



**THE  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY**  
of Cincinnati  
and  
Hamilton County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**Press Release**

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## **2006 Successful for Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County**

2006 was another very successful year for the Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County. The Main Library and 41 branches loaned 14,783,307 items last year, a 3.5% increase over 2005. It also answered 1,726,374 reference questions, responded to 9,417 online chat reference questions through KnowItNow, offered the community access to a collection of 9,551,178 items, provided 10,904 periodical and 463 newspaper subscriptions, issued 220,113 library cards, and served 286,293 active registered borrowers.

“Our Library received national recognition for the quality of its programs and services, ranking 8<sup>th</sup> in Hennen’s American Public Library Ratings, up from number 10 in 2005, our first year in the top 10,” said Library Executive Director Kim Fender. “We also received a 2006 John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award for outstanding library public relations for our 2005 library card sign-up campaign, *Get Your RED Card, It’s Wild!*”

“Through our plans and the development of our services, we re-dedicated our Library to our customers,” she continued. “We’ve made several small changes that improve the customer’s experience including shortening the time materials are overdue before the customer is notified and accepting library card applications online. The late fall upgrade to our computer system also included changes that made it easier for customers to use the Library. We’re working to make self-service checkout available at our busiest locations and to accept credit/debit card payments online and at every Library location.” Last year both ebooks and digital audio were added to the collection, and both have been very popular with our customers. “We plan to continue to grow this collection to meet the increasing demand,” said Ms. Fender.

### **In 2006, the Library also:**

- o Reached 323,667 people of all ages through 14,874 free programs
- o Provided free in-house access to 137 electronic databases and remote access to most of these
- o Posted 42,994,289 online resource uses, a 26% increase over 2005
- o Provided 296,721 braille, digital, and recorded books to blind and handicapped readers
- o Registered 2,784 people to vote
- o Faxed 4,397 pages of reference materials to library users
- o Delivered approximately 4,190 individualized collections for use in area classrooms

- o Processed 20,481 interlibrary loans to assist library users (loaned 17,063; borrowed 3,418)
- o Delivered 1,084,203 items as interagency loans for convenience of library users
- o Made 1,956 visits to nursing homes, retirement centers and correctional facilities
- o Mailed 6,080 books to homebound readers
- o Provided 208 large print book collections to 21 branches
- o Enabled 408 people to take the GED practice test at library locations
- o Processed 1,011 U.S. Passport applications in 2006, for income totaling \$30,330

Two new services were outstanding and introduced in 2006: the *Veterans History Project* and the reading blog, *Turning the Page*. The first honors the many veterans from our area and documents their history for future generations. *Turning the Page* discusses books and is a great resource for avid readers to find fiction and non-fiction on a variety of topics.

The Library Board approved moving forward with a redesign of the Main Library to better address the changing needs of customers. Based on extensive research of both Library customers and libraries nationwide, ML/21 will bring new services to the Main Library including Homework Central, a Technology Center, a Teen Center, the Popular Library, and still provide reference assistance and access to the Main Library's extensive collection. Additionally, this restructuring will result in operational savings of about \$1 million annually, making it both an improvement in service and operational efficiency.

“We worked with the Ohio Library Council and Senator Richard Finan to lay the groundwork for next year’s state budget, but we won’t know for several months how effective these efforts have been,” she continued. “A report from the Local Government and Library Revenue Distribution Task Force encourages the Ohio General Assembly to keep public library funding strong by adopting the new funding model recommended by the Task Force. To further support these efforts we joined with eight neighboring libraries in Butler, Clermont and Warren counties on an Economic Benefit Study-our first collaborative effort. The results of this study were truly astonishing showing that for every dollar the state invests in public libraries, communities receive \$3.81 in benefits. Public libraries are good for our communities and are good stewards of public funds and we’re pleased to have this study, conducted by Levin, Driscoll & Fleeter, to demonstrate this benefit.”

With the work completed and initiated in 2006 the Library system is poised to move into 2007 ready to face the many challenges ahead of us. “We’ll keep listening to our customers as we strive to meet our mission of ‘connecting people to the world of ideas and information,’” said Ms. Fender.

✓ **Information about events at the Main Library and 41 branch libraries is available on the Internet site: [www.CincinnatiLibrary.org](http://www.CincinnatiLibrary.org).**