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# Foreword

The Newsletter of Friends of the Palo Alto Library

Fall 2021

## President's Message

Terrific news from the City of Palo Alto – The City Council on August 9 confirmed the appointment of Gayathri Kanth as Director of Library Services. Previously Kanth stepped into the role of Interim Director in October 2019, leading the department through COVID-19 and related fiscal challenges. Before that she served 3.5 years as an Assistant Director, overseeing the library's Public Services division, drawing on her long history of leading the Cupertino and Saratoga libraries as a Community Librarian. She has more than 20 years of experience in library administration and services.

At last – a real monthly sale at FOPAL on August 14 and 15. See pages four and five for the excitement of finally opening our doors for an Early Member's Sale in our Main Room followed by a regular monthly book sale at all three rooms.

Helen Beavers, nominee for our next Secretary, recounts on page five the improvisations necessary for donations by appointment and Friends and Family Sales, also by appointment.

For a lighter good old days reflection, Nancy Olson has recounted some of the early times of FOPAL on page three.

Central to our staying afloat during the pandemic has been our online sales activity. Past President Nigel Jones has managed our Amazon, eBay and auction sales assisted by a team of researchers, listers and shippers essential to this effort. During the fiscal year ending in June 2021 those sales accounted for \$105,025 of our total sales income of \$252,251. Luckily FOPAL had completed several lengthy process documents explaining how to list books on different sites as well as how to prepare shipments. This work was done mostly by volunteer Fabio Peruzzi. Thus we were able to instruct new volunteers by telephone and video how to accomplish the work of selling online. Nigel spent many hours talking to staff at Amazon and eBay (or waiting on hold while someone searched for answers) whenever we received strange messages about a holdup in the process. Often there were new policies, not usually communicated to us, that complicated the situation.

Our high value team has been instrumental in garnering very successful online revenue even during the period of COVID constraints. We have maintained a high volume of Amazon  
*(Continued on page 3)*

### 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	Name _____
_____ Individual	\$20	\$35	Address _____
_____ Family	\$30	\$50	City / State / Zip _____
_____ Sponsor	\$100	\$175	Phone _____
_____ Lifetime	\$500		Email _____
_____ 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).

Friends of the Palo Alto Library (FOPAL): Officers: Nancy Mahoney Cohen, President; Nancy Tillman, Vice President; Melinda Parry, Secretary; TBD, Treasurer; Susan Light, Assistant Treasurer; Board of Directors: Officers (except Susan Light), Karen DalColetto, Charlotte Epstein, Bill Jones, Nigel Jones, Tina Kass, Suzanne Brown Little; Gerry Masteller, Karen Neier, Young-Jeh Oh; Steve Staiger; Jim Sutherland

### FOPAL BOARD ELECTION

#### Proposed for re-election to the Board for a two-year term

Nancy Cohen, Karen DalColetto, Nigel Jones, Karen Neier, Nancy Tillman

#### Continuing Board Members

Tina Kass, Suzanne Brown Little, Gerry Masteller, Young-Jeh Oh, Melinda Parry, Steve Staiger, Jim Sutherland

#### Proposed New Board Members

Helen Beavers, Jenny Munro, John Wang

#### Proposed FOPAL Officers

President: Jenny Munro  
Vice-President: Nancy Tillman  
Secretary: Helen Beavers  
Treasurer: John Wang (Bio at meeting)  
Assistant Treasurer: Susan Light

### MEMBERS' ANNUAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, October 13, 2021

Time: 10:30 am

Place: Embarcadero Room, Rinconada Library

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

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## Presenting the two FOPAL Board nominees

### Jenny Munro, Nominee for President



I was born in London and grew up in Hertfordshire. I came to the U.S. in the sixties, as a teenager, with my parents and sister, and attended college and graduate school here in California. I majored in English literature, and taught high school for over thirty years, first at the Charles Armstrong School, and then at Gunn High School. I was a volunteer at FOPAL from 2013-2017, and then moved to Portland, Oregon for three years. I returned to Palo Alto last year, after deciding that Portland was a great place in many ways, but not somewhere to spend the rest of my life. I am happy to be back in Palo Alto, and have enjoyed getting reconnected with FOPAL where I am currently helping in the Mystery section, as well as doing other needed tasks. It's great to be with other book lovers. I know that President of the FOPAL board will be a demanding position, but it is one that I am eager to undertake. I am willing to devote the time needed to help make FOPAL as successful in the future as it has been in the past. You might run into me walking my dog in the Midtown neighborhood, swimming at the Y or, more often, helping out in the main bookroom.

