

FOREWORD



Quarterly Issue No. 69

Fall 2005

Google Searching: Get Your Answers, Faster!

You are invited to
The Friends of the Palo Alto Library
Annual Meeting
Thursday, October 27, 7:30 p.m.

with a talk from

Special Guests from Google, Inc. who will demonstrate ways to use Google search, including many special techniques to help find the precise information you need. There will be time for questions and answers.

Palo Alto Art Center Auditorium,
1313 Newell
Free and open to the public ~
Refreshments provided

Thoughts from the Library Director



Dear Friends,

About the upcoming community survey

Why are the services of the Palo Alto City Library (PACL) limited, as compared to trends in public libraries? Why are PACL facilities older and less upgraded than those in most of our

surrounding communities? Is it because Palo Altans like the Library just as it is? Is our community satisfied with library service levels and facilities? Is there interest in change? If so, what kind of change? The City Council recognized the ongoing community debate about the future of the Library last December, when they asked the Library Advisory Commission (LAC) to come up with a long-range plan. They gave the LAC some important guidelines: make sure the plan includes a full-service library in an existing or to-be-determined location, all of the five existing branch libraries, and any necessary “distributed services” to meet community needs.

The Commission is the official advisory body to the City Council, appointed by the Council to represent community library interests and advise the Council on library matters. Commission members decided that they needed some fundamental information before they could formulate the long-range plan. They agreed they needed a sound assessment of community-wide attitudes and preferences for library service. Thus, they recently asked the Council to fund a random-sample survey about the Library, and the Council agreed to do so.

The survey will happen later this autumn. It will ask a representative sample of Palo Altans a series of questions about how they use the Library, which library services they want the most, and which they value the least. A professional public opinion research firm will be used to develop the survey instrument in conjunction with staff and the LAC, and with input from key stakeholders such as FoPAL and the Palo Alto Library Foundation (PALF). The results of this survey will be the basis for the

LAC’s plan, tentatively called *Library Service Model Analysis and Recommendations*. The Commission will focus on making the plan one that is fundable and sustainable, and that addresses the needs of the broadest possible cross-section of citizens. The LAC intends to present its recommendations to the City Council in the spring of 2006. As they develop the plan, and once it is presented to the Council, we will make sure there are ample opportunity for community discussion and debate.

If you have questions about the survey process or the long-range plan, please let me know.

About the Children’s Library renovation/ expansion project

The architects are wrapping up the final drawings for the Children’s Library project. If work stays on schedule, we hope the project will go out to bid in late November. Children’s Library is slated to close in mid-December, and construction will begin in January 2006. We’ll be setting up a special place on the Library’s website for updates. Soon you’ll be able to go to www.cityofpaloalto.org/library and click on “Children’s Library project” to get the latest information. I’d like to again extend our gratitude to all the generous donors who contributed to the Friends and Library Foundation to support the Children’s Library project – thanks to you, it’s very close to becoming a reality!

I always welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. Please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Paula Simpson, Library Director
Paula.simpson@cityofpaloalto.org
329-2403

From the President

Over a Million Dollars to the Library

Our volunteers, donors, and booksale customers have accomplished something truly amazing. Through their efforts, the Friends of the Palo Alto Library will have given more than \$1,000,000 to our library over this year and the one prior. This is an incredible milestone in Palo Alto library history.

These funds haven't come just from a few large donations either. Countless people donate used books and other items to our monthly booksales. Some items may sell for only a quarter or two, but it all adds up.

Our booksales currently bring in about \$200,000 annually – approximately double the income of just three years ago. If you've ever come at opening time on Saturdays to one of our Cubberley sales, you know how remarkably popular they are.

Others have donated funds to our organization. Many give \$10 a year or more for memberships or contribute the cost of a new book through our Library Lover's Fund. Some give money for bricks for the Children's Library. Our largest contributions came from an anonymous donor for the Children's Library renovation and expansion and from the Cable Co-op for our 9 Libraries Project.

