

CALTACTICS

Issue III
July - September 2011



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Libraries are wonderful, intriguing places! Their resources can spark imagination, answer provoking questions, and provide a lifetime of reading enjoyment. While curmudgeons claim that technology will soon make dinosaurs of libraries, I believe technology will make libraries stronger and more useful than ever.

The Camarillo City Council was so eager to replace the antiquated 16,500 square foot Branch County Library at the city's expense that we held long and often intense study sessions without an identified funding source. We brainstormed about space, facilities and technology, and hired an architect and interior designer to help mesh our ideas into one vision.

A needs assessment identified 65,000 square feet, and Council members insisted on approving every detail. To come up with something uniquely Camarillo, we flatly rejected some suggestions and modified others. Nothing was approved unless all five of us agreed.

When the Library Bond Act of 2000 passed, we were ready to hone details and forge ahead with our grant application. We wanted our library to be a place where residents would come for books, educational classes, technology, and community programs. We wanted a place where children would learn the value of reading, teens would be able to work and study together, and adults would linger. We each sat in every chair proposed for all three areas, keeping some and rejecting others. We approved murals and a pirate ship for the children's area, a Gaudi

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President's Column Fall 2011



Autumn is my favorite time of year. California's bountiful harvest surrounds us, the school year begins, a hint of a chill is in the air, baseball comes to a wow finish and we celebrate Thanksgiving. In the fall, we are also in the throes of election season -- an advocate's favorite time of year!

The weeks before an election and before winners officially take office are a great opportunity to meet the candidates and their supporters. Politics aside, candidates care about your community or they wouldn't be running. They are looking for your vote and want to talk about their issues. Drop by their campaign office. Listen carefully to them. Get to know them BEFORE it is time to ask for something.

Chances are very good that you know much more about the library than they do. It doesn't matter whether you ultimately vote for them or not! You want the candidates to be informed about all the ways that libraries enrich your community, whether they are running for or serving on the education board, city council, board of supervisors or the state legislature. You will become the "go-to" person about libraries.

Don't forget the candidate's aides and campaign workers. If they have an outdated idea of what a library is, take them on a guided tour of the library and invite them to programs. Remember, today's campaign worker may be tomorrow's assemblyperson.

Advocacy ideas for election season:

- Build an ad hoc advocacy committee for your library. Perhaps your Friends group already has such a committee. Join it!

- Identify key politicians and candidates. Remember: just because a candidate is not predicted to win doesn't mean you shouldn't spend time with him. He may win next time. Or he may be well connected.

- Create an advocacy plan for all the candidates that includes:
 - Attend community meetings/town halls/candidate forums
 - Visit office/campaign HQ
 - Connect with Notes/email updates about the library
 - Invite candidates to library events/give guided tours
 - Know the candidate, her family and their interests

Libraries will be vibrant and healthy in some communities but could be irrelevant or abolished altogether in others. It is not too dramatic to say that the relationships you already have with your local and state officials, and the ones you will cultivate in the coming years, will shape our libraries for the rest of this century.

As library trustees, donors, friends and advocates -- librarians and staff, too -- the responsibility is ours. Use election time 2011 to tell your story. The future is truly in our hands.

What do you need? What will it take? For more ideas, conversation and advocacy strategies for your *next* election cycle, please attend the advocacy sessions at California Library Association (CLA) conference in November 2011. Experienced advocates will share tips about what works at a hands-on seminar on Friday, November 11. CLA's lobbyist will teach us how to navigate the halls of the Capitol in Sacramento. Please bring your own great ideas and advocacy techniques as well. Be there as CLA rolls out its new Advocacy Toolkit!

'Tis is the season to be a library advocate. May your own advocacy efforts be bountiful this autumn.

CAL TACTICS is the official publication of **CALTAC**, the California Association of Library Trustees and Commissioners. It is published quarterly and is included in membership dues.

