

FOPAL After-Sale Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2014

10:00am Main Room

Moderator: Janette Herceg

Recorder: Doug Graham (A lot of phrasing in these minutes has been copied directly from Janette's agenda)

In Attendance: Althea Anderson, Katherine Bass, Olive Borgstadt, Nancy Cohen, Karen Dal Colletto, Charlotte Epstein, Doug Graham, Verna Graham, Janette Herceg, Lynn Hum, Nigel Jones, Marian Knox, Suzanne Little, Karen Neier, Verne Rice, Bob Schwaar, Georgia Schwarr, Judy Wagstrom, Ed Walker, Scottie Zimmerman.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Janette Herceg called the meeting to order at about 10:05 am.

2. SALES RESULTS: Karen Neier (the new FOPAL Treasurer) gave the Sale Report. The Main Room total was \$9,458 (down 12% from December), Outside \$514 (up 250% - due to DVD sales), Ephemera \$376 (down 30%), Children's Room \$3,595 (down 13%), Bargain Room \$2,431 (up 12%), and Total \$16,374 (down 9%). See the sales summary tables from Karen Neier, copied below, for the daily details and December actuals.

Amazon sales to date were \$3,585, volunteer sales \$502, and library sales \$55. There will be one more Amazon deposit, and more volunteer and library sales, so this month's total should be about \$25,000.

Bob Schwaar reported that high-value book sales have totaled \$8,300 in the past 30 days; 305 books at an average price of \$27.

It is felt that the section managers are still missing too many high-value books and they should look up more of them. Examples were passed around for illustration.

3. SALE PROBLEMS AND EVALUATION:

- a. The new "one-ticket-per-person" policy was the target of complaints again this month. We will check what's on the current web site to make sure that the new policy is clearly stated.
- b. Complaints were also made that "someone" moved the boxes that early-arriving customers left in place "holding" their spots in line for tickets.
- c. We were short one cashier in the Main Room Sunday morning due to a no-show. A volunteer was successfully switched into the cashier position. Janette is developing a short list of volunteers who live within a 2-minute walk of the Main Room and are willing to be "on call" for Saturday morning.
- c. Two tabs were left unpaid. Janette called them Sunday and one had a non-working number. However, it turned out that this person had paid - he had pulled cash out of his sock and paid one of the cashiers before leaving. In the future, we will ask for current phone number to be on each tab to facilitate calling forgetful customers.
- d. One traditional tab customer asked for the Bargain Room cashiers to start a tab for him but the cash box had neither tab forms nor the tab approved customer list. This will be corrected for future sales.
- e. One cashier found a blatant case of price-sticker switching involving sets of books. All cashiers should be reminded to always open the book to check the written price, rather than depending upon the sticker.
- f. There were too many books without prices in this sale!
- g. Once again, Section Managers please remember: if you are putting books into another section's area (because they were sorted incorrectly), to leave the books on the floor. In some cases, they are apparently being shelved without being priced first.

4. CHILDREN'S ROOM:

Sunday cashiers were unable to open the cash register. We will look into how to open the cash register using a release button underneath. To deal with this, Janette moved the tent sale cash box to the Children's Room and had the tent sale volunteers direct customers to pay inside or at the Ephemera area. That is why the Sale Summary shows almost no outside sales on Sunday.

5. BARGAIN ROOM:

Lots of customers but fewer books this month. We sold lots of green bags again. The shelves looked picked over on Sunday. We have been holding books over after Free Night. The shelving volunteers will be asked to decide whether or not this should be done again.

6. CULLING:

A LOT OF BOOKS WERE HELD IN THE Main Room for next month's sale. Section Managers please cull thoughtfully and maybe twice for the February sale. Consider culling after you see how many books come in...

7. SPECIAL SECTIONS:

Specials sold very well - approximately 50% sold. The specials were Biography, Business, and Military History.

In February we will promote books on Soviet Union history, philosophy, the KGB and spying, Soviet textbooks - anything that would fit with those topics. Please put anything you are contributing on the floor in front of the Philosophy section.

8. DONATIONS:

- a. Book stocks in both the Bargain and Main Rooms were noticeably below the usual levels, even considering that January is typically the annual low point for donations.
- b. Nancy Cohen reviewed the discussion in the most recent Board Meeting that dealt with this issue.
- c. One idea was to contact local realtors and provide them with information on the sales. This might stimulate donations from people moving out.
- d. We will also see if we can be included in the City's "City-Wide Garage Sale" notice that goes to all utility customers.
- e. We may be able to get the leftover books from Stanford Shopping Center's "Book Blast" aimed at kids in February.
- f. The annual PAMPPA (Palo Alto-Menlo Park Parents Association) Rummage Sale will be held at Cubberly and we will probably get the leftover books this time.
- g. Other donation-stimulus ideas included;
 - a. Distributing notices of our sales to senior living centers with the suggestion that our book sales are opportunities to augment the living center's lending collection.
 - b. Preparing e-mail notices of the sales to go to broad-distribution neighborhood lists, either directly to neighborhood associations who maintain such (like the Barron Park Association), or through the website nextdoor.com.
- h. One question that was unresolved is: Should we establish a regular place for donations to be left when we are closed? Donors are leaving books outside the doors of all three sales rooms.
- i. Considering the long-run prospects for FOPAL sales, the Board feels that donations will hold up well for the next ten years, then will drop slowly as the total stock of books in homes is expected to decline. In the meantime, we expect more sales by internet and fewer at the Book Sales as the population ages and switches to on-line shopping.

9. ANNEX:

On January 20th, the Annex will be reorganized, to clear out the boxes and install shelving. Janette has enough volunteers for Monday, but may need some for Tuesday if it takes that long.

10. WEB SITE:

Committee meetings times and places will be added to the website.

11. SALE SUMMARIES:

Starting in February, the sales results will be disseminated to all volunteers as soon as they are compiled. Karen Neier will send the Sale Summary tables to Doug Graham for e-mailing to the volunteers on Sunday (if possible).

12. FUTURE MEETINGS:

NOTE: After-Sale Meetings will begin at 10:00 am!

13. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned about 11:20 am.