

Orcas Island Library District
Board Meeting, October 12, 2004

Library Director's Report, written 10/7/04. Phil Heikkinen

Overview: this past month I've been focusing on meeting and listening to members of the community, talking with staff about existing priorities, policies, and programs, getting to know the collection, further developing the 2005 budget, taking steps on our workroom expansion project (including digging in the swale with Gregg Bronn), formulating a hiring process and description for a children's services position, and developing a sense of priorities to emphasize next year and beyond. A key element underlying everything is to work towards living within our means, with an eye towards approaching the voters for a levy vote if and when necessary to fund the Library at a level people want.

Community input: I've met with a number of community members discussing such items as Sunday and weekend hours, the proposed levy lift in 2002 for a building expansion, the 1992 building project, our collection profile, alternatives for providing children's services and staffing in general, history of the library district, library budget priorities, the floor plan project, long-range planning, etc. The recent (9/22) newspaper article about the library was instrumental in encouraging people to come in and talk with me. It's been helpful to hear the wide range of opinions about library and community issues.

Friends of the Library: I am preparing proposals for funding of the HVAC replacement, as well as for a variety of activities and items we have budgeted for 2005. I should have this list by the time of the October 12 Friends board meeting.

WLA, PNLA, Washington State Library: I've joined WLA along with some state and regional listservs, and have made plans to attend the upcoming Friends Forum in Ellensburg on October 23, as well as upcoming public library director meetings and other events.

Book Selection Committee: I attended the September 17 meeting, and plan to attend future meetings when possible. This committee has offered to assist with some weeding

I shared information with the LaConner Public Library Director, Howard Downey, about our book sale agreement with the Friends.

Ferry meeting: I'll be meeting with the Lopez and San Juan library directors on October 14.

HVAC replacement and workroom expansion project: I've worked on creating requests for bids for the HVAC replacement, as well as for the related electrical work and the pouring of the concrete pad. At the time of this writing, Mary and I were scheduled to meet with Jan Flagan of the County on the 7th; she's offered to help us develop the Request for Bids. Also, I am interested in hiring a volunteer or paid construction manager for the workroom expansion. I am asking the Board for a clarification about which fund to use for the soft costs for the workroom project. The Board approved use of existing building funds, provided by donations; however, no specific fund was specified. My recommendation would be to use the Building Fund, 632-000-070, with a current balance of about \$92,000 (with about \$10,000 already allocated to the 2004 budget).

I executed the agreement for the drainage plan study with Gregg Bronn of Hart Pacific Engineering. He began work on it on Monday, September 27.

Discussion about future revenue and expense issues and options: including grants, donations, bequests, cutbacks, and an increased levy rate: possibility of a maintenance and operations levy, foundation function by the FOTL,

Parking lot sealing: County Public Works has strongly recommended this treatment as a cost-saving measure in the long-term. We have reinstated this in the 2005 budget, and are hoping to coordinate the job with Island Market, in order to save on transportation costs.

Public Services Librarian for Children's Services: although I believe that this position deserves a full-time person, in recognition of our potentially long-term funding constraints I am planning to recruit for a $\frac{3}{4}$ -time person.

Streamlining checking accounts: I have sent an email inquiry to Si Stephens at the County concerning the possibility of streamlining our banking accounts with Islands Bank. Currently, we have accounts set up for the revolving fund, petty cash, advance travel, and special projects. I'd like to combine them into a single well-documented account containing \$1000 or less. Of course, the revolving funds would include all receipts until sent over to the County at the end of each month; possibly, we would keep that as a separate fund.

Credit cards: I am looking into updating our credit cards to reflect current staffing

Library policy update: I recommend an update to our policy concerning the privacy of library user information, in order to broaden protection while recognizing, for example, the Library's need to share information as appropriate during the course of business. At the time of this writing, I am writing the update and planning to work with Paige as the Trustee responsible for policies.

Fern Street Building: Anna, one of the co-owners, dropped off a flyer to me on Wednesday, September 29, saying that it's for sale at \$895,000. I told her that I would share the information, though I added that I did not expect that the Board would pursue any acquisitions at this time.

Lifelong Learning programs—a report from Holly King:

Classes are in full swing for the fall session and attendance is at an all-time high; in fact, we had to relocate one class because it grew out of the Library's meeting room! There was a broad range of topics to choose from this quarter. Students could learn about pop art, Nobel prizewinning literature, personal relationships, and archetypal figures. They could tap into their own creativity in poetry writing, storytelling, or a memoirs class. All in all, adult continuing education opportunities continue to serve as an important part of the Library's Lifelong Learning program.

