

California Readers



April 2010

NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We probably all agree that a great book makes the best companion for a rainy day, but this year's luncheon at Burbank's *Castaway Restaurant and Banquet Center* proved to be an even better treat! To those of us who *weathered* the proverbial Southern California downpour, not only was there a rainbow outside at the day's end, but a vibrant display of California authors, books, Ed Pert projects, and boutique and silent auction items brightened the room inside. (I looked for Martin Burton's friendly leprechaun, but he must have been at the other end of the rainbow!) I wish to extend my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the entire California Readers Board and committee members whose hard work and dedication made the event such a success, as well as to each and every author, artist, speaker, educator, student and family member in attendance. As this school year with its uncertain budget draws closer to an end, I leave you with these words of wisdom from Oscar Wilde; "Ordinary riches can be stolen, real riches cannot. In your soul are infinitely precious things that cannot be taken from you." May we forever reap the benefit of *real riches*.

Best Wishes,
Tammie Celi
President

LITERARY FASHION WEAR

Here's a clever way to make a fashion statement in your library – vests with see-through pockets. Students can use the pockets to display artwork, written responses, realia, or author information about library books they have read and then wear the vests around the library or school to promote reading. California Readers has a supply of small, medium, and large size vests made out of red, gold, sky blue, or dark blue in durable fabric. You can purchase a set of 7 for your library or classroom for the fashionable price of \$25. Contact **Candy Dardarian** at candar@earthlink.net to arrange delivery/pickup.

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BOOK CORNER



This Book Corner features a review of a book submitted for consideration for the California Collections. The Committee members evaluate books all through the year.

Antoinette Portis Studio City

NOT A STICK

By **Antoinette Portis**

ISBN: 0061123269 HarperCollins 2008

A pig uses his imagination to turn a stick into many playful items such as a fishing pole, a paintbrush, and a riding crop. Text is written in simple question-and-answer format in which the pig insists the stick "is not a stick." Sparse line drawings by Portis, using only blue or black capture a young child at play and encourage the use of the imagination. Useful **read-aloud** for learning about shapes and expanding the imagination.



Antoinette Portis
will be presenting at
Cesar Chavez Elementary
school on May 27, 2010.

President's Award
2010

Sid Fleischman passed away on March 17, 2010, one day after his 90th birthday. Over the years Sid has had 33 books in the California Collections. His legacy will live on in his fine writing. We will all miss him.



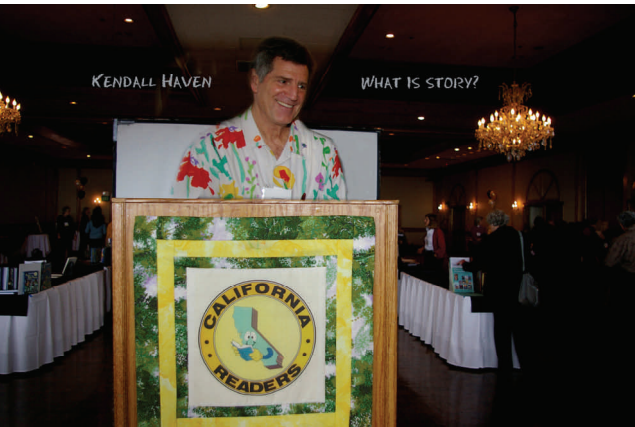
2011
Luncheon
February
26

californiareaders.org

KENDALL HAVEN CAPTURES AUDIENCE WITH STORY

By Fran Oberman

A late February downpour couldn't keep 200-plus book lovers from trekking to the [13th annual California Readers' We](#)



[Love California Authors and Artists Luncheon](#) for an afternoon of book signings, author-speakers, grants to schools, a silent auc-

tion, and displays by last year's prize-winning schools.

Highlighting the festivities was keynote speaker **Kendall Haven**, well-known author and storyteller. His rapt audience of educators and students listened to his stories and learned how to transform the elements of a story into engrossing written and oral tales.

A display of books by Los Angeles author and illustrator **Leo Politi** was augmented by four of Politi's original illustrations loaned to us by Susan Israel from Woodlake Elementary School. In accepting this year's Leo Politi Golden Author Award, **Susan Goldman Rubin** spoke of Politi's influence on her writing. She cited his use of ethnic characters in his stories and told how he had motivated her to utilize Jewish themes in several of her books.

