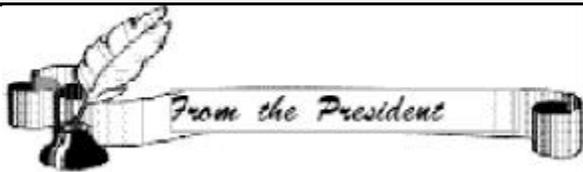


# FOREWORD



Quarterly Issue No. 56

Summer 2002



## Clear, Essential and Frugal

After thousands of hours of hard work by private citizens, city commissioners and staff, we've reached consensus on a practical plan that is clear, essential and frugal.

This November 5, Palo Altans will consider a \$49.1 million bond measure for the renovation of Children's Library as well as the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center.

The sorry states of Children's Library and Mitchell Park Library/Community Center are clear. They are overcrowded and obsolete.

Built in 1940, Children's Library is dwarfed by a ten-fold increase in its collection and decades of active use by our children. It has significant repair issues. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo is actively pursuing federal historical funds to help with renovations.

The south of Palo Alto has experienced the greatest population growth in recent years. Mitchell Park Library, in partnership with Mitchell Park Community Center, is in the first priority application category for a Prop. 14 state library grant for a City-School partnership plan to create Everyone's Homework and Enrichment Center (EHEC). The EHEC would provide a program to benefit our children by supporting school curriculum, providing current technology and fostering lifelong learning. After years of lagging behind, a new resource library and community center complex would go a long way toward catching up on services for youth, families and seniors.

We're focused on essentials. For over a century, Palo Altans have recognized that our library system is an essential community service. And the proposed phased plan to implement the Library Advisory Commission's New Library Plan takes care of the key essential issues: renovations, space and upgrades.

(Continued on page 2)



## Library Director Announces Retirement

Mary Jo Levy, Palo Alto's director of libraries for more than 20 years, announced she plans to retire at the beginning of September.

Levy's tenure with the city goes back to a time when libraries stocked nothing but books, magazines, newspapers and LP records to the era of CDs, videos, books on tape and DVDs.

As the supervisor of Main Library starting in 1971, she was responsible for implementing the library's first computer system--one that kept track of patrons and books with bar codes back in 1978. Palo Alto was one of the first libraries with such a system.

In 1981, Levy succeeded June Fleming as director of all the city's libraries.

"The media has changed a lot during my time here, to say nothing of the impact since the early '90s of Internet access and the change that has brought," Levy said. "It's been in a lot of ways a very dynamic profession."

Before coming to Palo Alto, Levy received a graduate degree from the University of California at Berkeley and worked in libraries at the University of Washington, San Jose State University and, briefly, San Francisco State University. But Palo Alto became her long-term home.

"One of the things that's kept me with the city of Palo Alto is that there are always interesting challenges and the people are so interesting," she said. "There's a lot of intellectual activity in this town and, because of that, the interchange and conversations and expectations for library service are very high.

"That's a wonderful environment to work in—great appreciation for library services and high use."

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(President's Message, Continued from page 1)

Common sense frugality is the name of the game. It's frugality that prevents diehards like me from throwing in a few barbs like "Remember the Main!"

Frugal - why, I believe it's every librarian's middle name. I carry around in my purse a wadded up note on a paper clip that's carefully attached to a length of used ribbon. It came to my volunteer folder at Downtown Branch library through the city's delivery system from Children's Library manager, Katy Obringer. Seems I had used it on a poster and when they finished with the poster, Katy frugally saved the ribbon and returned it to me in case I wanted to use it again. Save, reuse, make do. Frugal ways are to be admired, but by themselves are not enough for the job we have now.

Our elected officials have coalesced around the common sense Children's/Mitchell Park renovation plan and have passed it to the grassroots community to go forward. A common sense guiding vision has evolved thanks to the Friends, engaged citizens, frugal librarians and tax conscious elected representatives who know that we can provide Palo Alto with quality libraries where no child is turned away from an overcrowded story hour, where seniors can get access to computers, where students can study together for their group assignments.

Clear, essential, frugal. Clearly, the time has come.

—**Shelby Valentine**

(Retirement, Continued from page 1)

Most recently, Levy has worked intensely to prepare plans and government grant applications for library renovations. She said she has particularly enjoyed working with the Library Advisory Commission.

