

# **Simi Valley Public Library:**

***Books are just the beginning!***



**Simi Valley Public Library Annual Report  
2013-2014**

## **TABLE OF CONENTS**

Directors' Message	3
Simi Valley Public Library Metrics	4
Annual Review	5
Customer Service	11
Service Areas and Collections	12
Simi Valley Friends of the Library	15
Community Reaction	15
Looking Ahead	15
Appendix A: Programming Statistics in Detail	17
Appendix B: Patron Satisfaction Metrics	19

## **DIRECTORS' MESSAGE**

When the Simi Valley Public Library reopened in July of 2013, operated by the City of Simi Valley, Library staff anticipated an increase in foot traffic thanks to publicity surrounding the transition. However, the increase turned out to be higher than expected. Over the past year, we have welcomed over 200,000 patrons into the Library and hundreds more online. Looking for everything from the latest best seller to an enriching program for their little one, residents have embraced their new Library.

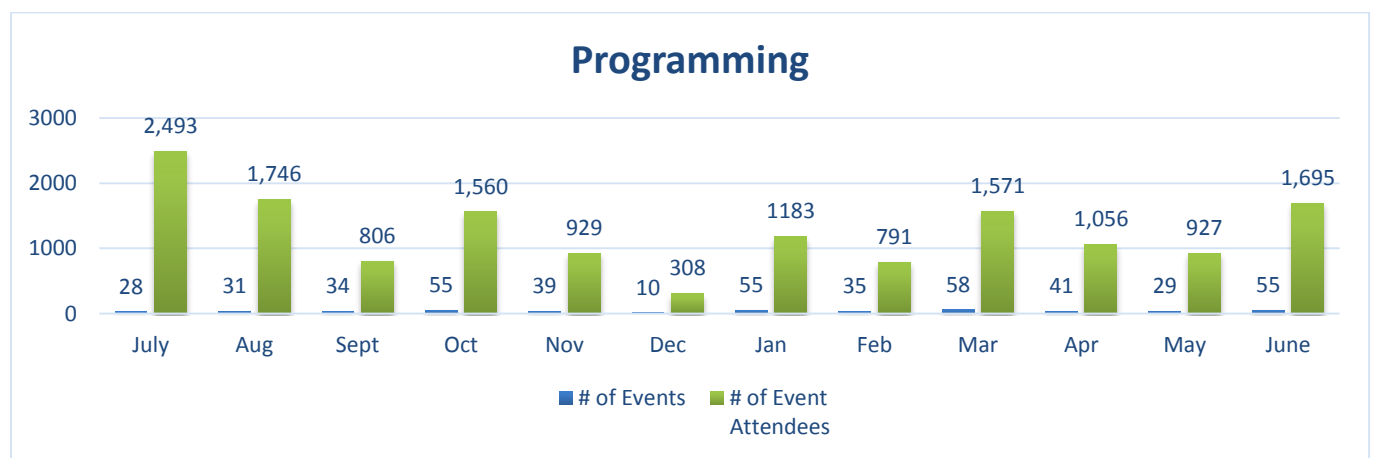
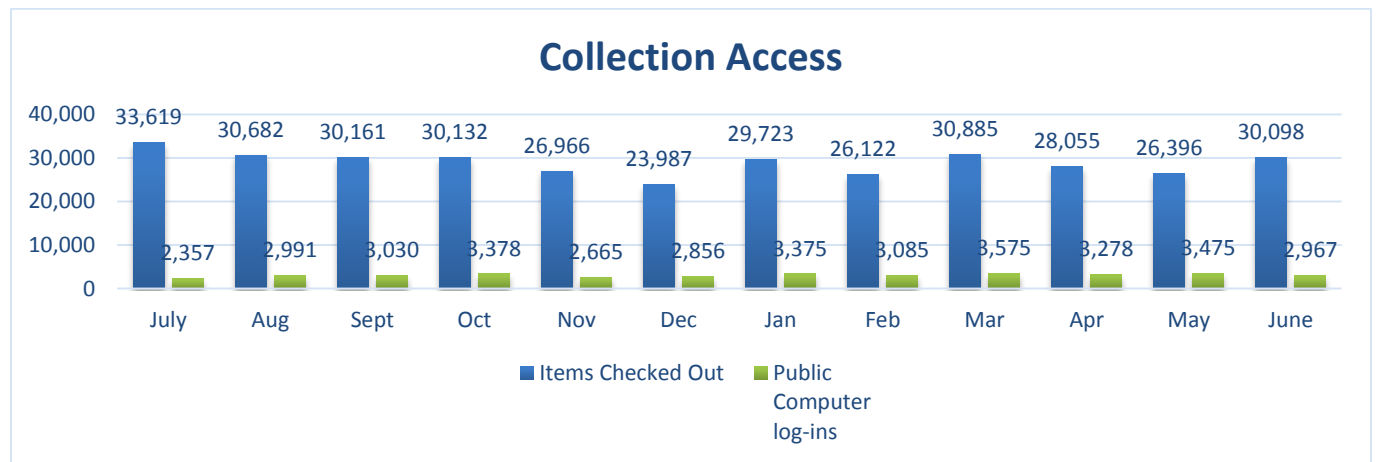
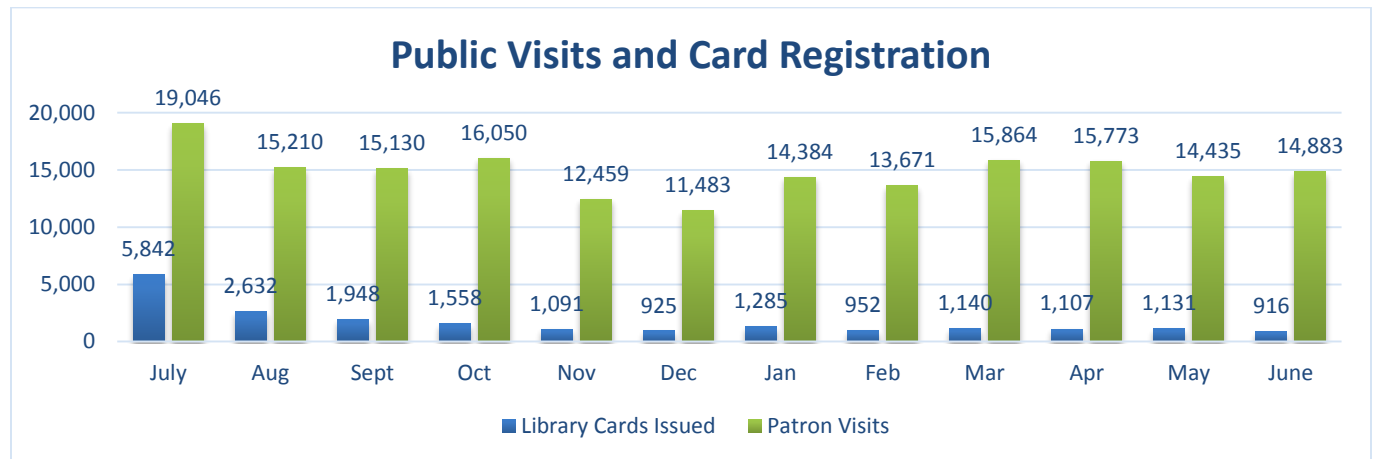
Since opening, your Library staff has worked to match these high expectations by strengthening collections and offering a diverse array of programming and services for children, teens and adults. Thanks to the support of committed allies like the Simi Valley Friends of the Library, the Simi Valley Unified School District and the Ventura County READ Program, we expanded access while providing an inclusive space where every community member can explore their intellectual curiosity in a supportive environment.

