

The CAO Weekly Report

The week of April 6, 2015



Monterey County Administrative Office

Lew C. Bauman, CAO

In this edition:

- County Librarian honored for work linking literacy to abuse prevention
- Libraries add new leadership position
- Pajaro Park honored for improving lives



Child Abuse Prevention Council Honors County Librarian

We have all heard the advice to read to children at an early age, even as babies, to improve literacy. County Librarian Jayanti Addleman is so passionate about literacy and young children that she has worked tirelessly to develop programs that stress the importance of reading to children as an integral part of early brain development. That effort, to improve the future for children in Monterey County, came to the attention of the Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC), which this week honored Addleman for her leadership and vision.

Addleman was presented with CAPC's Front Line Award, which is given to individuals providing direct services to families and children who are abused or at risk of abuse.

CAPC sees Addleman as being on the front line of an important message, that reading aloud is widely recognized as the single most important activity leading to language development as it builds word-sound awareness in children, a dominant predictor of reading success which can be linked to success in life.

When Addleman took over the reins of the Monterey County Free Libraries in 2007, she insisted that literacy be a major focus for MCFL in serving the community. She directed staff and resources into programs emphasizing service to children and initiated activities such as the Reading Safari van which takes early literacy programs to preschools and Head Start programs.



Addleman thanks CAPC for recognizing her work during the organization's awards breakfast at the CSUMB University Center this week.

She initiated two Basic English classes, one focused on the Triqui speaking community in Greenfield and the other focused on Arabic and Farsi speaking women. Both programs were planned to include children so parents and children can learn together. She also obtained a new bookmobile which provides services in South County communities.

“At about age 3, we begin to lose unused brain cells, so starting to read early helps put our brain cells to use,” she explains, saying libraries have an important role to play here. “Libraries are about much more than just books, and reading to children is about much more than just building language skills.”



Jayanti Addleman is joined at the CAPC Awards Breakfast by members of the Foundation for Monterey County Free Libraries Board of Directors. L-r Nancy Ausonio, Jayanti Addleman and Sheri Kline.

In accepting the Front Line Award, Addleman emphasized that what happens during the first months and years of life provides a blueprint for adult well-being because it sets either a sturdy or fragile stage for what follows.

Once children start school, difficulty reading can contribute to school failure, causing a negative domino effect: doing poorly in school can increase the risk of being absent, eventually leading to dropping out of school, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy - all of which can perpetuate the cycles of poverty and dependency.



County Libraries Get Second in Command

For the first time in its history, Monterey County has an Assistant Library Director.

County Librarian Jayanti Addleman announced this week that Managing Librarian Chris Ricker has accepted the position of Assistant Library Director. She will start in her new position April 18th.

“It is an honor for me to be the first Assistant Director of Monterey County Free Libraries,” says Ricker. “MCFL has a long legacy of pioneering librarians that have dedicated themselves to knowing every acre of this spectacular county to ensure library services are delivered to all of our residents.”

Chris started her library career as a branch librarian at the San Francisco Public Library and also worked for two years at Sun Microsystems in Mountain View as a reference librarian. She joined MCFL in 1997 as the Carmel Valley Branch Manager where she spearheaded the branch expansion. In 2001 she became Managing Librarian of Technology and Support services. She is an advocate for intellectual freedom in public libraries and has overseen most of the library branches technology and automation improvements.



Chris Ricker holds a few of her favorite books.



Ricker feels a connection with Monterey County's first librarian, Ann Haddon, who delivered books via burro. Ricker is urging county libraries into the future with the same persistence, but with new technology.

“The library closest to my home is the Greenfield branch, which was the first county library established back in 1912,” says Ricker. “It took our first County Librarian, Ann Haddon all day to travel from Salinas to Greenfield by train and horseback. The same trip takes me about 50 minutes by car and within that time I pass four county libraries and several bookmobile stops.”

Ricker wonders what Haddon would think of the work she is doing today and the changes to delivering services.

“Could she ever imagine a fellow librarian driving home to rural Greenfield after a wonderful day at work to relax with a great library e-book on an iPad,” muses Ricker. “I think she would be thrilled and I think she would say ‘keep going’.”



Pajaro Park Still Earning Honors

Pajaro Neighborhood Park has been open for more than a year and while residents still give it rave reviews, the project is also still receiving kudos for its design and project management.



Steve Sutherland (left) and Nick Nichols (right) share a moment with their CPRS award during the awards presentation.

The California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS), which recognizes outstanding achievements in community improvements, facility design and park planning, honored the park, giving it the organization’s Statewide Award of Excellence for Park Facility Design.

The award was presented at CPRS annual award ceremony in Sacramento last month. On hand to accept was Project Architect Steve Sutherland of SSA Landscape Architects, Inc., and Project Manager Nick Nichols, now with RMA, but formerly of the Redevelopment Agency of County of Monterey.

Projects being considered for these state-wide honors had to submit a lengthy application, explaining project challenges, unique elements or constraints and how these challenges were addressed. Each project was also judged on how it fit the

CPRS campaign message of “Parks Make Life Better!” Pajaro Park earned top honors for how it improved the lives of local residents. Here is the project’s winning entry essay.

“Pajaro Neighborhood Park plays a large role in making life better for the town of Pajaro by enhancing community involvement, health, education and pride. The park has brought the community together, strengthening connections between local artists, historians, schools, families and business. Its central location and proximity to



Children at play at Pajaro Neighborhood Park.

the Pajaro River, provides convenient access to open space, exercise, arts, culture and nature. The Parks art and educational elements help to increase cultural unity, create a sense of place and support economic development in the community. The public art mural and large artistic tiles display a historical timeline of Pajaro's beginnings and culture while providing local work to artist in the community.

Pajaro Neighborhood Park will hopefully inspire people to foster relationships, improve their health, follow their dreams and build a better community.”

