



**Friends of the
Kensington
Library**
61 Arlington Avenue
Kensington
California 94707

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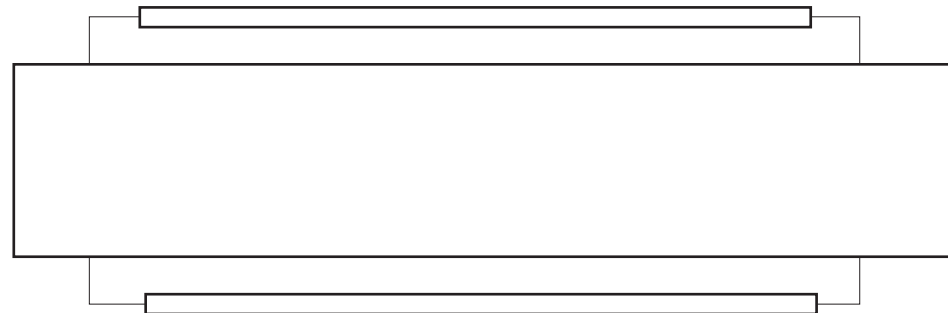


**Friends of the
Kensington Library**

Serving the Kensington Community

NOTES

Spring 2008



Programs and Events

Children

Baby/Toddler Storytime:
most Thursdays at 10:15am & 11:15am. Call library for dates

Children's Special Programs:
May 20 at 6:30pm: *Joy of Movement*,
with Liz Mac, accredited Nia instructor

August 28 at 3pm: *Art Workshop with Robbin Milne*
Elementary school children are invited to help design the
2009 West County Reads calendar

September 17 at 6:30pm: *Ventriloquist Randal McGee*
and his naughty dragon, *Groark*

October 28 at 6:30pm: *Bat Program with Patricia Winter*
from the California Bat Conservation Fund

Family Storytime:
Tuesdays at 7pm (when a special program is not scheduled)

Tweens (grades 4-6)

Manga Maniacs:
meets monthly (call the library for the schedule)

Crafts:
every other Monday at 3pm

Games:
every other Monday at 3pm

Summer Reading Program: Catch the Reading Bug June 17-August 23 (all ages)

June 17 at 6:30pm: *Summer Reading Program*
Kickoff Party with Insect Discovery Lab

Saturday programs TBA. Check the library for schedule

June 21 at 2:00 pm: *Alex Ramon*

July 5 at 2:00 pm: *Knucklehead the Clown*

August 2 at 2:00 pm: *Sandi & Stevie sing "Bug" songs*

August 26 at 6:30pm: *Summer Reading Program Prize Party with*
Python Rich and his live reptiles

Adults

Knitting: every first Monday at 7pm

Adult Special Programs:

May 12 at 7pm: *Berlin—Shanghai—New York:*

My Family's Flight from Hitler

Frederick Rolf, who took part in *Kindertransport*, will discuss his
father's memoir of escaping Nazi Germany.

Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature

Dr. Naomi Seidman of the Graduate Theological Union is back for the
third installment of popular monthly discussions. The theme of this
series of free discussions is "Your Heart's Desire: Sex and Love in
Jewish Literature." Registration is recommended.

July 26 at 2pm: *Portnoy's Complaint* by Philip Roth

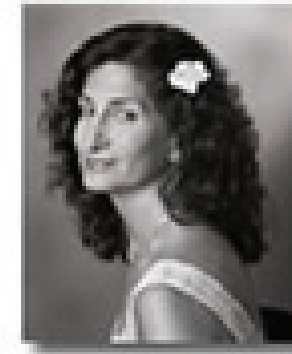
August 23 at 2pm: *The Little Disturbances of Man* by Grace Paley

September 20 at 2pm: *A Simple Story* by S.Y. Agnon

October 18 at 2pm: *The Lover* by A.B. Yehoshua

November 15 at 2pm: *The Mind-Body Problem* by Rebecca Goldstein

COUNTY READING FESTIVAL BRINGS AUTHORS & FUN



Vivian Walsh and Barbara Quick
will read from their latest works.

The Contra Costa County Library invites you to celebrate reading at the first Reading Festival May 16-18, 2008. The Festival includes readings by 50 nationally known and local authors at 25 community libraries throughout Contra Costa County. For a complete schedule of events at each library, visit www.cclib.org/reads.

The Kensington Library has planned a day filled with activities on Saturday, May 17. Children's author, Vivian Walsh, will do a presentation at 11am. Ms. Walsh is an animal lover who brings her favorite animal friends to life in her popular picture books for children. Her long list of titles includes *Olive, My Love* and *Olive, the Other Reindeer* (which was made into an animated television movie) and several books featuring Mr. Lunch.

At 3pm, Barbara Quick will discuss her recent novel, *Vivaldi's Virgins*. Ms. Quick, a Bay Area author, spent four years researching and writing her latest work, which has been well-received and translated worldwide. The book provides an intriguing look into the cloistered world of a convent orphanage and music school in 18th century Venice. The protagonist becomes a student of the composer Antonio Vivaldi, and the story focuses on her relationship with this musical master. Ms. Quick's reviews, essays and articles have appeared in the *New York Times Book Review*, *Newsweek*, *Ms.*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Her first novel, *Northern Edge*, has recently been optioned for film.

Between author events, guests will be entertained by face painters, balloon artists and musicians. Refreshments will be served (but don't spill them on the books!).

The Sale You've Been Waiting For!

Friends of the Kensington Library Spring 2008 Book Sale

Saturday, May 10: 9am-4pm
Sunday, May 11: 11am-3pm

Kensington Community Center
59 Arlington Ave



Mark your calendar – the big sale is almost here! Every May and October, thousands of books are unleashed from the Friends' storage shed, eager to find new homes. From popular fiction to political science – and even some special collector's items – there's something for everyone – and at prices you can't resist.

