



SIMI VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2021-2022



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Letter from the Library Director

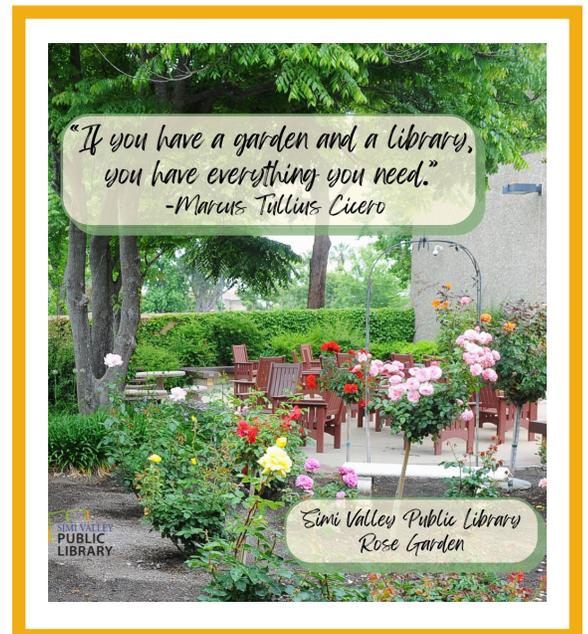
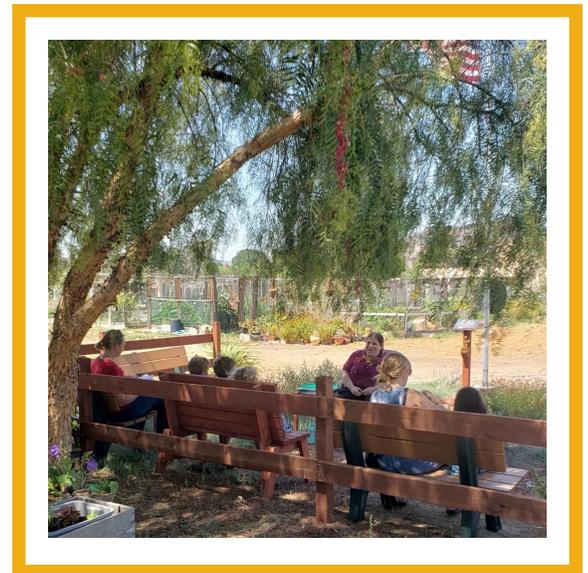
Developing an even deeper understanding of Simi Valley's wants and needs for library service was a highlight of Fiscal Year 2021-22.

In-depth conversation with our community about your goals and aspirations formed the heart of the Simi Valley Public Library's 2022-2026 strategic plan. In developing our new plan, we identified service priorities to realize community goals and lead us into the future. Another highlight from the past year is our focus on customer-driven collection development. Residents have numerous ways to suggest a book or other item, resulting in a collection that reflects the people and interests of Simi Valley. A California State Library Zip Books grant enhanced our ability to fulfill your suggestions for physical items and digital purchase suggestions are a popular feature of the CloudLibrary platform.

The City of Simi Valley renewed its relationship with Library Systems & Services (LS&S) to continue providing full management, staffing and collection development services through 2027. The new contract builds capacity for service through expanded open hours and the addition of an Assistant Director.

We will build on innovative services like 'Meet [Me] at the Library' during the coming year. The successful event brought school personnel and families to the Library and nearly 60 students registered for a library card. A new monthly program for adults with developmental disabilities brought fun and specially tailored engaging activities for attendees and caregivers.

The Library continues to be a vital community gathering place. Simi Valley residents visited the Library for Job and Wellness Fairs, Neighborhood Council meetings, blood drives and Stroke Survivor's Support Group gatherings. Community members voted in September and again in June at the Library, and purchased hundreds of boxes of books at Friends of the Library Blowout Sales. We are planning a refresh of the building that will make it a more comfortable gathering place and Simi Valley destination.



During the year, the Library experienced excellent recovery from COVID-19 closures and service changes. 55% more teen materials and 56% more adult materials were borrowed compared to the previous year. Children's materials were borrowed at a 72% higher rate this year! We are pleased to see that the number of readers in the summer program is approaching pre-pandemic levels.

