CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 3

MEETING DATE: Thursday, March 28, 2013
AGENDA ITEM #: 9
ITEM: CORRESPONDENCE

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

• None
The Honorable Edmond G. Brown Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Room 1173
Sacramento CA 95814

Subject: State Library Funding

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of the residents of Contra Costa County, thank you for including public library funding in your 2013-14 Budget. The $4.7 million helps to provide support for literacy programs to teach adults to read, as well resource sharing between the 183 library jurisdictions.

California’s public libraries:
- Provides a safe place for students to do their homework.
- Reading programs assist in development reading skills which are so important for education success.
- Provide resources to learn skills needed for new jobs and careers.

Increasing library funding would strengthen California libraries which are so important to support the transformative power of education and the growth of our state’s economy. Additionally, without increased funding, over $12 Million in Federal funds that was received in 2012-13 is jeopardized due to the Maintenance of Effort requirement.

Again, on behalf of the over 1,000,000 California residents who use their libraries each day; please increase the present proposed funding. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shirley Peck
Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

cc: Senator Lois Wolk, 3rd District
    Senator Mark DeSaulnier, 7th District
    Senator Loni Hancock, 9th District
    Assemblymember Jim Frazier, 11th District
    Assemblymember Susan Bonilla, 14th District
    Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, 15th District
    Assemblymember Joan Buchanan, 16th District
    Federal Glover, Chair, County Board of Supervisors
    David Twa, County Administrator
    Library Commissioners
    Barbara Flynn, County Librarian
February 5, 2013

The Honorable Lois Wolk
California State Senate, 3rd District
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento CA 95814

Subject: Local Government Finance: Public Libraries (SCA7)

Dear Senator Wolk,

On behalf of the residents of Contra Costa County, I thank you for your many years of championing public libraries, which was exemplified by your proposed constitutional amendment that would reduce the threshold for passage of local public library measures from two-thirds to 55%. On January 24, 2013, the Contra Costa County Library Commission endorsed your amendment. In our county, many communities would benefit from the renovation, rehabilitation, and new construction of library facilities that would be funded by local special taxes.

Public libraries are the community's living room where students can do their homework in a safe place; residents can use the public access computers to perform job searches and file for government benefits; and others can research opportunities to establish new businesses.

Libraries, like good schools and roads, are an integral part of the community. Again, thank you for introducing this constitutional amendment.

Sincerely,

Shirley S. Peck, Ph.D.
Brentwood Library Commissioner
Chair, Contra Costa County Library Commission

cc: Senator Mark DeSaulnier, 7th District
Senator Loni Hancock, 9th District
Assemblymember Jim Frazier, 11th District
Assemblymember Susan Bonilla, 14th District
Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, 15th District
Assemblymember Joan Buchanan, 16th District
Federal Glover, Chair, County Board of Supervisors
David Twa, County Administrator
Library Commissioners
Barbara Flynn, County Librarian
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION
AGENDA ATTACHMENT 4

MEETING DATE: Thursday, March 28, 2013
AGENDA ITEM #: 10
ITEM: REPORT FROM COUNTY LIBRARIAN

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

None.
The Contra Costa Library racked up an amazing array of awards in 2012 for its innovative services and programs, closing out the year with a coveted National Medal for Museum and Library Services. The Medal was presented to Librarian Barbara Flynn at a White House ceremony in November. Supervisor Mary N. Piepho, community representative Gladys Leeks and Library staff were also present at the ceremony.

The Board of Supervisors has proclaimed 2013 to be the Year of the Library in recognition of 100 years of success. A century ago, the Board of Supervisors established the Contra Costa Library on July 21, 1913. With Mrs. Alice G. Whitbeck at the helm as County Librarian, the first library branch opened in Walnut Creek on October 9 that same year.
Fast forward to February 2013, and a series of kickoff events have been held throughout the County at various branch locations, including Martinez, Walnut Creek and Pittsburg. Birthday parties continue into March in Lafayette, Brentwood and El Sobrante, with more to follow leading up to the big countywide event to be held on Sunday, July 21, at Pleasant Hill Park and Teen Center. Find the kickoff party details at libraries throughout the County in a special online guide created to help you navigate the many events marking the “Year of the Library.” You can check it out at: [link]

The Martinez Library hosted the first regional 100th Birthday celebration on Saturday, February 9, with Supervisors Federal D. Glover, Candace Andersen and Karen Mitchoff in attendance. Andrea Blachman, Director of the Martinez Museum, shared the history of the Library, from the efforts to establish a “free reading room” in the late 1880s to the community resource it is today.

