

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May 2004

The staff of the Children's Department, Fairhaven Library and the Teen Librarian are gearing up for the activities of this year's **Summer Reading Program**. The theme this year is "Blaze a Summer Reading Trail" and will be previewed during the Junior Ski to Sea Parade on May 21st.

In the **Grand Parade**, the Library will partner with the Parks and Recreation Department in entering a float based on our summer reading theme and featuring kids and Reader Raccoon sitting in the woods sharing a story.

May 4th, Scott Blume and Helen Scholtz represented the Bellingham Public Library in a celebration of **statewide library services to youth** held in Olympia and hosted by Governor Gary Locke. It was a good opportunity to provide exposure to State officials on the importance of children's services in our local libraries and how these programs complement the Governor's emphasis on education.

We have begun the training for our **system migration** with a core group of staff members having completed a basic training regimen last week for three days at the headquarters of the Whatcom County Library System. This group will be the key players for system design and system training

The in-house public catalog stations are already being upgraded to the new format in order to ease the transition for library patrons. Actually, this "new" format will look like what our remote users have been using for more than a year. The cover art, reviews, and table of content information will be added this fall.

Another group of staff members is working on a project to study our **policy differences** between the two library systems. The system migration offers a perfect opportunity to resolve patron confusion wrought by these differences. Hopefully, next month we will have some significant progress to report for the Board's consideration.

As the expectation of a new building within the next five years recedes into the distance, staff has begun tackling **the problems of space constraints and workstation deficiencies** in our current facility. We are looking at where we can add more shelving to accommodate both our print and our nonprint collections—this, however, will reduce public open space and seating areas.

We are also looking at how we can reconfigure the checkout desks to accommodate both our new computer system and at the same time address ergonomic issues for Circulation staff—this, however, will strain an already tight budget and require some creative financing.

When the cost estimates roll in, we'll check our wallets and see how many of our needs we can actually accomplish.

A staff committee is working on a **display project** that will be installed in the front lobby. This display will provide the public with information about the role of each group of library staff members (pages, clerks, librarians), services provided by the library that are not immediately visible, and the volume of transactions that are handled day in and day out. The goal of this display is one of education and enlightenment. The Friends of the Library will be funding any expenses incurred with this project.

Gayle Helgoe
Acting Director