

2009 Hunterdon County Library Commissioners

Dr. Thomas Valasek, Chairman
Mr. J. William Newitt, Vice-Chairman
Dr. Ken Jagel, Jr, Finance
Dr. Peter Craig
Ms. Nouhad Jensen
Mark Titus, Library Director
Floyd Saums, Assistant Library Director

2009 Hunterdon County Freeholders

William Mennen, Freeholder Director
George B. Melick, Deputy Director
Erik C. Peterson
Ronald Sworen
Matthew Holt
Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator

Libraries in the Hunterdon County System

Hunterdon County Library Headquarters (HQ)

314 State Route 12, Bldg. #3, Flemington 08822 908-788-1444
Monday-Friday, 8:30-9:00; Saturday, 9-5 [Open Sundays 1-5 in Sept-May]

North County Branch (NCB)

65 Halstead St., Clinton 08809 908-730-6262
Monday, Friday, Saturday, 9-5; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9-9

South County Branch (SCB)

1108-A Old York Rd., Ringoes 08551 908-782-3564
Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 9-5; Tuesday, Wednesday, 9-9

Bunnvale Library

7 Bunnvale Rd., Califon 07830 908-638-8884
Wednesday, 1-8; Thursday-Saturday, 10-5

Frenchtown Public Library

29 Second St., Frenchtown 08825 908-996-4788
Monday 9:30-12:30; Tuesday, Wednesday, 3-5, 7-9; Friday, 9:30-12:30

High Bridge Public Library

71 Main St., High Bridge 08829 908-638-8231
Monday, Wednesday, 10-12, 3-8; Friday, 10-12, 3-7; Saturday, 10-2

Holland Alexandria Free Public Library

129 Spring Mills Rd., Milford 08848 908-995-4767
Monday-Friday, 9-12, 3-8; Saturday, 9-3

Readington Township Library

105 Route 523, Whitehouse Sta. 08889 908-534-4421
Tuesday, Thursday, 12-8; Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9-5; Sat. 9-12 (closed August)

Tewksbury Public Library

31 Old Turnpike Rd., Oldwick 08858 908-439-3761
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10-6; Thursday, 12-8; Saturday, 10-3

Three Bridges Library

449 Main St., Three Bridges 08887 908-782-2908
Monday, Thursday, Friday, 9:30-5:30; Wednesday, 12-8

HCL Bookmobile

Call 908-788-1421 for schedule.



Hunterdon County Library

www.hclibrary.us

ANNUAL REPORT 2008





Freeholder Ron Sworen at Beach Night in March



HCL and author Dar Hosta at the Farmers Market

Volunteer Activities

The volunteer program in the county library flourished during 2008. At the North County Branch (NCB), 10 adult and 37 junior volunteers donated 1,582 hours of their own time and at HQ, 9 adult and 21 junior volunteers donated 1,116 hours. All sorts of people choose to donate regular hours every week at their local library. There are high school and college students (some considering careers in the library field), young adults from the Center for Educational Advancement, people in the process of changing careers, young people working off Community Service hours, grandmothers and grandfathers, and folks who just love the library atmosphere.

Volunteers engage in a wide variety of tasks. Although they do not perform any jobs for which a paid position exists, they are kept very busy by Mary Noone-Kozakiewicz, who supervises the volunteers at NCB, and Linda Reynolds who supervises HQ's volunteers.

During 2008 the volunteer force at NCB played a large role in getting the Library Anniversary displays ready by sorting and selecting photos, articles and artifacts.

The volunteers searched newspapers from 1999 which were to be discarded and photocopied articles of local historical significance. To print new labels for magazine boxes, volunteers created an easily maintained database.

At HQ, a dozen volunteers were trained to carry out a massive spine label changeover project. This project began late in 2007 and involved using a computer to generate new spine labels for thousands of juvenile books. Previously these books were labeled with the first letter of the author's name. For ease of locating particular books in the juvenile collections at HQ, NCB, and SCB, these labels were replaced so that the author's entire last name is visible on the spine. In 2008 volunteers completed the juvenile books at HQ and SCB and started on books sent from NCB.

Another project that the HQ volunteers oversee is the "Welcome to the Community" mailing project. Newcomers to Hunterdon County receive an information packet describing our library system and its resources and services. Volunteers make mailing labels from the real estate transactions published in the local newspaper, stuff the envelopes and prepare them for mailing.

