

Local



Thomas Fire

■ Shelters open their crowded doors to animals displaced by blaze. 5A

Public library opens in east Ventura

Adults may apply for special cards

Kathleen Wilson
Ventura County Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

Eight years after Ventura residents lost the only public library in the eastern section of the city, another one has opened.

County officials held a ceremony to celebrate the opening early last week of what's been named the Hill Road Library. The facility will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays, 2 to 6 p.m. Thursdays, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays through Sundays.

It is located at 1070 S. Hill Road, east of

the Ventura County Government Center.

Under a novel feature to be launched in mid-January, patrons will be able to use the library for two hours a day before normal operating hours every day but Thursday.

Adults over age 18 may apply for cards they can use to enter the library when staff members are not present. Once inside, they can select materials, check them out, and meet and study with other

patrons.

High-definition cameras will monitor their activities, said Nancy Schram, who takes over as director of the Ventura County Library system on Dec. 17.

The pilot test will be repeated at other branches if it is successful to extend hours. She knew of only one other library in the nation offering the option but said

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A boat dressed out as a Christmas tiki bar makes its way through Channel Islands Harbor during the annual Parade of Lights on Saturday night. PHOTOS BY RICHARD QUINN/SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Parade floats through harbor

Staff reports

In a county devastated by nearly a week of destructive brushfires, local boat owners brought back a bit of the holiday spirit Saturday by parading their vessels through Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard.

This marked the 52nd year of the Channel Islands Harbor Parade of Lights. This year's theme was "Fairy Tales Afloat." Festivities began at 10 a.m., with an artists market featuring nearly 100 vendors. Santa made a visit later in the day, as did snow and Christmas carolers.

Next weekend, the Ventura Harbor Holiday Parade of Lights is expected to take place in Ventura Harbor. The parade, now in its 41st year, is scheduled to start at 6:30 p.m. Friday and again on Saturday. Ventura Harbor Village is hosting a winter wonderland and holiday marketplace from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday.



A trumpet player plays Christmas carols on the bow of a boat during the annual Parade of Lights on Saturday night.

Students raise funds for schools

Money will be used to rebuild schools in Nepal

Alexa D'Angelo
Ventura County Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

It isn't often you find a 5-year-old willing to ask for donations to go toward disaster relief for her sixth birthday — but that's just what Harmony Pandey did.

Harmony wanted to help the children of Nepal after the 2015 7.8-magnitude earthquake that devastated the country and turned many homes, schools and historic buildings into rubble and killed 9,000 Nepalese.

She also wanted to be like her big brother.

When Akash Pandey, who was 9 at the time, found out about the earthquake, he cried thinking about his grandparents and his dad's extended family that lived in Nepal — and then he rolled up his sleeves and got to work.

He made a list of all the ways he could think of to help and showed it to his parents, Jo Anne and Deven, and they decided as a family they would work on gathering money and donations to send to Nepal.

"It was so sudden," said Akash, now 11. "We saw the destruction ... we knew that we had to help, so that's what we did."

They made T-shirts and sold them for \$10, they collected recyclables and started a GoFundMe drive and formed www.bykids4kidsofnepal.org to raise money for victims. They raised \$5,000 and in partnership with the Gorkha Foundation in Nepal, the money was sent to rebuild a school in the earthquake's epicenter — Gorkha.

Before the earthquake, the Gorkha district had 454 schools. Afterward, only 13 percent were left standing.

Now, two years later, Jo Anne and Deven want their children to know that it's important to stick with a cause.

"A disaster lasts longer than a news cycle," Jo Anne said. "The thing of it is that recovery lasts a lot longer. Katrina took 10 years ... Haiti seven years after that, there is a lot of recovery that needs to happen. Nepal, it's been 2½ years ... and the people are still suffering."

This year, the kids helped a class at Aspen Elementary School in Thousand Oaks for the second year in a row raise money for their organization By-Kids4Kids Nepal to build another school in the country.

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Conejo schools launch online enrollment tool

Alexa D'Angelo Ventura County Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Conejo Valley Unified School District recently launched a website that will serve as a one-stop shop for enrollment information, both for those in and out of the district's boundaries.

The website, EnrollCVUSD.com, features a "Choose Your School" section where families can browse the district's schools and see what each one has to offer. It's broken down into categories con-

sisting of elementary, middle school, high school, preschool, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, magnet and home and online blended learning.

Under each category, each school has a section that briefly outlines their vision and highlights of the school's academic and extra-curricular offerings.

"Showcasing all of the amazing academic and extracurricular opportunities available to Conejo Valley Unified students and families is no easy feat," said Mark McLaughlin, superintendent for

the district, in a statement. "The hope is that EnrollCVUSD.com will encourage and inspire families to learn more about the district's exceptional offerings, while it also provides an easy to understand breakdown of all the information families will need to enroll their student and join the CVUSD community."

