

Long Range Plan

for the

Harnett County Public Library

FY 2008 – 2013



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Introduction

Motivation for Planning

In January 2008, the Harnett County Public Library received a federally-funded LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant to develop a strategic plan for its library system by implementing a planning process based on the one outlined in the Public Library Association's publication, *The New Planning for Results*.

The Planning Process

The staff of the Harnett County Public Library chose to use a variation of the planning process outlined in *The New Planning for Results*. This planning process was developed by the Public Library Association of the American Library Association to encourage public libraries to define their services in light of the needs of the individual communities being served. *The New Planning for Results* was specifically written for small and medium sized public libraries and emphasizes a streamlined, community-based approach to planning. The planning process outlined in *The New Planning for Results* is based on the assumption that excellence must be defined locally and that excellence results when library services match user needs, interests, and priorities.

The staff of the Harnett County Public Library used a survey of library users and non-users to identify the needs of members of the community and then used their own understanding of the library's strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats facing the library to identify a mission, goals, and objectives for the Harnett County Public Library.

Participants

The staff planning committee was made up of the following members of the staff of the Harnett County Public Library:

- Melanie Collins, Library Director
- Rosalie Cauthen
- Cathey Clifton
- Jackie Frye
- Heather Giunta
- Susan Hobbs
- Sue Johnson
- Angela McCauley
- Barbara MacLean
- Kim Sirois
- Michael Williams, Dunn Library Director

The Harnett County Public Library's planning process was facilitated by Dr. Robert Burgin, a library consultant with more than 30 years of experience in library education, library consulting, and library administration.

Survey of Users and Non-Users

The first task of the staff planning committee was to conduct a survey users and non-users to determine their opinions of the library and its services. This survey was conducted in late February and early March 2008. The library received 683 completed surveys, and the results are provided as Appendix 3 of this report.

Library Service Responses

Based on the survey of library users and non-users and the staff's understanding of the library's strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats facing the library, the staff team selected the five service responses that it believed were most pertinent to the needs of the Harnett County Public Library's actual and potential user bases. These service responses were selected from a list of seventeen service responses created in January 2007 by the authors of *The New Planning for Results* with input from the library community.

- Stimulate the Imagination: Reading, Viewing, and Listening for Pleasure, which focuses on the library's role in helping residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time find what they want when and where they want them and have the help they need to make choices from among the options.
- Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning, which emphasizes the library's role in helping residents have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.
- Create, Encourage, and Support Young Readers, which emphasizes the library's role in providing programs and services designed to ensure that children of all ages will learn to read, write, and listen.
- Visit a Comfortable Place: Public and Virtual Spaces, which emphasizes the library's role in providing safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking.

- Explore Our Community: Community Resources And Services, which focuses on the library's role in providing a central source for information about the programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

The staff team then discussed the library's vision and mission statements and began the process of identifying goals, objectives, and activities to implement the service responses over the next five years. The vision statement, mission statement, service responses, goals, objectives, and representative activities are listed below.

Vision Statement

Supporting the love of reading, the joy of learning, and the search for information.

Mission Statement

The Harnett County Library System seeks to create and encourage young readers; to help individuals explore the community's resources and services; to encourage curiosity and imagination; to support lifelong learning; and to be a comfortable and welcoming gathering place for the community.

Service Priorities, Goals, Objectives, and Representative Activities

The goals, objectives, and activities of the Harnett County Public Library support the service responses that were selected by the library staff, based on the survey of library users and non-users and the staff's understanding of the library's strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats facing the library.

Library Service Priorities and Goals

STIMULATE THE IMAGINATION: READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING FOR PLEASURE

- Goal 1: Library users will benefit from an increased awareness of and satisfaction with the library's print and non-print materials.
- Goal 2: Library users will benefit from an increased awareness of and satisfaction with the library's online resources.

SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING

- Goal 3: People of all ages will be provided with resources, services, and programs to support lifelong learning and personal development.
- Goal 4: Library users will have access to space that facilitates a variety of activities to support lifelong learning and personal development.
- Goal 5: Library users will benefit from a well-trained and knowledgeable staff who are better able to serve the public.

CREATE, ENCOURAGE, AND SUPPORT YOUNG READERS

- Goal 6: Children under age 5 will have programs and services that instill the love of reading and learning, encourage a sense of curiosity and discovery, and ensure readiness to enter school prepared to learn to read, write, and listen.
- Goal 7: Children in grades K-8 will have materials and programs that stimulate their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.
- Goal 8: Teens will have materials and programs that respond to their current interests and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences in pursuit of lifelong learning.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE: PUBLIC AND VIRTUAL SPACES

- Goal 9: Library users of all ages will have comfortable and welcoming places to meet and interact with others.
- Goal 10: Adults who use the library will have “quiet” spaces to sit, read, study and use laptops.
- Goal 11: Library users will have open and accessible virtual spaces.
- Goal 12: Library users will be provided with more accessible hours of operation.

EXPLORE OUR COMMUNITY: COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

- Goal 13: Library users will benefit from staff who are familiar with the community resources that are available.

Goal 14: Library users will benefit from a more accurate community information database.

Goal 15: Library users will be made more aware of the information on community resources that the library makes available.

**STIMULATE THE IMAGINATION:
READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING FOR PLEASURE**

Goal 1: Library users will benefit from an increased awareness of and satisfaction with the library's print and non-print materials.

