



March • April
2005

Library Board Appoints New Director

The San Antonio Public Library Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of Ramiro

S. Salazar as Library Director. The appointment concludes a year-long process during which a national search identified an initial field of eighteen applicants. In explaining some of the reasons behind the Board's choice, John Nicholas, Chair of the Library Board of Trustees, stated "Mr. Salazar has a proven track record as a successful Library Director of a large urban library system. He also has a reputation for forging partnerships with the community to enhance the Library's programs and services. The Board really liked his partnership approach and obvious personal commitment to ensuring the Library takes a leadership role in addressing literacy and educational problems within the community."



Mr. Salazar is currently an Interim Assistant City Manager in Dallas, Texas. Since June 2004 he has had oversight responsibility for the following City Departments: Dallas Public Library, Business Development and Procurement Services, Office of Cultural Affairs and the Public Information Office. He was the Director of the Dallas Public Library from 1993 to 2004, and served as Director of the El Paso

See New Director, p 6

Two Friends Receive Library Champion Awards

Beth Graham

The Library Board of Trustees has selected two members of the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library to receive Library Champions Awards, along with a local school, four corporations, and another individual.

The Library Champion Award was created to recognize individuals and organizations that have made notable contributions of time, talent, or resources that have resulted in the enhancement of public library service in San Antonio or who have had substantial involvement in the support of the San Antonio Public Library system over a period of many years.

Patricia Marie Bjornson was selected in recognition of her work with the Friends of Brook Hollow Branch Library. She has been involved in volunteer activities at the branch library since 1986, when she began assisting staff with tasks, such as children's story hour, checking items in and out, and shelving. In 2001, she began publishing a newsletter for the Brook Hollow Friends. In 2002, Pat was elected president of the Brook Hollow Friends and, while serving in office, has coordinated updating the organization's bylaws, development of a scrapbook recording the group's history, and yearly staff appreciation dinners. She has spearheaded the branch's semi-annual book sales, bringing in more than \$17,000 to support branch activities and programs; among other items, the funds have been used to purchase a television with VCR and DVD player for the branch. Pat's enthusiastic volunteerism has also led her to support the umbrella Friends of the San Antonio Public Library, for which she has served as Membership Chair and on a committee to determine ways volunteers could be used in the library system. Her nominator **Lloyd Gardner** calls Pat "a dedicated, dynamic leader who leads by example."

Vera Banner's involvement with the Friends of the Library has resulted in the founding of two new groups, the McCreless Friends and the Writer Friends, for both of

which she was an initiator and a charter member. As a member of the Writer Friends, Vera filled in as vice president when the previous office-holder moved out of town. She served as president of the McCreless Friends and was appointed by Councilwoman **Linda Billa Burke** to the Library Board of Trustees, where she completed two terms and was elected Secretary. Vera was Chair of the Friends Arts and Letters Award Committee, which coordinates the annual ceremony to honor local authors and artists. She has also helped schedule many branch/support group programs and has served on nominating committees for both the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library and the Writer Friends, working to bring new people into both groups. Vera works at the Book Cellar every Sunday. In her nomination of Vera, **Barbara Stanush** said, "I don't know of anyone who works harder or more selflessly."

Other recipients of 2004 Library Champion Awards

The Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children, for encouraging students to get Library cards, read, and participate in Library activities; for their support of the Library's Centennial celebration in 2003; and for contributing to a 1999 historical display at the Central Library.

Guillermo Nicolas, who received two nominations, for his support of Cortez Branch Library (which was named for his grandfather **Raúl Cortez**), including coordination of and contribution to a relandscaping and refurbishing project at Cortez Branch Library.

Summer Reading Program partners **The Boeing Company**, **San Antonio Water System**, **Verizon**, and **Promotional Management Group**, for volunteer and financial assistance to the Summer Reading Program for the past two years. Along with contributions from the Friends of the Library, the support of these companies made the program possible in 2003 and 2004.

From the President

Dear Friends,

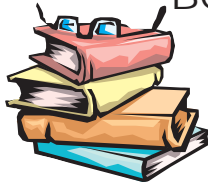
For those of you who do not know me, let me introduce myself. I am a San Antonio native. A member of FOSAPL for at least twenty years, I became active about nine years ago when my branch group reactivated. I have been president of my branch group and have been on the board of directors of FOSAPL, and I have been a member of the Arts and Letters Committee. Last year I retired from North East ISD, where I had been a teacher and a guidance counselor. In addition to reading, my interests are gardening, baking, travel, volunteer work, and visiting with family and friends.

