



LA COUNTY LIBRARY FOUNDATION

September 2023

Hi Library Champion,

Like you, I love a good story.

So when Kristi, my colleague in Library Youth Services, shared a picture of a winning design from the Library's 1982 third ever Annual Bookmark Contest that she'd gotten from librarian Jill, who in turn had gotten the picture from Janet, her hair stylist and the artist behind the bookmark some 40+ years ago, I was hooked.

Pretty soon I was on the phone with Janet - curious to know more about her design, her story since 5th grade, why the bookmark contest mattered.

Janet graciously agreed to share her **Library Story** with you, as well as an update of her 5th grade winning bookmark. Read on.

Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs through October 15th, is a great source of stories...and more. We're headed to the Chicano Resource Center on a

Virtual Field Trip, and making some side visits to Library activities, events, and Foto-East LA - plenty of ways to celebrate now and throughout the year.

We're also heading into Banned Books Week (October 1-7), in an increasing storm of book bans and challenges to ideas. Yes, a story goes with it.

Your Library is standing strong in support of the freedom to read, to explore, and to express oneself. To have free access to a spectrum of information, ideas, and other resources, building understanding about oneself and others.

With support from Library Champions - individuals, foundations, and corporate citizens - your Library Foundation is funding the Library's newest initiative, **Books Unbanned.**



This initiative will provide a **Books Unbanned Card** to any teen (13-18 years) throughout California, giving them free access to the Library's digital collection.

The Foundation will add to the Library's collection, with e-books and e-audiobooks that cover a range of topics and genres, including books that are banned.

The Library and Foundation are joining a national movement, started by the Brooklyn Public Library, followed by Seattle Public Library and now, joined by your Library, Boston Public Library and San Diego Public Library.

Learn more about this bold initiative [here](#).

You make a difference with your support - as a Library user, champion, and advocate.

Read on about a couple other programs you help fuel with your generous support - a wildly successful close to this year's **Summer Discovery Program** and...there's still time for you K-12 artists to apply...the Library's 44th **Annual Bookmark Contest!** Just think, this contest may launch a life of art, or undoubtedly, a good story or two.

You're a vital part of LA County Library - building connection, championing the right to read - forging a strong and vibrant community.

Thank you!

Andrea

Andrea Carroll
Executive Director

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P.S. [You make an impact with your gift](#). Thank you!

My Library Story: Janet B on how the bookmark contest fueled her artistic journey

"I'm a stylist at a salon in West Hollywood. I've been cutting Jill's hair for years. She's a librarian for LA County Library in the Santa Clarita area, and she often shares stories about her work.

One day it dawned on me that she might enjoy the fact that I had won the Library bookmark contest as a tween – in 1982.

