

FOREWORD



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Library Offers Free Genealogy Materials

You're just seconds away from researching your ancestors and relatives in the massive Heritage Quest genealogy resource, which the library recently obtained. Just go to the library online resources webpage, click on the "Heritage Quest" link, and enter your library card number. You can search for people through various United States census records from the very first in 1790 up through 1930, which is the most recent available for public viewing. For example, a search on the surname "Pelosi" finds a Louis Pelosi in Milwaukee in 1860 who was the "director of the theater" at age 34. Heritage Quest lets you search through many other genealogical databases as well.

The library also now offers the Ancestry.com genealogy resource, although you must use it from computers at the branches. Ancestry.com contains approximately two billion names from the U.S. census records and thousands of books, government records, and genealogies. An annual membership in Ancestry.com costs \$155 or more, so using it for free at the library is a great bargain.

From the President...

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH LIBRARIES?

Almost five years after Measure D for library improvements failed to gain voter approval, the City is poised to bring another ballot measure for library improvements to voters in 2008. Included in this issue is an article by Library Advisory Commissioner, Valerie Stinger, which explains the process used to reach this point as well as what it is hoped will be accomplished this year.

Elsewhere in this issue, the Palo Alto Library Foundation reports on the progress of its campaign to raise funds for furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) for the Children's Library. The Children's Library improvement and expansion project is on track and we expect to see that library reopen this summer. Funds supplied by a Friends of the Library supporter were the catalyst for the successful public/private collaboration that will give Palo Alto residents back their beloved, but improved, Children's Library.

Also in this issue, Diane Jennings, our library director, briefly reports on the next steps in the Main Library renovation project.

(Continued on page 3)

Diane Jennings—A Dedicated Librarian

Main Library Improvement Project

The delivery of a construction storage container in the parking lot on January 4 was the first visible sign that the eagerly awaited facility improvement project at Main Library was about to begin. Planned in 2005 and funded with City infrastructure dollars, the project will reconfigure some areas at the library to make better use of space and improve access to some of the most popular collections.

New, smaller circulation and reference desks will be built and positioned to free up floor space for new display and holds shelving. The media room will be enlarged and converted into a space for current periodicals. A portion of the staff work room will be remodeled into a check-in area to remove the clutter of the returns operation from the public area, and the bathrooms will be remodeled to meet current standards for accessibility.

The library will remain open during most of the three-month long project. Two short periods of closure are scheduled in March during periods of the heaviest construction.

Diane Jennings
Library Director

The Great Pumpkin Gave Books!

Way back last October, our Halloween was different. We did not stock up on candy to appease our little invaders. Instead, we went to the Friends book sale and laid in a supply of children's books. We sorted them by grade level – pre-school, 1st-3rd grades, 4th-5th grades and junior high and beyond. We had a supply of joke books as a backup when we exhausted our supply of age-appropriate books.



We'd never done this before. For several years we doled out coins from a bowl. A typical young caller might get a small fistful of pennies with a nickel and perhaps a dime. But this year, to our delight, all of our young visitors loved the idea of getting books. Nobody said, "Books, yuk!" Our routine was to guess and then ask each youngster his or her grade and let them choose from the appropriate selection of books. Each youngster would focus on what they were being handed, and then look up and grin.

Several youngsters expressed delight at getting a book. One ten year old said, "Books instead of candy! What a great idea." One mother, on seeing a paperback of Jack London's *White Fang* said, "Oh, that was always my favorite," whereupon her daughter immediately piped up, "I want that one."

Each book that we gave away included one of FOPAL's orange bookmarks with the schedule of FOPAL's monthly sales -- nothing like a little promotional effort. (Does this qualify our Halloween give-aways as a tax deduction?)

This was an experiment, and we thought it was a grand success. We'll be doing it again this year except that we'll start haunting our book sales earlier to accumulate our books. We need to lay in a few more than last year since we ran out of books and our last few callers had to settle for, ugh, foil-wrapped chocolate mints.

Ellen and Tom Wyman

From the President

(From the President continued from page 1)

The Board of Directors of the Friends devoted their annual January Retreat meeting to identifying the key library issues that will need to be our focus in 2007. Those issues include: working with our book sale volunteers to ensure the continued extraordinary success of those sales; broadening our efforts to inform our supporters, library users and staff about the many contributions of the Friends; educating ourselves about the Library Services Model Analysis and Recommendations (LSMAR). We will also review the data collected from the 2006 poll of residents and correlate that with data gained from the polls that will be conducted in this year, so that our organization can confidently represent the interests of library users and supporters during the coming months.

