



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,

March started with special visits to Maya Lin Elementary and the Main Library from children's author and illustrator Peter H. Reynolds. Reynolds presented his new book, *Be You!* and met fans of all ages for one-on-one time. Books For Friends partnered with the children's librarians and Books, Inc. to stock four Peter H. Reynolds titles.



*Josh Dapkus, Jane Chisaki, Mike Eitner,
Marcie Soslau Johnson*

We'd like to extend a special thank you to Fernanda Nuñez Gutierrez and Eva Volin for organizing the program and the FAL volunteers who partnered with the Library: Csenge Molnar, Katy Kelly, Leslie Milosevich, Margaret Ostrander and Kris Venturini.

FAL hosted its third annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on March 14. Volunteers and FAL Board Members gathered to celebrate the people who are the foundation of the organization. It was a beautiful, sunny day filled with great food from local caterer Asena. FAL Board Vice President Kyle McBard and I offered special tributes to Karen Butter and Carole Robie for their many years of leadership and dedication to the Library. Councilmember Tracy Jensen delivered a heartfelt speech celebrating our volunteers and paid tribute to outgoing Library Director Mike Eitner. A special thank you to the volunteers who organized this event: Luzanne Engh, Kumar Fansé, Karen Manuel, Kyle McBard and Karen Roemer.



Tammy Hall (left) and her accompanying musicians perform at Live @ the Library

We closed out March with the first jazz concert in our 2026 Live @ the Library series. The concert featured Tammy L. Hall, a Grammy-recognized pianist, composer and musical director. We were thrilled to welcome her back to the Library to share her extraordinary talents with our community. The concert series is made possible by our sponsors and the outstanding Live @ the Library Committee: Karen Butter, Billy Reinschmiedt, Renesha Robinson and Eileen Savel.

I hope to see you at the next concert on April 11 with Mads Tolling. In March, the Library also hosted visits from the Mayor, Alameda Fire Department and East Bay Regional Park District representing Crab Cove.

Looking ahead, the popular [Día de los Niños celebration](#) hosted by the Alameda Free Library is coming up on April 18 from 12:30 to 4:30 pm. Families will be treated to a magic show, singing, dancing, free churros and more. FAL will have a table at the event, so come and say hello!

FAL's annual [Spring Fundraising Appeal](#) will be in your mailboxes before the end of this month. Please consider a donation to ensure the continued success of the Alameda Free Library. Your support is fundamental to ensuring Library access to all. There will be a [screening of *The Librarians*](#) on April 9, 2:30pm at the Main Library (Stafford Room). This film portrays how library staff are on the forefront of the battle for access to information. Supporting FAL means supporting library staff.



Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft visits the Bay Farm Island Branch

Finally, FAL would like to thank Mike Eitner for his service as the Library Director. Highlights of his tenure include increasing visitor traffic by 22%, successfully advocating for three new full-time positions, including a clinical social worker, and facilitating the development of a five-year strategic plan. Mike returned to Solano County Library as its Director of Library Services. Marlon Romero was appointed Acting Library Director at the Alameda Free Library. We look forward to working with Marlon and the Library staff to foster a vibrant, relevant library for our community.

