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When the going gets tough, the tough seek opportunities



Much has been said and written about the appeal of public libraries during economic recessions. From CNN to small town newspapers, the story is told that libraries are particularly busy, whether it's helping people write resumes, fill out job applications, check out books and movies or provide family programs. Libraries have always provided these services, but people now seek them out more frequently.

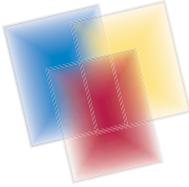
In a recent survey of 50 public libraries serving more than half the population of Iowa, the State Library discovered that library visits were up 6.86 percent, checkouts increased by 5.97 percent, and computer use was up 7.64 percent for the final two quarters of 2008, compared to the same period in 2007. Statistics demonstrate that Iowa public library use increases each year, but the special survey was significant because the numbers exceed all annual increases over the past five years. The 2009 annual survey will no doubt reflect even more usage.

During her budget hearing with the Education Appropriations Subcommittee earlier this month, State Librarian Mary Wegner spoke about the importance of Enrich Iowa funding and State Library services, reminding them that two-thirds of all Iowans have an active public library card. She asked legislators to remember, as they make funding decisions, that libraries enrich Iowa and that every day, Iowans' lives are improved through state funding for libraries.

The State Library has been approached by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) about developing partnerships between IWD and Iowa public libraries that want to assist Iowans in finding jobs. Look for more information about this program as it unfolds.

Iowa public libraries recently had an opportunity to receive federal funding to add staff through the federal Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) worker program. Information was sent to Iowa public library directors who had until March 20 to indicate an interest in the program. The program is made possible by the Corporation for National Service, which oversees VISTA. Thirty-five libraries replied.

Wegner is in touch on a biweekly basis with the American Library Association (ALA) and other state librarians in the country to discuss the latest information about libraries and the economy. At the national level, ALA has actively supported the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act 101 (www.ala.org/knowyourstimulus), which President Obama recently signed into law. According to ALA, "Throughout the process of creating the law, the library community demonstrated a steadfast commitment to the American public by working to inform leaders in Washington about the programs and services libraries nationwide provide Americans who want to find jobs, such as assistance with resume building and online job searching, as well as free classes to teach the public 21st century job skills." Support for libraries' inclusion in the stimulus package continues and ALA is asking libraries to bend talk to their legislative leaders at the national and state level.



Successful budget proposals and fundraising ideas from around the state

Council Bluffs Library Director Barbara Peterson happily reported that the library received an overall 9.3 percent increase for FY09-10. The city provided a 5 percent increase in the materials budget and a 12 percent raise in the salaries line. The mayor also approved a plan for a renovation project that includes a new teen space in the library.

"I talked with him about the proposal in the spring," said Peterson. "He signed off on the project if I could get a matching grant. I submitted a matching grant application to Iowa West Foundation and they awarded us the grant. Part of the City's match for this project is a full-time teen librarian and two part-time assistants. One of the part-time assistants will work between the teen room and the youth room."

In the proposal to the mayor, Peterson included the three staff positions in the general fund. The rest of the city money came from capital improvement project funds. She has talked about the need to better serve teens for the past five years.

"In the weekly department head staff meeting with the mayor, I always include statistics about circulation, library visits, programs coming up, program attendance, and even the bad things that happen at the library. I feel that an informed mayor and city council not only gives them a heads up in case they receive a call, but they're also educated about what the library really means to the community.

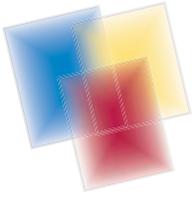
"As of the end of February, our circulation increase was 15 percent over the same time last year. Due to this statistic, the city finance director and mayor decided to add 5 percent to the materials line item. I then received a call from the finance director telling me that he had found another \$18,200 for the materials budget. I asked what drawer he found that in. It seems that our monthly premium for Workman's Compensation is going to be lower for the year by \$18,200. He did not want to lower our bottom line (since the budget had already been received and filed by the council) and wondered if it would be OK to put it towards materials. Of course I said yes! So this raised the materials line item 15 percent.