The answer to what's happening in our library community is that a **LOT** is happening. 2007 looks to be a busy and productive year for library supporters.

Martha Schmidt, President



Farewell from the Outgoing President

After three wonderful years as President of the Friends of the Palo Alto Library, I'm even more deeply appreciative of the countless hard-working volunteers, generous donors, numerous members, avid customers, and devoted library fans whom I've met. I'd like to introduce to everyone our new President, Martha Schmidt, whose involvement with public libraries goes way back. Martha is a retired librarian who has worked in public libraries in Michigan, Ohio, New York and the Bay Area of California, including a stint as interim director of the Santa Clara City Library. As an independent contractor, she provided administrative support to the Palo Alto Library management team during the developmental phase of Measure D. In addition, Martha has helped to sort some of the thousands of incoming book donations and she and her husband Jim are regular cashiers at the busiest times of our monthly sales. She and Jim moved their family to Palo Alto in 1981. They are interested observers of city government, and have time and again championed our neighborhood libraries, which is how I first met them. I wish Martha well and look forward to working with her this year.

Jeff Levinsky

Today, our thoughts are with Marty Paddock, our FOPAL Book Sale Manager. She is currently on medical sabbatical, and we hope that it won't be long before she is back with us. Marty has been the heart and soul of our book sales since she took over in 2000. She's "everyone's best friend," and we wish you well, Marty. You're the very best – and we want you back so that we can stop floundering. Simply know that our thoughts are with you, Marty, -- our very best thoughts!

Investing in Our Future/Investing in Libraries

As we look forward to 2007, our library community builds on the substantial achievements of 2006. Countless contributors spent many hours to make the library proposal - one of the City Council's Top 3 priorities - a reality. A unanimous Library Advisory Commission (LAC) and a unanimous City Council agreed to a vision for the Palo Alto City Libraries (PACL) and laid out the tasks for 2007.

The need and vision for the library system are developed in detail in the Library Service Model Analysis and Recommendations (LSMAR). The overriding need facing the PACL is to handle the increased growth in usage and population, current and projected. Unlike many neighboring communities, Palo Alto has failed to reinvest adequately in libraries.

The vision for PACL is a city-wide system that addresses community needs through collections and services that meet leading edge standards for content, access, and connectivity; serve all ages and support life-long learning with staff, partnerships and volunteers; provide facilities

with flexible spaces including areas for quiet study and reflection; small and large group meetings and delivery of neighborhood programs and services. (see <http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/library/about/documents/LSMARFinal12-04-06.pdf>)

To build to this vision, Council unanimously approved an improved array of collections and services; uniform, comprehensive access to services; and the development of a technology plan.

In our current, taxed system, these enhancements require infrastructure improvement; thus Council approved maintaining all library locations and implementing system-wide facility improvements. The latter includes upgrading Mitchell Park Library. In all of this, the Council was clear in its commitment to the library system, in its entirety.

To move ahead in 2007, there will be work in three areas. First, community polling will be conducted to better understand relevant needs, hopes and concerns for library and public

safety buildings and better shape funding proposals.

Second, with staff input, the Council will move one of four options for an expansion of Mitchell Park forward. The options include a new stand-alone library or a joint Library and Community Center facility on the north or south corner of the existing Mitchell Park Library site. None of the proposals would encroach on parkland.

Third, study will continue on the Council's charge to ensure that service delivery is efficient and to outline the impacts on library service if no new funding is approved. A City Auditor's Report has already been requested and is due in the spring.

The promise of 2006 will require diligence in 2007. An involved library community can continue to direct wise decisions, which affect current users and future generations and which define the type of community we represent.

By *Valerie Stinger*
Library Advisory Council



Children's Library Renovation

← November 2006

Photograph by Barbara Silberling

Drawing of New Wing →

Drawing by Peter Szasz ©



Children's Library

The "What's Missing?" Campaign finds full support!

With Children's Library set to open next summer, the Palo Alto Library Foundation is pleased to announce that we have raised sufficient funds to fully furnish the renovated and expanded building. Including pledges, we now hold just over \$320,000 toward the estimated \$370,000 price-tag for all furnishings, fixtures, and equipment. The remainder will be covered by a \$50,000 donation from the Friends of the Palo Alto Library.

