



Library Director's Report

July 2025

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

- From "Jackie's News June" – My Report to Constituents from San Mateo County Supervisor Jackie Speier:

- **Bringing Community Programs To Our Libraries**

I also requested \$50,000 in funding to give county libraries grants to create programs that will bring people of all ages and backgrounds together in trusted environments where they can explore and learn together, find common ground, and build connections.

My hope is that these programs will draw people who may feel disconnected from the larger community due to age, isolation, language barriers, economic disparities, or disability. About 20 percent of people over 65 live alone in San Mateo County. Activities typically not expected at libraries like fixit clinics or senior afternoon teas can help reduce isolation. It is easy to talk to strangers at libraries and build social connection. Evidence shows that people engaged in their community are healthier and have increased chances of weathering emergencies.

I was very pleased to learn that 550,000 residents in San Mateo County have library cards, so these programs have the potential to reach many people.

- On July 10, our library hosted the culminating session of the Pacific Library Partnership's "PLP GOLD" staff development series: This intensive in-person leadership program, led by San Francisco Public Library's retired Director Luis Herrera, brings together a cohort of 12-14 participants from member libraries with representation from multi-type libraries in both urban and rural settings. PLP GOLD aims to grow future library leaders currently serving as division, branch, unit, or service level managers through a series of monthly learning experiences covering current topics and issues. The key objective of the year-long program is to develop leadership skills necessary to advance to higher level roles in their respective library organizations. We were happy to host at LPR and attend the

capstone presentations of the cohort groups. The presentations featured thoughts on and preparing for the Library of the Future (2035).

- National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday, August 5, 2025. Library teams and the Learning Wheels early literacy van will host tables at several locations.
- The Learning Wheels and library team will participate in Cultura Fest 2025 on Saturday, August 23, 11AM – 5PM, on Grand Avenue. This is a celebration of all cultures, with a special focus on Latin American culture and creative expression and a special spotlight on Salvadoran traditions, flavors and talent.
- Additional Save the Dates:
 - September 20, 2025, SSF Concert in the Park @ Orange Park
 - September 30, 2025, Library - Citizens' Academy @ LPR
 - November 7, 2025, Project Read Trivia Challenge @ the SSF Conference
 - November 13, 2025, State of the City @ the SSF Conference Center
 - December 9, 2025, tentative City Council Reorganization
- High Demand Holds:

Title	Author	Material Type	System Holds
Careless people : a cautionary tale of power, greed, and lost idealism / Sarah Wynn-Williams.	Wynn-Williams, Sarah, author.	BOOKS	316
The wedding people : a novel / Alison Espach.	Espach, Alison, 1984- author.	BOOKS	255
Atmosphere : a love story / Taylor Jenkins Reid.	Reid, Taylor Jenkins, author.	BOOKS	235
Nightshade : a novel / Michael Connelly.	Connelly, Michael, 1956- author.	BOOKS	206
Original sin : President Biden's decline, its cover-up, and his disastrous choice to run again / Jake Tapper and Alex Thompson.	Tapper, Jake, author.	BOOKS	157
Wild dark shore / Charlotte McConaghy.	McConaghy, Charlotte, author.	BOOKS	154
The brutalist / A24 presents in association with Protagonist Pictures, LipSync, Richmond Pictures, Meyohas Studio, Carte Blanche & Pierce Capital Entertainment ; a Brookstreet Pictures & Kaplan Morrison production in association with Intake Films & Andrew		BLURAY	150
Sinners / written and directed by Ryan Coogler.		DVD	121
The tenant / Freida McFadden.	McFadden, Freida, author.	BOOKS	114
The first gentleman : a thriller / Bill Clinton and James Patterson.	Clinton, Bill, 1946- author.	BOOKS	111

