



# CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Friends of the Castro Valley Library  
February 2024

OUR NEXT BOOK SALE IS THE LAST WEEKEND IN APRIL!!



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Robin Olivier

**Happy 2024, Friends!** As we look ahead to the new year with our plans and aspirations, we also look back at the accomplishments of 2023. This is the first year that it seemed like Covid was in our rearview mirror! We had three very successful book sales attended by enthusiastic crowds. These are the major fundraisers for our library projects, so we are proud to have done so well!!

**Our December book sale** was particularly successful. Thanks to the donations to our store, we had a wonderful selection of books, CDs, and DVDs. All year we collected holiday books for adults and children. These were scooped up by happy shoppers. On Sunday, shoppers filled paper bags to the brim for \$5! For volunteers, the best part was hearing and seeing the appreciation of the public. So many thanked us for volunteering our time and making this sale possible for our community.

**Speaking of volunteers**, thanks to recruitment online and at the store, we have many new volunteers now working in our bookstore. We have been able to extend hours and now are open on Sundays as we were before Covid. We have Roberto Souza of CV News to thank for publicizing our needs on Facebook, Instagram, and his news program. Sue Robertson has been active in contacting potential volunteers and Joan King has been responsible for their training. This definitely has been a team effort and we are so pleased to have these new, enthusiastic volunteers working in our bookstore!

**Castro Valley Reads** is upon us!! The Friends provide the books for this community wide event. Kickoff is scheduled for February 4. Hopefully, you will be involved either with your book clubs or with the discussion groups organized by Chris Selig, Adult Services Librarian. This is a program the Friends are very proud to support!

**Our eBay sales** continue to bring in revenue! Our hard-working eBay team (Amber Marsh, Amy Fain, and Sari Weis) post the unusual and higher value donations and then send them off to happy buyers. We're so lucky to have these great donations as well as the volunteers to advertise and disperse them!

## COMING EVENTS AT THE LIBRARY!

### Ongoing Events:

Homework Help Center: Monday through Thursday 3:30 to 5 p.m. when school is in session. For primary and secondary students.

Advanced Math and Science Tutoring: Mondays from 5:30 to 7 p.m. when school is in session. High school and college level tutoring in math, physics, and chemistry.

Computer Crew: Saturdays from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Job Lab: Mondays from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Paperwork Clinic: 2nd Mondays from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Young at Heart Book Club: First Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Registration closes on February 6th.

Page Turners Book Club: Second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Registration closes February 14th

Genealogy Study Group : First Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. (registration required)

### Coming Events (check the library website for a complete list and description of events):

2/11 10:30-11:00 a.m. Toddler Storytime (every Thursday - registration required)

2/5 6:30-7:00 p.m. OR 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Paws to Read. Two sessions available—registration required)

2/10, 2/17, 2/24 all day—Lunar New Year Scavenger Hunt

*Events are subject to update or change. Some events require advance registration. Please check the library website for the latest information or registration requirements.*

### Upcoming Holidays:

The library will be closed on the following days:

Monday February 12th for Lincoln's Birthday

Monday February 19th for President's Day

Monday May 27th for Memorial Day

**We hope to see you** at our bookstore soon! We have new materials on display weekly. Be sure to peruse the front shelf where materials of special interest are placed. And remember too, that we love to receive your donations of new books! They are very popular! Here's to a great 2024!!

## CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, PAGE 2

### MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER

By Dawn Balestreri, Branch Manager

**Our book choice** for our 7<sup>th</sup> annual Castro Valley Reads was announced in early January. *Cold Millions* by Jess Walter is our selection for 2024. 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!

**We have a lot of wonderful programming** for CV Reads this year. In mid-February, we will welcome the Wobblies for a program on the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World). The San Francisco Bay Area General Membership Branch will discuss the current activity and the importance of labor unions. Late March we'll host Professor Jane Wolford for a presentation on Women in the Labor Movement. We have also invited labor lawyer, Bill Sokol to help us understand income inequality and why it continues to persist and impact the well-being of so many Americans.

