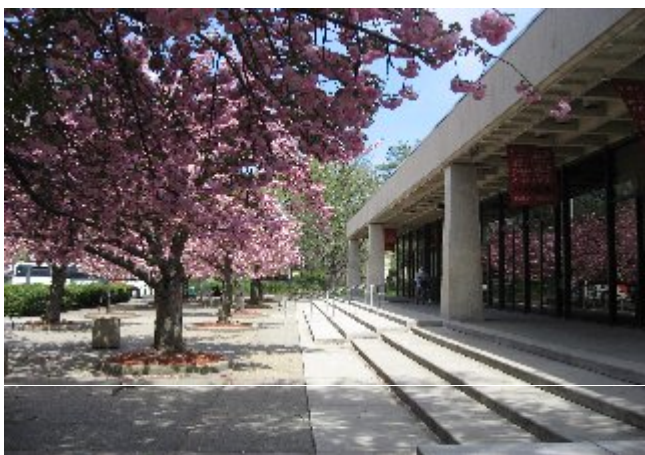


PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

2009



**A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT
A DECADE OF DISTINCTION**

VISION STATEMENT:

***To be the center of cultural enrichment
and information for lifelong learning for
the Plainfield community.***

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS 2000-2009

LIBRARY HONORS

Plainfield Public Library has won over 15 awards from community and professional organizations since 2000. The following represent a cross-section of the awards and sponsoring organizations:

2009—Community Change Award

In recognition of the library's Diversity Studies Collection.

New Jersey Black Issues Convention

2008 and 2001—Alice M. Leppert Award

Outstanding Literacy Affiliate in New Jersey
Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey

2007— 19th Annual NJCH Book Award

For excellence in collection development.

New Jersey Council for the Humanities

2006— Award for Achievement by a Community Organization

For fostering human rights and relations in Union County and for promoting and advancing the understanding, acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity

Union County Human Relations Commission

2006—Institutional Service Award

For furthering the cause of archives and history in the state, in particular for outstanding progress in acquiring, processing, describing, and preserving local history archives

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference/New Jersey Caucus

2004—Community Distinction Award

In recognition of the significant improvements brought to the lives of the citizens of Plainfield.

Plainfield Chamber of Commerce

2003—Best Service Brochure

For development and publication of "A Kid's History of Early Plainfield"

New Jersey Library Association

2000—Access Union County Award

For outstanding commitment to improving access for people with disabilities

Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders

This handsome modern facility, designed in the monumental architectural style of Lincoln Center, opened in 1968. Since that time the Library has changed to reflect the changing needs of the community and the demands of a technological society.

COMPUTERIZATION—Starting with the automation of the bibliographic records, a tidal wave of change introduced public access computers that offer free access to the Internet and e-mail. A content-rich website not only provides remote access to the catalog and special databases, it gives access to a huge number of local history resources.

COMMUNITY SPACE—The Anne Louise Davis Room seats 120 people and is often used for town hall meetings, art exhibits and performances. The installation of programmable track lighting now provides cultural events with the showcasing they deserve.

RESEARCH COLLECTION

In 2002, an 1800 square-foot area was created out of storage space to house the library's growing local history collections of photographs, blueprints and documents. The climate-controlled Archives set a new standard for public libraries in New Jersey.

CONFERENCE ROOMS—In 1968 the building's only conference room was the Board Room that doubled as the Local History Room. Today there are six additional rooms that vary in size, seating from 4 to 20. College students, business people, tutors, and community groups have validated the need for these new spaces by keeping the rooms in constant use. In 2009 a new conference room was carved out of underused space accommodating 50, an ideal mid-size space for many groups.

ADULT LITERACY OFFICE—The growth of the Adult Literacy program necessitated new spaces for interviewing, testing, tutoring, and meetings. The Library remains the only free provider of literacy, GED, and citizenship classes in the community. The program operates with two staff members and 75 volunteers trained as tutors.

2010 Plans for Renovations

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

Currently entering final design stage, renovations for this heavily used area will soon be underway to incorporate more computers and more comfortable spaces. Construction is expected to start in mid 2010, during which the book collection will be moved and children's services will continue from another area of the library. Funding for this project has come from the library's recent Capital Campaign, made possible by private donors and foundations.

