



October 2022

Hi Library Champion,

Lots going on with your Library this month. It makes me smile, and want to shout BINGO!

And not just because it's *Teen Read Month* and they're playing Library Bingo. But because you and your fellow Library Champions are creating lots of wins with your support for your Library.

From generously providing opportunities for teens to get involved with reading and their library, to helping children learn to read, to introducing young people to careers in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, your love for your Library and your donations add up.

You're making a positive difference in lots of lives. Thank you!

Check out the *Donor Impact Snapshot* to find out more about what you've made possible -- and read on to see how your future donations will also help build a brighter today, and tomorrow.

This month's *My Library Story* is a tribute to Evelyn Gutierrez, a decades-long Library Foundation director and volunteer with the Friends of the Library group, Los Amigos of the East Los Angeles Library.

Evelyn passed earlier this month. We miss her, and we'll honor her legacy with additional support for Library resources for older adults.

That's already underway, launched with a grant to purchase eAudiobooks for low vision readers -- the majority of whom are older adults -- and to get the word out widely about other fabulous Library programs and services for people with low vision.

You might have enjoyed a book sale at your local library this month in recognition of the value that Friends of the Library groups bring to your local library.

We're keeping the celebration going, with a virtual look at the Gardena Mayme Dear Library (and its namesake) -- authored by sisters and Friends of the Library officers Eleanor and Elaine Bersano.

Want to get involved? The Library has 55 Friends of the Library groups with thousands of members. [Find out more here.](#)

And because I can't resist, I'll leave you with another Library gem -- an easy way for you to vote!

Your voice matters. So, check out the [46 libraries with vote by mail ballot drop boxes](#). Not one at your library? Check out a list of drop boxes across the county.

And don't forget...I love to hear your Library stories, recommended reads, shout outs to your amazing Library staff. [Send them](#) my way.

Thank you, Library Champion, for creating big wins with your Library!

Wishing you joy,

Andrea

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P.S. [Your gift today will strengthen your Library.](#) **Thank you!**

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## A tribute: Evelyn Gutierrez, Library Champion, and Foundation Director



*Evelyn Gutierrez (seated) with Los Amigos of East Los Angeles Library volunteer Helen (left) and Librarian Xuemin join with other Library Champions to celebrate Dia de Los Muertos.*

Evelyn Gutierrez was loved throughout the County – as a colleague, volunteer, and friend. People responded to her tremendous caring and commitment to the County, its employees, and Library system.

Evelyn served on the board of directors for the LA County Library Foundation, as secretary and treasurer; and she spearheaded funding initiatives, including for teen programs, cultural resource centers, and Friends of the Library groups.

She also volunteered for two decades with Los Amigos of the East Los Angeles Library, weekly serving in their bookstore and building lasting connections with staff, and between children, teens, and adults and their library.

Evelyn enriched the Library Foundation, the Retired Employees of Los Angeles County (RELAC), and the County's Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC) with her creativity, insights, and sense of fun.

She freely shared her marketing expertise, honed during 35 years with the County and in the Chief Executive Office for 15 years as director of workplace programs and marketing.

Evelyn also gave generously to support students, and with the March of Dimes Team RELAC, raised awareness and funds for vulnerable babies and their families.

She believed in multiplying impact, and generously shared resources and connections among the Library Foundation, Library, RELAC, and QPC to strengthen each organization and increase their value for the people and communities they serve.

Evelyn made our lives brighter, and we miss her very much.

The Library Foundation is celebrating Evelyn's legacy by funding Library resources for older adults.

You can be part of this endeavor - make your gift at [LACoLibraryFoundation.org/contribute](https://LACoLibraryFoundation.org/contribute) (please add a note if you'd like).

## **What's your Library Story?**

[We want to know.](#)

[Read more Library stories here.](#)

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## Virtual Field Trip: Friends of the Library take you to Gardena Mayme Dear Library



Image: LA County Library

*The Gardena Mayme Dear Library features an enclosed Japanese Garden designed by Takuma P. Tono, professor of landscape design at Tokyo Agriculture University. Gardena's sister city, Ichikawa, donated a nearly 200 year old stone lantern that is displayed in the garden. A mosaic mural above the main entrance depicts the development of books and printing. You can find a [local history and images of Gardena](#) on the Library's website.*

I was curious about the namesake of Gardena Mayme Dear Library, so I asked **Friends of the Library President Eleanor R. Bersano** and her sister **VP Elaine E. Bersano** to tell me a little about Mayme Dear and also about their library. They replied,

"So what is the legacy of Mayme Dear that still lives on...?"

