

Hunterdon County Library  
Director's Report  
February 2014

Bookmobile

The Hunterdon County Library bookmobile was invited once again to participate in the annual Flemington Holiday Parade sponsored by the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce. Lisa Storm and Kerri Messinger drove the decorated bookmobile in the parade. Adorning the bookmobile was a joint effort; thanks to Jim Thatch, Kathy Monti, Karen Lewis, and Kerri and Lisa for helping with the decorations.



The bookmobile participated in the Hunterdon County Parks Department's Touch-a-Truck once again. It had been canceled in 2012 after Superstorm Sandy.

***The Bookmobile will be starting a new stop on April 9<sup>th</sup> from 10-12 at the Hopewell Valley Bank in Pittstown. The stop will be every other Wednesday morning. The bank personnel are very excited about this arrangement and hope to be able to offer some promotions to attract younger readers.***

### eHCL

**eHCL**, the Hunterdon County Library's digital collection, continues to grow. As of December 31, 2013, the Hunterdon County Library owned 147 downloadable audiobooks and 1,359 eBooks. 1,549 unique users took advantage of this service checking out a total of 8,479 eBooks and 451 audiobooks. A decision was made to continue with Digital Library NJ for one more year (through February 2015).

### CD project

A CD reclassification/relabeling project, a joint project between Technical Services and Extension Services (including South County Branch staff members) continues. The genres have been refined to be more descriptive; the labels will have the entire genre name written on them as well the artist's entire name (i.e., Popular-Beatles rather than P-Bea 2). The CDs will be shelved within each genre, then alphabetically by artist (or group) and then by album title making for easier browsing.

### Technical Services

Once again, Technical Services handled the end of the year ordering/processing/receiving crunch with grace and good humor.

### Volunteers

There were a record numbers of volunteers and volunteer hours this past year. Volunteers take care of tasks such as shelving, cleaning tables and public computer equipment, assisting with displays and annotating the *New York Times* bestseller list each week after which it is posted in the new book area at Headquarters, North County, South County Branches and the Bookmobile.

Volunteers at North County Branch finished 2013 with a whopping 2294.8 hours of donated time. That is almost five FTE staff.

## 2013 Gingerbread Competition



The Third Annual Gingerbread Competition, sponsored by the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce and the Friends of Hunterdon County Library, was held during December at the Hunterdon County Library Headquarters and was a huge success! Entries for 2013 were more than doubled from the year before and the main gallery was visited frequently during the month by library patrons enjoying the edible masterpieces. On Wednesday, December 4, more than eighty people attended an opening reception hosted by Hunterdon Chamber President Christopher Phelan, Richard Gerstner from Hunterdon Chamber Radio, Hunterdon County Library Director Mark Titus and Supervising Librarian Jennifer Winberry.

## Holiday Concerts at Headquarters and North County Branch

In addition to the Gingerbread Competition, the holidays were celebrated with a variety of musical programs at both the Headquarters Library and the North County Branch Library. Fred Miler performed his annual *An American Christmas* and The Eric Mintel Quartet performed *A Jazz Holiday* at both locations in December. North County Branch was also visited by The City Winds Trio and held a *Holiday Sing-Along*. At Headquarters, The Hunterdon Harmonizers Barbershop Chorus performed their annual show for our patrons, and the Hunterdon Central High School Fiddle Club gave a lunchtime holiday concert. If that was not enough, Headquarters hosted a *Holiday Movie Series* in the meeting room, featuring several holiday classics.

## On the Big Screen Movie Series

Terry Edwards continues to host our popular movie series in the meeting room of Headquarters, featuring newly released films on DVD, giving patrons a better chance to see these films, most of which have a long list of holds. Library patrons have appreciated the opportunity to see these new movies, especially during this time when Hunterdon County is still lacking a movie theatre within its borders. Some titles presented in the last series were *42*, *Mud*, *The Heat*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *Now You See Me*. The movie license was generously paid for by the Friends of the Hunterdon County Library.

