

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – May 2011

New Grant Award – Penny Severns Family Literacy Grant

Our newest grant is the second year award for the Penny Severns Family Summer Literacy grant, which we call The KEY to Success: Knowledge, Education & You @ Homer Library. This grant consists of projects that provide integrated instruction and educational activities to improve the basic reading, math, writing skills or English language proficiency of parents and children together during the summer months. Services include reading enrichment for adults and children, literacy-based interactive parent-child activities, and library activities for the families' enjoyment. Projects also strengthen the ability of the parent to foster educational achievement and increase their ability to use the resources and services of the library. Last year we established partnerships with both Joliet Junior College and Lewis University to have them provide adult and family reading and literacy instructors to support grant activities. More details about this year's programs and partners to follow.

Grant funding provides quality program and increases resident awareness of the library as a strong community leader and collaborator. Additional grants have been submitted and we hope for continued success.

ILA 2011-2012 Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee focuses on implementation of the legislative agenda as recommended by the Public Policy Committee (PPC) and approved by the ILA Executive Board; develops annual advocacy plan in conjunction with PPC and the Executive Board; identifies advocacy best practices and implements them as appropriate; builds partnerships with organizations that have similar views; is responsible for advocacy education of ILA members; and develops educational materials and programs to improve ILA members advocacy skills.

The Committee consists of twelve voting members, representing all types of libraries, serving three-year, staggered terms. Each incoming ILA president appoints four members, including his/her designated Advocacy Committee chair. Nonvoting *ex officio* members are the ILA executive director, the director of the Illinois State Library, ILA President, ILA Past President, and the chair of PPC.

I am pleased to note that I have been re-appointed as the board liaison for the ILA Advocacy Committee for 2011-12. I was elected to the ILA Executive Board in 2009 will continue to serve as a board member through 2012. I am also a member of the ILA Finance Committee.

Non-Resident Card and Fee

The board needs to annually visit the non-resident card issue and review the fee. This is required by PALS and the administrative rules governing the non-resident law. Section 3050.20 states:

- a. The public library board of trustees shall annually take action to decide whether to issue non-resident library cards during the ensuing 12 months. At that time, the non-resident library card fee formula and fee, if applicable, to be used will be determined and adopted.*
- b. The public library board of trustees shall notify the regional library system within 30 days of the action taken and effective dates and fee formula as determined in this Part.*

Homer Library has previously used the tax bill "general average" method of computation to establish the fee we charge. Our current non-resident card is \$170. Neighboring library fees: Joliet = \$150; New Lenox = \$225; Mokena = calculated directly from tax bills; Lockport = \$115; Lemont = \$172, Fountaindale = \$367; Orland Park = calculated directly from tax bill; Frankfort = \$204, and Wilmington = \$152. We issue no more than 10 new cards annually.

Library Issues

The Illinois Library Association (ILA) has a link that you can use (CapWiz): <http://capwiz.com/ila/issues/> which provides easy access to current Illinois bills related to library advocacy and the mission of the ILA. You can also access general information about Federal, State and local legislators.

Merger News

You can sign up for email news about the 5-system merger. Visit <http://www.systemsmerger.info/> for additional merger news and information.

Long Range Planning

We are coordinating meetings with consultant Fred Schlipf in both June and July to provide input for the long range program. As we move forward a public meeting will also be scheduled. A timeline has been developed and as the process proceeds we plan extended outreach and communication to our community and elected officials via the newsletter, website, and more.

Spotlight on Homer Library Staff

- The bulk of staff vacations are beginning. We are always cognizant of staffing and schedule appropriately to provide coverage for those on vacation or out of office. The library is anchored by experienced staff, whether some staff is attending meetings or taking earned time off. Personnel records (regarding vacation, sick, and personal time) are recorded and monitored for every staff member by our business manager.
- Our staff has received much acclaim and I consider them the “best of the best!” I want to take this opportunity to give them credit for being such a positive and excellent group. They support a full schedule of events and throw their heart and energy into positive customer service. I appreciate their excellent effort and willingness to attend educational training and provide the best to our community.

Programs + Events

The library newsletter is being distributed as an insert piece via the Homer Horizon local newspaper. It details all upcoming programs and events. Local organizations continue to support the library and our programs. We thank them for their ongoing generosity. Upcoming library events and programs include:

- ◆ May 21 Library/Bookmobile @ Arbor/Earth Day
- ◆ May 29-Sept 4 Library Closed on Sundays over the summer
- ◆ May 25 Library/Bookmobile visit schools for “Reading Day”
- ◆ May 25 Chicks due to hatch- part of our special Chick It Out Program
- ◆ May 30 Butterflies due to hatch week of May 30
- ◆ June through August Teen Summer Volunteer Program
- ◆ June 10 Bookmobile Lockport Park District Touch A Truck
- ◆ June 13 SUMMER READING PROGRAM BEGINS
- ◆ June 13 SLAMMER (mascot) from Joliet Slammers @ Library
- ◆ June 21 BOOMER from Windy City ThunderBolts @ Bookmobile
- ◆ June 25 Homer Independence Day Parade – Bookmobile
- ◆ August 11-16 Used Book Sale
- ◆ August 27 Library Booth & Bookmobile @ Chamber Expo Event
- ◆ September 19 Author Fair
- ◆ October Costume Swap
- ◆ October 18 Teen Open House
- ◆ Ongoing through Dec Geek of the Week feature in Homer Horizon

Trustee Oath of Office/Ethics Committee

At the May meeting our board needs to induct the newly elected trustees and appoint or renew one-year terms of the library ethics commission. Current ethics terms end in April, 2011. The Ethics Commission has the authority to review and act upon complaints arising under Article 10 of the Model Ordinance (Gift Ban), and also to review complaints arising under Article 5 of the Ordinance for Prohibited Political Activities.

