

The more we change, the more we stay the same – libraries remain the place for lifelong learning

By Melinda Cervantes

Libraries have always been places of learning where the public could find information, ideas and inspiration to help them in their daily lives. But the library of 2011 in many ways looks and feels quite different from the libraries our grandparents visited.



DVDs and CDs are stacked next to traditional books and magazines. The huge cabinet of little drawers that used to hold the catalog cards has been replaced with computer terminals for searching the collection and accessing the Internet. Checking out materials is speedy with self-check machines and automated equipment for returns gets items back on the shelves faster than manual systems.

The biggest change, though, is not as easy to spot. Our Snapshot Day in October [see

article on page 4] confirms what we have seen as a growing trend.

Almost an equal number of people access our collection and services virtually through the 24/7 Electronic Library as come to the library in person. New online services and the revolutionary innovations in downloadable books, films and music continue to change the way people receive information and entertainment. All of these changes can prompt the question: What is the role of today's library?

The answer is the same as it was 100 years ago – the public library is the knowledge center of a community. Our purpose has not wavered even as the ways in which we deliver services to the public has experienced dramatic revisions.

The Library is where children learn to love books and reading – where, as one patron told us, “children can escape into a life of imagination.”



The Library is where students find help with homework assignments and preparation for college, and where teachers get ideas for new lesson plans. “The library is a wonderful place for finding references and resources for school projects,” said a Cupertino student.



“Vital to a functioning civilization” ... “the most helpful aspect of government today” ... “a little piece of heaven on earth” ... “a home for your heart” – comments like these come from the thousands of residents who count on the Library to be there when they need it at every stage of life, at every opportunity for learning.

The Library, like the world, is ever-changing. We are meeting the challenges of rapid innovation by continually revising and updating our collections, services and programs. But one thing will never change – we will continue to be here when and how you need us.

The Library is where jobseekers go for career-related information and help in identifying employment opportunities. “The Library has great personal and business resources,” said one patron. “It’s an important part of my personal improvement plan.”

The Library is where families on a budget go for entertainment. “We find interesting books to read and terrific DVDs to entertain, amuse and inform us,” one patron said. Another commented, “We have been laid off from our jobs over two years. Going to the library is the only entertainment we can afford.”

The Library is a welcoming place to meet and connect with others in the community. One patron calls it “the best place to spend time in town.”

Melinda Cervantes is the Santa Clara County Librarian and also 2010-2011 Chair of the Urban Libraries Council, an organization dedicated to strengthening the public library as an essential part of urban life.



MEET THE NEW Community Librarians

Los Altos/Woodland Jane Cronkhite

Jane has worked in libraries since she was 16 and growing up in Indiana. She has degrees from Indiana University and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and has served as a librarian in Phoenix, Cleveland and San Jose before joining Santa Clara County Library.



"Before a trip to the wine country, I researched best wineries online, mapped a route on my GPS and checked out a guide book from the Library. When we got to Napa, the GPS failed, the wineries on our list were overcrowded and we ended up lost on a back road in need of a new plan. The one tool that came to our rescue was the library book we could just open to find a nice simple map."

Cupertino Mark Fink

Mark grew up in Alaska and attended Willamette University in Oregon for his undergraduate degree and San Jose State University for his master's degree. He also holds a J.D. degree from McGeorge



School of Law in Sacramento. He has more than 10 years of experience as a librarian in Contra Costa County and eight years as a community college instructor.

"I have fond memories of spending Sunday afternoons at the Noel Wien Library in Fairbanks, Alaska as a young boy. The children's room featured a whimsical mural and I was excited by the possibility of leaping into the mural to join townspeople parading around an enchanted castle. All of the engaging tales on shelves in the children's room made such a journey possible on a cold, dreary winter afternoon."

Morgan Hill Peggy Tomasso

Peggy has more than 20 years of experience as a librarian, first in San Jose and then Prescott, Arizona before coming to Santa Clara County Library where she worked with the Bookmobile and the Campbell Library. An enthusiastic puppeteer, she has her own stage and more than 50 puppets.



"I love to look through travel books in the Library to discover all kinds of hidden gems. One of my favorites was a cave in the mountains surrounding Santa Barbara that

had Chumash Indian petroglyphs. It's in a remote area and I never would have found it on my own."

