2005 Annual Report The Denver Public Library



A message from K.C. Veio, Denver Public Library Commission President

For the last twenty years, Rick Ashton has worked with the Library Commission, staff and the community to build the Denver Public Library into the respected and cherished organization it is today. This message would not be complete without recognizing his retirement, which became effective February 28, 2006.

Rick's service as City Librarian has covered a significant part of the history of the Denver Public Library. His professional genius, personal integrity and steadfast leadership have guided us well.

We thank you, Rick, for the example you have set and the compass you have passed down. You leave a powerful legacy, and we owe you our deepest gratitude.

K (New)

K.C. Veio



"Rick's service as City Librarian has covered a significant part of the history of the Denver Public Library. His professional genius, personal integrity and steadfast leadership have guided us well."

Rick J. Ashton and K.C. Veio

A message from Rick J. Ashton, City Librarian

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Denver Public Library,

By the time you read this, I will have completed my work as City Librarian of the Denver Public Library. In the years between July 15, 1985, and February 28, 2006, I have enjoyed a wonderful opportunity to serve a dynamic, diverse community by leading an energetic, dedicated organization. I am very grateful for that opportunity and very proud of the Library's work.

As you review this Annual Report for 2005, I hope you will notice that its many and varied success stories share a single theme: the transforming impact of the Denver Public Library on our individual and collective lives. When we, the people of Denver, borrow books, attend classes, or support children's learning, we enrich our own lives and enhance the city in which we live. The Mission of the Denver Public Library guides us, and we begin to achieve our full potential.

The happy stories in this report exist in spite of great difficulties. The financial condition of the Library continued to worsen in 2005, and 2006 is not an improvement. Since 2002, the Denver Public Library has lost more than a third of its book budget, a fifth of its staff, and a sixth of its hours of service. Nevertheless, the Library Commission, staff, supporters, and customers of the Library have made effective use of existing resources. We have, moreover, refused to let money problems prevent us from looking forward, planning and preparing the strategies that will ensure excellent Denver Public Library service to our community in the years to come. I am confident that these efforts will bear fruit soon.

For my twenty years and seven months as City Librarian, I give you thanks. It has been a great privilege.

Cheers—

Rick J. Ashton

Pile J. Auf



The community room with its beige walls and slightly worn carpet at the Hadley Branch Library may not look like much to most people, but to Lorena Delgado it may as well be a mansion. It is here where Delgado faithfully attends classes twice a week to improve her English and earn a GED. Down the hall, Delgado's three children take part in a crafts program while their mom studies. The children also work on their homework at the library. The oldest, 10-year-old Lilliana, dreams of being a doctor when she grows up.



Michelle Luna proudly shows art she created at the Hadley Branch Library.

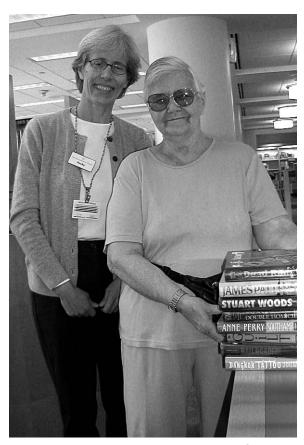


"The worth of a library is in its use," said Denver's first City Librarian, John Cotton Dana, in 1889. More than a century later, this belief continues to guide us at the Denver Public Library. We are thrilled that in 2005, nearly four million customers walked through the doors at the Central Library and 22 branch locations.

Education Program Assistant Thora Hanson assists Victoria Luna in an exercise to improve her English at the Hadley Branch Library. **Above** all else, the Library belongs to the people who use it.

Juanita Thomas is one of our customers who uses and decidedly loves her Library. The 74-year-old mother of six, who cleaned houses to help make ends meet when she was raising her family, rides the bus to the Central Library twice a week. Here, she checks out so many books, she needs a backpack on wheels to carry them all. Thomas estimates she reads a dozen books a week.

"I really don't know what I would do without the Library," Thomas says. "I love to read and could never afford to buy all those books." The librarians in Central's Burnham Hoyt Room know Thomas by name and often help her choose her favorite classics, murder mysteries, westerns, and "the occasional romance novel."

