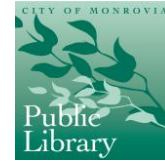




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: **Community Services,**
Library Division

MEETING DATE: January 25, 2024

PREPARED BY: Kurt Gally
Adult Services Supervisor
Ginger Antunez
Youth Services Supervisor

AGENDA LOCATION: CC-3

ADULT SERVICES REPORT

Adult Programs

On October 6, the library held its 2nd Flashback Friday program with th 22 adults in attendance! This month's program had attendees participating in friendly rounds of trivia with our *Jeopardy* program. The participants enjoyed their experience and are looking forward to next month's, *Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader* gameshow program.

On October 7, Adult Services staff partnered with Monrovia Music Academy to offer more Beginner Ukulele Lessons for Adults using the libraries own collection of ukuleles. At least three participants enjoyed the September session so much, they signed up for the October session again. This session had 12 participants. The program discussed instrument tuning, basic cords, and culminated in playing simplified versions of the songs, *You are My Sunshine*, The Beatles' *Twist and Shout*, and Disney's *Lava*.

On October 13, the library hosted a special *Spooky Game Night* for Adults. Five participants enjoyed games themed around the October Season and had a few treats with each new title. The only trick played that night was by a quick Orange Tabby cat running by the entrance before quickly disappearing into the night.

On October 24, Novel T's Book Club met to discuss *California Soul* by Keith Corbin. A total of 17 participated, 14 in-person and three via Zoom, in this monthly program. Next month's title is *The Secret Place* by Tana French.

On October 27, the library hosted a Dungeons & Dragons session with an adventuring party of five skilled members from the guild of Myrtle. The guild teamed up to investigate an auburn forest and its recent disturbances. The benevolent patrons parried predatory plants and worked with a sentient gargoyle to restore peace to the region.

On November 3, the library held its 3rd Flashback Friday program, with 30 adults in attendance. This month's program had attendees participating working as a team in our *Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader* Program. The participants enjoyed their experience and are looking forward to next month the *Family Feud Holiday edition*.

CC-3

On November 8, the library hosted its monthly *Adult Game Night*, with seven adults in attendance. Patrons enjoyed playing many of the items in the library's Games Collection and talking with new people. A few games were suggested and patrons were pleasantly informed that the library had the items available for checkout and were able to assist on the spot.

On November 17, the library hosted its monthly Dungeons & Dragons Program, with four adults in attendance. The campaign focused on discovering and stopping a fantasy smuggling operation in Boulder's Gate. Patrons were able to rescue many sheep and prevent the illegal exporting of noble fleece.

On November 28, Novel T's Book Club met for their annual potluck and to discuss, *The Secret Place* by Tana French. A total of 20 participated, 18 in person and two via Zoom. The group also selected their titles for the upcoming year and are excited for their 2024 club meetings.

On December 1, the library held its 4th *Gameshow Extravaganza Program* (formerly promoted as Flashback Friday). The program had 35 adults in attendance. Attendees had the fun participating in our *Holiday themed Family Feud* program. The participants enjoyed their experience and are looking forward to next Month's *25 Words or Less* program.

On December 5, Adult Services staff held its 1st monthly Winter Crafternoon program! Three adults enjoyed a relaxing afternoon of crafting their very own paper snowflake. A fun yet calming activity to celebrate the upcoming holidays.

On December 8, the library hosted its *Tabletop Game Night* with eight Adults. Staff was able to introduce patrons to more involved games that could accommodate larger numbers at once. A patron also brought in one of their own games to play that was an excellent fit for the group.

On December 11, the library hosted its monthly *Dungeons & Dragons* Program with a full party of six adventures. The Dungeon Master provided a wintery quest having each participant role-play as a woodland gnome. The group was quickly thrown into battle against a 12-foot nutcracker and proceeded to rescue the imprisoned master toy maker Nicolas.

On December 22, the library hosted a Video Game Tournament for *Super Smash Brothers Ultimate* on the Nintendo Switch. A total of nine contenders each battled in a Round Robin-style tournament. The top two players then competed in a final battle with all eyes watching as both competitors traded blows, going back and forth for an exciting match on the big screen.

Literacy Services

In October, a total of 50 learners and tutors participated in nine programs. Culture & Conversation continues with weekly hybrid (Zoom and In-Person) meetings, Book Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program, and Write Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program. In partnership with Youth Services, staff provided a family literacy program called *Trick-or-Read*, where learners and their young children enjoyed song and story time, engaged in literacy-oriented crafts, and were given picture books to add to their home libraries.