The district is home to 27 campuses, including 16 elementary schools, one K-8 school, four middle schools, three high

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Conejo Valley Unified School District has a new information website. STAR FILE

Funds

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"It was really important to us to help rebuild," said Harmony, now 8. "We really wanted to help kids build a school. They don't have nice desks; it's kind of like an old-timey thing. So I was hoping we might be able to help another school this year."

Kathi Byington, a third-grade teacher at Aspen, said she wanted to get involved when she heard about the cause last year, so she had Akash, Harmony and their parents come talk to the class about their organization. Last year, Byington's class raised around \$450 for desks and classroom furniture, and this year, the class raised around \$400 to go toward rebuilding a different school in Nepal.

The kids in the class took home purple buckets and collected donations. Byington turned it into a math lesson and had the students count how much they had raised and then Byington calculated the total.

"It's great to see them put it all together and have them working as a team," Byington said. "It's important they know that no matter how big or small a donation they can still help others all across the world."

Byington also had the students write letters to the students in Nepal.

In 2016, the Pandey family traveled to Nepal to visit the school that fundraising from Akash and Harmony helped to build. Teachers at Aspen donated school supplies and books for the kids to take, and students also wrote letters for the kids at the Nepal school.

"The Nepalese children benefited from ... learning English from native speakers in the letters, and having the chance to write letters back to the students at Aspen, many of whom were so proud, they showed off the letters in the front of their binders," Jo Anne said.

Harmony is in Byington's class this year and although it's been several years since this tragedy — and there have been many others across the globe in its wake — the students remain dedicated to raising money to help the children of Nepal, many of whom are still without a permanent place to live.

"They are finding ways to continue this foundation and are being more creative," Deven said. "We want to grow and make sure more people know about it and get involved."

Byington said other teachers in the Conejo Valley Unified School District have heard about the project and want to find a way to involve their students, too.

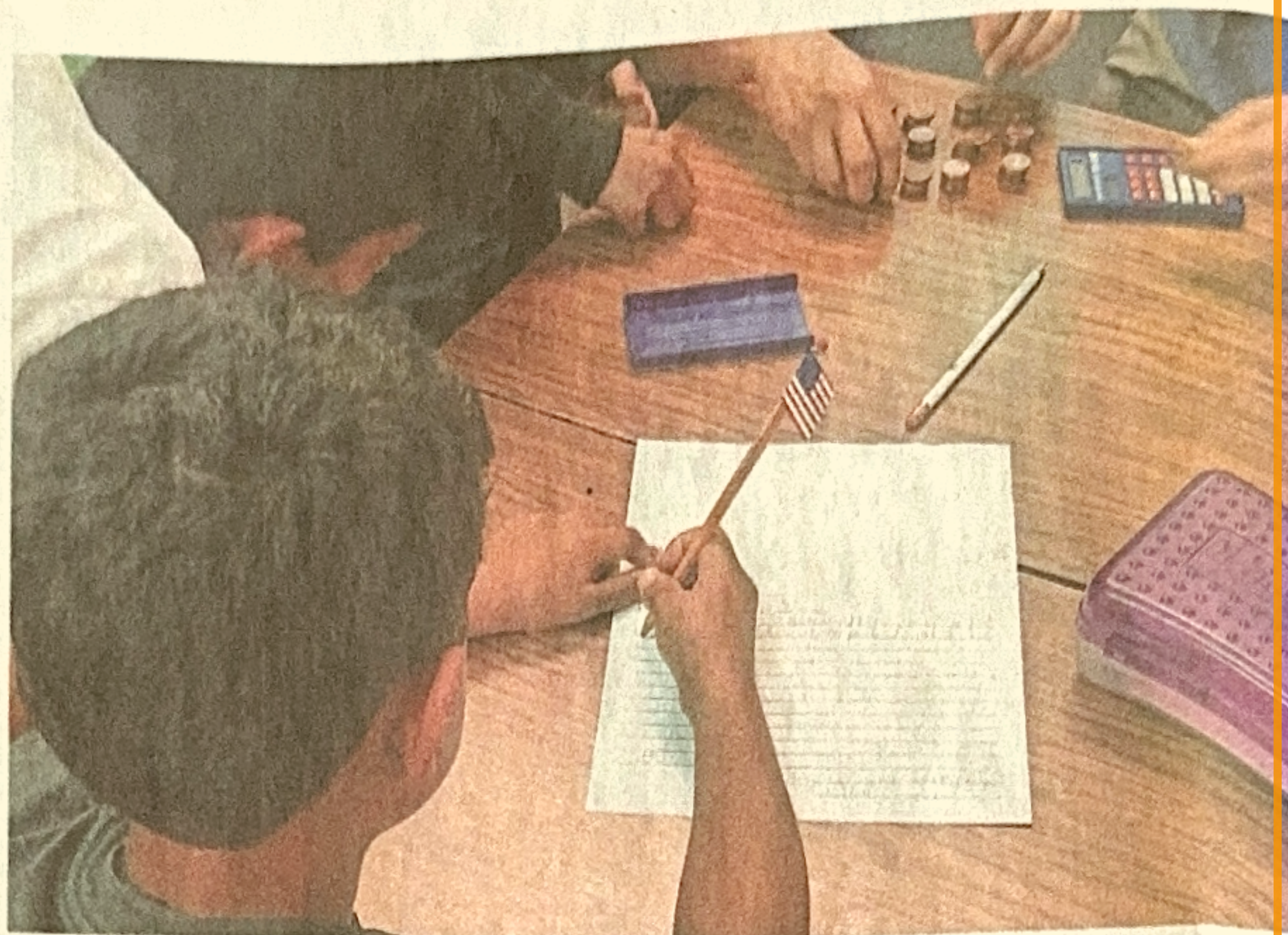
Akash said he might want to expand in the future to helping people in other parts of the world — like Puerto Rico.

