



# Friends of the Oakley Library Newsletter

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## Long Time, No See!

We at the Friends of the Oakley Library are happy to greet both old and new members with the return of our e-newsletter! If you're receiving this, we're very appreciative of your support and we'd like to update you on our activities and progress from the last several months. The return of these newsletters have been a long time coming, and we're excited to share what we've been up to so that you know exactly what your support has meant to the Oakley Library and, by extension, the City at large.

## Friends of the Oakley Library Named California Nonprofit of the Year



As selected by California State Assemblywoman Lori Wilson (District 11), Friends of the Oakley Library received the honor of being named California Nonprofit of the Year. This honor was achieved in large part due to a \$15,000 grant from the City of Oakley, which helped the Friends

sponsor numerous Oakley Library programs and activities, as well as giving us the means to provide more outreach to Oakley residents about our mission. Ahead of a June 7 celebratory luncheon at the Capitol, Friends President Lorena Campos' acceptance of the award was quoted by The Press:

"Volunteers with the Friends support the Oakley Library in transforming the lives of everyone in our community every day, and we are deeply humbled to be recognized by Assemblywoman Lori Wilson as a 2023 Nonprofit of the Year."

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## We've Been Busy!

2023 was a busy year for the Friends of the Oakley Library. In the past several months, the Friends either attended or helped sponsor the following activities:

The City of Oakley Juneteenth Celebration on June 17th, during which we had our own table dedicated to our support for the important anniversary;

Dance Around the World at Civic Center Park on June 27th during which we lent our support to an Oakley Library event that helped children and families experience the music and dance of a variety of different cultures;

Summerfest on July 1st where the Friends had their own table indoors dedicated to providing outreach during the City's summer event;

ARPA Grant Presentation on August 8th in the City Council chambers, the goals of which will be outlined in the following section of this newsletter.

A booth at the annual Oakley Oaktoberfest on October 21st;

A well-attended "Howl la la Boo" celebration on October 24th at the library, a costume party complete with crafts, games, a Halloween story, and a kid-friendly marionette show;

A Noon Years' Eve party on December 30th, for all ages, complete with games, crafts, and a balloon drop at noon.



## Our Goals for 2023-2024

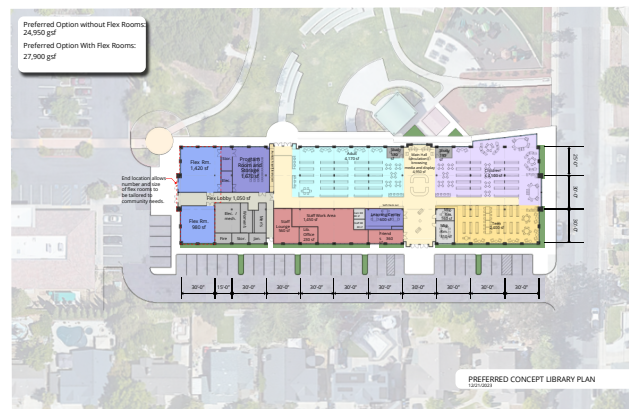
As outlined in our grant request to the City of Oakley, our goals for 2023-2024 are thus:

Provide quality programming for the Oakley Library;

Increase visibility, awareness, and membership of both the Oakley Library and Friends of the Oakley Library;

Support the City of Oakley's efforts to build a new library.

## Vacant Sheriff's Building is No More; City Council Updates



As you may have already heard, the old Contra Costa County Sheriff's building located off O'Hara Avenue has now been demolished. It had been vacant for several years, and prior to its existence as a sheriff's office it once served as the location of the Oakley Library itself. History could repeat itself, as the site is seen as a potentially viable location for a brand new Oakley Library.

As for the library project itself, the recent November 14th City Council meeting provided some much-needed updates. City Manager McMurray noted that \$9 million is available to put into the project right now. While this would provide roughly a 9,000 square foot building right now, these numbers are down from the \$25 million number needed to fulfill the vision of the library the city deserves, and additional funding is being looked into. Liz Fuller, our treasurer, noted with her thirty years of library experience that 9,000 square feet is simply not big enough, and will inevitably need an expansion. It will be more expensive to expand later, so better to front the costs now.



