



2021 Annual Report

Escondido Public Library



**Escondido
Public Library**

2021 Annual Report Escondido Public Library

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Letter From the Library Director



The Escondido Public Library proved its resilience by engaging and assisting the community in navigating the uncertainty of 2021. Despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic, our Library opened to full capacity in February and added in-person programming in September. Our staff continued to be a valuable resource to Escondido and patrons were thrilled to finally be back in the Library, using our spaces and attending events. We adapted by adding innovative responses to our programs and resources and were happy to return to full service.

One of our favorite highlights of the year was *Escondido's Vision*, the new mural painted on the west wall of the Library building. Artist Julia Anthony was commissioned by the Escondido Library Foundation to capture the beauty of Escondido and showcase the Library's significance to the community. To further enhance Julia's mural, Escondido City Council approved funding to create a lovely mini park that was designed and planted by the City's Public Works crew. It is a colorful, transitional space that beautifies our community and allows visitors to move from the sidewalk or parking lot through the garden while admiring the mural. The plant palette is filled with California-friendly, drought-tolerant, and pollinator-attracting species in shades of colors chosen to complement the mural. Visitors enjoy viewing the mural and walking through the garden and park. We are grateful for Julia's craftsmanship and the work of the City's Public Works crew to bring art outside and into our City's spaces.

In addition to these exterior improvements, we also accomplished another step towards eliminating barriers to access by going fine-free. Patrons can now check out materials without worrying over due dates, late returns or the possibility of losing their library card. By eliminating fines, we will provide more access and support to members of the Escondido community. Looking ahead, we have started working on our next Strategic Plan so that we may receive community input to assess what the Library needs to accomplish in the years to come. We would not have been able to achieve our 2021 goals without the dedication and tenacity of Library staff, the Library Board of Trustees, and our dedicated volunteers. Escondido Public Library loves our patrons, community and all of our collective accomplishments.

We look forward to the journey ahead.

Dara Bradds,
Library Director



Escondido Public Library

BY THE NUMBERS

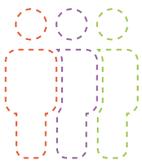
LIBRARY



PATRON VISITS (PHYSICAL)

2021: 145,197

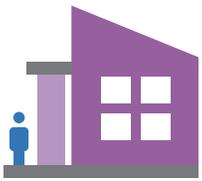
2020: 99,235



PATRON VISITS (VIRTUAL)

2021: 203,174

2020: 211,082



PATRON VISITS (TOTAL)

2021: 348,371

2020: 310,317



FREE EVENTS

2021: 454

2020: 374



EVENT ATTENDANCE

2021: 6,657

2020: 11,899



TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

2021: 134

2020: 100



TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS

2021: 13,019

2020: 8,957

TOTAL CHECKOUTS

2021: 467,590

- eBook and eAudiobook checkouts comprised 71,761 or **15% of total circulation**

- Overall circulation **increased by 35%** from 2020 to 2021

2020: 305,027

- eBook and eAudiobook checkouts comprised 68,575 or **23% of total circulation**

- eMaterial circulation **increased by 59%** from 2019 to 2020

Escondido Public Library

BY THE NUMBERS

LIBRARY



MONEY SAVED BY PATRONS

\$3,382,737



NEW USERS/LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS

4,498



CATALOG SEARCHES

734,422



HOLDS PLACED

41,624



WIFI SESSIONS

49,571



FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

381



ITEMS ADDED TO THE COLLECTION

9,621

Escondido Public Library

BY THE NUMBERS

LIBRARY



PATRON SATISFACTION WITH COLLECTIONS

2021: 84.4%

2020: 76.4%



PATRON SATISFACTION WITH RESEARCH HELP & ASSISTANCE

2021: 66.3%

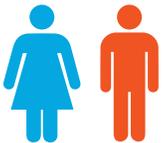
2020: 62.2%



PATRON SATISFACTION WITH ADULT LIBRARY PROGRAMS

2021: 53%

2020: 33.6%



PATRON SATISFACTION WITH TEEN LIBRARY PROGRAMS

2021: 36.5%

2020: 28.3%



PATRON SATISFACTION WITH CHILDREN LIBRARY PROGRAMS

2021: 47.98%

2020: 45.5%

Escondido Public Library

BY THE NUMBERS

LITERACY



TOTAL LEARNERS SERVED

2021: 62

2020: 111



TOTAL INSTRUCTION HOURS

2021: 3,807

2020: 2,508

PIONEER ROOM



TOTAL COLLECTIONS USED

2021: 168

2020: 169

Pioneer Room was closed March 16, 2020–April 2, 2021



TOTAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED

2021: 200

2020: 181

Staff answered Pioneer Room questions as they were able with the COVID-19 restrictions in place

