

**San Antonio Public Library
Director's Report
December 3, 2008**

**Administration
Director's Office**

Deputy City Manager A.J. Rodríguez and Intergovernmental Relations Department Director Andrew Smith met with Bexar County Intergovernmental Relations representative Cindy Segovia to discuss the Interlocal Agreement for Library Services. As a result of that meeting, Library staff are compiling statistics requested by the County.

Library Director Ramiro Salazar attended the Friends of the San Antonio Public Library Arts & Letters Awards ceremony held at the Central Library on October 26. Classical guitarist Terry Muska and *Express-News* columnist Cary Clack were honored.

On October 28 the Library Director met with representatives of the Encino Park Homeowners Association and the Library Foundation to discuss possible donation of a site for a library east of Highway 281 and north of Loop 1604. That afternoon, Mr. Salazar and Library Board Chair Jean Brady met with District 8 Council Representative Diane Cibrian to update her on the library card campaign and other library issues.

Ms. Brady, Mr. Salazar, Library Foundation President/CEO Kaye Lenox, and Library Public Relations Manager Beth Graham met with Council Representatives John Clamp and Justin Rodríguez on November 5 to update the Councilmen on the library card campaign. Kaye Lenox reported Scholastic Books' interest in supporting the campaign, and the Council representatives agreed to a proposed date of January 24 for the card campaign kickoff.

On November 9, Mr. Salazar delivered remarks at the opening of the *Letters to Sala* exhibit in the Central Library Gallery.

District 8 Council Representative Diane Cibrian invited Mr. Salazar to appear on her monthly TVSA program, taped on November 10, to discuss library issues. The afternoon of November 10, Mr. Salazar attended the dedication of the flagpole at Johnston Branch Library, where District 4 Council Representative Philip Cortez spoke.

Mr. Salazar joined the delegation representing the San Antonio Public Library at the opening of the *Winds and Words of War* exhibit at the Chicago Public Library on Veterans Day, November 11. Also traveling to Chicago for that event were Ms. Brady and Ms. Lenox.

On November 12, Mr. Salazar attended a booksigning at the Central Library Auditorium to celebrate the release of State Senator Leticia Van de Putte's biography *Latina Legislator*.

Mr. Salazar spoke at the news conference held on November 13 at the Club at Sonterra to announce the donation by Dan Parman of ten acres of land for construction of a new branch library in City Council District 9.

On November 13 and 14 Mr. Salazar, Ms. Lenox and Library Teen Services Coordinator Jennifer Velásquez traveled to Dallas to visit Dallas Public Library teen service centers, as research for a grant application to be submitted to AT&T to create teen technology centers throughout the San Antonio Public Library system.

Mr. Salazar and Ms. Brady attended the meeting to obtain community input on the new District 3 branch library held by City Council Representative Jennifer Ramos on November 17.

November 22 Mr. Salazar attended the Children's Book and Author Celebration presented by the Library Foundation to raise funds for the "Born to Read" program.

November 30 through December 3 Mr. Salazar attended the Feria Internacional del Libro (International Book Fair) in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Two changes have occurred in the Library's Management Team: Kendra Trachta was named Assistant Director for Public Services, and former Semmes Branch Manager Kate Gray accepted the position of Branch Services Coordinator formerly held by Barbara O'Hara.

Children's Services

The final children's program in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month was held on November 1 at the Central Library. This program was the 58th event held as part of the 2008 Children's Hispanic Heritage celebration. Total attendance for this set of programs was 1787 for an average attendance of 31 per event. Target Stores sponsored the 2008 celebration with a grant of \$5000. Given that amount and the total attendance figure, the cost per attendee for 2008's Children's Hispanic Heritage programming was \$2.80, a figure that staff maintains was "a lot of bang for the buck!"

On November 22, children's staff participated in the 2008 Children's Book and Author Celebration sponsored by the San Antonio Public Library Foundation and the Express-News. This annual event features presentations by a variety of children's authors and illustrators as well as art activities related to the featured books. Children's staff planned the art activities and staffed the activity tables at the event, which benefits the "Born to Read" project.

Melissa Tijerina from Child Protective Services (CPS) was the featured guest at the October Children's Services meeting. Ms. Tijerina presented an informative session on the prevention of child abuse and neglect and helped children's staff clarify their role in reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect cases.

Little Read Wagon

The first program of the year in the *Para los niños* series was held at the Carver and Westfall Branch Libraries October 7 through November 25. At both locations there were several families that attended each week. Thanks are due to the Westfall and Carver staff for welcoming these families.

Little Read Wagon and the Memorial Branch Library received a grant to offer "Play and Learn" sessions from January through September of 2009. The grant is a collaboration coordinated by Family Service Association's Children Healthy and Prepared to Succeed in School (CHAPSS) program. Funding is from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Partner agencies for this project are Avance, the Family Service Association, the San Antonio Children's Museum, and the YWCA. The target audience for this series is informal caregivers (extended family, friends or neighbors who take care of children 0-5 years of age.)

Julia Lazarin and Corinne Sanchez attended the annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, November 4 – 8, 2008. Ms. Sanchez focused on sessions related to fatherhood and new resources for parents. Ms. Lazarin attended sessions about history and theories of early childhood education and the use of technology and nature in the classroom. Both ladies enjoyed music and early literacy programs presented by Ella Jenkins, Jose Luis-Orozco and Dr. Jean Feldman.

Digital Services

The Digital Services team and key library technology leaders have been collaborating to resolve connectivity issues with various third-party vendors and the library's subscription databases. The team has been working to troubleshoot, communicate, and resolve these issues to restore digital

service to SAPL patrons, and would like to extend special thanks to all of the subject matter experts who came together to overcome these challenges.

The team has also been involved in working with the Reference Department to provide assistance in training for the e-vanced calendar module. They are working to thoroughly test the program, document potential issues, and provide vendor communications. The team's goal is to create a professional and productive relationship with vendors so that they and the library can grow together.

Facilities

Life Safety New fire panels were installed in Central Library and staff are now in the process of correcting deficiencies that were discovered while testing the new panels and components. Fire system inspections and testing was also accomplished at all branch library locations. A new fire panel at Oakwell was recently installed and is still pending inspection approval.

Public Relations

The new San Antonio Public Library bookmobile premiered at City Hall on October 23. The appearance was scheduled to raise awareness of services offered by the library and to give City officials an opportunity to see the new vehicle. All City Council representatives and the Mayor stopped by, as well as members of the public.

On October 30, Library Public Relations Manager Beth Graham and Teen Services Coordinator Jennifer Velásquez met with representatives of the San Antonio Spurs to discuss possible collaborations. The Spurs representatives were most interested in the library card campaign and in programming planned for teen services. An outline of the card campaign has been sent to the Spurs for their consideration.

On November 5, Ms. Graham, Library Director Ramiro Salazar, Library Board Chair Jean Brady and Library Foundation President and CEO Kaye Lenox met with City Council Representatives John Clamp and Justin Rodríguez to discuss the library card campaign. Kaye Lenox reported that Scholastic Books had agreed to be the first corporate supporter of the campaign, and a kickoff event was scheduled for January 24.

