

MENDOCINO COUNTY *Library*

2020-2021 Annual Report



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MENDOCINO COUNTY
CULTURAL SERVICES AGENCY - LIBRARY



**ROUND VALLEY BRANCH
SEED PLANTING PARTY**



**SUMMER READING PROGRAM
AT COAST BRANCH**



BOOKMOBILE COVID PRECAUTIONS



FORT BRAGG'S ORIGAMI PROGRAM

HELLO, MENDOCINO COUNTY!

Message from the County Librarian



Thank you so much for welcoming me so warmly to this beautiful part of the country. I started as your Cultural Services Agency Director on January 25th and have been amazed at the dedication and professionalism of both Library and Museum staff. Prior to my appointment here, I had worked as County Librarian for Tuolumne County, CA and as Branch Manager for the Public Library of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County in New Mexico. I've worked in libraries all over the country from Dayton, OH to Monterey, CA to San Angelo, TX to Augusta, GA to Las Cruces, NM and have met so many different people dedicated to serving the public through Libraries. I have worked in larger systems with larger budgets, but never with such a hard working staff before.

Since my tenure began in January, I have been able to visit every branch in the County Library system and meet all the staff, appreciating the traits and eccentricities of each unique community despite

the new restrictions placed on us by this pandemic. Library branches are still not open to the public at pre-pandemic levels, but we're hopeful that we will be able to do that eventually.

Our branches have continued to serve their communities well over the past year, with on-line programming, take-and-make crafts, curbside pick-up, social media

games and challenges, and telephone reference assistance while closed, and adding browsing and computer assistance since re-opening in late March. In the following pages Branch Managers will highlight their branch's accomplishments over the past year and let you know some of their hopes for the future.

I am proud that during my time

here we have placed an emphasis on staff development and training and are in the process of eliminating late fees for overdue materials, which really only serve as a barrier to access for those in our community who need us the most. All of our branches are getting set up with high-speed broadband access through the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC) this year, enabling us to serve even more residents in the remote areas of our County.

Thank you to the amazing Cultural Services Agency staff, The Library Advisory Board, and all the individual Friends of the Library groups that do so much for our branches on a daily basis. What a great team!

My goals for the upcoming year are to open the new Laytonville Branch in early 2022, to set up Story Walks® in our communities, and to bring all our branches together as members of the same Library with a shared identity.

~ Deb Fader Samson



Coast Community Branch Library

Located in Point Arena, Mendocino County's smallest city, this branch serves south coast communities from Elk to Gualala and further south into Sonoma County, including Sea Ranch, Annapolis and Stewarts Point.

During the summer of 2020 until March 2021, the branches provided curbside pickup of materials. Many patrons were able to place requests online at home and for those without internet, people handed staff lists (through the door), or they called and had requests placed for them. Since March, staff have returned to checking out materials in person and allowing use of the study rooms and public computers. Patrons and visitors from afar have begun to visit the branch (while masked!) with greater frequency.

People are also now coming inside to buy books at the ongoing Friends of the Library Book Sale that is temporarily located in the Community Room. The space is functioning like a mini bookstore and sales are at an all-time high. This is a fine use of the room until public programs and classes can be resumed.

During the 2020 Summer Reading Program in July and August, branches were open only for curbside pickup so staff provided a cart at the front door supplied with free Scholastic Books and weekly craft go-bags. The Time-Capsule booklet project was very popular with Coast Community families. The creator of the booklet made it available on the web, saying, "Because we're living through history right now I thought a 'time capsule' would be an amazing way for children to document this experience."

In September, branch staff celebrated Mendocino County Library's award of



a grant from the American Library Association and the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission commemorating the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment.

In October, Coast Branch posted its first YouTube videos...the reading of two children's books that were part of a Census book grant the County Library received.

In December, they presented a video of a book talk by local Comptche author and historian, Katie Tahja, sharing her latest book, *An Eclectic History of Mendocino County*.

In January and February, Branch Manager Julia Larke created a poster honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and his 1968 *I Have A Dream* speech and posted it on social media. For Black History Month they highlighted books, movies and audiobooks in a window display, including the works of Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Colson Whitehead, Isabel Wilkerson, and many more.