## Remembering Linda

We'd be remiss if we didn't mention the passing of our former President and Treasurer, Linda Pennock, on June 2nd. She supported and anchored our organization for many years, and a memorial fund in her name aimed at supporting early literacy has been established at the request of her family.

Please visit the Friends of the Oakley Library website for more details:

[https://www.oakleylibrary.org/honoring\\_linda\\_pennock](https://www.oakleylibrary.org/honoring_linda_pennock)

## Additional Notes

If you have a green thumb, don't be afraid to visit our Seed Library, located near the gardening books at the library. Bring some seeds of your own to exchange so that everyone can join in the fun!

The Contra Costa County Library has introduced the Rolling Reader, an all-electric, early literacy outreach van designed to visit underserved communities across the county.

We're looking to have both Board Elections and a General Membership meeting very soon, so keep an eye out!

## Closing Thoughts

2022-2023 was a hugely successful time for the Oakley Library and Friends. As mentioned in our grant presentation, foot traffic, library card signups, program attendance, Friends memberships, and income all increased over the life of the grant. Visibility and awareness of programs, program services, and the goal of a new library also grew over that period, leading to the Friends and its relationships to become stronger as a result. We can only hope that the 2023-2024 year can lead to even greater success, and as a member of the Friends of the Oakley Library, we hope that you will continue to play a large part in it. We truly appreciate and value



your continued membership, and if you would like to help or contribute even more to our efforts, please don't hesitate to visit our website (links below) and tell a friend who you think may be interested in supporting the Oakley Library as well. We hope to see you at a future general membership meeting!

<https://www.oakleylibrary.org>

## Get to Know Us!



### Lorena Campos

President

"I am a third generation resident of Oakley and when I'm not working I enjoy dedicating my time to support our City library. I still remember the excitement of getting my first library card and how amazed I was at the access it gave me; it opened a door into a community I could take part in as a young child. I love to showcase the value of our library resources and I look forward to the day when Oakley has its own full fledged Library building to serve our growing City."

### Arnold Fitzpatrick

Vice President

"For me, libraries play an important role in communities and in society. From storytime programming, to teen activities, to adult programs, libraries are lifelong learning centers that impact everyone from preschool age to after school years. A number of these programs require funds and volunteers beyond what is provided by the city and the county. The Friends of the Oakley Library steps into that role to obtain volunteers and fundraise to provide funds to keep the library and its programming possible."

### Liz Fuller

Treasurer

"I worked for the Contra Costa County Library system for 30 years, including a two-year stint as the Oakley Library Youth Services Librarian, and four years as the manager. I love libraries and know what potential they have to enrich people's lives. I am looking forward to attending a state-of-the-art, stand-alone public library in Oakley in the not-too-distant future!"

### Nancy Huffaker

Secretary

"My name is Nancy Huffaker, Secretary for the Friends of the Oakley Library and Oakley resident for over 44 years. My late husband and I raised our children in Oakley, and I taught in the schools here as well."

I love to read and the library has always been a special place for me since I was young, and it was a great resource for me as a teacher.

"I currently teach adults in an ESL (English as a Second Language) class. Libraries are or newly arrived adults from other countries, as they provide computers to help these adults hunt for jobs in addition to providing resources to improve their English.

"I look forward to the day when we will have a 'standalone' library that can meet the needs of our community and be a place where college, high school, and community groups can study or meet. Our current library staff does an amazing job with programming for children of all ages, but just imagine what they could do with a larger space with modern facilities!"

### Joy Kick

#### Book Sales Volunteer

"I love to read and I love libraries! In another life, I'd have chosen a career in library science. Thankfully, I get to do the next best thing in my retirement volunteer job in which I sort through book donations to the Friends of the Oakley Library and display these books for sale just inside the library doors. We offer gently used books for all ages and interests, hardback or paper, for anywhere between just \$0.25 to \$1 each. Come by and browse our great selection! All purchases support the library."