

Director's Report

July 2009

ADMINISTRATION

July has proven to be another record-breaking month for us, as Adults, Children's and Teen's Summer Reading Programs surpass all previous years in numbers of participants. It has become commonplace in 2009 to report our dramatic circulation increases, and this trend continues unabated through the summer. Comparing June of 2008 to June of this year, circulation is up 40%, and up over 25% year-to-date.

Our customers are finding that the RFID self-check stations are so quick and easy to use that fully 80% of our entire circulation system wide is self-service. For comparison our self-check usage for 2008 was 54%. The dramatic increase in self service demonstrates that we are providing our patrons with a technology that is easy to use, saves time, and provides a higher degree of privacy than staff assisted checkout. At the same time, the increase allows circulation staff to work in other areas such as sorting and shelving to keep pace with our large increase in business.

More than ever, we are reliant on our very large number of dedicated, talented and altogether wonderful volunteers. Last year almost 800 volunteers provided over 17,000 hours of service to the library and the community. This year more volunteers are working even more hours.

In addition to offering my deep and heartfelt thanks to all of our volunteers, I want to recognize a staff member who plays a vital role in our volunteer program. Barbara Crandall has worked very hard all year long to recruit, train, and schedule volunteers. I want to take the opportunity to commend her for all of her good work. With the opening of Council Tree Library, and the increase in demand for our services, our need for volunteers increased greatly. Barbara has shown herself to be more than equal to the challenge.

I am including in the packet a letter to Lu and me from Ms. Cordery-Cotter sent on behalf of the Laporte Area Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC), and my response to her.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office finalized the following projects:

- Created July programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 17 press releases and made five media follow up calls
- Updated website & TV monitor
- Wrote July District Employees News Update
- Continuing promotion for LSTA grant "Book Express", billboards and advertising
- Coordinating effort for 2009 Summer Reading Program promotions- over 200 events!
- Setting up Brand Standard guidelines for all printed materials
- Organized and presented a brand standards class for 15 employees on July 14
- Annie Walk promotion, activities, booths and pre-registration. We will be on Critter Patter Show – KRFC, Thursday, August 6

- Continued planning for Writers' Block Event on September 26
- Planned all-staff meeting on July 15
- Attended CAL Marketing Committee Meeting on July 6 at Erie Library, I will be working with that committee to formulate a marketing workshop at the CAL Conference in November
- Coordination of "We Broke the Record Day" ... ice cream recognition for all library staff when we broke the Summer Reading Program record on July 3.

The following projects have been started:

- Communications portions of Strategic Plan
- 2009 All-staff meeting coordination, next one in October
- Coordinating Planning for Results competencies calendar for dissemination
- Emergency Procedures and Crisis Communication guidelines
- Video scripting for capturing this year's activities for a Summer Reading video
- Staff internal communications survey #2
- Promotion for September "National Get A Library Card Month"
- Activities surrounding new Director arriving, photo org chart, etc.
- Promotion of fall activities and events

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

It's official! The 2009 Kids' Summer Reading Program (SRP) has surpassed all previous records for registrations! At over 7,000 registrations, we are now past last year's total of 6,991—and that is despite the move of all sixth graders into the Teen SRP! That news occurred on the first day of the month and set the tone for a month of record-breaking activity--such as having puppet shows at two locations on the same day—and finding there were still plenty of kids to go around! In fact, in July alone there will be over 130 children's library programs throughout our district--inside our three libraries, outside our three libraries, in small neighborhoods in the city and in small towns in the hills and canyons.

Council Tree

Council Tree continues to be a very busy place. On July 9, thousands of eagerly awaited new picture books and easy readers arrived at Council Tree Library and were quickly unloaded and shelved. This last book order was expedited by Council Tree Children's Librarian Millie Kridler and Children's Collection Development Librarian Marian Sawyer to meet the heavy customer demand that had already cleaned out the shelves twice in the three months this popular new branch has been open

Meanwhile, summer programming also keeps the young families coming to Council Tree. Music programs were held outdoors at Council Tree on Monday evening, June 29, and July 6 in the grassy median to the south of the library's entrance. Despite initial questions about how programming would work in this spot, families were clearly in favor of the venue and enjoying the sun as it set in the west, spotlighting the performers and lighting up their children as they laughed, sang, and danced in the grass.

