

Friends of the Long Beach Public Library Newsletter **Fall 2026**

In this Issue

2 President's Message
Director's Report

3 Summer Essay Contest Winners Celebrated
Save the Date

4 Michelle Obama Library 10 year Anniversary
Musical Theatre West Partnership

5 Donations Keep Us in Business
Board Member Carol Collins Remembered

6 Banned Books Events A Success

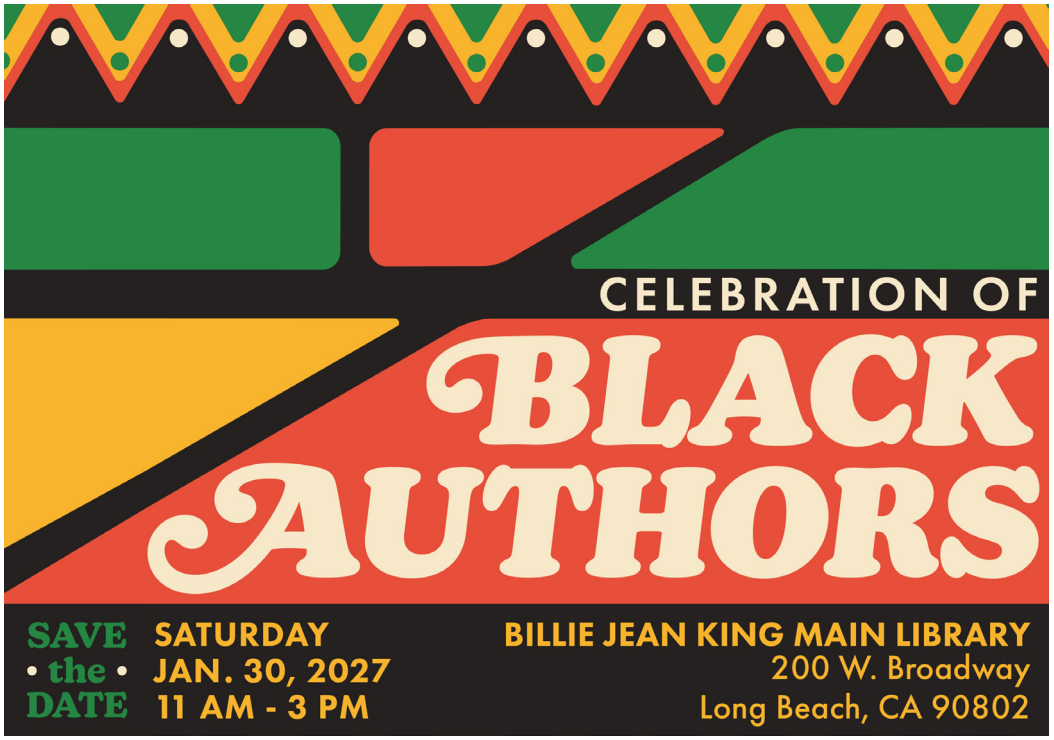
7 Memorial & Honor Books
Volunteers Needed

Save the Date

Celebration of Black Authors

January 30, 2027
Saturday
11 am to 3 pm

Billy Jean King Main Library
200 W. Broadway



Black Authors Festival Returns After 14 Year Hiatus

The Celebration of Black Authors is making an exciting return featuring Black authors, storytellers (authors and poets), publishers and agents, vendors, book-sellers, and literary agents. Hosted by the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, the Long Beach Public Library Foundation and the Long Beach Public Library itself, this event will be an impactful and fun experience for everyone.

"After 14 years, we're excited to bring the Celebration of Black Authors back to Long Beach, a city rich in stories, creativity, and community spirit," said Planning Chair Samantha Aviles. "This celebration is about more than books. It's about bringing neighbors, families, writers, and readers together to uplift Black voices, share experiences, and celebrate the stories that connect us. Through literature, art, and culture, we hope to create a welcoming space where everyone feels inspired, discovers something new, and sees the beauty of our community reflected in the stories we share."

Check our website soon for more information on authors and other details.

President's Message



Advocacy: def. "the act of publicly supporting, recommending, pleading for, or defending a cause, policy, or individual to ensure their voice is heard and their rights are protected."

In Long Beach this September, advocacy was on full display. And it worked.