Objective 1.1

The library will publicize the library's print and non-print materials, special events, and activities through news articles in the local newspapers at least twice a month.

Objective 1.2

The library will publicize its print and non-print materials through presentations to teachers, students, and civic groups outside the library at least four times each year.

Objective 1.3

The use of the library's print and non-print materials will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years. ¹

Objective 1.4

At least 80 per cent of the library's users surveyed annually will "agree" or "strongly agree" that they are satisfied with the library's print and non-print materials. ²

¹ Appendix 1 provides a work sheet for selected library statistics and targets for 2006-2007 through 2011-2012

² Appendix 2 lists the items needed in the annual surveys referred to in the library's objectives and activities.

Goal 2: Library users will benefit from an increased awareness of and satisfaction with the library's online resources.

Objective 2.1

By the end of fiscal year 2008-2009, the library staff will email flyers to all county employees, advertising the library's online resources and how to access these resources.

Objective 2.2

By the end of fiscal year 2008-2009, the library staff will make available to the public bookmarks, flyers, and brochures listing the library's online resources and how to access these resources.

Objective 2.3

The use of the library's online resources will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 2.4

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will "agree" or "strongly agree" that they are aware of and satisfied with the library's online resources.

Representative activities to support these goals include:

- Allocating 20 per cent of the annual operating budget to the purchase of popular materials with a long-term goal of improving the collection while increasing the number of books per capita to the state standard of 2 books per capita.
- Purchasing nonprint materials that will enhance the collection within the guidelines of the collection development policy and within the constraints of budget.

- Focusing on readers advisory to the public via NoveList and proactive recommendations via book displays and reading lists on current topics.
- Monitoring the number of holds on adult books and ordering an extra copy when the number of holds per copy of a title exceeds 5.
- Withdrawing 3 per cent of the collection annually in order to remove worn and outdated materials from the collection.
- With the support and assistance of the library Board of Trustees and the Friends of the Harnett County Public Library, attempting to increase local funding for books and other materials to the state average of \$2.77 per capita.
- Purchasing multiple copies of best-seller books in high demand and continuing to use a shorter loan period for best-seller books in high demand to increase turnover.
- Providing access to online resources of interest to the library's users.
- Reviewing resources purchased by the library independently of NC LIVE.
- Designating two staff members to write bi-weekly newspaper articles to publicize the library's print and non-print materials, special events, and activities.
- Purchasing print and non-print materials of interest to the library's users.
- Providing access to online resources of interest to the library's users.
- Publicizing the library's print and non-print materials through newspaper articles; presentations to teachers, students, and civic groups outside the library; publicity items; and monthly displays.
- Publicizing the library's online resources through bookmarks, flyers, and brochures.
- Providing basic library services to homebound users.
- Making each staff member responsible for at least one publicity item each year to publicize the library's print and non-print materials.
- Making each staff member responsible for two monthly displays each year to publicize the library's print and non-print materials.

SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING

Goal 3: People of all ages will be provided with resources and services to support lifelong learning and personal development.

Objective 3.1

The number of library-sponsored programs that promote lifelong learning and personal development will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 3.2

The number of people who participate in library-sponsored programs that promote lifelong learning and personal development will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 3.3

The circulation of nonfiction materials will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 3.4

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the library's resources and services to meet their needs related to lifelong learning and personal development as "Good" or better.

Goal 4: Library users will have access to space that facilitates a variety of activities to support lifelong learning and personal development.

Objective 4.1

The number of programs held in library facilities but not sponsored by the library will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 4.2

The number of people who attend programs held in library facilities but not sponsored by the library will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 4.3

At least 80 per cent of the organizations that use library facilities for programs will rate the library's facilities as "Good" or better in meeting their needs related to lifelong learning and personal development.

Goal 5: Library users will benefit from a well-trained and knowledgeable staff who are better able to serve the public.

Objective 5.1

The library will set aside 40 hours of staff training time per year for topics such as using Microsoft Office; demonstrating how to open a free email account for patrons; using programs offered through NC Live such as Learning Express, Net Library, and MyDVLibrary; logging into the OPAC; using NC Live from home; using a scanner; using microfilm; and performing a basic internet search.

Objective 5.2

All staff will be able to demonstrate the ability to complete the Level I and Level II competencies of the State Library's "Technology Competencies for Libraries in North Carolina" (<http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/ce/competencies.pdf>) by the end of their second year of employment at the library.

Objective 5.3

All staff will identify a target for training hours on their performance appraisals.

Objective 5.4

The Library will devote 2 per cent of its annual personnel budget to in-service training and continuing education for staff members.

Representative activities to support this goal include:

- Developing partnerships with local agencies and organizations to provide learning opportunities or assistance to library users.
- Creating Web or print pathfinders on subjects related to lifelong learning and personal development.
- Creating book displays for adults and children to stimulate interest in learning and personal development.
- Allocating 5 per cent of the book budget to purchase of self-study, remedial, and career advancement materials.
- Evaluating the collection for currency and accuracy.
- Surveying users annually to determine how they perceive the library's collections and programs to meet their needs related to lifelong learning and personal development.

CREATE, ENCOURAGE, AND SUPPORT YOUNG READERS

Goal 6: Children under age 5 will have programs and services that instill the love of reading and learning, encourage a sense of curiosity and discovery, and ensure readiness to enter school prepared to learn to read, write, and listen.

Objective 6.1

The library will host two workshops each year utilizing materials from the “*Every Child Ready to Read*” program for parents of children under age 5.

