

# FOREWORD



Quarterly Issue No. 68

Summer 2005



Members-early sale precedes  
the regular sale on

**Saturday, September 10**

9 am: Life members get in;  
can buy up to 50 books that hour

10 am: All FOPAL members get in;  
12 book at a time limit applies

11 am: Rest of public gets in;  
12 book at a time limit applies  
as normal until noon

Tickets for the 10 am line  
will be available at 8 am.

You can join at the door, but we  
encourage you to join in advance.  
Use the membership form  
on page 7 or join online  
at our website  
at [www.friendspaloaltolib.org](http://www.friendspaloaltolib.org)

## From the President

### Is City Growth Good for the Library?

Palo Alto woke up recently to the startling news that our town will soon contain about 15% more residences. Some parts of Palo Alto will grow by over 30%. How will all this new building and the new people moving in affect our libraries?

We tend to think of Palo Alto as a stable town. Growing cities were always elsewhere, such as the southernmost parts of the county or east of the Oakland hills. So imagine the surprise when Elaine Meyer, President of the University South Neighborhood Association, started totaling up all the new developments in Palo Alto. So far, her list at [www.universitysouth.org/housingShortage.html](http://www.universitysouth.org/housingShortage.html) details 3,768 residences that are either recently completed, under construction, already approved, or likely to be approved. Our housing boom will probably continue as long as residential real estate remains so valuable. A good example is Alma Plaza, which only recently was talking about modernizing its stores but is now slated to be replaced by 51 homes.

Most of these new residences are in just four areas of the city: Downtown/Sand Hill Road, College Terrace, South El Camino, and San Antonio Road. When you compare these to where our libraries are located, the greatest growth rate is around the **Downtown Library**, where the housing stock is growing by 32%, due to many new high-density, multi-story buildings. To accommodate the resulting new residents, the Downtown branch needs to provide more seats and tables, more computers, and more books, DVDs, and CDs. Indeed, the neighborhood's population boom was cited repeatedly by the City Council and others last year as a reason to keep the branch open with good hours. What's worrisome is that more administrative offices are slated to move into the library soon, in fact shrinking its public area by about 29% and reducing seating and shelf capacity. This combination of more users with less space seems likely to create a far more crowded and less pleasant and useful library.

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The area served by the **College Terrace** branch will gain about 18% housing units, not including growth on the Stanford campus itself. Fortunately, the branch is not shrinking and there are some funds allocated to improve the building (although not enlarge) it over the next years. Using our Cable Co-op Legacy Grant, the Friends of the Palo Alto Library is funding a major electrical overhaul at the branch. We've also paid to add wireless Internet access for users with laptops, since there isn't otherwise any room in the building for more computers.

The **Mitchell Park** branch can expect about 10% more users, coming mainly from the large South El Camino and San Antonio Road housing projects. The branch is already the busiest in Palo Alto, and would have expanded significantly if the Measure D library bond of a few years ago had passed. There is still ongoing discussion about ways to enlarge the branch, although there are no immediate plans.

Our other two libraries should be less affected by the growth. The **Main Library** is surrounded by mostly single-family homes and virtually none of the new residences on Meyer's list are nearby. The **Children's Library** serves a wider community geographically but one narrower in age. Much of the new development, particularly in North Palo Alto, is of senior housing or housing with fewer bedrooms, so South Palo Alto will likely continue to be where the majority of young children live. Again, this puts pressure on the Mitchell Park branch, and to a lesser extent on College Terrace.

Even though it's hard for our branches to expand, perhaps their hours can be extended. There are often crowds waiting to get in at opening time and begrudgingly going home at the closing hour. Although the relationship is indirect, having more residences in town does translate into higher revenues for the city, and a share of that should go to the libraries. Expanded evening and weekend hours would be a great way to help more people use the existing branches, especially for busy families and job-holders.

Our collection needs to grow and modernize too. As you'll read in the sidebar on the right, our libraries are in first place for both items checked out and library visits per capita among California cities with 60,000 to 100,000 residents for this last fiscal year. With a growing population, we won't be able to hold onto the number one spot unless we add more books, DVDs, and other materials. To help with this, the Friends of the

Palo Alto Library continue to seek donations of both cash and used books. There will be continued pressure to weed out the less-used books in the libraries to free up shelf space.

