



River Bluffs Regional Library

BIENNIAL REPORT

1992-1994

INCLUDES THE FOURTH AND FIFTH ANNUAL REPORTS

Dedicated
to

JOYCE A. HUMEL

Director
Rolling Hills Consolidated Library
1977 - 1989

Associate Director
River Bluffs Regional Library
1989 - 1994

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RIVER BLUFFS REGIONAL LIBRARY
Biennial Report
1992-1994

INTRODUCTION

During the past two years the Board of Trustees and the staff 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 refine roles and goals for both the system as a whole and for individual branches in order to make the best possible use of resources available to meet local needs for public library service.

The River Bluffs Regional Library provides materials and services which meet intellectual, educational, social, cultural, informational, and recreational needs. In carrying out this mission, the prototype of which was adopted in the spring of 1991 by the Board of Trustees, the staff places primary emphasis on a systemwide basis on the roles of popular materials library and reference library, and secondary emphasis on the roles of children's door to learning and formal education support center, as they are defined in Planning & Role Setting for Public Libraries. Each of the five facilities of the system assumes these four roles to varying degrees.

A popular materials library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.

As a reference library the River Bluffs system aggressively provides timely, accurate, and useful information for users.

In its role as a children's door to learning, the 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 River Bluffs Regional Library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal study.

To a lesser degree the library plays the roles of community activity center, community information center, independent learning center, and research center.

Throughout the year the Board of Trustees receives detailed reports on the progress being made in meeting the library's goals in the context of commitment to these four major roles. What follows are highlights from those reports which give an overview of the most important achievements and trends which have occurred between July 1, 1992 and June 30, 1994.

RIVER BLUFFS REGIONAL LIBRARY
SYSTEMWIDE AND INDIVIDUAL BRANCH ROLES

	POPULAR MATERIALS LIBRARY	REFERENCE LIBRARY	CHILDREN'S DOOR TO LEARNING	FORMAL EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTER
SYSTEMWIDE	XX1	XX2	X3 (tie)	X3 (tie)
CENTRAL LIBRARY	X3	XX1	X4	XX2
BELT BRANCH	XX1	X3	X2 (tie)	X2 (tie)
CARNEGIE BRANCH	XX1	X3	X2 (tie)	X2 (tie)
WASHINGTON PARK BRANCH	XX1 (tie)	X3	XX1 (tie)	X2
SAVANNAH BRANCH	XX1	X3	XX2 (tie)	XX2 (tie)

Primary XX
Secondary X

Each of the four roles is marked numerically, with "1" the most important. This rating can include a "tie" between or among two or more 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 the last two years library staff have continued to provide a rich variety of programs to children, both in libraries and at other locations, including such sites as daycare centers and Head Start classes.

In the summer reading program of 1992, 2,318 children were enrolled, which represented a 10% increase from the previous year. Of these 1,433 youngsters completed the program and received a reading certificate and a paperback book paid for by the Library Friends, since book ownership has been shown to be important in encouraging the love of reading.

Several children's programs during the summer have been conducted at more than one location. An example of what can be unique at one branch is the Carnegie Library's sidewalk show, the trading post, and the storybook costume contest.

At the Savannah Branch as part of the 1992 summer reading program staff held a read-aloud day with various people from the community scheduled to read.

In a consensus-building workshop conducted for the Board of Trustees in November of 1991, one goal which had been mentioned was to expand outreach services. To assist in accomplishing this, a new position of outreach services manager was created in the late summer of 1992. A general reorganization of outreach services was begun, which included a review of previous activity at off-site locations with "deposit" collections and within the books-by-mail program. Deposit service which had been temporarily suspended during personnel changes was reinstituted. More recently, signs were made for all deposit sites identifying the materials as having been provided by the library. Literature racks also were purchased for miscellaneous library promotional materials for each site. In the fall of 1993 deposit service began at the Western Missouri Release Center, a minimum security facility on the State Hospital grounds housing at the time over 200 prisoners, who were eager to have books to read. In the spring of 1994 staff worked with the Junior League's project to develop resources for children at the Open Door Food Kitchen by placing materials there and providing some programming. Other deposit collections have been placed in senior citizen and low income housing.

In the spring of 1994 staff began delivering materials for mini-reference deposit collections: a dictionary, a thesaurus, a one-volume encyclopedia, a family medical guide, an almanac, and several other popular and easy-to-use books.

