

Austin Public Library Director's Report August, 2009

Highlights

On September 10, 2009, the contract for professional services agreement with the Joint Venture of Lake/Flato Architects with Shipley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott to design and oversee construction of the New Central Library Project. Input sessions are being planned.

Beginning October 1, 2009, the following two changes to Austin Public Library Policy will take effect:

As part of the 2009-2010 Library Budget, the Library will begin charging for holds not picked up within the allotted 10 calendar day hold period. Accounts will be charged a \$1.00 fee per item that is not picked up.

The loan period for DVDs and VHS tapes will be extended to 3 weeks, but, due to high demand, there will be no renewal option for these items.

On August 11 the AHC opened its new exhibit, "Not a Museum ~ Your Story, Your Archive: An Exhibit About the Value of Archives." This exhibit explores and celebrates the value of archives in our community and in our lives by highlighting some of the unique collections at the AHC, how the community uses the AHC, and how all of our histories are connected. AHC staff report seeing many visitors exploring the exhibit.

Facilities Services

New Central Library Project: The execution of a professional services agreement with the Joint Venture of Lake/Flato Architects with Shipley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott to design and oversee construction of the New Central Library Project was completed by the City of Austin on September 10, 2009. Subsequently, Project Manager Cynthia De Witt Jordan of the Public Works Department issued Notice to Proceed to the design team for Phase A, Preliminary Phase Services for the New Central Library with an effective start date of September 17, 2009. On Thursday, September 24, 2009, the New Central Library Project Kick-off Meeting will be held at the Austin History Center for key staff stakeholders and the consultants. In a related development, the Phase I review of the twelve (12) Statements of Qualifications received from interested Construction Manager at Risk firms was completed by Thursday, September 12, 2009, and a short list of the five (5) most qualified construction firms was established. Phase II of the New Central Library Construction Manager at Risk process will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to the short listed firms from Phase I. Those proposals will be due to the City of Austin by roughly September 28, 2009. It is anticipated that the staff evaluation of those proposals will be completed by November 20, 2009. Maintaining this schedule will allow the recommended construction firm determined by the selection panel to be conveyed to the Austin City Council in the form of a Request for Council Award of Contract (RCA). Lastly, eleven (11) responses to the New Central Library Project's Commissioning Agent Request for Qualifications were received by the City of Austin on Tuesday, September 1, 2009. The tentative schedule for the New Central Library Project now stands as follows:

October, 2009 ~ Design Phase Initiated

November, 2009 ~ Citizen Input Process Initiated
Spring, 2010 ~ Schematic Design Completed
April, 2010 ~ Construction Manager-at-Risk Contract Executed
May, 2010 ~ Commissioning Agent Hired
Fall, 2010 ~ Design Development Completed
Fall, 2011 ~ Design Phase Completed
Summer, 2012 ~ Construction Begins
Spring, 2014 ~ Construction Completed
Fall, 2014 ~ Grand Opening

Twin Oaks Branch Library Replacement Project: Presently, the construction of the new Twin Oaks Branch Library is proceeding at a good pace. Aluminum doors and glass have been installed as have been the ceramic tiles in all restrooms. Taping and floating as well as painting is underway throughout the interior spaces of the building, while the mechanical sub-contractor has been busy setting coils, connecting ducts and piping and vacuum testing refrigerant lines. The electricians on site, meanwhile, are fully engaged in the installation of all light fixtures specified for the building. Ongoing exterior construction activities at the moment include setting outside air conditioning units and coils, connecting the rainwater collection tanks, setting plants, trees and sod, and installing guard rails along West Mary Street. The outdoor reading garden is also being constructed at this time. The general contractor's schedule currently identifies substantial completion of the project being achieved by December 7, 2009. The Library Department will, of course, carefully monitor the contractor's progress to complete construction so that the Twin Oaks lease space library may be closed at an appropriate date to allow the collection to be relocated to the new facility. Based on the latest contractor schedule received by the City of Austin, it may yet prove possible to celebrate the Grand Opening of the new Twin Oaks Branch Library in March of 2010.

