

CSULB President Dr. Jane Conoley Featured at Annual Meeting

Dr. Jane Conoley, President of CSULB, was the keynote speaker at the 2022 Friends Annual Meeting and Literary Luncheon, our first since 2019 due to the pandemic. She was followed by a quartet of high school students who spoke about the 'banned' books they read and answered questions from the audience.

The meeting and luncheon was held Saturday, May 21, at the Grand Event Center, a new location for the annual event. Nearly 100 Friends of the Library and their guests attended.

Dr. Conoley provided statistics which illustrated a substantial increase in the number of book challenges across the country. She spoke of her concern that limits placed on the freedom of libraries to carry any and all books may affect other freedoms we currently take for granted.



In addition to Dr. Conoley's speech, four high-school students spoke individually about a 'banned' book they had chosen themselves. The students were presented by Lia Lades, Teacher Librarian at Wilson High School. They included:

- Dylan Ballard, Orange Lutheran HS: *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
- Jaclyn Goshert, Wilson HS: *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie
- Chloe Pearl, Wilson HS: *Out of Darkness* by Ashley Hope Pérez
- Daphne Richards, Wilson HS: *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George Matthew Johnson



Lia Lades, Teacher Librarian at Wilson HS, with her student speakers at the annual luncheon.

Many attendees were impressed and moved by the students' presentations. "They were passionate and persuasive," said Barbara Sosa, President of the Friends. "These young people give me hope for the future."

A silent book auction held during the event raised over \$182.

New Library Director Named

City Manager Tom Modica appointed Cathy De Leon as Director of the Library Services Department for the City of Long Beach. Ms. De Leon brings to the City more than 22 years of experience in public libraries, with the last five years as Manager of Branch Library Services for Long Beach Public Library, overseeing the operations of its 11 neighborhood libraries. As Director, she will oversee the Long Beach Public Library system as a whole and Library programs and initiatives, operations, budget, staffing and partnerships.

“Ms. De Leon’s approach to Library Services is what the Long Beach Public Library is all about – free access to information and learning for everyone in our community, with equity, inclusion and innovation built in,” said City Manager Tom Modica. “There are so many great community-centric programs and initiatives that our Library leads, and many more to come under Ms. De Leon’s leadership.”



Ms. De Leon’s career has centered primarily on early childhood literacy and library services for diverse communities with her recent work including the promotion and implementation of racial equity initiatives and fostering relationships with underserved community groups. Since joining the City of Long Beach in 2017, she has also focused on developing innovative approaches to library service such as increasing the accessibility of Khmer-language materials. Ms. De Leon led the development of the Library’s pandemic response, namely LBPL To-Go and Grab + Go services, and worked to safely reopen all library locations. She partnered with the Department of Technology and Innovation to develop the Digital Inclusion Hotline, an effort lauded by the California State Library as a model of service for other public libraries, and distributed free computers and hotspots to qualifying residents. Ms. De

Leon also collaborated with Long Beach residents and small business owners to host the inaugural Festival of Asian American-Pacific Islander Books (FAB LB) held on Saturday, May 21, 2022, at the Billie Jean King Main Library.

“It’s an honor to be named the next Director of the Long Beach Public Library. Public libraries are said to be the ‘great equalizer,’ a fundamental educational, informational and community resource for all,” said De Leon. “Long Beach Public Library will continue to be so for this wonderful and dynamic city. As we strive to be inclusive and welcoming to all, we’ll focus on eliminating barriers to use so that all can take full advantage of the wealth of educational and enrichment opportunities the library has to offer.”

Ms. De Leon was one of 28 emerging leaders from across the country named a fellow of the 2019 Public Library Association Leadership Academy. She holds a Master’s degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles, where she also earned undergraduate degrees in History and Asian American Studies. Born and raised in Southern California, Ms. De Leon is the daughter of Philippine immigrants and a self-described dedicated soccer, baseball and basketball mom.

She will begin her role as director on July 5, 2022.



President: Barbara Sosa

Editor: Diane Riska-Taylor

Contributors: Ellen Butler, Arlene Gale, Jan Jackson, Caroline Martin, Dawn Mendelson, Diane Riska-Taylor, Barbara Sosa

The Friends of the Library newsletter is usually published three times annually for members in good standing.

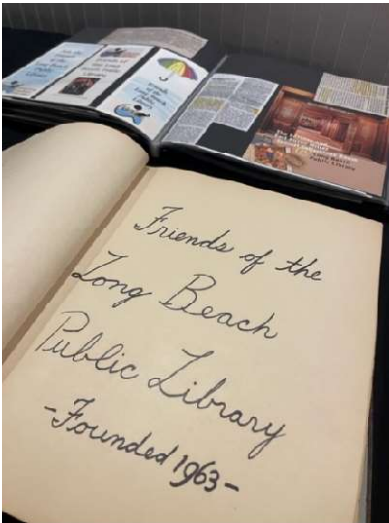
Visit our website at

<http://www.longbeach.gov/library/connect/friends-of-the-library/> Contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com

President's Message

Libraries are under attack. Be it a school or public library, there are increasing reports of people who want to censor the titles available to the patrons.

