

FOAL Focus

A Quarterly Newsletter from Friends of the Auberry Library

HARVEST FESTIVAL CAPS A YEAR OF FIRSTS FOR FOAL



Sierra High School's band was one of the many talented acts performing on the museum stage

2017 came with some new adventures for FOAL, the most visible of which was [co-hosting the Harvest Festival](#) with the Eastern Fresno County Historical Society and the Sierra Oaks Senior and Community Center. When the idea was first broached, the FOAL board deliberated on whether this project fit under the FOAL mission. Ultimately, the board agreed that the benefit to the vibrant culture of the community, the opportunity to work with other community groups, and the increased awareness within the community about FOAL did serve the mission. It was a very large undertaking, but the board agreed it was worth the risk.

In the post-event review, the board looked at vendor and community feedback, as well as budget outcomes. Thanks to sponsorships from Auberry Intermountain Rotary Club, the bottom line from underwriting the event was a gain of \$872. These funds are in a separate account and will go toward the 2018 event. Some areas which will likely be refined for this year will be higher forecast numbers for food booths, and pre-treating for meat bees, to name a few. Overall, the board felt that the event did meet expected goals, and was a success.

Another first was the hosting of the [benefit concert](#) in September. Thanks to generous sponsors, and a strong turnout, this event brought in \$4,900 to fund FOAL activities for the next year. This was the primary fundraiser for the year, and the hope is to make it even better in 2018.

Finally, many of the FOAL leadership team were able to attend [governance training](#) together, offered through the Central Valley Community Foundation. While this is not the first training ever attended, it stood out as particularly meaningful in helping to focus on setting direction for our non-profit, or "community benefit organization." As a direct result of this training, FOAL connected with students from the Humanics Department at Fresno State to help win two small local grants.

Each of these new activities generated momentum for this new year. As Program Director Loren Leach puts it, "FOAL continues to search for new ways to improve itself and its ability to fulfill its mission. Our goal is to benefit the Auberry Library, our membership, and our local foothill and mountain communities in the New Year and for many more to come."

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Jamelie Taylor

Happy New Year to all! This is the time of year when we look both backward and forward in time. How often have you absentmindedly written 2017 since January 1st?

Looking back, last year and its final quarter were memorable for many reasons not the least of which was FOAL's leadership role in the 25th Annual Harvest Fest. Thank you to all of our volunteers and friends who made the location change possible and enjoyable while insuring that

this celebration will continue into the future. Just this week someone came into the office saying she had moved here late last summer and the Harvest Festival was her first taste of our community. She was very impressed and is now a FOAL volunteer!

Looking even further back, Carol Olson and I made a quilted wall hanging commemorating the founders of FOAL. We finished it in the last month of 2017 and you will be able to see it hanging in the library very soon. Thank you, Carol.

Remembering our past while continuing into the future is the hope of all the organizations in our community. Just last week Loren and I gave a presentation to the Sierra Women's Service Club and

we all talked about needing to attract younger members. That gave me an idea—a contest!

FOAL will have a contest in April to name our 'new-to-us' telescope. Last year thanks to the estate of Gary Cox, FOAL became the proud owner of a 16" instrument that has enabled us to expand our astronomy program. As a result of refurbishment by Mitch Smith and the expertise of Carl Dotts, the telescope will be used by all who attend our free astronomy evenings between May and September of 2018. Start thinking of a good name for our telescope and the story behind your idea. This contest will be open to teens and younger during the month of April. Check in the library for contest details.

FRESNO STATE STUDENTS WIN GRANTS FOR FOAL

As mentioned in earlier articles, FOAL leadership attended governance training for non-profits, or to phrase in a more positive way "community benefit organizations." The training was guided by Dr. Don Simmons, Professor at Fresno State, who specializes in "Humanics." If you have never heard of this area of study, you are not alone! Merriam Webster defines humanics as: "the subject or study of human nature or human affairs." What our team observed was an expertise in helping organizations "do good" for their communities.

After the training, FOAL was able to get on a list of organizations that students could choose to assist in seeking grants. Three students, Israel Cortez, Patricia Cortez and Elizabeth Lopez, selected FOAL for their project. The students joined

several board meetings to share their progress. To our delight, they were successful! The Briscoe Family Foundation awarded a grant for \$1,000 in support of the first grade book program. With these funds, the program will be expanded by adding Big Creek School to Foothill and Pine Ridge as recipients, and

increasing the book gift from one to two. The Bonner Family Foundation awarded FOAL a grant for \$1,500 in support of visual arts programming including Sierra High School visual arts outreach. Thanks to Israel, Patricia, and Elizabeth, as well as Professor Simmons for helping in the FOAL mission!



