

**Inside this issue: Holiday Home Tour report, Gail won an award,  
and Jane tells us what it's like to volunteer at the bookstore**

## **The READS Literacy Program ~ A Calming Path for Adult Learners**

**by Alma Sisco-Smith**

In the most recent *See Gull*, I spoke of Building Community and particularly noted having had the pleasure of being “in community” with an adult learner as his tutor with the READS Program. The manner by which I reconnected with him through his family after a two-year hiatus lingered with me. And on the Day of Epiphany, January 6, it became clear the importance of this relationship was just one example of so many others. More needed to be heard, learned, understood and cherished.

Other learner-tutor pairs are quietly working together in community with each other; helping adults continue to grow, to become more, all that they can be. I felt more needed to be brought to light – here in our Oceanside/North San Diego County area and beyond. It seemed worthwhile to place some focus on our program, or others like it, inasmuch as the general population do not see the broad numbers across our communities of educated citizens with low-level reading and/or literacy capacity. “Capacity” does not mean these individuals are not capable of learning.

Statistics from the San Diego Council on Literacy and a new Oceanside READS report provide clarity on the status of literacy skills among adults showing discrepancies in those skills who are high school graduates and English as a second language residents. English-speaking adults are less likely to ask for help than individuals who want to learn English because of the stigma that is attached to not being able to read. These statistics paint an understanding of how difficult it is for adults to face what they feel or see as shameful or a blemish. So corrective steps are difficult to take.

One real and powerful example of taking corrective steps is that of *John Corcoran: The Teacher Who Couldn't Read* (also the title of his memoir). His is an example of the difference between literacy capacity and capability. This man, born and educated in the United States, who at the age of 48 had adapted functionally to become a successful, professional individual, decided to peel away the covering to reveal his deficiency. His voice resonates a clear message: “It is as important in America today to teach an adult how to read as it is to teach a child.”

In 1998, The READS Literacy Program was formally established under the Oceanside Public Library and John Corcoran was an avid advocate. In August 2018 a consultant's report, *An Assessment of a Library Adult Literacy Program* was completed. This report was contracted as part of the Library's Strategic Plan and in view of the pending retirement of the program coordinator. The full informative report is available on the library website under Adult Literacy Services ([www.ci.oceanside.ca.us](http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us)).  
(continued inside)

# Holiday Home Tour: A Fundraising Event for the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library

By Jo Rittenhouse



"Welcome to the Friends of the Library Holiday Home Tour!" is how guests were greeted by helpful volunteer "elves" as they entered the tour of four beautiful ocean-front homes on December 9th. Each home was exquisitely and individually decorated for the season with Santa Claus in various forms, fully decorated Christmas Trees, charming handmade ornaments, prancing reindeer, a gang of snowmen, candy canes, Christmas

themed quilts, frosty angels and more.

Each home on the tour provided snacks or soup, cups of punch or wine, or crackers, cheese and dips. Visitors were encouraged to eat, drink and explore the homes upstairs and downstairs. A party atmosphere prevailed.

Also at the event: opportunity prize drawings and a silent auction provided guests with an additional way to help the Friends raise funds.

As the home tour concluded, visitors were asked for their impressions of the event:

"This was so much fun! The houses are so beautiful."

"I loved how each home was different. Thank you for hosting this tour!"

"Please do this again. It was really entertaining."

"It was so nice for people to open their homes to us. I loved the ocean views."

"It was an unique opportunity to get to see these houses. Thank you."

"I had a terrific time!"

Tickets were available for purchase before the tour and also on the day of the event. Many guests purchased Friends memberships and some generous

individuals even added cash donations when they purchased their tickets. The Home Tour was extremely successful—raising significant funds with limited cost, as the hospitable homeowners donated the use of their homes, the decorations and provided the refreshments. The Friends of the Library support ALL Library programs for the community, including summer reading for all ages, and special Library projects like the online high school diploma program. The Friends fund community concerts, movie screenings and other cultural events, help finance the literacy program Oceanside READS, and provide books, materials and supplies for the 3-D printers. Keep a sharp eye out for the Friends future FUNd-raising events. There is much more to come in 2019 and we would love to see you there!

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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT UPDATE: Gail Wells

It's official: Gail Wells provides award-winning service to the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library!

In November, Gail received a prestigious volunteer award from the North County Philanthropy Council. Gail was nominated for her many years of leadership. Gail has been profiled in the See-Gull on more than one occasion because the difference she makes for our Library is undeniable.

