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Children's and Teen's Books & Media Go Fine-Free

Santa Cruz Public Libraries Sesquicentennial Back-to-School Celebration

August 22, 2018 —SANTA CRUZ, CA—The Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) is celebrating 150 years of library service by giving the gift of reading to every child and teen in the county. Starting on September 10th, 2018 all children's and teen's books and media will become fine-free.

It is well documented that access to a library improves student success. According to Heather Norquist, SCPL's East Region Manager who leads the K-12 Outreach Team, "We have been working on a variety of ways to improve children's and teen's access to the reading materials and learning tools they need to succeed in life. We have brought together a team of Librarians to focus on K-12 outreach to strengthen our connections with county schools. We have purchased subscriptions for digital eBooks accessible to school libraries. These are several approaches that help us further our goal to have every child in Santa Cruz County receive a library card."

One way to improve children's access to library materials is to remove the burden of overdue fees. Library Director Susan Nemitz says, "We weighed what was more important to our mission, collecting these fees or improving access for children. As we reflect on the important changes in library services over the last 150 years, we felt that this was an appropriate change for a 21st century library."

The fine-free status only applies to children's and teen's materials – not accounts. Adult materials will continue to generate overdue fees even if checked out on a child's card. Individuals will continue to be responsible for damaged and lost items -- children's, teen's and adult. After a one-time amnesty removal of account charges relating to children's and teen's materials that will occur on September 9th, everyone should be starting with a clean slate. Children's and teen's materials go fine-free on September 10th.

If overdue fees have prevented your child from getting a card or reading more books, now is the time to visit your library. Apply for your free card today and stop by any branch on September 10th to make your own sesquicentennial party hat!

ABOUT THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM:

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) system delivers information, education, enrichment and inspiration through a network of ten neighborhood library branches, a web-based digital library, a Bookmobile and community-based programs. SCPL serves children, teens and adults with innovative programming, professional services and community facilities that spark imagination and support discovery. Residents can explore a wide range of interests from academic research, book clubs and literacy programs to digital photography, locally-produced music and local history. Branch locations include Aptos, Boulder Creek, Branciforte, Capitola, Downtown Santa Cruz, Felton, Garfield Park, La Selva Beach, Live Oak and Scotts Valley. Learn more about SCPL at SantaCruzPL.org or via Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and YouTube.

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