

THE *Universal Penman*

NEWSLETTER OF THE PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM

FROM ALISON MAXELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chilly mornings, sun-soaked afternoons, soft shadows as the sun begins to set... autumn is fast approaching, time to retire the well-worn sandals still covered with the last grains of sand - and don't forget that sweater on your way out! But from our quiet reluctance to give up summer comes a desire to reconnect intellectually and physically to the places and things that define us during the academic year. As the splendor of fall arrives, bringing new realities of school and schedules, we re-engage. And all of us here at the Athenaeum relish the opportunity to help you in that process!

Replenish your reading lists with our newest selections. Tables and shelves are ripe with the fruits of our summer labor... choose a riveting mystery, a robust novel, or a rational work of non-fiction from the *New York Times* best seller list... we have it all, an abundant harvest for the mind!

Reap the rewards of membership by posting the enclosed calendar card on your refrigerator. Join other members and guests for our signature Friday evening Salon Series, which has redefined the Athenaeum's role in the community as an organization creating civic engagement.

Remember to invite a friend to the retinue of public programs, masterfully crafted by our own Christina, designed to stimulate your senses, whether it be a musical performance, an evocative reading, or a heated discussion on current events. Revisit your childhood with family moments in the children's library. Lindsay and Nancy will entice you with a splendid array of story times, programs, and crafts for children of all ages.

AND NOW IT'S FALL – COME ONE, COME ALL!

Bring your friends and join us at the ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH!

3 to 5pm: Enjoy family fun and refreshments, plus a visit from those beloved bookworms the Big Nazo puppets, back by popular demand!

5 to 7pm: Toast to the new season, catch up with old friends, and introduce yourself to new folks, too, all to the tune of Bertrand Laurence's French-accented guitar melodies.

5:30pm: Join us for the dedication and naming of the Helen Walker Raleigh and James C. Raleigh Courtyard. As announced in our Spring 2007 *Universal Penman*, Mrs. Raleigh bequeathed over \$700,000 to the library, one of the largest single gifts the Athenaeum has ever received. The funds will be administered by The Rhode Island Foundation, with the Athenaeum receiving a distribution from the interest on this gift annually. Mindful of Mrs. Raleigh's other philanthropic interests in the city, her husband James's previous generous bequest to the Athenaeum, and the love they both felt for the library, the Board of Directors will name the small courtyard facing Benefit Street as a tribute to their lives.



Big Nazo sponsored in part by Kas DeCarvalho Business Law

FALL SCHEDULE

We're back to fall hours, just a reminder:

Monday through Thursday: 9am to 7pm
Friday and Saturday: 9am to 5pm
Sunday: 1 to 5pm

We will be closed
Sunday, October 7th
and Monday, October 8th
in observance of
Columbus Day.



THE OWLET News From The Children's Library

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AT 4:00PM

Story Teller MARK BINDER

Join our great friend Mark for an afternoon treat of telling and reading stories with children.

Ages five and up, RSVP a must.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29 AT 3:00PM

Our Annual Open House with Big Nazo puppets
Treats and surprises!

Fun for all ages! Bring your friends!

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11 AT 3:30PM

Spooky House Building Workshop!

This activity requires a more demanding skill level,
therefore it is most suitable for children ages 5 and up.

Limit 10, RSVP a must.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25 FROM 3:30 - 4:30PM

A Little Halloween Magic!

A Costume Party for children ages 3 - 6.

Stories, games, treats, and prizes.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

RSVP a must, \$5.00 per child.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 FROM 5:30 - 7:30PM

Halloween Movie Madness!

For children ages 6 -10.

Slightly scary movie.

Pizza, juice boxes, and Halloween treat bags!

Space strictly limited to 20

RSVP a must, \$5.00 per child. Guests welcome.

STORY HOURS

Please note: non-members are welcome as guests of members. For more information call Lindsay at 421-6970 x17 or email lshaw@providenceathenaeum.org.

BEAR CUBS - TUESDAYS AT 10:30AM

Songs, rhymes, and clapping games for the very young, infants to age 2.

FAWNS - WEDNESDAYS AT 4:00 PM

Stories, songs, and craft activities for children ages 3 - 6.

CHIPMUNKS - THURSDAYS AT 10:30AM

Songs, rhymes, stories, and craft activities for toddlers 24 to 34 months.

NO STORY HOURS:

Thursday 10/18 and Thursday 10/25

WE ARE GRATEFUL!

The Providence Athenaeum thanks you for your generous gift this past year. Your gift, combined with those of more than 250 members and friends, enabled us to raise over \$100,000!