Were you in the City Council chambers when over 40 people stepped forward to speak on behalf of keeping Library funding? When our time to speak was reduced from 3 minutes to 1 minute each? When the audience was filled with signs of "Support Our Library" and "No Library Cuts"?

The energy was amazing. I have never seen a demonstration of advocacy so definitive. And because we were informed and engaged, passionate yet polite, we were heard by the Mayor, the City Council, and the City Manager. They listened.

This year, we weren't asking for an increase in library funding. We just wanted to retain the Monday hours, and prevent staff cuts. As a bonus, we wanted to save the Creativity Lab, a previously grant-funded program that has been wonderfully successful. And because of our advocacy, all those things were saved.

Many thanks to City Manager Tom Modica, whose team crunched numbers to develop a solution to save Monday hours and library staffing. And also thanks to the LB Library Foundation, who has officially partnered with the City and pledged $750,000 over the next three years to fund the Creativity Lab.

Thank you to all the library advocates who lent their voices this year. Whether you signed a petition, or sent an email to the Mayor or your Councilperson, or showed up at a Council meeting hoisting a sign – you were, and ARE! – a library advocate.

Please be aware – this action was only for the FY2027 budget year. We wage this same battle every budget season. Sometimes the stakes are high, as they were this year, where they impact staff hours and personnel. But every year we need all the advocates we can get.

So mark your calendar for the month of September 2027. We will be advocating for the library budget again, this time for the fiscal year 2028. And we hope to see you at a Tuesday council meeting then – I'll be happy to hand you a "Support Our Library" sign!

See you at the Library!

Director's Report



As the air turns crisp and the days grow shorter, the Dept. of Library, Arts, and Culture is getting ready for a cozy season of learning, community, and cozy winter reading. This November and winter, we have a packed lineup of events, special exhibits, and community programs for all ages. Thank you again to our amazing Friends of the Library for your unwavering support and for helping to make all of our wonderful library programs possible!

Celebrating Native American Heritage Month
November is Native American Heritage Month, a time to recognize, celebrate, and honor the rich traditions, histories, and ongoing contributions of Indigenous peoples. Join us as we showcase local Native voices, literature, and culture throughout the month:

- ***Indigenize the City***
  Sacred Path's Indigenous Youth Advisory Council brings together an exhibition of original artworks from Indigenous youth. See the exhibit November 5-30 in the Miller Room at Billie Jean King Main Library.
- ***Stories and Songs of Native California***
  November 17 at 5:00 PM | Michelle Obama Library
  November 21 at 11:30 AM | Brewitt Library

  Louis Paul John Epifanio Valenzuela Robles, an enrolled tribal member of the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation, will share the history and culture of Native California through stories, songs, and personal anecdotes.

Cozy Up with Winter Events & Activities
Here is a sneak peek at what's coming up in December:

- ***Chess Please!*** @ Michelle Obama Library
  Friday, December 4 at 3:30 PM
  Did you know that we now have a chess club for adults? Patrons are welcome to play a game or two during a one-hour session in the periodicals room.
- ***California Native Plants 101***
  Saturday, December 12 at 12 PM
  Learn about native plant gardening from Tory Jaimez, Board Member of the California Native Plant Society (South Coast Chapter).

Summer Essay Contest Winners Awarded



This year's Helen Fuller Cultural Carrousel Summer Essay Contest was a great success with over 100 submissions. This year's prompt asked: "What was the coolest book you read this year and what was your favorite part?"

Young writers shared their creativity, imagination, and love of reading through a great variety of book choices.

The awards ceremony was held at Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library on Saturday, August 29, with a full house of family and friends as well as members of the community on hand to celebrate these wonderful readers! Thank you to everyone who came to support.

Shown: winners of the Helen Fuller Cultural Carousel Summer Essay contest (L) and Friends of the Long Beach Public Library board with Long Beach Coast mascot Derrick the Parrot (below).



Save the Date. . .

December 19 Book Sale at Brewitt Library, 11 am to 3 pm
January 30 Celebrate Black Authors Festival, 11 am to 3 pm



We Need You!

Want to Volunteer?
We are always looking for help at our events.

Contact Corrine Magdaleno at
corinnemagdaleno@yahoo.com

Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library 10 year Anniversary Celebration



Shown: Friends' board members (L to R) Diana Riska-Taylor, Liliana Roman, Talia Watson with her son Logan with Friends' supporters..

