

**San Antonio Public Library  
Director's Report  
August 27, 2008**

**Administration**

**Director's Office**

The City Manager's Proposed 2009 City Budget contained good news for the library, with increases of almost \$5 million, including \$1.24 million for operating resources and \$3.74 million for capital projects. The schedule of City Council District public budget hearings has been announced, and members of the Library Management Team are attending the meetings to be available as a resource and answer citizens' questions. Library Director Ramiro Salazar attended the District 1 meeting on August 19 and the District 3 meeting on August 20. Board Chair Jean Brady is scheduled to make a budget presentation to City Council on August 26, followed by Ramiro.

Negotiations continue on the City-County Interlocal Library Services Agreement. On August 1, Ramiro and Bexar County Information Technology Director Dr. David Morgan met with County Judge Nelson Wolff to discuss strategies to move the agreement forward to completion. Judge Wolff indicated that he awaited a County staff recommendation prior to making a final decision, and indicated that he would like to see the County receive more acknowledgement of its funding support for the library. Via email, on August 17 Dr. Morgan recommended that Commissioners Court approve continued funding of the San Antonio Public Library at the new proposed level of \$3.75 million.

As part of the initiative to inform the City Council on an ongoing basis about Library activities, programs and resources, on August 12, the Council Quality of Life Committee received a presentation about Summer Reading and District 8 Council Representative Diane Cibrian's "Read for the Gold" collaboration with the library. On August 13, the Council Intergovernmental Relations Committee received a report from Intergovernmental Relations Department Director Andrew Smith on the progress of the negotiations between the City and the County on the Interlocal Library Services Agreement.

On August 12, Ramiro attended a meeting held at the Mission San José Visitors Center for area stakeholders to discuss the new District 3 branch library planned for the former Mission Drive-In site. On August 13, he met with Council District 4 Chief of Staff to update him on progress on the library's 5-Point Internet Safety Plan and to discuss the upcoming renovations at the Pan American Branch Library.

KSAT-TV/Channel 12, which originally aired the Internet safety story, requested a follow-up interview with Ramiro on steps the library had taken in that area. He was interviewed by reporter April Molina on August 21, and discussed the 5-Point Internet Safety Plan during that interview.

Partnerships and collaborations have been central elements on the Library Director's calendar. On July 24, Ramiro Salazar hosted a luncheon to introduce new Deputy City Manager A.J. Rodríguez to library stakeholders.

Ramiro worked closely with the Council District 8 office and Councilwoman Diane Cibrian on the launch of the "Read for the Gold" initiative, including a blog by San Antonio Olympian Josh Davis. On July 24, he attended the news conference to kick off the initiative, and on August 4 and 5, he attended send-off parties for Josh at the Cody Branch Library and the Central Library.

On July 25, he attended the Literary Feast presented by the Grand Hyatt in support of the Library Foundation.

Ramiro attended the Library Foundation's August 4 news conference with Mayor Phil Hardberger and County Judge Nelson Wolff to announce the receipt of a near-\$1 million grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Service for the Foundation's "Librarians for the Future" scholarship program, held at the Central Library. He kicked off the August 20 Foundation news conference held to premiere its new "Born to Read" literacy advertising campaign.

On August 6 he attended the presentation by photographer Chris Jordan and a reception for Mr. Jordan sponsored by Texas Public Radio. Chris Jordan's presentation and the exhibit of his photographs were made possible by a collaboration among Texas Public Radio, the Southwest School of Art and Craft, and the San Antonio Public Library initiated by Library Public Relations Manager Beth Graham and arising out of the library's collaboration with Texas Public Radio on the Big Read 2008.

On August 8 Ramiro met with County Court-at-Law Judge Ramón Olivarri to discuss the judge's promotion of literacy, reading and the library in his sentencing of juvenile offenders who appear in his courtroom.

The South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce honored Congressman Ciro Rodríguez at a luncheon on August 19, which Ramiro attended as a guest of the City's Intergovernmental Relations Department, a major sponsor of the event.

Ramiro and Library Foundation Grant Coordinator Sarah Swinney met with Mark Richter, Executive Director of the San Antonio Opera, on August 20 to discuss possible future collaborations and a grant opportunity.

San Antonio author Sandra Cisneros honored Ramiro by inviting him to serve as a judge for her Alfredo Cisneros del Moral Foundation grant awards to support Texas authors.

### **Automation**

A total of 220 new public-access computers have been installed throughout system, upgrading outdated equipment. The 30 new early learning station computers for children have also been installed in all locations. Thirty laptops purchased for the in-branch checkout service have been imaged and a series of tests being performed on the laptops and the WiFi signal that will support the laptop checkout service.

### **Branch Services**

Branch Services Coordinator Joel Bangilan offered "emergency" storytime training for branch managers to help them when filling in during the absence of a children's librarian. He and Branch Services Coordinator Barbara O'Hara continued to formulate policies for the in-house laptop check-out pilot program. They are also compiling a branch staffing deployment study.

Joel supported SummerFest by serving as a facepainter.

He is coordinating a partnership with Goodwill Industries to provide information to participants of Goodwill's Job Readiness Training Sessions about the library as a resource for job skills and employment searches. He coordinated staff appearances and distributed library card applications and information at the District 5 Backpack Bash.

Branch Services Coordinator Barbara O'Hara has tendered her resignation, effective October 24, to pursue teaching and writing opportunities.

## **Children's Services**

The big event in Children's Services this month was SummerFest, held on August 2. More than 900 people attended the event – children, parents, grandparents, and quite a few foster parents and big brothers and sisters as well. Attendees enjoyed a bouncy castle on the lawn, face painting in the gallery, a Magik Theatre presentation in the auditorium, refreshments on the terrace, and craft activities scattered throughout the first three floors of the library. Almost all of the children's staff was involved in the day's festivities with additional assistance from six library employees outside of children's services and seven wonderful volunteers.

## Little Read Wagon

The community outreach calendar has been full. Corinne Sánchez participated in Barrio CommuniCare's information fair, where she had the opportunity to speak with food and nutrition program clients as well as other vendors. Cresencia Huff represented the library once again at the St. John United Methodist Church Food Pantry, issuing library cards and distributing information. The group of food pantry clients was much larger than in the past and had many new faces. Julia Lazarin staffed an information table and issued library cards at the San Antonio Independent School District Library Media Services professional development day.

