



Friends of the Alameda Free Library

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This monthly newsletter gives you the latest updates and news from the Friends.
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Dear Friend,

We have lots of news to share, so let's jump right in!

Last week, we held a special fundraising event for the [2026 Live @ the Library concert series](#). It was a fun and successful event that included live music by the [Miles Ahead Ensemble](#), with Live @ the Library sponsors, library staff members Marlon Romero, Kevin Tam and Fernanda Nunez and Councilmember Tracy Jensen in attendance. Following this event, we are just \$3,000 shy of covering 100% of our concert expenses. If you'd like to help by sponsoring, please [click here](#).



Joshua Dapkus, incoming President, with Karen Butter, outgoing President

I'm delighted to introduce three new board members: Billy Reinschmiedt, Nafisah Ali and Jennifer Tell. Each of them brings exceptional skills, experience and dedication to our community and we're incredibly lucky to have them onboard. Please look for their profiles later on in the newsletter.

Speaking of new additions, we're also excited to welcome new Alameda Free Library staff members: Librarian Natalie Canellas, School Resource Services Librarian Mika Permutt and Alameda Family Services Clinical Social Worker Maria Temporal. When visiting the library, say hello!

In 2025, the library had a total of 232,000 visitors and ran 1,200 programs with over 44,000 participants. FAL is proud to have supported 100% of these library programs. These totals are significant increases from the year before,

a clear sign that our library is finding effective ways to serve and engage with our community.

Looking ahead, I want to bring your attention to a couple of upcoming events: the [Used Book Sale](#) is February 4 to 7 and our next [Art Docent Talk](#), “A Tale of Two Baroques,” takes place on February 11. And we’ve just opened up ticket sales for the [Live @ the Library Jazz Concert Series](#) on [March 28](#) and [April 11](#). Capacity is limited, so get your tickets today!

Of course, our events and day-to-day operations wouldn’t be possible without our incredible volunteers, who are the driving force of our organization. If you’d like to join our volunteer team, we have roles suited to a wide variety of skills and interests. Please take a look at the Volunteer Corner section of the newsletter to learn more about the roles we’re currently seeking.

Cheers,

Josh Dapkus

President, Friends of the Alameda Free Library

Used Book Sale

February 4 - 7, 2026

USED BOOK SALE

 *Friends of the*
Alameda Free Library



OVER 10,000 BOOKS,
UNBEATABLE PRICES!



\$5 BAG OFFER FOR
TEACHERS ON WEDS,
FEB 4 ONLY!

ALAMEDA MAIN LIBRARY
1550 OAK ST.
ALAMEDA, CA 94501

FEBRUARY
4 - 7, 2026

FIND MORE
INFORMATION AT
ALAMEDAFRIENDS.COM

HOURS:

WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 4: 1 - 6PM

THU - SAT,
FEBRUARY 5 - 7: 10AM - 4PM



LARS G. HANSSON
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

The [Used Book Sale](#) is open from **February 4 to 7** at the Alameda Free Library. The sale features **over 10,000 books** at unbeatable prices! This is a great chance to stock up on books for all ages and interests. On Wednesday, February 4, from 1 to 6 pm, we'll have a **special discount for teachers: fill a bag for just \$5!**

Sale Hours & Details

- **February 4 (Wed):** 1 - 6 PM – open to all. Educators, fill a bag for \$5!
- **February 5 - 7 (Thu - Sat):** 10 AM - 4 PM
- **Location:** Stafford Room, Alameda Main Library (near the Books & Bites Cafe)

Used Book Sales directly support the Alameda Free Library. In 2025, over 1,200 programs with over 44,000 participants were hosted for free by the Library. Library programs are 100% funded by FAL.

We Need Volunteers!

The Friends **rely on volunteers** to help make our book sales a success. Whether you're available for a few hours or the whole event, we'd love your help.

[Sign up to volunteer](#)

Come shop and/or volunteer—**every book sold helps support library programs!** See you at the sale.