55%

MORE TEEN
MATERIALS
BORROWED

56%

MORE ADULT
MATERIALS
BORROWED

72%

MORE CHILDREN'S
MATERIALS
BORROWED

Kelly Behle | Director

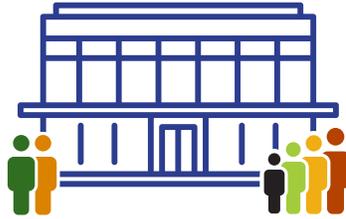


Simi Valley Public Library

BY THE NUMBERS



2,774
SERVICE HOURS



112,336
LIBRARY VISITORS



8,075
COMPUTER USERS



128,680
WIFI SESSIONS



309,132
PHYSICAL ITEMS
BORROWED



53,226
DIGITAL ITEMS
BORROWED



3,768
NEW CARD
HOLDERS



33,549
TOTAL CARD
HOLDERS

Data From
FISCAL YEAR
2021-2022

Strategic Plan Implementation and Capital Projects Updates

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 saw the completion of the Library's five-year strategic plan, with notable successes in each of the five priority areas:

Plan service priorities were

Make Access Easier, Tell the Library's Story, Empower Customer Service, Cultivate Community Creativity, and Support Educational Pursuits.

Making Access Easier

Laptop Kits: The Library is a key access point for computers and the internet in Simi Valley. By offering laptop kits for checkout (including a wifi hotspot and power cables!), these resources can now be used anywhere, not just in the Library.

Mobile Library: Mobile Library outreach continues to grow through partnerships. Library staff visited Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District sites, Simi at the Garden, and retirement communities.



California State Library Parks Passes: In partnership with the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the California State Library, Simi Valley Public Library began lending free passes to California State Parks in April 2022. Library Parks Passes provide equitable access to state parks, encourage good physical and mental health and support outdoor education. The Library created six hiking kits residents to borrow. Kits include trekking poles, binoculars, maps and other items that will enhance a hike.

Telling the Library's Story

Street Fairs: In a break from tradition, the city of Simi Valley held two street fairs and staff represented the Library at both events. In Fall 2021, staff in Halloween costumes handed out candy to early trick-or-treaters. In Spring 2022, Library staff promoted the first in-person Summer Reading Program in two years, sharing activities related to its outdoor camping theme, "Read Beyond the Beaten Path." Attendance at both of these events was strong, and staff met many Library customers who were overjoyed to learn that the Library was open again.



Empowering Customer Service

Zip Books: Through the California State Library's Zip Books Grant, customers are able to request books through Amazon.com and have them shipped to their homes. When the customer is finished with the book, it is returned to the Library and added to the collection.

Updated Events Calendar: in response to community input during the Strategic Planning process, the Library implemented a more user-friendly events calendar. Customers can view the calendar in a format and date range that suits their needs and use filters that show personally relevant programs. The calendar is easily viewed on mobile devices.

Cultivating Community Creativity

In 2021, the Library held its second annual Community Reads. The book *Rising Strong* by Brene Brown focused on themes of resilience and perseverance. This book spoke to our collective experience during the pandemic and a community beginning to get back up on its feet and open up again.



Pressbooks Public and Indie Author Project: California State Library-funded Pressbooks Public allows authors to format, design and create their own professional quality print-ready and eBook files for free. Indie Author Project (IAP) gives local writers the opportunity to submit eBooks for inclusion in the Library's catalog.

Supporting Educational Pursuits

Library Unlimited: In 2022, the Library launched a monthly adult adaptive program called Library Unlimited. The event includes reading, interactive activities and tours to increase familiarity with Library staff and resources. Event themes in 2022 were Super-Heroes, Spring Dance Party, Star Wars, and Outdoor Adventures. Seven to twenty people attended each month.

Meet [Me] at the Library: Schools often struggle with transportation to the Library for field trips. Meet [Me] at the Library is a unique program designed to improve the school tour experience. School district personnel with strong rapport with students act as a featured host and tour leader at the Simi Valley Public Library, while Library staff provide craft activities, a game and streamlined card registration for families. Two Meet Me events held just before the school year ended each brought more than 80 people and resulted in more than 50 Library card registrations.



Left: Township Elementary Library Technician, Julia Hammon, with a student family; Right: Mountain View Elementary Principal, Jennifer Goldman, with a student family.

Strategic Planning Process for 2022-2027

Development of the 2022-2027 Simi Valley Public Library Strategic Plan was a true community effort.

The Library hosted seven focus groups to gather ideas and feedback from local business, education and nonprofit leaders, key stakeholders, and Library customers, volunteers and staff. Roughly 400 community members responded to a survey, attended focus groups and participated in individual interviews.

