

**Director of County Library Services
For
January 2011**

BRANCHES (Ongoing tidbits about happenings around the system)

FAIRFAX:

The wooden Fairfax Library sign at Sir Francis Drake Blvd has been unlit for years. We'd been told there was something wrong with the wiring and Public Works would fix it someday. One Friday afternoon, the regular Public Works maintenance man decided to try changing the light bulb and voila! It works! The same wonderful worker removed a low shelving unit that had created a bottleneck near our very busy DVD shelving. Staff and patrons alike have been raving about the space they now have to move through that area. A major shift of collections resulted in more room to expand in the Spanish language materials, audio books and paperback classics. A few pieces of furniture were also moved, relieving crowding in the meeting room and improving the look of a back corner of the building. Many items of furniture that were no longer of use were taken to County surplus. All of these improvements were triggered by the need to tidy up prior to the installation of new carpet in February. Staff and patrons anxiously await the completion!

Saturday January 29th was the official launch of the new Teen area, funded by the Friends of the Fairfax Library. The meeting room was packed with well-wishers who listened to local music groups, enjoyed some refreshments, and saw the fabulous new furniture and shelving. Commissioners **Bill Crandall** and **Martin Perlmutter** were there as well as several members of the Fairfax Friends. Kudos to everyone involved.

WEST MARIN:

Rolling Stone Keith Richards has a new biography out, "Life," and in it he talks about West Marin legend, Ramblin' Jack Elliot. Jack was in the Point Reyes Library this month and had a great talk about the book with Bonny White (Senior Librarian, West Marin.) He said his first wife was the road manager for the Rolling Stones early in their career and that "she thought she got rid of me when she went to London, but the Stones played nothing but Jack Elliott tapes for weeks after she got there." Rock on.

A little poetry renaissance is going on at the Stinson Beach and Bolinas Libraries lately. It started when Stinson Beach hosted the Marin Poetry Center's traveling show in the fall. Then local poet Claudia Chapline taught a poetry workshop at Stinson Beach, followed by a very successful evening of poetry in Bolinas in January. Poets Joanne Kyger, Donald Guravich, Stephen Ratcliffe and Bob Grenier read from their works to a standing room only crowd at the tiny Bolinas Library. Many attendees said it was the first time they'd been "downtown" in years and stayed late into the night, swapping stories and visiting with friends. This program was planned and executed by Bolinas Community Library Specialist **Jane Silvia**, and it took place on her birthday (but she wouldn't tell anyone or let us sing!) The week after the poetry reading, clear plastic "poetry exchange boxes" were installed at the Bolinas and Stinson Beach Libraries. The official name of the poetry exchange project is "Pass the Poem," the brainchild of Marin County's current Poet Laureate 'Lyn Follett (who is coincidentally, a family friend of **Kerry Livingston's** (CLS, Stinson Beach and Bolinas.)

CORTE MADERA:

The popular Listen In program now has several new volunteers in place to read to residents at the Aegis Assisted Living Facility. This dedicated group reads short stories, essays, even newspaper articles to a steadily growing and appreciative audience.

MARIN CITY:

It's been a while since I have talked about our Webstar program and the presentation at the January Commission meeting reminded me of all the good work these young people do. The program is designed to empower young people ages 14 - 17 through computer training, opportunities to work with the public in a library setting and participation in internship programs with local technology companies. They reach out to the community's non-profit agencies to provide support in accessing information and building up the Community Network. Under the leadership of Etienne Douglas, the Webstars have completed a number of special projects in addition to their valuable work in the library - they partnered with the Canal Alliance after school program to teach participants video editing and assisting with creating their own neighborhood documentary; created "news" style video, where they interviewed various people in Marin about different subjects; created a Webstar recruitment video; created a Webstar commercial for advertising the program to patrons; and taught numerous one on one classes with patrons. 13 Webstars graduated to higher education in the last six years!

