



FOCAL Points ~ ~



VOL. XXXII No. 3

Summer 2010

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY

For more news, go to www.focalonline.org

THE SUMMER OF OUR DISCONTENT : Notes from the Editors

During the depths of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the Los Angeles Public Library responded to the needs of its public by extending its hours and services to those who needed it most.

There were no computers, no Internet, nothing that we offer today except the services of the staff, the librarians and the clerks who offered their help to those who sought it, whatever could be done they did, whatever was available to their public, books, periodicals, a place to seek solace and assistance, we offered.

Flash forward to today, when the public needs us most, our computers, our Internet service, the staff that could help them in their search for jobs, for information, for help of all kinds. And, where are we ???

Despite all the valiant efforts of the Librarians' Guild; the Coalition of City Labor Unions; and the thousands of pleas from the public via petitions, post cards, phone messages and emails, the Mayor and the City Council have chosen to ignore the needs of their public. In the first group of layoffs, one-third were library employees.

For the first time in its 138-year-old history, the Los Angeles Public Library will be open only five days per week, from Tuesday through Saturday. The cartoon below, reprinted through the courtesy of the *Downtown News*, was published after Sunday hours were eliminated. Since then, Monday hours in every LAPL agency were eliminated as well.

Meanwhile, the librarians who are left, the clerks and messenger clerks who are left, will do what they always have ... persevere in spite of it all. At Central Library, over 500 children have signed up for the Summer Reading Program. This is what we do. This is what we will continue to do, despite all odds.

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NEW SUNDAY ACTIVITIES at CENTRAL LIBRARY

Courtesy of Doug Davis, L. A. Downtown News

Into the Jaws of Science Day 2010, and Back Again

By Madeline Bryant

Neither rain, sleet, snow nor dead of night...oh, wait. Wrong description. Well, it might as well have been! Despite traffic alerts, road blocks, and detours by the dozen because of the downtown Amgen Bike Race of 2010, a dedicated bunch of parents and children stalwartly carried through and made it to the Mark Taper Auditorium for Science Day, May 22, 2010.

The husband and wife diving duo that call themselves *The Ocean Adventure* treated them to the Australia Great White Shark Expedition. Entertaining and educational, this team of travelers wowed the crowd with life-size shark jaws and a surprise appearance by a giant Great White inflatable shark (think “jack-in-the-box” with “Jaws”!)

Meanwhile, outside in the sunny courtyards, others enjoyed multiple varieties of crafts and activities. Debby Pourroy created an interactive beach play area for the little ones, which included a boogie board so toddlers could “ride the waves”. Right next to that, our fabulous GAB volunteer Debra made sure that plenty of children got their “beach reading” in, minus the sand, of course!

Lara Clardy set up a stand with *The Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Earthquake*, where children got to build houses of various materials and see how well they stood up against a shaker. And, as usual, the California Science Center came well equipped with all kinds of popular things to make and do from parachutes to tinker toys!

A special thanks to Helen and Alex Muller who arrived early, stayed late, and tirelessly coordinated all of the outdoor events with new and improved signage.

The crowd was pleased! In fact, I'd say the Fifth annual Science Day went just swimmingly.

READ THESE COOL SCIENCE BOOKS!

Barretta, Gene. *Neo Leo : The Ageless Ideas of Leonardo da Vinci*. x 92 L581Ba
(Grades 3-8) Cleverly shows how Leonardo's ideas foreshadowed modern inventions. At once an artist, inventor, engineer, and scientist, Leonardo da Vinci wrote and drew detailed descriptions of what would later become hang gliders, automobiles, robots, and much more.

Chin, Jason. *Redwoods*. x 582 C539
(Grades K-5) A young city boy, riding the subway, finds an abandoned book about redwoods and finds himself in the very forest described in the book. *2010 FOCAL Award Winner*.

Guiberson, Brenda Z. *Life in the Boreal Forest*. x 577.5 G944
(Grades K-5) The boreal forest is buried in ice and snow during winter. But in summer lakes teem with fish, and bogs swarm with insects. Follow a snowshoe hare, beavers, a lynx, and other animals as they survive a year in this endangered landscape.

