



November 9, 2022

Dear President McConeghey and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of September and October, 2022 and to provide a look forward to some of the activities, programs, future plans and contingency plans we are working on.

The Library Board will continue to meet virtually. The Alameda City Council continues to have Zoom Council meetings, they approve the teleconferencing of meetings every 30 days. The City Council agenda item to end the local emergency and make a determination about virtual meetings keeps getting pushed to the next agenda so no decision has been made. There is no new news regarding the City Council meetings going to a “hybrid” meeting format. I am still awaiting direction for any changes to our meeting format.

Welcome to new Library Board Member Thushan Amarasiriwardena! Thushan was confirmed by the City Council at the September 20 City Council meeting and can introduce himself at our November meeting. We are very pleased to have him join our Board.

Modified Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). I will continue to send the “Modified Activity Report” as long as we continue to meet virtually. I did add a couple of lines for our relatively new Link+ (interlibrary loan) service. It has been a great success and we are very pleased to be able to offer this to our library customers. The Expenditure Reports and Check Registers for July and August are also included in this packet.

Interim City Manager. Interim City Manager Nancy Bronstein retires from the City on November 2. In the absence of the new City Manager being hired, another Interim City Manager has been appointed. Public Works Director Erin Smith will assume the role. Recreation and Parks Director Amy Wooldridge will be the Interim Assistant City Manager. It is anticipated that these will be temporary positions until a new City Manager is hired, most likely after the first of the year. Although Interim City Manager Erin Smith will still oversee the operations of the Public Works Department, City Engineer Robert Vance has been named the Acting Public Works Director, Amy will continue to supervise ARPD while being appointed Interim Assistant City Manager. With the departure of Nancy Bronstein as the City Human Resource Director, Jessica Romeo has been promoted to be the Human Resources Director. We wish Nancy the best in her retirement and will miss her wise counsel. There is no doubt that Erin, Amy, Robert, and Jessica will do well in their new positions with their new responsibilities, all departments will support their efforts as much as possible until a new permanent City Manager is hired by the City Council.

Library Staffing. The Library continues to be terribly short-staffed. At the September meeting it was reported that we had two full time vacancies and two part time vacancies. At this writing, we still have two full time vacancies and now four part time vacancies. The full time Teen Librarian position just had the second interviews in early November, we expect to offer the position to a candidate soon. The Senior Librarian position did not garner an adequate applicant pool. The recruitment was held open longer with no significant change in applicant pool. The City Employee bargaining units just approved a new

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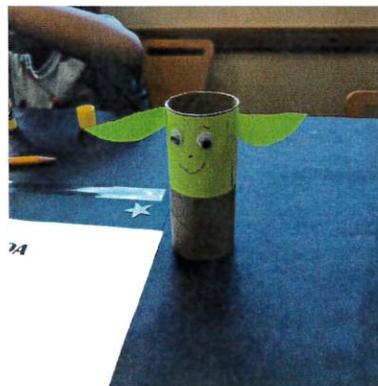
contract which is awaiting City Council adoption, a new increased salary range is part of that contract. So once that contract is adopted by the City Council we will reopen the Senior Librarian recruitment and hope the new pay scale attracts a larger applicant pool. In the meantime we are also looking for part time librarians.

Change in Library Operating Hours. There have been literally NO comments from the public regarding our change in hours. There is a constant presence of the public in the buildings but nothing overwhelming. The Children’s Department began their new story times the same week as the new hours and those programs are pretty well attended. The Friends Café is considering opening in the mornings, if they can get enough volunteers, now that storytimes has resumed and children/families are here to purchase small snacks. The Friends bookstore, Books for Friends (BFF) enjoys increased business when the library has programs or story times as well.

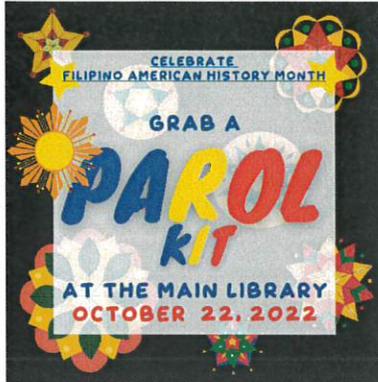
Main Library Update. Short staffed, fully staffed, the library moves forward with our increased hours, new story times, and our programs & activities. New hours, school, and new story times all began in September. The new programs have been well received and have moderate sized attendance.



In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month the Library hosted Loteria, which is similar to bingo. Lots of people came and went, and most stayed for the whole 2 hours! We had families with children, teens, and seniors. It was nice to see a program that brought different age groups together. It's normally a challenge to find a program that fits all. Thanks to Library Technician Fernanda Nunez Gutierrez and the Children’s Department, this program had tasty treats, candies, authentic game cards, wonderful book-related prizes and lots of happy people.