Objective 6.2

The circulation of picture books will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 6.3

The attendance at library programs by children under age 5 will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 6.4

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the library’s collections and programs for children under age 5 as “Good” or better.

Goal 7: Children in grades K-8 will have materials and programs that stimulate their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.

Objective 7.1

Beginning in September 2008, the library will host a monthly activity night for families with school aged children.

Objective 7.2

The circulation of juvenile fiction books will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 7.3

The library will provide a relevant and accessible collection for school aged children by weeding at least 5 per cent of the juvenile collection each year for the next five years.

Objective 7.4

The library will provide a relevant and accessible collection for school aged children by increasing the number of juvenile materials by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 7.5

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the library's collections and programs for school aged children as "Good" or better.

Goal 8: Teens will have materials and programs that respond to their current interests and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences in pursuit of lifelong learning.

Objective 8.1

By September 2008, the library will establish and organize a teen advisory council with representation from across the county to assist in developing programs and activities of interest to teens.

Objective 8.2

Beginning in September 2008, the library will hold at least quarterly meetings of the teen advisory council.

Objective 8.3

Beginning in December 2008, the library will offer a weekly current interest program for teens.

Objective 8.4

The library will increase the number of materials available for teens by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 8.5

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the library's collections and programs for teens as "Good" or better.

Representative activities to support this goal include:

- Offering two preschool storytimes and one toddler storytime each week.
- Providing comfortable and inviting places for children at all library facilities.

- Providing Accelerated Reader and other book lists for children at all library facilities.
- Providing outreach services to child care facilities in Harnett County.
- Providing workshops for parents of preschool children.
- Providing workshops for families with school aged children.
- Providing current interest programs for teens.
- Surveying users annually to determine how they perceive the library's collections and programs for children under age 5, the library's collections and programs for school aged children, and the library's collections and programs for teens.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE: PUBLIC AND VIRTUAL SPACES

Goal 9: Library users of all ages will have comfortable and welcoming places to meet and interact with others.

Objective 9.1

The library staff will conduct entire Library Walk-Throughs during fiscal year 2008-2009 using questions on page 204 as a basis from *Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries*, by Sandra Nelson, et al., published by ALA, c2000.

Objective 9.2

Using data from the Library Walk-Throughs, the library staff will review signs throughout all library locations to determine the need for additional or improved signage.

Objective 9.3

By 2010-2011, at least 85 per cent of library users surveyed will “agree” or “strongly agree” that they can easily find their way around the library.

Objective 9.4

Using data from the Library Walk-Throughs, the library staff will review library furniture, including tables and chairs, to determine whether to purchase or replace furniture.

Objective 9.5

By 2011-2012, at least 85 per cent of library users surveyed will “agree” or “strongly agree” that library seating is clean and comfortable.

Objective 9.6

By 2011-2012, at least 90 per cent of parents or caregivers surveyed will “agree” or “strongly agree” that the children’s area of the library is comfortable.

Objective 9.7

Meeting Room use will increase by 5 per cent each year for the next five years.

Objective 9.8

By 2010-2011, at least 85 per cent of the organizations that use the library facilities will “agree” or “strongly agree” on a survey that the facilities were comfortable and welcoming and met their needs.

Goal 10: Adults who use the library will have “quiet” spaces to sit, read, study and use laptops.

Objective 10.1

The library will provide quiet areas in the adult sections of its facilities and identify these areas with attractive signs.

Objective 10.2

The library will increase the number of tables and chairs for library users who are using laptop computers or need space for work or study.

Objective 10.3

By 2010, at least 85 per cent of the people who come to the library to find a “quiet” area to sit and read will indicate on a survey that they were able to do so.

Goal 11: Library users will have open and accessible virtual spaces.

Objective 11.1

The library's technology staff will develop a plan by the end of 2009 to continually maintain and update the library's Web site with input from library staff.

Objective 11.2

By the end of 2010, at least 85 per cent of the library users surveyed will "agree" or "strongly agree" that they are aware of and satisfied with the library's wireless Internet access and with online library resources.

Objective 11.3

By the end of 2009, library staff will publish a monthly online newsletter to 100 recipients by promoting e-mail subscriptions on the Web site and in the print newsletter.

Objective 11.4

By the end of 2010, library's technology staff will create a virtual tour of the library facilities.

Goal 12: Library users will be provided with more accessible hours of operation.

Objective 12.1

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the library's hours of operation as "Good" or better.

Objective 12.2

If the percentage of library users surveyed who rate the hours of operation at any facility as "Good" or better falls below 80 per cent, then the library administration and the staff of that facility will survey users to determine the most convenient

hours of operation and will explore the library's options for meeting the identified need.

Representative activities to support this goal include:

- Conducting Library Walk-Throughs by groups: library staff; Friends of the Library and Library Board; and people in the community and library users, including junior high children, teenagers, and college students.
- Budgeting for the purchase of signs and furniture.
- Developing a timetable for the purchase and installation of signs and furniture.
- Targeting civic groups, support groups, and other local service organizations and contacting them to schedule monthly meetings in the library so that they can be informed about library resources, both print and non-print (for example, like the Caregiver group that met here recently).
- Contacting Spanish-speaking groups, youth and teenage groups, and senior groups to schedule monthly meetings in the library so that they can be informed about library resources, both print and non-print.
- Making available library facilities for use by outside groups that wish to sponsor ongoing educational opportunities and other activities that meet the needs of our community.
- Encouraging partnerships by attending at least six meetings annually of organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce meetings, civic groups, and other local service groups.
- Making attractive "Quiet Area" signs after the quiet areas are identified.
- Shifting and moving furniture for laptop users.
- Providing library staff with training on library online resources if needed.
- Providing library staff with training on updating the Web site if needed.
- Using signs, handouts, and online notices to market wireless Internet access and online library resources that are available from home, school, or work.

