



**CITY OF MONROVIA
LIBRARY BOARD
AGENDA REPORT**



DEPARTMENT: **Community Services, Library Division**

MEETING DATE: January 22, 2026

PREPARED BY: Kurt Gally
Adult Services Supervisor
Ginger Antunez
Youth Services Supervisor

AGENDA LOCATION: CC-2

ADULT SERVICES REPORT

Adult Programs

Adult Social & Craft Programs

Adult Services held *Loteria* Night on October 3, where 19 participants experienced an evening of laughter, prizes, and traditional Mexican bingo.

Craft Night was held three times during the quarter. In October, 26 participants embroidered spider webs using fabric, hoops, and decorative spiders. The November craft drew in 21 participants that created rolled beeswax candles in various colors. In December, a total of 16 participants folded donated books into Christmas tree decorations and embellished them with acrylic pens and jewels. These programs continue to be well received, with patrons expressing interest in future offerings.

On December 12, the library held its annual *Holiday Family Feud*. The participants competed in rounds of answering survey questions about holiday themes with the aim of sharing the top answers. The program had 50 participants. The patrons enjoyed their evening and are eagerly anticipating the return of Trivia Nights in 2026.

Senior Outreach & Technology Assistance

Staff conducted monthly senior outreach and tech help visits. On October 8, November 12, and December 10, staff visited *Brookdale Senior Living*, with two participants at each session. Topics included renewing library cards, using Libby, exploring databases such as Comic Plus and A to Z World Food, sending photos via email, uploading audio to YouTube, checking blocked numbers, and managing app notifications.

Staff visited Heritage Park Senior Apartments for outreach Bingo. On October 10, and on November 7. During these visits, a total of 15 residents played six rounds of Bingo for prizes. They also received library calendars and promotional bookmarks, and one resident received assistance accessing library databases on a mobile device.

Musical Programs

Adult Services collaborated with local music organizations to offer beginner music classes for adults and teens. On October 11, a *Beginner Vocal Class* with Monrovia Music Academy had five participants who practiced posture, warm-ups, and sang songs such as Music Alone Shall Live and Come Follow Me to the Greenwood Tree. On November 8, a *Beginner Keyboard Class* with Max Lee Music had six participants learning keyboard basics and performing *Welcome to Music Land*, with one participant checking out a keyboard afterward. On December 6, the *Beginner Ukulele Class* with Monrovia Music Academy focused

the session on singing holiday and classic songs together. After the session, one participant checked out the ukulele to continue enjoying it at home.

Role-Playing & Tabletop Gaming

Adult Services hosted recurring role-playing games throughout the quarter. *Dungeons & Dragons* sessions were held on October 14 with 16 participants, November 18 with 10 participants, and December 9 with seven participants. Adventures included haunted libraries, magical pie races, confidence-building quests, and a cult mystery, with several new players joining and many expressing enthusiasm for future sessions.

On October 25, TableTop Adventures brought together 10 participants for a gothic horror experience set in Ravenloft, including *The Curse of Strahd* and a zombie plague scenario. Participants appreciated the darker, alternative setting compared to traditional fantasy games.

Adult Game Nights & Special Gaming Events

Game Night for Adults was held on October 24 with 10 participants, November 21 with 7 participants, and December 19 with 15 participants. Participants enjoyed board games, Nintendo Switch titles such as Mario Kart, Smash Bros, Sonic Racing, PAC-MAN World Re-PAC 2, Potion Permit, and VR gaming with Beat Saber. Several participants shared their own games, and new additions like Cosmolancer were well received.

On Saturday, November 15, the library hosted an all-day *Games Month Celebration* attended by 100 patrons. This rainy day program's activities included a Mario Kart tournament, scavenger hunt, perler beads crafts, Glowforge keychains, a prize raffle, and a video game-inspired drink tasting, with participants of all ages expressing strong appreciation for the event.

Novel T's Book Club

The *Novel T's Book Club* met twice during the quarter. On October 28, 20 attendees discussed *The Lion Women of Tehran* by Marjan Kamali. On November 18, 18 attendees discussed *Far From the Madding Crowd* by Thomas Hardy and enjoyed their annual end-of-season potluck. The group also shared book selections for the January–June 2026 season and look forward to beginning the New Year with *The Bear* by Andrew Krivak as the *One City One Story* title.