Simi Valley Public Library's crucial role in the community is evident. The final plan is both visionary and realistic, and it will guide Library decision-making for the coming five years. Simi Valley residents directly shaped a plan that will support continued Library success and exceptional service to the public.

We Want to Hear **FROM YOU!**



Requesting community input on library services for our upcoming Strategic Plan.

Special Projects and Additional Funding

Día de los niños / Día de los libros

The California State Library provided grant funds for Día de los niños / día de los libros festival on May 7, 2022, in addition to program supplies, printing costs of promotional material and approximately 20 multicultural children's books for the Library's collection.

Zip Books Grant

SVPL received \$4,550 from the California State Library for Zip Books. Since the program's launch in March, the Library has fulfilled 118 customer purchase requests and added 64 items to the collection. Not only does this program help create a collection that reflects the community's interests and needs, it also increases access by delivering items directly to customer's homes.

Community Partnerships

Rancho Simi Recreation and Parks District (RSRPD)

This summer, the Library developed a new relationship with Simi Valley Trail Blazers, which provides outdoor and historical education.

This organization helped the Library expand its services beyond its walls by leading an educational hike at Corriganville.

City of Simi Valley Youth Council

City of Simi Valley Youth Council and the Library hosted a Rock Painting night during Suicide Prevention month. The program was held in the Library Rose Garden and reached approximately 250 people with positive messaging and support. People of all ages painted rocks and visited with one another, celebrating the importance of human connection.



Kiwanis

The Kiwanis Club of Simi Valley offered inexpensive hot dog lunches during Summer Reading Kickoff on June 4. Club members arrived early in the morning with the locally famous 'hot dog trailer' and served lunches to families.

A poster for a Job & Career Fair. The top left corner says "Youth Employment Service (YES)". The main title is "JOB & CAREER FAIR" in large, bold, purple letters. Below the title is an illustration of four diverse young people (two women and two men) dressed in professional attire. To the right of the illustration is a green box with "Event Highlights" and a list of bullet points: "1,000+ job openings available", "Meet employers", "Apply directly for job openings", "Job coaching", "Access to tools and resources to help you get hired", and "Practice interviews". Below the highlights is the date and time: "Saturday, April 23, 2022 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m." and the location: "Simi Valley Public Library". At the bottom of the green box is the website "www.simivalley.org/YES".

Youth Employment Services / Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Library is proud to work alongside the Youth Employment Services team and the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce to bring job opportunities to Simi Valley residents. On April 23, the Library hosted nearly 50 local businesses at a Job and Career Fair. Visitors had the opportunity to learn about local businesses and apply for openings.

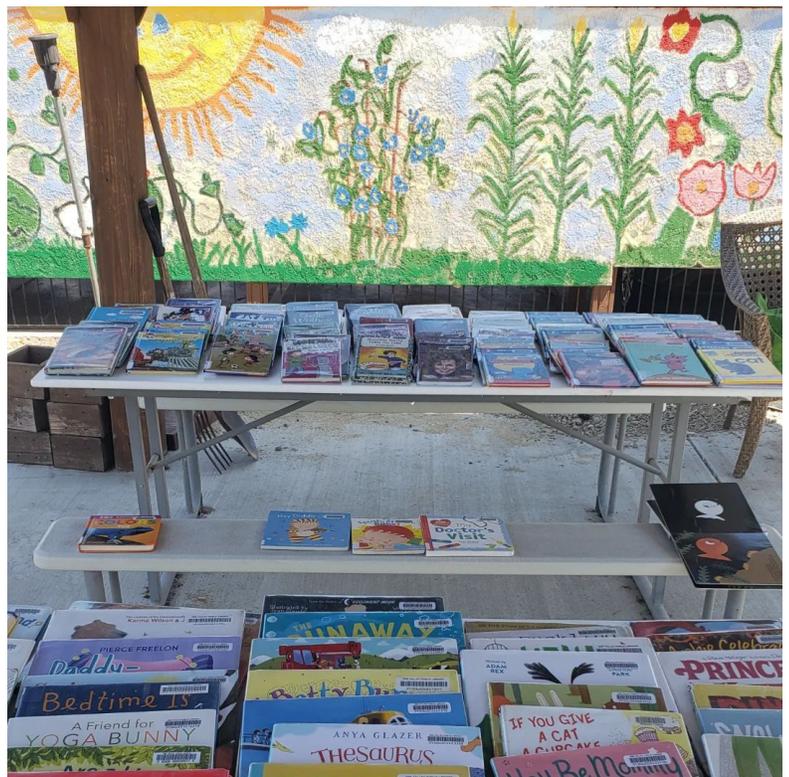
Library Facility

The Library is a popular location for community events, hosting two Job Fairs, two Wellness Expos, three Blood Drives and two Elections with 11,315 ballots cast during the past year.