A rainforest motif was chosen because it is timeless and timely, and it reflects the mix of cultures that prevail in Plainfield. The new room is designed to enchant and educate youngsters for years to come. The following profile was written as a guideline for the architectural competition:

"A space that dazzles the imagination, this room is a unique island in Plainfield: an environment that has burst forth from books of faraway lands; a room that reflects family roots in tropical countries; a reminder that there are animals and trees to be saved, a room where technology is integral and familiar."

"This room is a haven from the pressures of school and family, where individuals, friends, families, and classes visit for quiet excitement and learning. It is a world of wonder that is just for the children of Plainfield. And it's here inside the library!"

JOB SEARCH CENTER

With statistics from the Bureau of Labor showing that Plainfield has been in double-digit unemployment since January 2009, the Plainfield Public Library is stepping up its service to the unemployed and underemployed. During 2009 two grant proposals were submitted to Union County for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to create a Job Search Center, a computer training facility on the library's main level that will add 12 public-access Internet computers. Remodeling is scheduled for 2010.

Reference Librarians have been assisting students and adults with career and job-seeking information for decades, but the world of job hunting today requires extensive use of computers. Librarians have the training and expertise to help job-seekers search the Internet for job vacancies, lead them through tutorials to develop résumés, and assist them with the complexities of filing applications online.

The plan also calls for partnering with other community agencies that provide related services, such as counseling. Professionals will be brought in to present programs on the many aspects of job searching in today's world. Once funded, the remodeling will take place in early 2011.

"Plainfield has been in double-digit unemployment since January 2009."

Shared Services = Cost Effective Operations

Plainfield Public Library participates in the following networks and consortiums:

New Jersey State Library Jersey Connects Technology Network—Subsidized cost for Internet and e-mail access.

Infolink Regional Library Cooperative—Employee training on new technologies; group purchasing discounts.

New Jersey Library Association—Workshops on management, training and censorship issues.

Libraries of Middlesex County Automation Consortium—Hosts computer catalog of 30 libraries.

MURAL—Reciprocal Borrowing—Enables the public to cross jurisdictions without fees.

Literacy Volunteers of Union County—Administers the Plainfield program, with emphasis on Basic Literacy.

Library Partnerships

Library Usage Soars in 2009

Circulation

126,000 items borrowed by library users
(33,000 more than in 2008)
5,974 books loaned to other libraries

Active Borrowers

11,000 adult borrowers from Plainfield
1,063 adult borrowers, non-resident
5,500 youth borrowers
750 library users per day

Collection

181,323 total volumes owned
6,685 total volumes purchased in 2009

Computers

18 public computers
44,387 user sessions
55,505 individuals accessed the website

Outreach

A monthly electronic newsletter was created to advise library users and supporters of special programs, events and new books. All events link to postings on our website.

Programs and Meetings

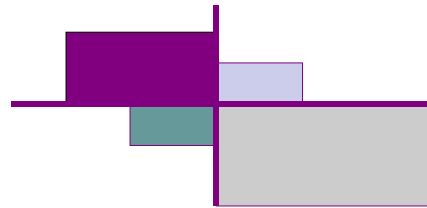
62 community groups used library meeting rooms
24,350 attendees at library and community programs

Children's Library

424 library programs for children
8,525 total attendance at library programs
3,227 participating in Summer Reading Club
3,314 books distributed through *Reading Is Fundamental*

Staffing

20 Full-time employees
7 Full-time master's degree librarians



Adult Literacy Services Continue Growth in 2009

84 Active Volunteer Tutors

157 Students on Waiting List

211 Students Served from 39 countries: Afghanistan, Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sonike, Spain, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, Tobago, Trinidad and Uruguay.

LOS AMIGOS CLUB—An award-winning grass roots initiative of 30 ESL students who meet weekly to practice speaking English.

LATINOS IN CONVERSATION— *Story Corps* conducted the library's 2007 oral history project of 13 interviews and has invited the library to participate in the first nationwide Hispanic project. This program will produce 12 more oral histories of local residents.