In the coming year, we plan to deepen our connection to the community by beginning the strategic planning process. Strategic planning will allow you, our patrons and Library supporters, a chance to explore your vision of the Simi Valley Public Library of the future. We hope you will share your thoughts and ideas with us so that together we can continue to serve you as not just a public library, but a Library for the public.

Heather J. Cousin  
Director  
Simi Valley Public Library

Sommer Barwick  
Director  
Department of Community Services

## SIMI VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY METRICS -- AT A GLANCE



Additional programming metrics can be found in Appendix A.

## SIMI VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY 2013-2014: ANNUAL REVIEW

**July** The Library opens to huge crowds on July 1, following a brief ceremony and ribbon cutting featuring members of the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Bob Huber and City Councilmembers, and Library Director, Heather Cousin. On the first day staff welcome over 2,400 patrons who are eager to stay, even after closing. Staff stays until 9:30 p.m. issuing new library cards.

The Friends of the Library provide \$12,000 towards improvements at the Library, and are recognized by the Library Board of Trustees at the July 1, 2013 meeting.

The Library continues to be busy with the start of the Summer Reading Program, issuing new Library cards and welcoming those eager to get a peek at the refurbished facility. Over 19,000 visit in the first month.



Teens staff the 2013 Summer Reading Program registration table.

**August** Programming for adults kicks off with two food-themed events: *Join the Farm: Community Supported Agriculture* and *Tasty Tips Chefs Use*. The two programs have over 75 participants. The Library partners with the Ventura County Law Library to host *Lawyers in the Library: The Year in Biotechnology Law*.

Teens also have their first program in the new Teen Lounge. *Death By Chocolate* taste testing is very popular and kicks off a new calendar of programming especially for teens.

The Library helps Simi Valley students start the school year at the Simi Valley Moorpark First 5 Kindergarten Kickoff. Library staff reads stories and registers families for new cards.

Staff makes presentations at each Neighborhood Council Meeting.



Library staff reads to children at First 5's Kindergarten Kickoff

**September** Staff participates in several outreach visits including offering a tour of the facility to the administrative team of the Simi Valley Boys & Girls Club.

The Ventura County READ Adult Literacy Program resumes, offering free tutoring for those interested in improving their English speaking and reading skills.

In honor of National Library Card Sign Up month, staff holds a library card registration drive at the Boys and Girls Club. Over 30 new cards are issued to Boys and Girls Club participants, their families and staff.

