



ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

A major league city needs a major league library

Sept. 2010

Generally meets third Tuesday, October through April at 2:00 p.m., Main Library, 3745 Ninth Ave. N.
Board Meeting follows in the Conference Room.

Troxler returns to share pre-election insights

We will have the primaries behind us, but the mid-term elections still ahead when Howard Troxler re-visits the Friends on Saturday, Sept. 11th at 2:00 p.m. in Main Library.

The popular speaker's opinion columns appear Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday in the *St. Petersburg Times*, taking members of government at all levels to task for what they do and don't do on behalf of citizens.

Whether it be the class size re-

do Amendment 8, or citizens having much more say in the future development of the Sunshine State, Troxler will speak his piece with wit, insight and respect for differing opinions. But his commentary is sure to focus on the facts -- longtime newspaper man that he is. He says he considers himself politically unpredictable with libertarian leanings ("I'm for gay marriage WITH gun ownership"). He is married to a woman who has more



sense than he does and lives in St. Petersburg with no children and three cats.

Passing the torch . . .

Many thanks to true Friends of the Friends of the Library

Bethia Caffery: Around St. Petersburg, Bethia Caffery is familiar to many for the varied roles she has played over the years as one of the



Bethia Caffery, left, with Wilma Brown, Mrs. Tom (Mary) Dreier and her grandson, and Dorris Kent are shown years ago at the dedication of the Blanche Nowell Dreier Garden, funded by tom Dreier (pictured), on the north side of Main Library overlooking Library Lake.

most active and civic-minded citizens a community could wish for. An ability that has served her well in all those roles -- particularly in her chosen profession as a reporter for what is fondly called by those who worked there, the "late, great *Evening Independent*," -- is that of being able to draw people out and reveal themselves to her. Her longtime editor and friend, Janet Woods describes the "early" Bethia as a "warm and outgoing woman with long, long hair that she fastened with a bone. Yes, caused quite a stir!"

Well, she worked there for 20 years, retiring in 1985, and the "stir" never quit. Janet continues: "Bethia took up causes, championed the helpless, organized those who needed

community, was intensely curious about the world, about thoughts, about meaning. She was the mother of SPIFFS -- and, for that matter, the mother of everyone she met -- and known by every civic mover and shaker in town. She laughed easily, participated joyfully and without effort drew others to her. She wrote novels rather than stories -- but, my, they were good tales!"

When local and state government support for libraries became the pot that needed stirring, Bethia was retired and ready. Along with many of the earlier defenders of libraries' value to communities, she made trips to Tallahassee, City Hall and wherever it took her to help keep funding, support and

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Friends of the Library Board of Directors

Clarence Scott,

Dept. of Leisure & Community Services

Laurel Gustafson, Library Director,
Ex-officio

Elaine Birkinshaw, Manager,
Main Library and branches, Ex-officio

Angela Pietras, Coordinator,
Main Library, Ex-officio

Alice Graves, President

Mozelle Bell, Secretary
and Treasurer

Directors

Sharon Centanne

Deborah Haslam

Eunice Hirsch

June HurleyYoung

Eric Peterson

Sydni Ann Shollenberger

Jeanette Wenzel

Ray Wunderlich, M.D.

Bethia Caffery, Honorary Member

Dorris Carlotta Kent, Honorary Member

Interested members wishing to join
the Board would be welcome.

Sharon and Jim Moorhead
Newsletter Editors

Your dates with Friends

Please mark your calendar with these Friends program dates; some don't fall on our usual meeting day of the second Thursday of the month. Programs begin at 2:00 p.m. in Main Library Auditorium.

Sat., Sept. 11
Howard Troxler,

St. Petersburg Times columnist

Sat., Oct. 16
Suzanne Beecher,

creator; <http://dearreader.com/> and
author: *Muffins and Mayhem: Recipes for a Happy (if Disorderly) Life*. Oven mitt not necessary! Books will be available for purchase. Don't be surprised if you encounter hula hoops!

November program
TBA

Sat., Dec. 4
St. Petersburg College Madrigalians
Period holiday musical classics

Florida Libraries: Bang for your buck!