Apple in China : the capture of the world's greatest company / Patrick McGee.	McGee, Patrick (Reporter), author.	BOOKS	99
Problematic summer romance / Ali Hazelwood.	Hazelwood, Ali, author.	BOOKS	88
THUNDERBOLTS* [videorecording].		DVD	82
King of ashes : a novel / S.A. Cosby.	Cosby, S. A., author.	BOOKS	79
AN INSIDE JOB	Silva, Daniel	BOOKS	77
The doorman : a novel / Chris Pavone.	Pavone, Chris, author.	BOOKS	75
The amateur / directed by James Hawes.		BLURAY	75
THE WHITE LOTUS SEASON 3 [DVD].		DVD	74
How to lose your mother : a daughter's memoir / Molly Jong-Fast.	Jong-Fast, Molly, 1978- author.	BOOKS	73
The unexpurgated code : a complete manual of survival and manners / J. P. Donleavy ; with drawings by the author.	Donleavy, J. P. (James Patrick), 1926-	BOOKS	71
HEART LAMP : Selected Stories	Mushtaq, Banu/ Bhasthi, Deepa (TRN)	BOOKS	69
Bury our bones in the midnight soil / V.E. Schwab.	Schwab, Victoria, author.	BOOKS	67
THE ACCOUNTANT 2 [videorecording].		DVD	67
Empire of AI : dreams and nightmares in Sam Altman's OpenAI / Karen Hao.	Hao, Karen, author.	BOOKS	62
Murder takes a vacation : a novel / Laura Lippman.	Lippman, Laura, 1959- author.	BOOKS	61
The river is waiting : a novel / Wally Lamb.	Lamb, Wally, author.	BOOKS	59
So far gone : a novel / Jess Walter.	Walter, Jess, 1965- author.	BOOKS	57
Flashlight : a novel / Susan Choi.	Choi, Susan, 1969- author.	BOOKS	55
Hidden nature / Nora Roberts.	Roberts, Nora, author.	BOOKS	53
The haves and have-yachts : dispatches on the ultrarich / Evan Osnos.	Osnos, Evan, 1976- author.	BOOKS	53

- Top eBook and eAudiobook Checkouts:

Title	Checkouts
A Court of Thorns and Roses	22
Just for the Summer	16
The God of the Woods: A Novel	10
Pride and Prejudice: (unabridged)	9
The Women: A Novel (unabridged)	9
Just for the Summer: (unabridged)	8
The Women: A Novel	8
Eruption	7
Fourth Wing	7

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	7
Maybe You Should Talk to Someone: A Therapist, Her Therapist, and Our Lives Revealed	7
Not in Love: (unabridged)	7
Revenge of the Tipping Point: Overstories, Superspreaders, and the Rise of Social Engineering (unabridged)	7
The Covenant of Water	7
The Handmaid's Tale	7
A Not So Meet Cute: (unabridged)	6
Funny Story: (unabridged)	6
The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes	6
The Hunger Games Trilogy	6
The Three-Body Problem: (unabridged)	6
This Summer Will Be Different	6
Throne of Glass: (unabridged)	6
With a Vengeance: A Novel (unabridged)	6
Be Ready When the Luck Happens: A Memoir (unabridged)	5
Brawl of the Wild	5
Charlotte's Web: (unabridged)	5
Dark Matter: A Novel	5
Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance (unabridged)	5
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone	5
House of Earth and Blood	5

ADULT SERVICES

Digital Literacy & Online Resources

June – Key Stats & Updates

- Programs: **35** total; **348** attendees or participants
- Streaming Movies & Music: **1,603**
 - Hoopla: **918**
 - Kanopy: **685**
- eBooks, eAudiobooks, & eMagazines check-outs: **9,874**
 - eBook and eAudio checkouts (combined Libby & Hoopla): **7,891**
 - Hoopla: **551** (includes comics)
 - Libby: **7,412**
 - EMagazines checkouts (Libby): **1,983**

Premiere Programming & Community Partnerships

On June 26th the library celebrated Juneteenth with an author talk by Lee Forrester, *SPEAK: A Guide to Unleash Every Woman's Voice*, and J.R. Rice, *Broken Pencils*. The authors presented a short reading, and conversation with each other and the audience,

revealing that 5 aspiring writers were “in the house.” Afterwards the authors signed books while participants enjoyed traditional Juneteenth red velvet cupcakes. Also in attendance was Councilmember Flor Nicolas, Library Trustee Catherine Abalos and Frances Luster from the Cultural Arts Commission.



Pride Events

On June 14th, the library held an all-ages Pride Trivia and Board Games event. Nearly 70 people came to enjoy snacks and board games with friends and family.



