



*Okaloosa County
Public Library Cooperative*

*Annual Plan of Service
FY2009*

*Approved by the OCPLC Governing Board
on
September 15, 2008*

Introduction

History of the Cooperative

Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative is the result of a desire on the part of the County's dedicated representatives, citizens and librarians to create and foster a comprehensive cache of informational resources and materials designed to serve the residents of Okaloosa County.

In 1991, the portion of the Florida Administrative Code dealing with the state aid program was revised to allow a new type of library system referred to as a Library Cooperative. A cooperative type system allows existing municipal libraries to remain autonomous while agreeing to share resources through cooperation and joint planning and benefit from grant monies not available to individual libraries. A committee, chaired by Mary Esther Public Library Director Betty Robertson, was formed to study the feasibility of such a system in Okaloosa County. Both the County and all involved cities worked together on the study, which ultimately concluded that a cooperative system could work successfully in Okaloosa County.

It took approximately two years to complete the above study, but the Okaloosa County Library Board, consisting of officials appointed from the County and each participating municipality, signed the final documents officially establishing the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative (OCPLC). Charter membership began October 1, 1997 with three public libraries on board and leading the way, Robert L. F. Sikes Public Library in Crestview, Mary Esther Public Library and Niceville Library. In October of 1999, Destin Library, Fort Walton Beach Library and Valparaiso Community Library doubled the Cooperative's potential by joining as new members.

Over the course of this partnership, the Cooperative and its member libraries have made great strides in library service to area residents. All County residents have access to each member library and its programs and resources. The Cooperative brought technology to the libraries with a new automation system and online public access catalog. Technology is supported and encouraged by the Cooperative at each library in an effort to provide the best possible experience for patrons seeking information and knowledge. Training both staff and the public has become an important priority for OCPLC and will continue to expand as our technology needs grow. Programming at the libraries is supplemented with funds from the Cooperative headquarters to expand the possibilities and diversity of programs libraries can offer individually and as partners.

The Cooperative continues to remain dedicated to providing quality library service to the residents of Okaloosa County and surrounding areas in accordance with the interlocal agreement.

Vision

Developing a broad vision for the future of Okaloosa County served as the basis for determining the needs of area residents.

- ❖ **Economy** – Residents in our county will flourish in a healthy economic environment reflected by increased jobs in the manufacturing and technology industries. Employment will be available for residents with various skills, abilities and educational backgrounds.
- ❖ **Culture, the Arts, and Recreation** – Residents in our county will have access to a wide variety of cultural and recreational opportunities. Opportunities for enjoyment and participation in the creative and performing arts, parks, organized sports and recreational activities will be readily available. Libraries will have the funding necessary to provide the resources to help residents work toward making this vision a reality.
- ❖ **Education and Life Long Learning** – Students involved in all levels of learning will get an appropriate and effective education that will prepare them for successful adulthood, enabling them to have full-time employment and competitive pay. People of all ages will have opportunities for lifelong learning through technology and other local resources.
- ❖ **Environment** – Residents of our county will thrive in an environmentally friendly community that supports activities that conserve and protect our beautiful beaches and waters.

Community Needs

The Cooperative and its member libraries strive to address the following needs of residents in Okaloosa County:

- ❖ Library collections that not only provide resources concerning the environment, but also address environmental issues and the concept of building sustainable communities.
- ❖ Quality information that is current, valid and reliable.
- ❖ Shared resources with public schools to avoid duplication of costly electronic reference and learning programs.
- ❖ Access to distance learning materials.
- ❖ Programs dedicated to children, young adults, adults and seniors.

Mission Statement

The mission statement for OCPLC encompasses what the Cooperative and member libraries do for residents by providing:

- ❖ Current materials as well as information on popular cultural and social trends. Materials will be provided in a variety of formats for recreational reading, viewing, and listening.
- ❖ Access to free technology and online information resources.
- ❖ Support and assistance to students to facilitate learning and success
- ❖ Assistance and training to improve library customers' ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively.
- ❖ Resources enabling personal growth and development.

Service Philosophy

The Cooperative staff and member library directors and staff believe in a service philosophy for their patrons that demonstrate:

- ❖ **All** customers are important.
- ❖ Libraries matter to the community.
- ❖ Pride in our home libraries.
- ❖ Pride in our library cooperative system.
- ❖ Pride in our service to our libraries and our patrons.
- ❖ Cooperative, pleasant, and respectful demeanor to all who come through our doors.

