

**San Antonio Public Library  
Director's Report  
August 26, 2009**

**Administration**

**Director's Office**

The Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), part of the federal economic stimulus package, has been a priority for the Library Management Team. On July 29, Library Director Ramiro Salazar met with the Texas Urban Library Directors in Austin, and the BTOP was a major item on the agenda. On August 4, he met with City IT Services Director Hugh Miller to discuss the Library's collaboration with ITSD to submit a comprehensive application for funding for the City and the Library under BTOP. The Library has applied under the first round of funding, and notice of grant awards under that first round is expected in November or December 2009. Senior Management Consultant Jessica Ramos coordinated the Library's application for stimulus funds.

Late July and early August were also occupied with finalizing the Library's Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget. The City Manager presented the proposed City budget to Council on August 13. To apprise Library staff of the possible ramifications of the budget, Ramiro and Assistant Directors Kendra Trachta and Kathy Donellan met with all Library staff members whose positions might be affected to explain the process to them and to assure them of the City Manager's commitment to laying off no City employees. That afternoon, Ramiro was interviewed by KENS-TV/Channel 5 regarding the City budget and possible changes and improvements to Library service.

Ramiro has also met with the Library Foundation to discuss capital campaigns to support the opening of the Mission and Parman Libraries. The Foundation has engaged the services of the Wood Agency to support the campaign to fund enhancements at the Parman Library, and on August 22, Ramiro attended a meeting at which preliminary campaign concepts were discussed.

**Children's Services system-wide**

Summer programming for 2009 drew to a close on Saturday, August 1, with the annual SummerFest Celebration. Attendance topped off at 971. Children's staff from across the library system were joined by nine enthusiastic volunteers to provide entertaining activities on the first three floors of the Central Library. Local McDonald's restaurants generously provided "Apple Dippers" for attendees to enjoy, with many parents expressing their appreciation for these healthy snacks.

The Summer Reading Club has now reached over 22,500 participants and has exceeded our goal by more than 500 children. The final number of finishers, those children who returned completed Reading Logs, received certificates and claimed free paperback books, is not yet available. Staff expects finishers to trickle in through the first of September. However, current figures indicate that 7648 children or 34% of registrants have completed the 15-book requirement.

**Public Relations**

Public Relations Manager Beth Graham has been coordinating the "Be One in a Million" Tax-Free Weekend Mall Blitz. To remind parents and students that a Library card is the most important school supply, the Bookmobile visited six shopping centers around the City to register shoppers for a San Antonio Public Library card. Response from the shopping centers was enthusiastic, and the San Antonio Express-News supported the campaign with an editorial in the August 19 edition.

Graphic Designers Ana Farr and Tiffanie Wilson have been working on the Hispanic Heritage Month calendar of events. They have also designed a series of banners for Little Read Wagon to use to

promote their "Play and Learn" and "Learn about Early Literacy" series of programs. Tiffanie also acted as media contact for SummerFest at the Central Library on August 1.

The Library has received 47 media mentions in the past month.

### **Teen Services system-wide**

The Teen Summer Program, *A Summer with Character*, was a great success, with 4,226 teens registered for the program and more than 1,000 completions. The program's completion rate increased approximately 10% from last year. The redesign of the Teen Summer Program was well-received among many teens in San Antonio. The colorful game card captured the attention of many, including some who were never attracted to SAPL's previous reading programs. Part of the appeal was that teens got credit for activities other than reading, such as socializing at the library.

GameFest 2009 was an absolute success. More than 400 people attended, an approximate 45% increase from last year's event, partly due to the variety of Teen Summer Program prizes paid for by the Friends of the Library. These included a Nintendo Wii with Mario Kart, a FLIP video camera donated by District 6 Councilwoman Delicia Herrera, and tickets to San Japan. Also of note was the presence of Games2U, which provided the teens with the opportunity to play video games inside a decorated van. As soon as they arrived, many of the attendees flocked toward it to participate. Double Dave's provided pizza for the event and Coca-Cola San Antonio provided the beverages. Special thanks to Violeta Garza (Librarian I at Central Teen Services), Tim Johnson (Library Assistant at Guerra), Carlos Loera (Library Assistant at Collins Garden), Tricia Masterson (Library Assistant at McCreless) and Rene Leija (Library Assistant at Memorial) for volunteering to work this event.

Landa Library Assistant and Teen Services Liaison Brooke Ballard coordinated outreach visits to St. Anthony High School for their student orientation. Central Teen Services Librarians Violeta Garza and Kathleen Fordyce, Las Palmas Teen Services Librarian Heidi Novotny, San Pedro Department Systems Aide Hondo Aguilar, Johnston Children's Services Librarian Karen Sebesta, and Pan American Library Assistant Melissa Carroll participated in this outreach effort. More than 75 students and parents received library cards. Staff also promoted services and resources that the Library offers, such as Live Homework Help.

Central Teen Services Library Assistant Sylvia Pachecano attended the Josiah Youth Media Project on Saturday, July 11. She received permission from the Media Project program director to bring mini-fliers for the San Antonio Public Library Teen Film Festival. The fliers were distributed to the teens attending the Project as they arrived.

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

"I love the SA Public Library, esp. the Brook Hollow branch! Great resources/great staff. Kudos to Manager Beth Schorlemer and her great team!" – **Leslie Cardinal**, July 27, via Twitter

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"Thanks for telling me about the online databases for the Library. Came in really handy in doing some client research on south side businesses. Imagine – because I have a library card, I can access for free what businesses pay thousands of dollars a year for. I \*heart\* our public library!" – **Debi Aronson Pfitzenmaier**, July 31, via Facebook

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"I would like to take this opportunity to applaud Andrew Jung for his efforts in assisting me in retrieving San Antonio *Express-News* articles from the archives and e-mailing them to me. I needed these articles to complete documentation for my security clearance. Without them, I probably would

not be able to qualify. It is employees like Andrew that make a difference for the better, and he should be commended. Thank you.” – **Robert Niño**, August 12

## **Central Library**

### **Alamo Area Library Systems (AALS)**

AALS staff has been working on two new grants for the member libraries. The Joint Automation Grant with the Central Texas Library System will upgrade 13 AALS libraries' automation systems to a Web-hosted online service provided by Biblionix. These libraries will be able to offer remote access to patrons, enhanced content (book covers and reviews) in the catalog, and a management tool for interlibrary loan transactions.

The Systems Negotiated Grant (SYNG) is still being developed at this time. SYNG allows for additional System funding for early childhood literacy, family literacy or workforce development programs.

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

As summer programming winds down, Central Children's Services staff begins to concentrate on collection maintenance. After a period of heavy summer usage, the picture-book collection becomes the first priority. Staff are examining books for damage, and cleaning them as well. This careful examination of the picture book-collection also provides an opportunity for shelf-reading and shifting where the books have become too tight.

Another collection project currently underway involves the juvenile biography collection. Through a grant from the Texas Book Festival, Central Children's Services staff are identifying and ordering additional and replacement copies of high-demand biographies including U.S. Presidents, leaders of the civil rights movement, and Hispanic American heroes. While there is no specific time frame for spending the Texas Book Festival funds, the intent is to have the entire sum encumbered by the end of August.

### **Digital Services**

With the assistance of funding from the Alamo Area Library System, the Digital Services team is taking advantage of various technology courses at the New Horizons computer learning center. Their goal is to refresh current knowledge as well as learn new features dealing with web and desktop applications that are used to support the library.

