

# Patron Satisfaction Survey 2018

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## Executive Summary

At the direction of the Library Board of Trustees and the Long Range Planning Committee, the Lake Bluff Public Library conducted a Patron Satisfaction survey from January 8, 2018 to April 13, 2018. The goals of the survey can be summarized as follows:

- Identify patron needs and interests
- Assess patron satisfaction with existing services and facilities
- Identify areas of service that may be improved in order to more effectively meet patron needs
- Compare the results of the 2018 Patron Satisfaction Survey to the results of the 2016 Patron Satisfaction Survey and the 2013-2014 Patron Satisfaction Survey.

Respondents generally felt that the Library provides excellent service given its size and limitations. As in the 2013-2014 and 2016 Patron Satisfaction Surveys, customer service was the Library's highest ranked category, with over 96 percent of respondents giving the Library a rating of 4 or 5.

As in previous Surveys, digital resources, Library programming, and the Library website had the 3 lowest satisfaction ratings; however, programming saw a decrease in the number of respondents reporting low satisfaction.

Negative or critical feedback about the Library building has increased since the 2013-2014 and 2016 Surveys, with more respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction with the Library building. In particular, feedback from the 2018 Survey highlights the fact that respondents don't want to spend time in the Library building—but they do want to spend time in the Library. Limited collection size, lack of seating, unappealing aesthetics, and a lack of needed features continue to be problems that affect respondents' use and enjoyment of the Library, as well as lower expectations. Additionally, Survey feedback identified some critical gaps in general understanding of the Library's space needs, the capacity of the building, and steps that have already been taken to address these problems.

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## 2016 Patron Satisfaction Survey

### *Findings*

The 2016 Patron Satisfaction Survey was open from January 4, 2016 through April 1, 2016. A total of 262 responses were collected. Similar to the 2013-2014 Survey, the 2016 Survey showed generally positive assessments of the Library overall, with customer service receiving the highest rating (4.71 out of 5). The Survey also identified the following areas for improvement:

- Digital Resources
- Library Programming
- Library Website
- Physical Collection/Library Building

The full report for the 2016 Patron Satisfaction Survey is available online at [http://www.lakeblufflibrary.org/pdf/profile documents/Patron Satisfaction Survey 2016.pdf](http://www.lakeblufflibrary.org/pdf/profile%20documents/Patron%20Satisfaction%20Survey%202016.pdf)

### *Follow-up Actions & Other Changes*

The following is a brief summary of some of significant changes that occurred following the 2016 Patron Satisfaction Survey:

- Efforts to update and further develop the Library's branding have been ongoing since 2015. In the Summer of 2016, the Library commissioned a new logo. Along with a brighter color palette, the new logo reintroduces the geese statue that was gifted to the Library from the Lake Bluff Garden Club in 1975.
  - For the first time ever, the Library served as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Marshal in 2016.
  - In the fall of 2016, the eNewsletter was redesigned to include the new logo and color scheme.
  - At its August 2016 meeting, the Board of Library Trustees voted to engage Ter Molen, Watkins, & Brandt to conduct a fundraising feasibility study. The study would assess the feasibility of funding capital improvements—namely, a building renovation and expansion—through fundraising alone, rather than relying on taxpayer support. As of this writing, the final report of the study is expected to be presented sometime in May 2018.
  - In September of 2016, the Library signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with District 115. This expanded IGA card access to Lake Bluff students attending Lake Forest High School.
  - In the fall of 2016, the Library Board of Trustees announced the start of a fundraising feasibility study conducted by Ter Moulén Watkins Brandt.
  - In November of 2016, the Library approved a new circulation policy. The new circulation policy included the following changes:
    - The renewal limit for materials was increased from 2 to 3 renewals.
    - The minimum age requirement for library cards was eliminated.
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- The account block for fines was raised from \$5.00 to \$10.00.
  - Color copy fees were adjusted from \$1.00 per page to \$0.30 per page to more fairly reflect the cost of copies.
  - Fax fees were adjusted from \$1.00 per page to \$1.00 per page for the first 5 pages and \$0.25 per page after the first 5 pages.
  - Fees for damaged materials or materials with missing components were clarified.
  - Replacement fees were revised. Previously, the Library charged the full retail cost of the item to recoup processing costs; the new policy charges the amount the Library paid for the item, plus a \$5.00 processing fee.
- In November of 2016, the Library added Flipster and Hoopla to its digital resources. Kanopy was added in February 2018.
  - In January 2017, Library hours were expanded. Seven additional hours were added to the weekly schedule. The Library is now open from 10am to 9pm Monday through Thursday and closes at 5pm on Saturdays.
  - In March of 2017, the Friends of the Library provided the Library with funds for installing a new slatwall display on the first floor, as well as the startup funds for a Trending Titles collection. Trending Titles is a collection of popular Adult Fiction, Non-Fiction, Blu-rays, and DVDs that circulate for one week and cannot be renewed or reserved.
  - The 40-year-old shelving units for Juvenile Fiction and Non-Fiction were replaced in March 2017.
  - *Off the Shelf*, the Library's redesigned print newsletter, made its debut for the Summer 2017 issue. The newsletter size was increased from 6 to 8 pages to accommodate additional programming. Simultaneous changes to newsletter design process resulted in significant savings on printing costs.
  - The Library exceeded its all-time highest circulation record in fiscal year 2016-2017, with 115,349 checkouts. The previous record was fiscal year 2012-2013, with 113,764 checkouts.
  - In November of 2017, the Circulation and Reference department was created. Prior to this point, circulation and reference functions existed under the management of the Adult Services department; as services evolved, this resulted in substantial problems with workflow and unmanageable workloads for employees. Employees from the existing Adult Services department were shifted to Circulation and Reference. The new arrangement also reflects practice at other libraries.
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## Methodology

In order to provide comparable data, the 2018 Patron Satisfaction Survey asked the same questions as the 2016 and 2013-2014 Patron Satisfaction Surveys, with some minor edits for clarity or accuracy. New questions were added as needed; questions that were new or substantially modified are noted later in this report. Survey questions were reviewed by Tim Kregor and Kate Jackson (Library Trustees), Eric Bailey (Library Director), and Martha Cordeniz O'Hara (Head of Adult Services) prior to survey publication. Survey questions were divided into five general sections: Library building and physical materials, digital resources, programming, overall ratings, and demographics. Survey respondents were asked to describe various aspects of their Library usage and rate their satisfaction with different services. Questions were mostly multiple-choice, with some free response opportunities.

The survey was available online on the Library website from January 8, 2018 through April 13, 2018. Paper copies were available by request. The survey was promoted on the Library website, in the print newsletter, in multiple editions of the eNewsletter, at library programs, and on signs throughout the Library. Library staff also promoted the survey at the front desk. All respondents were given the opportunity to enter an optional raffle for a \$100 Amazon Gift Card at the end of the survey. Regardless of raffle participation, survey responses were confidential and anonymous.

