Programs & Exhibits

December 2022 through February 2023
Library Hours
Monday to Tuesday
9 am to 6 pm
Wednesday
9 am to 8 pm
Thursday to Saturday
9 am to 6 pm
Closed Sundays

Library Closures
Christmas Holidays
(Observed)
Friday, December 23
Saturday, December 24
Monday, December 26
New Year’s Day
(Observed)
Monday, January 2
Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day
Monday, January 16
Rancho Mirage
Writers Festival
Friday, January 27 through
Tuesday, February 7
Presidents’ Day
Monday, February 20

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Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
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Cover Image: Jessica Fichot and her band (photo: Andy Sheng)

Nearly All of Our Programs Are FREE

Thanks to the support of our generous donors.

Unless otherwise noted, programs are presented by the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory Foundation.

Keep up to date on everything happening at the Library and Observatory by signing up for our email newsletters! In addition to a monthly preview email, each Sunday morning you’ll receive an email with a detailed look at the week ahead. We’ll even send you “day-of” reminder emails for our major programs. Sign up today at ranchomiragelibrary.org or by scanning the QR code below.
Welcome to Your Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory

Since its opening in 2018, the popularity of the Rancho Mirage Observatory has exceeded expectations by leaps and bounds. This overwhelming interest has also resulted in challenges however, and we often get the following questions: How do I get in at night? When does registration for stargazing programs open? Do all the reserved spaces REALLY fill up that fast? (yes, they really do!).

Our public Observatory belongs to the community, and our goal is to provide as much access as possible to this incredible facility. To make that happen, while continuing to offer unforgettable lifelong learning opportunities, we are proud to announce the launch of Observatory Public Exploration Nights (OPEN). No registration is necessary for these open-house-style events that take place on a regular basis. Gaze deep into space beneath the dome and view fascinating objects in the night sky through powerful telescopes on the observing deck. Our astronomers and friendly volunteer docents will be on hand to provide guidance and answer your questions. You can learn more and see a list of upcoming OPEN dates at ranchomiragelibrary.org/stargazing.

Additional Highlights

• One of our most popular annual events returns with a new special guest: Santa! Join us for our Gingerbread House Workshop on Wednesday, December 7 (page 20).

• Rancho Mirage photographer John Henebry’s striking images will adorn the walls of the Library to help us kick off the new year. See even more and learn about Henebry’s artistic process in a lecture on January 19 (page 9).

• Opera legend Angelina Réaux will perform an unforgettable concert developed specifically for the Rancho Mirage Library audience on February 22 (page 17).

• Perennial favorite Dr. William Gudelunas returns for a three-day history lecture series January 24 to 26 that will take a look into what our country was like a century ago with an exploration of the Roaring Twenties (page 10).

The support received through donations, grants, and sponsorships to the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory Foundation are what makes what we do possible. If you’d like to learn how you can help, or easily donate online, visit ranchomiragelibrary.org

PLEASE NOTE: The Library will be closed January 27 through February 7 to host the Ninth Annual Rancho Mirage Writers Festival. Resources will remain available on our website, and other libraries in the Valley will be ready to serve you in person.

Your partners in lifelong learning,
The Staff of Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory

People of all abilities are encouraged to attend Library programs. If you have special communication or access needs, please contact the Library at 760-341-7323 four business days in advance of the event(s) you will attend.
Meet our Staff

Aaron Espinosa, Executive Director
Hired by the City of Rancho Mirage in 2013, Aaron quickly rose through the Library’s organizational structure, holding positions in accounting and as Library Operations Manager before being named Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory Director in 2018. Over the course of his career with the City of Rancho Mirage, Aaron has played an instrumental role in a number of projects including in the growth and operations of the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival, the design and construction of the Joe and Gigi Roberson Mineral Collection, and oversight of the planning, development, and construction of the Rancho Mirage Observatory. He is directly responsible for the hiring and continued development of a passionate and professional team dedicated to serving our community.

In addition to his duties as Library and Observatory Director, Aaron is also the Executive Director of the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory Foundation, staff liaison to the City of Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission, and Executive Director of the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival.

“It is an honor of a lifetime to get to lead such wonderful organizations in a community that believes in intellectual freedom and supports cultural events to the fullest. My passion is people. Whether providing resources, hosting community programs, or exploring the night skies, our mission remains lifelong learning and access for all.”

Bob Rekuc, Library Operations Manager
Bob has been with the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory since 2011. His education includes Master’s Degrees in both Library Science and Computer Science. In addition to working for the National Archives, he has previously worked in private, university, and other public libraries. Bob coordinates with other City departments as well as overseeing the planning and implementation of Library services.

“The people are what I enjoy most about the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory, both the staff and the patrons. It really is a community center, and it is great to feel like a part of that community.”
Deanne Dekle, Senior Librarian

Deanne joined the staff of Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory in 2021, coming from the New Mexico State Library where she focused on services to children and young adults. Prior to that she had worked as a children’s librarian in a public library. She holds a Master’s in Library Science from the University of North Texas. Deanne supervises the Reference, Children’s and Cataloging Departments and oversees all aspects of collection development within the Library.

