

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – January, 2015

Happy New Year!

Year in Review

More than one quarter of a century ago, in July 1982, Homer Township Public Library opened in the Reed School building, under a grant from the federal government. The following year a referendum passed, establishing the Homer Township Public Library District as a unit of local government. We have been serving Homer Township and Homer Glen as a first-rate information source with excellence these past 32 years. Today's libraries are more important than ever and function as community social centers and great equalizers, especially during tough economic times. Library use has increased as people seek free books, DVDS and other materials along with high quality programs for entertainment and learning. And computers are extremely popular as we now have 3-4 times the computers than before the expansion. We encourage residents to use the library and note that they can save money by doing so. Users enjoy free DVD movies, can access more than 100 magazines and newspapers, check out brand new books, take free computer classes, register their children for a variety of fun programs, join many library social clubs, use a public computer, and benefit from the library more than ever in 2015. Residents can pursue skills that prepare them for lifetime success at every age and stage in their lives. We offer thirty computers, both conventional and WIFI access, a collection of approximately 100,000 items, an engaged staff to assist patrons, and round the clock access from work or home.

This past year has been an energizing and successful one at Homer Library. Statistics help us tell the story and showcase library usage.

- **Up to 600** customers daily (105,027 visitors annually)
- **548** items circulate daily (191,036 items each year)
- **12,792** users annually log on using a library computer
- **22,000** annual Help Desk questions are answered by experienced staff (63 questions each day)
- **334** quality programs this past year for children, teens and adults
- More than **1,000** new library cardholders in the past five years

Bond Update

We will pass an ordinance to abate the bond proceeds on the tax rolls. This is done annually in January.

Grants

This year I am again proactively pursuing grants and sponsorship opportunities through outside funding sources and local agencies. New grants will be sought from local agencies and through creative partnerships. I have coordinated with BMO Harris Bank and IL American Water to continue to support educational programming and collections for our community. We appreciate the generosity of our sponsors.

Tax Forms

For this filing season, we will offer the following products:

- Forms 1040, 1040A and 1040EZ
- Publication 17, one reference copy for each participant (Taxpayers will be able to access Publication 17 in English and Spanish online from irs.gov/Pub17 and, new this year, it will also be available as a free e-Pub for downloading from IRS.gov and viewing on most e-Readers and other mobile devices.)
- Publication 4604 (EN/SP), Use the Web for IRS Tax Products & Information
- Publication 1132, Reproducible Copies of Federal Tax Forms and Instructions
- The TFOP Poster Package which includes:
 - a) Publication 1169, Need Tax Help?
 - b) Publication 1258, Where Should I Send This?
 - c) Publication 1309, Tax Forms This Way Publication
- Publication 1725, If The Form Fits...Use It!

Winter Reading Programs & Events

The Winter Reading Club “Reading is SNOW Much Fun!” will have Chicago Wolves as our primary sponsor. We are most appreciative of this partnership, which brings many reading incentives to participants at the library and on the bookmobile. The program includes teens and will begin February 2nd. The bookmobile will also feature the Winter Reading Club.

Staffing

As we acclimate in the expanded space we have been reviewing staffing levels and adjustments are ongoing.

Marketing the Library

- Articles in the newspaper include my Library Year in Review in the Homer Horizon, as well as other program information. The library newsletter was provided via the Horizon as an insert this month.
- We are sending monthly library calendars to the schools in our district; reaching approximately 7,000 students. We are supplying the same monthly library calendar to local area daycares. Some of the schools now scan the documents into a parent portal for parents to access online.
- Positive press coverage continues from the local newspapers.
- The outside library sign is always an opportunity to encourage use of the library and specialty programs. Inside the electronic bulletin board at lending services showcases upcoming events.

We continue to promote the library at many levels. We use the following: brochures, media wall, in-house handouts, print newsletter, email blast, Facebook/Twitter, TV Media, fliers, calendars to schools, and emails to the HS. Newspapers that we promote information to include the Homer Horizon, Triblocal, Herald News, Southtown Star, and we will expand to Patch, some local groups, and look to adding self-authorized articles. This is one of the most challenging aspects at the library, coordinating the publicity from each department. Future plans include adding a defined staff member position to assist us, if the budget allows.