Recently, she said, the library has put a new emphasis on serving the remote user. The library catalog has been on line for many years, but now users can call up the library's web site to access many research materials from their own homes. "We have the text rights to literally thousands of magazines," she said. "We're trying to make it faster, cheaper and easier for people to use from their homes, and not to be limited by library hours."

The library long has had a delivery system for homebound patrons, using volunteers to deliver materials. Later this summer, the library will introduce a "library by mail" program in which any user can order a book and, for a fee, have it mailed to the home.

Levy, a Palo Alto resident, looks forward to "retooling" herself and having time to pursue a long list of interests, including organic gardening.

"I feel like I'm launching into this new life, and will see what kind of opportunities are coming forward," she said. "I have a great feeling going out."

— **Chris Kenrick**



## LIBRARY SUPPORTERS HONORED



Children's Librarian Katy Obringer, left, and Director of Libraries Mary Jo Levy, right, present one of the 2002 Community Star Awards to library supporters Peggy and Yogen Dalal.

Longtime library advocates **Yogen and Peggy Dalal** are recipients of a 2002 City of Palo Alto Community Star Award. The award is given by the Community Services Department to individuals or organizations that have helped advance the goals of the department's five divisions, including libraries.

The Dalals were honored for their sustained backing of the Children's Library dating back to 1997.

"Their support has made it possible to have the depth of collection that we currently enjoy," said Children's Librarian Katy Obringer. Among the Dalals' many contribution to the children's collection are National Geographic and special PBS videos, a Student Discovery Encyclopedia, Animals of the World sets, World Book Encyclopedia, large print books, materials from the Monterey Bay Aquarium and a chess set.

Peggy Dalal has served on the PTA executive board at Jordan as well as on the board of TheatreWorks. Yogen Dalal, a managing partner at Mayfield Fund, currently sits on the boards of several information technology companies as well as TheatreWorks.

Other 2002 Community Star Award recipients, who were honored along with the Dalals at a May 22 breakfast at the Palo Alto Golf Course, were **Carolyn Tucher** for the Arts and Culture Division; **Ronna Devincenzi** for the Parks and Golf Division; **Judith Moss** for the Human Services Division and **Friends of the Junior Museum** for the Recreation, Open Space and Sciences Division.

— **Chris Kenrick**



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Once again, we are delighted to recognize our newest Friends members. We are especially pleased to acknowledge the generous donations of four who have upgraded or joined as Life Members:

**Judy & Tony Kramer**  
**Katharine Miller**  
**Lee Rasmussen**  
**Laura & Mark Yim**

We also extend a warm welcome to the additional new members:

**Ronald Clemens**  
**Becki Cohn-Vargas**  
**Laura Faught**  
**Pei Kuo**  
**Chris Larsen**  
**Stephen Luce**  
**Cazmo & Leah Lukrich**  
**Richard Lyon**  
**Greg Nelson**  
**The Ruwart-Melcher Family**  
**Eugene & Nancy Sharp**  
**Nancy Steege**  
**Valerie Taylor**  
**Jerry & Bobbie Waggener**  
**May Wang**  
**Joshua Wong**

As always, we are most grateful for those of you who have sent in your renewal:

**R.E.Abbott, Fran Adams, Ray & Jan Barrett, Frank Benest & Pamela Grady, Elton & Rachel Bell, Rhoda Bergen, George & Dawn Billman, Jane Boulton, Helen & Carl Bunje, Beth Bunnenberg, Robert & Marilyn Burnes, Shirley Coates, Trudi Cobb, Stan & Mary Cottrell, Lisl Day, William & Dorothy Dewing, Thomas & Rose Drewek, Marilyn Edwardson, Tom & Ellen Ehrlich, Leo & Bess Gabow, Floyd & Sandy Gardner, The Graham Family, Peter Garst, Jessie Gaspar, Betty Gerard, Joan Grammar, Alice Gross, Mickey Hamilton, Harry & Susan Hartzell, Glen & Racy Huffman, Don & Laddie Hughes, Ray & Eleanor Jadwin, Karl & Diane Jagler, Irene Jelenfy, Warren Jensen, Mary Johnson, Mel & Zoe Kelm, Al & Anne Kilert, MariJean King, Jean LaLanne, Rosalie Lefkowitz, Rob & Lucinda Lenicheck, Don & Doris Lorents, Bernie MacKay, Nikole Manou, John & Edwina McGannon, Brenda Miller, Ellen Miller, Emmy**