- Surveying users annually to determine how they perceive the ease with which they can find their way around the library, the cleanliness and comfort of the library's seating, the comfort of the library's children's areas, the degree to which library facilities are comfortable and welcoming, the degree to which library facilities meet their needs, their ability to find a "quiet" area to sit and read, the library's wireless Internet access and online library resources, and the library's hours of operation.
- If the percentage of library users surveyed who rate the hours of operation at any facility as "Good" or better falls below 80 per cent, then the library administration and the staff of that facility will survey users to determine the most convenient hours of operation and will adjust the hours to most closely match those identified as most convenient.

EXPLORE OUR COMMUNITY: COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Goal 13: Library users will benefit from staff who are familiar with the community resources that are available.

Objective 13.1

The library staff will meet at least twice a year and ask representatives of local organizations (Beacon Rescue Mission, Joblink, Literacy Council, etc.) to speak.

Objective 13.2

Half of the library staff will score 75 per cent or better on a quiz about community organizations given by the Library Director at an annual staff meeting.

Objective 13.3

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the staff's knowledge of community resources as "Good" or better.

Goal 14: Library users will benefit from a more accurate community information database.

Objective 14.1

By the end of July of each year, the library director will designate staff members to work with volunteers to ask organizations for updated information.

Objective 14.2

The designated library staff will update at least 20 per cent of the community information database each fiscal year.

Objective 14.3

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate the accuracy of the library's information on community resources as "Good" or better.

Goal 15: Library users will be made more aware of the information on community resources that the library makes available.

Objective 15.1

By the end of fiscal year 2008-2009, the library staff will email flyers to all county employees, advertising the information on community resources that the library offers and how to access that information.

Objective 15.2

By the end of fiscal year 2008-2009, the library staff will make available to the public bookmarks, flyers, and brochures listing the information on community resources that the library offers and how to access that information.

Objective 15.3

At least 80 per cent of the library users surveyed annually will rate their awareness of the library's information on community resources as "Good" or better.

Representative activities to support this goal include:

- Holding staff meetings at which representatives of local organizations speak to staff.
- Updating information in the community information database.
- Continuing to provide access to the community information database via the online catalog.

- Publicizing the information on community resources that the library offers and how to access that information through bookmarks, flyers, and brochures.
- Testing staff annually to determine their knowledge of community resources.
- Surveying users annually to determine how they perceive the staff's knowledge of community resources, the accuracy of the library's information on community resources, and their awareness of the library's information on community resources.

Appendix 1

Selected Library Statistics and Targets, 2006-2007 through 2011-2012

Selected Library Statistics and Targets, 2006-2007 through 2011-2012

(Source: State Library of North Carolina, NC Public Library Statistics, 2006-2007,
URL: <http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/ld/plstats0607/plstats0607.htm>)

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Use of library's print and non-print materials (Objective 1.3)	326,330					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						
Number of library-sponsored programs (Objective 3.1)	507					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						
Circulation of nonfiction materials (Objective 3.3)	58,672					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						
Number of programs held in library facilities but not sponsored by the library (Objective 4.1, Objective 9.7)	370					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						
Number of people who attend programs held in library facilities but not sponsored by the library (Objective 4.2)	2,162					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Circulation of juvenile books (Objective 7.2)	144,195					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						
Number of juvenile books (Objective 7.4)	81,705					
Percentage increase (Target = 5 per cent per year)						

Appendix 2

Items for Annual Surveys

For Library Users

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

I am satisfied with the library's print and non-print materials. [Objective 1.4]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am aware of and satisfied with the library's online resources. [Objective 2.4]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I can easily find my way around the library. [Objective 9.3]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Library seating is clean and comfortable. [Objective 9.5]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The children's area of the library is comfortable. [Objective 9.6]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I came to the library to find a "quiet" area to sit and read and was able to do so. [Objective 10.3]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am aware of and satisfied with the library's wireless Internet access and with online library resources. [Objective 11.2]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

For Library Users

Please rate the library in the following areas:

Resources and services to meet my needs related to lifelong learning and personal development [Objective 3.4]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Collections and programs for children under age 5 [Objective 6.4]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Collections and programs for school aged children [Objective 7.5]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Collections and programs for teens [Objective 8.5]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The library's hours of operation [Objective 12.1]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The staff's knowledge of community resources [Objective 13.3]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
The accuracy of the library's information on community resources [Objective 14.3]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
My awareness of the library's information on community resources [Objective 15.3]	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent

For Organizations that Use the Library Facilities

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

The facilities were comfortable and welcoming and met our needs. [Objective 9.8]	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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Appendix 3

2008 Survey Results

2008 Survey Results
Harnett County Public Library

In late February and early March 2008, the Harnett County Public Library surveyed users and non-users as part of its strategic planning efforts. The survey asked users and non-users to rate the service priorities from the *New Planning for Results*. The library received 683 completed surveys.³

Overall Results

Library cards. Overall, 70 per cent of the survey respondents who answered the question reported having a library card. (See Table 1.)

