



# Foreword

The Newsletter of Friends of the Palo Alto Library

Fall 2022

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My first seven months as Board President have been both challenging and rewarding. Putting together the Foreword for the first time in the spring was a formidable task for a former English teacher; I'm pleased to say that my technical skills have improved significantly this year. With the help of many kind volunteers, especially former presidents Nancy Cohen and Nigel Jones, the task was accomplished in a timely manner. In many of my duties I have depended heavily on the assistance of more experienced volunteers, and I thank everyone at FOPAL for their help and encouragement. It is because of all my colleagues at FOPAL that the beginning of my term as president has been enjoyable and, I hope, successful.

It was wonderful to be able to resume our monthly sales after the long shut-down due to COVID and a second hiatus in December, January and February. During those months our

"Friends and Family" sales, as well as the High Value income, kept us going.

Although our monthly in-person sales have not been as profitable as the pre-COVID events, they have drawn enthusiastic customers and provided substantial income to support our libraries. FOPAL's monthly sales income, including mid-month book sales, Friends and Family sales, library store sales and High Value sales from January through July has averaged almost \$24,000 in 2022. An exciting High Value item was discovered recently by Lin McCallister in the history section: Martin Luther King Jr's last published book, signed by the author. The High Value team had the signature authenticated, and the book went to the Pacific Book Auction in San Francisco where it sold for over \$6,000. A few years ago, Lin's husband Rich found a rare Ray Bradbury edition of *Fahrenheit 451* with an asbestos cover that sold for over \$4,000. Congratulations and many thanks to Lin, Rich and our wonderful High Value team. And to end with more good news, the August sale brought in \$20,853 which is a post-COVID mid-month sale record.

At our board meeting in June, we were able to award the library a total of \$152,000 for the 2022-23 fiscal year, the maximum requested. This will fund a significant increase in library collections as well as many additional programs for adults, seniors and youth, including the Summer Reading Program. It also pays for events recognizing staff and volunteers (see the article about the luncheon on p. 4), and various outreach programs. Lastly, I'd like to thank all our generous book donors, without whom we could not achieve such success.

## FOPAL BOARD ELECTION

### Proposed for re-election to the Board

Charlotte Epstein, Tina Kass, Susan Light, Suzanne Little, Gerry Masteller, Young-Jeh Oh, Melinda Parry, Steve Staiger.

### Continuing Board Members

Nancy Cohen, Karen DalColletto, Nigel Jones, Jenny Munro, Nancy Tillman, John Wang

### Proposed New Board Members

Suzanne Cholko, George Chaltas, Gail Reeder

### Proposed FOPAL Officers

President: Jenny Munro

Vice-President: Melinda Parry

Secretary: Suzanne Cholko

Treasurer: John Wang

Assistant Treasurer: Susan Light

## MEMBERS' ANNUAL MEETING

**Date:** Wednesday, October 12, 2022

**Time:** 10:30 am

**Place:** Embarcadero Room, Rinconada Library

Agenda: Election of Board members and Officers, annual financial summary and other business from the members.

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# Presenting the three FOPAL Board Nominees

## Suzanne Cholko, Nominee for Secretary



I intended to donate some books. Instead, I volunteered. That was my introduction to FOPAL. The sight of thousands of books hooked me. Since that day fifteen years ago, I have volunteered in various capacities. Currently, I work in the Heath Section, plus assist in the Children's Room on

Sunday sales.

Graduation from the University of Pittsburgh (Spanish and Art) was followed by raising our family, plus five home relocations. We finally arrived in Sunnyvale 47 years ago.

By volunteering, presenting art lessons for my children's classes, word spread. Soon, I was traveling the South Bay, teaching art in various classrooms. Next came the establishment of an interior design business which provided a variety of design experiences.

I hope to continue at FOPAL for a long time. It is amazing to see the variety and abundance of books, pamphlets, and memorabilia that arrive. The opportunity to work with other like-minded volunteers is a pleasure.

