

## Misty Jones Letter to Library Patron

*Thank you for your email. I am responding to address your concerns regarding the Pride display at the Rancho Penasquitos Library. First and foremost, it is essential to recognize that public libraries play a vital role in our communities as inclusive spaces that promote intellectual freedom, access to information and diverse perspectives. Therefore, it is fitting that the San Diego Public Library takes the opportunity to celebrate Pride Month, an occasion that acknowledges and supports the LGBTQ+ community.*

*Pride displays serve several important purposes. They foster a sense of belonging and validation for LGBTQ+ individuals who often struggle with acceptance and face societal challenges. They also educate the broader community about the history, struggles and achievements of the LGBTQ+ community while promoting empathy, understanding and acceptance.*

*A core value of SDPL is to provide a welcoming environment that reflects the diversity of our society. Displays such as the one at Rancho Penasquitos send a powerful message that LGBTQ+ patrons and their allies are respected members of our community. They also serve to encourage conversations and dispel misconceptions and stereotypes that often surround the LGBTQ+ community. Embracing and celebrating diversity does not favor one group over another. Pride displays are much like other displays that recognize other cultures, holidays or causes so that we can recognize the experiences of others and have a more inclusive and equitable society. We are proud of our position in encouraging members of our community to learn, grow and celebrate our differences.*

*I do want to make you aware that not returning items will eventually lead to you being charged the full cost of replacement and could result in you being sent to Collections. Just as you are free to select materials that align with your beliefs, others also have that right. By removing the materials, you are denying others the right to make the decisions that align with their beliefs. I hope that you will consider these perspectives and join us in creating an environment where everyone can thrive.*