**Lou Miller, Dena Mossar & Paul Goldstein, Jim & Trish Mulvey, David Ng, The Passerello Family, Joan Paulin, Bill & Paula Powar, Elsa Preminger, Ronda Rosner, Ruth Satterthwaite, Paul & Kirsten Seaver, Marjorie Smith, S.D. Sparck, Susan Strain, Veronica Tincher, Evelyn Vigil, Lois Warren, George & Sarah Wheaton, Carolyn Williams, Jay & Ruth Wilson, Howard & Katherine Wolf, Micki & Les Zatz**

Are YOU wondering if it is time to send in a renewal check? Please check the label on this newsletter and use the printed form if your membership has expired. Thank you for helping keep down our costs.

— Sarah Clark



## BOOK SLEUTHING ON THE INTERNET

Finding valuable books among the thousands that are donated every month is an exciting part of preparing for the Friends of the Library Book Sales. When we find one, we want to sell it for the best price to maximize our revenue and, thus, our eventual donations to the Palo Alto libraries. But how can we judge just how valuable it is?

Independent booksellers all over the world are now listing their used books on the world-wide-web, complete with information on the edition and printing and detailed descriptions of the book's condition. When we find that a book is offered for say \$25 or \$30, and we have one in similar condition, we feel justified in putting a \$10 price tag on ours, rather than only a dollar or two. And the buyer still gets a real bargain. (And of course, he or she can see it and touch it, and pays no postage to get it.)

A growing group of volunteers is active in looking up books on the Internet. **Tom Wyman, Marianne Simpson, Emmy Lou Miller, Bob Schwaar, and Valerie Taylor** are busy learning some of the bookseller's jargon and enjoying the success of a real "find." Just recently, we came across a copy of a 1923 edition of "The Tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen," the first telling by Howard Carter himself, of his uncovering of the famous Egyptian king's treasures. The book is stamped with gilt lettering (and a scarab) on bright red cloth, has decorative end papers and 79 plates of photos of the treasures. Copies in similar condition are listed on the Internet at \$90-100.

Which books are likely to be valuable? FOPAL's army of book sorters have to decide which ones are likely candidates for pricing on the Internet. Most likely to be valuable are books of attractive appearance in good condition (although books over 100 years old are not usually expected to be in as good condition).

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(Sleuthing, Continued from Page 3)

Also important: first editions; books without writing in them (unless it is an author's signature); books with dust jackets.

Less likely books include reprints; remainders; books that have been library books ("ex-lib" to the trade); or recent books that have been printed in large numbers. Especially likely are first books by authors that have gone on to produce greater works.

But the sorters are far from infallible, which means that real undiscovered gems are still to be found at modest prices, perhaps even in the bargain room.

A first edition of Howard Fast's "Spartacus" showed up not long ago. It is a 1951 first edition, signed by Fast. It was self-published, because no publisher at that time would touch a book by someone on Senator McCarthy's black list. Even without its dust jacket, and with a badly faded spine, it is comparable to copies listed on the Internet for \$100! Books this valuable, especially if they are on an arcane subject with a limited audience, are often offered to specialist book dealers.

Children's books in good condition can also be valuable, particularly if they are well illustrated or written by a prominent author. We have had books illustrated by Maurice Sendak, Howard Pyle, and N. C. Wyeth that proved valuable. Collections of classic tales are often worthy; ones by Grimm, H.C. Anderson, or Hawthorne are always popular. But even little books from the Golden Press printed in the 1940s can be worth quite a bit.

Ask bookshop manager Marty Paddock how you can learn to look up books and join in the fun!

