

**Director of County Library Services Report  
For  
September 2011**

### **GOAL 1: CONNECT WITH READING**

The final report from Reading on the Ranches, a collaboration between West Marin Literacy and the Point Reyes Library, indicates that it was a real success this year. Sixty six participants aged 1-13 on 12 ranches, stretching from the Inverness side of Tomales Bay all the way up to Chileno Valley, checked out more than 400 books. Thanks to a small donation from TBLA, they were able to pass out colorful summer reading t-shirts to the participants this year.

West Marin staffers continue to host a weekly table at the West Marin Farmers Market at Toby's Feed Barn, checking out books and visiting with attendees. Library staff selects materials that complement the theme of the market every week. This has really been a major project for the small West Marin staff, but so far, everyone thinks it has been worth the effort. The last Saturday will be October 1 when Kerry Livingston (CLS), the organizer of this project, will bring books about food preservation for patrons to check out. The guest speaker will be Karen Solomon, author of *Can it, Bottle it, Smoke it*.

Point Reyes Library hosted a program about the history of cheese making in West Marin. Inverness Historian Dewey Livingston teamed up with Rick Lafranchi of the Nicasio Valley Cheese Company for a lecture, slideshow, and cheese tasting event at the Dance Palace. More than 70 attendees seemed very enthusiastic about Dewey's talk and even more enthusiastic about the delicious cheeses as we tasted –lovely morsels with names like *Foggy Morning* and *Loma Alta*. Bonny White (Senior Librarian, West Marin) is trying to persuade Dewey and Rick to repeat this very popular program at the Civic Center Library.

Kudos to the staff at Marin City who put a lot of effort into outreach this summer, visiting local agencies and schools, and maintaining contacts throughout the summer. As a result, the participation in the Summer Reading Program increased dramatically—to 300! Of course, the promise of an MP3 player helped, too, but really it is the personal contacts that make the difference.

## **GOAL 2: ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY**

Four Corte Madera children, students at Neil Cummins elementary school, sold lemonade and home-made cookies on the Larkspur-Corte Madera bike path during the summer. They earned \$53.97, which they gave to the branch. Staff purchased two copies of "Star Wars: the Complete Visual Dictionary" with the money. Popular, they are.

MCFL has chosen to participate in a pilot project that will benefit libraries all over the country and also help us demonstrate the value of providing public access technology services in our community.

The University of Washington, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is extending the benefits of the 2009 U.S. IMPACT Study patron web survey by making it available for public libraries to use in their own public access technology data collection, evaluation, and advocacy efforts. The University of Washington has recruited 400 library systems nationwide to pilot a web portal where libraries can easily connect to the survey and use it whenever they want to evaluate their public access services. Instead of programming, collecting, analyzing our own survey, and having to write our own reports, the new UW system will do all this for us automatically. As a pilot library, we'll receive a full-color, ready-for-distribution report immediately after running the survey. The UW has also developed new advocacy tools through the survey website, including video instruction, to help us use the survey results to communicate with funders and other policy makers in your community. Pilot libraries will receive technical support throughout their involvement and given an opportunity to provide feedback on the process and support materials.

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

Under the management of Damon Hill (Library Services Manager) planning for our capital projects is moving along well. Bids are open for design work to remove the wall between the Literacy offices and the Point Reyes Library. The Inverness accessibility project is planned to start in about six weeks, as soon as the County architect can complete a few last updates to the drawings. The Novato Courtyard accessibility project is waiting for a survey so that the landscape architect can develop his concepts into drawings. As soon as the courtyard work is completed, the same contractor will begin the accessibility changes to the Fairfax deck.

Margaret Miles, Senior Librarian, Fairfax) attended a Fairfax Chamber of Commerce meeting, in between working the desk (the Chamber meets in the Library meeting room,) and was able to connect with Chris Lang, founder of Marin County Bicycle Coalition. He is going to donate 3 bike racks to the library!

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

An important part of training is the opportunity to attend conferences and connect with colleagues around the Country who do similar work. While attending the Reforma national conference, one of our staff was quoted in LibraryJournal.com *Elizabeth Muñoz-Rosas, a Spanish-language services librarian at the Marin County Free Library,*

*CA, said librarians have to prepare for the future. "The most important thing is the social consciousness of the library system as to how the community is changing and how their needs are changing," Munoz-Rosas said. "The need is to become aware of who you are serving," she said.*

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

Thanks to a donation to the Marin Literacy Program, we were able to sponsor a Family Literacy story time in Novato on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The theme was a "Cat in the Hat", and the children really got into the story. They all wore "Cat in the Hat" hats and big bow ties! At the end of the program each child received a copy of the "Cat in the Hat" to take home.

### **DONATIONS:**

During September we took the following donation to the Board of Supervisors: (9/27) Contribution from TBLA to the Marin County Free Library: The Tomales Bay Library Association has made a generous contribution to the Point Reyes Library in the amount of \$1,732.79. These funds will be spent to purchase prizes for the summer reading program and to buy books for the Tomales Spanish Language Book Club, a very active reading group that promotes reading and literacy in the community.

### **MEDIA MENTIONS:**

The Marin IJ published 36 Brief/Calendar mentions with 22 brief mentions in the West Marin media. Longer articles included Library Corner (Nancy Davis) (included in Commission reading file) in the Twin Cities Times; 2 IJ articles concerning the "Blue Box" book donation controversy; articles in both the Pacific Sun and The IJ about the addition of Dominican University Library to MARINet; an excellent article about the Friends Book Place in the Pacific Sun; and of course, several articles in local newspapers and The Patch about the RPG launcher in Novato.

### **UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT:**

On September 13<sup>th</sup> we evacuated the Novato Library for about 3 hours. The incident started with a traffic stop that just happened to be on the road outside the Library. After pulling the car over, police saw what looked like a grenade launcher in the back seat of the vehicle. The police decided to call the Bomb Squad, which is based at U.C. Berkeley, and to alert the nearby offices and residents about the situation. The police gave the offices the option of evacuating, and in the interest of safety, staff and patrons evacuated the Novato Library at approximately 11:15 am. When the Bomb Squad arrived from Berkeley, they used a robot to retrieve something from the backseat of the car, and place it in a special container for transport (presumably to a location where it would be safer to deal with whatever they removed.) Once this was done, police let everyone know that the situation had been successfully resolved, and it was okay to return to their offices/homes. Staff reopened the Novato Library at approx. 2:15 p.m. Not only was did the episode generate a considerable amount of press and e-press coverage, but Eva Patterson (Senior Librarian, Novato) made the 11 p.m. news. Kudos goes to the Novato staff for the calm professional manner in which they conducted the evacuation and thanks to the staff at Technical Services and the South Novato branch for accommodating their exiled colleagues.