



# CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Friends of the Castro Valley Library  
February 2020



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Kay Wetherwax

As I write this in mid-January, I find myself reflecting back on 2019, a year in which we succeeded in reaching our goal of adding new members to the Friends of the Castro Valley Library. Now I want to remind you that if you have not yet renewed your membership for 2020, please do so! We need your continued support to help us fund so many great library programs. You can stop by the BookStore any time to renew your membership, or you can renew at one of our occasional "Pop-Up" membership sales.

I also encourage you, as always, to shop at our BookStore. We have a wonderful selection of best sellers, all categories of non-fiction, and a large and varied assortment of children's books. On our outer shelf facing the windows, you will find many gift-quality books. Remember us when you're looking for a gift to take to a dinner party or a surprise for a favorite child in your life.

At our annual meeting in November, we elected Debbie Masin as Director-at-Large to our Board. Debbie is profiled in this newsletter, so you can read about her here! We are delighted to welcome Debbie!

I hope many of you will join me in participating in this year's Castro Valley Reads. This year's book, *Bluebird*, *Bluebird* by Attica Locke, is a wonderful mystery set in northeastern Texas. Our librarians have planned some excellent programs that will be offered for the next couple of months, that will add to our appreciation of this great book.

Our spring book sale will be held April 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>. As always, Friday night will be for members of the Friends, and Sunday will be the ever-popular "Bag Sale." Stop by and check out our huge selection of books of all kinds. I'll see you there!

## COMING EVENTS AT THE LIBRARY!

There are many regular Library activities, and the event schedule is updated frequently. Please call 667-7900 or visit [www.aclibrary.org](http://www.aclibrary.org) for up to date event information.

### Reading Groups:

First Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m. *Mystery Book Club*  
Second Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m. *eBestseller Book Club* (registration req.)  
Third Tuesdays, 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. *Real Reads* Nonfiction Book Club  
Tuesdays, 6:00-8:00 p.m. *Write to Read* Literacy Reading Club for adults with English as their second language.

### Other Ongoing Activities:

**Homework Help** Mon. thru Thurs. 3:30-5:00 p.m. (when school is in session only)  
**Advanced Math & Science Tutoring** Mondays 6:00-7:30 p.m.  
**Lawyer in the Library** 2nd Mondays 6-8 p.m. Appt. req'd.  
**State Sen. Bob Wiechowski** Representative 3rd Wed. 3—5 p.m.  
**MAC meeting** 2nd, 3rd and 4th Mondays, 6 p.m.  
**Job Lab** Monday 12:30-3:00, Wednesday 10:30-3:00.  
**Drop-in gadget help** 1st and 3rd Mondays 5:30-7:30 p.m.—(phones, computers, etc.) for adults.  
**CV Library Genealogy Study Group.** 1st and 3rd Thursdays from 10:30 to 12:30. Registration required.  
**Creative Writing Group,** 2nd Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. (preregistration required for this group).

### Partial List of Events Coming Up in February

2/1 10-11 a.m. Free Medicare Counseling  
2/2 1-2 p.m. Knit & Crochet Club (registration required)  
2/2 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday Cinema "The Last Black Man in SF"  
2/3 6:30-7 and 7-7:30 p.m. Paws to Read (reg. required)  
2/7 6:30-8:30 p.m. CVSan film "The True Cost"  
2/8 10:30-11:45 Yoga for Beginners  
2/8 1-4 p.m. Fixit Clinic  
2/9 2-3:30 Douglas Morrison Theater Sneak Peek—Black Comedy  
2/22 1-4 p.m. Expanding Your Perspective Through Tarot  
2/29 1-4 p.m. Meditation—a Common Sense Approach

New events are added frequently! Please visit the library website or check the readerboard in the library lobby for complete information on all events and activities!

### The Library will be closed on the following days:

Wednesday February 12 for Lincoln's Birthday  
Monday February 17 for President's Day

Watch for more announcements in the *Forum*, on the Library's website and readerboard, and on the CV Library Facebook Page.

