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## President's Message

Dear Friends,

A big thank you to our amazing volunteers who contributed to a very successful February book sale despite rainy weather for two of the days. Special mention to organizers Billy Reinschmidt, Joanne Schneider, Marcie Johnson and Serena Hom (Used Book Sale), Philip Barry and Marcie Johnson (Books For Friends); and Mary Ann Monroe and Nancy Cooney (Friends Café). They were assisted by many, many volunteers who successfully rehomed 140 boxes of books including 25 bags of books to teachers on Wednesday and added more than \$6,000 to FAL support for the Library.



FAL board members enjoyed talking to - and meeting with - returning and new volunteers and buyers, thus introducing the community to BFF and Friends Café. We hope to see everyone at our upcoming 2025 sales on May 14 - 17 and October 15 - 18.

All FAL activities support programs at the Alameda Free Library. In Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the Library hosted an amazing 1,215 programs. I want to highlight one new program at the Alameda Free Library: the [Library Speakers Consortium](#), bringing you two to three live online talks with bestselling authors every month. The live talks feature a diverse mix of authors where participants can ask questions. Recordings are available and library registration is required to attend.

"Who's afraid of a Public Library" was a recent article in *The Washington Post* by Colbert King. He describes a conservative takeover of his library. A Carnegie Library was built in his community in 1903 and it was the first desegregated public building in the District. He goes on to say, "My library card became a passport to a world far beyond my Foggy Bottom/West End neighborhood. It carried me outside a city in which I was judged based on my skin. It was a haven in which I could learn about and study real stories, get into the minds and lives of real people who made me laugh or mad or scared as hell. Over the years, and through my library card, I learned about life, the good and bad, and how to live it. I learned something about myself and others. ....Libraries are where fear and ignorance meet facts. Libraries

are where history is captured and boundaries are rightfully crossed, and communities are built, not broken, around them.”

We are so fortunate in Alameda that the pursuit of knowledge remains unobstructed.

Warm regards,

**Karen Butter**

**President, Friends of the Alameda Free Library**

## FAL Board Welcomes Two New Members

### **Andre Fairley**

The FAL Board welcomes Andre Fairley to the Finance Committee. Andre was born and raised in Oakland. With an undergraduate degree in Public Health and a Master of Public Administration, his finance background and attention to detail complement his Oakland roots, making him an advocate for supporting community members in need. Andre currently works for the City of Alameda's Housing and Human Services Division and is devoted to serving the community as a whole. As a new board member, he believes the existence of public libraries brings knowledge, creativity and a safe space for all individuals from different walks of life.



### **Kris Venturini**

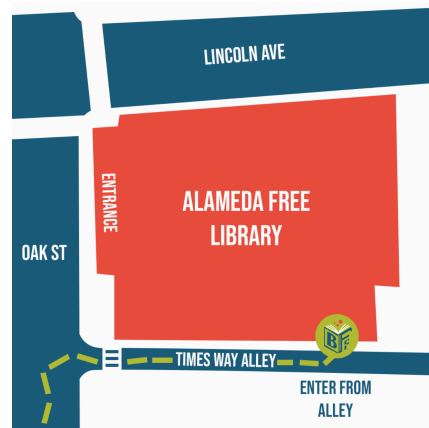
Kris Venturini has lived in Alameda for 34 years and has been a frequent user and supporter of the Alameda Free Library along with her family. If you've ever donated books you might recognize her name as she's currently the Book Donation Coordinator. Kris has also worked in BFF and volunteered at many used book sales over the years. Kris is a CPA working in multiple finance roles in both industry and non profit sectors and has recently moved to a partial retirement status which allows her to give more time to FAL and her other passion of dogs/volunteering at the Friends of Alameda Animal Shelter. She loves reading and leads a local book club. Kris believes in making the library an open, welcoming place for all and is encouraged by new ideas where the library can continue to serve as a valuable resource for the Alameda community in multiple ways.



**Books For Friends (BFF)**  
Alameda's Curated Bookshop

**BFF Hours**  
Thu - Sat, 12 - 4 PM  
Main Library

Stop by and check out our special selection of books at great prices! Enter from inside the library via the Friends Cafe or use the outside entrance on Times Way Alley.



## What's Happening in the Friends Café?

**Café Hours**  
10 AM - 4 PM every day  
(except Weds: 12 - 4 PM)  
Main Library



March is beginning to peek it's head out with warmer temps and lovely Spring flowers. The [Friends Café](#) has its own blooming garden!!

The recent product introductions are doing well, bringing more and more people into the library and the Café. Please come in and enjoy one of the NEWLY introduced treats:

- Breakfast Burritos
- Muffins
- AriZona Tea
- Numi Tea

Thank you all for stopping by the Friends Café. Your support helps keep our library thriving!

## Upcoming FAL Events



### [Art Docent: Jack London as a Photographer](#)

**Virtual Event (Zoom)**

**Wed, Mar 12 @ 7 PM**

Jack London was a man of many parts: cannery worker, oyster pirate, and sailor while still a teenager, self-educated author of 50 books (and the first American author to earn a million dollars), war correspondent, Socialist and forward-thinking rancher. A lesser-known aspect of his prodigious activity was photography.

Over the course of his life, London took some 12,000 photos, both during his journalistic exploits and his travels with wife Charmian. They form a fascinating record of a world unknown to most of his contemporaries, and display sharp composition, an unerring sense of drama, and sympathetic respect for his subjects.

Avril Angevine will moderate this program. She is an independent art lecturer who has spoken at the Alameda Library many times. She is a Humanities and English instructor at local colleges, and a museum guide at both SFMOMA and the Oakland Museum of California.

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**[EH: Earth Without Art](#)**  
**Virtual Event (Zoom)**  
**Wed, Apr 16 @ 7 PM**

A Presentation and Conversation with the Phoenix Art Museum.

