



Schenectady County Public Library Annual Report 2012

BUILDING TOWARD THE FUTURE



Esther Swanker, Past Board President

2012 was a pivotal and exciting year for our library system. The long awaited expansion and renovations of the Central Library were completed mid-summer and a celebratory grand opening and ribbon cutting of the **Wright Family Center** was held on July 30, 2012. In addition to the beautiful new Children's Room, interior renovations of the Central Library were completed, including new public restrooms and water fountains, a new rug, and electrical work. Patrons now have an updated, brighter space to enter and use, more access to technology, as well as digital literacy classes based on the newly revamped New York Library Association's curriculum. Patrons were able to attend classes and tutoring sessions in the use of the newly available downloadable ebook options for their personal reading devices. Families have the newly expanded children's area, the Wright Family Center, to enjoy for browsing, reading, and literacy activities. Much appreciation goes to **Past Board President Esther Swanker**. With tireless energy and commitment, she, as well as the Building Committee consisting of past and present Board members, saw the expansion project through from beginning to end. Now the patrons and staff are able to reap the benefits of all the

upgrades and programming in the lovely space.

The Board wished **Director Andy Kulmatiski** well as he left the Library System to begin his retirement in September. In October we welcomed Karen Bradley into her new position of Director. Also, Trustee members Esther Swanker, Simon Weinstein, and Jean Wildgrube retired from the Board. We appreciate all the time and energy they devoted to the Library over the years of their tenure.

In October, the Library Board was given a charge by the Schenectady County Legislature to reduce the overall budget by \$521,000 for 2013 due to the effects of the New York State 2% tax cap on our County government. A **Restructuring Work Group** was formed, including members of the Board, Library Director and Assistant Director, community, Friends of the Library, County staff and Legislators to begin work on this assignment. By the end of the year, the group had direction from the community after receiving results from a survey in which 4,500 community residents responded, demographic data from the County Manager's office, and patron use statistics. As the year closed, this group was committed to bringing forward to the Board a plan that would comply with the direction from the County Legislature and at the same time maintain programs and services to the residents of Schenectady County.



Andrew Kulmatiski, Past Director

Respectfully Submitted,
Cheryl H. Cufari, President, Board of Trustees and Karen Bradley, Director

ADULT SERVICES

The expansion project was the impetus for some important technology upgrades at the Central Library in 2012. A new wireless system was installed with higher capacity to meet the increased demand of our users. An equipment room was constructed to handle the additional technology requirements of the new space. An additional 37 new computers were ordered to replace outdated public and staff equipment and 10 iPads were purchased.

Special thanks go to the **Friends of SCPL** whose invaluable support has enabled us to expand upon our technology programming. Fifteen laptops, a storage locker and a **SmartBoard** were purchased for the library this year! All of these are housed in the new **Swanker Boardroom**. This has freed up resources in other parts of the library, allowing public PCs to remain available during scheduled computer classes. It also allows a wider variety of technology program offerings. The community now has additional meeting room space that is equipped with presentation software and equipment.

As part of our ongoing effort to promote financial literacy to small businesses and families, we expanded access to our popular ValueLine subscription. Using their library card patrons can now view stock, mutual fund and industry analysis right from home. This ability has caused usage to double over last year. In response to public demand we added an online language learning service called **LiveMocha** that has been well-used. It includes an ESL component which is important to our diverse community.

The **eReader Lending Program**, supported by the Friends of SCPL was also expanded this year. Twelve additional devices (Nooks and Kindles) were purchased and loaned from the Rotterdam, Niskayuna, Glenville and Quaker Street branches. In all, these eReaders and those at Central were borrowed 400 times from the library in 2012.

Downloadable audiobooks and eReader pilot programs have been such a hit with patrons at SCPL, we knew it was time to take the plunge with downloadable eBooks. In January of 2012 we launched our new OverDrive eBook subscription with approximately 1800 titles ready for download. The program was an instant success as readers eagerly downloaded almost 1,000 titles the first week! Classes were offered at the Central and three larger branch libraries with over 100 in attendance the first month. Patrons came with Kindles, Nooks, iPads and other devices in hand for

instruction on downloading to their preferred eReader. By year's end, SCPL patrons had borrowed more than 27,000 eBooks. We strive to be the central information and referral agency for the community, providing access and training in today's technologies.

Despite the physical disruptions and the number of staff who were devoted to the relocation of a large number of materials and equipment at Central, 2012 proved to be a record breaking year for adult programming with 10,584 in attendance. While One County, One Book was put on hiatus due to the construction project, we were able to promote reading with a total of fifteen visiting authors, including **Alice Ozma**, who wrote *The Reading Promise: my father and the books we shared*.



