

Director's Report

December 2008

ADMINISTRATION

Council Tree Update

We are progressing steadily on several fronts as we move closer to the opening of our new library.

Building

Construction at the branch is on schedule. The walls are being painted, and elevators, ceilings, lighting and plumbing fixtures, raised flooring and rooftop units for heating and cooling are all being installed and tested. Barring potential delays, Heath Construction will be substantially complete with tenant finish work in mid January. Furniture and shelving are scheduled for arrival shortly thereafter, and the Opening Day Collection materials will be delivered in mid-late February.

Staffing

In the area of staffing, I am pleased to announce that we have hired a new Lead Librarian who will manage staff and oversee daily operations at Council Tree Library. Currie Meyer has accepted the position and will begin in late January along with other new Council Tree staff. Currie comes to us from Steamboat Springs. She has a wealth of management and public library experience and a demonstrated ability to energize and motivate staff and engage the greater community.

I am likewise very glad to announce that Kate Merrill, who has been with the library in various capacities for a number of years, will be the branch's full time Library Assistant. Kate's excellent customer service, reference, training and organizational skills make her a solid addition to our new Council Tree team.

We are very close to naming a new Children's Librarian for the branch. We are conducting final interviews for our other classified positions at the branch.

Classified staff will begin together in late January. They will spend much of February orienting to the District, working with staff at our existing facilities, and receiving intensive training on topics such as roving reference service, merchandising, customer service, databases, readers' advisory, and more. Staff will be busy helping set up the branch and arrange materials when our Opening Day Collection materials ship to us in mid to late February.

Planning For Results

- January initiates the first month of our new strategic plan. Many of our early efforts these first few months are focused on opening Council Tree, with the increases in materials, services and activities for the public that accompany launching the District's third service outlet. However, staff intends to sustain efforts to implement the plan District- wide as we seek to improve services for all

residents. Work has already commenced on many key activities identified during the Planning For Results process. Below is a sampling of our activities in the first half of 2009.

- Create and improve displays to merchandise collections
- Improve teen spaces and increase teen collections at existing libraries
- Continue Adult and Teen Summer Reading Programs
- Provide non-fiction reader's advisory service for adults and teens
- Expand Here & Now collections of popular adult materials at Main and Harmony
- Provide an average of 50 off site storytimes per year
- Expand and make Mother Goose Times more accessible [please see Lu's description of "Peek-a-boo" storytimes below]
- Promote Summer Reading Program for ages 5 and under
- Offer 2 children's literacy stations at each library
- Expand in-house storytimes to accommodate branch opening
- Continue partnering with Larimer County Early Childhood Council
- Expand in-house puppet shows to accommodate branch opening
- Create, promote and circulate story kits to childcare providers
- Increase board book collection
- Provide interactive literacy experiences
- Take programs to lower income communities
- Provide more music-based programs aimed at the very young
- Create interactive literacy spaces, making each library more inviting to families

There are many activities and benchmark activities related to the organizational competencies identified in the Planning For Results document. In the next month staff will determine the best approach to make progress on these. We will also propose a method for updating Trustees on our progress on PFR goals through the year.

Facilities Master Plan Process

The Facilities Master Plan project continues to progress. Since the last BOT meeting a conference call was held with LMT, Aaron and Alex Cohen, and Shelly Kalkowski, we have received copies of their notes from the on-site visit in November and have received a draft of their Visual Scan Brief. Staff is in the process of reviewing the Brief which documents the comments made from the Visual Scan meetings held in November. The second site visit has been scheduled for January 27, 2009 at which time preliminary findings and recommendations will be discussed with the BOT.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

- Created December programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 6 press releases and made 5 media follow up calls
- Updated website weekly
- Coordinated Branding/Naming Creativity Committee

- Continuing to help coordinate outreach events to District outlying areas
- Setting up staff safety committee to go over safety procedures
- Attended joint partnership meeting with other city entities to participate in the ftcollins.com web site
- Facilitated Council Tree public outreach with PTO's within the library's area and other events (so far Linton, Zach, Leshner)
- Wrote December District Employees News Update
- Finalizing the "User Friendly" version of strategic plan for public outreach
- Met with Bayer General Manager over Council Tree Grand opening
- Strategizing fundraising efforts with the Library Trust. Obtained a marketing company, Convertible Creative, to help with Trust fundraiser, and a two year marketing plan.
- Did Community Outreach presentation at the Friends of the Library November meeting.
- Coordinating Employee Appreciation Reception with Programming Librarians – **Date is January 9th at 6 pm, Main Library**

The following projects have been started:

- Promotion for LSTA grant "Book Express"
- Programming coordinated effort for 2009 Summer Reading Program
- 2009 All –staff meeting coordination
- Coordinating PFR competencies calendar for dissemination
- Coordination of Tropical Week at the Libraries in January
- Emergency procedures and Crisis communication guidelines
- Gathering year end stats for 2008 Annual Report

Naming/Branding project update:

Continuing to meet with ToolBox Creative. The public survey has been finalized and we went through the questions, timing, incentives, how and where the survey will be accessed. The Creativity Committee's meeting on Nov 19th and Dec 4th discussed preliminary survey questions. Our next meeting will be on Dec 17th when we will finalize the survey plan and start in on the name finalization.

