

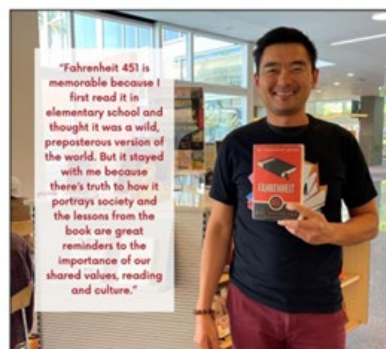
**Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Secretary's Report
October 2023**

Citywide:

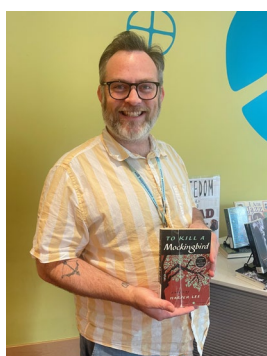
The city is committed to creating an environment for youth that is safe, nurturing and empowering and that promotes growth and success. As part of this commitment, the city has implemented an **Abuse Prevention Program**. Staff across the city have begun to take part in the training to ensure that children who participate in city-managed programs are protected.

Santa Monica Public Library

Earlier this month, the library celebrated **Banned Books Week** as part of Freedom to Read! As the nation experiences an unprecedented number of challenges and book bans in the United States, the library continues to support the right to access books, information, and resources. According to the Office for Intellectual Freedom, ALA documented 1,269 demands to censor library books and resources in 2022. This is the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago, and almost double the number of challenges in 2021.



Members of our Library Board (Dana Newman, Judith Meister, and Jason Lin) celebrated their Freedom to Read and their favorite banned books, emphasizing how important access to stories, books, and information is to our community.



"The freedom to read is the freedom to live! They are the same thing; to read is to invite the world into you, the pieces you could never create on your own. Without the freedom to read, one's world is isolated and limited."

– Chase Chauffe, Library Program Specialist



It's important to read a book like All American Boys because it demonstrates institutional racism in a way that teenagers can understand.

–Finnegan Forsyth, Teen Volunteer

Operations

Library Meeting Rooms are open!

The Library is accepting reservations for meeting rooms at all its library locations. Visit our [meeting room webpage](#) for information about the meeting rooms, policies, and how to make a reservation.

Laptop Kiosk at the Main Library



Chromebook laptops are now available for checkout via the new Laptop Kiosk, when using the 2nd floor Workspace.

The 2nd Floor Workspace is available for up to four hours with your library card. To make a reservation, just visit https://smpl.org/Study_Rooms.aspx and choose Workspace.

Programming

This month, the Main Library will be hosting an Art of Recovery installation of **The Women's Empowerment Project**.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROJECT

An Art of Recovery Program

October 12-November 13, 2023
Main Library
Central Courtyard
601 Santa Monica Blvd.

The Women's Empowerment Project is an Art of Recovery documentary photography project and collaboration between artist Maiwenn Raoult and six women who were in transitional housing at The People Concern Santa Monica. To view photos taken by each of the women by scanning the QR code below.

SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY

City of Santa Monica

Banned Books Trivia Bowl: In honor of Banned Books Week library staff hosted a 'pub-style' trivia competition in the Main Library's Central Courtyard. Five teams competed to win new copies of popular banned books and gift certificates to the Friends of the Library Bookstore. Participants were engaged throughout and demonstrated an appreciation for contemporary literature. Several asked when the next trivia night was scheduled.





Neighborhood outreach at Montana Ave. Art Walk: Library staff had the opportunity to interact with over 150 people during the Montana Ave. Art Walk. A resource table was set-up where the library Calendar of Events and library card sign-up applications were distributed, including Halloween swag and tootsie pop spiders were made!

Tuesday Tales: Fire Prevention Storytime at Fairview Branch

Santa Monica Fire Department staff co-presented a very special storytime to inform the community about fire prevention and safety during Fire Safety Week. Close to 100 participants enjoyed the event, including kids who dressed up and brought their toy firetrucks. The Fire Department distributed red hats and bilingual cooking safety handouts.



Fire Inspector Reyes read storybooks, *Fireboy to the Rescue: A Fire Safety Book* by Edward Miller and *The Little Fire Truck* by Margery Cuyler to a very excited crowd.



Special guests from Fire Station No. 4 came and brought their fire engine for community members to take a peek inside and take pictures before they had to leave to respond to an emergency call.

Walk-in Tutoring – An Essential Service at the Library: It has been one year since library staff brought back Walk-in Tutoring through its regular programs “Appy Hour” and “Tech & Tasks”. Both programs focus on assisting individuals with myriad questions, from devices to writing help to job and resume questions. People can “drop-in” and connect to a tutor. Since its launch last September, we have had 428 documented sessions.



