

Library Director's Report February 2007

Groundbreaking for the Redwood Shores Community Library was held on February 24, a festive and well attended event that included many segments of the community including elected officials; a game Mayor on a loader; hundreds of future, eager library users; the Police and Fire Chiefs; and members of the Redwood City Library Foundation and Redwood Shores Community Association. Garnered great press coverage including two full color front page photos in the Redwood City Daily News. Also featured was a presentation of a \$52,000 fundraising check by the Redwood Shores Community Association to the Redwood City Library Foundation for the *Campaign for the Opening Day Collection*; and the Vice-Mayor giving out awards to the best readers at Sandpiper School.

Library staff is attending weekly Redwood Shores construction progress meetings with City staff, architects and contractors. The indicator piles have been driven and permanent piles will be driven in mid-March 2007. Library staff, City staff and architects visited the new San Mateo Public Library and met with staff to discuss and see furniture in their new facility. Architects and staff will be exploring a variety of options.

Congratulations to all library staff who put on a fabulous KinderCard Super Saturday on February 17. The library has made it a mission to get library cards into the hands of every kindergartner in Redwood City. This is the third year of the campaign and 559 new library cards were issued out of 955 kindergartners in the District. The event drew approximately 500 kindergartners, siblings and parents who took part in four hours of activities designed just for them. Each kindergartner received a goodie bag and was feted to a day of activities including coloring pages, balloon-folding by Chiquy Boom, a visit from Curious George, a Curious George movie, and a puppet show with Joe Leon's Caterpillar Puppets. Everyone had a grand time and experienced the library as a fun and happening place to be. This was community building at its finest!

Staff met with the grant writer at Marine Science Institute to look at possible grants to fund the construction and installation of the interpretive center in the Redwood Shores Community Library. The very wild and exciting design by SplitRock Studio was funded by Cargill Salt.

Staff distributed 1,000 free copies of Fahrenheit 451 in English and Spanish to dozens of locations throughout Redwood City as part of The Big Read, including government agencies, community centers, local businesses, and "random" locations such as park benches and hospital waiting rooms. Subsequent visits have shown that readers (hopefully readers) had picked them up. Stickers on the book say Read Me and Pass Along with web info to the Big Read program.

New technology! Instant Messaging has been launched among staff as an inter-office communications tool, and staff is preparing for the eventual launch of public IM-based

library services (e.g., IM reference). Other projects completed: a staff wiki; preparation of webcast services; new software for our website design; and a blogging program for the public (see below). Although we do not see dramatic results in library services, these are the first steps towards getting staff comfortable with new tools, and preparing the software/infrastructure for library uses. We have also emphasized staff training.

We have a new staff schedule that uses wiki technology for easy viewing/editing by staff from any computer on the web. Benefits include: scheduled backup for sick/emergencies including branch support; the 1st floor computer lab now open 10am – 7 pm M-Th and all day Sat/Sun. (24 additional hours/week); “Manager on the Floor” shifts added to increase management presence and support in public service areas during peak after-school hours.

The appearance of the lobby and Reading Room is more accessible by clearing sightlines and streamlining furniture arrangements in those spaces. We have had several comments from customers on when did we get a fireplace!

The Friends of the Library in February voted to generously contributed funds to these programs:

- Summer Reading Club and Bookstock III \$15,000
- Adult Programming \$ 4,500
- Bookpage \$1,000
- Programs at the Community Libraries \$4,000
- Books on CD \$10,000

Please take time to thank our Friends for their support.

The library met with Redwood City IT and PLS (the network we use) regarding moving the Library onto the City network. Greater band-width and better technical support are the major reasons for this. There are many issues to resolve and I see several more meetings ahead, but the ball is rolling.

On Thursday evening, February 1, the Schaberg Library held a very interesting program entitled, “Living with Urban Wildlife” which was presented by the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA. Wildlife Care Center Manager, Sue Kelly captivated the audience with her presentation on urban wildlife. Interestingly enough, just a few blocks away from the Schaberg Library, bobcats, coyotes and foxes can be seen at times, in Stulsaft Park. And, within Redwood City, squirrels, raccoons, opossums, crows and rodents are just a few of the urban wildlife that inhabit our city. Additional information on urban wildlife can be found at www.peninsulahumanesociety.org.

