

Friends of Children's Services



Robin and Victor Smallberg, trustees of the Herman Auerbach Memorial Trust, were honored on April 2nd for their support of the children's services at the Oakland Public Library. At a reception for major donors preceding the 2009 National Library Week program featuring *Culture Clash*, Board President Julie Waldman thanked the Smallbergs for annual grants designated for children's programming. "FOPL has been fortunate to have received more than \$100,000 from the Auerbach Trust over the last 12 years."

Library Director Carmen Martinez presented bookmarks decorated for the occasion by young visitors to the Main Library Children's Room. "These grants, with very few strings attached, allow us to use the funds where most needed for a variety of children's programming."

According to Robin Smallberg, Herman Auerbach lived in New York City and was a family friend of the Smallbergs.

Mr. Auerbach left his money in a trust for causes related to children and the elderly. Victor and Robin became trustees in 2000. "At that time, we had the pleasure of deciding which nonprofit organizations in Oakland we felt were worthy of Mr. Auerbach's intentions for this money. We chose Friends of the Oakland Public Library at the suggestion of our then neighbor, Jean Triebel, who was then a board member of FOPL. We feel strongly that programs that encourage kids of all ages to come to the library and read give us hope for the next generation. The new teen center at the Main Library is a very exciting addition to the services the library provides for the youth of Oakland and is the latest proof of that mission."



photos: 1) *Culture Clash* performers Herbert Siguenza and Ric Salinas made a surprise visit to the FOPL major donor reception prior to their appearance at the National Library Week program. Pictured from left to right: Victor Smallberg, Herbert Siguenza, Julie Waldman, Robin Smallberg, Ric Salinas, Carmen Martinez.

2) Carmen Martinez presents bookmarks to the Smallbergs.

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Ronile Lahti

Life-long Friend of Oakland's Public Libraries

By **Sophie Fynland Souroujon**, FOPL Board Member

Part of an ongoing series on the unique and fascinating people who are Friends of the Oakland Public Library

Ronile Lahti has been a member of FOPL's board of directors since 2007. Prior to that, she was a Friend of the Piedmont Library for many years. Ronile was born and raised in Oakland, all in Piedmont Avenue District.

Ronile recalls that she used to go with her grandmother at a very early age to the Piedmont Avenue Branch Library, and when she was probably 5 years of age, Ronile received her first library card there. Her grandfather had a bakery in the 1920's known as the Risdon Bakery. After the Depression, he worked at the Washington Street Market, which can still be found in the Old Oakland area, just a couple of blocks north of FOPL's *Bookmark Bookstore*, located at 721 Washington Street.

Before Ronile and her siblings were able to read by themselves, their mother would read to them. Later on, "it was a given," according to Ronile, each child read on her/his own every single night from the wide choice of books at their disposal. Ronile's maternal grandmother signed up her grandchildren with a children's book club that delivered four books a month to their home.

Ronile attended Piedmont Avenue Elementary School, and part of the school's activities included a regular visit to the nearby Public Library, a branch where she has remained an active library card-carrying member till this day.

Ronile's junior high years were spent at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School, where she had an extraordinary introduction to library education thanks to a very special librarian, Mrs. Ariel Day. Mrs. Day believed that students needed to learn how to run a library. So Ronile was taught how and where to shelve books, repair them, insert pockets on books, learn about the subject matter of the books and how to file them accordingly, how to conduct research, and even collect fines if there were overdue items. In recognition of their exceptional library education, students were invited to attend a meeting of the California Librarians Association, where they presented a filmstrip of what they were doing at their school library accompanied by speeches that they had composed.

A San Francisco State history major, Ronile confessed that she has the "guilty pleasure" of currently owning a lot of books, primarily on American history, with an emphasis on the U.S. Constitution, even after having downsized her living space from a large home to an apartment.

Ronile shared a story about "The Lighted Candle" store and lending library on Piedmont Avenue that existed before the 1950's. "The store was originally located almost across from the Piedmont Avenue Branch (160 41st Street). The owner sold upscale bric-a-brac and had a 'ladies' lending library' in the back of the store. However, she would not lend certain books to young women because she thought they were too risqué! Ronile picked up things for her grandmother from the store but never borrowed any of the books. The store closed in the 1960's.

Ronile loves to read to this day. She also likes to cook and owns lots of cookbooks. I asked Ronile what made her decide to become a FOPL board member. The obvious answer, of course, was her love of books. But there was another connection - in 2006, she "extensively worked the phone banks at night" in support of Measure N, the *Library Improvement and Expansion Bonds, City of Oakland* measure. Shortly afterwards, while Ronile was checking out books from the Piedmont Avenue Branch Library, she was approached by then-manager librarian Helen Bloch (now Children's Room Librarian at the Oakland Main Library) to see if she'd be interested in joining the FOPL board. Former FOPL board member Glenda Scarbrough, had asked Helen if she knew anyone who might be interested in becoming a FOPL board member.

Current FOPL president, Julie Waldman, and FOPL board member Gen Katz, interviewed Ronile, and by November 2007, she was officially nominated, accepted, and welcomed as a new board member.

