

2010 Annual Report of the Mountainside Public Library

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Following on the heels of the Mountainside Public library's 75th anniversary year, 2010 was another busy year at the MPL. This annual report will highlight some of the events, activities and measures of use of the Mountainside Library over the period of January – December 2010.

As always, thank you for your interest in the Mountainside Public Library.

Circulation Our total circulation for 2010 was 74,383 items. This represents a decrease of 4.9% from 2009, which remains our biggest year on record (78,194 items, down 3,811). 2010 was our third busiest year for checkouts, surpassed only by years 2008 and 2009. We were open 286 days in 2010 (292 days in 2009), with several unexpected snow days at both the beginning and end of the year. These closures account for part of the decrease. Our average daily circulation was 260 items.

The average cost per item checked out in 2010 was \$20.31, making the total value of last year's checkouts \$1,510,718.70.

Some circulation highlights:

<u>COLLECTION</u>	<u>TOTAL '10</u>	<u>Total '09</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>% Change</u>
ADULT				
Books	25,980	25,510	+470	+1.8%
Audiobooks	2,374	2,738	-364	-13.3%
CDs	4,417	4,768	-351	-7.4%
DVDs	15,756	16,600	-844	-5.1%
Periodicals	973	1,070	-97	-9.1%
<i>subtotal - Adult</i>	49,500	50,686	-1,186	-2.3%
JUVENILE				
Books	17,833	18,569	-736	-3.96%
Audiobooks	255	568	-313	-55.1%
CDs	248	389	-141	-36.2%
DVDs	6,547	7,982	-1435	-18.0%
<i>subtotal - Juv</i>	24,881	27,508	-2,627	-9.5%
TOTAL	74,383	78,194	-3,811	-4.9%

Reference Interactions The Mountainside Library prides itself on providing friendly service from courteous and knowledgeable library professionals. There were 4,960 reference interactions recorded in 2010, a decrease of 4.7% (-244 interactions) compared with 2009. While our reference interactions may have leveled off this year, the longitudinal view still shows a remarkable increase in reference interactions over the last several years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Total Interactions	2,602	3,594	4,200	5,204	4,960
% change		+38%	+17%	+24%	-4.7%

The percent change in reference interactions from 2006 – 2010 is exactly +90.6%.

Programs In 2010, 5,998 people attended 364 events and programs at the Mountainside Public Library, making 2010 our biggest year on record. This is an 8.8% increase over 2009 (+484), which had been our best year up to now, with a net increase of 52 programs over the course of the year. This count is particularly significant in that each of the last four years were record years for program attendance at the Mountainside Public Library.

Year	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Attendance	2,376	3,279	3,859	5,514	5,998
% change		+38%	+17.7%	+42%	+8.8%

The percent change in program attendance from 2006 – 2010 is +152.5%.

Our average attendance per program decreased slightly in 2010, to 16.5 people per program (down from 18 per program). However, 63 uses by community groups (U.S. Census, scouting groups, etc), had small turnouts per meeting. If we look only at library events, the average attendance per program actually increased again, albeit slightly, to 18.14 people per program, an increase of 0.77%.

The 2010 Summer Reading Program was another success for the MPL. The theme this year was “Make Waves at your Library” and many books and programs were built around a water theme. While we did not exceed the record participation numbers of 2009 (125 children vs. 130), we are still far above 2008, which had only 73 participants. One of the difficulties of growing the summer reading program is that a number of residents go away for summer vacations. For those who do take part, we are glad to enrich their summers and encourage their love for reading. Special thanks are due to the Friends of the Mountainside Library who fully supported all special events, programs and prizes associated with the 2010 Summer Reading program.

There were three categories of participation this year: Family Readers (pre – K through first grade), Independent Readers (second grade through sixth grade) and Teen. The following table shows participation by category:

Category	2010 Partici- pants	2010 Total Read	2010 Avg amt Read	2009 Partici- pants.	2009 Total Read	2009 Avg amt Read	Change in partici- -pation	Change in Avg Amt Read
Family PreK – 1 st Gr	32	1,262 bks	39 bks	38	1,467 bks	38 bks	-6 ; -16%	+1 ; +2.6%
Independent Grades 2 - 5	82	47,500 min	580 min.	74	97,330 min	1,315 min.	+8 ; +10%	-735 ; -55%
Teen Grade 6 +	11	27,000 min	2,455 min.	18	38,490 min	2,138 min	-7 ; -38%	+317 ; +15%
Total	125			130			-3.8%	

The Mountainside Library will participate in the 2011 Summer Reading program. The theme will be “One World, Many Stories” and will focus on culture, travel and other related topics. By capitalizing on this exciting theme, and through good planning and collaboration with the Mountainside School District, we hope to set a new record for participation this year.

Patron Registration In 2010, we registered 419 new patrons, bringing our total patron count to 7,129. 215 of these registrations were for Mountainside residents; the remainder is a combination of non-residents, nannies and partner libraries who borrowed books from us through Inter-Library Loan.

Collection Management Our collections consist of books, DVDs, books on CD, audio CDs and periodicals. Our collections improve in two ways: through the acquisition of new material and through the careful selection of items for withdrawal. In 2010, we added 5,135 items and withdrew 4,420 items, bringing our total holdings to 62,955 items.

