

Library Director's Report October 2006

The Library in partnership with Montalvo has received \$20,000 grant for The Big Read project (our next One Book, One Community program) in March. Our book will be Fahrenheit 451. They said it was the best proposal they had ever received for The Big Read so congratulations to us all and especially Montalvo for putting together a proposal that couldn't be turned down! Staff will be flying to Seattle in November for a reception and a day of training. Ray Bradbury has agreed, at the very least, to do a phone interview and there is a possibility he will agree to a video conference interview. An opening gala, author events, panel and book discussions, film festival, family and school events, a cool marketing campaign and hopefully lots and lots of folks reading the book are being planned.

The Library garnered three front page photos in October covering the children's room renovation, the after school Homework Center, and Project READ's annual fundraiser, the Trivia Bee.

The Fair Oaks Library participated in San Mateo County's Fourth Bi-National Health Week activities. On Tuesday, October 10, the library hosted a Domestic Violence workshop with 33 people in attendance, which was sponsored by El Concilio of San Mateo County. On Saturday, October 14, the Fourth Annual Bi-National Health Fair was held at the Fair Oaks Community Center. The Fair Oaks Library was open special hours on Saturday, from 10:00am-2:00pm and served as a resource site for health screenings; a diabetes clinic; and dental information. The San Francisco office of the Consulate General of El Salvador provided informational handouts and had staff available to answer a variety of questions. The library provided regular library service as well, with over 780 people visiting the library in conjunction with the health fair. The Bi-National Health week activities offer an excellent opportunity for the Fair Oaks Library to work in collaboration and partnership with the community agencies.

As part of our new technology plan, several staff has been assigned to help manage our aging and growing computer network at all the libraries.

The Schaberg Library held a Halloween Celebration on Thursday evening, October 26 for 47 pre-schoolers and their families. Children arrived in costume and listened to not too scary stories; sang songs and made various crafts.

The Fair Oaks Library held a Fair Oaks Halloween Bash on Tuesday evening October 31. Over 50 children and parents attended the Halloween festivities which included spooky children's movies; scary stories in Spanish and English; and arts and crafts activities. Children arrived in costume and enjoyed a fun and safe Halloween evening at their local library.

After unofficially accepting the idea at last month's meeting, the Civic Cultural Commission approved the transferring of \$6000 set aside for a faux tree entrance to the

Children's Room for a mural to be painted by local artist/children's book illustrator Elizabeth Gomez. The mural will be above the shelving to the left of the service desk, a space approximate 3-1/2 feet tall and 16 feet wide. The mural will depict the library, a castle made of books, and numerous other elements incorporating children and books. Elizabeth has great senses of color and child appeal in her illustrations and the YS staff members (and the Civic Cultural Commission) are all jazzed by her proposed artwork. Those interested can stop by Chuck's desk to see the pencil illustration of the mural. For a look at her use of color, check out MOONY LUNA (SP JP ARGUETA) which she illustrated.

54 people attended a talk by syndicated columnist and CBS broadcaster Larry Magid on MySpace and other forms of social networking used by teens. The audience, which consisted of parents from all the middle schools and high schools in Redwood City and even San Carlos, was very enthusiastic and stayed until 9:00 asking questions. The program was co-sponsored by the Redwood City Education Foundation, which split the costs with the library and provided a myriad of new publicity contacts. It was a great collaboration; hopefully the first of many. Big thanks go out to Georgia Jack, president of the RCEF, and to Jennifer Tsay, communications officer for the Adelante School Site Council, whose suggestion kick-started the whole event and the collaboration.

The monthly Dad and Me @ the Library program featured puppeteer Tony Borders who performed a puppet show of "Peter and Wendy" based on "Peter Pan". The 100 in attendance hooted and howled as Mister Snee and Captain Hook got their comeuppance.

The Lemony Snicket Series of Unfortunate Events book release party drew well over 300 young Snicket fans who were encouraged not to attend but did so anyway. The dismal, dreary affair that took place on a Friday evening after library hours had kids and parents alike woefully taking part in such activities as Pin the Fangs on Sunny, a Snicket trivia contest, and watching the travails of the Baudelaire children in the misguided film starring Jim Carrey.

The annual Halloween Costume Parade drew the usual couple hundred kids and their parents to the journey through the library, culminating in the Community Room where they were feted to songs by Chuck and an original puppet play performed by Chuck, Cristina and Jacky.

Several of the Youth Services staff members attended a workshop on dialogic reading. The workshop covered techniques that can be used with preschool age children in developing preliteracy skills.

