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INDIANA LIBRARIES



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Editors Note

Bookmobiles, Friends of Libraries groups, and the impact of WPA library projects in Indiana are topics that Dolores Hoyt's *History of Libraries* students explored in the spring of 2000. The students have all scattered on the wings of their MLS's, but their L517 papers are published here. If you are one of those students, please contact me; we want to know where you are now.

The other articles in this issue compliment the students' explorations. Alicia Maehler describes the Friends of Mishawaka-Penn Public Libraries group. Martha Roblee describes the state's efforts to provide library services to all its citizens. Then we are brought up to the present day by Virginia Rumph's article that provides practical advice about the RFP process and its benefits.

Send us your ideas for topics you'd like to see covered by **Indiana Libraries**. See the information in the back of this (and every) *Indiana Libraries* issue.

Stay with us, we're looking forward to a full year of **Indiana Libraries** in 2002.

Emily Okada
Editor

BOOKMOBILE SERVICE IN INDIANA: ITS HISTORY, ITS PRESENT, AND ITS FUTURE

*by Stephanie Davis, Cynthia Harnish,
Elaine Walker, Janet Wallace*

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the bookmobile has played an important role in meeting the needs of the reading public and in providing information to a broad segment of society. But in the past few years, bookmobiles have fallen on hard times, and their demise has long been predicted. They have fallen victim to such things as the gas crisis, construction of branch libraries, and automation.

Bookmobiles, or traveling libraries, are an extension of the services offered by the conventional library. Usually, a bookmobile is operated by a public library system and it travels on a scheduled, repetitive route to schools, small towns, crossroads, and shopping centers. Its driver is often also the librarian. The inventory of materials it carries varies, as the librarian tries to meet and anticipate patron interests and information needs.

During the past decade this outreach service has been enhanced by wireless technology. Bookmobiles can connect to the main public library and exchange information; the Internet and other technological innovations provide easy access to electronic information sources. These bookmobiles, sometimes called "electronic bookmobiles," "online bookmobiles," or "cybermobiles," expand the universe for individuals beyond the reach of the traditional bookmobile (Khalil).

This article describes the past and present and tries to identify future trends of bookmobile service in Indiana. Our study focuses on 1954 to the present. We chose 1954 as the starting date because statewide bookmobile statistics appear not to have been kept prior to that year. We gathered information from a variety of sources including published articles, Indiana State Library records, and developed a survey instrument in an effort to evaluate the evolution of bookmobiles and to identify trends and changing services.

Library users of the baby-boomer generation growing up in any of Indiana's rural communities fondly remember, and many still utilize, the services of their local library's bookmobile. Just as profit-making businesses are always working to increase their cus-

tomers base; public libraries are constantly striving to gain new patronage. Ideally we would like all those taxpayers who financially support the library to use the library and benefit from its services. Reaching out to the far corners of the library district is a priority goal for all public libraries. Of course libraries approach outreach in many different ways depending on the size and population of the library district. The traditional library outreach mechanisms provides books and other materials to those who are unlikely or unable to reach the physical library. According to recent studies, bookmobiles and branches have been the two main service outlets used nationwide by public libraries. Of the 8,981 public libraries in the United States in 1995, 1466 or 16% had branches and 819 or 9% had bookmobiles. The number of libraries, branches, and bookmobiles that each state has varies greatly. That year Hawaii had 1 public library with 48 branches and 6 bookmobiles, while New York 's 741 public libraries had 326 branches and 11 bookmobiles. Kentucky's 116 public libraries had the most bookmobiles with 103 (Public...1995 24-25).

One of the most unusual systems in the nation is found in Wakita County, Oklahoma. When the 1973 tornado destroyed all five library buildings, it was decided that a totally mobile library, which now includes nine bookmobiles, would best serve service to the rural farm community. One unit houses the automation system and the satellite link to the Internet and another unit is in charge of ordering and processing materials. The librarians work fireman style shifts, twenty-four hours on and forty-eight hours off since one unit is always on call. Each unit is linked to the Internet and many carry 15,000 items (Wakita).

Nationwide, Indiana's library service ranks very well. In 1995 Indiana ranked 14th in the number of public libraries (238), 15th in the number of branches (189), and 7th in the number of bookmobiles (43) in the United States. Indiana's effort to make library service accessible to all by providing a high number of library outlets has paid off. In 1995 Indiana libraries loaned over 10 items per Indiana resident, ranking Indiana 2nd in the nation for the number of circulation transactions per capita (Public...1995 127).

The Allen County Public Library had up to seven bookmobiles on the road in the early 1960's, two serving users within the city limits of Fort Wayne, two serving children during the summer months, and three serving the county areas. As of 1992 they no longer have any bookmobiles. Instead each of the county's suburbs has a new or expanded branch facility (Slater-Putt 163). Due to a breakdown in 1998, the Shelbyville-Shelby County Public Library no longer has its bookmobile visiting rural towns and schools, but consideration is being given to replacing it and revamping the service. The Wells County Public Library had a bookmobile serving the county for 60 years. However, a need for major repairs and more patron services took the bookmobile off the county roads in 1990. The library replaced it with two new buildings and an additional branch.

METHODOLOGY

A search for scholarly literature and studies on bookmobile services in Indiana was not productive. While several articles and case studies of single bookmobiles or single library systems were found, a study of Indiana's overall bookmobile service was not found. Studies have been done on the national level by the Center for the Study of Rural Libraries. The most recent study was done in 1997. This study, earlier studies, and a review of the literature by The-wei Hu for his book, A Benefit-Cost Analysis of Alternative Library Delivery Systems written in 1975, all have found a lack of available hard data on bookmobile costs, users and service. Apparently bookmobile service is not an area in which states, or even local libraries, have historically kept a wide range of statistics. Therefore, researchers have used surveys to gather information for their studies.

The Indiana State Library has gathered and published statewide statistics on public library service since 1954. The only statistic kept on bookmobile service is the number of bookmobiles each library system owned. In 1954 there were 15 bookmobiles in the state owned by 12 libraries. By 1962 the number doubled and steadily increased to a high of 54 bookmobiles at 42 libraries in 1986. Libraries of all sizes owned bookmobiles. Sixty percent of the bookmobiles belonged to libraries with populations between 25,000 and 99,999. Only one library, serving a population of less than 50,000, had more than one bookmobile in their library system. By 1986 Boonville-Warwick County Public Library, with a service population of just over 20,000, had added a second bookmobile to help increase circulation when the city and county merged their library services.

The State Library statistics did provide a list of all the public libraries in Indiana that have or have had a

bookmobile. Since 1954 a total of 56 libraries have had a bookmobile in their history. Today 36 libraries have bookmobiles, so the number has significantly decreased.

To obtain data for this study, a short survey was developed. The questionnaire consisted of ten questions relating to the beginning of bookmobile service, reasons for the increase or decrease of service over time, number of stops and hours in use, kinds of places served, the type of vehicle used, and any special features of the bookmobile. Brevity was an important factor since our goal was to receive a high number of responses as quickly as possible. In order to reduce both time and expense, e-mail and fax were chosen as the form of communication and the initial mailing was via the Indiana public library listserv. Since it was not known how many of the libraries would be reached through this listserv, additional mailings were planned.

Two weeks and 18 replies later, the questionnaire was again sent to the non-responding libraries via the library director's e-mail address obtained from the State Library Directory. Those libraries with no e-mail address were faxed a copy of the survey. This mailing resulted in an additional nine replies for a return of forty-eight percent of the targeted libraries. This was a very good response rate, much higher than the 9-30% received in other national bookmobile studies. The authors of this paper are indebted to those libraries that supported the survey with their cooperation.

RESULTS

Before the advent of bookmobiles, many libraries provided outreach services. These services were often in the form of deposit stations set up in such places as general stores, post offices, fire stations, industries and even private homes. A collection of fifty to a few hundred books was provided and then changed at regular intervals. In some instances, these stations were even mobile. While the Gary Public Library initiated their bookmobile service in 1951, they had a "traveling branch" in 1937. How a traveling branch differed from a bookmobile is not known and is an example of one of the inherent problems of this research – terminology. Many libraries consider anything on wheels, horse drawn or otherwise, to be a bookmobile, while others make fine distinctions between delivery and bookmobile service.

At least nine of the dozen libraries offering bookmobile service in 1954 actually had their service much earlier than that. While literature indicates that the nation's first book wagon started on its way around 1905, there is much discrepancy with dates and terminology. While Fulton County Public Library claims to be the first in Indiana and the second in the United States to offer bookmobile service beginning in 1921, Indiana's

start may have been in 1918 in Gas City-Mill Township. "The wagon service was begun on February 22, 1918" offering a "house-to-house service." The Gas City bookmobile was built on a Ford chassis and it looked "something like a patent medicine wagon" (Hughes 9). During this time there was a growing movement in Indiana libraries "to bring to the farmer and his family the incalculable privilege of getting acquainted with the world of books" (Hughes 9). At least seven Indiana bookmobiles were put into use in the 1950s and five in the 1960s. The Greensburg-Decatur County Public Library may have been the last library in Indiana to initiate service when it began bookmobile use in 1985. In 1998 Evansville-Vanderburgh Public Library renewed the service that was discontinued in the 1970s.

The appearance of the bookmobile has changed over time. Fulton County's first "resembled an old hack wagon used to transport school children." The Monroe County Public Library's first bookmobile in 1929 was an "original Model A Ford Truck." In 1930, the Allen County Public Library bookmobile was constructed on an International Harvester chassis and had shelving both inside and out with a capacity of 1000 books (Slater-Putt 161-162). This concept of inside and outside shelving was still evident when the South Bend Public Library began its first bookmobile in 1953. The vehicle cost nearly \$8000 and could accommodate 2000 books (Waterson 28). Many of the survey respondents did not give details about the types of vehicles previously used, but at least nine said that they had an RV type. Nine mentioned having had buses, three had vans, and one each had a truck/trailer, a box truck, and a pickup pulling a modified trailer. More information was given on the present bookmobiles. These range from small step vans to vehicles forty-foot long that have a capacity of 5000 volumes. Nine libraries claim to have a bus; six have RVs, and three have step vans. One has a truck without a trailer.

Among those libraries still offering bookmobile service, most have automated them in some fashion. While most use laptops for circulation, not many are actually online. Data is downloaded into their automation system at a later time. Anderson and Kokomo-Howard County Public Libraries are among those with an online connection and Monroe County Public Library uses cellular technology to connect to the library automation system, e-mail and the Internet. Other special features on today's Indiana bookmobiles are wheelchair lifts, ramps and skylights.

