The Library Leader
San Francisco Public Library Annual Report Fiscal Year 2019-2020

eLibrary Interest Explodes
With Covid Shutdown, Library pivots to provide digital access

As the months stretched into spring in March, the virus went on stage in the Library. The Library was forced to shut down, but the Library continued to provide services online. Library patrons could access the Library's rich and varied collection of online resources, from streaming movies to virtual storytimes. The Library's website was a hub for online resources, providing access to e-books and e-magazines. As a result, the Library saw a significant increase in e-library usage. In April, the Library reported a 200% increase in e-library usage compared to the same period in 2019.

Library Steps Up in City's Time of Need
The Show Must Go On! Storytimes Continue Despite Library Closure

San Francisco Public Library Storytimes have been postponed due to the lockdown to ensure the Library's safety and the well-being of its patrons. However, the Library has continued to provide online storytimes. Patrons can access the Library's storytimes through its website, where they can find a schedule of virtual storytimes. The Library has also launched a new program called "Library at Home," which provides free resources and activities for children.

A Night to Remember
SFPL Goes Fabulously Fine Free

The Library Spreads the Love of Reading at Mayor's Annual Toy & Book Festival

New Virtual Library Lets Patrons #LibraryFromHome

From Drab to Fab — sfpl.org Gets a Makeover

Dear Susan

One City One Book Events Draw Record Crowds

VOWS: Reunited and It Feels So Good

Summer Stride Celebrates the Outdoors

Summer Interns Step Up

The I Love My Librarian Award goes to ...

2019 Library of the Year Winner

Top 10 Circulated eBooks and eAudiobooks

Advancing Racial Equity at the Library and Beyond

Questionable Questions

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Letter from the City Librarian

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PRE-PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
FASHION

From Drab to Fab — SFPL.org Gets a Makeover

According to Chief Information Officer Michael Lian, "The new site boasts"

In January 2020, San Francisco Public Library unveiled its redesigned website, sfpl.org. This update represented the first major revision to the Library's site since 2010.

SFPL Goes Fabulously Fine Free

On September 16, 2019, SFPL had exciting news to share: it eliminated overdue fines for all Library patrons, a monumental step in reducing barriers and living up to its commitment to free and equal access to its communities.

In addition, the Library erased all outstanding overdue fines from patrons' records, thereby restoring access to many patrons who have need of the Library's resources.

Nationwide, elimination of overdue fines in libraries had several positive outcomes:

- Hypnosis and increased patron access to materials and services
- Reduction of the inequitable impact of overdue fines
- Improved patron relationships with the library
- Optimization of library staff time and increased staff efficiency

This move was made possible through SFPL's partnership and work with the San Francisco Financial Services Project of the Treasurer's Office. The two resolutions went before the Board

"Your efforts at inclusiveness of our whole community, not just some of us, is an ongoing inspiration. (I am very clear that this requires a whole list of wisdom and on-going hard work for the staff from top to bottom.)"

— Linda Morrow, patron

Continued on A21
POST-PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTS
QUESTIONABLE QUESTIONS

The TIP Line (415) 557-4450 is a telephone ready-reference service where librarians at the
Main Library are available Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., and Sunday, 12 – 6 p.m.
Once in awhile, we receive some interesting and curious questions.

Illustrations by Michelle McKell

"You've been extremely busy. Is my library card still good?"

"Can you look up my address on Google Earth and see if it looks like I am growing old?"

"Do you have any cookbooks on the subject: Artless Side Dish?"

"No. We can't back up a minute later.

"Can you try this recipe: Filled Ball Recipe?"

"It is better to live from SF to Oakland or SF to Treasure Island, and what's the phone number for the City Council because I think they should come with me."

"Can you give me the phone number for the people who destroyed images?"

"What your old doctors stop taking babies on the boat where they are born?"

DEAR SUSAN

What we gain by preserving the present

Dear Susan,

I'm grappling with how we, as a society, will be able to explain this extraordinary time to future generations. Please help.

--STUCK INSIDE IN SF

Dear Susan, we often don't fully grasp the significance of the current events that shape us and our city, but when we look back at images and documents, we get a sense of what we lived through and its historical legacy. It's a good thing that the San Francisco Public Library thinks about these things for us so that we don't have to.

Located in the Main Library, the San Francisco History Center is the repository of the city's collective memory. Right now, the Center is actively acquiring all types of materials, in multiple formats, to build a collection that documents and preserves the collective experiences of San Francisco residents during the coronavirus era.

They want to know what is happening to you, your neighborhood, your school, and your workplace. I suggest you chronicle your experiences by putting on yourzeichnis hat and help them capture what is different in our world today, what we miss, what we've created to reflect our new reality and how we are communicating and living now.

The kinds of items they're looking for include photographs, blog posts, video or audio recordings, notices, signs or posters, including government notices or signs from private businesses, personal correspondence such as letters, emails, or postcards, community newspapers, and personal journal entries. You should also go about and send documentation about protests for racial equity and the horrible wildfires too. It's all part of our world today, and we need multiple perspectives to tell the story about what we are living through.

All submissions will be preserved in the City's official COVID-19 Community Time Capsule to be shared with the public, as well as remain in the City and County Archives of San Francisco (part of the San Francisco History Center) for long-term preservation.

If you are interested in sharing digital content, there is a submission form on their website.

