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President's message by Karen Butter



We hosted a very successful March Used Book Sale. Many discovered our used bookstore, Books For Friends, which also saw brisk sales, while others purchased delicious items from the Friends Café. Billy Reinschmiedt directed the sale, assisted by Cindy Silva, Marcie Johnson, Kim Buckley, Lydia Kim, Serena Hom, Karen Manuel, Mary Ann Munro (and the Friends Café team), Das and many dedicated volunteers. Thank you to everyone who joined us.

As part of our 50th Anniversary celebration, FAL is sponsoring Adopt-a-Pet Day on April 6, hosted by the Bay Farm Island Branch in partnership with FAAS (Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter). Come meet the pets available for adoption and reserve a spot in the cartooning workshop to learn how to draw cats and dogs. (More details below.)

At the start of the pandemic, FAL began offering our very popular docent talks via Zoom. Eventually, we heard that folks missed the in-person library talks, while others enjoyed the convenience of watching from home. We have decided to keep the virtual events and, whenever possible, offer in-person talks as well. In May, we are offering a docent talk on Rembrandt both on Zoom and in person at the Main Branch.

Sadly, it has been a difficult year for longtime FAL members and supporters of the library. We lost Honora Murphy last month and just recently learned of Gert Woods' passing. Gert established the FAL Used Book Sale tradition and led it for more than 40 years; you can read more about her significant contributions to the library below. We miss her terribly and extend our deepest thanks for her many years of service.

FAL remembers Gert Woods

Gert Woods, a longtime FAL volunteer, passed away in February at the age of 89. Gert joined the first Friends of the Library book sale team 49 years ago, along with close friends and her husband, Pete.

Gert established the FAL Used Book Sale tradition, sorting books weekly for more than 40 years and enlisting family members to help out as well. Together with Adair Jorgenson, Gert managed the book sale for decades.

We will miss her, and we extend our condolences to her family and friends.



Above: Gert Woods and Lois Hanna in a photo from an Alameda Times Star article, urging book donations for a book sale at Wood Middle School in May of 1976.

Spring Used Book Sale a success!



The March Used Book Sale was a huge success! On Friday, we sold close to 2,500 used books. Children's books were our best sellers, and we had a great selection available. On Saturday, we sold over 215 bags of books at \$5/bag, in addition to individual book sales.

Books for Friends did banner business on both days of the sale, as did the Friends Café. Both saw more customers than usual, thanks to the Used Book Sale.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who staffed the sale and worked behind the scenes sorting, packing, setting up, and packing away again. Thank you also to the volunteers at BFF and the Café.

The next Used Book Sale will be June 21-22, just in time to stock up on your summer reading!



An appreciation of our amazing volunteers

On March 2, the FAL Board of Directors hosted a party to honor our volunteers' many contributions. Approximately 75 volunteers attended, including founding member Donna Vaughn (pictured below, top right, with FAL President Karen Butter), Assistant City Manager Amy Wooldridge, and Interim Library Director Marlon Romero. The event was held at the Harbor Bay Isle Community Center, where guests enjoyed delectable food from Asena and live jazz by Thom Douvan & The Forget-Me-Nots.

Our volunteers are creative, enthusiastic, and hardworking. They sort books, produce book sales, manage the Friends Café and Books for Friends, host jazz concerts and author talks, and so much more. They are dedicated to raising money for our outstanding public library system for the benefit of all in the community. We thank them for their service, support, and unwavering spirit.

Billy Reinschmiedt, our official photographer, captured the afternoon:



Springtime in the Friends Café



March was another busy month for the Friends Café. Construction began on the new shelving to display all the delicious goodies and new treats we'll be adding in the months to come.

The Friends Café would love to host your next group meeting. Knitters, book clubs, study sessions, bridge and mahjong groups — all are welcome! Just let us know in advance, and we'll be happy to set up and reserve tables for groups of up to ten people.

