

The Rural Library in an Urban Environment: A Study of the Brown County Public Library

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Abstract

Brown County, Ohio, is two counties east of Cincinnati and is experiencing a strong population shift within its traditionally rural agricultural environment. "Urban flight" is affecting Brown County's housing prices, traffic patterns, natural resources, utilities service provisions, education, and public library services. This paper will examine the developing library services provided by the Brown County Public Library, a small, but growing system, which is facing the challenges and opportunities of the rural library in an urban environment.

I. The Changing Rural Environment in Brown County

Situated approximately 45 miles east of Cincinnati, 50 miles southeast of Dayton, and 98 miles south-southwest of Columbus, Brown County is one of the southernmost counties in Ohio. Its 496 square miles sit just above the Ohio River, and it is home to more than 40,000¹ people. At the northernmost tip of Brown County is Perry Township, which had a 1995 population estimate of 4,259.² In 1995, the Village of Fayetteville, in Perry Township, had a population estimate of 436.³

What better site for the study of the development of a rural library, in a state upon which the standards for public libraries in the United States are modeled? This paper will examine the development of The Brown County Public Library System: How it progressed from one building in the county seat of Georgetown to four buildings located throughout the north, west, and central portion of this growing county, to serve 70% of its 40,000 inhabitants.

Interesting features of Brown County that make this study particularly relevant are the traffic patterns and trends of population movement. According to Lynn Book, executive director of The Brown County Public Library, most traffic patterns in Brown County are east to west, rather than north to south, despite easy travel on U.S. Route 68, which runs down the center of western Brown County. Main east-west routes include the Appalachian Highway (Route 32), State Routes 125 and 131, and U.S. Routes 50 and 286.⁴ The busy east-west traffic is part of the modern phenomenon of "urban flight." In a reverse trend to the nearly-century old migration from country to city, Cincinnatians who are tired of the urban rat-race are crossing Clermont County into Brown County and making Georgetown, Mt. Orab, Hamersville, and Sardinia their new homes. Even tiny Fayetteville is experiencing growth, with a gated community at Lake Lorelei and new school buildings. The presence of Chatfield College, a private three-year school run by the Ursuline Sisters of Cincinnati, which is also a

“feeder school” for Xavier University in Cincinnati, attracts non-traditional students from around the world.

On average, townships and villages in Brown County have a projected population growth from 20% to 24% from the 1990 census to the year 2000; from 1995 to 2000, estimates are for 9% to 12% growth for the area.⁵ The villages with the highest population forecasts for 2000 are Georgetown (county seat), 4,405; Mt. Orab (conveniently situated on Route 32, which is the Appalachian Highway and the major Cincinnati east-west road), 2,408; Ripley (along the Ohio River), 2,184; and Aberdeen (in the southeastern part of the county, also along the Ohio River), 1,666. A county that was once primarily tobacco farms with a few scattered factories is now being encroached upon with the standard pattern of modern living: cookie-cutter housing subdivisions line Route 68; small seas of parking lots pave over the landscape as manufacturing plants draw unskilled labor from the tobacco fields; traffic jams on Main Street during rush hour (most towns and villages have old railroad crossings, but few, if any, traffic lights) cause citizens to complain about overcrowding.

Perry Township, home of the Fayetteville-Perry building of The Brown County Public Library, is expected to have a population of 4,734 by 2000. This figure represents almost 11% of the entire projected population of 43,189 for the county. Clearly Perry Township is experiencing strong growth. Situated in the northernmost corner of Brown County, the Village of Fayetteville, though tiny itself, houses the area’s elementary, middle, and high schools, and has an estimated population base of 27,058 in a 10-mile radius—close to the 12-mile radius Ohio has established for public library service provision within the state.⁶

II. Ohio LibraryLand: A Complex System of Systems

Librarians across the nation associate the state of Ohio with well-funded, innovative library services. The level and source of direct state funding for public libraries, OhioLINK, and the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN), have captured considerable attention in the professional press. . . . Ohio is rightfully seen by many as a model worthy of emulation.

A Study of Ohio's Regional Library Systems
Himmel and Wilson, Library Consultants, at
www.winslo.state.oh.us/publib/findings.html

Since 1986, the Ohio Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF) has provided opportunities for many public libraries existing on marginal budgets to shore up and expand services previously unavailable to them. The LLGSF has opened the doors for improved operations and services for many public libraries throughout the state. Ohio libraries receive between 70% to 90% of funding from the state, according to a recent *Library Journal* report. It is no wonder Ohio libraries are “worthy of emulation,” but this enviable state of financial affairs carries with it some bureaucratic and political side effects.⁷

In 1997, the State Library of Ohio (SLO) appointed Himmel and Wilson, Library Consultants of Madison, Wisconsin, to conduct a study of the regional library systems of Ohio. Ohio’s growing library networks, OhioLINK, OPLIN,

and INFOhio have significantly affected library structures within the state. The question of the continued feasibility of regional library systems prompted SLO, in November 1997, to issue a Request For Proposal to study the role of regional library systems in the face of the growing importance of the library network programs.

Himmel and Wilson's study found differing opinions on the efficacy and need for regional library systems. Overall, there was strong support for the regional library systems in Ohio, including indications that library services improve in libraries that belong to regional systems. Areas of significance included more active resource sharing, a more proactive acquisition of new technologies, and increased staff development and continuing education opportunities.

The consultants provided a brief overview of the structure of Ohio library services in their report, which is available at www.winslo.state.oh.us/publib/findings.html. It is summarized here to provide a framework for the development of The Brown County Public Library.

- Local independence in decision-making is important to Ohio libraries. What services should be offered and how they should be provided are considerations that are taken quite seriously at the local level, as libraries are very conscious of the unique and diverse communities they serve in urban and rural, affluent and underserved areas of the state. Management, budgeting, administration, technical services, outreach, reference, and programming services are considered to be best served through local guidelines and planning. Decisions with direct effects on service are highly regarded at the local level.
- "Regional," when applied to library systems in Ohio is a complex and confusing term. It is used not only to refer to a number of different chartered systems, but also to a variety of different unchartered systems, and to the SLO's Southeast Office (SEO), with which The Brown County Library is affiliated for cataloging, circulation, and ILL services. The way libraries in Ohio are structured, different types of libraries are affiliated differently, and have their own network systems: public libraries use OPLIN and continuing education opportunities through the Ohio Library Council; academic libraries use OHIOlink or the Ohio Private Academic Libraries (OPAL) network; and so on. At present, library regional systems do not solely represent those chartered and funded directly through SLO.⁸ Another "regional," with which The Brown County Public Library is affiliated, is the Southwest Regional Library System (SWORL); Himmel and Wilson's findings regarding this and other loose confederations in the southwestern part of Ohio are not as strong in terms of organization, structure, and qualitative services to their affiliate libraries, particularly when compared to other, stronger, better-organized systems such as the Cleveland Area Metropolitan Library System (CAMLIS) or the Northwest Library District (NORWELD). The consultants surveyed the participants in the study as to the value, prob-

lems, and recommendations for improvement with regional systems. The surveys solicited strong responses.