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Legislative Report



CALFACTICS Legislative Column Fall 2011

Sacramento is quieter these days, with the State Legislature in recess. Capitol watchers predict that legislators will wait until the regular session reconvenes on January 4, 2012 before addressing the state's ongoing budget problems.

CALIFORNIA BUDGET

Library issues were in the spotlight all year, beginning in January when Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr.'s budget proposal eliminated virtually all state funding for public libraries -- \$30 million. But in a state budget of \$127.4 billion, library funding was almost budget dust -- a mere .00023 percent (2 ten thousandths of a percent). Still, threatened libraries and schools create headlines and sound bites; thus, Governor Brown demonstrated the enormity of the state's budget problems.

Library advocates took up the cause. Your calls, emails, and letters helped legislators understand that library funding supported three state programs important to local libraries, as well as ensuring that California received federal funding. Thanks to library advocacy, legislators restored \$15.2 million to the budget in a bi-partisan effort for public libraries. Well done.

The final budget agreement also included some spending cut *triggers* that will dramatically affect libraries and education if revenues fall short of assumptions. Those revenue shortfalls now appear likely. When Governor Brown and the State Legislature resume budget

discussions in January, library funds may be in jeopardy. Stay tuned.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATION

Governor Brown was busy right up to his October 9, 2011 deadline, signing or vetoing more than 600 bills passed by the Legislature this year, including a number of last day "gut & amend" bills and three library-related bills.

Library-related legislation signed by the Governor:

SB 445 (Simitian) extends the protection of the California Public Records Act to ensure the confidentiality of library records, including e-records.

AB 438 (Williams), a controversial bill that imposes requirements on a city or library district intending to withdraw from a county library system to contract with a private company for library services, passed after many amendments and much conversation inside and outside the library community.

SB 602 (Yee), extends privacy protections to include the personal information of users of e-books and prohibits commercial book providers and sellers "from knowingly disclosing to any governmental entity a user's personal information related to the use of a book or part of a book, except to a law enforcement or non-law enforcement entity or private person as specified."

Other new legislation of interest includes:

AB 597 (Eng) establishes the California Financial Literacy Fund in the State Treasury for the purpose of enabling

partnerships with the financial services community and governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to improve Californians' financial literacy.

Every March will now be *Read Across California Month* -- everyone will be encouraged to read for 30 minutes for 30 days -- in conjunction with the *Read Across America* campaign held annually on March 2nd.

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

The budget cuts continue to have an impact on the California State Library and have included staff reductions and cuts to program budgets. The State Library has been working with the regional cooperative systems to best allocate decreased funding.

NATIONAL NEWS

Good news and bad news on the national level.

Budget

Library funding in the federal budget has been cut; California libraries will feel the impact because the state with the largest population (currently California) traditionally receives the largest amount of grant funding under the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

SKILLS Act Still Alive

The Strengthening Kids' Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLS) Act (S. 1328), was reintroduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Thad Cochran (R-MS) on July 6, and includes key provisions to support school libraries. At this writing, the Act continues to attract co-sponsors.

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August 29, 2011

AND THEY CAME

By Alan B. Smith

August 20, 2011 was a warm clear day in Martinez, California near the Carquinez Straits. Speakers strained to be heard over the Amtrak whistles. What was the occasion?

It was the re-grand opening of the Martinez public library, a proud member of the Contra Costa County library system.

The first reading room in Martinez was established in 1885. A more permanent facility was built approximately 1895 when the Martinez citizens raised \$1,700 including \$25 from John Muir. The current building was built in 1941, which included some funding from John Muir's granddaughter. (John Muir's home is open to the public in Martinez. It is a National Historic Site maintained by the National Park Service).

In November 2008, Martinez passed a bond measure for various civic improvements, which included \$2 million for remodeling the library. It included skylights on the top floor which make the interior much brighter. Also, an elevator was installed to meet ADA (American with Disabilities Act) requirements so the basement could be used for a Friend's bookstore, meeting rooms etc.

