

Friends of Walnut West Library

June 2010

From the President ...

Spring 2010 brought another egg hunt to Walnut West Library. For the first time in many years, the weather cooperated and most of the activities could be held out of doors. Many thanks go to co-chairs Mariza Shavelle, Kiwanis leader for Penn Circle K and Daphne Harris of our Friends group. Beth Ann Johnson coordinated the collection of books from Germantown Academy 5th grade students, school supplies and stuffed animals donated by Maria Biebel and Maureen Harrigan, Candis Saunders, Freda Egnal and the Second Mile Thrift Shop. Penn Circle K students led crafts and games. Freda Egnal and Peter Manoogian volunteered as did several parents. Over fifty children attended along with their parents.

April saw another successful breakfast by the Friends board, organized by Diane Adler for our library staff. Everyone enjoyed home-made goodies: coffee cake, French toast casserole, fresh fruit salad etc. before the library opened on April 22.

Our adult librarian, Tara Murphy, left Walnut West to become the branch head at Falls of Schuylkill, but Matt Murphy, her husband, continues as a volunteer at children's chess on Wednesdays at 5:30pm.

--- Beth Ann Johnson

*Save our Libraries !!
Protest proposed budget
cuts and four day weeks.*

*See update on city budget
and sample letter you can
send on pages 5 & 6*

ANNUAL EGG HUNT



Summer Reading Programs at Walnut Street West!

June:

Yoga for Kids and Teens

Monday, June 21 4:00-4:30pm

Led by yoga instructor Valerie Rushmere.

Summer Reading Kick-Off Party!

Wednesday, June 23rd 2:00-4:00 pm

Featuring the dynamic musical duo, "The Cat's Pajamas!"

Summertime Baking:

Cupcake Decorating Workshop!

Monday, June 28th 2:30-4:00

Local University City bakery **Cream & Sugar** (www.creamandsugarsweets.com) will teach kids how to make buttercream icing before decorating and eating cupcakes!

Pre-Registration is a must!* *Please call Ms. Prather, Children's Librarian at 215.685.7671 to register your child.

July:

Crime Lab: Forensic Science & DNA Science Bus!

July 6, 7 & 8th 1:00-3:00pm

Sponsored by Congressman Chaka Fattah, this three day workshop is for children entering grades 3rd-7th. Children will explore the popular subject of criminal forensics as a platform for scientific learning.

Board Games! on Fridays in July ~

July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30~

2:00pm for the General Public

New Board Games at the Library just for Summer Reading!

Meet Vet Dr Otto and her dog, Dolce
Friday July 9, at 3 pm.

Dolce, a certified therapy dog, reads and counts! Find out more. Dr Cynthia Otto of the Penn Veterinary School will also talk about how she choose veterinary medicine as a career.

Remarkable Reptiles!

Wednesday, July 28th 2:30-4:00pm

Join Reptile Expert James Galloway as he shares fun facts about his reptile friends.

Beware: snakes will be present!

August:

Pajama Storytime!

Wednesday, August 4th 6:30-7:15pm.

For families with children of all ages.

Summer Reading Wrap-Up Party!

Wednesday, August 11th 2:00-4:00pm.

Have your face painted and take home some free give-away books to celebrate all the great reading you did this summer!

Summer Reading runs from
June 16th - August 11
Walnut St. West Branch
Free Library of Philadelphia
www.freelibrary.org (215) 685-7671

COUPON EXCHANGE

Did you know? We hve a coupon exchange in the lobby of our library. It is next to the box for stamp lovers to exchange postage stamps. Bring some, take some.

AN UPDATE FROM THE LIBRARIAN

by Dan Ryan

We have had a busy month here at the Walnut Street West Branch! Our branch manager, Ai Leng Ng, has been out all month, and Dan Ryan from the Durham Branch has been trying to fill her very large shoes. Our children's librarian, Prather Egan, will be away for a few weeks starting at the end of May, as she celebrates her wedding and heads out on her honeymoon with her husband!

We have been fortunate to host several valuable programs, including chess club for children, the University of Pennsylvania's "First Thursday" community meeting and the regular Friday book sale run by our wonderful Friends group!

All of us have been busy here preparing for Summer Reading, and while our branch will unfortunately not be hosting Science In the Summer this year, Ms Egan is getting us Chaka Fattah's Learning Lab bus this July! It will be outside the branch, and interested parents may contact Ms Egan. The beautiful name plaque on the outside of our branch has been installed.

