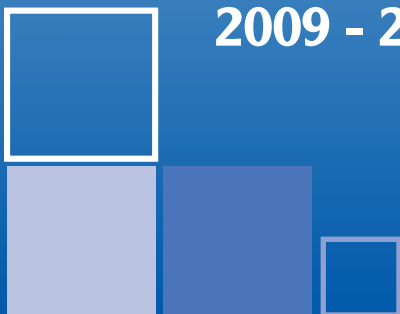



■ Collaboration ■ Commitment ■ Community





2009 - 2010 Biennial Report

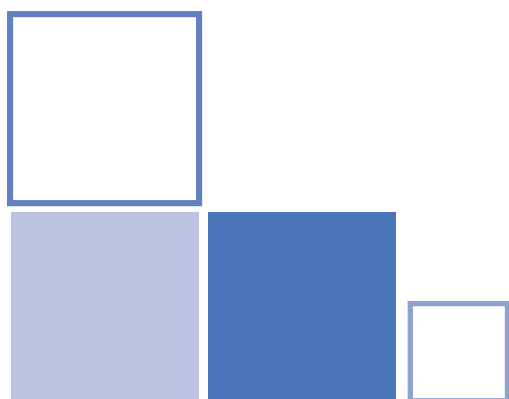


As technology and society change, so must our institutions. The Akron-Summit County Public Library recognizes that today, more than ever, libraries have the opportunity to be vital centers of public education, interaction, and inspiration. We understand that we must work within an evolving cultural landscape. We also know that we can be, and remain, a valuable part of civic life. Three words describe our approach:

 **Collaboration** – Summit County residents know the value of joining forces to accomplish greater goals. Combining our efforts in partnership with other agencies and institutions is not just a good idea; it has become an economic and social imperative. Our cooperative scope extends to local, regional, and even national organizations. Shared purpose and vision will shape our future in a positive way. Together, we can do so much more than we could if we chose to stand alone.

 **Commitment** – Amid economic uncertainty, our resolve to provide the best service we can has not wavered. Instead, it has become strengthened, as we know that the role of the library expands during unsettled times. Despite financial setbacks, we will continue to seek ways to keep that role strong.

 **Community** – We exist for our community and because of it. Our resources and facilities are directed toward those who need them as well as those who appreciate and enjoy them. We are working to be an integral part of Summit County's cultural and economic network, providing necessary services and an enhanced quality of life for all its residents.



A CHALLENGING TIME – OPTIMISM & REALISM

*A letter to the community from
David Jennings, Library Director*



To the three C's outlining the theme of this biennial report (Collaboration, Commitment, Community) I would also add that of Challenge. For our library system, 2009 and 2010 were challenging years that required both agility and resilience from our entire organization.

Like virtually every part of the public sector in Ohio, our library has experienced significant reductions in funding during these years. Compared to 2008, we have lost approximately 23% of our funding from the state of Ohio (Public Library Fund), or about \$3.3 million per year. This reduction has caused us to reconfigure and realign our work, as we now have 13% fewer employees (60 positions) than two years ago. This staffing reduction was accomplished gradually through attrition, not layoff, and we also reduced almost every area of our operating budget to deal with revenue reductions. Throughout this period, with few exceptions we have managed to maintain the programs, services, and resources that we provided prior to this economic downturn.

Meanwhile, simultaneous to this loss of funding, demand for library services reached record levels. During 2009/2010 we experienced the highest use in our organization's history in terms of visitors to our facilities, number of items borrowed, program attendance, and public computer usage. Meeting this public demand for services remains our primary challenge going forward with fewer dollars.

Those who work with me know me as an incurable optimist. My life experience has taught me that one can never know what is coming around the corner, either good or bad, and that any notion that we are in control is an illusion. This used to trouble me, but now I embrace that idea, and choose to approach the future with optimism.

