

TWELFTH ANNUAL MEETING
PARK FOREST PUBLIC LIBRARY and OLYMPIA FIELDS PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARDS OF TRUSTEES MEETING

November 1, 2007

The Joint meeting of the Park Forest Public Library and Olympia Fields Public Library Boards of Trustees opened at 6:55 p.m. Those present were:

Park Forest Public Library Board Members: Peg Donohue, Gail Graham, Linda Marron, Sevena Merchant, Penny Shnay and Fritz Wildermuth.

Absent: Joan Larsen.

Olympia Fields Public Library Board Members: Joan Braden, Ann Juttelstad, Patrick Kelly, Mary Lubertozi, Robert Pierce and Diane Pierson.

Absent: Corine Hawthorne.

Park Forest Public Library Staff: Barbara Byrne Osuch, Mitchell Cox, Paul Silic, Mary VanSwol, Sharon O'Leary, Susan Stumbaugh, Golam Kibreah, Renee Wick-Brink, Brian Vagt, Mary Paleologos and Nancy Kupec.

WELCOME

President Shnay welcomed the Trustees and staff and thanked them for their participation. She noted that watching the PowerPoint presentation and listening to the conversations between Trustees prior to the meeting exemplified the cooperation of the Boards. Even with the physical problems experienced and dealt with during the year with the building, the atmosphere in the Library has been great. The staff response to the patrons has been visible in the increased circulation, program attendance and gate count.

2007 & BEYOND

Ms. Osuch welcomed the Trustees and introduced the Library staff attending. She noted:

- The slide show was an overview of twelve months of Library programs held.
- The Library has lived up to its mission statement to open doors to a world of information, education and recreation.
- The flood that the Library experienced on January 5th was devastating, but by 11:00 a.m. on January 6th, all the water had been removed from the basement and a crew of volunteers distributed 500 hats and mittens to patrons that day. It is to be appreciated that no taxpayer dollars were spent on this giveaway.
- In February, sixteen pounds of Valentine's Day cards were made by patrons and shipped to soldiers in military hospitals.
- The 50th Birthday party for the Cat in the Hat in March was attended by over 250 people.

- Also in March, the Library in cooperation with the Park Forest Health Department presented activities during Diabetes Awareness month. This included the Library hosting educational seminars and free glucose screenings.
- An in-library Easter Egg Hunt was the highlight of April for the 270 people who attended.
- On May 1st, in cooperation with the Friends of the Library, Live Homework Help was introduced for online tutoring help.
- May brought the start of the Farmer's Markets for both Park Forest and Olympia Fields. The Library made 500 gardens more beautiful with the free marigold seed packets distributed to patrons. Also, the Library celebrated Sgt. Peppers' Lonely Heart Club Band's anniversary.
- In June, children were launched into the Summer Reading Program with a kickoff by author/illustrator, Eric Rohmann. Over 200 parents and children attended. Later, many of the same faces and some new ones participated in a program presented by two NASA engineers. All attendees were given the opportunity to handle tiles used on the exterior of the space shuttles.
- July was a magical month with several programs offered by staff member, Mark Krahn. Over 100 participants were dazzled with magic tricks and many returned for educational sessions on how to perform several tricks.
- School supplies were distributed free in August. Again, this was made possible through the generosity of the staff and residents. No taxpayer dollars were spent for this community outreach opportunity.
- The One Library, One Book program began in September with book discussions and film screenings of To Kill a Mockingbird. This novel is still as effective and controversial today as it was when originally published.
- The Brown Bag Book Club had its first meeting in September with discussion of Summer at Tiffany's.
- October brought scarecrows to the Library with a how-to-make presentation. Two lucky families went home after the program and raffle with life-size scarecrows for their yards.
- Four hundred smoke detector batteries were distributed to patrons during Fire Prevention Week.
- The twenty-third season of Potpourri Lectures resumed during October.
- Library staff George Manno, Charles Erickson and Brian Vagt participated in the Village's Safe Halloween where 400 children trick-or-treated through downtown Park Forest. The Library is looking forward to partnering again with both the Police Department and Recreation and Parks Departments in the upcoming year.
- On November 17th, 330 ticket holders will attend a free concert performed by Ella Jenkins to celebrate Children's Book Week. During the week of November 11th, there will be programs every day "Under the Big Top" as children and their families experience the joys of books.
- On October 29th, the Library was notified that a check was received from IRMA for flood expenses.
- The Peek-a-Book kiosk will be unveiled in the Youth Services Department in November.

