

MARIGOLD LIBRARY SYSTEM

Board of Management
Saturday, November 19, 2011
Chestermere

MINUTES Present:

Lynda Lyster (Chair) – MD of Bighorn
Leslie Duchak (Vice Chair) – Okotoks
Shelley Sweet - Airdrie
Glen Keiver – Kneehill County
Helen Veno – Special Areas #2
Lil Morrison – Starland County
Al Campbell – Three Hills
Donna Isaac – Delia
Linda Schafer – High River
Lisa Constintini – Irricana
Debbie Habberfield – Rocky View County
Marilyn King – Chestermere
Diane Osberg – Black Diamond/Turner
Valley
Barb Beary – Foothills M.D.
Louise Henrickson – Drumheller
Maxine Booker – Acadia M.D.
Jan Dyck – Longview
Christine Boyd – Ghost Lake
Sandra Barker – Waiparous
Cathy Watts - Hanna
Arn Hoffman – Kananaskis I.D
Pat Fule – Strathmore
Frank Vanderkley - Trochu
Marilyn Foxford - Canmore
Gary Billings- Rockyford
Robert Eccles – Consort
Gordon Thomson – Oyen
Kristen Anderson - Hussar

Guests:

Gemma Noon -Director of Chestermere
Public Library

Regrets:

Rosana Ramos – Special Area #4
Donna Habich – Empress
Alison Roppel – Rockyford
Connie Fraser – Trochu
Carney Raitz-Wakaryk – Town of Canmore
Elaine Michaels – Cereal
Susan Roper – Cochrane
John Getz – Standard

Staff:

Michelle Toombs
Lynne Thorimbert
Denise Fung
Shona Gourlay
Steven Pattison
Carlee Pilikowski
Nora Ott (recording)
Kari Colville
Alison McMillan
Candice Koshman
Colleen Tooth

Vacancies:

Youngstown
Beiseker
Acme
Special Areas 3
Morrin

Regrets without notice

Lyle Cawiezel – Munson
Berniece Bland – Wheatland County
Kathie Putnam - Linden

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

- L. Lyster, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at **9:30 a.m.** Quorum was reached with 28 Board delegates in attendance. With staff and guests, the total attendance was 40. L. Lyster invited delegates, guests and staff to introduce themselves to all in attendance.

1.1 Greetings from Town of Chestermere

- Marilyn King, Marigold Board Representative from Chestermere and Town Council member, introduced Patricia Matthews, Mayor of Chestermere and Gemma Noon, Director of Chestermere Public Library.
- Patricia Matthews, Mayor of Chestermere, welcomed the delegates. She was presented with a planter by Marilyn King as a token of appreciation for allowing the Marigold Board to use the Chestermere Council Chambers for the meeting. Patricia Matthews was one of the original supporters for having a library in the Town of Chestermere.

1.2 Recognition of Board appointments

New:

- Bob Eccles – Consort

Re-appointed

- Debbie Habberfield-Rocky View County
- Gen Keiver-Kneehill County
- Berneice Bland-Wheatland County
- Gordon Thomson- Oyen

At this time, there are vacancies in 5 locations: Acme, Beiseker, Morrin, Special Areas #3 and Youngstown.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were two changes to the agenda:

- Item 5.1.2 RISE End of Project Financial Report was removed and will be presented at the January meeting.
- Item 5.2.5 was removed as the policy is still under review with the Governance Committee

MOTION: L. Schafer/F. Vanderkley

To accept the agenda as amended

CARRIED

3. MINUTES OF THE August 27, 2011 MEETING

There were two changes:

- Carney Raitz-Wakaryk represents the Town of Canmore not Cochrane as recorded in the information sharing roundtable

MOTION: C. Watts/ L. Constantini

To accept the minutes as amended

CARRIED

4. CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Transfer of agenda items from consent agenda

There were no items to be transferred

4.2 MOTION: D. Habberfield/D. Isaac

To accept consent agenda items in 4.3 and 4.4

CARRIED

5. DECISION

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 Financial Statements to September 30, 2011

