



2008-2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Fresno County Public Library

Balance

*Our "People First!" Promise:
We commit to deliver service
that is friendly, knowledgeable,
wholehearted and respectful.*

BALANCING ACT

Everyone is feeling the impacts of these tough times. In search of affordable ways to restore a little balance to their lives, more people than ever are turning to—and returning to—their libraries in record numbers. Recreational reading, musical performances, author talks, homework help, literacy tutoring, computer access, job searching, volunteer opportunities and so much more for all ages at the library are making a comeback in a big way.

This annual report summarizes how Fresno County libraries managed their own "balancing act," maintaining service levels even while Measure B revenues declined for the second year in a row. With revenues projected to decline for an unprecedented third year, Fresno County libraries redoubled their commitment to keeping the promises of Measure B.

One thing remains clear among all the economic uncertainty—communities depend on their libraries through thick and through thin. This is overwhelmingly evident as we watch library use climb to the highest levels ever. Thank you for placing your trust and confidence in the library. We wouldn't have it any other way!



Karen Bosch Cobb
County Librarian [retired April 2010]

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The library website at www.fresnolibrary.org featured useful resources to help everyone cope with budgets stretched tighter than ever before. Colorful features included Stretching Your Dollars, Pinching Pennies and Start Something.

The library's Information and Referral Network compiled Help in Hard Times, a selected online list of local resources to assist with basic needs like food, clothing, housing and health services. Other online lists included flu shot clinics and tax assistance sites.

A new government services web page also debuted to provide quick and easy access to timely topics such as federal economic stimulus programs, mortgage assistance and identity theft.

JOB ASSISTANCE

Outreach to assist job seekers in their employment search kept staff busier than ever. More than 1,750 adults participated in mock interviews, resume makeovers and online job search classes at the library or at community sites. Drop-in interview and resume clinics remained a popular service discovered by many job seekers. Staff also increased participation at community job fairs to interact with new customers delighted to discover the free career services available at their local libraries.

Job seekers enrolled in the Literacy Services Program for free tutoring to help improve their reading, writing, spelling and math skills. With the library's help, clients were able to more efficiently fill out applications and successfully pass employment tests. Improving literacy skills also helped them gain confidence to impress potential employers. In fact, the library achieved a new record for adults enrolled in the program meeting the goal of finding jobs.



LEARNING AND LITERACY

Outreach to children increased dramatically. Youth Services staff interacted with 18,000 children through age 12. Presentations to elementary school students jumped from just 20 programs the previous year to 56 programs. This amazing increase of 180 percent in classroom visits was the result of a new project focusing on fourth grade students and a revitalization of the Kindergarten outreach program. Librarians shared information about the benefits of using the public library and how to get a library card and concluded with reviews of some of the library's best and most entertaining children's books. Visits to pre-schools and daycare centers by the Daycare Bookmobile also increased by 31 percent.

More than 240 adults enrolled in the Literacy Services Program. Many participants successfully improved their skills to pass part of or all of the General Education Diploma exam, which was the first of several personal goals on the road to transforming their lives. Hundreds of parents in western Fresno County received free training and materials to improve their children's literacy and learning skills from before birth to pre-school age. Through the AprendoVan Family Literacy Project, families and daycare providers checked out bilingual books and interactive kits, and came onboard to use computers and educational software.

READING AND RECREATION

Brain health for kids was the focus of Fit for Life with funding from Libraries for the Future and MetLife Foundation plus local support from First 5 Fresno County and Kaiser Permanente. "Healthy Body = Healthy Brain" tool kits distributed to 10,000 children, teens and parents through dozens of community partners emphasized the five pillars of a healthy brain: physical activity, nutrition, socialization, mental stimulation novelty, and mental stimulation complexity. Libraries were also highlighted as the "go-to" place for free health and wellness resources.

Adult Services launched a new grant-funded program through the California State Library designed for the "baby boomer" generation. Life After 50 redefined, created and delivered innovative new services to the growing population of active, older adults through a series of community expos. Each expo focused on a topic of importance to baby boomers, including health and wellness, finance and life planning, services for New Americans, and leisure and recreation.

