LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION (LAC)

On Monday, August 18, 2025 at 6:30 PM

This is a hybrid in person and online provided meeting open to the public

Public Viewing:
The meeting will be broadcast through the Santa Cruz Libraries YouTube channel
https://www.youtube.com/user/SantaCruzPL which you can access through the Santa Cruz
Libraries website by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking on the YouTube icon.

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Please click the link below to join the webinar:
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The meetings will be recorded and posted for viewing after the meetings on the
Santa Cruz Public Libraries website http://www.santacruzpl.org/

Public comment: There are three ways to comment during this meeting. All comments must be received prior to the close of public comment on that agenda item:

1. **How to comment on agenda items <u>via email</u> before the meeting begins:**

Members of the public may provide public comment by sending an email to the Library Board Clerk at clerk@santacruzpl.org
   - Identify the agenda item number in the subject line of the email
   - Emailed comments should be a maximum of 500 words, which corresponds to approximately 3 minutes of speaking time.
   - All correspondences received prior to 12:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding a LAC Meeting will be distributed to Commission members to review prior to the meeting. Information submitted after 12:00 p.m. on that Friday may not have time to reach Commission members, nor be read by them prior to consideration of an item.

2. **How to comment on agenda items during the meeting and prior to the close of public comment on an item, using the <u>Zoom Q&A</u> feature:**

   - Type your comment using the "Q&A" feature found on the Zoom control bar
   - Identify the agenda item first, then type your comment
   - Your comment will be read aloud

3. **How to comment aloud on agenda items, during the meeting and prior to the close of public comment on an item, via the <u>Zoom "raise hand" feature</u>:**

   If you are accessing the meeting using the Zoom app and using computer audio:
   - During the comment period for that agenda item, use the "raise hand" icon found on the Zoom control bar
   - The moderator will announce your name or the last 3 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak
   - Unmute yourself using the microphone icon
   - Identify the agenda item
   - Introduce yourself using your first and last name
   - You will have three minutes of speaking time

   If you are accessing the meeting using telephone audio:
   - During the comment period for that agenda item, press ***9** to raise your hand
   - The moderator will announce the last 3 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak
   - Unmute yourself using ***6** – to toggle the mute/unmute feature
   - Identify the agenda item
   - Introduce yourself using your first and last name
   - You will have three minutes of speaking time

LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2025 at 6:30 PM

APTOS BRANCH LIBRARY

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commissioners Rena Dubin, Charlotte Khandelwal, Timothy Lydgate, Vivian Rogers, Mike Termini, Pamela Woll, and Tricia Wynne

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Any member of the audience may address the Board on any matter either on or off the agenda that is within the Board's jurisdiction. Note, however, that the Board is not able to undertake extended discussion or act on non-agendized items. Such items can be referred to staff for appropriate action which may include placement on a future agenda. If you intend to address a subject that is on the Agenda, please hold your comments regarding that item until it is before the Board so that we may properly address all comments on that subject at the same time. In general 3 minutes will be permitted per speaker during Oral Communication; A MAXIMUM of 30 MINUTES is set aside for Oral Communications at this time.

4. REPORT BY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

    A. Library Director's Report (P3-5)

5. REPORT BY FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES

    A. Friends of SCPL – Report (Oral)

6. MEMBER REPORTS

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed in the "Consent Calendar" will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion on these items prior to the time the Board votes on the action unless members of the public or the Board request specific items to be discussed for

    A. Minutes of May 19, 2025
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Approve Minutes (P6-7)

    B. Recent Articles about Santa Cruz Public Libraries
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Accept and File (P8-39)

    C. Workplace Safety Report
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Accept and File (P40-44)

    D. California GenAI Initiative Final Report
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Accept and File (P45-78)

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

General Business items are intended to provide an opportunity for public discussion of each item listed. The following procedure is followed for each Business item: 1) Staff explanation; 2) Board questions; 3) Public comment; 4) Board deliberation; 5) Decision.

    A. Status of Music CD collection at Santa Cruz Public Libraries
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Accept and file (P79-83)

    B. Proposal for Drag Queen Storytime at Branciforte
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Endorse the "Reading Is a Drag! – A Family Storytime Celebration" program proposal (P84-88)

    C. Website Migration Project Current Status Updates
         <u>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</u> Accept and file (P89-91)

9. SCHEDULED UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Location	Anticipated Upcoming Agenda Items:
October 20, 2025	**Downtown Branch**	●

10. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned to the next regular meeting of the Library Advisory Commission to be held on Monday, October 20, 2025 at 6:30pm at the Downtown Branch Library.

11. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

SANTA CRUZ
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

August 18, 2025

Director's Report to the Library Advisory Commission

Introduction

With the completion of Summer Reading, the implementation of the initial pieces of our website migration, as well as the shift to our new primary materials vendor and the launch of our strategic planning work, Santa Cruz Public Libraries are shifting from a very busy Summer toward a very busy Fall.

Despite continuing funding pressures the State Budget did continue funding at last year's levels in three categories in which SCPL has participated: California Library Services Act (CLSA) monies that support shared services among 3 or more libraries (SCPL uses this funding to help support our participation in the Northern California Digital Library e-book collection via Libby), Lunch at the Library grants, and the California State Parks Passes.   The latter are funded through the CA State Parks budget through December of 2026 and we will learn our portion of the CLSA and Lunch at the Library funding in the next few months.   We are also grateful that, following up on our Building Forward grant submission for the Downtown Library Project, Senator Laird and Assembly Member Pellerin secured $4.5M of those funds to go toward that location's construction.

Additionally, despite the still-uncertain future of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, we are cautiously optimistic that the U.S. Senate S.2587 Appropriations Bill includes $291,800,000 for the IMLS. IMLS funds for libraries are distributed through State Libraries and have traditionally supported services like the Braille and Talking Book Library, grant programs, infrastructure grants, and more.

To further explore partnerships and stay connected, I have met with numerous members of the County Behavioral Health team, the Genealogy Society of SCC, co-hosted a Chamber After Hours at Live Oak Library Annex with County Parks & Recreation, and John Deitz at Life Literacies Center. I have also been asked to run for the Board of the California Library Association so have submitted my name for the election later this Fall.

Library Team

Current Vacancies:

Vacant	Facilities Maintenance Supervisor	350-xxx	Mid Mgmt	1.0000
Vacant	Network & Systems Administrator	726-012	Mid Mgmt	1.0000
Vacant	Library Assistant II	283-xxx	SEIU	0.7500
Vacant	Library Assistant II	283-xxx	SEIU	0.5000

Vacant	Librarian II	750-031	Mid Mgmt	1.0000
Vacant	Library Assistant III	363-004	Supervisor	1.0000
Vacant	Librarian I/II	750-xxx	Mid Mgmt	1.0000
Vacant	Library Assistant II	283-xxx	SEIU	0.7500
Vacant	Library Assistant III	363-003	Supervisor	1.0000
Vacant	Librarian I/II	750-xxx	Mid Mgmt	1.0000

New Hires:
- Perla Berumen – Downtown Library Aide starting 8/8
- Zoe Willats – Bookmobile LAII starting 8/18
- Abi Maxwell – Floating LAII starting 8/18
- Jennifer Santillana – Scotts Valley LAII starting 8/18
- Jennifer Eldridge – Capitola Aide starting 8/19

Staff Departures:
- Laura VanderSlice – Live Oak Branch Manager 7/7
- Miguel Rodriguez – Infortmation Technology Network and Systems Administrator 8/8

Services

Summer Reading and the website migration were the focus of our Summer.   An update on the migration is on the agenda and the Summer Reading report will come at a future meeting. In the meantime we are grateful to report that the Friends of SCPL have established an annual Literacy Fund to help create sustainable funding for Summer Reading, READ Tutoring and other literacy efforts and presented a check for $89,500 representing contributions from each Friends chapter for this fiscal year.

We are also grateful for the many hours of support we get from SCPL Volunteers helping support branch programs, Book Buddies services to Homebound Patrons, the important archiving work at the Downtown Library, the extremely popular Puzzle Exchange program and more. We are celebrating their support with a special Volunteer Ice Cream Social at Aptos Library on August 23rd.

Libraries

Coordinated by the County's Capital Projects team, the Capitola rooftop solar project is proceeding. This will be followed by similar project for the Felton Library to provide generator or battery backup.

We have installed further lighting improvements and new window shades at Scotts Valley Library.

Long-planned work to install a new generator at the Headquarters building launched this Summer and LIT staff will be moving physical server equipment from the Downtown location to

the new Server room at Headquarters on August 31st for minimal disruption. The entire Library network will be down that day.   After this is complete we can proceed with moving the existing generator from Downtown to the Boulder Creek Library as originally planned.

Upcoming

The LJPA approved expanded hours at 4 locations scheduled to begin in October: Aptos and Scotts Valley locations will close at 7 p.m. M-Th and Capitola and Felton will be open Sunday afternoons 1-5 pm alongside the Downtown Library. Concurrent with this change we will be opening all locations one hour later each Friday morning to allow for regular staff meetings for each location's team.

We also received extra funding to expand our Outreach team which will allow us to send out the Bookmobile and associated outreach services to additional locations in South County and the San Lorenzo Valley.   We are anticipating beginning this work in October as well.

We have selected a new primary materials vendor, Ingram Library Services, and our CMS team is working with them closely to set up our selection, ordering, cataloging and processing accounts.   This work will continue into the Fall.   Ingram itself is migrating to a new upgraded software system to support this work so we are subject to their pace on that project but to date we have ordered over $50k in materials from them and the fulfillment rate is an improvement over our previous vendor.

Importantly, our planned strategic planning work has begun. Consultants from Baton Global have begun data gathering, peer surveys, local stakeholder interviews and a team kick off meeting on August 14th.   Going forward they will be generating surveys and focus groups for staff, stakeholders, and members of the public.   A staff strategic planning committee will work alongside the management team to help craft the results into the final strategic plan that will guide our work over the next 3 years. We will provide an update of this work at the next LAC meeting.

LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025 at 6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commissioners Rena Dubin, Charlotte Khandelwal, Timothy Lydgate, Vivian Rogers, Mike Termini, Pamela Woll, and Tricia Wynne

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

RESULT:	**APPROVED THE AGENDA**
MOVER:	**Tricia Wynne**
SECONDER:	**Pamela Woll**
AYES:	**Dubin, Khandelwal, Lydgate, Rogers, Woll, Wynne**
ABSENT:	**Mike Termini**

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

A member of the public, Judi G., made a comment

4. REPORT BY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Library Director, Christopher Platt, provided a written report

5. REPORT BY FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Sarah Beck, Executive Director of the Friends, provided a report

6. MEMBER REPORTS

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT:	**APPROVED THE CONSENT CALENDAR Items A - B**
	A. **Approved Minutes of April 14, 2025**
	B. **Accepted and filed the State of America's Libraries Report**

MOVER:	**Tricia Wynne**
SECONDER:	**Vivian Rogers**
AYES:	**Dubin, Khandelwal, Lydgate, Rogers, Woll, Wynne**
ABSENT:	**Mike Termini**

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Website Migration Presentation by Jennifer Yeung, Management Analyst, & Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

B. Libraries and Artificial Intelligence Presentation by Bjorn Jones, Digital Learning Librarian

C. New Child Protection Policy #500

RESULT:	**Endorsed the new Child Protection Policy #500 for the Library Joint Powers Authority Board adoption pending 2 changes**
MOVER:	**Tricia Wynne**
SECONDER:	**Charlotte Khandelwal**
AYES:	**Dubin, Khandelwal, Lydgate, Rogers, Woll, Wynne**
ABSENT:	**Mike Termini**

D. FY 26 Draft Library Operating Budget Proposal

RESULT:	**Accepted the Draft FY 26 Library Operating Budget and recommend approval to the JPA**
MOVER:	**Charlotte Khandelwal**
SECONDER:	**Timothy Lydgate**
AYES:	**Dubin, Khandelwal, Lydgate, Rogers, Woll, Wynne**
ABSENT:	**Mike Termini**

9. SCHEDULED UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Location	Anticipated Upcoming Agenda Items:
August 18, 2025	**Aptos Branch**	●

10. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 7:59pm to the next regular meeting of the Library Advisory Commission to be held on Monday, August 18, 2025 at 6:30pm at the Aptos Branch Library.

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Ana Maria Treadwell, Community Relations Specialist

RE: Recent Articles about Santa Cruz Public Libraries

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept and File Recent Articles about SCPL.

DISCUSSION

This Media packet covers the time period for April through June 2025.

Library Advisory Commission
Media Packet
(Apr 1st – Jun 30th, 2025)

Santa Cruz Sentinel

April 2, 2025: Santa Cruz Public Libraries celebrate National Library Week with documentary screening

'Free for All: The Public Library' to be screened at Branciforte, Capitola, Scotts Valley branches

By Nick Sestanovich

SANTA CRUZ —Even in today's digital world, libraries remain valuable community resources. They are places where people can check out books, research information and have access to welcoming spaces, regardless of economic or technological barriers.

That is why the American Library Association hosts National Library Week to celebrate the role that libraries and librarians play in communities. This year, National Library Week is April 6 to 12, and Santa Cruz Public Libraries will be celebrating with a screening of the documentary "Free for All: The Public Library" at three of its branches. Directed by Dawn Logsdon and Lucie Faulknor, "Free for All" focuses on the history of public libraries, from those established by Andrew Carnegie to the "Free Library Movement" pioneered by women to the roles of librarians today in an era marked by library closures and book bans. The documentary will be broadcast nationally on the PBS series "Independent Lens" starting April 29. Those who do not want to wait will have three opportunities at Santa Cruz Public Libraries within the next two weeks. The first screening is 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Branciforte Branch Library, 230 Gault St., Santa Cruz. The other two screenings are 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

April 10 at the Capitola Branch Library, 2005 Wharf Road; and 1 to 3 p.m. April 12 at the Scotts Valley Branch Library, 251 Kings Village Road. Even if not attending the screenings, Santa Cruz Public Libraries are encouraging everybody to visit any of the system's 10 branches during National Library Week to celebrate the vitality of libraries. "Millions of people across the country visit their libraries every week," officials wrote in a news release. "What's the draw? Everything! From young families stopping in for play and story time, to students sketching out their next creative project in a makerspace, to seniors seeking tech help and everyone in between, libraries help us connect the dots from one part of our journey to the next."

Register in advance for any of these screenings by going to Santacruzpl.libcal.com/calendar and clicking on the appropriate date.

Link to story: https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2025/04/01/santa-cruz-public-libraries-celebrate-national-library-week-with-documentary-screening/

April 2, 2025: National Library Week, downtown library festival deliver much to check out

By Chimera Mohamadi

Between the long-awaited groundbreaking of the downtown Santa Cruz library mixed-use project set for this spring and National Library Week coming up on April 6-12, Santa Cruz County bibliophiles have plenty to celebrate this month.

Film screenings
During National Library Week, enjoy a free premiere screening of the 2025 PBS documentary "Free for All: The Public Library" ahead of its online release. The documentary follows the rise of public libraries in the United States and the quiet revolutionaries responsible for them. Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) invites anyone interested to one of three screenings:

- Branciforte branch, Saturday, April 5, 2-4 p.m.
- Capitola branch, Thursday, April 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Scotts Valley branch, Saturday, April 12, 1-3 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served and drop-ins are welcome.

Meet Me at the New Downtown Library Festival

Later in the month, get a preview of the future downtown library during the Meet Me at the New Downtown Library Festival. The festival is on Saturday, April 26, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the site of the future library on the corner of Cedar Street and Lincoln Street. Construction on the new library, part of a mixed-use development that will also feature affordable housing and a parking garage, is set to begin this spring.

The festival will feature large-scale renderings of new library's rooms. Guests can also enjoy live music, food trucks, free library programs and hands-on activities for all ages.

The festival also kicks off the official Downtown Library Capital Campaign fundraiser. On this special day only, a donation of any size will get your name in a library book.

For more information on all this month's events, see the SCPL calendar or the Friends of Santa Cruz Libraries website.

Link to story: https://app.lookout.co/story/national-library-week-downtown-library-festival-deliver-much-to-check-out/content.html

April 3, 2025: Santa Cruz Public Libraries celebrates 2025 National Library Week

By Staff Report

April 6-12 marks National Library Week, and the Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) invites the community to explore the wealth of resources and programs available at their local branches.

Libraries serve as vital hubs for all ages, offering such activities as storytime for families, makerspaces for students and tech assistance for seniors.

As part of the celebration, SCPL will host screenings of the documentary "Free for All: The Public Library" at the Branciforte, Capitola and Scotts Valley branches. The film highlights the history and impact of the public library system, featuring the pioneers of the "Free Library Movement" and today's dedicated librarians amid modern challenges like closures and book bans.

To register for the Branciforte event on Saturday, April 5, from 2-4pm, visit santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/14279360. For the Capitola event on Thursday, April 10, from 6:30-8:30pm, go to

santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/14038050. To register for the Scotts Valley event on Saturday, April 12, from 1-3pm, visit santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/14262291.

"The 10 Santa Cruz Public Libraries branches welcome everyone in the community and offer spaces and programs for all," stated SCPL in a news release. "Whatever draws you in, your library has something for everyone. Join us in celebrating National Library Week, April 6-12, 2025."