“I am excited to help the Library foster a love of lifelong learning in our patrons and the residents of the Coachella Valley. The staff at the Library are the greatest asset, and I enjoy being a part of such a wonderful, committed team bringing robust services, exciting programs, and a well-rounded collection to all of you.”

T.J. Hicks, Program Coordinator

T.J. has been with the Library and Observatory since 2018. He has worked in a variety of leadership roles in nonprofit and governmental organizations dedicated to informal education. He has served as Marketing Director at DuPage Children’s Museum, Development Director for Wheaton (IL) Park District, Education and Exhibits Director at Children’s Discovery Museum of the Desert, and in positions with Northern Illinois University, Georgia State University, and Georgia Aquarium. He holds both a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree in Communication with an emphasis in media studies and documentary. In conjunction with Library and Observatory staff, T.J. plans and coordinates adult library programming and oversees all programming-related communications (including the production of the quarterly *Programs & Exhibits* guide).

“What I love most about working for the Library and Observatory is the organization’s commitment to providing lifelong learning opportunities for the entire community. Each day is rewarding and exciting as I am a part of helping to provide such diverse and engaging programming, whether it be youth theatre productions, author lectures, or unique musical performances.”
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Look for the ram’s head icon that marks our Premier programs!

All residents of Rancho Mirage and donors who contribute $100 or more annually to the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory Foundation can take advantage of priority seating for Premier programs by arriving early.
Community Showcase

Book Discussion Group

The Library’s Book Discussion Group meets on the second Friday of each month. No advance sign-up is necessary! If you have any questions and for more information, please contact Reference Librarian Jeffery Durham at (760) 341-7323 ext. 781 or email JefferyD@ranchomiragelibrary.org.

Friday, December 9
10–11 am
Vesper Flights
by Helen Macdonald

Friday, January 13
10–11 am
The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections by Eva Jurczyk

Friday, February 10
10–11 am
Between the World and Me
by Ta-Nehisi Coates

LifeStream Blood Drive

Friday, December 16, 9 am–2 pm
Friday, February 24, 9 am–2 pm

Support your community and join us for a blood drive! Throughout the year the Library and Observatory partners with LifeStream to host these important events. Please be sure to drink plenty of fluids and bring photo ID with proof of age. Donors under the age of 17 must bring a signed LifeStream parental consent form. To learn more and sign-up in advance, visit lstream.org/rmpl or call 1-800-979-4484.
An Afternoon of Poetry  
Friday, January 13, 2–3 pm
Rancho Mirage Library Poet Laureate Dorothea Bisbas and The Wordkeepers Poetry Group invite you to enjoy an afternoon with local poets as they read some of their most impressive work. Refreshments will be served.

Lunar Festival at The River  
Presented by the Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission  
Saturday, February 11, 11 am–5 pm
The first annual Lunar Festival at the River will be at the beautiful River in Rancho Mirage (71-800 Highway 111) on the second Saturday of February. From red lanterns to lion dancing, the festive atmosphere welcomes everyone to come and experience the Year of the Rabbit! The rabbit is the fourth of the twelve zodiacs. In many Asian cultures, the rabbit is regarded as gentle, quiet, and elegant. Together, let us celebrate the new year’s fortunes. The event will kick off with an opening ceremony at the amphitheater from 11:30 am to 1 pm.

On stage, performers from all around the Coachella Valley will showcase their talents during the event (be sure to check out the dance performances). At the marketplace, local and regional artisans will be on-hand selling traditional and modern goods, including handmade jewelry, clothing, and terra cotta dolls. Caricatures, manga, henna, and custom paintings will also be available.

The 2023 Lunar Festival at the River is presented by Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission and co-hosted by Panana Events and The River. Admission and parking are free. For more information please visit pananaevents.com

Emergency Preparedness Commission Town Hall Forum  
Wednesday, February 15, 5:30–7:30 pm
Join the City’s Emergency Preparedness Commission to learn about the importance of earthquake insurance for residents and homeowners associations. For more details on upcoming events visit the Commission’s page on the city’s website at tinyurl.com/RMEmergency.
Friends of Desert Mountains Series

Clara Vera • Trash Talking: Reducing Organic Waste in Today’s World!
Tuesday, December 6, 2–3 pm

California is now experiencing the effects of a climate crisis: hotter summers with world record-breaking temperatures, even more devastating fire seasons, more extreme droughts, and rising sea levels that erode our coastlines. Scientists tell us that greenhouse gasses released by human activities, like landfilling food and yard waste, cause climate change. To respond to this climate crisis, California is implementing statewide organic waste recycling and surplus food recovery (SB 1383 regulations). Clara Vera brings over 15 years of public and private business management expertise to the Southern California community. Currently, Clara serves as the Municipal Marketing Manager at Burrtec Waste and Recycling Services in Palm Desert, California.

