

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



MENDOCINO  
COUNTY *Library*



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# LIBRARY LOCATIONS

BOOKMOBILE  
105 N. MAIN ST.  
UKIAH  
(707) 234-2874

COAST COMMUNITY  
BRANCH  
225 MAIN ST.  
POINT ARENA  
(707) 882-3114

FORT BRAGG BRANCH  
499 E. LAUREL ST.  
FORT BRAGG  
(707) 964-2020

LAYTONVILLE BRANCH  
44960 N. HWY 101 SUITE D  
LAYTONVILLE  
(707) 234-6390

ROUND VALLEY BRANCH  
23925 HOWARD ST  
COVELO  
(707) 983-6736

UKIAH MAIN BRANCH  
105 N. MAIN ST.  
UKIAH  
(707) 463-4490

WILLITS BRANCH  
390 E. COMMERCIAL ST.  
WILLITS  
(707) 459-5908

ADMINISTRATION &  
OPERATIONAL SERVICES  
105 N. MAIN ST.  
UKIAH  
(707) 234-2872  
(707) 234-2861



Sr. Library Technician Juliana Castillo shelves books at the Willits Branch Library.





## COUNTY LIBRARIAN'S MESSAGE

A year ago, I was hired as the interim County Librarian, and on May 21, 2024, I was appointed as the County Librarian/Director by the Board of Supervisors. The last year has contained a whirlwind of activity, as I am also still the Branch Librarian of Coast Community Library. I have traveled to each branch at least once and enjoyed partnering with the Bookmobile for a regular program in Anderson Valley. As I've spent time hanging out and working in the different locations, one overarching theme presented itself – Mendocino County Library is rich with talented, caring staff who truly love working in libraries and serving their communities. I feel so lucky to be surrounded by such talented professionals.

Getting to visit the different libraries has meant I've gotten to explore the communities they serve. Mendocino County loves its libraries. While this may seem evident with the passage of Measure O, the sense of good will and support from the community really underscores that sensibility. Mendocino County is the 15th largest county in California with over 3500 square miles of land and a population of just 91,601 people. That wide expanse means that the areas that contain a library branch have the potential to differ quite a bit from each other, but one of the things they have in common is how grateful they are to have access to a library branch or the Bookmobile. I look forward to exploring even more ways to serve this beautiful county in the coming years.

- Mellisa Hannum, County Librarian

County Librarian Mellisa Hannum at the Coast Community Branch.





## CLIMATE CORNERS

Mendocino County Library partnered with Sonoma Clean Power to create “Climate Corner” displays at each branch which featured books on climate change and Do-it-Yourself (DIY) Toolkits that can be checked out. Sonoma Clean Power donated funding for new climate-related books for all ages and provided the DIY toolkits.

Each DIY toolkit comes with free supplies for patrons to keep, including LED lightbulbs, weather stripping, low-flow showerheads, as well as tools to help measure energy and water use in your home, including a Kill-a-Watt meter and water flow rate bag. Although the Climate Corners are no longer on display, you can still check out the books and toolkits!

- Barb Chapman, Administrative Services Manager

**Sonoma Clean Power**  
**Climate Corner**  
Combat climate change in 4 easy steps

- 1 Check out a fantastic book from Mendocino County Library's curated collection of climate-centered books.
- 2 Take home a DIY Energy...





## ALL STAFF DAY

Every year, the Library holds an All Staff Training Day. It's an opportunity for everyone who works in the Library to come together, grow as a team, and learn about opportunities in Mendocino County, advances in Information Services, and new policies and procedures. People from different branches scatter about the room, introduce themselves, and bond over stories and shared library experiences.

January 2024's All Staff Day was a celebration of library workers. There was a great deal of laughter as we did a contour drawing icebreaker. We applauded our fellow team members on their accomplishments, learned from Human Resources about options available to us to support our wellbeing, and even participated in an after-lunch Tai Chi lesson.

Round Valley Branch led us through an art activity that aided in team building as we got to tour the room and chat with our peers about our favorite children's books, our hobbies, and why we love working at the library. It probably doesn't come as a surprise to anyone, but we all really love working for the Mendocino County Library system. I feel grateful for the amazing team I get to lead and the community I get to serve. All Staff Day was a wonderful reminder of how lucky we are to be a part of the local, public library.

-Mellisa Hannum, County Librarian

Left: Round Valley Branch Librarian Josh Bennett leads all staff in a craft project. Right: Example of completed craft by County Librarian Mellisa Hannum.



# LIBRARY SPEAKERS CONSORTIUM

Mendocino County Library is pleased to have joined over 400 libraries in the Library Speakers Consortium cooperative to present virtual author talks each month featuring bestselling, award-winning, and highly acclaimed authors from around the world. The featured writers and thought leaders cover a wide range of fiction and nonfiction genres. The free, virtual series takes place two to three times a month and includes the opportunity to ask questions to the author. A complete list of events is available on our [Library Speakers Consortium website](#).

The author talks can be watched live with the ability to submit questions online. The [virtual recordings](#) are available online and can also be viewed on demand. A few popular talks last spring included, “Embrace Love in the New Year: A Heartfelt Conversation with Rebecca Serle,” “The Power of Friendships with NPR Legal Affairs Correspondent Nina Totenberg,” and “On Retelling Greek Classics: An Exploration of the Modern Epics with Madeline Miller.”

Last summer we presented author talks geared towards families and children including “A Visit to Deckawoo Drive,” with Mercy Watson and Kate DiCamillo (PreK-2nd Grade), “Surviving the Summer with The Last Kids on Earth” and Max Brallier (3rd-6th Grade), and “Graphic Novels are Life! Telling Your Own Story in a Graphic Novel,” with Dan Santat (5th-8th Grade). Coming up in the fall are, “Liberating Latin American Genre Fiction: In Conversation,” with Bestselling Author Silvia Moreno-Garcia and “Maybe You Should Talk To Someone: Examining the Truths and Fictions we Tell Ourselves,” with Lori Gottlieb.

- Barb Chapman, Administrative Services Manager



TOTAL PROGRAMS	TOTAL VIEWS OF PROGRAMS
36	6,012



## LIBRARY OUTREACH

The 2023-24 year was a dynamic and fruitful period for Library Outreach marked by several significant initiatives that have broadened our impact across Mendocino County. Our mission to provide equitable access to library resources has taken on new dimensions this year, reflecting our commitment to serving diverse community needs and fostering lifelong learning.

A major milestone for Outreach this year was the successful launch of our Library by Mail service. This innovative program is designed to support homebound individuals who might otherwise face barriers to accessing library resources. By using the US Postal Service, we have made it possible for Mendocino County residents with valid library cards to receive books, DVDs, and CDs delivered directly to their homes. This initiative not only provides essential entertainment and educational

materials but also reinforces our dedication to inclusivity, ensuring that those who are unable to visit our physical libraries can still enjoy our resources at no cost.

Our outreach efforts have continued to extend across the county, driven by our commitment to connect with local agencies, service organizations, schools, towns, and Tribes. This year, we were particularly excited to launch a series of Tech Help events at Sun House Senior Apartments in Ukiah. These events marked our first foray into offering onsite digital technical assistance specifically for seniors. Through these sessions, we have been able to support older adults in navigating digital technologies, thereby enhancing their ability to access information and stay connected in an increasingly digital world.

Continued on page 11.