Survey responses were counted, summarized, and analyzed by staff members Martha O'Hara and Eric Bailey. Questions about the survey data, analyses, and recommendations should be directed to Eric Bailey via phone (847-234-2540) or email ([ebailey@lakeblufflibrary.org](mailto:ebailey@lakeblufflibrary.org)).

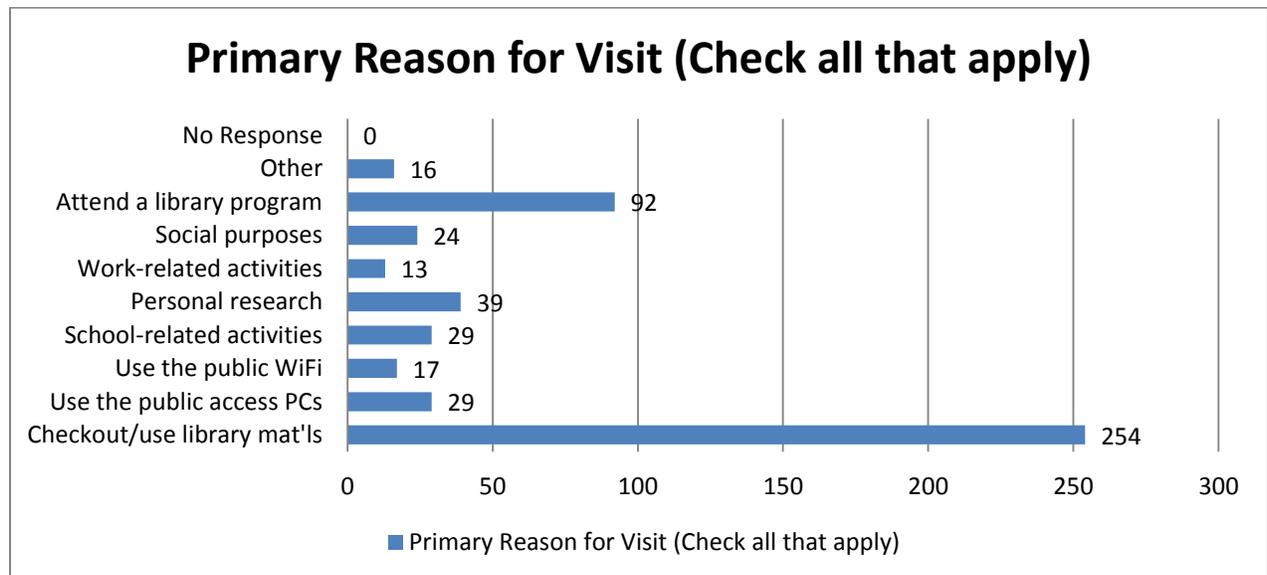
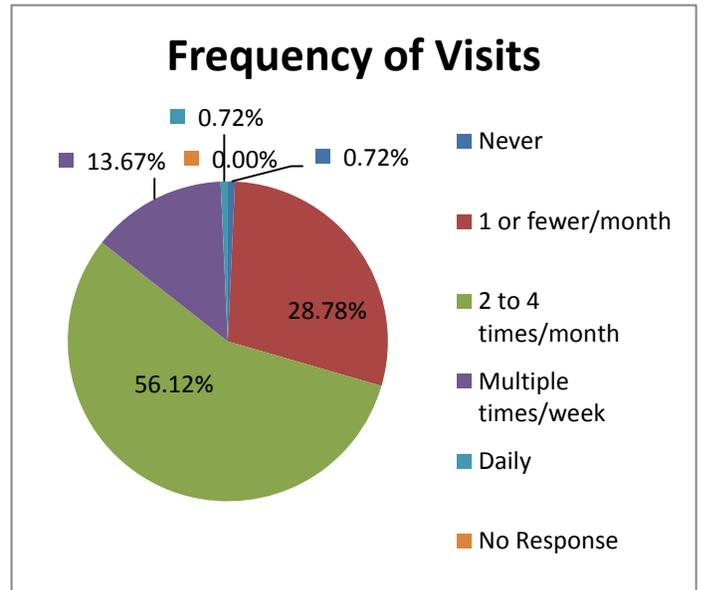
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## Findings

### Library Building

#### Usage

A majority of respondents (56.12 percent) continue to visit the Library 2 to 4 times per month. Respondents primarily visit the Library to check out materials (91.37 percent), attend a Library program (33.09 percent), or to conduct personal research (14.03 percent). Smaller percentages visit the Library to use the public access computers (10.43 percent), work on school-related projects, research, or studying (10.43 percent), social purposes (8.63 percent), and to use the public wireless internet (6.12 percent).

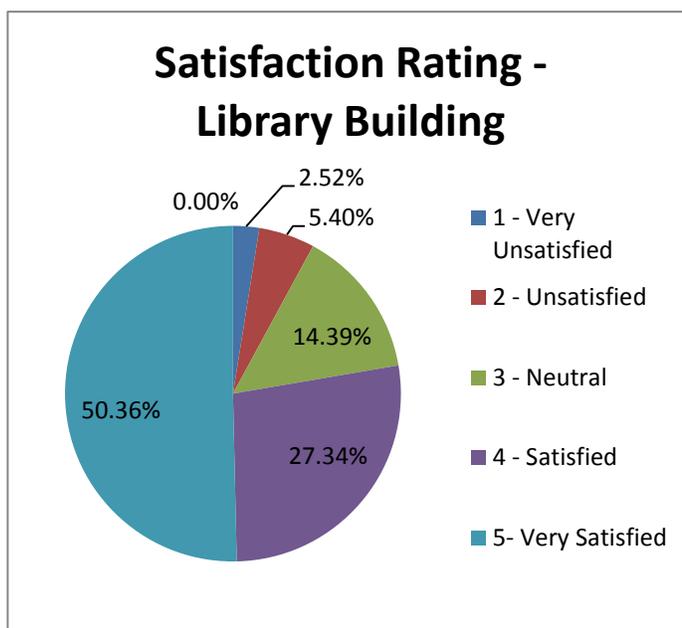


### Satisfaction

The Library building received an average satisfaction rating of 4.18 out of 5, with 7.91 percent of users reporting low levels of satisfaction. Of the 22 respondents who reported low levels of satisfaction with the Library building, 19 named unappealing aesthetics as a reason for their low satisfaction. Comfort was also a driving factor of low satisfaction—15 respondents indicated that they found the building or aspects of the building uncomfortable.

Several questions about the Library building were reworked for the 2018 Patron Satisfaction Survey in order to better capture response data. In previous years, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were satisfied with the

space in the Library building or if they thought the Library needed more space. While a majority of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the amount of space in the Library building, analysis of free response answers found that a significant number of satisfied respondents were requesting new building features or substantial changes to the Library building. To better capture these responses, a third option—“I am satisfied with the amount of space in the library building, but I would like to see changes to the space (e.g. quiet reading areas, more books, study space, etc.)”



