



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Friends of the Castro Valley Library
August 2021



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Kay Wetherwax

Greetings, Friends!

I am happy to share some exciting news with you! The Friends of the Castro Valley Library are back – in a reduced capacity, but we're back! We will be selling books in front of the library from 10 to 12 AM on Saturday mornings from now through the month of August. I hope you will stop by to say hello and look for that next great read!

Each sale will include children's books, novels, mysteries, and one additional category that will change weekly. These sales will be Cash Only. If you have already renewed your Friends' membership for 2021, you can pick up your new membership card. You will be able to use your store discount coupons at these sales.

Although we still do not have a date for re-opening our BookStore in the library, we hope to do so within the next couple of months. In the meantime, we are very busy planning for the future! We may have a few openings for volunteer shifts in the BookStore. These shifts are for approximately three hours one day each week. BookStore volunteers clean and sort donated books, assist customers, and of course, sell books.

We also need an editor for our quarterly newsletter. The editor collects articles, puts together the layout, and oversees distribution of the newsletter. And we are looking for a few strong volunteers to be our "book haulers." They need to be able to lift and carry boxes of books, load them into cars, and take them from the library to our storage area.

If you are interested in applying for any of these volunteer opportunities, please let us know. We will have volunteer applications available at our Saturday morning book sales. Or you can send an e-mail to friends.cvl@gmail.com and our volunteer coordinator will contact you.

Our library staff members are planning many wonderful programs that will benefit our community. The Friends look forward to supporting these events. Please continue to support us by volunteering a few hours a week, by purchasing books, and by being a Friend of the Castro Valley Library!

MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER

By Dawn Balestreri, Branch Manager

It's August, and getting "Back to School" will hopefully mean back on campus for most students this year. It has been a very strange year indeed, with the last day of school consisting of "logging off" and emptying the Chromebook recycle instead of running through the halls and tossing a ream of paper into the recycle bin!

Summer rolled through quickly at the Castro Valley Library! We were very pleased to be able to provide some in-person programming for children who have lost so much this past year. Daily outdoor hands-on science and art programming, a Summer Adventure Game and an active outdoor Storywalk® for families were all options this summer. Seeing some of the children who were just infants when we closed, (or not here at all yet) has been so special for the staff. There's nothing like seeing a toddler or preschooler walking into the library for the first time in over a year.

We also kicked off the summer with an outdoor concert on July 1. The James Henry Trio provided us a global journey to Afrofunk, Urban Caribbean, R&B, Reggae and more! It was wonderful to be outside with so many of our members and enjoy the beautiful weather and crowd-pleasing tunes! It was truly a memorable evening, and appreciated by so many. We plan to have at least one or two more concerts before the summer ends. Check our calendar for details: aclibrary.bibliocommons.com/events.

We were also very happy to see the Friends of the Library out, enjoying the music and treating the crowd to a pop-up sale at the event. The Friends make events like these possible, and they have continued to brainstorm ideas during Covid to provide funding for the library. Their efforts are truly admirable, and much appreciated. Although our hours have continued to be impacted due to Covid restrictions, we hope to re-open fully this fall. Until then, we continue to be open as follows:

Monday thru Thursday, and Saturday – Library is open 10am-12pm, 3-5pm

No Contact Pick-Up – Make an appointment to pick up holds Monday thru Thursday, and Saturday: 12-3pm, and Tuesday evening 5-7pm

We appreciate your support and understanding during this transitional and sometimes confusing period. Alameda County Government is still requiring masks in all County buildings. Please remember to mask up before walking into the library.



By Kay Wetherwax

During the past year and a half, the Board of Directors of the Friends, along with a few very committed volunteers, have continued to meet each month on Zoom. They have continued to sell books on Amazon and to plan for our eventual re-opening. Thanks to all these dedicated supporters of our Castro Valley Library.

The library staff has done a terrific job of providing services, even when they were unable to open for “business as usual.” The hands-free pick-up service of library books kept many of us going during the pandemic! And the numerous on-line programs were wonderful. A big Thank You!! to Library Manager Dawn Balestreri and her entire staff for their efforts during this challenging time!

In Memoriam

Within a two-month period, the Friends of the Castro Valley Library lost, through death, two dedicated and valuable volunteers, **Jack Conner** and **Sara Accornero**. They were an important part of our volunteer corps and are – and will be – deeply missed.

