



## EVENTS & SPECIAL PROGRAMS HIGHLIGHT



**Wednesday, May 2, Noon - 8:30 pm**

### *A Dickens Day Celebration*

Celebrate Charles Dickens's 200th Birthday Anniversary! Start with lunch at the Six Jolly Fellowship Porters Pub and hear talks on *Discovering Dickens's London*. Then enjoy *English Tea Readings* with Charles Dickens in Residence (Robert Young). The evening features keynote speaker Jane Smiley, author of *Charles Dickens* (2002); followed by a panel, *A Writer's Life: Author, Celebrity, Social Reformer, Intrepid Traveler, Amateur*

*Actor & Family Man and Dickens in the Digital Age*. The finale includes a dramatic reading by Paul Whitworth and surprise Victorian guests!

Co-sponsored by the [Dickens Project, UC-Santa Cruz](#); [Litquake](#); and [The Great Dickens Christmas Fair](#).

Full listing on page 2

## BRING YOURSELF ONLINE

Although we are pleased to bring you our news every month in print, we want to remind you of the constantly changing content of our website at <http://www.milibrary.org/library>. Reviews, highlights of

the Library collection, links to recent lists of new books, and the ability to place holds 24/7 are all good reasons to keep active in our online community!

## POETRY AND PARLOR GAMES



On Monday, April 16, MI members played a couple of rousing word-based parlor games to celebrate National Poetry Month, stimulate our creative spirits, and hang out with each other over lunch. Reprinted here are a couple of completely unedited examples of our good time! For more see [www.milibrary.org/corpse](http://www.milibrary.org/corpse). If you would like to see more low-key lunch-time activities, send your suggestions to Taryn Edwards at [tedwards@milibrary.org](mailto:tedwards@milibrary.org).

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## PROGRAMS

# A Moment of Truth: Confronting America's National Debt

SHARON MILLER,  
LIBRARY DIRECTOR

**A**re you disappointed with the lack of civic discourse in this election year?

Join fellow members in a Mechanics' Institute Citizens' Jury to wrestle with current issues of national interest. This moderated seminar, first in a projected series, will study the Simpson-Bowles and Domenici-Rivlin reports, debate and deliberate alternative solutions, and seek to arrive at statements of agreement for governmental action to reduce the national debt.

MI members Avery Chope, retired from a career in banking and finance that spanned the globe; and Steve

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## EVENTS

## A Dickens Day Celebration

Wednesday, May 2, 2012 from Noon – 8:30 pm

In Honor of Charles Dickens's 200th Birthday Anniversary Year

Co-sponsored by The Dickens Project, University of California, Santa Cruz; Litquake; and The Great Dickens Christmas Fair

*An Important Notice of (perhaps) the one and only all-day Dickens Day Celebration in San Francisco, hence, one that should not be missed on all account. Thus, a brief description of what will occur by way of discourse and disquisition, literary enrichment, theatrical engagement, delectable fare, and, of course, sheer fun.*



## Afternoon Program - 4th floor, Meeting Room

## Discovering Dickens' London

NOON - 6:00 pm

Six Jolly Fellowship Porters Pub  
(hearty tavern fare & libations available)

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

John Jordan - Arriving in Dickens's London

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Murray Baumgarten - Reading Dickens, Writing London

2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Peter Orner - Dickens and Melville: A Tale of Two Scriveners

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Tea Readings with Charles Dickens (Robert Young): A Dramatic Reading by the Author!  
"5-Minute Dickens" with audience participation - bring your favorite selection to share!  
English Tea Service available!



## Evening Program - 2nd floor, Library

## A Writer's Life: Author, Celebrity, Social Reformer, Intrepid Traveler, Amateur Actor, &amp; Family Man and Dickens in the Digital Age

6:00 pm

Doors Open - Victorian Guests &amp; Surprises

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Keynote Address: Jane Smiley, author of *Charles Dickens* (2002)

Panel discussion, moderated by John Jordan with Murray Baumgarten, Edwin Eigner, Jane Smiley, Peter Orner, Jon Michael Varese

From Page to Stage—A Dramatic Reading by actor Paul Whitworth



Thursday, May 17, 6:00 pm

*Parks and Gardens in Greater Paris* (Edition Axel Menges)

JACQUELINE WIDMAR STEWART

For over 350 years Parisians have designed and preserved phenomenal public outdoor spaces. From the Jardin des Tuileries which opened in 1667 to a contemporary garden suspended over a train station, Jacqueline Stewart documents the tapestry of parklands throughout Paris with a keen eye to the city's history and culture. Her identification of various hallmarks of park-building eras allows the reader and visitor to experience these grand green places in the way Parisians do.

