

Director of County Library Services For June/July 2011

Changes are happening at the library and also with my monthly report. You'll find similar information but reorganized into a format that better reflects MCFL's Performance Plan (aka Managing for Results) goals.

GOAL 1: CONNECT WITH READING

If the SF Giants are known for their "June Swoon", they came back and created "July Fever" on the **Bookmobile!** Three of our teens who signed up for the reading program and are writing reviews were the lucky recipients of Friday night game tickets for themselves and their families. It was amazing! The donated tickets went to families who probably would not have been able to afford such an event on their own and the thrilled faces of the kids and parents were really something to see. Two of the teen boys who won were trying their hardest to look "too cool for school" but the excitement of winning the tickets was too much for them to keep up "the look". Excited grins popped out and even a few joyous giggles were heard. The incentives are definitely working with these teens and they all asked for more book review forms. Staff is dreaming of getting some more Giants promo material or get some players to pose for those "READ" posters so a whole new sports reading display can come to life. Or maybe just the stuffed Panda Bear in the "READ" poster surrounded by the thrilled ticket winners..... the possibilities are endless. GO GIANTS!

Our **Technical Services** staff has started posting "Going out today" books on Facebook. They've done 2 so far... They posted our first one, Robert Ludlum's Bourne Dominion, on a Monday at 3 pm and it went from 2 holds to 7 holds by 4 pm. They plan to Facebook about 3-4 high interest books a week from now on.

A satisfied patron send a note to our **E-Services** librarian: "I'm really enjoying downloading books, and am looking forward to using it on vacation next week. Thanks for providing this service.

As a teacher, I hope to show my kids how to borrow digital books from the library so they can read more too!!!”

Following the Novel Destinations theme, **Outreach** Coordinator Victoria Gonzalez spearheaded an innovative summer reading family project in conjunction with the Traveling Postcards organization.

At least 60 children, moms, grandmothers and nannies attended events at Novato, Fairfax and Corte Madera to create cards that will be distributed Christmas time. All the materials for the project were provided: blank postcards, colorful papers, maps, stickers, gems, lace, magazines, markers, glue sticks and more, for kids to make their one-of-a-kind creations. The hour was filled with the joy of children thoughtfully creating fun, meaningful messages for children they will likely never meet. The Corte Madera cards are headed for an orphanage in Mexico, sponsored by Hillside Church. When asked how it felt to make these postcards for an orphanage, one youngster shared, “It felt good, I kept thinking the whole time where they were going...” The program was so successful that we are going to do a follow up in the fall.

After a very successful season, **Senior Book Clubs** ended in July. 55 seniors participated in this grant program through SPD (Small Press Distributors.) We are excited that the grant has been extended for the fall, and we hope to add a senior group in Fairfax. For more information see http://www.spdbooks.org/pages/events/l_remember_documents.aspx

In addition to a very successful ice cream sundae and jewelry-making event for teens at **Stinson Beach Library**, nine teens signed up to read the “Ranger's Apprentice” as part of a teen book club. One of the members is from Thailand and in the last month, has read four books in this series. His dad says that in addition to reading, he's writing down words he doesn't understand and looking them up. This is really increasing his comprehension and language skills.

GOAL 2: ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY

From a community member who led a well attended needlepoint demonstration at **Civic Center**:

“... thank you for all your efforts in making our visit a success yesterday! You really went the extra mile in advertising our group, both in the Marin IJ as well as the posted announcements on the Library door. The cookies were a good added attraction! Because of the advertisement of our visit, we had four people that came specifically to talk with us. Out of the four, we feel that three of the ladies are definitely interested in checking out our chapter. For a two hour stint, that is a good show of interest. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for all your help. We will contact you in the future for another possible visit. “

When Nancy Davis (Senior Librarian, **Corte Madera and Marin City**) reached out into her local community by attending a meeting of the Corte Madera Women's Club, she came away with a partnership with the Hillside Church and Traveling Postcards that resulted in one of our most successful summer reading activities in years. A win/win for all.

