



City of Alameda • California

March 8, 2023

Dear President McConeghey and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of January and February 2023 and to provide a look forward to some of the activities, programs, future plans and contingency plans we are working on.

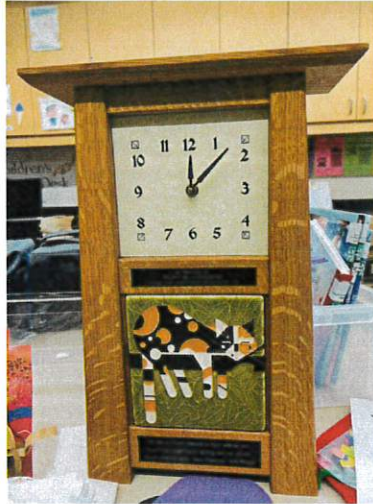
Welcome to our first hybrid Zoom/In-Person Library Board meeting. As of March 1, 2023 the Governor's order for a modified Brown Act expired at midnight on February 28. The City's direction is for all City Council meetings and all Board and Commission meetings to go hybrid, offering the opportunity for the public to attend in-person or via Zoom. Library Board meetings will be held in the Main Library, Administrative Conference room on the 2nd floor. We will have a Zoom set up with laptop/table microphone and a static view of the room showing all board members, secretary and recording secretary. I realize that only two of you have been here for in-person meetings. Everyone, please plan to arrive a little early so you can become familiar with the set-up, seating will be a tiny bit tight but we can shift seats around so everyone is comfortable with their location and so we can see what the public will see if they join in. We are working on upgrading the technology in the conference room to use a smart TV rather than a laptop. All in time....

Modified Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda). I think this will be the last "Modified Activity Report" as we are transitioning to the new hybrid meeting format. At the suggestion of Board Member Amarasiriwardena, I am adding the number of unique library card uses by location for each month and this will also appear on the full Activity reports going forward.

Library Staffing. Woo Hoo! We are so very close! Both of our two new Senior Librarians have started working. Senior Librarian Giuliano Costantini will be overseeing activity at the West End Library and he began work on February 13. Our new Senior Librarian who will be coordinating programming is Vaile Fujikawa and she began working on February 27. You'll find Vaile at the Main Library. Both are very knowledgeable, enthusiastic about their new positions, fast learners, and we are thrilled to have them. Oral Board interviews for the full time Library Technician position at the Bay Farm Island Library will be held on March 2. This vacancy was created when Library Technician Jessica Luther turned in her resignation. In the meantime, two long time part time employees and two less tenured part time employees have voluntarily resigned. Part time Library Associate Sherry Cohen who has been with us for nearly 25 years left to be a full time site substitute teacher for AUSD. She is quite excited to begin this new chapter of her life. Library Aide Carmen Chu has worked with us since October 2009 and she has blossomed over the years with the assistance of our adult literacy program, Alameda Reads. Carmen's English language abilities are much improved, speaking, reading and certainly her writing skills. Whenever she wrote short pieces for submission to some of the literacy periodicals, her stores are chosen. We are so proud of Carmen and are so sad to see her leave us. As she said to me, she is now a lifelong learner thanks to her experience with the library and with Alameda Reads. We also have two library aide openings. We have already started the hiring process for these part time vacancies. Now that we are nearly fully staffed, we are very excited to ramp up our programing and outreach again.

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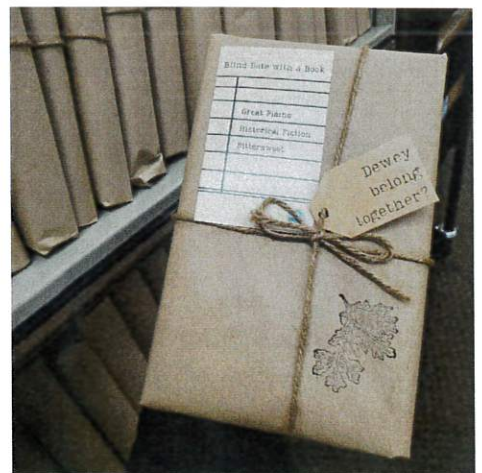
Main Library Update. Busy. Staff will say we are busy. This crazy weather drives in quite of few of our regular unsheltered customers. As long as they follow our Behavior Policy, they can stay but there is one individual who required constant intervention by the library supervisors. We have requested advice and assistance from our city attorney's office, Alameda Police, the City CARE team and Community Development who manages several social services on the island. Still waiting for guidance.