Of the twenty-one libraries that responded and still provide bookmobile service, none seem to provide service only to rural areas. Fourteen libraries provide service to both rural and city patrons and six service mainly city locations. One is "moving away from rural

'crossroad' type stops in favor of captive audiences." The survey did not ask for a completed bookmobile schedule from each library, so in many cases there is only information on which areas a particular library serviced, not how many schools or nursing homes were visited each week by the bookmobiles.

Most stops seem to concentrate on the young or the elderly. Bookmobile services are also changing as public libraries redefine their missions, according to Carol Hoe, outreach consultant. Many outreach programs now focus on serving the disadvantaged, or targeted groups such as the elderly or children in daycare (Evan 18). Two responding libraries provide service to assisted living facilities and ten to nursing homes. One goes to a senior center and another to a county home. One library has eight elderly housing stops and one visits retirement apartments. Fifteen service daycare/preschools and fifteen also visit schools. The LaGrange Public Library sends its bookmobile to twenty-five Amish schools. Anderson and Porter County Public Libraries make visits to jails and Kokomo-Howard County Public Library visits a juvenile detention center and in-home daycares. Four libraries make stops at apartment complexes, two stop in mobile home parks and one stops in a housing addition. Other stops include: an industry, a church, a hospital, and a facility for the handicapped.

How much time do bookmobiles spend on Indiana roads? While the hours varied from ten to forty hours a week, the average for the responding libraries was thirty-one hours. Two-thirds of these libraries make biweekly stops, but some are weekly and monthly. A few libraries said that their bookmobile schedule changes frequently to meet changes in patron schedules. Some have different school year and summer schedules and the Porter County Public Library reviews new sites and rearranges the schedule every four months.

The stop and go use of a bookmobile is hard on the vehicle thus repair and maintenance are the biggest problems for bookmobile service. The need for repair and/or replacement is often the reason libraries start reevaluating their service. Gas City-Mill Township, Mishawaka-Penn and Wells County Public Libraries all cited cost and physical problems among their reasons for discontinuing service. Other reasons for reducing or discontinuing bookmobiles were reduced service area, reduced circulation, and adding or expanding facilities and branches.

Few responded to the question that addressed the reason for discontinuation of service, probably due to the fact that most of the respondents still use bookmobiles. However, the most frequent reason given was the opening or expanding of a branch. When the Allen County Public Library ended their bookmobile service

in 1990, Associate Director Steven Fortriede said, "It's not so much the bookmobiles' time has ended as it is the branches' time has come" (Von Frank).

While adding branches can be the reason to stop bookmobile service, it has often been the reason to start the service. Over the years, several libraries have used the bookmobile to test sites for future branches. It has also been used to replace a facility that is no longer seen to be viable. The most popular rationale for the bookmobile is to serve populations too small to have a branch and those populations situated in areas that cannot easily access the nearest branch.

While several libraries still visit small, out of the way communities, none of the responding libraries limits the bookmobile to just this role. In Indiana, libraries are filling up their schedules with stops for two growing groups of immobile, unserved patrons—children and the elderly. In our working society, daycare centers are increasing in number. This large population of children is unable to attend toddler times and after school programming. Instead of worrying about getting these children to the library, the library is going to them. An example is St. Joseph County Public Library's Readmobile. This library-on-wheels contains only children's books and visits first through third graders at schools with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged children. In the summer, the Readmobile visits other sites including city parks and daycare centers (Fosmoe).

In his article entitled "The Bookmobile and Its Future," Richard L. Waters states, "The average life span in 1900 was 47; today it is 79 ... By 2040, twenty-one percent of the population in the United States will be over the age of sixty-five" (Waters 39). Therefore, it is understandable that bookmobiles are beginning to visit retirement communities, assisted living centers, nursing homes, and senior centers. No matter how close the nearest library facility is, it will not be close enough for many of our elderly who are ill or who simply do not drive. Today we do not need to drive to the country to find a population that is isolated from library services.

CONCLUSIONS

The data gathered from this survey indicates that bookmobile service in Indiana is declining, slowly and steadily. It is on the downside of a bell-curve that gained momentum in the 1950s and peaked in the 1980s. Bookmobiles may be a real rarity on Indiana roads by the 2010s. Our research indicates bookmobile service, while declining, is actually transforming. Instead of outreach bookmobile service, libraries seem to be leaning to personal delivery service. In January 1999, the Eckhart Public Library in Auburn replaced its 12-year-old, repair-ridden bookmobile with a smaller white van nicknamed EMOS, Eckhart Mobile Outreach

Service. EMOS delivers materials to homebound, daycare centers, home daycares and nursing homes (Prentice). Even today personal delivery service may be more prevalent than bookmobile service in libraries. This trend is seen in the kind of stops bookmobiles are making and in the delivery of materials to individuals by staff in a small van rather than the traditional bookmobile. In addition, one wonders how many libraries are making these nursing home, daycare, and jail stops under the title of "outreach," "homebound," "delivery service", or "mobile library service" rather than the standard terminology of "bookmobile service."

Another significant transformation of library outreach services may be seen in the new "online" bookmobile. An example of wireless technology at work can be seen at Muncie, Indiana Public Library's Cybermobile. This online bookmobile is equipped with six computer stations, all with Internet access, through a satellite and modem connection. 1999 marked the first full year of Cybermobile service to the Muncie community. It is used to teach Internet and computer skills to children, the disadvantaged, the elderly, and others. The library networks with a variety of community groups to reach as wide an audience as possible. Some of the groups receiving classes in 1999 included: Adult Literacy/English as a Second Language, Isanogel Center, Muncie Homeschooling Cooperative, Head Start, Community Corrections, and Forest Park Senior Citizen Center. In addition, training workshops have been held at Ball Memorial Hospital and Farmland Public Library (Muncie).

There is no doubt about the advertising and public relations value of a library's bookmobile. Everywhere the bookmobile travels, it delivers a visual reminder of the services available to each and every resident of the community. The goals and purpose of the Anderson Public Library bookmobile service are clear and very representative of those libraries still offering the service today. Their survey response stated, "Bookmobiles are a method of advertising library services, showing the kinds of materials libraries have, getting people signed up for library cards, and projecting a friendly, courteous manner in a non-threatening environment. We hope to turn more people into users and that they will take advantage of the services offered downtown."

Our research leads us to conclude that Indiana libraries will continue to provide services to those who cannot make the trip to the library building. Indiana residents are top promoters and users of bookmobile services. In the future, resources and services may be delivered by library staff driving a van or a cybermobile. The physical appearance of the bookmobile of the future may be uncertain, but the future of the bookmobile "tradition" is clear. The dedication of bookmobile administrators and staff ensure that it will be bright.

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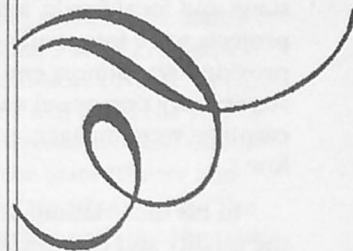
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This article had its genesis as a research project for the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science's L517: History of Libraries. The authors were students in the course taught by Dolores Hoyt in Indianapolis during the 2000 Spring Semester.

WPA LIBRARY PROJECTS

IN INDIANA

By Marcia Caudell, Deborah Jones,
Ben Jessup, & Marti Reeser



HISTORY OF THE WPA

From its birth in 1935 until its death in 1943, the WPA (the common acronym for the Works Progress Administration and, after 1939, the renamed Work Projects Administration) hired a total of 14,000,000 Americans for a wide variety of public works projects. This massive army of WPA employees and veterans represented more than one in ten of the 132,000,000 Americans counted by the 1940 census. Some economists argued that a cutback in WPA hiring triggered a downturn in the national economy in 1937. Of all the initiatives of the Roosevelt Administration, only Social Security surpassed WPA in terms of size and scope.

In addition to involving millions of lives across the nation, both the WPA and Social Security required a state and federal partnership. Washington and each of the forty-eight states split the expense for these programs. Unlike the federally directed Social Security pension system, however, state governments ran their own WPA projects. The Federal authorities enjoyed final authority only in selecting the destinations of the grants. State officials, often acting under local pressure, made the funding proposals.

The WPA came to life as a federal initiative, albeit one which incorporated significant state involvement, direction, and cooperation. The WPA followed by two years the New Deal's initial efforts to ease unemployment which had begun in 1933 under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) when, during his first hundred days in office, Roosevelt signed legislation aimed at reviving the American economy. He directed much of this legislative effort, which was intended to provide a "New Deal for the American people," toward unemployment relief. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) hired unemployed young men to work on federal land; the National Youth Administration (NYA) provided part-time jobs to high school and college students; and the Public Works Administration (PWA) hired private contractors to construct roads and public buildings.

The WPA combined the idea of tax-funded employment with the work of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). FERA granted money directly to the states to help cover the escalating costs of caring for

destitute citizens or, in the terminology of the day, "poor relief." The WPA continued Washington's involvement in this traditionally local responsibility, but substituted public work as an alternative to direct relief payments.

The majority of WPA employees worked at enterprises such as construction of schools, government buildings, and roads that were usually considered part of the private sector domain. The decentralized nature of this agency, however, allowed the WPA to spend tax money in unprecedented ways: for example, the WPA hired actors and directors for a theater program, and many visual artists won commissions for paintings, statues and murals. This flexibility allowed even the traditional beneficiaries of tax money, such as libraries, to use resources in different ways.

THE NATIONAL WPA LIBRARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In his 1942 published dissertation *Library Extension under the WPA: An Appraisal of an Experiment in Federal Aid*, Edward Barrett Stanford points out that prior to the Depression years, not only aid to the poor and unemployed, but also support for libraries were considered to be local and state responsibilities, beyond the purview of the federal government. As the crisis of the early 1930's deepened, however, it became increasingly clear that the need for relief was overwhelming the limited resources of states and localities and that the federal government would be forced to intervene in some capacity. It was this intervention, this massive effort to create work for the nation's unemployed that resulted indirectly in the first federal aid to libraries.

In 1933 the precursors of the WPA, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA) made federal financing available for state and local projects by making grants directly to the states, over which the states had complete control. At this point, the federal government had no responsibility for project operation at the national level. Corrington Gill, Assistant Administrator of FERA, the CWA, and the WPA criticized the results of this initial effort in work relief in 1937:

“...the local work relief activities, financed by FERA, state, and local funds, left much to be desired. The projects were frequently of little value, the work provided was almost entirely unskilled manual work, supervisory personnel and materials were inadequate, earnings were meager, and efficiency was generally low.”

