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Library Digital Archives Put History at Your Fingertips

Monterey County Free Libraries provides the latest books, periodicals and music but it also creates digital archives, preserving local history.

Did you know that MCFL maintains a local history and institutional archive of photographs, ephemera, documents, letters, books, newspapers, maps and audio-visual materials? The collection is open for research by appointment...
The Libraries’ archival collections are cared for by a team led by Librarian Jennifer Smith. Smith works with an intern and her colleagues to not only preserve but to produce digitized materials and finding aids that enable this great resource to be used by the County and the public. Smith and her team also secure grants, interact with professional agencies in archives management; in fact, since 2010, the Library has secured grants to digitize and provide access to hundreds of images and documents from its historical collections.

During the month of October, archives are being celebrated by libraries and museums and MCFL is joining in by highlighting new digital collections. The MCFL Local History Digital Archive can be viewed online from any computer or digital device by visiting the MCFL Local History Digital Archive.

You’ll also find local offerings in a new collection of digitized items available through the California State Library’s ‘California Revealed’ program. MCFL nominated 30 items from its collection of historical photographs, documents and audiovisual materials. These selections can be viewed at California Revealed and the Internet Archive.

From the digital archives: Castroville Grammar School, First Grade Class of 1925 (left) and World War I letters from a soldier to his father who lived in Spreckels (right). You can read about them in the online archives, MCFL has a small collection of WWI letters since the war broke out a few years after the library was established. During this war, the County Library was asked to assist the Monterey County War History Committee. Library staff at the time transcribed the letters as part of preservation efforts.
Second Employee Engagement Survey to Launch

It’s that time again – time to take part in the Employee Engagement Survey.

Employees will get a link to the survey via email on Monday, October 21st and will have until Friday, November 1st to respond.

The survey is open to ALL County employees. Human Resources staff, which is managing the survey, says the feedback is very important to get a real picture of employee concerns on issues ranging from work environment to career development to job satisfaction.

“If those in our county workforce want to effect change, the survey is a venue to share your concerns, viewpoints and needs,” explains Human Resources Director Irma Ramirez-Bough. “We want to hear from employees, and we want everyone to know that concerns expressed in last year’s survey did trigger increased employee engagement in departments throughout the County.”

For example, says Ramirez-Bough, departments using feedback from last year and an action planning process submitted more than 65 SMART goals to improve programs, policies and services for both employees and customers. You can find out more about those results here.

The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete and results are completely confidential. Employees without a County email address or computer access will be able to use paper surveys so all will have the opportunity to participate.

Questions? Contact Wendell Sells in the Human Resources Department at 796-6066 or sellsw@co.monterey.ca.us.
Bureau Gives Local Food Safety Awards

If you are what you eat, then you might want to know what food establishments have earned top County operating honors.

28 food facilities from around the county were nominated this year for the Gold Seal Award of Excellence given by the Health Department’s Environmental Health Bureau to retail food facilities. Only three earned top honors. They are:

- Canterbury Woods Retirement Community
- Nepenthe Restaurant
- Sun Street Center-The Road to Recovery

The Gold Seal Program helps consumers identify facilities that meet or exceed health standards based on state laws. You can find what restaurants have the seal by searching on the Health Department website or by downloading and using the Monterey County App MCConnect.

“All operating food facilities must meet regulatory food standards,” explains John Ramirez, Director of Environmental Health. “Those which excel are recognized with our Gold Seal and those food facilities who have consistently demonstrated excellence in providing safe and secure food will be honored with the Award of Excellence.”

The awards were given at the Bureau’s 11th Annual Food Safety Conference last month, which offers a variety of subjects for local operators with a focus on the importance of food safety education. This year’s conference theme was “SIP: Sustainability, Innovation and Progress.” Speakers included Executive Chef Matthew Beaudin from the Monterey Bay Aquarium, who talked about “Being a Chef in a Sustainable World,” Salinas Fire Department staff talking about common fire safety and inspection violations found in food facilities and Health Department staff providing an in-depth review of new food safety laws.