



MAIN LIBRARY ON CIVIC CENTER PLAZA

FRIENDS OF THE RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY



EARLY READING IS THE KEY

Jump Start on Reading

By Christine Volker

The Richmond Public Library has offered Story Time for as long as people can remember. What exactly is it? And why does the library put emphasis on this FREE program?

During Story Time, a librarian engages children by reading picture books or other stories to them. Listening to stories and learning new words are keys to a child's development.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents read to their children from birth. To succeed, a child needs basic literacy skills by the time (s)he enters school; without these they are 3 to 4 times more likely to drop out. Sadly, dropping out leads to individuals' unfilled potentials; in many communities, drop out levels are used to plan for prison capacity needs, a stark indication of where the future for some may lie.

It is estimated that a child from a professional family would hear around 11 million words annually, while a child from an economically disadvantaged family would hear 3 million.

The Richmond Public Library's free program helps to bolster children's vocabulary and development, evening the odds, along with providing a fun and positive group atmosphere for learning.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. In November I sat down with Sheila Dickinson, Children's Librarian to learn more. Here's what she had to say.

Tell me about your background.

I've been a professional for twenty years, working in the west. For the last eight, I've been a children's librarian here in Richmond. I come from a family of librarians and booksellers. Holidays around our home looked like a book festival! You could say that a love of reading and books is in my genes. So it was natural that I would study library and information science and get my MLS.

Why did you choose to be a children's librarian?

Despite all of the technological changes that have impacted libraries and other types of librarianship, work as a children's librarian continues to be rooted in strong personal relationships with kids and their parents. We connect and interact over the stories (Story Times date back to the 1930s) and other activities I organize.

What else should people know about Story Times?

We offer a total of five to ten Story Times per week, taking place in our three branches. They're listed in our website and also on flyers in the library. I also post these on my personal Facebook page. We try to keep to the same, predictable schedule, so parents and guardians can plan. Story Times are open to the public on a drop-in basis. Kids from ages zero on up are welcome to attend. Roughly 4,500 kids attended Story Time for the first nine months this year. Getting that exposure to words, and to vocabulary in children's early years is critical. Plus, kids have a lot of fun and get to experience the library as a friendly place.

How do you decide which books to read?

Generally I key off the seasons, holidays and cultural celebrations. November is Native American Heritage Month, so some of the stories I'll read to the kids will be related to that history or those beliefs, like the story of Raven putting the sun in the sky. I plan far ahead, generally one year, but it's flexible, so I can take advantage of anything that may come up in current events. Recently I featured stories on immigration and refugees.

How about outreach to kids in schools or those outside of the library?

We still have a commitment to this, but the new school curriculums, test schedules and other rules make it much harder to visit schools on a regular

basis. After school tutoring programs in many schools have been cut as well.

How have kids' tastes in stories changed during the years you have been doing Story Time?

Not surprisingly, 21st century kids have a shorter attention span than when I began this work 20 years ago. Their preferences are for more action and brighter colors. Humor continues to be popular and a big crowd pleaser; funny stories are a sure bet, especially if I don't know the kids attending a particular Story Time and what they like. I've always loved the natural world, and many kids don't get the chance to run around in the woods or parks as much as they'd like. I want to make sure that through stories, kids coming to Story Time can experience a bit of the wonder and beauty of nature, even in an urban environment like Richmond.

What would be your one wish to improve the experience of children and their parents with the library?

To hire more children's librarians! There is so much more that we could do if we had more people to help do it all!

With roughly 17,000 kids in Richmond, 18% of the population in poverty, 49% of Richmond families speaking a language other than English at home, and just two children's librarians plus one teen librarian to serve the huge numbers, the need to boost early reading is urgent.



Sheila leading Story Time at Bayview Branch



Art in the Library

By Christine Volker

Patrons of the **West Side Branch** have been enjoying the beautiful rendering of birds and flowers by young artists. The colors and images are glorious. If you haven't seen the art work, go ahead and visit. While you're there, borrow a book from the library, or a buy a book from the Friends' cart.

Below is a small selection of the artwork, along with the names of the artists.



2015 in Review

By Christine Volker

We were pleased to launch our new website in 2015. By now we hope that all of you have checked it out. The address is:

www.richmondlibraryfriends.org

Thank you to all of our members, donors of funds and books, book purchasers and volunteers!

We are also grateful to the **City of Richmond** employees who contribute to our efforts each year.