Most importantly, these funds benefit everyone who uses our libraries. We work throughout the year with library staff to ensure that the monies we give meet vital needs at each branch for people of all ages and interests. Our goal is to not replace the funds that the City already provides for the libraries, but instead to expand what our libraries do and provide even more services than the City can pay for itself.

Here's where the million dollars (\$1,093,415 to be exact) is going:

Children's Library Expansion and Renovation: \$470,000, the largest amount, will help rebuild and significantly expand the aging Children's Library. The small building opened in 1940 and needs major seismic retrofitting and more space. An anonymous donation made three years ago to the Friends blossomed into a matching contribution campaign in conjunction with the City and the Palo Alto Library Foundation. Construction should begin soon while the

Foundation and we raise yet more funds for the library's furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

New Computers and Internet Access: Step into any library in the nation nowadays and you'll see people avidly using public computers to access the Internet. Since the computers in our branches are often fully in use and putting more on desks or tables would reduce study spaces, we've purchased 14 laptop computers for Mitchell Park and Main that library users can use anywhere in the buildings. We've also provided for

new color and black-and-white printers, wireless access, computer furniture, printer supplies, and more outlets to plug laptops into at all five branches, at a total cost of \$190,305.

\$1,093,415

More Space for the Main and Downtown Libraries: Space has always been tight at our libraries, and it will be even worse when the Children's Library closes for two years. To provide more room at the Main Library, including a small area for books and services from the Children's Library, the library plans to move more offices into the Downtown Library, shrinking its public space. Because this library is serving a growing community, we've heard from many who want to see its space preserved. In response, we offered the city \$100,000 for a modular building to provide extra space, allowing both Main and Downtown to improve and also creating more space for children's services during the next two years.

Books: The number one reason to come to the library is for books, and we very much want the library to have the ones you're looking for. Popular new books often have incredibly long waiting lists in Palo Alto. For example, as of this writing, there are 127 holds on *Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, which doesn't even count those who looked in vain for the book at the library but didn't place a hold. Over two years, we'll have given a total of \$94,641 for new books, including extra copies of best sellers to shorten the waiting lists, children's books, and titles in Chinese and Russian.

Online Resources: Having reference materials online makes them easier to search and generally allows them to be used at all hours from schools, homes, and offices

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Introducing Marian Knox

With over one hundred volunteers in the book room not everyone knows everyone else, but everyone knows Marian Knox.

Marian who started volunteering in '01, often brought wonderfully tasty homemade cookies and other goodies that were an instant hit. Then somewhere along the line it morphed into a full-blown monthly luncheon on Friday, the setup day before our monthly sale. Friday attendance zoomed as all sat down to lively conversation and camaraderie and a delicious luncheon of homemade salad, seafood mousse or homemade soup, and an always different but dependably delicious dessert and homemade bread. Yes, every one knows Marian.

Several afternoons a week, Marian can be found in the book sorting room. One afternoon a week; she oversees everything that's going on in the book room. At the same time, she manages several sections: English language/short stories/education, American West/Native American, sociology/anthropology/archeology and hardback fiction. In spite of the sometimes near-frantic activity in the book sorting room, with her quiet, calming influence she sees to it that the job gets done.



Marian, who also volunteers with Palo Alto Urban Ministry Food Closet, collects and donates our countless plastic bags to them for food distribution.

She also delivers 200-300 leftover fiction and kids books to the Food Closet each month. Marian is one of those people who works quietly and efficiently and regularly comes up with problem-solving suggestions.

Marian, who grew up in Moline, IL graduated from Northwestern, moved to Palo Alto in 1978 when her husband Naphtali became Palo Alto's planning director. She worked at Stanford for many years and is associate dean of faculty affairs in the School of Medicine emeritus.

Somewhere along the line Marian found time to work in a couple of bookstores, B. Dalton and Stacey's, so it was only logical that she became a book room volunteer.

Naphtali now has his own city planning consulting firm; they have a married son and daughter and two grandchildren who all live in the Bay Area.

