

Executive Director's Report

February 2010

ADMINISTRATION

As requested, I have included in the board packets a recommended program strategy and timeline of activities for the Main Library Remodel and Build-down. Shelly Kalkowski, Ken Draves and I met with Jim O'Neill and John Stephen to review the RFP process and to clarify what needs to be included in the contract statement for the conceptual design. Mary Atchison and I met to review the timetable of activities including a general library awareness campaign in the summer. Ken Draves and I are talking to Beth Haeger, Group 3, about facilitating a space planning session with staff and interested board members in late March or early April. A broad statement of space needs will be included in the conceptual design RFP.

The Colorado State Library has included our library district in its application for economic stimulus funds for public computing centers. We are requesting two mobile computer labs of 10 laptops each to be used throughout the district at community centers for training and general use. The Library District will also receive two ADA compliant workstations to be placed at the Main Library and Harmony. The equipment is valued at \$42,300. Carson Block has taken the lead on this project by determining the equipment needs and working with staff to determine how and where the mobile computer labs will be used. This type of statewide approach for Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) funding has been successful in Florida and New Mexico.

The Poudre River Public Library District interactive annual report was launched March 3rd on the library website. Paula worked with ToolBox Creative and Rocket Jones to accomplish what I hope will be a frequently visited document on our website as well as a useful tool to use when making community presentations. Paula will present the report at the March board meeting.

I continue to meet with Pat Burns and the other dean's staff of CSU libraries. The CSU library staff will tour Council Tree on March 4th. I toured the Morgan Library on February 11. We continue to talk about joint programming opportunities and CSU will be participating more fully in Fort Collins Reads. We have also discussed linking some of our digital collections, joint technology projects and possible grant writing in strategic areas.

The Library Management Team and other supervisors and senior staff completed the Crucial Conversations training. Speaking for the group I think we all have new tools for better decision making and productive and honest communication. Doreen Kemp will be returning to help facilitate team development and conversations concerning reorganization. She will also conduct another Crucial Conversations class for additional staff in the fall. This training and facilitation is included in our contract for HR services from the City.

Carson Block, Lu Benke, Jeff Barnes and I will attend the first community workshop for Plan Fort Collins on March 3. Thomas Frey, a renowned futurist will discuss what cities may be like in the future. His written comments on the future of libraries are quite interesting. He sees libraries as transitioning from centers of information to centers of culture.

Roundtables were held at Council Tree, Harmony and Main libraries the last week of February. This is an opportunity for all staff to meet one-on-one with the Director and an opportunity for me to get better acquainted with staff that I see infrequently.

I am volunteering with United Way as a site reviewer for its Solid Foundations program. To date I have visited four childcare centers and have learned a great deal about the community and its services for the young.

I met with Jan Borman and Chuck DeWayne from Poudre School District. The school is going to post our newsletter on its parent portal. We discussed placing Poudre River Public Library District book returns at Stove Prairie and Livermore schools with the school district delivering returned items from these two schools to Cache la Poudre school for pick-up by our courier service. As there is no courier service in the summer, this warrants further discussion for a trial this fall and possible tie-in with the extension of a books-by-mail program.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

This is a new format of relaying Communications Office activities as they relate to the Communications Plan adopted in February. In an attempt to highlight special activities associated with the plan, those activities have been set apart by making the text red. A follow-up to this report with any special information, dates, activities etc. will be included at the end.

Highlighted activities are in 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.

Tactic

- 1 Distribute monthly event calendars to targeted media lists
- 3 Produce a monthly library newsletter
- 4 Determine which child, teen, adult, and business programs would present good photo opportunities
- 5 **Create and distribute Associated Press Style news releases and public service announcements – working with CSU intern**
- 7 Distribute a weekly tip sheet to targeted media outlets.

Strategy 2 Use advertising to promote library programs and services

- 3 **Seek media sponsorships to reduce advertising costs – for Summer Reading Program & National Library Week**

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

- 1 Update web event calendars of regional media outlets and organizations
- 2 Update the District's homepage to include information about upcoming and ongoing programs

- 3 Send out electronic weekly event updates and news items
- 4 Continue to collect e-mail addresses from patrons who wish to receive a weekly event update e-mail.
- 5 Use links from the District's homepage to promote new library technology or community partnerships
- 6 Post weekly on the library's Facebook page
- 7 Target Facebook fan groups with relevant weekly posts
- 8 Use Twitter to promote library programs and services.
- 9 Use excerpts from key media articles in weekly Facebook and Twitter releases