In November, a total of 61 learners and tutors participated in eight programs. Culture & Conversation continues with weekly hybrid (Zoom and In-Person) meetings, Book Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program, and Write Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program. Staff provided a *Holiday Potluck* for tutors, learners, and their family members could celebrate another year of literacy achievement. It was at this event where the Literacy Anthology was debuted to tutors and learners.

In December, a total of 28 learners and tutors participated in five programs. Culture & Conversation continues with weekly hybrid (Zoom and In-Person) meetings, Book Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program, and Write Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program. Staff facilitated Watch and Talk, a program that gives learners an opportunity to gather and to enrich their conversation skills.

Veterans Services

During the month of October, the Veterans Resource Center had a total of 133 interactions with veterans and their family members. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) 15; Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) 33; and VRC staff 85.

On October 10, library staff, and Hayden Velasquez, Los Angeles County military Veterans Service Officer attended our *Monthly Meetup* at Starbucks. Veterans and family members attended the informal coffee and light refreshments gathering. The invitation is open to all whether they are new to the community or long-term Monrovia residents. The goal of this meetup is to meet our veterans, hear their stories, and connect them to the resources they need.

On October 19, the library hosted a *Paint for Fun* program for military service members, veterans, and their friends/family. Participants relaxed and let their guard down with some tasty wine samples. They socialized with others as they created their own painting masterpiece. It was a fun and casual event for veterans and service members to gather and create new relationships with one another.

During the month of November, the Veterans Resource Center had a total of 96 interactions with veterans and their family members. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) 12; Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) 19; and VRC staff 65.

On November 9, library staff attended the *Veterans Resource Forum with LA County Supervisor Barger* at Glendale Community College hosted by Supervisor Barger and a panel of veterans' service providers from Los Angeles County, California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). They addressed the needs of veterans throughout Los Angeles County. This event offered an opportunity for veteran's organizations dedicated to serving veterans, professionals working closely with veterans, and the broader veteran community to engage in a dialogue that can shape the way to support and serve veterans and all who served.

Veterans Day 2023 @ Library Park, The City created a weeklong recognition to thank veterans. A *Field of Honor* flag display located at the front of the Library Park, to invite the community to write messages of appreciation to veterans. City staff was available by the flags to hand out tags to those who wish to write a message of appreciation. The tags were then tied to one of the many flag poles on the display. A Veterans Day Ceremony honoring those who served was held on Saturday November 11, 2023. Hosted by the Allied Veterans Council of the Upper San Gabriel Valley.

On November 14, library staff and Hayden Velasquez, Los Angeles County military Veterans Service Officer, attended our *Monthly Meetup* at Starbucks. Veterans and family members attended the informal coffee and light refreshments gathering. The invitation is open to all whether they are new to the community or long-term Monrovia residents.

During the month of December, the Veterans Resource Center had a total had a total of 76 interactions with veterans and their family members. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) nine; Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) 19; and VRC staff 48.

On December 12, library staff and Hayden Velasquez, Los Angeles County military Veterans Service Officer attended our *Monthly Meetup* at Starbucks, Monrovia 239 W. Huntington Drive Monrovia, CA. Veterans and family members attended the informal coffee and light refreshments gathering. The invitation is open to all whether they are new to the community or long-term Monrovians.

YOUTH SERVICES REPORT

October 2023 Programing

Storytimes

Library staff hosted storytime on Wednesday, October 4, 11, 18, and 25. Families gathered to hear stories, sing, and dance, practice movement, enjoy sensory activities, and make a craft. Storytime plays a pivotal role in childhood development by nurturing a child's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. It helps children expand their vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills as they engage with characters and narratives. Some themes highlighted were shapes, babies, bears, and Halloween. Three hundred and ninety-seven people attended.

Baby Storytime

Our early literacy with young children aged 0-2 continues to thrive. Together we share songs, rhymes, stories and activities to assist in the development of language and literacy in the youngest members of our community. We are as resolute as ever in our endless devotion to the benefits of talking, reading, singing, writing and playing for young developing minds. We consciously tout these advantages while offering a plenitude of options for little ones to talk, read, sing, write and play at our storytimes.

Bilingual Storytime

Children and their caregivers were treated to songs, stories and fingerplays honoring *Dia de Los Muertos* during bilingual Storytime.