In his dissertation, Stanford goes on to summarize the quality and condition of library projects during this period and to point out that despite their deficiencies, they provided a good foundation of experience on which to base the more ambitious and complex federally supported library projects which were to follow under the WPA:

“The caliber of library projects before 1935 reflected the conditions under which they came into existence. Neither relief authorities nor librarians were ready with carefully thought-out programs when federal relief was begun on a nation-wide scale in 1933. Hence it is not surprising that many of the first projects were hastily conceived under-takings of a more or less “busy work” character.

However, the first work relief projects did serve several valuable purposes. They provided much-needed assistance to libraries at a time when libraries generally were suffering from greatly decreased budgets and increased service demands. They demonstrated the efficacy of library work as a suitable type of project activity for women and white collar workers. They brought to light numerous weaknesses that could be avoided in subsequent endeavors. They revealed the need for planning, professional supervision, and adequate book collections as a basis for developing library projects of permanent worth. Finally, they helped to arouse groups of citizens to a new understanding of the role of library service in community life – an important factor contributing to the success of state-wide library demonstrations under the WPA today.”

In 1935, the WPA created a wider, more systematic, and more ambitious national work relief program which gave the federal government more direct control over the design and operation of state and national work relief projects. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the National Youth Administration (NYA) superseded FERA, and until 1942 provided the channel and structure for federal aid to libraries.

Under limitations of WPA guidelines, federal money and federally funded workers could not be used to provide existing library services, but instead had to be used in some manner to extend or expand what has already being provided by established libraries.

Under these guidelines, Stanford categorizes four

different types of library projects that qualified for library funding:

1. the construction and repair of library buildings;
2. the preparation and publication of various indexes, and other reference books;
3. the provision of relief workers to assist established libraries in expanding their services; and
4. the operation of demonstrations to further the development of permanent library services in formerly unserved areas.

While these projects followed in the rough tracks of their predecessors for a time, their quality and effectiveness improved steadily over time and with experience.

By the time the WPA library assistance reached its peak of operations in 1938, there were more than 38,000 relief workers employed full-time in libraries nationwide. This was more workers than all of the regular librarians and library assistants put together in the United States had at that time. By June 1941, \$100,000,000 of federal money had been spent on library service projects; 100,000,000 books had been repaired; 260,000 books had been purchased; 150 counties had been helped to acquire bookmobiles, and 2664 local libraries were staffed with WPA personnel.

HISTORY OF THE INDIANA STATE LIBRARY

On June 28, 1816, the following resolution was adopted by the Indiana legislature:

“That it be recommended to the general assembly of the State of Indiana, to appropriate the money voluntarily given by the citizens of Harrison county to the State, to the purchase of books for a library for the use of the legislature and other officers of government; and that the said general assembly will, from time to time, make such appropriations for the increase of said library, as they may deem necessary.”

On February 11, 1825, the Indiana State Library was established, one of the first six state libraries in the nation.

The original concept of the State Library was as a repository and reference institution for the use of legislators and state officials; its first Librarian was the Secretary of State. The Library became an independent institution in 1841, and since that time a number of missions have been added to meet new needs and changing conditions. In 1903, by special act, the lending service was extended to include the citizens of the state, and in 1925 the library established a traveling library service for communities that had no local library service. Over 700 traveling libraries were on the roads during 1930.

In 1913, the state established The Division of Indiana History and Archives. Its material constitutes the state historical collection and includes a very large collection of books, maps, pictures, and manuscripts. Its manuscript collection has over 3 million items available for use.

The State Library obtained the first Braille editions for the visually impaired. Supported by federal and state funds, it created the Indiana Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Today the Special Services Division of the Indiana State Library is one of 56 regional libraries of the Library of Congress's National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS). The Division's objectives are to make library materials and information available to the residents of Indiana who are unable to read regular print due to a visual or physical impairment.

In 1930, at the start of the Depression, there were 224 public libraries in the state. Fifteen of these provided county-wide service. Every town with a population of at least 4000 had public library service, as did every county but one. Local governments, however, traditionally under-funded libraries, and the WPA money could be used for projects that would otherwise have gone unsupported. The federal government, in its effort to end the depression and its subsequent unemployment, subsidized projects through the WPA which were important to these libraries and to the future course of libraries in Indiana and throughout the nation.

LIBRARY PROJECTS IN INDIANA

Projects undertaken in Indiana included the construction, renovation, and repair of library buildings; establishment of bookmobiles and other extension services; the creation of a genealogy division at the State Library; translation of books into Braille and other services for the blind; indexing and microfilming of newspapers and other documents; compilation of county histories; cataloging of uncataloged collections; and bookbinding and book repair.

The significance of these projects ranged from miniscule to mighty. However, simply the fact that the Indiana State Library and other public libraries in Indiana were able to obtain WPA funding to support such efforts during this depressed time was important. In many ways, it set up the framework for further development of library services in the State of Indiana in the decades to come.

THE STATE-WIDE LIBRARY PROJECT

While WPA projects were underway at the State Library and other public libraries prior to 1938, it was not until 1938 that the coordination of efforts led by the State Library came to be known as the "State-Wide

Library Project." The initial proposal for this project stipulated that one person would serve as the state's technical advisor and that the state's six WPA districts would each have an assistant technical advisor. In each instance, a professional librarian was to fill the role of technical advisor. The state supervisor worked closely with the Extension Division of the State Library and oversaw the work of all the assistant supervisors. The assistant supervisors in turn worked with the librarians in their district to set up the projects. The main purpose of the state-wide project was to extend library services to previously unserved areas. The idea was that these library demonstration projects would have a permanent effect on the development of library service in Indiana.

In July of 1938, the State-Wide Library Project was operating in Indiana with an initial federal appropriation of \$800,000. The Indiana State Library sponsored the project in coordination with the local libraries where the projects were taking place. By June of 1939, 390 individuals were employed in fifty-six different operations. After the development of a state-wide approach, the current projects superseded all earlier efforts. Because of this approach, it was easier to supervise projects and to produce more favorable results.

By the end of 1939, forty-eight libraries were receiving services from 232 WPA workers. Congress mandated, however, that individuals who had been employed for eighteen months or more were to be subject to a thirty-day lay-off, a disruption that inevitably effected productivity. However, at the same time, new assignments were underway which projected employment of 402 individuals on different 58 projects.

By 1942, the previous four years of library work had been an on-and-off pattern of fluctuation in the state-wide library projects. Then, in the early part of 1942, the funds and the time originally allotted to the project ran out. On March 7, an additional \$103,975 became available to continue some projects, but due to the war effort then underway, it was clear that the national WPA resources would have to be funneled toward defense initiatives. Because of this shift in priorities, the remaining state-wide project efforts understandably focused on the goal of victory, first by assisting communities that were engaged in preparing men and weapons for action abroad, then by supporting communities preparing for action at home.

To meet the needs in the first category, the state wide library project worked with Fort Benjamin Harrison and Baer Field, Charlestown, and Burns City. It assisted those in the Kingsbury area, Vermillion County, and in the proposed camp in Bartholomew County. The statewide supervisor worked with librar

ians in these areas to assess the needs and to coordinate with other agencies involved.

In the second category of wartime emphasis, the state-wide library project sponsored the Victory Book Campaign. This project was given the highest priority. Wherever possible, workers were provided to all areas to collect gift books. Beyond these operations, however, all other activities were curtailed. It was clear that library projects had to be subordinated to the war effort. Wayne McDermott, the former supervisor of the State-Wide Library Project, explained that

"...libraries in wartime are even more important to the community than in times of peace. We have witnessed the increased demands upon library service in the emergency of the depression, and there is no doubt that the emergency of the war will similarly highlight its importance in the community."

As the need to support the war efforts continued, the focus of the State-Wide Library Project adjusted. In the end, projects that provided extension services through the maintenance of stations, branches, and bookmobile service continued; projects such as indexing, cataloging, and book repair, however, were dropped.

On February 1, 1942, all WPA projects in Indiana were suspended by order of the President. Without a doubt, however, the contributions of the WPA to libraries and library service had been valuable:

"As a source of much valuable assistance during an emergency period, when library budgets had been drastically cut, the WPA enabled libraries not only to carry on when the demands for their services increased many fold but also to undertake many new enterprises usually considered impossible even in normal times. The projects in local history, library extension, work for the blind, indexing, and many other works undertaken during the depression and prewar period be of will permanent constructive value."

On a small scale, a few of the projects started during the war years operated through 1944.

INDIANA STATE LIBRARY AND LOCAL LIBRARY PROJECTS

After seeing how the entire State-Wide Library Project came together, it is as important to focus on its impact on specific library services. As previously mentioned, the following areas are highlighted: genealogy and archives; county histories; newspapers and indexes; service for the blind; building construction and repair; book repair; cataloging; bookmobiles and other extension services; and clerical help.

GENEALOGY AND ARCHIVES

Indiana State Library WPA workers in coordination with regular library staff performed the following tasks: filing 12,000 bound volumes, 1,650 unbound filing drawers, and over 1,000 more cartons of miscellaneous documents. Overall, the workers in the archives cleaned, mended, humidified, and pressed documents that previously were in poor condition. In addition, they constructed a filing system for documents that were previously not filed. At the Vincennes Library, WPA funds provided for the long-needed indexing of hundreds of historic documents (manuscripts, papers, and deeds) which had accumulated over the years.

COUNTY HISTORICAL INDEXES

WPA workers at the Indiana State Library compiled (or were planning to compile) an index for each county in the state. Such an index comprised the names of people and firms found in any printed matter held at the State Library on the particular county. Sources for the county indexes included atlases, pamphlets, and biographical publications.

The Indianapolis Public Library, for example, used the additional help to finish a three-year effort to index material related to Indiana and Indianapolis history, including the standard references *Indiana and Indianans* and *Greater Indianapolis* by Jacob Platt Dunn.

These compilations would have far-reaching use for both historical and genealogical research. When the project ended in 1942, thirty-nine counties had been indexed.

NEWSPAPER INDEXES

The Indiana State Library had hundreds of unbound newspaper volumes with loose or torn pages as well as other types of damage. WPA workers mended, re-cased, and re-lettered these volumes so that they could again be used for research purposes. The total number of volumes included 7,850 bound volumes and 1,880 unwrapped volumes. WPA workers compiled a complete and comprehensive card index for all newspapers in the State Library. All prominent newspapers in the state at that time, including those published at Vincennes, New Albany, Madison, and Indianapolis from 1846 to present were part of this project. The subject index created for these newspapers saved needless handling. In 1938 a display of the indexes and other work produced by the WPA was set up at the John Herron Art Institute.