Department Systems Specialist Glenn Parker is working with Viki Ash to develop online web registration and reporting for Young Pegasus 2009. He is currently finalizing the entry form and poetry selection screens. In addition to the web components, he will be developing a client application that allows the poems to be generated as Microsoft Word documents based on selected filter criteria.

Library Assistant Sarah Carolan is currently working on improving information provided in the Internet Frequently Asked Questions section. Her goal is to develop a useful, accurate, and searchable information repository that will allow both patrons and library staff to locate information more quickly.

In addition to creating Young Pegasus web graphics, Department Systems Specialist Juanita Lopez is working to develop a new library services web page. The new page will be featured as part of the main navigation bar on <http://www.mysapl.org> and will feature a few of the library's main services. Phase II of this project will be programming this logic into a database environment, and involve the inclusion and description of additional library services.

Digital Services Librarian Adam Spana joined Landa Library Assistant Brooke Ballard for an interview on "Cover to Cover" to promote the Mejor Futuro/Better Future library scholarship program. Adam also led a training session on accessing library resources online as part of Little Read Wagon's monthly continuing education class.

### **Outreach Services**

The Bookmobile's new stops at Kirby and the Elmendorf area are proving to be successful. At Kirby, the staff of Hopkins Elementary School greeted the Bookmobile and made a classroom available so that Little Read Wagon staff could conduct a storytime inside. More than thirty Kirbyites came out to see the Bookmobile.

Whataburger, the Bookmobile's new host in the Elmendorf area, offered a warm greeting on the Bookmobile's first visit. Whataburger's manager made an intercom announcement to her customers to inform them of the Bookmobile's arrival; she also brought out a stack of coupons for free drinks to be given to Bookmobile patrons. Twenty-five visitors dropped by, most of them having come to the Whataburger specifically to use the Bookmobile.

The library's new Playaway media devices have been slow to catch on with most Bookmobile patrons but have proven to be a hit at Eva's Heroes, where the teachers have found them to be helpful learning tools for developmentally disabled students. The teachers borrowed several Playaways, along with print copies of the same titles, to use in the learning lab. The students listen to the narration and follow along in the book, thus enhancing their reading skills.

The Bookmobile made a special visit to the Martínez Street Women's Center on July 24. On July 25, the Bookmobile provided service at the Palo Alto Community Coalition's La Fiesta del Verano. Outreach staff ran an information table and registered new library card holders at a conference for daycare teachers and administrators, held at Windcrest United Methodist Church, July 25, and at SAISD's New Teacher Orientation, August 5. On August 1, the Bookmobile appeared at Child Protective Services' Protected and Connected Festival. So far this year, Outreach/Little Read Wagon has registered 1,036 new cardholders and talked to 10,889 event-goers.

Between public appearances, the Bookmobiles received a strenuous weeding.

Libro the Lion made an appearance at SAIL's (Seniors Active in Learning) ADA Celebration and District 4's Health Fair. On August 5 Outreach Coordinator Ramona Lucius taught nonprofit organizations how to use Foundation Directory Online. On August 8, Library Assistant Barbara Celitans demonstrated a science experiment at KLRN's Early ON Back to School event at the Children's Museum.

With pride and sadness, the Outreach staff bade farewell to Shannon Calderon, whose internship concluded in July. Shannon will be starting college in the fall.

### **Little Read Wagon**

The summer has flown by for Little Read Wagon! July 10-13 Cresencia Huff attended the American Library Association's Annual Conference in Chicago. At the conference Mrs. Huff had the honor of being a panelist for the program "Where you can go with Every Child Ready to Read." In addition to her presentation, Mrs. Huff attended several sessions where she learned more about early childhood programs, marketing, photography, and "green" living.

Throughout July and August Little Read Wagon is offering Play and Learn programs at The Neighborhood Place. The first program, held July 8, had a small turnout. As parents and grandparents have shared program information with their friends, the classroom assigned to the program has become very crowded! Several families have participated in Little Read Wagon

programs as often as three times in one week, attending sessions at the Memorial and Guerra libraries as well as The Neighborhood Place. These same families also take their children to regular storytimes at their neighborhood branches.

On July 30 Julia Lazarin, Corinne Sanchez and Cresencia Huff attended a play therapy workshop at KLRN. The training was presented by Michelli Gomez of the Children's Bereavement Center. Along with representatives from other School Readiness delegate agencies, Little Read Wagon staff was encouraged by the explanation of how the brain is affected by traumatic experiences and how open-ended play helps heal such injuries.

Aside from regular Little Read Wagon programming, staff have also helped in other areas of the library system. Cresencia Huff filled in by providing baby time and storytime programs on July 28 at the Brook Hollow Branch Library. Little Read Wagon supported SummerFest this year by hosting a toddler play area and assisting with face painting. Corinne Sánchez and Texana/Genealogy Librarian Andrew Crews represented the library at a Communities in Schools event on August 13.

### **Reference Department**

On July 18, Diana Starrett hosted a program, "Value Line: Behind the Numbers." Members from the South Texas Chapter of the National Association of Investors introduced "Value Line," a source used by many financial analysts to judge the financial soundness of a company. The class was well received and requested a follow up, which has been scheduled for August 22.

On August 31, Dan Stanford represented the library at the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Americans with Disabilities Act celebration at La Villita. The hall was packed and the appearance of Library mascot Libro was a big hit.

On August 5 Sally Bauer hosted a "Clean Green" program, attended by 25 people. April and Charles Mier discussed the potentially harmful toxins and chemicals that can be found in common household cleaners and gave a demonstration of "make-your-own" cleaning products – window cleaner, scouring powder and all purpose cleaner – using common ingredients such as vinegar, baking soda and salt.

### **Technical Services Department**

On August 3, Martha Knott, Margo Guzmán, Katie Enright, Nohemí López-Rosdahl, and Charlotte Balusek met with Eric Timm of Midwest Tapes to discuss RFID linking issues and other processing concerns.

Martha and Nohemí attended the Texas Library Association's Annual Assembly on July 28-31. As members of the TLA 2010 Program Committee, they participated in the evaluations of submitted program ideas, and Noehmi assisted in the creation of a tentative program schedule for the 2010 TLA Conference.

### **Teen Services**

Teen Services staff host programs for teens Monday through Thursday afternoons during the summer.

Mondays with Librarian Violeta Garza: As part of Japanese Bunka Mondays, on July 13 teens watched the popular Anime series *Ouran High School*. On July 20, teens played Super Smash Bros. Brawl. Teens got a Japanese fried rice demonstration on July 27 for the "Fried Rice Cooking Mama" program. They also had green tea and participated in a Japanese vs. Chinese culture quiz. On August 3 and 10 teens played *Brawl*.

Tuesdays with Librarian Kathleen Fordyce: Tuesdays are gaming afternoons for teens. Teens choose which game(s) they would like to play on these days. On July 14, teens played *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* for the Wii. On July 21, teens played *Guitar Hero World Tour* and *Brawl*, and got to see a creative performance by teens from the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, who held a poetry recital in the Teen Services Department. On August 4, teens played *Brawl* again and on August 11, they played both *Brawl* and *Rock Band 2*.

Wednesdays with Library Assistant Sylvia Pachecano: Sylvia hosted the weekly Wii Wednesdays programs as part of the Teen Summer Program's daily program for teens.

