

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – March, 2011

Geek the Library

Everyone has something they are passionate about. The Geek the Library program is a bold publicity campaign to remind customers that we have materials that inspire and empower their life-long learning, hobbies, and interests. Geek the Library gets people talking about libraries and how libraries improve lives. The Geek campaign will be an ongoing initiative this year. Our three program goals include: gain people's attention; raise awareness of the library; and encourage library use and support. We have established a partnership with the Homer Horizon newspaper to feature a Geek of the Week picture and caption, which launched March 24th along with a feature article. Geek Family Day with minute-to-win-it contests officially launched the campaign this month. And we are soliciting local residents and businesses to join in the fun and get their official geek picture and poster taken at the library. Our library photo site showcases the campaign and other photos of library use and programs at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/homerlibrary/>.

National Library Week - April 10-16, 2011

National Library Week (NLW) began in 1958, as a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country. NLW is a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation's libraries, librarians and library workers and to promote library use and support. NLW will be celebrated with the theme, "Create your own story @ your library."

National Library Workers Day (NLWD) is Tuesday, April 12th. This is a day for library staff, users, administrators and Friends groups to recognize the valuable contributions made by all library workers. On January 25, 2003, a resolution was proposed to honor library staff which read: *That in order to recognize the hard work, dedication, and expertise of library support staff and librarians that the Tuesday of National Library Week be designated National Library Workers Day; and, that on that day, interested library workers, library groups, and libraries should advocate for better compensation for all library workers and, if the day coincides with National Pay Equity Day, these individuals, groups, and libraries should recognize both days together.*

Bookmobile Day is Wednesday, April 13th. We join the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Service (ABOS), and the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) as we commemorate the annual National Bookmobile Day. Providing the library experience to the extended Homer community our bookmobile offers professional outreach staff, programs, and special events, as well as quality resources. We are pleased that National Bookmobile Day recognizes and celebrates the role of bookmobiles and direct-delivery outreach services in fulfilling the mission of libraries. For over 100 years, bookmobiles have provided access to information and materials for life-long learning to Americans of all walks of life in rural areas, cities, and suburbs. We share a proud tradition of serving a community well.

Teen Literature Day is April 14th. The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA, the fastest growing division of ALA, is celebrating Teen Literature Day on April 14th. The purpose is to raise awareness among the general public that young adult literature is a vibrant, growing genre with much to offer to today's teens. Teen Literature Day also seeks to showcase some award-winning authors and books in the genre as well as highlight librarians' expertise in connecting teens with books and other reading materials. YALSA's 2011 Teen Read Week initiative will be celebrated in October with the theme "**Picture it @ your library!**" Statistics show that about one in every four library users is a teen.

Programs + Events

The Winter Reading Club was well received. Activities promoted reading and literacy via an incentive partnership program with Harris Bank and the Chicago Wolves Hockey Team. Fun reading incentives and giveaways included tickets, t-shirts, pennants, and posters. Staff continues to do an excellent job of soliciting sponsors for existing and new programs that benefit our community. We recognize all sponsors in PR, fliers, and on our web site. Last year we expended zero dollars on the summer reading program due to the generosity of local business support. We thank local organizations for their ongoing generosity. This type of program support will be pursued to help continue to limit spending and maintain a conservative budget.

Staff Spotlight

I want to recognize library staff for their hard work and fine team effort regarding programming and coordinating special events. Much appreciation goes to Alex Annen-Tyle, Adult Services Director; Kitty Mitchell, Youth Services Director; Jody Olivieri, Bookmobile/Outreach Manager; Sara McCambridge, Assistant Director; and Patti Nakutis, Administrative Assistant for their hard work and leadership in brainstorming creative programs and the collections that support our community. Each of the library departments have team meetings to discuss initiatives I am encouraging, as well as promote new ideas within their team or define the coordination necessary between departments. Exciting programs showcase collections in innovative ways. Many projects encourage developing partnership opportunities, which help us to support the Homer community and inspire our customers to value us anew. Coordinating the many elements for each program, including sponsors, publicity, and running them successfully is a team effort and our team is exceptional.

Financial

We continue to spend conservatively and have expended approximately 64% of the library's working budget over the past eight months (through February). Areas to note include:

1. Supplies and materials –expended 58% (for eight months).
2. Capital expenditures –expended 64% (for eight months).
3. Operating and contractual services / Personnel –expended 64% (for eight months).

Developing the working budget will begin soon. It is based on the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2011. The working budget does not mimic appropriation amounts, which represent our authority to spend. Instead it is an accurate picture of what we are conservatively spending. The working budget is distributed monthly at all board meeting in the compilation report.

We had an informative meeting with financial advisor Robert Lewis of PMA Securities. They have reviewed three years of audit and levy figures for the library and presented an overall picture of financial stability. They included the details of what they believe financially we can support from surplus funds not expended each year. Board President Dr. Ed O'Brien, Treasurer Mike Budde and I were present and I asked both the Assistant Director and Business Manager to attend. The library's financial stability was lauded and recognized to be extremely solid with the ability to mortgage or bond.

Long Range Planning

In reviewing other library renovations and building spaces we found Palos Heights Library to be especially relevant to what we may consider. A representative of the architect firm that did the Palos building, Joseph Huberty from Engberg Anderson Architects, was here recently to make available their firm profile. It was an opportunity to meet with him, ask questions, and provide a tour of Homer Library. He was very complimentary regarding the current use and maintenance of space. He noted that they have undertaken several library projects that are similar to what we may be considering. He would welcome the opportunity to meet the library board and present their firm.

Grant News

We were pleased to receive this month a \$32,773 grant award for a Public Library Per Capita Grant. The new Penny Severns Literacy program grant has been submitted, as well as Better World Book grant (\$25,000) and The Library Store (\$5,000). Several other grant applications are being completed for a total of ten applications. We will begin to learn of award status next month. Grant funds allow us to provide additional programs, collections, and the technical tools needed by our community.

Programs + Events

- ➔ April 10 - 16 **National Library Week 2011** – Patron Appreciation Week/Amnesty
- ➔ April 16 **Spring Fling Family Event**
- ➔ April - May **CHICK it OUT** Special Chicks Hatch @ Homer Library event
- ➔ June - July **Summer Reading Program**
- ➔ **American Dream Literacy Program** – ESL classes have begun and continue through April. This and more quality programming is via a grant award from ALA and Dollar General.
- ➔ **Volunteer Corp for Teens** – Community service hours are now required at local high schools. The library offers a variety of projects to assist teens and promote leadership.
- ➔ **Letters to the Troops** – Coming soon, this initiative will be our second opportunity for community members to write a troop letter using a library form.

Public Relations

- Articles in the newspaper include our newest Geek of the Week photo, feature article and program details along with other publicity for programs and library happenings.
- The director's and other blogs are posted regularly.
- We are sending a monthly library calendar to the schools in our district.
- We are supplying a monthly library calendar to six area daycares.
- We are receiving excellent press coverage from the local newspapers.
- The library calendar is accessible from the Library Web page.

In Conclusion

This has been a very busy month. Usage has increased and we are seeing many visitors. Grant writing is a continued priority along with long range planning. In April we will feature an amnesty of fines during National Library Week and many programs here and on the bookmobile.

These monthly reports are intended to give you a detailed overview and provide pertinent information on local and regional issues. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if you would like any item in my report detailed more fully.

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Library Director

3/21/11