



Envision the Future
it's @ your library™

Richland County Public Library . 2003 Annual Report
www.richland.lib.sc.us

The Future is @ your library™

In 2003, RCPL celebrated its 10-year anniversary of an unprecedented program of expansion, growth and renewed vision. This expansion included building new branch libraries and opening the state-of-the-art Main Library in downtown Columbia.

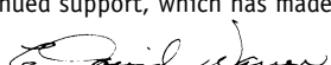
Last spring, more than 60,000 people attended several special events in celebration of RCPL and all the library means to Richland County citizens. An interactive exhibit on the life and work of Maurice Sendak drew more than 50,000 people in the 15 weeks it was at the Main Library. Events focusing on children's author and illustrator Eric Carle attracted another 6,000 children and adults.

Specifically, RCPL accomplished the following in 2003:

- Achieved record annual usage in units of service (12,725,624—up 18%), circulation (3,254,842—up 6.7%) and visitors (2,036,900—up 11%).
- Expanded globally through Answers Now, a virtual reference service, at low cost to RCPL with partners in Australia and the United Kingdom.
- Achieved the highest level of volunteer participation ever, with 847 volunteers at RCPL.
- Provided Live Homework Help, an online tutoring program, for one year through a grant.

What's next? Even in tough economic times, your library is working hard to enhance its resources, services and programs. Capital needs are being identified, and your library's Board and staff are firmly committed to meeting your needs for reading, learning and information.

Whatever the future holds for you, the Richland County Public Library has the resources and services that can help you grow personally and professionally. Thank you for your continued support, which has made RCPL a world-class library.



C. David Warren, Executive Director

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Dr. Glenn James
Carrie Allen McCray
Dr. Rosemary Canfield Reisman
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**Meeting Our Citizens' Needs
for Reading, Learning and Information.**



January 2004

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Reflecting on 2003

While celebrating the 10th anniversary of the expansion of the library system in 2003, RCPL served record numbers of Richland County citizens and continued to develop innovative programs and services for the community.

The following are two examples.

More than 6,000 patron questions were answered immediately with RCPL's Answers Now, the first online global reference service. Answers Now is made possible through partnerships with libraries in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Through a grant with First Steps, RCPL expanded its children's outreach program to establish permanent collections of picture books in 55 child care centers throughout Richland County. The grant also allowed RCPL to hire two part-time librarians to develop these collections and work with the centers to emphasize the importance of books and reading to children.

Residents Value Their Library

The Richland County Public Library is one of the most heavily used services funded by the county, benefiting everyone regardless of age or background. More than 260,000 residents—82% of the population of Richland County—are registered users, and RCPL's circulation in 2003 exceeded 3,000,000.



February 2004

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RCPL has Something for Everyone

A modern and efficient library system is the hallmark of a progressive, growing community, and RCPL has proven itself to be the one community resource that is most used and valued by a large majority of residents in Richland County. The Main Library, which has now been open for more than 10 years, has become a cornerstone for the ongoing revitalization of downtown Columbia. Libraries are a valuable part of economic development, supporting business and community leaders by serving as a center for information and education.

In 2003, more than 2,000,000 visitors utilized RCPL resources, an increase of 11 percent over the previous year. As budgets have tightened for schools and businesses, adults and children have become very dependent on the public library.

10th Anniversary Events Focus on Eric Carle

As a part of the 10th anniversary of the library's expansion, RCPL hosted several special events with renowned author and illustrator Eric Carle in February. More than 4,400 school children and another 700 children and adults attended 10 performances of Carle's best-known works *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *The Very Quiet Cricket* performed by the Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia. The blacklight puppetry production featured large, colorful puppets accompanied by spirited music and the soothing voice of a narrator. A special book signing with Eric Carle at the Main Library attracted more than 400 people. These special programs were made possible through the support of the Friends of RCPL.



March 2004

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We Can Never Have Too Many Friends

The Friends of RCPL is a nonprofit organization established to generate support and increase visibility of the library through special and ongoing projects. Since 1975, the Friends have worked to raise awareness of the library throughout the community. The Friends' contributions have enabled the growth and expansion of services that helped RCPL become the 2001 Library of the Year.

In 2003, the Friends helped sponsor the special events held in celebration of the library's 10th anniversary, which included the special interactive exhibit on Maurice Sendak, a book signing with Eric Carle and 10 performances of Carle's work by The Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia. The Friends also held events with renowned authors like former President Jimmy Carter, Terry Kay and Dorothea Benton Frank.

