

# Director's Report

## February 2009

### ADMINISTRATION

#### **Council Tree**

We are moving rapidly towards having our Council Tree building, staff and collections ready for our grand opening. Below are some of the major recent milestones.

- § 2/12 Substantial Completion walk through with Heath, architects, City and District staff. Contractor is completing identified punch list items currently.
- § 2/17 Fort Collins City Council approved (on unanimous consent) Resolution 2009-018 Authorizing the Grant of a License to Enter to the Poudre River Public Library District.
- § 2/16 Large BWI book delivery of Children's materials. Staff and volunteers unpacked, received, shelved and inventoried 18,000 items.
- § 2/18 All Building department final inspections complete and signed off
- § 2/19 PFA inspection; building released with a temporary certificate of occupancy (TCO) good for 30 days. Outstanding issues for a complete Certificate of Occupancy are being completed currently.
- § 2/25 Second, and largest, book delivery (22,000 items, 1,140 boxes) from Ingram
- § 2/27 Final Elevator Inspections scheduled

New Council Tree staff members are engaged in a comprehensive training program during February. There is much to learn about the District and many veteran staff members are involved in making sure new staff develops a strong foundation of knowledge and confidence in their new positions. Lynda Dickson organized two excellent trainings for new staff on "roving reference" and customer service. The latter training, provided by Pat Wagner, a nationally known trainer and consultant, was open to District staff and also to other northern Colorado public libraries. We invited and were joined by many enthusiastic staff from Loveland, Berthoud, Estes Park, and Red Feather Lakes. We will have an additional training for staff on library merchandising in March.

Plans for the grand opening weekend of March 28-29 are progressing. Please see the Communications Office update below for details. Regarding BOT involvement, I am hopeful that members will be present at the opening program, which begins at 9:30 Saturday morning, and that some (or all) Trustees will be available and willing to serve as tour guides for small groups of 1-3 people on one or both days.

### **BOT Vacancy Process**

On March 17, the Fort Collins City Council passed (on unanimous consent) Resolution 2009-019 Ratifying the Reappointment of Michelle Kalkowski to the Poudre River Public Library District Board of Trustees. The Larimer County Board of County Commissioners approved her reappointment on February 24.

The application process for the currently vacant, two year BOT position closed on February 20. The selection Committee received 13 applications. The Committee will meet on March 4th to interview top applicants.

## **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE**

### **The Communications Office has finalized the following projects:**

- Coordinated "I Love My Library" essay contest
- Created February programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 16 press releases and made 12 media follow up calls
- Updated website weekly
- **Finalized Community Survey contacted 5 survey winners**
- Continuing to help coordinate outreach events to District outlying areas
- Setting up staff safety committee to go over safety procedures
- Met twice with new Council Tree employees to go over marketing implementation and Strategic Plan
- Attended Coloradoan Editorial Board meeting for survey
- Facilitated Council Tree public outreach with PTO's within the library's area and other events (so far Linton, Zach, Leshner)
- Wrote February District Employees News Update
- Did radio interview with Ken on KRFC about name change and grand opening
- Helping the Friends with promotion of their March 27-29 Book Sale
- Toured with *Coloradoan* photographer at Council Tree
- Attended the Northern Colorado Public Communicators meeting and unveiled new name & logo
- Finalizing Main Library "refresh"
- Worked with City and County for publicizing of Board opening
- **Council Tree Staff FAQ page to answer questions (attached)**
- **New District Name talking points (attached)**

### **The following projects have been started:**

- Working on press packet for grand opening
- Gathering year end stats for 2008 Annual Report
- 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
- Emergency procedures and Crisis communication guidelines
- Launch strategy and activities associated with the name change
- Planning for National Library Week – April 12-18
- Chamber Business Before Hours Event at Council Tree – April 14, 7:30-9 am
- "Special Days" programming at Council Tree for designated patron groups

### **Naming/Branding efforts Update**

- Continuing to meet with ToolBox Creative. The public survey was finished January 31, and a final report and analysis is attached to this report.
- Worked with ToolBox on new: logo design and usage, library card design, grand opening invitations, billboard, stationary and letterhead, wireframe design for website, creative brief.
- Working on disseminating the new logo and prioritizing placement efforts, such as nametags, forms etc.