The name finalization will come to the Board of Trustees at the January meeting for a vote. Please see agenda item summary in the January packets.

Council Tree Grand Opening update:

I have met with the City and Bayer properties to coordinate the Grand Opening Event for Council Tree. It looks like now we will be the main opening on that day due to set backs in the other retail stores for one reason or another. I am working with retail outlets at Front Range Village for some sponsorship opportunities. The Children's librarians will also be starting a weekly storytime at Babies R Us beginning in January to start gaining a following. It will be moved to Council Tree after the opening. So far the main concept will be a short 30-40 minute program (dignitary speeches and a handing over of the key to the Library District) on the morning of the 28th followed by a full day of fun events at the library. Grand Opening banners should be going up in the windows, and we continue to spread the word through our contacts with media and schools.

SAVE THE DATE! Library Trust Fundraiser update:

The Library Trust will be having their annual fundraiser on **Thursday, March 26th** at Council Tree in the evening. The committee is working on obtaining sponsors for the event and we have found a wonderful marketing company – Convertible Creative to help us with the event and marketing the Trust in general.

Miscellaneous:

Fort Collins Forum has gone to strictly an on-line information source. I am currently reviewing it to see how we can still use it as an information source.

CIRCULATION

Where does the time go!

This past month a challenge was placed before the Circ staff to be the first building to reach 80% self-check for 4 days out of 7 and earn their building's Circ/Shelving staff a pizza party! This challenge has seem to peak interest in working with patrons on self check and for the first time in 10 years the Harmony crew is running slightly ahead on Main on their usage. The crew has 90 days to see if they can reach this goal.

Things are gearing up for Council Tree as Circ supervisors trudged through the 374 applications received for the Library Service Rep positions recently posted. For two days Lynda, Chris Cortez and Holly Bucks interviewed 29 worthwhile candidates. Second interviews are scheduled for Dec 29 and 30th. 9 current employees were among the 29 interviewed.

Lynda has been working with Carol Gyger on testing e-commerce. Staff is excited about this new feature and can hardly wait to roll it out for general use. Lynda has also been working with Carol on a Courtesy Notice to let folks know a couple of days before items are due that their due dates are coming up. This service will only be provided for those patrons with an email address. This has been a customer request that comes up every now and then, so once we could offer the service we decided we could and would.

Harry Hale has been working with Tova Aragon to move the computer lab upstairs.

Business as usual keeps us pretty busy on a daily basis.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

You'd think the staff members in Children's Services were trying to impress Santa with how hard they have been working, all the way up until the very end of the year.

Let's start with children's programming. Planning for Results (PFR) gives us direction for the years 2009-2011 and staff are kicking off with some changes that focus on Creating Young Readers. "Peek-a-boo," a lively, interactive program for children 0-24 months and their caregivers will occur in two locations starting in January. This new generation of popular lapsit programs will emphasize the fun and importance of music in early

literacy experiences. "Peek-a-boo" will occur weekly at Main Library and at Front Range Village's Babies R Us. A three-month partnership was formed with this Council Tree Library retail neighbor allowing us to start building support for the infant program even before the new branch opens and the storytimes begin onsite.

The opening of Council Tree Library is the other factor causing ripples in our array of programming for children. In order to efficiently meet the demand for weekly storytimes at each of our three libraries, some shifting of the when, where, who, and how we hold storytimes has to occur. For one thing, we want to make it easy for more staff at each location to participate in presenting quality storytimes. Specially created boxes full of ready-made storytimes will travel from branch to branch to help onsite staff prepare and present their library's storytimes for ages four and up. Centralized staff will still travel between the branches presenting much of the programming, but by training and supporting more onsite staff, we accommodate our growth as a district AND save on gas!

Next, there are the scheduling logistics to deal with. Storytimes at Main will need to shift from two mornings of age-specific storytimes to one different morning of age-specific storytimes and one new evening of a family storytime called "Sleepyhead Storytime." The Sleepyhead Storytime will start in January but the shift to holding one morning of storytimes at Main will start after Council Tree opens. Council Tree programming will start off with two mornings of four age-specific storytimes to take the place of the two weekly family storytimes held at Austin's Grill near Harmony and Ziegler Roads. All Harmony storytimes will remain as they are now. The exciting part is that by April, every weekday morning we will be offering preschool storytimes somewhere in our district and parents of infants will have a third morning of programming for their little ones.

