



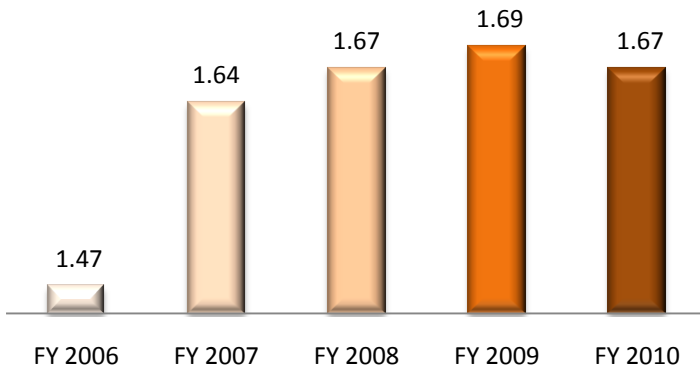
On March 23, 2006, the Arlington Public Library Advisory Board adopted a 5-year strategic plan, the first for the Library. The plan was based on documented needs of the community, ongoing citizen input of desired services, and diligent work of Library staff. Its foundation was a legacy of library service going back to 1922.

The Strategic Plan Committee choose six service areas that would be the focus for Library staff, Advisory Board, Foundation, and Friends for five years. For each of these, specific goals (where do we want to go), objectives (how do we measure progress), and activities (what will we do and when will we do it) were developed.

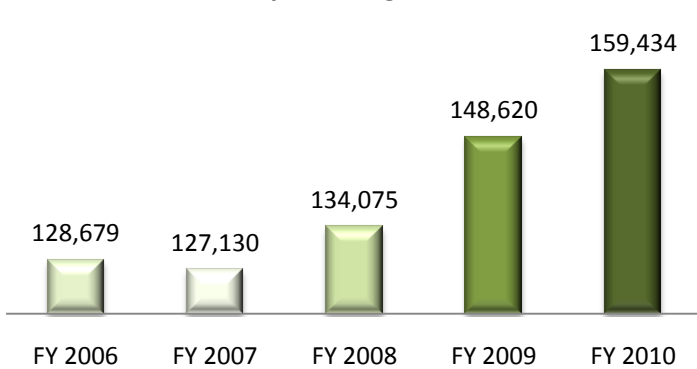
On the following pages you will find summary reports from each of the six focus areas, detailing their successes, challenges and performance measures.

General Information

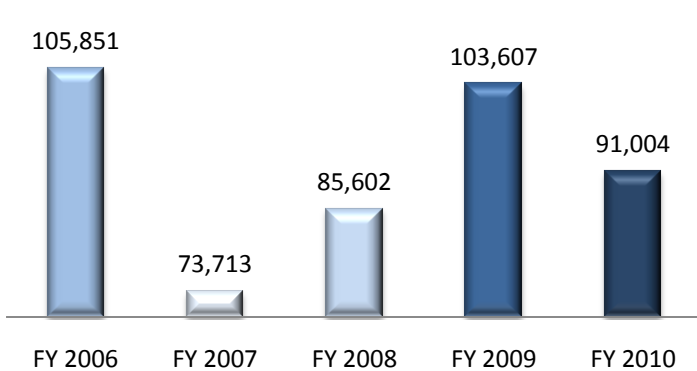
Materials per Capita



Library Card Registrations



Database Searches



GOALS:

1. Become a community resource of choice for information on a wide range of topics related to work, school, social, civic, and personal life.
2. Build a collection of information resources in multiple formats and in multiple languages that effectively covers the broad array of interests and information needs of our community.
3. Provide quick, courteous and accurate responses to a wide range of information requests, in person, over the phone, and through the Internet.

A library that offers General Information helps meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal life.

OUR SUCCESSES:

The goals of the General Information focus area were directed at getting the message out into our community about the wide range of resources and services provided by the library. Progress was made during the period of the plan as library card registration, after hovering at around 30% of the population for the last decade finally began to climb upward to an toward the objective of 50% of the population. While library card registration certainly does not portray the entire story about the community's perception of library resources and services, usage indicators such as circulation of materials and facility and website visitors continue an even more marked upward climb, serving to confirm inroads made in "market penetration."

Two library card campaigns—the GOCARD campaign for K-6 students and the MYCARD campaign for teens in grades 7-12 have assisted greatly in building card registrations and encouraging entire families to use the library together. In addition to the card campaigns, staff assigned to collection development projects have spent time analyzing community needs and borrowing patterns and have directed the \$1,250,000 in bond fund available from the 2003 bond program toward purchases that expand the depth and breadth of the collection.