One reason for optimism is the continued support of the residents of our service area. In May, 2010, the Library's 1.4 mill replacement operating levy passed with 63% of the votes cast. Passage of this levy ensures a continued level of local funding through 2015, and we are very thankful for this crucial support in our community.

However, as we move ahead in 2011, I also recall that my mother, who grew up in a small, failing oil town in Oklahoma, taught me to "play the cards you are dealt." Thus optimism is tempered with a decent dose of realism.

Being realistic, I know that in 2012 we will face another funding challenge as the reappraisal of property in Summit County will very likely result in less revenue generated by our property tax levy. Regardless of how much revenue is lost, we will have to continue to find ways to reduce our operating expenditures.

Being optimistic, I know that our Board, management, and staff will respond to this newest challenge with imagination and vigor, and will continue to provide services valued by our community.



The traditional library is not gone. We remain focused on the educational and recreational needs of children and adults. The greatest asset of an individual, and our society as a whole, is the ability to learn. Our ongoing pledge is to provide resources and opportunities for lifelong learning. We also remember to have fun with it!

Early childhood literacy and the importance of family reading were emphasized in the Annual Day of Reading. Sponsored by This City Reads!, participants read for at least 30 minutes on a designated day and report their reading. Supported by Akron Children's Hospital, Western Reserve Media, First Book Greater Akron and many others, Main Library was also the host for the Family Reading Festival, a day of literacy development and fun activities.

One of the oldest art forms, storytelling continues to have a role today for people of all ages. The Library presented the annual Akron Storytelling Festival in the summer of 2009 and 2010 with workshops and concerts featuring nationally known storytellers, teachers and authors who shared their techniques and perspectives.

Bookmobile service remains a popular and needed resource for those who cannot visit the Library in person. Parades are a favorite Bookmobile activity. Our Mobile Services staff participates in the American Library Association's Parade of Bookmobiles, a virtual parade allowing Bookmobile staff from libraries all over the country to exchange information and ideas. In addition, our Bookmobiles have been part of Akron holidays and St. Patrick's Day Parades.

"I think one of the best things about the Bookmobile is that it allows many people to visit the Library who would otherwise be unable to do so...driving the Bookmobile in parades is fun because you are able to share a special day with so many people in the community. I really appreciate hearing their words of support while driving along the parade's route."

– Jon Hershey, Manager, Mobile Services Division



“The lab benefits parents as well. We go out into the community and make visits to early childhood programs. We’re at all the early childhood events.”

– Laura McFalls,
Early Childhood Librarian

“We’re responsible for orientations to help every minute spent in the RECE lab count. We get to know the early childhood practitioners and try to meet their needs. We invite them to fine tune this service...we’re in such a great position to connect. We need to build bridges in the early childhood field.”

-Vicky VanDerSchyf,
Public Service Assistant,
Children’s Library



Support from the Akron Community Foundation helped the Children’s Library develop the Resources for Early Childhood Educators (RECE) Lab. The Lab contains equipment such as laminators, die cut machines, and binding machines for teachers to create materials for their classrooms. There are also circulating resources on a wide variety of subjects and activities located at all Library branches. In 2010, the RECE Lab logged 555 visits with 275 registered users.

Keeping our minds sharp is a necessity that can be enjoyable. For our first Akron Crossword Puzzle Tournament created by the History & Humanities Division, New York Times editor and puzzle master Will Shortz provided a set of unpublished crossword puzzles used in three rounds of competition for over 40 participants.