In Gary, a Lake County historical room was created at the public library. This project included a newspaper index created with support from WPA funds. The index (completed through 1936) included the names of every person, building, organization, or activity that ever appeared in print in county newspapers.

According to Philip Wayne McDermott, then supervisor of the State-Wide Library project, the indexing of Indiana newspapers was one of the most important features of the project. The following is a list of libraries that have such indexes of local newspapers: Alexandria Public Library, Indiana University Library (Bloomington), Crawfordsville Public Library, Gary Public Library, Indiana State Library (Indianapolis), Kokomo Public Library, Purdue University (West Lafayette), Muncie Public Library, Morrisson-Reeves Library (Richmond), and Fairbanks Memorial Library (Terre Haute).

SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

The Indiana State Library first began operating services for the blind in October of 1935. The original plans called for transcribing ink-print books into Braille. During this project, approximately 650 volumes were transcribed, proof-read, shellacked, and bound. An average of ten workers were employed in this project. Because it was a highly specialized area, efforts were made to not duplicate titles that were already available in Braille. Many of the titles were non-fiction.

Since the Library of Congress did not supply books in Braille for younger children, emphasis was placed on creating books for this age group. Most Public Affairs pamphlets were transcribed, as well as one college textbook and several long poems for a Butler University student. Statistics from the 1939 State Library annual report indicate that WPA workers under staff supervision completed the following "mending": new books plated, stamped, and pocketed (6,695); volumes mended (11,611); volumes rebacked (8,512); books collated and prepared for bindery (685); and pamphlets put in binders (1,012).

The addition of this service saw an eager response from individuals in Indiana as well as those in fifteen other states. In addition to requests for materials already in circulation, special requests were made for reference materials by the Indiana School for the Blind, the Board of Industrial Arts, and college students. Patrons often wrote to the State Library in Braille, and the project staff would read and correspond. As many as 150 Braille books a day were charged out and mailed. According to one annual report, 1,142 readers availed themselves of this service.

In 1937, the Indiana State Library held an exhibit of the work done in this area on the main floor of the building. The exhibit was divided into three parts: items translated into Braille (music, periodicals, deck of playing cards, and Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*); a chronological development of blind writing (Boston line type, Moon type, New York point, original

American Braille, and revised Braille); and the results of WPA employees work with Braille (transcribing machine, proof reading and binding of Braille volumes, illuminated pictures and a "talking book" machine).

Since the Indiana State Library served as a depository for the Library of Congress, WPA grants made it possible to distribute more than 600 "talking book" machines to borrowers on an indefinite loan plan. The titles made for use on these machines come from the master records at the Library of Congress, but up to that point, only 188 titles had been produced; this number was inadequate to meet the need, and it cost \$3 to produce each title. One note: the State Library did own two copies of *Snow White* written in Braille. Overall, these were great services for the blind.

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR

While the Indiana State Library did not use any WPA money for building construction or repair, the use of WPA funds (usually in the form of labor) to help libraries was evident throughout Indiana. Building projects included the following:

- Clinton - interior completely refinished and furniture restored
- Ohio River Flood - Libraries in Aurora, Jeffersonville, Lawrenceville, and New Albany furnished with materials and labor to get facilities back in "good condition."
- New Library Buildings - Cambridge City & Winklepleck Memorial (Odon). WPA provided greater part of library in the construction of both facilities.
- Kokomo - Library branch at Highland Park is also used as recreation center (model airplane club, table tennis, checkers, and other "quiet" games)
- Kokomo - Public library holds open house (May 13, 1937) upon successful completion of its rehabilitation and redecoration project. Workers provided by WPA.
- Jeffersonville - by 1938, library has been re-opened to public with flood damage reconditioning work by the WPA.
- Bluffton - in coordination with Tri Kappa sorority, the library is being redecorated. WPA is overseeing the cleaning aspect of project.

BOOK REPAIR

9,504 books had been repaired at the Indiana State Library by 1939. The mending process combined the techniques using onion skin paper, Japanese tissue, mending paper (for filling out margins and corners), cambric reinforcement, cleaning with erasers and

vinegar solution, and sandpapering. All books were plated, pocketed, stamped, marked, and shellacked. 2,214 pamphlets were mended, along with magazines, sheet music, and manuscripts prepared for circulation. Probably the biggest effort came in the Public Documents section where within one and a half years 8,000 volumes — the entire collection — were reconditioned.

Marguerite H. Anderson, then State Supervisor of the WPA State-Wide Library Project explained that "The project is saving thousands of books for further use by the repairs given. Book collections which were once grimy and repellent looking are now clean and attractive due to the cleaning on the project."

CATALOGING

There are very few reports on cataloging projects. What was reported included statistical reports from the Cataloging Division at the Indiana State Library. Three workers were assigned to this project. While not librarians, these individuals were given a summer training course at the State Library. With this training, the workers were considered to have training equivalent to many catalogers throughout the state, and they performed simple cataloging and classification under the supervision of a professional librarian. The Catalog Division of the Indiana State Library did lend some assistance to state-wide cataloging projects in 1940.

BOOKMOBILES AND EXTENSION SERVICES

With the help of WPA funds:

- The Fort Wayne and Allen County Public Library added a new bookmobile in January (1937) for use in rural book distribution. The body of the auto mobile, like the one being used in the city, was built by WPA labor. The truck served all consolidated schools in the county except those served by a branch library. It also distributed books to parochial schools and during the summer to many villages in the county.
- Indianapolis - New service created (November 2, 1939) for individuals not within walking distance of main branch. Books were sent for distribution to a central neighborhood location named the Library Extension Service. Schools, fire stations, businesses, and factories used the extension service. Books were sent free of charge.
- Logansport & Cass County - "trailer" library purchased in 1937 that visited schools and small towns (carrying 1,200 books & magazines). Trained librarian was in charge with assistance from WPA worker.
- Bluffton and Wells County - trailer branch consisted of a specially built semi-trailer pulled by a half-ton

Dodge pick-up. Equipped with shelving to accommodate 1500-2000 volumes. Branch was out five days a week. Four staff members divided the work on the trailer. During winter, when daily circulation reached about 500, a WPA worker assisted.

- New Castle - in cooperation with WPA State-Wide Library project, a new service to Henry County not already having library service was created. A bookmobile, carrying 2,000 volumes was scheduled to supply books to all schools and communities previously unserved. A member of the industrial arts department of New Castle High School specially designed the bookmobile.
- Valparaiso - WPA State-wide library project in Porter County established stations in nine townships formerly without library service. 3,500 books were circulated, with an estimate that 6,000 would soon be available.
- Rockville Public Library - with support from the WPA State-Wide Library Project, librarian Maye Jessup organized a county demonstration in Parke County. From this, the county supported a library tax rate to fund branch and station services. While just in an early stage, it was reported that the county library board and Mrs. Jessup studied the impact of this type of new service.

Whereas this was a service with widespread impact, there was an indication in 1940 that the services had not spread as rapidly as expected. This was due to changes at the administrative level and to vacancies at the local level of the State-Wide Library Project. In addition, it was difficult to generate local funding for bookmobile or library extension services.

CLERICAL HELP

The Indiana State Library reported that among the seven levels of stacks at the State Library, WPA workers helped serve as clerks, typist, and dusters. They were engaged in shelf reading, checking, and card indexing in an effort to keep the stacks in proper working order. This worked helped to run the library efficiently. Such help could not have been hired without WPA funding.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from the voluminous evidence found in various sources that the funds from the WPA coordinated through the State-Wide Library Project had a huge impact on library service during the Depression. While there was concern about possible misuse of WPA funds at a national level, there was no evidence of this in the Indiana program. Librarian Ethel McCullough in her 1935 annual report for the Evansville Public Library summarized this sentiment when she stated "Almost

without exception each person has turned out an honest day's labor. Without this help the system would have been hopelessly handicapped and the service would have fallen short of the year's achievements."

While the WPA was created to help the country out of the Depression by training individuals for employment, creating jobs, and providing income for the unemployed and their families, it also benefited Indiana Libraries, improved services, and laid the ground work for future federal library assistance.

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THE UNSERVED AREAS ISSUE:

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Martha Roblee,
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Indiana has a long history of efforts to extend library service to all citizens of the state. The constitution passed in 1816 included a provision that, when a new county should be created, the General Assembly "...shall cause at least ten per cent to be reserved out of the proceeds of the sale of town lots in the seat of justice of such county for the use of a public library for such county; and, at the same session, they shall incorporate a library company under such rules and regulations as will best secure it permanence and extend its benefits."

In the following years various laws were passed to allow establishment of libraries in townships and municipalities. In 1899 the Indiana Library Commission was created by the General Assembly as an agency of the state government. One of the Commission's staff, the "library organizer" whose salary of \$1,000 a year was authorized in 1901, began 'a systematic program to extend library privileges to all of the people of the state' by visiting localities which expressed an interest in creating libraries, consulting with the local people involved, and advising them in respect to the legal, building, and other problems involved. In a report to the Indiana Library Association meeting in 1907 the secretary of the Commission reported that, in the 8 years since its formation, the number of 'county seats without public libraries' had been reduced from 47 to 31." (Documents...) In 1925 the Public Library Commission was merged with the Indiana State Library as the Extension Division (now the Library Development Office) and continued in the role of advisor to libraries on extension of service and establishment of new districts.

In 1946, in preparation for the 1947 legislative session the Joint Library Planning Committee presented A Proposed Plan for State Aid. Its goal was "The development of state-wide and more adequate library service, with emphasis on larger units of service, either counties or combinations of counties." The report in the September 1946 Library Occurrent states that 23% of the people of Indiana, 790,000, were without local public library service. It was noted that Crawford County had no library. The first objective of the plan

was to extend service to unserved portions of all counties from the appropriate existing library in each county. The second goal was to secure merger or federation of existing libraries within counties, by contract or by less formal cooperative agreements, in order to provide better and more economical service to the entire county. The 1947 program of library legislation included the revision of all public library laws, which became the current library laws under which public libraries now operate. The other two bills were for state aid for public library development which was proposed to equalize library opportunity on a basis of local ability to support library service, and would have encouraged the establishment of new county libraries and the strengthening of existing county libraries; and a bill to strengthen the State Library so it could help local libraries in their efforts.