Teen Librarian, Llyr Heller, visits Simi Valley High School and takes students on a virtual tour of the Library's online resources. The position of Teen Librarian was created when the City assumed operations in July of 2013.

In addition to offering several story times for children, the Library adds new programs: Waggin' Tales (children read to specially trained therapy dogs), California State University Channel Islands speaker series and monthly teen craft programs.



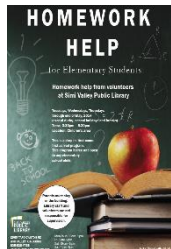
The Library partners with United Way to host volunteers for its Day of Caring event, promotes and hosts a table at both the City's Living Green Expo and the Simi Valley Cultural Art's Center Foundation's Festival of the Arts.

**October** The Library publishes its first newsletter featuring a two month calendar, variety of articles, and book reviews. In December, the newsletter is integrated into the City's e-notify system, enabling residents to sign up to receive the publication electronically.



Volunteers from Anthem Blue Cross help during the United Way's Day of Caring.

Staff participates in Bullying Prevention Awareness Month, along with the City and Youth Councils, offering a screening of the critically acclaimed film *Bully*.



The Library initiates the Homework Helpers program. Using volunteers from high school honor societies and college students, elementary school students receive help with homework or other subject specific questions.

Among the outreach events, staff participates in Sunrise Assisted Living facility's first health fair. They distribute promotional materials and issue new Library cards.

The Library's Halloween Spook-tacular is a success with over 300 people attending. Thanks to the assistance of volunteers from Bank of America and the Simi Valley Adult School's Cosmetology program, children, teens and adults enjoy a variety of games, crafts and free face painting.

Staff hosts a presentation by Richard Senate, a professional ghost hunter based in Ventura County. The program generates interest from all ages, with over 60 people attending.



To spotlight Domestic Violence Awareness Month, staff partner with The Domestic Violence Task Force of Ventura County to screen *Sin by Silence* and host a discussion with Convicted Women Against Abuse founder, Brenda Clubine. Following the



discussion, the Coalition for Family Harmony, Fleet and Family Support Services, the Ventura County District Attorney's Victim/Witness Center, Interface Children & Family Services, and Mixteco/Indigena Community Organizing Project hold a resource fair.

**November** The Simi Valley Friends of the Library vote to fund \$32,600 to support collection development and Library programming.



Teen Librarian, Llyr Heller, continues to reach out to area high schools attending a lunchtime volunteer fair at Simi Valley High School.

In honor of National Novel Writing Month, the Library hosts several local authors and a fiction writing workshop featuring Doug Taylor, author of *Bogota by Bus*.

Celebrating International Gaming Day, the Library features a day long board game event. Families join the Simi Valley Gamers for Yu-Gi-Oh card tournaments and a variety of role playing games.

READ, Ventura County's Literacy program holds its first tutor training of the year at the Senior Center.

**December** Simi Valley Friends of the Library vote to donate an additional \$40,000 to fund collection purchases. The funds will enhance material purchases for children, teens, and adults.

The Busy Hands Garden Club donates \$300 to the Library to provide additional lighting on the Rose Garden Memorial patio for use during the *Music to Our Ears* concert series.



The Library begins partnering with Sandbox Computers for Kids, a local computer education business. The first program, creating computer games, fills within a few days of putting it on the calendar.

Partnering with Toys for Tots and Food Share of Ventura County, the Library serves as a drop-off point for much needed food, toy and clothing donations.



Over 180 children and their families attend the first Winter Wonderland program, featuring free face painting by Simi Valley Adult School Cosmetology students, crafts, cupcake decorating, stories and games. The program is followed later in the day by a holiday music concert. The event is featured in the Sunday edition of the *Ventura County Star*.

Library Technician, Laura Herrera, and Teen Librarian, Llyr Heller, hold the first homeschooler meetup. Offering participants the opportunity to meet other homeschooling families, the event features a brief reception followed by an introduction to the Library's in-house and online resources.

**January** The Library kicks off *Talk Time*, a program, using a combination of staff and volunteers trained as part of the Laubach Literacy program, to assist participants in improving their English language skills. Laubach matches learners with program graduates who are trained to then coach new learners.

The Library holds the first concert on the Rose Garden patio, co-sponsored by local performing arts organization, It's A New Day. An audience of 55 people brave chilly winds to enjoy a performance by local student musicians. The program grows in succeeding months with a variety of musical genres including jazz, swing, and a Beatles tribute night.



Thanks to a generous donation from the Simi Valley Friends of the Library, the City is able to install a cross fence on the staff/Friends patio creating a more secure area in which to accept donations.

**February** The Library begins hosting collaborative programs with the Simi Valley Recreation and Park District. The programs feature fun craft themed events for teens.



Teens showing off crafts created at the Mustache Party.