Also, remember to visit the quarterly art displays near the BookStore and the special features in the lobby display cases.

## MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER

By Dawn Balestreri, Branch Manager

### Masks

She had blue skin,  
And so did he.  
He kept it hid  
And so did she  
They searched for blue  
Their whole life through,  
Then passed right by—  
And never knew.

-Shel Silverstein

**Happy February to all of you!** The library is off to a great year. Our book choice has been announced for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Castro Valley Reads event, *Bluebird, Bluebird* by Attica Locke. This is our first work of fiction and a mystery as well. We are so pleased to be able to provide the community with another opportunity to come together, read and discuss the same book. Please consider joining other community members for a book discussion group at the library or in your homes. Tell your neighbors. We'll provide the books!

**One of my favorite programs** around the event is a film screening of *The Best of Enemies*. Based on a true story, the film centers on the unlikely relationship between Ann Atwater, an outspoken civil right activist, and C.P. Ellis, a local KKK leader. Another great one will be our "Introduction to Unconscious Bias" program. We all carry bias with us, whether we recognize it or not. Join us for this educational workshop to actively investigate racist concepts and more. Altogether we will be hosting more than 20 library programs around our book theme this year.

**This is also** our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *Kids Read* event. Besides a tween book club, we'll have several other programs around the mystery book theme for kids. Check out the librarian's column in this newsletter for more information about Castro Valley Reads.

**We are also in our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual year** of participating in the Castro Valley Community Alliance. The April presentation will be a community engagement event about poverty and homelessness in Castro Valley. Please join us on April 26 (time TBD) to learn more about the issues affecting our community and how to participate in alleviating some of these problems.

**Of course, the Friends** have played a primary role in providing funding for most of the events this year. As usual, this library wouldn't be the vibrant community gathering place without the funding of our Friends. Thank you for continuing to support their efforts.

**I hope you and your neighbors** all have a wonderful 2020. I hope to see you at the library!

## CASTRO VALLEY READS 2020

By Chris Selig, Librarian II

**Castro Valley Reads is back!** Castro Valley Reads seeks to get hundreds of community members to read and discuss the same book. With this program, we celebrate reading and great literature, and we build community through a thoughtful exchange of ideas. Once again the program is generously funded by the Friends of the Library!

**"We're excited to be launching** our third annual Castro Valley Reads," said Dawn Balestreri, branch manager. "We hope you'll join us to grow the program. What can we learn from each other? What can we learn together? Let's find out!"

**This year we are switching gears** and doing a work of fiction. Our selection is *Bluebird, Bluebird*, a blues-infused thriller about the collision of race and justice in America, by Attica Locke.



**The novel's lead character is Darren Mathews**, a black Texas Ranger. He knows all too well that when it comes to law and order, East Texas

plays by its own rules. Deeply ambivalent about growing up black in the Lone Star State, he was the first in his family to get as far away from Texas as he could. Until duty called him home. But when his allegiance to his roots puts his job in jeopardy, he travels up Highway 59 to the small town of Lark, where two murders—a black lawyer from Chicago and a local white woman—have stirred up a hornet's nest of resentment. Darren must solve the crimes – and save himself in the process – before Lark's long-simmering racial fault lines erupt.

**In addition to being the author** of five novels, including *Heaven My Home*, the sequel to *Bluebird, Bluebird*, Attica Locke works as a screenwriter. Most recently, she was a writer and producer on Netflix's *When They See Us* and the also the upcoming Hulu adaptation of *Little Fires Everywhere*. A native of Houston, Texas, Locke lives in Los Angeles, California, with her husband and daughter.

**The Library is offering** a wide range of programs for Castro Valley Reads. There will be music, movies, discussions, and more! Visit the Library today to learn more and sign up. You can get a free copy of the book while supplies last. Attendees of discussion groups will get an invitation to the Grand Finale on Friday, April 24 at 6:30 pm.