Because there is plenty of space at HQ to display and promote the library's collections, 8-10 themed displays are created each month. The entire staff gives input into these displays and the enterprise is overseen by display coordinators Linda Reynolds and Terry Edwards. Volunteers play a large role in the process by helping pull books and other items and arranging them in attractive displays.

In addition to these special projects, volunteers provide invaluable assistance with a variety of essential tasks like photocopying and restocking scrap paper holders, tax forms, bus & train schedules and book displays. They shelf read - put the books back in order after browsers finish perusing -so patrons and librarians can find what they need. All these time consuming 'behind-the-scenes' tasks help us to better serve all of our patrons.

Reference Department

Working proactively in the area of Reader's Advisory, the Reference Department put together 26 book group kits, which were borrowed by members of local book groups, as well as by in-house book groups at HQ, NCB, and SCB. In addition, the library promoted October's National Reading Group Month with a Reading Group Open House. We also started a registration of local book groups so that we may better serve the needs of this growing phenomenon in our community.

We added approximately 600 titles to our downloadable audiobook collection, which included 150 titles in a new format that could be used with Mac computers and iPods. Hunterdon County Library circulated 2,816 downloadable audiobooks in 2008.

Reference transactions were up by over 14%, with 13,352 questions at Headquarters and 11,288 at North County Branch.

Interlibrary loans also increased. We borrowed 3,131 items (an increase of 14%) and lent 1,668 (an increase of 45%).

Because Rosetta Stone, the popular language-learning database, no longer licenses its product to libraries, we replaced it with Mango Languages. Patrons seem pleased with the new product.

Youth Services Department

2008 was a big year for the Youth Services Department. In addition to our very popular storytimes for babies and preschoolers, we were also able to concentrate on school age children with our Tweens and Teens programs.

At the Headquarters Library, we held a series of Art Exploration programs for Tweens which combined reading and crafts. At the North County Branch Library, the Tween Zine program is a series of writing workshops for children in grades 4-6 which culminated in a magazine of their best writing pieces.

The Teen Café programs have been long-standing favorites at both HQ and NCB. In 2008, the NCB Teen Café successfully partnered with both the Hunterdon Radio Theater and Kohl's.

Unfortunately, in 2008 we came up short one Youth Services Librarian position due to a countywide modified hiring freeze. As a result, we had to cancel a preschool storytime at the South County Branch and the Art Exploration and Teen Café programs at Headquarters.

Even with the cancellation of programs, our statistics were still impressive. The 2008 Summer Reading Club had 1,232 active participants who read 28,239 books. Youth Services also had 658 total programs in 2008. 9,796 kids and 4,369 adults attended.

Message from the Director

This was a year filled with much success and more than a touch of irony, too. Our business went through the roof with circulation up 21% over 2007. This was the year we took delivery of a shiny new bookmobile, a blue and gold dynamo designed to match our library card in looks and our libraries in spirit. As the economy began to falter, activity in all our facilities picked up at a ferocious pace. Demand for our services was going up... up... up at the same time our shattered economy was going down... down... down. By year's end it was very clear that more and more first timers had decided to check us out and, yes, they really liked what they saw. Our focus on superior customer service, diverse and innovative programs, and a family friendly environment really got everyone's attention.

Ironically, just as our business was booming, we began to face the prospect of making do with less. Library management, as well as the entire staff, worked hard to minimize the impact of a temporary downsizing resulting from a modified hiring freeze. Cutbacks like this were a phenomenon being felt not only in Hunterdon County but elsewhere in libraries across the country. This was the year it became quite clear that we would have to postpone our plans to build new regional libraries in the southern and northeastern parts of the county. Yet, in spite of these setbacks, we remain hopeful for the future thanks to the support of our awesome Friends of the Hunterdon County Library, as well as our Library Commission, Board of Chosen Freeholders, County Administrator, community partners, and all of our enthusiastic patrons.

- Mark Titus, Library Director



2008 - The Year in Review

The Hunterdon County Library celebrated a milestone year, its 80th anniversary! The Library was formed through a referendum in 1927, and began operation in June, 1928 with a staff of one librarian and two assistants. In those early days, the "library" was not a building to go to, but was a system of "library stations", which were small cupboards filled with books and placed around the County in post offices, general stores, etc., where local people went to borrow their books.