— Bob Schwaar



## Book Sale News

### September Sale Last at Terman

The future of the book sales remains unknown; **Marty Paddock** and **Tom Wyman** continue their frustrating search for a commercial site to rent for the Book Sale. The Board of Directors approved their efforts in this motion: "The Book Sale Committee has our authorization to immediately negotiate a contract at a commercial site at the most competitive rate possible as a relocation site for book sales. The contract is not to exceed the projected income of the book sales." We haven't begun to mourn the loss of the Book Sale yet. If you have any contacts for commercial property, please call **Tom Wyman** at 325-9483.

### New Volunteers

Even with the Book Sale's future at stake, new volunteers are arriving to help sort and sell books. Shantha

Mohan signed up Friends on the "volunteermatch.com" website. We welcome new volunteers: **Elissa Chandler, Johanna Kenrick, Karen Bacon, Trudy Cobb, Matt Foster, Julia Verheeke** and **William Crull**. We are especially pleased to have local high school and college students participating. If you know a book-loving young person who would enjoy rewarding summer volunteer work, please have them call Barbara Silberling at 856-1862; or they can inquire at the Book Room.

**Book Room phone number:** 493-7432 (leave message if not answered).

**Book Room hours:** Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon; Wednesdays and Thursdays 2 to 5 p.m.; Saturdays 3 to 5 p.m.

**The next sales are August 10 and Sept. 14** from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Terman.

**For donation information** call Book Sale Manager Marty Paddock at 493-5672. **To volunteer** call Barbara Silberling at 856-1862.

**For information on Non-Profit Day** call Maggie Anderson at 856-7741. Monday after every sale, teachers and non-profit organizations choose free books from the Bargain Room.

## Summer Reading Program Coupons

Students who complete the Palo Alto library's Summer Reading Program, including the new "Aloha Teens" group, receive a Kermit-green Friends' Book Sale coupon worth \$1.00 off on any book or merchandise purchased at a Friends' Book Sale in July, August or September. The coupon will be one of the many rewards in the Summer Reading packet the library gives to those who complete their goals. The Summer Reading Program is underwritten by the Friends of the Library.

Congratulations, readers!

— Barbara Silberling



## Book Sale Success

The Friends of the Palo Alto Library Book Sale has been an institution in Palo Alto for many years. Besides helping raise money for the local libraries, the book sale also keeps an astonishing number of books in circulation. The Friends sell approximately 15,000 books each month to members of the public and donate another 2,000 books to non-profit organizations, such as local hospitals and schools. That comes to 204,000 books per year circulated by the sale, or 3.3 books per resident. That's quite respectable when you consider that California public libraries circulate on average just 4.9 items per capita a year, including videos. Moreover, the Friends book sale achieves its considerable circulation being open just five hours a month, using a few rooms in an old school and an all-volunteer staff. When you compare the book sale to libraries, it ranks at the top in terms of cost-effectiveness.

The Friends book sale exists because of the generous spirit of Palo Alto's volunteers and donors, and our collective community interest in reading and learning. Starting from very humble beginnings, the sale has become an eagerly anticipated monthly event for thousands of Palo Altans. As we move into new space this fall, we're committed to having the sales continue to grow and to support our city.

—Jeff Levinsky

**COUPON COUPON COUPON COUPON COUPON**



**Coupon for One free  
centennial poster  
redeemable at the  
Book Sale**

**COUPON COUPON COUPON COUPON COUPON**



**Almost a Record**

The July 13 Book Sale was one of the largest in Book Sale history. The Saturday sale, at Terman, netted \$12,069.70. The only larger sale in Friends of the Library history was when we sold a special group of Lockheed books in 1995 for \$23,928, according to FOPAL Treasurer Bob Jack. Congratulations, book sellers!



**BEHIND THE SCENES  
AT MAIN LIBRARY**

How to organize the library, so much to do, and so little time! The public using the Main Library never sees us working in the back, where we are busily readying all the materials they might be looking for, and hopefully adding to their success rate in finding them. The Technical Services staff prepares more than 1600 items a month for Palo Alto's six libraries. As you will find out, there are many steps along the way.

First all of those items (books, videos, DVDs, CDs, talking books, etc.) have to be ordered. The Acquisitions section is responsible for inputting all of the necessary information correctly, and the good news is that some of these orders can be downloaded from order sites we use on

the Internet--meaning fewer mistakes. Patrons can see what we have on order, and place holds on items even before they arrive in the library. When they do arrive--boxes and boxes of exciting materials--they have to be checked for the right titles, the right editions, the right number of copies, and then the bills have to be paid and the accounts squared. The Acquisitions staff then loads items onto carts and they are ready for the catalogers.

