

Executive Director's Report

January 2010

ADMINISTRATION

The New Year continues to bring good news to the Poudre River Public Library District. At the American Library Association Mid-Winter Conference, the ALA Public Information Office announced that Poudre River Public Library District is the 2010 winner of the Scholastic Library Publishing National Library Week Grant. This is an annual \$3,000 award open to U.S. libraries of all types. It supports a single library's public outreach efforts during National Library Week (NLW), which is April 11-17, 2010. Thirty-three entries were submitted for this year's contest.

Using the national umbrella theme "Communities Thrive @ your Library" the goal of the Library District NLW campaign is to foster awareness of the library as the "original renewable resource." Featured during the week will be a series of programs and activities on sustainability, energy savings and waste reduction. Partnering with the Library District to developing the programming is Climate Wise, Larimer County Landfill Recycle Center, the Girl Scouts of Larimer County and the Poudre River Friends of the Library. Congratulations to Paula Watson-Lakamp, Jean Gullikson and Norm Fitzpatrick for drafting the winning application. Now the work begins!

The Library District also received news the same week that the recently launched "History Connections" website, a project of the Library District, Fort Collins Museum and Science Discover Center was ALA's Digital Library of the Week.

Production of the 2009 interactive annual report is well underway. Videotaping and film editing is complete, PDF content is written and proofed and website design approved. Paula Watson-Lakamp has worked closely with Toolbox in coordinating this work. Next steps include incorporating the report into our website and the addition of the 2009 financials. The Library District will present the report to the Larimer County Commissioners at their March 23 meeting. We are waiting confirmation of a date to present to the City of Fort Collins' City Council.

The Library Management Team, circulation supervisors, and other key staff are attending the *Crucial Conversations* communications course. Doreen Kemp from the City's Human Resources department is facilitating the class for us on Tuesday afternoons at the Main Library. It is my hope that this training will help our management team work together even more effectively to solve problems and plan for the future.

I met with the four Colorado State University library deans including Pat Burns, Interim Director of Libraries, on January 14th to discuss ways the Library District can partner with the CSU libraries. We discussed joint author programs, joint exploration projects such as print-on-demand and e-book readers and linking some collections such as CSU's Historical photograph collection and the PRPLD history connections. I am scheduled for a tour of Morgan Library on February 14th and am invited to the next meeting of the CSU libraries deans.

Ken Draves, Jeff Barnes and I met with Steve Seefeld and John Stevens on January 25 to begin discussion of ways to begin the design process for an expanded and remodeled Main Library. Two options were vetted for developing a conceptual design to present to the public prior to the April 2011 election. The first option would be to have the City's architectural firm, Aller-Lingle-Massey present several conceptual designs and then issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for architect selection after the election if the ordinance is repealed.

A second scenario is to issue an RFP for an architect and ask the selected firm to develop conceptual designs to present to the public. The RFP process takes about 6-8 weeks. The Library District will be able to move forward with the project more quickly if an architectural firm is on board prior to the election. The staff will begin to develop a service program for the remodeled Main Library regardless of which option is chosen by the board.

Linda Williams, Technical Services Lead Librarian resigned suddenly on January 8, 2010 without notice. She is eligible to retire and is working with the Human Resources department to facilitate the process. Tova Aragon is supervising the Technical Services staff and spending part of each work day at the Technical Services building until a decision is made about how best to provide supervision of the department. Tova Aragon, Carol Gyger and Becky Sheller and the Technical Services staff have worked as a team to streamline processes and to compile year-end data. I commend them for quickly stepping up to the plate to ensure that the ordering and processing of library materials continues without delay.

Jill Stillwell, Cultural Services and Facilities Director for the City of Fort Collins, will come to the February meeting to give an update on the Carnegie Use survey and next steps. Nina Bodenhamer, Robin Gard and I attended the Open House on January 7 and answered a few questions from the public. There were many representatives from the City, a group from the Global Village Museum and a small number of interested citizens in attendance.

