

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION  
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 2**

**MEETING DATE:** Thursday, March 12, 2009

**AGENDA ITEM #:** 8

**ITEM: ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMISSION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Commissioners or Library staff may make announcements regarding the Library Commission and Library or Friends group activities of interest to other Library Commission members.



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## Library News & Events - Spring 2009

### In This Issue

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[Library Usage Up As Economy Is Down](#)

### Check it Out

The following titles are from the [Popular Culture and Philosophy Series](#) written by academic philosophers and explore the meanings, concepts, and puzzles within television shows, movies, music and other icons of popular culture.

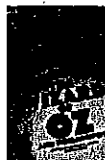


***iPod and Philosophy: iCon of an ePoch***

Edited by D.E. Wittkower  
Nineteen readings examine the social impact of this popular mobile digital device. Approaching hearing as a social act and technology from a Marxist perspective, Wittkower asks questions about the relationship between the music we hear via the iPod, the artist, the "I" (self), and iPublic.

***The Wizard of Oz and Philosophy: Wicked Wisdom of the West***

Edited by Randall E. Auxier and Phillip S. Seng  
Essays explore philosophical themes in the Wizard of Oz saga, comprising the books by L. Frank Baum, the 1939 film, the novel *Wicked*, and related films and plays.



***Harley-Davidson and Philosophy: Full Throttle Aristotle***

Edited by Bernard E. Rollin  
Here 14 professors from a variety of disciplines explain what their preference for hogs has to do with their studies.

Newsletters

Looking for something to read or listen to in your favorite subject areas? Subscribe to these popular eNewsletters or choose others to help you discover what to check out next.

- [Audiobooks](#)
- [Biography & Memoir](#)
- [Fiction A-Z](#)
- [Historical Fiction](#)

### Reading Festival 2009

This year's Reading Festival will be a week long event running from **Sunday, May 3 - Saturday, May 9.**

The Festival will feature one major author event in each region and community libraries are coordinating regionally to plan additional programs and events. We've got puppet shows, art programs, carnivals, writing workshops, cultural events – you name it!

The major author events tentatively scheduled\* for the Reading Festival include:

An Evening with **Daniel Handler** (aka **Lemony Snicket**), which promises wit and laughter for the whole family. (South County)

A chance to brush up on all things Harry Potter before the next movie. Meet **Melissa Anelli**, webmistress of the popular **Leaky Cauldron** website and author of **Harry: A History**. (Central County)

Listen to inspiring stories of growth, perseverance, the struggle for education, and ultimately, success from **Francisco Jimenez**, author of a trilogy of award-winning books about his childhood as an illegal immigrant and child migrant laborer, **The Circuit**, **Breaking Through**, and **Reaching Out**. (West County)

What was it like to be on the Presidential campaign trail? **Mark Curtis**, longtime KTVU news anchor, shares his latest work, **Age of Obama: A Reporter's Journey with Clinton, McCain and Obama in The Making of the President, 2008**. (Lamorinda)

**Omar Tyree**, New York Times best-selling author of 16 books and NAACP Image Award Winner, will delight Reading Festival audiences with his stories of writing, entrepreneurship, and success. (East County)

\*Author appearances and schedules subject to change

free2  
Read

### KidsReads



We are thrilled to present the third annual KidsReads from Monday, April 6 - Sunday, May 3 at Danville, San Ramon, and Dougherty Station Libraries.

With funding from Target, San Ramon Library Foundation, and Danville Friends of the Library, we



- Kids
- Mystery
- Thrillers & Suspense

## Featured Programs

### Through April 11 (Fridays & Saturdays) - Free Tax Preparation

The Concord Community Library and the AARP are partnering to provide free tax assistance to low- and middle-income persons, with special attention given to persons age 60 and older. Interested persons are encouraged to call the library for an appointment as soon as possible.

### March 16 - College Admissions and Information Session

Tips for choosing a college, taking the SAT and ACT, securing letters of recommendation, early admission, application essays, and more. Complete action plan for Juniors and seniors.

### March 16 - Franchising

Buying a franchise is a big investment and you want to make sure you find the one that you can afford as well as the best fit for you.

### March 21 - SAT Strategy Session

Are you ready for the SAT? Take this free practice exam at the Martinez Library and find out. Space is limited. Registration is required.

