

## Director of County Library Services Report For December 2012

### GOAL 1: CONNECT WITH READING

What Gail is reading: *Fatal Remedies* by Donna Leon; *Wine of Violence* by Priscilla Royal; *The Wool Omnibus* by Hugh Howey.

E -book use is soaring and our selectors are devoting an increasing percentage of our materials budget to filling that need. In addition to the MARINet wide Overdrive platform, MCFL is experimenting with other ways to get eBooks. We just launched *3 M's Cloud e-books*, a really easy to use interface for tablets and smart phones and *Zinio Digital Magazines* that has hundreds of e-magazine titles that can be read on a PC or a mobile device.

### GOAL 2: ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY

Bonny White (Senior Librarian, West Marin) was invited to an in-service day for the Tomales school staff and did a live demonstration of Homework Help and Mango Languages. West Marin Health and Human Services staff heard about it and invited her to their staff meeting to do the same thing. Bonny's theory of outreach, "one-thing-leads to another" really is true. She also does a weekly radio show in Point Reyes – acting as both the weatherperson and the library spokesperson! She often gets call in responses and questions about the library and says that when she is about her business in town, folks walk up to her to continue the discussion.

From Bookmobile – "If it's December, it must be show time in the little schools visited by the Bookmobile. Singing performances at Laguna and Lincoln schools and a "fine-feathered musical" at Union School---How the Penguins Saved Christmas. The entire student body of Union School (all 11 children, preK through 6<sup>th</sup> grade) joined in to put on the play. There are certain challenges when putting on a play that was written to have 28 parts and you only have 11 kids. I asked one of the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders what part he had and he replied "Penguins 1, 3 and 5". Poor Santa---forgot to hold both reins on the sleigh, fell off over the South Pole and suffered amnesia.

It's Christmas Eve----who can save the day? Why some savvy penguins of course! Hypnosis by the Emperor Penguin restored Santa's memory and off he went pulled by his team of "3 tiny reindeer"----remember, it's a small school! Our tiniest preK reindeer had a "wardrobe malfunction" when his dyed brown long johns fell down but this was quickly fixed by his teacher. There was no time to waste---as we know, the show must go on!

Winter break is a great time to go to the ranches and see all of the older kids who are now in the upper grades, high school and even college. Some of these kids will be the first in their families to attend college and the sense of responsibility and pride is wonderful to see. We even got to see some of our former students who had moved to Point Reyes several years ago----what a delight to see them so grown up. One of our now 8<sup>th</sup> graders said, "I didn't know if you would remember me!". Why, yes indeed---turns out that there are special places in the heart for each of the kids and there's always room for more."

Corte Madera reported that the holiday season was especially busy. Right up until the school holiday the meeting room was packed with tutors and students; staff turned their heads a bit at the snacking that was going on, in sympathy for the students who needed to keep up their energy as they prepared for finals! The Sunday before Christmas was expected to be slow, what with terrible weather and last minute shopping, but instead the library was bustling the entire day and the display of "DVD's for the Holiday" had to be frequently replenished.

The Friends of the Marin City Library raised \$6,000 at the Floating Homes Tour last fall and at their December meeting honored Floating Homes Association President Ray Dunaway and his wife JoAnn with coffee and pastries. These funds will go directly to supporting library

December's PR mentions are way up over November. The Marin IJ published 21 Brief/In Your Town/Calendar mentions plus another 29 on-line and miscellaneous mentions. There were also 21 mentions in the West Marin Citizen and the Point Reyes Light. And speaking of media, make sure to "like us" on Facebook and ask your friends to "like us" also. Staff posts all sorts of interesting tidbits there so it's an easy way to keep in touch with the library.

### **GOAL 3: RETHINK OUR SPACES FOR BETTER COMMUNITY USE**

MCFL has always had a good relationship with the County's Department of Public Works (DPW.) They maintain our buildings, respond promptly to emergencies and are always available when we need some expert advice. Our remodel projects are being overseen by DPW so there's been lots of behind the scenes work by our Library staff and their engineers and managers. I was invited to the annual DPW holiday lunch and was completely taken by surprise when I was called up to the podium to receive the "Friend of DPW" award. Thanks to Damon Hill, Scott Bauer, Andrew Yon and many, many other Library staffers who've created such an amicable working relationship with our colleagues down the hall.

The Board of Supervisors approved a new lease for our space in the Creamery Building in Point Reyes, bring to fruition a long held dream to combine the Literacy Program space with the Library. The Literacy Office will be moving from its current corner space to a space adjacent to and on the same floor level as the Point Reyes Library. The landlord will be making a number of modifications including breaking through the wall by the Teen area; installing carpeting; painting; and creating small offices for the Branch Manager and Literacy staff. The new space includes a kitchen and a bathroom making it perfect for both Literacy and Library programming. The space swap means we are getting a much more flexible community space to serve the ever busier branch. The estimated date for the move is in March.

