

Hunterdon County Library Director's Report April 2018

Buildings and Grounds

The Director and Assistant Director did a walkthrough of the HQ and North County Branches with library interior designers. We are working on developing short-term and long-term goals to redesign the interior of the two locations.

The "Grove" area in front of HQ is scheduled to be upgraded. The concept is to redesign the area to provide an area usable for Children's Programs and the public. The existing trees are included in the plan.

Finances

The Library Management Team met to discuss the Friends Request for FY18/19. The Friends of Hunterdon County Library (FOHCL) Finance Committee will meet with the library staff to finalize the request before the June FOHCL meeting. The Friends provide critical funding for library programs, landscaping and special projects.

In the Libraries

This April, the library re-started our National Library Week promotional efforts with great success. Each branch library hosted an information table at the lobby, a board where patrons could post what they love about the library, and gift baskets (one for adults, one for youth at each location), donated by the Friends of HCL to raffle off. In Youth Services, families created a number of library-themed crafts to express their love of libraries.

The North County Branch will hold the annual *Garden Expo* on Saturday May 19th from 9:30 am – 2 pm. Exhibitors include Rutgers Master Gardeners of Hunterdon County, The Native Plant Society of NJ, the Northwest NJ Beekeepers Association, and many more.

The programs and concerts at NCB continue to draw good numbers of patrons. For the "Highlands Trail" talk, 50 nature enthusiasts showed up. Fred Miller has been steadily regaining his popularity, and had 55 attend his lecture-in-song. One of the two big surprises of the month was the "Simon and Garfunkel" tribute concert which had a SRO attendance of 94. The other was the "Declutter" talk with Jamie Novak, which had a sign-up of 81! For the gardeners, the "John Bartram" program again proved to be popular with 48 people. Finally, the talk on "Gardens of Devon and Cornwall", which was shown on a rainy day, drew 28 attendees.

Youth Services has finished the last session of story time for the spring and are beginning to gear up for the Summer Reading Club: this year's theme is LIBRARIES ROCK!

Entries are being received for the annual *HCL Outdoor Art Show and Sale*. With still a month to go before the registration deadline, we have received about 40 entries, more than half of the maximum 75 local artists that will be accepted.

Laurie Wallmark returned to HQ and held a coding workshop for tweens that was very well attended. Students brought along their own computer to work on code.org. Parents attending requested more workshops like this.

The Delaware Bead Society held a Bead workshop for students in grades 1-6. The children were able to make bracelets and necklaces using the beads and wire provided by the Bead Society.

Pearl Observatory came to HQ in April for the "Little Al the Allosaur" Dinosaur program. Kids were a paleontologist for a day and learned about dinosaurs and reassembled the bones of a large Allosaur.

At NCB, art teacher Amber Gale led a Tweenz Art program-Art in April. Students learned about the color wheel and how to use it. Using mixed mediums, the children made a watercolor booklet on a topic of their choice.

Staff Updates

Kathleen and the Director held multiple Branch Meetings at all three locations. We shared our management philosophy and engaged the staff in constructive conversations about current issues and future goals. Kathleen summarized the key points into an actionable spreadsheet. We will be setting up another round of Branch Meetings in June to follow up and build on previous discussions.

The Library Management Team met on April 11th, 2018. The meeting was the first one of its kind in sometime. The Library Management Team voted to have the meetings monthly, and at the next meeting we will address many of the issues raised at the Branch Meetings.

At the Branch Meetings the staff requested Departmental Meetings. The proposal is to stagger the Branch Meetings and Departmental Meetings every other month.

The Assistant Director will be "graduating" from Leadership Hunterdon on June 6th. There will be one more session in June after that.

Outreach/Partnerships

On Thursday May 10th, the Director will be inducted into the Clinton Sunrise Rotary having transferred his membership from the Piscataway Rotary Club.

The 5th annual Hunterdon County Community Day, sponsored by the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, will be held at Fairgrounds in Ringoes on Saturday, June 2 from 11am-4pm. The planning committee, of which HCL's Jim Thatch is a member, has scheduled a full day of events, games, food, and music for the entire family. The Hunterdon County Bookmobile will also be on hand for tours. The Friends of HCL and HCL's Youth Services Department will provide games for kids and teens and information about our programs and services for the public.

The Hunterdon County Library Bookmobile participated in the Somerset Patriots TD Bank Ballpark on Saturday April 21 from 9 am – 12 noon as part of Healthy Kids Day[®] Swing for the Fences co-sponsored by the Hunterdon County and Somerset County YMCAs.

The Bookmobile has begun spring visits to local grammar and nursery schools. There are currently five scheduled between now and the middle of June.

A Youth Services Librarian went to Career Day at North Hunterdon High School to represent Librarians in a County Library. The Library promoted the digital services offered by HCL and distributed over 50 YA books to students. An abundance of donated books over the past few months resulted in free books for any student who stopped by the HCL table to chat!

The Library is once again hosting the 4-H displays highlighting local clubs and their projects. The exhibits will be on display on the main and lower levels of Headquarters during the month of May.

Technology

The Director has seen two demonstrations, Communico and Plymouth Rocket, of online program registration services and is scheduled to review one more product, Evanced. Each of the options also offer other services such as online meeting room bookings, book club kit management, reading club and museum pass management.

The issue around computer shutdown at the end of the day may have a solution. IT is going to implement a new solution that will shut down all library computers at the same time. This should address the issue raised at April Library Commission Meeting.

Affiliates

The Assistant Director prepared a preliminary document detailing the current services Hunterdon County Library provides the affiliates.