



City of Alameda • California

September 14, 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 July and August, 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. As our City Council goes, so the Boards and Commissions. 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. I think a decision of some kind will happen at the October 4 City Council meeting.

This September meeting will be the last meeting for our former Library Board President Amber Bales. It has been a pleasure having Amber on the Library Board to give us a fresh young perspective to library services. It is with great appreciation and fondness we wish Amber well in all her future endeavors and hope that she continues to frequent the libraries and our programs. Our new Library Board Member was nominated by the Mayor at the September 6 City Council meeting. Thushan Amarasiriwardena, if confirmed by the City Council at the September 20 City Council meeting (and there's no reason to think he won't be), will officially join the Library Board for the November 9 meeting.

Modified Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). I have not included the "regular" Library Services Report in your Board Packet. I will continue to send the "Modified Activity Report" as long as we continue to meet virtually. The Expenditure Reports and Check Registers for July and August are also included in this packet.

Interim City Manager. The City Manager position continues to be a difficult one to keep filled. Our new Interim City Manager Dirk Brazil began work on May 23. Unfortunately, he had a family emergency and had to make the best decision for his family. He left the City of Alameda in mid-July appointing Public Works Director Erin Smith and Human Resources Director Nancy Bronstein, as Co-Acting City Managers (they covered for each other if one was off). The City Council selected and appointed Human Resource Director Nancy Bronstein as the new Interim City Manager at their September 6 Closed Session meeting. Meanwhile the Human Resources Department has been directed to recruit a permanent City Manager and there are interviews scheduled in September and October, although final selection before the November 2022 election is doubtful. There are no plans to open a recruitment for Assistant City Manager at this time.

Library Staffing. The Library is terribly short-staffed. Our amazing Teen Librarian Kat Kong separated from our library to accept a wonderful position with the San Mateo County Library. This is a great career move for Kat and we are happy for her but sad for us. The recruitment for her replacement just closed so we hope to have a new Teen Librarian before too long. Then the bad bug hit and our Custodian is off work with an injury and we are not certain when he will return to full duty. We are doing our best to get the branches cleaned and are in the process of trying to add a scope of work to the janitorial service contract at the Main Library but it is a slow process. On the heels of all that, one of our Senior Librarians

resigned unexpectedly. Jenny was our “programming & outreach librarian” so we may have to put a hold on some of our programs until we get our staffing back in order. It is already difficult to cover the desk hours and some of the programs already scheduled. An author program scheduled on September 28 had to be canceled due to lack of staffing, we hope to reschedule him in the not too distant future. And as if staffing couldn’t get any better...two of our part time librarians gave us their resignations to accept full time positions in other library systems. We all wish our part time staff full time jobs with benefits. So our staffing is a bit of a challenge right now and library customers may have to wait just a bit for service but we have no plans on closing our doors.

Change in Library Operating Hours. Amazingly, the library is INCREASING our open hours for the public in spite of our staffing challenges! Staffing will be a little spare but staff is confident that we can cover everything we need to cover.

<i>MAIN LIBRARY</i>	<i>WEST END</i>	<i>BAY FARM ISLAND</i>
Monday 10am-8pm	Monday 10am-8pm	Monday 10am-8pm
Tuesday 10am-8pm	Tuesday 10am-8pm	Tuesday 10am-8pm
Wednesday 12-8pm	Wednesday 12-5pm	Wednesday 12-5pm
Thursday 10am-5pm	Thursday 10-5pm	Thursday 10-5pm
Friday 10am-5pm	Friday Closed	Friday Closed
Saturday 10am-5pm	Saturday 10-5pm	Saturday 10-5pm
Sunday 12-5pm	Sunday Closed	Sunday Closed

These changes will standardize the hours at both neighborhood libraries, making them the same so customers don’t have to wonder which night each library is open, it allows for all staff to have project team meetings on Wednesday mornings without bringing in additional desk coverage. With more open hours, the Library will be able to offer the community more story time options, making it easier for families to attend programs, and decrease overcrowding at some of our more popular sessions. Here are the new story time schedules.

Mil y un Cuentos

(bilingual storytime)

Mondays 7:00pm @ WEB

Toddler Storytime (ages 2-4)

Fridays 10:30-11:00am @ Main

Saturdays 10:30-11:00am @ Main

Tuesdays 10:30-11:00am @ WEB

School-Age Storytime

Wednesdays 3:30-4:00pm @ Main

Pre-School Storytime (Ages 3-5)

Tuesdays 10:30-11:00 @ Main

Thursdays 10:30-11:00 @ Main

Thursdays 10:30-11:00 @ BFI

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Mother Goose on the Loose

(Ages up to 6 years)

Thursdays 10:30-11:00 @ Main

Family Storytime

Tuesdays 7:00pm @ BFI

In addition to the change in hours, staff is updating the handouts given to new card holders, updating the hours bookmarks and other library information literature before the change in hours. Magnets/stickers with the new hours will be available as giveaways at all three libraries.

Main Library Update. The library participated in the August 2 National Night Out at Jack Capon Villa. Senior Librarian Jenny took our “Wheel of Fortune” and lots of Alameda and Library swag to share with the residents. The theme was “carnival” and it was great fun for all in attendance.