Literacy Services

In October, Literacy Services served a total of 74 learners and tutors across eight programs, with *News & Views* meeting weekly and *Book Club* and *Word Workshop* offered biweekly. Staff attended the quarterly Southern California Library Literacy Network meeting and completed the FY 2024–2025 CLLS Grant Final Report.

In November, 66 learners and tutors participated in eight programs, with ongoing weekly and biweekly offerings. On November 4, staff hosted the *Fall Tutor Roundtable* focused on writing resources, upcoming events, and volunteer support. On November 18, staff presented *Families Read Together: Star Party*, a family literacy event featuring storytime, constellation crafts, star mobiles, and free books.

In December, participation increased to 102 learners and tutors across nine programs, with *News & Views* continuing weekly, *Word Workshop* expanding to a weekly format, and *Book Club* remaining biweekly. On December 9, staff hosted the annual *Literacy Potluck Celebration*, featuring shared meals, literacy games, raffle prizes, and distribution of the 2024–25 Literacy Anthology.

Veterans Services

During October, the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) recorded 154 total interactions, including 59 with the County Veterans Service Officer (CVSO), 35 with the Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN), and 60

with VRC staff. On October 18, the VRC hosted a private screening of *Tron: Ares* at LOOK Cinemas for 26 veterans and family members. On October 28, eight participants attended the monthly *Veterans Meetup* at Starbucks, discussing collaboration with the VRC and upcoming events.

In November, the VRC recorded 172 total interactions (CVSO 50, VPAN 22, VRC staff 100). On November 11, a total of 40 people visited the VRC booth during the *Veterans Day Ceremony at Library Park*, where resources were shared and thank-you notes were written. On November 25, eight participants attended the *Veterans Meetup* at Starbucks, welcoming two first-time attendees and members of VFW Post 2070, and discussing *the Holiday Parade* and *Craft Night*.

In December, the VRC recorded 138 total interactions (CVSO 42, VPAN 16, VRC staff 80). Veterans programming included 12 participants marching in the *City of Monrovia Holiday Parade* on December 4, and nine participants attending *Craft Night* for Veterans on December 11, where they created personalized coasters while enjoying refreshments and fellowship.

YOUTH SERVICES REPORT

Baby Storytime

Baby Storytime has maintained its status as a popular early literacy program for families with children ages 0–2. Throughout October, November and December, families shared songs, rhymes, stories, and interactive activities designed to support language development and early literacy. The program emphasized the significance of talking, reading, singing, writing, and playing in building strong foundations for lifelong learning. A total of 483 participants attended.

Storytime

Storytime sessions were held weekly throughout October, November, and December, featuring themed programs that focused on farms, community helpers, thankfulness, and family. Activities included reading, singing, moving, crafting, and using sensory materials like rhythm sticks, scarves, and shaker eggs. The local fire department's visit added to the Community Helpers theme. *Storytime* provides an opportunity for early literacy, school readiness, social skills, and imagination while fostering a warm and engaging environment. A total of 764 participants attended.

Sensory Friendly Morning

In October, November, and December, sensory friendly mornings were hosted for neurodivergent children and their families. The programs were designed to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for children with sensory processing differences, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder. Families were given the opportunity to explore the library, engage in accessible crafts, participate in sensory play, and borrow materials at their own pace. A total of 10 children and caregivers were in attendance.

Storytime with the Park Naturalists

On Saturday, November 8, the Library collaborated with Recreation to present a *Storytime with the Park Naturalists* program, located at Station Square Park. Staff shared stories, songs, and dances related to owls, and then learned about local wildlife while utilizing one's animal knowledge to make inferences during the presentation. Staff are continuously taking advantage of this opportunity to enhance the community's experiences, access, and partnerships. A total of 16 children and caregivers attended.

Fall Festival Storytimes

The Library participated in the citywide Fall Festival celebration on Saturday, October 11 by offering multiple storytimes for families to enjoy. Staff performed fall-themed stories, songs, dances, and observed seasonal changes in the local flora and fauna of Library Park. A total of approximately 250 children and caregivers attended across four storytime sessions.

