City of St. Helena
Library Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
St. Helena Library, 1492 Library Lane, St. Helena CA 94574
St. Helena Library - 1492 Library Lane
Wednesday, January 9, 2019 @ 5:00 PM

PLEASE NOTE: Any person who wishes to speak regarding an item on the agenda or make a comment under the "Oral Communication" portion of the agenda may do so, but please observe the time limit of four minutes.

Page

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL
Chairperson: Skip Lane
Vice Chair: Terry Wood
Trustees: Emily Armstead, Rebecca Martin, David Slaby, Susan Swan, and Lin Weber
City Councilmember Liaison:
Staff Liaison: Chris Kreiden, Library Director
City staff present at the meeting will be noted in the minutes.

3. PUBLIC FORUM
An opportunity for the public to directly address the Committee on items of interest to the public that are not listed on the agenda. Any person addressing the Committee should provide his or her name and address, and limit comments to four minutes. Because of restrictions imposed by the Brown Act, the Committee may not engage in substantive discussion, nor take action on matters not described on the agenda.

4. REPORTS BY STAFF COMMITTEE:
Reports by staff and/or committee on items of general interest. Brief questions for clarification may be posed and answered, and Committee may request that items be placed on a future agenda. Except under certain circumstances, **the Brown Act prohibits any other discussion or action by the Library Board of Trustees.**

5. CONSENT ITEMS:
Members of the Board or the public may ask that any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless this is done, one motion may be used to adopt all recommended actions. (Roll Call Vote)

5.1. Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2018 — 3 - 5
SHPL Board Minutes Special Meeting December 5, 2018

6. SCHEDULED MATTERS:

6.1. Report from Friends & Foundation, St. Helena Public Library - Maria Stel, Friends & Foundation, Executive Director

6.2. Review of Library Statistics for November 2018 - Chris Kreiden, Library Director 7 - 11

Library Statistics 2018 November

6.3. Review of Library Statistics for December 2018 - Chris Kreiden, Library Director 13 - 17

Library Statistics 2018 December

6.4. Review of Library Newsletter for January 2019 - Chris Kreiden 19 - 22

Library Newsletter 2019 January

6.5. Review of Monthly Library Operating Expense Report for December 2018 - Chris Kreiden 23 - 24

Library Monthly Expense Report 2018 December

6.6. Discussion of the Possibility of Going Fine-Free at the St. Helena Public Library - Chris Kreiden 25 - 38

Contra Costa County Library Fine Elimination press release
Contra Costa County Library Fine Free FAQs
Library Journal Fines article 2017
Library Journal Fines article 2018

6.7. Discussion of Possible Project Ideas from Library Trustees

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2019 at 5:00 PM, St. Helena Public Library.

This agenda was posted at City Hall, 1480 Main Street, and at the St. Helena Public Library, 1492 Library Lane, St. Helena on January 4, 2019.

Chris Kreiden, Library Director

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact City Hall at (707) 967-2792. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28 CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II). However, City staff will attempt to assist at any time with accessibility.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
St. Helena Public Library Board of Trustees
5:00 PM
Wednesday, December 5, 2018
Community Meeting Room

1. CALL TO ORDER –

2. ROLL CALL - Library Board Chairperson Skip Lane called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were: Vice Chair Terry Wood; Trustees Emily Armstead, Rebecca Martin, Susan Swan, and Lin Weber; Library Director Chris Kreiden; and St. Helena Mayor Alan Galbraith.

3. PUBLIC FORUM – There were no public comments this month.

4. REPORTS BY STAFF, COMMITTEE – Chris reported that the Friends & Foundation has received $50,000 in sponsorships for its *Bookmark Napa Valley* fundraiser and that tickets to the January 27th, 2019 event are selling briskly. The *St. Helena Star* will have a story this week about Hampton Sides, one of the authors appearing at *Bookmark*, and his book *On Desperate Ground,* which recounts the story of the Choisin Reservoir Campaign during the Korean War. Martin Faxon Russ, the late husband of Liza Russ of Main Street Books, was a Marine, military scholar, Carnegie Mellon associate professor, and purple heart recipient, whose 1999 book *Breakout: The Choisin Reservoir Campaign, Korea* was a New York Times bestseller and an important reference for Sides.

Chris reported that the library carpets were all cleaned last week, and that staff discovered a new leak in the front of the library. The mold remediation in Chris's office and a few other locations will begin once the Finance Department releases the PO.

The library will close Thursday, December 6th at 6 pm for a City staff appreciation event.

Chris has spoken to St. Helena City Manager Mark Prestwich about *Stacks*, the website service Mariah and Chris would like to license to update and improve the library website. Chris is working on a Staff Report to inform City Council about it. Chris reached out to several libraries that are using *Stacks* and they all give it five star reviews, noting especially that the customer service is excellent. Library staff is looking forward to getting started creating a new and improved website.

Chris explained that, because Trustees decided to move the December meeting up one week in order to discuss the City's Draft RFP seeking proposals for feasibility planning/visioning of city hall, library, and recreation facilities, prior to the December 11th City Council meeting, there are no monthly statistics included in the meeting packet as the statistics were unavailable when the agenda was posted.

5. CONSENT ITEMS:

5.1 - **The Library Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2018** were approved.

6. SCHEDULED MATTERS:-

6.1 - Review of Library Newsletter for December 2018 – Chris Kreiden – Trustees reviewed and briefly discussed the upcoming events. Chris pointed out that the library's new Spanish librarian, Connie Greene, is diving into the library's Spanish collection to become familiar with it and update it.

6.2 - Review of Monthly Library Operating Expense Report for November 2018 – Chris Kreiden – Chris pointed out that, as she said would be the case, much of the Training and Conference budget for the year was spent to send staff to the recent CLA conference. Everyone is looking forward to implementing the creative ideas they took away from the conference. She also pointed out that the City made a mistake crediting the Special Department Supplies line item with $1600, and will correct the error on the next report.

6.3 - Discussion and Possible Creation/Adoption of a Board of Trustees Statement Concerning the St. Helena City Council December 11, 2018 Agenda Item to Provide Direction on Draft Request for Proposals (RFP) Scope of Work for Feasibility Planning/Visioning of City Hall, Library and Recreation Facilities – Skip Lane – Skip reported that the Committee put together by City Manager Mark Prestwich for this project has held two meetings, which Skip attended, along with Chris, Mayor Galbraith, City Councilmember Anna Chouteau, Parks and Recreation Director Andre Pichly, along with Maria Stel and Jack Stuart of Friends & Foundation. The discussion at the second meeting included City Hall. Prestwich is trying to put together an RFP for more than one facility, instead of multiple RFPs for the three facilities. The result of the Committee meetings is the draft Trustees are reviewing, which will go before the City Council on Tuesday, December 11th. A few changes have taken place since the SHAPE Committee did its work; there is no longer any discussion about moving City Hall to the library building. Instead, the focus will be on improving the existing library building as a library. After City Council approval, the RFP will go out at and proposals should be back by January 16th. Interviews of potential consultants will take place on January 23rd and 24th. The interviews will not be open sessions; the City Manager's committee is expecting to participate in the interviewing process. The hope is that a firm will be selected by the end of January, at which time, the consultant will begin gathering information/input from community members, Trustees, and other interested parties, which is part of the proposal plan. Susan asked if Trustees wanted to present the idea of extended hours at the library, but after discussion, Trustees decided to articulate their hope for increased staffing and hours in February, when next year's budget discussions begin. Skip reported that Mark Prestwich

has emphasized receiving community input. Lin asked if it would be possible to have a community meeting in the library to show community members two or three of the proposals being considered. Mayor Galbraith suggested Trustees schedule a Special Board Meeting so the results of Trustee and community review of the proposals could become a part of the decision. Skip reported that expansion of the exterior on the east side of the library has come up several times in the committee meetings. Skip would like Trustees to walk the area at the next Board meeting to gain an understanding of the area under discussion. Discussion followed about the possibility of adjusting the plot lines of the City-owned library property. In response to Skip's question about whether library staff members have any opinions or ideas about changing the library space, Chris replied that they have expressed many ideas and opinions. Part of the consultant's job will be to gather their ideas. The consultant will also go out into the community seeking input; decisions will not be based merely on input at community meetings at the firehouse.

6.4 – Discussion of Possible Project Ideas from Library Trustees

7. ADJOURNMENT. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Library Board of Trustees is scheduled for January 9, 2019 at 5:00 pm at the St. Helena Public Library, 1492 Library Lane.

Susan Swan,
Recording Secretary

Solano Partner Libraries & St. Helena

Circulation By Media

Report Printed:12/12/2018

11/1/201 to 11/30/2018

St. Helena Public Library

		CHARGES	RETURNS	RENEWALS	ON-SHELF RETURNS
	Adult Book on CD	485	675	53	154
	Adult Book on Tape	10	10	1	3
	Adult CD Non-English Language	0	3	0	0
	Adult Compact Disc	126	287	39	153
	Adult Digital Audio Book	2	4	0	0
	Adult Fiction	1,259	1,790	84	466
	Adult Non Fiction	955	1,635	141	444
	Adult Paperback Book	0	2	0	0
	Adult Periodical	94	84	1	103
	Blu-Ray - Feature Film	6	13	0	0
	DVD - Educational	259	356	31	68
	DVD - Feature Film	2,598	3,390	174	624
	DVD - Foreign Language	35	79	0	0
	DVD - Juvenile Educational	10	22	6	11
	DVD - Juvenile Feature Film	507	665	71	377
	DVD - Juvenile Foreign Lang	3	4	0	0
	Easy Reader	268	329	7	71
	Juvenile Audio Cassette	0	2	1	1
	Juvenile Board Book	0	1	0	0
	Juvenile Book on CD	100	116	15	27
	Juvenile Compact Disc	30	37	7	15
	Juvenile Digital Audio Book	0	1	0	0
	Juvenile Fiction	821	1,098	81	228
	Juvenile Non-Fiction	481	804	87	236
	Juvenile Paperback Book	65	71	6	23
	Juvenile Periodical	0	1	0	0
	Juvenile Spanish	116	130	16	36
	Link+ Book	21	33	0	4
	Link+ Media	9	10	0	2
	Link+ Media - 1 week	3	3	0	0
	Miscellanous	2	1	0	0
	Mixed Media Kit	2	4	0	0
	Non-Circulating	0	1	0	4
	Picture Books (EASY)	1,125	1,411	130	389
	Young Adult Book on CD	8	9	0	7
	Young Adult CD	2	5	0	7
	Young Adult Fiction	96	215	22	63
	Young Adult Non-Fiction	6	11	1	1
	Young Adult Paperback book	20	39	7	14
TOTAL:	**St. Helena Public Library**	9,524	13,351	981	3,531
GRAND TOTAL:		9,524	13,351	981	3,531

