



**Lee  
County  
Library  
System**

**Annual Plan  
Of Service**

**October 2011 – September 2012**

Approved by:  
Lee County Board of County Commissioners  
November 29, 2011

## **The Lee County Library System**

The Lee County Library System (LCLS) provides public library services to the people of this southwest Florida community through six regional and seven branch libraries, Talking Books sub-regional library, special agricultural collection, bookmobile, Telephone Reference, community outreach services, processing and administration centers. Total square footage of library space is currently 260,825. A project to relocate and expand the new Fort Myers – Lee County Public Library (one of the existing regional libraries) is on track for completion in FY2012/2013.

The library system is a division of Lee County government and is funded through a dedicated millage to library service. The Library Director reports to an Assistant County Manager. A group of citizens, representing Friends of the Library groups or other library support organizations, function as an advisory committee and meet regularly with the library director. All thirteen system libraries have community library support organizations or Friends of the Library groups.

The library system maintains a web site and publishes a bi-monthly online *Lee County Library System Calendar of Events* and a variety of printed materials to inform the public about available services. Other publications are available to aid the public in using library collections, equipment and services. A majority of the publications are available in English and Spanish; some are also available in Haitian Creole and/or Portuguese as appropriate. A staff online newsletter, *e-Communiqué*, is regularly published. Staff members also shares information electronically through a library system Intranet and online bulletin board.

## **Service Profile**

The Lee County Library System provides a wide range of public library services to county residents and visitors including collection, organization and loan of books, magazines, music CDs, Books on CD, DVDs, e-books, computer software, downloadable digital audio books, videos, and music and other new formats as they become available. An automated database of titles, user registration and current use records enables the public to find titles and subjects of interest across the system and to keep abreast of their own borrower status.

Reference and information services are available to people of all ages. Staff makes use of print and digital resources to answer questions and help users find information, in person at individual libraries, through a centralized Telephone Reference service, and by e-mail through the LCLS web site. The Lee County Library System also participates in the statewide “Ask A Librarian” live chat project. Most of the digital resources on the library system’s web site are available for remote patron use. The library system offers a number of digital informational databases, electronic journal/magazine indices, and access to the Internet and World Wide Web as well as a collection of print reference resources.

Interlibrary loan of print materials held by other libraries in the state, nation and internationally is available.

The library system's web site links users to information about Lee County Library System events and services and to a variety of other informational web sites and paid databases. Computers are available at all libraries for public use and all libraries offer wireless access. Public computer training classes are made available via wireless training labs at the six regional libraries.

Children and young adult library users have access to collections and services tailored to their needs, including homework assistance. Electronic resources of interest and use to children are available as are computers for Internet searching and other applications. Designated children's computers have either filtered or no Internet access. All youth computers also offer access to selected educational learning programs. Program events for preschool and school age children are held throughout the year and annual summer reading programs serve children and teens through age seventeen.

LCLS is the largest of the public library agencies in southwest Florida and is actively involved in the Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN), a multi-type library cooperative. The library system participates in reciprocal borrowing among the SWFLN libraries. Library employees have personal memberships in the Florida and American library associations, attend conferences for continuing education sponsored by these groups, and participate in state and national planning and development of library services.

### **Service Statistics**

The Lee County Library System experienced an increase in both circulation and library card holders during the past fiscal year. Circulation for FY 2010 – 2011 was 6,017,639; up 2.79% over the previous fiscal year. The number of library card holders increased by 4% during FY 2010 - 2011 to a total of 293,938.

The way in which individuals use/visit the library has been evolving. Visitors to our physical library locations in FY 2010 – 2011 totaled 2,955,798; down 5.3% from the previous fiscal year. Visitors to our e-branch (web site) reached 4,401,596: up 18.8% over the previous fiscal year.

### **Lee County Library System Strategic Plan 2007 – 2012**

The library system began work on the plan at the annual staff day in October 2006. A Strategic Planning Steering Committee, comprised of library staff members, was formed and selected Tecker Consultants (Yardley, PA) to facilitate a customized strategic planning process. That process was completed in October 2007 and the resulting document will guide the library system during the next five years.

## **Lee County Library System's Core Ideology**

### **Core Purpose:**

Strengthening our community by informing and enriching individuals.

### **Core Organizational Values:**

- Ensure equal and open access
- Defend intellectual freedom and the right to privacy
- Ensure that an individual's economic status does not deter library use
- Commit to meeting customer needs
- Foster a climate of mutual respect and trust
- Value and support individual initiative
- Promote cooperation, collaboration and connections
- Promote reading and life-long learning
- Practice financial accountability
- Support the county's vision, mission, and values

## **Lee County Library System's Envisioned Future**

### **BHAG:**

To be valued by everyone as indispensable in providing connections between the community, its people, and resources.