MOTION: L. Constantini/ B. Beary

That the unaudited financial statement to September 30, 2011 be received for information CARRIED

5.1.3 2012 Draft Budget

- Michelle explained the budget categories. She explained that the budget tells the story of what Marigold does.
- An estimated 2% increase in official municipal population and increases to the levy rates were factored into the budgeted revenue for 2012.
- Strategic Plan goals and objectives were included in the 2012 budget..
- A minimum of 2 consultation visits for every member library will be provided each year.
- Website templates will be available for all member libraries. A good start has been made on this project in 2011.
- Increased hours for tech support were included in staff costs.
- Bank charges may change when Marigold switches banks as a result of the banking proposal submissions.
- Communication audit will take place in 2012.
- Salary grid review to take place in 2012.
- Conference expenses are increasing. Conferences offer valuable networking opportunities. Conferences allow staff to keep up on latest trends and motivate improvements for developing services.
- Marigold needs to budget for computer software upgrades.
- Marigold is purchasing new Fortigate units for member libraries to connect to the SuperNet. These need replacing every few years.
- Marigold will be installing a new phone system that will allow staff to receive voice mail.
- Marigold is increasing its e-book collections and digital media content. Marigold will drop little used resources and acquire new resources. Marigold is exploring a new resource for downloading music. This may entice more people to get library cards.
- TAL costs are going up. This is mainly due to TAL needing to cover their expenses. They negotiate licenses for digital media content on our behalf.
- Marigold needs to increase its delivery runs and purchase roadside assistance. Rising fuel costs were included in the budget.
- Rebranding includes refreshing Marigold's image and reputation. Carlee Pilikowski spoke about proposed changes. The logo cannot stand on its own. Rebranding includes everything that Marigold does and stands for. This is an ongoing project which will begin in 2012. Carlee also circulated a draft copy of a new publication to promote the power of a library card to promote memberships at Marigold member libraries.
- Staff are a key asset to the success of the organization. In 2012 staff will receive a 3% cost of living increase (there has not been an increase since 2009). It is recommended that a COLA increase be included in future budgets so that the catch-up is not so much at one time.
- Marigold is exploring options for providing a pension plan. This is to attract potential candidates for vacant positions and retain employees.
- Marigold, Chinook Arch and Shortgrass library systems are sharing the cost to sustain RISE videoconferencing

MOTION: H. Veno/ J. Dyck

To approve the draft budget for 2012

CARRIED

5.2 Policies/Plans

5.2.1 Contingency Plan for Finance – Executive

MOTION: D. Habberfield

That the Contingency Plan for Finance be approved

CARRIED

5.2.2 Violence in the Workplace – Executive

MOTION: D. Habberfield

That the Violence in the Workplace Policy be approved

CARRIED

5.2.3 Harassment in the Workplace – Executive

MOTION: D. Habberfield

That the Harassment in the Workplace Policy be accepted as revised

CARRIED

5.2.4 Consultation – Standards & Services

MOTION: M. Booker

That the Consultation Policy be accepted as revised CARRIED

5.2.6 Hours of Service (Library Service Points) – Governance

MOTION: B. Beary

That the Hours of Service Policy be accepted CARRIED

5.3 Marigold IT Service Agreement

Lynne Thorimbert presented the IT Service Agreement.