SPANISH/ENGLISH PICTORIAL DICTIONARIES—*Rotary Club of Plainfield/North Plainfield* has funded a new library initiative to purchase bilingual dictionaries that will be distributed free to ESL participants.

ANNUAL RECOGNITION EVENT—This year's ceremony was attended by 160 tutors and students. Certificates of Achievement were presented to the outstanding students, and all tutors received Certificates of Appreciation from the New Jersey State General Assembly.

LIFESKILL WORKSHOPS—The most successful lecture of the year was a presentation by an immigration attorney on the requirements of the U.S. naturalization process. Fifty people attended.

LVNJ STUDENT OF THE YEAR! ESL student, Narvis Bent, was recognized with the *Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey's 2009 Award for Student Excellence*. Narvis was born and educated in Colombia, earning a university degree in computer science. Although he has been in the Plainfield Public Library's Literacy Program for only two years, he has made impressive achievements in learning English.

Community Groups Using Library Meeting Rooms

With nine meeting rooms, the Plainfield Public Library provides space for committee meetings, focus groups and lectures. It is also the community's most important venue for cultural programming.

° = 2009

Civic Organizations

- Latino Leaders
- °League of Women Voters
 - Candidate Forums/Mtgs.
- °People's Organization for Progress
- °Plainfield Chamber of Commerce
- °Plainfield Community Outreach Inc
- °Union County Women's Political Caucus
- West End Revitalization Board
- °Women for Progress
 - Candidates Forum

Educational & Youth groups

- °Barack Obama Green Charter HS
- Dr. Ellen Pressman Charter School
- °Brightest Charter School
- °Grand Canyon University
- °I Have A Dream Program
- Lincoln Alumni
- °NAACP Middle School Overachievers
- °National Association of University Women – Scholarship Tea
- °New Horizons
- New Jersey Orators
- Phi Alpha Parents
- °Plainfield Board of Education
 - Candidates Forum
- Plainfield Board of Education
 - College Planning Workshop
- °Plainfield Cardinals Football
- Plainfield Education Foundation
- Plainfield Girl Scouts
- °Plainfield Soccer Club
- °Plainfield Vikings
- °Queen City Baseball League
- Rotary Club of Plainfield
 - Scholarship Interviews
- °Stockton State College
 - Recruiting
- °Tsunami Track Club
- °Union County College
 - Recruiting

Neighborhood Associations

- Crescent Area Homeowners
- Crystal Court Association
- °E. 6th St. Block Association
- °Friends of Sleepy Hollow
- Hidden Hollows Townhouse Association
- Netherwood Neighborhood Association
- Reeve Terrace Block Association
- °Renaissance Association
- Triangle Block Association
- Victoria Homeowners Meeting
- °West End Reunion Committee

Government

- °Assemblyman Green
 - Town Hall Meeting
- Ceasefire Committee
- City of Plainfield Personnel Division – Mgmnt Training
- °Councilman Mapp
 - Town Hall Meeting
- EPA Clean-Up Grant
- NJ Transit – Public Hearing
- Plainfield City Council
- °Plfd Cultural & Heritage Comm.
- Plainfield Housing Authority
- Plainfield Planning Board
- Plfd Special Improvement District
- °PMUA - Town Hall Meeting
- °U.S. Census Bureau – Training
- °Union County Department of Human Resources
- °Union County Board of Elections
 - Training

Library groups

- °Libraries of Middlesex County Automation Consortium
- Libraries of Union County
- °New Jersey Library Association Executive Board
- °NJLA Technical Services Section
- °Friends of the Plainfield Public Library
- °Literacy Volunteers of Plainfield Advisory Council
- °Literacy Volunteers of Union County - Tutor Training
- °Los Amigos ESL Club
- °Plainfield Poetry Club