Table 1
Respondents Having Library Cards

Have library card	476	70%
Don't have library card	202	30%

Age. The mean age of all respondents was 41.6 years.

Gender. Approximately two thirds of the respondents were female. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
Respondent Gender

Male	220	33%
Female	444	67%

³ Based on Harnett County's 2006 certified population of 103,714, the results of the survey are accurate to within plus or minus 5 percentage points at a 95 per cent level of confidence.

Ethnicity. Three-fourths of the respondents were white, and another 19 per cent were African-American. (See Table 3.)

Table 3
Respondent Ethnicity

African American	131	19%
Asian American	3	0%
Hispanic/Latino	18	3%
White	503	75%
Other	20	3%

Library most used. Approximately half of the respondents listed Lillington as the library that they most often used. Dunn (18 per cent), Other (10 per cent), and Coats (10 per cent) were the next most frequently listed. (See Table 4.)

Table 4
Library Most Often Used

Angier	23	3%
Anderson Creek	10	1%
Coats	68	10%
Dunn	126	18%
Erwin	61	9%
Lillington	330	48%
Other	69	10%

Visits. On average, respondents reported visiting the library 15.6 times in the past six months.

Limits. Respondents were asked to list the items that limited their use of the library. Table 5 shows their responses. By far, the most frequent response was “I have a computer and Internet

access at home or at work.” “Inconvenient hours” and “Other” were the next most common responses. The least frequent response was “I don’t like the library’s atmosphere.”

Table 5
Limits to Library Use

I have computer and Internet access at home or at work	177	26%
Inconvenient hours	110	16%
Other (please specify)	103	15%
I get my books or videos elsewhere	66	10%
Inconvenient locations	52	8%
Library doesn't have what I want	57	8%
Library's size or layout	37	5%
I don't like the library's atmosphere.	20	3%

Rating the library. Respondents were asked to rate the library in terms of its materials, customer service, facilities, and programs. The results are shown in Table 6. Respondents were most satisfied with customer service; nearly three fourths rated the library’s customer service as excellent. Over half of the respondents rated programs, facilities, and library materials as excellent.

Table 6
Ratings of Library Materials, Customer Service, Facilities, and Programs

<i>Library Materials</i>		
Excellent	283	54%
Satisfactory	218	41%
Poor	27	5%
<i>Customer service</i>		
Excellent	396	73%
Satisfactory	121	22%
Poor	28	5%

<i>Facilities</i>		
Excellent	303	56%
Satisfactory	227	42%
Poor	12	2%
<i>Programs</i>		
Excellent	263	62%
Satisfactory	151	35%
Poor	12	3%

Improvements. Respondents were asked to list ways in which the library could be improved. Table 7 summarizes the results. The most frequently listed ways were “More books,” “Longer hours,” and “More computers”; over one-fifth of respondents selected one of those responses. The least frequent responses were “Programs such as ...” and “More non-English materials.”

Table 7
Ways in Which the Library Could Be Improved

More books	164	24%
Longer hours	158	23%
More computers	143	21%
Using the libraries resources from home, school or work	111	16%
Materials other than books (CDs, movies, e-books etc)	89	13%
Wireless Internet access	84	12%
More branch libraries	64	9%
Programs such as ...	33	5%
More non-English materials	13	2%

Services and resources. Finally, respondents were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for the respondents are listed in Table 8. ⁴

⁴ Rankings here and throughout the report are based on the percentage of respondents who ranked a service or resource as very important. The total was the number of respondents ranking a service or

By contrast, fewer than half rated as very important the bottom four services and responses: computer classes; meeting space; foreign language materials; and downloadable audios and DVDs.

Table 8
Top Ten Services and Resources

All Respondents		
1	Books for children	86.8%
2	Books for young adults	81.0%
3	Access to the Internet	79.3%
4	Books for adults	77.8%
5	Programs for children	77.3%
6	Reference books	76.1%
7	Reference service	75.9%
8	Support for life-long learning	74.1%
9	Access to online databases	72.2%
10	Outreach to the homebound	71.9%

Library Card Holders

As noted earlier, 70 per cent of the survey respondents who answered the question reported having a library card.

Age. There was little difference in the mean age of cardholders (41.7 years) and respondents who did not have library cards (41.4 years). However, the likelihood that a respondent had a library card increased with age up to ages 30 to 39 and then declined, particularly after age 60. (See Table 9.)

resource as not important, somewhat important, or very important. Responses of "N/A" and non-responses were not included in the total on which percentages were based.

Table 9
Effect of Age on Likelihood of Having a Library Card

	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Have library card	53%	60%	89%	83%	80%	59%
Don't have library card	47%	40%	11%	17%	20%	41%

Gender. Female respondents were far more likely to have library cards (76 per cent) than were male respondents (57 per cent).

Ethnicity. Whites were slightly more likely to have library cards (71 per cent) than African-Americans (65 per cent). Individuals with other ethnic backgrounds (79 per cent) were even more likely to have library cards.

Visits. Not surprisingly, library card holders averaged far more visits to the library in the past six months (20.5 visits) than did respondents who did not have library cards (3.4 visits). Likewise, the likelihood of having a library card increased as the number of visits to the library in the past six months increased. Only 29 per cent of individuals who reported no visits to the library in the past six months reported having a library card, while 75 per cent of individuals who reported 1 to 6 visits also reported library cards. Even more (86 per cent) of the individuals who visited the library 7 to 20 times had library cards, and practically all (96 per cent) of the individuals who visited the library more than 20 times during the previous six months had library cards.

