

Executive Director's Report

March 2010

ADMINISTRATION

The celebration in recognition Council Tree Library's Platinum LEED certification for commercial interiors was just that...a great celebration of a significant community achievement. Mayor Hutchinson, City Manager Darin Atteberry, LEED consultant Kelly Karmel, and Holly Carroll addressed a crowd of about 30 community members on April 9th. The event was taped for cable TV by Mark Grant of the City's Communication and Public Involvement department.

On April 8th, Poudre River Public Library District was recognized as both a new Climate Wise partner and a Silver Level partner at the annual Envirovation ceremony at the Drake Center. It is quite an achievement to reach the silver level so soon after joining the program. Jeff Barnes completed all the record keeping that is necessary each year to measure the positive effect that our environmental practices have on the city.

Lu Benke and I attended the first session of Larimer County 101 on April 8. This program is similar to the City of Fort Collins' City Works program. It is an eight week course held on Thursday evenings and provides an introduction to county government and visits to various county departments.

Seven staff members attended the Public Library Association Conference in Portland, Ore in March. I attended sessions on strategic planning, building design, organizational culture and change and technical services administration and found the sessions to be helpful in the Library District's restructuring and Main Library remodeling processes. Caron Block, Carol Gyger, Peggy Shaughnessy, Tova Aragon and Lynda Dickson will be attending Innovative Interfaces annual users group meeting in Chicago later this month. Carson, Carol and Lynda are presenting sessions. Carol Gyger is this year's chair of the users group and as such has been responsible for presentations and meeting facilitation at the Users Group meetings as well as PLA and ALA conferences. Innovative financially supports her attendance at these events.

Poudre River Public Library District's National Library Week celebration began Sunday, April 11 with an afternoon of music provided by TVS and the Three Fingers Band. The group played a variety of music on alternative instruments made from recycled instruments. Events focusing on environmental responsibility and the local theme, *Your Library: the original renewable resource*, are scheduled throughout April.

The Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) was held at the Lincoln Center on April 8th. This is an annual conference that is held in three locations across the state. This was the first time that Fort Collins was selected as a site and Poudre River Public Library was the host library. Staff directed participants to local restaurants for lunch. Currie Meyer and Ken Draves presented a program entitled "Our Green Library: Going for Platinum at Poudre Libraries" at Council Tree for about 30 attendees. Lynda Dickson and Carson Block presented a program on trends in circulation that was well received.

Sharon Rowland and Beth Hager will present two visioning sessions to gather management and staff ideas for the remodeling and build-down of Main Library. This is a preliminary step to developing a service and space use plan that will be included as part of the RFP for the Main Library conceptual

design. The sessions include a discussion of demographics, current and projected within a 2-mile radius of Main Library; library use statistics, both local and national, and numerous examples of latest design trends and service models of public libraries in Colorado and other western and Midwestern states.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

In an attempt to simplify the report, I have highlighted special activities associated with the Communications Plan that are new to the month; they have been set apart by red text. The following portions of the Communications Plan were completed:

GOAL 1 THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE WILL USE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS TO SUPPORT THE DISTRICT'S SEVEN SERVICE PRIORITIES.

Strategy 2: Use advertising to promote library programs and services

- 2 Ad was placed in Rocky Mountain Parent Magazine for NLW
- 3 Seek media sponsorships to reduce advertising costs – for Summer Reading Program & National Library Week

Strategy 4: The Communications Office will create and distribute a variety of collateral materials that support the District's service priorities.

- 12 Work with the District administration to disseminate information for LEED Certification Ceremony

Strategy 5: Engage in community outreach activities that promote the library's service priorities and encourage long-term relationships

- 6 Support the teen librarians and the teen IRS group with Annie Walk activities

Strategy 6: Use community feedback and consultation with other industry professionals to improve programs, services, and communications.

- 1 Consult with colleagues through the PLA conference, met with other professionals and attended seminars.
- 1 Attended meeting of Northern Colorado Public Communicators Group

GOAL 2 THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE WILL USE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS TO BUILD BRAND AWARENESS AND A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF THE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE DISTRICT.

Strategy 2: Communicate the District's brand to external audiences through the appearance, usability, continuity, visual consistency, and efficiency of external communications

- 2 Perform an audit on external communications materials currently being used – in progress
- 7 Ordered flash-drives with logo to be sold at libraries

GOAL 3 THE DISTRICT WILL USE THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS TO BUILD COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS AND TO RAISE THE DISTRICT'S STATURE ON A LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL LEVEL.

Strategy 2: Create a series of targeted communications, face-to-face meetings, speaking engagements, and events aimed at key stakeholders and community leaders

- 3 County Proclamation for National Library Week in April, LEED Certification ceremony in April

Strategy 4: Position library staff and administrators as experts who are serving the community.

