Friends of the Palo Alto Library

Foreword

The Newsletter of Friends of the Palo Alto Library Spring 2018

80th Anniversary Edition

President's Message

Dear Fellow Members, Volunteers and Supporters,

On behalf of Friends of the Palo Alto Library I would like to thank you for your generosity as donors, customers, members, and volunteers, and for those of you who are all of the above. With over 1,200 members and more than 160 volunteers the financial support you provide and the many hours of your time you dedicate makes FOPAL a success. Your commitment is sincerely appreciated. Although we continue to have challenges with our online sales, our retail book sales and in-store book sales continue to perform strongly. Clearly the joy of having books, CDs and DVDs is not diminishing. Also, this year, at $10,600, our Annual Appeal sets a new record. As a result of this, for 2017/2018, we have committed to grants totaling $140,000 to the Palo Alto City Library. This will provide for its astonishing range of programs and for the continuing replacement of the books in circulation to ensure they are current and to supplement with new publications that are hot off the press. Monique le Conge Ziesenhenne, the Director of the Library, told us recently that they put on more than 1,700 programs a year with over 70,000 attendees. This shows you how significant your support is and how many people benefit from it.

FOPAL was founded in 1938 and now we are observing our 80th anniversary. We look forward to celebrating this special year with you. In this FOREWORD, you will see an article on 1938 by Board Member and Palo Alto Historian Steve Staiger looking at what the world was like when FOPAL came into being. Looking to the future, Alison Cormack, who has been a community leader for the Library, gives us her perspective on where the Cubberley Community Center is going and how FOPAL can be part of that story. And here in the present, for all the book lovers in the community, we will bring you books live in performance, with an afternoon of meetings and readings from local published authors. I hope you can join us.

THANK YOU for all your support and we look forward to seeing you at our next sale.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please let me know.

Nigel Jones, President
Nigelfopal@ gmail.com

MEMBERS' CORNER

MEMBERS' EARLY BOOK SALE

Main Book Sale Room
Saturday, April 14, 2018
Saturday, December 8, 2018
Life Members and Sponsors: 9am to 10am
All Members: 10am to 11am
General Public: 11am to 4pm

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Life Members and Sponsors can each buy 100 books or other items between 9am and 10am at our biannual Members' Early Book Sale. All Members can buy 25 books or other items between 10am and 11am at the sale. Sets, regardless of size, count as one item.

For membership information see back page.

From New York to California to FOPAL (with an aside about Thomas Hart Benton)

By Pat Blumenthal, Curious Books Section Manager

Pat Blumenthal, Curious Books Section Manager

Soon after I started volunteering at FOPAL about seven years ago, I was asked to take over the section called Curious Books. That appealed to me since I have always been curious about an enormous variety of subjects. My interests have ranged widely. I attended the Bronx H.S of Science during which time I did an internship with the NY Dept. of Public Health. I was pre-med. at Vassar College but ended up graduating with a major in philosophy. My PhD from the University of Chicago was in Human Development (a interdisciplinary program that included psychology, sociology, anthropology and biology) and I covered aspects of all of those subjects during my 12 year career in academia. At two universities in California, I taught classes as diverse as Women's Studies, Human Sexuality, Death and Dying, African Studies and Cross-Cultural Cooking, as well as more ordinary classes in Psychology. I also spent a year in India "supervising" 80 college sophomores and traveled to Asia, Africa and Europe on our round the world ticket (with a toddler in tow). Since that year, 1970, I have continued to travel widely. I go to Mexico for two weeks a year and have traveled to various parts of Mexico at least 30 times. I have been to Italy 10 times. Of the more exotic places I have visited, my favorites are Bali and Hanoi.

I settled in Palo Alto in 1980 and have had a clinical private practice as a psychologist since then.

Curious Books, the small section by the window in front of the cashiers' desks, was designed to contain books that don't fit easily into any other section. They cover a wide range of unusual topics and includes books that are too small to be displayed easily in other sections (some as tiny as 2x2 inches) as well as blank journals. Some amusing current titles from my shelves include: "I May Not be Perfect, but Parts of Me are Excellent," "Don'ts for Mothers-1878," "Yes, but is it good for the Jews: A Beginners Guide," "How to Dump a Guy: A Coward's Manual," "The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating," "The Worst Case Survival Handbook: Dating & Sex," "The History of the Snowman," "Eats, Shoots & Leaves and Kama Pootra: 52 Mind-blowing Ways to Poop."

Growing up in New York City, I was fortunate to live within walking distance of many museums including the ginormous Metropolitan Museum of Art. I still visit those museums during my trips back "home" every summer. When I was in elementary school, I used the Met more as a private playground where my friends and I played hide and seek throughout the galleries during our lunch hours. When I took Art History at Vassar, I was amazed to discover that I had actually seen the original art work from about half the slides during my childhood adventures at the Met.