- The purpose of this agreement is to establish what IT services and support Marigold provides to member libraries, and to identify responsibilities for both Marigold and member libraries.
- In preparing this document, all current IT agreements in Alberta library systems were reviewed to find much common ground.
- This document defines new Marigold IT services such as an after-hours IT support schedule, Help Desk support, and defines procedures for videoconferencing support, computer upgrades, troubleshooting, and IT-related purchasing. It includes a contingency to establish a billing schedule for exceptional circumstances where Marigold IT has not been consulted before changes were made at the local library, resulting in one or more IT visits from Marigold to fix issues.
- The draft also provides more concise guidelines for Marigold's role in SuperNet administration and the processes for library moves or new facility builds.
- The section "Skills expected at the local level" reflects Municipal Affairs' Standards and Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta.
- The draft has undergone several revisions since June, and involved several Marigold staff, including Director Michelle Toombs, Automation and Network Support Consultant Steven Pattison, IT Specialist Richard Kenig, and Lynne Thorimbert.
- Feedback was incorporated from library Director Michelle Preston of Canmore Public Library.
- The Standards & Services Committee has reviewed the draft twice and approved this draft for presentation to the Marigold Board.

MOTION: M. Booker

That the Marigold IT Service Agreement be accepted CARRIED

Alberta. 5.4 Freedom to Read Week declaration (February 26 - March 3, 2012)

- Denise Fung made a short presentation regarding the history and purpose of Freedom to Read Week.
- Lynda Lyster read the declaration and signed the proclamation

5.5 Upcoming Board Meetings:

- January 28, 2012 9:30 a.m. – videoconference with Cochrane, Hanna, Airdrie, and Marigold HQ in Strathmore
- April 17, 2012, 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Strathmore Travelodge – Marigold AGM
- August 25, 2012, 9:30 a.m. – Drumheller
- November 17, 2012 9:30 a.m. – Host Required

6. ITEMS FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items transferred from the Consent Agenda

7. INFORMATION

7.1 ALTA Report – Leslie Duchak

- Trustee training is scheduled at Airdrie Public Library on Nov 26 (9:30 to 3:30 pm)
- Karen Lynch and Stephanie Gregorwich, ATLA's Director, have been giving Website based Trustee Workshops.
- There has been discussion that website chat rooms could be sponsored by ALTA for trustees to discuss concerns.
- The ALC Planning Committee has taken over total responsibility for the Registrar. As a result the Public Library Services Branch has withdrawn \$8000 from the ALTA grant.
- Karen Lynch has announced she will not be running for President at the end of her term.
- Leslie's term as the Marigold representative will expire at ALC in April 2012

7.2 Updates – Michelle

- Schedule C has passed. Letters will go out to all of the municipalities to advise them of this.
- Michelle has presented the value of Marigold to Munson. It is hoped that she was able to prevent Munson from withdrawing from Marigold. Carlee Pilikowski has designed a flyer that will be put into the Munson water bill envelopes.
- The Standards & Services Committee approved a new look and a name change for the Paperbacks-by-Mail service, now known as Library to You (L2U). L2U service is more than print books; L2U patrons can access digital media like e-books and databases like Ancestry.com, which are available with their library card.
- Carlee has designed a new cover for the Paperbacks-by-Mail catalogue to go with the new name (Library to You/L2U). Library to You will be launched in a January publication.
- Small Libraries with Big Hearts – two videoconferences:
 - Wednesday, November 16, from 1pm-2pm
 - Empress, Three Hills, Cereal, Rumsey, Oyen, Berry Creek, Trochu,
 - Wednesday, December 7, from 1pm-2pm
 - Irricana, Standard, Carbon, Linden, Youngstown, Acme
 - Library Manager Jocelyne Kisko of Rockyford agreed to serve as Chair for both meetings.

7.3 Information Sharing – Roundtable

Shelley Sweet from Airdrie stated that Airdrie Public Library's use continues to grow at an unprecedented rate causing a space crunch. Airdrie is hosting a Board workshop on Nov 26 (9:30 to 3:30 pm).

Jan Dyck from Longview reports that they are meeting in their new board room.

Christine Boyd from Ghost Lake reports that the new community building is progressing and that they hope to move into their new space in January 2012.

Marilyn King from Chestermere stated that Chestermere Public Library is celebrating its 4th birthday. They have a new strategic plan. Chestermere Public Library is partnering with an organization in the UK and will be hosting a product launch expo in Chestermere in 2012.

