The background of the cover is a solid teal color. It is decorated with numerous overlapping circles of varying sizes. Each circle is filled with a pattern of fine, concentric black lines that radiate from the center, creating a hypnotic, optical illusion effect. The circles are scattered across the page, with some being larger and more prominent than others.

Indiana Libraries

Journal of the Indiana Library Federation
and Indiana State Library

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Indiana Libraries Change Lives

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Indiana Libraries Change Lives: A Public Awareness Campaign

Libraries have the power to change lives! That was the concept behind this year's Indiana Library Federation public awareness campaign. Every day, libraries meet the needs of millions of people. For many, the library experience becomes an event that shapes their lives -- from checking out their first book to searching a database that helps them find a job; from doing genealogical research that completes their family tree to discovering an author who influences their personal philosophy -- libraries have long been a cornerstone of our communities.

The Indiana Libraries Change Lives campaign was designed to spotlight the vital role libraries play in our neighborhoods, schools, colleges, universities, and businesses. To spread this message, we utilized our most powerful resource -- the personal stories of library users. Many library users have stories that are most compelling, and these experiences are the most impressive evidence that we can present to convey the essential role libraries play.

Libraries around the state participated in this campaign and were generous enough to share their user's stories with us. This publication is the compilation of those stories. The Indiana Library Federation Public Awareness Committee would like to thank all of the Indiana libraries that were a part of this campaign, as well as the Indiana State Library. Without the support of these organizations and funding from the Library Services and Construction Act, this publication would not have been possible. We hope you will enjoy reading these stories as much as we enjoyed bringing them to you.

Indiana Library Federation Public Awareness Committee

If you have questions concerning the Indiana Library Federation's public awareness efforts, feel free to contact any member of the ILF Public Awareness Committee.

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Introduction

Somewhere deep within the heart of your community, just beyond the line of trees that surround your neighborhood, a secret lurks. It is a secret that has been there a long time, perhaps as long as you have. Perhaps longer. It waits in silence, patiently. In just a few pages, that secret is going to emerge, never more to hide.

That secret is the library. The secret is the library's story. The library has quietly, yet continuously, been changing lives.

You are about to experience in this book a few of those lives touched by the library. This collection of library stories is part of a nationwide and statewide campaign to see how libraries have transformed the lives of their users. The Indiana Library Federation has compiled these stories so that you will see what a valuable and essential part of our society libraries are. You will be amazed at what you see. In an age when information technology is constantly changing, the library is a vital link. Libraries have managed to provide hundreds of new developments in the information marketplace, including video and computer technology, CD-ROM, fiber-optic networks, and many, many more. But more than that, they have helped people change their lives for the better.

The library stories are important to each of us. Library stories are stories of how the library helped someone learn to read, get a job, escape being homeless, find important research data, learn how to use a computer, find recreation, improve grades in school, save families, and many, many more life changing experiences. The stories are remarkable. The library stories must be told, and they need to be heard.

Libraries are our silent resource. The information marketplace is so crowded with new and improved brilliant technological innovations that libraries have seemed to become invisible; some even fear they are on the verge of obsolescence. These stories and countless others like them, exist because our forgotten resource, the library, has always been there with the energy and vibrance of progress. Libraries can be silent no more. They need resources and support to continue making such extraordinary differences in the lives of people all over the country, and particularly in Indiana.

As you read these stories, I would challenge you to find someplace, any place, that can compete with the library when it comes to valuable, life-changing power. Libraries are easily accessible and progressive, and most importantly, they belong to us. Read these stories of transformation, then decide — isn't the library an institution you would like to visit and support.

Jim Fleck, Fleck Leadership Center



Indiana Library Federation Public Awareness Committee

It is our hope that you will find this information helpful in your efforts to raise public awareness of the library's role in our community. We are pleased to have you as a member of the Public Awareness Committee.

The Public Awareness Committee is the library's voice. The library is the heart of the community. We are pleased to have you as a member of the Public Awareness Committee.

For an about twenty years, the Public Awareness Committee has been working to raise public awareness of the library's role in our community. We are pleased to have you as a member of the Public Awareness Committee.

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The Public Awareness Committee



Libraries Change Lives...

Libraries not only enhance the quality of our lives, they can influence the way we view ourselves and the world. By exposing us to a variety of ideas, they allow us to think, create, and dream in ways we never thought possible. Libraries actually have the power to change people's lives. The stories you are about to read attest to the life-changing effect of libraries. Some of the stories may surprise, others will delight. Some may make you happy, and others sad. Whatever the affect, the following stories are depictions of power -- the power of lives that were changed because of a library.

Once upon a time...

Once there was an excruciatingly shy girl, so shy that some thought her rude when she didn't answer them, some snobbish and "too brainy." She was also very sensitive, crying over newscasts of poverty, sorrow, and tragedy; grieving over injured or abandoned animals; defending a handicapped child from the cruel taunts of other children. Unfortunately for her, in addition to being an awkward, chubby pre-teen, her family was going through a nasty divorce. For release, she began to write down her emotions onto paper into loosely formed "poetry."

One day she happened by a nearby public library located in a shopping center within walking distance of her home. While there she noticed an announcement soliciting entries of student art: paintings, drawings, etc., for display in the library. Somewhere within the girl welled up the courage to approach the librarian with an almost gruff question: "What about poets? Aren't they artists? Why can't I display my poetry as art?" Instead of replying defensively to this attack, the librarian, being a bit of a maverick herself, paused thoughtfully a moment and then said, "Of course, you are right. Poets are artists, too, and you are welcome to bring in your poetry for display."

So the girl went home, and using colored construction paper, magic markers, and cut-out magazine pictures, she painstakingly assembled two of her poems into graphic presentations. She dropped them off at the library where they were displayed with the other students' work, and she never thought of it again.

Several years later, in reduced financial situation after the break-up of her family, she needed a job and remembered the friendly librarian. Lo and behold, that same twinkly-eyed librarian hired her to shelve books. After many, many hours of shelving, the girl became fascinated with the marriage of illustrator's and author's talents in children's picture books. Each was a work of art in itself. She was further fascinated as she watched the children's librarian read these books to the wide-eyed wonderment of little preschoolers. She decided she wanted to be a librarian, too. So against the odds, she went back to school, put herself through college, and did just that.

And that's how libraries change lives! And sometimes a life can change a library, because eventually that young woman replaced the twinkly-eyed librarian when she retired. And not only that, the young woman helped the community accomplish a 20-year dream to design and build a new facility for the library. Better yet, at the dedication of the new library, she met another librarian who one day became her husband. The two of them became the first husband and wife library directors in Indiana.

Deborah Robinson

I found solace at the library...

When I think of the forces that have shaped my life, I realize that the public library was one of them. Mine was not a happy childhood, for I was beaten by a father who would not allow me to go anywhere except school, and so I lost out on activities that my peers took for granted. When my father was not home, my mother would let my brothers, my sister, and me ride our bicycles the six miles to the library to check out some books. Those were good days for me because I was able to get away from home, if only for a little while.

I loved books ever since I could remember, but we had very few at home and I had no spending money with which to buy any. The library was a blessing, for there I could explore the world and improve myself. Soon I began to envision a better life. I could read the fashion magazines and see how other girls my age dressed. I could read etiquette books and improve my manners and diction. By reading, I could prepare for college and make “friends” that have stayed with me even today.

In every town there are children who suffer the same way I did, children who want to do better but cannot unless given a chance. Transportation is impossible for them, so they cannot go to the movies or share in school activities. They need escape, but not the kind found in drugs or alcohol, as so many young people attempt to do. The library is a good place to counteract all the ugly influences a bad life can have on a child. I am proud to say that the library was a good influence on me. Now I am a college graduate with a good job in the library system at Purdue University, a person who can contribute to society, but most of all, a person who feels good about herself.

Emily Branson

“The library is a good place to counteract all the ugly influences a bad life can have on a child.”

Emily Branson

I used to have problems at home so I would go to the library and lose myself in a book. It was the only way I could escape from my problems for a while. I don't know what I would've done if the library hadn't been there.

