

CULVER CITY FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY SPRING NEWSLETTER



Message from our President

First, let me begin by saying thank you to all of our members and supporters—near and far. Whether you are an annual member, a lifetime member, or a loyal frequenter of our book sales, please know that every dollar you contribute goes directly toward purchasing new books and funding engaging programs for our community. Your support truly makes a difference.

We're excited to share we will soon be adding "endcaps," which are beautiful displays at the end of the book aisles, to our library interior. Keep an eye out for a special party invitation to celebrate the installation. With the generous collaboration of the Culver City Historical Society, the endcaps will feature truly historic photographs of Culver City—a beautiful tribute to our city's rich past.

One of our first-quarter highlights was our January Installation of new officers. We were especially delighted to welcome Author Nell Cross Beckerman as our special guest and surprise appearance from former Librarian Joan Mead. It was a wonderful evening of community and celebration.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Paula and Tom Wilson for their generous grant to the Friends. Their support strengthens everything we do.

And a huge grazie to Sorrento Italian Market for donating the delicious sandwiches and pasta salad for our Installation dinner—your kindness helped make the evening extra special. For any questions on how to get involved, email us at info@ccfol.org

If you'd like to lend a hand at a future book sale, we would be thrilled to have you join us—there's nothing more fun than books and community coming together! And if volunteering isn't on your calendar right now, you can still make a big impact by donating your gently used books. We gladly welcome them and love giving them a second life through our sales.

Last note: Please be sure to drop off your donations during library open hours only. It's because of your generosity that we're able to enrich programs and enhance the beauty and atmosphere of our library. We truly couldn't do it without you!

Get ready! Our T-shirt and tote bag fundraiser launches soon. Take care, and thank you again for your continued support of the Friends.

Sincerely,
President Aileen Zeidman
Culver City Friends of the Library

Celebrating Leadership, Community, and a Bright Future

On January 14, 2026, the Culver City Friends of the Library installed its 2026-2027 Board and reflected on the past year's accomplishment.

Outgoing Co-President Michael Laase warmly welcomed members and special guests Hope Parrish (City Historian), Scott Zeidman (former School Board president), and author Nell Cross Beckerman before reflecting on her seven years of leadership—two shared with co-president Aileen.

What began in 2019 with exciting plans for One Book One City and the library's 50th anniversary soon met the unexpected challenge of the pandemic. Yet through it all, the library thrived. Zoom became second nature, Kelly Conn and her staff kept services strong during unprecedented times, and in 2024 Lisa See finally spoke in person to a full and enthusiastic audience.

During Michael's tenure, the Friends created lasting contributions: the beloved Bookshelf Quilt (dedicated to Laura Frakes), two striking yarn wall hangings, a successful CicLAvia presence, and continued support for vibrant library programming. She also proudly announced a donation from the Wilson Family Foundation—an extraordinary show of community generosity.

Looking ahead, the Friends will unveil beautifully decorated bookcase endcaps featuring historic images selected with Hope's invaluable guidance. A celebratory reception is already in the works.

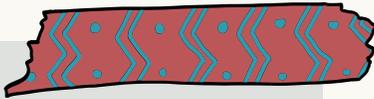
Before concluding, the Board surprised Michael with a heartfelt thank-you: a canvas bag signed by all members and a Culver City-themed blanket in her favorite color, green—a fitting tribute to years of dedication and steady leadership.

THANK YOU for your book donations which supports the work of CCFOL.



An important reminder - with the closure of the library parking lot after hours, please drop off book donations only during regular library hours Tuesday through Wednesday 12pm to 8 pm and Thursday through Saturday 10 am to 6pm.

The library is closed Sundays and Mondays.



2025 Financial Snapshot

- Income: \$27,705.63 (primarily book sales and donations)
- Expenses: \$32,915.74 (books, program support, and teen center furnishings)
- Year-end balance: \$89,934.59

While 2025 reflected a modest net decrease, the Friends remain financially strong and poised for an exciting year ahead—including the upcoming endcap project. It has been a remarkable chapter of resilience, creativity, and community—and the next one looks just as bright.