Your support demonstrates your personal understanding of the value that the Athenaeum provides to our members and to the community. Your gift will enable us to continue offering the high quality service that membership funding alone cannot sustain. We couldn't do it without you!

TOP TEN REASONS TO SUPPORT THE ATHENAEUM THIS YEAR:

10. You are a member of one of the nation's oldest libraries, a pioneering cultural center and collector of the best in reading from the 18th century to today!

9. You have access to 17,258 novels, 6,779 mysteries, and so many volumes of poetry that they haven't all been counted yet, to feed your soul, broaden your mind, entertain you, and inform your world.

8. You have 1,750 reference volumes to peruse for answers to your every question.

7. Your Athenaeum is the only building in Providence designed by the preeminent Philadelphia architect William Strickland. Walk through the doors and feel the history. You're not on a movie set - wait a minute, yes, you are! You're also in your very own library.

6. It's pouring rain, the kids are on their way - no, not another afternoon in front of the computer screen! You're off to the Athenaeum, where the staff is ready to find just the right books.

5. You're headed to Maine in the car. Four and a half hours of switching radio stations? I don't think so! A quick stop at the Athenaeum and you're on the road listening to that classic you loved and always wanted to reread.

4. You're meeting friends at the MFA in Boston next week for a show on contemporary Japanese artists, and you want a bit of background. You head over to RISD; as an Athenaeum member, you have use of the library at one of the world's premier art schools.

3. You feel like catching up on the financial news. You want something in-depth, and you'd like a quiet space to sit back in. Onward to the Athenaeum for an hour of quiet in the Reading Room with this week's issue of *The Economist*.

2. There will be over 60 fascinating salons, programs, and events between now and the end of May where you'll get to know some of the area's most intriguing creators, collectors, and connectors, who will provoke, enlighten, and engage you and your guests.

1. Twenty percent of the Athenaeum's operating budget depends on member support from members just like you. So when you get this year's Friends' Appeal, please join your friends and fellow members and be a supporter!

A SUCCESSFUL SPRING!

ANNUAL GALA



Our annual gala on May 12th was a smashing success, bringing over 185 friends together and raising over \$31,500 in support of the Athenaeum. Befitting the theme, *A Tribute to Motherhood*, Mayor David Cicilline spoke warmly of the contributions of all mothers everywhere, including those of his own mother, Sabra, his date for the evening.

Also honored was Athenaeum devotee extraordinaire, Betsy Carpenter, who received the 2007 Stephen Hopkins Award in recognition of her many contributions to

the library.

Gracious hosts Jane and Deming Sherman and Julie and Todd Andrews presided over an evening of memories and merriment, especially during the witty bidding banter of auctioneers Matthew Bird and James Hall, who brought down the house while bringing up the bids. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the evening so special and

NINTH ANNUAL PHILBRICK POETRY AWARD

Over 65 people came out on May 11th to hear the new Philbrick Poetry Award winner, Leslie McGrath. Selected from a pool of 83 entries by the 2007 Poet Judge, D.H. Melhem, Ms. McGrath enchanted the audience with readings from her newly published chapbook, *Toward Anguish*.

Partial funding was provided by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and by the Philbrick Family. Special thanks to Sandy Markley, Tina Egnoski, Brett Rutherford and members of the Philbrick Poetry Committee for their commitment and dedication. *Toward Anguish* is the ninth title in the Philbrick Poetry Award chapbook series. Copies can be purchased by calling Sandy Markley at 421-6970, x13.

ENORMOUS CHANGES AT THE LAST MINUTE...

"Why, Grandma, what a big calendar card you have!"

"The better to fit in all those Athenaeum programs, my dear!"

In order to keep our members up to date on all the library's news and activities, while simultaneously sending out fewer separate mailings, we're now:

*Incorporating *The Owlet*, the newsletter of the Children's Library, into the *Universal Penman*;

*Increasing frequency of the *Universal Penman's* publication – it will now come out seven times a year, mailing along with the monthly calendar cards;

*Increasing the size of the calendar cards.

We hope you find these improvements helpful!

DON'T MISS THIS STUDENT SPECIAL

Don't want to put your laptop down in a puddle of eggnog latte again this winter? Then swear off studying at Starbucks and make the Athenaeum your lair of intellectual inquiry instead. As a full-time college student you can join the Athenaeum for only \$30 per year, which gives you not only a quiet, cozy place to study, but access to our wonderful collections of books, periodicals, movies, and music, plus invitations to Salons and programs. We'd love to be your home away from home – stop by the Circulation desk or call 421-6970 to become a member!