Gail is the head of book sales for the Friends and is responsible for sorting the physical donations that come in from the community. She also leads the volunteer team of book sellers that show up at every Farmers Market and quarterly BAM! Sale. It is hard work, involving a lot of long hours and physical labor, and it makes a difference. One volunteer from each of more than 80 nonprofit organizations in North County were treated to an awards ceremony luncheon at the Omni La Costa. In the event program, Gail was asked to provide a brief statement. Her last sentence says, "It takes many volunteers to accomplish our mission and I am proud to be able to help out." And that's why we are so fortunate to have Gail: as she gives due credit to her team, she humbly describes her incredible efforts as "helping out."

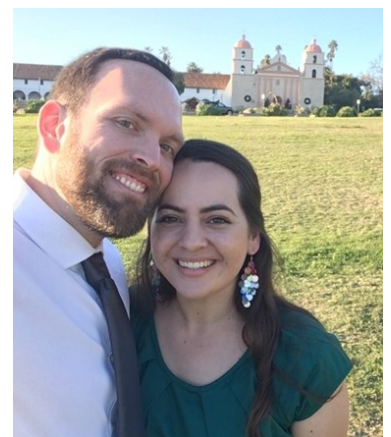


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### ***A Message From the Library's new Literacy Coordinator!***

Hello, Friends!

My name is Chelsea and I am looking forward to returning to North County! I was raised in Oceanside, and, having spent Thursdays at the Farmer's Market and checking out books at the Library as a child, it feels a bit full circle to be returning after years away. These past ten years have taken me to Washington, D.C. and La Paz, Bolivia, where I worked in international development and counseling, and to Santa Barbara, CA and Aarhus, Denmark, where I completed a B.A., a Master of Education, and received a Education Specialist credential. I also worked as a special education teacher and at the Santa Barbara Public Library. I have a deep love for teaching learners of all backgrounds and abilities and feel proud that the library is a place where everyone is welcomed. I hope to create a comfortable, fun, compassionate and inclusive space for the community. I feel most content on a calm, warm Saturday somewhere outdoors with my husband, reading or going on a walk and am a proud foreign money nerd; if you'd like to see money from non-existent countries, I'd be delighted to show you! I feel honored to have this opportunity to grow Oceanside READS and serve the dedicated learners and tutors as the Literacy Coordinator. Please feel free to come by the Literacy Center anytime after February 4th to say hi; I'd be delighted to meet you and hear your thoughts! Take care, *Chelsea Genack Eggli*





*("Adult Learners" continued from front page)*

Some important assessments from the report:

- Literacy is key to workforce participation, productivity and social inclusion.
- Literacy includes understanding, evaluating, using and engaging with the written word.
- Reading literacy has a powerful impact on pleasure, empowerment, and outcomes related to health, intellect, personal and cultural/social economic engagement.
- Adult literacy learners can be basic, challenged, English or non-English language learners.
- Adults with low-level literacy come from all walks of life, and skills are often well-camouflaged for fear of discrimination or embarrassment.
- Causes of low-level literacy are numerous and often linked to the need for non-conventional teaching methods.

Thirty two active learner-tutor pairs are currently engaged in the READS program and most of the current learners have become naturalized citizens; two were born and educated in the United States. There are three prospective learners who were born and educated in the U.S. and are awaiting tutors. These small facts demonstrate two things: 1) There are many adults in our region who we are not reaching, and 2) we need more tutors.

Adults join literacy programs for many reasons. Several READS learners are studying to improve their literacy skills to prepare for admission to MiraCosta College. A few anecdotes:

My first learner was an adult in his 40s, of a Mexican family, whose siblings had become lawyers, teachers, and a business owner. As a middle child, he got lost in the educational and socio-economic challenges. As an adult his work began to offer upward mobility, which was frightening for him yet excellent for his young family. But he knew he would have to increase his literacy levels, and also "be able to read to and with his grandchildren." In summary: To improve employment opportunities and to keep up with his children.

One pair has been working off and on for 10 years with gradual improvements in functionality, such as using the computer, using the ATM without fear,

filling out forms without assistance, learning greater vocabulary and using the vocabulary in conversations - delighting her tutor. In summary: To reduce anxiety and become more independent.

Another learner likes to explore and travel the world through reading, but didn't read well. Now improving his reading, writing, and speaking means life to him and he is happy. "It is therapy." The tutor of this pair served as a "ghost reader/writer" for a CEO years ago until encouraging the individual to address the challenge. Upon coming to Oceanside, this tutor knew the literacy program was key for her; "to see my learners advance is exciting and rewarding."