Mary Blackshere (1950-2018) was a long time employee of the Alameda Free Library. She was a fixture in our children's department for about 40 years. Mary was born and raised in Alameda and many of her family members were and are city employees in various departments. Her brother Vince Dermont was the City Carpenter until his retirement and relocation to Arizona. Mary's sister, Virginia Hill currently works at the Main Library also in the Children's department and her niece Jennifer Hill is a part time Library Associate and also a part time Library Specialist. Mary passed on October 25, 2018. Her brother lovingly handcrafted a clock for display in the library's children's department. Cats, represented by the tile detail, were another of Mary's passions and the quote from Winnie the Pooh is one of her favorite quotes. Stop by the children's department to see this beautiful tribute to someone who touched the lives of so many inside and outside of our library.

The libraries offered our annual "Love at First Line: A Blind Date with a Book" experience February 10-17. The Teen Advisory Board wrapped all our books for all three libraries and while supplies lasted, each person's checkout was accompanied by a small heart shaped box of chocolates.

A very special toddler storytime will be presented on Friday, March 3. Miss Avala and Tutu School return for a special Toddler Storytime at the Main Library. Bring your dancers, wearing their tutus if desired as they have ballet stories read, can practice twirling, and waving their wands ~ and best of all, wands will be provided!



Wonderfest science programs have returned to the library! Learn about the life and work of naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverer of evolution by natural selection. In 1858, two friends and colleagues, Alfred Wallace and Charles Darwin, independently proposed one of the deepest ideas in science, evolution by natural selection. Biologist George Beccaloni charts the development of Wallace's ideas about evolution, from his first interest in the subject through his epic international expeditions during which he finally discovered the process which drives the evolution of life on our planet. Dr. George Beccaloni is a zoologist, evolutionary biologist, and science historian who served as an entomologist at London's Natural History Museum for more than 20 years. He was the historical consultant for a multiple award-winning BBC series about Alfred Wallace, and he is the founding director of the Wallace Correspondence Project. This interesting topic will be held as a virtual program, in partnership with the San Francisco Public Library. *Wallace, Darwin and the Discovery of Evolution by Natural Selection* will be presented on Sunday, March 26 from 10-2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Register for

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this webinar using this link: <https://sfpl-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucuyhqjktGdOUdSWn72vthnW2GJcSyMAY>

Coding with Legos. During Thanksgiving week in November 2022, the library hosted a Coding with Legos workshop. Library Technician Fernanda Nunez applied for an Innovation Grant from the State Library to purchase our own Lego materials, lap tops and other associated equipment for this program, and to offer library staff a Train the Trainer session. Fernanda was successful and our library was awarded \$10,000 to get this program up and running. We are still working out the paperwork and setting up the financial grant tracking systems but we hope to be offering these Lego STEM programs at the Main Library and, with the new laptops, at both neighborhood libraries in the near future. (pictures from November 2022)



Seed and Tool Lending Library. The time is coming! Our long awaited and desired Seed and Tool Lending Library will become reality! At the February 21 City Council meeting, the Council voted to move forward with funding a new Aquatic Center at the western end of the Jean Sweeney Open Space.

Access Key Card Project. This project continues to creep forward. We were informed that the vendor would expedite our new system given the fact the card readers are continuing to fail around the building. In early February we were advised that they should be able to complete the task within a month's time, however, it's March and we still don't have a confirmed timeline to have the work started much less completed. We continue to push to get this project completed with assistance from Public Works.