ST. HELENA PUBLIC LIBRARY E-MATERIAL STATISTICS | **November 2018** | **FY 18/19**

DIGITAL CIRCULATION		THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
E-BOOKS			
	Hoopla	27	N/A
	Overdrive	279	223
	TOTAL	**306**	**223**
AUDIOBOOKS			
	Hoopla	92	N/A
	Overdrive	337	204
	TOTAL	**429**	**204**
MOVIES & TELEVISION			
	Hoopla	21	N/A
	Kanopy	96	N/A
	TOTAL	**117**	**-**
MUSIC			
	Hoopla	0	N/A
	TOTAL	**-**	**-**
PERIODICALS			
	RB Digital	81	45
	TOTAL	**81**	**45**
TOTAL DIGITAL CIRCULATION		**933**	**472**

PROVIDER	TOTAL
Hoopla	140
Kanopy	96
Overdrive	616
RB Digital	81
	933

SPANISH MATERIALS CIRCULATION

Year	Charges	Renewals	On Shelf	TOTAL
2018	184	19	71	**274**
2017	284	43	123	**450**

Solano Partner Libraries & St. Helena

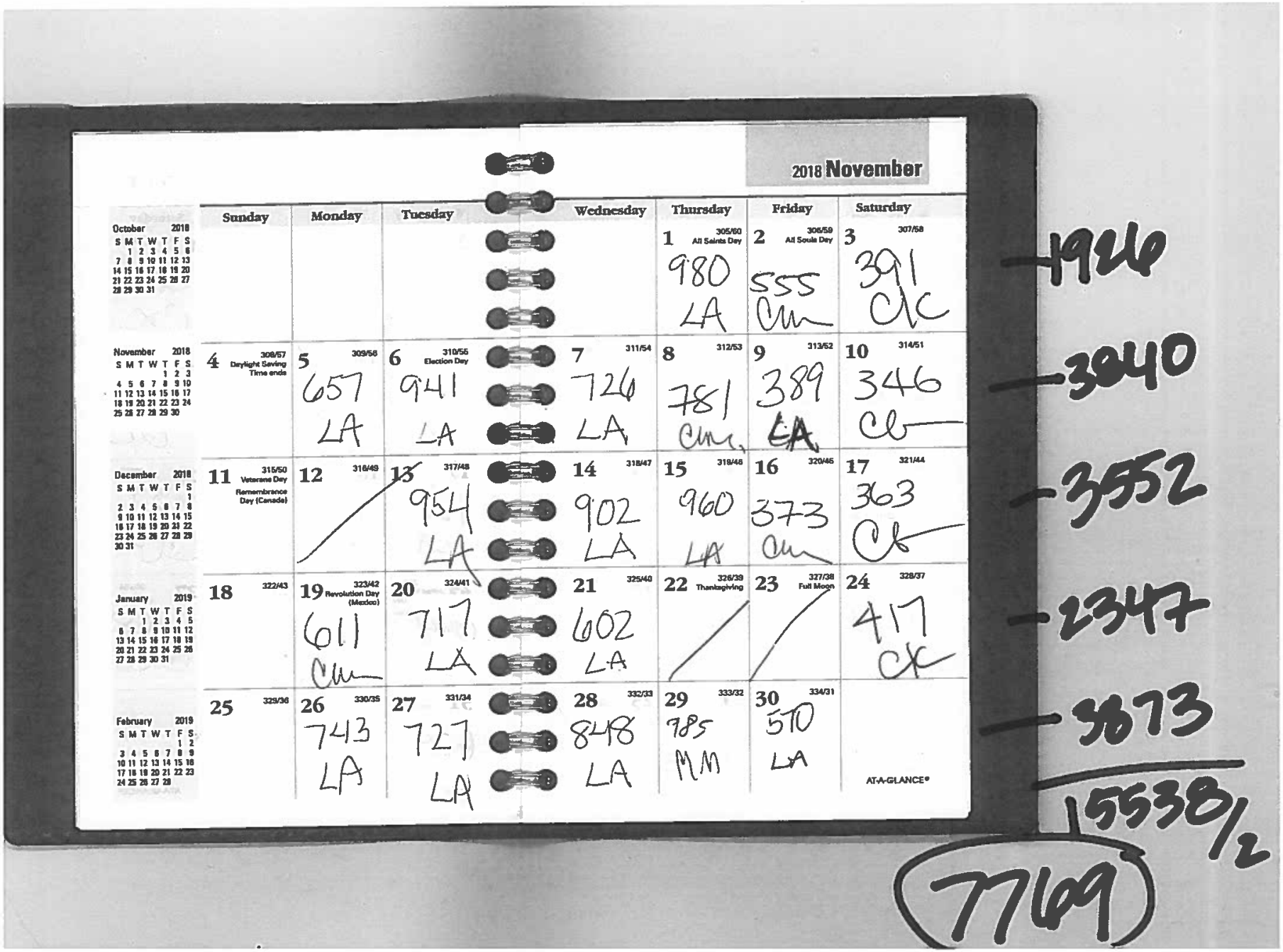
Circulation By Media

Report Printed:12/12/2018

11/1/20 to 11/30/2017

St. Helena Public Library

		CHARGES	RETURNS	RENEWALS	ON-SHELF RETURNS
	Adult Book on CD	512	788	47	172
	Adult Book on Tape	7	9	0	5
	Adult CD Non-English Language	8	7	0	0
	Adult Compact Disc	320	477	29	187
	Adult Fiction	1,397	1,971	104	510
	Adult Non Fiction	1,054	1,734	135	570
	Adult Paperback Book	2	5	0	0
	Adult Periodical	96	87	8	95
	Blu-Ray - Feature Film	3	3	0	0
	DVD - Educational	312	418	61	69
	DVD - Feature Film	2,774	3,590	163	651
	DVD - Foreign Language	30	77	2	1
	DVD - Juvenile Educational	23	32	2	5
	DVD - Juvenile Feature Film	597	735	76	367
	DVD - Juvenile Foreign Lang	1	0	0	0
	Easy Reader	312	338	26	61
	Juvenile Audio Cassette	1	3	0	1
	Juvenile Book on CD	107	128	4	52
	Juvenile Compact Disc	33	48	3	12
	Juvenile Digital Audio Book	0	1	0	0
	Juvenile Fiction	928	1,154	167	355
	Juvenile Non-Fiction	630	910	112	258
	Juvenile Paperback Book	42	58	5	14
	Juvenile Spanish	143	134	24	44
	Link+ Book	29	31	0	4
	Link+ Media	7	6	0	2
	Miscellanous	0	1	0	0
	Non-Circulating	3	1	0	4
	Picture Books (EASY)	1,268	1,691	155	510
	Video - Juvenile Feature Film	1	2	1	0
	Young Adult Book on CD	12	16	0	15
	Young Adult CD	1	1	0	3
	Young Adult Fiction	157	262	38	82
	Young Adult Non-Fiction	11	23	1	1
	Young Adult Paperback book	16	26	2	21
TOTAL:	**St. Helena Public Library**	10,837	14,767	1,165	4,071
GRAND TOTAL:		10,837	14,767	1,165	4,071


2018 November
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
1 305/60 All Saints Day 980 LA
2 306/59 All Souls Day 555 Cm
3 307/58 391 CK
4 308/57 Daylight Saving Time ends
5 309/56 657 LA
6 310/55 Election Day 941 LA
7 311/54 726 LA
8 312/53 781 Cm
9 313/52 389 LA
10 314/51 346 CK
11 315/50 Veterans Day Remembrance Day (Canada)
12 316/49
13 317/48 954 LA
14 318/47 902 LA
15 319/46 960 LA
16 320/45 373 Cm
17 321/44 363 CK
18 322/43
19 323/42 Revolution Day (Mexico) 611 Cm
20 324/41 717 LA
21 325/40 602 LA
22 326/39 Thanksgiving
23 327/38 Full Moon
24 328/37 417 CK
25 329/36
26 330/35 743 LA
27 331/34 727 LA
28 332/33 848 LA
29 333/32 785 MM
30 334/31 570 LA
AT-A-GLANCE®
October 2018
November 2018
December 2018
January 2019
February 2019
1926
3040
3552
2347
3673
5538 1/2
7769

November 2018

LIBRARY VISITS: THIS YEAR: 7769 LAST YEAR: 7833 VOLUNTEER HOURS: 70.75

CHILDRENS

Onsite Programs:

Storytime (PS):

Tuesday		Wednesday	
11/6/2018	12	11/7/2018	14
11/13/2018	15	11/14/2018	12
11/20/2018	26	11/21/2018	0
11/27/2018	11	11/28/2018	8
Total:	***64***		***34***

Movies:

Frozen	11/7/2018	6
Incredibles 2	11/14/2018	4
Christopher Robin	11/21/2018	13
A Christmas Story Live!	11/28/2018	8
Total:		***31***

Bilingual Kids: **Spanish Storytime (PS)**

11/1/2018	8	
11/8/2018	6	
11/15/2018	0	
11/22/2018	CLOSED	
11/29/2018	4	
Total:	***18***	

Onsite Class Visits:

	# of Visits	Attendance
Preschool (PS)	0	0
School Age (SA)	2	35
Total:	***2***	***35***

Misc Events:

11/27/2018	Let's Lego	8
Total:		***8***

Offsite Class Visits:

	# of Visits	Attendance
Preschool (PS)	6	81
School Age (SA)	12	236
Total:	***18***	***317***

Special Events:

11/3/2018	Folding with Karl	10
11/10/2018	Folding with Karl	10
11/17/2018	Folding with Karl	10
Total:		***30***

TOTAL CHILDRENS	# of Attendees	**689**
	# of Programs	**42**
Total Childrens ONSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**220**
	# of Programs	**22**
Total Childrens OFFSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**469**
	# of Programs	**20**

Offsite Programs:

11/1/2018	RIF Hunts Grove	27
11/29/2018	RIF Boys & Girls Club	125
Total:		***152***

ADULT

Onsite Programs:

11/13/2018	Jay Greene: A War to End All War	38
Total:		***38***

Spanish Adults:

Neuroticos Anonimos

Thursday Programs

11/1/2018	Craft: Dia de los Muertos	45
11/8/2018	Art Reception: RLS Museum	12
11/15/2018	Concert: Peter Fletcher Guitar	18
Total:		***75***