CIRCULATION

- Total circulation for June 2025: **37,547**
- Total number of materials checked in: **17,799**
- New library accounts: **483**
- Number of items lent to another library: **5,592**
- Number of items borrowed from another library: **3,297**

MARKETING and PROMOTION

Total Library Newsletter Opens in June: **52,162**

- Notable features in Mayor Newsletter:
 - Summer Events at the Library (**19.7% of total clicks, ranked 1st**)
 - Summer Learning Challenge (**10.1% of total clicks, ranked 3rd**)



Social Media

- Total library content views: **10,710**
- Community members reached: **3,210**

GRAND AVENUE BRANCH LIBRARY

June – Key Stats & Updates

Programs: **16** total; **590** attendees or participants

- The Grand Library offered a Juneteenth self-directed craft all month long: a Community Paper Quilt. Patrons were provided with examples of quilt blocks and an opportunity to create one to take home, or to choose to add to a community quilt. 212 people participated, with 77 quilt blocks being added to the community quilt that is now on display. Along with directions for making the quilt blocks, our displays highlighted the role of quilting in African American culture as well as the meaning of Juneteenth in general.



Community Paper Quilt



Patrons participated in completing this 1,000-piece puzzle.

- This month's scavenger hunt celebrated Pride month, with 122 participants.
- June's Kid Karaoke program took place on the library patio, and 28 participants danced, sang, blew bubbles, and made buttons in celebration of creativity and community.
- This spring, we started offering a community puzzle in our community room and have developed a loyal group of puzzlers who each contribute to finishing one of our 1000-piece puzzles. June's puzzle was perhaps the most difficult one we have offered, and took the entire month to complete, with numerous patrons contributing to the final result (see photo above).

Premiere Programming & Community Partnerships

- The library hosted its first of four Big Lift Inspiring Summers (BLIS) class visits in collaboration with the [Big Lift program](#), a San Mateo County program designed to “strengthen language and literacy skills while fostering positive school connections.” Over 60 rising 4th graders participated in a read-aloud, bubble wand making on the patio, and book selection/checkout. Children were also offered the opportunity to participate in the summer learning program. We will be hosting three such visits for younger participants in July.



BLIS rising 4-graders participate in bubble wand making activity on the patio at Grand.

- The library kicked off the Summer Learning Program with Cajón Circle, a musical program highlighting Afro-Peruvian drumming. 34 attendees danced and drummed in the library, and were offered Summer Learning books and reading forms.



LITERACY SERVICES

Gene Mullin Community Learning Center (GMCLC) – Adult Services

- The Gene Mullin Community Learning Center's Adult Programming wrapped up its second Spring session in mid-June. In response to feedback from returning participants seeking deeper learning opportunities, we offered both Digital Literacy I and an advanced Digital Literacy II course—continuing our commitment to meeting the evolving needs of our community members. Looking ahead, we're launching a 4-week midsummer session featuring both English I and II courses led by our facilitator, Maria, that will meet twice weekly, a Saturday English conversation group, and weekly Citizenship classes. Evening tech tutoring and access to our open computer lab will also be available throughout the session to support learners' continued growth and digital access.

Gene Mullin Community Learning Center (GMCLC) – Youth Services



- The Gene Mullin Community Learning Center continued to offer a free summer youth program for incoming 2nd–6th graders, providing meaningful enrichment throughout June. A standout moment was watching the 2nd and 3rd graders grow in their communication skills—whether they were collaborating on community maps, partnering with incoming 6th graders for a nature scavenger hunt and tree-building activity, or working together on a neighborhood cleanup. The incoming 6th grade group participated in a variety of hands-on activities, including researching local issues to create educational posters, designing interactive displays for public input, crafting cardboard animals and stained glass-inspired art, and leading buddy projects with younger students focused on community care and nature crafts. The summer program also featured a teen internship session, where five teen interns supported daily activities, built relationships with our staff and elementary students, and developed valuable soft work skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership.

Project Read – Adult Services

- On June 26, Project Read successfully relaunched its Adult Literacy Book Club, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for learners and tutors to connect through reading and discussion. At the launch, five books were distributed, with two more picked up in the days following. Seven participants have registered for the upcoming July session featuring *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. Monthly hybrid meetings will begin July 24 and continue through October 2025, offering both in-person and Zoom access to foster flexible participation. This program's activity furthers our commitment to learner-centered literacy by promoting inclusive participation and thoughtfully chosen books. These elements work together to spark meaningful discussions that deepen engagement and extend the program's impact in our community. We're excited to see this initiative grow as part of our ongoing efforts to empower adult learners through the transformative power of reading.

