

# FROM HERE... TO EVERYWHERE



**Ypsilanti District Library  
Community Report 2006-07**





GO

One day last May, the Ypsilanti District Library awakened as students scrambled off the bus to tour *Forever Free*, an exhibit that traced the tumultuous times of the Civil War.

Downtown, moms and toddlers settled in for an hour of stories, rhymes and songs, while adults met for friendly conversations to improve their English fluency.



At YDL's Whittaker Road and Michigan Avenue libraries, cards were issued, questions were answered, books went home, and laptops linked to the Internet through wireless connections.

ANYWHERE.

That evening, an adult book group discussed *Black Lace* by local African American author Beverly Jenkins, while the Kids Only Book Club explored a different title. YDL-Michigan Avenue hosted a loyal following of local chess masters and game enthusiasts as the lights dimmed elsewhere for the screening of a '30s film classic.

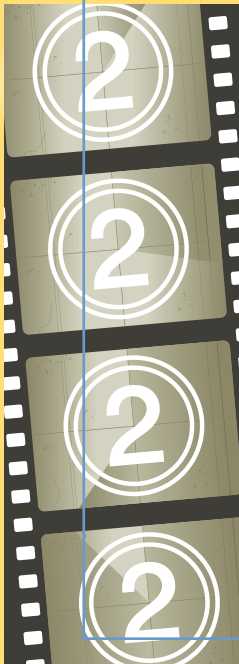
As this day slipped into the next, a grad student logged into YDL's database of scientific journals to conduct a worldwide search from his living room. Just what is our public library coming to, anyway?

ANYTIME.

### Meet the library of the future.

With astonishing speed, the electronic age has transformed the role of libraries from book repositories into places where people interact with information. Encyclopedias and bound books are giving way to streaming videos, audio books, data downloads and "virtual libraries" that catalog the world's knowledge.

As rich as this environment is, there's a vital part missing: other people. That's why the libraries of the future are evolving into community meeting places where people find — and share— information.



The Ypsilanti District Library sits squarely in the center of this community dialog. Thanks to input from some of the best libraries in the country and patrons like you, we've completed a strategic plan to guide us through 2010. The plan is all about using new technologies and ideas to get information into people's hands. It calls for extended hours, after-hours pickup of materials, a second bookmobile, and e-mail or text messages sent when titles are due or available. And that's just the start.

Who knows? The next time your cell phone rings, please answer. It just might be the library calling.





### Bridge the digital divide.

In today's wireless world, it's easy to assume that everyone has a computer and an Internet connection. But that's simply not the case, as the demand for our computers attests. Patrons logged countless hours on our computers, which number 58 at YDL-Whittaker Road and 22 at YDL-Michigan Avenue.

Even so, providing the hardware is not enough. YDL is working to build our community's technical literacy. In 2006, 1,323 learners enrolled in 229 computer classes, including many seniors set on bridging the technology gap.

YDL's website, [www.ypsilibrary.org](http://www.ypsilibrary.org), is designed to be a portal to the world. You'll find new and notable books, upcoming events, a way to reserve materials, a link to 38 public databases, and volumes more.



For YDL's reference librarians, the challenge is to help patrons navigate printed materials and online resources with equal ease.

"In the future, our reference librarians will leave their desks and become roving resources," says Sue VerWys, manager of YDL-Michigan Avenue.

Sometimes, the link between YDL's print and online resources is obvious: after acquiring a collection of foreign language books, we added an online language center, Rosetta Stone, where you can learn Arabic, English, French, Russian, or Spanish.

More esoteric subjects rely on librarians' creativity to draw people in. Downtown, VerWys created a new book room inside the front door and fashions retail-style displays to showcase the collection. "Above our DVD browsing bin, we feature books on filmmaking and put books about composers and music next to our CDs," she explains. "We want our library to be a destination."

To make that happen, YDL has created a powerful magnet: the fascination of learning something new.



# GET TO KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND.

As any good teacher knows, we learn best by doing. So YDL has crafted all kinds of fun and free doings to expand your personal universe.

The most popular programs often develop organically, explains Assistant Library Director Lori Coryell. "The Community Reads program took the premise behind our book discussion groups—that the only thing better than reading a good book is sharing it with others—and made it bigger," she says. "The 2006 theme, *Revolutions in Science*, sparked local discussions all over Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor about the global significance of scientific discovery."

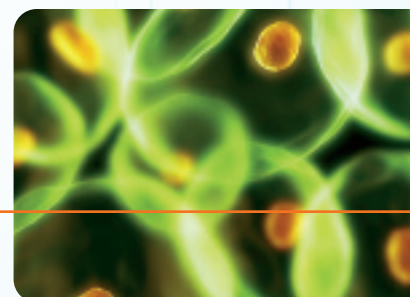
YDL staff commissioned no less a playwright than Shakespeare to inspire readers of all ages to join the *Shakesperience* Summer Reading Program, made possible through generous sponsorship by the Friends of YDL. Challenged "To Read...Or Be Read To," 1,829 young readers read for a combined 13,585 hours, and twice as many teens as in 2005 exercised "Will Power" to devour the pages of 784 books.