Librarian Nayo Sicard at the Round Valley Indian Days event with books for all ages.





Librarian Nayo Sicard at the Redwood Valley Rancheria sharing seeds packets, origami kits, library resources, and signing up people for library cards.





## LIBRARY OUTREACH CONT.

This summer, outreach staff had the privilege of partnering again with the Ukiah branch and several other Mendocino County Library (MCL) branches for the highly successful Lunch at the Library program. City agencies and school districts, in conjunction with the government, provided the nutritional component of the program by supplying the lunches while the Library contributed by offering arts and crafts, STEAM activities, storytimes, access to the Summer Reading Program, and books. This collaboration supported our community's growth in health, wellness, literacy, and social-emotional learning, helping to build a strong foundation for success in school and beyond. This year, we saw a significant increase in both participation and the number of lunches served, with a mix of many returning families and a notable influx of new families – including those new to the community and long-time residents.

Overall, the 2023-24 year has been marked by growth, innovation, and community engagement for MCL Outreach. Our new services, strategic partnerships, and active participation in local events have allowed us to extend our reach and impact, reinforcing our commitment to making library resources accessible to all residents of Mendocino County. As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to expanding our services and continuing to support lifelong learning and community connection through our library programs.

-Nayo Sicard, Librarian II  
Outreach/Bookmobile & Technical Services

Top: Librarian Nayo Sicard and patrons with books at Round Valley Indian Days.  
Bottom: Giving out Build-a-Robot kits at the Redwood Valley Rancheria.



# SEED LIBRARY

All branches and the Bookmobile have a Seed Library which contains a large collection of seeds and information that community members can access for free. Interest in gardening and food production has only grown since the COVID pandemic, and we distributed more than 13,453 seed packets over the last 12 months. Our seed librarians attend and host seed swaps that attract people from all over the county. We focus on encouraging people to garden and save seeds and on developing locally adapted crop varieties that will grow and thrive in our specific climates.

- Seed Library Staff

Clockwise from top right: Orange milkweed at the new pollinator demonstration garden at the Willits Branch. Seed packets available at the Ukiah Branch. Seed returns celebration at the Round Valley Library. Former staff member Will Minor at the Willits Seed Lending Library.







## SUMMER READING

The Summer Reading Program (SRP) was another wild success at Mendocino County Library this year. The theme was, “Read, Renew, Repeat,” with not only an emphasis on conservation and the environment but also self-renewal. (And book renewal!) SRP ran from June 15 to August 10 with presenters Conservation Ambassadors’ Wild Things and Nature Joe bringing real animals to the libraries, while performer Captain Jack Spareribs sailed into every branch with his magic tricks and puppets. 255 participants, from babies to people in their nineties, received books and other prizes and gifts including backpacks with school supplies and family passes for the Botanical Gardens.

- Sam White, Ukiah Children’s Librarian



Top: Ukiah Staff posing with Cap’n Jack Spareribs. Bottom from left to right: Performance by Magical Nathaniel at the Willits Branch. Cap’n Jack Spareribs performing at the Willits Branch.





Top: Summer Reading banner at the Fort Bragg Branch. Bottom: Fort Bragg staff at the Summer Kick-off Party.





Swipe left to reveal comments and reactions



Clockwise from top left, Richard TwoTrees leads storytime at the Willits Branch. Wild Things Animal Show with Jojo Kerschner and Tater Tot the capybara at the Coast Community Branch. Pop and Go puppet show at the Coast Community Branch.





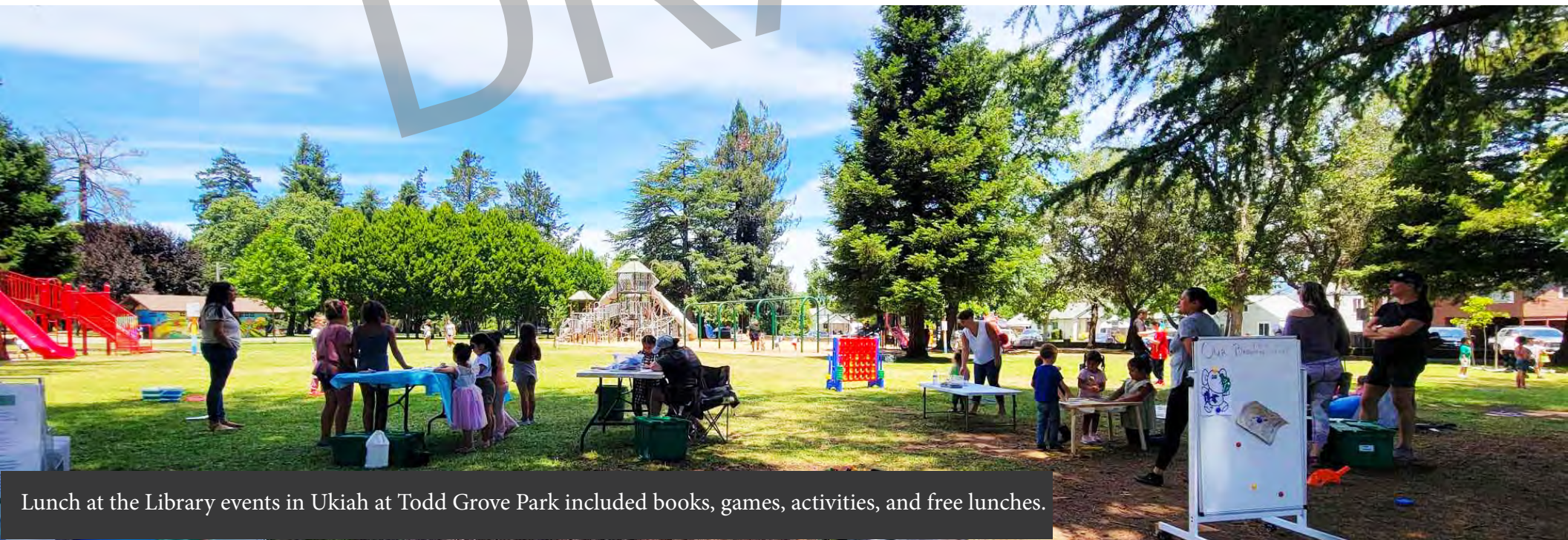
## LUNCH AT THE LIBRARY

In addition to SRP, Mendocino County Library was granted funds to host Lunch at the Library services from the California State Library again this summer, and most library branches were able to provide additional services to youths aged 0-18 using these funds. The Ukiah, Fort Bragg, Willits, and Round Valley branches coordinated with local school districts and individual schools to host pop-up events at existing USDA summer lunch sites, which included but were not limited to STEM crafts, creating art, movement-based activities, learning about nutrition, and providing new books for youths for their home libraries. The Coast branch used their grant funding to partner with the local school district to provide in-library meals for community youth four days per week over an eight week period while also including many of the same crafts and activities. In total, the Mendocino County Library was able to provide Summer Lunch at the Library services to over 2,699 youth (and caregivers) in the various communities around Mendocino County, including a total of 1,887 lunches served.

- Sam White, Ukiah Children's Librarian

Children's Librarian Kim Doyle on the smoothie bike at the Fort Bragg Lunch at the Library event.





Lunch at the Library events in Ukiah at Todd Grove Park included books, games, activities, and free lunches.





Clockwise from left: Children's Librarian Sam making bubbles for children at the Lunch at the Library event in Ukiah. Children playing with a sensory activity at Todd Grove Park event. Reading corner at Ukiah Lunch at the Library.



