

Friends Trends

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE JEFFERSON PUBLIC LIBRARY

NO. 44

January 2015

Terrytown Community Garden is growing

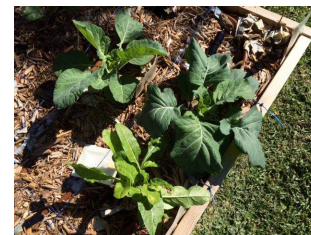
by Peg Phelps

Librarian Anna Jensen is not one who likes empty spaces, so when she saw the little side yard at the Terrytown branch library, she just had to fill it with something. Some plants seemed like the perfect answer, and thus was born the idea of the Terrytown Community Garden.

When Anna mentioned her idea to library director Marylyn Haddican, she was enthusiastically supportive. Anna was put in contact with LSU Extension Service agent Sarah Bertrand, who was extremely helpful in spelling out just what Anna would need to achieve her goal. One last hurdle, however, was funding. Erin Korosi, Youth Services Coordinator for the library, suggested Anna approach the Friends with her request. With Marylyn Haddican's approval, Anna presented us with a list of what was needed and approximate costs, and we approved the expenditure.

All the necessary supplies were ordered, mostly from Lowe's, and on July 12, Anna, her fiancé, and her roommate picked them up, filling Anna's office to overflowing. After eliminating the grass where the garden plot was to be planted, Anna's fiancé helped her build the raised bed. Sarah Bertrand then visited the library and helped Anna build a small irrigation system.

Seeds for collards, chard, peas, green beans, shallots, and broccoli were started in seed trays, and on Saturday, September 6th, patrons were invited to come in and plant one of the seedlings in the garden. In conjunction with the plantings, children were invited to listen to a reading of *Growing Vegetable Soup* by Lois Ehlert, and to make plant markers to



The Terrytown Community Garden in September, above, and October, below. (photos by Anna Jensen)

identify the vegetables.

Gardeners saw the fruits of their labors when, on October 15th, the first green beans were harvested. Anna says, "It's very rewarding whenever someone comes in and asks how the garden is going and goes out to check on its progress."

As with any agriculture project, there have been challenges, including insects that attacked some of the plants, and an animal that dug up a few things. Patrons and the Ag Center have worked together to offer advice to ameliorate these problems, and the garden is doing so well that Anna is looking forward to harvesting more vegetables this winter. She has also recently planted spinach and turnip seeds in anticipation of a spring crop.

Anna says the garden has been a great learning experience, both for her and for the young patrons who helped do the planting. And that empty space has become an enjoyable vista for many who visit the library.

We find good homes for used books.

Friends of the Jefferson Public Library

(a member of United for Libraries: the
Association of Library Trustees, Advocates,
Friends, and Foundations)

Officers

Sandra Blount, President
Anna Campos, Vice President
Peg Phelps, Treasurer
Sue Hellwig, Recording Secretary
Annette Centanni, Corresponding
Secretary

Board of Directors

Blamid Sunseri, Robert Campos,
Patricia Cox, Judy Zawislak,
Diane Schlefstein, Lisa Conescu,
Joan Demers, Aileen Janney,
Jan DeVidts, Maria Tujague

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
Contributing Editor: Peg Phelps

Book carts fill a need and generate funds

by Annette Centanni

Does each library have its own, unique personality? Most assuredly, it does! The eight Friends who man the book carts at the 12 parish libraries which have them, each have a different story to tell about his or her experience. The book carts are used by the Friends to sell donated books on the honor system to library patrons.

First of all, book carts generate about \$3,000 yearly, a goodly sum for the minimum of effort and time involved. Generally, books cost \$.50 or \$1.00, which is left in available envelopes or collected by a librarian. Most book carts are located in the foyers of their respective libraries. However, the stories differ as to what sells in the individual neighborhoods, and in the little details reported on by each Friend.

