



the *Library Insider*

Spring 2014 Vol 20-Number 104

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Meet author Robin Sloan



at one
of the
following
events:

Thursday, March 27

10:00 a.m. • Pasadena City College, Creveling Lounge (Campus Center), 1570 E. Colorado Blvd.

7:00 p.m. • Conversation with Jan Sanders, the Pasadena Public Library Director, in the All Saints Church Forum, 132 N. Euclid Ave. (Fee-based event parking is available nearby.)

Friday, March 28

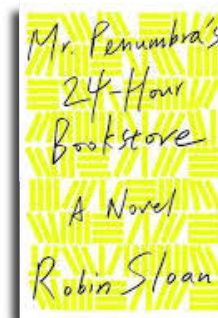
6:00 p.m. • IdeaLab, 130 W. Union St. "Inventing Media," a presentation by author Robin Sloan. How do new formats get started? Visit <https://www.facebook.com/pasadenalibrary> or <https://twitter.com/pasadenalibrary> for program updates.

One City, One Story

... let's participate

There's still time! Pick up a copy of *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore* at a nearby library or a local bookstore. The novel is a fun read, and you'll be primed for book discussions—planned or impromptu—that take place in March as Pasadena embarks on its annual One City, One Story program. To learn more about the related events, please see page 5. The Friends of the Pasadena Public Library is a sponsor of the Pasadena program, now in its 12th year.

There are many reasons to participate. One of the book-related programs may draw you into a library branch that you've never visited. And surely Penumbra's author, Robin Sloan, will be an engaging speaker when he visits Pasadena. Sloan must have been a standout even in college, as he co-founded a literary magazine at Michigan State University and was tapped to deliver the senior convocation address when he graduated from its Eli Broad College of Business in 2002. Awarded a post-college fellowship at journalism's Poynter Institute, Sloan quickly demonstrated his flair for imaging the future and utilizing digital technologies. He joined Current TV in its infancy and championed the use of Twitter data in the network's coverage of the 2008 presidential campaign. He then moved to Twitter. In 2010, he signed with a literary agent and began the task of coaxing a full-blown novel from the short story he'd previously published in the Kindle Store.



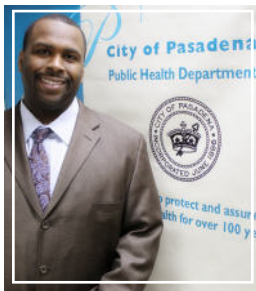
LitFest Pasadena on the prowl

In its third year, the literary festival will be a moveable affair, beginning at 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 17 in the courtyard of Vroman's Bookstore at 695 E. Colorado Blvd. The organizers say that events will be staged during the evening in multiple locations in the city's Playhouse District. As the date nears, look for detailed information in local news outlets, the Pasadena Public Library or the festival's website at <http://litfestpasadena.org>.

What's on Your Nightstand?

As this column begins its third year, *The Insider* marvels over one constant: the busiest and most accomplished people seem to be great readers, delighting in books that range afield of their day jobs or professions.

Consider Eric Walsh, whose demanding job bears two titles: Director of Public Health/Health Officer for the City of Pasadena. One of just three city-operated health agencies in California, the Pasadena Public Health Department oversees educational and clinical programs to cope with an array of needs: immunizations, lead poisoning prevention, HIV/STD services, tuberculosis, nutrition and vital records, to name just a few!



Eric Walsh

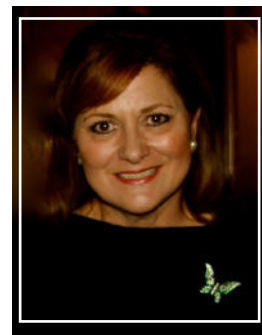
Walsh, who holds degrees in medicine and public health, is enthusiastic about two business books he recently read. He also reads the Bible on an ongoing basis "to kind of center myself," he said. In mid-February, he was reading the Book of Acts, as well as selections from the Book of Psalms.