Library Statistics:

I'm interested in hearing from the Board about what statistics would be most useful as an aid to planning. We have begun using the people counter in the front doorway. I think this will be a good tool for better understanding use of the building. For now, we're counting on a daily basis; however, we might also experiment with counting usage patterns throughout the day. On October 7, as of 6:30 pm, 440 people had visited the Library—not counting the people coming into the lobby to use the phone or restrooms. On a rough average of 300 open days during the year, this translates into library usage of over 150,000 people per year, especially if we consider that summer usage is higher than fall usage.

**Orcas Island Library District
Board Meeting, November 9, 2004**

Library Director's Report, submitted 11/4/04. Phil Heikkinen

Overview: much of my activity has involved the workroom expansion, HVAC/heat pump replacement, continuing to meet with community members, working with the Library Board nominating committee, formulating and posting the children's services position, and then fielding calls and email inquiries about it.

News in The Sounder: in a letter to the editor in the October 27 edition, I shared information about our trial vehicle repair database, our new week-long video and DVD checkout period and ability to place reserves on them, our job opening, a request for people's email addresses, news about the art browsing cart, and an invitation for people to join us on November 6 from 10 am to noon for the Library Park weedout party. In the November 2 edition, I shared news of our new diaper-changing table in one of our public restrooms, and an invitation for volunteers to offer children's storytimes.

Meetings: On October 20, I met with a group of local artists interested in improving our collection of art books and in discussing past decisions on the part of the Library. We had a good exchange of ideas and arrived at a plan to offer what we are calling the Art Browsing Cart, which will allow people to bring in possible donations to our collection, leaving them on the cart for a while for people to browse and offer their opinions about whether the items should be added.

I attended the Orcas Island Prevention Partnership meeting on November 1, a good way to learn more about youth activities and initiatives.

On October 14 I met on the inter-island ferry with Aimee Hirschel and Lauren Stara, the directors of the Lopez and San Juan libraries, respectively. I plan to visit each of those libraries in the near future.

I visited Rudy Boyd and looked at her interesting collection of books that she wants to give to the Library. Some of them have some value for collectors, for example a 20-volume Charles Dickens set from 1895, a 22-volume Shakespeare set from 1895, a limited-edition Arabian Nights set from 1901, and a full set of Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire from about 1900, also in limited edition.

Board nominee selection process: I worked with Steve Garrison and Harvey Himelfarb on setting up procedures and assembling packets of information for

prospective Board candidates. Also, I attended the October 26 meeting to gather input from members of the public. As one outcome, I compiled relevant sections of the RCW for the candidates' packets. The committee hopes to complete its work on or soon after the 7 pm Sunday, December 5 public meeting at the Fire Hall.

Building issues: we publicized an invitation for bids to replace three heat pump units, with submissions due November 10. I discovered that #5, one of the units we'd thought needed replacing, was actually replaced at the same time as #4B, in the fall of 2002. Also, I listed purchase and installation of the new system (#6) for the workroom expansion as an option, not to be installed at the same time as the other units, because we won't be ready for it until at least the shell of the new space is constructed. As of today (November 4) we have received inquiries from three firms.

Mary and I met with Jan Flagan of County Public Works on October 7. She offered to help us develop the Invitation for Bids for the workroom expansion project at her County billable rate, about \$35/hour.

Also, I plan to advertise for a volunteer owner's rep for the workroom expansion during the construction phase.

I've discussed alternative floor plans with Ross Jamieson and Library staff. Also, after talking with Ross about design costs and the feasibility of asking construction firms to handle some of the simpler design work (such as for interior arrangements), we invited Steve Kline from Jack Jackson's firm to drop by. It's possible that he or Jack could take over the design work at a much lower overall cost than using Lewis Architecture—an idea with which Ross appears to be happy. He is working on a summary of what he has accomplished so far and where he thinks we need to go next.

Technology update: we now plan for a January 10-12 implementation of Horizon, changed from December when Kathy will be gone. She had a productive visit to Bellingham in October, learning a lot about that library's migration process, training, and experiences so far with the Horizon system. We are still considering whether we might be able to open for at least part of the day on January 12. We've ordered and received six replacement computers, putting them in staff areas and moving the existing staff computers to the public area.