Opening the Southwest Branch Library in 2008 ensured that most residents now live within two miles of a library building. Because the greatest predictor of library usage is proximity to a library, the opening of this building was the final step in the plan envisioned in 1993 to bring convenient library service to all Arlington residents.

OUR CHALLENGES:

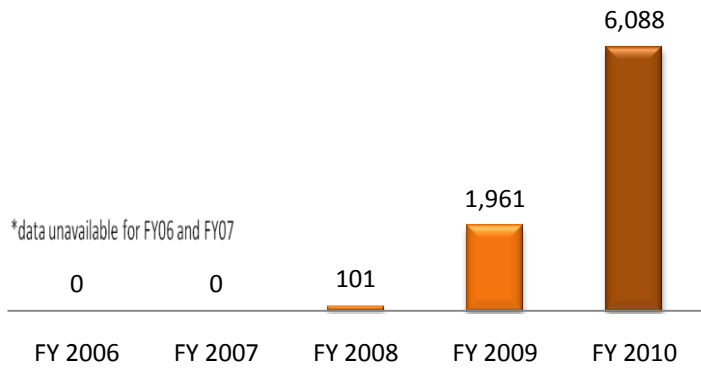
The per capita spending for collection materials in 2010 was \$2.25, which, as illustrated in the later section discussing resource allocation benchmarks, is strikingly lower than the expenditures of other similar libraries, both locally and nationally. In analysis of library statistics, library circulation (i.e. library usage) is clearly correlated with a higher number of materials per capita and higher collection expenditures per capita. In order to remedy this situation, library staff continues to focus time on developing grant and gift funding sources for collection development.

Marketing continues to be a challenge in a community where many citizens may not be familiar with the concept of a free public library, or where citizens do not have convenient access to a library building. Educating citizens on what the library offers them will continue to be an area for exploration and improvement.

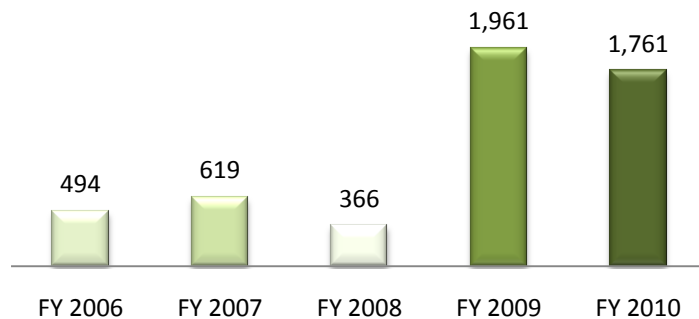


Basic Literacy

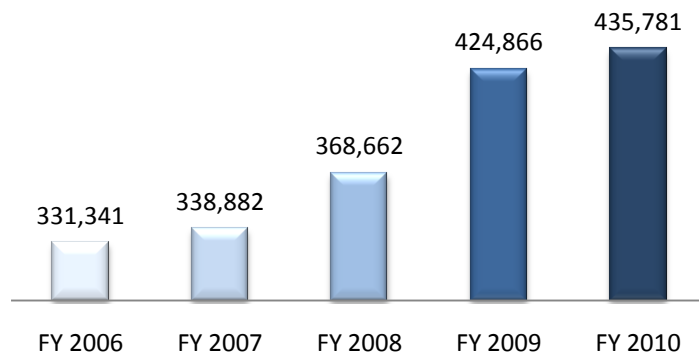
ESL Contact Hours



Homework Center Sessions



Early Literacy Materials Borrowed



GOALS:

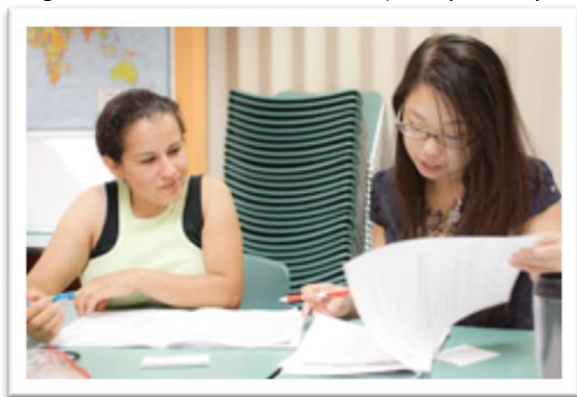
1. Provide materials and programming that will build pre-literacy skills in children and assure their readiness for beginning elementary school.
2. Support families and educators in their work to build a strong foundation in basic literacy skills for children in the early elementary grades.
3. Provide educational opportunities and resources for residents of all ages learning to read and speak English as a second language.