Devin

I grew up in the projects. My mother was raising five children by herself, and although she was working, there never seemed to be any money to do the things my friends at school were doing, such as going to the movies or going to McDonald's.

I found my solace at the library. There I could visit places I knew I would never really go. One minute I would be with Pippi Longstocking and the next, living in the little house on the prairie. Another time I could read about Abraham Lincoln. The public library opened up the world to a little girl more than 25 years ago. I still find it a way to escape the demands of the day by curling up with a good book.

Rachel Klammer

I know there is a direct connection...

In the fifth grade I discovered in my small hometown public library a series of historical biographies, all with orange covers. I read every one. Now some of the happiest moments in my life come when someone tells me that they read a book I've written. I know there is a direct connection between reading those orange cover books and writing my own books, between what I was in that small Carnegie library and what I am now.

James H. Madison

“The local library adds more to a person's life than space. It enhances, teaches, and influences what we believe and think.”

State Senator John R. Sinks

In every dream there is a moment of realization that your dream can become a reality. That moment happened for me in the public library. An avid reader all throughout my childhood, I found myself approaching the summer of seventh grade too old for any of the summer reading programs. Early that spring the librarian asked me if I would consider taking over the preschool storyhour. Deep in my heart, after the summer was over, I knew my dream of being a teacher was a good dream and a goal I wanted to achieve. For the next five years I worked the summer reading program for the pure joy of the experience. Thank you, Indiana libraries, for the affirmation of my dream.

Barbara E. Leek

Libraries empower the mind. Without them, I would not be in graduate school, would not have published scholarly articles, and I would be a less effective teacher. Libraries have played a major part in my professional life and have actually determined my future as a researcher and teacher.

Michael Dupagne

I discovered libraries early in my life...

I discovered libraries early in my life, which I must confess was ever so many years ago, and cannot remember when I didn't have a dog-eared library card in my pocket. But it was the public library's 1986 program, "Writing Your Memoirs," that truly changed my life!

Despite my age or perhaps because of it, my old romance with genealogy and my new romance with memoir writing became a duo that led — or pushed — me into writing two books, a regional history published in 1991 and a local history published in 1993. Oh yes, libraries change lives!

Anonymous

"By using the library's videos, I can sleep through a movie for free."

Joel Robinson

Providential intervention may be the only explanation for me spending my career as a librarian. My early experiences in libraries were less than positive. One childhood event burned into my memory is the shame, guilt, and embarrassment of returning a stack of long overdue books to the public library. I can still see my father peeling off dollar bills to pay the fine at a time when the money was desperately needed elsewhere. I cannot remember being in the public library again until my senior year. I had to use the public library to finish my senior paper because I had been banned from the high school library for disruptive behavior.

As an adult, I'm making up for the years of library use I missed as a child. At present I'm reading about 12 books on various topics. Books helped me plant my garden and complete my taxes. The library's religion collection helps me teach my adult church school class. The automotive section is helping me restore my MG. By using the library's videos, I can sleep through a movie for free. The talking book cassettes shorten a long road trip. For me, the list is endless.

Joel Robinson

It was the summer of 1939, and I was 15 years old. I lived on a farm, and my principal interest each summer was membership in the 4-H Club. I learned there was to be a competition among girls entered in the Food Preparation Division. There would be 200 questions, some regarding cooking and baking, but 25 percent would be on good manners. I wasn't too worried about the cooking and baking, but I was a little farm girl, and I knew there was a whole lot about gracious living that I did not know!

My Dad always took my brother and me to the library on Saturdays. He said, "It might be the Depression, but no one is poor if they have a library card." That Saturday, I went to the card catalog and looked under "etiquette." There were not many books in the stacks, but I took home three and tried to memorize them.

The competition was in August. There were about 100 girls competing. I took first place and won an all-expense trip for three days to Chicago. I had never been to a major city, and I was thrilled! We went in December and visited the International Livestock Expo, Museum of Science and Industry, Marshall Field's, Chicago Theatre, U.S. Steel, and the Aquarium. It was the first time I had eaten in a nice restaurant. A whole new world was there. I fell in love with Chicago, and vowed I would someday live there.

In the spring of 1946, I packed my bags, boarded a train, and moved to Chicago where I lived for seven years, loving it all! The library really did change my life!

Caryl Smith Okamoto

"My Dad always took my brother and me to the library on Saturdays. He said, 'It might be the Depression, but no one is poor if they have a library card.'"

Caryl Smith Okamoto

Libraries Change Lives...

for special audiences

In 1956, Congress passed the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). Originally, it was designed to help rural public libraries meet the needs of their patrons. Since then, it has expanded to include all public libraries. Federal funding has enabled many libraries to offer new and innovative services to their patrons that otherwise would have been difficult to provide with local funds alone.

LSCA grants have enabled public libraries of all sizes to improve their services for populations with special needs, such as the disadvantaged, illiterate, handicapped, non-English speaking, and older American populations. Others have used LSCA funds to construct or renovate facilities. Still others have purchased equipment to keep up with rapidly changing information technology.

The LSCA has also served public libraries in ways not always apparent as new computers or new programs. For example, LSCA funds were instrumental in strengthening state library administrative agencies, in promoting interlibrary cooperation and resource-sharing among all types of libraries, and in strengthening major urban resource libraries.

Indiana's share of LSCA is approximately \$2.5 million annually, but the stories we received as a result of LSCA programs seem priceless. Our investment in libraries is an investment in Americans. It is truly one of the greatest democratic bargains going, as you are about to read...

I have a hearing loss...

I started out taking sign language classes for a personal reason. In the past several years, I had frequent voice losses. My two sons and I made gestures to communicate. Last fall, my younger son brought a schedule of adult classes home from school. He encouraged me to take a sign language class offered by the library.

I am a registered nurse who works in surgery. On the day of our last class, I had the pleasure of caring for a deaf person who was awake for her surgery. Since we wear masks on our faces in surgery, she was not able to read my lips. I had taken the sign language class, so I was able to sign to her. It was a wonderful experience for me. I felt I did something good that day.

Elaine G.

“The library is an important resource and a valued friend in our lives.”

Carol Rhudy

Eight-year-old Beth Daily has a severe hearing loss. Sue Daily, her step-mother, wants to communicate better with Beth. Sue has borrowed videos from the library’s special services staff in order to learn sign language. In addition to the sign language videotapes, she also borrowed an Assistive Listening Device from the library for Beth to use in her classroom. They were so pleased with its effectiveness that they purchased one for Beth. Beth, her father, step-brothers, and Sue also regularly attend library children’s programs, which are interpreted by library staff.

In 1990, Beth attended a public school where her parents were pleased with her educational progress. However, due to changes in the state educational guidelines, Beth was re-assigned to a different school. Beth’s father and step-mother were unhappy with the education she was receiving in her new school. Once again, they consulted the library’s special services staff for information on appealing her IEP (Individual Education Plan). The library staff referred Mr. and Mrs. Daily to an advocate who assists parents of special needs children in resolving conflicts with schools. The advocate was able to obtain the services the Daily’s wanted for Beth.

Nancy TenBroeck

I obtained my library card at the old location. Although the building was old and in need of repair, the staff added sunshine with their friendly assistance. A new modern building now contains varied reading material, tapes, and many items for entertainment. Modern technology was added to expedite service to library patrons, and the library staff is still giving courteous service with a smile.

I have a hearing loss, and their assistance to my needs in locating varied reading material is greatly appreciated. I have used the library extensively over the years.

Irene H. Basey

I became visually impaired some years ago...

My husband is legally blind, and one of the librarians told me about services to the blind provided by the Indiana State Library. They asked him what he liked to read, and he now gets westerns and mysteries on tapes, records, and in large-print books. Everything comes through the mail, and all we have to do to mail it back is turn the card around and drop it in the mailbox. That is a big help, and everything is free. We don't even have to pay postage on it.

Mrs. W. P.

“Libraries are a terrific tax investment. They provide an opportunity for personal growth and development.”

State Senator Robert D. Garton

I have been a client of “talking books” ever since I became visually impaired some years ago. While I was able to continue working at my office with the use of closed circuit TV reading machines, my outside pleasure reading had stopped. The talking books program reintroduced me to the pleasure of reading in the evenings. As a 66-year-old senior citizen, this is important to me.

