

Friends Trends

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE JEFFERSON PUBLIC LIBRARY

No. 67

July 2023

2023 Volunteer of the Year Michele Thomassie

by Peg Phelps, photo by Meade Phelps



Sue Craig, left, presented the Volunteer of the Year Award to Michele Thomassie.

Michele joined the Friends a year ago, and instantly became an active volunteer. She learned to sort books, and then to check and pack. She is not afraid to try anything, including fixing our broken vacuum! Her latest project is to “tidy up” the storage room, which is an ongoing task. Due to her organizing skills, we can now find things in the room! She even took all the extra envelopes, folders, plastic page protectors, staplers, hole punches, pencils, and markers and made little packets that we sold at the last book sale. Michele and her husband, Bill, set up two Little Libraries outside his office on Division Street in Metairie. She takes many of the books that we cannot sell and makes them available to the neighborhood through these little libraries. Michele has also donated two of her beautiful, unique handmade quilts to the Friends. Both have been auctioned off at the store. She also serves on the board as an at-large member.

A graphic with a yellow background and a border of colorful books. The text reads: "The Friends Need You!" in large, bold, black letters. Below it, "Renew Your Dues or Become a Member" in red, italicized letters. At the bottom, it says "On-Line: friendsofjeffersonlibrary.org or Call: 504-455-2665".

**The Friends
Need You!**

***Renew Your Dues
or Become a Member***

On-Line:
friendsofjeffersonlibrary.org
or Call:
504-455-2665

We're on FACEBOOK!!!

Check out the "Friends of the Jefferson Public Library" Facebook page!

"Like" us on Facebook to get our reminders and updates on the latest happenings and Friends events!



If you are reading a print copy of this newsletter and would like to receive it online, send an e-mail to friendsjpl3@yahoo.com. In the subject line, write "Subscribe Newsletter."

We find good homes for used books.

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(a member of United for Libraries, the
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Advocates, Friends, and Foundations)

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Sharon Simmons, Anna Campos

Mission

The Friends of the Jefferson Public
Library is an independent, nonprofit
organization of civic-minded volunteers.
We support the Jefferson Parish Library
by promoting library awareness, providing
needed unbudgeted items for all its branches
through fund raising, and
participating in literacy programs.

Address and Phone

P. O. Box 9391
Metairie, LA 70055
504-455-BOOK (2665)

Web Site

<http://www.friendsofjeffersonlibrary.org/>

Friends Trends

Editors: Anna Campos, Annette
Centanni

Contributing Editor: Peg Phelps

News from the Friends Store

by Patricia Cox, store manager; photo by Meade Phelps



February is usually a slow month – this year, I thought income would be extra low since we were only open 25 days. I was very surprised when I did the monthly report to see that we had 11 days with over \$100 in sales. Two of those days were over \$200 and “cheers” go to Cheryl Smith and Carole McGinity for a \$300 day at the end of the month.

We welcomed a new volunteer, Patricia Noble – glad to have you on board!

“*BARBIE*” news – on our first venture into Ebay, we successfully listed and sold one of our designer Barbies only to have the buyer return it. Talk about frustration!! Later in the spring we sold a theme Barbie and resold the designer Barbie.

At the end of March, volunteer coordinator Sandra Blount brought in new volunteer, Barbara Coman, for training. That morning turned out to be one of the busiest ever – sales totaled \$275! OK Barbara – you set the bar high. We hope all of your shifts result in figures like that!

Congrats to our newest volunteer, John Gore—his first day on the job netted \$120!

Barbara Coman followed up with another \$158 dollar day with the sale of 2 afghans. Carole McGinity came in that afternoon and not to be outdone, sold 3 afghans – a \$340 day! Whoo-Hoo!! Mothers and Grads are in for a special treat!

We had another successful quilt auction, thanks to Michele Thomassie’s generosity. This time the quilt garnered \$200!

