

Chelsea District Library
Director's Report
May 2015

Did You Know?

- 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.

Questions from Last Board Meeting

- None

Library Board

- Finance Committee
 - Will be meeting several times during the month of June to review the plan for the Library's 2016 budget.
- Randy Fox
 - We were all very saddened about the passing in April of Randy Fox, husband of long-time library board member, friend, and supporter Lynn Fox. Randy and Lynn have given so much love and support to the library and staff over the years. They have been both generous and indispensable in our success, whether serving on the board, advocating for the building bond, or simply giving generously of their time and resources in making this a world-class library. We are going to miss Randy greatly.

Budget & Finances

- 2016 Operating Budget Planning
 - My priority in the coming weeks will be working with staff to plan the 2016 operating budget. Staff will be ready to present the first draft of the 2016 budget to the Finance Committee during the first week of June. Property values in Washtenaw County continue to progress. Although the economy is rebounding, property values in the county are still below 2010 values.
 - Budget hearing for the public is scheduled for Tuesday, August 18 and final approval of the FY 2016 will be scheduled for the Board of Trustees September 15 meeting.
- Audit
 - The Library's administrative team has worked successfully with the auditing firm of Andrews Hooper Pavlik to complete the 2014 annual audit of the Library's financial statements. Representatives from the firm will present their findings and answer questions to the Board of Trustees at their May meeting.
 - In the year ending 2014 for the general fund, the Chelsea District Library ended the year \$69,323 under budget for total expenditures.
 - Key Performance Indicators for the year ending 2014
 - Overdrive (downloadable circ.): 15,850. 27% increase over 2013.
 - Number of library cards: 9,732. 1% increase over 2013.
 - Attendance at library programs: 26,642. 7% increase over 2013.
 - Reference transactions: 25,528. 10% increase over 2013.
 - Wireless sessions: 145,852. 31% increase over 2013.
 - Website visits: 148,596. 27% increase over 2013.
 - Volunteer hours: 5,286. 2.5% increase over 2013.

Staff

- Staff Members Celebrating an Anniversary
 - Ron Andrews, 13 years.
 - Emily Meloche, 5 years.
 - Kathy Kahler, 1 year.
- Midwest Literary Walk
 - By all accounts, the 7th Annual Midwest Literary Walk was our most brilliant to date. Nearly 200 people participated in the event this year, doubling attendance figures from a year ago.

Participate feedback was glowing as well. About half of the people who attended completed program evaluations, which is extraordinary. We estimated that a little less than half of this year's attendees came from the Chelsea area, which means that the event is becoming more and more of a regional draw, especially in Ann Arbor and the Detroit area. One of the goals of the MLW is to showcase and bring in visitors to our unique community. With the increased number of visitors from outside of Chelsea, we are starting to reach some of these goals.

- The success of the event is the result of our exceptional planning team, which includes our Friends of the Chelsea District Library (esp. Sue Whitmarsh), board member Robin Wagner, ML Liebler (our former artist-in-resident), Rich and Karen Fahle of Astral Media, Aubrey Martinson of the Chelsea Alehouse, and our library team consisting of Emily Meloche and Patty Roberts. My sincere thanks to all of them.
- 5H Community Read 2015
 - The verdict is in from the five health towns! The consensus book choice for the fall community read program is *Hole in My Life* by Jack Gantos. This was the title that the coalition believes will strongly support the Chelsea Wellness Foundation's aim of "avoiding unhealthy substances." The title will have appeal to all ages. It is a story about becoming a writer the hard way. In the summer of 1971, Jack Gantos was an aspiring writer looking for adventure, cash for college tuition, and a way out of a dead-end job. For ten thousand dollars, he recklessly agreed to help sail a sixty-foot yacht loaded with a ton of hashish from the Virgin Islands to New York City, where he and his partners sold the drug until federal agents caught up with them. For his part in the conspiracy, Gantos was sentenced to serve up to six years in prison. In *Hole in My Life*, this prizewinning author confronts the period of struggle and confinement that marked the end of his own youth. On the surface, the narrative tumbles from one crazed moment to the next as Gantos pieces together the story of his restless final year of high school, his short-lived career as a criminal, and his time in prison. But running just beneath the action is the story of how Gantos - once he was locked up in a small, yellow-walled cell - moved from wanting to be a writer to writing, and how dedicating himself more fully to the thing he most wanted to do helped him endure and ultimately overcome the worst experience of his life.
 - The kick-off event will take place after Labor Day on Saturday, September 12 as part of the Heritage Day festivities in Grass Lake.
- Professional Exchange Program
 - We are busy making final preparations for the library's exchange program. Emily Meloche will be leaving for the Masiphumelele Community Library on May 23 as part of a month-long library exchange program in South Africa. In return, Nosiviwe Lutuli will be visiting the United States to work at the Chelsea District Library for a month-long stay as well. Nosiviwe will be arriving on May 25. We are looking forward to her visit and have lots of exciting plans for her. Please join us for a special meet & greet event at the library on June 1.
- Welcome aboard summer intern!
 - This summer, we will be working with a new library student intern from Wayne State University. Hannah Lesniak is a student in the Library & Information Science Program at Wayne State. She is also currently employed as a clerk at the library in Commerce Township. Hannah's first day will be May 12. Congratulations Hannah and welcome aboard.

