

Grateful for Our Library Friends

Jamie Turbak, Library Director

Dear Friends,

For 75 years, the Oakland Public Library has benefited from the support of the Friends of the Oakland Public Library. And in this milestone year, the Friends have given the library two truly remarkable gifts:

- **\$260,000 in Annual Grants.** These grants support programs, services, and facility improvements for the entire system, touching each branch and department.
- **\$155,000 to support Special Projects.** These include a new Bike Fleet for library outreach, matching grants to support improvements at 81st Avenue and West Oakland branch libraries, the Main Library's 75th Anniversary events in 2026, East Oakland library clean-up projects, and updates to the Main Library's photo gallery.

Awarded on September 3, these grants are a significant investment in Oakland's public libraries, and my colleagues and I are deeply honored to receive them. We know that every dollar comes from membership dues, donations,



Friends of the Oakland Public Library Board of Directors

or Bookmark Bookstore sales, and that this also represents thousands of hours of service from hundreds of volunteers.

I thank everyone who made these grants possible: members, donors, book-shoppers, Bookmark Bookstore volunteers and managers, Friends volunteers, and the Board of Directors. Your contributions make a huge impact on the library and our community. Thanks to your generous support, the Oakland Public Library is looking forward to a busy and engaging year!

*Jamie Turbak
Thank you!*

THE BOOKMARK — BOOKSTORE —

933 Broadway, Oakland

(510) 444-0473 | www.fopl.org

All proceeds benefit the Oakland Public Library.

MONTHLY MEMBER SALES

Members receive 50% off on Saturday and everyone receives 30% off on Sunday.

October 18-19
November 15-16
December 20-21

Support the library while finding great deals!

DONATIONS

Material donations accepted at the Bookmark Bookstore on Fridays and Saturdays (except on sales weekends) from 12-4pm

The new Donation Center near the gated parking lot on 10th Street makes drop-offs easy! Please call to confirm before coming by: (510) 444-0473.

Get to Know Your Grants

By Sara DuBois, OPL Coordinator of Grants & Volunteers

Each summer, the library prepares a funding request to present to the Friends of the Oakland Public Library Board of Directors. Because we try to limit these requests to once per year, we call these "Annual Grants." But that's a deceptively simple name for this critically important funding...

Friends' Annual Grants allow the library to purchase supplies, register for outreach events, provide snacks for hungry teens, hold departmental planning retreats, support three scholarships for staff pursuing library degrees, beautify library grounds with garden enhancements, and make other improvements to library spaces and services.

The Annual Grants are also critical to library programming. Library programs are not only fun, inspiring, and informative, but they also build community. And for many OPL locations, the Friends of the OPL Annual Grants are the only source of funding for these important activities.

Most of the library programs funded by Annual Grants are for adults and teens. That's because Children's Programming at the library is supported by a coalition of funders, including the Friends of the OPL, through a dedicated account.

At right are just a few of the many programs, services, and enhancements funded by the 2024-25 Annual Grants from the Friends of the OPL. The library is excited to start a new cycle this October with the 2025-26 Annual Grants announced on page 1.

YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDS **HUNDREDS OF PROGRAMS** FOR OUR COMMUNITY.



Thank you for making all of this possible through your support for the Friends!

Get to Know Your Grants is a regular feature which highlights library activities that are supported by grants from the Friends of the OPL. Contact Sara at (510) 238-6572 or sdubois@oaklandlibrary.org for more information.

The Board Bids Farewell to Long-Time Director, Ronile Lahti



Do not be deceived by her kindly demeanor. Ronile Lahti is a fierce advocate. This lifelong Oakland resident and library fanatic has been fighting to protect Oakland's public libraries since the early 2000s. Ronile has worked phone banks and mobilized support for a veritable

alphabet soup of local measures to strengthen library service: Q, N, D, and C.

The Friends of the Oakland Public Library has been fortunate to have Ronile as a member of the Board of Directors since 2007, five of those years in the office of Secretary. After 18 years of dedicated service, we are sorry to share that Ronile is stepping down from the Board, although she's not backing away from the fight.

Ronile remains committed to volunteering with the OPL Advocates and with the Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library (FOPAL). FOPAL is working hard to find a new permanent home for Ronile's beloved neighborhood library, which has been operating from a portable structure on OUSD property since 2012.