Friends of the Library: the Friends approved up to \$35,000 in HVAC replacement costs. Also, they approved my \$16,500 in grant requests for 2005, including \$5000 towards staff time for special projects, \$4500 for acquisition of new materials, and \$7000 towards costs for the workroom expansion. I am

grateful to the Friends (coordinated by Glenna Richards) for organizing the Meet the New Director reception on October 21 at the Library. My family and I enjoyed meeting and talking with a number of people who were new to us.

WLA, PNLA, Washington State Library: I attended the Friends Forum 2004 in Ellensburg on October 23, along with Tom Carroll and James Lobdell. It was an excellent way to meet a lot of people in a short amount of time. Also, I enjoyed hearing a discussion of issues by Brian Sonntag, the Washington State Auditor. One issue he discussed was the importance of having a written agreement between friends groups and library boards; this helps to clarify such issues as how to handle funds from the sale of library discards. Tom Carroll and I agreed that it would be good to create an overall Friends-Library agreement, in addition to the booksale agreement.

Book Selection Committee: the committee spent some time on October 15 selecting books for possible weeding. I hope to recruit volunteers to help us to manage areas of the collection that aren't receiving as much attention as other areas.

Public Services Librarian for Children's Services: we've experienced intense interest in this 32-hour/week posting, with the deadline for first consideration listed as November 12. People accessed the Children's Librarian link on our website 212 times in October! I foresee a challenging hiring process due to the wealth of qualified applicants.

Library policy update: I will submit for Board approval a proposed new policy addressing privacy of library user records, incorporating changes suggested at the October meeting.

Lifelong Learning and other programming: we sponsored a fantastic program presented by Cameron Fralick on October 28 about his Classroom Afloat experience for 10 months in 2003. I highly recommend him to any group that can corral him if/when he returns from Australia next spring. Also, Holly King is coordinating upcoming winter and spring programming. Our Halloween Spooktacular storytime and craft program on October 30, presented by Holly King, attracted 25 children and parents. We are beginning to plan programs relating to Women's History Month (including an Eleanor Roosevelt reenactor), National Poetry Month, and the Orcas Center's Laramie Project. Holly has started holding meetings of the new season's teen book club (about eight participants so far) and the middle school book club (so far about 20 people).

Selected Library Statistics:

- Door count [Oct 7-30]: 447/day for 20 open days; at this daily rate we would total 134,100 annual visits, based on approximately 300 open days/year. Currently, our door count does not include use of the meeting room or lobby, for those people who don't also use the central area of the library.
- Online system usage statistics: we checked out 7644 items (a rate of 91,728/yr) and renewed 443; we reserved 258 items and issued 58 new cards (bringing us to 7294 resident cardholders over age 14, plus 52 nonresidents, plus 587 resident youth). Compared to this time last year, our rate of checkouts to children is down about 15%, perhaps partly due to the lack of regular children's storytimes. Magazine checkouts are up 13%, and checkouts of adult books are up about 2% overall over last year at this time.
- Internet and online catalog use: we received over 1500 remote hits to our main webpage in October, 50% more than the same month last year, while in-house use was about the same. The LibraryLand link received double the traffic of last October.

Addendum, not included in Board packet sent 11/4:

Electrical project: we accepted a proposal by Bill Dallas of Dallas Electric to replace many low-efficiency lights with high-efficiency lights, and to replace some of our fixtures as well. Total cost \$10,900 - \$3000 in rebates = \$7,900 + tax.

Parking lot: we accepted a proposal for sealing and restriping the lot, scheduled tentatively for next May. Total cost: \$3,842 + tax.

Medical insurance research; open enrollment period until the end of November

Discussion of two American Libraries journal articles from the August 2004 issue: library as a publicly-supported, publicly-funded institution. [both printed and distributed to the Board]

"There is not such a cradle of democracy upon the earth as the Free Public Library, this republic of letters, where neither rank, office, nor wealth receives the slightest consideration."

(Andrew Carnegie)

**Orcas Island Library District
Board Meeting, December 14, 2004**

Library Director's Report, submitted 12/9/04. Phil Heikkinen

Overview:

I have focused a lot of my attention this past month to the hiring process for our children's services position, including evaluating applications, conducting telephone interviews, and setting up on-island interviews. Also, I continue to work on the workroom expansion and heat pump replacement projects. Mary Pugh gathered records requested by the State Auditor's office for our audit covering 2001 through 2003, then took them to Bellingham on November 24; since then, she has responded to a couple of sets of follow-up questions.

