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Newsletter

Volume 45 Issue 1
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Rave Reviews for the Holiday Home Tour

By Paula DeBell

"We loved it... Really good, every year... This has been the best yet!" Such were the written comments from guests who toured the five homes and bonus stops at this year's Holiday Home Tour. As you can see from the photos, taken on a bright December day by our talented volunteer Cheri Bailey, each home displayed unique decorating styles ranging from traditional to modern minimalism. Everyone on the tour had their favorite home.

Tartan plaid details were used to great effect in the Normandy Circle home and the entry patio was so warm and inviting. The three beautiful dogs that I met there were a special treat.

The home on Allende Avenue was spectacular. We are pleased TERI, Inc. was able to inform tour guests about the important support they provide for people with developmental disabilities who live in North County. Many guests commented

they had no idea group homes could be so lovely.

The home on South Pacific Street was stunning, with ocean views from every window. Lovely decorative items were on display, and the kitchen was the place to hang out. I loved the giant island that overlooked the coastline.

(Continued on next page)



Holiday Home Tour Wrap-up

(Continued from first page)



"The Myers Street home was especially exciting, a very beautiful remodel of a Craftsman beach bungalow. The large front porch was decorated with Poinsettias; the inside was open and spacious. The use of fine woods throughout the home gave such a warm affect. One guest commented, "This is the old Oceanside style. I love it."

The home on Grandview Street was a two for one deal. Not only the home was on display, but the grounds were open for exploration as well. Everywhere one looked, the eye was dazzled by whimsical collections devoted to the holidays. You can't find a wrought iron lion in a back yard just anywhere.

Everyone was talking about the Oceanside Police Department's Coffee with a Cop and facility tours. They were excited to see "behind the scenes," with many guests being quite taken with the Emergency Dispatch Center. And our very own Mission Branch Library held a special unveiling of a gorgeous mural, based on a photo and enhanced by

patron created art. If you haven't seen it, be sure to stop by.

Fairwinds Ivey Ranch continued their yearly support of the Holiday Home Tour by providing lovely refreshments and a place to relax in the middle of the tour. They also donated a beautiful basket for our silent auction, which found its way to my house. Love the warm blanket!

Finally, the Holiday Gift Boutique was filled with lovely items. Each year our vendors surprise me with their creativity and passion for their craft. Goats milk soap cupcakes, Bob Marley earrings, hand-drawn holiday cards, textiles, jewelry, and polished wood beer pulls... there were gifts for everyone on your list.

This favorite holiday event would not be possible without its volunteers, sponsors, silent auction and opportunity drawing donors, vendors, and of course our homeowners. The Friends thank you all for your support. And we thank all those who purchased tickets and enjoyed the tour. What a day!

A Letter From Our President

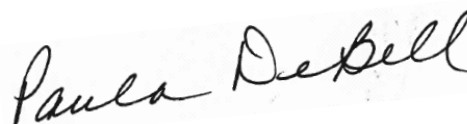
Happy New Year! And what a way to start—El Niño is finally here. I'm so glad its arrival was delayed until after our 2015 Holiday Home Tour and Holiday Gift Boutique. It was such a beautiful event and we're pleased to provide photos and a recap in this issue of the *See Gull*.

Also in this issue we welcome our new editor, Ashley Simpkins. Ashley currently serves as our Vice President, as well as Committee Chair on the El Camino High School Project Next Gen. She also coordinates all our social media efforts. We're delighted she's taking on the *See Gull* editorship. Is there anything she cannot do?

That said, we are so very grateful to our previous editor, Alma Sisco-Smith. She took the helm two years ago, when the regular editor had to bow out for health reasons. In each issue Alma has written inspirational articles that focus our attention on the improvement of education, literacy and the importance of libraries to the communities they serve. I'm happy to announce she will continue her presence with the *See Gull* by writing a column in each issue. Her writing skills are exceptional as indicated in the Fall 2015 article, *The Path to Excellence*. This article discusses the important data from research addressing the future of libraries, the opportunities electronic media offers to libraries, and listening to the community in strategic planning efforts for the future. (If you've misplaced your copy of the Fall 2015 *See Gull*, just visit our website at oplfriends.org!)

