# Chelsea District Library Director's Report February 2014

#### Did You Know?

• Did you know that nearly 7 out of 10 residents of the Library's service area, which encompasses the entire Chelsea School District, own or possess a library card? Now, compare that to the national average, which is only 4 out of 10. That's impressive. Clearly, this community loves its library. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

### Library Board

- Policy Committee
  - Met on January 20 to review and make recommendations to revise several dated library policies.
    These revisions will be presented to the library board in February.
- Finance Committee
  - O The committee will be meeting on February 19 to review quarterly reconciliation reports. In addition, the Library's auditors will be presenting their schedule and plan of work for the 2013 audit

# **Budget & Finances**

- Standard & Poor's Bond Rating
  - Standard & Poor's Ratings Services has affirmed its AA-rating of the library's general obligation bonds. The AA-rating indicates a very strong capacity to meet financial commitments and is the second highest rating in the S&P rating system.
- State Aid Report
  - o I completed the 2013 State Aid Report in time to meet the February 1 deadline.
- 2013 Audit
  - Initial pre-planning documentation for the 2013 audit has been completed. Each year auditors require updates about our governance, financial reporting procedures, technology, and standard operating procedures.
  - o Audit will take place during the third and fourth weeks of February.
- 2015 Budget Planning
  - Over the next few weeks I will be conducting planning meetings with my department heads to map out a course of action. The budget planning process is a lengthy one and it takes several months. Although we expect the tax base to continue to rise slightly, the Library will have to contend for the first time with the phase out of personal property tax. We project about a \$20,000 decrease in revenue from PPT in 2015.

## Facility/Operations

• January was a challenging month for the facility with the unprecedented snow and cold temperatures. Although we were able to keep our doors open during these challenging days, we did reduce our hours on a couple of days in order to give staff and the public time to make it to the library safely.

### Staff

- Professional Exchange Program
  - O I am continuing to make progress in developing a professional exchange program with the Masiphumelele Community Library in Cape Town, South Africa. Masiphumelele was one of the libraries that I visited during my trip to South Africa last spring, as a delegate to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Conference on libraries and their future. I hope to have dates confirmed in the next couple of weeks.
- New digital magazine service announcement
  - o In May, we will be launching our new *Zinio* service, which provides users with access to a library of popular magazines such as Country Living, Newsweek, and Rolling Stone just to name a few. The service begins May 1 and allows patrons to download the latest issues to their

mobile device. No need to lug heavy magazines anymore. With Zinio eMagazines, browsing your favorites is now much more convenient and portable.

- Staff Members Celebrating an Anniversary
  - o Terri Lancaster, 13 years
- 5H Community Read 2014
  - Our collaboration with the Chelsea Area Wellness Foundation, community coalitions, and libraries in the five healthy towns of Dexter, Grass Lake, Stockbridge, and Manchester will continue in 2014.
  - This year's event will tie in with the Wellness Foundation's aim of "connecting with others." In addition to working with the Chelsea Community Coalition, we will also work collaboratively with libraries and wellness coalitions in the other four healthy towns to plan programs, events, and determine the appropriate reading materials to tie into this aim.
  - Highlights from the 2013 program include:
    - Over 500 copies of "A Walk in the Woods" by Bill Bryson were distributed in Chelsea. 2000 copies to all five towns.
    - We estimated that each book was read by or passed on to at least three people, and project about 1500 read the book in our community.
    - Approximately 750 people attended the programs that were developed and facilitated for Chelsea residents. Key programs include: Picture Book Walk, Everybody Move More, Lockout at Eddy Discovery Center, and Big 400 Display in the Library's lobby. In addition, the Library distributed several hundred trail maps and brochures to promote the recreational opportunities that exist in Chelsea.
    - We received nearly 2000 "unique" hits on our community read website, which provided a digital resource guide to the area's recreational sites.
- Spring Programming Highlights
  - O Highlights include:
    - The Midwest Literary Walk is back on April 26 for its sixth year bringing fiction and poetry to the streets of Chelsea. This year we are proud to bring you several nationally-known and critically acclaimed authors, including Matt Bell, Bonnie Jo Campbell, Mona Jean Cedar, Harry Dolan, Mardi Jo Link, Garret Potter, and Diane Seuss. Detroit beat poet and perennial favorite ML Liebler will also make a return appearance this year.
    - Authors in Chelsea will also be returning in March as part of a two day-long celebration. Three nationally known authors (Sue Stauffacher, David Lubar, and Jennifer Holm, author of Airborn) will give workshops in Chelsea schools for all 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 6th graders during the school day. For more information visit aic.chelseadistrictlibrary.org.