In March, Julia applied and was awarded a \$500 grant from the California State Library's ELF project (Early Learning with Families). For día de los niños, día de los libros (Children's

Day/Book Day), held April 29, they hosted a bilingual zoom fairytale told by Point Arena's Poet Laureate, Blake More and retired Ukiah Poet Laureate, Jabez William Churchill.

At the end of March the County Library gradually began reopening the branches to the public. On Earth Day, held April 22, Coast Branch provided a Seeds and Starts Giveaway table near the entrance to the library and gave away dozens of borage and sunflower seedlings as well as seed packets that had been donated to the seed library by Territorial Seed Co.

In June, Coast Branch hosted a YouTube video for all ages by author and "Sightings" newspaper columnist, Jeanne Jackson, titled *Baby Animals of the Mendonoma Coast* and staff began producing videos of their preschool *Story Time @ the Library with Marilyn*.

Staff are looking forward to resuming full in-person programming. Although we are living in pandemic times, the library continues to function as a community center, a place where individuals can come (wearing masks!) to share, explore, learn, and create. 🌻🌻🌻

~Julia Larke

Fort Bragg Branch Library

"Curbside pick-up kept our family reading;"

"You kept me sane during the pandemic;"

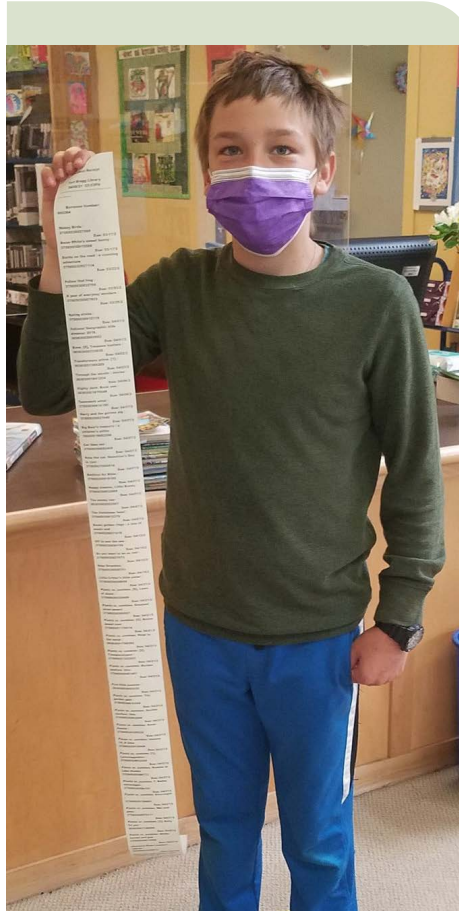
"I got turned on to e-Audiobooks last year and just love them!"

~ Library patron quotes.

Curbside pick-up turned out great for people familiar with our online catalog, but it was harder for those who liked to browse. The Fort Bragg staff jumped in and became expert weekly shoppers for their patrons. Families with young children had the toughest time, but they became our top requesters, checking out huge bags of picture books each week. Summer Reading 2020 proceeded undeterred. Children's Librarian, Kim Doyle, mailed Game Boards to all kids who'd played in the past three years. By summer's end, kids had won free ice cream, books, and t-shirts. Prizes were passed out at our door to maintain social distancing. The cold weather moved circulation to our front lobby, where patrons continued to visit in droves. Some days the phone never stopped ringing. Through parts of the pandemic, the branch circulated up to 5000 items per month.

Kids enjoyed online recordings of stories and craft programs. Monthly book group and Poetry Open Mic for adults continued on Zoom, which was especially appreciated when the town was locked down. The monthly poetry-writing workshop continue by email. Online meetings offered mental stimulation and helped to preserve a sense of community.

In March the branch reopened. To welcome back patrons in person, their local origami master made butterflies for all to take and make. At



the center of the table was an origami redwood tree, a lasting symbol of the City of Fort Bragg.

Ocean Wave Quilters celebrated our reopening with a tie-dye challenge that brought colorful quilts to every wall. Then the branch hosted a spectacular quilt show depicting the iconic buildings of Mendocino town. Each building was stitched in meticulous detail and was accompanied by a matching photograph. The library displayed its extensive holdings of local history books on Mendocino and provided a tour map so people could visit the historic buildings. People were overjoyed to see this exhibit and be in a living, breathing library. (Well-masked, of course!)