A wish list for FOPL? No, Ronile replied. Just one wish - a gathering of those who belong to Friends of their respective library branches. This meeting would be an "on the same page" event, to connect, exchange ideas and tackle the serious issues connected with current budget and service cuts, as well as finding ways to keeping crucial programs. As Ronile says, "A literate society = getting things done."

Please note that FOPL's board is seeking new members who are interested and willing to "get things done." Please join us.

Library Responds to Budget Cuts

Due to budget reductions for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the Oakland Public Library will be changing neighborhood branch hours and raising some fines and fees beginning August 1, 2009.

As of this date, all fifteen branch libraries will be open Tuesdays through Saturdays; closed on Mondays and Sundays. The Main Library at 125 14th Street will maintain its current 7-day per week schedule. In addition, all branch libraries will be open on Tuesday evenings, either from 12:30-8:00 p.m. or 11:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Special programs, such as the Temescal Tool Lending Library and the Second Start Adult Literacy Program, will no longer be available on Mondays. The library's mobile services unit, the bookmobile, has ceased operations.

Several fine and fee charges will also be affected starting August 1. Overdue fines for most adult/teen materials will now be \$.25 per day (instead of \$.20 per day), and it will cost \$2.00 (not \$1.00) to replace a lost or damaged library card. Individuals will also have to pay \$.15 per page for computer printing (no free copies), and \$2.00 (not \$1.00) to make an interlibrary loan request. For more information, updates and a more comprehensive list of fee and fine increases, please check the Oakland Public Library's Website at www.oaklandlibrary.org. You may also contact your nearest library.

NOTE: the Board Meetings on September 14 and November 9 will be held at 5:15 PM at the Main Library

'Book Friends' Members enjoy 10% discounts at:

Bibliomania, 1816 Telegraph Ave.

Book Zoo, 6395 Telegraph Ave.

Laurel Book Store, 4100 MacArthur Blvd.

Marcus Books, 3900 M.L.K. Jr. Way

Montclair Book Tree, 6123 LaSalle St.

Pendragon, 5560 College Ave. (Used Books),

The Spectator, 4163 Piedmont Ave.

Walden Pond, 3316 Grand Ave.

And a 20% discount at the **Bookmark Bookstore**, 721 Washington St., in Old Oakland

Digital Story Station —

California of the Past: East Oakland Stories

Residents of East Oakland are invited to share their personal stories and memories using a new digital storytelling station located at the Eastmont Branch Library. The Oakland Public Library - in partnership with the ACORN Woodland Elementary School and EnCompass Academy - is recording 3-5 minute mini-documentaries that include photographs, music, letters, and other pieces illustrating each individual story.

"We are honored to be one of only a handful of libraries in California to be awarded a *California of the Past* grant by the State Library. The public library is a natural place to bring individuals together to share and preserve our local history – history that might otherwise be lost," states

Carmen Martinez, Director of the Oakland Public Library. Visit the Library's website at www.oaklandlibrary.org to see and hear stories from family and staff members of the partner schools for Oakland's first joint public/school library now under construction at 81st Avenue. Tales from *California of the Past: East Oakland Stories* will be included as part of a public art project being created by artist Rene Yung and funded through the Oakland Public Art Program. *Our Oakland: Eastside Stories* will be housed and made available at the new East Oakland Community Library currently slated to be open in Winter 2009.

Giving

In memory of Bert Freeman from

Jane Freeman
Silver and Frank White

In memory of John R. Hege from

Carl Alexander
Winifred and Tom Walters
for the East Oakland Community
Library at 81st Avenue

In honor of Charlie Hill from

Sandra Sher

**FRIENDS OF THE
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Newsletter Staff:

- Ellen Moyer
- Julie Waldman
- Sophie Souroujon
- Kathleen Hirooka, OPL Community Relations

If your membership has expired,
PLEASE RENEW!

More ways to support the Friends...

Share this newsletter. Ask a friend to join a growing organization-- **800** strong-- dedicated to supporting the Oakland Public Library!

Donate your gently-used books and DVDs to the Bookmark Bookstore. Call **(510) 444-0473** for more information.

Do you have a few hours per week or month? Visit www.fopl.org or call **(510) 444-0473** to learn more about volunteering.

Donate your vehicle. Charity Connection, a service of Volunteers of America, will sell your vehicle with a portion of the proceeds going to FOPL. Call **1-(800) 559-5458** and be sure to say you want your tax-deductible gift to go to the Friends.

Join Us!

Yes, I want to support the **Friends of the Oakland Public Library!**

Enclosed is my check payable to FOPL for \$_____

New (1 year membership) Renewal (1 year membership)

Donation (\$_____ in addition to my membership dues)

Supporting membership levels:

\$1,000 Book Angel

Name(s)_____

\$500 Bibliophile

\$250 Book Conservator

Address_____

\$100 Book Worm

City/Zip_____

\$50 Book Friend

My gift is in honor/memory of_____

Basic membership levels:

\$35 Family/Household

\$25 Individual

\$15 Senior (65+)/Student

Contributions are tax-deductible (tax ID 94-2553734).

Make your Credit Card donation at www.fopl.org.

Call **(510) 238-6932** for membership information.

Mail to: FOPL, 721 Washington St., Oakland, CA 94607