A library that offers Basic Literacy service addresses the need to read and to perform other essential daily tasks.

Our Successes:

The creation and extraordinary success of Arlington Reads is a most profound highlight of the Library 2006-2010 Strategic Plan, exceeding our expectations and continuing to grow each year. Hundreds of students have been reached, other literacy and ESL providers in the community have a new source of support, training and resources to help them and newly trained volunteer tutors are impacting lives every day. Students are achieving citizenship, earning a GED, successfully getting jobs, connecting the world in new ways and improving their self-esteem and ability to master basic life skills.

Currently, the Arlington Reads literacy program consists of a number of initiatives, including: 1) The Learning Zone tutoring program for grades 1-3, held at both the East Arlington and Southeast Branches; 2) Early literacy



programming, including Wee Reads and Le Seras; 3) Life Through Literacy: a partnership with an infant mortality nonprofit and the Arlington Independent School District Parent Education Program (PEP); 4) English as a Second Language (ESL) and Basic Adult Education programs – both one on one tutoring and small group; 5) Conversation Circles programs for adults to practice their language skills; 6) GED instruction: an online program supplemented by small group tutoring; 7) Citizenship instruction; 8) Youth enrichment programs such as the Fittnesista's health literacy programming for tween-age girls, youth summer science camps, writing enrichment programs, etc. 9) Workplace literacy programs held at worksites such as Arlington Memorial Hospital

In addition to providing literacy services to our residents, the program has also assisted faith-based groups with starting their own literacy programming and providing support and resources to existing literacy programs within Arlington. The Arlington Reads program is supported by an Americorps VISTA program grant from the Corporation for National and Community Services. This program provides full time VISTA members who commit to serve full-time for a year at a nonprofit organization or government agency, working to fight problems such as illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, strengthen community groups and much more. In addition to this strong support, the Arlington Reads program also works closely with the Arlington Independent School District, United Way of Tarrant County, United Way - Arlington, the Tarrant County Literacy Coalition and the North Texas Future Fund. These partners have provided collaborative programming, training, as well as funding for joint initiatives.

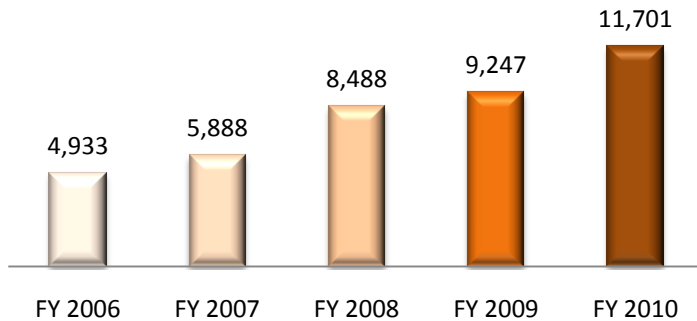
Our Challenges:

One of the largest challenges we face with our literacy programming is in meeting the vast need we have to fill in the community. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy Survey, one in five adults in Tarrant County cannot read well enough to succeed at a 4th grade level. However, less than 10,000 adults are currently enrolled in literacy programs in Tarrant County and those programs that do exist often have a waiting list. Like many literacy programs, the service capacity of the Arlington Reads program is dependent on the number of volunteer tutors able to provide assistance and on grants and donations raised by the Arlington Public Library Foundation.

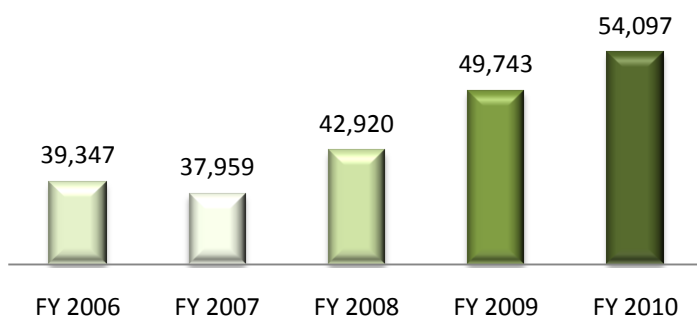


Lifelong Learning

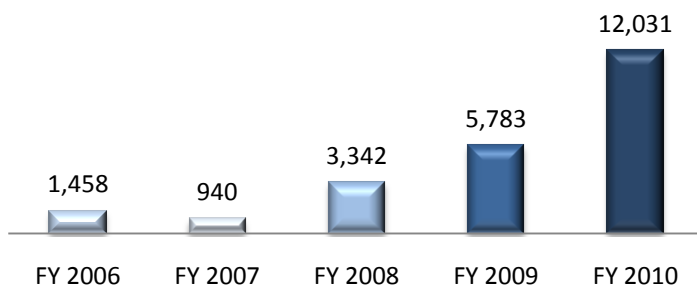
Adult Program Attendance



Juvenile and Student Library Card Registrations



**Educational Resources and Databases Used
(in sessions)**



GOALS:

1. Provide increased opportunities to Arlington citizens of all ages that foster interest in acquiring new knowledge and skills.
2. Support educational institutions and families with materials and programming that will ensure that Arlington's children and teens will become life-long learners.

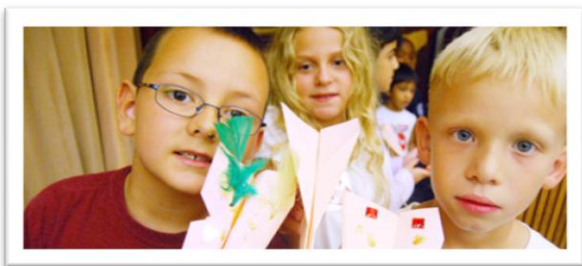
A library that provides Lifelong Learning service helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

OUR SUCCESSES:

One of the greatest changes that has taken place in library resources over the last decade has been the addition of online learning tools that library customers can utilize from the comfort of their own homes. These services are not only convenient, but also interactive. Services added during this time period include:

- Live Homework Help: an online tutoring service for students in grades K-college.
- Learning Express: test preparation and practice service, including SAT, ACT, TAKS, GRE, and professional certification tests.
- Language Learning help: the vendor providing this service has varied over the years from *Rosetta Stone* to *Tell Me More* and finally to *Mango Languages*, but the service has always offered a variety of languages (including ESL) for users to choose from.

As mentioned under the General Information section, the GOcard and MYCard campaigns, focusing on students in grades K-12 have helped to support the formal learning offered by our local school districts and ensure that the lifelong learning process is started off right. In addition, increased focus on collections for students has resulted in a 43% increase in the circulation of materials to our youngest learners.



In addition to providing learning opportunities for children and teens, a greater focus has been placed on making sure that learning does not end with formal school enrollment. Program offerings have expanded to ensure that adults of all ages have the ability to continue to learn new skills and interests. An activity of note has been the addition of numerous book clubs in all library locations



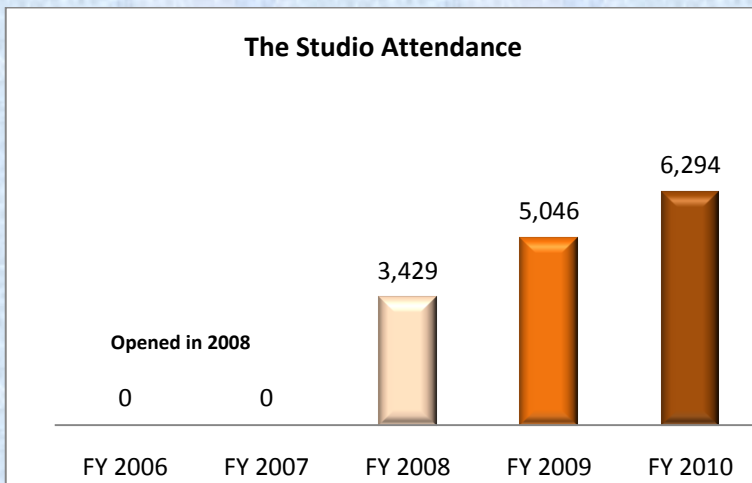
OUR CHALLENGES:

This area has been an area of many successes as explained above. Our greatest challenges to this focus area has been in prioritizing initiatives to ensure greatest impact. Marketing the high quality learning opportunities offered for adults has room for improvement and selecting cost-effective methods to reach the most users is an area for further development.