The Friends of the Fort Bragg Library did not go dormant in the pandemic, but continued to raise funds for library programs and the building project. Online sales were phenomenal, reaching nearly \$10,000. The \$1000 Club grew to 80 donors. A sizeable bequest came into the library in December 2020, boosting the expansion funds by \$450,000. The group prepared a brochure for financial advisors and law firms. The generous donations allow the Friends to seek a fundraising package that clearly defines building costs and starts the search for architectural firms. With well-defined costs, the Friends will be able to pursue public grants and private funding.

The staff members of Fort Bragg Library cordially invite you to visit and experience the collections, programs, and feeling of a thriving community library.

~ Dan Hess

Round Valley Branch Library



2020 was the year of the Zoom call. The Round Valley branch utilized this format for a variety of programs including children's story time, workshops for adults, and emergency preparedness presentations. Radio was also a big part of library outreach during closure: Reading Radio on KYBU featured weekly interviews with community members on the theme of literacy and books. Finally, the branch used social media to reach the community while library doors were closed. Visitors to the Round Valley branch Facebook page were treated to videos featuring origami instructions, virtual library tours, and tips on wildfire preparedness.

In the months before the branch opened its doors in March of 2021, priority number one in Covelo was serving library users with in-person services such as curbside checkout of books and movies, printing and scanning services, "grab and go" craft kits, and tabling outreach at the local farmers market. In August and September, the library posted evacuation maps and other public safety materials for those affected by the August Complex Fire.

With renewed interest in growing and preserving food, the seed library in Round Valley shared seeds at our local Farmers Market, and through community partnerships with the Yuki Trails Human Services Program and Round Valley Family Resource Center. The seed library distributed over 6000 seed packets in the last two years. Outdoor events included monthly planting parties and seed and seedling swaps.

In January, The Round Valley branch was honored to host local poet Michelle Peñaloza on Zoom. Michelle facilitated a writing workshop for an enthusiastic crowd who responded to engaging writing prompts and a discussion of hybrid writing forms. Participants left the program with original writing that combined elements of poetry, prose, and creative nonfiction.

This spring, The Round Valley Branch collaborated with the Mendocino County Museum on an event for middle and high school students. The Youth History Slam happened in April on Zoom and included students from Mendocino and Monterey counties. Jen Harness, a student from Round Valley, shared a wonderful presentation on the Northwestern Pacific Railroad that included stop action animation. Jen's presentation won "Best presentation" at the SLAM.

Entering into the 2021 wildfire season, community members joined representatives from Mendocino County Fire Safe Council and Sherwood Firewise Communities for an online presentation hosted by the branch. Topics included evacuation preparedness, home hardening, and community organizing and preparedness. This presentation was part of an ongoing "Learn Not to Burn" program series; over the following months library staff members shared information and resources on the Mendocino alerts emergency alert system, family communication plans, and the Firesafe Council's chipping program.

~ Josh Bennett

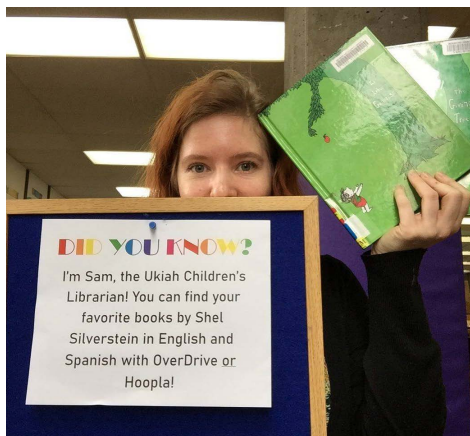
Ukiah Branch Library

The Ukiah Branch Library serves as a community-gathering place and a connectivity hub for all residents. Connecting people with information, educational resources, myriad learning opportunities, and with one another, patrons discover new ways to inhabit their worlds. Patrons of all ages visit the branch to access WiFi and public computers; borrow library materials including Chromebooks, ukuleles, and board games, and attend regular events such as Children's Story-Time, Teen Maker Squad, and First Fridays.