When asked directly about the Library’s space, most respondents (53.24 percent) said they were satisfied with the amount of space in the Library building, while 28.42 percent said the Library needs more space and 18.35 percent said that they were satisfied with the amount of space, but wanted additional features. Respondents who indicated that they would like to see changes to the Library’s space (either in terms of more space or more features) were asked to rate their interest in various potential changes. This question was reworked substantially from previous Surveys; in previous Surveys, respondents were asked to rank features against each other (most important, 2<sup>nd</sup> most important, 3<sup>rd</sup> most important, and so on). In 2018, respondents were asked to independently rate their level of interest in each feature from Very Interested to Very Uninterested. Quiet reading areas with comfortable seating generated the most interest by almost every metric. Of respondents who wanted to see changes to the Library’s space, 82.31 percent indicated they were interested in this feature, with 53.09 percent indicating high levels of interest. Respondents also indicated strong interest in more space for collections. A total of 75.38 percent of respondents indicated interest in expanded collections, with 43.85 percent indicating that they were very interested in this improvement. Additionally, more collection space earned the lowest percentage of uninterested respondents, with 6.92 percent saying they were uninterested and 5.38 percent indicating strong levels of disinterest. Respondents also indicated strong levels of interest in more seating (71.54 percent interested, 34.62 percent highly interested) and more quiet study space (63.85 percent interested, 27.69 percent highly interested). A dedicated teen space and more space for the children’s department earned the strongest levels of disinterest at 30.77 percent each.

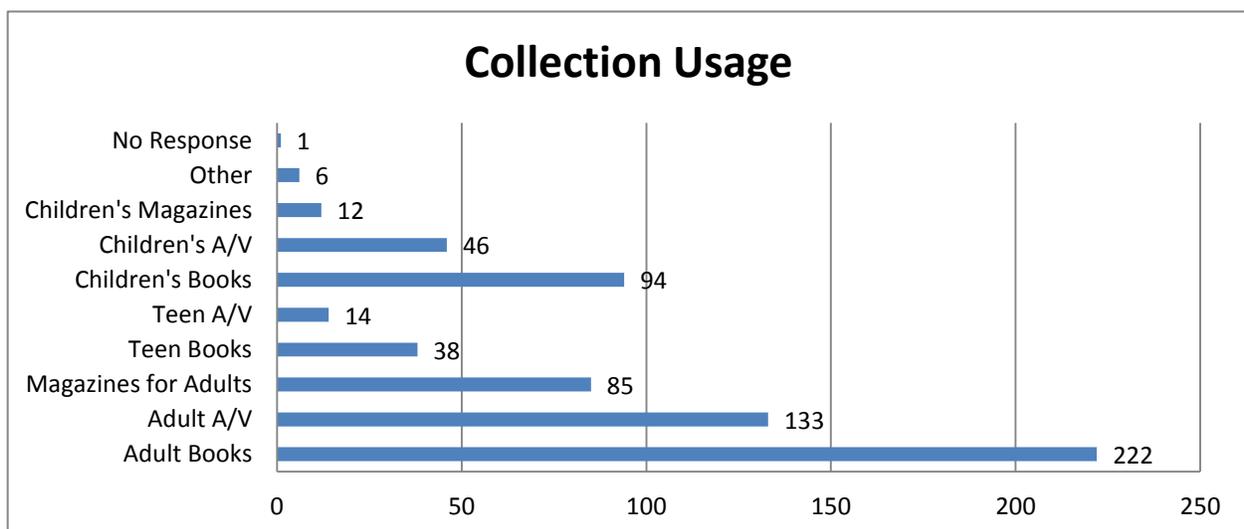
Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the Library's expanded operating hours. A majority (76.26 percent) of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the Library's new operating hours; 17.63 percent said they were not aware that library hours had changed. Only 6.12 percent indicated that they wanted additional changes or would have preferred different changes in the Library's operating hours. Of the 17 respondents who indicated they still would like to see additional changes, 10 (58.82 percent) indicated they were interested in Sunday hours during the summer, 9 (52.94 percent) were interested in expanded Saturday hours, and 7 (41.18 percent) were interested in earlier opening times.

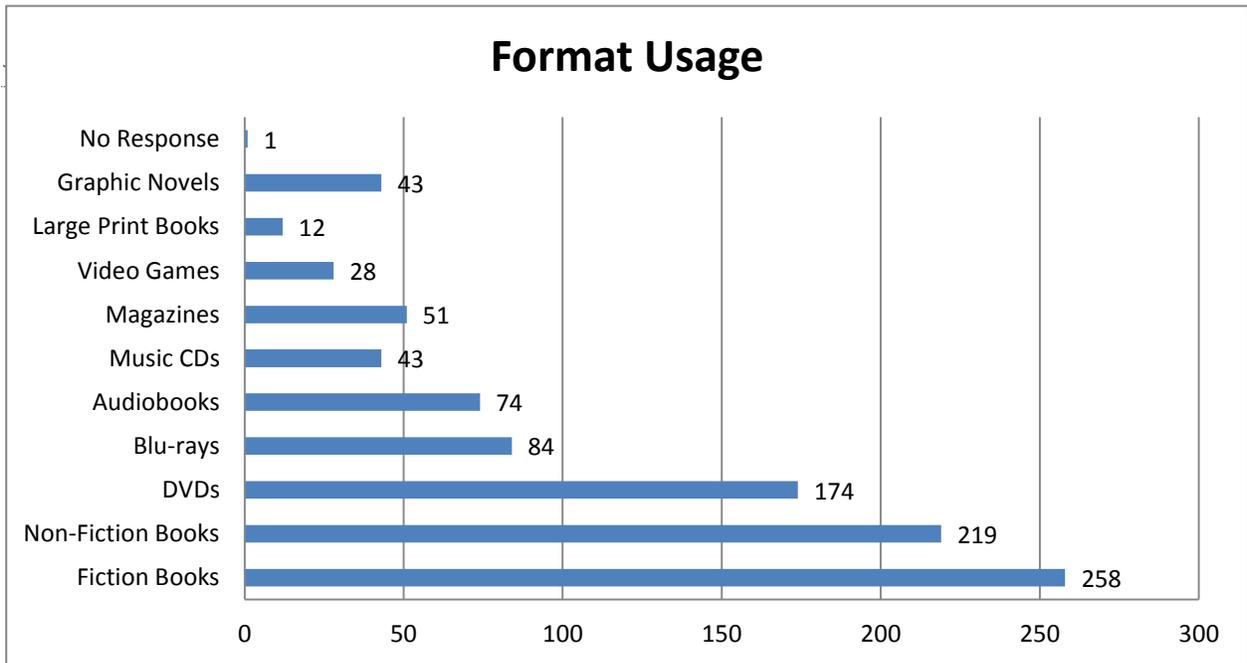
All respondents were asked if they had visited the Library during any of the new operating hours. Saturdays between 4 and 5 was the most commonly visited time, with 47.12 respondents reporting Library visits during those hours. Tuesdays and Wednesdays attracted 40.29 percent and 37.77 percent of respondents, respectively. Only 27.70 percent of respondents indicated that they did not use the library during any of the new operating hours.