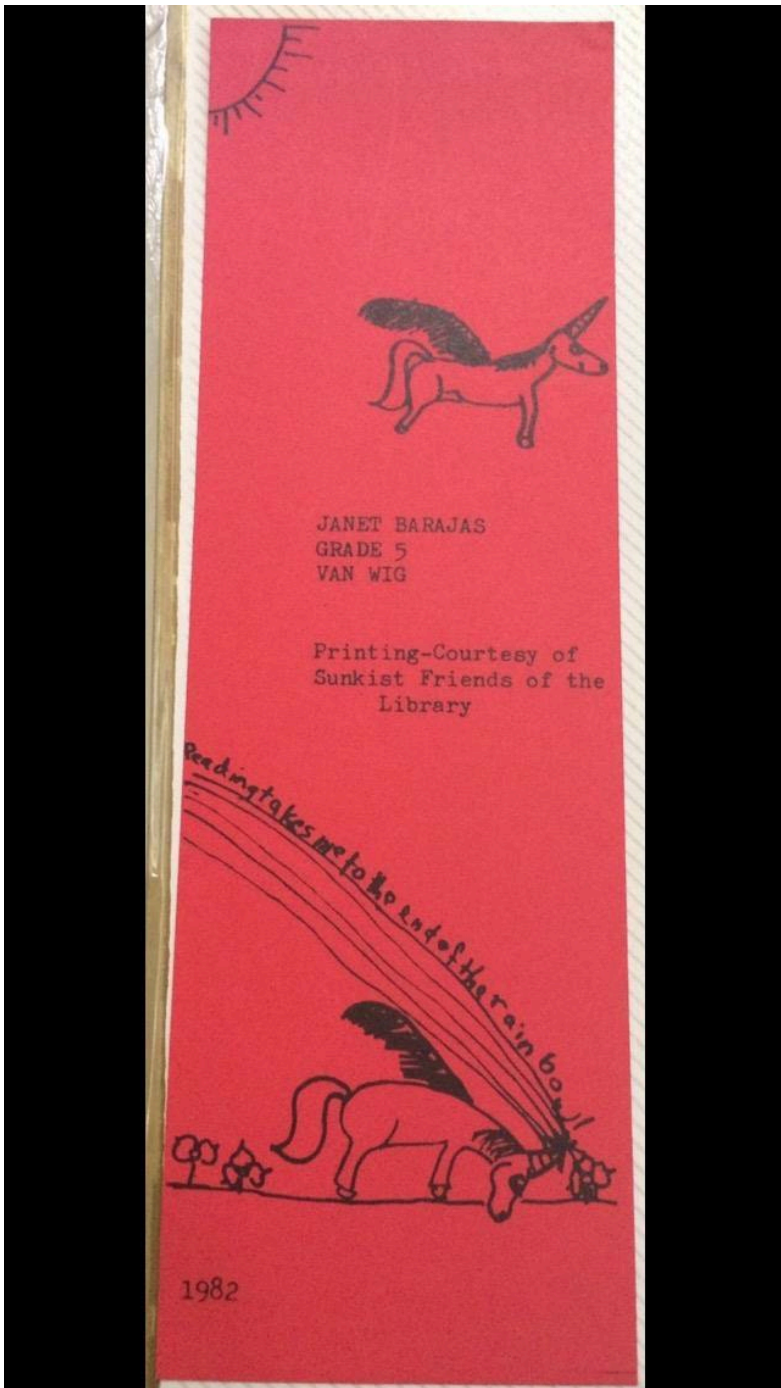


Image: Janet Barajas

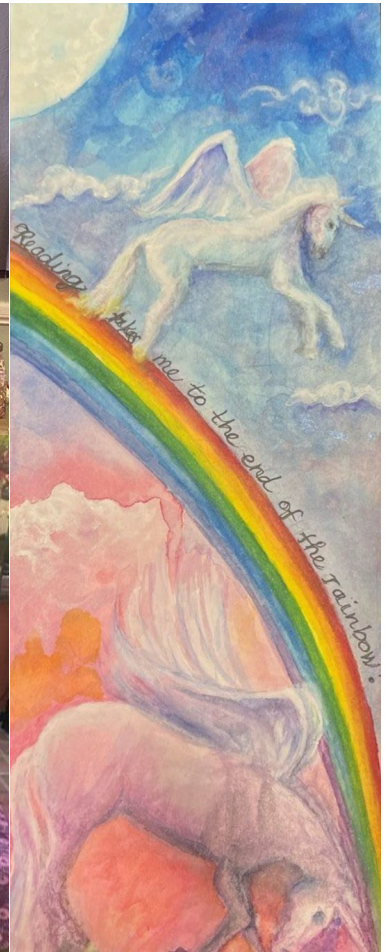
"When I was a child winning that contest, it meant the world to me. I was able to take my friends to a movie that had just come out, *Heidi's Song*. It may have been 10 of us that went, but it felt like we filled the whole theater.

I had so much joy that my heart could bring all of us together for this joyous occasion. This gave me the confidence to enter other contests.

Every contest that I entered from there on out, I won first place.

After high school, I got my first job and my life started happening. I started with my career and it wasn't until 2018 that my passion for art and drawing reignited again.

I painted a photo of my friend Enrico's dog, and I have been painting ever since with constant commissions. I was so inspired by all my commissions that I went to Rome to study oil painting for two years in a row with masters Natalia Fabia and Sean Cheetham at the Rome Workshops.