Which brings me, finally, to my story about Thomas Hart Benton, a famous but controversial American artist who lived from 1889 to 1975. Last month, while we were standing in front of the Art Section at FOPAL, Nigel

(continued on page 3)

From New York

(Continued from page 2)

Jones and I discovered a mutual interest in Benton and he asked me to write about my family's history with this artist for The Foreword newsletter. My grandfather, who died in 1987 at the age of 101, was an obstetrician in NY who met Benton and his wife, Rita, in 1926. At that time, Benton was just starting his career and was not a well known artist. When my grandfather delivered his first child, Thomas Piacenza, Benton paid him with a painting. For many years after that, Benton sent my grandfather numerous drawings, paintings and lithographs which formed the basis of the Benton collection that my family inherited when my grandfather died. All of these works are signed by Benton and many have personal inscriptions. In addition, he sent my grandfather Christmas cards over the years to update him on Benton's family, including T.P. the child he had delivered in 1926. Benton also created a wonderful portrait of my grandfather which we treasure.

If any of you are fans of Thomas Hart Benton, I urge you to visit a unique installation of his mural, America Today, at its new home in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The large mural was commissioned by The New School of Social Research in 1930 and completed in less than one year. Benton received no money for this work, his first commission, but he was paid in eggs, the yolks of which he used to create tempura paint for the murals. The mural was donated to the Met in 2012 and they built a special room to display the 10 panels which show a panorama of American life throughout the 1920's. An added bit of trivia: Jackson Pollack, a student of Benton's for many years, was the model for many of the buffed male figures.

For more information and images from America Today, check out this link:
www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/499559

The Future of Cubberley

By Alison Cormack

Alison Cormack, President of the Palo Alto Library Foundation.

Cubberley was built as a high school 62 years ago and has been well used as a community center for 39 years. Now, it's time to retire Cubberley and build a flexible, modern space that is designed for the range of wonderful activities it already hosts today - sports, arts, health, music, languages, dance, and lifelong learning.

What's the problem?

I'm sure that FOPAL volunteers and supporters know Cubberley's foibles well — the sloping corridors, leaking roofs, hot or cold rooms, icky bathrooms, parking problems, and more. Despite these poor conditions, demand for community space remains sky high since land and therefore rent in Palo Alto comes at a premium price.

Who can solve this problem?

The Palo Alto Unified School District owns 27 acres (plus more to the south) and the City of Palo Alto owns 8 acres. Together, and with our help, they can decide to take this decaying asset and make it a great place for everyone in our community.

What's the next step?

By the time you read this, the school district and the city should have hired a consultant to do a two-phase workplan that will generate design options. This will be our chance to share our thoughts about what the community needs and wants in a new space, learn about the funding options, and eventually see what the space could look like.

What could Cubberley become?

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Cubberly (Continued from page 3)

Over the past year, I've talked with a variety of people who are interested in activities that already happen at Cubberley and organizations who are interested in remaining there or being there in the future. Here are some creative options that have come up in those conversations. And please note I'm not recommending any particular option at this early stage in the process — just sharing some ideas I've heard!

Villages, perhaps built around inner courtyards - lifelong learning (educational space, language classes, auditorium, child care centers,) performing and visual arts (studios, display spaces, dance, theater), health and wellness (gym, health and sports nonprofits, therapists, yoga), and FOPAL.

Hopefully FOPAL could have all their book rooms in one place rather than scattered across Cubberley, which would help not only streamline operations but also make it easier for their donors and customers.

If no new public school is built, then the school district could move their administration building to the site, or perhaps construct teacher housing, or maybe build and then lease to a private school as they do on other campuses

If only the city land is redeveloped, then try putting the tennis courts (and pickleball?) up on the roof to maximize the space!

Other thoughts?

Keep in mind that this will be a complicated process with two owners and various restrictions on land use and bonds (particularly for the school district) plus legitimate concerns about where to put organizations during construction. Despite these obstacles, I'm confident that our community can come together to solve the Cubberley problem.

Congratulations to FOPAL on celebrating its 80th year of service to our community! I sincerely hope that we can rebuild Cubberley for your next 80 years.

Alison Cormack was the chair of Measure N, the $76 million library bond in 2008 that rebuilt and remodeled Mitchell Park, Rinconada, and Downtown libraries. She was also the President of the Palo Alto Library Foundation, which raised over $4 million in private funding for the furniture, computers, books, and other materials. Alison can be reached at alisonlcormack@gmail.com.

1938

By Steve Staiger, FOPAL Board member and Palo Alto Historical Association Historian

Eighty years ago FOPAL was created to support the Palo Alto libraries – the Carnegie Library on Hamilton and the College Terrace branch in south Palo Alto. In observing this anniversary, I have been asked to look at the year 1938 and report on some of the notable events that took place.