We'd like to take this time to remind our patrons that the LEAP after-school homework help program will be ending for the Summer: the last day is June 18th! Our LEAP staff has been wonderful throughout the school year! Another important reminder: all branches in the Free Library system will not be observing Saturday hours during the Summer.

Holiday Book Sale



The branches, including Walnut St West, will be open Monday to Friday only from the week of June 6th to the week of September 26th; our last Saturday until October was June 5th.

In June, we are looking forward to the beginning of Summer Reading for children, adults, and teens; and Ai Leng Ng's return to the branch. Summer Reading will kick off with a party for children and parents on Wednesday **June 23rd** from 2:00 to 4:00, and will feature the musical duo "The Cat's Pajamas."

Chess Club Celebrates Its Third Anniversary

The Chess Club started out strong this year due to the number of returning students and parents. In the beginning we hosted more than 20 kids with five or more parents to help out. At the end of the 2010 school year we are averaging 15 kids per week and five parents. Managing the club meetings has become much easier with the addition of parents who help organize the snacks so that we have them every week. It also relieves library staff of one responsibility.

Since flu season we now take the children to wash their hands first before snacks. I also have a volunteer staff of four men and sometimes an additional high school volunteer to help with the kids. Our group: Alden Zhang- Student at Drexel, Matt Bingham, Barton Smith and Fred Austin - long-time ASAP volunteer, are all accomplished chess players and good with the kids.

We had a visit by librarian Jeanne Hamman from the Lucien Blackwell Regional Branch to observe our group and ask questions about how we are organized and supported. I was proud to host Jeanne and to share with her the techniques we've discovered over the past three years that work. The kids definitely respond to structure and routine which helps in their comprehension of the game and behavior.

Sportsmanship is emphasized after each game and manners too with the magic words "Please" and "Thank you" when receiving snacks.

Also new this year is the use of a bulletin board on Google to share informa-



tion with parents, volunteers and library staff about upcoming tournaments, registration forms and other opportunities for advancing their chess. 25 parents are subscribed to the list - an easy way to communicate between club meetings.

Currently 64 kids are on our sign-in list; some come infrequently, others are regulars. We had 4 four-year-olds join this year; 3 five-year-olds; 8 six-year-olds and 8 each seven, eight and nine year olds. How remarkable that kids are developing an interest and ability at such young ages. It is essential, at that age, that a parent be there to support them.

Next year's goal will be to get more of our club members and their parents out to the monthly tournaments that are organized by ASAP - After School Activities Partnership. This will help focus the kids, who have been coming to the club for over a year, on organized competition and developing a team spirit. As our champ, Wenjie Xin, will tell you there are medals and rewards to be won as well.

If you are interested in helping or like your child to participate, email me at philly.joe.c@gmail.com or come to our next meeting.

Joe Clarke, Chess Coach,
Walnut West Chess Club

From the Coalition
to Save the Libraries

Last year, we all saved the libraries!!!, but the Mayor still cut \$8 million - 20% of the library budget, reduced library hours from 6 to 5 days a week, and eliminated over 100 positions.

In the last year and a half, through 2009 and much of 2010, rolling closures remained the rule, due to a shortage of security guards and other staff and Library Director Reardon's "rule of 4," requiring that 4 people, including a guard, be present in every library, or the library would be closed.

From October 2009 through April 2010, an average of 4.2 of the system's 54 branches have been closed EVERY day, due to staffing or building issues.

The number of visits to branch libraries was down 16% in FY 2010 over a comparable period in fiscal 2009.

On March 1, the Mayor pledged to representatives of many of our Friends groups citywide that there would be NO further cuts to our libraries in next year's budget.

