



# Winona Public Library A Community Asset

April 2010

*“My child can tell us how to get to the library from our house. It is what she looks forward to most. She loves to read!”*

## The Library Today

The people of Winona value their library. The Winona Public Library is a dynamic community hub that provides a broad range of services for a diverse population. Library usage continues to climb during these troubled economic times. Even in the face of budget and staffing challenges the library continues to fill an essential role in the community.



### Did you know?

- 40% of all residents in Winona County are library card holders
- Your library circulates over 375,000 items each year
- We offer our patrons access to nearly 150,000 items in our collection, and more than 2.2 million items throughout the SELCO region in southeastern Minnesota
- Attendance at children’s programs has doubled over the last five years
- Internet usage at the library has risen 42% in the last two years
- We offer free Wi-Fi
- The library is on Facebook
- Exhibits from local artists are featured in the library
- We provide materials to senior living and nursing home residents in Winona
- The Friends of the Winona Public Library donated over \$19,000 toward materials and special projects in 2009. In 2010, the Friends will be donating funds to purchase a new Circulation Desk.

## Services

Today’s library is not the same place you may remember from your childhood. Just as your workplace and your home have evolved along with technological and societal changes, so has your library. Our goal is to match our patrons with the information they need and want in the most efficient and cost effective manner. And, as technology continues to expand the availability of information, we strive to maintain a level of quality in the library, as well as breadth and depth of coverage, to meet the needs of our diverse community.

We continue to provide print materials, and they continue

to be in high demand with our users. Audio visual materials are also important and go far beyond movies for Friday night. People use AV materials to learn foreign languages and listen to books – fiction and nonfiction – on compact disc. Local performers use CDs and DVDs to prepare for their parts in plays, musicals, and concerts. Teachers use nonfiction DVDs in their classrooms. Truck drivers are some of our biggest users of audio books. The list goes on .

Internet access for the public is absolutely essential in today’s library, and the Winona Public

Library has twelve internet stations in the adult department. Usage continues to climb. Whether we like it or not, we are firmly in the computer age. While most people prefer to read books, not screens, the fact is that there are now some things



Library Internet usage. Sample month (April). Totals in minutes.



you must do over the internet, and there are still many households that do not have internet access. Our internet computers are busier than ever with people applying for unemployment compensation and looking for jobs. Students use the library to complete online college courses and apply for financial aid.

The library is more than materials and computer screens, however. There is also a dedicated staff that works hard to help the public find the information they need and want. Librarians can help identify a book, even if you just can't quite remember the

title. Librarians can suggest books you might like, or materials on a specific subject. If the library doesn't have the item, they can search nation-wide and often get it through interlibrary loan. Librarians find everything from phone numbers and addresses to rare 19<sup>th</sup> century pamphlets. They help patrons distinguish between good and bad information on the internet – and there is a lot of bad information out there. They help students with projects and papers. They help local authors with research. You can ask librarians almost anything, and they will try to find the answer.

We believe equal access to information builds a stronger community.

*“The best indicator of the health and vitality of a community rests in how busy the local library is. Public libraries strengthen a community's quality of life.”* —from the Urban Libraries Council report, *Making Cities Stronger*



## Our Users

*“The library is a great place to go for people of all ages, race, religion and socioeconomic status.”*

We may have over 20,000 library card holders, but there really is no “typical” Winona Public Library patron. People of all ages and from all walks of life make use of the library on a regular basis, each for their own needs and reasons. Here's what a few of them have to say –

*“The library is a great place to go for people together and is a vital part of any community.”*

*“The library enriches our lives greatly.”*

*“The children and young people of our community must have a continuing strong library available to them. All of us as a community benefit greatly from this beloved place and its wonderful staff.”*

*“The library serves such a critical role in the community – bringing learning, cultivating knowledge, fun for all age groups! I believe our library does a great job of serving this mission & we must support it.”*



*“The library is a great place to go for people of all ages, race, religion and socioeconomic status. It allows people who may otherwise not be able to afford books and other learning materials (including access to the internet) a chance to learn and interact with these materials. It also provides a safe place for families to go when looking for low/no cost quality activities. The library brings*

*“Winona's public library is fabulous. I've never enjoyed a better staffed, organized, and so diversely stocked library. The library is one of the main reasons I'm glad I moved here. My children and I had library cards issued while we were staying in a homeless shelter years ago; the librarian did not balk at our not yet having a permanent address. I've never forgotten that kindness.”*

*“I would be very depressed if I couldn't come to the library – it's always a comfort to be here and the staff is great. I couldn't possibly afford all the reading I do if I had to buy these books. I've been using this library for 56 years and just love it. Thanks.”*

*“The library is extremely valuable to my family. As a homeschooling family, we are in the library frequently, making use of all that is available. Life would be very different if we didn't have access to our local library and all its services!”*

While our adult users usually come here with a definite purpose in mind, our younger users come for fun and end up enriched and educated without even knowing it. The Children's Department, through a wide array of programming, fosters a child's curiosity and imagination, helping to form a life-long learner.

