

Chelsea District Library
Director's Report
January 2015

Did You Know?

- The youth department's READ (Reading Educational Assistance Dogs) to the Library Dog program, in which trained therapy dogs sit and "listen" to children reading to them, will celebrate its 11th year at the library in 2015. This program has shown that children can improve their reading skills by reading to a non-judgmental listener, plus the dogs are fun to pet!

Questions from Last Board Meeting

- None

Vacation/PTO

- I took vacation for a good part of the holidays, from December 23 thru January 2.

Library Board

- New Library Board Trustee
 - It is my honor to welcome Charlie Taylor to the Library Board of Trustees. Charlie was appointed to the library board in December by the Dexter Township Board to represent their constituents. I have worked with Charlie on a number of community-based projects over the years. He has always impressed me with his commitment, energy, and intelligence. Charlie will make a great constituent for Dexter Township and will represent both the library and his township with great passion and enthusiasm.
- Orientation for new board members
 - I have been organizing materials for our new board member Charlie Taylor about the library and the Board of Trustees. The orientation will include a tour, board by-laws, policy manual, an introduction to available staff, and several other items.
- Policy Committee
 - Will be meeting in late January or early February to examine a few dated policies to ensure that they are timely and up-to-date.
- 2014 Board Officers
 - The board will be approving its officers at their January meeting. The proposed board officers are:
 - President: Elizabeth Sensoli, Lima Township
 - Incoming President: Jerry Wilczynski, Lyndon Township
 - Treasurer: Robin Wagner, At-large (City of Chelsea)
 - Secretary: Gary Zenz, At-large (Lima Township)

Budget & Finances

- State Aid Report
 - Each year the library is expected to complete this annual report. State aid for libraries (also known as state aid for public libraries, state aid, direct aid or state funding) is funding provided to public libraries by the state of Michigan. Each eligible library receives a percentage of state aid based on the library's budget, income and population served. State aid represents a very small percentage of our annual budget each year, roughly \$6000 to \$7000 per year.
 - The state aid report for libraries is due in early February. I will complete work on this report by month's end.
- Audit
 - We are preparing documentation for the 2014 audit. Our first meeting with the auditors will take place in early February.
- Operating Budget 2014 Update
 - We ended the fiscal year under budget, about 95% performance. All major line items came in under budget.

Staff

- December was a slow month as many senior staff took vacation around the holidays, so there is very little programming to report out on. Staff concentrated their efforts on spending the rest of their material budgets.
- Staff Member Celebrating an Anniversary
 - Jennie Medeiros, 9 years.
 - Patty Roberts, 1 year.
- Midwest Literary Walk
 - The annual spring Midwest Literary Walk will welcome several critically acclaimed authors from all over the country and from various fields of writing, including fiction, nonfiction, poetry and even horror. The festival features readings at venues throughout downtown, such as the Purple Rose Theater, Chelsea Train Depot, Chelsea District Library, and Chelsea Alehouse. The event takes place at 11am on Saturday, April 25 and is free and open to the public.
 - We are proud to present this year's lineup, which includes Edward Hirsch, Davy Rothbart, Clayton Eshleman, Angela Flournoy, Josh Malerman, Annie Martin, and others to be determined.
 - **Edward Hirsch** is a celebrated poet. He has received numerous awards and fellowships, including a MacArthur Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an Ingram Merrill Foundation Award, a Pablo Neruda Presidential Medal of Honor, the Prix de Rome, and an Academy of Arts and Letters Award. In 2008, he was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets. He is now president of the [John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation](#).
 - **Josh Malerman's** breathtaking debut novel *Bird Box* has received universal acclaim with starred reviews from the publishing industry's leading taste makers. It is a horrific and gripping snapshot of a world unraveled that will leave you racing to the final page. Written with the narrative tension of *The Road* and the exquisite terror of class Stephen King, *Bird Box* is an edge-of-your-seat horror thriller set in an apocalyptic near-future world. Mr. Malerman is no stranger to Chelsea. When he's not writing horror novels, he is the lead singer of the rock band the High Strung, who have performed many times in Chelsea, including the library.
 - **Davy Rothbart** is the author of the national bestseller *Found*, and creator of the magazine of the same name. A contributor to public radio's *This American Life*, he is also the author of the story collection *The Lone Surfer of Montana, Kansas*. He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
 - **Clayton Eshleman** is one of America's foremost translators and poets, noted in particular for his translations of César Vallejo and his studies of cave paintings. Eshleman also founded and edited two of the most innovative poetry journals of the later part of the 20th century: *Caterpillar* (20 issues, 1967-1973) and *Sulfur* (46 issues, 1981-2000). Among his recognitions and awards are a Guggenheim Fellowship in Poetry, The National Book Award in Translation, two grants from the NEA, two grants from the NEH, two Landon Translation Prizes from the Academy of American Poets, and a Rockefeller Study Center residency in Bellagio, Italy.
 - In 2005, **Annie Martin** developed the award-winning "Made in Michigan Writers Series," which is devoted to highlighting the works of distinguished statewide writers to showcase our region's diverse voices. She is also a brilliant playwright. Martin wrote "Completing Dahlia," which was performed in 2001 by the Purple Rose Theatre Co.
 - **Angela Flournoy** is a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, where she received a Dean's Fellowship. She has taught writing at the University of Iowa and Trinity Washington University, and has worked for the Washington, D.C. Public Library. Her debut novel *The Turner House* brings us a colorful, complicated brood full of love and pride, sacrifice and unlikely inheritances. It's a striking examination of the price we pay for our dreams and futures, and the ways in which our families bring us home.
 - The Midwest Literary Walk is a joint venture of the Chelsea District Library, the Purple Rose Theatre, and Chelsea Alehouse, with support from the Friends of the Chelsea District Library. The featured authors' books will be available for checkout in a display at the library during the month of April, prior to the event.