Saratoga Gayathri Kanth

Before joining Santa Clara County Library 12 years ago, Gayathri worked for the Santa Clara City Library and the Mountain View Public Library. She is a 2010 fellow for the Eureka Leadership Program sponsored by the California State Library in partnership with Infopeople, and speaks Tamil as well as English.



"As someone brought up in India, I really value the library here in the U.S. As a new immigrant, I took my baby to the library but waited outside because I wasn't sure if I could take a baby inside. My husband went in and came out accompanied by a library staff person who took the time to welcome me and show me the various areas in the library. I loved the feeling that the library was open to everyone and after volunteering in the Library decided to go to Library school."

Santa Clara County Library in the community

CAMPBELL

77 Harrison Ave., Campbell
(408) 866-1991

Tue 12 noon – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

CUPERTINO

10800 Torre Ave., Cupertino
(408) 446-1677

Mon-Tue 1 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

GILROY

7652 Monterey Street, Gilroy
(408) 842-8207

Tue 1 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

LOS ALTOS

13 S. San Antonio Rd., Los Altos
(650) 948-7683

Mon-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

MILPITAS

160 N. Main St., Milpitas
(408) 262-1171

Mon-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 12 noon – 6 p.m.

MORGAN HILL

660 W. Main Ave., Morgan Hill
(408) 779-3196

Tue 1 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Wed-Thur 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Fri-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed Mon and Sun

SARATOGA

13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga
(408) 867-6126

Mon-Tue 1 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Wed-Sat 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

WOODLAND

1975 Grant Rd., Los Altos
(650) 969-6030

Mon-Wed 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Thur-Sat 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Closed Sun

BOOKMOBILE

Check the Library website
www.santaclaracountylib.org for
Bookmobile stops, dates and times.

The Library is a LEARNING PLACE — for many reasons and in all seasons

Storytimes set the stage

One of the most popular programs of the Library is the storytime for young children. Babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers love to come to the Library with parents and caregivers and listen to a story read by a librarian. They think they are just having fun, but educators know that the children are obtaining important pre-reading skills at the same time – learning to listen, interact with a group, be patient, and share with others.

Books written for young children help them recognize letters, numbers, colors and the names of things, and encourage youngsters to tell a story. Many families check out the books introduced at storytimes so they can be read and enjoyed over and over again at home. Through storytimes children develop a love of books and visiting the library that will carry through their years in school and adulthood.

“The Library is a fixture of the community. We love the read aloud time!” one Los Altos family told us. “It is a good place for families to go,” a Campbell family added.

Each Library offers storytimes for different age groups in the morning and in the evening. For information on days and times, check out our community library’s calendar at www.santaclaracountylib.org.



Learn a new language

Parlez-vous Francais? Hablas Espanol? If not, you can learn French, Spanish or 21 other languages including English through Mango Languages, an online language learning system available free if you are a Library cardholder.

You progress at your own pace through online language lessons with native speakers that include vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and culture. It’s easy to use and you’ll learn a few phrases in just the first lesson.

Look for Mango Languages in the Electronic Library 24/7 on the Library website.



www.santaclaracountylib.org

“Coming to the library is our favorite indoor activity – it’s like our birthday and all the gift-holidays in one.”

Silicon Valley Reads encourages families to read, discuss together

A walk on foggy Ocean Beach in San Francisco is the starting point for the page-turner novel selected for Silicon Valley Reads 2011. *The Year of Fog* by Michelle Richmond follows the journey of a young woman through the



mysteries of memory and guilt after her fiancé’s six-year-old daughter disappears while in her care.

The book’s themes of perseverance and hope are reflected in the companion books selected for children:

- *Pouch!* By David Ezra Stein for pre-K, the story of a baby kangaroo who takes his first hops outside his mama’s pouch
- *One* by Kathryn Otoshi for grades K-3 that uses colors and numbers to talk about standing up for yourself if bullied
- *Alabama Moon* by Watt Key for grades 4-8, a novel of adventure and survival by a 10-year-old boy

Silicon Valley Reads 2011 will kick off on Jan. 26, 2011, with an on-stage interview of Michelle Richmond by Mercury News columnist Mike Cassidy. The free event starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Heritage Theatre in Campbell. The author will also make appearances in Cupertino on Feb. 5, Los Altos on Feb. 8, Morgan Hill on Feb. 10, Milpitas on Feb. 16, Gilroy on March 3 and Saratoga on March 15. For a complete listing of free public events, visit www.siliconvalleyreads.org.



