

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

BRANCHES (Ongoing tidbits about happenings around the system)

e-BRANCH: The Digital Content Page of the www.marinlibrary.org site continues to evolve . Recent additions include the Anne T. Kent Digital Archive - a searchable database of historic Marin County images, oral histories, and newspaper articles; Computer Skills, which offers practice tests, exercises, skill-building courses, and eBooks; Job and Career Accelerator which allows job seekers to explore over 1,000 occupations and match those that fit their interests includes a database of over 5 million job postings; and Tuition Funding Sources , a private website designed to help students find scholarships, college and career information. TFS offers students the largest scholarship database in the world with over \$41 Billion in scholarship awards along with a career personality test and detailed college and career information.

FAIRFAX: The news from Fairfax is all about carpet. After a busy Saturday at the beginning of the month, we closed for two weeks for the re-carpeting project. Our Tech Support staff secured all the computer equipment, removed the security gates and moved the self-checks into the women's room (tile floor, no carpet, safe location). The movers came and removed everything that wasn't attached to the floor or the walls and put it all into two 40-foot containers that they parked in the parking lot. They also removed the bottom shelves from the book stacks to allow access under the stacks for the carpet installers to remove the old carpet and install the new carpet tiles. Then they enveloped everything that remained in large sheets of plastic to keep the dust out. Removal of the old carpet took a day, and installation of the new carpet tiles took a little more than three days. Then everything was moved back in and staff worked on putting their work spaces and the public desks back together.

Tech Support returned all the computer equipment to its normal location and took the opportunity to improve some of the cable management and equipment placement. It all went amazingly smoothly, given that it was a large and complex project. During most of the closed time, Fairfax staff worked in other locations, including the California Room and the Bookmobile. They all reported that they enjoyed the opportunity to try something a little different, but we all missed each other and were happy to “come home.” Public reaction to the new carpet has been all positive. It looks great and feels great to walk on and perhaps will help deaden the sound a little better. We’re happy!

WEST MARIN: Point Reyes Library celebrated Dr. Seuss Day in a big way. The second graders from West Marin School came with their teacher to participate in a Share a Book program. Each took a turn reading Dr. Seuss books to a fabulous listener, Mitzi the Dog, while their classmates worked on a unit about Soils and Fossils using library materials. Each of the students got a Dr. Seuss certificate for their reading prowess. Then, in the afternoon, Jennifer Livingston (Community Library Specialist) took several middle schoolers from the West Marin School to Papermill Creek Children’s Corner to help make homemade ice cream. The pre-school kids matched up with the older ones to read Dr Seuss books and then play on the playground. Reading is fun!

CORTE MADERA: We have several new volunteers for the Listen In program, an outreach service to the Aegis Assisted Living facility. Both the volunteers and the residents are enriched by the regular sessions where the reading selections vary from short stories to essays to newspaper articles to poetry.

MARIN CITY: Clara McFadden has agreed to take over the Rockey Grant project, which we received to develop a pre-literacy program in for the local community. Clara has experience with early learning programs at San Anselmo and through MLS courses. She is off to a great start, planning to launch the program along with other “Mother Goose on the Loose” programs in April.

BOOKMOBILE: In late January, Victoria Gonzales (Community Library Specialist) and Terry Jones (CLS) spent a day with the Marin Child Care Council at their annual conference. This was a wonderful chance to see the work the child care council does and to meet their child care providers. Preschool teachers, home care providers, head start teachers, child development workers were there, with an impressive array of diverse ethnic backgrounds represented. Many were regular library users but many were new to the idea. All of the attendees were surprised to see the many kinds of resources the library has available----and all for FREE! Terry and Victoria created a hundred packets of library info and resources which were handed out and very well received. A few of the attendees told us that they were happy the library was there and said so, on their conference evaluation surveys!

The council has already contacted us to join them in April at an outreach in Northgate Mall. They would also like the library to give a 2 hour presentation at one of their regularly scheduled meetings. We are excited to have the Marin Child Care Council as a community partner and join them in providing great services to children, their teachers and caregivers!

OUTREACH SERVICES: MCFL has partnered with Small Press Distribution to host senior book clubs in Marin for three months. The "I remember project" recognizes the growing senior population and Small Press hopes to open the seniors to independently published books. Three groups in Marin will be overseen by MCFL, using books and facilitators funded by a Marin Community Foundation grant to Small Press. Victoria Gonzalez has created the book clubs and will supervise the facilitators. The groups will meet for 3 months with 3 different books to discuss and critique, ending in a celebration in June hosted by Small Press. The three groups are - West Marin, San Geronimo Community Center seniors group, 15 participants led by San Rafael author Rita Lakin; Margaret Todd Center-15 participants led by Karen Amorde-Spalding; and Spanish language group, Margaret Todd center 15 participants led by published author Nancy Palate. This grant will allow us to partner with new community groups as well as test the waters for future senior book clubs led by trained volunteers. Check out the Small Press website spdbooks.org.

