



FRIENDS of the TOWSON LIBRARY

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Don't Miss the Friends' Annual Book Sale April 15 - 18

As a member of the Friends of the Towson Library, admission is free to the "First Choice Sale" on Thursday, April 15 from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. This gives you access to shop for the first-choice selections, while others must pay \$10 admission. But never fear, if you miss the opening night, there will be thousands of books, children's books, audio and video cassettes, CDs, and DVDs waiting for you through April 18. As always, the sale will be held in the Wilson and Towson Rooms on the ground floor of the Towson Library.

Following opening night on April 15, the sale continues through the weekend on:

April 16 & 17: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

April 18: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
(bulk pricing — \$2 a foot on April 18!)

All proceeds benefit the Towson Library.

Bring this coupon to the sale for one FREE fiction book on April 17 or 18.



In February, more than 40 inches of snow buried the Towson Library garden. We await the return of the library's lovely planters packed with flowers, grasses, and cascading vines this spring. The Friends of the Towson Library is responsible the new seating in this garden overlooking the dragon mural. *(Photos by Fay Citerone)*

**Thanks
for your
support!**

With the conclusion of our 2010 Friends of the Towson Library membership drive, we are pleased to welcome 20 new individual members and 136 returning members who have paid dues for the year. Of those, 41 members have paid dues of \$50 or more! We would also like to recognize four business members who've supported us since 2000: Azrael, Gann and Franz, LLP; Dulaney Plaza/Taubman Properties; Lafarge North America; and Pollard's Towing. **See page 3 to see some ways your support is making a difference.**

What Does the Life and Legacy of Abraham Lincoln Mean to You?

Friends of the Towson Library presented \$50 awards to two students for their essays that answered this question. The winning essays are re-printed below and on page 3.

Derek Siegel, Towson High School, Grade 11

When examining American History, the terms 'Lincoln' and 'liberty' often go hand-in-hand. Lincoln was a great supporter of social equality even before he was elected President. As his fame grew, Lincoln's lofty words became the monumental social strides that revolutionized the way Americans perceived freedom and justice. His actions and decisions ignited a chain reaction of liberty and hope; Abraham Lincoln has in no small way shaped the United States, and our world, as we know it today.

It is easy for a man born of moderate times to seek justice and achieve greatness, but what makes Lincoln's contributions to liberty so spectacular is that his efforts took place during the height of the Civil War, an era of grave turmoil for the nation. On January 1, 1863, in the midst of the widespread dissent and political pressure that *mandated* prudence, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to his fellow Americans. And in the following two years, Lincoln not only brought an end to the feuding states but also helped conceive the tremendous 13th Amendment, a document abolishing slavery and servitude in all forms. Some four million enslaved persons were able to break away from the shackles of bondage, and 200,000 ex-slaves were able to fight in the Union army for their country and their freedom.

"After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go when and where we pleased," esteemed reformed and orator Booker T. Washington recalls of the Emancipation Proclamation, "My mother, who was standing to my side, leaned over and kissed her children, while tears of joy ran down her cheeks. She explained to us what it all mean, that this was the day for which she had been so long praying, but fearing that she would never live to see."

He gave rise to other great men and women, like Booker T. Washington, who otherwise would not have been able to share their talents and abilities with the nation. Lincoln stood for liberty; he stood for justice; he stood for hope.

But we cannot, and must not, forget *how* Lincoln won the rights for African Americans, because just as he is famous for enslaved persons, he is infamous for his unjust disregard for other civil liberties.

In April of 1861, President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus in Maryland and other northwestern states. In doing so, he incarcerated some 15,000 without allowing them due process rights promised to every individual in the 5th and 6th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

His reasoning behind this suspension was that many Marylanders were sympathizers of Southern succession and could thus betray himself, the Union, and the cause of emancipation to Jefferson Davis and the South. But as plausible as his concerns were, by suspending the writ, Lincoln engaged in one of the greatest hypocrisies in American history: by inhibiting the rights of certain individuals in his bloody quest to attain liberty for others.