News in *The Sounder*:

The newspaper included news about the trustee nomination and recommendation process, a discussion I had with Ted Grossman about the idea of a Community Library Network, news about events during Women's History Month in March 2005, and coverage of the Friends' Holiday Tea (including a large photograph of Gladys Gropper).

Meetings and events:

On November 12, I attended the Deer Harbor Community Club potluck (their Thanksgiving feast!) and talked about library issues. I met with Library volunteers on November 18—about 30 attended. I spoke at the November 17 Lions Club meeting. And I attended two meetings of the Trustee Search Committee.

I introduced myself at the Chamber of Commerce annual meeting on 11/9. Audrey Stupke and I talked about ideas for her upcoming WILL (Washington Institute for Library Leadership) meeting, which I believe is scheduled for sometime in the spring; she also encourages any OILD Trustees to call her with suggested topics for discussion. The December 4 Holiday Tea was a lot of fun, and surprised me with the turnout—probably over 450 people.

Board nomination and recommendation process:

I worked with Steve Garrison and Harvey Himelfarb on setting up procedures and assembling packets of information for prospective Board candidates. At the October 26 meeting, held at the Library, several community members offered input about what qualities the committee ought to look for in prospective trustees. At the committee's request, I compiled relevant sections of the RCW for the candidates' packets. The committee met with the public

from 1 to 3 pm on Sunday, December 5 at the Fire Hall, and then met immediately afterwards to decide on its ranking of the five finalists to submit to the Board of County Commissioners (via the Orcas representative) for approval at its December meeting. I think that the Committee did an excellent job of finding candidates willing and able to be strong leaders on behalf of the Library District.

Building issues:

We have contracted with Tints Plus for window tinting to protect against UV rays, with installation scheduled for our closed days on January 10-12.

Our lighting project is nearing completion; the major remaining piece is to replace the lights on top of the highest beams once the new fixtures arrive. It's easy to see (pardon the pun) that the new lighting is a vast improvement.

We have accepted the lower of two bids to move two existing and add three new heat pumps, to be installed on a new concrete pad (estimated at 10'x10') adjacent to and south of the exit to the existing mechanical room. I estimate that this pad will extend about two feet south of the corner of the building; however, according to Steve Kline, this won't impinge on the workroom expansion project.

After discussions and reworking of previous sketches, Steve Kline has left us with a floor plan design that appears to be a good use of space in the proposed workroom expansion. I'll show it at the meeting. He has also begun working with energy and structural consultants, and has submitted paperwork to the County for the permitting process. I see a few minor changes before he completes final drawings.

Ross Jamieson of Lewis Architects sent me a summary of what he has accomplished so far and where he thinks we need to go next, and confirmed that he would be sending only a small final bill, if any.

Technology update:

We are on track for our January 10-12 implementation of Horizon. On December 20, we will put our bibliographic database updates on hold, while still updating patron information along with checkout and other transactions.

We received the six new PCs we ordered last month; and Tony is in the process of setting up and distributing them to replace the VT100 or dumb terminals.

We have identified some improvements we'd like to make or would like Dynix to make, so that the iPACs are more usable for the public, including enlarging the font size and clarifying the search options. These improvements are more important now that the dumb terminals are no longer available for searching the online catalog.

Friends of the Library:

At the Holiday Tea, Toby Hiller presented Bob Henigson with a check in the amount of \$16,500 to fund our grant requests for 2005. The Tea, with its wonderful food, music, and conversation, is a popular event well worth continuing.

Safe-opening contest:

In the interests of fun, we have moved the old Library safe out to the public area, displaying on it a flyer stating the theoretical combination and offering a prize to anyone who can open it. Mary found the combination written in an Orcas Island Library financial journal dated 1956. Jack Conant of Lockpickers dropped by, tested the combination, and told me that he thought that it was probably accurate based on the safe's responses. He thinks that the fourth wheel or tumbler is stiff or otherwise not working right, and that repeated efforts might loosen it up; and that he could probably open it pretty quickly with the right tools, if and when we give up on our contest. It's probably empty; but who knows for sure?

New staff member:

Nita Couchman started work on November 22 as a part-time Support Staff member. We are very lucky in that she worked recently at a library in Sitka, Alaska, using our identical Dynix system; and she has excellent customer service skills. Having already worked here as a volunteer for a few weeks, she required maybe a half-hour of training to learn more about the building and our opening and closing routines.