## TECHNOLOGY UPDATES & PROGRAMS

This year, the Library made significant strides in upgrading its technology and services. In collaboration with the County IT department, we replaced all computers over five years old across all branches. Additionally, the transition to the Windows 11 operating system has begun, with all branches set to complete the upgrade by the end of 2024. Public printing is now managed with Envisionware software at all locations, and we're excited to introduce mobile printing access next year.

New iPads and barcode scanners were deployed at all branches to replace older staff equipment. Through the CA State Library's EmPOWERing Access project, we also received three iFixit Repair Kits, 50 portable Solar Panel Chargers, and three ADA Accessible Study Booths. The Solar Panel Chargers are now available for checkout at all locations, and the ADA-compliant Study Booths were installed at the Ukiah, Willits, and Coast Community branches for patron use.

Our digital content offerings have expanded, providing even more valuable resources to the community. Free online resources from the California State Library now include Alexander Street, a collection of video and audio recordings in dance, music, and theater. For children, we've added bilingual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) resources like PebbleGo Science, PebbleGo Ciencia, and Capstone Interactive eBooks.

Continued on next page.

Top: New Study Booth at the Coast Community Branch.  
Bottom: Solar Panel Chargers marketing graphic.





## TECHNOLOGY UPDATES & PROGRAMS CONT.

We've also partnered with the Library Speakers Consortium to bring a monthly series of Virtual Author Talks featuring bestselling authors, available for live streaming or on-demand viewing. Additionally, patrons now have access to language learning through Pronunciator, which offers over 315 personalized courses, and ProCitizen, designed to help prepare for the U.S. Citizenship Naturalization Test.

Technology programming saw growth as well, with a series of 3D printing and design workshops at the Ukiah Branch with more to come. Other events introduced patrons to the library's eBook collections at the Coast, Round Valley, and Ukiah Branches and the Bookmobile. A digital literacy event using Northstar was hosted in Ukiah, while a Teen Tech Take-Apart session featuring the iFixit Kits took place at the Coast Branch. The popular Build-a-Robot series for kids and teens, first held at the Coast Branch and Redwood Valley Rancheria, will continue across all branches next year. We also launched a Senior Tech Help series in Ukiah, offering monthly support to residents of a local senior housing complex.

Our staff is continually improving its ability to assist patrons with technology. Staff from all branches participated in various training sessions focused on best practices for providing basic tech assistance, including an introduction to Virtual Author Talks during our All Staff Day. More training opportunities will be offered in the coming year to support staff development.

-Lily Rojo, Department Application Specialist







## BOOKMOBILE

It has been an exciting year on the Bookmobile. After a long search we were finally able to hire a new driver, Norm Longoria. Norm is doing great and is quickly becoming a vital part of the Bookmobile community.

This past year we have continued our regular route while also adding a few additional schools. The Bookmobile continues its community focus through a partnership with the Coast Community branch offering a family storytime in Anderson Valley biweekly, school storytimes upon request, and community outreach events when requested. The Bookmobile continues to offer access to the Summer Reading Program throughout the summer culminating in a Summer Reading Program event at Elk School.

- David Frick, Bookmobile Library Associate



Top: Bookmobile Staff Norman Longoria and David Frick at the Adventist Health outreach festival.

Bottom: New Bookmobile Driver Norman Longoria.



## COAST COMMUNITY BRANCH

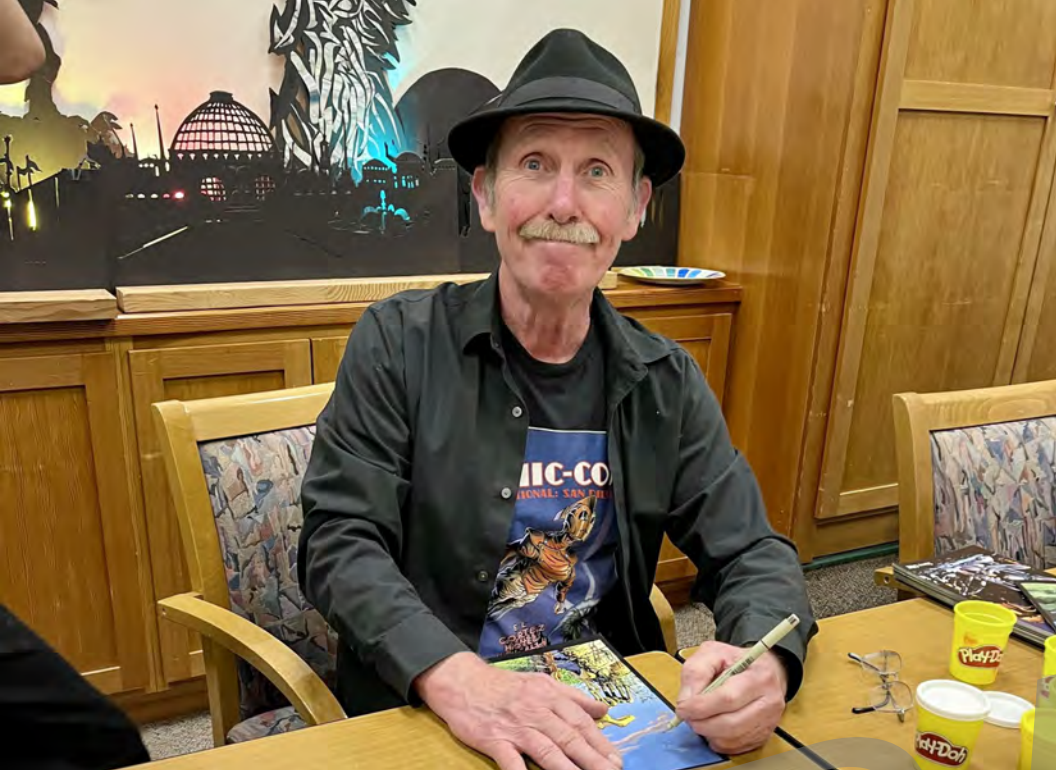
Coast Community Branch has gone through many changes over the past year. Maybe the foremost change was my appointment, first as Acting and then as the official, County Librarian. While it can be a challenge serving a dual role, I have an amazing staff who supports me – both at the administrative and at the branch levels. Patti and Jeannie are the daily face of Coast, greeting patrons at the circulation desk, organizing holds, and keeping the space organized and beautiful. The branch was lucky enough to bring back a former employee, Terra Black, who ran Coast before Julia's term as the branch librarian. Terra has introduced new programming, filling the gaps that I had not been able to address, including a very popular crafting activity every Tuesday for tweens.

Our teen programming also expanded last year, with our Teen Library Council (TLC) volunteers running events. Teens respond best with their peers, so it's great to be able to give them a safe environment for hanging out and being creative. Being a member of the Teen Library Council is a skill-building opportunity with lots of experience to put on resumes and college applications. Currently, our TLC volunteers run a weekly Dungeons & Dragons group, Teen Hangout where the teens decide what activities to do that week (tabletop games, storytelling, Magic the Gathering, etc.), and one volunteer even organizes and leads a preschool crafting program after Storytime.

Outreach and serving the community are important elements to the Library. Coast staff went out into the community for outreach programs 30 times last year, visiting locations like the Manchester-Point Arena Band of Pomo Indians Rancheria, Point Arena Elementary and High Schools, Boonville, Point Arena Village Apartments, Manchester Elementary, Pacific Community Charter School, Seed Library outreach in Philo, and talking about book bans and challenges at an event in Manchester.







