

Director's Report

August 2008

ADMINISTRATION

Participation of Board Members in Events

I'd like to thank the Trustees who have taken time out of their lives to support the activities of the District this past month. John, Mike and Shelly with the help of her daughter and daughter's friend gave up their Saturday morning to help with the Annie Walk. Shelly also attended the Toys R Us reception with me where we were able to let the store management know of the library's contributions to the center's success. Our staff provided storytimes to kick off their grand opening celebration as a way to highlight our excitement about the great progress on construction of the branch. Robin also joined Lu Benke in her visit to the outer edges of our service areas at the Rist Canyon Mountain Festival. Of course, Robin and Bob also provided support as volunteers for the SRP this summer. Mike met with the legislative committee of CAL to look at revisions of library law in the statutes. John attended the Trust meeting as Board liaison this month, too. Thank you to all of you. (Please let me know if I missed anyone's participation representing the Board of Trustees).

Community Connections

I met with the Larimer County Workforce and was invited to participate on their workforce planning committee. This committee provides leadership and guidance to the county-wide efforts to end joblessness. We already make considerable contributions to the economic well being of the community in so many ways and this is one way we can be at the decision making level in charting the best ways we can contribute to the community. We already work with them by hiring people from their program and collaborating with Anne Macdonald on various topics.

I attended the kick-off press conference to learn more about the "Bridge the Gap" initiative that will go on the ballot this November. This proposal is to create local treatment centers and services to help people with substance abuse and mental health issues. I had the opportunity to visit with a number of community leaders about the how this problem affects library services because of the lack of treatment of these special needs populations.

PSD Collaboration and Opportunity for Boards to Meet

Word about the many different ways that we have been successfully collaborating with PSD this past year was sent to PSD's Board President Jana Ley and she spoke about our successful collaboration at their August 12 meeting. I suggested to PSD Superintendent Jerry Wilson that we set up a meeting for both boards to get acquainted with each other and to share more about the different ways these partnerships can grow and be supported. He has spoken with his Board and they agree that it would be a good idea from their perspective. If the Board of Trustees agrees, I will schedule a meeting in January that will be part of the school board's meeting that is televised, thereby providing the public more information about how we are saving tax dollars through collaboration and enabling cost efficient public library services in outlying areas of the District.

Safety Issues

From time to time things happen that represent a bellwether event. There were two recent encounters with safety issues that are of great concern to me. Last month we discussed the accident that happened in the butterfly garden in the park that resulted in a child being run over by a careless biker. I met with the child's mother to discuss ways to improve the safety of the walkways in the park. She asked that we trim the bushes up to provide better visibility which has been done. We are working with city staff to improve the signage alerting bikers of the need for caution when riding in the park. Thus far, the city does not believe a dismount zone would be practical from the enforcement standpoint.

A second serious incident occurred in the Main Library involving threatening patron behavior. A person who appeared disoriented threatened a woman using the computers with a knife if she didn't relinquish her computer. Reference staff defused the situation while calling 911 and our security company for assistance. The police responded quickly and took the man outside to get his statement. Then they talked to a witness and the woman who was threatened and another witness. The police issued a ticket and confiscated the knife. We also banned him from the library. It appeared that he chose this couple for racially motivated reasons according to one officer. Kudos to Anne Macdonald and Wanda Colbert for keeping the situation from escalating.

The third incident that involved a patron who appeared under the influence of drugs or alcohol asked staff to call an ambulance. Then the man collapsed immediately and was taken to the hospital when the ambulance arrived. This type of situation occurs sporadically and probably would average once or twice a week. We have been told that there is no substance abuse or mental health treatment public facility so those with aberrant behavior problems like these two examples end up at public places like libraries and recreation centers.

Although we have trained staff to deal with the more predicable problems we are continuing to work with police to improve our ability to prevent as many as we can.

Facilities Planning

A team comprised of Ken Draves, Jeff Barnes Trustee Kalkowski, city purchasing staff and I met to go over the rating system for the six proposals we received in response to the facilities RFP and to review the process required by the Purchasing Policy. I'd like the Board to reconsider the steps we are taking to select the vendor to see if the Board of Trustees is comfortable with what is being recommended. Jeff will review the information at the September 8th meeting to receive your guidance.