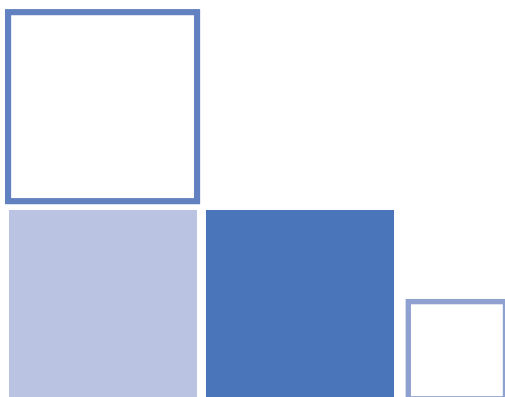
An emerging role of libraries is that of community facilitator. With the help of many other organizations, we offer programs assisting with a variety of needs: employment, business, early childhood development, personal finance and health and nutrition. Together, we are working toward making our county a better place for its residents.

Tax Aide, a long-standing collaborative effort with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), has worked with the Business & Government Division and Library branches to assist many Summit County residents with tax return preparation. The Consumer Health Information Center was developed in response to a need for a resource clearinghouse in which information is written for the patient or consumer rather than doctors and nurses. Harvest for Hunger is a partnership of four food banks serving 21 counties in Northeast Ohio. All Akron-Summit County Public Library locations have served as collection sites, helping to make donating easier and working toward assisting those in need.

In Fall 2010, the Library became one of many community agencies participating in a county-wide initiative called First Things First. The goal of First Things First is to develop a comprehensive, systematic approach to family support, early childhood care and education in our community, to assure that every child is ready and able to enter kindergarten. The initiative has brought together over 40 groups, including the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority, Asian Services in Action, and Child Guidance & Family Solutions.

“I changed careers a few years ago from business to teaching young children with autism... without the resources at the library I don’t know if my first year would have been as successful. I’m here every single weekend, choosing literacy books for my children.”

**– Maggie Oliver,
teacher**



Non-profit businesses and organizations had an opportunity in 2010 to attend a six-session workshop, Fundraising Fundamentals for Non-Profits. The workshops were co-sponsored by the Center for Non-Profit Excellence. Both the Library and the Center are Cooperating Collections of the Foundation Center, a nationwide network of grant resources.

In partnership with the Akron Beacon Journal, Ohio.com and Ohio.monster.com, the Library presented Accelerate Your Job Search, a daylong workshop geared toward helping participants with job hunting skills. Topics covered included writing effective cover letters and resumes, interview preparation, social media applications, and career transitions. Closely related to this effort, resume writing software was installed at all branches. In September 2009, the Electronic Services Division presented workshops focusing on how to use this software, which helps job seekers to refine their resumes and practice interviewing with built-in videos.



“It meant the world to me when a student notified me that I would not be seeing her in my next class because she got a job with the computer skills she learned from us.”

– MieMie Sann, Technology Trainer, Electronic Services



In a fast-paced world, we are challenged to not lose sight of what has gone before. We are dedicated to honoring our past, enhancing and contributing to our culture in the present, and preserving our resources for the future.

Summit Memory, an online scrapbook of Summit County history administered by the Special Collections Division, continued to add new collections and acquire new partners such as Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens and the Archives of the History of American Psychology. In 2009, Special Collections worked with the University of Akron to make the Goodyear Corporation's employee newsletters, Wingfoot Clan – Aircraft Edition and Wingfoot Clan – Akron Edition available in digital form. Summit Memory was honored with an Outstanding Achievement Award for Outreach from the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums.

Grants from the Akron Community Foundation and the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation as well as support from the City of Akron and WKSU made the Library's participation in StoryCorps possible. StoryCorps is a national oral history project in which participants interview one another in recorded sessions. During their visit to the Library in August and September 2009, interviews of and by Summit County residents were recorded and archived. Full recordings of the interviews are available to Library visitors during regular hours of operation. In addition, every interview conducted at the Library has become a permanent part of the collection of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

"I use the Library for researching local records and history... had it not been for the records at the Library, I would have never found my father's family."

– Judy Davis, genealogist



“Just thinking about doing patent and trademark research in the Science and Technology Division makes me smile – I’m always here! And the staff is wonderful.”