Several branches allowed the use of their meeting rooms for early literacy workshops. Area child care providers were able to choose from among the Maverick, Bazan, Memorial, Cortez or Johnston branches where they received a valuable introduction to library resources, early literacy activities and training hours. Thank you to all the branch library staff!

Throughout the summer, four early childhood facilities received library books and storytime on a monthly basis. The library books were checked out using Youth Outreach cards assigned to each classroom within a child care center. Participating locations are the Avance SW 19 Street, Avance Frank Garrett, Healy Murphy and St. Paul Lutheran Centers. It has been very rewarding to enter a classroom and see the children automatically rush to their storytime area while telling each other, "It's the library lady!"

## **Facilities**

Work continues on installation of new fire alarm panels in the Central Library. Testing and system inspections are currently in process, as well as correcting system discrepancies that have been discovered.

## **Public Relations**

July and August saw the library receive great publicity.

District 8 City Council Representative Diane Cibrian announced her "Read for the Gold" partnership with the library and San Antonio Olympian Josh Davis at a news conference at City Hall on July 24. Despite heavy rain, the announcement received good media coverage.

On Thursday, July 31, Mayor Phil Hardberger and County Judge Nelson Wolff announced that the Library Foundation had received a grant totaling nearly \$1 million from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to fund the Foundation's "Librarians for the Future" scholarship program. The news conference was covered by the *Express-News* and all the San Antonio television stations.

The Chris Jordan photo exhibit *Running the Numbers* opened in the Central Library Gallery and at the Southwest School of Art and Craft (SWSAC) on August 3, followed on August 6 by a presentation by Chris Jordan at the Municipal Auditorium and a reception at the Central Library and the SWSAC. The exhibit received coverage in the *Express-News*, and Chris Jordan appeared on the KENS-TV morning show "Great Day SA." The Library partnered with Texas Public Radio and the SWSAC on this project.

On August 12, the Spurs Coyote visited Carver Branch Library to cut the ribbon on the Spurs Reading Corner in the children's area of the library. The Coyote's visit delighted a group visiting the branch from a child care center. WOAI-TV and KABB/Fox covered the event.

The Library Foundation premiered its "Born to Read" public service campaign at the Central Library on August 20 by donating a \$1,000 savings bond to Joslyn Rodríguez, one of the 2008 Born to Read babies. Working together, Kathy Rhoads from the Foundation and library Public Relations Manager Beth Graham achieved coverage by the *Express-News* (media columnist Jeanne Jakle devoted her entire column August 20 column to the campaign) and four television stations.

The North Side Independent School District invited Beth to speak to the district's high-school fine arts teachers at their August 20 in-service training on the subject of how to help the creative person stay organized. Her presentation was well-received, and the teachers were also interested in the library information she handed out.

Beth worked with representatives from the CE Group to set up a promotional partnership with the Grand Hyatt and Haagen-Dazs ice cream to raise awareness and support for research into honey bee decline. The Grand Hyatt sponsored ice cream parties at the Tobin Library at Oakwell and the Landa, Cody and Semmes branch libraries featuring Haagen-Dazs' new flavor "honey vanilla." Special thanks are due to the staff at these branches for arranging to feature stories about bees, honey, or ice cream at these events.

She has also been working on publicity for upcoming major library events, especially the Greg Mortenson appearance on August 29 and the opening of the *Winds and Words of War* exhibit in October.

April Molina from KSAT-12 television contacted Beth to set up a follow-up interview with the Library Director on the subject of Internet safety for children. The interview was scheduled for August 21 and ran that evening.

Beth has been asked to serve as Vice-President for Professional Development of the San Antonio Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

The library received a total of 18 instances of television coverage and six stories in the *Express-News*.

#### Graphic Design

Ana Farr and Tiffanie Wilson designed the poster and calendar for this year's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, the Chicano Renaissance, as well as the Children's Services Hispanic Heritage Month program, *Colores, Calaveras y Canciones*.

They designed the posters for the Chris Jordan exhibit as well as posters and flyers for the Greg Mortenson program. Upcoming projects include the Teen Film Fest, a poster for the voter registration campaign and the new quarterly library calendar of events.

#### **Teen Services**

##### Summer Reading

With 4,035 teens registered, 2008 saw the highest number of registration participants for the Teen Summer Reading Program since the program's systemwide inception in 2000. Teen services staff throughout the system offer special thanks to The Friends of the San Antonio Public Library for their continued generosity in support of Teen Summer Reading. This annual activity could not take place without their dedication to the youth of our community.

### End of Summer/ Back-to-School Event

The Teen GameFest Party took place on Saturday, August 9, in the Central Library auditorium. With 180 teens in attendance, the event featured video and board games, make-your-own-anime-character buttons, beaded bracelets and a representative from the Solid Waste Department who demonstrated simple and fun ways to recycle. Teens enjoyed pizza and door prizes. Teens who registered for the Teen Summer Reading Program were entered in to a drawing of an iPod Nano. The iPod raffle took place at 2pm, and the winner will be announced pending notification.

Special thanks to Teen Services Coordinator/Central Library Administrator Jennifer Velasquez, Teen Services Librarian Kathleen Fordyce and Teen Liaisons Tim Johnson [*Library Assistant/Guerra*], Heidi Novotny [*Librarian I /Las Palmas*] and Carlos Loera [*Library Assistant/Collins Garden*] for their invaluable assistance during this event. To view photos of this and other teen events, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/youthwired/>

### Breaking Dawn Release Party at Central Teen Services

Central Teen Services celebrated the much-anticipated release of the fourth installment in Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series by hosting a party. Teens that attended the party were able to check out a copy of *Breaking Dawn*. Activities such as Bella bracelets, *Twilight* Jeopardy, bubble magnets, Alice Cullen fortunes and Who Do You Choose button-making kept teens busy and excited. Sergio Chapa from LivetheDarkness Productions made teens into vampires and werewolves by painting their faces. Refreshments such as apples (from the cover of the first book) and "bloody" popcorn were served. Fifty-two teens attended the event. Special thanks go to Violeta Garza and Sylvia Pachecano [*Teen Services/Centra*], and Christina Hess [*Reference/Centra*] hosting the party.

