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Saratoga and unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County

Winter 2007

Silicon Valley Reads 2008

Read the book everyone will be talking about



The debut novel of a Cupertino author that tells the story of betrayal and reconciliation spanning several years across two continents has been selected for Silicon Valley Reads 2008.

The Distant Land of My Father by Bo Caldwell will be the subject of numerous programs at Santa Clara County Library in February. [See inside for schedule and an interview with author Bo Caldwell.]

Silicon Valley Reads will kick off on Thursday, Jan. 17, at the Campbell Heritage Theatre with an on-stage interview of Caldwell by Mercury News columnist Mike Cassidy. The free event begins at 7:30 p.m.

This is the sixth year of Silicon Valley Reads, which is presented by Santa Clara County Library along with the Santa Clara County Office of Education and San Jose Public Library Foundation. The goals of the program

are to promote reading and literacy while building a sense of community through dialogue among widely diverse readers.

The library has three book club kits for *The Distant Land Of My Father*, each containing 12 copies of the book plus a discussion guide, funded by a generous donation from Book Group Expo.

For more information, visit www.siliconvalleyreads.org.

Engaging new interactive online books for ages 3-8

It's never too early to help a child develop a love of reading and learning. A new interactive, online reading program now available at the library helps children ages 3-8 improve their reading skills while learning more about the world around them.



There is also a puzzle section with educational games that test reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.

Other features include age appropriate web links to

satisfy their curiosity about a subject, and a section to learn more about the author of each fiction book.

BookFlix pairs classic video storybooks with nonfiction ebooks about the subject matter. For example, a child can read or listen to a story about Farmer John and then learn more about cows and milk.

BookFlix can be accessed anytime from home on the library's website. Go to KIDS, then click on BookFlix under Electronic Resources. A library card and PIN is needed.

Start your own book club – we'll help!



The library has drop-in book discussion groups where readers can gather to talk about a different book each month. It's a great

way to meet new people, enjoy stimulating discussion about interesting topics, and – best of all – read great books.

You might also want to start your own book club with friends, neighbors, or co-workers. The library can help you get started or reinvigorate a book group.

- To find books to read, use the library website to access an online database called "Novelist" that contains 155,000 fiction titles and 200,000 book reviews. It will also provide discussion guides, book talks, and information about authors that will help your discussion be lively and informed. Look for it in the Electronic Library 24/7 section of the library website.

- Check out a book on how to start or run a book group, such as *Running Book Discussion Groups: a How-to-do-it Manual* by Lauren Zina John; *Good Books Lately: the One-Stop Resource for Book Groups and Other Greedy Readers* by Ellen Moore and Kira Stevens; and *The Reading Group Handbook: Everything You Need to Know to Start Your Own Book Club* by Rachel W. Jacobsohn.

- More than 40 Book Club Kits are available at the library, each containing 12 books (including one or two copies in large type) and a discussion guide. A complete list is posted on the library website.

- Ask librarians for suggestions and assistance. They are happy to help gather resources to start your own book group.

Santa Clara County Library in the community



CAMPBELL

77 Harrison Ave., Campbell
(408) 866-1991

Tue 12 noon – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

Bus Routes: Route #82 stops on Hamilton Ave. Route #26 travels down Campbell Avenue. Route #60 stops at Campbell Ave., at Winchester Blvd.



CUPERTINO

10800 Torre Ave., Cupertino
(408) 446-1677

Mon-Tue 1 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

Bus Routes: Routes #23, #25, #54 and #55 all stop within reasonable distance from the library.



GILROY

7387 Rosanna St., Gilroy
(408) 842-8207

Tue 1-9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

Bus Routes: Routes #17, #19 and #68 stop at 6th and Hanna Streets, 6th and Rosanna Streets near the Wheeler Auditorium and at Hanna near the Senior Center.



LOS ALTOS

13 S. San Antonio Rd.,
Los Altos
(650) 948-7683

Mon-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

Bus Route: Route #23 stops at Hillview and San Antonio Road.

BOOKMOBILE



Check the website www.santaclaracountylib.org for locations and schedule information

MILPITAS

40 N. Milpitas Blvd., Milpitas
(408) 262-1171

Mon-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

Bus Routes: Routes #47 and #77 stop in front of the library.