Thank You to Our Used Book Sale Sponsors

We'd like to give a special shout-out to the following sponsors of our February Used Book Sale:

- [Lars G. Hansson CPA](#)
- [Alameda Municipal Power](#)
- [Windermere Bay Area Properties](#)
- [Greenway Golf](#)

Books For Friends
Quality Used Books at Great Prices

Bookshop Hours

Weds: 12 - 6 PM

Thurs - Sat: 12 - 4 PM

Main Library

American Red Cross Partnership

Throughout the year, the American Red Cross will be holding blood drives in the library. Blood donors will be treated to a free book or media item - up to a \$10 value - at Books For Friends, during special Tuesday shop hours that align with the blood drive donation days/times.



The 2026 Blood Drive dates are as follows:

- Tuesday, March 10, 2026: 12 - 5 PM
- Tuesday, May 19, 2026: 12 - 5 PM
- Tuesday, July 14, 2026: 12 - 5 PM
- Tuesday, September 08, 2026: 12 - 5 PM
- Tuesday, November 10, 2026: 12 - 5 PM

To sign up to give blood, please visit the Alameda Free Library's blood drive page by [clicking here](#).



**BOOKS FOR FRIENDS
STOREWIDE SALE!**

Used Book Sale Special Hours and BOGO Sale

! Buy one book & get one book FREE (of equal or lesser value) !

No limit on the number of books you may purchase

Take advantage of this limited-time BOGO deal taking place during the Used Book Sale

Sale dates:

February 4 (Wed): 12 - 6 PM

February 5 - 7 (Thu - Sat): 10 AM - 4 PM



Book Donations

Special Note: **Books For Friends will pause donation drop offs from February 1 to March 14, 2026** to give the small volunteer team time to work through several large book donations made in late 2025. Donation appointments will resume Sunday, March 15, 2026. If you have book donations that cannot wait until March 15, please reach out to one of the following resources:

- Savers, Marina Village
- Goodwill, across from the Alameda Free Library
- Salvation Army on Park Street

- The Book Mark, 10th and Broadway in Oakland

Books For Friends and the Used Book Sale would not be possible without the ongoing, generous donations we receive from the community. Thank you for thinking of Friends of the Alameda Free Library when you are cleaning your shelves and parting with your books, CDs and DVDs.

To donate, please fill out a [book donation request form](#) and the Book Donation Coordinator will schedule you for an upcoming Sunday drop-off time. Thank you for your patience.

What's Happening in the Books & Bites Cafe?

Books & Bites Cafe Hours

Mon - Sat: 10 AM - 4 PM

Sun: Closed

Main Library

New year, new name! **The Friends Cafe is now Books & Bites Cafe**

— the same friendly spot with a fresh new name. Our menu is the same, so come enjoy a local Mr. Espresso coffee, Firebrand pastries, warm noodles and a variety of drinks and snacks.



Stay and relax in the cafe, or take your treats with you into the library to your favorite cozy spot (yes, it's now allowed).

To keep up with the cost of goods, we have updated some of our prices:

- Coffee: \$2.50
- Tea: \$2.00
- Hot cocoa with whipped cream: \$1.50

Still the best deal in town!

