

# HOOT



ALL THE NEWS THAT'S  
FIT TO HOOT!  
[www.FriendsofPAL.org](http://www.FriendsofPAL.org)

## Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library

Volume 4 No. 5

SUPPORTING THE PIEDMONT AVENUE BRANCH, OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

February 15, 2021

### Be A Friend Of PAL

Support our library. Join the Friends of the Piedmont Ave Library [contact@FriendsofPAL.org](mailto:contact@FriendsofPAL.org)

#### Our Campaign for a Permanent Home for our Library

Another achievement for the Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library (Friends of PAL) in their efforts to secure a permanent bricks-and-mortar home for our library: FOPAL has completed the steps to be recognized by IRS as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our tax ID is 84-4203055. Now, all contributions will be tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Our status may have changed, but our mission remains the same. Together we

will continue to advocate for the Piedmont Avenue Branch Library and the Oakland Public Library. We will enthusiastically support our library's ongoing programs, reach out to the community and raise funds and awareness to secure a permanent home.

You may donate through Paypal. Or send a check payable to Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library to: Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library, 80 Echo Avenue, Oakland Ca. 94611-5207



**The Friends of PAL have need of a volunteer content manager for our new web site. If you have a few hours per month to donate to a worthy cause and can navigate your way around Word Press, please consider this opportunity. Questions/to apply – email [contact@FriendsofPAL.org](mailto:contact@FriendsofPAL.org)**

### How Does A Librarian Work From Home? –by Margaret Rodriguez

Sometimes people ask me, a bit incredulously, how can a librarian work from home?

These days I help with sidewalk service at the Asian Branch 3 days a week, but the other days I work from home, so I can tell you how a librarian works from home.

Besides purchasing children's books for you to pick up at sidewalk service and online tasks like trainings and email,

I'm meeting children where they are: on Zoom.

In pre-COVID days, teachers at Piedmont Avenue Elementary School would bring their classes to the Piedmont Ave library for a fun hour of chaos: I'd read them a story, kids would scramble about finding books to borrow, and then they would rush back to school. Class visits on Zoom

*continued*

are similarly hilarious but without the tangible satisfaction of putting books into students' hands.

In a typical visit with a class, I'll log into the teacher's Zoom room, read the kids a book, show them my online virtual reading room, talk about sidewalk service or another library resource, and take questions and have discussions. I try to choose funny books that are on the short side with clear illustrations and no little details that would get lost on a webcam.

The discussions are the most interesting. When we read *Two of Everything*, I asked second graders what they would like two of. Some answers: "my mom," "Zeke" (the teacher's toddler), "PS5" (a really expensive video game console), "999 lions." After some talk of odd and even numbers, the lions were revised slightly down to 998. I have also learned that someone used to be scared of chickens when they were little because their grandma's chicken pecked them "and nobody saved me because my auntie was filming!" and everyone wants to be able to talk to dogs.

When I show them my online virtual reading room, I highlight new books that have arrived at the library during the pandemic. Next they vote on a book to look up in the library catalog. *Dog Man* wins. I've checked with colleagues and learned this is a citywide phenomenon: the winner is invariably *Dog Man*.

After we talk about how to request *Dog Man* for sidewalk pickup, it's time for questions. These are usually, but not always, about the library. My favorite was when the discussion veered off into personal questions and ended up with my guinea pigs meeting a student's guinea pigs. All the guinea pigs sniffed the screen, no doubt wondering if it was edible.

Seeing the students' faces is truly the highlight of my week, and I can't wait to see them, and all of you, in person again.

—Margaret Rodriguez was our children's librarian for many years and is now the Children's Librarian at the Asian Branch.

## 37 Hours Later.... —by Ruby Long



The Friends of PAL sent an email asking for help, Joanna Smith called and emailed folks who lived nearby, and 37 hours later, at 9:30 on the morning of January 23, twenty neighborhood volunteers gathered with rakes and brooms at the walkway between the Piedmont Avenue Library and the abandoned Child Development Center next door. Each person took a trash bag, and began clearing the leaf covered area.

That pathway had been covered in dead leaves for months, so there was plenty of work for all the crew. Adding to the leaves were small branches, blown to the ground in recent heavy winds. The bags were strong enough to hold whatever was put into them. Community feeling was the dominant tone as people shared bags with folks they didn't know. One person pulled a crumpled box from the sidewalk and designated it for non-biodegradable trash. Plastic bags and cups went into it.

After about an hour, the site began to look like a different place. John and Renate Woodbury had filled bags and dragged them to the front, by the bench. Ruby

Long had broken up twigs and branches so they'd fit into the bags better. Christine Abrams swept and raked leaves, and Joanna Smith organized space for the full bags and cleaned under and around the bench. It was a great show of community.