Link to story: https://pressbanner.com/santa-cruz-public-libraries-celebrates-2025-national-library-week/

Santa Cruz Sentinel

April 4, 2025: Santa Cruz County prepares to name next youth poet laureate
Finalists will present at Cabrillo College April 17

By Nick Sestanovich

APTOS — Many municipalities have a poet laureate to serve as ambassadors of all things poetic while also reading poems at events and educating the public about this form of artistic expression. Naturally, Santa Cruz County — being the creative enclave that it is — has had a poet laureate since 2010, but it does not limit this position to just adult poets.

A youth poet laureate is given the honor as well.

Last year, Santa Cruz Public Libraries named Pacific Collegiate School student Dina Lusztig Noyes as the county's first youth poet laureate. With her term winding down, the county is ready to name its next youth poet laureate and has whittled down its pool of applications to five finalists. They will present their work in a special event at Cabrillo College April 17, where a new youth poetry leader will be named.

Starting in December, Santa Cruz Public Libraries — in conjunction with Urban Word, the Watsonville Public Library, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education and Arts Council Santa Cruz County — announced that applications were open for the next youth poet laureate position. The position was made available to county residents between the ages of 13 and 18 who were passionate about poetry, wanted to promote the art to the wider community and were willing to commit to a one-year term and live locally for the duration of the title. Much like the adult position, the youth poet laureate is tasked with promoting the art of poetry throughout the county, whether through workshops, civic functions or readings, while also encouraging their peers to take part in the art form. The position also allows for publishing opportunities.

Following a monthslong application process that included readings before a panel of judges and optional drop-in workshops, five finalists have been named: Sylvi Kayser of Aptos High School, Mason Leopold of San

Lorenzo Valley High School, Finn Maxwell of San Lorenzo Valley High, Noemi Romero of Pajaro Valley High School and Xander Shulman of Santa Cruz High School.

All five finalists, along with Lusztig Noyes and other members of the outgoing cohort of 2024 finalists, will read at the April 17 event, after which a new youth poet laureate will be named. The winner will receive a $500 cash prize, and each finalist will receive $100 each as well as prizes donated by Two Birds Books in Capitola.

Members of last year's cohort agreed that the youth poet laureate program has provided them with invaluable experience.

"I have been able to run workshops, help create a youth anthology that gives a voice to my peers, and connect with fellow poets on a level I never could've without the program," said Lusztig Noyes in a statement.

Madeline Aliah, a finalist from last year, wrote that the program provided her with "access to … networking opportunities to put momentum into my social justice career."

The youth poet laureate celebration is 7 p.m. April 17 at Cabrillo College's Samper Recital Hall, 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos. Free food and drinks will be provided. Admission and parking are free, and people can reserve their seats at EventBrite.com.

Link to story: https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2025/04/04/santa-cruz-county-prepares-to-name-next-youth-poet-laureate/

April 7, 2025: Thousands protest on the Central Coast, library week comes amid federal cuts

KAZU | By Erin Malsbury, Amy Mayer

In today's newscast, opponents of the Trump administration's recent actions protested in many Central Coast communities on Saturday. And, it's National Library Week, but the state library says a big federal grant was just terminated.

Link to story: https://www.kazu.org/kazu-news/2025-04-07/thousands-protest-on-the-central-coast-library-week-comes-amid-federal-cuts

April 7, 2025: SCPL joins Santa Cruz Pride 50th anniversary celebrations

By Makenzie Bennett

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. (KION-TV) -- Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) is set to start celebrating Santa Cruz Pride's 50th anniversary with events celebrating LGBTQ+ authors and creatives.

Celebrations are spanning from April to June with a Queer Author Panel: Celebrating Pride 50 kicking things off at the Capitola Library Thursday, April 17th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

"The public library in Santa Cruz has always been a welcoming space for all people, including LGBTQ+ people and youth," said Rob Darrow, Chair, Santa Cruz Pride and LGBTQ+ Support Consultant, Santa Cruz County Office of Education. "The library has been an integral partner for the student podcast project and other celebrating events."

Student-created podcasts discussing the history and stories of Santa Cruz's LGBTQ+ community are available to listen to on Spotify.

Link to story: https://kion546.com/news/top-stories/2025/04/07/scpl-joins-santa-cruz-pride-50th-anniversary-celebrations/

The PAJARONIAN

April 7, 2025: Lawsuit targets executive order cutting library, museum funding
Several services at risk, librarians say
By Todd Guild

A March 14 executive order by President Donald Trump targeting federal funding for libraries and museums—among other things—will leave no community untouched. But the impact will vary throughout the state.

Both the Santa Cruz County Public Library and the Watsonville Public Library systems receive millions of dollars from Measure R, a 2008 quarter-cent sales tax earmarked exclusively for libraries. That will largely cushion local institutions from the order.

"We're ok," said Watsonville Public Library Director Alicia Martinez. "We're not going to suffer."

Still, the executive order lists seven agencies deemed to be "unnecessary" and demands that they "be eliminated to the maximum extent consistent with applicable law."

This includes the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which is the only federal funding source solely for libraries. In 2024, the IMLS awarded $266.7 million to museums, libraries and related organizations throughout the U.S.

The order also includes the Minority Business Development Agency and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

While Trump does not have the authority to eliminate federal departments outright, he can defund them so that they become largely ineffective.

The order means that the California State Library—the agency that delivers state and federal funding to local libraries—will lose its funding under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). This year, LSTA funding amounts to more than $15 million.

"We are deeply disappointed by this ill-informed decision, which immediately affects critical programs supported by these funds," said Rebecca Wendt, California deputy state librarian. "The California State Library remains committed to serving all of the people of California and will explore alternative means to ensure continued access to essential library services."

On April 7, California Attorney General Rob Bonta joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in a lawsuit against the Trump Administration, challenging the order.

"The Trump Administration is once again violating the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law by attempting to unilaterally shut down agencies the President doesn't like, including agencies that give the public access to facts, knowledge, and cultural heritage for free or at low cost," Bonta stated in a press release.

For local libraries, the order will affect the system's ability to deliver several services, including online access to the New York Times, which allows cardholders to read an average of 560 articles per month, and professional development courses and leadership programs for library staff, said Santa Cruz Public Libraries director Christopher Platt.

It will also impact free access to the Braille and Talking Book Library, which currently has nearly 200 active users.

"That's really expensive to offer, and a local library like us or like Watsonville wouldn't be able to step up and fill that void," Platt said.

It will also hurt the ebook collection, which makes up for 46% of the library's usage, meaning fewer choices and longer wait times for people who download and listen to books through the Libby app, he said.

The loss of funding will fall heaviest on museums, tribal libraries and small rural libraries, Platt said.

"Rural libraries, small libraries and tribal libraries especially," he said. "They really rely on IMLS funding to do just about anything. These are on shoestring budgets. If that money goes away, the few innovative programs they offer might go away. So it has a ripple effect across the whole state."

Libraries, he said, provide a vital role in their communities, with families accessing books to teach their children how to read and patrons finding a quiet work area or a place to connect with others.

"You just have to walk through any library in the state, any public library, and you see how necessary they are," he said.

"I've seen public libraries do amazing things in my lifetime. Our collections are far more diverse than they've ever been. This kind of feels like we're being attacked for no good reason. There is no rhyme or reason."

Link to the story: https://pajaronian.com/lawsuit-targets-executive-order-cutting-library-museum-funding/

SANTA CRUZ LOCAL™

April 9. 2025: Downtown Santa Cruz Library, housing project to start in June

By Jesse Kathan

A city parking lot at Cedar and Lincoln streets in Santa Cruz is slated to become a three-level library with housing and parking. (Ten Over Studio)

Downtown library festival

- 1-4 p.m. Saturday, April 26 at Cedar and Lincoln streets, Santa Cruz.

- Designs and illustrations of the anticipated Downtown Santa Cruz library will be shown at an event with food trucks and live music. The event will kick off a fundraising campaign for a second phase of construction due to start in 2026.

SANTA CRUZ >> Construction on a new Downtown Santa Cruz Library and housing project is slated to start in June, and a fundraising campaign to help pay for interior work is set to launch this month. The eight-story complex at Cedar Street between Lincoln and Cathcart streets is expected to include:

A three-level library with two indoor levels, a rooftop terrace and patio.

Space for businesses and restaurants.

A child care facility with an outdoor play area.

123 below-market-rent homes, plus a manager's unit.

About 240 parking spaces, including 25 electric vehicle charging stations.

For the Future Housing and nonprofit Eden Housing will manage the below-market-rate housing. An interest list for the anticipated homes is online.

The first phase of the construction includes the exterior of the building, housing, a child care facility and parking garage.

A second phase beginning mid-2026 is expected to finish the interior of the library and business space, Santa Cruz Development Manager Brian Borguno wrote in an email.

The Downtown Farmers' Market is set to move by early May to the city lot on Cedar Street next to the existing Downtown Library, plus part of Cedar and Church streets next to the lot. The Santa Cruz Antique Faire will follow in the summer or early fall.

At an April 26 festival at Cedar and Lincoln streets, city staff plan to show illustrations of the new library and kick off a fundraising campaign for a second phase of construction that's expected to start in 2026. The festival is set to include food trucks and live music.

Building costs

The first phase of construction is estimated to cost $153.9 million, city staff said in May 2024. It has been fully funded from sources that include:

A $33.5 million state Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities grant.

$20 million from Measure S, a bond for libraries approved by Santa Cruz County voters in 2016.

A $55.6 million bond from the California Debt Allocation Committee.

A $55.1 million tax credit from the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee.

The second phase of construction is expected to use more Measure S money, proceeds from the city's sale of Skypark property in Scotts Valley and a fundraising campaign, Borguno wrote. City staff are also looking for other potential grants and funding sources.

Cost estimates for the second phase of construction are expected in July.

In March, the Santa Cruz City Council voted to pursue affordable housing to replace the existing downtown library at 224 Church St. with office space for city employees and a plaza to permanently host the farmer's market. City staff haven't yet presented a proposal for the new development or potential funding sources for that project.

Link to story: https://santacruzlocal.org/2025/04/09/downtown-santa-cruz-library-housing-project-to-start-in-june/

April 11, 2025: Downtown library and affordable housing project starting construction soon

A new library and more than 100 affordable housing units are coming to downtown Santa Cruz. It's all part of one big project. After years of planning, the city is finally getting closer to breaking ground.

By Brooke Kinebrew

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. —

For more than a decade, the city of Santa Cruz has been working to transform the lot on Cathcart, Cedar and Lincoln streets into a 41,000-square-foot, two-story library and 124 affordable housing units.

"It's very important to have a great modern library, world-class library for our community, for families to come to and for children in our community to come to and read books," Santa Cruz City Councilman Scott Newsome said.

Renderings of the 155 million dollar Downtown Library and Affordable Housing project show how accessible and inclusive the space is. It includes a child care center, more than 200 bike and car parking spaces, and plenty of outdoor space.

The new library is funded by voter-approved Measure S and will replace the existing downtown branch.

The project is at the tail end of the building permit process stages.

"We're in a pretty big growth period right now for the city, in particular downtown, when it comes to just trying to emphasize housing as a priority," project manager Brian Borguno said.

One University of California, Santa Cruz student says a new library is needed.

"Sometimes the library will get full, or the one on the west side is really small," said student Jacqui Power. "I think it'll be nice to have a really new modern place for students to study."

Rent rates range from $749 to $2,281 per month, depending on income.

"Everyone's scrambling to find a place for the next year," Power said. "So, it'll be nice to have something available. I think this is a first step in the right direction. It's not going to solve everything, obviously."

As for the current library site, city leaders are still deciding what will happen next.

"Look at some kind of combination of having the farmer's market moved to that site, along with potentially, possibly some administrative offices and more affordable housing on that site as well," Newsome said.

The city is hoping to begin construction in June. The project could take two to three years to complete.

To get the community involved, the city is hosting a "Meet Me at the New Downtown Library Festival" on Saturday, April 26, from 1 to 4 at the site.

Link to story: https://www.ksbw.com/article/downtown-library-affordable-housing-construction/64461666

Santa Cruz Sentinel

April 12, 2025: Downtown Santa Cruz library project to tentatively start construction in June

No official groundbreaking date scheduled

By Aric Sleeper

SANTA CRUZ — The city of Santa Cruz announced this week that the building permit for the downtown library and mixed-use project is "substantially complete" and construction on the first phase of the project is tentatively slated for June.

"This milestone represents years of planning and community partnership," said Santa Cruz Deputy City Manager Bonnie Lipscomb in a statement. "We're looking forward to breaking ground and delivering a project that meets critical community needs."

The new downtown branch of the Santa Cruz library will be housed in a mixed-use building with 124 housing units and a 240-space parking garage on the city-owned surface parking lot known as Lot 4 on Cedar and Lincoln streets.

The onset of construction will push the Downtown Farmers Market a few blocks away to its new home on Lot 16, next to the existing downtown library branch. According to the statement, the Santa Cruz Antique Faire, which is held on the second Sunday of every month, will remain on Lot 8 and Lincoln Street until the late summer or early fall.

An immersive preview of the structure will be available at the "Meet me at the New Downtown Library Festival," from 1 to 4 p.m. April 26 at Cedar and Lincoln streets.

For information about the library project, visit cityofsantacruz.com.

Link to story: https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2025/04/12/downtown-santa-cruz-library-project-to-tentatively-start-construction-in-june/

April 15, 2025: Lawsuit targets executive order cutting library, museum funding

By Todd Guild

A March 14 executive order by President Donald Trump targeting federal funding for libraries and museums—among other things—will leave no community untouched. But the impact will vary throughout the state.

Both the Santa Cruz County Public Library and the Watsonville Public Library systems receive millions of dollars from Measure R, a 2008 quarter-cent sales tax earmarked exclusively for libraries. That will largely cushion local institutions from the order.

"We're ok," said Watsonville Public Library Director Alicia Martinez. "We're not going to suffer."

Still, the executive order lists seven agencies deemed to be "unnecessary" and demands that they "be eliminated to the maximum extent consistent with applicable law."

This includes the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which is the only federal funding source solely for libraries. In 2024, the IMLS awarded $266.7 million to museums, libraries and related organizations throughout the U.S.

The order also includes the Minority Business Development Agency and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

While Trump does not have the authority to eliminate federal departments outright, he can defund them so that they become largely ineffective.

The order means that the California State Library—the agency that delivers state and federal funding to local libraries—will lose its funding under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). This year, LSTA funding amounts to more than $15 million.

"We are deeply disappointed by this ill-informed decision, which immediately affects critical programs supported by these funds," said Rebecca Wendt, California deputy state librarian. "The California State Library remains committed to serving all of the people of California and will explore alternative means to ensure continued access to essential library services."

On April 7, California Attorney General Rob Bonta joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general in a lawsuit against the Trump Administration, challenging the order.

"The Trump Administration is once again violating the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law by attempting to unilaterally shut down agencies the President doesn't like, including agencies that give the public access to facts, knowledge, and cultural heritage for free or at low cost," Bonta stated in a press release.

For local libraries, the order will affect the system's ability to deliver several services, including online access to the New York Times, which allows cardholders to read an average of 560 articles per month, and professional development courses and leadership programs for library staff, said Santa Cruz Public Libraries director Christopher Platt.

It will also impact free access to the Braille and Talking Book Library, which currently has nearly 200 active users.

"That's really expensive to offer, and a local library like us or like Watsonville wouldn't be able to step up and fill that void," Platt said.

It will also hurt the ebook collection, which makes up for 46% of the library's usage, meaning fewer choices and longer wait times for people who download and listen to books through the Libby app, he said.

The loss of funding will fall heaviest on museums, tribal libraries and small rural libraries, Platt said.

"Rural libraries, small libraries and tribal libraries especially," he said. "They really rely on IMLS funding to do just about anything. These are on shoestring budgets. If that money goes away, the few innovative programs they offer might go away. So it has a ripple effect across the whole state."

Libraries, he said, provide a vital role in their communities, with families accessing books to teach their children how to read and patrons finding a quiet work area or a place to connect with others.

"You just have to walk through any library in the state, any public library, and you see how necessary they are," he said.

"I've seen public libraries do amazing things in my lifetime. Our collections are far more diverse than they've ever been. This kind of feels like we're being attacked for no good reason. There is no rhyme or reason."

Link to story: https://www.goodtimes.sc/attorneys-general-lawsuit-against-trump-executive-order-library-cuts/

April 16. 2025: Santa Cruz breaks ground on ambitious library and housing project

By John Koenig

After years of debate and planning, construction on Santa Cruz's new Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project is set to begin in June 2025. The ambitious development, located at the city-owned Lot 4 between Cedar, Lincoln and Cathcart streets, will replace the aging downtown library with a modern facility while adding affordable housing, childcare services and expanded parking.

A community festival is scheduled for April 26 at the project site, featuring design illustrations, food trucks and live music, to kick off a fundraising campaign for the project's second phase.

Historical Context

The original library on Church Street opened in 1904—built of stone in Romanesque Revival style with an assisting grant from the industrialist Andrew Carnegie. The current library replaced it in 1968, funded by a library bond measure.

Sixty years later, the building faces numerous challenges, including non-compliance with ADA requirements, the presence of asbestos, and outdated plumbing, electrical and elevator systems. Inadequate facilities include bathrooms, study spaces and dedicated spaces for children and teens. Seismic code constraints also limit expansion of the current building.