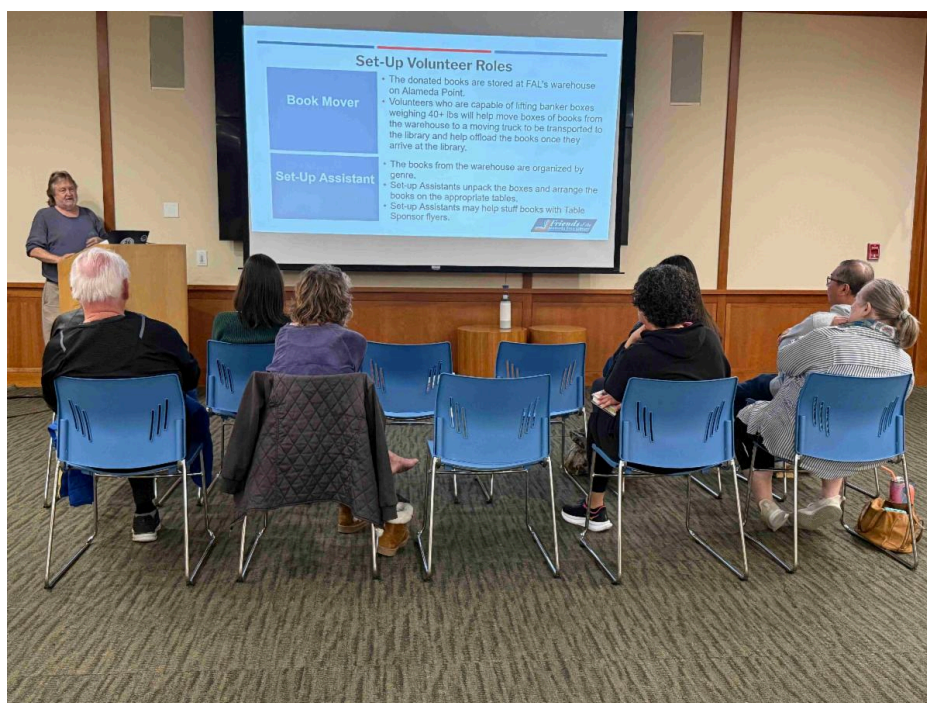
We're proud to share a small but meaningful moment from the cafe. We recently welcomed a small diplomatic party from Mongolia. They stopped by for coffee before their meetings with the City of Alameda. The special Library patrons came to meet and talk about the growing Mongolian community in Alameda—many of whom live here and commute to San Francisco for work. They were especially interested to learn that the cafe is volunteer-run and shared how much they valued it as a genuine community space. Moments like these remind us how far a warm cup of coffee and a shared space can reach.



We'd like to introduce Maria Temporal, the Alameda Family Services' Library Clinical Social Worker. She is working through an Alameda Welfare Grant awarded to FAL to help connect persons in need with free items at the Books & Bites Cafe. Maria will be working inside the Alameda Free Library on the second floor, Social Services Office. Thank you to Alameda Welfare Council for your support.

Finally, we're looking for volunteer drivers to help with Firebrand pastry pickups on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. If you're able to help out, please reach out to Joni at jpmahler@comcast.net or call [\(510\) 205-9594](tel:5102059594). We'd love to hear from you.

Volunteer Corner



Welcome to the Volunteer Corner! FAL is a 50-year-old nonprofit organization serving the community through fulfillment of its mission: to raise funds and advocate for the success of the Alameda Free Library. We rely heavily on volunteer support to carry out our mission.

We need your help! If you are interested in one of the volunteer roles below, please send your resume via email to volunteer@alamedafriends.com and we will set up a time with you to discuss our organization and the help needed.

Social Media Enthusiast

FAL is expanding marketing efforts for its popular Books & Bites Cafe, Live @ the Library and Friends @ Home programs. We are looking for a Social Media Manager to join the FAL Communications Committee to develop, schedule and manage our social media presence via Planable, a service that centralizes social media management across Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and Facebook.

Friends @ Home Event Coordinator

Friends @ Home is a recurring online art docent program that runs ten to twelve times per year. Art docents from local museums like SFMOMA, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and distant museums like Phoenix Art Museum deliver high quality art exhibit education to the public for free. In 2026, Friends @ Home will add in-person author talks - the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. We need an Event Coordinator to manage this program by tracking all the moving parts and ensuring key participant data is captured for each event.

