

# Voice of Literacy

[www.literacysandiego.org](http://www.literacysandiego.org)  
(888) 850-7323  
[contact@literacysandiego.org](mailto:contact@literacysandiego.org)

## Message from the CEO

In this issue of *Voice of Literacy* we have little choice but to highlight recent, enormous, and intensive book giveaway activity!

It absorbed us: 100,000 new books for children went to all corners of San Diego County. It took a lot of work and a lot of partners to make every aspect of the book distributions happen.



We want to especially thank The UPS Store, The Molina Foundation, the Cajon Valley Union School District, The Arc of San Diego, the Registrar of Voters, Words Alive, and the San Diego County Library for the donation of books, storage of books, and all that was required to do the distributions. We needed every bit of that help.

There are a lot of people who are unnamed here. They are heroes...good people looking for good opportunities to do good things. They make the world go 'round.

In all of this...we're celebrating our 35th anniversary! And we're celebrating the world opening up again.

It's a great time. Thanks to All!

Jose L. Cruz

## Message from the Board Chair



Dear Friends,

2021 marks the 35th anniversary of the San Diego Council on Literacy...35 years of uniting the San Diego community in pursuit of the vision of literacy for all .

Thanks to generous book donations from The UPS Store and The Molina Foundation, we marked this anniversary with two book giveaway events in May.

Over 100,000 books were given to children in grades K-12. This was accomplished through the affiliated programs of the Council on Literacy whose services span San Diego County. With this partner support, the Council aspires to further instill the importance of reading in the community.

Please see video of some of our 35th anniversary activities on our [Facebook page](#) and a recent profile on our CEO, Jose Cruz, on Shoutout SoCal [here](#).

Thank you!  
Idara

## The 2021 Calendar

**September 8**  
International Literacy  
Day

**November 1**  
National Family  
Literacy Day

**December 7**  
SDCOL Open House &  
Holiday Chili

**December 9**  
Literacy Champions  
Reception (tentative)

**December 24 to  
January 2**  
Office Closed



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## **SDCOL 35th Anniversary Sponsors!**

In this special year, we are grateful to all donors and to those who advocate for greater literacy in our region!

In this space, we'd like to say **Thank You** to these sponsors of the San Diego Council on Literacy's 35th anniversary:

The San Diego  
**Union-Tribune**

**The UPS Store**



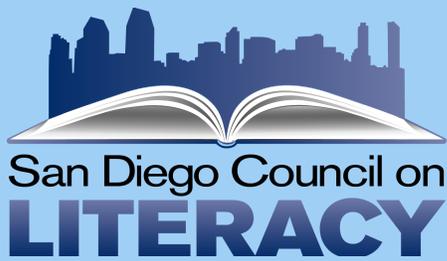
## The State of Literacy in San Diego County Literacy Statistics You Should Know

- 46% of **3rd graders** in the San Diego Unified School District **do not** meet the standard for language arts (reading/writing).
- 82% of **3rd graders** in Solana Beach Elementary School District **meet the language arts standard** compared to 32% from the South Bay Unified School District.
- Almost 70% of **White students**, countywide, in grades 3-8 and 11th grade, **meet the language arts standard** vs. Black students (40%) and Latinx students (44%).
- National City, Chula Vista, and Imperial Beach **adult residents** rank lowest in literacy skills among those residing in the **18 cities in the region**. 33% of National City adult residents read English at a 0-4 grade level.
- Percentage of residents, age 5 and over, who speak a language other than English at home:

U.S.	21.6%
California	44.2%
Imperial County	76.5%
Los Angeles County	56.6%
San Diego County	37.6%
Los Angeles City	58.9%
San Diego City	40.5%
National City	69.2%
Solana Beach	16.7%