Chris deVillasanna took over the Harahan Branch from Marie Breerwood two or three years ago when she went out of town, and has been manning it ever since. He maintains a four shelf cart with some 50 books, mostly paperback, but some hardback fiction. He puts newer, nicer books on the top of the cart, and stocks a variety of authors and subject matter, but no science fiction. His method is to put a date on the corner of the first page so that he can tell how long a book has been offered; if a book has sat for a month, he removes it from the cart and returns it to sorting. He chooses the nicer looking books from sorting, but never from Choice Fiction. He also displays \$.50 children's books on the cart at Christmastime and at the beginning of the summer. All of this takes him about 20 minutes a week. His cart generates about \$600.00 per year.

Judy Zawislak is in charge of the Old Metairie Library on Metairie Road. Her cart generates about \$800.00 a year, she reports. Judy has been manning this cart since the idea of honor system carts was formulated. She says that she visits the cart to replenish it every three to four weeks, and this takes her less than thirty minutes. Her clientele likes newer looking books, all of a standard size, mostly paperback, but some hardback, as well as multiples donated by Barnes & Noble. For some reason, children's books don't

See **Book carts** page 8

Friends' Book Reviews

by Annette Centanni

Collette Ricaud's Book Review

The Racketeer by John Grisham

"John Grisham is not even my favorite author," states Collette, an avid mystery reader, "but his *Racketeer* REALLY appealed to me because it was riveting from the very beginning. She says that she has read a lot of Grisham, along with James Patterson, Kaye Ketterman, and others, and can usually figure out the ending, but this book was very different. The plot was interestingly intricate. It involved an innocent attorney who had been wrongly imprisoned in a Mexican jail for five years. "In this book I liked how Grisham's vivid description of the jail situation is true-to-life," states Collette, "as well as his succinct style of writing with no wasted words. And just when I thought I had everything figured out, the ending shifted from the expected to the unexpected! I highly recommend it to all mystery lovers!"

Debbie Reed's Book Review

Various Favorites: *The Secret Garden*, *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry*, *Leaving Time*

Ever since she was a little girl, Debbie has loved to read. When her aunt took her to the library and told her that her ambition was to read every book there, Debbie thought that was a fine ambition for her to have, too! And she has never stopped trying!

Debbie reports that when she was a child, her favorite book was *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. She loved it because the characters, Mary and Colin, found and shared a private world, where they grew and thrived. She also remembers *The Little Princess* by the same author. Debbie says that these two books had a profound effect on her psyche and on her lifelong reading career.

Today she enjoys sampling different genres, and moves from one to another. One of her current

favorites is a novel, *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin. Debbie describes the book as "entertaining, enjoyable and charming." It is about a 40- something owner of Island Books in a small town, a "sourpuss" who has lost his wife, has had his prized Poe collection stolen, and who has given up on both life and people. Someone leaves a baby in his bookstore, and it changes him forever. Does Mr. Fikry adopt the baby? Debbie smiles and advises all to read the book to find out what happens! "It's a really good book!" she says. "I always wanted to own a book store, so I love the concept of the story. I always wonder how my life would be if I had chosen that path."

Debbie reads best sellers, both fiction and non-fiction. She says that she has no compunction about abandoning a book she doesn't like after she has read only a few chapters. She also has an e-reader now; she finds the e-reader to be easier on her eyes. She will even grab her e-book in the middle of the night and read until she falls asleep.

"Oh! One other book is a current favorite," says Debbie. "It is *Leaving Time* by Jodi Picoult. It involves a past incident at an elephant reserve that is now being investigated by a psychic and a detective. [Its format features] flashbacks and [a lot of current] research on elephants."

Debbie's aunt would be so proud of her!