Arn Hoffman from Kananaskis I.D stated that they are looking forward to having Michelle Toombs come to speak to them in 2012.

Cathy Watts from Hanna reports that the library in Hanna has a new manager. Hanna will be celebrating its 100th birthday in August 2012.

Louise Henrickson from Drumheller talked about the progress of their new facility. There will be many changes. Linde Turner has retired. The library has a new manager, Mellissa D'Onofrio-Jones.

Bob Eccles from Consort is new to the board from Winnipeg Manitoba. He likes Alberta.

Gordon Thomson from Oyen reported that there is a library fundraiser coming up.

Lisa Constantini from Irricana talked about the staff changes they have had. Lisa is now the Mayor of Irricana.

Diane Osberg from Sheep River reported that their Strategic Plan is now finished. They are revising their board policies. Sheep River has a new partnership with the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Sheep River has experienced a 50% increase in memberships. Their program rooms are being used by the public as well as library staff. Sheep River has 360 programs scheduled from January to April in 2012.

Gary Billings from Rockyford is the new Board chair for Rockyford library.

Marilyn Foxford from Canmore talked about the new Multiplex that is under construction in Canmore. There will be a fireplace in the new Canmore Library. Friends of Canmore Library have been supportive.

Linda Schafer from High River declared that their policy revisions are finished. Their fundraiser raised over \$4000.00. Art Days proved that the library was a happening place. Their new programmer, Joyce Brown is fantastic. High River library will be staying in its present location.

Donna Isaac from Delia says they now have a Friend of the Library group in Delia.

Leslie Duchak from Okotoks will not be seeking another appointment to ALTA. In March 2012 there will be a Board workshop offered at Sheep River Library for all interested trustees. The Library board participated in Library Snapshot Day. They took lots of pictures. Okotoks now has 4 Kindles for borrowing. Leslie gave credit to Michelle Toombs for changing Marigold Library System. It is now very transparent and the budget information is very detailed.

Lil Morrison from Starland County commented that the retirement party for Linde Turner was very well done.

Sandra Barker from Waiparous asked for a brochure to promote library services.

Frank Vanderkley from Trochu said that their Summer Reading program was successful. The library has new furniture thanks to fundraising from a casino.

Al Campbell from Three Hills said that they had a good year mainly due to the hard work by library staff.

Maxine Booker from Acadia reported that they now have public hours during school hours.

8. BOOK DRAW “Mountaineering”

- The draw was won by B. Beary

9. ADJOURNMENT

L. Lyster adjourned the meeting at **12:17 p.m.**

Delegates were invited to tour the Chestermere Public Library

Chair

Director

**Marigold Board Meeting
19 November 2011 Background Notes**

1. Marigold Agreement and Schedule C

Marigold has received and confirmed that Schedule Cs for all but two municipalities have been signed by their municipal councils; therefore, the requirement of “written notification from 60% of the Parties to this Agreement representing 60% of the people living within the boundaries of Marigold” (as stated in Clause 45 of the Marigold Agreement) has been met. Letters will be sent to all municipalities to confirm this.

Michelle is presenting on Marigold services to Kananaskis ID in the first quarter of 2012.

Munson has written to inform Marigold of its intentions to withdraw as of December 31, 2012; Michelle has attended a Council meeting to provide additional information about Marigold services and the limitations of non-resident membership. Councillors and the City Administrator provided insights to explain

their reasons for withdrawing from Marigold; Michelle asked them to reconsider. Subsequently, Munson requested a flyer to include with the water bills to inform residents about the value of having a library card and how library services, particularly virtual resources and provincially funded resources, are enabled by membership in a regional library system like Marigold. Carlee is working a flyer entitled "Discover the power of your library card!," which we believe will be useful for all residents in the Marigold area.