### March 26 - Author Showcase

Join Steve Fainaru, Washington Post correspondent and author of *Big Boy Rules: America's Mercenaries Fighting in Iraq*, at the El Cerrito Library for a reading and discussion. Fainaru won the 2008 Pulitzer Prize in International Reporting for his series on the rise of private security companies during the Iraq War.

### March 26 - Pricing Your Products and Services in Hard Times

Come hear why well-run small businesses raise their prices and make more profit in a recession and how you can position your business to do the same.

### April 15 Magician Timothy James

Eye-popping sleight and laugh out loud comedy!

### April 17 - How to Improve Your Personal Computer's Performance

Basic maintenance of your PC including hardware and software, performance enhancements, practicing "safe" computing including backing up. The emphasis is on Microsoft Windows, especially XP. Vista is not covered.

### May 26 - Mysterious California: Four Author Panel

Come and spend a wonderful evening with *Shell Games* author Kirk Russell and *Sharp Shooter* author Nadia Gordon. Two additional local mystery authors will be joining us. This author panel wraps up the Mysterious California program at Moraga.

You can find more upcoming library programs and events at the online Event calendar or at the community library pages:

- [Antioch](#)

have purchased copies of *Super Grandpa* by well-known author, David M. Schwartz. All the participating libraries will be distributing paperback copies of this book, while supplies last, to children free of charge. We hope that the book will be shared with friends and neighbors because we want as many people in San Ramon and Danville reading the same book at the same time to encourage community literacy, to celebrate reading and writing and for families to experience together this beautiful picture book.

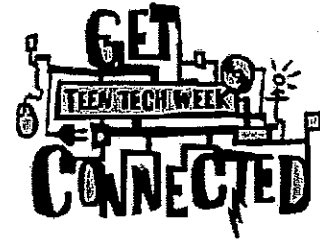
Join us for the events the libraries are hosting as part of KidsReads 2009:

- April 7 - Pam Donkin, Musical Performer (Danville)
- April 9 - Swedish crafts, foods, and more (Dougherty Station)
- May 3 - David M. Schwartz, Author (San Ramon)

[Read more](#)

## Teens, Technology, & Libraries

Libraries across the country are celebrating Teen Tech Week from **Sunday, March 8 - Saturday, March 14** and the Contra Costa County Community Libraries are offering several activities to connect teens with the technologies available at their local library.



### Get Connected @ Your Library!

Show us your tech-knowledge at the El Sobrante Library. Take fun quizzes, identify celebrity morphs and take the "Texting Challenge!"

### Press Play @ the Concord Library and Hear What Other Teens Have to Say About Books They Love

Record audio book reviews at the Concord Library to add to our Teen Advisory Group's wiki, which will be unveiled for Teen Tech Week.

### Amp Your MySpace Page!

Learn how to customize your MySpace page at the San Pablo Library to better reflect your unique personality.

### Thursday Afterschool Wii

Come every Thursday to play Wii games at the Hercules Library. The games are projected onto the wall, so you can play or watch. Compete with your friends in a wide variety of games such as Super Smash Bros. Brawl or Mario Kart. Games rotate every week.

The following online services make it possible for teens to connect to library resources at a convenient time and place any day of the year!

- Downloadable eBooks for access to popular and classic titles
- Electronic resources recommended for students
- Homework Help is available from free tutors
- Just for Teens website to find suggestions for great books, graphic novels, and movies in the library's collection
- Our Library is on MySpace, so check us out and become a friend

## Find Quality Information on the Web

Need information? Need it fast? Want it to be good? Your local Contra Costa County librarians have put together subject guides that combine the best information from the Web, with some of the library's own physical and electronic collections, to make researching a faster and easier process.

