

## BRANCH DESCRIPTION

Portola Branch opened in 1928. It was a deposit collection prior to establishment as a Reading Center. The first location is unknown. The branch is currently located at 2434 San Bruno Avenue. It is a rented building and has an area of 1,620 square feet located on one level; 1,210 square feet of the space is for public use. The restroom used by public and staff, storage area and janitor's closet take up the remaining space.

Portola Branch became a Reading Center in 1983. It is open 22 hours weekly and is staffed by a full time 3618 senior Library Technical Assistant, a half-time 3630 children's librarian and two 3602 part-time pages who work a total of 24 hours a week. A full-time 3632 senior librarian supervises the Reading Centers and works at Portola one day a week.

Portola was closed from August 3, 1989 to February 27, 1990 due to a fire that damaged and destroyed most of the branch's collection. The branch reopened February 28, 1990. Portola has one restroom that is shared by staff and public. Portola has 12,140 items in its collection of adult and juvenile materials. It serves a population of 13,669. Asian Americans is the highest ethnic population, which is 34%.

The 1992/93 statistics show that the total circulation was 27,280. The juvenile collection accounts for more than half of the branch circulation where 5,650 children attended programs. Portola has the highest juvenile circulation of all Reading Centers and the 2nd highest patron usage count of the centers as well. In-library use of materials was 15,246. Circulation per capita was 2.00. Library visits (from) was 63, library visits (to) 101, total questions 21,896. Usage information total circulation 27,280. Patron usage was 47,953. Average patron use per open hour - 43.51. Total number of registered patrons (as of October 31, 1993) is 4,590.

Test and career books, titles in Chinese and Spanish languages, parenting, Project Read, Grandparents and Books, McNaughton, YA/Teen, special holiday books are the core and integral parts of the collection. The Teen Corner opened in September 1993 with a collection consisting of non-fiction, fiction, career, young adult titles plus music cassettes and magazines. Located in front of the branch, it is basically patronized by teens and elementary school children. So far, it has been well received.

Portola is located between one neighborhood and one resource branch. Referrals are made to these larger locations due to the fact that the general public has not been educated to the differences between reading centers, neighborhood libraries and resource branches. They expect to find full library resources which are unavailable at a reading center.

Portola has two storytimes and two preschool craft programs a month. There are monthly media programs for preschool groups and afterschool children. During the school year, approximately seven classes visit the library a month. The total attendance for library programs and class visits was 3,439 for fiscal year 1992/93. There is no adult programming, even though adult circulation is 44% of the total branch circulation.

During the school year the children's librarian is responsible for visiting seven elementary schools in the area. The total number of children seen during fiscal year 1992/93 was 3,012. Every year Portola has a large number of children signed up for the Summer Reading Program. During the 1993 Summer Reading Program, 385 children enrolled.

The major weakness in Portola Library is the reference section, which was basically destroyed in the August 1989 fire. Trying to answer questions for school assignments show up the major weaknesses in the collection. Another weakness is the lack of a fax machine and a push button telephone.

Dec. 15, 1993

In conclusion, the Reading Centers are an integral part of the library system. However, due to budget cuts over the past 5 years, our resources have become miniscule. The public has no knowledge of the library's system of designating branches. If we are to survive, the public needs to be made aware of these differences and how their usage and advocacy will take us into the 21st century as information managers.