Maintaining our buildings is an ongoing challenge. During the November/December rains Corte Madera had a fairly serious leak in the roof. Fortunately, no books or computers were affected, but the ceiling was damaged. DPW did a patch job on the roof and will repair the ceiling damage soon. On a happier note, the Corte Madera Friends of the Library paid to repair the vertical blinds in the meeting room so that the room can be darkened for movies or power point presentations. The blinds were basically in good shape and just needed to have several of the louvers replaced.

Fairfax library just had its meeting room painted, and it looks wonderful! The meeting room is used as an art gallery, and the cleaner whiter walls make a much improved backdrop for our upcoming art shows.

The remodeling process is moving along. In **Novato** the bidding process for furniture is completed and purchasing process is underway. The bidding for construction and signage is currently in progress. The architects are working on a 3D drawing of the completed remodel to share with the public. In addition, a kiosk (the black board previously used) will be up in the branch showing layout and selected fabrics and finishes. A schedule for the remodel will be established once a construction contractor has been selected and the delivery of the furniture is determined. There are many variables and fluctuations which will happen during the process making a precise closure date uncertain at this time, but there is a realistic possibility the remodel could happen as early as April of 2013. In **Corte Madera, Civic Center, Fairfax and Marin City** progress is also being made. The engineers visited all four libraries to analyze the architecture design and a full report with costs is expected by the end of January. The interior circulation room design work continues. During December a series of meetings were held with Library Workflow Consultant Lori Bowen Ayers, Branch Managers, Library Desk Supervisors, the architects, DPW and Library Administration. Primarily the discussions revolved around the layout of the room, furniture and equipment. Corte Madera, Fairfax and Civic Center will be incorporating practices and procedure from Novato. The Civic Center design was changed to incorporate a staff room in the existing space now used by the Bookmobile and part of the area used by Civic Center circulation staff. Construction documents will start to be developed in February 2013. In **Point Reyes, Literacy and Inverness**, we are just about to start on the construction phases. The Point Reyes Library and Literacy plans have gone through the permitting process and work on the new space is slated for February. Completion of the project is slated by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Inverness Library exterior work is tentatively scheduled to be completed in January and interior work beginning in February. Closures are not anticipated for either Point Reyes or Inverness.

## **GOAL 4: IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

At a recent meeting of County Department Heads, the Human Resources Director spoke to us about the demographics of our workforce and the planning that HR is doing to meet current and future demands. They expect at least one third of the current employees to retire in the next three years – that’s about 600 people – and they will take with them a wealth of experience and knowledge. To help address the upcoming losses, the County entered into a partnership with Dominican University to create a “Leadership Academy” for promising mid-level employees. MCFL was fortunate enough to have one of our nominees selected for the third class - Damon Hill, Administrative Services Librarian for Public Services. I had the privilege of attending the graduation ceremonies and hearing the participants talk about how inspired they had become and how much they had learned both from the professors and from each other. Seeing how dedicated they all were to the concept of taking the best practices from private industry and using them to provide excellent public service was a very special experience.

Trainer Cheryl Gould did a session of *Fully Engaged Customer Service* with our circulation staff. The intent of the program was to give staff some communication techniques for managing in a Single Point of Service environment, including handing off to another staff member. We’ve made assessment of all training opportunities a regular part of the routine and staff is quite honest with their feedback. In this case more than 86% of attendees gave the training Excellent or Very Good and 100% of them will apply some parts of the training when they are back on the job.

Fairfax Library Desk Supervisor Anthony Puga received kudos and commendations as Employee of the Month at the Board of Supervisors’ meeting on December 11. A large crew of library staff carried banners and signs to show their support, and the Board was relieved to discover they weren’t there to picket!

We bid a sad farewell to two long-time employees who retired this month. Victoria Gonzales (CLS, Outreach Services) decided that the time was right to concentrate on her art and community service volunteering. And Carla Schoenthal (Children’s Librarian, Novato) leaves a legacy of pre-schoolers and their parents who enjoyed her guitar and her singing and her wonderful room decorations.

## **GOAL 5: FOCUS ON SERVICES TO YOUTH**

Programs at the branches this month ranged from the traditional to cutting edge. Holiday origami and gingerbread house programs drew enthusiastic participants. An origami workshop in Corte Madera was one of a series run by two teenagers who love to share their skills. The children’s librarian in Novato joked that she blew her supplies budget buying powdered sugar to decorate the gingerbread houses, but the enthusiastic faces on the kids in the overflow crowd made it all worthwhile! Teens in Novato had a chance to go to a Maker Program, working on projects developed by the people at MAKE magazine – soldering mini robot pins; squishy circuits; spin bots; brush bots. Talk about cutting edge – and staff had to take sign ups to control the demand!