

Executive Director's Report

May 2010

ADMINISTRATION

Main Library Remodel

The soft campaign to update community leaders on the Library District's plans to build-down and remodel Main Library continued throughout the month of May and early June. I met with Mayor Hutchison, Matt Robenalt (DDA), David Short (DBA) and David May from the Chamber of Commerce. Mike Liggett and I met with Wendy Williams, library liaison for the City. All are supportive of the District's efforts and presentations to the DDA and DBA boards are scheduled for November once the conceptual design of remodeled Main Library is available. The Library District will also be invited to present at the Chamber's Local Legislative Affairs Committee.

The RFP for the conceptual design was released May 21. A pre-bid meeting was held in the Ben Delatour room on June 1. Fourteen architectural firms were represented and several were accompanied with engineering and design partners. An amendment to the RFP was released June 3 which included drawings of previous remodels and announced a time available for picture taking of the interior before public service hours. A second amendment to the RFP was posted on June 8th in response to questions from prospective bidders.

Opening of proposals is scheduled for June 14th at 3 p.m. John Stephen will call me before the board meeting at 4 p.m. to provide a summary of bid cost estimates.

As part of the remodeling efforts, two marketing firms have submitted proposal for conducting a market analysis of the Library District's customer base to better inform the remodel process and supplement basic demographic information gathered to date. I am reviewing the proposals and working with the LMT to consider next steps.

Staff Reorganization

On June 10, the new Library District organization chart will be introduced to employees at an all-staff meeting. I will present the guiding principles, strategies to achieve the principle and answer questions of staff. Staff will then meet with current supervisors for further discussion. Management changes will take effect July 26th with the start of a new pay period. Doreen Kemp from the City's HR department will work with the administration and staff in transitioning to a team environment that involves more staff in decision-making and leadership roles.

Colorado Public Library Directors Retreat

The annual meeting of Colorado library directors was held at the Bud Werner Library in Steamboat Spring on June 3 and 4. Forty-five library directors were present. Community approaches to educating the public on statewide ballot issues was discussed as well as the BHAG advocacy campaign. Other topics for discussion included branding, change management,

budget cuts, and programming evaluation. Brenda Bailey-Hainer, Executive Director and CEO of BCR, a Denver-based library network which provides database purchasing and continuing education for libraries, explained the transition of BCR services to Atlanta-based LYSASIS. The retreat provided me with a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the Colorado library community and to meet many more directors that work in the state.

Other Activities

May 14th – PlanVan tour of North College area

May 24, 26, 27 – Director’s Round tables at Harmony. Council Tree and Main

May 25 – CAL workshop on best practices in technical services.

May 27 – Completed 8 week session: Larimer County 101

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 making the text red.

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 1 The Communications Office will work with traditional print and broadcast media outlets to ensure broad, positive news coverage of the library’s programs and services.

2 Submit a series of Soapbox pieces to the Coloradoan – Holly’s SRP column

6 Create a usable, up-to-date virtual press room on the District website –design work started

Strategy 2 Use advertising to promote library programs and services

2 Create and submit advertisements to run in Rocky Mountain Parent magazine – SRP ad

Strategy 3 The Communications Office will use internet resources including social media networking sites to promote library programs and services.

4 Continue to collect e-mail addresses from patrons who wish to receive a weekly event update e-mail. – email cleaned for outdated addresses

5 Use links from the District’s homepage to promote new library technology or community partnerships – working with new author partnership with Old Firehouse Books

6 Post weekly on the library’s Facebook page – over 550 “fans”

8 Use Twitter to promote library programs and services. – receiving numerous mentions and retweets

10 Advise children’s staff on updating early literacy blog – helping find resources for the blog

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

6 Coordinate with programming and graphics staff to create themed materials displays in libraries. – beginning work on Banned Books Week

8 Design customized giveaways as user incentives – continuing “Green” theme with summer giveaways

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

2 Promotion of Summer Reading Program through targeted partnerships – Boys & Girls Club, PSD, Daycares etc.

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.

5 Informally monitor common concerns and interests of District residents

Strategy 7 The Communications Office will regularly exchange information with internal audiences and will perform staff training that will result in better promotion of library programs and services.

5 Encourage idea sharing and feedback through quarterly all-staff meetings. - beginning work for July all staff

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 1 Implement the new brand by educating all staff and District representatives.