- Statewide services were viewed by participants in the study as more overarching: development of statewide resource-sharing programs, equitable licensing agreements for online subscription databases, plans to provide consistent and impartial library services to all citizens of the state. Nevertheless, these important “umbrella” functions are not viewed by the Ohio library community, according to the Himmel and Wilson report, as worthy of being centralized, despite the purse-strings held at the state level.

The study concluded regional libraries are an important resource for the library community in Ohio. Himmel and Wilson outline a series of goals and recommendations for Ohio libraries to better capitalize on the benefits of a regional library system. A few of the key objectives are noted here:⁹

- Development and promotion of cooperation between and among libraries of different types.
- Assessment of regional needs.
- Promotion and facilitation of regional resource-sharing.
- Provision of basic training in librarianship and technology.

Among the recommendations Himmel and Wilson made for further development of the regional library systems are:¹⁰

- Participation in a regional system should be available to all libraries in Ohio.
- Development of new regionals in areas unserved or underserved should be encouraged.
- Participation in regional systems should be voluntary (Libraries should belong to systems because they receive a direct, measurable return on their investment in membership).
- Funding should be a combination of membership fees and direct state funding to regional systems (a line-item in the State Library of Ohio budget rather than from any source of direct state funding to libraries, such as the Library and Local Government Support Fund).

The concerns and goals Himmel and Wilson raise in the study echo many of the issues of funding and cooperation that The Brown County Public Library has faced during its development. Table 1 presents a timeline showing the development of The Brown County Public Library. The timeline contains notes on the struggles and successes of this rural library’s attempt to establish itself and provide its population with the library services they need and have worked for decades to build.

Table I

History of The Brown County Public Library

Timeline	Significant Events in the Development of the Brown County Library System
1909	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Georgetown Mayor Eugene Kirkpatrick calls for public-spirited citizens to take on a project of establishing a library.
1911	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Civic-minded women formalize literacy projects into the Research Club, which is still a mainstay of The Brown County Public Library.
1912	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research Club Member Miss Eliza O'Hara writes the State Library of Ohio for guidelines to developing a public library. ● When the outline was received the club formed a library planning committee to fundraise for the project.
Oct. 1913	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Georgetown Village Council offers Research Club a room in the Georgetown Public Building to serve as temporary library facilities.
July 6, 1914	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library opens, staffed by volunteers from the Research Club, who charge 50 cents for library cards and "collected overtime fines with a vengeance." (Showalter, 1999)
1921	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mrs. Mary A. Cochran establishes the Mary P. Shelton Library Trust Fund in memory of her granddaughter. The bequest places \$20,000 in trust for the "purpose of purchasing a site and erecting and equipping a free public library in Georgetown, Ohio, for the use and benefit of the inhabitants of said village and vicinity."
1923	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Architects design a Carnegie-style library at 200 West Grant Avenue, Georgetown, with a Spanish tile roof. ● Merle Markey writes a "History of the Research Club," tracing the group's contributions devoted community service. ● The State of Ohio charters the Mary P. Shelton Public Library (MPSPL), which then becomes eligible to receive tax funds as a public library serving the geographic area of the Georgetown School District. ● Library trustees are residents of the school district and appointed by the school board. ● As a school district public library, the Mary P. Shelton Public Library receives money from a library tax of one and one-half mills levied on property within the school district. ● Membership in the MPSPL is free to residents, and available to nonresidents for a small fee.

1934	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MPSPL agrees to offer free use of the library to all county residents as a result of change in tax revenue legislation sponsored in 1931 by Senator Robert A. Taft, referred to as "local situs intangibles tax." ● The tax revenues are not substantial, but are enough to support two libraries in the county, the Mary P. Shelton Public Library, organized as a school district library and then open to the county, and the Union Township Public Library in Ripley, which was organized as a township library and limited to Union Township.
Apr. 5, 1937	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MPSPL joins the Ohio Library Association and the American Library Association, in a move to establish professional affiliations.
June 7, 1937 to May 4, 1942	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MPSPL benefits from a plan for State Supervision and State Aid with the State Library of Ohio, which provided professional staff to guide local programming, and state funds to expand the library's collection.
Sept. 4, 1947	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ohio laws regarding establishment of public libraries change. Until now, a public library could be established by an act of a municipal corporation, school district, township, or county. ● After the law goes into effect, established libraries can continue to operate, but the only new public libraries that could be established are county or regional library districts. ● This curtails growth of public library service in other areas of Brown County seeking library services, and limits the two existing libraries (MPSPL and UTPL) from expanding outside their legal service districts.
Between Aug. 23, 1957 and Apr. 4, 1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The two library systems and concerned citizens negotiate with local officials and State Librarian Ruth Hess to provide bookmobile services by the State Library of Ohio to underserved areas of Brown County.
1963	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concerned women in the Village of Mt. Orab begin collecting books and funds for the establishment of a public library. ● The 1947 laws prohibited the establishment of a new public library, so the State Library of Ohio requested the establishment of a Brown County district library system to be headquartered at MPSPL.
Between Mar. 18 and Mar. 30, 1964	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meetings took place between Mr. Orab Library Committee and State Librarian Hess, who reviews funding and regulations with regard to the two existing libraries. ● Hess decides that the revenue was insufficient to support a third library in Mt. Orab. ● Hess instead recommends expansion of bookmobile service into the area.

