



## Maryland's Khan Writes on Muslim Experience

A full house of kids and parents were treated during Ramadan to a discussion with Hena Khan, author of books for elementary and middle school children, in a Contemporary Conversations presentation co-sponsored by FOLSS.



**Hena Khan**

Khan was born in Maryland and grew up reading Western classics like *Little Women* and *Little House on the Prairie*, which she checked out

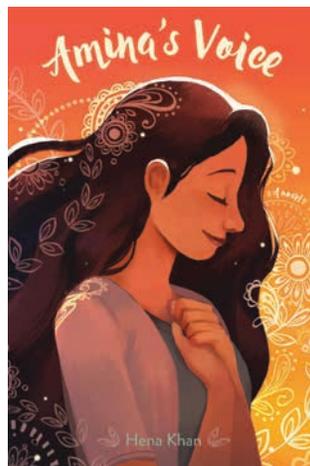
from the old Rockville library. But she never encountered Muslim or Pakistani characters in these books.

Khan works to change that for young people with her writing, focusing on American Muslims and the challenges they face.

"I wanted to create books with Muslim characters and themes—both for

Americans not exposed to this, and so Muslims can see these characters in books," Khan said. "Religious literacy helps create awareness. Representation matters. It helps to build compassion."

Khan's books include *It's Ramadan*, *Curious George*; *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns*; and *Night of the Moon*. Her books have been honored as a 2013 ALA Notable Book and a 2009 Top



10 Religious Book for Youth.

Her latest, *Amina's Voice*, is about a 12-year-old, second-generation Pakistani American girl "finding confidence, strength in herself, and strength in her community," said Khan.

*Amina's Voice* is the first book from Salaam Reads, a Simon & Schuster imprint that focuses on Muslim culture and young people.

## Join Us for FOLSS Annual Meeting Sept. 13

**Mark your calendars for the FOLSS Annual Meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 13, at 7:30 pm. It's a great chance to meet other members and hear plans for the year ahead, including the opening of Phase II of the Early Literacy Center this fall. We'll also be holding annual elections, so come cast your vote!**



## Early Literacy Center to Expand This Fall

The popular Early Literacy Center on the library's fifth floor is getting even better. Two new features—a bookmobile and an alphabet whirligig tower—will be installed this fall. Both will be loaded with fun interactive elements that will delight young children and their accompanying adults.

The new installations will mark the culmination of an ambitious fund-raising effort that FOLSS started in 2013. Nearly \$200,000 was raised from community members, local businesses, foundations, and the State of Maryland—many contributors are recognized on the Donor

Wall in the library's street-level lobby. We are deeply grateful to all who helped make the Early Literacy Center a reality.

Plans are in the works for a special program to celebrate the new installations this fall.



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**A new interactive bookmobile and whirligig tower are planned for the Early Literacy Center.**

## Hamilton Retires, Vassallo Named Interim Library Director

Following Montgomery County Public Libraries Director Parker Hamilton's retirement announcement, County Executive Isiah Leggett selected longtime MCPL veteran Anita Vassallo to serve as Interim Director starting August 1, 2017.

Vassallo will take the reins with extensive experience working at MCPL. She began in 1974 as a librarian, then moved up to several supervisory positions for 18 years at two of the County's busiest branches. She went on to manage the Davis branch and, most recently, was the Public Services Administrator for IT Infrastructure, Digital Strategies, and Emerging Technologies. She received her master's degree in library science in 1979.

Hamilton worked for Montgomery County for almost 37 years, and as Library Director for 12 years. In a statement, County Executive Leggett said, "Parker Hamilton is a remarkable woman and Montgomery County will miss her terribly." He noted that despite some difficult budget cuts in the Great Recession, "County libraries received 19 National Association of Counties awards, and innovation awards from Urban Libraries Council," under Hamilton's leadership. Hamilton plans to move back to Alabama in retirement.