4 Establish internal identity programs including the use of logoed staff shirts and name tags for identification.- continued interest on apparel

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

7 Create new branded products for sale in the libraries and other branded items for give-aways - Flash Drives

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

1 Schedule meetings of introduction for the new director and community leaders – continuing on setting up meetings for Holly with community groups for BHAG advocacy

Strategy 5 Work to gain recognition for the Poudre River Library District within local, regional, state, and national professional organizations.

3 Provide ongoing support to staff for grants, awards and recognition.

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 1 Use electronic communications to share information internally.

3 Communications from members of the Library Management Team will be sent to internal audiences as necessary. – part of the reorganization communications plan

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

6 Convene staff meetings in response to unexpected circumstances – reorganization communications

7 Quarterly round tables will be held by the Executive Director and employees at each library branch. – done in May

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

1 Plan periodic staff parties or outings – June Staff BBQ

In addition: I have a summer Communications Intern from CSU, and have been working with Currie Meyer to set up Bike to Work Day (June 23) activities at Council Tree, and finalizing promotions for Victorian Sunday in the Park (June 13).

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

After a job search of 342 applicants, Neal Schlein has been hired as a 20 hour Library Assistant at Harmony Library with an emphasis in Children's Services. Neal currently lives in Arvada but will be moving to Fort Collins where his soon-to-be wife is going to CSU's Vet school. He has a BA in Anthropology and most recent jobs include work at two public libraries of Westminster and Boulder and at a preschool program in Arvada.

Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays recently presented on the importance of early childhood education to the Eyeopeners Kiwanis Club and on early literacy skills at the Bridges to Kindergarten Conference. She completed training for Cradling Literacy, a Zero to Three extensive program and is now part of a three member team which will provide training for educators in northern Colorado. In the three years that this Early Literacy position has been in effect, Vicky has tremendously increased our role in the community as a player at the table of all things related to early childhood and literacy.

Collection Development Librarian Marian Sawyer returned from Book Expo of America in New York bursting with information and enthusiasm after mingling with over 20,000 publishers, authors,

librarians, and booksellers. Attendance allows her to learn about upcoming publishing trends, new reading-related technologies, and specialty publishers such as those for foreign language materials.

Library Executive Director Holly Carroll and Lead Librarian for Children's Services Lu Benke "graduated" recently from the Larimer County 101 class held on eight Thursday evenings. Not only did the class allow both of them to learn the wealth of resources and information available in different county departments, it served to share information about our services (e.g., downloadable books) with active members of the community.

The Summer Reading Program (SRP) is going great! We've:

- visited over fifty classrooms with magic trick skits and
- hosted another 14 school visits in-house promoting the Summer Reading Program
- done a total of 65 presentations reaching over 6,100 students.

Staff members Barbara Crandall and Erin Senseman have recruited, placed, and trained almost 80 adult volunteers to staff the SRP desks at each location and Giny McConathy did the same with 60 youth volunteers for Library Pals and Puppet Pals.

Other preparations for SRP include:

- Graphics Coordinator Cydney Clink finalizing and distributing display guidelines for the Children's area,
- Arranging to have SRP web links placed on Poudre School District pages (and links back to their summer LINC's), and
- Tech Services' speedily processing 2 ½ carts of new children's books to be ready for the surge in business.

Most impressive is that the total SRP registrations are currently more than 1,000 higher than at this point last summer and they're still climbing! Last year we registered 7,554, or 30% of ALL children in our library district ages 0-11! Further, if you look at the growth patterns for the youth population over the last few years vs. the growth pattern of our SRP, you'll find that the youth population is only very slowly growing --around 1% a year. Whereas our SRP has grown over 6.5% per year. The demand for our programs is outpacing the population growth.

Lu shared that as of August 2, she is resigning from her position as Lead Librarian for Children's Services to go back to school and get an advanced degree in Reading. During the next few months when she is away at summer classes, Jean Gullikson will act as head of Children's Services.

CIRCULATION /SHELVING & ILL/PROSPECTOR SERVICES

May is always a chaotic month for Circulation/Shelving what with the various work study students leaving, kids cleaning out lockers and closets and the adjustments to the schedule in anticipation of summer business. Through it all numbers are on the rise! Express check (a.k.a. self-check) numbers are up 15% over 2009 with a District average of 82%. Payments taken online and through Express Check are more than double what they were in May of 2009 as our customers are becoming more aware of the ease and convenience of paying somewhere other than a traditional desk setting.