Kathleen Brundige • Conservation in the Coachella Valley
Monday, January 9, 2–3 pm

In this talk Kathleen Brundige will cover the history and current status of the collaborative partnerships that support land acquisition, wildlife research, and habitat management initiatives under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. Brundige is the Director of Conservation for the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission and has developed land management, biological monitoring, and environmental education initiatives in the desert and mountain regions of southern California for the past 20 years. She has been working directly on implementation of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan since 2014 and also teaches Wildlife Management, Ecosystem Management, and Careers in Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences as an Adjunct Professor at College of the Desert.

Oscar Ortiz • Water in the Coachella Valley
Monday, February 13, 2–3 pm

Friends of the Desert Mountains Director of Education Oscar Ortiz will be delivering a presentation that discusses where our water comes from and how our water is used in the Coachella Valley. He will discuss topics such as the Salton Sea, the Colorado River, the underground aquifer, and how we interact with these systems during a time of unprecedented drought. Ortiz joined Friends of the Desert Mountains in 2022. He studied chemistry at Stanford University and uses his education to improve the sustainability in our community as a councilmember for the City of Indio and as an environmental educator in the non-profit sector.

This series is presented in partnership with Friends of the Desert Mountains.
Kip Cranna • Who’s Afraid of Opera Series

San Francisco Opera’s Dramaturg Emeritus Kip Cranna will share his 40 years of experience as he explores the wonderful world of opera. No previous experience necessary. Just watch, listen, and enjoy. Cranna has served on the staff of the San Francisco Opera for over 40 years, 30 of them as Director of Music Administration. He has managed the commissions or co-commissions of more than 20 new operas.

’Tis the Season at the Opera: Exploring Operas with a Yuletide Theme
Tuesday, December 13, 2–3 pm

Far from saying “Bah, humbug!,” composers aplenty have found the Christmas season a perfect backdrop for operatic storytelling. To help get you in a holiday mood, we’ll explore some Yuletide operas spanning the gamut from the silly to the sublime. We’ll sample composers ranging from Russia’s Rimsky-Korsakov to important contemporary Americans such as David Conte, Jake Heggie, and John Adams.

Books that Sing: Novels Turned Into Operas
Tuesday, January 10, 2–3 pm

Let’s explore the transformation from the written word to the lyric stage, as famous literature becomes operatic drama. In this lecture we’ll discuss passages from important novels and analyze video from corresponding opera scenes, illustrating the fascinating dynamics of transformation from a literary masterpiece to a successful opera.

This series is presented in partnership with the Palm Springs Opera Guild of the Desert and is made possible by a generous gift from The Bartush Performing Arts Fund.

The Photography of John Henebry
Thursday, January 19, 2–3 pm

Since he was a young man, Rancho Mirage-based photographer John Henebry has had a camera in his hands. Early in his life he spent time traveling in Asia and trekking in the Himalayas of Nepal and India. The huge dimensions of the landscapes and vibrant people he met captured his imagination and fueled his love of photography.

After working for National Geographic, Henebry shifted his landscape viewpoint to the golf industry and has become known for his unique eye, working with top golf architects and resort developers. In addition to his golf-focused work, he continues to produce stunning images of our scenic national parks and monuments, while also documenting diverse groups of people from cultures around the world. Join us to take a look at Henebry’s beautiful photography as he discusses his fascinating career.
American history professor and Library favorite Dr. William Gudelunas returns to present a three-part lecture series. He'll use his humorous and entertaining style to take us back 100 years to explore a decade of dramatic social, economic, and political change in which brought about a “revolution in morals and manners.”

**Return to Normalcy** • Tuesday, January 24, 2–3 pm

**The Jazz Age** • Wednesday, January 25, 2–3 pm

**Riches to Rags** • Thursday, January 26, 2–3 pm

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**Sunnylands Series • A Place at the Table: Dining at Sunnylands**

**Wednesday, February 8, 2–3 pm**

Sunnylands’ newest exhibition, *A Place at the Table: Dining at Sunnylands*, celebrates Walter and Leonore Annenberg’s remarkable history of diplomacy and social gatherings through an exploration of the fine china and tableware they used to entertain guests for decades.

In this presentation, India Hicks, a goddaughter of King Charles III, will discuss the fine art of elegant settings for diplomacy. Like Leonore Annenberg before her, Hicks entertains thought leaders at her homes in London and the Bahamas. A designer and an entrepreneur, she is a board member of Global Empowerment Mission, a disaster relief nonprofit, and the bestselling author of four design books, including her latest book, *An Entertaining Story*, published by Rizzoli in 2020.

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Charleston dancers (photo: Süddeutsche Zeitung Photo)

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Photo: Robert Fairer/Vogue UK
Robert D. Kline • Legends and Icons Series

The Legends and Icons series is a look at famous people and an up-close and personal look at them, their feelings, and the real person behind the public persona.

Robert D. Kline has been the Executive Vice President of 20th Century Fox, the co-founder of Lifetime Television, and producer of Oliver Stone's highly acclaimed film *Heaven and Earth*. In addition, he taught at USC for over 30 years. His award-winning profile series, *A Moment in Time*, includes Lady Bird Johnson, Princess Grace, and Gloria Steinem.

