

## **Director of County Library Services Report for April, 2010**

### **NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK**

Both the Marin County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax Council passed resolutions acknowledging the importance of libraries during the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>. April 13<sup>th</sup> was National Library Workers Day and Scott Bauer and I traveled to all of our open branches that day to chat with staff and deliver chocolates as a token thank you for all their hard work. April 14<sup>th</sup> was Bookmobile Day and Terry Jones celebrated with her folks at all her stops that day as well as soliciting special “remembrances” from them about their childhood experiences with libraries and bookmobiles.

### **DONATIONS:**

We acknowledged two very special grants in April. \$500 from the Marin chapter of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will be used for additional services and materials to carry out the California Council for the Humanities “California Story Fund” grant by the Marin County Free Library’s Anne T. Kent California Room. Working with Buckelew Programs, the California Room staff is recording a series of oral histories of local artists (some of whom are diagnosed with mental illnesses) for our Digital Archive. They’ll then assemble some of them into a video to present their artwork and their stories.

Last month I mentioned that we received \$1,000 from the Trust for Margaret Alexander Edwards that will be used to purchase books for Marin County Juvenile Hall, in support of our teen outreach program there. There is a nice background story – the trustee for the fund told us that they don’t usually fund requests for materials, but they were so touched by this program that they decided to make an exception.

### **LIBRARY CATALOG CHANGES:**

If you have a Smart Phone, or know someone who does, be sure to check out our cool new app, Boopsie. A slick pared down version of the MARINet website, Boopsie lets you use your phone to check on your holds, renew items, look at your record to see what’s due when. You can search the catalog and place holds and find maps and directions to our libraries. Fun side note, rumor says someone has done research to show that tech names with the “oo” sound do better in the market than others! (think, Google.)

### **PUBLICITY:**

We had a good month in April, keeping our message out in front of our public. 46 Calendar mentions; 12 “Library Hours” bits in the IJ; 3 small features; 2 major articles; and 2 short mentions of Measure A.

## **ONE BOOK ONE MARIN SUMMARY**

The final event for One Book One Marin was held on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Dominican University graciously hosts the program as part of their Institute for Leadership Studies which gives us access to their beautiful campus and facilities. The reception was held in the newly remodeled Reading Room of the Alemany Library and we all enjoyed chatting with author Michael Chabon while we sipped wine and nibbled delicious appetizers. The crowd at Angelico Hall was treated to a marvelous conversation between Michael Krasny and Michael Chabon that explored literature and writing and *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*.

## **SUMMER READING PROGRAMS**

This year we have 3 Summer Reading programs!

Make a Splash – READ is the theme of the *Children's Summer Reading Program*. For the first time this year, all branches will be counting reading by number of minutes, not number of books or pages. This brings us into line with what the schools are doing and emphasizes to the children that it is the act of reading that is important. We also made a decision this year to radically simplify the prizes handed out. Reading 20 minutes a day for 5 days earns a bookmark. Reading 20 minutes a day for 10 days earns a coupon for a free pizza (donated by Roundtable.) Reading for 20 minutes a day for 15 days earns a special prize from the fish tank (aka, bits and pieces left from other programs.) And reading for 20 minutes a day for 20 days earns a Summer Reading T-Shirt with a fun graphic. The program runs from June 12 to August 9. To entice our young readers and their parents to come and see what we have to offer, each branch has scheduled special events that include magicians, puppeteers, and musicians. Many thanks go to our Friends groups who provide the funding for this exceptional program.

Make Waves at your Library is the *Teen Summer Reading* theme and like the Children's program, it begins June 12<sup>th</sup> and runs through August 9<sup>th</sup>. Teens can sign up online, starting June 1. There are weekly raffles for gift cards for local stores and online music, or tickets to a San Francisco Giants baseball game. One lucky winner will walk away with The Grand Prize, a VISA gift card. To earn raffle tickets, Teens read the books they want and submit reviews online; each review earns one chance to enter the weekly raffle. In addition, they can earn raffle tickets by correctly answering the *Book of the Week*, a contest that involves following clues through the library catalog to locate the correct book title. There are also free events at all the branches, including jewelry making, henna body art, collage, and more. Every branch will also host a computer gaming and pizza party featuring *Need for Speed*, *Wii Sports*, *Rock Band* and *DDR*. These parties are a huge hit with teens, branch staff and our tech support folks alike!

Adults can have the pleasure of reading along with Children and Teens this summer by participating in the virtual Marin County Free Library *Adult Summer Reading Club* beginning June 1<sup>st</sup>. After joining at [www.marinlibrary.org](http://www.marinlibrary.org) by clicking on Summer Reading for Adults, readers can share their favorite titles with our community by submitting book reviews and read the reviews of other Adult Summer Reading members

on the website. After signing up and submitting at least one review, online members will be eligible to pick up a book bag from your local library between June 12<sup>th</sup> and August 9<sup>th</sup>. This program was funded by the Librarian's Fund at the Marin County Library Foundation.

### **ALL STAFF DAY**

On April 30<sup>th</sup> the entire staff at the Pickleweed Community Center assembled for our yearly All Staff day. (In previous years we have done one full and one half day, but with the budget cuts we now do just the full day in the spring.) We provide lunch and lots of home baked snacks and build in some time just for networking. Since we are spread out over so many locations, this is our one opportunity a year to see our colleagues and visit in person with people we may only get to talk to on the phone or through e-mail. We include a training component, this year a session on "Verbal Intervention" by a Risk Management staff member that had valuable tips on keeping verbal exchanges with unhappy patrons from escalating out of control. I always do a "State of the Library" and of course this year's talk was about the budget and what might happen after the election. This is also the time I introduce any new staff and give them a library T-shirt, honor our long term employees with certificates or small gifts (provided by Human Resources) and acknowledge special or out of the ordinary staff contributions with flowers. In the afternoon, we did a facilitated communications exercise with a staff committee that is working on improving internal communications and heard from a couple of other committees on their projects. Afterwards we send out a brief electronic survey, collecting feedback from everyone, and incorporating that into the next event.

### **BALLOT MEASURE/ BUDGET:**

We are in a relatively quiet place with the budget right now. Leading up to the yearend close, Library Accounting is busy working with the County financial staff to make sure SAP is accurately reflecting our various accounts. As part of our campaign to educate the public about our budget issues, I have made a number of appearances at various groups. As the campaign becomes more visible in early May with yard signs and mailers, I expect more invitations from groups wanting additional information and of course we will accommodate them.