With renovation costs deemed prohibitive, in 2016 Santa Cruz County voters approved Measure S, a $67 million bond measure to modernize and upgrade local libraries. The City of Santa Cruz was allocated $27 million for its library improvements, combining with additional state and federal grants.

Community Response

The project's approval has not been without controversy, facing significant opposition from community groups and residents. Critics argued that the original intent of Measure S did not include the construction of a parking garage, while some felt misled by the project's evolution, advocating for the preservation of the existing Downtown Farmers' Market location.

In response, the city has planned to relocate the farmers' market to a new, permanent location adjacent to the existing library site. The new short-term home for the Farmers' Market will be Parking Lot 16 next to the current downtown library branch along with a portion of Church and Cedar streets, which will be closed to traffic during market hours.

In response to community concerns about trees on the building site, some of which were designated Heritage Trees, the city states a tree removal permit was granted for the project. Inspections by the city arborist revealed structural weaknesses and evidence of past failures, limb and stem decay, and potential root disease. The trees will be replaced with 14 new trees, with 12 additional trees to be planted in the city.

The Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project includes the following:

• A 41,000-square-foot library: Designed to be a state-of-the-art facility, the library will feature two indoor levels and a rooftop terrace, offering ample space for reading, community events and educational programs.

• Affordable housing units: The project includes at least 100 affordable housing units, with the majority to be reserved for extremely low and very-low-income residents.

• Childcare facilities: A dedicated childcare center with indoor and outdoor play areas will support working families in the downtown area.

• Parking and transportation amenities: The development will provide 240 parking spaces, including 25 electric vehicle charging stations, bike lockers and e-bike charging and approximately 203 bicycle parking spaces.

• Commercial spaces: Approximately 9,598 square feet of commercial space will be available for businesses and restaurants.

As construction begins, the city is also planning for the future of the current library site. A public process has been initiated to explore potential uses, including affordable housing, community spaces, and a permanent home for the Downtown Farmers' Market.

Link to story: https://www.goodtimes.sc/new-downtown-library-housing-project-groundbreaking-event/

April 17. 2025: Santa Cruz County to Announce Next Youth Poet Laureate April 17

By Staff

Five teen poets — Sylvi Kayser, Aptos High School, Mason Leopold, San Lorenzo Valley High School, Finn Maxwell, San Lorenzo Valley High School, Noemi Romero, Pajaro Valley High School, and Xander Shulman, Santa Cruz High School — are finalists to become the 2025-26 Santa Cruz County Youth Poet Laureate.

The announcement will have come Thursday, April 17, at Cabrillo College's Samper Recital Hall, 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos.

The Santa Cruz County Youth Poet Laureate program is organized in partnership with the Santa Cruz Public Libraries, Santa Cruz County Office of Education and the Arts Council of Santa Cruz County.

The event will celebrate teen poets, with poetry readings from the outgoing Youth Poet Laureate Dina Lusztig Noyes, other members of the outgoing cohort, and the five 2025-26 finalists. Free food and refreshments donated from community vendors will be available beforehand.

All are welcome and encouraged to reserve their seat at https://tinyurl.com/SCC-Youth-Poet-celeb-tkts.

Parking is free.

The 2025-26 finalists were selected after an application process over the last few months, one which included optional drop-in workshops supported by the Santa Cruz Public Libraries and the Watsonville Library.

Program judges read the entire applicant pool, selected the finalists by committee and met with each finalist to hear them read.

The 2025-26 Youth Poet Laureate will serve a one-year term and receive a $500 cash prize. Each of the finalists will receive $100 in honor of their achievements in poetry and community engagement, along with prizes donated by Two Birds Books in Capitola.

Members of the 2024-25 cohort say the program has been invaluable. Madeline Aliah says it gave her "access to…networking opportunities to put momentum into my social justice career."

Youth Poet Laureate Dina Lusztig Noyes reflects, "I have been able to run workshops, help create a youth anthology that gives a voice to my peers, and connect with fellow poets on a level I never could've without the program."

The Youth Poet Laureate acts as an advocate and county ambassador for poetry, social action and civic engagement, with the opportunity to champion their own poetic practice while encouraging their peers through readings, workshops and appearances at events throughout the county.

Link to story: https://tpgonlinedaily.com/santa-cruz-county-to-announce-next-youth-poet-laureate-april-17/

April 18, 2025: Santa Cruz youth poet laureate program continues, proposed budget cuts worry higher ed advocates

By Amy Meyer

In today's newscast, the Santa Cruz County Youth Poet Laureate program enters its second year. And, UCSC and CSUMB campuses joined a national day of action to support higher education in response to proposed budget cuts.

Link to story: https://www.kazu.org/2025-04-18/santa-cruz-youth-poet-laureate-program-continues-proposed-budget-cuts-worry-higher-ed-advocates

News Briefs | Published April 18, 2025

By Staff Report

Community gathering at the Meet Me at the New Downtown Library Festival

Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) and the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries invite the community to experience the future Downtown Library through an immersive preview on Saturday, April 26, from 1-4pm at the new site, on the corner of Cedar and Lincoln Streets.

The Meet Me at the New Downtown Library Festival will bring to the community a preview of the new Library building in its future location with large-scale renderings of the new library's rooms, live music, food trucks, free library programs and hands-on activities for children, teens and adults. Project partners for the Downtown Library & Affordable Housing Project will be on-hand to provide the latest updates.

The Downtown Santa Cruz Public Library is the hub of the 10-branch Santa Cruz Public Libraries system, providing library services and resources to Santa Cruz County's 260,000-plus residents, and this event invites the public to celebrate a major milestone on the site before construction begins.

The event also serves as the official public fundraising kickoff of the Downtown Library Capital Campaign. The Friends' have already raised $1.9 million toward the $3 million goal. Now they are inviting the entire community to get involved because everyone can be a Friend to the new library. During the festival, a gift of any size given to the campaign will get donor names recognized inside a library book.

For more information about the event and campaign, visit santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/14347252.

Link to story: https://pressbanner.com/news-briefs-published-april-18-2025/

Santa Cruz Sentinel

April 22, 2025: San Lorenzo Valley High School junior Finn Maxwell is Santa Cruz County's newest youth poet laureate

By Nick Sestanovich

BOULDER CREEK — At just 16 years old, Finn Maxwell already has a major love of the written word. The San Lorenzo Valley High School junior has written short stories and poems, been published in national publications and now is about to serve a year as an ambassador of youth poetry in Santa Cruz County.

Maxwell was named as the county's second youth poet laureate Thursday following a monthlong application process and being selected among five finalists. He will be succeeding Dina Lusztig Noyes, a Pacific Collegiate School student who was named as the first Santa Cruz County youth poet laureate last year.

Maxwell was thrilled with the recognition.

"I'm very honored that I have this opportunity," he said.

Finn Maxwell. (Contributed — Santa Cruz Public Libraries)

The other finalists were Sylvi Kayser of Aptos High School, Mason Leopold of San Lorenzo Valley High, Noemi Romero of Pajaro Valley High School and Xander Shulman of Santa Cruz High School. They all read their poetry in a special event at Cabrillo College's Samper Recital Hall along with Lusztig Noyes and the previous cohort of youth poet laureate finalists. Maxwell said it was very humbling to perform alongside other skilled wordsmiths.

"They're all so incredibly amazing and talented, and they have outstanding rhythm, and seeing them perform was just amazing," he said.

Maxwell was initially into writing short stories, which have run the gamut from stories of adolescence to more adult tales, like the story of an art collecting couple who are convinced one of the sculptures they acquired is haunting them.

"I just write a lot of stuff," he said. "Sometimes it's coming of age, but most of the time, it's stories focused on the simple things in life and relationships."

Maxwell's interest in poetry arrived at the start of the school year after coming across a definition by Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge of poetry as "the best words in the best order."

"I was really interested in honing in on the accuracy of exploring an emotion," said Maxwell.

Maxwell likes the unifying and collaborative nature of poetry.

"Poetry is the kind of thing where it's completely accessible to everyone in some form," he said. "When you start reading it, you're immediately able to put yourself in someone else's shoes."

Maxwell said the communal nature of the poetry community is also very exciting.

"I really do enjoy working with others, especially in this loud and important medium," he said. "Now more than ever, it's vital we all embrace using our unique voices in ways that bring us together rather than push us apart. And that's the pinnacle strength of poetry."

Maxwell takes a lot of inspiration from Santa Cruz County for his poetry, whether it is his home in Boulder Creek or locales like Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park in Felton or the various beaches, the latter two being places he has visited to write poems.

"Any emotion that I can really connect there, because I have so many memories in these places, I always really enjoy," he said.

Maxwell's goals include working with the new cohort of finalists to expand awareness of poetry and also help host workshops to highlight the power of poetic verse.

"I really want to work with some of the younger kids in the county and get people exposed to the positive impact poetry can have in their lives and teaching them to think in new waves," he said. "I want to help introduce it to as many people as possible."

Maxwell, who also enjoys painting and photography in addition to writing, said there are many reasons youth should become involved in the creative arts.

"It can really teach you to think in new ways and to process your emotions better," he said. "When someone has a creative outlet, they really are able to understand themselves more, and I think that's really important. I think

that youth could really benefit from having that understanding and opportunity. Personally, with my writing, it's really helped me process events throughout my life in a more healthy way than maybe if I didn't have it, so I think that really speaks to the importance of a creative outlet."

For more information on Santa Cruz County's youth poet laureate program, go to Sites.google.com/view/santa-cruz-youth-poet-laureate/.

Link to story: https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2025/04/22/san-lorenzo-valley-high-school-junior-finn-maxwell-is-santa-cruz-countys-newest-youth-poet-laureate/

May 1, 2025: San Lorenzo Valley High School junior named Youth Poet Laureate for 2025-26

Finn Maxwell, a 16-year-old rising star in poetry, aims to inspire fellow teens

By Christina Wise

The definition of a poem is, "A piece of writing that partakes of the nature of both speech and song that is nearly always rhythmical, usually metaphorical, and often exhibits such formal elements as meter, rhyme, and stanzaic structure."

Remove the stuffiness of the wording above, and poetry boils down to being a song from the heart. Whether in iambic pentameter, haiku, sonnet or any other form, poems bring common experiences of life, love, happiness and loss to bear, and forge a path for a better understanding of one's soul.

Finn Maxwell's soul has come to life in his writing, and his mastery of poetry has been recognized in the most prestigious way possible: Maxwell, a junior at San Lorenzo Valley High School (SLVHS), was recently named Youth Poet Laureate of Santa Cruz County.

Maxwell writes short stories and poems, often inspired by his Boulder Creek home. His work has been recognized by the Scholastic Writing Awards and the Iowa Young Writers Studio and is present in The Malu Zine, The Blue Marble Review and The Incandescent Review. When he isn't writing, he spends his time painting and practicing photography.

Maxwell will serve a one-year term as Youth Poet Laureate and will act as an advocate and county ambassador for poetry, social action and civic engagement. He will champion his own poetic practice while encouraging peers through readings, workshops and appearances at events throughout the county.

All that is to say, Maxwell is one talented kid.

"The Youth Poet Laureate of Santa Cruz County is a representative of both poetry and civic engagement, and our idea is to offer representatives an opportunity to reflect on matters that are important to the poets and teens that are the heart of our community," said Farnaz Fatemi, an Iranian American writer and editor in Santa Cruz who was Santa Cruz County's Poet Laureate for 2023 and 2024.

Fatemi is also a founding member of The Hive Poetry Collective, which presents a weekly radio show and podcast in Santa Cruz County and hosts readings and poetry-related events. She was formerly a writing instructor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and is a huge advocate for Maxwell and the Poet Laureate program.

"We imagine that the program can increase visibility for teens and teen poets, and provide the opportunity to connect with each other," Fatemi said. "It's about creating a community amongst teens that are spread out across county high schools and other educational environments."

Maxwell will serve as the lead of a group of five cohorts that were recognized by the Youth Poet Laureate program, and will act as a champion for other writers and young people who are interested in writing.

The 16-year-old has been writing for many years, but doesn't have much experience with poetry.

"I haven't taken any classes in poetry, so my experience has come from what I've read. I was really drawn to poetry and found it to be more challenging than my other writing," he said.

Maxwell has an affinity for short stories, but the personal nature of poetry led him to try something new.

"I'm excited about making poetry feel more accessible to teens around the county, and making them feel like their voices are heard," said Maxwell, who references his experience at SLVHS. "I feel like with the current political climate, kids don't feel like they have much of an opportunity to share what they're thinking, or they feel like people don't care. Poetry is a strong and important way for people of all ages to express what they feel about the world, and I want to encourage others to do that."

Maxwell said he is looking forward to leading workshops and hosting open mic nights for up-and-coming local poets. He tips his pen to SLVHS English teacher Tiffany Darrough as the catalyst for becoming interested in the genre.

"She doesn't know it, but she is the reason I started getting into poetry. It's a rhetoric course, so it's all about detail and word choice. It definitely encouraged me," said Maxwell, who didn't think he had a shot at assuming the seat of Youth Poet Laureate. "I submitted my application just a couple of hours before the deadline as teens do," he smirked, "and I was really drawn to the idea of community and getting to know others with similar interests. You can only grow so much when you live in an echo chamber."

Maxwell was chosen from the 2025-26 cohort of finalists for Santa Cruz County Youth Poet Laureate, which included Sylvi Kayser of Aptos High School, Mason Leopold of San Lorenzo Valley High School, Noemi Romero of Pajaro Valley High School and Xander Shulman of Santa Cruz High School.

"I've heard them read their work and they are just fantastic," Maxwell said.

With humility as strong as his talent, Maxwell is eager to bring others into the hypnotic fold of poetry, and spread his own wings as he does in his work, "Because Things Are Different Now":

"For by the time I returned home at dusk, the seasons had changed

the youthful good had all but escaped my palms.

And it was a cold winter.

And the rain seeped through me."

For information on the Youth Poet Laureate program of Santa Cruz County, visit sites.google.com/view/santa-cruz-youth-poet-laureate/home.

Link to story: https://pressbanner.com/san-lorenzo-valley-high-school-junior-named-youth-poet-laureate-for-2025-26/

May 12, 2025: Santa Cruz County youth poet laureates create community through shared love of poetry

Dina Lusztig Noyes (left), the county's former youth poet laureate, and current youth poet laureate Finn Maxwell talk about their favorite poets on April 24, 2024, in Santa Cruz. Credit: Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz

By Hillary Ojeda

Earlier this year, San Lorenzo Valley High School junior Finn Maxwell, 16, didn't think he had the slightest chance to become the second Santa Cruz County Youth Poet Laureate. But, he applied anyway.

He knew about the other "amazing" and talented finalists. Noemi Romero of Pajaro Valley High School writes beautiful poems, some in Spanish, Maxwell said, and he knew Mason Leopold, also of San Lorenzo Valley High, writes excellent poetry about the environment: "It's literally like he's part of the Earth, bro. He writes beautiful naturalist poetry."

So Maxwell was "bamboozled" when his name was called as the winner for the one-year term at the program's second annual celebration at Cabrillo College on April 17.

Maxwell, along with Romero and Leopold, was among the finalists for the honor, including Sylvi Kayser of Aptos High School and Xander Shulman of Santa Cruz High School. They each submitted five poems and read them in front of five judges, who announced their selection at the celebration, hosted by Farnaz Fatemi, the 2023-25 Santa Cruz County poet laureate. Fatemi launched the youth poet laureate program as part of her tenure as the adult poet laureate after she heard that youth in the community had long called for one.

Santa Cruz Public Libraries hosts the youth poet laureate program in partnership with Urban Word, a youth literary arts organization, with headquarters in New York City and Los Angeles. Last year, the program selected its first Santa Cruz County youth poet laureate, Dina Lusztig Noyes, 18, a senior at Pacific Collegiate School on Santa Cruz's Westside.

Fatemi said she's just getting to know Maxwell but said she's "blown away" by how good of a poet he is already. And after having worked with Lusztig Noyes for the past year, Fatemi said she was impressed with how "intelligent [she is] in so many ways."

"One of the most inspiring things about Dina is how interested and confident from the beginning in writing poetry, and identifying as a poet," she said. "But at the same time how much they've let themselves learn how to be in community and how to interact with other poets multigenerationally and got so much satisfaction out of that process."

As Lusztig Noyes did for the past year, Maxwell will act as an advocate and county ambassador for poetry and civic engagement by hosting poetry workshops and performing poetry readings at events throughout the year across the county. Maxwell and Lusztig Noyes said perhaps their favorite part of the program is that it emphasizes the communal aspect of poetry, as finalists from last year, and this year, continue to be a team throughout the program.

"The best part about writing is the community part – when you're engaging with other people about it," said Maxwell. "That's why I really wanted to do this. I like the fact that there's a cohort, and it's not just like one person, like a cohort of people that you work with."

Lusztig Noyes said as part of her term as poet laureate, she and the finalists, as well as other local youth poets, compiled an anthology of their poems, featuring the voices of 20 authors, that will be published later in September. By that time, she'll be starting her first year at Sarah Lawrence College in New York.

"It's really cool," said Lusztig Noyes about the anthology. "I'm very proud of what we've done."

Lusztig Noyes describes her writing as being influenced by ancient civilizations and politics.