Princess Grace de Monaco, Grace Kelly
Tuesday, February 14, 2–3 pm

A rare interview with Hollywood legend Grace Kelly will be screened and discussed. The interview takes place on September 3, 1987, and is the only known interview she gave as Princess of Monaco.

Walter Cronkite and Billie Jean King
Tuesday, February 21, 2–3 pm

Kline will discuss and screen portions of two interviews: on location with Walter Cronkite at his home in Cape Cod and a conversation with Billie Jean King in New York City.

Oliver Stone and Coretta Scott King • Tuesday, February 28, 2–3 pm

Two more fascinating interviews will be examined: a conversation between the award-winning filmmaker Oliver Stone and producer Robert Kline and feminist icon Gloria Steinem sits down with Coretta Scott King.
Hollywood Gamechangers with Steven C. Smith

Award-winning author and documentarian Steven C. Smith takes us inside the battles and breakthroughs behind three screen classics. All of them defied the rules, advanced the art of filmmaking, and remain among the most entertaining movies ever made.

Smith is an award-winning biographer and four-time Emmy-nominated documentary producer whose collaborators include Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, Julie Andrews, and Sidney Poitier. He is the author of *Music by Max Steiner: The Epic Life of Hollywood’s Most Influential Composer* and *A Heart at Fire’s Center: The Life and Music of Bernard Herrmann*.

**Double Indemnity (1944)**
Monday, December 5, 2 pm

Director Billy Wilder (*Sunset Boulevard*) hired legendary crime novelist Raymond Chandler to co-script this sexy, twist-filled thriller starring Barbara Stanwyck as one of noir’s greatest femme fatales. The plot—lusty insurance salesman helps a dame kill her husband—defied strict Hollywood censorship, which forbade killers from being sympathetic. The result earned seven Oscar nominations and convinced the industry that adult crime thrillers were fair game to film.
The Woman Who Loved Giraffes • Screening and Q&A with Dr. Anne Innis Dagg
Wednesday, January 11, 7 pm

In 1956, 23-year-old biologist Anne Innis Dagg made an unprecedented solo journey to South Africa to study giraffes in the wild. In The Woman Who Loves Giraffes, Anne (at 86) retraces her steps, and, with letters and stunning, original 16mm film footage, offers an intimate window into her life as a young woman, juxtaposed with a firsthand look at the devastating reality that giraffes are facing today. Both the world’s first “giraffologist,” whose research findings ultimately became the foundation for many scientists following in her footsteps, and the species she loves have each experienced triumphs as well as setbacks. This special film gives us a moving perspective on both. Following the screening, the subject of the film, Dr. Anne Innis Dagg, will take the stage in person alongside local zoology and conservation experts to discuss the film and answer audience questions.

This program presented in partnership with The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens.
Palm Springs Opera Guild 39th Annual Vocal Competition
Saturday, December 3, 1–3 pm

Produced by the Palm Springs Opera Guild of the Desert over the past thirty-eight years, the Palm Springs Vocal Competition has awarded scholarships to hundreds of young men and women preparing for a career in the operatic arts. The finalists are selected through an auditioning process and will perform before a live audience. The finalist judges include opera company professionals from around the United States charged with discovering new talent for their opera productions. Eight finalists will compete for over $30,000 in cash scholarships.

This series is presented in partnership with the Palm Springs Opera Guild of the Desert.

Joslyn Singers Holiday Concert
Thursday, December 15, 2–3 pm

Celebrate the season with the Joslyn Singers, a mixed chorus of energetic seniors who love to sing and then share that love with the desert community by entertaining at assisted living facilities and clubs in the valley. Music Director Eva Myers has her Master’s of Music Education and has been directing the group for 19 years.

A Classical Christmas with Soprano Natalie Mann and Pianist Bruce Mangum presented by the Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission
Wednesday, December 21, 7–8 pm

Join us as we celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah holiday traditions with beloved songs and American classics. Soprano Natalie Mann will sing works including Handel, Bach, and John Jacob Niles, and Bruce Mangum will share piano fantasies on holiday classics. Mann is a desert favorite who has sung as a soloist with the San Diego Opera, La Jolla Symphony and Chorus, and Chicago Symphony. Palm Desert resident Mangum is a well-known pianist who plays piano and chamber ensemble recitals throughout the Coachella Valley.
Angels in the Architecture: Peter Sprague Plays the Music of Paul Simon presented by the Rancho Mirage Cultural Commission
Wednesday, January 18, 7–8 pm

Jazz guitarist Peter Sprague leads his ensemble through a tour of Paul Simon’s sonic gems. Classics like “Cecilia,” “Hearts and Bones,” “Sound of Silence,” and “You Can Call Me Al” take on a new light with Sprague’s creative arrangements. The band features vocalist Allison Adams Tucker along with Tripp Sprague on sax, Rob Thorsen on bass, Duncan Moore on drums, and Peter on guitar.