Ms. Graham is coordinating the Library Community Needs Assessment project, and on November 5 she attended a pre-submittal conference for vendors who might wish to bid on the project. The Request for Proposals closed on December 1 and meetings of the selection committee are being arranged.

The news conference coordinated by Ms. Graham on November 13 to announce the donation by Dan Parman of ten acres of land for construction of a new District 9 branch library was a success. There was standing-room only attendance, and the event was covered by the *Express-News* and three television stations.

As a result of the partnership that has developed with Texas Public Radio, Ms. Graham was invited to record announcements to be used in a projected publicity campaign.

SAPL's eighth annual *¡Tamalada!* was presented on November 22. A total of 173 attended the "how to make tamales" classes and the preview presentation of *Las Nuevas Tamareras*. Long-time sponsors Bolner's Fiesta Products, the Library Foundation, the Friends of the Library, and the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department again supported the program, and this year the Library Foundation recruited a new sponsor, Melinda Guerra Tienda de Cocina.

The Library received 18 media mentions in the past month.

Teen Services

To celebrate the immensely popular Twilight series and its movie release on November 21, Teen Services hosted The Bella Cullen Project on November 8. The Bella Cullen Project is an all-girl Twilight fan-band. All of their original songs revolve around the characters in the series. The band members signed posters and sold their own CDs and t-shirts after the show. Pictures of the event can be seen on the Teen Services Flickr page: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/youthwired/>.

Librarian I Violeta Garza attended the very first Young Adult Literature Symposium in Nashville on November 7-9. This historic conference was hosted by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and proved to be a major networking source as well as inspiration to how some young adult librarians are conducting business all over the nation. Violeta also served on the committee to nominate new officers for La Estrella de Tejas, the San Antonio chapter of REFORMA, and volunteered during ¡Tamalada! on November 22.

On November 15, Central Teen Services celebrated National Gaming Day @ Your Library by setting up Guitar Hero, Dance Dance Revolution and other video games for teens to play all day.

Kudos to staff - customer comments

"The branch libraries have really done a wonderful job with early voting. I know that it is extra work for our employees just to have the extra traffic but the exposure of our Libraries is wonderful! Thank all for their smiley faces!" – Mary McAfee, October 31

"I just renewed the one book I have checked out via the net – a first for me here at home. You've saved me at least 30 minutes of my time, a good 0.2 gallons of gas, and an increment of road risk. This service continues to be one of the best reasons I have for paying property taxes in Bexar County. Thank you for superior public service!" – Mike Snedeker, November 19

[Letter from United States Patent and Trademark Office on following page.]



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

October 21, 2008

Mr. Ramiro Salazar, Director
San Antonio Central Library
600 Soledad Street
San Antonio, TX 78205-1208

Dear Mr. Salazar:

I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the San Antonio Public Library for hosting Alexis Carrasquel, Douglas Salsler, and Tom Turner of the Patent and Trademark Depository Library Program (PTDLP) on September 9, 2008, in conducting a public program on "Researching Patent and Trademark Information." Very special thanks go to Wilson Plunkett and his colleagues Dorothy Blow and Benjamin Longoria for their hard work that resulted in a very well attended program. The evaluations we received from attendees were positive and appreciative of the program and the PTDL services at the San Antonio Public Library.

Alexis, Douglas and Tom were impressed with the hospitality of your staff. The warmth extended by the San Antonio Public Library staff to the PTDLP speakers added to the pleasure of the much enjoyed the tours they were given of your beautiful facility.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Plunkett's efforts in coordinating a training program at the New Mexico State Library in Santa Fe the following day where PTDLP staff provided hands-on training in a computer lab for librarians from your library system and others in the state.

Your library is the public's link to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and we appreciate the great job you do every day to ensure successful delivery of current patent and trademark information to the patrons of the San Antonio Public Library. Thank you again for inviting us to your library and giving us the opportunity to work with your staff and patrons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Kitchens".

Christine Kitchens, Manager
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Patent and Trademark Depository Library Program

P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 - [WWW.USPTO.GOV](http://www.USPTO.GOV)

Committees and Work Teams – a regular update on initiatives undertaken by library staff teams
RFID

With the majority of the Central Library collection tagged, self-check is now available at the Central circulation desk and in the media area. Equipment for the Phase-Three libraries has been ordered and tagging of those collections is underway. It is anticipated that the RFID project will be substantially complete in the first quarter of 2009.

Central Library

Alamo Area Library Systems

AALS will be hosting a session of automation vendors on December 3 at SAPL. Twenty-three libraries are interested in upgrading their integrated library systems and we are trying to find funding options for them. We are considering applying for grants from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Tocker Foundation. We are hoping to defray some of the costs for this massive project such as data migration fees or annual maintenance fees.

Children's Services Department

One of the highlights of the month was the presentation by author Pam Muñoz Ryan at Family Fun on Saturday, November 22. Following her morning appearance at the Foundation's Children's Book and Author Celebration, Ms. Ryan visited the Central Library to share information about her job as a children's author and to read her delightful picture book *Mice and Beans*. Following the reading, attendees had a chance to participate in a special craft project that included a mice-y sort of photo session.

Special tours of the Central Library hit a new benchmark on Monday, November 10, when over 130 fourth- and fifth-graders from Berch Elementary visited for a session that included bibliographic instruction and the creation of ten learning stations within the children's department. These stations, which each featured books on some aspect of colonial America, were used by students as they began research on a large-scale history and social studies project. Following a set of somewhat hectic moves between the stations, the students retired to the Auditorium on the first floor for lunch before returning to school in the early afternoon. Staff was happy to be able to facilitate student use of library resources, but it was generally agreed that 130 "big kids" take up a lot more space (and a different sort of energy) than 130 "little kids."

Circulation Department

Circulation has undergone some major changes in the past month. On October 30, Central Circulation became the proud owner of 6 new self-check-out systems. Three of those stations are located in the media center and the other three are placed on the main circulation desk. The staff and public are working together to ensure proper training for future use.

Since November 1, approximately 4,945 patrons have successfully utilized the self-check-out systems. The Circulation Manager anticipates this number will continue to rise. She also believes the numbers are due to the constant assistance that the circulation staff is providing when customers approach the circulation desk.

Circulation has also rearranged some computer stations in order to accommodate the RFID system. RFID pads for staff are now at each service area in order to better serve the public.

In order to have consistent equipment across the library system for training and procedural purposes, cash registers have been replaced at many SAPL locations. Central Circulation has been actively involved in the new cash register implementation and training of all cash handling employees. The Circulation Department received its new register and is now utilizing the register to improve procedures.

Government Documents

Government Documents is currently involved in a major weeding project, to make the collection more streamlined and more easily usable by customers. This weeding project will include the entire collection, retaining only current publications and important sets of documents. Currently the documents are in storage, awaiting permission from the Regional Depository (the State Library in Austin) to dispose of them.

The new hours in Government Documents seem to be working well, without customer complaints.

