

# WAYLAND LIFE

## Town cat is a big hit at library, police station

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Gordie is a bit slower and less adventurous these days. The cat's thyroid gland was removed a couple of years ago and as a result, Matto gives him two pills a day. Much of his health care needs are provided by the Wayland Animal Clinic.

But Gordie dictates his own beat, department employees said.

"We feed him when he wants, we bring him in when he wants. They're all his rules," Matto said.

Gordie's sleeping quarters are located in Matto's office, right under-

**'We've had people who come in here and are very tense. But he'll come up to them and they will become very content.'**

Phyllis Matto

WAYLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT



Phyllis Matto, 19-year administrative assistant to Police Chief Galvin, says Gordie the cat has been known to calm down, and occasionally spray, prisoners brought into the station.

neath her desk. He is also quite agreeable to taking naps on a certain Public Safety Building sofa.

But Gordie has occasionally shown up in some unauthorized locations.

On one occasion, police officers accidentally locked him in the department's vault, only to be found later because he set off the alarm, said Sgt. Frank MacKenzie-Lamb.

"That could have been a real version

of curiosity killing the cat," he said.

Sue Decker of the Wayland Free Public Library said on rare occasions Gordie has also been found after-hours in that building. Again, motion detectors picked up on his unautho-

rized visit.

On most warm days, Gordie can be spotted traveling on foot to or from the library. In that building, his favorite place to take watch is downstairs in the children's library.

Decker said he is especially friendly to the children, and in return, Gordie will receive some milk or water from library staff for his good services. In fact, one of the librarian's most commonly-asked questions is whether Gordie is in the building.

Gordie is quite popular with patrons, except for a few residents, many of whom have allergic reactions to animals.

"And that's very understandable," she said.

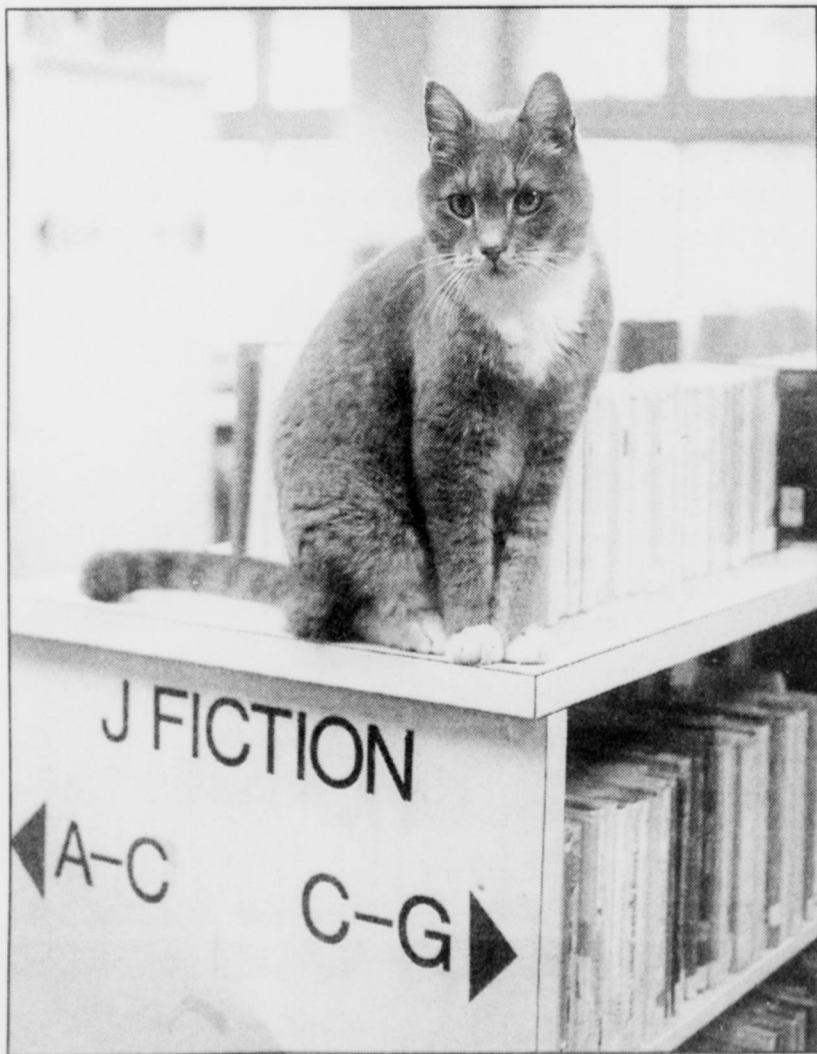
In fact, Gordie is found lingering within or around the Wayland Free Public Library so much that head librarian Louise Brown found it appropriate to submit his name and photograph for a web site honoring library cats.