MORGAN HILL

660 W. Main Ave., Morgan Hill
(408) 779-3196

Tue 1-9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

Bus Routes: Route #68 stops at the Park & Ride lot on Main Avenue two blocks east of the library. Routes #15 and #16 stop in front of the library.



Self-service lobby hours
Tuesday, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

SARATOGA

13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga
(408) 867-6126

Mon-Tue 1-9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 1-5 p.m.

Bus Routes: Routes #27, #54, and #58 stop near the library.



WOODLAND

1975 Grant Rd., Los Altos
(650) 969-6030

Tue-Wed 1-8 p.m.
Thur-Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

Bus Routes: Routes #23 and #51 stop in front of the library.



Q&A with author Bo Caldwell

Bo Caldwell is author of The Distant Land Of My Father, the book selected for Silicon Valley Reads 2008.

Are any of the characters in your book based on real people? Are you Anna?

The book is based on the life of an uncle of mine. My maternal grandparents were missionaries in China, so my mom and her siblings grew up there. There were five children in the family, with my mom being the youngest. The novel is based on the life of the oldest in the family. The family came to the U.S. on furlough in the early 1920s, and when they were ready to return to China in 1928, my uncle stayed in the U.S. to finish high school and to attend college. He returned to China after graduating, hoping to study medicine in Peking. Because of the Japanese invasion, he was unable to go to Peking and settled in Shanghai. The book follows the chronology of his life very closely.



As to whether or not I'm Anna, yes and no. I'm not Anna in terms of age or circumstance. She would have been born in the early 1930s, and I was born in 1955. She was an only child, I have a sibling; she was raised in China, I grew up in Los Angeles. Our family dynamics are very different. But I think there is some of me – people who know me say a lot of me – in Anna in terms of personality. For example, I hate separations and I hate the sound of suitcases closing. I was very close to my dad and I wanted to learn what he wanted me to learn – about Los Angeles when I was growing up, and Oklahoma City (his home) when we would visit there.

So I guess I'd say that while Joseph Schoene shares the facts of my uncle's life, he doesn't share as much of the personality. I don't know what my uncle's feelings were about much of his life. Anna and I are the other way around: I don't share many facts of her life, but we share feelings, those subterranean facts of our lives.

What was your most difficult challenge in writing this book?

The research, and recreating places of the past. I didn't go to Shanghai – I've never been, and I always feel a little guilty when I say that – but after doing a good deal of research, I came to understand that the Shanghai I was writing about no longer existed. I knew I could go there and see certain buildings or neighborhoods, but the mood and feel of the place, not to mention its physical appearance, have changed dramatically since the late 1930s. So, based on a lot of research, I had to recreate the place and time in my mind. It was sort of like translating something – in this case, translating research into my own sense of being there, seeing it, feeling it, living it.

That said, I loved the process. I had never written historical fiction before, and I loved writing about people in another time and place. Everything became very real to me.

What are the universal themes of the book?

As a writer, my mind sort of goes blank at the word "themes," I suppose because writing a book is like weaving a tapestry, and you're always on the wrong side of it – the working side. "Theme" is a word that makes sense when you're looking at the right side of the work – when you're looking at the book from the outside. So from the inside of the book, I can guess at the themes that people see in it, but I'm more comfortable talking about ideas or feelings in the book, and those, to me, are loss, separation, reconciliation, forgiveness, love. Maybe those are themes, and it's just semantics – I'm just uncomfortable with the word.

There's one more idea that I need more than one word for: the idea that people can change in ways that can surprise us, in ways we never could have anticipated. Joseph changed at the end of his life, in ways that, to me, are very real. My two favorite novels are *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Great Expectations*. Both involve people changing, or our perceptions of them changing.

Are you looking forward to the Silicon Valley Reads experience?

Yes, definitely. It's a full schedule, and that can be a little daunting, but boy, I'm not complaining. It's amazing to have this kind of response to a book. Writing is a very solitary activity; most days I'm sitting in my small study in the same old black pants and a white T-shirt working, not having any idea if what I'm doing is any good, or if

it makes any sense, not to mention not knowing whether anybody not related to me will want to read this stuff (family members have to read it). So to be able to talk to people who are reading the book and to answer their questions is really amazing.

