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Direct questions or concerns to the Commission Liaison at (310) 618-5950, or individual department head prior to submission to the Commission. Parties will be notified if the complaint will be included on a subsequent agenda.

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Any correspondence received after 2:00 p.m. on MONDAY on any item on the agenda will be provided to the Commission electronically and available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office. A copy of the correspondence will be available for public inspection in a binder at the back of the Council Chamber or Commission Meeting room.

**TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION AGENDA
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 P.M. IN THE WEST COMMISSION ANNEX MEETING ROOM
3031 TORRANCE BLVD., TORRANCE, CA 90503**

**THE TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM
LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

ROLL CALL: Commission members: Chatterjee, Lefevre, Piotrowski, Singh, Wang, and Reilly.

2. FLAG SALUTE: Commissioner Lefevre

3. INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE: Commissioner Piotrowski

4. REPORT OF THE STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Bl. and on the City's Website on Thursday, September 5, 2024.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS (Limited up to a 15-minute period)

*This portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on items on the Consent Calendar or not on the agenda. Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Commission cannot act on items raised during public comment but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed; request clarification; or refer the item to staff. **No longer than 1 minute per speaker**. If presenting handout material to Commission, please provide 10 copies to staff before speaking.*

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed by a Councilmember from the Consent Calendar and considered separately.

7A. Approve Commission Minutes: August 12, 2024.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

8A. REPORT ON THE STATUS OF ASSEMBLY BILL 1825: THE CALIFORNIA FREEDOM TO READ ACT

Recommendation of the City Librarian that the Library Commission accept and file report on the status of Assembly Bill 1825: The California Freedom to Read Act.

8B. REPORT ON THE 2024 SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Recommendation of the City Librarian the Library Commission accept and file the staff's report outcomes and outputs of the 2024 Summer Reading Program.

8C. CITY LIBRARIAN'S MONTHLY DIVISION REPORT

Recommendation of the City Librarian that the Library Commission accept and file the City Librarian's Monthly Division Report.

9. COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

10. ITEMS FOR FUTURE LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETINGS

11. ADJOURNMENT

11A. Adjournment of Torrance Library Commission Meeting to Monday, October 14, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission Meeting Room, 3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503.



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The Torrance Library Commission convened in a regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 12, 2024, in the West Annex Meeting Room.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Chatterjee, Lefevre, Piotrowski, Wang, and Chair Reilly.

Absent: Commissioner Singh.

Also Present: City Librarian Heather Cousin.

MOTION: Commissioner Piotrowski moved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Singh. Commissioner Wang seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

2. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Piotrowski led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE

Commissioner Lefevre shared an inspirational message.

4. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

City Librarian Cousin reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard and on the City's Website Wednesday, August 7, 2024.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

None.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

7A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JULY 8, 2024

MOTION: Commissioner Lefevre moved to approve the July 8, 2024 minutes. Commissioner Piotrowski seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

8A. REPORT ON TORRANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

City Librarian Cousin presented Item 8A.

The Friends of the Library were the primary fundraising vehicle for the library, but with challenges they have faced and with lack of volunteers, library staff will look into raising funds to revitalize the foundation that once was.

Members of the Commission spoke.

MOTION: Commissioner Chatterjee moved to accept and file Item 8A. Commissioner Piotrowski seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

8B. REPORT ON THE STATE BUDGET IMPACTS ON LIBRARY FUNDING

City Librarian Cousin presented Item 8B:

A challenge the library faces is the expiration of the American Rescue Plan that funded Online Homework Help, Resume Help, Career Pathways, etc. The Califa Group, a cooperative system that allows libraries to purchase resources at a reduced rate, is being researched by library staff to see what types of bargains regarding programming can be obtained.

Commissioner Lefevre inquired if the topic of fundraising could be an ongoing Item for meetings. City Librarian Cousin replied that the decision to discuss fundraising as an ongoing Item is within the Commission's purview but noted that there may not be a monthly update on the matter.

MOTION: Commissioner Piotrowski moved to accept and file Item 8B. Commissioner Lefevre seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

8C. REVISED LIBRARY COMMISSION ANNUAL ROTATIONAL MEETING SCHEDULING

City Librarian Cousin presented Item 8C:

The Katy Geissert Library meeting will be moved to the first meeting on the Commission's rotational meeting schedule. The meeting will take place in the Katy Geissert's Polly Watts Story Theatre and signage will be posted for the public's reference.