Proceeds from the book sales help support the many outstanding programs provided by the Kensington Library. We hope to see you there!



Youth Services Librarian, Pamela McKay, joins the Cat for Dr. Seuss' Birthday party in March

Kensington Library Hours

Monday: 12noon-8pm
 Tuesday: 12noon-8pm
 Wednesday: CLOSED
 Thursday: 10am-6pm
 Friday: 1pm-5pm
 Saturday: 10am-5pm
 Sunday: CLOSED

Library phone: 510-524-3043

Book Line: 1-800-984-4636
 (for general information and reference)

Website: ccclib.org

Library Staff

Community Library Manager

Liz Ruhland

Youth Services Librarian

Pamela McKay

Library Assistants

Mary French

Louise O’Dea

Chris Brown

Clerks

Monica Tilley

Eric Ralphs

Friends of the Kensington Library

2008 Officers

President	Nancy Okasaki
Vice President	John Gossard
Treasurer	Larry Sullivan
Secretary	Gretchen Gillfillan
Membership	Ann Bettelheim
Volunteers	Barbara Nelson

FKL meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Library Meeting Room. Members of the public are welcome to join us.

www.aboutkensington.com/fkl.html

Friends of the Kensington Library NOTES

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Message from the President

By Nancy Okasaki

As the newly elected president of the Friends of the Kensington Library, I’m so pleased to see the level of support the library receives from the community. Support of the library comes in all shapes and sizes, from book donations, volunteer hours and, of course, money. Two recent donations illustrate how important every donation can be. We recently received a \$25,000 bequest from George Spatz, a loyal library patron, and in the same month, were thrilled to learn of a regular donor who, at five years old, generously gives the library a portion of her weekly allowance.

Our library is a wonderful resource, not only for books and movies, but for engaging programs for all ages. And in order to maintain such a high level of service, we invite everyone in the community to join the Friends and get involved at any level that is comfortable. Thank you for your continued support – I hope to see you at the library!

On and Off the Walls

On your next visit to the Kensington Library, before you check out your books, be sure to check out the glorious art adorning the walls. Artists are often local, and their works are available for sale.

Upcoming displays:

May/June: Michael-Che Swisher, realistic oil paintings

July/August: Ben Ailes, photography

September/October: Allisen Ascercion, collage & mixed media

November/December: Rita Sklar, watercolors

Join the Club!

The Kensington Library Book Club reading list includes the classics and contemporary fiction. The club meets the fourth Monday of every month (except December) at 7pm in the Library Meeting Room. Books are available for check-out a month prior to the meeting.

May 19: *Cat’s Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut

June 23: *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* by Ivan Doig

July 28: *Persuasion* by Jane Austen

August 25: *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy

September 22: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

by Zora Neale Hurston

October 27: *Suite Francaise* by Irene Nemirovsky

November 24: *Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole

ABRACADABRA! Local Magician Returns to Kensington Library

It all started at the Kensington Library seven years ago. At the invitation of Children’s Librarian, Pamela McKay, fifteen-year-old amateur magician, Alex Ramon Gonzalez (now going by Alex Ramon), dazzled his young audience with sleight-of-hand magic and doves that appeared out of nowhere. And so it was fitting that the Kensington Library was the site of Alex’s return after an international tour as a professional magician.

On March 11, Alex returned to his library roots for a very special performance. Over 100 children filled the floor of the Kensington Library to both be wowed by and to learn how to do magic. The show was the first phase of a DVD project Alex is preparing for his young fans. “There are a lot of DVDs and books that teach children how to do simple magic tricks. But I wanted to come up with a way to show children how to put together a real magic show.” The DVD should be available in time for the holiday season.

The Richmond native actually learned his first magic tricks from a book, the *Klutz Book of Magic*, which he received from his grandmother. With the enthusiastic encouragement of a colleague of his father, Alex added many tricks to his stage repertoire and was soon performing for friends and family on a regular basis.

“I went to the library all the time to find books about magic and magicians,” Alex recalls. The sixteen-year-old became a poster child for libraries and set out on a tour, doing performances in public libraries throughout central and northern California. As part of the tour, his face donned the backs of many AC Transit buses during an extensive library campaign entitled, “Find it, Read it, Learn it at Your Library.”

At age 17, Alex captured the title of “San Francisco Bay Area’s Best Stage Magician.” The following year amidst the glitz of Las Vegas, he competed against magicians from around the world and took home the coveted Lance Burton Award for Top Teenage Talent and the title of “National Stage Magic Champion. He then hit the road for an extensive tour across the nation, performing over 250 shows a year.

In 2005, a fellow magician contacted the talented teen and made arrangements for him to audition for a new touring Disney production produced by the notable producer, Feld Entertainment. The audition was scheduled during the Christmas holiday, and Alex,



Professional magician, Alex Ramon, got his start at the Kensington Library.

having just returned from an exhausting tour, wasn’t sure that he wanted to take time away from his family to go. But serendipity brought him a free airline ticket, and after an impressive audition, he was signed on to join the new Disney LIVE! Presents Mickey’s Magic Show and currently shares the stage with possibly the most internationally recognized icon, Mickey Mouse himself!

Since joining the Disney show, Alex has added many stamps to his passport – from Canada to Asia, India to Egypt. He’s performed for over a million people worldwide, combining his close-up finesse with large illusions. And after a brief hiatus, he’s back on the road again with Donald and Goofy, several Disney princesses, and of, course, the guy with the big ears, big shoes and high-pitched voice.

Alex will be back in Kensington on Saturday, June 21 as part of the library’s Summer Reading Program.



FKL Board members welcome Alex back to the library.