English Conversation Club

Total: ***0***

Offsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

TOTAL ADULTS	# of Attendees	**152**
	# of Programs	**7**
Total Adults ONSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**152**
	# of Programs	**7**
Total Adults OFFSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**0**
	# of Programs	**0**

YOUNG ADULT

Onsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

Offsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

Solano Partner Libraries & St. Helena

Circulation By Media

Report Printed:1/2/2019

12/1/201 to 12/31/2018

St. Helena Public Library

		CHARGES	RETURNS	RENEWALS	ON-SHELF RETURNS
	Adult Book on CD	463	688	65	161
	Adult Book on Tape	8	10	2	6
	Adult Compact Disc	283	384	10	104
	Adult Digital Audio Book	3	4	0	0
	Adult Fiction	1,236	1,818	80	563
	Adult Non Fiction	945	1,586	116	416
	Adult Paperback Book	1	1	0	0
	Adult Periodical	53	69	10	47
	Blu-Ray - Feature Film	1	3	3	0
	Blu-Ray - Juvenile Feature	0	2	0	0
	DVD - Educational	320	395	37	63
	DVD - Feature Film	2,663	3,499	116	636
	DVD - Foreign Language	25	44	1	0
	DVD - Juvenile Educational	11	14	0	1
	DVD - Juvenile Feature Film	630	810	46	318
	DVD - Juvenile Foreign Lang	1	2	0	0
	Easy Reader	181	220	21	68
	Juvenile Audio Cassette	0	1	0	2
	Juvenile Book on CD	89	120	17	21
	Juvenile Compact Disc	42	54	2	16
	Juvenile Fiction	621	881	118	236
	Juvenile Non-Fiction	374	659	78	212
	Juvenile Paperback Book	36	57	8	64
	Juvenile Spanish	65	99	2	45
	Link+ Book	32	28	0	8
	Link+ Media	16	16	0	4
	Link+ Media - 1 week	6	5	0	0
	Miscellanous	1	4	0	0
	Mixed Media Kit	2	5	0	0
	Non-Circulating	0	0	0	1
	Picture Books (EASY)	829	1,243	75	335
	Young Adult Book on CD	5	9	0	6
	Young Adult CD	1	5	0	3
	Young Adult Fiction	90	132	20	56
	Young Adult Non-Fiction	8	17	0	0
	Young Adult Paperback book	12	24	1	13
TOTAL:	**St. Helena Public Library**	9,053	12,908	828	3,405
GRAND TOTAL:		9,053	12,908	828	3,405

ST. HELENA PUBLIC LIBRARY E-MATERIAL STATISTICS | **December 2018** | **FY 18/19**

DIGITAL CIRCULATION		THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
E-BOOKS			
	Hoopla	36	N/A
	Overdrive	321	223
	TOTAL	**357**	**223**
AUDIOBOOKS			
	Hoopla	114	N/A
	Overdrive	340	204
	TOTAL	**454**	**204**
MOVIES & TELEVISION			
	Hoopla	52	N/A
	Kanopy	150	N/A
	TOTAL	**202**	**-**
MUSIC			
	Hoopla	9	N/A
	TOTAL	**9**	**-**
PERIODICALS			
	RB Digital	72	37
	TOTAL	**72**	**37**
TOTAL DIGITAL CIRCULATION		**1,094**	**464**

PROVIDER	TOTAL
Hoopla	211
Kanopy	150
Overdrive	661
RB Digital	72
	1094

SPANISH MATERIALS CIRCULATION

Year	Charges	Renewals	On Shelf	TOTAL
2018	131	12	146	**289**
2017	214	24	95	**333**

Solano Partner Libraries & St. Helena

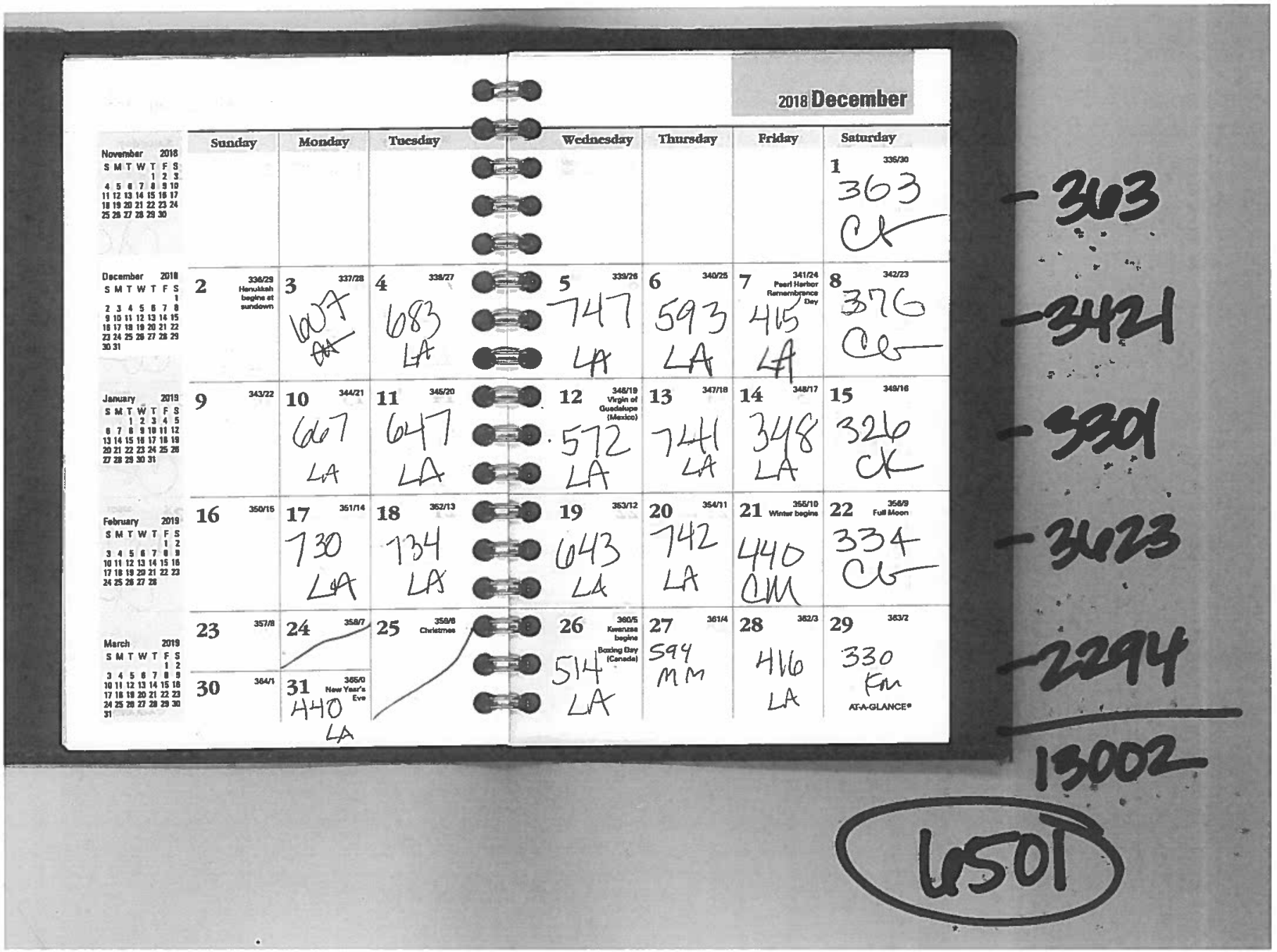
Circulation By Media

Report Printed:1/2/2019

12/1/201 to 12/31/2017

St. Helena Public Library

		CHARGES	RETURNS	RENEWALS	ON-SHELF RETURNS
	Adult Book on CD	454	662	54	164
	Adult Book on Tape	9	7	1	5
	Adult CD Non-English Language	0	2	0	0
	Adult Compact Disc	316	504	81	131
	Adult Digital Audio Book	1	2	0	0
	Adult Fiction	1,367	1,947	96	477
	Adult Non Fiction	900	1,586	90	510
	Adult Paperback Book	0	2	0	0
	Adult Periodical	75	93	1	60
	Blu-Ray - Educational	1	1	0	0
	Blu-Ray - Feature Film	1	6	0	0
	DVD - Educational	350	404	54	65
	DVD - Feature Film	2,851	3,470	191	563
	DVD - Foreign Language	16	36	1	0
	DVD - Juvenile Educational	7	26	1	11
	DVD - Juvenile Feature Film	676	803	70	301
	DVD - Juvenile Foreign Lang	1	1	0	0
	Easy Reader	218	270	32	70
	Juvenile Book on CD	91	108	15	22
	Juvenile CD Non-English	3	4	1	0
	Juvenile Compact Disc	34	53	2	17
	Juvenile Fiction	718	967	50	289
	Juvenile Non-Fiction	375	766	56	202
	Juvenile Paperback Book	45	48	4	18
	Juvenile Spanish	115	154	10	59
	Link+ Book	20	26	0	3
	Link+ Media	5	4	0	1
	Link+ Media - 1 week	2	0	0	0
	Miscellanous	0	3	0	0
	Non-Circulating	0	0	0	3
	Picture Books (EASY)	918	1,449	120	332
	Video - Juvenile Feature Film	0	2	1	0
	Young Adult Book on CD	7	19	0	7
	Young Adult CD	0	2	0	2
	Young Adult Fiction	109	230	14	86
	Young Adult Non-Fiction	6	20	2	0
	Young Adult Paperback book	10	33	0	26
TOTAL:	**St. Helena Public Library**	9,701	13,710	947	3,424
GRAND TOTAL:		9,701	13,710	947	3,424


2018 December
Sunday
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
1 335/30
363
CK
2 336/29 Hanukkah begins at sundown
3 337/28
607
4 338/27
683
LA
5 339/26
747
LA
6 340/25
593
LA
7 341/24 Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
465
LA
8 342/23
376
CC
9 343/22
10 344/21
667
LA
11 345/20
647
LA
12 346/19 Virgin of Guadalupe (Mexico)
572
LA
13 347/18
741
LA
14 348/17
348
LA
15 349/16
326
CK
16 350/15
17 351/14
730
LA
18 352/13
734
LA
19 353/12
643
LA
20 354/11
742
LA
21 355/10 Winter begins
440
CM
22 356/9 Full Moon
334
CC
23 357/8
24 358/7
25 359/6 Christmas
26 360/5 Kwanzaa begins Boxing Day (Canada)
514
LA
27 361/4
594
MM
28 362/3
416
LA
29 363/2
330
FM
30 364/1
31 365/0 New Year's Eve
440
LA
AT-A-GLANCE®
November 2018
December 2018
January 2019
February 2019
March 2019
-303
-3421
-3301
-3023
-2294
13002
650T