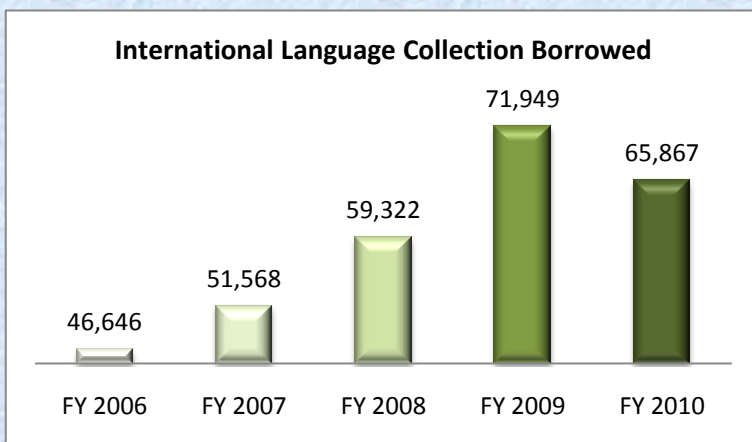


Culture and the Arts

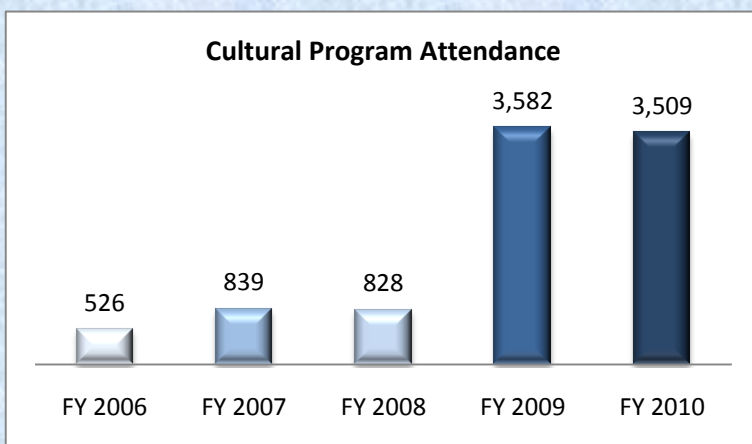
The Studio Attendance



International Language Collection Borrowed



Cultural Program Attendance



GOALS:

1. Offer a collection of materials and a selection of programming that reflect and celebrate the cultural diversity of the residents of Arlington.
2. Provide the environment and facilitate opportunities for engagement in arts and cultural activities.
3. Foster a greater appreciation and understanding of the arts in Arlington's children and teenagers.

A library that offers Cultural Awareness service helps satisfy the desire of residents to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of others.

OUR SUCCESSES:



The addition of *The Studio: teen arts underground*, has been a notable success within this focus area and has allowed teenagers throughout the community the ability to pair their knowledge of technology with their artistic, musical, and

writing talent. This initiative continues to expand and develop and usage of *The Studio* resources and programming has grown at a steady rate since its opening at the Central Library in 2008.

Throughout the last five years, the library has collaborated with numerous community organizations such as TCC, UTA, AISD, F6 Gallery and the Boys and Girls Club to display artwork in all library locations, but most notably at the Central Library and the Southeast Branch. Display of student artwork especially has brought new visitors to the library, as well as adding to the enjoyment of current library users.

In order to promote cultural understanding and learning, numerous cultural celebrations have been further developed during the last five years and others implemented for the first time. Notable celebrations include the Central Library's Medieval Fair, the East Arlington Branch Courtyard Celebration and El día de las Niñas programming at both East Arlington and Southeast Branches, Share your Passion programming at the Woodland West Branch, as well as various Black History month and



Hispanic Heritage Month and Chinese New Year programs at all library locations.

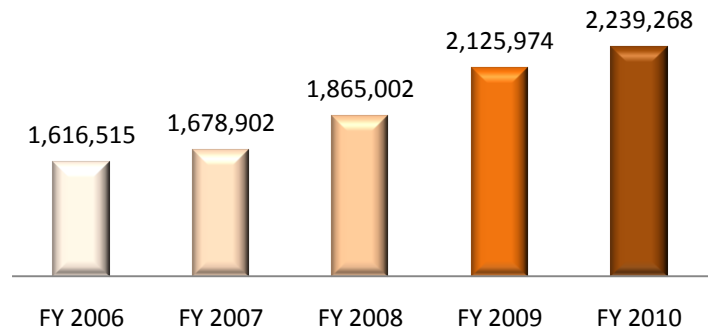
OUR CHALLENGES:

In assessing the gains made in this focus area, one of the conclusions drawn has been that the number of other organizations contributing to the arts in the community lessens our need to allocate resources toward developing arts initiatives. Instead, increased efforts will be made to partner with arts organizations to ensure that they gain a higher profile in the community and to give children and teenagers the ability explore fully their talents in these areas.