Save the Date!
July 21, 2013
Pleasant Hill Park, Noon - 5:00 p.m.
Contra Costa County Library, Turns 100

Got a Question? Ask a Librarian!

Contra Costa County Library's "LiveChat" feature on the home page of the County website continues to grow in popularity. Last year, more than 8,000 people looking for answers couldn't find online or by phone tapped a librarian's virtual shoulder by clicking on the "LiveChat" button. A snapshot of calls from the month of November 2012 shows some consistent trends. The vast majority of calls pertain to the following departments: Tax, Sheriff, Clerk-Recorder, Assessor, Animal Services, Employment and Human Services, Conservation and Development, and Human Resources. Those categories stay in the top ten throughout the year. And although the Courts split from the County many years ago, that point isn't clear to residents, who still seek Superior Court information from us online and by phone.

What can we do with these facts? In the coming weeks, departments will have an opportunity to find out what residents are asking the Library staff, and that information can help us enhance our own websites with the information people are seeking. You'll also find out how you can provide the Library's LiveChat staff with information to help arm them with the information that will better serve the public.
I've heard it everywhere I go: "Can you believe we are already in March?! Where is 2013 going?" I share that sentiment, as we have been very busy with District IV and county business. I continue to be very involved in Delta water issues, and recently attended a reception of the Delta Counties Coalition (of which Contra Costa County is a member) with state legislators to continue advocating for an alternative to the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), an alternative that actually does meet the co-equal goals of ensuring a reliable water source for California AND environmental protection for our precious Delta. Transportation is another issue keeping me busy and you should see the progress being made on the Caldecott Tunnel and Highway 4 East. Retirement and pension issues have been at the forefront of many discussions lately as we begin implementation of state legislation on pension reform. As I've mentioned to you in the past, Contra Costa County continues to be at the forefront as a leader on pension reform; and many of the components of the state legislation were implemented first here in Contra Costa County.

As always, I am available to you to discuss issues that are of interest or concern to you. Please contact my office, and I will be happy to meet with you or give you a call.

Sincerely,

Karen Mitchoff

Library Centennial

In my last newsletter I briefly touched upon our County Library system celebrating its Centennial birthday this year. This month I attended the County-wide kick off which was held in Martinez and my staff was able to attend the celebration in Walnut Creek.

I would like to invite you and your family to the Grand Celebration. Please save July 21st to come and celebrate with the Library at the Pleasant Hill Park and Teen Center. It promises to be a fantastic family event for all to enjoy.

For more information about both the July event and the history of our library please visit the website.
You’re Invited: 100th Anniversary Party for County Library!
Special event this Saturday, March 16 at the El Sobrante Library

Walter Cronkite once said: ‘Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.’ How true this is!

This year we’re celebrating the 100th birthday of the Contra Costa County Library.

Our library is known as an innovator, keeping pace with technology while still providing the amenities of a walk-in space.

Join me in the celebration!

What: County Library 100th Birthday Celebration with historians, speakers, festivities and more!
When: Saturday, March 16, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Where: El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way (off San Pablo Dam Rd) El Sobrante

For more: El Sobrante library’s webpage or call 510-374-3991

In my Supervisorial District, we’re lucky to have County Libraries in Pinole, El Sobrante, San Pablo, El Cerrito and Kensington. Of course, the City of Richmond has a great library system, too. The main county library website is also full of user services and information.

Here are some interesting library facts:

- The county library started with the opening of the Walnut Creek Library in 1913
- In 2011, it opened its 26th modern library; by 2013 patrons had borrowed over 7 million items
- Library resources include ebooks, computers, and wireless
- The county library has won numerous awards through the years, including the prestigious 2012 National Medal for Museum and Library Service
- Award-winning library programs include the Snap & Go smart phone app, which connects patrons to recommended reading and services: Project Second Chance adult literacy program; Discover & Go which offers county residents discounts on passes to an array of museums, theaters, and cultural events and activities

Happy 100th to our County Library! I hope to see you at the party in El Sobrante this Saturday!

Sincerely,

John
John Gioia
Supervisor District One
Contra Costa County
11780 San Pablo Avenue, Suite D
El Cerrito, CA 94530
Office 510-374-3231 • Fax 510-374-3429