### Friends of the Library

- Highlights from the Friends of the Chelsea District Library Annual Meeting
  - o Friends President Marie Brooks provided a 2013 recap:
    - Membership was up by sixteen this year.
    - The used book sale had higher sales this year due to sale of computers and holding sales monthly.
    - Mission Based Books sales were higher this year.
    - New events included the Barn Bash, Men of Chelsea Calendar and Star Wars Day.
    - The Friends supported library events and activities, including the Comedy Series, Special Needs Collection, Summer Reading Program, Sonic Sundays and infrastructure improvements.
  - o 2014 Election
    - The Slate of Officers was presented to the general membership:

President - Marie Brooks

Vice President / President Elect - Sue Whitmarsh

Past President - Cynthia Silveri

Treasurer - Nancy Neff

Secretary – Diane Bloom

o Presentation

 A presentation on the Newspaper Digitization Project was given by Sara Wedell, Head of Adult Services.

# Strategic Plan

- Economic Impact Research Study
  - o I have been facilitating meetings with several of my colleagues in Washtenaw County to develop a study that will assess the economic impact that local libraries have in the communities they serve. Value will be assessed in four areas: 1) literacy; 2) workforce development; 3) business development; and 4) value to homes and neighborhoods. In addition, I have been meeting with ProQuest, an Ann Arbor based electronic and microfilm publisher to gauge their interest in helping to support the project.
- Materials Selection Policy
  - The Collection Work Group has revised the Library's dated materials selection policy. I presented the proposed changes to the Policy Committee. I anticipate that the board will approve these updates at its March meeting.

#### **Professional**

- Update from the Michigan Library Association (MLA)
  - o The 2014-15 State Budget

It looks like the governor's 2014-15 budget recommendations for state aid to libraries and MeL are on target with last year's funding. To date, the governor has chosen not to recommend a reduction. Our MLA lobbyists will be meeting with education subcommittee members soon to make sure they understand the impact libraries have on communities.

o DDAs and TIFAs

The House Tax Policy Committee received testimony this week on Downtown Development Authorities and their accompanying Tax Increment Financing Authorities (TIFA). The entities whose taxes are being captured such as libraries consistently have no say in their participation in the DDAs or in the projects being undertaken by them. Tax payers who vote for mileages to support their libraries are often not aware that a portion of their tax dollars go to DDAs. MLA remains engaged on this matter and will be meeting with legislators to ensure they understand the issues surrounding the DDAs and how they impact the community.

#### **Outreach**

- Chelsea Lions Club
  - I emceed our Lion's Club annual fundraiser. The event took place on the afternoon of February 8 at the Chelsea Lanes. The Lions raise money for several community-based organizations and charities. This year's fundraiser helped raise funds and awareness for the *Penrickton Center for the Blind*, which is a private, non-profit five day residential and day care agency serving blind, multi- disabled children ages one through twelve.
- Chelsea Education Foundation (CEF) Fundraiser
  - My wife Jill and I attended the annual CEF fundraiser at the Comfort Inn in Chelsea on February 8.
- Rotary Club
  - o Tickets are still available for the Rotary Club of Chelsea's "Cash Bash." This is Rotary's largest fundraising event of the year. One lucky contestant will win the grand prize of \$3,000. All other ticket holders are guaranteed to win a prize thanks to donations from local business sponsors. The event takes place March 8 at The Comfort Inn beginning at 6 p.m.

#### **Meetings/Conferences Attended**

- Rotary Meetings, 1/21, 1/22, 1/28, 2/4
- Library Board of Trustees, 1/21
- Chamber of Commerce Personal Property Tax Forum, 1/23
- John Budinger, Sylvan Twp, 1/23
- Friends of the Chelsea District Library President, 1/23
- All staff meeting, 1/24
- Friends of the Chelsea District Library Annual Meeting, 1/25

- Library management meetings, 1/28, 2/4
- Ashley Helmholdt, Farmer's Market, 1/29
- 2015 Budget Meetings, 1/30
- Burrill Strong, 1/31
- Washtenaw County Library Director's meeting, 2/3
- Cape Town, SA Library conference call, 2/4
- Pat Cleary, Chelsea First, 2/6
- Chelsea Area Wellness Coalition, 2/6
- Lions Club Annual Charity Bowling Event, 2/8
- Chelsea Education Foundation Annual Fundraising Gala, 2/8
- Summer Reading Program Planning Meeting, 2/10

Respectfully,

William Harmer