



FOCAL Points~~



VOL. XXXVI No. 4

Fall 2014

For more news, go to www.focalonline.org

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY

CAROL ONOFRIO

It is with great sadness that we write of the recent passing of Carol Onofrio. She was the “puppet lady” who created the prize for the winning author at our FOCAL Award luncheon events.

Caroline Gill wrote, “We will miss Carol and her many talents, especially her puppet creativity.” Carol had received her copy of this year’s winner, and said she loved the book, and was looking forward to creating Kate Sessions, in spite of the arthritis in her fingers that made it difficult to sew those intricate costumes.



Each year Carol would anticipate that call from Caroline to learn of the new honoree. She eagerly read and reread the book to learn all she could about the protagonist. Then came the careful crafting of the head. Carol made several papier-mâché faces before she was satisfied. She tried to match the illustrations if there were any. Some novels had no illustrations, so Carol worked from the author’s words. The same care was put into creating the costumes. She used to remark that it was fun to create a ruffled dress after several years of boys in jeans and plaid shirts.

Was she successful? Author Theresa Nelson wrote, “Thanks for my beautiful “Slim.” How did you ever get her so right? You caught every clue and then read between the lines. She’s exactly as I imagined her. How did you ever manage it?”

FOCAL members shared their feelings. “She gave us so much pleasure and helped make the FOCAL Award unique. Central Library will be a shrine to her every year when the puppets are showcased.” (Lara) “I feel so blessed to have been able to use Carol’s wonderful puppets that she created for the Children’s Department. For me, the puppets seemed to come alive every time the curtains opened in the theater.” (Diane) “What she did for us was unique. We were so lucky to have her artistic sensibilities applied to our group.” (Barbara) “Such a talented soul. We will all miss her tremendous creativity and beautiful work.” (Teri) “A truly lovely woman and gifted artist.” (Rachel)

Along with the tributes have come generous donations in her memory. A committee has been appointed “to research ideas and plan for a tribute to Carol Onofrio, utilizing the funds that are already donated, and others as they arrive.”

Carol’s loving extended family hosted a Celebration of her Life on September 6. When tributes were invited, Sandy Schuckett, representing FOCAL members attending, related Carol’s contributions to LAPL, and shared the origins of the puppet as the FOCAL award. Then we were warmly urged to join Carol’s extended family at her daughter’s home. An exuberant houseful of nieces and nephews - and **their** children - shared happy memories of ‘Aunt Carol’ and her holiday parties and surprises.

So, here’s to you, Carol. We will always cherish memories of your twinkling eyes and smile as you arrived at each luncheon, carefully carrying your enormous wicker basket. Cheers from Pedro, Praiseworthy, and Lucky to last year’s 34th winner, Delphine.

Written by Renny Day with help from some of Carol’s many friends.



THE TREE LADY by Renny Day

Imagine Central Park in New York without its leafy tree-lined paths; imagine Northern California without its soaring Sequoias; or imagine Pershing Square in downtown Los Angeles without --- never mind.

It is hard to imagine San Diego's Balboa Park without its glorious botanical gardens and varied selection of native trees, but once it was covered in weeds, populated only by bobcats, rattlesnakes, coyotes and other wildlife. Kate Sessions, one of the first women to graduate from the University of California with a degree in science, decided to convert a barren landscape to the leafy oasis that it is today. She established a 35-acre nursery, and imported drought-tolerant plants from Mexico and from other Western states. She donated trees and plants every year to the City of San Diego, and was instrumental in establishing botanical gardens, such as the Desert Cactus Garden in Balboa Park.

But it was the preparation for the 1915 California Expo to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal, that gave the impetus for the growth in Balboa Park. The lead designer and site planner was Bertram Goodhue (yes, boys and girls, THAT Bertram Goodhue who designed Los Angeles Public Library's Central Library, years later, in 1926). Influenced by Spanish Baroque style, he created the Spanish Colonial Revival Style so prevalent in the major buildings of the park. Many of those buildings still serve today as sites of museums, art galleries, and the iconic Botanical Building.

It is difficult to imagine how author H. Joseph Hopkins could present all this information in a picture book format for young readers. But Joe did.

And could an illustrator depict all this to children unfamiliar with plants. Jill did.

For a description of the book, and the explanation for its selection as this year's FOCAL Award winner, you can refer to the outstanding review by Award Chair Lisa Schloss, published in the Summer **FOCAL Points**. As Lisa said: ... "This book meets and exceeds the FOCAL award criteria of literary and/or artistic merit, interest and readability, universality, and California enrichment content. It speaks to such current issues as conservation, urban gardening, and drought-resistant planting, as well as timeless themes like being true to oneself and persevering to achieve a goal." ...

"We always knew we had good taste in books!," notes FOCAL Board member Barbara Metzenbaum, who forwarded this information. *Booklist* cites *The Tree Lady* in its column "Social Studies for the Twenty-first Century," and suggests follow-up classroom activities to explore all the facets of the book.

FOCAL purchased multiple copies of the book. They are in the Children's Literature Department, and are free to teachers who are encouraging their students to enter the essay contest. Just call Madeline Bryant, Senior Librarian at Central Library [(213) 228-7251]. Madeline says 14 books have been picked up. This offer was described in the August 22 issue of the UTLA Newsletter, in the excellent article by Caroline Gill and Carol Raby.

The judges are anticipating a flood of articulate essays.

Reservation form is on Page 5 of this issue.