Programs

Barks & Books

In partnership with *Love on a Leash and Therapy Dogs International*, the library encouraged literacy and strengthened reading confidence with this *Barks and Books* program. Young children find it much easier to read aloud to a dog. With no judgment, no stress, and a positive experience, reading to a very special service animal helps young children interact and read while creating positive memories. Each participant received 10 minutes with the dog, which allowed for five participants during the hour program.

Craft-tastic

This two-hour program on Saturday, October 14, provided families an opportunity to create and take home their designs. Halloween crafts were available for children of all ages. Depending on their skill level, projects were on hand for the very young to older students. As children explore materials, colors, and shapes, they enhance their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Creating instills a sense of accomplishment and boosts self-esteem, as children see their ideas materialize. Fostering a child's love for creating not only ignites their imagination but also nurtures a wide range of skills crucial for their overall development. A total of 111 attendees participated in this event.

Benihana Kabuki Sushi for Kids

On Saturday, October 14, Benihana of Arcadia came to the library to show young participants the art of making California Rolls and Candy Sushi. A professional chef and Benihana staff were on hand to teach Japanese etiquette and help children create delicious treats. Space was limited and registration for this program filled up quickly. The children learned life skills like following directions and basic food safety. This program encourages kids to expand their palate and learn to appreciate Japanese culture.

Spooktacular Stories

On Tuesday, October 31, between 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., library staff hosted a *Halloween* program with short films based on popular holiday themed books, and live storytelling. Families came to the Community Room, received a free bag of popcorn, and sat down to enjoy kid-friendly spooky tales. The library event was in collaboration with the City of Monrovia's *Halloween Spooktacular and Trick or Treat Bash*.

The library had 1,346 children and their caregivers attend.

Sensory Friendly Morning

The library hosted another Sensory Friendly Morning in October for neurodivergent children. Children with sensory processing disorders, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, were invited to explore, play, and make new friends in a welcoming, accepting, and celebratory atmosphere designed specifically for this demographics' needs. The library's full offerings were available, including book checkouts, accessible crafts, and sensory play. Pre-registration continued to be encouraged as attendance is limited for comfort and safety, though walk-ups were welcomed as space allowed. A total of 15 children and caregivers attended.

Lego Free Play

The library hosted a *Lego Free Play* event for children aged 2 to 12 and their caregivers. The children exercised problem solving, fine motor, and social skills as they built and played cooperatively and independently. There were approximately 25 attendees for this post-Thanksgiving program.

Staff also hosted a couple of *Lego Free play* events over the holiday season. During these programs, children were able to flex their creativity at the program building a number of different inventive and imaginative builds. We are providing the children, and families, of Monrovia with an opportunity to develop fine motor skills, critically and creatively think, develop concentration and focus and boost self-confidence. The program offers an opportunity for attendees to engage and bond with their families and other members of the community. Staff continue to be happy with the turnout and have had a very positive response to the program.

Innovation Lab

On November 15, staff hosted an *Innovation Lab program* for elementary school-aged children. The program attendees learned about engineering, mathematics and other STEAM-related subject matter. Staff will continue to offer an assortment of *STEAM* programming for school-aged children for the foreseeable future to ensure we are enhancing experiences, access and technology for the people of Monrovia.

Storytime with the Park Naturalists

Staff partnered with Canyon Park Naturalists to present *Storytime with a Park Naturalist*. Due to weather conditions, the program was hosted inside the library. Stories, songs and rhymes were shared with program attendees, along with a presentation by the Park Naturalist about animal senses and hiking safety. To cap off the event participants made crafts and were able to socialize with other attendees. We continue to take advantage of this opportunity to enhance experiences, access and partnerships within our community.

November 2023 Programming

Storytimes

Library Staff hosted storytime on the following Wednesdays, November 1, 8, 15, and 29. Families gathered to hear stories, sing, and dance, practice movement, enjoy sensory activities, and make a craft. Storytime plays a pivotal role in childhood development by nurturing a child's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. It helps children expand their vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills as they engage with characters and narratives. Activities with rhythm sticks, scarves, shakers, and bells offer multisensory experiences, enhancing cognitive and physical development in children. Some themes highlighted this month were fall, thankfulness, kids, and clouds. Two hundred and forty-six people attended.

