

**Director of County Library Services Report
For
October/November 2011**

GOAL 1: CONNECT WITH READING

At the urging of the Collection Development Team, we have purchased 36 Color Nook e-readers to circulate to our patrons. The public “soft launch” date was Monday, Oct. 24th, 2011 followed by a big PR splash planned for early December, readying us to be talking eReaders by the time the holiday season hits. eReaders are predicted to be very big again this year and we hope that having examples that folks can check out and play with at their own pace will help them get comfortable with this new technology. A small implementation team worked feverishly to get ready, decided how to package the units, how to label and check them out, and how to keep them charged and ready to go. They've designed user guides for each kit and excellent signage for each branch, and have arranged for staff training so that no one is caught unable to help a new user.

New “Lucky Day” collections were unveiled to the public on Monday, November 7, 2011. Lucky Day Books are non-floating, non-holdable copies of high demand books, available to walk-in patrons on a first-come, first-served basis. Checking out for 7 days, the collection launched with adult fiction and non-fiction bestsellers and will expand to include children and teen books. The catchy name was creatively borrowed from Sacramento Public Library which says “*When patrons find these titles waiting on the shelf, it really is their ‘lucky day.’*” We will continue to buy the same number of copies as always for the shared, holdable collections. Patrons who are used to placing holds should see no change in their ability to get a book held for them. In fact, their wait times will likely decrease as the browsing public takes advantage of Lucky Day copies. Two other MARINet libraries have had similar collections for a while and report very satisfied users.

GOAL 2: ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY

The new website is growing rapidly as staff gets comfortable blogging and tweeting and facebooking and youtubing! When Outreach specialist Victoria Gonzalez started her blog, she quickly got a reply from her counterpart at Lawrence Hall of Science, looking for ways to partner.

Collaboration is the name of the game in our future and this month we have a valuable new partner in the Dixie Schoolhouse Foundation which will work with us on library activities and summer reading family events. Check them out at dixieschoolhouse.org.

Kay Ryan (US Poet Laureate, Pulitzer Prize winner, and MacArthur Genius Award recipient) appeared at Angelico Hall on the campus of Dominican University on November 18. Four months of work by West Marin library staff came to a festive conclusion when much to the delight of the 500 plus people in attendance, Ms. Ryan read poems, provided commentary, answered questions and then signed books well into the evening. The idea for this event, a fundraiser for MCFL, percolated in West Marin and then came off without a hitch due to the efforts of Point Reyes staffer Jennifer Livingston who could easily have another career as an event planner and to branch manager Bonny White who plastered the county with posters and worked her networking contacts to sell tickets. Special thanks also to our office assistant Gail Grant who put her graphic design skills to work and produced all of the posters and tickets in-house.

Continuing MCFL's tradition of collecting oral histories from important people in our communities, the California Room recently conducted an interview with former Marin County Supervisor, Gary Giacomini. See it at

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/62952406@N07/6289613019/in/set-72157627743628456/>.

GOAL 3: RETHINK OUR SPACES FOR BETTER COMMUNITY USE

Thanks to our colleagues in the Department of Public Works, we've narrowed the field of candidates to manage the upcoming remodels of our lobby areas to three and contract discussions have begun with the finalist.

The Board of Supervisors approved a contract with OBS Inc. Specialty Vehicles for the new bookmobile and we expect delivery probably in the early summer.

GOAL 4: IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Most of our branches now have eBook classes up and running. Anticipating a surge of interest this holiday season, Special Projects Librarian Diana Spaulding developed a curriculum, traveled from branch to branch to train staff and helped them launch their first class. In West Marin, for example, three of the four libraries have hosted Tech Petting Zoo Coffee and Tea Klatches. Participants received hands-on coaching about how to download Overdrive digital content to the many different devices on the market today. Diana also passed out copies of a recent Consumer Reports article comparing the various devices.

We've come a long way since we started on the web in 1996 and are so pleased to release a fully redeveloped site, complete with new content, a fresh look and lots of integrated social media, including connections to our blogs, Flickr feeds, Facebook posts, tweets and YouTube videos. The look and feel of the new site is crisp and clean and the reorganization and enhancements have been met with positive feedback from both patrons and staff. A big shout out to Amanda Foust, Electronic Services Librarian and chief wrangler, and the many, many staff who assisted in what was truly a monumental effort.

