



FIGARO
the
LIBRARY CAT



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Figaro was a white cat with black spots on his back & face and he had a black nose and a black tail.

He hadn't always lived in the library. Oh no! Figaro and Mama Cat and his 2 sisters lived with a nice family where the mother and father and 2 children were kind to him. The girl and boy would pull a string for him to chase and throw a ball for him to pounce on and he would pretend it was a mouse.

But Figaro wanted an adventure and the only way to have an adventure was to leave his family and go off on his own. He wasn't sure what he was looking for but he would know when he found it.

The first 2 times he left home, he didn't find his 'venture. There were too many dogs who were all too willing to chase a cat walking by himself. So Figaro went back home and made his plans. He decided his adventure wasn't going to happen in his neighborhood so one day, he went through the alley and it wasn't long before he found himself on a busy street corner. All those cars going by were quite frightening to him. He knew he would have to be careful when he crossed the street so after looking one way and then the other, he ran to the other side. He was safely on the other side of the road. There was a green car in front of the library. Of course he didn't know it was the library. He was resting under the car and thinking that maybe he shouldn't have left Mama Cat, but he didn't know how to get back home. And he was hungry. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all. What was that? He saw two feet on the street beside the car and then someone bent down and was looking at him. It was the Librarian. She began to talk to him and then reached out her hands to pick him up. She took him into the library.

He didn't pay much attention to what the library looked like inside or even wonder what all those bookshelves and books were doing there. He put on his hungry look, because he was certainly hungry, and the ladies in the library knew what that look meant. A library patron got him some milk and a hot dog that she was taking home for supper. Figaro ate the hot dog and drank the milk, but he was already thinking that if they thought he was going to eat a steady diet of this, they'd better think again.

When he finished eating his supper, he started cleaning his face and whiskers with his front paw the way his mother had taught him. He heard the library ladies talking about him. They wondered where he had come from and where he was going to spend the night. He knew where he was going to sleep. There was a soft green loveseat near the door that looked very comfortable - just the place for a young cat to curl up on. And that is just what he did. When it was time for the library to close, the Librarian patted Figaro and told him good-night. He purred and stretched and thought to himself "this is just what I was looking for".

Many people came into the library and he always had someone to play with. He learned about handicapped people. He met a blind man who let him play with his cane. A girl in a wheelchair was his friend. Figaro didn't see their handicaps, he just knew that they were his friends.

When he was old enough to go outdoors by himself, he had many adventures and met new friends.

Figaro visited the lady who lived in the building behind the library. He would sit on her steps and listen to her stories about when she was a little girl. He would look very intelligent and she thought "what a smart cat he is."

When the dentist or the hairdresser left their back doors open, he would walk in and visit with the people who were in there. One day, the lady who owned the beauty shop thought that Figaro didn't have a home and she was going to take him home. A lady sitting under a hair dryer said, "Oh, don't do that. His name is Figaro and he is the Library Cat."

One day, Figaro let curiosity get the best of him. He jumped through an open car window and it was so cozy in there, he went to sleep. He was still there when the lady who owned the car, got in it and drove off. Figaro was too scared to let her know that he was in there. When she stopped at a gas station, he jumped out of the car. The people saw him and didn't know where this cat had come from. He didn't live in that neighborhood. Figaro was lucky because the lady called the police station. When she described this handsome cat, the policeman said "that sounds just like the cat who lives across the street in the library." So Figaro was brought home and everyone was happy to see him.

If Figaro was writing this story, he would want everyone to know about the time that he helped the police catch a robber. At least, Figaro thought he was helping. Actually the police chief had other thoughts about Figaro. There had been some robberies in the town and when the police were told that a store in Figaro's neighborhood was going to be robbed that night, they planned a stake out. This meant that policemen were going to wait in cars that weren't police cars and try to catch the robber. Well, Figaro was out that night doing some patrolling on his own. When he came to the car that the police chief was in, he jumped up on the trunk and made just enough noise to cause the chief to think that the robber had come up behind him. The chief took out his gun and turned around fast only to find a white and black cat looking at him through the back window of the car.

by There was the time that the governor of the state was coming to the library to be interviewed by the people of the television stations. The camera crew arrived first to set up their cameras and lights. Figaro thought it was doubtful that the cameramen could have filmed that interview if he hadn't been there to inspect the equipment and show them where the light plugs were. He was so much help that they asked someone to take him outside and keep him there until the governor had left.

Figaro had many adventures while he lived in the Library. He lived there for four years and had many friends. He liked people and people liked him.

