



FOCAL Points ~ ~



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FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY



FOCAL PLANS FOR FIRST HISTORY DAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 2016 California Stories History Day

The first FOCAL event focusing on History and Social Studies will occur on Saturday, October 1st, from 1:00-3:00 pm at the Central Library, 2nd floor rotunda. Three FOCAL members, Lara Clardy, Stephanie Moore, and Beth Miller developed the event in honor of their parents' roles in fostering their passion for history, literature, and reading.

The family-focused event will include activities based on the FOCAL award-winning titles. Children will be able to attend two different presentations in the KLOS Theater, one from the Heritage Square Museum, and Chumash storytellers from the Wishtoyo Team. The afternoon will provide the children the opportunity to explore the many cultures that have contributed to California's rich heritage.

Some of the many creative make-and-take projects children will be involved in include tote bags and mobiles featuring California's state symbols, Japanese fans, Native American seashell necklaces, Chinese kites, and Mexican maracas. Some of the award-winning books that have provided the inspiration for these activities include Island of the Blue Dolphins; The Red Rose Box; Pedro, the Angel of Olvera Street; Dragonwings; and The Ballad of Lucy Whipple.

Children who attend California Stories will not only learn about many cultures, but will receive books, activity booklets, and other materials so they can continue their learning after the event. So save the date, October 1st, and join the celebration!

CHANGES, CHOICES, CHALLENGES

Children grow as they face challenges, and so do children's librarians. If you have missed some familiar faces in Children's Literature Department, it's because they are embarking on new career choices.

In April, MADELINE BRYANT promoted to the position of Youth Services Coordinator. It is a new position in the Engagement and Learning Division, and Eva Mitnick is its Director. (See the Spring 2016 issue of *FOCAL Points* for an interview with Eva.)

"What do you do all day?" we asked Madeline. Her job description is overwhelming. She coordinates Children's and Young Adult Services. For children, this means directing "We Read Together," which includes Early Learning and Families, which provides dedicated spaces where families can read, play and learn together; Learn and Play, which is a series of early literacy workshops; and STAR (Story-telling And Reading) a popular volunteer reading program.

For young adults, the goal of "Future Ready Teens" is met with Career/Workforce Development workshops and hands-on volunteer work in the teen departments; Student Smart, which stresses free college prep and practice PSAT and SAT tests; and Student Zones, dedicated homework areas with computers and after-school assistance by trained Student Zone Helpers.

More plans will be implemented in the fall. Her office is on the fourth floor, but we occasionally catch a glimpse of her as she scurries to meetings, or escorts visitors around the building.

JOANNA FABICON is now Senior Children's Librarian of Children's Services, which means that she co-ordinates everything having to do with children's work for the whole system. She trains librarians, and works with Madeline on the many facets of the "We Read Together" program. Joanna has a full calendar of training workshops scheduled involving librarians and volunteers. She also works with Summer Reading, Full STEAM Ahead, and performers and authors for youth and adult audiences. (Your reporter is gasping for breath!)

Joanna adds, "From story times, to professional development, book recommendations, and offering diverse programs, my priority is to be an advocate for LAPL's children's librarians, so that they feel supported and empowered to provide dynamic services."

BROOKE SHEETS, the new Senior Librarian in Children's Literature, is always busy, but she paused long enough to answer a few questions.

"Why did I become a librarian? Well, in college I was never the most inspired or articulate writer, but I did well because I enjoyed ferreting out sources that the instructors hadn't seen. One day I read an article in a magazine by an MLIS student, and it was as if I had found my calling...this is a real job? I researched schools, and soon began work as a shelver in the college library because I read that library schools prefer candidates with library experience."

"I left Arroyo Seco, a busy and vibrant community that I loved, because I decided the only way to advance my knowledge was to go bigger. Professional involvement is a passion. I wanted to learn from colleagues." Brooke continued, "Programming is my favorite activity. You need to always expect the unexpected. I love the bustle and instant feedback."

"Were there any surprises when you promoted to Senior Librarian?" we asked.

“I had no idea that Madeline was doing so much!” she exclaimed. “For example, management (I’m still learning this), collection development, vendor meetings, cataloging problems, and so forth. Madeline made it seamless...you never saw her break a sweat. I have learned to accept disappointment. You can’t do it all with short staff, especially in the busy summer months.”

When there is a full staff, Brooke has ideas for new services for children with special needs, and she wants to finish writing a grant proposal.

SARA REBMAN is a new librarian in the department. It was Sara’s third day at Central when your reporter shared the reference desk with her, and it’s very clear that she is going to be a wonderful addition to the staff. Her enthusiasm and approachable manner pleases both parents and children. Sara began her career at John Muir before transferring to the bustling Sherman Oaks branch. She describes herself as a Southern California girl who practically grew up in her local branch, and also worked in her school library.

“Story time is my favorite activity, and I enjoy being a little bit goofy, and trying new activities, such as a haunted house at Halloween, or using play dough to create stories.” When asked about her decision to transfer to Children’s Lit, she said that decision was made years ago on her first tour of Central Library. “Who wouldn’t want to work at the Disneyland of children’s libraries?” she said, laughing.

PATTI MARSHALL is the new clerk that you may see at the Computer Desk. She traveled all the way across the rotunda from Teen’scape to come to our department. Patti was impressed with the collegial atmosphere and variety of duties in the department. “After nine years, I was ready for new challenges,” she remarked, “and I love being busy.”



Linda, Brooke, Sara, Mara



SAVE THE DATE: The FOCAL Award luncheon will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2017. Details will be in our next issue, our Special Edition, at the end of December 2016.

**Information about the Essay Contest will be found on FOCAL’s Web Page:
www.FOCALcentral.org.**

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