Crystal and staff at Harmony have completed their first inventory assignment. While the initial reaction was cautious they were soon moving right along and very satisfied with the RFID process. Overall the new RFID process is taking slightly less than half the time the previous inventory process took and with improved results. Staff at Council Tree will be the next to experience inventory using RFID!

ILL/Prospector is humming along as usual. The CLiC courier has changed their schedule and are delivering Prospector materials in the morning now instead of late afternoon. This change has radically improved the workflow in this area. About 6 weeks ago Nancy and Lori Johnson made a few small changes to the physical layout of the Prospector area...they moved one portable wall. The change has improved functionality and reduced space issues that once were a huge problem. As of the end of May our patrons have checked out 14 Springer E-books, these are the special journals and academic publications available through 2 Prospector libraries. Patrons using this resource love it!

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

The Summer Reading Program is in full swing. We have 1,973 adults registered; 24.7% more than was registered last year at this same time.

The new electronic resources, Byki Language Learning and Overdrive, launched last month are doing very well. Byki has 119 unique users. The top languages accessed were Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese and German. There are patrons accessing materials for Greek, English for Spanish speakers, English for Russian speakers, Scottish Gaelic and Zulu to name just a few.

Overdrive has 464 unique users. Between April and May, the user base grew 29%. The most popular format is downloadable audiobooks. We have had a total of 898 checkouts. There are 166 items on hold with an average 9 day wait.

Our newest database, Plunkett Research, makes it easy to readily access and understand vital industry trends including finance, markets, technologies, deregulation, research/development and globalization. It is useful for conducting market research, looking for business prospects, writing a business plan, planning a business strategy or looking for a job. The Business Librarian at CSU will be helping to promote this database to students which in turn will help increase library card holders and our presence on campus.

Anne, Tova and Holly met recently with the Larimer County Workforce Center to learn more about their services and discuss how the library could further help job hunters. It was decided that the library would host a series of open labs during weekend hours when the Center is closed. The open labs will be held on six Saturdays this summer in the Ben Delatour at the Main Library, 1-3 p.m. A certified consultant will be available to help patrons with resumes and job applications. We will be utilizing eight laptops provided by the Gates Foundation grant. Patrons can also bring their own laptops.

Anne is featured in a soon to be published e-book titled "Creating an Entrepreneur-Friendly Public Library" by Christine Hamilton-Pennell. The author uses Anne's work to illustrate a "Librarian's Success Story".

Kim Doran from Circulation will be visiting the Reference Meeting on June 7th to train staff on Express Check. The Express Check on the 2nd floor will be unveiled on June 7th.

I am excited to announce that we will be partnering with Old Firehouse Books to host author J.A. Jance. She will be at the Main Library on Monday, August 2nd at noon for a talk and book signing to promote her newest title "Queen of the Night". Dessert will be provided. The event is free but registration is required. Registration will start Friday, June 25th.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Summer is off to a hot start! Busy month, so just some short graphs to satiate your appetite for information...

The surprise project to migrate our email system and email provider is on the front burner for SA – please see the AIS and separate "Situation Analysis" memo for detail on our process to evaluate, choose and implement a new email system in a timely manner.

Our final pieces of the big RFID project came together in May: we installed the final pilot decentralized Express Check unit in Adult Reference at Main (it will be turned on in early June) and Carol and Chris worked with circ staff throughout the District to teach how to do inventory "the RFID way."

Peggy, Ling, Carol and Carson have been working to create an intranet for staff. The project (part of our technology plan) is being designed to facilitate more powerful staff communications as well make it easier for staff to use the many electronic resources that they need day-to-day. Did you know that many staff need access to more than 40 electronic resources as part of their job? The research SA has been doing has been an eye-opener and will lead to the right solution to best fit staff needs.

Carson joined Holly for staff roundtables in May to share news about the email project, the staff intranet, and pass around an object called an "iPad" to discuss the implications of the device and underlying technologies to our library collections.

Working with Becky Sheller, Sarah Scobey, Elaine Burritt, and Tova Aragon from Reference, Peggy Shaughnessy launched two new web subsites, the updated Reading Room and the new Research & Information site. Similar in design to the Teen Lounge and Kids' Place, the new, user-friendly Reading Room features staff created/recommended booklists, providing locally created reader's advisory services on the web for adults (PFR goal). Links to lists from other sites, Award Winners, digital library downloads, and book club information are also included. The Research & Information site replaces the old Adult page and features databases, web site links, catalog tips, and events. The site also highlights a Reference Book of the Month and Web Link of the Month for users.