Key findings of a 2010 research study assessing taxpayer return on investment (ROI) in Florida's public libraries could teach the fiscal wonks in Washington a thing or two:

- Florida's public libraries return \$8.32 for every \$1.00 invested from all sources.
- For every \$3,491 spent on public libraries from public funding sources in Florida, one job (in the economy, not just in libraries) is created.
- For every dollar of public support spent on public libraries in Florida, Gross Regional Product (the value of all goods and services produced in the state) increases by \$10.57.
- For every dollar of public support spent on public libraries in Florida, income (wages) increases by \$22.97.

Results of the study (completed by The Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development at the University of West Florida) appear in the State Library and Archives of Florida publication of *Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries (2010)*. The release updates an original 2004 study. Study results are available at <http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/roi/>.

The study provides an analysis of return on investment at the state level as well as estimates for individual Florida counties. While the ROI figures vary widely from county to county, they demonstrate how even a small investment yields an extremely high value to the community. (The Pinellas results showed a \$5.74 return for every \$1 spent.)

Friends of Friends, continued from Page 1

public opinion front and center on the minds of decision-makers.

Serving as president many times, Bethia worked with past Board members of the Friends of the Library, some of whom are still active, along with various City Hall administrations and Library Directors. And, when her colleague Dorris Kent joined the efforts, the pair often replaced each other holding office on the Friends' board when needed.

Dorris Carlotta Kent: Her sophisticated name, her elegant demeanor, her Texas links, all disguise the boundless energy for worthy – usually culture-related – causes for which Dorris will outwork most of us. This lady is an example of plugging along till even the most tedious job is complete, and she would often do it by hand or typewriter.

But those were the “detail” jobs of running the Friends of the Library. She worked hard year after year in whatever office she held for the Friends maintaining the records, helping the treasurer with donations and library contributions, and – along with Bethia – providing interesting programs for the Friends and

the public. They ranged from Howard Troxler, opinion commentator for the Times to sugar egg decorating contests held in Main Auditorium.

You may have met her at a City Council meeting where she would be speaking in defense of libraries, or at any of hundreds of fundraisers for the other cultural activity dear to her heart, opera. She was founder and president of the Coalition of Opera Lovers.

She made lasting friendships pursuing her many interests, but make no mistake: you're dealing with a red-headed former Texan, passionate about what she believes in, who will not hesitate to speak her piece with grace and sometimes even wit – but who is set on getting you on her side.

No doubt numerous Library decisions have been tempered by the activism of these two ladies, and many like them. They feel called (endlessly!) to give of themselves, their knowledge of the community and their treasure. And to urge others to do the same. We should all be inspired and grateful. –Sharon Moorhead, newsletter editor

From the desk of the President . . .

This is my first column as President, but I feel more like an Accidental President. I joined the Board in March. At the April meeting, elections were held and I became one of the Vice Presidents. I wanted to plunge right in and get involved. And I got more than I expected. In June, Bethia phoned me and said both she and Dorris were going to resign from the Board for personal reasons. Dorris and Bethia built Friends into a vital institution that gave so tirelessly to the library. They gave us their time, their energy and their financial support. The impressive grand piano in our auditorium is a gift from Dorris.

We thank Dorris and Bethia with all our hearts, and hope we can continue to keep our Friends group vital, relevant, and become even better as we move into the 21st century.

I am excited about being your new

President, and I sincerely hope I can be as effective as my predecessors.

The technological age has changed libraries. They are no longer just the place you go to borrow books. The library is an essential part of the community. It is the place you go to apply for jobs, learn computer skills, prepare children for school, and help students achieve scholastic success. You can meet your neighbors at one of the library's book clubs, or make new friends. And our programs are entertaining and educational.

We still have a lot of work to do to catapult our Friends group into the future and to keep it relevant in the technological age. And to that end, we need you. We invite members to join the Board (we meet at Main on the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m.). And we need members to participate in committees -- helping get

our newsletter out each month, and writing short articles about library news. We need people who have great ideas about programs that Friends can present. We need others who can reach out to local businesses on behalf of Friends for support. We need people.

