

Director's Report

July 2008

ADMINISTRATION

Transfer of Library Park

- The City provided a draft for the transfer of Library Park to our attorney for review.
- Marty Heffernan recommended that the City lease the park from the library as was described at the last Board meeting. If Darin supports this proposal it will go to the Council for approval.

Facilities Planning - Request for Proposal

- The scope of work has been modified to include the points identified during the July BOT meeting. The revised scope of work was emailed to the BOT for their information as requested at the July meeting.
- This revised draft has been submitted to the City's Purchasing office for them to incorporate into the standard RFP form and will be issued as soon as they complete this piece.

Logo/Branding & Naming Progress

- Paula has scheduled 5 one-hour web usability study meetings for community comment on our web site from 4-5:00 pm in the Ben Delatour Room, Main Library, 201 Peterson Street as follows:
 - Thursday, August 7 - Define scope for the web portion of the branding Request For Proposal
 - Tuesday, August 12 - Visioning of what we want the Web site to be - Dreaming Big!
 - Thursday, August 14 - Examination of current site, what works well
 - Tuesday, August 19 - Build specifications of what we want in the redevelopment
 - Thursday, August 21 - Gather options and decide final specifications
- The Com-Com committee is reviewing the 154 names that were submitted through the public process.
- Information for the RFP for a local marketing firm to work with us on the branding, naming, website and logo has been submitted to purchasing for development of a draft.

Southeast Branch Construction

- Construction of the core and shell is on schedule. The City is scheduled to begin tenant finish work on or about September 8.
- FFE (furniture, fixtures and equipment) bids closed on July 25. Bids came in at about \$285,800, about \$14,000 less the budgeted amount of \$300,000. Three vendors will likely be selected based on low bids to provide the furnishings.
- Staff has established a hiring schedule for the new branch. The plan includes target dates for recruitment, screening, interviewing, hiring and training for each position. Initial postings, for children's and lead librarians, are scheduled for mid-late September with other positions posting in the ensuing weeks and months.
- Children's staff members are working on options for the children's interactive feature.
- Library selectors are building and submitting lists as they develop our opening day collections of books, music, and video.

Naming of Branch

- Staff submitted 11 names
- LMT narrowed list to four
- Staff is reviewing these four to indicate their favorite or favorites

Partnerships and Outreach Opportunities for Board

- Staff is compiling a list of opportunities for Board involvement that will be on a rolling calendar and Cynthia will be the point of contact for Board members who choose to participate.
 - Board members are invited to join staff on Wednesday morning, August 13 as we welcome the staff from all of PSD's Media Centers in a Meeting/Appreciation Day held at Main Library. We continue to work with Media and Technology Coordinator Marsha Ring to further cooperative ventures such as major pushes to get PSD students library cards and have PSD students use our databases.
 - Children's staff are holding a free community storytime on August 29, 30 and 31st at the Front Range Village, Toys R Us.
 - The program featuring a "Movie in the Park" is August 10
 - The Annie Walk is on August 23. A table is available for Board members to mingle with the public. An evaluation of the event by participants will be solicited. A report on the event will be made at the October Board meeting.
 - Library staff continue to attend outlying community events to publicize the library's services and solicit community input about library services

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office finalized the following projects:

- Created July programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 10 press releases and made 4 media follow-up calls
- Updated website weekly
- Coordinated library news column for the Fort Collins Forum
- Continued coordination with Bayer General Manager for marketing efforts
- Coordinated outreach efforts to patrons in the Poudre Park community for input gathering on library services. Adding information into their monthly newsletter.
- Attended the Colorado Association of Libraries Marketing Committee meeting at the new Erie Library
- Met with Kelli Johnson, Marketing Director for High Plains Library District
- Finalized promotion on new naming process for the Library District
- Facilitating the process for the naming of the new branch
- Sent RFP to purchasing department for logo marketing and web request
- Annie Walk planning – Friends Chair is Jeanne Pemberton
Final stage being organized

The following projects have been started:

- Coordinating and facilitating a Web Usability Study Focus Group to be meeting 5 times in August
- September Library Card Month promotions campaign "A library card is the best school supply"
- Strategizing fundraising efforts with the Library Trust
- Promotional efforts for Annie Walk – listen to KRFC Critter Patter on Aug 21
- Strategizing Library promotion for Fall events: Banned Book Week, Day of the Dead, Vote for Books, December Puppet Shows, Read for the Record Event

CIRCULATION SERVICES

Summer certainly keeps Circulation/Shelving/ILL-Prospector busy, and this summer has been no exception. We needed to schedule two additional circulation hourly staff to take care of the additional workload from Summer Reading Program this summer, one for each building for the programs. Thank goodness we moved the check-in rooms in both libraries over to RFID this past month or the check-in rooms would still be trying to catch up on the workload! We also saw all the desk stations converted to RFID with the new touch-screen equipment. Staff is excited to learn all they can about this new technology and just as eager to share it with patrons.

