

August 23, 1990

Mayor Art Agnos
City Hall, Civic Center
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: MERCED PUBLIC LIBRARY HOURS (19th & Winston)

Dear Mayor Agnos:

I am a resident of the Oakwood Apartments and use the Merced branch of the public library at 19th and Winston. The library is not open when most people in the area would be available to use it; the majority of the area's residents attend school or work full-time. The only people available when the Merced branch is open are the unemployed, or retirees, or night workers.

Merced's hours are M, T, 10-6; W, 1-9; Th, F, 1-6. With the library closed on the weekend, and open for limited hours daily and one evening only, a person with a nine-to-five job could use the library on Wednesday evenings only. If that individual had another scheduled activity on Wednesday evenings (such as a night class), he or she could not use the local library at all! A student (high school or college) with an after-school job would also be able to use the library on Wednesday evenings only.

Merced's head librarian said many people use other branches on weekends, and that because of the increase in library users from this area, those branches were overcrowded from the weekend overflow, and not able to give the best service.

Can anything be done to change library hours everywhere, not just at the Merced branch, so they more closely match the hours of working individuals and students? The present hours at most of the libraries, according to SFPL - 421 (Rev. 8/89) are extremely limited, with almost no weekend or evening hours anywhere (except at the Main Library, with Saturday hours from 10-6, Sunday 1-5, and one evening, Tuesday, 12-9).

Could the evening hours be extended to two evenings everywhere, as well as either Saturday or Sunday? Or could some libraries be closed on two weekdays and open on the weekend? Surely there is a way to work this out that will still be cost-effective and serve the needs of the most active members of the community, i.e., students and the labor force. Please use your influence to change this now! A well-read, well-educated populace will do much to solve, rather than create, our city's problems. We need access to our libraries when we are available to use them!

Sincerely,

Carol Mindey

cc: ✓ Head Librarian, Merced Branch; Library Commission, S.F.

Office of the Mayor
SAN FRANCISCO



ART AGNQS

September 4, 1990

655 Ms. Carol Mindey
565 John Muir Drive
San Francisco, California 94132

Dear Ms. Mindey:

Thank you for letting me know of your interest in having our public libraries, particularly the neighborhood branches, adjust their hours to permit greater access for both students and working individuals. You make a very reasonable point.

The current hours of operation for both the main library as well as the neighborhood branches have been set several years. Further limitations were imposed during the past two years following extensive discussions before the Public Library Commission because of city budget difficulties. The public library system like other city departments now face further pressures because of millions of dollars in cuts by the governor in the funding which the State had previously provided to San Francisco for basic city services. The October 17, 1989 Earthquake also created problems which still effect our public library's availability of services in addition to hours of operation.

However; these hours of operation are by no means etched in stone and may merit reconsideration as part of the response to the overall problems facing the public library system.

The City Librarian and members of the Public Library Commission will be discussing these problems at their next meeting on September 4, 1990. I am confident that the Public Library Commission welcomes constructive criticism of the way the libraries operate. Perhaps you might want to attend a future commission meeting and raise this issue. Their meetings are open to the public and public comment is welcome. You may contact Mr. Richard Walsh, the Commission Secretary at 558-3033 for information about attending an upcoming meeting to raise these issues directly with those who make the decisions.

As someone who loves to read and who strongly supports San Francisco having the best library system possible, I understand your desire to have them open more hours. Please continue to let me know about issues of concern to you.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Art Agnos".

ART AGNOS

AA/mhl.