Once again, plans are afoot to hold a PSD Media Staff Appreciation Meeting at our Library, welcoming our library partners back to the school year. This year the meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 12 at Council Tree and Board of Trustee members are invited to join us as hosts at the event.

Harmony

Outside Harmony this past month at the Student Center stage, Front Range Family Theatre Project presented another chapter in the Oz Series of plays to large crowds ranging in size from 100 to over 350. Inside the Library, plans are underway for a self-check machine in the middle of the Children's wing across from the Picture Book area. New furniture and end panels are also being considered as ways to brighten the area and increase customer convenience.

Programming

July means programming for the fall is being put into place. New for this year is Sleepyhead Storytime at Main being moved to Thursday nights at 6:30. Also, it looks promising for an Animal Afternoon to be held at Council Tree starting in September joining the other two sites in having this unique program on one Sunday afternoon a month. In other programming news, staff teams throughout the District will be busy in August creating 4 & up storytimes in a box. These kits will provide onsite staff with all they need to quickly and easily prepare and present excellent storytimes. Then they can easily travel to the next site maximizing the benefit of the preparation time. The purchase of a movie license will help with plans for family programs, as will the plans for family board game nights.

Outreach

Plenty of new things are happening in this corner. Our CSU-partnered program Storycorners is soon to be internationally known. The presentation on this community volunteer-based program will be titled "Linguistic diversity and the heritage Spanish speaker" and will be presented in Cuba at the International Congress of Reading by CSU's Dr. Velazques. It will be repeated at CSU with our Bilingual Outreach Assistant, Irene Romsa, and a volunteer storyteller joining Dr. Velazques. The volunteers who work with Storycorners are excellent and essential to the program; a handbook for training more volunteers is planned in order to maintain and support this resource.

Finally, a plan is underway to create more Spanish events at our various Libraries and attract not only heritage speakers but all those families interested in being immersed in the language. This "Noche en Familia" (Family Night) pilot program will be held at Council Tree once a month where families can share a time of stories, games, songs and crafts in Spanish.

Early Literacy

Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays worked with a CSU class on Creative Experiences for Young Children, helping the students find information on books, music and art activities for young children. Vicky has also been recently published in *Colorado Libraries* with an article called "The Quilt of Early Literacy" that uses quilting as a metaphor for the early literacy skills from Every Child Ready to Read.

Services to Remote Areas

It's been a very busy month regarding the outer areas of the District. BookExpress staff report 80 participants in the program so far with more trickling in each week, and approximately ten packages being mailed out each week. Even the smaller populations of remote places like Virginia Dale, Livermore and Red Feather have 1, 11, and 3 families signed up respectively for this books-by-mail-for-kids program.

There is a bit of news regarding our partnership with Red Feather: Red Feather Mountain Library District Executive Director Sarah Myers shared with Lu and Ken Draves her plans to resign effective August 15.

In happier news, Stove Prairie and Livermore families are turning up in growing numbers for the StoryExpress weekly story and craft time held in the local school, with last week's numbers an exciting 22 for Stove Prairie and 30 for Livermore. Lu sought and received input from customers in the outer areas by attending the County Commissioner Public Input meeting in Wellington, talking with LaPorte and North College attendees at the Facilities Plan Open House and receiving a memo from the LaPorte Advisory Committee requesting the library consider a small branch in the town of LaPorte.