Head Librarian, Derek Stalcup, is accepted to the Eureka Leadership Institute. The Institute, sponsored by the California State Library and Infopeople, is a competitive program offering leadership training to just 32 librarians throughout the State annually. His proposal to provide outreach and literacy services to families experiencing intimate partner violence receives a \$5,000 grant.

The Library hosts a reception and tour for Simi Valley Unified School District librarians. As part of the training day, the Library Director provides a demonstration of the Library's online resources, leads a discussion of ways to encourage library card registration by students and promote use of the Library's online collections as a way to supplement their own school's resources.

Addressing security needs, City Facilities staff upgrade the exterior patio emergency gates, installing better locking mechanisms. They also repair and replace much of the exterior lighting. The Library undergoes an energy efficiency audit and as a result, new emergency lighting is installed in the public and staff restrooms and new, more efficient lighting is installed in various fixtures throughout the Library.



The Library receives its 1,000<sup>th</sup> “Like” on Facebook.

**March** The Library hosts the Simi Valley Educators Association’s annual Read Across America celebration. The event brings together community leaders, students and educators celebrating the life and work of Dr. Seuss and encouraging reading among participants. Guest readers include Mayor Huber, teachers from throughout the District and several students. Over 350 people attend.



Honoring Women’s History Month, the Library hosts popular female punk band The Bags lead singer, Alicia “Alice Bag” Velazquez. Ms. Velazquez reads from her book, *Violence Girl* and performs acoustic versions of several of her Bags’ and solo numbers. This alternative music program attracts attendees from as far away as Oxnard and Los Angeles.



**April** The Simi Valley Friends of the Library host their annual children’s book and author festival. Featuring author and Simi Valley Friends of the Library founding member, Alexis O’Neil, the program focuses on her latest release, *The Kite That Bridged Two Nations: Homan Walsh and the First Niagara Suspension Bridge*.

The Library partners with Ancestry.com, the Strathearn Historical Park and Museum and the Simi Valley Historical Society to present a local history/genealogy workshop using the Ancestry.com database, one of the Library’s many online resource subscriptions.



Library Director, Heather Cousin, provides Simi Valley Unified School District teachers with a virtual tour of the Library space and promotes the Library’s extensive online resources and the upcoming Summer Reading Program at Simi Valley Unified School District’s Core Connections conference.

**May** Library staff hosts the first volunteer recognition brunch. The event features speeches from Mayor Huber and Library Volunteer Coordinator, Jodi Regan. Since July of 2013, the Library’s more than 400 volunteers provide everything from homework help and programming support to maintaining the appearance of the collection.

City Facilities staff installs a new door on the Conference Room. Popular with those looking for a quiet space for group study, the door allows those using the room to have conversations without disturbing or being disturbed by activities in the main part of the Library.

The Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of Realtors Equal Opportunity & Community Outreach Committee presents, *How to Identify & Avoid Fraud & Scams in Ventura County*, featuring a panel of realtors, lawyers, and investment agents.

**June** The 2014 Summer Reading Program kicks off, with events and incentives for children, teens, and adults. Over 500 participants sign up by the end of the first week.

Over 175 music lovers attend a concert of classic movie music on the Library's Memorial Rose Garden patio. Co-hosted by It's A New Day, the program reaches an even wider audience, thanks to the tie in with the popular Summer Reading program, confirming the Library's place as an educational *and* entertainment venue.



Father and daughter enjoy an evening of classic children's film music in early June.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

The cornerstone of a Library is the service provided to its users. A good Library should do more than just house a collection. It should provide its patrons with the tools necessary to actively and meaningfully engage with their world. Never has this been truer than in today's information saturated environment.



Shopping baskets, sponsored by the Simi Valley Friends of the Library, make selecting large numbers of Library materials easier.

With the increasing complexity of information distribution, the nature of Library service has changed dramatically. Patrons benefit greatly from the assistance of a well-trained and informed staff. In addition to assisting patrons with finding materials in the Library, staff helps guide patrons through the online universe, getting them the information they need in a format useful to them.

### ***Your Library Staff***

Google can bring you back 100,000 answers. A librarian can bring you back the right one.

-- Author, Neil Gaiman

The staff of the Simi Valley Public Library represents a diverse variety of backgrounds and experience. When the Library opened in July of 2013, twelve previous Ventura County Library System staffers were joined by eleven new staff members.

Responding to community demand, particular attention was given to ensuring a well trained professional staff was hired. All librarians possess the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS). Recipients of this designation must complete advanced training and graduate level coursework in collection and systems management and specialize in a particular area of library service.

Head Librarian, Derek Stalcup, Young Adult Librarian, Llyr Heller, Youth Services Librarian, Kathia Ibacache and Library Director, Heather Cousin, all received their MLIS degree from San Jose State University's Library and Information Science program.

The Library's Library Assistants traditionally staff the Customer Service desk and are responsible for collection management. Although not required, six have Bachelor's degrees and several are pursuing their MLIS degree.

## **Volunteers**

We are fortunate to be in a city where giving back to the community is the norm. We rely on enthusiastic volunteers of all ages to assist with numerous facets of Library operations. Volunteer Coordinator, Jodi Regan, works with staff to identify Library tasks fitting a volunteer's schedule and interests. The Library offers on-going and one-time special assignments.