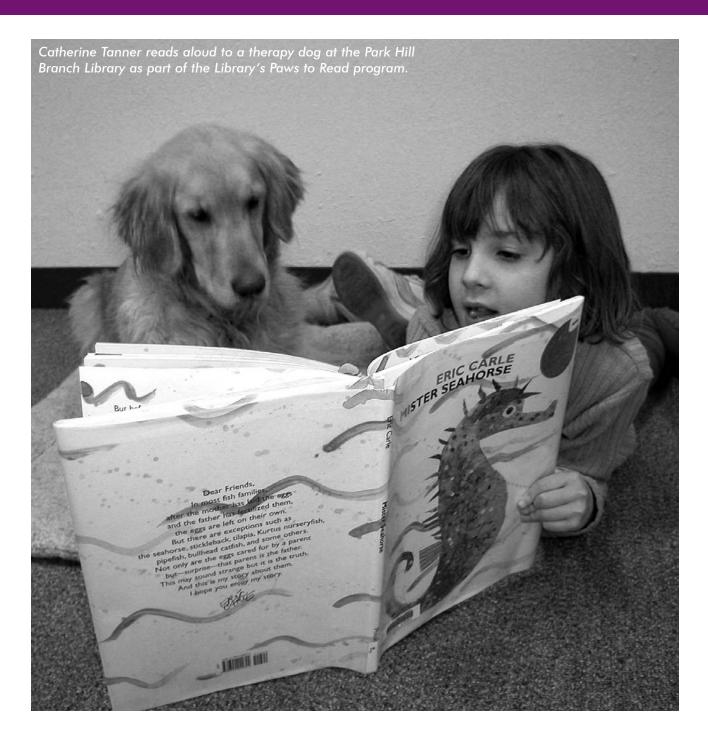


Librarian Becky Russell, left, assists frequent customer Juanita Thomas.

"We always look forward to seeing Juanita," says librarian Becky Russell.

Thomas says she brought all six of her children to the Denver Central Library "at least once a week" when they were growing up. "I love this library," she says, gesturing toward the stacks in the Burnham Hoyt Room. "I've never run into anybody who wasn't helpful. And I've been coming here since 1972."





Catherine Tanner is another customer who adores coming to the Library.

Catherine – who prefers to be called Cat – is a typical nine-year-old who loves playing with her friends and watching PBS Kids.

But Cat struggles with reading. When Cat's mom learned about the Library's *Paws to Read* program, in which children read aloud to a therapy dog, she was the first to register her daughter.

"Sometimes, dogs make better listeners than people," says reference librarian Mary Schadler who spearheaded the program. "The dogs don't correct or judge, so kids who have trouble reading in front of teachers or parents are more comfortable reading to the dog."

In the quiet community room at the Park Hill Branch Library, Cat nestles on the floor with Bree, a therapy dog, to read *Mister Seahorse* aloud. It's obvious the two have a special connection as Cat affectionately hugs the Golden Retriever's neck. According to Linda Port, Bree's owner/trainer, Cat's reading skills have improved greatly since she first began reading to Bree.

Although Port stays in the room with Cat and Bree, parents and teachers are not allowed. Even so, Cat can't wait to get home and tell her mom what she read that day. "I'm sure it's easier when no one is correcting you," her mom, Macay Tanner, says. "Cat has been begging to get a dog ever since she began the program," she adds, laughing. "It really has been wonderful. Cat is more confident about many things." Cat says she loves reading "way more than watching a movie." She also loves the staff at the Park Hill Branch Library. "They are really nice," she adds.



Of course, not everything we do at the Library happens within our buildings.

At Smith Elementary School in northeast Denver, Antoinette Wallace's third grade class collapses into fits of giggles when DPL senior librarian Taliah Abdullah reads Silly Sally, as part of the Library's Read Aloud program.



Senior librarian Taliah Abdullah reads to a class at Smith Elementary School, as part of the Read Aloud program.

Read Aloud sends trained readers, most of whom are volunteers, into the community to read stories to children during the school year and the summer. Volunteers visit more than 110 schools and Head Start centers throughout a sixteen-week period.

Abdullah says she loves "absolutely everything" about reading to the kids. "Many of the children cannot get to the library for whatever reason," she adds, "so it's nice to share books they may not otherwise be exposed to."

The kids adore Abdullah too. As she wrapped up a recent afternoon session, one sad-eyed, seven-year-old little girl pleaded, "Pleeease don't go, Mrs. A. We love you. Read to us forever."

At the end of the sixteen-week session, each child receives a new book to keep.

When the students receive their books, they are so excited they can barely sit still, according to Denver Public Library staff member and volunteer Pam Roeding. "At first, they don't always believe it is theirs," she says.

When four-year-old Lucy Avila receives her copy of *Goodnight Moon*, she breaks into a smile you could pour on pancakes. "Really, this is my very own book I don't have to bring back?" she asks, clutching the prized possession and hopping up and down. "Getting a new book is a very big deal for them," Roeding says. "For some, it's the first book they have ever owned."

Like many of our programs, Read Aloud would not be possible without private funding.

From the time of Andrew Carnegie and other nineteenth-century philanthropists onward,



Library staff member and Read Aloud volunteer Pam Roeding is surrounded by students from El "Dia" de Fairmont Dual Language Immersion Academy.

private funds have played an important role in public libraries. Carnegie gave nearly two thousand library buildings to communities throughout the English-speaking world, including eight of them in Denver. Five are still in use. Private giving has meant the difference between adequacy and excellence.



Customer Claudia de la Cruz is grateful to live in a city with a library system known for its excellence. De la Cruz came to the Montbello Branch Library to study and prepare for the test to become a United States citizen.

Then one day last fall, De la Cruz arrived at the branch "so excited that she practically crashed through the door," says education program assistant Barbara Gross. The young woman had big news to share, and she wanted the staff members at the northeast Denver branch to be the first to know. De la Cruz had passed the citizenship test. She came to

thank everyone who had helped her study

and prepare.

"I DID IT! I PASSED!" she jubilantly exclaimed, hugging any staff member within reach.