I attended the ALA mid-winter conference in Boston, January 15 – 18. In addition to my committee assignments, I attended an informative presentation on the future of E-books and the update on the Google Book Settlement. I also heard Al Gore speak about his latest book. There was much talk of the more prominent role libraries will play in the second round of economic stimulus funding. The Colorado State Library is preparing an application with the help of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for about 30 libraries. Carson and I made a pitch to Sharon Morris of the State Library to include Poudre River Public Library District in the application but unfortunately we do not meet many of the criteria. Most of our district has access to broadband and most of the population served cannot be defined as underserved. The application process heavily favors regional or statewide projects.

Mary Atchison and Mike Liggett are reviewing current policies and inclusion of a few new ones that pertain to the board/library district organization. They will complete their review before the end of the week and Cynthia will forward the policies to the rest of the board for a first reading no later than Friday, January 29.

Included in your packets is the first draft of the Library District's Technology Plan that Carson Block and his committee have been working on for the past two months. Carson will make a presentation and answer your questions. The Board will be asked to approve the document at the March meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office has finalized the following projects:

- Created January programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 11 press releases and made 8 media follow up calls
- Updated website & TV monitor
- Created District Employees News Update
- Continued efforts to gain Facebook and Twitter fans
- Continuing work on updating library pieces with new name & logo
- Worked on writing/organizing a new web based annual report with video
- Worked with format and art direction of online components and video shoots
- Designed and coordinated production of monthly newsletter/events calendar
- Prepared step by step guide for Annie Walk and gave presentation to Teen group
- Produced final District 2010-2011 Communications Plan
- Produced Employee Recognition event
- Formatted Technology Plan

The following projects have been started:

- Video scripting for this year's activities for a Summer Reading video
- Staff internal communications survey #2
- Promotion of Summer Reading and 2010 activities and events
- Training graphic artists in InDesign program to be used for new newsletter
- Preparing Communications budget for 2010 expenditures
- Organizing promotions and events for National Library Week Scholastic Grant received

Communications Plan

Please refer to the Agenda Item Summary for information about the adoption of this plan. The attached plan shows changes and modifications from the original in hot pink type. The format of the Communications Office portion of the Director's report will be changed to reflect the goals and strategies of the plan beginning in February.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Exciting things are happening on so many fronts! For example, with the children's collection we recently discovered the worrisome news that the costs of children's fiction hardbacks have risen 12.7% over the last year to an average of \$26.39. More positive news was found in the release of the 2010 Newbery and Caldecott Awards, a January event that is always exciting for us and our customers. Children's staff participated in an internal contest to see if they could guess which books would win with several lucky staff winners of chocolate—When You Reach Me by Rebecca Stead won the Newbery Award for older children's fiction and The Lion & the Mouse illustrated and written by Jerry Pinkney won the Caldecott Award for an illustrated children's book. Juvenile Circulation statistics from 2009 are making news with an all-time high of over 44% of the entire library district's circulation being children's items. Council Tree can take some of the blame for this increase as over 53% of their circulation is attributed to children's items.

On the programming front, our customers let us know they love our Winter Break events. The four Magic Snow Show performances pulled such large overflow morning crowds at each of the three libraries that staff worked quickly to work three extra shows into the offerings over three days. Ultimately close to a 1,000 got to enjoy the show and hundreds more were part of the overflow crowds that were turned away.

Toybox Theatre: A Puppet Show Especially for Babies was our next programming success, a unique idea where our puppetry expert Giny McConathy worked with two Puppet Pal teenage boys and offered seven performances for babies from birth through 24 months and their families. Parents and babies alike loved this creative new way to promote early literacy skills through music, puppetry, and play.

Animal Afternoon, a program where the local organization Larimer Animal People Partnership (LAPP) brings therapy animals to each library each month so that children can enjoy reading to them, expanded to include a Sunday at Council Tree this past month. Reports are that 38 children and parents showed up to interact with the 6 animals at the first event there.

