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Stacks in the Adult Section of the new Frisco Library

photo by Chris Fritchie

Checking Out the Latest on the Square

By Cynthia Howe

SOME OF US SIT DOWN WITH OLD FRIENDS to have a chat, others of us converse in our hearts with friends we have met between the covers of our favorite books. Eloise is friends with a number of young girls, and I'm sure Madeline would adore the square. Of course, who doesn't count Harry amongst their favorite friends, along with his pals Hermione and Ron? At the new Frisco Public Library located inside City Hall at 6101 Frisco Square Blvd, avid readers will be excited over a wide variety of new and old literary friends.

Dr Ron Heezen, director of the Frisco Library, is enthralled with the new location. "I'm really excited that we're finally going to have a collection available to the public that is worthy of the citizens of Frisco." For years the Frisco Library has been limited to 5,000 square feet of space for our collection, which significantly reduced our options. There was very little room to take into consideration the comfort of patrons. In the new space we

have approximately ten times as much room as before, 50,000 square feet, and the facilities take up approximately a third of the new City Hall, making it possible to include our entire collection, as well as expanding the collection to twice its original size.

*We read to know
we are not alone.*

– C. S. Lewis

Patrons will not only enjoy the updated and expanded collection, but they will also enjoy the new comfortable accommodations found throughout the library. Comfortable chairs and couches await them while they peruse their literary selections. The fourth floor is a fantastic space with soaring ceilings that are open to the fifth floor. Since this floor is also completely committed to the adult section, it is sure to be the quietest area

in the library.

Much can be said about the décor and overall comfort of the library. The architects of the building, Holzman Moss Architecture, LLP, were brilliant in their design and adaptation. The colors include reds and blues with a buttery yellow accent color. The warmth of the rooms is further accentuated with pink granite, Texas limestone and beautiful mesquite wood flooring. The furniture is a wonderful medium maple. Carpeting creates a quieter environment throughout the library. While the colors create balance and warmth, there is a method to the designer's tactics. The navy blue pillars represent the locations of the catalogs on each floor, the reference desks are all in red; and the light sage green areas signify available elevators.

The beauty of the facilities began with Frisco's commitment to art and culture balanced with an appropriate budget. City representatives did extensive research to develop a plan for the building, including

All About the Library

WHEN did the first public library open in Frisco? *June of 1991 at 5th & Main St.*

HOW big an increase in square footage from the old library to the new one?
41,000 sq. ft. increase.

WHAT was the size of collection in the old facility?*53,576 items. The new library will have a collection of 101,649 items.*

WHAT collections are being introduced in the new library?
The parenting collection, the young adult movie collection, the genealogy collection. and the greatly expanded Spanish language collection.

WHAT facilities and services are being introduced in the new library?
A dedicated teen space, a quiet reading room, group study rooms, children's and adult programming rooms, a state-of-the-art computer lab, and wireless Internet access.

HOW many linear feet of shelving are in the new library? *11,790 linear ft. That's 2.2 miles of shelving!*

WHAT is the total weight of the limestone used in the building?
2,314,000 lbs.

WHAT is the total weight of the granite used in the building?
106,600 lbs.

WHAT is the total square footage of the glass used in the building?
24,607 sq. ft.

WHAT kind of wood is used on the 4th floor ceiling? *Southern Pine. Like all the wood used in the building, it was grown in Texas.*

HOW many days did it take to construct the building? *695 days.*



Bright colors in the Children's area

photo by Chris Fritchie

the portion of the building dedicated to the library. Holzman Moss beautifully wove together the City representatives' ideals with their own philosophy. "We believe that architecture must serve a public good by rooting buildings and spaces in their communities, by evoking moments of unexpected joy and by respecting financial and environmental resources." This philosophy is in keeping with Frisco's own ideals, and the product speaks for itself. One example is how they have brought the metal roofing material found on the exterior – indoors, utilizing it for texture and character.

REFRESHING AND ENLIGHTENING

While surrounded with beauty and enjoying the new creature comforts, the library plans to include a refreshment area on the first floor. Many vendors have

shown extreme interest in the possibilities and one can be sure that a good cup of coffee will be available to them as they browse for their next read, or commit themselves to in-depth research. Dr. Heezen looks forward to the inclusion of refreshments. "Patrons will be able to use our library in complete comfort while enjoying the available refreshments."

On the first floor visitors will find, in addition to the refreshment area, the Teen section, the New Release section, as well as the expansive Media section. The Teen section will be very welcoming to students who need to do research, as well as those who require a place for group study. The Library also provides Live Homework Help. This service is an innovative after-school program that connects 4th-12th grade students, as well as college introductory students, to expert

tutors in math, science, social studies and English.

