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# At the Homer Public Library

Sponsored by the Friends of the Homer Library

## From the Desk of the Library Director:

Welcome to the new library!



Many of you, including members of the Friends of the Homer Public Library, your neighbors, your coworkers, and your family members, have been working for a new, larger library in Homer since the early 1980s. The most recent capital campaign began with a public meeting at the Pratt Museum on May 8, 2002 and gathered momentum due in large part to the tireless efforts of about 30 dedicated individuals, and the support of a majority of the community of Homer, which has clearly shown its ability to Just Imagine!

I've been working at the new library for several weeks now. As I walk through the almost

completed library in my stocking feet, I'm filled with grateful amazement. So many different people and ideas were able to come together to form a beautiful yet functional, graceful yet whimsical, delightful yet studious space that will be of use to every individual who walks through the building's sandhill crane doors.

The lengthy public meetings with the architects in the fall of 2003 helped Homer define the design principles for in the new library:

- Elegant and functional
- Encouraging thought, study, and collaboration
- Serene and purposeful
- Easy to use and understand
- Flexible and responsive
- Connected
- Enjoyable
- Sustainable

Sure enough, as I wander by myself from room to quiet, still-unfurnished room, I know that the new library has the capacity to grow and change along with our community for several decades. Although it has a modern design and state of the art technological infrastructure, the new library will also offer the best of the traditional library services that our patrons have relied upon for so many years. Do you need to find information on col-

leges and majors? Or download a business license or job application from the State of Alaska? Maybe you need to escape into a really good novel, or perhaps learn about health care facilities for your aging parents, what to eat when you have cancer, how to re-wire your lamp, a new Italian pasta recipe, or how to grow a grapefruit tree in your home.... I can't wait to see the public make use of the new facility, as people find their favorite spots for quiet study, a website to help launch a new career, or a new group of people with whom to meet and exchange ideas.

There are literally hundreds of people to thank for bringing the new public library from dream to reality. I hope each of you knows that you have made a positive difference to the quality of life in this community and that people of all ages, beliefs, and backgrounds will be able to find inspiration, knowledge, recreation, exploration, and discovery at the new library. Thank you to all!

Helen Hill  
Library Director



# A Work in Progress



A beautiful new Homer Public Library now stands at the corner of Heath Street and Hazel Avenue, but the vision of a new community public library has only begun. Because a few people dared to dream big and believe in possibility, a community came to embrace a vision that will continue to evolve in positive directions. The new library is, and will continue to be, a work in progress.

In celebration of that work in progress, the Friends of the Homer Public Library will present **Works in Progress** at 7 p.m., Wednesday, September 20th, at the new library. Local authors Michael Armstrong, Rich Chiappone, Nancy Lord, Jim Rearden, Eva Saulitus, and Miranda Weiss will be reading from current works in progress.

Each of the featured authors has a unique place in Homer's community. Michael Armstrong, a reporter for the Homer News, is the author of four novels. His short fiction and articles have been published in *Asimov's*, *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Fiction Quarterly*, *The Anchorage Daily News*, *Homer News*, and various anthologies.

Rich Chiappone, short story author and writer of *Water of An Undetermined Depth*, teaches creative writing at the University of Alaska. "Raccoon," a short story from that collection, was recently produced as a short film. Rich's short fiction has appeared in a variety of sporting and men's magazines, including *Playboy*.

Nancy Lord, prominent Alaskan author and activist, most recently published the award-winning *Beluga Days* and has a non-fiction piece forthcoming in *The Alaskan Quarterly*. This summer her short play *At Sea* was accepted and read at the Last Frontier Theatre Festival in Valdez.

Jim Rearden, longtime Alaska resident and author of *Arctic Bush Pilot*, *Alaska Wolf Man*, and *Rearden's Alaska*, has written numerous magazine articles and books about Alaska and is currently working on the completion of yet another. He spent twenty years as outdoors editor for *Alaska* magazine and twenty years as a field editor for *Outdoor Life*.

Eva Saulitus was a recipient of a creative writing fellowship from the Alaska State Council on the Arts. Her work has appeared in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Northwest Review*, *Quarterly West*, *Connotations*, and in several anthologies. Recently, Eva's work appeared in *carnet de route*, an annual journal that was launched in Paris late last year and is edited by Molly Freeman. Eva's long anticipated book of essays is due to be released this fall.