All the new residences in town will affect our libraries in another important way: the time it takes to get to one! Traffic is already cited as the number one municipal concern of Palo Altans, and a growing population means more cars on the roads and longer waits at intersections. It's already annoying that it takes twenty minutes to drive across Palo Alto at the busiest times of day. The time it takes you to get to and back from a library affects how usable it is, especially since each checkout means you must make a second trip to return the item (we hope!). Having branches distributed around the city means you're likely to be closer to one, reducing your travel time and offering a pleasant refuge. If anything, the additional residents in south Palo Alto will bring new pressure to reopen a branch near where the Terman Park Branch once was.

One thing is certain: all these new people in Palo Alto will bring new faces and energy to our community and to our libraries as well. We look forward to welcoming these many new residents and hope they'll quickly become as fond of our libraries as we are.

*Jeff Levinsky*, President  
jeff@friendspaloaltolib.org

### **Palo Alto Libraries Hold Onto #1 Slot**

Palo Alto's libraries are again in first place among California cities of our size for both circulation and visits per capita. State statistics for 2003-2004 show that Palo Altans checked out an average of 21.84 items each during the year, making ours the busiest library among cities with 60,000 to 100,000 residents. Palo Altans checked out more items per capita than Menlo Park, Mountain View, and many other neighboring cities.

Palo Alto also again ranked first for a city of its size in annual visits to the library, with 14.67 per resident. Congratulations to everyone: staff, library users, and City Council for a great and successful library system.

Source: California Library State Statistics 2003-2004.

## Thoughts from the Library Director



Dear Friends,

There are lots of things happening at the Library this summer. Effective July 5, the hours of service at the Children's, Downtown and Mitchell Park Branches will be changed to make opening and closing times more consistent across the system, and to allow for one morning per week when all branches are closed so that staff can hold training sessions and meetings. An added benefit is that

we're going to shift the opening and closing times at the Downtown Branch so that it is open an extra hour on Thursday nights, to respond at least in a small way to the demand for evening service at this location. Below is the new schedule effective July 5, 2005.

Effective July 1, the loan period for most library materials (not DVDs) will be changed from three weeks to four. Many customers have requested a longer time to keep their materials, and we're pleased to be able to respond to this demand, but my real reason for doing this is to reduce the volume of work for the staff. Even though we've made great strides with express (self-service) checkout for those who want it, everything that is checked out still has to be checked back in again. Checking-in consumes a lot of staff time and the repetitive nature of the work, especially when performed in the non-ergonomic conditions that exist in all the libraries. This is contributing to high workers' compensation costs. We plan to address this situation in other ways as well, including continuing to use volunteers wherever possible, and reconfiguring the check-in area at the Main Library as part of the upcoming physical improvements planned for that location.

The Children's Summer Reading Program promises to be one of the most fun and interesting ever! "Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds" is the theme, and there will be puppet shows, musical programs, stories, prizes and more for every child who participates. It started on June 9.

And for the first time this year, the Library is offering activities with the summer reading program for teens, too! Anyone going into the 6th grade and older is eligible to sign up for "Joust Read", featuring fascinating booklists, great prizes and some intriguing programs. The teen reading

program also got underway on June 9, and the first program, a presentation on medieval fighting techniques by the Society for Creative Anachronism on June 13, drew 178 kids!

Planning for the Children's Library renovation/expansion continues, along with all the necessary reviews and approvals. Although the projected start date for construction has slipped again, we are most definitely closing in on the final steps in this process. As I write this in mid-June, the estimated date for the City Council to award the construction contract is early October, and the projected date for closing the Library is November 1. The Council is expected to award the contract for construction management in July, and we hope the contract for moving services will be executed shortly thereafter.

Plans for the improvements at the Main Library, and the accompanying move of the Technical Services staff from Main to the Downtown Branch are also moving along, albeit slowly. We hope to have an estimated timeline once the architect is on board.