An interesting visitor came by the café recently: author Mark Carl Rom, who's writing a book called *America's Libraries: Finding the Women Who Help Make Them*. Rom is traveling around the United States to some 400 Carnegie libraries (which the Main Branch used to be) to research the thousands of women who brought these libraries to towns across the nation. Recently retired head librarian Jane Chisaki spent some time

speaking with Rom about the origins of the Alameda Free Library. We look forward to the publication of his book in early 2025.

Books for Friends

BFF sold over 850 books at our Buy-One-Get-One event held during the March Used Book Sale! Nonfiction books were the big sellers, followed by children's books. BFF has exceptional books in pristine condition in all genres. Come in, browse, and shop local —100% of all proceeds benefit the Alameda Free Library.



BFF Hours:

Thursday, Friday, Saturday - Noon to 4 p.m.

We accept used book donations by appointment on Sundays from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Please find donation and scheduling instructions [here](#).

Access more libraries!



Do you have a book on hold on Libby, Hoopla, or OverDrive and have to wait several weeks or even months before it's your turn? Try branching out! Any California resident can get a free library card at the following city libraries — just fill out the application to access all their digital “stacks”!

Los Angeles: [click here](#)

San Diego: [click here](#)

San Jose: [click here](#)

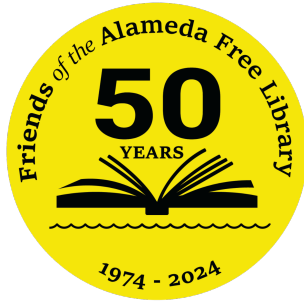
Oakland: [click here](#)

Checking out books and other materials from the library is great for several reasons:

- Increased use of library services allows libraries to request additional funding from state and local budgets.
- Authors get royalty payments for library check-outs — another great way to support the writers, musicians, and artists you love!

- It gives your library a better idea of what's in demand. If you're looking for a book, film, or album that your library doesn't carry, please request it so artists can get their work into more libraries and seen by more people!

FAL's Spring Campaign launches!



Twice a year in the spring and fall, FAL holds its campaign to support the Annual Fund, the cornerstone of our fundraising efforts. All proceeds go toward our Friends @ Home virtual talks by authors and docents and provide ongoing support to the Alameda Free Library for the many programs and services you love (see what's coming up in April below!).

In celebration of FAL's golden anniversary, we are pleased to announce our new 50th Anniversary Giving Tiers with year-long special benefits: different levels, discounts, free drinks, treats, and more. This is our way of thanking you and enhancing your experience of the Friends Café and Books for Friends.

Please consider making a donation this spring to help our library thrive for another 50 years.

Click [here](#) to learn more and donate, or scan the QR code below.

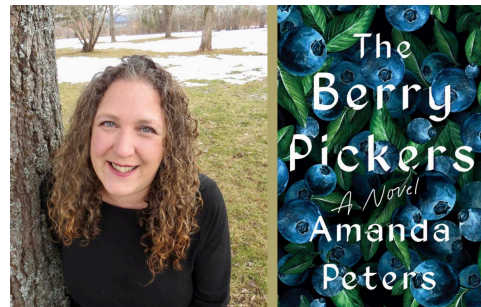


Upcoming FAL events

Online Author Event | April 3

Author Amanda Peters
The Berry Pickers
April 3 at 5 p.m. (note time)

July 1962. A Mi'kmaq family from Nova Scotia arrives in Maine to pick blueberries for the summer. Weeks later, four-year-old Ruthie, the family's youngest child, vanishes. She is



last seen by her six-year-old brother, Joe, who will remain distraught by his sister's disappearance for years to come.

In Maine, a young girl named Norma grows up as the only child of an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant, and her mother frustratingly overprotective. Norma is often troubled by recurring dreams and visions that seem more like memories than imagination. As she grows older, Norma slowly comes to realize there is something her parents aren't telling her. Unwilling to abandon her intuition, she will spend decades trying to uncover this family secret.