We may be Friends of the Library, but we should be more like Family. We have so much in common -- we love the library and we are committed to making it an invaluable part of the community. That's why we plan to hold **a full membership meeting this fall.** Until then, if you have any ideas, interests or concerns, or if you want to help with committees, please email us at **friendslibrary24@yahoo.com.** We want to hear from you! Together, we will make this year our best one ever. Most of all, we look forward to seeing you.

--Alice Graves, *president*

Friends of the Library, Inc. St. Petersburg Main Library

We are a 501(c) (3) nonprofit group whose purpose is to support the library through volunteerism, fund-raising activities, and sponsorship of programs and services. Your membership offers you the opportunity to get involved, share thoughts and lend your talents.

Friends of the Main Library meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 2:00 pm
at the Main Library, 3745 Ninth Ave. North

What we do:

- Support the library to help make it a vital part of our community
- Fund summer reading programs
- Purchase books and other materials
- Support library programs for children, teens and adults
- Host author visits, guest speakers and cultural events

Please mail your application with a check payable to "Friends of the Library" to FRIENDS of the LIBRARY
3745 Ninth Ave. North, St. Petersburg, FL 33713-6001

I want to be a **Friend of the Library!** () new () renewal.

Name _____ Phone _____ Date _____

Address _____ Email _____

() Individual \$15 () Family \$25 () Life \$100 () Business/corporate \$75

I would like to make an extra contribution of () \$25 () \$30 () \$50 () other \$ _____ TOTAL: _____

I can help with: () hospitality () fund raising () newsletter () programs () membership () publicity

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September 2010 Issue

Next Program:

Saturday, Sept. 11, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.
Howard Troxler
St. Petersburg Times columnist

~ Main Library's new **Non-Fiction Book club** will meet on Thursday, Aug. 26, and will discuss *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan. Main Library hosts three other book clubs: the **Mystery Club**, 1st Thursday of the month; the **Science-Fiction/Fantasy Club**, the 3rd Tuesday of the month, and the **Eclectic Fiction Club** on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. All meetings start at 6:30 pm. New members are welcome!

Honoring two great ladies and one fine Friend



Bethia and Katy As the Friends of the Library begin their new year this fall, it will mark the end of a successful volunteer career for both Dorris Kent and Bethia Caffery, who retired from their positions with the Friends Board this past spring. For many years, Dorris and Bethia have led the Friends through a number of fund raising efforts, have served as stewards of those funds, and have dedicated themselves to being advocates of the St. Petersburg Public Library System.

Through their efforts, libraries in St. Petersburg have benefitted in so many ways. Whether it was chairs for the newly renovated Mirror Lake Branch, or books for the Fill the Shelves campaign, Dorris and Bethia have worked for the good of both library and community.

These two ladies have seen the library through bad times and good times, and a succession of library directors with different visions for the library's advancement, not to mention budget challenges and physical changes to the buildings. Most recently, they guided the Board's support of the Main Library Renovation. The Friends awarded money toward construction needs for the building and also contributed substantially to the public art that is displayed in the Children's Department. They voted additional funding to help pay for items that did not get replaced during construc-

tion, such as a refrigerator for the lunch room, blinds for all of the offices and replaced the library's aging microfilm/microfiche reader.

Please join us in honoring Dorris Kent and Bethia Caffery and in recognizing their many years of dedicated service. Ladies, we will miss you and we appreciate your efforts very much. Thank you. Enjoy those grand- and great-grand kids now! —**From Laurel Gustafson and Elaine Birkinshaw on behalf of the staff of the St. Petersburg Public Library System and the city of St. Petersburg.**



Dorris and Noah

Keeper of the books - good job!

Another longtime member of the Friends Board, its Treasurer Ralph Trimble, turned over the books some months ago completing many years of diligent oversight. CPA Trimble, a Florida Power retiree, spent countless hours protecting Friends' assets and providing intricate financial reports.



Ralph Trimble

He carried out the Friends' philosophy of investing bequests and using only the proceeds, and seeking the safest growth potential. His friendliness, hard work and especially, his dedication to the Friends' fiduciary with their donors is truly appreciated. He lives in retirement with his wife here in St. Petersburg.