Crossfield will be discussing rejoining Marigold at their upcoming November Board meeting. When the Town of Crossfield signs the Marigold Agreement, they will become a member of Marigold because they are listed in Schedule A (Parties which shall be admitted to Marigold Library System).

2. Banking Proposal

Marigold has conducted a number of cost comparisons for services in 2011, including audit services, VOIP telephone system and banking services. The banking proposal was issued to five financial institutions in Strathmore (CIBC, Scotiabank, RBC, ATB and Chinook Credit Union) to compare customer service, investment opportunities, banking services and credit cards with our current arrangement. Marigold has banked with CIBC for many years. The Finance and Executive committees have reviewed the banking proposal responses and have advised the Director and the Accounting Administrator to meet with Scotiabank to assess whether our banking/business practices would be a good fit.

3. 2012 Draft Budget

Budgeting is a year-long process, and there have been three periods of concentrated budget examination this year so far. The first instance was a three-year budget estimate prepared for the Schedule C Committee and the Executive to inform the Schedule C levy decision for 2012 to 2014; the second was the 2012 budget estimate prepared for the August Board meeting; and the third is the 2012 draft budget that is being presented at this November Board meeting. The fourth instance will be for the final 2012 budget presented at the January 2012 Board meeting. In the past two years, Municipal Affairs released official population numbers for the municipalities after the middle of December.

As in past years, estimates for revenue have been cautious. In the case of the provincial grant, the revenue projection is based on 2010 population. The CAP grant revenue has been moved to reimbursements, because this federal government payment covers the expenditures for CAP computer equipment that is administered by Marigold on behalf of our member municipalities. Cost sharing to sustain the RISE bridge located at Marigold HQ has been arranged between Marigold, Chinook Arch and Shortgrass. We continue to look for opportunities to partner with other organizations and libraries in Alberta to seek operational efficiencies (e.g., almost all TRAC meetings are held by videoconference) and to enrich programming content.

The goals in the new Strategic Plan, Vision 2015, have been considered in these draft budget expenditures with provisions for: two consultant's visits (minimum) for every member library; evaluation and expansion of electronic resources (commonly called digital media); improvements to the Paperbacks-by-Mail service; website template for every member library; start of the rebranding initiative; communication audit; increased after-hours IT support; increases in technical training and general training opportunities; and reductions in turnaround times for materials by implementing appropriate technologies.

Marigold intends to do a Request for Proposal for landscaping services in 2012. Also, there are funds in the 2012 budget for a communication audit, salary grid review and building needs assessment funds if the Public Library Services Branch is successful in putting forward a request for funds to expand Marigold from the Treasury Department. The Building Committee will be meeting on November 21 to consider next steps following the arrival of a report from Alberta Infrastructure on October 18, 2011.

Marigold was pleased to receive the favorable ruling from the Canada Revenue Agency that 100% of the GST on all purchases will be rebated (as of July 2011). This is a savings of \$16,000.

Staffing costs are always the most substantial expense in a customer service-based organization like Marigold. Salaries and benefits are under review by the HR Committee so that this organization does not fall behind and find it hard to recruit and retain trained and skilled employees. That is why step increases and annual cost of living increases will be presented in the draft budget each year. The 3% cost of living increase in this draft budget is the first raise for staff since June 2009. Prior to when the current Manulife staff benefit contract concludes at the end of April 2012, the HR Committee will be comparing costs and services from a number of benefit providers.

The only capital expenditure anticipated in 2012 is for a new cargo van. Marigold will sell the 2006 Honda CRV, and the cost of the cargo van will be largely covered by the Vehicle Reserve Fund. Marigold has three delivery vans on the road during the week to handle an ever-increasing volume of deliveries.

4. SuperNet

Carseland: SuperNet installation is nearing completion and the Fortigate (SuperNet edge device) is ready to be connected. Marigold supplied Carseland with a second wireless access point to separate public and staff wireless.

Beiseker: The library has received a grant to move the SuperNet into a new building, and this installation will likely take place in the spring when trenching is less expensive.

