



# WHAT'S NEWS

Our mission is to provide every OUSD student access to a quality school library.

---

## Hello Dear Friends,

It won't be long now before the halls ring with the excitement of students heading to the school library. The good news is that more OUSD students will have access to a quality school library this year. Ann Gallagher, District Librarian for OUSD, and her entourage of dedicated FOPSL volunteers, library staff and OUSD personnel put the cruise to Tahiti on hold this summer, to ensure that school libraries are ready. Long hours have been spent merging collections, installing furniture, cleaning, painting, and automating, assessing and decorating school libraries. The libraries at Parker, Sankofa, Burckhalter and Grass Valley will open with enhanced collections and beautiful new furnishings. Cleveland Elementary now has an updated, automated library opening this fall in the upper grades wing.

The school library is a critical component for teaching literacy. The goal of Friends of the Oakland Public School Libraries is to support OUSD in providing students, teachers, parents and siblings a welcome mat to this resource as the district makes the move to full service community schools. The library will be a key component to immersing the school community in literature, information technology and access to a qualified expert. You will find us at the Brookfield Elementary and Rise Community School/New Highland Academy school libraries for our scheduled workdays this year. Check the Volunteer Calendar on our website for opportunities to join the fun. No experience is necessary and any amount of time is helpful. The task to restore all OUSD libraries is huge, but your efforts will advance the education of hundreds of students.

## Two New Libraries Open This Fall

On July 13, 2012, several tired but happy volunteers put away the stapler after securing the last colorful poster and stood back to admire the newly decorated and rehabilitated school library in West Oakland. PLACE at Prescott Elementary school, was one of two such libraries completed that week, by Friends of the Oakland Public School Libraries. The other library is the Lockwood



Elementary Library on International Blvd. This devoted crew of community volunteers and District Librarian, Ann Gallagher, spent the 2011/2012 school year automating and



improving the library collections, securing furnishings, and working with the principals to create a library program for the students at their schools. Students will return to find a beautiful new space and several thousand new books. Watch our website [www.fopsl.org](http://www.fopsl.org) for information about the Grand Opening celebrations to be held at these libraries in September.

## **Become a Senior Library Clerk**

OUSD is advertising positions for Senior Library Clerks. If you have two years experience working with children in a school library and some college background, check out the positions available on [www.edjoin.org](http://www.edjoin.org). These positions have potential for additional training and Library Technician certification through Diablo Community College.

## **WE NEED YOU**

There are many ways to support school libraries. Visit our website to view volunteer opportunities as we work to restore libraries. Contact Ann Gallagher, District Librarian [ann.gallagher@ousd.k12.ca.us](mailto:ann.gallagher@ousd.k12.ca.us) for OUSD or Kari Hatch, Volunteer Coordinator for FOPSL [khatch.fopsl@gmail.com](mailto:khatch.fopsl@gmail.com) if you have time and/or resources to offer. We are now accepting donations on our website. Your contributions will support the work we do. Public awareness and outreach are critical to understanding and restoring this vital educational resource to all the students in OUSD. All donations are tax deductible. Let us know if your business or corporation is looking for a fabulous and meaningful project. We can arrange a work day at one of the libraries.



## **FOPSL Promotes RIF-Macy's Be Book Smart Campaign for OUSD**

FOPSL Board members visited area Macy's stores in June and July to promote the Be Book Smart campaign; the driving force of a partnership between Reading is Fundamental -- the largest non-profit literacy organization in the United States -- and Macy's, which provides free books and literacy resources to the most vulnerable children and families in the U.S. During the campaign, Macy's shoppers could donate \$3 and receive a \$10 off coupon for most purchases of \$50 or more. Every dollar of the \$3 donation will put a free, self-chosen book into the hands of a child. This year's campaign raised \$4.8 million, equaling 1.6 million books for kids in need.