Not including Simi Valley Friends of the Library bookstore volunteers, Library volunteers donated over 20,000 hours in 2013/2014 which translates into over \$500,000 of labor<sup>1</sup>.



Waggin' Tales volunteers, Lisa Trent and Daisy the dog, listen to a story read by a local student.

To recruit volunteers, staff reached out to local high schools, offering on-going volunteer opportunities, and to middle schools for special event volunteering opportunities. In return for their help, students earn community service for either school credit or college applications.

Adult volunteers serve as one of our most reliable groups. They help with maintaining the Library's collection and assist patrons with basic computers issues. Among the

organizations volunteering at the Library are:

- American Association of University Women
- Anthem Blue Cross
- Arc of Ventura County
- Bank of America
- California Lutheran University
- Love on a Leash
- Simi Valley/Moorpark First 5
- Simi Valley Friends of the Library



Bank of America volunteers help at the Halloween Spook-tacular.

## **SERVICE AREAS AND COLLECTIONS**

The Library is divided along age based collections and service areas. The adult, teen, and children's collections each offer a multitude of multimedia resources including print, electronic, and media collections specially chosen to inform, entertain and enlighten. Additionally, in the areas of children and teen services, attention is given to material selection insuring those items meet the educational requirements of area students.

### **Adults**

With over 49,000 unique collection items for adults, the Library has something to suit nearly every reading and viewing perspective. Since becoming an independent



municipal Library, patrons have even more materials from which to choose. As a part of the Inland Library Network, the Library is now partnering with 92 member libraries to better meet patron needs.

Within this first year, using established professional guidelines, staff refined existing reference and fiction collections. As a result, materials were shifted to create a more intuitive layout better meeting the needs and desires of Simi Valley patrons.

Meeting the informational needs of library patrons is one of the cornerstones of library service. In line with this, SVPL's librarians and staff answered over 10,000 questions – in person, on the phone and via email -- ranging from general reference to in-depth research and homework help.

Programming for adults also received a big boost with a near 100% increase in the number of events over previous years. In total, the Library hosted over 40 events for adults with over 1,000 in attendance.

A key feature of the programming offered to adults is the partnerships developed with local organizations. Working with organizations such as, It's A New Day, Strathearn Historical Park and Museum, the Conejo Simi Moorpark Association of Realtors, Simi Valley Adventist Hospital and California State University, Channel Islands, the Library has expanded its reach, offering distinctive programming by recognized experts.



Richard Senate tells a packed house of his ghost hunting experiences in Ventura County.



### ***Adult Literacy and Services for Speakers of Languages Other Than English***

In the Fall, the City renewed its long standing commitment to those seeking literacy services. Through a partnership with the Ventura County Library's READ program and the Simi Valley Adult School, the Library is able to offer formal literacy training to those learning or looking to improve their English reading and speaking skills. Staff from the Simi Valley Adult School and the READ program have offered tutor training sessions twice since the Library's reopening in 2013.

Thanks to a partnership with Laubauch Literacy of Ventura County, the Library also serves as a host site for tutor learning groups wishing to develop their English conversational skills in a less formal setting. With their mission of Each One Teach One,

Laubauch successfully matches tutor/learner pairs who hold their study sessions at the Library.

The staff generated *Talk Time* program offers a less formal way for learners to practice their skills. Using a small group environment, participants discuss current events and other accessible topics. This program serves as a comfortable environment for those who simply desire a more structured conversational environment.

### ***Teens***

For the first time, teens in Simi Valley have a unique space in the Library to call their own. In addition to having a Teen Librarian, the Teen Lounge gives teens their own space for quiet study, group projects and additional programming just for them. The teen collection offers popular fiction and informational materials for ages 13-18. The fiction collection includes a growing Spanish section as well as audio books. Beyond providing multiple copies of required reading titles and assignments throughout the year, the Teen Librarian also expanded the fiction, graphic novel, and manga, Japanese inspired comic book, collections to include new releases and replacing worn copies of past favorites.

Increased emphasis on teen specific programming resulted in unique partnerships with Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, Simi Valley Boys and Girls Club and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ventura County. Offering everything from simple craft programs to book clubs and author visits, teens now have a space to truly call their own.

### ***Children's***

Perhaps the area which underwent the biggest change since the Library's reopening was Children's Services. The Children's Room received a makeover with the addition of new furniture, including a staff desk and computer. Staff now provide immediate information support to those looking for materials in the room and can better supervise the area.

New seating arrangements were also created giving families and groups of children an inviting space to enjoy the refreshed collections. Overall, the room took on a more child-friendly look with themed wall art and banners.