Robert J. Oates

When I was a child, I accompanied my mother, brother, and sister to the local public library, trying to keep my attitude of indifference to myself. In the mid-1970s, a local library was a very boring place to me. I'm totally blind, and all those books and other printed materials were inaccessible to me. I felt as though I were in a strange land where nobody spoke my native language.

But now it's 1994, and thanks to several media formats, the public library no longer seems alien. I'm even privileged to be doing my small part to make the library more accessible to those of us who are blind or visually impaired. On Tuesday mornings, I make Braille labels which identify the titles and authors of the cassette books in the library's collection. The outreach librarian believes in making the library accessible to everyone, and I'm glad that she gave me the opportunity to be part of doing just that.

When a part of the community is made more accessible to a person with a disability, the person's abilities become more evident. Each Tuesday morning when I make the Braille labels for the cassettes, I think back to the time almost 20 years ago, when I felt that a local library would always be a place alien to me. Although I still borrow books in Braille and on cassette from the State Library, having the option of going to the local library to select a book or magazine enables me to participate more fully in the community in which I live. Full participation in the community by people with disabilities is part of what the Americans With Disabilities Act is all about.

Debbie Morgan

Books delivered to our door...

I am 78 years of age and have had many various disabilities for many, many years, preventing me from attending the library and taking advantage of the many things the library has to offer. I love to read, but being handicapped I am not able to go for books myself.

Several years ago, my daughter-in-law talked to the librarian about my problem and learned about a library mailing program free to shut-ins. Since then, the library has mailed me hundreds of books, a large box each time, and enclosed an address label and postage for return mail.

I can't express how much this service has blessed my life. I always have reading material. I am very grateful for how the library has changed my life. Thank you so very much.

Mildred Corteville

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.....
Words cannot tell you how very much I have appreciated the extra work and kindness the library has shown in bringing books to my home. The selections have been wonderful, and since I can no longer get into the library or bookmobile, I am delighted to be able to continue with my passion for reading.

I must add that if it were not for my girls in their bookmobile, I would not have made it through the last two years. Their time and helpfulness has made these years passable. The only enjoyment I had was the wonderful selection of books brought to me. I owe a debt of gratitude to all the people connected with the library.

Carlis Dowdy

“The library has mailed me hundreds of books, a large box each time, and enclosed an address label and postage for return mail.”

Mildred Corteville

Eva Scott proves you're never too old to read. Scott, 96, reads two books a week, subscribes to two daily newspapers, and said she would rather read than watch television any day of the week. She loves to read and reads about everything she can get her hands on.

“I was born a reader,” she says. “We used to read when we were children — we'd take books home from the library at school. As soon as we could say our ABC's, we did our own reading.” In 1912, Scott, then 15 years old, was honored for her reading accomplishments by the State of Indiana.

Up until last year, Scott would go to the library herself and pick out her own books. Now her daughter, Mary Ann Johnson, checks them out for her. Scott is the community's oldest library card holder and still has the original card issued to her January 24, 1925. Even recent cataract surgery on her right eye hasn't deterred Scott from enjoying her favorite pastime. Now she reads large-print books, or uses a magnifying glass to read smaller print.

Scott followed in the footsteps of her father, who she said was an avid newspaper reader. She's even passed the habit on to her own children. Keith Scott said his mother used to read to them a lot when they were children — and now he's an enthusiastic reader himself. Perhaps Scott's love for reading is what keeps her mind alert as she approaches her 97th birthday.

Amanda Mitchell, Writer
Clinton County Times

It's a big change: six months with a 22-inch cast on the left leg. It all began in February when I fell, landing on the left knee and breaking the patella. After the knee was wired and set, I found myself rather inactive! But the library rescued me from boredom and apathy. The bookmobile stopped at my door weekly with a large delivery of books. Indeed, I read a book a day! This service changed my convalescence into a time of renewal and mental expansion. I am very grateful for the services rendered.

Mary Alice Crampton

You're never too old...

I am a retired teacher of 48 years. I have always encouraged my students to make use of the library, both for pleasure and for assignments. Now I am retired and have spent the last five years in a healthcare center. I know I am one of the many citizens who have enjoyed the books delivered to our door from the Mediamobile.

Sr. Margaret Celina O'Boyle

“Having the option of going to the local library to select a book or magazine enables me to participate more fully in the community in which I live.”

Debbie Morgan

The library certainly changed the life of Mary Grosjean and Clarence Williams. Mary was a library clerk who worked in both circulation and technical services processing books. Little did she realize that in the crowded catacombs of the Carnegie among the “Westerns” she would meet the one who was to change her life. She and Clarence were married and throughout their entire lives have remained library supporters and users. Now they are in their 80's and still are reading, large print now after cataract surgery for both. Her favorite books are “racy” suspense and his are still the westerns. The family is still a part of the library, since their daughter is a mainstay in the library's technical services department, cataloging all the children's materials.

Barbara J. Elliott

Utilizing the library for literacy is a natural...

I just knew a little English before I went to the Library Learning Center, since I am a foreigner, but I feel much better now. I can communicate with people in English; and I can read and write. The Library Learning Center is really a good place to study English.

Dingmin Min

“The Library Learning Center is really a good place to study English.”

Dingmin Min

A small, gray-headed lady came into my branch library occasionally to use the copy machine. We always said “hello” but never talked. One day after she’d made her copies, she came to the desk and asked if I could look at one of the forms she’d copied and tell her where to mail it. I helped her, and she thanked me.

To my surprise she began to speak. She said the papers she copied concerned her only son who had been abused as a youth and suffered emotional damage. He lived at home and received out-patient treatment. She never doubted that he was improving and would regain his self-confidence and lead a happy normal life. Then her husband died, and her other child, a married daughter, interfered. She and her husband succeeded in having the young man placed in an institution.

The lady told me how she’d had to carry on alone, trying to help her son and fend off her daughter and son-in-law’s efforts to control her life. She said that she’d never dreamed that her life could become so sad and lonely.

I asked if she ever read for relaxation. Her answer was no. She had learned English well enough to speak it, write it, and read what was necessary but had never really read for pleasure. I suggested that it’s a wonderful way to take your mind off problems.

I made her a library card, and she began with one magazine. Next time, she took three. Then the day came when she selected a book (I think it was a Belva Plain). I was thrilled! But my biggest thrill came later when my new regular patron said to me, “I want to thank you for getting me to read. Now I am not so lonely anymore.”

Marilyn Grambo

In 1989 it was discovered that in addition to our daughter's mild cerebral palsy, the vestibular area of her brain was depressed or only barely functional. This meant she was unable to write and do other necessary skills in kindergarten. It was the decision of the doctors and also her teacher, her father, and I that Heather be withdrawn from school until she was capable of functioning at a higher level. Here's where the library comes in. Heather could take in information but couldn't put it on paper. So the librarians told me of the discs on their computers about alphabet, spelling, numbers, addition, making words, etc.

We worked for one to two hours, Monday through Thursday, at the library from October 1989 through February 1990, and guess what? Due to that availability and the librarian's suggestion, Heather learned to spell her name, count, add, spell, and read and was very much ahead of her 1990 kindergarten class. She also then learned to write. She still does very well, and we're very thankful to the library.

Tracy Evans

“Due to... the librarian's suggestion, Heather learned to spell her name, count, add, spell, and read and was very much ahead of her kindergarten class.”

Tracy Evans

Two and a half years ago, using the library literacy program, I began tutoring Andrew Martinez, a retired gentleman who wanted to improve his reading ability and to better express himself. His schooling had been cut short at an early age, and he was anxious and enthusiastic for this long overdue opportunity.

Utilizing our local library for literacy tutoring was a natural. They not only provided a quiet, comfortable spot, but were my constant “back-up.” There was immediate access to resource material from encyclopedias to books of poetry — even to getting President Clinton's Washington address. An unexpected plus was the short conversations my student delighted in having with one of the librarians in his native language. It was obvious that made him feel much more at home.