Strategic Plan Update

In January of 2018, LS&S (Library Systems& Services) began operating the Escondido Public Library with the goals of connecting to the community, helping it grow, and inspiring innovation through access and service. To do this successfully, the Library needed a metrics system in place, so a five-year Strategic Plan was created with heavy input from the community to determine the course of action Escondido Public Library should take to best serve the community. A survey is also conducted annually to track the success of the Library in meeting its community goals, and to determine areas of improvement.

The Director's report provides quantifiable status updates in a chart with space to explain project status for items that said they were "in progress." This report continues to be updated and presented monthly to the Library Board of Trustees.

In preparation for the next five-year Strategic Plan, the Library Board of Trustees created a subcommittee that included several community members to contribute to the next Strategic Planning Process. They began meeting in January of 2021 and are now in the process of writing the Strategic Plan following surveys and focus groups performed in 2021.

The community needs outlined in the annual survey for 2020 resulted in a continued budget for eBooks and eAudiobooks following the 15% increase for the 2020-2021 fiscal year and new online resources are being purchased to support the programs the Library offers. More programs were offered in 2021 to meet these needs, and more still are planned, covering a more diverse range of topics and interests.

To meet the goals of the Strategic Plan, in 2021 the EPL Literacy Department applied for the California Library Literacy Services' English as a Second Language (ESL) Grant, and were approved funding for the next five years.

Collection

LibraryIQ

In August of 2019, Escondido Public Library implemented the **LibraryIQ** platform for collection performance management. The platform integrates with and analyzes data from Escondido's Polaris Integrated Library System software, providing clear actionable insights. This means a clear understanding of which materials in the collection circulate most, which circulate least and which areas need more titles to better meet the needs of the community of Escondido.

The LibraryIQ platform enables staff to see where the library is reaching and engaging the community, and helps them identify goals and track performance improvement.

LibraryIQ proved incredibly useful in 2021 as staff and collections were recovering post-pandemic. Reporting functionality in LibraryIQ provided staff with titles that had very rarely circulated, either due to being released during the pandemic when buildings were closed, or because they were on shelving located further from the high traffic areas. Using these reports, staff created "You May Have Missed..." monthly displays in the front of the Library to give these titles more visibility and promotion.

Additionally, LibraryIQ allowed staff to see distribution of the budget in relation to circulation metrics. Utilizing this data, staff were better able to support Escondido community interests by focusing monetary resources on areas that have low quantity and high circulation.

LibraryIQ also allowed staff to run reports on items with high circulation so that they could be reviewed for physical condition and replaced with new or like-new donated copies.

LibraryIQ is a powerful tool that has increased the Library's ability to provide adequately for the needs of the Escondido community.

Youth Services Highlights

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING & COLLABORATION WITH CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY SAN MARCOS (CSUSM)

As we started 2021, Youth Services continued to offer virtual programming through storytimes, one-off annual programming (**Día de los niños/libros, Tea and Etiquette, Kids Poetry Annual**), tween and teen book clubs, and our Inclusive Art Club. We also continued our tween afterschool program virtual monthly format.

The Youth Services department collaborated with CSUSM in a teaching-oriented program, where CSUSM students led Escondido tweens in STEM programming to tackle real life problems such as drought and global warming to earn teaching credentials. This partnership allowed the CSUSM students to accumulate instructional hours in a virtual environment, giving the Library more time and space to focus on programming and educational opportunities. The programs centered on tweens looking at real world problems and enacting possible solutions. Each session featured different activities including making comics, basic programming with Scratch, and take-home craft kits to be used during the live events.