Howson Branch Library Reroof Project: Now completely re-roofed, the Howson Branch Library is undergoing an interior renovation which is also fast approaching substantial completion. The outdated and technologically under-equipped building is in the process of receiving a significant facelift, with a modern color scheme throughout that compliments the revitalized, pecan veneer walls of the original architecture. Careful consideration was taken to preserve the overall ambience of this beloved branch library nestled in the heart of one of Austin's most established neighborhoods, while technologically bringing the facility into the Twenty-first Century. A new WiFi Bar is now being created to better accommodate customers with laptop computers, and electrical outlets and ports to the local area network are being added throughout the library so that customers have the option of either going wireless or "plugging in and learning". Library Facilities Services is likewise upgrading the Howson Branch meeting room with new audio-visual equipment in order to allow customers more flexibility when making presentations. The renovation project, in its entirety, has been extremely environmentally friendly, utilizing paints, carpets and countertops formulated from low VOC, recycled materials. A Rain Water Harvesting System was installed just in time to benefit from the recent week of rainfall, which filled the cistern with a 1,000

gallons of water to be used on the site's "Green Demonstration Garden". The "Green Demonstration Garden" serves as a useful tool to help educate the occupants of nearby residences, schools and businesses in methods of conserving natural resources. The motto "Reuse, Recycle and Renew" was adopted by the Library Department for this renovation project, and the resulting improvements clearly demonstrate the department's commitment to support the City of Austin Climate Protection Plan. Library Facilities Services personnel and their contractors are working in earnest to keep the project on track so that this library can reopen for community use on Saturday, December 5, 2009, as previously advertised.

Cepeda Music Garden Project: In the way of welcomed news, Cotera & Reed Architects have informed the Library Department that they are presently no more than a couple of weeks away from completing the Construction Drawings and Specifications Documents required in order to advertise this long anticipated art project for contractor bids.

Security Camera Installation Project: The Communications and Technology Management Department's vendor, TAC Systems Integration Group, has now ordered the video surveillance equipment which they will be responsible for installing at various library locations. TAC Systems Integration Group has likewise ordered the security cameras, acquired at a discounted price, which Library staff members from the Information Systems and Facilities Services divisions will be installing at the remaining library locations. All of the ordered video surveillance equipment, including the security cameras, are scheduled to be delivered prior to the end of October, 2009, so that this pressing personnel and property protection project can be carried through to successful completion as soon as may prove possible.

Zaragoza Warehouse Fire Suppression Sprinkler System Upgrade Project: On August 19, 2009, the Contract and Land Management Department (CLMD) issued Notice to Proceed (NTP) to the Mechanical Electrical Plumbing Engineering firm contracted to perform the PER (Preliminary Engineering Report) on the fire suppression sprinkler system of the Zaragoza Warehouse. On-site field work has already been conducted by the MEP firm and its sub-consultants, and a substantially complete PER is expected to be received by the City of Austin within 45 days of the issuance of the NTP. The project schedule then gives the Library Department a week to review and make comments and corrections to the PER, followed by a week for the MEP firm to address all Library concerns and submit the final PER which is due 60 days from the time the NTP was issued. Acceptance of the final PER will be followed closely by initiation of the Design Phase for a new integrated system to replace the obsolete fire suppression sprinkler system at the Zaragoza Warehouse, the primary storage facility for the Library Department.

University Hills Branch Library Art Replacement Project: During the first half of the month of September, 2009, the Facilities Services Division of the Library Department completed the deconstruction and removal of the deteriorated, exterior sculpture, "Color at Play" from the University Hills Branch Library site, as per the directive received from the City of Austin Arts Commission.

