

Chelsea District Library
Director's Report
March 2015

Did You Know?

- The library brings three children's authors to Chelsea Schools every year for the Authors in Chelsea program, and donates classroom sets of the authors' books to the schools. See the section below on the event for more details about this year's visiting authors.

Questions from Last Board Meeting

- None

Library Board

- Finance Committee
 - The Finance Committee will be meeting with Michael Voorheis, our new investment advisor with Chelsea State Bank on March 16. The meeting will focus on the library's investment portfolio and new options for return on investment.
- Board Retreat
 - The Library Board of Trustees is preparing for its annual retreat in April. The board will focus on succession planning, and revising the library's mission and vision statements.

Budget & Finances

- 2014 Audit
 - The auditors have completed all of their on-site work. I am awaiting their financial statements so that I can complete the MD&A report. I am confident that the audit is on schedule and the first draft will be received in time for the Finance Committee to review before the May board meeting.
- 2016 Budget Planning
 - Our management team will begin meeting in April to formulate plans for the 2016 budget. We do not anticipate receiving taxable values documentation from the county until May 1.

Staff

- Staff Member Celebrating an Anniversary
 - Karen Persello, 11 years
- 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 11 am 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 Rebecca Scherm.
 - **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.
- **Rebecca Scherm** is the author of *Unbecoming*, a novel. She received her MFA from the University of Michigan, where she was also a postgraduate Zell Fellow. She lives in Michigan, where she is working on her second novel, *Beta*.
- 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.
- 5H Community Read 2015
 - I have attended several recent Chelsea Wellness Foundation Coalition meetings to discuss funding for its year four comprehensive plan. As of this writing, it looks as if the library's original \$6000 request in support of the community read program will hold steady. We will know about the final details of the plan in the coming weeks. In the meantime, staff members are busy at work determining an appropriate book for this year's program, which will focus on "avoiding unhealthy substance," one of the four aims of the Wellness Foundation. If you have any good suggestions, contact us at 734-475-8732.
- Professional Exchange Program
 - I had such a wonderful experience visiting Cape Town and the rest of South Africa during my visit there in April 2013 as part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Peer Learning Meeting. One of the best experiences I had was visiting Sue Alexander and her wonderful library in Masiphumelele. I was moved by the many wonderful things that she had her staff members do for the community there. It was during my visit to Cape Town and her library that Sue and I came up with the idea of a professional exchange program between our two libraries. By sharing knowledge, ideas, and experiences that promote and teach cultural awareness, our goal is to strengthen the professional capability of both of our organizations to build stronger, more vibrant, and sustainable communities.
 - We have the dates worked out for the exchange, which is May 25 through June 20. I am pleased to extend an invitation to Nosiviwe Lutuli to be our visiting professional librarian this summer. In return, CDL adult service librarian will be visiting the library in Masiphumelele for four weeks. We are finalizing travel, visa, and other program details. We look forward to sharing much more information about Nosiviwe and the exchange program in the coming weeks!
- Newspaper Digitization Project Update
 - Recently, the Chelsea District Library launched the Historic Newspaper Project, which digitized the library's entire Chelsea Newspaper collection, making its content conveniently accessible to the public. For \$100, donor's sponsored the digitization of a year of the Chelsea newspapers between the years 1873-2012. We are pleased to announce that we have completed that sponsorship project. Thanks to the many generous donors who made this digitization project possible.
- Authors in Chelsea 2015

- The 6th Annual Authors in Chelsea Wednesday–Thursday, Mar. 25–26. Authors in Chelsea is a 2-day long celebration of three nationally known authors invited to Chelsea by the library to give writing workshops and assemblies in Chelsea schools for all 1st through 6th graders during the day. In the evening, meet and greet the authors at a special event in Room 100 at the Washington Street Education Center (512 Washington Street). Hear a brief presentation from each author, ask questions, and then get your book signed. Books by each author will be available for purchase, courtesy of Chelsea’s Just Imagine bookstore. In 2015, all our Authors are from Michigan and include Johnathan Rand, Nancy Shaw, and Gary Schmidt. To learn more visit our website at <http://aic.chelseadistrictlibrary.org>
- **RFID Project Launched**
 - The library launched its new RFID project in mid-February. During the lengthy process, we tagged the entire collection of materials, which included nearly 58,000 items. In addition, we have launched a couple of new self-check stations, which the patrons are utilizing and enjoying already. Many thanks go to Melanie Bell, the library’s network administrator for being so thorough in the planning and execution of this massive project.