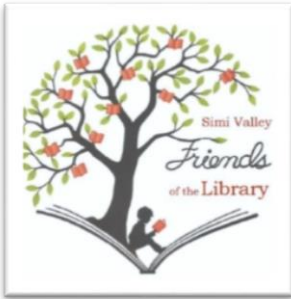


Staff of Simi Valley/Moorpark's First 5 present Little Bilingual Readers

The Children's collections also received attention. Aimed at children ages 0-12 and their families, the Children's service area comprises a diverse collection. Materials housed in the Children's room range from the virtually indestructible board book used to introduce infants and toddlers to the world of reading to complicated elementary science texts for those looking for curriculum support materials.



Staff continue to refine and enhance the collection in both breadth and depth, adding new materials and removing old, worn and outdated items. As a result of these changes, staff were able to move much of the Children's non-fiction collection into the Children's Room. This change has assisted families by creating a browseable collection more aligned with their child's interests and reading level.



### **SIMI VALLEY FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

The Simi Valley Friends of the Library was proud to support the Library's refurbishment. Providing financial support to assist with the purchase of much needed new furnishings and fixtures, the Friends have been among the Library's strongest allies.

The Friends continued operating their highly successful bookstore with generous help from their volunteer corps. Run entirely on donations of time and materials, proceeds from the bookstore are dedicated to providing high quality programs and materials for the Library and its patrons.

In addition to providing financial support, the Friends also sponsor ongoing programming and services.

- Books on Wheels provides library materials to the homebound.
- The Book and Movie Club hosts a discussion and screening of a book and film adaptation read by group members.
- Literazzi bookclub meets monthly to discuss a variety of adult fiction and non-fiction titles.
- The annual Children's Book and Author Festival features guest authors, crafts, games and storytelling for the family.

### **COMMUNITY REACTION**

With an eye toward continuous improvement, Library staff actively sought the opinions of patrons regarding library services. Through formal and informal surveys, staff hopes to incorporate public suggestions to create a more user friendly experience. Survey methods included:

- Information Desk inquiry log – a record of each question asked at the Information and Children's Service desks.
- Program comment cards – surveys completed by program attendees.
- Ask Us question log – questions and comments generated from the library's website.

- Library suggestion box -- comments submitted by the public in the entranceway dropbox.
- Social Media – comments submitted by the public in response to postings on the Library’s social media accounts.

Data from these various polling tools is included in the appendix immediately following this report.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

### ***Strategic Planning***

In the years to come, the Library will face many challenges. Among them are:

- Planning for anticipated growth
- Developing ways to reach populations and areas of the community not directly served by the Library’s physical location
- Establishing service expectations
- Continuing to foster new community partnerships while sustaining and enriching existing collaborations

To continue to move the Library in the direction desired by both the City and its residents, we will begin the strategic planning process. Over the next twelve months, Library staff will reach out further to solicit feedback from the community, both Library users and non-users alike, to gain a sense of what they would like to see in their Library.

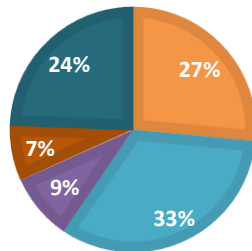
<sup>1</sup>Independent Sector. *Independent Sector’s Value of Volunteer Time*; 6/30/2014 [https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time); One hour of volunteer time equals \$26.43.

## APPENDIX A: PROGRAMMING STATISTICS IN DETAIL

*This information was obtained from sampling participants at various programs throughout the year.*

### How did you learn about this program?

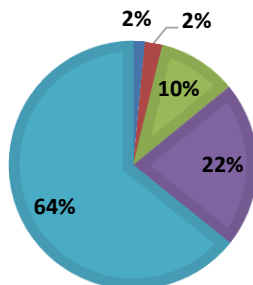
Library Website   Flyer   Newspaper   Library Staff   Other



Library Website	91	26%
Flyer	114	33%
Newspaper	30	9%
Library Staff	25	7%
Other	84	24%

### On a scale of 1-5, how much did you enjoy this program?

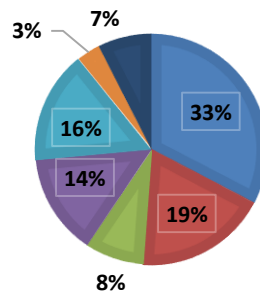
Not very much   It was "okay"   Good  
A lot!   It was excellent



Not very much	5	1%
It was "okay"	8	2%
Good	35	10%
A lot!	74	22%
It was excellent	219	64%

## Responses by Intended Program Audience

- Preschool Programs -- Story times
- School Age Programs -- Programs designed for children in K-5th Grades
- Family Programs -- Programming intended for a multigenerational audience
- Teen Programs -- Programs designed for those in 6th Grade through college
- Adult Programs
- Library Tours
- Outreach -- Off-Site visits to schools, community groups and outside agencies and tabling at public events



Preschool Programs – story times	127	33%
School Age Programs – Programs designed for children in K-5 <sup>th</sup> grade	72	19%
Family Programs – Programming intended for multigenerational audiences	32	8%
Teen Programs – Programs designed for those in 6 <sup>th</sup> grade through college	55	14%
Adult Programs	61	16%
Library Tours	13	3%
Outreach Visits to schools, community groups and outside agencies	29	7%

