

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – September, 2014

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### **Sunday Hours**

We officially opened Sunday hours 4-8pm on Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>. Sundays are quite popular and the library averaged **40 visitors per hour** or **161 people** total the first Sunday. In general, library usage has been increasing this fall. With school starting and as summer wanes, this is quite typical.

### **Community and Nature in Harmony Award**

Homer Library was selected by the Village of Homer Glen Environment Committee to receive a 2014 Community and Nature in Harmony Award for establishing **StoryWalk®** at Sendra Park in the Woodbine subdivision. This award was created in 2002. The Library received it in 2002 for the Green Community Grant I co-authored that established a green community initiative, which provided \$100,000 to the Village of Homer Glen. We are most honored to receive it again for the innovative **StoryWalk®** path project that combines reading and physical activities at Sendra Park. **StoryWalk®** has support from two partners: Homer Township and the Homer Glen Foundation.

### **Annual Report / Per Capita Grant**

Every public library in Illinois is required by law (ILCS) 5/4-10 to file an annual report with the State Library. The purpose of this report is to obtain and publish data on the resources and services of all Illinois public libraries. Our annual report is completed with fiscal year-end statistics (after June 30<sup>th</sup>) now in.

With the building now at 26, 497 square feet, we note increasing social and small group use. Trends noted last year included residents wanting additional computers and technology, quiet areas to study and socialize in, quality family programming, fax and copier use, and on-site support. With this in mind we have anchored a 24-public computer bay. We have six independent study rooms, a quiet reading room, multiple 2-4 person tables and couch seating throughout, family diner style booths, a separate teen room, and both a community and youth activity room. These allow for an optimal library experience for our residents. They can find a niche for their specific use from a multiple of possibilities.

Usage has remained consistent this year (with one month in total closed due to the move into the expanded space and the flood issue) with approximately 25 people visiting each hour the library is open. Homer Library has a solid 16,589 resident library cards in use. Collection usage has increased 9% to 191,036 items checked out. Public computer usage has increased approximately 25%.

We have examined staff positions and have flexible staffing that anchors the expanded departments spread throughout the library. Program and computer training requests are increasing, especially from our seniors and adult patrons. We are currently examining a print on demand system for the computers with new copier equipment planned for purchase. As we look at future planning for programs, including outreach, these trends will be a priority to address.

**Per Capita Grant** - The Illinois State Library (ISL) has provided the per capita grant application to us. The application must be completed with statistical information and details as ISL has requirements each year that must be met to receive funding. Previously we updated our Technology Plan, formalized our "Green" document, undertook a SWOT and community SCAN, and we continue to systematically review the required State Standards for Libraries.

These grant funds are earmarked for supplementing the information tools that our patrons use daily, including books, audio, and special collections of materials. Total grant award should be in the range of \$40,000. As supported by the 2010 census data, the population of Homer Township (39,059) has 27.4% children, 63% adult and 9.5% seniors. The primary change is the growing senior base (up 3.3%) and the adult base (up 6.4%). Homer residents use the Library heavily for a cross range of services, including computers and copiers, programs, reading, studying, classes, as a meeting place, and as the community social center.

### **Computer Classes**

We continue to assist computer users daily at our general bank of 24 computers and will be seeking to add laptops to offer core computer training again, as requested by our residents.

### **Special Events**

1. On August 27<sup>th</sup> the library will participate in the Chamber of Commerce Community Expo with table and bookmobile on display. Approximately 1000 visitors attend this event. Library Staff and teen volunteers will assist with set-up, tear-down and represent the library during the event.
2. The Goodings Grove Lions Club has changed to become the Gleaners Oak Arbor Club, which is based on Gleaner Life Insurance Society. Our new Oak Chapter will be undertaking community service projects. Community support for its' second year will kick off on October 22<sup>nd</sup> with the 2014 Fall Harvest for area seniors. In the past we have had more than 90 seniors visit over a two-hour period to receive free fruits and vegetables, courtesy of a partnership with local grocers. We also serve coffee and have a snack table so seniors are able to socialize together. This is one illustration of the library serving in many ways as the social center place in the community. This year the venue once again will be at the library in the community room.
3. Kindergarten Field Trips and school visits will be an outreach endeavor to classrooms this fall to encourage all students to get a library card and feel comfortable visiting the library.
4. September is Literacy Month as well as Library Card Sign up Month. We will be providing information at a "Welcome to Your Library" table with the White Oak (Lockport) Library at Culvers on 159<sup>th</sup> and Crème Road. We hope to encourage signing up for a library card and showcasing what Homer Library offers.