VIRTUAL YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMMING GRANT

In March, Youth Services was awarded a Virtual Youth Services Programming Grant funded at \$12,000 from the California State Library. The funds allowed for the purchase of virtual programming technology, including newer laptops, cameras, microphones, green screens, and equipment that also enhances our in-person offerings. The grant also provided supplies for our programs as well as new instructors. We were able to offer enhanced tween and teen book clubs where participants took home participation kits with books and crafts based on those books. **Inclusive Art Club** used the grant's funds for sensory-inspired craft



Youth Services Highlights

take-home kits. Participants of all ages and abilities could craft during our livestream or later with access to the recording. Professional instructors taught virtual art classes for kids. Lessons included a deep-dive study on an artist of color over four class sessions, how to make a comic book for tweens, and how to make manga for teens. Participants were given kits of professional-grade art supplies and materials to keep.

TAKE HOME CRAFT KITS

Over the summer, Youth Services offered take-home craft kits for babies, kids, tweens, and teens along with inclusive craft kits as part of the **Virtual Activity Challenge**. The virtual challenges were a mix of reading, crafts, mindfulness exercises, interactive programs, and spending time outdoors. Participants received a completion pack at the end of the program, which included food coupons and books. Youth Services staff also continued to offer outreach to schools through virtual tours, visits to local schools during distanced learning, and attendance at virtual reading nights.



Youth Services Highlights

RETURN TO IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING

In August we tested the waters of returning to in-person programming, which followed COVID-19 safety guidelines. This return proved to be successful as the public provided positive feedback. Staff received multiple comments from the public about how happy they were to have in-person programming back and how important it was for their families. It was wonderful to see our community in the Library again, enjoying our programs. Our most successful event was the **Día de los Muertos** program: a cross-departmental effort where staff worked as a team to provide an ofrenda community altar, traditional folklórico dance, Pan de Muerto, and much more.

Overall, Youth Services has enjoyed seeing all our familiar and new patrons attending programs, returning to the Library, and getting excited for what 2022 will bring.



Adult Services Highlights

The Adult Services Department was excited to bring back in-person programming in 2021 after offering virtual programs throughout the pandemic.

Hybrid programming—with virtual and in-person options for patron preferences became a normal format. A special camera and computer setup were installed to facilitate this successful programming option.

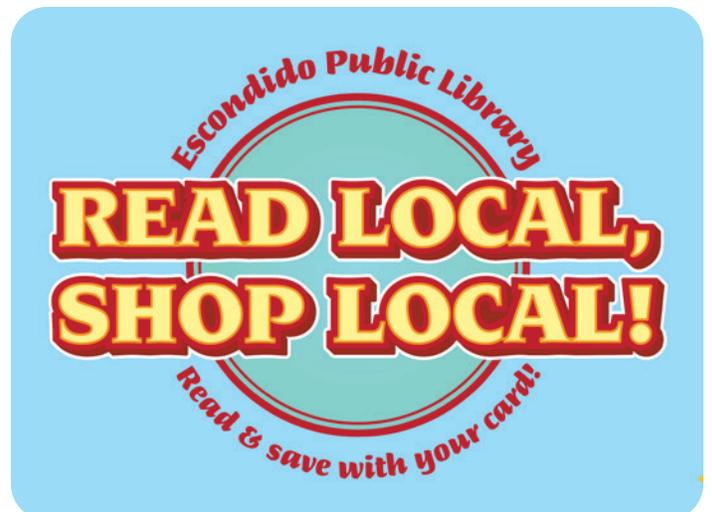
Regularly scheduled programs included: **Between the Covers Romance Book Club, Escondido Writers Group, 2nd Tuesday Book Club, 2nd Saturday Concert Series, Rincón Literario Bilingual Book Club**, and the two separate meeting groups of **Comic-Con Adult Graphic Novel Book Club**

Adult Services also added programs in 2021, including:

- The **Crafting Culture Series**, which provided educational and fun programs that taught participants about a variety of cultures.
- **Seed Pickup**, which allowed patrons to create their own gardens with donated vegetable seeds from Hawthorne Country Store Escondido.
- **The Afterlife Chronicles with Nicole Strickland**, a spirited Halloween event with an educational session for the Library community.
- **Virtual Career Services**, which was created at the request of patrons to assist in job preparation. Adult Services staff offered two sessions: a résumé writing workshop and a cover letter writing workshop.

