

Executive Director's Report

December 2009

ADMINISTRATION

The end of the year has brought some wonderful news to the Library District. The long awaited announcement that Council Tree Library was awarded LEED Platinum Certification in the Commercial Interior program was made December 8, the day after the December board meeting. The District achieved a circulation of over 3 million on Monday, December 28. And finally, the new highly visible exterior library sign was installed at Council Tree on December 30.

Library managers have been busy this month entering performance evaluations into the City's ITMS performance management system. Deb Mossburgh and Joan Busch from the HR department attended the December 10th LMT meeting to review the City's performance standards and corresponding calibration system. The written evaluations of all classified staff are in the system. Evaluations of hourly staff are being entered as attachments. A separate performance check-list was developed by management staff for this purpose. Managers will be meeting with staff during the first full week of January to review the evaluations beginning with classified staff whose performance is below or inconsistent with established work standards. The board will need to take action at this meeting to determine if these employees are eligible for the 1% salary increase. An Agenda Item Summary is included with the packet.

As reported last month, I have asked Paula Watson-Lakamp to draft a communications plan as a companion piece to the strategic plan and organization competencies. June Griest, PR and marketing consultant, worked with Paula in the drafting of the plan that is included in your packets. The plan identifies five broad communications goals supported by several strategies and tactics. The plan will guide the work of the Communications Office in achieving the communications and public relations organizational competency. Paula will make a presentation on the plan at the board meeting. The board will be asked to adopt goals and strategies at the February meeting.

Paula also has begun work on the Library District's annual report. This year the annual report will be an interactive link to our website including film clips of the Council Tree opening, Summer Reading Program and scripted messages from Mary Atchison and myself. Essential print information such as the budget and use statistics will be included as PDF documents. We will use this interactive approach as part of the Library's presentation to City Council and the County Commissioners and as an introduction for presentations to other civic and non-profit community groups throughout the year.

A new monthly library newsletter was introduced in mid-December. It contains a message from the Director and timely information about services and resources. The newsletter includes a separate listing of all programs. Several hundred copies of the newsletter will be printed each

month but it will also be distributed electronically to a growing list of patrons and community leaders. The Library will no longer be printing and distributing individual flyers for most programs and events.

Carson Block and the Technology Plan task force are reviewing and analyzing the survey responses from public and staff concerning the Library District's technology and support services. Carson will be presenting a draft of the technology plan at next month's board meeting for review and adoption in March.

An emergency meeting of Directors from libraries participating in the Prospector union catalog was called for Tuesday, December 22. I attended by conference call. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and approve the purchase of Innovative Interfaces Encore discovery tool for the Prospector catalog. Encore is Innovative's next generation catalog subscription service. It provides an interactive, google-like experience for the catalog user including relevancy rankings, faceted search tools, and integration of other databases and collections. The Director's group approved the purchase as there was no additional cost to the member institutions. Carson, his SA team and I have been reviewing various products, including Encore for upgrading the PRPLD's catalog as well.

Janine Reid, Director of High Plains Library District, is pulling together trustee training for 2010 and has invited trustees from several near-by libraries to participate. The tentative agenda includes presentations on changes in Colorado Library Law, Board leadership principles and practices, trustee advocacy and strategic planning for new buildings. The date for this training is Friday, March 19th at the High Plains new Administration and Support Services Center in Greeley.

Since June 2007 the library has participated in a security cooperative with the Museum, Transfort and the DDA. The four institutions pooled funding to hire the Fleming Security firm to provide coverage for each institution's security needs. By working together, the rates quoted were lower than if the institutions had contracted for security individually. In 2009, the Library District contracted for additional security hours at the Main Library and an addendum was added to the contract. In 2010, the DDA and City will not be participating in the cooperative and instead will fund two new police officers for District One. At this point in time, the Library coverage will remain at current levels. Transfort and the Museum are negotiating with the security firm to maintain their coverage.

Three state measures will most likely appear on the 2010 ballot that if approved will impact the revenue of local and state government including public library districts. I am preparing a power point presentation for the board meeting that outlines the three proposals and how each might affect the Poudre River Public Library District.

