

...Worth Its Wait

That dedication could be seen at the library's grand opening where an overflow crowd of about 500 surprised even Mayor Richard Riordan who exclaimed, "What a great turnout!"

But one suspected that the large press contingent wasn't there to hear from the politicians or see how nicely the books were stacked. It was Irmelin DiCaprio, mother of Titanic heartthrob Leonardo, who attracted the curious cameras. The family lived in a small house facing Franklin where the parking lot exit now resides.

Ms. DiCaprio recalled "how important the library was" to her son, who missed the event because he was making a movie in Thailand. But the DiCaprio family will continue to reside in the library in the form of the hardware and software that make up the Leonardo DiCaprio Computer Center they donated. Ms. DiCaprio said the center will help new generations of children with "the state of the art tools they will need to succeed in the future."

One who seems well on the road to success is Los Feliz Elementary School 5th grader Erika Babayan. She spoke of practical matters, explaining "the books on history gave me A's on many projects." And gazing on the brand new building, four times the size of the library destroyed by the 1994 earthquake, she predicted, "because of it I will have more success and more knowledge."

After a spirited dance routine by the Thomas Starr King Middle School drill team. . .and plenty of pictures posing politicians, kids and books. . .it was ribbon cutting time. Once the doors were open most of the adults lined up for the delicious refreshments provided by local restaurants. The kids headed for Leonardo's computers, and the press ate it up.

But if you think eating and libraries don't mix then you missed the Gala Champagne Reception and Dinner held Saturday evening April 10. The fundraiser was put on by the Friends of the Los Feliz Library and it surely seemed to have many. Even after adding more tables, seating over 150, the event had to turn some friends away for lack of space.

Among the munchers were a herd of prominent Franklinites including FHRA chairman Don Waldrop, President Adam Weisman, median benefactor Armida Bolton, and many more. All were careful to wipe their hands before touching any of the books.

If you missed the opening rush, the library is open Monday through Saturday at varying hours ranging from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M.. There are still lots of empty places on the shelves and a long wish list for books and other materials. Tax deductible donations can be made to the Friends of the Los Feliz Library at PO Box 27244, Los Angeles, CA 90027.



A spirited dance routine by the Thomas Starr King Middle School drill team.



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