Subject Guides offer quality Internet sites that have been handpicked by local librarians for the breadth and depth of their content. In addition to the top

- [Bay Point](#)
- [Brentwood](#)
- [Clayton](#)
- [Concord](#)
- [Crockett](#)
- [Danville](#)
- [El Cerrito](#)
- [El Sobrante](#)
- [Hercules](#)
- [Kensington](#)
- [Lafayette](#)
- [Martinez](#)
- [Moraga](#)
- [Oakley](#)
- [Orinda](#)
- [Pinole](#)
- [Pittsburg](#)
- [Pleasant Hill](#)
- [Rodeo](#)
- [San Pablo](#)
- [San Ramon - Dougherty Station](#)
- [San Ramon - Market Place](#)
- [Walnut Creek - Park Place](#)
- [Walnut Creek - Ygnacio Valley](#)

## Links

[Contra Costa County Library](#)

[Reading Recommendations](#)

[Sign up for an e-Card](#)

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[Library Locations and Hours](#)

[Library Catalog. New Advanced search!](#)

[Databases](#)

[Library Programs and Events](#)

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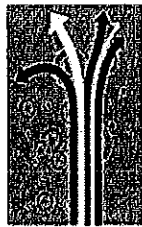
notch written information contained in the guides, users will find news feeds, podcasts, and videos that relate to the guide's topic.

Users are able to rate the guide resources, leave comments, and subscribe to new and updated content.

The most popular guides in the collection are [Job Seeking](#), [Business, Language, Arts & Entertainment](#), and [Government/Taxes](#), but the growing collection also includes [Do-it-Yourself](#), [News & Current Events](#), [Books & Literature](#), and [History](#).

The guides can be found at [guides.ccclib.org](http://guides.ccclib.org).

## Library Usage Up As Economy Is Down



Like libraries around the nation, the Contra Costa County Library has seen a significant increase in the number of people taking advantage of free access to books, CDs and DVDs, the Internet, and job search assistance. Attendance at library programs like small business workshops, book clubs, special performances and children's programs is at an all-time high. Library circulation reports show an overall increase of nearly 10% in the number of library books, DVDs, CDs and videos checked out over the past year. The circulation statistics at some of the county's twenty-five community libraries have realized even greater increases of between 10 - 15%.

The [San Pablo Library](#) is one of the libraries that has witnessed tremendous growth over the past year. Due in part to the addition of Sunday hours beginning in September 2008, Community Library Manager Heidi Dolamore notes that the San Pablo Library saw a 15% increase in the circulation of library materials from January 2008 - January 2009. Dolamore said of library usage patterns, "More residents are coming to the library as a free source of information and entertainment with some of the most popular collections focusing on activities such as cooking and crafts. Our Spanish language computer classes are incredibly popular, and we're getting more and more requests for materials on how to start and run your own business."

Seng Lovan, [Danville Library's](#) Senior Community Library Manager, can attest to the increase in job search assistance. "During the past few months, the computer docents—volunteers who provide 2 - 4 hours of assistance each week to help people with their computer needs-- have been swamped!" said Lovan.

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The Contra Costa County Library's Reading Festival is back and this year it's better than ever! In today's economic climate, people are becoming increasingly aware of the value of the public library and the idea that the library is the ultimate resource for information, entertainment and engagement in our community. This spring, the 2009 Reading Festival will celebrate reading and the library with a full week of author events, workshops, fun for children and intellectually stimulating programs for adults – all free and all right in our own backyard, May 3 – 9, 2009.

As a highlight of the 2009 Reading Festival, the Contra Costa County Library is hosting five Festival Authors in community libraries throughout the county. The tentative schedule of Festival Authors includes\*:

Melissa Anelli, Harry Potter historian  
Sunday, May 3, 2009 in Concord

Omar Tyree, New York Times best-selling author of popular fiction  
Sunday, May 3, 2009 in Antioch

Mr. Tyree will also make special appearances at Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall and the Orin Allen Youth Ranch

Mark Curtis, longtime KTVU news anchor, political correspondent and author  
Thursday, May 7, 2009 in Orinda

Francisco Jimenez, professor and author of award-winning children's series  
Saturday, May 9, 2009 in San Pablo

Daniel Handler, a.k.a. Lemony Snicket  
Saturday, May 9, 2009 in Walnut Creek

And that's not all! Our community libraries are preparing carnivals and crafts, storytimes and read-a-thons, magicians and actors and programs to celebrate the 2009 Reading Festival. We are excited to bring the 2009 Reading Festival to Contra Costa County and look forward to all that our communities will enjoy with us.