Drumheller: The Library will be moving into a new multiplex facility. The Town has decided to install its own fibre-optic line between the existing library and the new site rather than moving the SuperNet as Marigold recommends. Michelle and Steven have been working with the Drumheller Library Board, Town of Drumheller, Public Library Services Branch, and Axia to reach a suitable solution to ensure high quality network service to the new library.

Gleichen: Necessary maintenance on the library building is close to completion. Marigold hopes to work with the Public Library Services Branch to arrange for SuperNet installation in the spring and that will provide all Marigold member libraries with a SuperNet connection. If a library relocates, it is up to the municipality to provide funding for the relocated SuperNet connection.

5. Technical Services Update

Marigold Library System hosted the second annual technical services information exchange with representatives from Chinook Arch, Parkland, Peace, Shortgrass, Marigold and Public Library Services Branch. Discussions covered online bibliographic products such as BookWhere and WebDewey, delivery procedures, staffing roles, turnaround times for materials, vendors, suppliers of e-books and e-readers, manuals, handling world language material and more. Marigold feels that these meetings are worthwhile because of information sharing, learning about more efficient practices and the feeling of camaraderie and willingness to help each other.

Marigold supported Peace Library System by cataloguing well over 2000 books for Slave Lake Library. Slave Lake is preparing to open the library in a temporary location.

Marigold's turnaround time has improved considerably over the last two years. Turnaround time for new materials is currently less than a month, while turnaround time for conversion materials (sent from the member library for cataloguing and processing) is close to a month. Titles with patron requests are catalogued, processed and sent out within a week. Two bays of permanent shelving have been removed, and all materials in the cataloguing queue are placed on mobile book carts with target completion dates. These changes caught the attention of Gordon Stead, Manager of Facility Audits for Alberta Infrastructure, who commented that Marigold had made workflow improvements between his first and second site visits.

6. Direct Services Update

Marigold has proposed a name change for Paperbacks-by-Mail (PBM) to better describe the scope of the service to patrons who wish to receive print library materials by mail because they live some distance away from library service or because their ability to get to a library is compromised. The new name is Library to You (L2U). Marigold also provides this service to customers in the Chinook Arch and Shortgrass regions. Overall, the PBM service is rated as 'very important' by patrons who use this service.

Marigold visited all 14 paperback deposits in 2011, meeting with the local contacts and weeding all the deposits.

7. Marigold IT Service Agreement

Currently, Marigold has two outdated documents outlining IT support and services for member libraries: *Computer Automated network Support for Member Libraries*, and *Marigold IT Service Parameters*. This year, the Standards & Services Committee has worked to harmonize both documents into one, the new *Marigold IT Service Agreement*. The purpose of this agreement is to identify responsibilities for both Marigold and member libraries and to update services such as an after-hours support schedule, Help Desk Support as well as procedures for upgrades, troubleshooting and purchasing. The Agreements also states that Marigold may bill a member library for IT staff time and travel expenses in a situation where an IT visit could have been avoided by following the IT Service Agreement. The billing rate will be determined.

8. Netspeed 2011: Human Side of Technology (notes prepared by Lynne Thorimbert)

Marigold HQ staff Lynne Thorimbert, Carlee Pilikowski, Denise Fung, Richard Kenig, Barb Froese and Alison MacMillan attended Netspeed on October 20th and 21st in Calgary. Both Lynne and Denise convened conference sessions, and Lynne was presented with an award from Emerald Journals for her 2010 paper on the use of artificial intelligence and Natural Language Processing in libraries.

Keynote speaker Jesse Hirsh (Openflows Networks Ltd. and Metaviews Media Management Ltd.) is a strategist and researcher who hosts a weekly syndicated column on CBC radio. Jesse spoke about the benefits and pitfalls of technology, and how the speed of societal and technological change creates an illusion of “the future” when the present is what we struggle to comprehend. Through our current approach to technology, humans are being optimized for machines rather than the reverse. A moving story was his conversation with a retiree who demanded “that the world keep her a part of it, even if she never had a computer, or the Internet or a smartphone.” For Marigold, it was a striking reminder to balance technology with other service delivery streams and strive to remain inclusive. While we explore new technologies, we can do it without getting caught up in the frenzy of having to have the newest technology solely for the sake of it.

