

DIRECTOR'S REPORT **December 2005**

Automation Project – Weekly bookmarks are going out, each answering a specific question we have received from a patron.

Patrons are being asked to complete a new application so when we enter the patron information into the new database we know it is current and accurate. New cards will be distributed to staff when we Go Live! The tentative Go Live! date is February 10.

Client software has been loaded on computers in all seven libraries. Functional training for staff is January 5 & 6, with all District libraries closed. The training database will be built the week of January 9 and once ready, all staff will be expected to begin using it, looking for issues with how our materials display and to become proficient in the use.

Evaluations – Evaluations are well underway. Mine will be complete by the end of this week. All other evaluations are written and meetings with staff will take place before the end of the month.

Shirts for staff – We are thinking about asking the Friends groups to pay so staff can all get a shirt with the LCLD logo embroidered on it. The setup is about \$50 and the shirt prices are \$15 - \$20. This issue will be discussed at the staff meeting Dec. 13.

Snow Removal – It became abundantly clear during the snow storms that we are not prepared to deal with the sidewalks. The first Saturday we got hit two staff (Moscow) spent hours outside shoveling snow. Shelving went undone and only one person was covering the Moscow circ desk. This is unacceptable on several levels – first, one of the staff has a bad back and this opens the District up to some unwanted worker's comp issues and second, work that they are hired to do went undone because they were out shoveling snow.

We have been unable to find anyone yet, who, for a reasonable price, will ensure the sidewalks remain clear during future snowstorms. A change is going to have to be made to the recently approved position description for the business manager, sidewalks are not going to be her responsibility, she simply does not have the time.

I have contacted the city to see if they will take over responsibility for the periphery sidewalks and a price quote on having them do the other walkways. We have not received a response yet.

In the meantime, I have instructed staff to remain indoors and do the job for which they were hired. If the sidewalks become unsafe or impassable, we will close the library. I see no other alternative at this time.

Rowdy Patrons – Most of the libraries are dealing with rowdy patrons, frequently this behavior is tied to kids playing games on computers, or arguing over whose turn it is to use a computer. I believe this is a direct result of having insufficient staff at any of the libraries. We are seeing some very serious violations of policy in Moscow; elders being told to get off computers so teen-age boys can use them, harassing behaviors where hats are taken, youth talking back to staff, and unacceptable noise levels. The end of the Moscow Library where the youth tend to gather is unsupervised – no staff is available to be a presence down there. Staff spends time trying to deal with these issues again taking them away from other priorities.

I think we have put staff in a “no win” situation where they are expected to be doing multiple tasks simultaneously even when the tasks call them to be in completely separate locations. I am concerned about the “safe & friendly” environment that we claim to provide; without sufficient staff, we can no longer make this promise to our patrons.

Patron complaint about magazines – I received a complaint from a patron regarding the “Christianity Today” and “Creation” magazines. The letter from Ms. Baumgart is attached to my report along with my response

Requests for information – I received several requests for information from Chris Kowrach, Kendrick. Attached is all the correspondence to and from Ms. Kowrach.

Branch open houses – I attended the Juliaetta and Deary open houses. The Friends did a splendid job in decorating both libraries. I enjoyed visiting with people and listening to the Deary choir sing carols.

I also attended the Jack Nisbet presentation sponsored by the Friends of the Moscow Library and the Idaho Humanities council. Mr. Nisbet gave a very interesting account of David Thompson on the Columbia Plateau, 1800-1812. There were about 50 people in attendance. He signed copies of his book The Mapmaker’s Eye: David Thompson on the Columbia Plateau, 1800-1812 after his presentation.

Override – I will set a meeting with the Finance Committee right after the 1st of the year to discuss whether to recommend pursuing the override.

Planning committee preparations – The Planning Committee is meeting Dec. 19 to begin planning for how to revise our strategic plan. We are using ALA’s (American Library Association) “The New Planning for Results” to guide us through the process. This is a streamlined version of the same book that the planning committee used in 2002-03.

Branch Information

Bovill – Business has been pretty normal in Bovill this last month. The Bovill preschool is coming down for story time on Thursdays and we usually have anywhere from 8-12 kids. Now that we have snow on the ground I am seeing a few more kids in for the computers after school. Our star has been put up again on the front of the library for the holiday season. This star has been seen on the front of this building during the holiday for approximately the last 25 years. It’s a beautiful sight when you come down the hill into Bovill and see this on the front of our library. Thanks to our friends who have taken the time every year to see that the star is taken care of and hung up.