"I feel like my subconscious goal is a Shakespearian sonnet but imagine if it was written 2,000 years earlier," she said, adding she often writes about her gender transition and mental health.

Maxwell said his poetry often revolves around his upbringing and his Boulder Creek home. He is fascinated by the challenge of trying to pour as much emotion into every single word.

"I try to write about a lot of really diverse things, but it all comes down to nostalgia," he said, adding it tends to come from his childhood memories.

As part of Maxwell's term, he'll work with Fatemi and Santa Cruz Public Libraries librarians to begin organizing poetry events for teens and the public at the local libraries, such as poetry performances and workshops on topics such as using multiple languages in poems. They haven't decided yet, but maybe they'll do another anthology.

Last year, Fatemi and Lusztig Noyes organized 12 events, such as workshops hosted by four of the finalists including Lusztig Noyes.

"The teens have been finding each other, and that's what it's all about," said Fatemi.

For youth interested in the program, eligibility requirements for next year include being a resident in Santa Cruz County, being between the ages of 13 and 18 by the application deadline and being available to serve locally as the laureate from April 2026 to April 2027.

The application requires that interested candidates submit a portfolio of five original poems as well as a résumé or description of their leadership and social justice experience.

The current youth poet laureate will be one of the five judges, as Lusztig Noyes was this past cycle. This year, other judges included Fatemi and San Lorenzo Valley High School English teacher Jennifer Ruby, Santa Cruz Public Libraries librarian Jacqueline Danziger and former executive director of the Young Writers Program Julia Chiapella.

"En Plein Air," by Finn Maxwell

Lately, I've been yearning to obtain

the graceful sorrow of La Pietà in my painting.

The marble shone like a tear.

I have been believing in other myths…

If you look up through the windchime's' wooden tunnels,

you will hear the ocean

and the little boy who steals buckets from it.

And dashes away. And hides.

When I am in the open air,

waves come down upon the shore and mold

into the hands of prayer. The nails,

the pale wrinkles of the tide,

dig into wet sand and beg for penance.

My paint is dried before I can lay it. The ocean

chases the boy. My strokes are messy, and

the painting is muddled into a single shape

that melts from the canvas like an old candle

long abandoned in the good night.

Link to story:

https://lookout.co/santa-cruz-county-youth-poet-laureates-create-community-through-shared-love-of-poetry/story

Santa Cruz Sentinel

May 18, 2025: Coastlines Sign up for the library summer reading program

Santa Cruz Public Libraries is thrilled to welcome the summer season with the launch of their 2025 Summer Reading Program and invites adults, children and their family members to visit their local library, Bookmobile or the SCPL website to sign up for the program, which begins June 1.

The theme of this year's Summer Reading Program is: Color Our World, a message inviting participants to embark on a journey of art and creativity, celebrating the myriad ways in which art and reading enrich our lives. Participants can win prizes for reaching each of the reading milestones set by the program. The last day to log reading minutes will be July 31, and the last day to sign out and redeem prizes is Aug. 9.

During the next two months, every branch in the 10 library system and Bookmobile will host a range of free activities for children, teens and adults to encourage and support a love of reading. To learn more, please call 831-427-7713 or visit santacruzpl.org/srp.

May 20, 2025 : LIBRARY - Author event to showcase Judy Blume's impact - Rachelle Bergstein will discuss her biographical book in virtual talk

By Nick Sestanovich

SANTA CRUZ >> For many young readers of the last 50-plus years, there is one name that stands out among the many authors they read: Judy Blume. Her books, such as "Are You There God? It's Me Margaret," "Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing," "Superfudge" and "Blubber" captured the trials and tribulations of growing up and did not shy away from topics like puberty, bullying, living in poverty, divorce and grief. Even if you did not read her books, you likely knew someone who did.

Blume's books spoke to generations of readers still trying to find themselves, and Rachelle Bergstein has captured her importance in her biographical book "The Genius of Judy: How Judy Blume Rewrote Childhood for All of Us." She will be discussing it in a virtual author talk streamed by the Library Speakers Consortium to member libraries Wednesday, including the Watsonville Public Library and Santa Cruz Public Libraries system.

The book explores how Blume decided to become an author, living as a mother of two in suburban New Jersey in the '60s and wanting to seek a sense of purpose.

She took cues from the concurrent women's rights movement and explored topics that were taboo in children's and young adult literature but were still actual issues that preteen girls faced.

As popular as Blume's books were, they were frequently challenged. "Are You There God? It's Me Margaret" in particular became a staple of a lot of banned book lists, due to the titular character questioning her spirituality and also experiencing her first menstrual cycle.

Blume has spoken out against these challenges of books, including in the prologue of her 1999 collection of original stories by challenged authors "Places I Never Meant to Be."

"Book banning satisfied (parents') need to feel in control of their children's lives," she wrote. "Those who censored were easily frightened. They were afraid of exposing their children to ideas different from their own. Afraid to answer children's questions or talk with them about sensitive subjects."

Bergstein is the author of "Women from the Ankle Down" and "Brilliance and Fire" and has also contributed to NPR, the New York Times and New York Post.

The event is 11 a.m. Wednesday. People can register and submit questions to Bergstein in advance at Libraryc.org/santacruzpl/75094/register for Santa Cruz Public Libraries members or Libraryc.org/watsonvillelibrary/74937/register for Watsonville library members.

PRESS BANNER

News Briefs | Published June 6, 2025 by Staff Report

Community Conversation on peacebuilding set for June 11

Santa Cruz Public Libraries, the Resource Center for Nonviolence and the Conflict Resolution Center are co-hosting a series of Community Conversations to promote peacebuilding and reduce polarization in Santa Cruz County.

The first session, titled "Peacebuilding in the United States," is scheduled for 6:30-8:30pm on Wednesday, June 11, at the Felton Branch Library, 6121 Gushee St.

Participants are encouraged to bring family or friends with differing political views for a structured, moderated small-group dialogue using the "Living Room Conversations" model to foster understanding and community connection.

Register at santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/14407328. These events are part of Santa Cruz County United for Safe and Inclusive Communities, which works to reduce hate and bias and coordinates the county's United Against Hate Week.

Additional opportunities to engage will be offered on July 9 at the Resource Center for Nonviolence, with more locations to be announced in the coming months.

Santa Cruz Sentinel

June 6, 2025: Katherine Applegate - Local author to host virtual book talk

By Nick Sestanovich

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY >> Just about everyone has been awed by the adorable antics of sea otters, mostly seen in internet videos, but one thing the Monterey Bay area can boast is its close proximity to these marine mammals.

The Monterey Bay Aquarium even has its own sea otter surrogacy program where pups are rescued, raised and returned to Elkhorn Slough. From its inception in 2002 to 2016, the aquarium estimates that 37 otters went through the surrogate program.

One who personally took note of the program was best-selling author and Newbery medalist Katherine Applegate, who used the program as inspiration for her 2022 novel "Odder." She will be discussing the book in a virtual author talk hosted by the Library Speakers Consortium and distributed to member libraries, including the Watsonville Public Library and Santa Cruz Public Libraries system, June 24.

For more than 30 years, Applegate has written books for audiences of different age levels. To many who grew up in the '90s, she is best known under the pen name K.A. Applegate, shared with her husband Michael Grant, in which the two wrote the young adult sci-fi series "Animorphs" and the fantasy series "Everworld." Under her own name, Applegate has written books ranging from the "Endling" series, the young adult novel "Wishtree" and her "Ivan and Friends" series whose first installment, "The One and Only Ivan," was the recipient of a 2013 Newbery Medal honoring excellence in children's literature.

"Odder" was first published in 2022 and was adapted into a picture book this past April. The book tells the story of a baby sea otter in the Monterey Bay who is injured by a great white shark and separated from her mother before being rehabilitated by a team of marine rescuers. The novel is written in a free-verse manner with short chapters and illustrations. The picture book adapted the story with vibrant illustrations by Charles Santoso.

The book is inspired by the real-life program at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in which orphaned otter pups are paired with surrogate mothers before being released back into the wild. Applegate used different stories she learned about this program as research for the otters in her book.

"Every sea otter in my novel ODDER was inspired by a real story from the amazing otter surrogacy program at Monterey Bay Aquarium," she wrote in a 2024 Facebook post. "Odder herself is a composite—I needed bits and pieces of a couple backstories. But each piece of her story is very much real."

Applegate will discuss the book and take questions submitted in advance as time allows.

The discussion is 1 p.m. June 24. People can register and submit questions at Libraryc.org/watsonvillelibrary/77516 for Watsonville Public Library members and Libraryc.org/santacruzpl/77670 for Santa Cruz Public Libraries members.

SCPL Social Media Engagement in June

Our social media channels (Instagram, Facebook and YouTube) had higher than usual engagement due to a post that proved extremely popular with our audiences. The most successful post was this video from our SCPL Precision Drill Team marching during the Santa Cruz Pride parade https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g8qzaNEDlU recorded by Britt Bassoni for the Seniors Council.

As of the completion of this report, the video has gathered:

	Reach	Likes and reactions	Comments	Shares
Instagram	7.8K	260	6	50
Facebook	581.1K	33.5K	774	3.2K
YouTube	94 Views	1		

Below is a small compilation of Facebook comments:

Cal McCafferty
Not the choreographed librarians!!!! 🥹😍 I love them!!!
Deborah Levheim
Library cart drill team PRIDE! Love this!!!
Julia Ruth
Librarians on Social Media (and IRL) will save the world. I'm convinced of it.
Megan Jacobsmeyer
SCPL is fabulous! 🌈
Jenn Johnson
The street dance routine we never knew we needed!!! Thank you for your delightful show of support & for the smiles, **Santa Cruz Public Libraries**! 👏🏳️‍🌈🕺
Joshua Odom
This got the most cheers of the whole parade!! Well deserved!
Gillian Brownlee
This is amazing!! Libraries are for everyone. Happy pride!!

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

RE: Workplace Safety Report

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept and file

DISCUSSION

This is a continually updated compendium of current SCPL activities aligned with workplace safety. In response to staff concerns, this was presented at the all staff zoom meeting on Wednesday, July 30th and updates will be presented twice yearly going forward.

SCPL Workplace Safety Actions taken since Summer 2024 (updated 7/25/25):

Training:

Code of conduct recently updated is more clear on expectations. (2024)

- This policy update was accompanied by training and expectations around the new policy, de-escalation, workplace violence, etc in 2023-2024.
- In addition we provide ongoing training for dealing with difficult patrons, de-escalation, setting boundaries, etc in our online training suite. Trainings of particular interest are mentioned in the Internal Comms messages.
- We are pursuing a repeat of active shooter training for the upcoming All Staff training day, the last time this was conducted was 2023.

- As of earlier this year, staff are taking the City of SC's workplace violence training regularly as required by CoSC.
- At the latest All Staff day we hosted a 'working with vulnerable communities panel of area agencies to better understand their roles for referral, trends in behaviors, staff support, etc. Agencies included New Life, PeopleFirst, City of SC Homelessness Response, and County of SC Mobile Crisis Support. (suggestion came out of a Labor/Mgt meeting)
- Christopher reached out to colleagues on the CoSC's Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women for any suggestions they have for training/resources for our staff dealing with sexist harassment. He was referred to Jorian of the Downtown Association to see if they offer resources for their retail clientele:
  - Jorian alerted that the DTN Library is part of their Ambassador Service area so they can be called to assist with problem patrons.

  - Jorian also referred to Lily Perry of Encompass Downtown Street Team for her de-escalation training that she presented to the DTN Association. Lily no longer provides that training but did refer to the CRC as a good alternative source of training.

Incidents & Suspensions:

FY25 incidents shows an increase over this time last year in Incidents from 339 -> 460.

- This increase is driven partly by Aptos being open for a full year and partly because staff are more consistently logging behaviors that could lead up to suspensions. Downtown especially experienced a spike in the first half of the year that decreased in the second half.

FY25 Suspensions - which reflect serious infractions - peaked in Q2 and ended the full year with a modest decrease of 193 compared to previous year's 198.

- Downtown suspensions drove the peak in Q2 but fell both quarters afterward by 22% in Q3 and 12% in Q4.
- Since mid-2024, we have been much more strict on suspensions and extending durations on manager review. Suspensions apply systemwide.

PITS reports have gone to Risk Mgt and as of April 2025 now require us to submit separate workplace violence reports for certain levels of incidents. These are underway and were rolled out in training to staff at the April All Staff day.

System 2 yr quarters

DTN 2 yr quarters
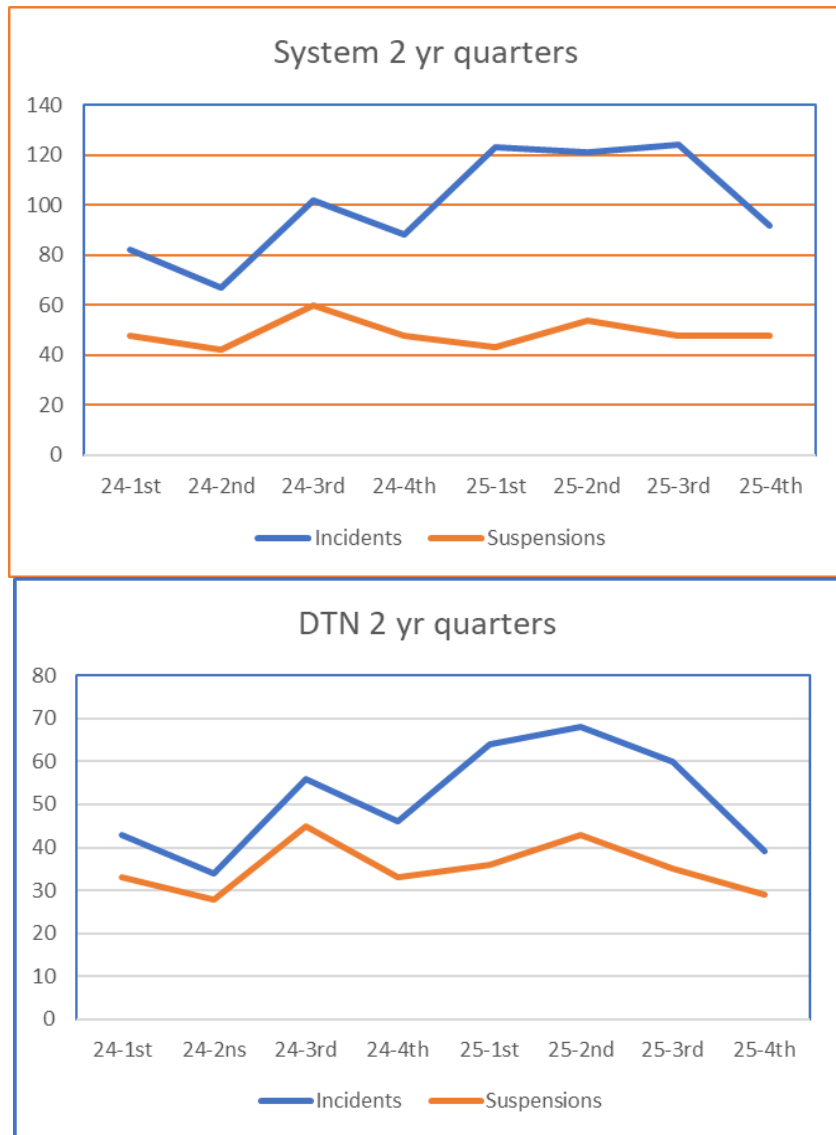
Downtown Library Specific Support:

In early Spring we reconfigured the security arrangement at DTN to place the security guard office at the entrance to the building and added an additional security guard.

We have worked with HR closely to tighten hiring processes so that vacancies at the Downtown Library get filled more quickly.

DTN has two tested & working panic buttons. In addition DTN staff have walkie talkies and if necessary use the PA system to communicate in situations that necessitate this. Branches have doorbell buttons at the desk that ring in the workroom when they need staff backup.

Replaced two security cameras at DTN so that the quality of video is better for identifying individuals who are part of incidents.

We have reached out to the County again to restart the notion of social workers in the library.

- Update 5/19/25: County Behavioral Health returned contact, they will be convening with their leadership and the Library's to discuss opportunities On July 14th.
- The July 14th convening was positive but indicated the need on the County side to have more specific program individuals in the discussion. Follow up scheduled for 8/22.

Broader Systemwide Team Support:

SCPL's Safety Team is regrouped to review onsite protocols, training needs, and update the Problem Situation Manual. (May 2025)

Staff do have recourse to EAP support services and we have reaffirmed for staff that during the immediate aftermath of a serious incident if they need to regroup in a safe space or go home their supervisor will support this.

The Asst Director is confirming a process with the Safety Team whereby a staff member or their supervisor will alert Management of a serious incident to make sure there is timely follow up - it has been a practice for someone from the mgt team to head out to meet with an impacted staff member in the wake of such an occurrence--we are now articulating an expectation around it. (in process)

We confirmed that staff in library branches can choose to wear a generic STAFF name badge instead of one with their name on it to avoid stalker situations.

Four AEDs have been installed at BCK, FEL, LIV, and LSB. CPR/AED/First Aid training classes have been scheduled in September at four Library locations to facilitate the CalOsha requirement that there must be someone onsite who has received this training at all work sites.

The next four AEDs have been ordered and will be installed at APT, B40, CAP, and SCV.

New Child Protection Policy was approved at 6/5 LJPA. Training will roll out August of 2025.

