



## ***Long Range Plan 2015-2019***

**Jasper County Public Library  
208 W. Susan Street  
Rensselaer, IN 47978**

***[www.myjcpl.org](http://www.myjcpl.org)***

Approved December 8, 2014

## **Our Mission Statement**

The Jasper County Public Library's mission is to inform, enrich and empower our diverse community.

## **Our Role**

- The Library provides easy access to:

Books	Audio Books/Playaways/Ebooks
Magazines	Computer Software
Newspapers	Research Materials
CDs	Wired & Wireless Internet
VHS/DVDs/BluRays	Computers/Printers/Scanners

- The Library offers easy access to our facilities, providing convenient hours and adequate space for materials, programming and quiet study.
- The Library serves as a cultural and community center, providing classes, programs and a place for the community to gather.
- The Library is a center for access to local history and genealogical resources relevant to Jasper County
- The Library is on the forefront of the information age. We make it a priority to continually evaluate rapidly changing technology, selecting those technologies which improve or enhance our service.
- The Library cooperates with other libraries to provide better service to its users and make the most effective and efficient use of its tax dollars.
- Trained staff assists users in making full use of library resources, programs, and facilities.

## **Our Values**

- We provide prompt, accurate and friendly service.
- We treat all library users with equal respect and consideration.
- We consider every question valid.
- We provide information expressing various viewpoints.
- We respect and protect the privacy of our patrons to the fullest extent permissible by law.

- We are committed to Intellectual Freedom. We encourage the exchange of ideas and information. We resist all efforts to censor Library resources.
- We encourage and support the highest level of personal initiative and professional development. We provide creative challenges, financial remuneration and continuing education for all staff.
- We foster and support teamwork, cooperation and involvement at all levels of the organization. We treat each other with respect and integrity and work as a team with the board.

### **Demographics/Statistics**

The Jasper County Public Library (JCPL), located in northwest Indiana, serves 31,525 county residents with three facilities – the Rensselaer Main Library, the DeMotte Branch, and the Wheatfield Branch. In November 2014 JCPL had 23,414 library card holders. The library has a collection of over 200,000 items and a circulation of over 300,000 items annually. The median age in our county is 38. 49.8% of residents are male and 50.2% of residents are female. The median household income in 2012 was \$54,092 with a poverty rate of 10.2%. As of September 2014 the unemployment rate was 6%. 87.8% of adults 25 years and older have at least a high school diploma. 14.5% have a Bachelors Degree or higher.

### **Facilities**

Jasper County Public Library operates from three facilities with the headquarters library in Rensselaer and branches in DeMotte and Wheatfield. The DeMotte (901 Birch St. S.W.) and Rensselaer (208 W. Susan) libraries, built in 1992, are approximately 17,000 square feet each. The Wheatfield Library (350 S. Bierma Street) built in 2005 is 14,900 square feet. All three buildings are in good condition and feature attractive landscaping. The Wheatfield Library has three distinct wetland areas featuring native plants.

### **Services and Programs**

Registered card holders may check out and/or download numerous items from our library: books, magazines, newspapers, audio books, music CDs, computer software, and entertainment and educational movies. The Library does not limit patrons to use of their own agency's collections. It shares material freely among the three locations via daily courier service. It also borrows more than 2,300 items per year from other libraries through interlibrary loan. The library provides access to over 70 databases including Auto Repair Reference Center, Novelist, Opposing Viewpoints, Heritage Quest, Consumer Reports, and Indiana Legal Forms. The library offers a large and varied selection of programs for persons of all ages including Summer Reading programs, author visits, book and film discussions, children's story hours, sign language classes,

resume classes, local history and genealogy programs, computer and Internet training classes, health screenings, and music programs.

## **Technology**

The Library uses computers and fax machines to move information quickly among the branches and to and from other libraries and patrons' homes and offices. Our automated library system provides for the cataloging of materials, circulation functions, record-keeping and an online patron access catalog that patrons can use to place holds on materials, renew materials, and access their patron account information. We also offer self-checkout as a means to fulfill the needs and expectations of our technologically astute library users. The Library has a website ([www.myjcpl.org](http://www.myjcpl.org)) with links guiding Internet users working in the library or in their homes or offices to useful websites. All staff computers and 64 public workstations have Internet access. Patrons use Internet workstations to file their taxes, search and apply for jobs, do their online banking, renew their license plates, file financial aid forms, take exams, plan a vacation, search for consumer and health information, and for other tasks too numerous to mention. In addition a wide-area network allows patrons at all three libraries to access valuable digital collections and allows staff to share files with each other. Patrons at all three libraries have access to all electronic resources from most public workstations. Most of the digital collections leased by the library are also available to patrons from their home or office computers. All of our libraries provide access to word processing software, children's electronic books, educational programs, and games. The DeMotte Library offers access to CD-ROM databases specifically related to Genealogy. In 2006 we digitized a collection of historically significant documents that were the property of Rensselaer resident Robert Huston Milroy, a prestigious Civil War general. These images are accessible via our library website and are useful to Civil War scholars. Patrons have access to wireless Internet service at all three libraries. This allows patrons to bring their own laptops and other portable electronic devices into our libraries and access the Internet via their own equipment. The Library owns 4 LCD projectors that may be used in any of our meeting rooms by groups reserving our meeting rooms. One projector may also be rented for use outside the library. The Library has a portable computer lab that contains 10 laptop computers, an LCD projector, and a printer. The lab is used to provide computer-based instruction to residents of our service area. It may be used at any of our libraries. When it is not being used at any of our locations for a scheduled training session, it is available to businesses and local organizations for hands-on training for their employees or members. The lab is also available to area colleges who may wish to offer classes using our lab as a satellite location. The lab can only be used in our facilities.

## **Operations**

A seven-member board of trustees governs the library, hiring a Director who manages the day to day operations of the library.

## **Professional Development Strategy**

JCPL feels that the professional development of staff at all levels is of utmost importance to the quality of service we can offer to our community. Therefore, we provide a number of different learning opportunities for staff. We encourage staff to expand their knowledge through attendance at workshops and conferences. We also provide mini-workshops and staff development days at the library. We encourage staff to attend regional "counterparts" meetings, where persons doing similar jobs in area public libraries share solutions to problems and work together to improve the service their departments give. We encourage staff to spend a day or ½ day at another library or another branch of JCPL to get a different outlook on how business may be conducted. We encourage staff to further their education. If we can tailor work schedules to allow staff to attend classes, without undue hardship to the library or the public, we will do so. Priority will be given to those pursuing coursework targeting the skills/knowledge necessary to increase the ability to perform optimally in a specific library position or required by the State Library.

## **Financial Resources and Sustainability**

The Jasper County Public Library will provide funding for its Long Range Plan from a combination of the Library's:

- Operating Fund
- Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF)
- Rainy Day Fund

Supplemental funding may also be procured by the following outside sources:

- Gifts
- Grants
- Friends of the Library
- Community Foundation
- Community donations

## **Equipment Replacement Schedule**

As an ongoing activity, the library will evaluate all existing PCs and peripherals, including barcode scanners, printers, inventory scanning equipment, and upgrade when necessary as budget will allow. The Systems Administrator will provide additional PC's, peripherals, and data connections for staff and patrons as budget will allow. Annually, the Systems Administrator will purchase a minimum of 20 new PCs to replace the oldest PCs in the system. Technology needs will be discussed at monthly Management Meetings. Critical needs will be implemented immediately

with less urgent needs noted for future planning and budgeting. Other equipment will be evaluated regularly and replaced as budget will allow.

## **List of Collaborations and Partnerships**

### **Library Groups and Organizations**

- Northwest Indiana Directors Group
- Northwest Indiana Counterpart Groups (i.e. Branch Managers, Childrens Services, Programming, Automation, Business Managers, Reference, Circulation)
- Friends of the Rensselaer Library
- Friends of the DeMotte Library
- Friends of the Wheatfield Library
- Indiana State Library
- Indiana Library Federation
- Indiana Online Users Group (IOLUG)
- Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS)
- Northern Indiana Computer Consortium for Libraries (NICCL)
- Statewide Reciprocal Borrowing Participant
- Northwest Indiana Literacy Coalition
- Books to Bridge the Region
- Midwest Indiana Download Center
- Other northwest Indiana libraries

### **Community**

- City of Rensselaer
- Town of DeMotte
- Town of Wheatfield
- Jasper and Newton County Community Foundation
- Jasper County Extension Office
- Rensselaer Chamber of Commerce
- DeMotte Chamber of Commerce
- Wheatfield Chamber of Commerce
- Rensselaer Rotary Club
- DeMotte Rotary Club
- Jasper County Historian
- Rensselaer Historical Society
- DeMotte Historical Society

- St. Joseph's College
- Jasper County Economic Development Organization
- Rensselaer Central School Corporation
- St. Augustine Catholic School
- Kankakee Valley School Corporation
- West Central School Corporation
- DeMotte Christian School
- Covenant Christian School
- Prairie Arts Council
- KV Reading Council

### **Statement of Community Needs and Goals**

In 2014 we assessed how well we are meeting community needs with the distribution of an Impact Survey and a User/Non User Survey. The Impact Survey is an online tool designed for public libraries that want to better understand their communities and how people use their public technology resources and services. In addition our User/Non User Survey was an online tool we created to assess how well we serve our community with our other services and programs. Both surveys yielded useful results.