## Staff Training Day

Staff members from all three branches and the bookmobile came together on October 4 for Staff Training Day. Speaker Luisa Paster presented a workshop on customer service and conducted staff exercises on various real life situations during the morning session. After lunch, which was generously provided by the Friends, director Mark Titus presented a State of the Library Report. His report touched on various subjects such as budget, eBooks, museum passes and Polaris. Afterwards, the staff ended the day by breaking into teams for a lively game of Trivia Pursuit.

Staff Training Day was well received by staff and we hope to make it an annual event. We are currently in the planning stages for a “mini” staff-training event to be held in May.

## Circulation

Headquarters and North County circulation departments are now back to full staff and our new staff members are progressing well in their training. One new staff member, Yamiris Marcano, is bilingual and has been extremely helpful with our Spanish-speaking patrons. Reference recently called upon her to assist with a patron in need of information and Yamiris was able to contact the patron and act as intermediary. Yamiris is also assisting in getting our World Language books in the proper order.

Jeremiah Harris has been made the “in charge” person for circulation on Sundays. He is doing a great job and helps with anything he can, even helping to keep the walks in front of the library clear on weekends so that patrons do not slip. Jeremiah also makes sure that staff keeps on track and reports any issues to circulation supervisor Lee Comella. He was a great choice to take the lead on weekends.

## Reference:

Book Bites, the adult book discussion group at North County Branch, is filled every month, despite snowstorms and winter vacations.

IRS Tax Forms are available, and so much in demand that several have already been re-ordered.

2013 Reference Questions increased 120% over 2012. More citizens are turning to their Library for information, research and entertainment.

North County Branch Displays reveal a wide range of talents and interests of our local citizens. Recent exhibits included Fall Scapes of Hunterdon County, Majolica stoneware, Tea Tins from around the world, T-shirts made by survivors of domestic violence, and oil paintings of PA coal miners.

Proctoring college level exams for our Distance Learners continues to be a valuable service. While it costs us nothing and requires only a few minutes per student, this allows 2-3 adults per month to pursue higher education or expand career goals without losing work time or income.

## Youth Services:

In January we started up the Tween and Teen programs again at Headquarters. Programs for both groups were held on Wednesday January 29. Both programs incorporated the Chinese New Year theme, with crafts, stories and music.

*TWEENZ in Costume* at North County had lots of scary fun at our *Third Annual Halloween Spooktacular* for grades 1-6. Sitting around a "campfire" with lights out and only the sound of crickets while hearing a haunting tale, wrapping each other like mummies, parading for candy at Reference, Circulation, and Youth Services, and Goody Bags to Go made the party really Creepalicious!

*Paws to Read* has really caught on at Headquarters with an average of 7 dogs and 25 children each Wednesday at 4:00.

Paws is always a favorite at North County with lots of dogs. There are usually around 45 children in attendance with the majority reading on their own, with the help of parents, or with the wonderful dog handler volunteers.

North County Teen Café ended 2013 with two exciting programs. On November 13, twenty young people stretched their creative abilities in defining who they are with a *Duct Tape Extravaganza*. While some teens decorated personal items, others created their own wallets, ties, belts, and bracelets.

On December 11, North County Branch Teen Café combined with the Teen Writers Group for *A Writers' Feast*, which celebrated the 15 young people who meet monthly at the library to read and critique each other's writing. Several teen writers read their original works before an enthusiastic audience of 32 peers, family, and friends. William Spear, who co-facilitates the writers' group with Ann-Louise Taylor, was the emcee. Each writer received a special journal as a token of appreciation for their dedicated work as writers.

North County Branch Teen Café celebrated the beginning of 2014 with a *New Year's Bash* on January 15. Teens gathered at the library to renew old friendships, "*Just Dance*" to the Wii, sing their favorite songs, and join in friendly dance competitions.

The first *Fun(damentals) of Creative Writing* program (formerly Writers Workshops), was held at North County Branch on January 29. Thirteen young people attended the workshop, which focused on stage and screen writing. William Spear presents eight theme-based writing programs each year. 2014 begins the 5<sup>th</sup> year of writing workshops for young people at the North County Library.

On January 8, there was an accident involving a water pipe in the North County Branch Youth Services department. Thanks to the quick actions of staff, the affected area was kept to three aisles. Unfortunately, that area continues to be off-limits to staff and patrons. We are hopeful that the matter will be resolved soon and the area can be restored and reopened.