

# Friends Trends

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE JEFFERSON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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## Announcing Friends Trends, Number 25

by Annette Centanni

After a hiatus of four years and seven months, *Friends Trends* is finally back and ready to serve you again. We're under new management, and will be operating through electronic format, but will continue the tradition of publishing quarterly to inform you of everything of interest in our organization and every happening you should be aware of.

The *Friends Trends* was initially commissioned at the August 13, 1997 meeting of the Board of Directors. The first issue was published in November of the same year with Kathy Norton as editor. As it turned out, Kathy was the only editor until she moved away in late 2004; the last published edition came out in January, 2005. The purpose of the original *Trends* was to announce meetings, disseminate the Library Director's news, and to publicize acquisitions, sorting news, and information of interest sent in by members.

Before a new editor could come forward in 2005, our city was blindsided by Katrina, and all publication ground to a halt. Recently, Anna Campos and I were approached by Peg Phelps and asked to "pick up the banner," so to speak; we agreed to attempt to do so. We have perused old copies of *Friends Trends*; thus, we know what is expected of us. We have our own ideas as well, and in our present format, hope to get breaking news to you more quickly than was possible in printed mode. We are also open to suggestions from you, our readers, and look forward to serving you in the future, God willing no more Katrinas!

(To submit information, ideas, or an article for the newsletter, e-mail [camposanna@hotmail.com](mailto:camposanna@hotmail.com).)

## Friends General Meeting

East Bank Regional Library  
September 23, 2009 at 1:00 PM  
Featuring a Demonstration  
by the Whistling Man

## Don't Miss Our Big Book Sale

Thursday - Sunday  
October 29 - November 1, 2009  
10 AM - Noon Thursday through Saturday  
Noon - 5 PM Sunday  
Ponchartrain Center in Kenner

## How Do All Those Books Get to the Sale?

By Peg Phelps

As you walk into one of our semi-annual book sales, do you ever wonder how all those books got collected, sorted into more than 70 categories, boxed and labeled, delivered to the Pontchartrain Center, and unpacked on the correct table? It is a story of public generosity, Library cooperation, and the expertise and dedication of many Friends' volunteers.

As time passes, certain books on the shelves of the library are deemed unneeded, and are removed

*We find good homes for used books.*

## Friends of the Jefferson Public Library

(a member of the association of Library  
Trustees, Advocates, Friends and  
Foundations)

### Officers

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Sandra Blount, Vice President  
Peg Phelps, Treasurer  
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Blamid Sunseri, Corresponding Secretary

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### Mission

The Friends of the Jefferson Public Library is an independent, nonprofit organization of civic-minded volunteers. We support the Jefferson Parish Library by promoting library awareness, providing needed unbudgeted items for all its branches through fund raising, and participating in literacy programs.

### Address and Phone

P. O. Box 9291  
Metairie, LA 70055  
504-455-BOOK (2665)

### Web Site

<http://www.friendsofjeffersonlibrary.org/>

### Friends Trends

Editors: Anna Campos, Annette  
Centanni

from circulation. These books, known as library weeds, are donated to the Friends. By the same token, residents of the surrounding area find unwanted books in their homes and offices, and the two area Barnes and Noble Book Stores have books that do not sell. These books make their way to the Friends in several ways. Patrons deliver their unneeded books directly to the Friends' sorting center at 6640 Riverside Drive in Metairie, or the books are picked up by one of our volunteers. Books not deemed useful to the library are brought to the Friends by the library maintenance staff, and the Barnes and Noble book stores often call the Friends to come and pick up unsold books.

All these books come to the incoming books area at the sorting center, where a cadre of up to 24 volunteers spends Tuesday and Thursday mornings processing each book. These volunteers come from all walks of life. Some are retired; some are full-time home makers; and some are still working. They are teachers, military veterans, former store managers, engineers, scientists, computer programmers, and travel agents. The common denominators are their love of books and reading; their goal of making books available to the public at a reasonable price; and their desire to support the library. They use their expertise to put each book into the best category. With over 70 categories, including fiction, mystery, romance, science fiction, literature, business, math, cookbooks, travel, health, history, and several categories of books for children, this can be a daunting task. Books that appear to be especially valuable are set aside for an expert opinion, whereas books of contemporary interest are sent to the Friends' Store at the East Bank Regional Library. All CDs, DVDs, audio and video tapes, cassettes, records, and books-on-tape are sent to the audio-visual room for special handling. Encyclopedia and other sets of books are priced separately. As a part of the whole process, regular seminars are held to keep the volunteers up-to-date on the various sorting categories and techniques.

It is not all work, however. During the sorting process, volunteers chat about their families, politics, the weather, travel, and books recently read. The coffee pot is always ready, and normally one or two of the volunteers brings a baked treat for everyone to share.

After the books are sorted, each book is scanned to ascertain its value in the on-line marketplace. Those books that meet certain criteria are separated to be listed in the Friends Storefront on Amazon.com. Remaining books are

handled by the pricers, who decide on a price and put a tag on each book as it is packed into a box. The price tags used are printed on a volunteer's home computer using return address labels, which are then cut to the proper size. A full box of books is sealed and labeled, and a tally sheet which lists each category is marked. This tally sheet is used to determine how much table space should be allotted to each category at the book sale. A pile of boxes is then brought to the book storage area. A fast pricer can pack between seven and ten boxes each morning. Since between 1200 and 1500 packed boxes are taken to each book sale, the need for year-round sorting and packing of books is obvious.

While the volunteers are working at sorting, pricing, and packing, generous residents are bringing their book donations to the sorting center. Volunteers help to carry the books in, and prepare a receipt for the donors. Donors also leave books in the two drop bins outside the sorting center, and a volunteer empties these bins frequently.

During the week of the book sale, the committee goes to the storage area to meet either a crew from Northrop Grumman or a moving company. (Northrop Grumman has been moving our books once a year for several years.) Several trips are usually necessary to get all the packed boxes to the Pontchartrain Center. Once the category signs are put on the tables, the boxes are delivered and are unpacked by yet more dedicated volunteers. Using this process, the books are ready for the onrush of customers who flow through the doors on opening day of the Big Book Sale.

The next Big Book Sale will be held from Thursday, October 29th until Sunday, November 1st at the Pontchartrain Center in Kenner. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, and noon to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. This time when you come to the sale, you will have some knowledge of how all those books got on all those tables. If you would like to participate in the year-round sorting and packing of books, or

would like to help at the Big Book Sale, please call the sorting center at 455-2665 and leave a message with your name and number.

*(Editor's note: The above is an updated version of an article that appeared in an earlier issue of Friends Trends.)*

**If you do not wish to receive future issues of Friends Trends,** address an e-mail to [friendsjpl@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsjpl@yahoo.com). Use "Unsubscribe to Friends Trends" in the subject line.