Recently the Library visited Coast Guard Island to participate in their “Year of the Military Child” event. Connections were deepened with their family services coordinator who thoroughly enjoyed hosting Sr. Librarian Rosemary and School Resource Librarian Andie at their event. When the Coast Guard celebrated their birthday with a big celebration on their base and the Library didn’t miss the opportunity

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to meet and greet the Coast Guard families, issue more library cards, offer crafts, play book themed games and talk about the online services available with just an Alameda library card. The Coast Guard Family Services were so happy to have the library participate, we know that we will be asked to participate in other celebrations and events in the future. Hopefully these Coast Guard families will take advantage of our library services by visiting our facilities and using our digital services.



Rhythmix hosted an event at the Jean Sweeney Open Space on August 20 to celebrate a new program called Rhythmix PAL – Performance, Art & Learning, a youth arts program for the local schools and in partnership with ARPD. This first event featured Chinyakare Zimbabwean music and dance. Rhythmix invited the library to bring “Words on Wheels” and set up a table, so School Resource Librarian Andie and Sr. Librarian Jenny attended this fun event. There will be another Rhythmix PAL event on Saturday, September 17 at Chochenyo Park with Caribbean Express, it’s open to the public and FREE!



Not to be outdone with programs, the Main Library hosted the Bay Area BikeMobile in our parking lot. Over 40 bicycles were tuned up just in time for the start of the school year! This is always a very popular program and when the bikes get their tune up, the bike experts remind people that our libraries have the bike repair stations and residents can do some of their minor repairs and pump up their tires on their own! A couple of Bike Alameda bicycle (lecture) programs will follow up in the near future. Urban Biking and Sharing the Road with Bicycles.



Access Key Card Project. We are still waiting for the access card project to progress. We keep hearing “soon” but have yet to see the hardware come in. It could be a supply chain issue but at this time it is unknown. In the meantime, the access card readers continue to fail. The exterior door to the Friends bookstore failed and we swapped out another interior door reader for that one. The interior door now requires a key. The pushbutton lock failed long ago and now we have “borrowed” the access reader. Will keep you informed if this project really gets some traction going forward.

American Red Cross Blood Drives. The Library’s next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is Tuesday, September 13. 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 scheduled...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. This continues to be a work in progress and, so far, the collection currently contains three interviews with a target of eight. In the coming months we will be adding more interviews and another digital collection that will contain photos and documents. Check us out! <https://ddr.densho.org/ddr-ajah-1/>. The project team has asked for a one year extension, mostly because of the volume of material available to be considered, processed and then it takes about three months for Densho to upload to their site, the extension was granted by the National Park Service. The expectation is to complete this grant project by late spring or early summer 2023. The Internet Archive will link back to the Densho site and the Library will also link to either Densho or the Internet Archive. These valuable materials will be preserved on four servers on three different continents.

Tonarigumi Japantown Historical Markers. The first two markers and the map are finally at the fabricators. The content for the library marker is assembled and is currently being edited. The final marker for Buena Vista United Methodist is in the design phase. This was supposed to be on one year project and is now going on two years. We hope to push and get this completed before the end of the calendar year. Final drafts of the Map, the marker for the Marketplace and for the Buddhist Temple are included in your board packet for you to see.

Friends of the Library. Books for Friends (BFF) is now officially open and is generating reasonable business. The Friends have decided to “brand” the bookstore and are looking to slightly modify their grand opening logo and use it as their moniker. When the store is open, they put a sign out in front of the Main Library to let people know they should come on in.



The books offered for sale are in exceptional, almost-new condition. The selection of books is carefully curated by Philip Barry, the BFF manager.

The big news is that the BIG Book Sale at the O Club is back. Friday, October 21; Saturday, October 22; Sunday, October 23. New will be the acceptance of credit cards in addition to the standard cash or check. There is a need for volunteers (preferably high school age and older) at the sale so if you are interested, let me know and I'll hook you up! If you've attended in the past, there are changes to be seen. New management means new procedures but hopefully the same results.

Dewey's Café continues to struggle a bit. Maybe the change in library hours and the additional story times in the mornings will help with sales. Slow sales also means less variety in their inventory so there isn't a whole lot of choice in snacks for sale.

The Live @ the Library Concert series have no dates to announce. Concerts will likely happen in the fall. Tentatively there is a concert scheduled in February 2023. The organizers are waiting for all occupancy limitations to be lifted, which I don't see happening any time soon.

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. The next few months will see them continue in their wide focus mode, with Rubén Degollado's *The Family Izquierdo*, a story set in South Texas, and Marjan Kamali's *The Stationery Shop*, set in 1950's Iran. In November they will be talking with English historian Anthony Sattin about *Nomads*. The good news is that all but one of their author talks so far have been recorded, and can be viewed through their website <https://alamedafriends.com/category/past-events/>. The recordings have had over five thousand views. Check them out if you missed the live programs.

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

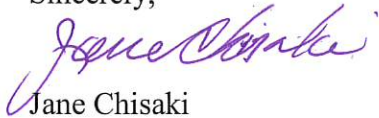
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to attend their virtual meeting, you may contact Friends Secretary David Beall at bealld@alamedafriends.com and he will send you the zoom link for the meeting.

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. The State Library continues to fund the Adult Literacy Programs throughout the State.

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