

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

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Community Services – Accept and appropriate a \$28,420 grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library to fund adult programming at the Torrance libraries in fiscal year 2010-11

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Community Services Director that the City Council accept and appropriate a \$28,420 grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library to fund adult programming at the six Torrance libraries in fiscal year 2010-11.

Funding

Funding is available from the \$28,420 grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library.

BACKGROUND

Lack of available City funding for programming has resulted in a lengthy partnership between the Torrance Public Library and the Friends of the Torrance Library to both host and sponsor programs and events. Over the past several years, the Torrance Public Library and the Friends have developed a reputation for providing innovative and interesting cultural, educational, and recreational 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 City's events calendar, the Library's web page, through the Library's monthly calendar of events, via local news sources, 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 2010-11 fiscal year that meet community interests 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 May 12, 2010 Board meeting, the Friends considered and approved a proposal from Library staff requesting an amount not to exceed \$28,420 to provide a variety of high-quality

adult programs throughout fiscal year 2010-11. All necessary costs such as speaker fees, refreshments, publicity, and supplies were included. Among programs planned are author talks, the ongoing Monthly Movie Presentation, and special recognitions for commemorative events such as Women's History Month, National Library Week, Asian Pacific Heritage Month, etc.

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 submitted by participants attending the various programs have been consistently positive and library users have come to expect a rich calendar of events year-round. As well as providing personal growth and enrichment of the individual, the acceptance of this grant will support the Library with the necessary resources to continue this valued service and fulfill a strategic priority of the City.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN JONES
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR

By 
Hillary Theyer
Principal Librarian

CONCUR:


Paula J. Weiner
City Librarian


John Jones
Community Services Director


LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager

May 12, 2010

TO: Friends of the Torrance Library

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

SUBJECT: Proposal for Funding Assistance – Adult Programming FY 2010-2011

Recommendation

The Principal Librarian and 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 2010-2011 in an amount not to exceed **\$28,420**.

Background

The Friends of the Torrance Library have for many years generously sponsored programming arranged by staff for patrons of all ages and presented at the six Torrance libraries. The funding has enriched the offerings of the Torrance Public Library to include a wide variety of educational, cultural, and recreational programs.

Due to the current economic climate and simultaneous cutbacks in opportunities for free activities, Library programs are increasingly popular. To compensate, staff has increased programming at all locations, in particular at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library, to several per month. Noted authors and speakers such as Lisa See and John Bogert were recent popular events. The Library also hosted self development, financial literacy, and career planning workshops.

Staff examined the surveys completed by participants at previous programs to determine preferred future events and based on that analysis, the funding request for FY 2010-11 is as follows:

Movie License

\$4,920

This is a renewal of the annual movie license from Movie Licensing USA to allow the presentation of full-length feature films at all six Library locations. In the past year, the license has supported movie nights for teens at several branch libraries, a popular event often planned by the Teen Advisory Boards. The Monthly Movie Presentation at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library continues to attract a large audience, and with the addition of equipment in the Polly Watts Story Theater, a movie screened in the Community Meeting Room can now be simultaneously shown in the Theater (a more comfortable setting for families). Movies can also augment programs - *Shaun of the Dead* was shown as a component of the successful "Zombie Month" activities in October 2009.

Adult Programs at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library

\$8,000

Funding from the Friends of the Library again allowed the Library to present many outstanding and popular programs in 2009-10 including:

Author Visits – In addition to those authors noted above, Sarah Reinertsen, author of *In A Single Bound: Losing My Leg, Finding Myself, and Training for Life*; Vicki Leon, author of the *Uppity Women* series; Kiyo Sato, author of the memoir *Kiyo's Story: A Japanese-American Family's Quest for the American Dream*; and Russell A. Olsen, author of *Route 66 Lost & Found*, were invited to speak at the Library during 2009-10.

Educational Programs – Louis Dominguez discussed *How to Buy and Sell on eBay*, and in conjunction with National Teen Driver Safety Week, Charles Powell, the Emmy Award-winning Los Angeles based film maker and creator of "Passing the Written DMV Test," shared insights to help teen drivers learn safe driving habits for life. In May 2010, the Library will host an overview of Social Security benefits with Dan Weintraub, a Torrance Adult School educator.

Musical Programs – In 2009-10, the Library featured acclaimed harpist Dr. Vanessa Sheldon, who performed to a standing-room only crowd. She is scheduled for a return engagement this May.

Assistance Programs – Local experts on topics such as developmental disabilities, learning disabilities and ADHD, and better communication in relationships led discussions about the most recent research and treatment.

