



FOOTNOTES

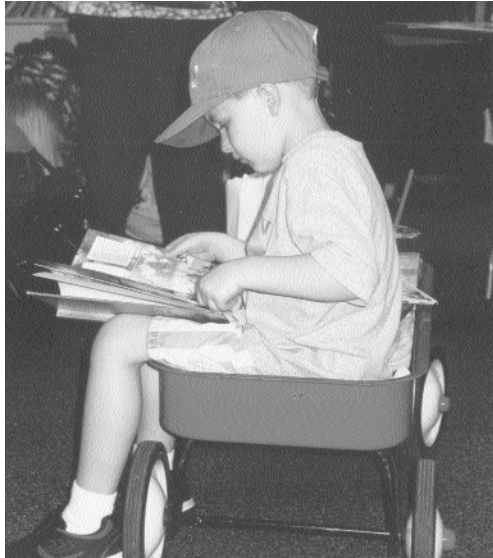
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS
OF MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY

The Eastern Experiment, a Friends' Book Sale in Gresham

By Adair Law, Book Sale co-chair 2002

On May 11, 2002, the Friends of the Library took a bold step eastward. On that gorgeous spring day, we held a Summer Reads Sale in the community room of Gresham Library. For experimental purposes, we brought in one hundred boxes of books in three categories: mysteries, popular fiction and children's. Since we are book lovers and not scientists, when it looked like we had more space, we crammed in 18 more boxes of books. Our books were priced between \$.50 and \$5.00.

We sent notices of our sale to Mt Hood Community College and the school districts that are served by Gresham Library. We advertised in the Gresham Outlook and in The Oregonian, and we put the word out through the Multnomah County Library's new publication, *@your library*. Our superior planning (and good luck) had set the sale on the first day of the Gresham Farmer's Market, so we had many people wander in already laden with plants and other goodies. When they saw the great book buys, they put their other pur-



After filling his wagon, this young reader checks out his purchases from the Friends' Sale in Gresham

chases down and set about finding good books in earnest. Library Director Ginnie Cooper, who was happily taking part in the Hollywood Library Grand Opening celebration, took time from her busy schedule to check in on our sale. She saw a full room of people of all ages browsing through more than a summer's worth of reading.

Our experimental sale brought in over 800 customers and we took in almost \$4,000. We enjoyed the good will of the Gresham Library staff and the assistance of many able volunteers. Several volunteers were from the Gresham, Fairview, and Troutdale area, while others were veterans of our

fall sale. We felt very fortunate to have so many Friends around the county.

What will become of our experiment next year? The Book Sale Committee is still thinking that through. If you have thoughts about our east county sale, please contact the Friends at foladmin@europa.com or you can write to us at the address on this newsletter. ■

Library Supporters Find Only Partial Solace In Final Levy Numbers

By Greg Simon

This past May, exactly 90,954 residents of Multnomah County voted in favor of a 5-year local option levy to continue unabated library services. This represented 58.9% of the 154,179 voters whose ballots could be read.

Unfortunately for library supporters, 184,000 eligible voters in the county chose not to turn in their ballots. Although the levy passed resoundingly, it was invalidated because the vote total was 3% short of achieving the second or super majority that is necessary according to state law for tax measures during primary elections or non-general elections.

The spirited gubernatorial race that county officials were

counting on to stimulate voter turnout did not materialize, and, as odd as it might seem, both the library and city parks levy campaigns were hurt by a lack of organized opposition. Apathy ruled the day.

So what does the levy failure mean for library users in Multnomah County? It means for the next fiscal year, from July 2002 to July 2003, library operations will be supported by a budget that must cut over \$5 million from the fifth year of the Library's 1997 levy. This represents the largest single piece of the \$14 million cut from all current service levels by County Commissioners to achieve a balance with tax revenues depleted by the recent economic slowdown in Oregon. *(continued on page 2)*

From the President's Desk

Like many other not-for-profit organizations, the Friends of the Library embark on a new year as of July 1, as that is the beginning of our fiscal year. This, then, seems an appropriate time to put into practice resolutions that have perhaps been forming over the course of the past months.

It loomed large on the horizon of library lovers this spring, and the levy to help fund the library will once again come before voters in the fall. It was, of course, heartening that the levy received such strong support from voters in the primary election this spring, even though overall voter turnout was not in our favor.

Friends, however, have terrific power. In our own personal lives, friends play a vital part in our quality of life. The same is true with Friends of the Library. For thirty years we have had a rich history of advocacy within the Multnomah County Library system, and our past activities have proven that we can impact the quality of library services in our community.

Every individual friend can help in the campaign to raise voter awareness of the vital role our library plays in our community. As the November election approaches, make a resolution to talk to your acquaintances about the library. Tell them about the students who use library services for research and

homework help. Talk about the senior citizens who learn computer skills at their local library, and the immigrants who rely on neighborhood branch librarians to help them find resources to adapt to life in their new community.

Numbers speak volumes. As we begin this new fiscal year, we have just under 1,750 members of Friends of the Library. The population of Multnomah County today is more than 660,486 individuals, and 75% of them are library cardholders. In theory, then, there must be nearly 500,000 people who love the library!

I believe that indicates that the potential for official members of Friends of the Library is tremendous! So as an organization of friends, our primary resolution for this new year is to build our membership to reflect that potential.

I hope that each of you makes a similar resolution as we embark on this new fiscal year. And as we celebrate our thirtieth year of library advocacy, we encourage your colleagues, neighbors and acquaintances to become card-carrying Friends of the Library. Ask them to help you spread the word that our library makes ours a richer community. Our library is here for every one of us to use, to enjoy, and to befriend.

