State Library of Iowa

1997-98 Annual Report

Vision for Library Service in Iowa

Each Iowan will have equal access to information and ideas in order to lead an enriched life through lifelong learning and to participate knowledgeably and productively in a democratic society.

Iowa Commission of Libraries

Dwight Carlson
Des Moines
(Represents the Director of the Department of Education)

C. Gordon Greene
LeMars
Term expires: April 30, 1999

Eldon Huston
Des Moines
Term expires: April 30, 2001

William O'Brien
Des Moines
Iowa Supreme Court Administrator

Linda Railsback, M.D.
Des Moines
Term expires: April 30, 1999

Dale Ross, Ph.D., Chairperson
Ames
Term expires: April 30, 1999

Nancy Ross, Vice Chairperson
Harlan
Term expires: April 30, 2001

Berta Van Ekeren
Monroe
Term Expires: April 30, 2001

It seems impossible that another year has passed so quickly. But reflecting on the events of last year, it is astonishing how much was accomplished.

There was a time in the State Library's history when resources were delivered by horseback riders in some rural parts of Iowa. Thanks to SILO, Iowans can still find the information they need when a visit to the library is not possible. SILO's success is Iowa's success. It is a direct result of the concerted efforts of Iowa libraries, and was achieved through:

- technical development and implementation of SILO by the State Library in partnership with the Parks Library at Iowa State University
- consulting and training provided by the Regional Libraries
- libraries finding the resources to purchase basic computer equipment
- contribution of local libraries' "electronic" card catalogs to a statewide database
- libraries assuming the added responsibility of borrowing and loaning books to each other
- libraries mastering the Internet and electronic magazine and newspaper databases

Without these elements, Iowa residents would never have seen the benefit of this statewide electronic library information network. We were thankful that the 1998 Iowa Legislature agreed to provide maintenance funding for SILO in FY 98-99, and look forward to continued support.

The State Library also began developing a plan to help raise awareness in Iowa of Census 2000. The State Library is Iowa's official liaison for Census 2000, and is working with people throughout the state to make sure everyone is counted on April 1, 2000. From now until Census Day, the State Library will:

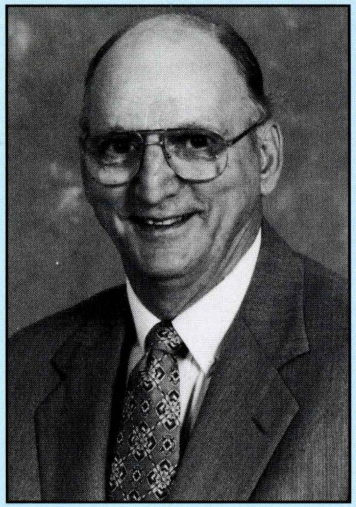
- encourage local governments to participate in pre-census programs
- work with communities and special population groups to increase participation in Census 2000
- coordinate promotional efforts to inform Iowans of the importance of being counted in the Census

This annual report is a snapshot of the activities that take place on a day-to-day basis at the State Library. And like most libraries, no two days are alike. The questions we receive and the answers we provide, the videos we loan and the Internet sites we locate, are driven by our desire to serve our customers. Our priorities for the coming year remain focused on customer needs:

- equitable access to library services for all Iowans through:
  - state aid for public libraries based on service measures
  - involvement of libraries in community-based programs to support learning
  - access to electronic information resources through libraries, schools, businesses, and at home
  - enhancement and expansion of SILO
- increased cooperation among libraries
- increased services to state government customers

As always, the State Library looks forward to working with the Iowa library community to reach these goals and to continue to improve library services for all Iowans.

A message from State Librarian Sharman B. Smith



A Report from Dale Ross, Chair Iowa Commission of Libraries

At its annual retreat in July, the Iowa Commission of Libraries set goals for 1998-99. Moreover, Commissioners noted several accomplishments: an increased visibility in the Legislature for the State Library and the Regional Library System; and the establishment of a greater presence outside of Des Moines that resulted from moving our meetings around the state. Several Commissioners also visited public libraries and library staff in various towns and cities. These activities, organized and spontaneous, have made all of us more cognizant of the many challenges facing public libraries today.