Other Community Groups

- °AARP Tax Aid Program
- °Ameriplan
- Art Festival Committee
- Assn. of Black Social Workers
- °Black Brothers United
- °Civil Air Patrol
- °Creative Writing Group
- °CWA Local 1037
- °Easter Seals Host Agencies
- ERA Queen City Realty
 - Home Buyers Seminar
- °Flight 93 Oral History
- °Firefighter Study Group
- °First Unitarian Society of Plainfield
- °H&R Block Tax Seminar
- °Immigration Workshop
- °Jack & Jill
- °Kappa Alpha Psi – art contest
- °Kean Univ. Small Business Seminar
- NACA Credit Counseling
- New Covenant Christian Assn.
- New Jersey Incubator Network
- °Plainfield Can – Preservation forum
- Plainfield Garden Club
- Plainfield Police Study Group
- °Plainfield Symphony Board
- °Raritan Valley Links Book Signing
- °Relay for Life
- °Rotary Club of Plainfield
- °Save Muhlenberg Committee
- Sisters' Voice
- °United Way
- Winners Connection

LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

- °Children's movies
- °Children's theatre
- °Citizenship classes
- °Computer classes
- °Conservation workshops
- °Cultural presentations
- °Dance performances
- °Fine Art & Photography Exhibits
- °GED classes
- °Historical lectures
- °Life-skill workshops
- °Training sessions
- °Tutoring sessions

Community Partnerships

Local History Activities in 2009

NOTABLE ACQUISITIONS

Courier News Photographs, et al.

An estimated 50,000 Plainfield-area images were donated to the library in mid-2009, some dating from the early 1900's. The CN obituary files will enhance our genealogy files on Plainfield and area residents.

Muhlenberg Medical Center.

With the hospital's recent closing, the Muhlenberg Board of Directors continued their relationship with our library, by donating Board meeting notes dating back to the 1880s, as well as a full run of Muhlenberg annual reports. Bound scrapbooks, press clippings, patient information, and donor recognition awards are also included in this collection.

Monday Afternoon Club.

From 1888 to 2007, the club was primarily a literary outlet for women, but the membership was also active with civic events, education, and outside organizations. This collection contains a detailed club history, membership lists and constitution.

Pittis Family Papers.

The Pittis Family came to Plainfield in the 1870s and played an important role in the commercial and cultural life of the town. When the Pittis Family Estate ended its business operations in Plainfield, hundreds of documents, maps, and corporate records were offered to our library to be part of our community archives.

The Polk Riley Collection of Books by African American Authors.

The roots of this collection stem from Dr. Charles C. Polk, who began collecting in the 1920s. The books was used throughout the years as reference material for family and friends taking courses, due to the scarcity of materials available elsewhere. The tradition was continued by his daughter Barbara, who became a librarian and worked in several historically black colleges. During her career, Polk Riley met many writers who helped shape the collection and inscribed books to the Polk family. After having already donated the main collection of nearly 2,000 books on African-American history and culture to the Plainfield Public Library, she has now donated these priceless autographed editions.

NOTABLE PROGRAMS NEW IN 2009

Local Authors Book Signing

Thirty local and New Jersey authors assembled to promote their new books, representing a variety of genres including local history, mystery, fiction, romance and fantasy. The strong interest shown by authors and the public suggests that this might become an annual event.

Conservation Workshop

Conducted by Leonard Cummings, a Master bookbinder who volunteers at our library, this all-day workshop for 25 librarians and library workers was a resounding success. A follow up workshop is scheduled for Spring 2010 to teach advanced techniques in a smaller group. Additional conservation workshops will be planned for the public.

Memoir Writing Club

Begun in October of 2009, this club of senior citizens meets monthly with library staff to learn techniques that will help them record their memories. Participants write on assigned topics about Plainfield's past, and copies of the writings have been added to the Local History collection. The group has generated some interest in the community and we hope this program will continue to grow in 2010 and become a core program for the Local History and Genealogy Department.

Church Records

As the first step of a long-range program to archive church records, library staff has begun to transcribe the handwritten cemetery records of the Plainfield Baptist Church. The library hopes to obtain grant funding to document the histories of the many houses of worship in Plainfield.

NEW PUBLICATION

Plainfield: Lost But Not Forgotten

The community's enthusiastic response to our mid-year exhibit of historical photographs has led to this new book of the same name. Sixty-one color and black & white images are featured in this new 40-page publication.

