

July 25, 2024

The Honorable Nicholas Dunlap
Mayor, City of Fullerton
303 West Commonwealth Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92832

Dear Mayor Dunlap and Members of the City Council:

I am writing to report on the Fullerton Public Library's (FPL) condition as of June 30, 2024. This update fulfills the Board of Trustees' requirement to annually update the council per Fullerton Municipal Code 2.16.060. The library staff and the supporting community continue to make excellent use of the library's annual appropriation. Our priority here at the Library continues to be serving the educational, cultural, business, and recreational needs of Fullerton's residents and visitors. I hope you find the following summary of the Library's new and expanded programs and services (broken down by division) as inspiring as I do.

HUNT LIBRARY

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, Hunt Library had its grand reopening. This grand reopening was possible due to the efforts and grants requested by Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva and Senator Josh Newman administered through the CA State Library, the Fullerton Public Library Foundation who provided matching funds for various grants and provided startup funds for the technological and logistical operating needs, various City Departments (Public Works and IT being two of them) who provided valuable input, physical work, and knowledge, and other local community groups. Due to everyone working together, Hunt Library is now a multipurpose facility that has books for checkout, library programming like Family Storytime, which is an interactive and engaging time full of rhymes, stories, and songs for all ages. We also offer Crafternoons and Saturday Game Days for patrons to partake in fun activities in a safe inclusive environment.

Hunt Library also houses exhibits like the award-winning "A Class Action: The Grassroots Struggle for School Desegregation in California" by the Museum of Teaching and Learning (MOTAL). This is an "interactive exhibition for which MOTAL was awarded an Award of Merit by the prestigious American Association for State and Local History". Hunt Library also offers other exhibits like a rotating collection of art pieces from the Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA), and the Mid-Century Room that covers Hunt Branch Library's history and displays original furniture. Hunt Library is located near many elementary and local daycare-centers, so staff are scheduling visits and outreach for Storytimes and other programming. In June, we had 93 Kindergarteners from Pacific Drive Elementary and 40+ Sailors and Marines come for a visit featuring several indoor and outdoor activities during Fleet Week! Hunt Library is open Tuesday-Thursday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and every third Saturday from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. or for special events and by appointment. Located on 2.4 acres of green space, Hunt Library is a beautiful indoor/outdoor facility with high-tech equipment available for private rentals and programming through Parks and Recreation.

SUPPORT FROM THE FRIENDS AND FOUNDATION

The Library is fortunate to have significant and continuing support from the Friends of the FPL and the FPL Foundation. Contributions to the library from these two organizations are placed in the city's two Restricted Accounts. These two Restricted Accounts allow funds to be donated and roll over past any one particular fiscal year. Funds may only be spent for library purposes, and at the approval of the Library Board of Trustees during their noticed meetings.

For fiscal year 2023-24 the Friends total contributions of \$83,500 were primarily used for Library programming and collection development which are items that the public can check out from the Library.

The Foundation contributed \$103,640 for fiscal year 2023-24. Support from the Foundation aided in the purchases of new technology in the Main Library's Conference Room, a new automated materials handler (book sorter), and renovations to the Main Library's PA system.

The Foundation has also further supported the Hunt Library with \$150,000 in Library Start-up Funding that allowed for the purchases of library furniture including the Ask Here Desk and mobile bookshelves, as well as technology equipment such as monitors, a projector, a portable movie screen, and speakers, as well as the starting book collection. The Foundation additionally supported the Common Startup Costs, in which they reimburse the library up to \$100,000 to purchase common use items such as tables, chairs, and exhibit accommodations that are used when Hunt Library is rented to provide needed revenue as well as to be used for library programming and events.

On top of this incredible generosity from both the Friends and Foundation, both groups also pledged an additional \$194,513.50 from their respective Restricted Accounts to serve as required matching funds for the CA State Library's Building Forward Grant #2 of \$1,167,430 for renovations to the Main Library's infrastructure: two elevator renovations, Osborne Auditorium renovation, much needed renovation to public spaces in the Children's and Adults' areas, and the replacement of the building's generator. We are beyond grateful for the contributions from our Friends and Foundation that made the awarding of this huge grant to support the Main Library's infrastructure possible.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Priorities, Changes & Transitions: Children's Services continues to offer highly interactive, regularly scheduled, and well-attended preschool storytime programs for children ages 3-6. From August 2023 to June 2024, we conducted 78 programs with a total attendance of 4,225. The library also continues to offer monthly STEM kits for school-aged children in grades 1-4. With additional help from Sunny Hills High School's STEMUp4Youth club, from August 2023 to June 2024, the Children's Division distributed 525 activity kits to children and families. With help from Fullerton Union High School's STEMUp4Youth club we hosted five in person STEM activities for 147 children. From October to November 2023, the library conducted the In-N-Out Burger's Cover to Cover Reading Program. The Children's Division enrolled 607 participants and had 336 children

complete all three prize levels.

