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**2011-2012
Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Madera County Library System**

Introduction:

In its review of the Madera County Library System, the Grand Jury toured each of the libraries located in Madera, Oakhurst, Chowchilla, North Fork, and Madera Ranchos. Interviews were conducted with the County Librarian, 4 branch managers, and 2 members of the Friends of the Library.

The County Libraries subscribe to the San Joaquin Valley Library System (SJVLS). SJVLS provides computer equipment at all sites, an inter-library loan system for most books and materials, web site services, and online access to informational data bases.

Each of the County libraries receives services and financial support from local Friends of the Library groups. These groups provide volunteer services in the libraries, and sponsor the summer reading program in addition to purchasing new books, magazine subscriptions, and audio and video equipment. The Oakhurst Friends group raised thousands of dollars to remodel the old fire station and expand the library. In Chowchilla the Friends group also raised thousands of dollars to purchase and remodel an old building, creating a new library for the community.

Findings:

1. The Grand Jury found that all library facilities are County-owned except the Madera Ranchos branch.
2. The Grand Jury found that in addition to books and other reference materials, library patrons have access to:
 - a. free usage of computers;
 - b. free internet access;
 - c. printing and copying;
 - d. CDs and DVDs; and
 - e. space for tutoring.
3. The Grand Jury found that three of the libraries have specially dedicated and designed stand-alone computers with numerous learning programs for young children.
4. The Grand Jury found that the children's summer reading program:
 - a. is popular and well attended by 2 to 12 year old children;
 - b. is educational;
 - c. promotes reading;
 - d. recognizes reading achievement; and
 - e. offers fun activities based upon the chosen theme.

5. The Grand Jury found that the libraries have increased utilization of volunteers.
6. The Grand Jury found that SJVLS provides:
 - a. home access to the data bases;
 - b. the ability to borrow books and materials from any library that belongs to SJVLS;
 - c. online access to the index of library books and materials; and
 - d. the convenience of borrowing and returning books and materials to any library in the SJVLS.
7. The Grand Jury found that membership in SJVLS has an annual cost of \$70,000.
8. The Grand Jury found that the State has reduced and may eliminate all public library funding.
9. The Grand Jury found that budget reductions impacted the libraries by:
 - a. reducing staff;
 - b. reducing public access hours; and
 - c. eliminating funds for purchase of new books and periodical subscriptions.
10. The Grand Jury found that the libraries are not currently able to provide the following services requested by the public:
 - a. faxing;
 - b. e books; and
 - c. wireless internet access.
11. The Grand Jury found that some of the libraries are not equipped with smoke detectors and a sprinkler system.
12. The Grand Jury found that some of the libraries lack security, outdoor lighting, and alarms.
13. The Grand Jury found that the current library administration:
 - a. has restored some of the previously reduced hours of public access, with BoS approval;
 - b. has implemented weekly meetings to increase staff communications; and
 - c. is looking for ways to improve the appearance and functionality of the library facilities.

Conclusions:

1. The Grand Jury concluded that without membership in SJVLS the library would be little more than a book repository with very few services to offer.
2. The Grand Jury concluded that the inadequate safety and security systems of the library facilities place the library, patrons, and County at risk.

3. The Grand Jury concluded that the library is successful in providing excellent learning opportunities for children.
4. The Grand Jury concluded that the Friends groups provide significant and vital support to the libraries.
5. The Grand Jury concluded that the libraries are evolving into a more service-oriented organization.
6. The Grand Jury concluded that the budget reductions have impacted the library's ability to provide some technical and requested services to the public.
7. The Grand Jury concluded that the current library administration has brought positive and effective leadership to the library system.

Recommendations:

1. The Grand Jury recommends that the County continue to fund the libraries' membership in SJVLS.
2. The Grand Jury recommends that the County evaluate the safety and security issues at all library facilities.
3. The Grand Jury recommends that the libraries provide access to faxing and wireless internet services to the public.

Respondent: written response required pursuant to PC 933(c)

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Informational: response optional

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Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Madera County Injury & Illness Prevention Program**