"I really believe that this all came about because we are very open about everything concerning the library with the mayor and our city council liaison. I also met with him before the budget was received and filed and went over the library budget with him so that he would understand the raise in the salaries line item we'd need for the Teen Space Project personnel. I told him and the mayor that if our budget did not pass with the teen personnel in it, we would have to scrap the project and give Iowa West Foundation's money back. I truly believe that it all comes down to being active in the community, keeping the mayor informed, and trying to meet community needs. I am also lucky to have a mayor I can talk to about the library's needs and who cares about the library," said Peterson.



Barbara Peterson, 2008 Iowa Library Association

On February 11, Peterson met with the county board of supervisors about their contract funding rate for FY09-10 on behalf of all five libraries in Pottawattamie County. They raised the rate from \$.1479 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation to \$.2142 per \$1,000.



More on fundraising

Director Nathan Clark, Emmetsburg/Ruthven public libraries, knows how to fund raise, as evidenced by a slew of new money he acquired for his libraries and those in Palo Alto County. Clark recently answered a few questions about his winning strategies. First, take a look at what he has to say about some of his winning grant proposals.

"Thank you all for your interest in the grants the Palo Alto County Libraries received through the local casino gaming license holder. Over \$1.6 million in grants were given away to worthy organizations in and/or serving Palo Alto County. All of the grants awarded were 25% matching grants.

"For my part, I was involved in writing six grants -- two for Emmetsburg, two for Ruthven, and two for the Palo Alto County Library Association. All six of the grants were awarded. What a thrill to get up to accept that many certificates!

"In Emmetsburg, we are being funded for a Playaway startup collection. The grant is a \$10,000 project and should buy 150-200 Playaways for adults, young adults, and children. Both fiction and non-fiction titles will also be purchased.

"The Friends of the Emmetsburg Library received a grant to do a Books for Babies program. The Friends will put together their own kits with custom-embroidered bibs, board books, and early literacy materials donated by the Library Service Areas. All babies born at the Palo Alto County Hospital will receive the kits. The total project was \$1,523.

"In Ruthven, we had our Summer Reading Program to Remember grant project fully funded (\$2,000). With this we are looking to enhance our summer reading program by buying extra materials, and hosting multiple outside programmers. Also in Ruthven, we want to renovate our children's area with new furnishings and a new shelving unit. Total project costs: \$3,600.

"The Palo Alto County Library Association wants to administer a \$7,500 project putting a digital multimedia projector in each library in the county. The projector can be used for in-library programs and can be checked out to bona fide community groups. The association also applied for and received a grant for a membership for each of the county's five libraries in the WILBOR Audiobook Consortium, a \$4,560 project.

"Though I did not write it, the Emmetsburg library will be positively affected by Iowa Lakes Community College receiving money for a \$2,260 project to install automatic doors to the library complex. [Editors note: The library is a shared facility used by the public and the college.]

"Other libraries in Palo Alto wrote and received grants, too. Graettinger was awarded a grant for an \$8,700 project to digitize their newspaper collection. Mallard was awarded a \$2,200 project to use for technology upgrades. The biggest of all was the Graettinger Community Schools \$36,142 project to update their library media center.

"It was indeed a great night for the libraries in the community. The best news is that we can do this again next year at this time!"

What words of wisdom would you give librarians who need to find grants or fund raise?

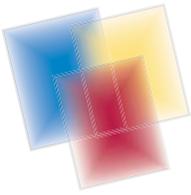
"I know that most counties in Iowa do not have casinos, but all counties receive money from gaming proceeds. Find out how to apply to receive some of these funds. It obviously will not be on the order of those counties with casinos, but I bet they are just as eager to give money to libraries as my county's gaming license-holder. Ask around in your community, your county...ask Library Service Area staff, State Library staff, and keep your eyes peeled on the listservs and elsewhere for news of available grants.

"Be creative in what you ask for. Organizations want to fund new, exciting projects, not the same old business as usual. Be innovative and bring something new or different to your library! You may be surprised by how progressive the people judging the grants are.

"When you write the grant proposal/application, portray your library as an upbeat, successful operation. Grant judges do not want to hear violins playing the sorrowful tune of a hard-luck library. You must demonstrate a need for the requested funds, but remember that it is just human tendency to bet on a winner.

