The [not so] Secret Garden Party

This year’s Secret Garden Party is different from those in the past. Traditionally the party’s location has not been revealed to guests until they sign up. This year we proudly announce the location in advance: the newly completed Leo Politi Garden on the Fresno State campus! A rededication of the garden will take place then, too.

The Arne Nixon Center Advocates (ANCA) invites you to attend the party/rededication on Sunday, April 13, from 3 to 5 p.m. The party is ANCA’s major annual fundraising event; all profits go to the Arne Nixon Center in the Madden Library. Underwriters are needed; they will receive tickets to the party and acknowledgments in promotional materials. The $1,000 Sponsor fee includes up to eight tickets; Patrons, for a $500 fee, get up to six tickets; Contributors, for $250, receive up to four tickets. Individual tickets for $50 are also available. To make reservations or for more information, please send email to jsanford@csufresno.edu.

Leo Politi was the Caldecott Award-winning illustrator and/or author of over three dozen books. A Fresno native who relocated to Los Angeles, Politi was a good friend of Professor Arne Nixon and often returned to Fresno to attend Nixon’s children’s literature classes and festivals. The Politi Garden was created with funds raised by ANCA to honor this special friendship. Politi’s children, Paul Politi and Suzanne Bischof, will attend the rededication.

Colorful mosaic tiles crafted by artist John Cook were installed in the garden last summer. The tiles are replicas of those Politi created for his L.A. home. Bronze castings of Politi’s only known sculptures will be installed. The statues, fabricated by sculptor Lester Harries, depict a girl and boy reading a book with a dog, and a little girl with arms outstretched to birds overhead.

Clovis Rodeo Centennial program in February

A record crowd of 225 people participated in the Friends’ February 7 celebration of the Clovis Rodeo Association’s Centennial. Many guests were Rodeo Association members, first-time visitors to our Library, who enjoyed a reception featuring Fresno State sausage, cheeses, wines, and Coors beer. Guests could tour the Thomas J. Ebert American Frontier Collection exhibition and docent tours were offered of the Library’s collection of Remington bronzes, on permanent display in the South Wing. Professor Emeritus John A. Crosby gave the bronzes to the Library between 1997 and 2002 in honor of his children, two of whom, Cathy Crosby and Dr. Ken Crosby, were present that evening.

Dean Peter McDonald welcomed the guests and introduced Alfreda Sebasto, who helped to organize the event. She introduced the speakers, Chuck Rigsbee, the Clovis Rodeo Association Board President, and Stan King, who gave a brief overview of the Clovis Rodeo’s 100 year history. Keynote speaker was John Gowney, the rodeo stock contractor who paired the world-champion bucking bull, Red Rock, with legendary rider Lane Frost in the 1988 “Challenge of the Champions.”

When Red Rock was retired after being undefeated in 309 attempts throughout his professional rodeo career, Gowney conceived the idea to pair the bull with Lane Frost, the World Champion bull rider of 1987, in a series of matches to be held at seven rodeos throughout the western United States. Red Rock got the better of Lane Frost in the first two matches, at Red Bluff and Clovis, but Frost rode Red Rock successfully in four of the seven matches, winning the Challenge. A documentary sponsored by the Frost family, “Challenge of Champions,” and a 1994 Hollywood film, “8 Seconds,” immortalized the competition.

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Rodeo Centennial, from page 1

Growney charmed the audience with tales of Frost’s career and with touching stories about Red Rock’s life in retirement. He recounted a trip Red Rock made back to his home state of Oregon. Board members of the rodeo association there wanted to be in a photograph with the champion bull, but Growney was at a loss to figure out how to get the almost 2,000 pound bull to pose. Red Rock solved the problem himself. After all 18 board members had entered his enclosure and lined up along the fence, Red Rock walked over to them and turned around, facing the camera. A born star!

“Turning Pages” exhibition

Have you ever wondered . . .

How books are made?

How printing technologies changed the world of children’s picture books?

What really happens to discarded books?

The Library’s Arne Nixon Center and the Special Collections Research Center are hosting an exhibition titled “Turning Pages: Intersections of Books and Technology.” The exhibition opened March 24 in the Library’s Leon S. Peters Ellipse Gallery on the second floor, North Wing, and will continue until May 30.

“Turning Pages” provides a glimpse into some of the ways in which technology has radicalized books and bookmaking. With examples from both special collections, as well as book art from five world-renowned artists, the convergence of books and technology is explored—from advances in printing to the digital arena to new and exciting forms of art.

A reception to celebrate the exhibition’s opening was held in the Library on March 28. Book artist Mike Stilkey discussed his process and the inspiration for his artwork. In addition to Stilkey, exhibition artists are Thomas Allen, Su Blackwell, Brian Dettmer, and Pamela Paulsrud. More information on the exhibition and the artists is found at www.turningpagesfresnostate.com.