Our Children's Librarians also found the time to conduct some great outreach to the community. Children's staff engaged in preschool/parent outreach events, as well as class and group visits to the library. From June to July 2024 the Children's Division hosted two interns from Troy Tech High School. These students helped organize the basement, shelve books, help with crafts, hand out prizes, and organize the Mary Campbell collection.

Fullerton Public Library's Star Wars Day 2024! On May 4, Jedis of all ages stopped by the Library to celebrate Star Wars Day! The celebration began with a screening of The Empire Strikes Back in our newly updated Conference Center. About 475 people stopped by to watch the movie, partake in a craft or coloring activity, and enjoy tasty treats. Children and their families colored space themed bookmarks, crafted their own paper Grogu doll, and played Star Wars themed bingo to win prizes! During the festivities, Jedi and Sith masters from Saber Guild Temple Prime arrived to take pictures, show off their lightsabers, and demonstrate the Force. The annual Star Wars Day celebration continues to be a hit for both Library staff and patrons!

Read, Renew, Repeat!: Summer Reading 2024! Young bibliophiles are invited to buckle up for an adventure in reading this summer! From June 4 to August 3, all children through 8th grade are welcome to sign up the Summer Reading Club! Readers earn prizes by keeping track of time they spend reading independently or sharing library books with their favorite grown-ups. Children who complete the program earn a FREE book! Kids can sign up online at <https://fullertonlibrary.readsquared.com> or download the READsquared App on a smartphone or tablet. To date, we have enrolled 771 children, and have 124 program finishers. Supplementing our summer offerings, the library also conducted a Winter Reading Club online with in-person prize pick-up from December 2023 to January 2024. 250 children enrolled in the program, with 101 participants completing all prize levels—an impressive 40% completion rate, about 10% higher than last year!

ADULT SERVICES, TEEN SERVICES AND LOCAL HISTORY ROOM

North Orange County Boardgamers Monthly Game Day: A host of avid Orange County board gamers and a bevy of newcomers to the hobby from far and wide congregate at the Main Library on first Saturday of every month in the FPL Conference Center from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for North Orange County Boardgamers Game Day, presented by the Library and our community partner, So Cal Game Connection. This is a free event for both experienced and new players, with a raffle for a free game at noon. Attendance continues to be phenomenal, with monthly attendance regularly exceeding 100 participants. A spin-off board game program, Game Day @ The Hunt, takes place on the third Saturday of every month at the Hunt Library.

Outreach to Fullerton Farmer's Market and Other Venues: Following last summer's success, the Library returned to the Downtown Fullerton Farmers Market with more

outreach, more crafts, and more free books. The Library's newest librarians, Emily and Deanna, are now seasoned veterans at running our Farmer's Market booth, sharing FPL's

programs and services with hundreds of market attendees! Energetic volunteers from the Friends, the Foundation, and the Library Board of Trustees are also on hand, giving away hundreds of free books provided by the Friends. Crafts for all ages, including Vintage Book Spine Bookmarks for adults and paper doorknob hangers for the kids, are also a popular draw. Library staff also attended outreach in support of Fullerton Airport Day, City Hall on the Go, National Night Out, various resource fairs, and many other events this year.

Summer and Winter Reading for Grown-Ups and Teens 2024: Why should the kids have all the fun? From June 4 to September 21, adults are invited to participate in the Summer Reading experience by writing short reviews for books they have read. Every review returned to the library is a chance to enter our grand prize drawing where one lucky participant will win a California State Parks Explorer Annual Pass! In addition to Summer Reading, from December 12 through March 19, adults aged 18 were invited to participate in the Winter Reading experience where one lucky reader became the proud owner of a brand-new Kindle, courtesy of the Friends. Summer or Winter, hundreds of budding book reviewers read mysteries, romances, cookbooks, craft and DIY books, graphic novels, manga, and even children's books then shared their discoveries which were posted inside the library and on FPL's social media. There's even Summer Reading and Winter Reading programs just for teens!