Also, when writing the grant, be sure to educate your grant readers. In most cases, it will not be a panel of librarians

Continued in next page



More on fundraising

reading the grant application. You need to avoid using library jargon and acronyms. You want to be sure that the judges understand exactly what it is you are asking for."

How time consuming is it and what kind of collaboration(s) were you involved in?

"I find grant writing to be an extremely time-consuming activity. I feel I have good writing skills, but I want to be sure to say things just the right way. This may take a few drafts. You may also want to think about having a competent proofreader look at your finished product.

"I really miss the ex-English teacher I used to have on my staff at Emmetsburg. I am so glad to have an English professor on my board at Ruthven. These people are certainly resources to take advantage of!

"Then there is the budgeting component of grant writing. Above all, check and recheck your arithmetic! Absolutely nothing will get your application tossed and disqualified quicker than inaccurate numbers!

"Once all the figures are added, then you need to be sure that if matching funds are needed you have a source. Be sure to stress to potential partners in providing matching funds how much their dollars are being stretched to buy equipment, materials, etc. Have I talked you into thinking it takes some time, yet?

"Yes, you may want to consider collaborating with your grant writing. What better and natural partnership than your own county library association? If you do not already have a county library association or some such partnership, then my advice to you can be summed up in two words: Start one.

"After all, chances are if you are reading this, then you probably work at a small library in Iowa. Why reinvent the wheel half-a-dozen times over in the same county? It is a waste of resources to not collaborate. We are so many, and so small, why not work together more?

"Finally, I want to convey what a rewarding experience grant writing can be. It can certainly help to give you the bigger picture, and you may even start thinking bigger! Nothing beats the feeling you get when you are called to the podium to get your check, or when you open the envelope and read the award letter. All of a sudden, all those hours you pored over your grant application seem a trifle now that you have received your reward."

Words of wisdom from Nathan Clark

Reminder:

The meeting minutes of the Iowa Commission of Libraries can be found at
<http://www.statelibraryofia.org/about/gov>

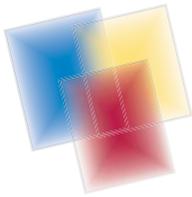
Certification Update

Congratulations to the following public library staff certified for the first time through the State Library's Iowa Certification Program for Public Librarians.

Janet Adix, Ellsworth
 Mark Blando, Ames
 Rachel Bussan, Webster City
 Lynne Carey, Ames
 Jim Cross, Riceville
 Elaine Droegmiller, Cushing
 Dianna Dunning-Rutledge, Chelsea

Jean Gnade, Paullina
 Andrew Hoppmann, Clarinda
 Erna Lunn, Ledyard
 Joy Metzger, Whittemore
 Marie Popken, Alta Vista
 Linda Roe, Des Moines
 Jeanne Tollagson, Woden





State Library - like most libraries - gets intriguing research requests

State Library staffer Pam Rees received an information request a while back from a man in the Netherlands. He and his wife had adopted a WWII soldier buried in the local war cemetery of Margraten. The couple did some research and learned the soldier was originally from Kossuth, IA. They also found the names of many of his family members. In an e-mail to the State Library, the couple hoped the State Library could help them find a living relative.

While the State Library is not typically in the genealogy business, Rees was able to find the soldier's living sister in Minnesota who was extremely pleased to get the information.

In his e-mail, the researcher said "adopting a soldier means that we honour the soldier for the offer he made and of course the offer his family made. We go a few times a year to the cemetery to put flowers with his grave and honour him with a few moments of silence. We want to let the family know that for over 60 years he's not forgotten here in Europe, the Netherlands."

Preserving Iowa's legal heritage

The law is what it is today because of what the law was yesterday; it cannot escape its ancestry.