The Force has returned! Star Wars Day at the library is always really a popular day. We intentionally try to avoid “May the 4th” for our Star Wars Day because there are so many other activities scheduled on that day (and besides, it’s usually “Free Comic Book Day” which is also a popular giveaway in Alameda). Attendees for Star Wars Day are invited to come in costume but costumes are not required. Crafts, games, and snacks were the order of the day and over 160 people came to enjoy the festivities.



In celebration of Filipino American Heritage Month the Adult Services Department offered a “take and make” Parol kit. Parols are Filipino lanterns commonly used in the Philippines to decorate homes during the winter season. All kits were claimed in about three days. Part Time Library Specialist Justine Rea made sure all the kits were ready to go. Happily/Sadly, Justine was offered a full time position in a neighboring library system and she has departed employment in Alameda. Alameda was her first job in this profession and I know she will go far and represent the profession well. We wish Justine the best in her career as a public librarian.

The Library tried to help people get organized and cut the clutter. If you’ve ever seen my office, maybe I should have registered for this online workshop...but I didn’t and I live happily with my haphazard piles. KonMari Gold consultant Shannon Honeycutt brought the life-changing magic of tidying to you through her Spark Joy® program. She explained the KonMari® philosophy and guiding principles needed to tidy once and for all, and leaving you feeling motivated to Spark Joy® in your home, office, and life!

The Stuffie Overnight at the Neighborhood Libraries were so popular back in September, Librarian Rosemary scheduled another couple of nights in October for a Spooky Stuffie Overnight at the West End Library and the Bay Farm Island Library. This round of overnights attracted the attention of the Alameda Post and they wrote a wonderful piece about this cute and fun program. Here’s the link to the article: <https://alamedapost.com/features/alameda-life/spooky-stuffie-overnight/>

If you would like to see more pictures of the hijinks of these sneaky little stuffies, see your gallery on the Library web page: <https://www.alamedafree.org/Spooky-Stuffie-Overnight-2022>



What would October be without the Library’s annual Children’s Spooky Night program. This year we did not have an original skit, nor did we hire a performer. The evening was filled with spooky costumes, games, crafts, photo opportunities and creepy snacks. The children’s staff were so busy with the attendees that they didn’t have much time to take any pictures. A great time was had by all in attendance! “Ghost pops for all!!” and leftovers were handed out to the little spooky people who came calling to our libraries on Halloween.



Did you know that we have a School Resource Liaison? Miss Andie visits classes, hosts classes at the library, puts together our teacher boxes, creates curriculum support materials as requested and is our most outgoing outreach person on staff. The is a “Shout Out” to the Edison kindergartener who was so impressed by the book Ms. Andie read to his class, Gustavo the Shy Ghost, he dressed up as Gustavo for Halloween! So if you know a K-8 teacher in an Alameda school who would like to have Ms. Andie, our school

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resource liaison, visit their class, have them check out our website and schedule a visit from Miss Andie!



Staff did a wonderful job dressing for Halloween. Here are a couple of our favorites!

(left)
The Amazing Spider man
(right)
Elephant, Piggie, and the Pidgeon



Access Key Card Project. Although we were told that the library has been put on the fast track to get the new Access Key Card system, we are still waiting. We keep hearing “soon” but have yet to see the hardware come in. For now, everything seems secure and the doors with the card system is working as it should so we will continue to wait.

American Red Cross Blood Drives. The Library’s next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is Tuesday, November 8. We have a new coordinator with the Red Cross, our former coordinator decided to retire (the nerve of her!!) and she introduced me to her replacement going forward. Our new liaison has increased the number of reservation spots for our drive from 33 to 40. I had to remind her that we can only host so many people during the time the blood drive is schedule...unless we have more volunteers taking the donors. The Red Cross is very appreciative of the Library finding a way to continue our blood drives even when the library was closed and each drive always had all reservations booked along with several walk-in donors.

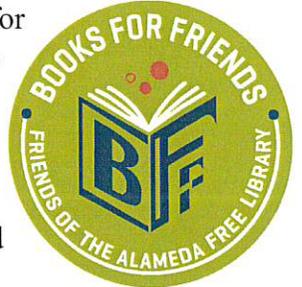
National Park Service Japanese American Containment Site Grant Project. Our project is progressing. The project team is trying to pin down the last few interviews and focus on the materials already collected rather than continuing to collect more photographs, diaries, and other memorabilia. Although this is a separate project, much of the content for the Japantown Historical markers came from this project. Separate but parallel and a lot of overlap with the project teams. The culminating exhibit will have the opening reception on May 17 in the Stafford Room. More details as they develop.

Tonarigumi Japantown Historical Markers. YAY! The first two markers will be installed in November. We have scheduled the program for the unveiling of the marker on the Marketplace on Thursday, November 17, at 4:30pm. This will be a very short program, only about 30-45 minutes. There will be a small number of speakers; any city council members, a representative from Buena Vista Methodist United Church, the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, and myself ~ doing introductions & acknowledgments. We will uncover the marker after the speakers then TaikoPeace will teach/lead a

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community dance to celebrate and we will be done. The early start time is because sunset is at 5:00pm and we wanted to have a little light. The Marketplace marker and the one for the Temple will be installed by the November 17 date. The Library and the Church markers are still at the fabricators and hopefully will be installed by the end of the calendar year. You are all welcome to attend.