December 2018

LIBRARY VISITS: THIS YEAR: 6501 LAST YEAR: 6716 VOLUNTEER HOURS: 36.75

CHILDRENS

Onsite Programs:

Storytime (PS):

Tuesday		Wednesday	
12/4/2018	14	12/5/2018	22
12/11/2018	15	12/12/2018	19
12/18/2018	12	12/19/2018	14
12/25/2018	CLOSED	12/26/2019	0
Total:	***41***		***55***

Movies:

Elf	12/5/2018	6
The Polar Express	12/12/2018	10
Elliot: The Littlest Reindeer	12/19/2018	4
Orphan Horse	12/26/2018	3
Total:		***23***

Bilingual Kids: Spanish Storytime (PS)

		12/6/2018	CLOSED
		12/13/2018	8
		12/20/2018	0
		12/27/2018	3
	Total:		***11***

Onsite Class Visits:

	# of Visits	Attendance
Preschool (PS)	0	0
School Age (SA)	3	45
Total:	***3***	***45***

Misc Events:

12/17/2018	Drop-in Crafts	12
12/18/2018	Drop-in Crafts	15
12/20/2018	Drop-in Crafts	20
12/21/2018	Drop-in Crafts	15
Total:		***62***

Offsite Class Visits:

	# of Visits	Attendance
Preschool (PS)	8	93
School Age (SA)	5	100
Total:	***13***	***193***

Special Events:

12/13/2018	Kids Gingerbread House Workshop	64
12/20/2018	Puppet Show: Christmas Capers	62
	Total:	***126***

TOTAL CHILDRENS	# of Attendees	**556**
	# of Programs	**38**
Total Childrens ONSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**363**
	# of Programs	**25**
Total Childrens OFFSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**193**
	# of Programs	**13**

Offsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

ADULT

Onsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

Spanish Adults:

Neuroticos Anonimos	12/8/2018	2
Total:		***2***

Thursday Programs

English Conversation Club

Total: ***0***

Offsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

TOTAL ADULTS	# of Attendees	**0**
	# of Programs	**0**
Total Adults ONSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**0**
	# of Programs	**0**
Total Adults OFFSITE Programs:	# of Attendees	**0**
	# of Programs	**0**

YOUNG ADULT

Onsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

Offsite Programs:

Total: ***0***

JANUARY 2019 NEWSLETTER

St. Helena Public Library

Programs made possible by Friends & Foundation, St. Helena Public Library

Thursday, January 10, 7:00 p.m.

Artist Reception

Brian Kyle: "Murmurations"

Brian Kyle is a fine-art photographer and multidisciplinary artist who employs a cinematic approach to fictional storytelling through the construction of engaging narrative-rich portraits, landscapes, and still-life photographic images. Taking advantage of the poetics and economy of visual storytelling, Kyle's resulting images often depict scenes of quiet melancholy that invite inspection.

Refreshments will be served thanks to Friends & Foundation

Thursday, January 17, 7:00 p.m.

Music in the Library

The Haute Flash Quartet

Don't miss this harmonious combination of gypsy swing music, French musette waltzes of the 1930s and 1940s, and American swing with vocal harmonies. The Haute Flash Quartet are hard driving rhythms, lush vocal harmonies, cool playing, and lighthearted fun – perfect for listening and dancing!

Refreshments will be served thanks to Friends & Foundation

Thursday, January 24, 7:00 p.m.

Food for Thought

Rancho Gordo Bean Tasting

Steve Sando has almost single handedly created a market for heirloom legumes. He grows more than 25 varieties and works with indigenous farmers in Mexico to import their crops to the US market. Based in Napa, he travels throughout the Americas collecting beans, friends, and adventures. He founded Rancho Gordo, which sells a variety of unusual and tasty heirloom beans. These beans have created a sensation among chefs and home cooks alike, transforming this humble staple into a celebrated delicacy. Steve will share cooking tips, anecdotes from his travels and different beans to sample.

Refreshments will be served thanks to Friends & Foundation

Thursday, January 31, 7:00 p.m.

Legion of Honor Lecture

East Meets West:
Jewels of the Maharajahs

Introduction by Ame & Doug Van Dyke of E.R. Sawyer Jewelers

Alfred Escoffier, docent at the Legion of Honor , will present on their newest exhibit, "Jewels of the Maharajahs." This exhibition explores the cultural and material exchanges between India and Europe through jewelry and precious objects ranging from the seventeenth century to the present. Learn about the importance of diamonds, and more, highlighted in this visual lecture about the 150 piece exhibit currently on display at the Legion of Honor.

Refreshments will be served thanks to Friends & Foundation

The library will be closed January 1 for New Years Day and January 21 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Special Events

Thursday, January 3, 6:30 p.m.

Family Movie Night

"The House with a Clock in its Walls"

2018; rated PG; 1 hr 45 min

The story of young orphan Lewis Barnavelt who aids his magical uncle in locating a clock with the power to bring about the end of the world.

Sunday, January 27, 4:30 p.m.

Bookmark Napa Valley

Please join us at Markham Vineyards for great food, wine, and conversation with **Lisa Napoli, Cristina Garcia, Craig Johnson and Hampton Sides**. This celebration benefits Friends & Foundation. When you join us at Bookmark Napa Valley, you support the hundreds of programs provided by the Library.

BOOKMARK NAPA VALLEY
BENEFITING SAINT HELENA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Tickets and details: supportshlibrary.org

A Sneak Peek

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for these exciting events this year!

Clutter-busting with Brooks Palmer

March 14

Poetry Workshop with Susan Wooldridge

April 18

Salsa-Making Contest

May 9

Great Library Bake-off

September 26

Resource Highlight

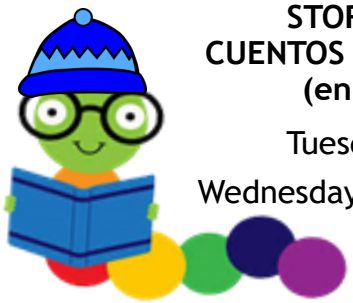
RBdigital allows you to automatically check out new issues of magazines, as soon as they are available. This means you always have the latest issues of your favorite magazines waiting for you in your RBdigital account!

To utilize this resource, go to our website and click "eBooks & eMedia", on the top right side.

When checking out your magazines, you may opt in for email notifications of the availability of future issues, and to have those automatically checked out and available for reading in your RBdigital app.

Youth Programs

Ongoing Programs



STORYTIME / CUENTOS PARA PEQUES (en Inglés)

Tuesdays and

Wednesdays @ 10:30 a.m.

SPANISH STORYTIME / CUENTOS PARA PEQUES EN ESPAÑOL

Thursdays @ 6:00 p.m.

MOVIE MATINEES / PELICULAS PARA NIÑOS

Wednesdays @ 3:00 pm

LET'S LEGO / AREMOS LEGOS

January 22 @ 3:00 p.m.

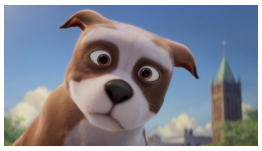
Kids' Matinees: Wednesdays, 3:00 p.m.

Movies will be shown in the Meeting Room

January 2

"Smallfoot"

2018; 1hr 36min; Rated PG



January 9

"Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero"

2018; 1hr 24min; Rated PG

January 16

"Pegasus: Pony with a Broken Wing"

2019; 1hr 26min; Rated G

January 23

"Peter Pan"

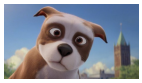
1953; 1hr 17min; Rated G

January 30

"Goosebumps 2: Haunted Halloween"

2018; 1hr 30min; Rated PG

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 LIBRARY CLOSED	**2** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm KIDS MOVIE: "SMALLFOOT"	**3** 6:00pm Spanish Storytime 6:30pm Family Movie Night: "The House with a Clock in its Walls"	**4**	**5** 4:30pm Neuróticos Anónimos
6	**7**	**8** 10:30am **Storytime**	**9** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm KIDS MOVIE: "SGT. STUBBY: AN AMERICAN HERO" 	**10** 6:00pm Spanish Storytime 7:00pm Artist Reception: *"Murmurations" by Brian Kyle*	**11**	**12** 4:30pm Neuróticos Anónimos
13	**14**	**15** 10:30am **Storytime**	**16** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm KIDS MOVIE: "PEGASUS: PONY WITH A BROKEN WING"	**17** 6:00pm Spanish Storytime 7:00pm Haute Flash Quartet	**18**	**19** 4:30pm Neuróticos Anónimos
20	**21** LIBRARY CLOSED	**22** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm: Let's Lego	**23** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm KIDS MOVIE: "PETER PAN"	**24** 6:00pm Spanish Storytime 7:00pm Rancho Gordo Bean Tasting	**25**	**26** 4:30pm Neuróticos Anónimos
27 BOOKMARK NAPA VALLEY BENEFITING SAINT HELENA PUBLIC LIBRARY	**28**	**29** 10:30am **Storytime**	**30** 10:30am **Storytime** 3:00pm KIDS MOVIE: "GOOSEBUMPS 2: HAUNTED HALLOWEEN"	**31** 6:00pm Spanish Storytime 7:00pm Legion of Honor Lecture: "Jewels of the Maharajahs"		