Your support of the 2009 Reading Festival is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the festival or the activities happening in your community, please visit [ccclib.org](http://ccclib.org) or contact Susan Lynn, Reading & Literacy Manager, at 925-927-3249 or [slynn@ccclib.org](mailto:slynn@ccclib.org).

\* authors and locations subject to change



# Contra Costa County Library

Bringing People and Ideas Together



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**Government / Taxes** Tags: government local state federal taxes election research policy vote environment

Find information about State, Local, and Federal Government plus details about taxes and elections and video, audio, and feeds from blogs on all aspects of government.

Last update: Mar 04, 2009 : URL: <http://guides.cocclib.org/government> : Print Guide : [SHARE](#) [RSS](#)

<p>Home Local Government State Government ~ Federal Government Taxes Elections Government Documents</p> <p>Taxes Comments (0) Print Page Search <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Go"/></p> <p><b>Federal Tax Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IRS Forms and Publications</li> <li>IRS Business Info.</li> <li>IRS Charity and Nonprofit Info.</li> <li>IRS Info. for the Hearing Impaired</li> </ul> <p>Comments (0)</p> <p><b>State Tax Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>California Tax Service Center</li> <li>Franchise Tax Board</li> <li>Employment Development Department</li> <li>State Board of Equalization</li> <li>Homeowner and Renter Assistance</li> <li>Non-Refundable Renter's Credit</li> <li>Property Tax Postponement</li> <li>Estate Tax</li> </ul> <p>Comments (0)</p> <p><b>Local Tax Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sales and Use Tax</li> </ul> <p>Comments (0)</p>	<p><b>It's Tax Time</b></p> <p>or free tax assistance locations near you, search by zip code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AARP Tax Aide (1-800-510-2020) provides assistance to elderly tax payers</li> <li>Volunteer Income Tax (VITA) (1-800-358-8832) provides assistance for any age, with income eligibility requirements</li> <li>Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) (1-800-358-8832) provides assistance for age 60 or older</li> <li>Earn it! Keep it! Save it! For locations and schedule of sites in Contra Costa County</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the locations listed above, tax assistance help is also offered at the Concord Library, 2900 Salvio St., Concord, CA on Fridays and Saturdays from February 6, 2009 through April 11, 2009.</p> <p>Interested persons are encouraged to call the library at 925 646-5455 for an appointment as soon as possible. Appointments are available at 10:15 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Walk-in service is also available but priority is given to seniors and those persons with appointments.</p> <p>Comments (0)</p> <p><b>Federal Taxes</b></p> <p>US tax forms, publications, and tax table</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Revenue Service official site: <a href="http://www.irs.gov">http://www.irs.gov</a></li> <li>View and print IRS tax forms and publications and the 1040 Tax Table.</li> </ul> <p>Phone numbers for Federal income tax assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For live IRS assistance call: 1-800-829-1040 (M-F, 7 AM - 10 PM)</li> <li>To order IRS tax forms and publications, call: 1-800-829-3676</li> <li>For the Walnut Creek IRS office, call: 925-935-9308</li> <li>For the Oakland IRS office, call: 510-637-2487</li> <li>People with hearing impairments may call: 1-800-829-4059 (TTY/TDD)</li> <li>For other IRS contact numbers, go to <a href="http://www.irs.gov">http://www.irs.gov</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Local IRS Tax Offices</b></p> <p>Visit Internal Revenue Services offices Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walnut Creek: 185 Lennon Lane 925-935-9308</li> <li>Oakland: 1301 Clay Street 510-637-2487</li> </ul> <p>Comments (0)</p> <p><b>State Taxes</b></p> <p>state tax forms, Publications, Tax Tables and Schedules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franchise Tax Board official site: <a href="http://www.ftb.ca.gov">http://www.ftb.ca.gov</a></li> <li>View and print California income tax forms and tax tables</li> <li>Payroll tax: tax forms, tax rates and withholding schedules</li> <li>Other states: State Tax Forms</li> </ul> <p>Phone numbers for California State tax assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For live State FTB assistance or state tax forms, call: 1-800-852-5711 (7 AM-6 PM)</li> <li>For state Homeowners and Renter Assistance, call: 1-800-868-4171</li> <li>People with hearing impairments may call 1-800-422-6268 (TTY/TDD)</li> <li>For automated forms request and refund information, call 1-800-338-0505</li> </ul> <p><b>Local FTB Tax Offices</b></p> <p>Visit Franchise Tax Board offices Monday to Friday, 8 AM-5 PM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oakland: 1515 Clay Street</li> <li>San Francisco: 121 Spear Street</li> </ul>	<p><b>TaxVox</b></p> <p>The Tax Policy Center Blog, a joint venture of the Urban Institute and Brookings Institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is Obama's Deduction Cap A Revenue Plug?</li> <li>Giving Up on the Advanced Earned Income Tax Credit</li> <li>Would Obama's Plan to Curb Deductions Hurt Charities?</li> <li>That Was Quick</li> <li>Stimulating State and Local Debt by Direct Grants</li> </ul> <p>Subscribe to Feed Comments (0)</p> <p><b>Tax Policy Podcast</b></p> <p>from the Tax Foundation, a non-partisan, non-profit research organization that monitors tax policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI): Tax, Monetary and Entitlement Policy Reform</li> <li>Robert Barro, Professor of Economics at Harvard University: Criticism of the Federal Stimulus Package</li> <li>Peter Nelson of the Center of the American Experiment: Budget and Tax Reform in Minnesota</li> <li>Joseph Hanchman of the Tax Foundation: State Budget Shortfalls Present Opportunities for Tax Reform</li> <li>Alex Brill of the American Enterprise Institute: Corporate Tax Rates - Receipts and Distortions</li> </ul> <p>Visit Website Subscribe to Feed Comments (0)</p>
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# Contra Costa County Library