Project Read – Family Literacy and Learning Wheels

- June was a vibrant month across our programs. We wrapped up the *My First Years* spring session with a family celebration on June 3, followed by a special bilingual book collaboration between our families and 5th graders from the Gene Mullin Community Learning Center's (GMCLC) summer youth program on June 5, culminating in shared reading and art-making. While the *Learning Wheels* truck underwent a remodel, our team continued distributing free books at the SSF Clinic and San Bruno Library during regular Tuesday and Wednesday slots, with plans to relaunch the truck mid-July. Our *Bilingual Storytime* temporarily moved to Grand Library to align with the GMCLC youth summer program, shifting to a 12:30 pm start time while maintaining steady attendance—returning to GMCLC in July at its usual 11 am slot. Our partnership with the Town of Colma began its summer guest lessons, adjusting to a larger group of up to 50 students daily with revamped lesson structures; a standout science/STEAM project challenged student teams to build creative structures using recyclable materials, resulting in an engaging and successful activity.



Bilingual Storytime at Grand



Students work on science/STEAM projects

DISCOVERY CENTER

- **16** premier programs and 13 pop-up activities were conducted in the Discovery Center with over **340** participants. The Makerspace had an estimated 11,250 visitors and a total of **96** 3D printer appointments for the month of June.
- On Saturday, June 21, Amgen scientists and the Discovery Center team hosted the **Magic of Flight!** workshop, featuring four fun and educational stations: **Plummet Parachutes**, **Butterfly Creation**, **Stomp Rockets** and **Magnetic Ping Pong Ball Path**. Over 160 patrons came and participated in the activities. Amgen plans to run another premier workshop in the fall.



- The Discovery Center team held the very first **Virtual Reality Event: Ancient Egypt** featuring 10 RobotLab virtual reality headsets funded by the Pacific Library Partnership grant. Each participant got to experience landmarks like the pyramids of Giza and locations such as the Nile River and Cairo. The team is planning to lead 11 more virtual reality workshops in the coming months.
- The virtual reality gaming corner in the Community Room has seen a spike in usage. Patrons of all ages can play games like **Fruit Ninja**, **Beat Saber**, and **Adventure Climb** virtual reality with friends and family.



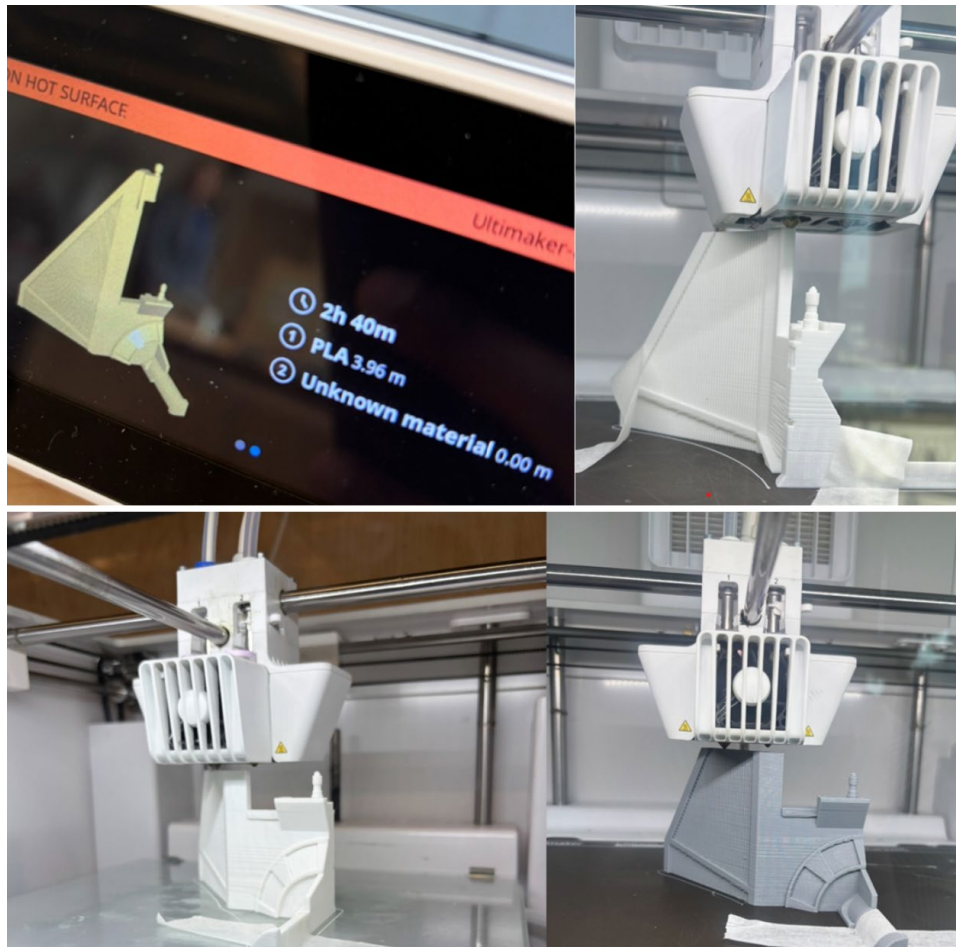
Patrons enjoying the VR headsets in the Community Room