The Library Advisory Commission continues to work on the Council's charge to develop a service model proposal for the Library. This service model is to consist of a full-service library supporting services at all existing branches, plus any other distributed services appropriate for Palo Alto. This is something of a daunting task, but the LAC is tackling it with vigor. If you're interested in hearing more about this project, please contact me.

You can find information about the summer reading programs as well as the changes in service hours and the new loan period at the Library's website: [www.cityofpaloalto.org/library](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/library) <<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/library>>. If you haven't visited the website recently, I encourage you to do so. There's a wealth of information there.

As always, thank you for your support of the Library!  
*Paula Simpson*, Library Director  
 329 2403 and [paula.simpson@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:paula.simpson@cityofpaloalto.org)

Palo Alto City Library Schedule, effective July 5, 2005							
<u>Branch</u>	<u>Sun.</u>	<u>Mon.</u>	<u>Tues.</u>	<u>Wed.</u>	<u>Thurs.</u>	<u>Fri.</u>	<u>Sat.</u>
Children's	1-5	10-6	10-6	12-8	12-8	12-5	10-5
College Terrace	Closed	11-6	11-6	11-6	Closed	11-6	11-6
Downtown	Closed	Closed	11-6	11-6	12-7	11-6	11-6
Main	1-5	10-9	10-9	10-9	12-9	10-6	10-6
Mitchell Park	1-5	11-9	10-9	10-9	12-6	10-6	10-6

## Introducing Marty Paddock and Althea Anderson

Hundreds of our Friends members know our famous book sales very well. Many of you are regular customers at what the *Mercury News* labeled as “wildly popular” monthly events, but you may not really know very much about how they are organized or how they manage “to run themselves.” We regularly brag that we have about 130 wonderful booksale volunteers all helping in some way or another, but we decided that you might like to know more about how we are organized and who makes it all happen – month after month, year after year.

The following page outlines the structure of how the sales are organized. Here, we’d like to introduce you to some of the key people who make it all work. This issue will introduce you to our management and forthcoming issues will feature some of our most dedicated volunteers.

Marty Paddock manages our entire FOPAL book sale operation with the able assistance of Althea Andersen, assistant manager. Marty is the one who makes sure that there is a manager for each section or category of books: Rose Giamalis for cookbooks, Herschel Smith for medical, Lucy LaPier for children’s, etc. And when someone is away or ill, she finds someone else to cover that section. She oversees the acceptance or picking up of donations. When our ranks get thin, she scouts out additional volunteers. Marty usually manages one section or another, at least until someone else agrees to take it over. She steps in when a section manager needs help or assistance and above all, she makes sure that each volunteer has most of what he/she needs to get the job done and that the job is a rewarding experience.



*Marty Paddock and Althea Andersen*

For some 20 years Marty worked as a Russian translator, but these days she is busy running our book sales. She is also a very engaged mother and grandmother who manages to be very involved with her family. Her son Randy is a State of California judge in San Diego, son John and his two pre-school sons live in San Francisco where he is a practicing architect and very active with a choral group. Son Richard is *Los Angeles Times*’ Bureau Chief for Southeast Asia, and he his family are currently in Singapore, while daughter Caroline and her three sons recently moved to Portland.

Marty somehow manages to see all of them pretty regularly. She recently returned from a visit to Singapore and Bali, last year she visited Richard in Indonesia and before that in Russia where she was able to use her Russian language skills to talk with people. None of us have quite figured out where she gets all of her energy; she is at the book room about 30 hours a week, is in and out of San Francisco at the drop of a hat and is just generally on the go. My own guess is that she has simply decided not to waste time on sleep.

Althea comes to us after a career as a librarian and library director in New England and in Florida, so she is right at home with books. Although she is at the book room all sorts of crazy hours, she has another life as an apartment complex manager. Althea has two sons: Eric in Delaware is an engineer with a medical supply company, and Mark in Montana is a free lance handyman, who shows up in Palo Alto every once in a while and helps us with all sorts of things that have us stumped.

