

Quarterly Report – August 1, 2009

Name and address of reporting institution:

Spanish Peaks Library District
415 Walsen Ave.
Walsenburg, CO 81089

Project Title: Spanish Peaks Library Health & Wellness Initiative

Name of person submitting report: Monica A. Birrer

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Reporting Period start date: May 1, 2009

Reporting Period end date: August 1, 2009

Publicity:

The Library received a great deal of publicity during the end of this quarter because we opened a beautiful new facility in an historic school building; grand opening activities took place June 26-28. The Librarian's regular column written at the end of July included an invitation to view the anatomical models now on display at the "health information station" however, it was not published until August 6, 2009.

Outreach:

We have continued to mention the health information station at community meetings. The hospital outreach clinic staff have come a couple of times and left material and offered health screenings.

Other accomplishments:

The Library District total population is less than 6500 people and with many volunteers and 8 staff members we moved our entire library out of a small 1500 sq. ft. house to a 9700 sq. ft. rehabilitated building. The entire quarter was spent repainting and assembling shelving, packing boxes, planning layouts, etc., all without professional assistance. On June 24, two days before opening, the IT director drove to the next largest town and purchased a 40" LCD HDTV for the health station. It took us the rest of the quarter to purchase additional equipment for the project.

Although not a part of this grant, the Library received a donation of twenty 'gently used' computers to set up a computer training lab during this quarter as well. At some point in the future we would like to offer free classes specifically to teach people how to find reliable health information on-line.

Target audience:

Our target audience is the entire population of the area; this includes communities outside of the library district where residents read local newspapers, shop or work in Walsenburg, and watch the local cable TV station.

Goals, Outcomes, Objectives:

Our major difficulty this quarter was finding the time to purchase all of the equipment and materials necessary to get the health station up and running. Staffing in the library and the bi-county health department fluctuates and adds to the job duties of remaining staff. We were able to order the equipment and the anatomical models before the end of the quarter.

Evaluation:

With the professional assistance of Betsy Kelly, Washington University School of Medicine, our survey was rewritten. Because the activities have not begun, the surveys have not yet been used.

Impacts and Observations:

Other health professionals in the community are excited about what we are proposing to do for the public with the health station. We are all so busy with our individual agencies and numerous tasks we do not coordinate our activities as much as we would like.

Planned Activities:

Our plan is to have health videos playing during the day on the large screen TV in the center of the new library. The anatomical models will be available as will various health materials, books, pamphlets, etc. As staff are asked questions, or see patrons using the health station, they will encourage participants to complete the survey and be counted.

Tech For All @ your local Library!

By Jaye Sudar

I spent last Thursday with Rose Keating, director of Tech For All, the organization from Denver which has provided 23 computers for the Spanish Peaks Library. Tech For All is a non-profit that collects computers, upgrades them and then donates them to individuals or groups in the community. Their goal is to give computers to those who need them so that they can learn the skills vital in our tech oriented world. As of last Thursday, over 2,034 computers had been given away.

Entering the conference room was a shock. Computers were on every table, cords crisscrossed the floor and Rose Keating was moving from computer to computer working to set them all up. On the wall was a sign that read:

"WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE ... We have a one year agreement to loan 20 computers to the Spanish Peaks Public Library in Walsenburg, CO a project close to the hearts of our benefactors, Steve & Reba Savageau. The Library did not have the funds to acquire these computers this year. At the end of the year, the computers will go to qualifying recipients in Walsenburg."

Rose had arrived with the computers on Wednesday, navigating the horrendous hail storms that pelted I-25. She and a handful of volunteers brought them in and did an initial set up that evening. A few had gotten wet, and were left to dry.

Thursday, Dan Harper

of LoboSavvy Technologies was on hand to help with system updates, software loading and general inspection of the computers. My original mission was to get the story on the computers. However, Rose's infectious enthusiasm for technology and helping people soon had me cleaning computers and working to set up the network needed to begin the hours of updates necessary for the computers.

The challenge of connecting 25 computers to the library's network was accomplished by scrounged routers and a spiderweb of black, blue, gray and pink cable. After plugging all the computers in, and making sure they worked, the task of updates and software installation began.

By 10 pm, we were nearly done. Rose and Monica stayed to finish up the last few computers. Twelve hours of effort provided 23 computers fit for service at the library. The benefit for the community will be a computer lab capable of teaching computer classes. LoboSavvy is partnering with the Spanish Peaks Library to provide a series of basic computer classes starting in mid August. However, none of this would have been possible without the computers from Tech For All.

This computer lab was the culmination of 24 volunteers, over 170 hours, \$2,694.48, and 328 miles on O'Blue, Rose's truck. For more information on Tech For All, check out their website. www.denvertchforall.org/index.htm.

@ your library

by Monica Birrer

WALSENBURG- Hurrah and thank you all again – what a beautiful space we have created! So far everyone seems to be enjoying the new library in the historic school building. If you have not yet visited, please take a few minutes to come by and let us know what you think. We have a short survey asking what hours you would prefer the library to be open for service. We are still figuring out where things are and what final touches would make it easier to serve you so your input is most important right now.

If you have tried to call the Library you will know that the phone number has not changed, 719-738-2774; however, we have not yet managed to get the voice-mail option to work, so you cannot leave a message. We all know how dependent we are on technology and it is very frustrating when it doesn't work as expected. There are a number of new procedures that we are trying to set up to make it easier for you to access your library records, sign-up for computers, pay for printing, etc. Of course, I want it all to work now so the staff has more time to help customers, but it is going to take some time. As you know, the operating budget for the Library has not been increased and we don't expect it to increase in the next year or two. So, we are trying to provide more service with the same staff. I'm sure the staff would appreciate any help you can offer; just dusting all the window sills or checking to see that the books on the shelves are in the correct order takes additional time. Our main-

tenance person is working hard to keep our beautiful new space clean and shining in the same nine hours per week in a building more than three times the size. It would be great if volunteers could take turns mowing and weeding the lawn this summer so he has more time to maintain the interior.

Speaking of time and staff and budget, I want you to know that the total operating budget for 2009 was set at \$186,610.00, down \$4,030.00 from 2008. Because of Abatement Refunds granted this year to CCA Properties of America LLC (The Prison) and BP America Production (formerly ARCO) the Library's actual revenues were decreased by \$10,093.03. This is not money that we can recoup next year; although many other public entities are allowed to do this, the Library District may only collect taxes based on the actual property valuation each year. Over the next couple of months the Board of Directors will have to review the budget and consider ways of dealing with this additional loss.

The Library recently received a grant from the National Library of Medicine to set up a health information station to help our patrons learn to be better consumers of health care. Come by and see the new anatomical models and learn something new as the topics change each month.

National Public Radio will be airing a program about the Library and services to rural communities in the next couple of weeks. A reporter was here before and during the opening and interviewed a number of residents, a few of whom will be heard in this piece. We will do our best to alert you when we know exactly when it is scheduled.

Tomsco and Makkai Are Headliners at Open Arms Banquet

by Carol Dunn

Open Arms Pregnancy Resource Center held its annual fundraiser banquet on Saturday, August 1 at the Walsenburg Community Center.

Featured speaker Ellen

mighty work of rescue to be done here – for children and for mothers."

George Tomsco of the Fireballs headlined the musical entertainment, joined by Lee Adams and Rick and



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