- The least literate **adult** residents in San Diego County **communities** are in San Ysidro, the Southeast community (City of San Diego), and Encanto.
- The most literate **adult** residents in our region's **communities** live in La Jolla Shores and Julian.
- The residents of the **cities** of Encinitas and Del Mar rank highest in reading prose among San Diego County residents of **all ages**.
- Over the past 28 years, ranking highest in **adult** literacy skills are residents of the cities of Poway, Carlsbad, Coronado, Encinitas, Del Mar, and Solana Beach.
- While Santee adult residents rank among the highest in adult literacy skills in the region, 44% of 3rd graders in the Santee School District do not meet the language arts standard.
- College graduation rates:

San Diego County	39%
Barrio Logan	10%
SD Southeast Community	8%



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## The UPS Store Book Giveaway

On May 1st, a school bus filled with books traveled to three locations across San Diego County to distribute books to children in selected communities. The UPS Store's donation of 55,000 books to the San Diego Council on Literacy, in partnership with Toys for Tots, made these book stops possible.

Jenny Robinson, head of public relations and social media for The UPS Store, shared why access to books is important. "We know that one in four children grows up without a book in their home. And we know that books at home is a critical piece of learning how to read."

The bus stopped at St. James Lutheran Church in Imperial Beach, the Jacobs Center in Central San Diego, and Lexington Elementary School in El Cajon. Books were given to 350+ children and families. About 3,200 books were handed out on this unique book giveaway day.

Most of the 55,000 books were distributed through other community partners:

- Cajon Union Valley School District
- City of Imperial Beach/School District
- Kiwanis Club of Carlsbad
- Kiwanis Club of Imperial Beach
- National City Public Library
- Oceanside Public Library
- San Diego Oasis
- San Ysidro School District
- Traveling Stories
- Wildflower Initiative



The San Diego Council on Literacy is grateful to the hardworking teams of volunteers and staff who made this day a success. A Special Thanks goes to Kiwanis Club of Imperial Beach, Lexington Elementary School, and the Diamond Educational Excellence Partnership (DEEP) for hosting the book stops.

Thank you again to The UPS Store and Toys for Tots!

## **10 Ways You Can Support Literacy in the San Diego Region!**

1. Volunteer to be a tutor for a child or adult.
2. Read to children at schools, libraries, and other community locations.
3. Read to seniors who may be alone or have vision loss.
4. Read to your children. Ask them to read to you.
5. Dedicate one-hour (or ½ hour) every day to reading.
6. Create incentives for older siblings to read to younger siblings.
7. Donate to a literacy program.
8. Build a Little Free Library in your neighborhood. Restock a Little Free Library near you.
9. Donate new or like-new books for children in low-income communities.
10. [Donate to the San Diego Council on Literacy](#)



## SUPPORT LITERACY WITH A DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION TO

### The San Diego **Union-Tribune**

For \$98, you will receive a one-year subscription to *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, **online version only**. When you [subscribe](#), \$35 goes to the local literacy effort.



**Subscribe**

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## Books to Children from Military Families

We are proud to announce that in the past year, 18,000 books for children were provided to military families associated with Camp Pendleton.



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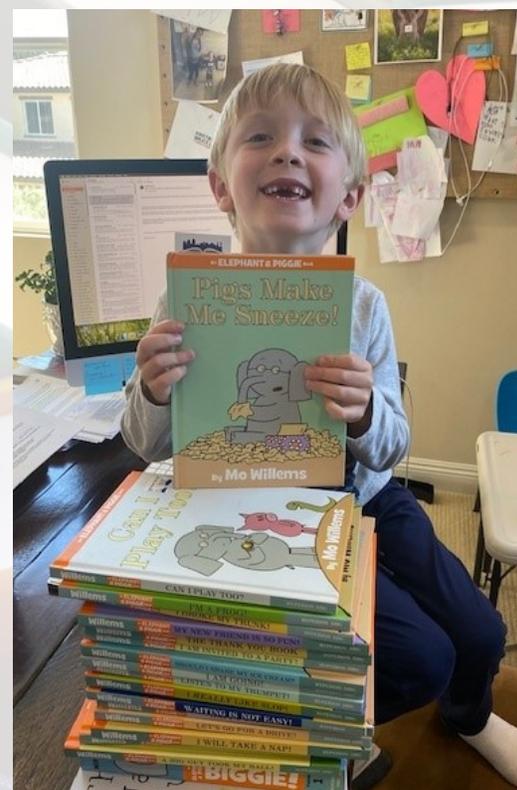
## **Thank you to Words Alive: Another Amazing Book Giveaway!**

On Tuesday, May 25, 2021, the amazing Words Alive literacy program team took time away from their regular programming to coordinate a special distribution of 16,500 books to local literacy programs and other SDCOL partners.