RED = YOUTH

Blue = ADULT

Green = SPANISH

PURPLE = EVERYONE

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday: 10:00am-6:00pm

Tuesday & Wednesday: 10:00am-7:00pm

Thursday: 10:00am-9:00pm

Friday & Saturday: 2:00-6:00 pm

Sunday: CLOSED

ST. HELENA PUBLIC LIBRARY

1492 Library Lane, 94574

707-963-5244

www.shpl.org

General Ledger
Monthly Operating Expense Rpt

User: JenniferW
Printed: 01/02/19 07:24:31
Period 01 - 06
Fiscal Year 2019

Acct Number	Description	Budget	Encumbered	YTD Spent	Available Budget	% of Budget Available
101	**General Fund**					
46	**Library**					
101-46-00-20-10	Salary-Regular	464,912.00	0.00	204,810.63	260,101.37	55.95
101-46-00-20-20	TempPart Time	33,177.00	0.00	7,868.03	25,308.97	76.28
101-46-00-20-37	Holiday Pay	2,885.00	0.00	299.89	2,585.11	89.61
101-46-00-20-40	FICAMedicare	38,522.00	0.00	16,461.13	22,060.87	57.27
101-46-00-20-45	Employer PERS	34,716.00	0.00	15,157.25	19,558.75	56.34
101-46-00-20-47	PERS Unfunded Liability	57,803.00	0.00	55,783.00	2,020.00	3.49
101-46-00-20-55	Health Insurance	124,178.00	0.00	56,224.83	67,953.17	54.72
101-46-00-20-61	Workers Comp	5,173.00	0.00	2,586.72	2,586.28	50.00
101-46-00-20-65	SDI	4,504.00	0.00	1,971.54	2,532.46	56.23
101-46-00-20-75	Deferred Comp	7,020.00	0.00	2,365.13	4,654.87	66.31
101-46-00-20-85	Auto Allowance	2,400.00	0.00	1,100.00	1,300.00	54.17
101-46-00-20-96	Education Reimbursement	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	100.00
20	**Salaries & Benefits**	**775,790.00**	**0.00**	**364,628.15**	**411,161.85**	**53.00**
101-46-00-21-10	Communications	12,300.00	0.00	2,200.66	10,099.34	82.11
101-46-00-21-15	Postage	500.00	0.00	31.80	468.20	93.64
101-46-00-21-22	Utilities	45,000.00	0.00	16,624.64	28,375.36	63.06
101-46-00-21-27	Equipment Lease Exp	9,000.00	0.00	4,436.82	4,563.18	50.70
101-46-00-21-45	Other Contract Services	122,400.00	56,377.72	45,779.49	20,242.79	16.54
101-46-00-21-55	Training & Conference	6,100.00	0.00	3,872.49	2,227.51	36.52
21	**Services**	**195,300.00**	**56,377.72**	**72,945.90**	**65,976.38**	**33.78**
101-46-00-22-07	Copies	3,000.00	0.00	911.21	2,088.79	69.63
101-46-00-22-12	Computer Equipment	52,960.70	0.00	29,101.08	23,859.62	45.05
101-46-00-22-13	Office Supplies	2,000.00	0.00	820.10	1,179.90	59.00
101-46-00-22-15	Special Department Supplies	1,000.00	0.00	-865.23	1,865.23	186.52
22	**Supplies**	**58,960.70**	**0.00**	**29,967.16**	**28,993.54**	**49.17**
101-46-00-23-35	Software Maintenance	1,852.20	0.00	1,852.20	0.00	0.00
23	**Maintenance**	**1,852.20**	**0.00**	**1,852.20**	**0.00**	**0.00**
101-46-00-24-25	Taxes & Other Charges	12,000.00	0.00	0.00	12,000.00	100.00
24	**Taxes, Insurances & Contributi**	**12,000.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**12,000.00**	**100.00**
101-46-00-26-40	Furniture & Fixtures	30,000.00	0.00	12,973.49	17,026.51	56.76

Acct Number	Description	Budget	Encumbered	YTD Spent	Available Budget	% of Budget Available
26	**Capital**	**30,000.00**	**0.00**	**12,973.49**	**17,026.51**	**56.76**
00	**Administration**	**1,073,902.90**	**56,377.72**	**482,366.90**	**535,158.28**	**49.83**
219	**CLSA State Library Grant**					
46	**Library**					
219-46-00-21-55	Training & Conference	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
21	**Services**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**
219-46-00-23-35	Software Maintenance	7,500.00	0.00	6,423.00	1,077.00	14.36
23	**Maintenance**	**7,500.00**	**0.00**	**6,423.00**	**1,077.00**	**14.36**
00	**Administration**	**7,500.00**	**0.00**	**6,423.00**	**1,077.00**	**14.36**
380	**Friends and Foundation**					
46	**Library**					
380-46-00-20-20	TempPart Time	55,242.00	0.00	28,269.03	26,972.97	48.83
380-46-00-20-37	Holiday Pay	4,777.00	0.00	983.19	3,793.81	79.42
380-46-00-20-40	FICAMedicare	4,591.00	0.00	2,237.71	2,353.29	51.26
20	**Salaries & Benefits**	**64,610.00**	**0.00**	**31,489.93**	**33,120.07**	**51.26**
380-46-00-22-16	Library Materials	56,000.00	18,997.90	21,074.35	15,927.75	28.44
380-46-00-22-40	Programming	14,000.00	0.00	3,957.39	10,042.61	71.73
380-46-00-22-44	Elsie, the Library Cat	500.00	0.00	66.61	433.39	86.68
22	**Supplies**	**70,500.00**	**18,997.90**	**25,098.35**	**26,403.75**	**37.45**
00	**Administration**	**135,110.00**	**18,997.90**	**56,588.28**	**59,523.82**	**44.06**
382	**Martin Estate Trust**					
46	**Library**					
382-46-00-22-16	Library Materials	1,600.00	0.00	0.00	1,600.00	100.00
22	**Supplies**	**1,600.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**1,600.00**	**100.00**
00	**Administration**	**1,600.00**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**1,600.00**	**100.00**
384	**Tweed Trust**					
46	**Library**					
384-46-00-21-45	Other Contract Services	0.00	0.00	-3,232.00	3,232.00	0.00
21	**Services**	**0.00**	**0.00**	**-3,232.00**	**3,232.00**	**0.00**
384-46-00-22-15	Special Department Supplies	5,000.00	0.00	962.42	4,037.58	80.75
384-46-00-22-16	Library Materials	45,000.00	0.00	9,968.67	35,031.33	77.85
22	**Supplies**	**50,000.00**	**0.00**	**10,931.09**	**39,068.91**	**78.14**
00	**Administration**	**50,000.00**	**0.00**	**7,699.09**	**42,300.91**	**84.60**
Grand Total		1,268,112.90	75,375.62	553,077.27	639,660.01	0.5044

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, December 11, 2018
Contra Costa County Library
(925) 608-7700

Contra Costa County Library is saying goodbye to fines

Beginning January 1, 2019, the Contra Costa County Library will eliminate overdue fines on all library materials. The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors voted today, Tuesday, December 11 in favor of the proposal to eliminate daily fines on overdue, books, magazines, DVDs and other materials.

By eliminating fines, the library is removing barriers and making access easy, equitable and enjoyable for everyone.

"Our libraries are open for the entire community to take advantage of all they have to offer," said Contra Costa County Supervisor Karen Mitchoff. "Saying goodbye to fines gives everyone an opportunity to restart their relationship with the library."

Of more than 650,000 cardholders countywide, 118,450 (18%) currently have their cards blocked due to fines. Forty-three percent of youth accounts currently owe a balance and approximately 21,000 youth cards are blocked at a critical time in their lives.

"Families are staying away from the library because it's simply too expensive for them," said County Librarian Melinda Cervantes. "We don't want people to have to choose between putting food on the table and reading."

Overdue library material fines and library material replacement charges make up approximately 2 percent of the library's revenue. Since 2013, revenue from fines and charges has decreased by 31 percent. During this same period, circulation of eBooks and other e-resources have increased 128 percent. E-resources are already fine free and benefit those with greater access to technology.

Eliminating overdue fines will also result in more positive customer interactions and allow staff to focus on creativity and exceptional service.

"We have so many outstanding and enthusiastic staff members who would much rather spend their time helping someone find the next great read or learn how to use one of our online

resources," said Deputy County Librarian Nancy Kreiser. "They can spend more time making people smile."

The Contra Costa County Library is the first county library in California and largest in the state to eliminate fines for everyone. The Library joins others across the country that have gone fine-free.

Patrons will still be expected to return library materials on time. Checkout periods on materials will remain the same and patrons will incur a replacement charge if materials are not returned 30 days after the due date.

For media inquiries, please contact Public Information Officer Brooke Converse at bconvers@ccclib.org or (925) 608-7713.

For general questions, please contact Library Administration at libadmin@ccclib.org or (925) 608-7700.

Goodbye to Fines

When will fines be eliminated?

The Library will eliminate fines beginning on January 1, 2019.

Why is the Library eliminating fines?

Eliminating fines removes barriers for our community and makes access easy, equitable, and enjoyable for everyone. Our doors are open for the entire community to take advantage of all the Library has to offer. Ending the collection of overdue fines will also result in more positive customer interactions.

If there are no fines, how will the library recover books and other materials that have been checked out?

We have eliminated overdue fines, but not the charges associated with damaged or lost materials. Checkout periods for library materials have not changed and we expect patrons to return items to the library on time.

If an item is not returned within 30 days after its due date a lost charge and $10 non-refundable processing charge will be assessed. However, if the billed item is returned in good condition, the lost and processing charges will be removed from the account.

Will the elimination of fines impact the Library's budget?

Fines and charges make up only slightly more than two percent of the library's total budgeted revenue. Revenue from fines has decreased significantly in the last several years and we don't expect the elimination of fines to have any impact on library operations.

Do I get a refund for late fines I recently paid?

No. Fines paid before the new fines and charges schedule was approved are not refundable. We thank you for your support of the Library.

Will the Library still send reminders about returning materials?

Yes.

I always considered my fines as a donation to the Library. How can I continue to support the Library financially?

- The Contra Costa County Library can accept financial donations through the website or via check. Here is a link with information on both options http://ccclib.org/donations/donate_library.html

- Donate books or become a member of any of the Friends of the Library groups at our 26 branches. Money raised by the Friends from sales at their bookstores supports the Library.

- Some Community Library Foundations and some Community Library Friends groups are registered as a 501(c)(3) California nonprofit organizations. The Library and these two support organizations are considered qualified charitable organizations for tax purposes by the IRS. Your contributions may help lower your income tax bill.

What about teaching a sense of responsibility to children?

Libraries have traditionally been viewed as a place charged with teaching responsibility and consequence, but that has never been part of our mission. We believe what's most important is getting more books in the hands of the children who need them most.

The mission of the Contra Costa County Library is to bring people and ideas together. Our strategic goals focus on easy and equitable access, literacy, high-quality customer service and promoting the value of the library.

All library materials will still have the same checkout periods. We still expect books to be returned on time. Any materials not returned 30 days after the due date are considered lost and patrons will be charged for them.

DOING FINE(S)?

As libraries reassess fines and fees, an *LJ* survey gathers benchmarking data on from institutions across the country

By Jennifer A. Dixon

Fees and fines have traditionally been a fact of life for public libraries in America, even though a nonnegligible proportion of librarians and patrons have long considered fines at best an unpleasant hassle and at worst a serious barrier to access to resources for those unable to pay them. A number of libraries nationwide from High Plains Public Library in Colorado to Columbus, OH, to Ipswich, MA, have recently made news by eliminating charges for late returns. Others are creating fine-free cards for certain categories of patrons, such as California's Peninsula Library System's for kids and teens, or Toledo Lucas County Public Library's for active duty military personnel and veterans. As many libraries continue to assess and overhaul their fine and fee structures, sponsored by Comprise Technologies, *LJ* surveyed a random selection of public librarians in January 2017 to learn about their libraries' approaches to fines and fees. *LJ* received 454 responses.