Eighty years later, the Library has become a thriving system with a 55,000 square foot main Headquarters library, two branches, in Clinton and Ringoes, and seven affiliated community libraries! The library now owns about half a million items, and checked out over 1,600,000 items in 2008. The residents of this county have always supported their library system, and value it highly. The increase in circulation, 21% higher than in 2007, demonstrates that level of support. The library administration and staff strove to meet the expectations of this library-supporting county, by enhancing services and providing interesting materials to read, listen to, and view, while keeping the cost below the previous year's budget, and coping with less staff during this challenging economic time.

The following illustrate the library's commitment to providing for our community:

- After 18 years of service, the Library bookmobile was finally replaced with a wonderful new vehicle. The process of reviewing vendors, writing specifications, the bidding process and waiting for the vehicle to be built was a lengthy endeavor, taking nearly two years. The result was worth the wait, as our new bookmobile enables the library to continue to provide library services to those communities furthest from other facilities, and also to serve special populations, such as senior citizens and nursery school age children in a very cost-efficient way. We look forward to many years of service from this wonderful new vehicle with its welcoming "eye popping" paint job. Look for it on the road!
- Increasing the number of times an item may be renewed to two, if the item is not on hold for someone else.
- Installing self-checkout machines, provided by the Friends of Hunterdon County Library, at Headquarters and the North County Branch to streamline the process for those who need only a few items.
- Greatly increasing the numbers of book displays on timely and interesting topics, to add interest and inform our patrons of the library's offerings.
- Greatly increasing the number of programs, including, for the first time, outdoor concerts on the newly installed patio stage on the side of the Headquarters building.

The Library enjoyed a very successful year in 2008, and we look forward to providing even more for the County's residents to enjoy and learn from in the year 2009.

-Floyd Saums, Assistant Director

South County Branch Library News

The South County Branch Library (SCB) continues to be a busy library in the southern part of the county. This fall, the library began an evening book group to compliment morning and afternoon book groups held at the Headquarters and the North County Branch Libraries. The group was an immediate success.

Bookmobile News

A brand-new, bright blue bookmobile from OBS replaced the almost twenty-year old bookmobile in December. Patrons are delighted with the new bookmobile. It has attracted many new patrons who, in the past, had only driven by the old bookmobile, but had to stop to take a look at the shiny new one.

Affiliated Libraries News

During 2008 the Affiliated Libraries all continued to enjoy a surge of increased circulation and new patrons. The libraries all once again participated in the Hunterdon County Library's Summer Reading Clubs for children and adults and many of the smaller libraries enjoyed story times and craft programs presented by librarians from the Hunterdon County Library. Book groups continue to be popular at many locations and all locations have internet stations for the public to use. Several of the libraries already offer free wireless internet service, and many more will be adding it during 2009. Remember, your Hunterdon County Library card may be used at any one of these libraries.

Bunnvale Library For Bunnvale Library, 2008 was a year of change: new faces on the staff and a new roof. Circulation continued on an upward trend, an increase of 17.4% over the previous year.

Frenchtown Library Frenchtown Library's adult reading group has grown quite a bit. For the month of December they tried something different and held poetry readings. One of their elder patrons memorized several poems from **Now We Are Six!** The former reference/biography room is being made into a reading room complete with easy chairs and magazine racks.

High Bridge Library All the summer programs went well at the High Bridge Library. The children really enjoy the craft programs provided by the Hunterdon County Library.

Holland Alexandria Library Holland Alexandria Library is proud to report that they had their highest circulation ever at 54,339 and the highest patron visits at 24,429.

Readington Township Library Readington Township Library displayed children's art work from the Whitehouse United Methodist Preschool during the year. The kindergarten classes from the Whitehouse School made a fall field trip to the library. In addition to enjoying a storytime, everyone had a great time exploring the library while looking for a special book to check out with their new library card.

Tewksbury Library plans continued for the Tewksbury Library's renovation project, and construction on the new staircase began shortly after Thanksgiving.