SCPL Director is attending a Library Director's Safety Summit in Hartford in September.

Objective Standards on Public Library Workplace Safety:

The American Library Association offers a range of suggested guidelines and resources around safety related policies, trainings, and design recommendations that favor security: https://www.ala.org/advocacy/resource-guide-library-safety-and-preparedness

In terms of objective standards on public library workplace safety to compare SCPL to, research turned up an active New York State Senate Bill (S7993) that would require public libraries implement the following safety protocols to prevent workplace violence (Spring 2025). As an example of standard requirements, we compared to it and SCPL meets each of these articulated requirements already:

- *"Making High Risk Areas More Visible to More People"*
    - This is incorporated into new and renovated libraries by design and at DTN most of the seating is in open areas.
- *"Installing Good External Lighting"*
    - This is incorporated into new and renovated libraries and most libraries close at 6 pm. We will review exterior lighting at Aptos and Scotts Valley for the Fall.
- *"Providing employee training"*
    - Regular and self-paced trainings on a variety of topics from working with difficult patrons, setting boundaries, mental health issues, de-escalation, and workplace violence are available and in some cases required.
- *"Establishing and Implementing Reporting Systems for Incidents"* and *"Annual review of incidents to make changes to Workplace Violence Policy as Necessary"*
    - We have a PITS system that flags incidents and suspensions and additionally as of this year some of the suspension-level incidents require an additional Workplace Violence submission form. These get routed to Risk Mgt at CoSC.
    - We review as they happen and report statistics quarterly. The above measures indicate changes as a result.
- *"Every Library Shall Install Panic Buttons"*
    - Downtown Library already has this, we are reviewing the remainder of the branches. This will require installation of dedicated phone lines and comes with a cost. Additionally we are reviewing which locations have 'doorbell' buttons that alert in the staff room of need for assistance at the desk.
- *"Security guards"* for *"Libraries that have experienced a certain number of violent incidents in a given period of time, as determined by the department"*

SCPL has this in place at Downtown library since it has by far the most incidents with a full time security guard recently supplemented by a part time guard to assist in patrolling. Anecdotally this is helping.

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Christopher Platt, Director of Librarires

RE: California GenAI Initiative Final Report

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept and file

DISCUSSION

This is the final report from the California State Library on an AI initiative referenced in the previous LAC meeting. SCPL participated in this initiative.

The Leadership Challenge of AI and Libraries:
Lessons from California's GenAI Initiative

In spring of 2024, the California State Library and the Pacific Library Partnership launched a statewide Generative AI Collaborative to support public library leaders and their staff across the state in critically examining how AI would impact their communities, programs, and services. With guidance and support from Collaborative members, library directors, and library staff, The LEO Group spent a year listening closely to library directors and their staff statewide as they navigated the evolving landscape of generative AI.

Over the past year, we've learned that AI's greatest challenge for libraries isn't technological—it's about leadership. Here's why:

As members of the Collaborative had conversations with library staff, a pattern emerged that sounded like a form of digital divide within the library community. On one side are staff who, whether excited or cautious, are already exploring AI tools and reflecting on how these technologies might reshape library services, information literacy efforts, and community engagement. Many of these staff view AI as essential to the library's mission of supporting informed communities and advocating for ethical technology use.

On the other side are staff who feel stretched thin, uncertain where to start, or unconvinced that learning yet another complex technology is feasible or necessary at this time. While some hesitation stems from genuine concerns around privacy, equity, labor impacts, and misinformation, just as often it arises from perceived practical barriers—such as lack of time, training, or institutional support.

If left unaddressed, this divide will lead to underserved communities lacking AI knowledge and skills, and library staff being unable to serve them effectively. In many places, whether and how libraries engage with AI may depend largely on the individual interests and capacities of staff rather than on coordinated, system-level strategies. Libraries where staff engage proactively may be better prepared to help their communities navigate the social and technological changes these tools could bring. Meanwhile, other communities risk being left without the guidance, resources, and support that libraries are uniquely positioned to provide during times of technological transformation.

Here's how leaders can meet this challenge and create the conditions for their libraries to ensure that they can support their communities:

1. ***Leaders can articulate their own guiding vision for AI in their libraries.*** Before they are ready to craft such a vision, leaders may need to do their own learning about possible uses and broader implications of the technology. This visioning can not be siloed and should include conversation with community members and decision makers, especially those not already connected with libraries. They can also take guidance from the statewide vision created by the Collaborative, which emphasizes "innovation, curiosity, creativity, and caution" (see appendix C) so that libraries may meet the needs and expectations of California's communities and improve access to opportunities for all. *Without a vision, individual staff may advance their knowledge and skill, but there will be no shared direction to guide collective work.*

2. ***Leaders can ensure staff receive high-quality training.*** This doesn't mean one-off events with AI vendors or experts. High-quality training requires ongoing learning, whether in person or virtual, that builds over time and provides room for people to experiment with new technologies and make meaning of what they learn. *Without strong training, staff will rely on their own assumptions about AI, which may be informed by misinformation or oversimplified media representations. This could result in discussions and training with colleagues and community members being unsuccessful.*

VISION	TRAINING	COLLABORATION		OUTCOME
Leaders craft and articulate a vision for AI in their libraries	High-quality, ongoing learning experiences about AI	Time & space for staff to explore ideas about AI together	→	**Coherent growth and learning for all, strong ability to support communities with AI learning and growth.**Staff share a common purpose, possess practical skills, and feel confident working with community members and decision makers to collaborate on AI learning and services. Library staff become trusted, equitable resources for AI literacy and innovation with their communities.
❌ Vision	✅ Training	✅ Collaboration	→	**Spotty growth, limited to interest and abilities of staff.**Training and collaboration occur. But without a clear vision and community voices, efforts feel fragmented. Individual staff may advance, but there's no shared direction guiding collective work or service to the community.
✅ Vision	❌ Training	✅ Collaboration	→	**Inconsistent knowledge; lack of shared understanding.**A vision exists and staff collaborate. But without strong training, staff rely on assumptions, incomplete knowledge, or misinformation about AI. Shared internal and external discussions lack depth or accuracy, leading to inconsistent messaging and services.
✅ Vision	✅ Training	❌ Collaboration	→	**Learning is constrained and limited; does not become a core part of people's understanding.**Vision and training are present. But without collaboration or input from community, learning remains individual and disconnected. Staff struggle to translate knowledge into practice or innovate collectively, and growth stays siloed.

3. ***Leaders can create time, space, and structures for staff to collaborate about AI.***
   This will likely require dedicated ongoing opportunities for small groups of staff to share their thoughts and learnings about AI, with open dialogue and skilled facilitation. *Without strong collaborative mechanisms, people may make individual but not collective meaning, knowledge may not translate into practice, and growth will be siloed.*

The challenges posed by AI point to a deeper need: to reimagine how leaders spend their time, how staff roles are defined, and even what it means to lead in an educational setting today. As libraries face rapid technological change, leadership must evolve from primarily managing operations to cultivating vision, trust, and shared direction—both within the library itself and in partnership with the broader community. Without that shift, libraries will likely continue to adapt reactively, rather than shaping the future with intention.

Appendices

Appendix A: Project Activities

Appendix B: AI Summit Executive Summary

Appendix C: AI Collaborative Vision, Mission, Goals

Appendix D: Logic Model

Appendix E: Research and Staff AI Interests Slide Deck

Appendix F: The Role of Libraries and AI Issue Brief

Appendix G: AI and Libraries Staff Interview Article

Appendix A

Project Activities

In spring 2024, The California State Library and the Pacific Library Partnership launched an initiative to support public library leaders and their staff in critically exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) could impact their communities, programs, and services. The primary goal was to help library directors take a high-level view of AI and to build a community of practice where leaders could learn together and share strategies for engaging with emerging technologies.

The first major activity was an in-person AI Summit held in Sacramento in April of 2024. This event brought together public library leaders from across the state, academic experts from X colleges and universities, and national partners. Participants engaged in small-group discussions about AI's implications for libraries and their communities. They also began designing tools and resources to help library leaders introduce AI-related learning and planning in their own contexts. (The executive summary and agenda from the session are included in the appendices.)

Building on insights from the Summit, The LEO Group facilitated a range of activities for library directors and staff across the state, including:

- Creating a **logic model** for the initiative

- Developing a **shared vision, mission, and goals** for the AI initiative

- Convening the **AI Collaborative**, made up of AI Summit participants

- Review of **existing research and survey of AI interests** of Collaborative members

- **Hosting monthly gatherings** for directors and staff outside the Collaborative

- Creating a series of **Learning Experiences** to build staff knowledge and skills around AI

- Producing an **issue brief** on the evolving role of library staff in an AI-driven world

- **Conducting interviews** with technology staff from six public libraries in California

- Publishing an **article based on findings** from staff interviews

Through these efforts the AI team gained valuable insights into the strengths and challenges libraries face in adopting a strategic approach to AI.

Achieving an AI Vision for California Libraries

Executive Summary
May 2024

In April 2024, library leaders from across California gathered at the California Libraries & AI Summit to tackle the big question: how can we prepare to build artificial intelligence (AI) services and support in local communities and libraries? The California State Library brought together a diverse group – library directors, university professors, academic librarians, and vested partners – to dive deep into the possibilities, pitfalls, and ethical quandaries of bringing AI into the library world.

Summit participants expressed both excitement and hesitation. On one hand, leaders see AI as a game-changer, with the potential to supercharge services like information retrieval, streamline day-to-day operations, and bridge the digital local community divides. They also know they need to tread carefully, making sure to put privacy first, fight bias, and ensure equity is prioritized in decision-making. While there is both excitement and hesitation, it is also clear that library leaders are still learning and need opportunities to consider short and long-term impacts of AI and develop flexible strategies for learning and decision-making.

Education and teamwork emerged as key themes. As libraries grow into their role as community hubs where people can learn about trends in technology, like AI, Summit participants highlighted the importance of training and resources that help customers navigate the AI landscape safely and confidently. They also acknowledged that by partnering with local government agencies, tech companies, and community groups they will have the power to pool resources and knowledge.

Summit Takeaways

The following takeaways reflect Summit discussions, highlight critical focus areas, and present strategic considerations for libraries as they prepare to adopt and integrate AI.

Cautious Optimism and Ethical Considerations

Library leaders expressed both enthusiasm and caution regarding AI integration, highlighting its potential benefits alongside ethical challenges and risks like misinformation, expanding community divides, and privacy breaches. Ethical use of AI, particularly concerning privacy and bias, remains a major concern, with leaders advocating for accountable and transparent AI applications that do not perpetuate social inequalities.

New Technology Integration and Accessibility of AI in Library Services

AI's potential to enhance information retrieval, expand digitization and preservation practices, automate workflows, and improve accessibility was central to many Summit conversations. Participants emphasized the need to explore immediate integration of AI while ensuring equitable access. There is a commitment to overcoming physical, educational, and technological barriers to make AI tools available to all.

Education and Community Impact

Library leaders acknowledge the potential for libraries to serve as critical hubs for AI education, offering classes and resources to help customers understand and use AI. Training library staff on AI applications is essential to achieve this education goal. AI can enhance educational and economic opportunities, improve social well-being, and increase community engagement. Library and community leaders aim to use AI to bridge technological divides and support communities experiencing marginalization.

Next Steps

As California libraries prepare to embrace the transformative potential of AI, it is essential to establish a clear and strategic approach. The following recommendations aim to provide a framework to guide AI initiatives, ensuring they are ethical, community-focused, and technologically advanced. By fostering collaborations, investing in professional development, leveraging research partnerships, and seeking adequate funding, libraries can effectively integrate AI to enhance services and support their communities.

Develop an AI Vision and Mission

California public libraries, in collaboration with community, academic, and vested partners, need to clearly define their goals for integrating AI into library services. Using data collected during the Summit, inviting a small group of Summit invitees to draft an AI vision and mission is recommended. This draft can then be reviewed and refined with feedback from the larger group of Summit participants.

Foster Collaborations

Summit attendees emphasized the importance of working together to make informed strategic decisions. With a clear vision and mission, the California library community has an opportunity to build a collaborative network that can work towards that vision and mission. They will be able to achieve this by sharing knowledge, designing initiatives, and developing AI-related strategies. The network can be multifaceted with small groups working on specific projects aligned with the vision, while also facilitating regular updates and collaborative learning sessions.

Implement Continuous Professional Development

Library leaders made it clear that ensuring library staff stay current with AI technologies is a top priority. The California State Library should leverage existing initiatives, such as California Libraries Learn (CALL); Community Centered Libraries; and programs related to California history, digitization, and preservation to provide ongoing training that enhances service delivery and staff AI expertise.

Research Practice Partnerships (RPPs):

The Summit made clear that academic faculty have knowledge and skill that public libraries can learn from and public library staff have knowledge and skill that academics can learn from. California library leaders and library school faculty should co-design RPPs that give libraries the chance to learn from and with each other. RPPs may focus on areas such as, working with those experiencing marginalization to design AI policies for the community (including the library), engaging with technologists and AI vendors to explore ways to build AI systems that support community strengths and challenges, and fostering connections with decision-makers to bring library knowledge and skill to processes for AI decision making.

Seek Out Funding

To bring the AI vision and mission for California's public libraries to life, substantial funding is needed. Current support from the state and a portion of the State Library's Institute of Museum and Library Services' Grants to States allotment is insufficient. The California library community must actively seek additional funding sources to support AI research and implementation statewide. Library leaders, vested partners, and state library staff have the potential to join forces to build support for library and community initiatives that lessen equity gaps and build the strength of communities across the state.

Conclusion

The California Libraries & AI Summit highlighted the transformative potential of AI for libraries, balanced by the need for ethical considerations and strategic planning. By embracing AI thoughtfully and collaboratively, California's libraries can enhance their services, support community education, and ensure equitable access to emerging technologies. This proactive approach will enable libraries to better serve their communities, addressing local strengths and challenges in the evolving AI landscape.

GenAI Collaborative: Initial Vision, Mission, and Goals

VISION
The GenAI Collaborative aims to strengthen the ability of local libraries to approach generative artificial intelligence with innovation, curiosity, creativity, and caution, so that they may meet the needs and expectations of California's communities and improve access to opportunities for all.

MISSION
The GenAI Collaborative works with vested partners, academic library leaders, and public library leaders in California to create conditions for all library staff to discover how genAI may support *and* challenge core library values, aid *and* disrupt essential library operations, and mitigate *and* exacerbate existing social and institutional inequalities.

GOALS
The first year of the genAI Collaborative is about planning and building. Our key goals are to:
1. Form and support topic-specific working groups to explore ways that the Collaborative can support libraries in areas that have emerged including:
    a. Understanding the role that policy can play in AI adoption and implementation;
    b. Building staff training and education experiences;
    c. Navigating the landscape of, and partnering with, ILS/Database Vendors;
    d. Describing and raising awareness of considerations related to ethics, privacy, and security.
2. Build an initial research agenda designed to inform research-practice partnerships that includes questions such as:
    a. What are libraries' high priority needs related to GenAI?
    b. What GenAI-related skills, dispositions, and understandings may support library staffs' sense of self-efficacy around genAI?
    c. What system-level structures will support libraries' capacity to integrate genAI wisely and ethically into their existing ways of working and serving the public?
    d. What are the challenges and opportunities for centering equity in library practices and systems?
3. Pilot at least one professional development experience for library leaders/directors, and one for library staff.
4. Develop a communications plan that includes outreach strategies, website presence, and branding/identity.
5. Host Collaborative conversations to update members on discoveries and processes.
6. Develop selection criteria and a process for building and maintaining an AI clearinghouse and begin to select resources for the clearinghouse.
7. Grow awareness of our efforts among library leaders across the state and other potential partners, and invite greater participation in our work.

MONITORING & EVALUATION
The GenAI Collaborative Working Group will submit regular progress updates to the California State Library, and will furnish an interim report by January 30, 2025 that will describe:

- The process that the Collaborative used to perform its work;
- The extent to which the Collaborative's planned activities were accomplished thus far;
- Any unanticipated challenges and opportunities that arose during the project;
- Critical knowledge that the working group gained during the initial phase of this project that could inform similar efforts, and inform the Collaborative's future work, particularly related to the Collaborative's ability to center equity and social justice.

