

Friends Trends

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE JEFFERSON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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May 2010

Raise a Reader gives early literacy a boost in Jefferson Parish

by Annette Centanni

“Peg, get the word out! Walgreen’s and CVS have pocket folders for ten cents this week!” Sally Hoffschwelle’s annual battle cry sends Friends scurrying out to relieve every store within a 10 mile radius of their entire inventories of pocket folders for the Raise a Reader Program. Usually about 1,200 of them! In all colors! Other scavenger hunts produce board books and soft page storybooks needed to fill the pocket folders. Then Sally and her troops can get to work on their REAL mission: making Readers of as many Jefferson Parish babies as they can reach.

The Raise a Reader Program was started in April, 1999 by Ethel Tarleton, then President of The Friends. After having funds set aside for it in the budget, Ethel contacted area hospitals to see if they would assist in distributing the packets of information for new parents. The hospitals which agreed were Ochsner in Kenner, Ochsner on Jefferson Highway, Lakeside, and Ochsner at Meadowcrest on the West Bank. Also on the West Bank, West Jefferson Pediatric Emergency Room agreed to participate in the program. Today, all of the aforementioned except Lakeside participate; Raise a Reader furnishes packets to new parents, and other packets, minus the burp pads, to young children up to about 4, who come in to the Emergency Room at West Jefferson.

Sally, who had been involved in the Program for many years, took over after Katrina when Ethel moved away. She is joined once a

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Sally Hoffschwelle, left, and the Raise a Reader volunteers fill pocket folders at the sorting center.

Friends General Meeting

East Bank Regional Library
Wednesday, May 19, 2010 - 1:00 p.m.

Presentation of the 2010-2011 budget
Election of Officers

Speaker: Al Mipro, Master Docent,
National WWII Museum
Topic: World War II Remembered

Book Donation Drive

Saturday, May 15, 2010

9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

East Bank Regional Library
4747 W. Napoleon Avenue
Metairie

Hardcover and paperback books,
DVDs, CDs, and audio and video tapes

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

Aileen Janney, President
Sandra Blount, Vice President
Peg Phelps, Treasurer
Sue Hellwig, Recording Secretary
Blamid Sunseri, Corresponding Secretary

Board of Directors

Jackie Kosche, Anna Campos
Patricia Cox, Judy Zawislak,
Sally Hoffschwelle, Lisa Conescu,
Joan Demers, Mark Parker

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 9391
Metairie, LA 70055
504-455-BOOK (2665)

Web Site

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

Friends Trends

Editors: Anna Campos, Annette
Centanni

Raise a Reader

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month for 2 ½ hours by 3 ladies who represent the Jefferson Volunteers for Family and Community, Inc. Together they assemble pocket folders with lots of goodies inside. Each folder contains a letter addressed, "Dear New Parent," a three page Reading to Children leaflet, an application for a Jefferson Parish library card, a Parent Guide to Raising Readers, a bookmark/application card to join the Friends, a bookmark on Watching Better TV, a bookmark to join Jefferson Volunteers for Family and Community, a colorful burp pad made by Friends and Volunteers, and a board book for infants. Older children who go to West Jefferson's Pediatric Emergency Room receive a soft page, longer story book to keep them occupied while they are waiting. All items are placed in an "I Read to my Baby" plastic tote bag.

Sally reports that between 250-300 bags are delivered to hospitals each month. At present, a grant from Entergy helps defray some of the costs; Friends, the Library, and Jefferson Volunteers collaborate in providing leaflets, and bookmarks, and cover other expenses.

Studies have shown that reading to an infant or young child promotes the formation of bonds and habits that last a lifetime. Thus, this truly worthy service provided by Sally and her helpers is having an untold ripple effect that spreads into the community and the world.

If you would like to volunteer your services to this effort in any way, please call Sally at 455-2665, or leave a message for her to get back with you.

Slate of Officers for 2010-2011 Friends board is announced

Patricia Cox, Nominations Chair, has announced the slate of officers to be considered by the members at the General Meeting on May 19, 2010. They are as follows:

President: Chris deVillasana
Vice-President: Kathy Pennington
Secretary: Sue Hellwig
Treasurer: Peg Phelps
Corresponding Secretary: Annette Centanni
At-large Board members: Robert Campos and
Kuniko Izumi

Bible Sleuths

by Peg Phelps

Maureen Howat, a volunteer with the Friends of the Jefferson Public Library, wondered why the old Bible had been sitting on the desk for so long. She finally found the courage to ask, and discovered that the Bible had been found in a box of donated books. The members of FJPL recognized that the Bible was something special, but they did not know how to proceed from there. Sensing a potentially interesting situation, Maureen, who is an amateur genealogy researcher, offered to see what she could find out about the Bible.

