

Friends of the Oakland Public Library Off The Shelf

THE FRIENDS' VISION

by Terry Preston
President of F.O.P.L.

I called an elderly voter during the recent successful Measure O campaign to ask for his support. After getting his strong promise to support the measure, he informed me that he hadn't gone to the Library in years. I thanked him for his support considering that he wasn't a library user. "It's important", he said, "that children have a place to go after school, and where old folks can go to read, and where parents can take their kids to get 'em to read books". He lived alone in a home somewhere in the council district #6 flatlands. His own life wasn't directly threatened by the prospect of closing neighborhood branches and reduced overall service. He could see what effect it would have on others, on parents, children, and other seniors. He had *vision*, the ability to see past his own life and experiences to the larger picture. Oakland showed its vision in overwhelmingly supporting Measure O. I ask you now to show your vision through a membership in the Friends of the Oakland Public Library.

The Friends are committed to programs and projects that bring the joy of reading and learning to Oakland, Piedmont, and Emeryville. Our grants support the Library's children's reading programs, which generally rely on private support. Our grants help support Camp Read-A-Lot, an innovative summer reading program developed through the mayor's office in co-operation with
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ARMCHAIR ADVENTURES

by Alice Mercer

Like many of you, I long for the thrills and adventure of travel. Unfortunately, I can't travel as often or as far as I would like. My version of economy class travel is reading travel essays., because reading about faraway places is the next best thing to being there. Reading also has the advantage of not requiring a visa or any shots.

What is the best way to pick a travel essay book? First, my own feeling is that what writers say and how they say it is as important as the setting. Many people have lower standards of prose for non-fiction, such as travel essays, than they would for fiction. Frankly, what's the use of buying a book about exciting adventures in exotic locales when the words don't do the setting justice?

There are a number of ways to find out what's good in travel literature. One way is by word of mouth, such as suggestions from friends and acquaintances. I like radio interview shows because they often include readings by the author from his or her book. I have found many travel books just poking through book stores. Try to read a chapter before buying. The back page blurbs on books will tell you
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SECOND START: Offering People a Second Chance to Learn

One Library program that F.O.P.L. helps to support is the Second Start Literacy Program. This program truly makes a difference in the lives of its students. The program offers literacy instruction to adults at all levels and is run on a volunteer basis. If you are interested in this program you can help in a couple of ways. You can make a donation to the program with your F.O.P.L. Membership form. These funds help buy materials and train tutors. You can become a Second Start tutor. You can attend fundraisers like the recent **Authors Reception** at Barnes and Noble Bookstore in Jack London Square on Saturday, September 17th. Members receive notice of all Second Start events.

Here's what Second Start students have to say about the program:

"A lot of time they ask me did I want to go to school to be a foreman. I always told em no. Ain't no way I was going to tell them I didn't know how to read."

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SURFIN' THE NET: LIBRARY USERS GO ON- LINE

by Terry Preston

Want to know what's available at the library in a certain subject, or if that specific book you're looking for is at your local branch? Too pooped to look in your local library? Well, you live in these modern times. By dialing 238-7322 you can access the same computer catalog on display in the library from the comfort of home. You can locate which branch has what you're looking for, when it's due back if it's been checked out, and whether or not a hold has been placed on it.

I use this service quite often and it saves me a lot of time. I recently wanted to see what the library had regarding the recent Persian Gulf war. I dialed up the catalog with my computer modem while sitting in my study, entered the search words "Persian Gulf War", and found *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War* by Rick Atkinson, available at the Montclair branch. I printed the book's call number off the computer screen to my computer printer. Within a few minutes I had found what I was looking for and where to pick it up. The on-line catalog also told me when the Montclair branch would be open.

Future Library developments may bring magazine articles on-line. The Chabot Science Center in the Oakland hills is looking to hook the library up to their projects and programs. We may be able to peer through the center's 20 inch refractor through our computer.

Libraries are on the cutting edge of the information revolution. Want to help storm the barricades? All you need is a computer and a modem. "Off The Shelf" readers can count on being kept up to date on these changes.

Traveller contd.

the plot, but not the quality of the writing. To help you in your search for travel adventure I have listed below some favorites of mine and others. Bon voyage and happy reading!

Vintage Press publishes many travel essay titles under it's Vintage Departures label. The most famous in this line are Peter Mayle's books on life in Provence, France: (*A Year in Provence* and *Toujours Provence*). Some other titles follow:

In Xanadu (Dalrymple) - Oxford Student follows the route of Marco Polo to China.

Fool's Paradise (Walker) - An American expatriate returns to Saudi Arabia in search of an elusive tribe where women go unveiled.

Iron and Silk (Salzman) - American travels to China to study martial arts.

Motoring with Mohamed (Hansen) - Man returns to Yemen to recover hidden travel journals and gets to know locals along the way.

