

# Life in LAMORINDA

## Beach Reads for the Thinking Gal and Guy

By Sophie Braccini



### Steve Tollefson's list of recommended books:

- Earth Abides, George R. Stewart  
*Post-apocalyptic life in the Bay Area. Ecology. Pandemics. But written in the '40s.*
- Storm, George R. Stewart  
*The "natural history" of a major Pacific Storm that hits Northern California.*
- The Ninth Wave, Eugene Burdick  
*Surfers, California politics, the new science of public opinion polls.*
- The Sibyl, Par Lagerkvist  
*The wandering Jew meets one of the women who was the Oracle of Delphi: goat gods, weird children, and philosophy. Sally Field is not involved.*
- Alexander's Bridge, Willa Cather  
*Her first novel, set in Boston and London of all places.*
- The Encantadas, or Enchanted Isles, Herman Melville  
*Novella: one story for each of the Galapagos Islands.*
- Saint Manuel the Good, Martyr, Miguel de Unamuno  
*Novella: a priest who no longer believes continues for the sake of his parishioners.*

### And if it's been a while, how about:

- The Octopus, Frank Norris  
*Farmers in the Central Valley fight the railroads. Great local color of the Central Valley and San Francisco. Makes you hate The Establishment.*
- Big Rock Candy Mountain, Wallace Stegner  
*An epic about the late 19th Century-early 20th Century West. Alberta, Montana, Salt Lake City, Reno, and Lake Tahoe.*
- The Sea Wolf, Jack London  
*A ferry accident in The Bay sends a man on a harrowing journey across the Pacific.*

### And a few more women writers:

- Carson McCullers,  
*Ballad of the Sad Café, Member of the Wedding, and short stories*
- Katherine Mansfield, short stories.  
*We've all read "The Garden Party" but there are lots of other good ones.*
- Willa Cather, especially O! Pioneers!  
*My Antonia and Death Comes for the Archbishop.*
- Zora Neale Hurston  
*Their Eyes were Watching God*
- Dorothy Parker  
*Poems*
- Sigurd Undset,  
*but instead of Kristen Lavransdottir, find the modern novels, Madame Dorthea and Ida Elizabeth 1928*
- Sarah Orne Jewett,  
*Country of the Pointed Firs*
- Mildred Walker,  
*Winter Wheat*
- Dorothy Johnson,  
*The Hanging Tree (she also wrote A Man Called Horse and The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance). All three books made into successful, well-received movies.*
- Jean Rhys  
*The Wide Sargasso Sea, Voyage in the Dark, After Leaving Mr. MacKenzie—*
- Laurie Colwin,  
*Shine On, Bright and Dangerous Object (as well as her more famous Family Happiness and Happy All the Time)*

There's nothing more exhilarating than a passionate person talking about what moves them most. That's what happened on Thursday the 28th, when Stephen Tollefson, Director and Lecturer at UC Berkeley – Undergraduate Education, talked about "forgotten treasures" at the Lafayette Library. Steve is a writer himself and has published two volumes of witty books about grammar called GrammarGrams and several short stories.

It was a very special "Sweet Thursday," sponsored by the Friends of Lafayette library (FLL) and supported by the Lafayette Book Store. About 110 people showed up to hear about lost treasures and talk about favorite books. Stephen Tollefson has a special gift for presenting books, many of which are forgotten treasures from well known and less well known authors. He can arouse each and everyone's curiosity.

The presentation was interactive with many in the audience giving their own impressions and opinions on books that have a special meaning for them. Books presented by Steve were on sale at the meeting and it was a challenge keeping fresh books on the table since they were eagerly snapped up. Linda Peterson, President of the Board of the FLL, and a published Mystery writer in her own right, was the moderator of the evening. She concluded by highlighting the importance of books and places where people can share common interests: "Books bring us together to talk about the things we love."



Moraga residents Spencer and Laine bring in clothes and toys

## Goodwill and Donations Thrive in Moraga's Goodwill Center

By Virginia Fox, Guest Writer

"Look at these flip flops,"

L says Kimberly Scrafano, accepting a donation from a customer and excitedly looking into a large plastic bag filled with decorative sandals. As the Senior Director of Community and Fund Development, Scrafano says donations have been pouring into the Goodwill Donation Center in Moraga in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center since it opened to replace a trailer in the parking lot.

"We typically get 550 donations a week in Moraga which is approximately 50,000 pounds," says Scrafano. Donors from all over Lamorinda drop off furniture, toys, clothing, antiques and oil paintings. The center also receives collectibles and musical instruments.

"Someone donated a pair of antique dolls which we sold for \$ 1,200, and we just got a guitar," she says smiling at the steady stream of customers. According to Scrafano, ninety three cents of every dollar raised from the resale of donations supports job training, placement and support programs.

The Moraga location, a part of Goodwill Industries of the East Bay non-profit franchise, is the first Goodwill center with features specially designed to improve customer service. The extra wide service

counter provides an easy place for dropping donations and the center is staffed and open seven days a week, 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM. Donations are separated in Moraga, sent to a sorting and processing plant in Antioch, then transported to one of twenty five Goodwill stores in the East Bay ensuring that a wide range of goods is available in each retail location.

Most of the donations received in the Moraga location are usable. With the launch two years ago of Goodwill's aggressive Recycling and Resource Recovery program, even unusable items often find an environmentally friendly end use.

Partnering with Alameda County Waste Management Authority and Stopwaste.org., G.I.E.B. recycles electronics, glass, plastic and other waste materials. Non-saleable clothing and other textiles are turned over to the salvage market. "We always look for ways to avoid adding to landfill," Scrafano says.

Lamorinda customers agree the central location is an easy drop off point. Hauling in five large plastic sacks and a box of assorted items, Moraga resident Mark Fenske says: "I donate all the time. We have three kids who go through lots of clothes and toys. This is a real convenience."

Frances Sheehan of Lafayette drops off a pile of



Kimberly Scrafano accepts donation from Lafayette resident, Frances Sheehan, as staff member, Debbie Greenwald, looks on.

clothes on hangars and says, "I've cleaned out my closets and my house. This is great." And for young Moraga residents like Spencer, 6, and his sister, Laine, 4, the donation center is a great place to practice the gift of giving. Handing over an electronic dog and pair of leopard shoes, plus bags of clothes and toys, Spencer shyly explains: "We want to let someone else have these."

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