Maureen's first step was to read the inscriptions in the Bible and the clippings and mementos that were pressed between its pages. In so doing, she discovered that in about 1858, the Bible originally belonged to Mr. Daniel Axtell of Tipton, Indiana. In keeping with what she had learned as a researcher, she used the New Orleans Public Library Obituary Index, Ancestry.com, the East Bank Regional Library microfilm of old newspapers, and the *Times-Picayune* on-line archives to research the Axtell family. A eureka moment occurred when she eventually discovered two male descendants of the original Daniel Axtell by reading the obituary of their mother, Jane Axtell Williams, in the June 10, 2006 issue of the *Times-Picayune*. According to Whitepages.com, both men lived in New Orleans. Maureen wrote letters to both gentlemen and eventually received a phone call from one of them, Mr. Robert John Axtell Williams, who was stunned to learn of the existence of this Bible. Mr. Williams told Maureen that Mr. Daniel Axtell, the original owner of the Bible, is his great-great-grandfather on his mother's side. Since most of the family is from Indiana, Mr. Williams was mystified as to how the book landed in an FJPL donation box.

On Thursday, April 1, in an emotional encounter, Robert Axtell Williams came to the FJPL sorting center on Riverside Drive in Metairie to pick up his great-great-grandfather's Bible. When he arrived, he brought another Bible, one that had belonged to his great-grandfather, Samuel Preston Axtell, son of Daniel Axtell, the original owner of the Bible in question. The members of the Friends of the Jefferson Public Library are so happy that the Bible is finally in the hands of a family member who treasures it.

Said Maureen, "I enjoyed the research so, so much, and finding a descendant of the Axtell family was exciting. I'm glad I saw the antique Bible on the desk." Now she can get back to the business of sorting, pricing, and packing books for the next FJPL book sale, which will be in October.



Maureen Howat, volunteer with the Friends of the Jefferson Public Library, holds the 1858 Bible of Daniel Axtell, while Robert Axtell Williams, great-great-grandson of the original owner, holds another family Bible. The 1858 Bible, which was left in a Friends of the Jefferson Public Library donation box, was presented to Mr. Williams, whose maternal ancestors were originally from Indiana.

Friends' Favorites

by Annette Centanni

(An ongoing feature highlighting our volunteers and the books that influenced their lives.)

Maria Tujague: A particular favorite of Maria's is *Night Jasmine* by Mary Lou Widmer, because it is set in New Orleans. Maria says she can picture the places Widmer describes, so familiar are they, and so rich in the New Orleans flavor she is accustomed to. She has read *Night Jasmine* twice.

Sally Hoffschwelle: Sally reports that one of her favorite books is *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson. She says it made her stop and think about the prejudices we all have but just don't acknowledge, and the dangers of judging people. The story is a haunting tale, featuring the memory of what happened to an entire Japanese community during World War II when it was sent into exile in an internment camp.

Mary Ann Tourres: Mary Ann had a lot to recommend about *The Gift of the Sea* by Ann Morrow Lindbergh, wife of Charles Lindbergh. Her personal copy is yellowed with age, underlined and falling apart, now preserved in a plastic zip-lock bag. She first read the book in the 1960s, but has read it numerous times since then. She loved it for the language within, its symbolism, and the parallels the author drew between shells and her own life experience. The kernel Mary Ann took to heart, is that everyone needs to know when and how to draw back during life in order to properly reflect, to refresh his own soul.

"Anyone who says they have only one life to live must not know how to read a book." ~Author Unknown

News Notes

Recent happenings and coming events for Friends of JPL

Volunteers needed for summer reading kick-off: On Saturday, June 5th, from 12 noon till 3 p.m., the East and West Bank Regional libraries will launch the system's summer reading program. Called Librarypalooza, the event will feature activities for children and teens, including craft stations, face painting stations, video games stations, refreshment stations, and picture booths. M. Selena Muhoberac, the Teen Librarian, is looking for between three and five volunteers at each location to help with manning the stations/booths. If you are interested, contact her at 504-838-1100 xt. 296, or mmuhoberac@jefferson.lib.la.us

October book sale dates: The next Big Book Sale will be October 21st through 24th, with set up at the Ponchartrain Center on October 20th. Mark your calendars!