One-on-One Tech Tutoring at the Library: FPL's One-on-One Technology Tutoring program features tech-savvy librarians who are ready and willing to assist library patrons with free, one-on-one tutoring. Available topics include general computing, using the internet, and using email, with a special emphasis on helping our patrons make better use of the FPL's electronic resources, including thousands of downloadable ebooks and audiobooks for free through the Libby app. This year, FPL's tech-oriented tutors were able to teach individual patrons how to use Facebook to enjoy family photos in the era of social media, how to apply for a job as an Uber driver, how to find an apartment on the Internet, and a myriad of other topics.

FPL Inspires Creativity with our New Library Paint Night Series: On Thursday, March 21, from 5:15 to 6:45 p.m., the Library invited our artistic (and artistically challenged) patrons to discover their inner Bob Rosses at our first-ever Library Paint Night in the Library's Osborne Auditorium! Participants painted a beautiful landscape with local Fullerton artist Kat Vidales guiding them through each brushstroke on the way. A teacher at Parks Junior High, Kat runs the afterschool Art Club at the school. Her artwork—featuring acrylic paintings of her chickens dressed in hats and necklaces—can be found at the Fullerton Market and Fullerton Museum. Painting supplies were generously provided courtesy of the Friends. Many budding artists who came out to paint reported that they had a blast and were looking forward to more installments in the new program series.

2,000 LoveFullerton Volunteers Work in Beauty the City and the Library: On April 20, the efforts of nearly 2,000 LoveFullerton volunteers worked through the City, touching schools, community projects, and the library. Thanks to the efforts of the Library's indefatigable Library Services Supervisor Alysha Long to get the library on their project list, an enthusiastic group of individuals and city staff converged at the Fullerton Public Library to refresh the planters and pine park just outside its main entrance. Devoting their morning hours to planting vibrant greenery and spreading fresh mulch, their hard work resulted in a

vibrant transformation of the library's surroundings. Thanks to their big hearts and commitment, the library now looks as inviting as it truly is!

Fullerton Public Library Hosts the University California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Master Gardeners of Orange County: Fullerton Public Library is hosting the UCCE Master Gardeners in a series of gardening events to teach library patrons to grow food, landscape with native plants, care for roses, and grow tomatoes. UCCE Master Gardeners are volunteers trained to help residents of Orange County become better gardeners using a variety of activities such as workshops, lectures, and a garden hotline, these volunteers answer questions about home horticulture, sustainable landscaping, and integrated pest management using University of California research-based information. Our first event, Grow Food Anywhere!, took place on June 15 and was a great success. Upcoming events in the series will include California Native Plants (August 17), Roses 101 (January 18), and Tomatoes A-Z (March 15).

FPL Gets Back to Basics with Our New Thursday Night Reading Club: Although we've supported many book clubs over the years, it's been a while since we ran one ourselves. This year we changed that, hosting a small group of avid readers on the fourth Thursday of every month accepting June and December for a lively book club discussion! Titles are specially curated to reflect a variety of genres and authors. Space and copies of the titles selected are limited, so interested bibliophiles are encouraged to register early for this first come, first served program. Light refreshments are served. For adults ages 18+.

TEEN SERVICES

Teen Library Escape Room: On November 14-15 and November 21-22, the library's Teen Services hosted an escape room to pay homage to the popular video game series Five Night's at Freddy's, and to celebrate the release of the new movie under the same name. Tweens and teens used their puzzle-solving skills to answer trivia questions, decode secret messages, and find hidden clues to "survive" as the night guard and keep away from the creepy restaurant animatronics. Each group successfully escaped without being "caught" by Freddy and his gang of animatronic friends. The fastest escape time was 11 minutes! Patrons expressed their excitement and love of the series and even requested the escape room come back another time.

Partnership with La Vista High School: During the 2024 Spring semester, the library partnered with La Vista High School (LVHS) to organize a series of classroom visits and fieldtrips. Each month, Librarians Emily Elliott and Keithley Hale organized a STEM related lesson and activity to present to a group of students who were interested in learning about different STEM topics. In addition, the library also made an appearance at the school's club rush events where we passed out free books, resources for homework help and volunteer opportunities, and information for upcoming library events. The library also connected with LVHS library staff in their newly constructed library space to aid them in developing a printed book collection for students to reflect monthly themes such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, and mental health awareness. To finish off the school year, a group of students took a fieldtrip to the library where they got a full tour, learned how to get a library card and borrow material, and participate in a variety of fun

STEM activities. This partnership was so successful that LVHS staff reached out to the library to continue these visits and fieldtrips for the upcoming school year.