## Physical Materials

### Usage

A majority of respondents reported visiting adult collections, with adult fiction and non-fiction books (79.86 percent) and adult A/V (47.84 percent) representing the most usage. The most popular youth collections were children's fiction and non-fiction books (33.81 percent), children's A/V (16.55 percent), and teen books (13.67 percent). 36.82 percent of respondents visit the children's department; 79.41 percent of these respondents report visiting the children's department with their child or a child in their care. Popular formats for all age groups were fiction books, non-fiction books, and DVDs.





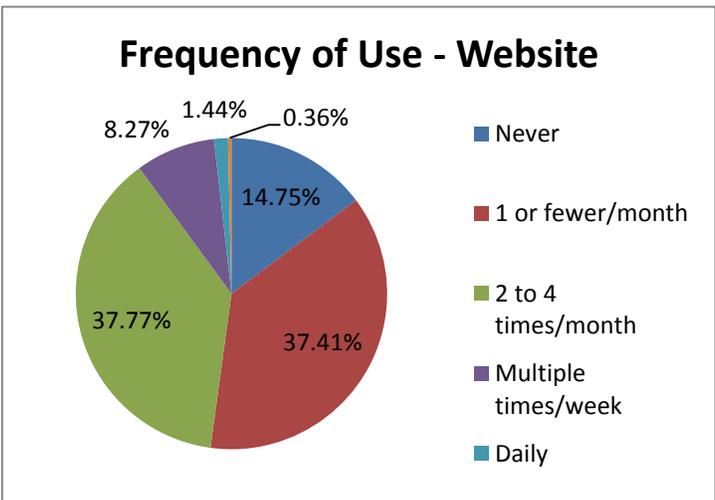
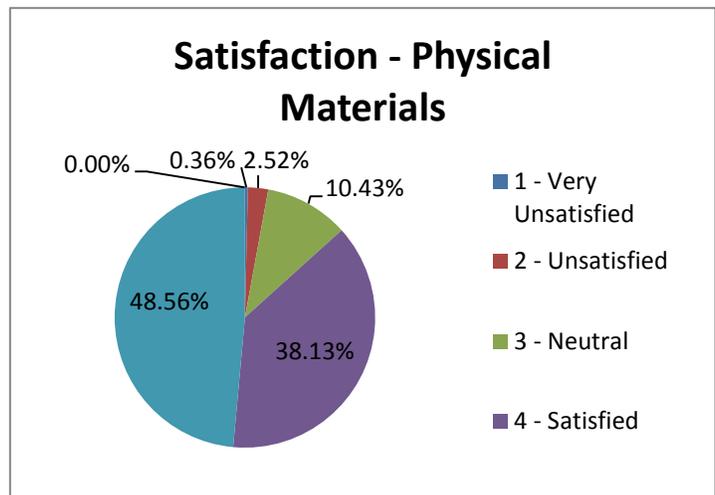
#### Satisfaction

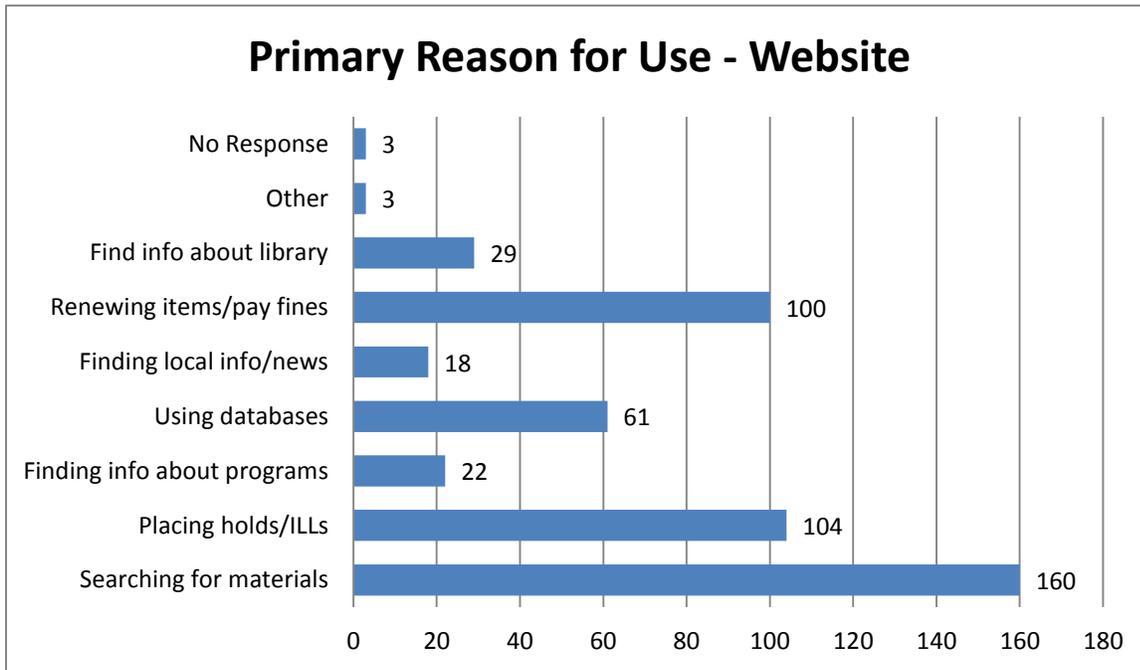
The Library's physical materials received an average satisfaction rating of 4.32 out of 5, with 2.88 percent of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction. The size of the Library's collection was the primary reason for low satisfaction; lack of variety and not enough materials on topics of interest were also concerns.