"It's certainly a possibility," he said.

"It's great to see them put it all together and have them working as a team."

Kathi Byington

Third-grade teacher at Aspen Elementary School



A third-grader at Aspen Elementary School writes a letter to a child in Nepal.



Third-grade students work on counting the money they raised for Nepal at Aspen Elementary School. PHOTOS BY ALEXA D'ANGELO/STAR STAFF



The Hill Road Library has opened in Ventura. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hill Road

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libraries in Europe have done it for more than 10 years.

Also offered at the library will be literacy programs, training classes and print materials.

Laptop computers may be checked out for use in the library and high-speed internet access will be available.

The last library open in east Ventura closed in late 2009 amid financial problems.

Located on Day Road, the H.P. Wright Library had operated for 42 years.

That closure left the city with only the E.P. Foster at 651 E. Main St. and a small, grant-funded branch on Ventura Avenue until last week.

The new library is being funded by the county, the city of Ventura and the Ventura Friends of the Library.

CVUSD

Continued from Page 3A

schools, one online-blended high school and one continuation high school. The district also offers an independent homeschool program called SHINE, preschool, early child care, transitional kindergarten and other academic alternatives such as adult education opportunities.

This January, the district's student support services department will begin accepting interdistrict transfer applications for students of all grade levels who would like to attend a Conejo Valley Unified School District school in the 2018-19 school year, according to a district news release. The new website has all the information

regarding the interdistrict transfer process to help families living outside of the district's boundaries select a school that is the best fit for their child.

General registration for families to enroll in their Neighborhood School — assigned based on address — begins Feb. 1, 2018. School Choice applications for the 2018-19 school year also will be available Feb. 1. School Choice is the process for enrolling in a school different than the assigned Neighborhood School. Frequently asked questions on that process can be found on the new website.

The school campuses and classrooms can also be seen on the EnrollCVUSD.com website via the district's promotional video.

PLAZA 14

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COCO (PG) (10:30 11:30 1:00 2:00 3:30 4:30)
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SPANISH DUBBED COCO (PG) (11:00 12:30)
1:30 3:00 4:00 5:30 6:30 8:00 9:00 10:30
NO PASSES
IN MEDIATION MX4D MOTION EX THEATRE
COCO IN 3D (PG) (12:00 2:30 5:00 NO PASSES
JUST GETTING STARTED (PG13) (11:05 1:20)
3:35 5:45 7:55 10:10
ROMAN J. ISRAEL (PG13) (10:55 1:40 4:25)
7:10 10:00
IN MEDIATION MX4D MOTION EX THEATRE
JUSTICE LEAGUE IN 3D (PG13) 7:45 10:25
JUSTICE LEAGUE (PG13) (10:45 1:25 4:15)
7:00 9:45
WONDER (PG) (10:40 11:40 1:15 2:15 3:50)
4:50 6:25 7:25 9:05 10:05
THE STAR (PG) (10:50 12:55 3:05 5:10 7:15)
9:25
SPANISH DUBBED THE STAR (PG) (11:50 1:55)
4:05 6:10 8:15 10:20
DADDY'S HOME 2 (PG13) (10:45 1:05 3:20)
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THOR: RAGNAROK (PG13) (10:35 1:35 4:35)
7:30 10:30
ADVANCE PERFORMANCES
12/14 STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI (PG13)
7:00 10:10 NO PASSES/NO DISCOUNT SUNDAY

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Coco (PG) (10:15 10:30 11:00 11:30 12:45)
1:15 1:55 2:35 3:35 4:05 4:45 5:25 6:30 7:00
7:30 8:15 9:25 9:45 10:15
Murder on the Orient Express (PG13) (10:50)
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Daddy's Home 2 (PG13) (10:45 1:45 4:30)
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Wonder (PG) (10:15 11:05 12:45 1:35 3:15)
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Thor: Ragnarok (PG13) (10:25 1:20 4:25)
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Justice League (PG13) (11:10 12:05 2:00)
3:00 4:40 5:45 7:25 8:30 10:10

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