The library maintains its original looks, but looks new. And they came. Estimates are that over 300 people streamed through the doors to see the results their investment in a modern library had bought. So come take the Amtrak Capitol Corridor train, the library is just a few blocks from the station.



ARTICLES ABOUT OPENING:

http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_18693189

<http://martinez.patch.com/articles/newly-renovated-library-draws-rave-reviews>

(click on the video)

<http://ccclib.org/locations/martinez.html> The Martinez library, completed in 1941, is located in an historic downtown waterfront community that also hosts the county government center for Contra Costa. The library houses a small historical collection that includes works by many famous local and state figures, including Martinez resident John Muir. Hanging in the library are portraits of Dr. and Mrs. John Strentzel, painted by Muir's friend and noted California artist William Keith. In addition to the historical, Martinez Library provides public internet computers, WIFI, a steady supply of new materials in various formats, and provides regular programming for children, teens, and adults. The Library was renovated and expanded with funds from Measure H and re-opened on August 20, 2011.

Is your Library Board:

EFFECTIVE?

PROMOTING YOUR LIBRARY?

WORKING WELL WITH THE DIRECTOR?

KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, and would like to be able to answer “yes” to all of them, you should have **CALTAC’s Board Effectiveness Training**.

At no charge to you, a trainer will come to your library and conduct a three and a half hour workshop, not only covering the above mentioned subjects but many more, especially if you have particular needs at your library.

Do you have **new** members on your Board or is it time for a “**refresher**” workshop?

For further information and details, please contact:

Jane Jones at janejones-pv@juno.com or phone 310-831-3372.

ARE YOU:

ENERGETIC, ENTHUSIASTIC,

INTERESTED IN LIBRARY BOARDS,

WILLING TO TALK WITH LIBRARY BOARDS?

If so, you may be interested in being a **trainer**. If you are at all interested, please contact **Jane Jones**.

See CALTAC’s website for more information regarding Board Effectiveness Training:

<http://www.caltac.org/resources/training.php>

Census Data Will be Less Accessible

The U.S. Census Bureau has terminated the collection of data for the Statistical Compendia program effective October 1, 2011. The Statistical Compendium program is comprised of the Statistical Abstract of the United States and its supplemental products - the State and Metropolitan Area Data Book and the County and City Data Book.

No Child Left Behind

On October 18, a U.S. Senate panel took the first step toward dismantling the controversial No Child Left Behind Law to give states more flexibility in measuring progress.

Late on Oct 20, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with a 15-7 vote. Unfortunately, an amendment sponsored by Senators Whitehouse (D-RI) and Murray (D-WA) supporting school libraries was withdrawn because of lack of sponsorship of the amendment. Senator Whitehouse intends to reintroduce this amendment on the senate floor. When that happens, it will need support. We will keep you informed. Next step: the ESEA bill will be brought before the full Senate.

Broadband and Digital Literacy -- Libraries Will Play a Part

According to a recent Pew Report, one-third of all Americans have no access to broadband at home. A new public-private partnership recently announced by FCC Chair Julius Genachowski will try to change that; libraries will be central to the plan to "close America's digital skills gap," according to Susan Hildreth, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, since libraries are already the nation's de facto digital literacy corps.

ADVOCACY AT ALL LEVELS

Most California libraries are feeling the pinch of the economic recession, but some are weathering these hard times better than others. We are seeing districts cut hours, lay off staff and privatize their libraries.

California is not alone, according to the State of Libraries Report 2011 from the American Library Association (Full text at <http://tinyurl.com/alasalr2011>). U.S. mayors reported last November that hours, staff or services at local libraries are a primary target for budget cuts, second only to parks. Another study indicated that nineteen states reported cuts in funding for public libraries from fiscal 2010 to fiscal 2011; more than half said the cuts were greater than ten percent. That study also found that state cuts often were compounded by cuts at the local level.

Your own efforts will make the difference in these tough times. Building relationships with elected or appointed officials and their staff takes time, but those relationships are the most effective tool there is. We all talk about *special interests*, but your representatives really DO listen to their constituents. They listen to YOU. If they haven't heard from you -- their neighbors -- about the positive impact libraries have on job creation and community building, they are unlikely to believe anyone else.

