

CITY OF
Camarillo
P U B L I C L I B R A R Y

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES AND
STATISTICS SUMMARY REPORT

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The City of Camarillo Public Library is a true community destination, offering information resources and signature events that nurture learning and strengthen the City. Library staff remain steadfast in their commitment to bringing people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and support a vibrant Camarillo.

FY 19/20 started strong with increased partnerships and programs. The Library wrapped up a successful summer reading program, launched an innovative cosplay project through grant funding and celebrated the holiday season in style.

In a year unlike any the Library or the world has experienced, the Library's mission – dedication to free and equal access to information, knowledge, independent lifelong learning, cultural enrichment and the joys of reading for our diverse community - is stronger and more purposeful than ever. The COVID-19 pandemic changed library services rapidly and often. While these changes continue, our commitment to serving the Camarillo community remains constant and stronger than ever. Access to the Library's educational and recreational services changed in the Spring of 2020 to include curbside pick-up, telephone and online reference with the AskUs service, expansion of the electronic materials collection, virtual programs and continuing education for the local business community through virtual meetings and programming with the Russell Fischer Business Collection and online Adult Literacy programs. Library staff stayed flexible and planned carefully for phased re-opening and expansion of services.

Library staff are grateful for and the community continues to benefit from continued partnership



and generous support of The Friends of the Camarillo Library. Even during the pandemic and physical closure of the Library, the Friends donated a generous \$200,000 for FY19-20, helping fund materials, programs and services.

This report provides a summary of the past fiscal year – one of the most unique in memory - and a preview of the exciting programs and services offered in unique new ways. Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

Patricia Crosby
Interim Director, 2020-2021



CITY OF CAMARILLO PUBLIC LIBRARY

USAGE AT A GLANCE

417,906

ITEMS CHECKED OUT OR RENEWED BY PATRONS

270,009

PATRON VISITS

138,359

LIBRARY WEBSITE VISITS

92,095

TOTAL CIRCULATION – ELECTRONIC MATERIALS

33,597

ADULT AND YOUTH REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

259,875

WI-FI SESSIONS

5,740

NEW LIBRARY CARDS ISSUED

5,371

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

EVENTS AND SERVICES

629 TOTAL EVENTS

321 Youth | 190 Adult | 118 Teen

25,604 TOTAL EVENT ATTENDEES

17,882 Youth | 6,241 Adult | 1,481 Teen

Signature Events

SUMMER READING CLUB

The new Summer Reading Club (June-August 2019) encourages Camarillo families to read and learn together during summer months to prevent the summer slide (learning loss). Reading suggestions, fun and educational activities and group encouragement combine to encourage children and teens to read throughout the summer.

1,481 Total Participants | 507,780 Minutes of Reading

The Camarillo Public Library hosted the first ever “Summer Reading Performer Showcase” in Ventura County on January 31, 2020. The all-day event was attended by 20 librarians from 10 different library systems in and around the Ventura County area. More than 30 performers gave demonstrations and explained the educational value of their presentation related to the summer reading theme of Dig Deeper. Librarians then connected with performers of their choice. Both librarians and performers alike raved about the event. Camarillo is a leader in the library field and strives to improve library services and connections in the area.

SCHOOL OF COSPLAY

Gearing up for November’s Camarillo Public Library Comic-Con, the Library offered a series of twelve cosplay workshops during October 2019. The School of Cosplay supported creativity and community connections by engaging participants—teens, adults, and adults with special needs—with a platform to collaborate, practice skills, create meaningful costume and art pieces. The School of Cosplay reinforced unique identities through artistic expression in a series of interactive workshops.

The School of Cosplay was funded by \$19,000 in grants from the California State Library and the Awesome Foundation. This effort is an example of Library innovation; the program was created in response to community request and was very well received by participants.



In the image to the left, ARC of Ventura County poses with caps created during one workshop. In the image to the right, teens prep for costume design. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

CAMARILLO PUBLIC LIBRARY COMIC-CON

The Library held its first ever Comic-Con on Saturday, November 9, 2019. The San Diego Comic Convention first popularized the idea of a convention for comic enthusiasts at a community festival in 1973, celebrating all things comic books, super heroes and science fiction. The Library put its own stamp on this trend with a highly successful event welcoming 1,000 attendees of all ages in costume. Participants enjoyed crafts, games and special presentations.