In addition to the above, the Library offered diverse programs including various crafts, *The African Art of Paul Nzalamba with Stories by Lungala Rubadiri*, and *End the Clutter* lead by the owner of dClutterfly.

Themed Programming

\$1,000

Subjects celebrated for an entire month - traditionally in the fall - have proved very popular. In addition to last October's *Zombie Month*, Tolkien's *Middle Earth*, vampires, and pirates have been selected topics. Activities include three to five related programs, one or two movies, a literature list and discussion, and a costume contest. These are also ideal opportunities for inter-generational participation.

This Fall, staff will focus on the story of Robin Hood. Screening of both the classic film starring Errol Flynn and the new version coming out in May starring Russell Crowe, and an expert speaker on weapons of the Middle Ages (to possibly include a demonstration of fencing or archery) will be included. Keeping with the "rob from the rich and give to the poor" theme, participants will be encouraged to donate non-perishable food or a toy for a less fortunate family.

Branch Library Programming

\$4,000

Due to the success of branch library programs, an increase in funding from \$600 to \$800 per branch for FY 2010-11 is being requested. Craft programs at the Southeast Library fill to capacity, most times with a waiting list, and the El Retiro Library is planning similar programs to accommodate patrons in that area of the city. El Retiro, Walteria, and Southeast Libraries will present gardening-related events in response to patron requests. Walteria will repeat the successful "Brain Games for

Grown Ups" program in conjunction with the Torrance Adult School. Henderson Library is planning a program discussing e-book readers.

Printing/Public Relations

\$2,500

A cost that has increased significantly is publicity. Posters in library lobbies continue to attract attention, and are frequently cited in surveys as the primary way patrons find out about specific programs; the foam board, printing and mounting is quite costly. Specific colors of paper not stocked by the City's Central Services Division (print shop) are purchased to print program flyers. Though all electronic means of publicizing events including the City's online calendar of events, *Torrance Seasons*, and local publications such as the *Daily Breeze* and *Easy Reader* are utilized, advertising continues to be crucial to successful programming. We are therefore requesting funding specifically for this purpose.

Laptop Computer for Library Programs and Workshops

\$5,000

In 2003, the Friends of the Library generously granted the Library funds to purchase a multimedia projector and laptop computer. This grant made it possible for the Library to present a wide variety of educational and cultural programming including workshops, bibliographic instruction, and expert speaker programs. Over the last several years, the laptop served its purpose; however in 2009, the laptop ceased functioning and can no longer be repaired. Speaker and/or workshop requirements frequently include a laptop with PowerPoint capability and/or the ability to show slides; the staff desktop PC we have been borrowing is difficult and time-consuming to relocate and does not have the mobility and flexibility of a laptop. A functioning laptop will enable the Library to continue offering a rich and varied schedule of programs. The cost indicated here includes the laptop with operating system, and necessary accessories including adaptors, extension cords, surge protector, USB charger, and PocketPoint remote. The cost also includes the necessary replacement funds specified by the Communications and Information Technology Department.

Portable Stage

\$3,000

The Community Meeting Room is often filled to capacity. It does not have graduated seating, and staff has received complaints from event attendees about difficulty seeing presenters or performers when the room is full. A portable stage would allow a direct view of the front of the room. The Library recently borrowed a portable stage from the Park Services Division for the Lisa See and Sarah Reinertsen programs and appreciation was expressed for this added component. Unfortunately the logistics to arrange for transport and stage set up were considerable; therefore to insure that needed equipment is readily available we are requesting funds to purchase a stage that would be housed at and used exclusively for Library programs.

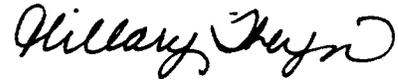
Conclusion

All Torrance Library programs are free and open to the public. Staff schedules a variety of events to appeal to diverse audiences and meet the schedules of various

age and demographic groups. Feedback continues to be very positive, and demand continues to grow.

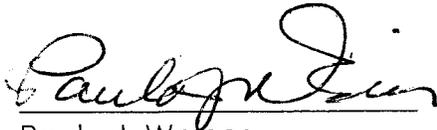
The continued generosity of the Friends of the Torrance Library in funding adult programming enables the Torrance Public Library to fulfill its mission. These programs tie in to the resources available at the Library, and encourage use of the Torrance Public Library as a community center and hub of culture in the South Bay.

Respectfully submitted,



Hillary Theyer

CONCUR:



Paula J. Welner
City Librarian