Annette Centanni: My own Book Review

The Tippy Parrish Series by Janet Lambert: *Don't Cry Little Girl*, *Rainbow After Rain*, *Welcome Home*, *Mrs. Jordan*

What do I look for in a book, even to this day? Emotional impact! First and foremost, it's emotional impact, even more so than plot, characterization or description. If a book can make me cry, or fall in love with its characters, or seethe with outrage, or split my sides laughing out loud, it moves to the top of my Five Star list of books to recommend. Emotional impact of favorite books became so much a part of who I am, that when I became a teacher, I always chose books to read to, or

See **Reviews** page 9

We find good homes for used books.



The Shadow Knows (and TELLS) All

Winter Greetings, Faithful Readers. I hope you had the happiest of holidays!

Since it has been only three months since I have last reported everything I know, this will be a short column! The first news is the Big Book Sale, during which the Friends earned \$6,000 in profits more than at the March sale. The Powers that Be attributed the increase to several factors: **Debbie Reed** and **Peg Phelps** reached more customers through expanded written advertising, **Anna Campos** and others distributed bookmarks to numerous school librarians (and even cross guards who also distributed), signs were displayed in various neighborhoods and in key locations by **Anthony Centanni** and **Shadow** sidekick, and there were several spots of free television coverage provided by **Bob Breck** of Fox 8 and **Eric Paulsen** of WWL-TV.

Thanks to about 100 volunteers, the sale was a huge success in many other ways, tangible and intangible: bonds of friendship and camaraderie were forged as many opportunities presented themselves for hours of dedication and self-sacrifice. If you helped in any way with the sale, consider this heartfelt congratulations for helping to earn over \$56,000 for the benefit of the Jefferson Parish Library System! Giving credit where credit is due, thanks go to **Judy Zawislak**, indefatigable Committee Chair, and **Peg Phelps**, Financial Chair; but kudos also go to some other "hard hitters" during the event. **Chris deVillasana**, **Robert Campos**, **Ted Blohm** and **Lou Zawislak** hauled boxes of books almost all day Tuesday before the sale. **Harris Jenson**, **Ted B.** and **Diane Davey** hauled *during* the sale, and **Ted** and **Diane**

worked after hours to straighten books. **Naomi Saul** was noted for working with bulldog determination in the packing-up phase, while **Greg Breerwood** packed away all of those treacherous bookends, a job nobody ever wants!

Our Thank You Coffee, October 31, was held at the Sorting Center for the first time. It was very well attended and enjoyed by all! Having it there furnished an opportunity for people who had never been to the center to get a look at the set-up. **Anna C.**, dressed in black and donning a witch's hat, directed traffic to the correct entrance. I'm told that **Jackie Kosche**, seeing **Anna**, nearly got hit in the parking lot, gawking at what she thought was an animated statue! **Marie Breerwood** provided her usual right touch of fall decorations, assisted by **Rodney Tujague**, who furnished some of his just-finished, hand-painted and battery-lighted Halloween ceramics.



The October Thank You Coffee. (photo by Robert Campos)

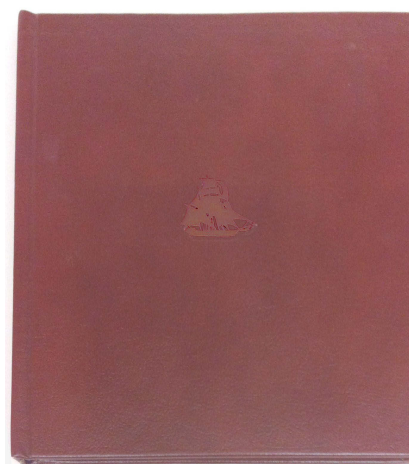
It was delightful to see both **Monie** and **C.J. Mouton** at the coffee, recently back from their annual trek to Denali National Park, where they serve as summer campground hosts. Unfortunately, due to a newfound sewing engagement, Monie won't be seen listing for

See **The Shadow** page 6

Online Sales Corner

Below is a description, taken from the Amazon listing, of the book that the Friends recently sold online for \$899.56:

"*Freedom, a Fable* is an illustrated artist's book with text and pop-up silhouettes. At first glance it appears to be a nineteenth-century children's book, but it is decidedly not. It tells the story of a female slave whose life after emancipation veers far from her dreams of meritocracy, revealing that *Freedom, a Fable* is not just the title of the work but is also the lesson to be learned. Much of Kara Walker's work engages the historical art form of the black paper silhouette to re-present African-American history. Her beautiful, laser-cut figures initially attract. But quickly one notices their demeaning postures and exaggerated features, which recall negative stereotypes of African-Americans portrayed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century minstrel shows, novels, and art. Walker's figures depict a physically and sexually violent antebellum South, often the source of these virulent typologies. Walker's inversion of the portrait silhouette--a supposedly representative art form--reveals the corrosive power of stereotypes and prejudice. To heighten the irony and poignancy of her message, her cutouts are normally wall-size installations. In contrast, the miniaturized images in *Freedom* address the viewer on an intimate, personal scale."



At left is the cover of Freedom: a Fable, and below is a view of one of its centerfolds. (photos by a Friends Online Sales volunteer.)



We're on FACEBOOK!!!

Check out the "Friends of the Jefferson Public Library" Facebook page!

"Like" us on Facebook to get our reminders and updates on the latest happenings and Friends events!"



Like us on
Facebook

If you do not wish to receive future issues of *Friends Trends*, address an e-mail to friendsjpl3@yahoo.com. Use "Unsubscribe to Friends Trends" in the subject line.



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Shop at smile.amazon.com and
Amazon will make a donation to:
**Friends of the
Jefferson Public Library.**

Go to smile.amazon.com and choose the Friends of the Jefferson Public Library, Metairie, LA as your charity. Amazon will donate .5% of all your sales to the Friends!

The Shadow

continued from page 4

Amazon, at least until after her project is completed. She and C.J. promise to serve at the next sale, however.

Sorting had a number of visitors recently.

Kathy Norton, founder and past editor of *Friends Trends*, and editor of our cookbook, *Cooking with Friends*, paid a visit in early November. She spent her time sorting and packing books while she chatted with old friends and met newer volunteers. Tuesday, November 25, was also quite an eventful day. **Kuniko** and **Tadahide Izumi**, and **Robert** and **Anna Campos'** daughter **Laurie** and her two children, **Rose** and **Julia**, all stopped by at the same time. It was quite a while before anyone got back down to business that day, but it is the **Shadow's** opinion that Sorting was looking for a good excuse to start the holiday season early, anyway!

Amazon's spurt of good fortune has lessened a bit recently. Donations of "listable" books have dropped off, leaving the listers with little to do on numerous occasions. However, a record was set in November for the most expensive book ever sold: *Freedom: A Fable*, a rare book (one of only 4,000 printed) sold for \$899.56! No one knows where the book came from, as it was donated anonymously to the Friends. *[For more information about Freedom: a Fable, see the Online Sales corner on p. 5--ed.]*

The prosperous run **Janice Paine** enjoyed in listing DVDs has come to an end. The Amazon Company placed so many restrictions on the sale of DVDs that the ladies who work the Friends' Amazon enterprise decided to pull all remaining copies from the inventory. From here on out, all donated DVDs will be priced for the sale by **Robert Campos**.

Paulette Mauterer has volunteered to switch her main packing day to Monday in order to relieve the stress caused by weekend sales. She has recently been joined by a new packing recruit, **Cory Kowalski**, who **Paulette** says is "a jewel."

Leslie Fall, long time Amazon and Collectibles sale worker, has assembled a data base which contains addresses and other information from customers so that they can receive notification of book sales. The customers who signed up for email notification will save the Friends much money on postage. That was a big job, **Leslie**, and we all thank you for your time and dedication!

The Amazon group is in the process of thinking of new ways to increase sales in the Collectibles area at the Big Book Sale, as sales have decreased there as well. **Anna Campos** has figured out that one of the reasons sales were down is that **Ouida Prieur** was recuperating from an illness and was not able to man her station outside of Collectibles as "hawk." However, she is back at sorting now, and plans to take a proactive part in the next sale.