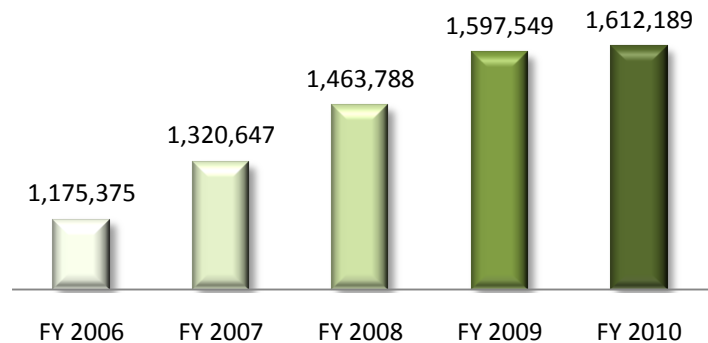


Current Topics and Titles

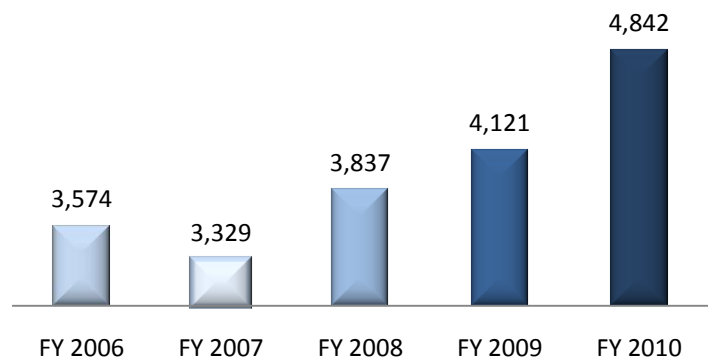
Materials Borrowed



Visitors



Summer Reading Club Participants



GOALS:

1. Provide rewarding recreational experiences by supplying easy access to popular material dealing with current issues and popular culture in appropriate languages, formats and quantities.
2. Modernize facilities, furnishings, and technology to ensure that our libraries provide welcoming and positive experiences for browsing, reading, or studying or meeting.
3. Foster a lifelong love of reading for pleasure in Arlington's children and young adults by providing opportunities for families to participate in recreational reading activities together.

A library that provides Current Topics and Titles helps to fulfill community residents' appetite for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.

OUR SUCCESSES:

Successes in the Current Titles & Topics focus area were numerous and served to bring new users into the library as well as increasing the satisfaction and enthusiasm of current users. Circulation of fiction for children, teens and adults has increased by 46.8% over the five-year period and attention to developing designated “bookstore-like” spaces for new popular materials in all library locations has contributed to these gains.



One of the initiatives begun during this period was the addition of digital material to the library's collection. Downloadable audiobooks were a natural extension to the Library's offering of books on tape and books on CD and have offered a greater convenience to users. Additional digital offerings include online book clubs and blogs that offer readers a place to talk about books and get reviews and recommendations.

The “One Book, One Arlington” annual program offered library users the opportunity to all read the same book at the same time and to come together to discuss and share perspectives. This program lent its theme to the Library's READ posters, featuring local “celebrities” with their favorite books.

Library collections have become more community-focused as we monitor suggestions and circulation patterns at the different branch locations. Over the past five years, the number of languages represented in the collection has been lessened in

order to produce a stronger collection in each language. The proportion of fiction to nonfiction and children's to adult materials has also been adjusted according to usage. . Because not all library users can “read” in the same way, library staff obtained grant funding to hold a “Low Vision Fair” to ensure that all citizens, despite their physical challenges are able to access and enjoy library services.



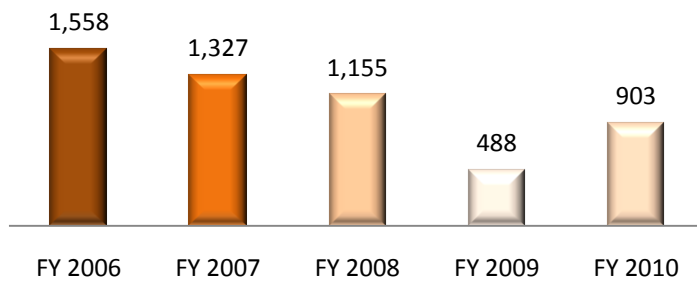
Library staff continue to find cost-efficient methods of improving the physical space of our library facilities and work closely with the Arlington Public Library Foundation to obtain funding to that end. During the strategic plan period, the Northeast Branch Library received a “facelift” with new carpeting, paint and furniture and planning is underway to obtain a similar effect at the Lake Arlington Branch.