### Teen Services @ San Japan

August 8 through 10, San Antonio played host to a historic event: the first-ever Japanese culture and Anime convention, called San Japan. Over 3,000 lovers of Japanese culture, anime, and manga attended this program at the Municipal Auditorium. Anime/Manga is wildly popular with teens and the conference presented a unique opportunity for outreach. Most booths at this convention sold something (Japanese merchandise, registration to other conventions, or fan art.) Teen Services created a "reading room" at the conference where teens could relax and browse through manga titles available at their local libraries. More 700 teens dropped by the reading room and chilled with the 200+ manga titles library staff had brought to display. This event sent the message to teens interested in anime/manga that the library has books, movies, programming and opportunities to participate - just for them. Several people confided that they were not aware that the library even had manga or anime, so this outreach event certainly served a purpose. Special thanks to Librarian Violeta Garza [*Teen Services/Centra*] (who spearheaded this successful program and attended the conference in full costume), Library Assistant Sylvia Pachecano [*Teen Services/Centra*], Librarian Martha Loewen [*Reference/Centra*], Librarian Connie Hejl [*Cody*] and Librarian Nohemí Lopez Rosdahl [*Collection Development/Centra*] for assisting with this outreach effort.

### Fall 2008

Plans are in the completion stage for Teen Fall 2008. Now that each location has its own video gaming equipment, courtesy of the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library, Fall activities will feature weekly video game open play plus special activities for September (Hispanic Heritage Month), October (Teen Read Week: Zombie Prom!), and November (Indigenous Cultures Month.)

### Teen Liaisons

The Teen Liaisons met on Wednesday, August 20 in the Children's Story Room. They discussed Teen Summer Reading and finalized the Fall 2008 schedule of events. They also discussed changing the regularly scheduled meeting day to one with less scheduling conflicts for the group.

## **Kudos to staff - Customer comments**

**Richard García** called to declare his long-time professional admiration for his library's maintenance worker Alicia [Moreno, *Memoria*]. He wished to convey his appreciation of her constant efforts to keep his library clean and welcoming. He has mentioned this to Branch Manager Melva Ramirez and the District 5 Council office, too. He always sees her working away and would go further and describe her as "dedicated non-stop to her duties and passionate about her work".

Mr. García said he was glad not only to see his tax dollars at work, but also seeing them enthusiastically hard at work! He hopes that she will receive recognition as an asset to the City of San Antonio! August 7, 2008

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"RE: Brook Hollow Library Adult Reading Program

Thanks for the invite...it gave me an opportunity to tell you how much fun I have had reading your selections for this summer reading program. I didn't get to do any real traveling this summer, but I have experienced travel through your well-put-together and thought-out journey. I have loved every book I have read thus far and will still try to read them all. Thanks again." – **Vivian** [no last name given], August 3, 2008

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"Dear Mr. Kaminski: I've been meaning to write this letter for a long time regarding a wonderful librarian named Betsy Dalton and am finally putting pen to paper (or rather computer to printer).

"My family befriended Betsy a few years ago when she was working at the Oakwell Library. Each Wednesday, my two children (now ages 6 and 9) and I would go to the library and look for new books. Betsy always enthusiastically greeted us, asked the children what was new and made us feel welcome, making the library a fun place to go. But she has turned into a Godsend. My son is a voracious but picky reader. While at Oakwell, Betsy would take the time to ask Ryan questions about his likes and dislikes, and then the two of them would be on their way pulling books off the shelf and deciding if Ryan would enjoy reading them.

"When Betsy was transferred to the San Pedro Branch, we followed her. It is not convenient, but nobody works as hard as Betsy to find an appealing book for a child. We visit her once a month and she always has a stack of books waiting for my children that she thinks they will like. She also goes above and beyond. Recently Ryan was trying to find two books he wished to read, but was unable to locate in the card catalog. He emailed Betsy and she replied to him that night (at 10:15 p.m.!) to explain why he was unable to find them. Then she offered to get the books through interlibrary loan. The next day came another e-mail saying she put in an order for the books and they would be sent to Oakwell, which is more convenient for us. Honestly, I attribute much of my children's love of reading to Betsy's help in finding them books they enjoy.

"I hope the library realizes what a jewel they have in Betsy. It is obvious she loves her work and it is reflected in the joy of her young patrons and their desire to explore the world of books." – **Carolyn Wheat**, July 31

## **Committees and Work Teams**

This section offers a regular update on initiatives undertaken by library staff teams:

### **RFID**

Twelve branch libraries are currently using self-check stations and an additional branch has been completely tagged and should be using self-check within the next two weeks. The Pan American branch library is also almost completely tagged. At the Central Library, only half of the 700s [Arts

and Recreation], books in Spanish and children's media remain to be tagged and plans are underway to install the self-check stations. The project will be completed on schedule or slightly ahead of schedule, thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers in placing RFID tags in library materials, making building modifications and installing the necessary data connections and power outlets.

## **Central Library**

### **Children's Services Department**

August is an unusual month in the Children's Department. While there is little programming, there is much cleaning and reorganizing as summer winds down and anticipation of the new school year grows. This August, in addition to reorganizing all the craft and programming materials in the supply closet, the staff developed a "dream team" approach to RFID tagging of the remaining audio visual materials on the third floor. By working in pairs, the time-consuming task of removing security cases, adding tags and then replacing the cases was accomplished much more smoothly. Staff are happy (actually elated) to report that the end is in sight. Additionally, they are very proud to assert that the Central children's collection has never looked better, due to the careful weeding that was done during the RFID project.

### **Reference Department**

Adam Spana conducted three outreach events to promote the library's online databases and services for educators and students. On July 26, Mr. Spana represented the library as an exhibitor at the annual San Antonio HERO Homeschool Roundup, and delivered a one-and-a-half hour seminar on the use of the library's online resources for homeschool educators and students, a combined audience of 53 adults, 20 teens and 17 children. On August 8, Mr. Spana went to the Great Northwest Branch Library to present a two-hour seminar for homeschool educators and students (audience, 25 adults and 15 teens). On August 14, Mr. Spana went to the San Antonio Independent School District's Bonham Academy to train 30 elementary school teachers in the use of education-specific databases, including the library's online tutoring service.

