

Library Director's Report September 2007

Reflecting positively on Redwood City Public Library, I was asked to speak to the staff of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County on community-centered libraries. They are one of the very prestigious library systems in the country (awarded Library of the Year two years ago), and for them to look at what we are doing here at Redwood City, and my experiences at San Jose Public, is quite a coup! Other large library systems in New Jersey and Phoenix have contacted us also.

The publishing party for our Redwood City history book is scheduled for Friday, October 26, after hours, at the library. The book is over 500 pages, written by community members, with plenty of photos from our archives collection.

We will be doing emergency evacuation training at all libraries in the month of October. A false alarm at the Downtown Library resulted in a need for this training.

Library staff are continuing work on various projects and tasks related to the Redwood Shores Library. The collection of library materials to be purchased is being discussed and reviewed. Staff have begun discussions with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services department in regard to facility and meeting room use and policies; and also the possible collaboration with classes and services. Work is underway on the RFP process for the café. As construction continues, the building is starting to take shape and form with the framing, slab pours and site work preparations. Construction progress can be viewed by webcam accessed through www.rcpl.info.

School District/Public Library cooperative efforts:

- Youth Service staff have visited many school libraries this past month, assisting with collection management and operations.
- The KinderCard blitz has begun! For the fourth year, every Kindergartner in the city will receive a library card. Staff have been to every class at every school making this happen and will culminate in the KCard celebration on October 13.
- Hoover School is struggling to raise the literacy level of its students, as well as their scores on the annual state and federally mandated tests. The Library has long partnered with Hoover in trying to help them reach these goals. One way is by contributing to the Reading Challenge Campaign, Hoover's school-wide, year-long reading club. Each month, students who meet their reading target are awarded a "Reader of the Month" certificate, and starting this month, students are invited to come to the library, show their certificates, and choose a free book to keep. Students from Hoover will go to Downtown or Fair Oaks to get them. This is just the first of many collaborations with Hoover to get our kids to succeed.
- Schaberg Branch Library historically has had hundreds of unsupervised kids wandering in and around the library in the afternoons. This year, a concerted effort by library, school and city staff have really made a positive difference. Communication to parents about programs at the community center, school and

library, including our homework center (in September, 296 students attended), is working.

350 folks at tiny Fair Oaks Library is quite a community building event!! Monday evening, September 24, the Fair Oaks Library was transformed into a “Town Plaza” as we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with Jose Luis Orozco. News of the program traveled throughout the community and 357 people turned out to enjoy the free concert.

We are ready to launch an expanded Storytime schedule, doubling the number of programs we have been offering. We surveyed our attendees, looked at attendance data and attempted to maximize the very popular (and crowded) programs.

Weekly Storytime Schedule

<u>Location</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Storytime</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Downtown	Monday	10:30	Preschool	to be determined (tbd)
Downtown	Monday	7:15	Bedtime Stories	Chuck
Downtown	Tuesday	10:30	Toddler	Jacky
Downtown	Tuesday	11:30	Toddler	Jacky
Downtown	Wednesday	10:30	Tiny Tales (Wobbler)	Jacky
Downtown	Wednesday	11:30	Tiny Tales (Wobbler)	Jacky
Downtown	Wednesday	3:00	Touchpoints	Angelica
Downtown	Wednesday	7:15	Bedtime Stories	Chuck
Downtown	Thursday	10:30	Preschool	tbd
Downtown	Friday	10:30	Preschool	Sarah
Schaberg	Monday	10:30	Preschool	Caroll
Schaberg	Monday	11:30	Toddler	Caroll
Schaberg	Tuesday	4:00	Tiny Tales	Jan
Schaberg	Thursday	1:30	Daytime Delight	Chuck
Schaberg	tbd	tbd	Preschool	tbd
Schaberg	tbd	tbd	Toddler	tbd
Fair Oaks	Monday	6:00	Bilingual	Armando
Fair Oaks	Tuesday	11:00	Cuentos en español	Elisa
Fair Oaks	Thursday	5:30	Bilingual	Cristina

Other Programs

<u>Location</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Storytime</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Downtown	1 st Saturday	11:00	Dad and Me	Chuck
Downtown	3 rd Saturday	11:00	Seaside Storytime	Marine Science Institute
Schaberg	Saturday	tbd	once a month event	tbd
Fair Oaks	Saturday	tbd	once a month event	tbd

The hours in the 1st floor computer lab have expanded again and the lab is now open every hour of the day the library is open. We will also be expanding the number of

computers available. An additional parking meter has been installed on the plaza in front of the downtown library. With the new meters, library customers can conveniently pay or add time to any downtown parking space from any meter. What's really great about the new meter's location is that it's close enough to the building so that now library staff can easily go outside with customers and show them how to use it. If you haven't had the chance to check out the new open space in the Reading Room, please stop by and have a look! There's now plenty of room for the next phase of this renovation project—creating an inviting “reading lounge” space for our customers with comfortable, inviting seating in the best-lit area of that room. As for the very large information desk which used to occupy the center of that space, it's in the shop for redesigning and will be back in a couple of weeks. Every bit of the original desk is being reused and integrated into the new overall design.

