

Public Trust

Excellent Service

P R O M I S E S **K E P T**

Equal Access

Diversity

Outreach Partnerships



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PUBLICTRUST

NOT ALL THE STORIES in the Ypsilanti District Library live between the covers of books. Some are told in the personal histories of those who come to the library for the information that helps them over the major hurdles of life: career, family, and personal growth.

Being a vital part of people's lives is at the heart of the library's promise to each person who walks through our doors.

For Board President Linda Gurka, keeping one of the library's most important promises meant maintaining a downtown presence and celebrating the Michigan Avenue grand re-opening this year. "Accessibility is key: Whittaker Road serves the growing township, while Michigan Avenue serves the pedestrian-oriented downtown," she says.

Building the collections and enhancing service are also ongoing goals. "The completion of our strategic plan gives us clear direction for decision making in 2004-2006."



YDL-Michigan Avenue's beautiful new public service desk

As branch manager for the downtown library, Meg Delaney has front-line responsibility for preserving the public trust. Each day is a new exchange: "Whether it's because we have the resources that people need or because our staff is welcoming and helpful, we hope each interaction invites people to come back," she says.

And if patron visits are any indication of promises kept, consider this: 47,808 people checked out more than a half-million items in 2003, and reference librarians answered 81,831 of their questions, 25 percent more than the year before. We increased our total collection by 11 percent, adding more of the CDs, videos and other resources that fly off the shelves.

All in all, we count fiscal 2003 as a highly satisfying year.



EXCELLENTSERVICE

BRENT STRONG, 6, became a book lover at an early age—two weeks, his mother Aimee says, when she started reading to him. Before long, mother and son were regulars at YDL story times.

When baby Ryan came along, Brent and Aimee took him in tow. Today, both boys have their own library cards and choose books that their dad, Bill, often reads to them after dinner. “Listening to the stories is helping them learn to read at an early age, which gives them a step up,” Bill says. Ryan, 3, puts it more succinctly: “It makes me a smarter boy.”

Drawing her inspiration from a child’s natural creativity, Youth Librarian Lynne Bustin delights in connecting young readers to books that capture their interest. “One little girl in our story time is so charmed by the characters that she told me, ‘I’m going to write stories someday and give them to you to put in the library.’ ”



Story time veterans Aimee and Bill Strong with sons Brent and Ryan

Promises like these make Library Director Jill Morey appreciate the wisdom of recruiting the best staff and letting them work their magic. “I’m proud of our top-notch staff and know their high level of service is a major reason for the phenomenal increase in library usage.”

And that’s no tall tale: Last year, nearly 15,000 kids and parents attended 452 story sessions held at the library’s two branches and at dozens of school and community sites.



OUTREACH&PARTNERSHIP

ELI KNAPP ARRIVED at Perry Child Development Center one day to find a community fair with tables full of kid-sized attractions. And while the kids lined up ten deep at the table with free samples of fudge, Eli was drawn to the display offering library cards for kids and a special incentive: the chance to have a book of his choice imprinted with his name. Eli signed up, joining 8,528 others who were issued library cards in 2003.

The program is called Celebration Books, and its goal is to engage young readers to discover what the library has to offer. Eli’s mother, Rachel Dewees, says the child-focused concept fits perfectly with hers: “I encourage Eli, now 6, to do more than just browse the picture books. When he’s interested in something, I tell him he can go to the library and look it up.”

Promotional partnerships with area organizations are one of many ways the library gets the word out. Since Washtenaw Literacy moved its offices and one-on-one tutoring services to YDL-Whittaker Road, the group’s reach has broadened considerably.



Eli Knapp and his mom, Rachel Dewees, are library regulars.

In 2003, the library’s small meeting and study rooms hosted 1,462 literacy sessions to help 539 adult learners acquire reading and English language skills.

But no mention of partnerships is complete without credit to the Friends of the Library, who now number more than 200 members strong. Last year, through sales of donated books, the Friends contributed more than \$21,500 to support the library’s concert series, youth summer reading program, and other extras that help make the library a destination for all ages.



EQUALACCESS&DIVERSITY

GROWING UP ON an East Texas farm taught Maxine Henderson the ins and outs of cooking and canning, which, years later, she turned into “Country Cuisine from Maxine,” and a second cookbook, “Snacks from Max.” But, at 77, not feeling at home with computers, Maxine decided to join the Internet generation.

She enrolled in the library’s “Senior Surfers,” and to her relief, found Brigitte Vallion, YDL computer trainer, to be a patient and understanding mentor. When Maxine wanted to go online to enter three of her prized recipes in the Pillsbury Bake-Off, Brigitte was there to guide her.

The new computer training center is just one of the meeting rooms that host programs ranging from wild bird rescue to concerts on the new baby grand piano. For Kathy Daly, YDL assistant director, the goal is to offer programs so diverse that they attract young and old, library newcomers and regulars, all for different reasons. Developing programs, Kathy says, is a library-wide effort. In 2003, offerings included the “Take Note” concerts highlighting



The Kevin Collins African Drum and Dance Troupe

Griffen Walton at the library’s new baby grand piano



local talent, an Underground Railroad exhibit and concert, a showing of children’s art from Washtenaw Head Start and the “100th Anniversary of Flight.”

The same sense of diversity strikes longtime volunteer Gerry Kruse from her vantage point behind the YDL-Whittaker Road service desk. “I’m overwhelmed with how many different people use the resources of the library,” she says.

All told, 1,023 people attended 200 free computer classes, 1,107 people attended 61 programs, and 19,634 people came to 649 youth events (including storytimes) in 2003. But as Gerry Kruse is quick to point out, there’s always room for more.



THOSE WHO HURRY by the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Adams Street and don't take notice of the historical marker and outdoor fountain miss the stories of two Ypsilanti visionaries. In 1872, Elijah McCoy invented an oil pump so reliable that customers accepted no substitutes: hence the saying, "The real McCoy."

More than a century later, community leader Patsy Chandler decided downtown Ypsilanti needed a fountain, and hosted tea parties for the next nine years to raise the money to construct it.

Today, Mrs. Chandler's effort has inspired another generation of civic leaders, who envision an urban park within the historic district, a green oasis that will invite families and children, downtown workers, and other adults with time for coffee and chat.

Ypsilanti City Councilwoman Sandie Schulze and other planning committee members have their sights on another addition to the park: a life-sized bronze of Harriet Tubman, whose Underground Railroad carried African Americans to freedom. Sandie explains the connection: "We're raising funds to honor people who achieved great things by having a vision and sticking to it," she says. "When people come to our little park, we hope they'll be inspired to apply the same strength and courage in their own lives."

APROMISINGFUTURE



2003 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Left:Ypsilanti City Councilwoman Sandie Schulze sees a green future for the library's downtown park.

Library Budget, Fiscal Year 2003

REVENUES	
Property taxes	\$2,503,860
Penal fines	144,061
State revenue sharing	51,519
Direct state aid	33,184
Indirect state aid	33,184
Contract with Superior Township	46,000
Miscellaneous	82,288
Donations	21,938
Interest income	48,326
Friends of the Library gifts	1,500
TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,965,860

EXPENSES	
Salaries and administration	\$2,142,031
Michigan Avenue facility	104,539
Bookmobile	6,081
Peters facility	11,980
Whittaker Road facility	596,001
Disbursements from donations	1,019
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,861,651

Excess of Revenues (under) Expenditures	\$104,209
General Fund balance, beginning of year	\$3,213,441
General Fund balance, end of year	\$3,317,650

This budget is an audited statement of actual revenues and expenses for the fiscal year beginning December 1, 2002 and ending November 30, 2003.