



RIVER BLUFFS REGIONAL LIBRARY

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT
1991-1992

Introduction

In 1991-1992 supporters of the River Bluffs Regional Library, the cooperative service of the St. Joseph Public Library and of the Rolling Hills Consolidated Library serving Andrew and Buchanan Counties, continued to preserve the best of the past and prepare for the future by clarifying goals and roles.

Consequently, during the final stages of the 1990-1991 celebration of the 100th anniversary of the St. Joseph Public Library and the 30th anniversary of the Rolling Hills Consolidated Library, trustees and staff persisted in their efforts to identify areas where improvements are needed in public services, collection development, personnel, facilities and equipment, administrative and support services, community relations, and interagency cooperation.

Prior to this, in the spring of 1991 the Board of Trustees of the River Bluffs Regional Library had adopted this mission statement: "The River Bluffs Regional Library shall provide materials and services which meet intellectual, educational, social, cultural, informational, and recreational needs."

In carrying out this mission, the Board had decided that the library's primary roles are those of popular materials library, reference library, formal education support center, and preschoolers' door to learning, as they are defined in Planning & Role Setting for Public Libraries.

As a popular materials library the River Bluffs system features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.

A reference library aggressively provides timely, accurate, and useful information for users.

In its role as a preschoolers' door to learning, the River Bluffs Regional Library encourages youth to develop an interest in reading and learning through materials and services directed both to them and to their caregivers and educators.

As a formal education support center the library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal study.

Other roles which the River Bluffs Regional Library plays to a lesser degree are of community activities center, community information center, independent learning center, and research center.

What follows are the highlights of the progress made in the year ending June 30, 1992 in meeting the goals of the library in the context of the Board's commitment to the four major roles.

Public Services

The library goal for public services is to develop and implement a program of services which meet intellectual, educational, social, cultural, informational, and recreational needs.

In this regard, a continued major manifestation of the library's commitment to the role of preschoolers' door to learning was the 1991 summer reading program. Participants at the Belt Library numbered 530, at Central 523, at Carnegie 287, at Savannah 263, and at Washington Park 421, for a total of 2,024, of whom 1,265 finished the program.

Programming throughout the summer reading program covered such themes as the mysteries of music and the mysteries of science.

At the Belt Branch, among other things, there were teddy bears' picnics for children in storytime. Activities at Carnegie included a magic show, a trading post, an appearance by the safety dog, a costume contest, and a play by the Mid-America Center for Young Artists. At Savannah there was a four-week storytime for children and their fathers. Also popular there was a pre-school storytime. Storytime sessions conducted by Washington Park staff attracted an average of 20 children each. Other events at this branch included a magic performance by David Sandy, a visit from a staff member of the St. Joseph Museum, and a martial arts demonstration.

In the summer of 1991 there was also a strong outreach effort, including service to daycare centers and apartment complexes. A deposit collection was placed at the elementary summer school at Lafayette High School as well.

Following the summer reading program, in the Write 2 Know, Read 2 Grow program people signed up for library cards at Venture.

Supported by a grant of Title I Library Services and Construction Act funds won on appeal, a project provided concept kits to underserved children and adults. In conjunction with this grant, a daycare providers' workshop, which could be used for required continuing education, provided information on reading aloud, activities to do with infants and school-aged children, stress management, free or inexpensive resources and holiday crafts for preschoolers. This activity was in line with a new state statute, a recommendation of the Missouri Governor's Advisory Council on Literacy, and a resolution from the White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

To assist in the provision of outreach services, in November of 1991 the Board of Directors of the Friends of the River Bluffs Regional Library pledged \$20,000 for a vehicle.

Children's Book Week was celebrated with the theme of "The World is an Open Book" and an accompanying poster contest.

To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Board of Trustees in April ratified the establishment of grievance procedures to help provide a speedy resolution of any complaints alleging any act of discrimination by the library which is prohibited by ADA, both in service provision and hiring practices.

Throughout the year staff reported an increased use of services in general, resulting partly from the bad economy.

In 1991-1992 the role of the reference library at the Belt Branch was studied and reduced in emphasis. A survey of telephone reference calls to the Belt showed that people tend to call or visit the Central Library's Reference Department for this kind of service. In a related study of reference book usage, staff pinpointed which reference materials were being used at the Belt, assisting in the evaluation of the collection.

