



San Mateo County Library

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



VISION

Connect. Discover. Evolve.

MISSION

The San Mateo County Library provides innovative, dynamic services that connect our diverse community with opportunities for individual growth and enrichment.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Destination Libraries: Create welcoming spaces that promote a sense of community pride and facilitate customer-centered services.

Collections and Services: Develop and deliver outstanding library collections and services that reflect the interests and needs of our diverse customer base.

Community Engagement: Raise awareness and visibility of San Mateo County Library services and increase recognition of the Library as an essential community asset.

Organizational Culture: Become a learning organization that continuously assesses community needs and develops staff to provide excellent customer service.

JPA GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Elizabeth Lewis, *Atherton*

David Warden, *Belmont*

Terry O'Connell, *Brisbane*

Laura Martinez, *East Palo Alto*

Pam Frisella, *Foster City*

Marina Fraser, *Half Moon Bay*

Marge Colapietro, *Millbrae*

Mike O'Neill, *Pacifica*

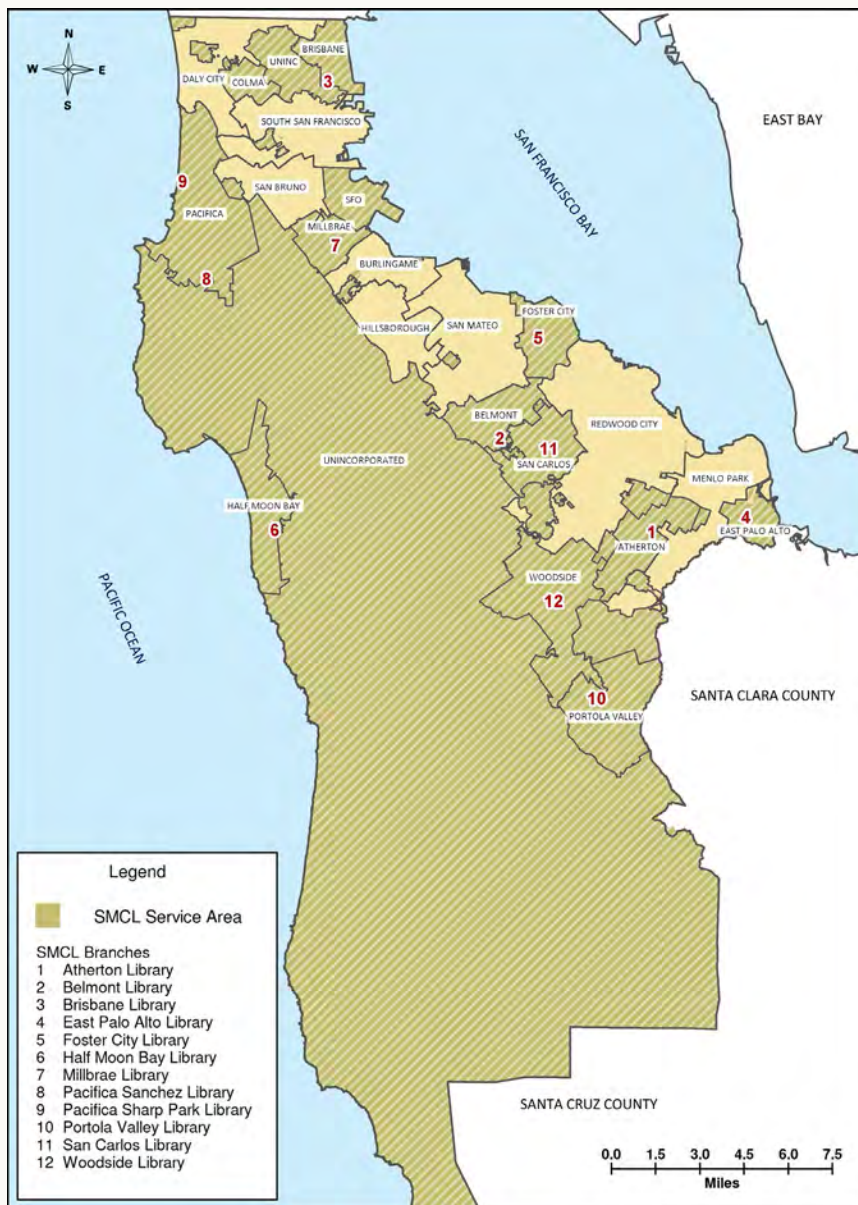
Maryann Derwin, *Portola Valley (Chair)*