**We're also excited** to continue the expansion of the program with the selection of a book on the same theme for kids in grades 4 to 7. *The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson, like our book for adults, is a mystery set in the South that addresses an injustice. Visit the children's desk at the Library for more information.

**Please join Castro Valley Reads: One Valley, One Book, Many Conversations!**

## DONATION GUIDELINES

The success of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library depends on your generous donations of books, CD's, and DVD's. We are happy to receive your donations any time the BookStore is open. If you have more than a few bags or cartons, please contact us ahead of time, as we may want to make arrangements for your donation to be dropped off at our storage facility rather than at the Library. **Please do not leave donations outside the Library** as they are subject to weather or vandalism damage and detract from the appearance of our beautiful Library.

**PLEASE NOTE that we cannot accept donations for a two week period prior to a book sale due to space constraints.**

At this time, we are accepting donations of most types of books, DVDs, and music CDs in good, saleable condition, as well as magazines that are no more than 3 months old. We **do not accept** sets of books such as encyclopedias, Time-Life sets, condensed books, textbooks older than 3 years, or books that are dirty, moldy, smoky, or otherwise damaged. We also **cannot accept** VHS tapes (except Disney), vinyl records, or cassette tapes (music or audiobooks).

Funds received from the sale of these items pay for many library programs and amenities that would not otherwise be available.

If you have questions about donating or how the donations are used, please let us know! Donation guidelines are available at the BookStore or on our website.

## Have You Renewed?

Reminder notices were mailed out in January for those who had not already renewed their memberships for 2020. If you responded, THANK YOU! If you have not yet sent in your renewal, here are the benefits.



**\$7 in discounts** for the Friends' BookStore. (\$14 in discounts for Family memberships.)

**\$2 discount** for each of our 3 book sales. (\$4 discount for Family memberships.)

**Our quarterly newsletter** *Circle of Friends* (e-mailed or snail mailed). The newsletter contains timely announcements, library news, book reviews, and more.

**Friday night admission** to our 3 book sales. Get first pick of the books and other media available for sale.

**Remember** that your dues support library programs that wouldn't otherwise be possible.

**I want to join the Friends of the Castro Valley Library as a  new  renewing member (IMPORTANT—so that we have accurate information, PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!)**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Make tax-deductible check payable to  
Friends of the Castro Valley Library  
3600 Norbridge Ave.  
Castro Valley CA 94546

**I  do  do not wish to receive the newsletter and other Friends' information by e-mail**

### MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

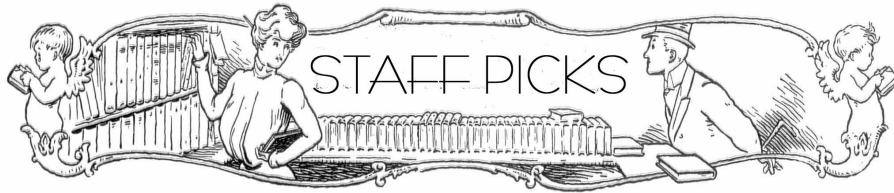
- \$10 Individual    \$20 Family    \$5 Youth    \$35 Corporate Sponsor  
 \$50 Benefactor    \$200 Lifetime—Individual    \$300 Lifetime—Family  
*Membership renewals are due January 1st.*

I would like to be an active Friend and help with:

- Book store    Sales events    Membership    Publications  
 Information Technology/Website    Public Relations/Advocacy

FOR OFFICE  
USE ONLY:

Card Issued  
By \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_



***The Bluest Eye*** by Toni Morrison (1970 fiction): This Nobel Prize-winning novel is a very difficult read. The story starts, “Quiet as it’s kept . . .,” a phrase which is explained later in the book, introduces the story of 11-year-old Pecola, presented seasonally, beginning with Autumn, and completed with an Afterword. I found the Afterword helpful literally beyond words. The author says *The Bluest Eye* has been dismissed, trivialized, and misread. She identifies three language choices – speakerly, aural, and colloquial. She declares, much to my relief, that full comprehension relies on codes embedded in black culture. I found *The Bluest Eye* difficult reading, but I believe the cultural challenge presented by the underlying thesis was matched by the overwhelming richness of language and authenticity of experience. (Martin Waldron)

