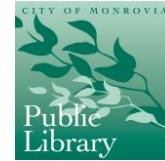




**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: **Community Services, Library Division**

MEETING DATE: August 22, 2024

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

AGENDA LOCATION: CC-2

ADULT SERVICES REPORT

Adult Programs

On July 9, staff held the monthly Summer *Craft-tabulous* program with 22 participants. This month's activity was making yarn-wrapped planters. Participants decorated terra-cotta planters in original designs with yarn, twine, and paint.

On July 12, staff visited Brookdale Senior Living to facilitate a tech help session. The community members took turns asking for help with individual problems on their cell phones. A total of seven people participated in this monthly program.

On July 12, a total of 18 members of the community gathered around a large mix of board games and puzzles and played multiple rounds of Same, Same, but Different, Telestrations, Mountain Goats, Battle Sheep, No Thanks, Century Spice Road, and a Shark Puzzle with way to many blue pieces. Attendees had a great time going around tables and getting to play in multiple groups.

On July 13, staff held an Adult's & Teens *Sun Printing* art activity with 25 participants. Attendees had fun learning how to use UV dyes and the power of the sun to creatively decorate their own tote bags and zipper pouches.

On July 15, the *Dungeons and Dragons* (DND) group gathered and were tasked with entering a dark forest and uncovering the cause of the local animal's disappearance. The six players were confronted with a spirit of the forest who was determined to see it burn. After some ineffective combat, the party decided to take a new approach, *talking*. The conversation in the literal heat of battle, revealed that the trees of the forest required fire in their natural cycle, but the neighboring village had worked to stop the forest fires for several years, causing the spirit to take direct action. The spirit did not want to cause harm to the forest animals and commanded them to leave before setting the first blaze.

On July 23 and 24, staff visited the *New Horizons* and *Gadabout* senior groups that meet weekly at the Community Center to share information about library resources and materials as well as sign up members for the Summer Reading Program. A total of 83 attendees learned about how to search for and request 3D prints. Four attendees placed a 3D print request, and seven attendees either signed up for a library card or renewed information to use this service in the future.

CC-2

On July 23, the *Novel T's Book Club* met to discuss *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. A total of 18 participated, 16 in-person and two via Zoom, in this monthly program. Next month's title is *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See.

On July 26, the *Nintendo Switch Free Play for Adults* program drew in eight guests. The players defeated Bowser in a Hot Rod, competed over a space ship, and used motion controls to stamp letters with their bottoms. Has technology gone too far? At the Adult Game Night, it is all in the name of humor.

Literacy Services

In July, a total of 63 Learners and Tutors participated in 11 programs. Culture & Conversation, *Book Club*, *Write Club*, and *Speak Easy* continue as regular programs. Staff also facilitated the quarterly Tutor Roundtable, an opportunity for ongoing training, support, and for tutors to share their experiences. A total of six tutors attended.

On Saturday, July 13, staff provided a family literacy event that aimed to empower parents as their child's first teacher, where families participated in process art together, engaged in song and storytime, and received free books for the home library. Process art allows children to think creatively and critically, explore materials, and embrace experimentation. A total of 50 children and family members participated in the event.

Staff attended the Southern California Library Literacy Network meeting at Commerce Public Library to learn from other literacy programs best practices for services and share ideas for engaging with learners and tutors.

Veterans Services

During the month of July, the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) had a total of 299 interactions with veterans. County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO) 98; Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) 35, and VRC staff 166.

On July 7, the VRC team held a special meetup and joined Monrovia residents for a summer concert in Library Park. A cover band played 80's classics while concertgoers danced the night away. Library staff shared information about veterans' services and programs while handing out free ice cream treats. A local veteran and Councilman, Larry Spicer also joined in on the fun to help with the large crowds of people who heard that free ice cream was available. Staff interacted with approximately 300 members of the community.

On July 20, the VRC team collaborated with the LA County Military & Veterans Affairs Office and LOOK Cinemas to provide a free movie matinee for veterans and their loved ones. The featured movie was *Twisters*. There had a total of 47 attendees enjoyed a free movie and \$20 gift card to purchase snacks from the lobby. The reception for the new program idea was overwhelmingly positive. Quarterly movie events for veterans are now in the planning stages.