## Find your niche.

Ironically, the more we're bombarded with information, the more disconnected we feel. That's why one of YDL's central roles is to be a meeting place where people of similar interests can connect. "Bringing people together around activities they enjoy—that's how we build a sense of community," says Library Director Jill Morey.

Another of YDL's top goals is to engage underserved groups, including seniors, men, and teens. On the front lines of the digital age, teens expect libraries to be visual, interactive, and immediate. Monique Geiman, who develops our teen programs and collections, says libraries must change to compete with teens' after-school interests. "We're planning new teen spaces at both libraries to give teens a place of their own for programs and meeting their friends."

"Teens don't separate learning and socializing," Geiman says. "Group projects and teamwork are how most learning occurs." She credits the Teen Advisory Group for helping select programs like *Dance Dance Revolution* and *Guitar Hero* that are relevant to teens' lives. It all seems to be working—word is getting out and teen participation is rising. In fact, our youth and teen programs set a record: 23,264 attended 917 programs in 2006.

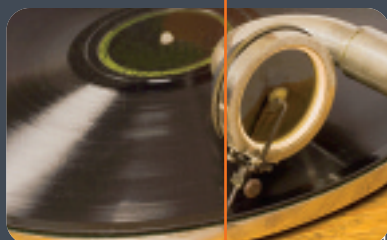




### Feel at home.

The more complex our world, the more we need our own sense of time and place. Through its local history collection and events, YDL preserves our heritage in national and world history.

Since its dedication on May 21, 2006, the Library Park Plaza has become a focal point for people to gather in downtown Ypsilanti—for lunch, conversation, or one of YDL's many outdoor programs. Installation of an impressive bronze likeness of Harriet Tubman in the park was cause for a celebration that traced the Civil War activist's life and history of the Underground Railroad. The theme of freedom moved forward during Black History Month's African American Read In and programs honoring Rosa Parks, Elijah McCoy, and Martin Luther King, Jr. YDL was among the select venues to host Forever Free, a national touring exhibit that cast the struggle for freedom through President Lincoln's eyes. The exhibit drew nearly 10,000 visitors and spawned an annual Living History Day, which in 2006 staged an authentic Civil War encampment on library grounds.



Local history also has a home in the Michigan/Ypsilanti Heritage Room at YDL-Whittaker. The room houses microfilmed copies of Ypsilanti newspapers from 1864 to the present as well as a priceless collection of historic books and photographs, some of which date from the original Ypsilanti Ladies Library founded in 1868. You can watch oral history interviews with veterans interviewed as part of the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project—and view changing displays of Ypsilanti created by volunteer Earnest Griffin featuring artifacts from donors and his own private collection. You can add your own bit of history as well: call 734.482.4110, ext. 1377.

### Take in a show.

If you didn't know better, you might mistake the Ypsilanti District Library for a performing arts center. And you wouldn't be that far off—we'll stage a show at the drop of a hat.

Entertainment has long been the thread we've used to tie fun and learning together. To bring this summer's Shakesperience to life, The Ring of Steel action theater troupe reenacted Elizabethan-era combat in authentic costumes. Our KinderConcerts regularly attract a hundred or more 3- to 5-year-olds and their families. And when Ypsilanti throws its yearly community-wide party for Elvis, we invite a tribute artist to read stories to The King's fans.



Our family-friendly *Take Note* concert series, generously funded by the Friends of YDL, features local musicians and a symphony of musical styles—folk, jazz, pop and classical. “Families who can’t afford concert-hall tickets get front-row seats here,” says Kathy Daly, who created the series. “Recent performances include The Fair Isle String Quartet, Jan Krist & the Midwest Urban Poets, The Ragbirds, and our annual holiday big-band concert by the Paul Keller Ensemble.”

On the flip side, live performances stimulate interest in YDL’s music and video collections, which fly off the shelves—and there’s no rental fee. In 2006, even our Lively Arts exhibits had a musical element, as Eastern Michigan University music professor Nelson Amos serenaded with a classical guitar as patrons viewed an exhibit of his paintings.

What more can you ask for? We’d love to hear—to make a suggestion, go online or call 734.482.4110, ext. 1377.

# FEEL FREE TO BRANCH OUT.

August 8, 2006 was a milestone date for YDL when Superior Township voters in the Ypsilanti, Willow Run, and Plymouth-Canton school districts approved a library operating millage and officially joined the Ypsilanti District Library. We welcomed them eagerly and went to work quickly.