**In April, we will invite** the New York Times bestselling author, Jess Walter, to discuss *Cold Millions* in person. We are very excited to have our author in person for the first time since 2019. Join us at the Castro Valley Performing Arts Center for a lively discussion about our 2024 Community Reads pick. Your free book (while supplies last) and program guide will be available at the library anytime beginning February 4 during or after our kick-off event (see Chris Selig's column for more information).

**This is also our 5th annual Tweens Read event.** The tweens are reading *Thirst* by Varsha Bajaj, "The riveting story of a heroic girl who fights for her belief that water should be for everyone" and a New York Times Bestseller! Tweens will have the option between two discussion groups to discuss the selection.

**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 a vibrant community gathering place without the funding of our Friends. Thank you for continuing to support their efforts and consider volunteering if you are able.

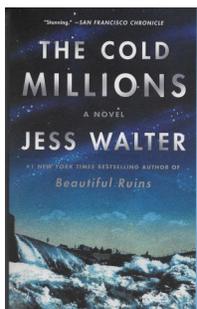
**A year ago we were hit by** an atmospheric river, and both Castro Valley and the Bay Area experienced major disaster events. January is Emergency Preparedness Month, and you can get more information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). Information is provided on preventing house heating fires, getting your car ready for the winter, preventing carbon monoxide poisoning, and making a plan to evacuate for you and your family. Being prepared is a great way to manage fear of disasters. The unknown is scary, but preparation helps. If nothing else, sign up for AC Alerts from Alameda County: [www.acgov.org/emergencysite/](http://www.acgov.org/emergencysite/).

**Hope to see you at the library!**

### Castro Valley Reads 2024

By Chris Selig, Librarian II

**We will celebrate** our 7<sup>th</sup> Castro Valley Reads in 2024! This annual literary event, which asks our residents to read and discuss the same book, is generously funded by the Friends of the Castro Valley Library. "Castro Valley Reads is an opportunity to discuss thoughtful books. But more than that,



it is an invitation to come together as a community to grow in our understanding of important ideas and events," said Dawn Balestreri, Manager of the Castro Valley Library. "Nearly 1,000 community members have accepted our invitation over the past 7 years. We're able to do this work because of the hard work and dedication of the Friends!"

**After a year in which** we learned daily about the demands of striking workers, from baristas in cafes to autoworkers to actors in Hollywood, we will be highlighting the history of the labor movement with a propulsive and entertaining novel entitled *The Cold Millions* by bestselling author Jess Walter.

*The Cold Millions* tells the tale of two brothers swept up in the turbulent class warfare and free speech fights of the early 20th century. The Dolans live by their wits, jumping freight trains and lining up for day work at crooked job agencies. While Rye yearns for a steady job and a home, his older brother, Gig, dreams of a better world, fighting alongside other union men for fair pay and decent treatment. Dubious of Gig's idealism, Rye still finds himself drawn to a fearless 19-year-old activist named Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. A storm is coming, and Rye will be forced to decide where he stands. Is it enough to win the occasional battle, even if you cannot win the war?

**As one reviewer wrote,** "*The Cold Millions* is a literary unicorn: a book about socio-economic disparity that's also a page-turner and a beautiful, lyric hymn to the power of social unrest in American history. It's funny and harrowing, sweet and violent, innocent and experienced; it walks a dozen tightropes."

**Discussion group registration in underway.** You can register for a Library-facilitated group or you can form your own group with three or more people. To learn more about discussion groups and to register, visit [aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads](http://aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads).

**Our Kick-Off Event is Sunday, February 4 from 2 pm to 3 pm.** You'll learn more about the book and be able to pick up a free copy, while supplies last. We'll sing along as local horn ensemble fun'SQ leads us in rousing renditions of union songs from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is no need to register for the Kick-Off event itself, but please register for a discussion group before you arrive. Through mid-April, in addition to discussion groups, we have a great line up of programs related to the themes of the book. And on Sunday, April 14, featured author Jess Walter will be joining us in person at the Castro Valley Center for the Arts for the Finale event. You can learn more about everything here: [aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads](http://aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads).