Friends of the Library. The Friends are proud to present the brand-new logo for Books For Friends (BFF), our bookstore in the main library. Thanks to longtime FAL supporter Patrick Kenney, their logo design became an assignment for his "Sketching Fundamentals for Design" students at Berkeley City College. Over a period of four weeks, each student submitted their unique designs, which a BFF subcommittee provided feedback on. The incredible talent of each student made the final decision very difficult. After much deliberation, they ultimately decided on this design, created by Jerry Hsaio.



BFF is bringing back the "\$100 Holiday Book Boxes". Stop in or call BFF at (510) 747-7737 to purchase a \$100 box of high-quality used books for yourself or a friend. Books will be personally chosen by Philip Barry, the BFF manager, based upon your choice of genre(s) or his own eclectic selection if the purchaser has no preference. Boxes can be delivered locally or picked up at BFF during open hours. Quantities are limited, so order now!

The October Big Book Sale at the O Club at Alameda Point sold more than 14,000 books, this was their first Big Used Book Sale in almost three years and it was an overwhelming success! They raised close to \$20,000 (gross), an impressive amount for a two-and-a-half-day event. Many thanks to Book Sale lead Cathy Peloquin and the 130 volunteers it took to put on this event; setting up on Wednesday, moving books from storage, working the sale, cleaning up, breaking down and waiting for the pick-up of the leftover materials. It took a village...and now we debrief before starting to think about the spring sale.

The Live @ the Library Concert series will be returning this spring. Concerts will be scheduled in February, March and April 2023. More details as they develop, I know organizers would like occupancy restrictions lifted but I have not yet agreed to that.

The Friends continue their online programming. The Docent Talks and Author programs have been very popular and given the virtual format, they have been able to host some significant authors in various time zones. In November, unfortunately the evening of our Board meeting they are hosting an art docent event featuring Stanley Kubrick, American film director, producer, screenwriter, and photographer who was widely considered to be one of the greatest filmmakers of all time. The talk will be focusing on Kubrick's thirteen feature films and the underlying theme of "the disruption of rationale systems," including clips from several of the films. The talk will also include background information and notes about his unproduced films. Also in November the Friends will off a talk with English historian Anthony Sattin about Nomads. Sattin will take the attendees back 12,000 years to a time when our ancestors were constantly on the move, living in harmony with the natural world rather than trying to tame it. Placing the forgotten co-creators of our modern world in the center of this sweeping history, Sattin shows how nomads have been anything but history's "uncivilized barbarians. There are already programs scheduled in December and January, check out the Friends website or sign up for their newsletter (if you aren't already on their mailing list) to know what the offering are. The good news is that all but one of their author talks so far have been recorded, and can be viewed through their website

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<https://alamedafriends.com/category/past-events/> The recordings have had over five thousand views. Check them out if you missed the live programs.

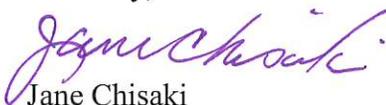
The Friends have asked if the Library Board would like to have two Board members as liaisons to the Friends Board, and receive the zoom link to their monthly meetings. Originally they thought to invite all five Library Board members but then it could be considered a Library Board meeting if there are three or more of you in attendance (creating a quorum) and requiring their meeting be publicly noticed a week in advance. So if only two were to attend there is no chance of there being a quorum. This is just a request if there is interest. Currently I attend the meeting, report to them our Library activities & upcoming items of interest, I also report back to the Library Board the activities of the Friends. If we have Board liaisons, the report out of Friends activities to the Library Board could be done by these new liaison members. We can discuss this at the meeting on November 9.

The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, September 26, 2022 via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. The Friends have decided to continue the Zoom format for their Board meetings for now. If you would like to attend their virtual meeting, you may contact Friends Secretary David Beall at bealld@alamedafriends.com and he will send you the zoom link for the meeting.

Alameda Reads. Alameda Reads continues to rebuild their services back to pre-pandemic levels. Tutors and learners have been booking time in the library study rooms or can be seen quietly working together is out on the open floors or in the café space in the evenings. Alameda Reads secured copies of the Easy Voter Guides in multiple languages and distributed them at the libraries and from their office. They also scheduled and conducted a couple of voter information days to help Learners or other members of the public understand the State issues on the ballot. I don't think they touched on local issues.

If you have any questions about the items to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you would like to discuss these or any other items, please email me at jchisaki@alamedaca.gov or if it is not urgent, please leave me a message at 747-7747.

Sincerely,



Jane Chisaki
Library Director