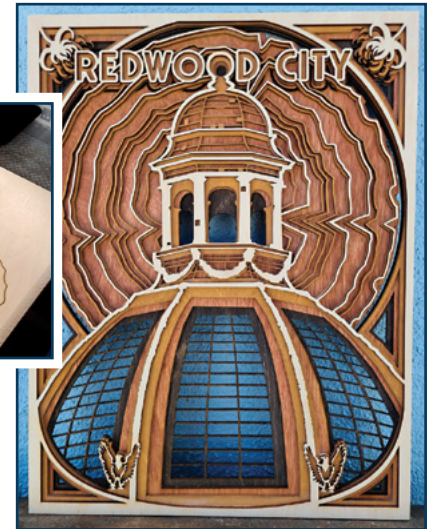
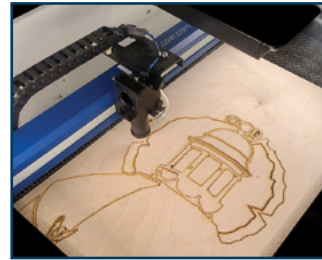


*Our mission is to support the Redwood City Public Library in cultivating literacy, life-long learning, and community connections.*

## How the Makerspace Helped Launch a New Career

Jason Newblanc, aka Gadget, was a devOps manager at Salesforce when he was unexpectedly laid off last January, forcing him to consider what he wanted to do next. Always creative and interested in art, whether building art installations for Burning Man or exploring public art around the world, he attended a laser cutting workshop at the Downtown Library Makerspace. There he learned about the technical aspects of laser cutting—what software to use, file formatting, operating the machine, designing with vector graphics, and how to think in layers. In addition, he valued being able to exchange ideas with other creative people using the Makerspace.

Two months ago, Jason purchased his own (larger) laser cutter, so he could create projects that require more consecutive hours on the laser cutter than possible in the Makerspace. He is now selling his art. Jason is thankful to Makerspace for inspiring him to start his new career. He said “It’s very unusual for a library to have such amazing machinery available to patrons at no charge. It’s a tremendous resource but it’s the patrons, volunteers, and staff that really make it special.”



Having participated in the local PACT (Partnership Academy for Community Teamwork) several

years ago, Jason uses our city as subjects for his art (see the Courthouse in the art piece in the photo). Jason is also a member of the Redwood City Arts Commission and spearheads many art projects throughout the city, including the Commercial Way Mural Alley and the recent “Women of the Future” mural on the back of Zareen’s restaurant. He is hoping to eventually volunteer in the Makerspace, teaching what he has learned about using the laser cutter to others. Jason’s website is [www.madebygadget.com](http://www.madebygadget.com).

## Building Futures at the Teen Center

The Teen Center on the second floor of the Downtown Library comes alive after school hours, when teens are gaming (see photo), getting online homework help, participating in clubs and special-occasion programs like



altar-making for Día De Los Muertos, and being together in their own dedicated space—popcorn included! This active hub draws youth from local schools, grades 6-12.

Teen Center Librarian Sonia Delgado (pictured) has a unique connection with teens. She grew up going to the Fair Oaks Library, where Teen Librarians helped shape her life, inspiring her to go to college, become a librarian, and model giving back to the teens in her own community. Sonia does regular outreach to local schools and the Red Morton Teen Center, and partners with local experts who volunteer to provide teen programming, such as college application help and career guidance. A former conference room is being transformed into a Study Center, a quiet space for teens to study and borrow laptops if needed, since the main Teen Center can become quite animated! Teens also utilize the Makerspace for Open Teen Makers on Monday evenings and a monthly dedicated Teen Makers program.

## Successful 2nd Annual Pub Crawl Supports Freedom to Read!

The 2nd Annual Upscale Pub Crawl on October 11 was an outstanding success! Over 450 community members visited 18 downtown Redwood City locations, enjoying libations and small bites and learning more about book bans from Library Foundation representatives at each location. Event proceeds help RCLF fund important library initiatives.

The Library Foundation celebrates Banned Books Week, an annual event supporting the freedom to seek and express ideas, even those some consider unorthodox or unpopular. The 2023 theme was **Let Freedom Read**, and we featured 42 frequently challenged books on colorful posters at the pubs, from *The Hate U Give* to *Gender Queer*.

This year attendees received a program with an old-fashioned 'library checkout card' and a map to guide them. Pub volunteers then stamped attendee cards while they talked about the banned books featured at that pub. Our community members seemed to love the challenge of filling in their cards. The stamps



brought out lots of nostalgia, even from those who seemed too young to have ever used a card catalog!