Fundraisers include special events with authors, annual book sales and A Tisket, A Tasket . . . A Literary Basket. The support of the nearly 2,000 members of the Friends also makes it possible for the organization to provide important enhancements not available though the library's public appropriation.

Bid on Baskets and Support the Library

In March, the tenth annual A Tisket, A Tasket . . . A Literary Basket, a silent and live auction that has become a major fundraiser for the Friends of RCPL, brought together nearly 200 people who share the love of books, libraries, travel, sports and cultural events. Each year, about 100 baskets, all built around a literary theme and containing books, hotel stays and much more, are auctioned.



April 2004

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Adequate Funding Allows RCPL to Serve Everyone

When the recession began in 2000, RCPL's usage was already at an all time high and, since then, has increased 33 percent. When economic times are tough, people increasingly turn to the library. Libraries serve as the heart of the community and are an integral part of our neighborhoods, providing resources to school children and people of all ages. More than 300 community groups and organizations rely on the library for meeting facilities. Thousands of children and adults depend on the library for computer and Internet access, especially in difficult economic times when they cannot afford books, magazine subscriptions and Internet accounts.

Vera Williams Featured at Storytelling Festival

A(ugusta) Baker's Dozen: A Celebration of Stories, held each spring, brings to life the world of storytelling and children's literature. Cosponsored by the Richland County Public Library and the University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science, the festival honors the works and achievements of nationally-known author and storyteller Augusta Baker. Baker moved to Columbia in 1980 and was appointed Storyteller-in-Residence at USC. The 17th annual event in 2003 featured children's author and illustrator Vera B. Williams. Lexington High School drama students, pictured here with Williams, performed a play based on her book *Amber was Brave, Essie Was Smart*.



May 2004

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How Your Library Stacks Up

The Richland County Public Library circulates more materials than all libraries in South Carolina and most urban libraries in the Southeastern United States. In FY 2003, RCPL's circulation systemwide topped 3.2 million.

RCPL ranked sixth among urban libraries serving populations of 250,000-499,999 according to the recent *HAPLR Ratings, 2002* (*Hennen's American Public Library Ratings*). Among nearly 9,000 public libraries in the United States and Canada, only four libraries in the Southeast ranked in the top 100—RCPL and three Virginia libraries.

Library holdings as of June 30, 2003 included more than 1,000,000 books; nearly 8,000 magazine titles in print and online; more than 150 newspaper titles and more than 450 electronic databases.

A Grand Send Off for Sendak Exhibit

After the interactive exhibit on Maurice Sendak closed on May 18, 2003, the materials were carefully packed and loaded onto a truck for transporting to its next location. The Richland County Public Library was the only public library able to host the exhibit, and the only place the exhibit was open to the public free of charge. This was made possible thanks to these sponsors: Friends of RCPL; Alan and Charlotte Kahn; Michael and Deborah Kahn Rubin; Baker & Baker Real Estate Developers, LLC; Bank of America; Book Wholesalers, Inc.; and Dynix. The Library of the Year \$10,000 cash award was also used to bring this special event to the community.



June 2004

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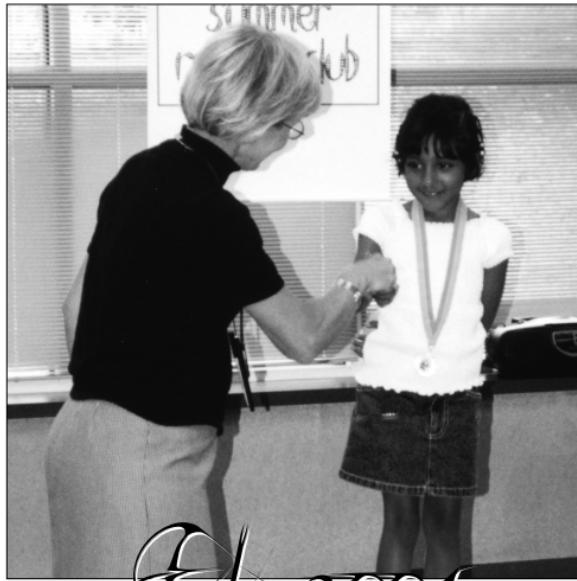
RCPL Brings Literature to Life

In addition to the many resources available at the library, RCPL brings the visual and performing arts to residents of Richland County and South Carolina through numerous performances of scholars, actors and authors. Regular art exhibits are also featured throughout the year in the Wachovia Gallery at the Main Library. The library is a pleasant and helpful place to discover, observe and establish an appreciation of the arts. The opportunities are heightened through the coordination of materials, staff, services, technology and facilities.