Whew! Hard to keep all that straight! And, because we wanted our customers to keep it all straight, Children's Service Graphic Artist Cydney Clink has been creating "Once Upon a Times," a new bimonthly children's newsletter with all the program information.

As we move closer and closer to March 28, our focus on branch-related projects increases. Hiring of the Children's Librarian and five of the Library Assistants for Council Tree has kept Lu Benke and many of the staff busy with interviews, tours, etc. Thankfully, we have had excellent response to the postings, particularly the Library Assistant postings which received 256 applications. Lu and Paula Watson-LaKamp also visited the PTO meetings of two of the elementary schools in the southeast in order to start promotion of Council Tree Library to families in the neighborhood. The fun part was the applause and exclamations of pleasure that came as we made the announcement that the new branch would open March 28.

Finally, the process of creating a unique and exciting children's play area at Council Tree Library has been gathering speed. Burgeon Group, the firm hired to create a unique combination of interactive literacy fun, visited with staff in November to gather their ideas about what the area should include and to get a taste of Fort Collins' unique personality. On Sunday, December 7, parents were invited to come to "Play + Your New Library = ?" a brainstorming event where Burgeon Group staff led participants in

generating over 800 ideas. Soon after, the national library newsletter *LJ Hotline* contacted Lu about the brainstorming event. A brief piece about the event appeared in the December 15 issue of this nationally distributed newsletter. Initial plans for the interactive center will be available in January.

With so much happening on other fronts, efforts to serve outlying areas slowed down over this past month. While Lu was called away because of a death in the family, Paula Watson-Lakamp presented the PowerPoint slide program on services to the outlying areas at the annual Friends of the Library meeting. The pilot program BookExpress has moved forward with books being ordered and the catalog being prepared, but the actual mailing of the books will be delayed two months. Ken Draves and Lu also met with Sarah Myers, Director of Red Feather Lakes Library District to discuss with her the possibility and costs of extending BookExpress services to families in her district.

In other news of how the CS staff has been good, Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays presented an early literacy program to 50 Shepardson Elementary parents. Volunteer Coordinator Barbara Crandall is processing and placing ten court-ordered community service volunteers throughout the library system. Jennifer Zachman and Marian Sawyer finished up on Council Tree's Opening Day Collection ordering. Bilingual Library Assistant Irene Romsa delivered library cards left behind at the library by three classes of first graders at Irish Elementary and presented a special storytime for them while she was there. Throughout the community, Irene has touched a total of 200 children this month with her stories presented in English and Spanish. Programming Librarian Jean Gullikson created the staff schedule for the new configuration of storytimes (NOT a fun job!) and picked staff brains for the fun names of new programs. And, Lu met with each and every staff member for their annual performance review.

It is no wonder that Santa Claus was very good to us and delivered, with Elf Tova Aragon's help, an early present in the form of a simple but much-needed renovation for our very crowded work area. With the computer lab being moved upstairs, the old room is being converted into two work spaces to accommodate the Volunteer and Homebound Services in the front half, and two staff work stations for Children's Librarians in the back half. Ahhhh. Even a brand new pony couldn't make us happier!

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

The District received a \$500 grant from the State Library for a Community Conversations project. Jimena Pena will be implementing the two-part project:

- (1) Strengthen the Asian language reader collection, coordinate community input for material purchase, and partner with community entities to promote the new collection.
- (2) Host the Asian/Pacific American Cultural Festival at the Harmony Library organized by community organizations and community members to promote the new collection, promote the library among the Asian community, and continue our commitment to serving an ethnically diverse community.

For further information, check out the state library website:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/download/pdf/CommunityConversationsFlyer.pdf>

The series "Craft Day @ the Library" is going well. Here are a couple of comments made to Norm:

From a woman that attended the "Craft Day @ the Library - Learn How to Knit":
"In the last month, since I came to the knitting class I made 5 scarves for my grandchildren. Thank you for offering this program. This year for Christmas I can give my grandchildren something I made for them."

From a young girl attending the "Craft Day @ the Library - Herbal Crafts" : " I will never walk through the woods the same again. I will always be looking for something to make from nature"

In response to current legislation being proposed in Colorado, the District will present a 5 part series, "Health Care in America: A Medical, Moral and Economic Crisis". The series will start on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at the Harmony Library with a presentation by Cory Carroll, M.D. Dr. Carroll is a family practice physician, a past president of the Larimer County Medical Society and a member of the Colorado Medical Society Physicians' Congress for Health Care Reform. Discussion topics include: Does the U.S. have the best health care system in the world? What health outcomes do we achieve for our health care dollars? How did the health care system become linked with employment and how does this compare with other industrialized countries?