From June 15 through July 20th, the **Point Reyes Library** offered a series of memoir writing classes to teens and adults called the Point Reyes Library Midsummer Memoir Class. On four consecutive Wednesday evenings, instructor Frances Lefkowitz, author of an award winning memoir, *To Have Not*, taught classes entitled, "The 500 Word Memoir," "Where I Come From: Writing about Place and Self," "Avoiding the Saccharine When Writing About the Self," and "Writing is Re-writing. Hands-on Editing Practice." The workshops were over-subscribed from the beginning with more than 20 attendees, and the evaluations were uniformly excellent. Many of the students met on July 20th to share their work with each other, and plans are in the works for a possible reading on KWMMR sometime soon.

GOAL 3: RETHINK OUR SPACES FOR BETTER COMMUNITY USE

Our updating project for the branches is gathering momentum. Damon Hill, Administrative Librarian, Public Services, has been working closely with Public Works and Group 4 Architects to define the scope of the project and hopes to be ready in early fall with a Request For Proposals to hire an architectural firm to actually prepare detailed plans. Fiscal Year 2011/12 will mostly be a planning year but there are a few projects that will move ahead. Long-planned ADA work in Inverness is now ready to go; we have applied for and had approved Redevelopment funds in Novato to improve accessible access to the atrium; a small project in the Civic Center to install a door to the California Room to control access to our valuable collection at times when staff is unavailable; and a project in Point Reyes to remove the wall between the Literacy Office and the Library, allowing us to make better use of both areas. Our "rolling building," the Bookmobile, is scheduled for replacement this year and will incorporate as much green technology as the state of the art allows.

GOAL 4: IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a measure that will modernize the State's library privacy laws. The bill, SB445 sponsored by Senator Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto), updates circulation of records laws in order to keep confidential electronic as well as written patron use information and borrowing records. The information cannot be disclosed by a public library or a third party that stores information for the library. The new law would protect online interactions that a patron has with the library, such as email communications with a librarian, online courses, computer research, and online records of checked out items and will ensure library users that records of their communications and transactions with their library will remain private and confidential.

Harking back to the flurry of activity a couple of years ago when we thought maybe we'd have to cordon off the children's rooms due to the presence of lead in ink in our children's books, there was good news on the Federal level. In the midst of the debt-ceiling debacle, Congress surprised publishers and retailers by taking unexpected action and actually getting something right. The House of Representatives passed an amendment to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) by 421-2 that excludes regular printed children's books and learning materials from the lead-content testing requirements that are due to take effect shortly. The Senate quickly approved the same measure by voice vote before adjourning, sending the bill on to President Obama for signing into law. The amendment has been three years in the making, and its quick passage was a happy surprise to supporters. The amendment also makes clear the CPSIA applies only to new products, further relieving pressure on sellers of used goods, libraries and others. Most coverage so far focuses on all-terrain vehicles for kids, which were also exempted along with bicycles and other used products.

GOAL 5: FOCUS ON SERVICES TO YOUTH

This summer has been a beehive of activity in all of our branches, with programming for children and teens happening several times a week. As an example, Marin City has been hosting a series of poetry workshops, led by Andrea Harris, an African American "spoken word" artist. The children from the Recreation Center and the group "Women Helping All People" attend. Elizabeth Cobey (Acting CLS) says that "The kids with absolutely no attention span are sitting there being engaged quietly for an hour!" These events fit nicely with the "rap poetry" contest that the Library is holding this summer.

MEDIA MENTIONS: The monthly media tally was a healthy 70! The Marin IJ has 10 postings of our hours, 31 calendar items, and a feature article "Book Club Program Launched" by Nels Johnson. We had 6 mentions in the West Marin Citizen and 19 mentions in the Point Reyes Light.

BUDGET:

First the good news. Our Library Beyond Walls program will receive close to \$1200 through donations from those attending Joan Brown's retirement party. Joan retired after 32 years as the County's Volunteer Coordinator, is a LBW volunteer herself, and generously made her retirement party into a fundraising opportunity for the Library. The less good news is that our State money is in a state of limbo. The Governor's Budget as passed reflects a 50% cut in available funds for Literacy, for Transaction Based Reimbursement (our inter-library loan money) and for the Public Library Foundation (our per capita reimbursement.) Then, a "trigger" amendment was attached to the budget that will eliminate all state funding for libraries at midyear if the state's revenue projections are not being met.