nature, welcoming personality and generous soul will be missed by all who knew and worked with her. Her memory will live on, and the legacy of her many contributions to ELCL will continue to enrich the community.

East Lake Community Library has recently lost two other dedicated supporters, Susan Wolf and Paul Goldman.

Susan, who passed away March 10 and who was featured in the November 2022 issue of Good News, was instrumental in starting the library's robotics program and Little Library initiative. She served on the ELCL Advisory Board and also, for 18 years, on the Friends of ELCL Board.

Paul, who spent over 10 years as a volunteer at ELCL, far exceeding any other volunteer in total hours each year, passed away January 11. He received several awards for his dedicated service, including one from Congressman Gus Bilirakis. In addition to circulation duties, Paul also taught hands-on computer classes for senior citizens.

Rest in peace, dear friends. You will be missed and remembered.



In February, to celebrate "Love Your Library" month, Friends of ELCL treated library staff members to a sweet array of goodies to let them know just how appreciated they are. Shown enjoying the tasty treats are, from left, Karen Fulton, Joan McCarthy, Barbara Cole, Brenda DeSousa and Shawn Bissessar.

Coming attractions in the Book Nook

The Friends of ELCL's Book Nook, which sells used books, puzzles and other items, will be offering the following specials:

April Special: Books on religion, family, self improvement, music, gardening, crafts, sports, games and travel will be 50% off. In addition, DVDs of favorite TV shows will be \$2.

May Special: To celebrate female authors, all paperbacks written by women will be 50% off.

June Special: Patrons will be wished a "ducky" summer. Come pick a duck out of the pond to see which special saving amount will give you something to quack about.

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Please support and thank this Friends of ELCL Community Partner

Did you know....

- ◆ **LARGEST BOOK** According to "Guinness Book of World Records", the largest book in the world weighs over 3,000 pounds and measures 16.40 feet X 26.44 feet. Unveiled in Dubai, UAE, in 2012, the book is titled "This the Prophet Mohammed" and is a compilation of stories highlighting the lifetime achievements of Islam's Prophet.
- ◆ **JOHN STEINBECK'S DOG** John Steinbeck's dog ate the original "Of Mice and Men" manuscript.
- ◆ **FAMILY SEARCH** In 2022 ELCL achieved the status of being a Family Search Affiliate Library thereby enhancing its genealogy services.
- ◆ **GOOD NEWS** At the end of March, Pinellas County's Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) approved ELCL's \$20K proposal for technology upgrades. The funds will be used to improve the internet cabling throughout the library and to upgrade ELCL's audio visual systems and the roadside digital sign.

FOELCL BOARD

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Lois Eannel, ELCL Director (Ex Officio)

**James Cuomo, ELCL Advisory Board
Chairman (Liaison)**

The purpose of the Friends shall be to promote and enhance library services and facilities of ELCL, to foster closer relationships between the library and its community and to raise funds in support of the library, its materials and resources.