## COAST COMMUNITY CONT.

As part of Coast's service as a community hub, the library also hosted weekly class visits during the school year and participated in community events like the Almost Fringe Festival, Harvest Festival, Hometown Holidays, and Independence Parade. For the second year in a row, Coast also participated in Lunch at the Library, bridging the nutrition gap for children and teens when school wasn't in session. The finale to the Summer Reading Program at the branch included handing out brand new backpacks and notebooks purchased with a generous donation from the Friends of Coast Community Library (FOCCL). 51 kids and teens started the school year more prepared thanks to this donation.

With all this community hub activity, one can understand that the library's main space is not always peaceful. Thanks to the California State Library EmPOWERing Access Project, a study booth was recently installed to offer another quiet area within the library. It's a great option for Zoom meetings, taking online tests, one-on-one tutoring, and more. So far, patrons and tourists alike are really appreciating the comfort of the study pod.

There's always something new and exciting happening at Coast Community thanks to our staff, patrons, community members, and FOCCL. I'm so pleased to be able to serve Mendocino County through my pretty home library in Point Arena.

- Mellisa Hannum, County Librarian & Coast Branch Librarian



Top: Eisner award-winning artist Steve Oliff teaching drawing at the Teen Lock-in event. Bottom: Staff member Paul at an outreach event at the Manchester-Point Arena Rancheria.



## FORT BRAGG BRANCH

Fort Bragg Library has expanded its reach this year, engaging with a wider range of people in the community than we have in prior years.

We resumed monthly storytimes at Headstart. We increased our presence in the schools by doing pop-up library programs during the free school lunch program available to Fort Bragg Unified students. Children's Librarian Kim Doyle attended Literacy Night, and Librarian Dan Hess promoted the library at a back-to-school event held at Mendocino Coast Clinic. In spring, we saw over 400 kids at a community helpers' event called "Read with a Ranger" on Big River Beach in Mendocino. Dan teamed up for storytelling with State Parks Ranger, Krista Pelican. The library was at Earth Day in April, Neighborhood Night Out in August, and Fort Bragg's Trunk or Treat in October, with over 400 families attending each event. Twice a month, we meet our neighbors and visiting tourists at the Farmers Market in downtown Fort Bragg, and we continue to sponsor the annual Paul Bunyan Kiddie Parade on Labor Day.

Our summer programs have drawn large crowds to the meeting room, where magicians, puppeteers, and animal educational programs combine with the magic of reading. There's a sizeable bump in circulation and door counts (6,500/month) during the summer as families access the library's vibrant collection to spend time reading.

Continued on next page.

Top: Sr. Library Technician Peggy McGee leads a Seed Exchange program. Bottom: Children's shadow puppetry event.







## FORT BRAGG CONT.

Summer's hardly over before it's Fall Carnival, our biggest party of the year with games, a costume parade, and sweet treats for our families. Throughout the year we promoted STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs through partnerships with Noyo Center for Marine Science and Sinister Science programs for school-age kids.

All year long we have kids crafts and adult crafts, tapping into the artistic sides of our patrons. We have monthly open mic poetry with around 20 people attending on average. The adult book club has grown to about 35 members with around 20 readers attending each month's lively discussion. Most of our programs occur on very regular times and days, so we've built good followings over time.



The patrons continue to give rave reviews to our eMaterials, the sharing of materials between our three counties, and the breadth and currency of new books available to readers. They like the changing displays and appreciate the new ideas and cultural experiences these displays convey. Above all, patrons express appreciation for attentive staff members. Kim Doyle continues to excel as our youth librarian, with new programs up her D&D dungeon master sleeves. Amie McGee, crafter extraordinaire and raconteur, provides great service to patrons. Peggy McGee, the master of all things behind the scenes, creates order from the chaos of weekly deliveries and new books. John Teller is an ace at mending and repairing well-loved material. Valerie Stump is back with us and brings wisdom and street smarts from working in the city's code enforcement office. We're happy to report that we've hired two new staff members. Sarah Ferretti and Marina Tavelli both grew up in Fort Bragg, and they're already invaluable to our tight-knit team. Of course, we miss Jennifer Johnson, Michael Brito, Nik Robalino, and Vicki Wellspring who were very well-liked by our patrons and staff. They are following their dreams, which is what the library is all about.

Continued on next page.

Top: Seed Library event. Bottom: Former staff member Michael Brito helping a patron at the Marine Science event.



## FORT BRAGG CONT.

We are grateful to Friends of the Fort Bragg Library for their outstanding support and hard work. They've held fundraisers in addition to quarterly book sales, and under their leadership, the Library Expansion Project is in great shape and has broad support in the community. They've streamlined their finances by working with a local CPA and bookkeeper, and a respected local consultant keeps the expansion project moving forward.

- Daniel Hess, Branch Librarian



Left: Poetry Open Mic event. Right: Children's Librarian Kim Doyle leading Storytime in the Redwoods.





## LAYTONVILLE BRANCH

The Laytonville Branch Library celebrated its first anniversary in March of 2024. Over this past year, the library has grown, and the furniture has been moved around to make room for more shelves. In January, the hours were changed to make them more consistent and to allow the library to be open a few more hours per week. The Laytonville community members still comment on how happy they are to have their own library.

Laytonville tried out some new programs including Kids' Zone and Storytime. Kids' Zone is a craft and activity time. Art supplies are provided for children to explore and create. Other times, they have a guided craft. Storytime was once a week with a volunteer, who is a retired teacher, reading to the children. Since space can be a challenge, in February these two events moved to the Friends of the Laytonville Library's Book Room. There is also a book club that meets once a month in the Book Room, co-hosted by Laytonville Branch and the Friends group.

- Denise Jessie, Branch Librarian



Top: New bookshelf installed at the Laytonville Branch. Bottom: View of the bookshelves at the branch.



# ROUND VALLEY BRANCH

The Round Valley Branch was named the Best Small Library in America by Library Journal in 2024. The featured article announcing the award describes ways the Mendocino County Library contributes to the local community's safety and resiliency. It also enumerates the various community resources that have been developed alongside the Round Valley Branch by groups such as the Friends of the Round Valley Public Library and KYBU Radio. The branch is described as a "hub" and "anchor" for various projects. We are honored to be viewed so generously and share this moment with the Round Valley community and a long list of staff members, volunteers, and Friends of the Library.

The Round Valley Branch had over 27,000 visits last year, with 22,193 items checked out from our branch. Folks also visited to use the public computers, get tech questions answered, and have their documents copied, scanned, or printed. We signed up 139 new patrons. 2,447 folks attended one or more of our over 200 programs. Our branch added 1,453 new items to our collection – we even circulated 13,690 items to patrons in Lake and Sonoma Counties. It was a very busy year!

The Round Valley Branch hosted presentations that entertained, inspired, and informed. In September, author Sara Calvosa Olson shared recipes from her cookbook, *Chimi Nu'am*, which translates to "Let's Eat!" in the Karuk language. Cookbook lovers gathered in the community room to hear the author's delicious and inventive takes on Native food styles from across California.

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## ROUND VALLEY CONT.