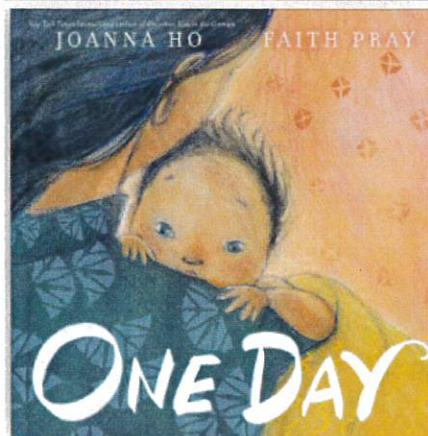
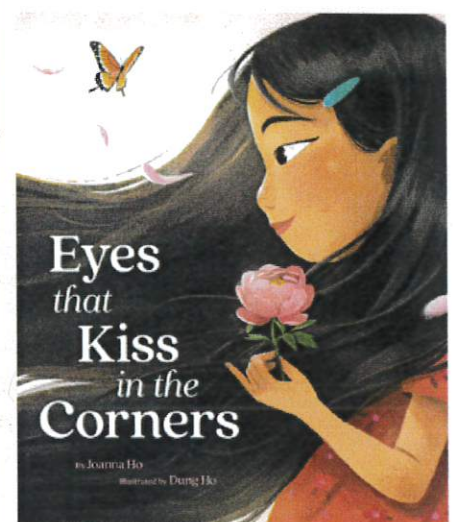
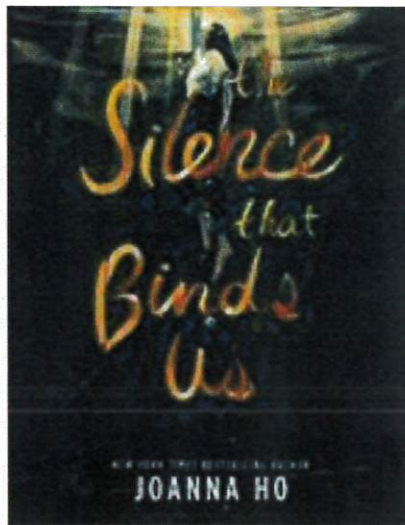
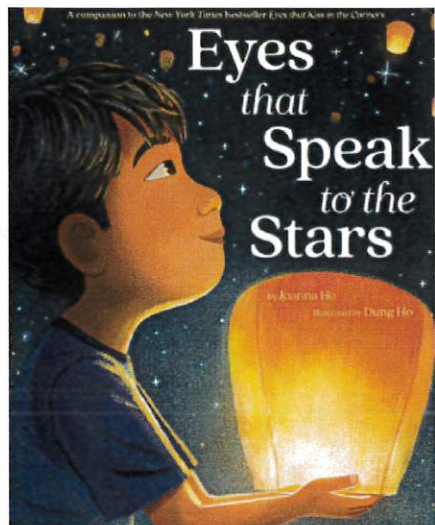
American Red Cross Blood Drives. The Library's next quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive is Tuesday, March 14. Nearly all reservation slots are filled and both the Red Cross staff and Library staff are prepared for the March blood drive.

Budget. It is budget season and the city is preparing the next two year budget. There is a new Finance Director so procedures to prepare the budget have changed. For this biennial budget cycle, we are going with a zero-based budgeting approach to remove one-time costs that were carried over in the budget year to year. There will be a separate submittal for new expenses, such as new positions. The Library Budget Team will meet with the City Manager and Finance to determine if the new requests will be put forward or tabled until the next budget cycle. An internal budget workshop is next on the agenda. Open public

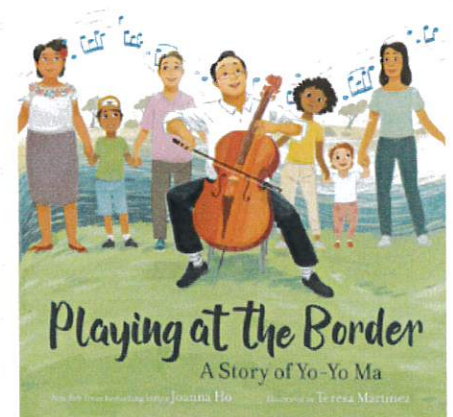
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budget workshops will likely be in May and the budget adoption brought to City Council the first meeting in June. If there are additional questions and the budget is not adopted at that first meeting, there will be time before the end of the fiscal year to adopt the budget at the second City Council meeting in June.