RCPL programming has been a strong point in library service and provides a valuable asset to the community. During the last fiscal year, more than 25,000 adults and children attended programming held at the library.

Literary Residency Program Launched

Based on the artist-in-residence concept, RCPL established a Literary Residency program with six actors and scholars who have been working with the library for 10 years on programs that stimulate creative thinking and the use of the library's collections and services. Literary Residents provide creative literary and historical presentations, lectures and workshops. RCPL's first Literary Residents include: **Clarence Felder** and **Chris Weatherhead**, cofounders of The Actors' Theatre of South Carolina; **Howard Burnham**, a British Actor and Scholar; **Dr. Glenn James**, a professor of English at Midlands Technical College; **Carrie Allen McCray**, a well-known author and poet; and **Dr. Rosemary Reisman**, a professor of English at Charleston Southern University.



July 2004

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Branch Locations Help Meet Needs of Community

In addition to the Main Library in downtown Columbia, the Richland County Public Library includes nine branches located throughout the county and a bookmobile. To best serve the community, all circulating materials can be sent to any location upon request and materials can be returned at any RCPL location.

In FY 2003, circulation of library materials from the branch locations, outreach services and the bookmobile reached 1.8 million.

Several branch locations, as well as the Main Library, have meeting rooms available for residents to use free of charge. Nearly 300 nonprofit groups held meetings at library facilities during the last year, and many used multiple library locations.

Thousands Feed Their Imaginations at the Library

This year, more than 17,000 children participated in RCPL's Summer Reading Club, which allows children to feed their imaginations and have fun at the library. Geared toward children ages 12 and under, the program encourages children to read more than 15 books and recognizes their success along the way. Medal ceremonies, like the one pictured here at the Sandhills Branch, are held at several locations to recognize children who reach the goal. Special programs are held throughout the summer to celebrate children's participation. This year, featured guests included Billy Jonas and his junkadelic folk music, Van Doren the Magician, and Columbia Marionette Theatre performances of *Snow White* and *Hansel and Gretel*.



August 2004

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Operating Budget as of June 30, 2003

Receipts

Richland County Appropriation	\$12,782,642
State Aid/Grants	\$375,219
Miscellaneous	\$919,276
Designated Funds, FY02	\$2,715,477
Total	\$16,792,614

Disbursements

Personnel and Related Expenses	\$8,694,223
Materials	\$2,641,207
Operations	\$2,222,323
Operations Reserve	\$3,234,861
Total	\$16,792,614

Subject to end of year audit adjustments.

Pigskin Poets and Their Game Plan on Summer Reading

For the sixth consecutive year, the USC Gamecock football team partnered with RCPL to share their game plan on summer reading. A capacity crowd of adults and children enjoyed stories and games with 30 football players at the July program, a celebration of the Summer Reading Club. Children of all ages took the opportunity to get the players' autographs on footballs, hats and posters, and some went home with signatures on their shoes and even their arms. By emphasizing the importance of reading, the program offers the players another opportunity to interact with children and have a positive impact on young lives.



September 2004

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Resources Available

Books	1,063,230
Magazine Titles in Print	1,404
Magazine Titles Online, Full Text	6,338
Newspaper Titles	158
Maps	1,235
Microforms	68,174
Audio Cassettes/Tapes	29,650
Videos/DVDs	33,665
Compact Discs	16,978
CD-Rom Titles	1,126
Digitized Photographs	453
Electronic Databases	47

Programs and More @ your library™

Throughout the year, RCPL provides a variety of regular programming on many subjects for both children and adults. In September, local jazz legend Skipp Pearson, accompanied by Bill Wingate on the keyboard, discussed jazz and shared his music with patrons at St. Andrews Regional Branch. In FY 2003, more than 25,000 people attended programs held at the 10 locations of the Richland County Public Library.



October 2004

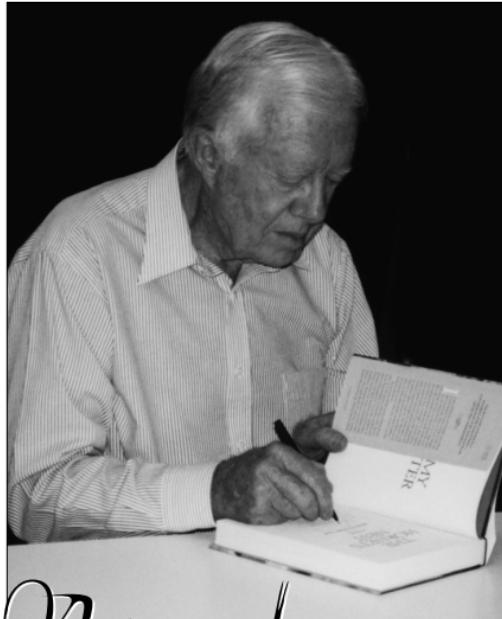
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Annual Statistical Summary

