

Harford County Public Library
Annual Report 2010

Illumination

Star Library





Message from the Director



Fiscal year 2010 was a challenging year for Harford County Public Library (HCPL). We began the year with a budget reduction and faced hard decisions about how to continue to provide quality library service with fewer resources. With the benefits of a dedicated staff and a supportive Harford County community, we still finished the year among the stars.

A new strategic plan helped define HCPL's vision. The library's core purpose "connecting people with information and promoting the love of reading within the community" focuses on providing responsive and creative services to meet the changing needs of the community, developing and growing new revenue streams in order to continue to provide excellent services and resources, and enabling the community to understand that the library is a vital and indispensable asset and to proactively advocate on its behalf.

Despite a reduction in hours HCPL continued to offer a wide range of programs. The Winter Reading Program for adults and teens, *Winter without Books, Nevermore!* exceeded previous years with 5,448 people registering. Later in the year, the Library's Summer Reading Program, *Make a Splash, READ!* exceeded all previous registration numbers with 18,027 children and teens participating. Harford County residents consistently visited the library seeking help in job searches and finding assistance from library staff on topics from how to write a resume to how to complete an online job application on one of HCPL's public computers. In addition to the wide range of children and adult programs in the branches, use of HCPL's outreach vehicles continued to grow. Children showed their devotion to the Rolling Reader by celebrating Annual Bookmobile Day complete with a banner signed by the all the students at the afterschool center. Silver Reader staff received constant feedback from appreciative senior citizens who said repeatedly how much the library's visits enriched their lives.

Accessing library services and materials became easier during the year with the launch of a redesigned website. Visually welcoming and easy to use, the website was one of the first library websites in the country to be available on mobile devices as well as through traditional computers.

Notwithstanding the many challenges during the year, the library staff discovered that the stars were within our reach when it was announced that Harford County Public Library was recognized as one of *Library Journal's* Star Libraries. Based on a rating system for service to the public, HCPL received a four star ranking, one of four public libraries in Maryland to do so. We were also proud to have one of HCPL's staff members, Maurice Coleman, Technical Trainer, recognized by *Library Journal* as a Mover and Shaker. The award is given to young professionals who are doing innovative work in libraries.

The ability to overcome the obstacles HCPL faced at the beginning of FY 2010 is due to the dedication of an exemplary staff, Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, Friends members, and volunteers as well as the people who use our services every day. As I move on to a new phase of my life, I want to thank everyone for making my time at Harford County Public Library so rewarding.

Audra L. Caplan
Director, Harford County Public Library



Message from the Trustees



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Dear Friends of the Library,

2010 continued to be a challenging year for many of Harford County's families, and that reality was obvious in the continued surge of demand for library services. Stretched budgets and limited resources continued to make our library system greatly in demand, and I am especially grateful that our budget did not see any additional cuts to it this year.

Support from the Harford County Public Library Foundation as well as the entire branch Friends groups enabled the Harford County Public Library (HCPL) to offer innovative programming and services. Grants also provided much needed funding including supporting the partnership with the Boys and Girls Club and the Local Management Board in developing the Aberdeen Youth Program, which provides Aberdeen teens with a stable environment that offers both fun and educational support on a regular basis.

One of the year's greatest successes was The Winds and Words of War, an exhibit of original World War I posters on display at both the Bel Air and Jarrettsville branches. Through the partnerships with the Foundation and community organizations throughout the county, HCPL was able to offer an exciting array of programs focusing on the United States during World War I.

Another of the big achievements of FY 2010 was the opening of the expanded Whiteford Branch. It was a wonderful experience on opening day to welcome the many Whiteford residents who had waited anxiously for the new 13,278 square foot space that offers a dedicated teen space with its own computers and gaming systems, an attractive interactive play area for children, as well as more shelf space for books and DVDs.

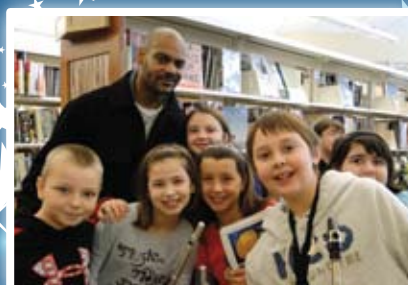
Many of the library system's accomplishments were achieved through the help of Harford County residents providing thousands of volunteer hours. People demonstrated their support by helping with everything from checking in library materials to reading to children in the Sharing the Gift program, to acting as docents for the Winds and Words of War exhibits. In addition, members of the community advocated for HCPL at County Council meetings and in Annapolis.