#### Library Website

##### Usage

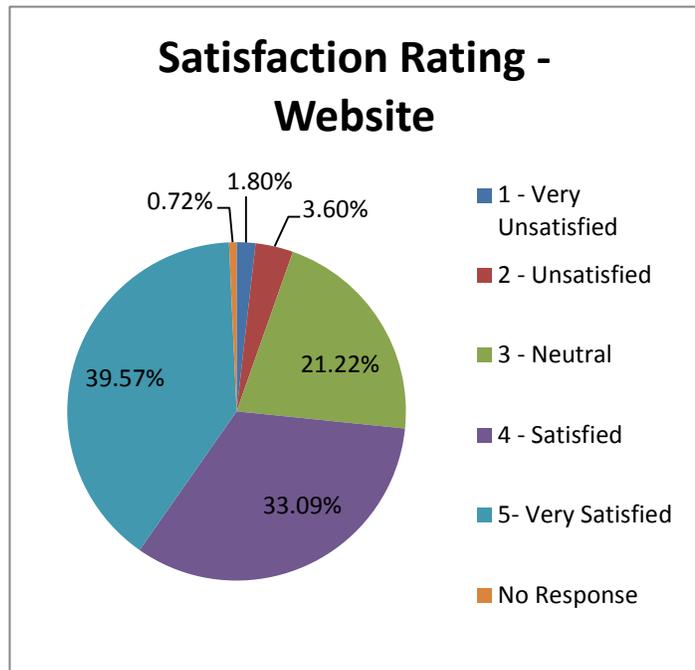
Most respondents use the website 2-4 times per month (37.77 percent) or 1 or fewer times per month (37.41 percent); 14.75 percent of respondents never use the website. Respondents primarily use the website to search for materials, place hold/ILL requests, renew items, and pay for fines. Infrequent usage of the website (never or 1 or fewer times per month) was primarily driven by personal preference: 44.83 percent of infrequent users say they do not need to use the website more often and 32.41 percent prefer to visit the library. 32.41 percent of infrequent users said that they were not aware the Library had a website.





**Satisfaction**

Respondents gave the website an average satisfaction rating of 4.06 out of 5, with 5.40 percent of respondents indicating low levels of satisfaction. Confusing navigation and lack of necessary features, information, or functionality were the primary reasons for low satisfaction. As in previous Surveys, respondents frequently do not differentiate between website and catalog features, particularly when describing issues with functionality.



**Online Catalog**

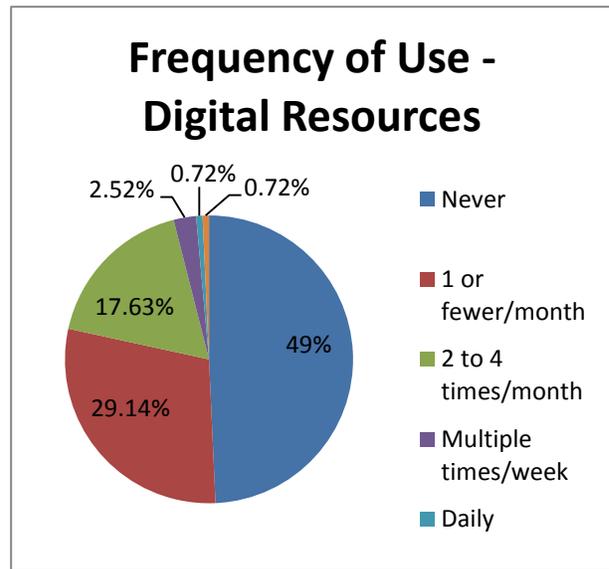
**Usage and Satisfaction**

Most respondents report some usage of the online catalog—33.09 percent use the online catalog between 2 and 4 times per month and 27.70 percent use the catalog 1 or fewer times per month. 32.01 percent of respondents said that they never use the online catalog. As with the Library website, usage of the online catalog is driven primarily by personal preference: most infrequent users stated that their current level of usage meets their needs (51.20 percent) or they prefer to call or visit (29.52 percent).

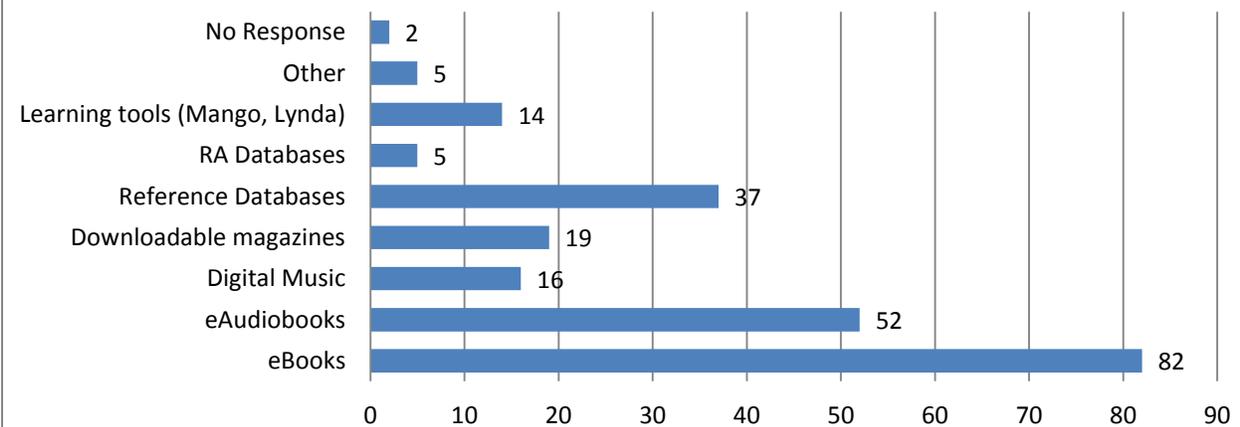
## Digital Resources

### Usage

A plurality of respondents (49.28 percent) said that they never use the Library’s digital resources, while 29.14 percent use digital resources 1 or fewer times per month. Of respondents reporting infrequent usage (never or 1 or fewer times per month), 45.41 percent prefer print resources over digital and 26.24 percent say that their usage meets their needs. Respondents who use the Library’s digital resources more than “never” primarily use eBooks (58.99 percent), eAudiobooks (37.41 percent), and reference and research databases (26.62 percent).