The number of reported book challenges rose from 223 in 2020 to 2,571 in 2022. Libraries in schools and communities are becoming battlegrounds for censorship.

Currently more than 90 pending bills attempt to restrict what young people can be taught regarding race, history, politics, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Thank you to all who attended our Pub Crawl! Attending events like this

and reading banned books from your library are ways to stay informed and involved. And a special thanks to the pubs, our volunteers, and all our sponsors. **When the whole community shows up and speaks out, libraries can be protected!**

*The library was the most stable thing in our lives, the only thing in the whole damn society that said to little Mike Muñoz: "Here you go, kid, it's all yours for the asking."*

– Quoted from the banned book *Lawn Boy* by Jonathan Evison



## What's Your Story?

Libraries are full of stories. We would love to hear yours. Ray recently shared his story about issues with his home Wi-Fi while working on his PhD. Using the the free Wi-Fi and study rooms at the library, he completed his doctoral research on broadband impact in minoritized communities. Ray experienced firsthand how our Library provides access to necessary resources through the *Bridging the Digital Divide* initiative which provides wireless hotspots and other connectivity tools, loans Chromebooks and iPads, and provides digital literacy classes! Share your own Redwood City Public Library story at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3w6a76e>

# LEGO Robotics League

The challenge: in 45 minutes build and program a LEGO robot that can steer and navigate its way through floor mazes. That's what teams of third- to eighth-grade kids did during an October session of the LEGO Robotics League. The league occurs every Sunday from 12:30-1:30 pm in the Downtown Library's Makerspace, thanks in part to a \$40,000 grant from the Saga Foundation.

This free and fun program provides opportunities for young people who are interested in robotics but whose families might be unable to afford the expensive kits and iPads. Between 6 to 20 students attend each session, says Sarah La Torra, Library Division Manager of Customer Experience. LEGO Robotics is an excellent way to teach young students the foundational skills of robotic design and programming and can ready them for building robots from scratch on high school teams.

Other October challenges included designing a dashboard system you'd use inside a car and building vehicles that move without rolling on wheels. The Robotics staff recently developed a new challenge format to help participants stay focused and work in teams toward an exciting goal.

Students also can tinker and attempt challenges with LEGO Robotics equipment on Mondays in the Family Center and Tuesdays in the Makerspace. People of all ages can learn robotics (and coding) during Kid Makers Coding Club in the Makerspace every Sunday at 2 pm. No experience necessary.

Your support helps create fun, accessible, and creative learning opportunities for young people in our community!



## Spotlight on Literacy *'The Right to Read'*



On November 6, our Foundation, in concert with Redwood City Library Board, screened "The Right to Read," a film that chronicles how the NAACP spotlights the failure to teach kids to read as a civil rights issue, and illustrates how literacy is a vehicle to include everyone.

More than 200 community members attended the screening at the Fox Theatre in Redwood City and heard an all-star panel discuss literacy and their work in building equity, access, and opportunity—either directly through reading education or through other supportive actions to lift up historically marginalized communities. Derek Wolfgram, Director of Redwood City Public Library, moderated the panel, with panelists representing

the NAACP, Redwood City Together, Redwood City School District, Project READ, Benetech, and the Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association. They provided insightful comments about the film, responded to questions from audience members, and issued calls to action! We can all support literacy by uniting against book bans; volunteering for literacy organizations like Project READ and Healthy Cities Tutoring; speaking out—be the voice for the invisible among us; supporting teachers and parents; and donating to libraries!

Thank you to community members who generously supported the film screening!

# GIVING TUESDAY

## Celebrate Giving Tuesday November 28, 2023

On the Global Day of Giving, people all around the world are coming together to tap into the power of human connection, strengthen communities, and change our world. Will you be one of them? By donating to RCLF on GivingTuesday, you're proving that in times of uncertainty, generosity can bring the whole world together. Mark your calendar for November 28th and GIVE! And please encourage your friends and family to join you in creating real impact by sharing our mission to support the Redwood City Public Library.

**SCAN ME!**



## Current RCLF Initiatives

Your gifts promote literacy and building community for all ages through the following initiatives:

### Bridging the Digital Divide

Digital literacy tools, including hotspot devices, computers, data, and annual software licenses.

### Makerspace

A community workspace in the Downtown Library that promotes curiosity and creativity, where users can learn and use a variety of technologies and craft making.

### Career Online High School

An 18-month program where adult learners can earn a high school diploma and career certificate with support from library personnel.

### Spanish Language Interpretation

The Library is beginning a pilot project in partnership with Upward Scholars to provide interpretation services for most library programming.



## Redwood City Library FOUNDATION

Supporting Your Library for Today and Tomorrow

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