Word continues to go out about what a find Council Tree is as a fun family destination. Recently, Examiner.com, a website that reports on fun things to do in the area extolled the free activities as well as books and movies for children at Council Tree commenting "It's worth spending at least a few hours each week in this beautiful library."

Technology has a prominent place in children's services and this past month had several notable events. Jennifer Zachman of Harmony Library recently unveiled the newly revamped children's page on the library website. You'll see some new features on the page including an "If You Like" section which has "readalikes" for some of the kids' favorite titles, as well as updated links to homework help and online games and fun. For now the site is aimed at grade school kids, but a separate Early Literacy page is currently being planned to be released at a later date.

Millie Kridler, Children's Librarian at Council Tree reports a new AWE Literacy Station, a computer station loaded with highly-rated children's computer game software, has been added to the two existing ones at Council Tree Children's Area. Three stations definitely help with waiting time for this popular activity! The kids really love the newest station because it features Dora while the others don't and it also has a touch screen.

The word is spreading about our new Spanish storytime (Rincon de Cuentos) at Northside Aztlan Center with 27 people attending the last one. Plans are already underway for the summer, especially at the Harmony Mobile Home Park next to Council Tree Library where the Food Bank will open a Kids Cafe and will be serving free hot and nutritious lunches for the children. Bilingual Library Assistant for Outreach Irene Romsa has worked to help form a coalition where the Food Bank will provide the meal, the mobile home park administration will serve and clean up, and different agencies will provide the programming component on different days. Many times children show up hungry to storytimes, especially during the summer when they don't get a meal at school. After sharing this with Food Bank's Kristin Bieri, Kristin quickly mobilized to find a solution. We are very excited to join efforts with others in favor of the children in the area.

Children's Services continues to partner with Adult Bilingual and Multicultural Outreach Services in creating sets of materials for CSU students of English. When these international students are assigned to simultaneously read and listen to a book in English, they find most adult titles too challenging or just too long. So, when TOEFL teachers from CSU are planning to bring their classes to the library, they alert Jimena Pena, who alerts Children's staff, who gather audiobooks and their matching books-with-pages. Having these materials from two different areas of the collection all ready and on display is a great way to serve international students.

Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays provided a bilingual early literacy program for kids in the Poudre School District Early Childhood Education program and their parents. Children under the age of five were able to discover and enjoy nursery rhymes in both English and Spanish as well as have fun with activities that enhance early literacy skills. That bustling Saturday morning, 128 kids and parents attended the workshop then went on to get library cards and use the library -- in many cases, for the first time!

Vicky was also a guest trainer with the Early Childhood Council staff providing a workshop on preschool literacy and language for childcare providers.

Cydney Clink, Children's Graphics Coordinator regularly contributes to projects outside of our area. This past month she again created over 400 full color individualized book store gift certificates to be distributed to school-age children as part of the Rotary READ program of rewarding children who participate in their autumn program of reading daily for a week. Cydney has also been working on "slides" for the TV screen in Main's Lobby to help with advertising programs. These "slides" are also being made into posters that can be used at both CT and Harmony to help get the word out about upcoming programs.

Finally, it's time to start thinking about the coming summer and our Make a Splash, Read! Summer Reading Program. If any of the Board members wish to obtain t-shirts to wear as staff do to promote the children's Summer Reading Program, let Jennifer at Harmony know.

CIRCULATION /SHELVING & ILL/PROSPECTOR SERVICES

It is hard to believe that January is over! School has started and all of our work study students are back...and there is much rejoicing in the land. Staff at Main is working on inventory with the new wand from Biblioteque. The wand reads the RFID tag in each item without pulling the item off the shelf. Folks working on it are thrilled with the timesaving aspect and supervisors are impressed with the accuracy. All using it are excited about the functionality and looking forward to launching a new inventory process! We are counting transit crates coming into all three buildings so we have a base number to look at once Floating Collections are fully implemented.