Thursdays with Library Assistant Regina Almanza: On July 16, teens participated in the last craft for the summer. They made an easy and inexpensive craft: bubble magnets. Using cut-out pictures from old magazines, they glued them to clear glass gems and glued a magnet piece on the back. For the rest of July and August, teens played Wii video games. *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* continues to be a teen gamer favorite. On August 6, a group of foreign exchange students visited the library and played the Wii for the first time. After a quick tutorial from a group of experienced teen Wii users, they were introduced to *Mario Power Tennis*. A great time was had by all.

Partnership: The GO Center, staffed by volunteers from AmeriCorps VISTA: Communities in Schools, closed down its Library outreach after 8 weeks of encouraging teens to go to college. They got a steady influx of curious teens and parents this summer, but really succeeded in communicating their message during GameFest 2009. It is expected that a similar relationship will be formed with the incoming VISTA volunteers next year.

### **Texana/Genealogy Department**

Although Texana/Genealogy did not have any regular classes during July, a group of five students and two adults from one of the summer programs at the Southwest Craft Center visited the department. Their class project was to produce an album or scrapbook based on family history. The group was given an introduction to genealogy and then began work. Everyone, including the adults, found at least one primary source document on a family member. Some found several.

On August 1 Los Bexareños met on the sixth floor, as the auditorium was otherwise booked. Approximately sixty individuals attended. A number of these later came into the department to research.

The same day Texana/Genealogy Supervisor Frank Faulkner taught a double class in the afternoon. The first session was on the Draper Manuscript Collection, and the second on Southern "Plantation Records." Classes discussed contents of the collections, indexing, and how to use them in research. Seven individuals attended each class.

Sylvia Reina taught a computer class about online maps on August 4. Thanks to a notice in Paula Allen's newspaper column the Sunday before, fourteen people filled a possible fifteen slots in the Training Room.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission grant, which was not renewed for a third year, is winding down. Librarian Debbie Countess is entering the cataloging data on the finding aids into OCLC. All work must be completed and reports filed with the NHPRC in November.

## **Branch Libraries**

### **Bazan**

Bazan's citizenship classes ended their summer session on August 20, the fourth semester Academia América has brought its instructors to the branch library. The free bilingual classes incorporate citizenship, civics and English. Academia América, which has received several commendations from representatives of the Immigration and Naturalization Service for its approach, was recently featured in the *Express-News*. The organization plans to start its fall session on September 15.

Branch staff are happy to report that the number of people using the library has increased significantly from last summer. This year visits to the library doubled and the number of patrons coming in stayed longer to take advantage of the library's many resources. While some children came in as part of the Summer Reading Program, others came in to enjoy board games, to read, and to use the computers. The children's computer with educational games seemed to be the most popular. The month of June also saw a 26% increase in circulation.

Bazan Branch Manager Raymond Villarreal would like to commend branch staff for their fine efforts in the recruitment of children and teens for the 2009 Children's and Teen Summer Reading Programs at Bazan. This was the first time that the Library has enrolled over 500 children in the reading program. Of special note are the efforts of Children's Services Librarian Hope Sonnen, who almost single-handedly planned, organized and taught the rest of us what needed to be done to ensure success. Also not to be overlooked are the fine efforts of Marisa Sparks and Chuck Tucker who maintained a fine working relationship with teens in the teen Reading Program and with the Wii Gaming. A heartfelt thanks to everyone else as well!

### **Brook Hollow**

On August 15 Brook Hollow's Spanish-language book group *La Tertulia* celebrated its fifth year at SAPL with a book group party. With plenty of food, sparkling cider and toasts, the group commended themselves and their relationship with the branch. Over the years, the members of *La Tertulia* have read an impressive 40 titles and hosted numerous poetry readings. The San Antonio Storytellers Association also continued its partnership with Brook Hollow at its monthly Tuesday Story Swap. The Story Swap is open to new or experienced tellers and to Very Important Listeners. In addition, Brook Hollow hosted AARP's Driver Safety Program again and plans to do so regularly in the future. Brook Hollow also hosted a new partner, the San Antonio Meditation Organization. They will be offering free meditation classes at the branch on Sundays. Computer classes were also offered by the City's Department of Community Initiatives during the month of July.

Summer Reading was as busy as usual but made even more so by the maternity leave taken by Children's Services Librarian Ruth Chiego. (Congratulations, Ruth!) Thanks to Little Read Wagon, Central Children's Services Librarian Rachael Pensiero and Thousand Oaks Children's Services Librarian Leslie Elsasser; the summer storytimes were well covered and the children had a blast. Brook Hollow was also fortunate enough to have a library school student oversee the Tuesday afternoon crafts. The Brook Hollow Teens ended the summer by exploring different aspects of Japanese culture and art. On July 22, the teens were treated to a special showing of anime by the Anime Cultural Enthusiast Society, and on July 29 they practiced their hand at Japanese calligraphy and learned a few Japanese words along the way. The Teen Summer Program ended on a great note and the teens are looking forward to the programs planned for them in the fall.

Teen Services Librarian Mary Smith attended the AALS workshop "Giving a Fish a Bath: the Untold Story of the Adolescent Mind," presented by Frank Kros of the Upside Down Organization. In this workshop she gained useful knowledge about how the brains of teens really work and the special "brain-based" challenges facing adolescents as they mature. Mary is looking forward to applying this

new knowledge in her daily work with the teens at Brook Hollow. Library Assistant Kathryn Ryan attended a Science Fiction Reader's Advisory Class and Branch Manager Beth Schorlemer, attended a team-building workshop for managers. Adult Services Librarian Tapley Trudell attended ALA in Chicago as a member of The Reading List Council.

### **Carver**

The Friends of Carver Branch Library boasted another successful book sale on July 10. Friends President Dorothy Smith and Friends member Shirley Coleman said they were delighted that support remains strong for the book sales.

In an effort to draw awareness to the library, Carver Branch Department Systems Aide Jesse J. Aguilar and Library Assistant Deanna Sutton visited a community youth conference, which attracted about 1,000 teens, some of whom signed up for library cards.

The Children's Summer Reading programming ended on July 28, after a season of steady attendance throughout. Children's Services Librarian Amy Thorne enjoyed seeing the children every week and had great fun at Summer Fest, where some of her regular patrons turned out for the festivities. She also visited the childcare center at St. Philip's College and spoke to a group of children in a local summer activity program about the services the library has to offer them.

The afternoon Teen Summer Programming also came to an end in July, although program regulars are still often in the library. The Anime Club continues its success, with both long-time and new attendees coming out on Thursday nights. Club participants are looking forward to celebrating one year of weekly anime meetings in September.

On August 6, Branch Manager Ronnie Delgado represented the Library at the Back-to-School Jamboree at the Claude W. Black Community Center. Library information, bookmarks and pencils were offered to about 500 teens and school-age children who attended. The Carver Branch Library would like to thank the Claude W. Black Advisory Board for partnering with the library and allowing staff to be part of their community functions.

Branch staff responded to the issue of joblessness facing many Americans, including a number of residents of their service area. On August 13 the branch welcomed Meredith Best of the Alamo Workforce Solution who presented a resume and dress-for-success workshop. One of the highlights was the discussion "What Not to Wear to Work!"