A popular service again in the spring of 1992 was the provision at all facilities of both federal and state tax forms.

Increased use of the Savannah Branch resulted when staff prepared a book display for a local program on the subject of durable power of attorney for health care and living wills.

Another popular program at Savannah was given by storyteller Bob Gasch as Paul Bunyon, which was preceded by a book display.

A well-received series of sessions at the Carnegie Branch was "lapsitters" storytimes, designed to introduce children ages 24-36 months to the library in the storytime program. Each child had to be accompanied by an adult "lap"-parent, grandparent, or other type of caregiver. Children heard stories and flannelboard presentations, learned fingerplays, and took part in simple craft activities.

The River Bluffs Regional Library serves as a partial depository for federal documents. An extremely useful ongoing project by the staff of the Reference Department at the Central Library was the preparation of bibliographies on these resources.

Service Statistics

Total items circulated:	660,934
Number of registered borrowers:	36,235
Juvenile programs in library:	616
Attendance:	15,683
Juvenile programs in community:	111
Attendance:	5,446
Adult programs in library:	5
Attendance:	51
Adult programs in community:	14
Attendance:	803

Collection Development

The library goal for collection development is to acquire and organize a wide variety of information and materials which meet intellectual, educational, social, cultural, informational, and recreational needs.

Extremely important work was begun this year on a collection development policy to replace the current policy on materials selection and collection review.

In the Reference Department of the Central Library the map collection was expanded and reorganized in 1991-1992.

Also in the Reference Department, the handling of the system's periodicals was streamlined by the introduction of centralized ordering and processing.

At the Belt Branch the travel guide section was weeded.

In the federal depository program, the collection grew. As of the fall of 1991, the library was selecting 21.4% of items available, as opposed to 18.15% two years ago.

The weeding of easy books and the adult fiction collection occurred at the Savannah Branch.

At the Central Library, the weeding of the fiction collection continued. Audiocassette and music compact disc collections were updated.

Systemwide, reference collections were reviewed, updated, and better coordinated in general. This included the weeding of the reference collection at the Belt.

There was also a more systemwide coordination of the development of the collection for youth.

Staff also worked on pursuing options for the best use of the older materials presently stored on the balcony of the Central Library.

Good news was received earlier than expected, before the end of the 1991-1992 year, in response to the library's proposals for federal Library Services and Construction Act grants. An award of \$9,350 of LSCA Title I funds was received for a project to increase reading and library use by parents of children under three, and a grant of \$31,050 was given for a project to provide improved access to library materials needed by the unemployed and the job-seeker.

At the end of the year total library holdings numbered 394,024 items.

Personnel, Trustees, Volunteers, and Staff Development

The library goal for personnel and staff development is to recruit, train, and retain the most competent and appropriate personnel, trustees, and other volunteers available to perform and support the services of the River Bluffs Regional Library.

In the summer of 1991 three trustees, along with staff, attended the annual conference of the American Library Association, where they obtained information on exhibit spaces and meeting room policies, staff evaluations, and issues relating to unattended children in the library. Other sessions at this conference covered such subjects as interlibrary loan, intellectual freedom, youth advisory boards, service to the aging and physically impaired, staff development, building design, collection development plans, and the selection of library building sites.

The Friends of the River Bluffs Regional Library continued to support generously the efforts of library staff to continue their formal education in library science.

Job descriptions of key administrative personnel were revised. The position of youth services coordinator was divided into two jobs of manager of the Children's Department of the Central Library and youth services specialist. Likewise, in an effort to improve the provision of services to adults, internal reorganization occurred when the job of adult services coordinator was separated into the position of manager of the Adult Circulation Department at the Central Library and adult services specialist.

The services at the Washington Park Branch continued to be sustained by a strong corps of loyal volunteers.

To foster better communication among staff, small group discussions or focus groups began to be held in the fall with a meal sponsored by the Friends.

The job rotation program begun after the 1991 Staff Development Day continued to educate individual staff members about how the total library system operates.

The 1992 Staff Development Day, the second such effort conducted in February, was another great success. Formal lecture and small group discussions centered on change in organizations and organizational culture and communications.

In an additional effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Board of Trustees ratified a policy on employment to the effect that aside from not discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, the River Bluffs Regional Library is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

The Board also augmented its personnel policies to comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act.