2010 also marked the end of HCPL Director Audra Caplan's long and exceptional career with Harford County, which culminated in her inauguration as president of the national Public Library Association. Through years of big budgets and lean times alike, Audra led our system superbly, with a fierce dedication to its staff and customers and a vision and passion undiminished by long hours and ever present challenges. Many of the accomplishments of the past decade in our stellar library system are due to Audra, and we owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude and wish her much happiness in her retirement.

May 2011 be a happy, healthy and prosperous year for you and your loved ones.

Lucie Snodgrass

Chairperson, Harford County Public Library Board of Trustees





WITH THIS ISSUE: REFERENCE 2010 E-Reference Ratings


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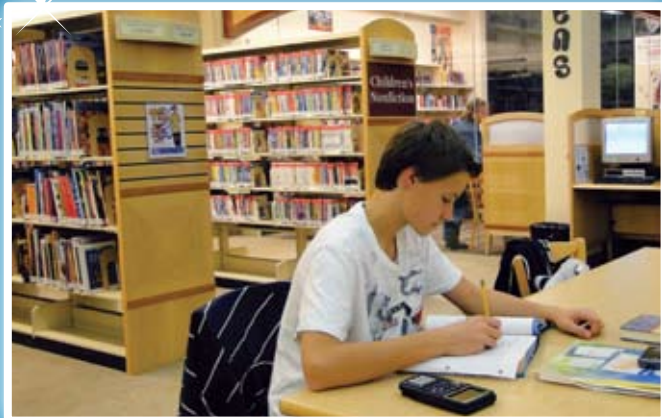
Read Business Information. (RBI™)

NEW STARS

258 Libraries
Top the *LJ* Index
of Public Library
Service



The cover features a dark, starry night sky background with the title 'NEW STARS' in large, glowing, multi-colored letters. Below the title, the text '258 Libraries Top the LJ Index of Public Library Service' is displayed. The America's Star Libraries logo is positioned to the left of the word 'Service'.





Star Award

Harford County Public Library Receives STAR Award

Library Journal (LJ) announced its star public libraries in the *LJ* Index of Public Library Service 2009 and Harford County Public Library was one of four public library systems in Maryland (Harford, Carroll, Baltimore County and Montgomery) to receive a star rating. This award was based on 2007 national data from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and HCPL received a 4 star rating, the highest for the state of Maryland.

The *LJ* Index scored 7,278 libraries across the country and identified 258 libraries nationwide that are delivering exceptional service. Libraries were grouped by the size of their operating budgets and rated 5, 4 or 3 stars

according to four per capita output measures that indicate public service – circulation, visits, program attendance and public internet usage.

It is the people behind the statistics, the staff members and volunteers working at the branches, that make these libraries stars, noted *LJ* editor, Francine Fialkoff. These libraries are stars because they are involved in the community. They don't watch the local issue go by...nor do they let budget concerns stop them from addressing those needs. They pursue creative partnerships that allow them to stretch their dollars and expand services. Even more important, there's a consistent focus on excellence.

**"If you love a flower that lives on a star,
then it's good, at night, to look up at the sky.
All the stars are blossoming.**

- *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupery





Photography by Jeffrey Sauers



J. Sauers



J. Sauers



J. Sauers





Star Branch

The Whiteford Branch of Harford County Public Library reopened to the public in early January 2010 following a complete building renovation. The building increased in size to 13,278 square feet with a capacity to hold 70,000 items in the collection; a 1,047 square feet meeting room; 24 public computers; self checkout; interactive children's play space with a puppet theatre; dedicated teen room with a gaming system; and a quiet study room.

The Harford County Public Library Whiteford Branch Campaign, a collaboration between the North Harford Friends and the Harford County Public Library Foundation, raised \$69,000 with support from local businesses, philanthropic leaders and area families.

A grant was also received from the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Library Development and Services, County Library Capital Project Grants Program. These funds were used to purchase materials, enhance the teen room and build the children's interactive play space.

"We had the sky up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made or only just happened."

- The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain



Star Programs and Events

“Hitch your wagon to a star.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Summer Reading Program 2010

Harford County Public Library's Summer Reading Program, *Make a Splash READ!*, began on June 14 with close to 9,000 children and teens signing up the first week. Summer reading programs play a significant role in preventing summer reading loss and public libraries provide an important bridge for students between academic years. A recent study done by Dominican University showed that students who participated in public library summer reading programs scored higher on reading achievement tests at the beginning of the next school year than those students who did not participate. HCPL served over 18,000 children and teens during the summer of 2010. Collectively, participants read 115,000 books. The program was supported by the Friends of HCPL and the HCPL Foundation.