***Dragonfly*** by Leila Meacham (2019 fiction): In 1942, five young OSS operatives, code name Dragonfly, are assigned details in occupied France in order to provide information on Nazi activities. Each spy’s talent is a critical part of their cover – an engineer, a clothing designer, a fencing instructor, a coach, and a fly fisherman. Their code pad is a mural on the wall of a convent in the Latin Quarter. As each operative pursues his or her Nazi objective, a harrowing cat and mouse game begins, placing each in danger of discovery, arrest, and potential execution. This is a richly detailed account of each side’s characters and activities with cliffhangers at the end of each chapter. Fans of both World War II and spy stories will be captivated by Meacham’s well-researched story. Recommended! (Ginger Russell)

***The Snowman*** (2010 fiction) and ***The Leopard*** (2011 fiction) by Jo Nesbo: *The Snowman* is the most infuriating thriller I have ever read. I am an experienced devotee of detective stories, and I am usually able to accompany the plot line to a satisfying conclusion. No here. I thought I had the solution in my sights on at least three occasions, but I hadn’t. Nesbo led me up garden paths, and then abandoned me, exposing me to unsuspected but convincing depths of character and plot development. The characters, located in various stages of relationship to Inspector Harry Hole, are compelling. The locations are cinematic in detail and design. The story line is ghoulish, Grand Guignol, either hypnotic or disgusting. Details are accurate and attest to a Hieronymus Bosch view of the human condition. I recommend *The Snowman* for a most challenging read, and as an introduction to an incomparable author. *The Leopard* is a follow-up masterpiece, which I set aside and retackled four times. The plot is the hunt for an apparent serial killer of members of a group who shared a mountain cabin. The hunters are at odds, Inspector Harry Hole of the Oslo police and Mikael Bellmann of Kripas, the national

police organization. There are informed references to the Snowman, Hole’s triumphant tour de force, and indeed to a Belgian torture instrument, Leopold’s Apple, all of which make a pre-reading of *The Snowman* a near necessity. In my case, memory loss added to my difficulty. *The Leopard* outwitted me several times, though a fellow reader reassured me that the clues were sufficient for the challenge. Nevertheless, I install *The Leopard* as my most infuriating Nesbo thriller. What distinguishes *The Leopard* is Nesbo’s insertion of exquisite emotional touches, such as Hole’s father’s illness, instances of extreme cruelty, such as the bathtub murder, and cosmic catastrophe as evidenced in an avalanche. The plot advances with the gradual elimination of members of the mountain cabin group, twin police efforts tripping over each other, and actual elimination of some suspects. Hole’s philosophical musings, punctuated by popular music titles and sips of Jim Beam, accompany the reader with clues of doubtful value to this reader. However, I survived to recommend a reading. (Martin Waldron)

***Where the Light Enters*** by Sara Donati (2019 fiction): This sequel to Ms. Donati’s 2016 novel *The Gilded Hour* continues the saga of 1870’s physicians Sophie and Anna Savard and their families as well as the investigation into the “multipara murders,” a series of extremely cruel deaths caused by an abortionist. The Savards are half sisters in a very complicated family. Sophie is additionally a woman of color and was consequently suspect in the first novel and again incurs prejudices in this book, in spite of being above reproach. Anna Savard is married to a New York City detective and so becomes doubly involved not only in the murders, but also in the investigation of orphanages. In the first novel, Anna and her husband become guardians of three Italian children whose parents have died, only to have them taken away when the Catholic Church objects. The story of these children continues in this novel. Both of Ms. Donati’s novels are rich in the history of New York City and of midwives and physicians in the post-Civil War era. They address many of the day’s social injustices, and while complicated, are readable and enjoyable. While *Where the Light Enters* stands on its own, it is helpful to read *The Gilded Hour* first. I am hoping for a third book in this series so I can find out what happens next. (Ginger Russell)

**BOOK REVIEWS WANTED!** Send your reviews of books, movies, and music to our email address or drop them off at the BookStore at any time. We will print as many as possible in each issue. Reviews should be approximately 100 words in length and include the publication date.