Cheers,

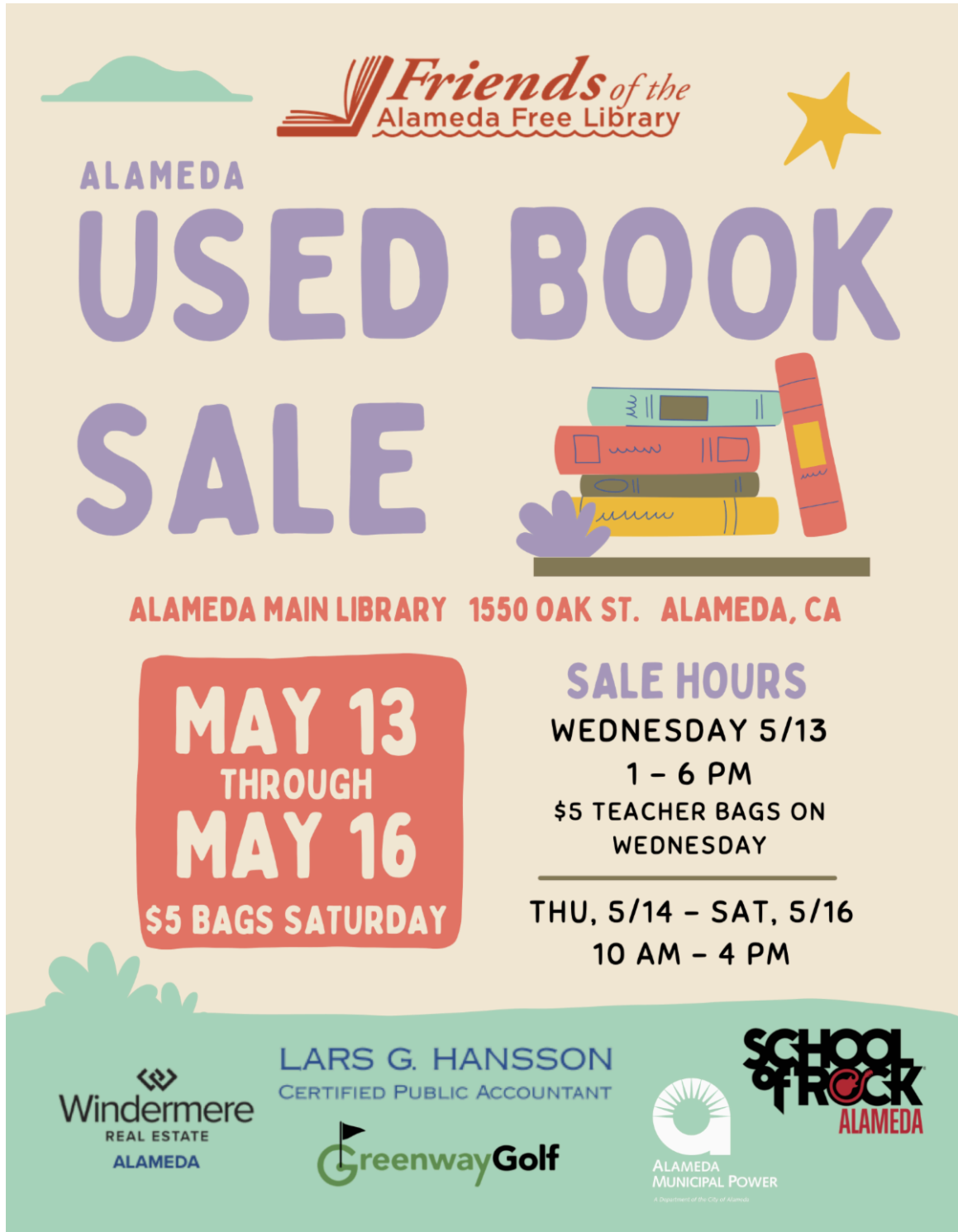


Josh Dapkus




President, Friends of the Alameda Free Library

Alameda Used Book Sale


May 13 - 16, 2026



The poster features a light beige background with a green hill at the top and bottom. At the top left is a green mountain silhouette. In the center is the logo for 'Friends of the Alameda Free Library' with a red book icon. To the right is a yellow star. The main title 'ALAMEDA USED BOOK SALE' is in large purple letters. Below it is an illustration of a stack of books in various colors (green, red, yellow, blue) with a purple flower at the base. The location 'ALAMEDA MAIN LIBRARY 1550 OAK ST. ALAMEDA, CA' is written in red. A red box contains the dates 'MAY 13 THROUGH MAY 16' and '\$5 BAGS SATURDAY'. To the right, 'SALE HOURS' are listed: 'WEDNESDAY 5/13 1 - 6 PM \$5 TEACHER BAGS ON WEDNESDAY' and 'THU, 5/14 - SAT, 5/16 10 AM - 4 PM'. At the bottom are logos for 'Windermere REAL ESTATE ALAMEDA', 'LARS G. HANSSON CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT', 'GreenwayGolf', 'ALAMEDA MUNICIPAL POWER A Department of the City of Alameda', and 'SCHOOL OF ROCK ALAMEDA'.