This is a true story. There really was a Library Cat named Figaro.

When she stopped at a gas station, she described this handsome cat, the policeman said "that sounds just like the cat who lives across the street in the library." So Figaro was brought home and everyone was happy to see him.

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the Library Cat.

TO FIGARO

Oh, such a charmer, dear Figaro,
in his suit of black and white,
To persons of all ages, his antics
proved delight!
We'll miss this leprechaun of cats;
how could any quite replace,
His airs of nonchalance, élan
or acrobatic grace!

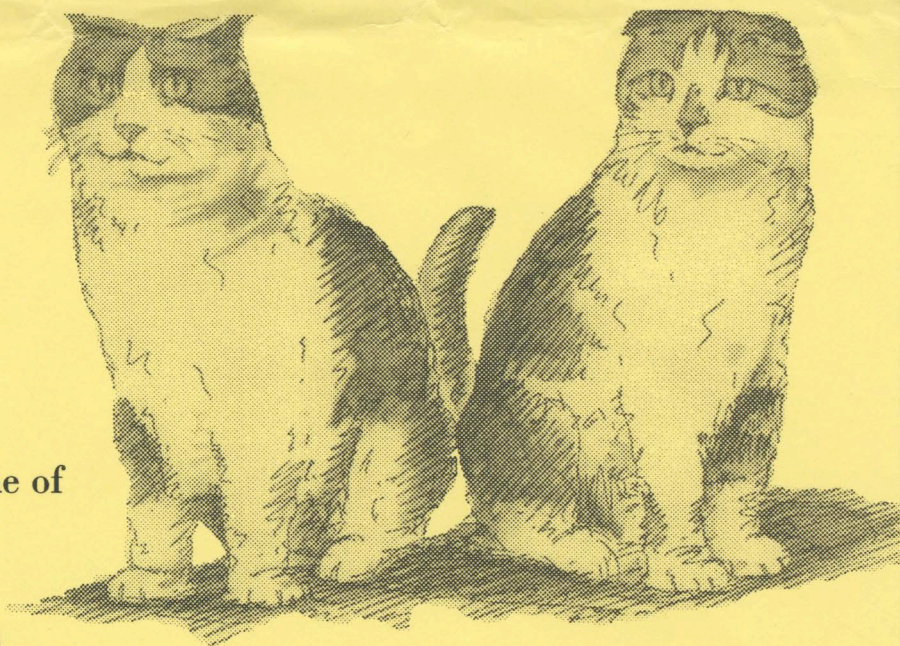
Nancy Sage
12/12/80

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Baker & Taylor's 1996 Cat Contest



Nominate your favorite feline for one of the following *Categories*:

- Baker and Taylor Look-a-likes**
- Best Dressed**
- Most Playful**

Fill out the entry form below and mail to Baker & Taylor with a *purrry* photograph of your cat. If it is one of the finalists, your cat's photo will appear in the Baker & Taylor booth at ALA Summer in New York City July 6 - 9, 1996. There, conference attendees will have an opportunity to vote for their favorite cat photo for each *Category*. Winners will be announced in the Baker & Taylor booth on July 9, 1996 at 12 noon. Twelve winners (four from each *category*) will receive a \$100 gift certificate to use at their favorite pet store.

Contest begins January 20, 1996.
Last day for applications will be
May 31, 1996.

Applicant must be an employee or volunteer at a library. Each cat may be entered in one *Category* only.



BAKER & TAYLOR
Information and Entertainment Services

Printed in the USA 1/96

Baker & Taylor 1996 Cat Contest Entry Form

Owner Name _____

Institution _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Work Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Cat Name _____

Age _____ Breed/Type _____

Category: (check one)

- Baker and Taylor Look-a-like
- Best Dressed
- Most Playful

**Please mail with
cat photo to:**

Baker & Taylor
2709 Water Ridge Parkway
Charlotte, NC 28217
Attn: Cat Contest

Baker & Taylor
MUST receive all
Information by
May 31, 1996.

Meridian Library History

1924, Sept 12 A traveling library has been opened in Meridian at the Songer Pharmacy. The books were obtained from the State Traveling Library at Boise, by the Occident Club of Meridian, and the latest and best books are included in each shipment. Mrs. Jack Garrett has charge of the library and it will be open to the public on Wed. and Sat. of each week. There is no charge of any kind for the use of the books and the citizens are invited to make use of this opportunity to secure some excellent literature.

1924, Mar. 25 The library moved to the city hall.

1926, Feb. 10 A Library Drive was on with a Pie Social, card Party and Dance being held to raise money.

1930, Feb. 3 The Occident Club purchased the vacant Interurban Depot for \$1,200 from John and Augusta Porter of Pittsburg.

1930, Feb. 7 Occident Club met at the home of Mrs. R.H. Bell. The business under discussion was "Shall the repairs on the building recently purchased be made now or later?" The club voted to make the repairs now, and if necessary get a loan of \$500 to start the work at once. It is imperative to have a place for the books as the library maintained by the club has to be moved from its present place.

Same issue of Meridian Times-different article- The carpenters of the town have offered to donate their time and work amounting to \$25 apiece to the ladies of the Occident club in repairing and remodeling the old Interurban Depot building which the club has purchased for a club house. The men started work this week.

1930, Sept. 5 The Library is open on Tuesday and Friday each week. It is in the new home, the former Interurban Station.

1930, Sept 12 The Occident Club, under the direction of their President, Mrs. W.J. Davidson, has renewed their activities and much work is planned for the year. At the state fair last week the ladies had a refreshment booth, selling hot meat sandwiches, homemade pies and ice cream. Four hundred and fifty dollars was taken in and after expenses are cleared the club will have \$250. This amount will be applied on the club house debt. Different merchants helped materially. The Idaho Power Company furnished the frigidair at the booth and also the lights. The Meridian Elevator company furnished the flour for the pies. Davis meat market made a reduction on the meats as also did the Jesma creamery for the ice cream. The club building, which is completed, is being frunished. Beautiful monk cloth curtains hang at the windows. Mr. O.M. Manion & Mr. Carl Patch made new book cases. Prof. S. L. Hughell furnished a stove. J.R. Clark, a desk, and Mrs. John Baird and Mrs. John Cato each a chair. The members are now negotiating for 40

Sept 12

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1950-1967

City began 1 mil levy for Library/to assist the Occident club. First paid librarian during this time.

1969

Library Annex Matching Funds request. (\$13,018 local, \$17,879 Federal) *30,960.00

1969 March 17

Ground breaking on project.

1974, July 1

Library Dedication club has to be moved from its

1974, July 15

District Hearing

1974, Aug. 27

District Vote, yes 61; no 47-City could not vote.

1975, Aug 26

Library Merger Election with Meridian Free Library Dist. Yes 90; no 10

1930, Sept. 5

The Library is open on Tuesday and Friday each week. It is in the new home, the former Interurban Station.

1982

Nancy S. Sage & Carl H. Rathjen Idaho Collection Day proclaimed. (Special shelf collection at library.)

1930, Sept 12

19

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Disruption
4000 chairs
negotiating for 40

On August 27, 1974, the voters approved the establishment of the Meridian Free Library District. The area served by this library follows the Western Ada Recreation District with the exclusion of a small portion served by the Kuna Library District. Residents of the City of Meridian were not allowed to vote as they were being served by the Meridian Public Library.

The Ada County Commissioners appointed the first board of 5 trustees. The trustees elected Ralph Hunter, chairman; Carl Rathjen, vice chairman; Pat Fabricius, sect., Dave McFadden & Nancy Spear members of the board.

Federal funding (CETA) was obtained to pay the salary of a librarian & a clerk-typist until tax support was available.

On Sept 27th, Grove Koger was hired as the District librarian and at the trustees meeting, he assumed the duty of secretary and Carl Rathjen was named treasurer.

On Oct. 31, 1974, Nancy Spear resigned from the board of trustees to begin her duties as clerk-typist. Evelyn Olsen was appointed to fill the vacancy on the board.

At this time there were two libraries operating in one building owned by Occident Club at 18 E. Idaho Ave. Mr. Koger was District librarian & Mrs. Nancy Sage was Meridian Public Library librarian and Mrs. Marie Sandy was her assistant.

The Meridian Public Library had its beginning on July 17, 1924 when members of the Occident Club started a small library in the Songer Drug Store on the corner of 1st and E. Idaho Ave. with a few shelves of books.

In 1925 the library was moved to the City Hall on Meridian St. There were approximately 2,000 books, mostly donations.

In 1929 the Club raised funds, incorporated & purchased the old Interurban Depot on the NE corner of Meridian St. & E. Idaho Ave. to house the Club & the library. When space proved inadequate, fund raising efforts brought enough money to add a 50 by 20 foot room on the east side of the depot & the library moved into this addition in 1951. Meridian City Clerk Gerald Cox reports that the Occident Club received a tax levy of 1 mill for the library in 1950. Up to this time the Club had volunteered their time to the library. Help from the City was appreciated, but volunteers were still a necessary part of taking care of the library needs.