On July 23, three veterans & Monrovians joined library VRC staff for an afternoon coffee at the monthly Veterans Meetup at Starbucks (239 W. Huntington Drive). The small but mighty group enjoyed reminiscing about family experiences in the military, sharing stories about their children growing up and discussing future meetups with a local hiking group.

YOUTH SERVICES REPORT

Sensory Friendly Morning

The library hosted another Sensory Friendly Morning in July 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 two children and caregivers attended.

Storytime with the Park Naturalists

On Saturday, July 13, the library collaborated with the Parks and Recreation side of Community Services to present another Storytime with the Park Naturalists program, located at Lucinda Garcia Park. Stories, songs, and dances that were related to toads were shared, followed by learning about local wildlife and practicing using various tools to hunt for worms like a bird did in the presentation. To wrap up the event, participants made frog crafts and got up close with animal pelts. Our community experiences, access, and partnerships are being enhanced by taking advantage of this opportunity. The event was attended by a total of 50 children and caregivers.

Summer Craftastic

Summer crafts for families continued in July. Children and their caregivers were welcomed for a weekly drop in craft program. Children were given the opportunity to design, decorate, and create to their hearts' content each week through a different art activity. The crafts for July were the following: reverse coloring, paper toys (frisbees and rainbow twirlers), suncatchers, and bookmarks, and ending the month with summer journals. Youth Services staff and Teen Advisory Board volunteers guided families in the creation of each activity. A total of 380 children and families participated in the program series.

Storytimes

Staff hosted storytime for 2-5 year olds Wednesdays in July. The families gathered to listen to stories, sing, move, and participate in physical activities, enjoy sensory experiences, and create crafts together. Storytelling plays a significant role in the development of children, as it fosters their cognitive, emotional, and social progression. It helps to broaden children's vocabulary, understanding, and analytical abilities as they immerse themselves in characters and stories. Multisensory experiences were included in activities that enhanced cognitive and physical development in children. On the final Wednesday in July, staff held a special Community Helpers storytime with a special surprise guest, Mayor Shevlin, as well as staff and vehicles from the Fire Department, Police, Athens Trash Services, Public Works and Canyon Park. A total of 552 people attended the Wednesday storytimes in July.

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, July 2 and 16. Twelve students participated for the one-on-one sessions.

Cube Club

Cube Club is an engaging program designed for children aged 6 to 12, focusing on developing strategic thinking and problem-solving skills through a variety of games. Participants immerse themselves in activities such as mastering the Rubik's Cube, playing checkers and chess, honing their skills in cup

stacking, and exploring other mind-stimulating games. The club provides a relaxed environment where kids can hang out for an hour, sharing techniques and strategies with their peers. Through these interactive sessions, children not only enhance their cognitive abilities but also build camaraderie and communication skills, making learning both fun and collaborative. A total of 95 children participated in the program series.

Stuffed Animal Sleepover Drop-off and Pick-up

The *Stuffed Animal Sleepover* was a delightful event that brought joy to many families. On Thursday, July 25, seventy stuffed animals were dropped off at the library between 12 and 5 p.m. Afterward, Teen Advisory Board volunteers meticulously set up various scenes for a photo and video shoot, capturing the whimsical adventures of the plush guests. When the animals were picked up on Saturday, July 27, children discovered that their beloved companions had enjoyed a night of storytelling, games, and a lively pizza party. The stuffed animals' dreams were filled with aspirations of participating in the 2024 Stuffer Olympics. The event's highlight was a video displaying these activities, which was a resounding success and warmly received by all families. The video is now proudly displayed on the library's website, allowing everyone to relive the enchanting experience. A total of 160 people attended the Stuffed Animal Pick Up.