Marian's favorite reading is what she calls "debut novels" – first novels by new authors, but it's not entirely clear when she finds time to do her reading.

Marian has become one of our near-indispensable book room volunteers.

Things Sold at Booksale

All sorts of things other than books sell at our FOPAL monthly booksale. We've sold teddy bears, vases, countless pictures, bookcases, file cabinets, computer paraphernalia and even a motorcycle!

Recently someone donated a very striking wall hanging. About 48 x 60 inches, multicolored woven tapestry sort of a thing – with a route 66 theme – very pictorial and colorful.

Which leads to a wonderful story. A couple named Schivaar, residents of Germany visiting their Palo Alto Schivaar relations – Georgia and Bob Schivaar – bought it! They had spent weeks motorcycling across our country on motorcycles and they simply followed route 66.

How perfect! You never know what you'll find at a Friends booksale!

- Ellen Wyman



Introducing Lucy La Pier

If you could see Room K6 – the Children’s Room at Cubberley -- as hundreds of boxes of donated books pour in, you would never believe this helter-skelter scene could turn into an attractive, well organized bookstore-like room by sale time each month.

The person who makes it all this happen is Lucy La Pier, our Children’s Room manager. Every month, Lucy and her family and a team of volunteers unpack, sort, price and shelve thousands of kids’ books. She and her crew are the ones that make order out of chaos.



Lucy grew up in Plymouth, Mass, graduated from Cornell, got her MBA at Yale and then worked as an investment banker on Wall Street. (We shouldn’t be surprised at this, as no one counts money as fast as Lucy!) Six years ago, after 15 years on Wall Street, she and her family moved to Palo Alto. She and her husband Dave , a product manager at Cisco, have three children: son Eben is 17 and a senior at Paly, Grace 15 and a freshman at Paly and Abigail 13 and an 8th grader at Jordan. All are dedicated volunteers in our "kids’’ room. Friends’ book sales have a way of just absorbing all available help.

Books are sorted into fiction and then into sub-sorts by age groups; non-fiction is sorted by categories such as history, sports, biography. And there are activity books, foreign language, and parenting, collectible books plus videos, games, puzzles and even teddy bears. Lucy and her family are ably assisted by a

number of good volunteers – Nancy and Fred Olson, Winnie McGannon, Carolyn Davidson, Nancy Karp, our former Children’s Librarian Katy Obringer (a natural for this work) and our newest children’s room recruit, Rene Jurgens. A great team!

During our September sale, over 3,000 books sold in this room for a total "take" of \$3,500. In addition, we redeemed 65 coupons from children who participated in the City-wide summer reading program that Friends helped sponsor. The value of the books that were awarded to youngsters with coupons represents another \$325.

Lucy became a Friends volunteer after repeatedly visiting our sales scouting for books by Edward Ardizzone, her favorite illustrator. She was always one to pitch in doing a bit of this and that and making suggestions, and before she knew it she was a Volunteer, with a Capital "V." For five years she’s been a key volunteer-- quick, organized, certainly capable and one who makes all the volunteer hours fun for those who work with her.

But, as you can imagine, Lucy also has another life. She’s a busy mother dovetailing activities and driving teen-agers to swim, soccer, music and Scouts -- you name it. She volunteers regularly at both Jordan and Paly. She would like to spend more time gardening if more volunteers were available. So all you lovers of children’s books -- come on in and join Lucy La Pier.

The Open Door to Wonder

I received the fundamentals of my education in school, but that was not enough. My real education, the superstructure, the details, the true architecture, I got at the public library. For an impoverished child whose family could not afford to buy books, the library was the open door to wonder and achievement, and I can never be sufficiently grateful that I had the wit to charge through that door and make the most of it. Now, when I read constantly about the way in which library funds are being cut and cut, I can only think that the door is closing and that American society has found one more way to destroy itself.

Isaac Asimov from the book *I, Asimov: A Memoir, 1994*.