Watch for other new series coming in 2009: "History of Fort Collins", "Eclectic Nights @ the Library", and a four part series on animal care.

The Main Refresh project is progressing nicely with only one delay so far. An incorrect accordion wall was ordered. When the correct wall was ordered, the project manager was told it could be delivered on time but was recently informed the delivery and installation will be delayed about 2 weeks.

One aspect of the project is to improve the sound proofing of the story time room. The sound carries into the administration offices and the meeting room. During discussions with the City project manager, Carson mentioned a new product called 'Green Glue'. Green Glue is a high performance viscoelastic material which provides sound damping. It comes in a tube similar to caulking tubes and is spread between two sheets of drywall. The City project manager was intrigued with the idea. His proposed splitting the cost if the district was willing to experiment with the product and report back on the effectiveness. Staff decided to go ahead with the experiment. For more technical information on the product, please see this website: <http://www.greengluecompany.com/>

The new computer furniture will be installed upstairs on the 19th and computers will start to be placed on the 22nd. Computer assistants have been hired and will start on December 22nd. The Gates lab computers did not require a library card to use. All computers upstairs are on the SAM sign up system and require library cards. Staff will print 'Visitor' cards for those patrons not eligible for a library card. Ling from systems was able to create a system to quickly print the Visitor cards on a receipt printer. The cards will be roughly 2 inches by 3 inches printed on recycled paper. Many libraries print

them out on full size paper. Her ingenuity will save the district paper costs and staff time.

Starting at the end of January, there will be some changes to our newspaper and magazine area at the Main Library. We will be reducing the number of newspaper titles based on use and availability. The majority of our print magazine subscriptions are available electronically. Using circulation figures and patron input, we will not be archiving as many back issues. Not archiving as many back issues allows us to balance the need for browsing with the demands on space. The back issues are stored in gold magazine boxes. The boxes are being recycled to district and city staff for reuse. The newly available space will be used for seating and/or expansion of the Spanish language collection.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Gates Grant computers and Lab Move:

SA staff has been working with Tova on the move of the Gates Lab computers upstairs. What many might not know is that the new public computing area upstairs will feature brand new computers, thanks in large part to the matching grant the library received from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Ling has done a great job of creating new, fast and fun system builds for the new computers, and Chris has done a fine job assisting in the installation. As well, SA is assisting in the reconfiguration of the re-configuration in the Children's area.

E-Commerce:

SA has been testing and refining the e-commerce module most of the month, and it should be ready to offer to the patrons (via our web site) early in January. Carol and Peggy have done a lot of work to refine the new service, and many thanks to Lynda Dickson and other staff members for additional testing.

Council Tree Branch:

A good portion of time each week (especially for Carson and Carol) is devoted to Council Tree IT needs -- the past several weeks we've helped the architects refine furniture designs, began the installation our major connectivity (fiber-optic cable), assist with the technical details for the Opening Day Collection, define wiring box locations in the raised-floor area of the branch, confirm other wiring locations, and many more small details. We've also begun planning for the next phase -- once construction is completed, SA's next priority will be ensuring that computing resources are in place to support the big library staff job of moving in to Council Tree!

HARMONY LIBRARY and TEEN SERVICES

Teen Services

Main Library---Teen Services

- Sue-Ellen hosted an IRS meeting at the Main Library. 21 teens attended.

- Sue-Ellen hosted the **New Moon** Teen-to-Teen book discussion program at the Main Library. 12 teens attended this program.
- Diane and Sue-Ellen completed the 2009 teen programming plan. I submitted program dates to Norm and he reserved them at all 3 locations.
- Diane and Sue-Ellen have completed their programming plan for the 2009 teen summer reading program. They will meet with Jean and Norm to finalize the order in which programming themes will occur.
- Sue-Ellen met with 2 teachers from Lincoln Junior High to help them structure library resources available for a class project that their classes are doing.

Harmony Library—Teen Services

Programming

- IRS Meetings, November 15 and December 13.
- Teens Create holiday decoration workshop, December 13.

Outreach

- Fossil Ridge High School booktalk, December 8.
- Media specialists meeting at Rocky Mountain High School, November 11.

Harmony Library

The fall semester at FRCC wrapped up successfully, with a week of extended hours for students needing later hours for study during finals.

FRCC and District staff have successfully agreed to a system for implementing e-commerce that works well for all concerned.

Public Spaces

Our refurbished and enlarged teen area is complete this month, with great new floor and table lamps and newly repaired carpeting. The area, with furnishings selected by our teen advisory group, features comfortable booth seating, a game table with a variety of board games available, and other comfortable and unusual seating options. Teens and FRCC students are using the area heavily.