These books were part of the donation of books that came to the SDCOL from The Molina Foundation. This event was customized for those agencies that needed to receive books in smaller quantities—vs. books by the pallet--and with the greater option for selecting diverse titles.

Eventually, all books will end up in the happy hands of local children.

Thank you Words Alive!



## Books in Spanish for Children Housed at the San Diego Convention Center



Thanks to the The Children's Initiative, the unaccompanied immigrant children being housed at the San Diego Convention Center are benefitting from a new Spanish language library. The SDCOL was honored to work with The Children's Initiative and Scholastic to secure books for these children.

## *Literacy for All Radio Show Archives*

We are sorry to announce that, after three years, the wsRadio *Literacy for All Radio Show*, sponsored by the San Diego Council on Literacy, is no more.

wsRadio has shut down operations. The SDCOL is exploring other radio show options.

The *Literacy for All Radio Show* featured literacy experts and advocates from the San Diego region and around the country, including Ruth Colvin (now 104 years old), founder of Literacy Volunteers of America; Nora Briggs, executive director of the Dollywood Foundation's "Imagination Library" program's North American operations; and Kevin Morgan, CEO of ProLiteracy.

300 show segments have been archived and can be made available by request.

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## **Imagination Library**

### **Books Mailed To Homes of Children**

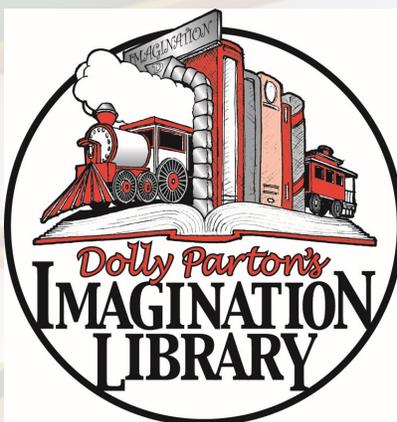
The San Diego Council on Literacy is a proud coordinator of Dolly Parton's "Imagination Library" program. This program results in books being mailed, every month, to the homes of low-income children, ages 0-5, in selected local zip codes. For \$25.00 a year, a child receives 12 books.

Currently being served are children residing in these zip codes: 92102, 92105, 92113, 92114, 92116, 92054, and 92058.

The Dollywood Foundation invites communities to sponsor a local chapter of this program. Both the SDCOL and BASIC, an SDCOL affiliated literacy program in Borrego Springs, are the sole coordinators of Imagination Library programs in the region.

The program also operates in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Australia. Last year, in its 25th year of operation, the Dollywood Foundation celebrated the donation of its 150 millionth book.

Thank you to the First Five Commission of San Diego County, The Wise Family Fund, the David C. Copley Foundation, the Beta Delta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma in Oceanside, and others who have donated funds to this program. If you are interested in contributing to Imagination Library, use [this link](#) to make a donation of \$25 per child.



## Little Free Library

### Books in the 'Hood

We are grateful to the County of San Diego and Supervisor Nora Vargas for new funding being provided towards more Little Free Library stand-ups in the San Diego region. Funding in the amount of \$20,000 was recently approved to purchase 40 new Little Free Library sites.

Little libraries are mailbox like structures put up in communities to create neighborhood book exchanges where people can freely borrow or leave books for others to read. They can be found all around San Diego County.

“Residents can borrow books as they like and return them afterward in an honor-based system,” said District One Supervisor, Nora Vargas.

With the Board’s vote approval, the San Diego County Library will work with the San Diego Council on Literacy, nonprofits like the national Little Free Library, and volunteer groups to increase the number of little libraries and put books in them.