Kelly, Irene. *Even an Ostrich Needs a Nest: Where Birds Begin*. x 598 K29
(Grades K-5) Curved text and multiple layers of information will capture readers' imaginations as they learn about the fascinating variety of birds' nests.

Siy, Alexandra. *Cars on Mars : Roving the Red Planet*. x 523 S625
(Grades 2-6) Probing the surface of Mars to find clues of the past, *Cars on Mars* takes readers on a trip riding Spirit and Opportunity to see whether life ever existed on the Red Planet.

Yaccarino, Dan. *The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau*. x 92 C869Ya folio
(Grades K-5) Designed for young readers and filled with cool retro art, this book traces the life story of Cousteau, beginning with his fascination with the sea as a young boy.

Selections from the 2010 NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Books for Students Grades K-12 (books published in 2009).

<http://www.nsta.org/publications/ostb>

The Mighty Mama Skate-O-Rama, Mother's Day, May 2010

By Madeline Bryant

It was a bright spring Mother's Day afternoon, clouds billowing in the blue sky, as I drove towards Simi Valley with my husband. Even though I grew up in Ventura County, I was going somewhere I had never been before- "The Skatelab". The reason? The Mighty Mama Skate-O-Rama, which is a skateboarding extravaganza featuring women skateboarders, particularly a group called "Skateboard Moms". You may be wondering how I got involved with such an event, as I am neither a skateboarder nor a mother. I am, however, the FOCAL liaison to the Children's Literature Department, and this -believe it or not- was a fundraiser for FOCAL!

Earlier this year, the Children's Literature Department booked Barbara Odanaka, local children's book author, to do a *Sundays at Central* Author Program. When Sunday hours were cut, so was her opportunity to visit the library as a part of this series, which is currently on hiatus. Barb is the author of several picture books including: **Skateboard Mom, A Crazy Day at the Critter Cafe, and Smash! Mash! Crash! There goes the Trash**. For school and library visits, she frequently takes on the persona of "Skateboard Cow", an entertaining black and white costumed creature on wheels!

Barb was dismayed at the cutbacks happening within the library and wanted to do something to show her support. Turns out, she is not new to the world of fundraising for literacy causes. In 2004, Barb founded Rolling4Reading, which collects new and gently used children's books and distributes them to children in need via skateboard. The inaugural Mighty Mama Skate-O-Rama, an annual fundraising event, occurred at the Laguna Niguel Skatepark in May of the same year.

As we entered the "Lab" for my first Skate-O-Rama, I quickly realized this was not the dingy roller rink of my youth. An impressive array of skateboards of every color, size, and shape lined the walls. The hip-looking young man at the counter directed us to the event. We made our way to the (gasp! steep!) basin where women of all ages, girls, and a few men, took turns dropping in to perform on their boards. And I do mean *dropping*! Wow! I made my way to Barb, who I was meeting for the first time. She was a bundle of energy, supported by her husband and son who were working at the bountiful prize table. I volunteered to work the raffle ticket sales table for a while. My husband, a skateboarder in his younger years, was content to hang out and watch the action.

Meanwhile, Barb was calling out names of winning raffle tickets. Prizes ranged from t-shirts and caps, to skateboards and gift cards. Our very own Mara Alpert won some gear and a board! We left before the grand prize was announced but were delighted to receive a phone call that evening from Barb. My husband won the Chinese Dragon deck signed by pro skating legend Steve Caballero!

One of the participants remarked to me that "there were some pretty gnarly moves out there". I had to agree and couldn't help but smile at the use of that totally awesome skate/surf vernacular I hadn't heard for such a long time. Thanks to Barb and her dedicated crew of volunteers, the children and parents who come to Central Library's Children's Literature Department will benefit from the very generous proceeds of the Mighty Mama Skate-O-Rama through special books purchases, events, and a revival of our author program, hopefully in the Fall. Pretty gnarly, indeed.

For more information about Barb, her books, Skateboard Moms, or the Skate-O-Rama, check out her webpage at www.skateboardmom.com.

Fun for Kids

Children's Literature Department
Central Library

July-August, 2010

Programs are subject to change without notice.
All programs are free.