Things we did well:

- Helped patrons locate materials - many respondents (90.78%) said they found what they were looking for. For those who were not able, staff was able to fulfill their needs in other ways.
- Staff and facilities found to be friendly, courteous, and helpful – library layout, availability and variety of items, hours of operation all seen as good/excellent by over 50% of respondents.
- Aware of services, such as free wireless, eBooks and eAudiobooks, ILL service (over 50%)

Things needing improvement:

- Marketing to patrons of free notary, genealogy/local history, exam proctoring, eMagazines, debit/credit card payment, all of which a majority of respondents suggested they were unaware of.
- Better marketing of programs, as many respondents indicated that they were only aware of events through word of mouth.
- Considering ways to improve library programming.

Survey results indicate that our community is interested in new technologies, but they are not early adopters of these technological advances.

As another means to engage our community and assess community need we contacted community leaders and others within the community and asked this question: *If you could envision a perfect*

*community 5 years from now, what would it look like? What do you think would need to occur to make that dream a reality and what could the library do to assist in making that dream a reality?*

We received interesting and varied responses but the consensus of various community, civic, and non-profit groups seems to result in the following needs list:

- A sense of community connectedness
- A strong focus on quality of life (i.e. arts and culture)
- An interactive environment
- Advancing and expanding technology
- Educating and promoting good health
- New business and employment opportunities
- Access to latest and current information and entertainment in a variety of formats
- Life skills training
- Resources that help to build or rebuild one's life
- Thriving and vibrant downtown areas
- A strong economy that encourages small business and shopping local
- Encourage good citizenship in our youth

## **Library Goals**

### **Goal 1 – JCPL is a welcoming community hub.**

Objectives: JCPL will provide helpful, friendly internal and external customer service.  
JCPL will provide an interactive and creative space.  
JCPL libraries and website will become community hubs.  
JCPL will provide a well-maintained and welcoming facility that encourages community connectedness.

Measurable Outcomes:

Increased number of patrons visiting the library  
Increased number of website uses  
Increased attendance at targeted programs  
Reduced number of outstanding facility maintenance issues needing attention

### **Goal 2 – JCPL is a collaborative community partner.**

Objectives: JCPL will provide an interactive environment.  
JCPL will actively seek opportunities to assist our community schools.  
JCPL will actively seek opportunities with other community organizations, businesses, and government units to promote a strong economy and thriving downtown areas.  
JCPL will serve as a source of information including community referrals.

JCPL will continue collaboration with other area libraries.  
JCPL will encourage donations and support for the library and its operations.

**Measurable Outcomes:**

Increased number of opportunities for interaction  
Increased encounters with community school students and faculty  
Increased encounters with community organizations, businesses, and government units.  
Increased number of answered or referred reference questions  
Maintain or increase collaboration with other area libraries  
Increase number of donors and donations to the library and its operations

**Goal 3 – JCPL increases awareness of its services and collections.**

**Objectives:** JCPL will actively promote the library.  
JCPL will continue to be visible and recognized as the source for information, recreation, and personal enrichment.  
JCPL will actively demonstrate that its collections, programs, and services improve quality of life.  
JCPL will act upon the wants and needs of the community.

**Measurable Outcomes:**

Increased knowledge of the products and services the library offers based on results from user/non-user surveys  
Annually increased service counts, circulation statistics, and downloads  
Increased recognition within the community of the library brand  
Staff is better informed and knowledgeable about library programs and services  
Maintain or increase number of patron requests acted upon

**Goal 4 – JCPL engages its community in lifelong learning.**

**Objectives:** JCPL will continue to educate staff and patrons and encourage good citizenship.  
JCPL will continue to offer a variety of lifelong learning opportunities, with an emphasis on technology, health, business, and life skills.  
JCPL will be a community leader in literacy.  
JCPL will be a source of local history and genealogy.  
JCPL will maintain its online presence.  
JCPL will continue to provide access to current information and entertainment resources in a variety of formats.

**Measurable Outcomes:**

Maintained or increased opportunities for staff to be trained in good citizenship  
Reduced number of incident reports reflecting poor behavior and citizenship  
Increased number of learning opportunities in technology, health, business, and life skills

Increased number of continuing education opportunities for staff on literacy initiatives for all ages and subjects  
Increased number of answered genealogy related questions, correspondence, and visits  
Increased awareness of online presence, as reflected in the library's user/non-user surveys  
Maintained or increased usage of current information and entertainment resources in a variety of formats

### **Evaluation Process**

The Management Team will evaluate the plan and progress with the plan four times annually and provide a report to the Library Board of Trustees.