Jack Conner died on May 3, 2021, at the age of 100 years and 3 months. Although his body gave out, his fertile mind, quick wit and friendly nature live on. He loved to regale anyone who would listen to his wide-ranging stories, a true and enthusiastic raconteur. He began as a volunteer in the “old” Castro Valley library and was the first to sign up to work in the BookStore when we moved to the new building in 2009. At times curmudgeonly, he was a friend to all and thoroughly enjoyed working the Tuesday afternoon shift with Berna Neumiller. His life-long association with books was obvious as a professor of English at Cal State, Hayward. In addition, he enjoyed woodworking, gardening and tending fruit orchards (especially apple) for the East Bay Regional Parks.

Sara Accornero lived her entire life in the Bay Area: born in Albany, she grew up in Castro Valley and graduated from UC Berkeley. She taught high school English, History, and Literature, as well as ESL classes, for 39 years before becoming active with the Friends, looking forward to working at the BookStore every Monday afternoon, satisfying her own appetite for books and then helping customers find just the right books for themselves. In addition, she served on the Friends Board of Directors as Vice President and Director-at-Large. Retirement gave her more time to follow her heart – travel, reading, gardening, and volunteering in the BookStore where her quiet, helpful presence complete with a wide smile for everyone endeared her to volunteers and the customers alike. She died on June 18, 2021, a loss for her very close family, the Friends, and the entire community.

SUMMER FUN AT THE LIBRARY!

By Leo Liang, Children’s Services

As we all adjust to new routines, we’re finding new ways of working, new ways of programming, and new ways to build relationships with our communities. This year, the Alameda County Library’s Summer Reading Game has been reimagined as the Summer Adventure. Our goal was to connect with each other through stories. This summer, we explored new and creative ways to share our stories while also learning about others’ stories through listening, watching, and of course, reading! By sharing stories, we achieve a deeper understanding of the world we live in.

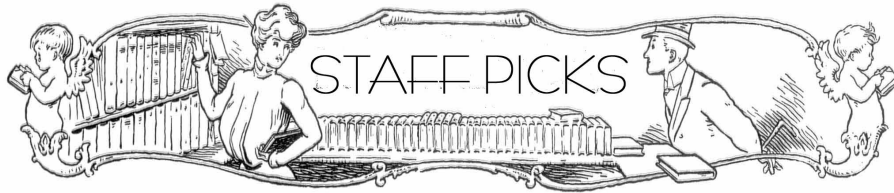
The first challenge the children’s librarians faced upon their return was to figure out how to continue providing programs for families. We navigated through technology and Zoom were able to figure out virtual Storytimes! Children would gather to sing and dance along with their favorite librarians. We estimate a total attendance of over 1,000 members from just April through June! While the branch was still closed, the librarians dissected picture books and put together our first StoryWalk®. Families walked alongside the library branch and read each spread. Action prompts and short questions helped spark engagement as they took a leisurely stroll.



Although the focus for the summer was not on performers, we were able to host some outdoor activities right in front of our library. There was no shortage of things to try. From Monday through Thursday, we offered a different STEAM related activity for families of all

ages. STEAM stands for *Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math*. One of our most memorable programs involved tubs of water and dinosaurs! The goal was to build a boat out of recycled materials that could help the dinosaur stay afloat. We also had a few messy art projects that involved bubbles and food coloring! Seeing each family’s excitement as they returned to the next activity was a wonderful experience. Children’s librarians worked on putting together numerous projects with materials provided by the Friends of the Castro Valley Library. We were fortunate enough to enlist the help of our Kid Power volunteers this year. Each of our activities allowed families to utilize their creative processes and more importantly, a fun and memorable experience.

August will be our first opportunity to provide outdoor storytimes, and we hope to welcome you all back with more programs. Keep an eye out on our website to stay up to date on our happenings. We’ve only just begun with outdoor programming!



Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster by Adam Higginbotham (2019 nonfiction) Reactor Unit Four of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station blew up in an explosion in the early morning hours on April 26, 1986, a catastrophic event that was to change the lives of tens of thousands of people in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and the USSR. It was also to forever change the world's view of the use and dangers of nuclear power, of the horrors of radiation sickness, and begin to expose the corrupt, secretive, state-controlled nuclear power and political system of the then Soviet Union. Alan Higginbotham, in a totally engaging (need one say frightening?) account of the events leading up to the explosions, fires and dispersal of a radioactive cloud over eastern Europe, has written a superb book. He brings an exhaustively researched story of the design and development of the power unit, the roles of the engineers and technicians in starting and then desperately trying to contain the collapse of the reactor, the heroic attempts to put out the fires and radioactive plumes of smoke and debris, and the decade's long efforts of the Soviet government to conceal the effects of the explosion. When this book was published it was greeted with enthusiastic reviews from all the major book review sources: "a masterpiece of reporting and storytelling"; superb, enthralling and necessarily terrifying"; top-notch historical narrative"; a stunningly detailed account"; wonderful and chilling". How could one not put this book near the top of one's "to read" list? Highly recommended. (Ned Lyke)

The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here by Hope Jahren. When the Castro Valley Library kicked off our first annual Castro Valley Reads in 2018 we chose the book *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren. We were so fortunate to get to meet this accomplished scientist and hear her speak at the program finale. Now you can read more of her work! I highly recommend *The Story of More*. This is a clear and readable explanation of how we have changed our planet. She examines our ingenuity, enterprising spirit, and our excesses, which have in many cases helped more than 7 billion people live on the Earth while also posing a grave danger to the planet. She mixes heavily-detailed straight talk about climate change with endearing, nostalgic stories from her personal life and work. So while the book is serious, it goes down easy. There are things we can do as individuals and as nations to make sure the Earth remains habitable for humans for many generations. There are things we can do as individuals and as nations to use less and share more with people around the world who have not enjoyed all that we in developed nations have enjoyed. But those things will require tremendous changes to our lifestyle and will not be profitable. Can we do it? Jahren believes we can. (Chris Selig)

The Paris Library by Janet Skeslien Charles (2021 fiction): In 1939, bibliophile Odile Souchet obtains her dream job at the American Library in Paris (ALP). There she meets the dedicated librarians Dorothy Reeder and Boris Netchaev, among others, and a cast of unique subscribers that bring fascination and joy to her days. Unfortunately, the Nazis soon occupy Paris, banning books and certain subscribers, and threatening to close the library. All of the "enemy alien" staff remains as long as possible, and the staff delivers books to the subscribers who can no longer come in person. The library remains open in spite of tragedies that strike the librarians and subscribers one by one. In alternating chapters, the novel also tells the story of Lily, a young teenager in 1983 Montana, who loses her mother and her way in life but befriends her next-door neighbor, who is Odile, the aloof "war bride" and now widow. Odile provides guidance and friendship and French lessons, but much of her past remains a mystery. As the story unravels, much of the mystery is solved. This is not only a book about the valiant librarians of the ALP, but about friendship and family and love and betrayal. Librarians will particularly enjoy all of the Dewey numbers sprinkled liberally throughout the book. (Ginger Russell)

HELP WANTED!!!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR for the quarterly issues of *Circle of Friends*. Assemble the newsletter from documents and columns provided by board members, library staff, and other sources. Approximately 100 to 125 copies are to be printed and mailed; most members receive the newsletter by email. It is helpful to be good at spelling, grammar, and word processing. The newsletter is currently prepared on MS Publisher. Detailed information available on request. Takes 8 to 10 hours total per quarter and can be a shared position. Work from home! If you're interested, please email us.



Please see the President's Report on Page 1 for more volunteer opportunities!

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, PAGE 4

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday thru Thursday, and Saturday – Library is open 10am-12pm, 3-5pm

No Contact Pick-Up – Make an appointment to pick up holds Monday thru Thursday, and Saturday: 12-3pm, and Tuesday evening 5-7pm

Please call 667-7900 or visit the Library website at www.aclibrary.org for more information.

BOOKSTORE HOURS

Currently closed. To contact us, please visit our website or email us at Friends.CVL@gmail.com.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOARD

Kay Wetherwax, President
Elizabeth McCune, Vice President
Barbara Kissling, Recording Treasurer
Elizabeth Rinehart, Operational Treasurer
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 emailing us as noted under the BookStore information to the left. You may also contact us through our website.

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.

Printed by:
Acclaim Print and Copy Center
6345 Scarlett Court., Dublin CA 94568
925-829-7750.

Friends of the Castro Valley Library
3600 Norbridge Avenue
Castro Valley CA 94546
www.aclibrary.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL

