

Co-President's Message

— Rupert McDowell

My parents, Wilmer and Myra McDowell, provided their eleven children with a home full of books. Every room had bookshelves. There was no internet and the library was 35 miles away.

I would read about famous people and places I had never imagined. Books took me all over the world. I learned about the history, culture and cuisine of the world. My parents "lead" us to the excitement of learning through books. One of my favorite things to do was to start with "A" of the Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia set and just read through to "Z." When we did have occasion to visit the library in San Francisco.... Oh boy! What a treat!

Now some 60 years later I have had the opportunity to visit many of those places I read about as a child. The Royal Crescent and the Roman Coliseum are just as I imagined them as a child reading.

We are fortunate to have such a great library in Chico. Our dedicated staff and volunteers work tirelessly to keep us informed and to keep the books current and in good reading condition. I always marvel at the staggering volume of usage of the Chico branch. The next time you visit the library take a look around. Computers are in full use, the children's room is bustling with activities, periodicals in the back are always current and always being read, eBooks, CDs, DVDs and Books On Tape are always in great demand. There is something for everyone at the Chico Library and the staff and volunteers work hard to keep it that way.

I'm proud to be a supporter of the Chico Library through our Chico Friends of The Library. Seeing families walk into our library and leave with a backpack or arms full of books to read lets us know that "we," the CFOL, are doing "good." Take time to thank the volunteers and staff for the fine

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Membership

— Ellen Walker

Did you know that the first library in America that was not in a private home or college was actually a subscription library, in which members pooled their books and paid for the privilege of borrowing from the combined collection? This was Benjamin Franklin's The Philadelphia Library Company, and he himself contributed his 4000-book library to it. Though more public than the other two existing kinds, it was exclusive to those who bought stock. It was Franklin's way of sharing books among the members of a literary society.

In the spirit of advancing democracy, the impulse to making books accessible to all citizens, the public or free library was born. What seems to have been the first, in this case, town library was founded in Peterborough, New Hampshire in 1833. And eighty years later Butte County followed suit with a small branch library in Merrimac, in the western hills. The public library, instead of serving the members of an existing literary society strives to make all of society literary and literate in the most expansive sense of that word.

The fact that the library's treasures are available to all county residents free, doesn't mean that the service comes without cost, as we all know, and the difficulty of meeting those costs is increasing with the economic environment in the country. Chico Friends of the Library go beyond the subscribers to Franklin's Library Company; by paying our dues in both money and volunteer efforts we make books available, not just to ourselves, but to all the citizens of Chico. We have taken over from the early subscribers to ensure equal access to the manifestations of culture that libraries preserve and distribute. We give our time and money to serve the community and not just ourselves.

It is important to remember now, on the cusp of our system's Centennial, just how important the efforts of our membership have

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If your address label says "FEB_2014", thank you for renewing early.

If your address label says anything else, then now is the time to renew.

If you include your eMail address on your renewal envelope, then you will receive monthly CFOL updates via eMail.

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work they are doing.

If you have a suggestion about other things you would like to see at our library, consider attending a CFOL meeting. We are always looking for innovative and fresh ideas from our members. Meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at 7 PM in the Library Community Room. ❖

Bookmark Contest

— John Few

The Chico Friends of the Library is having the seventh annual bookmark design contest for grade K-3 and 4-6. The theme of the contest is “**Communities Matter @ Your Library.**” Cash prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in both grade groups. The winners in each group will have their bookmarks duplicated by the Friends and distributed at the Circulation Desk in the library located at 1st and Sherman. All winning entries will be displayed on the windows of the Children’s Room

After February 18 applications and forms can be picked up at the Children’s Room of the Public Library, 1st and Sherman, as well as all schools throughout town.

All designs must be submitted no later than Friday, March 20, at the Circulation Desk of the public library.

Prizes will be awarded at a ceremony in the Children’s Room during National Library Week at 2:00 p.m. Saturday April 20th.

For more information, check it out at the library and please tell all of your friends who have children in grades k-6 to have some fun and submit an entry. ❖



— Members browsing the First Friday book sale in the peaceful company of other library supporters. Dedicated volunteers setup the book sale every week. Feel like helping?

become. The first, of course, is buying books and media to enlarge the collection and keep it current. Think how often you open a book from the library that has a “Friends of the Library” attribution sticker. (I feel proud every time I do.) The new circulation desk and chairs are another source of pride and of comfort for library patrons and of convenience for our heroic staff and volunteers. Perhaps most important is the purchase of supplies for children’s story hours and sponsoring children and family special events like the colorful fall festival and summer reading program events. Our library does wonderful things to promote reading for children and to assist families in encouraging reading. Children are the future of the library, indeed the future of our whole community and beyond. Friends of the Library’s investment in current and future readers produces dividends that will that support us all. And then there are the fabulous Saturday book sales. Remember, too, that we get the members’ privilege of an early look at the sale offerings on the first Friday of the month from 2-4pm.