### **Council Tree Grand Opening Update**

I have met with the County, City and Bayer properties to coordinate the Grand Opening Event for Council Tree. I am working with retail outlets at Front Range Village for some sponsorship opportunities. Formal invitations will be sent out the first week of March.

- The 5 winners of the I Love My Library Essay Contest will stand in as representative of the “Library District Patrons” during the ceremony.
- We are working with Bayer in conjunction with securing a give away book bag as well as other items. Bayer is working on the “What The Moon Saw” author visit and a dedication to the farmer, Johnson, who owned the land the building is on.
- We have secured 3 children’s book mascots, and well as the Library mascots to be at the event (thanks to our PALS).
- A professional photographer has been secured for photo shots.
- Additional volunteers will be used as “docents” and will be trained and stationed at various locations in the library to speak about unique items of interest.
- Programming Librarians are scheduling activities, like storytelling, make and take crafts, mascot naming contest and other activities for throughout the day.
- The CSU Ram Nation Drum Group will be playing at the opening ceremonies.

### **Council Tree Grand Opening Schedule**

9:30 am - Grand Opening Program

- Mary Atchison, President, Poudre River Public Library District Board of Trustees
- David Silverstein, Principle, Bayer Properties
- Kathay Rennels, Commissioner, Larimer County
- Doug Hutchison, Mayor, City of Fort Collins

10:00 - Key Ceremony with I Love My Library Essay Contest Winners

10:05 - CSU Ram Nation Drummers

Doors Open to Council Tree Library

Noon - Johnson Dedication - Celebrate the life and work of former landowner, Glen A. Johnson, who farmed the site since 1946.

10:00 am-9:00 pm - Programs and activities

- Mascot meet & greet
- Crafts & giveaways
- Storytelling
- Tours and information

7:00 pm - Evening concert by Jeff Wahl, acoustic guitar

### **Library Trust Fundraiser “The V.I.P. Event”:**

- The Library Trust will be having their fundraiser on the evening of **Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup>** at Council Tree. Invitations will be going out the first week of March. The committee has obtained \$3,000 in sponsorships for the event, which will cover costs so that all ticket sales will be income. ***This V.I.P. Event will be \$50 per person, and will feature paparazzi and red carpets like all the best events!*** Please plan to join the other V.I.P.’s for this special sneak peek of the new Council Tree Library.
- In addition the Trust will be giving a new “**Library Community Partnership Award**” To encourage collaboration and community partnerships, this award recognizes achievements in planning and implementing collaborative library programs or services between the Library District and a businesses, organization, group or individual. Nominations will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
  - A description of the collaborative efforts
  - Evidence of sound fiscal management
  - The innovative nature of the collaboration/partnership
  - The impact of the collaboration/partnership on library services

### **City of Fort Collins Citizen Survey**

Just an update on the City of Fort Collins Citizen Survey done by National Research Center in December 2008: There was one question in the survey under “Fort Collins Quality of Life and Community” which asked to rate the quality of library services. Table 1, page 9, shows the ratings at 29% Very Good, 50% Good, 19% Average, 1% Bad, 1% Very Bad. The report indicated age and gender responses to the question as well as area of town. Comparisons by year in Appendix VII, page 103 were also highlighted. They sampled 1,927 households and 641 households responded.

For the full document go to <http://fcgov.com/citizensurvey/?departments>

## **CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

“Changes, changes, and more changes!” describes the last month in the Children’s Services area, and they are all good changes.

Take programming. Our new bedtime storytime at Main on Mondays received some fun promotion from Children's staff. They wore (tasteful!) pajamas, slippers and robes to work on January 21 along with a button encouraging customers to inquire “Why??” To promote the Sleepyhead Storytimes, of course. And something must have worked, for the program which started in January is now being attended each week by close to fifty children in pajamas with their parents.

What is it about winter that makes us want to tie programs to bedtime? Once again this year, Harmony Library hosted two very successful Lullaby Concerts for over 100 children and parents. These concerts featured music, stories, puppets and the talents of the District staff members Jennifer Zachman and Giny McConathy, and Front Range Community College's Debra Throgmorton.

