

2024

SPRING

NEWSLETTER



Redwood City Library
FOUNDATION
Supporting Your Library for Today and Tomorrow

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

Meet Children's Author-Illustrator Team and See Special Film to Support the Library

Bring the family to share the joy of books and help raise funds to support Redwood City Public Library at the same time!

On May 20, we are bringing celebrated local author-illustrator team Jorge Argueta and Elizabeth Gómez to the Library to debut their book *Bilingüe, Superhéroe/Bilingual, Superhero*, a compelling story about how speaking more than one language is a super power!

We will also show excerpts from the exclusive film *Story and Pictures By* about trailblazing book creators who are diversifying children's books.

Please join us **Monday, May 20, 2024 at 6:30pm** in the Downtown Library Community Room. Tickets are \$40 (for up to 4 seats). Reservations are required: the event will sell out due to limited seating! The ticket price includes a link to stream the entire feature-length documentary film *Story and Pictures By*. You can also pre-order Jorge and Elizabeth's book. Can't make the event? You can still order the book or get a link to the film.

Get tickets and additional event information [here](#).



Traveling Storytime: Bringing Stories to Little Hearts

Traveling Storytime volunteers, who range in age from 11 to 85, have read to more than 230,000 children.

They share the goal to spark a love for reading when they visit daycares and preschools in Redwood City once a week.

Wendy Winkler, who volunteered for almost a decade prior to COVID, finds delight in the program. She shares, "It's 30 minutes of joy each week—their little faces, their smiles." Her recent return after the COVID closure shows the impact of the program. She recalls a touching moment where children ran to hug her after reading and singing songs.

Since its start in 2000, Traveling Storytime had grown over the years until COVID hit. Before, 40-60 volunteers regularly reached about 1,000 children weekly. Today, with the program restarting, there are 10 volunteers, including Wendy.



Jan Pedden, Youth Services Librarian, is actively working on reinvigorating the program with more preschools and daycare centers, more children, and more volunteers. "We're working on getting more people involved again," Jan said, highlighting Traveling Storytime's community-driven nature.

Traveling Storytime is known for its accessibility and inclusivity. Sponsored by the Library's Youth Services Department, and partially funded by RCLF, the program aims to foster a love for literature, learning, and libraries in children across Redwood City. Volunteers choose from 30 different themed book bags that each include 6 books, songs, activities, and more.

Traveling Storytime unites generations through storytelling. With volunteers like Wendy lending her voice, the program inspires countless children, one story at a time. Learn about [volunteering](#).

Bridging the Digital Divide **BY THE NUMBERS**

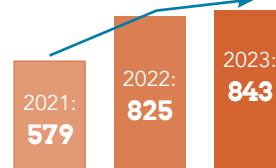
Many in our community have gained connection to necessary digital tools by checking out hotspots and laptops at the Library. "This helps my daughter a lot to be able to read on the internet every day and do her math homework," a Redwood City hotspot user wrote (translated from Spanish).

Join our mission to Bridge the Digital Divide! With your help, we can ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to succeed in the digital age. This initiative requires ongoing funding for the essentials: monthly internet bills, maintaining software, and replacing aging and defective devices.

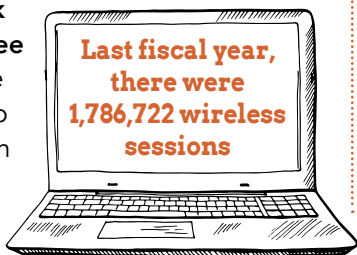


HOTSPOT INTERNET DEVICES are available for 3-week checkout. This year, RCLF funded the purchase of **25 more hotspots**, raising the **total devices available to the public to 100!** Hotspot usage shot up during the pandemic and has continued to increase year-over-year.

Number of checkouts per year

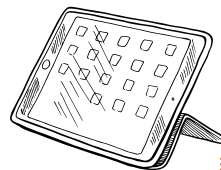


THE LAPTOP KIOSK in the Downtown Library provides the community with the opportunity to **check out a device for three hours' use** inside the building. Each laptop comes equipped with teleworking features such as Zoom and Microsoft Office.