The Big Read returned with a celebration of themes from Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It was the first time that the featured book was decided by a communitywide vote. Eight weeks of free events attracted participation from 7,000 enthusiasts for the fourth Big Read, which was again funded by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest.



TECHNOLOGY AND TRADITION

Teens from around the world, including such distant locations as Canada, Cameroon and Australia, made virtual library visits through the "Read. Watch. Listen." website. The innovative outreach tool launched last year offers teens the opportunity to contribute reviews, post comments and participate in timely polls. Visits to the home page nearly tripled in its first year of service, and the number of hits increased by 40 percent compared to its first six months in operation. More than 350 reviews of books, movies and music were submitted by teens, and authors are now offering to contribute content to the site.

The Talking Book Library ushered in new technology with titles recorded on digital flash cartridges. The new titles and specialized playback equipment were launched in the summer for customers who struggle to read standard-sized print.

HISTORY AND FAMILY ROOTS

The California History and Genealogy Room already holds one of the major institutional collections of materials documenting the career of Fresno-born author William Saroyan. An important addition to this collection was the acquisition of the Lucy Saroyan Archive. The fascinating assortment of letters, postcards and notes written to Lucy by her famous father from 1953 to 1972 is rich in detail on family matters, business issues and current events. The library is pleased to now share the archive with a wider audience.

The California State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library donated most of its entire research collection to the California History and Genealogy Room at the Central Library. The reputation of the DAR as one of the nation's premiere genealogical research organizations qualified the donation of 2,000 books as a major acquisition. The Room now houses one of the largest collections of genealogy materials in California and the largest collection of its kind between San Francisco and Los Angeles. In honor of the donation, the Room name was changed to include "California State Society, DAR Library."



BRICKS AND MORTAR

After an unsuccessful voter campaign by library advocates to raise the existing Measure B sales tax by a quarter cent to help build and renovate libraries, attention turned to prioritizing essential building maintenance projects within the existing budget. The Politi and Gillis branches will be refurbished with new carpet and fresh paint.

New building projects already funded through state bond financing provided a bright spot and hope to underserved communities.



A new library opened in Fowler to much acclaim from residents who had visited the former branch housed in a tiny storefront since 1914. After its first year of service in the new building, the Fowler branch achieved huge increases of nearly 300 percent in items checked out and issued more than 1,100 new library cards.

Groundbreaking festivities were celebrated for a new library in Tranquillity and a branch to operate out of a new County Regional Service Center in West Fresno. Construction began on a new library in Orange Cove expected to open in late 2009.

A SPIRIT OF GIVING

Much was accomplished through the generous support of volunteers and donors during this very challenging year. Their contributions were critical to maximizing especially limited financial and staff resources.

Volunteers gave of their time and talents to read to children, tutor adult learners, help customers use computers and research family trees, repair talking book machines, assist at special events, and raise awareness of and donations for services. The 682 volunteers who gave 27,935 hours of service enhanced the library experience for others, kept the library connected with the community, and encouraged peers to consider community service.

Donors who so generously contributed to library trust funds are recognized for the first time in this year's report. Donations totaling \$378,863 were made to the library trust fund in the form of bequests, memorials and gifts for programs and materials. Donors are always welcome to designate contributions for a particular branch, program or service of their choice.

DONORS

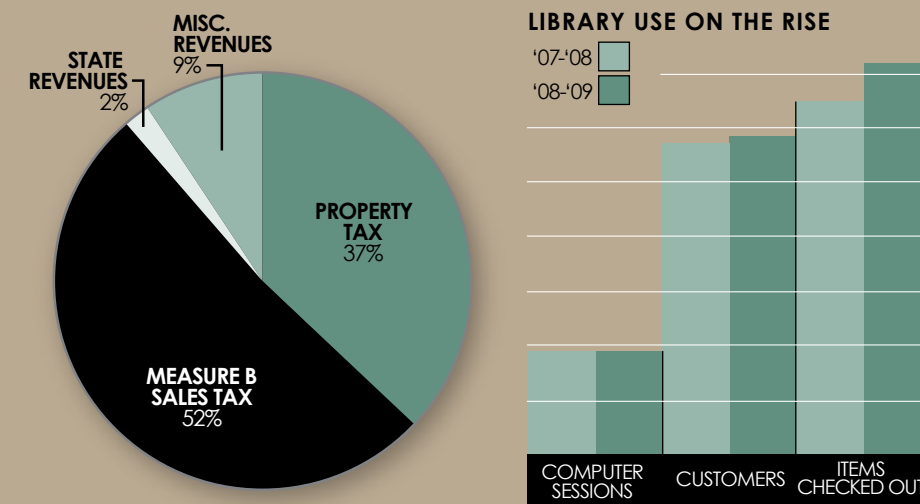
This listing includes donors who gave in the 2008 calendar year, which differs from the operational fiscal year schedule for revenues and expenses. Donations to the Friends of the Fresno County Public Library are not included in this listing.