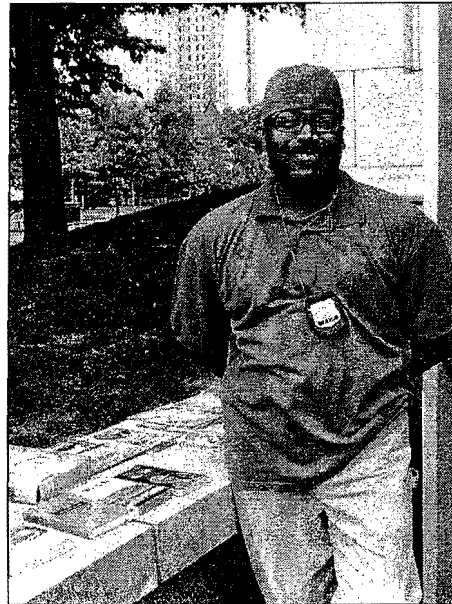
On May 20, the Mayor announced \$20 million in cuts to next year's budget, including \$2.5 million in cuts to libraries, in order to cut over 50 library workers and reduce library hours from 5 to 4 days a week. If the Mayor succeeds in his plan, we will have lost 2 out of 6 library days in neighborhood branches during the last 2 years!!!

This plan will be effective July 1,
UNLESS WE STOP THESE CUTS TO OUR LIBRARIES !!

See draft letter you can send on p. 6

Meet James Austin West,
Municipal Guard

James is the indispensable member of the Walnut West Library Staff (we can't open the building without him!)



His primary duty is to maintain safety in the Library. He also spends part of his time maintaining the building.

Mr. West has been a municipal guard for 20 years, 11 with the Free Library. And Walnut West is "the best branch" with a "beautiful" staff. (He also "loves the friends' group") But best of all are the patrons, James particularly enjoys the diversity of folks using the library.

James says that he likes safety for everyone, but especially for the children. If he sees a suspicious character, he hovers around and his presence is enough to deter trouble.

James is a resident of West Philly and a graduate of Parkway High School. He is married with three adult children and two granddaughters.

STOP LIBRARY CUTS

Below is a sample letter of support developed by The Free Library Foundation . Please fill in the name of your City Council member & sign the letter. Drop off at our local branch and they will mail them or do it yourself. Thank you.

June 20

Dear

As a regular customer of the Free Library of Philadelphia, I want to ask you to restart the discussions with the Mayor and create a revenue plan that keeps my Library whole.

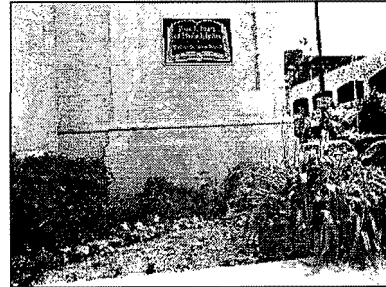
The services the Library provides are critical to the well being and improvement of our citizens. Free access to computers for job seekers, resources for small business owners who are the backbone of our economy, and educational materials to improve the literacy skills of our children as well as adults are essential for the future prosperity of our City.

I strongly urge you, and your fellow City Council members, to go back to the table to ensure the Free Library of Philadelphia system does **not** sustain additional reductions.

As the only institution of its kind with the programs and resources dedicated fully to coordinating and cultivating literacy on a daily basis, the Free Library of Philadelphia **must not** suffer further cuts. Thank you for doing something about this.

Sincerely,

(your name)

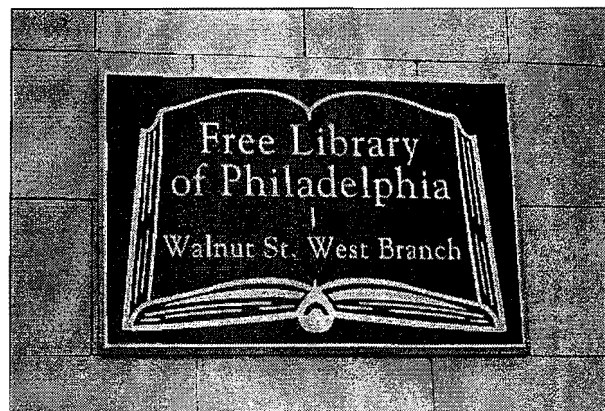


Thanks for your generous donations of books:

Sherhta B. Callaghan
Murray Dubin & Libby Rosof

and to

John Labenski for planting our wonderful garden

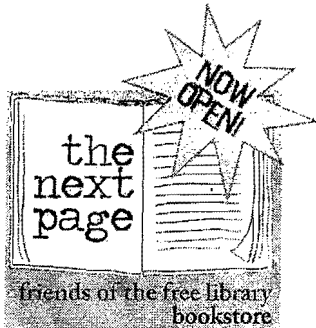


**Money well spent \$\$\$\$\$\$
Renew your membership
today**

This year the Friends supported our library through \$4,000 in unrestricted contributions to increase the collection (ie, buy new books and DVD's). Budget cuts meant almost no funds from the city for this purpose.

