

History of the Anaheim Public Library 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, limited English, 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 2009, 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, DVD's and Blu-Rays for all ages.

On February 14, 2018, we will be celebrated 60 years of service. In early 2019, we anticipate putting a new 38 foot gasoline RV Bookmobile on the road to replace the current 2005 Bookmobile. On March 12, 2019, the 2005 CNG Bookmobile retired from service and the new RV Mobile Library began service then next day.

Christened "Harvey, the RV" by Library Bookmobile Clerk, Rocio Dunn, the new Anaheim Public Mobile Library began service on March 13th, 2019 with the official dedication on National Bookmobile Day, April 10, 2019. Official kid reviews include: "Wow! This is heaven", "I'm staying here forever", "It's so beautiful", and "This is much better". This 38 foot gasoline RV is the fifth Bookmobile to serve the residents of Anaheim. The vehicle cost of \$210,081 came from a \$200,000 grant from Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG) and the remaining \$10,081 came from the City of Anaheim Public Works vehicle replacement fund. The Public Works vehicle replacement program also paid for the \$7500 graphics wrap, \$2,335 for extra books shelves and various finishing touches such as a bulletin board, adding extra shelving in cabinets, adding bracing in the storage area, creating extra key sets, etc. In addition, we were given generous donations of \$5,000 by the Kiwanis Club of Greater Anaheim and \$5,000 by the Orange County Community Foundation. These donations were used to purchase books for opening day collection and programming for the launch of new Bookmobile.



Annually, the Bookmobile circulates an average 70,000 items, during 40,000 patron visits. Since 1990, the Bookmobile program has checked out 2,728,034 items and answered 464,343 questions during 1,178,198 visits. Since our morning school stops started in 1999, over 18,658 class visits have been made.

The Bookmobile 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.