ALAMEDA
USED BOOK
SALE




ALAMEDA MAIN LIBRARY 1550 OAK ST. ALAMEDA, CA


MAY 13
THROUGH
MAY 16
\$5 BAGS SATURDAY


SALE HOURS
WEDNESDAY 5/13
1 - 6 PM
\$5 TEACHER BAGS ON
WEDNESDAY

THU, 5/14 - SAT, 5/16
10 AM - 4 PM

 **Windermere**
REAL ESTATE
ALAMEDA

LARS G. HANSSON
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

 **GreenwayGolf**

 **ALAMEDA MUNICIPAL POWER**
A Department of the City of Alameda

SCHOOL OF ROCK
ALAMEDA

The [Alameda Used Book Sale](#) is open from **May 13 to 16** 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, May 13, from 1 to 6 pm, we'll have a **special discount for teachers: fill a bag for just \$5!**

Sale Hours & Details

- **May 13 (Wed):** 1 - 6 PM – open to all. Educators, fill a bag for \$5!
- **May 14 - 16 (Thu - Sat):** 10 AM - 4 PM
- **Location:** Stafford Room, Alameda Main Library (near the Books & Bites Cafe)

Library programs are 100% funded by FAL. In 2025, over 1,200 programs with over 44,000 participants were hosted by the Library and offered to individuals and families, free of charge. When you support the Book Sales, you support the library!



Volunteers Needed!

The May sale will feature a special vintage and collectible section with items donated to the Friends by Tavistock Books. The volunteer signup page on Volunteer Local is now open! Please follow [this link](#) to sign up for volunteer shifts.

- There will be an **in-person volunteer orientation session** held at the Main Library on Tuesday, April 28 from 5 - 6 pm for new and returning sales volunteers. Please sign up for the orientation session [here](#).
- Cashier shifts are password protected. Please email volunteer@alamedafriends.com to receive information on how you may sign up.

FAL is in need of children's picture books and board books. Please help by donating your picture and board books. We are committed to circulating your family's treasured books to community members who will enjoy them. At Books For Friends, children's book prices are kept intentionally low to create greater access.

To donate books, please complete a [book donation request form](#) and the Book Donation Coordinator will schedule you for an upcoming Sunday drop-off time. Books For Friends and the Alameda Used Book Sale would not be possible without the ongoing, generous donations we receive from the community.

Thank you for considering a book donation to the Friends of the Alameda Free Library.

What's Happening at the Books & Bites Cafe?

Books & Bites Cafe Hours

Mon - Sat: 10 AM - 4 PM

Sun: Closed

Main Library

Friends Cafe is now **Books & Bites Cafe**. We're gradually introducing our new name and updating the signage.



We're delighted to welcome you in as spring has arrived and there are new delectables blossoming at the cafe. In April, we're featuring a new ginger molasses cookie from Firebrand Artisan Breads — a cozy treat we think you'll love.

One thing hasn't changed: Books & Bites Cafe is still one of the best values in town according to our customers. You can get a delicious coffee and muffin for under five dollars!

We hope to see you soon.

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.



Kumar Fansse, Karen Roemer, Luzanne Engh, Karen Manuel, Kyle McBard

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.

2026 Volunteer Appreciation Event

What do you call volunteers who volunteer to celebrate volunteers? Super volunteers! FAL celebrated their volunteer workforce on Saturday, March 14 at the Harbor Bay Isle Harbor Community Center. Attendees were treated to delicious food catered by Asena, live music and an open bar. Outgoing board members Karen Butter and Carole Robie were formally recognized for their long and continued service to FAL. Councilmember Tracy Jensen formally thanked outgoing Library Director Mike Eitner for his service and advocacy as he returned to Solano County in March as its Director of Library Services.

Thank you to the 2026 Volunteer Appreciation Event planning team and to the FAL Board of Directors for their support of this important event. Thank you to all our volunteers who convey their love of the library into volunteer service for our community. We look forward to celebrating with you again in 2027!



Live @ the Library Committee Lead for 2027

Live @ the Library is a concert series that began in 2009 and had 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 this year. We are looking for volunteers to join the committee, assist with the 2026 concerts and lead the program in 2027. The concert series will run from January to May 2027 and planning has commenced. If you are interested in partnering with FAL to bring live music events and concerts to Alameda, we'd love your help to lead this committee!

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 volunteer 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. FAL's communications team meets every second Monday of the month from 6:30 to 7:15 pm.