The March 1947 issue of Library Occurrent reported that the new public library law and the State Library code revision passed. However, the state aid bill died because of legislative opposition to the funding and the fear that the introduction of the proposal would jeopardize the other two bills.

The September, 1948 Library Occurrent reported that the Republican State Platform of Indiana, 1948, included the following provision:

Tax supported free libraries being an essential part of the state educational system, good library service for all the people is an obligation of government. The 1947 Republican Legislature enacted a new library law to codify numerous conflicting statutes. As more than 20% of Indiana's population is without local library service and many established libraries are inadequately supported, the Republican Party endorses the following program for our public libraries:

- Establishment of library service in unserved areas.
- Adequate salaries for librarians.
- Reasonable state aid for the improvement of local library service.

Credit for the inclusion of libraries was given to Raul R. Benson, a trustee from New Castle-Henry County Library and a member of the Platform Advisory Committee.

The 1949 legislation proposals again included a bill to create a state aid fund through an appropriation of \$500,000 for each of two years from which grants would be made to aid existing public libraries and to extend service to unserved areas. The legislation, while receiving a somewhat more favorable response, again did not pass.

The December, 1950 *Library Occurrent* reported that the main proposal for library legislation in 1951 would be strengthening the Indiana State Library, including expansion of extension services to provide more advisory help and more books for local libraries, to help establish library service in unserved areas, and to demonstrate use of bookmobiles. An expanded budget of \$106,000 for the Extension Division (currently Library Development) was proposed to carry out these functions. \$46,500 was received from the legislature, so the bookmobile demonstration had to be dropped, and the concentration was on hiring more consultants to work with libraries.

In 1953, the focus was on revising the Library Law of 1947 to clarify and remove inconsistencies, along with increased appropriations for the State Library and extension services. The library law revisions included a method for extension of services to townships, either by contract or by merger into a single library district.

The September 1955 *Library Occurrent* reported that a Library Action Committee representing the Indiana Library Association (ILA), the Indiana Library Trustee Association (ILTA), and the Indiana School Library Association had made a report to the Indiana Committee for the White House Conference on Education in preparation for Indiana's White House Conference. Under the recommendations for public libraries the first was "Adequate library service should be brought to all persons in the state by locally supported and operated library systems. Of 1009 townships in Indiana, 510 have no local library service and 54 are only partially served. Presented another way—844,000 people or 21% of the population of Indiana have no library service." In 1957 the Joint Legislative Committee drafted a proposal for legislation to establish a Library Study Commission to be set up by the Legislature for the purpose of surveying the public library needs of Indiana and the best means of meeting those needs. (*Library Occurrent*, December 1956.)

In 1965 legislation was passed to create a Library Study Committee. One of the listed objectives of the Committee was to study how to best provide library service to the 905,815 citizens without direct access to a local public library. (March 1965 *Library Occurrent*, p. 236) The Study Committee was formed in 1965 and continued through 1966, when a report was issued. The Committee held public hearings and invited representatives of various groups having library respon-

sibilities to testify. Their report recommended legislation in key areas, including the establishment of an interstate compact to authorize cooperation in providing library service across state lines. The Committee believed that this would permit joint and cooperative library services in areas where the distribution of population made the provision of library service on an interstate basis the most effective way to provide adequate and efficient services. However they also concluded that the Committee should be continued for another two years to complete their work. Therefore a bill was introduced and subsequently passed in the 1967 legislature to extend the committee.

In the meantime, a study was commissioned and funded by the Library Services and Construction Act to provide background for further development of Indiana libraries. Dr. Peter Hiatt was hired to direct the study, which focused on the needs of citizens for library services. The study concluded in 1970 with 15 volumes addressing the various aspects of library service in Indiana. The legislative study committee met a few times in 1967. The committee adjourned until the findings of the studies were available to them. The Indiana Library Studies Coordinating and Steering Committee submitted a draft report in April 1971 to the state as a whole. The report listed 14 points as necessary elements for the continued development and improvement of library services in Indiana. Point number 4 was "The need to extend public, academic, school, and special library services to areas which do not now have such services." (Outline Draft...) However, the action items in the attached draft plan were concerned with the strengthening of the State Library, the establishment of state resource centers, the establishment of Area Library Services Authorities, and the funding of these, and did not mention mandating library service.

Indiana began participating in the federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) in 1961. Initial priorities for the program included projects to fund extension of service to previously unserved areas. From 1961 through 1970 there were 18 bookmobile demonstration projects to unserved rural residents of the state. Eight other projects demonstrated service through other means than the bookmobile. Primarily because of these projects, the number of citizens without direct library services was reduced from 997,668 in 1961 to 531,985 in 1968 (statistics from August 1970 *Library Occurrent*.) However, as many of the areas with unserved populations were eliminated, the ones remaining were more difficult to convince. By the late 1980s a few counties had had multiple LSCA funded projects, and still had been unable to convince the citizens of those areas to agree to being taxed for library service. Ultimately the Indiana State Library Advisory Council recommended that federal grants

cease for extension of service because they were no longer effective.

More recent efforts to extend library service to unserved areas were bills introduced in 1972 and 1973; both died. In 1976, a bill was prepared by a library committee, but not introduced. In 1977 another bill was introduced in the House, but again did not pass.

A statewide legislative meeting was held in September of 1987 to get member input into the ILA/ILTA Legislative Program. The discussion agenda included extending library services to all the unserved areas of the state. The October 1987, Focus on Indiana Libraries reported that extending service to population unserved by libraries was the most vigorously debated issue at the meeting. As a result of the discussion, the Study and Development Subcommittee of the Indiana Library Association Legislative Committee included mandated library service as one of their areas of study for possible future legislation. However, their subsequent report recommended against introducing legislation to mandate library service for two reasons: 1) the failure of every effort in the last 15 years to get a bill mandating service passed, or even introduced, and 2) a survey of library directors rated the issue a very low priority compared to other issues facing the library community, such as fiscal body review of public library budgets. Contacts with legislators in following years have validated the view that they are generally negative towards the idea of mandated library service.

In 1995 the Legislative Committee decided to try a different approach with SB 152, which would have mandated counties having territory that is not in a library district to establish a library planning commission. In the bill the planning commissions were charged with adopting plans for providing public library services to all residents of the county. The Indiana library and historical board was charged with setting operational guidelines for the commissions, and approving the final plans for each county. Although the

bill received favorable hearings, it died at the very end of the legislative session because of complications related to property taxes. However, this bill spurred some counties to begin discussions on their own, and the following years have seen an increase in the number of expanded districts.

In 1999 a bill was introduced for one county, Hancock County, to allow funding of an expansion of service to the county through the County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT). This tax, which was originally established as an income tax to fund economic development, was seen by Senator Gard as a way to alleviate concerns over property tax increases. The bill was passed, and Hancock County has established a county system funded by CEDIT. Interest has been expressed in expanding this model to other counties in the future.

While it is a common perception that current legislation does not encourage unserved areas to join library districts, statistics show that new expanded districts continue to be formed. The Library Development Office began to keep track of the number of new districts formed each year in 1978. From 1978-1980 13 new districts were formed; from 1981-1990 42; and from 1991-2000 26 were formed, 19 of which were after the introduction of the county planning commissions bill. Legislation that mandated a minimum non-resident fee also helped raise the awareness of both library boards and elected officials.

The following table shows the progression of change over the last 40 years. Currently 40 of the 92 counties in Indiana have some unserved population in them. It ranges from 367 people to 44,775 in one county. Note that in the 1990s the Library Development Office began including contractual areas in the unserved totals, since those contracts are from year to year and do not permanently add the population in the contractual area to the library district.

Year	State population	% Change	Unserved by library	% of Total population
1952	3,934,224		849,535	22
1967	4,662,498	18.5	566,449	12.1
1972	5,195,582	11.4	496,215	9.6
1982	5,490,224	5.7	316,872	5.8
1997	5,544,159	1	464,226	8.4
2001	6,080,485	9.7	405,724	6.67

Indiana obviously still has work to do to extend library service to the entire state, but progress is being made township by township.

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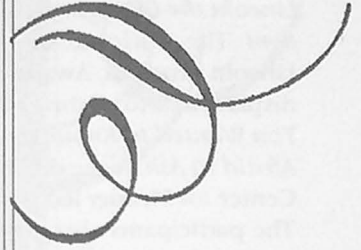
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**PUBLIC LIBRARIES NEED FRIENDS:
ASPECTS OF THE FRIENDS OF
MISHAWAKA-PENN PUBLIC LIBRARY'S
INVOLVEMENT AND IMPORTANCE TO THE
LIBRARY SYSTEM IN MISHAWAKA, INDIANA**

*by Alicia Caldanaro Maehler, Public Services Librarian,
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What does it take to be a Friend of the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library? Energy and interest. There are several levels of membership: Individual one- and three-year memberships; Family one- and three-year memberships; and Youth (K-12) membership. Every month, members receive *Hi-Lites*, the Friends of the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library newsletter. [See <http://www.mppl.lib.in.us/hilitespage1.html> for the latest issue.] Members who enjoy taking on leadership roles can serve on the Friends' Board as president, vice president, treasurer, assistant treasurer, program chair, book sale chair, or hospitality chair. These and other active members as well as the librarians who help coordinate Friends' activities are indispensable assets to the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library (MPPL).

The Friends' book sale takes place four times a year. Volunteers work with library staff to solicit book donations, publicize, organize, and staff the book sales. Proceeds from the sales are used to fund a variety of library programs.

Maria Siqueria, Friends Board Member and Program Chair, develops new workshop ideas that bring people to the library more often. She says she's learned a lot having been involved in past workshops like "Make a Quilted Christmas Ornament!"

Friends cosponsor (with the MPPL and different area businesses) the children, young adult, and adult Summer Reading programs. Each program has a special theme. Last year the adult theme was "So Many Books, So Little Time," this year (2001) it was "Never Judge a Book By Its Movie." The Friends, as well as area businesses, provide special gifts or gift certificates for those patrons who read (or in the case of adults, listen to) the required number of books. Past prizes have included t-shirts, book bags, gift certificates from local businesses, and beanie babies.

The Friends also sponsor discussion groups. The Great Books discussion meets once a month. The Great

Decisions discussion group meets on alternating Monday afternoons from February through May and discusses topics based on a briefing book provided by the Foreign Policy Association and the American Association of University Women. Friends volunteers provide refreshments for these groups. Lynn Day is a volunteer baker who says, "My second love is baking cookies so I love to donate them for refreshments [for library programs]!"