Friends Store report: Patricia Cox, Store manager, reports that the store has sold over \$9,000.00 in books and merchandise since February. 1688 books have been sold in that time, and 1038 gift items. This includes 23 New Orleans afghans sold at the March book sale. There have been sixteen days of unscheduled closings (no one showed up to open the store)—mainly Saturdays and Sundays. If you would be interested in volunteering in the Friends store, call the Sorting Center at 504-455-2665.

If you are reading a print copy of this newsletter and would like to receive it online, send an e-mail to friendsjpl@yahoo.com. In the subject line, write 'Subscribe Newsletter.'

Photo Highlights of the February 24, 2010 General Meeting



Lon Dickerson, Library Director, receives a check for \$70,000.00 from Friends. From left: Judy Zawislak, Book Sale Chair; Joan Demers, representing Online Sales; Lon Dickerson, and Patricia Cox, representing the Friends Store.

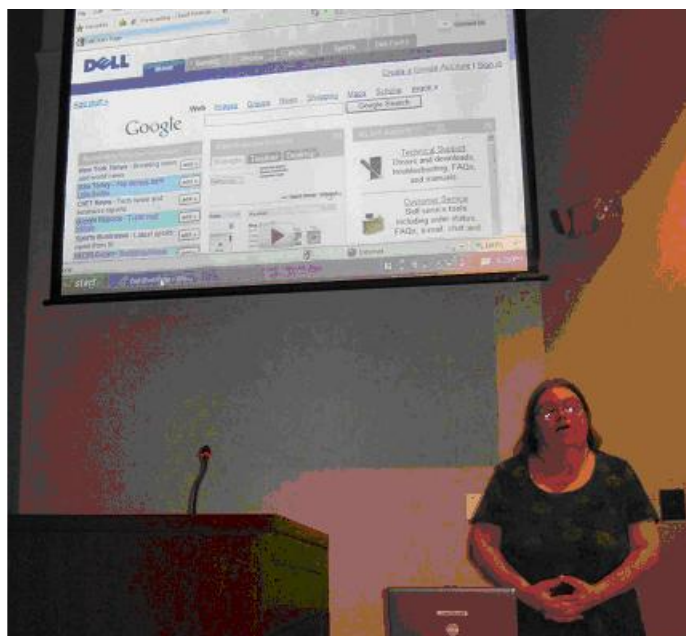
Congratulations to Jacquelyn Milan

One of our own Friends, Jackie Milan, has recently received confirmation that her short story, "Nobody But Me," will be published in the upcoming issue of *Big Muddy: A Journal of the Mississippi River Valley*, which is a publication of Southeast Missouri State University Press. Her story is set in New Orleans in the 1960s.

Jackie studied under author Shirley Ann Grau at a creative writing workshop given at East Bank Regional Library.

Felicitations, Jackie, on your success!

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



Linda Molinaro, Co-head of Special Collections, gives a presentation on how the Jefferson Parish Library can be used for Genealogical Research.

Scholarships Available: Did You Know?

The Friends offer a scholarship program for librarians, those who aspire to be librarians, or those who wish to get an advanced degree in Library Science.

Basically, an applicant must have been a library employee for at least six months prior to applying, and must be approved by the Friends and the Director. Courses must be in an ALA accredited program leading to a Master's Degree in Library Science. The amount of reimbursement is \$100.00 per semester hour. In order to allow time for the form to be approved and returned to the Director, applicants must apply three weeks before planning to enroll in coursework. Guidelines and forms are available upon request from the Director, Lon Dickerson.



... And the line went around the building

first day of March Big Book Sale an exciting event

photos by Robert Campos



The Spring Book Sale, which ran from March 11-14, 2010, was held at the Ponchartrain Center in Kenner. *Top: some of the over 300 people waiting to be first inside when the doors opened at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday. Left: Charlotte Lewis, Library Associate at the Terrytown Branch, left, and Bill McKee, Gretna Branch Manager, signed up new patrons of the Jefferson Parish Library. Right: A view of the main room of the sale on Thursday morning.*

This sale netted \$38,317.14, a \$5,500.00 increase over March of last year.

We find good homes for used books.