The Board will be busy this year. A statistical review and evaluation focused on fundraising, membership recruitment, and volunteer opportunities has started. Next comes the brainstorming sessions on how we can use the limited human resources we have to gain the most support for the Library. We are fortunate to be so diversified in how we raise money, but times are changing; what worked before may not continue to work. As with any successful organization, it's time to look at where we've been, envision where we want to go, and figure out how to get there.

Wishing you all a peaceful and prosperous new year,



Memorial, Honorarium and Gift Book Donations November 2015 - January 2016

Donated by:

In Memory of Peggy Harrison

Rain: A Natural and Cultural History

Brenda Robinson

In Memory of Helen Kennedy

I Love Cinnamon Rolls

Brenda Robinson

In Memory of Lorene Kimbrel

Andy Goldsworthy: Ephemeral Works 2004-2014

Cathie and Larry Hatter

In Memory of Mary Settle

Bird Dreams: Adventures at the Extremes of Human Flight
Little Tree

Cathie and Larry Hatter
Cathie and Larry Hatter

Bridging the Digital Divide: An Interview with the Library Director

by Ashley Simpkins

When Sherri Cosby began her career as a Library Technician, one of the standard job requirements was the ability to lift 30 pounds. It wasn't because any one book weighed that much, or that the Library was lacking in wheeled carts to easily move quantities of books; no, the heavy lifting was all about backup tapes for computer servers. Twenty nine years later, now operating in her role as the Director of the Oceanside Public Library, Sherri describes, with near-disbelief, how large the computer servers were ("like washing machine drums"), how useful they were ("the software was limited, and only served one purpose at a time"), and how convenient they were ("we had to back them up every single day.")

Of course, things have changed a bit since then. We live in a time when there's an internet truism about your smartphone having much more computing power than an Apollo spacecraft. Those huge backup servers have been replaced by cloud storage. And if you haven't visited the library in a few months, it's likely that the first thing you'll notice when you walk through the door are self-check stations that appear as though they were borrowed from the set of a sci-fi movie. Library visitors can now check out their own books and pay fines and fees with a credit card. These self-check stations are just the latest in a series of technological upgrades designed to keep the Oceanside Public Library system relevant to our community.

A review of recent news articles on libraries and technology trends offers up quite a few myopic worries about libraries becoming obsolete due to the replacement of print books with e-readers like the Amazon Kindle. Sherri concedes that the purchase of e-book licenses has strained financial resources a bit, because there's no price break in the market for either type of media, and readers are hungry for both. However, like anything else, "It was a new product, so we counter with new programming. New technology has come on the scene, and the readers of Oceanside Public Library look to the Library to help them navigate it."

A Pew Research Center study reinforces this

viewpoint and strategy. Last fall, Pew published a survey of over 2000 Americans, and found that around half visit their local library at least once a year. Notably, according to the survey-takers, the most important roles for the community library include supporting local education and literacy, helping job-seekers, providing internet access, and teaching the community how to use new technologies. Sherri emphasizes that new technology itself isn't a threat to the existence and success of our libraries: "The threat is people thinking they don't need us - and the counterpoint to that is that we have to stay relevant to the community. There are always going to be people who like reading a hardcover book, people wanting to bring their family to Storytime, and people needing a space to gather in the community, so we have to fight to keep that, and continue to be progressive."

Sherri says that there still remains in Oceanside a digital divide - a socioeconomic gap in access to internet resources - and that the Library is an important bridge over that gap. That's also where the Friends of the Library come in. "The important thing about the Friends is that they are the biggest supporters and advocates, [and they] let people in the community know that the Library is here and what it has to offer. They back it up with service and fundraising, providing for programming needs, and advocating for the use of technology to support the mission and vision [of Oceanside Public Library]."



Spotlight on a Friend: Alberta Thomas

by Suzanne Williams

Talk with Alberta Thomas for a few minutes and you will sense her positive energy and dedication to the things that are important to her. She has volunteered at our Library for an impressive 23 years. During that time she was President of the Friends for several years, and has held every Board position except Treasurer and Vice President. She currently serves on the Outreach Committee and is in charge of nominations to the Board. She is active in her church as well as in the North County African American Women's Association.