Love Your Library

Remember that February is membership renewal month. This is the time to emphasize your commitment to the great enterprise that is the public library. A membership renewal envelope is enclosed for you convenience. Consider celebrating the Centennial by increasing, if you can, the level of your membership. I still remember when the suggested library tax issue failed and then librarian Linda Thompson proposed that all those who had voted in favor of it title voluntarily the sum that would have been added to our tax bill: \$37.25. I loved the idea of the \$37.25 club and was faithful to it until it dawned on me last year that my love of the symbol was less important than the library’s increasing need for funds to buy books. I checked my finances and was able to give a bit more. Let’s do what we can so that those who can’t still have equal access to the materials so important for an informed citizenry and a lively culture.

Some other ideas for support include giving a library card to a friend or a child who does not yet have one; giving a membership as a gift to mark an important occasion, Valentine’s Day, for example which is hard upon us; conveying to other members any ideas you might have for events that might help advance our fund-raising and increase our membership. ❖



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...

**February 1, March 1, and April 5
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.

Library Centennial 2013

The 100th anniversary of the Butte County Library System is upon us, and a great cause for celebration. That it should arrive at a time when budget constraints press hard against the library's goals and mission makes it of particular importance that we take the occasion to honor its achievements. Plans are underway in Oroville to mark this milestone with a variety of activities; especially notable is a major archival assembly of original documents, ledgers, and librarians' daybooks. These resources, already in the library's possession, will offer fascinating views of library activities from their beginnings in 1913 on—accounts of the way money was spent (books, salaries, building maintenance)—and a glimpse, through the daybooks, of the daily activities of the dedicated, strong, and courageous librarians who created, maintained and expanded over its hundred-year history, the Butte County Library System.

Our own Chico Branch was not among the first to be established, since the early focus was to bring access to books to rural, outlying communities. Transportation of materials was a real problem and books were actually delivered by stagecoach, train, wagon, any means then available. With the advent of cars, the first version of the Bookmobile was inaugurated. Chico was home to the 15th branch opened in the latter part of 1914 in a small grocery store in Chapmantown. Many of us remember when one was located in the lovely old Carnegie building with its stunning tile work, and there was also a location in the building that now houses The Red Tavern. These are just a few of the fascinating details of our library's history being prepared by experts at the Oroville Branch and which will be on view as part of the centennial celebration. They will also create a written history of the library.

According to Kimberlee Wheeler, Outreach Coordinator, who supplied most of the information for this article, there will be a free standing display in the Oroville Branch in January, which will then travel to various branches, arriving in Chico in late summer and staying until the actual centennial in November, 2013. At its arrival in each branch a history of that branch will be inserted. Chico will be the last stop.

➤

The original plans for this celebration were very ambitious and had to be scaled back due to (what else) budget constraints. Thus we have not arrived at firm dates for these events.

It has been an eventful hundred years, for the library and the world: two world wars and the changes, which took us from the stagecoach to our current electronic delivery system. How could the grateful citizens of Merrimac, the first branch so far identified, receiving their stagecoach load of books have imagined the banks of computers now in the current modern building at 1st and Sherman, or the colorful moving images in games and educational programs in the lively children's room? Throughout its history our public library has been a realization of the spirit of equal access and equal opportunity and a freely shared space where all are welcome. Its survival and success merit admiration, wonder and celebration! ❖



— CFOL sponsored the new circulation desk. It's a big improvement over the old one!



— CFOL subscribes to 30% of the magazines in the popular reading room.

From the Treasurers

— Susan and Gerald Davis

With \$51,140 in total income for 2012, the Chico Friends of the Library Book Sale has for the first time exceeded our goal of "over 50" in sales. Our book sale leaders Rosa Weston, Helen Sutton, and Helen Martin worked very hard. Credit also goes to a formidable group of dedicated volunteers who work many hours behind the scenes during the week and on Fridays and Saturdays. Congratulations to all!

Our limited craft fair, held in the entry hall during book sales, generated \$373.50 thanks to board members Joan Olmstead and Susan Davis who handled everything.

The drawing for the lovely quilt donated by Annie's Star Quilt Guild brought in \$976 of donations. It was won by a part-time Chico resident who comes to town monthly to visit her grandchildren. She and her grandchildren are regular library visitors.

Generous Chico Branch Library patrons donated \$4,051 to the Christmastime "Buy the Book" program adding many high-interest books to the library's collection. What a nice farewell to retiring Chico Librarian Susan Rauen as well as a real welcome to new Chico Librarian Sarah Vantrese. ❖

Heaviest Deposit

A regular patron of the book sale often pays using rolls of coins. On a recent Saturday in November she gave us 13 rolls of pennies, two of nickels, one each of dimes and quarters.

We smile when telling about making the heaviest deposit in CFOL annals: over ten pounds! Thank you friend, you helped make history! ❖

**Chico Friends of the Butte County
Library**

**P.O. Box 6952
Chico, CA 95927**

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Coming Events

- * The regular **Book Sale** is open every Saturday, 9 to 11:30 AM at the Chico Branch Library, 1st and Sherman. This is our primary fundraiser.
- * **First Friday Members-only Book Sale**, February 1, March 1, April 5, 2 to 4 PM at the Chico Branch Library, 1st and Sherman.
- * **Membership Renewal Month**, February.
- * **Love Your Library Month**, February. The library will be celebrating in various ways. Stop in.
- * **Bookmark Contest** for grades K-6, February 18 - March 20. Winners announced April 20, 2pm.

For up to date information, see our web site: <http://chicolibrary.org>.