- 5 Continue to work on open communications and partnering efforts with Front Range Community College. – working on new outdoor sign

GOAL 4 THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS WILL BE USED TO FACILITATE THE CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A DISTRICT CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND A DISTRICT MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY.

Strategy 1: Determine and analyze current communications procedures.

- 1 Perform a communications audit. – in progress, working with a UNC intern to perform internal survey, survey finalized and analysis being done.

GOAL 5 THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS WILL BE USED TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS AMONG STAFF, MANAGEMENT, THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY AND THE LIBRARY TRUST.

Strategy 2: Use face-to-face communications to share information internally

- 1 Coordination of April All-Staff meeting

Strategy 4: Use formal and informal special events to share information internally.

- 1 Working with a staff committee on National Library Workers Day in April

- The major focus of this month was the planning and execution of National Library Week promotion and activities.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Typically, March is the month to get very serious about Summer Reading Program (SRP) planning while accommodating the extra busyness at the desk, providing programming over Spring Break, hosting a steady stream of class visits, heading out to schools to give booktalks and storytimes, and placing students who are assigned to volunteer before the school year ends. In March, 112 storytimes were held, 20 children's special events happened, and 3,854 customers took advantage of these offerings. And that doesn't include the thousands that enjoyed the Library District's entry in the St. Patrick's Day Parade!

The SRP theme for this year is "Make a Splash—READ!" The Readers to the Rescue animal group will be Polar Bears International (PBI). A \$3,000 pledge to challenge the children to read beyond the minimum number of hours is being donated by Jackson Hole residents Valerie and Richard Beck. The Becks support PBI and have ties to Fort Collins where Richard was the CFO of Advance Energy and Valerie still comes monthly to attend her book group meetings.

Board member Robin Gard and Children's Lead Librarian Lu Benke hosted the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL) Intellectual Freedom Committee meeting at Harmony this month. At the meeting, Robin reported her success in obtaining local author Lauren Myracle to be the Julie Boucher speaker on Intellectual Freedom at the 2010 CAL Conference. Ms. Myracle is well known nationally for her popular children's and young adult books and has recently come under fire for including same-sex parents as incidental characters in her book *TTYL*. Ms. Myracle, a frequent Poudre Libraries customer, impressed intellectual freedom advocates from around the country with her refusal to change the characters and for the way she and her fans protested against having the book removed from Scholastic elementary school book fairs.

A halftime Library Assistant position for Harmony Library has been posted and will be filled in time to assist with children's services' summer rush. This position reflects half of the position vacated by Kate Merrell who recently resigned from Council Tree.

The BookExpress program was slated to end on Monday, March 15. Instead, we will be continuing the project an additional six months while a plan to create mail service for customers of all ages in our more remote areas gets underway. Continuing the BookExpress program to the children will allow them access to quality popular books over the summer, a critical time period for maintaining reading skills. Statistics available with the close of the pilot year show that BookExpress participation followed population patterns: Laporte 31; Bellvue 22; Livermore 13; Fort Collins (northwest corner) 10; Red feather Lakes 4; Wellington (outside town limits) 2; Virginia Dale 1. Of the 106 children served by the program, school-age users made up about 80% and preschoolers 20%.

Recent purging of inactive records reveals a current total of 30 active homebound customers and 32 who periodically ask for the service.

Barbara Crandall is working with Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA) to prepare for the State Conference on Volunteerism this fall in Fort Collins. She also filled Board member Shelly Kalkowski's request to speak to the National Charity League about volunteer opportunities for their mother/daughter teams. The group voted to accept the Friends of the Library as one of their philanthropies for next year.

Lu Benke and Vicky Hays attended the PLA Conference in Portland last month where rationale for providing gaming in public libraries and updated research on early literacy were among the many insights they brought back.

At Harmony Library, the new self-check station is functioning in the children's area. Initial reports are that it is very busy, the children are loving it and parents like the way they can check out books after storytimes while the children continue to play nearby.

Council Tree celebrated its first year birthday with birthday themed storytimes, balloons, and posters displaying impressive statistics. Council Tree is the only library in our district with display space for children's art. In April, there will be a display from the preschool class from The Academy @GK celebrating Month of the Young Child.

CIRCULATION /SHELVING & ILL/PROSPECTOR SERVICES

Express Check is off to a great start! It is amazing what changing a name and the way you think about something will impact customer service.