Meanwhile, Peek-a-boo Time, our new baby storytime at Main and Babies R Us in Front Range Village, have joined our classic Mother Goose Time at Harmony in attracting 8-39 babies and their caregivers twice a week at each location. In fact, the report back from Babies R Us is that they have loved our

storytime so much they created their own baby storytimes modeled after ours. The more the better, we say!

This is the time of year when our workflow shifts to accommodate planning for our very large Summer Reading Programs. Children's Programming Librarian Jean Gullikson, Communications Coordinator Paula Watson-Lakamp, and Adult Programming Librarian Norm Fitzpatrick attended the Colorado Parks and Recreation Trade Show in Golden where they found many great programs and contacts to help them plan those upcoming summer events.

Finally, on the programming funding front, Lead Librarians Lu Benke and Tova Aragon received approval for their requests for 2009 programming and special materials from the Friends of the Library. The approved amount of \$80,175 will be spent on everything from a tent for Council Tree Library to all the Summer Reading Programs to traveling storytimes. This amount is less than was funded in previous years and reflects the economic slump the Friends are experiencing as Foothills Mall, the primary location for their sales, struggles and fewer people attend the sales.

The new initiative between the Library District's Outreach services, Colorado State University's Spanish Language Program, and CORE, moved forward this past month with training over 50 Latino community volunteers. "Rincon de Cuentos" ("Storycorners" in English) has a twofold goal of promoting literacy among children and preserving the Spanish language. Presenters at the workshop included John Kefalas, State Representative, parents, PSD students, and a professional musician who shared skills in storytelling, reading and music.

Our Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays continued efforts to spread the good word throughout the community with another Every Child Ready to Read program she presented to 21 moms and kids at the Eastside Mom's Group.

Graphics Coordinator Cydney Clink created and organized over 1,200 colorful personalized \$10 gift certificates for a very grateful Rotary READ Committee. These will be given to lucky elementary school children who participated in this past fall's Rotary READ Week.

A very relieving change this past month was the delay in the implementation of the anti-lead Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA). This law was designed to protect children from lead and harmful substances in their world (especially in toys), but was written so broadly it included children's books on library shelves. Pressure from library and publishing-related groups affected a one-year delay allowing study of how the law should be applied to both library books and to any toys that are used in libraries.

Gale Criswell, a new hourly substitute librarian, has been hired in the Children's Department to replace substitute Linda Justice, who will be working halftime at Council Tree Library. Gale moved to the area a year ago, leaving behind her job as Children's Service Consultant at the Louisiana State Library.

New staff, new signs! By now you have probably noticed the spiffy new signs applied to soffits around Main Library, including an especially colorful banner proclaiming "Children's Services." Thanks go to Paula Watson-Lakamp for arranging our attractive new signage.

Then, for the really big change: we have fifteen new staff members now on board for the Council Tree Library. These folks have been bouncing between Main and Harmony for training, shadowing, and

practicing what they are learning. Lu, Jean, Vicky, and Collection Management Librarian Marian Sawyer held very successful trainings for the new branch staff and all of us were impressed with the talents and experiences of the Council Tree staff, and, most especially, their great team spirit.

Much is being done to prepare for our new branch. From moving the Play & Learn Space through the final exciting stages of planning, to ordering last minute materials and equipment, to clarifying how PRPLD's centralized services will work with the new staff, to actually starting to put books on the shelves, Children's staff have been busy. We can even share with you now a fun decision made after receiving input from Children's Services staff in all three locations. Main Library has its Annie the Railroad Dog costumed mascot, Harmony Library has its OWL, and Council Tree's costumed mascot will be (drum roll, please!) a raccoon! Stay tuned for more details.