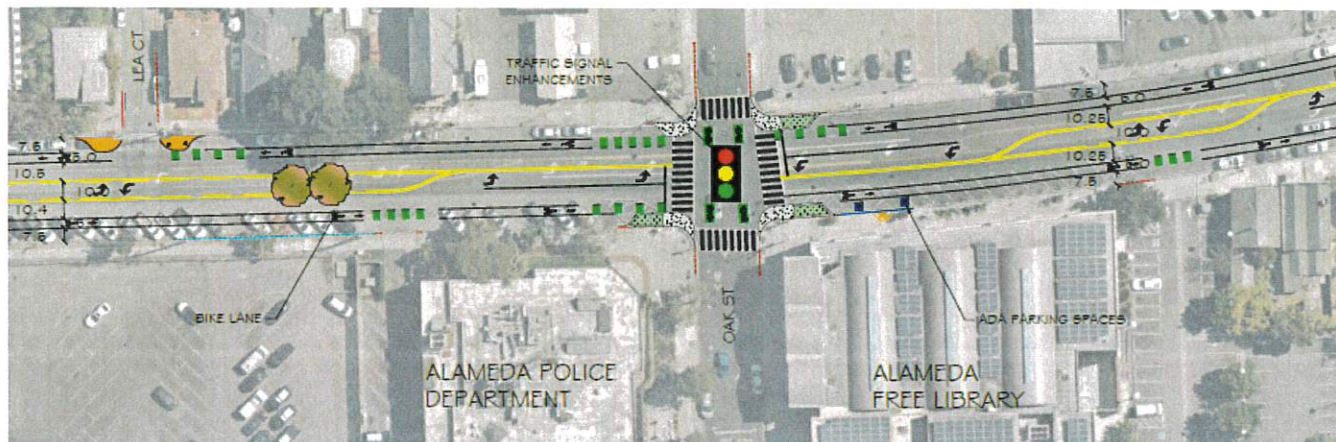
Bay Area Author & Educator Joanna Ho. On Monday, March 27, from 3:30-4:30pm, in the Stafford Community Room, local author Joanna Ho will speak about her books for children and young adults, her writing journey, and the importance of diverse representation in books. Her books are lovely and they really do speak to the audience. *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners* will make you cry it is so lovely. This free presentation is best suited for children in grades K thru 12 and their families.



MEET BAY AREA AUTHOR
**JOANNA
HO**



Lincoln Avenue at Oak Street. The transportation consultant working with our City Senior Transportation Coordinator and the Transportation Commission, have come up with this concept below for the Lincoln Avenue at Oak Street corner. They feel this concept at Lincoln/Oak will make it safer for all modes of transportation, will preserve police parking, and will make it easier to park at the library – both on-street and in the off-street parking lot in that the ability to turn left into the lot still is allowed. They will be requesting the City Council endorse this concept at the Tuesday, April 4 City Council meeting. Then they still need to complete the design. Actual construction would most likely begin in 2024.



Tonarigumi Japantown Historical Markers. As you know, the first two markers, at the Alameda Marketplace and the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, were installed in November 2022. The final two markers for the Buena Vista Methodist United Church and the Main Library are currently at the fabricators. We expect installation before the beginning of May 2023 to complete this project.

National Park Service Japanese American Containment Site Grant Project. This project is finally beginning to wind down. The culminating exhibit scheduled for May 17 is coming together nicely. We plan for the exhibit to be up for about two month after the opening reception. That last January interview has to be rescheduled as the interviewee tested positive for COVID-19, once rescheduled, we had to postpone again because the interviewer came down with COVID-19. So, things still aren't quite "normal" but we're getting there. This is another example of the type of photo and story we are collecting.



Across The Pacific

Hatsumi Iwamasa was 17 when her ship, the Tenyo Maru, left Yokohama harbor for San Francisco on August 25, 1920.

This photo was probably made just after her arrival in America, given the style of the chair and the wallpaper. It was certainly made before she was married. Once married, Japanese women do not wear such bright, colorful kimonos.

Hatsumi's voyage across the Pacific brought her to Alameda, CA. There she would marry Taiji Mashihara on August 8, 1923.

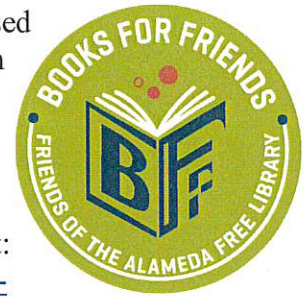
At the time of her marriage, Taiji was living in Boston, MA. He was working there as dentist and dental surgeon, a rare occupation for an Issei man in America. He first settled in Alameda after arriving from Japan in 1907.

