

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

June 2010

### Make a Splash, Read!

Join our Summer Reading program this year and qualify for some great prizes from amazing sponsors in the Boise area. Kids, teens, and adults earn eligibility for prizes based on various "qualifiers" for each age group. This year, we are proud to have Nancy Pearl kick off Summer Reading with her program "The Pleasures and Perils of a Life of Reading." Please join us for the event on Thursday, June 3, in the Main Library Hayes Auditorium. Mayor Bieter will also encourage kids to read at a special program this summer. Check out the Calendar of Events for a complete schedule of special programs sure to inspire every reader.

Joanne Hinkel also initiated a direct mail advertising campaign for this year's program. The Library sent a direct mail post card promoting Summer Reading to over 30,000 library card holders. We'll keep you posted on the various Summer Reading outcomes as the summer progresses.

### Budget Update

Mayor Bieter has reviewed the Library's proposed cost containment plan for FY 2011 and is recommending the City Council adopt the proposal. The plan includes reducing the minor equipment budget by \$66,000 (base reduction); reducing the Open Access Payment line by \$20,000 (one time); reducing the major equipment budget by \$28,500 (one time); and eliminating the budget for 5 frozen positions (\$236,670). The budget for these positions is projected to be returned to the Library's budget in FY 2013.

These containment strategies allow us to meet our reduced revenue target and maintain open hours for the public, collection and material dollars, and other core services.

Funding for the Bown Crossing branch is still pending.

### Foundation May Basket Fundraiser

This year's May Basket fundraiser grossed \$5,410. We expect to net \$2,500 once expenses are met. During the next year, the Foundation will be evaluating this fund-raising strategy. This year's effort was heavily advertised with direct mail, a Cable One PSA and the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce enewsletter, resulting in 48 baskets ordered. The Foundation wants to improve this fund-raising activity.

### J.A. Jance Coming to Boise Public Library

HarperCollins invited us to host mystery author J.A. Jance at the Main Library on Friday, July 30 at 7:00 p.m. We're very excited to host Ms. Jance and know that many fans will want to meet her that evening. More details will be forthcoming.

### Library Services Provided to Refugees and New Americans

Library Administration provided information to the Mayor's Office on library services provided to refugees and New Americans, for inclusion in a late-May presentation to City

Council on Refugee Services in Boise. The following is a condensed version of that information.

**Overview:** The last several years have seen an increase in delivery of library services to refugees and New Americans in Boise, as Boise Public Library has opened branches in neighborhoods with higher multi-cultural densities, and as services and programs have evolved to reflect our changing community. Refugees and New Americans from all over the world come into the Library to sign-up for library cards, use library computers, borrow books, movies and music, and attend library programs, such as those mentioned below.

**English-Language Learning Storytimes:** In 2009, Boise Public Library applied for and received a \$10,000 "Strengthening Library Services for Youth" grant from the Idaho Commission for Libraries and the Wal-Mart Foundation. The funding was used to create a 6-week repeatable series of storytime programs for preschool English language learners and their families. Participating families improved their English language skills through conversation and learning activities, including books, music, craft activities, and play.

The Library offered 36 storytimes between September 2009 and April 2010, with 320 total attendees. Offsite programs were offered in partnership with the IRC, a refugee resettlement agency; with Taft Elementary School; and with Davis Apartments, which houses a large population of immigrants. The Library used part of the grant to purchase additional English language learning materials for its circulating collection to supplement the storytimes.

**English Conversation Corner:** The Library! at Hillcrest offers New Americans and English language learners an opportunity to practice conversational English. The weekly program is moderated, and participants can practice speaking English with both native speakers and others who are learning in a fun, nonjudgmental setting for conversation and shared learning. English Conversation Corner was suggested by a member of the Hillcrest Advisory Group, comprised of Hillcrest neighbors, teachers, and New Americans.

**Worlds Connect—A Celebration of Cultures:** The Library! at Hillcrest also offers a quarterly series of programs dedicated to exploring the rich palette of cultures found in the Boise Bench community. The interactive programs are planned jointly by the Hillcrest Advisory Group and refugees and immigrants from the focus country. Most include a slide presentation and a moderated panel discussion of the country's culture, religion, art and contemporary social/political changes and conflict. Cultural dances, artifacts, maps and food may also be shared. The series began with Hillcrest's 2009 Get Loud at the Library event, which brought together performers, artists and craftspeople representing many of the cultures that make up the Bench community. In October, Hillcrest presented *Afghanistan: The Culture of Conflict*, followed in February by *China: Changing Times in an Ancient Culture*. This July, the program will focus on Mexico, and then on Iraq in November.

**Adult New Reader Collection and Materials:** Last fall, the Library created an Adult New Reader Collection to provide more materials for adults learning to read in the English language. The collection now includes over 300 fiction and nonfiction items at reading levels appropriate for beginning readers. The Library also created a "simple English" version of its library card brochure, working with the adult Learning Lab to rewrite the content.

**Staff Training:** The Library also invests in related staff training, taking advantage of learning opportunities such as the Idaho Office on Refugee Conferences, Refugee Community Coordination meetings and "Refugees 101", a WebJunction webinar that highlighted successful approaches to serving refugees in public libraries.

#### *ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT:*

##### Workshops and Computer Classes at the Main Library

Staff members in Adult Services have recently presented a variety of computer classes, including Computer Basics, Digital Local History Resources, Word Basics, and Career and Job Resources. Five reference librarians and one library assistant present these classes. In partnership with the Idaho State Department of Labor, staff from Adult Services also offered a day-long workshop, "Thriving Not Just Surviving," for individuals seeking work. Adult Services is planning to offer this workshop quarterly.

##### Promoting Summer Reading in Elementary Schools

Staff members from Youth Services have been taking their puppet show "Shiver Me Timbers" to elementary schools to get kids excited about Summer Reading. The show stars a pirate looking for treasure in Boise who finds a treasure chest full of books which is worth much more than gold. The Idaho Commission for Libraries provided small frisbees with the Summer Reading theme printed on them to give to kids during these visits. The Main Library's new teen librarian is visiting area junior high and high schools promoting the teen program as well.

##### Program Attendance at Cole & Ustick

The Library! at Cole & Ustick hosted May's Senior Share program and had 10 seniors golfing and bowling using the Wii. Staff members at Cole & Ustick also led more than 300 students through the branch for tours and to find out more about Summer Reading.

##### Well-Received Programs at Collister

The Library! at Collister hosted a program on Food Foraging on Tuesday, May 11, led by outside guests and staff. Over 50 people attended to learn more about picking mushrooms, fruit, and vegetables that grow wildly all around our community. Several attendees suggested forming a foraging club! Staff members at Collister also hosted a month-long adult art series, led by staff and two art students from BSU. The class focused on watercolor and drawing, and was attended by at least 10 adults per session. The customers have been very pleased and excited by the offering and we plan to continue with this series later in the year.

New Approach to Computer Classes at Hillcrest

Staff members at the Library! at Hillcrest have adjusted the branch's computer class offerings in response to customer suggestions. Classes now cover one series of basic skills, followed by one series of more advanced skills. This new approach allows customers to start at the very bottom and advance their abilities to the level they need to be successful and independent.