Professional

- Michigan Library Association (MLA) – Board Election Updates
 - Congratulations to MLA's new 2015-16 board members as elected by the membership. Kathleen Zaenger, Howell Carnegie District Library, was voted in as president-elect. Richard Schneider, Muskegon Area District Library was elected Treasurer. Steven Bowers, Detroit Area Library Network, was voted in as ALA Councilor. Cathy Lancaster, Traverse Area District Library and James Pletz, The Library Network, were each elected as member-at-large. Molly Freier, Northern Michigan University, was appointed by the board as ACRL Representative. All will serve three-year terms beginning July 1, 2015.
- Michigan Library Association Annual Conference
 - Emily Meloche and I will be doing a workshop at the MLA Annual Conference. The conference will be held October 28-30 at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi, Michigan. Our workshop will present highlights from the library's innovative professional exchange program with the Masiphumelele Community Library in South Africa.
- Northwest Regional Library System (NRLS) Annual Conference

- I will be the keynote speaker at NRLS Conference on Thursday, June 18. I'm going to do a talk entitled "Small Doesn't Trump Innovative," which will focus on how libraries, no matter the size, can and should be placing an emphasis on creativity and innovation. The conference will be held at the Edison Community College Theater in Piqua, OH.

Outreach

- Lions "White Cane" Drive
 - Participated in the annual white cane donation drive in May. The club collected donations at Chelsea State Bank, the post office and Country Market. Donations to the white cane drive go toward supporting projects like the Low Vision Support Center at the Chelsea District Library, the shelter at Timber Town Park, awards for outstanding students at Chelsea School District and eye screening for preschoolers within the Chelsea School District as well as providing support for the Western-Washtenaw Area Value Express transportation system.
- City Council Meeting
 - Board member Susan Brown and I gave a brief, five minute presentation to city council on April 20. The focus of our talk was on the Midwest Literary Walk and the Professional Exchange Program.
- Faith in Action Annual Fundraiser
 - I was the co-auctioneer at the annual fundraising event on April 25 at the hospital.

Meetings/Conferences Attended

- Clayton Eshleman, MLW Author, 4/3
- Midwest Lit Walk Meetings, 4/6, 4/22, 5/1
- Management Team Meetings, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28
- Emily Meloche, 4/8
- Masiphumelele Skype Conference Call, 4/9
- Rotary Foundation of Chelsea, 4/13
- Audit Closing Conference, 4/13
- Rotary Club, 4/14
- Staff Appreciation Lunch, 4/15
- Randy Fox Visitation, 4/16
- All Staff Meeting, 4/17
- Faith in Action, 4/20
- City Council, 4/20
- Library Board of Trustees, 4/21
- Martin Bandyke Radio Interview for MLW, 4/22, 4/23
- Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 4/22
- All Staff Meeting, 4/24
- 7th Annual MLW, 4/25
- Faith in Action Annual Fundraiser, 4/25
- Business Leaders Luncheon, 4/27
- 5H Community Read, 4/29
- Proposal 1 Community Forum, 4/30
- Lions White Cane Drive, 5/3
- River Gallery, 5/6
- Purple Rose, 5/7
- Andy Ingall, School Superintendent, 5/7
- PTO Ice Cream Social, South Meadows School, 5/8

Respectfully,

William Harmer