



MAIN LIBRARY ON CIVIC CENTER PLAZA

# FRIENDS OF THE RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY



## ROLE OF LIBRARIES

## The Role of Libraries

By Christine Volker

**We reached out to community residents and our members about their perspectives on libraries and the Friends.**

**For many, libraries evoke childhood memories - and sometimes a hint of romance.**

**Read on to hear about their experiences:**

*"My fondness for libraries dates back to when I was a child. When I would ask my father a question he couldn't answer, he'd say, "Let's go look it up at the library." We would then walk a couple of blocks to the Carnegie Library. Public libraries are our only cradle-to-grave educational institutions.*

*The Friends of the Library supplement the inadequate budget of the Library."*

***Rosemary Corbin, Past Mayor of Richmond***

*"I have such fond memories of our library. I was small when it was built and I have always loved the physical structure as well as it being the Library.*

*Before we started dating, my husband and I used to meet at the Library in the evenings when we were in High School. To study.*

*Libraries are community living rooms, especially now when they include cafes, art exhibits, meeting rooms, a variety of programs, etc. And because they are available to everyone, everyone now has access to information and technology.*

*The question is: why doesn't everyone support the Friends of the Library?"*

***Sandi Genser-Maack, President, The Richmond Public Library Foundation***

*"I used the library in school and now I'm a senior citizen. The importance of the library is to be able to supply all the resources available to all. I support the library because it has always had such a great impact on my life. I love the idea it is to be used*

*for all the generations under me and available for whatever way others use it. It's such a great place for all types of educational tools. The library or the Friends of the Library can do more for children or teenagers. I love going to the library when I feel the urge and it simply puts a smile on my face."*

**Annette Thomas**

*"The San Pablo Library in the 1950's was next to Dover Elementary School where I attended Kindergarten through 6th grade. As the daughter of a middle-aged Italian immigrant father, my first language was Italian and although we subscribed to the "Richmond Independent" newspaper, we didn't buy books or magazine subscriptions. Having a library near the elementary school allowed me to take books home, improve my reading skills and learn about people and places.*

*Public libraries are important because they are free, offer enjoyment, diversion and life-long learning. I know people buy books but I never thought it was prudent unless it was a special book.*

*I support the Friends of the Richmond Public Library because of the important influence libraries had in my life. I think the Richmond Public Library is one of the best things in Richmond. The selections are up to date and the reference librarians have always been helpful and knowledgeable.*

*The Richmond Public Library and the Friends are doing a fine job giving support to our diverse community. The alcove offering books for sale is inviting."*

**Margaret Accornero Baker**

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**Teen Librarian, Angela Cox, interviewed Justin Rodriguez, a Richmond teenager and member of the Richmond Youth Council. Here's a summary of his comments:**

Justin noted that many young people perform research for school remotely. He feels that personal contact with library staff is important because through that dialog,

students can be introduced to strategies and information sources which they may not have considered.

Justin's favorite book is Barack Obama's **Dreams from my Father** which reveals an ordinary man with flaws and obstacles that he overcame. It's the account of a person from an underprivileged background, who rose to prominence through hard work.

He feels that the Richmond Public Library could serve students better with: 1) newspaper and periodical databases, 2) a café where students could eat as well as study, 3) study rooms for group projects, 4) A Homework Help program for middle and high school students. He views the Library's S.A.T. Workshop, sponsored by the Friends of the Richmond Public Library, as a real asset.



**Justin Rodriguez**

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**Thank you for these observations and comments!**

**One of the Richmond Public Library's longstanding programs is Homework Help.**

Twice a week during the school year, the Richmond Public Library offers free homework assistance to students in grades K – 6. Over two hundred children have benefited from the program this year.

We sat down with Christina Nypaver, Children's Librarian, to find out more.

***For how many years has the Library held Homework Help sessions?***

More than ten years.

***What exactly is the type of help offered? Why is it necessary?***

More homework is being assigned by teachers. Many of the children in our community come from homes where the parents do not speak English well, or at all, and where parents cannot afford money for tutors. We are hoping to break a cycle of language and literacy barriers holding people back.

The adults volunteering at **Homework Help** assist students in understanding their homework assignments, help with sample questions and explain the thinking behind the solutions to problems. The students are responsible for actually completing the homework. The homework can involve math, grammar, or any other subject.

**Homework Help** is offered for a total of five hours a week.

***How many volunteer tutors are helping?***

Currently we have nine volunteer tutors. Some of the tutors come one day per week and others are here both days. Not all kids come every day. Sometimes we'll have 20, other days, 35. I like to aim at a ratio of 2-3 students per volunteer.

***What future plans do you have for Homework Help?***

It's been a very successful program. We've had students come back years later, telling us how much the **Homework Help** program assisted them.

We've also had teenagers volunteer to tutor younger children because they were inspired by what a difference the tutors make in children's lives. So we will definitely repeat it in the fall.

I'm also excited about a summer program we're planning which will give many children the opportunity to strengthen their reading skills and keep those skills growing. Summer break can represent an academic backward slide for any child, but it can be especially damaging for children who are already struggling to keep up in school.