Branch Construction Update

Pre-construction meeting

On August 28, District and City staff attended the pre-construction meeting for the tenant finish work. Representatives of Heath Construction, project architects, and subcontractors also attended. Heath and the City agreed on September 15 as the date when construction will start.

Construction

The City's contract with Heath is for the contractor to complete work within 120 days. Heath has submitted a preliminary construction schedule beginning on September 15 and finishing on January 2, 2009. Permitting from the City and Poudre Fire Authority will be completed before the start of construction.

Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (FF&E)

The City has awarded all but one of the seven bids for FFE. Studiotrope is coordinating final design and construction of the custom mobile display units and reference/information stations.

Opening Day Collection

Selectors continue to create orders of new books and other materials. Staff are coordinating the ordering process with City Purchasing.

Staffing

The first positions, Librarians, will be posted at the end of September.

Naming of the New Branch

Council Tree is the proposed name for the new branch. We are meeting with representatives from the Native American community to finalize our research.

Branding RFP

I would like the Board to follow the same process as the one for the Facilities RFP process. See Communications Office report for details about the RFP committee etc.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office has finalized the following projects:

- Created August programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 13 press releases and made 6 media follow up calls
- Updated website weekly
- Coordinated library news column for the Fort Collins Forum
- Attended Give 10 presentation by Bohemian Foundation
- Attended Homeless Initiative press conference
- Coordinated Radio Show “Critter Patter” for Annie Walk promo
- Facilitated new naming process for the Library District
- Facilitating the process for the naming of the new branch
- Annie Walk Special Event
- Coordinated and facilitated a Web Usability Study Focus Group meeting 4 times
- September Library Card Month promotions campaign “A library card is the best school supply”
- Created Sponsorship policy guidelines for Board of Trustees
- Finalized Planning For Results document
- Continuing to help coordinate outreach events to District outlying areas
- Facilitated Request for Proposals for branding and the following RFPs have been submitted:

iGenii.com
Zenman
A-train
One Tribe Creative
The Tenfold Creative
The Mantooth Company
Yellow Baron Graphics
Toolbox Creative
Lightsource Creative Communication
Linden
Sage Marketing Group

Timeline:

September 3, 2008	Proposals Due
September 10, 2008	Finalists Selected
September 17, 2008	Finalist Interviews
September 24, 2008	Firm Selected
October 6, 2008	FCRLD Board of Trustees meeting, District name finalized
October 15, 2008	Survey Work Complete
November 3, 2008	Identity Work Complete
December 3, 2008	Website Work Finalized

(Dates subject to change.)

The RFP committee members selected to review the proposals are:

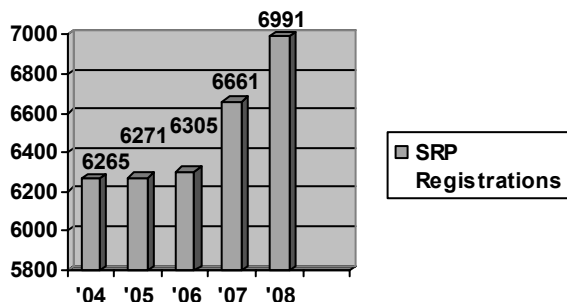
Nina Bodenhamer, Jeff Barnes, Carson Block, Peggy Shaughnessy, David Carey, Paula Watson-Lakamp and Brenda Carns. Proposals will be rated in accordance with the rating sheet included with RFP.

The following projects have been started:

- Strategizing fundraising efforts with the Library Trust
- Strategizing Library promotion for fall events: Banned Book Week, Day of the Dead, Vote for Books, December Puppet Shows, Read for the Record Event, Eracism Film Series, ReadOn! Fort Collins

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We finished the Summer Reading Program (SRP) on August 31 with the highest number yet—6,991 children!



This graph shows how over the past four years the number participating in SRP grew very little during the pre-district, budget-cutting years, and rebounded significantly during the first two years under the Fort Collins Regional Library District. But this is only the beginning of interesting statistics. In October, we will have ready more comparative statistics showing how our SRP growth this summer compares with population trends and circulation figures, what percentage of district children participated, how the completion rates compare and other interesting statistics that help us know where we have succeeded and where we need to tweak our programs or prizes to better serve the different age groups, both genders, and both sites.