GOAL 5: FOCUS ON SERVICES TO YOUTH

We have a new addition to our Library family – Literacy's FLAGship program (Families Learning and Growing.) Program Supervisor Ambre Dailey and bus driver Sissy Ratto transitioned from San Rafael with the close of the Joint Literacy Program and share office space in Library administration. The mobile learning center welcomes caregivers and children under five, living in isolated and underserved areas and not attending pre-school, onboard the bus to develop school readiness skills. Check out their You Tube video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xli8LoHQTUM.

Bookmobile's 4 child development center stops (14 classrooms of kids!) were the lucky recipients of some wonderful children's books weeded from our libraries. These books were "loved" but still with life in them and were perfect for the kids. For many of the children, there are few books at home and the child development centers are their library book experience. Some of the books that the child development centers own have been "loved to pieces" so the influx of new books was an amazing gift.

Terry was at Old Gallinas Child Development Center on Tuesday bringing new bins of books for their 7 classrooms. In every classroom, the kids are so excited to see new books coming in. As she entered a 3rd grade classroom, there was a loud, excited shriek from the back of the room---"new Liberry books!"----which brought the whole classroom there to "help her" unload them. In the kindergarten and first grade classroom, the excitement was the same for the new books but there were also some sad faces and "almost tears". It seems as though it was too painful to part with a few of the "best" books so, through the power of "renewal" the favorites were able to stay for a few more weeks.

In her grand plan, Terry (Jones, CLS Bookmobile) is planning to come up with the new hybrid plant----"the Liberry". Like the library itself, it will encompass all shapes and flavors of many berries and be a rich mix of all. What will the Dewey Decimal Number will be? ----food, fruit, library related or other? Maybe just under "food for thought".

DONATIONS: During November we took the following donations to the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) Contribution in the amount of \$500 from Jeff Craemer to Anne T. Kent California Room, Marin County Free Library to purchase an additional flat file to help better secure and protect maps and over-size photographs and documents pertaining to the history of Marin County.

- 2) Contribution in Amount of \$1,000 from the Friends of the Marin County Free Library to support the continued purchases of reading materials for the Marin County Juvenile Hall. Several librarians who work with teens will visit Juvenile Hall at least four times during Fiscal Year 2011-12 to deliver purchased materials and to provide programs that encourage Juvenile Hall residents to read and to determine what additional reading materials they would like.
- 3) Contribution in Amount of \$ 2,500 from the Friends of the Marin County Free Library to the Marin County Free Library that will used to connect and promote library services outside the physical library at community fairs and events.

On a related note, one of MCFL's largest donors each year is the Friends of the Library. Check out the nice article about The Book Place at http://novato.patch.com/blog_posts/the-book-place-the-little-book-store-that-can#photo-8582531.

MEDIA MENTIONS:

In October, the Marin IJ published 37 Brief/Calendar mentions with 24 brief mentions in the West Marin media. The IJ published a nice long article about Dominican joining the MARINet consortium and the SF Chronicles ran a nice profile "What I do – Terry Jones, Bookmobile." Shorter pieces appeared in the San Rafael Patch, the Twin Cities Times and the Mill Valley Herald for a combined total of 66.

In November, the Marin IJ published 29 Brief/Calendar mentions with 32 brief mentions in the West Marin media. There was also a long article in the Marin IJ "Marin Reviews Spending Comparison" that mentions MCFL and a small article in the Terra Linda News Pointer about the newly redesigned web site for a combined total of 63.

IN MEMORIAM: With much sadness I report the passing of Richard Gamble, Library Commissioner from District 4. The Stinson Beach Library hosted a bitter-sweet Volunteer Appreciation buffet on Tuesday, November 29. The lovely event, completely planned Richard, turned into a small memorial for him when it was learned that he had passed away the night before. Richard will be sorely missed and the Commission and throughout West Marin where he served on many Boards and selflessly served his community.