



# Butte County Library

County Librarian's Report  
For the Library Advisory Board

January, February, March, April, May, June 2020

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## Library Administration – Melanie Lightbody, County Librarian and Narinder Sufi, Assistant Director

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We live in interesting times. I have both little and much to report. Here it is by bullet point as the LAB has requested:

- Hired a new outreach librarian and promoted two staff to full time regular positions and an old hand has rejoined the admin team.
  - **Kenny Abramowitz** has joined us beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> as our new outreach and collection development librarian. We could not be more pleased that we once again have a professional outreach staff member. Kenny has already been working and he'll hit the ground running once he is here.
  - Longtime staffer, **Kathy Brazil**, has accepted a promotion to full time and will be joining the Oroville library staff. She brings a wealth of enthusiasm and ideas for children's programming and a deep commitment to public service.
  - **Katy Azevedo**, formerly your staff, has accepted a promotion to full time as well and will be joining the Gridley, Biggs, Durham, Paradise merry-go-round. Her first assignment will be in Paradise but as I mentioned in my email, you never know where you'll find her. I know we all miss her here but believe she'll be a boon to our residents.
  - **Heidi Mitchell** has rejoined the library and is once again serving as your liaison and administrative assistant to Library Admin. She'll be working 9am to 2pm Tuesday through Thursday.
- The library was fully closed in all of April and much of May due to the pandemic but began curbside services in late May. The library branches are expected to open for limited services in July. In your packet, you will find the professional appearing signage, created by staff members Andrea Liao and Janae Kambestad that details what the library is offering during this time.
  - It is unknown when all library branches will return to normal operations.
  - The Library is now operating its telephone services via a "call center" now that the Library has transitioned to digital telephone

service. You can always reach library administration by dialing 530-552-5651 to reach Heidi, Narinder or me.

- Library Admin is working remotely as much as possible but we are easy to reach.
- The library is reconfiguring how we handle meeting room reservations using a new up-to-date software called Communico. If you are involved with other organizations which use our meeting rooms stay tuned for a new process. <https://communico.us/room-booking-940>
- Next, this is my last report as your County Librarian. I will be retiring on September 19<sup>th</sup> and my last day “in the office” will be the 17<sup>th</sup>. While I am looking forward to new adventures, I will miss you all very much. I have been very proud to serve the citizens of Butte County. They have been well represented by your dedicated service. I will say goodbye at our Skype meeting in the July Skype LAB meeting.
- Finally, what allows me to say goodbye with a lighter heart is knowing that Narinder Sufi will be assuming the reins here at the Library. We have been truly lucky to have her expertise, knowledge and empathy during the pandemic and she is the best person to take the Butte County Library back once we’re through this time.

### Durham Branch - Cynthia Pustejovsky, Branch Librarian

#### Program -

- Dale became Durham’s mainstay after Christy Cooke-Williford retired at the end of December.
- Volunteer continued the biweekly Crafternoon drop-in Tuesday afternoon program.
- Kimberlee Wheeler is doing Durham’s Pre-School Story Time

#### New program -

- Staff have developed a good rapport with the students at Durham’s Children’s Center. The children feel right at home in the library.

### Biggs Branch, Cynthia Pustejovsky, Branch Librarian

#### Programs –

- Cynthia and Aiko cover Biggs. Before going to Durham, Dale had started a weekly Saturday afternoon drop-in activity- craft, Legos, games, puzzles, which we have continued.
- A few patrons who have relocated from Paradise are using the branch.
- A couple of families had become regular Saturday afternoon visitors before Covid19 hit.

### Gridley Branch – Cynthia Pustejovsky, Branch Librarian

#### Programs-

- Since Christy retired, Avery Campbell has been doing the Friday morning story times.
- Aiko Hori continues with the Wednesday after school activity program, and our Ladies Night Out movie has a loyal following.
- Aiko is on the Youth Service Committee and Dale Wangberg is a member of the Health and Safety Committee.

#### Paradise Branch - Cynthia Pustejovsky, Branch Librarian

#### Programs-

- In January, Avery started two weekly drop-in programs: Tuesday afternoon Legos, Saturday morning story time.
- Couple of families were making late Thursday afternoon visits a regular occurrence before COVID 19 hit.

#### New Programs –

- Kenny Abramowitz, outreach and collection development librarian, will be working in Paradise starting in July.
- Katy Azevedo, Senior Library Assistant will be working in Paradise starting in July.

#### Heartwarming Story –

- The flooring in the library, staff workroom, breakroom and office has been changed. It has really brightened the library and makes it more inviting. Being closed turned out to be an advantage for Paradise because Aiko and Cynthia had to remove books from the bottom shelves, oversee the move of the furniture to the meeting room, and box up all the supplies in the workroom. In addition to improving the look of the branch, Paradise no longer has a smoke smell.



involved. The workload is multiplied due to the inability to have volunteers at the library, which means on top of serving patrons through curbside pickup staff must also handle the tasks that are normally done by volunteers (i.e. shelving the mountain of returns each day and searching the ever-growing list of items placed on hold).