Both Harmony and Main Circulation areas have been testing checking Prospector items out via our current self-check machine. This is a new feature, made possible by a recent software update, so that Prospector and FCRLD items can be inter-filed on the regular self service hold shelves. Once we figured out that this could and would happen we began looking at the expansion of the hold shelves to accommodate several hundred more items. At Main we moved the display case that was in front of the desk to a location perpendicular to the desk and will be placing a shelving unit no longer needed in upstairs in its place. This will still keep the holds located close to the self-check machines as well as the desk for those patrons needing assistance. At Harmony they are looking into expansion of a unit previously added to ease the growth of holds.

The end of July was the end of Harry Hale's, Angela James', and Holly Buck's probationary periods and we are thrilled they have done well in their first 6 months as Library Service Representatives. Harry came on board to replace Chris Baumann when he went to Systems Admin; Holly and Angela were added to assist with the RFID retro-conversion and eventually will move to the new branch.

ILL-Prospector Coordinator, Nancy Osbahr, attended a meeting of Inter Library Loan (ILL) folks in Loveland and heard about changes and up-grades that are being made to the statewide SWIFT (ILL) program. These changes should make the SWIFT system work much better for the libraries throughout the state that don't have access to Prospector and the libraries that do. SWIFT is a Prospector-like system that was established approximately 10 years ago by the State Library.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

In this last week of Summer Reading Program (SRP) activities we finish up our over 160 summer events. Numbers at programs this summer have been reasonable with additional numbers of presentations of programs such as puppets shows and craft programs. It's another matter with SRP registrations: At the time that this report is being written we have over 6800 children signed up, and a month of registrations and reading for prizes yet to go. We are demolishing last year's record of 6,661. We're ecstatic!

Other successes with the SRP this month are the numbers, especially of new families showing up at the Livermore and Stove Prairie programs. Instead of the predicted five or so each time, we are getting numbers in the teens. Considering the remoteness, sparse populations of the areas, and newness of the programs, this is very good. The message that the Fort Collins Regional Library District cares about serving residents in these areas is definitely starting to spread and we are learning a lot in the process.

For five years now, the Front Range Family Theatre Project of Front Range Community College (FRCC) has partnered with our SRP and presented a family drama production that coordinates with our events. We promote it in our printed materials and libraries and clear our summer schedule of conflicting programs to encourage attendance. Finally, they use our large tent to shade the audiences. So, we join FRCC in feeling very proud that they had the best attendance ever at the seven performances of Wizard of Oz this summer—from around 200 to over 600 at each! Congratulations, FRCC!

Animal Afternoon got colorful coverage from the Coloradoan early this month and a variety of animals came to listen to the approximately 50 children read to them. As an added creature treat, Circulation staff member Julia Hall-Payne has been letting her pet tarantula Tara live at the Children's Desk at Main where many a kid and parent come by to visit. Sometime, Julia brings out Tara on her hands for the children to get a really up-close and personal experience.

Children's Services staff members have continued networking efforts this past month to great benefit. Bilingual Library Assistant Irene Romsa networked at two State meetings and has started a process locally to identify mobile home parks and affordable housing sectors where we might have big pockets of underserved children. In addition, she has met with Parks and Recreation's RAD Van Supervisor about working together both over the summer and during the school year. RAD Van presents programs to children in lower income neighborhoods.

Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays met with the new Director of the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County and discussed ways to promote our early literacy programs and trainings through their class catalog and email lists of home childcare providers.

