

Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Secretary's Report
March 2022

Citywide:

The [Santa Monica Homeless Count](#) took place on Wednesday, February 24th from 11pm-3am. This annual event is part of the Greater LA Homeless Count where teams of volunteers count people experiencing homelessness throughout the city.

City Manager David White announced the appointment of Danny Alvarez as the City's next Fire Department Chief. Chief Alvarez joined the City on February 28th. Press Release: <https://www.santamonica.gov/press/2022/01/27/city-manager-david-white-selects-danny-alvarez-as-santa-monica-s-next-fire-chief>

Santa Monica Public Library Operations:

On March 1st, **Montana Avenue Branch** welcomed back its patrons for in-person services. Visitors now have the ability to browse the collections, pick up holds, use computers, checkout materials, and interact with staff. Staff have been working hard weeding materials and prepping for opening. Open hours remain the same. This marks the 3rd branch that is now open for in-person services. Press Release: <https://www.santamonica.gov/press/2022/02/22/montana-avenue-branch-library-reopens>

The library continues to focus on reopening all library locations in order to provide access to its local neighborhoods even if at a reduced capacity. A lot of work remains.

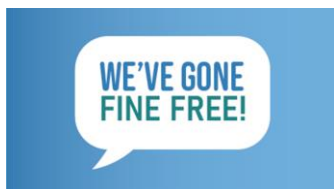
Ocean Park Branch, Open+ interest and usage continue to increase, offering access to its local neighborhood for 15 hours per week. As of its opening, 529 patrons have registered and been able to access materials.

February 2022: **367** visitors / **830** checkouts

Last month, library staff hosted a tour and demonstrated the Ocean Park Branch Open+ for Redondo Beach Public Library staff. Video about Ocean Park Branch Open + <https://smmirror.com/2022/02/self-service-library-access-at-ocean-park-branch/>

Budget

Midyear budget proposals (FY 21-22) were unanimously approved at the February 8th City Council meeting. Funds to enhance literacy and adult programming were received, which includes the first step to reopen Fairview Branch as a self-service location providing access to its community.



As of March 1st, the Santa Monica Public Library is Fine Free. What does this mean? That all fines for overdue books and materials will be eliminated. This does not include materials that are considered lost (items that are overdue more than 42 days). Patrons are still responsible for returning books!

This move will provide equitable access to library resources and a positive experience for patrons. Staff are working to share the news with the community through social media, newsletter, press release and planning a celebratory activity. Video about Fine Free <https://smmirror.com/2022/02/santa-monica-library-goes-fine-free/>

City Council approved the exploration of a parcel tax as an option for exploring an alternate funding resource. The City will begin researching its potential as a ballot measure and funding that could be generated. Exciting news!

Programming & Resources

[March Calendar of Events](#)

This month, Interim Director Erica Cuyugan, will be co-presenting at the **Public Library Association Conference** in Portland on our experiences with measuring outcomes around well-being. Erica will be joined by Julie Rusk (former Chief of Civic Well Being), as she has worked with other libraries on integrating wellbeing indicators and outcomes.

March is already a BUSY month for Youth and Family services! Beginning with **Storypalooza Story Tour** on Saturday, March 5th. All five library locations will have storytelling performers and activities throughout the day. Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Santa Monica, the event celebrates Read Across America, a national reading initiative designed to promote literacy and celebrate diversity in literature for young children and their families. Attendees receive a free book at each location. Followed by parenting workshops “Tweens, Teens, and Digital Lives” and Early Readers Club later in the month.

Art Messages in the Teen Center, Main Library by Santa Monica artist, Paula Goldman. Messages are from teens answering questions like:

- What will you do the first day you can meet friends?
- Where will you go when you can travel?
- What will be different?

Goldman’s art display is a collaboration with Santa Monica Cultural Affairs to support A Plague Journal, #SMHopes: An Archive of Hopes and Dreams, as we move through the impacts of COVID-19 on residents.

RED Kits - Through funding by the Library Services and Technology Act grant funds provided by the California State Library, the Santa Monica Public Library introduced staff curated kits, its first being a Technology RED Kit. The kits contained a pc with a landing page to easily navigate library resources, technology books for seniors, information & activity sheets, and a journal participants can keep. The Kits were accompanied by an intro pc class at Greenway Meadows Senior Living Facility* taught by SMPL librarians.

Staff are already working on future kits that will introduce gardening, brain health, stress reduction, mindfulness and baking. This is another great outreach opportunity to get seniors to sign up for a library card.



* A Senior Living Facility in Santa Monica (Age 62+, Low to Moderate Income, built by Community Corporation with \$10 Million in funding from the City of Santa Monica).

Lots of important celebrations took place in the month of February such as:

- Black History Month, Dial A Story recording stories from Black authors
- Black History Month story time with children’s librarian, Ingha and library services officer (LSO) Christopher which was viewed 243 times!
<https://www.facebook.com/smpublib/videos/311301037624503>.
- College prep virtual program “College A-Z” with children’s librarian, Jeff Kaplan. Followed by a teen “Planning for College Early” workshop this month, March 24th
- New Virtual storytimes, first session “Snoozers Storytime Adventures” was viewed 109 times!
- Greens Festival participation, distributed over 100 books to families and 50 Take & Make kits

Santa Monica Right to Return project support. In partnership with USC graduate students, Library staff provided referrals and shared resources with students conducting interviews of local residents. Great use of the Library’s local history resources, as many of the students used information obtained from the microfilm version of the newspaper. Below is the link to one student project:

<https://sites.google.com/view/santa-monica-right-to-return/home>

Partnerships:

Library Board – Two appointments were made to the Library Board at the February 22nd meeting and are scheduled to be sworn in at the March 3rd meeting.

Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library – Planning efforts continue for the reopening of the Bookstore, no date has been determined. Another audiovisual sale is being planned for the month of April.

Safety/Health & Security:

Library Security staff continue to monitor and patrol all 5 locations. Incident counts and activities continue to rise involving graffiti, homeless encampments and vandalism continue at all facilities. LSOs continue to coordinate with the SMPD team assigned to the Downtown Santa Monica area to minimize incidents taking place after hours. LSO Supervisor Lou Enriquez will also be leading a walkthrough to discuss other measures that can be taken for the safety of Main’s parking garage.

February 2022- Data below only reflects more serious incidents and not rule violation interactions that are made daily.

27 monthly incidents (20 major/ 8 minor)

20 incidents at Main / **7** Branches

1 calls in to police

5 active bans

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Cuyugan, Interim Director of Library Services