



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/07/2023

ITEM NO: 19

DATE: February 7, 2023
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Approve the Library's Holiday and Recognition Work Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Library's holiday and recognition work plan.

BACKGROUND:

Given the recent interest in what holidays and months the Town recognizes through its Library programs and communications, this agenda item provides the Town Council and the public an opportunity to review the recognition work plan and provide input within the context of the Town's available resources for such recognition. The goal of thoughtful acknowledgement of holidays and recognition months is to foster an inclusive community. The Library's core purpose is to connect people with stories that broaden understanding.

As a Library, the primary vehicle of connecting people with stories is through books. Our primary focus is ensuring equitable access to collections that reflect a broad range of authors, primary characters, histories, and narratives in which community members can find representation. This is year-round work that is not confined to a calendar month or day, as the publishing industry does not coincide publications to align with recognition months in general practice.

Selections of materials is done by our Librarians on staff and assisted by diversity, equity, and inclusion software purchased in July of 2022 that analyzes the collection to ensure growth in the following catalog subject headings: Asian, Black, Disabilities and Neurodiversity, Equity and Social Issues, Hispanic and Latinx, Indigenous, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender, Queer, or Questioning (LGBTQ+) and Gender, Mental and Emotional Health, Middle Eastern and North African, Multicultural, and Religious Background. Purchased books and e-books include titles by

PREPARED BY: Ryan Baker
Library Director

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Finance Director

BACKGROUND (continued):

authors with backgrounds historically underrepresented in the publishing industry, titles that give strong representation of historically marginalized peoples as primary characters, and histories told or researched through the lens of disenfranchised populations.

In addition to books, e-books, and media, the Library produces programs and events for 30,000 Library users representing a wide variety of ages, backgrounds, and interests. Within this work, celebration of holidays and recognition months through the medium of books and stories is included.

DISCUSSION:

The Library strives to recognize the following 33 cultural and national holidays that have been identified as holding importance to members of our community (days marked with “varies” fall on different days in different years with the month displayed indicating 2023; items marked with an asterisk (*) note events that will be newly added to our celebration calendar as of this year):

New Year's Day (Jan)*	Independence Day (Jul)
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan)	Islamic New Year (Aug - varies)*
Lunar/Chinese New Year (Jan- varies)	Labor Day (Sept)
Holocaust Remembrance Day (Jan)	Rosh Hashanah (Sept – varies)
Presidents' Day (Feb)	Yom Kippur (Sept – varies)
Purim (Mar - varies)	Mid-Autumn Festival (Sept – varies)*
Holi (Mar - varies)	Indigenous Peoples' Day (Oct)
Ramadan (Mar - varies)	National Coming Out Day (Oct)
Nowruz (Mar - varies)	Halloween (Oct)
Cesar Chavez Day (Mar)	Dia de los Muertos (Nov)
Passover (Apr - varies)	Veterans' Day (Nov)
Easter (Apr - varies)	Diwali (Nov – varies)
Eid al-Fitr (Apr -varies)	Thanksgiving (Nov)
Earth Day (Apr)	Chanukah (Dec)
Cinco de Mayo (May)	Christmas (Dec)
Memorial Day (May)	Kwanzaa (Dec)
Juneteenth (Jun)	

DISCUSSION (continued):

The Library strives to recognize the following 14 recognition months/weeks that have been identified as holding importance to members of our community:

Braille Literacy Month (Jan)	Mental Health Awareness Month (May)*
Black History Month (Feb)	Pride and LGBTQ Month (Jun)
Women's History Month (Mar)	Disability Pride Month (Jul)*
Developmental Disabilities Month (Mar)*	Physical Disability Awareness Month (Aug)*
Arab American Heritage Month (Apr)*	Suicide Prevention Month (Sept)*
Autism Acceptance Month (Apr)*	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept 15 - Oct 15)
Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month (May)	Native American Heritage Month (Nov)
Jewish American Heritage Month (May)*	United Against Hate Week (Nov)

Also included here for the context of calendar timing and workload, the Library additionally recognizes the following seven library/literacy-specific months/weeks:

Poetry Month (Apr)	Friends of the Library Week (Oct)
Library Week (Apr)	Teen Read Week (Oct)
Summer Reading Program (Jun to Aug)	National Novel Writing Month (Nov)
Banned Books Week (Sept)	

