

Library Director Report August 2017

LIBRARY SITING AND ALLOCATION

Pinney Project: I am hoping to be able to report at the September meeting that we will have a signed Purchase Agreement. In the meantime we are continuing our pre-design process with OPN. We are also planning for Pinney staff to make a site visit to another OPN project the Cedar Rapids PL Central Library.

Reindahl Project: The Mayor's Executive CIP budget will be released on September 5th.

Badger Maintenance Facility: Mark Benno will be providing an update. At this time we are a little behind schedule due to some unaccommodating weather for our roof installation.

2018 BUDGET

We will have our first presentation to the Finance Committee on September 11th on the Mayor's Executive CIP budget.

MEDIA ACADEMY

We just completed our first Media Academy at Madison PL this summer. We had two interns from the national Public Library Association working with Jesse Vieau and Rob Franklin to provide instruction and leadership to the program. The Media Academy participants decided they wanted to focus on homelessness as their documentary theme, in addition they could did some hip hop, and video production. Here is a link to the fruits of their participation:

<http://teenbubbler.org/creations/media-academy>

ECLIPSE MANIA

Many of our libraries provided programs associated with the eclipse and were providers of the coveted eclipse glasses that we distributed to many individuals in the community.

RESULTS MADISON

We will be reviewing the weeks of work we have put into the project including an upcoming meeting with the Streets Dept. the other City department working on the pilot program. We are gaining terrific insight into our operations as we create ways in which to measure the various aspects of our operations.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM SENATOR RON JOHNSON'S OFFICE

I had the opportunity to meet with Tawsif Anam, Regional Director for Sen. Ron Johnson, to discuss current library trends, tour Central Library, discuss politics (just a little), and poetry. Tawsif has published two books of his poetry, and he said if he had one word to describe himself he would say, writer. It was a very productive time to share the importance of public libraries and how we are making significant contributions in our communities.

STAFF PICNIC

I want to recognize the Engagement Team for putting together the recent staff picnic to bring staff together outside of the workplace. I hope we can continue to make this annual event. It was fun to see staff and their families enjoy the time together. (Plus I learned how to play Kubb. I would say we could field a pretty decent Kubb library team.)

STAFF RECOGNITION

Dennis Reynolds, a mainstay in our cataloging department, will be retiring soon. I asked Susan Lee, his supervisor, if she could provide some career highlights so she asked Dennis to provide some input. In true cataloger fashion Dennis provided considerable detail about his career path with MPL. His response truly reflects his value to this organization, and reveals why he is such an excellent cataloger. His summation, "They all mattered." And with that I couldn't bring myself to edit but to honor that reflection. Thanks for your service Dennis.

I started as a shelver (Page 1) here at the Central Library in February 1986. Peter Niemi was the director at the time. Carol Froistad and Zo Kussow were nominally in charge of the shelving staff. Jean Anderson and Del Rose Dockendorff were the mainstays in what was then referred to as Lower Stacks. After a year, I moved into a Page 2 position in the Adult Services/Reference Department where Natalie Tinkham and Phil Sullivan were the heads of the department but I mostly

worked on the newspaper/magazine for the Business and Local history clippings file under Terry Waraksa and Mary Knapp although Ching Wong did most of the hands on training.

After a year of that, some positions in the library were reclassified as full-time Clerks (with benefits!). I took a clerical test and scored well enough to be offered a job in the Circulation Department (still at the downtown location). I worked the circulation desk for three years under Harriet Anderson (who worked slightly under Pat Georgeson of Technical Services). Tom Karls was the Administrative Clerk in the Circulation department and did a lot of the training and supervision of staff. I spent about three years in that department. A clerical job opened up in Technical services and I transferred into that department (under newly hired Department Supervisor Susan Lee) where I did processing of new magazines (back when magazines were a huge part of circulation volume) and linking of new materials in the GEAC system and some helping out on filing in the card catalog.

I had spent some time in Library School working towards a degree while working full-time in the Circulation Department but had dropped out due to the time commitment. Susan Lee encouraged me to continue my studies and get a degree and arranged some flexibility into my schedule so that I could attend school and still work a 40 hour week. Eventually earning a degree in Library Science I was able to apply for a full-time cataloging position as a Librarian which opened up in the Technical Services department. I remember wearing a suit to the job interview. Memorable because me wearing a suit was (and is) such a rarity. But I got the job. All because of the suit?