Outreach services given by the Washington Park Branch staff have included on-site programs to the St. Mary's Head Start, LaPetite Preschool, the McCarthy Baptist Daycare, and Peter Pan Preschool. Youth services staff also provide outreach programs to the Horace Mann, South 36th Street, and 9th Street Head Start groups, as well as United Cerebral Palsy.

A young adult reading program to attract teenagers to the library was again conducted in the late spring and summer of 1992. Those young people reading five library books became eligible for a gift certificate to the East Hills Mall.

Family storytime at the Belt Branch continued to grow in 1993-1994.

A workshop for adults was cosponsored with the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce on expanding business opportunities through market research. The main speaker was from Missouri Western State College, and library staff gave a presentation on resources available. A display prepared by library staff also was well received.

The Literature for Families project, which was funded by the Missouri Humanities Council and sponsored by the Missouri Western State College Foundation in cooperation with the St. Joseph Area Literacy Coalition, was targeted toward low literate and newly literate parents of pre-school children. The purpose of the endeavor was to encourage a greater understanding of humanities concepts through the model of a family book discussion group. Library staff members were among the group discussion leaders.

In the fall of 1992 an agreement was signed to participate in a new interlibrary loan service option, a no-charge Missouri-Illinois Group Access Group whereby participants in Missouri and Illinois agree to provide no-charge loans and up to 30 pages of photocopies at no charge to other participants.

In the library's ongoing effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, volume controls were installed on the public telephones at the Belt and Central Libraries.

A major event in the last two years was the visit in November of 1992 of a depository library inspector from the U.S. Government Printing Office. In the seven areas graded, the library received a "satisfactory" in maintenance; a "good" in bibliographic control and public service; and an "excellent" in collection development, human resources, and cooperative efforts. In the area of physical facilities the library received an "unsatisfactory" rating. The inspector noted "a well-developed operation historically," and said that the program is "well organized, and well served in terms of human resources." He characterized staff as "bright, well trained, capable, and knowledgeable" with "superior public service instincts." He indicated that "promotional efforts are excellent." The initiative to include 40% - 50% of current materials in the library's online catalog also reflects the philosophy of excellent public service that the GPO is encouraging. On a negative note, however, the inspector predicted that the library could run into grave problems with the GPO and the Americans with Disabilities Act in the future because of the physical plant. He also recommended additional equipment to allow the accommodation of materials in the increasingly electronic format of depository information.

One effort that contributed to high marks in the depository library inspection almost two years ago was the preparation of bibliographies on federal documents. To improve public service, staff increased the pace of the production of bibliographies in other areas as well, highlighting authors of historical fiction, romance authors, videocassettes for the aged and other disabled subjects, videos on career-related subjects, new books on resumes and

interviewing, books for adults to help children cope with divorce, materials on various diseases, "wholesome" fiction, and parenting books for new adult readers.

A helpful service for children was provided in the fall of 1993 by a children's literature bibliography at the Belt Branch, useful in answering reference questions. Another bibliography dealt with literacy.

During the Trails West! sesquicentennial celebration displays at the Central Library featured the celebration itself and local history themes.

Another way of educating library users about certain subjects and increasing their awareness of the rich variety of library resources available has been through the improvement of displays. At the Central Library, for example, videocassettes have been moved out from behind the circulation desk for open browsing. Throughout the system, as well, the number and diversity of displays have increased.

Programming is another area where staff have experimented with rewarding results. In the late winter of 1994, for example, in cooperation with the East Side Human Resource Center, the Central Library sponsored a program based on African-American tales as one part of the African-American Read-In chain for an intergenerational audience. At the Washington Park Branch, Library Fun Time for elementary school aged children has had a regular schedule of events.

Workshops for home room parents were conducted at both the Carnegie and Savannah Branches. Book talks to area fourth graders have been given by Savannah Branch staff as well.

The Washington Park Branch, which has the only space available for use by the public, has also experienced increasing use of its meeting space by outside groups. Computer teaching equipment was added to the basement in connection with the Branch's status as an Adult Basic Education center, and several ABE students began using the branch for their personal reading needs.

Library staff were made acutely aware of how public library service is valued by library users when service at library facilities was interrupted during the flooding which occurred in Northwest Missouri in late July of 1993. When the southside was evacuated following the shut-off of the water supply in the City of St. Joseph, fearing possible damage to library materials, a crew of 20 family members of Carnegie Branch Assistant Sue Edson, other volunteers, and library staff moved upstairs from the basement at Carnegie items which included the children's collection, computer equipment, and a big-screen television set. Along with Ms. Edson, the rest of the library staff and volunteers were to be commended as well for their efforts in trying to reestablish public library service while dealing with the personal inconveniences of being without water.