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

- 7 Update Main Library lobby TV monitor on current programs and services.
- 10 Coordinate with library design staff to create eye-catching displays
- 11 Work with library design staff to create posters for the library's main events.
- 12 **Work with the District administration to create the Poudre River Library District Annual Report. – 2009 Finished**

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

- 3 **Support children's librarians in building relationships with public and private childcare organizations. – 600 brochures given out to PVH Bright Beginnings for give away to new parents**
- 6 **Support the teen librarians and the teen IRS group with Annie Walk activities – Logo being finalized**

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

- 1 **Consult with colleagues through the Colorado Association of Libraries Marketing Group – Paula Watson-Lakamp has been named Co-Chair of the Colorado Association of Libraries Marketing Division**

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.

- 4 Attend programming and web team meetings
- 5 Encourage idea sharing and feedback through quarterly all-staff meetings.
- 6 Educate the staff about the importance of promoting their programs and services
- 7 Create Masterlist of events – In progress

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. – Lands End Business Outfitters has been set up as a “Staff Store” for logo clothing.

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
- 3 Provide oversight on all print and electronic materials to ensure proper brand

Strategy 3 Implement the brand by providing consistency between institutional actions and brand values.

- 1 Integrate the image and brand of the library as “a place for people” – I Love My Library Essay Contest

Strategy 4 Periodically review institutional brand identity for continued

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 1 Compile a database of stakeholders, public officials, community organizations, and opinion leaders throughout the District.

- 1 Identify stakeholders – in progress
- 2 Create a database with all contact information – in progress

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

- 3 Arrange speaking engagements for the Executive Director– May Rotary Club, County Proclamation for National Library Week in April
- 4 Create up-to-date promotional/informational pieces for the District that can be adapted for a variety of uses – New 2009 Annual Report in Print version

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 adding our information to the FRCC TV monitors

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

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.**

- 1 Produce a monthly electronic internal newsletter
- 2 Deliver e-mail updates to internal audiences from the Executive Director.
- 3 Communications from members of the Library Management Team will be sent to internal audiences as necessary.
- 4 Use the District website to house useful information including an up-to-date events calendar and monthly newsletter.

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

- 2 Attend monthly Board of Trustee meetings
- 3 Attend weekly Library Management Team meetings
- 7 Quarterly round tables will be held by the Executive Director and employees at each library branch. – round #2 was done in February – dates and timetables established by Admin. staff

Strategy 3 **Use paper-based communications to share information internally.**

- 1 Use employee bulletin boards at each library branch to post copies of District policies, plans, news releases, the employee newsletter, and other news of note

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

- 1 Plan periodic staff parties or outings – working with a staff committee on National Library Workers Day in April

- The Communication Office activities this month have revolved around the use of the new Communications Plan to do strategic tactics. Those tactics have been accomplished by the collaboration of library staff, administrative staff, a CSU English major intern, a FRCC graphics intern, and a UNC Communications intern.
- The online Community Report was accomplished using four vendors. This report will be used for promotion through the entire year, and will be submitted for Library awards next year. The monthly newsletter and calendar continue to gain in popularity as the public is educated to look there for news and events. This newsletter has also been used as a promotional tool for outreach with Holly as she continues to meet with new organizations in the District.
- The Communications Office is working hard with community organizations to finalize the activities for Communities Thrive @ Your Library grant, and the schedule will be coming out mid-March.
- Internal promotion has been made accessible to staff through new on-line clothing choices made possible through Lands End. Board of Trustees may also order logoed clothing, see Paula for log-in information.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Our month could be summed up by simply saying our storytimes are bulging with eye-popping numbers, we're trying new and exciting programming ideas, volunteers are flocking to us and being quickly placed throughout our district, 2010 statistics are streaming in and looking impressive, our collections are working harder than ever through floating collections and even better use of our discards, children's librarians are planning new ways to reach out into the community, staff are supporting system-wide projects, staff are keeping current and learning new skills, and, people from here and beyond keep contacting us to find out how we do things so well. For details, read on...

Children's Librarian Millie Kridler shared that 83 children and parents showed up at Main at her 9th time presenting the storytime for 2s and 3s. Whew! Elsewhere storytimes for 2s and 3s and baby Peek-A-Boo Times are sporting attendance numbers between 50 and 70. Looking at 2009 statistics, we offered 19 storytimes a week, with an average attendance of 27. Recently, we answered a personal request of a high-ranking City official to be informed of neighborhood storytimes for the new addition to his family.