Mr. Spana received no less than 6 rounds of applause and a gold medal from his audience at Bonham Academy.

Stephanie Hatch has gone to two New Teacher and School Librarian Orientations and one back-to-school fairs in the San Antonio Independent School District and the North East Independent School District. So far, she has spoken to more 100 teachers and librarians about the library's services for them and their students.

Dan Stanford represented the Library at the 19 annual celebration of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He spoke with many vendors and members of the disabled community in San Antonio concerning SAPL services.

### **Teen Services Department**

Mondays with Librarian I Violeta Garza: A well-attended Guitar Hero tournament was held on August 4. There were several contestants for each category, ranging from easy to expert. Guitar Hero open-play for teens takes place every Monday at two o'clock.

Tuesdays with Librarian II Kathleen Fordyce: Teens have fun playing Dance Dance Revolution every Tuesday at two o'clock. The game gives teens a good workout too, as they quickly step in time to the moving arrows in the game.

Wednesdays with Library Assistant Sylvia Pachecano: Every Wednesday Sylvia sets up the Game Cube for teens to play Mario Kart Double Dash and Super Smash Brothers Melee.

Thursdays with Library Assistant Regina Almanza: On July 24, teens were given handouts along with scissors and glue to make a 3-D paper craft. For the craft on July 31, teens used glow-in-the-

dark fabric paints to personalize their own t-shirts. One teen played a game of tic-tac-toe with a staff member to decorate his (the game was a draw.) Air-dry clay, mosaic tiles and small mirrors were set out on July 7 for teens to make a small hanging mirror. The somewhat messy craft brought out some hidden artistic instincts in some teens. On July 14, teens consulted *The Cute Book* by Aranzi Aronzo to get ideas for cute figures to make out of felt. On July 21, teens engaged in an ever-popular teen craft, making earrings.

On Fridays, teens play board games, such as Monopoly, Jenga, Scrabble and Sorry.

### **Texana/Genealogy Department**

Deborah Countess presented a workshop on "Beginning Genealogy" to twenty-seven participants on August 2.

On August 5 Sylvia Reyna presented a workshop on USGenweb in the training room to seventeen individuals.

James and Doris Menke loaned Texana/Genealogy approximately 130 tapes of speaker's presentations that they had taped for the San Antonio Historical Association from 2000 through May 2008 and the Southwest Vaqueros from 1990 through July 2008. Copies of these will be made and will be available to in-library patrons. Mrs. Menke has allowed the copying of thirty-seven transcripts she has completed, and volunteers and staff of Texana/Genealogy will transcribe the rest. Mr. and Mrs. Menke also donated twelve tapes of speakers at the Castro Colonies Historical Association.

On August Matt DeWaelche and Frank Faulkner set up a display at MacArthur High School for North East Independent School District social studies teachers. The displays featured material on the World War I exhibit coming in October. Allison Hays Lane, who is co-coordinating the World War I project, was there with teacher packets and a sample "footlocker" to go with the exhibit. Andrew Crews created a PowerPoint from the World War I posters and San Antonio photographs to run during the day. Pamphlets, displays, and other materials describing the holdings of Texana/Genealogy that could be useful to teachers and their students were made available. Sylvia Reyna helped put together the displays.

The Texas Builders Exchange has donated their weekly *News Bulletin* from 1920 to present, as well as board minutes and other items. These are not indexed in any way. A co-operative venture is planned that will allow digitizing of the *News Bulletin* and making it word searchable.

Deposition tapes and paper copies of the exhibits of the Alamodome lawsuits and the records of the City/County Government Committee have been transferred from Texana/Genealogy to the City Records Facility.

### **Web Services**

As part of the redesign project, the Web Services team and committee members are working on content and design considerations for Frequently Asked Questions. This information will address the most common questions concerning a variety of topics, including the patron accounts, renewals, holds, databases, downloads, fines/fees, and library services. Patrons will be allowed to navigate to the most common information via the main web template, or they will be allowed select and view other information based on one of the categories.

Juanita López has worked to support the needs of the Summer Reading program by acquiring daily totals and assisting with the selection of the Teen Services contest winner. She has also worked to create web pages to support the Chris Jordan exhibit and SCORE (Counselors to America's small business). The team continues to provide content updates for news releases, director's reports, construction, and personnel updates.

## **Branch Libraries**

### **Bazan**

On July 26 the Bazan Branch Library held its Guitar Hero III Tournament. Both teens and younger patrons who had been coming in preparation for the tournament very excited to be participating in the contest, and found it to be as much fun as they had anticipated. Attendance was greater than expected: 33 people attended, with 18 participating in the game. The branch provided refreshments during the contest, as well as a variety of prizes. The tournament was so well received that staff have decided to continue holding tryout sessions every Thursday and every other Saturday to keep participants' skills up. Another tournament will be held in late December. Thanks the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library for providing the funds in for all branch libraries to purchase game equipment; this is an innovation that has made a big difference with teens and their parents. The purchase of this particular game also has paved the way for teens to recognize their library as a location they can call their own! More thanks are due to Charles Tucker, who organized the first tournament.

With funds from the 2007 Bond Election, the Bazan Branch Library is undergoing some plumbing repair and landscaping work. Larger pipes are being laid to carry rain water away from the building to the street and parking lot. Once the plumbing/storm sewer work is complete, new sod will be planted.

### **Brook Hollow**

Circulation Attendant Kimberly King has been accepted to the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman's University.

James Sontag, who has worked at Brook Hollow for 14 years, will begin working at the San Pedro Branch starting in September.

Brook Hollow's *La Tertulia*, a Spanish language book group, had their annual poetry reading in July. The event was very well attended.

Children's Librarian Ruth Turner worked at SummerFest and was delighted to see several children from Brook Hollow at the festivities. Children who registered at Brook Hollow for the Summer Reading Program continue to turn in their reading logs daily. At this writing, Brook Hollow is seeing a 46% completion rate, one of the highest in the SAPL system. In the fall Brook Hollow will be adding an additional library lapsit storytime group and a family fun craft to the weekly lineup of activities for children.