December was a slow month at sorting, Amazon, and at every other place but the Store. In store manager **Patricia Cox's** own words, "The store had an outstanding month in December, with sales over \$4,300. Christmas shopping began in November when we put out all the wonderful donations from Barnes and Noble. Of course, NOLA afghans brought up holiday sales. **Don Shoenbrun** was very excited to sell five afghans one Wednesday morning. His shift is traditionally the slowest time in the store, but he was very busy that day! **Audrey Munoz** and **Cheryl Smith** had one banner Tuesday, almost breaking the

See The Shadow page 7

News Notes

Recent happenings for the Friends of JPL



Friends volunteers, library staff and Jefferson Parish Council members celebrate the declaration by the Council of October 19-25 as Friends of the Library Week. (photo courtesy of Jefferson Parish)



Highlights of the Friends holiday party for the library staff were (from top) Anthony Centanni's lovely renditions at the piano, Peg Phelps's fruit salad and the new seating arrangements. (photos by Robert Campos)

The Shadow

continued from page 6

\$500.00 record. **Diane Schleifstein** sold eight afghans one Friday. Thanks to all the volunteers who kept the store open during the Christmas season. It made our cash register very merry!"

On a final note, if you didn't get a taste of **Sue Hellwig's** Queen Cake right before the holiday break, you missed something! I am told that a Queen Cake differs from a Mardi Gras King Cake in that it has every conceivable type of filling there is in the one cake. In addition, just about everyone else brought some sweet to share. Those who sampled all of the goodies brought in by Friends waddled away from the lunch table, nearly comatose, but extremely satisfied!

Until next time,
Your Friendly Shadow



We find good homes for used books.

Book carts

continued from page 2

sell well in her library.

Mary Anna Lightner took over the North Kenner Library cart from Sally and John Hoffschwelle at least five or six years ago. She says "they depend on her," so she keeps doing it! She has two carts to fill; it takes her about ½ an hour every six weeks to refill her carts with two bags of all paperbacks. Her customers pay the librarian; she reports she has had absolutely no problems with the system she has going. Her clientele prefers a variety of mysteries, science fiction and romance.

Marie Breerwood runs the River Ridge E-Branch cart, which is in a strip mall on Sauve at Jefferson Highway. Her library has NO BOOKS, therefore, her book cart books are the only ones in the library! Marie says she keeps trying a variety of fiction, self-help, authors who have had best sellers, and biographies, but nothing really "zooms" off her cart. She's still trying to figure out how to lure people to her cart. She finds this library to be a difficult situation for her, since she's a morning person, and her library is only open from 2:00-6:00 PM Monday through Thursday. Mostly, people go in to use the computers, but they CAN order a book and pick it up there if they know the specific author and title. Unfortunately, the strip mall has recently been sold, so Jefferson Parish is looking for a new location for the branch.

Sue Hellwig mans both Westbank Regional and Live Oak Libraries. Westbank calls her when they need refills, or have money to be picked up. Live Oak, which is down River Road past Avondale Shipyard, contacts her every few months when her cart needs servicing. Both WBR and Live Oak like to give her recommendations, reports Sue. They definitely know what their readers like! Live Oak clientele likes mostly romance and "Nora Roberts" sorts of books.

Patricia Cox services the Lakeshore Library, which was rebuilt and reopened after Katrina. She stocks her carts with a variety of fiction, non-fiction and self-help; she finds Nora Roberts and Clive

Custer to be big sellers. She goes every Friday to replenish the shelves and to collect any monies, but she makes sure her carts are full right before elections, since Lakeshore is a polling place, and people waiting in line tend to shop the cart. Patricia takes in about \$50.00 a month, though during July, 2014, she reported a record \$87.00!