Bringing People and Ideas Together



## Make a Donation to the Library

Donations will be used to purchase library materials.

Follow these steps to make a donation using your Visa or Mastercard:

1. Select a library: Specify the particular community library that you would like to receive your donation.
2. Select a group: Choose to purchase materials for either Adults or Children.
3. Enter the dollar amount you would like to donate: (For example: to donate \$10.00, enter 10.00).
4. Click the "Make a Donation" button.

Select a library:

Select a group:

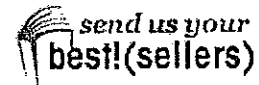
Enter dollar amount:

To make a donation to the Library by sending in a check, please use the [donation form](#).

### Do you have used books or other donations?

The Contra Costa County Library and its associated Friends of the Library organizations welcome donations. Please go to the [Friends of the Library](#) page and find a description of what your local Friends group accepts. If you have further questions regarding donating materials, please contact your local [community library](#).

If you purchased a copy of the latest bestseller and you're finished reading it, please consider donating it to your Community Library. Help your neighbors by helping your Library meet the demand for the latest titles. Thank you!





# Women's History Month *free2Dream*

The mission of the National Women's History Project, is to recognize and celebrate the diverse and historic accomplishments of women by providing information and educational materials and programs.

Keep smiling, keep dreaming, keep doing, ..make your library part of your life in '09. Tell us about your dream! You may write, draw and/or color your dream.

## We are Changing History



*Betty Friedan*

Now in her late 70s, Friedan reminisces over a life of social activism that has included helping to found the National Organization for Women, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, and the National Women's Political Caucus, as well as writing the pivotal *The Feminine Mystique*.

*Marilyn French*



This is not a simple repackaging of history for women. French instead gives life to a new way of looking at the world as it exists for women.



*Ann K. Boulis*

*Amy Hill Hearth*

This fascinating account examines how Strong Medicine's multiethnic community, tied together by Lenni-Lanape ancestry, endeavored over decades to establish their sovereignty, which they formally asserted in 1978 with the incorporation of "The Nanticoke Lenni-Lanape Indians of New Jersey."



*Through It All*  
*Christine King Farris*

In this memoir, the sister of Martin Luther King Jr. offers a look into her family, providing a remarkable perspective on the beloved civil rights leader.

*A Jury of Her Peers*  
*Elaine Showalter*

In a narrative of immense scope and fascination—spanning nearly 400 years and brimming with Showalter's characteristic wit and incisive opinions—readers are introduced to more than 250 female writers, both famous and little known.

