



# Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library

# HOOT

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S  
FIT TO HOOT!

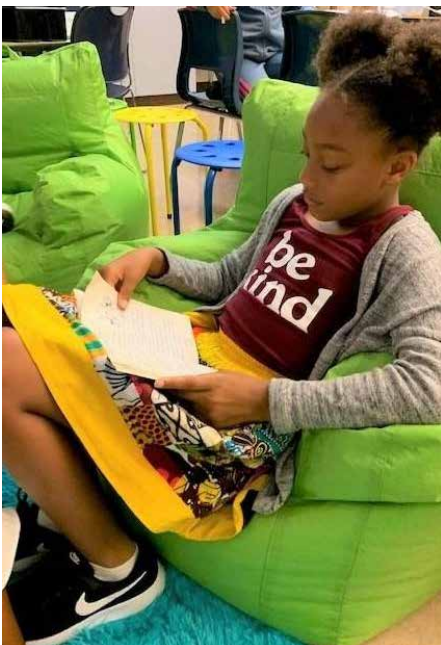
[www.FriendsofPAL.org](http://www.FriendsofPAL.org)

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SUPPORTING THE PIEDMONT AVENUE BRANCH, OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

August 15, 2021

## Updates and Info from Leni Mathews, our Branch Manager



**Yes!** We have a children's librarian, Shani Boyd. Shani is new to the OPL system. She previously worked in another Bay Area public library. Shani is bilingual-Spanish.

**School visits** may happen both at the school and virtually. There may be outdoor visits depending on the teachers' needs.

**Activities**, like Build Fridays or Crochet Sessions and the many others the library hosted before COVID, are still postponed until further notice.

**New books** for adults are being ordered. There is a suggestion sheet in the library for patrons.

**We have** an address number on the building.

**There are** some aesthetic changes in the children's area.

**We are looking** forward to a power wash of the outer building and a carpet cleaning in the near future.

**For the month** of August, the PAL community checked out 7,388 items, which is about 60% of the pre-pandemic circulation, but growing!

## Be a Friend of PAL

Attend our meeting in person Tuesday, September 21st at 6:30 pm at the library. It will be wonderful to see you all again as we work to support our library.

The Friends are seeking to fill two volunteer positions on the Board - Treasurer and Social Media Coordinator. To learn more please email [contact@friendsofpal.org](mailto:contact@friendsofpal.org).



## Your Library Goes to the John Street Jumble

If you missed the John Street Jumble this year, too bad. It was a great opportunity to grab a bargain, check out what the neighbors were selling, listen in on the latest gossip and help support our library.

On a lovely day for an outdoor event, the Jumble spread over several streets, and as you walked along you could find just about anything you wanted and some things you didn't know you wanted till you saw them. For instance: a fondue kit, bed linens and tablecloths, a broken rocking chair, picture frames – some empty, some filled – and lots of books in a wide range of subjects.

Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library was well represented by several volunteers. Ronile Lahti, Joanna Smith, Peg Janosch, Pam Feack, Christen Soares, Arlene Feng, Ski Grabowski and I were all there, selling t-shirts, taking donations, and telling neighbors about our library. Some people didn't realize there is a library in our neighborhood! Many others didn't know it was open again after the COVID shutdown. Names were added to the Friends of PAL mailing list so we could stay in touch. We gave away stickers, designed by Gail Jara, with our owl saying, "Come to the library."

A big hit among the children was the opportunity to design and make their own button. There was often a line waiting to be next, and we saw many one-of-a-kind buttons as a result of their efforts. Several kids took home choices from the free books on display. And there were lots of kids, some on shoulders, others in strollers or holding hands with a mom or dad, great candidates for Baby Café or a Teen Pop-Up Program when they're up and running again.

Free cookies and fresh coffee were provided for the volunteers at the library table. That's where you could buy your own HOOT Book Bag, get a library t-shirt or make a donation. \$165 was collected from those efforts.