The exhibition, suitable for all ages, will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays; and 2 to 5 p.m. on Sundays. It will be closed on Monday, March 31, for the Cesar Chavez holiday, and April 12, 13, 19, 20, and May 17, 18, during the campus spring recess.

A few of the advances in books and bookmaking technology: from printing presses (above) to e-Books on iPads (at right).
Thomas J. Ebert honored as Donor of the Year

Librarian Emeritus Tom Ebert, named the Library’s 2013 Donor of the Year, was recognized for his generosity and scholarship at the Library’s 14th annual Donor Recognition event on January 17. Ebert spoke on “Women Who Wrote the History of the West,” in which he discussed three women, Jessie Benton Fremont, Elizabeth Bacon Custer, and Frances Grummond Carrington, who, through their own writings and in collaboration with their husbands, shaped not only the public image of the West, but also its history.

A full-gallery exhibition of rare and important books from the Library’s Thomas J. Ebert American Frontier Collection was on display in the Leon S. Peters Ellipse Gallery. Ebert has spent a lifetime traveling in the American West and collecting books related to the frontier. Since 1993 he has donated almost 2,000 books on frontier life, ranging from the first settlements in Santa Fe and Jamestown to the history of California. The books, from university presses, western historical societies, museums, and specialty presses, comprise one of the largest American frontier collections in California. The Library holds many titles not found elsewhere in the California State University system. All the books circulate as part of the Library’s general collection.

One focus of the collection is the history of the U.S. Army in the West. Biographies profile generals George Custer, George Crook, and Nelson Miles, and lesser known, but equally important, figures like Wesley Merritt and Ranald MacKenzie. Some books study the cavalry and infantry units staffed by African Americans known as “Buffalo Soldiers.” Histories of western forts and studies of military equipment and tactics are of help to students who want to learn from the army’s successes and failures in the West. Other titles deal with the struggles of Native Americans to retain their culture and identity. The collection includes biographies of Red Cloud, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Victorio, Geronimo, and Cochise.

Ebert, who holds a master’s degree in history from SUNY-Albany, is proud that his collection demonstrates the fact that the West was not the Anglo-Protestant myth created by Hollywood. It was a mosaic of groups including Native Americans, ex-slaves, Chinese settlers, German-speaking Mennonites, Scandinavians, Hispanics, Basque shepherders, and missionaries of all faiths.

Ebert worked as a reference and documents librarian from 1970 to 1996, then served as Associate Vice President for Academic Personnel until his retirement in 2005. Ebert said, “I am not a graduate of Fresno State, but this university allowed me to have an extraordinarily successful career during my thirty-five years of employment. I feel it is important that I give back to Fresno State for allowing me this success.”

Above left: Ebert holds the custom-made, engraved, green marble bookends presented to him at the Donor Recognition event.

Meet our newest Board member

William Oliver is an Outreach Coordinator with the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation (EDC). As such, Oliver provides liaison services between the California High-Speed Rail Authority and persons and businesses likely to be affected by the construction. Previously, Oliver worked for U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer in her Fresno office for four years. He left that position in 2012 to work on President Obama’s re-election campaign in “battleground” Colorado, where he managed the President’s field operations in northeastern Colorado Springs.

Oliver received a B.S. degree in Business Administration from Fresno State. He is active in a variety of civic and charitable organizations, including Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Central Valley, Fresno Leading Young Professionals, Madera Vision 2025, and the City of Madera Community Development Block Grant Review and Advisory Committee. He is an avid supporter of Fresno State and Bulldog sports.
Drought-tolerant Landscaping

How to make your garden beautiful and your water consumption sensible during a drought.

Friday, May 2, 6 – 8 p.m.,
in the Henry Madden Library

Presented by The Friends of the Madden Library and the Central Valley Water Awareness Committee, this program is open to the public and free of charge. It will complement the Water-wise Plant Exchange that will take place on campus on May 3.

John Valentino, co-founder and Board chair of Tree Fresno, and Susan Stiltz, Landscape Water Conservation Specialist with the City of Fresno Water Division, will speak on transitioning traditional lawns to more drought-tolerant landscaping.

Exhibitions in the Madden Library

March 24 – May 30: The convergence of books and technology is explored in “Turning Pages: Intersections of Books and Technology.” Examples from two of the Library’s special collections and book art from five world-renowned artists are included. (Article on page 2.)

April 1 – 30: The Armenian Studies program at Fresno State will host an exhibition, “Remembering the Armenians of Bitlis,” on the second floor near the Leon S. Peters Ellipse Gallery. The exhibition features photographs, maps, and documents from the ancient region of Bitlis, birthplace of William Saroyan’s family.