Life in the Library: Teddy Hellam Celebrates Half Century of Service

For Theodora ‘Teddy’ Hellam, the library has been so much more than a job.

She has worked at the Monterey County Free Libraries Seaside branch for 50 years and checking out books from the same library (in its previous location) since she was a young girl. Her life’s work was also a personal journey, illustrating her commitment to the value of libraries in the community because of what they have meant to her.

“People, people, people were my reason for staying in such a long career,” she explains. “As a book reader, a perfect place to work is a library. The people who were my supervisors were mentors to me
and very dedicated co-workers on staff and in our support services were wonderful. I met a lot of interesting patrons over the desk that became friends."

Hellam’s love affair with the library pre-dates its current location. She remembers going to the Emerson Library as it was called, when it was in the basement of the grange hall. As a shy child, she loved to read.

In 1970 when she was a junior in high school, she took a chance and asked then Branch Manager Dorothy Carnie if there were any jobs and Carnie hired her on the spot for one night a week. She was hired full time in 1975 in the library’s new location on Harcourt Avenue and has fond memories of activities such as driving the Bookmobile.

“They told me don’t take the turns too fast or the books will fall out of the shelves.”

The summer of 1978 is one Teddy will never forget for many reasons. She was tapped to run the branch after layoffs from budget shortfalls due to Proposition 13. That was also the year she got married, and where was the ceremony? In the library of course! What is now the Homework Center was a community meeting room at the time and family decorated it for the service. Always mindful of the job at hand though, Teddy explains she went out to make sure the door was locked at closing time in her wedding dress and one of the regular patrons saw her and asked, “What’s going on?”

During the Intervening years, her hours varied as she raised three children who all came along, learning how to shelve books and helped keep the library space neat. In 1998, she was named Library Assistant III, Circulation Manager.

Teddy says she has seen a great evolution in the library, quoting renowned librarian S.R. Ranganathan, ‘Libraries are a growing organism.’

“First it was print materials: books, magazines and periodicals. In 1994, library work automated. Then it grew to incorporate Homework Centers and a massive volunteer program teaching patrons to use computers. Other additions followed: literacy programs, VHS tapes to DVDs, cassettes and records to CDs and digitized work to “e” collections.”

The original Emerson Library.
And now the library is a family legacy: both her daughters have followed their mother’s footsteps into the profession.

Friday, January 31, 2020 will mark Teddy’s last day of work at the Seaside branch; but you can’t take the library out of this life-long devotee.

“I live close by,” she says. “I’ll be seeing everyone soon.”

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**Drivers Needed for Vet Ride Program**

Please help spread the word about the need for volunteer drivers. Perhaps you have a friend or family member who can help. The Military and Veterans Affairs Office is putting out a call for drivers for its Palo Alto Van Ride program.

This transportation service is very important for local veterans for medical services. It offers free weekday rides to the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Palo Alto and the San Jose VA Outpatient Clinic. Right now, the program is manned by more than a dozen volunteers but that is not enough to meet the needs of our local veterans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pick-Up Locations</th>
<th>Pick-Up Times</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monterey: Courthouse</td>
<td>6:30 a.m.</td>
<td>1200 Aguajito Rd. Monterey, CA (Monterey Courthouse)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sand City: McDonalds</td>
<td>6:45 a.m.</td>
<td>990 Playa Ave. Sand City (Costco Shopping Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina: Jack-in-the-Box</td>
<td>7:00 a.m.</td>
<td>221 Reservation Rd. Marina (Marina Village Shopping Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salinas: Carl’s Jr. (Davis Rd.)</td>
<td>7:15 a.m.</td>
<td>1051 N. Davis Rd. Salinas (Next to Post Office)</td>
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The van program has several pick-up/drop off locations for veterans.

To volunteer, drivers only need provide their driving skills and be available at least one day per month; the County provides the van, gas, maintenance, scheduling and coordination.

To volunteer as a van driver, you need:
- A current copy of your DMV driving record
- A valid California driver’s license
- The ability to be at the Monterey Courthouse by 6:30 a.m.
- The ability to drive to Palo Alto and return usually by 3:00 p.m.

For more information about volunteering or if you have a friend or family member who could use this service, please contact Van Ride Coordinator Michael McFadden at (831) 647-7614.
Public Works Honored for ‘Green’ Road Project

Congratulations to RMA-Public Works and its River Road and Arroyo Seco Road Pavement Rehabilitation Team, which received a Transportation Excellence Award from the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC).

It’s a very smooth ride now along River and Arroyo Seco Roads for commuting, agribusiness or wine tasting. This Pavement Rehabilitation Project involved reconstructing about five miles of roadway between the cities of Greenfield and Salinas. The work occurred last fall and the project team worked closely with farmers and agricultural operators to reduce impacts.

River and Arroyo Seco Roads are primarily two-lane rural roads, but are important for business and residents. Sections of both roads are classified as “major collectors,” connecting travelers to Highway 68 and Highway 101. River Road sees 1,500 vehicle trips every day; Arroyo Seco Road between Paraiso Springs Road and Highway 101 sees 3,600 vehicles a day.

Not only were repairs made but the plan used an environmentally friendly recycling pavement process called Full Depth Reclamation. Here are some links to see the work that was done. The old pavement was dug up, mixed with new materials and reused along the same roadway. Once laid down, the new materials are compacted down until it’s the right level for use. This saved money and much more: tons of asphalt being hauled off to dumpsites, preventing waste and trips by heavy trucks hauling away debris, a plus when it comes to lowering...
greenhouse gas emissions. The result? A like-new stretch of road that will support the area for years to come.