

## LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

March 2011

### Library! at Hillcrest Update

I attended a neighborhood meeting at the Hillcrest branch on February 16 to learn more about the scheduled tenant improvements proposed by Northwest Animal Companions (NAC) for its clinic and thrift store in the Hillcrest Shopping Center. The NAC plans to close off the breezeway to space for a 25,000 + square foot thrift store adjacent to the branch library. The property owners, NAC representatives, and NAC architects hosted the meeting. The City's Planning and Development department reports that the tenant improvements are considered an allowable use and do not have to proceed through design review. However, the proposed animal clinic does have to go through a review process and city staff has proposed restrictions that include waste disposal off site, no more than 20 cats boarded at one time, no dogs boarded, and relocation of the handicap parking spaces on the south side of the shopping center. I've sent written comments addressing library staff concerns to the Planning and Development staff.

A library customer complained to the City's safety and risk management office concerned about the dust and construction equipment due to ongoing shopping center construction. An investigator was dispatched to the site and tested the area for hazardous materials in the air. The inspection found no hazardous materials in the Library and did consult with the contractors. The branch is closing the book drops on Mondays and will be moving the book drop closer to the entrance of the breezeway as a convenience to customers after library hours. Staff members will be fitted for dust-filtering masks as requested.

The fiber optic connectivity project continues to move forward. We hope to have fiber optic connectivity by the end of March for customers at the branch.

### House Bill 180 Internet Filtering

The proposed Internet Filtering bill, which would require libraries to provide mandatory Internet filtering on all library public PCs, will have a hearing in the House Education Committee on February 24, 2011. The Idaho Library Association (ILA) is working with legislators to ask that the bill be held until the ILA can propose draft legislation that is workable for public libraries, cities, and library districts, as well as for the public and legislators. The ILA has asked for an opinion from the Attorney General's office regarding the "withholding public funds" clause. The current bill would require that library staff determine whether or not a site should be blocked or unblocked on demand from library customers. This would prove problematic for libraries with high demand Internet usage and would violate the librarian code of ethics. The ILA has also determined that every public library in the state has an Internet safety policy in place, and no public libraries in Idaho receive state funding. The ILA believes Internet access is best left to local governing authorities. I'll give board members an update on the bill during the meeting.

### Big Events

The Library continues to make progress on strategic initiatives regarding public events for the community, improving the Library's visibility. Another great spring of programming is shaping up for the Library.

- ▶ On February 26, children's musician and songwriter Jim Gill will perform at the Egyptian Theater, funded in part by a Library Services and Technology Act grant. Mr. Gill is noted for his methods of promoting reading awareness and readiness through musical play.
- ▶ On Tuesday, March 2, the Library's author series continues with Garth Stein, author of *The Art of Racing in the Rain*. Mr. Stein will discuss his book and literary characterizations of dogs as main characters in conjunction with this year's Big Read selection, *The Call of the Wild*.
- ▶ The Library has also scheduled the Darkwood Consort to perform for the next First Thursday program on Thursday, March 3 at the Main Library. This program is funded by the Friends of the Library and the Boise Public Library Foundation.
- ▶ Then, April 1-3, the Friends will conduct its annual spring book sale in the warehouse on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Last year's sale grossed over \$44,000 in support of library programs and services, including the summer reading program, Spanish story times, the Gadget Garage, display racks, and marketing efforts.

### ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT:

#### Puppet Shows

Thanks to an article in *The Idaho Statesman* on February 4 covering the Library's puppet shows, more than 500 people total attended the Friday and Saturday performances for February. This is always a very popular program that is usually offered the first Friday and Saturday of each month.

#### Author Visits at Cole and Ustick Branch

The Library! at Cole & Ustick will be hosting a series of local authors in March and April. The one-hour programs are scheduled on Wednesdays at noon in the Sagebrush Room, and people are encouraged to bring their lunches. Authors will share information about their books and the writing process: March 2—Katy Robinson, March 9—Kristiana Gregory, March 16—Kelly Jones, March 23—Donna Fletcher-Crow, March 30—Laura Bingham, April 6—Gloria Skurzynski, and April 13—Phil Batt.

#### Beekeeping at the Collister Branch

The Library! at Collister hosted a program about beekeeping on February 8. The 30 attendees were treated to information about caring for bees and about making honey. The program was part of Collister's Do It Yourself adult program series.