

History of the Anaheim Public Library Bookmobile

On Valentine's Day 1958, the Bookmobile began service. The Bookmobile was the first branch of Anaheim Public Library, which at that time operated out of the Carnegie Library Facility, which now houses the Muzeo.

In the ensuing six decades since that first stop, the Bookmobile program has touched the lives and inspired a love of literature through the circulation of over 5,225,000 items during 2,200,000 patron visits. Since our morning school stops started in 1999, over 17,505 class visits to the Bookmobile have been made.

We have had four different vehicles over the years and in early 2019, we anticipate putting a new 38 foot gasoline RV Bookmobile on the road to replace the current 2005 Bookmobile.

The first Anaheim Public Library Bookmobile was added to the Library System through the efforts of Miss Elva Haskett in 1958. The vehicle was purchased for \$12,152. The first day of service was on Valentine's Day February 14, 1958 at Anaheim-Olive Road (now Lincoln Ave) and Placentia Avenue (now State College Blvd). On that Friday, 73 books were circulated. The total circulation for the first year in operation was 54,146 books of which two thirds were children's books. The circulation for the second year of service was 79,567 books.



On March 11, 1970 the second Bookmobile was purchased for \$32,000. This vehicle carried 5,000 books.



After the City of Anaheim built the Sunkist, Euclid and Canyon Hills Libraries the focus of Bookmobile service shifted to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) neighborhoods. Bookmobile Service's goal became supporting learning, literacy and reading in high-density, low-income neighborhoods with limited access to the Anaheim City Libraries. Barriers created by poverty, limited opportunities, and lack of transportation were alleviated by taking library programs, resources and services directly to neighborhoods and schools. During this time, 75% of Bookmobile patrons were children from preschool to 13. This Bookmobile serviced 32 stops per week. The vehicle was in service 6 days a week.

As the 1970 Bookmobile headed into the 1990's it was apparent a replacement vehicle was needed. The 1970 Bookmobile was officially retired from service January 29, 1994. It "died" before it could make its final run. It was turned over to the Anaheim Fire Department where it was overhauled and brought back to life to serve the City for several years as the City's Emergency Command Center.

The new tractor-trailer Bookmobile was purchased at the cost of \$137,916 and was put into service in January 31, 1994.



For four years running from 2001/02 to 2004/05, Anaheim's 1994 Bookmobile had the highest circulation of any single Bookmobile in California. Based on such high circulation, community appreciation, and need for Bookmobile services in additional neighborhoods, plans were made to purchase a second Bookmobile.

'Bookmobile 2' was purchased at a cost of \$285,574 as an alternative fuel vehicle, which met Air Quality regulations. The funding for this special vehicle and materials to fill it came from the Community Development Block Grant fund, California Public Library Fund, donations from the Anaheim Public Library Foundation, Friends of the Anaheim Public Library, Kiwanis, an air quality grant, and Anaheim Public Utilities. This 36-foot compressed natural gas (CNG) vehicle has energy efficient features. 'Bookmobile 2' went into service November 8, 2005.



Two Bookmobiles served Anaheim until the Summer of 2010, when the 1994 Bookmobile was taken out of service. Currently the Bookmobile program serves five different schools and fourteen neighborhoods. The majority of users of the Bookmobile program are elementary school age children. At the neighborhood stops, the Bookmobile is used by all ages including adults and teens. The collection includes homework support materials for students, and recreational reading, magazines, and DVD's for all ages.

In fiscal year 2016/17, Bookmobile circulated 77,597 items during 40,992 patron visits and answered 15,439 questions. 1248 classes visited the Bookmobile. Bookmobile had 159 programs at its stops with 3,949 in attendance. Bookmobile staff participated 19 special events with 7,662 people in attendance.

The Bookmobile program has been a proven and vital asset to the residents of Anaheim and we look forward to many more years of serving the library needs of the community.