Service Responses

Service responses define the roles of a library and clarify what a library provides to the public. The Cooperative is comprised of six member libraries. The service responses outlined below were chosen for the Cooperative as a whole and will be addressed by all participating libraries with the assistance and support of Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative. Each member library may also choose to address additional service responses that are appropriate to their unique communities.

- ❖ **Current Topics and Titles:** Current titles and best sellers will be available to satisfy library user's recreational reading needs. Library collections will support and stimulate the "pure and simple pleasure of reading." Libraries will provide a current collection of materials with sufficient copies of high demand titles to ensure that customer requests are met promptly. Materials will be offered in a variety of formats including print, audio and video. Selection of materials will be based primarily on

local demand for the specific formats. Collections will be organized so materials are easy to locate. Displays and display shelving will feature current titles and materials of specific interest to the communities. Library staffs will keep current with best selling authors and other items of interest to patrons.

- ❖ **Formal Learning Support:** Libraries will provide informational resources and assistance using educational tools including computers containing multimedia educational software and educational videos. They will provide distance education materials and information. Cooperative libraries concentrate on providing materials that supplement rather than duplicate resources available in institutions of formal learning. Libraries may provide study rooms and computer labs as available, develop a World Wide Web site with links to curriculum and other educational sites, as well as coordinate with local schools to provide tutoring or expert assistance to students. Individual libraries may also develop formal agreements with educational institutions. Library staff needs to be knowledgeable in the use of technological resources and be able to teach students to use them.

- ❖ **Lifelong Learning:** Member libraries will provide an extensive collection of circulating materials on a wide variety of topics in which the public has a sustained interest. Libraries may build collections in a few specific subject areas to serve the needs and requests of local patrons. Collections will encourage browsing to help familiarize customers with different aspects of each library's materials. Cooperative member library staff will work to develop a good level of general knowledge in order to increase their ability to assist independent learners as they explore a wide range of topics.

- ❖ **Information Literacy:** Libraries will provide access to information in a variety of formats and will offer Internet training and access. Libraries may offer group classes, individual tutoring, or spontaneous one-on-one training on topics including media literacy and finding resources on the Web. Libraries may provide a computer lab or classroom to facilitate training and instruction. Special programs on media literacy may include basic library skills and bibliographic instruction, instructional technology computer training, effective strategies when using search engines, or complex searches in the online catalog. One or more library staff in each member library will have a good range of computer skills and will be familiar with different types of software and electronic resources.

Goals and Objectives

State Library Consultant, Sondra Taylor-Furbee, facilitated a planning session during FY 2003 with the Library Directors, Cooperative Administrator and the Bookmobile Coordinator. The information obtained has been used to develop the goals and objectives for this plan. The goals and objectives have been amended and revised to meet FY 2008-2009 needs for library service throughout the Cooperative service area. The primary focus of the goals and objectives contained in this plan is how the Cooperative can facilitate library service in Okaloosa County.

PROGRAMMING

Programming Goals

The Cooperative seeks to coordinate library programs among member libraries in order to ensure high quality and increase both the number of programs provided and the overall program attendance.

Programming Objectives

- 1) Investigate different types of programming provided by other Florida public libraries and community service organizations to determine cost, availability, feasibility and success of those programs.
- 2) Library directors will continue the practice of contacting bookstores, schools and museums to encourage partnering with them regarding programming. Information pertaining to programming will be shared with the Director's Council and the Governing Board as it is collected.
- 3) The Cooperative headquarters will disburse funds for programming to each library not to exceed \$2000 as those funds are available. The funds will be disbursed by March 2009.
- 4) Number of programs and overall attendance for all Cooperative libraries will increase by 5%. Statistics on number of programs and attendance are compiled by each library and reported on the annual report to the State Library.

Evaluation: The Cooperative will track the overall number of programs provided as well as the attendance to provide an accurate indication of objectives met.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology Goals

The Cooperative seeks to provide increased training for staff and the public, improve system performance, maintain a professional web page and help libraries sustain updated technology.