City Librarian Cousin noted that the annual rotational meeting schedule will be finalized upon City Council's approval.

MOTION: Commissioner Wang moved to accept and file Item 8C. Commissioner Lefevre seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

8D. CITY LIBRARIAN'S MONTHLY DIVISION REPORT

City Librarian Cousin presented Item 8F:

- Programs are being well-attended.
- El Retiro Library will host a Council and a Community Open House for the Open Plus Service. Commissioners will receive an invitation in the coming weeks.
- Each library location has been busy with the Summer Reading Program, Animal Programs, and Musical Programs and the response from the public has been positive.
- The First Partner's Book Club donation has been received from the state.

Chair Reilly inquired on a prior discussion regarding a mobile library at the mall. City Librarian Cousin replied that conversations have not been had with anyone at the mall, but once staff can revisit the idea, it will be brought before the Commission for their review.

MOTION: Commissioner Lefevre moved to accept and file Item 8D. Commissioner Wang seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

9. COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Piotrowski announced that the Historical Society will have a new website that will display autobiographies in connection with individuals displayed on the Names on the Wall Project.

Commissioner Lefevre recognized Banned Books Week beginning September 22, 2024.

Chair Reilly noted that the Torrance Refinery Company has a monthly Community Alert Siren that takes place the first Wednesday of every month at 11:30 a.m.

10. ITEMS FOR NEXT LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING

- Update on Assembly Bill 1825, the California Freedom to Read Act.
- City Librarian's Monthly Division Report.

Commissioner Lefevre volunteered to do the flag salute.

Commissioner Piotrowski volunteered to do the inspirational message.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 7:02 p.m., Commissioner Piotrowski moved to adjourn the meeting to Monday, September 9, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the West Annex Commission Meeting Room. Commissioner Lefevre seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-0 approval (Commissioner Singh absent).

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TO: LIBRARY COMMISSION

FROM: HEATHER COUSIN, CITY LIBRARIAN

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE STATUS OF ASSEMBLY BILL 1825: THE CALIFORNIA FREEDOM TO READ ACT

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Librarian that the Library Commission accept and file staff's report on the status of Assembly Bill 1825: The California Freedom to Read Act.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

At the July 2024 meeting, Commissioners requested an update on Assembly Bill 1825, known as the California Freedom to Read Act. The bill, introduced by Assemblymember, Al Muratsuchi, would require:

- Libraries to establish a collection development policy approved by the local jurisdiction that is then sent to the State Librarian for review.
- If needed, local jurisdictions would receive assistance from the State Librarian to craft a collection development policy.
- Local library oversight boards would be barred from interfering with staff's ability to circulate, provide access to, and purchase items regardless of an item's:
 - content
 - perspective
 - author
 - intended audience

The bill also prohibits terminating, disciplining, or retaliating a library employee for refusing to remove material before it has been reviewed in accordance with the library's collection development policy. The same provision is there if an employee makes displays, purchases items, or makes programming decisions the employee believes are in accordance with the bill.

On August 29, the bill, which will cover public, school, college, and university libraries, passed the State Senate and is now awaiting Governor Newsom's signature before it would become law. The American Library Association, California Library Association, the California PTA, and California Federation of Teachers support the bill. Only one city, Huntington Beach, has committed to fighting its provisions.

As the bill made its way through the Assembly, both Community Services Director, John La Rock and City Librarian, Cousin, spoke with Assemblymember Muratsuchi and his staff regarding two key provisions – the right of the public to sue cities if an item remained on library shelves and the imposed oversight by the State Librarian. While the right to sue was removed from the bill, the oversight of the State Librarian provision remains in its final language.

Because the Torrance Library Commission reviewed the existing Collection Development Policy in 2023, which includes the request for reconsideration provisions, Torrance is likely in compliance with the law, should it pass.

Staff are available for questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heather Cousin". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Heather Cousin
City Librarian

TO: LIBRARY COMMISSION

FROM: HEATHER COUSIN, CITY LIBRARIAN

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE 2024 SUMMER READING PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Librarian that the Library Commission accept and file the 2024 Summer Reading Program.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The 2024 All Ages Summer Reading Program, “Read, Renew, Repeat” was held June 10 through August 17 at all six Torrance Public Library locations August 17. Inspired by the theme, programs focused on sustainability and literacy, sponsored by the Friends of the Torrance Public Library. This year, the Library was also grateful to receive kids’ meal bookmarks from Raising Caines restaurant – a very welcome treat for all who signed up for the challenge.