February sported new ideas in programming such as financial literacy classes for children and parents during America Saves Week—"Parents, Kids, and Money Matters" and "Saving for College." Also, an oft-requested class finally came to fruition this month as scores of parents signed up to attend "Wee Sign," a class to teach infants and their caregivers basic sign language. So great was the demand for the classes which run through March that a second tier of classes was added.

Please welcome the Timnath Family Storytime to our lineup of programming. The two Friday morning weekly storytimes began at the charming Old Timnath Hall this month, with funding from the Friends of the Library. An average of 15 very pleased and enthusiastic children and parents have been coming to each storytime, which is for all ages and includes a simple take-home craft. Town of Timnath staff have assisted greatly with establishing this new program, making the facility available and easily used, and spreading the word to residents—even through church bulletins. A volunteer is being lined up to assist hourly Children's Librarian Gale Criswell, who will be presenting the majority of these programs. Participants, who are mostly from the Timnath area with a sprinkling of others from nearby areas such as north of Windsor, are thrilled and promise to spread the word. Some parents and grandparents mentioned that they have attended the Council Tree storytimes but find these more to their liking for location, day of the week, and the all-ages format. As is the tradition with our storytimes in different locations, we welcomed a new puppet for the Timnath storytime—Cody the Coyote.

Special Services Coordinator, Barbara Crandall reports activities that include inquiries from Pikes Peak Library District on how we provide homebound services, placement of a library student volunteering 150 hours, pleased reactions among volunteers who recently received personalized Valentine thank you's from the staff, new streamlined ways to capture volunteer statistics and reading history for homebound customers, and efforts to recruit a slew of volunteers for upcoming National Library Week activities and events. Barbara's statistics for her area in 2009 show the incredibly busy year she had:

Volunteer Statistics 2009

1,000 volunteers

17,710 volunteer hours

8.51 FTEs

Homebound Statistics 2009

72 homebound customers

914 deliveries

8,651 library items delivered

Marian Sawyer, Children's Collection Development Librarian reports our children's materials are working harder than ever. As of March 1, the majority of the children's collections will move to a trial floating status. This means that if an item checks out from one library but is returned to a second library, that is where it will stay—until it is checked out again. The philosophy behind floating collections is that it allows collections to flex to accommodate the needs of a neighborhood library and saves on the expensive moving of materials needlessly from one location to another. Children's collections are taking the forefront on this trial and we are eager to see what changes happen to the distribution of our collections and the satisfaction of our customers.

In the no-rest-for-the-weary category, even discarded children's items can now count on a useful afterlife. Lead Librarian for Children's Services Lu Benke convened representatives from the Friends of the Library and Library Executive Director Holly Carroll to clarify and strengthen the role the Friends play in taking our discards and re-distributing them. Currently, they sell them to benefit the library or give them to non-profit organizations that are working to get more books into the hands of children. Some of the places around town where the Friends are doing this are the Indian Mission in Porcupine, Montana; Food Bank; Adoption agency; Salud Clinic, Foothills Christian college ministry, Mackenzie Place, Education and Life Training Center, and Poudre Valley Hospital. The Friends also met recently with a local effort to create "red shelves" of children's books around our community. The Friends shared with them the locations list from the now-defunct "Yellow Shelves" the library used to maintain and offered to send some books their way.

"Roses are red and yellow and peach. New readers bloom through Children's Outreach!" Recently all children's librarians in the District met for an afternoon to learn more about the groundbreaking study "From Awareness to Funding" and the powerful role children's librarians specifically play in taking the Library's message out into the community. Ideas such as establishing contacts at retail businesses in Front Range Village, working closely with Bright Beginnings, presenting programs for PTOs and service groups, speaking with homeschooling groups, and promoting library services to book clubs for kids were brainstormed and compiled as a game plan for 2010.

Children's staff have been busy with a variety of other activities including attending a Family Night at Riffenburgh Elementary to issue library cards, working with Board member Robin Gard to set up a CAL Intellectual Freedom Committee meeting at Harmony on Tuesday, March 16, finding locations in the outlying areas of the district to host potential stimulus-fund-funded computer classes, giving tours for CSU students in a childhood education class, attending the 5-week workshop on Crucial Conversations, furthering collaborations with Poudre School District, and attending webinars and workshops to keep current and improve our skills.