Membership in the South Central Library System grew under the direction of then director Peter Hamon and newer libraries joined our system and shared their collections and borrowers with our service population. With a shared system, all the records for materials would be accessible to all the member libraries. Madison had been using MACHINE Readable Catalog (MARC) records supplied by OCLC for some time and wanted to continue to do so. The rest of the South Central libraries kind of agreed to continuing that and expanding the practice to their materials as well. MPL director Barbara Dimick (promoted from Head of Children's Services) became director somewhere in here. Barb was supportive of our desire to do the cataloging for all the South Central libraries. Madison cataloging staff campaigned for and won that cataloging contract. South Central-- some of whose staff (Vicki Teal, Lauren Blough) were in the office right next to Madison's Technical Services department-- would print weekly reports of new materials the non-MPL libraries added to the system and the catalogers would use those printouts to search OCLC for records to download to the local system. At one point, the printer that South Central used to print reports broke down and they couldn't give us a printout of new materials to work from. Someone in our department suggested that perhaps they could email us a copy of the report rather than printing it out. And a time and paper-saver was born.

So, the personal computer happened. And email. Then computer graphics. And then internet access became possible. And things changed and we adapted. We moved from the GEAC system to the more accessible Dynix system-- patrons could search the catalog using computers and the (literal!) card catalog was displaced. Materials for the public switched from 16 millimeter films to VHS tapes and music went from vinyl albums to compact discs. Audio recordings of books went from vinyl (never a huge part of the collection) to books on cassette which became books on CD. Magazines and paperback romance titles were linked (and tracked) in the circulation system/catalog. Graphic novels became a separate part of our collection (thanks to the efforts of librarian advocate and selector Barbara Segal) VHS tapes were replaced by DVDs and were chosen by Jim Egger. Blu-Ray arrived later. Then downloadable materials (selected by committees of libraries throughout our system.

Behind the scenes, OCLC, our supplier of catalog records, moved to the internet rather than dedicated terminals and allowed more people to add records to the catalog and edit existing records. Much later, they increased the limitations on the size of the records from a maximum of 4,096 characters to basically whatever contributors were able to key into a record.

When the Dynix system was approaching the end of its life (being replaced by a Dynix upgrade), it was suggested include an "open source" library system called Koha when looking at new vendors. We were involved in the testing process and knew that development was ongoing and decided that we could work with the new system and their staff. It was not an overnight success. Lots of behind-the-scenes work by mostly SCLS staff and communications among libraries helped make the system more workable/understandable for our staff and patrons.

Somewhere during all of this, amazon.com started up. And they eventually opened up a self-publishing business. And a lot of new books were published-- some of which were donated to libraries (or we bought them outright) -- which needed catalogers (not unlike myself) to catalog them. And people continue to read. And they value and use libraries. Although the circulation numbers are down from our highs our mission to serve the community continues-- but in newer ways and with different materials. Current director Greg Mickells has made outreach a bigger part of our mission. And libraries continue to enrich lives.

Lots of details were omitted in providing this short history of my time here. Lots of names weren't included either. Details are supposed to matter when you're a cataloger. So are names.

They all mattered.

[I'm open to any revisions on this. Space considerations at your convenience. I'm not sure about my "timeline" of when things happened but this is fairly close. You can share it around with anyone for proof-reading fact-checking, or whatever.]

Dennis

Business Meetings

- PLSR Steering Committee meeting
- Meeting with Operation Welcome Home
- Attended the Tenzin Woesser Internship presentation
- Meet with IT staff about Telestaff
- Meeting with Deputy Mayor Enis Ragland on MPL updates
- OPN Design meetings (several)
- Results Madison meetings
- Telestaff review
- Meeting with Amos Anderson from the Urban League
- Meeting with Alder McKinney
- Dennis Reynolds retirement party
- Tour of the Men's Health & Education Center
- Pinney Purchase Agreement negotiations
- Mayor's Strategic Management Team
- Long Range Facilities Planning
- Mayor's Management Team
- Mayor's Human Services Committee
- RESJI Strategic Planning committee
- Mayor's Strategic Management Team
- Budget Review meeting

Public/Media Appearance

- TV interview with Channel 3 in regard to the Reindahl project
- Back to School Stuffing party for the 100 Black Men program
- Attended the Media Academy performance at the top of State St
- Forward Fest PechaKucha
- Attended the Madison College press conference on their new South Campus initiative
- Presentation to Peruvian Rotarian's visit to Central Library

City Business

- Dept/Division Head Meeting with Mayor
- Mayor's Guidance Team