We were thrilled to see that of the 16 staff recognized and honored at staff appreciation, 8 started in or are currently working in Circ/Shelving. Those still in Circ/Shelving represent 50 years of service!

Tuesday, January 26 Chris Cortez, Crystal Bollman, Nancy Osbahr and Lynda started the Crucial Conversations Class that will be held at the Main Library for five consecutive weeks. The class is offered by the City and they have agreed to conduct the class at Main Library.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

A few end of the year Adult/Reference department statistics:

	2008	2009	Percent Change
Program Attendance	15658	16376	4.6%
# of Programs	418	390	6.7%
Questions Asked at all Public Desks	153984	195495	26.9%

Linda Williams, Lead Librarian for Technical Services, retired as of January 8th. Linda had been with the District for 12 years. Technical Services staff has been working with selectors, Tova Aragon, Becky Sheller, and Marian Sawyer, and Carol Gyger from Systems to reallocate duties and to learn new processes in order to keep new materials flowing into the libraries. The Library Management Team will be evaluating processes and work flow in order to reorganize the Technical Services department.

Norm and Jean hosted a very successful 'Wolf Wisdom' program presented by W.O.L.F. Rescue at the Council Tree Library. The wolf hybrid was tied to his handlers and was escorted in and out of the building through the back door. Over 390 people were able to hear the presentation and see the wolf hybrid. Numerous additional people were also able to watch the wolf during his breaks between programs outside in a specially cordoned off area.

VITA, the free tax help service, will be at the Main Library again this year on Monday and Thursday afternoons. Last year, they helped 672 senior and low income people file their taxes electronically. The Board's willingness to hold their March and April meetings at Harmony and Council Tree libraries is much appreciated.

Good news about the library book group – The group has gotten so big it is now split into two groups. The first meeting of the group at Council Tree drew 18 attendees; 8 of which were new to the group. Sarah Scobey, Book Club Coordinator, received a very nice compliment about the book group.

"I still don't like the Hedgehog book one little bit, and the fact that it sold so many copies totally mystifies me... yet I SO loved the open minds of the women gathered at Council Tree last night to talk about it. And I believe that is all thanks to you!"

Sarah also helped the Lyric Cinema launch their film/book discussion series. She provided information on how to run a discussion and ideas for titles. The schedule can be seen at: <http://www.lyriccinemacafe.com/>

Two new business and investment databases have been launched:

BusinessDecision is a database and mapping service that enables local businesses to better penetrate their consumer marketplace. With BusinessDecision, business owners can access accurate and reliable consumer, demographic and other information; immediately create a range of reports and maps that are emailed directly to the user.

Mergent InvestorEdge is an investment product that helps investors make smart investment choices. Over 4,000 Equity Research Reports, Updated Weekly, providing expert analysis and buy, sell and hold recommendations from Ford Equity Research. This will replace the online version of ValueLine. Mergent is more affordable and can be accessed from home. We will retain the print version of Valueline.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Technology Planning dominated much of the month – and is the topic of a presentation for trustees at the February meeting. The plan reflects the input of 500 patrons and more than 50 library staff members, and sets our digital priorities for the next two years!

We're starting to compile 2009 statistics – here are some numbers regarding electronic use in 2009:

- Total page views of all website resources: 2,540,884 - up 2% from 2008
- Local History use was up 29-percent, with 41,000 views of the home page! The new project (called the Fort Collins Local History Connection) is getting used!
- Number of searches of the library catalog: 2,065,900 - up 9.3% over 2008!

Our Local History website (in partnership with the Museum & Discovery Science Center) was also featured as ALA's Digital Library of the Week this month – check it out at <http://www.ilovelibraries.ala.org/diglibweekly/?p=135>

Carol Gyger did an outstanding job stepping in to help when Linda Williams resigned earlier this month. As well as helping facilitate transition, Carol has been assisting Tova Aragon and Technical Services staff to refine processes and explore new possibilities in that department.

