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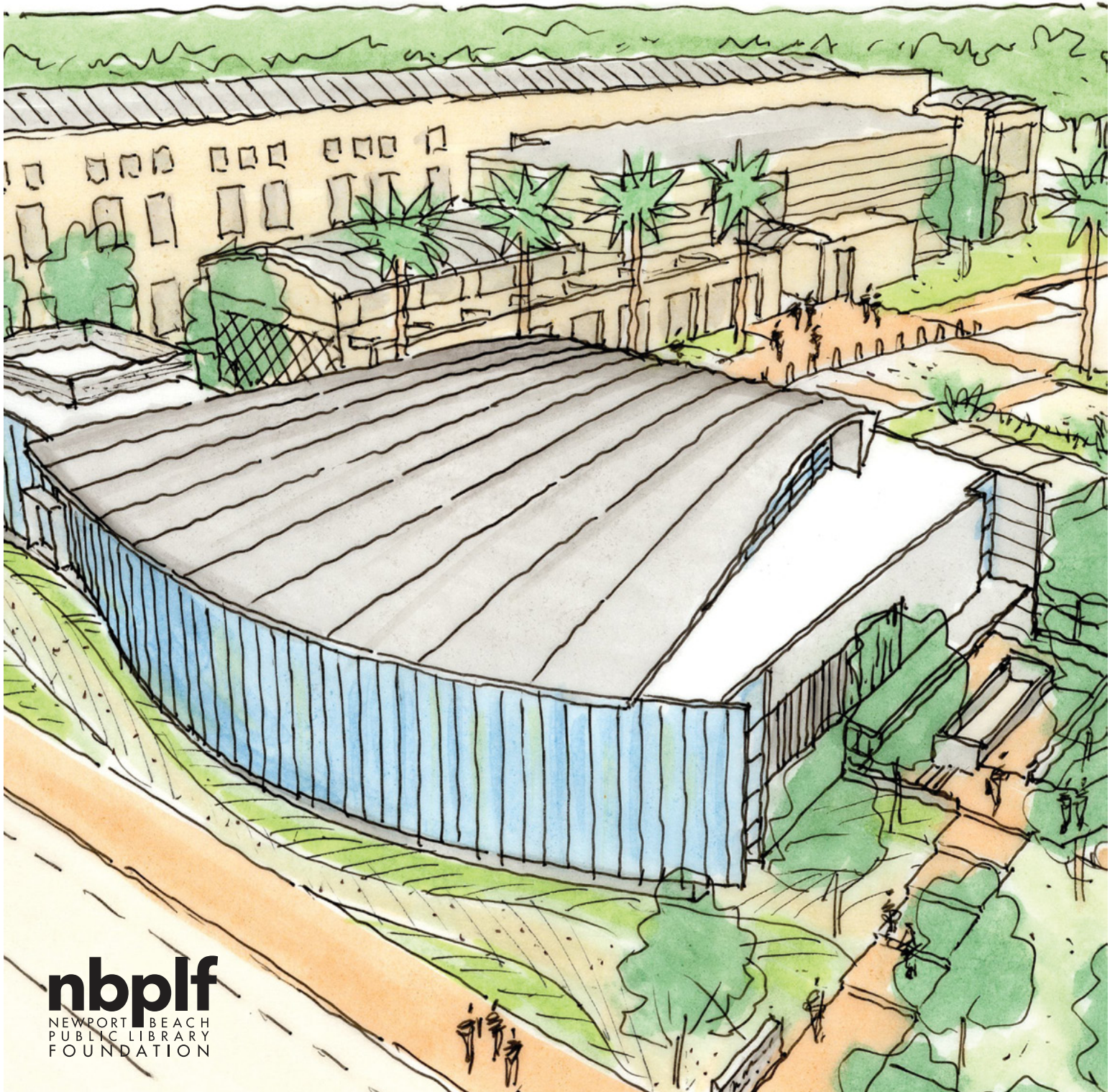
BOOKMARK

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEWPORT  
BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

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SUMMER 2025

Witte Hall: the vision becomes reality.  
Opening its doors in March 2026



**nbplf**  
NEWPORT BEACH  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
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# THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES

One way to think about libraries is as collections of books that serve readers. This is the first way in which most of us encounter and enjoy libraries. Another way to think about libraries, however, is as the factories in which new books are created. I have become more aware of this second role in my second career, as the author of several biographies.

For me, writing a single book requires reading or at least skimming two or three hundred other books, often on odd topics, like the role of the KKK in American politics in the early twentieth century. In some cases, I purchase books, but more often I read the books at a library. Here in Southern California, the libraries on which I rely include the Newport Beach Public Library, the UCI Library, and the Huntington Library. Further afield, I have worked in about a hundred different libraries over the years, from Maine to Florida to Ohio to Illinois to California.

Often the key library is not some massive place like the Library of Congress but a small public library. For my William Henry Seward project, for example, some of the most interesting letters were in metal filing cabinets in the basement of the public library in Goshen, New York. The only copies of some papers about Seward's first political campaign were in public libraries in upstate New York. For my Salmon P. Chase biography, a key collection was at the public library of Redlands, California, which had inherited a set of photocopies of Chase correspondence.

In some cases, a book or collection is available online. For my current project, a life of William Howard Taft, the million pages of the Taft collection at the Library of Congress are available online. They are only available, however, because the papers themselves are in the Library and because librarians have scanned and sorted and posted them. So, when I am reading the letters among the Taft papers, I am effectively relying upon a library.

Many older books are now available online through services like Hathitrust. This means that I do not have to go as often as I once did to the Rare Book Room at the Library of Congress. But again, these books do not just appear online by magic. Hathitrust is a collaborative effort of several libraries to identify and scan and organize older books. So, when I read part of a book on Hathitrust, I am again relying upon a library.

I know enough about the way in which other biographers and historians work to say that they rely like me upon libraries.

And even those who write fiction, at least if they write about some period other than the present, rely upon libraries. How can one write a thrilling fictional account of naval life during the Napoleonic Wars without reading books about that period? Indeed, writing such a book would require reading the original accounts of naval voyages, and one would find those accounts in libraries.

There is another sense, less tangible but perhaps no less important, in which libraries not only store books but make books. I suspect most books start when the author is reading some other book and has a moment of inspiration—a glimpse of some other book that he or she could write. Toni Morrison, for example, read in 1974 a newspaper clipping from 1856 about the murder by Margaret Garner of her daughter. Garner explained in the article that she had killed her child and attempted to kill two more because she would rather they died free (they had escaped from Kentucky to Ohio) than return to life in slavery. I do not know whether Morrison was literally in a library when she first read that clipping—I suspect she was because there were no online newspaper databases in 1974. We know however that the clipping was the genesis of the novel *Beloved* and that the clipping would not have existed if the paper in question had not been saved and shared by some library.

So, the next time you step through the doors of the Newport Beach Public Library, think of yourself as being not merely in a wonderful world of books, but in a factory in which yet more books are being made, to provide reading pleasure for years to come.



Walter Stahr  
*Member, Library Foundation  
Board of Directors*

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ELIZABETH STAHR**

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**LEGACY**

Celebrating those who have made an estate gift to the Library Foundation.



Walk into the Central Library main entrance and look at the wall of names on your left. Those names are the community of givers that saw a need for a great library in Newport Beach. It is not hyperbole to say that those names would not be there without the grand lady that we lost on April 29. Elizabeth Stahr and her husband John knew that they could call on the families, children, and businesses of Newport Beach to raise not only their voices in support of a major library but also open their pocketbooks to help fund the construction.