Alison Reppy, 1956

by Cory Quist, State Law Library



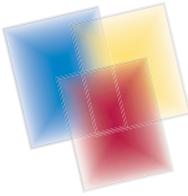
With the modernization of heating, cooling and fire protection systems, and after several years of shifting and cataloging, the state law library began a comprehensive preservation project related to its special collections. Many of the items in the collection are 200, 300 and even 400 years old with most of the materials having been in the possession of the law library for over a hundred years. The majority of the special collection is comprised of Anglo Saxon, Roman and International legal treatises that represent the seminal works upon which the United States legal system is based. The collection also contains several American gems such as the original printing of the Massachusetts Bay Colonial Statutes, Jefferson Davis' Laws of the Confederate States and a signed copy of President Hoover's Addresses Upon the American Road, to name a few.

The project has required a team effort in the truest sense; few individuals possess all the attributes necessary to see something of this nature through to completion. We have leaned on the State Library staff's extensive knowledge of the history of the legal publishing industry, original cataloging and technical services, professional principles of collection management and, of course, the science of book preservation.

Archival quality enclosures, protection from UV rays and environmental controls will ensure that our rare materials are preserved, protected and accessible hundreds of years into the future. It is with much pride that we engage in an ongoing effort to safeguard and store some of the foundational documents that aided our pioneer lawmakers in the formation of this great state of Iowa.



Cleaning an old book using special eraser crumbs



News from around the state

Kraft honored with Midwest Archives Conference Presidents' Award

According to the [University of Iowa \(UI\) Libraries'](#) news blog, [Nancy E. Kraft](#), head of Preservation at the UI Libraries has been selected as a 2009 recipient of the Presidents' Award presented by the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC).

Kraft has advocated for the preservation and proper management of Iowa's cultural treasures throughout her career. She is a leader in the Iowa Conservation and Preservation Consortium and has been personally involved in the development of a successful statewide preservation training program through the Consortium. Those efforts alone would make her eligible for the Presidents' Award but she is nominated for her extraordinary work following the historic levels of flooding that struck Iowa in the summer of 2008.

The Presidents' award recognizes significant contributions to the archival profession by individuals, institutions and organizations not directly involved in archival work but knowledgeable about its purpose and value. Recipients are chosen by a committee comprising the three most recent past presidents of MAC from nominations submitted by committees in each of the 13 states in the MAC region.

"Nancy's tireless efforts following last June's devastating floods alone merit this recognition," said David McCartney, University Archivist and one of the nominators. "In addition, her lifelong commitment to assisting our profession is deeply appreciated. We thank her for all she has done for us in preserving and strengthening our collections."

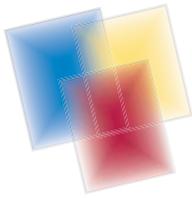


The [Independence Public Library](#) recently unveiled a mural recently titled "Open Books, Open Hearts, Open Minds" in the doorway leading to the library's community room.

The mural was a two-year process by artist John Paul Schafer, an Independence native, depicting images of freedom and independence.

According to library director Laura Blaker, library officials wanted the mural to carry the major themes of liberty and independence, in part because those are the lofty values public libraries strive for.

(Information gathered from the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier)



Congratulations to retiring library staffers

The following library employees have recently retired. The State Library wishes them the best in their future endeavors.

- Linda Mack, director, 21 years at Waukee Public Library
- Mary Walk, children's librarian, 33 years at Spencer Public Library
- Elaine Roberts, director, 15 years at Victor Public Library
- Anita Hartley, assistant librarian, 25 years at Wilton Public Library

Davenport PL awarded \$1.2 million

The Eastern Avenue branch of the [Davenport Public Library](#) received a Vision Iowa grant totaling \$1.2 million to construct a new, environmentally friendly structure. Total cost for the library will be \$8.2 million. The grant is contingent on the library raising \$2 million. According to library director LaWanda Roudebush, fundraising so far has netted \$1.8 million. Construction of the new library could begin in July and open the spring of 2010. Design components include a roof that resembles an open book, a children's garden, and areas for outdoor meetings. "Green" features will include rain gardens, geo-thermal heating wells, floor-to-ceiling windows that limit the need for artificial lighting and eco-friendly construction.