A new library sub-site for kids is live and running at <http://read.poudrelibraries.org/kids/>. Peggy and Children's staff have done a great job with the site, and it should help serve patrons even better!

Chris Bauman assisted with the re-topping of the self-check units at Council Tree this month, making sure the sensitive gear was gently uninstalled and re-installed to allow the vendor to do the work. The new tops – a “green” composite material containing sunflower seeds – looks great!

Ling Zhao toiled tirelessly keeping our systems robust this month in preparation of new initiatives in the Technology Plan, and testing different ideas that will be rolled out over the coming year. Stay tuned!

Carson participated in a State Library focus group in January to determine approaches to training and technology needs in the state.

HARMONY & COUNCIL TREE LIBRARIES

HARMONY LIBRARY

Spring semester is underway at Front Range Community College. Dr. Butzek reported that as of January 19, there were 6,031 students enrolled. Last spring at this time there were 5,372. This semester student enrollment by FTE is 1,996 compared to 1,764 last spring.

While the increase in enrollment is good news for the school and for the community, it may mean that parking for public library users becomes an issue. We are monitoring and will revisit the subject in cooperation with the college to insure adequate and proximate parking for all of Harmony's users. Parking is generally tightest at the very beginning of the semester and eases after a couple of weeks. This morning (January 25) the lot already looks substantially better than last week.

Construction is continuing on the new Sunlight Peak science building scheduled to open spring 2011. Construction traffic is not posing any obstacles to access to the library.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

In late December, YesCo signs began installation of additional and replacement exterior "LIBRARY" signs on Council Tree's south, west and east elevations. The signs are installed and are making it easier for newcomers to find the library. At dusk, the signs will automatically light up from behind, giving the letters a "halo" effect for increased visibility. Last week, the electrical contractor connected power to the signs. Testing is taking place this week.

Now that Council Tree Library (CTL) is signed from both approaches along Council Tree Avenue, Currie has arranged for additional, directional street signs to be posted near the Council Tree Avenue/Ziegler intersection. The City will handle the installation in February.

In December and early January, staff worked to ready CTL for several changes to its collection and circulation parameters. On January 5, CTL's collection was enabled to fill both local and Prospector hold requests. CTL's entire collection is now available to fill holds.

Nearly 700 items were requested from CTL's collection on January 5. Many of the items requested had never left CTL shelves. CTL and District staff managed these initial requests in a well-planned and executed manner. CTL circulation staff continues to efficiently manage daily hold requests.

Also on January 5, CTL offered access to its new Here and Now and Lucky Day collections. These collections are housed in display units in both the adult and children's areas of CTL. The same circulation parameters that apply to Here & Now and Lucky Day collections at Main and Harmony will apply to the Here & Now and Lucky Day collections at CTL.

The warranty period is finishing soon. On January 27, District and City of Fort Collins staff and contractors will conduct a walk-through to identify outstanding warranty issues requiring attention.

TEEN SERVICES

IRS meeting December 12th at Council Tree; 31 teens attended. Meeting followed by teen craft program, Teens Create: Holiday Decorations @ Your Library; 40 teens attended.

Teen Movies @ Your Library, “Star Trek” (41) and “Coraline” (20) on December 29th during winter break at Council Tree. (Putting the movie license the library acquired to good use—we are planning more teen movie programs during spring break and during the summer.)

IRS meeting January 9th at Main; 34 teens attended. Paula came to part of the meeting to start planning with the teens for the Annie Walk. Meeting followed by teen craft program, Teens Create: Block Printing @ Your Library; 19 teens attended.

Diane Tuccillo has written and published a new book on teen services. *Teen-Centered library service: putting youth participation into practice*, published by Libraries Unlimited, was released in January.