Teen Services Librarian Mary Smith hosted a very successful showing of the movie *Howl's Moving Castle* as well as a discussion of the book by the same title written by Diana Wynne Jones. The teen book group has continued to grow over the summer. Teen events have been rescheduled to Wednesday afternoons instead of Thursday afternoons for the fall.

All the librarians at Brook Hollow are busily planning fall activities for all ages.

### **Carver**

Nearly 50 people turned out for Summer Cinema late last month, making the last screening of the July the largest audience so far for the special summer program. Staff who had been working hard to cultivate the audience and who had been noticing increases each week were ecstatic with the sharp jump. "We knew it was getting popular when the numbers began to grow and people started calling us to ask what the next film would be," said a Carver worker. "To have forty-six people was outstanding for us – this is not a huge branch!"

Branch Manager Ronnie Delgado is studying the viability of continuing the program after school resumes later this month. An informal patron survey is being taken to determine whether their school-year activities will allow them to continue the patronizing the screenings.

Former interim Children's Librarian Amy Williamson was promoted to Librarian II and named permanent children's librarian for the branch. In July, Amy's programs showed impressive attendance numbers. Animal themes proved to be big with youngsters who jammed the meeting room on Tuesday mornings. During summer vacation, story times averaged about twenty-five youngsters and their caregivers. But on Tuesday, July 29, Amy watched with delight as her audience nearly tripled, and 72 children sat down to enjoy story time.

Friday, August 8, was a busy day for Carver staff, which represented the branch at two outreach events. Public Service Manager Ronnie Delgado was invited to attend the Antioch Community Transformation Network's (ACTN) fifth annual "Back to School Community Festival". More than 1,500 people attended the event, with some 35 organizations as exhibitors. At the conclusion of the festival, it was estimated that nearly 500 library card applications had been dispensed while about 400 maps were handed out.

ACTN's goal was to provide 1,000 youths with backpacks, school supplies and uniforms, as well as offering entertainment, health screenings, and information on social services. The festival backdrop provided a perfect outreach opportunity for the Carver staff to introduce the library and its services to residents new to the service area as well as locals who were unaware of features the branch offers. That same day, Library Assistants Melody Smith and Deanna Sutton represented the branch at the Back to School Jamboree at the Claude W. Black Community Center, which attracted several hundred children and their parents.

Carver Library staff feels fortunate to have a devoted Friends organization offering the branch support. On Saturday, August 9, the Friends of Carver Library hosted its Fashion Extravaganza and Talent Show at the Barbara Jordan Community Center to raise funds for the branch. H-E-B donated a cake. Members of the community took participated in the show, strutting down the aisle sporting the latest apparel and delighting the crowd with vocal performances and a praise dance. Friends President Dorothy W. Smith called the event a success. Impressed with the turnout and proceeds generated, the group immediately began planning for another benefit to be held sometime next year.

### **Cody**

Cody was pleased with the number of participants that signed up for Read Across Texas. Staff are still seeing quite a few children bringing in their completed reading logs to receive their free books. Cody finished off the summer with two well-received programs, *Donnabelle the Clown* and "Bugs, Bugs, Bugs," sponsored by the AgriLife Extension Program. Cody rounded off family movie day with *The Bee Movie* and *Enchanted*.

Cody also partnered with KLRN to workshops for parents and caregivers entitled *A Place of Our Own*. The workshops focused on storytelling and preventing childhood obesity.

On Monday, August 4, Olympic gold medalist swimmer Josh Davis helped the library kick off District 8 Council Representative Diane Cibrian's *Read for the Gold* program, which runs through August 23. Mr. Davis spoke to attendees about his experiences as an Olympic competitor and winner and allowed people to hold and wear his medals. Mr. Davis traveled to Beijing to watch the Olympics and posted items on his blog describing his travels and experiences. As well as hosting his blog, the library posted recommended reading lists that children would enjoy.

On August 9, local chess enthusiast Frank Salinas hosted the program "A Competitive Scholastic Edge through Chess" for 35 elementary-school-age children. He focused on using chess strategies as a way to improve skills in math, logic, and spatial reasoning.

Teen Triathlon Tuesday wrapped up with a big triathlon playoff. Teens competed on Saturday, August 16, for bragging rights. The top three competitors received prizes. All contestants received special T-shirts designed by Department Systems Aide Valerie Cruz and paid for by the Cody Friends.

Teen Services Librarian Connie Hejl attended the San Japan anime conference to help promote teen services at the library. Attendees were surprised to find that the library carries many anime and manga titles. The manga reading room successfully informed the public of the many services available to teens.

Volunteers and staff of schools, churches and nonprofit organizations learned how to research potential funders and how to write grant proposals in a day-long workshop taught by Ramona Lucius on July 26. Ten people, representing a variety of organizations, attended and made the discussion lively as well as informative.

Pompadours and curled lips were *de rigueur* in August as Cody celebrated National Elvis Week. To help kick off the event, patrons were asked to vote for their favorite Elvis movie. With 43 votes cast, *Viva Las Vegas* won the election and was shown during the Elvis Party held August 11. The family-friendly event featured Elvis crafts, in which children made hound dog masks and crowns; an Elvis imitator contest; and Elvis Bingo, in which the bingo squares were represented by song titles. A "Name That Elvis" game had contestants selecting from three Elvises (Presley, Stojko and Costello) to answer trivia questions. Volunteer Chip "Elvis" Turner served as MC, and the Friends of the Cody Branch Library provided funding for the treats, which included the legendary peanut butter and banana sandwiches. The biggest hit of the evening was ice cream and toppings provided and served by Haagen-Dazs as part of a partnership to promote research into honey bee decline. More than 85 people attended the event, and several requested that Cody offer a similar party in January to celebrate Elvis' birthday.

Since Cody will be closed for renovations sometime in September or October, the branch celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month early with a game of *Lotería* on August 23. Cody volunteer Kat Lowe called the game in Spanish. Contestants of all ages enjoyed the small prizes, including notepads, mouse pads and key chains.

