

Some Key People in BookCellar History

Friends of the Library Presidents Since 1990

Virginia Bowden, 1989–1990
Gladys Leverett, 1991–1992
Essie Johnson, 1993–1994
Pat Brown, 1995–1998
Lee LaCaff, 1999–2000
Barbara Isner, 2001–2004
Linda Nairn, 2005–2008
Nancy Gandara, 2009–present

BookCellar Committee Chairs

Val Poska, 1990–1998
Pat Sharman, 1999
Jim Wogstad, 2000–2003
Aaron Konstam, 2004–2011
Linda Arronge, 2012

BookCellar Managers

Liz Jones, 1991
Mildred Mitchell, 1991
Lois Parkhurst, June 1992–July 1993, Administrative Manager
Tom Nemeth, September 1992–July 1993, On-site Manager,
Mildred Mitchell, August 1993
Pat Sharman, September 1993–October 1994
Ken Pyatt, November 1994–December 1995
Lucille Teeter, January 1996–January 2000
Robin Wilson, February–August 2000
Karen Atkinson, September 2000–February 2004
Treva Dickson, March–May 2004
Monica Hernandez, June 2004–present

BookCellar Committee Members Since 2000

*Earlier committee rosters are incomplete.
19XX = joined the committee before 2000.*

Linda Arronge, 2005–present
Vera Banner, 2003–2010
Evelyn Bonavita, 2012–present
Pat Brown, 19XX–2009
Barbara Celitans, 19XX–2000
Gerard Celitans, 19XX–2002
Bruce Gill, 2007–2008
Aaron Konstam, 2000–present
Pat Konstam, 2002–present
Anne Long, 2009–present
Josie Martinez, 2003–2009
Andrea Mason, 2011–present
Richard Morales, 2006–present
Linda Nairn, 2010–2011
Tom Nemeth, 2012–present
Jeanne Papa, 19XX–2008
Val Poska, 1991–2003
Dianne Prickett, 2009–2010
Rowena Rodgers, 2003–present
Robbi Ruppert, 2000–2006
Stephanie Serrata, 2011–present
Pat Sharman, 1999–2000
Lucille Teeter, 2000–present
Judy Wilson, 2008–2011
Jim Wogstad, 2000–2006
Carole Wooster, 2010–2011

Friends presidents and BookCellar managers are ex officio committee members.

*The Friends of the San Antonio Public Library express their deep appreciation to **Pat Konstam** for compilation of this history in Spring 2012.*



The BookCellar
Central Library, 600 Soledad Street
San Antonio, TX 78205

Open daily Sunday–Saturday 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
and Thursdays 11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

(210) 227-9519 email: Bookcellar1@gmail.com

Friends of the San
Antonio Public Library



Celebrating 21
Years of History
and Hundreds of
Volunteer Workers

May 2012

Landmarks Along the Way

March 23, 1964 – Friends of the San Antonio Public Library was officially organized, receiving a charter from the City Council, signed by 13 founding members. Its purpose, then and now, is to “promote public use of the San Antonio Public Library System and appreciation of its value as a cultural and educational asset to the community, and to encourage the extension and improvement of the services.”

During its first 25 years, the Friends raised money for library programs primarily through donations, assisted library staff with various tasks, supported library bond issues and honored prominent local writers and artists with its annual Arts & Letters Awards.

May 1989 – **David Leamon**, “the father of the BookCellar,” was hired as Library Director, bringing new ideas from out of state. Finding a huge number of discarded library books in storage, he suggested Friends of the Library hold a big book sale and possibly open a book store to dispose of the books and raise money for the underfunded library. He and City Manager **Alex Briseño** persuaded City Council to authorize the Friends to sell discarded library materials. The resulting city ordinance was passed on March 22, 1990.

September 12–16, 1990 – The first sale, co-chaired by **Mary McAfee** and Assistant Library Director **Gerry LeFevre**, was held in Centro de Artes in Market Square, raising more than \$20,000.

April 6, 1991 – The Market Street Book Cellar opened in the Hertzberg Circus Museum basement at 210 West Market Street, open Tuesday through Saturday and operated by Friends of the Library. Early volunteers included **Norm Sonnenschein**, **Tom Nemeth**, **Jeanne Papa**, **Lucille Teeter**, **Yolanda Herrera**, **Rowena Rodgers** and **Jim Wogstad**, who all remain active workers. Others at the Hertzberg location who have retired from the Book-

Cellar in recent years included **Pat Brown**, **Robbi Ruppert**, **Ed Van Pelt**, **Bettie Ward** and **Ruth Yows**.

October 1991–March 1996 – The Friends continued to hold big Annual Book Sales, twice in the old Sears parking garage (now Central Library garage), three times in the Villita Assembly Hall basement, and finally in the auditorium of Central Library, which had opened May 20, 1995. Thousands of books were transported from the Hertzberg to sale locations by truck or hand-pulled dollies. **Mary McAfee** co-chaired most of these sales.

November 1996 – The Market Street Book Cellar was forced to close because of renovations to open the Hertzberg to the Riverwalk and make the building accessible to the disabled.

May 1997 and February 1998 – Annual Book Sales were held in the Central Library auditorium. **Lucille Teeter**, then Book Cellar manager, kept volunteers informed and involved.

October 31, 1998 – The Book Cellar reopened in its new location in the Central Library basement. Hours were 11 a.m.-3 p.m., seven days a week.

January 1999 – The Book Cellar began awarding volunteers with aprons decorated with patches each representing 50 hours worked. Since then, 1,350

patches have been earned, representing almost 68,000 volunteer hours recorded.

July 2000–June 2002 – The store shared space with Blimpie’s Subs and Salads.

May 17–19, 2002 – Canopies designed by **Jim Wogstad** enabled the big Annual Sale to expand to the patio.

June 9, 2005 – The store extended its hours to Thursday evenings.

October 2009 – Store’s name was officially changed to **The BookCellar** (one word).

2010 – The Library Board of Trustees presented a Library Champions Award to BookCellar volunteers as a group.

January 2011 – Under the leadership of Friends President **Nancy Gandara**, a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the Friends and the Library System was signed, spelling out for the first time their respective responsibilities in the BookCellar’s use of library space.

2002–2011 – The store added shelves, tables, new equipment and better lighting and expanded work space for improved effectiveness in selling books and media. Average annual sales increased by 33%.



21 Years of History

An estimated **450 individuals have worked** at the BookCellar since 1991, usually giving at least four hours a week of their time. At any one time, an active core of 20 to 40 people has kept the store going. Many have retired from volunteering for health reasons, moved away or are no longer living. On this anniversary, we remember all of them with gratitude.

Together, their work in operating the BookCellar and big Annual Sales **has generated more than \$1 million**, enabling Friends of the Library to **give the Library System more than \$1 million during those 21 years**. The Library System has used this money for Summer Reading programs, children’s events that travel to **all branches, adult programs, and library staff development**.