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

Here are a few statistics covering the first six months of the year:

- The number of questions answered at the Main, Harmony and Council Tree adult and children's reference desks is up 22.7% from last year.
- AskColorado, our 24/7 online reference service, had a record breaking month in April with a total of 5388 sessions.
- 85% of AskColorado questions come from K-12 students.
- There have been 7,496 attendees at 160 different adult programs and 7,071 attendees at four community programs.
- 80% of the damaged media was able to be restored to the collection through our cleaning machine and our new process for replacing cases and inserts.
- With two and a half weeks left, we have 2,539 registrations for the Adult Summer Reading Program. Last year's total was 2,121.
- Technical Services has added 17.5% more items into the collection than last year at this time.

The database budget is being stretched thin this year due to loss of funding provided through the State Library and the increased cost of the *Coloradoan* database. The *Ancestry.com* database has been cancelled. Patrons can continue to do genealogy research through the *Heritage Quest* and *America's Newspaper* databases. Staff is researching how to provide a well balanced database collection for our patrons and Front Range Community College students within the current budget.

Thanks to Paula's email blast out to patrons and Linda Williams' persistence, we are now fully staffed with volunteers in Technical Services. The volunteers play a vital part in getting materials to the shelves. For example, they program RFID tags, tape the jackets down and laminate paperbacks. Without the volunteers, we would not be able to process the increased number of items and get them to the shelves in a timely manner.

Here is an announcement from our partner, Fort Collins Reads, I would like to share. Staff will be creating teams and would like to invite board members to join in. If you are interested in joining a team or helping to sponsor a team, please contact Tova.

Registration begins for the Fort Collins Reads Adult Spelling Bee

The spelling bee is a fundraiser for Fort Collins Reads, a one-city, one-book organization that has chosen "The Tortilla Curtain" for its 2009 book. The author, T.C. Boyle, will speak November 8 at the Lincoln Center. Tickets will be \$5 and go on sale after Labor Day at the Lincoln Center and local bookstores.

The spelling bee will be from 2-5 p.m. September 20 at the Drake Centre, near the corner of Drake and Shields. It is guaranteed to bear little resemblance to the nail-biting spelling bees of elementary school days. At the Fort Collins Reads event, judges can be bribed, second chances can be purchased and audience participation will be encouraged.

Participants are in teams of 3 and pay \$150 per team, and must be 18 or older. All ages may attend. Admission will be \$10 at the door. Spelling words will be taken from Boyle's 20 books, which include the recent New York Times bestseller, "The Women." He is known for using seldom-seen words and occasionally, made-up words. A word list will not be released in advance to keep participants equally, entertainingly uninformed. Grand prize is dinner with the author.

For further information about the upcoming Fort Collins Reads events:
<http://fortcollinsreads.com/>

HARMONY, COUNCIL TREE, & TEEN SERVICES

TEEN SERVICES

Programs

- As of 10 a.m. on Monday, July 21, 1,494 teens are signed up for the 2009 Teen Summer Reading program. 535 teens (36%) have signed up at Council Tree, 430 teens (29%) have signed up at the Main Library, 361 teens (24%) have signed up at Harmony, and 168 teens (11%) have signed up online. So far 549 (37%) teens have picked up their first prize and the free ice cream has been a decided winner over the bookstore discount coupon. We have given out 112 second prizes almost equally divided between the book light and the free paperback book.
- 32 teens attended the July 11th IRS meeting at the Main Library. We brainstormed programs for the fall and winter months of 2009.
- 21 teens attended the July 11 Improvisational workshop taught by retired high school drama teacher Mary T. Scobey. The 2-hour workshop featured a variety of exercises designed to teach improvisational skills. Here are some of the program comments:
"...it was awesome!! Thanks!" ..."It was a blast and I love acting!" ..."I loved it!
It was so much FUN!! ..."What a great teacher! She didn't give us babyish things to do."
- *Teens Create: Decorative Book Making @ Your Library* was held on Monday, June 29th at Council Tree. 29 teens participated and had a great time.
- IRS teens have continued submitting evaluations and nominations for the Teens' Top Ten/YA Galley project, and book reviews for SLJ Teen. The latest group of SLJ Teen reviews was published in the online newsletter on July 15. The first check was received for doing SLJ Teen and deposited with Jeff.