Total Units of Service	12,725,624
Visitors to the Library System	2,036,900
Visits per Capita	6.35
Visitors to the Sendak Exhibit (February-May 18, 2003)	50,668
New Registered Borrowers	18,351
Total Registered Borrowers	226,968
Total Patron Information Requests	1,499,695
In-House	911,668
Phone/Mail	588,027
Holds Placed	142,443
Materials Borrowed from Other Libraries	837
Materials Lent to Other Libraries	1,461
Electronic Online Database Searches	156,727
Web Site Access to Library Resources	558,186
In-House Programming Attendance	25,082
Outreach Programming Attendance	3,958
School Group Visits/Tours	12,750
A(ugusta) Baker's Dozen Attendance	1,592
2003 Summer Reading Club Enrollment	17,232
*Population Served, Richland County	320,700
*Population Served, Greater Columbia	536,691
*Source: 2001 Census	

RCPL and Columbia Inferno Team Up for Blazin' Books

The Columbia Inferno Hockey team and RCPL promoted reading at the second annual Blazin' Books program in October. The players, Head Coach Scott White and mascot Blaze shared stories and played games with nearly 150 children and adults. The program allows children to interact with the players and learn about hockey, while emphasizing that reading is cool and the library has books on any subject.



November 2004

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Circulation

Main Library	1,080,819
Bookmobile	22,972
Community Services/Outreach	54,401
Renewals	284,445

Circulation at Branches

Blythewood	97,155
John Hughes Cooper	285,328
Eastover	11,572
North Main	97,363
Northeast Regional	254,302
Sandhills	306,024
Southeast Regional	322,762
St. Andrews Regional	322,192
Wheatley	115,507
 Circulation Systemwide	 3,254,842
Circulation per Capita	10.1
In-House Patron Use Systemwide	5,267,069

Friends Bring Former President Jimmy Carter to RCPL

Nearly 1,100 people came to the Main Library on November 24 to see Former President Jimmy Carter for a special book signing sponsored by the Friends of RCPL. In two hours, President Carter signed more than 1,800 books. This event—Carter's only appearance in South Carolina—was a part of his book tour for *The Hornet's Nest*. Drawing on real events of the Revolutionary War, this fictional novel covers the war as it was waged in Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.



December 2004

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Main Library and Branch Locations

Main Library Children's Room 1431 Assembly St., Columbia 29201 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri. - Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sun. 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.	799-9084 929-3434	Northeast Regional Branch 7490 Parklane Rd., Columbia 29223 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	736-6575
Blythewood Branch 218 McNulty Rd., Blythewood 29016 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	691-9806	Sandhills Branch 1 Summit Parkway at Clemson Rd., Columbia 29229 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	699-9230
John Hughes Cooper Branch 5317 North Trenholm Rd., Columbia 29206 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	787-3462	Southeast Regional Branch 7421 Garners Ferry Rd., Columbia 29209 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	776-0855
Eastover Branch 608 Main St., Eastover 29044 Mon., Wed., Fri. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Thurs., Sat. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.	353-8584	St. Andrews Regional Branch 2916 Broad River Rd., Columbia 29210 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	772-6675
North Main Branch 5306 North Main St., Columbia 29203 Mon. - Thurs. 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.	754-7734	Wheatley Branch 931 Woodrow St., Columbia 29205 Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. Tues., Thurs. 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.	799-5873

Fostering a Love of Reading

The Richland County Public Library's Elderly Homebound Program provides books and other materials to older patrons who can no longer visit the library. Richland County Residents who are 65 or older and homebound are eligible for the service. This year, the demand increased to a level where several volunteers were needed to assist the one part-time staff member. In FY 2003, the program delivered more than 5,200 books on 780 visits.

We Can Never Have Too Many Friends!

Many of the programs featured in this annual report would not have been possible without the support of the Friends of RCPL.

Your membership in and support of the Friends helps RCPL provide nationally recognized programs and services. Memberships start at only \$25. To join or for more information, call (803) 929-3475 or visit www.richland.lib.sc.us/friends.htm.

Richland County Public Library
2001 Library of the Year
1431 Assembly Street . Columbia, SC . 29201 . 799-9084
www.richland.lib.sc.us