

New Cambridge Library to open July 20

By Tristan McGough
CNDI Correspondent

"The new library will be open for business at 1 p.m. on July 20," announced Joan Behm, director of the Cambridge Community Library.

Years in the making, the new addition just completed by Vogel Bros., Co. - along with a host of subcontractors and material vendors - is nearing its finishing touches.

When toured, the shelves had not been installed, nor was most furniture. Nevertheless, the colorful spaciousness, coordinated design elements and dedicated areas offered an exciting glimpse into Cambridge's local library of the future.

Behm wants to let everyone know that the library will be closed for the week of July 13 until July 20.

"However," she continued,

"everyone needs to know that the library programs - everything we already have set into motion - will keep going throughout that week of moving."

These programs will take place in the Community Room of the Amundson Center, a room that is directly connected by door to the new library addition, but will remain unaffected by the transition from old to new.

Not only is the library structure new, the shelving, furniture, tables, storage and much of the equipment is, too.

When all this is finally delivered, arranged and organized, the newly refurbished information center and learning facility will be ready for community use.

The Cambridge Community Library has come a long way from when it was housed in

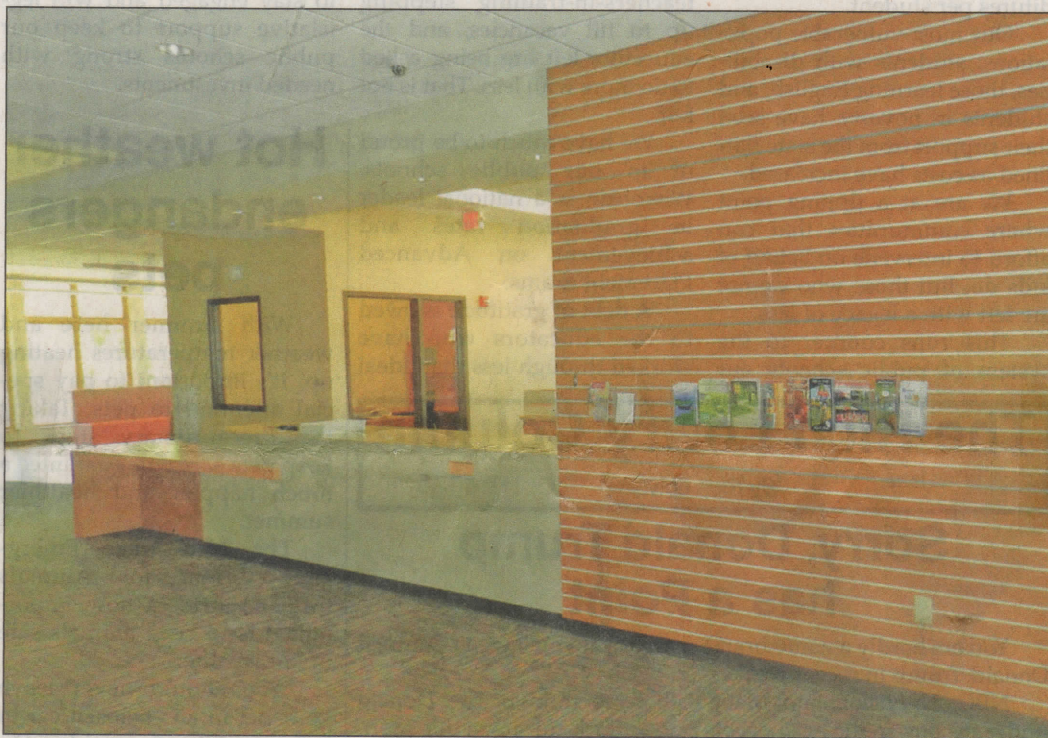
what is today the "e.serv" building adjacent to Koshkonong Creek.

Since 1978, the library has tended to the knowledge needs of local residents, helped students to enter the wider world of shared information and public institutions and has lended hours of entertainment to adults and children alike through books, DVDs, CDs, and Internet information services.

Long before the addition was built, talk was to move the library from the e.serv building to what is now the municipal garage and what had once been the old firehouse.

A sort of unified municipal building, with village offices and library, might have been fashioned out of that brick structure at the northwest cor-

(Continued on Page 8)



The new Cambridge Library offers more space, especially at the front counter for check out and information inquiries. Photo by Tristan McGough.

(Continued)

ner of North and River streets, however the Cambridge Foundation was determined to see the village's central establishments find more appropriate quarters that could serve future expansion needs too.

Due to the continued growth in community interest, support and use, the library got to the point where it did need larger accommodations.

An addition onto the original Amundson Center was decided upon. The Amundson Center was always intended by its benefactor to function as a social and cultural magnet for area residents.

With the courtyard and connecting pathways anticipated, and the cyberspace software and internet access installed, the library will continue to serve as a community destination, linking residents with one another and the outside world.

The library director spoke of the imminent move.

"Fortunately during the week we'll be moving there are staff, and lots of volunteers who will be able to help... but we also have a moving company. Our moving company has specialized carts for moving books off shelves, transporting them and then re-shelving as we direct."

This smooth operation will go off without a hitch assuming that Spacesaver Corp., the company making and setting up the shelving, will install it as planned. That will leave plenty of time for the move.

Some equipment is still being set up and some is still awaiting parts; but everything should be operational on July 20.

Furniture is arriving each day for one of the rooms or the other. Though themed to serve

as a design group of like pieces, the rooms are all a bit different and the furniture will reflect the very specific moods put in place by the designers.