Limits. Respondents were asked to list the items that limited their use of the library. Card holders were more likely to say "The library doesn't have what I want" (10 per cent vs 5 per cent). Respondents without cards were more likely to list "I have computer and Internet access at home" (32 per cent vs 23 per cent) and "I get my books or videos elsewhere" (16 per cent vs 7 per cent).

Rating the library. Respondents were asked to rate the library in terms of its materials, customer service, facilities, and programs. The differences between respondents with cards and those without were not great, although card holders were more likely to rate customer

service as excellent (74 per cent vs 67 per cent) and less likely to rate library materials as excellent (52 per cent vs 58 per cent).

Improvements. Respondents were asked to list ways in which the library could be improved. Those with library cards were more likely to list "More books" (27 per cent vs 17 per cent), "Using the libraries' resources from home, school or work" (18 per cent vs 12 per cent), and "Materials other than books" (15 per cent vs 9 per cent). Those without library cards were more likely to list "More computers" (26 per cent vs 19 per cent) and "More branch libraries" (13 per cent to 8 per cent).

Services and resources. Finally, respondents were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for each group of respondents – those with cards and those without – are listed in Table 10.

Respondents with library cards ranked books for adults and reference books far more highly than did respondents who did not have library cards. Respondents without library cards ranked access to online databases as their 6th most important service or resource; by contrast, online databases were ranked 13th by card holders. Likewise, respondents without library cards ranked outreach to pre-school children as their 8th most important service or resource; by contrast, this service was ranked 15th by card holders.

By contrast, fewer than half of both groups rated meeting space, foreign language materials, and downloadable audios and DVDs as very important. Those with library cards also rated computer classes as less important, while those without library cards rated videos and DVDs and interlibrary loan as less important.

Table 10
Top Ten Services and Resources by Library Card Status

With Library Cards			Without Library Cards		
1	Books for children	88.9%	1	Books for children	79.8%
2	Books for young adults	83.3%	2	Access to the Internet	79.7%
3	Books for adults	81.1%	3	Books for young adults	74.2%
4	Reference books	79.7%	4	Programs for children	74.0%
5	Access to the Internet	79.3%	5	Support for life-long learning	72.4%
6	Reference service	78.5%	6	Access to online databases	70.8%
7	Programs for children	78.3%	7	Outreach to the homebound	69.0%
8	Support for life-long learning	74.8%	8	Outreach to pre-school children	67.7%
9	Library Web site	73.0%	9	Library Web site	67.4%
10	Outreach to the homebound	73.0%	10	Reference service	67.2%

Gender

As noted earlier, approximately two thirds of the respondents were female.

Library cards. As noted earlier, females were more likely to have library cards: 76 per cent of female respondents and 57 per cent of male respondents had cards.

Age. Male respondents were younger, on average, than female respondents. The average age for males was 38.9 years, and the average age for females was 42.9 years.

Ethnicity. There were few differences in the ethnic backgrounds of the male and female respondents. Males were slightly more likely to be white (78 per cent) than were females (73 per cent). By contrast, females were slightly more likely to be African-American (21 per cent) than were males (16 per cent).

Visits. There was little difference between males (15.7 visits) and females (14.9 visits) in terms of the number of visits to the library in the past six months. The most frequent visitors (34 per

cent male) were no more likely to be male than were the least frequent visitors (38 per cent male).

Limits. Respondents were asked to list the items that limited their use of the library. Males were more likely to say "I have computer and Internet access at home" (30 per cent vs 25 per cent), and females were more likely to list "Inconvenient hours" (18 per cent vs 13 per cent).

Rating the library. Respondents were asked to rate the library in terms of its materials, customer service, facilities, and programs. Males were slightly more likely to rate library materials (58 per cent vs 51 per cent), customer service (76 per cent vs 71 per cent), and facilities (61 per cent vs 52 per cent) as excellent.

Improvements. Respondents were asked to list ways in which the library could be improved. Males were more likely to list "More computers" (24 per cent vs 19 per cent), while females were more likely to list "Longer hours" (26 per cent to 18 per cent).

Services and resources. Finally, respondents were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for each group of respondents – males and females – are listed in Table 11.

Males ranked outreach to the homebound more highly than did females. Males ranked this service as their 6th most important service or resource; by contrast, the service was ranked 11th by females. Females ranked the library Web site as their 8th most important resource or service; males ranked this resource 14th. Otherwise, the rankings were very similar.

By contrast, both genders rated downloadable audios and DVDs as less important. Male respondents added help with homework and computer classes as less important; female respondents added meeting space and foreign language materials.

Table 11
Top Ten Services and Resources by Gender

Males			Females		
1	Books for children	82.2%	1	Books for children	88.6%
2	Books for young adults	74.3%	2	Books for young adults	84.2%
3	Programs for children	73.5%	3	Access to the Internet	83.1%
4	Access to the Internet	71.8%	4	Books for adults	80.8%
5	Books for adults	71.2%	5	Reference service	79.2%
6	Outreach to the homebound	70.5%	6	Programs for children	78.8%
7	Reference books	70.4%	7	Reference books	78.7%
8	Support for life-long learning	69.3%	8	Library Web site	77.5%
9	Reference service	68.3%	9	Support for life-long learning	76.0%
10	Outreach to pre-school children	67.3%	10	Access to online databases	74.7%

Age

As noted earlier, the mean age of all respondents was 41.6 years. Survey results were broken into six age groups for further analysis: ages 0 to 19 (103 respondents); ages 20 to 29 (108 respondents); ages 30 to 39 (122 respondents); ages 40 to 49 (111 respondents); ages 50 to 59 (83 respondents); and ages 60 and over (141 respondents).