What is coming up in next 3 months-

- Staff eagerly anticipate opening library doors soon to allow the public to browse for and check out library materials. In preparation, we have moved tables and chairs so they are not useable, and blocked computers so they are inaccessible. Many patrons have expressed a desire to visit the library again, and we look forward to allowing them to do so again.

## Oroville Branch – Misty Wright, Branch Librarian

Programs-

- Staff have been very busy during the time we have been closed to the public. We have taken this opportunity to get our collection in shape, using the data from Library IQ. We have weeded every area, shifting the collection around, moving the Science Fiction and Westerns closer to the General Fiction section and integrating the paperbacks into the collection where they belong. All staff have been given their own desktop computers, which has been helpful for Call Center duties.
- Thu and Avery have been busy with virtual programs for children, specifically storytimes and Agent P. These are weekly programs that have been ongoing since the last week of March.
- The Mental Health Grant Committee finished up their grant requirements by having two Zoom meetings with Matthew Reddam of Butte County Office of Education. He gave two amazing talks about trauma and how to deal with trauma, specifically that experienced in this county due to flood, fire, COVID and now protests.

New Programs –

- While working at home, Heidi undertook the project of giving some of our book trucks a facelift and painting them bright colors.
- The Oroville library opened for curbside on May 12th, earlier than the other branches, as a test to see how it would go. From May 12-31, we had 102 pickups and June 1-20th, 133 pickups. Through our experience, we were able to tweek and share with the other branches what worked and what did not. Our patrons were very happy to begin returning items and checking books out again. The public were able to start requesting books

- again on May 26th, and we had 273 requests in those few days left in the month. Janae made a Google spreadsheet that staff at any branch could access to help schedule appointments.
- Oroville and Chico had split the call center duties with each branch taking 2.5 days while we were open. As Chico became overwhelmed due to massive amounts of curbside appointments, the staff at Oroville have stepped up and taken over all call center duties for the system. Other branches help out when needed and this has assisted those staff at Chico to catch up and better help their patrons.

What is coming up in next 3 months-

- The Oroville staff is currently getting the branch ready for reopening. Chairs have been moved into the meeting room and tables have been moved out of the main part of the floor and into the computer area, in part to get them out of the way and to help block that area off when we reopen.

## Literacy Services – Heather Tovey, Literacy Coordinator

Literacy Services performance –

- Whether it was the California Library Literacy Services strategic planning team on April 9<sup>th</sup> scheduled for Los Angeles or the Northern California Literacy Coalition network training (organized by Butte County) at the Sutter County Library on May 7<sup>th</sup> our library literacy community has managed to still convene utilizing Zoom. We remain busy in looking to engage and stay connected to those we serve:
  - Most volunteer tutors are remaining connected by texting or emailing their Literacy Students (adult learners).
  - Sending our easy reading News for You current event newspaper to each Literacy Student.
  - Mailing a writing journal and note to our Literacy Students for writing/recording this time apart.
  - KinderGo k-readiness literacy-to-home activities sent home with Lunch at Your Library.
  - Virtual Literacy Coach storytimes from Julissa and David
  - Family Literacy Tips via Facebook.

Heartwarming story-

- We are excited to announce that on April 28<sup>th</sup> Literacy Services was awarded the Shared Vision grant for Rural Roads to Library & Literacy for \$250,000. Our beloved Literacy Coach that provides services to 3000-5000 children county-wide will need to be replaced by 2023. Our new mobile vehicle will serve the needs of our low-literate caregivers/adults in

our rural county 3 days a week while the other 2-3 days the vehicle will serve as a bookmobile. Also of great importance is the Rural Roads to Library & Literacy grant incorporates the Early Learning plans created by our Countywide Children's Services team. We are looking forward to coming together around this new state-of-the-art mobile library & literacy 36ft vehicle.

- While apart we asked our volunteer tutors to reflect on their time sheltering in place and express themselves with a 6 word memoir. Here are a few:

Wake, walk, read, chores, cook, repeat.  
"What time is it? What day?"  
Miss tutoring busy sewing face masks  
My new kitten brings me joy  
A new world to navigate creatively.

New programs-

- We will continue to explore distance learning through our Tutor Training, Adult Reading Program and Family Literacy Services which we will adapt and seek to best serve Butte County.



**Public Participation:** It is the policy of the Library Advisory Board, and a requirement of the California Open Meetings Law, to allow members of the public the opportunity to comment on all matters before the Board. Public participation is limited to matters within the subject matter presented pursuant to The Brown Act.