In the attachment, a list of key performance indicators shows although overall participation was down slightly from last year, the program was both well received, and engagement was high. Customers of all ages were attracted to the program thanks to the colorful promotional pieces, the ease of signup, and the team’s success in promoting the program. This summer, the Torrance Public Library registered over 3,851 participants and reported a completion rate of nearly 45%, which is higher than last year.

PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

- Approximately 213 programs were provided throughout the Summer, including a continuation of the Happy Hours outdoor fitness programs.
- 126 Storytime sessions were offered during the Summer. This is 70 more than last Summer. Both Katy Geissert and Southeast needed to add additional sessions to accommodate families given the demand!
- 42 youth programs, in addition to Storytime, were provided throughout the summer. Programs included a variety of activities ranging from magic shows, musicians, board games, craft construction, and wildlife programs.
- Adults also enjoyed 42 programs throughout the summer including concerts, crafts, book discussion groups, and lectures on space exploration.

- 248 entries were received for the Design-A-Bookmark contest up from last year's 148. The Commission's help is requested in judging entries. The winning entries will be printed and distributed throughout the year.

Staff are available for questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Heather Cousin
City Librarian

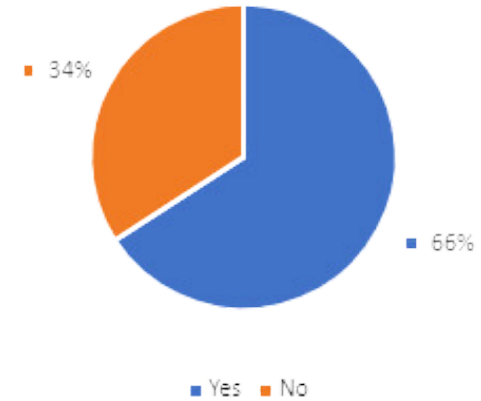
Attachment: Summer Reading Program 2024 Key Performance Indicators

City of Torrance Community Services Department - Library Division Summer Reading Program 2024 Key Performance Indicators

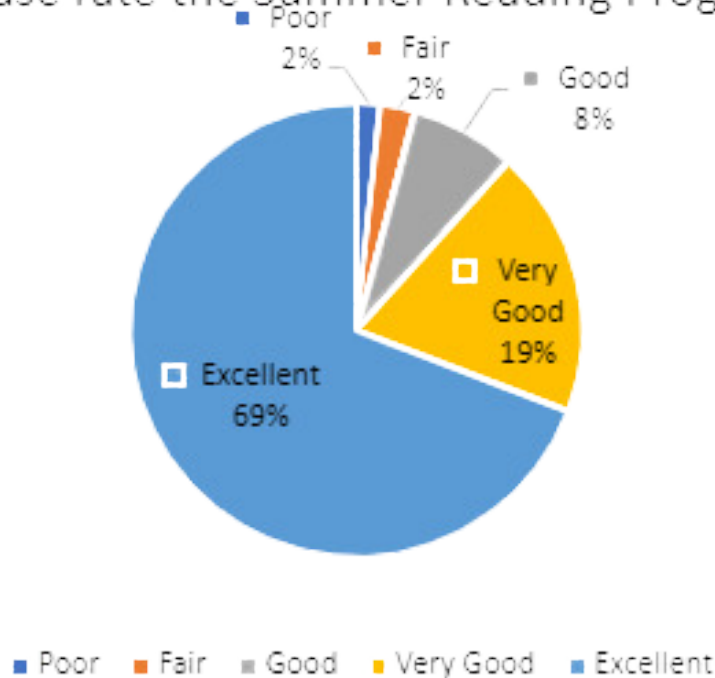
Out of 339 Survey Takers, a sample of about 120 randomly selected Torrance Public Library Summer Reading Survey responses were analyzed.



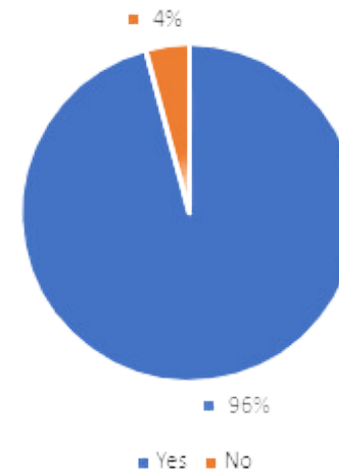
"Is this your first time participating in the Summer Reading Program?"



