Friends of the Alameda Free Library

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President's message by Karen Butter

We are excited to begin working with Acting Library Director Marlon Romero, who is managing the library until a permanent Library Director is hired. The City expects to hire a permanent director in early 2024. In the meantime, we are delighted to have Marlon on our team. (Get to know more about Marlon in the article below!)

I encourage you to stop by Books For Friends (BFF), our used bookshop, and the Library Friends Cafe. BFF Bookstore Manager Philip Barry has updated the bookshop's inventory. Check out the updated collection and the noteworthy display of diverse children's books with beautiful illustrations.

Just across from BFF, the Library Friends Cafe is adding healthy, delicious options to its array of food and drink offerings (more below). Drop by the cafe for a pastry and hot beverage to enjoy with your new books from BFF. Plus, stay on the lookout for even more changes coming to the cafe soon!

I could go on about the horrific attempts to censor books throughout the country — and now in California at the Orange County School Board — but I know many of you are following the issue. I am especially appalled at the focus on children's picture books. More than 300 picture books were challenged at schools in the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, a few states have passed laws allowing elected officials to participate in the book review process. At BFF, we follow the model set by Judy Blume in her Florida bookstore — BFF SELLS BANNED BOOKS!

Watch our Monday event emails and this newsletter for updated information about the October Used Book Sale.

FAL Welcomes Marlon Romero, Acting Library Director

Alameda City Council approved the appointment of Marlon Romero, the Supervising Librarian for Technical Services, to Acting Library Director, replacing Jane Chisaki upon her retirement on June 30. Marlon has been with Alameda Free Library since 2015. He earned a BA in History from UCLA and a master's degree in Library and Information Science from San Jose State University.

When asked about his most interesting and challenging roles, Marlon said, "I've worked in private, public, and non-profit sectors. The most interesting 'library'-related job I had was working for the Walt Disney Company at the Studio lot, where I worked as a Metadata Specialist on their project that sought to consolidate their TV and movie assets into one large digital asset management database. The most challenging but rewarding job I had was being a substitute teacher for The Help Group, a nonprofit that serves adolescents and teens with autism, learning disabilities, ADHD, and developmental delays."

He has worked on many key projects for our library, such as launching the electronics materials lending program, spearheading the Alameda Fine Free Library Program, and instituting the wireless hot spot lending program. He has ushered in policy changes that encouraged services promoting equity and inclusion.

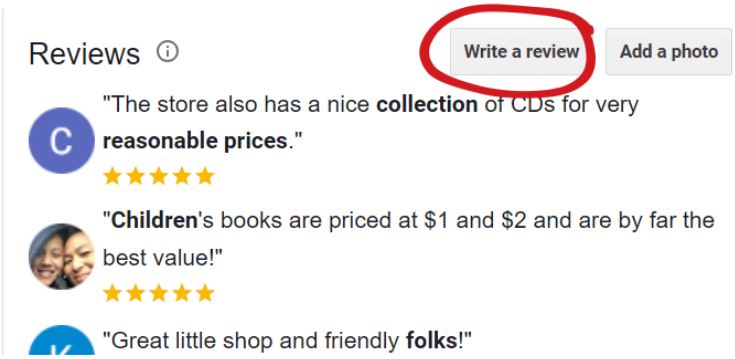
We look forward to working with Marlon and welcome him to his new position!

Pictured above: Marlon with Jane Chisaki at her retirement.

Books For Friends

Do you love Books For Friends? Let people know about our amazing bookshop, which carries an array of quality used books at great prices! Leave a **Yelp** review (**click here**) and/or a **Google** review to be **entered into a drawing for a $20 BFF Gift Card.**

How to write a Google review
Click **HERE**, then on the right side of the page in the BFF section, scroll down and click on "Write a review."



Open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from Noon to 4 p.m.