Grants of 100 library books and an author visit went to each of three schools: **59th Street ES, Lawrence MS, and Canoga Park HS**. **The Winnick Family Foundation** provided the elementary school award while the high school prize was sponsored by **PermaBound**. The **Peggy Miller Golden Angel Award**, in memory of the former Library Services supervisor and coordinated by her daughter, **Nancy Reich**, made possible the middle school grant.

Students and staff representing the 2009 Ed Pert winners, **Saticoy Elementary School, Millikan Middle School, and East Valley High School**, along with **Cesar Chavez Elementary School**, winner of the **Emma Pert Golden Angel Award**, set up displays to demonstrate how each school had implemented its winning grant proposal.

Cesar Chavez school won the President's Award by having the best display of student projects. They won an author presentation by **Antoinette Portis** who will be at their school on May 27, 2010.

In addition, **Lockhurst Elementary** again saluted the winner of the Leo Politi Golden Author Award with student-created puppets of characters from **Susan Goldman Rubin's** books. **Hamlin Elementary School**, winner of the **Bonnie O'Brian Award** also showed student work related to Rubin's books.

HAMLIN ES WINS ME By [Susan Goldman Rubin](#)

On Friday morning, February 26th, I pulled into the parking lot at Hamlin School and easily found my spot because it was marked with a bunch of balloons attached to a poster featuring images from my books. In the library I enjoyed another surprise: a California Readers bookcase filled with *my books*. My gracious hostess, **Najma Hussain**, escorted me to the auditorium and pointed out a display of artwork by "Hamlin's Aspiring Artists." I was flabbergasted to see drawings by children in first grade.

They had done their versions of **Georgia O'Keeffe's** Jack-in-the-Pulpit painting, one of the pictures I had



included in my power point presentation as a preview of my forthcoming biography. They had also done incredible drawings of **Andy Warhol's** fanciful shoes based on a page in my book, **ANDY WARHOL: Pop Art Painter**. Then there was a wall filled with self-portraits by fourth graders, another wall covered with third graders' paintings based on **Picasso's** Cubism, and a table holding books the fifth graders were creating about artists. I knew I had come to the right place. Talking with the children was stimulating and inspiring. We simply ran out of time with so much more to discuss. Two students gave me a pot of tulips and a magnificent collage of my book jackets as a parting gift. But the real gift was meeting the kids at **Hamlin Elementary School**.

CANOGA PARK HS WINS AN ED PERT AWARD By Elizabeth Holloway, Teacher Librarian

When students socialize about their reading, comprehension improves and engagement in reading improves. The California Collection Wiki will provide students with the opportunity to use Web 2.0 technology to socialize about their reading. Moreover, they will share their work with their parents, providing another level of socialization and greater visibility for the role of the library.

At the beginning of fall semester, ninth grade students will select books from the California Collection with the help of their classroom teacher and the teacher librarian. Ninth grade teachers will monitor students' progress weekly. Once students finish their books, they will write three entries on their class's California Collection Wiki page, addressing one of the open ended questions provided on the site without giving away the ending of the book. These questions will include the following: *A. Both the novels and the biographies portray people who have overcome tremendous obstacles. Describe a historical person or character. What obstacles did they face? How did he or she overcome them? B. There are several books that describe advances in technology. To what degree have these advances improved our lives? To what degree have they impacted them negatively? C. After participating on the California Collection Wiki, what book from the collection would you like to read next?*

In addition, students will respond to four other students' entries, using Accountable Talk (for example *I'd like to make a connection to what you said...; I am confused about what you said when...*).

On student-led conference night, classes will meet in the library and utilize the library's computer lab to present the wiki to their parents. They will be required to explain how the wiki either increased their understanding on their reading or inspired them to read another book that was discussed.

We hope that this process will lead students to a deeper understanding of what they read, a greater knowledge of other books they may enjoy, greater comfort and proficiency in publishing material on the web, and a greater understanding for their parents about what students are expected to achieve at school.



Bonnie O'Brian, Pam Hamashita, Beth Holloway, John Pert

59TH STREET ELEMENTARY WINS AN ED PERT AWARD By Karen Israel, Library Aide

Receiving the Ed Pert Award was a wonderful shock. As I unveiled the Award to our students and staff at **59th Street** during our regular Monday morning assembly, I let them know that 'NOW the work begins'. The enthusiasm in implementing our project is tremendous, we are all looking forward to the fun and rewarding task ahead.



Our project plan is to have each grade level, K - 5, read a selection of 5 books from the Elementary California Collection. Votes will be cast for the single book their grade level will perform in a Reader's Theatre Production.