<p>Aug. 6, 1969</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Southwest Ohio Regional Library Council (SWORL) is officially organized, consisting of libraries from Adams, Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Highland, and Warren counties. ● Its purpose is to bolster staff training, funding, and collections. UTPL withdrew from SWORL on February 2, 1970, but rejoined in 1983.
<p>Aug. 3, 1970 to Jan. 9, 1972</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A SWORL consultant assists MPSPL volunteers and staff in the development of the brand-new children's department.
<p>Sept. 10, 1979 to Jan. 25, 1983</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serious, deliberative steps are taken by the Ohio State Library Board to designate MPSPL as a county library district. ● What began as strong support from the State Library engenders strong controversy, which makes headlines in the local media. ● UTPL objects to this move and requests a hearing with the State Library Board. ● After several years of deliberation, the State Library Board reluctantly vetoes the request it had initiated, because efforts to reconcile the two existing library systems into one based at MPSPL were not successful. ● MPSPL remains a school district library for next 12 years, but continues to serve the library needs of all citizens of the county.
<p>1983</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) funds are available for the Brown County Long-Range Planning Project to develop a countywide multi-type cooperative, which unfortunately, never happens. ● A Community Advisory Board, as part of this study, supports the need for a public library in Mt. Orab, but not a third, separate library.
<p>1985</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Based on the Long-Range Planning Project, the MPSPL Library Board of Trustees purchases the lot behind the existing building for expansion. ● Plans for establishing other community libraries, including Mt. Orab, are also part of the Long-Range Planning Project study.
<p>Jan. 1986</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ohio State Legislature repealed the local situs intangibles tax and set aside 6.2% of the state personal income tax for the Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF). A formula was established based on per capita distribution for disbursement of LLGSF revenues to less affluent counties, which slowly affected the financial picture for the libraries in Brown County. In 1995, the state legislature reduced the LLGSF fund to 5.7% of the state personal income tax.

<p>Jan. 11, 1988 1989</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Friends of the Mary P. Shelton Public Library forms ● With the aid of a Community Development Block Grant and of the building committee fundraising efforts, the Mary P. Shelton Public Library facilities are expanded to include a two-story addition to the back of original structure, with new circulation and staff and meeting facilities on the ground floor.
<p>May 19, 1994 to June 22, 1994</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab Library Initiative and Mr. Orab Library Committee begin to develop "plan to study the possibility of locating a site, securing funding, and constructing a library for the families of the Village of Mt. Orab and the Western Brown School District area." ● The current Ohio law preventing the establishment of a newly independent library district seeking public tax funds almost stops the Mt. Orab Library Initiative before it can begin, except for a remarkable step by the MPSPL Board of Trustees.
<p>June 14, 1994</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The MPSPL Board of Trustees passes a resolution stating, "To improve library services to all Brown County residents, it is a consensus of the Board of Trustees of the Mary P. Shelton Public Library, that, if necessary, it would dissolve in order to be included in a county district library."
<p>July 7, 1994</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab Library Committee meets with representatives of the Union Township Public Library, the only other publicly funded existing library in Brown County, to discuss cooperative agreements for a countywide system. ● UTPL officials object and instead suggest a tripartite division of county library services with north, central, and south jurisdictions. UTPL members are concerned they will not be adequately represented in a county system and will no longer be in control of their library.
<p>Aug. 4, 1994</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State Representative Rose Vesper chairs a meeting of Mt. Orab Library Committee, UTPL and MPSPL officials, and the State Library of Ohio, represented by Roger Verry, Deputy State Librarian in charge of planning. ● Verry reviews current library services in Brown County and the services offered by the SLO. ● Verry outlines procedures for changes in legal service areas, and presents five options for the delivery of library services. ● Rep. Vesper summarizes the meeting by stating that Mt. Orab is likely to have a library, due to growth in the area, and notes there seems to be support from the MPSPL for a countywide system, and from the UTPL for a three-division system.

Nov. 10, 1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab Library Committee votes unanimously to pursue a county district library system as the best recourse for securing its own library and for the community.
Jan. 5, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab Library Committee once again invites the two library systems to the table to discuss a county district library system. ● UTPL representative decline and announce that plans had already been put into motion for UTPL to request from the SLO the right to expand its legal service area, to preserve its legal status as a township library. The request includes not only Union Township, but encompasses two central and eastern school districts of Brown County.
Jan. 19, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab Library Committee petitions the MPSPL Board of Trustees, to apply to the SLO for a change of status to a county library district, to be called The Brown County Public Library (BCPL), and to include Mt. Orab in the service area, so new library construction could be approved. The ability of a county library district to more flexibly meet the needs of county residents is cited as justification for the application. ● The BCPL would include the geographic area in the Georgetown Exempted Village Schools, Western Brown Local Schools, Fayetteville-Perry Local Schools and Eastern Local Schools. ● The Board also votes to recommend as part of the long-range plan that a public library facility be placed in each school district area, with Mt. Orab taking priority, due to the population and growth potential in that part of the county. ● The Board also votes to recommend that The BCPL adopt a policy which would provide board representation from each school district area included in the new county library district. ● The support of public officials throughout the proposed area of change is solicited and receives strong approval from the Brown County Board of Commissioners; affected Village Councils and Township Trustees; Boards of Education, and representatives of community groups and agencies.
Mar. 25, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A letter of endorsement arrives with a bonus, when the Liming Family of Mt. Orab donates a building lot to be the site of the proposed Mt. Orab branch of The Brown County Public Library.
May 16, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After 13 years, the State Library of Ohio finally granted the request of MPSPL to become The Brown County Public Library. There was only one exception to the petition: only two townships within the Eastern Local School District would be included in the new county district; the others, it would seem, became part of the legal service area of the Union Township Public Library.

On June 27, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Board of the Mary P. Shelton Public Library completed its business and signed over the deed and responsibility for library property to the trustees of The Brown County Public Library. The Commissioners of Brown County and Judge of the Common Pleas Court appointed a board of seven trustees for The Brown County Public Library district.
Oct. 13, 1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ground-breaking ceremony for Mt. Orab Branch of The Brown County Public Library.
Oct. 1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A renovation and expansion of the Georgetown site, the Mary P. Shelton Building, is begun; for a total of 8,000 square feet, completed in 1998
Fall 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mt. Orab branch opens its doors.
Feb. 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ground-breaking ceremonies for the two final branches of The Brown County Public library, Sardinia and Fayetteville-Perry.
Fall 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sardinia and Fayetteville-Perry branches anticipate opening for operation.
Source:	<p>Showalter, Harold. "History of The Brown County Public Library," unpublished manuscript. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Showalter for this manuscript. All dates and events are adapted from his history of the library. Mr. Showalter is past president and a current board member of The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Rural Library in an Urban Environment: The Brown County Public Library/Spencer</i></p>

III. The Rural Public Library in a Changing Environment

The Brown County Public Library is a county library district approved in 1995 by the State Library Board at the request of the Board of Trustees of the Mary P. Shelton Public Library in Georgetown. The formation of the new district was for the express purpose of extending library services to the northern and central areas of Brown County.¹¹

The Brown County Public Library is developing to meet the needs of a rapidly growing rural area. Kathryn Greene, president of the Friends of The Brown County Public Library Fayetteville-Perry, wrote a letter¹² to Library Director Lynn Book, in support of an LSCA grant application. It states in part:

The citizens of our service area have repeatedly expressed to us their desire for the branch to satisfy certain literary and other needs. . . .The Fayetteville-Perry school system is an excellent one, from both an administration and an academic perspective. The system is adding much needed classroom space in the construction of a new middle school. The additional space is required due to the increasing rate of population growth of the district. It is all our school system can do to keep pace with this growth. . . .Students of our area must travel some distance to other towns to have access to the services we envision being available in our library.

