

METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

LIBRARY MANAGERS' MEETING

Downtown Library

December 10, 2003

Attending: Denyvetta Davis, Judy Walden, Ann Aliotta, Karen Bays, Barbara Beasley, Priscilla Doss, Tim Fisher, Daphene Keys, Jack Kinzie, Mary Patton, Katrina Prince, Debbie Robertus, Debra Spindle, Phil Tolbert, Deborah Willis.

Guests: Janet Brooks, Scott Carter, Heidi Johnson, Donna Morris, Dana Morrow, and Anita Roessler.

- I. **Denyvetta** called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.
- II. **Tech Processing Presentation** – Heidi Johnson from Technical Processing showed the managers a PowerPoint presentation on her department, its personnel, its mission, and a lot of details of how it accomplishes its challenging tasks. The workload handled on a daily basis can run from 50 to 100 boxes of books and other materials that all have to be processed and made available to our staff and customers. Last year, over 143,000 items flowed through Tech Processing and out to the branches. After the presentation, Heidi made several tongue-in-cheek awards to help highlight some of the problems of coordination that arise between TP and the libraries such as: labeling directly on items, creating numerous non-standard audio-visual labels, and not returning the new book boxes as soon as possible so that they are ready for more new arrivals. The managers thanked Heidi for her presentation and for all the good work her staff does every day.

III. Open Discussion

Reference collection use—Barbara Beasley introduced the issue of a decline in the use of the reference collection at Bethany Library. It seems that more and more customers insist on reference staff finding information on the Internet instead of in print, regardless of the lack of authoritativeness. Some of this insistence seems to come from the fact that they can have 10 free copies if they are downloaded from the Internet, whereas they would have to pay \$.15 a page to make copies of a print source on the Xerox machine. Barbara wanted to know if any other branches have had the same problem. A general discussion was held concerning the use of the reference collection and whether or not a large, expensive hard-copy collection is necessary or desired with the ready availability of online sources, including the Internet. Tim asked, if this decline in print use was real, would it be a future consideration to limiting full reference collections to only a few library branches. However, few other libraries noted as marked a change as Bethany. There was a general concern, however, about the equitability of people getting free copies or having to pay just because they opt for different formats of material. Phil Tolbert wondered if there was any way to have copiers that would recognize library card numbers and would automatically allow 10 free

copies before charging a customer. Priscilla Doss and other managers pointed out that we tried pay-for copier cards in the past, but they were not popular with our customers. Debra Spindled wondered if a customer service issue was not involved here, and whether or not we need to determine during the reference interview if the customer has a specific format they proffer or are required to have before actually accomplishing the information search. Mary Patton pointed out that some teachers forbid using Internet or electronic sources. Debbie Robertus mentioned that some require that they do use the Internet. When some librarians mentioned that they find it hard to demand that small children or obviously indigent customers find the money to pay for copies they need, others, including Judy Walden, pointed out that staff members can and often do use their judgement in overriding the copiers and providing free copies on a case-by-case basis. After more general discussion, it was felt that no action could be taken at this time, but that the issue would be revisited in the future.

- IV. Training Certificates – Denyveta** gave out certificates of training to managers who completed workshops during the last month.
- V. Downtown Library – Debra Spindle** showed detailed drawings of the 1st and 2nd floors of the new Downtown LLC. She reported also that more progress has been made with woodwork, carpets, glass partitions, etc. She also shared several volumes of rare books that were found in the Downtown stacks area during the preparation for moving including ones from the eighteenth century with hand tinted illustrations and ones from the nineteenth century with actual samples of wood from various trees. We are looking at a collection for which these items would be better suited.
- VI. Presentation Tips – Karen Bays** demonstrated a PowerPoint presentation she has developed when talking to various community groups in her service area. Entitled, "Your Library and How It Can Help You," the presentation allows her to tout the benefits the Edmond Library brings to various groups and to the community as a whole. She mentioned the importance of couching facts in ways that are important to her particular audience. She also emphasizes new items and improvements, as well as our growing electronic resources. She allows her audience to ask questions at any time, and she said you need to be prepared to answer detailed questions about library cards and how they are issued. She also uses the opportunity to pitch for volunteers to come in and help her library and her community.
- VII. Marketing and Communications Update—Scott Carter** mentioned a favorable article in the *Daily Oklahoman* last week concerning the new Downtown LLC. He also stated that "Spotticus," the new MLS mascot was now available for personal appearances, as the first of two costumes had arrived and had been debuted at the annual Christmas Party. A second costume, for shorter wearers would be available soon. An advertising campaign is in progress featuring 10 billboards, a radio spot on KMGL, new TV spots, our city bus "wrap," and ads during local movie previews. The first Blazers hockey game giveaway went well and the second will take place on December 17th. Scott also

announced that the Summer Reading Task Force will soon finish its work and will make recommendations to improve the 2004 program. Finally, he announced the sale of sweatshirts with the "Read Y'all" slogan on them.

- VIII. Lifetime Readers Society Kickoff—Anita Roessler** presented our latest program for senior customers called the Lifetime Readers Society. This club will offer gifts, mailings, our Metro Library magazine, prizes and an annual *Readfest* program. Designed to engage our senior customers in library events and to encourage continual learning and recreational reading, the program will revolve around a late-winter reading festival, that won't interfere with our Summer Reading program.
- IX. Misc—Denyveta** offered copies of the MLS service area map for any branch that needs one. She also encouraged managers to start working toward the March deadline for the budget. She also assigned two new books for professional reading for calendar year 2004: *Why Employees Don't Do What They're Supposed To?* due by June 30th; and *"The Power of a Good Fight,"* due by December 31st.
- X. Final Comments—Donna Morris** said that she hopes to be more visible to library employees this next year, now that her broken leg is almost well. She also announced that the prospects look good for hiring both a new Director of Finance and a Facilities Director before the holiday break. This will allow some overlap for the benefit of the new executives. Dana Morrow mentioned that the group, Libraries of the Future (www.lif.org) has updated their Website to show which MLS branches that have Family Place activities.
- XI. Adjournment—Denyveta** adjourned the meeting at 2:23 PM.