Despite this suspension, there is no doubt that Lincoln has done great things for our nation. His principles of freedom and equality, as well as his bravery, earn him much merit. Additionally, his ambivalent politics have left his and future generations an important lesson about liberty: this it should always be striven for, but it comes at a cost. I believe that this lesson is his true legacy.

What Would Lincoln Think About the World Today?

Eleonore Evans, McDonogh School, Grade 6

One of the highlights of the world today is the United States' first African American President, Barack Obama. So what would Abraham Lincoln think of him? These are my thoughts on what would happen.

Barack Obama has been our first African-American president for roughly one year. So, what would Lincoln, a former president, think of Obama today? Well, the answer is now what most people would conclude. Yes, it is true that Lincoln believed black people should not be treated the way they were back in his time. He even abolished slavery. But Lincoln was a man of his time: a 19th century white man who had grown up with almost everyone around him thinking whites were superior to blacks. So, with the historical election of the first black president, Lincoln's thoughts would be more on the side of "No way!" rather than "Good for him."

Although, if Lincoln had been alive to experience and see the huge progress the world has made in accepting African-Americans, maybe his thoughts would be different. About 200 years ago the thought of a black President was...horrifying. Absurd. Now, with the help of many historical icons such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, we have a black President, and that is fully acceptable throughout the country.

So, to conclude, if Lincoln were to assess the U.S. Presidency with the mind of a white man in the age of the 19th century, he would not like it so much. But, if he had been alive to feel and experience the huge changes that have occurred in the U.S., he would gladly embrace it, much like the rest of the country.

Your generous support makes a difference

Over the past few months, you may have noticed a display board near the "bridge" at the Towson Library which shows how the Friends of the Towson Library spends your generous donations. Some examples are the dragon mural in the reading garden and the garden itself, indoor and outdoor seating, plants in the library, the big screen TV in the café, and new computer stations. The Friends also supports many literacy programs, including numerous readings and lectures for adults and children.

FROM THE MANAGER OF THE TOWSON LIBRARY

I hope you had a chance to visit the Towson Library during "**Forever Free: Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation**," the nationally touring exhibit we hosted in February and March. Many members of the Friends of the Towson Library Board joined us for the opening reception and a keynote presentation by Goucher College's Lincoln scholar, Dr. Jean Baker. Activities sponsored by the Friends throughout the exhibit period gave people of all ages an opportunity to think about and discuss our nation's history. With more than 30,000 visitors each month—despite the snows—we know that many had an opportunity to discover new facts to explore even more.

I hope to see you at the book sale this month. Good luck finding a gem!

- Jennifer C. Haire

Friends' Annual meeting on May 4 to feature novelist

On Tuesday, May 4, at the Friends of the Towson Library annual meeting, Ted Venetoulis, a former Baltimore County Executive, will be the headline speaker. Mr. Venetoulis will talk about his new novel, *Hail to the Cheat*, the story of a First Lady who kicks out her philandering husband, the President, from the White House. The book has been described as an amusing, but not farfetched, tale of American politics, full of twists and turns. Books will be available for purchase and for signing.

Mr. Venetoulis is Chairman and CEO of Corridor Media, a regional business and political news magazine serving the Baltimore-Washington corridor. He is a recognized expert on the newspaper industry and a leader of efforts to return the *Baltimore Sun* to local ownership.

The meeting will be held in the Towson Meeting Room on the ground floor of the Towson Library and begins at 7 p.m. with a brief business session to elect our officers and directors for the coming year. At their March meeting, the Friends approved nominations for officers and directors to vote on the May meeting. The officers nominated for a one-year term include Dorothy Fraquelli for President, Pat Fraher for 1st Vice President, Fay Citerone for 2nd Vice President, Susan Gillette for Treasurer, and Jim Ransom for Secretary; the board members up for re-election to three-year terms are Katherine Buchanan, Charles Cottrell, Pat Fraher, Susan Gillette, Art Lynch, Eve McGovern, Jim Ransom, Dorothy Seim, and Eleanor Wilbur; and new board members nominated for three-year terms are Hannah Pickworth, Boynton "Jack" Emerson, and Ann Groff.

Admission to the event is free and open to everyone. Refreshments will be served.

Friends of the Towson Library



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Mission:

To increase and improve
the services, facilities
and resources of the
Towson Library.