The Jumble provided a chance to get a bargain as well as time to say hi to neighbors you hadn't seen for a while. In addition, and perhaps best, it gave us an occasion to renew the feeling of community that's part of living in the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood.

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*By Ruby Long, a neighbor whose work has appeared in local and national publications.*



Friends of PAL information & button making center



## Save the Dates for OPL Meetings and Events



The Fall Branch Friends Network meeting will take place (via zoom) on Thursday, September 30th, from 4 to 5:30 pm. The Branch Friends Network is made up of members from each branch of the Oakland Public Library where there is a Friends group like our Friends of Piedmont Avenue Library -- Friends of PAL. On the agenda are presentations by Mercedes Rodriguez from the West Oakland Library Friends (WOLF) and reps from the Martin Luther King library describing its over 100 years of service to their community. To sign up for the zoom link, RSVP to Sara DuBois at [sdubois@oaklandlibrary.org](mailto:sdubois@oaklandlibrary.org).

*Once again, we're zooming the annual Holiday Mixer co-hosted by Oakland's Library Advisory Commission and the Friends of OPL and scheduled for Sunday, December 5, at 1pm. Watch your mailbox for your invitation.*

## What's Happening at the Library

### Sunday Closed

Monday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Friday: 12 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Our library is open six days per week and open until 8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The chairs and tables are back in use, and the computer is available again, but no programs like Baby Cafe or Berkeley Rep Docent Talks yet.



“Political history is far too criminal and pathological to be a fit subject of study for the young.”

Children should acquire their heroes and villains from fiction.”

— W. H. Auden

*Original art by S. B.  
High School Freshman*



Find out more about Friends of Pal at our website.

## The Avid Reader By Louis Segal

I've been an avid reader since I could read. In high school I used to cut school to read in the Berkeley Public Library. I'm writing this column to share some of the books I love. I hope, perhaps, you might grow to love a few of them.



Some folks, including your faithful correspondent, find both consolation and wisdom in reading history. History, after all, is not just something that happens to us. History is also something that we can shape, from time to time, to make a better world. We live now in perilous times, our polity is ripped asunder, and often it seems that we are sliding inextricably into paroxysms of violence. Books on the Civil War and Reconstruction can give us hope in these difficult times. I have found two books, along with Eric Foner's *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution* (2019), reviewed in this column earlier this year, that inspire hope. Those books are Gary Wills' *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America* (1990) and David S. Reynolds's recent *Abe: Abraham Lincoln in His Times* (2020).

Wills' book is short and elegant. He looks at the Gettysburg Address - delivered midway through the Civil War - as a moment of a profound transition in how the U. S. began to see itself as a singular union not a motley confederation of sovereignties and how our republic, "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal" began a move, albeit slowly, towards that more perfect union. Along the way, Wills, a trained classicist, compares Lincoln's speech with four other funeral orations, and reveals the common literary foundations - the Bible, Shakespeare and Blackstone's *Blackstone's Legal Commentaries* - between Lincoln and the US reading public. If you like this book, I commend you to read more of Wills. He's a national treasure.

*Abe: Abraham Lincoln in His Times* is long, inelegant, and, if you are a history buff, fascinating. Reynolds is a cultural historian and has written books on John Brown, Walt Whitman, and the American Renaissance. He is interested in exploring the links between high culture and popular culture and this is how he approaches his study of Lincoln. And so, he does: frontier humor, law and culture, the emergence of abolitionism and its effects on the ambitious and cautious Lincoln, trapeze artists, P.T. Barnum, theater, novels, the "Wide Awake" B'hoys, and the vagaries of war, all, are part of Reynolds's tapestry. At times Reynolds slips into hagiographic clichés of praise and I wish he had given props to Wills' foundational book. But as we slouch towards bedlam in the pandemic's solitude the republic's discontents, this book might provide comfort and consolation. Read on!

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*Louis was born in Oakland, raised his family in Oakland, dropped out of school in 1968, worked many jobs over the decades, dropped back into school in the 80s, got a Ph.D. in history, taught as an adjunct professor from 1993 to 2015. Retired but not withdrawn.*