Members Free; Public \$12



## CINEMALIT

CURATED &amp; HOSTED BY MICHAEL FOX

Fridays: Cafe 5:30 pm; Program 6:00 pm.  
Members Free; Public, suggested donation \$10

For eleven years Mechanics' Institute's CinemaLit has offered a monthly mini-film festival/salon, showcasing directors, stars, film genres, and classics. Each film is introduced by film critic and CinemaLit curator Michael Fox, or by guests who include local film writers, critics and aficionados. Come for the movie. Stay for the discussion!

## WHAT THE DICKENS: 200 YEARS YOUNG



Friday, May 4

*David Copperfield* (1935)DIRECTED BY GEORGE CUKOR  
Freddy Bartholomew,  
W.C. Fields

A child's painful journey to adulthood is beautifully limned in this stellar adaptation of the most autobiographical of Dickens' novels.



Friday, May 18

*The Old Curiosity Shop*  
(2007)DIRECTED BY BRIAN PERCIVAL  
Derek Jacobi, Toby Jones

Tormented by a vile loan shark, a shop owner and his granddaughter flee London for the country.



Friday, May 11

*Great Expectations* (1998)DIRECTED BY ALFONSO CUARON  
Ethan Hawke,  
Gwyneth Paltrow

A mysterious benefactor takes a liking to a working-class lad, opening the door to the wider world.



Friday, May 25

*Oliver Twist* (2005)DIRECTED BY ROMAN POLANSKI  
Ben Kingsley, Barney Clark

A runaway orphan comes to London and falls in with a gang of child pickpockets.

Reservations Required: 415.393.0100 or [rsvp@milibrary.org](mailto:rsvp@milibrary.org) Members and Co-sponsors Free; Public \$15

# CLASSES AT THE LIBRARY

## Monday, May 14 - Friday, May 18 "Office Hours" with Our Technology Team

Are you stumped over a feature on your smart phone, or confused with the folder options of your email? Would you like to learn to use the saved lists feature on your MI Library account? Does the Library catalog seem to never give you what you are searching for? Are you having difficulty managing multiple online passwords? For these and other questions regarding email, eBook readers, making the best of our Library online catalog, safely managing online accounts, we offer a week of office hours with our team of technology teachers: Sead Sehovic, Jeremy Snell and Matt Montgomery.

Reserve a 15-minute appointment during these times:



Monday, May 14, between 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm  
 Tuesday, May 15, between 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm  
 Wednesday, May 16, between 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm  
 Thursday, May 17, between noon and 1:00 pm  
 Friday, May 18, between 10:00 am - 11:00 am

All consultations will be held in the 4th floor meeting room, with laptops available.

Appointments are advised, but drop-in consultations will be allowed if all times are not reserved.

Call 415.393.0111, or email [jsnell@milibrary.org](mailto:jsnell@milibrary.org) with your desired day/time and consultation question.

### Web-based Tutorial Estate Planning Basics

The Mechanics' Institute has acquired a series of ten-minute video briefings on wills, living trusts, probate, trustees, charitable trusts, gift annuities, advance health care directives and other powerful estate planning tools. Viewed individually, they help clarify these complex subjects; viewed together, they're like a private estate planning seminar, but without the time commitment. Free to you as a benefit of your Mechanics' membership, you can start watching them right now by visiting our website: <http://www.milibrary.org/donate/planned>. For more information or assistance with viewing, contact Taryn Edwards 415.393.0103, [tedwards@milibrary.org](mailto:tedwards@milibrary.org).



## AUTHORS' CARNIVAL

Readings, workshops, and camaraderie in celebration of our members' creative achievements.

### FIELD TRIP TO HEYDEY! Tuesday, May 8, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Join us on a tour of Heyday, an independent, non-profit publisher in Berkeley. Since 1974, Heyday has promoted widespread awareness and celebration of California's many cultures, landscapes, and boundary-

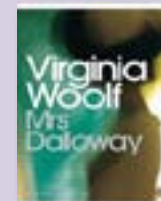
breaking ideas through their well-crafted books. Meet executive director Malcolm Margolin and his skilled staff as they discuss their individual responsibilities, Heyday's history and mission, and how this publisher has flourished for over thirty years to become one of the most coveted presses in the state. **HEYDAY** Examine



their recent publications and follow one from proposal to finished work. Tour starts promptly at 10:00 am. Reservations required.

For more information or to make reservations for any Authors' Carnival events, contact Taryn Edwards [tedwards@milibrary.org](mailto:tedwards@milibrary.org) or 415.393.0103.

