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New study shows public libraries "critical hub" for citizens

Marshalltown Public Library part of the national study

Nearly a third of Americans age 14 or older - about 77 million people - used a public library computer or wireless network to access the Internet in 2009 according to a newly released national report.

The report, ["Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries"](#), is the first large-scale study of who uses public computers and Internet access in public libraries, the ways library patrons use the free technology service, why they use it, and how it affects their lives. It was conducted by the University of Washington Information School and funded by the Bill & Medlinda Gates Foundation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Low-income adults are more likely to rely on the public library as their sole access to computers and the Internet than any other income group. Teenagers are the most active users. Half the nation's 14- to 18-year-olds said they used a library computer during the past year, usually to do homework.

Three University of Washington Information School researchers spent nearly a week at the Marshalltown Public Library, according to library director Carole Winkleblack.

"They interviewed staff, library trustees and 15 business and civic leaders about the library's role in our community and the importance of the electronic resources the library offers," said Winkleblack.

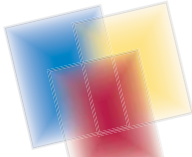
Winkleblack said the researchers also convened several teen focus groups and conducted one-on-one interviews with individuals visiting the library to assess attitudes towards the library and the value placed on free Internet access at the library.

"This appears to be a solid and significant study that I hope will be taken seriously," said State Librarian Mary Wegner. "One of the major points of the study is that public libraries have become a significant digital center where people can more effectively find jobs, improve their health, connect with government services and manage their finances. People are relying on their libraries for access to an abundance of information."

"Said Wegner, "I think it very exciting that some of the most important qualitative research informing the study took place at the Marshalltown Public Library. I am proud that an Iowa library played such a big role in such important work."

Research Methods

Data collection for the U.S. IMPACT Public Library Study took place in three concurrent phases. In order to provide greater context for interpreting and validating findings, four public libraries, including the Marshalltown Public Library, were selected to participate in one-week long site visits which included interviews and focus groups with public access technology users. Key library staff, administrators, board members, as well as representatives of local government agencies and community service organizations also participated in interviews and focus groups. The case studies were conducted between March and May, 2009 and resulted in 280 interviews. Telephone surveys were conducted between April and August 2009, and a Web survey used in 401 public libraries took place between April and June, 2009.



Kokke, King retire from State Library

We will miss them and wish both all the best!



Jackie Kokke, left, retired from the State Library on March 31. Jackie began as a clerk typist in the library's audio/visual unit in 1978. She became a library associate in A/V until the unit closed. Jackie then became the ICN scheduler in Library Development.



Karon King began working for the State in 1979. She began in the Department for the Blind, moved to the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation, then the Iowa Historical Department before settling with the State Library in 1989. Karon has spent many years assembling patents and trademark databases, as well as helping the public with patent research.

Help job seekers in your community; partner with Iowa Workforce Development

The State Library and Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) developed a partnership over the last year in order to better serve unemployed Iowans. The partnership was formally kicked off with an ICN program on October 13, 2009 for public libraries and IWD managers, followed by two online sessions in December for library staff on how to navigate the IWD Web site. On January 15, 2010 the State Library and IWD signed a letter of commitment between the two agencies. Shortly after, public libraries were invited to become IWD partners, or "library affiliates." About 80 libraries large and small have responded so far.

Sioux City Public Library touts itself as "Your E-Government Connection." According to library director Betsy Thompson, IWD Region 12 and the library joined together to cross-train staff on a variety of electronic resource materials, products and services in order to maximize resources for job seekers. The library is open nights and weekends, and offers free online resources for job searching and career help on "Learning Express Library" available through the library's Web site. The database includes licensing, certification and aptitude practice tests and is accessible with a full-service Sioux City Public Library card 24/7 from any Internet computer.

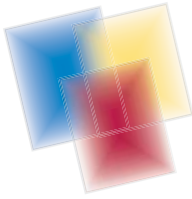
Nancy Trask, director of the Winterset Public Library, has found the partnership with her local IWD office beneficial to people in her community.

"We have a trainer from IWD coming to Winterset monthly during 2010. Every other month she conducts training at the library on resume writing, interviewing skills and job search techniques. On alternate months, she conducts training at the court house for ex-offenders on ways to succeed in a job search. She does a great job," said Trask.

A library's participation will demonstrate it is an engaged library, an active and responsive part of the community and an agent for change.

The State Library and Iowa Workforce Development invite all Iowa public libraries to sign the [letter of commitment](#) between your library and your regional IWD office. Most of the expectations outlined in the letter are things libraries are already doing. Job seekers and the community at large will benefit, as will the library, which will receive:

- * access to Microsoft Elevate America computer literacy training;
- * hard copies of the most used IWD guidebook: "Resource Guide for Job Seekers;"
- * enhanced visibility as a center for assisting job seekers.



ILA Legislative Day

Librarians, trustees and library supporters attended the Iowa Library Association's Legislative Day on Wednesday, March 3 at the State Capitol.