You can learn more about the Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library and other branches at long-beach.gov/library/locations

Library lovers and community members came together to celebrate the ten year anniversary of Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library on Saturday, September 10, 2026. The Friends were there handing out free children's books and meeting with local library users to inform them about the Friends and the many programs they support at the library.

Arlene Gale, vice president of the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, shared congratulations to the library and its community along with Mayor Rex Richardson, CA State Librarian Greg Lucas, and the LBPL Foundation board president John Mathews.



In 2006, Mayor Bob Foster proposed a new branch in North Long Beach, but it wasn't until 2014 ground was broken. The 24,000 square foot library serves over 90,000 residents with more than 70,000 books.

Friends Partner with Musical Theater West at Little Women Musical



"Little Women" the musical, came to life on Saturday, October 24, when Musical Theatre West actors gave a "Read Aloud" performance at Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library in a new partnership with the Friends of the Library.

The March sisters – Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy – and their best friend and neighbor Laurie sang – and danced! – and read passages from Louisa May Alcott's beloved novel. It was a free performance complete with music. In addition, there were letter writing and kite-making station for library patrons of all ages.

Musical Theatre West's Little Women "Read Aloud" was the first in a planned series of performances events to come in collaboration with the Friends of the Library.



Shown: Performers in "Little Women" Read Aloud performance at Michelle Obama Neighborhood Library.

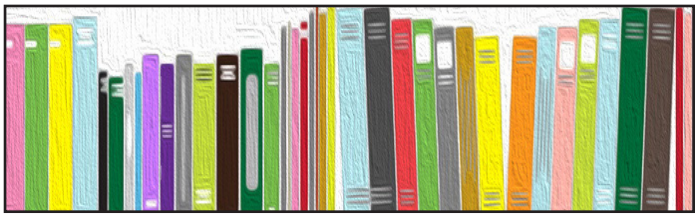
Learn more about Musical Theater West and the work they do on their website at www.musical.org

Donations Keep Us In Business

The Friends believe in the importance of books and the power of a literate and connected community. Our volunteers give books a new life. We and our partner organizations make it possible to donate and resell over 300,000 books yearly, reducing their environmental impact. Because of these efforts and the Friends' sales in branch libraries, it is affordable for families to have their own home library. Funds from these sales cycle back to the Library for program support and new purchases.

Most donated books are sold in a designated used book area in our libraries or at our annual book sale. We also deliver books to local schools, shelters, senior care centers and other locations.

We accept books and media, gently used or in like new condition, including DVDs, CDs, audio books on CD, video games, and recent magazines.



We cannot accept: moldy, wet, torn, yellowed or damaged books; encyclopedias; out-of-date textbooks or computer books (2021 and older); VHS tapes; books on tape and cassettes; newspapers and pamphlets. Please don't donate it if you wouldn't buy it. If your books are in a box you can't lift, our volunteers can't either. Donated items are tax-deductible, and a receipt is provided upon request.

For information about donations larger than 1 bag or box or other questions go to our website lbplfriends.org and look for Bookshop & Book Sales or email us at lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com.

Board Member Carol Collins Remembered



Carol Collins, a long time member of the Friends and also a years-long Board member, died peacefully in her sleep this August at age 87 in Seal Beach, CA, following a life full of love, humor, and intellectual and creative achievement.

In childhood, Carol was a fierce defender of younger siblings against neighborhood bullies, which perhaps prefigured a life embracing political and social activism. An early member and volunteer for the ACLU, for many decades she attended marches and rallies for women's rights, abortion rights, and LGBTQ rights.

In the late 1990s, she joined the Friends of the Long Beach Public Library. As the long-time chair of the Blanche Collins (no relation) Forum, she reached out to a long list of notables, asking them to speak at a Forum. An astute observer of human beings and an excellent writer, Carol's success rate is admirable and included Sally Ride, Larry Mantle, Ray Bradbury, Robert Scheer, Sandy Banks, Susan Orlean, Luis Rodriguez, among many other notables.

Carol was also the originator and chair of the Parade Committee for many years, being the first board member to recognize the value of the Friends marching in local parades, e.g., Pride, Martin King Jr., and Daisy Lane Christmas. While chairing the committee, she also eagerly marched every time.

An intellectual and geographical explorer, Carol read voraciously and traveled widely, to Europe, Asia, South America, and the Middle East. With her husband Bill and son David, she chased total eclipses on several continents. Also a talented cartoonist and caricaturist, Carol was known to family and friends for her humor, wit, and creative gifting.

