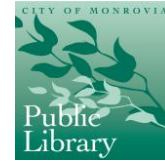




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: Community Services, Library Division

MEETING DATE: March 28, 2024

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

AGENDA LOCATION: CC-2

ADULT SERVICES REPORT

Adult Programs

On February 7, Adult Services staff held its monthly *Crafternoon* program with 16 adults in attendance. Valentine's cards and chocolate roses were this month's craft. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to relax and socialize with one another. This program grew out of feedback from patrons asking for crafting programs for adults and many of the participants were excited to continue attending the monthly series.

On February 9, the monthly *Tabletop Game Night* for adults took place in the Library's lobby and hosted 11 card holding, dice rolling, high steaks taking adults. The group was spread out and excitement filled the air as players enjoyed games that encouraged playful risk taking and rewards.

On February 10, the library held its *Gameshow Extravaganza* program. This month's event was inspired by the \$25,000 pyramid. The program had 23 adults in attendance. Attendees had fun competing, and testing their clue giving skills for a chance to make it to the top of the Pyramid. The participants had a great time and are looking forward to the Gameshow challenge next month, Jeopardy on March 1.

On February 12, the library hosted its monthly *Dungeons & Dragons* Program with a Dungeon Master, five players, and three observers. The nine participants made their way through a storm, fought with a mysterious group siphoning magic from a powerful elemental creature, and restored the natural balance to a fishing village. All for two silver pieces, and a fancy amulet.

On February 23, the library hosted a *Video Game Tournament* for Super Smash Brothers Ultimate on the Nintendo Switch with a total of 12 contenders each battling in a Round Robin-style Tournament. One player in particular excited the crowd with overwhelming wins. With each victory, the rest of the competitors grew more and more eager to be the one that ended their winning streak. But after making their way through all other entrants, the top player was ultimately undefeated and celebrated by the entire crowd.

On February 24, Adult Services staff collaborated with Monrovia Music Academy to offer more Beginner *Ukulele Lessons* for adults using the libraries own collection of ukuleles. This session had 13 participants. The program discussed instrument tuning, basic cords, and culminated in playing simplified versions of the songs, *Row Row Row Your Boat*, *You are My Sunshine*, and The Beatles' *Yellow Submarine*, with two participants interested in borrowing ukuleles after the class!

CC-2

Novel T's Book Club met on February 27 to discuss *The Language of Flowers* by Vanessa Diffenbaugh. A total of 21 participated, 17 in-person and four via Zoom, in this monthly program. Next month's title is *Ordinary People* by Judith Guest.

Literacy Services

In February, a total of 66 Learners and Tutors participated in 10 programs. Culture & Conversation continues with weekly hybrid (Zoom and In-Person) meetings, Book Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program, Write Club continues as a biweekly hybrid program, and Watch & Talk continues as a monthly in-person program. Staff with the help of a volunteer tutor, facilitated "Read Write Love", a Valentine's-themed family literacy event which consisted of song and story time, Valentine's Day card creations, and free books for the home library for 45 library patrons in total.

Lastly, staff would like to share some encouraging reporting from one of its tutors: *"Today's session focused on planning for [learner's] American citizenship goal. This past week, he went to the Downtown LA Federal government building to get information on becoming a U.S. citizen. He said he was asked to complete a form while there and again reported he had no anxiety taking it on himself and did not need his son to translate (yeah!). [Learner] walked away from the meeting with the citizenship counselor feeling inspired and motivated to become a citizen.*

Veterans Services

During the month of February, the Veterans Resource Center had a total of 121 interactions with veterans and their family members. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) 20; Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) 18; and VRC staff 83.

Changes were made to the Veterans Monthly Meetup date to encourage more veterans to attend and to avoid conflicting with the VFW's monthly meetings. Going forward the Veterans Monthly Meetup is scheduled for the 4th Tuesday of the month. On February 27, the Veterans Meetup was held at the Library. Staff welcomed three new guests.

Library staff gave a presentation about the Monrovia Public Library's Veterans Resource Center during the February 20th Monrovia VFW Post #2027 meeting. The intention is to continue building collaboration with community partners as the library connects with veterans and their advocates within the community

YOUTH SERVICES REPORT

Storytimes

Library Staff hosted storytime for 2-5 year olds on Wednesdays in February. 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, shakers, scarves, and more offer multisensory experiences, enhancing cognitive and physical development in children. Some themes highlighted this month were hats, food, music, and questions. A total of 341 children and their caregivers attended.

Baby Storytime

The early literacy program, Baby Storytime, for families with young children aged 0-2, continues to flourish every Tuesday. Together, staff share songs, rhymes, stories, and activities to assist in the development of language and literacy in the youngest members of the community. Staff continue to promote the benefits of talking, reading, singing, writing, and playing for young developing minds. Storytimes are designed to

provide young children with a variety of options for doing this while also modeling the importance of it for caregivers. A total of 168 children and their caregivers attended.

Storytime with the Park Naturalists

On Saturday, February 17, staff collaborated with the Parks and Recreation Department to present another *Storytime with the Park Naturalists* program, which was held at the library due to cold weather. Animal-themed stories, songs, and rhymes, were shared, and then used the knowledge of animals to practice making inferences during the presentation by Park Naturalists. To conclude the event, participants made crafts and were able to interact with other attendees. Staff continue to take advantage of this opportunity to enhance experiences, access, and partnerships within the community. A total of 23 children and caregivers attended.