The full cataloging record you see for each title we own is obtained from a central cataloging utility called OCLC, which stores records available to their customer libraries to download into their own systems. Medieval monks might have spent at least half a day figuring out where to put one book in their system, but the catalogers don't have that much time! Luckily for us, most of the cataloging records we receive are pretty accurate. We check for mistakes but also for information we can add to the record to help people find the item more easily. A travel guide to Carmel might have been done by an East Coast cataloger and given a vague "middle of California" kind of subject heading. Or we find we can add a list of plays, or songs to the contents, or even a note that helps explain what a book is about. Keyword searches can find a lot of items, but only if the "key" word you're typing in is present in the record!

Catalogers also do "authority" work. This is true behind-the-scenes work, but we feel it is important to put those cross references in so you don't have to guess how the Dalai Lama's real name is spelled or which form we have used for Muammar Qaddafi. And sometimes, cataloging records come with very specialized subject headings, such as "heart infarction" instead of "heart attack," so we try to help you along in case you don't know what those terms mean.



**Members of the Technical Services staff, from left, Marilyn McFarland, Kim Le, Mary Minto, Judy Spirn, Vicki Tran, Miki Smith, Mandy Ng, Martha Walters, Bernice Sakuma, Diane Claerbout, Stela Cardoso and Sharon Olson.**

We use specific call numbers for many of the books (nonfiction) and some of the AV materials so that they are ready for your casual perusal but also can be traced

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(Behind the Scenes, continued from page 5)  
down to the very last digit. Each item sits on the shelf in its own parking place--reserved for the lifetime of the item. A barcode provides a more exact match to the individual item and can be used for circulation records and inventory. Each item, then, "collects" identifying labels and stickers, pockets, plastic covers, whatever it needs, on its way to the shelves. Items receive this treatment in our Processing section. The Processing and Mending sections work closely together because many of these items come back to us for repair, some even soon after they first hit the shelves (such is the sorry quality of book production and AV packaging today). But we have talented menders and fixers who return about 600 items per month, cleverly refurbished, back to the collections in an orderly fashion.

Since the catalog is so important for almost all the operations in the library, we are lucky to have a system administrator, who also resides in Technical Services, to keep current with needed upgrades to the library computer system, and to troubleshoot whenever the catalog "acts out" (we can't just tell it to take a timeout). Our system administrator is also responsible for the content and maintenance of our web page.

All of this activity, done "under cover" in the back of the Main Library, adds up to our being major partners in providing good service to the patrons of our library system. In Technical Services the focus is on the details until it's time to say, *that's a wrap!*

— Sharon Olson  
Technical Services



## Friends Revise By-Laws

The Friends of the Library Board of Directors July 10 approved some revisions—major and minor—to the By-Laws of the organization. It was the eighth revision since the first amendment was made on October 14, 1980.

The major change that affects members concerns the election held at the annual General Meeting. In the past, the Nominating Committee of the Friends proposed nominees for officers (Board of Directors members who serve as officers for a one-year term) and directors (who serve a two-year term). In two of the past five years, one of the officers presented to the membership for approval at the annual meeting had to withdraw before the meeting was held. This took time to explain at the meeting and added costs for agenda changes.

In the future, only new Board of Director nominees will be presented for approval at the annual meeting. The board will then elect officers for a one-year term at the first board meeting after the General Meeting.

Other minor changes include (1) authorizing a majority of the remaining board members to fill vacancies on the board between annual elections, (2) authorizing the board to hold the annual General Meeting in a month other than October, (3) adding our ZIP code to our official address, (4) eliminating a reference to a "membership year"

running from July 1 to June 30 of the following year (memberships become due on the anniversary date of the original payment.), and (5) authorizing the board to set the level when and where two signatures are required on Friends' checks.

The new By-Laws are posted on the Friends web site ([www.friendspaloaltolib.org](http://www.friendspaloaltolib.org)) for your review. If you have any concerns or comments, you can let us know by writing us at P. O. Box 41, Palo Alto, CA 94301 or sending a message to [info@friendspaloaltolib.org](mailto:info@friendspaloaltolib.org).