Outreach

The new Office of Outreach shaped up this month, with Program Manager Barbara Celitans and Bookmobile Driver David Caseras joining the crew, now housed on the south wing of the fourth floor.

The older Elfmobile and the new bookmobile, formerly housed at Las Palmas when not in use, found new quarters at the City's Zarzamora Service Center. The bookmobile made 26 runs, with a member of the Outreach staff accompanying David on each.

Fall being the season for fairs in San Antonio, Outreach staff members spent a great many of their workdays and evenings on the road. A SharePoint site was created and a schedule of outreach activities was posted there, to keep SAPL management staff informed.

On October 23, Kathy Claspill and the Outreach staff took the new bookmobile to City Hall for its official debut. Several city council members dropped in, as did the public; some even checking out books. Outreach staff also fielded twenty requests for SAPL appearances at public events; Outreach staff attended twelve, and the branch libraries handled the remainder. Events attended by the Outreach staff included the Spurs 5K Run/Walk, the Housing & Neighborhood Services Community Fair, the District 7 Fall Fair, Oak Meadow Elementary School's Careers on Wheels Day, and Arts in Our Parks. Libro the library mascot even put in an appearance at the Department of Family and Protective Services' Adoption Day. Between its inception and November 15, the Outreach staff reached 868 people.

Reference Department

On October 22, Library Assistant Adam Spana demonstrated the business databases for eight small-business owners; on November 12, in partnership with Great Northwest Library Assistant Ben Castaneda, he demonstrated the Live Homework Help service to Spanish-speaking parents and students at Driggers Elementary; and on December 3, he provided search strategy instruction and an orientation to research databases to students at Wayland Baptist University.

On November 5, Librarian II (and Principal Investigator for the Express Outreach grant) Elma Nieto-Rodriguez, Librarian I Sally Bauer and Adam Spana met with their grant partners, the Edgewood Family Network and the University of Texas Health Science Center Libraries, and conducted a focus group to receive feedback on promotional materials created for the Express Outreach grant. Mr. Spana led a one-hour training session for the EFN promotoras (lay healthcare workers) in the use of the federal medical database MedlinePlus.

Dan Stanford gave a tour to visually impaired students from SAISD on November 25. He showed them the equipment and resources that the library has for the visually disabled as well as talking about his own experience as a visually impaired librarian.

Jody Hampton and Didi Morganti have given several training sessions on accessing digital media via Overdrive. They have shown a video presentation about Overdrive, demonstrated how to download audio books onto a personal MP3 player and answered questions from the staff. These trainings have taken place at the Central Library training room and at branch locations

Special Events

On November 8, the Central Library provided 40 guests of the Texas Art Education Association Conference with private tours of its art, architecture and gallery exhibition. The evening was coordinated by Southwest School of Art & Craft, and also included tours of the school's campus and ArtPace.

Teen Services Department

Teen Services staff host programs for teens Monday through Thursday at 5:00.

Mondays with Librarian I Violeta Garza: Gaming Mondays proved to be really popular. Attendees have been able to play their beloved video games Super Smash Brothers Melee and Guitar Hero III. The November 10 meeting of the Nerdfighters Club was the most successful to date, as a number of teens signed up to play the first of several "Jeopardy!" games. They were quizzed on everything from teen fiction to popular movies to President-Elect Barack Obama. Bilingual teens were given a chance to watch the telenovela "*La fea más bella*" (the Mexican version of "Ugly Betty"), as well as to brainstorm the writing of their very own soap opera set at the library.

Tuesdays with Librarian II Kathleen Fordyce: Teens played Guitar Hero III – always a favorite game – on October 28. For movie night on November 4, teens watched William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes. They had a lively discussion about the characters and the plot during and after the movie. On November 18, teens got the chance to be a star when they played American Idol Karaoke. After singing their hearts out, they played their favorite game, Guitar Hero III. Teens got their hearts pumping with Dance Dance Revolution on November 25. Then it was a Guitar Hero III night again on December 2.

Wednesdays with Library Assistant Sylvia Pachecano: Every Wednesday teens play Madden '09. The football players from Fox Tech particularly love this game.

Thursdays with Library Assistant Regina Almanza: On October 23, teens had the opportunity to make skull earrings for Halloween or everyday wear. Pictures from this craft program are on the Teen Services Flickr page which can be accessed from the web page www.youthwired.sat.lib.tx.us. After the earring-making session, teens played Dance Dance Revolution. It took felt, a needle, some thread and imagination for teens to participate in the craft program on October 30, where they made little felt toys in shapes as a chicken, a heart, and a popsicle among others. For the November 6 programs, teens used sign language stamps and ink pads to decorate cards. Teens were given candy during the various Thursday night crafts and told to save the wrappers. On November 13, the wrappers were glued to frames and sealed with Mod-Podge to create decoupage frames for gifts or for their own use. On November 20, teens got a head start on making holiday decorations for the Teen Services department. The decorations will be up in the area for the winter months.

Saturday, November 1, teens met for Sylvia Pachecano's monthly Anime/Manga Club. A.C.E.S., a city-wide Anime/Manga club, gave a presentation to the group in which they showed Anime and talked about their club.

Tours and Groups

On October 27, 16 ninth- through twelfth-graders from McCollum High School received a library tour and catalog and database instruction. Sylvia Pachecano presented a book talk to the students as well. On October 29 and 30 and November 20 and 21, art classes from Fox Tech High School used the Teen Services computers for their projects throughout the day.

Outreach

On October 22, Librarian I Violeta Garza visited a high school class at Brackenridge High School library in order to showcase to another librarian how an outreach session may be conducted. As part of Irving Academy's belated Teen Read Week program, she also performed a well-received booktalk to over 30 eighth-graders on November 3.

Texana/Genealogy Department

On October 25 Matt DeWaelsche and Andrew Crews staffed a table at Founder's Day in Main Plaza. Debbie Countess presented a class on "Using Census Records" to a group of eleven interested family historians.

Clarissa Chavira taught an internet class on "Beginning Genealogy: the Internet as a Resource for Family Historians." There were nine in attendance.

One of McArthur High School's gifted and talented classes spent the morning of November 12 in Texana/Genealogy. After a tour and introduction to the types of materials available in the department, students began research on various topics related to San Antonio and Texas history.

On October 29 staff gathered more materials from Rev. and Mrs. Garza related to his long career in the Rio Grande Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The City's Cemetery Office transferred records of the Knights of Pythias and International Order of Odd Fellows cemeteries to Texana/Genealogy. They also sent updates of the San José Cemetery records.

Donations of framed items from the Chicano Renaissance exhibit were received from Margaret Almazán, David Gonzales, and César Martínez.

Timothy Draves, teacher at McArthur High School and University of the Incarnate Word, was elected as the new chairperson of the Friends of Texana/Genealogy. Staff thank Maria Pfeiffer for her years of service and welcome the support of Mr. Draves.

Branch Libraries

Bazan

"What Veteran's Day Means to Me" was the title of a children's art exhibit at Bazan during the month of November. The art work supporting this theme was created by elementary-school-age children from Storm Academy as part of a competition. USAA, Storm Academy, ArtsTeach and the Bazan Library all collaborated to host a reception for the winners at Bazan on November 5. Many proud parents and approximately fifty excited children attended. The art will remain on display through the end of November.