In 1968 plans were made for further expansion of the library. Fund raising efforts were begun to reach the goal of 40% in local funds to match for \$17,879 in federal funds from the Library Services & Construction Act. Bake sales & the sale of popcorn balls & miniature rose bushes along with contributions from individuals & local organizations including the Meridian Athletic Association who donated their 1974 Easter Day race proceeds to the building and helped the realization of a bigger library of approximately 1800 square feet.

Mrs. Nancy Sage came to work in the library under Ruth Cline in 1954. Nancy became librarian in 1961 when Mrs. Amy Ambrose retired. Many students in the Meridian area will remember Nancy as being willing to help them at all times by finding the necessary information to complete a school assignment and help them with their problems. All the patrons of the Meridian Public Library will remember her and Mrs. Sandy as being cheerful & anxious to help

and just the right book for enjoyable reading. Mrs. Sage retired in Feb., 1975 and Mrs. Sandy in Dec. of that year.

Before the move into the new addition on June 1, 1974, the Library Board & Occident Club members knew that Meridian & Ada County were growing in population & that meant more library service was going to be needed. They were receiving money from the City of Meridian to administer the library & the staff but many people outside the City wanted the use of a library through taxation. The Occident Library Board members at that time were Mildred Langley, Pres., Mary Alice White, Leona Egbert, Marie Sandy & Nancy Spear. Petitions were circulated calling for the formation of the Meridian Free Library District. The petitions were filed with the Ada County Commissioners and a hearing was held at the Ada County Courthouse on July 16, 1974 attended by many citizens of the area & this was followed by a setting of the August 27th election date. Members of the Occident Club voted unanimously to provide the Meridian Free Library District use of the Meridian Public Library building for a fee of \$1 a year.

At the time of the formation of the District Library, it had been planned that the Meridian Public Library & the District Library should merge & become known under one name---- Meridian Free Library District.

The Meridian Public Library became a charter member of the Southwestern Idaho Regional Library System (SIRLS) in August, 1974 and after the appointment of the Meridian Free Library District trustees, the two Libraries were represented by Nancy Spear with Pat Fabricius as alternate. After Mrs. Spear's resignation, Pat Fabricius & her alternate Evelyn Olsen attended as SIRLS members & Mrs. Olsen currently fills that position and is secretary of the SIRLS executive board.

When Mrs. Sage retired in February, 1975, Mr. Koger was appointed acting City librarian and Mrs. Sandy continued as part-time librarian.

On June 9, 1975, members of the Board of trustees were Dave McFadden, president; June Black, vice president; Evelyn Olsen, treasurer; Jack Riddlemoser & Charline Denny, trustees and Dave Koger, secretary. Charline was Marilyn Plant's appointed replacement after Marilyn was forced to resign shortly after the voting took place. These were the first elected trustees of the District.

On August 26, 1975, the hoped for merger took place. The City residents had to vote to join the District & the District had to vote on whether or not to accept them.

In Jan., 1976, funds were provided for a full-time clerk typist & Mrs. Spear became librarian assistant & Debbie Higgins assumed the clerk-typist position. Mrs. Sandy retired & along with Mrs. Sage & Mrs. May Howell provide substitute help when we need it. As of June, 1977 the clerk's job has seen changes. Mrs. Higgins was unable to continue due to illness in her family & Mrs. Pat Rabehl took over. She left after a few months & now Mrs. Fern Wilson is at a circulation desk.

In April, 1976 Mr. Koger resigned & Mrs. Eleanor Andt was hired as head librarian.

In July, 1976, Jack Riddlemoser was elected president of the Trustees; June Black,

vice-president; Evelyn Olsen, treasurer; Charline Denny & Carl Rathjen members of the board and Eleanor Arndt, sect. & clerk.

The Meridian Free Library District is open 54 hours a week including Mon. & Fri. evenings until 9:00. Due to forecasted energy shortages, this may change in the upcoming fall & winter months. We had our library insulated this spring, hoping to keep in the heat & bring down our high power bills. We have a successful Tues. morning pre-school storyhour conducted by Eleanor Arndt from Oct. to May. Our Sat. storyhour & movies were cancelled after two months because competition from T.V. cartoons was too strong. Mrs. Arndt is taking books to a shut-in. We have volunteers for this job, but as Meridian's older people are so active, we haven't had to call on them for help. We have had a very successful Summer Reading Club in connection with Idaho State Library for 3 years. This year gives us the most cause for pleasure with close to 200 members & membership is still open. The competition has been taken out of the program & Mrs. Arndt credits our success to fun (not quantity) in reading. We had a book sale in the fall of 1976.