FUTURE EVENTS

CLA/CSLA Convention, Pasadena, 2011

American Library Association 2012, Anaheim

ALA is returning to Anaheim, June 21 – 26! If you can manage it, please take advantage of this conference. There will be special sessions for trustees, commissioners, donors, friends, fundraisers and advocates. CALTAC will be involved in these sessions, so if you have an interest in telling your story, please contact us. We'd love to hear them.

CALTAC Board Effectiveness Training -- Any time!

Just call to schedule a FREE three-hour CALTAC training at your library.

See you in Pasadena!

Deborah Doyle

CLA Chair, Legislative & Advocacy Committee

CALTAC Liaison

Parc Guel-type bench for the teen area, and overstuffed chairs by a fireplace in the adult reading room, making sure our image of the library was neither forgotten nor watered down. Fortunately, our architect knew people at Disney who created motifs from our conglomerate vision, economically.

Since the library opened in 2007, the number of library visitors has grown astronomically, the collection has soared, story hours have increased dramatically, and the library is the showplace to take out-of-town visitors. We have many shelves "reserved for books not yet printed," but residents generously donated more than a million dollars for materials in four short months after a request went out. Friends of the Library are delighted with their on-site bookstore; they recently donated another half million for the collection. The Adult Literacy Program has its own room and a generous man provided computers for the Children's Tutoring Center. The City provided computers for the children's, teen and adult areas, with Wi-Fi throughout, and we contracted out operation of an on-site coffee shop.

Last year we realized that the County System's formula took more from the city's general fund to subsidize other branches than was allocated for our branch, which forced us to break away. The Camarillo Branch Library closed on December 30, 2010, and the **Camarillo Public Library** opened on January 3, 2011. The transition to a private contractor made a busy holiday for city staff, but, other than having to obtain a new library card, transition was seamless for residents. Since then our collection and circulation and story hours have all increased, there is a new focus on expanded adult and community programs, and we've added electronic capabilities we previously didn't know existed. All of this tells me that the future of libraries is boundless.



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Cool Website

August 29, 2011

WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Cool Website: <http://www.cityofwoodland.org/qov/depts/library/>

In Woodland (Yolo County) book clubs are not just for adults. Is your child in the second or third grade? They have one for those grades as well as for the fourth to seventh graders.

Want to get your child interested in reading? Well check out "BookFLIX".

"Scholastic BookFLIX is an exciting online literacy resource that pairs classic video storybooks with related nonfiction e-books to get kids excited about reading and learning! With a library card, you can access BookFLIX anywhere there is an Internet connection -- from the library or from home. You can get to it anytime, 24/7! It is specifically created to support beginning and reluctant readers." 95 books are available including 27 in Spanish.

How often do teens say no one listens to us? Well Woodland has a teen advisory group. Don't have a downloadable device for e-books? Check out "TumbleTalkingBooks". With just a library card to you can listen to many books without needing to download them, 24/7 – and they are never on hold.

Read about "Books to Go", the library's free delivery service of material to the home bound. And for those with visual impairment, the library's web site is exceptionally clear with great contrast to make it easier to read. Also, with the click of a flag, the web site can change into 12 languages other than English – from Russian or Ukraine to Chinese or Japanese.

The Woodland Public Library website is truly a "Cool Website."



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www.caltac.org

Important Dates for 2011-12

CALTAC Board Meeting and Award Luncheon At:

CLA/CSLA Conference PasadenaNovember 12, 2011

CLA/CSLA Legi Days in the DistrictsTBD

CALTAC Spring Workshops

California Libraries: A Necessity, or Nice to Have?

Walnut Creek.....February 25, 2012

Nancy Skinner, keynote

Burbank, Buena Vista Branch.....March 10, 2012

CLA/CSLA Legi Day in SacramentoTBD