Activities included a virtual reality experience hosted by RCMakes, a creator panel featuring local artists, licensed Star Wars characters, a caricature artist, family board games, red carpet costume show and green screen photo booth. CSU Channel Islands invited attendees to participate in a student video project, giving everyone a chance to speak on camera about their favorite characters and explain why they are passionate about festivals like Comic-Con. First5 of Ventura County engaged children with storytimes and shared early childhood literacy information with more than 400 families. The Friends of the Camarillo Library sponsored the main event of the day, bestselling author Daniel Handler (a.k.a. Lemony Snicket), who gave an interactive lecture and book signing to raving fanfare. Because of the amazingly positive reception, plans are already being made for a follow-up festival next year.



Services

RUSSELL FISCHER BUSINESS COLLECTION (RFBC)

The RFBC continues to be an extremely valuable asset to the Camarillo community. Russell Fischer was an avid reader who visited the Library almost daily. The Library honors his memory and bequest by continually developing the collection of business resources in the RFBC and valuable programs for small business and entrepreneurs both at the Library and in the community. The RFBC benefits the business community and residents of the greater Camarillo area by informing, educating and sharing knowledge about how to develop and

grow a business and/or career. Located on the second floor behind the reference desk, the RFBC features comfortable reading chairs, a large workspace with charging ports for various devices, thousands of books, hundreds of audiobooks and many of top business periodicals.



The RFBC hosts many insightful and engaging events such as the Chamber of Commerce Business Expo, 805 Startups: Pitch to Your Peers and the Female Entrepreneur Forum. During FY2019-20, 763 people attended 31 events.

Another highlight from Fall 2019 involved Russell Fischer Business Collection Coordinator, Georg Winkler, who unveiled the findings of a research project funded by a grant from California Library Services Act. During this project, Georg designed an entrepreneurial process flow and invited community stakeholders to learn how they can help throughout an entrepreneur's journey. Using this information, the business community is able to better foster a spirit of collaboration, share referrals and help entrepreneurs succeed by making them aware of the vast network of local support organizations.

When the pandemic necessitated closure of the Library building in mid-March, the RFBC pivoted to virtual events including Virtual Craft Fair and Career 180 Coffee Talks, meetings and office hours for reference support and assistance with databases. During FY19-20, RFBC staff responded to 123 virtual reference inquiries, hosted seven virtual events with a total of 30 attendees and 24 virtual meetings.



ADULT LITERACY CENTER (ALC)

The ALC helps adult learners build and reinforce reading and writing skills in English. Learners are paired with volunteer tutors. Together these one-on-one pairs learn in a safe and welcoming environment. Goals are set and achieved together, covering topics such as high school diploma equivalency tests, citizenship applications and vocational training. Additionally, the ALC hosts monthly Adult Literacy Interest Group meetings, where literacy tutors and students gather to share ideas and experiences with fellow colleagues. In May and June 2020 the ALC held four virtual Adult Literacy Interest Group Meetings with a total of 30 participants. In the past 12 months, 20 pairs of learners and tutors spent a total of 2,318 hours in the ALC.

YOUNG ADULT CENTER (YAC)

The YAC is a vibrant space that is popular with Camarillo teens. The space is highly used and buzzes with activity. It features study rooms, gaming stations and weekly activities. During FY2019-20 the YAC hosted 118 teen programs with 1,481 attendees.

Services for the Whole Family

Staff developed many programs and partnerships this year. These robust programs focused on children yet impact the entire family as groups gathered to learn and grow together. Highlights from FY19/20 include:

STORYTIME WITH SANTA

Santa Claus—the Jolly Old Elf himself—was the Library's very special guest. Hundreds of attendees enjoyed sharing holiday joy and cheer with songs, stories, and crafts. Attendees even had a chance to take photos with Santa. Two separate events were offered because of popular demand. "We had an amazing experience at Storytime with Santa. My daughter was thrilled and Santa was unbelievable. We love seeing your staff in general and it was nice to have a craft that my 15 month-old could do. Thank you so much for all your hard work putting on this program," said one attendee.