As we slowed down with SRP in August, Poudre School District (PSD) revved up. On Wednesday, August 13, we celebrated PSD Media Center Staff Day and invited over 50 school staff members to Main Library for their kickoff meeting. Our theme was “Working Together Works” and, in addition to welcoming messages from the Library Director and Board Members, refreshments, tours and door prizes, the FCRL staff presented the media specialists with information on the library website, Ill computer catalog searching tips, and how to use databases relevant to their students.

Over the past year, PSD has helped us with things like spreading the word about our programs, free use of a school for summer programs, and promotion and evaluation of the books-by-mail program. Examples of how we have assisted the school district are providing training to PSD on our technology resources, facilitation of the use of our databases, and troubleshooting problems with their Ill automation.

This recent surge in working with PSD is part of our new district’s ability to be proactive in serving our community, rather than hanging on for dear life under terrible budget times. And, it is just part of the picture of how we work with different educational institutions in our community. We also reach out to private child care facilities (e.g., special tours, networking, and trainings for staff), private schools and charter schools (e.g., presentations, special tours, Book Talks in the schools) and homeschoolers (meetings held on site, presentations about resources, serving as homeschool distribution point for programs like Rotary READ Week.).

Scholastic Bookflix is a new online literacy resource you will find on our website. It pairs quality classic video storybooks from Weston Woods with related nonfiction e-books to build a love of reading and learning. It also has games related to the books. Bookflix can be accessed from inside the library as well as from home.

For diversity services to children, August was a month of reaching out to the community through visits and storytimes. Seventy-one (71) children and adults enjoyed programs at University Village, United Daycare, Family Center and CORE Center on healthy exercise and the diversity spirit of the Olympics.

In addition, Irene Romsa and Jimena Pena participated at the Pack2School event sponsored by the Educational Life Training Center where 182 people stopped by the Library's table and children made crafts as they learned about our different services.

Jean Gullikson and Irene hosted a visit of 34 fifth graders from Moore Elementary with Dewey Decimal fun and helping them feel more comfortable with Library resources. The entire visit was filmed for PSD's Channel 10 and covered by the *Coloradoan*. Finally, Irene participated in the meeting where local poverty statistics were presented to about 100 community leaders including representatives of human services agencies.

Vicky Hays, Early Literacy Librarian, trained Fort Collins Partners in Child Care and Bilingual Library Assistant Irene Romsa and Jimena Pena in Every Child Ready to Read. Now, Irene and Jimena will be able to present this program in Spanish. Vicky is also working with a statewide effort to develop the new Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy website. In a first effort to help a SE Branch neighbor, Jean and Vicky presented storytimes at the grand opening of the new Toys R Us store in Front Range Village.

Normally, you won't be reading about programs in these director's reports until the news about its success and its attendance numbers can be reported. But "Screen time: The Good, The Bad, and The Inevitable" coming up on Monday, September 29 at 7:00 p.m. at Main Library is worth mentioning ahead of time because it will feature a panel discussion that includes our very own Board member Nina Bodenhamer. Parents frequently share with us the dilemma and confusion about how much time to allow their child to sit in front of a screen. This program will present them with current research and several different viewpoints, including ones from Nina's experience in working with Public Broadcasting Corporation children's television programming. Join us!

Interactive Literacy Center for Southeast Branch Library Information Sheet

Progress has been made recently on an important part of the Southeast Branch Library--the Interactive Literacy Center (ILC). This exciting attraction in the Children's area fits in perfectly with the Planning for Results top priority of Creating Young Readers. But "interactive literacy center" is quite a mouthful and raises a few questions on what this project is all about.

What are ILCs?

Interactive literacy centers are structures, spaces, surfaces, toys, and activities that are created specially to entice children into playing with the elements and skills that are precursors to literacy. The focus is on the six skills that the research in early brain development tells us are critical to becoming literate. The structures and activities are appealing because they invite manipulation of the child's environment.

Why is it important to have one in a public library?

Literacy is built upon the experiences children have and interactives provide them with very productive, satisfying experiences on which to build their literacy skills. Parents are the child's first

teacher and the interactives provide the parents with valuable, exciting, and fun tools making them even more effective “teachers.” These ILCs make the library a “destination place” where families will go to spend quality time together—selecting materials to check out, working on computers, attending a program, and having fun with the interactive elements. Since our Planning for Results process is focusing on promoting early literacy as the top priority, creating an interactive literacy center fits right with the plan.