Teen Advisory Board: Our Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is a group of students in 7th-12th grade who meet monthly to advise the Teen Services Librarian and other library staff on books, teen programming, resources, and what's trending with today's youth. They provide invaluable insight into the minds of young people; including selecting reading club themes, providing titles of the books and manga they're currently reading, and making their teen area a place they want to be. Members gain important leadership and communication skills while learning how an advisory board functions and achieves its goals. Attending TAB meetings is a great way for tweens and teens to get volunteer hours and qualifies as community services. After a year of successful meetings, TAB members requested to increase our monthly meetings to twice a month to work on more projects, earn more volunteer credit, and become better friends!

HISTORY ROOM

FPL's Local History Turns 50: On September 19, 2023 the Local History Room held an all-day Open House to commemorate 50 years of preserving Fullerton's history. We have over 75 Fullerton history enthusiasts come in research their home, research their family, and browse the collection. A good time and sweet treats were enjoyed. A representative from the office of Assemblywoman Sharon Quirk-Silva stopped by with a "Certificate of Recognition" to recognize the milestone. The Local History Room was started in 1973 with a generous donation from Lulu Launer to honor her husband, Albert Launer. We have been collecting, organizing, and digitizing since then!

CIRCULATION SERVICES, TECHNICAL SERVICES, AND THE PASSPORT OFFICE

Library circulation is up by over 5,000 items between May and June of this year, circulating 23,557 physical items in May and 29,296 in June. Additionally, California State Library Parks Passes have increased in the same period from 134 passes checked out up to 235 in a single month. New borrowers have increased in the same period from 240 in May to 436 in June. Finally, thanks to our appealing MessageBee notifications as funded by the Foundation, we have an average pick up of hold requests of over 73%. This surge in engagement with the public is a testament to our Summer Reading Club for both children and adults, our outreach efforts, our positive impression upon our community, and to the enthusiastic efforts of the library staff. Our hard working staff shelve thousands of items every month, pull items for pick up, create new accounts, check out books, create programming, choose enticing titles for our collection, and generally engage the public in love for the library.

Camp Snoopy Library Cards: We launched our new Camp Snoopy library cards in celebration of California State Parks Week (June 12-16), and they have been a hit! Plus,

we saw a surge in State Parks passes check outs from 134 in May to 235 in June! Thanks to the Friends for funding this exciting, limited edition card!

MessageBee: Since implementing MessageBee in October of 2023, we have enhanced our communication with patrons through customizable email and phone notifications. Thanks to the Foundation for funding, MessageBee has enabled us to send over 41,363 automated notices and 42,411 newsletter copies so far, achieving high delivery and engagement rates. The qualitative feedback has also been overwhelmingly positive, with patrons appreciating the visually appealing, timely updates and engaging return to newsletters.

Mystery Date with a Book: Our American Library Association PRExcellence Award-winning Mystery Date with a Book program returned on a sweet note! Between February 1st and March 9th, participants checked out 189 wrapped books from our lobby display and rated their “dates” with special review slips. Thanks to the Friends for supporting our literary matchmaking!

Enhanced Passport Photo Services: The Circulation and Passports desk has expanded passport photo services, now offering professional photos from library opening until one hour before the library closes. Our certified agents ensure photos are taken with care and expertise for everyone, from infants to seniors. Passport customers have remarked at the fair pricing, convenience, and pleasant experience. Passport execution is available during our passport office hours and requires an appointment.

Library Lovers Month: In February, we celebrated National Library Lovers Month by highlighting all that makes our library special! For patrons who enjoy flipping through the pages of a thrilling mystery, listening to an e-book with their children, or exploring our exciting programs, we celebrated that libraries are vibrant spaces of discovery and community for all. Visitors joined the celebration by picking up a free "I ❤️ Fullerton Public Library" bumper sticker at our Circulation desk.

Library Sorter: The Library implemented a new automated materials handler machine (sorter) in June. The Circulation and Technical Services Divisions collaborated to evaluate potential vendors for the sorter, consulting with other Orange County libraries to ensure that staff members selected a high-quality machine with the best possible service agreement. Library staff members selected a sorter that allows the public to return multiple items at once, reducing patron wait times. The new machine also allows for local control in programming, has ergonomic features, and lower operating volume to optimize the staff user experience and efficiency. The City's Public Works, IT, and Administrative Services Departments assisted with the purchasing and implementation of the new sorter. The funding was achieved through a combination of capital funds and additional support from the Foundation. These new machines last an average of 15 or more years, so this

generational change will benefit library patrons and staff members for many years to come. As always, thank you for your support of our free and public Library.

Sincerely,

Sueling Chen
President, Fullerton Public Library Board of Trustees

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