As part of beefed up outreach services, donated children's books were delivered to the Red Cross facility at the National Guard Armory and to the Salvation Army for use by families who were victims of the flood. Staff also

worked with the Family Guidance Flood Relief Program in distributing books and magazines for both adults and children. In cooperation with the University Extension personnel, library staff distributed a list of children's books on floods to all library facilities to be made available to users working with children having trouble coping following this disaster.

Unfortunately, outreach services efforts were hampered when 200 books from the deposit collection at the Agency Post Office were destroyed by flooding. The following spring information on the books-by-mail program was left at the Agency Post Office.

Despite the somewhat superstitious nature of the library's youth services specialist, library staff assumed no responsibility for Missouri's bad weather through their promotion of the theme of the 1993 summer reading program, "Read Up a Storm." Despite the flooding, more children finished the 1993 summer reading program, 1,466 youngsters up from 1,433 in 1992. Total enrollment was down only somewhat, 2,278 as compared with 2,318 in 1992. Because of facilities closings and disruptions in programs caused by weather, a two-week extension was given to allow participants more time to finish.

On a trial basis for 1993-1994, a connection hooked the library through Missouri Western State College to MOREnet (the Missouri Research and Education Network), a fiber optic-based computer network providing access to the Internet, the network of almost countless computer networks, otherwise known as the "Information Highway."

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.

In the last two years many hours of work have gone into the revision of written guidelines for collection development.

A major activity in collection development is the removal of materials which no longer meet the needs of the community or collection development guidelines. Systemwide weeding, coordinated in part by the staff Collection Development Committee, has been done in such carefully selected areas as health care materials. In the summer of 1992 adult fiction was weeded at the Carnegie Branch, followed by the "easy" juvenile books. In the 1993-1994 year juvenile fiction at the Carnegie Branch was weeded. In the fall of 1992 the vertical file at the Belt Branch was weeded. The following year weeding was done in the areas of mysteries, westerns, and science fiction. In 1992-1993 the Central Library saw weeding in the music, short story, record album, and phone book collections. In the summer of 1993 weeding of the young adult fiction, which later was merged with adult fiction, was completed, along with the weeding of biographies and adult fiction. These adult fiction books at the Central Library also were cleaned and relabeled. The Savannah Branch staff weeded collections in the 600 - 630s and the 780s. The paperback deposit collection was weeded as well.

In the FY 1993 year acquisitions were greatly aided by three Library Services and Construction Act grants. In one project funded for \$9,350, agencies and daycare centers distributed coupons for a free board book redeemable at the library to promote library usage by parents of young children. These materials were especially valuable following the closing of the Sherwood plant because of the flood. A second LSCA grant of \$31,050 provided for books and audiovisual materials for job-seekers, both at the library's five facilities and through a rotating collection of materials at community agencies. An LSCA Title VI grant from the U.S. Department of Education for \$20,800 was for materials for new adult readers, a secondary resource for adults who participate in the two local literacy programs.

In the spring of 1994 word was received that a grant in the amount of \$17,500 of LSCA Title I funds had been awarded for reference books, circulating books, audiovisual materials, book cases, and promotional materials for a project for business. This was one of 46 applications funded at some level of a total of 75 with requests totaling \$870,514.

Input from community members, including representatives from the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce, was sought in a demonstration of a new product for business in the spring of 1994.

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.

Beginning almost two years ago, staff at all levels spent a great deal of time on job analysis, gathering information to describe in detail the various functions in current jobs. Connected to this was an increased emphasis on the revision of job descriptions. This work also fit into a comparison of staff salaries with those in the market and a study of inequities within the library's traditional salary scale.

Professional association conferences, such as those of the Missouri Library Association and the American Library Association, have continued to draw staff and Trustees alike. Other workshops have focused on such subjects as children's programming, literacy, coaching and teambuilding, management and leadership, and safety. Of particular value have been the workshops conducted by the St. Joseph Convention and Visitors Bureau on tourism and customer service.

Communication between the Board of Directors of the Friends of the River Bluffs Regional Library and the Board of Trustees of the River Bluffs Regional Library improved when the two groups began exchanging representatives during their business meetings.