How did we get so lucky? What paths over the years have led her to Oceanside and our Library? Alberta was born in Petersburg, Virginia. As a teen she was a debutante. She attended college in Monterey, California. For years she worked for the government in Human Resources and as a Management Analyst. Later, she became self-employed as a Small Business Consultant. Although retired, she still works intermittently. "I gather data for surveys and statistics to get the needed information for the government."

Alberta and her late husband raised three children; two daughters and one son. She has two grandsons. Because her husband was in the military, her family moved a lot. Living in Pennsylvania and Maryland, they were able to visit many historic sites.

Traveling became Alberta's hobby. She has been to Europe several times, as well as to the Caribbean and parts of the Middle East. When traveling, "I always try to visit local libraries and see how they do things. It's very interesting to compare them with us."

As you can see, libraries are key to Alberta's lifestyle. It began early. "As a child, my activities were very restricted, but I was allowed to go to the library. Books became my friends. I read plays and mythology. Several books I read repeatedly. When each of my children reached age two, they were introduced to the library, and today all of them are avid library users."

Alberta is obsessive and very organized about reading. She usually reads three or four books at a time, keeping one in her car, one at home, another for bedtime, and the last is carried to appointments as well as for standing in lines. Now, that's devotion!

She enjoys spending time inside the Library. "Go to any library and you will see people of various ages and ethnicities. They are reading, studying, working on computers, checking out materials and attending special events."

She also proclaims that volunteers make a big difference. "For our libraries the many hours provided by volunteers supplement our reduced budget by providing funds and working to support the staff."

Alberta, we thank you for your many years of devoted service. You are an inspiration to all of us.



(from left) Alberta posing at a Library event with Evie Magaña, Jane Cheadle, and Adrienne Hakes.

Alma's Things, Considered

TRANSITIONS

On January 12, I stepped outside into the most gorgeous and radiant day. It was a day after those torrential and devastating yet much needed rains. The sky was exotic in color and looked like a painting with light swirls of white, like someone's shawl was marking the path along which one had danced. This was so different from the big puffy, dark, grumpy looking clouds and angry winds of the preceding days. Transitions. What would we do without them?

I think it is an interesting word. It seems to me not quite the same as change. The first is often defined as the passing from one state to another - more gradual. Change conjures up a more immediate and different end result. Then, there can be exchange and interchange, which often adds confusion to the whole situation.

It is similar to the distinction between happy and satisfied, both conjure up a similar feeling yet one can be more lasting than another.

Well, you know I like words, and some of you may recall that upon joining the See Gull as Editor, it provided for a transition in the time of need. And I was happy for the opportunity having just made an affirmation to do more writing. That was May 2013. Since then the happiness transitioned to satisfaction.

The latter didn't happen all at once, as I wondered if I had made the right decision, fearful of mishaps and other possible horrific errors. Thankfully the See Gull allowed me to test my wings, helping to make soft landings.

But it was not all about me. It was the opportunity to meet, greet, and work with such committed individuals - primarily Library staff and volunteers - and to develop stronger relationships to be enjoyed! And, of course to exchange words and thoughts!

Here and now, another transition occurs - a new writing opportunity for both the outgoing and the incoming Editors; that would be me and Ashley Simpkins, respectively. The timing is perfect. I leave the task in capable hands and I appreciate the invitation extended to continue writing for future issues. What strong wings our See Gull has; I'll be seeing you as it passes along.

Alma Sisco-Smith

President, Oceanside Public Library Board of Trustees

Membership Corner

Thanks, Lee!

by Paula DeBell

It is with great appreciation that we say "Well done!" to Leland (Lee) Russell. Lee is stepping down as Membership Chair after 17 long years of membership correspondence, dues collection, and database management. Our new Membership Chair is Blake Kern.

Lee is a retired History Teacher and Librarian from Barstow High School, and was Dean of Libraries at Mira Costa College. That background comes in handy when it comes to reviewing the monthly minutes. We depend on him to scrutinize the document for typos, grammar errors and sentence construction. Most months everything is perfect, but when Lee does find an error he is gleeful but gentle with his correction. I've certainly learned a thing or two about punctuation from him.