San Diego guitarist Peter Sprague is known far and wide in the jazz and music community. He is an award-winning guitarist, producer, arranger, teacher, mentor, collaborator, and much more. He has been a guest artist on many records and has performed and toured with Chick Corea, Hubert Laws, Dianne Reeves, David Benoit, Sergio Mendes, and many others. In 2015, Peter was honored with the Lifetime Achievement award at the San Diego Music Awards. He continues to be active, publishing music books and delivering online video courses, as well as producing music at his SpragueLand studio in Encinitas.

Sean Gaskell • West African Kora
Thursday, January 12, 7–8 pm

Sean Gaskell will give a performance and educational demonstration on the kora, an ancient 21-stringed harp from West Africa. He will feature traditional songs that are the heart and soul of the kora’s musical repertoire.

Gaskell first heard the kora performed live in his hometown of Olympia, Washington, in 2006. That performance by Kane Mathis, who would become his first teacher, inspired him to immerse himself in the music of the kora and travel to its homeland in West Africa. The kora is traditionally played by oral historians known as Griots, often called Jalis or Jelis. Many songs tell stories of war, hardship, love, and loss all while presenting the history and fabric of Mande society, from which the instrument originates. Visits to Brikama, Gambia, West Africa provided Gaskell the opportunity to study the kora under the instruction of Moriba Kuyateh and his father, the late Malamini Jobarteh. Gaskell has presented adult, youth, and family programs at over 350 libraries and a multitude of K–12 schools, colleges, universities, and assisted living facilities throughout the United States and Canada. He is currently based in Asheville, North Carolina.

This program is made possible by a generous gift from the Bartush Performing Arts Fund.
Jacob Szekely Trio
Thursday, February 9, 7–8 pm

The Jacob Szekely Trio creates a unique musical tapestry that incorporates the richness of jazz improvisation, the structure of classical music, and the edginess of rock into its own alchemy—which Szekely calls rock chamber jazz. Jacob expands the sonic culture of the cello and showcases the influences of classical, jazz, funk, rock, and East Indian music. His compositions are highly complex, yet always have groove at their core.

Jacob Szekely is known as one of the best jazz cellists in the world, known for pushing the boundaries of the instruments in a quantum leap! In 2007, Jacob expanded his role as a musical ambassador through the co-founding and artistic directorship of String Project Los Angeles, a music school and resource for the alternative string-playing community throughout the world located in Venice, California. It was named by Strings Magazine as “One of the top 10 reasons to study music in Los Angeles.”

This program is made possible by a generous gift from the Bartush Performing Arts Fund.

Jessica Fichot and Her Band
Thursday, February 16, 7–8 pm

“From Paris to Shanghai.” From her original French chansons to 1940s Shanghai jazz and international folk, chanteuse and songwriter Jessica Fichot presents her unexpected and diverse repertoire of tunes from around the world, inspired by her own multicultural heritage.

Accompanied by her accordion and toy piano, Fichot draws from her French/Chinese/American heritage to create an intoxicating program. Featuring scorching performances from her bandmates on clarinet/sax, upright bass, and guitar, as well as her own beautiful, clear vocals in French, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, and English, Fichot’s music is truly a dazzling trans-world journey.
Angelina Réaux Sings Weill and His Contemporaries
Wednesday, February 22, 7–8 pm

Angelina Réaux has enjoyed an international career in opera, theatre, concert, and cabaret; was hand-picked by Leonard Bernstein to sing Mimi in his Grammy nominated *La bohème*; and performs Bernstein’s works world-wide. She has appeared in opera, musicals, and straight plays; has premiered works by Bernstein, Tony Kushner, Ned Rorem, Ricky Ian Gordon, and Kurt Weill; and has performed with preeminent orchestras, conductors, and directors. She will be accompanied on piano by Bruce Stasyna, Conductor and Chorus Master at San Diego Opera.

This one-night-only event will be a very special performance. According to Réaux, “upon discovering my affinity for the music of Kurt Weill, I began to explore just why I felt so comfortable in his musical skin. In preparing for this concert, I dug deep into his love songs and those of many of his contemporaries. I discovered that each song that I chose had a sublime integration of music and text that resulted in a compelling story, whether in English, French, or German; whether about love lost, rediscovered, longed for, or amused. The way I’ve strung these jewels together will hopefully tell a bigger story, each song bleeding together to inform what has been sung before and after.”

“Angelina Réaux brings a better voice to Weill than anyone has ever heard, and a degree of identification with the material no one has matched since Lotte Lenya herself.” — *The New York Times.*

This program is made possible by a generous gift from the Bartush Performing Arts Fund.
Observatory

Observatory Tours
Take a daytime tour of the Observatory to learn more about the facility and its history, see a live view of the sun through our solar telescope (when available), check out the Cosmic Office, and enjoy a presentation via our Integrated Space Theater inside the dome. No registration necessary. For dates and times visit ranchomiragelibrary.org/observatory.