My personal goal is to help start branch groups in as many of our Library branches as possible. The Guerra Branch librarian asked me to begin with them. By the time you receive this newsletter, I will have met with interested patrons at the new Guerra branch on March 1. We will have discussed the why to's and how-to's of beginning a new branch group.

I look forward to serving the Friends of the SA Public Library as we strive to help support our Library.

Linda Nairn
President

FRIENDS OF THE SAN ANTONIO PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



January 23, 2005

Submitted by *Lucy Gale*

Directors Present: Barbara Isner, Lucy Gale, Pat Cummins, Lee LaCaff, Vera Banner, Lou Harris, Linda Nairn, Alan Cutler, Bruce Gill, Pat Konstam, Robert LaCaff, Bettie Ward, Don Norton, Aaron Konstam, Pat Brown, Betty Berry, Rowena Rodgers, Pat Mendiola, Maria Pfeiffer, Barbara Stanush, Robbie Ruppert, and Josie Martinez

Directors Absent: Lucille Lammert, Lillian McPherson, Shirley Horner, Lollie Boudrie, Yulanee McKnight, and Dr. Mark Prange.

Call to Order: Barbara Isner called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. in the Central Library Auditorium.

Minutes: Corrections—Location of meeting change to Auditorium and spelling of Robert LaCaff's name.

Elections of Officers: Mary McAfee thanked the following committee members for their hard work on the Nominating Committee: Vera Banner, Pat Brown, Pat Mendiola, Bettie Ward, and Lyn Belisle. The following slate of officers was elected: Linda Nairn, President; Robert LaCaff, Vice President, Lucy Gale, Secretary, and Nancy Gandara, Treasurer.

The following slate of board members was elected: Vera Banner, Betty Kelly Berry, Pat Brown, Lou Harris, Lee LaCaff, Aaron Konstam, Gerard Celitans, Rowena

Rodgers, Maria Pfeiffer, and Shirley Horner.

Approval of Budget: Alan Cutler thanked the following committee members for their hard work on the Budget Committee: Linda Nairn, Pat Cummins, Robbie Ruppert, Lee LaCaff, Robert LaCaff, and Nancy Gandara. The committee's recommendation for the 2005 Budget was accepted.

Library Administration: Beth Graham, Public Relations Manager for the San Antonio Public Library, had nothing to report.

Library Foundation: Dennis Martinez, Chairman of the Library Foundation, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the current status of the Library (both usage and funding), the important role that the Library plays in our community, and the alternative funding sources that are available to improve the Library.

Library Board: John Nicholas, Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the San Antonio Public Library thanked the Friends for all their support and efforts for the library. John mentioned that the Trustees had several

goals to accomplish this year, among them the space study for the Central Branch, updating the Library's strategic plan, and the opening of several new branch libraries. John also mentioned that the Trustees had been working to find a new Library Director, had narrowed the field to three choices, and were hoping to make an announcement soon.

Announcements:

Pat Cummins reported that copies of the tax filing were available for anyone wanting a copy along with the Treasurer's report.

Aaron Konstam reported that he is now the new Chair for the Book Cellar Committee and will be meeting with the committee to work on new procedures. Also Aaron announced that volunteers are needed at the Book Cellar particularly on Saturday and Sunday.

Barbara Stanush announced that the Writer Friends were going to have a meeting on February 8, 2005, and would host a panel of local romance writers.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Central Library Gallery:

Mar 3–Apr 3 **Liza Lewis & Carrington Gallery** Exhibit
Apr 7–18 **Latino Expressions II: Artistas de San Antonio.** Reception–Apr 17. Open to the Public
Apr 21–Jun 5 **Women of Afghanistan.** Reception–Apr 21. Open to the Public

BRANCH LEAVES

(News from Support Groups)



Book Cellar

Hardcover novels for adults and children's hardcover "chapter books" are the clearance sale specials during March and April, priced at 3-for-\$1.

The Book Cellar Committee is working hard to improve book displays, signage, and book processing to make the store more convenient and inviting for customers.

The store needs additional volunteers who can work regularly on Thursdays or Saturdays, or who can be available occasionally as substitutes for regulars who are ill or on vacation. Hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Benefits include first choice on arriving books, a half-price discount for volunteers who work a full 4-hour shift, and meeting interesting people. Contact Book Cellar manager **Monica Hernandez** at 227-9519 for more information.