Asked about her time on the Friends of the OPL Board, Ronile cites the Bookmark Bookstore's move to 933 Broadway as one of the high points. "It's such a good

location, and the foot traffic makes a big difference," said Ronile. Another bright spot for Ronile is the Branch Friends Network, a Friends initiative to connect the various library Friends groups throughout Oakland. This important informal network keeps the library's most active volunteers talking and trading good ideas.

A savvy advocate, Ronile understands the many angles of every issue and will (kindly) convince you to do whatever builds community and increases access to public libraries. So, it's no surprise that her advice for us is one of action: "Volunteer! Nothing gets done without volunteers."

Volunteer Opportunities at

THE BOOKMARK

— BOOKSTORE —

Join the Bookmark's amazing volunteer team during the store's Fall Recruitment drive!

Interested volunteers must be at least 17 years old and should plan for a regular 3-hour weekly commitment for at least six months.

To learn more or submit your application, visit

fopl.org/volunteer

Giving

Every gift can be a tribute gift! Please just let us know who you're thinking of when you donate online or via check. fopl.org/donate

- In memory of Lynn Bravewoman, from Carla Schick and Diana Curiel
- In memory of Eve Donlon, from Susan Papps
- In memory of Marlys Gaucher, from Sara Gaucher
- In memory of Mary Lou Jones, from Laila Halsteen
- In honor of Claudia Epple, from Ellen Jacobus
- In honor of Dr. Betts, from Gabriella Grisotti
- In honor of Mae Robbins, from Gary Hurd
- In honor of Ronile Lahti, for her many years of service on the Friends of the OPL board, from Tom and Winifred Walters
- In honor of Susan Papps, from Shannon Hackley
- In honor of Tavi Permutt, from Thomas Permutt
- In honor of Zara Quiter, from Edouard Kujawski
- In honor of the Oakland Public Library, with thanks for the many happy hours I spent at your library in 1953, as we slowly moved to Alaska from Los Angeles! From Jackie Musgrave
- Thank you, Mrs. Freeman, for your storytelling, singing and recommendations at Van Holten School Library in Bridgewater, NJ. You are the best school librarian ever! From Colleen Haikes

Friends of the OPL Board Members

- ✦ Ynez Arce, *Vice President*
- ✦ Mifta Chowdhury
- ✦ Noah Cohen
- ✦ Erica Dennings
- ✦ Elizabeth Falkner, *Secretary*
- ✦ Aniya Grimm
- ✦ Colleen Haikes
- ✦ Corey Hatcher
- ✦ Sara Jewell, *Treasurer*
- ✦ Diana Kaw
- ✦ Pooneh Koohyar
- ✦ Ronile Lahti
- ✦ Alexis Joseph Merritt
- ✦ Rebecca Pfiffner
- ✦ Glenn Poppe
- ✦ Kathryn Sterbenc, *President*

We welcome your feedback & comments:

info@fopl.org

If the date on your mailing label is **09-30-2025**
or earlier, PLEASE RENEW TODAY!

Annual Meeting of General Members (that's you!) November 5, 2025 at 5:15 pm

The Friends of the Oakland Public Library will hold its Annual Meeting of General Members on Wednesday, November 5 at 5:15 pm via Zoom.

In addition to hearing the President's Annual Report and voting for the Board of Directors, you can help the library and the Friends to honor Director Ronile Lahti, who will be stepping off the board after 18 years of service! (See page 3.)

If you would like to attend, email pres@fopl.org to receive the Zoom meeting details. Please note that this meeting is approximately 25 minutes in length and will adjourn no later than 5:45 pm.

We hope to see you there!

75th Anniversary Open House a Success

We marked our 75th year with an Open House on Saturday, September 27 at the Bookmark Bookstore. The Friends salute the hundreds if not thousands of volunteers who have helped us to reach this milestone: 75 years of supporting Oakland's public libraries!



75th Anniversary Committee Co-Chairs Diana Kaw and Colleen Haikes with 50th Anniversary Committee members Julie Waldman and Winifred Walters

To learn more about Friends of the Oakland Public Library, visit fopl.org.

The Friends of the Oakland Public Library is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Our tax ID is 94-2553734. All contributions are tax deductible.

THE BOOKMARK
— BOOKSTORE —

Erin Rivero, *Operations Manager*
Cheryl Liquori, *Volunteer Manager*
Lio Min, *Online Sales Manager*