2009 Volunteer Support

Volunteers Are Vital to the Library's Success

Volunteers have been the key to the growth of many of the Plainfield Public Library's services, from Information Services and Children's Services to Local History and Adult Literacy. In 2009 over 100 volunteers contributed over 7,500 hours to the library. We recognize them at different times of the year, but we can never thank them enough for their dedication.

Our Adult Literacy program has long been our flagship for volunteer commitment, with 85 active volunteer tutors. But in recent years the Local History Department has benefited by some notable volunteers:

Mary della Sala has been a library volunteer for over 20 years. Each week she scans the local newspapers to clip articles on topics of community interest for the information files.

Elizabeth (Liz) McNish assists with research on special projects. Of note in 2009 has been her ongoing work to research biographical material on the Notable Women of Plainfield project.

Leonard (Len) Cummings, a master bookbinder, shares his skills by conserving rare and special books and by conducting hands-on workshops for librarians and support staff.

Our most successful agency partnership in 2009 has been with *Easter Seals of New Jersey*, an agency that coordinates a work training and re-entry program for workers 55 years of age and older. Of the five persons placed at the library, we have hired two as part-time workers when openings occurred. Most of them have worked as Computer Assistants, assisting the public with limited computer experience.

In 2009 over 100 volunteers contributed more than 7,500 hours to the library.

Friends of the Plainfield Public Library Donate \$9,000 in 2009 Annual Support

- \$750** **Literacy Volunteers Recognition Event**—Our annual ceremony recognizes our adult learners and thanks our volunteer tutors. This year's ceremony was attended by 160.
- \$2,250** **Children's Summer Reading**—Funding underwrote performances by a magician and a puppeteer for over 3,000 children. The *Reading Is Fundamental* program distributed over 3,000 books for children to build their personal libraries.
- \$5,000** **Local History**—Funds were used to obtain matching grants from the Union County History Grant program and the Plainfield Cultural & Heritage Commission; both funded the processing of the newly donated Courier News photograph and research collections.
- \$1,000** **4th Annual Plainfield Photography Contest & Exhibit**— 86 entries were received this year and exhibited in our annual November/December show. All contest photographs become part of the library's permanent photograph collection, available to future researchers.

Personnel in the News

Library Director Honored

Library Director Joe Da Rold, M.L.S., was honored in October by the Hispanic Cultural Association, *RAICES*, for his "services to the Hispanic Community of New Jersey." The presentation cited Joe's personal support of Hispanic art and artists and his leadership in opening the library to the Latino community. Joe has also been honored as a biographee in the 2009 edition of *Who's Who in America*.

Previous awards in his tenure as Library Director include the 2007 Susan Swartzburg Preservation Award presented by the New Jersey Library Association and the 2004 Award of Achievement presented by the New Jersey Historical Commission for outstanding service in the preservation of NJ history.

New Assistant Director Hired

Mary Ellen Rogan, M.L.S., formerly Assistant Director of Special Formats Processing at the New York Public Library, joined the Plainfield Public Library staff in June 2009. Her new responsibilities include supervising the Local History, Circulation, Information Services and Technical Services Departments. Mary Ellen is an avid genealogist and is State Lineage Chairman of the New Jersey Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

Library Staff Achievements

Three staff members, all Plainfield residents, received full-tuition scholarships from the New Jersey State Library through the **Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program**.

Senior Library Assistant Audrey Samuels earned her B.A. degree with honors through Thomas Edison College;

Children's Librarian Janice People completed her M.L.S. degree at Rutgers State University;

Archival Assistant Michelle Rausa-Campbell has just completed the first semester of her M.L.S. program.

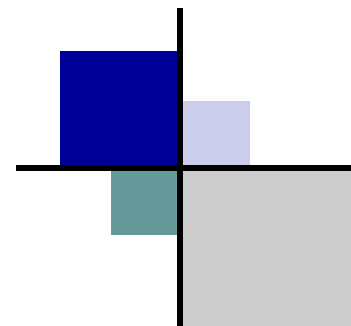
The scholarship program is designed to increase minority and bilingual staff in New Jersey's urban public libraries. All scholarship winners are committed to work in their home library or another urban library for two years after completion of their degree.