Fun for Kids

Children's Literature Department
Central Library

November - December 2014

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



November

Baby Story & Playtime. Mondays, November 3, 10, 17, & 24
Stories, songs, and rhymes, followed by playtime. For babies and toddlers (ages 0-2). Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.
(Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Preschool Storytime. Wednesdays, November 5, 12, 19, & 26
Stories, songs, fingerplays, and more for ages 2 - 5. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250. (Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Return of the Creature Features! Thursdays, November 6, 13, & 20
Book discussions, crafts, games, science, and much, much more, for Grades 4-6. (Children's Literature Department, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.)

1 Sat Family Storytime: Hooray for the Harvest!
Celebrate your favorite fruits and vegetables with our delicious (and nutritious) stories, poems, songs, and puppet show.
(KLOS Story Theater, 2 p.m.)

8 Sat Family Storytime: Library Magic
Our librarians show off their magical talents in this mystifying blend of stories, songs, poems, tricks, and a puppet show.
(KLOS Story Theater, 2 p.m.)

15 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)

15 Sat Family Storytime: Fun and Games
Celebrate International Game Day with fun story and library games, songs, poems, a puppet show, and more!
(KLOS Story Theater, 2 p.m.)

22 Sat Family Program: Craig Newton - American Heroes
Musician Craig Newton leads the celebration of some of America's greatest heroes, like Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr., in stories and songs! (Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 p.m.)

29 Sat Family Storytime: On the Run!

Too much turkey? Work it off with our very active stories, songs, action rhymes, and puppet show! (KLOS Story Theater, 2 p.m.)

December

Baby Story & Playtime. Mondays, December 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29
Stories, songs, and rhymes, followed by playtime. For babies and toddlers (ages 0-2). Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250. (Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Preschool Storytime. Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31
Stories, songs, fingerplays, and more for ages 2 - 5. Reservations required for groups of five or more. Call (213) 228-7250.
(Children's Literature Department, 11 a.m.)

Return of the Creature Features! Thursdays, December 4, 11, & 18
Book discussions, crafts, games, science, and much, much more, for Grades 4-6. (Children's Literature Department, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.)

Winter Break Fun! Tuesdays, December 23 & 30
Stories, songs, crafts, and more for K-Grade 5.
(Children's Literature Department, 4-5 p.m.)

06 Sat Family Program: KareSare Kids Improv!
Children will have the opportunity to explore their creativity through fun improvisation games, nurturing confidence, communication, and teamwork skills! (Children's Literature Department, 2 p.m.)

13 Sat Family Storytime: Toy Stories
Dolls and balls, trains and puzzles, and whatchamacallits of all kinds will be celebrated with stories, songs, poems, and a puppet show.
(KLOS Story Theater, 2 p.m.)

20 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)

20 Sat Family Program: Ken Frawley - Christmas and Hanukkah Family Fun
Share winter holiday stories, songs, and silliness with singer/storyteller Ken Frawley! (Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 p.m.)

27 Sat Family Storytime: Happy New Year!
Welcome 2015 with stories, songs, poems, a countdown, plenty of noisemakers, and a puppet show! (KLOS Story Theater: 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

HOURS

Monday - Thursday	10 am - 8 pm
Friday - Saturday	9:30 am - 5:30 pm
Sunday	1 pm - 5 pm

THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL FOCAL AWARD LUNCHEON
and
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

HONORING
The 2014 FOCAL Award Winner
THE TREE LADY
by Joseph Hopkins

Saturday, December 6, 2014

at
Border Grill

445 South Figueroa Street #100 • Los Angeles CA 90071

PARKING

Westlawn Garage • 524 S. Flower St. (\$1.00 with library validation)
Union Bank Garage • 445 S. Figueroa St. (\$5.00 with restaurant validation)

11:00 A.M. Social Hour

No-Host Bar

12:00 Noon Luncheon

Reservation Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

Reservation Options	Number	x	Price	Amount
Luncheon FOCAL Members @ \$40 ea.		x	\$40.00	
Luncheon Non-Members @ \$45 ea.		x	\$45.00	
Lunch + \$20 Basic Membership @ \$60 ea.		x	\$60.00	
Lunch + \$30 Associate Membership @ \$70 ea.		x	\$70.00	
Lunch + \$60 Contributing Membership @ \$100 ea.		x	\$100.00	
Lunch + \$100 Sustaining Membership @ \$140 ea.		x	\$140.00	
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED				\$

Please send this completed form and checks, made payable to FOCAL and postmarked no later than Monday, December 1, to: Renny Day, 15221 Via de las Olas, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

TICKETS WILL BE HELD AT THE DOOR

For questions, contact Renny at [310-454-3667](tel:310-454-3667) or rennyday@msn.com

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

Please send renewals to: Renny Day / 15221 Via de las Olas / Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

Name

Address

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____

Membership is for calendar year, January through December. Dues are tax deductible.

New _____ **Renewal** _____ **Basic \$20** _____ **Associate \$30** _____

Contributing \$60 _____ **Sustaining \$100** _____ **Lifetime \$1,000** _____

(Free autographed book) **(Seat at Head Table)** **(Book and Head Table)**

Selena Terrazas, Department Manager
Madeline Bryant, Senior Librarian, Children's Literature
Helene Mochedlover, FOCAL Points Editor

FOCAL

Children's Literature Department

Los Angeles Public Library

630 West Fifth Street

Los Angeles, CA 90071