Loteria for Kids

To commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month, the library organized a lively *Loteria for Kids* program that honored culture, language, and community through play. Children and families had a great time playing this traditional game that helped them develop listening skills, vocabulary, and cultural awareness in a fun and welcoming setting. Families were able to connect, learn, and celebrate Hispanic heritage together through the program. A total of 13 children and caregivers attended.

Craft-tastic!

The staff hosted their monthly *Craft-tastic* program in October, November, and December, offering families hands-on art activities related to seasonal and cultural celebrations. Children and caregivers collaborated on Halloween, Dia de los Muertos, and holiday-themed crafts that encouraged creativity and facilitated the development of fine and gross motor skills. A total of 420 children and caregivers attended across the three months.

Skill Builders

Skill Builders is a hands-on educational program for children ages 6–11 that helps participants develop practical life skills through collaborative, family-centered learning. In October, the library collaborated with FoodED to present gardening concepts to children and parents, including microgreens, composting, and plant care. Every child received seeds to take home. In a follow-up session, caregivers accompanied children to work in small groups, teaching them how to measure ingredients, practice kitchen safety, and bake vanilla cupcakes and buttercream frosting with the library's mobile kitchen, the Charlie Cart. Teamwork, problem solving, and real-world skills were highlighted in both sessions through engaging, hands-on activities. A total of 52 children and caregivers attended.

Mini-Vation: Mini Lab – Toddler STEAM Activities

Mini Lab is a STEAM program that encourages early exploration through guided play and is tailored to children between the ages of 2-5. During October, young learners were able to participate in activities that focused on basic chemistry concepts like dissolution, which allowed them and their caregivers to experiment together in a supportive environment. The program encourages curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and early scientific reasoning while also encouraging family involvement. Through *Mini-Vation*, the library is enhancing its role as a community-learning hub by providing more access to early STEAM learning experiences. There were 32 children and caregivers in attendance.

Gears & Gadgets: Exploring Robotics

On Saturday, October 18, 2025, the library buzzed with innovation during *Gears & Gadgets: Exploring Robotics*, a dynamic STEM event led by one of Monrovia High School's talented Robotics Teams. Young participants gained an insider's view of how robots work and what it takes for students to design, build, and bring them to life. The afternoon incorporated live demonstrations with hands-on activities, providing kids with the opportunity to tinker, test, and experience the excitement of robotics up close. Guided by the high school mentors, participants asked questions, experimented with ideas, and even built and raced their own mini robots. The program sparked curiosity about engineering, teamwork, and creative problem solving while celebrating the innovation and leadership of local youth. A total of 40 children and caregivers attended.

LEGO Free Play

The staff hosted *LEGO Free Play* events in October and November. Throughout these programs, 112 individuals were capable of creating a variety of items. The library is providing the children, and families, of Monrovia with an opportunity to develop fine motor skills, critically and creatively think, develop concentration and focus and boost self-confidence. The program offers an opportunity for attendees to engage and bond with their families and other members of the community.

Innovation Lab

The Innovation Lab provides the library with opportunities to collaborate with the local nonprofit called “WOW! That’s STEM” who’s mission is to deliver engaging, hands-on STEAM programming to the community. Programs held in October, November, and December introduced children ages 6-11 and their families to concepts in robotics, design, engineering, and physics. Through interactive challenges and guided exploration, participants strengthened their creativity, adaptability, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Innovation Lab is committed to making technology-rich learning experiences more accessible to school-aged children in Monrovia. A total of 93 children and caregivers attended.

Pop-Up Makerspace for Kids

The monthly Pop-Up Makerspace for Kids was offered in both October, November, and December, providing children ages 6–12 with opportunities to explore, experiment, and create using the library’s Makerspace cart which includes a variety of STEAM-related supplies and activities. An open-ended format promoted hands-on learning, creativity, collaboration, and social interaction within a welcoming atmosphere. There were 69 children and caregivers in attendance across the three sessions.