Programs

Barks & Books

In partnership with *Love on a Leash and Therapy Dogs International*, the library encouraged literacy and strengthened reading confidence with this Barks and Books program. Young children find it much easier to read aloud to a dog. With no judgement, no stress, and a positive experience, reading to a very special service animal helps young children interact and read while creating positive memories. Each participant received 10 minutes with the dog, which allowed for five participants during the hour program.

Imagination Station

On Thursday, November 16, in honor of *World Children's Day*, the staff hosted Imagination Station. Pretending and imaginative play, such as kitchen, doctor, and dress-up activities, provide numerous developmental benefits for children. These activities promote creativity, allowing kids to explore and express their ideas. Role-playing enhances social skills, encouraging cooperation and communication as they interact with peers. Using props in play, like kitchen utensils, play money, tools, and more, supports fine and gross motor skills development. Additionally, imaginative play fosters cognitive skills, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence, laying the foundation for well-rounded development. There were fifty-six in attendance for this 90-minute program.

Thankful and Grateful Crafts

On Thursday, November 16, in partnership with the City of Monrovia's *Thankful and Grateful* event, the library kept their doors open to allow families to come in and make crafts. They could create a Thankfulness Turkey Poem to take home complete with colorful feathers, or in honor of *World Children's Day*, make a paper doll and dress it up with material and a multitude of supplies. One hundred and eighty attended this open-house style program.

Sensory Friendly Morning

The library hosted another *Sensory Friendly Morning* in November for neurodivergent children. Children with sensory processing disorders, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, were invited to explore, play, and make new friends in a welcoming, accepting, and celebratory atmosphere designed specifically for this demographics' needs. The library's full offerings were available, including book checkouts, accessible crafts, and sensory play. Pre-registration continued to be encouraged as attendance is limited for comfort and safety, though walk-ups were welcomed as space allowed. A total of 15 children and caregivers attended.

Tzu-Chi Preschool Visit

Library staff visited Tzu-Chi Preschool for an *A autumnal animals* themed storytime. Students, teachers, and parents heard stories, sang songs, and danced while considering what animals do to prepare for winter. There were approximately 75 attendees.

Lego Free Play

The library hosted a *Lego Free Play* event for children aged 2 to 12 and their caregivers. The children exercised problem solving, fine motor, and social skills as they built and played cooperatively and independently. There were approximately 50 attendees.

CELC Preschool Visit

Library staff visited *Canyon Early Learning Center* for autumn themed storytimes, staggered throughout the day so all students in the school could attend. Students and teachers heard stories, sang songs, and danced while reflecting on signs of seasonal change. There were approximately 150 attendees.

December 2023 Programming

Storytimes

Library Staff hosted storytime on the following Wednesdays, December 13 & 20. Families gathered to hear stories, sing, and dance, practice movement, enjoy sensory activities, and make a craft. Storytime plays a pivotal role in childhood development by nurturing a child's cognitive, emotional, and social growth. It helps children expand their vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills as they engage with characters and narratives. Activities with beanbags and bells offer multisensory experiences, enhancing cognitive and physical development in children. Some themes highlighted this month were snow and mice. One hundred and fourteen people attended.

Santa Storytime

On the evening of Wednesday, December 6, the library hosted its annual Santa Storytime program. Commencing at 5 p.m. and concluding at 8 p.m., this special event featured a musical performance by the *Silver Strings*, a group of senior citizen musicians from the Duarte Senior Center. Comprising of 20 musicians between the ages of 75 and 95, the Silver Strings entertained library patrons with Christmas Carols using various instruments. The performance, held in the Library Lobby, lasted 45 minutes and set a festive tone for the evening. Subsequent to the musical segment, families gathered in the Community Room for a storytelling session centered on Santa and his reindeer. The program included interactive stories and sing-alongs. Santa made a noteworthy entrance, engaging children with a special book reading. Post-storytelling, families had the opportunity to take photos with Santa and engage in a Christmas wreath crafting activity. To conclude the evening, the Grinch, stationed outside the library, distributed candy canes and provided an additional photo opportunity. One-hundred and fifty individuals attend this holiday event, contributing to its success and community engagement.

Bilingual Storytime

Children and their caregivers were treated to bilingual stories showcasing Noche Buena and how it relates to the Hispanic Culture. A fun jingle bell craft was available after storytime.

