

Library Director's Report December 2006

On December 11, the City Council unanimously approved to spend 2.5 million dollars from general fund reserves to fully fund the Redwood Shores Community Library. Construction costs have escalated over the past three years and the existing construction budget was approximately 3 million dollars short. A remaining .5 million has been reallocated to the project costs from the 07/08 library budget—monies that were allocated for Redwood Shores Library operations (the library will be open fiscal year 08/09). This is great news, especially that we will be delivering the library that was promised to the community three years ago—rare in these times of severe construction cost escalations.

Library staff processed over 110 checks for the Redwood Shores Library Opening Day Collection in December, necessitating the need to create a new system to track donors and gifts. The Redwood Shores campaign received \$93,503 in donations, \$31,685 in pledged matching funds from the Redwood Shores Community Association.

The Downtown Library hosted the annual Boards, Councils and Commissions party on December 1. Many folks commented on how good the library looked and were amazed at the new children's room remodel.

The annual Staff In-service was held on December 1. Highlights included the sharing of year-end accomplishments; a "walk around" activity in which all staff surveyed downtown retail stores and then compared customer service and layout issues to the library; and a holiday thank you turkey-dinner lunch.

Alana's on the Plaza is open for business in front of the Downtown Library! They serve high quality espresso drinks and food. It is great to partner with a local Redwood City business to enhance the library experience for all. Thank you to all city staff who helped get this project implemented.

Scott Bauer is back at the library after a three month assignment in Belmont as a management analyst for the Parks and Recreation department. This is a program sponsored by the peninsula City Managers to develop the executive and management skills of aspiring administrators. Scott worked on some interesting projects and experienced firsthand how another department in another city conducts business. Scott will continue to focus on our technology/system issues and budget/analysis projects.

Kasia Pereira and Serena Gregorio graduated from the City's Profiles in Leadership program. The 3-month leadership development program is designed to enhance leadership skills, create a talent pool of strong leaders, and build community within the City of Redwood City. Congratulations to them both.

The Library lost three long term staff this month due to retirements. Traveling Storytime creator and director JoAnne Wetzel finally made it official. Young Adult Librarian Diane Casey also chose the retired life after seventeen years with the library. Tanya Pomposa,

Library Administration's right hand has also officially retired, although she will continue to work some until her replacement is on board. All three will be missed for their fine work and for their camaraderie with the staff.

Sean Reinhart has accepted the offer of employment for the position of Public Services Manager. Sean comes from Santa Clara University as a Help Services Coordinator where he coordinated services at the central library reference desk and also managed service desk schedules for two library locations. Sean's official date to start will be on Monday, January 8.

New computers have arrived for the Fair Oaks Library. Kasia is working diligently to get them prepared and installed. There are some communication/wiring issues that will need to be worked out with the City and County so we can accommodate the increase in pcs.

The Fair Oaks Library held its annual Las Posadas celebration on Monday evening, December 18. This was a very exciting and fun-filled celebration that was enjoyed by everyone in attendance. 43 families received a holiday framed copy of their picture with Santa. An arts and crafts table was set-up for children and their parents to create a variety of pictures, ornaments and other crafts to take home. Special guest, entertainer Victor Hugo Santos provided storytelling and songs throughout the evening; and then led the annual Las Posadas procession, which began at the Fair Oaks Library, traveled to the Fair Oaks Community Center and ended up back at the Fair Oaks Library. The evening culminated with the breaking of three piñatas, which were certainly a highlight for the children. Everyone in attendance received a free book; a gift certificate courtesy of Chipotle; and colaciones (favors). Overall, 372 people attended this festive occasion! Many positive comments were received throughout the evening from community members expressing their gratitude to the library for sponsoring Las Posadas. Thank you to the staff for their assistance in making this a successful community event.

Staff has increased visits to North Fair Oaks pre-school classes, the child care center and elementary students at Fair Oaks School. The Fair Oaks School Librarian has personally thanked us for the partnership/collaboration with Fair Oaks School and has asked that this continue. We are also providing a weekly bilingual story time on Monday evenings, and have cultivated a group of young children that attend on a regular basis. These efforts are a vital extension of the library, promoting the love and joy of reading.

Youth services staff members met with school district librarian Ethan Annis to plan the Kindercard campaign for February.

Achieving a long-held goal, Cristina went to Hoover's computer lab to demonstrate the library's homepage and some of the databases to two 6th grade classes. Even though most of the students remained the picture of cool by slumping as far down in their chairs as was humanly possible, it was clear to see they were surprised and interested by what they could access from school and from home. It was a revelation to the teachers, too.

December was a busy month in the Traveling Storytime office as Jan attempted to

go it alone after JoAnne's retirement. The highlight of the month (if not the year), was the distribution of 650 copies of the book, *Ten Little Fish*, by Audrey Wood, to the children that are served by the Traveling Storytime volunteers. Several volunteers came back to the TSS office with tears in their eyes as they recounted the experience of handing out the books to the overjoyed children. One volunteer, a former teacher, remarked that "It was the best holiday experience I have had in years!" Several of the volunteers thanked the Friends of the Library for providing the funds to purchase the books and one preschool made a door-sized thank you poster for the Friends' office.

Upcoming dates: The annual Day in the District 2007 will be held Friday, January 26 and Friday, February 2. The California Library Association Legislative Day in Sacramento is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18. More information to follow.