OUR CHALLENGES:

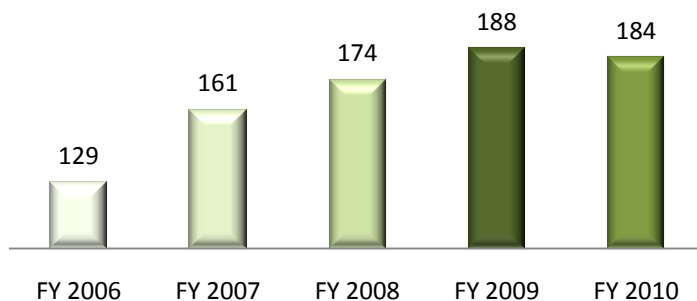
Balancing popular materials with more “serious” learning support material will continue to be a challenge given the Library's limited budget for collection materials. Recognizing that all of us, especially children, become better readers when we read material that we enjoy continues to lend support for developing strong popular collections of fiction for all ages.

Information Literacy

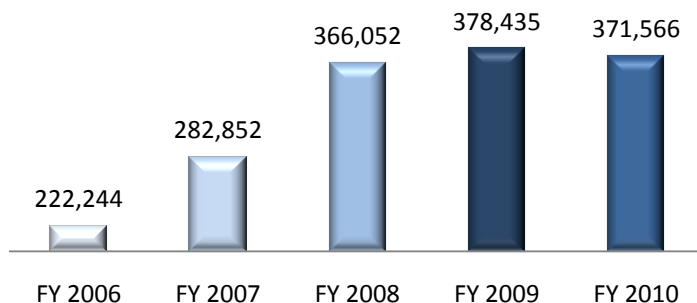
Computer Class Attendance



Public Computers



Computer Usage (# of sessions)



GOALS:

1. Develop the skills of students (K-12) and senior citizens to find and evaluate information necessary to make informed decisions and to communicate successfully in an electronic environment.
2. Make certain that Library staff achieve competency in information literacy skills and stay up-to-date in this rapidly changing environment.
3. Ensure that Arlington job seekers and small business owners have the skills to locate electronic information necessary for their success and can interact efficiently and effectively in an electronic environment.

Providing Information Literacy services helps address the need for skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information effectively.

OUR SUCCESSES:

Wifi is now available in all Library locations in addition to access to public computers during all hours the libraries are open. In 2010, internet access was expanded to include the computers in the Children's Learning Centers of all libraries. This access provides children with online resources for homework, exploration, and creativity.



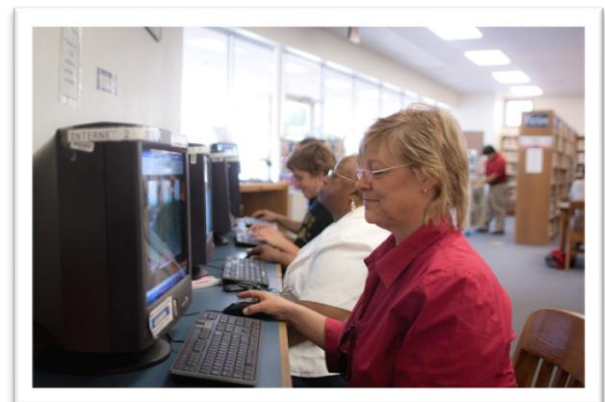
Web 2.0 features (blogs, RSS feeds, Facebook and Twitter links, videos and surveys) were added to promote better patron communication options, as well as to give insight and advice on information sources and reading materials. Virtual reference service through email and chat was implemented providing real-time customized service when physical access to a library is not possible.

A new Library website debuted in FY 2010, improving access and functionality to digital information. Since 2006, total "virtual" use of library resources (online catalog searches, webpage visits, downloads, and use of databases) increased 70% to 3.7 million in FY 2010.

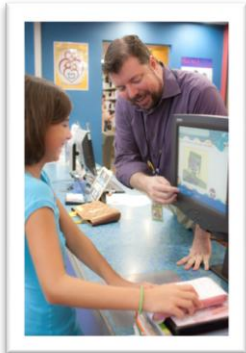
OUR CHALLENGES:

Technology and information literacy classes, while popular in throughout the period of the plan, were limited in their scope, only reaching a small percentage of library users, compared to other services such as borrowing materials, children's programming and general public computing use. When staffing reductions were necessary in 2008, a decision was made to discontinue information literacy and software productivity coursework offered in the training center at the Central Library in order to allocate staff to other functions. When Arlington Reads VISTA/Americorps staffing increased in 2010 and workplace literacy became a prime focus, this coursework was reintroduced at both the Central Library, as well as the new Family Learning Lab at the East Arlington Branch Library.