Images: Janet Barajas

"Since then, my understanding and appreciation has grown. I consider myself a much more serious artist, doing and following my true and original passion. Only through this, I feel as if my life has been set on fire. As Rumi says, I have also found those who fan my flames."

Through reading, study and sheer determination, I find myself in a very happy place. After talking with Jill, I was inspired to re-create the painting I made as a 10 year old. I found joy and wonderment in my new creation.

Thank you LA County Library for being the original "fan to my flame."

What's your Library Story?

[We want to know.](#)

[Read more Library stories here.](#)

Program Spotlight: *44th Annual Library Bookmark Contest*



Know a K-12 student who expresses themselves through art?

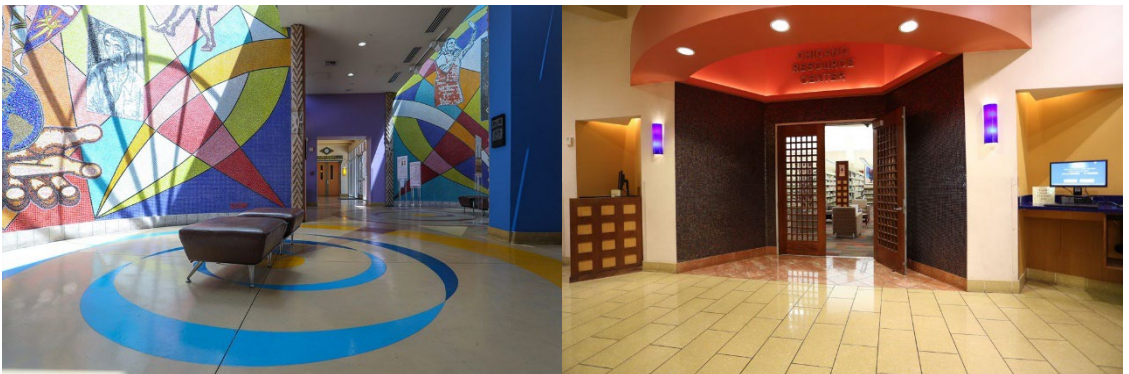
There's still time to enter the [44th annual bookmark contest!](#) Let your creativity soar - draw, paint, or design an image for a bookmark. You can celebrate books, readings, libraries, whatever you choose.

Each library will choose local winners by grade levels, and the Board of Supervisors will choose the grand prize winners - the winning 20 designs will be made into bookmarks and available throughout the county in 2024. Curious about past winners? Check out winning designs [here](#).

Click here for an [online application](#) or pick one up at your nearest library.

With you, the Library Foundation is supporting creative expression with this vital program - thank you!

Virtual Field Trip: Chicano Resource Center & beyond



Left: mosaics in the entry of East Los Angeles Library. Right: inside the library, the Chicano Resource Center. images: LA County Library

[Hispanic Heritage Month](#) (September 15-October 15) is in full swing at your Library - with activities, events, booklists, and more - to recognize and celebrate the culture, contributions, and heritage of Hispanic Americans.

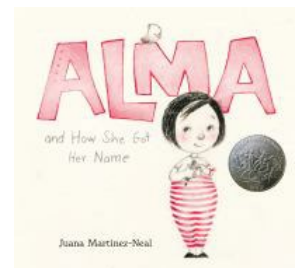
Consider a physical trip to the Library's Chicano Resource Center (CRC), a cultural gem at the East Los Angeles Library. It's a great example of the Library's work to celebrate diverse cultures all year long.

The CRC, established in 1976, delights academic researchers, as well as community members, with a collection rich with information for and about the Chicano (Mexican American) community and, increasingly, other Latin American communities for whom LA County is home.

You can explore hard to find materials - English and Spanish language newspapers (on microfilm) that date to the 1800s, skim historical clippings about East Los Angeles, pull from a feast of poetry and fiction titles. Get a book and settle in for a read in the tranquil and art adorned resource center.

CRC librarian Daniel Hernandez, like the Library's three other Resource Center librarians (Black Resource Center, Asian Pacific Resource Center, and American Indian Resource Center), supports cultural and historical programming for the entire system - all year long.