Slightly over half of the libraries responding, approximately 60 percent, are classified as "small," serving a population of 25,000 or less. Slightly over 20 percent were midsize, serving a population of 25,000 to 99,000; the remainder are classified as "large." Responses came from locations across the United States and ranged from suburban branches to rural libraries to a slightly smaller percentage of urban library systems.

AVERAGE FINE & FEE COLLECTIONS

	TOTAL*	SMALL (<25K)	MIDSIZE (25K–99K)	LARGE (100K+)
Fines	$3,345	$449	$2,691	$9,788
Fees	$1,758	$291	$1,241	$6,770

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017; *Weighted

OVERDUE FINES STILL IN THE MAJORITY

A substantial majority of public libraries continue to depend on fines and fees for some portion of revenue, with 92 percent of survey respondents reporting fine collection for late returns. Eight-eight percent of small libraries collect overdue fees, and 98 percent of large libraries, serving populations over 100,000, do so. Not all libraries charge fines for every type of material—for example, some (five percent) do not charge fines for juvenile materials—but libraries almost universally charge late fees for DVDs.

Librarians in the *LJ* survey estimated that about 14 percent of borrowed materials are returned late, with patrons in larger library systems slightly more likely to return items after their due date. The vast majority of overdue materials, 88 percent, are returned within one week of the due date. Only three percent of libraries reported an average late period exceeding three weeks. The daily fines for lateness are typically small, approximately 17¢, but can add up to a maximum of $5 to $10, or the cost of item replacement.

Monthly revenue from fines was roughly proportionate to the size of the system. Libraries serving populations under

Jennifer A. Dixon is a librarian and recent graduate of the School of Information, Pratt Institute, New York

ljx170401FinesFees.indd 40 3/17/2017 5:28:47 PM

Can Your Library Go Fine-Free?

By Steven A. Gillis

Many library administrators feel that fines are a barrier to access (especially for low-income families), cost the library significant staff time, are antithetical to our mission and principles, set up an adversarial relationship, or prevent implementation of services such as autorenewal. Nonetheless, they may fear that eliminating fines is impossible owing to funding issues. That is not necessarily the case. In the face of declining budgets and increasing costs, how can a library justify removing a revenue stream? A close look at the business situation may allow for a step-by-step transition, especially as fines collected often represent less than one percent of total budgets. A small trial period may be the answer.

At the Orange Beach Public Library (OBPL), we instituted such a trial, with rigid data tracking. Even if the project were a complete disaster, the board considered six months a minimal risk. We compared collected data to a baseline averaged from our 2010–12 calendar years. Our primary data points were circulation and average time materials stayed off the shelf, but we also examined the cost of the initiative and took note of staff and patron opinions, including patron email surveys in 2013 and 2016 that collected over 2,000 responses. Most important for concerns over revenue reduction, we tracked data on fines plus donations collected in our baseline vs. our donations collected during the experiment.

ALTRUISM VS. PUNISHMENT

Initially, we used a "waive-and-request" method. Fines were unchanged in our library automation software, but we would inform patrons that we were waiving the charges and asked if they would like to make a donation. While some chose not to donate, others donated at least the fine amount, often rounding up to the nearest dollar rather than receiving change. This method served to advertise our fine-free status, helped tracking, and sparked many questions from patrons. It also changed the tone of the interaction from punitive to altruistic, which was more pleasant for everyone.

Data from the first six months showed an overall decrease of only $265 compared to our baseline of combined fines and donations after excluding large or organizational gifts. This amounted to a 12 percent loss for these combined revenue streams. Almost 88 percent of fine income was recovered in donations through "waive-and-request" or from increased general giving. Comparing fines actually waived in our ILS reports vs. donations collected showed that 49.9 percent of the fine values were recovered through "waive-and-request." After six months, the experiment was considered successful enough to go forward. We continued tracking and did see some ongoing falloff. After nine months, our recovery dropped to only 41.8 percent. It may be a good idea to anticipate and plan for a drop once the novelty wears off.

Revenue from the combined streams for the same six-month season of the original experiment did decline slightly. Because our library is located at the beach, our usage can be very seasonal, so we made sure to compare the same six months for each year and included our highest fine-generating months in the snapshot. Losses for fine incomes compared with donations fluctuated from 15 percent to 32 percent for 2014–16 ($330–$713). Even the highest percentage loss in 2016 was actually an increase in small donations by more than 25 percent over 2012, with this increase making up for 68 percent of our previous fine incomes. Our "waive-and-request" period ended in 2015, and in April 2015, we removed all fines at the direction of the library board.

Our test indicates that increases in donations may help mitigate the losses in fine income with the proper framing. Instead of planning for a one to two percent loss in total income, you may experience a surge in donations and goodwill. There is no real way to know if this will occur without trying a test period.

GOODWILL GROWS SUPPORT

At OBPL we were able to leverage increased goodwill with our city council. While there are many reasons for the raises in funding for our library, the goodwill of the community and the change in the overall environment from removing fines is a significant factor.

In the first year of the project, our municipal funding increased by nine percent over funding in 2012. Over the next three years, our municipal support has increased by nearly 30 percent. We currently anticipate a continuing budget of almost $140,000 greater than our 2012 funding. With this increased revenue and support from our city, we also anticipate remaining fine free.

Steven A. Gillis is Director, Orange Beach Public Library, AL

25,000 reported an average of $449 in fines collected each month, libraries serving from 25,000 to 99,000 reported an average of $2,691, and libraries serving over 100,000 reported an average of $9,788. Based on responses to this survey and the number of libraries in the United States, *LJ* has projected the amount of money collected in monthly fines at approximately $11.8 million. This calculation is based on the total number of library systems in the United States and not the number of individual library buildings, making this a very conservative estimate.

Larger libraries are far more likely to accept credit or debit cards for fine payments than their smaller counterparts, with 88 percent of larger libraries accepting credit or debit cards, 65 percent of midsize, and 39 percent of smaller libraries. Nearly all responding libraries—99.5 percent—accept cash, 95.5 percent take checks.

Sixty-one percent of libraries also accept other ways to satisfy fines without monetary payment, although alternatives are less common in large systems, where just 37 percent offer such approaches. When they do, though, the results can be quite impressive: in recent amnesty programs, Chicago Public Library received at least 20,000 returned items, worth roughly $500,000; Los Angeles Public Library received 64,633 books, and 13,701 patrons had fines forgiven

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and accounts unblocked. Options include activities such as food drives, participation in programs in which patrons—usually children or teens—can "read down" their fines, donations representing a portion of the fine, or through amnesty periods. Multiple survey respondents referenced periodic fine amnesty periods as a powerful means of recovering overdue materials, which patrons may otherwise hang on to for fear of financial consequences. Indeed, the San Francisco Public Library recently held a six-week amnesty and recovered 699,563 overdue items, including 12,246 items that were more than 60 days past due.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

The money collected is allocated to the general fund in about three-quarters of libraries. According to Jenny Paxson, readers' advisory librarian at Webster Public Library, NY, "The money we get from fines helps us through the year. We use it as operating costs." About 15 percent reported that funds go to materials, five percent that the money goes to programming, and six percent wrote in that fine money goes back to the city or county general fund. There have also been examples of libraries using fine revenue for other purposes—in 2016, for example, the Central Arkansas Library System donated a week's worth of fine collections to help those affected by the extreme flooding in Louisiana earlier that summer.

Fines were originally instituted to dissuade patrons from bringing materials in late, depriving others of limited shared resources. It causes frustration for patrons and librarians alike, respondents noted, when they request items to find they are overdue and unavailable. There is a "responsibility factor," says an Indiana library director. These are "community materials to be shared with all."

Libraries will also take steps beyond fines for patrons who consistently hold on to their materials. Almost all libraries—97 percent—will suspend patron borrowing privileges when fines accumulate past a particular threshold, frequently around $10. Some refer patrons to a collection agency for outstanding fines long past due or over a certain amount. This is true of 67 percent of large libraries, 57 percent of midsize libraries, and 22 percent of small libraries. The typical threshold for such action is $42, and 54–90 days past due. Some libraries use a combination of dollar amount owed and number of days past due to determine whether they should take tougher action. A small percentage, 12 percent, have taken legal action to recoup overdue fines.

One factor leading to a decline in fine revenue for some libraries is the increasing prevalence of digital materials, which automatically "return" to the library at the end of the borrowing period. Nearly a third of responding libraries stated that digital materials have reduced their fine collections.

DOES YOUR LIBRARY CHARGE FINES FOR OVERDUE MATERIALS?

	TOTAL*	SMALL (<25K)	MIDSIZE (25K–99K)	LARGE (100K+)
Yes	92%	88%	95%	98%

HAS YOUR LIBRARY EVER CONSIDERED DOING AWAY WITH FINES?

	TOTAL*	SMALL (<25K)	MIDSIZE (25K–99K)	LARGE (100K+)
Yes	34.3	25.9	31.6	53.5

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017; *Weighted

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST YOUR LIBRARY MONTHLY TO COLLECT FINES?

	TOTAL*	SMALL (<25K)	MIDSIZE (25K–99K)	LARGE (100K+)
Average $	$714	$84	$594	$3,265

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017; *Weighted

FINE COLLECTION STRESS

The majority of libraries (90 percent) have circulation staff communicate with patrons about fines, with fewer using email (67 percent), snail mail (55 percent), or phone calls (40 percent). In some libraries, patrons receive notification via text message, on their checkout slip, or through their online account. For many library staff members, the process of collecting and enforcing fines can prove stressful. The vast majority of libraries train their staff in how to handle it, particularly in libraries serving over 100,000, where 98 percent of staff receive training, although 88 percent of staff in midsize libraries and 79 percent in smaller libraries receive training as well.

Fine collection may also present a barrier to community goodwill toward the library. Said one staffer, "It's not worth the severed relationships when responsible customers have a one-time occurrence, when families incur huge fines because of a vacation, or when the word of mouth messaging spreads because of any of these situations. Libraries have enough to combat, this is a matter of hospitality and being supportive of our customer needs." Staff also feel concern about a negative effect on patrons' use of their libraries. Says Monica Baughman, deputy director of Worthington Libraries, OH, fines can "impact those who can least afford it." Bearing out Baughman's point, when San José Public Library lowered fines and instituted a program for working down the amount owed through volunteering, nearly 100,000 residents had their library access restored. (For more, see "Jill Bourne: *LJ*'s 2017 Librarian of the Year," *LJ* 1/17, p. 28.)