June arrived and so did the hot temperatures. And the afghan sales. On the hottest day of the year so far, Pam Francis sold 2 afghans!

We have indeed been reaping the rewards of our generous donors. Thanks to Robin Palmisano, Holly Mo’s nephews and Laraine Marchese our sales have increased significantly!



2023 Friends of Distinction

by Peg Phelps, photos by Meade Phelps

(Ed. note: in a very clever presentation, these awards were given out simultaneously.)

Rose Catalanotto



Rose, shown at left, was presented her award by Sandra Blount.

Rose comes to sorting on both Tuesday and Thursday.

She is helpful whenever and wherever she is needed.

She sorts books.

She prices books.

She scans books

She packs books.

She has mastered what seems to be the almost impossible task of cutting price stickers.

She helps to unload donations outside, even in summer.

She works the book sales as a cashier and as a credit card machine operator.

She provides delicious baked goods, often with an Italian flair.

She shares the fruit of her garden.

She competently handled the children's books when Sandra spent nine weeks recovering after her surgery.

She is a great friend (with a small 'f') and a loyal Friend (with a capital 'F').



Sharon Simmons



Sharon, left, received her award from Peg Phelps.

Sharon comes on Thursdays.

She is helpful whenever and wherever she is needed.

She sorts books.

She prices books.

She scans books

She packs books.

She lifts boxes and takes them to storage.

She takes out the trash.

She helps to unload donations outside, even in summer.

She makes sure everyone has a nametag, all the while engaging in a never-ending battle to keep the nametags in alphabetical order.

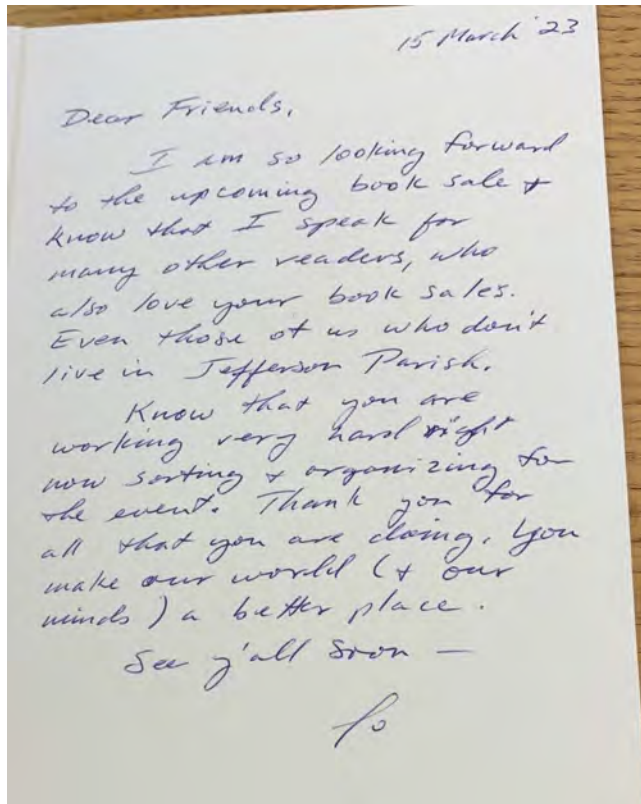
She makes sure all members get a postcard informing them of meetings.

She makes sure information about new volunteers is followed up by the appropriate chairperson.

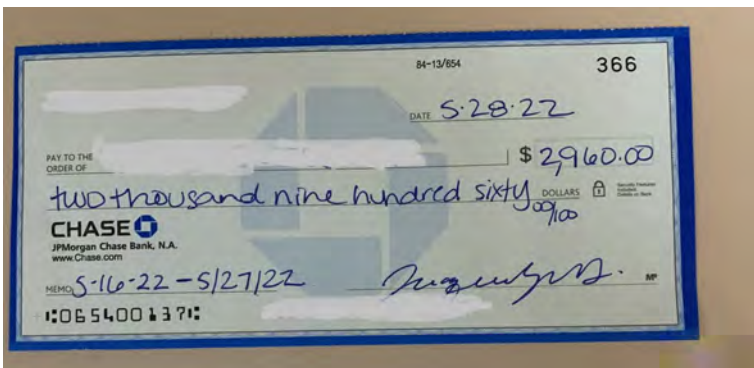
She is a great friend (with a small 'f') and a loyal Friend (with a capital 'F').