Another tutor reminds us: "Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase," as quoted by Martin Luther King, Jr. She then goes on to say, "Every day at READS is a celebration and the development of first steps."

Our community is fortunate to have this program available at no cost to the learner or to the tutor. Tutor training is provided with a trained facilitator under the READS Program and tutors do not have to be teachers.

Let us use this information to share, to inform, to encourage and to help engage those who may benefit by confronting their literacy challenges, taking first steps and winning the prize: That of greater self-sufficiency, comfort and joy.

In the late 70s, while still living in Boston, I learned of and briefly met with a Harvard University group that had formed to promote literacy, taking their interests and findings to the U.S. Dept. of Education in hopes of working with or through libraries. At that time I had no understanding of the magnitude of the problem. Yet, my interest then stemmed from what I began to see as I rose into higher education - a discrepancy in public education across cultural and socio-economic divides. It left an unpleasant taste within, and I pledged after my professional university life, I would search out a literacy project or program in my community. How fortunate I was to have found Oceanside READS.

*In writing this article, I wish to acknowledge Jose Cruz and Nora Kenney-Whitley with the San Diego Council on Literacy for their assistance and Corrie Miles, READS Coordinator until August 2018, for her support.*

## A Day in the Life at the Friends Bookstore by Jane MacKenzie

One recent Saturday, I arrived for my volunteer shift at the Friends bookstore in the Civic Center Library. The morning shift volunteer was still there. Her shift had been slow and she tidied up the shelves and moved a few books that were mis-categorized. We sort the books into general categories, but we don't have computerized catalogs, nor do we use the Dewey Decimal System. The randomness of our donated collection appeals to me (and most customers), as it's the "thrill of the hunt." We shared a laugh that she had found *Chicken Soup for the Soul* among the cookbooks! Sometimes the proper category is subjective, but this was just funny!

My first customers were a couple of snowbirds from Oregon, living in their motorhome at the RV park on South Coast Highway. They donated books and bought a few.

While I was chatting with the snowbird couple, another couple came in. The bookshop is small, and four customers plus me is a crowd. After the snowbird couple left, I saw the second couple chatting at the entrance. The husband was apparently getting antsy and went outside. The wife came back into the bookshop and we began to chat. She had never been to our bookstore. She began browsing and opened up with her life story. She was born and raised in Carlsbad, in the Barrio, I'd guess in the 1950s. She shared with me that her family and her neighbors did not have books since they were too poor. There were no libraries in Carlsbad at that time. She shared that women in her community took the little ones from the Barrio to the Oceanside Public Library downtown, where she discovered books.

I explained to her that 100% of the proceeds from our two bookstores are used to fund children's and adult programs and services. She was thrilled to hear this. I gave her a newsletter and a postcard and asked that she consider joining and volunteering with us.

The story of her childhood visits to the library had a happy ending. Recently retired, she fell in love with books and learning and became a Sociology professor at California State University San Marcos. She told me how happy she was to have time for reading and other things she wanted to do in retirement. She bought a big bag of books to read on their upcoming cross country trip.

I hope our paths will cross again. Sometimes, when we have slow days at the bookstore, I become a little frustrated thinking of all the things I should be doing. Sometimes the children are noisy and excitable and get on my last nerve. Sometimes I wonder if my time spent volunteering makes a difference to anyone. It does.

### Memorial, Honorarium and Gift Book Donations November 2018 through January 2019

#### **In Memory of Vetha Ballesio**

Assorted Large-print Titles

#### **Book Club in a Bag Donation**

The Razor's Edge (six copies)

#### **In Memory of Peggy Harrison**

Whiskey in a Teacup

#### **In Memory of Helen Kennedy**

Christmas at Home: Holiday Decorating, Crafts, Recipes

#### **In Memory of Ernie Terry**

The Art of Movement

Ballerina Body

#### **In Memory of Sam Williamson**

MacKinnon: A Circle V Western

#### **Donated by:**

Melanie Van Horn

Fairwinds Ivey Ranch

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El Camino Book Club

Brenda Robinson

## Take a Vacation This Spring and Help Raise \$\$\$ for the Library: Announcing the First Friends Online Auction

The Friends are very excited to offer for auction two **Vacation Packages** that were gifted by a generous donor. All proceeds will go to the Friends of the Oceanside Library and will be used for the support and promotion of the services and resources of the Oceanside Public Library.