Carson and Carol took a very quick trip to Albuquerque (flying out in the morning and returning that evening) to give a number of presentations to the Rocky Mountain Regional Innovative User's Group. The sessions were very well received by the overflow crowd and covered RFID, database cleanup, and technology planning. The sessions were captured live on video and simulcast to RMIUG members in Denver.

As part of a number of partnership efforts with the Colorado State University library, Carson met with staff from the local history department and Fort Collins Museum & Discovery Center to explore ways to collaborate around our digital projects. The meeting was dynamic and should lead to some valuable collaboration activities toward the end of the year. More details to come.

Speaking of collaboration, getting library Techs in the state together can be difficult; IT Directors and IT staff are usually so busy with their own needs that they overlook the value that comes from gathering together to learn and discuss solutions to common problems, and to ultimately server our patrons and staff better. To combat that, Carson joined with colleagues from the High Plains Library District and Boulder Public Library to create an event for a dozen library IT workers in May with two purposes: education (we took an in-depth technical tour of the impressive computing facility at the National Center for Atmospheric Sciences) and information sharing. Both purposes succeeded beyond my wildest dreams, and all participants agreed that the gathering was extremely valuable, and committed to taking next steps.

Electronic Registration

2010 marks the 7th year of the electronic registration system for the Summer Reading Program. The system, authored by Peggy Shaughnessy and developed and refined by all SRP staff, won Technology Project of the Year from the Colorado Association of Libraries several years ago.

This year online registrations for Kids have already surpassed last year, with Teens and Adults very close. Here are the numbers as of 6/7/2010:

Kids

6,221 total; 1,136 online

Teens

1,096 total; 164 online

Adults

2,075 total; 324 online

All Programs

9,392 Total

1,624 Online

HARMONY & COUNCIL TREE LIBRARIES and TEEN SERVICES

Harmony

The spring semester at Front Range Community College (FRCC) has ended, and the first summer term has begun. Even so, parking through the summer is much lighter than during the school year. With impressive increases in enrollment and a new campus building opening near Harmony, we have been discussing options for maintaining adequate parking for Harmony users through the next school year. One piece of good news is that a significant number of parking spaces, likely for FRCC staff, will be added near the new science building, as that project came in under budget. We are also strategizing with FRCC administrators about additional signed spaces near the library for priority parking for seniors and caregivers with young children. We should have an agreement on how to proceed later in the summer.

Council Tree Library (CTL)

New staff: Drew Gaede and Shannon Wood were hired as Library Service Representatives (LSRs) in April and began training in May. Drew and Shannon were hired from an internal search; they were both hourly shelveers before Currie hired them as LSRs. Both Drew and Shannon will be based at Council Tree Library.

Weather warning procedures: Currie reminded the CTL staff about procedures (on file) for responding to weather watches and warnings. CTL has an active NOAA weather radio set up to broadcast weather watches and warnings for our area. CTL staff will respond to tornado warnings for Larimer County by alerting all customers and opening the back stairwell for their safety. On May 21, NOAA broadcast a tornado watch for Larimer County and a tornado warning for Weld County.

Elevator entrapment response procedures: Currie clarified the response procedures for staff in the event of elevator riders becoming entrapped. The plan includes Schindler Elevators (with whom CTL has a maintenance contract), the City's Facilities Services Department, PRPLD Facilities (Rob) and CTL staff (Currie or other). Emergency services (911) will only be called in the event that a Schindler tech cannot be onsite within 30 minutes, or if the entrapped people request a 911 call.

Teen Services

Main Library

- 26 teens attended the May 1st IRS meeting at the Main Library.
- 17 teens attended the first teen-led Teens Write: Polish Your Pages with Peers program at the Main Library on May 1st. We had teen leaders trained by authors Victoria Hanley and Todd Mitchell to facilitate each writing critique group. We had each of the four small groups rotate so that teens got the chance to work with and listen to teens from other groups. Thirty teens are signed up for the upcoming storyboarding program at Harmony.
- Sue-Ellen Jones provided PALS training about teen programs and volunteer opportunities for ten kids at two sessions on June 1st and June 2nd.

Outreach

- Sue-Ellen Jones and Diane Tuccillo talked to hundreds of teens at Poudre School District middle schools about the summer reading program. Each presentation was 30-minutes long and included a 20-minute book talk. Teens were excited about being able to sign up online and they were very positive about the variety and number of teen programs that we are offering this summer.
- Sue-Ellen recorded a summer edition of Bookends for PSD Channel 10. It's been airing for the last 3 weeks.