IPADS FOR YOUNG USERS

equipped with software recommended by local schools, are available for a 3-week checkout from the Family Place in the Downtown Library. **RCLF funded the replacement of 30 of these iPads** last year.



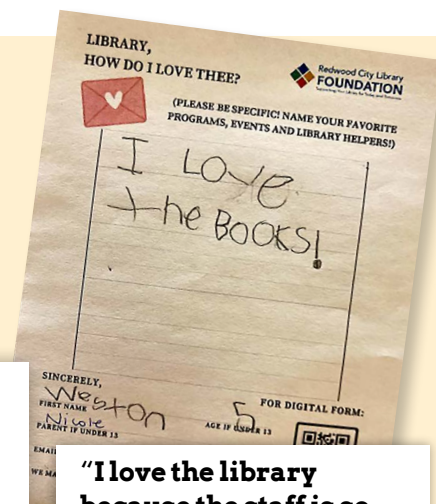
This year, **RCLF also funded the purchase of 6 iPads** for LEGO Robotics camps at Schaberg and Redwood Shores branch libraries.



Library Love is for Everybody

Our community members love our Downtown, Redwood Shores, and Schaberg library branches for many reasons—the awesome staff, the summer reading programs, the safe space, the hold system, and of course, the books!

Here are just a few of the comments from the three dozen Love Letters to the Library received in February:



"I love singing and reading during story time. Thank you for all the fun stories. We look forward to coming every Wednesday."

–Pia, age 1.5
(Pia's love is unquestioned but unless she's precocious, we're pretty sure mom or dad might have assisted in this review.)

Compare the letter to the left to this OLL (old-school library lover):
"I have loved this library since I was 6 years old and moved to RC from SF. That was 75 years ago! **Getting armfuls of books was, and still is, such a thrill.** Thank you, thank you."
–Judy, age 81

"You let me save money. Seriously! I could never afford all of the books that I read. I also appreciate how knowledgeable everyone there is. You always help me hunt down books. And you helped me activate and connect my e-book reader so I could use it! ... My life and our world are so much better because there are libraries in it."
–Hillary (no age given)

"I love the library because the staff is so helpful, and they make your experience so much fun and you can always find what you need. There is also so much entertainment other than books. The computers and Makerspace are perfect ways to unwind and get your spirits up."
–Olivia, age 10

See more letters [here](#).

Broken zippers or blenders?

Get skilled help in the Makerspace and save resources

Whether you've got an off-track zipper or a busted blender, you can receive skilled help for free from wonderful volunteers in the Makerspace, who love to problem-solve and share their know-how.

At one Open Sewing drop-in, volunteer Janice helped repair a bike jersey zipper that had come completely off track. "I looked up repair info online, but I realized I needed expert help," said Heather, a new Makerspace user. "I'm excited to keep this jersey in rotation and out of the landfill."

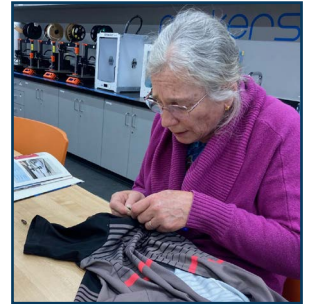
Another family comes in regularly for help with mending clothes. "At the Makerspace we're trying to help people reuse," Janice said.

Access to guidance, workspace, and tools in the Downtown Library's Makerspace helps community members gain skills while conserving money and resources in tangible ways. In addition to weekly Open Sewing and Drop In Tech Help programs, the Makerspace offers popular Fixit Clinics, held in partnership with the San Mateo County Sustainability Department and the Fixit Clinic organization.

[KQED](#) and [CBS](#) recently profiled one of the Library's Fixit Clinics. With the troubleshooting help of a Fixit Coach, Nancy Harris got her blender working again. "That saves me \$100, \$200 every couple of years when this happens again," she told KQED. "I'm really happy about it."

To become a Makerspace volunteer or find upcoming sessions of Open Sewing and Drop In Tech Help, check the [Makerspace page](#). To join or volunteer at the next Fixit Clinic on May 22, [register](#).