Tap Dancing to Work: Warren Buffett on Practically Everything, 1966-2012 is one business title that Walsh recommends. It's the work of Carol Loomis, a longtime business writer and Buffett friend who collected and expanded on articles published in *Fortune*. Walsh said he also admires Jim Collins' books on great companies, and recently read *Great by Choice: Uncertainty, Chaos, and Luck—Why Some Thrive Despite Them All*, a 2011 book that Collins coauthored with Morten Hansen.

Walsh said he was very moved by *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Written by legal scholar Michelle Alexander, the 2010 book examines the long-term consequences of incarceration for former inmates who are legally denied some civic and public benefits. "It's a phenomenal book that really looks at what we do to people long-term," said Walsh, who weighs long-term consequences of health issues and nutrition in his job.

On his watch, the Public Health Department published its Pasadena/Altadena 2012 Quality of Life Index, which documented a disparity of wealth that is reflected in city residents' varied access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The report spurred the formation of the Pasadena Community Gardens Conservancy, which has moved quickly to provide financial and technical support to urban agriculture. The group's first major project is a community garden at Villa Parke Community Center, set to open on April 26.

Eileen White Read, the Conservancy's president and chief executive, is engrossed in gardening books, as she's turned her Pasadena yard into an urban farm by taking out all the grass and the annuals. The endeavor is a switch from her early career as a *Wall Street Journal* reporter who tracked the California aerospace industry, and her later work for Washington D.C. nonprofits that focused on Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.



Eileen White Read

"I grow a lot of vegetables, 'bush' fruits like blueberries and strawberries, and fruit trees, so I'm learning how to care for them bit by bit," she said. "I have a number of local gardening books, but an inexpensive paperback published just last year, *California Gardener's Handbook* by Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, is my daily go-to. I'm trying to find ways to cram more edible plants into the garden, and the bible for this effort is *The Edible Front Yard* by Ivette Soler.

"Gardens are an important part of my imagination as well," Read said. "I can't tell you how much time I spend at night pondering *Labyrinths: The Art of the Maze*, by Giovanni Mariotti and Luisa Biondetti. Garden geometrics have been around something like 4,000 years, and in just about every culture. I'm also a devotee of the book *The Persian Garden*:

You Have a Date with The Friends

If you receive *The Library Insider* in the mail, you're among our greatly valued members! We're now noting the renewal date of your annual membership above your name on the mailing label. If that escapes notice, we'll send a letter to ask you to renew your membership in the appropriate month.

We deeply appreciate your continued support of The Friends and the programs we help fund in Pasadena's public libraries.

If you would like to adjust your renewal date, just include a note with your membership check, or email us at friendspl@yahoo.com. Questions? We can reply via email or snail mail or phone. Say the word.

—John Price, Membership Chair



since most Americans really can't visit, so I look at the pictures and illustrations in this extremely well-researched book . . . over and over again. And dream about what those paradise parks must have looked like."

The Conservancy president said that amateur gardeners figure in two of her favorite fictional tales, citing *The Constant Gardener*, John Le Carre's novel of intrigue set in East Africa, and *Rappaccini's Daughter*, a short story by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Set in Italy, the latter tells the story of a doctor's daughter who is tasked with tending a medicinal herb garden in medieval Padua. As she is forced to grow medicinal plants that are poisonous, her personality becomes poisonous and ruins her relationship with her beau and everyone around her. "It's an allegorical story based on an old tale from India. I first ran into this story because it was the source for Stevie Nicks' lyrics for a 1980s-era Fleetwood Mac song, 'Running Through the Garden,'" Read said.

The Insider also caught up with Marla Frazee, the award-winning author and illustrator of children's books who lives in Pasadena. A graduate of Art Center College of Design, Frazee is a two-time recipient of the Caldecott Honor, awarded to finalists for the Caldecott Medal. The American Library Association awards the Caldecott Medal annually to the artist of the most distinguished picture book for children published in the United States the previous year.

Drawing upon an experience of one of her children, Frazee wrote and illustrated *A Couple of Boys Have the Best Week Ever*, named a Caldecott Honor Book in 2009.

2009. One year later, she won a Caldecott Honor a second time for her illustration of *All the World*, written by Liz Garton Scanlon.