Parents will also be involved in costume making and in prop and set building. This will be a tremendous task that will build school spirit, community camaraderie, and of course a greater love of reading. We sincerely thank California Readers, and **The Winnick Family Foundation** for this opportunity.

RUBIN BRINGS ART TO LIFE! By Najma Hussain, Library Aide

Hamlin's Author Visit by **Susan Goldman Rubin** was a great success. It was both entertaining and educational for students and teachers alike. **Mrs. Rubin** shared her love of art with the students, beginning with her early childhood experiences. She personalized her presentation by inviting the students into her life through personal stories and a photo of her office, son, and dog, forming an immediate rapport with the students. She created an atmosphere in which the students felt comfortable asking questions and sharing their experiences.

All grades prepared for her visit by studying various artists and creating original works of art inspired by the masters. Throughout **Mrs. Rubin's** presentations students asked questions and made connections. She inspired the students to explore new artists and broadened their interests. **Mrs. Rubin** brought art to life!

PEGGY MILLER, A GOLDEN ANGEL
By Candace Dardarian

This year **Lawrence Middle School** was awarded a collection and an author visit from the bequests and donations made toward the **Peggy Miller Golden Angel Award**.

Peggy Miller Golden Angel Award.

It is said of **Peggy Miller** that she was always quiet and unassuming – sensitive and gracious. One never heard her get angry or say a nega-

tive word about anyone. And no one knew more about books for children and young adults than **Peggy**.

She began her library career in 1952 at **Pasteur Middle School** and then moved to **Library Services** where she was a coordinating librarian, head of collection development, and for 21 years, supervisor. She was nationally recognized as an expert in children’s literature and was very active in national, state and local organizations.

Peggy was a founding member of FOCAL – (Friends of Children and Literature) and her first job was to coordinate the “Author-for-a-Day” program that brought authors into local schools to interact with students.

She was a perfect match for California Readers – knowledgeable about books and a friend of children’s authors. She served on the High School Collection Committee and the Awards Committee.

Peggy Miller died on January 29, 2006.

RUBIN BRINGS ART TO LIFE!

The students and staff of **Hamlin Street School** would like to thank **Mrs. Rubin** for enriching our lives with her terrific presentation. I would like to express my appreciation to the **Hamlin Library Leadership Team** for making it possible to write, win, and implement our Grant Awards. We’d also like to thank California Readers and **Bonnie O’Brian** for making this visit possible.

Sunland Elementary School Taken Over by Circus Fever!

By Candace Dardarian

The students of **Sunland Elementary School** took a trip to the circus without even getting on a bus. They were the audience for a presentation by Alva Sachs about her book, **CIRCUS FEVER**. The story is about a young girl who looks forward to the circus coming to her town and imagines herself as one of the performing clowns.

As **Mrs. Sachs** read the book to the students, she asked them questions about their circus experiences and the children were excited to share their stories. Second-grade teacher **Mrs. Burden** said, “This is the most age-appropriate assembly I have ever been to.”

The students sat at tables and benches in the auditorium and drew crayon pictures of themselves as clowns and Mrs. Sachs circulated the room with a microphone and selected students to describe what the clowns were doing.

Mrs. Sachs, a former school teacher, told the students that the character of Jessica was based on her own daughter and her newest book, **ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO!** is written about her son. **Mrs. Boyett**, the library aide, had met Mrs. Sachs at a “We Love California Authors and Artists” Luncheon. “I spotted Alva’s book about the circus from across the room,” said **Mrs. Boyett**, “and knew I wanted her to meet Sunland stu-

A GOLDEN AWARD

By Tammie Celi, Teacher Librarian

There is nothing better than the honest *anticipation* and *hope* of winning an award, other than the actual *receiving* of one. This was my belief up until this year’s luncheon. Then I experienced the real unexpected, winning an award that I hadn’t even applied for! I had explained to my students the details of the Ed Pert grant and informed them that our school had applied, but also humbled them with the reality that there can only be one winner for middle school and to not be disappointed if it wasn’t our school. And then, as if **Lawrence M.S.** had their own guardian angel in a time of budget woes, a beam of sunshine shone through the rainy day as the legacy of **Peggy Miller** enlightened the room. I listened with fondness about a woman of whom I never had the privilege of knowing personally, but only through memory as I was blessed several years ago with the honor of announcing the **Peggy Miller Memorial Fund**. When **Nancy Reich** announced my school’s name as the recipient of this prestigious award, it was as if Peggy herself were giving me the “heavenly thumbs up” for effort and perseverance. I cannot imagine a higher honor.