"Please rate the Summer Reading Program"



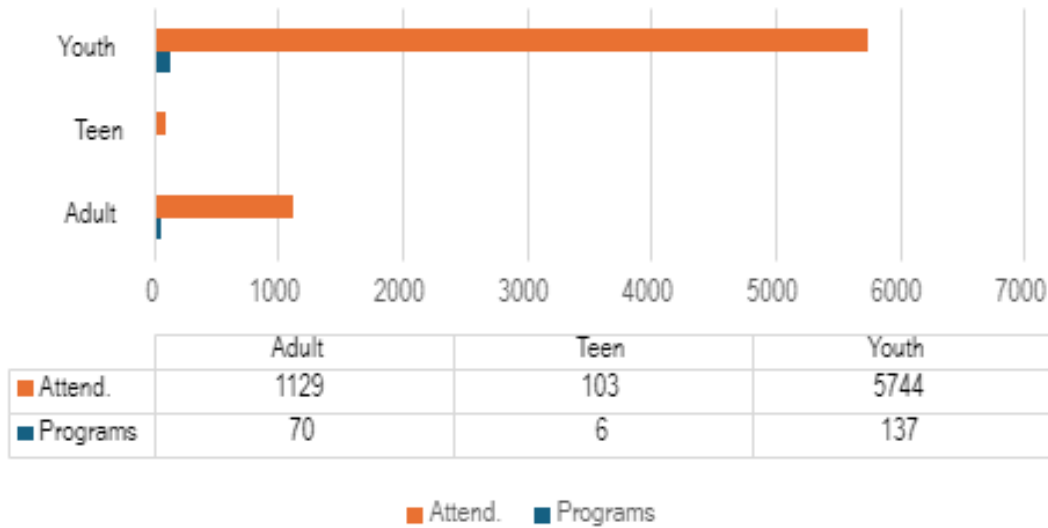
"Do you plan on participating again next year?"



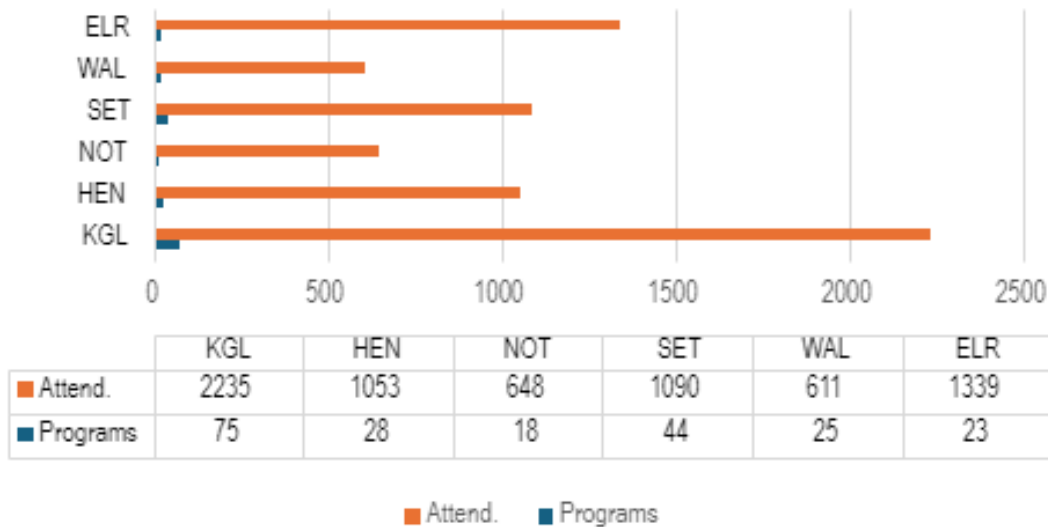
City of Torrance Community Services Department - Library Division