Want to support this skill sharing network? RCLF funds equipment, space improvements, and upgrades in the Makerspace. [Donate today!](#)



Left to right: Staff member lunisi and Open Sewing volunteers Janice and Allison.



Seaside Story Hours at Redwood Shores Delight Young Learners

In March, Redwood Shores Branch Library hosted a team from the Marine Science Institute for a Seaside Story Hour, featuring animals from the rocky shore. Kids and parents who attended were treated to several stories about animals who live there, from sea urchins to crabs to a kraken (a mythical octopus). After each story, kids eagerly crowded in to touch the small sea animals that Institute staff brought out. Another Story Hour with the Marine Science Institute was held at the Library in April, with more scheduled for [May 25 and June 22](#).

To find more Redwood Shores Branch Library events for kids and all ages, visit the calendar [here](#).

Stay tuned for information about upcoming upgrades to the [Redwood Shores Library Interpretive Center](#), designed to help children discover the wonders of the Bay and its wetlands.



Why are E-books so Expensive for Libraries?

Did you know that offering e-books and e-audiobooks is a costly challenge for libraries? Unlike physical books, which libraries purchase and retain indefinitely, e-titles must be licensed from publishers for a limited time (typically 2 years) or number of checkouts (26). In addition, library licenses for e-books are considerably more expensive than purchasing hard copies: A physical book might cost a library \$28 to \$36, but an e-book license for the same title could be \$55 or \$60. Similarly, a CD audiobook for *Lessons in Chemistry* runs \$45 and the e-audiobook license costs \$95. **Libraries must balance purchasing new e-titles, purchasing multiple copies of popular e-titles to reduce wait times, and repurchasing expired licenses.**

Redwood City Public Library (RCPL) patrons primarily borrow e-titles through platforms like Libby (Overdrive) and Hoopla, with some other sources available through the Library [website](#). The Peninsula Library System buys the Libby collection and shares the cost across its members, including RCPL. Hoopla charges RCPL a fee per checkout, ranging from \$.19 to \$3.99.

In 2022-2023, RCPL patrons made more than 124,000 digital checkouts. The Library spent nearly \$93,000 on digital content and is projected to spend \$100,000 this year.

What can we do? Eight states (not including California) have active legislation, opposed by publishers, to improve access for libraries and allow libraries to purchase e-books like physical books. [EveryLibrary](#) encourages supporting such initiatives and donating to entities like RCLF to aid in expanding digital collections. Community engagement and advocacy remain crucial to ensure equitable access to digital literature.

To suggest new e-books or e-audiobooks, contact the Library [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE for Our Third Annual Upscale Pub Crawl

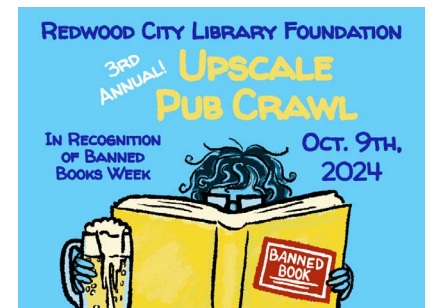
Mark your calendars for October 9th!

Last year, more than 500 people purchased tickets to the Second Annual Upscale Pub Crawl in recognition of Banned Books Week. Attendees enjoyed a lively evening while helping RCLF support vital Library initiatives! They also learned about banned books from volunteers and RCLF board members at 17 downtown pubs offering discounted drinks to participants. Banned Books Week 2024 will be September 22-28 and RCLF will hold the Third Annual Upscale Pub Crawl on Wednesday, October 9.

Protecting the freedom to read is still urgent. The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom has released

new data documenting book challenges throughout the United States, finding that challenges of unique titles surged 65% in 2023 compared to 2022 numbers, reaching the highest level ever documented by ALA.

We invite you to join us, support downtown merchants, and back the Library on Oct. 9. Buy Early Bird tickets [here](#).



Thanks!

*A big spring bouquet of thanks to all our **2023 donors**, with gratitude from the RCLF Board, staff, and volunteers!*



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