

Council Meeting of
September 9, 2008

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

Members of the Council:

**SUBJECT: Community Services – Accept and File the Library Commission
Annual Report 2007-08**

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Services Director and the Library Commission that the City Council accept and file the Library Commission's 2007-08 annual report.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The Library Commission Annual Report for the period July 2007 through June 2008 as prepared by the Library Commissioners is attached for the Council's information and review. The Commissioners approved the report at their August 11, 2008 meeting.

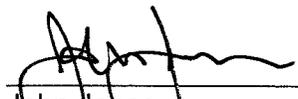
Respectfully submitted,

JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By 
Paula J. Weiner
City Librarian


Clarence Chappell, Chairperson 2007-08
Library Commission

CONCUR:



John Jones
Community Services Director

NOTED:



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

Attachment: Library Commission Annual Report 2007-08

CITY OF TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008

Vision Statement

The vision of the Torrance Library Commission is that all Torrance residents have access to quality library services in order to:

- Achieve their greatest potential
- Participate in a global society, and
- Enrich their daily lives

Mission Statement

The Torrance Library Commission is committed, through leadership, advocacy, and service to the Torrance Public Library system, to ensure that this community has a place to access information, to pursue lifelong learning, and to experience cultural heritage and enrichment.

Membership

The Torrance Library Commission was comprised of the following members:

- Clarence Chappell -- Chairperson, July 2007 - June 2008
- Jerome J. Haig -- Vice Chairperson, July 2007 -- June 2008
- Keri S. Botello
- Judith Gerber
- Linda Grogan
- Carrie Lang
- Wendy Wang

Commissioner Clarence Chappell was reappointed by the City Council on January 15, 2008.

Meetings

The Commission meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m., usually at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. However, the Commission continued its custom of visiting each branch library once every year. The Commission met at each of the branch libraries on the following dates:

- January 14, 2008, at the North Torrance Branch Library
- February 11, 2008 at the Henderson Branch Library

- March 10, 2008 at the El Retiro Branch Library
- April 14, 2008 at the Walteria Branch Library
- May 12, 2008 at the Southeast Branch Library

In addition to members of the Library Commission, regular attendees at the meetings included City Librarian Paula Weiner, Principal Librarian Hillary Theyer, and Friends of the Torrance Library board member Teresa Covey. On a less frequent basis, the Commission also welcomed Library Services Manager Norm Reeder, Senior Librarians from each library, members of the Torrance Public Library Foundation, and representatives from the Youth Council.

The Commission continued its tradition of an annual meeting with the City Council. The two bodies met at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library on November 20, 2007. Helen Ball and Betty Knapp, representatives from the Friends of the Torrance Library, presented a list of Friends' gifts to the Library in the past year, as well as summarized the group's fundraising efforts. Paul Briggs, President of the Torrance Public Library Foundation, spoke about the Foundation's reorganization efforts, and described their funding of the Live Homework Help program's matching portion this fiscal year.

The Council and the Commission also discussed the success of Sunday Service at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, the plans for the first floor remodel of the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, and watched a real-time demonstration of the Live Homework Help Program.

Challenges and Concerns

The Commission received updates on the status of the upcoming Branch Refurbishment Project and the closure for remodeling of the first floor of the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. As has been mentioned in the past two years' annual reports, the Commission is concerned about the earthquake safety of shelving at all library locations, and the electrical wiring and power problems at two, if not more, of the branch libraries. The Branch Refurbishment Project and the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library first floor remodel will take care of these issues--the Commission is eagerly awaiting the start, and eventual completion, of these major building projects.

Library staff gave the Commission ongoing updates on the status of the newly--reinstated Sunday service hours at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library. Commissioners visited on Sundays to avail themselves of the service and to gauge the community's response to the new hours.

The Commission was also apprised of and gave comment on Library policy issues, including the *Lost and Found Policy* and the *Tutors in Library Buildings Procedures and Guidelines*.

The Commission provided input on the Community Resources Element of the City General Plan at their December 10, 2007 meeting. Of concern was to ensure that the language in the General Plan reflected the Library's commitment to support learning in the community on all levels--including public and private schools, home-schooling,

foreign language collections, Live Homework Help, Summer Reading Programs, adult literacy outreach, and life-long learning opportunities for seniors.

Grants

The Commission received periodic updates from City Librarian Weiner and Principal Librarian Theyer regarding the status of various grant applications. The Library was awarded the following grants this fiscal year:

- *Live Homework Help*, a grant administered by the California State Library, in the amount of \$18,411 paid by the State Library and \$6,137 paid by the Torrance Public Library Foundation, to fund a live, online tutoring service that is available to help students with their schoolwork. This was the second year of this diminished-funding grant.
- *Transforming Life After 50* (Baby Boomer Initiative), a new California State Library Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, which involved application for a three-day training institute in November 2007 to demonstrate interest, dedication, and capability. After completion of the institute, the Library assessed the needs of the baby boomer generation in the community through focus groups and surveys. On June 27, Library staff submitted a targeted grant proposal to address identified needs.