## DONATIONS ALWAYS NEEDED!



The Friends of the Castro Valley Library depend on your generous donations of books, CDs, and DVDs. We are happy to receive your donations any time the BookStore is open (see page 8 for BookStore hours—note we are now open Sundays from 1:00 to 4:00!). If your donation is more than a few bags or cartons, we will appreciate your contacting us ahead of time to make sure we have staff available to receive it. We are happy to lend you a cart or help you bring your donation inside. Bring your donations directly to the BookStore office door. **Please do not leave donations elsewhere in- or outside the Library.**

**At this time, we are accepting** donations of most types of books, DVDs, and music CDs as well as magazines that are **no more than 4 months old**. We may also accept jigsaw puzzles, board games, unused greeting cards, and stationery items. We **do not accept** sets of books such as encyclopedias or 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 or cassette tapes (music or audio-books) or vinyl records. A good rule of thumb on condition: if you would purchase the item yourself, we will most likely accept it.

**Your donation is tax-deductible.** We are happy to give you a receipt for your donation. The receipt will specify the number of cartons or bags of books or other items received (so you don't have to stand there and wait for them to be counted.)

**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.

## 2024 Memberships Available Now!

**Your Friends of the Castro Valley Library membership** is renewable as of January 1st each year. You may renew at the Friends BookStore office inside the library, by mail, or through our website. Scan the QR code below for more information. Individual memberships are only \$10, and you receive the following:



**\$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.

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

**Not a member yet?** New memberships may be purchased any time of year.

**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:

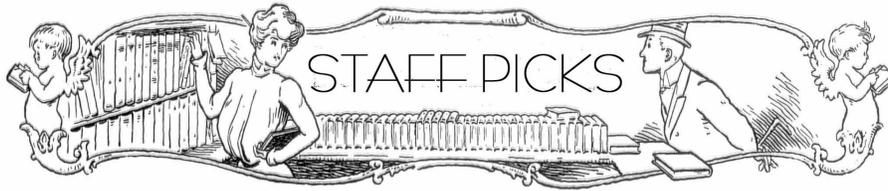
\$10 Individual  \$20 Family  \$5 Youth  \$35 Corporate Sponsor  
 \$50 Benefactor  \$200 Lifetime—Individual  \$300 Lifetime—Family  
*Membership renewals are due January 1st.*

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 Lighthouse Keeper*** by Alan K. Baker (2020 fiction) : In December of 1900, the three lighthouse keepers on the island of Eilean Mòr went missing. The bodies were never found. This much of the story is true and forms the basis for the fictional story that follows. In 1999, five researchers set up camp on Eilean Mòr. It's a rough area, so they're committed to a three-week stay. Almost immediately their instruments pick up an impossible artifact within the ocean itself. Then one character stumbles across a journal written by one of the replacement keepers in 1901. Things start driving out of control pretty quickly from there. The story switches between the events of 1901 and those in 1999, and it's pretty clear that whatever happened then repeats itself. The story veers between supernatural and science fiction. It's quite a ride, and admittedly sometimes too chaotic to easily follow. But somehow something different than I expected ended up being just what I wanted. (Amber Marsh)

***North Woods*** by Daniel Mason (2023 fiction) is a saga beginning in Pilgrim times and ending in modern day. There are dozens of interlinked stories, interspersed with illustrations, poems, letters and even a page from the Farmer's Almanac. The main character in the book is the yellow house in the North Woods where generations dwell within. Inhabitants include a former soldier who plants an apple orchard, his daughters who never marry, an artist, and a movie star. *The New York Times* review said, "This is fiction that deals in minutes and in centuries, that captures the glory and the triviality of human lives. The forest and the trees: Mason keeps both in clear view in his eccentric and exhilarating novel." Mason, an assistant professor in Stanford's School of Psychiatry, is a lyric writer. I loved his description of the soldier's daughters: "If life was a song, theirs was more of a refrain, than a verse." So apt! This book is a banquet of stories. Be prepared for the unexpected. Don't miss it! (Robin Olivier)