Austin History Center Wheelchair Lift Retrofit Project: During its August monthly meeting, the Historic Landmark Commission voted to approve of the construction of a ramp at the Guadalupe Street entrance to the Austin History Center to

replace the existing and malfunctioning wheelchair lift at that location. The Library Department's architectural consultant for this project will now proceed with completing the Construction Drawings and Specification Manual necessary to advertise the work for bids by interested contractors. Installation of this ramp will further enhance accessibility to the Austin History Center by creating handicapped parking spaces closer to that facility, an improvement which has long been a request from the wheelchair user community in Austin.

Media Relations

A total of 15 news releases were initiated in August

Central Library Services

On August 20, 2009, Faulk Central Library and the City of Austin Small Business Development Program worked together to present Business Startup Orientation at the Faulk Central Library, On Thursday, September 3, there was a 2 hour presentation by the City of Austin Small Business Development Program on the structure of a business plan complemented by a half hour demonstration of the resources available for small business owners at the Library. Nineteen people attended. Building Better Business Plans
http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/rg_bbbp.htm

Austin History Center Programming & Outreach

- Asian American Neighborhood Liaison Esther Chung had a busy month of August representing the AHC at various events. She had a booth at the annual Indian Independence Day Festival on Saturday, August 15. On August 22, she gave a presentation during the "Evening in Asia" fundraiser event held by the Network of Asian American Organizations; over 250 were in attendance. On August 27, radio station KOOP interviewed Esther about the AHC collections and early Chinese immigrants to Austin.
- August was a very busy month for the staff with the Society of American Archivists holding its annual conference in Austin August 11-15. Over 1700 archivists from across the world descended on Austin for this event. Photo Curator Daniel Alonzo served on the Local Arrangements committee for the conference and hosted 2 tours of the AHC on August 11. Video Archivist Tim Hamblin was a panelist at the August 13 session titled "Austin Music Matters," where he gave a presentation about the Video Collections and the importance of preserving music videos. Manager Mike Miller gave a presentation called "Managing a shrinking budget or the lost art of the hip check" during the August 13 Manuscript Repository section meeting.
- Michelle Mears, university archivist for the University of North Texas, gave a presentation about the Freedmen Communities of Austin on Sunday, August 16, at the AHC. Mears made extensive use of the AHC collections in researching these communities and writing her new book, *And Grace Will Lead Me Home: African American Freedmen Communities of Austin, Texas, 1865-1928*. 53 people attended the event.
- On Wednesday, August 23, Mike Miller and AHCA Executive Director Jeff Cohen gave a presentation to the AISD Social Studies teachers during their annual summer in-service. Mike & Jeff staged an Austin quiz show and discussed with 23 teachers how the AHC could better serve them and their students.

Collections

- Asian American Neighborhood Liaison Esther Chung finished processing the "Vietnam to Austin: Restoring Community" Exhibit Collection (AR.2009.048), which consists of approximately 1000

items obtained for and during the exhibit held at the AHC last year. In addition to this collection, Esther was able to acquire a significant donation of photographs and documents from the Ng family. Harry Ng was the owner of the Sam Wah Cafe and Tim Lim Restaurant.

- Processing Archivist Molly Hults completed the processing of the Max Nofziger Records (AR.2009.057). This set of papers is comprised of the working papers and correspondence from Max Nofziger's three terms as an Austin City Council member in the 1980s and 1990s.

- Photo Curator Daniel Alonzo is working with Austin Energy on their project to digitize all of their historic photographs. When the project is completed, these images will be transferred to the AHC. Photographer Grace McEvoy has also helped on this project, including serving on the interview team that hired the project intern to complete the work.

Publications

- Photos from the AHC were purchased for publication in an upcoming book by former APD Officer and Texas Ranger Ramiro Martinez, in the Austin Chronicle for an article about the warehouse district, for an upcoming documentary film about Jewish soldiers in the Civil War by Indigo Films, and for use at the Austin City Limits Festival in October.