July 28 was a red letter day for my student and for me! Hard to say who was most proud when he graduated from this program. His plans were to continue studying for his GED — and I'm betting he will!

Deloras O'Neal

Another chance...

When I retired I wanted to become involved in tutoring. The library-provided tutor training program put me in touch with a tutoring group and provided me with materials and a place to meet with my student. I have learned much more from my student than I will ever be able to teach her — and I have a new friend.

Anonymous

At age 17, Clayton was confined to a private jail cell. About all he could do was read. That's when he met an outreach librarian, Marcia Pendley. "Meeting Marcia was a turning point in my life," he says. "She got me thinking about how things were and how my life could be. It's because of Marcia I enrolled in the GED program through the jail."

Clayton is now a certified Literacy Volunteer of America. He's also studying psychology and fiction writing. Through reading in prison, he says he literally exchanged one escape for another.

Clayton remembers, "Marcia was so nice to me. She asked if I wanted library books and she remembered what I liked. My interest in psychology was sparked by a textbook she suggested." He reflects, "It was during the time that I knew her that I feel like I got my head on straight and found a new direction."

*Excerpt from Check it Out
Newsletter of the Friends of the
Morrisson Reeves Public Library*

Because of the library, I am able to carry out one of my favorite volunteer activities: using my adult literacy tutoring skills. The library gives me a place to work with the person whom I tutor every week and provides Tutors Talk, a program where tutors share their experiences and techniques and have a chance to get together every few months.

With the help of the Adult Literacy staff and the librarians, the person I tutor and I have used the Intensive Phonics software on a computer given to the tutoring office by a local company. This has been a terrific boon to the adult I work with. He had never touched a computer before. Now the lessons are giving him phonics help and he feels right at home with the computer.

Carolyn Hood

I quit school at the age of 17. By the time I was ready to continue school, I was too old to go back to school. My library gave me the chance to learn and earn my GED. I'm grateful to the library for giving me the chance to get my GED and a better job. Thank you.

Shawn Weaver

From the adults I have tutored, I will never forget the look of happiness and the happiness in the voice of a 28-year-old woman when she read an unfamiliar word. "I read that word all by myself." This happened after only a couple of sessions with phonics. The ability to read gives freedom. Freedom to try new ideas, to soar and reach unknown heights. The freedom to be yourself and live the good life.

Ann Walsh

No child should grow up without the magic of books...

Children are delightfully refreshing creatures. They say what they mean. No sugar-coating, no beating around the bush, no political correctness -- they just say what they mean.

Someone once said, "With children comes learning; with age comes understanding." Listen as children tell us what they have learned about libraries. Later they will interpret these youthful experiences, adding depth and detail with each new telling until, as adults, they have grown-up stories. But for now they are kids, telling us the truth. Nothing is more refreshing than to read and listen to the stories our children have to tell.

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My name is Destiny Nichols and I am in the sixth grade at DCMS. I used to hate to read until my teacher, Mrs. Sisson, threw out our reading text books and let us go to the library and pick our own materials to read. Now I read at least five books a week because I can pick anything in the whole library. This has made me a life long reader.

Destiny Nichols

"I like libraries. They are filled with wonderful stuff."

Brad J.

Libraries change a lot of lives. You can be smarter if you read more. For example, Albert Einstein read a lot. He was the smartest man in the world. See if you read, you can be the same. Librarians are nice. They'll help you if you need it.

AJ Machala

As the grandmother of several children, I have learned that libraries do change lives. I've learned that storytime programs, especially for toddlers, have been a big influence in my grandchildren. They learn to appreciate and respect books, the library, and reading. Storytime is fun. Toddlers are surrounded by friends, and they think the person reading to them is owner of all those cool and neat books. Storytime hooks kids on books. The eagerness and enthusiasm on their little faces as they search for their very own book tells it all.

Isabel Leisure and Family

Well, a library has changed my life in a lot of ways. A long time ago I didn't like reading but now I do. It's peace and quiet and you can get your work done or read a book. I like the books they have and I like the funny books. The library is fun to be in.

Tabitha Schlarb

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I like the library because of the computers and the stuff you can look up like the books. The other day I looked up football. It had the way the officials call, what you wear, the equipment, how big the football is, how long the field is. The public library also has very good books. I learned how to draw animals and stuff. I enjoy it.

Kyle Zischron

"I've read hundreds of books, but I find the best books at the library"

Brian N.

The library is such an important part of my family's life. We are a family of six and we visit the library many times a week. We moved to Greenwood about a year ago. Our kids were a little apprehensive about moving to a new place. I assured them that we would settle in quickly. One of the first things we did was to get our library cards.

There are so many reasons we love the library. The books — of course — but we also check out movies, CD's, cassette tapes, and even pictures for our walls. My kids have started as babies with the hardboard baby books and then have moved up to the picture books, then have learned to read with the great selection of easy readers, such as Margaret Hillert books and Dr. Seuss books. My 10 year-old enjoys books on sports and art books. We have also checked out books to help us out in our business and books for fun reading, too.

The video selection at our White River Library is so great! We never go to the video store. They have many of the new releases. We have also checked out movies to help my son in basketball.

We always have two pictures hanging on our walls from the library. People are always commenting on our neat pictures. They can't believe that they are from the library. We also love the music selection. The kids enjoy things like cartoon theme music and new pop music. At Christmas we filled our house with the sounds of music from the library, of course.

To sum it all up, we love the library. As a large family on a budget, we have saved so much money by frequenting our local library. I feel the most important card in my wallet is my library card. The library has enriched my family's life every day.

Judy Ford & The Ford Family

The library is where I go to get away from my troubles for a couple of hours. When you leave you are a better person with a wider word vocabulary.

Sara Holt

One day I was in a library and I took out my first book and I loved it it was fun to read it was called my book about me. it had questions about me and I answered them. That's how a library changed my life I started reading all the time.

William Marcum

My first grade teacher helped me learn to love reading. She let a group of us go up to the library when our work was done. The library was special and fun.

Melanie Bush

Our grandchildren love going to the library with us. Our 10-year-old loves reading old newspapers on micro-film — the older the paper the better. He likes looking at the prices of cars, groceries, and clothing. Our four-year-old likes the children's room and picking her own books for grandma and grandpa to read to her. She likes the toys and the other children in the homey children's room. She really likes the librarian, too.

Catherine McCready

I use my library for many things. When I have work to do at school and I don't have any books, I go to my local library to get books. As President Lincoln said, "Anything I want to know I can find in books." That's the way I feel.

Krista H.

I read a lot more books because of the library.

Rob Prichard

When I was little, I did not want to learn to read, but every day my mom sat me down and read to me. Then when I was in second grade, I went to the library with my class on a field trip. The librarian showed us how to look up books in the card catalog. From then on, every time we went to the library, I always checked out at least one book.

Now that I am older, I check out at least three or four books, and my mom can't keep me out of a library. Through books I travel to many different places, meet many interesting people, and go on many wild adventures.

Megan Wease

Books have always been of value to me. As a young boy growing up, it was a regular sight to see my father or mother reading. From this, came the joy, pleasures, and reward (mental, spiritual, and financial) that result from continuous learning. The library now enables me to read an almost nightly story to my five-year-old daughter while giving her the pleasure of selecting the books she would like.

Robert F.

How A Library Changed My Life! It made me smarter. Every time you open a book and read. It makes you smarter. I go to the library to help me with my homework. It is somewhere that I can have peace and quite.

Angela Erwin

Frequent use of the library is not only helping my four-year-old learn to read, but is also teaching her about life. Before her first trip to the dentist, we read about it in library books. Before I went back to work full-time, we read stories about daycare. And how fortuitous it was that just before my father passed away we had read a touching story about losing a loved one in *Blow Me a Kiss, Miss Lilly*. The story helped both of us.

Linda C. Nemeth

I like the library because it has books of all kinds. I like to read books of all kinds. I go to the library usually if I have a project to do or I just want to read for fun. I really like the library.

Lindsey Runnels

I really didn't like reading until I started getting books at the library. Books have given me a greater imagination and I'm always wanting to read another book.

