

Tattler

Spring
2022

MARK TWAIN
Library
Books Are Just the Beginning...

FROG FROLIC FESTIVAL: MERRIMENT, MUSIC, MAGIC IN MAY!

Shhhhhh...do you hear that? If you listen closely, you might catch songbirds chirping and peeper frogs crooning, sure signs that Spring is (FINALLY!) in the air. Another sign? The behind the scenes bustling at the Mark Twain Library, as a band of excited volunteers prepares for the **FROG FROLIC FESTIVAL**, which will spring up at the Redding Community Center on **May 14** (rain or shine!).

The **Frolic** has been in hibernation since 2019...but its back in sparkling form, this marking the Silver Anniversary of one of 06896's most favorite days. Families flock to the Redding Community Center to see one another after being shut-ins (and that was before the pandemic!). It is an amphibian-themed festival for all ages: food trucks, beer garden, live music, all kinds of crafts & fair fun for kids, and a hard-to-resist Silent Auction.

The inspiration behind the **Frog Frolic** is Twain's much-loved yarn: "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." This, the title story of his first-ever book, introduced the world to Samuel Clemens' irresistibly witty voice -- that of Mark Twain.

It's been 3 long years since we could rally in the name of family, fun and a frog...so mark your calendars May 14! We can't wait to celebrate the triumphant return of **The Frolic** + our Famously Funny Founder, while raising Foundational Funds for library he gave to Redding.



To sponsor (**please!**) or volunteer, visit the Frog Frolic page on our website: www.marktwainlibrary.org.

**"IN THE SPRING I HAVE
COUNTED 136 DIFFERENT
KINDS OF WEATHER INSIDE
OF 24 HOURS."**

— MARK TWAIN

FOUNDER FUN FACT:

WHEN ASKED WHICH HISTORICAL FIGURE HE MOST IDENTIFIED WITH, ICONIC FASHION DESIGNER **ISSAC MIZRAHI** SAID, "MARK TWAIN. HE WAS SOPHISTICATED IN AN EXCLUSIVELY AMERICAN WAY.

ALSO SO QUOTABLE."
(*Vanity Fair*, April 2022)

SPRING HOURS

Mon. & Thurs.: 10 am – 8 pm
Tues., Wed., & Fri.: 10 am – 5 pm
Sat.: 10 am – 5 pm
Sun.: 1 pm – 5 pm

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SPRING CLEANING... IT'S FOR THE BIRDS!



"If you'd like to turn your own little postage stamp of native soil into a conservation effort, NATURE'S BEST HOPE is a great place to begin." — **New York Times**

On a Wednesday night in early September, the Mark Twain Library joined forces with the Garden Club, New Pond Farm and Highstead to host the virtual program, "Nature's Best Hope." Based on his bestselling book by the same name, entomologist, ecologist, and conservationist Doug Tallamy outlined his vision for a grassroots, practical and effective approach to conservation, showing how homeowners can turn their yards into conservation corridors.

A remarkably large audience - almost 350! - tuned into the virtual program that evening, and another 300+ have watched the recording on the **Mark Twain Library's YouTube** channel. We are thrilled to think that hundreds will hopefully be approaching their lawns and hedges a bit differently this spring - with birds and bees and butterflies in mind! (If you missed it, you can find it via the YouTube link at: www.marktwainlibrary.org.)

APRIL 1910: THE SEEDING OF THE STORMFIELD SOCIETY

In June 1908, Mark Twain moved to Redding. He deemed his grand new estate - located high on the hill above where the library currently stands - **Stormfield**. It is said Twain gave the home its name while admiring a thunderstorm rumble across Redding's farms below. It is at **Stormfield** where the idea of The Mark Twain Library was born. Upon moving in, Twain realized that he owned more books than would fit on his shelves. So, he donated a few thousand volumes from his personal collection to create a local library for his neighbors. All Redding needed was an actual library building to house the books.

While Twain passionately believed that raising the funds for the library should be a community project, on April 6, 1910 -- 112 years ago this month -- he requested his lawyer to earmark \$6,000 to "erect a building for the Mark Twain Library of Redding." Twain died at home at **Stormfield** two weeks later, on April 21, 1910.