Adult Services Librarian DL Grant visited the Coliseum-Willow Park Neighborhood Association to promote library services and resources. He traveled to Austin to attend the Annual Assembly of the Texas Library Association, representing San Antonio Public Library and presiding over the District 10 business meeting. He was recently elected to the executive board of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association.

The Popcorn Club, Carver Branch Library's summer movie program, attracted an average of about 25 attendees for each of its offerings. Other activities, such as the Carver writers' group, enjoyed continued success, attracting at least one new participant each meeting. On August 4, members voted to change the group's name to the Carver Literary Arts Society (CLAS). They meet the first and third Tuesday of each month. Moderator Antoinette Franklin, who teaches creative writing classes at the branch, says the goals of the group are to encourage writing in the community and support the endeavors of members working to produce publishable works. "We have been very successful," she said. A number of the group's writers have already been published.

San Antonio writers R.L. Sloan and Antoinette Franklin chose the Carver Branch Library to announce their new books. Ms. Franklin is the author of *A Legacy to Leave Our Youth*, a historic

look at the Negro Baseball League featuring San Antonian and former league member John Miles. Ms. Sloan has published *Embellish*, a vampire novel set in San Antonio and Louisiana.

Carver's First Annual Community Art Show was held on August 8, attracting some 60 guests, including arts supporter and enthusiast Aaronetta Pierce. Mrs. Pierce, who boasts a national reputation, opened the event with remarks, encouraging the community to continue supporting the arts. Special guests included District 2 Councilwoman Ivy Taylor. Artists whose works were featured included Howard Rhoder, Gracie Poe, Helen Montagino, John Coleman, George Ellis, Paul Hurd and Ronney Stevens.

### **Cody**

Boys and girls from the Country Home Day care were entertained on Monday afternoons with some "fish stories," among others, read by Children's Services Librarian Sheila Acosta. Their particular favorites were *The Pout- Pout Fish* and *I'm the Biggest Thing in the Ocean*.

The Happy Half-Hour hosted during the summer by Sheila turned out to be a popular book event for young readers. Parents and children were asking about continuing this for the fall.

The Monday Game Day was a big hit with several families. Kids and their parents especially enjoyed *Monopoly*, *Apples to Apples, Jr. Edition*, and *Uno*. Staff hope to host more game day events after school during the fall.

The Cody staff helped to set the scene for Beach Day with Hawaiian shirts, flowery leis, and beach towels. Babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers enjoyed beach stories and finger plays at all of the children's storytimes.

TREEmendous Trees was the title of the summer nature program held on Wednesday, July 15, an event planned for the whole family. The program included hands-on activities and a craft for all who attended. This event was sponsored by the San Antonio Natural Areas.

It was all about BUGS, BUGS, BUGS! for the Thrilling Thursday Summer Reading event on July 16. Texas AgriLife Extension Service provided the creepy-crawlies and a variety of crafts for everyone. Bugs and crafts were enjoyed by all of the 114 in attendance.

Blimey! There were Buckos and Buccaneers all around for Pirate week at the branch. The Sufferin' Scallywags performed on July 23 for the Thrilling Thursdays Summer Reading program. Many children who came dressed as pirates received new books. All enjoyed the pirate stories and sing-along.

On July 28 through July 30, the Mi Casa Summer Camp chose the Cody Branch Library for their summer field trip destination. Sheila read a few stories to them, after which the children browsed the collection.

Chess Enthusiast Frank Salinas presented a special chess workshop and tournament to twenty-four third, fourth, and fifth graders.

Summer Reading concluded with the show *Great Illusions* by Blake. More than 170 people attended and were very impressed with the amazing magic tricks that Blake performed during the show.

Summer Reading 2009 was a success. A total of 1,510 children signed up for the Children's Summer Reading Program while 228 teens participated in the Teen Summer Reading Program. Children are still bringing in their completed reading logs to pick out their very own books to keep.

Wednesday family movie days were a hit. Children had the opportunity to enjoy *Horton Hears a Who*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *Paul Blart: Mall Cop*, and *Coraline*. *Coraline* set a new record in attendance with an audience of 80.

Shooting mischievous rabbits with plungers replaced brawling during Teen Tuesday as participants replaced Smash Brothers Brawl with Rayman Raving Rabbids as the Wii favorite. Teens also enjoyed playing Dance Dance Revolution and Guitar Hero on the Playstation.

Film and book clubs enjoyed a successful July by discussing such titles as *Which Big Giver Stole the Chopped Liver?* by Sharon Kahn *Chat* by Archer Mayor; *Dewey: The Small Town Library Cat* by Vicki Myron, and *Predictably Irrational* by Dan Ariely. The library hosted two special events in July. The San Antonio Writer's Guild met on July 15 to offer positive critiques of authors' work. On July 22 the San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition presented a workshop on their Trap, Neuter, Return program.

### **Collins Garden**

Summer Reading is winding down at Collins Garden. Participation has been widespread, as Collins has included several recreation centers and childcare centers this year. Virtually all the free books have been claimed by participants, and many kids have indicated an interest in participating next year. Children's Services Librarian Leigh Bedford reports that 823 children signed up for the SRP with a total of 380 – or 46% - finishing.

The branch has been offering coloring sheets for their youngest patrons this summer, and they have been a smash hit. The kids love to color and then display their art work up on the glass block wall. The branch has "exhibited" Dora the Explorer next to dragons, next to arctic animals, next to Superman, next to Pokémon. Clearly, there is no obvious theme, except "Hey, I want to color 'cause it's fun!"

A thorough weeding of the entire Collins Garden collection has freed up shelving, which has allowed staff to relocate the various paperback book collections from spinners to the emptied shelves. Shelving the paperback books has made it easier for customers to browse the paperback collections and for staff to locate requested items and to reshelve checked-in paperbacks. Branch Services Coordinator Joel Bangilan attributed an increase in branch circulation statistics, for which he sent staff members a kudos, to the weeding of the collection.

The on-going resume assistance program was announced on KONO 101.1 during the July 21 "7:20 Money" segment on the Dave E. Rios morning program. There were a least couple of people who heard the announcement and visited the branch to take advantage of Adult Services Librarian Elma Nieto-Rodriguez's expertise. KABB and KENS also advertised the availability of this program during their morning shows on August 11, and the branch received several telephone calls as well as visits from a couple of interested job-seekers.

The Teen Summer Program at Collins Garden Library attracted 205 participants, with thirty-eight completing the program.

A total of 245 teens enjoyed the twelve gaming sessions offered at Collins Garden in July. Two teen-themed films drew 40 young adults. The Sumo Wrestling program proved to be a very popular event with the thirty children and young adults who attended.

Animal Care Services presented an animal safety class on how to care for pets and the dangers of coming into contact with stray animals. As a bonus, all who attended received a free t-shirt.

Teen Services Liaison Carlos Loera made eight outreach visits to two community centers. He reports that a total of 473 teens participated, enjoying the opportunity to watch movies and use the *Wii*.

The San Pedro Playhouse performed readings from the play *Barefoot in the Park* on July 25. Those who attended were pleased with the performance, with a lively discussion ensuing after the performance.

### **Cortez**

Construction on the Cortez Branch Library's new entrance continues with minimal disruption of library services. Patrons are entering and leaving the building through the meeting room and are using the meeting room as quiet study space and for WiFi access.