A Tesla battery system from the California Public Utilities Commission provides backup energy storage. The system provides 20 hours of backup power to ensure the Library can operate uninterrupted as a cooling center. Installation began the first week of October and continued through the end of November.

Library Collections

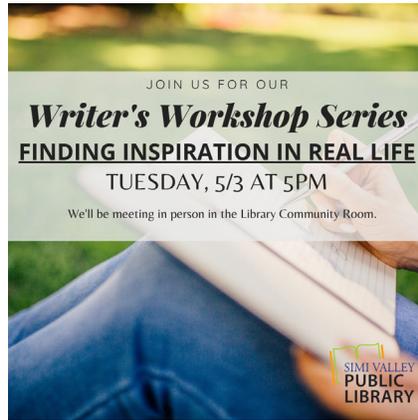
Cloud Library pay per use (PPU) launched in March 2022, with over 2,000 items borrowed during the first year. PPU items are not purchased by the Library. Instead, an extensive collection of items are available to Library customers, and Simi Valley Public Library is charged only when an item is borrowed. This model is cost effective and instantly provides more items of immediate interest to Simi Valley customers.



Library Events

Family literacy mini storytimes were held outdoors in the Discovery Garden, four times per week, prior to the return of full-length face to face programs.

The Teen Advisory Group met twice per month to discuss the needs of local teens, and middle school students participated in a teen book club. Events for adults included Writer's Workshops, Meditation Workshops, Adult Craft programs and Senior Fitness programs.

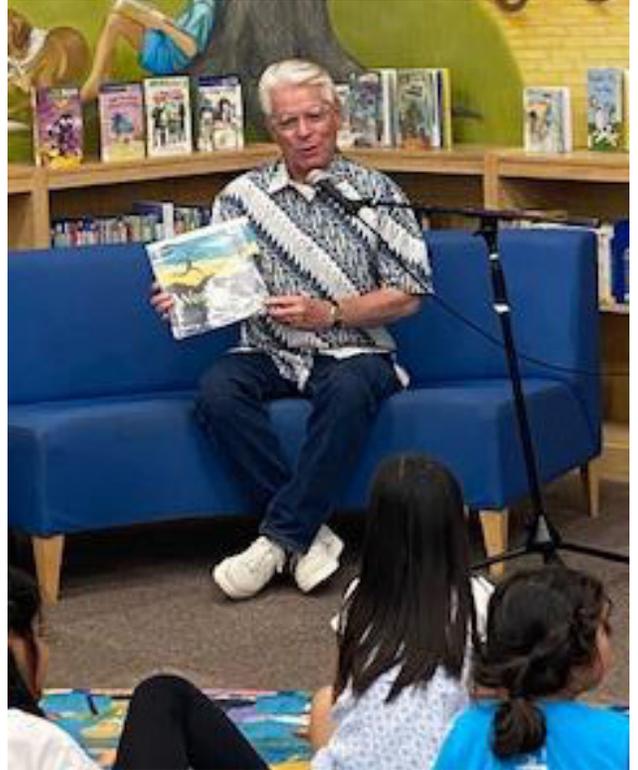


The Yellow Heart Memorial created a special opportunity for those who lost loved ones to COVID-19 to come together and share memories. Congresswoman Julia Brownley, County Supervisor Carmen Ramirez and City Councilmember Dee Dee Cavanaugh all attended the event, with music by local professional vocalist Lynzee Fraye. The Busy Hands Garden Club provided beautiful centerpieces, presented as gifts to each of the individuals who spoke at the event.

Children's Book Day / El día de los niños

After a two year hiatus of the annual Read Across America festival, the Library held a combined Día de los niños/ Día de los libros and Children's Book Day event in May. Community leaders delighted children with book readings, and a Native American story-teller from Redbird's Vision shared a tale and talked about the value of stories.