Furthermore, partly in connection with compliance with ADA, the process of job analysis began for an eventual systemwide project, focusing initially on staff in the support services area.

Facilities and Equipment

The library goal for facilities and equipment is to provide and maintain appropriate, functional, and accessible facilities and equipment adequate to support the mission of the River Bluffs Regional Library.

A consensus-building workshop for the Board of Trustees in November and another session in January on strengths and weakness of the various facilities helped to focus the Board's attention on areas of improvement needed in the facilities.

External signage was improved at the Savannah Branch.

At Washington Park, a small classroom in the basement was repaired and painted for storytimes and small group meetings, including literacy tutoring.

Efforts continued to make facilities more accessible in compliance with ADA.

The Central Library was visited by a consultant from the Missouri State Library, who made several recommendations on improving the use of space there.

Throughout the year only absolutely essential small equipment was purchased because of lower than anticipated revenues.

Administrative and Support Services

The library goal for administrative and support services is to attain and maintain the most efficient and effective utilization of the human, financial, and physical resources of the River Bluffs Regional Library to carry out its mission.

Unaudited Income

Assessed Valuation	\$263,542,045 (RHCL)	
	365,425,522 (SJPL)	
Tax Rate (in cents)	.15 (RHCL)	
	.27 (SJPL)	
Property Tax Income	\$ 423,520 (RHCL)	
	1,073,001 (SJPL)	
Other Tax income:		
State Aid	7,121 (RHCL)	
	15,607 (SJPL)	
Federal grant	19,350	
Other	128,257	(Interest, donations, misc., etc.)
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 1,666,856	

Unaudited Expenditures:

Personnel:	
Salaries, Wages	\$ 848,244
Fringe Benefits	160,809
Collection:	
Print Materials	187,305
Serial Subscriptions	28,390
Audiovisual Materials	26,247
Telephone Fax	18,906
Postage	22,254
Automation*	78,081
Other Equipment	4,463
Contract Services	108,055
Building Maintenance	4,061
Utilities	42,218
Property & Liability Insurance	28,352
Other	<u>78,843</u>
 TOTAL EXPENDITURES	 \$1,636,228

*Includes hardware, software, hardware support and software support.

Revenue from real, personal, financial institution, and sur taxes in Andrew and Buchanan Counties comprised approximately 90% of the total income for the year for the regional library. Revenue from interest fell from previous years, and in FY 1992 state aid was essentially halved from last year's appropriation.

Despite the award of a grant of \$11,050 of LSCA money, revenue from the federal level was lower than anticipated.

In August of 1991 the Board of Trustees adopted an ethics code dealing with conflicts of interest as required by Missouri Senate Bill 262.

The library's largest single capital investment in a "physical resource" is the integrated automated system.

With the installation of the acquisitions module, the system can indicate if an item is on order.

Consideration of the best use of the library's automated acquisition system was one of the items under study by consultant Pamela P. Brown. Her general charge was to study the work flow used at the library for selection, ordering, and processing of library materials, and to make a report designed to expedite the delivery of materials to the library's patrons.

The collation and documentation of procedures relating to automated circulation were finalized during the year.

The final stages of the "cleanup" of the database began, resulting in a more accurate reflection of the library's actual holdings.

New security software was installed in the system.

Dial-up access between the three local public high schools and the library was developed. Refinement continued on this function for future use by the general public.

For three weeks beginning during National Library Week, library staff and users participated in three output measures test to count library visits, reference transactions, and in-library materials use. The results of the tests were used in reports submitted to the Missouri State Library and questionnaires for the Statistical Report of the Public Library Data Service of the Public Library Association.

Community Relations

The library goal for community relations is to communicate the availability of the wide variety of information, materials and services of the library and to promote the ways they meet the intellectual, educational, social, cultural, informational, and recreational needs of library users and potential users.

In recognition of outstanding work to date, the Friends of the River Bluffs Regional Library received the Public Relations Achievement Award at the annual fall conference of the Missouri Library Association.

Moreover, Friends brought in a hefty \$38,000 with which to support library activities throughout the year. A book sale in early October of 1991 raised \$6,864, and the spring sale earned a record total of \$9,710. This would help support the 1992 children's summer reading program, which included the purchase of paperback books as prizes for those completing four reading contracts. The Friends also supported the young adult summer reading program, promotion related to National Library Week and the Apple Blossom Parade, and continuing education, among other things.

