

**Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Secretary's Report
December 2023**

Citywide:

City Council meeting. On December 12th, Mayor Davis passed the gavel to Councilmember Brock, who will serve as mayor for the next year.

Santa Monica Public Library

Director of Library Services, Erica Cuyugan, presented the Library's FY 2022-23 Annual Report at Tuesday's Council meeting.

Programming



Teen Volunteers. On December 13, teens planned a lovely wintertime event "Winter Tales". Teens read stories to a total of 78 people in attendance, helped with an ornament craft and handed out snacks. Teens took pride in their work in preparing and planning for the event, while also seeing the direct benefit as a program that brings the community into the library.



Wellbeing Microgrant Commendation Ceremony. On December 9, Pico Branch was able to support one of its local partners in recognizing its 9th cohort of the program and their completed projects. Mayor Davis was in attendance and presented certificates to project leaders.



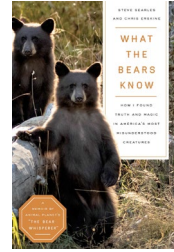
Last week, staff led an all-ages **Card and Bookmark Making Workshop** in the Main Library lobby. Participants were able to bring cards or bookmarks and upcycle them, engage and share stories across generations. A total of 52 total people attended. Many participants shared how they were unaware of the workshop but were glad that they came across it as it made their trip to the library feel special.



'Tis the Season for 'Ukulele' program. On Saturday, December 9, an all-ages holiday ukulele concert was held. Heidi Swedberg, who initiated the 'ukulele program at SMPL, and her partner Daniel Ward treated an appreciative, all ages crowd of 85 to a program of international holiday music, including animated children's tunes, Chanukah songs, and some dazzling Flamenco. Several attendees had taken 'ukulele classes at the Library from either Heidi or current instructor Cali Rose. The concert was followed by a festive 'ukulele

ornament craft in the Atrium, prepared by Gia and with assistance from two teen volunteers.

Local author and columnist Chris Erskine and “Bear Whisperer” Steve Searles talked about their new book *What the Bears Know*. Over 70 people attended, including Hollywood icon Angie Dickinson, now 92 years old! Chris and Steve had great banter and the audience was eating it up. They shared funny anecdotes about Steve’s work with bears and gave lots of great information about California’s black bears.



Fairview Branch Open House. Library staff welcomed neighborhood visitors and spoke about the Open+ self-service access. Library staff held a Polar Bear story time with 43 caregivers and children were in attendance, followed by a Holiday Book Fair. Books were donated by the Friends of the Library, allowing visitors to select free books for their parents, siblings, friends and relatives, and have them gift wrapped by volunteers. Over 275 people visited throughout the day, with many expressing how much they miss Fairview being open.



Access to information. A class of 4th graders from Roosevelt and Franklin Elementary had the opportunity to tour the Santa Monica Room and hear about interesting tidbits about Santa Monica History. Students wanted to know if Roosevelt (1909) opened before Franklin Elementary (1927). Students also recognized Popeye who was first incorporated into the comic strip *Thimble Theater* by Elzie Segar in Santa Monica. Due to the wildly popular character, Spinach became the third most popular food for children in the United States. First was ice cream and second was turkey.

In addition, staff worked with USC and SJC graduate students in utilizing the library’s microfilm, print, and digital collection for research projects. USC are working on GIS digital mapping project showing displacement and businesses for Spanish heritage residents of Santa Monica from the 1950-1980s. SJSU MLIS student found that we had the only copy of an Index to History of California for a project investigating the Zamorano Club, the oldest club 1929 of bibliophiles established in 1929.

Literacy Services Year-End Celebration: Our [Literacy Education for Adults and Families \(LEAF\)](#) program celebrated literacy tutor and learner pairs, as well as Career Online High School graduates this week. The celebration included dinner for the 60+ guests who attended, some of whom were friends and family of the celebrants. LEAF is made possible by a grant from the CA State Library and support from our Friends of the Library.

The Library is fortunate to have so many dedicated LEAF volunteers. One volunteer stated, “The parts of Tech & Tasks I enjoy the most are the times when you can tell that the session as a real chance of improving the

client's life; working on Veterans administration issues, housing applications, job applications and banking issues." Impacts from the LEAF program include:

- At least 250 Tech & Task volunteer hours to address over 460 patron interactions
- 24 learners received close to 600 hours of tutoring
- 5 learners worked towards earning their high school diplomas
- 63% of our learners learned a new technology skill
- 2 learners were hired for new jobs
- 7 reported being able to communicate better with medical professionals
- 6 reported voting in an election
- 3 graduated from the Career Online High School program and received an accredited high school diploma and career certificate

November Statistics

In November, a total of 26 incidents were reported at the library, with 18 being major incidents and 8 being minor incidents.

- 23 of those incidents involved individuals who appeared to be unhoused.
- 17 of those incidents occurred at the Main Library, while 9 of those incidents occurred at our branch locations.
- Santa Monica Police Department was called 4 times to assist Library Service Officers with incidents.
- Active bans in place: 6 active bans
- Property damage reports on library premises: 7
- During non-operational hours, Netwatch reported 47 minor incidents, signaling the need to continue monitoring library grounds during these hours.

Fun stats for November:



By Erica Cuyugan, Director of Library Services