

For Immediate Release  
**Saturday, June 28, 2008**

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**Downtown Community Celebrates Opening  
of New, Expanded Joyce Ellington Branch Library**  
*New Branch is More Than Double the Size of the Original*

SAN JOSE, Calif. — San José residents gathered Saturday to celebrate the opening of a 14,500 sq. ft. community library at 491 E. Empire St., that more than doubles the size of the original library occupying the site from 1976 to 2006. Following the dedication ceremony that included remarks from city and library officials, residents were able to explore the library and enjoy free entertainment and activities for kids.

The expanded Joyce Ellington Branch Library will feature a Community Health Information Center, resulting from a collaboration between San José Public Library and PlaneTree Health Library, supported by a grant from The Health Trust.\* The Center will offer health information resources in a variety of formats and languages, organized to facilitate quick and easy browsing. In the near future, specially trained PlaneTree volunteers will be available on a regular basis to assist customers in locating the information they need, both in print and through the online "health portal" at SJLibrary.org.

**AT A GLANCE**

- Building Size: 14,500 sf
- Computers: 28
- Seats: 100
- Group Study Area: 6 persons
- Quiet Study Area: 6 persons
- Storytelling Area: 25 persons
- Community Room: 60 persons
- Parking: 29 spaces

"Thanks to the residents of San Jose for their support for new community facilities like the Joyce Ellington Library," said Mayor Chuck Reed. "This library will be an important community gathering place as well as a critical resource for health information. We appreciate the partnership of The Health

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Trust in incorporating the PlaneTree Health Library into the new Joyce Ellington Library. Residents of all ages will benefit from having easy access to both the traditional branch library and the health library in their neighborhood."

The library continues to bear the name of Joyce Ellington, memorializing her legacy as the Northside Association founder and later board member. It honors Ellington's long history of service to the local community and her efforts to establish library service in the neighborhood now served by Joyce Ellington Branch Library.

"It's tremendously satisfying knowing neighbors will soon enjoy this marvelous new facility," said District 3 Councilmember Sam Liccardo, "It will surely prove to be a jewel of the neighborhood and a gathering spot for the community."

Two public artworks are part of the new library, one by Masayuki Nagase, and one by Lucy Liew. Masayuki's piece, *Where the Tree is Born*, is a seating element in the Community Room patio area that references the importance of trees as community gathering places. With *Tales of a Forest*, local artist Lucy Liew creates a magical entrance to the Children's area, and a special backdrop for the storytelling corner.

The library's interior is further enhanced by a number of art pieces contributed by community members. These include a photo mosaic depicting Joyce Ellington at age 9, a painting of the original Grant School previously occupying the site and *School of Neighbors*, one of 100 life-size fiberglass sharks created as part of the 2001 *SharkByte* project sponsored by the San Jose Downtown Association to enliven downtown spaces and benefit local charities. The branch will welcome students from adjacent Grant Elementary School with a second entrance that faces the school.

"This library will play an important role in the neighborhood," said Library Director Jane Light. "Not only as a source of information, but as a place where children and families can learn together and neighbors can interact. The need for information to make decisions affecting our health is one that we all share, so we are particularly pleased to be able offer the resources of the Community Health Information Center and the help of PlaneTree volunteers."

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The total project cost, including public art, was \$9.8 million. Generous contributions from the local community helped to furnish the interior, providing furniture and equipment. Like Edenvale before it, the Joyce Ellington project is the recipient of a \$50,000 grant from AT&T, part of an overall pledge of \$200,000 to the San José Public Library Foundation branch fundraising campaign ([www.sjplf.org/campaign.html](http://www.sjplf.org/campaign.html)) and the single largest corporate donation to date.

The Library worked with community representatives, City of San José staff, Tetra Design, Inc., (Los Angeles, California), and John Plane Construction, Inc. (Brisbane, California), to achieve a vision of dynamic spaces and experiences that address the needs and preferences of local residents

Other highlights of the new branch include an Internet café, living room with a fireplace, technology center, teen room, group and quiet study areas, a community room that will accommodate 60 persons, and ample space for more seating, collections and computers. On-site parking will accommodate 29 vehicles, in addition to nearby street parking.

The new facility is the eleventh library to be completed using funds from local bond measures approved in 2000 by San José voters. The Branch Library Bond Measure provides \$212 million over 10 years dedicated to the construction of six new and 14 expanded libraries in San José. At this stage, the Branch Bond Development Program is well advanced with 11 projects completed, and eight others in various phases of design and construction. Expanded Pearl Avenue and Willow Glen branch libraries are expected to open later this year in August.

Joyce Ellington Branch Library is located at 491 E. Empire Street in San José. Library hours are: Monday, 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; and Thursday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Community Health Information Center will be accessible during all library open hours. Library services are available online 24 hours a day, everyday, at [www.sjlibrary.org](http://www.sjlibrary.org). For more information, call (408) 808-3036.

\* The Health Trust is a nonprofit public charity committed to improving the health and wellness of residents of the greater Santa Clara Valley.

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