Worth a thousand words



Left: an admirer penned this note to the Friends before the April book sale. Right: Jack Young and Barbara Coman wore their team shirts to Friends at the opening of the college baseball World Series. Below: Online Sales lister Mary Penot found this check for almost \$3,000 in a book she was listing. Treasurer Peg Phelps tried unsuccessfully to return it to the owner and plans to shred it. Photos by Anna Campos.



NOTICE: The Online Sales department is in need of packing materials and small boxes (3" high or less).

If you do not wish to receive future issues of *Friends Trends*, address an e-mail to friendsjpl3@yahoo.com. Use "Unsubscribe to Friends Trends" in the subject line.

We find good homes for used books.



The Shadow Knows (and TELLS All)

Greetings, Fellow Booklovers! Hope you are having a great summer in spite of the heat. My guess is we will be just fine as long as El Niño keeps protecting us from any hurricanes.

We have recuperated! Yes, in April we pulled off another success of a Big Book Sale and survived! We knew it was going to be spectacular when **Joan Kittok** of the on-line Amazon krewe bounced in reporting that while driving to the Pontchartrain Center, she heard **Dan Gill** of WWL radio singing our praises. He touted our “well-run sale, good prices,” and many other niceties. With his and our other advertisements: newspaper, Facebook, internet, TV, posters, book marks and word-of-mouth, the sale *did* turn out to be spectacular! In fact, we grossed \$65,298, and netted \$52,232, a most respectable total for the three days we were open.

More importantly, it was a wonderful community activity in so many ways. It was great fun to be with the many volunteers who came to work the sale, many of whom most of us see only twice a year, but who step up when needed. Sustenance was smoothly and efficiently handled by **Judy Welcker** and other volunteers. BTW, **Judy** extends a hearty Thank You to all who contributed cakes, cookies, chips, pasta salad and many other goodies to feed the tired, hungry horde who worked, especially all morning on set-up day.

As customers started flocking in, **Meade Phelps** appointed himself “crowd control officer.”

Whenever the checkout line extended from the lobby to the back of the room, he took control. Our seasoned, dedicated cashiers, then, increased their speed to work the line down as quickly as possible



The Book Sale in the dark. Photo by J. D.

so that customers never had more than just a few minutes' wait. Of course, we had a few anxious minutes when lightning struck and the power went out Saturday at 1:00 PM, but the generator kicked on and we were once again in business.

It may be only my opinion, but I think it is the **stories** that always make the sale, however. In talking with our customers, we have found that our sales are important, highly entertaining and very personal to them. They love to browse, chat, touch books, and consider their selections. Veteran cashier **Cheryl Ledet** has always known this and has a loyal following of many-a-year who will wait in line just to have her wait on them. She has time for a chat with *everyone* and an ear to listen to each one's stories.

My husband reports he loves working in the Collectibles area for just this reason. Everyone seems to have a story they love to tell to anyone willing to listen. This time, **Anthony** unwittingly

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We find good homes for used books.

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asked two young ladies which high school they go to. He was surprised to learn they were both criminal justice majors already finished college!

My friend **Maria** reported to me she bought 25 books for \$25 and was *thrilled* with her bargains. Friends brought friends and relatives. There were repeat customers, even repeat customers within the sale. **Angelle & Stephen Stuart** from my extended family brought two friends, whom I'm sure will be repeat customers in future sales, and so on. We will be having another big one on **October 20-22, 2023. Y'all come!** Then you can contribute your *own* stories and spread the good feelings around further.

