

David Hagopian
Senior Librarian / Acting Branch Manager
Encino-Tarzana Branch Library

Annual Report - November 16, 2011

This has been an exciting and interesting year for the Encino-Tarzana Branch and the Los Angeles Public Library. 2011 started with the campaign to pass Measure L, which secured a larger portion of City funds for the Library. Friends of the Library members, Library staff and Library lovers and supporters citywide waged an enthusiastic, aggressive campaign to pass the Measure in March. Within a few months, the Los Angeles Public Library was able to restore Monday service to all branches and Central Library with the hiring of as-needed librarians, clerk-typists and messenger clerks. As the economy improves and more money comes to the City of Los Angeles more hours and services will be restored. None of this will happen at once, but 2011 felt like the beginning of the "return" of the Library.

The Encino-Tarzana Branch Library continues to be one of the busiest. We consistently achieved the 2nd to 5th highest circulation of all 72 branches in the system throughout 2011. Our Persian and Russian language materials collections have increased in popularity, and we have added much-desired new books to the collection using Friends of the Library funds. Our Adult, Young Adult and Children's collections were also well used by our patrons this past year; and our DVD collection continues to be one of the most popular and eclectic in the West Valley Region.

With Friends of the Library funds we were able to purchase hundreds of the best selling books and popular movies of 2011 to add to our collection. The Friends also provided an additional \$6,000.00 to renew our popular Hot-Off-the-Press subscription, which gets new books into patrons' hands faster. In addition to these wonderful gifts, in 2011 the Friends replaced a work chair for the circulation desk, some metal chairs for the meeting room and three wooden chairs for the reading room. Additionally, they made it possible for us to purchase much-needed workroom supplies; a license to show feature length movies at our branch; and the funds to hire professional performers and provide refreshments and supplies for children's, young adult and adult programs.

We had some pretty great and memorable events and programs. One in particular was the Chip Thrash concert. On this day we gave teens what they wanted and it was loud. I was really pleased with this program and consider it a success because the teens who attended it had a great time. Teens are one of the most difficult groups to attract to the library and to literature, and if it takes a very loud concert to do, I'll do it. Other programs for teens this past year included a Robotics Demonstration; college exam preparations; and teen council meetings, where we invite their input on our teen collection and programming.

It is never difficult to attract kids to programs at the Encino-Tarzana Branch and we presented some pretty great children's programs in 2011. My favorites are the musicians and storytellers,

but other great programs were the African American Heritage presentation, magic shows, and an active volcano demonstration.

Some of our more memorable adult programs include How to Create a Life History; the League of Women voters, who spoke in February before the March election; money and financial management lectures; and documentary and foreign film movie screenings. Additionally, each month the Friends of the Library hold a Board of Directors meeting in our meeting room which is open to all and an excellent opportunity for people concerned about and interested in their community branch to come in and get involved.

Other notable events during the year have been an excellent Banned Books Week display, planned and presented by the Friends of the Library. This included literature about Banned Books Week, explaining why some books are banned by different groups and agencies, and bookmarks, and, of course, many of the books from the banned books list were available to borrow. In January the Friends hosted a lunch for Branch staff, which was attended by both appreciative library staff and Friends group members. In June, our neighbor, Monarch Village, consulted with the Friends again on Monarch's second annual "Cookout for Books" -- a buffet lunch for Friends and Library patrons along with a successful book donation drive for the Library. Also in June the Encino Neighborhood Council generously donated nearly \$2,000.00 worth of books to the branch.

The Encino-Tarzana Branch is very happy to receive donations. All year round our patrons donate their used books and movies to the Branch. We are very grateful to receive these gifts and resources. What we do not add to our collection, we pass on to our tireless volunteers who sort the books and sell them in the Friends Bookstore (located in the Library, usually keeping the same hours as the Branch) and at one of the four giant, two-day used book sales that they have during the year.

This year I have settled more into my position at the Branch. We have a very diverse group of library users and I have gotten to know them better and am more perceptive about the type of library and community center that they want. I enjoy hearing patrons' ideas and suggestions and what they think about our branch, our staff and the quality of our service. Many of the materials I buy and programs and services I consider come from patron suggestions. This year many patrons have asked about our extensive electronic media collection and how they can enjoy ebooks, audiobooks, music and videos on their various devices.

Patrons also tell me their views and feelings about the Los Angeles Public Library system as a whole. One of the remarks I heard frequently had to do with restoring Library service hours. Re-opening the Library on Mondays starting this past July was so important to the citizens of Los Angeles. People are pleased that the Library is on track to restore even more hours open to the public, to put more money into the materials and program budget and, especially, start to hire more staff. Our staff works so hard to provide the best service we can to the public but at a busy Branch such as this one, reduced staff is especially noticeable. In 2011 our Young Adult Librarian left us to pursue new challenges as manager at another busy branch. Her absence is strongly felt here because her knowledge of and expertise in young adult services was exemplary and admirable.

In addition to losing staff in 2011, we are also losing Barbara Leff as Friends' president. I am very sorry to see her retire. I am very fortunate that in my first experience working with a Friends group I could rely on a leader who was very supportive, full of excellent advice and suggestions, always willing to help out, and whose main goals and objectives were always focused on providing the Encino-Tarzana Branch with the resources it needs to serve the community. But I am also looking forward to working with Adele Druck, the new Friends President, starting in January 2012. She has long been active in the Friends group and is one of our most popular GAB volunteers.

I am confident that 2012 will be a great year for the Encino-Tarzana Branch, full of changes and opportunities. With funding for the Library secured by two thirds of Measure L voters, Library service can only get better as the economy strengthens. I look forward to working with patrons, volunteers, staff, and Library supporters in a variety of ways to continue providing excellent service to the community and moving forward with new and traditional Los Angeles Public Library goals. The Library is here for all to use and I encourage the community to come in and see what we have to offer.