Summer Reading Program 2024 Programs & Visits

Overall Total Programs by Audience



Overall Total Programs

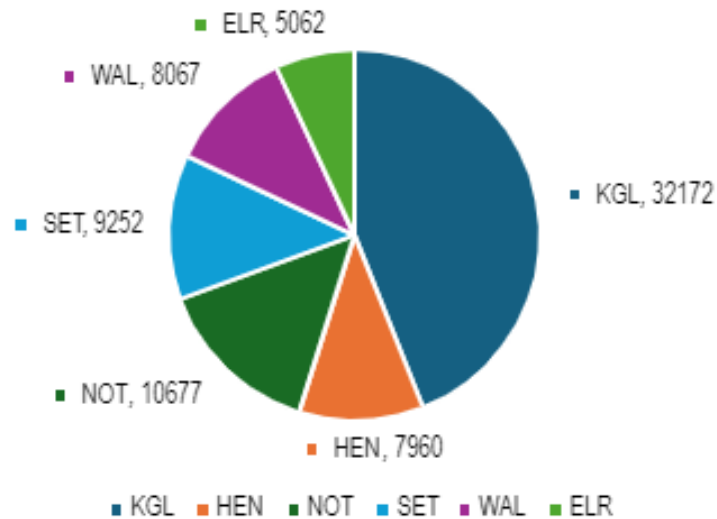


City of Torrance Community Services Department - Library Division

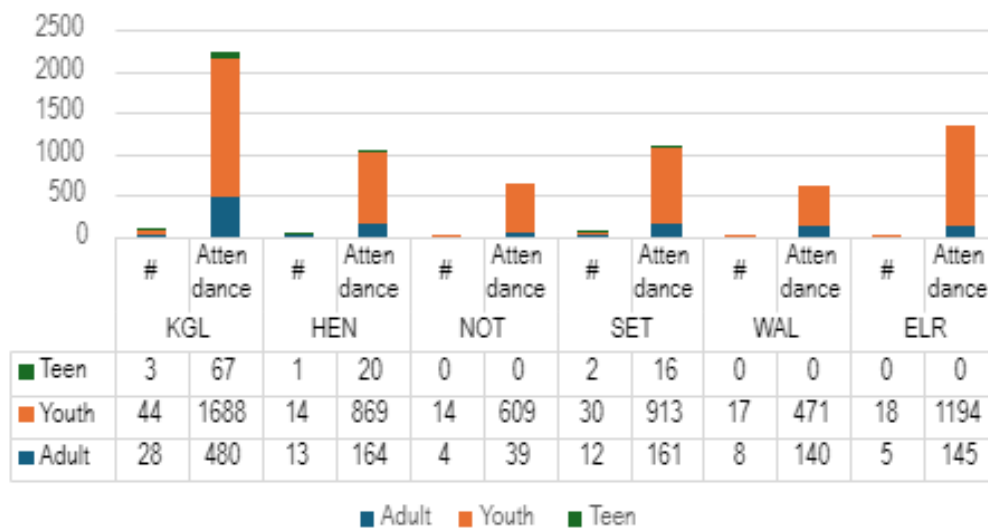
Summer Reading Program 2024 Programs & Visits



Overall Door Counts for SRP (June 10 -Aug.17)



Library Program Attendance by Age



City of Torrance Community Services Department - Library Division

Summer Reading Program 2024 Results

Comments and Suggestions

"Self paced, easy to follow"

"More effort in decorations, prizes, and activities/events. Afternoon/evening story time, more crafts for family time at all locations."

"Motivates my kids to read. They love the prizes and keeps them focused on daily reading."

"Keeps the kids busy during the summer."

"... Boosted my son's confidence to see the visual total amount of books read in such a short span of time... and drove him to read books he normally wouldn't read."

"More squish mellow please. I read 3 hours a day but still not in time to get the squish mellow I wanted."

"I like the new prizes this summer because it is a good motivation to read more everyday."



Attachment A

TO: LIBRARY COMMISSION

FROM: HEATHER COUSIN, CITY LIBRARIAN

SUBJECT: CITY LIBRARIAN'S MONTHLY DIVISION REPORT

Staffing and Administration

Library Administration staff with the assistance of the Community Services Senior Administrative Assistant, and Human Resources staff launched the recruitments for a Senior Librarian for the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library and the Library's Administrative Assistant position.

The Senior Librarian position was posted first, as a promotional position for current City employees. The Administrative Assistant position will be an open recruitment for either current employees or those new to the City.

In mid-August, the Library was happy to welcome its first Management Aide, Jaiden Villanueva. Management Aides work in a variety of departments and divisions throughout the City helping to assist with projects. Jaiden's primary assignment will be working with community engagement through social media, print, and the development of a survey to determine the Library's effectiveness at reaching the community.