On December 15th, the Building 400 Condo Association had its initial meeting. The Association bylaws were approved and officers were elected. I am the president and Jeff Barnes is the vice-president. A budget was presented by Melissa Moran and approved by the Board. The largest

component of the condo budget was for insurance on the building. The share of the condo budget to be paid by the District is within the District's budget for operating Council Tree. Our portion of the budget will be paid on a monthly basis to Front Range Retail Company. Any unspent funds at the end of the year will be made available for the condo board to use to lessen funds needed to operate the condo association in 2011 and/or add to reserve funds for future repairs. Ms. Moran also provided us 2010 CAM estimated expenses for Front Range Village. Our share of these costs is \$29,728 or \$1.79/square foot. This is significantly below the \$2.50 maximum CAM allowed.

A second series of staff round tables was conducted at each library in December. These hour-long sessions provide staff the opportunity to meet with the Executive Director to ask questions and to hear library news first hand. Other noteworthy meetings and professional activities of the Executive Director in December include:

- Presentation at Kiwanis breakfast meeting, December 1
- Stove Prairie Winter Festival, December 5
- Introductory meeting with Anne Hutchison, Chamber of Commerce, December 7
- Larimer County Workforce Development Board meeting, December 8
- Risk Management Managerial training session, City of Fort Collins, December 8
- CSU forum on Gallagher Amendment, Dec. 9
- Capital Expansion Fee Presentation to Timnath City Council, December 9
- Tour of Laramie County Library, Cheyenne, WY, December 11
- PSD partnership meeting, December 14
- Northern Colorado Leadership session on Regionalism, December 16
- Visit from Shelley Walchak, Colorado State Library, December 18
- Visit and tour of Council Tree, Jamie LaRue, Douglas County Public Library, December 21

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office has finalized the following projects:

- Created December programming calendar media and e-mail releases
- Sent out 20 press releases and made 14 media follow up calls
- Updated website & TV monitor
- Wrote and redesigned December District Employees News Update
- Continued efforts to gain FaceBook and Twitter fans
- Continuing work on updating library pieces with new name & logo
- Coordinating promotion of PFR customer satisfaction surveys
- Attended Cause Marketing information session
- Worked on scope of work and writing/organizing a new web based annual report with video
- Designed and coordinated production of new newsletter for January 2010

- Researched vendors for online registration
- Wrote grant for Summer Reading Program to Scholastic
- Prepared step by step guide for Annie Walk to give to Teen group
- Produced and coordinated effort on LEED announcement of Council Tree
- Produced and coordinated new signage for book drops
- Coordination and design of new shopping/book bags
- Produced District 2010-2011 Communications Plan

The following projects have been started:

- Communications portions of Strategic Plan
- Video scripting for capturing this years activities for a Summer Reading video
- Staff internal communications survey #2
- Promotion of Winter and 2010 activities and events
- Planning for 2010 Employee Recognition Event – January 22, 6:30 PM, Main Library
- Training graphic artists in InDesign program to be used for new newsletter
- Preparing Communications budget for 2010 expenditures

Employee Recognition Event January 22, 6:30 PM, Main Library

This year we will be recognizing the following individuals for their dedication to the Library District:

JULIA FOX	30 years
CYNTHIA LANGREN	20
GINY MCCONATHY	20
ANNE SAUNDERS	15
SARAH SCOBAY	15
ERIN CONTE-BRYANT	10
KIMBERLY DORAN	10
AMANDA ARMSTRONG	5
WANDA COLBERT	5
LINDSEY GEISSLER	5
HARRY HALE, Jr.	5
LORI JOHNSON	5
ROSEMARY PERRY	5
JANEROTHFELD	5
ERIN SENSEMAN	5
LINGZHEN ZHAO	5

(These employees have reached a milestone year of service in 2009)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's Programming Librarian Jean Gullikson has been attending an online class on "Services to Homeschooling Families" in preparation for development of services to homeschooling families.

Jean currently volunteers to review resumes through the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) helping library job seekers receive feedback from someone in the field .

This month's Children's staff meeting involved children's programmers from across the district in discussions of improvements to our story time protocol that is to be used throughout the district.

The Planning for Results focus on Early Literacy continues with Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays working with Marian Sawyer on weeding the Parent Collection and adding new books to the collection.

Bilingual Library Assistant Irene Romsa worked with Lead Librarian Lu Benke to hire two new hourly staff members who will be helping Irene reach out to more children in the community through Spanish story times. Alba Williams is originally from Paraguay and will be taking care of the Sunday story times at Northside Aztlan. She is great with group dynamics and has extensive community-work experience and excellent contacts in Fort Collins' Latino community. Ludy Rueda is from Mexico and will be taking care of story times at Harmony Road Mobile Home Park and some of the Noches en Familia. Although her degree is in Accounting, she has spent all of her professional life in schools and greatly enjoys working with young children. Funds approved from Friends of the Library projects and Planning for Results are funding the hours in these two new positions.