Ohio State Representative Rose Vesper, a strong supporter of The Brown County Public Library, sounds another note in a letter¹³ of support dated February 4, 1998:

What I am most excited about, however, is the role this library will play in the community. Although the Fayetteville-Perry School District does a wonderful job of educating its students, its ranking as one of the poorest districts in Ohio makes it clear the schools simply can't afford the kind of resources that would be made available in the new library.

These two strong statements echo in every rural community, and are especially pertinent in a county experiencing the unprecedented growth that Brown County is experiencing. The nationwide growth of telecommuting, expanded highway systems, and suburban areas expanding into ex-urban areas, are all affecting the delivery of library services to predominantly rural populations. The Brown County Public Library is a textbook example of a rural library system gearing up to face the challenges and needs of rural demographics slowly but surely evolving into a more urban environment.

IV. The Brown County Public Library: A Brief Overview

The Brown County Public Library has had experience navigating uncertain waters. In recent years, the proactive administration of the Library Board of Trustees and its forward-thinking director, Lynn A. Book, have steered a steady course around many obstacles, including competition and opposition from a rival library system, the Union Township Public Library, which serves 30% of

the population in the southeast-central portion of the county. To ensure the maximum advantages of membership services within the State Library, many public libraries join regional library systems. The Brown County Public Library has joined other public libraries in southwestern Ohio who are members of SWORL (Southwest Ohio Regional Libraries) and recently completed a self-study, in an effort to aid SWORL in becoming a state-chartered regional library system. By the end of 1999, The Brown County Public Library had three operational libraries in addition to the main Mary P. Shelton Building in Georgetown. The Mt. Orab building opened in fall 1998, and Fayetteville-Perry and Sardinia opened their doors to the public just after Christmas. Despite such rapid growth, The Brown County Public Library did not spring up overnight. The timeline in Table 1 highlights the development of the library and was adapted from a history compiled by Harold Showalter, past president and current member of the Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees.

V. Structure of The Brown County Public Library

The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees: There are seven members of The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees, who meet monthly with busy agendas. Each member serves for seven years. Of the 12 meetings per year, only four are termed “regular meetings” without additional responsibilities for fiscal and administrative evaluations, county commissioner hearings on the proposed budget, or nominations of officers.

The Board of Trustees shall have all the powers granted to it by law and shall, in open meeting, determine and establish in accordance with law, the basic policies of the library with respect to (a) the appropriation and budgeting of funds; (b) the establishment and maintenance of libraries and library services; (c) the acquisition, improvement, maintenance, insurance, use, and disposition of properties; (d) the hiring, compensation, and responsibilities of, and the personnel practices concerning, librarians and other employees; (e) the selection, collection, lending, and disposition of books and other library materials; and (f) the acceptance of gifts.¹⁴

The Statement of Purpose,¹⁵ states the vision of the Brown County Public Library is to be an outstanding system of community libraries, providing library users:

- Prompt and courteous service.
- A program of planned library services.
- Convenient and timely access to resources.
- Local facilities that are adequate and accessible.

Mission Statement:¹⁶The mission of the Brown County Public Library is to enrich lives by providing diverse and easily accessible materials, services, and

programs in an atmosphere which encourages the free flow of ideas. The library offers its collection and services to educate, inform, enlighten, and entertain the residents of Brown County, so that knowledge and inspiration shall be in reach of every man, woman, and child in this county in perpetuity. The Brown County Public Library Goals and Objectives¹⁷ are:

Goals

Goal I: The public will be able to obtain information in the form of books, periodicals, audiovisual media, and other materials in a timely manner from collections developed by the library in response to defined and anticipated need.

Goal II: The public need for broad access to information and materials will be supported through the use of technology, participating in library networks, and cooperative arrangements with other library organizations.

Goal III: The residents of Brown County will have access to local facilities, providing library service in all of the public school areas of The Brown County Public Library District.

Goal IV: Library programming will be planned which meets the needs and interests of the public.

Goal V: Use of and knowledge about The Brown County Public Library will be increased through public awareness activities.

Goal VI: The public will be served by a library system that seeks long-term fiscal stability.

Objectives

1. To facilitate informal education of all people in The BCPL communities.
2. To enrich and further develop the subjects in which individuals are undertaking formal education.
3. To meet informational needs as far as the budget will permit.
4. To support educational, civic, and cultural use of leisure time.
5. To provide access to services to all residents of the county.

The Brown County Public Library Foundation was formed in December 1997 “to provide a mechanism for encouraging and managing planned giving and substantial donations to The BCPL”¹⁸ and as “a worthwhile community endeavor which will benefit libraries individually and/or the system collectively.”¹⁹ The Library Foundation’s “projects shall be undertaken only with the full

knowledge and approval of the library director and board of trustees. All foundation projects, benefiting either the library system or individual buildings, are to be coordinated and scheduled through the library director.”²⁰

The Friends of the Library Groups are subject to the same approval and knowledge of the board of trustees and the executive director. Recent developments include the possibility of an “umbrella” Friends of the Library for The Brown County Public Library. Each community (Georgetown, Fayetteville-Perry, Mt. Orab, and Sardinia) maintains individual Friends group, but the umbrella organization could potentially facilitate the application for tax-exempt status under section 501(c)-3 (nonprofit educational organization status) of the IRS code, according to Kathryn Greene, the president of the Fayetteville-Perry Friends of The Brown County Public Library.²¹ At present, the most active group is the Mary P. Shelton group, which has been deeply committed to programming and fund-raising activities. The Sardinia Friends group is small, but has been very active, and the Mt. Orab Friends group is re-establishing itself after a brief lull. The Fayetteville-Perry Friends group, in a proactive community spirit, is trying to promote more involvement in these other communities’ Friends groups by assisting in scheduling and attending Friends meetings, and by recruiting members in each of the respective communities.²²

Brief Financial Overview: As stated earlier, The Brown County Public Library serves approximately 70% of the Brown County population. Union Township Public Library serves the remaining 30% of southeastern Brown County. At present, however, the Budget Commission of Brown County has not redressed the inequitable funding of the two library systems. Per capita, the Union Township Public Library (\$50.97) receives nearly double the tax revenue than does The Brown County Public Library (\$27.49). The Brown County Budget Commission, using an outdated formula, divides the revenue. This formula includes a large set-aside figure and is weighted using population and circulation statistics. The Brown County Public Library has grown quickly within a short time: from 1997 to 2000, The BCPL has grown from the single main library in Georgetown to four buildings. In 1996, a bond issue for \$2.9 million, was passed by a 2,543 to 1,888 margin, “for the purpose of obtaining and improving sites; constructing, renovating and adding to buildings; acquiring furnishings, technology and opening collections for a public library within each school district within the public library district” (from Certificate of Result of Election, On Issuing Bonds, Revised Code Sections 133.18, 3501.11, The State of Ohio, Brown County, March 19, 1996).

The various Friends groups of The Brown County Public Library, especially the Research Friends of the Mary P. Shelton Building, actively seek ways to make donations and contributions to The BCPL. The Fayetteville-Perry and Sardinia Friends groups are working on selling bricks for their respective buildings, which honor someone of their choosing. The BCPL Friends also staff the entrance at the Brown County Fair Week in September, and receive a portion of the gate, which in 1999 raised more than \$2,000 for BCPL, according to Kathryn Greene, president of the Fayetteville-Perry Friends group.

The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Exhibit IV.B: Finances, Plans to Meet Increased Costs, addresses the need for a stable financial future. In addition to anticipated Ohio Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF) and tax revenues (5.7% of Ohio income tax funds are earmarked for the state's public libraries, according to Himmel and Wilson²³), The Brown County Public Library Foundation and the Mary P. Shelton Public Library Trust fund, Designated Gift Campaigns, and active grant-writing projects will be developed to assure the fledgling library system stays on sound financial footing.

VI. The Brown County Public Library Service Population

As the bond issue quoted above states, The Brown County Public Library sites were chosen to correspond with school district areas, but as a designated county district library system, BCPL serves the greater community of Brown County. It is an issue of concern to education-minded citizens of Ohio that while the state is justifiably proud of its excellent public libraries, the school libraries in Ohio leave a great deal to be desired. Governor Robert Taft is reviewing proposed legislation to increase funding for education in the state. There is concern, says Lynn Book, executive director of BCPL, that the funds for improving education may mean level-funding in future for Ohio's public libraries. According to Ms. Book, Brown County has seen annual increases in funds between 15%-17% over the past several years, based solely on the 5.7% state income tax revenue targeted for Ohio's public libraries. One can easily understand the importance of well-funded public libraries when school libraries cannot meet the needs of their students. Therefore, a large constituency of The Brown County Public Library is schoolchildren.

Fayetteville is the home of three public schools: an elementary, a brand-new middle, and a recently renovated high school. The elementary school is a half-block away from the new Fayetteville-Perry building. Additionally, a "free center," operated by the Ursuline Sisters of Cincinnati, is adjacent to the new library. The families who avail themselves of the free center's goods (mostly clothing, books, and canned food) have easy access to a variety of educational and leisure materials at Fayetteville-Perry.

Chatfield College, a nontraditional community college also run by the Ursuline Sisters, is about 3.5 miles from the new Fayetteville-Perry Library. The new library will provide the kinds of materials students, faculty, staff, and the retired sisters cannot usually find in their college library. Students attending Southern State Community College, also located in the area, will have access to the Fayetteville-Perry resources.

It is interesting to note Fayetteville has a large Catholic population, due in part to the presence of the Ursuline Sisters convent and Chatfield College. Other areas in Brown County have predominantly Protestant populations, with Baptist, Church of Christ, and Methodist congregations being the most

prevalent churches. The region is generally considered conservative politically and socially, due, it is likely, to the strong religious influence. The library collections include a variety of Christian periodicals, fiction, nonfiction, and audio-visual materials, although the library policy manual states

The board cannot satisfy the needs and desires of one group at the expense of another. The library does not act as an agent for or against any particular issue, but maintains its position as a free channel of communication and upholds its right to select books and other materials. The disapproval of a book or other material by one group should not be the means of denying that book or other material to all groups, if by the library selection standards it belongs in the collection. Consequently, this Board shall adopt and declare its will to adhere to and support the Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association²⁴

Sardinia and **Fayetteville** each have gated communities, **Lake Waynoka** and **Lake Lorelei**, respectively. The communities were originally built as leisure or summer homes for well-to-do retirees. While the profile of the gated communities has changed somewhat to include young families, senior citizens are active and enthusiastic supporters of the **Fayetteville** and **Sardinia** buildings.

The Mt. Orab building, strategically positioned near the intersection of Route 32, the Appalachian Highway and main east-west artery to Cincinnati, and on Route 68, the main north-south route in the county, serves a steadily growing population fueled largely by urban flight. The library has recently begun providing selection, delivery, and pick-up service of materials to shut-ins in the small, private senior citizen residence, **Sunshine Retirement Center**. Twice a month, two library staff select up to 25 items for the dozen or so residents, including large print fiction and nonfiction, videos, and audiobooks. This service is the first attempt to begin outreach services, an initiative **The Brown County Public Library Foundation** is making a high priority for all buildings, says **Lynn Book**.

The Mary P. Shelton Building, the main library building, located in the county seat of **Georgetown**, has a long-established and devoted public from throughout the central and western portion of **Brown County**. Some patrons have migrated since the opening of the **Mt. Orab Library**, which is centrally located within the system and in the western portion of the county. However, the **Mary P. Shelton Building**, in existence since 1923, has a long history of successful programs and an established clientele from the **Georgetown Village Exempt school district** and the surrounding central and southwestern portion of the county.

With the new buildings of **The Brown County Public Library** open to the public, one of **Lynn Book's** goals is to hold focus groups and conduct a formal community survey for each library to determine which services the public would like to see developed within each area. It is **Ms. Book's** intent to have each library grow its own particular strengths to service its main population, thereby avoiding costly duplication of materials and redundant services in a current population base of about 28,000.²⁵

VII. The Brown County Public Library Users

The two largest populations using the services of the existing library buildings, the Mary P. Shelton Building in Georgetown and the Mt. Orab Library, are schoolchildren and senior citizens. There are homeschoolers in the county who use the more mature collections at the Mary P. Shelton Building. The Mt. Orab Library has begun a small outreach service, as noted above, to senior citizens at the Sunshine Retirement Center.

The Summer Reading Program for 1999, with a theme of the “The Incredible Library Time Machine,” devised by the State Library of Ohio, was very successful for **parents, children,** and The Brown County Public Library at both existing buildings. “The limitless wonders of space” is this year’s theme, and the libraries are gearing up with special weekly programs for participants. Within that framework, public libraries across the state create their own unique versions of the theme. The Mt. Orab building, which opened in Fall 1998, experienced its first Summer Reading Program in 1999, and despite a fall-off in late spring of children’s storytime participants, the summer program was a great success. Recently, under the direction of Karen Wakefield, who provides children’s services at Mt. Orab, children were wrapped in reams of bathroom tissue to simulate Egyptian mummies (Wakefield advocates “buying the expensive kind, as it is impossible to wrap yards of toilet paper around squirming children using the cheap kind, because it tears so easily.”²⁶), and the dozens of Polaroid pictures taken during the festivities attest to the success and high visibility of the Incredible Library Time Machine’s success within The Brown County Public Library system.

The existence of two local community colleges, Chatfield College and Southern State Community College, and the Southern Hills Vocational Training Center, means hundreds of students, faculty, instructors, and staff reside within easy access of the Brown County Public Library. The Mary P. Shelton and the Mt. Orab buildings keep these constituencies in mind when building their collections. The Fayetteville-Perry Library is close to Chatfield College, and the Sardinia library is near Southern State Community College.

VIII. The Brown County Public Library Non-Users

Because of the recent and ongoing expansion of The Brown County Public Library system from the Mary P. Shelton Building, which has been in Georgetown for more than 75 years, to three additional libraries throughout the northern and western part of the county, no recent studies exist on the service regions’ non-users. Ms. Book says there are no immediate plans to conduct a study of non-users, but that may be a project that would interest The Brown County Public Library Foundation.

There is one small population that has not availed itself of the existing BCPL facilities—the Mexican migrant workers who travel throughout the county, working on the autumn tobacco harvest. A small collection of Spanish-language materials is being considered for this transient but consistent population.

There is an active Literacy Council in the region, and one population to target as previous non-users is the newly literate adult. In addition to easy reading and large-print books for adults, The BCPL carries a varied collection of videos that do not compete with the most popular types of feature films to be found for rent at local video outlets. An excellent and growing collection of unabridged audiobooks are highly popular among commuters to Cincinnati, and one supposes this category could be a lure to those in the population who prefer audio-visual forms of entertainment and information to those found in print. As noted earlier, Book has plans for a community analysis survey, which may also identify some of the non-user population.

IX. The Brown County Public Library Staffing

The Brown County Public Library staff has grown from a handful of paraprofessional staff led by Executive Director Lynn Book, M.L.S., University of Illinois, Urbana, at the Mary P. Shelton Building to more than 20 employees in four buildings. Here is a brief summary of the staff divisions within this fledgling system:

- There are three full-time, professional librarians with the M.L.S. on staff: Lynn Book, executive director, and two of the three managers (Mt. Orab and Fayetteville-Perry). The Sardinia manager is an employee of long-standing experience within the system who assumed the duties of interim library director for eight months before the current director was hired. The Sardinia manager does not have any formal library training, other than the excellent workshops offered by the Ohio Library Council that employees of The Brown County Public Library regularly attend.
- The term “librarian” in The BCPL refers to paraprofessional staff members who serve as reference, children, and adult program librarians. Each of the three libraries has one “librarian,” the Mary P. Shelton Building has two. “Librarians” should have bachelor’s degrees in any discipline, although in some cases, extensive experience in a customer service position and an associate’s degree might be considered.
- Library associates are full-time staff (40 hours per week) who perform a variety of duties, ranging from administrative to technical and public services. Preferred education is an associate’s degree or its equivalent. BCPL employs two library associates at the Mary P. Shelton Building and one at Mt. Orab.
- Library assistants within BCPL work part-time, usually 30 hours a week, and are expected to have a minimum of a high school diploma;

an associate's degree is preferred. Customer service experience is highly desirable. The Mary P. Shelton Building has four library assistants, the Mt. Orab Library three, and the Fayetteville-Perry and Sardinia buildings each have two.

Staff development is highly valued and encouraged by the executive director at The BCPL. All of the existing buildings close for one day during the spring southwest regional meeting of the Ohio Library Council, which is devoted to staff development. Staff members are encouraged to target other workshops and seminars, and usually, one staff member per building is sent to a workshop and is expected to do a presentation to the remaining staff. There is not enough funding, despite a generous budget for staff development, thanks to Lynn Book's proactive stance, to fund all staff for every relevant workshop, with the exception of the annual OLC regional meeting. The BCPL pays for staff membership in OLC, registration, meals, and travel to staff development meetings. Budget constraints do not allow for individual membership in the American Library Association or its chapters and divisions.

X. Additional Library Services

The Southwest Bookmobile Center, part of the State Library of Ohio, is housed in a warehouse, and is administered by the Southwest Ohio Library and Administration Center in Fayetteville. The warehouse is not open to the public. Until the opening of the Mt. Orab Library, Mt. Orab was a bookmobile stop. Fayetteville and Sardinia, including the two gated communities, Lake Lorelei and Lake Waynoka, have been very popular stops, although with opening of the new buildings, bookmobile services are likely to be stopped within these two villages. The Southwestern Bookmobile Center is a free service to Brown County residents supported by The Brown County Public Library, the Union Township Public Library, and the State Library of Ohio. The bookmobile provides fiction and nonfiction, bestsellers, science fiction, mysteries, westerns, biographies, large print, and classics, and provides photocopies of magazine articles.²⁷

Service to shut-ins is just beginning, and is The BCPL Foundation first major project. A small project is underway at the Mt. Orab Library and is covered in Section VII: The Brown County Public Library Service Area.

Business Services: Businesses are provided the same reference and public services as individuals, as there is, as yet, no formal service or collaboration with area businesses. The Friends groups informally work with local businesses when fundraising for The BCPL. Service is limited to purchasing periodicals or other print resources for the collection upon request (assuming the requests meet the collection development policy standards).

Classes: No formal instruction, such as introductory computer use, word-processing, or Internet, exists. The BCPL does not have the staff to develop formal classes at this time. Instruction may be offered upon request, and occasionally, special events are held at the libraries and demonstrations can be requested. Once a community analysis survey is conducted, if there is a great demand, instruction may be considered for the future.

Reference services: Reference services are provided by the paraprofessional “librarians” (although this distinction may be sharply observed elsewhere in LibraryLand, this is not noticeably the case at BCPL), and if the “librarians” cannot find the information, the library managers or the executive director are consulted. The State Library of Ohio also contracts with the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County to provide statewide reference back-up services. The Ohio Reference Excellence Initiative provided a reference training workshop for employees of many types of libraries. Participants received a hefty binder filled with useful search strategies and resources available to Ohio libraries.

Programming: Storytime, adult book clubs, Summer Reading Programs, and Friends of the Library-sponsored cultural events, such as guest musicians and performers, or a crafts show or mini-antiques roadshow, are popular program attractions at the Mary P. Shelton and Mt. Orab buildings. Such programs are expected to be as popular at the Fayetteville-Perry and Sardinia libraries.

Meeting Facilities: All of The Brown County Public Library buildings meet ADA requirements for accessibility. Recent renovation in the Mary P. Shelton Building has improved accessibility and resulted in better use of space. In the three new buildings, single-story, open-floor plans with wide windows, high ceilings, and sturdy but easily moved furnishings provide a welcoming, bright, and comfortable environment for patrons of all ages. Meeting rooms in each library have chalkboards, which double as whiteboards and projection screens, sinks and cupboards for light snack service, and flexible table and chair arrangements. Additionally, each meeting room is equipped with a TV/VCR combination and a portable CD and tape player. Access to the meeting rooms and public restrooms is simple and well-lit, prohibiting entry to the library after hours. Meeting rooms are booked well in advance at the Mary P. Shelton and Mt. Orab buildings, and this popular feature continues at the Fayetteville-Perry and Sardinia libraries.

Relationship with local schools: The Mary P. Shelton Building has an established relationship with the lower grades of the Georgetown Village Exempt School District. Such a relationship has not yet been formalized for Mt. Orab. Sardinia and Fayetteville have begun to build mutually beneficial relationships with school librarians and teachers in the local schools.

XI. Technology Status and Plans

The Brown County Public Library uses the **Dynix** system for cataloging and OPAC services, through an arrangement with the Southeast Ohio division of the State Library of Ohio (SEO). Most materials coming into the library are copy-cataloged through this cooperative database of holdings from approximately 80 libraries. Original cataloging is done for a fee by the State Library of Ohio.

Internet access is provided to The Brown County Public Library through the Ohio Public Library Information Network (OPLIN). There are no filters in place at any of The BCPL buildings' computer terminals with online access. The buildings all have T-1/56K connections, based at the Mary P. Shelton Building. OPLIN provides a variety of databases such as SIRS and EBSCO. Concern about children's access to inappropriate material on the Internet has Lynn Book searching for a software package that guides and directs children to child-friendly websites, but that is not a filter. Ms. Book does not believe in Internet filters. Anyone with a enough computer knowledge and the desire to do it can get through a filter to inappropriate sites, she says, and filters often filter out important information. The Library Channel, a software package designed by staff of the Westerville (OH) Public Library, was Ms. Book's first choice for a child-safe, entertaining and informational website guide for the children's area computers within The BCPL. Unfortunately, there is upheaval in the production and support of the software, and Ms. Book is not willing to commit to a product with such an unstable future. The imminent upgrade of computer equipment and the establishment of a LAN (local area network) also delay the implementation of any Internet site selection tools.

Beginning in late summer 1999, BCPL patrons were able to access the catalog online at home through the OPLIN interface. A telnet link with a simple password allows patrons to browse the database shared by some 80 Ohio libraries.

Future Expansion Plans: Each of the three new buildings of The BCPL has been designed and constructed to facilitate future growth and expansion. The BCPL Title II Grant Application describes the design of the Fayetteville-Perry site:²⁸

- The building is located on the site in a manner to provide area to the north for 3,000 or more square feet of additional building area. The layout of the building would allow the expansion to extend the library area without change in circulation, staff areas, or internal re-organization of spaces.
- The north wall will be designed in a manner to allow removal for extension of the open, flexible library area of the original plan.

- The site will allow expansion of the parking area along the drives for sixteen cars. Further parking expansion could be provided along the south end of the library, if needed.

XII. Summary

Summary: The Brown County Public Library is poised for enormous growth. All four buildings were operational by the end of 1999, and more than 28,000 Brown County residents no longer have to drive more than 10 miles to reach a public library.

After reviewing *The Brown County Public Library Policy Manual*, "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application," demographic data from the Brown County Department of Economic Development, and the unpublished manuscript of the history of The Brown County Public Library by Harold Showalter, and after conducting informal interviews with Lynn Book, Executive Director, and Kathryn Greene, president of the Fayetteville-Perry Friends of The Brown County Public Library, it is evident that much careful planning, forethought, and dedication has made this fledgling rural library in an urban environment a reality.

There is still a struggle to be overcome because of the existence of the Union Township Public Library, which has two buildings and a storefront and serves approximately 30% of Brown County's population. Repeated attempts by the Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees and the State Library of Ohio to bring UTPL to the bargaining table to join The Brown County Public Library, the county district library system, have thus far met with active refusal. In an era when cooperation, collaboration, and partnerships are imperative for funding and even survival of rural libraries, UTPL's resistance to the opportunities for growth is puzzling.

Conclusion: With change comes challenge, and The Brown County Public Library faces much of both as it seeks to anchor itself in the hearts, minds, and pocketbooks of its patrons and wider constituency. Continued financial support, growth in circulation, active Friends groups, interested politicians, participation in programs, and active community development will be necessary to in grain The BCPL in the lives of the citizens of western Brown County.

With 70% of the county's population to serve, The Brown County Public Library is opening its doors to a population that is slowly becoming more diverse as the urban flight from Cincinnati moves eastward. For the first time, a small collection of Spanish-language materials may be purchased to bring the Mexican migrant tobacco farm workers into the library. The BCPL facilities have been designed with expansion in mind, and architectural plans reflect this, so that building additions can be constructed with minimal disruption of service and the collections. Clearly, The BCPL is gearing up for growth, in its facilities, collection development, and staffing.