Forty-seven state representatives and 28 senators visited with nearly 75 library advocates.

From left, State Librarian Mary Wegner, ILA President Dale Vande Haar, ILA Past President Ellen Neuhaus, Governmental Affairs Chair Mike Dargan and NE Library Service Area Administrator Bonnie McKewon at ILA Legislative Day.

To see more photos, visit <http://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/images/10ila/>.

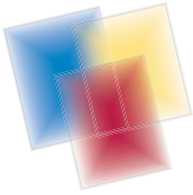
Task force charged with revising standards

A Public Library Standards Advisory Task Force has been created to revise the State Library's Standards and Accreditation program.

The program exists to encourage the ongoing development of high quality public library services in Iowa. The task force is working with State Library staff to review existing standards in light of best practices and current trends, and to develop the 5th edition of "In Service to Iowa: Public Library Measures of Quality." The group began meeting in January and is meeting monthly. A draft of the revised standards will be provided to the library community by early July, 2010.

Standing from left are Scott Dermont, State Library; Mary Wegner, State Librarian; Karen Randleman, State Library; Jet Kofoot, North Central LSA; Sue Padilla, Newton Public Library; Betsy Thompson, Sioux City Public Library; Bonnie McKewon, Northwest LSA; Nathan Clark, Emmetsburg Public Library; Becky Rike, Corning Public Library; and Emily Weaver, Perry Public Library. Sitting from left are Sandy Dixon, State Library; Daniel Boice, Iowa Commission of Libraries; and Susan Macken, Oelwein Public Library.





Iowa winners named in Letters About Literature 2010

Letters About Literature (LAL) judges have chosen 2010 Iowa winners and honorable mentions. Iowa students in grades 4 through 12 broke last year's record for participation in the Library of Congress' Center for the Book Letters About Literature (LAL) reading/writing contest. The contest is co-sponsored by Target. LAL encourages students to write a letter to the author of a book they have read that has changed their worldview. Last year, Iowa youth sent in more than 1,700 entries. This year Iowa teachers and students submitted 1,811 entries. LAL is a program of the Iowa Center for the Book, State Library of Iowa.

A reception will be held for winners and honorable mentions, their families and teachers, at the State Library on April 30. Iowa's Poet Laureate, Mary Swander, will be the guest speaker.

And the winners are:

Level I - Grades 4-6

First Place Winner is Jillian Gabby who wrote to Jennifer Jacob Richardson about her book "Winnie at Her Best." Jillian attends Horizon Elementary School in Johnston.

Second Place Winner is Melanie VanHorn who wrote Kate DiCamillo about her book "Because of Winn-Dixie." Melanie attends West Fork Middle School in Rockwell.

Third Place Winner is Cecilia Novotney who wrote Nancy Rue about her book "Lucy Doesn't Wear Pink." Cecilia attends West Fork Middle School in Rockwell.

Level I Honorable Mentions:

Amy English, Eisenhower Elementary School, Dubuque
Michaela Fishback, Price Lab School, Cedar Falls
Luke Safris, Horizon Elementary School, Johnston

Level II - Grades 7-8

First Place Winner is McKenna Lynch who wrote Joyce Carol Oates about her book "Freaky Green Eyes." McKenna attends St. Augustin Catholic School, Des Moines.

Second Place Winner is Sydney DeGeest who wrote to J.K. Rowling about her book "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone." Sydney attends Ames Middle School.

Third Place Winner is Olivia Baxter who wrote to William Golding about his book "Lord of the Flies." Olivia attends Spencer Middle School.

Level II Honorable Mentions:

Elizabeth Meier, Spencer Middle School
Anya Ogilvie, Oak Ridge Middle School, Marion
Tory Soma, Spencer Middle School

Level III - Grades 9-12

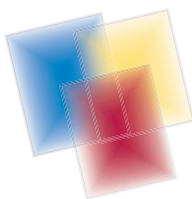
First Place Winner is Austin Helmink who wrote to Jeffrey Marx about his book "Season of Life." Austin attends Spencer High School.

Second Place Winner is Petra Hahn who wrote Tracy Kiddler about the book "Mountains Beyond Mountains." Petra attends Davenport Central High School.

Third Place Winner is Hannah Soyer who wrote Barbara Kingsolver about her book "The Bean Trees." Hannah attends Johnston Middle School.

