

Executive Director's Report

November 2010

ADMINISTRATION

Main Library Remodel/ Expansion

The library design team reviewed the final schematic drawings and documentation prepared by OZ Architecture on November 10. Jeff and Holly have print copies as well as a CD of the drawings and documentation for review. Let me know if you would like to review them. Following this meeting, administrative staff met with OZ Architects, Tracy Tafoya and Kate Fields to discuss space needs for leased office space for staff relocation. Preliminary pre-lease space estimates are roughly 12,000 sq. feet. This space provides workspace for up to 28 employees, a small conference room, ample room for collections, including processing space for new materials, and adequate space for the Library District's servers and other centralized IT equipment. Ken and I will be meeting with the Josh Birks from the City's Economic Development Department on Wednesday, December 8 to continue discussion on possible tenants and available leased space within the city.

A contract with Wember, Inc for various one-time tasks in support of the renovation has been signed. Services the Wember team will provide as owner's representative and separate from the project management services provided by the City include the development of a master owner budget, creation of a master schedule and phasing plan, a cost estimate validation and design review. Wember representatives will work with Steve Seefeld, project manager, to support and coordinate efforts throughout the design and construction phases.

Public Awareness/Petition Campaign

The petition campaign is well underway. The City Clerk's office approved the form of the petition on November 19th. Training of volunteers who will gather signatures for the petition took place the week of November 29th. Five sessions were conducted by Sam Fox and Robin Gard. I presented an overview of the remodel process, plans, vision and pertinent market analysis findings at each training session as well. To date, 78 petition sections are in circulation with four already completed, returned and attested.

I also made presentations to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the City Manager's Strategic Issues Team (SIT) and will present to the Chamber of Commerce, Local Legislative Affairs Committee on December 17.

Market Analysis

The written summary of the market analysis will be available by week's end. Copies will be emailed to the board as soon as the District receives the document. The webinar with OrangeBoy, Inc. representatives Adam Gay and Nickki Harber is confirmed for 2:45 p.m. prior to the board meeting. I have invited staff to attend as well.

Reorganization

Ken and I met with the co-facilitators of each team to review team charges, outcomes and activities to date. He and I will meet with the facilitators as a group to outline overarching strategies and develop a process for coordinating projects among teams and the SA department as well as a plan for communicating team progress to the whole staff.

Other Activities

Six library employees (Holly Carroll, Sylvia Garcia, Jean Gullikson, Karen Cagel, Natalie Hammang and Rob Stansbury) took part in the Homeward 2020 homeless registry week by either interviewing individuals or entering data. Those of us participating in this community project became more aware of the vulnerability of the homeless, many of whom use our libraries on a regular basis.

I attended the annual Prospector library directors meeting on November 18. It was announced at this meeting that Poudre River Public Library is the highest borrower of materials and the fifth highest loaner of materials. The Marmot libraries, a consortium of libraries of the western slope, will join Prospector in 2011. Denver Public Library will stop loaning materials December 20th while the library migrates to a new integrated library system. It hopes to be able to re-engage with Prospector in 2011, date to be determined.

Andrea Lapsley, CSU Morgan Library Development Officer, and I met with the presidents of our respective friends of the library groups on December 7 to firm up plans for a CSU/PRPLD author series in 2011. We are awaiting date confirmation of several authors and we hope to have all authors scheduled by the end of the year.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

The final weekend of the Fort Collins Reads programs for Garth Stein's *Art of Racing in the Rain* was busy and successful. The author started the weekend at a breakfast co-sponsored by the Argus Institute at Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Garth spoke to 84 attendees and took pictures with the essay contest winners and honored guest, Temple Grandin. He then met with 51 community members at a reception at the Rio. The two talks at the Lory Student Center had a total of 802 attendees.

Collections and Systems staff continues to tweak processes for efficiencies. Becky, Carol and Peggy have revamped the way material recommendations are received from patrons. The recommendations web form has been rerouted to an email account which can be accessed by more staff in multiple locations. This revamp eliminated several steps in the previous process which allows for quicker turnaround of recommendations. Now that electronic ordering has been implemented, we are beginning to implement electronic invoicing. Testing has begun with two of our major vendors, BWI and Midwest Tapes. Invoicing with Ingram will begin in January.

The Collections Advisory Team evaluated Freegal, a downloadable music database. Due to the cost and limitations of the program, it was decided to not purchase it at this time. The team will demo another program when it becomes available in January. Next up, the team will be evaluating the holiday collections, studying statistics and learning about the materials budget.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

- Completed monthly/weekly goals of Communication Plan.
- Planning and promotions for internal information effort for Main Library remodel.
- Organizing, managing and supervising all graphic design work for the district.
- Creating and coordinating the “ReOrg Man” campaign for internal staff information.
- Attended Colorado Association of Libraries Communications meeting.
- Coordination and point person for marketing efforts by OrangeBoy.
- Coordinated efforts for staff holiday events with a team of representatives from all libraries.
- Coordinated media events for Main remodel campaign.
- Beginning coordination of 2010 Annual Report
- Working with SA on information and graphics for new mobile app.
- Starting work on Employee Recognition event – January 14.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE/CIRCULATION