Conference sessions included: *The Ups and Downs of Online and Self-Paced Staff Training* (e-learning had more cons than pros over classroom training), *Graphic Novel Extravaganza*, *The Provincial Technology Report*, *Text Messaging as a Mobile Information Service*, *Universal Design: A Disability Perspective*, and more. A session hosted by Calgary Public Library (CPL) librarians on *Engaging Customers Virtually* discussed their new approach to virtual services as a library branch; CPL had over 5 million unique visitors to their website in 2010. The new APLEN Mobile Digital Media Creation Lab was presented – the lab can be loaned to library staff or headquarters staff for training sessions or public programs. Of particular note, the *Resistance to eBooks* session brought to light challenges with Overdrive contract cost increases (over 700% in 3 years for one library system).

The closing keynote speaker was Kevin Franco of Enthrrill Entertainment and Franco Media (francomedia.com). Kevin spoke in detail about the Alternate Reality Game (ARG) created to coincide with the book release for “One Child” by Jeff Buick. Kevin touts this as the first Transmedia Thriller. The story was released online in real-time as it happened (over 30 days). Social media profiles were created for each character, allowing readers to interact with and follow along with characters in the story. Some characters had blogs and Twitter posts that pre-dated the story, adding eerily real character depth. Websites were built for fictitious corporations in the novel, and a faux radio station broadcast audio daily with news reports that incorporated actual events happening in the world, coupled with the news and events happening within the story. The online book incorporated a soundtrack that helped set the mood as you read. Four segments of the book were recreated in film; if you read a news report in the story, you could click on it and watch it on your iPad or desktop reader. Through Transmedia storytelling, Kevin provided fascinating examples of how reality and virtual reality can intersect, and the importance of story.

9. Rural Libraries Conference 2011

On September 20th in Grande Prairie, Lynda Lyster and Michelle Toombs attended the 25th Anniversary celebration of the formation of Peace Library System. Dignitaries included the Minister of Municipal Affairs (at that time), Hector Goudreau. During an open mike invitation, one trustee related a story about being doubtful that a regional library system would be a worthwhile expense; however, he was put on a committee and he visited several newly established libraries in the Marigold Library System (less than five years old at the time). He described his conversion when he saw the difference it made, especially to small communities, and he has remained a staunch supporter of library systems ever since.

Lynda and I also attended informative sessions at the Rural Libraries Conference, sponsored by the Peace Library System. We learned about the geography of NW Alberta and had discussions with passionate library staff and supporters.

10. APLEN (Alberta Public Library Electronic Network)

Michelle attended the APLEN Nodes meeting on October 14, 2011 where it was decided that the AAQ (Ask A Question) service would be shelved at the end of June 2012. The AAQ software is urgently in need of a software and service upgrade, but without budgeted resources. Most library systems already have a link on their website to answer their patron's questions. Marigold will continue to support its member libraries by answering reference questions.

An overview of what happens next with the Technology Plan was presented by Dr. Diana Davidson, Director of the Public Library Services Branch. Two out of the six key recommendations will be first priorities: 1) seamless access to public library holdings for all Albertans; and 2) the SuperNet and Internet, the backbones of modern library services, utilized effectively and efficiently by all public libraries. The \$2M, which has been invested by the province and is being held by APLEN, will be used to implement these recommendations with a centralized (all for one and one for all) approach. An announcement with more detail is expected at the upcoming Alberta Library Conference in Jasper.

APLEN has invested in a mobile lab of 20 PCs (in pods of 5) with peripherals that can be loaned to libraries for training. APLEN is also assembling a "gadget" lab of devices like e-books and a portable netbook lab.