WLA, PNLA, Washington State Library, and library profession news:

The federal government passed the e-rate appropriation late on 12/8. I am looking forward to attending my first semi-annual meeting of Washington public library directors on January 27 and 28.

Children's Storytimes:

After a call for volunteers, I reinstated storytimes on November 13. Presenters so far include Jorah Rainstein, Dixie Walmsley, Bev Leyman, Jennifer Johnson-Fralick, and Christiana Egger. These sessions are slightly different from past storytimes in that we are advertising them as family storytimes rather than for ages 3 to 5; in practice, it is probably a fairly similar group. We offer two per week, Tuesdays at 11:30 am and Saturdays at 1 pm. Holly King and Mary Pugh have each filled in on important occasions when we had no volunteers. People that we've interviewed for the Children's Librarian position sound interested in continuing volunteer involvement in children's services.

Public Services Librarian for Children's Services:

Due to Holly's decision to commit to a ¾-time schedule, I was able to make this new position fulltime. This certainly made it easier for people to stay in the interview process. Joining Holly and me, three volunteers agreed to take part in the interviewing process: Lynn Thomerson, Dixie Walmsley, and Bev Leyman. All three have excellent relevant experience. I evaluated 28 initial applications that included all the required elements: a letter of interest including a statement of approach to children's services, a resume, and a completed job application (which we modeled after San Juan County's). Almost all of the applications met at least some of the required and desired qualifications. I rated them, chose eight semifinalists, and asked three staff members to review the applications to make sure I wasn't overlooking anybody. We conducted telephone interviews with those eight people on 11/23 and 11/30. Then, after discussion among committee members, I set up on-island interviews with three finalists. We interviewed one candidate on December 7, and have scheduled the next two interviews for the 14th and 17th. The process for finalists includes both a storytime session to children and an interview with the committee. Paige, Lynn, Toby, Dixie, Pierrette Guimond, and family members have been generous in offering time and hospitality.

Community Library Network:

Lynn Thomerson brought up this idea in which community members would share their personal libraries upon request; this would have the added benefit of connecting people with similar interests. It immediately struck a chord with me as worth implementing. From the Library's point of view, it is not only a way to take advantage of people's extensive and sometimes very specialized personal libraries, similar to the Art Browsing Cart idea, but also avoids the problem of where to house the materials, and will help us to address the sometimes very advanced research needs of our community without having to resort as often to borrowing as often from other libraries. This is an obvious money saver. I contacted Ted at The Sounder to get the word out. After his report about our conversation in the 12/1 edition, I immediately began hearing from people, and already have nine available libraries (including my own collection of chess books). I plan to call together a meeting of interested parties by February so that we can come up with general guidelines for participants, such as how to set up a feedback mechanism letting everyone know who have been responsible borrowers. A similar idea already exists in the form of the Distributed Library Project, with the use of a Web-based catalog and borrowing system for individual titles loaded into the database, and an eBay-style feedback mechanism for participants. The Orcas system, at least to start, would comprise

entire browsing libraries unlikely to be entered into an online system in the near future, if at all. Once this is off the ground, I anticipate it being something the Library supports rather than runs.

Records Retention Research:

I did some research into retention policies for nonprofit boards, and have had better luck so far finding policies for libraries and other governmental or quasi-governmental agencies. With more diligence, I'm sure I could find more pertinent examples.

Lifelong Learning and other programming:

We are beginning to take registrations for classes to start in January, including the ever-popular literature class offered by Richard Fadem, which already has 36 registrants after 6 days of registration.

Selected Library Statistics:

- Door count [Nov 1-30]: 416/day for 24 open days; at this daily rate we would total 124,800 annual visits, based on approximately 300 open days/year. This month's weekly pattern shows highest use on Mondays (averaging 472/day), dropping gradually to Fridays (337/day), with a slight increase to 358/day on Saturdays. November was unusual in that we had two Thursday holidays; so I want to check on that pattern before drawing too many conclusions. Our family storytimes averaged eight attendees in November, along with 35 for the storytime that coincided with the Holiday Tea and a visit by Mr. And Mrs. Claus on December 4.
- Online system usage statistics: our checkouts for the fiscal year to date are .6% above last year's, or 80,333, a rate of about 87,600 per year. Our checkouts of audio-visual materials are double or triple what they were last year, especially for DVDs and audiobooks on CD. Compared to last month, most materials showed slightly less use in November.