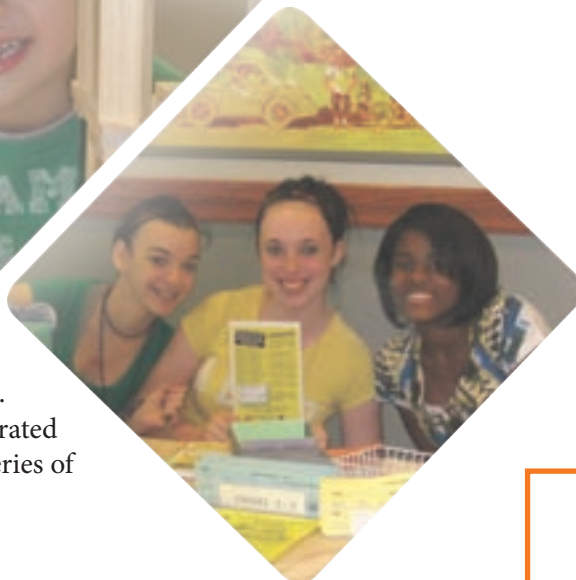
– Ricky Allen, medical technologist and consultant



The Popular Culture Division continued to present The Main Event, an author series featuring prominent voices from the worlds of literature, the arts, politics and journalism. Speakers included best-selling and prize-winning authors such as David Bianculli, Gary Shteyngart, Rick Bragg, and E. Lynn Harris.

A Patent and Trademark Depository Library (PTDL) is a library designated by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to receive and house copies of U.S. patents and patent and trademark materials, to make them readily available to the public, and to actively disseminate patent and trademark information. We have been a PTDL since 1995 and our Science

& Technology Division staff provides a link between local inventors and the Patent and Trademark Office. In Fall 2010, our PTDL celebrated its 15th anniversary with a series of programs and workshops.



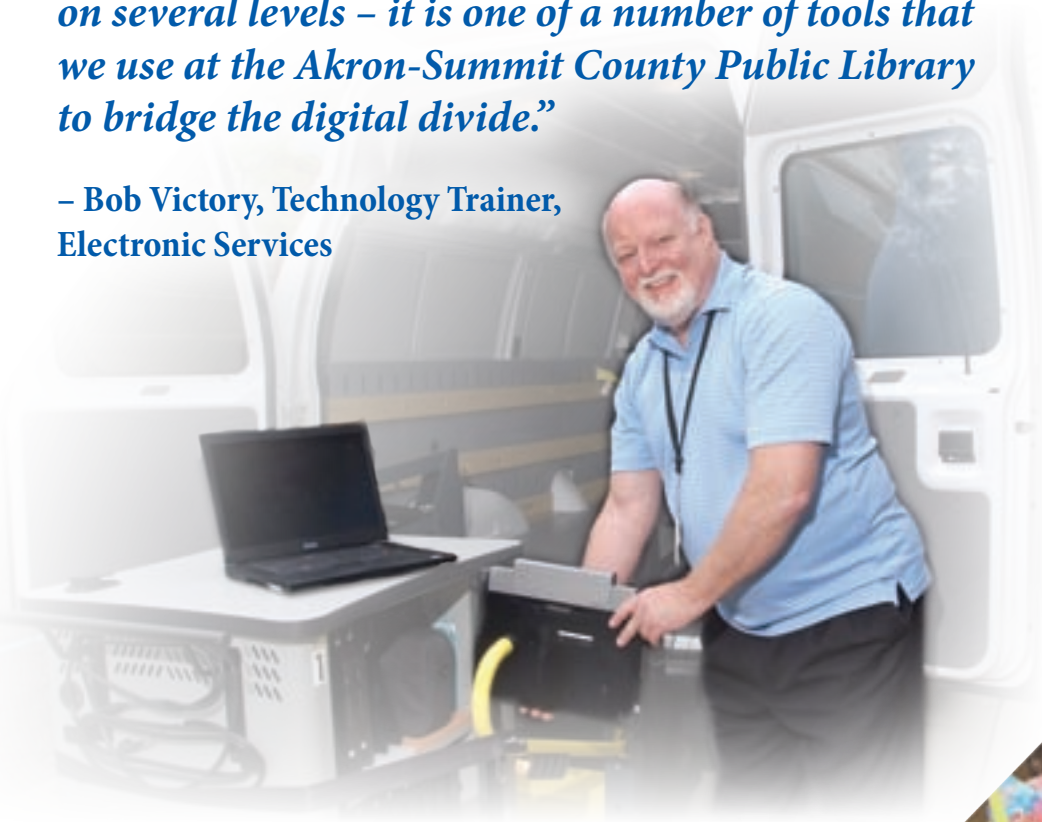
New ways of communicating and relating to one another mean new ways of thinking and working. While maintaining our commitment to service in person, we also recognize our responsibility to move forward, change with technology, and meet our public where they are.

