

Council Meeting of
September 19, 2006

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services – Accept and appropriate a \$9,000 grant
from the Friends of the Torrance Library

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Services Director recommends that the City Council accept and appropriate a grant of \$9,000 from the Friends of the Torrance Library for adult programming at the Torrance Public Library for fiscal year 2006-07.

Funding

Funding is available from the \$9,000 grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library.

BACKGROUND

Lack of available City funding for programs has resulted in a partnership between the Torrance Public Library and the Friends of the Torrance Library to both host and sponsor library programs and events. Over the past several years, the Torrance Public Library and the Friends have developed a reputation for bringing innovative and interesting programming to the Library's community of users, and these programs are now an established and expected element of the Library's Plan of Service.

Programs for adults - from author presentations to demonstrations and lectures - are promoted prominently on the Library's web page, through the Library's monthly calendar of events, and by distribution of flyers in the libraries and at other community locations. The availability and success of library programs would not be possible without the generous support of the Friends of the Torrance Library.

ANALYSIS

Staff at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library and the five branch libraries will plan and implement a selection of programs for adults in the 2006-2007 fiscal year that meet community interest and needs, while supporting and promoting the Library and its many resources.

In particular, the hosting and presentation of adult cultural programming helps the Library fulfill its role as a center for lifelong learning, and satisfies not only the cultural needs of Torrance citizenry, but also the need of people to meet and interact while providing opportunities to participate in public discourse on a wide range of issues and ideas.

At their August 16, 2006 Board meeting, the Friends of the Torrance Library considered and approved a proposal from Library staff requesting an amount not to exceed \$9,000 to provide a variety of high-quality adult programs throughout the 2006-07 fiscal year. All necessary costs such as speaker fees, refreshments, publicity, and supplies were included. Among programs planned are author talks, the ongoing Monthly Movie Club, special recognitions for commemorative events such as Women's History Month and Holocaust Remembrance Day, instruction in use of library resources, book discussion groups, and the popular "Read the Book, See the Movie" events.

The Friends of the Torrance Library have continued to provide essential monetary and volunteer support for adult cultural and informational programming for the Torrance community. Evaluations received from participants at the various programs have been consistently high and library users have come to expect a rich calendar of events year-round. The acceptance of this grant will provide the Library with the necessary resources to continue this valued service.

Respectfully submitted,

GENE BARNETT
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By 
Paula J. Wejner
City Librarian

CONCUR:


Gene Barnett, Director
Community Services Department


LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment A: August 16, 2006 Proposal to the Friends of the Torrance Library

August 16, 2006

TO: Friends of the Torrance Library

FROM: Hillary Theyer, Principal Librarian
Paula J. Weiner, City Librarian

SUBJECT: Proposal for Funding Assistance – Adult Programming FY 2006-07

Recommendation

The Principal Librarian and the City Librarian respectfully request that the Friends of the Torrance Library provide funding to support the Library's adult cultural and informational programming for FY 2006-07 in an amount not to exceed \$9,000.

Background

The Torrance Public Library has established a partnership with the Friends of the Torrance Library for sponsorship and hosting of educational, cultural, and recreational events. The reputation of the Library as a venue for innovative and interesting programming for adults has grown and program offerings have only increased with popular demand. Our community of library users now expects programs and they are an established element of our library Plan of Service. Adult programs, from author presentations to demonstrations and lectures, are promoted prominently on the library web page, via the monthly Calendar of Events, and by distribution of flyers to libraries and other community organizations. None of this would be possible without the generous support from the Friends of the Torrance Library.

Analysis

The Katy Geissert Civic Center Library and the branches of Torrance Public Library are planning to offer a selection of quality programs for fiscal year 2006-2007 that support and promote the library as well as meet community interests and needs. We are requesting the support of the Friends to fulfill an important element of the mission of the Torrance Public Library. In particular, adult cultural and informational programs help the library serve as a center for lifelong learning, and satisfy the need of people to meet with others in the community and participate in public discourse about a wide range of interests.

The total request is for an amount not to exceed \$9,000 to provide a wide variety of adult programs throughout the year. All necessary costs such as publicity, speaker fees, refreshments, decorations, and library materials to support the programs are included. The statement "Sponsored by the Friends of the Torrance Library" will appear on all flyers and publicity for the events. Each type of event is described briefly below.

As we are in the process of training two new branch Senior Librarians and all other branch supervisors have rotated locations, we are requesting a budget of \$400 per branch to allow for a minimum of two adult programs per facility. This is a standard budget for speaker and refreshments, but a generic budget would assist the branch

supervisors in booking craft programs, supporting an ongoing book group, or offering other events as they become familiar the community and hear from the users of the branch about what they want in adult programs.