Weekly ESL classes, conducted by Project Learn to Read of San Antonio, continue to be well attended.

Library Assistant Stephanie Vásquez facilitated a discussion of *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez for this month's Cortez Book Club on August 6.

The branch hosted an introductory Sahaja yoga meditation class on August 13.

Branch Manager Rebecca Johnson and Outreach Manager Ramona Lucius attended a District 4 Back to School Fair at the Southwest Branch Metro Health Clinic on Saturday, August 8. They received 94 library card applications and spoke to numerous people about library services.

The City's Solid Waste Management Department presented a children's program about recycling on July 13. Seven parents and children attended the program and made a craft out of recycled materials.

Children were still registering for the library's summer program through late July and early August. As of August 10 the number of Cortez child program registrants was 877.

Avance San Antonio presented a program on early literacy for caregivers, parents, and children on July 23. More than fifty parents and children enjoyed stories, games, and snacks.

### **Forest Hills**

Forest Hills displays for July and August include Hurricane Season, Great Outdoor Month, and Travel the World with Books. In addition, the Contrarian Viewpoints Book Club met twice to discuss two different titles. Neighborhood associations such as Woodlawn Hills and Thunderbird Hills continue to use the meeting room on a monthly basis. The Feral Cat Coalition met August 2 at the library as well.

Forest Hills continued to have good customer turnout at the B.A.C.K. Pack and Story time programs. Customers enjoyed making crafts and listening to stories. KLRN visited Forest Hills on July 21 and brought Maya and Miguel with them. Customers enjoyed playing games, making crafts and taking pictures with Maya and Miguel. The last story time of the summer was especially magical because Ronald McDonald came to visit. Kids and adults enjoyed his magical show. Some children gladly participated and helped by being assistants to Ronald McDonald.

At the end of the Summer Reading Program, Forest Hills had about 735 children registered.

## **Great Northwest**

Great Northwest's workroom has been re-organized with areas designated for supplies. A new laptop in the second workroom is assisting with off-desk scheduling and holdings editor functions.

Adult Services Librarian Patricia King has started training library aides to process media items that need cases replaced. Adult Services Librarian Tracey Knouse is actively participating on the SAPL Weeding Committee. Branch Manager Roberto Zapata continues his committee work with the Idea Team.

Great Northwest Library enjoyed the excitement of the summer reading club this year. There were 2,944 participants this year (2,478 children and 466 teens). Children and their families were seen each day in the library from opening till closing. So far, 870 children have completed the reading club and received their free books.

Children's programming was very successful this summer, averaging attendance of more than 500 per week. The Texas Treasure Trackers (younger school children), American Girls (older elementary), Texas Stage Hands (a puppet club for the older elementary), Toddler Time and Storytime were brimming over with enthusiastic children and their families.

On August 3 the Friends of the Great Northwest Library sponsored an End-of-Summer-Reading Thank You Party for all volunteers and staff members. Their generosity is very much appreciated.

August is the time for the Great Northwest Library to reorganize and prepare for new and even better fall programming for the Great Northwest community.

## **Guerra**

The Henry A. Guerra, Jr. Branch Library celebrated its fifth anniversary on July 18. Library Director Ramiro Salazar, Assistant Director/Public Services Kendra Trachta, Branch Services Coordinator Joel Bangilan and Public Service Manager Beth Graham joined Leticia (Mrs. Ernesto) Barrera, other local community leaders, and branch staff for the observance of this milestone and for the dedication of the branch's meeting room to former District 6 City Council Representative Enrique M. Barrera. Mr. Barrera had been a tireless and dedicated advocate for District 6 and for the opening of the library. A branch staff meeting was held on July 20 at which Branch Manager Dexter Katzman introduced Adult Services Librarian Dorothy Blow, who transferred from the Cody Branch. Dexter joined other members of the Circulation Library Administrative Directives Committee for a meeting on August 4. He provided on-site consultations to Corinna Cabeza, a library technology student, on July 16.

Children's Services Librarian Yanira Vegerano Cruz continued to provide weekly storytimes for children through age 5 and their parents, grandparents and care givers. During the summer, Yanira was able to add another storytime program for school-aged children. She has been kept very busy with the large number of school children on summer vacation, and has successfully and effectively managed the Summer Reading Program.

Adult Services Librarian Dorothy Blow researched U. S. Census data for census tract 1717 (the area whose boundaries include parts of Military Drive, Marbach, Loop 410, Culebra, Callaghan, and West Commerce) and discovered that approximately 24% of that population is 50 years of age or older. Some are residents of senior facilities and are probably underserved due to their inability to visit the library. Dorothy will be conducting outreach programs and will start her programs with activities at the Virginia Gill and Sterling Adult Day Care Centers. The goal is to provide home- or institution-bound seniors in the Guerra service area with the same high level of library services that those can come to library routinely receive. A specific scheduling of dates and times will be available in the Library's online calendar when the needs are further identified.

Adult Services Librarian Stephen Jackson planned and conducted two book club meetings during the reporting period. The Spanish-language *Club de lectura* was well-attended on July 30. This book club discussed *Vivir en el maldito trópico* by David Unger. On August 11 Stephen moderated the Tuesday Evening Book Club; the focus was biographies and a Mexican film *Su Alteza Serenísima*, a film that covers the life and influence of Antonio López de Santa Anna with a special focus on the last days of his life.

Teen Services Liaison Timothy Johnson presented his Animangiacs on July 30; the meeting hosted fourteen teens who enjoyed playing *Naruto Clash of the Ninja*. Game-ra sessions were held twice, on July 22 (37 participants) and again on August 12 (47 participants). There were three Wii Play events (July 25, August 1, and August 15). The Yu-Gi-Oh competition on August 5 hosted eight children and teens. Tim also assisted with Teen Services' end-of-summer party. He attended a Youth Services meeting on August 12 and participated in training on dealing with issues relating to unattended children and teens.

The branch's more-than-full-time custodian Annie Castillo will be leaving at the end of September. Annie has been with the branch since it opened. She has been a wealth of information and a source of professional work. The staff at Guerra will miss her and consider lucky the other COSA department to which she will be assigned.

### **Igo**

In July, Igo hosted live snakes, explored optical illusions and had a Pirate Party to finish up the Summer Reading Program. A total of 1,134 children signed up for the summer reading program, and more than 5,000 children and adults attended the children's programs offered during the months of June and July. The branch also offered an adult summer reading program. A total of 160 signed up for the program, and 93 completed it. Each adult who completed the program received an Igo book bag provided by the Friends of the Igo Branch Library. Finally, 151 teens signed up for the Teen Summer Reading Program and 60 teens attended the end-of-summer program. All in all it has been a very busy and successful time, marking the second summer the branch has been open.

### **Johnston**

The Summer Reading Program was a smashing success with Johnston patrons, thanks to the commitment of the entire staff to welcoming families and encouraging them to enroll their children. Even the branch's security officer got into the recruiting spirit! As of this writing, Johnston has 1572 children and 480 teens for a total of 2052. This would not have happened without everyone's help and enthusiasm. Children's Services Librarian Karen Sebesta is very, very grateful to the best staff in the whole world! Children are still coming in to pick up their prizes.