The Thank You Coffee. Our May 3rd Thank You for the Big Book Sale was the biggest and best it has ever been! The brunch was delicious, and attendees stayed and stayed. **Judy Zawislak** and **Peg Phelps**, co-chairs of the sale, gave full reports on all of the happenings and accepted suggestions from the experts who had fielded the problems which inevitably occur within every sale. As always, we are working on solutions.

The May General Meeting. Thanks to the book sale, the on-line business, the Store, the book carts and other year-round fundraising endeavors, Friends' President, **Marie Orth**, was



President Marie Orth, left, and Library Director Jessica Styons pose with the big check. Photo by Anna Campos.

able to present **Jessica Styons** with a check for the library in the amount of **\$100,000**. This was the first check **Jessica** had accepted as new Library Director, and her face said, "ecstatic!" You are welcome at our board meetings anytime, **Jessica**.

Guest Speaker **Linda Wegmann** did a wonderful job with her presentation of "Super Summer Plants for your Louisiana Landscape." It was very well-attended and a huge success.

From Anna's lips to God's ears: A true story. Back at sorting, the work never stops. One morning after the sale as sorters were lamenting the dearth of books in the center of the room, **Anna Campos** suddenly mused, "What we need is for the doorbell to ring *right now*." No sooner had she uttered the words than the doorbell rang. Outside was a tall gentleman who had been sent by a Friend who is a current board member. With a wide grin he said, "Does anyone around here need some books?" The sorters were astounded! His pickup truck was filled with beautiful books that kept them happily occupied all morning.

Some new members! The sorting center has been blessed recently, also, with a bevy of new volunteers. Most have started out sorting, but I'm told that a few have decided to try their hands at listing books on Amazon. The members are **Liz Averill, Christy Pepper, Darlene Scalf, Barbara Starks** and **Jill Thaller**. **Peg Phelps** will interview them shortly and promises an article about them in the September issue of Friends Trends.

Two new babies! Two long-time members have welcomed new grandbabies since I have last reported. **Judy Welcker** and her husband **Stephen** have a new grandson, **Lincoln John**, son of their

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daughter **Julie** and son-in-law **Michael**. **Judy** says he has the cutest, plumpest cheeks ever. **Diane** and **Mark Schleifstein's** newest granddaughter, **Eve Elle**, "never" cries; she just sleeps and eats!

Bits & Pieces around sorting. I thought you might be interested to know that **Diane** and **Randy Pittman** are NOT moving to Florida after all. That is wonderful news for both Sorting and Amazon listing, as **Diane** has been an active member of both groups. **Randy** cashiers at every sale.

Michele Thomassie has become our new "tidier-upper." It seems she has a natural talent for straightening things out, pitching unusable stuff and organizing supplies. We are all very grateful you love to do this, **Michele**.

Barbara Coman has been "counting steps" lately, as part of her fitness program. Sorting heard all about it while they were working one morning; so, when the doorbell rang during lunch, a few people piped up, "You get it, **Barbara**. This is a great opportunity to get some more steps in!" The lunch

table is always ready for a good laugh.

I'll close with a donation and a mystery. Recently the Gretna branch of our library received a heartwarming donation. It seems a new patron was so pleased with his experience at the Gretna library that he decided to leave \$100 in the care of **Bill McKee**, Branch Manager, in appreciation of the friendly, efficient service he had received. **Bill** promptly called **Will Hunn**, our Gretna library liaison, cart replenisher, donation picker-upper and regular sorter. **Will**, in turn, picked up the check, told the story to **Treasurer Peg P.** and handed her the \$100. Another reason we continue to do what we do for the library!

The second item is still a mystery. Twice on a Monday during the summer, **Patricia Cox, Store Manager**, opened the store to find the credit card machine set to "Hebrew." She has no idea how or why that happened! Look for more adventures of **Patricia** and her krewe in a separate article in this issue!