Michelle Richmond

Silicon Valley Reads is presented by the Santa Clara County Library, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and the San Jose Public Library Foundation.

Is this blue card in your wallet?

A Santa Clara County Library card is your free pass to education, career opportunities, interesting events, fun reading, listening and viewing. It’s easy to obtain at your local library with just a valid form of identification showing your name and picture, plus proof of a current mailing address. No minimum age limit or residency requirement. Join the 320,000 local residents who are Santa Clara County Library cardholders.



Finding a new job or career path starts with research

High unemployment rates and rapid changes in many professional fields and industries are leading hundreds of people in Silicon Valley to their local libraries for help in exploring new career options, upgrading skills and finding a job.



Sophisticated databases and online resources have replaced the want ad section of the newspaper as the best tools for someone looking for work. Library cardholders can access these valuable resources free. Two of the most popular are:

- Job & Career Accelerator from Learning Express: one-stop to explore 1,000+ occupations, guidelines and templates for effective resumes and cover letters, and ways to improve interviewing skills.
- Career Transitions: a guided, self-paced resource that walks a jobseeker through the entire job search process, from assessing strengths and interests to preparing a resume and applying for jobs online.

The Library’s Job and Career Help Center also includes information and links to local, national and internal jobs, teen jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities. Find it on the Library website under Electronic Library 24/7.

Searching tips and tricks

“Tips and Tricks for Searching the Library Catalog” is a free 60-minute class that will help you easily locate the materials you need in the immense Library collection.

Los Altos Library
Saturday, Jan. 15, 9 a.m.

Cupertino Library
Tuesday, Jan. 25, 12 noon

Milpitas Library
Thursday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m.

Campbell Library
Wednesday, Feb. 9, 6:30 p.m.

Speakers • Workshops
Films • Crafts
Performances

Visit the Santa Clara County Library website frequently for an up-to-date list of events at your local Library.

www.santaclaracountylib.org

www.santaclaracountylib.org

Students look to Library for homework help



It’s homework time and a pre-algebra student looks at the first question on his assignment: Write this as an equation and solve it – *Eight times the sum of two and some number is 120.*

Mom and Dad scratch their heads and want to help more. The teacher can’t be reached until class time tomorrow. Instead of hours of frustration, this bewildered student can get immediate one-on-one assistance from a tutor through Brainfuse, a free online service available through Santa Clara County Library.

“We can’t afford a tutor, so the Brainfuse service has been a real help to our family,” said one mom whose son now thinks of being able to tap into the online tutors for homework help as a reward. “It’s been the difference between an A or an F on assignments where we can’t help him.”

With a Library card, students in grades 3-12 can connect through the Internet with a tutor for real-time help with English/language arts, math, science, social studies and writing assignments. Brainfuse also offers a 24-hour writing lab, a test center, a foreign language lab and other services to help students improve their skills.

Access Brainfuse on the Library website at “Live Tutoring, Homework Help, and Skill Building” on the Electronic Library 24/7 menu.

Reading Buddies at the Library

The perfect audience is one who listens with love in their eyes – and doesn’t talk back. That’s why the Reading Buddies program that pairs up reluctant readers with a quiet listener, a dog, is helping youngsters improve their reading skills.

“I really like reading to the dogs,” said Connor Bass who comes to the Morgan Hill Library to read to furry friends. “It makes it easier and more fun for me to read.”



Children in kindergarten through 5th grade read aloud to the dogs that are provided by volunteers from Furry Friends Pet Assisted Therapy Services. In a relaxed, non-judgmental setting, the young readers feel more comfortable if they stumble over a word or a difficult passage.

“This type of program has been successful in libraries across the country,” said Nichole King, Acting Children’s Supervising Librarian in Morgan Hill, “motivating children to read and raising their self esteem about their reading skills. And the dogs enjoy it, too!”