On October 29, the branch sponsored a Halloween costume party for the participants in the "Guitar Hero III" program. Forty-three teens and pre-teens enjoyed refreshments and gamed to the music of favorite rock bands. The party was a thank-you to Bazan's teen community for their supportive attendance. Prizes were also awarded for Best Costume and Scariest Costume.

The branch has been working in partnership with the Goodwill Industries downtown office by assisting individuals with information on the resources the public library offers for those looking for employment. This series of half-hour presentations began in earnest on September 2 2008 and will end on December 9. Pat Rodríguez, Charles Tucker and Marisa Sparks all contributed to the project.

The Bazan Library will be closed for further renovation beginning December 8. The project will include recarpeting the entire library, replacing older furniture with newer selections and painting the interior.

Brook Hollow

Early voters turned out in droves at Brook Hollow with 15,244 recorded!

Brook Hollow hosted classes on downloadable media Net Library and Overdrive for staff.

Brook Hollow staff took on a major moving project, shifting the branch's juvenile Spanish section into the children's area, alleviating some space constraints in the adult fiction and large print areas.

The Brook Hollow Friends postponed their book sale until March. They did proceed with the "Member's Only" Book Sale, which raised \$450.

Brook Hollow staff enjoyed sampling soup and other fantastic foods made by their co-workers at their Annual Soup Day.

Six more youth groups visited Brook Hollow for library orientation tours hosted by Children's Services Librarian Ruth Turner and Teen Services Librarian Mary M. Smith. Among them were students from Radiance Academy and the Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Eagle Scouts.

Carver

The Carver Branch Library celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with "*Calaveras*", a children's event that drew regular customers as well as a few who had never visited the branch. The October 25 offering was fun and festive, with attendees fashioning their own colorful, creative skeletons.

On the heels of "*Calaveras*", the Friends of Carver Branch Library sponsored their fall book sale. Business was brisk and at the end of the day President Dorothy W. Smith confirmed that it had been another successful sale. Staff noted that interest in the sale was so keen that other customers came the following day, hoping the event were a two-day affair.

On October 25 Carver Adult Services Librarian D.L. Grant and Westfall Adult Services Librarian Monica Garza attended the fall meeting of Texas Library Association District 10. Monica was elected Treasurer, succeeding Shirley Martyn of St. Mary's University. D.L., who is chair-elect, will replace current chair Providence High School Librarian Stella González.

That same day, Carver welcomed representatives of about a dozen colleges and universities for a college fair that attracted 50 high-school students and their parents. Afterward, the students were treated to lunch. To make the transition to college life as seamless as possible, staff put together a bibliography of college prep materials that included useful websites.

Many of the same students returned to the branch near the end of November for the screening of a short film promoting awareness of meningitis, a preventable but often fatal disease that sometimes strikes at college campuses. The screening was sponsored by the Cherice Cochrane Mentoring Foundation. Named for Cherice Cochrane, who died from the disease as a college student, the foundation seeks to inform people about the meningitis vaccination that can save lives.

San Antonio writer Antoinette V. Franklin's series of creative writing workshops have continued to grow in popularity. Attendance for the most recent session nearly reached capacity. Reception to the sessions has been so positive that Franklin has agreed to continue the series through summer.

Outreach efforts continued at Carver Library. Children's Librarian Amy Thorne visited Wheatley Middle School on October 29 to talk about library services, and enjoyed sharing some slightly spooky material with the kids. Adult Services Librarian II D.L. Grant was invited to speak to families with children at P.F. Stewart Elementary School. About 150 people attended the event and were informed of library resources and activities.

Amy, who also serves as Teen Services liaison, was pleased to announce that Carver's Anime Club had a successful Halloween party on October 30 with its highest attendance yet. The club continues to have consistent attendance. Three of the teens have also become volunteers at Carver and are doing a great job helping to keep the branch in good order.

Amy reports that evening storytime at the branch has a small but steady audience that often produces wonderful insights. For example, at the Thanksgiving storytime the list of things the children were thankful for included pandas, cooking pots and the baby brother (but not the older sister). As an older sister herself, Amy assured the young man he would come to value his sister in time.

Getting an early start on the holiday season, the Organization for Black Unity conducted a Kwanzaa workshop on November 13 to share information about the week-long observance that runs from December 26 to January 1 and honors African heritage.

Cody

Children's Services Librarian Sheila Acosta and Valerie Cruz, Department Systems Aide, participated in SAWS' annual Make a Splash Home School Water Festival at Eisenhower Park on October 22. The children loved the storytimes and the crafts that were presented throughout the day.

Storytimes have seen good attendance. On October 28 and 29 babies and toddlers wore their Halloween costumes and participated in a special Boo Parade around the library. Elementary school kids and teens participated in Cody's first Scary Stories to Share in the Dark event. Prizes were awarded to the three students whose stories were voted the scariest.

A special Japanese storytime and origami class was presented on November 3 to celebrate Matsuri.

Families enjoyed participating at Cody's first Tongue Twister Contest held on November 7 in celebration of National Tongue Twister Day.

The Thornton and Boone elementary schools exhibited art work in the children's area at Cody. Many children brought in their parents to view their art work and to take pictures. More schools are scheduled to exhibit their students' art for December and January.

Staff participated in several outreach events. Children's Services Librarians Sheila Acosta and Trina Smith attended events at the Stone Hill Apartments in partnership with Lockhill Elementary School on October 27. They also visited Rhodes Elementary School and the Eleanor Kolitz Academy to promote the Young Pegasus contest. Branch Manager Hayley Latshaw and Library Assistant Kimberly Ammerman attended District 8 Council Representative Diane Cibrian's Fall Festival on November 8.

The Cody Library closed for renovations on Monday, November 10. During the project the library received new carpeting, a new HVAC system, and new fixtures in the bathrooms. The older part of the parking lot was repaved and a flag pole was installed. All of the exterior and interior surfaces were repainted. Landscaping was also completed around the branch.

During the renovation, the old bookmobile unit was located at Cody so that customers were able to pick up their holds. Most days saw 150 people visiting the bookmobile. During the renovation staff stayed in the building to work on returns and routing. Much of the collection was moved to create reading areas for elementary school children and teens. The branch reopened on December 1.

Collins Garden

For National Night Out, the Collins Garden Neighborhood Association held their celebration at Collins Garden Branch Library, and CGNA President Lupita Escobedo-Siller recently reported that the event was awarded first place.

Collins Garden Branch Library was chosen once again as an early voting and Election Day site. During the early voting period there was a steady stream of people but voters did not have to experience the long lines that were the norm at other early voting sites. Election Day was anti-climactic since the majority of those planning to vote in the election had voted early.

The five laptop computers that were provided through the auspices of the San Antonio Public Library Foundation have helped to reduce the waiting list for the Technology Center computers, making it possible for more people to have access to the Internet, SAPL's proprietary databases, and MS office software applications.