Amanda Peters is a writer of Mi'kmaq and settler ancestry. Her debut novel, *The Berry Pickers*, won the 2024 Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction and the 2023 Barnes & Noble Discover Prize. It was shortlisted for the Barnes & Noble Book of the Year and the Atwood Gibson Writers' Trust Fiction Prize.

To learn more and register, [click here](#) or scan the QR code below.



Online Art Docent Event | April 17



The Art of Volume: Fernando Botero April 17 at 7 p.m.

Fernando Botero's unique style is instantly recognizable. His subjects exist in a universe populated by exaggerated, seemingly larger-than-life beings, at once both solid and voluptuous. His figures echo Pre-Columbian, Classical Spanish, and Spanish Colonial Art.

His work is an assault on what is held to be timeless canons of beauty and ideal proportions. Botero said, "My painting has two main sources. On one hand, they are my views on aesthetics, and on the other, the Latin American world where I grew up."

A native of Buenos Aires, Isabel Ballerna has been a docent at the Phoenix Art Museum since 2014. She holds a BA in art and is an artist and interior designer. Her works have been featured in art galleries and numerous publications, including *Artists of the Rockies*. Isabel is also an avid horse rider and competitor in dressage.

To learn more and register, [click here](#) or scan the QR code below.



Online Art Docent Event | May 15

Rembrandt van Rijn: The Man and His Art May 15 at 7 p.m.

Rembrandt van Rijn lived in the Golden Age of Dutch art, and 400 years later, we are still captivated by his paintings and etchings. You might expect that Rembrandt would have been universally beloved in his lifetime, just as he is now, but the reality was quite different. Listen and learn from Rembrandt's successes and challenges as he reigned over and rebelled against 17th century art.



Guiding us through this fascinating story is Marsha Holm, who has been a docent with the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF) since 1979. In addition to giving tours and lectures in all areas of the museums' collections, from Africa to the Pacific Islands and from the Americas to Europe, she has served in several administrative capacities, including new and continuing education for FAMSF docents. She has also assisted in training docents at the Blackhawk Museum, the Oakland Museum of California, and the San Jose Museum of Art.

Registration for the online docent talk coming soon!

In-person Art Docent Event | May 22



Rembrandt van Rijn: The Man and His Art May 22 at 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**Alameda Free Library, Stafford Room
1550 Oak Street, Alameda**

We are pleased to offer this docent talk at the Main Branch for those who wish to experience this event in person. Marsha Holm will be our docent for the evening. The program runs from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., leaving time for questions before the library closes at

8 p.m. For more information, please see the description of the online event above. We look forward to seeing you at the Main Branch! No pre-registration is necessary for the in-person event.

Alameda Free Library events

Sponsored by *FAL*

All events are free and open to the public. Visit www.alamedafree.org for the full events calendar or call the library at 510-747-7777 for more information. These events are made possible by the sponsorship of Friends of the Alameda Free Library.

Arts & Crafts Supply Swap

All branches

Do you have extra yarn, paint, canvases, beads, or anything else a fellow crafter might enjoy? Drop off unused craft supplies in good condition at any Alameda Free Library location during the month of April, starting April 1. We will collect and sort, then on **Saturday, April 20, drop by the Main Branch** between 1-4 p.m. to grab some new supplies for yourself!



Make It! Fiber Arts in April

April 2 and April 16, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

Join us in the Family Study Room for a fiber arts craft circle. All kinds of fiber artists are welcome! Limited instruction will be available. Please bring your own materials and expertise. Look forward to an afternoon of community building and crafting!



Adopt-a-Pet Day

April 6, 1-4 p.m.

Bay Farm Island Branch
3221 Mecartney Rd.

Join us for a fun afternoon of adorable animals and quirky cartoons! The Friends of the Alameda Animal Shelter (FAAS) will be swinging by the Bay Farm Island Branch with their mobile adoption vehicle. Come and meet the wonderful animals available for adoption.

After meeting some new friends, learn how to draw them cartoon-style! Artist Brian Kolm will be leading a Dog Drawings and Cat Cartoons workshop for ages seven and

up. Space is limited – please call (510) 747-7787 to reserve your spot.