Deary – The highlight of the last few months was Anne coming out to visit our libraries to chat about various preparations for migrating to VALNet. What a pleasant surprise it was to see her in the branches! We faithfully copy the weekly informative bookmarks and distribute them to our patrons. Food for Fines and Cans for Kids went really well this year. We collected 58 food items for the local food bank! The patrons really appreciate being able to donate and pay off fines too.

Snow removal is in full swing. The City plows our driveway - it was nice to come to work and only shovel out the back and front door and the bookdrop. Winter is truly here! More next month!

Genesee –

Juliaetta – November was a quiet month for Juliaetta. Some story times were well attended but one week we only had 5 children and 3 adults. Many patrons have been saying that they have been sick so the winter weather- round of illness has begun.

The Friends held an Open House to show off the improvements made to the Juliaetta Library over the past months. Some things, like some painting in the back room, are yet to be completed but we hope to have it all done shortly after the first part of 2006. There were approximately 80 people at the Open House and lots of good food and conversation. Thank you to Janice for attending and visiting with

patrons. Eight new library cards were issued to long-time residents that have never used the library before. It pays to advertise!

The Friends decorated their "tree" in the Kendrick Park for the annual "Light the Park" event which took place on November 19. This year the Friends drew the bushes by the swimming pool so it was an easy chore to string lights on them. I bought some tickets for the raffle, which was held to help pay for the event, and won a two-hour pool party for next summer. I am donating the certificate to the library to use for Summer Reading so the Friends will not have to pay for the pool rental for the final party next summer.

Business has been slow at the library but it always is during the holiday season. Happy Holidays to everyone!

Moscow –

Access Services – November was an eventful month in the Moscow circulation department. We saw patron traffic increase as the weather changed and the warm library became especially appreciated. We welcomed the patron interest in the Friends of the Library booksale on November 5th, and were glad to see Janice back from her vacation soon after that. Staff conducted the popular two-week Food for Fines campaign from the 7th through the 19th and volunteers divided the donated food among three local food banks. We continued distributing the weekly VALNet marketing bookmarks and in late November put up a VALNet information bulletin board. We also began the staff evaluation process.

Adult Services –

Business Office -

Outreach Services - November was active in Outreach Services. The numbers for inter-library loans were high – 42 items borrowed, 11 loaned, and 5 that were unable to be filled. My visits to preschools and daycares have been approximately cut in half for this fiscal year, as compared to last year, but working 4 hours/week on the reference desk on Thursday evening has been interesting. I feel like the new kid on the block up there and am still foundering around on working the cash register and taking money and cans for fines for overdue materials from patrons. I worked through an online tutorial on reference sources provided by the University of Idaho during this month to learn more about effective search strategies for reference questions. Add in the time to reflect on the self-evaluation and job duties that are fairly new to round out a busy month.

Tech Services -

Youth Services –

Potlatch – We didn't have the turnout we would have liked for the Family Reading Night. We only had 22 adults and children show up. Jo Minden, Elementary School Librarian and I felt we did everything we could to get the word out. We have had success with this program before, so I do not know what happened this year. I am going to concentrate on adult programming, since we already have storytime and summer reading for the kids. We also have the Christmas Open House that brings in both Adults and Kids. Our adult programs have always been well attended. The Potlatch Recreation District awarded the library a \$480 grant to supplement our paperback budget. The Friends will provide \$120 dollars and then we will have the \$600 to cover the cost of cleaning for the year.

Troy – Not only was the "Food for Fines" a success, but so was the "Cans For Kids". We had a man bring in 54 items for the "Cans for Kids." It cleared many fines for the kids.

Anne is keeping us well informed about VALNet each week by sending us book marks with important information on each. She also sent out flyers to use for a VALNet information center. Patrons have asked several questions about the new consortium.

I am enjoying using i-page to order paperback books. Thanks Sheila for making it easier for us. The Troy Elementary School made a book about the Veterans and it is displayed at the Troy Library. It is titled, It Takes Many Hands, Helping and Defending America.

We now have a new reading lamp to go with the new chair and ottoman in the Adult Reading Corner. How lucky we are to have wonderful Friends of the Library.

The Book Club met this month to discuss the book, American Chica, by Marie Arana.

The Creative Workshops with an Author have tentatively been scheduled in March on Wednesday the 22nd, 7-8 p.m. and Saturday the 25th, 9:30-12:30 a.m. at the Troy Library. The Troy Friends will be acting as the Fiscal Agent for the across-county events. I am sure I will have more on this later.