We also underwrote snacks and new chess equipment for chess club and tokens to attend tournaments and school supplies and snacks for other programming.

These funds come from your donations and the money raised from our used book sales.



722 Chestnut St., Philadelphia 19106 | 215-926-0722

**Announcing the opening of
The Next Page
at 722 Chestnut St.**

FFL's second bookstore expands our offerings to book lovers everywhere for the great deals you've come to expect at Book Corner. Open Monday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

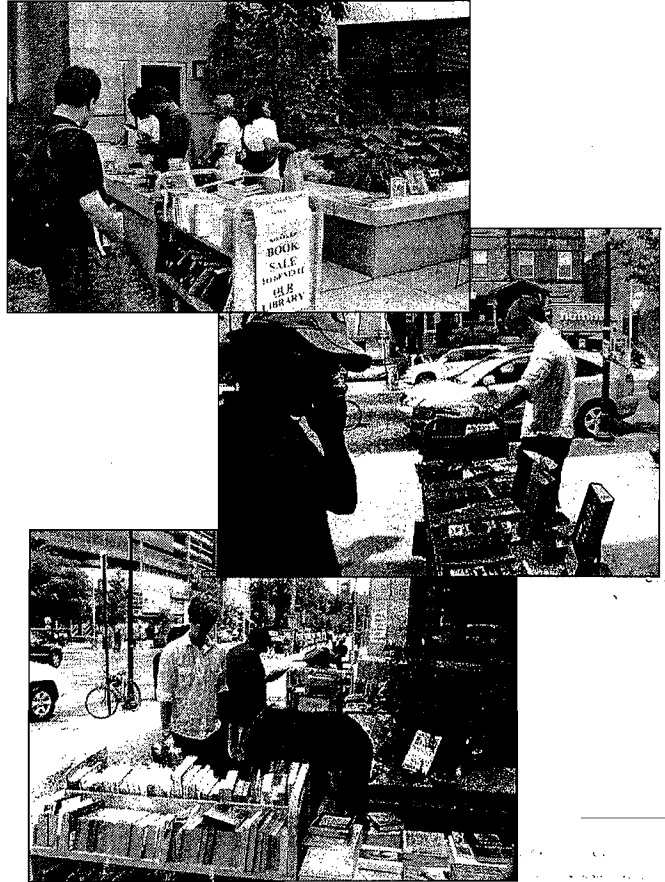
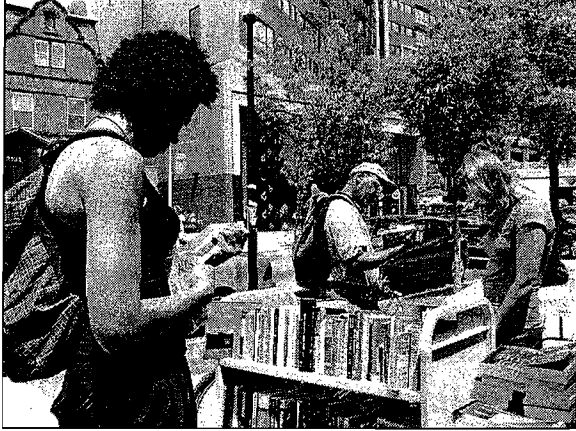
Here at Book Corner, we've been lowering our prices to give you the most book for your buck. We have a vast collection, ranging from well-loved to nearly-new. At a savings of 60 to 90% off list price, the stock is renewed daily and consists of a wide variety of books, records, videos, and CDs in all genres including many rare and out-of-print titles. Come browse our stacks, and take home a treasure.

**Friends Host Appreciation
Brunch for Library Staff
April 22, 2010**



Friday Book Sales are Thriving

Stop by between 12:30 and 2:30 pm
Friday afternoon for great bargains.



**WE NEED GOOD QUALITY BOOKS
TO SELL
ESPECIALLY CHILDREN'S BOOKS**

Friends of Walnut West Library
c/o Beth Ann Johnson
4025 Walnut Street,
Philadelphia. PA 19104



Friends of the Free Library Amy Dougherty
1901 Vine street
Philadelphia, PA
19103-1189

**CALL THE MAYOR'S OFFICE
AND YOUR COUNCILPERSON
AND SAY NO MORE CUTS !!
See pages 5 & 6**