The Collins Garden staff were happy to welcome Elma Nieto-Rodriguez and to congratulate her on her promotion to Adult Services Librarian II.

Branch Manager Pamela J. Longoria met with members of District 5 Councilwoman Lourdes Galvan's staff to discuss SAPL programming and services and to provide them with copies of Bookmarks and flyers of upcoming Collins Garden programs.

Collins Garden is helping customers prepare for the holiday season by displaying books on holiday cooking, crafts, and holiday story books. The displays have successfully tempted some casual browsers to check out some of the titles.

The local daycares visited by Children's Services Librarian Leigh Bedford are requesting professional development titles, which she is happy to provide. Books on puppet making, storytime skills, and children's crafts are proving to be a big hit with local daycare providers.

Teen Liaison Carlos Loera reported that twenty teens participated in National Gaming Day on November 7, 2008; and later that day Snakes with Susan Frigge attracted a mixed audience of children, teens, and adults. The recently instituted Chess Night, which meets every Thursday evening, is attracting a mixed group of teens and adults.

Department Systems Aide Dario Hernández is pleased to report the birth of his daughter Amalie on November 21. She weighed five pounds nine ounces and measured seventeen inches.

Forest Hills

Forest Hills Branch Manager Roberto Zapata has been selected to act as Interim Great Northwest Branch Manager. He will alternate between the branches.

Paintings by Chicano Artist Jose Esquivel have been on display at the branch for the past month. Edna Rodríguez from the Cody Branch Library has been detailed to Forest Hills for two weeks.

The Woodlawn Hills Neighborhood held its monthly meeting at the branch on October 28.

On October 30 Forest Hills held a Halloween party with crafts, treats, a Halloween lineup and a costume contest. Customers were decked out in costumes ranging from cute to extra spooky.

Roberto Zapata and Veronica Franco attended an outreach event on November 1, at the invitation of Councilman Justin Rodríguez. The event, which included a book sale, was held at the Woodlawn Hills Church. Staff informed attendees about library services and signed them up for library cards.

Gregorio Esparza Elementary School second-graders visited Forest Hills Branch Library on November 5, 6 and 12. They were given a storytime and tour by the Children's Librarian and happily checked out books with their new library cards.

Ralph Thompson was the discussion leader when the Contrarian Viewpoints Book Club met on November 8 to discuss Robert Kagan's *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*.

On November 16, 23 and 30 the indigenous crafts class made their own gourd dance bandoleros.

The History of San Antonio Book Club met on November 20 to discuss *Los Mesteños* by Jack Jackson and to review the index to the *Provincias Internas*.

Keetowah, a group promoting education and knowledge of indigenous cultures, met on December 1 to discuss participation in upcoming events.

Great Northwest

Diane Backhus was transferred to serve as manager for the Johnston Branch Library. She had made many friends with the library customers and will be missed. Roberto Zapata is kindly stepping in as the interim branch manager during this time. Congratulations are in order for Library Assistant Mari Martinez, who passed her Capstone examination, making her an official MLIS graduate of University of North Texas, and to Department Systems Aide Danny Duran, who became a married man on November 15. Circulation Attendant and up-and-coming amateur actor Anthony Seguin is in a feature-length black and white detective movie playing in November. Anthony is playing a crooked veteran cop.

Circulation received a handmade thank-you card from a young customer who loves his library. Library Assistant Ben Castañeda was invited to visit Driggers and Fernandez Elementary Schools to show their students' parents how to use Live Homework Help on the library website. The library is also sending a PowerPoint presentation to the schools to advertise the Young Pegasus Poetry Contest. The schools have given positive feedback to the effort.

Great Northwest continues to be very busy. The children's programs are averaging well over 1,000 in total attendance each month, thanks to the more than 50 programs offered. The children are enjoying themselves and loving the hands-on excitement during the ABC Club and Quirkles. Library Assistant Christina Reedy offered a *Día de los muertos* workshop with sugar skulls. Christina also made a delightful display of festive food books. The library continues to host the knitting, quilting, radio, chess, book discussion and creative writing clubs.

The library served 15,027 early voters in October.

Guerra

On October 30 the Guerra Branch offered a Halloween party for children and teenagers. Around 350 people (among them children, teens and their families) enjoyed the Special Halloween storytime and a costume parade that led to the costume contest. Winners won special Halloween bags provided by the Friends of the Guerra Library and staff members. The San Antonio Paranormal Investigators concluded the Halloween celebration for that night.

Young Adult Liaison Tim Johnson continues his excellent work with the pre-teens and teenagers that visit the library. During the first week of November, fourteen teenagers painted the windows with wrestling masks to promote the Young Adult Library Services Association Wrestlemania Reading Challenge. Game-Ra continues to be the program with the highest attendance at Guerra Branch, with an average of 34 to 38 kids per evening. Circulation Attendant Christine Martinez leads the Craft Club (the former Embroidery Club) every other Sunday afternoon. The name and time change contributed to an increase in the average number of participants from three to eight participants per event.

On November 22, Guerra Branch and the Boy Scouts from Troop 517 delighted library patrons with an outdoor cooking demonstration with a Dutch oven. Customers were able to sample corn bread, chili, and chocolate cake during a cold day.

Outreach has been the branch focus this month. Children's Librarian Yanira Vegerano Cruz has visited four daycare centers and eight schools, reaching 250 children and adults. Librarian Stephen Jackson participated in the Career Day at John Glenn Elementary School, talking to seventy-four students. Timothy Johnson attended the Cable Elementary School's Cable Cafecito event, a community outreach effort to teach the community about the different services the library offers. Approximately 30 attended. Adult Services Librarian Tracey Knouse continues to build a senior outreach program to the surrounding community. She and Library Assistant Elizabeth Hernández provided a reading and craft event with a Christmas theme to Sterling Adult Care.

Library Assistant Ernestina Garcia made a display celebrating Native American History Month using an ALA poster and bookmarks, library books and Native American artifacts. The other display is of clothes and children's books, toys, and other items from Kazakhstan on loan from a Guerra patron.

Igo

Igo was an early voting site for the first time this October. The election brought many new patrons to the branch. In those two weeks, Igo staff issued over 400 new cards, two and a half times the number of new cards issued the two weeks before voting. The meeting rooms continue to be rented frequently. Having two meeting rooms made early voting much easier since library programming could continue uninterrupted.

Library Assistant Jackie Dyess planned several programs in honor of Veterans Day, along with a display. The programs included a movie weekend, flag-raising ceremony, and Veterans reception. José Durán, Helotes VFW commander and member of the Igo Friends, attended the events, and local boy scouts performed the flag ceremony. Children's Services Librarian Lisa Taylor read stories and led a card-making craft. The cards were mailed to military soldiers stationed in the Gulf region.

Library Aide Megan Feeley planned programming for America Recycles Day, November 15. Children's Services Librarian Cara Waits and Library Aide Nicole Garza assisted with crafts and games all using recycled materials.