Achieving an AI Vision for California Libraries (YEAR 1) — Logic Model — August 4, 2024
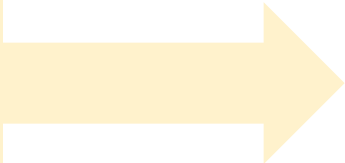
Planned Work			Intended Results		
Needs	**Inputs**	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Outcomes**	**Impacts**

Increased individual and field-level understanding of genAI's potential use for libraries and local communities and in libraries (public & higher ed)
 	
Increased individual and field-level knowledge about ways that genAI will interact with existing systems, beliefs, and information seeking behaviors
 	
Strategic planning about how to harness/introduce/support genAI use
 	
Greater individual and field-level understanding about ethical considerations & genAI
 	
Improved collaboration between libraries to support diffusion of knowledge and innovation
 	
Opportunities to participate in/provide specialized feedback to tech companies
 	
Shared vision for genAI and libraries
	LEO Group led team of consultants
	
	Public library staff, academic faculty, academic library staff, technologists
	
	Relationships with AI experts and learners across the U.S,, academicians across the U.S., instructional designers, professional journal editors, library collaboratives in CA,
	
	Funding from Cal State Libraries
	
	Paid interns
		1. Lay the groundwork for a genAI library collaborative
		
		  a. Compose and convene a mission/vision group
		  b. Plan & facilitate 3 synchronous sessions
		  c. co-design a genAI mission/vision and framework for genAI Library Collaborative
		  d. Investigate and identify additional sources of funding to support future collaborative
		  e. Create communication channels for stakeholders (listserv or other)
		  f. Form a knowledge-building/ research group
		  g. Develop a research agenda
		
		2. Lay the groundwork for the collaborative to engage in future RPP/knowledge-building
		
		  a. Compose and convene research-practice working group
		  b. Plan & facilitate 4-6 synchronous sessions
		  c. Draft a research agenda for genAI and libraries
		  d. Investigate and identify additional sources of funding to support RPPs
		  e. Draft/submit proposals to potential funders
		
		3. Funder communications
		
		  a. Quarterly memos
		  b. Regular calls/contacts
		  c. Final report
		
		4. Immediate knowledge building
		
		  a. Ongoing inquiry into what core project team is learning
			1. genAI collaborative
			
			  a. Draft mission/vision
			  b. Draft framework
			  c. Commitment of X participating orgs
			  d. Communications established with X orgs
			  e. Draft plan for first phase (3-5 years) of collaborative
			  f. Webpage?
			
			2. Future knowledge building
			
			  a. Research agenda with 3-5 priority areas
			  b. 1-2 RPPs in formation
			  c. 1-2 proposals under consideration
			
			3. Immediate knowledge building
			
			  a. Clear sense of barriers and opportunities to this work
			  b. 2-4 "lessons learned" about genAI and libraries
			  c. Manuscript or communication to broader community?
				Increased capacity for Cal libraries to navigate genAI
				
				Increased knowledge of promises, pitfalls, uses of genAI within communities and libraries
				
				Stronger cross-org and cross-sector relationships
					Libraries have a strong voice in helping to guide and shape ethical AI use
					
					Library staff are part of conversations and decision-making about use and development of genAI
					
					Librarians …

What are library staff's AI needs?
A brief review of published research & knowledge

Rebecca Mazur, MLS, PhD
for the LEO Group
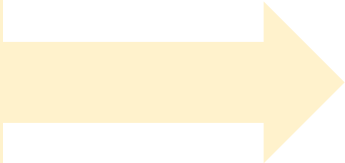
The big question that drove this mini-review:

What needs might a genAI collaborative address?

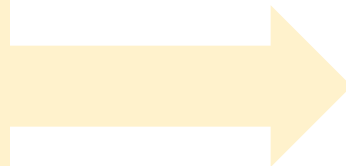1. What insights do published research offer about what librarians need?

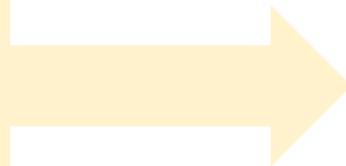2. What initial observations can we make about the literature?

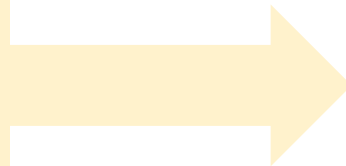3. Can any of this inform the direction of the genAI collaborative?

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Methods

LIST Abstracts, Google, Google Scholar (librar* AND artificial intelligence since 2023)

Included the first 20 or so that looked at all useful, some were then excluded

Extracted summaries from Claude 3.5 Sonnett, skimmed them myself

Click here for spreadsheet and links to full text

P60

Q. What insights do published research offer about what librarians need?

A. Very few of note

(AI-generated themes shown here)

Themes 1-4 →

1. AI Literacy and Education:
 - Need for **AI literacy** among library staff, students, and faculty.
 - Many institutions are developing programs and **guidelines** for AI education and use.
 - Libraries seen as key players in promoting AI literacy and responsible use.

2. Integration of AI in Library Services:
 - AI is being explored for various library functions, including **reference services**, **information literacy instruction**, and **content creation** (e.g., LibGuides).
 - **Chatbots** are increasingly being deployed in libraries, especially academic libraries.

3. Benefits and Opportunities:
 - AI tools can enhance productivity, save time on routine tasks, and improve user services.
 - There's potential for personalized learning and improved **research assistance**.

4. Challenges and Concerns:
 - Ethical issues include potential bias, privacy concerns, and the spread of misinformation.
 - Concerns about job security and the need for reskilling among library staff.
 - Accuracy and reliability remain concerns, especially in academic and research contexts.

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Q. What insights do published research offer about what librarians need?

Themes 5-8 →

5. Research and Evaluation:
  - **Need for more comprehensive studies** on AI effectiveness in library settings.
  - Current research shows mixed results, with AI tools **still falling short in key areas like systematic literature searches**.

6. Skill Development:
  - Emphasis on developing skills in **prompt engineering** and effective use of AI tools.
  - Recognition that **human oversight** and critical thinking remain crucial.

7. Future Directions:
  - Libraries are exploring ways to balance AI integration with traditional services.
  - There's a focus on developing **best practices** and **ethical guidelines** for AI use in academic settings.

8. Changing Role of Librarians:
  - Librarians are adapting to become AI-literate guides and educators.
  - There's a shift towards strategic activities as AI takes over routine tasks.

Academic libraries are doing more with AI, and appear to have different needs than public libraries:

Academic libraries want to support student learning, research excellence, and content discovery.

Public libraries want to enhance staff productivity and support content discovery.

Academic libraries are most concerned about budget constraints and research/academic integrity.

Public libraries are most concerned about privacy and security, and misinformation.

Both say shrinking budgets are the greatest challenge facing libraries today.

Q. What initial observations can we make about the literature?

A. More descriptive and empirical research is needed

Not Useful:

- **Overly broad/vague statements without evidentiary support** (e.g., "Integrating ChatGPT in libraries considerably improves the user experience")

- **Playing into the hype cycle** (e.g., AI promises to "transform" library services)

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Quite Useful:

- **Descriptions of specific use cases** (e.g., using AI to create LibGuides)

- **Details about training programs** (such as an academic library that offered a weeks-long course in AI to library staff)

- **Empirical inquiry** (such as testing LLM's ability to conduct literature reviews)

See the summary of our interests poll, then look at the comparison on the next slide.

Topic	Responses	Percentage
Policies	6	17%
Staff Training	6	17%
Library Workflows	5	14%
Ethics	4	11%
Privacy and Security	4	11%
Working with ILS/Database Vendors	3	8%
Research Agenda	2	6%
Competencies	1	3%
Evaluation and Assessment	1	3%
Information Literacy	1	3%
Adult Literacy AI P65	1	3%

Our Poll

Literature

Vendors

Adult Literacy (AI)

*License discussions, access to current models (how can you provide focused/limited access to new models)

Preparing future workforce

Training

Workflows & Operations
(cataloging, metadata enhancement
Special collections & archives,
accessibility info, tech support and
training needed, etc.)

Research Agenda

Eval. & Assessment

Information Literacy

Policies/Oversight

Security Concerns

Ethical Concerns

Guidelines

Reference Services

Chatbots

Lib Guides

Literature Reviews

Prompt engineering

Curriculum

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How could a GenAI Collaborative…

Support the creation of guidelines for AI use?

Support the development of an AI research agenda?

Help libraries draft wise policies?

Centralize information about AI vendors?

Offer trainings in specific use cases?

Lib Guides	Chatbots	Evaluation
Lit Reviews	Reference Svcs.	Security
Prompt engineering	Content discovery	Cataloging

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All framed using a lens of ethics & justice

The Role of Library Staff in an AI World

Introduction

- Part of the mission of the California AI & Libraries Collaborative is to identify critical areas where more knowledge is needed to support California's public libraries as AI continues to develop.

- We have spent the past nine months developing familiarity with the growing body of relevant research and scholarship, and engaging in many conversations with library staff, directors, and policy makers across the state.

In this brief we summarize a rationale for what we believe is an essential area for inquiry as of Spring 2025: The ways that library staff are reconsidering or reconceptualizing their professional roles, and the role of libraries, in light of the advent of AI.

Trends in Current Research

- Research about public libraries and AI is growing but still nascent. Most scholarship focuses on understanding the utility of AI in libraries, its limits, and both the logistical and ethical challenges that surround it for library staff.

- Emerging themes include the importance of AI to the ways in which libraries operate and connect with their communities, AI literacy as a core competency for library staff, and the need to grapple with pressing ethical concerns.

- A [2024 Clarivate](#)[1] survey showed, among other findings, that public library staff are particularly interested in AI's potential to support content discovery and accessibility, and have concerns about privacy and security, misinformation, and potential job displacement.

- While AI's impact is still emerging, researchers say that "the way we relate to information will change."[2]

Missing from current published scholarship and research is a topic that has come up explicitly and subtly — but nearly universally — in conversations with library staff in California and across the country: namely, grappling with how library staff can continue to support their communities while the ways in which they provide services and their roles may be changing.

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[1] Clarivate is a publicly-traded company that has made [significant investments in AI](#).
[2] Mollick, 2024, p. 197

- For library staff, the role they play has long been in flux. This is particularly true in public libraries, which "must wrestle with providing both an individual service while performing their role as a 'public good'".[3]

- The advent of new information technologies are often catalysts for library staff to question their role because of the ways such technologies impact library services.[4]

- The way library staff integrate new technologies into their understanding of professional roles has practical consequences: "Professional identity is more than simply a description of the self with specific practices—it also serves a purpose, or function, and has different social consequences and implications as a result."[5]

- For example, researchers have examined ways that the advent of the internet came into tension with library staff's sense of ownership of key roles in information seeking, leading some "members of the occupation to miss important innovation opportunities."[6]

Like the internet, print, and language itself, AI may be a "general purpose technology" that has fundamental implications for humans' relationship to communication, creativity, and information; the way library staff make sense of it as part of–or as antithetical to–their own professional roles will have real-world consequences.

Emerging Research Agenda

- California's Libraries and AI Collaborative has the opportunity to begin contributing to the field's knowledge of the way library staff are understanding their roles. Possible research questions include:

  - Are library staff re-negotiating their understanding of their own roles with the advent of AI? If so, how?

  - What previously-acquired skills do library staff see as relevant to helping navigate new generative technologies?

  - To what extent do library staff see AI as a transformative "cultural technology" as opposed to a transactional communication/information tool? What do they think its role in libraries and library services may be?

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[3] Grey, 2013, p. 39
[4] Hicks, 2014; Nelson 2014
[5] Hicks, 2014
[6] Nelson, 2014, p. 892

- How are library staff forming their opinions of AI? Through what methods and channels are they learning about it?

- How do library staff understand the implications of AI for: (a) their socio-civic role (e.g., providing "a platform for civic engagement and defend against threats to democracy"[7]); (b) their existing knowledge practices, and (c) public perception of the profession?

- What are library students' perspectives on the implications of AI for libraries and library staff?

In order to begin to answer these questions, we will launch a pilot study. This study will include interviews with a small sample group of library staff (3-4) Through this pilot we would refine our conceptual framework and develop appropriate methods for future research on this topic.

Needed from the GenAI Collaborative

1. Your opinions of this idea — can you offer expansions or refinements? Does this sound worthwhile to you?

2. How can you help? — are you interested in helping to design the pilot and/or able to connect us to pilot participants?

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[7] Yap, 2024, p. 47

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I'm an AI skeptic.
Here's what I learned from talking to techy-librarians.

Rebecca Mazur, MLS PhD

Here are some titles on my "recently read" list: *AI Snake Oil* by Arvind Narayanan and Sayash Kapoor; *Algorithms of Oppression* by Safiya Noble; *Atlas of AI* by Kate Crawford; and *The AI Con* by Alex Hanna and Emily M. Bender. This is to say: I'm into AI, but I have not drunk the AI Kool-Aid. (All of these titles are, in some way, profoundly critical of AI.)

But I'm also a realist, and I recognize that the conga line of AI horrors we hear about daily (It steals our creative work! It has learned to lie to protect its own interests! It will take all our jobs!) is unlikely to yield to my well-reasoned and nuanced objections.

When California's GenAI Collaborative gave me a chance to interview library staff to surface their feelings about AI, I imagined talking to frontline folks — people at the reference desk, the circulation desk, or who work with adults, or, youth and families — who I expected to have more or less the same baseline aversion to AI as me, and would commiserate about the position in which library staff and educators find ourselves.[1]

It turned out that people who responded to my call for interviews had a different profile — they were tech staff, systems staff, and directors of library technology.[2] The conversations left me awed and humbled by the intellectual horsepower that exists in our profession, and created some cracks in my hardened skeptic's heart. While I'm still not a techno-utopianist, I am convinced that libraries can, and must, play a strong role in helping communities navigate AI.

In this report, I share the things that have really stuck with me from my conversations.

> *While I'm still not a techno–utopianist, I am convinced that libraries can, and must, play a strong role in helping communities navigate AI.*

[1] Some background about me: I am a former high school librarian, now an educational researcher who does work in digital literacy and educational technology. Since 2024, I have worked with The LEO Group to help start California's GenAI Collaborative.

[2] This was a small pilot project. Six library staff participated, all of whom hold primarily technology-related roles in their libraries or library systems. Participants were promised anonymity; quotes have been lightly edited for clarity and to protect individual identities.

1

1 The library world has experience dealing with disruptive automation

In contrast to the rhetoric that abounds in the media, some library staff see AI as less transformative than prior technology innovations. One staffer put it this way: "Our big transformation already happened — when we switched away from the physical card catalog. AI is actually going to be less dramatic for us, but it doesn't always feel that way."

And of course, as folks I talked to pointed out, the advent of the ILS is only one of several sea changes that libraries have weathered. Most frequently noted was the advent of internet search, which posed strong challenges to librarians' workflow and professional identity, but which, ultimately, library staff incorporated into their expertise and became a service that communities expected from their libraries. The same is true about incorporating computers and other electronic devices into library programs and offerings.

Another person put a finer point on it: "Many of us are search experts; we understand the level of detail that goes into a good search. It's the same with AI prompt engineering. We can apply a lot of what we know to learn that skill and help teach it to others."

2 AI is good for some tasks — sometimes scary good

The library staff I talked with experienced initial disappointment with generative AI tools — boring, bland outputs and rampant hallucinations. (For those of you worried, like me, about anthropomorphising AI, the terms "AI falsehoods" or "AI fictions" may be more comfortable.)

But they've all witnessed its rapid improvement since the first days of ChatGPT back in late 2022: "There's something magical about the thing once people start using it..." one staff members aid, "This is the one tech product that's meeting and exceeding people's expectations, and it's getting easier and easier to use."

Another expressed my own feelings with so much clarity that unnerved me: "The more I play with it, I become more fearful of it. Initially I was so disappointed. I was hoping for a smart, conversational bot, but what I got was a dumb bot. But I figured out things, I learned more, and the tech vastly improved. Now the fear comes in. What else can it do? How much better will it get?"

The sentiment mirrors my own experience. In the early days of public-facing generative AI, I was convinced that it was just the latest in Big Tech's all-sizzle-no-steak streak of over-hyped innovations. The clunky, boring, off-base responses were actually comforting.

2

But things have changed, and while there is still a healthy dose of unfounded hype surrounding the AI conversation, the technology's rapid improvements are notable. The library staff I interviewed all agreed: some amount of concern is a reasonable response to AI. Their cautions were the ones I expected: possible job loss, effects on children's critical thinking abilities, hidden bias that will exacerbate existing marginalization, possible environmental impacts, spread of misinformation, misuse of intellectual property, and loss of data privacy.

The staff I talked with weren't glib about these concerns —they acknowledged real current and potential harms and the lag in sound regulatory guardrails. But they also see real uses for AI technologies for library staff and for communities (see the table below), and pointed to library staff's history of keeping ethics at the core of how technology is used.

How are tech librarians using AI?

They mentioned several ways that I was not tech-savvy enough to understand. See below for the uses that a non-techy like me could actually decipher:

- Help with coding
- Mock-up potential solutions to workflow challenges
- Help monitor and adjust the tone of emails and communications
- Review research and brainstorm research-based solutions to problems
- Create personas that then aid in review of different projects
- Help create website taxonomy
- Create a custom chatbot to help answer FAQs
- Help figure out all kinds of technical questions
- Help with the reference interview (but look out for hallucinations)
- Proofread
- Find the right words in tricky situations
- Help write blog posts
- Brainstorm ideas for workshops
- Support resume writing for patrons

3 Libraries have a big role to play

I am bothered by AI's narrative of inevitability — the "cat's out of the bag" story that deprives us of agency and situates power entirely with private technology corporations. The "it's here, so we may as well deal with it" approach feels like a cop out. But at the same time: it's here, so we may as well deal with it.

Talking to tech library staff underscored the powerful role libraries can play."AI can be scary and overwhelming, but knowing about it is better than not knowing," one interviewee said. Another noted, "When we're not scared of technology, we can help people navigate things that are stressful and confusing."

A number of them talked about ways that their libraries are already helping communities navigate AI. They mentioned having teens teach older folks about how to use big models (like ChatGPT), offering hand-on training courses, and holding open office hours for people who just want to come ask questions about the technology.