The Yokayo Seed Project has provided seeds to patrons throughout the pandemic. In fall 2020, branch staff offered Seed Pack Bundles via curbside check-out and collaborated with the NCO Gardens Project to create Mendo Seed Talks: a series of seed saving videos for patrons available via social media. Seed Library Coordinator, Jen Lyon, fostered Tomato Hornworms in our Seed Library. Staff are proud to be 1 of 400 seed hubs with the [Co-Op Gardens Commission](#), a grassroots collective working toward food sovereignty in response to the pandemic and persistent injustice.

While the branches were closed to the public, the staff continued to work in various capacities: behind the scenes answering reference and readers' advisory requests; fulfilling contact-free curbside services; preparing for reopening; serving as disaster workers - answering calls at the call center, checking temperatures, and performing COVID contact tracing.

During the summer of 2020, the branch began offering many virtual children's programs including Full STEAM Ahead: Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math Crafts for Kids; Kids' Corner book talks; 1000 Books Before Kindergarten on Beanstack; and Sweet Saturdays in partnership with local school River Oak. During the spring of 2021, they offered DIY Take-Home Mother's



and Father's Day Card kits for children to mail to seniors in retirement communities and Story Promenades, temporary exhibits of children's books displayed on boards along paths in various parks in downtown Ukiah, in partnership with the City of Ukiah Recreation Department.

Young Adult Librarian Katrina Griffiths expanded the number of virtual pro-

grams for teens on Instagram and Discord, including Foodie Finds: an educational cooking program; Mad Genius Science Projects; Money Smart Week Budgeting 101, and DIY Take-Home Self-Care Kits.

In July, 2020 branch staff formed the Social Justice Book Club dedicated to promoting social and racial justice in the Ukiah community. They read and discussed many powerful books including *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. This book club is still active on Zoom and will continue to be offered.

The 2021 UkiahHaiku Festival (UHF) was produced as an online virtual event hosted by our outgoing Ukiah Poet Laureate, Roberta Werdinger, and conducted by our incoming Poet Laureate and Branch Librarian, Melissa Eleftherion Carr. In collaboration with the Poet Laureate Committee of Ukiah, the Ukiah Library also hosted a memorial tribute and poetry reading to honor the late poet, Diane di Prima. The monthly LOBA (she-wolf) Poetry Series resumed and continues live virtually with an Open Mic poetry reading on Zoom.

To support and sustain community resiliency, Ukiah branch staff have provided a variety of DIY Take-Home Kits for Adults including DIY Eye Pillows, Tabletop Fountains, and DIY Rose Petal Sachets, to help with ameliorating insomnia, fostering relaxation, and aiding rest.

Patrons and staff alike enjoyed a wonderful first day of reopening! Within the span of 4 hours, staff welcomed 175 patrons into the branch. Visiting (briefly) with friendly faces and assisting patrons with requests buoyed everyone's spirits. As our society recovers from wildfires and COVID, the staff have begun to reintegrate more in-person and hybrid events outdoors and as safely as possible. Staff are grateful to be part of the Ukiah community.

~ Melissa Eleftherion Carr

Willits Branch Library

Virtual Programming

For the safety of the staff and community, all programming was virtual during the 20/21 fiscal year. Staff created three ongoing programs to stay connected with their community, each small but with consistent viewership.

- *Nicole's Test Kitchen Craft Edition*- This program, which began in April of 2020, focuses on crafts that are for adults or children with adult supervision.
- *Nicole's Test Kitchen STEAM Edition*- This program, which started at the same time, focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math projects for school-age children.
- *Make it. Own it. Work it*- began in July 2020 and features practical crafts for teens and adults that can be used or worn.

Though they had to work around internet outages from a winter storm and other technical difficulties, the staff learned how to stay connected and now have skills to apply to future programming.

Curbside Service

From July 2020 to March 2021 the staff served 3,222 patrons through curbside service. They regularly answered requests to "find me five movies that are funny" or "Can you just put some good audio books in my bag?"

Staff never just grabbed random items from the shelves; they always tried to remember what kind of items their patrons had gotten pre-pandemic to match their individual tastes. Some folks still pick up materials curbside even though branch

doors opened back up 5 days each week beginning in the spring.