Barks & Books

The library’s Barks & Books program was presented giving children the chance to practice reading in a calming and welcoming setting. *Love on a Leash and Therapy Dogs International* partner with young readers to pair them with certified therapy dogs, creating a peaceful and encouraging environment that enhances storytelling. The comforting presence of dogs alleviates anxiety and encourages participation, particularly for reluctant readers, while improving reading fluency and confidence. Barks & Books not only supports literacy but also supports children’s social and emotional growth by providing a safe space where they feel encouraged and supported. This program, which is beloved, remains effective in promoting empathy, self-esteem, and a positive connection to reading. Participation for October-December included 31 children.

Video Game Free Play

A video game free play program for elementary school-aged children took place in October. A total of 10 attendees enjoyed playing some of their favorite video games with their friends while parents were happy to see their children get a chance to socialize and interact with other kids their own age in a secure environment.

In-N-Out Cover-to-Cover Book Club

From October 4 to November 15, 2025, the library partnered with In-N-Out Burger to offer a reading program for children ages 4–12 that rewarded completed reading goals with free burgers. A total of 321 children participated, collectively reading 2,523 books and logging over 96,000 minutes. Most participants (283) completed all three-goal levels. The program successfully encouraged consistent reading and supported the library’s mission to promote youth literacy and a love of reading.

Maker-Space Thanksgiving Break

During the Thanksgiving break, the library hosted Makerspace for Kids, where children ages 6-12 could drop in to experiment, create, and learn using the library’s makerspace cart. The cart features building sets, such as Magna-Tiles and KEVA Planks, general craft supplies, and specialized STEAM kits to create different contraptions or art pieces. In addition to this, staff also had a pearler bead activity. The kids got to create anything they chose or to follow along a template of their choosing, where the staff in charge then melted the beads for the children. A total of 70 children and their caretakers attended this program.

Santa Storytime

The library hosted a joyful Santa Storytime that brought holiday magic to families through music, stories, and seasonal fun. The program included live holiday music played by the Duarte Senior Group,

Silverstrings, creating a warm and happy ambience while children and caregivers enjoyed a holiday storytime. Families were treated to holiday snacks and had the opportunity to take photos with Santa, making the event a memorable celebration of the season. A total of 250 children and caregivers attended this merry holiday program.

Holiday Card Workshop

The library hosted a holiday card workshop the weekend before Christmas for children to make last minute gifts for friends and family members. Families were invited to drop in during the two-hour period to make a card or spend some quality time coloring. The program was open ended with foam stickers, gems, Christmas cutouts, markers, scissors, and glue that were available for unique creations. A total of 50 participants attended the program.

Christmas Movie Night

On Friday December 19, the library hosted a Christmas movie night for children and families of all ages. They watched the movie *The Polar Express* in the Story Room. Library staff provided hot chocolate with a variety of toppings and chocolate chip cookies. A total of 40 children and their caretakers attended.

Mini Christmas Tree Craft

At the library on Monday, December 22, the library hosted a craft program for children during the winter break. By using pinecones, they painted and decorated them to look like mini Christmas trees. The library provided all needed supplies for their craft and once they finished painting, they brought their “trees” to the staff. Where the staff then hot gunned the tree to a wooden coaster as a stand.

A total of 150 children and caregivers attended

TEEN PROGRAMS

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meetings

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meetings for October, November and December took place in the library Story Room and was led by the TAB Leadership Team. During the meetings, TAB members received updates on volunteering. The teens signed up to help with the Storytime Craft Preparation on Tuesday Afternoons, Santa Storytime, and Craft-tastic. Teen members also signed up to host two monthly TAB led events (Teen Game Night and Pop-up Teen Makerspace). A total of 78 TAB members attended the 3 meetings.

Teen Game Hangout

The Teen Game Hangout event was held on a Friday afternoon in October and November. Teens enjoyed snacks, played Nintendo Switch Games, and board games. The most popular game was Smash Ultimate. This was a TAB led program, so volunteers welcomed their peers and showed them what was going on while having fun themselves. The ongoing teen game hangouts provide teens a safe and supervised environment to learn healthy competition and practice their critical thinking and social skills. A total of 22 teens attended this program

Pop-Up Makerspace Teens

The Pop-up Makerspace for Teens was held on Wednesday, November 26 in the Teen Area. Teens who attended used the portable makerspace cart to make origami, jewelry, and color. Maker events can provide teens a space to socialize with like-minded peers and express themselves creatively. Three teens attended this program.