Custom 1-of-1 pillows created by a patron using heat transfer vinyl in the Discovery Center display case



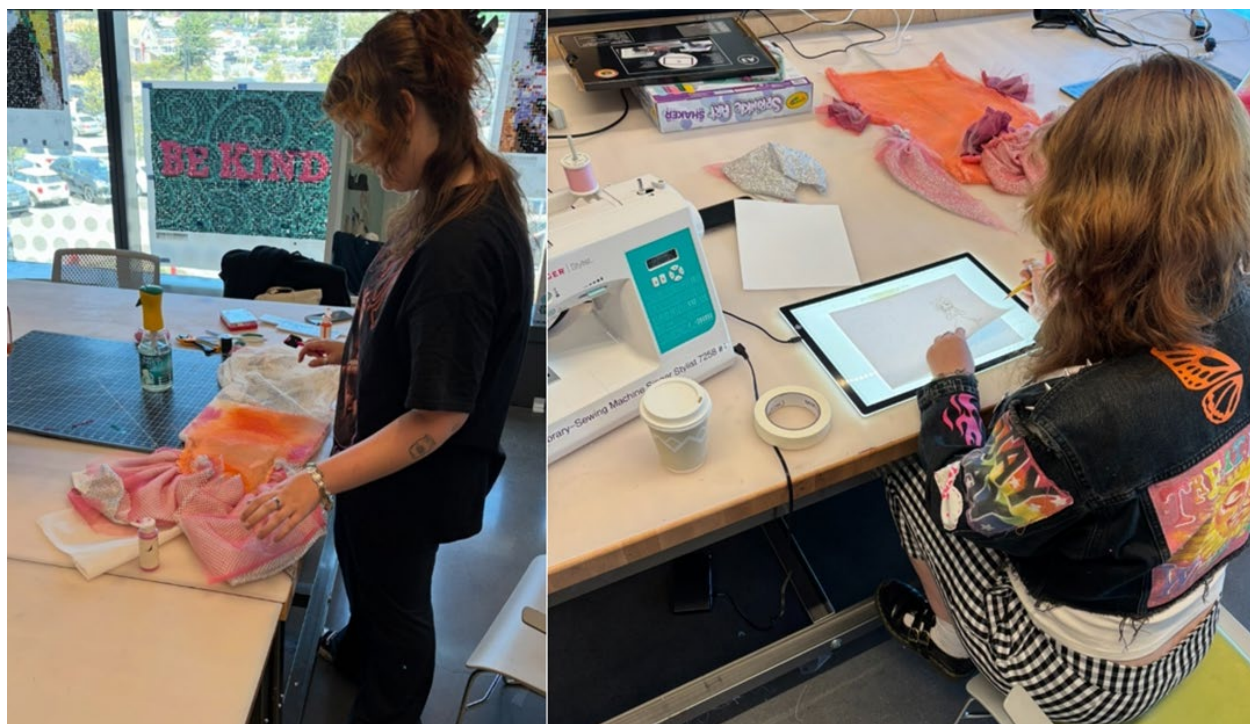
Ability Path movie showing in the Young Adult room



