



A Message from Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library



Vol. 3 No. 5

February 15, 2020

Getting a Permanent Home for Our Branch Library

One Step Forward – the CDC Building

We are seeing progress here. There is a proposal on the agenda for the Oakland School Board's February 26 meeting that will:

- Declare that the Piedmont CDC is not surplus (That is what we hoped for.)
- Direct the OUSD Superintendent's office to investigate how to pursue a Joint Lease or Joint Occupancy Lease for the site (That is the next step we want.)



This is a great start down the right path, but just covers the legal concerns about joint agreements – it doesn't take the next step of saying that the joint-use or joint-occupancy lease for the Piedmont CDC should be with the City of Oakland to house the branch library, as the Friends of PAL has advocated.

The full text of the proposed resolution is here: [Click here to view](#)

The Road Ahead

With OUSD Board approval of the resolution, the Superintendent's office could open discussions with City staff to draft a joint agreement. The draft would be sent to the OUSD Board and City Council.

A final agreement would include the specifics of planned alterations and monthly payments for rent, utilities and maintenance. The agreement terms would also need to comply with various sections of the state Education Code.

As preliminary talks get under way, City staff will have to make budget estimates for construction, and increased staffing, and identify ways to meet these funding needs. They will also need to develop a timeline for incorporating these library branch costs into city budgets for future fiscal years.

This process will involve city Library and Public Works departments working with input from the neighborhood and school communities to address:

- Layout and space needs for library resources: book and media collections, computers, children's section and if possible a meeting room or multi-use space to host community and school activities.
- Continuing access to the library for classes and staff from the Piedmont Avenue Elementary School.
- Costs of alterations and code upgrades, including for accessibility and rest rooms, and any earthquake and safety upgrades that may be required by the Division of the State Architect.
- Management of exterior grounds and play area (while general maintenance responsibility would be on the city Public Works Department, in practice small parks like this are most successful with active volunteer stewards from the neighborhood).

Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library has come a long way toward this goal, but we'll need active community help at every step going ahead.

What You Can Do Now

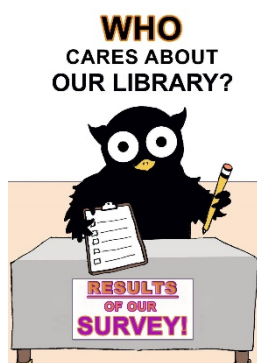
Now is the time for you to write a statement of support, asking the OUSD Board to approve Proposed Board Resolution 1920-0205 for Piedmont CDC. They should receive your letter well in advance of their February 26th meeting.

You can use the sample comments from the Friends of PAL online resource folder at <https://bit.ly/20255rh>. It includes samples of support comments and FAQs, plus other documents about the CDC.

Tell the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Board you support giving the branch library a permanent home in the CDC.

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By Arleen Feng, Steering Committee Member, Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library



Piedmont Avenue Library Survey Results

Conducted by the Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library PAL
10/1/19-12/31/19

[See the Stats](#)
[See the Comments](#)

A Day at Our Branch Library

Fifty-six adults and children attended Piedmont Avenue Branch Library's Baby Café on Saturday. They listened to stories, played with big blocks, made pictures with crayons, read books -- all in the library's 1900 square feet. Meanwhile, the library's business went on as usual, with patrons checking out and returning books, using the computers, browsing for new books or CDs. It is indeed a busy place. Here's what some patrons have to say about it.

Margot – 9 likes to read, someone always there to help

Aida – 11 likes to write fantasy, comes twice a week

Nov – 10 likes computers, making slime

Kennedy – 7 likes hanging out, coloring

Mom (3 kids) with an armload of books the wide selection keeps the home library from running out of space

Renuka (5 kids) allowing them to choose books broadens their world; the library has a wide range with easy access

Keaton – 9 you don't have to pay; reading is good for your mind

Ellora – 6 reads fiction, comes once a month, reads at home

Shelene (adult) reading expands knowledge; library has a wide range

Garrett – 6 it's fun to read, likes skateboarding books

Unidentified dad with 2 kids, one on his lap – it's good to introduce kids to books early; it helps them be good readers

Sterling – 5 likes scary books, LEGOS, magna tiles, board games, checking out DVDs and movies

This goes on almost every day at the smallest library in Oakland's system. Wednesdays at 10:15 for Toddler Storytime; Wednesdays at 11 for Pre-School Storytime; Fridays at 3:30 for Build Fridays, and Saturdays at 10:30 for Baby Café. But there's service as usual with a friendly, helpful librarian or two at the desk.

By Ruby Long

Ruby is a neighbor whose work has appeared in local and national publications.



Baby Cafe, Piedmont Gardens



We'll Miss You, Michelle.



Our Branch Manager, Michelle Rosenthal, is leaving us at the end of February to take a job as Library Operations Manager in Happy Valley Oregon, a town of 21,000 near Portland. She has been our librarian since April 2018 after years as Branch Manager of Lakeview and Melrose.

Michelle loved getting to know the patrons of our library, watching the children grow up, working with a great staff and with the Friends of PAL. She says Friends of PAL is a treasure because it includes wonderful stewards of the library. But in Happy Valley she will be living closer to

family, in particular her nieces Beaux and Penelope. We send our best wishes with her.



The Book Worm Recommends

The Guardians by John Grisham

What if the Courts Convict an Innocent Person?