Arnold E. Aalto American Legion Auxiliary Selma Unit #12 American Legion Selma Post No. 12 Constance Amico Richard C. Beacham John & Jean Burress City of Kerman Clovis Rotary Club Thurman S. & Mary Ann Doman Educational Employees Credit Union Richard W. & Jacqueline T. Eyde Ruth Falcon Roger F. & Evelyn F. Falcyn Mitchell & Betty Forney The Friday Club Aram & Barbara Garabedian Bertha & John Garabedian Charitable Foundation Larry & Cherre Gardner Ida Gleason Thomas A. & Joan L. Gonzales G.O. & Bernice A. Graham Marion Gregory/Laton Women's Club	Scott & Sue Ann Hillman John W. & Jennifer Hirstein Crow Marybeth Hogan Fred Ilchert Kerman Chamber of Commerce Jean Kesler Tina Knight John R. Knorr Laton Women's Club Christina Lee Elaine Levenson Arthur Mariscotti Michael J. & Kathleen Y. Markovich Ralph & Frances Metcalf F. Mae Morita Elizabeth A. Motta Dr. Rodney D. & Shari Paloutzian Kermit & Carmen L. Patrick Ponderosa Telephone Robert F. & Kathryn S. Price Jay & Zoreh Ramani Mary Rios Riverdale Women's Civic Club B. Frank & Rosemary Rowland San Joaquin Valley Town Hall Inc. Selma Chroma Club Selma Women's Club	Haig Shekerjian & June Stevens Sierra Challenge Express Road Runner Club Luanne Silkwood St. James Episcopal Church Women Esther E. Stein Sisters' Trust Susan N. Stiltz Janet M. Strand & Walter R. Olsen Akira Tajiri Loretta Thomas Bea Trainer United Christian Church Jack D. & Dorothy Vance Wal-Mart Foundation Wednesday Club Dick Wetnight Clair M. & Nina C. Williams Merle S. Woodin IN-KIND DONATIONS Belvi Trust/Larry Groppo Galli Film Studio/Andrew Galli Sherry Mealer David Okazaki John Phillips
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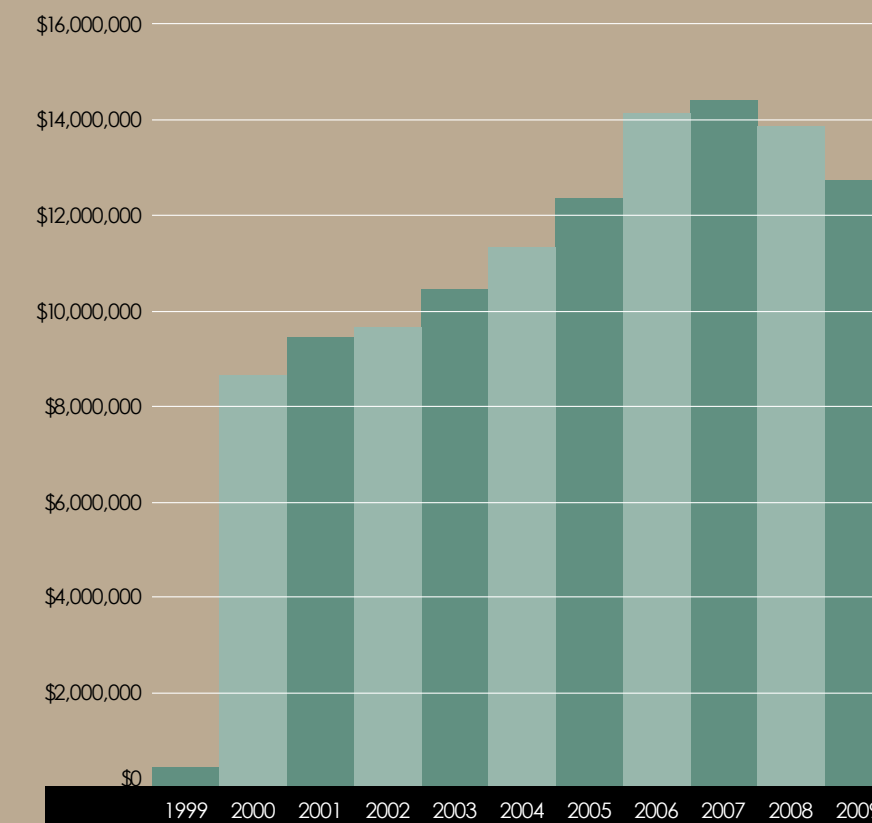
BRANCH CONTACT