Irene recently worked with Adult Services Bilingual Library Assistant Jimena Pena to update a resource map of Local Homeless Shelters and Resource Agencies. The colorful clear map will be available at the Public Desks to share with customers who need it and who are often newcomers to our community.

Holly Carroll, Lu, Tova Aragon, Ken Draves, and Paula Watson-Lakamp met this month with Poudre School District's Chuck DeWayne and Marsha Ring to make sure our successful partnership continued to move forward as new players and updated forms are added. A next step will be Holly's meeting with the Leadership group at PSD to discuss some partnership ideas in greater detail.

Lu and Holly attended the Winter Festival at Stove Prairie, taking advantage of the one big event that this remote school community holds to spread the word about BookExpress, potential library services, and to introduce our new director to some of the more remote residents of the library district.

Broomfield Children's Services staff visited Council Tree recently to look around the new library and especially explore the early literacy spaces. Word about the exciting Play & Learn Space is spreading!

Teachers at Moore Elementary raved over Collection Development Librarian Marian Sawyer's book talk presentations to 3rd & 4th grade classes. Marian also brought library cards to distribute to the students and left the students eager to use holiday time to read some of the new books she introduced.

Jennifer Zachman, Harmony Library Children's Librarian, announced that the new, fresh and inviting Children's webpage is ready to launch, thanks to her, Peggy Shaughnessy's, and Kristen Draper's efforts.

Council Tree Children's Librarian Millie Kridler continues her outreach visits to area schools, offering visits and cards, as well as welcoming neighborhood preschools into the library for tours.

Lu and Jean recently toured Timnath to explore location possibilities for a new story time in the area. Both came away impressed by the growth potential and actual potential for young family participation in library programs. A location for a pilot story time to begin in February will be announced shortly.

Finally, staff has been busy submitting their yearly evaluations for supervisor review partially using the City's online I-TMS program which will phase in as our automated evaluation system over the next year.

CIRCULATION /SHELVING & ILL/PROSPECTOR SERVICES

Staff at Harmony helped with the weeding project and will be shifting books back into place for several weeks. Staff District-wide is assisting in the removal of VHS tapes from shelves and as they are returned.

Chris, Crystal and Judi have been working really hard to get hourly staff evaluations done and ready to be loaded into I-TMS.

Lynda has had proposals accepted and will be presenting at three sessions for the Innovative Users Group (IUG) Conference in April 2010.

And finally, the Library district reached 3 million in circulation on December 28, 2009!!

REFERENCE AND TECHNICAL SERVICES

Reference and Circulation staff from Main and Harmony, with lots of help from volunteers, completed the 'Big Weed'. Over 3,300 books were weeded from the Adult sections at Harmony to make more room in the non-fiction, classics and genre fiction sections. The VHS format was weeded out of both libraries. Several factors came into play when making the decision to weed out the VHS – circulation was low; the library had not purchased any VHS in 3 years; they are not being manufactured; they take up more room than other formats and DVD players are becoming more affordable.

The library book club continues to grow in attendance. It is starting to get unwieldy for a single discussion group. Starting in January, the book club members will be able to choose to attend at Main or Council Tree. The same book will be discussed at each session. Because of patron requests and a survey of book club members, it was decided to hold the second session at Council Tree.

We rang out our successful year of programming with a series of holiday concerts and a holiday decoration program for teens. Both were well attended.

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

Technology Plan brown bags and Staff Survey

A great technology plan begins with great research. What do our most important customers and users need? What are we doing well – and how can we improve? Those questions and more have been vigorously pursued the past few weeks with patrons and staff in a number of methods. A patron survey conducted in November resulted in nearly 500 responses. In early December, Carson and Currie Meyer hosted brown-bag lunches for staff at all four Library District Buildings. The discussions centered on a couple of key questions:

- 1) Over the next two years, how do you see technology supporting what you do for the library and library patrons?
- 2) What should we be doing with technology (that we're not doing now) – and why?
- 3) What positive impacts could your ideas have for library patrons?

Staff response was phenomenal, with more than 50 folks contributing to the discussion either in-person or through an on-line survey.

You'll need to wait for the Technology Plan to see the results of public and staff input, but I can share that our staff are engaged in technology as a way to serve patrons better, and are primed to use technology even more powerfully. Stay tuned – the Technology Plan is scheduled for review at the February BOT meeting.