### **Vivid Description of the Desired Future:**

The Lee County Library System (LCLS) is the definitive place to go, physically and virtually, for information, enrichment and life-long learning. We provide a variety of services, resources, and programs to meet the diverse needs of the County's growing population. Access to programs and services is convenient, saving patrons time and money. Lee County residents recognize the libraries as part of the fabric of their daily lives and as a primary source for reliable and trustworthy information.

Lee County libraries are viewed by residents as vital places for community interaction and growth. We develop and maintain relationships with organizations and businesses within the community. To strengthen services, we expand partnerships with local, statewide and national library organizations and other information providers. Our well-designed, strategically placed facilities strive to be safe, secure public places, offering diverse areas for both individual and group users, including spaces for quiet reflection. Lee County residents are advocates for the LCLS, recognizing the vital role it plays in making the community a better place to live.

LCLS staff plays a vital role in the success of the libraries. Perceived by patrons as knowledgeable and responsive in providing services, we find the library to be an enjoyable place to work. We are committed to

promoting the library through our involvement in the community, our interactions with library patrons and our relationships with each other. We are committed to our professional development and life-long learning. Patrons and staff enjoy a relationship based on mutual respect. LCLS is recognized universally as a leader in library services and innovation.

## **Lee County Library System's Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (FY 2011/2012)**

### **Goal Area: Services and Resources**

**Goal Statement:** The library's content and services are authoritative, trustworthy and relevant.

Objective 1: Enhance reference service by ensuring accuracy of information and consistency in customer interactions.

Strategies:

- Continue to investigate innovative and creative ways to provide quality reference service.
- Continue to investigate time and staff levels at reference service points.
- Provide opportunities for the library system staff members to shift their focus from technical operations to library user interaction.
- Provide and promote continuing education opportunities for reference staff.

Objective 2: Enhance circulation service by ensuring accuracy of information and consistency in customer interactions.

Strategies:

- Continue to utilize circulation supervisor training, for consistency of evaluations and services delivery, developed in FY08/09.
- Continue to investigate opportunities to streamline circulation procedures.
- Provide opportunities for the library system staff members to shift their focus from technical operations to library user interaction.
- Provide and promote continuing education opportunities for circulation staff.

Objective 3: Enhance the relevancy of library collections.

Strategies:

- Review overall library system definition to clarify system-wide collection development strategy.
- Continue to investigate and streamline branch (Staff/Customer) involvement in material selection.
- Investigate floating collections.
- Continue to expand and develop the collection of electronic resources.

- Provide and promote continuing education opportunities for collection development staff.

Objective 4: Ensure that programs are designed to meet the needs of targeted user groups.

Strategies:

- Continue to utilize programming plans (as developed in FY08/09) to better serve targeted groups and use available funds effectively.
- Continue to provide programs for new immigrants and limited English speakers as defined in FY08/09.
- Develop a plan for increased partnership activity with the community using the new Fort Myers Regional Library as a model site.

**Goal Area: Marketing and Communications**

**Goal Statement:** Residents recognize the Lee County Library System as integral to their daily lives and to the strength of the community.

Objective 1: Increase the focus of marketing and communications materials to reflect the connection between programs and services and the individual's daily life.

Strategies:

- Develop and implement a plan for a coordinated and unified marketing and communications strategy.
- Create a marketing and communications committee with equal branch representation including outreach
- Develop system-wide tools and resources/branding tools that are flexible enough for branches to adapt to specific audiences.
- Investigate the creation of a brand and new logo for library system.

Objective 3: Increase staff awareness of the array of services offered, changes and trends in the larger library community, and our marketing and communications strategy

Strategies:

- Continue to find ways to educate staff on available library services.
- Continue to communicate with staff our marketing and communications efforts.
- Provide and promote continuing education opportunities for all staff.

## **Goal Area: Accessibility**

**Goal Statement:** Library services, programs, and facilities are accessible.

Objective 1: Establish a balance between providing physical and virtual services based on user preferences, needs and changing modes of delivery.

Strategies:

- Continue to evaluate and identify needs to expand virtual services.
- Continue to address identified needs and take advantage of new system capabilities.
- Investigate additional ways to improve a patron's ability to gather relevant results from resources in a simplified manner.
- Provide and promote continuing education opportunities for all staff.

Objective 2: Enhance the library's physical presence throughout the county.

Strategies:

- Proceed with the Fort Myers building project.
- Investigate current use of space in individual locations for optimal use.
- Investigate upgrades to the Bonita Springs and North Fort Myers facilities.
- Continue with the development, implementation and review of a full plan for equitable distribution of physical resources (including buildings, staff, equipment, materials and hours of operation) as begun in FY08/09.

Objective 3: Monitor performance at all library locations to ensure that community needs are being satisfied.

Strategies:

- Continue on-going customer satisfaction surveys of current library users.
- Develop periodic surveys of the service and information needs and preferences of both current and future library users.