



OJAI VALLEY LIBRARY FRIENDS & FOUNDATION Library Reader

Ojai, CA

SUMMER 2022

Homework Centers- volunteers needed

The Library Friends fully fund the afterschool programs located in the three valley public libraries. This program makes a world of difference to many students.

Are you interested in making a difference in the lives of young students in area schools? Please consider volunteering in one of our Homework Centers in Ojai, Meiners Oaks, and Oak View, working one-on-one with children who need help with basic homework tasks. Our Homework Centers are open Monday through Thursday after school, beginning Sept 6th. Volunteers choose when and how often to serve on a set schedule. Potential volunteers can pick up a Volunteer Application (available at each of our local library branches) and must pass a full background check.

Contact:

Ojai Library
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Meiners Oaks:
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Summer Fun Continues at Your Ojai Library *By Ron Solórzano, Regional Librarian*

Summer is in full swing, and the Ojai Library continues to offer lots of great programming for kids and adults! First and foremost is our Summer Reading Challenge—this year's theme is "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" and readers can log their number of minutes (for children) or books read (for adults) to be entered for a chance to win lots of fun prizes. This challenge runs through August 14, and prizes include stylish tote bags, custom-made buttons, and a grand prize of a Nintendo Switch for the youth program. Children who log 500 minutes can also visit the library to choose a free new book to add to their home collection. To register for these challenges, visit vencolibrary.beanstack.org.

Families can also visit the Ojai Library during the summer to enjoy our Lego Club on Friday afternoons, board game sessions on Sunday afternoons, and a youth Writer's Club on the second Thursday of the month. We are also offering a monthly STEAM Lab program on the third Wednesday of the month, a monthly Art Lab program on the first Thursday of the month, and our weekly Paws for Reading program every Wednesday. Contact the library for information on how to reserve your spot for any of these events.

Most exciting of all, this summer saw the return of our weekly Storytime for children age 0-5 years! Youth Librarian Becky Rowe leads a fun and engaging program every Wednesday morning at 10:30am, followed by a special family craft activity. We are all so happy to see all of those smiling faces back at the library!

Elsewhere in the Ojai Valley, the Ventura County Library's Mobile Library continues its regular visits to Meiners Oaks Elementary School every Friday from 10am to 12pm. The Mobile Library also stops by the Ojai Community Farmers' Market every second Thursday of the month from 3-4:30pm. For more information on the Mobile Library, including the services offered and other places you can see it, visit www.vencolibrary.org/locations/mobile-library.

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While the Meiners Oaks Library remains closed for its relocation to the Meiners Oaks Elementary School campus, the Ojai and Oak View libraries are open for their normal hours, and the Oak View Library continues to offer its own exciting series of Summer Reading activities. These include weekly storytimes and Play to Learn sessions on Tuesday afternoons, Lego and board game clubs, a STEAM Lab, and an Art Salon. In addition, the Oak View Reading Society offers adults a chance to join a communal reading experience on their own schedule—most recently participants read *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger. For more information on any of our events or hours of operation, or to check out our eBook collections, virtual storytimes, and our ever-growing Library of Things, visit www.vencolibrary.org.



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The board welcomes anyone who is interested in its activities to the Board meetings, held the fourth Tuesday of each month. While appropriate it is a Zoom meeting, otherwise we meet at the Library Meeting Room in Twice-Sold Tales.

More books are banned than ever before, as Congress takes on the issue

By Hannah Natanson - The Washington Post- April 8. 2022

Two reports this week show the United States is facing an unprecedented wave of school book banning, spurring Congress to hold a hearing Thursday focused on the issue, which free-speech advocates warn will undermine democracy.

PEN America, a nonprofit that advocates for freedom of expression, found there have been 1,586 book bans in schools over the past nine months. The bans targeted 1,145 unique books by more than 800 authors, and a plurality of the books — 41 percent — featured prominent characters who are people of color. Thirty-three percent of the banned books, meanwhile, included LGBTQ themes, protagonists or strong secondary characters, and 22 percent “directly address issues of race and racism.”

Also this week, the American Library Association published its annual report on book censorship, revealing that it had tracked 729 attempts to remove library, school and university materials in 2021, leading to 1,597 book challenges or removals. That is the highest number recorded since the association began tracking the phenomenon 20 years ago. For comparison, the association counted challenges or bans of 273 books in 2020, 377 in 2019 and 483 in 2018. Most titles targeted in 2021 were written by or about LGBTQ or Black individuals.

At the district level, meanwhile, book bans are proliferating, as the two reports suggest and as The Washington Post previously reported. The Post reported that many book removals are taking place in secret, by administrators wary of controversy — a finding the PEN America report supports.

The report found that 98 percent of the more than 1,500 book bans it tracked took place when administrators acted covertly or outside of the normal processes schools have set up to handle book challenges.

[Ed. Note- a copy of the full article is available as a PDF file. Send your request to ovlff121@gmail.com with the words “banning books” in the subject line.]