Election of Board of Directors at Annual Meeting

Thursday, October 27, 2005
7:30 pm
Palo Alto Art Center Auditorium
1313 Newell St., Palo Alto

The Friends of the Library Nominating Committee
proposes the following new directors
for the upcoming year:

Margarita Quihuis
Thomas Wyman

The committee proposes the following
returning directors for new, two-year terms:

Wendy Akers-Ghose
Betsy Allyn
Bob Otnes
Marty Paddock
Gloria Reade
Martha Schmidt
Barbara Silberling
Steve Staiger

The Nominating Committee proposes
the following slate of officers
for the upcoming year:

President:
Jeff Levinsky

Vice President:
Martha Schmidt

Secretary:
Margarita Quihuis

Treasurer:
Bob Moss

Assistant Treasurer:
Bob Otnes

Submitted by *Barbara Silberling*
Chair, Nominating Committee

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as well. Online materials also tend to be more up-to-date and don't require library shelf space. We've provided \$76,269 for the online versions of the New York Times beginning with the first issue in

1851, interactive classes in 28 different languages, online practice tests, the Online World Book Encyclopedia, and even a database on how to repair all major models of cars. A Cable Co-op Legacy Grant of our 9 Libraries Project funded most of these resources and the computer equipment above.

DVDs: DVDs are extremely popular in our libraries, with 400 different DVD titles having been checked out at least 150 times each. The library stocks not only mainstream movies, but also operas, stage performances, PBS shows, and instructional materials. We're just recently given the library \$39,720 for more DVDs to go at the four branches that will be open next year.

Programs for Children: For some, this is the most important service that libraries provide. Studies show that reading to young children correlates highly with their later academic success. Over the last two years, we've given \$38,500 for early reading programs, storytellers, after-school tutoring, the very popular summer reading programs for teenagers and younger children, and other library events and support for youth.

Staff Appreciation: Our libraries couldn't run were it not for the staff, and we've given \$2,500 for improvement in the staff lounges and other items of appreciation.

Other Needs: We've also provided \$8,374 to start the popular coffee service at the Main Library, provide special first-time library cards to children, and fund miscellaneous items.

Additional Funds: On top of all that we've already provided for, we're aware of many other needs our libraries may have in the next months. We've allocated an additional \$75,606 for these. All in all, it's a breathtaking list, and one in which every Palo Altan can take great pride. We're delighted to see the improvements these donations have already made in our libraries and anticipate more to come. Thank you all for supporting our efforts in so many ways and helping to improve our libraries by a million dollars and more!

Jeff Levinsky, President
jeff@friendspaloaltolib.org

In Memory of Jane Staley

Memorial gifts to the Library Lover's Fund have been received
in memory of Jane Staley from:

John A. Watson family
Violetta Bella
Jan Ryman
The McCarthy Family
Mr. & Mrs. Robb Caldwell
Jay & Kathy Dugan
Nancy C. Gang
Mary Brown
Bill & Jean Dugan and family
Judy & Gary Grossman
Ernestine Beare

Timothy Fitzpatrick
Alan & Jacqueline Andrew
Beth Bunnenberg
Ruth Flammer
Betty Lum
Hank Bannister
Kyoko Watanabe
Barbara & Bob Houghton
Norwest Venture Partners
Patricia Marion & Rick Salazar

Jane, as a former book room volunteer, would indeed be gratified
at the generous response as is Friends of the Palo Alto Library.

Please check the membership expiration date that appears on the mailing label bearing your name and address and send
in this renewal form if your membership is about to expire. You may also renew your membership online at
www.friendspaloaltolib.org/join.htm. The form may also be used for persons joining Friends for the first time.

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 don't send me the monthly email news
- Please do not send me the quarterly newsletter

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—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 thn 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.

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

Library Commission: Fourth Thursday

Council Conference Room, 250 Hamilton Ave. 7 pm

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

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

History Book Discussion Group

For information, call Floyd Gardner (9 am to 7 pm)
at 328-8855

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