



# Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library

# HOOT

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S  
FIT TO HOOT!

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

Volume 6 No. 2

SUPPORTING THE PIEDMONT AVENUE BRANCH, OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

November 15, 2021



## Our library is open six days per week!



### 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.



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.

## A Big Welcome For Shani Boyd

Shani Boyd, the Children's Librarian at Piedmont Avenue Library, has many challenges to deal with in her new job and lots of energy to face them.

She chose to specialize in children's librarianship largely because she got so much satisfaction from reading fantasy when she was growing up. As early as middle school in Marin, she was serving as part of a teen advisory group for the local library.

Still living in Marin, she drives here every day to develop programs for children, order materials, and support students in the community. It is a challenge these Covid days to provide activities for the kids while keeping them safe, so part of the job includes wiping down toys for check-out after they are used and before they go back out. And she figures out how to do Storytime with proper distancing. Not the kind of problems that usually come to mind when you think of a librarian's job. But since August, Shani has been here every day, doing all that and taking her turn at staffing the circulation desk, too.

Shani came to our library immediately after she received a Master's in Library Science from San Jose State, preceded by an undergraduate degree from University of the Pacific, so she is still getting acquainted with the job, her work team, and the community. But she has many ideas, much enthusiasm and she is eager to help keep Piedmont Avenue Library the community resource it has always been.

Just what we are looking for.

So, when you are there, say hi, welcome, and thank you to Shani Boyd.



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

## Read-A-Thon

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Our 2nd annual Piedmont Avenue Elementary School PTA Read-A-Thon fundraiser is in full swing this month through November 30th. We're using a site called ReadAFun (<https://www.readafun.com/>) to manage it and the kids are having a blast tracking their reading and soliciting donations from their family and friends. On the ReadAFun website, the kids are able to log their books and minutes read daily, send emails asking for donations, as well as thanks for those donations. They also get points that they can use to modify their owl avatar with things like sunglasses and hats

and other fun things. Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 through this event, which will help fund programs like field trips, STEM curriculum, music programs and other support for our Title One school. The Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library have generously donated gift certificates to local book stores which will be used as prizes for kids with the most minutes read. Check us out at <https://pta.paeschool.org/> for more information.

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—Christen Soares

## The Friends of PAL were at the Piedmont Avenue Halloween Parade!

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We gave away 200 free books, Halloween treats, our new bookmarks with library hours, and neighborhood children made 80 big buttons with pictures of our owl. We spoke to our neighbors, told them about our library, and added names to our mailing list. We had so much fun supporting our library



**Hear about all the progress the Oakland Public Library has made in 2021, despite the pandemic, at this event hosted by the Friends of the Oakland Public Library and the City of Oakland Library Advisory Commission on December 5th.**

Last year's event was a smash hit, and we look forward to another virtual celebration until we can all be under the same roof again.

On December 5th, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm, we'll hear from some of our beloved library staff on topics such as the reopening of libraries, the brand new OPL website, and more:

1. "Teen Take & Makes," - Sharon McKellar and Katrina Deans, Teen Services Department
2. East Oakland Outreach and Community Engagement Team Presentation
3. "The Bookworms Book Club," - Sally Engelfried, Children's Librarian at 81st Avenue Branch
4. Poetry reading from 2021 Youth Poet Laureate, Myra Estrada.

Register at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5301569](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5301569) to get your free ticket to join us on Sunday, December 5th.



## Be a Friend of PAL

Attend our meeting in person Tuesday, November 16th at 6:30 pm at the library. Join us in these exciting times as we work to support our library.

The Friends are still 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).

If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.

— Albert Einstein



## The FOPL Bookmark Bookstore will turn 30 in November 2022 and is celebrating for a year.

Every weekend for the next year, beginning November 6, everything in the store will be 30% off. The store is open from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm Wednesday through Sunday, at 721 Washington Street.



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.



### A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall

George Stewart was not a native Californian, but he spent most of his last six decades in the Bay Area. Trained in literature and history, he was also a wordsmith, a geologist, a geographer, a historian, a philosopher, and a novelist. From 1923 he taught English at UC Berkeley. I have brief memories of meeting him when I was 12 or so. He seemed unbearably old and thin and after a few minutes of stilted conversation I ran outside to play Strike-out with my friends. Oh, if I knew then what I know now I'd gladly give up all my baseball dreams to spend a single afternoon with him!

Stewart's most famous book was the 1949 *Earth Abides*, a book beloved by generations of adults and school kids. *Earth Abides* was a strange book for an academic to write, a dystopian futuristic novel that ends with humble redemption. It won the inaugural International Fantasy Award in 1951. And the book still has legs. My wife and I each read the book, our parents read the book and our grandson, too, will, I'm sure, read it in the 2030s. Part of the joy of the book is its deep and learned meditation on the role that humans play on Earth and more importantly the role the Earth plays on humans.

Stewart wrote many other learned toponymic, historical, and literary books. *Fire* [1948] and *Storm* [1941] and *Earth Abides* are considered among the first eco-novels, novels where the protagonists, indeed the heroes, are Fire, Storm and Earth [cf., today's *The Overstory*]. We humans are merely the foils subjected to powerful natural forces. We are neither immortal nor all powerful. We might seek dominion over the land and the waters, the flora and the fauna, the winds, and the elements, but we remain here only at the long sufferance of our exquisite, inter-connected Gaia.

In honor of the recent wave of 'atmospheric rivers,' I revisited Stewart's *Storm*, an extraordinary novel of the twelve-day life cycle of a Pacific storm from its inception in "death cold Verkhoyansk," to its sojourn over the ocean to the storm's full maturity and death rattles along the peaks of the Sierra Nevada. The thematic concerns are the path of the storm, how people and organizations responsible for dealing with the storm adjust to its force and trajectory, and how the storm effects the land, the people, and the social fabric. This book is a learned treatise on meteorology, a gripping tale of humans in crisis, a profound meditation on geologic time, on human nature, and on the vast and impersonal nature of the solar system. Scattered liberally along the way there are etymological treasures, dollops of California history, eclectic and curious selections from a naturalist's catalogue, and occasional transcendently lyrical passages on the majestic rhythms of nature.

If you are interested in a longer review of Stewart's work, see the November 2011 Harpers, or check out <http://georgerstewart.com/>

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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.*