



January 8, 2020

Dear President Silva and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of November and December 2019, and to provide a look forward to some of the projects which will be coming up and a few we were working on.

Happy New Year to you all! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. It's hard to believe it's already 2020! Did you know that 2020 is a Leap Year? Thanks to that extra day in February 2020, all of next year's holidays are perfectly lined up!! Valentine's Day is a Friday; Cinco de Mayo is on a Taco Tuesday; 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a Saturday; Halloween falls on a Saturday; Christmas is a Friday; and New Year's begins with a 3-day weekend! Take that 2019!

**Library Services Reports: (Consent Agenda).** The October and November 2019 Library Services Reports are included in your Board Packet. The Expenditure Reports for November and December are also included.

**Main Library Update.** The Librarian recruitment for a Full Time entry level position was open for three weeks in early December. This was Librarian Dawn Boyer's position, Dawn left to move back east in mid-November. The applicant pool looks very promising with over 35 applications to screen. Supervising Librarian Sierra Campagna hopes to hold first round interviews in early January 2020. Once this FT position is filled we will consider opening the PT Library Specialist position if we still have gaps in librarian staffing. We have also hired two new PT Library Aides to replace two who were promoted to PT Library Associate. Welcomes to Kayla Ngai and Kylie Tam and congratulations to Jennifer Hill and Andie Nguyen!

The Library is proud to announce the launch of a new database on Monday, December 16. *Novelist* is a database that connects libraries with readers on how to find the next great read. It has reading recommendations for both fiction and nonfiction titles for all ages. Of course, the Library staff is always available to suggest your next great read should you prefer the personal shopper approach!.

The Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan's office, the Library, ARPD, partnered for a successful grant application. The Early Learning Community Network (ELCN) grant involves collaboration with many community organizations, including AUSD and Alameda Family Services, to provide early literacy, reading readiness, and kindergarten readiness for the youngest community members. The primaries for this grant are Sarah Oddie from Supervisor Chan's office, Patrick Russi from ARPD, and Eva Volin from the Library. More information to come as the grant project moves forward.

The City Council held their Priority Setting Workshop on December 18 at City Hall West. All the department heads were present to hear the priorities of the Council and to answer any questions should they arise. The facilitator opened the meeting with an ice breaker for the council, City Manager, and City Attorney. They were asked for one "hidden gem" in Alameda. All of them came up with two gems rather than one but I am proud to say that the Library was mentioned twice among the 7 people! One

Library Board  
January 8, 2020

was a comment about the West End Library and how great the staff is, particularly in making book recommendations for their young (one year old) child. They would walk there and enjoy the library before walking home. They would be a little sad to make their walk and find the library closed. I responded by saying we'd like to have more hours and I heard, "I'd support that." in response. I think that's a good sign for one of the goals in our Strategic Plan. The other comment was about the Main Library Saturday children's story time. Big shout out for how fun it is and that toddler points to the library building saying "Berry! Berry!" whenever they go past the Main Library. The parents have to tell him that it's not story day but the whole family enjoys going to the age appropriate programs and praised staff for their animated reading, knowledge and skill. No other individual department received comments as being a gem in Alameda, hidden or otherwise.

Teen programs received a couple of compliments on FaceBook for offering the Study Hall during finals week. It seemed the comments were from parents who appreciated the study time with friends and free snacks. The last minute gift making workshop also drew an appreciative crowd of about 12.

The Bay Farm Island Library has begun a twice a month Chinese Storytime for ages 0-5. The program will be presented by volunteers from a non-profit who does story times in other local libraries as well. The program is in Mandarin, may include a craft after the stories and although geared to ages 0-5, they would not turn anyone away. The program will be the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 10:15AM for about 30 minutes. The first two "soft opening" sessions drew about 10 people and staff is working on flyers, press releases, and building the audience.