- **Lake Tahoe:** This **Club Tahoe Resort** package is for seven days and nights, March 29, 2019 to April 5, 2019... consists of a two bedroom suite with a sleeping loft and can accommodate up to six people. **The beautiful suite contains everything needed for a relaxing stay including kitchen, washer and dryer, dining area, fireplace, and balcony.** On the resort is a swimming pool, hot tub, gift shop, and exercise equipment. The Resort is smoke free and does not allow pets. Area attractions include Lake Tahoe and beaches, nearby Casinos and other outdoor activities.
- **Las Vegas:** This **Jockey Club Resort** package is for seven days and nights, April 28, 2019 to May 5, 2019... consists of a well-appointed one bedroom suite (sleeps 4) with a king-sized bed and a queen sofa sleeper and a fully equipped kitchen. The Jockey Club is directly south of the Bellagio Hotel and ideally located **on the Las Vegas Strip.** The resort is smoke free and does not allow pets.

To get in on the auction, email your name, address, phone number, which vacation you'd like, and your highest bid to Cheri at [cnoel@oceansideca.org](mailto:cnoel@oceansideca.org). Starting bid for both packages is \$500. Bids will be taken by email until bidding closes on **February 19, 2019**. Bids will be "blind" and will be confidential. Winners of the online auction will be announced by Chris Wilson, President of the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library Board of Directors, at the close of bidding. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held.



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### Membership Corner

A very happy New Year to one and all!

The Friends of the Oceanside Public Library have started their annual membership drive. Information to former members was sent out earlier this week asking them to rejoin the Friends to help support the Library in their presentation of the quality programs that our residents have come to expect.

Membership is celebrating ❤️ **"Love Your Library"** ❤️ during the month of February. **Any new membership at the Family Level (\$25) will qualify for a free Individual (\$10) membership during the month of February. So please encourage friends and family to join who can give a gift of membership to another.**

Membership is open to anyone; members of the Friends pay a yearly membership fee, and all monies go toward reaching the goals set by the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library Board.

#### Don't Forget:

- Friends have four book sales a year and need volunteers to help. They also need people to help sort and clean the books that come into the Library on an ongoing basis.
- Friends sell books every Thursday at the Farmers Market and are always looking for volunteers that help out book seller extraordinaire Gail with the heavy lifting.
- Friends hold several fundraising events a year, and always welcome volunteer help.
- Friends always welcome new volunteers willing to take available shift: at the Civic Center and Mission Branch Bookstores.



*Blake Kern, Membership Chair*



MAGAZINES \* 25 ¢ or 5 for \$1  
MUSIC CDs \* \$1  
DVDs \* \$2  
VHS \* 2 for 25 ¢  
CASSETTES \* 25 ¢ or 5 for \$1

# Friends of the Oceanside Public Library

We invite you to join us to support the library!



## BOOKS AND MEDIA CLOSEOUT S A L E

**Saturday, February 16, 2019**  
**10 am to 4 pm**  
**602 Civic Center Drive**  
**(Members can enter at 9 AM)**



To learn more about  
**Friends of the Oceanside  
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**SAVE THE DATE**  
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PAPERBACK \* 25 ¢ or 5 for \$1  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS \* 25 ¢ to \$1  
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*Friends of the Oceanside Public Library presents...*

## **Islands of New England**

September 16 – 23, 2019

**Travel with the Friends!**

**Information Session  
February 20 @1PM  
Mission Branch  
Library**

**Book Now  
& Save  
\$250  
Per Person**

For more information contact  
Friends of the Oceanside Public Library  
(760) 435-5600  
[admin@oplfriends.org](mailto:admin@oplfriends.org)



# Friends of the Oceanside Public Library

1971-2019

**Celebrating 48 Years of  
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**Facebook.com/OPLfriends**

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*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!

- **More Books For Sale!** Visit us at the first **Mission Branch Community Book Sale** on March 23 and 24. At least 1,000 books and media items will be available for purchase in the Community Room.
- If you qualify for tax assistance (you receive the Earned Income Tax Credit or you made <\$34,000), you can **file your federal and state income taxes for free** on Saturday, February 23. Call (888) 268-1666 to make a reservation.
- Learn **How to Grow Your Instagram Following** at a workshop for artists at the Civic Center Library on Thursday, **February 28** at 6pm.
- The little ones will get excited for the annual **Egg Hunt Storytime**, coming up in March.
- **BAM! Sale on Saturday, May 18, 2019.** The Friends' quarterly fundraising sale at the Civic Center features a deep discount on books and a variety of other types of media, and all proceeds support Oceanside Library programs.

## PURCHASE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

### Annual Membership:

Individual — \$10  
Family — \$25

Booster — \$50  
Patron — \$100

Business or Organization — \$250  
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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