The Igo Friends and interim Branch Manager Haley Holmes are busy planning the branch's first anniversary party to be held December 6 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Planned activities include the Brandeis High School drama department production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, a Latin

dance demonstration, clowns, face painting, storytime, tree decorating, choirs, a talk by John Igo, and, of course, birthday cake. The day should be an exciting celebration of a great first year. The Friends also recently purchased two shelving units for read-alongs and a directional whiteboard sign for the branch.

Johnston

Early voting at Johnston kept the staff busy, arriving earlier and leaving later. Thanks to 7,048 voters who came to vote at this location!

On Monday, November 10, the Branch dedicated its new flagpole with a memorable event. Marshall and Jeanne Mundorff, Jean and the late Bob Barlow, Lori Taylor and Cathy Rainwater, all members of the Friends of Johnston Library, spearheaded the endeavor and had worked for more than two years to get the flagpole installed. The dedication ceremony was held on November 10, right before Veteran's Day. The planning for the event was coordinated by Children's Librarian Karen Sebesta. The flag was raised by the Color Guard from Lackland Air Force Base. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by local Boy and Girl Scout troops. Rich Fields served as master of ceremonies, and introduced the keynote speaker, District 4 Councilman Philip Cortez. Following the ceremony, the Air Force Band of the West presented an hour-long concert inside the library.

Children's Librarian Karen Sebesta presented a paper to administration about her experiences at the 2008 National Institute for Museum and Library Services conference in Salt Lake City. Her paper was received with thanks by Kaye Lenox from the Library Foundation, which had made the trip possible.

Johnston Branch would like to acknowledge Adult Services Librarian Richard Fields, who served as Interim Branch Manager from December 2007 until November 2008. He is yielding the assignment to Diane Backhus, who accepted a transfer from Great Northwest.

Landa

With the start of the new fiscal year, Landa Library is now officially renting the outside terrace for events, and it is once again a popular children's birthday party spot.

Children attending story times at Landa Library on November 12, 2008 had a special treat when Lois and Amy Jensen from the Jensen Yamaha Music School presented, "All God's Critters Got a Song to Sing". Kids, Moms, and Miss Ginger scurried like ants, slithered like snakes, lumbered like elephants and just generally had a good time under the direction of the jolly Jensen's.

On November 15, 2008, Landa's meeting room became an art house movie theater for an afternoon for the screening of *Paper Clips*, a multi-award winning documentary. The audience was so riveted that they sat all the way through the credits when it was over.

Las Palmas

Early Voting and Election Day went very smoothly this time around – no mariachi bands or impromptu rallies! As always, it was a team effort, with staff reporting early, staying late, and working weekend hours. Kudos to Senior Management Analyst Jessica Ramos and to the Bexar Elections Administrators for the time and prep work that went into creating a very organized voting period.

Eleven teens decorated sugar skulls for *Dia de los muertos*. Thanks to a program trade with Collins Garden Teen Liaison Carlos Loera, 15 Las Palmas teens enjoyed playing Guitar Hero.

Librarians at Las Palmas were busy with outreach and class visits: Teen Services Librarian Heidi Novotny visited six classes (89 students) at Kennedy High School. Children's Services Librarian Gina Brudi presented stories and handed out library information at the Las Palmas Elementary

School Fall Fair (60 participants), and hosted 110 Carvajal Elementary School students for their annual library visit. Ms. Brudi also presented storytimes and left classroom book collections at Mirasol (8 classrooms, 100 children), AVANCE (5 classrooms, 40 children), and Good Samaritan (3 classrooms, 40 students).

Six readers met with Librarian Karen Michaelson to discuss the novel *Gilliad*. Thirty enjoyed the two Family Fun sessions presented by Ms. Brudi.

Volunteer Rosa García has been pulling titles on the Dusty Book Reports in the adult 700's and 800's, assisting librarians as they weed the collection in preparation for RFID tagging. Ms. Garcia also assists with pulling and packing router.

Maverick

The Maverick Branch has been very busy since the last part of October. The branch was an early voting polling site and had huge numbers of voters. In addition, the branch was also an Election Day voting site. Special thanks go to the Library staff who came in early and stayed late to accommodate the election workers.

Branch staff are on many committees. Circulation Attendant J.D. Elizondo is currently on the Big Read Committee and the Library Card Campaign Committee. Teen Services Librarian Derika Bailey is on the Book Club Kit Committee and the Teen Summer Reading Program Committee. Children's Services Librarian Amy Roberts is on the Career Paths for Librarians Committee.

Staff is offering numerous programs for all ages. Teen Services Librarian Derika Bailey continues her monthly book club and has added a Guitar Hero program for teens on the first and third Thursdays in December. Storytimes continue to be popular. Library Aide and recent UNT graduate Stacy Bosquez is helping Ms. Roberts with preschool storytimes during November and December. For adults, the Department of Community Initiatives offered computer classes at the end of November to enthusiastic learners.

Children's Services Librarian Amy Roberts has been presenting tours for Cub Scout and Daisy Scout troops in November so that the Scouts can earn their library badges. During her November 18 storytime, early childhood education classes from Warren High School came and observed.

Librarian II Alice DeCristoforo organized a Latin Dance student practice get-together on November 20. An invitation was extended to the dance students at Igo. If interest continues, more practice sessions will be scheduled. She also continues to offer her Ladies Choice Book club one Saturday a month.

On November 22 the Maverick Library showed the documentary film *Paper Clips*, the story of a middle-school class project that honored, in a unique personal way, all the Holocaust victims. There was also a Holocaust book display. This program was part of a series of library system-wide programs focused on the Holocaust in conjunction with the *Letters to Sala* exhibit at the Central Library.

Library Assistant David Canales, Library Circulation Attendants Candelario Soliz and Raquel Gonzales, and Librarian II Alice DeCristoforo represented the library at the District 7 Fall Fest on November 8. A member of the Friends of the Maverick Branch Library also joined the library table with information and applications. Thanks to Ramona Lucius for coordinating our participation and for bringing the laptop!

McCreless

The main event for the end of October and early November was the election. McCreless saw truly record-breaking crowds and staff came early and left late on many days to help everything run smoothly. McCreless was in the top ten locations for number of voters served.

On November 5 Children's Services Librarian Beverly Bixler took books and read stories to the Highland Hills Parent-Child Incorporated participants.

Beverly is to be commended for continuing to provide story times to large groups of children despite being displaced for four weeks due to voting and holidays.

Branch Manager Cammie Gunter received a certificate of appreciation from Texas Tejanos for her participation in their theatrical presentation at the Central Library in October.

Cammie also received some edible appreciation in the form of a pumpkin pie from a customer who wanted to thank her for excellent customer service. The pie was shared with staff because no one can do it alone!

On November 24 the branch showed the film Kung Fu Panda. Snacks were provided by the Friends of McCreless.

The book display for November was for Life Writing and National Storytelling Month in support of the Letters from Sala exhibit at Central.

Memorial

Library Assistant Susan Francis-Maldonado held Memorial's first Anime Club meeting on November 22. Participants watched the anime classic *Princess Mononoke* and planned future events and activities.

Diá de los muertos was celebrated with the display of a traditional altar. The altar showcased the artistic talents of the Imelda Zapata García family and was on display for two weeks. This is the second year that Ms. García and her family have graciously shared their altar building art with Memorial and its patrons.