Mike

When my son Alex was diagnosed with optic nerve hypoplasia (a visual impairment), no one could imagine the fear and frustration I felt. The library freed me of my fears and empowered me with knowledge that taught me how to teach and grow with my son.

Cindy T.

I learned how to research and write reports at the library. I like to go to the library and read.

Amanda Yackese

Reading has helped me be able to spell better and understand more things. When I need more to read, the library has the books.

Adam G.

Because of my own love of books and the experiences I have observed in the children I have taught, I have become a strong supporter of libraries.

*Dr. Suellen Reed
Indiana Superintendent of
Public Instruction*



Libraries Contribute to Lives...

Libraries are many things to many people. Some believe libraries are a vital public institution that America cannot exist without, while others think they are simply a fun place to visit. The myriad of opinions are as varied as the people that hold them. One common theme expressed in all stories about libraries is that they make a positive impact on individuals and on our society -- in many ways.

The library means much more than checking out a novel...

How have you served us? Let me count the ways.
We borrowed your pictures to hang on the drab walls of our first apartment.

When our children were small, your shelves had the books that their little hands could hold, with stories that their eager minds could learn.

Your walls provided the space for my first "one-man" art show.

Your rooms were the meeting place for storyhour, Junior Great Books, Spanish class, and lectures.

We read your periodicals for tips on buying a car, taking a vacation, and training a dog.

When our son was job-hunting, he spent hours searching the classifieds in your newspapers and writing letters on your typewriter.

We borrowed audio tapes to make long drives seem shorter, and videos to fill the quiet evenings.

The word "library" implies books. We found them — and so much more.

*Joanne Swanson and the
Swanson Family*

"The word 'library' implies books. We found them -- and so much more."

Joanne Swanson & the Swanson Family

We both feel the time we spend helping out at the library is contributing to our longevity as well as expanding our field of acquaintances.

*Bill and Doris Heimann
Library Volunteers*

I drive more than 30 miles each way to work every day. The time used to be wasted, but now I "read" books on tape from the library during my commute. I can finally read many books I've always wanted to read. I've noticed how it changes my mood, both driving and when I arrive at my office or home.

Jan Nowicki

Using the library's audio cassette books helped me through the last ice storm. I simply put batteries in the cassette player and listened to old time radio shows. I lit the oil lamps, listened to tapes, and crocheted Easter baskets. I love the library and all it opens up to everyone. You can take armchair trips to anywhere and learn everything... and it's all free.

Betty McKinzie

I have recently been confronted by several legal matters, and I am in a financial situation which prohibits the use of an attorney. To back myself legally, I've become familiar with Indiana's laws and legal system through the use of the law reference books. I've been successfully able to represent and protect myself and others. I honestly do not know what would have become of me and my family had I not known what my rights were. The library means much more than simply checking out a romance or a science fiction novel for entertainment; it means reassurance in an uncertain world.

Chris R.

The library is an old, old friend of mine. It was good news to me to learn that the work of the institution had expanded beyond books. In the library, I found a good home for the many, many slides I have accumulated in my travels. The library sends the slides out to the schools for their use. It was a happy solution for me to know they might still be useful through the services of the library.

Catherine McCord, 94 years old

"I love the library and all it opens up to everyone."

Betty McKinzie

I took up genealogy and contacted an uncle in California who was my oldest living family member. He became very excited and interested in the information I was finding in the Clay, Vigo, and Jefferson County libraries and the Indiana State Library. I think my research in Indiana libraries had the effect of adding great richness to an old man's final years of life. Thanks to Indiana libraries, his final years were full and productive. He even became so inspired that he wrote an historical article about Madison, Indiana.

Tamie Dehler

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Having recently moved to the farm to help care for my elderly mother-in-law, I was lonely. Then I volunteered for a library book sale. I met another worker who sensed my love for literature and my loneliness. Soon I was invited to join reading and garden clubs. Participating in clubs and interesting library programs, I found many new friends.

Anonymous

“I’d give up my credit cards before I’d give up my library card.”

Pat Edmons

I overheard a television program where they said the library had out-of-town phone books. I had wanted to make connections with an old Army buddy I had been out of touch with for some time. Thanks to the reference librarian, I found him.

Robert Axe

I appreciate the many opportunities offered by my library — the creative writing workshops through the “Let’s Write About It: The Indiana Experience,” the old film series, the book discussion groups, as well as the many other fun and educational activities. The Vigo County Library — more than just books.

Delores M.

The library gave me the chance to educate myself...

I was the most undisciplined student in my high school. Science put me to sleep and math made me nauseous. In short, I was very bored. I cut classes, then whole days, and eventually I dropped out of school altogether — three times. Where did I go? Where else? To the library. I read poetry, novels, literary criticism, art history — all the books they didn’t teach in high school. After a few years, I got a GED. I went to college and graduated *summa cum laude* with honors in both of my majors. I’m now a PhD student in Comparative Literature at Indiana University. I start teaching undergraduate classes next fall.

John Stone-Mediatore

My strongest memory of the library was the time I opened a book to discover woodblock prints of German Expressionists. I felt such excitement. The images were tragic, yet so wonderfully expressive. That began my intense interest in the artists and their history.

A Putnam County Art Teacher

Reading is always a pleasure. I can escape from everyday life and just relax. The only thing I have to worry about is my mom finding me in bed, still awake, telling myself, "I can only read until the next chapter." The library is always providing me with wonderful books about explorers of the past, heroes of the present, and leaders of tomorrow. Without the library, I'd be lost in a boring world — a world without books.

Darcy Flanagan

The residents here look forward every week to the library cart. They enjoy the large print books that the library provides for them. They are able to keep in touch with the authors they have enjoyed all their lives. They are able to keep up with current events though the *Reader's Digest*. The library has made the lives of the residents happier.

*Pat Bailey
Activities Director
Lowell Healthcare Center*

"Without the library, I'd be lost in a boring world -- a world without books."

Darcy Flanagan

My exposure to women in leadership roles came through books. As a young girl I had the chance to visit my local library frequently. I read about Madame Curie, the scientist; Harriet Tubman, who created the Underground Railroad for slaves to escape to freedom; and Eleanor Roosevelt, a teacher and humanist. These profiles of women provided examples of how one could make a difference in the world as well as live the principles of integrity, courage, and honesty. I learned about leadership and my potential to contribute to society from the women role models described in books.

Dr. Peggy Ondrovich

Research! Research! Research! Not for a PhD but for my quilt shows. I began digging for ideas, and while helping at a Friends of the Library book sale I stumbled onto a subject! I have been researching ever since. Each year I look for something new, and the search always begins at the library.

Charlotte Bass

The library has enriched my life by providing the countless books, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers that are always available. I have also borrowed many of the classical LPs.

Frederick A. Lisarelli

“It is as comfortable for me to be in the library as it is for me to be in my own home.”

Jerry Miller

I have used the library to indulge my curiosity on many subjects, from art to psycho-analytic books, but especially poetry. Without access to the library, I am certain I would not be editing a poetry column for a local paper, nor leading a workshop on poetry.

Geraldine Walden

I can't remember a time when the library wasn't central to my life. Mary Lou Fitton, librarian at Hanover College, made the greatest impact on me as a mentor and friend. A bright, witty, delightful person, I fell completely under her spell as a freshman. Later, working as a student in her library, I knew I had found my role model. So I became a librarian — what else?

Anonymous

I've learned that libraries not only change the lives of youngsters, but also oldsters like myself. The library gives me a second chance to educate myself. The library is a place to get the newest or oldest information on subjects from A to Z. If what you need isn't locally available, they'll help you even if they have to go through the State Library. The best part is you don't have to leave town or spend a lot of money.

Isabel Leisure

The library means opportunity...

By the time I reached the seventh grade, I was heavily absorbed in biographies of people in many callings: political, military, educational, and scientific leadership. I lived their lives through wonderful biographies and shared their experiences through these extraordinarily helpful books. I have no doubt that the lessons of those lives, made possible through a wonderful neighborhood library staffed by librarians who took almost a parental relationship in my education, made a remarkable difference in my life.