This is John Grisham's fortieth novel. In most, he focuses on some aspect of legal practice and he always educates the reader about both the necessary legal procedures and the many ways that practitioners elude or obscure the intent of the law. Here Grisham writes about a lawyer who seeks release for prisoners who have been wrongly convicted. The subject is close to Grisham's heart because he has served on the Board of the Innocence Project which seeks to reverse the convictions of innocent convicts. In the novel, the characters speculate that this happens in about 10% of cases which means that there are thousands of innocent people in prison today.

Grisham is a master of characterization, plot, narrative and dialogue. Here he introduces Cullen Post, a sweet and caring man who is both a lawyer and, after a nervous breakdown, an Episcopal priest. Post is building a

legal case to introduce new evidence that will lead to the release of a Black man named Quincy Miller who was framed for the murder of a Florida lawyer. The story wanders through a collection of interesting individuals—Southern lawyers who drink too much, weak prison guards who have been corrupted by dangerous criminals, forthright women in power, angry officials who don't want to admit they are wrong. All are well described but none are so overwhelmingly evil that they are unbelievable.

This one does not have the astonishing turns of plot found in Grisham's early novels such as *The Firm*, but it is a well-constructed, engaging narrative with characters that one might like to know. It is also a painless and detailed way to learn about the way the legal system malfunctions for many people.

by Ann P. McCauley

Ann studied Anthropology at Cal and works in international health. She loves stories with sympathetic, wise characters who engage in humorous conversations and travel to exotic places.

What's Happening at the Library

Ongoing Events – every week

Wednesdays at 10:15 am – Toddler Storytime
Wednesdays at 11:00 am – Pre-School Storytime
Fridays at 3:30 pm – Build Fridays, Legos & More
Saturdays at 10:30 am – Baby Café
Saturdays at 2:30 pm – eBook Help

Hoot Happenings February 15 -March 31, 2020

Toddler Storytime – Every Wednesday at 10:15am

Songs, active rhymes and stories especially for ages 18 months to 3 years old.

Preschool Storytime – Every Wednesday at 11am

Stories, songs and rhymes for kids ages 3 to 5 years old.

Build Fridays – Every Friday at 3:30pm

Design, build and explore every Friday after school. Legos and Duplos every week, plus building surprises. Come see what we have this week! Will it be Keva planks, marble run, or something new?

Baby Café – Every Saturday at 10:30am

Bring your baby or toddler to Baby Café for coffee and playtime! Siblings welcome. Most Saturdays we meet at the library and make new friends, but on the second Saturday of each month, we meet at the Piedmont Gardens retirement community, for music and playtime with seniors in nursing and memory care.

Friends of the Piedmont Ave Library – Meeting Wednesday February 19 at 6:30pm

Join us as we plan the next steps in our campaign for a permanent home for our library. How shall we use our survey results? Are we getting closer to a home in the abandoned CDC building? We need your help!

Berkeley Rep Docent Talk: Culture Clash (Still) in America – Saturday February 29 at 1pm

Irreverent, thought-provoking social satire

The missionaries of mayhem are back with their unique, badass brand of Chicano satire!



In this powerful, pointed, and downright hilarious update, they turn their razor-sharp wit to everything from pussy hats to MAGA caps, laying down outrageous, biting, and thought-provoking monologues and sketch comedy about the immigrant experience in America right now.

Kids' Writing Group – Every Tuesday in March at 2-6pm

You can write and illustrate a book! Every Tuesday in March, drop in and write with other kids or by yourself. You can:

- draw and write in a blank book
- illustrate and add words to a digital template, then print it
- publish your work online with Biblioboard
- send your book to Children's Fairyland for their Young Writers' Contest
- just have time to finally work on your own project!

The library will provide printing, digital templates, blank books, art supplies, online publishing, encouragement, and tea.

Bring your ideas and maybe friends, siblings, and favorite art supplies.

Introduction to Female Persian Poets Saturday March 7 at 1pm

To celebrate women's history month, and to expand the answer to a question that was asked in our first session on Persian Poets, what about Persian female poets?

In this session female poets, female feminist poets, modern feminism, and ancient Persia will be discussed.

Meditation: For Stress Reduction Saturday March 21 at 2pm

We are living in a high-anxiety world, where peace seems like an elusive commodity.

Yet, waiting within you is a 'portable paradise,' a lush garden of personal peace and joy that you can visit at will, 24-7--simply by sitting in meditation!

Dr. Marshall Zaslove will offer simple, effective techniques, and will demonstrate the most practical methods of controlling and calming the mind for better meditations and many other health benefits. As a result, stress is reduced, and that permanent place of peace and joy is found within.

Berkeley Rep Talk: School Girls; Or, The African Mean Girls Saturday March 28th at 1pm

An infectious comedy with teeth

Paulina, the reigning queen bee at Ghana's most exclusive boarding school, has her sights set on the Miss Universe pageant and the glamorous life that's sure to follow. But her plans and even her very reputation are shaken up when Ericka, a new student who's strikingly beautiful and talented, captures the attention of the pageant recruiter—and Paulina's hive-minded friends.

A biting comedy that tackles the universal issues of beauty and self-worth that face teenage girls across the globe.

Unless noted, all these activities and events take place at the Piedmont Avenue Branch, 80 Echo Avenue, Oakland CA 94611



**At the Community Meeting 1/29/20
our Councilmember Dan Kalb pledged
to continue his support of our library!**