

Library Foundation Promotes Reading Together

-- Countywide event encourages thousands to read the same book --

For the past two years, the Sonoma County Public Library Foundation has presented Sonoma County Reads, a fun and educational event designed to promote reading and community spirit. Sonoma County Reads returns this fall with the reading of *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros. A highly regarded writer, Cisneros has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the MacArthur Foundation. *The House on Mango Street* won the American Book Award in 1985.

Barbara O'Hara, Sonoma County Library adult services coordinator, voiced her enthusiasm for this book: "*The House on Mango Street* will be a good selection for many reasons. It's an accessible book to readers, it appeals to teenagers as well as adults, and it will bring together the Hispanic and non-Hispanic communities as they read the same book in Spanish and English."

Hundreds of copies of the book, both Spanish and English versions, have been purchased for the Sonoma County Library system, and the book will be available at all 13 Sonoma County Library branches. Numerous activities will coincide with the community reading of the book, including bilingual book discussions, presentations of "readers theater" at senior centers and local events, special programming on local public television and radio stations, and art exhibits. In addition, as with last year's Sonoma County Reads, the Girl Scouts Konocti Council will create a patch that local Girl Scouts can earn.

The Sonoma County Public Library Foundation will host a benefit in conjunction with the Rialto Cinemas Lakeside on Wednesday, October 27 to help support Sonoma County Reads and other Library Foundation projects. Beginning at 6:30 p.m., guests will be able to sample delicious chocolates, including locally produced treats. The chocolate tasting will be followed by a showing of the movie *Like Water for Chocolate*. The \$20 tickets will be available in advance from Library Foundation board members and at the Rialto.

Other special events include an original theatrical work at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, *By the Hand of the Father*. This work combines spoken word, music and video to dramatize the unique 20th Century journey of the Mexican-American father and to reflect on the personal stories of America's immigrant history. *By the Hand of the Father* will be presented at the LBC on November 5, 2004.

Sonoma County Reads kicks off at the Sonoma County Book Fair, held at Santa Rosa's Courthouse Square on Saturday, September 18. The Petaluma Regional Library will host the first bilingual discussion of the book, facilitated by Dr. Elizabeth Coonrod Martínez, on Tuesday, September 28. Additional book discussions, readers theater and other events will continue throughout October.

For a complete list of Sonoma County Reads events, as well as updates to the event schedule, visit the Sonoma County Library Web site, www.sonomalibrary.org.

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