Adopt-a-Pet Day

FAAS MOBILE ADOPTION EVENT

Bay Farm Island Library
April 6, 1-4 PM

Dog and Cat Cartooning workshop
with artist Brian Kolm!
Ages 7 to adult - spots are limited.
Call 510-747-7787 to reserve your spot!

ALAMEDA FREE LIBRARY
FAAS
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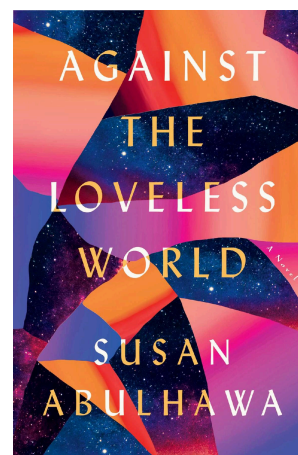
A Novel Idea

April 8, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

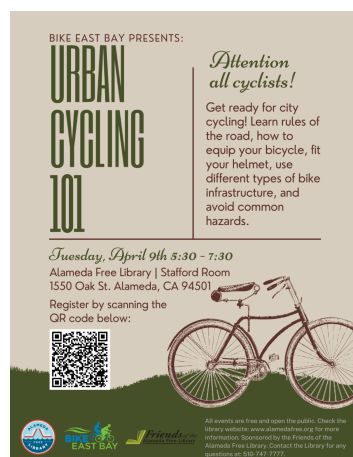
Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

A Novel Idea is a monthly book club for adults featuring novels from diverse genres and authors. Join us for a lively discussion and deepen your engagement with your reading!

The April book selection is *Against the Loveless World* by Susan Abulhawa: a sweeping and lyrical novel that follows a young Palestinian refugee whose understanding of the world undergoes revolutionary change as she searches for a better life for her family throughout the Middle East.



Copies are available in the Alameda Free Library digital collection and through LINK+. A limited number of free copies provided by Friends of the Alameda Free Library are available at the reference desk at the Main Branch.



BIKE EAST BAY PRESENTS:

URBAN CYCLING 101

Attention all cyclists!

Get ready for city cycling! Learn rules of the road, how to equip your bicycle, fit your helmet, use different types of bike infrastructure, and avoid common hazards.

Tuesday, April 9th 5:30 - 7:30
Alameda Free Library | Stafford Room
1550 Oak St. Alameda, CA 94501

Register by scanning the QR code below:

All events are free and open to the public. Check the library website www.alamlib.org for more information. Sponsored by the Friends of the Alameda Free Library. Contact the Library for any questions at 510-747-7777.

Urban Cycling 101

April 9, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

Calling all city cyclists! Learn rules of the road, how to equip your bicycle, fit your helmet, use different types of bike infrastructure, and avoid common hazards. To register, call the library at (510) 747-7777 or scan the QR code in the poster to the left.

A Sensory-Friendly Family Movie Matinee

April 14, 2 p.m.

Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

April's movie is *DC League of Super-Pets*, starring Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart! Rated PG.



What does sensory-friendly mean?

- **Lights Up.** Only the lights in the half of the room closest to the screen will be turned off.
- **Sound Down.** The volume will be lower than at our Monthly Movie Nights. Captions will be on as well.
- **Hands Busy.** We will provide a basket of fidget toys you are welcome to choose from. We encourage you to bring any sensory aids or comfort items that would enhance your experience.
- **Rules Relaxed.** Feel free to move, vocalize, dance or sing along! There is no expectation to sit still and remain quiet. Snacks will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own (easy-to-clean-up) options as well.
- **Flex Seating.** A space will be open at the front with wobble cushions to sit on. You can also bring along a blanket or pillow and make yourself comfortable!

This is a monthly event! Check back soon for the May title.

Supper & Support

April 21, 1-3 p.m.

Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

Come by the Stafford Room for a free, hot meal and join Dr. Cindy Acker in a discussion on equity and inclusion in our community.

