

Friends of A.K. Smiley Public Library

President's Report

Annual Membership Meeting

June 12, 2022

Library Assembly Room

Beginning a return to "normal"

June 2021 brought the welcome return of some normalcy. The library increased hours back to the traditional 56 hours of service per week and resumed some in person programming. Bookstore hours increased from 10 1/2 hours per week to 30 hours per week. The first Saturday Bag Sale returned to the bookstore in July after months in Smiley Park. Also in July, our board met in person (masked, of course) at the Contemporary Club after many months on Zoom. We continued our journey back to normal, until January 2022 when the Library once again was closed for two weeks. We honor and appreciate the resiliency of Friends members, Library staff and our community.

Bookstore

Bookstore leaders, George and Marie DeLange, jumped into July with new pricing, "Volunteer's Pick" featuring a favorite book, updated colorful signage, reorganization of the book categories to make them easier to locate and creative promotions to entice customers to return to shopping with us.

The behind the scene heroes of the bookstore are the Monday sorting team. They sort the hundreds of donated books we receive each week and put them on the shelves.

The other essential group is our volunteer cashiers. Staffing the bookstore was impacted by some retirements. If you are interested in becoming a bookstore cashier, please email our Volunteer Coordinator Alice Moore at info@friendsofsmileylibrary.org.

Adult Literacy

The Board re-established the adult literacy program at A. K. Smiley Public Library in 2010. Since that time, the Friends have been a crucial partner in helping the adult literacy program grow and broaden its services to the community of Redlands. The Friends continued to highlight the importance of

adult literacy during the pandemic with the Friends newsletters, an important resource for community outreach. Kim and Andy Green, Friends members, developed a new adult literacy website that highlighted the Community Read of Charlotte's Web and posted materials that families throughout Redlands could use as they conducted homeschooling. The Friends' financial support during the pandemic allowed the adult literacy collection to continue to grow, helping members of the adult literacy program and the general community to improve their literacy skills. Diane Shimota, the adult literacy coordinator, expressed her gratitude to the Friends saying: "I am grateful to the Friends for providing key support to the adult literacy program so that every adult in Redlands can have free access to improving their lives through literacy."

Membership

One year ago our membership had dropped to 564. We are proud to say that we have increased to 826 as of the end of May. Our membership coordinator, Robin Urquhart, has done a wonderful job of reaching out to former members over the last year. Our bookstore cashiers have also helped to increase this number by reminding patrons of the benefits of becoming a member. Members receive special pricing on most books and early access to our popular first Saturday Bag Sales.

Community Outreach - Social Media

Our social media has been active throughout the year thanks to our coordinator, Tracy Wise. We are now on Twitter and have been active on Instagram and Facebook for several years - We have over 1,000 followers on Instagram! Information about our Bookstore sales and special promotions, the Silent Auction, Amazon Storefront and other activities can be found on our social media. We also have fun posts in **#FriendsEagerReader** (Wednesday book suggestions) and **#KeepReading** (Saturday quotes about reading).

Volunteer Efforts

Our volunteers are indispensable - we are grateful for the many hours devoted by them to making all the pieces of our work come together. From June 2021 - May 2022 our volunteers (including board members) contributed 4,580 hours of their time.

Redlands Little Library

Last year planning began on a Redlands Little Library to be installed outside the Redlands Community Center. The effort was spearheaded by board members Katherine Gifford and Kathryn Brown working with Dave Jaffe, Recreation Coordinator City of Redlands and Franz Rettig, Rettig Machine. Months of planning and effort culminated with the ribbon cutting ceremony on April 14th. The Friends will continue support of the Little Library by providing donated books as needed. Congratulations to all on a very special project.

Board of Directors

This year two Board members are departing - Michael Bosman and Toni Momberger. We thank them for their service and wish them well.

Jim Rice will be joining the board for the first time. Jim has volunteered with the Friends for five years. He has lived in Redlands for 76 years and attended Redlands High School, San Bernardino Valley College and UC Riverside. He currently works with the Monday sorting team and on the Silent Auction.

Former Friends president, Les Kong, will be rejoining the board. Kim Green, currently an adjunct board member, will be returning and will serve as Secretary.