

HUNTINGTON BEACH

A Passport to Adventure at the Library

Children and their parents learned this week that a library is much more than just a building filled with books.

"We're a cultural center too," said Nanci Williams, children's services coordinator at the city's Central Library.

To motivate youngsters to read during the summer and use the library all year long, Friends of the Children's Library sponsored "Carnival of Folk Tales" Tuesday, drawing about 2,000 children and their parents.

The youngsters attended storytelling sessions about different cultures, heard folk tales from places such as India and Africa, and were entertained by folk dancers from Spain and musicians who played Calypso music.

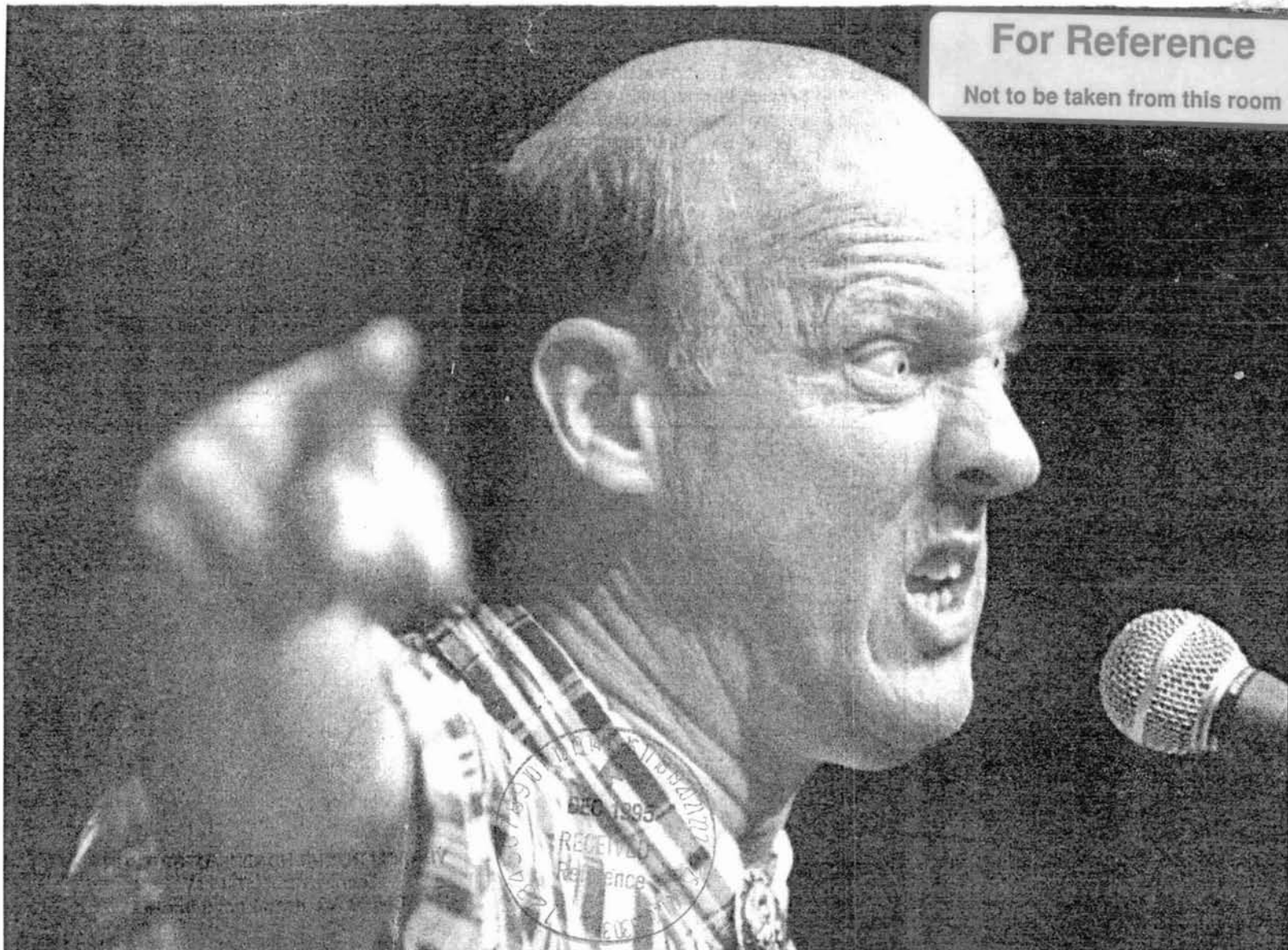
The festival also included games and crafts from around the world.

Sharon Seier of Buena Park brought her 2-year-old son, Bradley, to see the puppet shows and participate in the story times.

"It's a way for him to learn and for me to be with him and to teach him some educational activities," Seier said.