The Commission has pledged itself to promoting a state-wide awareness of the roles public libraries play in early childhood education. For many youngsters, the earliest exposure to reading occurs at story hours and summer reading programs at their local public libraries. The Commssion, therefore, has begun activities that are aimed at strengthening the connections between K-12 programs and public libraries. Recently, I met with Gail Sullivan and Ted Stilwell of the Department of Education to discuss this initiative and to explore ways to implement it. In the coming months, we plan to meet with the State Board of Education. We are hopeful that a task force can be appointed jointly to consider carefully possibilities for state-wide collaboration. Further, we plan to pursue partnerships with the Iowa Association of School Boards and the Iowa State Education Association, thus continuing to promote and strengthen the role of public libraries in the education of children.

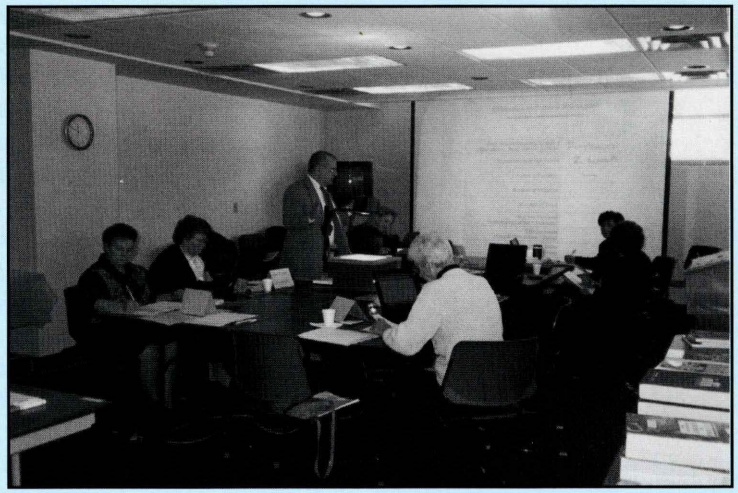
Another undertaking the Commission has begun is to help state government leaders learn more about Iowa's system of libraries. A Legislative Interim Study Committee on Libraries requested by the Iowa Library Association afforded the Commission and public and Regional library representatives from around the state an opportunity to explain our system of libraray service and to detail the needs and challenges facing that system. We also had an opportunity to speak informally with panel members on a wide variety of issues affecting library service. In sum, the day-long meeting acquainted some legislative leaders with issues ranging from the need for state health benefits and competitive salaries for Regional staff to the increasing demands and costs of technological innovations and to the urgent need for the "Enrich Iowa" program to help public libraries large and small, rural and urban, serve Iowans better and better. I, for one, was quite impressed by the attention the Interim Study Committee members focused on the presentations and by their willingness to learn what the Iowa library community is all about.

The coming months give promise of much progress. I and my colleagues on the Commission are committed to the proposition that improved library services and programs enrich the lives of all Iowans. Toward that end we bend our efforts ceaselessly.

Training/ Consulting / Workshops

As part of their mission to "promote excellence and innovation in library services," State Library staff spend hundreds of hours a year providing training, consulting and workshops to Iowa library staff and trustees. Opportunities this year included:

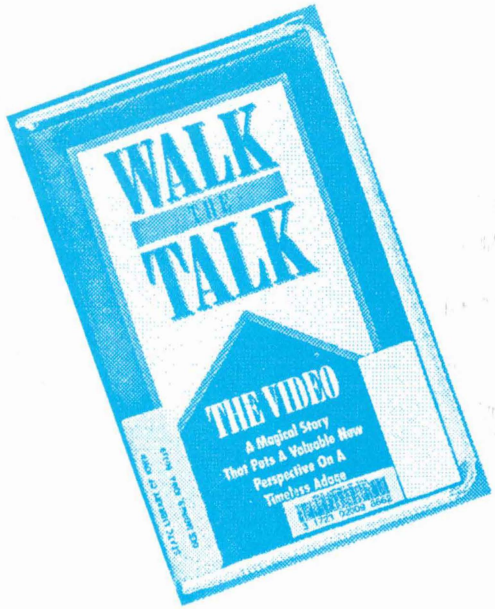
- Workshops on how to apply for discounts from the Universal Service Fund, which provides discounts on telecommunication costs and Internet connectivity
- Three grantwriting workshops -- "What Do Do Before You Ask for Money" -- held over the ICN
- Training on Windows 95
- Basic and advanced Internet training
- Workshop on "Internet Filtering in Libraries"
- Summer Library Program workshops
- Workshops on video reviews of new children's books; juvenile nonfiction collection analysis; weeding children's collections; adult nonfiction collection analysis; advanced collection workshop
- Library trustee workshops: "What's It All About? The Library Board Member's Job Description;" "The Power of Public Library Boards Over Budget and Finance;" "Library Philosophy 101: The Most Deeply Held Principles of the Library Community;" "Policy Development;" "Internet Policy;" "Hiring and Evaluating the Library Director"



- Nearly 250 people participated in Public Library Management 1 and 2, and found assignments to be not only interesting, but practical. One librarian wrote and received a grant from the R.J. McElroy Foundation to purchase Spanish literacy materials. Another director wrote to area businesses asking for donations to purchase reference and nonfiction materials. She raised over $1,250.
- The inaugural Hazel Westgate Youth Services Lecture was held April 16, 1998 with author Kathleen T. Horning presenting "Children's Books that Changed Children's Books: Groundbreakers in 20th Century American Children's Literature." Westgate Lectures will be held biennially.

Town meetings a popular event

Over 325 people attended the 1998 State Library and Regional Library Town Meetings in September. Meetings were held in Clear Lake, Storm Lake, Greenfield, Pleasant Hill, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids and Bettendorf. A lively exchange was held on "Who Killed the Public Library," which included discussions on what the public thinks about libraries, a review of initial findings from the ILA marketing plan, and the changing demographics and needs of Iowans.



The most sought after video in Audio-Visual Services was "Walk the Talk," based on the best-selling book by the same name. Copies of the video were booked solid between November 1997 and May 1998. Videotaped ICN trustee courses were also popular among librarians.

SILO a triumph for Iowans

SILO (State of Iowa Libraries Online) continues to grow as a major information resource. In addition to providing Iowa libraries and their customers with access to hundreds of online reference sources through the Internet, SILO contains the electronic card catalogs of the State library, public libraries and Iowa's academic libraries. It also includes a component which allows libraries to directly borrow and lend materials to each other.

- There are now 550 public, school and academic libraries using SILO interlibrary loan.
- Approximately 70,000 interlibrary loans a year are conducted through SILO.

SILO
State of
Iowa
Libraries
Online

www.silo.lib.ia.us

Shelves in the State Library would be bare if not for the support of Technical Services staff. Technical Services acquires materials needed in the State Library's government, medical and library science collections, manages the budgets for library materials, and creates or edits records for the electronic catalog. This year, Technical Services staff attended a conference on building digital collections, and a teleconference sponsored by the Fundamentals of Acquisitions Institute.

As the official treasury of documents produced by state government agencies,the State Documents Center gets requests for information produced anywhere from a month to over a hundred years ago. In the past year, for example, the Center provided attorneys with the latest long term care facility deficiency reports from the Dept. of Inspections and Appeals, and helped locate an 1870's Geological Survey Bureau publication on the laying of the State Capitol's cornerstone. Customers include state agency personnel, other depository libraries, and the general public.

Open Access

Three-year-old Laura Tibbs is shown at home with some of the books she and her parents checked out through Open Access at the Williams Public Library.

Use of the program continues to grow. Over 600 libraries now participate. Total transactions in 1997-98 were 2,273,845. Funding for the program continues to fall behind. Nearly half a million transactions were not paid last year.

Access Plus

Access Plus, the book sharing subsidy program which gives Iowans equal access to library resources by supporting library resource sharing, has 600 participating libraries. Libraries agree to loan their materials to other library for use by their customers. About 150,000 interlibrary loans are made annually through the program.