The Fair Oaks Library celebrated Black History Month on Monday evening, February 12. Renowned storyteller Yolanda Rhodes enthralled the 22 attendees with a variety of African-American folktales, stories and songs.

With the addition of the one extra staff that Council allocated, Project READ has increased the number of youth, adults and families served in our computer lab. In fiscal year 05/06 the program served 105 youth and adults. These are learners on the waiting

list or in need of extra help between tutoring sessions. At mid-year 06/07, with the addition of the one extra staff member, we have served 251 youth and adults through the drop in after-school youth computer lab and tutoring services. We are very excited about the increase in the number of learners we are serving and the quality of intervention that we are offering our learners. We are working with reading and learning specialists to plan workshops to help youth, tutors and parents to help identify special learning needs and find successful methods and materials (including software and internet sites) to help our learners overcome learning challenges.

Our great Kids In Partnership program highlights:

- A new program that matches preteens with early elementary students has recruited and trained a total of 8 preteen tutors for the second semester of this KIP pilot program. These fifth graders participated in two days of tutor training which included a Project READ and KIP overview, what it means to be a literacy tutor for emergent readers, preparation for meeting their new learners, and an introduction to literacy centers and KIP reading materials. The eight preteen tutors were then matched with eight first graders in the KIP program. The pairs had a successful first meeting at which they authored and illustrated their own My Book About Me as a way to get acquainted.
- A current KIP teen tutor volunteered to do a classroom presentation to share with her classmates her enthusiasm for the program. Her presentation was so effective that she recruited 5 new tutors from the Academies Program at Sequoia High School. In addition, KIP staff visited the Academies Program classrooms at Woodside High School to recruit second semester teen tutors. Over 50 high school students showed interest in the KIP program.
- KIP staff and Notre Dame AmeriCorps members trained 22 new teen tutors for the second semester of the KIP program. We are thrilled to welcome our new teens who come from several different schools including Sequoia, Woodside, Sacred Heart and Cañada College. The teen tutor training included an overview of the KIP program, a tour of Fair Oaks school, literacy center exploration, an orientation to KIP materials, strategies for previewing and questioning while reading with learners as well as an opportunity to role play their initial meeting with their learner.

Sometimes programs don't have to draw hundreds to be effective. This is the type of programming the library could do more of. Michele Mizejewski, the program organizer, writes:

I just wanted to report that the Tuesday evening workshop "Start Your Own Blog" was a great success. Roz had arranged for Liz Henry (who did some work last year on the Big Read) to teach this hands-on class in the Teen Homework Center. There were 10 people in attendance, most of whom signed up ahead of time on our web site. The hour and a

half workshop included an overview of what blogs are and the many ways they can be used, as well as step-by-step guidance for each person to start their own free blog at www.blogger.com. Roz and I assisted by walking around and helping people when they got stuck on a step. Thanks also to Scott who helped prepare the computers and the lighting situation beforehand. Below is an excerpt from Liz's blog post on the experience of teaching the class and what she recalls of the participants:

Philip, who wrote a mystery novel, and who used to work in TV news, and who I think I know from past meetings of the Redwood City Not Yet Dead Poets.

Richard, who looked like he was in maybe 7th or 8th grade (but I could be wrong) and who came with his mom, and who is a huge star wars fan.

A very lovely person whose name I have forgotten but who is a technical recruiter...I can't remember her blog name.

A dad and his high school or college-age son, and the son was super good at it all already, and the dad was starting a blog on his personal finance business for long-term care.

Esperanzamj, who started a blog about hope and creativity.

Gina, who was blogging in Spanish, ¡espero que me di su blog url aquí en los comments!

The woman who has a craft business and teaches classes and makes soap and beauty care products.

And everyone else. That was really a lot of fun.

from: <http://liz-henry.blogspot.com/>