### **Collins Garden**

Collins Garden enjoyed a very high completion rate – more than 30% – for summer reading this summer due to the active involvement of local day cares.

Collins Garden has put up a display honoring Olympic athletes and patrons, especially children, are enjoying learning about both summer sports and China.

Collins Garden's new display easel is getting attention. Collins Garden's customers appreciate the opportunity to be able to easily make note of upcoming events. Staff hope that this announcement easel will be helpful in increasing attendance at branch programming.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Greater San Antonio presented the financial workshop, *Money Principles for Today* to help participants learn techniques for stretching a dollar as well as how to set up a financial plan.

Librarian Amy Cline joined Bazan Branch Manager Raymond Villarreal to make a presentation at the San Antonio Independent School District's new teacher orientation at Page Middle School. They spoke to about 80 teachers about SAPL's online tutoring database, how to schedule school visits, how to get a library card, and other services the library system provides.

Library Assistant/Teen Liaison Carlos Loera reports that teen program attendance continues to be strong, especially when Guitar Hero is the featured event. Twenty-two teens have claimed their prizes for completing the teen summer reading program, *Teen EcoSummer*. Eight of our Collins Garden's teen regulars were able to attend the Game Fest at Central.

The AWE computer has been generating a lot of interest among our younger customers as well as the middle-school crowd.

An outside trash receptacle has approved and installed at the branch. Staff and patrons have been pleasantly surprised at the tremendous reduction in the amount of trash accumulating around the entryway, which previously seemed to be always collecting trash.

### **Cortez**

KENS-TV Assistant Director of Technology Jerry Paonessa presented a program about digital television on Thursday, August 14. The program included a question-and-answer period about the conversion to digital television, a digital converter box demonstration, and free coupons worth \$40 toward the purchase of a digital converter box.

The Cortez Branch hosted two Texas Two-Step dance classes this month. The program was a hit with all the participants! The branch will continue to host monthly dance classes.

Cortez has had more than two and a half times the number of children's summer reading program registrations, and has more than tripled program completions compared to the last summer that Cortez was open. Children continue to register and report completions. Compared to spring storytimes, the branch averaged five times more storytime participants in the summer. The AWE Early Learning Center computer was installed on August 12. Children and parents are enthusiastically enjoying the new computer.

### **Forest Hills**

The Forest Hills Branch Library is pleased to welcome new Children's Librarian, Cindy Moreno, who transferred from Thousand Oaks Branch Library. Cindy plans to add a Library Lapsit program to the fall storytime schedule.

As of August 14, a total of 1,260 children were registered for the Summer Reading Program at the Forest Hills Branch. Final completion numbers will be tallied at the end of August. In terms of registration numbers, Forest Hills is in the number six spot, a considerable increase over last year's registrations.

The final summer storytime and B.A.C.K.Pack storytime were held on July 29. Storytime had an attendance of 23, while the B.A.C.K.Pack storytime had an attendance of 34. An end-of-Summer-Reading celebration, with snacks, was provided to those that attended. In addition, the teen program on that day had 12 participants in their last activity of the summer.

Branch Manager Roberto Zapata and Library Assistant Veronica Franco attended a Family Fun Day sponsored by PBS at Ingram Park Mall. An information table was set-up with a craft activity, flyers, and the opportunity for children to sign up for the Summer Reading Program. Approximately 616 children and parents stopped by the table to get information about the library, its services and to participate in the craft.

Pedro Ruíz spoke on the Aztecs and their culture to eleven attendees at a meeting of the Missions and Presidios Book Club on July 24.

On July 29 the directors of the Woodlawn Hills Neighborhood Association held their regular monthly meeting at the branch.

A total of eleven members attended the regular meeting of Keetowah, a group promoting education and knowledge of indigenous cultures, on August 4.

On August 9 Ralph Thompson was the discussion leader when the Contrarian Viewpoint Book Club met to discuss *Train Wreck* by Bill Press.

The Thunderbird Hills Neighborhood Association Board of Directors met at Forest Hills on August 12.

On August 14, Project Mom, a not-for-profit organization designed to aid mothers needing assistance, began meeting at the Forest Hills Branch Library on a trial basis. If the meetings are successful they will continue on a weekly schedule.

The Forest Hills Anime club held a screening and discussion of the film *Moon Phase, Volume I* at their August 19 meeting.

### **Great Northwest**

August has been a very busy month for the branch, with middle- and high-school students have been coming in to find their assigned school summer reading lists. The staff put together a special display with all the books on it. Many new library cards have been issued to new residents of the neighborhood.

Children's Services at Great Northwest had a busy summer, and staff want to thank the 24 wonderful volunteers (Gabby Martines, Cody Thaler-Evans, John Sobkoviak, Heather Holland, Victor Carreon, Sarah Farias, Paul Lopez, Laurie Cillessen, Kristy and Misty Raley, Benjamin Todd, Priscilla, Karen and Allison Whisler, Bonni Kolczak, Kevin Castaneda, Elizabeth Smith, Roberto Bernal, Steven, Pauline, and Natalie Bosmans, Russell Smith, Rachael Baldwin, and Robert Potter) who contributed to its success. They helped with the puppet shows, relay races, crafts, square dances and many other requirements involved in managing the more than 5,000 people who attended children's programs this summer. The Great Northwest Library Friends provided them a western style thank-you with lunch from Rudy's and Bill Miller's Bar-B-Que and a colored bandana filled with candy. Afterwards, they checked out the new video game Dance Dance Revolution and Guitar Hero. The party ended with a boot stomping square dance for a grand finale!

Teen Services Liaison Patricia King and Department Systems Aide Danny Duran visited Warren High School for "Prep Days" events on August 11, 12 and 13. On August 15, Mr. Duran visited Taft to talk to students about the many services the library has to offer. They spoke with nearly 400 students and handed out brochures created by Mr. Duran to attract the teens to the library. Many students were thrilled to hear that the library is more than just books. They learned about the online tutoring, computers, gaming and different teen events.

The branch staff would also like to acknowledge the hard work of several volunteers, including Robert Potter and Matilda Martínez, who kept up with the thousands of returned items in June and July. The circulation work room has a sorting system which worked extremely well, and so shelving was never more very far behind.