Jaiden graduated from California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) with an undergraduate degree in Psychology. Before Torrance, Jaiden interned in community organizations in San Francisco and worked with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs at CSUDH.

Outreach

Staff from Katy Geissert and Southeast Libraries partnered to staff the Library's booth at the last Recreation Division Movie in the Park this Summer. With nearly 1,000 movie goers in attendance, the Library team gave out information about services and resources while positioned next to the Torrance Art Museum who were leading participants in a tile painting project. The tiles will ultimately be used to decorate a large mural installation at the Southeast Branch Library.



Families enjoy incentives at the Library booth during the last Summer Movie in the Park, August 17.

El Retiro

In August, El Retiro Library wrapped up its Summer Reading Program, with the Library still buzzing with daily visitors from the nearby park. The vibrant artwork from the Summer Reading Program continued to decorate the Library, adding a festive touch. Staff have planned a variety of fall programs for both adults and youth. The team is eagerly anticipating the upcoming Library Card Sign-Up Month and the extended access kickoff event in September.

Henderson Branch Library

August was fun and fantastic month at the Henderson Library! Our Summer Reading Programming in August included a performance by Magician Tony Daniels (with 90 people in attendance), board games, Storytime, and a fun pineapple-themed craft.



Magician Tony Daniels greets a guest after the show.

The school year began on Thursday, August 22. The Library has seen an increase in traffic with children and families visiting the library afterschool. In the absence of the assigned Senior Librarian, Southeast Youth Services Librarian, Judy Neeb, is serving as Interim Senior Librarian.

Katy Geissert Civic Center Library

Circulation

Circulation is happy to report receiving 213 library card applications – a slight decrease from the previous months most likely due to SRP coming to an end. However, its anticipated to increase in September with National Library Card Sign Up month.

Circulation staff and Library Pages met to discuss the planned rotation of job duties beginning after the Labor Day holiday and various cross-training projects with Technical Processing. Some Library Pages have assisted Technical Processing staff in shifting DVD collections, interfiling them with the non-fiction. This is helpful for staff when searching for holds and easier for the public to locate items on the shelf. Pages have also been sorting empty DVD cases by capacity/color/type and recycling whatever isn't needed.

When these projects end, staff will explore more Technical Processing cross-training. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure full cross-training to support both Circulation and Technical Processing.

Reference

The work unit executed a variety of engaging programs during the month of August including, craft programs like, hand weaving a bookmark in partnership with the Southern California Handweaver's Guild and a dried bean mosaic craft. "Piano Potpourri with Dr. James Lent, " hosted by Phil Ross drew an audience of 77.



The UCLA music faculty member performed favorites, such as "Maple Leaf Rag," "Claire de Lune," and "Rhapsody in Blue," on the library's hundred-year-old concert grand piano donated in 1972. Mr. Ross's next event is "Labor Songs History and Singalong" on August 31. The outdoor Beginner Tai Chi event was enjoyed very much by the participants and received positive feedback.

The

Library hosted an online book talk "The Sustainable Path: A Beginner's Handbook for Eco-Friendly Living" and an in-person event on Torrance history, "Change and the Torrance Civic Center".



There were also online and in-person book discussion groups -- Science Fiction and Fantasy Book discussion which met via Zoom and then the in-person Biography & Memoirs Book Discussion. The Library's English Conversation Online for the English learners, in its second year, welcomes English language learners of all primary languages and has become increasingly popular in part due to the convenience and welcoming tone set by staff.

In addition, four proctored exams were administered in August. Supervising exams for distance learners increased significantly during the pandemic as, mostly college students, needed a way to take their exams in a supervised setting. Students are charged \$50 per session and while it earns a little money for the Library, the service it provides to the community is immeasurable.

Technical Processing

Technical Processing staff worked on special projects, taking advantage of the very short break between the end of "delivery season" and the start of the "Fall rush". Staff continued to put together new State Library sponsored camping backpacks cataloging walking sticks, binoculars, and other camping equipment. The team also worked on housekeeping tasks such as clearing out discarded material and cleaning up the online database of damaged and withdrawn materials.

Youth Services

The Katy Geissert Youth Services work unit hosted two Baby Time Storytimes, four Toddler times, and one Sensory Storytime. All Storytimes were well attended, with participation numbers for Toddler time reaching a combined total of over 90 on the last day of Storytime. There were lots of little ones rocking out to *Baby Shark* and eagerly listening to interactive stories. One family gave the storytelling librarian a thank you card at the end of Toddler time, complete with their child's drawings inside!