Library staff is working closely with the architect (Architectural Resources Group) to choose colorful furniture, art and fixtures that will bring the updated Children's Library to life.

Thanks are due to so many members of the Palo Alto Community, including the 400 people who gladly posted "What's Missing?" signs in their yards for the last three months; the many families who purchased inscribed bricks; and the major donors who gave amounts ranging from \$1000 to \$100,000 to ensure that our community will continue to have a remarkable library for our children.

By *Katharine Miller*
President, Palo Alto Library
Foundation

The Impact of the Children's Library

Nancy Steege, a long-time Palo Alto resident and her daughter Laura Manther, who grew up in Palo Alto, reminisce on the impact Children's Library had on Laura.

Laura Manther sent this email to her mom, Nancy Steege:

[Dear Mom:]

I also got your letter about the children's library. It really did bring tears. How lucky I was to have had that place and those wonderful women who allowed me and encouraged me to be a library person. Just yesterday I was saying to G that I want the school library to be a place children can explore, not a place where they have to come to check out books to pass a certain test or to learn something specific or to read at a certain level. And, I thought about sending a monetary gift to the library in Palo Alto. How serendipitous your mail was.

Laura



Nancy Steege sent this note to FOPAL Board Member Ellen Wyman:

Dear Ellen,

Last fall I sent copies of the Sept. 13 letter about the children's Library Fund to my children, all of whom were card-holders from an early age, also telling them I's "bought" a brick in our family's name.

The above was in a responding email from my daughter, Laura Manthey. The "G" she refers to is her husband. They sent in a donation as well. Laura runs the library at an elementary school in San Jose. When I was clearing away old messages on my email I noticed this one and thought I'd share with you the long-lived impact the library has had on one (now middle-aged) young girl.

Nancy Steege

The newly renovated Children's Library is scheduled to open in September 2007 to once again inspire generations of children.

The following article was written by Tom Wyman, FOPAL Board Member, and is reprinted from the Fall 2006 newsletter of *The Fellowship of American Bibliophilic Societies*.

FABS AND FRIENDS

A recent "Collector's Bin" column tells readers, "Over 6,000 bibliophiles read the *FABS Newsletter*." This started me wondering how many of these readers also support their local Friends of the Library associations?

There is a congruency of interests between bibliophiles and members of friends organizations who are dedicated to the support of their local libraries. Both are devoted to the preservation of the printed word with the goal of seeing books passed on to new readers rather than becoming recycle fodder or worse yet, landfill. Friends of the libraries advocate for and support their local libraries. Much of this support in financial terms is derived from the book sales that the friends groups sponsor. These may be annual or semi-annual sales or, in some cases, monthly sales. Ongoing Friends-sponsored sales of books within public libraries can also be an important source of income.

Inevitably, there is a great deal of work involved in preparing for these sales. Before their sales, Friends receive donations of books, sometimes in a trickle and other times as an avalanche. These may be library withdrawals, collections of books contributed by generous donors who are downsizing or moving or they may be garage or estate sale remnants. Sometimes books may be mildewed and fit only for the trash barrel, but far more often they are books that owners have valued. These are the ones that can be sold quickly at attractive prices and will be seized by

buyers eager to add them to their own collections. Volunteers do the always interesting, sometimes challenging and occasionally arduous work of receiving, storing, pricing and arranging the books for display and sale. They're all bibliophiles in one way or another, they don't want to see books discarded and share the common goal of finding new homes for older books.

A challenge facing every book sale manager and book sale volunteer is identifying bibliophilic treasures before they're put out for 50¢ or perhaps a dollar or two. Of course, the chance of finding such a treasure is what keeps many collectors, scouts and even the lay public haunting book sales. It's all in the game, but the local library is the loser when an unrecognized "rarity" finds its way onto the bargain shelf. Many smaller Friends of the Library groups may not have access to a knowledgeable book-person or even to someone who may be somewhat aware of book values.

Here's where members of FABS can serve their communities in a meaningful way. Simply contact your local Friends of the Library and find out where they prepare for their book sales. Wander on in some day when volunteers are sorting and pricing and see what's going on. Your expertise will be welcome. You may recognize a high-value item where others may not. You may be in a position to help move such items into markets or to dealers where they will command amounts well above what could be expected at Friends' periodic book sales where buyers may be unwilling to pay the going price.

Understandably, you may not view yourself as a broad-based expert in book and ephemera values, but one need only recall that in the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king, and moreover, the one-eyed woman is empress!