SearchOhio, a network and combined catalog of more than fifteen Ohio libraries, made its debut in Summer 2009. With this service, Library cardholders are no longer limited to placing holds only within our system. Providing access to more than 10 million items, SearchOhio has substantially increased resource availability with much greater efficiency. Participating area libraries include the Cuyahoga Falls Library, the Portage Library Consortium, the Stark Library Consortium, and the Cuyahoga County Public Library.

In early 2010, a three-year, \$240,000 grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation enabled the Library to realize a long-time goal: mobile, hands-on computer training at all branches. Previously, computer classes outside Main Library could be demonstration only. With grant funds, the Library was able to purchase two mobile carts with laptops and wireless Internet connections, and hire a computer trainer. The grant was part of a Knight Foundation initiative to expand digital access at libraries nationwide, recognizing their essential role in providing basic computer training.

“The mobile computer lab benefits our community on several levels – it is one of a number of tools that we use at the Akron-Summit County Public Library to bridge the digital divide.”

**– Bob Victory, Technology Trainer,
Electronic Services**



A new concept in audiobooks, Playaways became available in Summer 2009. A Playaway is a device allowing the storage of a complete book, eliminating the need to change discs or tapes and allowing listeners to resume where they left off. Through OverDrive we increased our offerings of ebooks, audio and music, and expanded their availability on various types of digital devices. During 2009 and 2010, Main Library public service divisions introduced new blogs to replace old static Web sites, connecting on a more regular and personal basis with our customers. The Library also joined the social networking revolution by establishing Facebook and Twitter accounts, posting updates on news, books, programs and special events.



Communities are created by cooperation and by commitment of resources. We will do all we can to continue to be a vital part of Summit County's daily life and work. We are connected to, engaged with and involved in our community, and we are focused on its future.

For two consecutive years the Library was recognized with the highest possible ranking, Five Stars, in the Library Journal Index of Public Library Service, which identifies outstanding public libraries in the United States. Among the factors impacting rank are location and demographics, organization and funding, and leadership and management, in addition to statistics such as number of items borrowed, visits, program attendance, and public Internet use.

Our library system was also named a top ten library in the nation in the Hennen American Public Library Ratings (HAPLR). The annual ratings, published by independent researcher Thomas J. Hennen, Jr., are determined based on 15 factors of service quality and operational efficiency related to staffing, materials and circulation. We were rated the 8th best library of the 100 libraries included in our size category of a service population between 250,000 and 499,000.

"I can walk to the library from my office, which is convenient... I love to go to the library to find biographies, which are my favorite, because they have such an excellent selection. I love my library because it's a treasure trove of information."

– Robert Maguire, attorney and Tallmadge resident



Libraries play a key role in times of economic distress, and we have endeavored to provide excellent service despite cutbacks in state funding. Our sound ratings have helped us and our customers gauge our progress. As our previous levy expired, Summit County generously responded with a new levy passage. Issue 16, the Library's five-year replacement levy for current operations, passed by 63% of voters in the May 4, 2010 primary election. We are proud of our national recognition and honored that our community rallied so positively for our support, putting its trust in us to continue our mission and keep our role strong. With the ongoing assistance of all our partners in Akron, Summit County and beyond, we are confident we can attain our goals.