Fresno State Humanics students update the board on their success



Acclaimed violinist Patrick Contreras and his band weave musical magic in the Auberry Library

After performing for students at Sierra High School for FOAL's student Outreach program, Patrick Contreras (El Violin) and his band presented FOAL's 105th concert to a standing-room-only crowd at the Auberry Library, December 1. Contreras served up everything from traditional mariachi fare such as "El Rey," to unique covers of popular hits like, "Black Magic Woman," "Kashmir," and "Sleepwalk," to a decidedly country "Orange Blossom Special" and a show tune, "Over the Rainbow." He also shared some of his original compositions like "The Taco Song," and "Tijuana." Contreras, a Central Valley fixture for some time, adds dramatic flair to his musical presentations by breaking down the barrier between player and audience. At one point he departed the stage and wandered through the crowd all the way to the back of the room making individual eye contact with admiring listeners without missing a note. It was a return appearance for Contreras and judging from audience reaction, it won't be his last.

SCHMIDT FUNK BAND GIVES ENCORE PERFORMANCE

The jazz band Schmidt Funk presented a fare of modern music to a small but enthusiastic audience at the Auberry Library Nov. 3. This was FOAL's 104th concert. The band previously played in 2007 at FOAL's third concert. The quartet featured lead musician Jim Schmidt on saxophone, flute, percussion and vocals, Jeff Logan on guitar, Tyler Burke on bass and John Shafer on drums. As Schmidt explains, the band's style is very much improvisationally oriented. Typically, they will begin a number with a lead sax or flute melody or a bass line, then each musician will solo his instrument to the beat, improvising at will, finally the band returns to the initial melody and closes. The source of the melodies are sometimes their own, and sometimes they borrow from other artists such as Herbie Hancock, the Rolling Stones, and Jimi Hendrix. Jim Schmidt is well known not only for his unique jazz style, but also for his contributions to saxophone and flute design. Search YouTube for "Jim Schmidt Saxophone," to see how he created his chromatic sax.



The Schmidt Funk Band jazzing up the library with their improv style



New science materials and giant thank you note in the kindergarten classroom

Last spring, FOAL awarded over \$9,000 to Foothill Elementary to enhance K-3 literacy. Dr. Alan Harris, Foothill principal, proposed FOSS science kits as a way to link science exploration with reading and writing. The FOAL board concurred, and last fall, several members went to see the new program in action. On this particular day, kindergarten and second grade were having a science lesson. Both classrooms were busy with hands on activities linked with the program, and the teachers seemed very happy with the materials. Kindergarten was

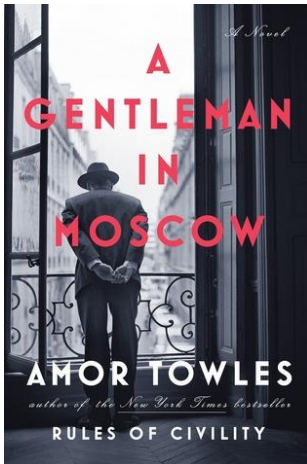
BAKE SALE BOOTH

Amidst all the newness of last fall's Harvest Festival, the one constant was the FOAL Bake Sale Booth. This year, with Loren Leach occupied with helping to run the festival itself, the booth needed a new organizer. Camille Turner answered the call. Showing up each morning to start the coffee well in advance of the festival start, Camille did a great job of keeping things going. Another tradition that kept up this year was the steady flow of donations, including Vicki Maxwell's amazing pies. She donated 15 of them! The bake sale booth was a fun place to be, right next to the main stage, although things could be a little loud. However, next year will probably see the booth located close to the other food items, in a nice, shady spot. All in all, the bake sale brought in \$1,411 for FOAL's activities in the upcoming year. Thanks to all who donated their time and baked goods to make this happen.

studying trees and plants, and second grade was working on the states of matter. As an extra special touch, kindergarten had prepared a thank you poster for FOAL. Visiting FOAL member Charlotte Gordon noted "As a former teacher, I was especially pleased to see the new science program in action. The teachers and students were thoroughly engaged. Hands-on science can take a lot of time to get ready. The materials provide everything the teachers need." Note: This is a grant overseen by FOAL for the Floyd Sohm Trust.

HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

Another tradition in the FOAL year is the Holiday Book Sale, which occurred on Dec 4-6. Book donations flow in throughout the year, and several times a year, the FOAL office opens up to host a sale, with some amazing books for just \$0.50. This activity is highly dependent on willing volunteers who help set up, run the sale, and break down the materials after the event. This year's sale was a little smaller than usual, but still worthwhile, according to those involved. The event raised \$498 for FOAL's activities. A special thank you to Aaron Turner, who is always a key volunteer for this event. Program Director Loren Leach stated "The book sales are opportunities to bring people into our office who don't know about us yet. After seeing all the flyers on our walls from programs we have hosted, they walk away with an understanding of who we are and what we do for our community."



