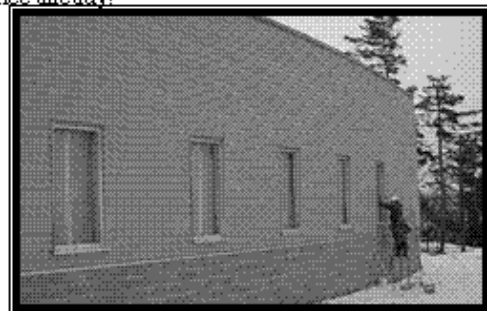
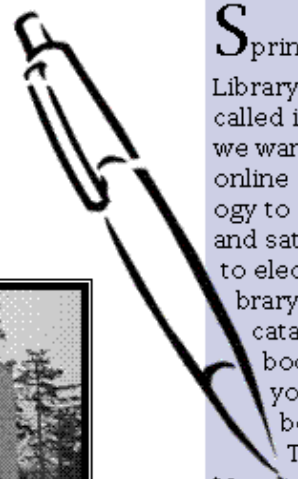




A few photos to show the progress on the new library. These were taken in mid-January, so you can probably see a big difference already!



## From the Desk of the Library Director:



Spring is on its way! At the Homer Public Library that means a new library catalog, called iBistro, will soon be in place. Why do we want a new library catalog? iBistro is an online catalog that uses the latest technology to make library discovery easy, fun and satisfying. iBistro will provide access to electronic information about the library's collection, just like the current catalog, but in addition to locating books, audiobooks, and videos/DVDs, you'll be able to use regularly updated bestseller lists from the New York Times, Publishers Weekly, and others to help find just the right book. You can now look forward to book reviews, summaries, other book information, and even graphics of book covers, all from one source. It's like upgrading from a hand drill to a battery powered drill—the same type of device, but with characteristics that make so much more possible!

With iBistro, you will be able to interact with the Library's computer and renew and place holds on library materials, a service that has been unavailable with the current library software. Patrons will no longer need to call library staff to renew a book or check their account, although library staff will still be happy to take such calls. If patrons wish to go one step further, they may set up personalized iBistro accounts to create reader profiles and receive customized information about new authors or titles.

iBistro will also offer a Kid's Catalog, which groups all the materials in the library's Juvenile and Young Adult collection in a separate catalog. This feature will help children pinpoint materials that are just for them, without having to sift through materials in the adult collection.

We hope these exciting features of the new online catalog will help you choose materials with greater convenience from anywhere, be it the library, home, school, or work. We hope to have the new catalog available by early May. Library staff will be ready to answer all your questions about the new catalog.

—Helen Hill, Library director

The ways in which Christopher can and cannot function within the day-to-day world are compelling and interesting. Because the story is told from

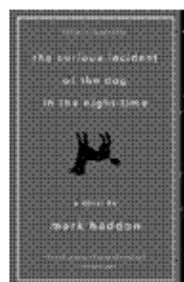
his perspective, it is without any heavy emotion, which gives the reader the freedom to arrive at her own emotional conclusions. The book is sad in some ways, but I was not depressed about Christopher's condition because Christopher himself is not. He

relates his world in a straightforward, factual manner. It is not in his character to complain that his life (or those of his parents) might be more difficult than anyone else's. In

fact, the ways in which he thinks and expresses himself are often very funny.

An enthusiastic thumbs up, as the critics say. Read this book.

Review by Amanda Gibson



The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time  
by Mark Haddon

I was skeptical of this book in the way that I am skeptical of most best-sellers that "you just have to read," but in the end I was impressed. The narrator of the story is an autistic teenager named Christopher. He is razor-sharp in the realms of mathematics and logical thinking, but severely limited in certain everyday behavioral ways. He can't stand being touched, refuses to have anything to do with the colors yellow or brown, cannot read facial expressions or lie, and has a tendency to lapse into groaning and screaming fits when he is feeling overwhelmed (which is often). He functions pretty well in very specific and predictable circumstances, but can easily be rendered helpless (or hostile) by apparently unthreatening situations.

## Check it Out! Books, Films and Such

## Behind the Scenes at the Homer Public Library

While the goings-on at the Homer Public Library may seem business as usual, the staff is actually exceptionally busy behind the scenes. They are preparing for the move in September to the new, bigger and better library on Heath and Hazel. To illuminate what Library staff members are up to and some of the features we can look forward to in the new library, FHL volunteer Anne Marie Hoken recently spoke with some of the current library staff about what library patrons, young and old, will be able to do in the new facility. Read on and you'll find that there will be something for everyone—moms, dads, preschoolers, 9-year-olds, teens, and seniors.

Pete Coots, a recent addition to the Library's staff, is the staff "tech guy" who helps users of the public computers understand the ever-changing nuances of internet, catalog and database searching. He can also be seen at the circulation desk, dishing out stamps to the youngest library users and answering the great questions the Homer public comes up with. Pete will have lots more to do in the new library, which will have a large bank of public use computers, a new library catalog system (see related article), and of course more room for kids—which means more stamping of the hands!



Pete noted that families will enjoy one of the new additions to the Library's cache: board games which will be available for use in the library. Today's board games teach reading, math and life skills in fun new ways. Kids of all ages might want to square off in a game of checkers, and hardcore SCRABBLE enthusiasts may want to make use of the group study rooms for an intense practice session before next year's SCRABBLE tournament (see calendar for details about the 2006 tournament).

Kathy George keeps the library stocked with great young adult and history books, as well as dvd's and videos. She also spends time helping the public with the well-used interlibrary loan program and developing the Russian collection. Kathy is excited to bring some new items into the video/dvd collection. Just imagine more foreign videos like the Czech film, *Autumn Spring*, new educational dvd's, or films for the kids who are hungry for more variety after attending the Homer International Film Festival for Children (see related story). And as

usual, all of the videos and dvd's can be checked out (no pun intended) for three days!

Sue Gibson is the staff member who orders your favorite best-selling novels, as well as the "must haves" of philosophy, religion, science, computers, foreign language and even dictionaries. She points out that seniors will find the new library easier to use. Wheelchair-bound folks will be able to maneuver easily through the aisles of the new library. Large print books will no longer be scattered throughout the stacks, and will instead be located in one easy-to-browse section of the library. On his/her way to the circulation desk for check out, a senior (or any user) will be able to swing by the new music collection and pick out a CD for the ride home. It will be a great way to test out some new Classical tunes before you buy the download for your ipod.

It's an exciting time at the Homer Public Library! Stay tuned for more about the Homer Public Library staff in the next issue.

On March  
27, 28, and 29

the library will be  
closed

for Seward's Day  
and staff training

## volunteer Spotlight



Frank Vondersaar is a great example of a Library volunteer! He is a long-time resident of Homer and an avid library user. He devotes many hours each week to helping the Library and other area organizations. Frank has helped move books for the bi-annual book sales, hang flyers for Library events, and stake the outline of the new library on the Hazel Avenue site for the groundbreaking in May of 2005. His latest project is helping the Library get wi-fi access. Come mid-April, Library patrons will be able to bring their own computers to the Library and access the internet via a wireless connection. This will provide new options to Library users and free up more time on the public-use computers for patrons without computers. Frank wants everyone to know that lots

of volunteers will be needed during the move to the new building and if you're interested call or stop by the Library. Thanks Frank!