Her friendship and regular exchanges of mailings with Margaret Atwood (!) was something she very much enjoyed, but shrugged off in her egalitarian way.

Carol shared with her husband Bill a delightful sense of humor, sense of the absurd, and a remarkable aesthetic sense (clearly obvious in everything from the beautiful ways she presented meals to her insightful feedback on his stellar photography).

Carol's presence, and all that she brought to every table and occasion, were gifts, clearly always appreciated, and which clearly will always be missed.

Freedom to Read: Friends Bring Awareness to Banned Book Month

The Friends organization was founded in 1963 when a concerned group of citizens joined forces with City Librarian Blanche Collins to ensure forever the right of librarians to make book-buying decisions for the City of Long Beach library system. Since that time, we have grown to support Long Beach libraries in many ways, but our dedication to the freedom to read stands strong. In October, we attended several community events to share not only the history of banned books, but also educate the public on which books are being banned across the country and why, even to this very day.







Shown: Banned books (top left), Friends at Banned Books table (above); children's books are free to young readers at each event (left).

For details about our local events, visit our refreshed website at **www.lbplfriends.org** or click on QR code.

Find us on social media:
@friendsoflbpl

FRIENDS of the LONG BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

President: Barbara Sosa

Editor: Dawn Mendelson

Contributors: Samantha Aviles, Barbara Sosa, Ellen Butler, Caroline Martin, Diane Riska-Taylor, Eveyln Scollick.

The Friends of the Library newsletter is usually published three times annually for members in good standing.

Memorial & Honor Books Celebrate Individuals Through Reading

Did you know you can honor a loved one through a Memorial or Honor Book with the Friends? Donations in memory are selected by the librarians and a special acknowledgement plate is placed within a new book and put on the shelves for all to enjoy.

The following individuals were honored with books donated in their name and selected by the library staff. A Friends of the Library bookplate is attached to each book selected.

The Friends of the Library thank these donors for their generosity.



In Honor of Judi Cameron
Ann Cantrell

In Memory of Terry Braul
Anne Saulnier

In Memory of Agnes Knight
Jeanne Baer
Susan Frost
Sue Lepage
Jane Matt
Roby McCluskey
Rebecca Robbins

In Memory of Lisa Moore
Mary Boykin
Marianne Buchanan
Donna J Burke
Lucy Caulfield
Margaret Dauphin
The Friends of the Library
Sandra Kroll
Nancy Krusbe
Caroline Martin
Barbara Sosa
Linda Tate
Mary Margaret Vitolins

In Memory of Eleanore Schmidt
The Friends of the Library

Book Lovers Wanted - Looking for Book Sales Volunteers

Volunteer once a week or once a month during library open hours. We'll train you! Job description includes shelving books, filling and tidying shelves, sorting donations, scanning books for resale, and delivering boxes of books to other locations. For people who love books this is an ideal way to help our community.

Email **lb.libraryfriends@gmail.com** if you have questions or are interested.

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Have you renewed your membership? Our annual membership year is from July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027. The date above your name on your mailing label shows when your membership expires.

Your membership is important! Dues and contributions enable Friends to purchase books and support community library programs and activities. As a member of the Friends, you show your concern for maintaining the resources and services of our local neighborhood libraries, and you will be kept informed of vital issues that affect our libraries. Super Friends will have a book donated to the library with their name on a special bookplate. We welcome contributions of any amount. Both dues and contributions are tax deductible. Our tax ID # is 23-7006247. Thank you for your support.

To join or renew your membership go to www.lbplfriends.org to use a credit card OR use this form to mail a check. Make checks payable to the **Friends of the Long Beach Public Library** and mail to:
Friends of the Long Beach Public Library, PO Box 15733, Long Beach, CA 90815-0733.
Feel free to share this with a friend or neighbor. Thank you!

❑ New member ❑ Renewal

❑ Senior Membership	$10	❑ Student Membership	$15
❑ Individual Membership	$20	❑ Family Membership	$25
❑ Super Friend	$100 or more	❑ Patron Membership	$75
❑ Business Membership	$200 or more	❑ Lifetime Membership	$1,000 or more

I want to participate in the following way:

❑ Service on Friends of the Library Board of Directors ❑ Volunteer in the Bookstore

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____