## Reading of the U.S. Constitution- 19th Amendment



## Search Our Gale Databases

Search all of our Gale Databases such as Biography Resource Center, Informe and Student Resource Center Gold with one easy tool. Just type in your search term(s) and click Search to begin! If you do not have a library card, apply online for an e-Card.



*Diane Von Furstenberg*

The daughter of a concentration camp survivor, 22-year-old Von Furstenberg was living in 1960s New York with her husband, German Prince Eduard Egon Von Furstenberg, when she introduced the dress that would make her a fashion icon and a millionaire in her own right.

*Ladies of Liberty*  
*Cokie Roberts*



In *Founding Mothers* Roberts paid homage to the women who helped establish our nation. In *Ladies of Liberty* she continues to shed light on remarkable women, but focuses on what they have done to help define the country during the second half of the founding era.

## Women's History Timeline

From 4,000 B.C. - 2008  
Check out other activities from Gale's Free Resources arranged in general age categories, but many of them can be used for all age groups.

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

ContraCostaTimes.com

## Stanford White, longtime Saint Mary's accounting professor, dies

By Sam Richards  
Lamorinda Sun

Posted: 01/22/2009 12:00:00 AM PST

Saying Stan White was a loyal Rotarian may be an understatement.

"He went 58 years without missing a Rotary meeting; that's once a week, every week for 58 years," said Terry Fenton of Bethel Island, his daughter. His last Rotary meeting was about a year ago, the same time he moved to Brentwood, where he lived until his death Jan. 13, at age 91.

Stanford White did far more than that in the communities where he lived, primarily Lafayette and Walnut Creek. After serving as a U.S. Army instructor throughout World War II, he opened his own long-standing accounting business in Lafayette in 1947. He continued to operate that shop for more than 40 years, long after becoming an accounting professor at Saint Mary's College in 1963, where he was a cornerstone of the school's accounting program. He retired from the college in 1994.

As meticulous as he was as an accountant was as demanding as he was as an academician, said his daughter.

"If you were in his class, you'd better like what you were doing," Fenton said. "He was a stern taskmaster."

He wasn't that way so much at home, she said, describing White as a great father and grandfather.

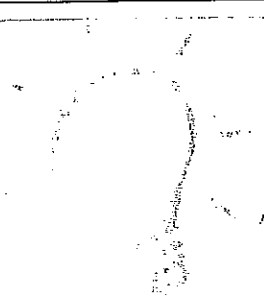
And when he wasn't being an accountant, a professor or a parent, he served a term on the Contra Costa County grand jury; was a member of the fire protection board; worked to support the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and the Lafayette Library, worked on the Lafayette Design Project, a partial blueprint for the city's development, in the late 1950s; and was an accomplished pilot, having flown to every state except Hawaii.

"When he took on a project, he stuck with it and never quit," Fenton said. "He was just remarkable."

He was Lafayette's Man of the Year in 1959, and in 1984 was honored by Saint Mary's with the De La Salle Award for teaching excellence.

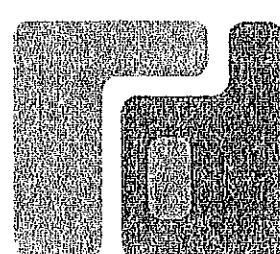
White is survived by his wife, Jeanette, daughter, Terry, and five stepchildren. Plans for a memorial service on the Saint Mary's campus are pending.

Advertisement




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## Business Brisk at Area Libraries

In Bad Times, Free Resources Are a Hot Commodity

By Annie Gowen  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Monday, February 2, 2009; A01

Nearly every study table is full with patrons sipping lattes and surfing the Web. Teens are curled up in easy chairs. In a worried knot by the doorway, job seekers gather around a sign-up station for the Internet, waiting for their turn.

Before the Germantown library opened in 2007, there was hardly any "downtown" to speak of in the Montgomery County community, where houses and strip malls grew before anything else. Now it's an important civic anchor, a main street where none existed, and the busiest library in the county.

In the past few months, it has become even busier. The library, like most in the Washington area, has had a rising tide of users as patrons look for free computer access, DVD loans and activities for children during the recession. Circulation in the last six months of the year rose as much as 23 percent in libraries around the region, records show.

The influx comes just as county managers are preparing budgets for the coming fiscal year in a time of huge shortfalls. Libraries, like other services, face drastic cuts that could mean reducing staff and hours or even shuttering branches.