But that's not all. Several folks noticed that the street drain was completely covered with leaves, compacted from cars parking on it, and they set to work getting it cleared and cleaned. Every tool available was put to use as digging, poking, pulling were all employed, and bit by bit the grating was exposed, the gunk was bagged and dragged to the bench site.

While this was happening, Joanna's neighborhood friend Larry arrived in his pickup to load the bags and take them to a disposal site.

A morning well spent on a task that makes the area look ever so much better.

Thank you, Joanna for organizing it and thanks to everyone who made it happen. We did good.

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



During and after the clean up at the CDC Building January 2021

The  
Bookworm  
Recommends



## Never Caught: The Story of Ona Judge

by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Kathleen Van Cleeve

### George and Martha Washington Behaving Badly

This fascinating book by Erica Armstrong Dunbar and Kathleen Van Cleeve raises the question—how did an admirable man like George Washington justify owning slaves? We don't hear negative things about Washington very often, so it is amazing to hear the story of his pursuit of Ona Judge, a young woman who escaped from George and Martha Washington's household. We have the details of the story because Judge gave in-depth interviews about her life and escape to two abolitionist newspapers-- The Granite Freeman in May of 1845 and two years later in a second paper, The Liberator . She wanted to be free and, despite a life of poverty, she had no regrets.

This book is a young adult's edition based on *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* by historian Erica Armstrong Dunbar. Both the young adult version and the original publication are well researched and include copies of primary documents such as the interview in the Granite Freeman and the Washingtons' May 23, 1796 Philadelphia Gazette advertisement offering a \$10 payment to anyone who tracked down their "absconded" slave.

Detailed information about individual slaves is scarce and the books greatly increase our knowledge about the relationship between slaves and their masters. Judge was Martha Washington's maid who travelled with the household to Pennsylvania for the meetings that established the new U. S. government. Pennsylvania restricted slavery and the Washingtons, warned by other slaveowners, ensured that their slaves were sent back to Virginia before they could qualify for freedom. When Ona heard that she was being sent South, she escaped. For years, Washington offered rewards, sent agents to kidnap her in New England, and wrote angry letters accusing her of being ungrateful because he felt she had been treated well in their household. Even after Washington left the presidency, he pursued Judge. Not until his death did he free many of his other slaves. It seems that he agreed with Virginia law of the time that he alone had the right to decide who was enslaved and who was free. He did not believe that the slaves themselves, like Ona Judge, had the right to make that decision.

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—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.

**“The branch library is not a luxury but an essential public good. It provides a safe place for kids to read and learn after school, along with many educational programs for community members of all ages.”** Survey 10-/1 - 12/31/19 conducted by Friends of PAL

## Different Branches Getting Together



There are 16 neighborhood branches in the Oakland Public Library system and most of them have a Friends Group – like FOPAL, Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library.

The Branch Friends Network was set up as a way for members of those different branch groups to get together twice a year to discuss issues of mutual interest, but, due to the pandemic, the last meeting of the network was over a year ago in January 2020. Now we are happy to announce the first ever Virtual Branch Friends Network meeting on Monday, March 15 via Zoom.

### AGENDA:

General Meeting—4-5pm

- Introductions and welcome
- Library budget update will be presented by the OPL Administration
- The Bookmark Bookstore’s new shopping options
- A “how to” on how to participate in Council meetings and contact Council members will be presented by the OPL Advocates
- Branch spotlight

Optional social time—5-5:30pm

RSVP to Sara DuBois at [sdubois@oaklandlibrary.org](mailto:sdubois@oaklandlibrary.org) for zoom information.



## Celebrate Black History Month with Your Library!

**AAMLO & OPL are hosting numerous virtual events at the OPL website.**

**Black Culture Fest** - Celebrate the joy, beauty, and heritage of Black children and their families and communities.

Children’s librarian Mahasin Abuwi Aleem, will read stories that reflect the joy, beauty, and heritage of Black children and their families and communities. This is a recorded program that will air online on February 22, 2021 at 11:00 at <https://www.facebook.com/Oaklibrary>. You can also enjoy it later on the OPL YouTube channel.

## What’s Happening at the Library

Effective March 16, 2020 the Oakland Public Library closed all Library locations to help limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). These closures will remain in effect until further notice. There is curbside sidewalk service at Piedmont Ave Library Tuesday – Saturday, 10am to 1pm. You can pick up books, DVDs, CDs and WiFi hotspots. To find out how, go to <https://oaklandlibrary.org/services/cards-and-visiting/sidewalk-pickup-oakland-public-library>