The Friends of the Library



Local School Librarians with author, Alice Ozma



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Wright Family Center

at the Movies Oscar program with a local film writer and professor - to the sciences, with a series of programs on genetics and mummies.

OUTREACH SERVICES

Hundreds of retired senior citizens and elderly in nursing and rehabilitation centers, senior apartments, assisted living facilities, senior day programs, Alzheimer's disease facilities, and the homebound were able to borrow 7,093 library materials in 2012 due to the dedication and cooperation of staff and volunteers, who made 189 visits to facilities.

YOUTH SERVICES

Programs and services for youth and families were front and center this past year throughout SCPL. The most notable event was the opening of the **Wright Family Center** in July. This new space for children and families, as well as the addition of an area for teens, was the culmination of a long and challenging process. The result is a spectacular space, both modern and comfortable and well suited to our program and collections. There is a real sense of renewed pride in Schenectady, as many came in to visit and admire the new wing and the repurposing of our existing library space. We have enjoyed increased program attendance and use of our new facility, particularly in the **Schenectady Foundation Early Literacy Corner**. Furnished with family friendly furniture, toys, and two self-serve Early Literacy Computers, this area is nearly always occupied with families and very young children engaging in early literacy practices.

As our commitment to early literacy remains a top priority, we added several sessions of programs for pre-school children as demand grew, particularly among parents of babies and toddlers. Attendance jumped by record numbers at Central and branches where year-round, regular programs are held. Toddler program attendance alone was up 65%. Throughout 2012, we held 511 pre-school programs in our 10 libraries (a 9% increase) and 8,398 attended (a 15% increase).

Once again we proclaimed March as **Family Reading Month** and rolled out a reading promotion for families to read aloud to their children as much as possible during the long month. An author visit by **Alice Ozma**, author of *The Reading Promise*, encouraged families to establish long term reading goals of their own.

We embarked on a new program series entitled **Culinary Conversations** featuring cookbook authors, foodie films, and educational programs relating to food. Writing programs continue to be popular with our community and 2012 featured the following workshops: **Becoming American**, **Saving Grace**, **The Things We Saw**, **Poetry with Barbara Ungar**, and **Travel Writing**. Two weekly writing support groups meet at Central and several of the participants have had their work published this past year, with one being featured on NPR. The free Sunday afternoon concerts series provided by the Friends of the Library Music Committee draws attendees not only from Schenectady County, but beyond. Efforts continue to provide something for everyone, from the arts - featuring **An Afternoon**



Crafts at A Midsummer's Night Celebration

To encourage school age children to visit their library, we held 253 programs for kids and teens during after-school hours, school breaks and summer vacation, with 4,291 attending. This also includes our popular summer reading programs, when we are able to provide weekly professional programs, supported by funds from our Friends of the Library. Twelve-hundred and sixty children and teens registered for the reading club, with an additional 700 family (pre-school) readers. In total, 974 programs were held in our libraries, with 19,339 attending (a 9% increase).

For the first time, we also held a community wide summer reading celebration at **the Mabee Farm Historical** site. Entertainment for all ages was provided, along with food, activities and information tables. It was a wonderful, well attended community event.

The Schenectady Foundation funded an innovative reading support program at the Duane branch during the summer months. Designed by librarian Kaela Wallman, partnered with a reading teacher, the project provided one-on-one tutoring, with pre and post testing of students to determine reading levels. Librarian Nancy Gifford also received a grant from BOCES to partner with a school librarian for summer book discussions and the use of social media to get kids talking about books. A system grant from MVLS funded **Comics Connect** with Central, Rotterdam and Mont Pleasant branches, also partnered with a neighboring school. The grant funded graphic novels for libraries and schools, which have been shown to attract reluctant boy readers to great benefit. Throughout the year, we partnered with a large variety of other agencies for program opportunities.

Outreach efforts included participating in large community events such as the **Jay Street Arts Festival**, the **YMCA Healthy Kids Day**, literacy nights at local elementary schools and visits to early education sites. We saw 5,356 children at various locations outside the library walls. One new opportunity came with the addition of the library as a site for SICM's free summer lunch program. SICM staff set up on the corner of Liberty and Clinton Streets with library tables to serve over 30 children every week day for six weeks. This program brought in many families who walked or took the bus to the library specifically for the lunch, but also came in and got new library cards, checked out books and returned for other scheduled programs.