So . . . what books were piled on Frazee's nightstand in February? Several grown-up titles. Frazee said she was "about 100 pages into" *The Signature of All Things*, the 2013 novel by Elizabeth Gilbert. She was also reading *Stag's Leap*, the 2012 volume of poetry by Sharon Olds, and a book she received from a friend: *Encyclopedia of an Ordinary Life*, the 2005 memoir by Amy Krouse Rosenthal, who has also written a number of children's books. *Stag's Leap* tells poignantly of the demise of a long marriage. Frazee, who has enjoyed Olds' work in the past, said she wanted to read *Stag's Leap* as she has undergone challenging transitions in her own life. She said that she has found the poems to be inspirational and "they resonate over time." *Encyclopedia of an Ordinary Life* is clever and fun, Frazee said. The book is structured like an encyclopedia, with cross references and illustrations. In one entry, the author talks about her life in relation to coffeehouses. The book captures a life of experiences, observations and musings told with humor.



Marla Frazee

In her own work, Frazee portrays life in a playful and insightful manner. She recently collaborated with poet Cynthia Rylant, "reimagining" and illustrating 16 of Rylant's previously published poems for a new collection entitled *God Got a Dog*. The 2013 work is "a lyrical celebration of where the divine meets the mundane," in the words of the *School Library Journal*.

—Katie Harris and Janet Lundblad

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Pasadena, California



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For questions regarding membership or
our activities and projects,
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email at friendspppl@yahoo.com

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Pasadena's independent bookseller has a marvelous "Gives Back" program that returns a portion of in-store purchases to local nonprofits—and our organization is one! Please designate The Friends of the Pasadena Public Library as the charity that you wish to benefit. Not a member of the Vroman's "Gives Back" program? Enroll at a store register, or sign up online at www.vromansbookstore.com.

Make every purchase count!



Pasadena's libraries ... are something to celebrate!

Pasadena loves to throw a party. This year, the city is celebrating 130 years of reading because the community's first library opened its doors in 1884—two years before the city incorporated. Current year festivities began in January with cake, exhibits, musical performers and dignitaries on hand. In February, Central hosted a fair for local authors to meet their readers and to autograph books. Other special events will take place in the months ahead, so look for announcements in the library's *Off the Shelf* newsletter or visit: www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/library/.



(from left) Pasadena's Library Director Jan Sanders, Mayor Bill Bogaard and state Senator Carol Liu



Deputy Library Director Jennifer Addington (left); Theatre Americana (below)

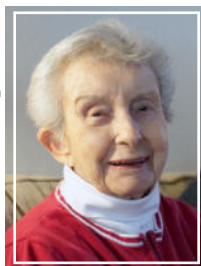


Photos by Molly Kennington



In Tribute

We thank the friends of Sally Glass Peisch (1918-2013) who have sent donations to our organization in her memory. Outgoing and active, she loved books and shared that enthusiasm in her professional and private life. A graduate of Pasadena High School, she earned her bachelor's degree from UCLA and a Master's in Library Science from Columbia University. She worked at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and the Huntington Library in San Marino. As a volunteer, she organized a library for a local elementary school. Returning to college in 1972, she earned a Master's in Instructional Media and teaching credentials to work as a school librarian. As her family noted in the affectionate obituary published in the *Pasadena Star-News* on January 12, 2014, she stayed active in her final decade by attending classes and exercising at the Pasadena Senior Center. "She will be remembered for her love of books, her warm sense of humor and her gregarious nature."



Central Library

626.744.4066

285 East Walnut Street
Mon - Thurs 9:00 am - 9:00 pm
Fri and Sat 9:00 am - 6:00 pm
Sunday 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Allendale Branch

626.744.7260

1130 South Marengo
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 2 - 6 pm

Hastings Branch

626.744.7262

3325 E. Orange Grove Blvd.
Mon - Thurs 10 am - 9 pm
Fri & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Sun 1 - 5 pm