The Book Cellar also welcomes book donations and issues receipts for tax purposes.

Pat Konstam

Brook Hollow

The Brook Hollow Friends will meet Monday, March 7, at 7:00 p.m. Our spring used book sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 14. However, construction has finally begun on the Brook Hollow addition and renovations, so we may have to change the sale date.

Hopefully, we will know by the 7th when the library will be closing and also when we will be helping the staff pack up the library's book collection.

The Friends sponsored a farewell dinner for our retiring branch manager, **Beverly Jackson**, January 20, and on January 23, we held a reception for her at the library. It was great to see so many patrons, friends, and present as well as former co-workers come to wish Beverly

well. **Meranda Cohn**, aide to our city council representative, **Carroll Schubert**, presented Beverly with a certificate honoring her for her 35 years service with the San Antonio Library system.

Pat Bjornson

Cody

Cody Branch Library's meeting room is one of the locations being used this year for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offered by the City of San Antonio's Department of Community Initiatives in conjunction with IRS and other agencies. Through April 15, taxpayers earning income less than \$36,000 per year may receive free tax preparation help through VITA. Attendance at Cody has shown how well received this service is.

With the meeting room thus occupied, the Cody Friends have had to postpone our March book sale. It will be on Saturday, May 7, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We are already receiving many donations and look forward to being able to offer our biggest and best collection of must-buy children and adult books.

Word has been received from City Councilman **Art Hall's** office that the expansion of Cody's parking lot should begin in April and be completed in July. Yes, this year! Our onsite parking lot should be more than doubled, and curbside parking thus greatly reduced. Our thanks to so many Friends of the Library who, among many other citizens, voted for the November 2003 bond issue!

Margaret Lecznar

McCreless

Officers were elected for the 2005 term at the December 14th meeting.

New officers are:

President: **Evonne Smith**
Vice-President: **Lillian McPherson**
Secretary: **Paul Frisch**
Treasurer: **Tom Nemeth**

Meeting dates for the year are February 16, June 15, August 17, and December 14.

McCreless Mall management offered space for a weekend book sale, and it was decided to schedule one over the

Martin Luther King holiday weekend, January 15-17. Regular book sales at McCreless Library will be held on March 5-6, June 18-19, September 17-18, and December 3-4.

Branch Manager **Melva Ramirez** said goodbye before her transfer to Memorial Library. The Friends will purchase a library book in her honor and will present her with a personal gift of gardening tools. Although Melva will be greatly missed, the Friends look forward to working with our new manager, **John Powell**, formerly of Thousand Oaks Library.

Cathy Dean

Texana/Genealogy

The Friends of Texana/Genealogy book sale was a great success! Buyers took away boxes of books and magazines, and we earned over \$1,500 to help the department. Many thanks to our very special volunteers-**J.O. Wallace, Sissy Braunig, Becky Braunig Haag, Bob Harris, Lou Harris, David Laro, Pat Brown, Margaret Lecznar, Jo Myler, David Haynes**, and **Fred Pfeiffer**. We were mightily assisted by invaluable staff members, **Frank Faulkner** and **Matt DeWaelche**, and the library's maintenance crew who did the "heavy lifting!" Remember that we are looking for donations to replenish our inventory for next year. Leave your materials at the Texana/Genealogy desk on the 6th floor of the Central Library or call me at 210-222-1586.

The Texana/Genealogy Department is offering some informative classes in the near future, including

- 📖 Vital Records and More (March 5)
- 📖 Courthouse Research and Maps (April 2)
- 📖 Secrets of the "Family Search" Website (April 11)
- 📖 Military Records (May 7)
- 📖 Passenger Lists Online (May 9)

For more information, call 210-207-2500 (ask for Texana) or write genealogydesk@sanantonio.gov. We will be scheduling our Spring meeting soon and will be back in touch.

Maria Watson Pfeiffer

Thousand Oaks

On February 8, the Friends of the Library Book Club had an active discussion on the *Da Vinci Code* by **Dan Brown**. Next month, on March 8, the discussion will be on *Big Stone Gap* by **Adriana Trigiani**. All members and nonmembers are encouraged to attend.

In March, the Friends will hold their first book sale of the year. It will be SUNDAY, March 13, from 1:00–5:00 p.m. In addition to fiction and non-fiction books in paperback and hardcover, there will be children's books, videos and CDs. In the future, there will be two additional book sales; the dates will be announced later. Please come and bring your friends.

Nancy Fitzgerald

Westfall

The first meeting of the Friends of Westfall for 2005 was held on February 5 at which time a budget presented by Treasurer **Eddie Patino** was adopted, and a "Wish List" presented by Branch Manager **Jeff Martin** was approved. Now we are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new items.

We were very sorry to report the death of our friend and member, **Dotty Adams**, who served as our Vice-President. We are placing a book in the Westfall collection in her memory. **Patricia Cummins** was elected to fill the remainder of her term.

A thought-provoking program was presented by local author **Karin Ireland**, who discussed her latest book, *Learning to Trust Myself: Lessons from Cancer and Other Life Dilemmas*. Ireland revealed that her book was a self-help memoir, which she hoped might help others dealing with adversity.

A Westfall Staff Appreciation Luncheon will be held March 21. Co-Chairs for the luncheon are **Martha Tarpley** and **Patricia Cummins**, and they will be happy to have many volunteers! Call 694-2083 if you would like to help.

LATE BREAKING NEWS! The next meeting of the Friends of Westfall will be held on Wednesday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m. and will feature **Rick Riordan**, nationally acclaimed mystery writer. Mark your calendar and join us!

Bettie Ward

Writer Friends

The Writers Friends February 8 gathering managed to

lighten a rainy, damp San Antonio night with some welcome writerly (I know it's not a proper word) companionship. Our new president, **Rick Riordan**, welcomed everyone, made a few brief announcements, and then recognized the outgoing board officers—**Barbara Stanush**, **Jay Brandon**, **Susan San Miguel**, **Vera Banner**, **Junette Woller**, **John Hammond**, **David Liss**, **Caren Creech**, and **Jill Goldman**, for their outstanding contributions to the organization. The new board was introduced after which a special plaque and a bouquet of roses were gratefully presented to **Wendy Friedman** in honor of

her six years as Library Liaison to the Writers Friends.

After a few delightful words from Wendy, **Rick Riordan** introduced the panel of guest romance writers—**Jen Holling**, **Pamela Morsi**, and **Evelyn Rogers**. Their presentation was exceptionally lively and illuminating, offering a glimpse into a market that is rapidly becoming a major source of interest to numbers of writers. The writers graciously donated copies of their books and some Valentines chocolates as door prizes, and the evening ended on a sweet and "romantic" note.

Kathleen LeStrange

Writer Friends Past President's Report

Barbara Stanush

The Writer Friends finished 2004 with an excellent panel on November 9 featuring four San Antonio Publishers: **Barbara Ras**, director of the new Trinity University Press; **Joe Labatt** with Corona Publishing Company; **Palmer Hall** with Pecan Grove Press at St. Mary's University; and **Bryce Milligan** with Wings Press. We are fortunate to have these presses in our city, each with a different focus, but all interested in the work of South Texas writers and beyond.

Elections for the Writer Friends Board for 2005–2006 were also held at the meeting. We are pleased to announce the new officers: **Rick Riordan**, President; **Cary Clack**, Vice President; **Kathleen LeStrange**, Secretary; and **Michael Barrett**, Treasurer.

Rick Riordan is an award-winning novelist and former teacher at St. Mary's

Hall where he received the Master Teacher Award. In addition to his *Tres Navarre* mystery novels and others, the first book in a series for young readers, *Percy Jackson and the Olympian: The Lightning Thief*, will be out shortly. Rick was a recipient of a Friends of the San Antonio Public Library Arts and Letters Award for 2004.

Cary Clack is well known to South Texas readers for his award-winning columns in the *San Antonio Express-News*, where he has worked for the last ten years as editorial writer and metro columnist. A graduate in political science from St. Mary's University, Cary served as an intern at the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta and has served the Center in various capacities since that time. In his spare time, he writes short fiction.

Kathleen LeStrange worked as a television screen

writer in New York City for some years on shows including "All My Children" and "Another World." She won the 1996 and 1998 Writers Guild Award for Best Daytime Serial Writing and four Emmys.

Currently, Kathleen is the Director of the Creative Writing Program at the Northeast School of the Arts in San Antonio.