Althea is the free spirit of our operation. She steps right in and handles all of the unexpected things that come our way. Like the motorcycle that was donated along with some books and which she immediately sold. Last month we received a wall hanging, a striking sort of tapestry, about 48 x 60-inches with a Route 66 theme, that Althea promptly priced and hung. She readies the ephemera we receive for sale, any number of baskets, jewelry, bookcases, all manner of computer related items, etc. You can’t stump Althea. She also manages a section, currently sports, but in truth, she does whatever needs doing.

This introduces our book sale management team, and you’ll be hearing more in our next issue about other essential team members. Meanwhile, don’t miss our book sales, and take a moment to look around and admire all that goes into making a successful sale.

*Ellen Wyman*

## Behind the Scenes at the FOPAL Book Sales

We are frequently told that Palo Alto has one of the best Friends book sales in the state - in fact, our previous library director, Mary Jo Levy, claims that it is THE best in the state. We appreciate the fact that the community loves our sales. So, we want to shine a little light on it and fill you in on some little known facts.

We offer about 45,000 books for sale each month; have you ever wondered where they come from? The library sends us their withdrawn non-fiction, but most of our books are donated by individuals and businesses in the community. Because this is a very literate and up-to-speed area, we do get some terrific and current books. Donations vary from two volumes to as much as 120 boxes of books. It is then that the work begins. In the following paragraphs our book sale manager Marty Paddock, tells us how it all works.

### What's What and Who's Who in the Book Room?

**Marty** is the boss, **Althea** is the assistant boss. **Karen** is in charge of the Bargain Room (K7). **Lucy** is the head of the Children's Room (K6).

The Main Room (or the big house as **Edwin** calls it) is divided into sections according to subject area: history, cooking, technology, etc. Each section has a manager who is responsible for pricing, displaying, selecting books to go to the Bargain Room, and for having his/her section ready on the Friday before each monthly sale. If the manager is sick, going on vacation or has an emergency, he/she calls on a co-worker to take over or calls **Marty** or **Althea**. Each manager works on his/her own time, day or night.

The Main Room is open from 2:00-4:00 Tuesday thru Saturday afternoons. Each day there is a person in charge who:

- 1) opens on time
- 2) trains new sorters
- 3) gives out receipts to donors
- 4) sees that books are delivered to the sections and to the Bargain Room
- 5) answers the phone and is generally available to answer questions.



Some volunteers only sort books. Others take turns doing various jobs and some section managers take turns at sorting. Most volunteers come on a certain day each week. Others drop in occasionally and work when they can.



Donated books are sorted by subject and put into alphabetically arranged boxes. When the boxes are full they are moved out to the floor and put in front of the appropriate section for pricing and shelving.

These tasks are all essential to the success of our sales. The challenge is to coordinate all of this activity and to make everything work smoothly. **Verne** does the advertising; **Marian Dannenberg** does publicity; **Jeff Levinsky** manages the website, oversees the monthly newsletter and is an important worker during each sale; **Rene** calls volunteers and sets up the schedule for sale days; **Verna** designs and prints our flyers, bookmarks, gift certificates, handouts for the children's summer reading program; and **Ed** delivers the empty red tubs to the library. The pickup service is manned by **Ed, Carl, Steve** and **John** and when needed by a dozen other volunteers.

Sale days require at least 35 volunteers to handle all the jobs including keeping books tidy on the shelves and cashiering. **Ray**, with **Carl's** help, puts out and brings in a dozen signs around the Cubberley campus. Friday before each sale is set-up day which can be a bit frantic. This is the day for finishing up all sorting, pricing and shelving, for vacuuming and tidying. **Marian K.** provides a gourmet lunch that day, complete with homemade bread and cookies, so that set-up day has become very popular.

We have a number of student volunteers who get school credit for doing community service. They sort books, recycle cardboard, push cart-loads of books to rooms K6 and K7, arrange shelves, sort CD's, work on the Internet, price, etc. They are a hard-working bunch who come when they can. **Althea** has taken on the job of orienting the students and is terrific working with kids.