Level III Honorable Mentions:

Stephanie Kilmer, Davenport Central High School
Lauren Stephens, Johnston Middle School
Oksana Weir, Davenport Central High School



Certification Update

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

Carol Adams, Runnells
 Rebecca Allison, Storm Lake
 Elizabeth Brase, Strawberry Point
 Diane Coberly, Center Point
 Trisha Hicks, Burt
 Matthew Hoehamer, Hull
 Brandie Ledford, Sac City
 Laurie Lee, Titonka
 Lana Lewis, Gilmore City
 Kay Montano, Lake View
 Joan Mooney, Eldora
 Barbara Pedersen, Boone
 Kelly Platte, Denver
 Serena Riesgaard, Avoca
 Amy Strong, Madrid
 Amy Stuenkel, Cedar Falls
 Brian Visser, Iowa City
 Katherine Raveling Whitcomb, Albion
 Krista Woodward, Osceola
 Peng Zhao, Granger

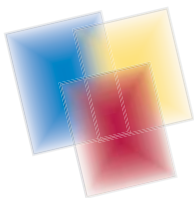


Discover Iowa

From vibrant cities to serene small towns and unique scenery, discover the history, heritage, people, pastimes, and nature of the Hawkeye State. To discover books in the State Library's Iowa Collection, please click on one of the categories below. Books can be requested through SILO.

[Iowa's history](#)
[Art and writing](#)
[Vacation and travel](#)
[People](#)
[Natural treasures](#)
[Sports](#)





News from around the state



Leslie Powell-Skinner, Eldridge, wrote about her experiences with the Scott County Library and won \$350 in a nationwide creative essay contest sponsored by the American Library Association.

Here's a the first verse of her poem.

"In these uncertain economic times, here's a truth that I have found
Using the Scott County Library is financially sound!"

[Click here](#) to read the complete poem.

Iowa librarian behind bars for good

Graettinger Public Library Director Nicole Harris was arrested and thrown in jail on March 24 in an effort to help raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Harris teamed up with local Girl Scout Troop #122 for their community service project. Bail for Harris was set at \$500. For more on the MDA Lock-Up and to see a humorous report on Harris' arrest, go to <http://www.joinmda.org/spenceria2010/nicoleharris>.

ISU library dean selected for Margaret Mann Citation

Olivia Madison, dean of Parks Library at Iowa State University was recently named the 2010 recipient of the Margaret Mann Citation presented by the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services. The Mann Citation, recognizing outstanding professional achievement in cataloging or classification, includes a \$2,000 scholarship donated in the recipient's honor by OCLC, Inc. to the library school of the winner's choice. Madison is recognized for having exercised decisive leadership in the development and management of cataloging throughout a long and distinguished career.

Waverly school wins national "library makeover" competition

The Acer and Intel School Library Technology Makeover announced that Washington Irving Elementary school in Waverly is the winner of a \$12,000 prize that includes 10 laptop computers and two desktop computers. The school was a casualty of the 2008 floods and is currently housed in a strip mall until a new building is constructed in about another year.

To win the grant, Washington Irving competed against 1,000 other schools nationwide, and nine entries in the semi-finals. All 10 of the schools received in excess of 81,000 votes from a nationwide audience. A key part of the winning submission was a video showing the extent of the flooding at the old school campus.

When principal Roger Wilcox told his 250 students of the award, everyone screamed, including Wilcox.



Ankeny librarian constructs self-check kiosk

Technically speaking, Eric Melton is the audiovisual/technical support librarian and supervisor of Kirkendall Public Library (Ankeny) circulation staff. While his primary responsibility is ordering and cataloging AV materials, he's earned a reputation as an entrepreneur. He was featured in the February issue of the library-related newsletter "Hotline" for the self-checkout kiosk he built. Melton was sticker shocked by the \$23,000+ price tag of purchasing and maintaining a selfcheck system, so he studied the script for communicating with circulation systems via SIP2 (the 3m protocol that most selfchecks use to get and send information to a system) and built his own. The open source self-check is a GNU licensed web application written in php. Melton said the project is available for free download at [google code](#).

Huxley PL celebrates impressive milestone

It has been just over 37 years since the Huxley Public Library began operations in November 1972. So it was with much ado that the library celebrated the check out of its 1 millionth book at 12:57 p.m. on February 4. The library was initially housed in the basement of City Hall, moved to the Ballard Plaza, and, as use increased, moved to the top floor of a larger building where it now services both the public and the Ballard Junior/Senior High School.

The library began with about 2,000 items and 170 patrons. Today it has more than 30,000 items and 3,000+ customers. Library director Mike Hanks is proud to point out that the library is open six days and four evenings a week to accommodate the various schedules of library users.



Huxley Public Library Director Mike Hanks congratulates the winners of a \$50 Borders gift card, Michelle Siepker, left, and Gina Ralston of the LilyPad Learning Center who checked out the 1 millionth book from the library at 12:57 p.m. February 4.

Be Counted!

Seventy-one Iowa public libraries of all sizes are partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to host 2010 Census Questionnaire Assistance Centers and Be Counted sites where residents can receive assistance on filling out their census forms or pick up an extra form if they did not receive one at home. Over a third of the census sites in Iowa are located in libraries, an indication of the civic engagement and vital community role of Iowa's libraries.

Check out 2010 census participation rates for Iowa counties, cities, and census tracts (updated daily). <http://www.iowadatacenter.org/2010participation>