BUILDING AND GROUNDS:

Alison had hoped to trade in her hard hat for a beach umbrella this summer, but it was not to be! Thanks to funding from the Champlin Foundations and a 2006 State Preservation Grant, construction resumed this summer. Having recently completed necessary repairs to

the 1838 Strickland section of the building, this new project is a continuation of efforts to address water penetration and restore the structural integrity to the 1914 Isham addition. This current work is the first phase of a larger project that will provide archival storage space for the Athenaeum's special collections, incorporating a thermal envelope, climate controls, and compact shelving. While construction will be taking place behind the Reading Room walls, we will make every effort to minimize the disruption to our members.

CHEERS ALL AROUND!

We are able to bring you our programs and Salons thanks to our wonderful sponsors. This fall's generous sponsors are: Antiques & Interiors, Claudia Curl Cuts Color, The Curatorium, Figments, Hope Alswang and Henry Joyce, Kas DeCarvalho Business Law, risdworks, Studio Hop, and Yankee Travel.

We hope that you will stop in and visit them and let them know how much you appreciate their support of the Athenaeum!

Thanks also to Greg Matta and the crew at Campus Fine Wines for all their support and assistance.

MY SUMMER VACATION

by Trisha Kometer

Librarian in Reference and Technical Services

The students at Cape Coast School for the Deaf in Ghana will soon know the joy of libraries. In July 2007, eight volunteers from the US, Ireland, and Switzerland traveled to West Africa to bring books and supplies, and to assist local masons with the construction of a new library building. My husband, Russ, and I were fortunate to have the opportunity to be among them.

Cape Coast School for the Deaf (known affectionately as "Cape Deaf") is home to about 350 deaf children and another 30 blind students. It is a somewhat isolated campus near the town of Cape Coast that provides a safe haven for children with disabilities, as well as vocational training in areas like agriculture, carpentry, weaving, and sewing. Great efforts go to providing a solid educational foundation for the children, but resources are limited. Without a library or access to reading materials at Cape Deaf, teachers have struggled to teach the children to read and write in English, Ghana's official language. The school administration's determination to get a library started, with the help and financial assistance of volunteers, demonstrates their commitment to preparing these children for productive, independent lives.

The volunteer "library staff" consisted of three American librarians. We designed a system for the library and created a card catalog for the books that we brought, over 400 titles in all! When we finished cataloging, we trained one of the teachers to maintain the system and provide basic library services. We also helped Russ and the other volunteers with mixing cement for the masons, carrying water to the site, and installing the window and door frames. The library building was nearing completion when we left, and we are eagerly awaiting pictures of shelves filled with books, and students enjoying their new gathering place.

The best and most rewarding part of the trip was the time we spent with the children. We picked up some sign language from them, and they showed a lot of patience as we attempted to join in their favorite games and dances. When we brought out the books, they were thrilled to look through them, and even more excited to learn that the library would make these materials available for everyone. It was remarkable how

WE SAY GOODBYE, WE SAY HELLO!

In August we said goodbye to Circulation Assistant Virginia Davidson, who, after getting her degree in June from the graduate program at the John Nicholas Brown Center for the Public Humanities at Brown, was hired as Program Coordinator at Middlebury College's Language Schools in Vermont. We will miss her!

And in September we said hello to new Circulation Assistant Gwen Burrow, now earning her Library Science degree in the graduate program at URI. A resident of Warwick, she is also interning at the Center for Digital Initiatives at Brown's Rockefeller Library. Be sure to introduce yourself next time you're in!



happy and full of life the kids seemed to be, even with their daily challenges of living without electricity, indoor plumbing, and many other things we take for granted. Our experience with the children provided powerful motivation to continue our involvement with the school, and to do what we can to help boost their level of education.

We are planning to work with the school administration and other agencies to set up a Friends of Cape Deaf organization so that it will be easier to offer support to the school and library on an ongoing basis. If you are interested in contributing to this project or have questions about our volunteer vacation experience, please let me know at tkometer@providenceathenaeum.org!

SAVE THE DATE!
OUR FALL FUNDRAISER:
WINETASTING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15,
7-9PM!

ENTERTAINING EVENINGS:
WINES FROM COCKTAILS TO DESSERT.
Augment your entertaining arsenal in time for the holiday season! Let Campus Fine Wines help you entertain the possibilities, from cocktail wines and aperitifs through wines for the meal, followed by ports and other after-dinner selections, and, finally, spirits to make the dessert course even sweeter.

Wines will be paired with complementary food tastings.

Spirited gypsy jazz musical accompaniment by Minor Swing!