

Upstairs, Downstairs

What's going on behind the scenes at the Cedar Rapids Public Library

1-14-2008

Administration

- Lori Barkema, Library Director and members of the Board of Trustees presented the library's FY09 budget proposal to the Council and City Manager. The library is requesting council support for an architectural feasibility study to revitalize the downtown branch as described in the Board-approved building program
- The advocacy rally on January 7 drew 380 people in support of the library. This volunteer effort to enlist community support for the library is a project headed by the Foundation and the Friends.
- The Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance (ICCA), a group of 128 arts and culture organizations located in the 11-county area around the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Corridor, has announced nominations for its upcoming Cultural Corridor Innovative Excellence Awards (aka "The Ickys"). The event is Iowa's only cultural awards voted on solely by the peer groups of ICCA. Two collaborative projects in which the library participated have been nominated: The "Hidden Treasure" illustration exhibit with the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art and "The Seuss Is Loose" with the Science Station and Theatre Cedar Rapids. Lori serves on the Board of ICCA, and Carol will be one of the presenters of the Children's Programming award. Tickets to the event are \$20 and are available through Theatre Cedar Rapids at (319) 366-8591. Visit the [Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance's Web site](#) for more information and a listing of nominees.

Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center

- The temporary office location seems to be working out pretty well. We appreciated the help in getting moved, and like seeing the friendly faces that pass our way. Dixie, Katy, and Jean have made some adjustments to ensure that ISAIC patrons get the same wonderful service that they are accustomed to receiving while we are in the Red Room away from the collection and materials.

IT

- IT staff moved the Ghosh Technology Learning Center equipment back in place after heat pump installation.
- They also moved ISAIC to its temporary location in the Red Room and changed the phone lines.
- Staff wrote and/or edited background documents for Budget discussions.
- They tested the PayPal payment system for out of state "Ask-a-Librarian" questions
- They updated the lobby display slide show to highlight Linn Area Reads.

Maintenance

- One of the heat pumps in the boiler room has been installed. The heat pump in the tech services closet is in the process of installation. The heat pump above the second floor staff hallway is in the process of being removed and is not slated for replacement as a cost saving measure.
- We custom made an adaptor assembly for the computer projector in the technology learning center for use in computer classes.
- We are re-hanging the Land Wave painting in the Lobby today.
- We continue to work with the heat pump installation contractor to ensure a smooth transition from old to new.

Children's/Programming

- Simply Science, new program for preschool age children, was held on Friday. Courtney Harber from the Science Station will present a science related story time on the second Friday of each month. This month's theme was the moon.
- Books for the intergenerational reading program have begun arriving. "Read the River" will begin on Feb. 1. We are doing programming in collaboration with CRMA and the Indian Creek Nature Center. We have also ordered book bags which will be given to the adults who participate in the reading program.

- The canoe to be given away at Paddle Day on Feb. 16 at the Indian Creek Nature Center is on display in the lobby. There is information about the day and other associated programming at the library including "Read the River" and a free writer's and illustrator's seminar to be given by Kelly Dupre, a children's writer and illustrator. Some early publicity about the seminar has already gone out and we have had some interest about registering. Attendees do not need to register. The program is free and open to the public at 10-11:30 am on Saturday, February 16, in Beems.
- Playtime Poppy and actors from Kennedy High School who are performing "James and the Giant Peach" visited the library on Saturday. They offered a brief performance from the production that was followed by a craft and treats.

Circulation

- The Circulation team has been working hard to eliminate clutter in our workroom.
- Many ideas are flowing to make the most of the space we have! Great job, Circulation!
- The shelving team has a new staff member. Welcome, Robert!
- The featured window display at West this month concerns creating a budget and making wise financial choices. Thanks, Paula!
- Curtis is shifting for the expansion of the Religious fiction.

Adult

- Our nonfiction book discussion for next week is The Innocent Man by John Grisham. The Innocent Man, John Grisham's first nonfiction book, deals with murder and injustice in a small town. Grisham uses Ron Williamson's story to raise issues of fairness in the criminal justice system and to highlight problems with the death penalty and our systems for dealing with people with mental illness. The book discussion will be Thursday, January 17th at 2:00PM in the 2nd Floor Lobby.

Ask Marian

Dear Marian,

A friend who missed Monday night's "rally" asked me, "Is the library asking for other support from the public, to try and stop/lessen the cuts?" What should I tell her?

Signed,

Supportive Staff Member

Guest respondent Marie DeVries, Foundation Director, replies:

Dear Supportive,

Two charitable organizations support the Library: The Friends of the Cedar Rapids Public Library and the Cedar Rapids Public Library Foundation. These sister organizations were both established in the early 1970s to fund programs and facilities that *enrich and enhance* the CRPL; each has a different focus. The Friends focus on supporting additional library services and programs that enhance those funded by the annual operating budget, such as outreach and literacy programs. The Foundation supports capital improvements and programs considered new/innovative and presume some risk.

Donations to these organizations are not intended to supplant public operating funds. Operating funds are mainly the responsibility of the City and its residents. Our public library is in the same category as our fire, police, streets, & parks departments.

Now, to answer your question! As they have for nearly 40 years, the Foundation and Friends continue to seek private funds that will supplement public funding, but they will not seek funds for annual operating costs. For a library to remain free and democratic, the public must do the heavy lifting. It's up to us – the taxpayers!

Marie DeVries, CRPL Foundation