### Helen Beevers, Nominee for Secretary



I was born in Southampton, UK and after studying Mathematics & Music at the University of Keele and gaining a teaching qualification at the University of Exeter, I moved and settled near Aldershot, Hampshire, UK for my first teaching job. After 16 years in the primary classroom I began working for the local public library service - starting as a general assistant and ending up programming events and workshops for several libraries in the English county of Hampshire.

Two years ago, my husband's new job brought us to Palo Alto where I met FOPAL. I help with collecting donations, sorting books, looking after various shelves in both the Main Room and the Children's Room as well as hosting Friends and Family Sales. When not delving into boxes of donated books, I'm a keen amateur singer and musician, although things have been understandably quiet on that front for the last 18 months!

## President *(Continued from page 1)*

book sales including one of the highest selling books we have had, *The Saints*, for \$595. On eBay we have focused on DVDs and antiquarian children's books, and have now added in high value literature selling a first edition of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* for \$300.

Auction sales of a few of our donations are often surprising. A non-signed, no dust jacket copy of Steinbeck's first novel, *Cup of Gold*, with an opening offer of \$100 sold in August for \$1,080. Recent sales have included the assault plans for the Battle of Anzio and a two-volume set, *Travels in the Yucatan*, from 1843. Upcoming, we have an antiquarian rarity in excellent condition, Sir Walter Raleigh's work of selling online. Nigel spent many hours talking to staff at Amazon and eBay (or waiting on hold while someone *History of the World* written in 1736 while in the Tower of London.

Janette Herceg, FOPAL's Director of Volunteer & Community Engagement, drew up schedules, interviewed new volunteers, fulfilled volunteer assignments for hitherto unknown activities, and answered LOTS of phone and email message, mostly from home with poor internet activity. Internet service in our mobile buildings has not been terrific either so we were delighted when HP offered the expertise of Bruce Wong to explore the options for improvements and give us a recommendation. He also helped with better systems for group emails and other office activities.

We are thankful to Oak Dellenbach for facilitating gifts of furniture and office supplies for use by our volunteers from Toppan Merrill. And recently Jack Feldman of Feldman's books donated many boxes of books to FOPAL as he relocated his store to 1075 Curtis St. in Menlo Park.

All these activities rely on our donors, our many volunteers and, of course, our customers.

*Nancy Mahoney Cohen*

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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, furniture, technology, and special programs for Palo Alto public libraries. These sales happen through the efforts of many individuals just like you!

Please join us!

### Choose a Job to Suit Your Time, Talents, and Interests:

#### HIGH VALUE SELLING

Learn how to research, describe, price and prepare our most significant high value books and media for sale and shipping online on Amazon and eBay. Books can range from modern to antiquarian and media from DVDs, CDs, 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).

#### REMOTE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Friends of the Palo Alto Library is seeking a Book Sales Volunteer Coordinator to oversee the operations of our monthly book sales at Cubberley Community Center, which normally generate more than \$200K annually to support programs and acquisitions in Palo Alto City libraries. This person will be in charge of coordinating the assignments of sales day volunteers in the many tasks involved in holding the sales. The time required is estimated to average 8-10 hours a month, with the most work in the days leading up to the sale dates. (Second Sat & Sun of the month). Additional information is available on our website, [www.fopal.org](http://www.fopal.org)

#### BE ON THE FRONTLINE FOR FOPAL!

Interested in being the first to see the items being donated? FOPAL's sorters are on the frontline, figuring out what books go where. This is a terrific opportunity for

volunteering to work solo or with other sorter(s) for a 2 hour shift. Training available! Are you able to fill a shift? Please let us know!

#### SUPPORT A SECTION, BECOME A SECTION MANAGER'S ASSISTANT.

By using your love and knowledge of books in areas like History, Historical Fiction, Art, Year books & Annuals, (to name several sections in need) you can make a difference! You'll train to fill-in or assist a section manager, check on-line for book price comps and to identify books for on-line High-Value sale and organizing and pricing books for our monthly sales. Share and expand your interests and expertise. Once trained, flexible schedule is available!

#### MORE DONATION MONITORS PLEASE!

Enjoy a first look at an amazing assortment of books, greet donors, and monitor the donation process, offer receipts, and thank you to donors! General Info-FOPAL Donation Monitors/volunteers will be accepting donations, 6 bags/boxes or less, Mondays- Saturdays 3- 5pm. Donation monitors will assist donors to drop their books...Donors dropping off boxes/bags at FOPAL-Cubberley Community Center. Meet friendly donors; get free body-building exercise!