Limited measurement and assessment have occurred regarding the usage of public computing and the need for information literacy programming for various citizen groups. Greater efforts in this area will be called for in the next five years.



Fiscal Responsibility

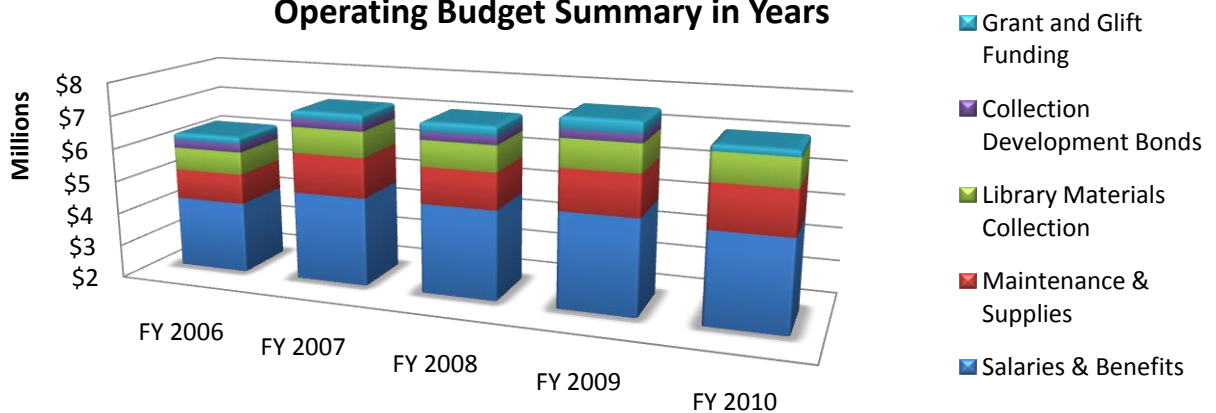


While Fiscal Responsibility was not a designated focus area in the Library's FY 2006 – FY 2010 Strategic Plan, each focus area did contain objectives and activities that underscored the need to develop the most cost-effective programs and processes possible to deliver library services. The introduction of RFID technology and self-checkout systems in 2006 began a trend toward self-service for many manual and repetitive tasks which once called for staff intervention such as checkout of materials, renewal of materials, logging of hold requests, library card registration and payment of fines and fees. This has allowed staff to spend more time with library customers in answering requests for information and developing and implementing programs and has greatly changed the configuration and organization of staff, leading to a newly structured organization in FY 2011 to carry out the Library's next plan of service.

Resource allocation is discussed in greater detail and from a comparative perspective in the third section of this document, *Library Resource Allocation and Usage Benchmarks*. The majority of the Library's operating budget is allocated from the City of Arlington's General Fund; additional monies are received from the Friends of the Arlington Public Library, the Arlington Public Library Foundation, the Texas State Library and Archives commission. Individual and corporate donations are received both through the Foundation, as well as directly to the Library.

The issues arising from the results of FY2006–2010 plans, as well as from general economic conditions suggest that areas for further development in the FY2011–2015 plan include: 1) enhanced regional cooperation in order to reduce cost of service delivery; 2) increased community partnerships, focusing on the development of volunteer efforts to assist with service delivery; 3) focused attention on developing alternate sources of revenue, including individual and corporate donation avenues, as well as increased attention toward recovering revenue from overdue patron accounts; 4) investigating budgetary avenues for collection development purchases, including the use of one-time funds for this purpose.

Operating Budget Summary in Years



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Salaries & Benefits	\$4,167,347	\$4,692,860	\$4,708,984	\$4,869,949	\$4,730,594
Maintenance & Supplies	\$918,726	\$1,222,944	\$1,106,332	\$1,242,897	\$1,313,631
Library Collection Materials	\$692,984	\$787,781	\$785,385	\$835,385	\$835,035
Collection Development Bonds	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	
Total Collection Funding	\$942,984	\$1,037,781	\$1,035,385	\$1,085,385	\$1,085,035
Grant/Gift Funding	\$217,634	\$249,327	\$286,201	\$359,360	\$191,796
Total	\$6,246,691	\$7,202,912	\$7,136,902	\$7,557,591	\$7,321,056