Nor do our efforts go unnoticed. In the last month, our storytimes were the backdrop for a Denver 9 News feature on children and Facebook, our Spanish language children's programs are featured on "CHILES," a website to support Spanish language programs and services in public libraries (<http://www.chil-es.org/home/>), Erie Public Library staff visited our storytimes, and Graphics Coordinator Cydney Clink and her 2-year-old son Stephen were a part of the CLEL (Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy) Building Blocks to Reading video clip project. In partnership with Rocky Mountain Public

Broadcasting Services (RMPBS), CLEL is creating an online video resource "Online Road to Reading" to support public library staff, parents, and child care providers. Stephen and Cydney were videotaped demonstrating the use of early literacy skills through songs, and Cydney shared parent tips.

CIRCULATION /SHELVING & ILL/PROSPECTOR SERVICES

Circ staff went through a detailed re-training on the newly renamed Express Check (formerly self-check) responsibilities. We wanted to make sure that staff was more comfortable and engaged while in "the zone". Already we have seen some really good examples of life in "the zone" and are looking forward to seeing some additional increases in Express Check numbers and percentages.

Lynda has been working with Lu, Tova, Ken and Peggy from Systems Administration (SA) on an Online Patron Registration program. The group should be reporting out on their findings in the near future.

Lynda, Crystal Bollman, Chris Cortez and Nancy Osbahr recently completed a five-week Crucial Conversations class that City trainer Doreen Kemp provided for managers and was held at the Main Library. Lots of good buzz about how it is already providing help and insight with day-to-day issues and encounters.

The ILL/Prospector crew has been busy re-working their work area at Harmony to provide better space for working on the increase in Prospector crates coming in daily. This past month we have seen the daily numbers jump from an average of 20 crates per day to 25-30 crates per day.

This past month, lead shelver Carol Hanlon has been working with Chris Bauman and Carol Gyger of SA on inventory with the RFID wand. There have been some bumps and questions along the way. If we can get things figured out this could reduce the amount of time by half as well as eliminate the need to physically pull every item from the shelf to be scanned. Stay tuned for updates as we have them.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

It is with mixed feelings that Tova announces the retirement of Ginny Feagler. Ginny has been the Genealogy and Medical librarian since March 1998. She has made great strides in building a relationship between the Genealogy Society and the library. She brought a calm professional manner to our department. Reference staff is excited for Ginny but we will all miss her wisdom and sense of humor. Wanda Colbert will be taking over as liaison to the Genealogy Society. She will be coordinating the 3 partnered programs and attending Society meetings. Wanda is one of our substitute librarians and a genealogist.

We will soon launch a 'Jobs and Careers' database and web link page. It will be on our database page. Here is the prototype: <http://www.poudrelibraries.org/research/databases-jobs.html>

There are many products launching to help with job and career research. Anne Macdonald has been discussing various tools with the Larimer County Work Force Center. With input from the center and other community groups, we have chosen to purchase [Ferguson's Career Guidance Center](#). This database will help patrons find information on nearly 3,400 jobs and 94 industries; expand their ability to find and hold a job with invaluable advice on applying for a job, behaving professionally in the work environment. It includes 100 sample resumes and cover letters and more than 55,000 entries on scholarships and internships.

Reference, Tech Services and Systems staff are making great headways in evaluating the processes at Tech Services. Staff has been updating records; cleaning out old records; learning new ordering and invoicing processes; closing out the 2009 accounts. As part of our evaluation process, Tova has been speaking with other libraries to see how they performed their process audits.

The Let's Go to College! is a bilingual conference targeting Spanish speaking families and their children ages toddler to 18 with the objective to encourage them to consider a college education; and provide them with the necessary tools and information to aid in the process of entering college. This conference is spearheaded by the library and partners with CSU Latino fraternities and sororities, representatives from the Poudre School District and other community organizations. This conference takes place on CSU campus in the Lory Student Center and has been mostly sponsored by private funders. It is held in the fall. Jimena Pena applied for a Rotary grant for funding.

Norm and Tova would like to give a big Thank You to Vicky Hays. Norm's programmer for the cake decorating program ended up in the hospital a few days before the program. Vicky stepped right in to do the program so we wouldn't have to cancel. She did a wonderful job and the participants were very happy and grateful.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Carson presented the draft Technology Plan to the Library District Board of Trustees earlier in the month, and also posted it to the library web site for public review. Trustees offered great questions and offered valuable feedback, and will consider final approval at the March Board meeting.

