



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

Gabriel Subia, 7, gets some help from computer system at Watsonville library on a school report about snakes.

Watsonville library looks for funds

By GREG BEEBE
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WATSONVILLE — Faced with a budget reduction for next fiscal year, the Watsonville Public Library is embarking on a vigorous drive to increase revenues rather than cut services.

The library, which is a product of the city of Watsonville's general fund, rather than part of the Santa Cruz area's city-county library system, is one of the busiest places in town. As many as 800 people go through its doors daily, and space inside is sometimes standing-room-only. More than 280,000 items were checked out last year.

The library received about \$550,000 in operating funds from the city for this fiscal year, and another \$150,000 from the county for serving borrowers from outside the Watsonville area. But it's expecting a \$64,000 budget bite for 1993-94, said library director Vivian Hurley, who presented a status report to the Watsonville City Council on Tuesday night.

"We're hammering away at that \$64,000 any way we can," Hurley said Wednesday. "We're not going to reduce hours and we're going to try to not have any layoffs."

Instead, the library is looking at ways to save money and increase revenues, including cutting back on less-popular periodicals and pursuing late fines more aggressively, a policy that has already added \$7,000 to library coffers.

Hurley and others have started a "Library Trust" fund-raising drive that asks communi-



Library director Vivian Hurley.

ty members to donate money to upgrade certain parts of the library collection: women's studies; blue-collar resources; children's books in Spanish; California and local history; and parenting.

Hurley would like to expand the current collection of books she described as "women writing about women."

Blue-collar books — including manuals on applied mechanics, skilled trades and agriculture — are crucial to serve the many library users who seek to upgrade job skills, study for state licensing exams or tackle do-it-yourself repairs.

"This is a real working town. People are not afraid of work here," said Hurley.

The library also needs more children's books in Spanish, she said.

"Publishers in the U.S. are improving their ability to publish (children's) titles in Spanish," said Hurley, citing such young-set favorites as "Corduroy" and "Curious George."

"But we would like some more original works that were originally written in Spanish, and we have a lot of requests for bilingual materials," Hurley said.

More books on state and local lore are also needed, said Hurley, because "if a local public library doesn't keep its local history, it's liable not to be kept."

In addition, the library would like to add to its "fledgling" collection of parenting books, with the hopes of someday establishing a special section of books for moms and dads inside the children's department, Hurley said.

Although any tax-deductible contribution to the trust is welcome, donations of \$50 or more will be memorialized with a "book plate" in the name or memory of the donor. Donations may be directed to a certain category of book.

Contributions of \$10,000 or more will be put into a trust account, with interest used to buy books, and the name of the donor used in the trust title.

Already, Papier Mache Press in Watsonville has donated \$1,000 to the trust, and the area Friends of the Library group has chipped in \$500, Hurley said.

For more information about the Library Trust for Watsonville Public Library, call 728-6040.