Winds and Words of War

The Winds & Words of War: Posters and Prints from the San Antonio Public Library, a collection of 40 framed vintage World War I posters, was on display at the Bel Air and Jarrettsville branches from March 20 through May 31, 2010. These posters were created by famous artists to mobilize the American public on behalf of the war effort and feature classic images of patriotic themes and messages.

HCPL was one of only 12 locations in the nation to house the exhibit. A major publicity plan was employed to promote the exhibit to the local community and mid-Atlantic region. Over 2,600 people attended the exhibit and 70 volunteers were trained to be docents. Customer comments upon seeing these unique lithographs were overwhelmingly positive.

HCPL's promotion for *The Winds & Words of War* earned a second place win in the HISTORY™ Library Outreach Contest; a contest connected with its landmark 12-part series *AMERICA The Story of Us*. The contest criteria

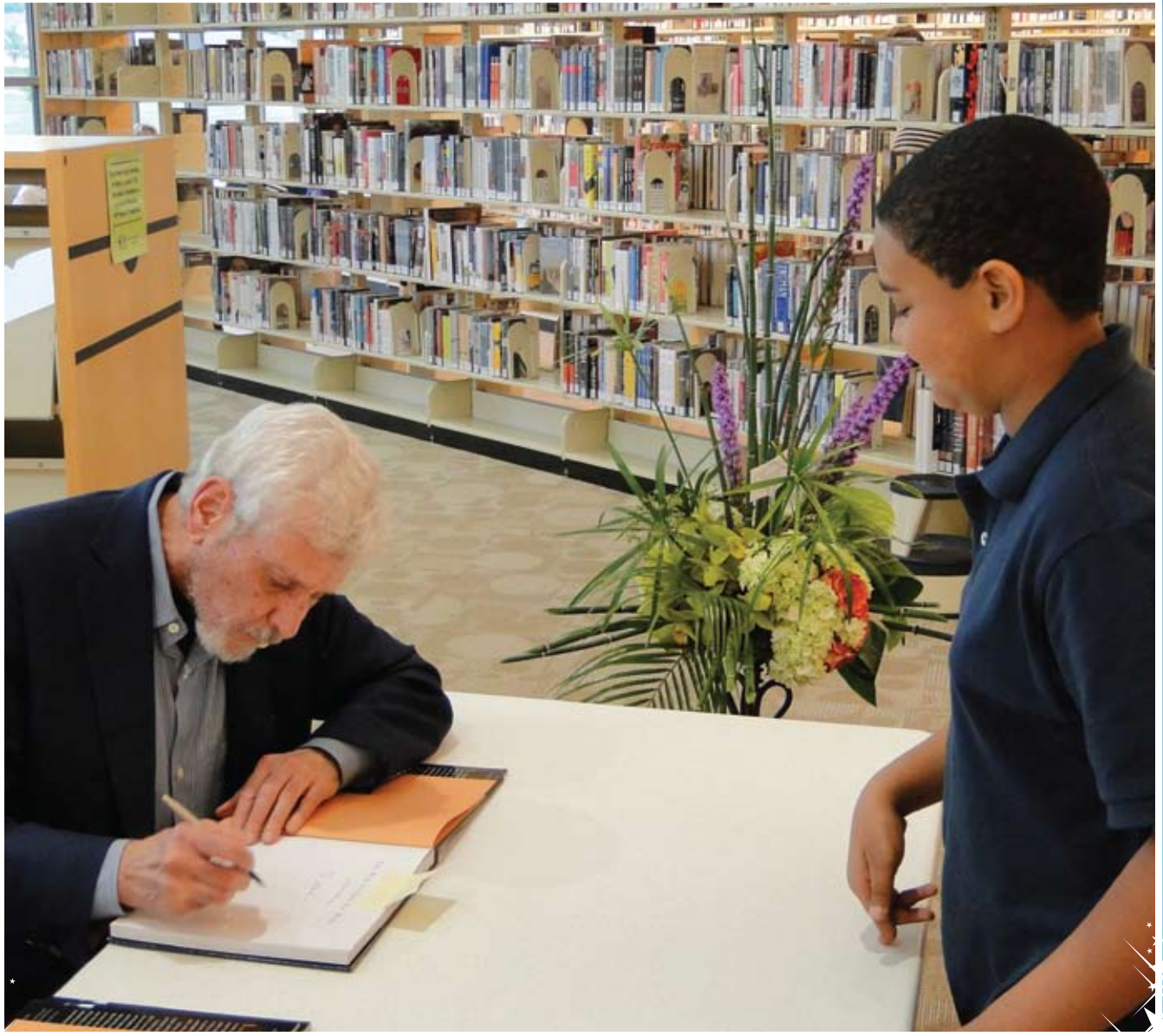
included the relevance of the exhibit to American history, the effectiveness of the exhibit or media project overall, and outreach about the projects to local communities.