Library cards. As noted earlier, the youngest and oldest age groups were the least likely to have library cards. (See Table 9.) Nearly 90 per cent of the respondents aged 30 to 39 had library cards.

Gender. As Table 12 shows, the gender breakdown for ages 0 to 19 was even – half males, half females. For all other age groups, nearly two-thirds or more of the respondents were female. Males were least likely in the 30 to 39 year old age group.

Table 12
Gender Breakdowns by Age

	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Male	50%	35%	25%	29%	33%	29%
Female	50%	65%	75%	71%	67%	71%

Ethnicity. There were few differences in the ethnic backgrounds of the age groups. As Table 13 shows, other ethnic groups were most highly represented among the youngest age group – 10 per cent of whom were Hispanic/Latino. African-Americans were least represented among two age groups – 40 to 49 and 60 plus. Otherwise, the breakdowns were similar among age groups.

Table 13
Ethnic Breakdowns by Age

	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
African-American	20%	24%	21%	13%	24%	13%
White	64%	70%	72%	79%	74%	86%
Other	16%	6%	6%	7%	1%	2%

Visits. The mean number of visits to the library in the past six months was fewest for the youngest and oldest age groups. The most frequent visitors were the second oldest and second youngest age groups. (See Table 14.)

Table 14
Mean Visits by Age

	0-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Mean Visits	7.5	19.8	16.1	17.9	20.9	12.9

Limits. Respondents were asked to list the items that limited their use of the library. For all age groups except 50 to 59, the most frequent response was "I have computer and Internet access at home." This was particularly frequent among the 0 to 19 age group (35 per cent), the 20 to 29 age group (34 per cent), and the 40 to 49 age group (31 per cent). Only "Other" was listed by more than 20 per cent of any age group.

Rating the library. Respondents were asked to rate the library in terms of its materials, customer service, facilities, and programs. There were no noteworthy patterns associated with age, although the group aged 60 and older were clearly the most satisfied age group. That group rated the library's materials, customer service, facilities, and programs higher than any of the other age groups.

Improvements. Respondents were asked to list ways in which the library could be improved. The youngest age group (0 to 19) listed 50 per cent more improvements than the next highest age group. Half of that age group wanted "More computers," 39 per cent wanted "Longer hours," 38 per cent wanted "More books," and 31 per cent wanted "Wireless Internet access." No other age group listed improvements as frequently. The most frequently listed improvements for the other age groups were "Longer hours" for ages 20 to 29, 30 to 39, and 50 to 59; and "More books" for ages 40 to 49 and 60 plus.

Services and resources. Finally, respondents were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for each age group are listed in Table 15.

Every age group ranked five services and resources among its top ten: access to the Internet; books for children; books for young adults; programs for children; and reference service. Books for adults and reference books appeared in the top ten for every age group except the youngest group.

Table 15
Top Ten Services and Resources by Age Group

0 to 19 Years			20 to 29 Years		
1	Access to the Internet	82.7%	1	Books for children	89.5%
2	Access to online databases	74.0%	2	Access to the Internet	85.3%
3-4	Books for children	73.1%	3-4	Books for young adults	83.0%
3-4	Books for young adults	73.1%	3-4	Programs for children	83.0%
5	Programs for young adults	69.9%	5	Books for adults	82.8%
6	Reference service	69.0%	6	Support for life-long learning	77.9%
7	Computers for adults	67.9%	7-8	Programs for young adults	76.8%
8-9	Programs for children	67.6%	7-8	Reference books	76.8%
8-9	Support for life-long learning	67.6%	9	Reference service	76.3%
10	Computers for children	67.5%	10	Literacy services	75.8%

30 to 39 Years			40 to 49 Years		
1	Books for children	94.6%	1	Books for children	93.8%
2	Programs for children	82.6%	2	Books for young adults	90.5%
3	Books for young adults	81.3%	3	Books for adults	87.6%
4	Reference books	80.6%	4	Access to the Internet	83.2%
5	Access to the Internet	78.2%	5	Library Web site	77.4%
6	Reference service	78.1%	6	Reference service	76.8%
7	Books for adults	77.1%	7	Access to online databases	76.1%
8	Outreach to the homebound	76.0%	8	Reference books	76.0%
9-10	Computers for children	75.9%	9-11	Best sellers	75.0%
9-10	Programs for young adults	75.9%	9-11	Programs for children	75.0%
			9-11	Support for life-long learning	75.0%

50 to 59 Years			60 Plus Years		
1	Books for children	81.7%	1	Books for children	83.5%
2	Books for young adults	80.6%	2	Reference service	76.7%
3	Books for adults	80.6%	3	Books for adults	76.5%
4	Reference books	80.3%	4	Reference books	76.3%
5	Reference service	76.9%	5	Programs for children	75.6%
6	Programs for children	76.1%	6	Books for young adults	75.3%
7	Support for life-long learning	75.8%	7	Support for life-long learning	73.0%
8	Access to the Internet	75.7%	8	Outreach to the homebound	72.9%
9	Outreach to the homebound	73.4%	9	Access to the Internet	72.6%
10	Access to online databases	70.8%	10	Best sellers	72.5%

By contrast, downloadable audios and DVDs were ranked as the least important service and resource by all but one age group (50 to 59 years).