***The Frozen River*** by Ariel Lawhon (2023 fiction): On the surface, this is a murder mystery, but it is much more than that. Based on the life of midwife and healer Martha Ballard, the story opens with the discovery of a body in the near-frozen Kennebec River, territory of Maine, in the late 1700's. As one of her duties, Mrs. Ballard is called to give an opinion on the cause of death, which she deems to be murder. But this is a much more complicated tale than seeking out a murderer. As the book unfolds, many interconnected subplots come to bear: a rape, attempted theft of property, relationships, births, and deaths. This well-written, well-researched novel is a wonderful cross-section



of life, people, and the laws in effect at the time. The characters are real and warm; you like the ones you are supposed to like, and you don't like the villains. At the center of all of this are the frozen Kennebec River, a character in itself, and a silver vixen who reappears at appropriate moments throughout the story. This is a captivating read, and I highly recommend it. (Ginger Russell)

***Poetry Takes Flight: Birds of California*** by James Roethe: This review is of a singular book familiar to some Friends of the Castro Valley Library as it was introduced to us in November of 2023. *Poetry Takes Flight: Birds of California* by James Roethe was published in 2023. The book comprises the author's descriptions of familiar California birds. Each are shown in wonderful photographs accompanied by a short description of aspects of the bird's life and/or importance to the author. Jim Roethe then writes a wonderful poem. Often the poem mentions important characteristics of the bird such as size, plumage, habits, and habitats, though even more delightful are words that tell the reader WHY the bird attracted the poet. The poems reflect the writing skills of the author and his joy in being the birdwatcher who loves seeing birds in his travels. This is a fun book to read, not only for those of us interested in birds, but anyone who appreciates the fine use of writing to describe the often-lovely birds at our feeders! (Ned Lyke)



***Mary Oliver (1935 – 2019)*** was a distinguished and beloved American poet who wrote both poetry and narrative books that have received numerous awards (including the Pulitzer Prize in 1984) for their quiet and reflective descriptions of the natural and physical world that caught the perceptive eye of the writer for decades. If one is searching for writing that is comforting, eloquent, loving, transformative and allows escape from the troubled world we now live in, you need go no further than the works of Mary Oliver. Her books may be found in bookstores and libraries throughout Alameda County. (Ned Lyke)

**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 can be up to approximately 250 words in length and should include the publication date.



## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**The New Year** is a good time to reacquaint yourself with the Friends' BookStore. We are located inside the Castro Valley Library near the Chabot/Canyon Meeting Rooms.

We are now open Sundays from 1 to 4 p.m., so please come on in to make purchases, renew your membership, or drop off donations! Please see Page 8 of this newsletter or the signs posted at the BookStore for the hours we are open each day.

We have gift certificates and gift cards. If you just aren't finding the perfect book (or DVD or CD) for that special person, gift certificates are available in any amount. They can be redeemed at the BookStore any time of year, and don't have to be spent all at once. Ask at the window or give us a call for more information.



**Our prices are reasonable!** We are the only BookStore in Castro Valley, and you won't find a better bargain for a wide variety of books in good clean condition. Most adult books are \$2. Most children's books are 50¢. Some books may be slightly higher; for example, current releases are \$4, and some gift quality, special, or antiquarian books may be higher-priced but generally less than you would find elsewhere. And DVDs and CDs are only \$1 per disc.

**We have a great selection!** We receive book and media donations almost daily and have a great variety of both fiction and nonfiction titles and authors. We also stock greeting cards and jigsaw puzzles in the BookStore.

**Remember that the funds** from all sales of books, DVDs, CDs, etc., pay for library programs that wouldn't otherwise be possible!

## CHECK OUT OUR BOOKSTORE MONTHLY THEMES!

By Marie Blackmon

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



**February:** Black History Month, American Heart Health Month, Groundhog Day, Lunar New Year, Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras.

**March:** Irish Heritage Month, National Women's History Month, St. Patrick's Day, Easter



**April:** April Fool's Day, National Poetry Month, Earth Day, Passover

**May:** Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, National Bike Month, Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, Memorial Day



## NOW SELLING ON eBay

**The Friends of the CV Library are now** selling books, DVDs, and CDs on eBay. Selected unusual, rare, and higher-value items are offered at reasonable prices.

**Our seller name is *friendscvlibrary*.** Some of the items we currently have listed are: *Wonder Woman: The Amazon Princess Archives*, *The Peter Max Book of Crochet*, *U.S. Duck Stamps* signed first edition, *Bernard Maybeck: Architect of Elegance*, *Chalk Art Lettering 101*, *Alice's Restaurant Cookbook* (1969), *Quilts and Human Rights*, and many sets of comics and graphic novels. You can see our entire online store by scanning this QR code, or by searching one of the titles and then clicking on our name when you reach that page. More items are added every week. We are happy to have these items available for you. Please let us know if you have any questions.