Michael Barrett is a free lancer who writes features and reviews for the *San Antonio Express-News*, where his monthly video column has run for several years. He worked for the S.A. Public Library for five years and "was proud to be responsible for stocking the Cody Branch media collection." He is working on children's fiction, short stories, songs, and other projects.

Caren Creech, a past member of the board, will be returning in her capacity as

See Writer Friends on p. 5.

TLA Legislative Day

Texas Library Association's Legislative Day was February 16. I hope some of you were able to go to Austin and personally visit the Senators and Representatives.

If you were not there for the day, we missed you!! Right now, the single most important thing you can do is to contact your state legislator. Schedule a visit with them while they are at the home district. Tell them about the particular needs of the people in your community and how state funding for libraries will help.

It is up to you to make sure elected officials understand the problems that libraries have with budget cuts. We need their support for increases for library programs. Ask your library patrons, city administrators, and people with influence to help you carry the library message to our elected officials. You can go to the Texas Library Assn. web site for information on the six items that we are asking to be funded now. Check it out today, please.

Mary McAfee

Writer Friends from p 4

the Membership Chair. We all are familiar with the warm welcome she extends at the door to those who attend our meetings. You may also know Caren as the Public Relations Manager at Barnes & Noble, Fiesta Trails. She has been a loyal Writer Friend since the inception of the group.

New to the Writer Friends is **Julia Selwyn** who will serve as the Library Liaison to the board. A children's and reference librarian at Central Library, she is a welcome addition.

What a board! We thank the nominating committee, **Vera Banner, Bob Flynn, and Marian Martinello**, for selecting them, and we look forward to a great year. And thanks so much to our Writer Friends Board for 2003–2004: **Junette Woller, Vera Banner, John Hammond, David Liss** and **Caren Creech**. Past President **Jay Brandon** helped out too. They were great!

Beverly Jackson retires after 35 years

Brook Hollow's branch manager, **Beverly Jackson**, retired at the end of January, after working for the San Antonio Public Library for 35 years. Beverly was named branch manager at Brook Hollow when it opened in 1983; she is the only branch manager

we have had, and we are really going to miss her! Beverly was instrumental in organizing the Brook Hollow Friends in 1997. Sunday, January 23, the Friends hosted a farewell reception at the library for Beverly. (Photos submitted by **Neal Bjornson**)



Beverly Jackson (left) poses with Pat Bjornson, President, Brook Hollow Friends of the Library and Past Presidents Marlene Reynolds and Molly Peacock (seated).

Author Karin Ireland visits Westfall Friends



Karin Ireland discusses her new book, Learning To Trust Myself: Lessons from Cancer and Other Life Dilemmas at Westfall Friends meeting.

New Director from front page

Public Library from 1990 to 1993. Prior to this, Mr. Salazar was the Library Services Administrator at the San Antonio Public Library from 1984 to 1989. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Texas A&I and a Masters of Library Science from Texas Woman's University.

Mr. Salazar has served on numerous professional and community advisory boards throughout his career, including those of the American Library Association, Texas Library Association, Literacy Instruction For Texas (LIFT), Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO) and the University of North Texas School of Library and Information Sciences. He also served as President of the Dallas Concillio, and was named 1998 Librarian of the Year by REFORMA, National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish Speaking. In addition, Mr. Salazar was named 1996 Library Director of the Year by the Texas Municipal Library Directors Association.

Contacted in Dallas, Mr. Salazar stated that he is "...looking forward to returning to San Antonio to begin working with the Library Board of Trustees, the Library Foundation, the Friends, the City staff and the citizens of San Antonio to provide the best library services to the community." Mr. Salazar continued, "Public libraries, by their very nature, have an inherent responsibility to be inclusive and responsive to the needs and expectations of their customers. I firmly believe in creating and supporting an organizational culture that is driven by positive energy - a culture that embraces change, supports risk taking, encourages creativity, values individuality, supports two-way communication and fosters mutual trust and respect."

He expects to be on board with the San Antonio Public Library in early April.