Do you know how the Friends of the Library was founded? In 1962, a city councilman wanted to ban the novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ* by Nikos Kazantzakis. Head librarian Blanche Collins took offense, and basically said, "Mind your own business!" and the community backed her up. The Friends of the LB Public Library was formed in December of 1963 by a group of concerned citizens who didn't want that to happen again.



In the city of Long Beach, we are lucky that the threat of censorship has not been raised since, but there are many places in the US that are still fighting book challenges. The Friends will be the first group to step up should a censorship issue rear its ugly head, but we do more than that.

Over the years, we have become the de-facto manager of book donations to the library. We keep the best for resale at huge discounts at our Bookshop in BJK Main Library and our shelves at our neighborhood libraries. We ship some to Thriftbooks, an online discount bookseller who maintains a "storefront" for the Friends and is able to sell books for more than our \$1 and \$2 price points. And since the pandemic began, library's

donations have increased exponentially – and the donations are not always books. Although we ask all donors to check our website for donation guidelines (i.e., no magazines, cassettes, or VHS tapes; no textbooks over 5 years old; nothing damaged, moldy or dirty), sometimes patrons use the policy as a dumping ground for everything paper-related. Oh, the things we've received and the stories we can tell!

All this is a long way to say that IF you are considering donating items to the library, please ask yourself "Would I purchase this book/CD/DVD again?" If the answer is yes, please donate it. But if the answer is no, please find another place that will accept your treasure. We are all booklovers and hate to see them gone, but like any other item a book has a finite life. If yours has reached the end of its lifecycle, please recycle it.

Our Board of Directors will resume meeting again in September, but we have activities planned throughout the summer. Please feel free to contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com. Take care, and thank you for your continued support of our LB Libraries.

Essay Contest is Here

The Long Beach Friends of the Library will sponsor their annual essay contest to coincide with the library's Summer Reading Program.

"Read Beyond the Beaten Path" is this year's reading program theme, and the essay topic will be "Describe a Book That Helped You Learn About a New Time, Place or Emotion."

The contest is open to students 6-18 years of age. It begins with the Summer Reading Program kick-off on Saturday, June 18, 2022 and ends Saturday August 6, 2022. Prizes will be given for first, second and third place. Fliers will be available at all Long Beach libraries by June 18, 2022.

An awards ceremony will honor the winners in early September. So, alert all the young readers you know that an opportunity to show and tune their writing skills awaits.

Doris Soriano Retires as Treasurer

Doris Soriano LOVES libraries.

When she retired from the Library system in 1996, she joined the Friends of the Library Board, and began serving as Treasurer.

Twenty-five years later, she is retiring as Board Treasurer. To say that we will miss her is an understatement. Not only does she keep the books for the Friends, but she also manages the separate funds for the Blanche Collins Forum, the Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel, and the Barbara Egyud Scholarship Fund.



Former LBPL librarians from left: Director Eleanor Schmidt, Doris Soriano, Director Cordelia Howard

Doris likes to travel and socialize with her many friends. A born librarian, she reads almost a book a day, and typically checks out 8-10 books a week. She loves mysteries, thrillers, and espionage stories, but any well-written fiction may appear in her to-read pile.

While she is retiring as Treasurer, she will remain on the Friends Board as a member-at-large. We are grateful for Doris' commitment to the Friends, and thank her for her many contributions.

New Officers Elected to Board of Directors

At the Annual Meeting on May 21, Elizabeth Andrew, past president of the Friends, was elected to take the

office previously held by Doris Soriano, who has resigned as Treasurer.

Arlene Gale, current Vice-President of Membership, and Sharon Abar, current Recording Secretary, were both re-elected. All three will serve two-year terms ending in 2024.

There were no candidates for Director of the Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel. The endowment fund for children's literacy and programming is currently being managed by the Friends Board of Directors.

Congratulations to Elizabeth, Arlene, and Sharon on their new and continuing positions.

Welcome New Members

We'd like to welcome the following new Friends of the Library members. Please contact us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com if you have any questions or are thinking about volunteering for one of our projects.

Deborah Borza

Mary Boykin

Gordon & Justin Catron

Valentine Pheifer

Monica Radliff

Gretchen Swanson

Richard Connelly

Astrid Viriding

We're Looking for a Few Good Directors

Do you love planning and hosting events? Or maybe you like children and children's books?