“Our beautiful facilities are updated and current with new technology, and in turn, that enhances the community’s knowledge and experiences in research... it is so wonderful to have staff that is friendly, well trained and ready to serve you. I love my library because it just enhances your life.”

– Shirley Washington, library and community volunteer



2009–2010 STATISTICS

	2009	2010
LIBRARY CUSTOMERS		
Registered Card Holders	335,879	357,002
Visitors	3,277,241	3,244,887
USE OF LIBRARY ITEMS		
Items Available (Holdings)	2,145,114	2,040,106
Items Borrowed (Circulation)	6,132,677	5,934,047
INFORMATION REQUESTS		
Reference Questions Answered	899,782	871,702
Other Requests/Computer Assistance	1,108,146	890,292
LIBRARY PROGRAMS/BUILDING USE		
Children/Teen Attendance	121,533	111,193
Adult Program Attendance	164,500	151,907
Total Program Attendance	286,033	263,100
Logins to Public Computers	1,048,996	1,001,312

2009–2010 FINANCES

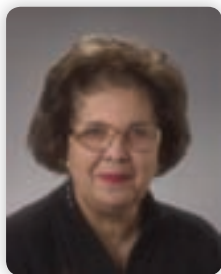
Revenues:	2009	2010
Taxes	23,152,578	23,072,368
Fines and fees	603,379	616,418
Contributions, gifts, donations	11,911	5,008
Interest earnings	77,701	5,874
Other revenues	274,861	259,520
Total revenues	24,120,430	23,959,188

Expenditures:

Salaries and benefits	16,949,591	16,055,377
Supplies	572,017	515,485
Purchased/contracted services	4,868,761	4,336,622
Library materials and information	3,849,106	3,101,660
Capital Outlay	225,646	108,233
Other expenditures	201,651	160,388
Total expenditures	26,666,772	24,281,765



Library Board of Trustees 2009-2011



Lolita K. Adair



Sandra Auburn



John Frola, Jr.



Mark A. Jackson, Sr.



Scott Jaffe



Peter M. Kostoff



William D. Rich



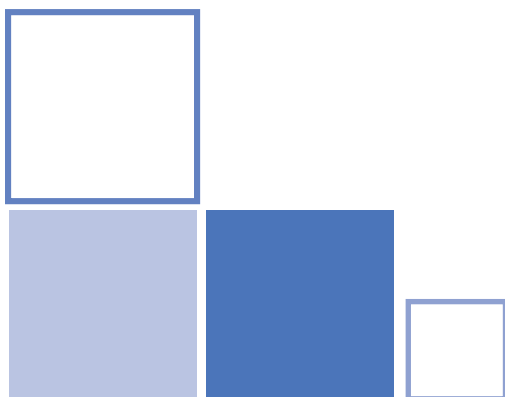
Bernard Rochford

2011

Lolita K. Adair
Sandra Auburn
John Frola, Jr.
Mark A. Jackson, Sr.
Peter M. Kostoff
William D. Rich
Bernard Rochford

2009-2010

Lolita K. Adair
Sandra Auburn
John Frola, Jr.
Scott Jaffe
Peter M. Kostoff
William D. Rich
Bernard Rochford





Vision Statement

The Akron-Summit County Public Library is recognized locally as an essential community asset and nationally as one of the finest public libraries in the United States due to its excellent customer service, collaborative community involvement, and high level of customer and employee satisfaction.

Mission Statement

The Akron-Summit County Public Library provides resources for learning and leisure, information services, meeting spaces, and programs for all ages that support, improve, and enrich individual, family, and community life.

