

**Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
Annual Report
2005-2006**

Goals for 2005-2006

The targeted goals for fiscal year 2005-2006 have been addressed and accomplishments within each goal are included below.

1. Improve access to electronic resources.
 - Wireless access is available on the first floor and in the Teen Spot.
 - An adaptive technology computer has been added for persons with disabilities. Staff has been trained to assist users in learning the software. Funding was received from the Community Development Block Grant.

2. Expand resources available electronically.
 - Patrons can download audiobooks from the library's website.
 - New databases were added: World Book, Bookletters, and Litfinder.
 - E-Books were added including: Business Plans and books for students preparing for exams or working on improving study skills.

3. Increase awareness of library services.
 - The May/June "Library Connection" newsletter was mailed to all households in Midland.
 - The library's website address was used on publicity materials. A staff Website Committee meets regularly to review the site and make changes.

4. Provide information to the Library Board to assist in decision-making.
 - Patrons' comments and concerns were reviewed and discussed at Board meetings, and responses are included in the minutes.
 - Information was presented on other libraries' experiences in allowing drinks in the library.
 - The goals, objectives and actions of the Technology and Customer Service Excellence Committees were reviewed and discussed. The Strategic Plan was extended to 2008.

5. Ensure the safety of employees and library users.
 - The Library's Safety Committee received the City Manager's Safety Excellence Award for 2005.
 - Staff is participating in a series of instructional programs on body mechanics as a preventative measure.

Highlights in 2005-2006

The Library Board nominated the Library for the 2005 State Librarian's Excellence Award. The nomination included new services added, collaborations with other community organizations, and the process used to address patron concerns. At the 2005 Michigan Library Association Annual Conference, the State Librarian announced that Grace A. Dow Memorial Library was the recipient of the award along with a check for \$5,000. The \$5,000 was used to re-upholster lounge chairs that were moved to the Mezzanine of the library to create seating areas.

The library began offering wireless access in May 2006. Hot spots are located in the adult fiction and nonfiction areas, the Cup and Chaucer Coffee Bar, and the Teen Spot in the Lower Level.

Beginning in February, the library joined libraries across the state to participate in MeLCat, a statewide database of library catalogs. Library cardholders can place holds on materials owned by other libraries and they will be delivered to the library via the statewide delivery service. There are over 6 million items available through MeLCat.

The Cup and Chaucer Coffee Bar celebrated their first anniversary on September 22, 2005. In order to increase purchases in the coffee bar, the Library Board voted in September to allow covered drinks in the library, except by the computers and in the Genealogy/Local History Room.

The library began offering access to downloadable audiobooks and expanded the ebook collection. A program was held to introduce and demonstrate downloadable audiobooks.

Forty-eight sessions of computer classes were offered using the mobile computer lab loaned by the Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative. The classes are conducted by Reference and Youth Services librarians.

Special children's events were held including: Once Upon a Time Day, Harry Potter Day, the annual Touch-a-Truck program, Teddy Bear Picnic, and the Children's International Fair during National Library Week.

Teens participated in the Volunteer program to help during the Summer Reading Program, heard an author speak during Teen Read Week, and the Teen Advisory Board assisted in planning teen activities throughout the year.

The Friends of the Library donated the money received in memory of long time Friends member, Jackie Froelich, to fund a puppet stage in the children's area. The Friends also donated funding for book giveaways at the library's first grade tours. In total, the Friends donated over \$28,000 to enhance library programs and services.

The Midland Genealogical Society volunteers who staff the Genealogy /Local History Room on weekday afternoons donated 643 hours serving 908 users.

The library collaborated with the following agencies on programs: Midland Area Chamber of Commerce, Delta College, Midland Genealogical Society, AARP, UNICEF, Library of Michigan Foundation, and the Michigan Humanities Council.

Statistics

The library experienced a 25,663 decrease in circulation and a 5,360 decrease in gate count (visits to the library) in 2005-2006 compared to 2004-2005. Use of databases increased as well as program attendance. The number of reference questions answered remained approximately equal to last year.

Staff reviewed the statistics of the fiction and nonfiction collections to determine in what areas circulation decreased. Check out of nonfiction books, both adult and youth, dropped the most. This may be the result of available information on the Internet and the preference to use electronic resources over print resources. There was also a significant decrease in check out of CD music, possibly indicating the popularity of downloadable music. Not surprising VHS and books on tape formats experienced significant drops. DVDs, books on CD and books on MP3 had increases in circulation over 2004-2005. The number of items in these collections has increased but still do not equal the number of VHS and books on tape in the collection, although these collections are being phased out and no new purchases are being made.

The declines in circulation and gate count do not constitute a trend at this point. More data is needed. Actions to be taken in 2006-2007 have been identified that may reverse the decrease in circulation. They are:

1. Review use of materials, particularly non-fiction.
2. Explore different ways to display materials.
3. Ensure that materials are up-to-date and accurate.
4. Expand popular collections like Book Express.
5. Utilize website to promote materials.
6. Promote related print materials at programs.
7. Increase interaction with patrons at library.

Future Directions

The library will continue to offer diverse services, understanding that our community embraces new technologies with their conveniences and ease of use, and supports maintaining traditional print materials. Looking forward, the library will:

- Expand wireless access throughout building.
- Study the need for additional public access computers.
- Develop programs that promote use of library.
- Purchase print material to maintain a vital collection.
- Build on collections of electronic formats of books, audiobooks, and subscription databases.
- Respond to availability of other electronic formats.

Goals for 2006-2007

1. Address circulation loss in 2005-2006 with action plans.
2. Expand access to electronic resources.
Extend wireless access capabilities to meeting areas and the Mezzanine.
Provide hard-wired ports for laptops and other devices.
3. Continue exploring technological improvements to library services through the Technology Excellence Committee.
4. Develop additional ways to communicate library services and programs to the community.
5. Participate in the Discovery Square Placemaking Committee.
Assist in contributing, researching and implementing ideas.
6. Assist the Library Board in meeting their goals.
7. Maintain a safe environment.
Continue body mechanics program with sessions in August, December, and March.

**Grace A. Dow Memorial Library
Circulation Statistics**

CIRCULATION	2005-2006	2004-2005
Circulation – Adult Print	319,578	324,558
Circulation – Youth Services Print	320,044	329,067
Circulation – Audio Visual	134,934	143,434
Circulation – Interlibrary Loan	20,310	17,062
Circulation - Misc	1,674	8,082
Circulation – All Materials, Adult and Youth Services	796,540	822,203
Days Open	337	338
Average Daily Circulation	2,364	2,433
Gate Count	474,551	479,911
Average Daily Gate Count	1,408	1,420
Number of Card Holders	58,727	55,221
Number of Non-Resident Cards Purchased	50	55
Number of Subscription Databases	50	44
Database Sessions	28,335	24,900
Database Searches	325,495	235,960

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Activity Counts

ACTIVITY	2005-2006	2004-2005
Adult Program Attendance	3,654	3,861
Youth Services Program Attendance	21,804	20,320
Total Program Attendance	25,458	24,181
Reference Questions – Adult Services	41,451	40,256
Reference Questions – Youth Services	23,590	24,800
Total Reference Questions	65,041	65,056

Collection Counts

	2005-2006	2004-2005
Items in the Collection	282,281	275,089
Collection Count – Adult	162,905	159,790
Collection Count – Youth	119,376	115,299
Collection Count - Print	239,696	248,306
Collection Count – Non Print	42,585	26,783