Fusaji Takata and Byko (Baiko) Umezawa witnessed the wedding, held at the Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South in Alameda. Rev. Shigeji Oishi presided.

Hand colored photo circa late 1910s-early 1920s.

Friends of the Library. Books for Friends (BFF), the Friends of the Library used book store is almost one year old! The opened on March 17, 2022 and have been powering forward ever since. They can be found on Google maps, Yelp, and other social media sites. The sell gift cards in any amount you desire ~ and those gift cards can be used at the mini-book sales, the big O Club sales as well as in their store. Recently the founders were interviewed for "Park Bench" and it's a nice little piece. Here's the link if you'd like to see it:

https://parkbench.com/blog/books-for-friends-friends-of-the-alameda-free-library-program-non-profit-organizations-alameda-marcie-hom?fbclid=IwAR3y7JM9ym9aq442LfVSk9TXVrtt6CCuJQmrLpL_PAON-Pa4AhyyCqMpjqS



The Friends of the Library are working hard on a proposed relaunch of Dewey's Friends Café. A small café committee have put together quite an ambitious proposal for their Executive Board to consider and fund. Library Board Member Sara Strickler is a member of this Café Relaunch Committee and she will give an update to the Library Board. In the meantime, Sara and the committee have started collecting comments from library staff regarding what they would like to see from the café at the Main Library. This is the link to the survey and I encourage you all to also take this short survey to give their team an idea of what you might like to see from the café. The survey is anonymous.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScaschwIM0YOOxGJ4Y66YjjO2yhgYmjkR5K8E2Um4fYVJAGyA/viewform>

All three Live @ the Library concerts hosted by the Friends of the Library are sold out! The first in this three concert series was held Saturday, February 18 in the evening in the Stafford Room at the Main Library. Tamir Hendelman is an award-winning jazz pianist whose playing has been described as "sensitive, introspective and captivating." He was amazing! Tamir was supposed to perform with Tierney Sutton but Tierney was called away to attend a family funeral in Paris ~ She flew out the morning of the concert. Our replacement vocalist was Jackie Ryan. She was outstanding! Jackie is considered a tour de force through a myriad of jazz idioms — from blues and gospel flavored jazz gems, to luscious love songs, a soaring Spanish ballad, a Gershwin classic, pulsating samba rhythms, and it showed. She sang songs in English, Spanish and Portuguese. Everything for the concert went well (except the late piano delivery and mix-up on pickup day, we were closed for the Monday holiday) but people were happy to be back in person and to hear these fabulous musicians. Two more spring concerts to go.

- March 25: Mimi Fox Trio with Mimi on guitar, Brian Ho on the Hammond B-3 Organ and Lorca Hart on drums
- April 15: The Peggy lee Project with Suzanna Smith

I allowed the full room of 120 seats, we now have two portable air purifiers that sweep the room every 30 minutes and are supposed to clear up to 98% of any virus causing particles. I still encouraged the wearing of masks but very few people did.

The Friends continue their online programming, "Friends @ Home". The Docent Talks and Author programs continue to be very popular and given the virtual format, they have been able to host some significant authors in various time zones. They are very pleased to report that the number of views of their YouTube programs has not surpassed 10,000 in the last two years. All but one of their author talks so far have been recorded, and can be viewed through their website

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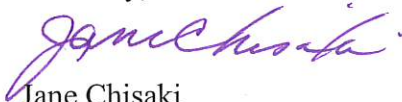
<https://alamedafriends.com/category/past-events/>. They surveyed attendees and spoke to others in person to inquire if they should continue this format or go back to only in person and overwhelmingly, people have asked for the virtual programs, so they will continue.

The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, March 27, 2023 via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. The Friends have decided to continue the Zoom format for their Board meetings until further notice. 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 has been gearing back up with new tutor trainings and small group classes. They have multiple pairings working together, occasionally we see them in the Main Library study rooms or in the library café in the evenings. The mid-year financial report was submitted to and accepted by the State Library. The final allocation of funds will be released to Alameda Reads before the end of this fiscal year.

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