Elizabeth's son Walter is a member of the Library Foundation Board of Directors, and he recalls that his mother wrote a thank you letter for every gift and made sure it was mailed even before the check was deposited. Every donor was important to her no matter the size of their contribution, every gift to be celebrated.

Elizabeth loved children and took great joy in their learning. The children's area of the Central Library is the Stahr Children's Room, and daily scores of children enter the room below that sign to roam the stacks, hear stories and sing songs during Storytime, grab a book (and often many, many books), and even watch in awe as caterpillars become butterflies and larvae transform into ladybugs. Elizabeth loved coming to watch Storytime and the look of joy in her eyes as she watched the children will be treasured by all. Her greatest legacy is not this building, but the generations of children that will discover the world around them through reading books.



For the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Central Library, Elizabeth's daughter Gretchen brought her mom to the Library. Elizabeth walked toward the Stahr Children's Room, looked up at the sign and smiled. I am sure she was remembering the day the Central Library opened and all the kids that rushed in to see this magical new space.

Elizabeth was known for her support of the Girl Scouts, Pacific Orchestra Youth Symphony, AFS-USA—children learning, children exploring, children fostering creativity; Elizabeth's children number not just four, but thousands.

Knowing how important it is for the community to gather and to learn from others and from each other, Elizabeth made a major contribution to the Beyond Books Campaign for the new library lecture hall, Witte Hall. The redesigned courtyard will be named the Stahr Courtyard.

At the Celebration for the Life of Elizabeth Stahr on May 30, Reverend Canon Cindy Evans Voorhees said that telling stories is the way to keep Elizabeth alive. There can be no better way to remember such a force for good and community.

DAVID CARMICHAEL

*"In the early 1990s I was chair of the Newport Harbor Chamber of Commerce (since renamed the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce). Elizabeth came to one of our lunch meetings fully armed with charts, brochures and energy. She made the case for the new Library with enthusiasm and sincerity and if there were any questions or resistance, they quickly vanished. She hit it out of the park. This display was repeated all over town with other business groups and town gatherings. She was persistent, passionate and effective."*

BARBARA ROBERTS

*"Elizabeth and her son Walter and his wife Masami attended the Foundation's Summer Solstice Celebration every year where we sat outside and enjoyed an early evening cocktail. She was the grande dame of the event."*

CLARENCE TURNER

*"I first heard about Elizabeth Stahr when I was mayor in 1993. Mayor Pro Tem Jean Watt assured me that Elizabeth and John Stahr would do a great job raising money for the library foundation. Wow, was she ever right!"*

KAREN EVARTS

*"I've never forgotten, as a Newport Beach Library Board Trustee in the 1980s, how pleased our team was, after about 5 years of labor, when our City Council finally said yes to building a new central library. Yet it was baffling too that our new public library was going to need \$1 million of private funding in addition to city funds plus the land donation from The Irvine Company. No problem, however, said Elizabeth Stahr, as she agreed to take on the fund-raising task. Of course, she requested \$1 million very soon became \$2 million, and ultimately \$2.2 million. But the cheerful confidence Elizabeth displayed was notable to all of us as she and husband John set out to accomplish this task, and bring our fabulous library to fruition!"*

LIZANNE WITTE

*"Elizabeth was a steadfast community leader and strong arbiter of everything important that happened under the Library's roof. As I got to know Elizabeth over the years, I grew to admire her diplomatic cultural leadership, her smarts, and her unwavering support of public libraries. Everything good that happened at the Library somehow circled back to Elizabeth. She was delighted that the Library Foundation had the goal to expand the library campus and build a much-needed lecture hall. I wish Elizabeth were still with us to enjoy the upcoming opening celebration. Soon the community will be gathering outside in the Stahr Courtyard to discuss the latest lecture, film, or cultural happening. It will be the perfect place for all of us to honor John and Elizabeth's enduring spirit."*

BARBARA GLABMAN

*"Elizabeth was always front and center. She asked me to handle the setup of the groundbreaking ceremony for the Central Library. The day I was out in the field putting stakes in the ground to mark out the setup, there she was. The ground was so hard we struggled to hammer in the stakes. A bird landed on one of our stakes and it just fell over. We had worked so hard, and the bird knocked it out so easily. We laughed and laughed."*

# The NBPLF is pleased to announce the upcoming 29th Season of The Witte Lecture Series

February – April 2026

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## Julian Gerwitz

*U.S.- China Tensions – Past, Present, and Future*

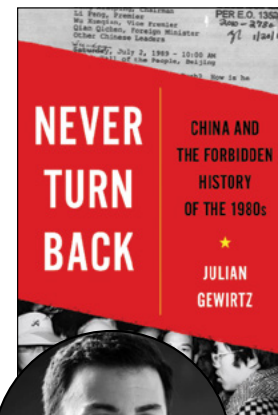
Friday, February 27, 7:00pm | Saturday, February 28, 2:00pm

**Will be held at the Central Library Friends Room**

Dr. Julian Gerwitz served in the Biden administration as Senior Director for China and Taiwan Affairs at the National Security Council (NSC), Senior Advisor to the Principal Deputy National Security Advisor, and as Deputy China Coordinator at the State Department.

Gewirtz is the author of three books including *Never Turn Back: China and the Forbidden History of the 1980s*, which was named the best book of the year by Foreign Affairs and BBC History, and the *Making of Global China and Your Face My Flag: Poems*. He was previously Senior Fellow for China Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, Lecturer in History at Harvard University and Columbia University.

Gewirtz was recently named one of "50 people shaping our society" by the *Washington Post*. He received his doctoral degree in modern Chinese history from Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and his undergraduate degree from Harvard College.



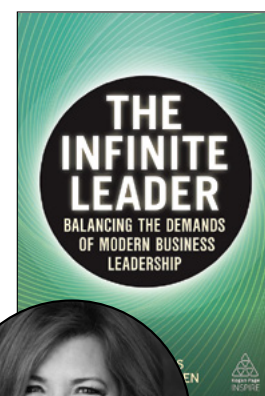
## Pippa Malmgren

*International Relations and the Future of Global Economy*

Friday, March 27, 7:00pm | Saturday, March 28, 2:00pm

An economist, author, and economic advisor to President George W. Bush, Pippa Malmgren is known for her expertise in global financial markets and geopolitics. Credited with coining the term "shrinkflation," she provides insights on emerging trends, technology, and risks shaping the global economy.

She served President George W. Bush in the White House as special assistant to the president and on The National Economic Council. After 9/11, she was also responsible for assessing terrorism risks to the economy and technology as a source of geopolitical competitiveness. Malmgren is the author of five books, including *Geopolitics for Investors* and *The Leadership Lab*. Her most recent bestseller, *The Infinite Leader*, won the International Press Award for the Best Book on Leadership. She serves as a judge on The Queen's Enterprise Business Awards and was a member of the Board of Directors for The Department for International Trade in the UK. She is a Senior Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute, a defense and security think tank in London.