In December, library staff presented “Getting Started with eBooks,” helping patrons begin borrowing eBooks, audiobooks, and videos using their library cards. Representatives from the Mendocino County Firesafe Council visited in April and shared information about home hardening, defensible space, and the importance of neighborhood-scale organizing around wildfire preparedness.

Our seed library hosted a Seed Returns Celebration in November that attracted folks from throughout the county and beyond. Then, in February, the branch hosted a Seed and Scion Exchange. Other special events included Free Comic Book Day, Earth Day Celebration hosted by the Friends of the Round Valley Public Library, and an open house featuring local newspapers co-hosted by the Round Valley Reader.

While a lot was happening at the library itself, staff also promoted library programs and services at community events such as Career Day at the Round Valley High School and Activity Day at Hidden Oaks Park. The Branch tabled at the Round Valley Indian Health Center’s Health Fair in September. We used the opportunity to share books on the topic of Health Care, Healthy Living, and Safety and Prevention for children and adults. Also in September, the branch was joined by the Mendocino County Library Outreach Van at California Indian Days. This outreach included human-powered smoothie making.

Offerings for children are a priority at the Round Valley Branch. Each Saturday Storytime happens for ages 0 to 7 years old. This year’s themes included Rock and Roll Storytime, Back to School, Water Safety, World Ocean Day, “Be Who You Are!” Solar Eclipse Art, and a Stuffed Animal Sleepover. Programs for older kids included a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Robot making workshop, the Summer Reading Program, Lunch at the Library partnership with the Tis Bil (Eagle) Education Summer Program, Conservation Ambassador’s Wild Things animal show, and Jack Spareribs pirate show.

-Branch Librarian Josh Bennett and Sr. Library Technician Pat Sobrero



Top: Volunteers sorting seeds for the Seed Library.

Bottom: Branch Librarian Josh Bennett at Stuffed Animal Storytime.





## UKIAH MAIN BRANCH

As the main branch, the Ukiah Branch Library serves as the hub for transporting materials throughout the tri-county area and enjoys connecting hundreds of daily visitors with rich, valuable, and sustaining resources. Our dedicated staff comprises myriad skillsets, talents, and backgrounds that are celebrated in the workplace to meet the needs of our patrons.

Children's Librarian Sam White developed new partnerships and collaborated with various organizations this year including Hendy Woods' "State Park Steve," who gave a talk about many programs and opportunities at our local state parks and engaged two large classes of schoolchildren with nature activities. Local NASA Ambassador Elizabeth Garcia gave a SPACE ROCKS! Space Talk and brought their pop-up planetarium to educate kids & families about the annular solar eclipse events. Instilling Goodness & Developing Virtue Schools (IGDVS) collaborated with the library for a series of Blossoming Kindness Storytime events and a spectacular Lunar New Year event in February. We also partnered with the Ukiah Natural Foods Co-op for a cozy winter craft faire. Other creative programs included Finding the Creature in the Library and a Jigsaw Puzzle Treasure Hunt thanks to Jenny Chang-Chien.

During weekly craft time in the Teen Room, Katherine Marmer collaborated with local artist and educator Buffie Schmidt to lead a Dreamcatcher Workshop for teens during Native American History Month. The Halloween Teen Lock-In featured a laser-tag tournament, blacklight painting, a smoothie snack bike, and wind-down time with movies and popcorn. 2023 also saw the return of Teen Gaming!

Lines & Spines Book Club met on Zoom and held monthly discussions of various memoirs and novels including *Maame* by Jessica George and *Fine: A Comic about Gender* by Rhea Ewing, while other busy bibliophiles dropped into Amble & Ramble to discuss books of their choosing while walking/rolling/strolling on the Great Redwood Trail.

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Top: Sr. Library Technician Jen Lyon and patron Karen Rifkin at the Kids' Farmers Market.  
Bottom: Urban Homesteading event learning about indigenous food ways.



## UKIAH CONT.

Local musicians Steve Hahm and Roseanne Wetzal taught basic songwriting and ukulele chords to patrons of all ages at their ongoing music series, the 101s of Songwriting and Ukulele. Friends of the Ukiah Branch Library Board Member Meri Castillo started a drop-in Knit & Crochet Group. Local golden retriever Emma and her handler Donna led the De-Stress with a Therapy Dog program for adults.

Gallery exhibits included “Memory & Legacy: traditional Pomo basketry” by Buffie Campbell Schmidt, “A Thin Line: An Intimate Awareness of Life & Death” by Margo Frank, a multi-disciplinary exhibit by local artists Phaedra Craig, Kathleen Miller Thomas, and Susan Walker, “We Live in a Beautiful Place”, paintings by Elliot Little, extraordinary quilts from the Grapevine Quilters Guild, an oil painting exhibit by Marco Donner, and mixed-media works by our talented staff! Live music by Clovice Lewis, The Jazz Dudes, Suni Robin, Steven Winkle, Twining Time, Lhasa Summers, and Clay Hawkins rounded out our popular First Friday ArtWalk events.

Over the winter, we collected and distributed 633 cold-weather clothing items to anyone in need. Patrons learned basic tech skills including computer skills, internet basics, and how to use email and social media during Tech Help with Alex Villarreal, Lu Renn, and dedicated volunteers including Richard Towle. Lily Rojo and Alex led 3D Printing & Design Workshops to introduce participants to the basics of 3D printing, including an up-close look at our two MakerBot Sketch 3D printers, courtesy of our dedicated Friends group, who purchased the 3D printers for the Library in 2020.

Continued on page 33.



Top: Artist Buffie Schmidt teaches the art of basketweaving at the First Friday Art Walk. Bottom: LOBA Poetry event with author Sidney Michele Regelbrugge.





Clockwise from top: Children selling vegetables and crafts at the Kids' Farmers Market. Patrons participating in a Fermentation Workshop. Blossoming Kindness Storytime children's craft. Children's Storytime with Children's Librarian Sam White.



## UKIAH CONT.

Seed Librarian Jen Lyon created Urban Homesteading 101, a new workshop series that brought local homesteaders to the library to share their knowledge in six bimonthly hands-on workshops. They explored paths to sustainability and self-reliance including gardening in small spaces the Adaptation Gardening way, worm bins, fermented foods and beverages, acorns and Indigenous foodways, pollinator gardens, and sourdough bread making.

We began 2024 with a trauma-informed mindfulness workshop with local author and licensed therapist, Jo-Ann Rosen to help guide us through difficult times. Certified, local hypnotist Margaret Andrews presented an introductory workshop on hypnosis and its benefits. In July, local artists Spencer Brewer and Esther Siegel offered a talk about the genesis of their recent book, “Lost & Found: Assemblage Artists of Northern California” as well as a hands-on assemblage workshop.

Over the past year, Jen and Katherine led bi-monthly Makerspace events where participants had hands-on experience making Gelli Prints, Shrink Bead Art Jewelry, Kokedama: Japanese Moss Balls, Needle Felted Wool Buddies, Junk Journals, and the Japanese art of Hapa-Zome: Flower Pounding. Jenny led an Origami Gift Box workshop in May.

Spring blossomed with the Seed Library’s popular succulent swap. Advocates for safer streets attended a documentary film screening of “The Street Project” along with a community conversation for National Bike Safety Month.

LOBA Poetry Series hosted a variety of featured poets including Sonoma County poets Bill Vartnaw and Jack Crimmins, Sally Ashton, Florencia Milito, Mendocino County Youth PL Sidney Regelbrugge, and local poets Theresa Whitehill, Colter Jacobsen, and Larry Rinder.

