

Hunterdon County Library
Director's Report
May 2009

The Return of *Festive Friday*

To wrap up National Library Week (April 13th – 18th), we hosted our first *Festive Friday* of 2009, sponsored by the Friends of the Hunterdon County Library. Over 150 patrons attended, mostly families, and some patrons who came to use the library unaware of the special program joined in the fun as well.

We had the ever popular *Scavenger Hunt*, locating board game images throughout the library, each with a letter on the image. When the patrons anagrammed the image the phrase "Library Week!" was spelled out (one young solver thought she had the phrase figured out before finding all the clues and turned in the answer "Library Geek!").

Downstairs there were two crafting areas set up, one with card making, stamping and coloring; the other, beading. Both of these areas were filled with crafters until the very end of the evening.

In the meeting room on the main floor, *Wii*, *Rock Band* and some retro-video games were popular. One of our library patrons, Consie Sindet, a professional face painter, volunteered her time and service for the evening and created some really spectacular faces! She painted the children's entire faces as butterflies, cats, even Spiderman, not just the usual stars and rainbows on cheeks. In the back reading area, games of *Scattergories* were on-going and very popular with families competing against each other and groups of new friends formed as people scrambled to find words in twelve categories that began with a selected letter.

Refreshments, courtesy of the Friends, and information on the upcoming Book Sale were available in the gallery to complete the evening.

Extension Services

The Bookmobile took part in *National Library Week* activities during the week of April 13th – 18th. It was parked at the front of HQ on Tuesday morning and at NCB on Wednesday afternoon for patrons to explore. We had a number of visitors, including many excited children who are enchanted with the vehicle. On Saturday afternoon it went to SCB for two hours while a number of patrons explored and checked out items the entire time.

The bookmobile will be taking part in a *Kids Day America Festival* to be held at HealthQuest on Saturday, May 16th from 12:00 – 3:00 pm. We are looking forward to this additional outreach opportunity.

School services are winding down for the season, with our focus on getting our books back from all of the schools before Summer.

Youth Services

Our preschool storytimes at all locations have ended until September. We had a number of tours at HQ and NCB. Three Bridges 1st graders have been coming to HQ every Friday, as well as Stockton grades 1 – 4. HQ also hosted a library tour for the children of Hunterdon County employees on *Take Your Child to Work Day*.

Reference Dept.

We are now working with staff from the *New Jersey Library for the Blind and Handicapped* to help them promote their services to the entire New Jersey library community. They would like public libraries to take a more active role in making their services available to not only the visually impaired and disabled community, but also to those with mild or temporary handicaps, dyslexia, etc.

We will also be involved in a three month beta test for the *Access World News Research Collection* from Newsbank. The database is all news-oriented, including blogs, newswires and newspapers from around the world. Their full-text indexing of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* and the *Star Ledger* are of particular interest to us. Since the NJ State Library will no longer be providing access to these important local resources, we are now longer for an alternative solution for funding this service. The beta test gives us three months of free access.

North County Counts

North County staff and volunteers are spending the week of May 4th – 9th conducting a patron head count for a statewide user survey. We have a small table and chair in the foyer and rotate staff or volunteers each hour to greet and count each person who comes in. This experience has turned out to be quite enjoyable. Seeing the way people enter the building gives a totally different perspective from encountering them at a service desk, whether it's Circulation, Youth Services, or Reference.

Many patrons are very purposeful and head right up the stairs, probably to get on the Internet. Others just amble in and stop to look at the display case in the foyer. Others are lead in by children who want to make a bee-line to the youth services area. Many stop to say "hello" and some of these people ask what we're doing and others actually volunteered to fill out a survey because they "love the library" so much. We thank them and say that we're just happy that they came in that day. One man thanked us for "counting" him. We said that everyone counts.

Watching and counting also gives us a real perspective on the diversity of our clientele and the fact that we do provide so much to so many.

Circulation Statistics

	April 09	March 09	% Change	April 08	% April	YTD 09	YTD 08	% YTD
Headquarters	51,669	58,192	-11.2%	45,232	14.2%	214,474	187,741	14.2%
North County	46,658	50,106	-6.9%	44,368	5.2%	192,018	178,268	7.7%
South County	9,186	10,047	-8.6%	9,409	-2.4%	37,828	36,111	4.8%
Bunnvale	3,703	3,709	-0.2%	3,021	22.6%	14,769	14,209	3.9%
Readington	6,951	7,345	-5.4%	6,215	11.8%	28,518	25,597	11.4%
Holland/Alexandria	4,373	4,830	-9.5%	3,909	11.9%	18,469	16,125	14.5%
Tewksbury	4,847	5,242	-7.5%	4,700	3.1%	19,276	18,229	5.7%
Three Bridges	3,311	3,407	-2.8%	3,023	9.5%	13,026	11,832	10.1%
High Bridge	935	883	5.9%	1,056	-11.5%	3,696	4,190	-11.8%
Frenchtown	598	684	-12.6%	624	-4.2%	2,627	2,472	6.3%
Bookmobile	1,380	1,831	-24.6%	1,751	-21.2%	6,261	5,689	10.1%
Total	133,611	146,276	-8.7%	123,308	8.4%	550,962	500,463	10.1%