With the Summer Reading Program ending, many library customers were eagerly racing up the stairs and rushing to the Summer Reading Program desk to show off their completed logs and receive their hard-earned prize. One tween was so excited to see the book “Mockingjay” as one of the prizes, she hugged it. That was the prize for her.

School is now in session, and with the new school year come class visits. The team received a surprise class visit from Ambassador Christian School’s middle schoolers during their first week of school. It was the first time Ambassador had ever taken an organized class visit to Katy Geissert, and the team was very happy to have them browse the collections, ask for lots of books, and answer the question of the day to get a nifty prize.

To celebrate Torrance Unified School District’s first week of school, Katy Geissert held a Science Technology Engineering Math, or STEM, challenge for students: create the longest paper chain possible with only one piece of paper. The winner of the challenge created a paper chain so long, it spanned the entire length of the Youth Services Desk. Now that’s an achievement!

North Torrance Branch Library

North Torrance Library welcomes everyone, and staff are thrilled when new patrons say they are visiting because a friend or family member has told them such favorable things about us. Staff noticed the location has become a popular place for younger patrons to bring their best plushie friends! Sometimes in their excitement, however, those friends are left behind. On a recent visit this bright pink friend was left behind, so staff took the opportunity to create a picture so their “grown-up” could see what they had been up to when they came back to pick them up.



Summer Reading Program continued in earnest in August. On August 2nd, we hosted the fifth and final Family Fridays event, an opportunity for friends and family to renew their connections at the Library while working on a fun craft with a focus on mindfulness and self-awareness. This time we focused on Under the Sea Art, and the relaxing properties of the ocean.



On August 10th, North Torrance hosted a presentation by Dr. Jonathan Arenberg, Chief Engineer of the James Webb Space Telescope. Dr. Arenberg is a technical fellow at Northrop Grumman and is currently the Chief Mission Architect for science and robotic exploration. His responsibilities include concept and mission development for all areas of space science.



Dr. Arenberg traditionally speaks to audiences such as this...



...so it was an extreme privilege to have him speak directly to the North Torrance community!

Southeast Branch Library

The Summer Reading Program finished strong with professional photographer Bret Watkins, who led a hands-on workshop with Polaroid cameras, and an afternoon showing of classic cartoons.



Participants in the Polaroid program, Jane and Linda, hold up their souvenirs.

The cartoon program was even better thanks to a visit from a team from Dave and Busters, who gave everyone a chance to spin a wheel and win prizes.



Storytimes continue to be popular, and the Percy Jackson Book Club for youth has built an enthusiastic following. Local author Christine Ma-Kellams lead a talk and craft for adults on her 2024 novel *The Band*.

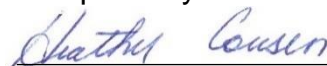
Walteria Branch Library

In August, Walteria staff successfully closed out the Summer Reading Program. The Monday after, a family stopped by, and their daughter was in tears upon discovering that the program had ended. Fortunately, we had some leftover prize books for her to choose from, which quickly turned her frown upside down.

While the Summer Reading Program had concluded, the arrival of Fall was on the horizon. Walteria staff librarians had been diligently planning engaging and informative library pro-grams. Our Senior Library Technician also recruited two new adult volunteers to help with dusting and cleaning the library stacks. Lastly, staff continued to weed and shift our collections, ensuring our community had access to relevant and popular materials.

Staff are available for questions.

Respectfully submitted,



Heather Cousin
City Librarian

Library Statistics

2024-2025 Visits	El Retiro	Henderson	Katy Geissert	North Torrance	Southeast	Walteria
July	2140	3531	14338	4609	3914	3559
August	2143	3313	13240	4207	4245	3229
September						
October						

2024-2025 Circulation	El Retiro	Henderson	Katy Geissert	North Torrance	Southeast	Walteria
July	4089	10085	33519	10178	8375	7515
August	3741	9064	31196	9669	8099	7087
September						
October						

2024-2025 Total Program Attendance By Location	El Retiro	Henderson	Katy Geissert	North Torrance	Southeast	Walteria
July	768	531	986	461	610	399
August	303	194	506	87	177	69
September						
October						

2024-2025 Programs Offered by Age	Adult	Teen	Youth			
July	42	3	71			
August	23	2	20			
September						
October						