

Thomas Memorial Library Board of Trustees

Minutes of meeting: Thursday, October 18, 2006 @ 7:00 P.M.

In Attendance:

Ed Nadeau, Secretary

Pat Bredenberg, Nancy Marshall, Penny Olsen, and Deborah Tillman Stone, *Trustees*

Jay Scherma, *Library Director*

Absent:

Bob Stier (work related conflict), Pat Bredenberg (away)

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the Sept 21st meeting were reviewed, and accepted as is.

Library Director's Report (September 2006): Report accepted as is.

Old Business:

- **Public use recycling receptacles outside of the library – Ed**
 - Recycling Committee members: Alina Perez-Smith (Chair) and Rachel Stamieszkin attended our meeting to educate us on the objectives of the proposal to place a multi-bin recycling container at the entrance to TML. They made many compelling arguments (see "Cape Recycles", attached) and answered all our questions. However, we cannot overlook two important factors:
 1. The statement that "the Town Manager and Town Planner have reservations".
 2. The implementation of "single-stream" recycling has been delayed from: Fall 2006, To: sometime in 2007.
 - **Motion:** To table this proposal until the Town Manager and Town Planner reservations are identified and resolved, and "single-stream" recycling is on the immediate horizon.
Result: Unanimously approved

- **Co-sponsor TABOR forum** **Jay**
 - We appreciate the skill and patience that Jay and Rachel exhibited while working through 8 iterations of the promotional poster for this event.
 - Review assignments:

Opening & Closing remarks (coord. w/David Backer)	Bob
Collect and sort question	All trustees
Coordinate lunch	Penny & Nancy
Deliver and hang banner	Ed
Timekeeper (coord. w/Mary Ann Lynch)	Ed
Pickup DVD (from Lighthouse AV, deliver to town clerk)	Ed

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Old Business: (continued)

○ **Book Review for Cape Courier**

Evan

- The second book review is complete (see "Thomas Book Review: Iran", attached), and like the first, Evan did a terrific job.
- Evan will produce one more before submitting them to the Courier for sequential publication. The topics being considered are: Lincoln, or Iraq.

○ **"Poet Laureate of Cape Elizabeth" proposal**

Evan

As another way to "raise the profile of the library," I would like to suggest that we create the title of "Poet Laureate of Cape Elizabeth." Here's what I have in mind. We would hold a competition for the title every other year, and it would be open to any Cape resident. The Library Board of Trustees would select a winner after reviewing the poetry submissions with the assistance of one or more of our resident writer aficionados (the first one that comes to mind is Kate Kennedy. We could also seek out the current Maine Poet Laureate, Elizabeth Betsy Sholl). The winner might get to read the poem during the ceremonies after the annual Fourth of July parade, or some such thing. I would imagine that a lot of High School students would apply since it would look incredibly good on a college application to say you were the Poet Laureate of Cape Elizabeth. It also might tie in nicely with the annual Gabriel A. Zimpritch Poetry Symposium at the library. Indeed, with the library's special room devoted to poetry, our library has already distinguished itself somewhat in the area of poetry. Plus, it wouldn't cost anything, and it might actually inspire some residents to donate money to further support the Zimpritch poetry room.

At this meeting, I was only expecting to raise the idea and get some feedback as to the pros and cons and overall feasibility.

- It was suggested that "Poet Laureate" may not be the appropriate term. Perhaps "Poet in Residence" is more in keeping with the nature of the proposal.
- Jay recommended contacting the Arts Commission to explore partnering with them and the writer mentoring program they sponsor.
- Evan will continue to explore details, including discuss his vision with Joyce Laurie in conjunction with Zimpritch Symposium.

○ **Facilities Subcommittee:**

Ed, Evan, Jay

- Perform a "walk around inspection" of the interior, and re-inspect the exterior of the building to update the list of observations from the "walk around inspection" performed on May 18th.
- Ed will take photos to coincide with the list.
- Inspection is planned for Saturday, November 11, time to be determined.

