

# Oceanside brings library to you

Mobile bus offers books to those unable to get to facility

By Michelle Johnson  
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OCEANSIDE — For Rita Meyers, walking to the bookmobile in front of Fairwinds-Ivy Ranch Retirement Community is a lot easier than getting to the Mission Branch Library.

"I think it's terrific. I think it's the best thing that's happened — especially for people who can't get out and drive," said Meyers, a Fairwinds resident. "I don't know what I would do (without it)."

The Oceanside Public Library bookmobile makes several stops in the community throughout the week at schools, recreation centers, parks and shopping centers.

At the North Terrace Elementary school stop, Calvin and Hobbes books were a sure-pick for a group of fourth-grade girls, while books on tornadoes were the choice of first-grader Cameron McCleese.

"I don't like tornadoes. I just like to look at them," said McCleese as he thumbed through colorful pictures of twisters.

North Terrace Elementary has its own library, but visiting the bookmobile gives students the opportunity to check out more books from the city's library. Students

can check out only one book from the school library.

A bookmobile has been serving the Oceanside community since 1968. Then it was just a trailer furnished with bookshelves and books. Now, the Oceanside bookmobile is a 40-foot-long bus filled with books — from children's to Spanish language and large print — magazines, videos and DVDs. The bus was built in 1989. High-tech features such as the satellite on the roof that connects the bus to the library

network and online catalogue were added later.

The Oceanside bookmobile is ready to be replaced. The new bus will have colorful graphic art on the outside, seven computers with network connections on the inside, a wheel chair lift and pull-outs to expand the size of the bus. Library Director Deborah Polich said they may have it operating in nine months.

The bookmobile has about 6,000 volumes and 9,000 circulating copies. Library card

holders can check out books for three weeks.

Working on the bookmobile is a bit different than working in a library. Garcia had to get a Commercial B driver's license in order to operate the mobile facility. "It's more on a personal basis (than working at the library)," Garcia said. "You don't get the disgruntled patrons because you are bringing (them) a service."

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Agnes McKee leaves the bookmobile Tuesday at its stop at the Fairwinds-Ivy Ranch Retirement Community in Oceanside. Sean Masterson | seanm@tinews.net