And to have it here, in Silicon Valley, makes it even better, because this is home. Not the home I grew up in – that's Los Angeles – but it's the home I chose. I graduated from Stanford in 1977 and just never left; I lived in Palo Alto until August of 1996, and I've been in Cupertino since then. It's home, home, home, and I love it here.

What is the most satisfying thing a reader has ever said to you?

That's a hard one. A couple of things come to mind. First, sometimes readers tell me it's one of their favorite books, and that certainly means a great deal. And people tell me it's helped them with their family relationships, and that, too, means a lot. It's very gratifying to know that the book really touches people's hearts.

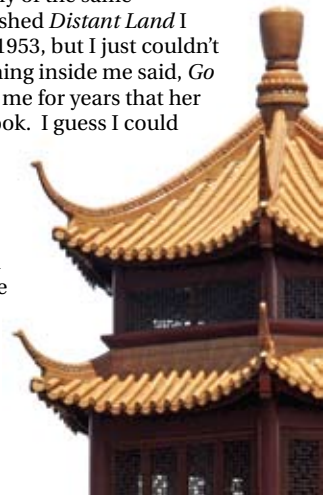
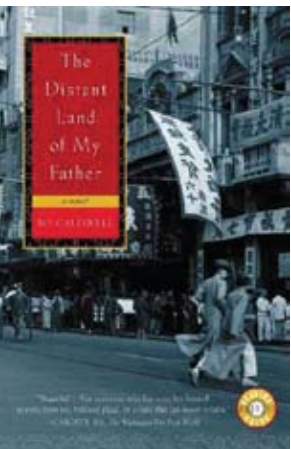
And then there was this woman on the London Tube. My family and I spent six weeks in England during the summer of 2002. The book had just come out in the U.K., and one day my son and I were on the Tube, and all of a sudden I noticed that the woman sitting right across from us was reading my book! It looked like she was almost finished. I nudged my son and nodded to her, and we just watched her for a minute. My son said she looked like she was about to cry. She got off at the next stop, and part of me wanted to run after her, but I was too overwhelmed (and I don't think that fast on my feet, AND I didn't want to scare her). But just seeing a stranger actually reading the book was very moving, even though she didn't say a word.

Are you working on a new book? Will it use any of the same characters?

I'm working on a novel based on the lives of my grandparents, the missionaries in China. It won't include any of the same characters (at least not so far). After I finished *Distant Land* I started a novel that was set in London in 1953, but I just couldn't get anywhere on it. Then one day something inside me said, *Go back to China*. My mom had been telling me for years that her parents' lives would make a wonderful book. I guess I could finally see what she meant.

What do you like best about writing?

That's easy. The best part of writing is the same as the best part of reading: being in another world, being so swept up by these other people and events in this other place and time that you completely forget where you are and what day it is and what you're supposed to do next. I love it. It's the payoff.



Silicon Valley Reads Events at the Library

Events featuring **Bo Caldwell**

Monday, Feb. 4
7:30 p.m., Saratoga Library

Tuesday, Feb. 5
7:30 p.m., Campbell Library

Tuesday, Feb. 12
7:30 p.m., Los Altos Library

Wednesday, Feb. 20
7 p.m., Gilroy City Council Chambers,
7351 Rosanna St., Gilroy

Wednesday, Feb. 27
7:30 p.m., Milpitas Library

Thursday, Feb. 28
7:30 p.m., Morgan Hill Library

Other events

Tuesday, Jan. 29
Drop-in book group discussion
7 p.m., Gilroy Library

Sunday, Feb. 10
Free performance of Firebird Youth
Chinese Orchestra
3 p.m., Milpitas Library

Through March 15
Writing contest on the theme of
forgiveness. Submit fiction, nonfiction or
poetry, up to 1,000 words. Winning entries
read at a reception and posted online
during National Library Week in April.
For information: forgiveness@library.sccgov.org.

Upcoming Book Discussion Groups

Here are a few of the books that will
be discussed this spring at drop-in
discussion groups. Everyone welcome!

- *The Palace of the Snow Queen: Winter Travels in Lapland* by Barbara Sjohim at 7 p.m. on March 25 at Gilroy Library
- *Timothy or Notes of an Abject Reptile* by Verlyn Klinkenborg at 7:30 p.m. at Milpitas Library
- *History of Love* by Nichole Krauss, 7:30 p.m. on March 27 at Morgan Hill Library



Special activities in Cupertino

The Cupertino
Library, with
help from

the Cupertino Library Foundation, is celebrating Bo Caldwell as its hometown author with a full day of activities on Feb. 23 in Cupertino Community Hall, 10350 Torre Ave.

