

Portage Lake District
Library

58 Huron Street
Houghton, MI 49931



PLDL Newsletter

Fall 2008

Library Sign Receives Face Lift

Library patrons may have noticed that the sign just below the main entrance was gone for a few days. The painters, Cook Sign, of Marquette, removed it to allow them time to repaint some worn areas.

“As everyone knows, winters are hard up here,” says Librarian/Repairman John Wallace, “So the library staff is grateful that the sign company helped with a needed facelift.”

Lobby Book Spines Still Available

Those wishing to leave a mark on a library wall that will not get them into trouble may do so by purchasing a book spine for display in the lobby.

“Clearly, one of the most successful segments of the Capital Campaign has been the book spines,” says Ron Helman, Capital Campaign volunteer.

“People are happy to see their family name, or the name of someone they wish to memorialize on the lobby wall,” Helman added, “where all who visit the library will notice.”

A recent purchaser of two book spines, Chuck Nelson of Houghton, explains why he donated. “As an English professor at Tech,” Nelson said, “I know the importance of reading, and why libraries will always play an important role.”

Nelson purchased two book spines: one with his mother’s name (a former librarian), and one for himself.



Library Staff Member Reveals Connection with Famous Comedian

Mary Hickey, PLDL librarian, offers a wealth of experience working with books, as well as an interesting connection to comedian Jack Benny.

“I grew up in Waukegan, IL,” Mary reveals, “and people in their sixties or older will recall that comedian Jack Benny also came from Waukegan. He would often mention his hometown in his radio or TV comedy routines.”

“When I graduated from Jack Benny Jr. High,” Mary continues, “the great comedian passed out our diplomas and shook our hands. At the time I was only 12, so he was just another adult to me, but my dad was ecstatic.”

Mary brings to her job at PLDL a strong connection to books. Not only did she share her hometown with Benny, but she grew up to become a teacher and eventually a school principal in the same city.

“Now that my husband and I have retired up here,” Mary says, “working at Portage Lake District Library is a dream job.”



Museum Bus Visits Portage Lake District Library



The touring Museum (Bus+Museum) visited the PLDL last spring, with exhibits focusing on WW II POWs who came from the Midwest.



The bus, which parked in front of the library, contained photos illustrating life for the POWs, mainly in German POW camps. The bus also offered topic-related books and tapes for sale. Authorities estimated that more than sixty area people toured the exhibits in the three hours the bus was in Houghton.

Chad and Elly Kuivanen from Chassell enjoy the exhibits on the Museum Bus.

Special Equipment Available in Library for the Visually Impaired

College Avenue Vision Clinic has donated special equipment that is available to area visually impaired readers, according to Jim Curtis, PLDL Director.

"Anyone needing special help because of eyesight problems may use the equipment in the library," Curtis said. "You do not need to be a member of PLDL."



Any reading material placed under the video camera will then appear greatly magnified on the closed circuit TV monitor next to it.

"For assistance setting everything up, just ask at the front desk," Curtis added.

PLDL Board Generates Public Relations Power Point

Two PLDL Board members have designed a fifteen minute Power Point presentation illustrating what the library offers.

Board members Jobst (Portage Township) and Garver (Houghton) hope to show the series of slides at future township meetings, not only to those already in the PLDL membership rolls, but also others who are unfamiliar with all that the PLDL offers.

"Our guess," Garver explained, "is that many people in the PLDL area do not know that the library offers more than books and computers."

Garver explained that the library owns thousands of CDs, books-on-tape, and movies. "Considering the numbers of people who visit the library each day," Garver continued, "the building's popularity has more than doubled in the past couple of years. But many people still have never even looked inside!"

Garver and Jobst are also willing to show the series of informative photos to other local organizations. Arrangements can be made by calling the PLDL during regular hours: 482-4570. There is no charge.



Houghton Consultant Bill Fink (in front of laptop) helps PLDL board members, Melton, Martin, Marion, and Burns, plan the future for the library

Current PLDL Trustees:

- Chassell**
- Tom Burns
- Marilyn Vogler
- Portage Township**
- Julie Jalkanen
- Jack Jobst
- Beth Martin
- Houghton**
- Gloria Melton
- Faye Marion
- Denny Garver