Another event made possible with the help of the Friends is the Mishawaka-Penn Public annual Collection and Hobby Show held this past January. Participation was open to children in grades four through nine. Prizes were awarded to winners. Although they were not eligible for prizes, teachers and library staff also displayed their collections and hobbies. Friend, Ed Wallis, was a judge of the Collection and Hobby Show.

Wallis, who has been an active volunteer for ten years, is an outstanding example of a Friend who wears many hats. His invaluable contribution as a Friend includes his help with the library's book repair team. As an experienced book repair team member, he makes new book jackets from old by fitting, fastening, and taping these to fit the various-sized books. He describes his work as "interesting and useful without involving a rigid time commitment."

Friends also develop new program ideas. Local attorney, Richard Currey, led a discussion that was free and open to the public on the life of Theodore Roosevelt during a meeting of the Friends of the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library and The American Heritage Roundtable. Currey is also on the Friends Board and provides legal advice for the library when necessary.

Friends volunteers can help make connections between the library and other community groups. Friend Linda Doshi from the Northern Indiana Center for History in South Bend, Indiana, requested that *Hi-*

Lites promote one of the center's programs: *Picturing Lincoln the Changing Image of America's 16th President*. The article stressed a need for volunteers for the Lincoln program. Awareness of the program also led to displays and to a Library program entitled *Everything You Wanted to Know About the Civil War, But Were Afraid to Ask*. A speaker from the Northern Indiana Center for History led the discussion of the Civil War. The participants also viewed artifacts from the Civil War such as Confederate currency and a tin cup and plate used by soldiers during the Civil War.

Another Friend, Ellen West, proved to be a valuable connection to local high school musicians. Her children are members of music groups and bands that hold concerts in the Library. Special programs during the holidays included Musical Selections Performed by Mishawaka High School Rhythm Express & Chamber Singers and the Mishawaka High School Jazz Ensemble that featured holiday jazz.

The Friends are also one of the sponsors of the Official Monopoly® Game Tournament where 24 players were needed to qualify. Mishawaka-Penn Public Library had 37 players. The winner at this event held at the library qualified for consideration as State Champion. State Champions get to compete in the National Championship 2003 and the winner of that goes to World Championship.

Other great programs the Friends help sponsor include excellent speakers. Humorist, Martha Branson-Banks, who is also the Director of Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Lake Michigan College, Niles, Michigan, spoke at a library program entitled *Humor: Jest for the Health of It*. Branson-Banks, with 20 years of experience as a speaker on humor, provided an interesting free program for the public to enjoy at the library. The library also held a program called *Meet the Author: Mark Kelley*. Kelley wrote the book *Berman's Lament* and is a professor of communication at Goshen College, Indiana. He discussed the history and development of broadcast journalism and what prompted him to write *Berman's Lament*.

The Friends were one of the sponsors of a program for the entire family to enjoy called *The Space Shuttle*. Space flight historian, Brian Weaver, presented a multimedia program that discussed the conception, history, and present day uses of the space shuttle; its role in space activities, and the operational aspects, systems and subsystems. He shared his collection of books, magazines, artifacts, hardware, models, autographs, and other items from both the United States and Soviet Space Programs. Many of the items were also put on display at the library.

The Friends have further fun as a group when they take their annual bus trip. In October 2000 they went

to Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where they enjoyed touring the gardens and viewing the Gerald R. Ford Museum.

The Friends annual meeting and luncheon is also a good chance for the group to socialize. During the annual meeting, the library staff express their appreciation for the work done by the volunteers. Last year, volunteers received a small first aid kit as a token of appreciation from the library.

When various Friends members were asked what they enjoyed about being a Friends member, Maria Siqueria emphasized how much she enjoys working on the holiday library decorating committee with library staff and other Friends. Another member, Ellen West, likes taking part in the selection of materials such as Books On Tape, Accelerated Reader, and books for the Children's Department and for Mishawaka elementary school programs. West is also in charge of Mishawaka-Penn Public Library's entry in the Memorial Day Parade that promotes the MMPL's Children's Summer Reading Program. Friend Fran Means' volunteer contributions have included lining up speakers for library programs, furnishing refreshments at library programs and other meetings, and planning Friends bus trips. Means said, "I enjoy being on the Friends board because it has the widest variety of interesting people on it."

Friends of the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library are also our best users. Dick Currey said, "I've used this library since I was a toddler and [it's] always seemed like a second home with just a few more books." Kris Monagle, Friends Board President says, "One of the greatest things about our library is that the staff is friendly and kind... The library is a sanctuary of knowledge and also a peaceful place in which one can relax." "Mishawaka-Penn Public Library is very fortunate to have such good friends!

For more information about the Friends of the Mishawaka-Penn Public Library, see their home page at <http://www.mmpl.lib.in.us/friendshome.htm>.

FRIENDS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES, INDIANA ORIGINS AND OUTLOOK

by Amme Brown, Melissa Callahan, Trisha Shively, Patty Stringfellow, and Jennifer Walter

INTRODUCTION

"Where there are friends, there is wealth," wrote Titus Maccius Plautus more than 2,000 years ago ([An Invitation](#)). An advocacy group in Syracuse, N.Y, whose interest lay in the promotion of the welfare of its community's branch libraries and main libraries, took this sentiment to heart when they established their organization in 1922. They called themselves the Friends of Reading of Onondaga County, Inc. (Butler 21), and in the process started a Friends of Libraries movement that has resulted in the strengthening of libraries nationwide. Friends of Libraries are very much an influential presence today, providing support for public, university, and special libraries at local, state and national levels.

The purpose of a Friends group typically reads:

[T]o focus attention on the needs of the Library, to stimulate gifts of books and desirable collections, and to raise funds for the purchase of material not otherwise procurable.

It is not intended that the Friends should assume obligations which now rest upon the university and the state in maintaining and improving the Library. Rather it is hoped that, through the interest stimulated by this association, private donors may be induced to supplement the work of the state.

Through such an organization it is hoped that the needs of the...library may become known to a wider public than is at present acquainted with them ([Friends of the University Library](#)).

Just as Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) groups are viewed as vital to the functioning of schools, so are Friends of Library groups in their promotion of libraries (Butler 21). Sentiment from Christopher Morley in 1937 portrays libraries and librarians as a network in need of advocacy by nature. "Nassau County [New York] has the largest jail and the smallest library I have ever seen in a town of its size," he states, in addition, "Librarians themselves are very modest people; too much so" (Morley 7). Thus the role of Friends groups was established as a provision of assistance in both obtaining increased funding and vocally announcing library needs. "More interest, more books, more shelf space, more borrowers, more money—to help secure

all these fall within the area of operation of the Friends of Libraries—and there cannot be too many librarians or too many of their friends" (Butler 3).

The focus of this exploration of the origins and outlook of Friends of Libraries groups in Indiana is on public libraries, whose Friends groups have frequently been formed by librarians and civic leaders ([Friends of the Library Survey](#)). Accordingly, activities of these public libraries Friends groups are quite community-centered in their event programming, their outreach, and their advocacy ([Friends of the Library Groups 2-3](#)). All organize regular publications, meetings, lectures, social events and book sales with the intended goals of fund raising, development of support for their respective libraries, and advisory to their respective libraries' administration ([Survey](#)). Edwardsville, for their antique shows – which are on average attended by 1,900 people and attract much publicity (Herring 67).

ORIGINS OF FRIENDS IN INDIANA

It is difficult to determine when the first Friends of the Library organization was founded in Indiana as there is a lack of definitive sources on this topic. It is known, however, that in the spring of 1941, a group of concerned citizens met in Logansport, Indiana and conceived the idea for the Friends of the Logansport-Cass County Public Library. The idea, which was born out of a tragedy, would have a long-term impact on the citizens of Logansport, Indiana.

In the early morning hours of March 17, 1941, the Logansport Public Library was ravaged by fire. Approximately twenty-five thousand books were destroyed and \$25,000 worth of physical equipment was lost. Total loss of property exceeded \$100,000. One quarter of this community library ceased to exist in just a few short hours and the community was heartbroken.

A few days after the fire, a group of concerned citizens met in the City Court Room with members of the Library and School Boards. Those assembled quickly decided that some form of organization needed to be created to help library officials "solve what then seemed to be well-nigh insurmountable problems" ([Announcing](#)). What was to be done with the library?

Another meeting was held a few days later "in the Assembly Room of the City Building. Numbers of scores

more of those whose hearts were heavy with the realization of the loss which had been suffered, came-to learn and to determine what to do about the library” (Announcing). It was at that meeting that the idea for a Friends group was born.

The founding members wanted to form “a group of citizens-men, women, and children-who are friends of the library and who, when informed of its needs, will help to supply them” (Announcing). They wanted to encourage all community members to join, regardless of their means, but they wanted their members to show support for the library by paying annual dues to join the organization. Thus it was decided to offer a variety of memberships. The different memberships were as follows: Associate, designed for school-age children, 10 cents; Contributing, \$1; Buy-a-Book, \$2; Supporting, \$5; Sustaining, \$10; Patron, \$25; Life, \$500; and Foundation, \$1000. The founders intended to use the monies obtained through membership to rebuild the Logansport Library “and as the years roll on, it is hoped and truly expected that there will be those who may care to provide, by gift or endowment or bequest, other volumes or collections or works of culture, or the funds with which they may be obtained” (Announcing).

In addition to their fund raising efforts for rebuilding the library, the Friends group also organized study clubs, author visits, art exhibits, displays of rare manuscripts and collections, and hosted open houses. The group was quick to give credit where credit was due. Individuals who purchased a book for the library through the “buy a book” campaign were recognized with a bookplate bearing their name in the book they purchased. Benefactors who made substantial contributions to the library were given public recognition.

The group was governed by a nine person Board of Directors. The Board of Directors was chosen by vote of the members at large. Its officers included a president, vice-president, and a treasurer. The officers were appointed by the board of directors. The secretary of this group was the acting librarian of the Logansport library.

The Friends of the Logansport-Cass County Public Library was granted a non-profit Indiana corporation charter in perpetuity on May 12, 1941. Its first Board of Directors included: Caroline N. McNitt, Reverend D. K. Finch, Nora Medland, Merrill D. Miller, Mae M. Barnett, Millicent R. Condon, M. L. Butler, Ann Morgan, and Robert J. Arthur.