Richard G. Lugar
U.S. Senator

I was raised on a farm during World War II. A minor physical problem kept me out of strenuous activity, and I had no one to play with. But we had a house full of books. I read everything in my age bracket during the summer and thumbed the school library in winter. Soaking up grammar and spelling by literary osmosis made schoolwork simple. With pleasure reading I got acquainted with history, travel, adventure, romance (Nancy Drew), sailing, flight, how to build things, etc. I can now converse with almost anybody.

John O. Watson

When I was a small child, my mother died, leaving a tiny baby, myself, and two other children. We lived within walking distance of the library, a loved place in my life. The books borrowed were treasures to me. I've shared my love of reading by participating in the Right to Read program and by tutoring.

Marjorie Rover

If I had to choose just one word to sum up what our library means to us it would be "opportunity." With a library within reach, we feel fortunate indeed — the opportunity to learn, explore, examine, entertain is all there. I grew up in Gary in a house packed with eight people. "Running away" to the library was ever so much better than the other alternatives; a positive secure memory, presenting limitless opportunities to a skinny little kid with not much else.

Nancy Fay-Lesley



Libraries Enhance Career-Lives...

According to Tom Peters, author of *Liberation Management*, "Organizations are pure information processing machines -- nothing less, nothing more." This fact makes libraries one of the most important community resources to which a business can have access. Libraries provide the fast, accurate information needed by businesses. But libraries and librarians go beyond providing data to inspiring the work-lives of *people*. As you are about to read, libraries contain the resources and the atmosphere to nurture many different types of businesses and careers.

The computer at my library gives me up-to-date business information in any configuration. In a short amount of time, I can walk out with an accurate listing of potential customers. Sure, I could do it without the computer... if I had a few days to spare. But spare time is hard to find for a busy salesman.

Greg H.

“We were about to give up and call it a night when somebody dropped the girl off the bridge.” Thus begins John D. MacDonald’s *Darker Than Amber*, which I first read more than 15 years ago on loan from the Putnam County Public Library.

I defy anyone to read those first two lines without reading on; or to read the first page of a Dick Francis novel without reading the second. Immediacy — how to capture and hold a reader — was what those two writers taught me. But there were many other lessons to be learned at the library.

From Ross MacDonald and Martha Grimes, I learned plot; style from Robert Parker, Sue Grafton, and Ed McBarin; setting from Stuart Kaminsky and James Lee Burke; and characterization from all of the above. Without the library, I could not have afforded to read, and consequently never would have learned to write. Writers are readers first — remember that. And for those of us writers who can only afford a fraction of the books that we read, the public library is not just a pleasant diversion, it is a lifeline.

John R. Riggs
Mystery Novel Writer

Thanks so much for making time to acquaint us at Associated Rehabilitation Services with the abundance of resources available at the Lake County Public Library. More local companies should utilize you.

Joan Duilley

As a writer, I use the Putnam County Library as a research center. The library has an excellent collection of the basic reference books that all writers and readers need to explore ideas, track down information, or verify facts. Besides, it’s just a nice place to spend some time.

Norma Crampton
*Author of The 100 Best Small
Towns in America*

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I am a commercial actor and impressionist. About three years ago, I decided I would like to get into the movies. I had some background but not quite enough. To make a long story short, I went to my library for information. The staff was extremely helpful and the book, videos, and cassettes they recommended were lifesavers. It paid off. I received a phone call last October from Pierogi Pictures to have a small part in *Roommates*, a movie starring Peter Falk to be released this spring. Thank you.

David L. Hawkins

“My library card was my passport to the outside world.”

Bill Blass

Libraries contain the wisdom, wit, and knowledge of our world, its history and its hopes. Libraries are literally storehouses of knowledge, they are facilities for reading, for relaxation, entertainment, and education.

I am an ardent consumer of our local library's inventory, using it for speech research, self improvement, and an understanding of our nation's heritage and the individuals creating it. In addition to researching speeches prepared for a variety of groups, I thoroughly enjoy political novels, biographies, and books on our political process and personalities.

Robert D. Garton
Indiana State Senator

Libraries haven't changed my life, they have literally formed it, first as a young reader, then as an undergraduate and graduate student in English literature, then as an English professor, and now as a novelist doing research to make my historical novels realistic.

When I was in high school, I used to meet my girlfriend at the library. We would tell our parents we were going there to study, and we would (for a while) before sneaking to the drugstore for a soda.

I did the research for my first essays on Dickens in the British Museum library in London. That experience really changed my life. In frustration one day, when all of my book request cards came back marked “bombed in the war,” I stomped out to a pub and, unable to write the scholarly essay on Dickens that I had planned, scribbled the outline for my first novel. You better believe libraries have changed my life.

William Palmer

It was in a school library that I first learned to do research, probably for a book report. That assignment, simple at first, then increasingly more challenging as I passed through each successive grade, taught me to use the printed word. It taught me to gather information from the printed page. It taught me to reach beyond initial naive forays into the encyclopedia.

Additional references steered the way to whole books, journals, newspapers, and other rich sources of information. That network of words, articles, books, theories, and concepts now includes computers and electronic databases. It connects me to an entire world. That world has taken me a long way — from an elementary book report more than 20 years ago to my first major published article last year. It has taken me to the completion of my doctoral dissertation. As a future professor in education, I intend to take a lot more people with me before I'm through.

Mark Sidelnick

“As director of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, I find the State Library to be an incredible base of knowledge, and I use it regularly.”

Patrick R. Ralston

Long before the *Lafayette Business Digest* lease was up last August, I went searching for a new office. We had been in the Robertson Building five years and needed a little more visibility plus accessibility for our customers. It was time for a change. *Digest* staff voted to stay downtown where we'd continue to have easy access to county records and library resources. When our realtor said the historic condo at 622 South Street was available, I knew it was the right place. It's across the street from the library! Almost every issue of our weekly contains information from the library's resources. We at the *LBD* are grateful patrons of the Tippecanoe County Public Library. Thank you.

Marlene Laurendeau

Without the limitless access of reference materials provided by our American libraries, my career as a textbook illustrator could not have existed. For more than 25 years many helpful librarians assisted me in the discovery of flora and fauna particular to a specific area as well as the dress, furniture, food, transportation, etc. in use at various periods of history. Often days of research preceded a few sure hours at the drawing board.

Beatrice Leonard

As the lonely, only child of a single, working mom, the public library in Waterloo became my after school retreat and Saturday hideaway. Once inside those book-lined walls, I discovered a treasure house of limitless possibilities. My hardback friends — from Heidi to Captain Hook — transported me to exotic lands, challenged my thinking, and freed my imagination. Soon, reading wasn't enough. I began creating the poems and stories of my heart. Today, I am a freelance writer, and two of my books rub shoulders with my old friends at the library.

Judith Lee Birch

Regardless of the career chosen, well-rounded knowledge of our world is essential. No institution contributes more effectively to that knowledge than our libraries.

Marjorie H. O'Laughlin
Treasurer of State

Science fiction was what first attracted me to the space program. In sixth grade, I picked Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time* off the public library shelf in Madison, Indiana, and I've been a voracious science fiction reader ever since. On my first flight on the Space Shuttle (which launched June 21, 1993), I brought a copy of Issac Asimov's science fiction book, *Foundation*, with me to read while I was exercising on the bicycle ergometer. When we stayed in orbit two days longer than planned due to bad weather at Kennedy Space Center, our prime landing site, I ended up with a few hours of spare time because the experiments I was working on had been turned off. So I took a few minutes of that time to curl up in the corner of the flight deck and read Asimov by earthlight (sunlight reflected from the Earth). Looking up from my book to see blue ocean above me out the window made me realize how far I had come from that science fiction book I had picked up in the sixth grade.

Janice Voss
Astronaut



These are a few of my favorite things...

The following memoirs remind us of days gone by, which, like photos in an old album, have edges broken and colors faded. In a moment of timelessness, the past returns to the present, and we embrace the sights, sounds, and smells of distant experiences.

You have read many wonderful stories about how Indiana's libraries have contributed, changed, and even saved lives. Now it's time to build a fire, grab an afghan, sit back in your favorite chair, and indulge yourself in one of the most enjoyable chapters ever written about Indiana's libraries.