#### CHILDREN'S ROOM

Love Children's Literature? 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) see this featured story in the Palo Alto Weekly: [http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/show\\_story.php?id=27907](http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/show_story.php?id=27907)

Ability to lift 20lbs valuable.

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)

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## Donations

(Continued from page 5)

began to leave the FOPAL Rooms allowing space for more to come in and providing income during the fiscal year of \$116,923. However, the influx of books needed to be controlled so we wouldn't run out of space again.

Donations restarted - but by appointment only. On three afternoons each week volunteers would now wait by the Bargain Room. Books would be emptied into red crates for our volunteers to expertly pack and store them until there was space on the shelves. And behind the scenes, an equally busy team of volunteers shuffled boxes from our various storage spaces over to the Main Room whenever there was space.

We have learned that our donations come from retired professionals, people who have moved into the area, people who are moving out of the area, from parents whose children have outgrown their childhood favourites, teachers who are refreshing their school libraries, from friends, neighbours and family who have sadly passed away but have left fabulous collections that should be shared. We volunteers get to see them first, learn their history and discover more about our community!

Friends & Family Shoppers have been an amazing support and the trickle of books flowing out has turned into a steady stream. In preparation for the August Weekend Sale, donors can now bring books straight over to the Main Room without an appointment Mon - Sat: 3pm - 5pm. We will help you pack them into our bankers boxes - (large books on the bottom, books placed flat if possible and flush with the top of the box) - and then you can take them straight into the Main Room to receive a receipt and, of course, our thanks.

It has been hard work; we've needed to be flexible and modify our processes, improvise where required, accommodate and adapt to rapidly-changing circumstances but FOPAL volunteers have proved once again what a great job they do!

*Helen Beavers*

## Welcoming new volunteers!

Iris Chen - Sale Volunteer  
Emma Chen - Sale Volunteer  
Nina Soltero - Sorter & Sales  
Stephanie Rose - Donation Monitor, Sorter & Sales  
Mikaela Clarete - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Sukurat Alimi Abimbola - Sorter & Donation Monitor  
Linda An - Section Manager & Sale Volunteer  
Amanda An - Section Manager & Sales  
Ellen Smith - Sorter & Sales.  
Dennis Smith - Sorter & Sales  
Hsio Ling Hee - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Grant Tatge - Donation Monitor  
Brett Tatge - Donation Monitor  
Stacey Xu - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Cerys Holstege - Donation Monitor, Sorter & Sales  
Pandora Shi - Donation Monitor, Sorter & Sales  
Mallika Viswas - Sorter & Sales  
Maya Mazor-Hoofien - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Ariel Chen - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Erin Brady - Donation Monitor, Sorting & Sales  
Asa Deggeller - Book Moving & Sales  
Amara Holstein - Sorter & Sales  
Michael Kass - Sales  
Laurie Aldrich - Box moving & Sales  
Rakela Mitchell - Donation Monitor & Sales  
Heidi Kristin Mitchell - Donations & Sales  
Kylie Yen - Sorter & Sales.  
Richard Greene - Sorter & Sales  
Niklas Hagstroem - Box moving & Sales  
Xinmei (Emay) Lui - Donation Monitor, Sorting & Sales  
Lily Zhang - Donation Monitor, Sorting & Sales  
Matt Herrema - Book Moving & Sales  
Ellen Achtman - Section Manager Assistant, Sorter & Sales  
Felix Chen - Sorting & Sales.  
Gabriel Donnelly-Higgins - Book Moving & Sales  
George Chaltas - Sorting & LP Sales  
Julie Naik - Donations & Sales  
David Taglimonti - FOPAL Liaison & Sales  
Ming (Maggie) Hei Yeung - Sales  
Ajay Khanna - Box moving, Sorting & Sales  
Fiona Wang - Main Room Section Manager

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## VOLUNTEER REFLECTION

We were a rural family, but once each month my parents would take us to a wondrous, enchanted place. The County Library. There my parents and my younger sister and I would choose books to take home with us. Imagine - a huge selection of books that were ours for the whole month!

When I started school, I discovered that my school actually had a small library where each class could go on a weekly visit. Although we could only take one book per week it was a marvelous school "perk." We continued to go to the County Library on our monthly trips until I was in Junior High School when we moved into town - near the City Library!

I was not able to go to college right from high school, but had very good employment opportunities in interesting accounting jobs. That led directly to meeting and marrying a wonderful man who also liked to read. We had a delightful daughter who loved libraries and reading.

