

Hunterdon County Library
Director's Report
September 2014

South County Branch



Author Buffi Neal discusses her book *Wonderfully Dysfunctional* at the South County Branch Library's Book Group July 15th

Bookmobile

The Bookmobile was on the road at many community events this spring and summer; in addition to nursery school tours and one for the kindergarteners at Robert Hunter School, the bookmobile was seen at the Readington Buffalo Farm's annual fund raiser for the Whitehouse Station Rescue Squad on May 17th, the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce's Community Day June 21st, and at Kids' Day at the Red Mill in Clinton.



The Bookmobile and Paws to Read at Kids' Day at the Red Mill in Clinton July 19th

Led by Kerri Messinger, the staff of the bookmobile continues to put up displays to entice and encourage readers:



The newest bookmobile stop at the Hopewell Valley Community Bank has been a great success. The bank is very excited to have us and ran a summer reading promotion to encourage children to read. Each week several new patrons register and there are even some regulars who look forward to the stop every other week.

World War I Commemorative Displays

A library-wide display commemorating the 100th anniversary of the beginning of World War I boasted books of all kinds, family pictures from the era, a Red Cross uniform and bombers and a zeppelin created by Linda Zdepski.



Summer Outdoor Concert Series

We were pleased to welcome representatives from Raritan Valley Community College to our Outdoor Summer Concert Series. Tables were set up with information about the school and programs they have available for the public.

Elizabeth Gilbert Tricentennial Program

The Hunterdon County 300th committee welcomed Elizabeth Gilbert on Saturday, August 9th to a crowd of almost 200 people in Building #1. Jennifer Winberry was excited to work once again with Ms. Gilbert's publicists to set up the program; the library was pleased to be able to assist in the publicity and Frank Bell and the staff of Buildings and Grounds contributed greatly to ensuring that the program went off without a hitch.

Library Card Month Promotion

Joan Sabo, with the help of Linda Zdepski, worked tirelessly on our Library Card Month promotion. Almost forty businesses are partnering with the library this year to offer discounts with library cards. For more information, go to:

<http://www.hclibrary.us/pdfs/libcardmonth.pdf>

The Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce was very supportive in promoting the promotion in their newsletter. We even received a request from Auntie Anne's Pretzels, who heard about the program on Hunterdon Chamber Radio! Go to:

<http://hunterdonchamberradio.com/library.htm> to be part of the event.

8th Annual Adult Summer Reading Club

The 8th Annual Adult Summer Reading Club had a very successful year. The Friends of the Library assembled three large, colorful summer-themed gift baskets, and displayed them at Headquarters, North County, and South County. This attracted attention to new flyers that displayed pictures of coffee and ice cream establishments around the county to which club members could win a gift card. The combination of the gift baskets and the new flyers brought in 83 first-time members to the club! In total, we had 189 club members, consisting of patrons from Headquarters, North and South County, the Bookmobile, and every one of the member and affiliate libraries. A grand total of 1,700 books were read. The club's End-of-Summer party was attended by a meeting room full of enthusiastic club members, who enjoyed snacks, games, prizes, and conversation about good reads.

Here are some comments that were made:

Thank you to you and your staff for hosting a fun Adult Summer Reading End of Summer Party. It was neat to meet other book lovers. I had a good time and I'm glad I went.

Thank you and your staff for a very fun evening! I met some amazing people at my table. I really had a great time and then to come home with a stash! WoW!

I'd say it was an evening of great happenings! Thank you again, I love my Library!

My first and I hope not my last book club party. It was really fun and great refreshments. Thanks for all your hard work in the planning.

I had always participated in libraries' summer reading programs as a kid, and I am so delighted that we have a club for adults. I really appreciate it. I also loved reading "Just Jennifer" and all the blog posts, and as a result I read books I never would have picked out on my own.

Thank you and your team for a great party! I think everyone who attended had a wonderful time.

And finally....

I joined the Adult Summer Reading Club the first year it started. That year, I went to the End-of-Summer party simply to get out of the house. I walked into a room of people I didn't know and immediately wondered what the heck I'd gotten myself into. I left that night with a room full of new friends and a very happy heart. The party was soooooo much fun - and every year it seems to get even better. In fact, I haven't missed a party since - and even postponed my book/speaking tour in Vermont several days so I could make it to this year's festivities. Hope to see YOU at the party!

- Patti Kerr, author of I Love You, Who Are You? Loving and Caring for a Parent with Alzheimer's

Museum Passes

We have just completed the first full year of our museum pass program. Beginning with just four museums, we have doubled our offerings to eight during this period. We now offer passes or vouchers for the American Museum of Natural History, Da Vinci Science Center, Grounds for Sculpture, Intrepid Air & Space Museum, Liberty Hall Museum, Museum of the City of New York, and the Red Mill Museum Village (**NOTE:** the Zimmerli Art Museum just announced they are doing away with admission fees and has been removed from our museum line up). We have also added a link on our webpage to the Crayola Factory for discounted tickets.

The American Museum of Natural History is the frontrunner in popularity with our patrons with 105 checkouts. Grounds for Sculpture came in second with 73 checkouts, followed by the Intrepid Air and Space Museum with 55 checkouts and the Da Vinci Science Center with 25 checkouts. In total, we had 271 museum pass checkouts in the first year with an average savings to patrons of \$9,499.38.

The museum pass program is generously supported by the Friends of the Hunterdon County Library. For more information on museum passes, go to:

<http://www.hclibrary.us/community/museum.htm>

Second Annual Staff Training Day

We will be holding our second annual Staff Training Day on Friday, October 24, 2014. Headquarters, North County Branch, South County Branch and the bookmobile will be closed that day in order for staff to participate in a seminar presented by Claudia Monte of CAM entitled *Stress Management – Keeping it all together*. Also planned for that day is a presentation on safety by a County representative.

Some of the day is still in the planning stages, but we certainly intend to make the most of one of the rare times the entire Hunterdon County Library staff will be together in one place!

Circulation Department

We will be dealing with staff shortages at North County Branch in the coming months, with one person retiring and two other staff members on temporary leave. We plan to “borrow” staff from other departments to make up the shortages as well as sending circulation staff from Headquarters to North County Branch as schedules permit. Supervisors Lee Comella and Jennifer Winberry will be working closely together to keep the circulation desks at both branches staffed.

The day after Labor Day there were 309 items on the RHA list. We have been averaging around 125-175 a day, so this was a large number. As always, Jared Biondi did an excellent job of retrieving the items.

Circulation Supervisor Lee Comella has weeded fiction twice and shifted books to open up room on our shelves. She is now readjusting shelves as needed as part of this ongoing project.

Youth Services Programs

This Summer Paws to Read had four fun programs at North County Branch during June and August and two outdoor programs at the Red Mill Museum Village--"Storytelling" and "Kids Day" each with the Paws To Read dogs.

North County Tweenz had four successful programs during July—"Meet the Bees with the Northwest NJ Beekeepers Association", "Drum Circles", "Playful Yoga", and "Mad Scientist".

This fall Paws to Read begins on Wednesday, September 10th at Headquarters and on Saturday, September 13th at North County Branch for the school year.

North County Branch Teen Café had some terrific programs that went along with a science theme – Chemistry, Physics, and Experiments.

Headquarters Tweenz and Teens had programs about comic books, origami, hula-hoops, and science. All were very popular and well attended.

We also had a dozen large, sold out crowds for our weekly performers at Headquarters and North County Branch. Shows included a magician, reptiles, and a theater group.