FRIENDS OF INDIANA LIBRARIES

The founder of Friends of Indiana Libraries (FOIL) is Sophie Thanos Misner. An untiring activist and promoter of libraries and Friends groups, Sophie also helped found the national Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA) in 1979. [For information about FOLUSA, see <http://www.folusa.com>]. In an interview, Sophie stated that she began her career as a library advocate in 1957 in her own public library, the Gary Public Library. In 1958, Sophie joined the newly formed Friends of the

Gary Public Library whose primary objective was to initiate a “friendly lawsuit” against the Gary Public Library Board of Trustees’ proposed two million-dollar bond issue to finance a new library. The suit was filed to test the constitutionality of a 1947 Indiana law that allows libraries to issue bonds. The Gary Friends raised \$500, and along with other libraries in the state interested in this case, underwrote the legal costs (Friends of Gary Public Library).

As the Friends of the Gary Public Library and other similar organizations around the state became more active, it became evident that there was a need to unite these local organization under one umbrella organization at the state level. So the idea of a state organization was born. But how does one start such an organization? Others in Indiana and other states were also struggling with the same issue. In late 1979, a group of interested people from around the United States, including Sophie Misner and Bruce Kirkham of Ball State University’s Friends of Braken Library gathered in Dallas, Texas at the American Library Association’s annual conference to start a national organization, to be named Friends of the Library USA or FOLUSA. With the knowledge gained in starting FOLUSA, Sophie, Bruce and others created Friends of Indiana Libraries in 1980.

Friends of Indiana Libraries (FOIL) was formed in 1980 following the first White House Conference on Libraries (Letters). FOIL is a non-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors. According to FOIL Bylaws, the organization has four purposes:

1. To assist and aid those individuals and groups dedicated to developing citizens interest, support, and understanding of library services and needs in Indiana.
2. To encourage the organizing of Friends of the Library groups and to recommend ways of correlating and developing their interest in Indiana libraries.
3. To encourage the development of adequate library services to all citizens of Indiana and to cooperate with educational, professional, and civic organizations to this end.
4. To include any and all matters within the Articles of Incorporation which are hereby incorporated by reference.

During it first decade, FOIL focused largely on developing Friends groups. One of the most important contributions of FOIL in the early days was educating library Trustees as to the role of library Friends groups. According to Sophie, many Trustees were initially apprehensive that the Friends would undermine their power. The Friends worked diligently and eventually were able to demonstrate to the Trustees that they were not adversaries, but partners in the cause to promote and support the library.

Over the years some of the important contributions FOIL has made include being a resource for local

groups, helping local Friends groups get organized by creating a treasurers and presidential handbook, organizing Friends programs at the Indiana Library Federation Annual Conference and district conferences, creating an annual library book sale calendar and the *Library Friends Planning Calendar*.

In 1995, after the publisher of the first two editions of the *Directory of Indiana Children's Authors Illustrators*, Stone Hills Library Network, dissolved, FOIL took on the updating of the *Directory* as a service to local Friends groups. This project is also supported by other groups such as the Indiana Center for the Book, Indiana Historical Society, Indiana Historical Bureau and Only Reading Makes it Real.

The *WordStruck* program, coordinated by FOIL, is an offshoot from the *Directory*, which connects children with Indiana authors and illustrators and their books by co-sponsoring visits from Indiana children's authors and illustrators to public libraries and schools.

FOIL publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Between Friends*, to announce educational opportunities, news from local Friends groups, share feature stories about members, and update subscribers on state legislative issues. Information about the organization is also available on their web page at <http://birch.palni.edu/~foil> or <http://web.incolsa.net/~foil>.

In the spring of 1993, the FOIL Board was approached by the White House Conference of Libraries delegation. Sixteen individuals, including four laypeople, four government officials, four library supporters, and four library professionals who had been elected at the Indiana Governor's Conference on Libraries, went to Washington, D.C. to meet with the delegation. Upon their return, the representatives determined that there were three areas where they could make a difference:

1. Building information networks through technology
2. Strengthening children's and youth literacy, and
3. Marketing library services.

To involve a larger audience to work on these priorities, the representatives formed a partnership with FOIL. The agreement was based on an action plan that included:

- Offering each of the 200 delegates to the Indiana Governor's Conference a free first-time membership in FOIL.
- Designing a new letterhead and graphic "identity" for FOIL, and
- Submitting Articles of Incorporation for not-for-profit status in order to receive grant and foundation funding. (FOLUSA Awards to Friends Groups Application)

As a result of this partnership, a very active state and regional education program, and regular communication with members, FOIL ended the year with a record membership of 130 individuals and over 60

Friends groups representing more than 5,000 local Friends members. In 1994, the Friends of Indiana Libraries received the State Friends Award from the Friends of Libraries USA. The \$1,000 award, sponsored by Baker & Taylor, recognized the outstanding efforts in innovation, planning, community involvement, implementation, and evaluation of Friends programming. In addition, Microsoft, Inc. donated \$250 worth of software.

FOIL success has surpassed Sophie's wildest dreams. Support and information from FOIL was directly responsible for many of the local Friends groups now in existence. In 1997, FOIL established the Sophie Thanos Misner Award to honor the efforts of its namesake. Sophie was the first recipient of this award. This lifetime achievement award is presented annually to a Friends member who has demonstrated superior achievement in his or her activities with the Friends of the Library on the local and state levels. These achievements may include such activities as membership recruitment, fundraising, organizational development, board service, and the general promotion of library Friends. In addition, this person will have shown an exemplary commitment to representing the interests of his or her local library, libraries in general, throughout the community.

CURRENT STATUS OF FRIENDS IN INDIANA: SURVEY RESULTS

A short survey was posted to the Friends listserv and the public libraries listserv to gather information on the existence and strength of local Friends groups in Indiana. A total of 37 libraries responded to our survey, 31 of which do have Friends organizations, representing a 28% return rate based on 130 Friends organizations in public libraries in Indiana. Several Friends groups have been in existence for over 25 years. The groups range in size from 10 to over 700 members. Typical membership dues are \$1 for students, \$5 or \$10 for individuals, and \$8-\$15 for families. Other levels of contribution, such as Patron, Supporter, Contributor, Benefactor, Corporate, and Life Memberships are available for almost every Friends organization. One library uses more creative categories of Reader, Author, Publisher, and Scholar to classify its members. Friends meetings are generally attended by Board members only and, on average, are held monthly or every other month.

Almost every Friends group reported that they hold book sales on a regular basis to raise money. Funds are used to purchase equipment such as computers, display cases, and microfilm readers. A variety of programs, lectures, and special events for children, young adult and adult are also funded. Promotion for the Friends groups are through Friends or library newsletters, brochures, web sites, bulletin boards, fliers, mailings, or in the local Chamber of Commerce book.

Most Friends reported steady or growing membership. The importance of continuous promotion was identified as a crucial element to maintain support and

energy of the organization. Some groups reported periods of little activity and low energy. As in almost every organization of volunteers, it is usually a few members who do the bulk of the work.

CURRENT STATUS OF FRIENDS IN INDIANA: CASE STUDIES

The Fayette County Public Library is located in Connersville, the county seat in the heart of a rural community. The Fayette County Public Library is a medium-sized library serving a population of approximately 26,000. The library mission is to provide "library services for individuals from infants to senior citizens. As a community institution, the library provides materials and services to meet the cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs of all the residents of Connersville and Fayette County and surrounding areas" (*Fayette County*).

The Fayette County Public Library is rich in history. In 1893, a petition was presented to the Connersville City Council to form a public library and in 1894 the Connersville Public Library was opened. The library was first housed in a small rented room in downtown Connersville. In 1909, the library was moved into its own building at the corner of 9th Street and Grand Avenue using funds from Andrew Carnegie. In 1967, the Fayette County Contractual Library was started and in 1974, this library merged with the Connersville City Library to form the Fayette County Public Library. The current building was opened in April 1981.

The Fayette County Public Library is growing and in an effort to prepare for possible future expansion is currently purchasing property. The library has added technology to the building with the help of grants and by using funds allocated in the regular operating budget. The library also offers a bookmobile service that runs three days a week to other towns, schools and nursing homes.

The Fayette County Friends of the Library was formed in 1978 and is an important partner of the library. During the year, the Friends hold an annual book sale, a mini romance book sale, and six travelogues. They also sponsor children and adult programs and provide prizes and supplies for the summer reading programs. Over the years the Friends have helped microfilm the *Connersville News-Examiner* and purchased a variety of items such as a microfilm reader/printer, dies for letter machine, chairs for staff and patrons, folding tables, and paperback book racks. The Friends of the Library continually help the library purchase needed items that do not fall into the regular library budget.

The Friends are promoted through fliers distributed to new patrons, a yearly mailing, by word of mouth, and on the library's web page at <http://www.fcplibrary.com>.

Membership drives are held during other Friends activities such as the book sales. The Friends of the Library has grown to over 500 members since its beginnings in 1978 and membership has remained steady in the past few years. The membership dues are as follows: \$0.50 for Junior Member (holder of children's cards), \$1 for adult, \$3 for family, \$5 for Business or Organization, and \$10 and up for Patron. The Friends Board meets several times a year. The Friends are also members of FOIL.

Tippecanoe County Public Library was established in 1983. However, the first public library in Lafayette, Indiana began in 1927 through the philanthropic donations of Dr. Albert A. Wells, a local pharmacist. Dr. Wells donated a building for the use of a public library and the Albert A. Wells Memorial Public Library was dedicated on August 27, 1927. A Tippecanoe County Contractual Library was established in 1971 to serve county residents through a contract with the Albert A. Wells Memorial Public Library. In 1983, these two libraries merged to form a single library district, known as the Tippecanoe County Public Library. The Library District covers all areas of Tippecanoe County except for the majority of West Lafayette. Due to the lack of space in the Wells Library, the Library Board decided to acquire a new site to build a larger library. Through a bond issue in 1988, the present facility was constructed and the library opened in October of 1989. The libraries mission statement is "To be the leader in information resources for the residents of Tippecanoe County" (Tippecanoe County Public Library Mission Statement)

The organizational meeting of the Friends of Wells Memorial Library (now The Tippecanoe County Public Library) was held April 22, 1964 at the library in Lafayette, Indiana. Ten individuals attended this first meeting and an election of officers was held.

A form of constitution and by-laws was adopted as the constitution of this organization. Annual dues were set at \$1 for individuals, \$2 for contributing members, and a minimum of \$25 for patron memberships. The aims of the organization were discussed, particularly the placing of a book cart in each hospital for the benefit of patients incapacitated for a long period of time, and a book and coffee program.