Author visits

HCPL hosted several authors this past year. The comprehensive list includes Jennylyn Hart at Fallston with her latest book *Jenny's Journey*; Ed Okonowicz, at Joppa and Havre de Grace with his releases: *Haunted Maryland*, *Baltimore Ghosts* and *True Crime: Maryland*; Cornelia Nixon, at the Jarrettsville branch discussed her first book *Jarrettsville: A Novel*; Steve Luxenberg, at Bel Air with *Annie's Ghosts: A Journey into a Family Secret*; Gyleen Fitzgerald at Havre de Grace talked about *The Dream: A Magical Journey in Colourful Stitches*; Lucie Snodgrass and photographer Edwin Remsberg at Abingdon with a Maryland favorite, *Dishing Up Maryland*; Wendie Old at Joppa reading excerpts from *To Fly: The Story of the Wright Brothers*; Michael Lasser at Whiteford with a program in conjunction with our Winds and Words of War exhibit *America's Songs: The Stories Behind the Songs of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley*; and Russell Freedman at the Abingdon branch discussed *The War to End All Wars: WWI*.

Winter Reading Program

Face a *Winter Without Books? Nevermore!* The Winter Reading Program for adults and teens at HCPL kicked off on January 4 and ran through March 6. During the first week of registration, the program saw a 23% increase versus the prior year with over 2800 adults and high school teens signing up. Participants received a commemorative pen and mug depicting a raven in celebration of Edgar Allan Poe's famous poem. In honor of Edgar Allan Poe's birthday, January 19, 1809, the Edgewood branch held a program centered on his life and the mysterious circumstances surrounding his death. The 2010 Winter Reading Program was supported by the Friends of HCPL and the HCPL Foundation.





Star People

Community Engagement

"Communities Thrive @ Your Library" is the theme HCPL initiated to engage community members to connect with the Library and voice their thoughts on why HCPL is important to them. Through this effort we saw tremendous advocacy throughout the year supporting why the Library is a vital part of the community. Customers told their stories in many ways including being taped and shared on the HCPL website and sites like YouTube.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a key role in the success at HCPL and this past year the Library experienced a 56% increase in volunteer hours. Over 20,000 customers received computer instruction which included assisting customers with resume writing, job applications, creating email accounts and searching health and tax information. Over 13,000 children were visited by staff and volunteers in daycare homes and centers through two outreach services – *Opening the Gift* and *Sharing the Gift*. Seventy volunteers signed up to be docents for the Winds and Words of War exhibit.

**"Everybody's a dreamer,
everybody's a star."**

- The Kinks

Communities Thrive @ your Library

Harford County
Public Library



The logo features a large blue five-pointed star on the left. The word "Star" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font inside the star. The word "Technology" is written in a blue, cursive script font to the right of the star. The background is white with a trail of blue stars of various sizes leading from the top right towards the center.

Star Technology

Website Relaunch

A redesigned website was launched providing customers with a new experience in accessing HCPL online. The new website offers a clean look with easy navigation. The homepage highlights current news including featured library programs; new release lists for books, movie DVDs and music CDs; and a section to showcase photo slide shows and videos.

The website also has sections that are targeted to specific users, including children, teens, seniors, educators, and business/job seekers. From the homepage you can also access HCPL's social media activity on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

We have an app for that!

Harford County Public Library launched a mobile app in January 2010. The first public library in the state to develop an app, this feature allows for "touch" access to all services available on the Library website including branch hours, phone numbers (touch to call), and addresses (touch for directions). Users can browse lists of featured programs with full descriptions including registration phone

numbers (touch to call); browse new releases and booklists and access the catalog to request materials; submit a question to library staff; view their account; and access links to HCPL's social networking sites. This service is available for iPhone, iPod Touch, Android and webOS users.

Living Treasures Goes Digital

The Living Treasures Oral History, a collection of stories of more than 280 Harford County residents, was digitized and made available online. The online collection was part of a collaboration with the statewide digitized program at the State Library Resource Center, headquartered at the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The Harford County collection was the first to be included on the state's digital cultural heritage site. These oral histories include firsthand accounts from Harford County residents on issues such as racial integration, farming practices, education, childhood experiences and careers. Candidates are reviewed and approved by the County Council. To be eligible as a Living Treasure, participants must be at least 70 years old and have lived in Harford County for 40 years or more.

"The stars are the street lights of eternity.