In June, the first fully in-person Summer Reading in two years kicked off with an interactive science storytelling program. The summer theme, Read Beyond the Beaten Path, invited readers of all ages to track summer reading, redeem prizes, attend Library events and get outdoors! Outdoor events included a hike at Corriganville, a Discovery Garden Open House and a Picnic Storytime in the Park. National Park Rangers from Channel Islands spoke about the natural history of the islands and how to enjoy time there.



Ventura County Community College District
Board Member Bernardo Perez



Contributors

Simi Valley Public Library Board of Trustees

Keith L. Mashburn, Chair
Elaine Litster, Trustee
Mike Judge, Trustee
Dee Dee Cavanaugh, Trustee
Ruth Luevanos, Trustee

The Board of Trustees provides citizen oversight of Library operations. During this fiscal year, the Board endorsed entering a 5-year contract with Library Systems & Services for 2022-2027. The Board's commitment to supporting Library services, planning for the Library's future and ensuring the Library's fiscal health is foundational to the success of the Library in meeting the needs of the community.

Library Staff

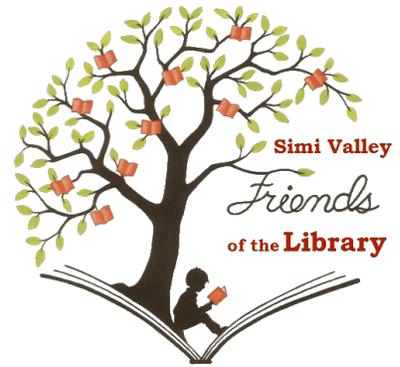
A team of twenty dedicated staff members provide service to the community seven days per week. Staff participated in ongoing professional development and training throughout the year. In August, an All Staff Training Day featured local career coach, Camille McKinney, whose interactive presentation taught staff how to utilize emotional intelligence to improve teamwork and customer service. The day-long training covered evacuation drills, first aid, trends in library innovation and digital resources.

Children's Services staff completed "Storytime Bootcamp", a comprehensive eight week course on early childhood literacy. Adult Services staff participated in a one-day virtual summit on reinventing library services organized by Library Journal. Staff also took advantage of these training opportunities (partial list):

- Data Literacy for Librarians
- Extreme Customer Service
- Future Thinking Panel
- Media Smart Libraries
- Public Libraries and the Battle against Misinformation
- Serving Library Users on the Autism Spectrum
- Storytime Bootcamp

Friends of the Simi Valley Library

The Friends generously donate funds each year to support the cost of supplies for events. In addition, contributions from the Friends cover the majority of costs for the Hoopla streaming service. The Friends bookstore is open six days a week, conveniently located inside the Library and stocked with gently-used, donated materials. Special events such as Blow Out Book Sales offer materials for purchase at very low prices. Thank you to our dedicated Friends volunteers!



Lisa Trent, President

Claudia Allen

Diane Annis

Teresa DeGagne

Jennifer Frank

Fran Harders

Julia Hammon

Gloria Hasson

Caroline Hucker

Roshni Khiantani

Cathy Meininger

Susan Miller

Gail Rich



Community Partners

The following organizations were valuable partners during 2021-2022:

AAUW (American Association of University Women)	Simi Valley Senior Center
Art of Living, Purvi Shukl Pathak, Meditation Instructor	Simi Valley Trail Blazers
Boys & Girls Club of Simi Valley	Simi Valley Unified School District
Busy Hands Garden Club	Simi Valley Youth Council
Cal Coast Martial Arts	Simi Valley Youth Employment Service (YES)
California State University, Channel Islands	Stephanie Hicks, Confidence and Style Coach and Educator
City of Simi Valley Public Works	Strathearn Historical Society
First 5 of Simi Valley/ Moorpark	Varenita of Simi Valley
Homes with Heart Ventura County	Ventura County Behavioral Health
Justin Early Learners Academy	Ventura County Community College District
Kiwanis Club of Simi Valley	Ventura County SCORE
Kopy King	
Literazzi	
National Park Service, Channel Islands Education	
Nora Hayes, Health Educator and CPR Trainer	
Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District	
READ Ventura County Library Adult Literacy	
Redbird's Vision	
Regal Medical Group	
Ronald Reagan Presidential Library	
Simi at the Garden	
Simi Institute for Careers and Education	
Simi Valley Arts Alliance	
Simi Valley Art Association	
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce	
Simi Valley Community Council	
Simi Valley Friends of the Library	
Simi Valley Police Department	
Simi Valley Samaritan Center	