## George Chaltas, Board Member



I was introduced to FOPAL by my brother Tom, who asked me to join him on sorting duty; since I am a linear thinker and I like to see things organized, this duty suited my personality perfectly. After a while, I was asked if I wanted to take over the curation of the Photography Section, which agreed with me, as I have a BFA

in Sculpture. Reorganizing the section was initially a challenge, but I did so with gusto, and am pleased with the scope and variety of the many fine volumes (especially the monographs!) that are shelved there.

My latest project has been the curation of the Music Section, where I have put to bear my experience of over 30 years of music business experience as a marketing executive for Columbia Records, Billboard Magazine, and Warner Music Group. I'm retired now, and happy to introduce our clientele to a spectrum of worthy books spanning from the earliest compositions to contemporary artistry in the present.

## Gail Reeder, Board Member



I am a native of Colorado and we moved to Palo Alto in June of 2021. I live in the Greenmeadow neighborhood with my husband and son. We found FOPAL on our daily walk and I began volunteering in January of this year.

I studied microbiology as an undergrad and earned a Master of Public Health from the University of Colorado. I've worked in many aspects of the healthcare industry from bench research to health policy and administration. I am the Population Health Director for a start-up health tech firm helping small to mid-size employers and their employees navigate the healthcare system.

I am passionate about healthy and sustainable living and endlessly curious about the world. My hours sorting books each week and learning from Section Managers has been a joy and I am looking to serve on the Board of Directors to steer FOPAL through our post-pandemic world.

## THE RETURN OF ROBBIE ROCKET SHIP



*Jim and Robbie outside the Bargain Room*

A loyal customer of many years, Jim Pollock, and his sweet dog Robbie, were missed at our sales in June and July. We were saddened to hear that Robbie, who always accompanied Jim everywhere, had disappeared when out and about one day with his owner. Robbie had been dog-napped and taken to the Sacramento area, but thanks to his being chipped Jim finally got him back after "three months and two days." Seeing Jim and Robbie was a high point on Saturday at the August sale.

# Volunteer Events and Library News

On April 27, Palo Alto Library Director Gayathri Kanth and her staff organized a luncheon for many FOPAL volunteers, and a few library volunteers. The event was well attended, and we were joined by such dignitaries as Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt, Vice Mayor Lydia Kou, Council Member Alison Cormack and Assistant City Manager Kylie Nose. A delicious lunch was prepared by Ada's café, and attendees were able to view the new "Farmbot" behind the Community Center. Library Service Managers RuthAnn Garcia, Ryan Hess, Alex Perez and Senior Librarian Melody Tehrani presented information about the new and revitalized library programs.



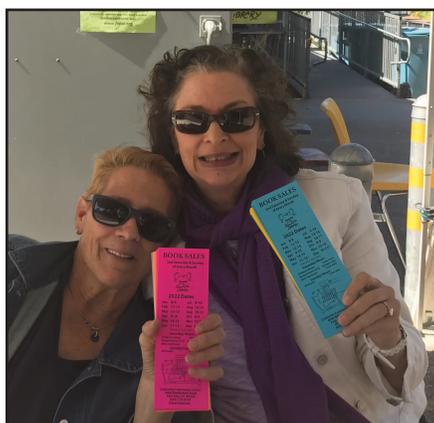
Sabrina, Lucas, Bella, Virginia and Gail



Some of the staff that helped with the luncheon are (left to right) Valeh, Dan, Doris, Melody, Marleah, Hee and Chris.



Alison Cormack, Mayor Pat Burt, Lydia Kou



Janette and Tyler with bookmarks.



Bargain room sale goes.



Children's room customer.

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# Message from Gayathri Kanth, Director of Library Services



Since honoring our volunteers at the Volunteer Appreciation Lunch on April 27th, the Palo Alto City Library has made progress toward restoring services post-pandemic and realizing some of our long-term goals.

Library staff is working with the Human Resources department to the restore library staffing levels, and re-opening branches that were approved by the Council.

This summer, we held our annual Summer Reading Program that was sponsored by the Friends of the Palo Alto Library (FOPAL). 1600 participants signed up and logged over 21,000 books! This year's theme was "All Together Now" and in that spirit, for every book read, \$1 was donated to the Palo Alto Community Fund.

