BUENA PARK Library District

Staff Report- Agenda Item 9

Date: November 3, 2026
To: Board of Library Trustees
From: Helen Medina, Library Director
Subject Director's Report

Recommended Action:

Agenda Item 9

Informational Only

Administration Updates:

Please let Patty Salas know by November 10 if you would like to attend the Community Prayer Breakfast on November 19 at 7:00 a.m. The District will not be purchasing an entire table but will purchase tickets for Trustees if they are interested in attending.

Construction is underway at the library. The old shelving has been demolished, and the new shelving has been placed into storage. A trailer is on site for the construction manager, and the fencing is in place. Demolition and abatement activities are ongoing and are being monitored by our hazardous materials consultants.





I attended the California State Library's Public Library Director's Forum in Riverside on October 21. We discussed the State Library's Vision for Public Libraries and Resilience.

We have also been working on Information Technology improvements, including updating permissions and settings in MS365. Patty Salas and I also met with vendors to review point of sale systems to enhance our reporting and internal controls. I also attended a community meeting for libraries presented by the California Department of Justice to discuss new policy requirements coming soon relating to public library response to immigration enforcement activity.

All documents were signed and submitted for the lease financing. The financing successfully closed on October 13 and the funds were transferred into the District's California CLASS account. The transaction was recorded with the county and the state. I also submitted our insurance renewal questionnaire and unemployment taxes. We are awaiting completion of the annual audit of our financial statement and have been working on that over the month.

Staff Training:

Ruth Cho and Brenda Gomez both attended the California Library Association Annual Conference in Riverside. Gomez has been attending online Lunch at the Library Community of Practice meetings and her attendance at the conference was an opportunity to meet and engage with her cohort in person. Gomez, Cho, Patty Salas, and Ann Thompson also attended a two-day HR Bootcamp workshop presented by the California Special Districts Association (CSDA). Ashley Parker has been attending the Regional Government Services Lead Worker Academy. This is part of an effort to ensure that the District's leadership team and senior employees are supported in the performance in their duties and develop the knowledge and skills to handle workplace challenges effectively. Patty Salas and I also attended a two-day Supervisory Skills for the Public Sector workshop presented by CSDA.

Programs and Services:

The Outreach Team attended several events this month including the Raymond Temple Elementary School Trunk or Treat on October 16, the District Four Fishing Derby at Ralph B. Clark Park on October 17, and the San Marino School Kick-Off Assembly for Centralia Reads on October 20. They also attended the Annual Cops & Goblins event on October 28 hosted by the Buena Park Police Department. Brenda Gomez also attended the Buena Park Collaborative meeting and the City of Buena Park's Education Committee meeting.

The Fall into Reading program had 245 new registrations and 152 completions in October, bringing our participation totals to 281 registrations and 160 completions. Participants earn incentives after reading designated numbers of books, supported through a generous toy donation from Giving Children Hope. Staff received positive feedback from families expressing appreciation for both the reading challenge and incentive prizes. The program will continue through December 23rd.

The October Name Charm Challenge had 186 participants, with 130 completing the activity. The program was made possible through the continued partnership and support of Fluffy Market.

The annual and highly popular In-N-Out Reading Challenge recorded 518 registrations and 103 completions during the month. Participants earned food rewards by meeting reading goals. Registration remains open through November 14, with reading logs accepted through November 21.

Additional Children's programs included *Word Game Night: Bananagrams* which provided children and families with an opportunity to develop literacy and critical thinking skills through interactive gameplay. *Mini Pumpkin Decorating* with approximately 60 attendees, where children created imaginative pumpkin displays inspired by popular characters; *Monster Mayhem* during which 60 monster-themed craft kits were distributed to children as take home craft kits, and a Día de los Muertos remembrance display that invited patrons to create marigolds in honor of their loved ones. There was also an origami activity, regularly scheduled story times, and the BARK reading program.



In November, the Children's Department will welcome back the popular Chess Club with Strategic Kids and *Who Stole Grandma's Pie?,* a self-directed Thanksgiving mystery activity sponsored by Polly's Pies, with a year-long pie prize awarded to the winning participant. Finally, a new five-month partnership with First 5 Orange County will begin in November. This monthly program will take place every third Wednesday following our Baby & Toddler Storytime. First 5's Kid Builder sessions will support parents by focusing on early childhood developmental milestones.

The District also provided a fun Halloween-themed experience teen program featuring mini pumpkin decorating, vintage ghost art painting, and readings from Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark by Alvin Schwartz. Teens will get together on November 17th for their annual Friendsgiving celebration to share refreshments, make fall-themed crafts, and puzzles.

Our October Hallow-READ Reading Challenge was very successful with nearly 50 adult registrations and over 70 book reviews submitted. Readers earned chances for virtual badges that led to a Grand Prize.

Our Book Club met in October to read *The Staircase in the Woods* by Chuck Wendig, a supernatural story for the spooky season. The Book Club members were ultimately disappointed in the book's underdeveloped characters, convoluted storyline, and lackluster ending. . The November Book Club meeting is November 12 at 5:00 p.m. and the selection is *Marguerite by the Lake* by Mary Dixie Carter, an atmospheric, tense novel about the death of a glamorous garden designer, a widower trying to keep his secrets buried, and the beautiful young gardener who finds herself entangled in their lives.

The Library will be closed on November 11 for Veterans Day.