A Chinese Tea Ceremony from 9:30-11 a.m. includes a demonstration from the American Tea Culture Association accompanied by a performance of the Firebird Chinese Youth Orchestra. The Chinese Performing Artists of America will perform from 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

The glamorous world of pre-World War II Shanghai will be described in stories and slides from 2-2:30 p.m. by Beverley Jackson, author of *Shanghai Girl Gets All Dressed Up*, followed by Bo Caldwell discussing *The Distant Land Of My Father* from 2:30-3:30 p.m. The two authors will have an on stage conversation from 3:30-4:15 and then sign books.

Drop-in craft activities for children will be offered from 10 a.m. - 12 noon, and teens will be treated to a free showing of a film from 2-4 p.m. in the Cupertino Library.

Share your love of reading in 2008

Thousands of adults in Santa Clara County have limited reading skills and struggle every day to earn a living wage and take care of daily tasks that require reading and writing. Fortunately, many of them are improving their skills through one-on-one tutoring sessions with volunteers from Vision Literacy, a program of Santa Clara County Library.

More volunteers are needed and several orientation sessions are scheduled in 2008 to describe how tutors are trained and answer other questions. For information, call (408) 262-1349, visit www.visionliteracy.org.



Up close and personal with authors

Some of the most popular programs at the library are those featuring authors. Readers enjoy meeting their favorite writers, and authors also look forward to the experience.

"Writing is an essentially solitary occupation, and yet a writer who does not keep in mind his readership is like a person talking to himself," said David Corbett, a mystery writer who appeared on author panels at four libraries as part of the summer reading program. *"No matter how brilliant his words might be, they exist in a kind of vacuum until they've touched the heart of another person. Meeting people who have been moved by my writing is like learning my words have found a home. Nothing could be more gratifying."*



More than 100 people attended a reading and talk in Morgan Hill by Julie Otsuka, author of *When The Emperor Was Divine*.

Check the website www.santaclaracountylib.org
for information on author events.

2008

New year, new programs at the library

Knit-In Ongoing

Open to knitters of all levels every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at Morgan Hill Library.



Tax Assistance Saturdays through April 12

Free help from VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Milpitas Library

Open Poetry Reading January 12

Join the Garlicky Group of Poets at 3:30 p.m. at Gilroy Library

Patrick Hunt January 17

Author of *Ten Discoveries That Rewrote History* speaks at 7 p.m. at Saratoga Library.

Reese Erlich January 19

NPR foreign correspondent will discuss his book *The Iran Agenda: The Real Story and The Middle East Crisis* at 2 p.m. at Gilroy Library.

How To Buy A Franchise January 19

Free Small Business Administration (SBA) workshop from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Saratoga Library

Book Sale January 26-27

Friends of the Los Altos Libraries Book Sale at Hillview Community Center, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Saturday and 12 noon – 3 p.m. Sunday.

Steven Yvaska January 26

Antiques columnist in the Mercury News discusses “Six Factors That Determine the Value of Antiques and Collectibles” at 2 p.m. at Gilroy Library.



Chinese New Year Puppet Show January 30

Celebrate the Year of the Rat with storyteller Charlie Chin at 7 p.m. at Cupertino Library.

Meditation for Healthy Living February 2

Talk by Dr. Marshall Zaslove at 2 p.m. at Gilroy Library.

Festival of Books on Wheels February 2

Storytelling, music, crafts for families with children ages 0 to 5. One free book per child under 5. 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at Cupertino Community Hall. Co-sponsored by Vision Literacy, Cupertino Library and Cupertino Community Services.

Birds in the Garden February 7

Learn how to attract birds to your backyard at 7 p.m. at Milpitas Library.



Valentine Stories, Crafts February 11-12

Special programs during storytimes for toddlers at 10:30 a.m. and families at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 11 and preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. on Feb. 12 at Campbell Library

Feng shui February 13

Learn how to arrange your space to achieve harmony at 7 p.m. at Cupertino Community Hall



Make A Sock Monkey February 6

Bring 2 adult sized socks for this adult crafts program at 6:30 p.m. at Campbell Library

Family Movie February 16

Bring your lunch and watch a film for all ages. Dessert provided. 12 noon at Saratoga Library.