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We have two computers. **Emmy Lou** and **Mary Anne** come in every week to look up books on the Internet to help us set prices for unusual items. We price books at well below the average Internet price. **Ann** and **Jeff** sell books on line. If you want to see what books FOPAL is offering online go to [dogbert.abebooks.com/servlet/BooksBrowsePL?vendorclientid=5433758](http://dogbert.abebooks.com/servlet/BooksBrowsePL?vendorclientid=5433758).

**Tom** and **Ellen** sell selected pricier books to specialists and place some items for sale with auction houses. Before each sale **Gerry** cruises the shelves to pick out any sleepers. Following each sale non-profits, who have been alerted by **Maggie**, come to get free books. We have a new group who plan to take many of the books we are unable to sell. We try to recycle as many books as possible.

As Book Sale Manger my goals in priority order are to:

1. Keep a happy work force
2. Keep our customers happy and returning each month
3. Earn money for the library
4. Find homes for as many books as possible.

For those who wish to donate books, if the door is open at the Main Room at Cubberley, come on in. We promise to be open between 2-4 Tuesday thru Saturday and by appointment, but we are often open other hours as well. We give out tax receipts. Also, we are willing to pick up donations which can be arranged by calling 213-8755.

*Marty Paddock*  
Book Sale Manager

## St. Louis Public Library Study Shows That Municipal Investment in Public Libraries Pays Substantial Economic Dividends

For the last several years Palo Altans have been engaged in a conversation about the value of their public library services. It's a known fact that citizens generally - in Palo Alto, as well as most municipalities - value public libraries at a level that nearly matches their valuing of public safety and educational services. That said, when the question about funding public libraries comes up in Palo Alto (and elsewhere), it's difficult to answer the question of what real economic value is made to a municipality by its respective public library system; that is certainly a question here, one that has led to a reluctance to aggressively fund our public library system.

A very good answer to the above question - i.e. about whether public library investment is "worth it" - is in a 1998 St. Louis Public Library (SLPL) study conducted under the auspices of a \$250,000 Federal grant. The SLPL study was created to credibly discover "bottom line" estimates of the net value of SLPL services to its users and to the St. Louis community as a whole. In fact, the SLPL study developed a "practical, conservative transportable methodology" showing that SLPL users received back \$4.00 in direct benefits of every \$1.00 of tax revenue that the public contributed to SLPL.

Thus, it is now possible - without hesitation - to tell citizens and civic leaders that public library services do indeed add tangible, measurable economic value to a community, in addition to the better-known "soft" features and values understood by most library users and citizens. Quoting the St. Louis study sums it up best:

"..., libraries, in carrying out the social mission for which they were chartered, provide users with services from which those users receive direct benefits. And, because good things happen to others in the community because citizens use the library's services, the whole society benefits indirectly from the library's operations."

I suggest a close - and to guarantee fairness, even conservative - reading of the SLPL study by our municipal administrators, City Council members, and civic leaders. Such an undertaking would help those groups better understand that Palo Alto's public library "pays back" the investment that Palo Alto taxpayers make in supporting them.

Informed leadership on the issue of appropriately funding Palo Alto's public library will lead to a more efficient and pleasing library system, and help Palo Alto to realize and better understand the added economic advantages from its public library investment as well.

For more on the SLPL study, go to [www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc/resintro.htm](http://www.slpl.lib.mo.us/libsrc/resintro.htm).

*-Sanford Forte*

*Sanford Forte is Vice-Chairman of the Palo Alto Library Advisory Commission; Partner and EVP, Marketing and Business Development at SNAGG, Inc., a technology startup ([www.snagg.com](http://www.snagg.com)); Founder and Director, California Open Source Textbook Project [www.opensourcetext.org](http://www.opensourcetext.org); Partner, 'Create It! Ceramic and Mosaic Studio' on California Ave. in Palo Alto [www.createitstudio.com](http://www.createitstudio.com). Sanford is also a member of the California Avenue Area Development Association (CAADA) and involved in several other areas of personal and professional interest. Sanford believes that our public library is and will be an essential part of the fabric that keeps the Palo Alto community whole and thriving, going forward.*



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**Email: [info@friendspaloaltolib.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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