One major project has been the development of guidelines for the elected Staff Grievance Committee, which came into being in an effort to improve the operation of the grievance process. In the future, this committee may assume the role of a general staff advisory group.

For the purpose of the improvement of library service it is the goal of the library to provide employees with frequent, timely, and objective feedback on their job performance. In the fall of 1993 as part of the formal appraisal process for administrative staff, extensive peer reviews were conducted.

As required by Missouri law, the Board of Trustees adopted in August of 1993 an ethics code dealing with conflicts of interest, identical to the one adopted by the Board two years earlier.

Also at the August, 1993 Board meeting changes were approved in the personnel policy to comply with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

In the fall of 1993 as part of the library Board's continuing education on the library's finances a presentation was given by the finance director of the City of St. Joseph.

Job rotation has been continuing in an effort to broaden the perspective of employees and to help them to consider themselves part of a larger system, as opposed to only a specific branch or department.

In the last couple of years library operations have continued to depend heavily on the assistance of volunteers, whose help is particularly needed during the summer reading program. Another example of how volunteers can help out in a variety of functions at the last minute is the assistance the Washington Park branch manager received from three young patrons in the second to the fourth grade in clearing the walks from the season's first snow in December of 1993. (In this case, payment from the library took the form of hot chocolate and marshmallows.)

All library facilities were closed on February 21, 1994 for Staff Development Day, which involved all full-time and most part-time staff. Sessions were conducted on the Internet; business communications, more specifically teamwork and non-defensive communication; and ideas for services and facilities of the future.

A major change in the organization of the administrative staff was set in motion when Joyce Humel, associate director of the River Bluffs Regional Library and executive director of the Board of Trustees of the Rolling Hills Consolidated Library, announced her resignation in April of 1994 in advance of becoming with her family International Partners with Habitat for Humanity International in Africa. As a result the positions of executive directors to the Boards of Trustees of the Rolling Hills Consolidated Library and the St. Joseph Public Library were abolished, along with the job of associate director. Additionally, the position of adult services specialist was upgraded to deputy director for public services, that of outreach services manager to deputy director for outreach services, and the one of support services manager to deputy director for support services. A full-time professional public service librarian position was created as well.

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.

In the FY 1993 year the physical layout of the Support Services Department at the Belt Branch was rearranged to accomplish the workflow in a more efficient and effective manner.

In the fall of 1992 new light fixtures were installed in the three rooms on the west side of the main floor of the Central Library.

To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), architectural audits of all library facilities were conducted.

The new van, purchased for outreach services by the Friends, arrived in December of 1992.

In the 1992-1993 winter major shifting of collections and shelving occurred in the southwest corner of the main floor of the Central Library.

In the area of facilities, the most important action taken by the Board of Trustees in the spring of 1993 was the vote to direct the staff to begin planning for a different facility on the east side to replace the present Belt Branch and for improvements needed in the four other library facilities. In October of 1993 the Board endorsed the idea of searching for a building consultant to help in this process.

The FY 1994 budget provided for the purchase of several pieces of computer equipment, including a personal computer and printer, along with software, which staff could use to produce graphic materials. This has allowed the production of attractive bookmarks, flyers, bibliographies, posters, and catalogs.

Even before the major flooding of July of 1993, pounding rains were hitting an already leaky roof at the Carnegie Branch and causing some flaking in the ceiling above the public service area on the main floor. In the fall of 1993 it was decided to do a short-term caulking project until a major decision could be made about the future of the roof. An area in the ceiling which had been pulled away from the ceiling joist near the front door and another spot were repaired in the late winter of 1994. Staff are continuing to watch areas where there is an extra load.

In the summer of 1993 major work was done in reconfiguring the use of space in non-public areas of the Central Library, as well as in the main lobby.

Work on spiffing up the "documents" room of the Washington Park Branch has been done to provide the site for a north side group in the Adult Basic Education program.

The lease for the Belt Branch was renegotiated for another five years. As part of the agreement the owner was to bring the facility up to ADA compliance, which has included improvements in restrooms, doors, ramps, the parking lot, and drinking fountains.

Other equipment purchased in the FY 1994 year which has led to the improvement of service included a videocassette cleaner/evaluator, personal computers, printers, and DTC cards.

A new microfilm reader printer was purchased for the Reference Department of the Central Library.

In the spring of 1994 some wiring work was done to comply with requests by the St. Joseph Fire Department.

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.