The year 2012 was eventful for many reasons. With the new and improved library spaces, staff does feel energized to accomplish new things in the coming year, all dedicated to creating and supporting literacy among children and families.

Circulation Statistics

	2011	2012	%Change
Central Library	489,582	463,411	-4.20
Duane	43,514	43,805	0.68
Glenville	128,553	122,394	-4.80
Hamilton Hill	11,959	14,680	23.00
Mont Pleasant	42,734	45,998	7.60
Niskayuna	204,632	205,236	0.30
QS/Duanesburg	49,004	49,610	1.20
Rotterdam	160,263	163,973	2.30
Scotia	44,359	44,714	0.80
Woodlawn	65,123	60,873	-6.50
Electronic Materials	NA	31,043	NA
Totals	1,239,605	1,245,737	.10

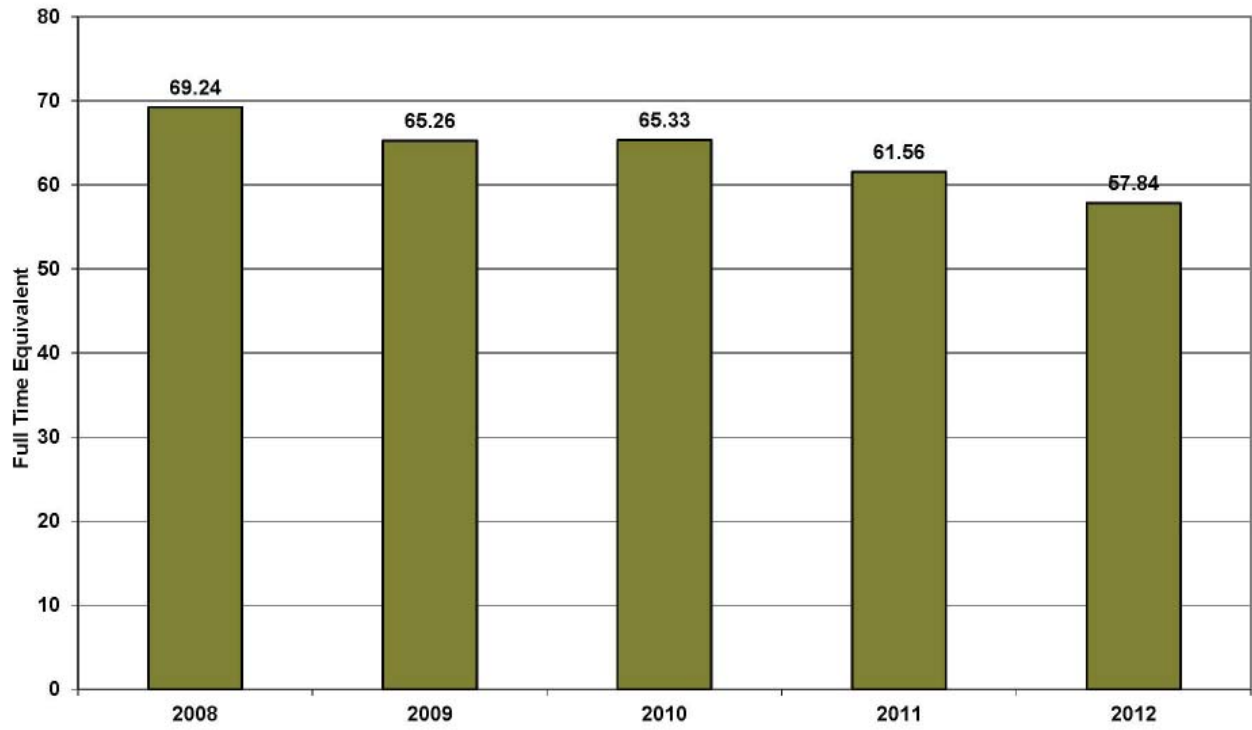
Program Statistics

Adult	2011	2012
Number	419	526
Attendance	9,433	10,584
Children's	2011	2012
Number	1,457	1,178
Attendance	28,576	24,698