## Lecture Details

### Fridays Evening Lectures

Friday, 7-9:00pm,  
Doors open at 6:30pm  
Lecture, Book Sale & Signing,  
Light Supper with Wine

**Witte Season Pass \$250\***

General \$75  
NBPLF Member: \$70

### Saturday Afternoon Lectures

Saturday, 2-4:00pm,  
Doors open at 1:30pm  
Lecture, Book Sale & Signing,  
Refreshments

**Witte Season Pass \$180\***

General \$55  
NBPLF Member: \$50  
Student: \$25 Saturday Only

## Tickets

Come to the lectures and chat with our speakers at a tasty post-lecture supper on Friday night or coffee and cookies on Saturday afternoon. All lectures will be at the Witte Hall except Julian Gerwitz. To Purchase Tickets: [nbplf.foundation](http://nbplf.foundation) or 949-717-3892.

**Tickets go on sale October 1, 2025 at [www.nbplf.foundation/programs/witte-lectures/](http://www.nbplf.foundation/programs/witte-lectures/)**

**\*Only NBPLF members can buy season pass.  
To become a member, go to [nbplf.foundation/join/](http://nbplf.foundation/join/)**



The 29th season of the highly acclaimed Witte Lecture series launches on January 24-25, 2026. Sifting through the massive flow of information and discerning what deserves thoughtful attention is time consuming and difficult. Our roster of nationally known speakers will once again provide a spark for igniting community conversation on the timeliest topics. Be part of the Witte community for live, dynamic, and compelling conversations in our award-winning library. Knowledge is power!

## Thank you to the 2025 Witte Committee

Karen Clark	Signe Keller	Latika Sethi
Lisa Edwards	Marilyn Krahe	Ellen Shockro
Dani Gold	Dorothy Larson	Lizanne Witte
Whitney Gomez	(Library Trustee Liaison)	Miles Yourman
Janet Hadley (Chair)	Rachel Reinus	
Diane Hafer		

## Annie Griffiths

### *Connect with Anyone, Anywhere: Power of Photography*

Friday, April 17, 7:00pm | Saturday, April 18, 2:00pm

One of the first women photographers to work for *National Geographic*, Annie Griffiths has photographed in more than one hundred countries during her rich and varied career. She has worked on dozens of magazines and book projects for *National Geographic*. In addition to her editorial work, Annie is deeply committed to using photography to support aid organizations. She is the Founder of Ripple Effect Images, a collective of prize-winning photojournalists and filmmakers who are documenting programs that empower women and children in the developing world.

Known for her warmth and humor, Annie has a gift for sharing stories and photographs that humanize situations and cultures. Annie has received awards from the National Press Photographers Association, the Associated Press, the National Organization of Women, and the White House News Photographers Association.



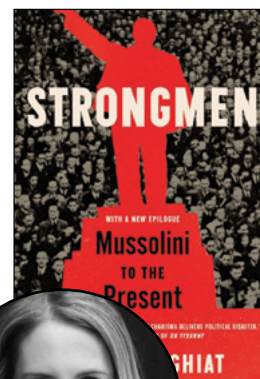
## Ruth Ben-Ghiat

### *Strongmen: Mussolini to the Present*

Friday, May 1, 7:00pm | Saturday, May 2, 2:00pm

Ruth Ben-Ghiat is Professor of History at New York University. She writes about fascism, authoritarianism, propaganda, and the threats these present to democracies around the world. Her most recent book, the *New York Times* bestseller *Strongmen: Mussolini to the Present* (2021), looks at how illiberal leaders use propaganda, corruption, violence, and machismo, and how they can be defeated. She is the recipient of Guggenheim, and Fulbright fellowships.

Ben-Ghiat's insights into the authoritarian playbook and democracy protection, and her ability to explain complex issues clearly and succinctly, have made her an expert source around the globe. She writes for *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Atlantic*, and provides live commentary for CNN, France 24, MSNBC, and other networks. She has appeared in many documentaries about dictators and threats to democracy, such as Netflix's *How to Become a Tyrant* and PBS's *The Dictators' Playbook*. Ben-Ghiat served as a historical consultant for Guillermo del Toro's Oscar-winning *Pinocchio*, which is set in Fascist Italy, and the Netflix docuseries *Hitler and the Nazis: Evil on Trial*.



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# The Newport Beach Public Library Foundation is pleased to announce *Library Live / October 2025 – April 2026*

## Thomas Fuller

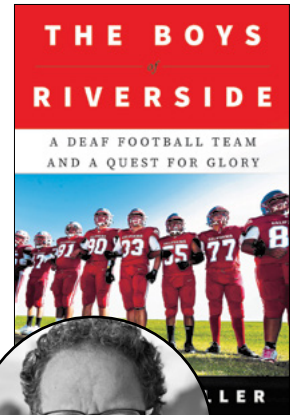
*The Boys of Riverside:*

*A Deaf Football Team and a Quest for Glory*

Thursday, October 16, 7:00pm

**Will be held at the Civic Center Community Room**

*The Boys of Riverside* by New York Times reporter Thomas Fuller tells the inspiring story of the California School for the Deaf's high school football team, which achieved an undefeated season. The narrative highlights their strong brotherhood, the challenges they faced, and their dedicated coach, Keith Adams. Captivated by their journey after receiving an email about the team's success, Fuller documents their historic 2021-2022 seasons, showcasing personal stories of determination, such as a player who continued despite a broken leg. The book portrays the power of high school athletics, inspiring camaraderie and the experience of deafness in America. The book *The Boys of Riverside: A Deaf Football Team and a Quest for Glory* was chosen by Amazon as the Best Book of 2024. He has reported from more than 40 countries for *The Times* and *International Herald Tribune* and is currently Page One Correspondent for the *Times* based in the East Bay of San Francisco.



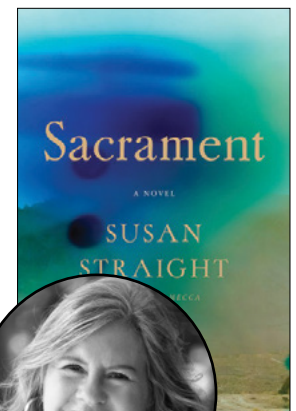
## Susan Straight

*Sacrament: A Novel*

Thursday, November 6, 7:00pm

**Will be held at the Civic Center Community Room**

From National Book Award finalist Susan Straight comes a gripping novel about nurses during the Covid pandemic in San Bernardino due to be released on October 2025. In August 2020, Larette, Cherrise, and Marisol work tirelessly in the ICU, living in RVs to protect their families. As they face rising patient numbers and personal struggles, Cherrise's daughter goes missing, prompting a search led by Grief's friend, Johnny. The journey explores themes of love, loss, and the quiet heroism of first responders. *Sacrament* showcases Susan Straight's powerful voice in American literature. A Southern California native, Straight has authored nine novels, including *Mecca* and *Highwire Moon*. She has received numerous accolades, such as the Lannan Prize, O. Henry Award, Edgar Award, and the Robert Kirsch Award for lifetime achievement. Her work has been translated into ten languages.



Author Photo  
by Stan Lim

## Lecture Details

**Thursdays, 7-8:30pm**

Lecture, Book Sale & Signing,  
Refreshments

**Library Live Season Pass \$120\***

General \$40

NBPLF Member: \$35

## Tickets

First two lectures are at the Civic Center Community Room. Colm Tóibín will be held at the Central Library in the Friends Room and Anthony Doerr will be held at the Witte Hall. Doors open at 6:30pm. Lecture and Q&A, 7:00pm - 8:30pm, followed by book sale and signing till 9:00pm. To purchase tickets: [www.nbplf.foundation](http://www.nbplf.foundation) or 949-717-3892.

