

Musings of a Bookworm

— Miklos Sajben is a local author of two books: *Dancing Boots and Pigs' Feet and Floating In Air*. We asked him to write about his relationship with the library and Chico Friends of the Library.

I love to read. Books are my friends, as is the Chico Library, where most of them come from. I like all kinds of fiction, love historical novels, and also get into social and global issues. When I am really into a book, I am oblivious to the world, a state my wife sometimes finds hard to bear.

Before you start reading a book, you need to pick it out from a huge selection, and that process is like buying a pig in a poke. How do you select a book you are going to like? You can listen to your friends or read book reviews but may find you don't enjoy the recommended fare. Comments coming from different people can vary quite a bit, showing that individual taste is a big factor in judging authors. I am an immigrant, never had a class in English lit to educate me what is "good" and what is not; so I don't pay much attention to other people's opinions and read what I like. If I find a writer who suits me, I copy the list of publications from the beginning pages of his/her latest book and proceed to read every one. Sometimes I read a collection of short stories, pick the ones I like, and search for other works by the selected authors.

My memory was never in the class of Jeopardy winners, and as the years have gone by, I developed a tendency to forget titles. I often brought a book home that I had read before. It was irritating to read fifty pages before it dawned on me: "My God, I know what's coming." Eventually I decided to compensate for my memory problems by keeping a log of everything I read. I put down the author, title, a very short abstract and two grades on a scale of one to ten. I give one grade for the enjoyment I get out of the work and another for how much I learn from it. I keep the log on a spreadsheet in

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Chico Branch Librarian

— Our new librarian, Sarah H. Vantrease (pictured right), arrives mid-November. We asked her to introduce herself.

It's an exciting and challenging time to be a librarian. Never has it been more apparent that strong libraries make a huge difference in their communities; never has it been more difficult to stay apace of changing technology and many potential ways that libraries can become even more relevant to civic life. I'm thrilled to be joining Butte County Library during this era and look forward to helping fulfill the mission of the library in Chico.

I've been working in libraries on and off for 14 years, most recently at Los Angeles Public Library as a branch manager. Although I've been immersed in ultra-urban library environments since completing my MLIS (UCLA, '07), I am originally from rural Lake County. One of my earliest memories is visiting the bookmobile in the little mountain town of Cobb!

I attended college in Boston, where I first began to learn about issues of justice, as well as participate in meaningful community service. There I also found my first paid library job at the university music library, which was another highlight of my undergrad experience. When I finished school, it just made sense to work at the progressive and community-focused public library in Cambridge. My mentors there showed me that the library was more than just a collection of books—it was a real community center where lives were changed. They also encouraged me to get a master's degree and turn my passion for service and libraries into a lifelong career.

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"My mentors there showed me that the library was more than just a collection of books—it was a real community center where lives were changed."

— Sarah H. Vantrease

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— *Musings of a Bookworm, continued*

my computer and take along a printout whenever I go hunting for something to read. Before I take a book off the shelf, I make sure it is not among the nearly thousand entries already on my list.

I am over eighty and my memory may well slide further down the proverbial tube. I might reach a point where by the time I finish a book, I forget the beginning. If I ever get there, I could cut my library down to a single volume and just keep re-reading it over and over.

It has not happened yet and until it does, I need an affordable source of books. I have it and it is the Chico Library. I am grateful to the Chico Friends of the Library for constantly putting new books on the shelves: their efforts allow me to keep adding to my log. For quite a while, I hope. ❖

Fall Festival was fun!

We had the last fine Saturday before Chico's first winter storm for our 12th annual Fall Festival. We moved our fall event from Book Farm to the Library in 2001 to celebrate the City of Chico funding 25 extra open hours for our branch. Since then, the National Charity League (a mother and daughter service organization), numerous Girl Scout Troops, Pleasant Valley High School Key Club members, Library teen volunteers, many local authors, and a wide variety of other musical groups and organizations have joined with us for this event which is all about fun and sharing the love of the library, books, and reading.

This year, Girl Scout Troop 70044 painted whimsical art on faces and helped kids create colorful bookmarks. Volunteers from Troop 70154 hosted a froggie feeding frenzy with bean bags. The National Charity League gave away yummy cakes, cookies, and bars at the cake walk. Once again, energetic teens from PVHS Key Club set up canopies, tables, and chairs, and ran the fishing booth and library scavenger hunt. A wide variety of authors joined us for conversations about books and publishing. The Papa Murphy's Bauer family provided hot pizza which we sold to our hungry festival goers.

The Book Swap and Sale was a humming place as boxes of books changed hands. Scary masks were made in the Butte County Literacy Coach. This Coach regularly visits preschools and other sites giving out free children's books and providing library services to children and parents.

