You Bring Learning with LEGO to Your Libraries

Four times a week around your library system LEGO take over. Ten to thirty kids meet at a branch with a programming librarian, and at Scotts Valley and Garfield Park, a volunteer facilitator, break out the LEGO and start learning.

Catherine Workman, the Person in Charge at Garfield Park Library, says she likes seeing the energy of all the kids working together. In her small branch the program is set up in the middle of the computers, but the adults don’t mind. Programs like the LEGO club in the library allow kids to explore and innovate while learning the basic fundamentals of various educational disciplines. A few weeks ago at the Garfield Park Library the kids learned how to make catapults. “The computers were being used while the LEGO club were testing their catapults. Not all the pieces avoided the adults and no one was upset. Everyone was having a good time and enjoying the space,” remembers Catherine.

The catapult day is one of volunteer facilitator Steve Mead’s favorite sessions too. The kids “enjoyed the ability to fling things with rubber bands and LEGO.”

The clubs are more than just play. Steve proudly tells of past sessions when the kids learned about gear reductions, of how he brought in motors and the kids made four-legged LEGO creatures that walked across the table. This first taste whets the participant’s appetite for robotics.

The energy on a mild December afternoon at Garfield park was high as Steve split the kids into two groups, one to build a defending castle, and the other to build battering rams to destroy it. The teams were excited and asking Steve for advice on how to fortify their creations. This workshop is brought to your community kids in part by your donations, which are used to purchase LEGO kits for your libraries. Please consider donating to support great programs like this!
Families enjoy reading together at the Capitola Library. Your donations bought books that families in all of Cruz County. We have an energized bicycle designed, all-weather lightweight bicycle trailer awarded SCPL’s grant project, Santa Cruz County…a bicycle bookmobile!

A bicycle bookmobile is perfect for Santa Cruz Public Libraries…members are invited to come vote on our bylaws. January 15th 9 am at the Downtown Library. Email Cordelia.n@fscpl.org for more information.

It’s not too late to RSVP for our Relax at Home with a Good Book New Year’s Eve Gala! To reserve your spot visit www.fscpl.org/goodbook and give a hostess gift today.

Please consider donating your gently used books to benefit your libraries! You can bring your donations to any library while they are open.
Plans taking Shape for Library Facilities
Ballot Measure in June 2016
Cynthia Mathews

The history of our local libraries has always been one of change and improvement—driven by evolving technologies, needs and opportunities, and supported by a loyal base of friends and patrons.

In recent years, however, it’s become increasingly clear that many of our branches are outdated, structurally deficient, or not adequate for the library needs of today.

In 2013 the Library Joint Powers Board commissioned a Facilities Master Plan to provide detailed analysis of the condition and needs of the different branches, and the anticipated costs.

Now, heading into the new year, our system stands at the threshold of a truly exciting opportunity to carry out that plan—bringing our facilities up to date through major renovations, upgrades and even entirely new facilities where needed.

As this newsletter goes to press, the jurisdictions that comprise the Library partnership (County of Santa Cruz, cities of Santa Cruz, Capitola and Scotts Valley), are taking steps to place a revenue measure on the June 2016 ballot to fund a carefully selected package of necessary and long-overdue improvements.

A separate political campaign committee is being formed to pass the facilities ballot measure. Early polling shows strong public support for library services in general, and for funding improved facilities.

Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries have made a contribution to launch the campaign. Contact us if you want to learn more and please donate today to improve your library for all your future needs!