

Director's Report

June 2008

ADMINISTRATION

Communication of Note

- I spoke with Matt Robenalt, Downtown Development Association, to discuss how we might apply for grants for building improvements
- United Way, State of the Community, Larimer County Event - Paula and I attended this well planned and meaningful gathering of the Larimer County volunteer community. Joshua Disney was nominated by the Library District and was awarded the Linda Nerger Youth Volunteer Excellence Award for his volunteerism for the library district and other numerous volunteer organizations
- Attended the CU Presidential reception
- The City and the District have finalized the necessary legal documents required for the transfer of the park
- District staff are scheduling discussions with attorneys and staff about how to handle oversight and scheduling of the park after the transfer. Library staff would like to continue to have the City schedule the park and maintain it.

Southeast Branch

- Two construction contractors submitted bids for the tenant finish work on the branch. R.C. Heath Construction Company, a local firm, was the low bidder at \$1,553,300. Both bids were significantly less than the Capstone estimate of approximately \$1,890,000. The Heath bid is approximately \$330,000 less than estimated.
- After reviewing the bids Steve Seefeld, the City's project manager, has recommended to Purchasing that the City award the contract to Heath.
- The Furniture Bid package is now open for bids. Bid opening will be July 25, 2008. (If interested in looking at the bid package, please let Cynthia know and she will send it to you.)
- The core and shell construction is proceeding according to schedule. The City should be able to initiate tenant finish work beginning in mid-September.
- Our collection development librarians are in the process of developing and submitting initial orders of books and other media for the branch.
- We have established a recruitment, hiring and training schedule for new branch staff.

PFR (Planning for Results)

Management staff identified what activities can be initiated that will achieve our goals and objectives.

- The first three priorities (Childhood Literacy, Stimulate Imagination, and Satisfy Curiosity) will be achieved without increasing staff by shifting duties, elimination of less important activities currently performed and using funds within the departments
- Connect to the Online World would encompass the desire to create a virtual library which involves sufficient workload to consider the creation of a new fulltime position

Main Library Repurposing

More work is being done on analysis before a recommendation will be finalized. Managers have been working on a plan to rearrange the upstairs of the Main library to accommodate some functions located on the 1st floor to the 2nd floor and 'freshen' up the look at the same time. While going through the PFR process, it became apparent that the emphasis on remodeling and rearranging space needed to be shifted to the first floor. We will still be rearranging and freshening up the 2nd floor, but will be placing most of our attention and effort on the 1st floor.

LMT members met with Group3Planners, a highly recommended library space planning company, to consider a scope of work. This group uses a specialized library computer program to help evaluate the allocation of space to collections, public and work areas. Once the scope of work is determined, managers will be working to evaluate what work can be done within budget and how to proceed.

It is our goal to best utilize our space to meet the needs created by the library PFR work plan and to accommodate the increase in circulation and the use of Main Library we anticipate. At the same time, we want to 'polish' up the look and feel of the building by updating the paint, color schemes and furnishings as budget allows.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Office has finalized the following projects:

- Shared Communications Plan with Library Board of Trustees
- Created June programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Facilitated staff meetings to finalize "Activities" for Planning for Results
- Sent out 15 press releases and made 6 media follow up calls
- Updated website weekly
- Coordinated library news column for the Fort Collins Forum
- Continued coordination with Bayer Marketing Manager for marketing efforts
- Coordinated outreach efforts to patrons in the Wellington and Virginia Dale communities for input gathering on library services
- Implemented advertising plan for Summer Reading Programs
- Coordinated Library booth at Victorian Sunday in the Park
- Implemented new web pages for Library on Council Tree Avenue
- Solicited names for new library from staff
- Implemented promotion on new naming process for the Library District
- Met with the Board of Trustee Communications Committee (aka Com-Com)
 - Subjects discussed:
 - Outreach schedule for Board of Trustee Members
 - Community input projects for new branch
 - Community input efforts for District and Branch naming
- Annie Walk planning – Friends Chair is Jeanne Pemberton
 - Logo done, advertising and planning schedule put together, vendor solicitation out, registration finalized, prizes are being picked up by volunteers

The following projects have been started:

- Strategizing September Library Card Month promotions campaign
- Strategizing fundraising efforts with the Library Trust
- Coordinating focus group meetings for strategic plan in Timnath and Laporte

CIRCULATION SERVICES

As always, the end of a school year and the beginning of summer is a busy time for this department. Nancy is working to clean-up and clear out the Reserve Room at Harmony to get things removed from this past year's reserve items in preparation for the fall semester at FRCC. Prospector & Circulation at Harmony have been involved in a workflow readjustment that will move things from one area to another to better serve our patrons and create a smoother flow of materials. Shelves are busy keeping up with the materials returned each week as a result of the library's well-attended programs. Circulation in both buildings is seeing the expected increase in new cards as new readers show up for the variety of summer activities.

Various Circulation staff that worked on the RFID retro-conversion have been busy with the "mop-up" tasks required after completion of a project as big as this one. Systems Administration has been prepping staff for the switchover to RFID in the check-in rooms around the first of July. A mobile

check-in station in both libraries has been surrounded by staff eager to use the new technology. One of our more ardent change-a-phobes let us know very quickly how she felt about the new process. When encouraged to try it and told how simple it was and how much easier it would make things in the check-in room she replied: "You bet your sweet bippy I love it!!!! Christopher let me use it awhile today. He had to physically take it from me!!" Needless to say, Circulation staff is very excited...so the next time you are in the vicinity of one of the check-in rooms stop by and let staff show you how it works!

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Irene Romsa, our new Bilingual Library Assistant, has been quite busy since joining our team six weeks ago. She participated in craft and promotional activities at three community events held at Romero House, Neighbor to Neighbor, and Holy Family Church. In addition, she and Jimena Pena, Adult Services Diversity Outreach were interviewed by Radio La Grande (1630AM). This station is located in Greeley but reaches areas in seven states. The radio extended an invitation to return with a brief storytime on July 7 with the potential of becoming a monthly program.

Speaking of storytimes... Irene has scheduled eight "Creepy Crawly Critters" programs featuring stories, puppets and fun from around the world in locations like Family Center, Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park, and CORE Center. In addition, she will be presenting bilingual storytimes for groups like El Nidito Daycare, Wild West Days and their Hispanic Heritage program, and Kid's Cafe.

In late May, Lead Librarians Lu Benke and Tova Aragon and Communications Manager Paula Watson-LaKamp met with Poudre School District staff to finalize the free use of the Stove Prairie Elementary School building for FCRL storytimes over the summer. The meeting also brainstormed on the present and future ways that our library district and the school district could possibly partner.

One of those ways is to get library cards into the hands of as many students as possible and as many students as possible into the library. A possible drive to issue library cards to students during the school day at the senior and junior high level is being investigated through meetings with appropriate FCRL and PSD staff. PSD would like this to happen to facilitate students using the District's library databases that the school district no longer owns. At the same time, efforts to create curriculum-friendly library visits for all second graders studying local history are being explored.

On June 1, our new Event Management System (EMS) was launched at Main and Harmony. This multi-featured automated scheduling system is gradually taking over the more labor-intensive, less customer-friendly paper calendar that had been used at each site. Procedures at each library have also been aligned to be consistent, making service offered to the public less confusing. As part of this process, the regulations were updated and posted on the website along with a calendar showing the next two months of bookings which is as far out as outside groups can book a room.

Lu Benke and Paula Watson-Lakamp with help from Cynthia Langren have been appearing at community events and festivals in the outlying communities of the library district and will continue to do so over the summer months. A Wellington Yard Sale that featured a special area for those outside of the town limits to set up tables and the Virginia Dale Community Day were the first two events. We shared information on the library and upcoming events and did plenty of listening to our customers' needs. Lu always finds it interesting to find common threads in what the more remote citizens have to say, such as when their kids were small they would bring their kids to town for the SRP, they love coming to Main Library when they are coming to Fort Collins anyway, and they love audio books . Stay tuned for more information on this front.

