



SAN MATEO COUNTY LIBRARY

2009-2010 Annual Report



Connect
Discover
Evolve



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

Kathy McKeithen, Atherton
Dave Warden, Belmont
Cy Bologoff, Brisbane
Laura Martinez, East Palo Alto
Pam Frisella, Foster City
Marina Fraser, Half Moon Bay
Nadia Holober, Millbrae
Pete DeJarnatt, Pacifica
Maryann Derwin, Portola Valley
Matt Grocott, San Carlos
Anne Kasten, Woodside
Carole Groom, San Mateo County



As you will see in the following pages, the San Mateo County Library had a tremendous year. With the support of the JPA Governing Board and the guidance of a customer-driven strategic plan, we continue to accomplish more even in these difficult economic times.

In the last year, over 2.3 million people visited our libraries and more than 3.9 million books and other library materials were checked out. Over 300,000 hours of computer access were provided, library staff answered more than 200,000 customer questions, and over 31,000 hours of service were provided to our communities.

One of our strategic goals is to create gathering spaces that promote a sense of community pride. We work to accomplish this by providing engaging events that respond to the needs of our users. This past year we offered over 6,500 programs and activities to more than 195,000 children, teens and adults.

We are fortunate and grateful to everyone who supports the San Mateo County Library. The outstanding contributions of our Friends groups and many volunteers are invaluable and enable us to continue to provide excellent library service.

As you read this year's Annual Report, I hope that you will get a sense of our collective achievements, as well as the individual commitment that our team of dedicated staff devote to the services we provide. Every day of the week, our twelve libraries, the eBranch virtual library, the bookmobile, and our community outreach partnerships provide library experiences that reach thousands and provide residents with an opportunity to Connect. Discover. Evolve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anne-Marie Despain".

Anne-Marie Despain
Director of Library Services

Healthy Communities

By focusing on programs that address the current, critical needs of our library users, we helped support the health and success of our communities.

In response to the difficult economic challenges our residents are facing, we responded by focusing our efforts on presenting "critical need" programs this year. Our libraries, a traditional source of free access to books, magazines, music, videos, and computers, have become lifelines, offering new programs on topics ranging from employment and job searching to health, finance and law. We also expanded our computer classes and added new classes in Spanish and Chinese.



Another important effort this past year has been an expansion of outreach services to reach non-users and raise awareness of the value of library services. The Library initiated several new partnerships and began providing family literacy services at Second Harvest food distribution sites and battered women's shelters. Additionally, we offered language literacy classes on-site at low-income health and nutrition clinics, women's shelters, immigrant housing centers, and other agencies serving immigrant populations. In these classes, 40% of the attendees received their first library card, indicating that we are successfully reaching new users.

eBranch

The development of our new library website reflects our commitment to offer virtual spaces that serve as gathering places where our diverse communities can connect and share.

Our new eBranch was launched in April and aims to provide the same kinds of services and interactions as a physical library visit. Every day, thousands of users visit www.smcl.org to reserve books, search for programs, check library hours, get homework help, access reference databases, and take advantage of the many other features the eBranch offers.

The dramatically redesigned website is inviting to all members of the community, easily navigated by adults, teens and children, offers opportunities for social interaction and participation, and conveys a sense of community.

Digital Storytelling Project

This project exemplifies our ongoing efforts to engage our communities in the library experience through innovative methods that explore and build local community.

In July 2009, the Library received a grant from the California State Library for the digital storytelling project "California of the Past." Considered a highly competitive award, SMCL won with its compelling description of a project entitled "Pacifica and Coastsides Stories," which focuses on stories from individuals residing in Pacifica, Half Moon Bay and the unincorporated communities on the coast.

Partnering with the Pacifica Historical Society, Senior Coastsiders and Puente de la Costa Sur, the Digital Storytelling Project gives community members an opportunity to spotlight something important from their life in the context of California history. To date, over 35 stories have been recorded and shown at two community presentations. These stories also become part of an expanding digital local history collection that will be available for future generations to see and hear.

Working Smart

Our commitment to pursuing technology that increases operational efficiencies assists in meeting present and future service demands.

An important technology initiative that was implemented this year was the installation of automated material handling systems (AMHS) at the Belmont, Foster City, Millbrae and San Carlos Libraries. This year, the San Mateo County Library circulated over 3.9 million items, 64% of this circulation took place at these four libraries.