I hope you consider sharing your experiences with the Library. Perhaps you can start with this letter.

Sincerely,
Susan Goldstein,
the City Archivist for San Francisco
The I Love My Librarian Award goes to… JANET TOM

Reference librarian at San Francisco Public Library, Janet Tom received a 2019 I Love My Librarian Award, administered by the American Library Association. Recognized for her leadership in her community and commitment to transforming lives, she is one of only 10 librarians in the country to receive this national honor.

Tom was nominated for her ability to bring taboo subjects out of the dark and discuss them with care and respect. Her innovative 'Death and Dying' program series was instrumental in helping community members deal with grief and dispelling the stigma around discussing mortality.

Her nominators also noted Tom’s work with San Francisco Chinese Alzheimer’s Association to create a Cantonese/English bilingual forum for elders and their caregivers. According to one of her nominators, through community engagement, Tom "brings the best of the Bay Area together."

"We could not be more proud of Janet Tom. She is an exceptional librarian, focused on meeting patrons' needs for valuable information and resources, and is most deserving of this award," said City Librarian Michael Lambert.

2019 Library of the Year Winner
Talking Books and Braille Center Continues Service while Sheltering in Place

Each year the Library of Congress recognizes the work of state and local libraries that provide braille and talking-book services to people who cannot use print materials. The Talking Books and Braille Center (TBBC) was awarded Subregional Library of the Year for 2019 for great programming and attention to individuals and the community.

TBBC Program Manager Jane Gladly described the unique work her department does: "Like the rest of SFPL, we offer great programming and exhibitions—including music jams, book clubs, audio-described movies, craft, games, braille storytimes, tech workshops and school visits. But another way we stand out is in offering intensive 1-to-1 attention and we know many of our patrons very well. We look for other sources for audiobooks and work out how to play them on various devices. We regularly spend upwards of half an hour on the phone with a patron, particularly shelter of their homes. They also offer virtual programs. Sheltering In Place also further complicated due to the fact that many websites do not meet

- 815 active individual patrons
- 65 institutional partners, e.g., the Jail and Reentry services, the Veterans’ Administration, schools, elder residences and day centers and SFPL branches
- Circulation FY19-20: 29,706
- Circulation during COVID: more than 5200 books including ILL and BARO
- Library by Mail circ: 1,334
- Patron contacts: approx. 3000
Advancing Racial Equity at the Library and Beyond

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." - James Baldwin

Public libraries have a unique and vital role to play in advancing equity and addressing social divides. This means taking a closer look at our services and being honest about how our institution has failed to help advance racial equity. In recent years, San Francisco Public Library has made a concerted effort to help the racial equities both within and outside the organization. Since 2016, the Library has taken active steps to expand our workforce to include more Minority and Women employees, with a focus on diversifying the library’s ranking levels as well.

The Committee’s mission states: "SFPL will use a racial equity lens to identify and respond to past and current disparities in order to better serve the needs of our communities. We believe the library belongs to everyone and will work on policies and programs to promote race equity so that all people feel welcome in the library to fully participate and benefit from our services." 

"Racial Equity is not simply a black and white issue. It involves all of us," said Shana Sherman. "We hope to really dig into the data to see where inequities exist in our library culture that we can address. We are all in this together. We all have to work together if we want to make change."

Office issued a citywide Racial Equity Framework, a document ordering the City's vision, goals, and overarching strategies to address racism and racial disparities and advance racial equity in the City with a focus on the work of City government. The framework includes metrics by which departments, through Racial Equity Action Plans, can demonstrate after attending the workshop, one participant said that the would “step up” her conversations about this topic with her child and “get more involved at school for implementing changes.”

Another attendee said, “I will search for a structured guideline that can be used to explain to my children. This race is a social construct. A brief overview of how racism and the oppression with Committee President, Dr. Mary Wurdall-Chism, both the host on drafting a statement championing inclusivity and supporting the spirit's inclusivity movement. In the statement, Dr. Wurdall-Chism indicated that, "You and colleagues, neighbors and French have spent lifetime living with anxiety and uncertainties which in turn led..."
Fiscal Year 2020 Budget (in millions)

- Labor: $97.14
- Capital: $29.01
- Collections: $17.62
- Services of Other Depts.: $12.41
- Non-Personnel: $8.20
- Materials & Supplies: $3.94
- BLIP Debt Service: $1.72
- Equipment: $1.55
- Total: $171.59
FRIENDS OF SFPL

Grant Expenditures FY 19-20
Friends of the San Francisco Public Library provided $454,450 in direct support for programs, services, equipment and fiscal sponsorship in the following areas:

- Children and youth programs, including Summer Stride
- The Mix at Main teen media center
- Connected Community, system-wide adult programs
- Grants to branches for crafts, wellness and cultural programs
- Professional development training for library staff
- One City One Book and the Effie Lee Morris Lecture
- Collections and programs at affinity centers at the Main (The Bridge, Hormel LGBTQIA, Latino Hispanic, Chinese American, Filipino and Stegner Centers)
- History, art and literary exhibitions
- Enhanced marketing of Library programs and services, including At the Library
- Emergency expenditures for PPE for SFPL staff

Friends-supported programs at SFPL were impacted in the fourth quarter due to the City health orders and branch closures, beginning in March.
THANK YOU SFPL STAFF