— Bob Jack



## Children, Libraries and Pornography

Librarians applauded a federal court ruling in May that affects libraries all over the country.

A federal circuit court declared unconstitutional the Children's Internet Protection Act, which would have required public libraries to install anti-pornography Internet filters or risk losing federal funds.

In a 195-page decision, a three-judge panel said the CIP went too far because it also blocked access to sites that contained protected speech. The filtering software blocked substantial amounts of protected speech "whose suppression serves no legitimate government interest", the judges wrote.

The Justice Department has appealed the decision, written by Chief Judge Edward R. Becker of the Third Circuit and joined by U.S. District Judges John P. Fullam and Harvey Bartle III, to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Attorneys for the American Library Association and the American Civil Liberties Union contend the law is unenforceable, unconstitutional, vague and overboard. They say it denies poor people without home computers the same full access to information as their wealthier neighbors.

"Filters are not the only—or the best—way to protect children," said American Library Association President John W. Berry. "Filters provide a false sense of security that children are protected when they are not."

The Children's Internet Protection Act was the third anti-Internet-porn law brought before federal judges for constitutional challenges. The 1996 Communications Decency Act made it a crime to put adult-oriented material on line where children can find it. It was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. The 1998 Child Online Protection Act required Web sites to collect a credit card number or other proof of age before allowing Internet users to view material deemed "harmful to minors." The 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals barred enforcement of that law, saying the standards were so broad and vague that the law was probably unconstitutional. The Supreme Court partially upheld the law this last May, but did not rule on its constitutionality as a whole. It remains on hold for action in lower courts.

— Mary Jean Place  
Library Advisory Commission



## JOIN THE FRIENDS!

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**TIME VALUE**

WebPage: <http://www.friendspaloaltolib.org/>

Email: [info@paloaltofriends.org](mailto:info@paloaltofriends.org)

<p><b>Monthly Book Sales: Second Saturday</b> Terman Library, 661 Arastradero Road 11a.m. to 4 p.m.</p> <p><b>August 10</b> <b>September 14</b></p>	<p><b>Board of Directors Meeting: First Wednesday</b> Lucie Stern Community Center Community Room, 1305 Middlefield Road 8:30 to 10 a.m.</p> <p><b>September 4</b> <b>October 2</b></p>
<p><b>Library Commission: Fourth Thursday</b> Council Conference Room, 260 Hamilton Ave. 7 p.m.</p> <p><b>July 25</b> <b>August - No meeting</b> <b>September 26</b></p> <p>See <a href="http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/clerk/schedule.html">http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/clerk/schedule.html</a> to confirm meeting date and time.</p>	<p><b>Book Discussion Group: Second Thursday</b> Lucie Stern Community Center Fireside Room 1305 Middlefield Road 7:30 to 9 p.m. For information, call Crystal 961-1528 <b>August 8, September 12, October 10</b></p> <p><b>August 8</b> Speak, Memory by Vladimir Nabokov <b>September 12</b> The Feast of Love by Charles Baxter</p> <p>You don't have to be a member to attend this meeting. A list of books that have been reviewed since 1987 is at our web page: <a href="http://www.fopalbookgroup.homestead.com">http://www.fopalbookgroup.homestead.com</a></p>

Friends of the Palo Alto Library (FOPAL) Board of Directors: Ann Shelby Valentine, President; Amy Greene, Vice-President; Paula Sandas, Secretary; Bob Jack, Treasurer. Members: Wendy Akers-Ghose, John Burt, Gretchen Emmons, Chris Kenrick, Jeff Levinsky, Shantha Mohan, Robert Otnes, Marty Paddock, Mary Jean Place, Cecilia Rodriguez, Barbara Silberling, Cherie Stephens, Karen White. Library Representatives to the Board: Mary Jo Levy, Director of Libraries; Coordinator, Downtown Library: Barbara Geibel. Foreword Staff: Chris Kenrick, Shantha Mohan, Cherie Stephens; Digital Photograph: Robert Otnes; Webmaster: Jeff Levinsky; Circulation: Post Haste Direct Mail Service.