## AVAILABLE ON AMAZON.COM

The Friends currently have over 100 books and other media listed on *Amazon.com*. Here are a few of them:

*Louisville Slugger, a Complete Reference Guide*  
*The Newfoundland Puppy, early care*  
*Oakland Raiders, The Good Guys*  
*From Old Tom to the Tiger*  
*Sesame Street—Read Along With Elmo* 8 book set  
*The Marx Brothers, A Bio-Bibliography*  
*The Best of Bijou Funnies*  
*Clowns and Children of the World*  
*The Three Musketeers (Copyright Edition)*  
*College Football and All-American Review*  
*Beyond the Planets*



Our name on Amazon is *FriendsofBooks*, and you can access the store by clicking on our name when viewing one of our listings. When you reach the welcome page, click on “Products” to view all of the books.

Don't forget to mention us when purchasing through *Amazon Smile*. When you select Friends of the Castro Valley Library as your charity of choice, we will receive a 0.5% donation every time you make a purchase.

## CHECK OUT OUR BOOKSTORE MONTHLY THEMES!

By Marie Blackmon

Our special theme books are found on the center of the Honesty Shelves.

**February:** Check the forecast on Groundhog Day, sweets for the sweet on Valentine's Day, celebrate Mardi Gras, and learn something new for Black History Month and American Heart Month.



**March:** Everyone's Irish on St. Patrick's Day and during Irish Heritage Month. It's also Read Across America Month and National Women's History Month.

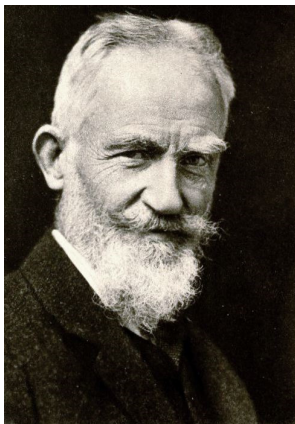


**April:** No foolin'. It's poetry month. Celebrate Earth Day, Passover, and Easter.

**May:** Dance on May Day, fiesta for Cinco De Mayo, honor someone on Mother's Day and Memorial Day.



**June:** Here come the brides, celebrate Dads and Grads, learn about the history of Juneteenth.



**Bernard Shaw's** name first became familiar to the general public as the result of scurrilous attacks, disguised as interviews, made upon him by a section of the London evening press. The interviewer would force his way into Shaw's modest apartment, apparently for no other purpose than to bully and insult him.

**Many people maintained** that Shaw must be an imaginary personage. Why did he stand it? Why didn't he kick the interviewer downstairs? Failing that, why didn't he call in the police? It seemed difficult to believe in the existence of a being so [forgiving] as this poor persecuted Shaw appeared to be. Everyone talked about him.

**As a matter of fact,** the interviews were written by Shaw himself.

- Jerome K. Jerome, *My Life and Times*  
(From the *Reader's Digest*, May 1939)

## Thank You CORNER

By Kay Wetherwax, President

**I normally use this column** to highlight individuals who have helped with special projects or who have contributed something specific to the Friends, but this month I want to thank each and every one of our many volunteers. We are an organization operated completely by volunteers.

**Without all of you**, those who work in the BookStore, those who work at our large book sales, those who come in regularly to haul boxes of books to and from our storage area, those who serve on our Board of Directors and others who attend and contribute to Board meetings, those who assume responsibility for specific categories of books and keeping the shelves of the book store stocked, those who manage our membership lists, and so many other tasks, we couldn't serve our community as we do.

**As I have said before**, it really does take a village. So an enormous **Thank You** to you all!!

### HOW TO CONTACT CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

**If you have** any comments or suggestions for regular columns or features that you would like to see in *Circle of Friends*, please let us know.