Miranda Weiss recently returned to Homer from New York City, where she just finished her MFA at Columbia. She is getting her non-fiction manuscript ready to send out to book publishers and was recently named Development Director of the Pratt Museum.

Homer is rich in the arts, but we sometimes forget the depth of talent our community possesses in the literary arts. The Friends of the Homer Public Library is proud to present a selection of authors who will share their **Works in Progress**. We will get to hear their new material on September 20<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 p.m. at the new Homer Public Library.

One of the FHL's visions is to support local writers and aspiring authors. We hope to use programs such as Top Drawer, which was founded by Joy and Norman Griffin, to bring our community together in celebration of literacy, the literary arts, and the diversity of writing talent in Homer. Look for new programs and readings throughout the year.

By Kelly Thompson

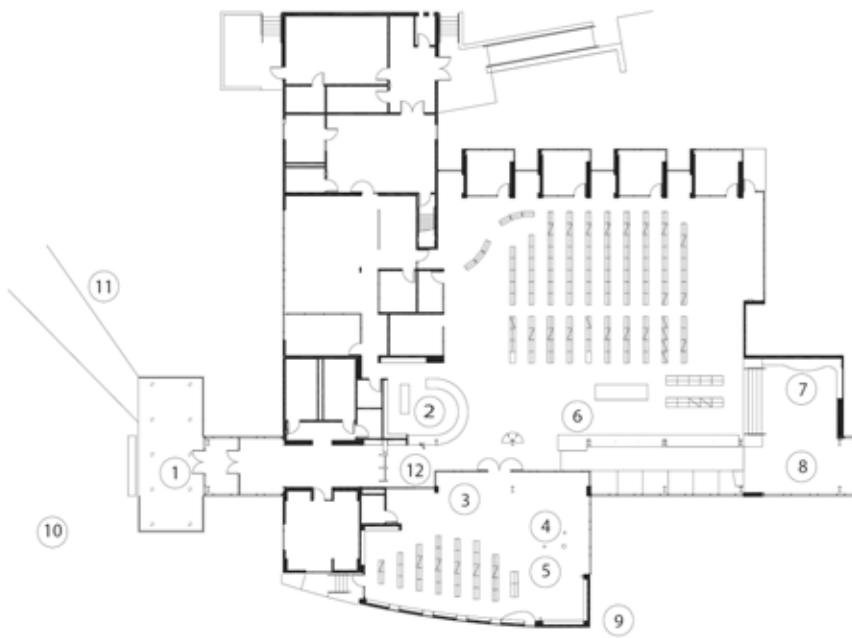


Alphabet Artwork by Lynn Naden

The new Homer Public Library grand opening was made possible by generous support from:

**The City of Homer, Friends of the Homer Public Library,  
the Homer Boat Yard and lots of volunteers!**

# Library Art Map



1. Locally crafted artistic door pulls by Mooserun Metalsmiths
2. Woodwork artist's circulation desk by Yankee Woodworks
3. Alphabet surround artwork by Lynn Naden
4. Local driftwood forest by Paul Dungan
5. Mushroom-inspired chairs by Lisa Krebs
6. Reclaimed wood reading bar wood from Kenai High School gym floor, reading bar created by Scott Hyson
7. Fireplace and wood steps by Leo Vait
8. Flying cranes by Tamara Schmidt
9. Pate Memorial Garden designed by Rika Mouw
10. Homer Library donor wall by Mooserun Metalsmiths & Ken Castner
11. Bike rack art by Lisa Krebs
12. Alice image on Pioneer Wall designed by Suse Cushing

*Birds of America*  
By Lorrie Moore

Check it Out!  
Books, Films and Such

There is a reason for the popularity of Lorrie Moore's collection of short stories, *Birds of America*. Lorrie Moore is a very good writer. She has an instinct for rhythm and avoids the temptation to make her prose too fancy. She also sees deeply and well into her characters, building them both believably and quirkily. These characters all have shortcomings and vulnerabilities that seem distressingly familiar.