Gordie, along with other literary-loving felines such as Centerville's "Dotty" and Eastham's "Melville Dewey" can be found at [www.ironfrog.com](http://www.ironfrog.com). The map displays 200 cats.

Waltham-based Iron Frog Productions plans to release this fall its documentary on library cats, "Puss in Books: Adventures of the Library Cat."

As for Gordie, who normally has a loud purr, he has pleaded the fifth on questions about his wanderings.

Possibly he was finishing up on police business.



Gordie sits atop a bookshelf in the fiction section of the library.

## Trees add color and life to your fall landscape

By Valerie Shell  
COLUMNIST

I must admit that I missed fall despite the almost year-round beautiful weather in Southern California. There is something about the glowing panorama of

New England's fall that simply cannot be matched.

But somehow, amid all the palms and eucalyptus, I managed to find one tiny maple tree tucked behind a building on UCLA's campus. Each year I would wait with great anticipation for the little sapling to do its magic. Each year I would make an almost holy pilgrimage to this young tree to pay homage to its beauty.

I would then return to my office and announce to whomever would listen, "It's fall. The tree has turned color."

What is so magical about this transformation is that each leaf has the ability to change color all along. As the days grow shorter and the nights cooler, the leaf forms a separation layer at the base of the leaf stalk

The layer enlarges as photosynthesis slows down and chlorophyll (the green pigment) fades with the changing light and weather conditions. Yellows begin to appear. More colors become visible while trapped sugar increases production of other pigments.

The magic happens when the leaves turn yellow, orange and red.

While Mother Nature does her job of sprinkling the New England countryside with trees to paint her fall portrait, there are others (beside maples) known for their colorful foliage that you can add to your own landscape. Here are two suggestions worth considering.

The Katsura tree (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), was introduced to this country in 1865, and originates in China and Japan. It grows to 14 feet in the first five to seven years, reaching up to 60 feet high and 50 feet wide at maturity.

It is hardy from zones 4 through 8.

Katsura trees prefer very moist, well-drained soil so they need watering during times of drought. Plant them in full sun to

light shade.

Katsura have small reddish flowers without petals in mid-to-late spring. Their heart shaped leaves start out as reddish purple in the spring and during the summer, become bluish green.

In fall, they turn yellow to apricot-orange, becoming very fragrant.

The sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), gets its name from the sap that oozes from wounds on one variety of this tree. Once established, it is a fast growing tree that can achieve 15 to 20 feet of growth in its first 10 years.

Likely to reach 60 feet high and 40 feet wide at maturity, it can grow to 100 feet tall (or more) and 50 feet wide. It is hardy from zones 3 to 8

The sweetgum has a neat pyramidal outline and prefers deep, moist slightly acid soil, in full sun to light shade. It is a greedy feeder, requiring plenty of water. Its wide root system needs plenty of space, allowing no other shrubs to grow immediately around it.

Therefore, it is best planted as a specimen tree in an open space of lawn.

In the summer, the sweetgum's star shaped leaves are a deep glossy green. In the fall, they can turn a wide range of colors, becoming yellow, gold with a pink tinge, scarlet, crimson, orange to red and purple toned

Its fruit is brown, dry, somewhat prickly, long-stemmed balls that cling to the tree in September through November and sometimes longer. The fruit can be a nuisance when it falls off the tree and is best kept away from sidewalks, driveways and patios.

Despite this nuisance factor, it has a decorative value to craftspeople when painted and used as Christmas decorations. The seeds also attract songbirds, chipmunks and gray squirrels.

Since the glory of fall is all too short, trees planted for their fall colors should also provide interest in other seasons. Both of these trees do just that. Now is the time to be on the lookout for these trees so you can

view them as they perform their fall magic. If one suits your fancy, it's never too early to start your spring wish list.



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