Friends of the Library

- The Friends annual meeting will take place on Saturday, January 31.

Professional

- Michigan Library Association (MLA)
 - With the 2013-14 legislative session coming to a close, libraries have some things to celebrate but we also have significant work ahead of us in the New Year. The road funding package (**House Joint Resolution UU**) crafted by conference committee is now in the hands of the voters and will be decided at a May 12, 2015, regular election. Basics of the deal amend the State Constitution to:
 - Eliminate the sales and use tax on gasoline and diesel fuel used to operate motor vehicles after October 1, 2015.
 - Increase the maximum sales and use tax by 1% (from 6% to 7%).
 - Dedicate 60% of the first 5% of the sales tax and an amount equal to 12.3% of the first 5% of the use tax to the School Aid Fund. (The sales tax earmark currently applies to the first 4% of the tax; the use tax earmark would be new.)
 - Provide for the School Aid Fund to be used exclusively for aid to school districts, public community colleges, public career and technical education programs, scholarships for students attending either public community colleges or public career and technical education programs, and school employees' retirement systems, as provided by law. (This effectively removes aid to public universities as an allowable use for the fund.)
 - Dedicate 15% of the first 5% of the sales tax to be used for revenue sharing with townships, cities, and villages. (This earmark currently applies to the first 4% of the tax.)
 - Other pertinent legislative updates from the 2013-14 session include:
 - **HB 5453 (Robert Kosowski, D–Westland)** Legislation would double fines on overweight trucks and divert the new monies to road repair.
 - MLA, GCSI and members lobbied heavily against this bill and although we preferred to continue to oppose outright, the best outcome we could marshal included an amendment that would hold libraries harmless. The bill did not hold up in conference committee and is dead. However, we remain vigilant for future diversion of our penal fines.
 - **HB 5856 (Rep. Eileen Kowall, R-White Lake)** TIFAs and DDAs Draft 4 of proposed legislation.
 - Despite several efforts by House leadership and Representative Eileen Kowall to move TIFA/DDA reform through the legislature in the final weeks of the 2013-14 legislative session, HB 5856 did not achieve passage. The bill saw several forms but in the end, it could not muster the support needed to move through the process. It is anticipated that House leadership will continue this conversation in the next session and MLA will be engaged throughout the process.
 - **HB 5868 (Rep. Amanda Price, R-Holland)** Amendment to District Library Establishment Act This bill would allow the continuation of a district library if one or more of its municipalities is dis-incorporated.
 - MLA worked closely with Rep. Price (R – Holland) who introduced this bill the week of September 29. Despite severe timing constraints, GCSI and MLA worked diligently to achieve passage of this important legislation. It passed the Senate 38-0 in the final hours of lame duck. It is on its way to the governor's desk, who has fourteen days to consider the bill for signage.
 - **HB 5584 9 (Rep. Lisa Lyons, R-Alto)** This bill would eliminate February millage elections.
 - The bill was introduced on May 20 and was referred to the House Elections and Ethics Committee. This is a compromise that MLA was able to negotiate with Rep. Lyons, who originally proposed eliminating February, May, and August millage opportunities. The bill did not achieve passage and is dead.
 - **HB 4001 (Rep. Mike Shirkey, R- Clark Lake)** Legislation would modify the Freedom of Information Act.
 - The bill was discharged in the final hours of the lame duck session and placed on the Senate calendar. A substitute S-2 was offered and passed 30-8 from the Senate chambers. There has been much debate about the bill and the governor at one point signaled a possible veto. GCSI is working to confirm the governor's position on this bill in its final form.

- **HB 4363 (Rep. Amanda Price R-Holland) The bill would amend the Open Meetings Act** to read that a meeting is not open to the public if a member of the public body casts his or her vote on a decision without being physically present at the meeting.
 - The bill passed the House and was reported from Senate Committee. However, it did not achieve passage in the Senate and is now dead.
- **HB 5597 (Rep. Adam Zemke, D–Ann Arbor) Amendment to the District Library Establishment Act** removed the sunset for establishing a district library with a school district.
 - GCSI and MLA worked closely with legislative leadership to accelerate passage of this bill in the House and had agreement in the Senate to discharge the bill and move it all the way to final passage. However, in the end, the bill died in the political scrum between the House and Senate. We have secured a commitment from the House and Senate to run a bill reestablishing this part of the law in 2015.

Outreach

- No Notable Progress This Month

Meetings/Conferences Attended

- Finance Committee, 12/15
- St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Cancer Center Opening, 12/15
- Library Computer Volunteer Annual Meeting, 12/16
- Management, 12/16, 1/6
- Library Board of Trustees, 12/16
- Bob Pierce, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce, 12/17
- Library Makerspace Meetings, 12/17
- SRSLY Program Coordinator Job Interviews, 12/18
- Meeting with Library Grant Writer, 12/18
- Pat Conlin, Circuit Court Judge Swearing-in, 12/18
- All Staff Meeting, 12/19
- Midwest Literary Walk, 1/8

Respectfully,

William Harmer