**Tickets go on sale September 1, 2025 at  
[nbplf.foundation/programs/library-live/](http://nbplf.foundation/programs/library-live/)**

**\*Only NBPLF members can buy a season pass.  
Become a member go to [nbplf.foundation/join/](http://nbplf.foundation/join/)**



We are excited to welcome these four brilliant authors to our 2025-2026 series. Library Live is for adventurous readers who enjoy hearing from established literary figures and emerging talent. Novelists, poets, historians, journalists, biographers, memoirists and more share their ideas firsthand with our community. Participate, engage, and be challenged by our presentations with today's most gifted scribes.

## Thank you to our 2024-25 Library Live! Committee

Loren Blackwood, Karen Clark, Patricia Dreyfus (Chair), Emily Ford, Amy Fulford, Elizabeth Hanauer, Dorothy Larson (Library Trustee Liaison), Meghan Michalovsky, Liz Manji, Ann Stephens and Adrian Windsor.

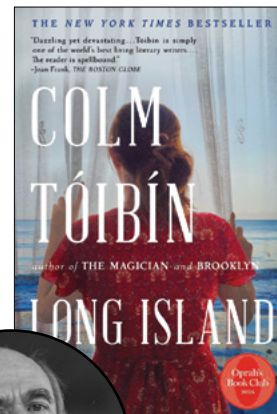
## Colm Tóibín

### *Long Island* and *Brooklyn*

Thursday, March 12, 7:00pm

**Will be held at the Central Library Friends Room**

Colm Tóibín is a renowned Irish writer known for his extensive body of work, including fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. His latest novel, *Long Island*, is a *New York Times* bestseller and continues the story of Eilis Lacey from his acclaimed book *Brooklyn*, which received multiple awards and was adapted into a film. Tóibín's notable works include *The Master*, which explores the life of Henry James, and *The Magician*, a portrayal of Thomas Mann, both of which have earned critical acclaim. He has received numerous literary awards, served as the Laureate for Irish Fiction, and is a professor at Columbia University. Tóibín's writing often delves into themes of Irish society, exile, Catholicism, and personal identity. In addition to novels, he has written essays, edited collections, and staged plays, showcasing his diverse literary contributions.



Author Photo by  
Reynaldo Rivera

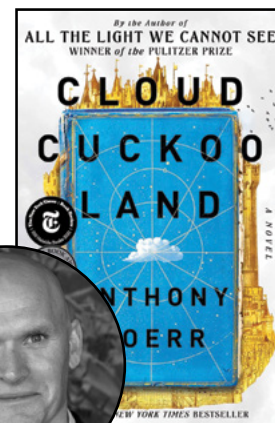
## Anthony Doerr

### *Cloud Cuckoo Land* and *All the Light We Cannot See*

Thursday, April 23, 7:00pm

**Will be held at the Witte Hall**

Anthony Doerr is the author of several acclaimed works, including the story collections *The Shell Collector* and *Memory Wall*, the memoir *Four Seasons in Rome*, and novels such as *About Grace*, *All the Light We Cannot See* (winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize), and *Cloud Cuckoo Land* (finalist for the 2021 National Book Award). His short stories and essays have earned five O. Henry Prizes and have been featured in notable anthologies. Doerr's works have been translated into over forty languages and have received numerous awards, including the Barnes & Noble Discover Prize and the prestigious Story Prize. *All the Light We Cannot See* was a bestseller, remaining on the *New York Times* Bestseller List for over 200 weeks.



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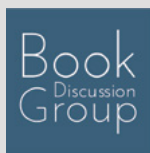
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## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP 2025-2026



The Book Discussion Group members select, read, and discuss 9-10 books per year. All are welcome whether you've read the book or not. The program is FREE. Refreshments are provided and the books are available through the Newport Beach Public Library. We meet every second Wednesday of the month from 9:30-11:00am at the Newport Beach Central Library, Friends Room.

**September 10:** *The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder* by David Grann

**October 8:** *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China* by Jung Chang

**November 12:** *The Sun Walks Down* by Fiona McFarlane

**December 10:** *Precipice* by Robert Harris

**January 14:** *My Name is Emilia Del Valle: A Novel* by Isabel Allende

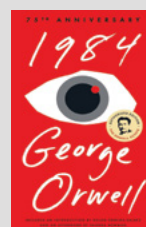
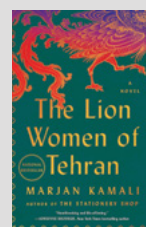
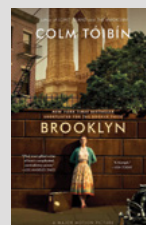
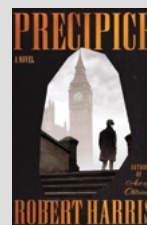
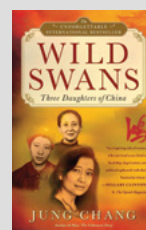
**February 11:** *Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin

**March 11:** *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

**April 8:** *The Lion Women of Tehran* by Marjan Kamali

**May 13:** *1984* by George Orwell

<https://nbplf.foundation/programs/book-discussion-group/>



## FINANCIAL LITERACY WORKSHOP

### It's Your Money!

**September 29 – November 3, 2025**

Every Monday 10-11:30am

Held in Civic Center Community Room, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach



The "It's Your Money!" sessions cover the business of money; 9 hours of objective education over a 6-week period. The instructors are local FEE ONLY financial advisors who all act in a fiduciary capacity with their clients. None of the speakers are licensed to sell any financial products. You will learn how they charge and the steps you need to take on your financial plan with or without a professional.

<https://nbplf.foundation/programs/financial-literacy-workshops/>

## MEDICINE IN OUR BACKYARD



The Newport Beach Public Library Foundation in collaboration with UCI Health is pleased to present the 2025-26 season of Medicine in Our Backyard featuring an extraordinary group of renowned doctors and researchers speaking on a wide range of topics. The UCI doctors present the latest studies and newest technologies in an engaging forum. This series is funded in part by the generosity of long time Newport Beach Public Library Foundation members Mike and Polly Smith.

### Hearing Related Disorder

Monday, September 22, 2025

7:00pm

### Beyond Traditional Cancer

**Treatments: What Else Can I Do?**

Monday, October 13, 2025

7:00pm

### Age-related Macular Degeneration: Retinal Degeneration and Stem-cell Therapy Options

Monday, November 17, 2025

7:00pm

Held at the Newport Beach Civic Center Community Room, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660

<https://nbplf.foundation/programs/medicine-in-our-backyard/>



The Newport Beach Public Library Foundation is pleased to present Spotlight on Science, a program featuring extraordinary and renowned scientists who will shed light on innovative and exciting research in the sciences.

<https://nbplf.foundation/programs/spotlight-on-science/>



### From Molecules to Mankind: Tracing Life's Origins

Irene Chen / *Professor – Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, UCLA*

**Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 7:00pm**

Doors open at 6:30pm

The origin of life is a captivating scientific mystery that has intrigued researchers for centuries. It refers to the process by which life began on Earth, transitioning from simple organic molecules to complex living organisms. Dr. Chen will provide insight into how life may have originated; its processes as well as the latest findings from asteroid Bennu by NASA's OSIRIS-REX spacecraft which was packed with life's building blocks.

Dr. Chen is a professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at the University of California, Los Angeles. She received a B.A. in chemistry and an M.D.-Ph.D. in biophysics from Harvard. She has received the Searle Scholar award, NIH New Innovator award, and the David White award for outstanding contribution in astrobiology. She has been a Simons Investigator for the Collaboration on the Origin of Life since 2013.