We in Circ/shelving, Prospector/ILL are having a hard time believing that November has come to an end! We are even more amazed at the number of items that have passed through our areas. Last month we checked out 272,487 items; checked in 202,126 items for a total of 474,613 items handled by hourly staff as things were moved through the system. Of this total 11,270 moved through Prospector; 7,466 items borrowed and 3,804 items loaned. Interlibrary Loan sent out 352 items and received 134 things from non-Prospector libraries for a total of 486 items. Carol Gyger told us that the District passed the 3million circulation mark on Wednesday November 24! All of this and express-check numbers translates to 81.5% of our customers use the self-check machines. Oh, I forgot to mention that while staff was busy moving materials in and out they worked and processed approximately 19,000 paging slips District wide!

Since we brought up Online Library Card Registration the first part of September, we have added some 400+ new accounts to our patron base.

Ecommerce continues to be a popular function and much used by our patrons to the tune of \$7,764.27.

You are welcome and invited to drop by and visit the elves in Circ/Shelving, Prospector/ILL anytime!

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION (SA)

Construction Projects

Carson assembled a technology team in November to begin planning for a trifecta of projects related to the proposed remodel of the Main Library. As well as the remodel, SA needs to support staff and public needs during four phases of construction. As well, the plan would call for moving mission-critical centralized IT resources from Main to a new, yet-to-be-determined facility. These projects represent major, high-priority efforts and critical efforts over several years.

BTOP Grant

Carson was joined by Irene and our two project partners (from the CORE Center and La Familia) for a two-day training in Denver on the BTOP grant to provide computer access and training to the underserved in communities across the state. The meeting was excellent, and sparked an engaging planning process among the team from Poudre Libraries. To guide the project, we will use a model from the Kellogg Foundation called "The Logic Model." The group has created a framework, and will re-convene in January to refine the plans.

Poudre Libraries is Going Mobile

Carson announced exciting news concerning access to library resources on mobile phones. The library is working with a vendor to create an "App" that will run on all popular smartphones, including iPhone, Droid, Blackberry, Windows Mobile and more! The crew is working hard to have it available in time for the Holidays (or at least soon after).

As well, SA is working with another vendor to pilot a mobile-friendly website for our library, with most of that development work happening after the first of the year.

Why have both? Carson and other SAers are focusing on the importance of choice for our users -- we want patrons to be able to access our electronic resources no matter what sort of mobile device they might choose to have -- and those choices are growing daily! Some folks love apps, others love using their mobile web browser. As long as it's affordable and sustainable to the library, we want to support patron choice!

We don't have a firm launch date for the App, but watch the website for news when we're ready!

Carol Gyger and Peggy Shaughnessy have been integral in the behind-the-scenes work to make this all happen -- it might look like magic on the device, but feeding the data is a big job! Paula Watson-LaKamp has worked closely with SA staff in the development of graphics and content for the mobile site.

Backup Plans

It's wise to have contingencies when things aren't going as expected. We are fortunate that interruptions to connectivity are very rare on our wired network, but when it does happen we realize just how dependent we are for electronic information.

Ling Zhao has created an alternate connectivity method for those times – the services are limited, but would allow staff to search our catalog (via prospector) and check email. Nice going, Ling!

eBooks

In November the first meeting of the eBook committee (a joint effort with CSU) was held, and the group started grappling with the formidable challenges represented by eBooks and the avalanche of eReaders currently on the market. The group is refining its charge, and will continue to work through the next several months to help frame the issues we're facing, and make recommendations for directions for both Poudre Libraries and CSU Libraries.

In the meantime, Carson is launching an informal, lunchtime "club" for library staff who either have an eReader, or just want to learn more. The goal of the group is to raise awareness among staff, and have some fun in the process. The first meeting will be held in December – and the invitation to join has been enthusiastically received!

Tech Standards

Just a quick note here – Carson (joined by Marilyn Coulter of Pikes Peak Library District) worked with Jim Duncan of the Colorado State Library to create the new technology standards. The tech standards are part of the larger public library standards document soon to be published by the State Library.

MAIN LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

Several staff attending training sessions and have been volunteering to collect signatures for the petitions for the remodel of Main Library to get on the April ballot. Staff have commented how exciting it is to have members of the public who are so supportive of the Library's efforts.

Public Services staff at all three libraries tried out a reference tracking software called DART for one week. We are hoping to find a tracking tool that can improve some of the efficiencies in reference, informational, and reader's advisory work.

Librarian Sarah Scobey went to full-time status. She will continue her duties and will integrate some of the outreach/bilingual services into her position that were formerly performed by Jimena Pena as well as assist with the hourly public services staff.

Early Literacy Librarian Vicky Hays hosted the children and families from PSD's Early Childhood Program using rhyme and song stations originally created for our 2010 Summer Reading Program. This annual event brings in families to get library cards and sharing in early literacy ideas. Vicky also worked with Early Childhood Council and PSD staff to present early literacy training to volunteers and nurses in PVH's Bright Beginnings program.