In partnership with the City of Ukiah, the Arts Council of Mendocino County, and the Grace Hudson Museum, the 22nd Annual ukiaHaiku Festival returned to a traditional contest format where prizes were awarded for 10 categories, from Kindergarten through 12th grades and adults, including the International Jane Reichhold Award. In recognition that the Pomo people are the original inhabitants of the Ukiah area and that the word Ukiah itself is from the Pomo languages, we made an open call to our Pomo neighbors to share haiku in Pomo languages or that express a Pomo perspective. These haiku were a resonant and enduring event highlight.

- Melissa Carr, Branch Librarian





## WILLITS BRANCH

This has been an incredible year at the Willits Branch. We are delighted that community members use the Willits Branch as a safe, comfortable place to relax. People come to the library to read books, magazines, and newspapers. They also visit to use the computers, play games, and draw. While here, they are likely to run into friends or acquaintances and stop to chat for a bit. It warms our hearts to see the community using the library for such a wide array of purposes.

Adults attend a variety of events. Some favorites have been going on for years and are well-attended including Sit and Sew, Knitting Circle, Book Lovers Discussion Group, and Stamp Club. The Penny University Coffee Klatch is also a popular weekly event where conversations are always lively. Another adult program, Touch of Mendocino, is in its second year. Each month, a different speaker from around the county shares their special skill or art with participants. An event that started in the spring of 2023 is Senior Dance. Once a week, we clear out the furniture from the meeting room, play music, and mature adults come to dance and socialize, emphasizing the importance of movement and socialization for overall health. Another health-focused program was Willits Walk and Talk, which combined a nice walk around the neighborhood with friendly conversation, benefiting both mind and body.

Children's literacy is foundational to the Willits Branch Library. Children ages 0–18 enjoy various programs. Storytimes, LEGO Club, game nights, and Craft Saturdays are just a few of the events that children look forward to. We also have a special storytime, Paws-n-Tales, where a therapy dog joins the program. The children hear an animal-themed story and participate in an animal-themed craft. Casey, the therapy dog, enjoys the children as much as they enjoy him.

Continued on next page.



Top: Spring craft at the Willits Library. Bottom: Spinning Circle event.



## WILLITS CONT.

Our most popular passive programs over the past year have been the various scavenger hunts we set up for the children. One standout was the Baby Elves Scavenger Hunt. We hid small baby elf dolls around the library and provided a scavenger hunt sheet with their photographs. The children had so much fun searching for these baby elves that they returned each week to try again. We moved the elves to new locations each week to keep the game challenging and engaging. Children of all ages enjoyed this activity, and while looking for baby elves, they also explored the library. It was such a popular program that we have repeated it as part of our passive offerings. Other passive programs include a “Who Said That?” flip chart, creation stations, card-making stations, puzzles, and matching games.

In the spring of 2023, the Willits Branch established a Pollinator Demonstration Garden. A master gardener volunteered to create the plant list and design the layout. The plants were donated by local nurseries and patrons, and the work was done by staff and volunteers. To showcase the garden, we held a Pollinator Garden Reveal Party: Bees, Blooms, and Crafts. We featured a talk about the importance of pollinators throughout the community with Seed Librarian Will Minor. The children made bee magnets, accordion butterflies, played a flower-matching game, painted, and watched “The Bee Movie” (SWANK licensed). Butterfly cookies and cupcakes decorated with flowers were served as refreshments.

We have had a few special events at the branch over the past year. One fun performance was music by Mr. Elephant. His program involved children and adults in participatory activities. He played both favorite and original songs that entertained and educated. We also hosted our annual Halloween party, themed as a Halloween Dance Party. Sponsored by the Friends of the Willits Library, the DJ played dance music with a Halloween mix. Fun was had by all, with games, snacks, and plenty of candy.

- Denise Jessie, Branch Librarian



Left to right: Library Technician Cameron McKenzie-Chapter at Tech Help with a patron . Branch Librarian Denise Jessie leading Craft Saturday event with patrons.



# STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS

**325,592**

NEW CARDHOLDERS

**3,938**

TOTAL PROGRAMS

**3,087**

TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

**47,087**

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS &  
GENERAL AUDIENCE

**1,354**

ATTENDANCE FOR ADULTS &  
GENERAL AUDIENCE

**21,861**

PROGRAMS FOR AGES 0-18

**1,733**

ATTENDANCE FOR AGES 0-18

**25,226**



July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.



# STATISTICS AT A GLANCE

TOTAL CHECKOUTS

**605,544**

PHYSICAL CHECKOUTS

**430,422**

DIGITAL CHECKOUTS

**175,122**

NEW ITEMS ADDED

**12,327**

SEED PACKETS CHECKED OUT

**13,453**

LIBRARY WEB VISITS

**233,093**

TOTAL ZIP REQUESTS FILLED

**410**

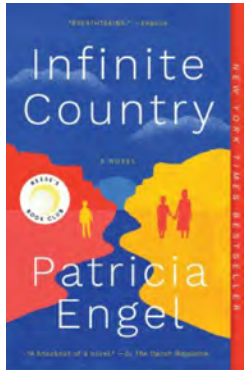
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.



Library Assistant Patti Stratton-Jordan assists a patron at the Coast Community Branch.



# TOP TITLES (JAN-JUN 2024)



ADULT FICTION  
*Infinite Country* by Patricia Engel

ADULT NON-FICTION  
*An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong



YOUNG ADULT FICTION  
*New Moon* by Stephenie Meyer

CHILDREN'S FICTION  
*Maizy Chen's Last Chance* by Lisa Yee



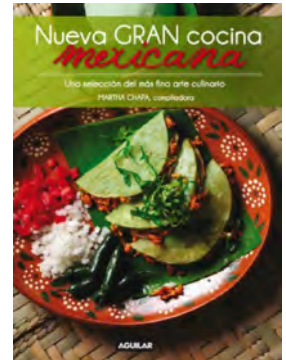
MOST POPULAR ITEM  
California State Library Parks Passes

FICCION PARA ADULTOS  
*El alquimista* por Paulo Coelho

NO FICCION PARA ADULTOS  
*Nueva gran cocina mexicana* editado por Martha Chapa

FICCION PARA ADOLESCENTES  
*Yo no soy tu perfecta hija mexicana* por Erika L. Sánchez

FICCION PARA JOVENES  
*La princesa de negro y los conejitos hambrientos* por Shannon Hale y Dean Hale



12,327 new items were added, including 120 items to the Library of Things!



## LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

ROSEANNE WETZEL, DISTRICT 1  
Secretary

MICHELE SAVOY, DISTRICT 2  
Chair

LEW CHICHESTER, DISTRICT 3

CAROLE POMA, DISTRICT 4

MICHAEL SCHAEFFER, DISTRICT 5

LINDA THORNQUIST STUMPE, CITY OF FORT BRAGG

LARRY RIDDLE, CITY OF POINT ARENA

SUSAN SHER, CITY OF UKIAH

OLGA O'NEILL, CITY OF WILLITS  
Co-Chair

## LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

The Library Advisory Board (LAB) was created by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors in 1970 to advise, advocate, and make recommendations to the Supervisors, the County Library Director, and the County Chief Executive Officer regarding library operations, services, budget, and needs. The LAB has nine active members: one from each of the five supervisorial districts and one from each of the four cities.