Until next time,

Your friendly Shadow

News Notes

Pam Francis, a Friends volunteer, took this picture of the framed display of the flag with the signatures of the Medal of Honor recipients. Together with a book, it was given to the Friends by the widow of Dr. Donald J. Palmisano. The Friends thought they would be better enjoyed in a military setting, and so donated them to the new Military Lounge at the New Orleans Airport. The Victory Belles entertained at the ceremony, and Judge Michael Bagneris and Airport Director Kevin Dolliole were also present.



The March Book Sale



Above, left: Volunteers arranged all the books neatly on the tables the day before the sale. Right: customers search through puzzles on opening day. Below: after the sale, the books are piled into large Gaylord boxes. They are then transported to Thrift Books in the large van seen below right.



Gaylord Boxes

The book sale committee is looking for used Gaylord boxes for packing books after the sale. If anyone can donate these to us, please call 504-455-2665 or e-mail FriendsJPL@Yahoo.com. Gaylord boxes must be in usable condition.

Thank you!

We find good homes for used books.

The March General Meeting

photo by Anna Campos



Genealogist Gwen Kelley from the Jefferson Public Library spoke on "Uncovering your Family Roots."

If a man write a better book,
preach a better sermon, or
make a better mousetrap than
his neighbor, tho' he build his
house in the woods, the world
will make a beaten path to his
door.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

The May General Meeting

photo by Anna Campos



"Super Plants for Your Louisiana Landscape: Summer Selections" was the topic of speaker Linda Wegmann, a Master Gardener.



Attendees at the May General Meeting enjoyed being in the double meeting room and the addition of tables.

Photos from the Volunteer Luncheon

taken by Meade Phelps



Above: Marie Orth, left, was presented with a special award by Anna Campos to mark the completion of her first year as president.



All Friends volunteers who worked 50 or more hours in the current year were invited to the luncheon held June 2 at Austin's restaurant in Metairie.

What's cooking at the Friends?

Michele Thomassie and Anna Campos have baked these artisan loaves with great success.

Light Whole Wheat Bread in 5 Minutes a Day

(makes 4 round loaves—recipe may be halved to make 2 loaves)

3 cups lukewarm water (100°F or below)
1 tablespoon granulated yeast
1 tablespoon Kosher salt
1 cup whole wheat flour
5 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

1. Mix the yeast and salt with the water in a 6-quart bowl or a lidded (not airtight) food container.

Mix the remaining dry ingredients without kneading, using a spoon. You may need to use your hands to incorporate the last bit of flour.

3. Cover (not airtight) and allow to rest at room temperature until the dough rises and collapses (or flattens on top), approximately 2 hours.

4. The dough can be used immediately after the initial rise, though it is easier to handle when cold. Refrigerate the container of dough and use over the next 14 days.

5. On baking day, dust the surface of the refrigerated dough with flour and cut off a 1-pound (grapefruit-size) piece. Dust with more flour and quickly shape into a ball by stretching the surface of the dough around to the bottom on all four sides, rotating the ball a quarter-turn as you go. Allow to rest and rise on a pizza peel prepared with cornmeal, whole wheat flour, or parchment paper for 40 minutes.

6. Preheat a baking stone near the middle of the oven to 450°F (20 to 30 minutes), with an empty metal broiler tray on any shelf that won't interfere with rising bread.

7. Sprinkle liberally with flour and slash the top, about 1/2 inch deep, using a serrated knife.

8. Slide the loaf directly onto the hot stone. Pour 1 cup of hot water into the broiler tray and quickly close the oven door. Bake for about 35 minutes, or until deeply browned and firm. Smaller or larger loaves will require adjustments in baking time.

9. Allow to cool on a rack before slicing and eating.



Michele Thomassie

--from *The New Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day*

See the Youtube video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_c53AYZMGM