As we track more specific interactions this fiscal year, we have already found that:

- 78% of attendees are 65+
- 85% are library card holders
- 73% are returning patrons who have used the service previously

One returning participant expressed her gratitude by contacting Library Administration:

I have been fortunate enough to take the computer class... It's so meaningful to many people like myself, who are not in that generation of laptops...I think it's so important that someone knows how many people are being helped (by the Tech and Tasks program and Library staff)....there's a real need, no question about it. -Deborah G.

Safety and Security

September 2023 - Data below only reflects incidents and not day-to-day rule violation interactions.

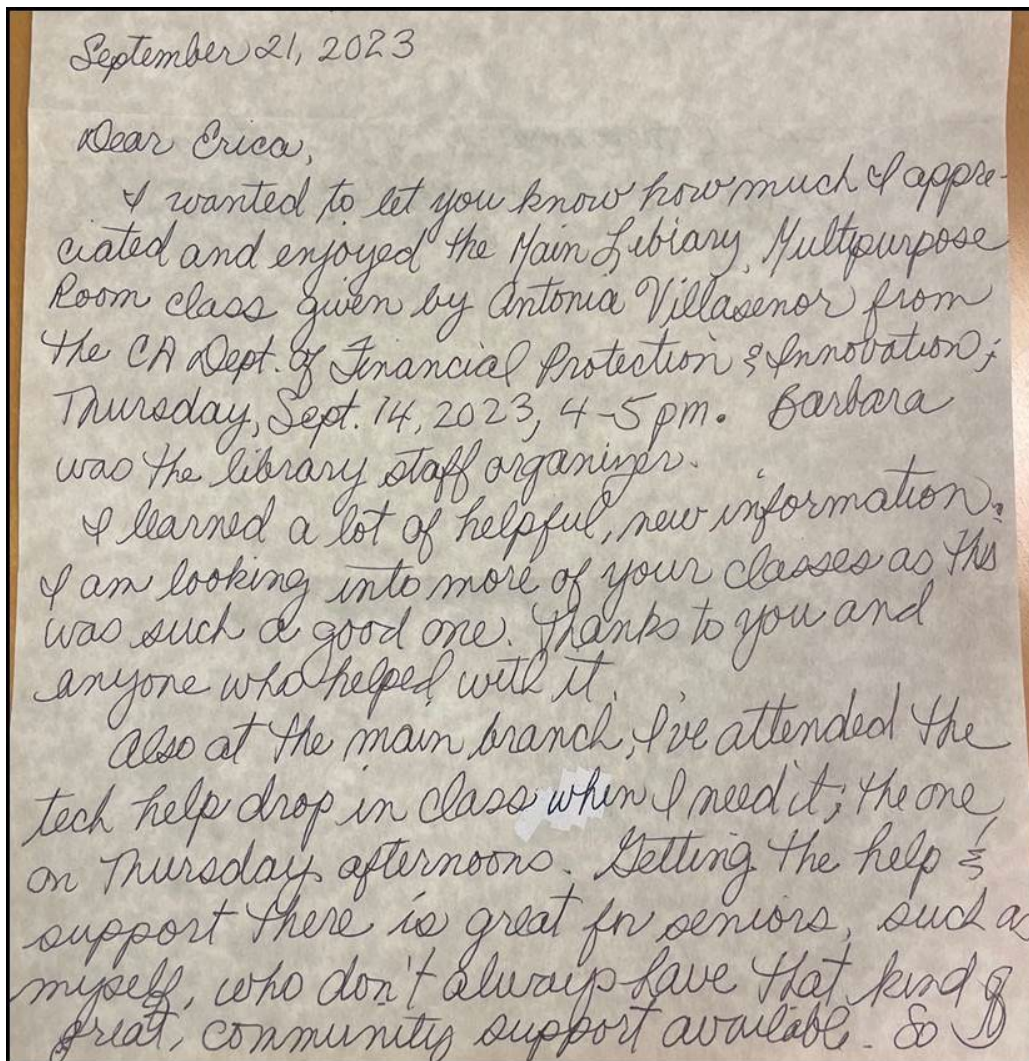
35 monthly incidents (18 major/ 17 minor) / **31** Incidents involving people who appear to be homeless.

15 incidents at main / **20** incidents at branches

2 calls in to police / **8** active bans / **3** acts of Vandalism on library property were reported.

56 minor incidents were reported by Netwatch during non-operational hours.

Lastly, a hand-written note full of gratitude from a valued library patron:



wanted to say a heartfelt Thank you!

Sincerely,
Suzen Cella

P.S. (Oh! One more thing! I saw the
used book store. So glad the hours have
^{been} extended!)

By Erica Cuyugan, Director of Library Services