## Value to the Community

Every library user values the library in his or her own unique way. However, it is possible to quantify the value of the services provided by the library.

In 2009:

### Patron Services

- Offered **46** hours of service per week to **50,209** Winona city and county residents who made over **148,000** visits to the library
- Checked out **375,840** items to library patrons, or **\$9,396,000\*** worth of materials to **20,010** card holders (\*at an estimated average retail cost of \$25 per item circulated)
- Offered a collection of nearly **150,000** items to library users, including books, magazines, newspapers, audio books, videos, DVDs, and music CDs
- Received **24,315** items from other libraries and sent **22,361** items to other libraries to fill customer requests throughout the region and state

### Adult Department

- Answered over **19,300** requests for information that required reference services from library staff
- Delivered over **2,600** large print books and audio books to senior living and nursing home residents in our community

### Children's Department

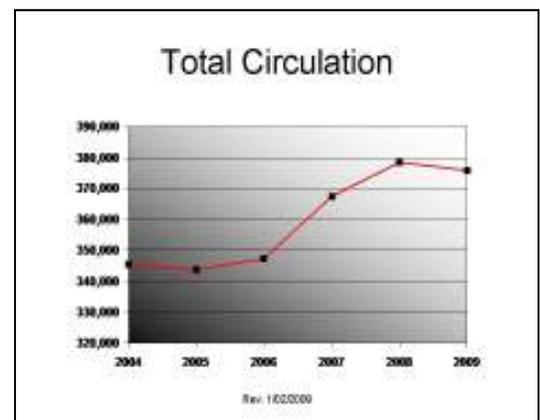
- Supported early literacy and education by circulating **156,803** juvenile materials, and offering **215** children's programs, including outreach, story time, and summer reading programs, that were attended by **5,272** children

### Technology Services

- Offered free Wi-Fi access and **14** public internet computers; **27,149** customers logged over **12,200** hours of use on library computers



*"I couldn't possibly afford all the reading I do if I had to buy the books."*



## Community Partnerships and Involvement

Winona Public Library has increased its presence and involvement in the community by participating in outreach and programming with several organizations:

The Friends of the Library,  
The Minnesota Marine Art

Museum, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Winona Area Public Schools, Winona Education Association, Winona State University, St. Mary's University, Winona County Historical Society, Winona Health's Healthy Kids Club Initiative, Winona Early

Childhood Initiative, SEMCAC Head Start, Winona Park & Recreation, Winona Volunteer Services, Grace Place, and Winona National Bank.

We have also been supported by many donors and sponsors in recent years.

*"The library serves such a critical role in the community – bringing learning, cultivating knowledge, fun for all age groups!"*

## Challenges

### Budget

For many patrons, a library is only as good as the materials they can find there, and Winona Public Library has prided itself on building strong fiction, non-fiction, children's, and audio visual collections that serve the broad array of users in our community. Sadly, the materials budget has decreased 60% in three years, from \$100,548 in 2007, to \$40,128 in 2009. The Library is drawing from its Memorial Fund to cover the materials budget for 2009. This limits the ability to add new materials – whether the current best sellers that are always in high demand, or updated editions of exam study guides, or health information that reflects the latest research. Even a brief period of reduced spending

leaves significant gaps in the Library's collections, and at present we are looking at a year or more of not being able to meet all of our customers' needs.

### Staffing

Circulation, program attendance, program offerings, and internet use all continue to rise, while staffing levels have declined. In the summer of 2008, Winona Public Library reduced staff by 1.5 FTE. In 2009, two full time positions were eliminated and replaced with three part time



Checkout Desk

positions. Current staff members have picked up extra duties and reorganized work loads to cover those responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, the library strives to keep pace. We will continue to change as our community needs continue to change.

## An Invitation



### *Winona Public Library*

151 W 5th St.  
Winona, MN 55987  
507-452-4582  
[www.winona.lib.mn.us](http://www.winona.lib.mn.us)

#### Hours

M-W	10:00 a.m.— 6:00 p.m.
T-Th	10:00 a.m.— 7:00 p.m.
Fri.	10:00 a.m.— 5:00 p.m.
Sat.*	9:00 a.m.— 2:00 p.m.
(Sat. summer hrs.	9:00a.m. — Noon)

*Come in and explore the world through your library.*