Hill Avenue Branch

626.744.7264

55 South Hill Ave.
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 10 am - 2 pm

La Pintoresca Branch

626.744.7268

1355 North Raymond Ave.
Mon - Sat 9 am - 6 pm

Lamanda Park Branch

626.744.7266

140 South Altadena Dr.
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 2 pm - 6 pm

Linda Vista Branch

626.744.7278

1281 Bryant Street
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 10 am - 2 pm

San Rafael Branch

626.744.7270

1260 Nithsdale Road
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 10 am - 2 pm

Santa Catalina Branch

626.744.7272

999 E. Washington Blvd.
Mon - Thurs & Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Fri 2 - 6 pm

Villa Parke Branch

626.744.6510

363 E. Villa Street
Mon - Fri 10 am - 6 pm
Sat 10am - 2 pm

One City, One Story Events

Around Town

Films to celebrate One City, One Story

Wednesdays • 1 p.m. • Central Library, Donald R. Wright Auditorium • 285 E. Walnut Street

March 12 • Night at the Museum (2006) PG

March 19 • Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium (2007) G

March 26 • Hugo (2011) PG

Data Visualization Event

One City, One Story Data Visualization

The ongoing Learn to Code with Us series hosts a special Data Visualization themed program. Bring your laptop and any project you want to work on. We'll run the best talks on the subject in the background as we get down to coding ourselves.

Thursday, March 20 • 7 p.m. • Central Library, Donald R. Wright Auditorium • 285 E. Walnut Street

Teen Art Contest

Co-sponsored by Art Center College of Design

Submit a one-frame illustration depicting an idea or scene inspired by *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore*. Entries will be judged based on creativity, technical skill, and execution. Selected entries will be displayed at the Pasadena Central Library. All artwork will be returned to the artist. The first place winner will receive free tuition for a Saturday High class at Art Center College of Design (valued up to \$350!).

- Open to teens in grades 9-12
- Single frame illustration in pencil, ink or paint
- Size can range anywhere between 8" x 10" to 22" x 28"
- Can be submitted at any Pasadena Public Library location
- Deadline to submit: Monday, March 31

Contest forms are available online and at the library. For details, please visit <http://cityofpasadena.net/library/teens/> and www.artcenter.edu/sat.

Community Book Discussions

La Pintesca Branch Library
Saturday, March 8 • 9:30 a.m. • 1355 N. Raymond Avenue

Allendale Branch Library
Saturday, March 15 • 10:30 a.m. • 1130 S. Marengo Avenue

San Rafael Branch Library
Thursday, March 20 • 4 p.m. • 1240 Nithsdale Road

Lamanda Park Branch Library
Monday, March 24 • 11 a.m. • 140 S. Altadena Drive

Hill Avenue Branch Library
Wednesday, March 26 • 3:30 p.m. • 55 S. Hill Avenue

Linda Vista Branch Library
Saturday, March 29 • 11 a.m. • 1281 Bryant Street

Youth Programs

Steam Team Club. Explore the STEAM (Science, Technology Engineering, Arts and Math) concepts through creative, innovative projects. For 3rd - 6th graders.

Wednesday, March 12 • 4 p.m. • Hastings Branch Library • 3325 E. Orange Grove Blvd.

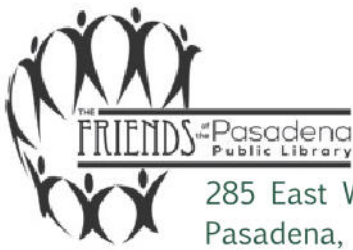
Game Maker. Learn to create and design simple computer and videogame programs with digital artist Ean Moore. For kids 10 to 17.

Thursday, March 13 • 3:30 p.m. • La Pintesca Branch Library • 1355 N. Raymond Avenue

"Your life must be an open city, with all sorts of ways to wander in."

Robin Sloan, *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore*





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The mission of The Friends is to support the library's programs, special services and cultural events. Priority is given to projects that instill the excitement of discovery and the love reading in library patrons of all ages.

The Friends' Upcoming Book Sales

Saturdays
March 8,
April 12 &
May 10

Central Library's East Patio

If you wish to donate books to The Friends' monthly sales to help raise funds for library programs, you may deposit books in the Book Drop container on the loading dock next to Central Library's north entrance.

Donations may also be left inside at the Circulation Desk or in The Friends' book store during store hours (11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday).

Need help with your donation?
Call us at 626.744.4680

All donations are tax-deductible. Request a receipt in The Friends' book store or at the Circulation Desk. The Friends thank you!



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