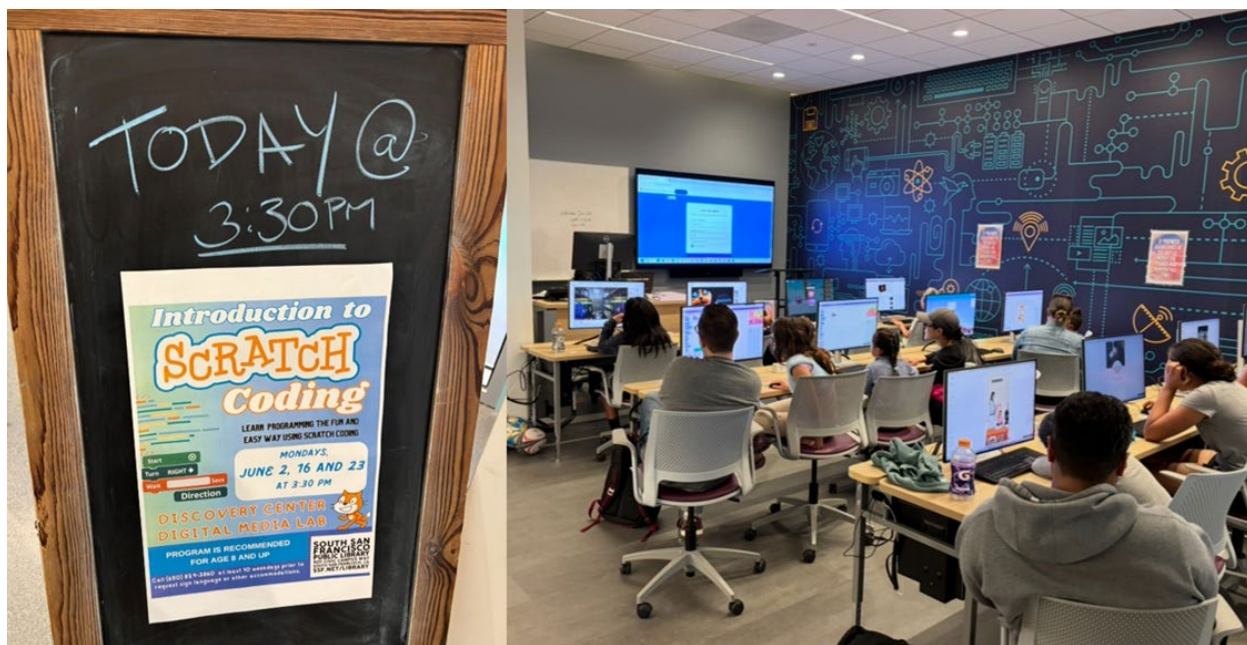
3D printed spaceship model pieces designed by a patron



3D prints and laser cut items created by patrons and library staff



Library Assistant Miriam Hart creating a custom mermaid costume (left) and doing animation using the Makerspace lightboard (right)



Scratch Coding for Kids program led by one of our high school volunteers



Weekly Digital Art Club Program

YOUTH SERVICES

July – Key Stats & Updates

Programs: **19** total; **2,105** attendees or participants

This month, we welcomed 146 SSF Parks and Recreations Summer Camp students and 65 rising-3rd graders from our Big Lift Inspiring Summers to our Main Library. Students got to tinker with robots, borrow books from our collections, and sign up for our Summer Learning Challenge!



Participants had a chance to play the newly released Nintendo Switch 2 console during our weekly video game series in the Young Adult Room.



Soul 4Kidz performed an hour-long set of children's songs with a soulful twist in the City Council Chambers on Saturday, June 28th. The band played several songs in honor of Black Music Month, including selections from Bob Marley and Pharell Williams.



The Summer 2025 STEMsters program began on Saturday, June 28th. STEMsters offers presentations on STEM concepts and related activities for ages 6-14. The summer sessions will take place on select Fridays and Saturdays between June and August. During the week before the first summer session, STEMsters volunteers participated in outreach for the program and children got to meet Tommy the dinosaur!





The Summer 2025 Brain Explorations program began on Saturday, June 7th. The volunteer-led program teaches neuroscience concepts through fun, interactive workshops for ages 6-12. The summer series will include 6 sessions between June and August.



On Saturday, June 14th, Youth Services and Adult Services co-hosted a special drag storytime in the Social Hall with Bay Area drag king King Lotus Boy. This program was part of the Main Library's all-ages LGBTQIA+ Pride celebration and the Youth Library's Summer Learning Challenge performance series.



Valerie Sommer

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Library Director