Community Relations

The Commission is dedicated to improving communication and outreach with residents in the Library's service area and seeks to disseminate information more effectively to Library patrons. As part of this effort, the Commission undertook the following activities:

- On February 9, 2008, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioners Gerber and Grogan volunteered with staff in a booth at the Torrance Farmer's Market promoting library services, and passed out Baby Boomer grant surveys
- On June 7, 2008, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioner Grogan volunteered with staff again at the Market promoting the Summer Reading Program
- On June 21, 2008, the Library Commission, in cooperation with the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission, jointly sponsored a film showing and panel discussion on the documentary "Who Killed the Electric Car."

Events

Commission members were routinely involved in several local boards, committees, and agencies. Among the Commissioners who were involved in organizations and functions related to the Torrance Public Library were:

- ⇒ Vice-Chairperson Haig periodically attended meetings of the Torrance Public Library Foundation.

- ⇒ Commissioner Grogan periodically represented the Commission at the Torrance Unified School District Educational Council of Torrance (ECT) meetings.
- ⇒ Commissioner Botello continued to represent the Commission as a Metropolitan Cooperative Library System (MCLS) Advisory Board Delegate.
- ⇒ Vice-Chairperson Haig is on the Board of Managers of the South Bay/Torrance YMCA, and was named to its executive committee in June, 2008.

Commissioners also undertook the following activities for the benefit of the Library:

- ⇒ On July 11, 2007, Vice-Chairperson Haig visited the State Library in Sacramento.
- ⇒ On September 15, 2007, Commissioner Grogan volunteered with Library staff at the City of Torrance and Salvation Army Adult Day Care's 15th Annual Health and Resource Fair
- ⇒ On September 29, 2007, Commissioner Lang volunteered with Library staff at a booth at the City of Torrance Disaster Preparedness Expo.
- ⇒ On October 26-29, 2007, Chairperson Chappell, Vice-Chairperson Haig, and Commissioner Botello attended the 2007 California Library Association (CLA) Conference and Exhibition in Long Beach.
- ⇒ On December 28, 2007, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioner Gerber attended the City of Torrance rose float official's night.
- ⇒ On January 25, 2008, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioner Lang attended a CLA "Day in the District" meeting with Assemblyman Ted Lieu's staff at his office.
- ⇒ On January 29, 2008, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioner Gerber attended the City of Torrance Commissioner reception.
- ⇒ On March 15, 2008, Chairperson Chappell and Commissioner Grogan attended the CALTAC Spring Workshop at the City of Orange Public Library.
- ⇒ On April 8, 2008, Commissioner Gerber accepted a National Library Week Proclamation from the City Council.
- ⇒ On April 11, 2008, Vice-Chairperson Haig represented the Commission at the Youth Council *Beat the Odds* selection program.
- ⇒ On April 16, 2008, Chairperson Chappell attended CLA Library Legislative Day in Sacramento.
- ⇒ On June 18, 2008, Commissioner Lang represented the Commission on the interview panel to assist in selecting next year's Youth Council members.
- ⇒ On June 25, 2008, the Commission held its annual Library Part-Time Staff Recognition Event. City officials, Commissioners, Senior Library Management, and Library staff members were present to honor five Library employees for achieving a 5-year increment of service the previous fiscal year.
- ⇒ On June 26-July 2, 2008, Commissioner Gerber attended the American Library Association Conference in Anaheim.

Partnerships

The Torrance Library Commission remains committed to strengthening its relationships with key partners in the community. Both the Friends of the Torrance Library and the Torrance Public Library Foundation have enabled the Library to enhance its current

operations through fundraising and donations. The Library Commission is working toward facilitating a joint meeting with these two entities in the upcoming year.

Similar to past years, the Friends of the Library continued its generous underwriting of enhanced adult and youth programming, purchase of equipment and materials, and other needs not covered by the City of Torrance's budget, including funding refreshments for the Baby Boomer grant focus groups, extending funding of Saturday "musical mornings" programming for children, purchase of an Early Literacy computer station, reframing of paintings and prints by noted children's author/illustrator Leo Politi, and purchasing display banners. This year, the Torrance Public Library Foundation covered the matching portion of the Live Homework Help on-line tutoring program for students.

The Library Commission was kept apprised of a unique three-way partnership between the Torrance Historical Society, the Friends of the Torrance Library, and the City of Torrance to digitize deteriorating historic newspapers and city directories in the Library's collection and make these resources available through the Library's website.

People

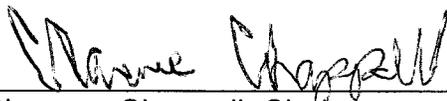
The Commission was pleased to welcome the new Community Services Director, John Jones, and looks forward to collaborating with him in the future.

The Commission sadly noted the passing of former Library Commissioner and City Councilmember Pat McIntyre. Her support of the Library was unequivocal--she will be missed.

The Torrance Library Commission wishes to thank the dedicated staff at all library locations for the insight and assistance given it during the past fiscal year. The Commission commends the efforts and accomplishments of the entire staff of the Library, as they provide a wide array of quality programs and services to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

TORRANCE LIBRARY COMMISSION

By 
Clarence Chappell, Chairperson