



**City of South San Francisco**  
PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Leslie Arroyo, Communications Director  
Phone: (650) 829-6603  
Email: [Leslie.Arroyo@ssf.net](mailto:Leslie.Arroyo@ssf.net)

**Grand Avenue Library in South San Francisco Reopens to the Public**

*City hosted a "Grand" Celebration Showcasing the new and improved 100 year old library*

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., October 17, 2016 – Rain didn't stop hundreds of eager library patrons from attending the "Grand" reopening of the Grand Avenue Library this past Saturday in downtown South San Francisco.

Closed for more than a year, the \$3.1 million renovation has created a community gem with sweeping views that is a welcoming space for reading, learning, and playing. Study spaces equipped with technology, such as the iPad bar, enhance the library as an after school destination. In addition, there is a new outdoor reading room that patrons can sit back, relax, and read.

"There are many people to thank when it comes to this project – first and foremost, our dedicated City Council. But there are so many more people to thank, among many, the partnership of Supervisor Dave Pine and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors," said South San Francisco Library Director Valerie Sommer.

The Grand Avenue Library is a "Carnegie library" that opened exactly 100 years ago. A Carnegie library is a library built with money donated by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. A total of 2,509 libraries were built between 1883 and 1929, including some belonging to public and university library systems. 1,689 were built in the United States. Carnegie believed in giving to the "*industrious and ambitious; not those who need everything done for them, but those who, being most anxious and able to help themselves, deserve and will be benefited by help from others.*"<sup>1</sup>

Seems fitting that he donated to South San Francisco, the *Industrial City*.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The North American Review*, Volume 149, Issue 397, December, 1889

In 1914, the first South San Francisco high school teacher, Miss Rue Randall Clifford, affectionately known as “Cliffie,” obtained signatures from residents in support of building a library by riding through town on horseback. With the agreement that the City would provide a site and continuous funding for the library, Carnegie provided \$10,000 and the building plans for the construction of the first library in South San Francisco.

“If only Miss Clifford could see our libraries now. More than anything, our libraries in South San Francisco are an adventure. We aim to make learning – all kinds of learning — fun, and sometimes surprising,” added Sommer.

An unknown person once said, “A city library is like a city park, but for the mind. Rather than fresh air, it provides fresh ideas. It also helps us remember where we came from and how we got here.”

The Grand Avenue library hours are:

- Monday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Grand Avenue library is located at 306 Walnut Avenue. (650)877-8530; [ssfpladm@plsinfo.org](mailto:ssfpladm@plsinfo.org).

###

### **About the City of South San Francisco**

The City of South San Francisco proudly remains *The Industrial City*, a reflection of its steel mill and ship building past, redefined to reflect the innovative, entrepreneurial and industrious spirit which has made South San Francisco the Biotech Capital of the World, with 211 active biotech companies and growing. A vibrant community of 64,585 residents, South San Francisco enjoys a high quality of life with an extensive public parks system, active library and learning programming and a dynamic, engaged community making South San Francisco a great place to live, learn, work and play.