"It was a wonderful, wonderful moment," said Gross, who had assisted De la Cruz as she worked diligently to achieve her goal. Gross said everyone at the branch shared in the young woman's joy and accomplishment.

"Becoming a United States citizen is something to be very proud of," Gross adds.



Naturalization Ceremony at the Denver Central Library

Just ask David Estrada. On a crisp, sunny, October day, the young man left F. E. Warren Air Force Base near Cheyenne, Wyoming, at dawn, to drive to the Denver Central Library. Along with 123 others from countries from Australia to Yugoslavia, the native of Colombia raised his right hand and promised to abide by the laws of this country. In a ceremony that would bring many to tears, Estrada became a U.S. citizen. "I am excited and nervous too," Estrada said, smiling proudly and holding his certificate of naturalization. "This is an important day."

What better setting could there be for a new beginning than the Library.

With the tools of the public library, people make themselves citizens: citizens not only in the formal legal sense, but citizens in the broader sense of participation in the free world.



Library staff member Joe Damon, left, congratulates David Estrada on becoming a U.S. citizen, at the Naturalization Ceremony at the Denver Central Library.

It's almost closing time on a Friday afternoon at the Central Library, when Denver Fire Engine No. 1 parks on Broadway near the Library's entrance. A fire? An industrial accident? A customer needing medical attention? No. Three burly firefighters are simply doing what thousands of other customers do every day: checking out a stack of books and videos.

There is no better way to measure our success than by the personal triumphs of our customers. Whether you are working on a GED or a Ph.D., we beam with pride over your accomplishments. And we are glad you are here. After all, the worth of a library – one customer at a time – is in its use.

By the Numbers

8,428,033

Items circulated

417

Full-time equivalent staff members

3,918,658

Visitors to the Central Library and 22 branch locations

31,378,982

Transactions conducted online

99,332

Hours donated by docents and volunteers

939,393

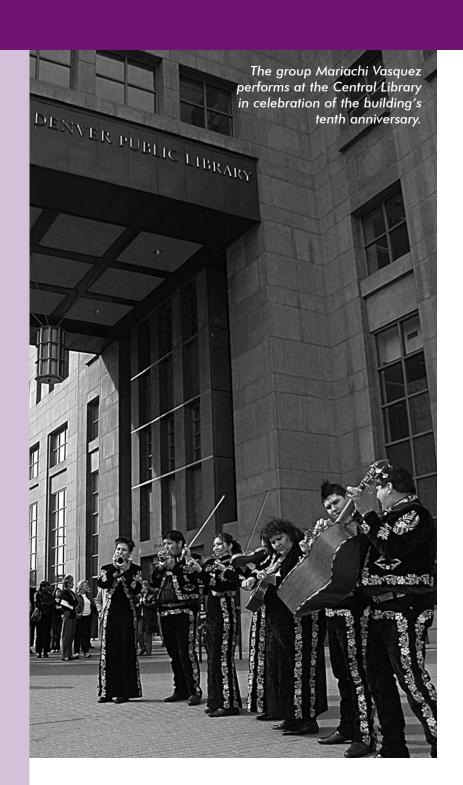
Reference questions answered system-wide

22,446

Kids and teens who registered for Summer of Reading

5,189

Number of times the One Book One Denver selection, Caramelo, by Sandra Cisneros, was checked out



Financials

BUDGET

Library Revenues



12 Library Expenditures



Capital Improvement Projects

\$ 36,329

The Denver Public Library Friends Foundation

Statement of Financial Position

Audited Statement December 31, 2005

Assets:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,397,275
Pledges, Accounts Receivable, Prepaid Expenses	12,540
Assets Held in Trust for Library	372,955
Long Term Investments	4,185,295
Fixed Assets	369
Total Assets	\$ 5,968,434
Liabilities and Net Assets:	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 7,549
Assets Held in Trust for Library	372,955
Unrestricted Net Assets	463,902
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Temporarily Restricted Net Assets 3,500,414
Permanently Restricted Net Assets 1,623,614
5,587,930

Total Liabilities and Net Assets \$ 5,968,434

Statement of Activities

Audited Statement December 31, 2005

Revenues:	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Contributions	\$ 28,981	\$ 672,944	\$ 701,925
Memberships		119,399	119,399
Events/Fund Raising		57,277	57,277
Investment Income	67,338	364,612	431,950
Total Revenues	\$ 96,319	\$1,214,232	\$1,310,551
Expenses			
Program Services	\$ 24,453		\$ 24,453
Supporting Services	_54,304		_ 54,304
Total Expenses	\$ 78,757		\$ 78,757
Transfers			
Transfers to DPL	\$ 18,076	\$ 696,740	\$ 714,816
Total Expenses and Transfers	\$ 96,833	\$ 696,740	\$ 793,573



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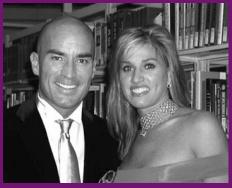
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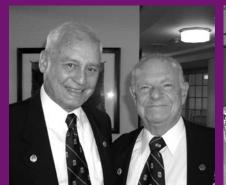
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