**We also welcome** brief news items or articles. Deadlines are typically about two weeks prior to the issue dates: the first of February, May, August, and November. Keep in mind that time-sensitive items must fit within the publication schedule.

**Please call** 510-733-3285 or e-mail us at [Friends.CVL@gmail.com](mailto:Friends.CVL@gmail.com) if you have any questions or want to submit an item.

## MEET YOUR FRIENDS Debbie Masin

**Our newest Board member**, Debbie Masin, joined the Friends of the Castro Valley Library in March of 2019. She began volunteering in the BookStore in July and was elected Board Member-at-Large in November.

**Debbie was born in Orange County** and grew up in San Jose. She moved to Castro Valley in 1980 to begin teaching at Redwood Christian School. For the past 39 years, she has worked with kindergarten, first and second grade students, which she finds both challenging and fulfilling.

**Her favorite pastimes** are reading (British mystery authors in particular) and travel. She enjoys visiting and photographing lighthouses and searching for treasures at local thrift stores. She is owned by a cat, Sheena the gray tabby.



**Debbie says** the best thing about retirement is she can be as busy or as idle as she wants and has time to do the things she most enjoys. Being part of the Friends has been a great way to transition, and she looks forward to the future.

**I have a passion** for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage.

- Roald Dahl

*I kept always two books in my pocket,  
one to read, one to write in.*

-Robert Louis Stevenson



Mark your calendars now—the Spring Book Sale is

**APRIL 17-19**

As always, the sale will be at the following times:

Friday night Member Preview—6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday—10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday Bag Sale—1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (\$4 per bag)

We will have our usual selection of fiction, nonfiction, and children's books, as well as audio books, CDs and DVDs, at bargain prices.

We anticipate having at least 350 cartons of books at the sale.

You will be glad you came!

Volunteers will be needed for all sale days as well as for the set-up and clean-up days.

Contact us at 510-733-3285 or [Friends.CVL@gmail.com](mailto:Friends.CVL@gmail.com)

if you can volunteer or if you have any questions about the work or requirements.

A signup sheet will be available in the Friends office approximately one month prior to the book sale date.

***Planning to attend?***

***Please remember to bring your current (2020) Friends of the Castro Valley Library membership card in order to take advantage of your \$2.00 discount.***

***You can join or renew at the door or purchase a membership ahead of time.***

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE 2020 BOOK SALES:**

**April 17—19**

**August 14—16**

**December 4—6**

**SPECIAL SALES AND EVENTS MAY OCCUR AT OTHER TIMES DURING THE YEAR. LIKE US ON FACEBOOK TO GET UPDATES!**

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, PAGE 8

**LIBRARY HOURS**

Monday & Tuesday 12 noon to 8 p.m.  
Wed. & Thursday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Friday Closed  
Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Please call 667-7900 or visit the Library website at [www.aclibrary.org](http://www.aclibrary.org) for more information.

**BOOKSTORE HOURS**

Monday 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.  
Tuesday (1st & 3rd) 12 noon to 7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday (2nd, 4th, 5th) 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.  
Wed. & Thursday 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Friday Closed  
Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Please call 733-3285 or e-mail [Friends.CVL@gmail.com](mailto:Friends.CVL@gmail.com) for more information.

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOARD**

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Carol Lyke, Secretary  
Ka'ai Jensen, At-Large Director  
Debbie Masin, At-Large Director  
Rose Kish, At-Large Director  
Nancy Hollister, At-Large Director

**Board members may be contacted** by calling the Friends office or emailing us as noted under the BookStore information to the left. You may also contact us through our website or by visiting the BookStore during normal operating hours.

**MEETING SCHEDULE!!!**

**Friends meetings** are held on an as-needed basis. *Circle of Friends* is published quarterly. Please check your newsletter or our website for upcoming meeting dates and other events.

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925-829-7750.

**Friends of the Castro Valley Library**  
3600 Norbridge Avenue  
Castro Valley CA 94546  
[www.aclibrary.org](http://www.aclibrary.org)

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL

