"Libraries and books are the representatives of our civilization, culture, and language. Libraries are homes, community centers, archives, learning centers. Keep libraries strong, viable and accessible."

– M. Seeley,
an Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System Customer

Compiled by
The New Mexico State Library
The New Mexico State Library and the New Mexico Library Association partnered to encourage the New Mexico library community to collect statistics, stories and photos on April 14, 2010, to show the importance and value of services that our libraries provide. This initiative was dubbed “Library Snapshot Day.”

Libraries are busier than ever and offer outstanding service in these tough economic times. The American Library Association’s recent report on “The State of America’s Libraries, 2010,” states that “Americans are turning to their libraries in ever larger numbers for access to resources for employment, continuing education, and government services. The local library, a traditional source of free access to books, magazines, CDs, and DVDs, has become a lifeline, offering technology training and workshops on topics that ranged from résumé-writing to job-interview skills.” All these services are being provided by our local libraries while cuts to shrinking library budgets continue.

Public, school, and academic libraries used a web-based survey instrument to submit their information. They were asked such questions as: How many customers visited your library that day? How many people used your computers? How many books, movies or other items were checked out? How many children attended library programs? How many reference questions were answered?

So the questions we ask you to think about are– What would people do if libraries disappeared, even for one day? How would that impact New Mexico and the people that rely on them?
Data Collected

We are highlighting the responses received from our public, school, and academic libraries in New Mexico. Approximately 31% of our 92 public libraries responded.

DID YOU KNOW?

In ONE DAY: 23,159 people visited New Mexico libraries.

In ONE DAY: 15,573 passengers departed from the Albuquerque International Sunport.

“…Since the economic woes began, we’ve noticed the Library is a crowded and busy place. The computers always seem to be in use with people waiting. What a great resource that is for people who cannot afford their own. Whenever there is an issue on the ballot for money for libraries, you can bet I vote for it. Whenever I go to the Library and see and hear the children discovering the love of stories and books, I have renewed hope for civilization.”

– S. Pike, an Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Library System Customer
What is a New Mexico public library worth to citizens if they had to pay out-of-pocket for library services?

In ONE DAY: residents saved

$379,065 By borrowing Library books, movies and other items. 
# of items borrowed multiplied by $15, which is the average discounted retail cost of an item

$55,692 By using Library computers with Internet access
# of users multiplied by the cost if they went to a local commercial copy center @ $12 per hour

$14,637 By attending Library programs and events.
# of children & adults attending a library program multiplied by the average cost of a movie ticket @ $7

Did You Know?

There are 1,146,574 people who are registered library card holders in New Mexico—57% of the 2,009,671 total population.

There were 9 sellouts this year at the UNM “Pit,” with an overall attendance of 131,274 people.

“For nearly nine years, the Corrales Community Library has been a second home to me…It is the belly button of our village!”

— Anonymous

“Not only does our public library provide books, videos, computers and Internet access, it is the social center of our community. It’s only been open two and a half years, but has contributed immensely to the quality of life in Questa. I cannot image living here without it.”

— L. Anderson
Who Needs the Library?

- Children from newborns to teens benefit the most when they participate in library programs. Library programs sponsored by New Mexico public libraries encompass a wide range of activities for our youth: field trips, read-alongs, story times, arts and crafts, a meeting place for local youth clubs, gardening clubs, and gathering places for homework activities and tutoring sessions.

- In ONE DAY: almost 1,200 children went to their local public library to participate in a library-sponsored activity or program.

- Over 68,000 children in New Mexico went to their local public library to participate in the annual Summer Reading Program in 2009. How many books did they check out? Over 629,000 books in June and July! Our libraries offered more than 1,560 programs for children to encourage reading over the summer months.

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Other Facts and Figures

“I love our small library here at Sandia Pueblo. The staff is real knowledgeable on books and what Internet sites you should go to to acquire the answers you may need. My kids love coming here to read all the kids’ books.”

– D. Samuel, Sandia Pueblo Library
Adults as well as children attend events at their local public libraries. However, a more serious requirement arises for many adults who need assistance with job applications, unemployment applications, filing taxes, writing resumes, finding government information, searching the Internet, etc. Impressive numbers on the use of computers were reported by all libraries:

- **In ONE DAY:** 4,641 people in New Mexico used a computer in a library.
- **In ONE DAY:** 116 job seekers were helped.

The State Library provides access to databases that include articles from thousands of magazines, newspapers and reference books. They are available free of charge to any resident in New Mexico. All public, school, and academic libraries in New Mexico have an account through the State Library which allows their library customers access to the databases.

- **In ONE YEAR,** people in New Mexico conducted over 10 million searches using our subscription databases.

“*I use the library because I need to use the computers. I can’t afford one and it’s a great resource for me. I also have 3 children in school so the reference material here is very valuable. Also, it is a safe and fun place to spend time with my children.*”

– Liz, Laguna Public Library

“I appreciate the Rio Rancho Library sponsoring the Willot and Associates Job Hunting Seminar. It was great and very useful.”

– S.M. Gallegos

Library web sites are gaining popularity throughout our state.

- **In ONE DAY:** there were 32,845 web page hits on New Mexico library web sites.
- **In ONE DAY:** there were 3,737 reference questions answered by New Mexico librarians.
- **In ONE DAY:** there were 24 “how-to-use-library-resources” classes held, with 309 people in attendance.
What Library Customers Are Talking About…

An employee of Grace Requires Understanding says, “The Library has enabled me to teach people with disabilities how to use the computer. And now all the clients maintain an email address and are able to communicate with family members through email. These are people who have trouble communicating with people in a one-to-one setting. The library continues to be a great part of each and every day.”

– T. Garrison, Marshall Memorial Library

“As a child, the local library had a huge impact. As a faculty/researcher, the NMSU library is an indescribable resource to my students when conducting research and simply learning and studying our discipline.”

– L. Anderson

“Computers are available to the public, like myself, who doesn’t have a computer. I really don’t know what I’d do without this Library that is open to all of us.”

– A Western New Mexico University Library Customer

“Most Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped patrons are elderly and some are bedridden and almost helpless. They let us know daily how much the books mean to their quality of life.”

– Manager, State Library, Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

“Miracles happen every day in small ways. A young man learned to read the instructions on how to install a lock when being tutored by The Literacy Link-Leamos adult literacy program at the Silver City Public Library. Where would a student be if not for the support of this library and the good volunteer who tutors him.”

– H. Heunermund, Executive Director, New Mexico Coalition for Literacy

“School libraries are important because…some kids are not able to make it to public libraries. Our library is not just for checking out books. We learn about other things like the Dewey Decimal system, about genres, how to write a bibliography and the skills we need when we go to a public library”

– An Edgewood Elementary School Student
**Snapshot Day Photo Album**

Libraries were asked to document the first New Mexico Library Snapshot Day with photographs. The web-based photo sharing site, Flickr, has more than 200 photos showing hundreds of people taking part in library activities in April 2010. One easy step will get you to the photo album. Go to www.flickr.com/photos/nmsnapshotday/.

**Thank You**

“We would like to take this opportunity to thank the public, school and academic libraries for their participation in the first New Mexico Library Snapshot Day event. Their participation made a significant difference in the success of this day in showing the importance of each library to their community. Our hope is that local and state government officials, businesses, and citizens will continue to communicate the importance and celebrate the services that libraries provide.”

-State Librarian Susan Oberlander, New Mexico State Library

The New Mexico State Library, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is responsible for planning and developing statewide library service, administering federal and state aid to public libraries, and serving the information needs of state government and the residents of New Mexico. It is located at 1209 Camino Carlos Rey, Santa Fe, NM.

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