Adult programs at Katy Geissert Civic Center Library \$300
The Reference Division of the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library offers a variety of programs on subjects such as Torrance history, election information, consumer resources, and other library instruction. These programs educate our community on the resources of the library, both print and online. In addition, the Library hosts the Biography Book Group, a monthly meeting to discuss a high quality biography selection. The funding would support these ongoing programs.

Adult programs at the library branches \$2,500
The branch librarians will host a minimum of two adult programs at each facility, with an average anticipated cost of \$200 each. In addition, each branch may use funds to support an ongoing book discussion group such as the Mystery, Books Eclectic, or Great Books group.

National Library Week \$400
National Library Week is April 16 – 21, 2007. During this week, we will host two author events or similar library-focused presentations. Last year's program featured the Carnegie Libraries of California.

Asian Pacific Heritage Month \$200
For the past several years, we have offered events to honor aspects of Asian Pacific Heritage including a showcase of Pacific Islands' culture, the Japanese American experience during World War II, and the history of Chinese Americans in Los Angeles. We will again host an educational and interesting event to celebrate Asian Pacific heritage in May of 2007.

Women's History Month \$200
In March 2007, the Library will celebrate Women's History Month with a guest speaker or film. In 2006, the program was "Women Invent" and honored women inventors throughout history.

Hispanic American Heritage Month \$200
In September 2006, the Library will celebrate Hispanic American heritage with a guest speaker and/or film.

Black History Month \$200
In February of 2006, the Library will celebrate Black History Month with a guest speaker and/or film.

Book Discussion Masquerade \$600
The Library will celebrate the 6th Annual Book Discussion Masquerade program in October of 2006 with a series of events celebrating Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone With the Wind* on the 70th anniversary of its publication. A minimum of three events will offer

participants a chance to see the film, participate in a hands-on history experience, and discuss the book.

Holocaust Remembrance Day \$200

April 15, 2007 is Holocaust Remembrance Day and the Library will host a speaker to address the importance and significance of the Holocaust.

POV Film Screenings and Discussions \$125

Each year the Library presents free documentary film screenings in concert with PBS. This series of films is made available through a project called Point of View (P.O.V). The documentaries create an opportunity for the community to come together to discuss topical issues such as gentrification, racism, and poverty.

Monthly Movie Club \$250

In 2007, the Library is looking forward to continuing its Monthly Movie Club. The first Saturday of each month, the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library shows a film and offers a discussion opportunity.

Brown Bag Lunches \$250

Brown Bag Lunches are typically held on occasional Fridays at 12:00PM and last for an hour, with a guest presenter covering such topics as an introduction to opera, behind the scenes looks at plays, and other cultural topics. The programs are designed for patrons in the Civic Center area to attend on their lunch hour.

Author Talks \$1,500

The Library will host authors who offer patrons the opportunity to learn about the creative forces behind fiction, non-fiction, screenplays, and more.

Meet the Farmer \$400

Two programs, offered in conjunction with the popular Torrance Farmer's Market and coordinated with Judy Gerber, agriculture writer and community volunteer, will be held to educate participants on picking produce and producing great gardens.

Craft Programs \$500

Last year, craft programs offered for adults included scrapbooking, knitting, and making ribbon leis, and proved to be very popular. An anticipated minimum of four programs will explore crafts for adults.

Read the Book, See the Movie \$500

In 2005, WALTERIA Library hosted the first Read the Book, See the Movie program in the park, and in 2006 this format again proved successful with four programs. These programs offer a unique family experience, with their promotion of reading and the enjoyment of literature combined with the ability to eat, lounge, and enjoy a film under the stars in a community park. Attendance of 150 to 300 people is common, and we received many requests for more events. In the summer of 2007, we anticipate being able to provide more books/movie in the park programs.

Conclusion

The Library is requesting funding from the Friends of the Torrance Library in an amount not to exceed \$9,000 that will support a wide range of free cultural and informational programming for the Torrance community. Evaluations, public comment, and staff observations have been consistently positive, and library users express interest in and demand for future programs. It is our hope that the Friends will continue to provide the Library with the necessary resources to provide essential programming, and it is with great pride that we say at the start of exciting and enriching events "this program is generously sponsored by the Friends of the Torrance Library."

Respectfully submitted,



Hillary Theyer
Principal Librarian

CONCUR:



Paula J. Weiner
City Librarian