This year's annual Trivia BEE was another huge success. Over 400 attended. Senator, Joe Simitian, was this year's emcee, and he kept the BEE buzzing all evening with his quick wit and hilarious sense of humor! The program included special awards and acknowledgements recognizing the extraordinary efforts of Project READ volunteers, tutors, learners and trainers. This year's honorees included; Pat Benner – Fueling the Fire of Hope Award, The Rodriguez/Alvarez Family and Nicola Sandars – the Spirit of

Project READ Award. "The Ineffables" were once again crowned the Trivia BEE Champions, with Zap Think Tank coming in Second and SRI Max third. Our thanks to council members, Alicia Aguirre, Diane Howard and Mayor Barbara Pierce for their help during the event and their ongoing support of literacy and education in our community. A very special thank you to Dave Genesy for his generous sponsorship of the BEE and his continuing commitment to Project READ and the goal of a literate community.

Project READ has recently trained over 50 community tutors. Each new tutor completed 15 hours of training and is now ready to be matched with a student.

This fall we bid farewell to our seven 2005-2006 Notre Dame AmeriCorps members who have served hundreds of Redwood City students, teens and parents over their year of service. Each member completed over 1,700 hours of community service in the Redwood City community. We welcomed our new 2006-2007 AmeriCorps in September.

Traveling Storytime Early Literacy Program held a celebration honoring volunteers and their new expanded office. The Traveling Storytime program has shared offices with the Library's Youth Services staff but with its unprecedented success and bringing in over 80 volunteer readers, the program has outgrown its space and earned a new, dedicated place in the Library. The Traveling Storytime program trains volunteers to read to children from birth to five, then assigns them to a weekly storytime in a home day care or preschool in Redwood City. The program was honored by the San Mateo County Reading Association for Exemplary Service in the Promotion of Literacy. Over 75,000 preschool children have been read to by Traveling Storytime volunteers, and this wonderful and effective program can always use more volunteers. Community members interested in joining the Traveling Storytime volunteer corps are encouraged to call 650-780-7014 to learn more.

62 people attended the final lecture in our Fall Stanford Health Library series on understanding how your body's clock affects your sleep. Thanks very much to Roz Kutler and the staff of the Stanford Health Library for co-sponsoring this series, which brought a grand total of 113 people to the library over three evenings. We look forward to working together in April and May on a spring series. Many guests inquired about prospects for future talks last night.

We are in the process of hiring a new Public Services Manager, with interviews scheduled in mid November. A part-time cataloger and Teen Librarian will be hired also.

And finally a very informative note regarding the effectiveness of the Traveling Storytime program, but also volunteer opportunities in general. The writer is a long time volunteer for the Traveling Storytime program.

Sent: Tue 9/26/2006 2:21 PM

To: LIB-Joanne Wetzel
Subject: Letter of Commendation

To Joanne Wetzel and Jan Pedden Traveling Storytime Program Redwood City Public Library. I am writing to commend you both for the great program you have created for the Redwood City Public Library to offer to our community. I have been part of the program from its beginning stages, and have watched it grow and evolve into the very successful program it has become. There are many factors contributing to its success. Since this is a program that makes broad use of volunteers, your ability to work well with volunteers, to offer excellent training and ongoing support to the volunteers are probably the most important contributing factors in the program's success. I have volunteered in many different settings over the past 21 years - the most successful programs are those which offer clear guidelines to the volunteers, training, and the opportunity for ongoing support and feedback. These are critical factors in terms of volunteer retention. People stop volunteering in a program for many reasons, sometimes due to changes in their personal situation which prevent them from continuing. But I have been in situations where people have dropped out of a program because of lack of support or poor direction. In this program where volunteers are going out to work with children every week, there are times when you need to talk about a problem or concern that has come up. I have found you both extremely helpful and supportive in talking about problems, and also in sharing a really great experience. This program uses volunteers in many ways. The most obvious is the use of volunteers in the role of storytellers. But there are also volunteers who work behind the scenes, in helping you to create the flannelboard figures that we have available as part of the bookbags. Your enthusiasm certainly encourages people in the community to volunteer their time for this program. Another very crucial factor in a program's success is that it is well-structured. The Traveling Storytime Program is really outstanding in its design, and in the books that you have selected to include in our bookbags. You both have done a wonderful job in setting up the program, with the collaboration of many of your fellow children's librarians. All of this takes time, and I appreciate the fact that you have both had the time allotted to make the program such a success. I want to thank you very much for your great work in creating a wonderful program where I am able to really enjoy the volunteer job that I do with some of the preschoolers in our community! Sincerely, Jeanie Isaacs