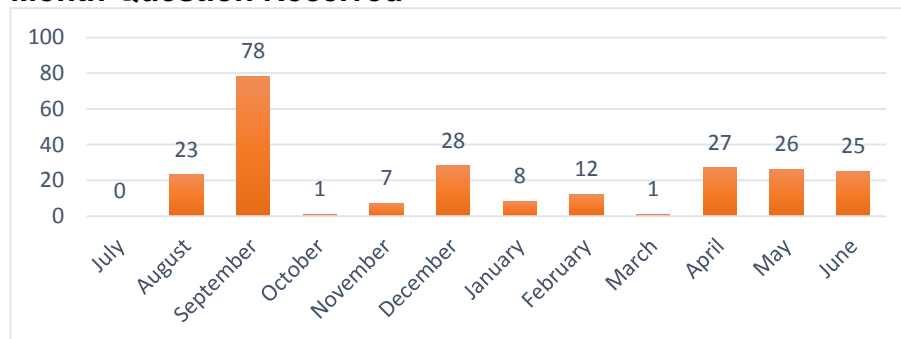
## APPENDIX B: PATRON SATISFACTION METRICS

### Ask Us Questions



Items Claimed Returned	69	25%
Placing Holds	45	16%
Renew	9	3%
Technical Support	21	8%
General Library Information	27	10%
Volunteering	4	1%
Ebooks	16	6%
Donations	9	3%
Other	74	27%

### Month Question Received



July	0	January	8
August	23	February	12
September	78	March	1
October	1	April	27
November	7	May	26
December	28	June	25

## SUGGESTION BOX

The following comments were all dropped in the suggestion box on the Library's front counter and transcribed as written. Some were submitted prior to the Library's transition to City operation. With the addition of other methods of interaction, use of the suggestion box declined and it is no longer a primary source of patron interaction. How staff responded to submissions follow in italics.

Comment: Not the first time  
Tired of waiting in line!  
L. C. 9-8-13

*When the Library first reopened and for the first few months, lines and wait times were occasionally long due to a high circulation volume and technical issues which often made use of the self-checkout machines difficult. As a result Library staff were redeployed during peak times of peak demand to speed up checkout. Staff also closely examined item records and corrected flaws which enabled more items to checkout through the self-checkout machines. Following that, volunteers were trained to assist patrons when using the self-checkout machines.*

Comment: Receipts needs to be enlarged so can see!  
Have available full list of DVDs we own  
Announcement at closing needs to mention when check-outs stop  
Visually on DVDs it needs to show 1-week DVDs

*Although, the receipt font size cannot be changed, patrons can receive email or phone call reminders of when their items are due.  
A full list of DVDs owned by the Library is available via the Library's online catalog. As staff are constantly adding new items to the collection, that is the best way for patrons to access a comprehensive list.  
Our closing announcements are made a half hour before closing, 15 minutes before closing and five minutes before the Library closes. Each time the announcement is made, patrons are reminded that items must be checked out prior to closing, at which point staff must exit the checkout system.  
Due to popular demand, all DVDs checkout for three weeks. There is no longer a one week checkout.*

Comment: Dear librarians,  
There are more and more Chinese people moving in Simi Valley. May I suggest the Simi Valley library to buy some Chinese books? I saw there are some international books (Spanish) in the library. I think this will help Chinese people to come in and join in the library and this community easily and quickly. Thank you!

*Staff are currently investigating the availability of materials in multiple languages other than English that are spoken in Simi Valley.*



Comment: Simi Library  
I love the new library; what I love is the cleanliness & the welcoming layout.

*During the transition, one of our main goals was to make sure the Library retained a warm, welcoming feel. As we move forward, we continue to keep an eye out for ways to encourage interaction, participation and use of the full space by the community.*

Comment: When the library first opened, there were 2 spots I particularly feel comfortable in: in the fiction room where there is now a tree plant, there was a poster & a comfortable chair at the space below the poster. In the non-fiction room, there is a poster on the far wall & a comfortable chair below it. I would like to sit in one of those spots when I come in. Could these chairs be put back? Please.  
Angela

*Although the addition of ficus trees did require the relocation of these chairs, Library staff have added many new welcoming, seating arrangements designed to encourage patrons to enjoy their reading selections while at the Library.*

Comment: I really do object, the people of Simi Valley pays for this library through taxes, and now you (or the City Council) have decided that we should pay for our library book (so few on City Council, should decide that so many living in Simi should condone to this), well I am one that will not. Maybe there should be new blood voted in to that position that you have held so long.

*Fines for overdue items and fees for lost items, adopted by the Library Board are consistent with those in place prior to the transition.*

Comment: The noise level was never this bad. Please try to get under control!!

*Anecdotally, staff have observed the Library is as much as three times busier now than in previous years. While that certainly can create a noisier environment, quiet study areas have been added throughout the Library, specifically, the Conference and small study rooms. Additionally, the Teen Lounge has also enabled teens to enjoy programs and lively discussions while not disturbing those outside the room.*

Comment: The Internet is extremely slow. I used it a few times for over a week and it is the same. Hope u can fix it. Thank u  
Love E. B.