Moments from our 2026 Annual Meeting

Pictured Top Left to Bottom Right
President Emeritus Michael Laase with Author Nell Cross Beckerman
Treasurer Roz Henderson giving presentation on finance
President Emeritus Michael Laase and President Aileen Zeidman
Swearing in of 2026-2027 Board
President Aileen Zeidman presenting President Emeritus Michael Laase with blanket from Culver City Historical Society



2025 Updates from Kelly Conn

Community Library Manager

At the Annual Installation Meeting, Community Library Manager Kelly Conn shared an inspiring overview of the library's year—and the numbers tell a powerful story.

After pandemic slowdowns, library use and foot traffic are steadily climbing, a testament to the community's renewed enthusiasm.

Creative window and table displays, thoughtfully designed by librarians, complemented programs throughout the year—many tied to cultural heritage celebrations and seasonal themes.

From delightfully “punny” children's events to dynamic teen and adult programming, the library offered something for everyone.

Much of this was made possible by the Friends. CCFOL contributed over \$9,000 for programming—support that fully funds all adult programs—and donated more than \$13,000 for books and expanded periodicals.

The library catalogued 535 books from Friends donations alone.

Facility improvements also enhanced the visitor experience, including a new public address system, upgraded security cameras, key card access, and the ever-popular household battery recycling program.

The teen center now features sturdy, perfectly sized furniture funded by the Friends.

With nearly full staffing, 18 dedicated volunteers, and 118 library cards issued at a recent community event, the library is not just open—it's thriving.



Don't forget to renew your dues to Culver City Friends of the Library!

Membership years are annual and 2026-2027 membership renewals are due now.

Membership allows CCFOL to grow and support our local library, providing programming and funding critical needs.

Thank you to our Friends!

We wanted to express enormous gratitude to the Wilson Family Foundation for their generous donation.

And, a special thank you to Sorrento Italian Market for supplying sandwiches and salads for our annual meeting.

Finally, thank you to all those who donated books to the Book Room.



Coming This Spring: One Book, One Coast Unites 140+ Libraries for the West Coast's Largest Book Club Featuring George Takei

Join in on this impressive book club event unifying libraries across the west coast, reading George Takei's new book *They Called Us Enemy*.

More information available on the LA County website [here](#).

Upcoming Library Events!

Tips and Tricks Workshop with The Seniors Tech Club (Mar. 13, 20, 27)
Pi in the Skyline (Mar. 14)
We can do it! Performance (Mar. 21)
Create & Unwind (Mar. 25)

Hazards from Space: Asteroids and Space Debris (Mar. 28)
Spring Fabric Mosaic (Mar. 28)
Center Theatre Group Presents: ¡Sí, Se Puede! (Apr. 4)

Renewal Forms

Culver City Friends of the Library

Membership Form
(Please print)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (check one):

New Renewal

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (check one):

- Student (under 18 years of age): \$5.00 per year
- Individual: \$10.00 per year
- Senior (over 55 years of age): \$5.00 per year
- Sustaining Senior (over 55 years of age): \$15.00 per year
- Family: \$20.00 per year
- Supporting Member: \$50 per year
- Business and Organization: \$100.00 per year
- Lifetime: \$200.00

DONATION:

I wish to donate \$ _____

In memory/honor of: _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED TAX-DEDUCTIBLE PAYMENT OF \$ _____

Cash

Check payable to the Culver City Friends of the Library

I wish to get involved in the Friends of the Library:

Please contact me at: _____

Please mail or bring this form with payment to:

Culver City Friends of the Library
4975 Overland Avenue
Culver City, CA 90230
(310) 559-1676
www.ccfol.org

Thank you!

Screenland 5k

Friends of the Library Board Members came together to celebrate the Screenland 5k in Culver City.



Pictured President Aileen Zeidman (left), Vice President Laura Jane Kessner (center), President Emeritus Michael Laase (right)

2026 Friends of the Library Board Members

Aileen Zeidman—President

Laura Jane Kesser—Vice-President

Michael Laase—President Emeritus

Susannah Baxendale—Secretary

Roz Henderson—Treasurer

Steven Wieber—Book Room Chair

Pat Harmon and Sue Wiedem—Membership Co-Chairs

Kelly Conn—Library Representative

Members-at-large: Wanda Anesh, Sandy Eliga, Fran Kissel, Tricia Krause, Nancy Kuechle, and Marie Romano