# BOOK DISCUSSIONS



Thursday, May 3, 6:00 pm; registration required (see below)

### FORGOTTEN CLASSICS

#### Mrs. Dalloway

VIRGINIA WOOLF

Virginia Woolf's impact on English literature is still being weighed. This book, following the events in the single day of an upper-class Englishwoman, is known for her unique perspective on sexuality, feminism, life and death, madness and sanity.



Monday, May 14, noon; no registration required

### BROWN BAG MYSTERY READERS' BOOK GROUP

#### At Risk

STELLA RIMINGTON

Following her retirement as director-general of the British Security Service known as MI5, author Rimington began writing novels featuring a MI5 operator, Liz Carlyle, introduced in *At Risk*.



Tuesday, December 20, noon; no registration required

### FICTION YOU WISH YOU HAD READ

#### The Age of Innocence

EDITH WHARTON

Wharton's portrayal of 1870 New York upper class life is considered one of her best novels, and resulted in a Pulitzer Prize in 1920. She was the first woman to win that literary prize.



### THE PROUST SOCIETY OF AMERICA:

#### SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER

operates two bi-weekly groups, **Proust: In Search of Lost Time** and the **World Literature Group** which continues reading pre- and post- Proustian novels. **Enrollment for both groups has closed for this semester but will open to new members in September.** For more information contact Mark Calkins at [mark@tempsperdu.com](mailto:mark@tempsperdu.com).

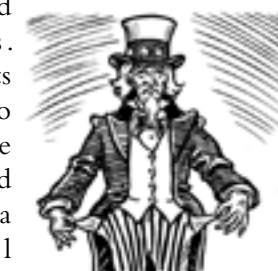
**Information & registration:** 415.393.0113 or Sharon Miller [smiller@milibrary.org](mailto:smiller@milibrary.org)

All readings are available at the 2nd floor Circulation desk. All Book Discussions are held in the 4th floor Board Room.

## A Moment of Truth

(continued from page 1)

Weiner, retired Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley, are preparing a four-session seminar to offer members of differing opinions an opportunity to study the issue and discuss the merits of proposed solutions. Participants who wish to do so will be encouraged to write a personal opinion statement for possible publication.



The Library will make copies of the reports for all participants: *The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform: The Moment of Truth* (Simpson-Bowles); and *Restoring America's Future: Reviving the Economy, Cutting Spending and Debt, and Creating a Simple, Pro-Growth Tax System* (Domenici-Rivlin).

The seminars will be held on Mondays, from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, on July 9, 16, 23, 30.

For a full description of the seminar structure and application information, see the website, or contact Sharon Miller at [smiller@milibrary.org](mailto:smiller@milibrary.org) or 415.393.0113.

Participation is limited; please apply early.

At the completion of the seminars, the group will present a program for all interested members on Wednesday, September 5, at 6:00 pm in the 4th floor Meeting Room.

## In Memoriam Val Zemitis, 1925–2012

INTERNATIONAL MASTER JOHN DONALDSON, DIRECTOR OF THE CHESS ROOM



The Mechanics' Institute lost one of its most loyal and hard-working friends with the passing of Valdemars (Val) Zemitis early on the morning of March 22 in Davis, California. The cause was prostate cancer.

Born April 11, 1925, in Riga, Latvia, Mr. Zemitis learned to play in his early teens. He and his sister Rita were taught the game by their father, Martins Zemitis, a master violin maker.

Chess was to become a lifelong love of Val's.

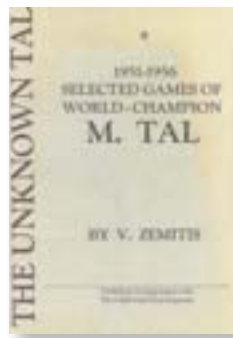
Mr. Zemitis immigrated to the United States in 1951, first settling in Salem, Oregon. Less than a year later he moved to Berkeley where he studied at the University of California. This was a golden time for chess in Northern California and Mr. Zemitis soon found himself good friends with many of the leading lights of Bay Area Chess including Neil Falconer and Bob Burger. These three would serve as games editors for the newly founded *California Chess Reporter* which was published by Guthrie McClain who was an inspiration to chess players throughout the state and region. All four men were devoted to the Mechanics' Institute Chess Club of San Francisco and the Castle Chess Club, an East Bay institution comprised of UC Berkeley graduates.

During his undergraduate days Mr. Zemitis enjoyed his greatest competitive success, tying for third in the 1954 California Open

where he scored 5.5 from 7, drawing with Grandmaster Issac Kashdan and International Master Herman Steiner. Held in Santa Barbara over Labor Day weekend, the event had all the best players in the state competing and the eighty-one competitors was a record setting turnout for the time.

