



Sioux City Public Library Annual Report

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This year marked the beginning of a new three-year planning cycle, as Library staff and stakeholders considered where we are and where we want to be as a vital community presence. The Library's new mission, adopted in June, is to "connect people and ideas to empower and enrich our community."

From the Library's three buildings and the Online Branch, our goal is to find the best resources that efficiently and effectively meet the learning and leisure needs of our patrons, at a time convenient to them. We remain deeply committed to creating and serving a literate, self-reliant population and enhancing the quality of life in Siouxland, as you will see from this annual report.



Betsy Thompson
Library Director

STATS AT A GLANCE

The Sioux City Public Library houses 233,241 books and recordings in The Wilbur Aalfs (Main) Library, Morning-side Branch, and Perry Creek Branch Library.

408,000 visitors (up from 384,000 last year) checked out 590,609 books, magazines and recordings and used an additional 176,000 items inside the Library buildings. Checkouts are up 2.4% over the previous year.

Logins to the Library's free Internet computers increased 7%. Visitors logged in 76,288 times for online job applications, test proctoring, social networking and research. Others used their own laptops to tap into the Library's wireless connection.

Sioux City Public Library has 33,371 active library card holders, 41% of Sioux City's residents.

Individuals and organizations booked the Library's two public meeting rooms 362 times, attended by 8,625 people. Meetings are now posted at www.siouxcitylibrary.org.

During the year, staff cataloged, stamped, stickered and readied 23,007 new items for public use and withdrew 23,551 outdated or damaged items.

From home or office computers patrons visited the Library's web page 97,404 times, and logged into the Library's premium databases 13,645 times.

2008-2009 HIGHLIGHTS & HAPPENINGS

📖 Upgrades to the underlying infrastructure of the **Online Branch** led to a more dynamic and personal web site, which launched in January. Users began submitting questions and comments and requesting titles for purchase via online forms. The online meeting room calendar made it easy to request a room, check a reservation or look for available dates. Book cover images, previews and sample chapters appeared courtesy of Google Books. A running list of items "just checked in" inspired web visitors with new options.

📖 "Grantseeking Basics with Foundation Directory Online," led by **Foundation Center** representative Kief Schladweiler, connected 66 grantseekers from local organizations with information on funding sources.

📖 Continuing an emphasis on **early childhood literacy**, staff developed alphabet, counting and rhyming book lists for parents, and incorporated literacy tips at each public storytime, engaging preschoolers in brief activities that developed pre-reading skills. Literacy is an important workforce development component for our community.

📖 To encourage **reading for personal enrichment**, the Library sponsored summer reading for all ages, took the lead on the One Book One Siouxland community reading initiative featuring *Dewey: The Small-town Library Cat Who Touched the World*, launched a series of nighttime storytimes so that working parents and their preschoolers could share the magic of reading, hosted read-to-me dogs, and supported the Booked on Crime and Open Book discussion groups.

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Keeping up with **technological advances** improved customer service in several areas. A new signup system simplified Internet logins at The Wilbur Aalfs (Main) Library. New hardware made the Library catalog faster and more secure. A system for maintaining the wifi network was implemented, and new connections gave patrons remote access to thousands of downloadable audio titles.

The Library ramped up **reader services**, personalizing the staff-recommended book displays at all agencies. Staff developed tip sheets to help readers identify "appeal elements" and find new authors with similar styles. Labels on range ends at The Wilbur Aalfs (Main) Library helped patrons locate books by topic along with Dewey number.

Partnerships were many and varied, from staffing booths during History Day and Week of the Young Child to presenting book talks at the Senior Center, celebrating All Iowa Reads, and cosponsoring City initiatives. In collaboration with area colleges, the Library brought actor Duffy Hudson to Siouxland as Edgar Allen Poe and Albert Einstein. Teens from Consumer Science classes came to the Library to learn about puppetry and select books for programs in the daycares. Youth Services staff commemorated the Lincoln Bicentennial with book talks in the schools. The Library partnered with Barnes & Noble Booksellers on summer reading and worked with Book People to bring the author of *This Water Goes North* to the Library for an evening presentation. Staff prepared resource lists for WITCC Life-long Learning and the Siouxland Humane Society,

and created book displays in support of the Autism Support Group and the Human Rights Commission.

Staff training, a cornerstone of customer service, covered strategically important areas such as reader's advisory service, early literacy, collection maintenance, leadership essentials, online marketing, and exceeding customer expectations during tours and visits.

Two **new databases**, licensed for use from home, office, or in the Library, enhanced access to specific information: Learning Express Library offers practice tests for entrance, advanced placement and licensing examinations, and Iowa Legal Forms contains thousands of free business and personal forms for completing legal transactions.

New sidewalks and redesigned entrances at The Wilbur Aalfs (Main) Library opened in September. One month later, new carpet in the Gleeson Room further **improved the ambiance** at public meetings.

The **Book Lovers' Book Sale** in April brought in a record-breaking \$27,000 for the Friends of the Library; proceeds benefit the Library and patrons.

Delivering Library books to shut-ins, entering data in the *Sioux City Journal* Index, or working the book sale, a total of 199 **Library volunteers** donated 3,041 hours supporting Library services. The Perry Creek Branch could not stay open without its dedicated volunteers.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	(not audited)
City Adjusted Appropriation	\$2,617,099
Expenditures:	
Personnel	\$1,924,777
Materials	\$308,217
Plant/Operations/Equipment	\$349,077
Gifts & Grants Received	\$131,059
Including major gifts of \$61,315 from the Sioux City Public Library Foundation, \$47,556 from State of Iowa funds, \$14,563 from the Friends of the Sioux City Public Library.	

LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2008-2009

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FROM THE LIBRARY MAIL BAG:

I love the new website...I find the layout easy to navigate and I enjoy the rotating series of library personnel and their quotes.

I do home health care and I signed up one of my clients for Home Delivery. She is 89 years old and she loves it! Thank you for this service.

I was so nervous about taking my cosmetology exam, especially when your practice test book was already checked out. What a relief to find out I could practice from home using the online database. Thanks!

Many, many thanks to the staff for all you did during our tour. We appreciate all the excellent information; our students loved it! ~ESL Excursions class, WITCC

The Abe Lincoln presentation was a success. The students really liked it. Your staff encouraged them to use the library. This morning a couple of boys told me they walked to the library after school. Thanks for sharing this opportunity with our students.

The employees are to be commended! We have lived in many places including West Des Moines for 10 years. I have NEVER found a library as helpful, courteous, and patron-responsive as Morningside Library. Thanks!