Gardena Library was born under the sponsorship of the Wednesday Progressive Club before the Los Angeles County Free Library was founded in 1912.

Eighty years later, in 1992, the library was renamed Gardena Mayme Dear Memorial Library in honor of Mayme Dear, a longtime library volunteer and well-loved elementary school teacher. And in 1993, Mayme Dear's portrait was commissioned and painted by Betty L. Donahue...it is a small oil painting displayed in the library.

Although we never met Mayme Dear, we feel like we almost understand her. Mayme was a voracious volunteer who generously shared her time and talents in the Gardena Library and as President of the Friends.

She taught for 17 years at Denker Ave Elementary School in Gardena and after retiring, began volunteering at the nearby Gardena Library and at several other organizations.

Her work at the library included placing barcodes on every book in the library, leading then community library manager Julie Fu to encourage Mayme to be the first person to check-out a book on our very new Automated Check-Out System (ACS system).



*image: LA County Library, Gardena Mayme Dear Library Friends of the Library*

Because of her community activism, years of excellent teaching of youth, and superior dedication to the library and its Friends, it was decided to re-name the Gardena Library in her honor. Mayme loved learning and was a perfect fit to represent a hub of knowledge.

In 2015, the library celebrated its 50th anniversary at its current location. A refurbished portrait of Mayme Dear greeted guests, and heralded the three-fold celebration:

The fact that the Gardena Library had its original ribbon cutting on December 5, 1964...the establishment of the Friends of the Library early in 1965...and the beautiful Japanese garden encouraged by then Supervisor Kenneth Hahn.

The garden, which you can enjoy today, was completed for the opening, created by Japanese American Association members who brought to life the vision of a famous Japanese architect, Takuma P. Tono.

Just think: without the support from the Gardena Wednesday Progressive Club, the beginning of the Gardena Library system would not have occurred....In 1912, this club supported an L.A.County Free library...and then all is history. "

**Where do you want to go next?**

[Email us.](#)

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**Donor Impact Snapshot: a taste of what  
YOU make possible**



image: LA County Library/Monica Almeida, *Stories Around the World* at El Monte Library,

You help kids (of all ages) say YES to reading, thank you!

Your generous gifts will support **Library programs that help children learn to read and resources to build and sustain lifelong learners.**

At a time when students across LA County (and even across the nation) are struggling, with major drops in reading and math scores, your Library is needed more than ever.

**Thank you for helping to meet that need** - with funding for new and struggling readers and support for programs like *Teen Read Month*.

Thank you, too, to sponsor Via Care Community Health Center.

Thank you to Edison International and Library Champions for fueling **Careers in STEAM** - a series of in-person and virtual programs for tweens that included an entomologist, engineers from the county's public works department, a NASA-JPL Mars scientist, and behind-the-scenes tours of the Aquarium of the Pacific.

**226** young people attended in person and **643** participated virtually! Curious? [Check out the videos](#) on the Library's YouTube channel.

And even better? In response to surveys about the programs, **93%** of these young people said the programs encouraged them to check out books or explore online to learn more about STEAM.

Did you know that your Library has more than just audiobooks and eAudiobooks to **support Library users with low vision?**

You can check out large type books. And each library has computers for public use - with magnifying and screen reader tools.

**Low vision isn't uncommon** - many people with severe diabetes and older adults become visually impaired. And too often, they miss out on the joy and enrichment of reading. It doesn't have to be that way, thanks to your Library.

And thank you to the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Monica! They're funding additional eAudiobooks and helping launch communications about Library resources for people with low vision.

The need is huge, and your gift will help.

Your love for your Library and your generosity all adds up to a major win.

Stay tuned...next month we'll celebrate more of what you and your fellow Library Champions make possible. Thank you!

**Thank you, Library Champion!**  
**Your support makes an impact.**

**Give Today**



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