How much will it cost?

The ILC is projected to cost \$100,000 and will be funded equally through Friends of the Library donations and FFE budget savings for the branch. In checking with other libraries our size, this cost is comparable. Cheyenne’s much larger interactive literacy center costs over \$300,000.

Why the plan to spend so much money on it?

To begin with, safety, sturdy construction, inviting appearance, and clarity of how to use are key characteristics of a successful interactive. Up to 50% of museum activities break down in first year; we need to go with elements that are extremely sturdy, hence very expensive and with comprehensive guarantees of safety and durability. Secondly, this ILC structure will also contribute to the uniqueness of our new branch in much the same way a special water feature or design element would. This would be a long-term investment for the District, a gem that would put us on the map in the library world as a place that “did it right.”

Who will create our center?

We will be using the Burgeon Group from Phoenix, AZ. This firm has made a name for itself and won awards for its ability to incorporate the uniqueness and values of a community into highly popular interactive literacy centers in public libraries around the country, but not yet in any significant way in Colorado. In fact, they have managed to carve a niche for themselves for projects like this, creating a sole source process in using them. They will also be assisting us in going through a brainstorming process inviting the public to participate in the design of the center.

What does an Interactive Literacy Center look like?

For a peek at the kinds of work that Burgeon Group has done for libraries, you can visit the new Laramie County Library in Cheyenne. Their center, named “My Library Place” is much larger (and noisier!) than what we are planning for the Southeast Branch, but you can get a flavor of the fun and popularity of literacy interactives. Or, you can visit websites where literacy interactives are displayed through photographs:

<http://www.wbllib.org/visit/vtyouth.php>

<http://kidsspace.torontopubliclibrary.ca/LOUD/Moving%20in%204.html>

<http://www.burgeongroup.com/>

http://www.lclsonline.org/building/images/200712_08.jpg

http://www.lclsonline.org/building/images/200712_12.jpg

http://www.lclsonline.org/building/images/200712_13.jpg

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

The Summer Reading Program was a smashing success. The final total for Adult registrations was 2121 for Adults with 192 registering online. A more detailed report about the Summer Reading Programs will be compiled for release in October.

Fort Collins Regional Library District and Colorado State University (CSU) Libraries have partnered with CSU’s Global Social and Sustainable Enterprise (GSSE) graduate MBA program to offer a two-part community program focused on social entrepreneurship and how it can affect our local community. The two components of the Social Entrepreneurs program include,

- 1) a viewing of the PBS/FRONTLINE /World Social Entrepreneurs Film followed by a facilitated discussion that emphasizes the vocabulary of social entrepreneurship and how it

is serving as a nexus of government, nonprofit and business sectors working together to solve local social problems.

2) A facilitated panel discussion will be held at Colorado State University. This panel will be made up of a member of UniverCity Connections involved in the homeless issues facing Fort Collins, two students who have completed their GSSE projects, and the regional advocate for the Small Business Administration. This will emphasize how to translate social entrepreneurship to the Fort Collins community.

Both programs will take place during the United Way's Make-A-Difference Week, October 20-25. Workforce Center Business and Economic Manager, Genipher Ponce-Pore will be the facilitator for both programs. The two programs target members of the local nonprofit and business communities, including United Way staff and board, members of three local entrepreneurial consortiums, Larimer County Workforce Center staff, and UniverCity Connections task force members. They will be open to the community. The programs are being presented with the support of funding from a ALA/Frontline/World Social Entrepreneurs Film Program grant awarded to the library.

The District will receive the Colorado Association of Libraries Services to Diverse Populations Award at the Awards Banquet at the CAL Annual Conference on Friday, November 7th. The power point presentation created by Jimena Pena and submitted to CAL for consideration was sent to board members in a separate email several weeks ago.

As mentioned in the July Director's report, several staff members attended a conference in Denver the 1st week of August. *A Reference Renaissance: Current and Future Trends* conference explored 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. Conference presentations are available for review at http://www.bcr.org/referencerennaissance/schedule_details.html

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

RFID

The RFID project remains on time, and at this point it's safe to say that it is well under budget!

The circulation departments at Main and Harmony libraries have been operating with RFID in the check-in rooms since early July and at the check-out desks since late July.