The Friends Board of Directors has openings for two directors of special endowment funds – the Blanche Collins Forum, and the Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel. Each has a specific mission and a separate annual budget.

The Blanche Collins Forum is named after the brave city librarian whose fight to prevent censorship became the basis for the Friends. Its purpose is to present topical speaker programs for the city. The duties include developing a program or contracting with a speaker, arranging a venue, and organizing the publicity for the event. Past speakers have included authors Ray

Bradbury, Lisa See, and Judith Viorst, and also Father Gregory Boyle, astronaut Dr. Sally Ride, and past Los Angeles Poet Laureate Luis Rodriguez.

The Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel (HFCC) was founded in memory of a beloved children's librarian. The HFCC sponsors the annual essay contest for students ages 5 – 18, and the performances that kick-off the Summer Reading Program. Each year, the Director of the HFCC meets with select children's librarians to determine how that year's budget will be allocated – what children's programming will be sponsored, or what training will be funded and provided to the children's librarians.

Both positions are voting members of the Friends Board of Directors. The Board meets September thru June at 4 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the neighborhood libraries.

Interested? Please send an email to the Friends Board at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com.

Memorial Books

The Friends of the Library donated one book in memory of Eunice Sato.

Cathy Robinson Hutton donated in the name of the Hutton Family as a memorial honoring Claire LaFave on her 100th birthday.

Friends Board Purchases *Hidden*

Hidden: Life with California's Roma Families, a powerful photographic essay by Cristina Salvador Klenz, documents a people and culture often overlooked or misunderstood. With an insightful forward by Ian Hancock, and informative photographer's notes, *Hidden* powerfully illustrates Roma lives here in California, with many of the images having been shot in Long Beach. It is published by Brown Paper Press here in Long Beach.

The photographs, in gorgeous black and white, are both individually and collectively a treasure. Each one brings the viewer right there into the lives depicted. The compositions are perfect, the subjects fascinating, every moment captured the decisive one.

Why did the Friends' board vote to buy a copy for all twelve branches? That question is best answered by this incident. A mother with an adopted Roma daughter walked by Page Against the Machine (the small indie bookstore on 4th near Temple) and saw *Hidden* in the window. Intrigued, she went in and looked at the book. And her teenaged daughter? Since her adoption, she had always struggled with how to tell people of her heritage. "Are you Indian? Where are you from?" *Hidden* gave her the words for her identity, "I am Roma," and a feeling of both pride and belonging.

And for those of us who are not Roma, *Hidden* gives us both knowledge and understanding about many fellow citizens with whom we live side by side here in Long Beach.

It's a beautiful book. We hope you will find the copy at your local branch library and spend time with it; it will be time well spent.



Author and photographer Cristina Salvador Klenz with her book, *Hidden*.

Annual Meeting and Luncheon



Grand Event Center



Super Friends and Life Members

We would like to thank our new and renewing Super Friends and Life Members, February 2022 through April 2022. We appreciate your generosity and support.

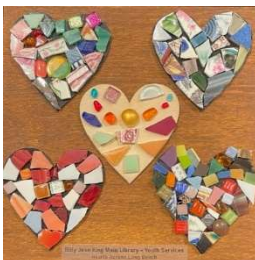
Sally Bates	Ian Welks
Robert Bellinger	Eleanor Newhard
Karye Briegel	George & Jan McDonald
Renee Simon	Gloria Perry
Annette Gordon	Donna Herman
Amy Essington	Eileen Hunter

And our apologies to the following who were inadvertently not listed in the Winter newsletter: Ellen Butler and Audrey Hyde Zahlar.

Hearts Across the Libraries

Hearts Across Long Beach began as a community wellness project for essential workers in response to COVID-19 by ArtWorksLBC. Participating organizations were provided mosaic heart art kits to create a moment of beauty, healing, and self-expression. Some participants include Global Paratransit, LGBTQ Center, Hacienda of Hope, Rebuilding Together Long Beach, and CARE Center at St. Mary Medical Center. Several local elementary and middle school teachers and staff also participated. The project was so well-received, it was opened to the larger community, which also created and contributed hundreds of hearts.

The Friends recognized and supported the wellness of our hard-working librarians through a donation to this community project. Each library was given several hearts to be created by staff. These were then mounted and displayed at Friends' Annual Luncheon.



Hearts from the branches and BJK Main will be displayed together and then handed back to the individual libraries to display in their own spaces. Hearts from the community will be displayed throughout businesses and organizations in the Rose Park Neighborhood as a symbol of community and the power of arts wellness.

ArtWorksLBC fosters community engagement through the conduit of art, in conjunction with the Rose Park Neighborhood Association's (RPNA) Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative. ArtWorksLBC is a community benefit project of RPNA.