Early voting at Memorial saw large turnouts and a spike in new library card applications. Many favorable comments about the library were received, as were promises to come again when parking conditions were better.

The Memorial Amigos' S. A. Essay contest awards presentation was held at Memorial branch, on November 8th, at 10:30 a.m. Contestant were asked to write about a Hispanic hero. The event was very well attended, with the winners, family members and well-wishers enjoying the festivities. The winning essays were read aloud, to the delight of the audience. Photographs were taken and posted to Flickr. The winning essays have been transcribed to MS Word format and will be uploaded to the library's website. Also, the winning entries will be sent to the San Antonio Express-News, which may elect to reprint them.

On November 25, Department Systems Aide Valerie Capelo and Librarian Maria Stroligo held their Famous Turkey Checkers Tournament, during Family Fun/Teen Time at 5:00 p.m. Many prizes were awarded: First Prize, turkey; Second Prize, ham; Third Prize, Cornish hen; Consolation Prizes, assorted side dishes, all compliments of H.E.B.

Pan American

Children's Services Librarian Raissa Marking visited several schools this reporting period. On October 23, Adams Elementary School pre-kinder, kinder, first- and second-grade classes (a total of 147 students) enjoyed stories and library information. On November 14 she visited seven groups (300 students) at Bellaire Elementary School. November 19 she participated in Gilbert Elementary School's Career Days, and spoke to seven groups, or about 154 students. She also visited the Texas Migrant Council on October 28, and read stories about fall, apples, and pumpkin patches to 17 attendees. She visited them again on November 24 and performed a turkey puppet show. Ms. Marking and Teen Services Liaison Melissa Carroll visited McCollum High School on November 20 and 21. Together, they shared information with 18 classes – a total of 480 students – and collected more than 300 library card applications.

Melissa has become Pan American Branch Library's Ms. Teen. Every Thursday evening teens gather to enjoy games, crafts, and programs. On October 23, Guitar Hero and Dance Dance Revolution were enjoyed by 15 participants, along with sodas and candy. On October 30, eight participants made Day of the Dead "*Calaveras*" skull masks for the Dia de los muertos celebration while enjoying sodas and popcorn balls. On November 6, a new Pictureka Board Game was enjoyed by seven participants. November 13 was a major event: a Twilight Party. Teen enjoyed Twilight-themed food (apples, apple juice, vampire bite cupcakes, and vampire fang gummies) and played Twilight trivia. Prizes included two Twilight books and a Twilight movie poster, necklace, bookmark, and keychain. There were also giveaways for everybody inspired by the book – glitter body spray and Icebreakers lip gloss. To hold all this, the group made a Twilight bag with pictures from the movie and quotes from the book. There were 18 participants, all girls, dressed in Twilight-inspired outfits. Mary Spears, a NTSU library science graduate who did her practicum here and still volunteers, assisted Melissa. November 20 was time for Dance Dance Revolution and NBA Live with 8 participants.

The ABC Club Wednesday morning preschool storytime continues to study letters and have a wonderful time. On October 22, there were 34 participants with horse stories and a craft of clothespin horses. On October 28, 37 attendees enjoyed a dress-up parade and all kinds of goodies to eat and drink. November 5, the letter I shared crafts with ice cream cones and 27 children. A Japanese koi craft fascinated 18 attendees on November 12. A break was taken from the letters on November 19, and 22 participants enjoyed Thanksgiving stories and a craft. For November 26, the theme was Kites.

Monday afternoon Family Fun has been experiencing some challenges with attendance. On October 27, four school-age children attended the Family Fun "Monsters" session. November 10, a group of ten read *Aliens Are Coming* and made clay aliens. November 17, four came for the *Falling Leaves* program. November 24, *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Pie* was featured, and the group made mobiles of the old lady and all the food she ate.

Pan American will be closed for 3 weeks beginning December 1, while the parking lot and sidewalks are being redone. New carpet will be installed, along with counters and sinks in the public restrooms.

Reagan High School/Bannwolf Library

The Bannwolf Library at Reagan High School has had many interesting programs held in the library. Programs for children included a Reagan High School group from the American Sign Language class holding a hands-on learning session for elementary age children. The children learned several words to sign. Another exciting program for pre-school children was about firemen and fire trucks. A fire truck from Station 46 came to Reagan for Saturday storytime. Two firemen read stories to the children, followed by a tour of their fire truck. All 108 children enjoyed exploring every inch of the truck.

The Bannwolf Library has also had very successful adult programming. The Spanish 101 group has completed three beginner classes. The adults attending had much praise for the two college students teaching the class. Graham Toms, former Disney animation instructor and Bannwolf Library customer, presented a workshop on animation. Young adults were also invited to this program. Both adults and teens valued learning animation techniques. Senior adults were introduced to scrapbooking during a program held in the library. Attendees brought pictures and were able to make memory pages to take with them.

The Bannwolf Library has received a new television to be used for movie night and Wii gaming. A new CD display unit has also been installed, allowing customers to browse the CD collection with more ease.

San Pedro

Story time is now held twice a week, BACKPack (Books and Crafts for Kids) for elementary-school-age children) once a week, and a teen group once a week. There were ten storytime programs during this time period. A small but loyal group of parents and children come to storytime. The programs average around six people. BACKPack has really grown in recent weeks. Beginning in late October more students have been attending. During this time period, there were ten programs with an average of six kids per program; however, thirteen children have attended the last five programs. A fun fact about the group is its diversity: there are students from Beacon Hill Elementary, St. John's Lutheran School, and Blessed Sacrament School, and two who are homeschooled.

This month's Family Fun program offered crafts including leaf people, cornucopias made from different colored lentils and beans, and apple lacings. As evident from the activities the theme was the Fall Harvest. Forty-one people attended the program.

Children's Librarian Betsy Dalton met twice with two elementary school book clubs. Both groups read Halloween-themed books for October and a different book for November. The Cotton Elementary School club read *Midnight for Charlie Bone* and the Hawthorne Academy club read *Gideon the Cutpurse*. Both groups have fifteen members each. The students enjoyed the books and lively discussions were held. Betsy also promotes about ten extra books per meeting and all of those books are checked out by individual club members as well as the "club" book.

Betsy conducted story time and delivered books to six different childcare/preschool facilities, attending to fourteen classes and reading to approximately 172 children.

Kipp Aspire Academy, Monte Vista Montessori School and Kriterion Montessori School bring classes to the library on a weekly or twice-weekly basis. These students range in age from eight to thirteen, grades 2 through 8. When the classes come to the library, Children's Librarian Betsy Dalton and other library staff members suggest books and help them navigate the Dewey Decimal system, place holds, use the catalog and databases, and locate materials. The three schools bring approximately 100 students per week to the San Pedro Library.

The San Pedro Cinema's November feature was *October Sky*.

Chess on Thursday evenings, hosted by Department Systems Aide Hondo Aguilar, continues to bring in a dedicated group ranging from 5 to 12 participants each week.