Friends of the Library

- At their March board meeting, the Friends approved an increase in the Midwest Literary Walk funding from \$1500 to \$3000, and approved the request for \$2800 for new teen furniture. Thank you Friends. We are so lucky.

Professional

- Michigan Library Association (MLA) – Advocacy Updates
 - **Board Strategic Planning Meeting**
 - The MLA Board met in early March to begin work on a new strategic plan for the Association.
 - **Governor's Budget Recommendation Includes Increases for Libraries**
 - Governor Snyder has recommended a \$1 million increase in State Aid to Libraries for fiscal year 2015/16. This is good news in light of the lower net revenue numbers coming out of the state’s recent estimating conference. Net general fund revenues for the 2016 fiscal year are now projected to come in \$532 million lower than officials earlier estimated. State officials attribute the downturn to a recent surge in corporations cashing in old Michigan Business Tax credits that were issued as economic development incentives.
 - **Legislation Introduced to Make Libraries Gun Free**
 - Representative Andy Schor (D-Lansing) introduced House Bill 4261 which prohibits openly carried guns in so-called “gun-free zones” already in state law. The bill also amends the Concealed Weapon Act to add public libraries to the list of Michigan’s gun-free zones. A similar bill was introduced last year but was never granted a hearing in committee. Rep. Schor also attempted to introduce amendments to two of the gun bills in the House this week that would have closed the open carry loophole and added libraries to the gun-free list, but both were gavelled down and defeated. Passage of the new bill is unlikely; however, if your library supports libraries as gun-free zones, please contact your State Representative and ask them to support HB 4261 and take a moment to thank Rep. Schor for including libraries in his bill.
- Library of Michigan
 - I did an interview with the Library of Michigan in early March. The Library of Michigan is going to do a special report or feature about CDL’s winning the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce Annual Business Leadership Award. We will include the piece in the next board packet if it is published in time.

Outreach

- Chamber of Commerce Large Business Leadership Award
 - The Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce honored its 2015 Small and Large Business Leadership Award winners, which included the library and our friends at Chelsea Update, at its annual meeting on Feb. 19 from 6-8 p.m. at the Village Conference Center. Nearly our entire

staff showed up for the award ceremony along with many members of our Friends and Library Board of Trustees. A great night was had by all.

- The library will be fielding a bowling team for the Chamber's Annual Family Fun Night at Chelsea Lanes on March 14 from 7pm to 10pm.
- Lucy Ann Lance Show
 - On March 3, I joined Bob Pierce, Executive Director of the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, on the Lucy Ann Lance Show. We got an opportunity to talk about the significance of the library being recognized by the Chamber for its Business Leadership Award.
- Chelsea Senior Center
 - The library sponsored a wonderful Dr Seuss-inspired table at the annual Festival of Tables event, which took place on February 14. Many thanks to our staff members who volunteered their creative talents to the cause, especially Lucie Smith who created a special quilt.

Meetings/Conferences Attended

- Community Read Meetings, 2/5, 2/6
- Rotary Meetings, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3
- Monthly Meetings with staff, 2/12
- Chelsea Senior Center Festival of Tables, 2/14
- Management Team Meetings, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3
- Smarty Pants Trivia, 2/17
- Audit Meetings, 2/18
- Chamber of Commerce Business Leadership Award, 2/19
- Tour of the Ann Arbor MarkerSpace, 2/20
- Reading Glasses Book Club, 2/24
- Terri Lancaster, 2/25
- Clayton Eshelman, author, MLW, 2/25
- Finance Committee, 2/26
- Keegan Sulecki, 2/27
- Lucy Ann Lance Show, 3/3
- Midwest Literary Walk Meetings, 3/3
- Michigan Library Association Strategic Planning Meeting, 3/4
- Chelsea Area Wellness Coalition Meetings, 3/5

Respectfully,

William Harmer