We would not achieve the impact we do without your support.

Reflecting our mission to be a transparent organization, we are sharing details below about our financial condition. You can see how funds you contribute are put to work. Following is a summary of our financial condition. (Our fiscal year is from 7/1 to 6/30.)

SELECTED INCOME STATEMENT and BALANCE SHEET CATEGORIES

*Six Months Ending 12/31/15
Fiscal Year Ending 6/30/15*

	6 Mos: 12/31/15	12 Mos: 6/30/15
Income Stmt:		
Donations	\$4,975	\$2,367
Books Sales	2,130	3,185
Membership	1,395	4,430
Other	100	1,088
Total Revenue	\$8,600	\$11,070
Admin Expenses	0	\$1,548
Library Programs	\$3,810	\$11,466
Net Income	\$4,790	-\$2,278
Admin Expense ÷ Total Income	0%	14%
Total Assets	\$42,334	\$38,189

After covering necessities such as postage and printing, our all-volunteer organization utilizes the rest of the funds we receive to sponsor current and future library programs.

We wish to specially recognize our Corporate, Sponsor and Patron members along with our In Memoriam donors.

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- Mark Roquet
- Elizabeth Soujourner

In Memoriam

Douglas Holtzman and Jennifer Smith in memory of Stephanie Kennedy

Westside Branch Library Book Club in memory of Leslie O'Hara

News Bits

By Christine Volker

A report, called the **Impact Survey**, was released recently, focusing on public library patrons across the country. Patrons' use of libraries' public computers or wireless connections was surveyed and analyzed. The variety of uses and the importance in people's lives was pretty interesting.

Following are key categories of the informational needs/activities of the 68% of overall library patrons who used the public library's computers/wireless services. So, for example, 32% of those patrons used the resource for employment purposes. (Since patrons can have more than one category of usage, the percentages below do not total 100%.)

- ✚ 37% - Social Engagement (keeping up with family and friends via technology)
- ✚ 32% - Employment (applying for jobs, receiving training, researching careers)
- ✚ 32% - Civic Engagement (keeping up with news, current events, civic/political activity)
- ✚ 31% Health and Wellness (finding out about diseases, exercise, learning about diets, applying for healthcare)
- ✚ 31% eCommerce (researching products, online travel arrangements, banking)
- ✚ 29%- eGovernment (applying for government programs, learning about government)
- ✚ 28% - Education (that means applying to schools, for scholarships, taking online courses, or doing research for a class, applying for financial aid)
- ✚ 8% - Entrepreneurship (researching, finding opportunities)

Happenings and Plans

By Christine Volker

We are starting to plan for our annual meeting and celebration toward the end of May. We will

keep you posted on the date. We invite members and non-members alike.

Activities



Adult Craft Projects

Main Library's Whittlesey Room, 325 Civic Center Plaza (510) 620-6561

All materials are free of charge

Wednesday, February 17 at 5:00PM – 6:45PM

Make a Duck tape pouch

Thursday, February 25 from 3:30PM – 5:00 PM

Grab Bag Surprise

Story Times Schedule

Mondays:

Bayview Branch

10:30 AM (Preschool)

Tuesdays:

West Side Branch

10:30 AM

Wednesdays:

Main Library at 10:30 AM

Saturdays:

Main Library at 12:00 PM

Don't Forget to Visit!

Bayview Branch

5100 Hartnett Ave.

Richmond, CA 94804

510-620-6566



West Side Branch

135 Washington Ave.

Richmond, CA 94801

510-620-6567

The Friends' Book Nook at the Main Library Book Carts at West Side and Bayview Branches

Book Bargains await you!

Only \$1.00 for hard cover, \$.50 paperback.

Payment at the Reference Desk.

"Grab a Bag" sales at Main Library on first Wednesday of the month (10 items for \$3).

Next "Grab a Bag" is March 2

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Friends of the Richmond Public Library

(510) 620-6555 or via email at

FriendsRPLCA@yahoo.com

We are seeking additional board members with accounting and publicity backgrounds. Email us at the above address. We are also looking for book sorters, website designers and publicity talent.



Homework Help: 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

CONGRATULATIONS TO LIBRARIAN KAREN ROY ON HER RETIREMENT

Thank you for your public service, Karen! Karen spent the last ten years bringing her enthusiasm and talent to Richmond Public Library patrons. We wish her all the best.

