

The Mission Hills-Hillcrest Branch Library Has Something for Everyone

By Charlyn Earp

The Mission Hills/Hillcrest Branch of the San Diego City Library system truly caters to the younger and older readers and everyone in between. Branch Manager Philip Detwiler wields his baton before a well orchestrated symphony of people and events, making this library a vibrant place for everyone.

In October, the Mystery Book Discussion Group invited the Reuben H. Fleet Space Center Education Department to their monthly meeting to conduct a CSI inspired Forensic Detective Program for adults. All library patrons were invited, so there was quite an impressive turnout. Twenty-five eager adults traded their mystery books for microscopes and litmus paper to test the soil sample and hair discovered at the scene of the "robbery." Genise McLaren, from the Space Center, facilitated the night's activity and led the

participants through the five different evidence stations.

Laughter replaced the normal subdued tone as everyone reveled in the discoveries they made at each station. Nancy Carter said it was "a very entertaining evening, especially the interaction with the others here."

Kate Williams added that it was "really, really fun working with some people I didn't know, and we laughed a lot." The Friends of the Mission Hills-Hillcrest Branch Library supplied the great snacks and dessert.

Now an opportunity for a great time for the young readers is in the works at the library. They will be able to spend time at the library reading to a beautiful



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Other librarians are eager to utilize this gift, but Samantha Hurst, a Professor of Anthropology at UCSD, chose this library because it is such a vital part of the Mission Hills-Hillcrest community. Therapy Dog International is a volunteer

therapy dog named Blaze. A shelter, Blaze has a loving and sweet spirit and actually enjoys the stories and attention. Research shows that this activity improves the confidence of young readers. Blaze tilts his head with expression and appears extremely interested in every word and doesn't correct any mistakes. He

group organized to provide qualified handlers and their therapy dogs for visitation to schools, libraries and hospitals. As a member of this group, Hurst chose to volunteer her services to help hesitant, embarrassed and shy young readers grow into confident and skillful readers, and to showcase her wonderful dog. Young readers will reap huge rewards when their improved reading leads to better grades in school. Blaze and Samantha look forward to their evenings with the young readers. They will be in the library on the second and third Wednesdays beginning December 10.

Residents need to keep this library in mind when they want more than just a book. Detwiler keeps the Mission Hills-Hillcrest Branch Library's activities geared to the community. He and his library staff are dedicated to the education and reading pleasures of all ages.