Space exploration in the 1970s galvanized a generation to look at our planet differently. The diversity of life on Earth, captured by explorers and Hudson River School artists, was suddenly dwarfed. Contemporary artists challenge landscape painting traditions and turn trash into treasure. We will discuss how art and activism intersect when looking at the human impact on our changing environment.



**Alameda Free Library Events**  
Sponsored by FAL

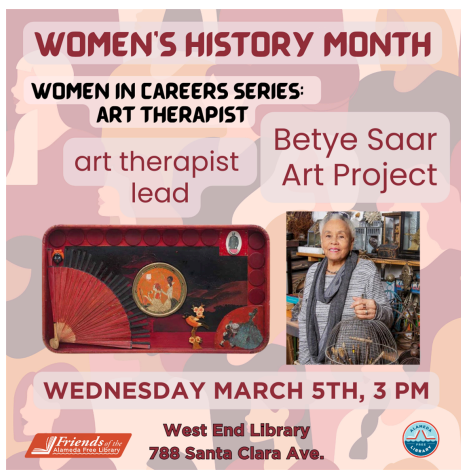
All events are free and open to the public. Check out the full [events calendar here](#) or call the Library at **510-747-7777** for more information.

*These events are made possible due to your donations to the Friends of the Alameda Free Library.*

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**FOR KIDS, TWEENS, TEENS & FAMILIES**

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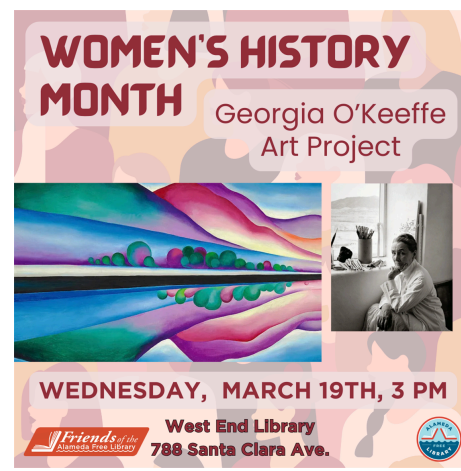


**Women in Careers Series: Art Therapist**

**Mar 5, 3 PM**  
West End Library

Join us as we hear from a professional art therapist about this important career and create an assemblage project based on the artwork of Betye Saar.

\*This program is designed for children ages 8-12.



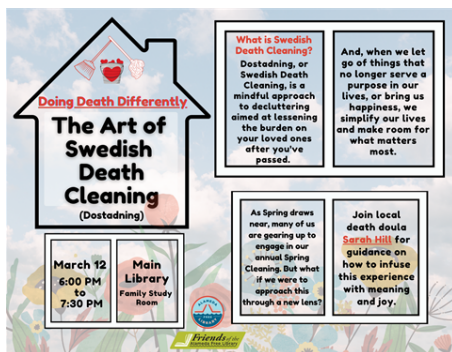
**Georgia O'Keeffe Art Project**

**Mar 19, 3 PM**  
West End Library

Learn about one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, Georgia O'Keeffe, and create your very own artwork based on O'Keeffe's abstract landscapes.

\*This program is designed for ages 6+.

**FOR ADULTS**



**The Art of Swedish Death Cleaning**

**Mar 12, 6 - 7:30 PM**  
Main Library

As Spring draws near, many of us are gearing up to engage in



**Workshop: Family Seedstarting with Alameda Backyard Growers**

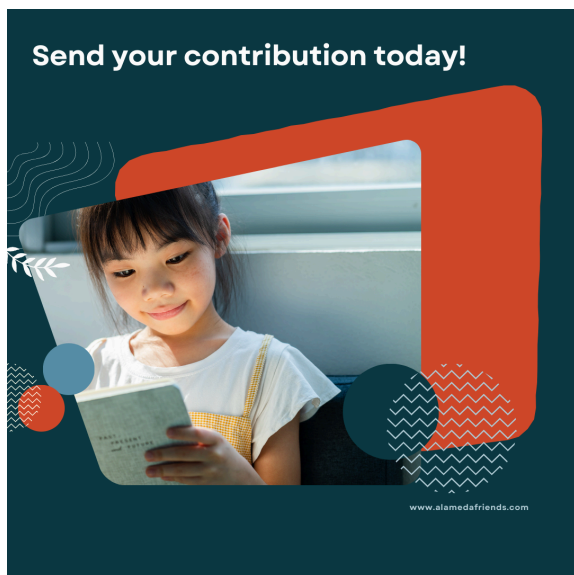
**Mar 23, 1:30 - 3 PM**  
Main Library

Join Marcus Carini, founder of Newfound Foodscapes and

our annual Spring Cleaning. But what if we were to approach this through a new lens? Join local death doula, Sara Hill, to learn the art of Swedish Death Cleaning and how the process of decluttering for your loved ones can be infused with meaning and joy.

board member of Alameda Backyard Growers, for a hands-on Family Seedstarting Workshop designed to empower families to grow their own food and cultivate a lifelong connection with nature. This workshop is perfect for families of all experience levels who want to enjoy the benefits of fresh, homegrown food and a deeper connection to the natural world. All materials will be provided; bring your excitement!

## Support the Friends of the Alameda Free Library



As we welcome 2025, we encourage you to support the Alameda Free Library through Friends of the Alameda Free Library's Annual Campaign! Your monetary gift fuels engaging programs, expands book and eBook collections and brings inspiring cultural events to the community. Every contribution strengthens our library's role as a place for discovery, learning and connection. Join us in making a lasting impact – donate today!

[Donate Today!](#)

## Stay up to date with the Friends!

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Friends of the Alameda Free Library is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
Tax ID: 23-7437087

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