With the help of Superior Township officials, we opened an interim library just six months later—on February 24, 2007—in the township’s fire station at 8975 MacArthur Boulevard at the intersection with Harris Road.

Small but mighty, YDL-Superior has a sampling of our most popular books, DVDs and videos, as well as newspapers and magazines and four Internet-ready computers. It hasn’t taken middle school students long to discover us, and after school, it’s standing room only at the computers to get online. As full members, Superior Township residents can use any of YDL’s branches and can request materials to be delivered to YDL-Superior from our other locations. To find out more about services and hours, call 734.482.3747 or 734.879.1303.



Our new branch, however, wasn’t YDL’s first connection with Superior Township. That distinction goes to “Big Blue,” our bookmobile, which is now outfitted with a wireless connection that allows patrons to check out, check in and reserve books directly on our main reservation system. In 2007, a second fully-stocked bookmobile will be added to the fleet, enabling us to expand the number of stops along our mobile library route.





### Take to the road.

YDL takes the show on the road in other ways as well. Community Relations Coordinator Donna DeButts says connections with area schools are strong and getting stronger. "Presentations by Marlena Shuler, who developed *Heroes and Sheroes* to talk with kids about role models and *Art Matters* to provide art experiences, are wildly popular," DeButts says. "We've also sent our one and only harmonica-playing bilingual storyteller, Ernie Pope, to tour preschools, day care centers and Head Start programs to keep up with the demand for creative kids programs."

From the schools' perspective, library exhibits and programs are an invaluable source of inspiration. Christie McGuire, a second-grade teacher at St. Thomas Grade School, says, "Every exhibit my class has toured has sparked their imagination, leading them to check out books on topics they would never have known or cared about otherwise."



Youth Librarian Ilene Singer's 32-year career with the Willow Run School District was the perfect background for bringing

YDL's resources into local classrooms. Not one to wait for Summer Reading signups, Singer traveled to summer school classes, signed up the students, and went back once a week to award prizes. "Being a teacher for so many years,

I know that if kids don't read over the summer, they lose a lot of ground," Singer explains.

In all, YDL staff made 318 outreach visits to preschool and elementary schools in 2006. Closer collaboration between libraries and schools is a trend that's being watched nationally, according to Shannon Bovis, manager of YDL's Youth Department. "We can provide access to resources that schools don't have and accelerate student achievement with outreach programs that provide literacy resources and teach research skills," she says. "The payoff for us is that young people will have a favorable view of the library as a viable community institution that supports lifelong learning."

### Operating Financial Highlights 2006

#### Revenue

|                            |                    |       |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Property Taxes             | \$2,963,981        | (84%) |
| Penal Fines                | \$168,896          | (5%)  |
| State Aid                  | \$57,660           | (2%)  |
| Interest and Other         | \$246,990          | (7%)  |
| Grants, Donations, Friends | \$39,7016          | (1%)  |
| State Revenue Sharing      | \$39,876           | (1%)  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$3,517,104</b> |       |

#### Expenditures

|                           |                    |       |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Salaries                  | \$2,055,421        | (56%) |
| Library Materials         | \$470,331          | (13%) |
| Contractual               | \$97,856           | (3%)  |
| Automation/Capital Outlay | \$616,766          | (17%) |
| Utilities/Repairs         | \$264,134          | (7%)  |
| Other                     | \$155,721          | (4%)  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>\$3,660,229</b> |       |

(Audited statement of actual revenues and expenses from December 1, 2005 through November 30, 2006.

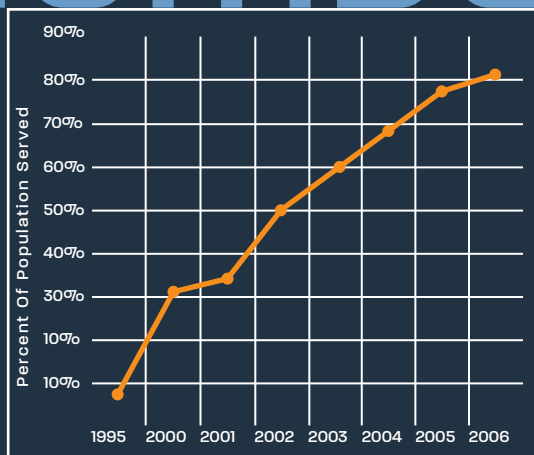
Our **FOCUS ON PARTICIPATION** resulted in  
a healthy increase in circulation  
Circulation 698,547

**THERE'S NO DEADWOOD** in our  
collections 269,330 total items

**REFERENCE QUESTIONS** ANSWERED 124,232

6,473 **NEW LIBRARY CARDS**

TOTAL **REGISTERED BORROWERS** 64,456



Our **PROGRAMS ARE BILLBOARDS** for what's  
inside: 27,726 attendees

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[www.ypsilibrary.org](http://www.ypsilibrary.org)

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