This new technology will assist staff by checking in and sorting material into bins and helping to get items back on the shelves more quickly. It will also free up staff time to be redirected to working on the floor assisting customers. Customers are now able to return materials 24 hours per day, have their items instantly checked in and have the option of a receipt showing that the materials are returned.

San Mateo County Library At-A-Glance

Number of Service Outlets	12
Population of the Service Area	283,232
Number of Registered Borrowers	182,647
Borrowers as a % of Population	64%
Annual Circulation *	3,946,151
Circulation per Capita	13.9
Number of Library Visits	2,334,661
Visits per Capita	8.2
Number of Public Computers	335
Percent of Self-Check Usage	79%
Number of Events Offered	6,546
Program & Event Attendance	195,108
Number of Collection Volumes	814,943

***Does not include loans of electronic/digital books or "hits" on electronic databases.**

Generous Support

The work of our wonderful community members makes a tremendous difference in the lives of the citizens of San Mateo County.

San Mateo County Library is fortunate to have strong support from its Friends groups. The generous contributions made by the Friends allow the San Mateo County Library to enhance collections, summer reading, programs, support homework help, and specials events. In FY 2009-10, support totaled more than \$220,000.

The work of volunteers is also invaluable. To meet the rising demand in the areas of events, collections and literacy support, volunteers contributed 19,000 hours of service.

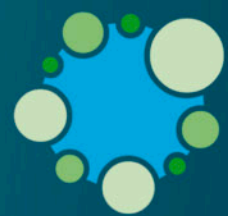
Measuring Performance

The figures below represent just some of the data collected by the San Mateo County Library. This information helps us understand where we are and which way we are going. It also assists in making sound decisions on issues that affect future service delivery.

Branch	Items Circulated	Library Card Holders	Library Visitors	Program Attendance
Atherton Library	129,249	8,443	80,603	7,254
Belmont Library	554,880	20,416	328,498	20,879
Brisbane Library	96,371	3,819	65,848	6,633
East Palo Alto Library	111,196	18,192	185,006	12,413
Foster City Library*	724,893	29,846	330,548	23,979
Half Moon Bay Library	407,706	17,979	170,895	23,120
Millbrae Library	633,241	18,479	475,262	29,215
Pacifica Libraries	402,542	25,341	188,267	21,735
Portola Valley Library	95,681	5,001	81,837	6,746
San Carlos Library	622,687	23,849	337,571	22,666
Woodside Library	112,105	9,189	90,326	14,469
Other **	41,293	2,030	---	5,999
Total	3,946,151	182,647	2,334,661	195,108

* Closed for three months

** Bookmobile and Other Literacy Programs



San Mateo County Library

The San Mateo County Library (SMCL) is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) 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.



Teen Leader Reader Program

This program is a wonderful example of a partnership that leveraged resources to deliver a unique learning experience to the children and teens of San Mateo County.

In collaboration with the County of San Mateo and the County Office of Education, the Library implemented a new “Teen Leader Reader” program to encourage a thriving community of readers. The program promotes literacy by pairing young students (2nd - 4th grade) with high school role models with whom they can practice reading skills to become successful lifelong readers. Results were very positive, showing that children’s weekly reading time increased 87% and their enjoyment of reading increased 52%. Sixty teens in the program volunteered a total of 879 hours and 92% completed their school’s community service requirement. The average parent satisfaction rate was 2.8 on a scale of 0 to 3 and comments included: “Halley went from not reading at home at all to reading 30 minutes every day”; “my child is more interested in reading other things”; “Brenda’s teacher said she improved her reading”.



Foster City Library Improvement

Our libraries are constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of our communities, and responding with improved facilities that redefine and recreate vibrant, vital learning spaces.

Following three months of extensive renovations, the Foster City Library re-opened this January. The Library opened its doors to a welcoming environment and a new library experience. The updated library features newly designed spaces for teens and casual readers, a colorful and playful children’s room, a dynamic marketplace that displays high interest books and encourages browsing, zoned public computers and laptops for checkout, self-service technology improvements and a one-point service desk.

Support for this important community project was provided by the City of Foster City, the San Mateo County Library JPA, and the Friends of the Foster City Library who successfully raised more than \$200,000.

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