Staffs notes:

- Our new Young Adult Librarian **Sarah La Torra** is working on creating a large group of teen volunteers that will help her plan and implement programs; started a MySpace page for the library; designing the new Teen Space; and meeting with many community folks.
- Our Electronic Services Librarian, **Michele Mizejewski**, presented at the Future of Libraries conference in San Francisco. Her talk entitled, “Blogs and Flickr @ Your Library” focused on how we've added interactivity and participation to our web presence by using these free tools.
- Long-time volunteer and program assistant **Jan Pedden** was hired as the Traveling Storytime Program Director to replace retired Director Joanne Wetzel. Jan brings a lot of experience, dedication, and great customer service skills to the position.
- We found an excellent candidate, **Everett Phillips**, as our new cataloger. He will start work on October 29th.
- We are fortunate that the Downtown Library is a lively after school hangout for teens and young people in general. **Kelly Lee**, an experienced campus supervisor at Kennedy Middle School has been doing a wonderful job as our new after school Library Monitor ensuring that we maintain a friendly, welcoming, safe and secure environment for everyone in our Downtown Library. She is a community-centered, values-driven person who actively engages all library visitors, and especially young people, with the right balance of understanding, authority, and respect.

We have also been very busy supplementing our casual, on-call staff for additional public services support:

- **Jessica Silver**, Librarian (casual / on call). Jessica joined us earlier this month and has quickly learned the ropes at the downtown Information Desk, covering evening and weekend shifts. She will soon begin training to cover the Children's Desk, too. She received her MLIS from University of Michigan, and has an extensive background in archives and reference services.
- **Martina Tello**, Library Assistant (casual / on call). Martina came onboard back in July and has been doing a fantastic job working for us on the downtown Accounts desk most Sundays, and occasionally at Fair Oaks. She also works for San Mateo County Library in the Raising a Reader program. Martina is bilingual (English/Spanish), and a great addition to our team.

- **Jenny Davis**, Librarian (casual / on call) has been working here part-time since March 2006. She has been assisting the library in expanding our adult community programs. Her knowledge of the book industry and of the community have made her indispensable to us in this effort. Jenny recently received her M.L.I.S. from San Jose State University and she recently began working for the King Library (San Jose) at the University Library reference desk. Jenny is now in training to work at our Information desk here at downtown RCPL, too.

Monthly Staff Appreciation Awards. We had two month's worth of nominations to draw from; a huge batch! We drew four winners at random during the all staff meetings:

- **The Youth Services Staff.** Nominated by Dave, who said: "The staff who worked on the Harry Potter event did an excellent job in coordinating and planning this very successful event. A job well done to all those who were involved."
- **The Page Staff.** Nominated by Mildred, who said. "My dear coworkers. They do such a wonderful job, and I have learned so much from this group. Thanks for all your help."
- **Shajuan Morish.** Nominated by Gene, who said: "I nominate Shajuan because she is such a great addition to the library. She is so helpful and pleasant to work with."
- **Yann Ly.** Nominated by Rebecca, who said: "Yann helped me with some of the shifting of new non fiction, and he is always willing to help."

The individual winners each won a \$20 gift card. The group winners will receive special treats. But wait, there's more... The folks who nominated the winners each won a \$5 gift card, too. Congratulations! I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to all the nominees for a job well done – and that goes double for all the people who appreciated them enough to submit nominations, all of which will be posted in the break room for everyone to view.

And for some bad news:

GOVERNOR SIGNS BUDGET: MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT FOR LIBRARIES AS GOVERNOR SLASHES PLF AND TBR

Shortly after noon today, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, flanked by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez and Senate Republican Leader Dick Ackerman, signed the 2007-08 State Budget in the rotunda of the State Capitol. You will recall that the Budget bill was 52 days late, and relations between the two houses and the Governor were significantly strained during the contentious negotiations. At the bill signing, the Governor noted that the "Budget has a zero deficit. That is an extraordinary accomplishment."

Unfortunately, the attempt to obtain a "zero deficit" meant that an additional \$700 million was cut by the Governor from the Budget version that was sent down to him. Suffering significant cuts today were two major library programs: the Public Library Foundation and the Transaction Based Reimbursement Program.

Last year, the Governor, in his May Revise and subsequent Budget, approved a \$7 million augmentation to the Public Library Foundation, bringing the total baseline figure to \$21.3 million. This year, the Budget Conference Committee approved a \$1 million augmentation to the fund. However, the Governor has chosen to slash not only the \$1 million augmentation for 2007-08, but in addition, he is taking away the \$7 million augmentation he provided last year. In his veto message he states:

"I am deleting the discretionary \$1,000,000 legislative augmentation to the Public Library Foundation. This reduction is necessary to limit program expansions and help bring ongoing General Fund expenditures

in line with existing resources. In addition, I am deleting \$7,000,000 in order to further build a prudent reserve in light of the various uncertainties in revenues and spending that we face this year."

The Governor's reduction today brings the new PLF baseline down to \$14.3 million.

Similarly, you may recall that the Governor, in his May Revise and subsequent Budget last year approved a \$7 million augmentation to the Transaction Based Reimbursement program. Today, the Governor inexplicably cut \$7 million from that program as well. His veto message states:

"I am deleting \$7,000,000 for Direct Loan and Interlibrary Loan services. This reduction is necessary in order to further build a prudent reserve in light of the various uncertainties in revenues and spending that we face this year."

We do not know how this reduction will now affect the federal match component for this program, and we will be working with the State Library.

The Governor's reduction brings the new TBR baseline down to \$11.6 million.

We are deeply disappointed in the Governor's actions today, particularly in light of the inconsistent message, wherein he funded both of these programs last year in the approximate same amounts that he cut this year. These programs were just beginning to recover from the devastating cuts that were made to the PLF and TBR under the previous Governor, Gray Davis. One Budget staff member, who we worked with throughout the year, called immediately after seeing the major cuts and commented, "You have my anger, empathy, and sympathy."