> *When we're not scared of technology, we can help people navigate things that are stressful and confusing.*

They also acknowledged that library staff themselves need their own opportunities to explore AI, and that limitations including, lack of time and resources, are keeping some library staff away from AI learning. Some also noted that delays and roadblocks created by various policies mean that "we're a bit delayed compared to the public."

"We all need time to play," said one interviewee, "and with AI, you need quite a bit of time — at least 10 hours per model, by one estimate."[3] People are also hungry for accessible principles and guidelines, and they need training in how these models work and how to mitigate harms related to data privacy and hidden bias.

"We have to learn to help people learn about AI and understand its possible uses along with its possible harms. That's a hard line to walk," one said. And another pointed out, "We are information professionals. This is what many of us know how to do."

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[3] This person was referencing scholar Ethan Mollick, who estimates that it takes roughly 10 hours to learn the ins and outs of a large language model like Claude, Gemini, or ChatGPT. See Mollick's book *Co-intelligence: Living and working with AI* (2024) or his blog, One Useful Thing.

4

Here's what I think now.

On the (non-virtual, asphalt-coated) highway, I'm often appalled by drivers who pass me, and annoyed by those going slower. I've noticed a similar phenomenon in conversations about AI. When people are more optimistic than me, I catch myself secretly questioning if they truly understand its potential harms; when they are more pessimistic, I wonder if they've given AI a real chance, or if they are abdicating some responsibility for information and media literacy. This is a shameful admission of sanctimony, and I promise I'm working on it. But I own up to it here because the tech library staff who participated in this project opened my mind in ways that I am deeply grateful for. Here's what I think now:

I can be concerned <u>and</u> intrigued about AI

I have colleagues that I trust and respect who are AI hard-liners. They see any use of AI as fruit from a poisonous tree, so to speak, because of the abuses to human labor, the environment, and copyright that have been committed in the name of building the technology.[4] In my opinion, this is fair. But at the same time, it can foreclose on the kind of knowledge and skill building that many of us need to serve our communities. The tech staff I spoke to modeled an attitude that I want to embrace: clear-eyed understanding of the technology's limitations and potential for harm, alongside genuine curiosity about what it can do and how it might be able to help.

We need to talk to each other about AI

Having these conversations about AI with brilliant people taught me as much as the stack of books I listed up front (though they are all great, and I recommend them). Formal professional development or training sessions are important, but libraries also need to provide dedicated opportunities for staff to talk openly about AI, without fear of judgement or being expected to "know" anything.

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[4] For a truly eye-opening look at all this, see Kate Crawford's *Atlas of AI*.

5

> *Libraries and library staff can lead our communities through the changing tech landscape*
>
> Most of us, librarians as well as the general public, have more questions than answers about AI, and we're at least somewhat conflicted about whether its potential benefits outweigh its very clear drawbacks. People are scared, hopeful, confused, interested, and overwhelmed. Meaningful guidance will not come in the form of technology companies, who are responsible for the incessant deluge of AI hype that is currently assailing us. Nor is it likely to come from some of our closest partners and vendors who themselves have, in many cases, made deep investments in AI. But within the profession there is deep expertise about how to see ourselves, and our communities, through this technological change. Library leaders and policy makers need to invest in and listen carefully to in-house experts and community members, including those experiencing marginalization, who are on the frontiers of this technology and who are deeply committed to the public good, not to the interests of private industry. Our communities will rely on them, and us, to lead by learning about wise uses of generative AI, about its limitations and harms, and about ways to resist the ever-present hype.

At the same time, I'm still deeply confused about AI. The story I hear in the media, and from people in tech, business, and education, is that AI is a revolutionary innovation that is going to change everything. But when I listen closely to how library staff are using AI (at least right now), the story I hear is one of incremental change. So... which is it? A small step in a long march toward automation, or a massive transformation to our everyday lives? Or both?

I suspect this disconnect may stem partly from vocabulary — there is no such thing as "Artificial Intelligence," which is a term that has more meaning for advertisers than it does for computer scientists. My conversations with librarians were mainly about chatbots built on large language models like chatGPT and Gemini. These are only some instances of a broader category sometimes called "generative AI," which itself is only one of the technologies that gets termed "AI." The gap between the hype and the on-the-ground realities have something to do with the fact that when we talk about "AI," we are conflating many different types of technologies, with different capabilities. That's not to say that there is nothing concerning about large chatbots, but that it's hard to have a sensible conversation when the very words we use suffer from such rhetorical imprecision.

6

This is why no matter what place AI ultimately takes in the media and information landscape, one thing feels certain: those of us who see ourselves as stewards of media and information do not need to embrace use of AI technologies, but we do need to pursue knowledge of them. Learning about AI technologies — what they are and aren't, what they can and can't do, and how we can situate them in our understanding of the library profession — is the only way to cut through the hype and make sense of how to move forward.

How I used and didn't use AI while writing this, and why:

Despite myself, I've gotten used to leaning on AI a bit to smooth out my writing, especially for low-stakes communications like quick emails or memos. *But this piece is not low-stakes,* and I wanted to honor the very human conversations I had with librarians, and potential human readers of this report, by writing this without the use of text-generation software.

For similar reasons, I hand-coded my notes. I didn't ask my participants permission to feed their words into an AI model that might use them as training data, partly because I think that sets up an uncomfortable power dynamic (it might feel weird for them to object, knowing it would make my work harder), and partly because I forgot.

For the life of me, I could not come up with the word "sanctimony" in the first paragraph of the "what I think now" section. I gave the first few sentences of that paragraph to Claude (a popular AI text synthesis model) and asked it to fill in the word that would come next. That saved me at least 10 minutes of frustration.

I was tempted to ask an AI model to review my drafts, but then I remembered that my mom is the best proofreader and feedback-provider I know. One of AI's possible harms is that it may rob us of moments of connection to each other. But we can choose not to let it. Thanks, Mom!

7

SANTA CRUZ
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

RE: Status of Music CD collection at Santa Cruz Public Libraries

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Accept and file this report, informational only.

DISCUSSION
The music CD collection at Santa Cruz Public Libraries has long been a part of SCPL's diverse and accessible collection. The current collection consists of about 4,000 items in the adult collection and about 200 items in the juvenile collection, all shelved at the Downtown Library. In light of dramatically decreasing demand and use, the music CD collection was changed to non-floating, and all items had their assigned branch changed to the Downtown Library in March of 2024. This change was made in alignment with the Collection Development Policy which states that the Library's collection is a living, changing entity and collection maintenance helps to keep the collection current, attractive, responsive, diverse, and useful to the needs of the community. Moving the collection to the Downtown Library allowed a fully browsable collection in specially configured CD drawers, and also allows request pickup at any branch in the system.

Patron demand for music CDs is dropping.

Circulation of the music CD collection has dropped 79% in the past 10 years.

Music CD Circulation Year to Year
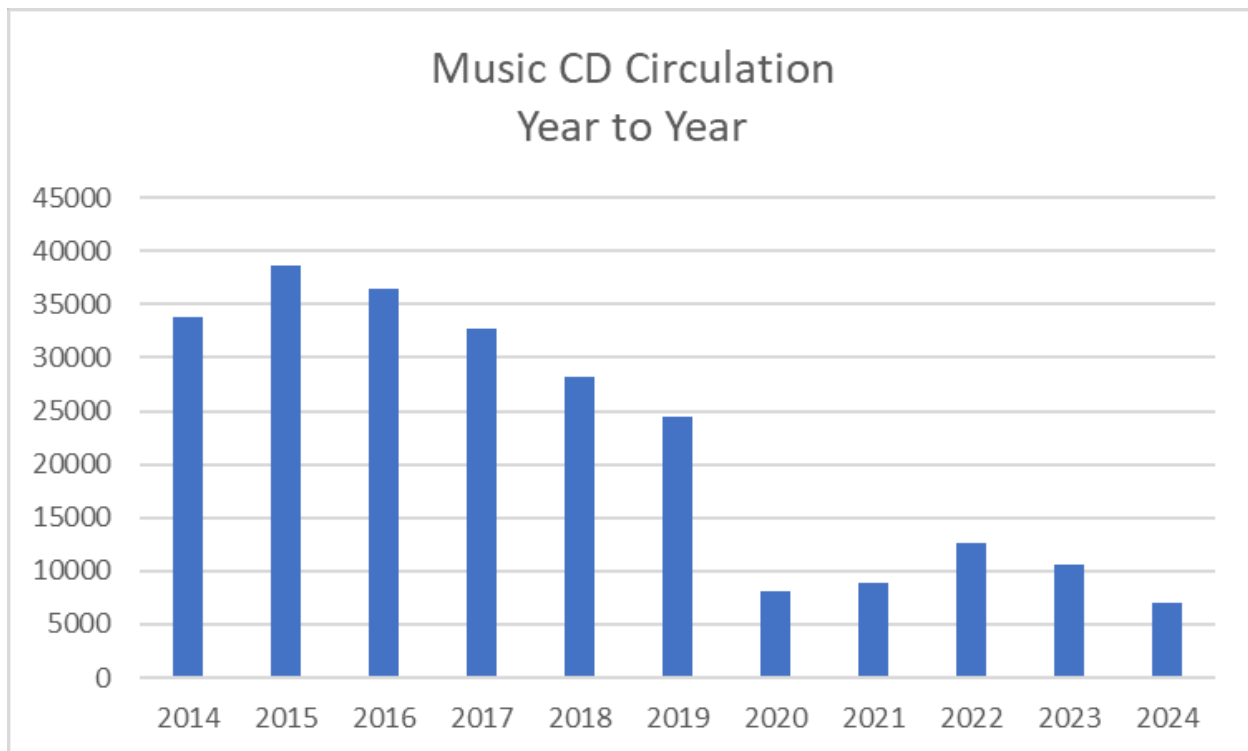
Note: 2020 and 2021 included the closures due to the pandemic. The entire collection saw dips in use these years.

At the Downtown Library in 2012, over 90% of the music CD collection had circulated in the past year. Last year that dropped to 58% of the collection being checked out in the past year.

A look at LINK+ borrows by our patrons to see if the SCPL collection is lacking what our patrons wanted to borrow shows that 2.8% of LINK+ borrows are music CDs.

New music CDs are not being purchased and added to collection due to the waning interest in the format. An analysis of the suggestions for purchase submitted to our website showed that 46 suggestions for music CD purchases have been submitted since July 2021, accounting for 1.99% of disc media (DVD and music CD) purchase suggestions.

Digital music checkouts have also declined.

Hoopla music album borrows
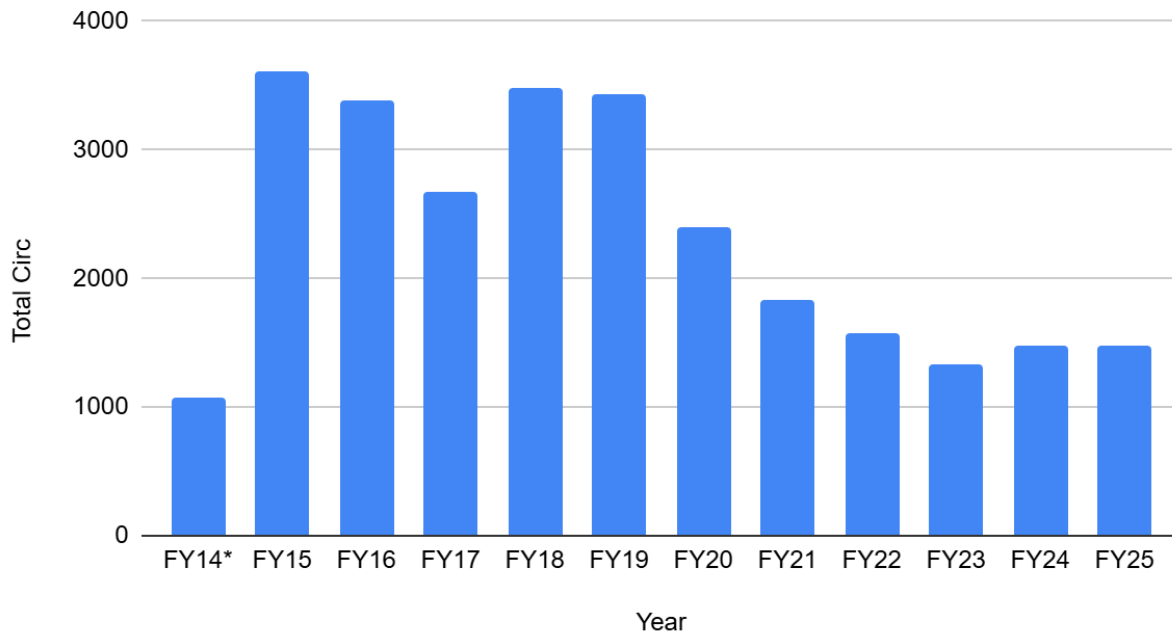
Note: In July 2025, music accounted for 2.83% of hoopla borrows.
*hoopla began at SCPL in December 2013.

What are the nationwide trends in public libraries?

The demand for physical CD shipments in the US has seen a decline in the past 25 years.

Physical CD shipments in the United States from 1999 to 2024 (in millions)

Source
RIAA
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Additional Information:
United States; 1999 to 2024; includes only CDs / net shipments after returns
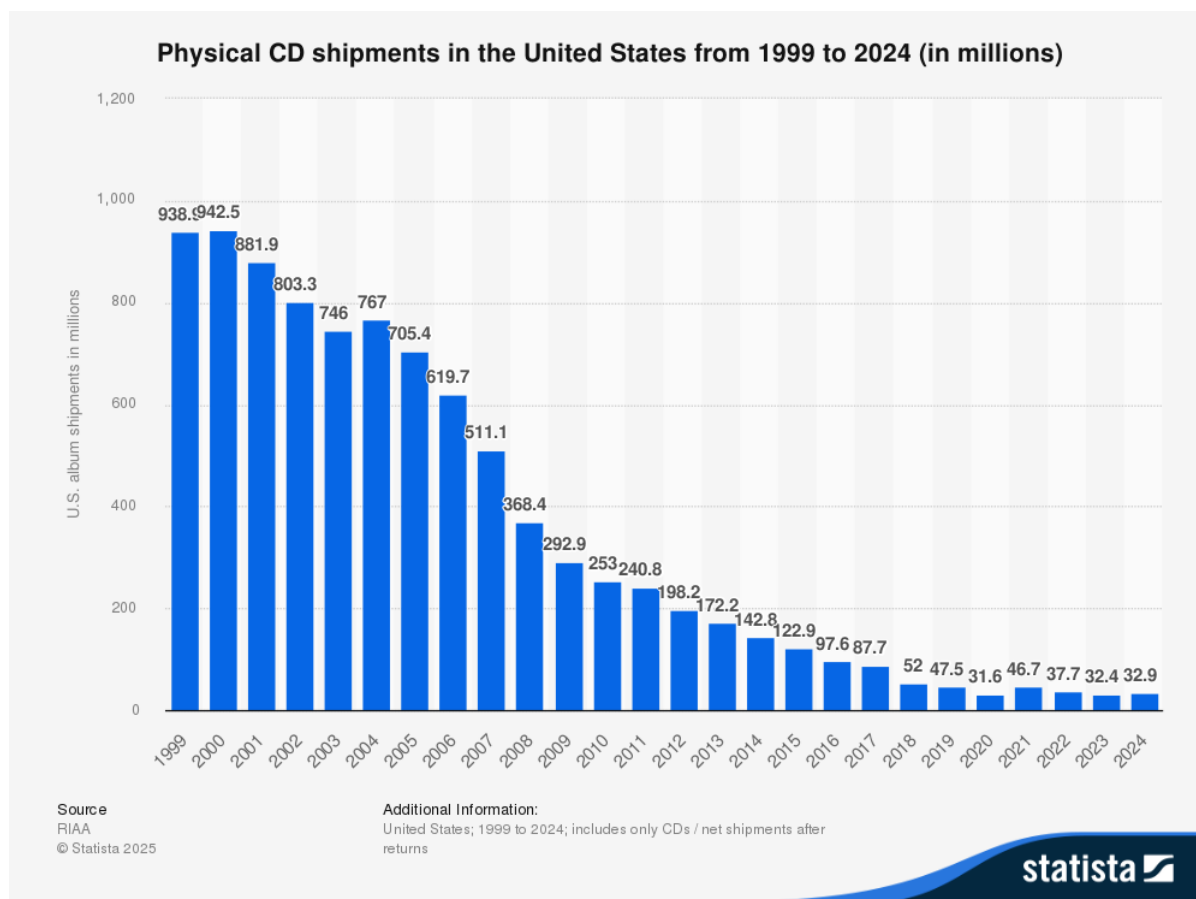
statista

RIAA. "Physical Cd Shipments in The United States from 1999 to 2024 (in Millions)." Statista, Statista Inc., 18 Mar 2025, https://www-statista-com.lapl.idm.oclc.org/statistics/186772/album-shipments-in-the-us-music-industry-since-1999/

Libraries are moving away from acquiring physical recordings of music in favor of the more convenient streaming music providers for libraries such as Hoopla, Freegal, and Alexander Street. SCPL provides access to music through Hoopla, though limited to 5 borrows per month per patron. The California State Library provides access to Alexander Street for public and K-12 libraries through COMPASS (the California Online Media Program for Access and Student Success). Freegal is a well regarded product, though SCPL has not seen the demand for digital streaming music so has not provided access. The following excerpt from *Notes* provides an overview of what is happening nationally with music and public libraries.