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New Business:

- (none)

Parked items:

- TML Policy Review (Circulation Policy), tabled until November meeting
- Register Cape residents as Portland patrons, tabled until detailed proposal is submitted by Steve Podganji, PPL Director
- One Book One Community, tabled until next year
- Reciprocal borrowing arrangement w/SoPo, pending letter from TMLBoT secretary to SoPo board to propose a joint meeting.

Meetings:

- TMLBoT meeting is schedule for Thursday, Nov 16, 2006, @ 7:00 P.M.

Adjournment: 8:25 P.M.

The Thomas Book Review: Iran

by Evan J. Roth

In Cooperation With The Thomas Memorial Library Board of Trustees

Iran is a major focus of the news, whether the topic is terrorism, nuclear weapons, or the war in Iraq. But for many people, despite all the print, Iran remains a mystery. If you find yourself looking for clues, check out our library's collection on Iran.

Iran is the modern name of the ancient civilization of Persia, which is the subject of one of the oldest books in our library's collection, an 1870 version of The Five Great Monarchies Of The Ancient Eastern World, by George Rawlinson. The book is part of the original collection of William Widgery Thomas, who founded our library in 1919. Rawlinson provides a quaint portrait which, if anything, reflects the limited Western understanding of Iran. Considering the Ayatollah Khomeini's eventual overthrow of the Shah of Iran, Rawlinson could hardly have been more wrong when he suggested the following:

The feeling of the Persian towards his king is one of which moderns can with difficulty form a conception. In Persia, the monarch was so much the state that patriotism itself was, as it were, swallowed up in loyalty; and an absolute unquestioning submission, not only to the deliberate will, but to the merest caprice of the sovereign, was by habit and education, so engrained into the nature of the people that a contrary spirit scarcely ever manifested itself.

For a more contemporary treatment of Iranian motivations, consider All The Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror, by New York Times foreign correspondent Steven Kinzer, who tells the remarkable story of how, in 1953, a handful of CIA operatives masterminded the overthrow of Iran's democratically-elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, and replaced him with Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran. In the context of the Cold War at the time, President Eisenhower viewed Mossadegh as too cozy with the Soviet Union and too hostile to British and American oil interests. Although those events are obscure or unknown to most Americans, Kinzer explains they are central to Iranian distrust of the West and contributed to Khomeini's February 1979 Iranian revolution and the taking of hostages from the American embassy in Tehran later that year.

The ongoing impact of the Iranian revolution is described in one of our library's newest books, The Shia Revival: How The Conflict Within Islam Will Shape The Future, by Vali Nasr, an adjunct senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a Professor at the Naval Postgraduate School. Nasr explains that within the world Muslim population of 1.3 billion, there is a longstanding rivalry between the vast majority who follow the Sunni faith (as reflected in the leadership of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt, Syria, and Jordan), and the nearly 15% of Muslims of the Shia faith (who form the majority of the population in Iran and Iraq). One of Nasr's more chilling examples of the rivalry involves Iran's ongoing efforts to develop a nuclear option – a so-called "Shia bomb" – to counterbalance Pakistan's "Sunni bomb," which was financed in part

by Saudi Arabia.

Iraq has long been a battleground for this rivalry, as reflected by the violent oppression of the Shia majority in Iraq by Saddam Hussein, a Sunni. At the conclusion of the first Gulf War of 1990-1991, Nasr explains that the Saudis were content to leave Saddam in power since he served as a Sunni buffer to Shia Iran. But now that the United States has toppled Saddam's regime, the Saudis are extremely concerned that American policy has enabled Iran to expand its regional influence through ties with the new Shia leadership of the Iraqi government.

So what is in America's best interest? Before we choose sides, consider Nasr's post-9/11 illustration of the kaleidoscope of shifting Middle East sentiments:

A grassroots outpouring of sympathy for the victims of September 11 occurred on the streets in only two places in the Muslim world, both within days of the collapse of the twin towers and both among the Shia. The first was Iran, where tens of thousands snubbed their government to go into the streets of Tehran and hold a candlelight vigil in solidarity with victims of the attacks. The second was in Karachi, where a local party that is closely associated with the city's Shia broke with the public mood in Pakistan to gather thousands to denounce terrorism.

In the five years since 9/11, the tensions between America and Iran have escalated dramatically. How that plays out remains, like much of the Middle East, a mystery.