BOOKMOBILE:

Tomales Elementary School has a principal, Jane Realon, who LOVES reading. Jane's friend, "Miss Paige Turner", recently came to a school assembly and told the principal that kids don't read anymore, they're too busy playing video games. Jane said that this was not the case with Tomales kids so Miss Turner offered a challenge. If Tomales students and their families could read the equivalent of 6000 books (even dads reading the newspaper counts) the principal would do all of her work one day from the school roof! The students and families have about 2 months to accomplish this amazing feat. Bookmobile check outs are way up and we supplied the school with "Marin County Library Bookworm" buttons as well as an assortment of bookmarks and other buttons to

help spread the word. The school PTA purchased books from the **Book Place** (the Friends of the Library used book store in Novato) as well as receiving some donations to help with their book swap. If things continue as they have begun, the principal will be up on the roof in March. Do we think that many students will beg to be sent to the office that day?

TECHNICAL SERVICES:

We are in the final stages of a Graphic Novel re-class project. Since mid-December, we've called in over 2500 graphic novels (formerly cataloged in a mish-mash of fiction and non-fiction/art areas) and are applying the new, general "Graphic Novel" call number. **Jamie Gold** (Librarian 2, Cataloging) has done the cataloging update and the processing crew is giving the books fresh, new spine labels and some general clean up. We will now have J Graphic Novel, Teen Graphic Novel, and Adult Graphic Novel, each in their own areas. In the past, the Teen collection was the bulk of our graphic novels, but we're starting to see demand in Adult and several new series coming out aimed at early readers, so it was just time to standardize. The children's graphic novels series are especially interesting as a way to help reluctant readers (especially young boys) be more interested in building their reading skills. The old favorite Boxcar Children books are a good example of a new children's graphic novel series. The art inspires the kids to want to know the whole story and compels them to work through reading the words...and before they know it, their skills are improving.

Good news for movie lovers. We will be starting a DVD reclassification project in March, simplifying the feature film DVDs into just three categories (based on user surveys.) Feature Films, Foreign Films, and TV Series. Documentaries and non-fiction won't change. There was a lot of debate about the term "foreign" films, but we agreed that as long as the Academy is still using it, we will go with that.

MEDIA MENTIONS:

We had 47 listings total (up from previous months, recovering from the holiday lull.) There were 25 Brief/Calendar mentions, 8 postings of library hours, and 1 feature article: "Marin Library Builds Database of Old Coroners' Files", by Gary Klein, Marin IJ, 1/1/11 (This story was also picked-up in American Libraries & the California Library News E-Clips.) And on the "other side of the hill," there were 20 notices in the West Marin Citizen, 9 in the Point Reyes Light. Illuminating the on-going shift to e-media, we had 5 items in the San Anselmo-Fairfax Patch (including articles "Hidden Gems on Display at the Library" on 1/11 & "Libraries Upgrade w New Funds" on 1/26)

PERSONNEL:

A warm welcome to library school intern **Sarah Butts** who has been hired as a Library Assistant 1 in Corte Madera.

Jill Harris (Library Assistant 1) received her M.L.S. and has resigned to accept a Librarian position. She will be replaced by **Christina Czuhajewski** who has been working as a Library Branch Aide in Fairfax. Much luck to Jill and welcome Christina!

DONATIONS: We received the following donations:

- 1) \$500 from Sandra Hess to supplement programming for youth & Seniors at the Novato Library
- 2) \$1,000 from the Union Bank; \$500 each to CMA & CCE for to support or public technology training efforts
- 3) \$1,000 from the Girard Foundation for CMA to enhance public and staff training in the use of library resources & other technological skills

BUDGET:

With the announcement of Governor Brown's proposed budget, calling for the complete elimination of all programs supporting local library funding, librarians and library supporters across the state went into high gear, lobbying their representatives and flooding the budget sub-committees with e-mails, letters and phone calls. The cuts represent about 1.85% of MCFL's budget – a total of \$242,271 from our Literacy, Public Library Foundation and Interlibrary Loan revenues. As concerning as the loss to our individual system is that if the Cooperating Library Service Areas (CLSAs) are eliminated, the sharing incentive for individual jurisdictions would be removed. Already the State Librarian is getting reports of cash-strapped municipalities looking to implement fees for non-residents to use their libraries. For the past thirty years, California has been a model of cooperation and lobbying efforts have concentrated on this issue.