***Please tell us more about that summer program.***

We're calling it "Richmond Reading Heroes". Sometimes by reading well, you can help someone else. That makes you a hero. The program will be open to children going into grades 1 – 5 in the fall. We are especially interested in helping children who do not already have a grown up available to read with them in English, either because of language barriers or literacy issues.

Students participating in this program would read with a volunteer tutor for thirty minutes. Currently, we're planning to offer the program two days per week. A children's librarian will be available to help the children in choosing a suitable book to read with the tutor. Given the individual attention needed, the half-hour appointments will be formalized, with sign-ups at the Children's desk.

We're looking for outside funds, hopefully from the Friends of the Richmond Public Library, to purchase additional easy reader books for this program, which then would make their way into the permanent collection in the fall.

**Richmond Reading Heroes will start on June 16 and take place Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons from 3 to 5 PM, continuing until August 14.** Children in the program will be encouraged to enter our summer reading game, where they can make additional reading accomplishments and earn prizes.

***Sounds like you'll have a busy summer!***

I look forward to coordinating this program and helping to connect students with the caring adult volunteers who make such a huge difference in the children's school success and in also in the children's aspirations for the future. I like the name "Reading Heroes" very much, because to me, our adult and teen volunteers are real heroes, generously donating their time and talents to improve the lives of local children and strengthen our community.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our Homework Help tutors, some of whom started working with us last September, and also those who have been with us for many years.



*Christina and Skakiara*



*Roger and a student*

We certainly couldn't do without them!

- Antonieta Franco
- Christine Volker
- Daniel Bort
- Jerry Richardson
- Judy Pordes
- Michele Ramos
- Paul Wilson
- Rick Jason
- Roger Gies
- Ruby Law
- Shakiara Ward

Some volunteers prefer to remain anonymous, but the results of their efforts continue to shine!

***Please contact Christina Nypaver at  
620- 5495 if you would like to volunteer for  
Richmond Reading Heroes  
and help kids improve their reading skills  
this summer.  
(Volunteers may participate for two hours,  
one or two days per week)***

## Goings On: Activities and Sponsorships

### March and April

The Friends sponsored a series of SAT Preparation Workshops for students, organized by Teen Librarian, Angela Cox. These took place on successive Saturdays.

#### March 9

Emma Clark and Christine Volker presented material about the Friends to the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council, and earlier to their Board.

#### March 28<sup>th</sup> – Emma J. Clark Day in Richmond



Mayor Tom Butt proclaimed March 28, 2015 as Emma J. Clark Day. Congratulations to Emma on this outstanding achievement! The official recognition of her many contributions to the City of Richmond, including as a librarian and also President of our organization, is heartwarming.

### May

#### Zentangles

Meditative Drawing. Come and de-stress by diving into drawing.

**May 12** at 5:30 – 6:30 at Bayview Branch Library, 5100 Hartnett, Richmond, 94804



#### The Friends of the Richmond Public Library: Annual Meeting and Secret Tour of the Library



**Saturday, May 16** at 1:30 PM at Main Library, Whittlesey Room, 325 Civic Center, Richmond, 94804

Come meet and learn secrets in this librarian-led tour, followed by refreshments. Free.

June

### Friday Night Music in the Library

Slow down, listen and enjoy the soothing sounds of local blues singers and guitarists at this free event.

#### Rev. Rabia & Keizo



**Friday, May 22, 6-7 PM** at Main Library, 325 Civic Center Plaza, 510-620-6561.

**Music and books do mix!**

Sponsored by the Friends of the Richmond Public Library.



### Author Mary Monroe



The successful author of the **God Don't Like Ugly** series, Mary will read and discuss her new book, **Bad Blood**.

**Saturday, June 20** at 2:00 PM

This free event will take place in the Main Library, Whittlesey Room, 2:00-3:00 PM, 510-620-6561

Sponsored by the Friends of the Richmond Public Library.

Book Passage will be offering copies of **Bad Blood** for purchase, with proceeds helping the Richmond Public Library Foundation.

## Don't Forget to Visit!



### Bayview Branch

5100 Hartnett Ave.  
Richmond, CA 94804  
510-620-6566

**Story Times for kids  
are on Mondays, at  
10:30 AM**



### West Side Branch

135 Washington Ave.  
Richmond, CA 94801  
510-620-6567

**Reopening once roof  
repairs completed.**

**Story Times for kids  
will then resume on  
Tuesdays at 9:30 and  
11 AM**

### The Friends' Book Nook at the Main Library

Book Bargains await you!

Only \$1.00 for hard cover, \$.50 paperback and Grab a Bag sales on first Wednesday of the month.

**Plus, Book Carts at West Side and Bayview.**

Payment at the reference desk.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Homework Help and Richmond Reading Heroes: Christina Nypaver at the Library**

**(510) 620-5495**

*Looking for Tutors*

**LEAP (Literacy for Every Adult Program): (510) 307-8084**

*Looking for Tutors, Instructors and Mentors*

**Friends of the Richmond Public Library (510) 620-6555**

**or via email at [FriendsRPLCA@yahoo.com](mailto:FriendsRPLCA@yahoo.com)**

*Looking for Book Sorters, Website Designers, Publicity Talent*