

May 2020
Library Stakeholder Report
Jennifer Weeks, Acting County Librarian

Library and Patrons Embrace a Digital World

As we close out our seventh week of shelter in place, we have made significant changes to the way we offer library services in this “new normal”. Since March 16 when the shelter in place mandate took effect, all library staff have been teleworking in accordance with the county directive to flatten the curve and keep everyone safe.

Something you may not be aware of, SCCLD staff are county employees and all county employees are Disaster Service Workers. We’ve had many of our pages, clerks and warehouse staff called in to serve as Disaster Service Workers and we are very proud of the important work they are doing on behalf of Santa Clara County.



What seems like overnight, we have moved from a physical world to an all-digital world to serve our patrons. This includes providing:

- Technology, training and support to staff to successfully telework
- Access and expansion of the digital collection
- LIVE online programs Mon-Sat
- Call in book clubs for those who prefer to use a phone over a computer
- Phone, chat and email reference and account service 7 days/week from 10am-6pm
- Website refreshed frequently to focus on all digital materials and new services
- Weekly email communications to patrons ([sign up to receive our weekly emails](#))

All of this has resulted in even more engaged library users with the following:

- eCards: Over 2,300 new eCards in the month of April and almost 3,600 since we started shelter in place
- Student eAccounts: Access to the student portal increased from 3,000 views in Feb to 9,000 in March and over 11,500 views in April
- Streaming Video: Patrons are enjoying streaming video with our numbers doubling
- Chat: Patrons are appreciating our chat service as our chat volume had tripled
- Phone: We’ve implemented a new centralized phone service to be able to receive and answer calls from patrons remotely from centralized phone numbers

- eBooks: Our patrons continue to enjoy reading as our eBook circulation increased from 60,000 to 150,000 checkouts

WHAT'S NEW:

We've continued to add to the list of resources, programs and services we provide. Some notable additions include:

- New phone service to call and speak with a Librarian or Clerk live with reference or account questions. Our staff are available Monday through Sunday from 10am – 6pm to answer questions.
 - [Ask-a-librarian](#): (408) 540-3947
 - [Account questions](#): (408) 540-3945
- [School age programs](#): Storytime is a fun, engaging way for little ones to develop a love of literacy. In addition to the [family storytimes](#) that are offered Monday-Saturday, we're offering a special storytime on Tuesdays 5pm on Facebook LIVE for children ages 5+, plus book groups for school age kids
- [Teen Adulting 101](#): For our teens, we have a series of videos by the Founder of Life Launch on different topics important and relevant to teens.
- [STEAM](#): Science Technology Engineering Art Math programs are important to keep young minds developing. Our staff have started a STEAM program for school age kids.
- [Bilingual Storytime](#): We've implemented a weekly storytime in Spanish/English on Thursdays at 5pm and Mandarin/English on Fridays at 5pm. These special storytimes are very well attended!
- [ESL Conversation Clubs](#): Our ESL Conversation Clubs and ESL book club are by registration only and very quickly we found each of the classes had a waitlist for more to join. Each session allows 20 participants and we currently offer classes 3 days/week. We will continue to expand the number of classes we offer in May
- Programs for Adults: So the kids and teens don't have ALL of the fun, we have virtual [film clubs for adults](#), [SCORE to learn how to start a business](#), [book groups for all ages](#), and more.



SCCLD Is Ahead of the Curve

We are fortunate that as the entire world was forced to shift to a virtual world, SCCLD had already made some key investments and implementations that helped us make the turn quickly and effectively. We had completed the following critical initiatives prior to COVID-19:

- Launched the brand new website with many new features and staff enabled updates
- Recently trained our staff on how to add events and blogs to the new website
- Designed and implemented an online Library eCard registration platform
- Implemented Sharepoint intranet for safe internal file sharing and communication
- Implemented Office365 for secure, remote access to work files
- Purchased laptop carts containing 12 laptops for each of the community libraries
- Conducted a study to identify a new, centralized phone service provider

All of these actions have paid off in allowing SCCLD to successfully telework from home and provide valuable library services to our patrons—virtually. Our IT staff quickly went into action to configure the laptops we had for public programs to make these available for staff to conduct work from home. And now, our talented library staff are fielding patron chat, email and phone questions, have increased the frequency of blogging, are conducting live virtual programs, posting on social media, and can access their work files and take valuable training courses from home. And to highlight this work, our virtual library team skillfully redesigned the homepage and other key pages of the website to focus solely on the virtual services and online resources we currently offer.



Our patrons are fortunate that we built our custom eCard registration platform for residents without a library card to instantly receive an eCard with the Santa Clara County Library District as we shelter in place. This card gives the user immediate access to borrow all online materials available through SCCLD.org.

And finally, since we had already worked with the 13 public K-12 school districts within our Library District to provide all 90,000 students with a Student eAccount, all students in our district can access our digital resources to support at home learning.

What's Next?

SCCLD is working on identifying what steps are needed to reopen when the time is right, with a safe, phased approach. We will map out what services we can offer according to the county health guidelines for our staff and patrons to be successful. We have a team working on this plan which will be informed by information from IMLS, other leading library systems, ALA, PLP and more. We will be updating you through the commission meetings or by email when our plans are ready to be shared.

Please enjoy this short video we created for you. If you would like a copy of the video to share, please contact Diane Roche at droche@sccl.org. [Thank you for your support of the library. We miss you.](#)