Ethnic Background

As noted earlier, three-fourths of the respondents were white, and another 19 per cent were African-American. For the purposes of further analysis, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and other respondents are grouped as “Other” and represent 5 per cent of all respondents.

Library cards. As noted earlier, Whites were slightly more likely to have library cards (71 per cent) than African-Americans (65 per cent). Individuals with other ethnic backgrounds (79 per cent) were even more likely to have library cards.

Age. Respondents of other ethnic background were, on average, 29.1 years old. African Americans averaged 38.4 years old, and Whites were 43.1 on average.

Gender. The African American respondents were less likely to be male (28 per cent) than were the other two ethnic groups, 34 per cent of whom were male.

Visits. African-American respondents reported the most visits to the library in the past six months, 22.9. By contrast, those in the “Other” category reported an average of 16.5 visits during that time period, and White respondents reported an average of 13.8 visits.

Limits. Respondents were asked to list the items that limited their use of the library. For White and “Other” respondents, the most frequent response was “I have computer and Internet access at home” (30 per cent and 21 per cent respectively); by contrast, only 14 per cent of African American respondents cited this limitation. For African Americans, the most frequently listed limitation was “Inconvenient hours”; 15 per cent of African American respondents cited that limitation, as opposed to 17 per cent of Whites and 18 per cent of “Other” respondents.

Rating the library. Respondents were asked to rate the library in terms of its materials, customer service, facilities, and programs. Those from “Other” ethnic backgrounds rated the library’s materials, customer service, facilities, and programs higher than any of the other ethnic groups. African Americans rated the library’s materials and facilities higher than did White respondents.

Improvements. Respondents were asked to list ways in which the library could be improved. African Americans and “Other” ethnic groups listed “More computers” and “Longer hours” as their top two improvements. Whites listed “More books” and “Longer hours.”

Services and resources. Finally, respondents were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for each ethnic group are listed in Table 16.

Some interesting differences appear in the top ten lists of services and resources. For example, African American respondents listed job and career information as the 3rd most important service, but neither of the other two ethnic groups listed that service in their top tens. Likewise, Whites listed adult books as the 3rd most important service, but neither of the other two ethnic groups listed that service in their top tens. All three groups did include access to the Internet, books for children, support for life-long learning, and books for young adults in their top ten lists.

Table 16
Top Ten Services and Resources by Ethnic Group

African American			White		
1	Access to the Internet	88.3%	1	Books for children	87.1%
2	Books for children	85.5%	2	Books for young adults	81.0%
3	Job and career information	83.5%	3	Books for adults	78.7%
4	Programs for children	83.0%	4	Access to the Internet	76.0%
5	Library Web site	82.6%	5	Reference books	75.7%
6	Support for life-long learning	80.6%	6	Reference service	75.5%
7	Books for young adults	79.2%	7	Programs for children	75.1%
8-9	Reference books	77.8%	8	Outreach to the homebound	71.7%
8-9	Reference service	77.8%	9	Support for life-long learning	71.5%
10	Literacy services	76.4%	10-11	Access to online databases	70.4%
			10-11	Best sellers	70.4%

Other		
1	Access to the Internet	96.0%
2-3	Access to online databases	88.5%
2-3	Books for children	88.5%
4	Books for young adults	84.6%
5-6	Computers for children	83.3%
5-6	Support for life-long learning	83.3%
7	Programs for children	80.0%
8-9	Books for adults	76.9%
8-9	Computers for adults	76.9%
10	Library Web site	75.0%

By contrast, downloadable audios and DVDs were ranked as the least important service and resource by all of the ethnic groups. Foreign language materials were ranked as the second

least important service and resource by African Americans and Whites, but understandably, those of other ethnic backgrounds rated those materials higher.

Staff

Finally, it is instructive to look at the results of the survey of Harnett County Public Library staff. Like the users and non-users, staff members were asked to rate services and resources as not important, somewhat important, and very important. The top ten services and resources for the staff are listed in Table 17.

Table 17
Top Ten Services and Resources for Staff

Staff		
1-6	Best sellers	100.0%
1-6	Books for adults	100.0%
1-6	Books for children	100.0%
1-6	Books for young adults	100.0%
1-6	Books on tape and CD	100.0%
1-6	Programs for children	100.0%
7-12	Access to the Internet	83.3%
7-12	Genealogy and local history information	83.3%
7-12	Large print books	83.3%
7-12	Library Web site	83.3%
7-12	Outreach to pre-school children	83.3%
7-12	Reference service	83.3%

Like the respondents to the survey (see Table 8), staff rated books for children, books for young adults, access to the Internet, books for adults, programs for children, and reference service among the most important services.

However, while all six of the staff who responded to the survey rated best sellers and books on tape and CD as very important, these services and resources were not listed in the top ten for all respondents. Best sellers appear on the top ten lists of only two subgroups (ages 40 to 49 and ages 60 plus). Books on tape and CD appear on the top ten lists of none of the subgroups from the survey of users and non-users.

Four other services and resources – genealogy and local history information, large print books, library Web site, and outreach to pre-school children – were also ranked among the top services and resources by staff but not by overall users. Again, no other subgroup rated genealogy and local history information or large print books among the top ten services and resources.

While respondents overall and nearly all subgroups ranked downloadable audios and DVDs as the least important service and resource, half of the staff rated these as very important. By contrast, no staff member rated help with homework as very important, and this service appeared on no subgroup's top ten list.