*This comment may have been submitted prior to the transition. Staff frequently receive compliments on the speed of the Library's WiFi access. This is thanks in large part to the addition of numerous "drop points" throughout the Library, insuring faster access and fewer interruptions.*

Comment: It would be very appreciated if the noise level were monitored here more carefully. Such as people talking loudly on cell phones. Children running & constantly talking. A little quieter would be nice. Thank you

*Library staff do actively monitor and remind those in violation of the City's Code of Conduct. Staff are also now deployed throughout the day in the Children's Room, enabling them to better Maintain order in the heavily used area.*

Comment: I suggest=DO NOT take our library away. I also suggest that when you become senior citizen, that you still have a car to get to Oak Park, I do hope that when you are seniors that they send you to an L.A. library

*We hope that those who shared these concerns have continued to use their Library and are satisfied with the service.*

Comment: Is this a library or a day care center?? NOISE!!!

*Staff encourage patrons to enjoy all the Library has too offer. Sometimes the noise levels do rise and staff also intervene to enforce the City's Code of Conduct and insure a satisfying visit for all patrons.*

Comment: Laura & Llyr were both very helpful!!!

*We think so too! Library Technician, Laura Herrera and Teen Librarian, Llyr Heller are part of our professional level staff. Like the rest of the Library staff, each is trained, in all aspects of providing good customer service.*

Comment: How about...Some type of list for when we have to wait for an open computer?  
-Telling patrons to be quiet?  
-Asking/reminding patrons who clearly know how to read that cell phone are not to be used inside?  
-Flashing the lights 5 minutes before completely turning them off and leaving people in utter darkness in the back?

*With the addition of a faster WiFi connection and upgraded public computers throughout the Library, there is seldom a wait for computer access.  
Library staff do actively monitor and invite those holding conversations to continue doing so on one of the Library's outside patios. The same is true for those patrons using cell phones.  
Announcements are made multiple times during the last half hour before the Library closes.  
Staff do not turn of the lights until exiting the building, after the Library is closed.*

Comment: I have been coming here for a week while I have had problems w/ my [illegible]. I also have visited Chatsworth library! It is incredible the difference in attitude with your staff here & Chatsworth...So friendly, sweet, cheerful & helpful! Thank you

*When recruiting staff, much attention is given to a candidate's customer service skills as well as their technical skills.*

Comment: I'd like to see that the library carry audiobooks by "PLAYAWAY" instead of or addition to compact disc ([www.playaway.com](http://www.playaway.com)). Thanks

*Library staff are investigating the possibility of adding the preloaded audiobook devices.*

Comment: Suggestion 8/8 Before S.V. changed its library and computer system—which is a great improvement, I used Camarillo's computers. They allowed unlimited add/minutes except when computers were mostly used. It would be helpful if S.V. would allow more than a one-time 15 (*minute*) extensions when there are more

than half dozen computers not used—why not? Surely there is a way to monitor general usage so that one can stay on when so many are not being used. I realize we can end and start anew...but then again we're limited. Perhaps in the future...Thanks

*The Library's public computer access system permits users to extend their time providing there are no pending reservations. Staff can and do assist computer users in extending their time as needed, beyond the 15 minute increments when able.*

Comment: When emailing renewal notice: Please "link" to library site in order to renew.  
Thanks.

*Library patrons can receive email reminders when items are due and can then, if they choose, renew those items online via the Library's online catalog. The automated reminders are sent centrally, for multiple locations that are part of the Inland Library Network. At this time, it is not possible to include a link to a specific Library's catalog, however, technicians are exploring that possibility for the future.*

Comment: Can we have a S.V. one city-one book program next year?

*Library staff are currently exploring a One-City-One-Book program for the coming year.*

Comment: Announcements that the library is closing begin an hour early (at 7 when the library is closing at 8) and are very disruptive. They repeat at least every 15 minutes, are very loud, and tonight consisted of the librarian singing. It is very hard to work the whole last hour. -It is not necessary to begin the announcement an hour early. It is ineffective and unhospitable. -The announcements when the must happen should be brief, not silly (singing), and not so loud. Thank you.

*Initially, staff made announcements more frequently as many patrons were still unfamiliar with Library closing procedures. After observing that was no longer a concern, staff reduced the number of announcements to just the four made beginning one half hour before closing. The Cerritos Public Library, one of the most highly regarded libraries in the state, begins and ends each day with a high spirited sing-along lead by Library staff. It is meant to make a sometimes stale and routine task unique and fun. Simi Valley Public Library staff experimented with this same concept but abandoned the idea when patrons complained it was more of a nuisance than an enjoyable experience.*

Comment: 9-6-13  
People have been coming in to the bookstore & complaining about the long lines. They don't realize we can't do anything about it. It's particularly troublesome at lunchtime I think, when there's only 1 checker @ the counter.  
FoL Bookstore Cashier

*Library staff worked diligently to reduce wait times and make the checkout process more efficient.*