Visit to Ojai by State Librarian

On June 11 we were honored by a visit from Greg Lucas, California State Librarian. As part of a visit to Southern California he arranged with Nancy Schram, Ventura County Deputy Library Director, to visit the Ojai libraries. Carol Smith, Susan Bee and Judy Oberlander met with Greg and Nancy, along with

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Top Ten Challenges Facing Public Libraries

By Mark Smith

Pages 241-247 | Published online: 26 Apr 2019 -Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Austin, USA Correspondence - msmith@tsl.texas.gov
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Public libraries today are at a critical juncture. Approaching the turn of the millennium, we heard much handwringing about whether public libraries would become obsolete, and we faced constant questions about how libraries can remain relevant in the age of online information. Nearly 20 years later, libraries have successfully transformed themselves from being chiefly about materials to being community anchors for formal and informal learning, technology access, workforce development, and community engagement.

But while public libraries have reinvented themselves into a key element of social infrastructure, to borrow the term coined by Eric Klinenberg in his book, *Palaces for the People* (2018), threats to the well-being of the institution remain. From my perspective as a state librarian – and representing purely my considered opinion – following [is one of] the areas that seem of most concern to the long-term health and vitality of the public library.

Erosion of faith in objective information

The dystopian novel *Golden State Winters* (2019) by Ben H. Winters imagines a distant future where objective truth is society's most important value, and the official record is faithfully guarded by – you guessed it – librarians. As the main character observes as he seeks entry in the Hall of the Permanent Record, "These are the custodians of the Record. They are Librarians, and they do not fuck around" (127). Unfortunately, the post-apocalyptic world of *Golden State* has succeeded an unknown and unknowable past in which truth was so degraded that it fatally undermined the foundations of society, leading to the destruction of the world. In other words, a past that looks distressingly like our present.

Those of us of a certain age can remember when people agreed about basic facts, when science was considered gospel, and we looked up to experts in academia, government, and industry. While research shows that public trust in scientists has remained relatively stable since the 1970s (though only 44 percent of U.S. adults report "a great deal of confidence") there are deep divides over some issues, such as climate change and food science. Meanwhile, by the same survey, only 37 percent of U.S. adults report that they have a great deal of confidence in medicine, and only 13 percent have confidence in the press (Funk and Kennedy 2019). The Knight Foundation (2018) has documented how the question of confidence in the media is particularly troubling as significant portions of the public mistrust the news they get and increasingly turn to non-objective sources of information.

This trend is troubling because it undermines what we thought would always be regarded as authoritative sources of information and undermines the ability of people to make decisions about their lives, families, and communities. And while the public seems to continue to have a high level of trust in the authenticity of information from libraries, I worry that just as we have seen confidence in the reliability of information from other sources erode, the public could lose faith in the authenticity of information from the library, undermining one of the most important pillars of the library's value to society.

[Ed. Note: excerpted from a longer article: *Top Ten Challenges Facing Public Libraries*. A PDF copy of the full article is available by sending an email to ovlff121@gmail.com with the words "Top Ten" in the subject line.]



State Librarian... continued from page 2

Dana Vinke, and Matt LeVere of VCLS, in the Community Room for a light lunch and conversation. Greg spent time with Ojai Librarian Ron Solorzano looking around the Ojai Library. He also did a drive-by at Meiners Oaks School to check out the new library location there. He was interested in learning about Ojai, our libraries, and the current issues we face. As State Librarian, Greg likes to visit as many libraries as possible; we're happy that Ojai is now one of his destinations.

Greg discussed his role as State Librarian in an interview with Anne Fitzsimmons on the online site AFAR:

"The state library is an information hub, both for the state government and as a cultural heritage institution. We were created as one of the first three pieces of California legislation from 1850. Our charge and our mission, as we see it, is to be reflective, to be a library that reflects California. There are around 300 languages and dialects spoken here. Forty percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home; 30 percent were born in another country. California has one of the most diverse groups of people ever brought together as equals."

As the state librarian—a role appointed by the governor—he believes local libraries and librarians should be storytellers for the diverse history and current times of California. "What's been a delight, but also a challenge," he says, "is to make sure we're talking about all the different threads that go into weaving this incredibly colorful and rich tapestry that is the state of California."





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Seven Trends Shaping the Future of Libraries

By Jeffrey Sackenheim
SHP Research Group

Advancements in technology—even a global pandemic—haven't meant the end of libraries. Far from it! Libraries have consistently evolved to keep pace with changing times, while providing a place for learning and community-building.

- But what must libraries consider to stay relevant in the communities they serve? In our latest whitepaper, *5,000 Years of Adaptability: The Proud Past and Bright Future of Libraries*, our Community Studio experts offer seven trends shaping the future of libraries.

- We predict the effects of COVID-19 will continue to be felt for years to come. As such, we'll see libraries offer ongoing post-pandemic

support: providing greater access to computers and the internet, helping students make up for lost ground, and supporting teachers to an even greater extent.

- SHP has already experienced a rise in clients' interest in thoughtfully and purposefully integrating outdoor spaces into their facilities' master plans.

- We expect libraries to continue implementing interactive

environments into their design plans - We expect the demand for libraries to offer individual workstations and meeting spaces that can double as business conference rooms will increase dramatically in the next five years.

- Libraries are in the unique position of offering amazing opportunities when they use their resources to collaborate in real-time.

- Even with a full return to in-person service, we anticipate the next

several years will bring a greater investment in infrastructure to support increased digital lending, online content and virtual programming efforts.

As one of the grandest public institutions in the United States, and one where everyone is welcome, libraries provide invaluable opportunities for lifelong learning, self-discovery and human connection. From clay tablets to digital tablets, libraries have survived for nearly 5,000 years thanks to their incredible ability to adapt.



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