Auberry	33049 Auberry Road	855.8523
Bear Mountain	30733 E. Kings Canyon	332.2528
Big Creek	55185 Point Road	893.6614
Caruthers	13382 S. Henderson	864.8766
Cedar-Clinton	4150 E. Clinton Avenue	442.1770
Central	2420 Mariposa Street	488.3195
Clovis Regional	1155 Fifth Street	299.9531
Easton	25 E. Fantz Avenue	237.3929
Fig Garden Regional	3071 W. Bullard Avenue @ Marks	438.4071
Firebaugh	1315 "O" Street	659.2820
Fowler	312 S. 7th Street	834.3114
Gillis	629 West Dakota	225.0140
Kerman	15081 W. Kearney Plaza	846.8804
Kingsburg	1399 Draper Street	897.3710
Laton	6313 DeWoody Street	923.4554
Mendota	1246 Belmont Avenue	655.3391
Mosqueda Center	4670 E. Butler Avenue	453.4072
Orange Cove	815 Park Blvd.	626.7942
Parlier	1130 E. Parlier Avenue	646.3835
Piedra	25385 Trimmer Springs Road	787.3266
Pinedale	7170 N. San Pablo Avenue	439.0486
Politi	5771 N. First Street	431.6450
Reedley	1027 "E" Street	638.2818
Riverdale	20975 Malsbary Street	867.3381
San Joaquin	8781 Main Street	693.2171
Sanger	1812 Seventh Street	875.2435
Selma	2200 Selma Avenue	896.3393
Senior Resource Center	2025 E. Dakota Avenue	453.6767
Shaver Lake	41344 Tollhouse Road	841.3330
Sunnyside Regional	5566 E. Kings Canyon Road	255.6594
Talking Book Library	770 N. San Pablo Avenue	488.3217
Tranquillity	5831 S. Juanche Avenue	698.5158
West Fresno	188 E. California Avenue	455.6066
Woodward Park Regional	944 E. Perrin Avenue	433.3135

FINANCIAL



MEASURE B SALES TAX REVENUE DECLINES



MISSION

Our Mission Your Fresno County Public Library provides books, technology, programs, services and more to inform, enlighten and entertain all ages and cultures.

Our Vision Your Fresno County Public Library will provide the community with opportunities to discover an environment of limitless learning and entertainment to enrich lives.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- District 1 Phil Larson
- District 2 Susan B. Anderson
- District 3 Henry Perea
- District 4 Judith G. Case
- District 5 Debbie Poochigian

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION

- County Librarian Karen Bosch Cobb [retired April 2010]
- Associate County Librarian Patricia Pondexter
- Business Manager Steve Nitta
- Adult Services Manager Jeanne Johnson
- Reference Services Manager Marie Stanley
- Support Services Manager Deborah Janzen
- Youth Services Manager Lisa Eckman

PRODUCTION

- Editor: Roberta Barton
- Designer: Amy Johnson
- Printing: Micheal Criado