Melissa Bernardin of Huntington Beach brought sons Zackary, 3, and Tyler, 9 months, with hopes that "they'll grow up to love reading. I want them to read a lot."

The festival was the kickoff for the library's summer reading program, "Passport to Adventure: Read Around The World." The children's wing at Central Library has 56,000 titles for



For Reference
Not to be taken from this room

Photos by CHRISTINE COTTER / Los Angeles Times

Jim Cogan's enthusiastic, animated storytelling captures the attention of Lindsay Bramel, 2½, below left, and Samantha Bramel, 5.



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During negotiations for the purchase of the library, city officials discovered that Seal Beach had a priority option to buy the library if it closed. The city's right of first refusal stems from its \$90,000 contribution to the county in 1972 for construction of the library. In complicated negotiations, the city relinquished its right to purchase the library in exchange for ownership of the books.

Howard McCurdy, president of Golden Rain Foundation's board, said the library might have to close for a week to change the book check-out system. The foundation is using the private library operated by the Laguna Hills Leisure World as a model.

—RUSS LOAR

SEAL BEACH

Panel Nears Decision on 223-Home Project

The Planning Commission is expected to vote Wednesday on whether to recommend the proposed Bixby Ranch Co. development to the City Council.

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The proposed 223-home residential and commercial development near the Old Ranch Country Club has divided residents who have packed the past three Planning Commission meetings to take part in heated debate.

On Tuesday, commissioners listened to public comments about the project but postponed an advisory vote for a week. The City Council will make the final decision.

Opponents say the project will generate unacceptable levels of traffic on already congested streets. They also say that some of the planned homes will be too close to the runway at the Los Alamitos Armed Forces Reserve Center and could be subject to flooding problems.

A contingent of residents from the nearby unincorporated community of Rossmoor also expressed concerns about traffic and safety issues at the Wednesday night meeting.

"In my discussions with neighbors, I feel you do not realize the depth of opposition to the Bixby project," said Rossmoor resident Glenn Cook.

Representatives from Bixby Ranch Co. have said the city will take in approximately \$800,000 a year in net revenue generated by the project. And Bixby has pledged to spend \$1 million in traffic improvements, which company representatives say will prevent additional traffic problems.

fortable using the library.

"It's a start of lifelong learning," he said. "It awakens a whole dimension of literary desires beyond what they get in school."

—DEBRA CANO

SEAL BEACH

Leisure World Board to Take Over Library

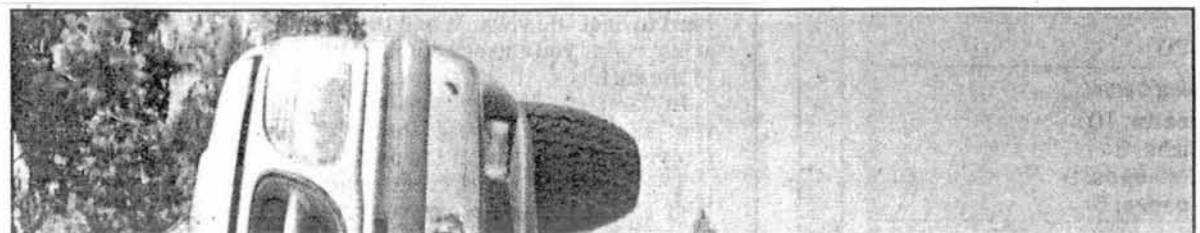
Leisure World's governing board made a successful \$225,000 bid for the county library adjacent to the retirement community, fending off the impending closure of the facility.

The 22-year-old library,

which will be operated privately for Leisure World residents, was one of six county branches threatened with closure. Leisure World's governing Golden Rain Foundation rejected a compromise offer from the county that could have kept the branch open two days a week.

Rather than face limited operating hours and an uncertain future, foundation board members chose to bid for the 4,000-square-foot building on three-fourths of an acre at Tuesday's auction of 19 county properties.

"This is a very big deal for our residents," said Seal Beach Councilman George Brown, a Leisure World resident who was



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Friends of the Children's Library for years has sponsored the festival to kick off the summer reading program, typically with a carnival.

This year the focus is on literary skills and literature, said Ruth Siegrist, a Friends member and coordinator of the festival.

"We wanted to give the children a multicultural experience," she said. "We want to motivate them to read about different lands."

Williams said 706 children ages 3 and older signed up for the reading program. Incentives such as free meals, gifts and toys donated by local businesses will be given to youngsters who read eight or more books or make eight weekly visits to the library during the summer.

Children can continue to sign up for the program through July 31 at Central Library or any of the branches.

Councilman Ralph Bauer, who attended the festival, said it is a way to make children feel com-

NEWPORT BEACH

New Visitor Parking Spots Ease Frustration at City Hall

It's tough to fight City Hall if