

More Fun to Look Forward to at the Library by Santiago Vasquez

It is a bittersweet feeling I get while writing this article. I will finish my term on the Columbus Public Library Board this year in September and this will be the last article I write for the Librarian's Shelf. As I understand it, I am the first Latino to have served a full term on the Library Board and consider it a privilege and a celebration to the diversity and inclusion we are working towards in our area.

During my time on the board, I have seen how the Library Board, the Library Foundation Board and other partners have been working diligently to understand the needs of the public in regards to the library. This includes the possibility of getting a new building and what the public views as important components for this potential building. The Library Board wants to propose a project that reflects the needs and wants of Columbus.

On Thursday, the library hosted a town hall meeting to share results from a recent survey that was completed in the community. The survey was looking to understand the public's thoughts on what a great library would include. Architects from Alley Poyner Macchietto facilitated a public discussion to develop different options for the project. The public will continue to have the opportunity to share feedback on these options as they are being developed.

While serving on the board, I have also seen firsthand how the library continues to improve the programs and services it offers by tailoring them to the interests and needs of our community. Programs are offered year-round, but are usually maximized during the summer time.

These activities include several space-themed movies starting at 10:30 a.m. on Mondays. Snacks are generally provided and children are encouraged to bring pillows and blankets for their viewing comfort.

On Tuesdays, also at 10:30 a.m., various guest speakers will be making a visit and sharing some appealing presentations. Story Time is then offered twice on Thursdays. The first session is scheduled from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and the second session runs from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

As an added incentive, children who register for the summer program and read at least 50 pages per week will receive a small prize. The little ones, who cannot read yet, can have someone read five picture books to them and still qualify for the weekly prize. Summer reading registration starts on June 3rd.

Tweens also get many fun programs that include moon, star and space exploration! Starting Wednesday, June 12, any student who just finished the 3rd, 4th or 5th grade will have the opportunity to become space explorers. There will be a total of six different events, including a special celebration, which students can sign up for.

In these activities participants will learn what it takes to survive in outer space, build rockets, learn about constellations and end the program with a make-your-own pizza party at Pizza Ranch! Students have to attend at least three of the events to qualify for the pizza party. Please also note that students have to sign up for each event individually.

The teen program will also have weekly Anytime Activities. The adult program will have a short story contest that people can sign up for by July 1. The grand prize will be having their story published in the library newsletter and winning a \$50 amazon gift card.

I hope your family continues to enjoy the many programs and resources the Columbus Public Library has to offer and I wish everyone has a safe and blessed summer!