Observatory Public Exploration Nights
Observatory Public Exploration Nights are your portal to the Universe! Join us at the Rancho Mirage Observatory to glimpse beyond our world through our PlaneWave Instruments CDK 700 telescope. Ask questions and learn fun facts from astronomers and volunteer docents as you take in 100-350x magnified views of planets, nebulae, star clusters, and more (weather permitting). No registration is necessary for this drop-in, open-house-style event. Due to the capacity limits of the Observatory, you may experience a short wait, but everyone will have a chance to get in. For dates and times visit ranchomiragelibrary.org/observatory.

Library Telescope Program
The goal of our Library Telescope Program is to help foster scientific literacy, stimulate an interest in astronomy, and provide people who have never looked through a telescope the chance to experience the excitement that comes from discovery. Thanks to a generous grant from the Smaby Family Foundation, we are lending portable, user-friendly telescopes to patrons. Reserve a telescope today by looking up the Orion StarBlast in our catalog or asking one of our staff for assistance.
Moon Occults Mars Live Stream
Online program • Wednesday, December 7, 6:15–7:45 pm
Online program • Monday, January 30, 8:15–9:45 pm
Please join us on our YouTube channel for a live stream event to view the Moon occult Mars. City Astronomer Eric McLaughlin will guide us through the Moon’s journey as it passes in front of the red planet, Mars. From our vantage point here in the Western U.S., we will see Mars disappear behind the full Moon and then reappear on the other side. Tune into our live stream to watch this fascinating event! Watch on our YouTube channel at youtube.com/RanchoMirageLibraryObservatory!

Hello Darkness My Old Friend—A Journey into a Naturally Dark Night Sky
Thursday, January 5, 2 pm
David Larson is a Park Ranger with the National Park Service and leads the astronomy program at Joshua Tree National Park, which was designated as an International Dark Sky Park in 2017. Hello Darkness My Old Friend—A Journey into a Naturally Dark Night Sky explores the wonders of the night sky and examines how we as a society can protect this important resource.
Storytimes

Tiny Tots
Ages 3 and under • Tuesdays at 10 am, Wednesdays at 10 and 11 am
25 minutes of lively songs, fingerplays, action rhymes, flannel board stories, and books, followed by a coloring activity, will delight the young ones.

Preschool
Ages 4 and up • Thursdays at 10 am
30 minutes of engaging stories, songs, and active rhymes captivate the imagination of children. Coloring sheets and simple crafts round out the themed storytime experience.

We suggest that participants arrive early so that all can benefit from the total experience and minimize disruptions. Space is limited. First come, first serve.

Animal Companion Therapy • Animal Samaritans
Reading Program
Wednesday, December 14, 3–4 pm • Wednesday, January 11, 3–4 pm
Wednesday, February 8, 3–4 pm • Wednesday, February 22, 3–4 pm
Join us on these dates for an afternoon of fun as Animal Samaritans bring their Animal Companion Therapy Dogs to the Children's Room for your child to practice their reading skills by reading to them.

Family Night

Gingerbread Houses • Wednesday, December 7, 5:30–7 pm
Ho Ho Ho! Santa and Mrs. Claus will be joining us for a fun evening of holiday cheer! Come build and create your own gingerbread house! While supplies last.

Family Night Gingerbread Houses is sponsored by Christine Hughes, Patrice Merritt, Robert Moon, Lucy Tagmyer, Leslie Usow, and Rancho Mirage City Council Member Ted Weill.

Favorite Book Character • Wednesday, January 4, 5:30–7 pm
Join us for an evening of fun where we read stories of our favorite book characters and then make a craft based on the stories we read.

Sand Art • Wednesday, February 8, 5:30–7 pm
Using a variety of different colored sand and the molds provided, create a layered sand design.

Family Nights are sponsored by the Grace Helen Spearman Charitable Foundation.
Teen Video Game Tournament and More!
Tuesday, December 20, 2–4 pm
Grades 6–12 join us for a tournament playing the hit game MultiVersus! The final player standing will win a great prize; no prior game playing experience needed! We’ll also have various board games and snacks available too.

Design It • Make It

A monthly program that sparks creativity and imagination with STEAM/STEM projects (recommended for ages 5+).

Steam Power • Friday, December 16, 4–5 pm
Using a battery, magnets and copper wire make a dancing wire sculpture.

Kaleidoscope • Friday, January 20, 4–5 pm
Using mirrored paper and a toilet paper roll, design your own kaleidoscope and watch your design become a beautiful prism.

Articulated Hand • Friday, February 17, 4–5 pm
Make an articulated hand replica of your own hand with movable fingers.

LEGO Night
Build with us! Each month has a theme. It’s up to you whether your creation reflects that theme or your own individual expression. Work alone or in a group. You’ll have 45 minutes to build, 5 minutes to clean up, and 10 minutes to show off your work. Creations will be displayed until the following month. For kids ages five and up.