During this time, a book delivery committee was formed to start delivering books to shut-ins. The Friends were also very involved with National Library Week, presenting afternoon movies, sponsoring book talks, and even providing childcare for parents attending library programs.

As of June 5, 1964 the organization had grown to a total of 32 members. In 1972 membership surpassed 100. In 1982 the Friends of Wells Memorial Library changed its name to the Friends of the Tippecanoe County Public Library. In 1989, the Tippecanoe County Public Library moved to its current location of 627

South Street, Lafayette. The Friends of Tippecanoe County Public Library received approval for the Articles of Incorporation as a not-for-profit corporation in June of 1992, allowing contributions to the Friends to be tax deductible. By 1995, membership had grown to 413. In that same year, the Gold Card Campaign was initiated and proved to be a turning point for the Friends. For \$35, members received a special gold library card. By January of 1996, the Friends reported 336 Gold Card members and total membership of 669. At the end of 1999 the Friends of the Tippecanoe County Public Library had 725 members.

During the 1970s and 1980s, several annual book sales were canceled due to lack of books. However, since the early 1990's the Friends of the Tippecanoe County Public Library's biggest success has been its book sales. To accommodate the large quantity of books donated for the sales, the Friends paid for the construction of a two-story storage building adjacent to the library to house and store books prior to the book sales. The Friends currently sponsor four book sales per year. The estimated book sale income for the year 2000 is \$40,000.

Over the years, the Friends role has changed to more of a financial supporter than service supporter. However, their role as an advocate for the library is stronger than ever. Currently, the Friends fund almost all library programs, which includes \$8,000 the 2000 Summer Reading Club only, and an additional \$10,000 for other library programs such as author visits throughout the year. The Friends fund all staff recognition activities, volunteer recognition awards and luncheon, and staff scholarships, which were \$3,500 for 2000, they also have a \$15,000 budget to purchase needed equipment for the library in 2000. The Friends 2000 budget exceeds \$57,000. Current membership fees are \$5 for Friends and \$10 for Family. Gold Card memberships are \$35 for Sustaining, \$75 for Benefactor, and \$150 for Patron. Information about the Friends group is available on the library's web page at <http://www.tcpl.lib.in.us>.

CONCLUSION

The Friends of the Library movement has a rich and varied history. Groups at the national, state, and local level have had a tremendous impact on libraries and library services across the country providing both financial and advocacy support to the library.

Our research shows that Indiana public libraries big and small have active Friends of Libraries groups. The contribution that these groups make to their libraries is invaluable. The exploratory research we did for this article appears to be the first of its kind. Most Friends organizations do not preserve their documentation and history in any organized or formal way. In addition, there is no centralized group that has preserved the history of the Friends organizations at the state or local level in any formal manner.

Dedicated individuals have donated and continue to donate countless hours helping libraries complete their missions by becoming Friends of the Library. Theirs is a story worth telling and one that should be preserved for future generations.

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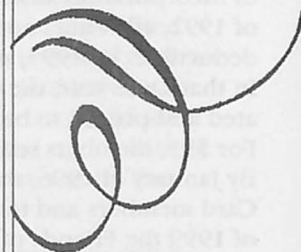
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This article had its genesis as a research project for the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science's L517: History of Libraries. The authors were students in the course taught by Dolores Hoyt in Indianapolis during the 2000 Spring Semester.

**VENDOR SELECTION USING THE RFP
PROCESS... IS IT FOR YOU? -- ONE LIBRARY'S
EXPERIENCE**

By Virginia A. Rumph



The following article is based on a presentation at the 1998 Indiana Library Federation Annual Conference given by Virginia A. Rumph (Serials Librarian, Butler University), Lindsay Gretz (Assistant Science Librarian, Butler University) and Eve Davis (Account Services Manager, EBSCO Information Services). The presentation and this article cover what an RFP is, the elements of an RFP, the evaluation process, advantages and disadvantages, a vendor's wish list, trends, and final thoughts.

DEFINITIONS

What is an RFP (Request for Proposal)? To paraphrase the ALA Glossary of Library Terms: an RFP is a document used to solicit proposals to provide a service or product. It can be formal or informal. A formal RFP is mandated by law or institutional regulations, and always involves a purchasing department or contracting office outside the library. An informal RFP is one that is not required by institutional or governmental regulations, and is administered totally within the library. Butler University employed an informal RFP in the serials vendor selection process.

In addition, a Periodical is defined as a publication intended to appear indefinitely and published more often than annually, and a Standing Order as all other open-ended publications including monographic series, annuals, and irregulars. Butler University Libraries subscribe to 1360 periodicals and 750 standing orders.

ELEMENTS OF THE RFP PROCESS

First, someone in authority, in our case the library dean, decides (often on advice) that the RFP should be done. Our dean designated the Serials Librarian (me) and the Assistant Science Librarian to be responsible for the RFP process.

Next, a timetable was created. For our serials RFP, we wanted to make sure the selected vendor(s) would be ready to handle our account by June 1, when our

fiscal year begins. It was also very important to avoid gaps in coverage if we switched vendors. Our time table included drafting the RFP document during January 1996, deciding which vendors to include, and mailing the document by January 31 to three periodical vendors and eight book vendors. We had to set a deadline for responses of March 15 (which gave the vendors six weeks) and schedule presentations by the three periodical vendors for March-early April. We called references, reached a final decision, and notified all the candidates of our decision by the end of April 1996. As this timetable unfolded, Lindsay and I had frequent consultations with our library dean.

Our RFP consisted of a cover letter informing the vendors of who we are, the date their reply was due, when the contract would commence, the period of the contract, instructions, and a summary of specifications in the RFP. These specifications were grouped by categories: background, reputation and financial stability of the agency, orders and cancellations, invoices and overall financial considerations, claims and title changes, customer based services, and computer based services.

Finally, as an appendix, a list of our paid serials (periodicals and standing orders) was sent to the periodical vendors, and a list of paid standing orders to the book vendors on a Mac formatted disk. Unfortunately, some of the vendors needed DOS, taking more time and effort. Also, when we decided to use a book vendor for the standing order titles, the periodical vendor we selected was unsure which titles should be deleted from the serials' list.

The evaluation process began with the arrival of waves of documentation from the vendors. In order to make any sense of all these responses, I decided to separate the periodical vendor responses from the book vendor responses, and create summaries of their answers to each question for easier comparison. This was especially useful for the book vendors since there were eight of them to scrutinize.

The evaluation continued with the three periodical vendor presentations which were open to all the staff (few were interested in attending). The presentations were very informative; each was unique. The staff saw each vendor's products and databases, and met the people who might be working with us.

Next, the dean called a meeting with the Associate Dean, Lindsay and myself to review information from the presentations and the summaries, as well as the original documents whenever a point needed clarification. At that meeting, we whittled down the number of book vendors from 8 to 2, and the periodical vendors from 3 to 2.

Follow-up questions to and from some of the finalists became necessary after this meeting. Lindsay proceeded to call each reference to schedule a convenient time for a formal phone interview. We devised questions for them that focused on those points that were most important to us. For the periodical vendor references these emphasized customer service responsiveness in such areas as new orders, claims, and title changes. For the book vendor references we were particularly interested in title status reports and other title inquiry services.

We learned it is important to talk to the right person in the chain of command—someone who deals with the vendor on a day-to-day basis, especially customer service personnel; someone in the trenches. Before our wrap-up meeting with the library dean, Lindsay and I pulled together all the pieces we had accumulated. We included answers from references, RFP response summaries, a book vendor testimonial from our Acquisitions Librarian, a list of pros and cons for each vendor using the key components of price, service, and electronic resources/database in a summary of our conclusions. We presented our findings to the library dean who agreed with our recommendations. As the last step in the process, he notified all the participating vendors of our decision.

REVIEW OF THE RFP

In reviewing the outcome of our RFP experience, what advantages and disadvantages did we discover? On the plus side, the RFP process gave us the opportunity to really scrutinize our serials' list. We were able to resolve problems and clear out dead wood before the process began. We had to articulate what we needed to look for from a vendor (e.g., reports, documentation, service, price). It gave us a method for comparing vendors using the same language and parameters. The process also provided a basis for future evaluation of vendors; are they doing what they said they would? The primary disadvantages were the amount of work required from both the library staff and the vendors; and, the amount of time consumed over the course of

months—creating the RFP document, waiting for responses, attending presentations, attending frequent meetings, and making decisions.

Eve Davis compiled a vendor's Wish List for the RFP process:

- Realistic expectations
- Allow 6-8 weeks for a response
- Allow for narrative responses—avoid yes/no check boxes
- Use the present vendor's invoice for title list pricing
- Proforma invoice required
- Mandatory presentations by vendors
- Required demonstrations of services
- Year 2000 compliance
- Request Dun & Bradstreet Report, not performance bonds
- Group questions in categories—avoid repetition
- Decision by library no longer than 6 weeks after vendor response deadline
- Submit RFP between Nov-May, but no later than July
- Request information only on expected services

She also talked about Trends in the RFP process:

- Either Long and detailed or Short and to the point
- Increased role of purchasing agents
- Hidden agenda to favor or disqualify a particular vendor
- Price as sole consideration
- Shorter time frame to respond
- Bundled services
- Stress on financial health
- Unrealistic expectations
- Increased level of involvement of new vendor in the transition period
- Automation as an important consideration
- Electronic capabilities increasingly important
- Repetitious questions
- RFP only—no presentation

OUR CONCLUSION

Could we have come to the same conclusion via an easier route—No! The combination of periodical

vendor presentations, answers to a thorough battery of questions, references' responses, and the mental exercise of articulating our needs were all crucial in reaching a decision we could justify to others and ourselves. Was the result worth all the effort—Definitely. The working relationships we have established with both the periodical vendor and the book vendor we selected are light years ahead of our previous experiences with serial vendors. We have a pruned serials list, and a logical division between the titles our periodical vendor handles and those that our book vendor handles.

As a concluding comment (remembering the ALA definition of an RFP), the usefulness of the Request for Proposal is not limited to serials. Any situation in which a vendor may be employed is fair game for the RFP process.

If you would like a copy of our RFP documents, please phone or email me at (317) 940-6491, vrumph@butler.edu.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Virginia A. Rumph is the Serials Librarian at Butler University. She has held the position since Sept. 1992. Her duties include supervising the acquisition, claiming, binding, and cataloging of all the library's serials. Prior to becoming Serials Librarian, Rumph was the Assistant Catalog Librarian, and the Periodicals Librarian at Butler.

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