



For information or interviews, contact:
Kimberly Caballero
kimberly@lbplfoundation.org
562.628.2441

Mayor Garcia Welcomed Bestselling Children's Author Jan Brett to Long Beach

*The event featured Jan Brett's latest book, *The Mermaid*, a story of real and fantasy ocean life.*



Hundreds gathered as Mayor Robert Garcia welcomed *New York Times* best-selling children's author, Jan Brett at a free community event this past Saturday, December 9, at the Aquarium of the Pacific. This second annual Mayor's Book Club event featured Brett's latest book, *The Mermaid*, and was sponsored by the Long Beach Public Library Foundation, the Mayor's Fund for Education, the Aquarium of the Pacific and the Long Beach Public Library.

"I grew up reading. I grew up in libraries. It's really important that we promote reading and literacy and great events that engage all people," said Mayor Garcia as he invited Mrs. Brett to the stage.

Known for her intricate and vibrant illustrations, Brett inspired young artists in the crowd with a drawing demonstration of a Giant Pacific Octopus from her book, a species of octopus featured in an Aquarium of the Pacific exhibit.

"My favorite trait is curiosity because when I was little it was the thing that made me want to try things for the first time and made me excited about the world," Brett explained to the children when explaining how she was inspired to become a writer.

"The Long Beach Public Library and our Foundation are committed to promoting literacy and education in Long Beach. Studies show that children who do not learn how to read proficiently by the 3rd grade are four times more likely than their peers to leave high school without a diploma. This event is just one way we aim to inspire our city's next generation of readers and turn that statistic around," said Kate Azar, Executive Director of the Long Beach Public Library Foundation.

At the end of the presentation, Karissa Selvester, Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund for Education, announced that all children in attendance would receive a free copy of *The Mermaid* as an early holiday gift from her organization.



Barnes and Noble at the Long Beach Towne Center will donate a portion of book sales from the event to the Long Beach Public Library Foundation.



Brett's artwork will be auctioned off for charity at the Long Beach Public Foundation's upcoming Grape Expectations gala on June 10th, 2018. To get tickets or bid on the artwork, please contact the Library Foundation at info@lbplfoundation.org.

The Mermaid, and Brett's other award-winning children's books are available for check out at the Long Beach Public Library.

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Long Beach Public Library Foundation provides support to enhance the Long Beach Public Library and encourages literacy and education for all members of the community. lbplfoundation.org

Long Beach Public Library includes 12 library locations and is committed to meeting the information needs of our culturally diverse and dynamic population. lbpl.org

Mayor's Fund for Education believes that there is no better investment than education and works with community and education partners to ensure improved economic prosperity through strategic partnerships like the Long Beach College Promise. mayorsfundfored.org

Aquarium of the Pacific is a community gathering place where diverse cultures and the arts are celebrated and where important challenges facing our planet are explored by scientists, policymakers, and stakeholders in search of solutions. aquariumofpacific.org