Winter Wonderland
Wednesday, December 21, 5–6 pm

Superhero
Wednesday, January 25, 5–6 pm

Favorite Ice Cream
Wednesday, February 22, 5–6 pm
Younger Kids Book Discussion (Ages 7–9)
For the first half hour, we will be discussing the books. An activity will be planned for the second half of the hour, based on our reading material. Register online and pick up a copy of the book in the Children’s Room.

*The Poet’s Dog*
Wednesday, December 21, 4–5 pm
By Patricia MacLachlan (A.R. level 3.7)

*Dory Fantasmagory: The Real True Friend*
Wednesday, January 25, 4–5 pm
By Abby Hanlon (A.R. level 3.2)

*Maybe Maybe Marisol Rainey*
Friday, February 24, 4–5 pm
By Erin Entrada Kelly (A.R. level 4.1)

Older Kids Book Discussion (Ages 10–12)
Every second Monday of the month. Register online and pick up a copy of the book in the Children’s Room.

*Gregor the Overlander*
Monday, December 12, 4–5 pm
By Suzanne Collins (A.R. level 4.8)

*The Wild Robot*
Monday, January 9, 4–5 pm
By Peter Brown (A.R. level 5.1)

*Dog Driven*
Monday, February 13, 4–5 pm
By Terry Lynn Johnson (A.R. level 4.4)
Teen Book Discussion (Grades 6–12)
The first 10 registrants will receive a free copy of the book. Registration is required.

**Anna and the French Kiss**  
Wednesday, December 7, 5:30–6:30 pm  
By Stephanie Perkins

**Special Edition Book to Movie: If I Stay**  
Wednesday, January 4, 3–6:30 pm  
By Gayle Forman • Watch the movie then discuss the book

**The Inheritance Games**  
Wednesday, February 8, 5:30–6:30 pm  
By Jennifer Lynn Barnes

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Creative Writing Club  
Thursday, December 8, 4–5:15 pm  
Thursday, December 15, 4–5:15 pm

Kids ages 9–14 can join us for two sessions in December. Poetry is the focus of our micro creative writing sessions. Participants will learn creative writing techniques, become confident writers, and feel positive in their creative expression. These two sessions will include an icebreaker, snack, a tiny lesson, and time to write and create a mini book. **Writers interested in attending both sessions must sign up for both sessions at ranchomiragelibrary.org.**
Exhibit

The Photography of John Henebry
January 2–February 28

As a young man, photographer John Henebry spent time traveling in Asia and trekking in the Himalayas of Nepal and India. The huge dimensions of the landscapes and vibrant peoples he met captured his imagination and fueled his love of photography.

After completing two photo assignments for *National Geographic Magazine* in Asia, Henebry shifted his landscape viewpoint to the golf industry and became known for his unique eye. Growing up in a golf-loving family he “saw” the course from a golfer’s perspective. Partnering with his sister, they won acclaim and renown for their golf beauty shots and worked for the top golf architects and resort developers. Among their clients were Steve Wynn, Tom Fazio, and the MGM Grand. Book publishers and golf magazines frequently feature their images to illustrate their publications.

Henebry has always been inspired by the work of Ansel Adams and his unique technique of shooting with large format cameras in the field to ensure sharp focus and depth of field throughout the photograph. Throughout his career, Henebry has shot with a large format 4x5 view camera and Fuji 617 Panoramic camera, often carrying them up a mountain or onto a golf course. He became known for his crisp photographs with rich vibrant colors and detailed shadows, which lend his large art prints special qualities.

Henebry has always been meticulous about his photography and is known for his attention to detail, often waiting hours, days, or even years for the perfect conditions. His preferred time to photograph is “magic light” at sunrise and sunset. He is renowned for his ability to capture and showcase the beauty and subtleties of a golf course and transfers that ability to photographing landscapes. In recent years, returning his camera lens to the beautiful scenic National Parks and Monuments, he is constantly seeking those special shots of the natural world.
The Writers Series is sponsored by the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival Foundation and presents a series of talks by eminent authors throughout the year. These talks will also be live streaming on our YouTube page youtube.com/ranchomiragelibraryobservatory and available to view at www.rmwritersfest.org/videos/writers-series.

**Delia Ephron • Left on Tenth: A Second Chance at Life**  
Wednesday, December 14, 2–3 pm

*Delia Ephron* is the bestselling author, screenwriter, playwright and sister of Nora Ephron. She is the beloved writer of romantic comedies like *You’ve Got Mail* and *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*. In 2012 she lost her sister, Nora, and then in 2015 her husband, Jerry, both to cancer. Her latest book, *Left on Tenth: A Second Chance at Life*, is her radiant memoir that chronicles a series of “left turns, some perilous, some wondrous,” including her own late-in-life love story complete with a tragic second act and joyous resolution. The **first 200 people at this event will receive a FREE copy of *Left on Tenth*.**

**March Preview**

*Catherine Grace Katz • Daughters of Yalta*  
Thursday, March 2, 2–3 pm

*Victoria Kastner • Julia Morgen*  
Tuesday, March 7, 2–3 pm

*James Kirchick with Adam Nagourney • Secret City*  
Thursday, March 9, 2–3 pm

*Lis Smith • Any Given Tuesday*  
Tuesday, March 21, 2–3 pm

*Nabil Ayers • My Life in the Sunshine*  
Tuesday, March 28, 2–3 pm
Sponsorship and Naming Opportunities

A terrific way to support Library and Observatory programming is to make a general donation to our Foundation, but did you know that individuals and organizations can also choose to sponsor specific programs? Sponsorships help us continue to fund favorite presenters and performers and allow us to bring in exciting new programs as well. Upcoming sponsorship and naming opportunities include, but are not limited to, the programs listed below.