As of midday June 30th, over 6100 children ages 0-12 have signed up for the Summer Reading Program (SRP). This number is over 250 more than this time last year. The Ladybug Liftoff, our kickoff program on June 16 attracted over 445 at each location. The CSU Student Gillette Entomology Club helped with insect zoos, roach races and the release of thousands of ladybugs-one at a time on the hands of kids of all ages. One eight year old attendee summed up the excitement

with the bugs and bug crafts and activities everywhere with "This is one of the best days of my entire life!"

One to four programs are offered each weekday, many with audience attendance numbers over 300. The storytime and craft programs taken to Stove Prairie are having success with small groups that are slowly growing and attendance at the Livermore program has grown since implementation last summer.

Thank goodness for an influx of volunteers this summer to help us handle all the programs and the crowds. At last report, we had 31 summer volunteers and many different opportunities for them to join us in working with the kids.

Meanwhile, efforts to move Planning for Results forward has meant many long hard discussions on how to do the things the community group said were most important with basically the same budget. We're getting there!

The work on the new branch has involved Lu's time with working with the Friends of the Library in deciding their contribution to the branch (\$50,000 for interactive literacy center), creating a timeline for the hiring process for the branch and-a real treat!-touring the construction site for the new branch.

No two ways about it, with Summer Reading Program (SRP) in full swing and other projects continuing to demand time and effort, June is one crazy month.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

It is a record breaking year for the Adult Summer Reading program. We have a total of 1,832 registrations so far this summer which surpasses last year's total of 1,667. Online registrations are up from 102 in 2007 to 173.

The weather has cooperated and the outdoor programs have drawn large crowds. The *Harmony on the Green* featuring Halden Wofford & the Hi-Beams had 384 persons in attendance. A customer commented that "even though it was free, it was priceless". The *Harmony on the Green* concert featuring the Fort Jazz Big Band had over 500 people in attendance. People seem to appreciate events like this on the South side, since there are not many of them compared to the Old Town/Campus area. There is one more concert coming on July 18th, 6:30-7:30 p.m. featuring Dos Americas. These concerts are co-sponsored (paid for, planned and staffed) by the Friends of the Library and Front Range Community College (FRCC).

This summer brought a new type of program to Library Park, *A Victorian Sunday in the Park*. This community program had activities aimed for all ages. There was music from the time period, free popcorn and lemonade and the 1st Colorado Volunteer Infantry reenactment soldiers. Many attendees came in period costumes. Local historical groups hosted booths to share information. Old fashioned bikes and a fire hose cart were on display. The Museum and Discovery Center provided vintage crafts and activities for children in the Museum courtyard. Attendance was 1422.

The book club discussion of *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali drew 38 attendees. The participants appreciated the opportunity to learn about and discuss the experience of a Muslim refugee. The have requested more programs about Islam. The book club kits continue to be very popular. We were deeply touched by one woman's donation. She donated the money to purchase a new book club kit in memory of her mother.

Tova would like to thank her staff in Reference and Technical Services. This has been a very busy month for the management team members and staff have stepped up and done a great job keeping things running.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Tag Project

Systems staff are all about RFID these days, and will be for the remainder of the summer. I think everyone knows about the phenomenal job Circulation staff did with the retro-conversion project – from a project perspective, that crew wrapped things up a month ahead of schedule!

Media provided a special challenge so Tova took the lead and put together an intrepid crew of Julia, Louise and Kate who for weeks have been plowing through the precise needs of Media.

After weeks of refining workstation “builds”, SAers (including Chris, Ling and Carol) have begun installing the RFID gear in the check-in rooms. For next steps, SAers and managers are taking a very close look at the desks and security gates at Harmony and Main to map out the modifications needs for staff stations, self-check machines, and new security gates.

Local History Electronic Archive

One project that has been receiving constant attention from SA but a bit overshadowed by RFID is the Local History Electronic Archive (at <http://history.fcgov.com>). Here's a brief update on that project, and a glimpse of more information to come.

With the transition of the library to a District, the physical Local History department moved across Library Park to the Fort Collins Museum. The electronic archive (records) was treated as a partnership – with the library continuing to provide the necessary technology, and the museum providing most of the work involved in posting new content. After some work in visioning and project design, the library and museum will go to their respective decision makers with a recommendation concerning next steps for the electronic archive.