- Author unknown

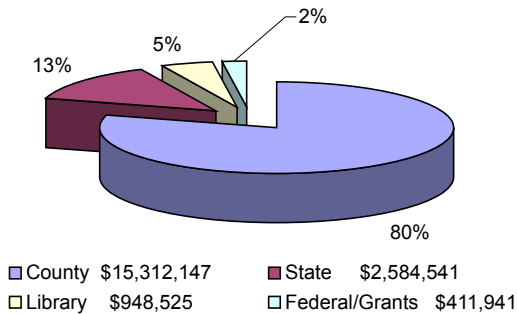
Harford County Public Library Financial & Statistical Report FY10

Collection Size: 1,032,428

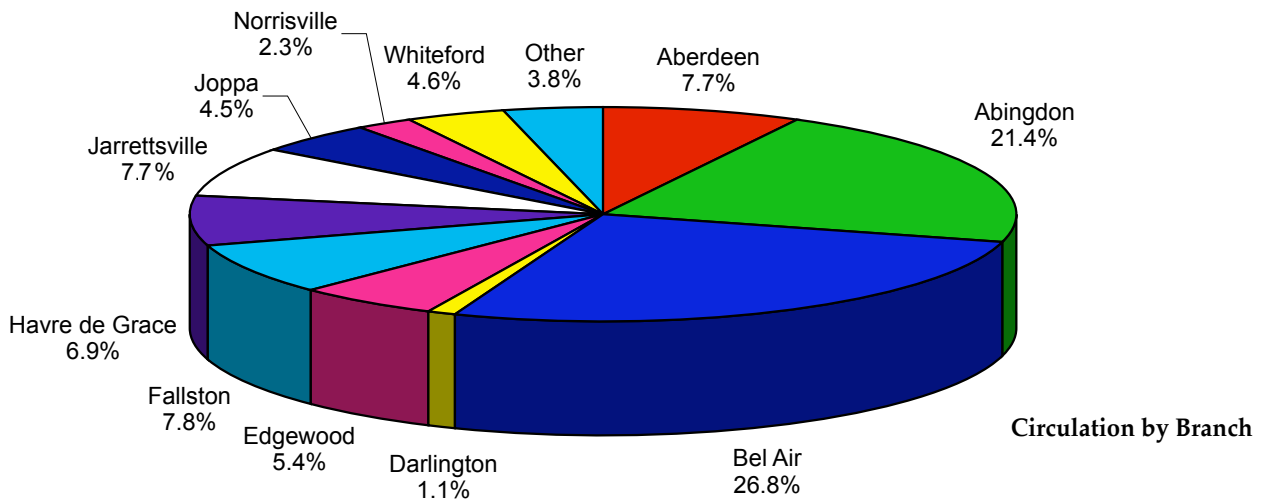
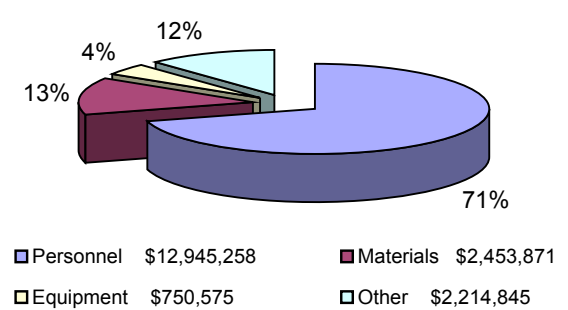
Registered Borrowers: 214,116

| | FY 10 | FY 09 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Circulation | 4,699,033 | 4,851,373 |
| Information Questions | 587,656 | 642,896 |
| Programs | 2,996 | 3,271 |
| Program Attendance | 156,269 | 154,011 |
| Virtual Visits to Library | 8,766,359 | 6,642,137 |
| Walk-in Customers | 1,635,011 | 1,789,341 |
| Volunteer Hours | 30,393 | 24,023 |
| Meeting Room Use by Outside Organizations: Number of Groups | 464 | 2,168 |
| Number of People | 8,798 | 27,996 |
| Interlibrary Loan - Received | 14,449 | 18,127 |
| Interlibrary Loan - Loaned | 11,993 | 11,710 |
| Full Time Equivalent Personnel | 235.85 | 251.28 |
| Public Access Computers | 351 | 317 |

FY 2010 Revenue Total: \$19,257,154



FY 2010 Expenditures Total: \$18,364,549



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NORRISVILLE Branch Manager - *Joan Stiffler*
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410-638-3608, 410-452-8831

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410-612-1600

SILVER READER Librarian - *Katherine Clipp*
410-638-3151



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