Holiday Programming

Willits branch staff love to celebrate Halloween. Pre-pandemic, they hosted a Halloween carnival every year that was loved by the community. So instead, they hosted three virtual programs that were Halloween themed and put together trick or treat bags filled with will books, stickers, and toys and dressed up as witches and wizards to hand out curbside pick-up bags.

Community Engagement

The Willits branch of the library is a hub of activity and staff wanted to make sure their community could still connect with each other. Julie Castillo, a Library Assistant, designed a Gratitude Dahlia by creating petals and asking patrons to write down something that they loved about the library, or were grateful for in general, and then color those petals and return them to be added to the mural in the branch's front window. All the petals built a large and beautiful flower of positivity at the branch.

They decided to keep the idea going by continuing to have a mural in the front window that is built by community input, changing out the dahlia for a scene with raindrops and leaves.

Collaboration with the Museum

The Mendocino County Museum is a physical neighbor of the Willits branch as well as a figurative neighbor under the umbrella of the Cultural Services Agency of the County.

In the spring the Library and Museum partnered for a virtual event



showcasing different kinds of print-making during their exhibit "The Art of the Wind and Sea," which featured community art. The Branch and Museum also partnered for an outdoor series of Summer Reading events.

~ Nicole Bird

The Bookmobile



The Bookmobile staff have been sanitizing the truck and its collection and stocking it with hand sanitizer, gloves, and signs pertaining to approved COVID procedures. The biggest change in the service was conducting all business outside on a table as the Bookmobile is too small for six-foot social distancing

on board. Even with all the necessary precautions, our patrons were very excited to have their Bookmobile back out on the road again and followed all safety protocols.

As the pandemic persists into the second year and restrictions have eased somewhat, patrons wearing face masks are allowed on board

two at a time. Dave and Hunter continue to provide the best possible service they can to Bookmobile patrons and are expanding their service to a couple of new locations which have reached out to request additional stops.

~Dave Frick

Laytonville Branch

In 2022, the Laytonville community will finally have a library space to call their own. The Laytonville Branch will have a small but comprehensive book collection with a mix of adult, young adult, and children's fiction and non-fiction titles as well as DVDs and audiobooks. In addition, the branch will offer reference and children's services, public internet computers, printing and copying, and will have Wi-Fi availability.

This branch has been a dream in the making for several years. The dedicated Laytonville Friends of the Library group has been the driving force in bringing this much needed branch to the Laytonville community.

~Nicole Bird



YEAR IN REVIEW

Visitors



27,971

Programs for age 0-5: 107



Attendance: 1,213

Programs for age 6-11: 105



Attendance: 1,494

Programs for age 12-18: 178



Attendance: 646

Total
Programs:

527

Total Program
Attendance

4,893

Programs for adults: 137



Attendance: 1,540

New Items Added
to Collection



8,915

Total Zip Book
requests filled



1,112

New Library Cards
Issued



513

INTERLIBRARY LOANS
Items Borrowed
from other Libraries



77,176

INTERLIBRARY LOANS
Items Loaned
to other Libraries



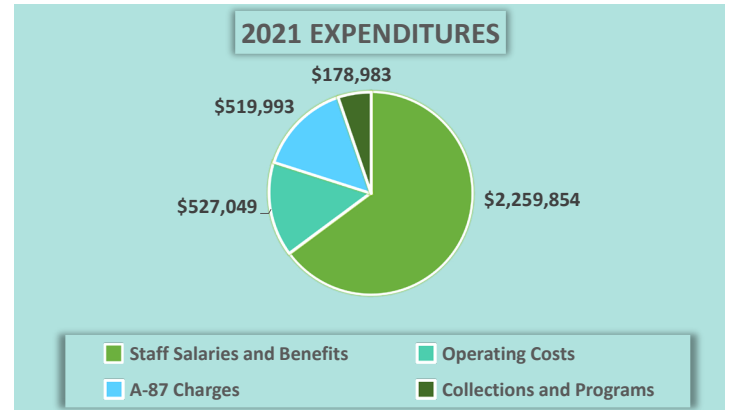
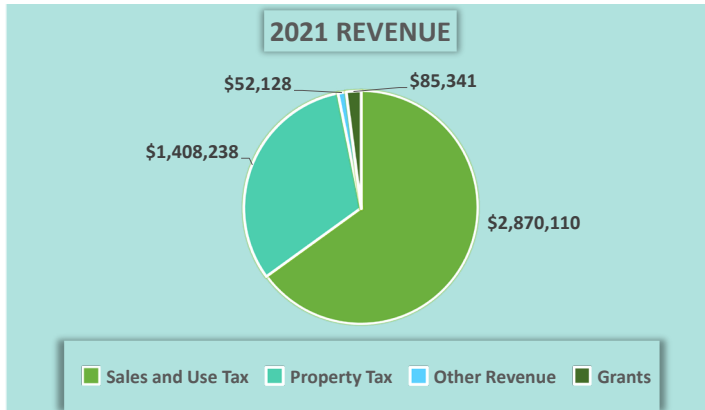
88,670