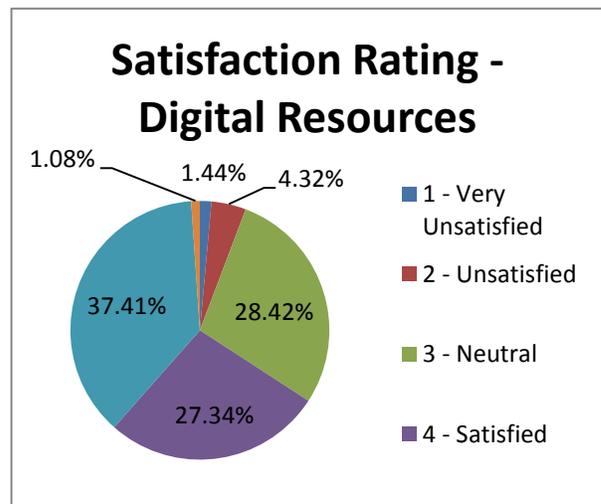


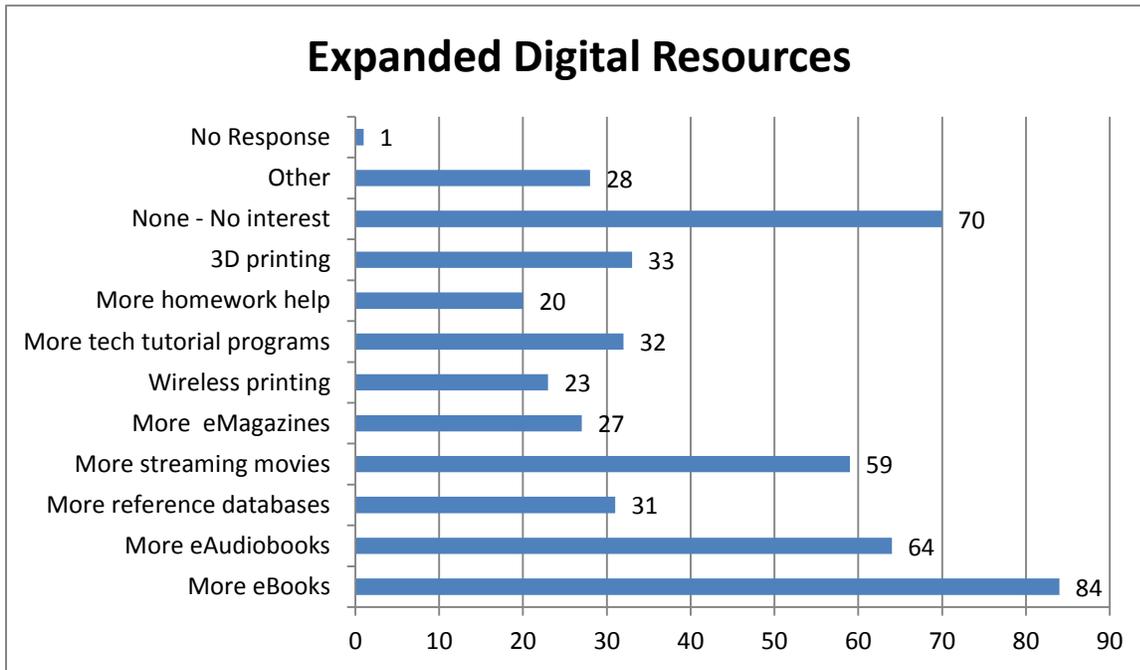
## Primary Resources Used -- Digital Resources



### Satisfaction

Digital resources earned an average satisfaction rating of 3.96 out of 5, with 5.76 percent of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction. Of the 16 respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction, lack of materials in the eBook/eAudiobook collections was a concern for 7 (43.75 percent) and 5 (31.25 percent) said they had no use for digital resources. Respondents were most interested in adding more eBooks, eAudiobooks, and streaming movies to the digital resource collection. Only 25.18 percent of respondents indicated no interest in digital resources.