Mourning a Loss. In August 2009, the Mountainside Library lost a dear staff member. Mary Quinn passed away on August 6th after a bravely-fought battle with cancer. Mary was a dedicated member of the Mountainside staff for just over 10 years. To honor her service, and in recognition of her love for the theatre, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to dedicate the MPL's collection of theatre scripts to Mary Quinn. The collection is now known as the Mary T. Quinn collection.

Friends of the Mountainside Library The Friends continue to be active supporters of the MPL. In April 2010, the Friends held their big community book sale. The other fundraiser was the annual September membership drive, which garnered a great public response.

Through generous financial support from the Friends, we were able to again offer many special programs and events in 2010, including the Story Time Theatre series for young children, several lectures & music programs, and the popular summertime "Plays in the Parking Lot." Many attendees remarked that this year's plays were the best ever!

Thank you to the Friends, and to all individual donors, for your support -- past, present and future. The Mountainside Library is fortunate to have your help and generosity.

Grants The Mountainside Library received six grants totaling \$12,100 from two organizations in 2010.

The Watts-Mountainside Community Foundation continues to be very supportive of the Mountainside Library. The Watts Foundation provided \$10,100 for the following endeavors: The Folk Music Café; participation in Listen-NJ downloadable books; subscriptions to Mango Languages and Wowbrary; and CPR/AED training. Our other benefactor was the Target Department Stores Foundation, which provided \$2,000 to cover the cost of Story Time Theatre for Kindergarteners and early literacy support.

Thank you to our grant providers for your tremendous support.

Technology Public libraries, including the MPL, continue to serve, in part, as community technology centers, with public computer workstations, internet access, scanners, printers and even WiFi as a part of their service array. In 2010, there were 10,576 network computer logins at the Mountainside Library, an increase of 2.1% (+217) over 2009, which sets a new record for the MPL. This number does not even include staff logins or connections made via the library's wireless network. Like in previous years, the most popular reasons for logging in are communication; job searching and networking; news access; and entertainment.

Databases are searchable information banks that provide access to news articles, book and product reviews, reference information and more. Our databases are Web-based, but searching them should not be confused with just doing an Internet search. Databases are better for research than a general Internet search, as the sources they pull from are qualified and reliable. In 2010, there were 6,544 queries to our databases, an increase of 27.4% (+1,408) over 2009, which sets a new record for the MPL. Searches can be done in the library or from home by logging in with your Mountainside Library card.

In 2010, the library added Mango Languages and A-to-Z Maps to its comprehensive list of databases. Both products are available from home or in the library. Mango provides online courses in over 30 different languages and feedback on this product has been excellent. A-to-Z Maps provides convenient access to maps from all around the world, from ancient cities to modern population charts and more. It is an excellent resource.

In January 2010, the library phased out the five oldest public computers and replaced them with new PCs. The new machines are incredibly fast, Windows 7 – 64 bit computers and should serve the library for many years. They were chosen for their ability to handle modern, multimedia websites that have become so popular, particularly among our younger generation of patrons. These PCs were placed in the library's children's and YA areas.

Library Website The library expanded the “new and improved” look of its home page to other pages within its site. There is now uniformity among the webpages and feedback from users and other librarians outside the MPL has been extremely positive. Our site is also now registered with Norton Safeweb which verifies that it has no hidden viruses, Trojans or other malware in its code. A green “safe” rating with Safeweb gives visitors more confidence in visiting our website. For more information, see <http://safeweb.norton.com>

Meeting Room Renovation. As shown earlier in this report, use of the library meeting room has soared over the last several years. At the same time, there were some concerns about the condition of the space, from missing ceiling tiles to the age and cleanliness of the carpet to the efficiency of the lighting, and more. With these concerns in mind, the Board decided that gift funds received in 2009 would be used to renovate the room, creating a warm and welcoming community space. Architect specifications were drawn up and the project commenced in late-September 2010. In December, our beautiful new room opened for public use and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The top-to-bottom renovation includes new lighting, a new drop ceiling, insulation, drywall, fresh paint and new carpet. The Mountainside Library recognizes Grace Shulman and Claire Tansey, whose bequests funded the renovation. We also thank the Friends of the Mountainside Library for purchasing the new window and door blinds.

Looking Ahead. 2010 was a very good year at the Mountainside Library, though there were some challenges. Just like in many of our personal lives, the MPL had to make some tough choices in light of budget reductions. Decreases in our 2010 municipal appropriation and state aid reduced our overall revenues about \$31,000. But careful planning and generous private support allowed us to maintain a solid collection, offer a varied slate of special programs and provide 56 hours of service every week. We were even able to renovate our community room without spending a single tax dollar on the project!

2011 will bring us additional challenges, as our appropriation is again reduced, this time by \$52,000, which brings our revenue back to levels not seen since 2005. At the same time, however, the last five years have been the library’s busiest, so it is easy to imagine the difficulty in striking a balance.

That being said, our goal is to prevent these reductions from affecting service so that you, our patrons, are not hurt by these budget cuts. We will continue to rely on gifts and grants, as well as the generosity of the Friends of the Mountainside Library, our primary fundraisers, to bridge any gaps and perhaps even enhancing our array of services. Please be assured that we will work as hard as ever to deliver everything you expect while keeping all costs under close watch.

Thank you, everyone, for your patronage. We are glad to be a part of so many of your lives. Finally, please know that my office door is always open to you, so if you ever have any questions, comments or feedback, I will be very glad to hear from you.