## **REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES**

Our programs are so well received and attended that we are facing turning people away. It is a wonderful challenge to face. The history programs seem to be especially popular. At the "History of the Calendar" program, we hit capacity and turned away 17 people. The first part of the "History of Fort Collins" series had an overflowing crowd. In response to these situations, reference staff is re-evaluating how our programs are handled and creating some new procedures. At certain programs, we implement a new procedure and have extra staff to staff the door and monitor room capacity. Volunteers will be used when possible. In order to have the staff to utilize in this way, we may need to decrease programs, repeat programs and/or change the type of programs we offer. Our goal is to continue to provide great programming while keeping our audiences and staff safe. Our first test of this procedure was for the second part of the "History of Fort Collins" series. We turned away 36 people after we hit capacity. Fortunately, there is alternative access to this series. Channel 14 is filming and showing the series. The library will have DVDs to circulate.

Staff is negotiating with Front Range Community College (FRCC) to continue to present the "History Comes Alive" series in the Student Center. The venue is bigger than our meeting room and the program is near the library; keeping the connection between the program and the library. Because the Frederick Douglas program drew an unexpected 325 attendees, FRCC requested we meet to work together to create a set of standards for the program – capacity, set up, staffing. Members of the Friends of the Library have offered to help with the program. We are hoping to have two door monitors and two ushers for each "History Comes Alive" program.

January is a good month to look back and compare some statistics. As most of you have probably read, library use is up nationwide. The reference numbers prove that we are following the trend. Reference questions asked at the Main and Harmony Adult desks have increased 9.2% from January 2008.

The ReadOn Fort Collins Committee has announced a name change. They are now "Fort Collins Reads". *Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle is the 2009 book choice. We are partnering with this community group to present a series of programs leading up to Boyle's presentation at the Lincoln Center on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Watch the website for further announcements. <http://www.fortcollinsreads.com/>

I would like to announce that Anne Macdonald is now serving on the SBDC Board of Directors and on the Workforce Center Workforce Investment Board.

Over the last few months, Reference and Technical Services staff has been part of a multi-departmental task force to process materials for Council Tree and coordinate shelving of the collection. At any one time, you can find staff from Children's, Reference, Circulation and/or Council Tree at Technical Services processing materials. Staff from all departments has been flexing their schedules and duties to cover for those that need to concentrate on Council Tree.

## **CIRCULATION SERVICES**

Crystal Bollman and Judi Allen have been busy revisiting and revising the Library Services Representative (LSR) training manual in preparation for training two new LSRs for Council Tree (CT). Kim Doran has been working on updates for the "Quick Reference Guides" at all the Circulation stations as well as putting one together for Council Tree. Lynda has been busy with training for Council Tree staff on subjects like: GroupWise, Colorado Library Law, Patron Privacy and Confidentiality expectations, and general orientation "stuff". Lynda has also been busy coordinating special training for CT staff on "Roving Reference" from an outside source, Joan Giannone; and "Customer Service" with Pat Wagner, which was opened to all district staffers. Both trainings were excellent and well received by staff.

Chris Cortez has been a blur as she works with the Opening Day Collection (ODC) team getting ready for receipt of new materials at CT. She, Holly Bucks and Angela James worked on hiring hourly staff for CT. Chris has also been working with Lynda on a training schedule for all the hourly staff to ensure they are ready when the doors open at CT.

Last month Lynda issued a challenge to the Circulation staffs at Main and Harmony to see who could reach 80% self-check first and then sustain it for at least 4 days in a 7-day period. The winner gets a pizza party. It only took Harmony 4 weeks to win the challenge and the pizza party will be in March. In looking at self-check stats since the challenge, both libraries have improved their stats over last year. In February '08 Harmony did 52% and Main did 55% in self-check usage; February '09 both libraries are at 70%! Year-to-date system-wide self-check usage is 70% and staff continues to work to educate customers on the process.

The biggest news for Circulation Services in February was the "grand" release of E-Commerce. In the first half of the month \$1,041.90 was collected via E-Commerce; \$898.05 of the total was via remote login. Folks at home are finding this feature and enjoying the ease of paying their fines right when they need to in order to renew items or place holds. This functionality has also proved useful for those customers with an account in collections. They are able to pay/clear their account and get a receipt quickly; all they need is an email address in their registration and a receipt is available before they exit the payment process.

Elsewhere in the department, staff works diligently to make sure that the thousands of items coming in each day are checked in and returned to the shelf. Prospector crates are coming in fast and furious and one day in early February, over 20 crates were received containing requested and return items. The number of paging slips this past month has been higher than any of us can remember; so much so that it is not unusual to have 250-300 requests between Harmony and Main first thing in the morning.