The new APLEN marketing campaign, *Make It Yours*, has been very successful, with great interest in various customized and do-it-yourself tools (posters, screen savers), local newspaper and radio ads, trade show display (which can be borrowed for local events), and a "how to best use the tools" wiki.

11. Member Library Updates

Rockyford Municipal Library – new Board Chair

Inspiring words from Gary Billings, the new Chair for the Rockyford Library Board, which were printed in the October 2011 Rockyford Library newsletter and then in the Marigold Newsletter with his permission: "I am a newcomer to the Rockyford area, having moved here from Calgary just four years ago. By day, I work in oil and gas exploration, using seismic data to peer into the earth, evaluating places for my employer to drill. By night, I peer into the sky as an amateur astronomer, watching variable stars change their brightness. Libraries have always been important to me. I had a most amazing English teacher in grade 10, who let me do a library research assignment she'd set for her grade 12 class. It took me to obscure library resources that helped me with what seemed impossible research problems, 25 years later. I've been using the Rockyford Library since shortly after moving here. At first I thought such a tiny library wouldn't have much for me, but I soon learned it was part of the Marigold system, and I have access to books from all over the province: art books, travel guides, computer programming, obscure novels, even sci-fi TV shows on DVD! So, my reward for being such an enthusiastic patron was to be asked to join the board at the beginning of 2010. It has been a pleasure to work with the rest of the board, and now to continue as chairman. I look forward to working with the library's enthusiastic staff, and the other deeply experienced board members."

Drumheller Public Library – new Library Manager

The Board of the Town of Drumheller Public Library is pleased to announce the appointment of Mellissa D'Onofrio-Jones as the new Director of the Library, effective November 1, 2011. She has experience in teaching and early childhood education and has a strong passion for public library services. Ms. D'Onofrio-Jones and her family have recently relocated to Drumheller from London, Ontario. Mellissa replaces Linde Turner, who retired at the end of October, after serving the Drumheller community for 23 years as the Library Manager.

12. Marigold Headquarters Staff

Technology Assistant Alison McMillan received a \$500 grant from the Library Association of Alberta to attend the *Copyright Issues for Information Professionals* workshop at the University of Alberta from October 21st to October 23rd. The course provides students with insights into the historical and present day

international context for the development of copyright norms, the broader societal implications of copyright and an understanding of how they influence the Canadian legislative agenda.

Lynne Thorimbert and Denise Fund attended Parkland's PD Day conference on Monday, October 3. Sessions included *Public safety in Rural Libraries*, *Programming on a Shoestring*, and *Connecting to Readers: Displays That Work*. Lynne and Denise came away with some great ideas and hope to bring the Public Safety session to the Marigold workshop in 2012.

Cindy Wiebe resigned from the position of Processing Clerk in October. Following a job description rewrite, a replacement will be recruited.

Sandy Watson volunteered to be trained to assist Kari Colville, Accounting Administrator and also to be a back-up when Kari is absent. Having a back-up plan is a smart idea.

13. Letters to Alberta Ministers

Lynda Lyster, on behalf of Marigold, sent letters of congratulations to two newly appointed ministers:

- Doug Griffiths, Minister of Alberta Municipal Affairs. He co-authored the book *13 Ways to Kill Your Community*, and was on the steering committee for *Rural Alberta: Land of Opportunity*, a report that promoted rural development as a key part of Alberta's economic development strategy, and outlining how libraries play an important role in enhancing community-based learning.
- Manmeet Bhullar, Minister of Service Alberta. Minister Bhullar has previous experience as a Parliamentary Assistant in Municipal Affairs and track record of community support and involvement.

14. TRAC Advisory Council

This council meeting is held twice per year (May and October) with representatives from at least two member libraries from each of the four partner library systems, as well as Directors and staff. Kerry Anderson from the Public Library Services branch presented information on the Technology Plan. S