“The reality is there are vast disparities,” Vargas said. “Many children don’t have access to age-appropriate books at home, which causes them to fall behind. This initiative is going to address disparities seen in disadvantaged communities by promoting and encouraging reading from home and by creating more access to literature.”

(Some content for this article was quoted from the County of San Diego News Center)

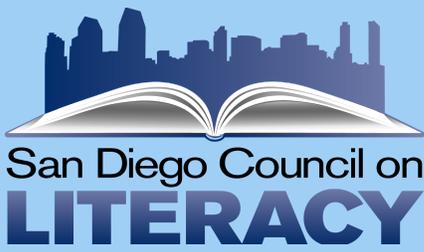


*An already standing Little Library built by Melanie Mashburn and Pablo Sanchez-Lopez.*

## Observations on Returning from a Pandemic

- Some survival is by design. Some is plain luck, good or bad.
- A pandemic is not just a word. People became sick. Some suffered. Some died. Some are still suffering.
- This might not have been the plague, but it was close enough.
- Maybe it was softened up by a media that did not exist 100 years ago. Maybe the media saved us.
- Maybe it was softened up because now we have more science and kind of knew what was happening to us.
- This science saved millions of us.
- The Black Death, which hit Europe in 1347, claimed 200 million lives in four years.
- Then it came back 300 years later. The Spanish Flu hit 250 years after that. 50 million people died.
- And something hit us again in 2020, but in a different way, different name.
- Covid = 166 million cases and 3.5 million deaths worldwide.
- Each one of those who died meant something to friends and family.
- We are not dwelling on this. We are looking back to see how far we have come. There's value in that.
- And while THIS was happening, yes, we had patience and faith.
- Many of us had it in our minds fourteen months ago that we might be in for a long ride.
- And we lived by this and communicated it to those around us, verbally and non-verbally.
- And that made a world of difference.
- And now we are coming back.



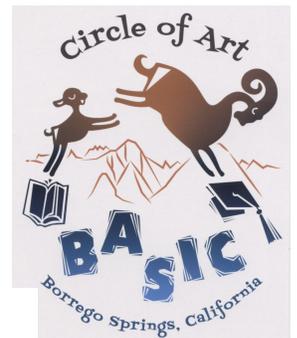
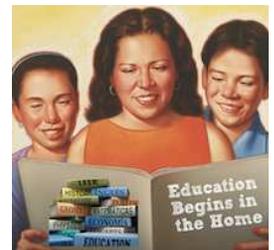
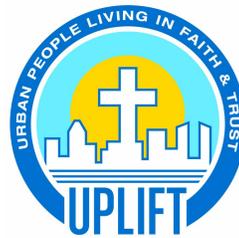
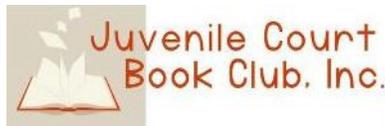
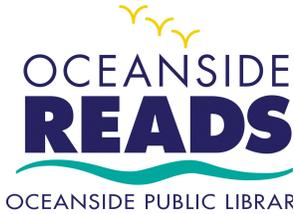
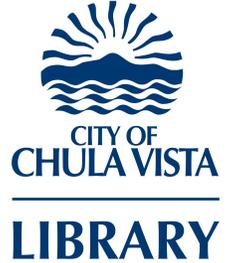
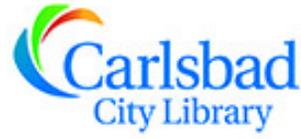


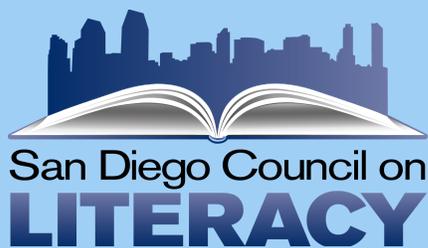
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San Diego Council on  
**LITERACY**

Spring/Summer 2021



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Please [make a gift](#) to the  
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