READ LOCAL, SHOP LOCAL!

Adult Services continued to partner with local businesses for **Read Local, Shop Local!**, an award-winning program where customers receive discounts and special offers when showing their Escondido Public Library card at local businesses.



Adult Literacy Services & Families for Literacy (FFL)

PANDEMIC ADAPTATIONS

In 2021, Literacy Services took a break from hosting our annual **Scrabble-thon** and **Learner Recognition Dinner**. We felt it was more important to focus on safety as well as the educational opportunities our Literacy Learners needed.

When the Library reopened, our one-on-one tutors reengaged with their Learners in-person at the Library. Many of them also continued to interact remotely through email, phone calls, Zoom, FaceTime, texting, and even snail mail.

LITERACY LEARNING ACTIVITY & CARE PACKAGES

Throughout 2021, Adult Literacy Learners and Families for Literacy Learners continued to receive Literacy Learning Activity and Care Packages. Like the previous years, these packages included News for You, reading activities, books, craft projects, and writing practice. The packages included self-addressed envelopes asking Learners to return completed activities for feedback. Families for Literacy Learners have also received craft challenges in the Winter, Spring, and Summer. Challenges included creating a penguin, snowman, or other themed design using only household items. The challenges were divided into different age groups for kids, teens, and adults and were designed to get learners out of a rigid way of thinking and into a more open model of learning.



Adult Literacy Services & Families for Literacy (FFL)

BIRCH AQUARIUM OFF-SITE EARNING EXPERIENCE

Literacy Services provided a special learning opportunity for our FFL learners over the summer. We brought several families to the Birch Aquarium for an off-site learning experience to spark imagination and thoughts about what jobs are possible through hard work. Many of the FFL learner families have never been able to visit an aquarium or museum. These community visits ignite a passion and dedication towards their learning journeys.



VIRTUAL ZOOM CLASSES

The biggest highlight that came out of 2021 for Literacy Services was Zoom classes. Virtual options have been a game changer for our literacy learners' schedules. For some, it is hard to make it to in-person classes with work or childcare. Being able to virtually attend has been a boon for learners as they can participate from home and then go off to work or watch their children. The classes are recorded so those that can't attend live can watch later and then do the homework. The instructors will grade the homework and provide feedback to the learner. It's been wonderful and will remain a core part of what Literacy offers for years to come.

Overall, Literacy Services has done a tremendous job serving the vast needs of our community and we look forward to 2022.

Pioneer Room

The Pioneer Room was established in 1992 with a bequest from historian Frances Beven Ryan and is operated by Escondido Public Library. It houses the Library's collection of local Escondido history and genealogy research materials.

COVID-19 HOUR CHANGES

Due to COVID-19, the Pioneer Room was closed from March 16, 2020 to April 2, 2021. The Pioneer Room reopened to the public 12 hours a week in June 2021 with new hours to accommodate visitors who work a 9 a.m.-5 p.m. schedule throughout the week.

The Pioneer Room is open Thursdays from 4-8 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

PIONEER ROOM STAFF

In 2021, the Pioneer Room welcomed three new staff members with a background in history and a love for local Escondido stories. They split their time between the Pioneer Room and the Customer Service Department and work with Archivist Aspen Hill, who has been in her role since 2018. Meet the Pioneer Room staff:

Aspen Hill

Aspen is the Library Operations Manager at the Escondido Public Library. She oversees the Customer Service Department and the Pioneer Room. She has a Master's degree in History and is obtaining her Master's in Library and Information Sciences. Aspen loves local history and the history of media. Her favorite collections in the Pioneer Room are the photograph collections.

Ashley Hays

Ashley graduated from Indiana University Bloomington with a bachelor's degree and a passion for public history. After volunteering with the Madame Walker Theatre Center and the CANDLES Holocaust Museum, she moved with her husband and cats to Southern California. Ashley began volunteering in the Pioneer Room in 2017 where she uploaded photos to HistoryPin



Pioneer Room

and created a searchable catalog for the Frances Beven Ryan Collection. She is currently pursuing a Master's of Library and Information Science degree from San Jose State University—Go Spartans! Ashley enjoys processing donated collections, researching new materials, and developing programs for the Pioneer Room.