An award-winning educator, keynote speaker, and playwright, Dr. Acker speaks and writes on social justice issues worldwide. She has served as a public policy adviser, education and board consultant, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) trainer nationwide.

A poster for the 'Supper & Support' event. The title 'SUPPER & SUPPORT' is written in large, bold, black letters at the top. Below the title is a graphic of a fork with various vegetables (broccoli, tomatoes, carrots, green beans) on it. A blue starburst with the word 'FREE' is on the left. The event details are listed on the right: 'Alameda Free Library, 1550 Oak St. Alameda, CA, Sunday, April 21st, 1-3 PM'. Below the graphic, there is a green section with white text: 'Come enjoy a free, hot meal at the library! Join us in welcoming Dr. Cindy Acker in a discussion on equity and inclusion in our community. Award-winning educator, keynote speaker, and playwright, Dr. Acker speaks and writes on social justice issues worldwide. She has served as a public policy adviser, education and board consultant, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging trainer nationwide.' At the bottom, there are logos for the Alameda Free Library and Friends of the Alameda Free Library, along with contact information: 'All events are free and open to the public. Check the library website: www.alamedafree.org for more information. Sponsored by the Friends of the Alameda Free Library. Contact the Library for any questions at: 510-747-7777.'

Check back for the providers who will be at the May session of Supper and Support.

Monthly Movie Night!

April 24, 5:30 PM

Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

Join us in the Stafford Room for a showing of *Breaking Fast!* (2020, not rated, adult relationship) -

A modern American rom-com: Mo, a practicing Muslim living in West Hollywood, is learning to navigate life post-heartbreak. Enter Kal, an all-American guy who surprises Mo by offering to break fast with him during the holy month of Ramadan. Certified fresh at 96% on Rotten Tomatoes!



Día de los Niños
April 27, 12-4 p.m.
Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

We have lots of fun activities planned!

12-1 p.m.: Singing & reading for Mariela's Music Time.

1-2 p.m.: Craft time

2-3 p.m.: See an incredible magic show by Magical Mark

3-4 p.m.: Awesome balloon twisting with Mr SHAP, plus fresh churros while supplies last



Don't forget to capture a keepsake in our free photo booth, running from 2-4 p.m.!

There will be Free Health and Development Screening Services for Children from 12-4 p.m. School readiness materials will be made available at no cost to families while supplies last. This service is provided by Alameda Family Services. Help Me Grow Alameda County and the Museum of Children's Art (MOCHA) will also be present to hand out information.

Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior

April 26, 3-4 p.m.
Alameda Free Library
Main Branch, 1550 Oak St.

Almost 7 million people in the U.S. live with Alzheimer's, including nearly one in ten folks over the age of 65. A vast majority of their care comes from family, friends, and other unpaid caregivers.

Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior

 **FRI APRIL 26**
3-4pm

STAFFORD ROOM | MAIN LIBRARY
1550 OAK ST., ALAMEDA

Review caregiver tips and strategies to respond to some common behaviors exhibited by individuals living with dementia, such as agitation, confusion and more.

alzheimer's
association



All events are free and open to the public. Check the library website: www.alamedafree.org for more information. Sponsored by the Friends of the Alameda Free Library. Contact the Library for any questions at: 510-747-7777.



Presented in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association, this session will review caregiver tips and strategies to respond to common behaviors exhibited by individuals living with dementia, such as agitation, confusion, and more. Learn vital information in a supportive, caring environment.

Volunteer with us!

FAL is looking for volunteers and leaders in a number of areas. We are a 50-year-old organization with exciting volunteer and board opportunities to help expand the library's outreach into the Alameda community. Sign up [here!](#)



We are especially interested in individuals with the following backgrounds/interests:

- Event Planning
- Social Media
- Accounting and Financial Management
- Marketing
- Retail, bookselling, or café skills

Get the latest on FAL news and events!



Visit our website

<https://alamedafriends.com/>



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