**Parker Hamilton**

## Upcoming Programs Sponsored by FOLSS

### Sept. 6, 7:00-8:30 pm: Conversation with Mystery Writer Annamaria Alfieri



JUDI BENVENUTI

Annamaria Alfieri

Join us for a conversation with Annamaria Alfieri, author of *Strange Gods* and *The Idol of Mombasa*, historical mysteries set in British East Africa in the early twentieth century. Described as *Out of Africa* meets Agatha Christie, the stories capture the beauty and

danger of the African outback and the complexities of imposing a culture on a foreign land. Alfieri will be in conversation with Eric Weiner, author of *The Geography of Genius*. The program is part of the monthly Author Series, co-sponsored with the Silver Spring Library Advisory Committee and MCPL.

### Sept. 19, 6:00-7:00 pm: Raymi Andean Latin Fusion Ensemble

Raymi brings the haunting sounds and mystic power of the Andes to Silver Spring Library in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Using traditional instruments in combination with classic band instrumentation, the group produces an exhilarating fusion of Andean and Latin sound.

### Oct. 21, 11:00 am: "Dragon Dreams"

Nothing says Halloween like science and storytelling! ScienceTellers present "Dragon Dreams," with flying rockets, fog, bubbles, and changing states of matter. The program is designed for children pre-K through fifth grade.

### Nov. 8, 4:30-6:30 pm: Breaker Space

Ever wonder what's inside your electronics? Come find out. We'll provide



**ScienceTellers engage their audience in hands-on science experiments to bring the sights and sounds of a story to life.**

broken electronics, screwdrivers, pliers, and safety goggles. You provide the curiosity. Ages 6-12. Parent participation is required. Registration opens October 9 at <http://host.evanced.info/montgomerycountymd/evanced/eventcalendar.asp>.



**Raymi brings its fusion of Andean and Latin sounds to Silver Spring Library.**



**This penguin knows where to find Friends!**

The African penguin visited the library as part of the Maryland Zoo's summer reading program, "Going, Going, Gone," which informed a rapt audience about vanishing species and habitats, and steps we can take to protect life on the planet.

## Survey Tracks Library Users' Satisfaction

### Did you get asked?

More than 500 visitors to the Silver Spring Library this summer took part in a new survey conducted by the Silver Spring Library Advisory Committee that sought to determine library users' attitudes on the branch.

Those surveyed were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 4 their satisfaction with each of six major aspects of the Silver Spring branch—Customer Service, Collection, Technology, Public Spaces, Programs and Events, and Overall. One was the lowest rating while four was the highest.

People taking the survey could also write in responses to the prompts “How has the library made an impact

on your life?” and “Please provide additional comments or feedback.”

To conduct the survey, eight LAC members equipped with iPads staked out areas on all three library floors, in the lobby, and at the Kefa Café. Surveys were completed at different times of the day throughout the week so as to get a representative mix of users. The surveyors also sought out library users at popular events like the Taste the World Fenton Village, the 9th Annual Silver Spring Blues Festival, the Saturday farmers market, and at various public meetings at the Silver Spring Civic Building.

The numbers are now being tabulated and plans call for the results to be released this fall.

Friends of the Library, Silver Spring Chapter (FOLSS), is an all-volunteer organization of people who care about our library. FOLSS raises money to augment public funding for programs, materials, and equipment at the Silver Spring Library. FOLSS also oversees the sale of used books through book carts at the library and through periodic book sale events. Proceeds from book sales and memberships provide funds for programming and special projects.

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## Thank You, Volunteers and Donors!

With heartfelt thanks to our book sale volunteers, who sort community book donations weekly, keep our book carts stocked, and made possible our book sales in March and July! And thanks to our generous community for high-quality book donations. Our combined efforts have raised about \$3,500 since March, all of which goes directly toward programming and services at Silver Spring Library.

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### Please Join Us!

Membership in the Friends of the Library, Silver Spring Chapter, helps support our programs, and you'll get regular updates on our activities! Join online at [www.folmc.org](http://www.folmc.org). Click the orange DONATE button at upper left, and be sure to designate Silver Spring chapter membership at the bottom of the page.



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