Meet Dawn Mendelson

Dawn Mendelson joined our board in early 2020 via board member Ellen Butler, a long-time friend and fellow art and literature enthusiast. She lends us her skills in graphic design and art engagement, helping with promotional materials and various other projects. She has been an Adult Literacy Tutor and her artwork was once exhibited at the old downtown Main Library. Dawn calls Los Alamitos her local library.



Born in Texas and raised in Santa Cruz, California, Dawn earned her B.A. and M.A. in Creative Writing and English Literature from CSULB where she was editor of the school's journal *Genre*. While working in the graphic design field, an art store mosaic kit sparked a new creative direction and kindled a passion. Dawn then pursued pique assiette, a form of mosaic using recycled materials. This led to a now twenty-two-year career in creating art and building community.

After years of making commissioned work, Dawn taught for a nonprofit mosaic arts program and social enterprise, Piece by Piece. While leading workshops in South L.A. and Skid Row, she discovered a passion for helping people new to art find their creative voice. During her 14 years with Piece by Piece, Dawn has served as an Instructor, Program and Managing Director, and lead artists in creating large-scale public art.

Dawn also developed ArtWorksLBC, a local arts wellness program that partners with the Rose Park Neighborhood Assoc. It uses art to connect the community through various activities and informs the neighborhood about local issues and services.

Just before the pandemic, Dawn was awarded an artist residency in Listowel, Ireland, where she spent a glorious month discovering the beauty of Ireland and creating artwork in a bright and inspiring studio space. She recently received her Community Teaching Artist certificate from Cal State L. A. and has several community art projects in the works. Her commitment to arts advocacy includes serving on several nonprofit boards and committees, as well as supporting and educating on a national level.

Dawn's son, Alex, is a senior in biology at CSULB. They share a large cat, Fred, who insists on greeting all their neighbors (follow him on Instagram at @fred_m_cat). She has a small garden (flowers and veggies) and is a big jazz fan.

Dawn has traveled in England and Mexico and is looking forward to future travels to Italy and Greece.

She reads contemporary fiction, especially satire. Favorite authors include Dawn Powell, E. Annie Proulx, Toni Morrison, Colson Whitehead, and Michael Chabon. Her all-time favorite book is *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster, and a recent delight was *The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

We are delighted to have Dawn on our Friends Board of Directors.

Update on Children's and Teen's Gently-Used Book Give-Away

It is important that our young people have books of their own in their homes, both for their own enjoyment and to read to their siblings.

During this last school year, Friends of LBPL collaborated with librarians and a few teachers in LBUSD to give gently used books away to students in our community. We have to date delivered over 60 boxes of these books to sixteen of our District's schools. Our students in Long Beach deserve good books they would be happy to receive. To give them dirty, torn and damaged books is not appropriate. With your generous donations of books, our team sorted through them and selected those in very good condition to donate. We are grateful to all of you who stepped forward with your book donations.

One of our collaborators, Darla Castillo, Teacher Librarian at Roosevelt Elementary School, and her colleagues, set a goal of giving each and every student at Roosevelt fifty (50) books of their own to take home this school year. With a population of approximately one-thousand students in grades K through 5, that is a lot of books! We at the Friends made it one of our goals to help them in this laudable campaign for their students.

As of this date, the staff at Roosevelt continues to work hard to achieve this goal by the end of the school year, which is soon! In our Autumn newsletter, we will let you know if they succeeded.

We plan to continue this practice for the 2022-2023 school year as long as there is interest and we continue to receive donations. In September, we will once again contact LBUSD librarians to share our desire to continue this collaboration.



Friends of the Long Beach Public Library
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Our annual membership year runs from June 1, 2022 - May 31, 2023. Have you renewed your membership? *The date above your name on the mailing label shows when your membership expires.*

Your tax-deductible contributions enable the Friends to purchase books and other media, and also supports library programs, staff training and additional activities. Membership shows your concern for maintaining the resources and services of our local libraries. We'll keep you informed of vital issues affecting the library via mailed newsletters and emails (but not too many). A book will be donated to the library in the name of each Super Friend and Lifetime Member.

Mail this renewal form with your payment or drop it in one of the blue honor boxes where Friends' books are sold at each branch. Thank you for joining the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library and supporting community libraries.

New Member or Renewal

<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Membership \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Membership.....\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership..... \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership.....\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Super Friend \$100 or more	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron Membership.....\$75
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Membership \$200 or more	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Membership.....\$1,000 or more

I want to participate in the following way:

- Serve on the Friends of the Library Board of Directors
- Volunteer in the Book Store

Name.....Address.....
 Zip.....Phone.....Email.....

Please make checks payable to the *Friends of the Long Beach Public Library*, and mail to: Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, 200 West Broadway, Long Beach, CA 90802-4433. Your membership card will be mailed to you.