## Thank You CORNER

By Robin Olivier, President

**Our BookStore** has lots of moving parts—happily lots of volunteers, new and renewing members, computer research of donations, sale and overflow boxes, and on and on. All of this happens due to Sue Choquette, our office manager. Sue enters each member into the computer system to ensure each one's updated information. She orders the membership cards annually so they are ready to sell by mid-November. Our computer has updated software and office supplies are at hand—all due to Sue. She designs announcements and coupons. Additionally, she attends our Board meetings so she is aware of new plans and anticipates any need. Truly, Sue is the backbone of our office. We could not thrive without her! Thank you, Sue!!

**Kay Wetherwax** served as President of our organization for several years. I am so grateful for her mentorship since I became President and especially for her continued leadership of our book sale events. We have a strong committee working on the book sales, but Kay's organization and coordination makes the difference. These events are primary sources of the funds we can provide the library, so they are tremendously important. Thank you, Kay, for your continued commitment to the Friends!

### 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 two to three 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 Victor Fujii

**Victor Fujii** has been a member of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library for about four years. A couple years ago, he noticed a request for volunteers in the newsletter. He was first assigned to help move donated books from the Friends' office to our storage facility and then back to the library for the large book sales. He soon expressed an interest in other tasks and now works in the BookStore every other Monday and helps move the books one day a week.



**Victor grew up in Hayward**, where he currently lives. He worked in his family's nursery business, growing cut flowers and potted plants, first for wholesale and then for retail sales. After about 25 years, he went back to school to become an occupational therapy assistant. He worked in that field for 17 years and found it to be enjoyable and rewarding. He retired 6 years ago.

**Victor has also volunteered** with J-Sei, an agency working with the elderly, as well as for the Eden Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church. He also worked on the Watkins Street Committee to have a marker installed in memory of the 600 Japanese-Americans who were forcibly moved from this area in 1942.

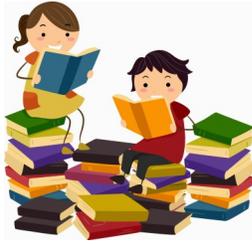
**Victor and his wife Kathy** live in Hayward, and their daughter Laurel lives in Oakland. They enjoy travel, attending symphony concerts, watching sports, and walking for exercise.

The person, be it gentleman or lady, who has not pleasure in a good novel, must be intolerably stupid.

— Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*

Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.

—Neil Gaiman, *Coraline*



Mark your calendars now—the Spring Book Sale is

## APRIL 26-28

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. (\$5 per bag)**

We will have our usual selection of fiction, nonfiction, and children's books, as well as audio books, CDs and DVDs, all at bargain prices. We may also have jigsaw puzzles, board games, journals, and other educational and stationery supplies.

**We anticipate having about 250 cartons of books at the sale. You will be glad you came!**

Prices for most books and media items are as follows:

Hardback and Large Paperback	\$1.00
Small Paperback	\$ .50
Harlequin Romances	\$ .25
Children's & Young Adult Books	\$ .25
Comic Books	\$ .50
DVDs (per disc)	\$ .50
Music CDs (per disc)	\$ .50
Sheet Music	\$1.00

There will be a limited selection of gift quality, antiquarian, and special price books that are priced as marked.

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 (2024) 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 CALENDAR:

The 2024 book sale dates are:

**April 26-28**

**August 2-4**

**December 6-8**



We may have pop-up sales of certain types of books from time to time. Follow us on Facebook to get timely notice of pop-up sales.

**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 7:30 p.m.  
**Tuesday** 12 noon to 5:30 p.m.  
**Wednesday** 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
**Thursday** 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
**Friday** Closed  
**Saturday** 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Sunday** **NEW!** 1:00 to 4:00 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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Wayne Ainsworth, At-Large Director  
Amy Fain, 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. Our annual meeting will be held in November.

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[www.aclibrary.org](http://www.aclibrary.org)

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TIME-SENSITIVE MATERIAL