### What You Should Expect to See from Quantum Computing and When Will It Happen?

Doug Finke / *Chief Content Officer, Global Quantum Intelligence*

**Wednesday, November 12, 2025, 7:00pm**

Doors open at 6:30pm

Quantum computing is a rapidly evolving field that promises to revolutionize the way we process information but what is quantum computing? Doug Finke will take on this daunting topic and make it more approachable for us to understand by exploring the basics of quantum computing, its progress and application.

Finke is the Chief Content Officer of Global Quantum Intelligence (GQI) and the Managing Editor of the Quantum Computing Report by GQI, which he founded in 2015 as the first news and analysis website dedicated to quantum technology. He holds degrees in computer engineering and management from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and MIT, respectively, and holds eight patents in the field of computer technology.



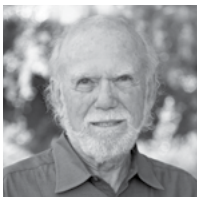
### Miniature Space: The Future of Small Satellites

Charles Norton, PhD / *Deputy Chief Technologist at NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology*

**Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 7:00pm**

Doors open at 6:30pm

Dr. Charles D. Norton is the Deputy Chief Technologist at NASA JPL/Caltech responsible for JPL's technology strategic planning, research, and infusion into flight missions. Dr. Norton is the Special Advisor for Small Spacecraft Missions at NASA HQ. In that role he is responsible for advising NASA's cross-agency strategic direction for innovative small satellite science, exploration, and technology missions from ESPA-Class spacecraft down to CubeSats. Previously, he was a Principal Technologist and Program Manager Associate at JPL where he developed and led multiple small spacecraft missions. Charles is a recipient of numerous awards for new technology and innovation, including the JPL Lew Allen Award, Voyager Award, and the NASA Exceptional Service Medal.



### Echoes from the Cosmos: Pioneering Contributions to Gravitational Wave Observation

Barry Barish, PhD / *Distinguished Professor, Physics & Astronomy Department, University of California, Riverside*

**Wednesday, May 6, 2026, 7:00pm**

Doors open at 6:30pm

Dr. Barry Barish received the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physics for his pivotal role in the LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory) detector and the observation of gravitational waves, sharing the honor with Rainer Weiss and Kip S. Thorne. He began his career in high-energy physics, making significant contributions at Stanford and Fermilab. In 1994, Barish became the principal investigator for LIGO, implementing necessary design changes and establishing the LIGO Scientific Collaboration to involve more scientists. Construction of LIGO's interferometers began in 1994, with observations starting in 2002. After years without detection, Advanced LIGO successfully detected gravitational waves on September 14, 2015.

# SEASON WRAP-UP 2025

Thank you for attending the 2024-2025 program season with us. We presented and supported forty-seven (47) events this season with thirty-five (35) free to the community. This year's lineup displayed an exceptional variety of speakers covering relevant and timely topics. The 28th season of the Witte Lectures and 2024-2025 season of Library Live Author series were sold out events!

The feedback we received from participants was positive, with many expressing appreciations for the diverse topics and engaging discussions. A standout moment of the season was the Library Live event featuring the author of *Lessons in Chemistry*, Bonnie Garmus, who engaged in conversation with Judy Wu, UCI Director of the Humanities Center. This event, held outside on the Civic Center Green, attracted an audience of over 500.

Following this, we welcomed LA Times environmental journalist Rosanna Xia, who discussed her book *California Against the Sea: Visions for our Vanishing Coastline*. She shared insights from her investigation into rising sea levels and their effects on Southern California beaches and communities. Xia also provided a sneak preview of her documentary, "Out of Plain Sight," revealing the shocking discovery of up to half a million barrels of toxic waste dumped just off the Southern California coast. The third event featured author Javier Zamora in conversation with Programs Director Kunga Wangmo-Upshaw, where Zamora candidly recounted his harrowing journey as a 10 year-old undocumented immigrant to reunite with his family in the U.S. The season concluded with Pulitzer Prize winner Viet Thanh Nguyen, whose book *A Man of Two Faces* detailed

his family's experience fleeing Vietnam and pursuing the "American Dream" as refugees.

The Witte Season launched with sold-out lectures featuring *New York Times* columnist Bret Stephens, who addressed a wide array of pressing topics, including the Presidential election, immigration, and the Israel-Gaza conflict. In a similar vein, former Assistant Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security, Juliette Kayyem, along with Jacob Ware, an adjunct professor at Georgetown University's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, explained how various governmental agencies assess and mitigate national security and climate risks, such as California's wildfires. M. Chris Fabricant, the Director of Strategic Litigation at the Innocence Project, provided a deep exploration of the American criminal justice system using one of his well-known cases as a reference. Providing a refreshing perspective, award-winning national sportswriter Christine Brennan offered an insightful discussion on the historical impact of Title IX and an exclusive preview of her forthcoming book, which examines the ascent of basketball player Caitlin Clark and the increasing prominence of women's college basketball.



- 1) Event attendees at one of our lectures
- 2) Juliette Kayyem, *The Devil Never Sleeps*
- 3) Bonnie Garmus signing her book
- 4) Rosanna Xia and Lizanne Witte



Our free program, Spotlight on Science, kicked off this season with an event discussing why hydrogen could be California's alternative for a clean energy future, featuring Jack Brouwer, PhD, the Director of the Clean Energy Institute at UCI.

The next two speakers attracted a sold-out audience when Grant MacGregor, D.Phil., introduced the limitless potential of CRISPR, gene editing, in medicine, agriculture, and scientific research. The final speaker, Lucy Jones, PhD, explained the complexities

of understanding earthquakes and their associated risks, especially here in Southern California.

The Medicine in our Backyard series continues to engage the community by providing insights into health and medical advances from UCI Health experts. Additionally, the Financial Literacy Workshops offer the latest developments in financial and estate planning from ethical professionals to a curious audience. Our Book Discussion Group has also been growing steadily, as we strive to include works from various genres, both classic and contemporary, ranging from *The Lincoln Highway* to *The Book of Goose*.

Looking ahead, we are excited to continue expanding our offerings and exploring new ways to connect with our community. We are committed to creating a space where everyone feels welcome and inspired to learn. We invite you to join us in the coming season as we embark on another journey of discovery and knowledge sharing.

*"Dr. Brouwer was engaging, dynamic and informative on many levels. The content and delivery of his presentation was outstanding! I have committed my membership to the Library Foundation this evening."*

— Event Attendee



- 5) Bonnie Garmus and Judy Wu outside on the Civic Center Green
- 6) Jack Brouwer, PhD
- 7) Bret Stephens
- 8) Javier Zamora
- 9) M. Chris Fabricant
- 10) Christine Brennan
- 11) Juliette Kayyem
- 12) Viet Thanh Nguyen

# THE NEWPORT BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY: INNOVATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND GRATITUDE

As a Trustee of the Newport Beach Public Library, I am privileged to help guide an institution that serves as the cultural and knowledge hub of our community. Thanks to generous community support and the city's ongoing commitment, our library is thriving and well-positioned for an exciting future.

## 1. Embracing Innovation in a Digital Age

Today's Newport Beach Public Library is more relevant than ever. While digital resources and e-services continue to expand, we remain equally committed to our welcoming physical spaces — places where neighbors learn, connect, and share ideas. Our Trustees and staff continually evaluate new technologies and services, ensuring that every advancement truly benefits our patrons. Recent upgrades to our digital collections and online access have made it even easier for everyone to enjoy the library, wherever they are.



## 2. Expanding Community-Focused Programming

Our library offers something for every age and interest, from early childhood storytimes to inspiring lectures and workshops for adults. Each month, we host a wide range of events and classes — book clubs that spark lively discussion, hands-on STEAM workshops for kids and teens, technology help sessions for seniors, and author visits that bring nationally recognized voices right to our community. Our summer reading program continues to draw hundreds of families and young readers, building enthusiasm for books and learning year after year. Seasonal events, enrichment lectures, and interactive workshops ensure there is always something new to discover at the library. We take pride in seeing the library's meeting rooms and event spaces filled with people engaged in learning, creativity, and connection. These experiences help foster a lifelong love of reading and provide meaningful opportunities for neighbors to meet, share ideas, and participate in the rich cultural life of Newport Beach.

## 3. Building on Strong Community Support

The success of the Newport Beach Public Library is truly a collective achievement. We are grateful for the ongoing generosity of the Newport Beach Library Foundation — whose support is making the new Witte Lecture Hall a reality — and for the tireless work of the Friends of the Library volunteers. Their dedication, combined with the city's steadfast commitment, ensures that our library continues to flourish.

With exciting developments on the horizon, including the new Balboa branch and Witte Hall, the library's role as Newport Beach's central gathering place for culture, learning, and inspiration continues to grow. Together — Trustees, staff, volunteers, and supporters—we are committed to keeping our library vibrant and innovative for generations to come.



Chase Rief  
*Chair, Library Trustee*





## SUMMER READING PROGRAM

It's not too late to join us for the SUMMER READING PROGRAM, a summer of free family activities, entertaining performances, and an interactive reading challenge at the Newport Beach Public Library. Join us for family crafts, prizes, books, and much more.

For all ages — from kids to teens to adults, through August 2.  
[newportbeachlibrary.org](http://newportbeachlibrary.org)

## PARK PASSES AT THE LIBRARY

Did you know that you can use your Newport Beach Public Library card to check out a free California State Park pass? You can! These week-long passes are available at every NBPL location.

Check out our website at [newportbeachlibrary.org](http://newportbeachlibrary.org) (search "park pass" in the upper right search bar) for more information, then get out and get exploring! Based on availability.



## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

From vintage to bestsellers, cookbooks to kid's books, vinyl, and more, find the perfect book at the perfect price at the Friends of the Library Bookstore.

Located on the first level of the Central Library,  
 1000 Avocado Avenue, Newport Beach, CA 92660  
 Hours: Monday - Saturday, 10:30am to 3:00pm

## CALLING ALL KIDS!

Check out the children's calendar for fun all-things-kids at the library! Join us for events and programs including BARK: Read to a Dog, Artspace, Drop In Crafternoons, STEAM Lab, Toy Train Thursdays, LEGO Saturdays, Middle Grade Book Club, Storytime, and much more. Complete information is on our website at [newportkids.org](http://newportkids.org).





## COLLEGE PREP AT THE NEWPORT BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

### THE COMMON APP VS. THE UC APP

**September 17, 2025 7-8:00pm**

Location: Mariners Library, Vincent Jorgensen Room

Join a Collegewise admissions expert as they review the Common App and the UC applications. How are they different? How are they similar? And how can you make the most of each application to showcase your unique personality to your dream college? You'll leave this workshop with the information and skills needed to make the best impression. Registration required.

### HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

**October 22, 2025 7-8:00pm**

Friends Room

Applying for financial aid and scholarships doesn't have to be stressful! Join Collegewise experts for clear, step-by-step advice on eligibility, forms, and deadlines. Get answers to common questions and feel confident about the process. Registration required.

## DARE TO PREPARE WORKSHOP

**October 25th from 10:00am-12:00pm**

Friends Room

This FREE workshop for pre-permit teens 14-17 years old helps parents and teens navigate the learning-to-drive process. The class covers state Graduated Driver Licensing components, what to look for in a driving school, and the role of parents in the training process. Presented by AAA. Registration is required – parent/legal guardian/caregiver must accompany teen to participate.



## PROJECT ADULT LITERACY: CALL FOR TUTORS

A program of the Newport Beach Public Library, Project Adult Literacy provides free literacy instruction to adults who live or work in the area. The focus is on developing literacy skills, enabling learners the potential for greater success in their lives. Our team of dedicated volunteers has helped hundreds of people improve their literacy skills over the last three decades – which in turn could mean everything from getting a better job, to reading the prescription without fear of taking the wrong dose, getting a high school diploma, getting into college, helping a child with homework, and more.

A key component of Project Adult Literacy's success is based on their dedicated team of volunteer tutors. If you have an extra 2 hours a week and are interested in getting involved, we'd love to hear from you. You must be 18 and older, and able to commit to the program for a year. Please contact Christina Smith, Literacy Coordinator at [literacy@newportbeachca.gov](mailto:literacy@newportbeachca.gov) or call us at (949) 717-3874.



# SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE GREEN

It's that time of year! Join us for Summer Concerts on the Green, Sunday evenings from 6-7:30pm at the Newport Beach Civic Center, 100 Civic Center Drive. Bring blankets, low-slung beach chairs, and a picnic dinner, or purchase from food trucks on-site. Free admission and parking. Alcohol not permitted. This summer's lineup includes:



## **CASSIE B – July 27, 6-7:30pm**

Playing both top 40 hits and original music, Cassie B's music draws from the rich sounds of Motown soul and funk.

## **PACIFIC SYMPHONY – August 17, 6-7:30pm**

A mix of classical favorites, popular music, and patriotic tunes, led by a member of Pacific Symphony's conducting staff. Join us for a pre-concert Musical Playground filled with interactive, hands-on activities for children.

## **TIJUANA DOGS – September 14, 6-7:30pm**

The Tijuana Dogs are a high-energy, multi-faceted rock/dance/party band who have performed with Lynyrd Skynyrd, Pat Benatar, Florida Georgia Line, Macklemore, Cheap Trick, KC and The Sunshine Band, Pitbull, 50 Cent, and more.



**And a fall concert at Marina Park, 1600 West Balboa Blvd, Newport Beach. Bring blankets, low-slung beach chairs, and a picnic dinner, or purchase from food trucks on-site. Free admission and parking.**

## **805 SOCIAL CLUB: THE HISTORY OF POP**

**October 12, 4-5:30pm, Marina Park**

The History of Pop is a musical journey covering seven decades of pop music from the psychedelic 60s to the new wave 80s to current hits today. Each decade is presented in a short set, introduced with an audio montage of news and pop culture sound clips to evoke the nostalgia from the era.

## ART AT THE LIBRARY

Stop by the Central Library's rotating lobby gallery to see art by Kathy Bambeck (Puzzle Paintings) June 30 through August 22; and Joe Cladis (Lithographs) August 25 through October 17.

Art exhibitions are scheduled one year in advance. Regional artists are encouraged to submit exhibition proposals to [newportbeachca.gov](http://newportbeachca.gov).



# BEYOND BOOKS CAMPAIGN UPDATE

When the Library Foundation's Board of Directors, wearing boots, hard hats, and safety vests, toured the construction site for Witte Hall, memories of the anxiety and struggle to bring a library lecture hall and civic auditorium to Newport Beach evaporated. Thanks to the leadership of Jill Johnson-Tucker, former library trustee and philanthropist, the skill and experience of Jerold D Kappel, Library Foundation CEO, the commitment of the Library Foundation Board, and the generous contributions of more than 200 donors, the impressive sight of the auditorium left the Board mesmerized.

For months, library visitors have observed the construction underway – the mounds of dirt, then structural steel, then the grid of waves to match the Civic Center roof, and now actual walls. None of this prepared the Board for the experience of the depth and grandeur of the actual space for 299 seats with its elevated stage, huge video screen, acoustic excellence, and welcoming lobby.

Witte Hall will transform the program experience of the Newport Beach community with Library Foundation lectures, Library presentations, Film Festival screenings, Sunday Musicales, and even local school performances. The uses for Witte Hall will go far “beyond” our expectations, as will the Stahr Courtyard that expands the Hall “beyond” its actual perimeters, accommodating a variety of activities.

The Stahr Courtyard is named for the late Elizabeth Stahr, who, along with her husband John, established the Library Foundation 31 years ago to advocate for and receive donations to support the construction of the Central Library, which last year was the second most visited site in Newport Beach after the Harbor and beaches. Jene Witte, widow of Martin Witte, established the Witte Distinguished Lecture Series in Martin's name 28 years ago. It continues to thrive and forms the model for the Foundation's exceptional programs: Library Live Distinguished Authors Series, Medicine in Our Backyard, Spotlight on Science, Financial Literacy Workshops, and the Book Discussion Group. Bill Witte, son of Martin Witte, and his wife Keiko Sakimoto, are major donors to Beyond Books, and celebrate the Witte legacy with the naming of Witte Hall. Once again, the Library Foundation, with its bond to the community, brings to Newport Beach a landmark dedicated to engaging learners, inspiring thinkers, and nurturing civic connections.

**Beyond Books**, the name the Foundation gave to its campaign to raise 50% of the cost of the \$24 million Hall, is near completion. “**Beyond**” is being delivered. The Grand Opening of Witte Hall, scheduled for the weekend of March 20-22, 2026, will kick off with a Grand Opening Gala Reception for donors of \$25,000 and above. The names of those donors will be memorialized on the Donor Wall in the Louise and Roy Woolsey Memorial Lobby. You still have time to take a hard-hat tour and be included on that roster. Due to the construction timeline, donor names must be submitted by November 15, 2025. However, if you sign a gift agreement by that date you can fulfill your commitment any time before the Witte Hall Grand Opening.

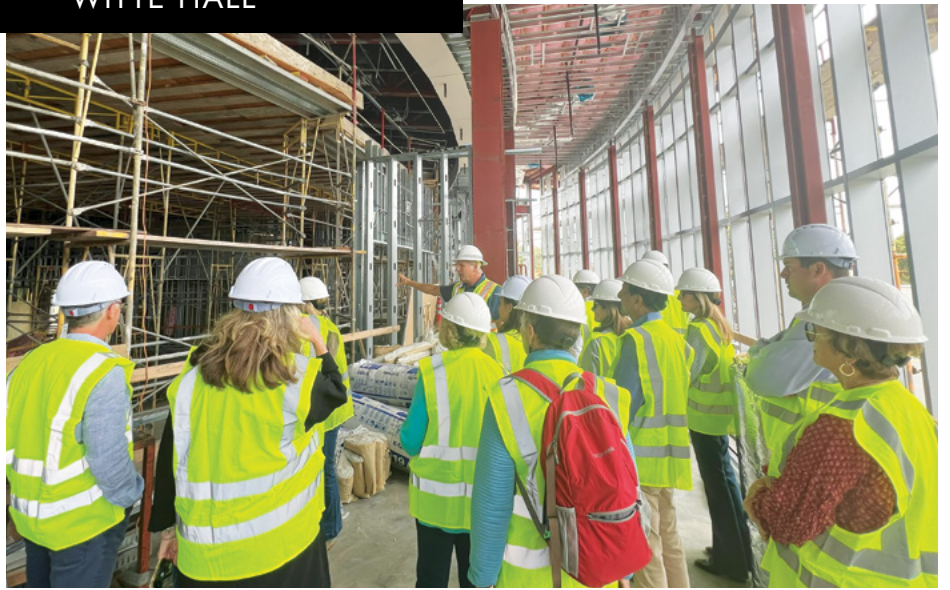
The weekend of the Grand Opening, being planned by the Library Foundation, Library staff, and the City's Recreation and Senior Services, includes children's events, a film on the Foundation-funded 11'-19' video wall, a Sunday Musicale, and a renowned speaker. Be on the watch for the schedule. In the meantime, to join the list of donors on the Foundation website and the Donor Wall, contact Jill Johnson-Tucker, Campaign Chair, Jerold Kappel, Foundation CEO, or any member of the Beyond Books Committee.

**Beyond Books Campaign Committee:** Karen H. Clark\*, Dorothy Larson, Janet Hadley\*, Kevin Barlow\*, Marilyn Krahe\*, Clarence Turner, Randy Heyler\*, Linda Beimfohr\*, Erin Kingsley, Mireya Llaurodo\*, Ashley Johnson, Marie Case and Adrian Windsor\*.

*\*Designates Board Member of the Library Foundation*

Time-Lapse video of the Witte Hall Construction, a current list of Beyond Books donors, the Gift Agreement and Donor Benefits can be found on the Library Foundation website under the Witte Hall tab. <https://nbplf.foundation/witte-hall/>







# 2025 SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

On Wednesday June 18, the Library Foundation held its annual end of the season event to celebrate those members that have joined the Foundation in the last year and to salute a member that has done extraordinary service for the Newport Beach Public Library and the Library Foundation.

Adrian Windsor, chair of the Foundation's development committee, initiated the Summer Solstice Celebration in 2022 to thank donors that had become members during the time that the Library was closed due to the covid pandemic, and the Foundation had to transition its programming online. It became an opportunity to reflect on the Foundation's successes of the past year and to honor someone whose leadership, philanthropy, and dedication to the Foundation's mission, has made those successes possible.

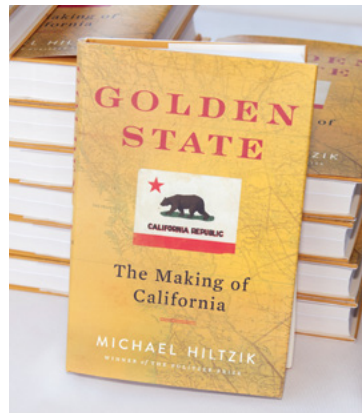
Because the Courtyard was being demolished as part of the Witte Hall construction project, the event was held in the Civic Center Community Room. There was music by the Celine You Jazz Trio and small bites by Angel in Your Kitchen. Michael Hiltzik, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and LA Times columnist, spoke about his latest book *Golden State: The Making of California*.

Karen Heath Clark was honored for her years of service to the Newport Beach Library as Trustee, member and Chair of the Board of the Library Foundation, member of the Library Lecture Hall Design Committee, and philanthropist. A visionary leader, Karen guided the Foundation through two executive leadership transitions, and the pandemic closing. She strengthened the governance of the Foundation, represented the Foundation on the Design Committee, and is a strong supporter of Foundation programs, helping to initiate the newest endeavor, Spotlight on Science. Karen will stay engaged with the Foundation as a valued member of program committees and a counsel to Board officers.





# SUMMER SOLSTICE



- 1) OC Supervisor Katrina Foley
- 2) Dev Ghose, Annu Sharma, Kristen Statton and Jatin Sharma
- 3) Karen Heath Clark and City Council member Robyn Grant
- 4) Members at the Summer Solstice reception
- 5) Tom Edwards, Walter Stahr and Jill Johnson-Tucker
- 6) City Council member Robyn Grant, Kory Kramer, Lauren Kramer, Marilyn Krahe
- 7) Marilyn Krahe, Chair of Library Foundation Board
- 8) LA Times Columnist and author Michael Hiltzik
- 9) Janet Hadley, Kathy Voreyer, Brant and Nancy Dahlfors
- 10) Patty Dreyfus and Adrian Windsor
- 11) Michael Hiltzik book signing





The Foundation's Financial Literacy Workshops always highlight the importance of charitable intent when financial planning. However, like many nonprofit organizations, the Library Foundation has heard concerns from donors about how economic and market conditions may impact their continued support for the Foundation and its mission to support the Newport Beach Public Library. I asked Kevin Barlow, the Immediate Past Chair of the Foundation, and its former Treasurer, for his expectations on charitable giving for the next six months.

— Jerold D Kappel, CFRE  
The Library Foundation CEO

## Don't let short term economic anxiety affect your longer-term charitable plans

In 2025, the U.S. stock market has experienced significant volatility, impacting both investor sentiment and charitable giving. The year began with optimism, as major indices like the S&P 500 and Nasdaq Composite reached record highs in early February. This upward trajectory was then abruptly interrupted in March when the Trump administration announced sweeping tariffs on imports. This announcement led to a sharp market downturn, with the S&P 500 entering correction territory in early April.

Despite the initial shock, the market rebounded in April and May after the administration paused the implementation of new tariffs. If you fell asleep on New Year's, then woke up at the beginning of June and looked at the market indices, it would almost seem like nothing had happened in the year so far—key market indices were within 1% of where they started the year.

How the economy and U.S. stock market perform in the second half of the year will likely be highly dependent on policy decisions. Currently, data in areas like corporate profits, profit margins and employment remain strong, but uncertainty over policy decisions—what will happen with the implementation of tariffs, federal reserve policy and the looming 2025 tax bill—affects both investors and donors alike. But, as recent economic data shows, the US economy has proven more resilient than many give it credit for.

This market volatility has had mixed effects on charitable giving. High-net-worth individuals continue to contribute significantly, with foundations projected to increase their giving by 5.3% in 2025, although anecdotal data shows these numbers may be too optimistic in the current environment. However, the broader donor base is facing challenges: Many have reduced their charitable donations due to increased living costs and economic uncertainty. Changes in projected government spending in several areas have also affected many nonprofit sources of funding. Nonprofit organizations—particularly those reliant on individual donations—are experiencing financial strain,

such as rising operational costs, as they navigate these economic headwinds. These increased expenses are not always offset by increased donations.

In short, nonprofit organizations are more reliant than ever on donations from high-net-worth individuals to achieve their missions.

A few ideas to consider:

- Market gains over the past decade have left many investors with significant unrealized gains in their taxable accounts. Donating appreciated stock—such as that high-performing technology holding—can benefit not only nonprofits, but also you, by providing significant tax benefits that help reduce both current and future tax liabilities.
- As of the end of 2024, over \$251 billion has been allocated to Donor Advised Funds, but hasn't yet reached operating nonprofits.\* This money is already outside of donor's estates and the tax benefits have already been received. Consider recommending a contribution from your Donor Advised Fund to a nonprofit when the money is needed most.
- Don't let short term economic anxiety affect your longer-term charitable plans. Talk to the leaders of the organizations you support about how and when your funds can make the most impact.



**Kevin Barlow, CFA**  
Managing Director and  
Senior Wealth Advisor  
Mariner Wealth Advisors

\*Source: National Philanthropic Trust.

*This article is for informational purposes only. It is not individual advice. Investing involves risk and the potential to lose principal and past performance does not guarantee future results.*



# STAHR LEGACY SOCIETY

Elizabeth Stahr held a steadfast belief: a library is essential for everyone, young and old, to explore new ideas, forge connections, and delight in the written word. Her legacy isn't simply the Central Library building. It's about the countless people, especially children, who will step through its doors and find a place of enlightenment, joy, and personal transformation for generations to come.

The Library Foundation is proud to carry forward the spirit of exceptional public service championed by the community leaders who have shaped the Library for decades. To honor Elizabeth and John Stahr's deep commitment to the Newport Beach community, we've created The Elizabeth and John Stahr Legacy Society.

This special society celebrates those who have made an Estate Gift to the Foundation or have indicated their plan to do so. Donors who make an Estate Gift are welcomed into the exclusive Library Leadership Circle. This means they are invited to key events like the Library Leadership Reception, which kicks off our season, and the Summer Solstice Celebration, which brings it to a close. Plus, members of the Stahr Legacy Society will see their names in our Annual Report, featured in the Fall Bookmark magazine.

The Library Foundation has partnered with FreeWill, an online tool to simplify the estate planning process. An individual can create a legally valid will or revocable living trust online at no cost. If you are in the process of creating or revamping your estate plan, you can utilize the FreeWill service while in that process. FreeWill provides the free forms and a free summary of your will intentions to bring to an attorney.

For more information go to <https://nbplf.foundation/estate-giving/> and click on the **FreeWill** link.

**FREEWILL**

For financial advisor information and the Estate Gift Intent Form, go to <https://nbplf.foundation/Give/Legacy>

For further information, contact Jerold D Kappel CFRE, Library Foundation CEO, at [jkappel@nbplf.foundation](mailto:jkappel@nbplf.foundation), or by phone at 949-717-3890.



Pictured from left: Lucille Kuehn, Jack Dwan, Lizanne Witte, Dave Carmichael, Barbara Glabman, John Stahr and Elizabeth Stahr

# nbplf.

NBPL Foundation Office  
1000 Avocado Avenue  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
949-717-3892  
[info@nbplf.foundation](mailto:info@nbplf.foundation)  
[nbplf.foundation](http://nbplf.foundation)

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Elizabeth & John Stahr

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Jerold D Kappel, *Chief Executive Officer*  
[jkappel@nbplf.foundation](mailto:jkappel@nbplf.foundation)  
Kunga Wangmo,  
*Director of Programs*  
[kupshaw@nbplf.foundation](mailto:kupshaw@nbplf.foundation)  
Shawn Boeker, *Office Manager*  
[sboeker@nbplf.foundation](mailto:sboeker@nbplf.foundation)

## NEWPORT BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

[newportbeachlibrary.org](http://newportbeachlibrary.org)

MELISSA HARTSON  
Director of Library Services

CENTRAL LIBRARY  
1000 Avocado Avenue  
Newport Beach, CA 92660  
949-717-3800

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1300 Irvine Avenue  
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949-717-3838

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Balboa, CA 92661  
949-644-3076

CORONA DEL MAR BRANCH  
410 Marigold Avenue  
Corona del Mar, CA 92625  
949-644-3075

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## FASCINATING SPEAKERS, OUTSTANDING PROGRAMS

Check out the Bookmark Magazine archive on the Library Foundation's website and read about our years of fascinating speakers, outstanding programs, and support of the Newport Beach Public Library. Dig in at <https://nbplf.foundation/archives/bookmark-archives/>. And if you're not yet a member, join us — we'd love to have you.