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— *Chico Branch Librarian, continued*

My background and experience have drawn me to library service in communities that may be isolated, overlooked, and underserved in one way or another. I'm looking forward to meeting the Chico library's regular patrons, but also finding out more about who *isn't* using the library and how to best welcome new users.

My priorities as a librarian have been helping all library visitors make the most of their experience, as well as taking the library outside the building to reach first-time users (and community stakeholders). Though the branch librarian sets the tone for customer service and outreach, the staff and the Friends are equally essential in meeting these goals. I certainly believe that good ideas come from all positions (paid *and* volunteer).

In my experience as a branch manager, I've enjoyed working with our Friends, many of whom are community leaders in their own right. Their long-term commitment to this neighborhood is inspirational! Working together, we've been able to build partnerships and create connections that strengthen the health of the library and therefore the community. I expect no less from the Chico Friends!

My husband, Tyree, and I are eagerly anticipating our life in Chico, both professionally and personally. Tyree will be working for a local architecture firm and scouting out the best fly-fishing locations. Together we hope to hike and bike throughout the county and beyond (especially Lassen!), as well as get plugged in to community service and church. We can't wait to invest the next season of our lives in Butte County. ❖

Book Sale Dollars

We spent **\$6,629** on book purchases in September, 2012.

The Chico Friends of the Library (CFOL) purchases all of the non-fiction books in the Chico Branch, and also buys extra copies of high demand fiction. ❖



This coupon admits you, a Chico Friends of the Library member, to the "First Friday" Members-Only Book Sale. Cut it out and show it at the door. Sale dates are...

**December 7, January 4, and February 1
2pm to 4 pm at the Chico Branch Library**

Sales are held on the first Friday of the month before the first public Saturday sale each month.

— Fall Festival, continued

The highlight of the festival the last few years has been the wonderful band “Alice Peake Experience.” This group of friends, many in the education field, dons funny hats and perform a collection of foot-tapping lively songs that brightens everyone’s mood. They provide the perfect backdrop to our swirl of events. Below and to the right are pictures from this fun event. ❖



Girl Scouts do Face Painting



Alice Peake Experience

Christmas Craft Table

The Friends of the Library have been having a Craft Faire for several years. Well, the Craft Faire has morphed into the Christmas Craft Table. Instead of one day, there will be several 2-hour sales: Friday afternoon December 7; Saturdays, November 24, December 8, and December 15. The dates are “penciled in”, and the hours aren’t set yet, so check the CFOL calendar online for more details (www.chicolibrary.org/Events/Events.htm). ❖



Local Authors

Trivia Bee Winners!

The competition was tougher this year. But so were we. In round one we got 25 of 30 correct to move on to round two, in third place. In round two we got 13 of 15 correct to move on to the final round, in first place. In the final round we got 2 of 7 correct to finish in a 3-way tie for first. In the sudden-death round we got the first question right and so ... WE WON. MVP of the final round was Marian for getting these two questions correct:

Q: What year was the great San Francisco Earthquake? In Roman Numerals.
Answer: MCMVI

Q: In what airport was the first attempted skyjacking on American soil?
Answer: Chico Municipal

MVP of the sudden-death round was Joan for getting this question correct:

Q: By what name was Lady Rebecca Rolfe better known?
Answer: Pocahontas. ❖



(l to r) Marian Milling, Joan Olmstead, and Walter Coffey

Quilt Raffle

Each year CFOL raffles a quilt as a fundraiser for the Children’s Room in the library. It’s part of our effort to grow young readers.

The quilt has been donated by Annie’s Star Quilt Guild. It’s queen-sized, and it’s beautiful.

Go into the library to purchase your raffle tickets. The quilt is on display in a display case near the circulation desk, and you can purchase your tickets there. ❖



2012 Quilt

Christmastime Buy the Book

The library is offering a unique holiday gift-giving idea. Buy a book for the library, and at the same time you can honor a friend or family member.

“Christmastime - Buy the Book!” runs from November 24 to December 22. All kinds of books will be on the gift table: cooking, art, travel, history, nature, and children’s books. The library will place a bookplate inside the book of your choice.

Give a gift that gives again and again by donating to the library.

For more information, contact Maureen Jeffers at 891-2726. ❖

Chico Friends of the Butte County
Library

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Calendar of Events

- * CFOL **Board meetings** are the 3rd Tuesday of every month, 7pm, in the library meeting room. Join us to see what you can do to help.
- * Every Saturday morning, the book sale volunteers open the **used book sale**, 9 to 11:30AM, in the library meeting room. Buy some books and support the library.
- * Each First Friday of the month, the book sale volunteers open the **used book sale** to CFOL *members only*, 2 to 4PM, in the library meeting room. Come browse the sale with other CFOL members.
- * **Quilt Raffle Drawing**, Saturday, December 8, noon, after the book sale. You need not be present to win, but you do have to buy some raffle tickets for a chance to win.
- * November, December, and January—*Enjoy your Fall and Winter holidays!*