OUSD was the only district in the Bay Area that participated in the campaign this year and was consequently invited by RIF to participate in a special kick-off event at the flagship Macy's on

Union Square in San Francisco. FOPSL Board Members, the Principal of Prescott Elementary School and some Prescott teachers, parents and twenty-five students took BART to Macy's at Union Square store to meet Curious George and hear San Francisco 49er Chris Culliver read a book. The students received backpacks with a free book. FOPSL submitted a photo of the event, which won from RIF a special, multi-cultural library.

Thanks to RIF, Macy's and FOPSL volunteers!

## FOPSL Salutes Library Volunteer Cindy Pierson

When Friends of the Oakland Public School Libraries created a fabulous library at Grass Valley Elementary, students, teachers and parents were excited, however there was no one to run the library. Then along came Cindy Pierson... an educated, knowledgeable, caring VOLUNTEER. Cindy spends two to three full days a week, making sure every student and every class, visits the library. This year, that will likely be over 400 students. In a recent conversation with Cindy, I asked about her work.



**Why Cindy volunteers:** “All my life I have been aware of the inequities in our society. The most vulnerable citizens are our children, elderly, poor and those with health issues. When I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, I read the biography of Jane Addams. That was inspirational. Growing up in San Francisco, I witnessed inequities personally. My family often struggled to make ends meet, but many of my peers came from affluent neighborhoods and I saw first-hand the difference in access to resources. This early awareness stimulated my drive to work in capacities that provide equitable access to resources.”

**Why a School Library:** “I know that what I’m doing is important. When I opened the library in the middle of last year (December 2011) a student expressed disbelief that he could take a book home. He was surprised by my trust in him. Some of the simplest lessons from the library have a huge impact...trust and responsibility. I grew up in a home without books. I feel that I can relate with many of the children in OUSD that are also growing up without easy access to literature. I remember the first time I entered my school library and received the same enlightening message; I could choose any book I wanted and take it home.”

**What Cindy likes about her work:** “One thing I find rewarding are the discussions that are stimulated in the library. I get to know what kids are interested in by their questions and choices. One day a student surprised me with breakfast. He had checked out a cookbook. I was so touched and it opened a door for communication and common interest with this otherwise very quiet student.”

“I know what the popular topics and titles are at the different grade levels. Diary of a Wimpy Kid, drawing books, Guinness Book of World Records and joke books are all favorites. After helping one first grader locate a joke book at his reading level, he proceeded to follow me around the room reading jokes. We were equally delighted to laugh together. The fifth grades entered eager to continue our weekly read aloud, The Invention of Hugo Cabret. This book introduced rich language and stimulated discussions.”

**How Cindy benefits:** “While reading a poem to a group of students, they began to clap the rhythm of a poem so I could “hear” the words; I realized they changed something in me. These students shared their love for the rhythm of poetry, which created a new appreciation for me and our poetry reading was a lot of fun. But they also taught me that each individual child’s experiences in the library are unique and provide opportunities to develop personal interests and have conversations about the world of literature and information.”

**Additional thoughts Cindy shared:** “My experience working in this library has convinced me that the librarian is extremely important to teaching literacy. Some people think that this job is just about checking out books. It is so much more. Teachers, parents and students are all benefiting from this library...and so am I.”

**Thank you Cindy Pierson, for sharing your story with us.**

There are many people like Cindy that commit time, energy and dedication to the school libraries, because they understand the critical need for this resource in the education of our students. FOPSL will be sharing some of their inspirational stories in our newsletters and on our website.

*Interviewed by Kari Hatch, August 15, 2012*

## **Citizens of Oakland**

Thank you for your continued support of OUSD libraries through your Measure G Parcel Tax contributions.

## **OUSD Principals**

We appreciate your role in keeping OUSD school libraries open and operating during these financially difficult times. FOPSL is dedicated to supporting your school library. Let us know how we can help you.

Please visit our website to learn more about Friends of the Oakland Public School Libraries at

[www.fopsl.org](http://www.fopsl.org).