

Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative

Director's Report

December 2009

Library of Michigan: Governor Granholm has formed a commission to consider funding challenges and space utilization at LoM. Nancy Robertson, State Librarian, has indicated that she is submitting the names of possible library representatives who can serve. The commission will meet after the first of the year and has a report deadline of June 1, 2010. Nancy also reports that the library administrative offices have reopened after a two year hiatus in which library ceilings were repaired. The LoM staff is happy to be reunited on the 5th floor from library and off-site locations spread far and wide.

State Aid Budget: Unfortunately, the legislature adopted the reduced budget of \$6 million that the public library community anticipated and dreaded. While sources have indicated that a possible supplementary bill might be introduced, that action has not taken place. The budget for next year is predicted to be worse.

Summer Reading: The Summer Reading Performer showcase was held on October 20, 2009 at the Fenton Community Center. Attended by 47 library staff members, 38 performers, and 2 guest speakers, the day was a resounding success thanks to Irene's careful planning and attention to details. Irene has booked over 350 performances at libraries in MMLC and NLC. We have signed most of the contracts and she is now preparing the packets that go to the libraries and the performers. Spring tour - featuring Tim Smith "aka Buck Wilder" – bookings are also underway with over 20 performances already scheduled.

Michigan Library Association Conference: The MLA conference seemed subdued in light of the reduction in public library funding. I attended sessions on public policy, advocacy, investing, the state of the association, and the economic future for Michigan libraries. The message is clearly that we must look for other ways to do business if cooperatives are to survive.

Workshops: A Plinkit Review is scheduled for December 8, 2009 with Sonya Norris. Plinkit is an initiative of the LoM to provide libraries that do not have websites to create and maintain a web presence. Cheryl Cole, Vernon District Library Director, serves on the Advisory Committee. In January, a day long workshop on millage campaigns will be offered.

Library Visits: I began meeting with library directors and their staff members on October 15, 2009. Spending from a few hours to a full day at each location learning about the library was very rewarding. I was extremely impressed by the staff pride and dedication, customer service excellence, phenomenal programming, and outstanding buildings that I visited. On November 24, 2009, I completed my tour with the 19th library visit. It was an enjoyable six weeks on the road!

North Branch Township Library: Karen Lambert, Director of the NB Library, is retiring after 30 years with the library. The NB Board invited me to make a presentation on hiring processes.

Michigan Library Consortium: MLC is currently working with the Executive Director of INCOLSA, the Indiana equivalent to MLC, to complete a process to combine the two organizations. There are many benefits to Michigan libraries with this association. A vote of member institutions will take place on December 16, 2009.

Universal Service Fund: It is that time of year again. I attended a full-day workshop on USF in October. Members are completing their Form 470's and updating technology plans.

Holiday Schedule: Between December 23, 2009 and January 3, 2010, Irene and I will be using vacation time. I will be monitoring our voice mail and email systems and will be responding to messages from home.