### **1,000 Books before Kindergarten**

Our new initiative 1,000 Books before Kindergarten is a free program that encourage families to read 1,000 books with their child before the child enters school. Sharing books helps cement pre-reading skills and helps to provide an important foundation to school and learning success. This is an incentive program and will be supported in part by the Homer Junior Women's Club. At key levels participants will receive a family book bag, with each child able to select a new book of their choice and receive a certificate and t-shirt. By reading three stories each day a family will have read more than 1,000 books in one year, so we know this is an achievable goal. It also encourages library use and program participation. We plan to kick off this initiative in November this year.

### **Illinois Library Association**

The 2014 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference (ILA2011) is titled Kickstarting Connections, Creativity, Community, focuses on how libraries align ideas, passion, and commitment to cultivate connections and create imaginative approaches, methods and/or library services across Illinois communities. It will be held October 14-16 in Springfield, IL. Complete information is at: <http://www.ila.org/ila-events/2014-ila-annual-conference>

The ILA conference is the best place in Illinois to develop professionally, connect with colleagues, and learn about new techniques and new products that improve library services for our community. This year's conference offers approximately 70 programs and will feature more than 150 companies exhibiting their new products and services. This conference is the third-largest state library exposition in the nation, representing 3,000 librarians from the state's public, academic, school, and special libraries. Librarians, trustees, library assistants, educators, and others interested in libraries all attend. Conference attendance highlights the innovative ways that we can use to embrace best practices, offers opportunities to network with colleagues, and provides information to encourage librarians' to remain vital and indispensable to our community.

An entire track of programming has been created specifically for library trustees. As noted in the State Standards for Illinois Libraries, trustees are encouraged to attend at least one educational opportunity annually and I hope you will consider the ILA Conference. Trustee day is set for Wednesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. This year's conference planning committee dedicated itself to bringing a top notch line-up of programming. Program information is included in your board packet. Please let Assistant Director Sara McCambridge know if you plan on attending.

## **Programs + Events**

Upcoming library events and programs include:

- ◆ September Literacy Month and Library Card Sign Up Month
- ◆ September Fall newsletter distributed via Homer Horizon Newspaper
- ◆ September 7 Sunday hours 4-8p.m. resume
- ◆ September 15 Fall program sign-up
- ◆ September 19 Information provided @ Culver's to encourage library card registration
- ◆ September 27 Library Booth & Bookmobile @ Chamber Expo Event
- ◆ Sept 21-27 Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read
- ◆ October Illinois Arts Month
- ◆ October 3 Teen Open House
- ◆ October 12-18 Teen Read Week
- ◆ October 14-16 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference; Springfield
- ◆ October 20 Author Fair
- ◆ October 22 Senior Harvest with Homer Township Oak Arbor
- ◆ November 13 Star Wars Specialty Program (not confirmed yet)
- ◆ November 15 National Game Day
- ◆ November 20 Family Reading Night
- ◆ December 13 Puppet Show
- ◆ February Food for Fines month

## **In Conclusion**

This monthly report is intended to give you a detailed overview and provide pertinent information on local, regional and state issues. Upcoming priorities include the levy and working budget portions of the budget.

We welcome Linda Sumis to lending services. Linda joins our lending/circulation team.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any item in my report detailed more fully.

***Sheree Kozel-La Ha***

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Library Director

9/19/14