Saturday March 5 is the first ever Marin Teen Girl Conference sponsored by the Marin Women's Commission at the Embassy Suites. Three hundred teens will attend all day workshops on various topics and MCFL will be hosting tables in the vendor lounge. We will show the teens all the services we have to offer - e-books, homework help, digital content, and books for every topic of interest to teen girls. Included will be college and scholarship materials, fiction, current topics, e.g. the environment, design and crafts, movies and many more. There will be a short survey form which will enable one lucky teen to enter a drawing and receive an e-reader to connect to our e-library. The girls will be able to graffiti a banner with their favorite book names to begin conversation with Victoria Gonzalez about the library. We are looking forward to learning about this often lost population from our library and at the same time educate them about our free services.

TECHNICAL SERVICES: While our tech folks do their work "behind the scenes," the results of their labors directly affect all of our library users. Right now the processing staff are adding a fun color promo to the inside cover of every new Audiobook on CD pointing out that we also have downloadable audios. The sticker has the e-Branch website and an invitation to ask branch staff for more information. We recently signed on with a new service called Collection HQ and TEC will be implementing its "evidence based stock management" practices in the more efficient sharing of the general collection. It will help us "right size" the number of system copies we buy and keep in the collection, for starters, which is important since we want to make sure we spend our collection dollars wisely.

MEDIA MENTIONS: We're up again to a total of 66 "exposures" this month. Our staff is working hard to get the word out about our programs and services. There were 16 brief mentions or calendar items in the Marin IJ, a full color full page promotion for One Book One Marin and a feature article on February 10th written by Paul Liberatore "Romance writers say Valentine's Day's true message is one of hope." There were showings in regional newspapers include the Point Reyes Light, the San Rafael News Pointer and the West Marin Citizen. Though not part of the news tally, MCFL is gaining

a lot of promotion online through Social Networking: Twitter, Facebook, yahoogroups (FAI & SGV), SanAnselmo-FairfaxPatch, and The Marin Calendar.

PERSONNEL: Congratulations to Amanda Foust who has been promoted from Librarian I (Teen Services) at the Novato Library to Librarian II (e-Services). Amanda has been acting in this position for quite a while and has done a superb job expanding our social networking presence, helping staff adjust to all our new technology initiatives and preparing for our the website redesign. We hired a new Library Branch Aide II, Adriann Dennis, for the South Novato branch. Our LBA II's do both shelving and materials check-in at our branches. On a sad (for us) note, Gail Wiemann (Senior Librarian, Fairfax) will be retiring in March. In addition to her excellent work at the branch, Gail spent some time as Acting Administrative Librarian and has been a vital force in the rejuvenation of Teen services in the system.

DONATIONS: We took the following donations to the Board of Supervisors:

- 1) \$1,071.55 fundraised by Spanish Services Librarian to be used to provide support and materials for book clubs in Tomales and Point Reyes
- 2) \$10,000 from the Rockey Foundation; to be used to initiate and carry out for two years an Early Learning program for very young children (age birth to 5 years) and their parents or caregivers. \$3,500 will be used this fiscal year to plan the program, purchase supporting materials, train staff and volunteers, and publicize it.

BUDGET: The Governor's proposed budget cuts of about \$250,000 are working their way through the legislature. As of this writing, the library and literacy communities are still educating and lobbying their representatives to minimize the impact of the cuts. Indications are that most likely the best we can achieve is retaining a budget line for Literacy, Transaction Based Reimbursements and the Public Library Foundation, perhaps with some minimal funding. The Library's budget hearing with the Board of Supervisors will be on March 23 and in advance of that I am preparing a 5 and 7 year budget scenario as a planning aid. The numbers will necessarily be rough guesstimates but it will be a place to start and will highlight where our issues may be.

MEASURE "A": In line with our promise to serve children and youth, we have been strategizing the best way to target our services and staff resources. InfoPeople, a statewide training consortium for libraries, offers excellent, cost-effective on-line training and we've had 20 staffers "virtually" attend a one month course in "Fundamentals of Children's Services" and another 20 planning to "virtually" attend "Fundamentals of Teen Services." In addition, we sponsored a fabulous training for our children's librarians and other interested staff for a pre-literacy program called "Mother Goose on the Loose." This nationally recognized program uses simple songs, stories and props to prepare children under four to successfully learn the tools they will need to read when they reach school age. The founder of the program lives in Maryland, but was in California for a conference and so was available to us at a more affordable price. Now we are busy assembling the necessary supplies and practicing for a roll out during April for National Library Week.