The United States was still at peace and beginning to recover economically from the depths of the Depression. But there was war on both the eastern and western horizons. Japan had invaded China, entering Tsingtao in 1938. Hitler marched into Austria; Jewish businesses were vandalized in the "Kristallnacht"; and despite Chamberlain's hopes following the talks in Munich, Czechoslovakia was invaded. The Spanish Civil War continued.

The Palo Alto Women's Republican Club was also founded in 1938. Members included Kathleen Norris, Elizabeth Gamble and Lou Henry Hoover. Norris published another one of her best-selling novels "The Runaway".

Bill Hewlett designed his oscillator (model 200A). He and David Packard begun their company, operating out of the garage at 367 Addison for several years. Lajos Biro came up with his great invention – the ballpoint pen.

More than 600 people died in a hurricane that hit the New England coast. The first ski tow in America

(Continued on page 5)

1938 *(Continued from page 4)*

Pearl S. Buck, Nobel Prize for Literature, 1938.

opened in Vermont. Orson Welles scared his radio audience with a broadcast of H.G. Wells "War of the Worlds".

Pearl S. Buck won the Nobel Prize for Literature. John Marquand's "The Late George Apley" and Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" won Pulitzer Prizes. "You Can't Take It with You" won an Oscar.

The New York Yankees beat the Chicago Cubs 4-0 in the World Series. Stanford lost the Big Game to Cal 6-0, and Cal went on to defeat Alabama in the Rose Bowl 13-0.

It was a very good year for Nike's Phil Knight, actresses Natalie Woods and Diana Rigg, author Judy Blume, Wolfman Jack, and future Giants Gaylord Perry and Willie McCovey as they were all born in 1938. It was not so great for those who died, including Clarence Darrow, Harvey Firestone, Max Factor, blues legend Robert Johnson, and "Typhoid Mary" (Mary Mallon).

Frank Lloyd Wright built his Taliesin West in Arizona. Birge Clark designed the commercial space at 451 University Avenue that would house Swain's House of Music and the Apple Store. He also designed homes at 1220 Hamilton and 425 Nevada.

Individual achievements in 1938 included future Stanford President J.S. Wallace Sterling who received his doctorate and Howard Hughes who flew around the world in a record time of 3 days, 19 hours, and 17 minutes. Alfred Hitchcock directed "A Lady Vanishes" and Benny Goodman was popularizing a new style of jazz. Hit songs of the year included "Jeepers Creepers", "A-Tisket A-Tasket", and "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby".

That was the year that was, 1938.

Library's New eLibrary - BiblioCommons

By Gayathri Kanth, Assistant Library Director

On January 23, 2018, the Library launched its new eLibrary platform with products from BiblioCommons. The new platform has these functional components: Catalog, Events and Programing Calendar, Web Content Management System, Marketing Platform and Fine Payment Management.

Gayathri Kanth, Assistant Library Director

In the first week of hard launch, registrations surged to around 3,300 customers, or 22% of the Library's 'Active in Last 30 Days' customers.

Customers have said the following:

"The home page now has all the key things I typically need from events, kids content, e-content, new books and many other categories. All of these just an easy scroll from my phone .. awesome! Thanks for making it so easy."

"Thank you for the extended eLibrary service. I am very excited to explore and use the sharing capabilities to connect with other library users both locally and globally."

"Much simpler to check things out all at once. The previous site seemed clunky to use."

On its new eLibrary platform, the Library has seen a significant number of activities, particularly in the area of social engagement with user-generated content, such as Rating, Comments, Quotes, Notices, and Age Suitability. Going forward, library staff will continue

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eLibrary *(Continued from page 5)*

using the various functions provided by the platform to highlight library collections, programs and discussions of any interest to the community. Browse on and enjoy your discovery in the Library's new platform!

FOPAL's 80th Anniversary Local Authors Event

Mitchell Park Community Center Adobe Room

Saturday, April 21, 2018 ▨ 1AM to 5PM

To celebrate our 80th Anniversary FOPAL is holding a public event at the MPCC to give the community the opportunity to enjoy meeting local published authors and listen to them read selections from their work. This event has been arranged with great passion by Tina Gibson, an author and longtime FOPAL volunteer.

Authors participating in the event are the Legendary Hip-Hop Artist, Suga-T; the Poet Laureate of the City of East Palo Alto, Poetess Kalamu Chaché; Award Winning Journalist, Minu Dave; Award Winning Podcaster, Emmy Z. Madrigal; President of the California Writers Club-SF Peninsula, Lisa Meltzer Penn; Award Winning 'Hall of Fame' Journalist, Doug Sovern; Internationally Recognized Award Winning film director, Stacy Poulos; Award Winning Creative Writing Educator, Patty Somlo; Audio Fiction Prize Winner, Dave M. Strom, and FOPAL's very own, Tina Gibson. All ages are welcome. Light refreshments will be served. We hope you can join us for this very special event.