One unique aspect of the children's B.A.C.K.Pack events was the participation by celebrity guest readers. The celebrities were representatives of the 433 Reserve Wing at Lackland Air Force Base, who read to the children and answered questions from little people and their moms, dads, tías, tíos and grandparents, posed for paparazzi, and even signed autographs! In July, the special guest readers were SSgt Julia Sandoval, LTC Mike Ratliff, and MSgt Ed Campos.

The Branch capped off the last B.A.C.K.Pack program with a visit from Ronald McDonald, who wowed everyone with juggling, magic tricks and, of course, books.

Danny Alvarez and Karen Sebesta kept the teens busy with the Wii provided by Teen Services. This addictive activity kept bringing the kids back again and again! A special word of thanks goes to the Friends of the Johnston Library for donating an Ipod Shuffle and a digital camera for a raffle drawing here at Johnston. The raffle tickets were sent down to the BIG DRAWING at Central Teen Services

and two winners were from Johnston Branch! Congratulations to all of the teen Summer Reading participants.

The Friends of the Johnston Library hosted a pizza lunch to say *thank you* to the great group of teen volunteers who kept the books and other materials on the shelves. They were so proud of their efforts, that several took a picture of the empty preshelving area in the workroom. (It's very rare to be so caught up with shelving during the busy summer months.)

The Branch participated in the City's School Supplies collection. A box was delivered right before school started.

Children's Services Librarian Karen Sebesta spent one Saturday morning running the Roadrunner's Women's Only 5K up and down the streets of Alamo Heights.

### **Landa**

A group of children from the Alamo Heights Special Needs Department made a series of visits to Landa where they enjoyed storytimes with Children's Services Librarian Ginger Payne and earned certificates and free books through the Summer Reading Program.

Landa Gardens Conservancy volunteers, including Interim Branch Manager Michael Kaminski, have been faithfully handwatering the Landa grounds to preserve the beautiful landscape which was created with a huge investment of time and money.

Outside the building, Teen Services Liaison Brooke Ballard went to St. Anthony High School on August 10 and 11. With the help of other Teen Liaisons she issued roughly 75 new library cards over a two-day period. On August 13 she participated in an IMLS initiative which allowed her to "shadow" Kate Simpson at Central Reference for the day. Brooke was also taped for this month's *Cover to Cover* along with Adam Spana discussing library school and Better Futures/IMLS.

### **Las Palmas**

In less than three weeks, Las Palmas closes for much-needed renovations. While customers are sad to hear that Las Palmas will be unavailable for a few weeks, they're anxious to see the changes that will improve and beautify their branch.

The weekly teen Wii program drew an audience of 49 (4 sessions); 15 teens created and then snacked on Candy Sushi. Six teens stopped by the library for the last GO College Information session.

Librarian Heidi Novotny was part of the Teen Services team that shared library information at the August 11 student orientation at St. Anthony's High School.

A program for first time homebuyers was presented to couples and singles of various ages (11 attending) interested in learning the steps to buying a home. The presenter touched on the various types of loans available and their interest rates, the new tax incentive, and the importance of a good credit record. In addition to answering audience questions, he shared COSA contact telephone numbers and web sites.

Children's Services Librarian Gina Brudi's Summer Family Fun Times were well attended: 25 for *Dragons!*, 20 for *Sunshine and Shadows*, and 20 for *Bats*. Community outreach to day care centers also continued: Good Samaritan (60 children), Mirasol (58 children), Madonna (50 children), and AVANCE (60 children).

Staff training this month included Teambuilding for Managers, attended by Branch Manager Rebecca Alvarez, The Reader's Advisory Interview, attended by Library Assistant Mary Area, AALS Reader's Advisory, attended by Librarian Heidi Novotny and Library Assistant Mary Area, and Giving a Fish a Bath, presented by AALS and attended by Librarian Heidi Novotny and Department Systems Aide Michael Gutiérrez.

*Be One in A Million!* Community outreach events: Children's Services Librarian Gina Brudi and Circulation Attendant Patricia Pérez were invited to the Kelly Child Development Center for a library card sign-up event, and to talk to parents about library services. Since working parents are often pressed for time, the event provided an opportunity for parents and their children to obtain a library card, with a total of 35 being issued. In addition to questions about WiFi and tutor.com, parents asked for library maps (parents were representative of all areas of the city). Thanks for to Outreach Coordinator Ramona Lucius for the loan of laptops, and to both her and Department Systems Aide Michael Gutiérrez for technical support. Ignite the Harvest Church held an information fair on July 13. Las Palmas staff members Mary Area and Patricia Pérez distributed library card applications, and literature and answered questions regarding library services, emphasizing Tutor.com. A total of 47 visited the library's table. Las Palmas was invited to return for their Back-to-School Fair on August 22.

### **Maverick**

Maverick Library has been extremely busy with patrons and programs. The B.A.C.K. Pack school-age programs continued to have a large number of children in attendance throughout July. Children's Services Librarian Stacy Bósquez offered a storytime and craft for 23 children from Protégé Learning Center on July 16. Children's Services Librarian Amy Roberts visited KinderCare on July 20 and read and promoted the library to the preschool classes.

Summer reading was a great success with 1,345 children registering and 508 completing the program as of August 9. The teen summer reading program had 446 teens sign-up and 53 completed the program. The Maverick staff worked as a team and did a great job!

Circulation Attendant J.D. Elizondo continues his committee work on the Idea Team and the 2010 Big Read committee. Amy attended the Texas Library Association Annual Assembly on July 29 in connection with her Texas Reading Club committee duties.

Adult programming in July included three popular "Christmas In July" programs. Frequent presenter Lou Thomas gave a program to 33 enthusiastic patrons on Twitter, Facebook and other social networking sites. Adult Services Librarian Alice DeCristoforo went to a Bandera Community Church luncheon to promote the library and its resources. On August 13, Lou Thomas will host a "Building Good Parent/Teacher Relationships" program.

Teen Services Librarian Derika Bailey had a successful turnout of 36 people for the viewing of *Prince Caspian* on July 25. On August 6, Ms. Bailey had 23 teens participate in a Guitar Hero Contest.

### **McCreless**

On July 29 McCreless staff bid a sad farewell to volunteer Georgine Smith. Ms. Smith had volunteered for the branch for a remarkable eighteen years. During that time she was a recipient of the "Library Champions Award" and served as the virtual right-hand for children's services. The branch celebrated with dessert and soft drinks and presented Georgine with a gift card.

The party for the end of the Summer Reading Program was a huge success! Ronald McDonald was there in person to present a highly entertaining magic and comedy act. The Friends of McCreless Branch Library provided funding for pizza, soft drinks and dessert from Domino's. The local franchise

gave the library a tremendous discount and the branch served 131 persons at the event! As an extra treat Beanie Babies donated by patron Ruth Farris were given away by drawing, and every child left with something to take home.

On July 25 the branch hosted a program on the health benefits of water. There were only five in attendance but the presenter was still pleased with the exposure.

On August 5 the branch was connected to the CMS printing station. Customers were quick to catch on and staff are thrilled with the streamlining of operations with this system.

Also on August 5, McCreless presented the last summer movie *Bedtime Stories* with Adam Sandler. There were 25 in attendance. The Friends provided water and candy as an extra treat.

The branch has established a new partnership with the recently formed Hot Wells Neighborhood Association. The Association will be holding their Board meetings the first Saturday of every month at McCreless.