Buildings and Grounds

We completed minor tree trimming so that branches cannot scratch the bookmobile when it enters or exits the drive. The sump pump and electrical outlet were replaced. HVAC repairs were undertaken. The building MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) systems have ongoing issues that we continue to address.

Summer Reading Program

A Midsummer Night's Read is our summer reading club. We offer a full slate of quality programming to encourage youth to participate and enjoy reading this summer. We are pleased to coordinate reading incentives from six local elementary schools, who have each donated a themed gift basket as a contest prize. This tie-in with local schools is a win-win for all. In addition, we have several other sponsors in place.

As we operate a conservative budget, outreach for program support and sponsorship will continue to be a high priority. Sponsors for the 2011 Summer Reading Club are being coordinated with a complete listing to follow next month. We thank local organizations and businesses for their ongoing generosity. Last year we expended zero dollars on the summer reading program due to the generosity of sponsors. We recognize all sponsors in PR, fliers, and on our web site.

Statistics

Facebook/Twitter

Our presence on Facebook shows an average of 452 visitors each week with a consistent fan base of 109, an increase of 9%. This social network presence allows the library to publicize events and creates another avenue to interact and connect with our patrons. Twitter is a social stream that we have begun posting regularly to.

Flickr Library Photo Site

We began posting pictures to flickr in April, 2006 and were one of the first libraries to use this online site. To date we have had 46,842 visitors view the 7,703 pictures that are posted.

Library Web Site/Blogs

In April, 2010 there were 13,746 visitors to the library's main web page. In the past five years I have posted at least once monthly to my director's blog. 2010 statistics show that 25,000 visitors have viewed the director's blog and the teen blog – that's 50,000 people coming to our site. 2011 statistics are not available at this time.

CHICK-IT-OUT Live Hatch Program via Webcam

We've had more than 4,555 people log onto the Chick-It-Out webcam (in just over 2 weeks!) as the chicks hatched and grew. This program is extremely well received and created a fun new energy at the library. We are also hatching butterflies on site and on the bookmobile. Our second batch of chicks is due to hatch May 25th.

Each of the above areas' statistics details the people we are reaching as we establish new ways to connect to our users and showcase the many programs and services we offer. These sites allow the vibrancy of the library to be "seen" and give us a human and social presence. We are fortunate to have talented and progressive staff to oversee these tools.

Annual Book Sale August 11-16

The library's teen groups: Teen Advisory Board (TABs), Young Adult Committee (YACs), and Teen Interns will assist in the planning, organizing, and running of the end-of-summer book sale. Used book donations will be accepted in early August. In the past 3 years this event has raised \$5,000.

Teens at the Library

Once again, we offer a "teen summer library intern program." Teens will be able to schedule hours to undertake a variety of support and learning roles with staff mentors at the library. Teens can intern as Special Event Helpers, General Help Desk volunteers, Summer Reading Desk, and Used Book Sale assistants under the direction of our supervisory staff. They will also do general volunteer work with the Summer Reading Program club. All activities promote leadership, self-confidence, and responsibility. Last year we had more than 70 teens participate.

Financial

We continue to spend conservatively and have expended approximately 78% of the library's working budget over the past ten months (through April). Developing the new working budget has begun. It is based on the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2011. The working budget is distributed monthly at all board meetings as part of the compilation report. This budget is always reviewed with both the accountant and finance committee. The working budget will present an accurate picture of what we plan to limit spending to.

Meeting Dates for New Fiscal Year

Please review the following dates. At the May meeting a resolution needs to be passed regarding the schedule of board meetings for the next fiscal year.

- July 25, 2011
- August 22, 2011
- September 26, 2011
- October 24, 2011
- November 29, 2011
- January 23, 2012
- February 27, 2012
- March 26, 2012
- April 23, 2012
- May 21, 2012
- June 25, 2012

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. An upcoming feature will showcase teen volunteers and the new literacy grant.
- ◆ 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

My priorities for the coming months are budget work, personnel evaluations and meetings regarding long range plans. Statistics will also begin to be compiled for the annual IPLAR report after June 30th.

These monthly reports are intended to give you a detailed overview and provide pertinent information on local and regional issues. In addition I provide weekly trustee updates that present information about the activities and long range plans of our library. I will be out of office this month from May 25th to June 1st and Assistant Director Sara McCambridge will capably handle things during my absence.

Please contact me if you have any questions or if you would like any item in my report detailed more fully.

Sheree Kozel-La Ha
SHEREE KOZEL-LA HA

Library Director
May 20, 2011