YOUTH SERVICES PRESENTATION

Ms. Osuch introduced the new Youth Services Librarians, Sharon O'Leary and Susan Stumbaugh. The two librarians noted:

- Even though they both are new to Park Forest, they are not new to libraries.
- They each complement the other and feel that they will form an effective team and look forward to moving into 2008 with renewed vibrancy in the department.
- They thanked the administration for the opportunity to attend the School District 163 Open House. They found the schools invigorated and moving forward to continue to improve their curriculums and students' lives and academic performance.
- It was good to see the concentration on reading and math, but especially pleased that the cultural arts were not neglected. The School District refused to cut music and art from the curriculum in order to save money.
- The Open House was a wonderful introduction to the community outside of the library walls.
- During the presentations, the Library was recognized for its commitment to the community by the School District's administration.
- It was valuable to see how the students interact in the school setting and how it will relate to the Library's efforts to better serve them.
- A Meet & Greet for School Districts 162 & 163 teachers and media specialists is planned in November. This will offer an opportunity to more closely coordinate with the teachers regarding preparation for school projects, a forum to discuss what after school programs the Library could offer to supplement the schools' curriculums, possible clubs (Science, etc.) that the Library could sponsor and ways to reach children in their daily lives.

President Shnay thanked Ms. Stumbaugh and Ms. O'Leary for their comments and noted that the Trustees looked forward to the many great things they had planned for their department.

The Trustees were invited to visit the Youth Services Department when using the Library. They will see the tables filled with students studying and reading, the computer stations fully utilized and little hands crafting projects at the table that is always available.

Mitchell Cox, Network Administrator, demonstrated the new Peek-a-Book kiosk that would be available in the Youth Services Department beginning in November. The interactive station features six storybooks at a time and these can be changed on a regular schedule.

QUESTIONS/SUGGESTIONS FROM TRUSTEES

Trustee Donohue requested feedback from the Olympia Fields Public Library Trustees. Items noted included:

- Another survey will be mailed to residents in November.
- They are expecting positive feedback to the changes in the Library this year.
- They are anticipating that the improved customer services will be reflected in the survey. As highlighted during the meeting, the programs, patron participation and helpfulness of the staff have increased noticeably since the last survey.
- It is the hope that Olympia Fields residents will be more aware that Park Forest is their library. It is felt that this message is being conveyed through outreach such as participation in the Farmers' Markets and Olympia Fields Fall Fest. The presentation of materials to be sold at these events has been impressive.

- Requested continued efforts to include Olympia Fields schools in Youth Services contacts. It was noted by Ms. O'Leary that Arcadia School has been invited to the Meet & Greet. Other schools in District 201-U and the parochial schools served by the Library will be contacted at a later date.
- The staff was complimented on their improved efforts and it is felt that the Library is getting better every year.
- Pride of the Library and Ms. Osuch has been a wonderful asset to the developing the relationship between the Village and Library Boards.
- Feelings were shared about the improvements in the Library, compliments to the staff and Trustees on overcoming the flood tragedy in the beginning of the year.
- Has only good words for the staff from a patron perspective.

Additional comments/questions included:

- Compliments to Ms. Osuch on her leadership of the library.
- The community's changing attitude toward and support of the Library since the reorganization.
- The staff teamwork in the Library has dramatically improved. The positive results of this are seen at the public services' desks and reflected in the increased statistical numbers.
- The events calendars in The STAR Newspapers distributed for Park Forest and Olympia Fields are not identical. Continued attempts should be made to have the Library programs listed in both editions. Also, it was shared that with the merger of The STAR and Daily Southtown Newspapers, that different press releases may appear in either publication.
- The Library website is currently being redesigned.
- Calendar of Library events should be sent to schools in the service area.
- Possibly include a upgrade of the outdoor sign for the next fiscal year.
- A new display board featuring the Library has been installed at the Olympia Fields Village Hall.
- The feedback on the *Forest & Fields* newsletter has been positive.
- Ease of use for online services such as searching the catalog, placing holds and renewals is appreciated.
- Some repairs have been made to the basement drains which will allow the Village to continue investigating the problems. The Library will be updated as information becomes available. Calls from Secretary of State Jesse White and the Illinois State Library have been received concerning the progress.
- The need for additional space has become apparent especially in scheduling programming. The Library is increasing the programming while facing limited space to hold the events.
- The challenge before the Rich Township High School District concerning reading curriculum was mentioned in order to apprise Trustees of the current debate.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Lubertozzi moved to adjourn the special meeting of the Park Forest Public Library Board of Trustees at 8:12 p.m.

Trustee Marron seconded.

Motion carried.

Gail L. Graham
Library Board of Trustees