The Palo Alto City Library also made two big moves toward the future. First, the library formed a partnership with the San Jose State University iSchool to develop technology programs and services for the community. And second, the library launched new digital literacy services in the Ventura Technology Learning Center at Mitchell Park Library. The new 'Reboot Services' aims to provide our customers with hands-on experiences with digital media, code, robotics and other emerging technologies.

Other noteworthy changes include the return of our popular Seed Library at Rinconada, and the Vintage Media Lab at Mitchell Park. Also, the library continues to offer some great resources thanks to the State Library and American Rescue Plan Act; for instance, our Upskill online learning services offering courses from LinkedIn Learning, Coursera and Skillshare.

In addition, we now have California State Parks and Foothills Nature Preserve and Junior Museum and Zoo passes available to our customers. Last but not least, thanks to the increased budget funding and contribution from FOPAL, the library was able to enhance collections with more copies of popular materials and online offerings like the Wall Street

Journal Online and ComicsPlus.

As we move into Fall, the library is eagerly looking forward to welcoming back more community members and volunteers.

## Ten Thousand Books, Ten Thousand Miles

By Chi-Feng (Acme) Ho & Chi-Hong (Horace) Ho

Our brothers' motto remains, "Try to help thousands when you have the potential, but if you can only serve one or two, make every effort to do so."

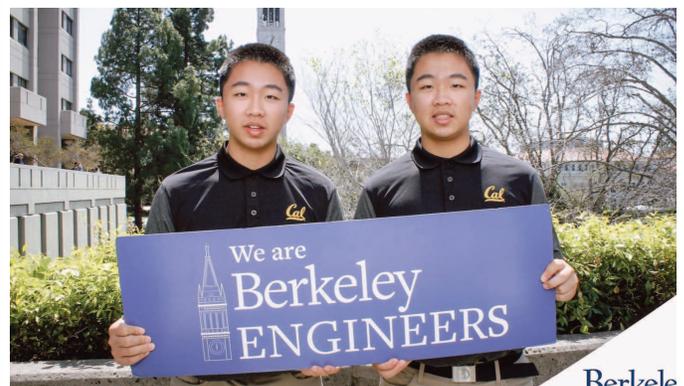
We lived this motto when we were young and took part in a book donation event for disadvantaged mountain school children. We offered them our two treasured dictionaries and realized that socioeconomic inequality caused an unbalance in knowledge.

We worked hard during the pandemic to find ways to help our neighborhood. Soon after, our passion became working for FOPAL as book room section managers, where we could put our philosophy into practice. We brothers co-managed 10,000+ books in nine different sections.

We both noticed that the profit from the book sales allows the purchase of new books, media, and resources for our libraries. We learned to improve shelf efficiency and inventory turnover, in order to raise FOPAL sales revenue. We identified our reserves, set appropriate prices, and maximized the display space in our sections. Moreover, we stuck encouraging phrases on post-its to urge people to buy books.

We volunteered as cashiers at the monthly book sale and

*(continued on page 5)*



The Ho brothers.

# Volunteers Socialize In-Person

Since before the advent of COVID, we have been unable to reinstate the monthly FOPAL Volunteer Lunches that we held regularly on Fridays before each sale, but thanks to organizers Janette Herceg (FOPAL Volunteer Manager) and Palo Alto librarian RuthAnn Garcia, around 50 volunteers attended the Social Gathering and Brunch at the Mitchell Park Community Center on Wednesday August 18th. RuthAnn gave an excellent presentation on all the programs that the library has been able to offer thanks to FOPAL funding, and then there was time for volunteers to socialize and enjoy the goodies provided by Ada's café. It was wonderful to be able to get together in person once again.



*Bruce and Mary enjoying brunch.*



*Rich, Donya, Helen and Lin chat on the patio.*



*Janette and RuthAnn, ready for the presentation.*

*Ann and Jim discussing important matters.*



*Peter, Dave, and Frank, plotting.*

## Brothers *(continued from page 4)*

learned a lot. Not only did communicating with customers increase our social skills, but it also improved our accounting accuracy. A small boy once screamed, "Wow! With my pocket money, I can buy an entire series of picture books now!" Looking at his happy face, we were overjoyed that the seven-year-old could appreciate and learn from the books.