Deliverables

Given the scope of work calendared above, staff has determined that the capacity for deliverables would entail:

Month-long recognition*:

- Social media post through Library's social media, reposted through Town social media
- Newsletter call out
- "Stories We Are Celebrating" booklist
- Storytimes featuring a broad cast of characters and families in book selections
- Reader's advisory highlighting recognition
- Book displays in Children's, Teen, and Adult sections
- Post showcasing the display, featuring the sign, with links to "Stories We Are Celebrating" content
- Storywalk in Oak Meadow Park (when feasible)
- One related program, live or virtual (when feasible)
- "Stories We Are Celebrating" graphics on lobby screens and desks
- Booklist callouts in the Library newsletters

DISCUSSION (continued):

*During months in which there are two or more recognition categories assigned, staff will divide display space appropriately between the multiple categories.

Week-long recognition:

- Small book display on countertop
- Give away items such as bookmarks, stickers, or buttons (as/when available)
- Social media post through Library's social media, reposted through Town social media
- "Stories We Are Celebrating" booklist

Single day observances:

- Social media post through Library's social media, reposted through Town social media
- "Stories We Are Celebrating" booklist

Deliverables for holidays and recognition months/weeks will sometimes be augmented by contributions from invested community partners that may provide materials, displays, give away items, etc. that would generally be outside of staff capacity or budget.

Limitations

The above-mentioned deliverables constitute the 'high-end' of what staff has analyzed is within our capacity to produce. Staff desires to recognize all holidays and recognition months equally; however, there will be occasions where it will not be logically possible due to the following limitations:

- Availability or quantity of titles produced by publishing houses. While publishers have made significant strides in quantity and quality of publications reflecting a more diverse range of voices, certain holidays have significantly more publications available than others. This may impact the ability to build and maintain full displays.
- Availability of presenters or speakers. Competition for speakers and presenters directly related to celebrating holidays and recognition months by schools, libraries and other institutions far exceeds supply and greatly increases in cost the closer to the day/week/month of recognition.
- Budget. Programming funds do not come from Town General Fund dollars, but rather through donations (the Friends of the Library being the largest donor). These limited funds are divided by staff for use across a wide variety of programming appealing to broad interests across the community. Museum quality displays, curriculum development, and exclusive programming themes are not possible for staff to produce.

DISCUSSION (continued):

- **Physical space.** The Library is highly limited in available display space. Space may need to be shared or have mixed use depending on how holidays and recognition months fall on the calendar for any given year.

Community Input

The Library is open and receptive to adding additional holidays within our capacity as suggested by community input. We have created a link in our "Stories We Are Celebrating" call outs that specifically ask community members to contact us for consideration of additional holidays important to their families.

Use of Social Media

Social media engagement will generally consist of a single post on Instagram and on Facebook for each holiday or at the beginning of a recognition month. Within the spirit of stories, staff in 2023 will be using a similar template for each post that highlights books from our collection as they relate to the holiday or recognition month. Library staff will tag the Town in postings to allow Town staff to repost. Postings for holidays that fall on days the Town or Library is closed will generally be posted some days in advance to allow the Town to repost as appropriate. Note that program and event advertising through social media means will primarily be through the Library's newsletters with a measurable click/engagement rate of 16.39% compared to Facebook at 1.16% and Instagram at 0.06%.

CONCLUSION:

Library staff is committed to working towards all community members feeling represented and included as part of our Town core values. Holidays and recognition months are one of the many ways staff undertakes to create this sense of inclusion for Los Gatos. This report has been prepared through conscientious examination of an ongoing process.

COORDINATION:

This workplan has been reviewed by the Library Board. The high-level comment that the Board feels appropriate to communicate to Council is:

The primary focus for the Library's mission to foster a diverse and inclusive community should first and foremost be through conscientiously striving for equitable access to a large variety of books, e-books, and media that reflect the experiences and backgrounds of diverse communities. Every person of every age, background, and identity must be

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COORDINATION (continued):

able to have access to a wide offering of books in which they can see themselves reflected. The Library should not lose sight of this as their primary means of fostering dialog and understanding within the community as it pursues additional avenues of recognition.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.