In Sept., 1976, a 3 month old white & black cat adopted us. He joined our 2 resident gerbils (Dot & Dash) and was named Figaro by the staff. He has quickly become an important staff member. He met Gov. John Evans in May, 1977 when the governor held his press conference at the library & the following week our friend Dianne Whitacre of the Idaho Statesman did a front-page feature on him. The governor sent his best wishes & autograph to Figaro & Figaro sent a thank-you letter back complete with paw prints. Figaro is our press relations purrson and a good one, too, judging from the gifts he receives throughout the year and the verbal greetings from patrons & passerbys alike.

Our board of trustees remain the same after the election held this month in which June Black was up for re-election. John Evans opposed her and June was re-elected.

Total circulation figures for 1976 was 42,562. The circulation figures for Jan. to May, 1976 were 16,469. The circulation figures for the same period in 1977 is 19,291. Our circulation is up by almost 3,000 books & library material over last year for the first five months. We have added 484 new books in this five-month period.

Addendum Sept '81

The total circulation figures for 1977 were 46,726; for 1978 they were 53,498; (by law the fiscal reporting date changed at this time, making comparison difficult) for 1980 they were 65,080 and for 1981 the figures were 65,117.

The Board membership has remained unchanged with incumbent members being unopposed at the annual elections, except for Mrs. Shirley Spencer replacing Mrs. Evelyn Olsen when Mrs. Olsen resigned to take a position as part time juvenile librarian.

Mrs. Rabehl is back at work as technical services clerk and Miss Roben Joy has replaced Mrs. Wilson in the clerk position. Mrs. Arndt and Mrs. Spear continue to serve as librarian and assistant respectively.

One sad note-in December, 1980, Figaro died from injuries incurred in October of that year.

We are currently open 52 hours per week including Mon. & Fri. evenings until 8:00.

Members of Kiwanis: Thank you for having me today.

When Marv. Bodine asked me to attend today he said "Maybe you would say a few words --- not longer than 1 hr tho."

Since many of you use the Meridian Library you know I could probably bend your ear for at least an hour but you're in luck I'll only speak a few minutes!

I'd like to introduce a little nostalgia about the M.L.

1924
M.L. was established by a wonderful group of local ladies called 1 Accident Club

2

Library
lib was a few donated books on a few shelves in 1 local drug store manned by volunteer Accident ladies

by 1925 a collection of c 2000 bks was moved into 1 city hall - again volunteer help

1929 saw funds raised by the Accident Club to purchase the old inter urban depot (where we are still located). This bldg was to house the Accident Club & the library. manned by volunteers

By 1950 enough funds were raised by a 1 mil Tax levy in addition to the efforts of the Accident Club to build a 50x20' room on 1 E. side of the bldg. Volunteers were still donating time & effort on behalf of M.L.

3

1968 saw further expansion funded again by efforts of 1 Accident Club but with the help of a Library Service Construction Act matching fund grant.

1 ladies baked; made popcorn balls & sold rose bushes to supplement funds contributed by individuals & local organizations including the Meridian Athletic Assn. who donated proceeds from the Easter Day Race toward the bldg fund.

Preceding 1 move to this addition the Accident Club voted unanimously to provide to MFLD use of the bldg for 1⁰⁰/yr.

4-

Nancy Sage + Marie Sandy are remembered fondly by most of us as the smiling, friendly faces behind the checkout desk during the years from 1954 - 1975 when they both retired

Our library is rich in 66 yrs of heritage
Our community has a vested interest in what is to become of this unique organization. There are so many people & organizations responsible for the library as we know it, I am not able to mention them ^{all}
Many people are asking why should the Ada County Library Director and her ACLD Board members be actively trying to force the Meridian Library into a consolidation with Ada Co. Library.

5/

Could it be because

- ① We have a collection that spans 66 yrs + many books are out of print & unavailable for purchase
- ② ACL's decreasing tax base - due to annexation by Eagle City + Boise City
- ③ ML's 100,000 + / yr budget + places
- ④ ^{for} Close to 100% library tax inc. for ML patrons if consolidated
- ⑤ the \$10,000 incentive grant offered by ILL thru ~~BSEA grant funds~~ for each library consolidated

6/

Our collection was designed & developed by this Community for this Community.

M.L. would lose its uniqueness if it were to lose its autonomy by incorporation with another library

Thank you for a lovely luncheon