Join Los Angeles Public Library's 2010 Summer Reading Club:
KNIGHT TIME READING
June 12 – August 14, 2010

July

Preschool Storytimes

Tuesdays, July 6, 13, 20, and 27

Stories and more for ages 3 - 5. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.

(Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Wednesday Knights (Afternoon) Crafts and Stories!

Wednesdays, July 7, 14, 21, and 28

Stories, crafts and more for kids 5-12! Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.

(Children's Literature Department, 4 p.m.)

3 Sat Family Program

"Fun Children's and Family Songs" We'll be singing and dancing and celebrating the Fourth of July with musician **Bob Harrison!**

(Children's Literature Department, 2 p.m.)

10 Sat Family Storytime

"Royal Romp" Bring your princes and princesses to the Children's Literature Department for stories, songs, poems, and a puppet show.

(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)

14 Wed Wednesday Knights (Afternoon) Crafts and Stories!

"Dolls and Dragons!" Hear a story then make and take a character home!

Appropriate for kids ages 5-12. Presented by the Crescent Bay Doll Fanciers of Southern California. *(Children's Literature Department, 4 p.m.)*

17 Sat Used Book Sale

Find bargain children's books for sale. Sponsored by FOCAL, Friends of Children and Literature. *(Rotunda, 10 a.m. to 12 noon)*

17 Sat Family Storytime

"Nighttime Reading" We'll be wearing our jammies while we share bedtime stories, songs, poems, and a puppet show! *(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)*

24 Sat Family Program

"Merlin's Magical Adventures" Get ready to be amazed (and amused) by one of our very favorite magicians, **Tony Daniels**, who shows kids that when you pick up a book and use your imagination, you can do anything! *(Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 p.m.)*

31 Sat Family Storytime

"Dragon Day" Dragons of all shapes and sizes will be at storytime in stories, songs, poems, and a puppet show. *(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)*

August

Preschool Storytimes

Tuesdays, August 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31

Stories and more for ages 3 - 5. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.

(Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Wednesday Knights (Afternoon) Crafts and Stories!

Wednesdays, August 4 and 11

Stories, crafts and more for kids 5-12! Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.

(Children's Literature Department, 4 p.m.)

7 Sat Family Storytime

"Fractured Fairy Tales" You think you know stories like Cinderella and Rapunzel? Check out our crazy, mixed up stories, poems, songs, and puppet show! You'll never look at fairy tales the same way again! *(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)*

14 Sat Family Storytime

"Tournament of Champions!" Summer Reading Club 2010 ends with a program featuring our librarians' favorite stories, songs, and more... and of course, a fabulous puppet show! *(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)*

21 Sat Used Book Sale

Find bargain children's books for sale. Sponsored by FOCAL, Friends of Children and Literature. *(Rotunda, 10 a.m. to 12 noon)*

21 Sat Family Storytime

"Dog Days of Summer" Walk, sit, stay... for some doggone good stories, poems, songs, and a puppet show! *(KLOS Theater, 2 p.m.)*

28 Sat Family Program

"Treasures of Japan with Shin3" We'll explore the cultural treasures of Japan through traditional Japanese drumming (taiko), storytelling, music, and dance. *(Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 p.m.)*

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
CENTRAL LIBRARY
Los Angeles Public Library
630 W. Fifth St. Los Angeles, 90071
(213) 228-7250
www.lapl.org

SAVE THE DATE !!!

FOCAL Award Winner

Jason Chin for REDWOODS

January 15, 2011

Details next issue



JAWS redux



Riding the waves ...



Alex and Helen Muller



Barbara Odanaka presents a check from the proceeds of the Mighty Mama Skate-O-Rama to Senior Librarian Madeline Bryant, accepting for FOCAL, while Mara Alpert and Renny Day look on.



***** MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION *****

Name _____

E-mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Membership is for calendar year, January through December.

New _____ Renewal _____ Basic \$10 _____ Associate \$25 _____

Contributing \$50 _____ Sustaining \$100 _____ Lifetime \$1,000 _____

(Free autographed book)

(Seat at Head Table)

(Book and Head Table)

Eva Mitnick, Youth Services

Madeline Bryant, Senior Librarian, Children's Literature

Helene Mochedlover, FOCAL Points Editor

Send renewals to: Renny Day

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