Final rollout of RFID to the public will be completed in two phases. The first (in mid-September) includes replacing our old self-checks with RFID stations; the second (in mid-October) will introduce e-commerce and de-centralized self-checks in our libraries.

Our live date for RFID is Monday, September 15. Volunteers (coordinated by Barb Crandall) will be available to assist library patrons (if needed) the first full week of RFID for patrons. Paula Watson-LaKamp is preparing press materials to promote the public debut of RFID. During the first month of live RFID, staff will observe how each self-check is used and make any necessary adjustments to optimize the placement of the components.

The budget for the RFID project is \$793,000. Expenditures to date are \$590,119.

Web Focus Group/Usability Study

Peggy and Carson served on Paula's Web Focus Group, which included a usability study of the current web site. Peggy was instrumental in creating and implementing the studies, where participants were observed using the library web site to answer a series of questions. The results

haven't yet been compiled, but each session presented revelations on what works well, and what needs improvement as we look forward to the web site redesign.

SE Branch

As one major project wraps up, another is on deck. Carson and other members of the Branch IT team (including folks from City MIS, City Utilities, and a wiring contractor) joined the bigger construction team to start the ball rolling on the interior finish of the Southeast Branch Library.

HARMONY, TEEN SERVICES AND NEW BRANCH LIBRARY

Harmony Library

The Fall semester for Front Range Community College began August 25. Staffed worked with Campus Librarian Annie Fox to extend new and returning students, faculty and staff a warm welcome. Many students are just out of high school, or have not been in school for many years. We strive to insure that staff members are ready to help students navigate their way around the library and campus.

Teen Services

- Sue-Ellen Jones, Teen Services Librarian, provided a tour of the Main Library teen and adult areas for the Poudre School District's secondary media specialists on Wednesday, August 13th. She put together a handout on the Fort Collins Regional Library District databases and a handout on book talking. Diane Tuccillo organized our handouts into folders for each secondary media specialist. We had about 20 – 25 secondary media staff for our presentation. Marsha Ring, the Media coordinator for PSD, arranged dates for our Teen Services Librarians to teach different databases in depth at future PSD media specialist meetings throughout the year.
- Teen Services Librarians hosted an IRS Lock-in on Friday, August 15th, from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. on Saturday, August 16th. 20 IRS teens attended the Lock-in at the Main Library. They silk-screened t-shirts, made foil art picture frames, acted out our favorite picture books, told ghost stories with all of the lights out, and played games like "Ghost in the Graveyard" and "Sardines." Because of associated costs of this activity, we have decided to discontinue it--especially since we need to plan programs for the Southeast branch. We will continue to do other types of get-togethers with the IRS teens throughout the year.
- 12 teens attended the IRS meeting at the Harmony Library on Saturday, August 23rd
- Teen Services Librarians completed our fall 2009 teen program dates. We have three teen-led book discussion programs scheduled for this fall, two Teen Read Week programs in October--a teen read-a-thon program that will raise money for Turning Point (a non-profit agency that works with high-risk youth and their families in Northern Colorado) and an after-hours "Books with Bite @ your Library" party at the Main Library, a macramé workshop, and a holiday decoration-making workshop. These programs are in addition to the monthly IRS meetings that we have scheduled through 2009 and two Teens Write! forum programs featuring Spring Lea Henry, founder of Grumpy Dragon Press, who will teach a workshop on writing fantasy and local author Todd Mitchell, who will do a presentation on writing compelling plot lines.
- Our IRS group has been selected as one of the 15 national Teens' Top Ten groups by the American Library Association's YALSA division.

Top Ten is a "teen choice" list where teens nominate and choose their favorite books of the previous year. Nominators are members of teen book groups in fifteen school and public

libraries around the country. The Interesting Reader Society group members will take part in YA Galley, an ongoing project in which publishers of teen books provide copies of their recent titles to teen book discussion groups in libraries. In exchange, teen readers evaluate books for the publishers. Fort Collins IRS members will receive review and galley copies of new teen titles from the more than 20 participating publishers in exchange for providing the publishers with important feedback.

The Interesting Reader Society is one of the 15 national library groups that will act as nominators for the Teens' Top Ten list of the best new books for teen readers. Teens are responsible for creating a national list of new titles that is voted on by teens during YALSA's Teen Read Week, held each year in the third week of October.