Programs

Barks & Books

In partnership with *Love on a Leash and Therapy Dogs International*, the library encouraged literacy and strengthened reading confidence with this Barks and Books program. Young children find it much easier to read aloud to a dog. With no judgement, no stress, and a positive experience, reading to a very special

service animal helps young children interact and read while creating positive memories. Each participant received 10 minutes with the dog, which allowed for five participants during the hour program. This program was available on Tuesday, December 5 and 19.

Holiday Family Movie Marathon

The library hosted a *Holiday Family Movie Marathon* in December. Attendees were able to view three different holiday classics over the course of the day. One attendee remarked how happy he was able to share one of his favorite holiday movies with his young son. There were 27 in attendance.

Holidays around the World

On Saturday, December 2, children had the opportunity to create crafts celebrating, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and New Year's Eve. Staff provided informational handouts about each celebration and children had a great time making party hats, Star of David, Santa's and Kwanza Cups.

Santa Letter Writing Station

The popular Santa Letter Writing Station, offering children a creative and educational opportunity, returned this December. Participants wrote or drew for Santa, placing their submissions in a designated Library mailbox. Library staff, acting as St. Nick, responded to each letter with provided email addresses, creating a charming correspondence. This program aligned with the broader objectives of promoting early letter writing, enhancing communication, social, and handwriting skills. Emphasizing spelling and grammar practice, the station reinforces school-taught skills in a festive context and the wish list creation fosters decision-making skills and clarifies children's desires. Lastly, the expression of gratitude in letters instills an appreciation for positive things, contributing to both the joy of the season and educational development. This passive program serves as a meaningful initiative, combining joyful engagement with valuable learning experiences for participating children. One-hundred and ninety-six letters were submitted.

TEEN PROGRAMS

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meeting

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meeting took place on October 9 in the Library Community Room and was led by the TAB Council. During the meeting, teen members received updates on volunteering in October. The teens signed up to help with Innovation Lab, backroom help, preparing crafts for Storytime, toy cleaning after storytimes, and Lego Free Play. They also signed up to host two teen events, Teen Game Night and Teen Drop-in DIY. The TAB council led an icebreaker activity, *Two Truths and a Lie*. After that, teen members broke into groups to begin brainstorming for a program they are planning as a group and hosting in January. A total of 27 TAB members attended the meeting.

The *Teen Game Night* event was held on Friday, October 20 after the library closed. Teens came, enjoyed snacks, played Nintendo Switch Games, and board games. The most popular game of the night was Smash Ultimate. This was a TAB led program so volunteers welcomed their peers and showed them what was going on while having fun themselves. Our ongoing teen game nights provide teens a safe and supervised environment to learn healthy competition and practice their critical thinking and social skills. A total of six teens attended this program.

The *Teen Drop-in DIY* event was held on Wednesday, October 25 in the Teen Area. This month debuted a new portable makerspace cart. This cart has many tools and supplies for making many different crafts and art pieces. Teens who attend this event made friendship bracelets, clay charms, pins with our button maker and more. Crafting events can provide teens a space to socialize with like-minded peers and express themselves creativity. A total of five teens attended this program.

On November 6, the TAB meeting took place in the Library Community room and was led by the TAB Council. During the meeting, teen members received updates on volunteering in November. The teens signed up to help with Innovation Lab, Backroom Help preparing crafts for Storytime, and Lego Free Play. They also signed up to host two teen events, Teen Game Night and Teen Drop-in DIY. The TAB council led an icebreaker activity, "Rock, Paper, Scissors Entourage". The teens also voted on a theme for the program they are planning as a group and hosting in January. They chose to do *Minute to Win it* Games. A total of 26 TAB members attended the meeting.

The *Teen Game Night* event was held on Friday, November 17 after the library closed. Teens came, enjoyed snacks, played Nintendo Switch Games, and board games. The most popular game of the night was Smash Ultimate. This was a TAB led program so volunteers welcomed their peers and showed them what was going on while having fun themselves. Our ongoing teen game nights provide teens a safe and supervised environment to learn healthy competition and practice their critical thinking and social skills. A total of 13 teens attended this program.

The *Teen Drop-in DIY* event was held on Wednesday, November 29 in the Teen Area. Teens were able to use our new portable Makerspace cart. This cart has many tools and supplies for making many different crafts and art pieces. Teens who attend this event made friendship bracelets, clay charms, and pins with our button maker. Several teens even joined a spontaneous crochet lesson. Crafting events can provide teens a space to socialize with like-minded peers and express themselves creativity. A total of four teens attended this program.