One character suffers from identity concerns stemming from her Eastern European origins, her parents' early death in a car accident, and her lack of career or social ambition. Another woman, a middle-aged but over-the-hill-for-Hollywood "minor movie star," runs back to Chicago to escape (or maybe to indulge in) her feelings of washed-upness. She lives in a by-the-week hotel room and has an affair with a decidedly unswift mechanic. In another story, petrified and indecisive Abby flees the flatness of her marriage by going to Ireland with her bossy, adventurous Mom. In the course of the trip, Abby discovers

something unexpected about her mother and herself.

Although I enjoyed the collection, I felt that it was slightly repetitive, and I yearned for the occasional independent, self-confident, well-grounded character to balance out the others. Lorrie Moore does an excellent job of connecting us with her characters, but this commonality can also produce a feeling of monotony if they seem too similar.

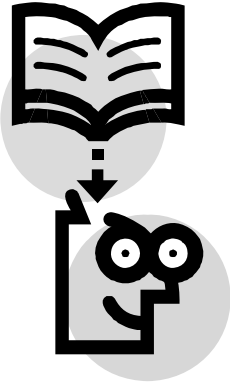
Lorrie Moore is an intelligent, witty writer, with a fine eye for the emotional foibles that make us who we are. As a result, her characters are often people we understand, even if most of us would choose not to spend time around them. We have all experienced moments of the inertia, helplessness or doubt that plagues many of her characters, although probably without the benefit of such artful expression. Read a few of her stories—I'm sure you'll see what I mean.

Review by Amanda Gibson

Thanks to all of the volunteers and businesses that donated time, energy, food, and equipment during the move of the library.



We could not have done it without you!



# Library Happenings

### How to Contact Us:

Homer Public Library  
500 Hazel Ave.  
Homer, AK 99603  
library.ci.homer.ak.us  
907.235.3180

Hours:  
Mon., Weds., Fri., Sat.  
10am-6pm  
Tues. & Thurs.  
10am-8pm

Friends of the Homer Library  
500 Hazel Ave.  
Homer, AK 99603  
www.friendshomerlibrary.org  
907.235.3180

## September

- Sept. 16** new Homer Public Library Grand Opening
- Sept. 20** Works in Progress Reading, 7-9pm at HPL. Free
- Sept. 28** Genealogy and the National Archives, 10am-12pm at HPL conference room. Free
- Wednesdays**, Preschool story hour at HPL's Children's Library

## October

- Oct. 3** Folk Tales through Music with Adam Miller, 3:30pm at HPL's Joy Griffin Children's Library. Free
- Oct. 11** FHL Board meeting, 6pm at HPL conference room
- Oct. 27** FHL members only pre-sale, 6-8pm at HPL
- Oct. 28** FHL Fall Book and Plant Sale, 10am-6pm at HPL (one day only!)
- Wednesdays**, Preschool story hour at HPL's Children's Library

## November

- Nov. 8** FHL Board meeting, 6pm in HPL conference room
- Nov. 9** "The Big Chill," physics with the Imaginarium, 4pm at HPL's Joy Griffin Children's Library. Free
- TBA** Annual Spelling Bee
- Wednesdays**, Preschool story hour at HPL's Children's Library

## December

- Dec. 13** FHL Board meeting, 6pm at HPL conference room
- Dec. 16** "Birds of Paradise" Quilt Raffle at HPL
- Wednesdays**, Preschool story hour at HPL's Children's Library

Still want to buy a fish for the library?

No Problem!

Visit [www.friendshomerlibrary.org](http://www.friendshomerlibrary.org)



# volunteer Spotlight



Which current FHL volunteer has been involved the longest? Cleo Webb, of course! Cleo is celebrating her 25<sup>th</sup> year as an FHL volunteer and we appreciate every minute she has been with us. After moving to Homer in 1979, Cleo was persuaded to join the Friends by Joy Griffin. Since then she has been a regular on Reading Between the Lines and at the bi-annual FHL book sales. Cleo eventually became a FHL board member and helped to oversee several great FHL projects like the recent capital campaign as board treasurer. She is particularly proud of the new children's library named after her friend Joy.

Cleo has seen volunteers come and go over the years, and has been especially impressed by the huge number of dedicated HPL Friends who have made the new library a reality. Cleo is right, though, when she says, "FHL and the library will need lots of volunteers to help make possible the extras that enhance the library experience but aren't available in the annual budget. Friends are also vital to help spread the word about what the library has to offer."

Thanks Cleo, for your time, great smile, and love of the Homer Public Library!