

CHECK IT OUT

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY-PLACERVILLE CHAPTER SPRING 2019

A look behind the scenes

...at how volunteers help keep your library running smoothly



Friday morning and the air was still cool. “Mr. Weston” looked at his watch: Ten o’clock, right on the dot. The library was about to open. Like the others standing around, he had been patiently waiting. Trying not to be rude, he moved closer to the entrance.

An elderly gentleman wearing faded jeans and a well-worn sweater, Mr. Weston was an avid reader and the library was one of his favorite places to visit. Now inside the lobby, he moved slowly and gazed to his left at the used books. There might be something to his liking in the biography section and he made a note to himself to come back later. It was a sort of treasure hunt, a treat he gave himself.

As he entered the library proper, a woman with a young child pushed hurriedly by him. The two scurried to the children’s section totally focused on their task. In the meantime, a middle-aged woman, tote in hand, began her weekly routine. “Amber” joined several patrons going through the new book section. She zeroed in on the Mystery section and pulled out two that looked promising. Amber read the description on the book jacket and noted each book had been “Donated by the

Friends of the Library.”

She kept both books and moved to the DVD section. She had promised her neighbor, Eileen, she would get several movies they could watch during the week-end. Done at last, she moved over to one of the tables. She sat and took out her cell phone and scrolled through messages. Then she sent a quick text to Eileen: “Found good movie. TTYL” Maybe she should download some “apps.” Internet reception was more reliable here than at home. Most of all, she was pleased that she had found the movie she was looking for; it was one of her friend’s favorite. And there it was right where it was supposed to be!

Fast forward to another world: *Imagine yourself at a Broadway production—the props in place, lighting just so, and the actors ready for their cue; the curtain rises. Like many in the audience, you are enthralled by the performance, swept away by the drama and the music. Although you admire the actors and their performances, little thought is given to those backstage. The carpenters and electricians, the playbill writer and stage manager, the person who supervises wardrobe and the set designer —just a few of the many who make it all happen. They are backstage and behind the scenes but they are critical to the production. Yet, few in the audience consider what it took to accomplish this.*

In much the same way, neither Amber, Mr. Weston, nor the woman home-schooling her daughter give a second thought to the organization and availability of the items they sought. It was taken for granted that



Erni Bolduc, Carmen Barbour, and Aileen Nicolls are the Monday Morning Menders—they repair library books.



Volunteer shelver Cathy Knight has helped at the library since moving here in the mid-1980s.

books would be where they belonged; DVDs would be categorized by genre; new books on the shelves front and center. The computers were up and running ready for use, and the daily newspapers were on display.

Libraries, more than any other entity, are all about

“order,” things in their place, numbered just so, arranged in such a way that patrons could easily locate an item. How is order maintained? Who makes this happen?

For the most part, they are people like you and your neighbor, individuals who love the library so much they donate a few hours a week, and much like the backstage crew on

continued on back

Behind the scenes

continued from front

a Broadway production, they go about their business in anonymous quietude. People like Erni Bolduc, Carmen Barber, and Aileen Nicholls who come in each Monday to repair books.

Books are re-shelved by volunteers like Cathy Knight; she appreciates that the Dewey Decimal system is alive and well. Other volunteers make sure computers are booted up and gently used books are placed on the



Charles ("Durf") Loeffelbein helps get the library ready to open on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

honor shelves in the lobby. A mainstay volunteer is Charles Loeffelbein, affectionately known as "Durf." Like a good host, his early morning preparations include clearing up the book drop

and filling patrons' requests for a hold item. All this is completed by the time Mr. Weston, Amber —and you —walk into the library. But wait, there's more.

In addition to the on-site volunteers, there are those who find a different way to support the library: they donate money to buy new books and to fund some of the children's and teen's programs. These 'volunteers' donate gently used books for the monthly sales. Other patrons give of their time, talent and energy by serving on the Friends of the

Library board (FOL); they are dedicated members —just like you—who help raise awareness of the many services provided by the library. For example, the library's signature fundraiser, Wine for Words, is coordinated by Board members and the many volunteers who lend a hand during the annual event.

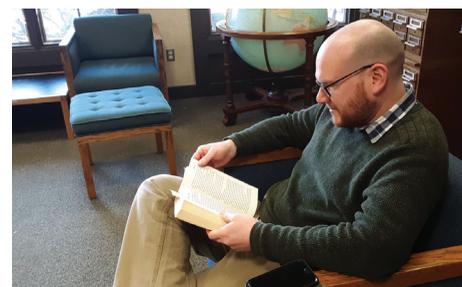
Do you see a theme running through this article? People just like you give of their time and energy (and yes, sometimes money). Together, the bits and pieces come together to make a whole that is our library, providing the community with valuable resources and services. None of this could be done without our volunteers. Join us!

State Librarian featured at FOL General Meeting

Greg Lucas, State Librarian, was the featured speaker at the annual meeting of the El Dorado County Friends of the Library, held on January 28, at the Placerville library. Lucas emphasized the many services that public libraries provide as well as how they strive to keep up with technological change and the use of social media to reach patrons.

Of special note during the business part of the meeting was a motion to change the general meeting, typically held in January, to a Monday during the fall. The change would mitigate low member turnout due to inclement weather. This is especially true for members from the Georgetown, Pollock Pines, and South Lake Tahoe chapters.

Good Reads/ Who reads what?



★ **David Eule**, pictured above, enjoys science fiction but typically looks for books based on the author. He makes a point to look for "interesting characters."

★ **Pam A.** loves looking over the new book section, especially best sellers; she belongs to three book clubs so is no slouch when it comes to reading. Pam also volunteers in the library and can offer recommendations on books to read.

★ **Library staff member Deborah R.** is currently listening to a downloadable version of *Becoming* by Michelle Obama, and while she enjoys the convenience of being able to "hear" the book while going on walks, she is also reading *Tricky Twenty-two* by Janet Evanovich.

USED BOOK SALES are typically held on the first Friday and Saturday of the month (excluding July and December) and offer a wide array of gently used books for the avid reader.



FOOTNOTES

- 1. Members of the public are invited** to attend Board meetings of the Placerville Chapter held on the fourth Monday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon (excluding July and December). Visit www.eldoradolibraryfriends.org for more info.
- 2. There are four types of libraries:** academic libraries serving higher education; public libraries serving towns and cities; those that serve students in schools from Kindergarten to grade 12; and specialized libraries like those in hospitals, museums, the military, and the government.
- 3. At least 65% of those ages 16 and over** believe that closing their library will negatively impact their lives, according to the PEW Research Center (from Libraries at the Crossroads).
- 4. Placerville library volunteers will be recognized in April** for the many hours of service they provide. But you don't have to wait until then to show your appreciation. Don't hesitate to say "Thank you!" to a library volunteer.