Three Bridges Library Circulation continues to grow at the Three Bridges Library. Many new patrons have discovered Three Bridges. Thanks to the Friends of Hunterdon County Library they were able to add several new magazine subscriptions.

Friends of the Hunterdon County Library Highlights

The year began with the Friends gearing up for their 12th Annual Used Book Sale. Once again, this popular community event went off without a hitch on April 26 and 27. The annual Private Sale on April 25 was oversubscribed and sold out in one week – 60 people (up from 50 last year) attended this special advance look at the 120,000 items donated from the community. Netting close to half a million dollars over the 12 years of this event, the Friends added \$40,000 to their Long Term Library Development Fund which now contains \$80,000.

Other allocations included two Self-Check-out Machines – one for HQ and one for NCB. The Friends continued to fund the children's summer reading club prizes and refreshments and in 2008 added funding for the adult summer reading club, in its second year. Finally, as usual, the Friends allocated \$1,000 to each of the seven member community libraries.

Books for the College Bound Scholarships were awarded at the HCL Annual Appreciation Party for the Friends on June 5. In 2008, there were two deserving graduating seniors at Delaware Valley High School so the Scholarship Committee decided to award six \$500 scholarships in 2008.

The Friends of Hunterdon County Library Conference Room became fully furnished in 2008 and groups began booking this room for meetings.

Ongoing projects include the HQ landscaping which will be a work in progress for years to come. The book club met 10 times in 2008 alternating between NCB and HQ. The Outreach Committee continued its services.

Popular programs for the Friends included Professional Storyteller Mary Ann Pater-niti, who entertained the nearly 100 people who attended the Friends Annual Dinner on October 3; and Professional Actress Linda Kenyon, who performed her one woman show "A Life of My Own: Meeting Eleanor Roosevelt" to a packed house of over 100 on December 3.

The year ended with the Friends co-sponsoring "Life Lessons with Elizabeth Gilbert" with the Hunterdon Regional Cancer Center on Wednesday, December 10, at Hunterdon Central Regional High School. A few hundred people attended Ms. Gilbert's remarks and Q&A about her best-selling book "Eat Pray Love" while a smaller group (for a higher ticket price) attended a private post-event reception and book signing.



Author Elizabeth Gilbert , Bobbi & Mark Titus, Dana Neubauer, and Terry Edwards

2008 Budget Highlights

	2007	2008
Salaries & benefits	\$3,747,808	\$3,985,143
Books	\$635,944	\$533,759
Newspapers, magazines, microfilm, indexes	\$67,300	\$63,974
Music, DVDs, books on tape, etc.	\$271,700	\$276,854
Online database subscriptions	\$95,000	\$85,030
Furniture, equipment, supplies	\$94,699	\$80,778
Youth & adult programming	\$31,200	\$32,582
Capital reimbursement	\$415,000	\$325,000
Library development reserves	\$120,000	\$20,000
Conferences & training	\$18,000	\$4,750
Vehicle maintenance and gas	\$14,300	\$10,051
Total Library Budget	\$6,147,149	\$6,068,130

Circulation Statistics for the Year

	2007	2008
Books	798,418	863,321
Magazines	25,350	31,997
Music (CDs, cassettes)	64,457	77,344
Books on Tape	19,841	12,017
Books on CD	40,108	65,021
Videotapes	98,258	44,538
DVDs	283,002	482,803
CD-ROMs	3,215	3,225

Items Borrowed Per Library Location

	2007	2008
Headquarters	492,088	591,045
North County	477,864	579,318
South County	100,297	115,792
Readington	74,621	86,441
Holland Alexandria	42,481	53,378
Tewksbury	44,731	56,705
Three Bridges	32,030	41,724
Bunnvale	37,999	44,605
Bookmobile	12,256	18,615
High Bridge	12,201	13,115
Frenchtown	6,339	7,794
Total	1,332,907	1,608,532

Adult Programming/Public Relations

Programs at HCL Headquarters (HQ)

HCL Headquarters hosted 68 musical programs, lectures and workshops in 2008. That's 26 more programs compared to 2007. Attendance for the series was over 5,000 patrons, which is approximately a 30% increase over 2007 and more than quadruple the number of patrons who attended programs at HCL in 2006. The library was assisted in the funding of these events with a grant from the New Jersey Council on the Arts administered by the Hunterdon County Cultural and Heritage Commission as well as The Friends of the Hunterdon County Library.

