

Fort Bragg Branch Library 2021 / Branch Librarian Report / Dan Hess

The Fort Bragg Library reopened its doors in March 2021, nearly a year after the pandemic forced us to close to the public. During the closure we switched to Curbside Service and our patrons kept us very busy filling bags of books and movies. At times we circulated 5000 items a month from our trusty lobby. But everyone wanted to move the show back indoors.

As the trees came into flower, we opened our doors. Door count statistics started rising—from 130 that first month to over 300 people on our busiest days. Our origami expert, Kathy Silva, welcomed folks back with a take-away butterfly craft for all ages. Many butterflies fluttered out the door. This prompted us to join the nationwide library trend of “Take and Make Crafts.” We now hand out over 60 bags each month. (A local retired teacher adds to the fun by offering free learning packets, which we distribute from the children’s room.)



Ocean Wave Quilters gave a North Coast welcome to our patrons with a colorful exhibit of tie-dyed quilts. Soon after, quilter Sharon Lau brought quilts depicting Historic Buildings of Mendocino Town. In spring, we were honored to receive *The Art of Discovering Whales* by local artist, Larry Foster. (Larry created the life-sized whale models kids climb on at Lawrence Hall of Science and near the Monterey Bay Aquarium. The book is a great addition to the books we display each year during Whale Week!) In March, we did a music video tribute to labor icon, César Chávez on his March Birthday. Local musician, Roy Helsing, performed Mexican-American tunes on accordion. In April we celebrated National Poetry Month in several ways:

Daniel Barash performed a virtual shadow puppet show based on nursery rhymes. We recorded original Wildflower Poems (via Zoom) and posted on our Youtube channel. Throughout the pandemic and to the present time, our Poetry Writing Workshop has met via email, while Poetry Open Mic meets over Zoom. Our adults also enjoy rousing discussions at the monthly online Book Club, where attendance runs between 8 and 15. Open doors at the library were a happy sign to all. One mother and daughter got the word out to Facebook friends with a shared post reaching over 1000 people! In spring, we met new CSA Director, Deb Fader Samson.



Summer Reading was a big hit in Fort Bragg! Kids made beautiful chalk art drawings outside the library with the summer reading theme: Reading Colors Your World. 233 signed up and 121 finished the game. Final prizes were free books and gift certificates to local ice cream and cookie shops. We finished SRP on July 23 with Coventry and Kaluza. 120 people attended the outdoor event. Safe Passage, a local family advocacy group, tabled at our event, collecting books to distribute to youth at the start of the school year. In summer, we returned to Farmers Market, promoting our programs and services to locals and tourists.

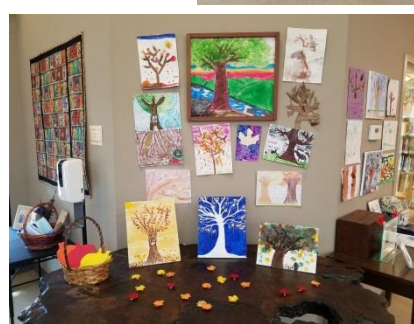
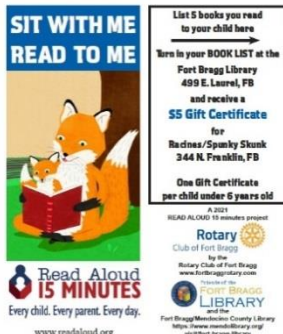


During Library Card Sign-up Month in September, Fort Bragg staff did outreach downtown and all month to recruit new signups, offering a cookie coupon incentive. 30 coupons were given out, including many first-time sign-ups by local teens. We sent 600 emails to inactive users, asking them if they wished to reactivate. 110 users said, "Yes;" while many of the "Nos" had moved out of the area and missed our library! The Library celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with craft bags, stories and book display. During Banned Books Week, we had hot display of banned and challenged books. Fort Bragg City Council created a brilliant proclamation opposing Censorship

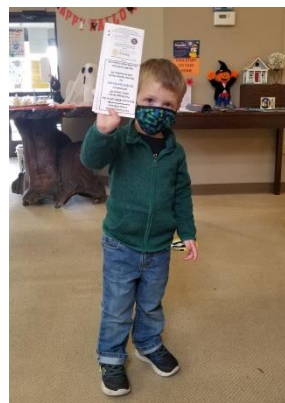
and celebrating the Freedom to Read! Librarian, Dan Hess, and LAB member, Carolyn Schneider, received the proclamation from the Mayor. Fort Bragg Advocate News printed a story and photo, showing library staff and their favorite banned books.



October at Fort Bragg Library is focused on Halloween! Rotary Club of Fort Bragg sponsored a Read Aloud contest, where families who read 5 books to their children (under 6) won a \$5.00 gift certificate to Spunky Skunk Toystore. In good weather, we hold our Preschool Story time outside, moving it just inside the meeting room door if it's raining. For Spooktacular Saturday, we told spooky stories, gave away craft and goody bags, and hosted an all-day costume parade.



November was the season of Trees and Leaves, the theme of our Children's Art Show. Nearly 20 children made art to decorate the library. We bought new weatherproof floor runners. A generous quilter donated a book-themed quilt which is on display above our mask and cleaning station. A benefactor helped the library purchase a Rapid Reads collection for new adult readers and ESL Learners. The Friends' Book Endowment fund made it possible to add fifty early reader books to our new shelves and replace our entire collection of Shakespeare plays!



Fort Bragg Branch
Mendocino County Library
499 East Laurel Street
Fort Bragg CA 95437

707-964-2020
www.mendolibrary.org
www.fortbragglibrary.org
Facebook: fortbragglibrary