In February, Kim Doran held "class" with all the folks that work the Desk areas at both Harmony and Main, and she talked about the negative connotation that self-check has come to have everywhere, from the library to the grocery store. She re-focused staff on Express Check! Same process just a different name and focus. Staff members now work in front of the Express Checks with patrons and are able to facilitate 3 times the number of folks they could at the desk! Staff approach patrons and offer assistance with the Express Check. It is amazing how many times I have heard patrons exclaim how simple & quick it is to use Express Check, and how many did not realize they could pay their fines there as well as at the desk. Patrons and staff seem to be having a great time with something that has been around for 15 years! While the goal of the Express Check was and is to provide excellent customer service; the numbers have gone up as well. In March of 2009 Main did 71% self-check and in March of 2010 Express Check was 77.3%; Harmony in 2009 = 69% and in 2010 = 72%; Council Tree in 2009 = 93% and in 2010 they are settling in at 91.7%. Across the District Express Check stats are 80.4%...amazing!!

We continue to BETA test for Triple I and have uncovered a few odd bugs and whatnot that Triple I has had to fix. Staff really enjoys the treasure hunt attitude of Beta Testing and we appreciate being asked to participate.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

Fort Collins Reads is officially announcing its book choice for 2010. The community read book will be "The Art of Racing in the Rain" by Garth Stein. "The Art of Racing in the Rain" is a New York Times best-selling novel about a dog's perspective on navigating life's ordeals. The author will speak at the CSU Theater on Sunday, November 7th. Leading up to the author there will be a program on the philosophy of racing with race cars in the park; how to relate to your dog through different stages of the dogs life; and several book discussions. Through a partnership with CSU Morgan Library and the Friends of the Colorado State University Libraries, there will be 2 book discussions on campus and Temple Grandin will be speaking at the Griffin Concert Hall on Monday, September 20th at 7:00 pm. It looks to be a fun and exciting community read program. For more information: <http://www.fortcollinsreads.com/>

I am pleased to announce that Jimena Pena has been accepted to the University of Denver's Morgridge College of Education. She will be pursuing a Master's of Library and Information Science.

In May, Technical Services and Systems staff will be meeting with a consultant from Innovated Interfaces, Inc to evaluate the use of our automated acquisitions and cataloging systems to see if we are maximizing the capabilities of the modules. They will be evaluating workflow for efficiencies. We will be implementing a new electronic ordering and invoicing system to streamline the process and eliminate many tasks now done by hand keying.

Staff has been busy getting ready for the Summer Reading Program. It looks to be another exciting and busy summer.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

The March 2010 Director's report is devoted to a First-Quarter 2010 status report on the District Technology Plan. I'm pleased to report that the plan is on target! First, a short list of projects not on the plan, but essential to library operations:

Copy Cards

An issue with the failure of new copy cards is requiring a methodical and in-depth response; Carson is leading an effort to identify an enduring solution. So far, the work is promising and we hope to have a permanent fix identified by the end of April.

BTOP grant response and coordination

Carson worked with Holly and several other library staff to coordinate our participation in a grant written by the Colorado State Library seeking stimulus funding for mobile computer labs and accessible workstations in two of our current libraries. The grant has been submitted and the results will be announced in late summer or early fall.

Harmony Fiber Upgrade

A project to upgrade the Harmony fiber is complete! Staff report a faster, more robust connection! The new network will also eliminate some possible points of failure, and greatly simplify service response in the few times we have trouble with the connection.

III Beta testing; Floating Collections support; and Ongoing Technical Services transition support

Carol Gyger, with her expert administration of our III automation system, has been instrumental in all three of these areas – requiring significant amounts of effort and even greater rewards. Especially significant is “Beta Testing” in which we use a pre-release version of our software. Participation in Beta Testing allows us the opportunity to not only get a look at the latest version first, but also to provide feedback to the vendor to help mold the system to our needs.

Electronic Annual Report support; Online Patron Registration

Peggy Shaughnessy has been instrumental in these efforts, facilitating the vendor-supplied Electronic Annual Report and laying the groundwork for online patron registration. Public service staff will enable online patron registration later this year to coincide with promotional efforts.

Google Fiber Partnership

Carson worked with City CIO Tom Vosburg to partner on an application for an opportunity offered by Google. The search giant is offering to fund fiber-to-the-home for one (perhaps more) lucky communities. The partnership announcement, with quotes from Holly, earned a front-page store in a recent edition of the Fort Collins Coloradoan.

Overdrive Support

Peggy was instrumental in providing SA support for the library's latest digital downloadable services via Overdrive. Peggy created a new page for overdrive users, and along with Carol assisted in configuring the technical structure to match our web site and web offerings.

Tech Plan Update

Please see below for relevant Technology Plan items and status:

GOAL I: LIBRARY PATRONS AND STAFF WILL HAVE ACCESS TO STRONG, RELIABLE AND USER-FRIENDLY COMPUTER RESOURCES

Objective 2: Meet the 2011 PFR goal of users rating the public computing resources as very good or excellent by improving user interface for public computers.

Task 3: Implement upgrades and improvements. Target Completion Date: ongoing through Dec. 31, 2011.