Pedro Lopez

Pedro “Peter” Lopez has been working at the Escondido Public Library for two years. Peter was born and raised in Fallbrook and graduated from California State University San Marcos with a degree in History. As a child he loved three things: cars, wrestling, and history. While a career in wrestling was not in the cards, Peter was able to pursue his love of history through the Pioneer Room in processing copious amounts of local history and sharing that knowledge with others, which brings him great joy.

John Archer

John Archer has been working at the Escondido Public Library for five years. John is from Southern California and calls Temecula home, where he lives with his wife Leslie and their two daughters, Katharine and Ashley. He has completed his undergraduate degree in Political Science at California State University San Marcos and would like to continue his education in Library Science. John has recently started working in the Pioneer Room, where he gets to pursue his interest in researching local history. When not working, John likes to spend time with his family and visit airshows and museums.

Contributors & Partners

SUPPORT GROUPS

Escondido Public Library has the support of five amazing groups that donate time, funding, and countless other resources to ensure the Library provides for the community. These groups are:

- Library Board of Trustees
- Friends of the Escondido Public Library
- Escondido Library Foundation
- Friends of Literacy
- Pioneer Room Friends

STAFF

Escondido Public Library has a dedicated and hardworking staff of 29 people who provide excellent customer service, advisory to readers and programs and so much more for the residents of Escondido and the greater North County area. Our team is made up of eight MLIS-degreed librarians, an Operations Manager/Archivist, two Literacy Services Coordinators, a Volunteer Coordinator, a Marketing Coordinator, an Outreach Coordinator, three Library Associates in Adult Services, four Library Associates in Youth Services, and 6 Library Associates in Customer Service. Four staff members are enrolled in San Jose State University's Master of Library and Information Science program.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

In 2016, Escondido Public Library launched a community engagement program for local businesses called Read Local, Shop Local! This program is still going strong and facilitates cross-promotion of local businesses and the Library through marketing, events and more. Our Read Local, Shop Local! partners are listed below:

- ArtHatch Escape
- Burger Bench
- Clue Avenue
- Cute Cakes Escondido
- Day Dream
- EcoVivarium
- The Grand Tea Room
- Jimbo's...Naturally
- Kettle Coffee & Tea
- Mathnasium of South Escondido
- Patio Playhouse
- Persian Cultural Center
- Printing Solutions
- Rock On Pizza
- Shakey's Pizza Parlor
- SIP Wine & Beer
- Stone & Glass
- Sunny Side Kitchen
- Suzy Q's

Contributors & Partners

We also look for ways to partner with area organizations to enrich programs and offer more valuable services.

- 501st Legion (Star Wars Reads Day)
- City of Escondido Utilities Department (Succulent Swap)
- City of Escondido Recycling & Waste Department (Succulent Swap)
- Comic-Con International (Comic-Con Graphic Novel Book Clubs)
- County of San Diego (COVID-19 rapid tests)
- CSUSM Department of Civic Engagement
- Escondido Audubon Society (Backyard Bird program)
- Escondido Union High School District (Virtual outreach)
- Escondido Union School District (Virtual outreach)
- HarperCollins (Author Chat Series)
- Hawthorne Country Store Escondido (Seed Pickup)
- Madres y Familias Deportadas en Acción (Crafting Culture program)
- MAGEC (Museum & Arts Growing Escondido Culture)
- Mando Mercs (Star Wars Reads Day)



Contributors & Partners

- Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore
(Author Chat series)
- KPBS (One Book One San Diego)
- The Old Globe Theatre
- PB Creates
(Artsy Adults craft kit)
- Rebel Legion
(Star Wars Reads Day)
- The Ripped Bodice Bookstore
(Author Chat series)
- San Diego Children's Discovery Museum
- San Diego Council on Literacy
- San Marcos Writers Group
- Sourcebooks
(Author Chat series)
- Spring Career Services
(Virtual Career Services program)
- Vista Community Clinic