"It's a cruel irony that use is going up and budget cuts are occurring simultaneously," said Jim Rettig, president of the American Library Association and a librarian at the University of Richmond. "What I think doesn't get enough recognition is the role libraries play in the economic vitality and development of a community."

Cultural soothsayers once thought libraries would become obsolete in the Internet age. Not so. They have modernized, digitized, virtualized.

Patrons can bring their own beverages; Arlington County hopes to add a cafe in one of its branches. They can access databases, read Chinese newspapers or the latest graphic teen novel. Users have more and more access from home; they can text in reference questions to a Fairfax County librarian, for example, or listen to podcasts. Fairfax card holders can read an e-book online. Librarians are trying to tailor services to community needs, hoping to add more babysitting certification classes in Silver Spring or résumé-writing workshops in Prince George's County.

More than 68 percent of American adults now have a library card, the highest number since the A.L.A. began tracking the numbers in 1990.

"One thing I hear quite frequently is 'Gee, it's cheaper to come here than Borders,' " said Nancy Savas, the library manager at Germantown. "It makes me laugh, because we've always been here."

### The Searchers

The Germantown library cost \$19 million to build three years ago, a civic project emblematic of flush times that would be hard to build today. It has soaring glass windows and a rotunda with a spiral staircase that is supposed to evoke a silo -- and memories of the county's agricultural past, the dairy farms now plowed under. It has the latest bestsellers, 32 computers and Chinese- and Spanish-speaking staff, a necessity in a community where a third of the population is foreign-born.

"You feel like you're almost in a little bit of a cathedral," said Galen Yoder, 63, a Chevy Chase resident who visited the library recently. "The only thing missing is stained glass."

Into the cathedral the seekers come. One middle-aged mom at the information desk was looking for a DVD of a self-help tome, "The Secret," popularized by Oprah Winfrey two years ago. "I'm trying to find myself, the meaning of life, my existence," she whispered.

Lately, and more painfully, the library has been populated by job seekers. They spread their résumés on tables and visit job search Web sites. Some are even trying to navigate the computer for the first time -- learning how to use a mouse or setting up an e-mail account -- to apply at McDonald's or Target.

Others appear at the library on Friday afternoons, teary, having just been laid off, needing the computers to figure out their unemployment insurance.

"Three o'clock on Friday is an interesting time to be at the library," Savas said, a little ruefully.

Some find a sense of community with their fellow sufferers. Some not.

"It depresses me. I don't know," said Abby Glackin, 39, a Germantown resident who has been unemployed since October and is looking for secretarial work. "I see people filling out questionnaires on Monster.com. I guess there are so many of us who are unemployed that it's more disheartening to me than it is anything else."

Victoria Grant, 22, a mother of two who lost her job in retail four months ago, logged on to the computer recently to look for a new position.

She vowed she would get one by Feb. 1 so she and her fiance, Curtis, a chef, could get back to planning their wedding. It doesn't seem right to get married while she's unemployed, she said. She told him the wedding had to wait.

"You can't have a marriage without some sort of stability," she said. "It's really bad out there. . . . Trust me, I know so many people looking for a job, it's not even funny."

Instead of buckling down, though, she was dreamily perusing wedding sites. There's her dress at David's Bridal -- a satin one with a flouncy skirt and black sash for \$449.

"Oh, one day," she said, scrolling. "It's the most beautiful thing ever. I love it."

Later, she jubilantly reports that she has been hired as a cashier at Staples.

The nuptials are back on.

### **The Traffic Jams**

Across the country, Internet use has skyrocketed at libraries because so many people are out of work or canceling home service to save money. At Germantown, despite its 32 Internet-accessible computers, wait times can stretch over an hour. Even the free Wi-Fi system has been strained and crashes occasionally, Savas said.

Chris Termini, 41, a postal worker from Germantown, disconnected his Internet and cable about a year ago.

"I'm just trying to make ends meet," he said.

He visits the library a few times a week to check his e-mail and see the latest links or jokes his friends have sent. He used to be able to log on with no problem. Now he sometimes waits an hour. On Monday or Tuesday, he often has to leave for work before his turn comes up.