On November 17, 12 patrons enjoyed a presentation on creating *papel picado* offered by Kathleen Trenchard of Cut-It-Out Studios. They also had a chance to try their hand at a project of their own. This presentation was part of the regular monthly craft program hosted by Library Assistant Cynthia Cruz.

On November 18, four patrons attended the inaugural meeting of the San Pedro Park Women's Literature Book Club. The book was Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. It was a stimulating conversation with diverse opinions voiced. January's selection will be *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. The idea for this book group came from volunteer moderator and branch patron Nicole Provencher, a doctoral student and instructor at UTSA.

Semmes

The Julia Yates Semmes Branch turned three years old on November 5. On November 8, the Semmes Friends offered birthday cake and punch and everyone in the building sang "Happy Birthday" to Julia. The Friends presented Semmes' maintenance worker Monica de la Cruz with a certificate and a gift card, in appreciation of her help with the last book sale.

Semmes welcomed early voters in droves during the last two weeks of October. This site was the second most popular one in the County, after Crossroads Mall. Thanks to library staff for coping so well and to the election judges who managed the crowd efficiently, with humor and never-ending patience.

Children's Services Librarians Randi Jones and Carrie Vance continue to visit Lost Creek Parent-Child Initiative, bringing stories and a selection of books to keep in the classroom.

Opera by Children continues to meet monthly in the meeting room. Supported by the local homeschooling community, this group is open to the public, and programs center around the integration of the arts into education.

School groups and scouting groups tour though the library on a regular basis, led by Children's Librarian Randi Jones.

On November 17, Teen Services Librarians Debye Nicholl and Roberta Hernández hosted a *Twilight* movie party on the patio. The terrace was decorated with lights and cake and punch were served. Those in attendance participated in trivia quizzes and discussion about the Stephenie Meyer books. The refreshments and the quiz prizes were underwritten by Semmes Friends.

Manager Kate Gray will move from Semmes to Central Library on December 8, to begin duties as one of the Branch Services Coordinators. She will miss the daily contact with Semmes staff, patrons and Friends very much, and cannot thank them enough for making the last three years very special and so very gratifying.

Thousand Oaks

Fall has been an exciting time for Thousand Oaks staff. The branch served as an early voting site where 9,647 people cast their votes. Citizens also came to Thousand Oaks to vote on Election Day.

On November 15 the Thousand Oaks Friends group had their fall book sale and raised more than \$1,000 to support the library. The Thousand Oaks staff is very grateful for the hard work of the Friends members and to the community for donating used books.

The Internet computers continue to be consistently busy. The addition of five laptops has helped to alleviate some of the congestion. Patrons have been checking out the laptops and have appreciated this new service the library provides.

Library programs continue to attract patrons of all ages. During the week of Thanksgiving the Thousand Oaks Theatre presented *Kung Fu Panda* and *Wall-E* for children to enjoy during the holiday week. Librarian Jorge Chavez had his monthly book club November 10, and the group discussed *Nefertiti* by Michelle Moran. Students in Library Assistant Barbara Kwiatkowski's after-

school program continue to work on the play *Hansel and Gretel*. Guillermo García and the teens rock out on Thursday nights with Rock Band and Guitar Hero. The Toddler Time and Story Time programs for young children have been well-attended, and fall programs included dinosaurs, dogs, and Thanksgiving.

On November 22 Children's Librarian Leslie Elsasser participated in the San Antonio Express-News Book and Author Celebration, which raised money for the San Antonio Public Library Foundation's "Born to Read" project.

Circulation staff members Phyllis Phelps, Brenda Ramos, Jayne Hitzfelder and Karen Gilsdorf welcomed the new cash register and adjusted beautifully to the change!

The Tobin Library at Oakwell

The Tobin Library at Oakwell welcomed 13,308 early voters. The Tobin location was reported as having one of the shortest wait times from sign-in to vote casting. This year the Early Voting Officials requested access to the Meeting Room one to two days in advance of their scheduled start date. They used this time to set up equipment and to work out any issues prior to the first day of Early Voting. Special thanks go to the Tobin staff for working flexible hours to accommodate the Voting Officials during Early Voting and on Election Day.

In an effort to involve the younger patrons of the branch in the election process, Librarian Sherrie Langston Hardin developed and implemented a program which allowed them to vote on the movies they would like to watch as part of programming activities for 2009. The event coincided with the absentee balloting process at Tobin. Approximately 75 of Tobin's younger patrons participated in the event. The winning movies were announced on Election Day.

The branch library resumed hosting of the Beginning Yoga classes. Sherrie Langston Hardin works in cooperation with Yoga instructor Debbie Reid to offer this weekly program to Tobin's patrons.

The Friends of the Tobin Library at Oakwell had another successful book sale in November. The Tobin Friends raised more than \$2,900 and received another \$50 in donations. Branch staff would like to express their many thanks to book sale chairperson Pat De Pasquale and the Tobin Friends. Through their hard work and their spirit of cooperativeness and enthusiasm, every book sale is a success.

The weekly lapsit program was renamed to Baby Time. As a result, the branch saw an increase in the number of participants for this event hosted by Children's Librarian Debra Bryant.

On November 5 Adult and Teen Services Librarian Sherrie Langston Hardin hosted a showing of the movie *Men in Black*. The event was attended by 30 Garner Middle School students and library patrons.

Library Assistant Virginia Hurt hosted the monthly Family Fun event on November 8. The theme this month was "Harvest Festivals." The activity was well received with a greater number of participants.

In cooperation with the Little Read Wagon, on November 13 Children's Librarian Debra Bryant delivered books to the Rittiman Clinic for Women, Infants and Children. Ms. Bryant also sets up book displays and keeps their reading center organized. This outreach activity promotes early childhood literacy.

Westfall

November and, so far, December have been busy months at the branch. On November 4 Westfall served as an Election Day polling location. Turnout was steady but manageable, with a total of 594

voting at the branch. Later that week, on November 8, the Westfall Friends held their fall book sale and raised about \$900. Branch staff are very grateful for all of the Friends' hard work and look forward to putting the proceeds to good use.

Westfall offered many program opportunities for patrons. On November 12, Oscar García presented information about Social Security's on-line resources. This informative session highlighted the various services provided on the Social Security website. November 14 was National Game Day. Patrons were invited to enjoy board games and card games at the branch. Later that day, Hanna Pankowsky, author of *East of the Storm: Outrunning the Holocaust in Russia*, spoke about her experiences during World War II. As Thanksgiving neared, Children's Services Librarian Imelda Merino presented several storytimes on Native Americans and Thanksgiving. On November 19 Westfall patrons interested in feathered creatures were invited to come to "Bird Buddies". At this presentation, several exotic birds were presented and there was also an opportunity to have a picture taken with the beautiful birds.

During the few weeks that the Cody Branch was closed, Westfall staff was happy to have the opportunity to work with several Cody employees. The help received from Cathy Trejo, Mark Ruíz, and Leticia Zúniga-Prather was very much appreciated. Staff was also glad to have the use of Cody's laptops while they were closed. Westfall's Internet computers are always busy, but the additional customers really increased our usage and the additional laptops relieved some of the demand.