Karen Clapper, *San Carlos*

Carole Groom, *San Mateo County (Vice Chair)*

Anne Kasten, *Woodside*

SAN MATEO COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICE AREA



The San Mateo County Library is a Joint Powers Authority comprised of the cities of Atherton, Belmont, Brisbane, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Carlos, Woodside, and the unincorporated areas of San Mateo County.

Director's Message

Established in 1912, San Mateo County Library has a rich history of providing library service to the residents of San Mateo County and a commitment to exceptional public service which endures to this day. The system's 12 community libraries, bookmobile and eBranch are embracing new services and technology while staying true to our traditional role as a democratic institution of learning and equal access. Public libraries are unique in that they engage with all residents and serve as a bridge for community connections by offering diverse populations easily accessible services.

In fiscal year 2012-13, the Library was recognized as one of the nation's top libraries based on use of services. Named a four star library for the fifth consecutive year by Library Journal, the Library ranked seventeenth nationwide and third in California among similar peer libraries. Being ranked as one of the best public libraries in the country serves as a demonstration of staff's commitment and dedication and the important value of our community services.

It is an exciting time as we grow and transform to respond to the dramatic changes in the way that people use libraries today. This report highlights some of the wonderful accomplishments of the Library JPA and staff who, with the support of the community and Friends, continue to grow and transform our services, expand our collections, and strengthen our community connections to offer inspiring new experiences. I am honored to present the Library's 2013 Annual Report.



Anne-Marie Despain
Director of Library Services

“It is a great privilege to serve as Chair of the Library JPA Governing Board. Rated in the top 3% of public library services nationally, the San Mateo County Library is well positioned to provide the next generation of library service to our communities.”

–Maryann Derwin,
Portola Valley Town
Council Member and
Library JPA Governing
Board Chair



Raising Readers

Public libraries have been leaders in recognizing and communicating that parents are a child's first and best teacher. The San Mateo County Library is working to improve early literacy outcomes and increase the reading frequency in the county by educating, providing learning tools and tips, and ensuring that book experiences support the critical parent/child learning relationship. The "I'm Raising a Reader" campaign was designed to create a dialogue with families about the importance of reading with their children and to gain an understanding of why reading regularly matters. The effort further established a connection to libraries and book sharing routines at home.

The Library's Summer Reading Program supports the Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council (PPLC) reading initiative and the county-wide campaign for 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency. Studies show that when just five books are read over the summer, children can gain approximately three points on standardized reading tests. Students who participate in summer reading programs are also more likely to read at their grade level or higher than those who do not. With support from the Friends of the Library, special summer programs featured animals, magicians, musicians, storytellers, and even an astrophysicist, all designed to promote the enjoyment and importance of reading. Over 7,000 people signed up, and a high level of satisfaction and reading improvement was reported by parents of children who participated.



As reported by parents whose children participated in the 2012 Summer Reading Program

"My 6-year-old is now confident enough to read to his two little brothers on his own. He's very proud of himself and I'm proud of him." –Belmont mother

Making a Difference

Our libraries are learning centers. They offer homework help and tutoring both online and in person, and in many locations, the chance for older students to be role models and mentor younger children. The Quest Homework Center at the East Palo Alto Library is an important community service, providing much needed after-school tutoring for students. Third to sixth graders participate in literacy enrichment, homework assistance, academic skill-building activities, mentoring and guidance. Parent workshops are also provided to help families assist their children with academics and to improve communication with teachers and school administrators. Quest works closely with students, their families, and teachers to improve mastery of all school subjects, especially English and math.

