

# **Prairie City Public Library**

Prairie City, Iowa



City Council Update

February 2015

Sue Ponder, Library Director

2014 was a fun and productive year at the library. Library Assistant, Gladys Burns retired in the spring. We were lucky to hire Jenny Anderson to fill the position. Jenny has done a great job helping with programs, special projects and covering when I am out of the office or filling in for staff at City Hall. I feel very fortunate to have someone that has adapted so easily to the job.

We have offered new programs for our patrons and have continued some from last year. Our preschool story time on Wednesday mornings has continued to be a good program. Last year's preschoolers went on to kindergarten and some new ones joined us. We even had a special guest join us one day for fire safety week!



The Friends of the Library sponsored a *Fancy Nancy* party! It was a fun and fancy time!



Movie days have continued to be a popular event. Due to our space restriction, we have to limit the number of attendees.



## Summer Reading

Summer reading kicked off July 9<sup>th</sup> with a registration day and story time. We had 47 children register to participate in our *"Fizz, Boom, Read!"* themed programs.

*UNI Department of Science of Energy* came and gave a program on solar energy and wind energy. The kids were able to build solar-powered wind turbines and solar-powered cars.





We had a full house for our *Jasper County Conservation* program. I think we used every chair we had and some kids still had to share with a friend!



We had a day of science experiments that was a very popular day! We learned about viscosity, Charles Law of the effect of heat on gases, static electricity, aerobic respiration. I was thankful for the many volunteers that helped out!



Aerobic respiration using yeast



Charles law demonstration using giant marshmallows in the microwave!



Static Electricity with balloons



Mayor Alleger demonstrating viscosity using honey and syrup

A representative from Blank Park Zoo brought a variety of animals for the kids to see and touch.





Over 90 community members attended our Summer Reading Wrap-up event with a concert by Debbie DooWop and Dynamite Dan!



We all enjoyed Goldie's ice cream after the show! It was a great way to end our summer reading program for the year!



***Some other highlights and events from the year:***

Last March, after offering the house next to the library for relocation without any offers, we had it torn down. The lot has been graded and seeded and is available for us to use.



Courtyard Estates sponsored a ***Wellness Clinic*** offering free blood pressure checks and blood sugar screenings. We also held a ***Diabetes Academy*** class, presented by a diabetic educator which was well attended. I received very positive feedback on these community health-related events!

We had a ***Learn to Crochet*** class that went on once a week for most of last winter and spring. Library patron Barb Heggen taught the group how to crochet many different things. This week we are starting *Learn to Knit* with Amy Ingle instructing. We have 22 people signed up!

We held a ***Christmas Craft Night*** led by volunteer Joan Van Gorp. It was a fun night for all ages! I've had many that attended asked when we will be having it again.





We wrapped up the year helping at the Winterfest celebration sponsored by the Celebration Committee. We had a gingerbread house making activity and the Friends of the Library's annual tree and wreath auction. The auction raised \$355 for a new public catalog computer.



Today's library is obviously not all about books. We spend much of our time helping patrons use the computers, perform research, work on resumes, look for employment, fax, print and copy documents, proctor tests, and answer questions about our community. We have many people that come in and use our wireless internet access. Some of these are students that do not have internet at home. Some of these are unemployed people looking for jobs. Some of these are retired people just wanting to browse the internet. Whatever the reason, our library allows them free access.



In addition to my work at the library, I fill in at City Hall, handling all of the website changes and social media communications for both the library and the City and assist with grant writing for both the library and the City. I am also still on the board of the Jasper Library Association. In my role on that board, I have met with other library directors, the County Supervisors, and the County Auditor and his staff regarding the distribution and measurement of the funding received from Jasper County. I have also been assisting a library director from Warren County calculate a fair distribution of their funds that is modeled after the work I did for Jasper County. This year, we completely reformatted the presentation we gave to the Supervisors for our funding request. I published two separate flyers for the JLA to use in that request. One, a directory of libraries in the county, and the second, a flyer explaining what Jasper County libraries have to offer. They were very well received and our funding request was granted.

We received a grant from the State Library of Iowa to cover the cost of a library consultant to perform a needs assessment of the library. This will happen in March. This will provide us with a good tool to plan our future and to secure any grants may be available to us. I sent him all of the documentation he requested. He will be meeting with the board on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. I am looking forward to seeing what he has to say.

Thank you for supporting me and the Prairie City Public Library. 2014 was an excellent year.