Dr. William Gudelunas 2023 History Lecture Series—$5,000
Kids Book Discussion Groups—$2,500
Creative Writing Club—$500
Seed Library—$500
Music Programs and Concerts—$1,000–$5,000
Lecture Programs—$250-$1,500

Sponsorship is a great way to publicly show your support for the power of lifelong learning. To learn more, get in touch with us by calling 760-341-7323 or sending an email to programming@ranchomiragelibrary.org.
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You may have seen Library and Observatory programs featured on Rancho Mirage Television (RMTV), but did you know that our YouTube channel has a library of over 200 videos that you can access online for free? Many of our upcoming programs will be live streamed, and you’ll also find past lectures, author appearances, concerts, and more! To access our channel, simply visit our website and click on the link for RMTV, or visit youtube.com/ranchomiragelibraryobservatory. Once there, you can choose to subscribe and activate notifications so that you’ll know the second we’ve posted a new video!

We Want to Hear from You!

Have a program idea or a connection to a person or organization we should feature?

Send us a message to tell us your ideas and let us know how we’re doing!

programming@ranchomiragelibrary.org
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Winter Solstice is December 21
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<td>4 Teen Book Discussion: <em>If I Stay</em> 3–6:30 pm p. 23</td>
<td>5 Hello Darkness My Old Friend 2 pm p. 19</td>
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<td>5 Family Night: Favorite Book Character 5:30–7 pm p. 20</td>
<td>6 Library Closed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Observatory Public Exploration Night 6:30–8 pm p. 18</td>
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| 8   | 9 Library Closed | 10       | 8 Friends of Desert Mountains Series: Conservation in the Coachella Valley 2–3 pm p. 8 | 10 Who’s Afraid of Opera Series: Books that Sing 2–3 pm p. 9 | 11       | Animal Companion Therapy 3–4 pm p. 20
| 13  | 14 Library Closed | 15       | 13 Book Discussion Group: The Department of Rare Books and Special Collections 10–11 am p. 6 | 14 Observatory Public Exploration Night 6:30–8 pm p. 18 |
| 18  | 16 Library Closed | 17       | 15 *Angels in the Architecture* 7–8 pm p. 15 | 18       | 19       | 19 The Photography of John Henebry 2–3 pm p. 9
|     |        |         | 18 Observatory Public Exploration Night 6:30–8 pm p. 18 | 20       | 20 Design It • Make It: Kaleidoscope 4–5 pm p. 21 |
| 27  | 28 Library Closed | 29 Library Closed | 27 Library Closed | 28 Library Closed | 30 Library Closed | 31 Library Closed |
|     |        |         | 27 *The Photography of John Henebry* p. 25 | 28 Library Closed | 29 Library Closed | 30 Library Closed |

- Community Showcase
- Lectures
- Music
- Film
- Observatory
- Kids, Teens, and Families
- Exhibit
- Premier Program

Library Shelfie Day is January 25
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<td>Library Closed</td>
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<td>A Place at the Table 2–3 pm p. 10</td>
<td>Jacob Szekely Trio 7–8 pm p. 16</td>
<td>Book Discussion Group: Between the World and Me 10–11 am p. 6</td>
<td>Lunar Festival at The River 11 am–5 pm p. 7</td>
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<td>Library Closed</td>
<td>Friends of Desert Mountains Series: Water in the Coachella Valley 2–3 pm p. 8</td>
<td>Emergency Preparedness Commission Town Hall Forum 5:30–7:30 pm p. 7</td>
<td>Jessica Fichot and Her Band 7–8 pm p. 16</td>
<td>Design It • Make It: Articulated Hand 4–5 pm p. 21</td>
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<td>Legends and Icons Series: Princess Grace de Monaco, Grace Kelly 2–3 pm p. 11</td>
<td>Animal Companion Therapy 3–4 pm p. 20</td>
<td>Observatory Public Exploration Night 7–8:30 pm p. 18</td>
<td>LifeStream Blood Drive 9 am–2 pm p. 6</td>
<td>Observatory Public Exploration Night 7–8:30 pm p. 18</td>
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<td>Library Closed</td>
<td>Legends and Icons Series: Walter Cronkite and Billie Jean King 2–3 pm p. 11</td>
<td>Legends and Icons Series: Oliver Stone and Coretta Scott King 2–3 pm p. 11</td>
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- American Heart Month
- Black History Month
- **The Photography of John Henebry** p. 25