A very popular section of the library is the Movie section. Both DVDs and VHS tapes are available to meet the various entertainment needs of the community. Teachers are sure to love this collection as it expands their own limited video library.

You can also get really excited about the large selection of books on tape or CD. Commuters will love it. In our fast-paced lifestyle where long-distance commuting is a necessary evil, many avid readers find books on tape to be an ideal solution to their limited reading time. They are also popular during the summer months when long car trips seem shorter with a good story. In addition to the books on tape and CD, the library will also be able to offer audio story tapes to download.

The Media section also includes the wonderful world of music! Whether teens are looking for the latest sound, or you're trying to find the song you danced to with Ralph back in '68, you may now be able to find it in our local library.

ESPECIALLY FOR THE CHILDREN

The second floor is completely dedicated to the Children's section. This bright and welcoming area is not only brimming with an extensive array of colorful books, but it also houses an absolutely fantastic puppet show area. Children of all ages will love to see stories as they come to life before their eyes.

The importance of providing your child with a variety of reading material is key in their early learning stages, and the local library plays a vital role in providing such opportunities. The library has fantastic librarians who can help your child find reading materials suitable for their reading levels.

The librarian for the Children's section, Shelley Holley, works closely with the Frisco Independent School District (FISD) to ensure that the reading material available to the public is congruent with local students' needs. "Approximately 50 percent of Frisco's population consists of those under the age of eight, so their needs are extremely important to us."

With such a large population of children in our midst, it's good to know that the library also has a great selection of parenting materials, also found on the

second floor. While your daughter finds her perfect book on how to make peanut butter, you can curl up with a great book on how to squall temper tantrums.

FOR GROWN UP READERS

While the third floor of the library is used for the offices of the director and administration, the fourth floor is dedicated to the Adult selections and contains both fiction and non-fiction areas, as well as a research area. There are twice as many selections here as previously found at the old library site. The tower room consists of much of the non-fiction area, and a research area is provided as well. Those who enjoy studying genealogy will appreciate the library's inclusion of materials and resources dedicated to this study, and the library staff plans to expand it further as materials become available.

The Frisco Library now has "Dear Reader Online Book Club" which delivers via email five minute segments of a book each day throughout the week.

Book groups have been growing by leaps and bounds the last five years. They give participants a unique sense of connection with others they may not have otherwise engaged. The Frisco Library has three book groups currently meeting. One is specifically geared toward Senior Citizens. There are two others for adults, one meets in the morning and the other at night. The new library collection will include numerous copies for the book club participants so that each member can checkout their own copy. Being a member of a book club not only engages your reading, but it also encourages interpersonal relationships you may otherwise not have enjoyed.

While these book clubs are growing in popularity, there is one other way to enjoy a different form of Book Club.

Frisco now has an online Book Club called "DearReader Online Book Club." This service delivers, via e-mail, five-minute segments of a book electronically each day throughout the week. This group may read anywhere from two to three chapters during the week. With busy schedules this may be the only way some readers get to read during the week.

In addition to the library's numerous services, a drive-through service is in the making. The convenience of this possibility is fantastic for mothers of small children or the handicapped. Conceptually, you would find the book or item online, give the library a call and tell them you'll be by to pick it up. There will be a window in which to complete the transaction. The planning committee has certainly thought through numerous ideas in order to provide its patrons with the utmost of convenience, but this is the *pièce de résistance*.

The library is set to hold their grand opening September 21st, and with the staff's welcoming spirit and warm helpful ways, I'm sure they're looking forward to seeing you there. For more information on any of the Library services addressed here, please contact the library at 972.335.5510, or visit the Library Catalog to see the schedule for children's reading times at www.friscolibrary.com.

The world becomes very small on the Square. While you sip your coffee over a good book, you may ponder the possibilities of your next adventure. Where to go from there... Shopping for the latest home décor? Maybe you can picture yourself catching a bite at one of the restaurants down the street. Pizza Hut Park is a great place to catch a concert – wonder who's playing? While you think about all of that, think of what it will be like when you can walk over and catch the latest Brad Pitt film when the movie theater opens within the year. Some folks may decide to just move in next door – and they could. There are new homes being built all around the Square. Shelley Holley said it well, "It's as if the library has become the community's living room." But most of our living rooms aren't quite so cozy, nor are they filled with quite so many friends.

Cynthia Howe is a freelance writer living in Little Elm.