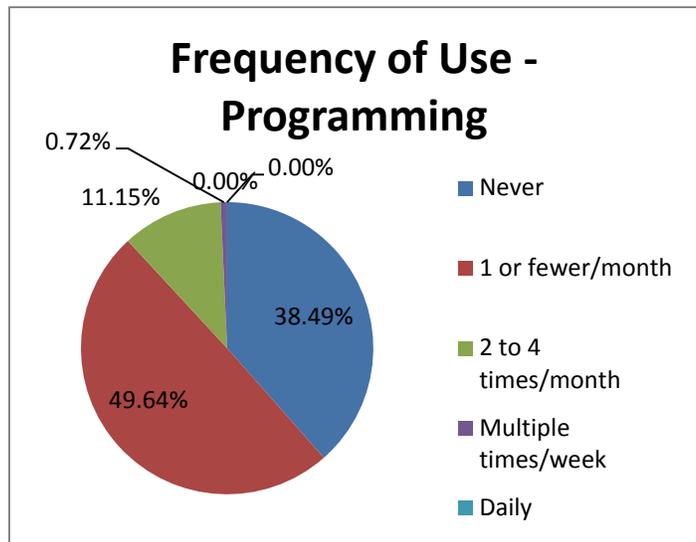




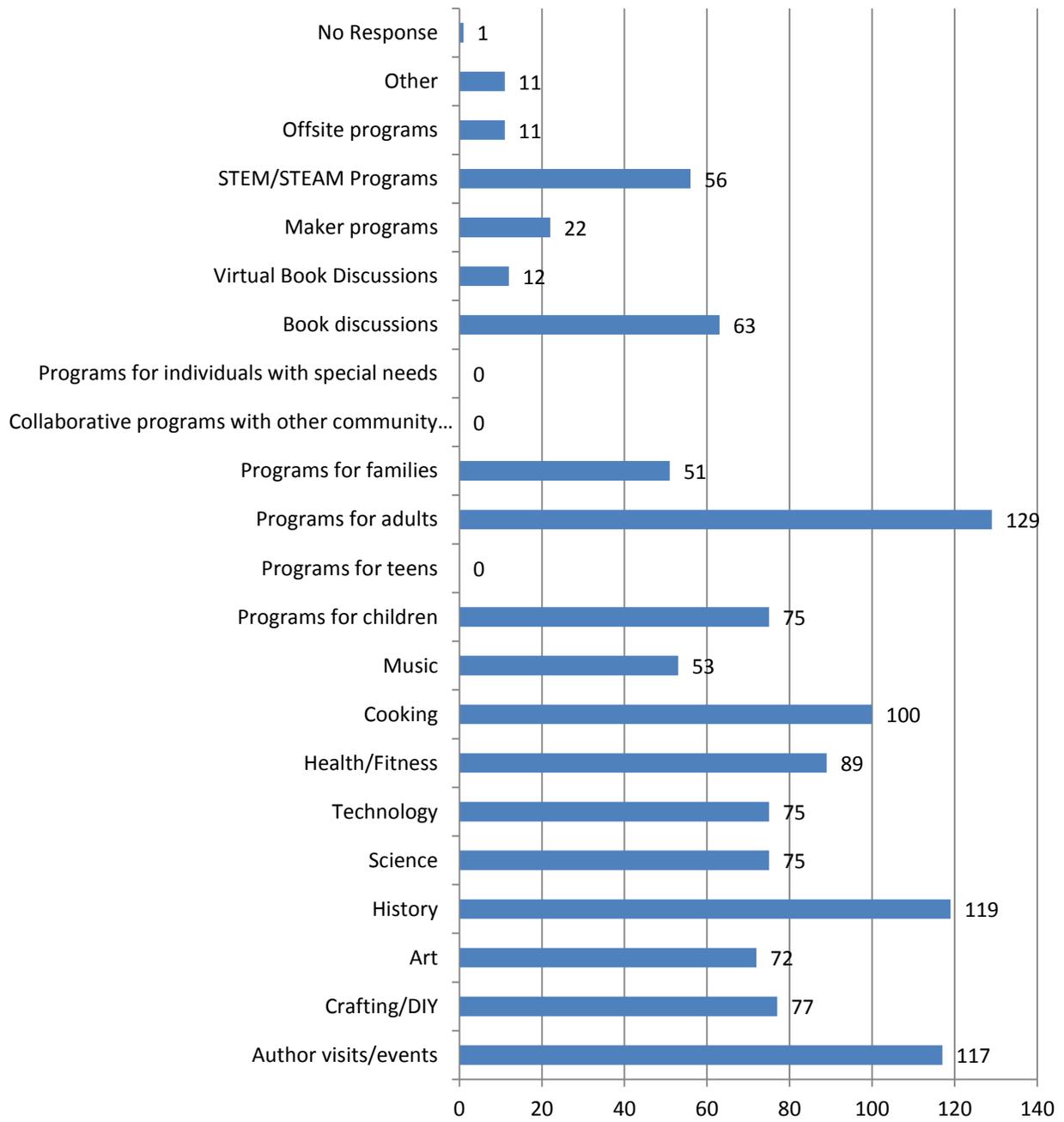
## Library Programming

### Attendance

A plurality of respondents (49.64 percent) attend Library programs 1 or fewer times per month; 38.49 percent of respondents report never attending Library programs. Infrequent attendance is primarily driven by scheduling concerns—40.41 percent of infrequent program attendees would like to attend, but do not have time and 29.80 percent said that programs are not offered at convenient times. However, 31.84 percent of infrequent attendees indicated that they attend the programs that interest them. Respondents who attend programs more than “never” most frequently attend lectures, special events, and craft programs. Respondents indicated high levels of interest in author visits, programs for adults, cooking, and history programs.

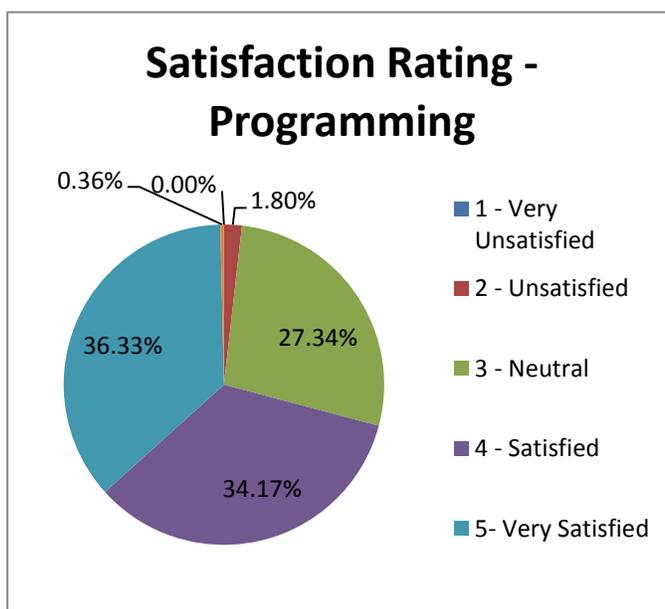


### Programs/Topics of Interest



### Satisfaction

Library programming earned an average satisfaction rating of 4.05 out of 5, with 1.80 percent of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction. The primary cause of low satisfaction was being unable to attend library programs; lack of variety and not enough program offerings were also listed by respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction. Many respondents offered ideas for programs in the free response sections.



## Overall Satisfaction

### Library Overall

The Library received an average overall satisfaction rating of 4.36 out of 5, with the majority of respondents (87.41 percent) giving a rating of 4 or 5. Low satisfaction was reported in 3.60 percent of respondents. Low satisfaction continues to be driven by concerns about service constraints, particularly with regard to size of the physical collection and the state of the Library building.

### Customer Service

Customer service received an overall satisfaction rating of 4.73<sup>1</sup> out of 5, with the majority of respondents (96.40 percent) giving the library a rating of 4 or 5. The words most frequently used to describe library staff were helpful, friendly, and great. A total of 2.16 percent of respondents reported low levels of satisfaction. Respondents who reported low levels of satisfaction were concerned about the level of staff friendliness, engagement, and customer service skills.

### Improvement Priorities

Respondents were asked to select one element of library services that they are most interested in improving. Most respondents prioritized improvements to physical resources: physical materials (34.89 percent) and Library building (32.73 percent) captured the largest number of responses. Improvements to programming was a priority for 13.31 percent of users, while digital/downloadable resources (12.59 percent), virtual spaces (3.24 percent), and other digital services (2.16 percent) were a concern to smaller percentages of respondents.

<sup>1</sup> One respondent's rating was adjusted for this metric. The respondent stated in the customer service free response question that the Library was doing great, but she gave the Library a rating of 1, indicating that she was very unsatisfied with customer service. Her rating was adjusted to 5. The average customer service satisfaction rating was 4.71 out of 5 with the original rating left in.

## **Additional Concerns**

### ***Reciprocal Access***

Some reciprocal cardholders would like to be able to access more of the Library's digital resources, particularly eBooks.

## **Demographics**

### **Gender**

The majority of respondents were women (71.58 percent), with men representing 26.26 percent. A total of 2.16 respondents preferred not to disclose their gender.

### **Age**

Most survey respondents were adults (ages 18 and older), with individuals ages 35 to 49 representing the largest age demographic (28.42 percent). Individuals ages 65 and older accounted for 25.90 percent of respondents and individuals ages 50 to 64 made up 24.46 percent of respondents. Individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 accounted for 17.27 percent of respondents. Children and teenagers accounted for 3.96 percent of respondents: 2.52 percent were teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17 and 1.44 percent were children ages 11 and under.

### **Race**

86.33 percent of respondents were white. 7.91 percent of respondents preferred not to disclose their race. Individuals of Asian descent represented 2.88 percent of respondents; 1.08 percent of respondents identified with a race or background not listed as one of the choices. Black or African American respondents and American Indian or Alaska Native respondents accounted for 0.76 percent of respondents and 0.36 percent of respondents, respectively.

### **Education**

88.13 percent of respondents have completed a Bachelor's degree or higher—34.53 percent have earned a Bachelor's degree, 10.07 percent have done some post-graduate work, and 43.53 percent have completed a graduate degree.

### **Employment**

Most respondents are either employed full-time (35.61 percent) or are retired (22.30 percent). 14.75 percent of respondents work part-time and 6.12 percent are self-employed. 11.51 percent of respondents are stay-at-home parents or homemakers. 6.47 percent of respondents were students. The remaining respondents described themselves as unemployed (1.80 percent), not employed (0.72 percent), or other (0.72 percent).

### **Children or Teenagers in Household**

A majority of respondents do not have any children ages 0 to 12 (67.99 percent) or teenagers ages 13 to 18 (79.50 percent) in their household. Respondents reported a range of 1 to 6 children or teenagers, with 1 and two being the most common selections.