Four hundred hours of community service at FOPAL is not the end; we will continue our support of FOPAL during our college years. We aim to be better equipped with academic skills obtained at IEOR Engineering, UC Berkeley, prepare ourselves to be more effective citizens, and keep doing our best to contribute to society.

# FOPAL Volunteer News

2022 has been an exciting and challenging year: the Sorting Room got a mini make-over; the Main Room saw sections change size and location; and the Bargain Room got a clean out with help from Hands-on Bay Area/HOBA. We encouraged more eBay on-line sales for ephemera and collectable items by creating the eBay Look-up and Listing Team, and running an ad in the Palo Alto Daily News for High-Value volunteer recruitment.

Our first large in-person event, a FOPAL & PACL Volunteer Recognition Luncheon was held in April with a wonderful turn out! Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt, Vice Mayor Lydia Kou and City Council members attended, all praising the FOPAL volunteers. The Palo Alto Library staff hosted and Ada's Café catered the event.

This summer we recruited several new board members for next year, an Eagle Scout project brought the Cubberley Community Center a large FOPAL Free Library, and we dedicating the months of June and July to student/teen volunteering. This included the return of a student summer internship, and in-person new volunteer group orientations. We dedicated Tuesday and Thursday evenings for student Donation Sorting signups, and encouraged Teen Book Reviews for our monthly sales newsletter. In addition, we held regular All-Volunteer Zoom meetings, and in August the volunteers enjoyed our first Coffee/Social Event with a customized presentation by Palo Alto Librarian RuthAnn Garcia.

All this was accomplished while monthly FOPAL donation monitors, sorters, section managers and High-Value team members processed more than 40,000 books each month, which generated over \$20,000 monthly in sales. A super big THANK YOU to all for your effort, energy, resilience and commitment to FOPAL and to preserving the printed word!

- Janette Herceg | Director of Volunteer Engagement



## Welcoming New Volunteers!

John Wang- Treasurer  
Ayush Shetty -Summers, Sales  
Christy Du - Sorting & Sales  
Angela Rao -Sorting & Sales  
Andy Chung - Sorting & Sales  
Ainslie Chen - Sorting, Donation Monitor & Sales  
Tina Chen- Donation Monitor, Sorting & Sale  
Katherine Lu- Sorting & Sales  
Harry Peng - Donations & Sales  
Xiwe Liang -Sales  
Diana Fong - Sales  
Adam Fong - Sales  
Xiwen Liang - Sales  
Joseph Kim- Sales  
Rachna Rangan- Sales  
Neel Rangan - Sales  
Yonhao Fan - Sales  
Kathleen Joynes- Sorting & Sales  
Amanda Tomasko- Sorting & Sales  
Danielle Batres- Saturdays Sales  
Stefan Kostic - Sales Saturday  
Huiyuan Lui - Sorting, pricing, Sales  
Anoop Thakore - Section Manager  
Xiang Li - Donation monitor, Sales  
Jacob Chan - Donation monitor, Sales  
Susan Pillsbury- Sorting & Sales  
Kaye Storm - Sorting & Sales  
Lukas Dong - Saturdays Sales  
Jessica Galbraith - Sales Saturdays  
Abigail Galbraith - Sales Saturdays  
Leia Chan - Sales Saturdays  
Mehr Sethi - Donation monitors, Sorting, Sales  
Misko Halas - Donation monitor, Sales  
Matthew Mao - Donation monitor, Sales  
Rahul Sundaresan - Sorting & Sales Saturdays  
Nandini Sharma - Sorting & Sales Saturdays  
Neel Sundaresan - Sorter & Sales  
Neil Pendyala - Sorting, donations, Sales  
Yi Feng - Donation monitor, Sales  
Phoebe Barrientos - Donation monitor, Sales  
Alexis Javellana Hill - Sorter, Sales, work from home  
Christine Hao - High Value  
Vivian Leung - Donation Monitor & Sales Saturdays  
Gail Reeder - Sorting, Section Manager/Med., Sales Saturdays  
Kate Chesley - High Value, Sorter & Sales  
Gene Iwamoto - High Value & Sales  
Michele Kasper - Donation monitor, Sales, sorting, SM Vintage Cooking  
Amy Kohrman - High Value, Sorting  
Rita Vrhel - Sorting, Donations, Sales  
Sabrina McDowell - Summer Sales Coordinator