Other libraries are also seeing cyberspace traffic jams. Internet use was up 41 percent at all branches in December, officials said. In Loudoun County, Wi-Fi use has increased 33 percent.

At the Spauldings Library in District Heights, librarian Kelley Perkins has seen tempers fray at the Internet queues when job seekers have to wait their turn behind youngsters perusing MySpace or watching videos on YouTube.

"People are getting a little short with each other," Perkins said. "What we hear most frequently is, 'Why are those kids on the computers when I have real work to do?'"

### **The Kids**

Germantown's Discovery Center -- a quiet place with dollhouses, puzzles and other toys -- is booked a month in advance. A second one is opening this month. On Saturdays, the diverse population turns the room into a mini-United Nations, with parents crouched in tiny chairs reading with their kids in a dozen languages and admonishing them not to bang the fish tank.

Even so, the story time for toddlers that used to draw 20 or so children now commands three times as many, Savas said, as parents tightening their wallets search for cheap entertainment. One day, 172 children showed up.

"I stopped coming because it was insane," said Sondra Jackson, 38, a stay-at-home mother of two from Clarksburg.

Similar programs are popular in other counties where children make up a large percentage of the population, such as Loudoun.

There, online registration for the toddler music class "Rhythm Rhyme and Tune Time" used to reach a fever pitch, not unlike buying tickets for a rock concert, librarians said. Registration would fill up within a minute on the morning it was available.

"We were getting screamed at by angry customers who weren't getting in," said John Huddy, the branch

manager for the Ashburn library. "You explain to them it's like a Springsteen concert."

Finally the library instituted a lottery system.

Although the popularity of that music class predates the downturn, participation in all of Loudoun's children's and adult programs is up 24 percent.

"People are discovering what an incredible value their library is in their community," Rettig said. "It's the only institution in American society" offering such accessible learning opportunities to all ages.

Huddy, Savas and other local librarians said the challenge now will be trying to meet demand while bracing for proposed budget cuts that will be unveiled in the coming weeks.

Already they are getting creative. Huddy, whose library is short-staffed, actually put a few of the unemployed regulars to work shelving books as volunteers. Alexandria's libraries posted a wish list on Amazon.com, hoping that benefactors might treat them to "Mr. Jefferson's Women" by Jon Kukla for \$10.17 or the "Good Dog Massage" DVD for \$24.95.

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## In Recession, Libraries Are Booming

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 2, 2009

(CBS) In a town used to lining up for celebrities, these days the long lines in Los Angeles are forming outside an unlikely place: the public library. CBS News correspondent Sandra Hughes reports.

In tough economic times it's becoming the hot spot for just about everyone.

It's standing room only during children's programs. Many of the people who attend are regulars, like Melanie Jarvid and her son, Aaron.

"Now with how the economy is, we've been coming more often and checking out books more often," Jarvid said.

In 2008, 18 million people visited Los Angeles public libraries. That's two million more than the previous year.

Many are recently unemployed and coming for help: every computer terminal is being used and librarians have become job counselors.

Meydani Perucho makes frequent trips to the L.A. public library, but says it's the only one.

"This is actually the first and only library I've been to," Perucho said.

For Zach Pond, who graduated last April with an MBA - but no job - the library is his office and job center.

"It's quiet it's a place to work," said Pond. "You feel like you are moving forward"

Is it a place to be productive? "Absolutely, absolutely," Pond said.

Nationwide more people applied for library cards last year than anytime since they started keeping records in 1990. Just as library funding is being drastically reduced.

Cities just don't have the money to spare with shrinking budgets and more urgent needs.

Peter Persic, the Los Angeles public library spokesman, warns that, "At a time when people need libraries most, some aren't able to meet that demand and in fact are even being cut back or closed."

In Philadelphia, protestors fought a plan to close 11 libraries. Still, hours will be reduced.

Today, two of three branches in Troy, N.Y., will close. And Muncie, Ind., has plans to close three of its five branches.

All of this is happening as more people are re-discovering the value of the public library.

Maggie Johnson is the head librarian at palms library. Johnson said getting an item at the library is, "free unless you don't return it on time, and then you have to pay the fine."

But everyone will pay the price if budget cuts mean libraries aren't there when people need them most.

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