

## DIRECTORS REPORT FEBRUARY 2014

### Notes on Library Services, Programs, and Staff:

- As everyone knows, January was not kind to us in the weather department. We closed four hours early January 2 and were closed all day Sunday through Tuesday, January 5, 6, and 7. Given that the library was open fewer days this year than last, we expected the door count would be down for the month – and it was down 6,400. In spite of all the bad news, however, circulation was a bright spot, down just a fraction from last January.

February's weather so far has been only marginally better, but it's encouraging to see how resilient our patrons are in continuing to use their library.

- Highlights for February include several successful programs. Collaboration with the Hamilton County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Carmel Clay Historical Society resulted in a program about the Roberts Settlement story. This was a free black settlement and community of Native Americans, African Americans, and Euro Americans. The program had an attendance of 76, including several descendants from Roberts Settlement. Although scheduled to last an hour, it lasted another half hour because of the number of questions people asked.
- We enjoyed a successful launch of the community-wide program called Carmel Clay Reads the Arts. The book selected is *Mao's Last Dancer*, the true story of a young Chinese boy taken from his small village to Beijing to be trained as a ballet dancer. His story was also made into a film with the same title. The launch coincided with the Chinese New Year celebrations, including dragon dancers and young Chinese dancers in the library lobby and a musical performance with original Chinese instruments in the program room. Mayor Brainard and representatives from ICCCI (Indianapolis Chinese Community Center, Inc.) and the Center for the Performing Arts participated in the program. The book is available in English and Chinese and in a young adult version. Book discussions and related programming are also scheduled.
- The CCPL/CCS eBook partnership continues to develop and thrive. As previously mentioned, Children's staff have provided instruction to students in the elementary schools and interest has been expressed to do the same in the middle schools. If the initiative extends to middle schools, YA staff will provide the training. *Current in Carmel* ran an article recently on this collaboration, including a photo of CCPL librarian Holly Southern and students taken at one of the instructional sessions.
- Children's and Youth Services has been building up the nonfiction collection to provide better support for the educational focus on STEM. They were recently

rewarded for their efforts when a first grade teacher remarked on the increased number and quality of books she has found for her young students.

- Audiovisual Services recently upgraded the subscription to Freegal (free and legal downloadable music). The limit on the number of songs patrons may download each week has been raised from three to five.
- Technical Services staff have been working with Circulation to clean up the database of library materials. This involves eliminating long lost items so they no longer appear to patrons. It isn't glamorous work but it's very important in maintaining the integrity of the catalog.
- The IT department reports that patron use of Pinterest continues to grow. The library's number of followers is close to 1,400 and there were nearly 4,000 referrals in January. This is a tribute to CCPL staff and their consistent attention to quality.

#### **Budget/Finance:**

- Following a request at last month's Board meeting, I contacted the County Auditor's office to ask for an explanation of how much of the property tax deficit is from the circuit breaker and how much might be for other reasons, such as appeals, delinquencies and the like. I didn't receive a definitive answer but it seems that most of the \$196,159 (the amount unpaid at settlement) is from the circuit breaker. Appeals are settled fairly quickly but could be a minor factor.

#### **Building and Grounds:**

- The contract with Lehman's Inc. has been reviewed by library attorney Deb Farmer Smith and I have signed it. Deconstruction and demolition work begins Monday, February 24 to be ready for installation of the new chiller, which will be delivered the last week of March. We expect the chiller to be operational before the middle of April.
- We are working with Conzer Security to upgrade our access to the building. The current system is original to the building and runs on an outdated platform. We are looking at a newer technology that will replace the magnetic swipe cards. Conzer already provides our security cameras, the same type of system that is used by Carmel Clay Schools.
- As an early reminder, the roof is under warranty until June of this year, after which the roofing company will conduct a thorough evaluation. We expect the evaluation will lead to a recommendation for what we should do in a post-warranty period.

- An area we may want to consider for green technology is to change the parking lot lights to LED fixtures. We received a quote last year but put it on hold because of the more pressing issue of replacing the chiller. We will ask for an updated quote, which could be between \$40,000 and \$45,000. The payback we were given last year is about 9 ½ years. The advantage is that the lights are virtually maintenance free, with an estimated life in excess of 100,000 hours.

#### **Foundation Report from Ruth Nisenshal:**

- The 2013 end of year direct mail appeal continues to receive donations. It stands at over \$43,000, almost \$4,000 more than the 2012 fall campaign. There are probably several factors responsible for this increase in donations, including more publicity for the foundation and library as well as increased patron awareness to maintain the library's excellence.
- On Wednesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> the foundation hosted the Downton Abbey event at the Palladium. We were very pleased to have over 760 attendees and the \$100 VIP tickets were sold out. Although the event expenses were high, the net proceeds were over \$31,000. We were very fortunate to have had wonderful sponsors who helped assure that we exceeded our \$25,000 goal.

The event was also the perfect launch for the library's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and the kick-off for the foundation's Centennial Society Campaign. Our campaign's honorary chairs Joyce & Jim Winner gave an excellent presentation to the assembled guests of their \$100,000 commitment to be used as a challenge match for the campaign. They emphasized the importance of the library in their lives and for the impact it has on the community.

The event chair Megan Gregor did an outstanding job in helping make this evening happen – her leadership and oversight of the committees and personal solicitation for in-kind donations were indispensable. She was determined that this event would succeed and it resulted in an event that will be difficult to duplicate.

- A Centennial Society mailing will be sent in a few weeks to a targeted list of donors and significant library friends. Linda Kennen is chairing this effort. To date, the society has received over \$30,000 in gifts and pledges towards the foundation's endowment.
- The foundation's individual and corporate committees met earlier in the month. They are each focused on different projects. The first, on the Centennial Society and maintaining our annual operating donations and the second, on presenting a series of educational programs "Law School for Small Business." More information about the series will be provided at the next Trustee meeting.

- The guild is also stepping up their commitment to become more self sufficient. We are reviewing the various responsibilities they can assume that were previously handled by the foundation. And at this month's guild meeting, the members approved a new concept – it was recommended that the increased dues (\$20), Guided Leaf event ticket (\$70) and new Centennial Society donation (\$10) be paid by the end of April. The collective \$1,000 donation from the guild will be acknowledged on the Centennial Society's recognition plaque.

### **Friends:**

- The next Friends Board meeting is March 20.

### **Legislative Issues:**

- It looks as if libraries may be relatively unscathed by legislative actions this session. If anything passes regarding the business personal property tax, it is likely to be the SB 1 version which affects taxpayers only if the assessed value of their business personal property is at least \$25,000.
- We understand that HB 1266 (local government finance issues) so far affects only the Huntington library, which has been the source of Representative Leonard's displeasure for the past several years. The situation could change before the session ends in mid-March, of course, but at this point no other public library would face binding fiscal approval of their budgets. (The only exception is the Indianapolis Public Library, which has long been subject to budget approval by the City-County Council.)

### **Strategic Planning**

- The Steering Committee met last week to discuss strategic plan activities and the February update is in BoardBook. A verbal report will also be given at the February 24 Board meeting.

### **Other**

- Over the course of a week late last August, we were the victim of a series of thefts of Blu-Ray discs that were subsequently sold to a half-price retailer in Indianapolis. With the help of the store's personnel and police detectives from both Carmel and Indianapolis, we were able to recover a portion of the stolen discs. Police also arrested an Indianapolis resident whose case is being prosecuted in Hamilton County. We received word last week that a jury trial has been scheduled in June. If the trial does move forward, Christy Walker, Nancy Newport, or I will be subpoenaed to appear in court.