Michelle Rausa-Campbell



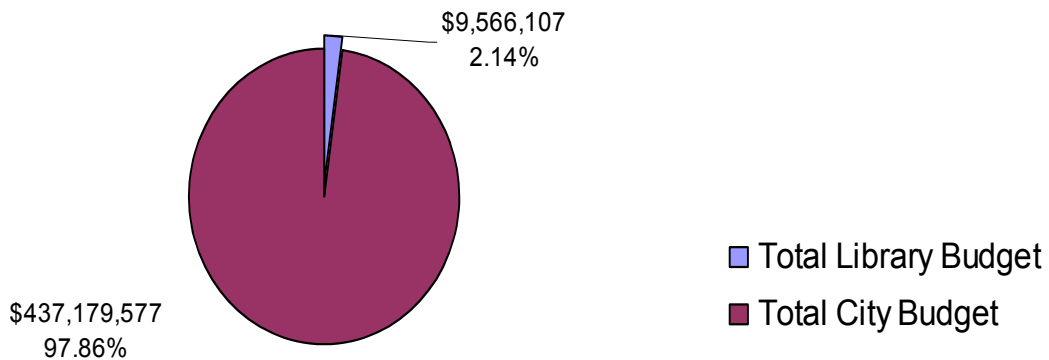
LtoR: Janice People, Audrey Samuels,
Library Director Joe Da Rold



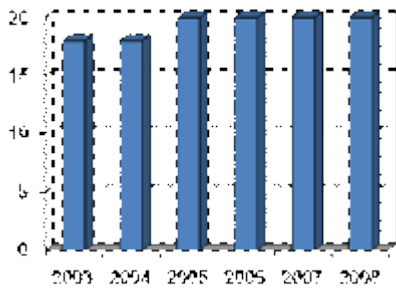
Financial Summary

INCOME	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Municipal	1,175,000	1,210,250	1,324,864	1,365,386	1,442,641	1,458,281	1,556,338
State Aid	56,500	57,038	58,391	59,591	59,435	61,581	58,203
Grants	146,588	347,845	200,508	201,349	209,023	274,622	209,874
Capital Campaign	0	14,318	155,543	60,851	81,760	47,012	26,041
Misc. Revenue	169,133	164,073	162,166	123,157	118,539	137,828	122,853
EXPENSE	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Personnel	845,512	884,783	971,810	991,563	1,028,567	1,068,926	1,052,129
Building Operations	216,184	405,531	227,093	344,496	398,558	244,505	410,665
Library Operations	435,088	391,097	429,103	383,247	355,068	418,983	360,037

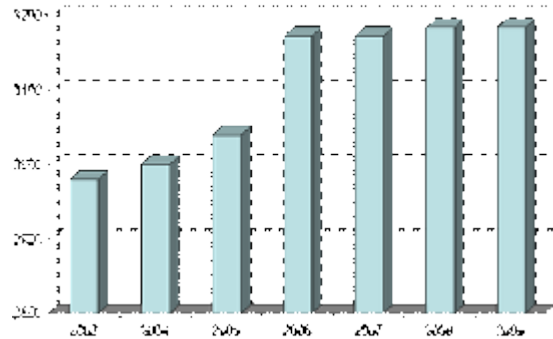
Municipal Budgets 2003 - 2008 & Percent of Library Allocation