My own experience derives from having been associated for some 12 years with the monthly book sales sponsored by Friends of the Palo Alto Library. During this time our annual gross income has increased from \$15,000 to \$200,000. This remarkable increase is attributable to many factors including more donations and improved quality of donations along with a growing number of dedicated volunteers and devoted customers. A significant contributing factor has been more realistic pricing. This includes identifying special items, both books and ephemera, and finding appropriate markets for them. It's gratifying to see the operation working so well and to see that it has such broad public support.

The suggestion offered here will not appeal to all. But it can result in the satisfaction of knowing that you are serving your community and its libraries while, at the same time, making new friends among Friends. It's a worthy endeavor for a bibliophile and a good way to put your expertise to work.

Book Sale

Two Days, 3 Rooms, Over 50,000 Books!

2007 Dates

March 10 and 11
April 14 and 15
May 12 and 13
June 9 and 10
July 14 and 15
August 11 and 12

Open Saturday

Children's and Bargain Room
10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Main Sales Room
11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Open Sunday

All Rooms
1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Donate Books

Don't Throw Books Away

We find new readers for your old books and other items, raising \$100,000's for the Palo Alto Library.

We Accept

Books (paperbacks and hardcovers),
Movies (DVD's and Video's), Software, Games,
Music (CD's, Cassettes, Records, Sheet Music)
Other (Artwork, Posters, Pamphlets, Collectibles,
Magazines) and You Get a Tax-Deduction for Your
Donations

Drop-off Times

Tuesday—Saturday
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

You can also drop off up to one bag or box
(per day)
at any Palo Alto library.

Information and Pickups

(650) 213-8755

Book Sale Room and Book Donations Accepted
FOPAL Book Sale Room, Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Road, (North Entrance)

Friends of the Palo Alto Library Membership Form

I/We would like to join or renew at the following level:

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Student \$10
- Senior, 62+ \$10
- Supporter \$50
- Sponsor \$100
- Patron \$250
- Lifetime \$500 (No dues reminder!)
- Corporate \$1000

We are a public-benefit 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your membership is tax-deductible.

Please return form to:
Friends of the Palo Alto Library
P.O. Box 41
Palo Alto, CA 94302

Name(s)

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email- used only for Friends' email notices. Please print.

Please make checks payable to Friends of the Palo Alto Library. For credit cards:

Visa Master Card _____
Credit Card Number Expiration Date

Signature

Name on Credit Card if Different than Above

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Web Page: www.friendspaloaltolib.org

Email: info@friendspaloaltolib.org

Monthly Book Sales: Second Weekend

Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Rd.

*****Special Member's Book Sale on October 14*****

See page 7 for schedule

Saturday

Main Room: 11 am to 4 pm

(Free tickets to reserve place in line available at 8 am)

Children's (Room K6) & Bargain (Room K7): 10 am to 4 pm

Sunday

All rooms: 1 pm to 4 pm

See www.friendspaloaltolib.org for details

Board of Directors Meeting: Second Wednesday

Cubberley Book Sale Room
4000 Middlefield Road 8:30 to 10:30 am

Book Discussion Group: Second Thursday

Lucie Stern Community Center Fireside Room
1305 Middlefield Road 7:30 to 9 pm

For information, call Crystal 961-1528 or see
www.fopalbookgroup.homestead.com

Great Books: Second Wednesday

Oak Creek Apartments Club House
1600 Sand Hill Road, Palo Alto. 7:30 to 9:30 pm

For information, call Elsie Taboroff at 493-8629

**Library Commission: Fourth Thursday
& Special Schedule**

Council Conference Room, 250 Hamilton Ave. 7 pm

See www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/clerk/schedule.html
to confirm meeting date and time.

Friends of the Palo Alto Library (FOPAL) Board of Directors: Martha Schmidt, President; Betsy Allyn, Vice-President; Margarita Quihuis, Secretary; Jeff Levinsky, Treasurer and John Burt, Assistant Treasurer; Marty Paddock, Book Sale Manager. Members: Wendy Akers-Ghose, Rudy Batties, Gretchen Emmons, Gerry Masteller, Bob Otnes, Enid Pearson, Gloria Reade, Jim Schmidt, Barbara Silberling, Steve Staiger, Ellen Wyman, and Tom Wyman. Library Representatives to the Board: Diane Jennings, Library Director. Foreword Staff: Wendy Akers-Ghose; Webmaster: Jeff Levinsky; Circulation: Post Haste Direct Bob Otnes