Nancy Osbahr has been working with the folks at the CLiC office on a different way to handle items coming in from and going out to the large users of Prospector. In the past, everything, regardless of

library, was placed in crates that were taken to a warehouse in Denver where they were sorted by library before leaving the warehouse. Currently we are working on placing Prospector things from the larger libraries, like Jefferson County, Arapahoe, DPL and us, in unique-to-location crates. Those crates are then closed and labeled for their specific destination before heading off to the Denver warehouse. So far this is working really well, materials are getting where they need to be quicker and there are fewer incidents of things ending up at the wrong locations. CLiC is very pleased with results thus far.

## **SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION**

### **Council Tree**

Work to prepare Council Tree is progressing nicely -- and it's essentially all hands on deck until the project is completed. The SA department is managing a number of components, including network and phone configurations, last-minute modifications to furnishings, and PC and peripheral installations. Carol Gyger is proving integral to assisting Becky Sheller with preparing the opening day collection. Ling Zhao and Chris Bauman have been on-site and in-house -- building the technology we need and making it ready to use. The more time I spend writing about Council Tree, the less time I have to do my part to help open it, so I better run!

### **Website Changes**

An important web - related project is also on the front burner. Carson and Peggy are working with Paula and Toolbox Creative to launch the first version of our new website prior to the opening of Council Tree. This first version will reflect our new name (Poudre River Public Library District), new URL (<http://poudrelibraries.org>), and the first steps toward a new look and feel.

One of the most welcome changes to be offered with this first move is to create one "front door" to our web site instead of the two that we have now. Due to the intricacies of changing names, not all of our URLs will change right away (for instance, we have to take great care with transitioning our ILL system so that we don't break internal or external business functions in the change) but the most visible pages -- our home page and all design elements -- will give all web visitors a strong sense of our new identity. This facelift is very welcome, and the early designs look quite nice.

After this first version of the site is launched, the group (Toolbox and library staff) will continue to work together on the basics of a continued freshening of the communications aspects of our web sites to deliver patrons the best web experience possible within our current web infrastructure.

A complete overhaul of our web structure has been on the back burner for a number of years, and the time has come to revisit library district needs in this area. My desire is to create an electronic services infrastructure that will not only meet our current demands, but also provide the scalability needed for our future, respond to the likely growing demands for web-based and other electronic library services, and deliver the best return on investment possible.

To do so successfully, we will need to incorporate a number of key elements -- including powerful functionality for patrons and staff, cohesiveness of the look and feel across all electronic resources, intuitive navigation, powerful yet simple-to-use discovery tools, robust and dependable technological components (including the hardware, software, and network needed to deliver these services), and last (but certainly not least) be aware of how these elements are influenced by three major institutional

efforts – our Planning For Results directives, the results of our Facilities Plan, and our incoming new Executive Director.

SA will endeavor to incorporate all known elements to propose a plan as part of the 2010 budget process.

### **Email Changes**

Another project to reflect our new name has begun – changing our email identities from [user@fcgov.com](mailto:user@fcgov.com) to [user@poudrelibraries.org](mailto:user@poudrelibraries.org)

We are working with MIS on the initial technical pieces of the changes, and ensuring that all the right things are in place, configured, and ready to roll. Timing, though, is key in this transition. Since changing all of our email addresses is not a trivial change for staff, and since many staff are in the thick of preparing Council Tree for opening, we will schedule the actual email change to occur after our newest library is open.

## **TEEN SERVICES**

Diane presented a book talk for 31 students at Fossil Ridge High School in the last report on January 21.

The IRS meeting was February 7<sup>th</sup>, 20 teens were in attendance.

An Artemis Fowl teen book discussion was also February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-3 p.m. Eleven teens attended.

Diane attended the PSD media specialists meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Corky was there too and did a presentation on the library databases. Diane shared information about the things going on for and with teens at the library.

A Bookends author interview show was done on February 18<sup>th</sup> on channel 10. Two PSD students and one of our IRS members participated in the interview.