Collections

- Completed quick turn-around for additional ODC order for Teen books at Council Tree.
- Completed Teen non-fiction and graphic novel books order for all three branches for June.

Meetings/Trainings

- Diane attended the ALA annual conference in Chicago July 11 to July 14.

MEMORANDUM

To: **Ken Draves**
Interim Executive Director
Poudre River Public Library District

Lu Benke
Children's Services Lead Librarian
Poudre River Public Library District

From: LaPorte Area Planning Advisory Committee

Date: July 3, 2009

Subject: Library branch for LaPorte

Dear Ken and Lu,

Thank you for the time you spent talking to members of the LaPorte Area Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC) at the Library's Open House on June 25th. As we mentioned during those discussions, LAPAC is requesting that the Poudre River Public Library District (the District) consider adding a small branch library in LaPorte. LaPorte currently has three vacant commercial buildings in its downtown area for lease or for sale, including the former Dollar Store.

As stated in the June 10, 2009 draft of the Facilities Master Plan for Poudre River Public Library District (Draft Master Plan):

"The District's commitment is to serve all of its residents. The unincorporated communities of LaPorte/Bellvue, Waverly, Livermore, Lower Rist Canyon, Stove Prairie, Poudre Park, Upper Poudre Canyon, and Virginia Dale are all located more than five miles from a District facility. The LaPorte community represents the most populated of these areas with a population of 2,691 in the 2000 census." (In the nine years since that census, the population of LaPorte has grown to approximately 4000).

We note that the Draft Master Plan identifies LaPorte as one of the communities being considered as a site for a possible regional library and service center (page 25). However, until such a regional library and service center might be built, a small branch library located in the growing LaPorte area would give all the above mentioned communities more convenient access to library facilities.

In addition to the important service priorities stated on pages 3 and 4 of the Draft Master Plan, a branch library in LaPorte would also provide a safe and educational place for area children to spend time, a local activity center for families, an opportunity for young people to experience browsing through real books, and a much needed community meeting and gathering spot for LaPorte and the surrounding communities.

Several months ago, the District asked LAPAC what LaPorte might want from the District. While we appreciate the library's web-based, mobile, and mail services, LAPAC believes that what LaPorte would like is a library building.

Respectfully,



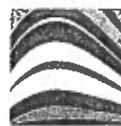
Susanne Cordery-Cotter
Chair

7-3-09
Date

MAIN LIBRARY 201 Peterson Street • Fort Collins, CO 80524

HARMONY LIBRARY 4616 S. Shields Street • Fort Collins, CO 80526

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY 2733 Council Tree Ave. • Fort Collins, CO 80525



**POUDRE RIVER
PUBLIC LIBRARY**
DISTRICT

July 20, 2009

Ms. Cordery-Cotter
c/o Cordelia Stone
Laporte Area Planning Advisory Committee
PO Box 1330
LaPorte, CO 80535

Dear Ms. Cordery-Cotter,

Thank you for your memo of July 3, 2009 regarding your interest in a branch library for LaPorte. I am sharing your memo with the District's Board of Trustees.

The Facilities Master Plan was in process when we spoke with you and other LAPAC members at the Open House. The Board has since approved the Plan at their July 6, 2009 meeting.

The Facilities Master Plan will guide the District's facilities efforts for the next ten years. As you mentioned in your memo, LaPorte is one of the areas identified in the plan for consideration when the District evaluates locations for a future regional library. Site selection for a new regional library will likely not occur for some time.

Because of costs, efficiencies and other factors, establishing and operating small libraries in addition to regional libraries is not an element of the Facilities Plan.

We encourage you to continue communicating the needs of your community as we work to identify optimal and sustainable services for each of the population areas in our District. We look forward to continuing conversations with you and the residents of LaPorte.

Respectfully,

Kenneth Draves
Interim Executive Director