FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2, 2012

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Santa Clara County Library District to host California Reads Reading and Discussion Series on Democracy

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIF.— The Santa Clara County Library District received a $5,000 grant from Cal Humanities (formerly the California Council for the Humanities) to host a reading and discussion series based upon the books Farewell to Manzanar and Lost City Radio. The Library District is one of 51 public library jurisdictions across the state of California receiving grants as part of Cal Humanities Searching for Democracy initiative, designed to animate public conversation on the nature and needs of democracy.

“The Library District provides services that go above and beyond the regular and very useful materials they have to lend,” said County of Santa Clara Supervisor Mike Wasserman, County Library District Joint Powers Authority Delegate. “Every time we engage the public in a healthy and thought provoking dialogue we are facilitating opportunities to share and build a sense of community.”

Through a wide range of public programs leading into the 2012 elections and beyond, students, families and people from all walks of life will explore – online and off – what discoveries and lessons about democracy are in works of fiction and nonfiction, provocative programs and public conversations.

“This is an opportunity for the community to interact with one another, and to discuss the ways in which democracy shapes our daily lives and our government,” said County of Santa Clara Supervisor Liz Kniss, County Library District Joint Powers Authority Delegate. “In this election year, knowing what it takes to have and maintain a democracy will help build a foundation for well informed decisions on the candidates and measures.

During the series, the library will host the authors, scholars, and experts, who will explore the theme of democracy as reflected in these books. Film screenings and book discussions are also planned. For details, please visit www.sccl.org or contact Santa Clara County Library District at 408-293-2326.

“In this time of crass partisanship, Americans need to come together for meaningful conversations about the real issues of the day – and the fundamental values of our democracy,” said Ralph Lewin, President and CEO of Cal Humanities. “Santa Clara County Library District is providing a unique opportunity and alternative – for local residents to examine the evolving nature and needs of our democracy in a meaningful but accessible way.”

The books chosen for discussion in Santa Clara County Library District are:

- **Farewell to Manzanar**, by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston – A compelling memoir about the Japanese-American internment experience, as seen through the eyes of a young girl, and a reminder of how our civil rights are at risk during times of crisis.

- **Lost City Radio**, by Daniel Alarcón – A haunting novel by a young California writer that raises questions about the importance of historical knowledge, collective memory, and access to information in a democratic society.
**About California Reads**

California Reads is a statewide reading and discussion program developed by Cal Humanities in collaboration with the California Center for the Book and with the support of the California State Library. Five books, chosen for their examination of the theme of democracy, will be discussed in every region of the state in a wide range of settings from March through November. Authors will participate at some events.

**About the Santa Clara County Library District**

Established by the County Board of Supervisors in 1914, the Santa Clara County Library District serves residents of Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, Morgan Hill, Saratoga and the unincorporated area of Santa Clara County. It also includes two bookmobiles and an online library. In 2010, the Library loaned over 12 million items to 3.8 million visitors.

Santa Clara County Library District collection includes 1.8 million books, videos, CDs, DVDs, audiobooks, ebooks and extensive online resources that users can access from home or work.

Santa Clara County Library District is one of the top 100 libraries in the United States. For eleven years, it has ranked as one of the best in the nation for its size by Hennen’s American Public Library Ratings, which uses 15 different benchmark measures such as collections, circulation, visits and customer service. Also recognized as one of America’s 2010 Star Libraries by Library Journal and with more than 3.8 million visits each year, Santa Clara County Library is one of the most-used public resources in the region. Visit Santa Clara County Library District online at www.sccl.org.

**Schedule Follows**

**CALIFORNIA READS Programs at Santa Clara County Library District**

**May 5: Cupertino Library**
10800 Torre Avenue • Cupertino, California 95014
2pm Saturday, May 5
Contact: Mark Fink MFink@sccl.org
**California Reads Film Screening: Unfinished Business: The Japanese-American Internment Cases.** The Cupertino Library will be screening the Oscar nominated film recounting the story of the more than 110,000 American citizens of Japanese ancestry who were uprooted from their lives and incarcerated in relocation camps and of three Japanese-American resistors—Gorden Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu, and Minoru Yasui—who courageously defied the government order and refused to go, resulting in their conviction and imprisonment. Free program; no reservation necessary.

**May 19: Cupertino Library**
10800 Torre Avenue • Cupertino, California 95014
2pm Saturday, May 19
Contact: Mark Fink MFink@sccl.org
**California Reads Film Screening: Return to the Valley**
A poignant documentary about the struggle, hardship, and triumph of the many individuals of Japanese ancestry who returned to the Santa Clara and Central Coast after three years of imprisonment in internment camps. Free program; no reservation necessary.

**May 23: Milpitas Library**
160 North Main Street • Milpitas, California 95035
7pm Wednesday, May 23
Contact: Terye Balogh TBalogh@sccl.org
**California Reads Book Discussion: Farewell to Manzanar**
The Milpitas Library hosts a discussion of Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston’s touching memoir about the
Japanese American internment experience as seen through the eyes of a young girl, whose personal story bears witness to a failure of American democracy.

May 24: Saratoga Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue • Saratoga, California 95070
3:30pm Thursday, May 24
Contact: Roslyn Donald RDonald@sccl.org
California Reads Film Screening: Farewell to Manzanar
Saratoga Library screens the film based on Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston's memoir about the Japanese American internment experience as seen through the eyes of a young girl. Free program; no reservation necessary.

June 9: Cupertino Library
10800 Torre Avenue • Cupertino, California 95014
2pm Saturday, June 9
Contact: Stephen Fitzgerald 408.446.1677
California Reads: Rabbit in the Moon Film Screening and Discussion with Chizu Omori
Like many Japanese Americans released from WWII internment camps, the young Omori sisters did their best to erase the memories and scars of life under confinement. Fifty years later acclaimed filmmaker Emiko Omori asks her older sister and other detainees to reflect on the personal and political consequences of internment. From the exuberant recollections of a typical teenager, to the simmering rage of citizens forced to sign loyalty oaths, Omori renders a poetic and illuminating picture of a deeply troubling chapter in American history.

June 9: Saratoga Library
13650 Saratoga Avenue • Saratoga, California • 95070
11am—5pm Saturday, June 9
Contact: Roslyn Donald RDonald@sccl.org
California Reads Film Festival and Speaker: Amy Imai and the Japanese-American Internment Experience
11:00 pm—12:30 Beyond Barbed Wire recounts the personal sacrifices and stories of heroism displayed by Japanese American soldiers who fought for the United States during World War II while their families were held in internment camps.
1:00 pm—2:30 Amy Imai (Japanese American Museum of San Jose): Presentation and screening of All We Could Carry, a film that tells the story of confinement at Heart Mountain, Wyoming.
3:30 pm—5pm 9066 TO 9/11: America’s Concentration Camps, Then...And Now? A documentary that directly addresses the surprising similarities between the Japanese American concentration camps of 1942 and the current treatment of many individuals of Arab descent due to 9/11. Free program; no reservation necessary.

June 16: Gilroy Library
350 W. 6th Street • Gilroy, California 95020
2pm Saturday, June 16
Contact:Lani Yoshimura LYoshimura@sccl.org
California Reads: An Afternoon in Conversation with Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
The Gilroy Library welcomes Jeanne Houston for a conversation led by the author of Farewell to Manzanar. Free program; no reservation necessary.

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