In the last couple of years staff have continued to follow up on recommendations made by a support services consultant hired to study the workflow of selection, ordering, and processing of library materials. This has involved streamlining procedures for the routing of selection tools, evening out the ordering of materials, providing more information to staff about the status of orders, improving the processing of "rush" orders, and working on the development of preselected and semi-preselected ordering lists. In this regard, in late 1993 staff worked on an "A List" of authors or performers whose latest work is to be purchased automatically in a quantity predetermined by each selector as soon as the work is available.

Staff in the administrative offices have continued to increase their efforts to recover long overdue library materials, thereby improving the accessibility of materials and reducing the loss of tax-funded materials.

At the Board level, the budgeting process has been improved by involving more committees than just the Budget Committee.

The library continued to benefit from unexpected bequests, in the late winter of 1993 receiving from the estate of Eula W. Popplewell a check for approximately \$8,200 and from the Doherty estate an amount of approximately \$4,400.

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.

The Friends of the River Bluffs Regional Library is the auxiliary group most responsible for helping to achieve this goal on an ongoing basis. Through annual membership drives and biannual book sales, the Friends support staff development, the summer reading program, library promotional events, and the purchase of equipment, among other things. In the summer of 1993 the first annual Friends picnic for staff, Trustees, and volunteers was held. In the fall of 1993 the Friends Board voted funds for the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the Elwood School library for flood relief efforts. The

Friends also sponsor programs for the community, such as the one in May of 1994 given by syndicated columnist Terry Marotta.

Staff at the Savannah Branch have opened the library's doors in the evening for the festive Old-Fashioned Candlelight Walk following Thanksgiving.

Outreach to children can occur in many ways. During the 1992 September National Library Card Sign-Up Month, second and third grade classes in schools, especially in lower income areas throughout Andrew and Buchanan Counties, were encouraged to obtain library cards by staff visiting the schools.

Often various parts of the library have common histories with local community groups. In the fall of 1992, for example, the 90th anniversary of the Carnegie Culture Club was celebrated in the basement of the Carnegie Branch. Festivities included remarks and displays about the history of both the Carnegie Culture Club and the Carnegie Library.

The most important interactions between the general public and the Board of Trustees in the 1992-1993 year were the hearings conducted to consider alternative hours of service at the Washington Park and Carnegie Branches, proposed to reflect changing usage patterns and needs. As a result of these spirited sessions, the hours of service at the Washington Park Branch were left unaltered, and Carnegie hours were extended somewhat. Aside from the question of the hours of service, the most important point driven home during these meetings was that the public feels very strongly about maintaining branch library service. The process also served to improve communication between the public and the Board.

A year later the Board of Trustees began planning what turned out to be six focus group discussions and two town hall meetings in the late winter and early spring of 1994. In these sessions participants were asked about their general impressions of the quality and quantity of library materials and services, both systemwide and in individual branches; their thoughts about improvements in service in any or all of the current five facilities of the library; their ideas for an appropriate general geographic area or specific site for the replacement of the present rented Belt Branch; and their opinions about the understanding of the general public of how library operations are funded. A written summary report was prepared by the facilitators to assist the Board of Trustees in long-range planning. Staff also have begun following up on suggestions for improvement.

In an outpouring of sympathy for flood victims, in the fall of 1993 staff increased their total United Way donation by 44% over the prior year's gift. Involvement in the United Way continues to keep people aware of the interdependency of all of the agencies and organizations of the library district in meeting human needs.

In another humanitarian effort, as part of the program coordinated by the Northwest Missouri AFL-CIO Community Services, a United Way agency, a family was "adopted" by the library staff for holiday gift giving in 1993. Over 1,100 families were enrolled in this program. In addition to the effect on the family, the project also served to bring the staff closer together during the season of sharing.

Other examples of cooperation with community organizations in 1993-94 included participation in the Caregivers' Fair at the Joyce Raye Patterson Senior Citizen Center and the "Love to Read, with Barney" day sponsored by J. C. Penney stores in November of 1993. McDonald's Restaurants also teamed up with the American Library Association to support family reading, and promotional materials were sent to all library facilities in January of 1994.

Promotional ideas have included such efforts as inserting a River Bluffs Regional Library bibliography in a program for a Savannah High School play.

A unique experience for the staff was when in early February of 1994 the interior of the Central Library was featured in a 30-second commercial on the Missouri Lottery. The Central Library site was chosen because it is a "quintessential" public library, "the closest thing in Northwest Missouri we can find to the Harvard Law Library," according to a member of the production company. Despite the somewhat negative, but predictable, stereotyping of the librarian, the commercial resulted in much local levity and pride in the library.