Mark Twain gave both the inspiration and, through his will, the lead gift to the library that bears his name, propelling Redding on a course for intellectual, cultural, and social pursuits.

**THE MARK TWAIN LIBRARY
STORMFIELD SOCIETY** RECOGNIZES
THOSE WHO, LIKE MARK TWAIN, HAVE MADE
PLANS FOR A LEGACY GIFT TO THE LIBRARY.

If you are interested in joining **The Stormfield Society**, please contact Library Director Erin Dummeyer erin@marktwainlibrary.org. If you have already included the Mark Twain Library in your estate plans, please let us know so we can recognize you as a member of this distinguished group, founded by America's greatest humorist, and seeded in the spring -- along with the forsythia-- a century ago.

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MARK TWAIN
Library
Books Are Just the Beginning...
PO. Box 1009
Redding, CT 06875



POSTAL PATRON

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR, ERIN DUMMEYER

There is a Little Free Library ® in my neighborhood that we pass on our way to the playground. If you aren't familiar with LFLs, they are public bookcases where neighbors can take a book or leave a book in a free exchange. They're often made to look like charming miniature libraries and they're popping up everywhere. I call the one in our neighborhood magical because it seems always stocked with a book that is just right for me at that moment in time. The latest find was Mary Oliver's *Devotions*, which contains selected poems from her oeuvre. Oliver's work is delightful to read as the seasons change especially now, in April, National Poetry Month. Below is one of my favorites from *Devotions*:

At Blackwater Pond

At Blackwater Pond the tossed waters have settled after a night of rain.

I dip my cupped hands. I drink
a long time. It tastes
like stone, leaves, fire. It falls cold
into my body, waking the bones.
I hear them
deep inside me, whispering
oh what is that beautiful thing
that just happened?

Mary Oliver



IN A WORD: THE 2022 ANNUAL APPEAL

#15 – just after Shakespeare and Jane Austin - on Goodreads' list of Most Frequently Quoted Authors, is Mark Twain. America's beloved humorist, banked on knowing just the right words for literally every subject imaginable. We think he'd approve this year's Annual Appeal campaign.

Inspired by (addicted to!) the word craze **Wordle**, we've landed on 6 words to describe the library's relationship with our town and her residents.

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y | O | U | R | S |
| P | L | A | C | E |
| I | D | E | A | S |
| M | A | G | I | C |
| H | E | A | R | T |
| T | W | A | I | N |

The mission of our staff, Board and devoted volunteers is to ensure that Mark Twain's library is **YOUR PLACE**, fostering **IDEAS** and **MAGIC**. Located centrally and engaging constantly, the library is the **HEART** of Redding – which is exactly the dream **TWAIN** envisioned when he hatched our library.

But your support is the only way the **PLACE**, the **MAGIC**, the library can continue. The money we receive annually from the Town of Redding does not cover our operating budget. Volunteers fund-raise for the rest; this year, we need to make \$400,000 through a few events and this Appeal.

Everyday people of all ages use the library – in person or online - for a great book, a stimulating program, a fairy tale, a bingeable series. All for free. That would not be possible without help from neighbors like you.

Please consider a donation to the **PLACE** where **MAGIC** and **IDEAS** are ever-flowing, the Mark **TWAIN** Library. Every single gift makes an impact beyond **WORDS**.

THE LAST WORD:

PLEASE SUPPORT THE MARK TWAIN LIBRARY THIS SPRING!

With a contribution of:

- \$50 \$75 \$100 \$200 \$500
 \$1,000 \$_____ (your choice)

The Mark Twain Library is a 501(c)(3) non-profit which qualifies for corporate matching funds. All contributions are tax deductible as permitted by law.

HONOR SOMEONE WITH A TRIBUTE GIFT

In honor of

In memory of

Name: _____

CHECK: please make check payable to Mark Twain Library

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

CREDIT CARD: Visa Mastercard Amex

Account No: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature (required): _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

SAVE A STAMP! YOUR ONLINE DONATION IS GLEEFULLY ACCEPTED:

www.MarkTwainLibrary.org



THANK YOU for helping the library keep
a **SPRING** to our step!