Live @ the Library Committee Member

Live @ the Library is a concert series that began in 2009 and has been on hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A small, dedicated team of volunteers has revived the program, scheduling two jazz concerts and a fundraising event in 2026. We are looking for volunteers to join the committee, assist with the 2026 concert series and help plan a more robust and diverse live music program for 2027. If you are interested in partnering with Alameda Free Library to bring live music events and concerts to Alameda, we'd love your help on this committee!

Upcoming FAL Events



A TALE OF TWO BAROQUES

Touched by Grace, Consumed
by Fire

JOIN US! February 11th at
7pm

[Art Docent Talk | A Tale of Two Baroques](#)

Virtual Event (Zoom)

Wednesday, February 11 @ 7 PM

“Baroque” is what the Portuguese called imperfect pearls—irregular, yet impossibly beautiful. Some gleam with quiet grace, while others flash with divine fire. *A Tale of Two Baroques* explores two distinct styles of Baroque art that reflect the same contrast: the fiery theatricality of Roman Baroque and the refined elegance of its Florentine counterpart. Whether you’re drawn to divine drama or graceful beauty, this presentation will reveal why Baroque art of either kind still stirs us.

Registration is free. [Please register in advance here.](#)

saltbreaker
EAT+DRINK

Thursday, February 26th

**DINE
&
DONATE**

we will donate 10% of all proceeds from
saltbreaker, the yard at saltbreaker
& the yard-to-go



make a reservation at resy.com
have questions? email us directly at
events@saltbreakeralameda.com

[Partner Fundraiser | Percentage Night at Saltbreaker Restaurant](#)

Saltbreaker Alameda

Thursday, February 26 @ 5 - 9 PM

Enjoy a delicious meal while supporting the Alameda Free Library!

On Thursday, February 26, 10% of all proceeds from Saltbreaker, The Yard at Saltbreaker and The Yard-To-Go will be donated in support of the Alameda Free Library.

[Make a reservation here.](#)

Volunteer Appreciation Night

March 14, 2026 | 4 - 7 PM

Harbor Bay Isle Community Center
3195 Mecartney Rd
Alameda, CA 94502

[Volunteer Appreciation Night](#)

Harbor Bay Isle Community Room

Saturday, March 14 @ 4 - 7 PM

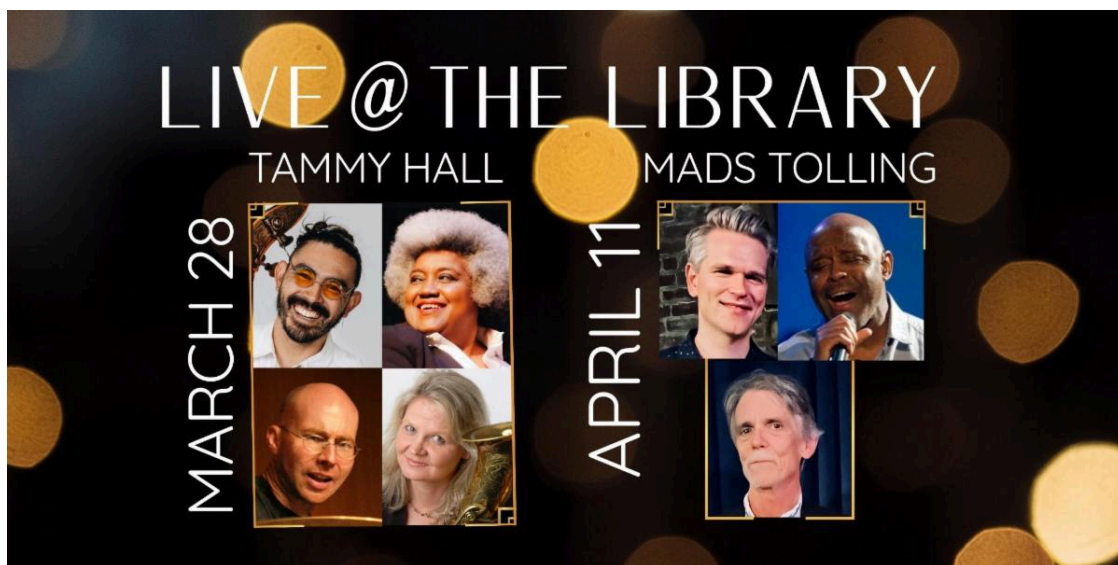
Join us for a special evening dedicated to celebrating the incredible volunteers who make the Friends of the Alameda Free Library possible. This volunteer appreciation night is our way of saying thank you to the dedicated individuals who generously give their time, energy and passion to supporting our community's most vital resource.