As part of the project work, the cross-organization team attended a free, 2-day conference in Denver in June sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services called "Connectiing To Collections - Collaboration in the Digital Age" – perfect timing for our collaborative process with the museum. Here's the description from IMLS:

"Collaboration in the Digital Age responds to the needs of museums and libraries by helping them think strategically and collaboratively about digitization and digital preservation. Speakers will review the fundamentals of digital content creation and preservation, emphasizing practical approaches to planning digital projects, increasing access to collections, enabling digital resources to serve multiple purposes, and protecting digital investments.

The conference was extremely valuable – our library/museum team learned that our process to date is directly in line with national standards for this type of collaboration, and in some areas we're ahead of national standards.

In July, the group will reconvene to:

- Draft a new, shared vision for the Local History Electronic Archive;
- Create a project plan for the migration to ContentDM;
- Draft a Memo of Understanding between the Library District and the Museum defining our collaborative relationship and responsibilities that will be brought to the Board.

Brenda will review the outcomes of that effort, and has asked Carson to prepare a brief presentation to the Trustees about the project, its financial impact, level of use, importance to the community, etc. to be scheduled in the fall.

PCs for Harmony

When it rains it pours – not only is SA processing all the PCs needed for the RFID project, but more than 20 new public machines have arrived for the Harmony library. Through the library's agreement with FRCC, the school provides periodic replacement of computing technology based on FRCC budget. This year is a good one – the new machines will replace the aging stand-up Public Access Computers (PACS) (with access to the library catalog and databases) as well as public Internet machines. Thanks to Annie Fox of FRCC and Ken Draves for helping secure the new PCs and select the most worthy candidates for replacement, and to Ling for squeezing the greatest benefit out of the new machines. RFID efforts take a front seat this month when it comes to PC work, but I suspect Ling and Chris will start deploying the new machines for Harmony very soon.

PCs for Main

It's not just Harmony that will get a PC makeover – new machines, courtesy of a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation matching grant, will be coming to Main later this year. Carson and Jeff sent a letter of commitment to the Gates foundation in June confirming our participation in the two-year grant to refresh some public computers at Main. The confirmation letter is our last step to comply with the requirements of the grant, and the first of two fund disbursements (one for 2008, another for 2009) should be received later this year. The two-year grant award from Gates amounts to \$35,750. To meet the institutional match requirements, the library budgeted a total of \$21,440 for this purpose in 2008 and 2009. Combined, the grant opportunity provides \$57,190 to provide the Main library with a much-needed overhaul of public computing resources.

Next Gen Library Catalog

Although we're quite happy with our library automation vendor (III), that's not the case universally for many of our library colleagues. Mergers and acquisitions among other major vendors (not ours) have created a high degree of tension among the library community, with the possibilities of open source being explored. If this exploration turns into actual effort, it could represent a sea change in the Integrated Library System (ILS) landscape that eventually could impact us. Executive Director Brenda Carns asked Carson to keep abreast on developments in this area, resulting in another Brenda (Bailey-Hainer, head of the Bibliographic Center for Research, or BCR) to ask him to attend a national meeting in Boise tackling this subject in July and facilitate one of the think-tank sessions.

The proposal in the Colorado library community is to create a system that would share costs, improve collaboration and cost less.

HARMONY LIBRARY

There were 217 people who enjoyed the Teen Rock Band concert on Sunday, June 22nd, in Library Park from 1 - 4 p.m. The group "1 and 0" (just like the strike count in baseball) started things off with a rousing set of original songs. This talented group of 6th and 7th graders just started playing together last year and they seem to attract people not only with their talent but also because they have a lot of energy. Josh Disney did a solo act for the second set. Josh just graduated from high school and is a former IRS member. He brought his electric guitar and played some amazing blues music and even took some requests from the crowd. The last band to play was "The Rewards." "The Rewards" are a high school group who have been playing together for 2 ½ years and their tight vocals and great rock-and-roll reflect that experience.

As of Monday morning, June 30th, 1,023 teens have registered for the 2008 teen summer reading program. We are about 150 teens ahead of last year.

Our teen advisory group, IRS (Interesting Reader's Society), met in June with 15 teens in attendance, Teens also participated in a book discussion and a creative writing program this month.