> Music education is a major priority for public music libraries, especially in the way of programming, and over the last twenty years, there has been ongoing advocacy encouraging partnerships between school music programs and libraries. Public libraries have also begun to veer away from acquiring physical iterations of recorded music. Instead, libraries prefer to subscribe to products specializing in streaming music such as Hoopla, Freegal, DRAM, Alexander Street Press's Music Online, and Naxos Music Library, saving them time, labor, and space. Where budgets do not allow for streaming subscriptions nor the acquisition of recorded music, patrons are often introduced to commercial streaming services such as YouTube and Spotify. This trend is being driven by both the convenience of access to streaming music and the waning availability of CD players which are being phased out by automobile and computer manufacturers. The exception to this extends to libraries servicing communities in internet deserts.

Berkowitz, Adam Eric. "PUBLIC LIBRARIES." Notes, vol. 80, no. 2, Dec. 2023, pp. 296+. Gale Academic OneFile, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A774474761/AONE?u=scruzpl&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=c09d6d70. Accessed 11 Aug. 2025.

Locally, not all public libraries are continuing to collect music CDs. Monterey County, Monterey Public, Los Gatos, and San Benito County libraries are reducing or have stopped adding new music CDs to their collections. Watsonville Public has held steady with their music CD budget.

Commitment to music

Santa Cruz Public Libraries is committed to music and championing local musicians. The library maintains a local music collection called SoundSwell, which features locally produced albums available for free streaming and download to cardholders. The sheet music database, maintained by SCPL, has a collection of sheet music of songs about Santa Cruz and California. The library also hosts regular Soundswell concerts, including partnering with the Downtown Farmers Market to support local musicians and provide live music on the first Wednesdays of the month. Munching with Mozart is a popular monthly series of free noon-time concerts in the Downtown Branch meeting room. Jazz at the Library has also been a popular event. The summer reading program features many musical programs for children including Village Rhythms, Cascada de Flores ¡Hasta las ranas cantan! Let's sing in Spanish!, Sean's Music Factory, and Musical Me. Throughout the year, story times presented by librarians feature song, music, and dance, including guitar and ukulele music.

Future of the music CD collection at SCPL

As Santa Cruz Public Libraries staff look to the future, we must consider the future of the music CD collection and its space in the new Downtown Library. As this decision is made, we will be guided by the Collection Development Policy (JPAB Policy #302), and make data driven decisions.

FISCAL IMPACT
None.

ATTACHMENT
None.

Report Prepared by: Sarah Harbison, Manager of Collection Management Services

Reviewed and Approved by: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

RE: "Reading is a Drag!" Storytime Proposal

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Endorse the "Reading Is a Drag! – A Family Storytime Celebration" program proposal

DISCUSSION

"Reading Is a Drag!" – A Family Storytime Celebration

Submitted By: Shelley Murray SCPL Librarian, Branciforte Branch

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1. Program Overview

This proposal outlines a plan to host a **Drag Storytime** at the Santa Cruz Public Library (SCPL). The event is a family-friendly program where drag performers read children's books that highlight themes of diversity, self-expression, and community. The objective is to promote literacy and inclusion in a fun, welcoming, and educational setting consistent with SCPL's mission to provide free and open access to knowledge for all members of the community.

Results from a SCPL July 2025 survey distributed to parents and caregivers, showed a desire for more performance based story times. Of the 36 responses, the top three requests were for: drag performers, musicians and career day guests. Comments included requests for more inclusion and diversity within the YA programs. Opening

this program up to a partnership with Drag Story Time Santa Cruz would be a wonderful way to support these requests.

American Library Association Impact:

Hosting Drag Storytime in Santa Cruz enriches the community by affirming the American Library Association's core values of diversity, inclusion, and intellectual freedom. These events create a welcoming space where children and families can celebrate creativity, self-expression, and the joy of reading—while also learning about acceptance and empathy. By partnering with local performers and fostering intergenerational dialogue, Drag Storytime supports community engagement and reflects the vibrant, inclusive spirit of Santa Cruz. In line with ALA's Library Bill of Rights and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) framework, these storytimes champion every individual's right to access information and programming that reflects the broad spectrum of human experience.

The ALA has a comprehensive list of articles and resources relating to Drag in libraries, with stories from libraries across the country. An article by the Cherry Hill Public Library in Philadelphia follows the process Deena Caswell took when developing and running a Drag Storytime. Throughout the planning process, staff and board members were kept in the loop. This made dealing with any pushback from community members easier and unsurprising. An article from the Alameda County Library, titled Why Drag Storytime Belongs in Public Libraries covers the history of drag storytime and the importance of maintaining diverse programs. After an incident during a Drag Storytime, the ACL received support from the San Lorenzo community and from Dave Brown and his District 3 staff. Due to this overwhelming positive support, the library has continued to provide Drag Storytime and other LGBTQ+ programs.

https://www.ala.org/advocacy/libraries-respond-drag-queen-story-hour

Who are Drag Story Time Santa Cruz?

Drag Story Time Santa Cruz is a collective of small Santa Cruz County businesses and organizations that are committed to offering Drag Story Time events to the community that are diverse, welcoming, and inclusive for all. We believe that representation matters and we want our Santa Cruz youth and families to experience spaces where they can not only be their authentic selves, but who they are is celebrated, uplifted, and affirmed.

Past events included:

Downtown Santa Cruz Pride - 50th Anniversary

May 22nd Childish Toyshop 4-5:30pm

March 20th Childish Midtown 4-5pm

Sept. 14th 2024 Diversity Center Santa Cruz County 1:30-2:30pm

2. Program Objectives

The proposed Drag Storytime supports SCPL's strategic goals in the following ways:

- **Early Literacy Engagement:** Through dynamic and expressive read-alouds, the program helps young children develop foundational reading skills.

- **Inclusive Representation:** The program reflects Santa Cruz County's diverse communities and promotes empathy and understanding through inclusive stories and presenters.

- **Community Building:** Events like Drag Storytime invite families to engage with the library as a safe, creative, and inclusive community space.

- **Support for Self-Expression:** By celebrating individuality and creativity, the program fosters self-confidence and positive identity development in children.

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3. Program Description

Drag Story Time Santa Cruz - Our incredible line-up of professional Drag Artists rotate as storytellers of books with inclusive and diverse narratives and characters to youth and families. Drag Story Time can also include dancing, juggling, games and face painting. Combining story, representation, education and play this is an environment where kids can explore their identity and express who they are in an affirming environment.

- **Title:** *Reading is a Drag! A Family Storytime*

- **Intended Audience:** Children ages 3–10 and their caregivers

- **Duration:** Approximately 45–60 minutes

- **Format:**
    o Welcome and introduction by library staff (5 minutes)

    o Read-aloud sessions by 1–2 drag performers (20–30 minutes)

    o Interactive activity: sing-along, movement, or themed craft (10–15 minutes)

    o Optional photo opportunity or meet-and-greet (5–10 minutes)

    o Closing remarks and resources from the library (5 minutes)

- **Proposed Location:** SCPL Branciforte

- **Preferred Date(s):** Sept. or October Launch with afternoon start time

- **Family Storytime will continue as scheduled**

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4. Content & Book Selection

All content will be thoroughly reviewed in collaboration with SCPL's youth services staff to ensure age-appropriateness and alignment with the library's standards. Book selections will reflect themes of inclusion, kindness, community, and identity.
Sample Titles (subject to approval):
- *Julian is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love

    Books will be selected in collaboration with SCPL librarians and reflect the library's collection development policy.

5. Performer Information & Safety

- Drag performers will be **experienced in public family events** and briefed on all guidelines related to working with children.

- Performers will wear **family-appropriate attire** and follow a code of conduct consistent with library standards.

- SCPL Librarians will remain present throughout the event to provide oversight and ensure adherence to all library policies.

6. Accessibility & Inclusion

- The event will be open to the public and free of charge.

- Materials can be made available in English and Spanish to reflect local demographics.

- SCPL's existing accessibility accommodations (e.g., wheelchair access, ASL interpretation upon request) will be utilized as needed.

7. Partnership & Promotion

The proposing party is available to collaborate with SCPL's marketing and youth services teams to promote the event through:

- Flyers and in-branch signage

- Library social media accounts

- Email newsletters or local media outreach

All promotional materials will be subject to SCPL review and approval.

8. Potential Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Potential Challenge	Mitigation Strategy
Community Sensitivity or Pushback	Proactively frame the event as a literacy and inclusion-based program, consistent with SCPL's values. Collaborate closely with library communications staff to develop clear messaging and FAQs. Ensure all materials emphasize age-appropriateness, educational goals, and alignment with SCPL's mission.
Questions About Age-Appropriateness	All books, costumes, and content will be reviewed and pre-approved by SCPL's youth services staff. Performers will be briefed on expectations and boundaries. Library staff will be present to ensure the environment remains suitable for children and families.

Potential Challenge	Mitigation Strategy
Safety and Security Concerns	SCPL staff will be on-site throughout the event. If necessary, staff can consult local law enforcement or security teams in advance to ensure a calm and respectful environment. A Code of Conduct will be posted and enforced for all attendees. The Rainbow Defense Coalition will also be on-hand to help with any security issues.

9. Assessment & Next Steps

Drag Storytime provides an inclusive, literacy-rich experience aligned with the Santa Cruz Public Library's values of access, equity, learning, and community. We would be honored to partner with the Drag Story Time Collective to offer this program as part of our children's programming lineup. SCPL could become a supporter of Drag Storytime with, ideally, regular monthly programs.

10. Estimated Costs

The following is a projected cost breakdown for a single Drag Storytime event. Actual costs may vary depending on scope, number of performers, materials, and library resources already available.

Item	Estimated Cost	Notes
Performer Honorarium	$100–$200 per performer	Based on standard rates for educational and family-friendly appearances. Typically 1–2 performers per event.
Books / Reading Materials	$0–$60	Books may be pulled from the existing SCPL collection. If new titles are purchased, costs may apply.
Craft Supplies or Activity Materials	$25–$50	Optional: supplies for a simple, themed craft (e.g., paper crowns, coloring pages, stickers). May be donated or provided by the library.
Promotional Materials	$25–$75	Flyers, posters, or printed materials for outreach. Digital promotion via SCPL channels may incur no additional cost.

SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 18, 2025

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

RE: Website Migration Project Current Status Updates

STAFF RECOMMENDATION
Accept and file this report, informational only.

DISCUSSION
The Commission last received an update on May 19, 2025. Since then, the Library has made significant headway on the project and is excited to provide an informational update regarding the following modules that have been released and incorporated into the Library's existing website.

Attend (Calendar of Events and Programs)

The new calendar interface makes program registration easier by auto-populating patron library card account information and keeping track of the patron's upcoming program registrations. Patrons can use the flexible Date Range and Filter By options: Location, Age Group, Event Type to search for specific programs and events across all locations in one unified view. The Brochure feature enables patrons to build customized brochures with preferred programs based on their chosen filters.
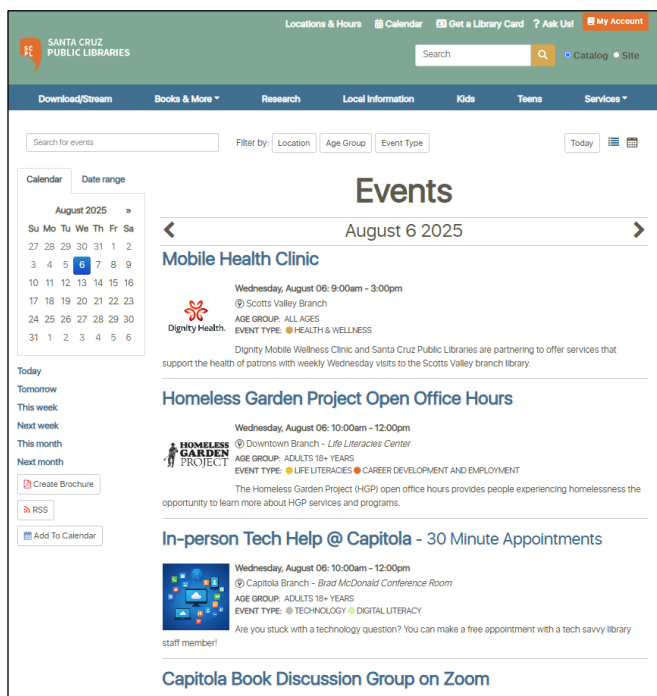
Reserve (Meeting Room Reservation System)

The new meeting room reservation system features an enhanced search by date that allows patrons to see room availability in real time across all locations and specific room types, including community rooms, conference rooms, and study rooms, in one unified view. Patrons can now book meeting and community rooms directly from our website, including for the select after hours locations. Requests are automatically routed for approval. The Library anticipates enabling the study rooms for direct booking in September.

Schedule (Appointments)

Are you stuck with a technology question or need help with basic technology assistance?

Just register for in-person tech help on the calendar of events and you can book an appointment with a tech savvy library staff member through Schedule.

The new appointment scheduler gives patrons the power to lock in a timeslot with a designated library staff member for a one-on-one session.

P90

Broadcast (Digital Signage Display at Branches)

As part of the Communico suite, Broadcast supports our branches' smart TVs digital signage display system by making it easier to present even more visually attractive, rotating carousels of Program promotions and other promotional events. The displays can also showcase customized messaging, moving slideshows, videos, and branch-specific information, such as hours of operation and can quickly replay important messages in real time.
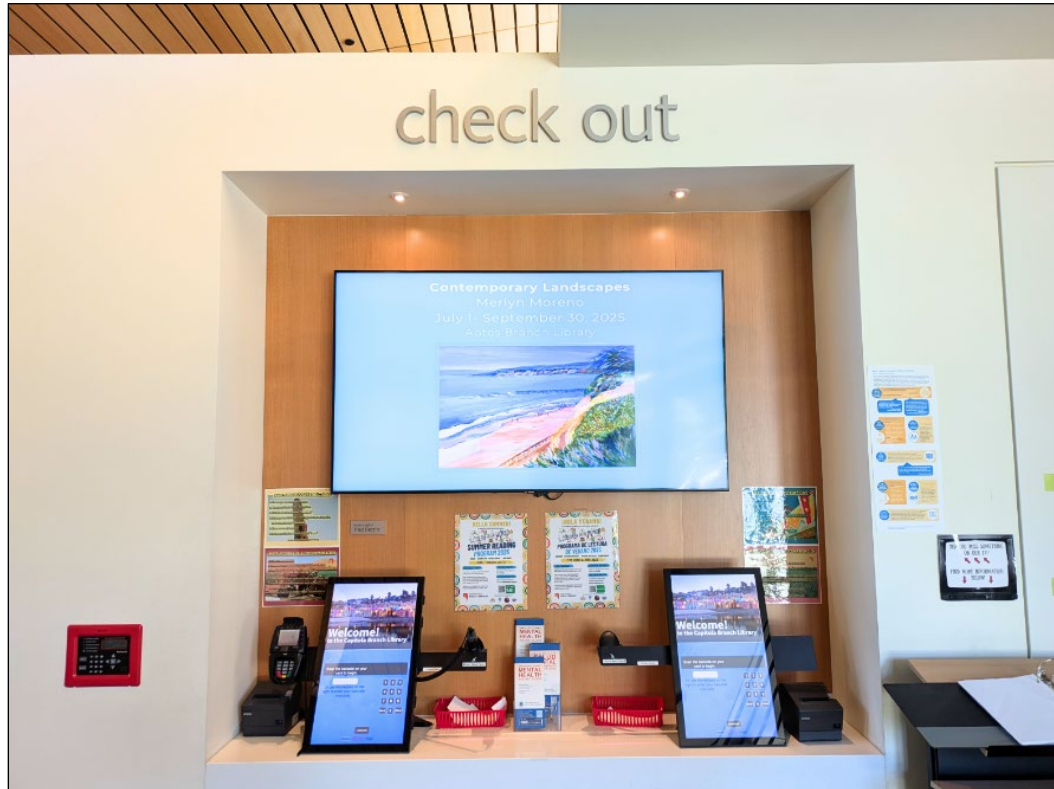
Future Updates

The Library is currently working on these remaining modules: **Create** (website platform), **Connect** (mobile app), and **Explore** (enhanced search for books, materials, and other media). The Library anticipates rolling out the new mobile app and website to staff first, followed by a public launch over the next few weeks. A special promotion of the new mobile app will also be conducted to inform patrons that the existing app will sunset. Patrons will be encouraged to download the new mobile app from the App Store in order to take full advantage of the Library's offerings.

FISCAL IMPACT
None.

ATTACHMENT
None.

Report Prepared by: Carlos Silva, Information Technology Manager
                                    Jennifer Yeung, Management Analyst

Reviewed and Approved by: Christopher Platt, Director of Libraries

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE LISTING

Dear Library Board,
Yesterday's deforestation of Lot 4 to make way for the new Downtown Library is a tragic loss for the downtown area residents, visitors and wildlife.

How can the Library Board be proud of such a mistake to remove eleven heritage trees that were healthy and could have provided a welcoming environmental connection for future library patrons who would have looked into the canopies of those green giants, filled with birds and life?

In my opinion, your Board needed to lobby for a design that would accommodate and incorporate the beautiful shade trees, not urban deforestation. You have not served the people or the environment well.

Shame on you.

Sincerely,
Becky Steinbruner