Mathnasium Meetup

The *Mathnasium Meetup* was a resounding success on Friday, July 12, attracting 115 enthusiastic attendees. In partnership with Monrovia's Mathnasium, a renowned local math tutoring company, the event transformed the Youth Area into a vibrant learning hub. Various booths were set up, each dedicated to a specific math skill, catering to both older and younger students. Participants engaged in activities covering addition, multiplication, division, geometry, and more. The interactive nature of the event ensured that learning was both fun and effective. As a reward for their dedication, participants who visited all 10 stations received exciting prizes. The Mathnasium Meetup not only fostered a love for mathematics but also strengthened community ties through collaborative learning.

Innovation Lab

The *Innovation Lab* program in July drew in children between the ages of 6 and 11, and their families. The program attendees learned about STEAM-related subject matter, including, engineering, design and motion. The adaptability, creativity and decision making prowess of the children attending the program was challenged. This program continues to provide opportunities to enhance access, technology and experiences for school-aged children in Monrovia. A total of 45 children and families participated in the program.

Baby Storytime

The early literacy program, Baby Storytime, for families with young children aged 0-2, continues to be immensely popular. Attendees share songs, rhymes, stories and activities together to assist in the development of language and literacy in the youngest members of the community. A total of 494 attended the Baby Storytimes in July.

LEGO Free Play

On Tuesday, July 30, the library hosted a *Lego Free Play* event. There were 65 children between the ages of one and 13, along with a number of parents and caregivers. The children were able to exercise their creativity during the program, building a variety of inventive and imaginative structures. This program provides children with an opportunity to develop fine motor skills, critical thinking, concentration, focus, problem-solving, organization, project management skills, and self-confidence.

Mini-Vation Lab: Toddler STEAM Activities

In July, *Mini-Vation Lab* offered two programs for toddlers. The programs attracted large groups of children between the ages of two and five, as well as their families. This month, 76 attendees were educated on bubbles, matter states, and chemical reactions between base and acids. Children and their caregivers are

encouraged to try out new things and take a hands-on approach. The development of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving is supported by this program, while also nurturing their curiosity and imagination.

Video Game Free Play

A *Video Game Free Play* program was held on July 25. This program was intended for children between 6 and 11. There was a solid turnout of 15 attendees and many positive responses to the event. The attendees enjoyed playing some of their favorite video games with their friends while parents were happy to see their children get a chance to socialize and interact with other kids their own age in a secure environment.

Summer Outreach

Staff provided library services and programs to local summer programs in July, including visits to the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and Plymouth Elementary (site of Monrovia Unified School District's summer school program). Children enjoyed stories, played with the library's Legos, craft activities, and games hosted by Youth Services staff. Across the three visits, staff provided services to 231 summer school and summer camp children.

TEEN PROGRAMMING

Teen Advisory Board Meeting

The monthly *Teen Advisory Board (TAB) meeting* took place on July 1 in the Library Community Room and was led by the TAB council. During the meeting, the teen members received updates on volunteering in July. The teens signed up to volunteer to prepare Storytime crafts on Tuesday afternoons and at several library programs including Innovation Lab, the Stuffed Animal Sleepover, and Video game Free Play. This month, the graduating seniors received scholarship awards from the Monrovia Public Library Foundation. The teen members also went over TAB council positions and discussed which spots will be vacant in the upcoming TAB year, starting in September. At the end of the meeting, any interested members could pick up an application to join the TAB Council. Summer Reading Program volunteering continued, and TAB members staffed an information table in the Library Lobby three days a week throughout July. A total of 26 TAB members attended the meeting.

Teen Game Hangout

The *Teen Game Hangout* event was held on Friday, July 19. Six teens enjoyed snacks, played Nintendo Switch Games, and board games. The most popular games were Mario Kart and Monopoly. 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 hangouts provide teens a safe and supervised environment to learn healthy competition and practice their critical thinking and social skills.

Pop-up Makerspace for Teens

The *Pop-up Makerspace for Teens* was held on Wednesday, July 31 in the Teen Area. Teens were invited to use the 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 make air dry clay keychains or beaded friendship bracelets, and others colored. Maker events can provide teens a space to socialize with like-minded peers and express themselves creatively. There were six teens attended this program.