We'll see you down memory lane...

To reminisce in the sounds and smells I remember so well...

I would like to share a fond memory of my hometown library in Logansport. It was a large old building, much like the original one here in Goshen. My mom took us there to get books, and I loved listening to the whispers and the clicking sound my shoes made on the solid, polished floors. The smell was almost overwhelming — all those words and pictures just waiting to be let out! As I got older, I still enjoyed roaming the dark halls of that old building, not so much looking for any book in particular, but to reminisce in the sounds and smells I remembered so well from my childhood. Even now, whenever I go into a library those memories come flooding back.

Nancy Risher

“Even now, whenever I go into a library, memories come flooding back.”

Nancy Risher

As a little girl growing up in Greensburg, my appreciation for libraries came early. I was the youngest in a family of seven children, born to parents in their 40's who were caring but strict. There were many things that I was not permitted to do because, “Nice girls don't do those things.” The most important activity I was permitted to do was to visit the library on a regular basis.

Greensburg was very fortunate to have a Carnegie library. I spent many happy hours there, reading and checking out most of their books, or so it seemed to me. From that childhood experience, I developed a love of reading, a deep respect for books, and a great deal of human interest that has been beneficial to me throughout my life.

I can remember climbing those steps, walking through the doors to a wonderful world of books and the familiar smell, just as if those trips took place yesterday.

Lora Mae Schoettmer

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My mother decided to take me to the public library when I was about seven or eight years old. "We must be very quiet," my mother said. "We will also have to be very careful of the books and especially of those that we borrow." I was amazed because I had never seen so many books all in one place. I was overwhelmed, then delighted, and I was in love! What a wonderful treat for a literature-hungry little girl.

Bette Killion

"The library is an important resource and a valued friend in our lives."

Carol Rhudy

Libraries have always been very special to me. When I was little, my mom mended books part-time at the local 1901 Carnegie library. Her work area was a tiny nook under the curving back stairway. Also tucked in to this cozy room was the area which the library staff used for their lounge. One of the tea-time supplies stored there was a box of sugar cubes. We never had sugar cubes at home, and I thought they were the best treat in the world. My mother judiciously tried to prevent any pilferage, but I usually managed to sneak one or two. My earliest memories of the library have the pleasant feel of that hidden-away-under-the-stairs room, piles of books, and sugar cubes all mixed together.

Later, my library visits expanded to include the Peter Pan room on the lower floor where the children's books were located. Peter Pan character silhouettes were inlaid in the floor. Storyhours and summer reading programs followed, and I read everything that looked appealing. I was thrilled when the librarians finally allowed me to go upstairs and borrow books from the youth collection. During high school, the librarian at school suggested books she thought I would enjoy. In college, my favorite study spot was a corner carrel on the third floor of the university library.

Now, I like to chat with the people at the circulation desk, look over the reserve shelf, and ask what others are saying about new books. The librarians at the reference desk can always find anything I need from interlibrary loan.

A library is for me an ideal atmosphere. The quiet surroundings and endless collections of books and magazines are irresistible. A library is a friendly and predictable place in an unfamiliar city. My children are proud cardholders and frequent library patrons. The library is an important resource and a valued friend in our lives.

Carol Rhudy

My ticket to the universe...

From the time I learned to read, libraries were my second home. In them, I traveled to exotic lands I never thought I would see; I had conversations with Mozart, Beethoven, Abraham Lincoln, Booker T. Washington, and W.E.B. DuBois; I shared adventures with Buck Rogers, H.G. Wells, Mowgli, Hans Brinker, and Sherlock Holmes. I read books on how to build model airplanes, how not to be a 97-pound weakling, and how to win friends and influence people. I was inspired by the wonderful stories in the Bible, the life of Gandhi, and the slave narratives, and I cried when I read the stories of the Titanic, the Hindenberg, the Lindbergh kidnapping, and The Diary of Anne Frank.

I empathized when I saw Burgess Meredith in an episode of The Twilight Zone about a bookworm who survived nuclear holocaust. He now had time to read all of the books in the Metropolitan Library, but broke his glasses.

David Baker

I have traveled throughout the world — the glory of ancient Egypt, the pomp of Old England, exotic remote islands, and the far reaches of our own great country. My library card has been my ticket to the universe, and the librarians the conductors for my trip through life.

William B. Hopp

As a youngster growing up in a small, Indiana town in the middle of the depression, my library card was my passport to the outside world.

Bill Blass

When I was young, I developed rheumatic fever which held me bedridden for many months. After visiting the local library, my father came into my room and handed me a book that he had checked out.

"This was the first book I ever read," my father said. "Give it a try." The book was The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. I read it and loved it. Those many months, I never left my bed, but I traveled to Sherwood and met Robin; faced danger with Hawkeye, Chingachgook, and Uncas; discovered footprints in the sand with Crusoe; walked the street of Tombstone with Wyatt; and sat with Arthur at the Round Table. The library introduced those wonderful friends to me...friendships that have lasted a lifetime.

Michael Yurichovich Jr.

When I was a child...

My father was one of six children in a not very prosperous household during the Depression. When he was in high school, he had a part-time job as the custodian of the Carnegie library in Wabash. He spent every evening with all those marvelous books for company and could dip into them when his work was finished. As a child, getting my own library card was a momentous occasion. The library was one of the first public places I was allowed to visit on my own. I'd carefully pick out my four books and start reading them on the walk home with one arm stretched out in front of me, so if I veered off the sidewalk into a tree, I wouldn't be knocked unconscious.

Tracy Wimberly

"I'd carefully pick out my four books and start reading them on the walk home with one arm stretched out in front of me, so if I veered off the sidewalk into a tree, I wouldn't be knocked unconscious."

Tracy Wimberly

When I was a lad still learning to read, my father, who was a minister, would sometimes go off to a research library. He was wise enough to leave me at home when he needed to entrench for a few hours. He did, however, take me along when he returned a book or consulted references only briefly. I liked to go with him. He would leave me for a few minutes in a balcony overlooking a large, busy reading room. I was not afraid because I could see him from this perch. I could also view dozens of scholars engrossed in their work, seemingly oblivious to all else that was going on around them. What could be so absorbing as to transfix people for long periods?

As a robust child, I did not comprehend what was going on in that reading room. But I did understand that the treasures of that library beckoned my father and that he derived great pleasure from studying there. He also read good books to me and my siblings after dinner and had us read to him. By the time I was 20, I too was visiting that same reading room and studying history for long hours. A few years later, while working on my doctorate, I was spending as many hours there as I was spending in our nearby apartment. And before our oldest daughter learned to read, I brought her to that balcony to overlook another generation of scholars.

Peter Harstad

As a child I had an intense desire to read. As I sat on the wood box beside our old cookstove, my mother, while preparing meals, taught me letters, then words until I could read. My world expanded. One time, my father bought a book for me in town, and by the time our horse and buggy reached home, I had read the entire book. It became my favorite pastime.

Through the years, the desire to read has stayed with me. I was fortunate to marry a man who also loves to read. Now, as we have passed our 50th anniversary, we live just a five minute walk from our town library. We do a lot of armchair traveling to all parts of the world.

The library is a god-send, for we are now handicapped and read more than 100 books a year. We so appreciate the library and visit it at least once or twice a week. I rate our well equipped library and helpful staff next to our church. It is indeed a comfort to have the library as a good friend.

The Fountain of Wisdom flows through books. This is an original poem I wrote for a talk I gave on reading.

Books! Books! Everywhere I look,
On the table, on the chair, on the chest, and on the stair.
I love to read of far off places, and the many varied faces.
Sometimes I think they're all I need, for they are truly friends indeed.

Grace W.

“I was fortunate to marry a man who also loves to read. Now, as we have passed our 50th anniversary, we live just a five minute walk from our town library. We do a lot of armchair traveling to all parts of the world.”

Grace W.

My wife, Jean, and I both have fond memories of the library's role in our love of reading. In my case, as an 8th grader who lived five or so miles from the library, I would ride in on Saturday morning during the school year and walk home with as many books as I could carry. In the pre-TV days in my family, the library was the only show in town.