The time spent collecting these fees can use up hundreds of dollars in staff time from library budgets. Some libraries have found that the effort expended to enforce fines is not worth the small amount charged per day. Not surprisingly, about a third of librarians contemplate doing away with the practice entirely.

However, with budgets tight, many libraries are concerned about losing that source of revenue. Hollis Helmeci, director, Rusk County Community Library, WI, writes, "We would have to eliminate staff if we cut fines." In particular, some referenced resistance to such a cutback from administrators, trustees, and local government. Others emphasized a belief that fines facilitate the timely return of library materials and patron accountability, with Mary Geragotelis, director, Scotland Public Library, CT, writing that "we believe that patrons will ignore due dates completely if there is no penalty imposed for late items."

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Some librarians compromise by waiving patron fines for those who cannot pay or restructuring the fines to pose less of a burden. As Cheryl Napsha, former director of the South Fayette Township Library, PA, writes, one deterrent to removing fines entirely is "board/local government expectation that fines are part of library service. It's easier to waive fines than to deal with the board. While our system blocks people who owe $10 or more, we just override that or reduce fines to keep it below $10."

DAILY FINE FOR EACH TYPE OF MATERIAL

	$ AVERAGE	$ MEDIAN	$ MAXIMUM
Adult Print Material	0.17	0.15	5.00
Juvenile Print Material	0.14	0.10	5.00
Adult DVD/Blu-ray/VHS	0.67	1.00	6.00
Music CDs	0.21	0.20	5.00
Audiobooks	0.21	0.20	5.00
Games	0.51	0.25	5.00
Devices	2.23	1.00	10.00

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017

LIFE WITHOUT FINES

Of those libraries that do not impose overdue fines, 45 percent had done so in the past. Most eliminated fines more than two years prior to the survey. The majority were unsure as to whether this change had impacted their circulation and instead focused on improving customer relations. Napsha observes, "Fines and fees should not be part of a library's revenue stream," as they have become "a barrier to service" and to a "cordial, positive atmosphere."

Lisa Richland, director, Floyd Memorial Library, Greenport, NY, which has done away with fines but does restrict the borrowing privileges of those who have overdue nonrenewable items, reports, "folks who are dilatory about returns have not changed their habits, but the interaction at the circulation desk is much less fraught. My staff is not put in the position of punishing those who return items late, and we have a donation box for people who still have a need to pay a fine." Even without fines, the majority of library materials do make their way back to the library eventually. Not only does this reduce staff stress levels, Richland explains, but it also helps the library maintain a "good name" in the community. "You never know what burdens people have, so we try not to judge or act in a hectoring manner."

Contrary to concerns that fines are the key to patron accountability, Kathy Dulac of the Milton Public Library, VT, reports that after doing away with fines, more people returned books on time, and others felt more welcome in the library space. She explains, "We also found some patrons that had not been in because of fines were again coming to use the library." While some patrons take advantage and keep books out, she explains that "we have the best results getting books back by keeping on top of overdue notices."

To offset the lost revenue from eliminating overdue fines, a small majority of fine-free institutions have started to collect voluntary donations at the circulation desk [see "Can Your Library Go Fine-Free?," p. 41]. Others simply adjust their operating budget, as the amount collected through fines represented a minimal percentage of the overall budget.

THE INCREASING USE OF FEES

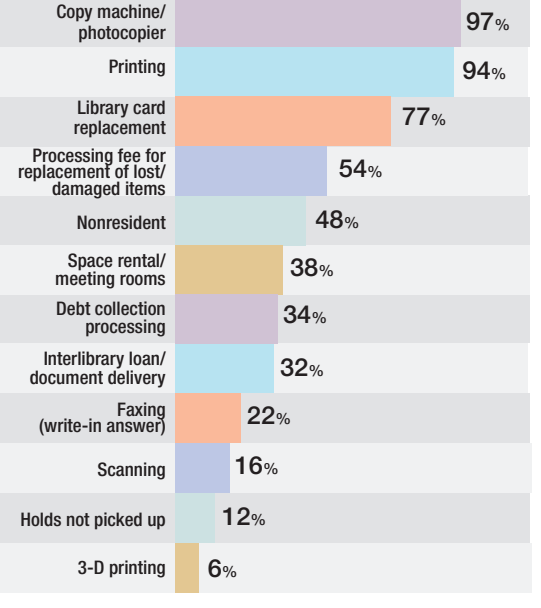
A majority of the responding public libraries—86 percent—also collect fees for library services. Based on survey responses and the number of library systems in the country, *LJ* projected the amount of fees collected by U.S. public libraries each month as $6.5 million.

Most of those fees are for in-library copying and printing, with some also charging to replace lost or damaged library cards or damaged materials or to grant access for nonresident users. Of those charging for nonresident use, six percent reported determining the fee based on tax rates. Smaller libraries in particular charge fees for faxing and scanning, while larger libraries are more likely to charge for services such as interlibrary loan (ILL) or debt collection processing. For ILL or document delivery, about eight percent will assess the charge from the lending institution, while eight percent will charge the cost of return shipping. Over a third of libraries, particularly larger systems, also charge for the rental of meeting rooms or event spaces. The revenue collected from such fees enables libraries to provide services they might not otherwise be able to offer, for instance, Wi-Fi kits or 3-D printing.

One in five libraries also charges admission fees for programs or events. Common events include classes such as art or yoga, field trips, or author talks. Other examples provided by survey respondents include driver safety courses, genealogy seminars, "paint n' sip" gatherings, and concerts. Libraries also host free events at which participants pay for materials, like craft classes, or organize fundraisers for which attendees pay a fee or a donation.

Some libraries take a flexible approach to how they charge for common services like printing and copying.

LIBRARY CHARGES A FEE



SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017

Steven Harsin, director, Grand Marais Public Library, MN, describes operating "on an honor system, so we don't know for certain whether patrons pay nor not.... Undoubtedly, some do not pay. On the other hand, there are patrons who print a couple of pages and drop $5 in the bucket." The library also will negotiate lower rates for large printing jobs and allows patrons to bring one copy of a tax form to be duplicated for free during tax season. Overall, library staff report efforts to adjust their fee structures in a manner that facilitates the best possible services for patrons and emphasize that these charges are never instituted to make a profit.

Many libraries are still testing what works best for their community when it comes to fee programs. Lisa Eck, Roseville Public Library, CA, notes that her library used to charge for held materials not picked up and for the processing of lost items, damages, and ILLs. However, she writes, "we have dropped [those charges] because we found that they didn't warrant the staff time, and they caused negative experiences with our customers."

As is the case with overdue fines, for many libraries the money collected in fees helps to support a tight institutional budget. Explains a public services librarian in Wisconsin, "As our city continues to slash our budget, our meeting room fees (collected for private events usually held on the weekends) are helping to plug the holes."

The results of the *LJ* survey provide a picture of the ways in which libraries nationwide assess and adjust their approaches to fines and fees in order best to serve their patrons. The clearest trend from these results is that libraries benefit from open-mindedness about these revenue sources and a willingness to move away from entrenched traditional methods. There is a cost, in staff time and effort particularly, to collecting fines and fees from patrons, and libraries must balance this by collecting in a way that makes sense for the individual library and community. ■

SERVICE FEES CHARGED

	$ AVERAGE	$ MEDIAN
Nonresident (per year)	46.96	32.00
Space rental/Meeting rooms for Businesses (per hour)	40.24	30.00
Debt collection processing fees	12.21	10.00
Space rental/meeting rooms for nonprofits (per hour)	8.48	10.00
Processing fee for replacement of lost/damaged items	5.58	5.00
Interlibrary loan/document delivery	3.27	3.00
Library card replacement	1.92	2.00
Faxing	1.23	1.00
Holds not picked up	1.02	1.00
Scanning	.58	.25
Color printing	.50	.50
B/W printing	.16	.15
Color copies	.49	.50
B/W copies	.16	.15

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017

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THE END OF FINES?

As more and more libraries are finding, eliminating fees lowers barriers while still bringing books back into circulation

By Lisa Peet

As recently as a decade ago, for a library to abolish overdue fines was a radical move. Some libraries have been fine-free for years—a few for their entire existence. But for many, the idea has gathered momentum recently, along with the growing awareness that fines and fees are an equity issue, raising barriers to those who need the library most.

Apart from "this is how we've always done it," there are three common reasons given for collecting fines and fees: to generate revenue, to ensure that books are returned, and to teach responsibility. These are the same across all types of libraries—public and academic, large and small, urban and rural. Yet as more libraries go fine-free, their experiences challenge all three.

Much has changed even since *LJ*'s January 2017 Fines and Fees survey (see "Doing Fines(s)?" at ow.ly/7Cah30lABBD). Those results showed 92 percent of the more than 450 respondents collecting fees. Only five percent of those did not charge for children's materials. Although responding libraries estimated that around 14 percent of materials were returned late, the majority—88 percent—were returned within one week of the due date. Daily fines for lateness were typically small, approximately 17¢, but could be up to a maximum of $5–$10, or the cost of replacement.

Recently, large systems such as the San Diego Public Library; Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL), Baltimore; Salt Lake City Public Library (SLCPL); Nashville Public Library; and more have eliminated fines entirely, as have many suburban, small-town, and rural libraries. Academic libraries from private universities to small community colleges have elected to stop collecting late fees from students. Some libraries that have eliminated fines for books still charge fees on items such as DVDs or Playaways; others do not. Some place a freeze on holds until an item is returned; some don't. (Nearly all fine-free libraries charge for lost or damaged items.) In her recent editorial "Farewell to Fines" (*LJ* 7/18), *LJ* editor in chief Rebecca T. Miller asked readers about their experiences going fine-free. Several of the responding libraries are included in this article.

What all fine-free libraries have in common, however, is that they have examined their budgets, card registration patterns, renewal rates, and circulation statistics; reviewed before and after numbers and testimonials from peer libraries; and then stepped up to challenge the assumptions for collecting fines in the first place. Increasingly, they have found that eliminating fines has raised circulation numbers, brought lapsed users back to the library, and boosted goodwill, which can lead to substantial funding gains at the ballot box.

HAS YOUR LIBRARY CONSIDERED DOING AWAY WITH FINES?

One third of libraries currently charging fines have considered doing away with them.