The cozy reading room, replete with gas fireplace, will offer a quiet place to catch up on reading during the cold winter months.

Or the brightly hued children's area - open and accessible - allows parents to peruse the stacks while keeping an eye on their young ones.

The tech area will allow students to make videos, even having a green-screen for back-drop.

There are many alcoves and side areas visitors will find the perfect spot to sit, either alone in comfortable silence or together will similar-minded adventurers.

Just about wherever you turn in the new addition, you get a gorgeous view of the back environment, a scenic wetland tableau worthy of Wisconsin.

Behm gave credit to Deb Haffner, from South Central Library System, and the instrumental part she played on the building committee.

Haffner did a lot of the picking and choosing for color design and integration, as well as picking styles for tables, booths, and furniture. She does this for many small municipalities that develop their library resources but don't have the planning capacity and current knowledge of quality products and top vendors.

Nor do towns and villages have the ability to receive deep discounts for bulk purchases. The role of SCLS was central to obtaining a first-class library facility.

However, it was the drive and gumption of local residents and civic contributions from a

good many area stakeholders that the addition has finally and successfully been completed.

Many local people, businesses and community groups have given generously, demonstrating that from the start, the new library project had widespread support.

The municipalities of the Village of Cambridge, Village of Rockdale, Town of Christiana, Town of Oakland, and the Town of Deerfield have all made substantial financial commitments to the project, many giving two times or more until all the goals were met.

The Friends of the Library alone contributed over \$185,000 to the project.

In addition, there were large grants from the Madison Community Foundation and Cambridge State Bank (via its charitable arm, the Vucurevich Foundation).

Further financial contributions came from the Ralph Evinrude Foundation, Evjue Foundation (the altruistic division of The Capital Times), Calpine/Zion Energy, Herb Kohl Foundation, Alliant Energy, Shopko Foundation, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation and, the American Endowment Foundation.

And the backbone of community commitment - The Cambridge Foundation - contributed \$200,000 to the library project, as well as the drive and dedication which the whole community backed.

That drive and dedication has taken Cambridge to their cultural destination: the new library addition.

At three times the size of the current library - 6,800 square feet, to be exact - the new library will feature a 24-hour drive-thru book return, drive-thru book check-out, a computer center, community activities room and a completely furnished complex of interrelated interiors designed for individual research and group study.

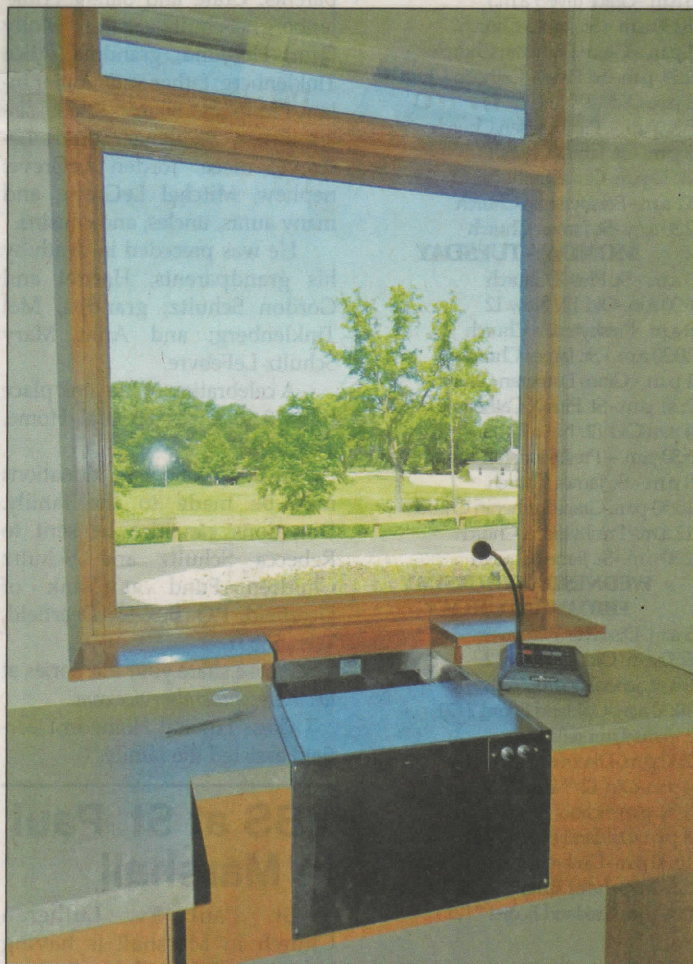
The library will, in addition to its library and information services, uphold the initial purpose of the Amundson Community Center, which is to serve as a social focal point for the Cambridge community.

It will stand as an attractive facility for residents and a first invitation to those who might be looking to make Cambridge their future home.

Besides connectivity to distance learning opportunities, family-friendly children and young adult areas and a well-equipped technology area, there is a room for a unique local history collection that will offer first-hand observation of artifacts, relics and memorabilia from bygone eras.

So, save the date and time to come view the new library July 20 at 1 p.m.

When you visit, expect to be delighted by what you see; expect to find yourself excited by all options you, your friends and your family will have at their newest cultural resource, the local Cambridge Community Library.



The drive-up window offers a beautiful view and the chance for conversation with library staff while dropping off items from the comfort of the car.



The reading room offers comfortable seating and a fireplace.



The new library, being three times the size of the original library, will offer plenty of space for shelving, common areas and books.



The new children's area is filled with vibrant color and enough space for fun and imagination.