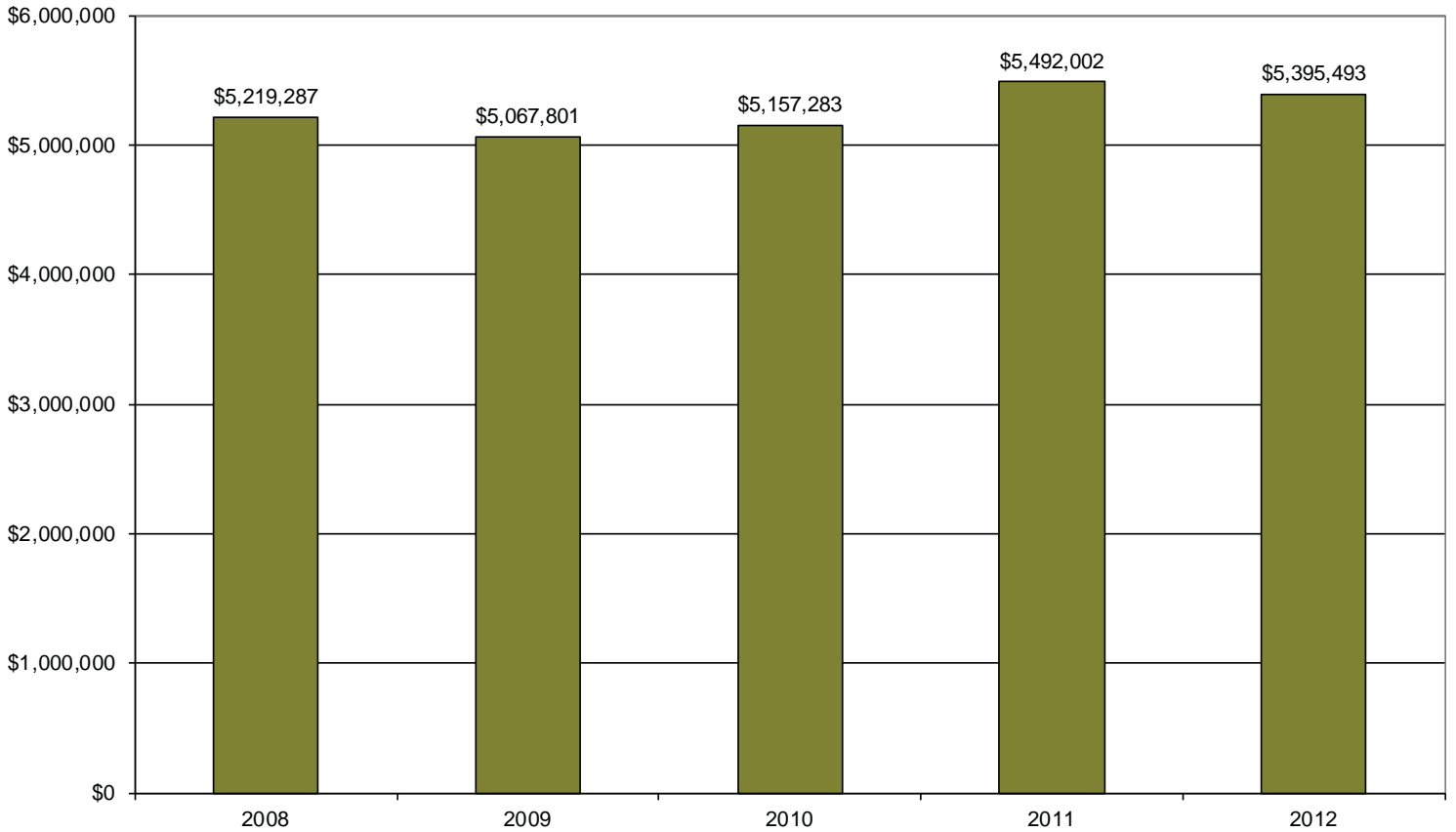
2012 At a Glance

	2011	2012
Circulation	1,233,657	1,245,737
Inter-Library Loan	119,880	118,134
Registered Borrowers	91,556	93,977
Reference Questions	84,184	100,381
New Borrowers	6,399	6,899

**Schenectady County Public Library
Library Staffing 2008-2012**



**Schenectady County Public Library
Total Library Expenditures 2008 - 2012**





Top row, left to right: Children try out the educational games in the new Wright Family Center; author Ricki Lewis, Corey Hass, Jan Tunison and Hannah Sames; families barn dance at *A Midsummer's Night Celebration* at Mabee Farm Historic Site

Middle row, left to right: Karen Johnson, M. Joe Landry and Esther Swanker at the expansion Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; The SCP Writing Group with author Lee Woodruff; Precious displays the book she created at *A Midsummer's Night Celebration*

Bottom row, left to right: Comic book author & illustrator Barbara Slate with teens; Bern Allanson from the Friends of the Library takes part in Schenectady Theater for Children's production of *Androcles and the Lion*; Film historians Rob Edelman and Audrey Kupferberg at *An Afternoon for Movie Lovers*