		POPULATION		
	TOTAL*	SMALL (<25K)	MIDSIZE (25K–99K)	LARGE (100K+)
YES	34.3%	25.9%	31.6%	53.5%
NO	57.6	66.2	57.9	39.5
DON'T KNOW	8.1	7.9	10.5	7.0

SOURCE: *LJ* FINES & FEES SURVEY 2017 *Weighted

REMOVING BARRIERS

In 2014, the Colorado State Library (CSL) undertook a two-year project, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), to promote early learning among low-income children. The resulting study and report, Project SPELL (Supporting Parents in Early Literacy Through Libraries), scrutinized barriers to public library use among parents and caregivers in low-income communities and discovered that fines and fees were among the greatest obstacles.

Many parents and caregivers surveyed said that although they did use the library, they didn't let their children check out books because they didn't want to risk late fines and were afraid they wouldn't be able to return them in time—whether because of work schedules, mobility issues, or lack of reliable transportation. Other parents, explains CSL youth and family services consultant Beth Crist, told them, "We do let our kids check out books, but as soon as we get home we put them high up on the shelf and don't let the kids touch them because we don't want them damaged or lost."

The study led to a white paper, "Removing Barriers to Access: Eliminating Library Fines and Fees on Children's Materials," issued in 2015, and many libraries have used it as a starting point for analyzing whether they can—and should—go fine-free.

REVENUE, RETURNS, RESPONSIBILITY

Revenue from fines and fees has been falling steadily for years as more e-materials—which are returned automatically—enter circulation, and more libraries institute auto-renewal for physical materials without holds. The income generated by fines currently averages one percent or less across all types and sizes of libraries. Many that have gone fine-free have easily made up the shortfall by other means, such as offering passport services or holding fundraisers. Some even find that the cost of collecting fines equals or even exceeds the revenue thus generated, so that eliminating them doesn't leave any shortfall to overcome.

Lisa Peet is Associate News Editor, LJ

Late fees can encourage returns and thus put books back in circulation, but they can also backfire, as patrons who can't afford to pay the accumulated fines may decide not to return a book at all. Amnesty periods, reading down fines, or "food for fines" donation programs don't always serve the people who need them most. EPFL had held a number of food for fines initiatives over the years, and these proved solid partnerships with local food banks, reports CEO Heidi Daniel. The problem, she explains, "was that you can't ask a customer who themselves might benefit from the services of a food bank to participate in that program."

The concept of promoting responsibility is the hardest to quantify and inspires debate over whether it ought to be a library job even if fines were effective at doing so. Notes SLCPL executive director Peter Bromberg, "The library is an arm of the government, and I believe that the teaching of morals and behavior is really the purview of the family and the church. I would want to be very sensitive about the government stepping in and seeing itself as having a role to teach morals and moral responsibility." Even for those who are comfortable seeing libraries in that role, questions of equity arise: Is it fair to put a freeze on the card of a five-year-old who can't get to the library to return a book on time? Or to punish a patron who might need to choose between paying a fine and eating?

STARTING ANEW

A number of recent fine-free initiatives originated with a new director who brought fresh eyes and a creative take on breaking down service barriers to their system.

Bromberg arrived at SLCPL in 2016 with the initial goal of laying the groundwork for a budget increase, imagining he'd save the question of fines for the following year. As he met with board members, city council, community leaders, and employees, however, he found himself casually bringing up the idea of going fine-free, and people were interested to hear more. In the process of discussing the budget, "I was workshopping the [fine-free] messaging a little bit," Bromberg explains. "I could start to see what was resonating and what wasn't."

By the time Bromberg gave his formal budget presentation in spring 2017, he recalls, the city council executive director was all in: "We want you to do this fine-free thing now. It's a great idea—why wait?" Surprised, Bromberg only had a few months to put a policy together, but it was passed and implemented by the beginning of July 2017. Bromberg elected to wipe all fines clean and go forward fine-free and immediately saw an increase in checkouts, new cards, and returning borrowers. He has been collecting statistics since then and gladly shares them, adding, "I feel like I have a part-time unpaid consulting gig...helping libraries go fine-free."

Sharing both quantitative and qualitative data on the transition is critical to assisting more libraries to move forward on eliminating fines. When then adult services director Bobbi Perryman wanted to take the Vespasian Warner Public Library District (VWPLD), Clinton, IL, fine-free in 2009, she reports, there was little hard or anecdotal data on the subject. The director at the time had a background in law enforcement, she says, "so her knee-jerk reaction was, 'They've broken the rules. They have to be punished somehow.'"

Perryman, now VWPLD executive director, did her own research. She pointed out that the library's overdue fees, maxing out at $2 per item, accounted for .0016 percent of its income while taking up large amounts of staff time. Perryman recalls college students who had lost library privileges as children coming in to pay their fines once they had jobs of their own.

Another groundbreaker, Colorado's Anythink Libraries, also decided to go fine-free in 2009—the change initiated by staff who had begun experimenting with the idea the previous summer. Fines were waived for children and teens who signed up for summer reading, recalls Director Pam Sandlian Smith, and "the response from the community was so positive that it set the conversation in motion to create a fine-free policy." The library formed a task force, made a recommendation to the administrative team, and developed a draft policy to present to the Board of Trustees.

"When people discover that they aren't going to be penalized for forgetting to return their books on time, they are always a bit surprised and always grateful," notes Sandlian Smith. "We want people to remember the library for the fabulous experiences they encounter, not the grief of having to pay a fine for returning books a few days late."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ENOCH PRATT FREE LIBRARY

FINE-FREE FOR LIFE

Sometimes, however, the library convinces the director. When Cheryl Schoenhaar stepped into her role at the helm of the Town Hall Library (THL), North Lake, WI, in 2013, she had spent most of her 30 years of librarianship in fine-based institutions. THL, however, had been fine-free since it opened in 1966. At her welcoming reception, she recalls, "Over half of the 90 people who attended felt the need to get me into a quiet corner so that they could share two main themes over and over again—how truly wonderful the staff were…and how important it was to remain a no-fines library. As one member of the Friends of the Town Hall Library commented, 'Why would we want to fine our neighbors? That's just not the community we want to have.'"

THL serves a largely agricultural population that poses multiple challenges to due dates. Farmers' schedules don't always align with that of the library, Schoenhaar says, vacation home owners take books back to their home states by mistake, and homeschoolers tend to keep materials for an entire semester. Instead of fees, the library employs a "high touch" system of personal phone calls to remind patrons: "Hey, those books are a little overdue right now. If you

could get those back to us, we'd really appreciate it." Return rates average around 95 percent, says Schoenhaar.

EASING STUDENT BURDENS

Academic libraries are also realizing the additional stresses overdue fines can place on students who are already struggling to manage their time—not to mention meeting extra expenditures on top of tuition and textbooks. Because academic libraries often need to maintain separate fiscal accounts for different kinds of transactions, maintaining those accounts involves another set of costs.

When Jeff Wahl, library director at the Front Range Community College (FRCC) Westminster Campus Library, CO, brought up the idea of going fine-free, he was pleasantly surprised that the college's fiscal department jumped at the idea. FRCC was already working to simplify financial procedures on campus, he explains, and the library was an easy item to cross off the list. The largest community

FINE-FREE IS FINE The Enoch Pratt Free Library celebrated doing away with fines with a block party featuring performances, food trucks, a DJ, and a new mural at its Walbrook branch; fine-free announcements from the Salt Lake City Public Library and San Diego Public Library

college in the state, it employs only five library staff members, who share reference, circulation, and teaching duties. "I can't justify having any time taken away from that to put toward processing credit card receipts and putting together financial statements for the small amount of money we bring in," says Wahl.

The dual use Westminster Campus Library shares space with a local public library that still collects fines, but navigating different fine policies with a shared integrated library system (ILS) hasn't been difficult. Students who don't return a book after a month have their college accounts frozen and won't be allowed to register or drop classes until it is returned; members of the public who don't return books are blocked on the shared ILS.

MAKING THE CASE

The advice CSL's Crist has for libraries looking to make the case to their boards or city council is to begin with as much research as possible on their own system, starting with basic numbers: how much of the library's operating or materials budget comes from fines, and the accumulated time, energy, and financial costs to the library to collect them. At a minimum of 30 seconds per transaction, collecting fines can significantly eat into the time of desk staff. With the additional expense of credit card transactions or collection agencies, fiscal costs add up. And the majority of those exchanges do not feel positive to either party—a more difficult cost to quantify but a critical one.

Augment the quantitative data with testimonials, Crist advises. "If you can collect some compelling stories about how fines have negatively affected people in your communities, that can be powerful."

A board or city council may respond positively to the idea of a pilot period. Crist suggests a full year, if possible, as borrowing habits can vary seasonally. Starting with children's materials can also help sway reluctant officials, she adds.

THE CASE FOR EQUITY

The most compelling reason, of course, is the need for everyone in a community to have access to the library, regardless of their ability to pay.

When EPFL set out to make a case for going fine-free, the library's Innovation Team interviewed staff at other systems that had eliminated fines, reviewed those libraries' policies and procedures, and looked internally at how much revenue EPFL's fines were generating (in this case, less than one quarter of one percent of the overall budget). A public advisory council of city residents offered input from a patron perspective. Finally, the team gathered statistics on not only which neighborhoods were seeing the most fines collected but where the greatest number of blocked users lived—which proved to be in the library's lowest-income communities. (Similarly, SLCPL found that its three branches serving a predominantly lower-income population accounted for 14 percent of circulation and 32 percent of blocked cards.)

Erin Schmändt, director of the Caro Area District Library (CADL), MI, considered going fine-free for several years before deciding the library board would be open to the idea. The CADL service area is largely rural and low income, with a state mental hospital and a number of group homes in the area. Library policy was to block patrons who owed more than $10 not only from checkouts but from in-library computer use; in a community with low Internet access, this impacted everyone from schoolchildren to job hunters.

Schmändt gathered articles about libraries that had made the transition, printed them out, and made packets for her board members in September 2017. When the board met in October it had some reservations, chiefly about losing revenue. She crunched the numbers to show that the library would only lose $2,000 a year out of a $515,000 budget—an amount the library could easily absorb—and stressed that the library would still bill for lost items. That November, the seven-member board agreed to a trial period of one year, which was implemented on January 1.

Although that year is not yet over, Schmändt doesn't imagine the board will want to return to collecting fees. "I have fewer people in collections than I did in the past," she notes, pointing out that since the spring, card sign-ups are up by about 50 percent.

Still, it's the stories that resonate most. Shortly after CADL waived fines, Schmändt recalls, a girl came in who would be starting at the nearby middle school that fall. A constant reader, she had racked up so many fines that her parents had taken away her library card. "And she was just ecstatic that we were going fine-free," says Schmändt. "She…said, 'I'm going to be reading so much, I'll be here after school every day!' She was so happy to come back." ■

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