—*Judy Kearney, President* ■

The Friends of Multnomah County Library

is a non-profit community organization dedicated to supporting the Multnomah County Library. We accomplish this principally by promoting public involvement in the Library and by raising money through membership fees, the Friends' Library Store, and an annual used-book sale.

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Levy . . .

(continued from page 1) What the levy failure also means is that all libraries will continue to be closed on Mondays, there will be personnel cuts, the budget for library materials will be reduced from 15% to 12% of the operating budget, and the Parkrose Cooperative Library will be closed. In addition, the Library asked all staff to voluntarily take one week of unpaid leave, and cut more than \$1 million from line items for supplies, capital expenditures and professional services. This cut package will balance the Library's FY budget at \$43,252,388.

Like it or not, these numbers mean the Library is an essential player in the often agonizing process of balancing the entire county budget, which will amount to \$1.17 billion. The Library does enjoy strong support from the Board of Commissioners, but that support cannot be translated into dollars without approval by the voters. County Chairperson Diane Linn has stated her resolve to place the same library levy on the ballot in November. To make sure it does not fail again will be the task of all of us who love and support our Library. ■

Friends' Annual Meeting Report

By Greg Simon

On Sunday, June 2nd, in the U.S. Bank Meeting Room at Central Library, about 70 FOL members, new and old board directors, staff, library staff and guests gathered for the Annual Meeting and Afternoon Tea. Those present were engaged for over an hour by a wide-ranging and fascinating conversation—out-loud from Portland's own Michael Powell, respected civic leader and owner of the largest independent new-and-used book store in the world.

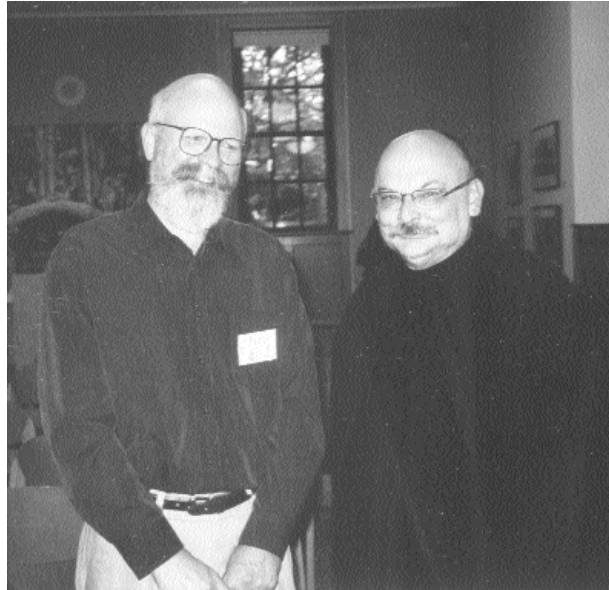
Mr. Powell spoke candidly about the history of the store in Portland, which was actually founded by his late father, Walter, as well as the trials, tribulations, mechanics and considerable rewards of his chosen field. He also revealed the parameters of his ongoing, love/hate relationship with his local and national competition—ranging all the way from pioneer

Portland bookseller J.K. Gill to the latest superstores brought into existence at a mall near you by Borders and Barnes and Noble. (One of the afternoon's surprises: he doesn't feel as threatened by the other big stores as much as you might think . . .)

At the end of his talk, Mr. Powell also addressed the advent of computers in the book business, and discussed what his recent partnership with Amazon.com might mean for the future of his company, primarily the necessity of purchasing a warehouse in Northwest Portland, where he will be able to store the hundreds of thousands of

books he can sell online, but has no room for in the four retail outlets of Powell's Books.

The Friends would like to thank Michael Powell for his generosity and candor. At his request, a donation was sent to The Library Foundation in his name. ■



Outgoing Friends President Greg Simon and Michael Powell at the Annual Meeting

Friends' Annual Donation to the Library

It was with great pleasure that members of the Board of Directors of the Friends fanned out across the county delivering the news, (along with a box of chocolates) about this year's donation of \$2000 to each branch library, Central Library and Library Outreach Services. The total donation was \$36,000, raised from proceeds of the Used Book Sale, the Friends' Library Store, membership dues and donations. ■



New Seasons Market Pops Corn for Books

By Sara Lindgren

In celebration of National Library Week, the friendly folks at New Seasons Market teamed with volunteers from Friends of the Multnomah County Library and held benefit organic popcorn sales April 20th and 21st at the Sellwood store and the new Concordia store. New Seasons Market is dedicated to contributing to the communities where it does business, and because they donated locations, popcorn and assistance, we were able to raise \$760 to support our library system. We were also able to raise voter awareness of the May library levy by providing literature and voter registration cards. Many thanks to "the friendliest store in town" for this benefit opportunity and to the many Friends who volunteered for this event! ■

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What's New At The Friends' Library Store

An idea that had been in the planning stage for several years finally came to fruition this spring when the Friends' Library Store, with the assistance of Store Committee chairs Cecelia Goodnight and Jo Burch, Ash Creek Press and photographer Aaron Johnson, produced six gorgeous greeting cards which feature antique rose images. Store managers Sherry Alicki and Alicia Davis selected the colorful images from the Thomas Cook and Jesse Currey Rose Collection in the John Wilson Room at Central Library, with the invaluable advice and consent of the Room's curator, Jim Carmin. The



"Rosa Remontante" one of six images now available on greeting cards at the Friends' Library Store

cards, which were available during this year's Portland Rose Festival, can be purchased individually at the Store for \$2.50, or in a boxed set of six for \$12.95.

If you are interested in viewing other items from the Library's Rose Collection, feel free to contact Jim Carmin at 503-988-6287. The John Wilson Room is accessed from the second floor of Central Library, beyond the information desk in the Periodical Room. It is open to the general public during the week for a selected number of hours, and by special appointment with Jim. ■