Year-End Projects

Systems Administration is typically busy in December with year-end projects, as well as year-end statistics gathering. A snapshot of the many projects in motion during December:

- Final Gates grant purchases to improve public computing (including a laptop lab for Main and printing for the public wireless system) – (to be completed early 2010).
- Early prep for on-line Summer Reading Program support
- Project to add Overdrive e-media to offerings for patrons (to be completed early 2010)
- Name change for our main ILL server – the last piece of moving all of our technology resources to <http://poudrelibraries.org>
- Electronic prep for the 2010 Floating Collections project
- Ongoing review of “Discovery Tools” for our website to enable patrons to find our many resources in a user-friendly manner.
- Details for the next phase of self-check units: de-centralized self check. December work includes cabinet design for Harmony and retro-fitting existing furniture for Main.
- More!

Leadership Northern Colorado

Holly and Carson were invited to attend the keynote presentation of the inaugural class of Leadership Northern Colorado – a new group (similar to local Chamber of Commerce sponsored programs such as Leadership Fort Collins) with a regional approach. The keynote topic was regionalism. Both Holly and Carson enjoyed the thought-provoking presentation, and the opportunity to visit with the class and other attendees.

RFID Inventory

With the core components of RFID working smoothly in the library, SA staff are digging deeper to employ the full potential of the technology at the District. Chris Bauman and Carol Gyger worked in November and December to greatly improve inventory procedures for Circulation staff using a special piece of hardware called an RFID inventory wand. After refining the process, Chris worked with Circ staffers Judi Allen, Crystal Bollman and Carol Hanlon to launch the first RFID inventory at Main. After a few inventory runs, Circulation staff began to get excited about the process and how much of a time-saver it will be. Staff estimate that with RFID, 4-5 times more materials can be inventoried in a given time period than by using older manual methods! Also, the time spent finding ‘exceptions’ has been cut dramatically and there is virtually no use of paper.

HARMONY & COUNCIL TREE LIBRARIES

HARMONY LIBRARY

Front Range completed its fall semester this month. During finals week, the library offered extended hours for the convenience of students studying for tests and completing final projects. Annie Fox initiated extended hours in cooperation with the District a couple of years ago. It has proved to be useful for students, based on library use during late evening hours.

Enrollment at Front Range Community College (FRCC) is up dramatically. Spring enrollment system wide is estimated to be up more than 50% over the same semester just one year ago. While final enrollment numbers for Larimer Campus will not be available for a couple of months, enrollment on this campus will likely be up significantly.

On December 11, FRCC held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Sunlight Peak science building. The \$14.7 million building, scheduled to open spring 2011, will double the lab and classroom space for science programs and provide much needed faculty office space. FRCC is seeking LEED certification for the project.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

As noted elsewhere in this report, Council Tree received LEED Platinum Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Council Tree is the first public library in the nation to receive the highest rating of Platinum for a Commercial Interior (CI), and the second public library of any type to achieve this distinction. This designation has been reported locally and in the national library press.

On January 4, 2010, Council Tree's collections of books, CDs, and DVDs will become holdable. Up until this time, Council Tree's collections have been "non-holdable", which means that Council Tree's items could not be placed on hold for customers to pick up. We began in this way intentionally, in an effort to insure that our new, very popular, and smaller branch had a wide selection of high interest, high demand titles on its shelves for our customers at Council Tree. We have succeeded in this regard. We are now at a point where, as a matter of equity for customers system wide, we are opening up Council Tree's collections. Customers can now place Council Tree items on hold for pick up at any of our three public locations.

TEEN SERVICES

Thirty-one teens participated in the December IRS (Interesting Readers Society) meeting. IRS teens continue to write and publish book reviews in two nationwide programs, for *SLJ Online* and the YA Galley program. As described on the YALSA [Young Adult Library Services Association] website, "YA Galley is an ongoing project in which publishers of young adult books provide copies of their recent titles to teen book discussion groups in libraries. In exchange, teen readers evaluate books for the publishers."

Forty teens attended the Teens Create: Holiday Decorations @ Your Library program on Saturday, December 12th at the Council Tree library. Teens created cards using pre-carved linoleum block prints and holiday stars made of unusual yarns. They used recycled DVDs to create shiny ornaments decorated with wire and beads. They created pop-up cards and used recycled pop cans to create tin ornaments with a hammered design. From all reports attendees had a productive and enjoyable time.