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# FOPAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

You can make a difference. Won't you consider contributing a few hours a week to help keep our five Palo Alto libraries up-to-date and thriving? FOPAL's monthly sales of donated books and media raise much-needed funds to purchase new books, technology and special programs for Palo Alto public libraries. These sales happen through the efforts of many individuals just like you. Please join us. Flexible schedule is available.

## CHOOSE A JOB TO SUIT YOUR TIME, TALENTS, AND INTERESTS

### High Value online e-business team/volunteers needed!

Learn how to research, describe, price and prepare our most significant high value books and media for sale online on Amazon and eBay. Books can range from modern to antiquarian and media from DVDs, CDs, and games to software. You can work at FOPAL or from your home; your hours are up to you. We will provide detailed training and mentoring. We need volunteers right now to join our very successful high value team. For additional information contact Nigel Jones, [nigelgj@gmail.com](mailto:nigelgj@gmail.com).

### Enjoy a first look at an amazing assortment of books!

Donation monitors greet donors, monitor the donation process, offer receipts and thanks. Using social distancing, you will be accepting donations (6 bags/boxes or fewer) Mondays- Saturdays 3- 5pm. Donation monitors will offer to assist donors dropping off their books and moving those books into FOPAL's sorting room. Meet friendly donors and get free body-building exercise!

### Section Managers needed!

Bring your love of books in areas like: the west, military history, art, drama, vintage books and large format, to name a few of the sections available. All books are pre-sorted and ready to be priced and shelved.

### Volunteers @ book sales!

FOPAL book sales are held on the second weekend of every month. Monthly needs: cashiers, floor supervisors and set-up & break down volunteers. Meet many fellow bookaholics and experience the thrill of the marketplace.

### Bargain Room/H2 book shelving area opportunity

By volunteering 2 hours a week bargain room/H2 volunteers are able to take ownership of a specific section or two. Flexible schedule! No pricing needed, as all books sell for 50 cents or \$1.00.

### Children's Room Tuesday Team opening

Sort and price children's book donations. A friendly group of volunteers meets in the Children's Room each Tuesday afternoon, or work on your own schedule.

To volunteer for any of above opportunities please contact Janette Herceg - 650-494-1266 or at [jherceg@fopal.org](mailto:jherceg@fopal.org). If you have any questions regarding the type of volunteer opportunities FOPAL offers, please check out our website [www.fopal.org](http://www.fopal.org)

## New Volunteer



Elitza Markova has been volunteering at FOPAL for only six months, but already she has become an invaluable part of our team. Elitza is originally from Bulgaria, and moved to California in 1999. After studying Economics and holding a couple of jobs, she decided to take a break

and needed something interesting to do.

She heard about FOPAL on Volunteer Match, and decided that, as a book lover, this was the place for her. She wanted to work with other volunteers and to do something that would help our libraries and our community. She has become a familiar figure in the sorting room, and outside when people are dropping off donations.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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### Friends of the Palo Alto Library Membership Form

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 |                          |
|------------------|--------|---------|--------------------------|
| _____ Senior     | \$10   | \$18    | _____ Name               |
| _____ Student    | \$10   | \$18    | _____ Address            |
| _____ Individual | \$20   | \$35    | _____ City / State / Zip |
| _____ Family     | \$30   | \$50    | _____ Email              |
| _____ Sponsor    | \$100  | \$175   | _____ Phone              |
| _____ 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](mailto:info@fopal.org) for more information.

*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](mailto:editor@fopal.org).

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