### **Igo**

Igo hosted computer classes in July and August with great attendance. Librarians Michelle Ricondo, Haley Holmes, and Cara Waits offered library-specific classes including Library Online 101, Downloadable Media, and Live Homework Help respectively. Library Online 101 introduced patrons to the library catalog, interlibrary loan, and various databases. Downloadable Media is an overview of what SAPL offers patrons as well as the basics of how to download at home. Each librarian developed the class and handouts. Patrons were excited to see these librarian-led classes and asked when the staff would be teaching more.

The Summer Reading B.A.C.K.Pack programs wound up with a hoedown for children where they made cowboy paper bag body puppets. The Igo Adult Summer Reading Program, "Passport to Summer Reading," concluded with a party to announce the winners of the grand prize drawings for a Tiffany bracelet and Altex gift card, donated by our sponsors. The Adult Summer Reading Program was very well received with 156 patrons participating. Igo staff plan to continue the program next summer with a new theme.

Igo hosts a range of meeting room users every month. Alamo Hoot, a harmonica society, has been meeting monthly and invites library patrons to listen in on their performances. Igo also hosted the City's

"Our Part of Town" auditions on August 2. There were many enthusiastic participants, including a teen rock band.

### **Johnston**

The Johnston Library Friends group held a book sale at the branch on July 25 and 26 that cleared \$640. The Friends were ably assisted by several neighborhood teen volunteers.

### **Landa**

It has been a busy, exciting summer for the Landa Branch Library. There was tremendous participation in both the children's and teen's summer reading programs. A total of 742 children signed up for the children's program, and 120 teens registered for the teen program, making this the highest teen participation ever. The branch has also had an increase in attendance at both story times and teen programs. On August 2, six teens attended a *Breaking Dawn* party presented by Library Assistant Brooke Ballard.

Restoration has been completed on the broken marble chair and it has been delivered and set up in the branch, where it completes the three-piece furniture set the Landas purchased in Rome in the 1920s and used in the entry of their home. It is a beautiful piece of furniture and adds elegance to the branch.

With the recent rains, the gardens have really come into their own. Plants are blooming and the landscape has coalesced into a lush, coherent whole. The Landa staff invites everyone to drop by.

### **Las Palmas**

Thanks go to Librarian Heidi Novotny, creator of the Beijing 2008 Olympics display featuring the *Read for the Gold* blog by Olympian Josh Davis. She added the Olympic mascots Huanhuan, Yingying, Nini, Jinjing, and Beibei to the display of Olympic history, sports, and China.

Heidi assisted with the library's reading room at the San Japan manga/anime convention. Teens stopped by the library's display of titles, and she had the opportunity to learn more about this genre that has such a strong teen following.

Hurricane Dolly brought enough rain to the Las Palmas area to determine that most of the previous spot roof repairs were sound. Thanks to Richard Denning and the Facilities staff (José Valdez, Rudy Díaz, Jimmy Arceo, Greg Cortinas, Ruben Carasco and José Hernández), the damaged ceiling tiles in the meeting room and in the library have been replaced, light covers have been replaced, and other water-damaged areas have been repaired. Preparation is under way for the library interior and the meeting room to be painted. The weekend of August 23, Las Palmas custodians Lazaro Navarro and Joe Roque used the new extractor equipment to clean the library carpet.

Both children and teen readers have been coming in to present their reading logs and collect their book. This summer, area centers (St. Jude, Madonna, Good Samaritan, and Mirasol PCI) partnering with Las Palmas played a role in helping over 300 children earn their reading certificates.

Las Palmas children are enjoying the Early Learning Center unit; it has proven so popular that it has been necessary to initiate the "timer" module so that all have a chance to play the games!

### **Maverick**

Led by Amy Roberts and Esperanza Sonnen, Maverick staff registered the second highest number of Summer Reading participants in both the children's and the teen categories. A total of 1,580 children signed up for the program, and 339 teens joined in the fun.

The branch's newest display is a collection of artwork by staff member Melissa Backhus.

The Ladies' Choice and Wednesday Book Clubs are maintaining a steady and enthusiastic membership. The branch's other sponsored groups – Knitters, Chess Clubs, Fiction Writers and the Needlework Guild

– are doing well. Maverick also had the opportunity to welcome a Girl Scout meeting and a World Student Exchange meeting.

Special programs included money management, ukulele classes, piano classes, Little Read Wagon, first time homebuyer's grants, and school readiness programs for parents.

### **McCreless**

The McCreless Branch Library celebrated the end of the Summer Reading Program in a big way. With a generous donation from the McCreless Friends, the branch was able to hire the services of a story-telling clown, as well as treating all the attendees to pizza, soda and cinnamon slices from Domino's.

Tricia Masterson had another successful Young Adult event featuring the game Guitar Hero.

The branch continues to make use of their movie license and showed *Spiderwick Chronicles*.

Children's Librarian Beverly Bixler not only had her usual popular storytimes at the branch but also did an outreach event for "Kid's Night" at a local Chik-Fil-A.

Branch Services Coordinator Barbara O'Hara visited the branch three times in the last month and in the process visited with all the staff and presented the motivational "Fish" workshop.

On August 4 the branch hosted the meeting of the Highland Hills Neighborhood Association and Branch Manager Cammie Gunter was presented a check for \$100 to give to the Friends of McCreless.

### **Memorial**

Summer programming has been a huge success at the Memorial Branch Library, ending with the movie *Grease*, which patrons and staff attended dressed in '60s costumes. Several drawings for free books were held for the last two children's storytime sessions. The books were donated by Children's Librarian Sheila Acosta.

The Memorial Library received one of the many early literacy computers and it debuted with great success.

Regal theatres donated 200 posters for the movie *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants II*.

Communication has begun between the Memorial and San Pedro Libraries for a possible chess match and cross-promotion of events at both branches.

The book and movie club continues with Librarian I Maria Stroligo and Library Assistant Susan Francis-Maldonado planning the events and hosting the programs.

Children's Librarian Sheila Acosta and Branch Manager Melva Ramirez each attended back-to-school fairs for the Edgewood Independent School District and City Council District 5. Melva also began attending monthly meetings at the Neighborhood Place, which promotes children's services on the West Side of San Antonio.