Grants

- Photo Curator Daniel Alonzo, along with staff from ALIS, wrapped up work on the digitization of the Hubert Jones Glass Plate collection, funded by a TexTreasures grant from the Texas State Library & Archives Commission. The Jones Glass Plate Negative Collection is comprised of 466 fragile glass plate negatives from about 1870 to 1900 and is a unique resource for the history of Texas. Most of the collection focuses on a variety of scenes from life in early Austin. There is some coverage of San Antonio and Houston. The final website will be available in September.

- Manager Mike Miller submitted a \$262,786.00 grant application to the Council on Library and Information Resources, under the auspices of the Austin History Center Association, for a project titled: "Creating a Collection Management System: The O. Henry Collection at the Austin History Center." The project entails designing a new type of content management database to incorporate library, archives, and museum descriptive records, along with a digital asset management system, into one system using a Minimum Level Cataloging approach to resource description and discovery. The O. Henry Collection, which includes items from every collecting unit at the AHC, will be the first collection cataloged in this system to act as the test dataset for the project. If funded, this project should result in a new, dynamic, web presence for the AHC and bring most of its collections "out of hiding" and more visible to the general public. Also, this approach could serve as a national model for other similar repositories.

- Mexican American Neighborhood Liaison Gloria Espitia submitted a \$5000 grant application to Humanities Texas to partially fund a traveling exhibit component for the upcoming Mexican American Trailblazers project. On August 17, 2010, the AHC will open a new exhibit honoring up to 36 Mexican American trailblazers from Austin and Travis County. Nominations from the general public are being accepted until October 31. For more details and a nomination form, please see the project web page at: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/ahc/trailblazers.htm>

Staffing

- Reference Archivist Katie Causier and Manager Mike Miller passed their certification exams and completed all requirements

to become new members of the Academy of Certified Archivists, bringing the total number of Certified Archivists on staff to 4 (Photo Curator Daniel Alonzo and Processing Archivist Molly Hults are Certified Archivists). The Academy of Certified Archivists, founded in 1989 at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, is an independent, nonprofit certifying organization of professional archivists.

Upcoming Events

- On October 25 at 3:00 pm, the AHC will host an event with local author Lori Swick. Swick's new book, *Comfort & Mirth* (TCU Press), is a novel set in Austin in the 1920s. Swick will talk about how she researched for the book, using the AHC as a vehicle to get in the "historical moment," and the value of archives for writing historical fiction.

- On Saturday, October 31, 1-3 pm, the AHC, along with the UT Student chapter of the Society of American Archivists, will host its annual Archives Clinic at the AHC. The public is invited to bring in their special materials and get advice on topics ranging from organization to preservation of papers, photographs, scrapbooks, home video and audio recordings, electronic records, and other documents. Students and faculty from the University of Texas School of Information, along with staff archivists from the Austin History Center and other area archives, will be on hand to assess your materials and tell you what it takes to preserve them. Free literature will also be available.

- On November 15 at 3:00 pm, author Mike Cox will be at the AHC to talk about two new books he has out, the second volume of his history of the Texas Rangers and a coffee table book about the Texas Oil Boom. Cox will talk about his research for these books and the value of archives in writing history.

Grant Services

The Austin Public Library is pleased that the Royal Bank of Canada is funding the Library to teach children about watershed protection in the Hampton at Oak Hill Branch Library area using the natural environment as the classroom. The RBC Blue Water Community Action work will result in children from the local schools learning more about the Beckett Meadows and watershed area directly adjacent to the Hampton at Oak Hill Branch Library. The City Watershed Protection Review department and the Science Curriculum Group at AISD will be involved in this project which will further enhance work already completed by the Oak Hill Rotary Club. The Oak Hill Rotary Club has previously provided a trail head, benches, and support for exploration of the meadow area which contains a pond and other interesting features. The "Learning Tree," an Escarpment Live Oak (*Quercus fusiformis*), standing more than 50 feet tall in the meadow won the Tree of the Year Award in 2007. We expect a representative of the Royal Bank of Canada to deliver the check for \$4500 US dollars, to the Austin Public Library Foundation.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation has awarded the Cepeda Library with \$3000 dollars to purchase books and create programming that will bring the Brooke Elementary School children in special needs classrooms into the Cepeda Library for special attention to foster enjoyment of reading. The Children's Librarian, Jean Holland, will be working closely with Brooke Elementary to engage children with reading in their classrooms and at the Library. Brooke Elementary is close enough to the Library for the special needs classes to walk to the Library and as they do, they learn various life skills such as understanding traffic light signals. When they use the library, they learn how to check out the books, address the library staff, care for their library cards, and select their own materials to use. The Dollar General