Upcoming FAL Events



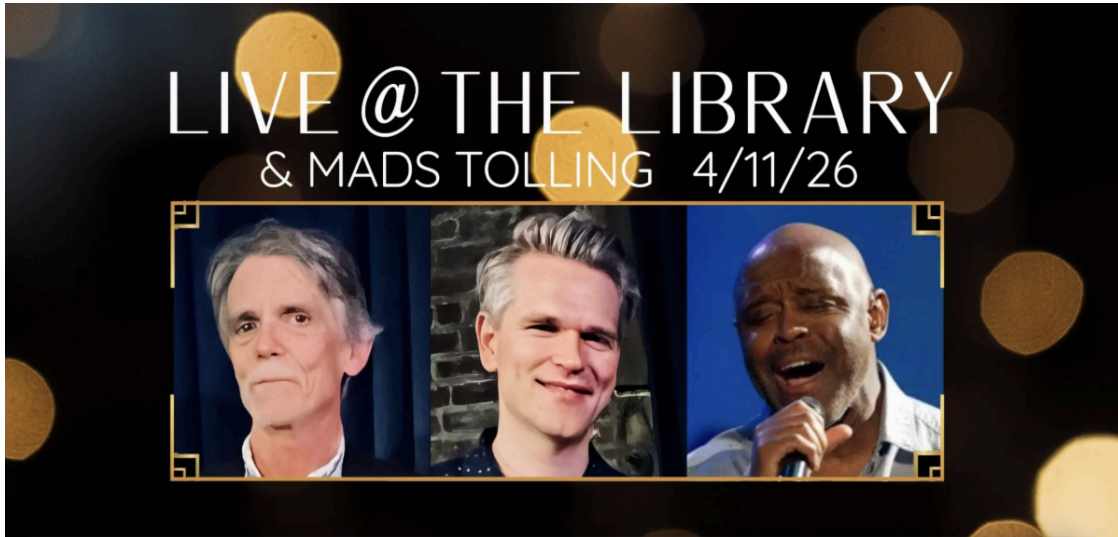
Author Talk | Deepa Fernandes Speaks with Alka Joshi

Main Library

Saturday, May 30 @ 1 PM

Join us at the Alameda Free Library, 1550 Oak Street on Saturday, May 30 for Friends @ Home's return to in-person programming. New York Times best-selling author Alka Joshi presents her internationally acclaimed Jaipur Trilogy — The Henna Artist, The Secret Keeper of Jaipur and The Perfumist of Paris — alongside her captivating new novel, Six Days in Bombay.

Award-winning journalist, cohost of NPR's Here and Now, author and Alamedan Deepa Fernandes will host the conversation. Advanced registration is required. Doors open at 1:00 pm and the program begins at 1:30 pm. Limited copies of Alka Joshi's books will be available for sale at Books For Friends the day of the event. Alka will be available post-program for book signing.



[Live @ the Library | April 2026 Concert: Mads Tolling](#)

Main Library

Saturday, April 11 @ 7 PM

Friends of the Alameda Free Library is hosting the second and final concert in our Live @ the Library series this Saturday!

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

Mads Tolling is a two-time Grammy Award-winning violinist whose artistry has taken him around the world. As a former member of Turtle Island Quartet and Stanley Clarke's band, Mads has shared the stage with jazz legends like Chick Corea, Kenny Barron, and Paquito D'Rivera. He's now performing with Bob Weir & Wolf Bros and continues to push the boundaries of what the violin can do.

NOTE: Tickets are sold out.



[Art Docent Talk | Monet & Venice](#)

Online

Wednesday, April 15 @ 7 PM

Although Claude Monet visited Venice only once, his paintings of the city are among his most dazzling. This exhibition, co-organized with the Brooklyn Museum, is the first dedicated to Monet's Venetian cityscapes since their debut over a century ago. Featuring more than 100 artworks, the exhibition places Monet's Venice paintings alongside select works from across his career, including his Water Lilies, as well as Venetian views by artists such as Renoir, Sargent, and Canaletto. Unlike the bustling scenes painted by other artists, Monet's Venice is eerily deserted, its architecture, buildings, and canals dissolving in an encompassing, hazy light he described as the envelope. This exhibition offers a rare opportunity to experience Monet's vision of the famed Italian city.

[Register here.](#)

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

Kids and families



Día de los Niños 2026

April 18 | 12:30 - 4:30 PM

Main Library

Join the Alameda Free Library (1550 Oak St.) on **Saturday, April 18 from 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm** for our annual Día de los Niños Celebration!

We'll watch an amazing magic show presented by Magician Mike Della Penna at 12:30 pm, then we'll sing and dance with a bilingual performance by Cascada de Flores at 2:00 pm, and we'll enjoy free fresh churros from 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm in the library's parking lot while supplies last.