Highlights of the 2008 schedule included two very well-attended Festive Fridays. The first was Beach Night held in March and patrons appreciated the glimpse of the warmer weather to come. The other was a Summer Block Party that was significant because the library christened its outdoor stage with a concert from the Irish band Hobnail.

The library teamed for the first time with the Hunterdon Land Trust to host a "Land and Food" Film series and the library regularly set up a table at their Sunday Farmer's Market to promote library services. Fred Miller continued to entertain our senior patrons with his always popular afternoon concert series. New Jersey country legend Jim Murphy and the Pine Barons performed for us in the summer and patron favorites Eric Mintel, The Beth Coleman Band, Eco Del Sur, St. Ann's Pipe and Drums and the Hunterdon Harmonizers all performed to standing room only crowds during the year.

The library was also visited by many talented local authors in 2008, highlighted by Frenchtown resident Elizabeth Gilbert, author of the best-selling *Eat, Pray, Love*. This program was a fund-raising event that benefited the Hunterdon Cancer Center as well as the Friends of the Hunterdon County Library.

HCL Headquarters continued to make Wii and Rock Band available on Wednesday nights, much to the delight of our patrons young and old!

The first outdoor concert on our new stage: Hobnail, July 2008

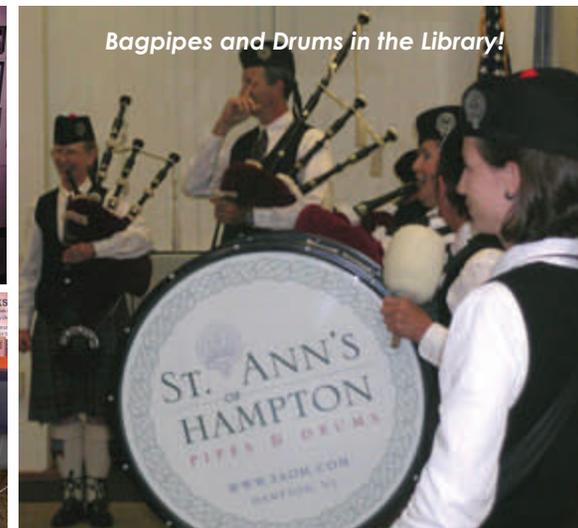


HCL Photo Show Winners



Hunterdon County Fair

Bagpipes and Drums in the Library!



Programs at North County Branch Library (NCB)

The North County Branch Library (NCB) has continued to grow in its programming, newly expanded in 2007. The total number of programs for 2008 was 64, an increase of 28% over 2007's 50 offerings. The attendance was also up 10%, going from 2,794 to 3,085. Increases were also shown in the Saturday programs, up 33% with 12 being offered instead of 9, with attendance also increasing 19%, going from 609 to 725. There were 40 non-musical programs held here in 2008, compared to 24 in 2007. Among non-musical programs offered this year were the always popular Antiques Appraisal; a visit/shelter fundraiser with Elwood, winner of the 2007 World's Ugliest Dog contest; lectures on honeybees, mushrooms, rainbows and haunted Hunterdon County; an incredible piano recital from a local student; 8 author visits; a poetry slam; and various instructional programs on hypnosis, starting a franchise, and knitting. This was in addition to the 24 concerts that were held at NCB. This was up from 22 concerts in 2007, a number that held its own despite a fixed budget.

Adult Summer Reading Club

The Adult Summer Reading Club had a very successful second year. Its 179 members read a total of 1,498 books over the summer! Increase in participants from 2007's club was 53%, and increase in books read was 67%. New in 2008 was the club's very own blog, on which club members could submit and read reviews of books that were read by the club. The highly popular blog published 424 entries. NJLA's children's theme for 2008 was "Catch the Reading Bug," which we modified for the adults to "Don't Bug Me, I'm Reading!" Bugs featured prominently in "Who Read What, Where, When?" – this year's logic puzzle. Patrons shared with us their eager anticipation to get the new puzzle clue each week. The club culminated in an end of summer celebration at which certificates were presented, games were played, and prizes were awarded. The Friends of the Library donated funds for the adult club this year, which helped greatly with procuring interesting prizes.