During Savannah's sesquicentennial celebration staff at that branch held a book sale. Refreshments were provided by the library, and staff "dressed up." Savannah's Chamber of Commerce newsletter also publicized the library's fall programs for children. And the Savannah Branch stayed open late on the Friday night after Thanksgiving for Savannah's annual candlelight walk.

The library received widespread attention with the circulation of an appropriate bibliography to accompany the first concert of the St. Joseph Symphony.

Throughout National Library Week the library as usual was highlighted in media coverage. During the "Call for America's Libraries" campaign, which began on March 16, 1992, Freedom of Information Day, and ran through National Library Week, 9,000 telephone calls were received from the State of Missouri. Staff at circulation desks all over the system reported hearing strong support for public libraries from users as a result of this campaign.

The library's float in the annual Apple Blossom Parade again drew to the library's name the attention of thousands of parade watchers.

Interagency Cooperation

The library goal for interagency cooperation is to cooperate with other libraries, political subdivisions, organizations, and programs to carry out the mission of the River Bluffs Regional Library both within the library service area and beyond.

In 1991-1992 staff assisted in the relocation of the professional library at the St. Joseph State Hospital and in the improvement of the library at the Buchanan County Jail.

The library has been represented in the Public Library Affiliates Network (PLAN), which at meetings of the American Library Association conducts theme-oriented discussions on such subjects as library unionization, mandated minimum professional salaries, the accreditation of both public libraries and librarians, funding of public libraries, library association involvement in legislative activities, and the function and services of state libraries.

Representatives of the library's staff Administrative Council served on the Northwest Missouri Community College Library Board.

The library served as a cosponsor of the Women's Financial Information Program, a series of seven seminars designed to help women increase their financial management skills. The program was developed by the American Association of Retired Persons, spearheaded locally by a library trustee in her work with the University of Missouri Extension, and cosponsored by a coalition of 18 agencies and organizations. Displays of books, magazines, and promotional material about library services were provided for this program.

Library staff continued to work on the formation of the St. Joseph Area Literacy Coalition. Among the projects of this new group were the preparation of a brochure on areawide literacy services as well as a project for adult readers using children's literature.

Following through on commitments made in conjunction with the receipt in 1990-1991 of approximately \$30,000 in LSCA funds for regional reference services, staff continued to provide telephone reference service, aided by telefaxcimile transmissions, to other members of the Grand River Library Conference.

Trustees, Friends, and staff were represented at the regional downlink of the National Teleconference on the White House Conference on Library and Information Services sponsored by the River Bluffs Regional Library and Missouri Western State College in December of 1991.

In 1991-1992 the library continued to be represented in Missouri's Public Library Directors (MPLD) and the Legislative Committee of the Missouri Library Association.

The planning committee for the Parent and Child Reading Fair sponsored by the Northwest Missouri Chapter of the International Reading Association also had River Bluffs staff representation.

Washington Park Branch staff worked with Pass the Power staff to provide space for literacy tutors and students in the private study rooms available in the basement of the Washington Park Branch.

During the holiday season food was collected at all library facilities for distribution to local food kitchens.

In March of 1992 the library cosponsored a School Board Candidates' Forum at the Senior Citizens' Center with the League of Women Voters, the American Association of Retired Persons, and Southwestern Bell.

The St. Joseph State Hospital library houses some items in the areas of mental health and other health related fields received through the participation of the River Bluffs Regional Library in the federal documents program. In 1991-1992 River Bluffs staff oriented new staff at the State Hospital to this service.

In late May the Central Library was visited by a delegation of women from Thailand. Remarks to these visitors focused on women as leaders, the role of volunteers, and the difference between American and Thai public libraries.

Where Do We Go from Here?

The River Bluffs Regional Library belongs to the public who support it.

The responsibility of the library's Board of Trustees is to determine the needs of the community for public library service and to set the goals of the library to meet these needs.

In this regard, the Board of Trustees is to be commended for its recent expression of interest in more actively involving the public in discussions dealing with library issues and plans. For it is only by following the tenets of the Library Bill of Rights, those of the free expression of a variety of points of view, that the Board of Trustees and the staff of the River Bluffs Regional Library will be successful in providing service in a world of a dizzying array of choices.

We all look forward to continuing to meet this challenge!

Dorothy Sanborn Elliott
Director
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