Scrapbook Self-Portraits

April 29 | 4 - 5 PM

Main Library

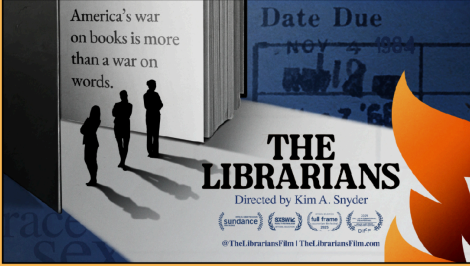
Join the Main Library on **Wednesday, April 29th at 4pm** to create a self-portrait inspired by Arab American artist Helen Zughaib.

Registration is required! Please contact the Children's Department at the Main Library via phone or email to register: (510) 747-7705 | childref@alamedaca.gov

Adults

Thursday, April 9th
1st Floor Stafford Room
Main Library
1550 Oak St Alameda
2:30-4PM

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK
Screening: "The Librarians"



Please join us in celebrating National Library Week (April 6-12, 2026) with a special screening of "The Librarians," the 2025 documentary profiling real working librarians as they face "harassment, threats, and laws aimed at criminalizing their work" with a "rallying cry for freedom to read." There is no registration required for this program.

The City of Alameda will not discriminate against individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities. If you need accessibility accommodations to participate, or information in other formats, please contact ada@alamedaca.gov.

For more information about the program, visit www.alamedafree.org or call the Main Library Reference Desk at (510) 747-7713.

Funding for this program provided by the Friends of the Alameda Free Library.



[The Librarians Film Screening](#)

April 9 | 2:30 PM

Main Library


Alameda Free Library (AFL), in collaboration with FAL, presents a free screening of the acclaimed documentary *The Librarians* on Thursday, April 9 at 2:30 pm in the Main Library, Stafford Room. As lawmakers work to censure books, librarians place themselves on the frontlines, protecting public access to race and LGBTQ+ related content. Due to the importance of the subject matter, AFL has scheduled a second screening on Saturday, August 15 at 2:00 pm. Please mark your calendars and let's view together in community.

Main Library | 1550 Oak St | Family Study Room

• A Novel Idea •

All the Books You Meant to Read!

Free event - join anytime!
(510) 747-7777 refdesk@alamedaca.gov
www.alamedafree.org



[A Novel Idea](#)

April 26 | 3 PM

Main Library

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

This book club meets on **the fourth Sunday of the month from 3 to 4:30 pm in the Large Group Study Room on the first floor of the Main Library**. A few complimentary copies of each book are available at the Main Library Reference Desk the day after each meeting.

Introducing Amy, FAL Administrative Assistant

Amy Dabrowski joined FAL in March as our Administrative Assistant. Amy and her family have lived in Alameda for 13 years and have been Library patrons since day one. Amy is a graduate of the Master in Library Information and Sciences program at San Jose State University and brings



extensive experience in non-profit operations to FAL. Before joining FAL, she worked as a project manager on K-5 curriculum production and federally-funded research grants, focused on process improvement and systems building.

Outside of work, you can find Amy at Crown Beach or hiking in East Bay Regional Parks. Amy has two children, keeps a busy home life on track and supports her aging parents and in-laws. Amy volunteers with the local Girl Scouts of Northern California service unit and is Vice President of Fundraising for the Franklin Elementary PTA.

We happily welcome Amy to the FAL team!

Generations Stay Connected through the Alameda Free Library

20 years ago, as part of the fundraising effort to support the new construction and outfitting of the Main Library, over 500 library shelf, stack and wall dedications were purchased. Recently, Alameda resident Barbara Caufield reached out to FAL to share her family's story:

When my daughters Nicole and Maggie were young, their paternal grandmother lived in Oregon. When we visited, G-Ma, also known as Leslee Cramer, she would have a stack of books from her local library to read to the girls. Later, when Leslee moved to the Bay Area, she would come over with a basket of books. Nicole and Maggie's maternal grandmother, Nonie, lived closer to us and she would take the girls to the Alameda Free Library for storytime and to participate in the children's programs. My parents passed away when the girls were in elementary school. G-Ma made a donation to the Alameda Free Library in memory of my parents (her in-laws) and nameplates were installed on shelves in the children's section of the Library. The girls loved visiting and would search the stacks to find Nonie and Haha's names intermingled with their favorite books. G-Ma recently passed away and it seemed only appropriate to honor her memory and love of books by making a donation to Friends of the Alameda Free Library. I am glad to be able to honor her in this way by making a contribution to an institution that she valued.

The Library and the Friends no longer maintain a shelf plaque program, but there is still room on our donor wall. Please contact us at info@alamedafriends.com for more information on how to give a dedicated gift.

Join our Spring Campaign and Support the Alameda Free Library Programming



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

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