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.

This happened in many ways in 1992-1993. As a new member of the St. Joseph Youth Alliance, the River Bluffs Regional Library began working with other community organizations devoted to meeting the needs of children and youth by improving communication between agencies, identifying needs, and coordinating resources. This commitment continued in 1993-1994.

Representatives of the Andrew County CARE Committee, Adult Basic Education in St. Joseph, and Pass the Power also help staff with suggestions for the purchase of materials as part of the literacy grant.

Pass the Power literacy tutors have also used meeting space at the Washington Park Branch, utilized by Scouts and occasional college classes as well. Library staff have been working with CARE in a project to assist teenage parents and to try to prevent teenage pregnancy.

One facet of the library's relationship with the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce has been the director's membership in the Government Relations Committee.

In the spring of 1993 the Board voted to transfer to the Pony Express National Memorial a letter to former librarian Purd Wright from Pony Express Rider Charles Cliff and some accompanying notes from Mr. Cliff's daughter. A ceremony highlighting this transfer was held the following autumn.

In another effort to promote the area, library Trustees and staff participated in the first St. Joseph Day in Jefferson City, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

In the fall of 1993 the youth services specialist contacted teachers in Andrew and Buchanan County school districts about the "homework alert" postcards that were made available for them to turn in when they assigned projects requiring River Bluffs Regional Library resources. Staff had hoped that this method would result in doing a better job of meeting the needs of both teachers and their students.

Along with the League of Women Voters, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Ecumenical Coalition for Peace and Justice, the YWCA, the YMCA, United Cerebral Palsy, and the Heartland Health System, the library cosponsored a series of public informational meetings on state and national health care reform.

Library staff worked with staff of the Knea-Von Black Archives and the East Side Human Resource Center on the celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday and Black History Month in February of 1994, preparing displays and a bibliography.

As a member of the St. Joseph Area Literacy Coalition, the library participated in a project to place children's picture books in participating doctors' offices. The project was supported by financial donations from the physicians and the donation of review books sent by publishers for local newspaper coverage.

In February of 1994 the library cosponsored a forum for the candidates for Mayor and the City Council of St. Joseph. Other sponsors were the American Association of Retired Persons, the Environmental Action Coalition, the League of Women Voters, and the Progressive Association of South St. Joseph.

In cooperation with the Missouri State Library and the Missouri Library Association, the River Bluffs Regional Library participated in a series of regional forums throughout Missouri in the late winter of 1994 for the purpose of highlighting needed services and additional funding for public libraries.

Library staff worked with staff of the St. Joseph School District Parents As Teachers in a "Me and My Dad" program in January of 1994.

In March of 1994 library staff participated in the International Reading Association's annual parent and child reading fair at the Neely School. The occasion provided an opportunity to distribute information about the summer reading program, the Friends book sale, and the town hall meetings, as well as to sign up parents and students for library cards.

SOME NUMBERS

	<u>FY 1993</u>	<u>FY 1994</u>
<u>INCOME</u>		
Local tax income	\$1,595,474	\$1,633,271
State aid	29,848	30,113
Federal grant	58,944	2,592
Other	133,623	178,509
TOTAL	\$1,817,889	\$1,844,485
 <u>EXPENDITURES</u>		
Capital Outlay	\$ 15,973	
Personnel	1,051,763	\$1,153,357
Collection	256,881	269,825
Operating	406,614	405,565
TOTAL	\$1,731,231	\$1,828,747
 Total library holdings	 418,116	 433,080
Total items circulated	719,239	724,321
Registered borrowers	42,373	47,791
Attendance at children's programs	20,215	20,084

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

In the last two years the Board of Trustees and the staff of the River Bluffs Regional Library have worked very hard in seeking input from the general public to determine the needs of the community for public library service and to set the goals of the library to meet those needs.

They have done so by following the tenets of the Library Bill of Rights, those of the free expression of a variety of points of view, some in stark contrast to each other.

The focus of the Board's and staff's attention in the FY 1995 and FY 1996 years will be to sort through the many suggestions from the community to develop a plan for the future to include improvements to the library's facilities, possibly involving new construction.

As the Board establishes a vision, we ask for the community's continued involvement and support. A public library is still the ultimate democratic institution, and it truly belongs to the people.

Dorothy Sanborn Elliott
Director
St. Joseph, MO
December, 1994