Technology Objectives

- 1) Member libraries have developed and implemented staff training schedules designed to meet the needs of new and existing staff with regard to operation of automation software and general office software.
 - a. The Cooperative in partnership with PLAN will provide training for library staff on the use of electronic resources, and the Cooperative will also help member libraries provide instruction for helping patrons access and evaluate those resources more effectively.
- 2) Member libraries will continue to provide computer instruction to assist patrons with new and improved technology.
 - The number of training opportunities available to the public and hours of technology instruction provided to the public throughout the Cooperative shall increase by 25%.
- 3) Replace those computers that need to be replaced in order for each library to maintain adequate equipment necessary for automation upgrades. Cooperative member cities will replace public access and staff computers as they become outdated or inoperable.
- 4) In partnership with County IS personnel, replace those servers and core components of the library network that must be replaced to maintain the integrity and functionality of the Cooperative's system.
- 5) Work with County IS personnel and the libraries directors to explore ways to introduce wireless access to the bookmobile and for library staff and patrons.
- 6) Work with County IS personnel to install cabling for the bookmobile office enabling bookmobile librarian full access to Horizon and the Internet.
- 7) Attend continuing education seminars and conferences to investigate and learn about the latest technologies available for libraries. This information will be shared with the Cooperative for the purpose of enhancing library service.
- 8) Continue to monitor the web page and its effectiveness by checking for broken links and outdated information.
- 9) Work with County IS personnel and the library directors to connect the Niceville Library, the Cooperative headquarters, and the Bookmobile office to the county's fiber optic network.
- 10) Work with County IS personnel and the library directors to prepare the Horizon database for the upgrade to Symphony.
- 11) Work with County IS personnel and the library directors to assure that all public access and staff computers comply with the standards necessary to successfully upgrade to Symphony.
- 12) Work with County IS personnel and provide the funding necessary to purchase the hardware, software, and contract with a Dynix consultant if necessary to successfully upgrade to Symphony during FY2009.

Evaluation: All improvements and changes to existing technology will be reported as it occurs.

MARKETING

Marketing Goals

The Cooperative continues to seek ways to increase the public's overall awareness of libraries and the services they provide, as well as the county's participation in the Library Cooperative, with a concentrated marketing campaign. The intention of this effort is to enhance circulation, foster community spirit and allow for greater lifelong learning opportunities for area residents.

Marketing Objectives

- 1) Disseminate information highlighting Cooperative sponsored events and services throughout the year as needed.
- 2) Actively schedule meetings with local community groups to present promotional materials as an ongoing process throughout the year.
- 3) Continue to promote books-by-mail program throughout FY2008-2009.
- 4) Continue ongoing Governing Board Member Orientation Program in order to facilitate their ability to govern and promote Cooperative services.
 - Offer a tour of each library and introduction to staff.
 - Presentation of services provided by each library throughout the year.
 - Presentation of services unique to member libraries throughout the year.
- 5) Increase number of registered borrowers by 5% throughout Cooperative service area by September 30, 2009.
- 6) Continue to investigate partnerships with area organizations to increase awareness of libraries and library service.
- 7) Work with the library directors and the county's Public Information Officer to determine methods of increasing awareness of the county's participation in the Library Cooperative.
- 8) Continue to be a strong advocate for library growth and expansion of all Cooperative libraries in Okaloosa County. Provide guidance and assistance as requested for all construction projects.

Evaluation: A master file of all brochures and flyers created for promotional purposes will be kept at the Cooperative office. The annual State Library report shall reflect at least a 5% increase in registered borrowers for Okaloosa County.

BOOKMOBILE SERVICE

Bookmobile Goals

Bookmobile service has grown significantly since the inception of the Cooperative. The goal in the coming year is to continue the upward growth trend in providing service to Bookmobile patrons.

Bookmobile Objectives

- 1) Provide funding for the Bookmobile to add at least 500 new items to the collection by September 30, 2009.
- 2) Implement a summer program unique to the Bookmobile to provide for all the needs of users unable to participate in traditional summer library programs.
- 3) Review and adjust the bookmobile schedule as necessary to ensure that those residents who need non-traditional library service are able to access library materials.
- 4) Review and adjust the bookmobile schedule as necessary to ensure the most efficient use of time and fuel.

Evaluation: Items cataloged for the Bookmobile are able to be captured via the Horizon automation program statistical reports. This report shall be generated at the end of September for review.