

ALLEGHENY COUNTY LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Highlights from 2009

Library Activity:

Usage

- County libraries (exclusive of CLP) circulated 7.2 million items (4% increase over 2008). Nonresident use represented 28.5% of total activity.
- There were 332,397 card holders in county libraries.
- There were 1,180,473 computer uses.

Building Improvements & Construction

Major building improvements &/or renovations:

- Carnegie Library of McKeesport launched renovations of its children's department.
- Lauri Ann West Memorial Library opened a new location for its Sharpsburg Branch.
- Plum Library broke ground on an expansion of its facility.
- Sewickley Public Library conducted extensive repairs of its HVAC system.

Formula Development

The formula development process coordinated by Olszak Management Consulting, Inc. concluded midyear with the approval by the Members of a new formula. Once submitted to the RAD in July that formula was further adjusted per RAD input and a final submission approved by the Members in October.

System Services:

Continuing Education and Professional Development

ACLA sponsored numerous continuing education opportunities for library staff, trustees, and Friends of Libraries including:

- Library Director Leadership Training retreat (8 CE hours)
- Meeting Facilitation Training (6 CE hours)
- Connecting the Public with Social Service resources (1 CE hour)
- Consumer Health certification for librarians (24 CE hours)
- Understanding Basic Financial Statements / Annual Giving Campaigns (2 CE hours)
- Best Practices for Friends of Libraries organizations (1.2 CE hours)
- 23 Things technology tools (11 CE hours)
- 24th Thing with Helene Blowers (2 CE hours)
- Technology Playgrounds (2 CE hours)
- Summer Reading Club training (8 CE hours)

Grant Activity

ACLA received more than \$186,000 in outside grants in 2009, including:

For *One Book, One Community*

- ✓ \$10,000 from Allegheny County for *One Book, One Community*

- ✓ \$10,000 from Comcast Foundation
- For system-wide deployment
 - ✓ \$14,400 from LSTA to install wireless access at 13 libraries
 - ✓ \$6,160 from Buncher Family Foundation for training equipment
- For Summer Reading Club
 - ✓ \$5,000 from Verizon
 - ✓ \$5,000 from Dollar Bank
 - ✓ \$500 from Millmont Foundation
- For lifelong learning initiatives
 - ✓ \$8,000 from Americans for Libraries Council
 - ✓ \$2,000 from Highmark PALS program
 - ✓ \$500 from Poets for Humanity
 - ✓ \$300 from Jewish Healthcare Foundation
 - ✓ \$200 from AARP
- For Mobile Services outreach
 - ✓ \$20,000 from Allegheny County
 - ✓ \$2,000 from the Pittsburgh Foundation
- For Knowledge Connections
 - ✓ \$100,000 from The Grable Foundation
 - ✓ \$2,000 from Allegheny County

Programming

ACLA coordinated nearly 900 programs for adults delivered at local libraries including:

- ✓ *216 PALS Book Clubs,*
- ✓ *460 Wise Walks,*
- ✓ *120 Conversation Salons,*
- ✓ *24 Intergenerational Art programs,*
- ✓ *15 Poetry events,*
- ✓ *5 Osher Lifelong Learning Institute programs,*
- ✓ *4 LifeLinks programs for caregivers,*
- ✓ *8 Unlocking the Classics,*
- ✓ *25 Consumer Health workshops,*
- ✓ *11 Laughter Yoga workshops,*
- ✓ *5 Art Chats, and*
- ✓ *10 special events.*

These programs are made possible through a variety of community partnerships with local organizations such as:

- AARP
- Aeolian Winds of Pittsburgh
- Americans for Libraries Council, Lifelong Learning Initiative
- Barnes & Noble Booksellers
- Beginning with Books, READ 365!
- Brew House Association
- Center for Healthy Aging (University of Pittsburgh)
- Eastern Area Adult Services
- Generations Together
- Homeless Children's Education Fund
- Highmark PALS (People Able to Lend Support) Program
- Jewish Healthcare Foundation
- LifeSpan

- Mystery Lovers Bookshop
- OASIS
- Penn State Extension
- Pittsburgh Opera
- Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra
- Retired and Senior Volunteers of Pittsburgh (RSVP) of Allegheny County
- University of Pittsburgh's Institute on Aging
- University of Pittsburgh's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)

“One Book, One Community” was conducted for the seventh year with The Giver by Lois Lowry. This title was the first young adult selection used for “One Book” and focuses on a future society where everything is not as it seems. Lowry provided radio interviews to help launch the program. Students in high school and middle school were asked to compose letters to County Executive Dan Onorato about how they envision the future of Allegheny County in the next 10-15 years. 114 programs were held in conjunction with this one-month event. The web site, www.onebookonecommunity.org, received 6,195 unique visits. Sponsors and partners included:

- *Allegheny County Chief Executive's Office*
- *Allegheny County Department of Human Services*
- *Barnes & Noble Bookseller*
- *Comcast*
- *Dollar Bank*
- *Duquesne University*
- *Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council*
- *Highmark PALS Program*
- *Homeless Children's Education Funds*
- *Joseph-Beth Booksellers*
- *Oasis*
- *University of Pittsburgh*

