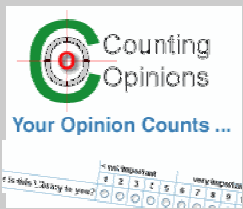




# FY2009 Annual Report



**LOCATIONS:** The *Indian Orchard Branch* marked its 100th Anniversary with a music filled Open House Celebration in May. Well attended and fun!

The *Forest Park Branch* will re-open in November and all areas will be accessible to everyone, thanks to the addition of a new entrance with lift and new restroom facility.

New carpeting was installed in the *Brightwood Library*; the *Central Library* Community Room, hallway, Periodical Room, and rotunda circulation area. Security gates and patron counters were upgraded.

The Mason Square Branch Library will be our next big project.

**RESOURCES:** Adult programs saw an increase in popularity. The free computer classes continue to be filled, including the waiting lists!

The *Early Childhood Resource Center*, in its second year being housed at the Central Library, is gaining popularity as a resource for learning kits, puppets, puzzles, equipment, books, and much more. Professional workshops fill up quickly. The quarterly newsletter is mailed to over 900 folks.

**SERVICES:** Patrons may now pay fines and make donations online, using credit and debit cards or PayPal.

Patrons may choose to receive holds, courtesy reminders, and overdue notices via emails from the Library.

*Counting Opinions*, our online customer satisfaction assessment and improvement system, was launched in February, allowing continuous feedback to reach us.

Wireless internet is now available at the Central Library, as well as East Forest Park, East Springfield, Forest Park, and Sixteen Acres Branches.

**CIRCULATION:** With all locations open fewer hours due to the budget cuts, we anticipated lower circulation numbers. Despite this we had a slight increase with total circ in FY09 at 650,386 items, compared to 647,913 in FY08. Bright spots are Young Adult circulation up 10%; website hits up 9%; programs offered and attendance at those programs up 8%. Area non-profits have discovered the library community rooms for free meeting room space increasing usage by 10% over last year.

**BUDGET REDUCTIONS:** In the Spring of 2009, the Library's budget was reduced by 14% in response to the statewide fiscal crisis. With this magnitude of reductions, the Library had to reduce staff, hours, materials and services. Twenty one staff positions were eliminated through a combination of layoffs and attrition, hours at the Central Library were reduced from 57 hours per week to 45 hours a week, and is now closed on Fridays. Branch hours were reduced from 24 hours and four days a week to 18 hours and three days a week.

In spite of these fiscal challenges the Library is committed to maintaining our high standards for service to the residents of Springfield.

**SUMMER READING CLUB:** *Adult Summer Reading Club* participation was up 11% with members reading an average of 5 books in 10 weeks. There were about 1200 children and teens participating in the Summer Reading Club, level with last year. It is sponsored yearly through the generosity of the Friends of the Springfield Library; this year an additional 26 local businesses donated gift cards and prizes.

**MLA CONFERENCE:** Springfield hosted the 2009 Massachusetts Library Conference in May. Over 700 librarians/library employees attended, shining the light on the Central Library, Museums and Quadrangle at the gala opening dinner, with the Mass Mutual Center as the main conference location.



**GATES GRANT:** The Library was awarded \$123,500 in a 2-year matching grant to purchase new computers and software. Eight branches have benefited, with Forest Park (19) and Brightwood (13) receiving the greatest number of new computers.

**PROGRAMS: A SAMPLE**

*Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center* classes are still filled with many folks on a waiting list. Our free adult basic education program “helps adults living in the greater Springfield area to achieve their basic education goals as family members, workers and community members. We are committed to networking with agencies and resources in the larger community to assist learners and their families to meet their literacy goals.”

*Family Adventures in Reading (FAIR)*, a humanities-based family reading program, presented collaboratively by Mass Humanities and the Springfield City Library, was well attended. It’s been offered at the Central Library, Indian Orchard, and Forest Park Branches and will be offered at the Liberty Branch in the fall.

*Littlefest IV* was held in September. The multi-cultural children’s literature festival is sponsored by Cherish Every Child, an initiative of the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation; the Springfield City Library; WGBY and others. It is a popular family event, and provides an opportunity for the Library to work collaboratively with the Museums Association to offer free books and educational entertainment for City residents.

*The City Thinks: Education, Poverty and a Call to Action*, is the 2009 program focus. The 2008 program, *China Road*, was again a successful collaboration with the Springfield Public Forum. The Library hosted four book discussion groups, documentary screenings, Feng Shui classes, a Shaolin Kung Fu demonstration, plus tie in storytime and craft projects for children.

*Write On, Springfield!* showed the popularity of writing and poetry programs offered by the Library. The publication of this collection of original writings about, or related to the City of Springfield, was the “icing on the cake!” A display and sample of the writing is now on display at City Hall.

The *Indian Orchard Branch* now provides art programs for teens and children, funded by a grant from Hampden Bank.

A *LSTA Teen Grant* was awarded to the *Forest Park Branch* providing funding for: a Teen Advisory Board; a Girl’s Group to hold various interesting workshops; a Boy’s Group and gaming programs; teens to help design a Teen Space in the branch; eight teens selected to participate in an eight week class to learn how to create a video about their vision of their future. A special screening was held in the Forest Park Branch Community Room.

**FY09 LIBRARY STATISTICS:**

- Circulated 650,386 items
- Answered 109,400 reference questions
- Program attendance: 27,895
- 1,692 programs
- 15,062,038 hits on our website
- 4,576 volunteer hours

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

In June our first “library column” was printed in the Republican Wednesday Plus Papers section. Now appearing monthly we have the opportunity to highlight library events, programs, or anything library related that we care to. Our goal is to show city residents that Springfield City Library is indeed “a place for everyone.”

Security Training was the focus of our 2008 *Staff Development Day*.