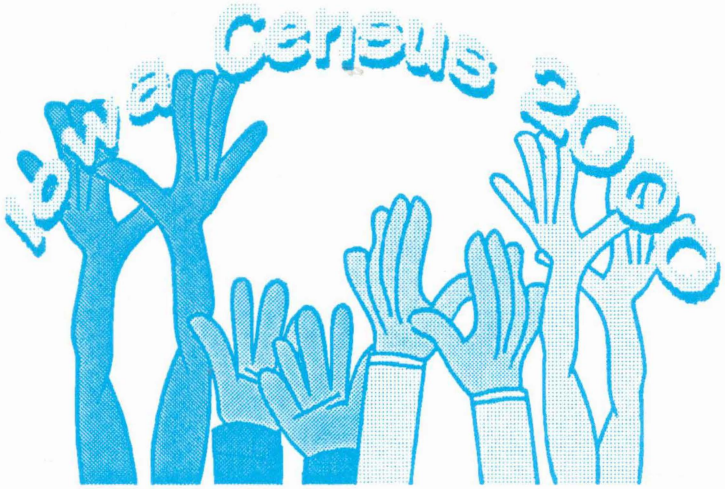
1998 Summer Library Program

Ninty-two percent of Iowa public libraries participated in the 1998 Summer Reading Program, "Rock and Read." Nearly 85,000 children participated.

Law library staff are masters in finding legal information pertaining to Iowa. In May, 1998 alone, the law library fielded questions from 17 states, including Iowa. In additional to perennial questions concerning landlord-tenant disputes, child support and common law marriage, more engrossing requests for information are all in a day's work. Examples:

- Request to loan a two-volume book on shopping center leases to a library in Reykjavik, Iceland
- Research request by the Arakansas legislature for Iowa's code section on driving in right-hand lanes
- Faxing law journal articles to a government official in Brisbane, Australia
- Copied the Amistad case (after the movie was released) for a local attorney
- Found information for a legislator on the oldest written law (A Sumerian law consisting mainly of a long list of rules to settle specific types of cases, such as the theft of a farm animal, and faulty work of a house builder)

By the end of FY98, law library staff had received 7,360 telephone requests, 524 in-person requests; and 168 electronic (e-mail) requests.



EVERYONE COUNTS

As Iowa's official liaison for Census 2000, State Data Center staff kicked into high gear this year to develop a plan to prepare Iowans in the public and private sectors, and at the state and local levels, for a complete count on April 1, 2000.

Preliminary meetings were held with members of the Governor's staff, Iowa legislature, city and county governments, and state and private agencies. Meetings were also held with representatives of various groups who have a stake in an accurate census, including the elderly, minorities, persons with disabilities and refugees.

Census 2000 presentations and training sessions were provided by the State Library. On July 21-22, 1998, training was held for cities and counties participating in the Census Bureau's address list review program. More than 600 elected officials and support staff from Iowa local governments attended.

State Data Center staff also conducted the day-to-day business of providing census data to its myraid customers. Requests for information come from business and government sectors, as well as news media, libraries, state data center affiliates and the general public.

As part of Information Services, the State Library's medical collection is used by a broad spectrum of Iowa citizens. Established in 1919, the medical library as been an important resource for health professionals, health-related agencies, students and the general public, as well as Iowa public, academic, health science and other special libraries.

The medical collection includes over 10,000 books and 390 current journal subscriptions.

Library Services and Technology Act

The State Library awarded several Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) demonstration grants in FY97-98. Davenport, Iowa City and Ames public libraries received LSTA grants for the purchase of electronic information kiosks which have connections to several sites, including the libraries' online catalogs, local government homepages, university websites, and job listings.

LSTA grant applications were also received from over 40 libraries for Technology Assistance Consulting Grants. The grants are intended to help libraries that are planning technology projects such as networking computers.

Building consulting services for Iowa libraries was also available through LSTA grants. Forty libraries received funds to contract with a qualified library building consultant.

INFORMATION IOWA

STATE LIBRARY OF IOWA

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Des Moines, Iowa
Permit No. 1195