

Hunterdon County Library
Director's Report
September 2008

2008 Hunterdon County 4-H & Agricultural Fair

HCL staff produced an interesting and interactive display at the 2008 Hunterdon County 4-H & Agricultural Fair from August 20 through 24. Sporting new cherry-red t-shirts with our blue ribbon slogan "The Library Grows Winners" (courtesy of the Friends), 29 staff members from 10 departments of 3 branches distributed program fliers, applied (*temporary*) tattoos, handed out pens with our web address and fans proclaiming "I'm a FAN of the Hunterdon County Library". A welcome addition this year was music by various bands who have performed for us throughout the year, such as Eric Mintel. CDs provided toe-tapping background tunes while a sign announced "As heard at Hunterdon County Library" so folks could learn about our great programs.

Our generous Friends provided 15 free, NJ-related raffle prizes guaranteed to delight young and old. NJ is the setting for DVDs "Rocket Science" and "Be Kind, Rewind"; book-on-CD "Fearless 14: a Stephanie Plum Mystery" as well as "real" books: "Fear and Yoga in New Jersey", "Notorious New Jersey", "The Great Swamp: New Jersey's Natural Treasure", "G is for Garden State" and "Food Lovers' Guide to New Jersey". Talented NJ authors & performers are featured in the book "Ernest and Elston", music CDs by Frank Sinatra ("Nothing But the Best"), Count Basie ("Basie at Birdland") and Bruce Springsteen ("X2"), and a DVD "Bottom of the Ninth" about the Somerset Patriots baseball team. "The Camel Bookmobile" is a novel about establishing library service in Kenya. Another book, "My Librarian Is A Camel", was reserved for kids who helped design our new bookmobile by coloring a bookmobile page.

Library staff at the Fair included: Joan Bonham, Cindy Boyer, Joan Brelsford, Karen Case, Fran Daley, Joan Dando, Elizabeth Erwin, Gabriele Freedley, Lisa Gilbert, Cheryl Grotrian, Karen Kilpatrick, Cindy Knight, Claire McFadden, Kerri Messinger (who was there in spirit: Get well quick, Kerri!), Alison Naftal, Dana Neubauer, Mary Noone-Kozakiewicz, Amanda Philipp, Maria Picciano, Jean Raper, Jane Ricketts, Floyd Saums, Glen Spinks (who helped set up), Lisa Storm, Ann Louise Taylor, Jim Thatch, Mark Titus, Stacy Whitelaw, Jennifer Winberry and Naomi Winder. To those who filled in at the last minute, you are much appreciated. Special thanks goes to our good Friends of the Library Bill Newitt and Bob Kozakiewicz for providing spot lamps, extension cords, display racks, duct tape and muscle to make our exhibit so attractive.

Hats off to everyone who braved heat, dust and fireworks to provide smiles, information and refrigerator magnets to the hundreds of visitors, some old friends and some new. Special thanks to the Fair Committee – Joan Brelsford, Mary Noone-Kozakiewicz, Jim Thatch, and Jennifer Winberry – for a job well done!

Bookmobile

The bookmobile vendor has reported that they expect to have our new bookmobile ready for delivery sometime in November. Final selections for interior finishes and the paint and graphics for the exterior have been made and the vendor is preparing their quote for the exterior graphic paint work which we should have shortly.

Adult Summer Reading Club

Kudos to Terry Edwards for doing such a fine job with the "2nd Annual" Adult Summer Reading Club. It was even more popular this year than last summer. We registered 179 club members, who read 1,498 books, a 67% increase over last year's total! As with last year, the members had a challenging puzzle to solve, and their reading efforts were rewarded with an end of summer party.

There were three new aspects to the club this year. One was the very popular moderated blog, in which we posted club members' reviews of books they read. The blog was visited 852 times from 121 cities throughout the U.S. Most were from Hunterdon County, of course, but we also had blog readers from Seattle, Santa Clara, Chicago, San Antonio, and Orlando! Club members loved it because it gave them ideas for books to read. Our staff loved it because it was a more efficient and attractive way to publicize club book reviews.

Another new aspect was our summer-long book display on our new eye-catching display shelf across from the Circulation Desk, on which we displayed the books that were rated highest among our readers. Books were flying off of this display and we constantly had to re-stock it.

The third change this year is that the Friends of the Library voted to contribute some funding to the adult club to enable us to have great prizes and party refreshments.

North County Branch

The program season is back in full swing and off to a promising start at North County Branch. The Vegetarian program with Sue Rose had 72 enthusiastic attendees; the Cookies and Books reading group ran out of books due to a large sign-up; and the Hobnail Irish concert had over 50 people sign up before it even hit the papers! NCB is planning many more Saturday afternoon programs including "Haunted New Jersey" with Gordon Ward and an I Ching class presented by Glenroy Wolfson.

NCB's volunteer program has been very successful with volunteers contributing 1,112 hours of assistance so far in 2008. There are presently eight adults and thirty teenagers who take on a variety of assignments to help the library. Many of the twenty new volunteers are high school students inspired by their schools' suggestion that service to one's community is character-building. Some of them continue on a limited basis during the school year and others completed as many hours as possible this summer. Volunteers willingly perform tasks such as restocking brochures, cutting scrap paper, sharpening golf pencils, and shelf reading. They also enjoy photocopying and collating, setting up the meeting room and organizing archived material. Their efforts are greatly appreciated.

NCB's Summer Reading Club was a great hit with a total sign-up of 837 readers and 13,607 books read. There were 44 special programs with an audience of 1,235 children and 594 adults!

Youth Services

NCB's Summer Reading Club was a great hit with a total sign-up of 837 readers and 13,607 books read. There were 44 special programs with an audience of 1,235 children and 594 adults! Final numbers for our other libraries will be available soon.

Fall storytimes began again after Labor Day. Storytimes at all locations are full and have waiting lists in many cases.

Circulation

Sunday hours at Headquarters resumed on September 7th. There were almost 700 first-time checkouts in the four hour period, in addition to items that were renewed.

Requested items have now reached an all-time daily high of 254 at HQ! The list continues to average 150 items per day!

Circulation Statistics

	Aug 08	July 08	% Change	Aug 07	% Aug	YTD 08	YTD 07	% YTD
Headquarters	51,584	58,166	-11.3%	46,714	10.4%	400,858	332,918	20.4%
North County	51,410	59,620	-13.8%	45,890	12.0%	393,083	325,011	20.9%
South County	10,375	11,588	-10.5%	9,739	6.5%	79,420	66,581	19.3%
Bunnvale	4,097	4,099	0.0%	3,814	7.4%	30,403	25,740	18.1%
Readington	8,279	9,267	-10.7%	7,227	14.6%	59,095	52,354	12.9%
Holland/Alexandria	5,067	5,518	-8.2%	3,984	27.2%	36,865	29,121	26.6%
Tewksbury	5,228	5,692	-8.2%	4,667	12.0%	39,409	29,376	34.2%
Three Bridges	4,235	4,400	-3.8%	3,618	17.1%	28,183	21,678	30.0%
High Bridge	1,345	1,239	8.6%	1,354	-0.7%	9,088	8,344	8.9%
Frenchtown	764	936	-18.4%	615	24.2%	5,450	4,448	22.5%
Bookmobile	1,318	1,681	-21.6%	937	40.7%	12,352	8,177	51.1%
Total	143,702	162,206	-11.4%	128,559	11.8%	1,094,206	903,748	21.1%