Debbie Reed takes care of Gretna, Westwego, Belle Terre and Terrytown, and has been doing so for about 10-12 years. It's a 24 mile circuit, so Debbie only makes her rounds every two to three months, unless called. In addition to the variety of \$1.00 books she stocks, the library managers accept donations from the public for the carts. Debbie claims that her customers at all of the branches "fussed" about the raise in price from \$.50 to \$1.00, but all branches are still doing well.

Kathy Lloyd volunteered for the Rosedale book cart on Jefferson Highway when Marie Breerwood asked if anyone could relieve her of one of the three she was servicing. Since Kathy's mother had once stocked the book cart at Rosedale, she thought it was only fitting that she step up. She has filled that slot for six years now. Kathy furnishes mostly Sandra Brown-type thrillers, though she enlists Mary Lou Spanja's help for the summer months for easy readers and juvenile books, which she displays on the top shelf. At the manager's request, she also stocks paperbacks for itinerant back-packers who frequent the Rosedale Branch. "You never know what services will be needed next!" says Kathy. And this is the opinion of just about all of the Friends who volunteer to satisfy the needs of the library patrons who browse the book carts.

If you are reading a print copy of this newsletter and would like to receive it online, send an e-mail to friendsjpl3@yahoo.com. In the subject line, write "Subscribe Newsletter."

Aurora Free Library



Peg Phelps sent in this photo of the Aurora Free Library, which is located in the Finger Lakes area of New York State. The library's webpage (<http://www.aurorafreelibrary.org/about.html>) has this description: "Designed and built as a community meeting place in 1899, the Tudor Revival building housing the Aurora Free Library was a gift to the Village of Aurora from Louise Morgan Zabriskie. Some of its splendid interior features include ornately carved woodwork, leaded glass windows, and a Victorian theater, the Morgan Opera House, on the second story. The property was donated in 1941 to the Aurora Free Library Board of Trustees. In 1960, the Aurora Free Library joined the Finger Lakes Library System, two years after its inception. The building currently houses the library, a basement jail cell that now houses an archives room, and the Opera House."

Aurora calls itself "the Village of Constant Dawn" and features many picturesque inns, some wineries, and Wells College, a nationally recognized liberal arts college.

(Have you come across an interesting library in your travels? Send a photo to our editors at friendsjpl3@yahoo.com. We would like to make this an ongoing feature.)

Reviews

continued from page 3

with my class based on this premise. A lukewarm reaction would never do; I always aimed for total involvement from my students. I wanted them to catch fire and love reading as much as I always have.

With this said, the first book that I can remember making me sob to break my heart was (ironically) *Don't Cry Little Girl*. I read it when I was an innocent, naïve 12 or 13. The main character, Tippy, was a world traveler, an Army brat who grew up and fell in love with a young Army Lieutenant, Kenneth Prescott. She was engaged to him at the time he was sent off to the Korean War. I remember that she wrote to him faithfully, and baked cookies to send to him for Christmas. She was so hopeful for the future. Alas, she received word that young Ken had been killed; when she got broken cookies returned to her in a crushed package, she couldn't deal with the pain. And neither could I! The story became so real to me that I was devastated. In *Rainbow After Rain*, Tippy learned to manage the reality that had been dealt to her, and began to hope as she found comfort in a childhood friend, Peter Jordan. You can guess what happened in Book 3 of the series! I couldn't turn the pages fast enough! I trace my lifelong love of romance back to this teen series.

Would I recommend this trilogy to a teen I know today? It depends. Since Janet Lambert wrote in the 50's, her stereotypes of the relations between men and women of the time prevail, as well as her stereotypes of the African-Americans mentioned as household help. Modern teens might find the details unbelievable or passé. However, not all! I recently learned that despite the problems these stereotypes cause to modern readers, the series is still popular and available to young readers both in paperback and on Kindle. They are the kind of books that are timeless in that they offer a wholesome look at family values, hopes, dreams, loyalties, patriotism, falling in love, and in dealing with the most devastating of problems. They had a most profound effect on me!