The LAB supports the Library's Five-year Strategic Plan envisioning future projects and programs to enhance users' educational and community-based activities in all six branches and the Bookmobile. The plan also prioritizes use of the Measure O funds earmarked for library capital investments such as a new roof and other improvements for the Willits Branch Library, the expansion of the Fort Bragg Branch Library, and a feasibility study to determine the expansion or relocation of the Ukiah Branch Library.

Members of the public are always welcome to attend LAB meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday every other month at 1 p.m., rotating between the branch locations. If you are interested in serving on the LAB, please contact the Supervisor of your district or your City Council to request an application.

- Michele Savoy, Chair of the Library Advisory Board



Board members from left to right: Roseanne Wetzel, Lew Chichester, Larry Riddle, Susan Sher, & Olga O'Neill.



# FINANCES

## REVENUE

SALES & USE TAX  
\$2,958,947

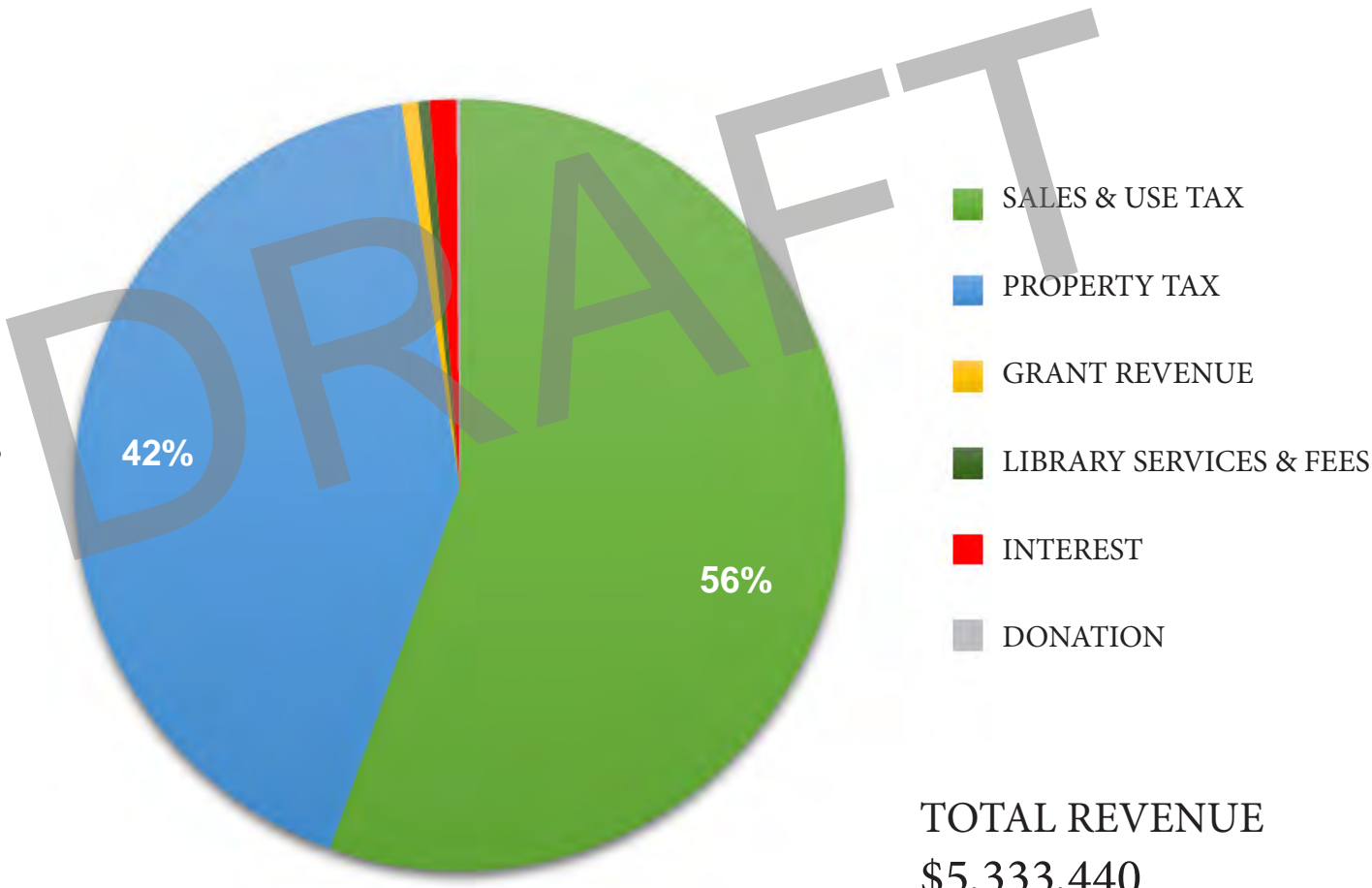
PROPERTY TAX  
\$2,245,184

GRANT REVENUE  
\$37,329

LIBRARY SERVICES & FEES  
\$25,096

INTEREST  
\$60,291

DONATIONS  
\$6,594



TOTAL REVENUE  
\$5,333,440



# FINANCES

## EXPENSES

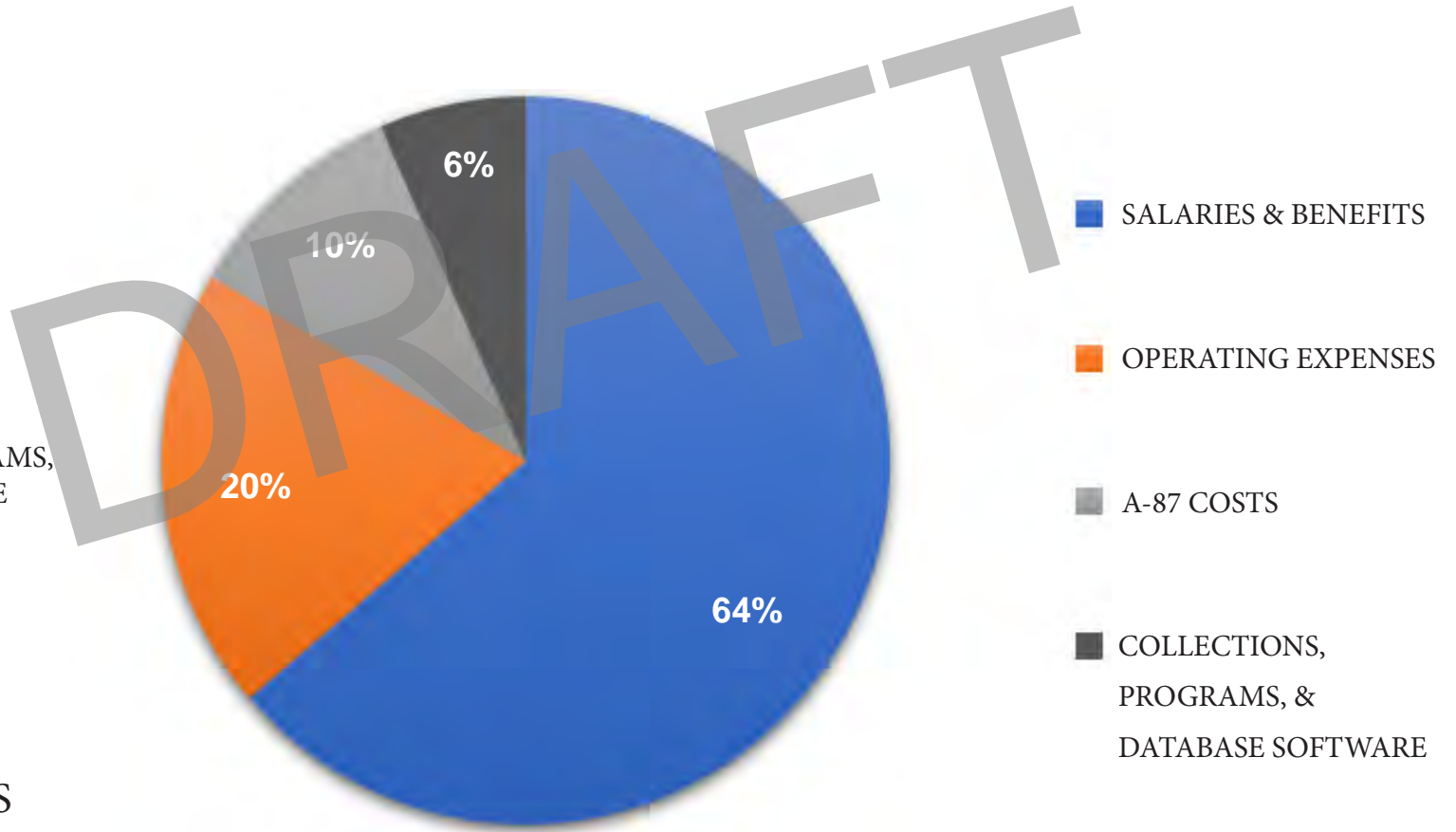
SALARIES & BENEFITS  
\$2,943,986

OPERATING EXPENSES  
\$911,743

A-87 COSTS  
\$465,215

COLLECTIONS, PROGRAMS,  
& DATABASE SOFTWARE  
\$300,376

TOTAL EXPENSES  
\$4,621,319





# EXPENSE ACCOUNTS

REGULAR EMPLOYEES SALARY	\$1,722,562
EXTRA HELP	\$116,170
OVERTIME REG EMP	\$18,093
CO CONTRIBUTION TO RETIREMENT	\$489,611
CO CONT TO SOC SEC A	\$90,954
CO CONT TO SOC SEC B	\$25,848
CO CONT TO RETIRE COL	\$110,700
CO CONT TO HEALTH INSURANCE	\$340,638
CO CONT WORKERS COMPENSATION INS	\$29,409
COMMUNICATIONS	\$51,732
COUNTY-WIDE MICROWAVE	\$7,252
HOUSEHOLD EXPENSE	\$94,697
GENERAL INSURANCE	\$40,885
MAINTENANCE-EQUIPMENT	\$10,861
MAINTENANCE-BUILDINGS	\$54,039
MEMBERSHIPS	\$1,566

OFFICE EXPENSE	\$34,256
MEDICAL & DENTAL SVCS	\$41,083
TRAINING	\$549
CONTRACTS	\$288,689
PUBL & LEGAL NOTICE	\$2,153
A-87 COSTS	\$465,215
RNTS & LEASES	\$46,402
SOFTWARE-SHORT TERM	\$83,877
SOFTWARE-MAINTENANCE	\$1,403
INFO TECH EQUIP	\$125,947
COLLECTIONS & PROGRAMS	\$215,096
TRAVEL IN COUNTY	\$15,308
TRAVEL OUT OF COUNTY	\$3,030
UTILITIES	\$93,296
TOTAL	\$4,621,319



# CAPITAL INVESTMENTS

SALES & USE TAX REVENUE

\$1,957,535

WILLITS ROOF & ENERGY PROJECT

\$818

UKIAH SAFETY PONY WALL PROJECT

\$6,808

FUND BALANCE

\$1,949,909



Top: Branch Librarian Denise Jessie leads the Walk & Talk program at the Willits Branch. Bottom: Exterior of the Willits Branch.





## FINANCES

The Library now has two funds: one budget unit for regular library revenue and operating expenses and a separate capital investment budget unit representing the 40% of the library sales tax revenue specifically set apart for projects and equipment for the library. Library operating expenses came in slightly under budget and received an additional \$780,902 in property tax revenue over what was expected. These funds will help to carry out the future programs and services of the Library.

The Library's capital investment fund had two minor expenses for fiscal year 2023-2024: \$818 for the Willits Roof project, and \$6,808 for the Ukiah pony wall which was installed near the public internet computers for electrical safety. The Library operating expense fund has a balance of \$2,696,975, and the capital investment fund has a balance of \$1,949,908. A few projects are planned for the 2024-2025 fiscal year including the completion of the Willits Roof and Solar Panel project, the Willits interior refresh design phase, and the Ukiah Branch