The Zemitis family returned to California in 1959 and the following year, with the assistance of future Mechanics' Trustee Bob Burger, Mr. Zemitis published his first book, *The Unknown Tal*. This was quite possibly the first book dedicated to the Wizard of Riga.

During the last decade of his life Mr. Zemitis continued his productive work, first as the publisher and a contributor to the journal *Latvian Correspondence & Latvian Gambit Magazine* and later for its successor *Latvijas Saha Vestnesis*. As important as these publications were they were dwarfed by the completion of his *Encyclopedia of Latvian Chessplayers*. This massive two volume work, over 800 pages in length, can be found at the Mechanics' Institute and the principal public repositories of chess books—the John G. White Collection in Cleveland, the Royal Dutch Library in The Hague and the Anderson Collection at the State Library of Victoria in Australia. There is no other publication like it devoted to the chess players of one small country; albeit one that has produced giants the likes of Tal, Nimzovitch and Shirov.



# Chess

## Chess for Women

Sundays, May 6, 13, 20, 27

Taught by Ewalina Krubnik

FUNDED BY A GIFT IN MEMORY OF MARTIN WISKEMANN

## Tuesday Night Events

May 1, 22, 29

5:15 pm - 6:15 pm

Lecture by IM John Donaldson

December 6

6:30 pm - 10:30 pm

Spring Tuesday Night Marathons

## After 6: Wednesday Night Chess for Adults

May 3, 24, 31

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Taught by Ewalina Krubnik

4 sessions. Members \$40; Public \$50

For questions or reservations please contact Taryn Edwards at 415.393.0103 or [tedwards@milibrary.org](mailto:tedwards@milibrary.org)



EWALINA KRUBNIK

## Thursday Night Lessons

May 3, 24, 31

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Taught by MI Grandmaster-in-Residence Nick deFirmian

## Saturday Morning Chess Class for Kids

May 5, 12, 19, 26

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Taught by M.I. Grandmaster-in-Residence Nick de Firmian and Anthony Corrales

## Tournaments

Saturday, May 5

10:00 am - 8:00 pm

12th Annual Charles Powell Memorial G/45

Saturday, May 12

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Children's Quad



ARTHUR DAKE AND VAL ZEMITIS

For information and registration, contact the chess room at 415.393.0110 or [chessroom@milibrary.org](mailto:chessroom@milibrary.org)



MECHANICS' INSTITUTE  
LIBRARY & CHESS ROOM

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Friday: 9 am - 6 pm  
Saturday: 10 am - 5 pm  
Sunday: 1 pm - 5 pm

Erika Schmidt, Editor



## Spring Members' Meeting and Author Program

Thursday, May 24, 2012  
5:30 pm Reception; 6:00 pm Meeting  
6:45 pm Jonathan Haidt  
4TH FLOOR MEETING ROOM

Join us for our bi-annual Mechanics' Institute community gathering to meet fellow members, staff and trustees. Hear from the staff about new plans and programs, technology updates, and our efforts to improve your experience as members. The meeting will be followed by a program with author Jonathan Haidt.

***The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion***  
(Pantheon) JONATHAN HAIDT

Why can't our political leaders work together as threats loom and problems mount? Why do people so readily assume the worst about the motives of their fellow citizens? Are the divisions between political groups truly based on self-evident truths, or is it driven more by differences in culture? In this intriguing book, social psychologist Jonathan Haidt examines the manner in which moral intuition is shaped by culture, the role it plays in the polarization of politics and religion, and how we can reconcile ideology and civility so that diverse religious and political groups can work together for common goals. With the National Party conventions and debates starting this summer, this topic will be timely!



**Members and Guests free; Public \$12**

### Parlor games

Continued from page 1

The heron runs his rusted  
fingernails down the tortured  
windowpane,  
Outside a phantasmagoria  
galumphs as he emits five staunch  
plumes,  
In tearful freedom he scampers  
past a chaotic oleander.

—Sylvia, Ellen, Jerome, Judith

The deli, like a morgue on  
Mondays, is  
filled with cadaverous hams hung  
haphazardly,  
hamfistedly, by the butcher.

—Regan, Jeremy, Sybil, Allegra



**Jonathan Haidt** was recently featured at the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) conference in conversation with the Dalai Lama for panel on Secular Ethics. He is a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and a visiting professor of business ethics at New York University's Stern School of Business. He is the author of *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*.

Reservations Required: 415.393.0100 or [rsvp@milibrary.org](mailto:rsvp@milibrary.org)