Travelogue on Peru, Galapagos Islands February 19

Travelers Rich Pickering and Nancy Toledo share their trek through Peru and the amazing wildlife of the Galapagos Islands at 7:15 p.m. at Campbell Library.



Great Decisions Discussion Group February 21

Foreign policy challenges of the U.S. at 7 p.m. at Morgan Hill Library.

National Bird Feeding Month February 28

Celebrate by making a bird feeder and learning about local birds from 3-4 p.m. at Campbell Library.

Database Training March 3

Learn about Morningstar and Medline Plus at 7 p.m. at Cupertino Library.

Teen Clothing Swap March 15

1 p.m. at Los Altos Library.

Guitar Concert March 30

Performance by Christopher Dean at 3 p.m. at Milpitas Library.



Special Programs for Teens

Super College

Authors of books about techniques for acquiring scholarships and other information about planning for college. Jan. 14, 7 p.m., Saratoga Library
Jan. 16, 7 p.m., Cupertino Library
Jan. 17, 7 p.m., Campbell Library
Jan. 22, 7 p.m., Morgan Hill Library

Practice SAT

Free practice of the SAT exam and strategy sessions for preparation. Sign up at the library for a session this spring.

Make Your Own Plushy

They're creepy! They're cute! Teens are invited to create unique stuffed creatures. All materials provided. Jan. 26, 2 p.m., Gilroy Library
Jan. 29, 4 p.m. Saratoga Library
Feb. 2, 2 p.m., Campbell Library
Feb. 6, 4 p.m., Morgan Hill Library
Feb. 11, 4 p.m., Milpitas Library
Feb. 15, 3 p.m., Los Altos Library





Santa Clara County Library
 14600 Winchester Blvd.
 Los Gatos, CA 95032
 TDD: (408) 364-1528

*Top ranked library in
 the U.S. for 6 years!*

News from your library

*Serving the cities of
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Melinda Cervantes,
 County Librarian

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Employee donations make a difference in people's lives

County of Santa Clara employees, including library staff members, pledged donations of more than \$1.1 million to charities during the County's fall Combined Giving Campaign, an annual fundraising event. "Our employees are truly compassionate," said County Librarian Melinda Cervantes, campaign co-chair. "This year's campaign theme, 'Reaching Out, Raising Hope,' mirrors the County's organizational philosophy and values. The theme inspired more than 60% of our workforce to donate to worthy local and global causes."



Video games improve reading and bring new users to the library

New additions to the library's collection of 1.6 million items are some

of the most popular console games for the Playstation, Playstation 2, Gamecube and Wii systems.

The ability to check out and play these games at no cost is bringing new people who prefer electronic media to traditional printed materials to the library. Experts say the games provide learning as well as fun since most feature problem solving as well as text and statistics that can improve reading comprehension.



The collection includes sports games (Madden NFL, Mario Strikers Charged), car racing games (Need for Speed Carbon), role-playing games (Final Fantasy XII, Kingdom Hearts), puzzle games (Elebits, Big Brain Academy), action games (Super Mario Galaxy), fighting games (Soul Calibur 3, Naruto Ultimate Ninja), strategy games (Grim Grimoire) and simulation games (Sims, Harvest Moon).

***Top 10* Books for Teens**

More than 450 teens recently voted to select their favorite books. Here are the winners:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <i>All Hallows' Eve</i>
by Vivian Vande Velde | <i>Maximum Ride – School's Out Forever</i> by James Patterson |
| <i>Bad Kitty</i> by Michele Jaffe | <i>New Moon</i> by Stephenie Meyer |
| <i>Firegirl</i> by Tony Abbott | <i>Prom Anonymous</i>
by Blake Nelson |
| <i>How to Ruin a Summer Vacation</i>
by Simone Elkeles | <i>River Secrets</i> by Shannon Hale |
| <i>Life As We Knew It</i>
by Susan Pfeffer | <i>Secrets of My Hollywood Life</i>
by Jen Calonita |

READ

Jean Mordo is Vice Mayor of Los Altos Hills as well as Chair of the 11-member Santa Clara County Library Joint Powers Authority.