(Information gathered from the Quad-City Times)

Libraries create special programs for job searchers, students

In their February 26 e-newsletter, the [Nevada Public Library](#) reported on a job seminar class they are sponsoring March 26 presented by Iowa Workforce Development. The library staff is also teaching "Introduction to Computers, E-mail and the Internet" to interested customers. The library also touted its large selection of books on how to help people create a great resume and then offers the computers to type them on.

The [Milford Public Library](#) recently hosted "Practical Job Search Techniques," a program that gave individuals things to think about before beginning their job search. Library staffer Jim Ramsey, program presenter, has over 25 years experience in major corporations as a human resource development and corporate training professional.

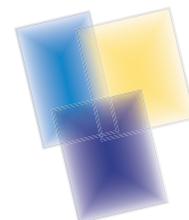
Free tutoring, or "Live Homework Help," is now available at the [Mason City Public Library](#). Students will connect to expert tutors via the Internet in the subjects of math, science, social studies and English. Spanish-speaking tutors are also available to help students in math and science. The tutors are certified teachers, college professors, professional tutors, or graduate and undergraduate school students from across the country.

Wapello school one of two nationwide to receive Alibris award

The [Wapello \(IA\) School District](#) was one of two recipients nationwide to be chosen from more than 100 applicants to receive the \$3,000 Alibris Collection Award. The awards are granted to help supply underfunded libraries with materials. According to Lori Doolin, media specialist, Wapello Jr./Sr. High School, the floods of 2008 left rural area of Wapello devastated. Due to a lack of available housing in the area, many families had to relocate, cutting the school enrollment which led to a reduction in state funding of more than \$250,000 for the 2008-09 school year.

Wrote Doolin, "Webster's dictionary defines a flood as an 'outpouring of considerable extent or a great stream of something that flows in a steady course.' And in order to restore morale and bring encouragement and hope back to the student body and staff, we would like to 'flood' our library with a collection of new, historical-fiction books."

The other recipient was the Mark Twain School and Academy in Detroit, Michigan. Alibris is an Internet independent marketplace for sellers of new and used books, music and movies.



Kuwait sites added for Freedom Call conferences over ICN

Two Kuwait sites are now available for Iowa families to connect with family members through the Freedom Calls-Operation Hometown Link program via the ICN. The non-profit Freedom Calls Foundation has added videoconferencing centers at Camp Arifjan and Ali Al Saleem Airbase in Kuwait. These are in addition to the sites already used in Iraq at Al Asad Air Base, Fallujah, Taji, Camp Victory (Baghdad), and Camp Taqaddum.

With the addition of the Kuwait locations, ICN hopes to help more military families. The ICN would like help from libraries in spreading the word to library customers who have soldiers in Kuwait.



April is designated the Month of the Military Child. The new locations in Kuwait provide an additional way for families to reconnect during what can be a stressful time for children and parents.

Any Iowa family with a deployed service member from any military branch may take advantage of the program. Video reunions may take place during the week and on some Saturdays at many of the ICN video classrooms located around the state.

ICN staff members find an appropriate location for the family, while Freedom Calls schedules and pays for the soldier's satellite time.

For more information, or to arrange a Freedom Calls/Operation Hometown Link ICN session, family members should contact Gail McMahon at gail.mcmahon@iowa.gov or call 877-426-4692 and select #1 on the voice menu. Please help spread the word in your community.

Iowa City PL receives ICMA grant

The Iowa City Public Library is one of nine out of 515 applicants nationwide to receive the ICMA (International City/County Management Association) Public Library Innovation Grant. The grant supports new projects developed by local governments that use public libraries to address critical local needs and provide services that strengthen their communities.

The Iowa City Public Library and the Iowa City Public Works Department will partner to enhance the quality of life for residents by improving the environmental sustainability of the community. The library will expand its role as a community information center to educate and engage citizens on the benefits of urban storm water management, urban composting, local food, energy conservation, and smart waste disposal. Using books, online databases, and other library resources, including the Web site and cable television channel, the library and public works department will offer workshops and other hands-on programs in conjunction with many community partners to encourage Iowa Citizens to create rain gardens, weatherproof their homes and businesses, and take other actions aimed at increasing the sustainability of a "green" earth.

The Public Library Innovation Grants are funded through ICMA's partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.