For more information, visit the Kids Page on the Library’s website.

www.santaclaracountylib.org

Snapshot Day at the Library

A moment-in-time look at how the Library responds to the needs of the community

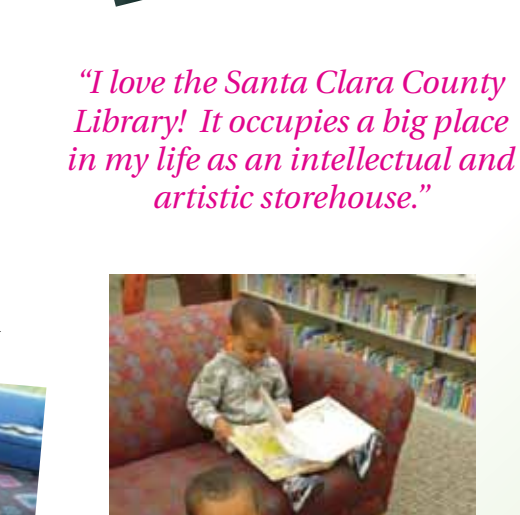
On October 5, 2010, libraries throughout California took their measure – capturing in statistics, public comments and photos the many ways the Library contributes to the quality of life of residents.

- 12,491 people visited a Santa Clara County Library in person
- The Library website was accessed 12,645 times
- 37,142 items were checked out or renewed
- 1,289 reference questions were answered in person by Library staff and another 134 were handled via telephone, email, instant message, text message or mail
- 2,499 people used a library computer and 472 brought their own computers to the library
- 9,380 items were retrieved by patrons from the Library’s licensed databases
- The Library’s digital collections were accessed 219 times
- There were 20 programs for children, teens and adults attended by 720 individuals
- 56 students used the homework help service and four adults received literacy tutoring

“This is the best library system my family and I have ever discovered.”



www.santaclaracountylib.org



“The library is the best part of my day.”



“I get to shop the world of literature.”

www.santaclaracountylib.org



Santa Clara County Library
 14600 Winchester Blvd.
 Los Gatos, CA 95032
 (408) 293-2326

*One of America's Best 100
 Public Libraries for 10 years!*

News from **your** library

*Serving the cities of
 Campbell
 Cupertino
 Gilroy
 Los Altos
 Los Altos Hills
 Milpitas
 Monte Sereno
 Morgan Hill
 Saratoga*

*and unincorporated areas
 of Santa Clara County*

Melinda Cervantes,
 County Librarian

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 San Jose, CA

Residential Customer

Record-breaking Summer!

More than 7,300 readers/listeners participated in the 2010 Summer Reading Club, about 8% more than last year. Free enrichment programs like the Library's Summer Reading Club help children avoid "summer slide." Research has shown that children can lose 1-3 months of progress over the summer holiday if they don't keep exercising their minds.

Volunteer tutors help local adults learn to read

He faithfully comes to the Library most every day, sometimes to meet with his volunteer tutor, other times to sit quietly by himself with a book and practice his newly-acquired reading skills. After decades of hiding and struggling with limited literacy abilities, this retired grandfather is learning to read better so that he can enjoy a good story with his grandchildren.

The Reading Program, sponsored by Santa Clara County Library, pairs adults who want to improve their ability to read and write with volunteer tutors. The tutors receive training and "on the job" coaching and support to help them, and their learners, be successful.

One in four need help

It is estimated that 23 percent of adults in California have below basic skills in reading, writing, math and computer use. They are functionally illiterate and have trouble with day-to-day tasks like reading a map, filling out a job application, or following instructions on medications.

"There are many reasons why an adult might be reading below a high school level," explained Patricia Lorenzo, Library Services

Manager. "The person may have dropped out of school or have a learning disability or a complicated health history. Some of our learners are conversant in English but still learning how to read in English."



Reading changes lives

Learners are appreciative of the investment of time made by their tutors and praise them for "changing my life for the better" and "making the world a better place." Tutors also value the experience where they can see they are helping people fulfill their dreams and aspirations.

"Each meeting is a delight as we discover together new things about the beauty and the workings of the English language and how it can relate to everyday life as well," said tutor Judy Walko. "I am the lucky one."

Become a tutor

More than 100 individuals already volunteer for The Reading Program, but more are needed. For more information on how to become a learner or volunteer tutor in The Reading Program, call (408) 262-1349.