**Strategic Plan.** The Strategic Plan is nearly complete. Consultant Ruth Metz and I hope to have the final draft of the Plan ready by the end of the second week in January. Supervising Librarian, Marlon Romeo and Library Technician Trina Dikitanan have been working hard on the formatting of the "short form" Plan which will be handed to the City Council at our presentation. The "short form" is in final draft before publication and should be ready for your viewing at the January Board Meeting. We have not started working on the staff "field guide" but that's an in-house product so there is no rush. The updated Strategic Plan will be presented to the City Council on January 21. All members of our Planning Team will be invited to attend the Council meeting. Certificates of appreciation will be presented to all who participated. I hope you will all be pleased with the final product.

Sort of on the heels of the updated Strategic Plan, I would like the Library Board to have a discussion regarding the statistical information in the Plan and what you would like to see on a regular basis to know our Plan is going forward. This might also be the time that we re-think the Library Activity Report, do you want to see all those numbers? Should we continue that report and the new information from the Strategic Plan? Or should we pick what's important to the Board to see and only include that in the Board Packet. It doesn't mean the Library will stop collecting the other numbers because we report back to the State Library. It would just mean your packet only would include statistical information that you feel is relevant for your knowledge.

**Friends of the Library.** The 2019 Live @ the Library concert series went very well. The last concert of the season was on Saturday, November 16 with Dimitri Matheny. The audience was very appreciative of the selection of artists this season and several have already stepped forward to be Concert Sponsors next year! There will be a changing of the guard with the concert coordination. Luzanne Engh is stepping down from the Friends Board and away from the concerts. John Kaso has volunteered to coordinate the



Library Board  
January 8, 2020

concerts with talent scout extraordinaire Eileen Savel. John will arrange for pianos when needed, bring items needed for each concert and recruit and direct other concert night volunteers. Many thanks for Luzanne's assistance over the past years.

The Friends held their elections and Karen Butter will continue as President; Kumar Fanse will continue as Vice President; there will be a change at Treasurer as Bill Gibbs will step down and new Friends Board Member, Josephine Sam is set to take over. Bill will stay on the Board for the remainder of his term as a Board Member.

The Friends approved the funding request from Library Staff for the 2020 calendar year. The Friends have agreed to fun over \$48,000 in special programs for our three libraries.

The next Friends Board meeting will be on Monday, January 27, at the Main Library in the Stafford Community Room at 6:30 p.m. These meetings are open to all.

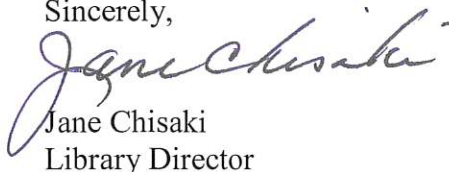
**Alameda Reads.** Two of our Learners are being published! Change Agent, an adult education magazine for social justice (which is published semi-annually) asked for submissions from adult learners all over the country around the theme "Stand Up and Be Counted." The essays could focus on voting in the 2020 election, the 2020 Census or other ways to Stand Up and Be Counted. Learners who attend our Writing Group were encouraged to write essays during October and by the November 1st deadline 6 learners had essays ready to submit. We are SO EXCITED to share the news that two of our learners had their essays selected for publication! Carmen Chu, who is also one of our Library Aides, and Lou Pinkoff will each have their work appear in the March 2020 issue. The other learners are also to be congratulated for their hard work (and bravery) in submitting essays.

The Alameda Reads office was closed on November 11 for Veterans Day and November 25-28 for Thanksgiving Break (corresponding with the public school schedule). In December they will continue mirroring the AUSD calendar and close for Winter Break December 23-January 6

I will be on vacation from December 20 to January 6, so this Board Packet will go out while I am out of office. I'm not going anywhere, it's a "staycation" to get my house ready for the family Christmas then cleaning up after the same.

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](mailto:jchisaki@alamedaca.gov) or if it is not urgent, please leave me a message at 747-7747.

Sincerely,



Jane Chisaki  
Library Director