Youth Services:

- ✓ Summer Reading
 - 27,559 children (birth-teen) participated in Summer Reading Club.
 - Attendance at Summer Reading programs was 98,305.
 - ACLA sponsored 47 programs in libraries during Summer Reading.
 - ACLA delivered 2 SRC training workshops for 92 librarians.
 - 37 of the 44 libraries in the county use eVanced (on-line) to register and track participation. This is a program first implemented by ACLA and now supported statewide.
- ✓ Gaming/Chess
 - 35 Chess Tournaments were held at individual libraries. ACLA partners with the Pittsburgh Chess Association for these events.
 - ACLA offers 2 wii and Guitar Hero gaming trunks to any library free-of-charge. 600+ children and teens participated in gaming programs utilizing these resources.
- ✓ Support
 - ACLA Youth Services created 167 blog posts about books, program ideas, grants, local community organizations, national literacy trends and more.

- 170 out of the 210 Youth Services staff in the county subscribe to the blog.
- The Youth Services Coordinator visited 32 libraries for consultations and conversations.
- ACLA employed 1 University of Pittsburgh MLIS graduate student through the PITT Partners program to assist with planning and initiatives.

Outreach Services:

Mobile Services

Bookmobiles serve three discrete populations: preschools (predominantly Head Start programs), facilities serving seniors, and general communities. The preschool and senior services are predominantly funded by ARAD. General service is on a fee basis to local municipalities or libraries.

- ✓ Bookmobiles made 1,276 stops in 2009:
 - 347 visits to preschool classrooms,
 - 510 visits to senior facilities, and
 - 419 community visits.
- ✓ These stops served 113 locations:
 - 54 preschool sites,
 - 48 senior sites, and
 - 11 general service sites.
- ✓ This represented 1,432 hours of service on site.
- ✓ Two libraries (Northern Tier and Northland), a school district (South Allegheny) and two homeless shelters (Homeless Children’s Education Fund) purchased bookmobile service.
- ✓ Bookmobiles delivered service in 50 separate municipalities.
- ✓ Mobile service circulation for 2009 was 95,361 items (up from 81,275 in 2008). 10,867 items from the Mobile Services collection were lent to county libraries.
- ✓ Bookmobiles traveled a combined 17,623 miles delivering service.

Robinson Township Library

In its first second year of operations, Robinson Township Library:

- ✓ Circulated 70,360 items (a 44% increase over 2008).
- ✓ Hosted 243 programs (of which 174 were children’s events) with total attendance of 2,553 individuals.

The Library has operated under a management services contract with ACLA, with all funding for operations supplied by Robinson Township tax revenue, Kennedy Township appropriation, and locally generated earned revenue. The contract ended December 31, 2009, and the Library has initiated independent operations effective January 1, 2010.

Knowledge Connections

Midyear 2009 the ACLA ceased operations of mobile lab service from Knowledge Connections. This service, funded principally by The Grable Foundation, had been challenged by connectivity issues, neighborhood renovations and relocations, funding shortages, and changes within the Housing Authority itself. The ACLA Board determined that obstacles were too many to overcome at this time. Two physical sites continue to

be managed by ACLA on a cost-recovery basis, with host agencies (AHRCO and Moon Township) paying all related costs.

Technology Services:

In January 2009, the eiNetwork began reshaping governance and operations incorporating the ideas and recommendations that were developed in 2008 with its member organizations, the Allegheny County Library Association and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Highlights of 2009 activities include:

- ✓ Outsourced Help Desk operations, PC security, and network administration.
- ✓ Selected vendor for outsourced webhosting services (to be implemented in early 2010).
- ✓ Formed Technology Council to provide county-wide input for eiN (includes more than 15 representatives from small, medium, and large libraries throughout Allegheny County as well as technology staff from the eiNetwork and a few larger libraries).
- ✓ Restructured the eiNetwork Board to include six individuals with three appointees from ACLA and three from CLP. Technology expertise is provided by both member organizations. New officers elected: President – Mary Frances Cooper, Deputy Director, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; Treasurer – Marcia Taylor, Assistant Manager of Mt. Lebanon.
- ✓ Worked with libraries to develop Technology Plans for each individual library organization. Analysis of these Plans identified four needs and opportunities:
 - *Libraries need more opportunities for technology-related education and training.*
 - *Libraries expressed concern about difficulty in maintaining their local website.*
 - *Libraries would like to see Apple Macintosh computers as a supported standard.*
 - *Libraries highly ranked an initiative to replace the public PC management system.*
- ✓ Technology Council developed process for libraries to propose individual technology projects.
- ✓ Implemented capability for patrons to track their Reading History in the online Catalog and Patron PINS to ensure the security of this information.
- ✓ Developed and released two new versions of the online catalog: GoCat (for patrons to access the catalog through PDA's and cell phones) and Catalog Explorer (improved search cloud features and more visual navigation of the online Catalog).
- ✓ Selected new PC management system for public computers in libraries (to be implemented in 2010).
- ✓ Implemented the Order Portal (providing purchasing discounts to libraries through a single website) and improved remote access capabilities for library staff.