Feasibility Study which will examine the potential to expand or move the Ukiah branch and to determine how to move forward to meet the branch's needs. Also, three replacement all-in-one copiers are planned for a few branches.

The Library was the recipient of a few grants last fiscal year – all from the California State Library: Lunch at the Library provided funds for enrichment activities for staff to provide in coordination with the USDA free lunch program throughout the county, our popular Zip Books program, and EmPowering Access which provided free study booths for three branches, solar panel chargers, and technology toolkits.

- Barb Chapman, Administrative Services Manager



Top: Library Technician Amie McGee leads patrons at Nailed It Adult Craft time at the Fort Bragg Branch. Bottom: The new Spanish language decal on the back of the Bookmobile.



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, I am pleased to have this opportunity to share the good work that the Mendocino County Library has done over the past year at its six locations, at outreach events, and online to provide our communities with resources that benefit everyone.

Our County Library is essential to help improve our economy by providing free access to everything from books to cooking kits and in-person classes. All branches have public internet computers and Wi-Fi access, as well as Chromebooks and hotspots for checkout. English language and foreign languages can be learned using the free Pronunciator app as well as preparing for the citizenship exam with ProCitizen. Additionally, you can find free career assistance from the online Business Source which provides business basics and access to helpful books and forms to start or grow your own business. Three Library branches, Ukiah, Coast Community, and Willits were awarded study booths by the California State Library for patrons to have a separate space to take exams,



have online interviews, attend virtual meetings, or study.

During the summer our Library provided families with many resources and exciting events. All branches participated in the Lunch at the Library program to offer fun activities at free summer lunch sites and educate families about the Library. Programs featured magic, comedy, science, and wild animal rescue presentations. The branches have storytimes and booths at local Farmers Markets, and the Ukiah Branch's Kids Farmers Market continues to be popular and teaches children business and customer service skills.

I look forward to seeing what the Library will bring to our communities over the next few years.

- Maureen Mulheren, Chair of the Board of Supervisors



## LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

MELLISA HANNUM

County Librarian and Branch Librarian,  
Coast Community

BARB CHAPMAN

Administrative Services Manager

MELISSA CARR

Branch Librarian, Ukiah

DANIEL HESS

Branch Librarian, Fort Bragg

DENISE JESSIE

Branch Librarian, Willits & Laytonville

JOSH BENNETT

Branch Librarian, Round Valley

NAYO SICARD

Librarian II, Outreach/Bookmobile &  
Technical Services

DAVID FRICK

Library Associate, Bookmobile



Top: Daniel Hess, Branch Librarian at Fort Bragg displaying a craft during an event. Bottom: Melissa Carr, Branch Librarian at Ukiah during a LOBA Poetry event.