



# FOCAL Points~~



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**FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AND LITERATURE -- CENTRAL LIBRARY**

**For more news, go to [www.focalonline.org](http://www.focalonline.org)**

**THANK YOU, LOS ANGELES VOTERS !**

On March 8th, voters passed Measure L with a resounding 63% of the votes cast.

Although the turnout was low, it spoke to the fact that the hard work done by many, many volunteers and staff members, members of FOCAL and of Friends' Groups throughout the City, the Yes on L Committee, the Library Foundation, the *L. A. Weekly*, The Librarians' Guild and other unions, Library Administration, and others too numerous to credit, paid off in a big way.

Staff members worked hard to educate the public that there was indeed a ballot measure that would help this library system. On their own time, they tirelessly urged Angelenos to vote "Yes on L".

FOCAL members worked hard to get the word out to their colleagues and students. Roy Stone, President of the Librarians' Guild, and Guild members and friends, hit farmers' markets, distributed thousands of flyers to gathering places, wrote pieces for newspapers and blogs, spoke at various meetings throughout the City. Our own Susan Patron, whose impassioned letter was sent to our membership last month, appeared on the *L. A. Times'* Op-Ed page on February 18th.

A wonderful victory for libraries, for literacy, for education, for children, and for all of us.



# *We Love the California Readers Authors and Illustrators Luncheon!*

*by Carol Raby*

On February 26<sup>th</sup> thirty six authors and illustrators gathered together with many fortunate librarians, teachers and admirers to celebrate the creative wealth of Southern California's literary community. The companionship was inspiring, the food was delicious, and the shopping at the silent auction was terrific. The effort of Karla Forbes, LAUSD Library Aide and President of California Readers, and her committee, are to be commended for organizing this wonderful event where we can all meet face to face and exchange ideas and hopes for the future.

The highlight of the day was the keynote speaker, Susan Patron. Susan eloquently opened her speech with the following quote:

*"Rather than pointing fingers or assigning blame, let's use this occasion to expand our moral imaginations, to listen to each other more carefully, to sharpen our instincts for empathy, and remind ourselves of all the ways that our hopes and dreams are bound together."*

Then, to keep us on our toes, we had to guess who said those words. (It was President Barack Obama in his speech after the recent shooting in Arizona.) Susan was charming, humorous and inspiring. During the slide show she prepared we saw her photo as a young girl. "See that girl with the weird clothes and the bad haircut? I write for that girl!" This comment drew a big laugh from all of us who identify with that girl. The fact that Susan taught herself to read using the LA Times comics section may explain where she gets her flare for humor.

Anticipation built as Susan talked about the final book in the *Lucky* trilogy, *Lucky For Good*. Several copies of an early version were sold on a first come first served basis. Since more revisions were requested, the publication date will be in August to coincide with back to school. So the rest of us will just have to sit down with our friend Lucky to catch up on her latest adventures.

Susan is having a new adventure writing a book for the *Dear America* diary series. The book is set in 1881, in a California mining town called Body, kept in a, "constant state of arrested decay." The story will be part romance and part ghost story in the diary format. Candidly, Susan shared with us that her previous books have undergone six revisions each over a two year period. This time, Susan's publisher wants the book in nine months. Good thing Susan is off to a great start on the upcoming book, *The Boldest Mask, The Diary of Angeline Reddy, 1881*. The opening line has me on the edge of my seat! "I knew there was trouble the minute I lifted up the lid of my Father's coffin and he wasn't in it." I'm happy about the nine month deadline because I don't want to wait to read this one! Surely we'll all be talking about it at the California Readers Luncheon next year.

**The Children's Literature Department Presents**

# Science Day 2011

**Reach for the stars!**

***"Up, Up, and Away!" with Mad Science of LA!***

Mark Taper Auditorium, 2 pm and 3 pm

***Hands-On Science with The California Science Center!***

Thornton Courtyard

***Crafts, experiments, and much, much more!***

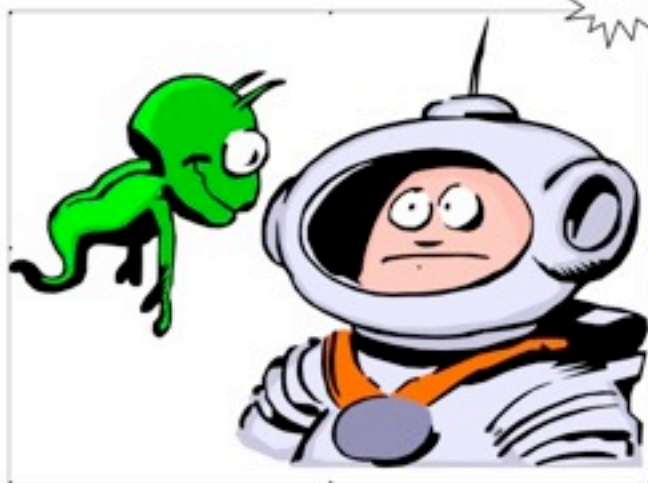
Thornton Courtyard

***Activities and Stories for Toddlers and Preschoolers***

Children's Courtyard

**Saturday  
April 9**

**2 - 4 p.m.**




Los Angeles Public Library

630 West Fifth Street

213-228-7250

[www.lapl.org](http://www.lapl.org)

This free program is sponsored by  
the Miller Family,  
(in memory of Peggy and Merv Miller) and  
FOCAL (*Friends of Children and Literature*).

 LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

## BLOODLETING CONTINUES ... PINK SLIPS HERALD THE IDES OF MARCH FOR SCHOOLS

The Editors asked Sandy Schuckett what can be done to help our school librarians ...

Grass roots advocacy works....as it did for Measure L. As far as LAUSD librarians getting pink slips.....if every FOCAL member contacted the Board of Ed. member who represents them telling them of what a disaster it would be to axe school librarians, it might have some impact. They should URGE Board members to keep school librarians in their positions throughout the district.

Here is the link to LAUSD Board of Education members:

<http://www.lausd.net/lausd/board/secretary/index2.html> People can either e-mail them or call their offices. They should click on 'Contact' under each Board member's name and they can then either click again to send an e-mail, or use the phone numbers that are provided.

Here are some talking points:

- School librarians are on the front line encouraging students to read and providing them with wonderful books for pleasure reading and for classroom assignments. Students who read more are better students.
- School librarians are credentialed teachers who collaborate with classroom teachers in creating learning projects for students that encourage them to ask questions, find information, evaluate it, and use it in something original. These are all 21st Century skills that are needed by every student today.
- School librarians are at the front line of cyberspace. They teach students how to evaluate content found in the Internet, how to be sure they are safe, and how to utilize that content to find the information they need -- either for school projects, or for their own use.
- 
- Studies in more than 19 states have shown a direct correlation between the presence of a credentialed school librarian and higher test scores. . . especially in reading and language arts.

The main message is to e-mail or call LAUSD Board of Ed members and express extreme disdain at the fact that they would even THINK ABOUT firing school librarians....and on a more positive note, to STRONGLY URGE THEM to think of students and KEEP school librarians who have been proven to be an asset to students' learning. The whole idea of grass roots advocacy is that one has to ACT! ...and in this case, ACT NOW!

People can also go to [www.cafepress.com/csia](http://www.cafepress.com/csia) and order neat items (t-shirts, note cards, mugs, posters, stickers, etc.) with designs by many well-known illustrators of children's books (Brian Selznick, Caroline Arnold, Alike, Joe Cepeda, Marla Frazee, et al) to support the California Campaign for Strong School Libraries. These illustrators have created and donated their designs for this campaign.

The message: "Strong school libraries build strong students and lifelong learners."

## “OH THE PLACES YOU’LL GO”

We are inaugurating a new column in *FOCAL Points*. The title is a nod to favorite author Dr. Seuss, since March is his birthday month. Southern California boasts several organizations that provide events and opportunities for parents and children to learn about books and reading. We will highlight these for our FOCAL members.

### CALIFORNIA READERS

P.O.Box 33225, Granada Hills, CA 91394

[www.californiareaders.org](http://www.californiareaders.org)

The mission of California Readers is to connect California children, young adults, and their school communities with California authors and artists and their creative works.

A visit to their web site will yield a rich amount of information for teachers, school librarians, and parents. It offers imaginative staff an opportunity to win donations of books and author visits to their schools, and provides links to other organizations that share similar goals. The link to interviews with California authors and illustrators is a boon to student readers as well as parents and librarians. They hold an annual awards luncheon on the last Saturday of February.

### CHILDREN’S LITERATURE COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

P.O.Box 573462, Tarzana, CA 91357

[www.childrensliteraturecouncil.org](http://www.childrensliteraturecouncil.org)

This is a non-profit organization that promotes greater interest in literature for children and young people and encourages excellence in the production and selection of books in that field.

Programs include: Spring Workshop, which provides practical information to those who work directly with young people and literature; a Fall Gala at which awards are presented to recognize the works of Southern California authors and illustrators; and *The Sampler*, a newsletter which keeps readers updated on events, trends and issues in children’s literature. The “Wet Print” column highlights recent publications of local authors.

“Read the Movie? Using Movies Based on Books to Promote Literacy” is the title of the Spring Workshop on May 7, 2011, featuring Wendelin Van Draanen, author of award-winning mystery series, and a recent novel, *The Running Dream*, which is now a movie.



The workshop will be held in the Mark Taper Auditorium, Los Angeles Public Library. Check the above website for additional details.

\*\*\*\*\* MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION \*\*\*\*\*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is for calendar year, January through December.

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Basic \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ Associate \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Contributing \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_

(Free autographed book)      (Seat at Head Table)      (Book and Head Table)

Eva Mitnick, Youth Services  
Madeline Bryant, Senior Librarian, Children's Literature  
Helene Mochedlover, FOCAL Points Editor

Send renewals to: Renny Day  
15221 Via de las Olas  
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

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