MESA UNION SCHOOL'S FAMILY LITERACY NIGHT

Camarillo Public Library staff were featured presenters at Mesa Union School's Family Literacy Night on Thursday, January 30. Their goal was to make parents and caregivers aware of literacy tools for children and adults. The pair distributed flyers and presented the Library's website to approximately 40 families during two sessions. Attendees told staff how happy they were to hear more about the library. The school administration was pleased and invited the Library back next year.

2020 CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

The whole community was invited to attend the 2020 Chinese New Year Celebration on Saturday, February 29, 2020. 500 people attended this special event, which included cultural performances, food trucks, family-friendly activities and the very popular Camarillo Lion Dance Troupe. Families were encouraged to bring blankets and folding chairs and enjoy a fun picnic on the lawn. The event was presented in partnership with the Ventura County Chinese American Association and supported by the Friends of the Camarillo Library. Leading up to the event, the library welcomed special guest Russell Low for a lecture about Chinese Americans in WWII. The event welcomed 63 people who enjoyed the story of Low's great-grandparents, which has been featured on the History Channel, BBC Radio, and National Public Radio.

Services During COVID 19

CURBSIDE SERVICES DURING COVID 19

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, 80% of library staff were furloughed beginning in March 2020. The Library established and launched a virtual chat platform in April 2020, connecting residents to resources during a time of need. Librarians assisted patrons with reference inquiries using the online chat service along with the development of an online knowledge base. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, patrons can chat with a librarian through an icon located in the bottom right corner of the Library's website, or directly at <https://camarillolibrary.libanswers.com>.

Library staff quickly planned and implemented curbside pickup of books and materials. This safe and easy way to check out materials began June 15 and continued throughout the pandemic. Additionally, the Russell Fischer Business Collection and the Adult Literacy Center began remote operations, offering programming and tutoring through digital means. These services allowed another 15 percent of Library staff to safely return to work. Beginning June 30, 2020 operating hours for curbside pickup and online chat service changed to Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6pm. Community response was strong; the first two weeks of curbside pickup saw a total of 6,022 items requested and 1,264 pickups.

INVENTORY

Library staff made the most of building closure during April and May by conducting a full inventory of the collection. This was an opportune time to scan every item in the building, allowing librarians to evaluate library records against the physical materials and make sure records were correct and up to date. Staff removed old records for materials that were no longer available, resulting in a more streamlined process for patrons when using the catalog.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

ADULT LITERACY CENTERAWARD: \$27,832

Helping people learn reading and writing skills.

Grantor: California Library Literacy Services

Period: Jul 2019 to Jun 2020

ZIP BOOKSAWARD: \$8,925

Delivering an alternative to the traditional interlibrary loan system.

Grantor: California State Library in partnership with the NorthNet Library System

Period: Jul 2019 to Jun 2020

COSPLAY HIGH SCHOOL AT C3AWARD: \$18,000 INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS

Supporting creativity and community connections.

Grantor: California State Library - Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)

Period: Jul 2019 to Jun 2020

COSPLAY AT COMIC-CONAWARD: \$1,000

Costuming and cosplay.

Grantor: Awesome Foundation

Period: Jul 2019 to June 2020

VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

1,299 volunteers FY19-20

107 average number of **volunteers each month**

663 average number of **hours monthly**

7,961 **total hours** of service

The commitment and service of so many community members is truly astonishing and deeply appreciated.

**The success
of the library
is also
measured
by the
strength of its
relationships
within the
greater
community.**

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDE:

805Startups
The Area Housing Authority
Black Gold Cooperative Library System
Braille Institute
Califa
California State Library
California State University Channel Islands
Camarillo Chamber of Commerce
Camarillo Council on Aging
Economic Development Collaborative of Ventura County
eWomens Network
First 5 Ventura County
Foster VC Kids
Friends of the Camarillo Library
kidSTREAM
Laubach Literacy
Love on a Leash
Matter Labs
National Association of Women Business Owners
Navy Gold Star Memorial Trees
NewCo Foundation
NorthNet Library System
Oxnard Adult School
Pleasant Valley Recreation and Parks District
Pleasant Valley School District
SAGE Publishing
Service Corps of Retired Executives
Small Business Administration
Small Business Development Center
Southern California Library Cooperative
VC Writers Salon
Ventura County Arts Council
Ventura County Chinese American Association
Ventura County Genealogical Society
Villa Esperanza Services
Women's Economic Ventures