

Employees, patrons praise new library

BY JEFF PAYNE
VOICE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

After years of dealing with cramped quarters, a leaky ceiling

and a lack of basic amenities, Chesterfield Township Library employees and patrons are in a mood to celebrate.

And that's what they will do this

Saturday when the library holds a grand opening for its new location on Patricia Drive, in an industrial complex between 23 Mile and Gratiot Avenue. The library opened late last month to rave reviews, said Director Marion Lusardi.

"So far, we've had lots of compliments. People are very thrilled that we're out of our old location and that we have a new location," she said.

Among the most common praises, she explained, are the bright colors, overall look and traditional feeling.

With space increased more than three fold, it also puts the library's former facility on 23 Mile Road in perspective.

"They're amazed at how many books and other materials we had crammed into the other building. At this point, everybody is really happy.

There are still issues to work on. Lusardi said additional signs, especially on Gratiot Avenue, would help people find the library. Also,

she added people are aware the building is not owned by the library but leased from a local developer.

"What's interesting is the question still comes up,

"This is really nice but when are we going to have our own building." It is leased and not in the most ideal location," she said.

At next Saturday's event, which will start at 11 a.m., plenty of activity is planned. Lusardi added some much-appreciated thank yous would be handed out.

"We will have a flag raising with the United States Marines from Selfridge. They have helped us so much with the move," she said.

"They helped us get all of furnishings from Schoolcraft College disassembled and moved here and helped move materials from the old library."

Marines from the base have always been there for the library, she added, helping its Friends group move materials for book

sales in the past.

Of course, there will be a ribbon cutting; and children will enjoy meeting the library's PAWS for Reading program dogs.

"Everyone can see what terrific animals they are and how the kids interact with the children," Lusardi said.

REPTILE Inc., which brings exotic animals to non-natural habits to give people a close up look at them, will be on hand.

"That's always a hit with kids," Lusardi said.

Also, the Friends of the Library will be having a used book sale and hope to attract more members in the process.

"I've been blown away at how positive the response is. This is not bells and whistles; it's a very basic interior laid out in a user-friendly way," Lusardi said.

The library is located at 50560 Patricia Drive. To find out more, call (586) 598-4900.

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Chesterfield Township Library facts and accomplishments

- Legally established in November 1994 by a library referendum passed by Chesterfield voters
- 1,242,785 library materials have been circulated since 1994. The library owns 62,256 books and magazines and 9,458 audio-visual materials.
- Serves people of all ages from infants to the elderly.
- Offers a variety of services to the community.

- Awards: Library of Michigan Foundation's Citation of Excellence Award for Public Service 2001, \$25,000 LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) Grant Award, Logo of the Month Award given by The Social Librarian magazine, \$2,000 James Dance Grant Award for promotion of the arts, \$5,000 Grant from MSD for Parenting Resource Center, two \$1,000 Literacy Grants from

Wal-Mart, and additional gifts/grants from: Anchor Bay Optimists, Anchor Bay Rotary, Macomb Rotary Foundation, Chesterfield Library Foundation, Lions clubs, Anchor Bay Community Foundation, Selfridge Spouses Club, Visteon Corporation, Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary, Huron Acoustic Tile Inc., and Huron Precision Parts

Source: Chesterfield Township Library