The B.A.C.K.Pack programs for children led by Children's Services Librarian Beverly Bixler continued to be a big draw. On August 14 there were 47 in attendance for a program about Harry Potter which converted the auditorium into a classroom for wizards and on August 21 there were 47 for *Captain Underpants*. The morning programs for younger readers were also popular, with 36 on August 14 to enjoy snake stories and crafts, 43 on August 21 for pirates, and 40 on August 28 for princes and princesses.

Beverly also added to her packed month by conducting a tour and library card sign-up event for 21 children and teens from Harmony Baptist Church on the 20 of July.

The McCreless Library Teen Time continued in July with great success. July 15 had a turnout of 35 people and July 22 had a whopping 60 people! The branch wrapped up Teen Summer on July 29 with the final program of the summer rounding out at 55 people. Crafts were created and video games were played, everything was enjoyed thoroughly by all in attendance. Tricia Masterson also participated in Game Fest on August 8 and put her personality to work on the microphone announcing contestants.

### **Memorial**

Summer programming continued at Memorial with a circus-themed Family Fun program held on July 14. The day included circus stories, crafts, activities and a special visit from James Nealy, a member of the Alamo City Jugglers. A very enthusiastic group of children learned the best techniques for juggling first two and then three balls.

The Anime Culture Enthusiasts Society (ACES) met at Memorial on July 14 to screen a number of anime films for teens. The presentation was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The very popular summer lunch program at Memorial ended in August with more than 1,000 free lunches being served over a three-month period. Lunches were provided by the San Antonio Food Bank's Summer Food Service Program, whose goal is to make healthy lunches available for children between the ages of 1-18 when they are out of school for summer vacation.

Memorial Branch Library hosted special-needs children and teens from the Edgewood School District for storytimes on Wednesday mornings. A storytime for these children was created when they started attending the Library regularly. We hope to begin the storytimes again in the fall.

A first time home buyer's class was held August 4. A representative from Avlar Realty presented information about the various mortgage options available to first-time home buyers, as well as the necessary preparatory steps needed to qualify for a home mortgage.

Memorial Library started a new craft program for adults in July with a Knit and Crochet group that meets every Saturday morning. The group consists of women who are willing to teach and those wanting to learn how to knit and crochet. The approach is very casual and involves a lot of socializing and snacks!

### **Pan American**

The fun continued at Pan American during the month of July. Monday programs for the older children featured "I Love Damsels and Dragons" on July 13. Twenty-nine children enjoyed 2 dragon stories and made tin foil dragons. "Pirates" was the theme on July 20, and 40 children shared pirate stories and made parrots with real feathers. Thirty-five children spent July 27 celebrating "I Love Monsters and Mayhem" with three monster stories and a craft of a monster on a string.

The Wednesday preschool storytime crowd continued the summer fun with "When a Monster is Born." Three monster stories and a monster craft were enjoyed by 37 children on July 15. Going to the beach was the theme for July 22, with 44 children making colored seahorses stuffed with cotton balls and enjoying beach stories. Bird stories were shared on July 29 and spoon seagulls were made by 46 children.

Thursday Puppet Parties drew enthusiastic groups of children and adults. On July 16, *The Foot Stompin' Adventures of Clementine Sweet* was performed for 52 attendees. Each child made 2 dancer stick puppets. On July 23 *The Three Cabritos* was enjoyed by 55 attendees. Staff members Susan Villalobos and Melissa Carroll were assisted by volunteer Dennis Vara with the puppet show. The children made (almost) life-size poster board guitars.

Teens enjoyed Tuesday evenings at Pan American with Nintendo Wii on July 14 and July 21, with 15 and 25 attendees respectively. July 28, 12 teens enjoyed playing Guitar Hero.

Approximately 20 adults participated in the Tai Chi classes held every Monday evening. An additional class will be offered beginning August 27 because of the interest in these classes.

Children's Services Librarian Raissa Marking visited Palm Heights Community Center on July 14 and shared books and issued library cards for 75. She also delivered boxes of books to the WIC Clinic in early August.

### **Reagan High School/Bannwolf Library**

The Bannwolf Library welcomes Joan Dyer-Westacott to the staff. Joan comes to the library from London, England, and will serve as Children's Services Librarian. The staff is enjoying working with Joan and hearing about new ideas she brings to the table. The Bannwolf Library is currently looking for another full-time librarian. Heidi Hoecker has moved to a half-time school librarian position at Reagan High School and will be working with SAPL customers only one Saturday a month.

B.A.C.K. Pack activities at the Bannwolf Library concluded on July 28 with Spikey Mikey. Close to 200 children and parents attended the event. Everyone enjoyed the kid-friendly magic show.

Teen summer programs finished on July 28 with brick bookend crafts. Teens took white painted bricks and used stencils and paint to decorate and personalize them, converting the bricks to bookends. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to be creative with this craft.

One of the largest events of the summer was the library's celebration of National Ice Cream Month. On July 20, Blue Bell Ice Cream gave customers in the Bannwolf Library free ice cream sandwiches for coming to the library. Over 300 patrons took advantage of the ice cream on this hot July afternoon.

The Bannwolf Library has received three additional receipt printers. Two were placed at the circulation desk at the Sirsi stations for customers checking out Reagan High School material. One was placed in the back workroom for checking in books and processing holds. These receipt printers have made the process of checking out books more efficient.

### **San Pedro**

The Summer Reading Program was a great success at San Pedro! To date, the branch has registered **1,347** kids for the summer program (trailing only four other libraries) and **278** teens (behind only three other libraries)! Each special program drew over 100 attendees.

Children's Services Librarian Betsy Dalton presented six storytimes and five B.A.C.K.Pack programs. Storytime and B.A.C.K.Pack are presented twice weekly, once in the morning and once in the evening in order to make these programs available to the children of working parents. The Wednesday afternoon B.A.C.K.Pack has been especially popular at San Pedro. The teens met three times during this period. Department Systems Aide Hondo Aguilar assumed the duties of Teen Services Liaison during this time period. As part of the Summer Reading Program, on July 14 the Magik Theatre performed *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* for an enthusiastic crowd of 127! Betsy also assisted at SummerFest on August 1.

Happy (Half) Hour is a new summer program offered by the Children's Services Librarian Monday through Thursday to encourage reading during the summer so that the children are able to complete the program and receive their free books. Children are invited to come to the library at 3:00 any day Monday through Thursday and join with other kids to chat about books, read, and get to know other children in the area. It is an informal get-together which Betsy hopes will engender more reading and fun at the library!

The Chess Club continues to meet on Thursday evenings. Hondo facilitates these events and sets up a display of chess-related books, periodicals, and media items. The chess group also meets on Monday nights as part of "Summer Chess Nights". A loyal group of nine or ten usually attends.

Library Assistant Cynthia Cruz arranged for the Seguir Adelante Community Center to come to San Pedro on July 18 to present a résumé writing workshop. On July 20 and July 30 Cynthia visited the nearby DCI Senior Nutrition site to tell the folks about the library, issue library cards, and deliver bookmobile schedules.

The Women's Literature Group met on July 21 to discuss *Plague of Doves* by Louise Erdlich. The group is facilitated by Manager Michael Kaminski.