**TABLE 2
Brown County Profile**

Brown County Profile			
1996 Per Capita Income:			\$17,423
County Seat:			Georgetown
Unemployment Rate (Nov. 1998):			4.2%
Land Area (square miles):			492
POPULATION			
Brown County			
1990	34,966	1997*	40,243
Cincinnati PMSA			
1990	1,452,645	1997*	1,580,797
Ohio			
1990	10,847,115	1997*	11,186,331
*Estimate PMSA: Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area			
Brown County Population Breakdown			
1994 People by Race			
Total All Races			38,271
White			37,733
African-American			475
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut			29
Asian and Pacific Islander			34
Hispanic (may be of any race)			51
1994 People by Age in Years			
Under	5 2,753	35 to 39	2,979
5 to 9	2,983	40 to 44	2,842
10 to 14	3,298	45 to 49	2,426
15 to 19	2,786	50 to 54	2,051
20 to 24	2,255	55 to 59	1,738
25 to 29	2,569	60 to 64	1,478
30 to 34	2,976	65 and over	5,137
Population Trends: Estimates & Projections			
1990 (census)	34,966	2000 (projection)	40,770
1995 (estimate)	38,708	2005 (projection)	43,530
Per Capita Income (BEA)			
1990	\$13,279	1994	\$15,551
1992	\$14,558	1996	\$17,423

Brown County Profile (continued)	
1996 Top 10 Employment By Economic Sector	
Non-Farm	10,314
Farm	1,746
Services	2,816
Government	2,024
Retail	1,934
F.I.R.E.	729
Manufacturing	1,100
Construction	818
Transportation and Utilities	468
Wholesale	249
1997 Largest Private Employers in Brown County (employing 50 or more)	
Trinity Industries, Rail Car Mfg.	400+
Cincinnati Milacron, Plastic Molding	338
Stanley Tool Works, Tool Box Mfg.	169
PCP Champion, Surgical Appliances	75
Pepsi Cola Bottling, Soft Drinks	65
NAL Co Industries, Shipping Supplies	58
Cincinnati Dowel, Furniture Mfg.	50
1990 Housing Units	
Total	13,720
Median Value	49,200
Occupied	12,379
Renter-Occupied	2,975
Owner-Occupied	9,404
Median Contract Rent	212
1997 Education	
Public Schools	16
Enrollment	8,144
Classroom Teachers	410
Teacher-Pupil Ratio	19.9
Private Schools (1996)	1
Enrollment	84
Joint Vocational Schools	1
Colleges (community colleges)	2
Public Libraries	3
The Brown County Public Library: Georgetown, Mt. Orab, Fayetteville-Perry, Sardinia	
Union Township: Ripley, Russellville, Aberdeen	
Southwestern Bookmobile Center: St. Martin	

Sources: Brown County Department of Economic Development (www.county.brown.oh.us/Contents.htm) and Ohio Department of Development

The Rural Library in an Urban Environment: The Brown County Public Library/Spencer

The dedication of the various entities that support The Brown County Public Library—The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees, The Brown County Public Library Foundation, Friends of The Brown County Public Library, the executive director, the library managers, and the library staff—are poised at one of most exciting moments in LibraryLand, the launching of a new, dynamic rural library in an urban environment. The balancing of priorities, the keen attention to service, the development of collections that will serve a changing population, and the promotion of excellence in all aspects of librarianship are heady and demanding tasks, and those who support the mission and goals of The Brown County Public Library will be the ones to successfully greet these challenges.

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to acknowledge the unstintingly generous and patient cooperation and assistance of Lynn A. Book, executive director of The Brown County Public Library; the support of the Fayetteville-Perry Friends of The Brown County Public Library; the information provided by Harold Showalter, past president and member of The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees; the data received from the Brown County Department of Economic Development; and the unattributed anecdotes of the interested and interesting Brown County Public Library staff.

Endnotes

¹ Source: Brown County Department of Economic Development; projections for 2000 are 43,189; U.S. Bureau of the Census data for 1995 lists population estimate of 38,850.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Exhibit I:B: Service Area." (February 10, 1998): 5.

⁷ St. Lifer, Evan. "Libraries Succeed at Funding Books and Bytes." *Library Journal*, vol. 124, no. 1, (January 1999): 50-(3 pp.)

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Himmel and Wilson, Library Consultants. "A Study of Ohio's Regional Library Systems," available from <www.winslo.state.oh.us/publib/findings.html>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

- ¹¹ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Exhibit I:A: Library History." (February 10, 1998): 1.
- ¹² Letter of support to Lynn Book from Kathryn Greene, president, Fayetteville-Perry Friends of The Brown County Public Library, dated February 7, 1998.
- ¹³ Letter from Ohio State Representative Rose Vesper to Lynn Book, dated February 4, 1998.
- ¹⁴ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. *The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees By-Laws* (August 1998): 2
- ¹⁵ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. *The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees By-Laws* (August 1998): 1
- ¹⁶ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. *The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees By-Laws*. (August 1998): 1.
- ¹⁷ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. *The Brown County Public Library Policy Manual*. (1999, currently under revision): 3, 5.
- ¹⁸ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Exhibit IV.B: Finances, Plans to Meet Increased Costs." (February 10, 1998): 2.
- ¹⁹ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. *The Brown County Public Library Policy Manual*. (1999, currently under revision): 13.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Kathryn Greene, president, addressing July 12, 1999, Meeting of the Fayetteville-Perry Friends of The Brown County Public Library.
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Himmel and Wilson, Library Consultants. "A Study of Ohio's Regional Library Systems," available from <www.winslo.state.oh.us/publib/findings.html>.
- ²⁴ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Feb 10, 1998, Exhibit I.A: Finances, Library History." (February 10, 1998): 3.
- ²⁵ The Brown County Public Library Policy Manual, (1999, currently under revision): 5.
- ²⁶ Conversation and Polaroid's viewed by the author, courtesy of Karen Wakefield, Children's Librarian, Mt. Orab library of The Brown County Public Library, on Tuesday, July 13, 1999.
- ²⁷ The Southwestern Bookmobile Center webpage, though somewhat out of date, is available at <<http://www.county.brown.oh.us/bookmob.htm>>.
- ²⁸ The Brown County Public Library Board of Trustees. "The Brown County Public Library LSCA Title II Grant Application, Exhibit III.B: Building Program, Program Description, Utility Requirements for Technological Improvements." (February 10, 1998): 18.