Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) held its annual Staff Day on Thursday, May 1st. On Staff Day, all branches of the library are closed down and all library employees (who are spread out over 3,000 plus square miles, from Parkfield to Pajaro to Big Sur) meet in one location to enjoy face time, training, team-building activities, a ‘State of the Library’ address and an awards ceremony.

“I find the Library Director’s State of the Library really interesting,” says Andrew Baranchea, Library Assistant II, who noted this was his 15th Staff Day. “I appreciate this annual get together; it’s a chance for the ‘tribes’ to get together.”
This year’s Staff Day focused on internal communications with training led by Dr. James Potterton, who guided staff in a fun and informative session on communication styles. Staff members learned to identify their dominant styles – Driver, Expressive, Analytical, or Amiable – as well as those of their coworkers. This was followed by a lively discussion on the positives and negatives of these styles, and how to work with them. Many thanks to the Health Department’s Wellness Program for assistance in providing this training.

Another goal of Staff Day that fits well with the Libraries’ role as an information provider is for all staff members to be more familiar with Monterey County itself. To that end, MCFL has had recent staff days at San Lorenzo Park in King City, Monterey County College of Law in Seaside and the Red Bull Center at Laguna Seca. This year’s event was held at the new Civic Center in Greenfield.

Greenfield Mayor John Huerta Jr. and 3rd District Supervisor Simón Salinas were on hand to welcome staff and share their appreciation of libraries. Assistant CAO Manny González also spoke of the value of libraries and gave an update on the State of the County. A short period of comic relief was provided by MCFL senior managers who put on a skit called “The Voice of MCFL” to give staff an overview of their administrative roles.

With the business of the day out of the way, it was time for the department to recognize those who go ‘the extra mile’ with the appropriately named Extra Mile Awards. Honorees are nominated by their peers, and here are this year’s winners:

**Individual Awards:**
- Denise Campos, Librarian II, Soledad Branch Manager
- Robin Cauntay, Librarian III, manager of the King City Branch, the small branches and bookmobile in South County
- Don Gonzalez, Library Assistant II at the Prunedale Branch and North County Bookmobile
- Sally Childs, Library Assistant I and Homework Center Coordinator at the Castroville Branch

Who says presentations have to be boring? Here, library staff unveils this year’s summer reading topic in ‘pet-icularly’ interesting attire.

Sally Childs (left) receives her Extra Mile award from County Librarian Jayanti Addleman (right).
Team Award: the Buena Vista/River Road Branch Team

- Jane Wallace, Librarian II and Branch Manager
- Roger Graf, Library Assistant II
- Julie Holland, Library Assistant I

Employee Creations Featured in Behavioral Health Art Calendar

Each year, the Health Department’s Behavioral Health Bureau invites the community to submit artwork for a calendar which features art alongside important information about mental health issues and inspirational messages.

This year, three county employees and a former county intern have works of art featured in this colorful and attractive publication. One employee’s artwork wowed the calendar committee so much that she has two pieces featured, one of which was also chosen for the cover of the calendar and by the Bureau’s Fiesta of Hope event committee to be featured as the Fiesta of Hope art piece. That particular painting, called “Ocean” appeared in all Fiesta of Hope promotional material and in the month of May in the calendar, since the event took place this month.

Who is this artist? Denise Hancock, Board Clerk with the Clerk of the Board's Office. She says she responded to the appeal for artwork for the calendar on a whim, but few
know what a wealth of work she has and what a benefit being an artist has been for her personally.

“I started painting when I was 11 years old, set it aside, then began painting again between the ages of 19-21,” explains Denise describing her life as a painter. “After another long period away from painting, I picked up brushes again in my forties when I was working with terminally ill patients and found painting to have that calming, ‘take-me-away’ feeling. I continue to paint now, but at a much slower pace.”

Denise, who uses the smallest brush she can find for her work, says she likes painting with acrylic paints because they dry quickly so she can keep working.

“Once I painted for seven hours but it felt like five minutes; it was dark when I finally put my brush down! It takes me an average of three months to complete one painting.”

Denise says she was surprised and honored to be selected for the calendar and as the Fiesta of Hope featured artwork. Other county staff featured in this year’s calendar are:

Atavia Jones, Psychiatric Social Worker Trainee, Behavioral Health (January)
Theresa Innis-Scimone, Behavioral Health Services Manager (September)
Joseph Perez, Intern, Behavioral Health (April)

Sheriff’s Office Hosts Office Professionals Workshop

The Monterey County Sheriff’s Office held its inaugural Law Enforcement Office Professionals Conference last month. This event brought 31 Law Enforcement Office Professionals from agencies in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties for a day of:

- Networking
- Learning about creative problem solving
- Identifying issues and best practices
Insights into career development

The conference, held at the Harden Ranch Foundation in Salinas, was a huge success with a wide variety of law enforcement agencies participating: the California Highway Patrol, the District Attorney’s Office, Monterey County Sheriff’s Office, Presidio of Monterey and police departments from Monterey, Salinas, Soledad, Ft. Hunter Liggett, Gonzales, King City, Watsonville and CSUMB.

Speakers included Sheriff Scott Miller, Undersheriff Max Houser, Dr. Jim Potterton, Seaside and Pacific Grove Police Chief Vicki Myers and Senior Trainer and Management Analyst Donna Myers.

The Sheriff welcomed the group and noted the important contributions each of the participants make in the lives of the people they serve.

“The Monterey County Sheriff’s Office works closely with law enforcement agencies both within our county and with neighboring counties,” said Miller. “By providing an opportunity to network, we are building our capacity to more effectively serve the public.”

Dr. Jim Potterton, an Organizational Psychologist, led participants in a three-hour interactive workshop on dealing with work stress through creative problem solving. Participants were able to personally identify their own “thinking style,” discuss those styles as well as understand the creative problem solving ‘five-stage technique,’ identify work stressors by taking an assessment, and learn 10 tips for preventing burnout.

In the afternoon Donna Myers facilitated a session about identifying workplace issues and Mary Zurita, Executive Assistant to the County Administrative Officer and Anna Marie Olds, Administrative Secretary-Confidential in Human Resources, shared best practices in resolving difficult issues.

Also on the agenda, Chief Vicki Myers talked about her career in law enforcement and Donna Myers was on again, with career development information and assistance.

Undersheriff Max Houser closed the session by encouraging attendees to continue to strengthen the relationships between organizations and the workshop ended with a special awards ceremony (those honorees were showcased in last week’s CAO Weekly Report).