During the summer, Children's Services Librarian Betsy Dalton delivered books to the classes of several neighborhood child cares, including VIA and SAC for their use during the month. On August 11, Teen Liaison Hondo Aguilar helped staff a library table at St. Anthony High School's orientation. Hondo and other library staff issued library cards and promoted library services. On August 12, Hondo took flyers and bookmarks to Twain Middle School. The school librarian is new this year, and excited about working with San Pedro during the school year and increasing the Twain student participation level in the summer reading program. A book club based at Twain but facilitated by San Pedro staff is under discussion.

Two groups from Higgs, Carter, King Charter School visited the branch on July 15. Children's Services Librarian Betsy Dalton gave them a tour of the children's side of the library. The children ranged in grade from 1 through 6, and each group numbered around 25 students and two teachers. With Kriterion Montessori starting school on August 3, the older class walked over on August 5 for the first of its weekly visits. These students range in age from eight to thirteen, grades 2 through 8. When the class comes to the library, the Children's Services Librarian and library staff spend approximately thirty minutes with the students, suggesting books and helping them navigate the Dewey Decimal system, place holds, use the catalog and databases, and locate materials.

Recognizing that ongoing training is essential to serving SAPL's patrons, staff members took advantage of various training opportunities. Branch Manager Michael Kaminski attended a Team Building workshop on July 21 and a Readers' Advisory training on August 11.

San Pedro staffers continue to serve on various library committees. Michael heads up the Floating Collections Committee and serves on the Library Design and Construction Committee; Children's Services Librarian Betsy Dalton serves on the Children's Cataloging Committee; Library Assistant Cynthia Cruz serves on the Adult Programming and Explore More Card Committees; Library Assistant Sherrie Bossart serves on the Idea Team; and Department Systems Aide Alejandro Aguilar serves on the Staff Development Day Committee.

Cynthia Cruz has applied for the Mejor Futuro/Better Future Scholarship funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. On July 21 she interviewed for the scholarship with representatives of the San Antonio Library Foundation and SAPL.

### **Semmes**

Summer reading is coming to a close at the Semmes Branch Library. Due to the hard work of the entire staff, especially Children's Services Librarians Randi Jones and Carrie Vance and Teen Services Librarian Debye Nicholl, Semmes registered 1,315 children and 89 teens for the summer reading program. To date, 598 children have completed their reading logs, and teens turned in 82 raffle tickets. During July, 83 teens attended library programs, and 1,441 people came to Storytime and B.A.C.K. Pack programs.

The Semmes Cinema was also popular. A total of 86 people attended showings of *The Spirit*, *The Tale of Desperaux*, and *Bolt*.

Semmes staff were kept busy with the extra influx of Thousand Oaks patrons and holds, while Thousand Oaks was closed for refurbishment. During the two-week closure, many of Thousand Oaks' patrons visited Semmes to check out items or to pick up their holds.

On August 3 Branch Manager Jamie Flowers and Circulation Attendant Melissa Bustos attended the El Chaparral/Fertile Valley Neighborhood Association meeting. The meeting was intended to be a kick-off for National Night Out on October 6. Melissa made a special appearance as Libro the Lion and took pictures with all the children. Libro and other Semmes staff will be attending National Night Out as well. After the meeting, members of the association were invited to get library cards. About seven people signed up for cards.

## **Thousand Oaks**

Thousand Oaks looks wonderful after the remodeling, which started July 13 and finished on schedule. New beautiful blue carpet was installed and the walls were repainted. To add a splash of color to the library, some walls were painted mauve. The bathrooms were remodeled and countertops at the circulation desk were replaced. The exterior was also repainted, a flagpole was installed, the bike rack was moved closer to the entrance, and the parking lot was repaired and re-striped. To take advantage of the remodeling, some of the bookshelves behind the reference desk were turned so the staff has better visibility toward the back of the library. Patrons like the library's new look, and they have been happy to return to Thousand Oaks after the two-week closure.

At the end of July, the Thousand Oaks staff said goodbye to library assistant Guillermo García, who left to attend law school at American University in Washington, D.C.

Summer programs for children concluded Aug. 1 with SummerFest at the Central Library. Children's Services Librarian Leslie Elsasser and Library Assistant Debra Lindenburg-Morrow worked at SummerFest, where they saw some families from Thousand Oaks. After the remodeling, there was one week remaining for children's programming, and the attendance for those programs was great. Barbara Kwiatkowski's Tuesday family movies and the teen programs, WII Wednesdays and the Thursday night movie, will continue until school starts. All of the programs this summer had strong attendance numbers. Children and teens love their library!

The Thousand Oaks book club returned to its originally scheduled time on Tuesday evening. On August 11, the group discussed *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett.

Children's Services Librarian Leslie Elsasser attended the AALS workshop about Reader's Advisory on July 27 at Central. The workshop was very informative, and Jorge Chávez chose the next novel for the book club from the book list Leslie received at the workshop.

Circulation attendants Phyllis Davis, Brenda Ramos, Jayne Hitzfelder and Karen Gilsdorf have made life a little bit better at Thousand Oaks. They have worked very hard alphabetizing all of the CDs and putting initial letters on them so they are easier to locate. This will benefit patrons and staff.

## **The Tobin Library at Oakwell**

The Tobin Library at Oakwell is happy to welcome a new Children's Services Librarian. Elizabeth Thurston comes to SAPL from Baltimore, Maryland where she was a Library Media Specialist with the Baltimore County Public Library for thirteen years. She has stepped right into the active summer programming with storytimes and B.A.C.K.Pack programs. She is busy planning for the fall storytimes and is planning on adding a Baby Time storytime to the branches line up. The staff is very happy to have Liz on board.

Ten ladies met August 5 for the monthly Book Club at Oakwell and discussed the book *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini. It was a lively discussion led by former Oakwell manager Wendy Friedman.

Tobin teens had a full set of activities for July. On July 15 Adult Services Librarian Sherrie Langston Hardin hosted fifteen teens making Harry Potter trinket boxes. This was very timely as that day the new Harry Potter movie started playing at theaters. On July 22 the Alamo Cosplay Group visited Tobin and entertained twenty-two teens. This group dresses up as their favorite cartoon or anime character and does role-playing. The troop talked to the teens about the dos and don'ts of cosplaying and gave practical hints on creating costumes. They also covered safety issues. Some of the attending teens actually came in their own created costumes. On July 29 fourteen teens relaxed in the library's air conditioning and enjoyed watching the movie *Teenager Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

**Westfall**

Library continued to see an increase in usage this busy summer month. Programs included an array of subject matter, from book discussions, storytimes, movie showings, to healthy eating workshops and group crafting. Children's Services Librarian Imelda Merino assisted at SummerFest at Central Library, where she saw some familiar children's faces from the Branch.

Staff has been involved in training opportunities, including the Branch Manager's attending a team building workshop, teen liaison meeting, and AALS program on The Adolescent Brain; Library Assistant Theresa Ybarra's serving on the Hispanic Heritage Committee; Department Systems Aide Andrea Silva attending a DCI Collaborative meeting and CMS printing update; and Adult Services Librarian Monica Bustillo attending the Adult Programming Committee meeting to set things in place for the upcoming fall season.

Westfall now has CMS printing capabilities for its patrons.

The Friends of Westfall purchased a new unit of shelving upon which to house the ever-popular genre paperbacks and thus make them much more accessible to the public.

Staff has been busy preparing itself and the public for the closure of the branch at the end of the month for a two-week construction period.

Monica continued the library's strong relationship with the nearby Granados Senior Center and facilitated a book discussion at their location.