Reviewer: Anne Neal

Genre: Historical Fiction

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles (2016)

It is 1922. Count Alexander Rostov has been sentenced to permanent incarceration within the venerable Hotel Metropol in Moscow. Never one to allow life's twists and turns to affect his outward gentility, the Count embarks on his new life with gusto and ingenuity. We delight in this indefatigable hero's escapades and observations, told with wry humor and a proverbial twinkle in the author's eye. Through the Count's experiences, we watch the decades of 20th Century Russian history unfold. This is a thoroughly entertaining and engrossing novel.

Reviewer: Mark Schlaefer

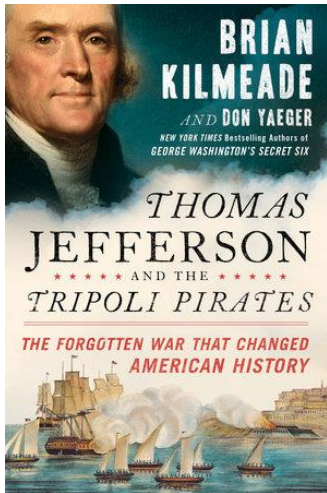
Genre: History, Nonfiction

Thomas Jefferson And The Tripoli Pirates by Brian Kilmeade & Don Yaeger (2015)

In the early years of the American experiment during the presidencies of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, the newly formed United States was eager and desperate to recoup its war debt and join the world economic community. Doing so required an exuberant and robust foreign trade agenda that was being threatened by a growing pirate force. For centuries the Ottoman Empire nations of Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco preyed upon foreign shipping, and the United States, no longer under the protection of France's navy, was ripe for the picking.

This wonderful book details the first Barbary war, from the seizing of the first American merchant ships and enslavement of their crews in 1885 to the first use of US Marines on foreign soil and subsequent peace treaty with Tripoli 20 years later.

An excellent, well-sourced book, ripe with heroism and treachery, Kilmeade and Yaeger have managed to make available a heretofore relatively unknown chapter in the formation of America generally and the United States Marine Corps specifically. If you don't know where the phrase "to the shores of Tripoli" in the Marine Hymn comes from or if you thought the United States has never had piracy issues before the recent interaction between Somali pirates and the US Navy, then this history of the first Barbary war is for you.

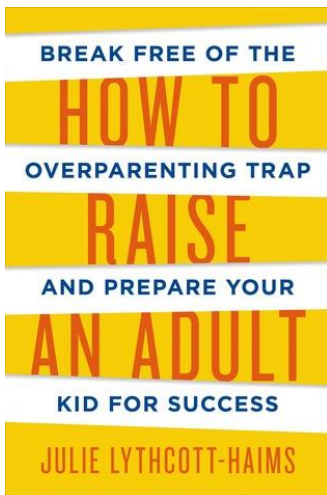


Reviewer: Connie Schlaefer

Genre: Parenting, Nonfiction

How to Raise an Adult by Julie Lythcott-Haims (2015)

When a friend mentioned this book as one that had affected his parenting right after I had *admired* how he handled his parenting, I figured I had to check it out. It was worth it. The author has served as a Dean of Freshmen and Undergraduate Advising at Stanford University, and has a well-referenced, factual work, with some opinion thrown in. Because of her background, the context of much of the book addressed the high pressure on children to meet milestones for admission into the best college versus actual life skills. Although I didn't totally identify with the high pressure (I'm an under vs. over pressure parent), there were definitely points that immediately affected my perspective. When is a child old enough to advocate for themselves with an adult? How do we, as parents, help them do this? What skills, other than academic, should we be working to develop as we help our children out into the world? Even if you are the perfect parent...Highly recommend.



WINTER/SPRING CALENDAR



Tuesday, Jan 30, Anne Neal Guest Speaker Series in partnership with the Eastern Fresno County Historical Society Present: Pine Logging Company, 7-8:15 pm.

Join us for two short films about the Pine Logging Company and some of the logging history from this area. "The Early Days" is a collection of black & white movies made in 1937 & 1938. "Timber" was made in the early 1950's.

Friday, Feb 9, Concert. David Hull. An evening of Stride & Boogie Woogie piano music. Social 1/2 hour 7:00-7:30 p.m. Concert 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb 13, Anne Neal Guest Speaker Series. 7:00-8:30 p.m. "From the Serengeti to the Roof of Africa." 7-8:30 pm

Join storyteller Shirley Spencer in a photographic journey through four Tanzanian National Parks, experience the breathtaking wildlife of a safari, a stay within a Massai village, and her expedition to the highest snowcap on the equator, Mount Kilimanjaro.

Friday, March 16, Concert. Lance Canales and the Flood, Social 1/2 hour 7:00-7:30 p.m. Concert 7:30-9:00 p.m.

ABOUT US

Friends of the Auberry Library (FOAL)

A registered non-profit since 2005

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FOAL Focus Newsletter

Connie Schlaefer, Editor

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We're on the Web!

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

P.O. Box 157, Auberry, CA 93602
33049 Auberry Rd, Auberry, California
Phone: (559) 779-3625
E-mail: foalorg@gmail.com

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