The positive impact of the Quest Homework Center can be demonstrated by one of its graduates. Jamie enrolled in Quest when he was in the third grade. He credits Quest as the catalyst that helped spark his love of reading and provided positive support during after-school hours. As a recent high school graduate, Jamie is preparing to embark on his journey of higher education this fall. He had the fortunate dilemma of having to choose between Princeton, Columbia, Harvard and Stanford. Jamie will be attending Princeton University with a full scholarship; his younger brother is currently enrolled in Quest.



“With education, it’s all about getting an early start. In elementary school, I used to hate reading, but with Quest, it developed into something I truly enjoyed.” –Jamie, Quest Homework Center graduate





Biography
& Autobiography



Innovative Services

The San Mateo County Library meets the diverse needs of the community by offering over 700,000 items in a variety of formats and a multitude of languages. Always striving for creative and innovative ways to better serve our customers, this year we piloted a new book classification system. The Dewey Decimal System has been around for more than a century and seems synonymous with the public library, but research has found that most customers have difficulty finding books, primarily due to a classification system they do not understand.

The new classification system, called FindIt!, enhances the library subject headings already in use and includes language easily identifiable by the public. FindIt! allows customers to easily browse, discover and access library resources the way they want to: intuitively and independently. The project includes new signage and updated shelving layouts that group books by subject rather than numbers, highlights contemporary, popular categories and encourages people to read more.

FindIt! was successfully piloted at the Portola Valley Library this spring, and we are already seeing an increase in the circulation of books. The goal is eventual system-wide implementation. As one of an estimated two dozen public libraries in the country to implement word-based classification systems, and the first in California, San Mateo County Library is at the forefront of customer service innovation.



Increase in circulation at the Portola Valley Library with FindIt!

“Whenever I see kids using the new system, they get so excited that they can do it themselves. They get that love of reading, curiosity and finding things.” –Maria Chiochios, Portola Valley Library Aide

Virtual Access

Mobile devices and wireless services provide tremendous flexibility for users to utilize library services. As one of the largest providers of free Internet access in the county, the San Mateo County Library offers 379 public computers connected to a high speed network and wireless access.

The new SMCL mobile app enhances the library experience by giving patrons access to the library from their smartphone or other mobile device. The library app allows users to quickly search for books, movies, music and other library materials, manage their accounts, and browse upcoming events. The custom app is designed to work seamlessly with the Library's growing collections of eBooks for easy checkout to a user's tablet or phone. It also features BookLook, which scans any book's barcode to immediately check to see if it is in the collection.

The Library is also expanding services by embracing the growing capabilities of wireless technology. To provide customers with a faster and more reliable wireless connection, technology infrastructure work was completed. Additionally, wireless printing is now offered, enabling laptop users the ability to print documents from anywhere in the library. These new services greatly enhance the level of convenience enjoyed by library users who leverage their own devices to utilize library collections and information.



“This is a great app! It’s nice to not have to go to the actual website to view the smcl information. It has many great features.” –iTunes reviewer





PÁJARO
DE LA COMIDA

Dr. Seuss
SLEEP

SLEEP

Community Engagement

The San Mateo County Library is committed to expanding our presence throughout the county and increasing service to populations that are unable or unlikely to visit community libraries. The Bookmobile is one beloved service that provides free access to books and information to people where they are. The Bookmobile offers a continually refreshed collection of over 4,000 items. In addition to offering access to library collections, services also include activities such as storytimes, book talks, participation in community events, and access to computers.

This year, service was increased from an average of three days a week to five days a week, bringing the Library to schools, parks, daycare facilities and preschools, and community centers. Several new popular stops have been added, such as visits to East Palo Alto for the popular “Kids Workshops” at Home Depot and the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos for their “Soar with Books” reading program for preschoolers.