As our daughter was entering high school, I started planning what I wanted to do with my future. I decided to get my CPA certificate. So I joined the wave of mature women returning to school.

In the middle of my first year at Foothill College, a new course was introduced - an AA course in library science. I did an immediate U-turn; entered the library program; earned the AA degree with fully transferable credits to San Jose State U. So later rather than earlier I was a Librarian!

A friend invited me to join the Board of the Friends of the Palo Alto Library. Of course, I said yes. That was about 1983. Over the years since then, I served on the Board, with time as the President. While on the Board we helped introduce a new service to our main library - Books on Tape. Our Board committee trial selection of titles proved very popular and flew off the shelves. Then you could find (or reserve) titles in all our branches.

As my job hours and responsibilities changed, I left the Board but looked for other ways to be helpful. I did internet book pricing from home and began to volunteer at our book sales.

We had annual sales in those days. The books had to be stored and then moved to our sales site - moving boxes and setting up tables and arranging categories of books, most usually in church halls. Sales began on Friday

evenings for members only, then open to the public on Saturday. Saturday evening we had to pack up unsold books, take down tables and clear the space for church use on Sunday morning.

It was great when we were able to move to the Cubberley site where books could be left on shelves and not packed away after each sale, and we could go to monthly sales. We were the only Friends group with "monthly" sales!

During our early years at Cubberley, I worked each sale as cashier or sometimes worked the 'floor'. Both jobs brought me face to face with our customers. I was pleased to see happy customers who had found a particular treasure or an arm load of anticipated reading pleasure, especially the children.

Then I heard the children's collection in Room K7 needed help. My husband and I volunteered with Lucy LaPier in pricing and displaying books. We enjoyed working each week until he became ill. I continued on and later happily moved into our wonderful Children's Room. I've been working in Children's Non-fiction for years.

We have a great group of volunteers who take pride and pleasure in their sections. In spite of this pandemic, we have had a couple of zoom get togethers to keep in touch and compare notes on the books we are currently reading. We really are like family.

As each calendar year comes to an end I seriously consider "retiring". Then about December, I decide, well maybe I will retire the end of next year. I really am quite addicted.

*Nancy Olson, Past President, Children's Room Volunteer*



# FOPAL monthly sales begin after COVID hiatus

## Donations and Sales during COVID

In July 2020, after four months of quiet, FOPAL 'opened its doors' for book donations once again. On three afternoons each week, people brought their books to the large shady tree in the car park by the Main Room and volunteers helped to pack them into bankers boxes, and load them onto the golf cart.

When full, the golf cart would take the boxes to the storage area in the Bargain Room, where volunteers would unload and stack the boxes for quarantine. On several occasions, we had to turn people away as we could fill the space for that afternoon (about 70 boxes) in 90 minutes!

It soon became apparent that many people had spent those first four months of 'Shelter in Place' emptying out garages, tidying up attics and basements and reorganizing home studies and libraries. There were a lot of books! All that lifting, packing, carrying and stacking was a great work-out - who needs the gym?!

After four days, volunteers would load the now quarantined books back onto the golf cart and unload them in the Main Room to be sorted, priced and shelved. There was a huge number of boxes coming in - but as there were still no sales, no books were leaving the FOPAL Rooms. Eventually we were full and the Main Room could take no more; donations had to stop.

So a plan was hatched to ensure books could flow out as well as in. Friends & Family Shopping was born and books

*(continued on page 6)*



Janette Herceg shows she is ready to start the Saturday sale.



Vintage children's books



Searching the full Main Room Shelves



Bargain Room customer pays for his books while Matt Herema counts incoming customers and Marcie Brown and Olivia Gee await the money.



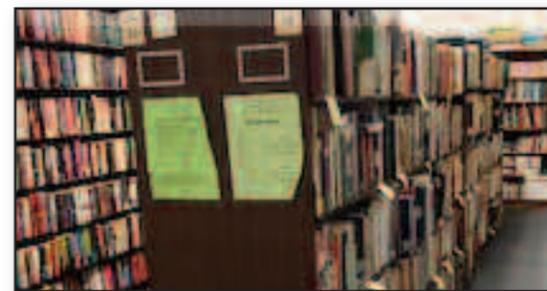
A wealth of puzzles and games in Main Room



Bikers pause to shop at FOPAL



Children's Sale Room



Bargain Room awaits customers



Raji Ramamurthi and Ed Walker welcome a FOPAL member while volunteer, Kenza Ashworth watches.