Read on for some of the ways you can explore the varied and rich cultures and histories that comprise the Hispanic American experience.



Ready to explore? Your Library has you covered. Whether you're ready to head to your Library or you'd prefer to stay at home, you've got everything you

need for a fiesta. DIY activity ideas include creating your own [papel picada](#), or exploring [mariachi](#) with film and music.

Enjoy a [read aloud by a librarian](#) on the Library's YouTube channel, or head to a library for some hands-on fun and learning for all ages - check out the [events listings here](#).



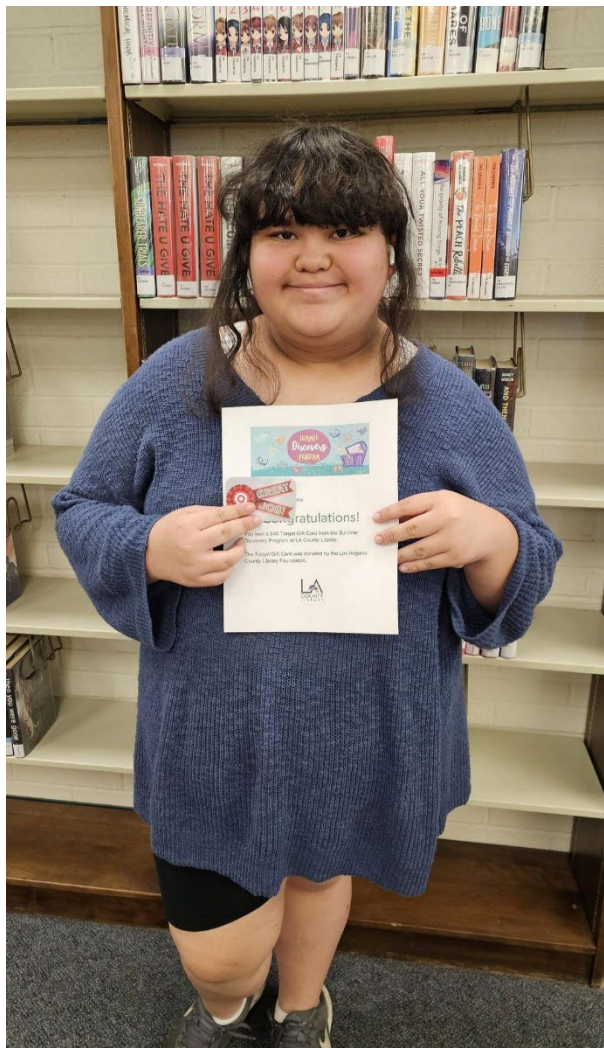
Left: Strand Theatre 1935. credit: D. Seikard/Foto-East LA. Right: Phillips Music Company 1948. credit: K. Taniguchi/Foto-East LA

[Foto East LA](#) is one of a number of Library digital community history projects. Take a visual stroll through one of the nation's most culturally rich communities. From everyday events to extraordinary moments, your Library is gathering historical images taken by locals who have experienced East LA firsthand. Have photos you'd like to share from before 1980? Submit them [here](#).

Where do you want to go next?

[Let us know!](#)

Program Spotlight: *Summer Discovery Program* and 49,795 Library Champs



Images: LA County Library

Pictured: a few lucky winners of awards for reading, exploring, and learning with the Summer Discovery Program.

Success! The Library's Summer Discovery Program is always a joy, a mix of reading and activities geared to get EVERYONE - from babies and toddlers to centenarians - reading and exploring during those hot summer months.

This year was a resounding success - 49,795 Library champions read more than 50,000 books and completed thousands of activities. With you, the Foundation helped get the word out and engaged readers of all ages with participation prizes for children, teens, and adults.

With student reading and math scores at an all time low, and people young and old struggling with mental health challenges and feelings of isolation, Library programs that connect, like Summer Discovery, make a powerful and lasting impact. Thank you for caring and supporting your Library and community.

Thank you, Library Champion!
You make a difference.

[Give Today](#)



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