- Upgraded base Internet browser on public computers to IE 7 during March 2010 to make Public Web Browser more functional on rich media sites like YouTube.

Objective 3: Library users will have friendly and efficient points of access to self-service technologies.

Task 3: Investigate options for wireless patron printing. Target Completion Date: December 31, 2010.

- Initial test of vendor system disappointing – too complex for users. Tova helped evaluate and didn't like it either! We will continue to seek alternate solutions. (Feb 2010)

GOAL II: ELECTRONIC LIBRARY SERVICES VIA THE WEB WILL SERVE THE INFORMATIONAL NEEDS OF LIBRARY USERS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

Objective 1: Offer web-based electronic library services that match, mirror and sometimes influence physical library services.

Task 1: Investigate and implement a Web discovery tool, platform or service to enable users to more powerfully find library materials, and that incorporates community-building interactive opportunities. Target Completion Date: September 2010

- Have met with major discovery vendors (including Aquabrowser, III/Encore and OCLC World Cat Local) by Feb 2010. Next step is a more formal look.

Objective 2: Reflect industry trend regarding all forms of e-media.

Task 1: Implement new e-media material services. Target Completion Date: May 2010.

- This task is specifically to implement Overdrive. SA support during Q1 has been strong and consistent.

Task 2: Study current developments in the delivery of e-books, MP3, streaming video and other digital formats to inform and make recommendations to Library Collection Management group and web strategy group. Target Completion Date: July 31, 2010

- Carson showed Collection Management group the archive.org website and challenged the group to consider whether such as resource has a place in our offerings, and how we might incorporate. Ball is on CM court (Q1 2010).

Objective 3: Serve the emerging needs of mobile users.

Task 1: Study current developments in mobile computing devices (including cell phones, e-readers, and e-media players) and create a roadmap to serve library users through their mobile devices. Target Completion Date: July 31, 2010

- Several SA staff (Carson, Carol and Peggy) participated in Mobile Librarian online conference in Feb 2010. Peggy is experimenting with tools to create a mobile interface. Carson is discussing possible outsourcing approaches with a vendor. (Q1 2010)

GOAL III: TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER TRAINING IN A VARIETY OF FORMS WILL ENABLE STAFF TO SERVE THE GROWING INFORMATION NEEDS OF USERS, AND PATRONS THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO USE LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY.

Objective 1: Library District users, including patrons and staff, will have up-to-date and on-going training for information literacy and information fluency.

Task 4: Provide for immediate (2010) public training needs. Target Completion Date: Feb 28, 2010.

- This item is completed – Elaine Burritt will continue her coordination of public training classes through the 2010 schedule, and will also participate on the District-wide training committee to identify enduring solutions for training.

HARMONY & COUNCIL TREE LIBRARIES

Harmony Library Remodel

Ken and Holly will meet with FRCC administrators and staff on April 27th to discuss funding options for the Harmony remodel project. We will have details to share by early May.

End of warranty period: The end of February marked the end of Council Tree’s one-year building warranty period. On January 27, 2010, Currie and Rob led representatives from Heath Construction, the City of Fort Collins, Kone Elevator and the Library District through the 11-month milestone walk through. Several areas, including an elevator door, light bulb replacements, grout darkening, caulk repair, drywall damage, and (non-functioning) sprinkler head parts were added to a punch list to be addressed by Heath, Front Range Village, or the City. All warranty items that Heath, Kone and Front Range Village were responsible for have been addressed as of early March.

Front Range Village merchants’ meeting on March 9. Melissa Moran spoke about marketing opportunities and the summer schedule of events, and PJ, the head of security, spoke about security services at FRV. Currie and Paula attended.

CT’s first birthday on March 28, 2010: CT staff enjoyed a birthday cake, while we decorated the service “desks” with balloon bouquets. Staff also posted a flyer with a few of CT’s astounding first-year statistics, such as 5,355 new library card holders and 185,152 visits.

Month of the Young Child art display: On April 2, Millie arranged for two women from the Fort Collins chapter of the Association for the Education of Young Children to collect and install a display of preschoolers’ art for displays in the children’s area through April.

CLiC presentation on CT’s LEED process: Currie and Ken organized and presented a slide show program called “Our Green Library: Going for Platinum at Poudre River Public Library District” for the Colorado

Library Consortium spring workshop on April 8. After the presentation, which was attended by 18 people, Currie led tours of the library.

LEED platinum dedication event: On April 9, City leaders Doug Hutchinson and Darin Atteberry, along with LEED Consultant Kelly Karmel, and Holly Carroll spoke in recognition of CT's LEED platinum certification achievement. In attendance were District Board of Trustee members, Poudre River Friends of the Library members, City leaders, Library Management Team members, regional library leaders, representatives from Front Range Village, Heath Construction, Aller-Lingle-Massey and Studiotrope.