Literacy Foundation provides funding to schools, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations to help with the implementation or expansion of literacy programs for students who are below grade level or experiencing difficulty reading.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

oSeptember 28: 7:00 p.m., Manchaca Road, Library Commission Meeting

oSeptember 30: 5:00 p.m., Oak Springs Branch. The Oak Springs Chess Club is open to beginner through advanced level players, adult and youth ages 8 and up.

•October

oOctober 1: 4:00 p.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 3: 10:30 a.m., Pleasant Hill Branch, Art in a Nutshell, Can you scribble? Have you ever seen clouds come alive with imagery? If so, you possess the hand and eye of an artist. Join Austin artist, Ismael Cavazos, as he leads this three hour class focusing on scribbles and the techniques it takes for you to transform these visions into art.

oOctober 3: 11:00 a.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 3: 2:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. . Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 3: 3:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 5: 7:00 p.m., North Village Branch. Fact Science Fiction/Fantasy Reading Group. Discussion of "Mistborn. The Final Empire" by Brandon Sanderson.

oOctober 7: 5:00 p.m., Oak Springs Branch. The Oak Springs Chess Club is open to beginner through advanced level players, adult and youth ages 8 and up.

oOctober 8: 4:00 p.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 8: 7:00 p.m., University Hills Branch. Book Club

oOctober 10: 11:00 a.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 10: 2:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. . Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 10: 3:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 13: 5:30 p.m., Austin History Center, "Behind These Walls Tour", Behind the scenes tours of the Austin History Center are held on the second Tuesday of every month from 6:30pm to 8pm. Tours are free and open to the public but advance reservations are required. Contact Jeff Cohen at 512.974.7499 to reserve a spot.

oOctober 13: 7:00 p.m., Old Quarry. Book Club

oOctober 13: 7:00 p.m., Howson Branch. Book Club

oOctober 14: 5:00 p.m., Oak Springs Branch. The Oak Springs Chess Club is open to beginner through advanced level players, adult and youth ages 8 and up.

oOctober 15: 4:00 p.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 17: 11:00 a.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos

Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 17: 2:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 17: 3:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 19: 7:00 p.m., Hampton Branch. AWorld Lit: The Flame of Literature Book Club

oOctober 20: 7:00 p.m., Pleasant Hill Branch. Mystery Book Club

oOctober 21: 5:00 p.m., Oak Springs Branch. The Oak Springs Chess Club is open to beginner through advanced level players, adult and youth ages 8 and up.

oOctober 21: 6:30 p.m., Manchaca Road Branch. Book Club

oOctober 21: 7:30 p.m., University Hills Branch. . Club de Lectura (Spanish language book club)

oOctober 22: 4:00 p.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 24: 11:00 a.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 24: 2:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 24: 3:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 26: 7:00 p.m., Austin History Center, Library Commission Meeting

oOctober 28: 5:00 p.m., Oak Springs Branch. The Oak Springs Chess Club is open to beginner through advanced level players, adult and youth ages 8 and up.

oOctober 29: 4:00 p.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 31: 11:00 a.m., Faulk Central Library. Practiquemos Espanol offers adults who are studying Spanish an opportunity to practice speaking Spanish with learners under the guidance of a Spanish speaking facilitator.

oOctober 31: 2:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

oOctober 31: 3:30 p.m., Cepeda Branch. Free Salsa dance lessons with instructor Raul Ramirez.

Brenda Branch, Director of Libraries