Penguin also features a lot of great travel essay books. One that I have read in this line is *The Great Divide* by Stephen Pern. Mr. Pern travels up the continental divide from the Mexican border to the Canadian border on foot.

Blue Highways by William Least-Heat Moon is a recent classic about travel in the United States. Mr. Least-Heat Moon attempts to uncover the character of America by taking the backroads and visiting small towns.

Paul Theroux is one the most well known travel writers in the world. Some titles include, *The Happy Isles of Oceania*, and *The Old Patagonia Express*.

Second Start contd.

"I guess that word is, I never could say it, illiterate. They look at a person like that like they are cut off from the world, don't know nothing, and it's not like that. They only got one or two things wrong with them, they can't read and write."

"I can't do anything without learning to read. I'm willing to do it, I'm willing to try it. I don't have nothing to lose. Now I have two children, and that's who I'm really doing it for."

The last quote comes from a student in the Families for Literacy Program. This program is for adult students with young children at home. It teaches adults to choose books and read to their children. This program helps to strengthen literacy in all family members and break the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.

To the right is a story from a Second Start student. Student stories are used as course materials for other students. We think you'll enjoy this one.

Vision contd.

the Oakland Library and other agencies. We co-sponsor fundraising projects and events for the Literacy program, and help expand special Library collections.

We do this because we have a vision. It's a child encouraged to read through reading games and a parent and child sharing a tale told by a storyteller at a local branch. It's an adult construction worker learning to read the newspaper for the first time. They're all part of an overall vision of a community that values children, reading, and literacy. Vision needs support to grow and stay vital. That's why we need you. Please become a member. Become part of the vision.

ALL PEOPLE SHOULD FELLOWSHIP*by Samuel Miller, 2nd Start Student*

Most days, I ride the bus.
 I start off from my house.
 I ride the bus downtown.
 Sometimes I go to Berkeley.
 I go to Telegraph Avenue.
 I just look around.
 I go from street to street
 I just look at the people.
 I stay in East Oakland.
 I like Berkeley better.
 I feel better in Berkeley.
 There are all kinds of people in Berkeley.
 People look at you funny in East Oakland.
 They's always thinking,
 "I got something better than you got."
 Or else they thinking,
 "You got something better than I got."
 It's competition.
 It's competition when I'm at home.
 People is always thinking,
 "You too dark, you too fat, you too skinny,
 you too poor."
 Everybody is trying to put you in a box.
 In Berkeley, people have their own style.
 They dress how they want to dress.
 Nobody makes fun of them.
 They do what they want to do.
 But where I stay, it's competition.
 You got to dress up to date.
 People make you do this.
 Society makes you.
 Society treats people like a pack of cards.
 Say you got all these cards.
 Some of them is aces.
 Some of them is clubs.
 Some of them is kings.
 You take those cards.
 You match them all up.
 You put all the fives together.
 You put all the kings with the kings.
 That's what society does with people.
 They want to put you in a group.
 They look at you and they say.,
 "OK, he's a jack." Or they say,
 "He's a king. This is where he belongs,
 right here. He's with them people."
 All people should fellowship.
 People should not put their brothers
 in boxes.
 They should not put their sisters
 in boxes. That's prejudice.

LIBRARY BRIEFS...**Single-Payer Health Care: The Great Debate**

The Melrose Branch Library and the League of Women Voters of Oakland will present a debate on Proposition 186, the Single-Payer Health Care Plan, on the November ballot. The debate will be held *Thursday, October 20th from 7 to 9 p.m.* at the Melrose Branch Library, 4805 Foothill Blvd. For more information, call *238-7347*.

**HELP WANTED!**

F.O.P.L. Bookstore is looking for strong backs and a large vehicle to move boxes of books from the Main Library to the bookshop.

Hours Needed: Minimal time commitment - one to two hours per week.

Contact: Skye Gover at 444-0473

For newsletter questions,
call 510-530-7363

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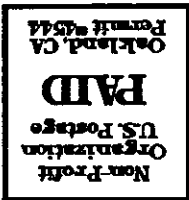
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Friends
of the Oakland Public Library



JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY!!!
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Membership benefits include this newsletter, book sale previews, advance invitations and discounts to special events, and the good feeling that comes from supporting our public libraries.

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Enclosed is my check (pay to the order of FOPL)
for:

- \$10 Student or Senior Citizen Membership
- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$25 Family Membership
- \$75 Business Membership

I would like to help FOPL by volunteering for :

- Fundraising Bookshop
- Special Programs Other _____
- Advocating for the Library

In addition to my membership, I would like a
special contribution of \$ _____ made
to:

- Second Start Adult Literacy Program
- Children's Reading Programs
- My employer will match my contribution

Please call Karen Bell (510) 834-1669 with any
membership questions.