- Come for quality used books in all genres at affordable prices! We have a well-stocked children's section, so kids can pick out their own books as well.
- We accept book donations by appointment on Sundays from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Please find donation and scheduling instructions **here.**
- All of our workers are volunteers. If you are looking for a fun place to volunteer, please consider BFF! More volunteers will allow us to expand our hours of operation. Click **here** to sign up!

Shop local! All proceeds benefit the Alameda Free Library.

Library Friends Cafe News

Survey results are in! The public is overwhelmingly in favor of the cafe expanding its hours. Here are our new hours beginning 8/14/23:

Monday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Tuesday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Wednesday Noon - 4 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday Closed

Along with our expanded hours, we will be offering fresh, new menu items! You'll be able to enjoy delectable pastries and sweets from **Firebrand Artisan Breads**, accompanied as always by our delicious **Mr. Espresso** coffee. Be sure to come by and enjoy some tasty treats as you relax with your favorite book from our library or BFF.

Additional hours means we need more volunteers. **We need you!** If you are interested in helping out at the cafe, please **contact us.** THANK YOU!!

One final important note: We ask for your support of an important initiative to remove the name "Dewey's Friends Cafe" from the library cafe (located at the main branch). The name was originally chosen to honor Melvil Dewey, inventor of the Dewey Decimal System. More information about Dewey's misdeeds and nationwide efforts to remove his name from commemorative buildings can be found **here.** We have begun a petition that will be submitted to the City Council. Please **sign the petition here**.

FAL Receives ARTSFUND Grant

We are proud to be the recipients of a $2,500 ARTSFUND grant from the Alameda County Arts Commission in support of FAL's Arts and Literature programming for 2023-2025.

The ARTSFUND Grant Program supports Alameda County nonprofit arts and cultural organizations serving Alameda County community members. Grants are awarded to qualifying organizations providing arts and cultural programs in the areas of visual art, dance, theater, music, literature, poetry, cultural events and traditions, and other related forms.

This ARTSFUND grant supports FAL's free Friends @ Home programming, which has brought the community annually 25+ online art docent and author talks covering a myriad of subjects, cultures, and publications.

Many thanks to the Alameda County Arts Commission and District 3 Supervisor Lena Tam for your generous support!

Coming events!

Friends @ Home Event | August 16

What's So Interesting about Houses and Cars? The Art of Robert Bechtle

Online Art Docent Event

August 16 @ 7 p.m.

Painter Robert Bechtle grew up in Alameda, where he began producing highly realistic paintings of houses and cars in the early 1960s. His works

depict real Bay Area neighborhoods, and locals will have fun speculating where each is taken from. These images evoke a wide array of responses, prompting us to consider our own histories with these places and the unseen people connected to them.

Find more information and register **here.**

Friends @ Home Event | September 13

Notre Dame Revisited

Online Art Docent Event

September 13 @ 7 p.m.

The April 2019 fire at Notre Dame Cathedral reignited worldwide passion for the building, which was already iconic for both its spiritual and artistic importance. Beginning in the early middle ages, the Church built cathedrals to tell stories to an audience that was frequently illiterate. During the Gothic period, this resulted in massive buildings and a rich display of objects at Notre-Dame de Paris and many other medieval religious sites. This virtual event will examine the architecture and art characteristic of these sites, as well as how fires (and restorations) have affected cathedrals over the centuries. Phoenix Art Museum Master Docent Cathie Rubins will guide us in this discussion.

Find more information and register **here.**

Looking for local volunteer opportunities?

We Need You!

Whether you can volunteer from home or in person, we'd love for you to join our team! We are a dedicated group of volunteers working to raise money for our wonderful library in a variety of ways. We welcome fresh ideas and new ways to raise funds.

Click here to learn more!

Find us on YouTube

Miss a Friends @ Home event, or want to rewatch your favorites? Simply **check our website** or subscribe to **our YouTube channel** to view the recordings. We record as many events as possible, copyright permitting. Enjoy!

We need your support!

Making a donation is easy!

Just click the button below.

Remember, your donations are tax deductible!

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https://bit.ly/FriendVideos

Visit our Website

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