For information please contact:
Tina Gibson: tinagibson78@gmail.com

FOPAL - VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Only a Few Hours a Week

Monthly Book Sale Opportunities

Sales Floor Monitors

It's a privilege to help people find what they are looking for during our monthly book sale. You will be trained before the sale to be ready to work with our long-time Saturday and Sunday floor monitors to help our customers with such things as finding the book or section they want. There are openings at all our time slots. If you like excitement come help us open on Saturday morning!

Credit Card Cashiers

We now offer credit card payment options to our customers in all rooms. Shifts are available in all of our rooms on either sale day. Training and equipment will be provided.

Book Pickup Team

Join FOPAL's Pickup Team

If you have a van, SUV or truck, enjoy driving and meeting people, you can help with making book pickups and delivering them to FOPAL at the Cubberley Community Center using your own vehicle. Snacks a plenty when you drop off donations plus we reimburse for gas and mileage.

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Volunteers *(Continued from page 6)*

Sort Books and Greet Donors

Be on the frontline for FOPAL!

Interested in being the first to see the items being donated? FOPAL's sorters are on the frontline, greeting donors and receiving donations while figuring out what books go where. This is a terrific volunteer opportunity for 2pm - 4pm shifts, Monday through Saturday. Available to fill a shift? Please let us know.

Mitchell Park Library Store

Enjoy meeting our customers while restocking and arranging the book shelves at our store in the Mitchell Park Library. We are looking for volunteers to help staff the store at different shifts throughout the week.

Section Managers and Assistants

Use your love and knowledge of books and enjoy the pleasure of being in charge of categories from Art to Young Adult fiction. We have many openings right now. You'll train to assist as a section manager and, if you are interested, become a section manager. You will check online for book prices to identify books for our online High Value store and organize and price books for our monthly sales. Once trained, flexible schedules are available.

Love Children's Literature?

Sort and price children's book donations with a friendly group of volunteers who meet in the Children's Room every Tuesday afternoon or work on your own schedule.

High Value Books

You will be trained to research and handle materials in our High Value Books section. You will learn how to list books and how to process them for our online store. If you are fascinated by old, vintage, and valuable books this is a perfect volunteer opportunity for you.

Contact Us

For questions about volunteering opportunities at FOPAL and to join our dedicated team of over 160 volunteers please contact Janette Herceg at 650-494-1266 or at jherceg@fopal.org

SPECIAL re: MAKER FAIR EVENT

Mitchell Park Library & Community Center
Saturday, June 23 from 11am - 3pm

The Palo Alto City Library will host the re: Maker Fair featuring cutting-edge environmental technology, through presentations and interactive activities, provide workshops on sustainable home life, and celebrate arts, crafts, engineering, science and DIY mindsets. Both the Library's LEED buildings and FOPAL's book and media handling are tied to the City's Zero Waste Goals.

Welcoming new volunteers!

Jeffery Cui, Nancy Tillman, Gose Salvadori, Sibrina Khan, Jolene Welch, and Laurie Frankel.

Retiring volunteers- Thank you for your service!

Karin Williams

Friends of the Palo Alto Library
PO BOX 41
Palo Alto, CA 94302-0041

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Book Sales:

Second Weekend Every Month
Cubberley Community Center
4000 Middlefield Road - Palo Alto

Saturday Hours

Bargain Room: 9:30am – 4pm [H2, H3]
Children's Room: 10am – 4pm
Main Room: 11am – 4pm

Sunday Hours

All rooms: 11am – 4pm
For details see www.fopal.org

Free Books

After each sale, FOPAL gives away free books from its Bargain Room (H2/H3). On Sunday between 4pm – 6pm, teachers and nonprofits can take free books and on Monday between 6pm – 8pm, everyone can come and take free books.
Be sure to bring your own bags and boxes

Book Discussion Group: Second Thursday

Lucie Stern Community Center Fireside Room
1305 Middlefield Road 7:30pm – 9pm
For information see: www.fopal.org

Friends of the Palo Alto Library Membership Form

"The Friends of the Palo Alto Library is a tax-exempt organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donation is tax deductible."

Join / Renew	1 Year	2 Years
_____ Student/Senior	$10	$18
_____ Individual	$20	$35
_____ Family	$30	$50
_____ Sponsor	$100	$175
_____ Lifetime	$500	
_____ Corporate	$1000	

Matching Funds: Many of our members and donors can increase their donation to FOPAL if their employers have a Matching Funds program for registered charities. Please contact info@fopal.org for more information.

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Make checks payable to:
Friends of the Palo Alto Library
Return form to:
Friends of the Palo Alto Library
P.O. Box 41 Palo Alto, CA 94302

If you would rather receive the FOREWORD by email please notify us at editor@fopal.org.

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