Sensory Friendly Morning

The library hosted another Sensory Friendly Morning in February 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 these demographics' needs. The library's full offerings were available, including book check-outs, 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 32 children and caregivers 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 than to adults. 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 during the hour program. This program was available on Tuesdays, February 6 and 20. A total of 12 children participated in the program.

Cube Kids

The Cube Kids program, centered on the popular speed cubing activity, is a testament to the many benefits of engaging in intellectual challenges. Speed cubing offers a remarkable avenue for enhancing cognitive abilities, refining motor skills, and honing hand-eye coordination, particularly advantageous during formative years. Moreover, for individuals grappling with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), the program serves as a constructive outlet, fostering improved focus, concentration, and problem-solving capabilities. The tactile nature of manipulating the cube offers a therapeutic reprieve, aiding in calming restless minds. By engaging in cubing, children learn the value of patience and persistence, as they may encounter numerous failed attempts before achieving success. Cubing clubs also encourage socialization and diverting attention away from ubiquitous screens. The after-school sessions, hosted at the library, provided a nurturing environment for thirty-five attendees between the ages of 6 – 11 years. Because of the increasing popularity of this program, staff plan on additional sessions this summer. A total of 35 children attended.

LEGO Free Play

The library hosted a LEGO Free Play event this past month. During this program, children were able to flex their creativity by building a number of different things. Staff provide the children, and families, 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. Youth Services staff are happy with the turnout and have had a very positive response to the program. A total of 41 children attended.

Innovation Lab

There was an Innovation Lab program on February 21, for elementary school-aged children. The program attendees learned about circuits, engineering, mathematics and other STEAM-related subject matter. The library continues to offer an assortment of STEAM programming for school-aged children for the foreseeable future to ensure the community enjoys enhanced experiences and access to new technologies. A total of 18 children and caregivers attended.

Mini-Vation Lab: Toddler STEAM Activities

Mini-vention Lab for toddlers, an offshoot of the popular Innovation Lab program for elementary school-aged children, was held in February. Once again, the program drew a large group of excited and immersed children between the ages of 2 and 5, and their families. The children learned some basic information about engineering, design, density and buoyancy while they built aluminum foil boats. Staff continue to take an active approach to teaching the program attendees about STEAM-related subject matter by encouraging experimentation and a hands-on approach. This program assists in the development of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem solving while nurturing curiosity and imagination. A total of 45 children and caregivers attended.

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

Lunar New Year Celebration

In honor of Lunar New Year, a cherished and significant Asian holiday, the library commemorated the occasion on Saturday, February 3 welcoming the community to a vibrant spectacle just outside the library entrance. Library staff hosted a captivating Lion/Dragon Dance performance, led by the talented students of Field Elementary from Pasadena. After this mesmerizing display of storytelling and cultural tradition, the dragon, lion, and performers ushered the audience into the library, where the festivities continued to unfold. Within the Youth Services area, an array of themed crafts awaited attendees of all ages, inviting them to partake in the celebration. In the lobby, a local high school student dressed in traditional Chinese clothing gave a musical demonstration on a three thousand year old Chinese string instrument named the guqin. She also shared the history of each song played. A total of 150 children and caregivers attended.

Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, the library collaborated with the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association on Saturday, February 17 for a special event. Embracing the national theme highlighting African Americans and their contributions to the Arts, a vibrant celebration unfolded. The Youth Services hallway had a captivating display, offering a glimpse into the rich history and artistic endeavors of prominent African American figures, spanning photographers, painters, musicians, sculptors, and beyond. A skilled storyteller enthralled the audience with tales originating from Africa, transporting them through time and culture. Following the performance, attendees partook in an interactive art session inspired by the renowned artist Alma Thomas. The event drew a crowd of fifty-five individuals, each eager to commemorate the enduring legacy of African American artistry and creativity.

School Visits

In-House visits included Blue Ridge Academy, where staff read and played interactive library games with students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. A total of 50 students participated in the visit.

Teen Programs

The February Teen Advisory Board (TAB) meeting took place on February 5 in the Library Community Room and was led by the TAB Council. The TAB council led an icebreaker activity asking their peers to share items they would take with them on a desert island. During the meeting TAB members received

updates on volunteering in February. The teens signed up to help with Innovation Lab, Backroom Help preparing crafts for Storytime, Space Exploration, and Lego Free Play. The teen members also signed up to host two monthly teen events (Teen Game Night and Pop-up Teen Makerspace). The activity this month was brainstorming ideas for a craft that TAB will have for children at the Spring Egg Hunt Booth. A total of 24 TAB members attended the meeting.

Teen Game Night event was held on Friday, February 16 after the library closed. Teens came, enjoyed snacks, played Nintendo Switch Games, and board games. The most popular games of the night were Boomerang Fu and Telestrations. This was a TAB led program so volunteers welcomed their peers and showed them what was going on while having fun themselves. The 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 6 teens attended this program.

Pop-up Makerspace for Teens was held on Wednesday, February 28 in the Teen Area. Teens used the library's portable makerspace cart. This cart has many tools and supplies for making a variety of different crafts and art pieces. Some teens used the cart's tools to work on a 3D math project and others used the cart's materials to draw. Crafting events can provide teens a space to socialize with like-minded peers and express their creativity. A total of 3 teens attended this program.