We are very happy that Lee will remain on the Board as a special committee member. His service to the Friends has not only included membership activities, but volunteering at our fundraisers and being an active participant on special committees. He brings a well thought out perspective to the importance of our mission; to support the Library in building literacy and community engagement.



Book Sale

Hard Cover Books: \$1

Small Paperback Books: 25¢ or 5 for \$1

Soft Cover Books: 50¢

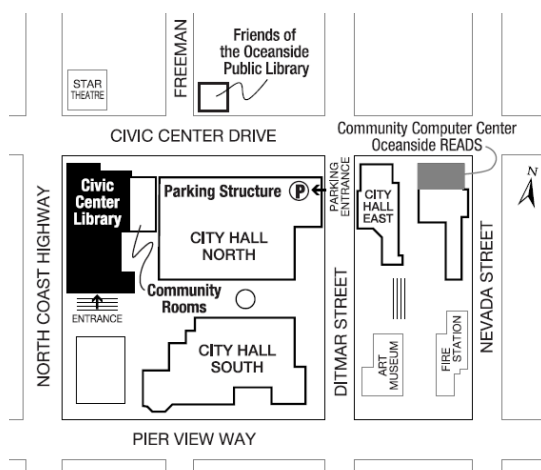
Magazines: 25¢ or 5 for \$1

Children's Books: 25¢ to \$1

National Geographics: 10¢

Reference Sets: Priced individually

**Behind the
Library at**



**Saturday,
February 20, 2016**

10 am to 4 pm

**EARLY BIRD SALE
for Friends Members only
from 9 am to 10 am**

A Note from the Editor

Thank you to Alma Sisco-Smith for doing a fabulous job helping this newsletter during her tenure.

Thank you to Paula DeBell; in general for her visionary leadership, and personally, for giving me the opportunity to stretch my wings and try out new projects.

Thank you to Cheri Noel for having all the answers when we need them most.

Thank you to the Library staff and volunteers for always being ready to chip in and help.

And big thanks to all of you, for reading the *See Gull* and supporting the Friends of the Library. You may notice some changes coming to this publication over the next few issues; my goal is to make this newsletter *for* you and *about* you on an interactive level. Please visit us on Facebook (facebook.com/oplfriends) if you'd like to interact with us!

-Ashley Simpkins

Friends of the Oceanside Public Library

1971-2016

***Celebrating 45 Years of
Community Service***



Facebook.com/OPLfriends

oplfriends.org

FriendsofOceansidePublicLibrary@hotmail.com

Founded in 1971 as a non-profit organization, the mission of the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library is to support and promote the services and resources of the Oceanside Public Library through community involvement, volunteer activities, and fundraising. The organization maintains a membership of persons interested in the Library, sponsors special programs and cultural events for both children and adults, and works to enhance the Library's collection and facilities.

The See Gull Scuttlebutt: Upcoming at the Library!

- The Friends of the Library Board will convene for the Annual Meeting on February 9, 2016 in the Civic Center Library Community Room - everyone is welcome to attend! There will be Board elections, as well as a summary of 2015 fundraising and donations, and an outline of the work we have planned in the year ahead.
- February is Black History Month, and there will be cultural programs at the Library, and in the community, to celebrate the accomplishments of black Americans both local and national.
- In April, Oceanside Public Library is launching a "history harvesting" project called *500 Years of Latino-American History* to discover unknown Oceanside histories, foster a sense of cultural belonging, and to populate the Oceanside Historical Archive with images that reflect the Latino history of the City.
- Check the Friends Bookstores in both the Civic Center and the Mission Branch Libraries to find the dot sales!

PURCHASE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



Annual Membership:

Individual — \$10
Family — \$25

Booster — \$50
Patron — \$100

Business or Organization — \$100
Benefactor — \$500

Donation: I've enclosed an extra \$_____ to help the Friends.

Make check payable to: Friends of the Oceanside Public Library. Membership and donations are tax-deductible.

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