Programs and Events

We continue to seek support for new and established popular programming that includes:

- One Book One Community (books under discussion include Gone Girl, Divergent, American Sniper, Unbroken, The Fault In Our Stars)
- Name Author Event
- Job Club
- Little Library (location to be determined) see <http://littlefreelibrary.org/>
- Saturday Disney Film Series
- Sunday Music @ Your Library
- Youth Safety Session Series
- Teacher in the Library – Homework Help
- 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten
- Winter & Summer Reading Clubs
- Craft Fair
- Star Wars 2015
- Shark Week

We have several new program initiatives that are popular, including Yoga programs that emphasize the community room and promote collections that support wellness. We will hold a Home/Craft show anchored by teen volunteers as a fundraiser this spring. Staff has initiated a Ladies Night Out group and Bingo. A series of financial programs will kick off national Money Smart Week in the spring, anchored by sponsorship from BMO Harris Bank. Water Conservation programming is planned, with support from IL American Water. Popular College Funding workshops are scheduled. A new series of Computer Classes will resume for Internet, Excel, PowerPoint and Word. We have had excellent response for Sensory Story time, too. It is a great bonus to now have defined community program rooms. Planned programs do not have to compete with each other, but can run simultaneously in the Community Room, Family Activity Room and Teen Room. The Quiet Reading Room will host some book discussion groups and also House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, who will hold “office hours” at the library on the

third Thursday of each month (Feb., March & April) from 5-7pm. The following schedule showcases the many adult, teen and youth programs that are planned. Plans for an iPhone User's Club this spring are in the works.

Currently accepting applications for upcoming Arts & Crafts/Vendor Fair on May 2

Thru Feb 27	Visit the Berry Unsafe House
Jan 26-Mar 3	Story Time sessions every Monday & Tuesday
Jan 26-Mar 5	Wiggles & Giggles sessions every Monday, Wednesday & Thursday
Jan 27-Mar 3	Special Needs Story Time sessions every Tuesday
Jan 27-Mar 3	Family Story Time sessions every Tuesday
Jan 28-Mar 4	Music & Movement sessions every Wednesday
Jan 28-Mar 4	Simply Stories sessions every Wednesday
Jan 29-Mar 5	Polish Story Time sessions every Thursday
Jan 26	Downton Abbey Tea with Chef Maddox
Jan 27	Legos
Jan 27	Chick Lit Book Discussion
Jan 28	Pokemon
Jan 28	PowerPoint
Jan 29	Teen Pizza Taste Off
Jan 31	Frozen Sing-Along
Feb 2	Adult Movie Matinee
Feb 2-Mar 2	Reading is SNOW Much Fun – Winter Reading Club for all ages
Feb 3	Teen Book Club
Feb 4	Story Explorers
Feb 4	Slow Cooker Secrets
Feb 5	Youth Bingo
Feb 5	Teen Volunteer Night
Feb 6	Basic Yoga
Feb 6	Coffee, Donuts, & a Movie
Feb 9	Mystery Book Club
Feb 9	Mother Daughter Book Club
Feb 9-22	Find the Hidden Snowman
Feb 10	Your Soul's Life Purpose
Feb 11	Chess Club
Feb 11	Ladies Night Out
Feb 12	TAB
Feb 12	Be My Valentine
Feb 13	Vinyasa Yoga
Feb 13	Armchair Traveler
Feb 14	Board Game Central
Feb 16	LIBRARY CLOSED
Feb 17	Crafternoons
Feb 18	Legos
Feb 18	Adult Book Club
Feb 19	Tween Scene
Feb 19	Manga/Anime
Feb 20	Adult Bingo
Feb 21	Babysitting
Feb 23-Mar 8	Dr. Seuss Guessing Jar
Feb 23	Frozen Costume Party
Feb 24	Legos
Feb 24	Chick Lit Book Club
Feb 27-Mar 1	Mini Used Book Sale
Mar 2	Mini Used Book Sale-Fill a bag for \$5

In Conclusion

What's next at your library? Long range planning will continue to provide the best in future services, collections and programs that bring value to the Homer community. We want to encourage residents to make Homer Library their "GO TO" place in 2015. We are compiling an hours/use survey and will be reviewing the website.

The appreciation event is a proactive way to acknowledge staff contributions. The foundation of support and goodwill is appreciated, as is your professionalism and willingness to do your best for Homer Community. I wish you a New Year of wonderful opportunities.

My report is intended to give you an overview and pertinent information on local (and regional) issues. If there is any issue that you would like information about, or anything detailed more fully, please let me know.

Sherree Kozel-La Ha

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Library Director

1/22/15