Treasurer's Report as of December 31 2004

Submitted by *Patricia Cummins*

Accounts	Balance
Cash and Bank Accounts	\$172,697.22
TOTAL ASSETS	\$172,697.22
Branch Funds	\$ 59,617.13
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 59,617.13
OVERALL TOTAL	\$113,080.09
BROOK HOLLOW	\$ 20,224.53
CARVER	1,821.73
CODY	5,442.54
JOHNSTON	770.53
McCRELESS	4,332.22
OAKWELL	7,049.00
TEENS	55.89
TEXANA-GENEALOGY	7,246.86
THOUSAND OAKS	3,599.82
WESTFALL	6,015.54
WRITERS	\$ 3,058.47
TOTAL BRANCH FUNDS	\$ 59,617.13

Membership Renewal

Final renewal notices will be going out soon. If you have not renewed your membership, this will be the last newsletter coming to you. Please send your renewal membership in right away. You can designate one branch for your support. \$3 extra is needed for any additional groups you wish to support. If you are a life member, we'd like to hear from you each year to be sure we have current information. Thanks for remaining our Friend.

Ronnie Retzloff,
Membership Chair

Late Newsletter

There was so much exciting news in February, some of it late in the month, that newsletter production was delayed to get better coverage of these important events. We regret the impact on early March calendar events.

*Cathy Dean, for Newsletter
Committee*

FOSAPL Budget 2005

Submitted by *Alan Cutler*

Income	
Book Cellar	\$60,000
Donations	1,600
Interest	1,300
Membership	11,000
Transfer from Savings	2,050
Total Income	\$75,950
Expenses	
Accounting	\$2,000
Advertising	1,800
Arts and Letters	700
Bank Charges	50
Book Cellar Renovation	5,000
Bulk Mail	1,850
Library Support (pending receipt of requests and approval by the FOSAPL Board)	40,000
Mail Box	70
Medicare	230
Membership Directory 2005-2006	1,500
Newsletter Prep/Editing	1,200
Newsletter Printing	1,300
Office Supplies	800
Parking	3,800
Postage	500
President's Expenses	350
Salary	6,000
Sales Tax	7,000
Social Security	1,000
Subscriptions	100
Volunteer Appreciation	500
Water Service/Book Cellar	200
Total Expenses	\$75,950

Telephone & Web Guide

Book Cellar	227-9519
< http://www.sanantonio.gov/Library/friends/cellar.asp >	
Central Library Administration	207-2630
Central Library Information	207-2500
Central Library Volunteer Office	207-2502
Friends of the San Antonio Public Library	
< http://www.sanantonio.gov/Library/friends/ >	
President, Linda Nairn	653-0640
Vice President, Robert LaCaff	545-6855
Secretary, Lucy Gale	452-2320
Treasurer, Nancy Gandara	695-9648
San Antonio Public Library Foundation	225-4728
< http://www.sapl.org >	

Preparing for a Second Century of Service

*Excerpt from Presentation by **Dennis Martinez**, San Antonio Public Library Foundation Chair, at FOSAPL Annual Meeting*

In the midst of all of the excitement associated with the Centennial Celebration of 100 years of Library service, representatives of the Board of Directors of the San Antonio Public Library Foundation and the San Antonio Public Library have been meeting regularly to address the question: What next?

Since Fiscal Year 1998, the year the Library Foundation launched its Centennial Achievement Plan, the number of Bexar County residents has climbed 7%. In the same five-year period, however, the number of Library cardholders climbed 26 percent. Today, there are 609,803 Bexar County residents registered to borrow materials from the San Antonio Public Library. The number of people passing through the Library doors climbed 24 percent. 3,660,043 patrons entered our Library facilities during fiscal year 2002; that translates to 10,000 people per day. More than 5-million books, books-on-tape, videos and CDs were checked out by San Antonians during fiscal year 2002. The number of computer users has soared by more than 50 percent since 2000, and the library website gets over 9,000 hits per day. If you combine these Library users with the 10,000 people who visit our libraries each day, we could have two sell-out crowds at the Alamodome weekly.

We turned to the 2003 Public Library Association's Statistical Report to see how our Library stacks up next to the libraries in our benchmark cities against which we traditionally measure ourselves. These benchmark cities are Austin, Charlotte (NC), Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Jacksonville (FL), Phoenix (AZ), and San Diego (CA).

Based on the number of books per capita served, San Antonio ranks 10th out of 10 among the group. In terms of computers per capita, we rank 9th. We're 8th in the number of service hours provided. We're 9th in operating expenditures per capita, library sites per capita served, and total square feet per capita served.

We must invest much more in our libraries to be at the average level of our benchmark cities. San Antonio Public Library's 2002 budget was \$19.8 million, including one million dollars of private

donations. To equal the average operating budgets of our benchmark cities, the San Antonio Public Library would need to receive an additional \$8.00 per person, or \$12,100,400 per year. To reach this average level, our annual investment should be close to \$32 million. For its collection to equal the average size of that found in these comparison cities, San Antonio Public Library would need to increase the size of its collection by 1.15 books per capita, or by 1,740,870 items.