Whether you've been volunteering for years or recently joined our team, this is a wonderful opportunity to:

- Meet other volunteers and build community connections
- Learn about upcoming FAL initiatives and volunteer opportunities
- Celebrate the positive impact we've made together

Your contributions truly make a difference in our community. We look forward to honoring you and your fellow volunteers at this special celebration.

More details to come!



[Live @ the Library | Spring 2026 Jazz Concert Series](#)

Stafford Room @ Alameda Free Library

March 28 & April 11 @ 7 - 10 PM

Join Friends of the Alameda Free Library for our two concert series Live @ the Library in March and April!

Discover world-class music in an intimate community setting. Friends of the Alameda Free Library presents Live @ the Library, featuring acclaimed jazz artists performing right in your neighborhood.

[Tammy L. Hall:](#) Saturday, March 28 at 7 PM

[Mads Tolling:](#) Saturday, April 11 at 7 PM

Tickets are \$45 (plus fees) for each concert. Save \$10 by purchasing the two Concert Series bundle for only \$80 (plus fees) at checkout!



[Author Talk | Alka Joshi](#)

Stafford Room @ Alameda Free Library

Saturday, May 30, 2026

Back by popular demand, we're thrilled to announce our first author talk of the year with renowned novelist Alka Joshi! *Stay tuned for more event details in the coming months.*

Born in India and raised in the U.S. since the age of nine, Alka Joshi has a BA from Stanford University and an MFA from California College of Arts. Joshi's debut novel, *The Henna Artist*, immediately became a NYT bestseller, a Reese Witherspoon Book Club pick, was Longlisted for the Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, and has been translated into 30 languages.

The Secret Keeper of Jaipur (2021) and *The Perfumist of Paris* (2023) completed the Jaipur Trilogy. Her fourth novel, *Six Days in Bombay*, was published in hardcover in 2025 and will be released in paperback on April 28, 2026. She is currently working on her fifth novel.

Introducing New Board Members

Nafisah Ali



Nafisah Ali serves as the Recruitment and Classification Manager for the East Bay Regional Park District and brings more than 12 years of public-sector experience in human resources, labor relations and benefits administration. Prior to her current role, she worked with the City of Alameda and the Housing Authority of the City of Alameda, supporting a wide range of workforce and organizational programming.

A Bay Area native, Nafisah has been an Alameda resident for the past 15 years, where she lives with her husband and three daughters. She enjoys playing tennis and exploring history in her free time.

Nafisah is honored to serve on the FAL Board as a way to continue giving back to the community she has long served as a public servant and to support the Friends' mission.

Jennifer Tell

Jennifer is a municipal budget officer who is drawn to local government service because of the tangible benefits it provides to the community, including the Alameda Free Library. An Alamedan since 2018, she has



worked throughout the Bay Area for the San Francisco Budget & Legislative Analyst's Office, the City of Alameda and now the City of San José.

Jennifer previously served on the Board of Directors for the Municipal Management Association of Northern California and the Revenue Bond Oversight Committee for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. Jennifer enjoys biking to the library with her daughter and is honored to contribute to FAL's work helping the library continue to thrive.

Billy Reinschmiedt



Billy, a native of Oklahoma, moved to the Bay Area in 1985 and became a resident of Alameda in 1993. He retired in 2020 after a 40+ year career as a video and film producer-director focused primarily in the field of education and health.