Library Webpages
Views



214,594

Finances & Statistics - Fiscal Year 2020-2021



DEFERRED FACILITY PROJECTS

Project	Estimated Costs
Ukiah Non-Slip Concrete Entrance and Exterior Bookdrop	\$55,000
Ukiah New Roof	\$900,000
Ukiah Community Room and Smoke Alarm System	\$140,000
Willits New Carpet	\$60,000
Willits Breakroom Kitchen Remodel	\$18,000
Willits Roof Replacement	\$300,000
TOTAL	\$1,473,000

Fiscal year 2020-2021 saw a welcome increase in library revenue. Sales tax revenue increased by 50% over FY 2019-2020. Additionally, the library was awarded a grant of \$85,341 from the California State Library for expenses to join the CENIC broadband network. This amounted to a 32% increase in total revenue.

The COVID pandemic has impacted budgets by causing unpredictable

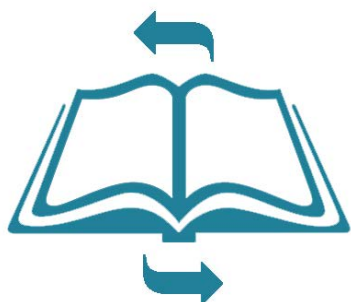
swings in revenue. We are hoping that the increased revenue continues, but year-to-year fluctuations are likely to persist. We still have facility projects that have been deferred for another year.

Some savings were recovered from the COVID closures. When staff left employment with the library their positions were not immediately filled, there was no security guard necessary

while the Ukiah branch was closed, and there was a reduction in purchasing of items like magazines and newspapers that patrons were not able to come in and enjoy. Consequently, expenditures were 8% less than the prior year.

Now that branches have reopened, we have resumed hiring the staff needed to serve our communities and a security guard is once again stationed at the Ukiah branch.

Total Circulation



224,014

Digital Checkouts



93,417



High-Speed Broadband for Mendocino County Library!

The Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC) high speed broadband connections will go live soon at most of the County Library branches!

The Mendocino County Library system, CENIC, and the California State Library through the Califa Group are partnering to provide direct connection of 1 Gbps to the entire Library system. Final components, such as switches and firewalls, are currently being installed and upgraded internal rewiring of the Willits Branch will be completed soon. Due to its remote location, Round Valley's connection will take a bit longer. However, we are very pleased that the branch will be obtaining a fiber-optic broadband connection as well!

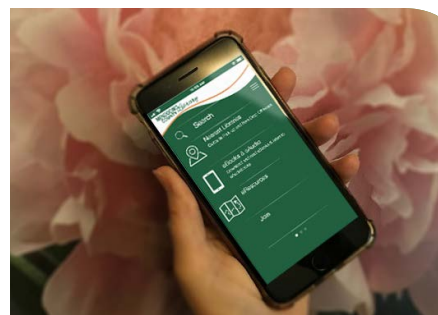
The California State Library has awarded \$85,341 to the Mendocino County Library to assist with one-time expenses. Since 2014, the California State Li-

brary has partnered with CENIC to help fund "Lighting Up Libraries" to provide improved broadband for patrons to enjoy all the benefits that come with excellent broadband connections.

CENIC aims to ensure that all California residents have access to high speed networks at their public libraries and educational institutions, and so far has connected over 88% of public libraries in the State to the network. CENIC connects California to the world - advancing education and research statewide by providing a world-class network essential for innovation, collaboration, and economic growth.