She also presented library catalog skills to a Children's Literature Class at Regis University. Since taking on responsibilities for FCRLD's outreach to remote areas and since attending a conference in March, Lu Benke has been intrigued by the idea of creating a books-by-mail program as a gas-saving way to reach our remote customers. The idea gained further direction when Planning for Results chose early literacy as a key priority. At the LMT retreat in early July, a decision was made for Lu to actively plan on a books-by-mail pilot program for children in remote areas. She was also asked to explore the possibility of applying for an LSTA grant to help fund the project. With terrific help from Harmony Library Assistant Kristen Draper, the grant was researched, written and submitted in a little over two weeks. Below are some of the key points to this grant:

- The project is titled *BookExpress*
- Areas targeted for service are attendance areas for Stove Prairie, Livermore and Cache La Poudre Elementary
 - These three areas are outside a five-mile radius from the nearest library.
 - According to GIS data, approximately 800 children, ages 0-12 live in these areas.
 - The goal is to have at least 250 children participate in the program and read 3500 books.
 - Poudre School District and the two principals for these schools are partnering with the Library by promoting the program in the schools and offering the usual standardized test schedule to provide pre- and post-test data for the grant.
 - The pilot will run from February 2009 through January 2010.
 - The emphasis will be on offering a very user- and child-friendly process by paying for postage for both ways and providing convenient circulation periods.
 - The LSTA grant, if funded, will cover the first six months of the program.
 - Funds set aside for Innovative Projects will be used for remaining costs.
 - Primarily paperbacks will be purchased to create a special collection for the mailings.
 - A mass-mailing targeting the area and advertising the project will help encourage preschoolers and homeschoolers in the area to participate and increase awareness.
 - Outcomes will be based on test scores, SRP data on increased participation and reading, and a survey measuring increased awareness of library services by residents in the targeted areas.
 - Our LSTA grant requests the full amount of \$20,000 to fund start up costs.
 - Cash and in-kind salary contributions from the Library come to \$20,547.
 - Funded projects will be announced on September 8, 2009.

We will use the experience of BookExpress to clarify the effectiveness, cost, and popularity of using Books by Mail for different audiences: for other rural areas; for both children and adults in rural areas; for homebound customers; or, for all customers. This will then be compared to other outreach options and the most cost effective and customer-requested one for targeting service to outlying areas will be presented to the Board of Trustees for funding within the general budget.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

The number of Adult Summer Reading Program registrations continues to grow. We have a total of 2057 registrations; 818 at Main, 1049 at Harmony and 190 Online.

The following for the *History Comes Alive @ Your Library* programs keeps expanding. Molly Brown drew 150 on Friday, July 25th to the Harmony library meeting room. The room filled up so 18 people had to be turned away. Staff will be exploring the possible use of alternative venues for future events, such as the student center or inside the Harmony library. The library received a \$2,800 grant from Fort Fund to continue the programs in 2009.

The library also received a donation from the Larimer County Genealogical Society. Robin Gard, Brenda Carns and Ginny Feagler were present at the Society meeting on the 17th to receive a check for \$467. The money helps support the purchase of Ancestry.com, a genealogy database.

The library participated in the 1st Annual Jazz Festival organized by Beet Street. The library supplied the use of the stage and library park. The stage was set up on the south side of the park. The district's banner was draped on the front of the stage. People commented on how nice it was to be able to sit under the trees and listen to the music. The crowd ebbed and flowed. The peak number was 170 at one time.

The Business Librarian is working with the vendor for the RefUSA business database to present the database at the Chamber of Commerce sales force meeting within the next couple of months and to their marketing members in 2009.

Starting in August, Technical Services will start a new way of processing music CDs. The majority of music CDs will arrive from our vendor with barcodes, and genre and property labels already attached. We will have new preprinted genre labels that can be added quickly to items from vendors that don't offer preprocessing and to donations.

Four staff members will be attending a conference in Denver the 1st week of August. A *Reference Renaissance: Current and Future Trends* conference will explore all aspects of reference service in a broad range of contexts, including libraries and information centers, in academic, public, school, corporate, and other special library environments. This two-day conference will incorporate the multitude of established, emerging, and merging types of reference service including both traditional and virtual reference. It presents an opportunity for all reference practitioners and scholars to explore the rapid growth and changing nature of reference.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

RFID

The RFID project continues to meet its marks, with SA staffers Ling Zhao, Chris Bauman and Carol Gyger installing stations at the circulation desks at Main and Harmony this month. By the end of July, our circulation staff will be operating 100% on RFID – both in check-in and check-out. It's been a big hit in circ – I'm sure Lynda Dickson's report will have the scoop on how circulation staff has embraced RFID. Needless to say, SAers are mighty pleased at the smoothness of the transition to RFID and particularly the improvements we're seen for circulation staff already. We had hoped that RFID would bring better conditions for staff (and soon - patrons) but it's safe to say we're all overwhelmed by just how strongly RFID has been embraced. We couldn't ask for a better situation!