Billy previously served as a board member of the Alameda Free Library Foundation until the merger of the Friends and the Foundation in 2016. After the merger he served as a board member of the newly formed Friends and remained in that position until 2023.

As a longtime volunteer with the Friends, Billy enjoys being able to support the outstanding work of the Friends and giving back to the wonderful community of Alameda. As an avid reader and lover of books, he enjoys working in the endeavor of providing the world of opportunity and education to all through the world of books. Welcome back to the Board, Billy!

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.*

Kids and Families



[Lunar New Year - Petit Picassos Art Class \(Family Edition!\)](#)

Feb 7, 12 - 2 PM

Bay Farm Island Branch

Prepare to ring in the Lunar New Year with a special Petit Picassos Art Class! We will celebrate the upcoming Lunar New Year with festive stories, a special “Year of the Horse” art project, and a wishing wall to write down our hopes and wishes for the new year!



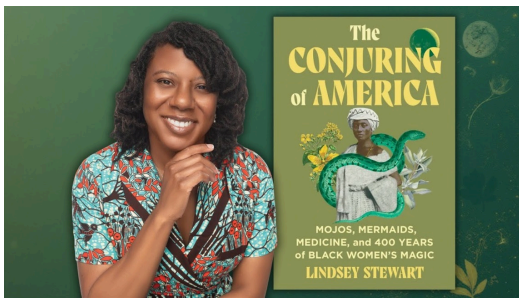
[Family Movie Matinee](#)

Feb 8, 2 - 4 PM

Main Library

Join us for our Family Movie Matinee, a sensory-friendly movie experience designed with families in mind! During the film, we aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment by keeping half the room lights on, lowering the volume, turning on captions, and offering fidget toys for use during the movie. Open seating with cushions will be available so kids have room to move, wiggle, and enjoy the show.

Adults



[Online Author Talk with Dr. Lindsey Stewart](#)

Feb 12, 11 AM

Online

Join us online for a powerful conversation with feminist philosopher Dr. Lindsey Stewart as she explores *The Conjuring of America*, a groundbreaking history of Black women's magic, resistance, and cultural influence across four centuries. From folk medicine and textiles to music and myth, this talk uncovers the hidden ways conjure shaped American life—and how Black women used it to sow freedom, hope and survival.



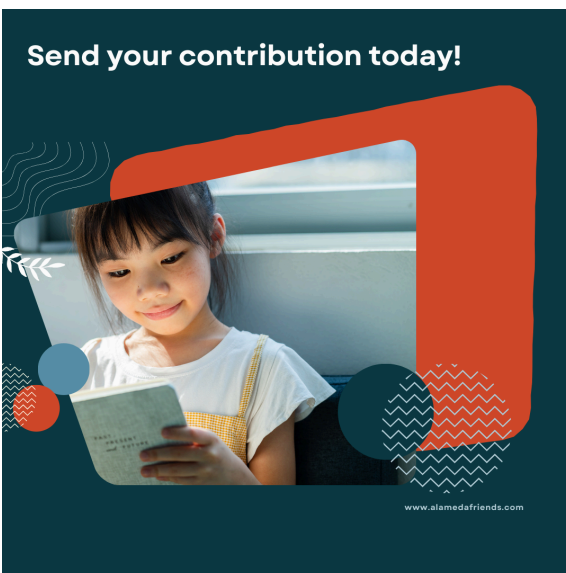
[The Reset: Career Workshops for 2026](#)

Feb 28, 11 AM - 1 PM

Main Library

Join us in the Large Group Study Room at the Main Library for personalized career advice - from resumes to interviews, networking to job boards, we've got what you need to get hired. Please bring any materials you'd like reviewed as well as an Internet-enabled device if you have one.

Join our Fall Campaign and Support the Alameda Free Library's Programs



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!](#)

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

Friends of the Alameda Free Library | P.O. Box 1024 | Alameda, CA 94501 US

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