Although some reimbursable expenses will need to be paid for in the first year or two, by joining this network consortium, the Library branches will have much improved broadband connections and save money at the same time.

~Barb Chapman



CHECK OUT OUR LIBRARY APP

"The library app has changed my life! Now I can easily keep track of all my kids' books checked out and library cards along with my own in the same place!"

-Library patron

NEW ADDITIONS

- JobNow/VetNow by brainfuse
- ProQuest K-12 Databases:
 - Britannica School
 - Britannica Escolar
 - Issue Researcher
 - Schools & Educator Complete
 - TeachingBooks
 - BookConnections
 - Recursos de Lectura
- Major Daily News Online:
 - New York Times
 - Washington Post
 - Los Angeles Times
 - The Chicago Tribune
 - Wall Street Journal
- Magazines Online Including:
 - The New Yorker
 - Rolling Stone
 - Country Living
 - Vogue
 - And over 3,000 more magazines!
- Children's Literacy Kits



Thankful staff at Ukiah Branch

Library Boards & Friends

Library Advisory Board

- ◆ District 1 - Richard L. Towle
- ◆ District 2 - Lynn Zimmermann, Chair
- ◆ District 3 - Shawn Haven
- ◆ District 4 - Janice Marcell
- ◆ District 5 - Michael Schaeffer
- ◆ County Librarian - Deb Fader Samson
- ◆ City of Fort Bragg - Carolyn Schneider, Vice-Chair
- ◆ City of Point Arena - Larry Riddle
- ◆ City of Willits - Olga O'Neill, Secretary
- ◆ City of Ukiah - Maureen Mulheren

Board of Supervisors

- ◆ District 1 - Supervisor Glenn McGourty
- ◆ District 2 - Supervisor Maureen Mulheren
- ◆ District 3 - Supervisor John Haschak
- ◆ District 4 - Supervisor Dan Gjerde, Chair
- ◆ District 5 - Supervisor Ted Williams

Friends of the Library Presidents

- ◆ Bookmobile - Michael Schaeffer
- ◆ Coast Community Library - Nancy Morin
- ◆ Fort Bragg Library - Kirk O'Dwyer
- ◆ Round Valley Library - Ed TePas
- ◆ Ukiah Library - Michele Savoy
- ◆ Willits Library - Melinda Clarke

Message from the Library Advisory Board

The Library Advisory Board (LAB) was created by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors in 1970 to act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors, the Library Director, and the County Chief Executive Office regarding issues of library operations and services. The LAB has nine active members: one from each supervisorial district and one from each of the incorporated cities. Supervisorial representatives serve three-year terms and city representatives serve two-year terms. The LAB welcomes input from the general population.

The LAB's strategic plan envi-

sions future library projects and programs to enhance users' educational and community-based activities in all five branches and the Bookmobile. Additionally, the LAB monitors library revenue and expenditures and ensures that dedicated library funds are not comingled with the other County departments or monies.

One of the upcoming plans of the LAB is to expand or relocate the Ukiah branch. They have been working with the Friends of the Ukiah Library to have a Needs Assessment conducted.

The LAB is supporting a citizens' initiative for the 2022 ballot to in-

crease the sales tax percentage dedicated to our libraries from 1/8 of a penny to 1/4 of a penny and make that change permanent for future services, materials, outreach, and building improvements and expansions.

Attend a LAB Meeting!

All Library Advisory Board meetings are open to the public. The LAB meets every other month starting in January on the third Wednesday of the month. Meetings have been taking place over Zoom throughout the pandemic and will continue to do so until such time as it is safe to meet in person.

**Mendocino County Library
Cultural Services Agency**
880 N. Bush St.
Ukiah, CA 95482
707-234-2873

Ukiah
105 N. State St.
Ukiah, CA 95482
707-463-4490

Willits
390 E. Commercial St.
Willits, CA 95490
707-459-5908

Round Valley
23925 Howard St.
Covelo, CA 95428
707-983-6736



Fort Bragg
499 E. Laurel St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
707-964-2020

Coast Community
225 Main St.
Point Arena, CA 95468
707-882-3114

Bookmobile
707-234-2874

www.mendolibrary.org