In March, the Library Foundation will initiate a series of discussions and informal coffees in each branch library across the city.

How can we get our Library to meet our community's needs during its next century of service? The City of San Antonio has maintained a strong commitment to funding the Library. Even as tight budget years have dictated cutbacks in many areas, annual Library funding has kept slightly ahead of inflation. Yet the Library must stabilize its existing funding. Our operating budget is already stretched far too thin to provide adequate service, and we have four new branches coming on board between now and 2007. Through the years, San Antonians have repeatedly indicated at the polls that they value and are willing to support their Library system. During the recent bond election, a higher percentage of voters endorsed the initiative for public library enhancements than any of the other initiatives on the ballot. Given the confines of the current city budget, where does that leave us? It leaves us with the responsibility to think creatively to identify alternative sources for additional, long-term sustainable funding.

A joint committee drawn from members of the Library Board and the Library Foundation has been examining options and studying how public libraries are addressing budgetary issues throughout the country. Among the possibilities for increased funding is to increase the sales tax. There are other public agencies and city departments competing for these funds, and the remedy they offer is short-term. Increasing property taxes or adding

impact fees are also areas to be examined. Designating potential windfalls from San Antonio utilities offers another source of possible revenue that can be used to provide an influx of materials or capital improvements for the Library, but the stream is not dependable for sustaining operations. Given the current economic picture, increased support from the state or federal levels seems unlikely.

Increasingly, more and more library systems throughout the country are creating independent library taxing districts to stabilize their revenue sources. The Texas legislature has authorized this approach for rural libraries but not yet for large, urban libraries.

We would like to work with you, to share our findings, and to find a solution for not only sustaining our Library, but also for bringing it to a higher standard to better serve all our citizens during the next 100 years.

Beginning in March, the San Antonio Public Library Foundation is initiating a series of discussions and informal "coffees" in each branch library across the city. These coffees are being scheduled, and we hope you will join us and other neighborhood leaders at the gatherings to give us your feedback and ideas on ways we can work together to make our libraries better and ensure the future of our community.

Call your branch or the Library Foundation (225-4728) to check the dates.

Mystery Volunteer--Please call again!

Some time back when we were advertising for a newsletter mailing volunteer, **Rowena Rodgers** had a message on her answering machine that was only partly understandable. She could tell the caller was volunteering in response to the notice but couldn't understand the name or number. Although **Mary McAfee** has now volunteered to handle this important task, we're sorry to have missed you. Since it's always good to have others willing to learn and help out, please call again if you're still interested. Call Mary at 695-9287 to learn more.



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CALENDAR OF BOOK SALES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Please refer to the Branch Leaves for support group meetings. It's a good idea to call and verify information before setting out for a meeting or program. Sometimes dates or times change after newsletter publication.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| March 13 | Thousand Oaks book sale, 1-5 pm |
| March 16 | FOSAPL Board meeting , 7:00 pm, Central Library Book Cellar |
| March 23 | Library Champions reception, at conclusion of Library Board meeting @7:00 pm, Central Library Auditorium |
| April 6 | Westfall meeting, Rick Riordan speaker, 7:00 pm |
| May 7 | Cody book sale, 9 am - 3 pm |
| May 14 | Brook Hollow book sale (tentative, call to confirm) |

Brook Hollow Library
530 Heimer Road, 78232
(210) 496-6315

Central Library
600 Soledad Street, 78205
(210) 207-2534

Cody Library
11441 Vance Jackson, 78230
(210) 696-6396

Thousand Oaks Library
4618 Thousand Oaks, 78233
(210) 657-5205

Westfall Library
6111 Rosedale Court, 78201
(210) 344-2373

Note: Each branch Friends group has a designated representative to the Board. However, these Board meetings are open to the general membership. All members are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER COPY IS APRIL 15, 2005

Articles to be submitted should be a simple text file or in Word or WordPerfect. Please email files and photos to **Alana Woods** at <awoods@swri.org> with a cc to **Don Norton** at <dorisonorton@satx.rr.com>. Hard copy articles and photos should be mailed to Alana Woods at Southwest Research Institute, 6220 Culebra Rd., San Antonio, Texas 78238.