The Library hosted the Native Pride Dancers in celebration of Native American Month; the audience very enthusiastically received this vibrant performance.

National Novel Writing Month events were held all over the District, coordinated by volunteer Northern Colorado District NaNoWriMo Liaison Julia Hall-Payne who is also on the Library District staff in several capacities. The events are offered annually around the world to inspire the writer in all of us and 36% of the participants in our area met their writing goal which is twice the national average.

Several adult book talk groups were offered in the District. Attendance often ranges between 20-30 participants.

Several staff participated in the Homeward 2020 activities. This movement is stepping up awareness of and efforts to end homelessness in our community. Staff interviewed, registered, and helped with the data entry for homeless individuals during the course of one week. In addition, Jean Gullikson and Sylvia Garcia participated in the 1st annual Homelessness Awareness Day Walk in Fort Collins.

HARMONY LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

Construction update

The Front Range Community College (FRCC) construction that has been ongoing for the past two months is nearing completion. Harmony's staff door, and the east-facing public doors leading to and from the rest of campus, are open and accessible after a period of closure for several weeks. Once the service drive is reopened the normal and convenient route for courier access will be restored.

Dart Reference Tracking

After decades of using a paper based method of tracking desk and telephone transactions with the public, Harmony staff along with other public District staff trialed a free online tool developed by the State Library, Dart, which will provide a much more complete and useful picture of the questions we answer for the public. Now that the trial period is concluded we are evaluating how to best incorporate this excellent tool to gain a better understanding of our reference services and use the data to inform staffing, collections, and management decisions.

Staffing

Marg Portouw, Library Assistant, is retiring after more than 23 years with our libraries. She has been at Harmony since it first opened in 1998, and before that, at the Main and Mini libraries (Mini Library was a storefront library that closed when Harmony opened.) Marg has been an attentive and effective scheduler for the past many years and helped maintain Harmony's collections and helped to select audiobooks. In years past, she planned and coordinated many excellent and innovative programs for adults, many in partnership with the college. She played a major role in the very popular Harmony in the Round and Harmony on the Green programs, which frequently attracted visitors by the hundreds. Most of all, Marg has provided caring, personal, and great customer service at our reference desks. She will be sorely missed. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

Staff Learning and Development:

Council Tree's daily debrief began November 9: Based on a program presented at CAL this fall, Millie and Currie planned and implemented CT's new routine of the daily debrief meeting for all CT staff. The debrief, named the "Pow-wow" by popular vote, takes place from 9:40 am – 9:50 am, is facilitated by all staff on a rotating basis, and covers daily information on the following areas: programs, schedule, collections, facility and a "catch-all" bit of trivia, a joke, an anecdote, etc. Staff are enjoying the Pow Wow, appreciate being included on library business, sharing leadership, and building camaraderie with fellow staff.

Dart Reference Tracker tool beta test November 8 - 21: The web-based Dart Reference Tracker tool provides an electronic system for reporting, tracking and analyzing a library's information transactions. It is made available for free from the Library Research Service, based at the Colorado State Library in Denver. With Ken's support, Currie researched, organized and implemented the Dart beta test first at CTL and then at Harmony and Main. For one week, public desk staff was asked to use Dart to record their informational transactions instead of using the traditional method of hash marks on paper. Over 3,000 questions were logged. Currie, Amy and Ken will continue to analyze the tool itself and the results in the weeks to come. The Dart tool may be used to guide staffing levels, training, collections, efficiencies and procedures.

Facility:

Countertop repair work completed Nov 4: John Murphy Millworks began work on repairing chips to the edges of threecountertop in children's, teens and the west study room. Work was completed under warranty. JMM also replaced a badly chipped "L" shaped laminated countertop in the circ work room for half price (damage was from wear and tear).

Additional lighting project installation completed November 9: Choice City Electric completed the installation of 12 additional light fixtures in the Teen area, study rooms and children's area. The areas are now more functional since they are brighter, warmer and more welcoming.

CTL Meeting Room Management: Currie assumed the management of CTL's meeting room reservations as of November 15. Millie has agreed to help. The (very popular) CTL meeting room may be reserved at ctmeetingroom@poudrelibraries.org

Little storytime room door removal and remodel began November 30: After many months of trying to make the little storytime room door safe for little fingers, Currie and Millie decided the best option for the safety of our children was to remove the door. Rob removed the little door and door-closing device on November 29. Finishing Touch contracting began work on a "mouse hole" arch doorway design on Nov. 30. The remodel is on track for a Dec. 5 completion date.

MSN (Microsoft Network) TV Filming November 18: MSN filmed a segment for one of their financial programs at CTL on November 18. The segment featured a stay-at-home mom who wanted advice on marketing her cloth book patterns. The mom lives in SE Fort Collins and uses CTL regularly with her toddler daughter. The crew, from California, filmed the segment near the Play and Learn Center.