The Memorial Amigos/Friends of the Memorial Branch Library, are preparing for their fall book sale and literacy fair with the Library and the City's Department of Community Initiatives. The event will take place on September 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

René Leija, who had previously worked at the Memorial Branch Library as a part-time Circulation Assistant, has been promoted and returns to Memorial as a Library Assistant.

### **Pan American**

Twelve attendees made bluebonnets during the last Summer Reading Family Fun Time on July 28. On July 30, 40 participants enjoyed "The Case of the Disappearing Books" and "Monster Ready." A group of 18 shared "Back-to-School Blues" on July 31.

Teens ended their summer Wednesdays with games on July 30.

Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Serrano has been at Pan American since July 21, helping with the RFID tagging of materials for the self-check out system and the security system. She has completed all the juvenile non-fiction, picture books, paperbacks, audio books on cassettes and CD, reference, and is currently working on the media. Before Elizabeth's arrival, branch staff had already completed the adult fiction, adult non-fiction, young adult and juvenile fiction, beginners, and juvenile biographies. Pan American should be able to go live with self-check-out as soon as the gates and systems are installed. Staff members familiar with the system are already using the check-out and check-in process at the circulation desk.

### **San Pedro**

Thursday Night Chess, hosted by Digital Systems Assistant and chess enthusiast Alejandro "Hondo" Aguilar, continues to draw a steady group of 5 or 6 players, both young and old. This program was the brain child of patron Roberto Botello who attends regularly.

Library Assistant Cynthia Cruz continues to host the monthly Knitting and Crochet Night which drew 3 attendees this last month.

On August 28, Children's Librarian Betsy Dalton will present a storytime to three classes of children at VIA's Child Development Center and to 3 classes of children at San Antonio College's Child Development Center.

### **Semmes**

Summer Reading wound down amid excitement and high attendance at storytimes. Children's Librarians Randi Jones and Carrie Vance participated in SummerFest at Central on August 2. Carrie's husband even helped out with facepainting at the party.

The San Antonio Audubon Society gave a presentation on area birds for an enthusiastic teen audience in July. Teen Services Liaisons and Librarians Debye Nicholl and Bobbye Hernandez ended the summer by hosting two environmentally friendly movies for teens, *Go Further* with Woody Harrelson and National Geographic's *Six Degrees Could Change the World*. Many more teens participated in Semmes Teen Summer Reading this year than in the past, much to the delight of the branch staff.

Adult Services Librarian Oscar González continued his outreach program with the Legacy Retirement Community. The August selection was *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks. The group reads the book, watches the movie, and holds a discussion afterwards. This outreach continues to be a popular program. Oscar also holds monthly open mike and poetry nights that continue to draw poetry lovers of all ages, as well as a Photo Club focusing on beginning photographic skills. Also in August, Oscar gave a tour of the current Blue Star Art Gallery Exhibit by Rolando Briseño for the McNay Art Museum Docents.

Every other month, the Semmes Stargazers meet to discuss the latest astronomical news and view the heavens. Circulation Assistant Joseph Knight and patron Mark Goll regularly team up for the presentations with their own material and telescopes. This program consistently draws a large number of astronomy buffs to watch the night skies.

Other popular programs at Semmes are the monthly family movies known as Semmes Cinema and Semmes Evening Cinema. The August family movie was *Ella Enchanted*, and the Evening Cinema presentation was *The Hours*.

### **The Tobin Library at Oakwell**

Customers of the Tobin Library at Oakwell were apparently sad to see the end of their weekly Thursday afternoon B.A.C.K.Pack events. Or perhaps they just really like ice cream! In any case, two weeks after Summer Reading officially drew to a close, the August 14 Haagen-Dazs Ice Cream Party drew one of the biggest crowds of the summer. The event was sponsored by Haagen-Dazs as part of a project to protect the disappearing honey bee population, as the honey produced by the bees is a key ingredient in nearly forty percent of the company's flavors. A representative from the Grand Hyatt explained the importance of saving the disappearing bees and Children's Librarian Debra Bryant read a couple of bee stories. Party guests were treated to sundaes featuring the new "Vanilla Honey Bee" flavor, with all the toppings. Though there was reportedly enough to go around at the Cody party, ice-cream-loving Tobin/ Oakwellers cleaned out every last scoop, leaving a handful of adults (mostly staff members!) with their ice cream cravings unsatisfied.

Debra also did some late summer outreach to the San Antonio Youth Center at the Bethany United Methodist Church. Speaking to a group of twenty-nine students, she promoted all of the benefits of owning a library card, discussed Internet safety, and shared a "fish" story and related drawing activity.

Approximately one hundred ESL students attending enrichment classes at Garner Middle School toured the branch during a two-day period. Teen Services Librarian Sherrie Langston Hardin put together a scavenger hunt to offer them hands-on experience in exploring library resources.

### **Westfall**

August has been a steady month at the branch. Summer Reading is winding down, but Internet usage remains high. This month marked the return of free computer classes at Westfall, which are proving to be very popular. Classes began on August 5 and will finish up on August 23. In addition to the regular slate of DCI classes, the Texana/Genealogy department is teaching three classes on Genealogy at the branch. Special thanks to Texana are in order for agreeing to come out and teach, and to Andrea Department Systems Aide Silva for arranging to have the classes.

On August 6 Consumer Credit Counseling presented a program entitled, "Money Principles for Today." About six people took advantage of this class. Participants were given the opportunity to learn about basic financial principles such as household budgets and different types of saving plans.

Patrons concerned about the upcoming switch from an analog to a digital television signal were invited to come to the "DTV Transition" presentation on August 21. Details about the upcoming February 2009 switch to a digital signal were discussed and those attending the presentation were able to ask questions.

Outreach was the word of the day on August 9. Department Systems Aide Andrea Silva staffed a table for the library at the Faith Assembly of God school supply drive on Huebner Road. Andrea gave out information about the library to about 200 kids and their parents. Later that evening, Librarian Monica Garza handed out information about the library at the Dellview Neighborhood Youth Rally. Monica talked to about 40 teens and 30 adults. The residents of the Dellview neighborhood are hoping to have a new park built in the area and were seeking input from the youth of the community.