The library received a pleasant surprise from the state library informing the District of its eligibility to be part of a state grant for stimulus money to bring Internet-accessible computers to underserved populations and others in need, as well as computer workstations that meet the accessibility needs of library patrons. Carson and Holly scrambled to complete several documents comprising the grant application, and assembled a library staff team to create programming recommendations for the equipment that would (among other things) support the library's role in serving folks in the District without nearby access to computers. As part of the grant, the library asked for two mobile laptop labs (of ten laptops each) and an accessible computer workstation for the Main Library and Harmony Library. The grant awards are scheduled to be announced in September 2010.

The Harmony fiber-optic network upgrade is close to completion – weather has made some termination work with the fiber difficult, but as spring arrives we're hoping for dry weather to complete the physical work on the fiber. Next steps would be "lighting it up" and switching over. Our web developer Peggy Shaughnessy met with Jennifer Kutzik from Colorado State University libraries. CSU is looking to add the CSU-Pueblo catalog as a scope into CSU-Fort Collins III server. Jennifer was asking for advice on merging the two webpacs and creating a separate customized look for the new CSU-Pueblo scope.

Carson, III Systems Administrator Carol Gyger and Peggy Shaughnessy participated with other staff in the online-only Handheld Librarian conference. The conference brought new ideas, and (perhaps not surprisingly) immediate mock-up experiments and talks with vendors to explore ways to serve patrons

via mobile devices. Not only was it convenient and inexpensive to attend, but the conference was timely to help with our Technology Plan objective of serving mobile patrons.

Carson met with two other members of the Colorado Association of Libraries Network Interest Group to brainstorm new ways to engage library techs in the benefits of participating with colleagues via the CAL organization. We often have much to share that would create mutual benefit, but so much work in our own institutions keep many of us from reaching out. We hatched a plan for a rewarding and fun event in Boulder, possibly in May, and would particularly target tech folks who don't have opportunities for involvement.

HARMONY & COUNCIL TREE LIBRARIES

HARMONY LIBRARY

Harmony Refresh/remodel - Harmony Library opened its doors in January 1998. While Harmony has aged well, the library is due for upgrades and improvements. A team including Annie Fox, Phyllis Abt, and Scott McKelvey from Front Range Community College, architect Larry Trampe, interior designer Brenda Carlile, Holly Carroll and Ken Draves has formed to plan improvements to Harmony. Based on initial discussions the architect and designer have produced a conceptual plan and are preparing preliminary cost estimates. Once estimates are in hand a funding discussion and timetable will follow. Funding is likely to come from two sources, the repair and improvement account from library fines collected at Harmony, and FRCC Facilities funds.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

Council Tree's new exterior "LIBRARY" signs on CT's south, west and east elevations are now lit from behind during open evening hours, giving the letters a "halo" effect for increased visibility.

Staff has adjusted well to providing holds at Council Tree which began in early January. Customers throughout the system now have full access to collections at all three public sites.

The warranty period for Council Tree is concluding March 2, 2010. Final outstanding warranty issues have been addressed. The issues addressed were minor and included some repainting, adjustments to lighting, and countertop repairs.

Two Council Tree projects unrelated to warranty are underway. One is an improvement to the lighting levels in the children's and teen's areas. The other is an improvement to the airflow and the thermostatic control of staff offices and the adjacent quiet study room. Currently the two areas are coupled, making either the staff area too warm or the quiet study area too cold for comfort.

TEEN SERVICES

Diane and Sue-Ellen attended two meetings with Adult and Children's staff to investigate the options for adding electronic gaming equipment and gaming programming to Teen services (will also be added to Adult and Children's but Teen will be first this summer).

IRS meeting on February 6th - 26 teens attended and participated.

Teens Write: Polish Your Pages with the Pros program on February 6th had 18 teens attending. There will be an additional session on March 6th. Authors Victoria Hanley and Todd Mitchell are conducting the sessions for us.

Diane attended the C'YAAL meeting in Lafayette on Feb 11th. She also was the afternoon presenter, doing a talk and interactive session on active teen involvement in libraries (based on her recently published book).

Diane, Sue-Ellen, Currie, Tova, and Ken met at CT to discuss ways to improve teen services at that branch. We decided from that meeting to conduct a teen survey, offer training on teen sociology/psychology for staff to better understand them, and consider various ways to enhance and support CT teen services.

Diane attended staff book group here at Harmony on Monday morning.

Diane attended 5 sessions and completed Crucial Conversations training.