My wife recalls that about that same time, she decided to read, in a summer, all of the mysteries in the collection. Even though she ran out of time, she nearly got through the “M's”!

Robert Burns

I remember the librarian...

A long, long time ago in a country far away, there lived a small girl who liked to read more than almost anything (popcorn and ice cream were better). Each week she would bike to her small town library where the librarians, Mrs. Lott and Mrs. Tew, took a special interest in avid readers like her. They let her buy two library cards so she could take home two fact books and two mysteries each week. And when they discovered she had read an abridged version of Pearl Buck's *My Several Worlds*, they let her into the adult section to read the whole book! What happened to her? You guessed it. She's a librarian at your local library.

Amy Paget

“Each week she would bike to her small town library where the librarians, Mrs. Lott and Mrs. Tew, took a special interest in avid readers like her.”

Amy Paget

My lifelong love affair with libraries and librarians began when I was nine. With my brand new library card in hand, I trudged up the wooden stairs to the public library. Elderly Miss Harper guided me to the right stacks where I chose a beautiful bird book. I read it quickly and returned it. But soon I was horrified to receive an overdue notice. With quavering voice I explained I had returned it and showed Miss Harper where I had shelved it. She kindly gave me a lesson in library procedure. My library love affair continued — I married a librarian.

Anonymous

My earliest recollection of our Carnegie library was one of quiet and solitude. It was a haven for study and research and was operated by a Miss Vernie Baldwin. There is no doubt that our public libraries have played a part in my being mayor of the City of Greenfield, and I hope our library will continue to expand and help all of us in our search for knowledge.

Keith McClarnon

How things have changed since I was a 12-year-old boy walking home from the old Main School in downtown Highland. I wanted a book about the love of my life — automobiles and racing. The librarian suggested *Hot Rod*, by Henry Gregor Telson, a classic of the genre.

You see, my family was going to a relative's cottage in Wisconsin for the weekend. It ended up being a miserable two days outside, but inside was warm and inviting as I lay on the bed and partook of all the excitement within *Hot Rod*. Not such a bad weekend after all, and my appetite for reading had been opened for life. Now I'm 39 and an avid reader of all diverse subject matter. But the sweet memories of that spring weekend in 1966 will never fade.

Jack Robinson

Many years ago in a place that has long since changed, I first entered the world of the library. For the first time in my then short existence, I was given this wonderful choice of books and magazines. In this strange, new building was a friendly librarian who helped me explore this new found treasure. The Brookston Carnegie Library became a source of my own personal love affair with books and other reading temptations. In the library I can always find new ideas, adventures and wonders that add brightness to life. The library is my sanctuary. It is my personal treasure.

Today, everywhere I travel, I always look for the local library. I know that when a community cares enough to support a library, there are going to be young people who have a world that is bigger than their immediate neighborhood.

William Christopher

I travel back in memory to libraries I have known. The first was in a little room that led to the basement of the one-room school I attended. On the wall hung a bookcase with all the books I knew for eight years. Some of them I read several times.

The second was the Sterling Public Library of my high school years. It was not available to me because I lived seven miles outside the city limits. But one year, my English teacher called me to her desk as class was dismissed. In her hand she held a card to that library, her personal card.

"I want you to have it for this year," she said, handing the card to me. That woman knew book starvation when she saw it. I remember walking out of that room feeling rich, rich!

I remember well the bricks and stones of that building. But more, I remember the librarians who served there. They were something like high priestesses mediating the blessing of a larger world of ideas.

Helen Alderfer

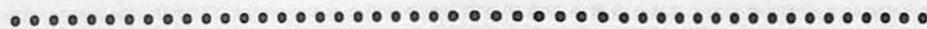
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When I was ten and living in Bedford, a Latin teacher aunt asked me to go on an errand to the public library. She was working on an extremely difficult double crossword puzzle and needed a six-letter word beginning with "E" that described a mountain peak in Antarctica.

[At the library], I asked for help and was shown to a heavy wooden platform stand in the corner of the library near a sunny window. Without further help, I found Antarctica in the index, and Mount Erebus on the map. I remembered it all the way home and to this very day.

Imagine my joy when, as a writer, columnist, newspaper editor, and author, I gave a program based upon one of my biographies in the basement of the Bedford Public Library. The audience sat one floor below the atlas — long since removed and no doubt destroyed — that laid opened on its stand in 1942.

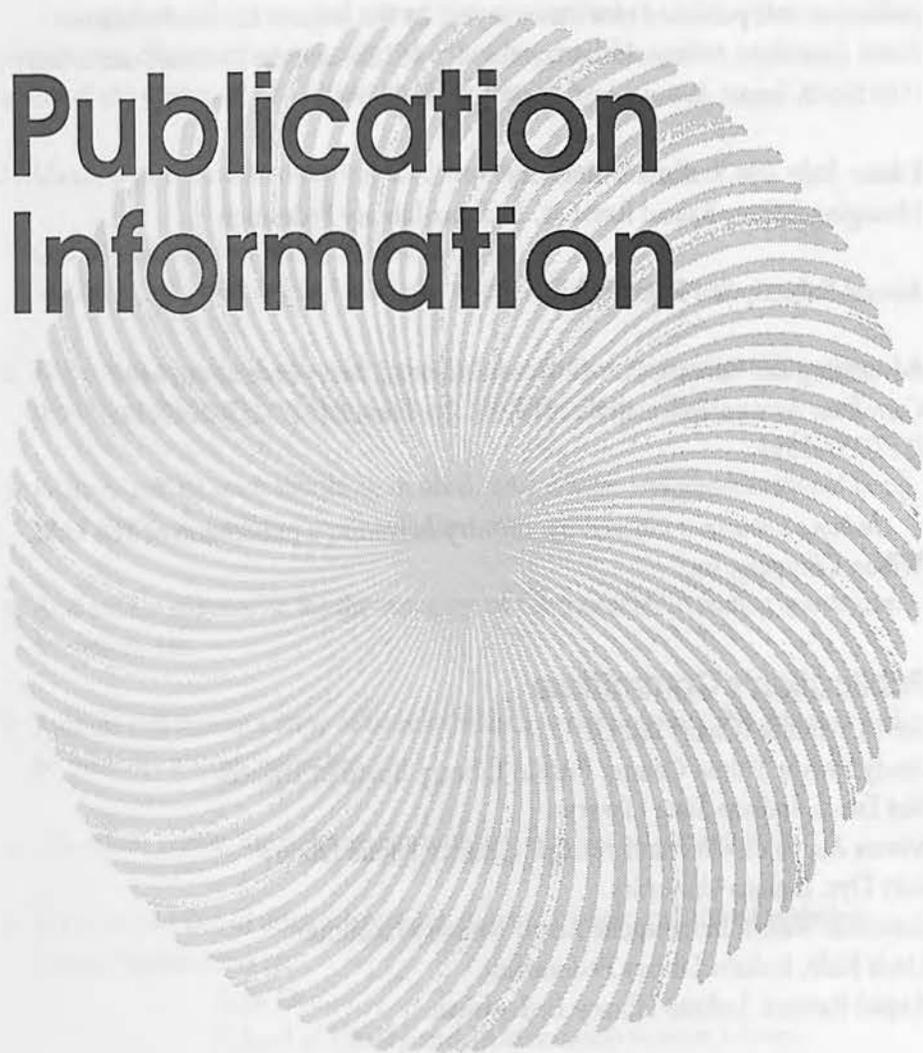
Researching information and imparting it in new ways to contemporary readers, has been a dominant part of my working life, as have libraries.

Robert Kreibel



Publication Guidelines for Indian Libraries

Publication Information



Indiana Libraries

Indiana Libraries (ISSN: 0275-777X) is a journal for those in the library profession. It is published two times a year by the Indiana Library Federation (6408 Carrollton Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46220) and the Indiana State Library (140 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46204).

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3. Pictures and art work should be in black and white, and graphics should be of good technical quality. Visuals will not be returned.
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Publication Guidelines for Indiana Libraries

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