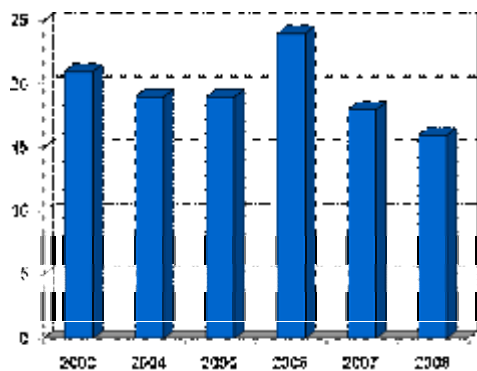
Full Time Employees



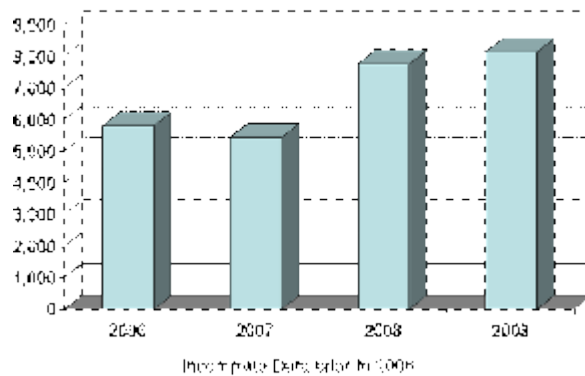
Hours Of Operation Per Year



Part Time Employees



Volunteer Hours



Capital Campaign Major Donors

\$50,000 +
Pond Foundation

\$45,000 +
Mary Vic Griswold

\$35,000 +
Plainfield Foundation
Charles & Victoria Rappold

\$25,000 +
Anne Louise Davis
Friends of the Plainfield Public
Library

\$15,000 +
Hyde & Watson Foundation
Dr. Richard Neblett

\$10,000 +
Lawrence Bashe
Kate Mason & Mary Lee Miller

\$7,500 +
Quin Jarrett & Joelle Haughey

\$5,000 +
Carol & James Bicket
Paul Chapin
F. Edgar Davis
Geoffrey Davis
Grassman Trust
Union Foundation

\$4,000 +
Greg Haworth
& Mary Burgwinkle

\$3,000 +
Joe Da Rold
Jean Mattson

\$2,500 +
Fanwood Foundation
Jeffrey Girod
Mel & Carol Lewis
Peter Simone

\$2,000 +
Marjorie Cohen
Pete Jones
Albert & Rosemary Pittis

\$1,500 +
Emilia Carlson
Flying Horse Foundation
Lillian McGowan
Barbara Sandford

\$1,000 +
Oliver & Brenda Anderson
E. Stanley Goldman
Herb & Lillian Goss
Herb & Marjorie Green
Rosetta Lattimore
Alice & Mason Logie
Andrew Hamilton
& Anne E. Robinson
Tom & Julie Shortridge
Nancy Swanson
Charles Wendell

\$500 +
Denise Bane & Rebecca Williams
Sandra Berman
Dorothy Henry
Evelyn Madsen

Grant Awards 2009

New Jersey Historical Commission
\$20,000 for research and an exhibit on four notable Plainfield photographers

New Jersey Historical Commission
\$17,500 (2008-09) and **\$13,250** (2009-10) for general operating support of the Local History program

NJ State Library—Literacy Initiative
\$20,000 to enhance tutor recruitment and training in the Adult Literacy program

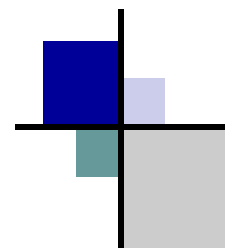
Plainfield Foundation
\$12,000 continuing contribution to the Capital Campaign

Infolink Reg. Library Cooperative
\$10,000 to develop a countywide literacy intake form online

Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey
\$3,500 to enhance literacy instruction through tutor & student roundtables

Union County History Grant
\$3,900 to process 85,000 newly acquired photographs donated by the Courier News

Plainfield Cult. & Heritage Commission
\$4,000 to process 85,000 newly acquired photographs donated by the Courier News



MISSION STATEMENT

The Plainfield Public Library will provide all citizens of Plainfield full and equal access to information resources, technologies, and programs for a lifetime of learning and cultural enrichment, by promoting literacy.

**We acknowledge with gratitude
the generosity and support
of all of our donors.**

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY 2009

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Director
Mary Ellen Rogan
Assistant Director
Peter Rajcevic
Chief Technology Officer
Tina Marie Doody
Head of Public Services

Children's Services: Janice People,
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Claudia Flores, Michael Paglia

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Leeming.

ESL Literacy Coordinator: Stella
Segura

IT Services: Jonathan Girdle,
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