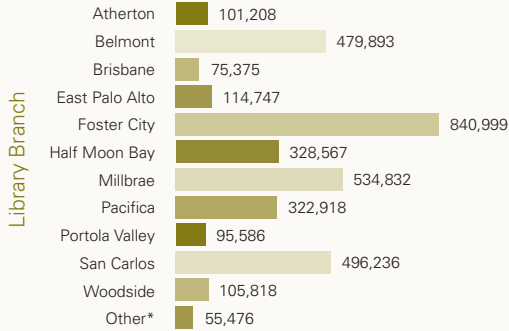
The Bookmobile has participated in many special events, including the San Mateo County Fair “Streets Alive! Parks Alive!”, Half Moon Bay’s “Rock the Block”, and “Dad & Me @ the Park”. In addition, the Bookmobile was honored to be among a parade of 30 vehicles that took part in the grand opening celebration for the Tom Lantos Tunnels at Devil’s Slide. These outreach efforts have increased the ability for San Mateo County residents with limited access to physical library locations to obtain the services they want and need.



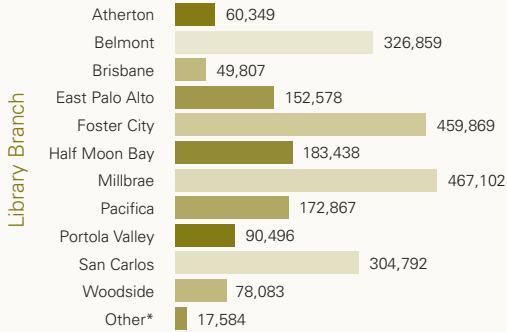
“Wow, I didn’t know that bookmobiles existed! This is the best thing we’ve seen at the fair so far today!” –Mother of young children at the San Mateo County Fair

NUMBERS AT WORK

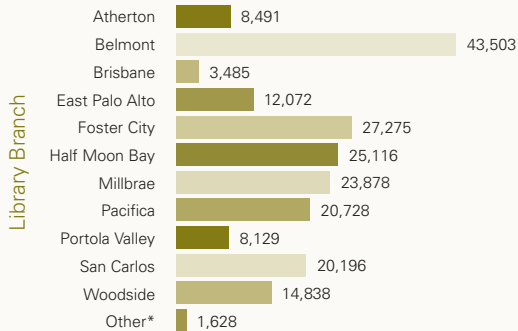
ITEMS CIRCULATED



LIBRARY VISITORS



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



*Bookmobile & Outreach

3,559,524
TOTAL ITEMS CIRCULATED

2,363,824
TOTAL LIBRARY VISITORS

209,339
TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

San Mateo County Library was ranked 17th nationwide and 3rd in California among public libraries with similar budgets.

—Library Journal Star Libraries Rating

“Outside the Barrel Award”:
Honor for outstanding innovation and creativity in drive efforts.

19,000
POUNDS OF FOOD COLLECTED

—Second Harvest Food Bank of San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties

12

LIBRARIES

273,021

POPULATION OF SERVICE AREA

61%

LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS
AS A % OF POPULATION

8.7

LIBRARY VISITS PER CAPITA

705,595

ITEMS IN LIBRARY COLLECTION

1,233,517

eBRANCH VISITS

33,744

VOLUNTEER HOURS

6,884

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS OFFERED

287,820

PUBLIC COMPUTER HOURS

\$18.5

MILLION
OPERATING BUDGET

13

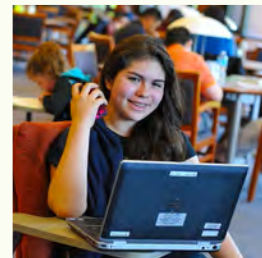
CIRCULATION PER CAPITA

94,120

NUMBER OF eBooks
AND AUDIO DOWNLOADS



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This report is available online at smcl.org.



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