There's only a handful of project components to go, including the self-check machines, new security gates (scheduled for a Mid-August installation), and the possibility of a new and better (not to mention automated) way to perform door counts and provide statistics in an electronic manner. Carson is working with Paula for media support, and will soon work with Barb Crandall (our wonderful volunteer coordinator) to have folks on hand to help introduce our new technology to the public.

We'll consider RFID "live" when we offer our new self-check machines to library patrons. Our working live date for RFID is now mid-September – Carson will make a final call on that mid-August, but so far most of the elements are aligning nicely to enable patrons to enjoy the benefits of RFID and the new self-checks at that time. With the SE Branch opening at the end of March next year, there's no longer any time pressure to begin RFID ASAP (sorry – couldn't resist!) but instead, we can slot in the live date to fit comfortably .

Public Training

Some teachers get the summer off – but our own Pamm Clements, completed and released the fall 2008 training schedule this month.

New this fall are classes on Microsoft Publisher, and a "Computer Comfort-Internet and E-Mail" class for seniors under our popular heading of "Silver Surfers" for computer users 60 years and older.

Other classes for the public this fall include Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access) & Publisher, Windows Basics & File Management, Internet Searching, Explore the Library's Website, E-mail, Internet for Travel and Tourism and Business Plan Basics. More information on classes can be found on the library web site at <http://fcgov.com/library/classes.php>

Next -Gen ILS (Integrated Library System) Conference

Carson attended a 2-day conference sponsored by the Bibliographic Center for Research (BCR) in Boise, Idaho to help forge the future for what is arguably any library's single most important electronic resource. Although FCRLD is in very good stead (we're very happy with our Ill system, and System Administrator Carol Gyger is in the top leadership positions in our International User's Group), many others in the library community are experiencing frustration and downright anger at a recent merger of two other top ILSes, as well as general feelings of dissatisfaction with how our electronic systems are not keeping up with the pace of change on the Internet. This frustration/anger has caused many libraries to look at open-source options, including a couple of studies/possible efforts in Colorado.

Although we're quite happy with our ILS situation, this nationwide move could affect the economics and stability of all players in the ILS field. Clearly, to continue enjoying even more efficiencies from these systems, it's in our best interest to be a voice at the table now to help influence the tools we'll have available in the future.

Bottom line, at the conference we determined that we (as a library community) need to forge a parallel effort – short term to meet immediate needs, and longer term to form interoperable standards for ILSes. I expect the next stop for this conference will be for an audience of heads of state libraries or decision makers of a similar stature.

HARMONY, TEEN SERVICES AND NEW BRANCH LIBRARY

Teen Services

- 1, 119 teens have signed up for the teen summer reading program. They have contributed 3,735 Readers to the Rescue hours. 507 teens have earned their first prize for the program so the completion rate is currently at 45%.
- 17 teens attended the July IRS meeting at the Harmony Library.

- Staff finalized arrangements for a Teen Read-a-thon that will take place at the Main Library on October 15th, 2008, to celebrate Teen Read Week. Money collected from this year's Read-a-thon will benefit Turning Point, a community agency that works with high-risk teens.
- The IRS group created a list of programs that they would like us to do during the 2008-2009 school year. We will rename the Creative Writing Club and call it the "Teens Write! forum." This group will meet quarterly. We plan to lengthen the IRS meetings on Saturdays and rotate the meetings between the Main, Harmony, and southeast branch libraries.

Harmony Library

- A delegation from Billings, Montana met with FRCC and Library staff about the details of the joint use partnership and to assess their level of interest in pursuing a similar joint use facility in Billings.
- All-new chairs are being ordered from the equipment replacement account held jointly by FRCC and the Library to replace the original chairs which are wearing out. The new chairs are lighter, more easily moved and will provide a freshening of the furnishings in the community room.

Branch Library

- Several stores are open at Front Range Village and the street past the library is open to traffic.
- Landscaping the library area has begun and the first hitch to be corrected will be to move the trees that were mistakenly placed down the center of the grass that will be used for outside programs. The Center will move them at no charge to the Library or City.
- Tenant finish and the furniture, fixture and equipment budget came in about \$300,000 below budget. Staff is reviewing the list of items that were eliminated when the estimates for these items were thought to be over budget and a number of enhancements may be reinstated to the project.