

Outdoor updates at Sunset Library add versatility to visitor experience

By Barbi Walker-Walsh

While National Library Week has drawn to a close, Sunset Library in West Chandler continues to be a thriving hub of activity, offering a plethora of engaging programs and services for all ages.

Now, with an updated patio area, patrons can not only broaden their access to reading materials but get a refreshing breath of springtime air via the recent outdoor improvements.

Established in 2000 through a collaborative effort, Sunset transcends the conventional idea of a library, or serves as a catalyst for community connection, education and sustainability.

Beyond the multifaceted hub with an extensive collection of books, Sunset Library provides a range of amenities and services to cater to diverse interests and needs. Visitors can take advantage of after-hours book returns, eco-friendly bike racks, and public computers for research and learning. From fax services to reservable meeting spaces, the library ensures convenience for its patrons. Printing and scanning services further enhance the efficiency of everyday tasks.

Programs empower sustainability, and Sunset Library's commitment to sustainability is evident through initiatives such as a seed library, which allows residents to access seasonal seeds for sustainable gardening practices. Additionally, the library hosts events like plarn drop-ins, where participants create sleeping mats out of plastic bags, contributing to both environmental conservation and community welfare.

The library's dedication to community extends to those without homes, with



Recent patio expansion at Sunset branch library provide an added dimension to visitors' experience.

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

regular sessions led by so called city outreach navigators to assist individuals experiencing homelessness or those in need of additional resources.

For those looking to give back while conserving and living more sustainably? Visit the library for drop-ins and work with others to create sleeping mats out of everyday grocery bags.

Plarn = plastic + yarn sleeping mats are distributed to those in need, also helping to reduce plastic in landfills. This program is made possible by the donation of two looms by DSquared Homes for the Homeless.

Through these efforts, Sunset Library serves as a beacon of compassion and support, fostering inclusivity and social cohesion within the community.

The library also encourages teens to think about the environment with its educational programs.

In alignment with its mission to promote lifelong learning, the library offers an array of educational programs, including STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) events.

Celebrating occasions like Earth Day, these events engage participants in hands-on activities to deepen their understanding of environmental stewardship and scientific concepts.

The patio experience also continues to evolve. Recent enhancements to the patio have transformed the area into a welcoming oasis for patrons to relax, socialize and participate in educational programs. With seating areas, a water bottle refill station, and plans for additional amenities such as benches and a shade canopy, the patio is designed to serve as an extension of the library's commitment to creating inclusive and inviting spaces for all.

With the creation of StoryWalk and Teen Spaces, the library says it continues to innovate with new offerings. StoryWalk is said to be a way to engage kids with stories while enjoying the beauty and mind-relaxing outdoors. Additionally, the library has dedicated a space for teens, providing games, creative outlets and study areas tailored to their interests and needs.

Sunset Library's enduring commitment to community engagement, sustainability, and education exemplifies its role as more than just a repository of books. As patrons continue to benefit from its diverse offerings and programs, the library remains a cornerstone of the West Chandler community, hoping to enrich lives and foster connections long after National Library Week has passed.

For information and events check out the website: chandlerlibrary.org/locations/6/