### **Library District**

A majority of respondents (87.05 percent) have Lake Bluff Library cards. 10.07 percent have library cards issued by other libraries, with North Chicago (39.29 percent), other libraries (25 percent), and Lake Forest (21.43 percent)

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representing the largest number of reciprocal cardholders. One respondent didn't know which library issued his or her card; 2.52 percent of respondents stated that they do not have a library card.

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## Conclusions

### Library Building

The average satisfaction rating for the Library building dropped 0.09 points from 2016 to 2018, making this the second consecutive Survey showing a decrease in respondent satisfaction with the Library building (a total decrease of 0.11 points since 2013-2014). While the overall decrease in the average satisfaction rating is small, the breakdown of respondent satisfaction ratings shows some more notable trends. In the 2013-2014 Survey, 7 respondents (2.57 percent) gave the Library building a rating of 1 or 2, increasing to 11 respondents (4.20 percent) in 2016. As of 2018, 22 respondents (7.91 percent) report low levels of satisfaction with the Library building. While it is difficult to make an accurate projection with only 3 years of respondent data, continued growth in this area should be cause for concern. Even an increase of 5 individuals giving the Library building a rating of 1 or 2 would increase low satisfaction ratings to over 10 percent of respondents.

Additionally, there is evidence suggesting that the average satisfaction rating may be slightly inflated. A total of 79 respondents indicated that the Library needs more space; however, 45.57 of these respondents still gave the Library building a satisfaction rating of 4 or 5. Similarly, 72.55 percent of respondents who indicated they'd like to see additional building features gave the building a satisfaction rating of 4 or 5. Inflated satisfaction ratings may be a result of lowered expectations (i.e. "For such a small library...") or satisfaction with efforts to make the space workable (i.e. "You do great with the limited resources you have.") The average satisfaction rating is also notably lower among respondents who said the Library needs more space or changes made to existing space (3.64 out of 5); respondents who said that the Library needs more space had an average satisfaction rating of 3.44 out of 5.

A total of 148 respondents reported that they were satisfied with the amount of space in the Library building; however, as in previous years, respondents provided inconsistent answers in the free response sections. A total of 14 respondents who indicated satisfaction with the Library space also expressed interest in features and services that cannot be accommodated within the existing footprint of the building. The vast majority of these respondents were interested in expanded collections. With these responses taken into consideration, 144 respondents (51.80 percent) in total expressed either direct interest (79 respondents or 28.42 percent) or indirect interest (65 respondents or 23.38 percent) in an expanded Library building.

Survey feedback also demonstrates a strong lack of understanding or misunderstanding of the Library's space needs and the capacity of the Library building. When asked directly about the space in the Library building, 79 respondents (28.42 percent) said that the Library needs more space. The remaining 71.58 percent of respondents had varying opinions. A total of 65 respondents (23.38 percent) requested features that cannot be accommodated in the current building footprint. Many of the 134 respondents (48.20 percent) who indicated satisfaction with the Library building suggested solutions that have already been pursued (i.e. a partnership with the History Museum) or cited a misconception or misunderstanding of Library needs as a reason for their answer. This indicates that there are some significant gaps in the Library's public communication about the building.

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Respondents also expressed concerns about the overall aesthetics, cleanliness, and comfort of the Library building. Some notable comments to this effect included:

- “Inside it looks like it needs a thorough clean, the furniture needs replacing, the walls need painting in a welcoming color, the entrance area needs reconfiguring to make it feel welcoming. Upstairs feels oppressive, Children’s area feels unclean.”
- “It is dated, tired, and quite frankly, pretty dingy. I am uncomfortable having my children sit on the rug in the resource room. The walls need to be painted.”
- “Overall, make it a more inviting, brighter, more welcoming place instead of so dreary. The staff is wonderful—the space is not.”
- “Make the building more desirable. Freshen the space, it feels like a ‘60s time warp.”

Multiple respondents indicated that problems with the Library facility have a negative impact on their usage:

- “The library has the resources and materials we seek, most of the time, and that will keep us coming back. However, we would be more inclined to stay if some attention was paid to the facilities.”
- “I just think the physical building/space is unappealing. I have zero desire to sit and read there.”
- “The interior is not a place where I’d really want to spend time.”
- “Library is too hot in the winter! It’s a furnace! I get in and get out as fast as I can before I pass out! What’s up with that?”
- “I usually get what I need and leave, as there isn’t a reading room, etc.”
- “We love your online services (Media Mall, Overdrive). We find the library as a whole cramped and dark. Would love more open spaces with natural light, like Deerfield library and others. It’s not a place we look forward to spending much time at, unfortunately.”

The above responses also demonstrate a significant problem with the existing space: it is not a space where people want to spend time. The chief driving force behind this is the fact that the Library offers very limited features that accommodate spending time in the Library. Building features that patrons expressed the most interest in reflect this: respondents are most interested in quiet reading areas, comfortable seating, expanded collections, and quiet study space—all features that would simply allow people to spend time comfortably and quietly enjoying the Library.

Several respondents expressed concerns or raised questions about the History Museum. While the overall number of critical comments was still relatively small, this is a marked increase from previous years when the Museum was mentioned by one or two respondents. Additionally, the majority of the comments about the History Museum were critical. One respondent summed up these concerns: “For the amount of time the Vliet Center is actually open, that could be space the library utilizes. [...] Many community members are wondering about the benefit of the Vliet Center in that space when the library will need to raise money for additional expansion options. Hard to sell the necessity of construction for this reason.”

Finally, the number of respondents who identified the Library building as a priority for improvement increased from 68 respondents (25.95 percent) in 2016 to 91 respondents (32.73 percent) in 2018, an increase of

approximately one third. Overall, feedback about the building shows a growing dissatisfaction with the existing space and increasing interest in improvements.

With regard to Library hours, more respondents indicated that they were satisfied with operating hours than in any previous Survey year. The number of respondents who wanted changes to Library hours dropped significantly from 62 respondents (23.66 percent) in 2016 to 17 respondents (6.12 percent) in 2018. Of the 49 respondents (17.63 percent) who said they didn't know Library hours had changed, 15 (30.61 percent) reported using the Library during expanded hours.

## Physical Materials

Physical materials saw a slight decrease in overall satisfaction since the 2016 Survey, with a decrease from 4.42 to 4.32. The number of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction (1 or 2) has fluctuated in the three years of available Survey data—5 respondents reported low levels of satisfaction in 2013-2014, 3 in 2016, and 8 in 2018. It is difficult to say whether these fluctuations are indicative of lower satisfaction, or just minor fluctuations between Survey years. As with the building, the satisfaction rating for physical materials may be slightly inflated. A total of 134 respondents (48.20 percent) provided feedback about physical materials that was not consistent with their satisfaction rating of 4 or 5.

Respondents also continue to express high levels of interest in expanded physical collections. Limited selection continues to be a frustration for respondents, with some indicating that they frequently (or exclusively) use other area libraries because of limited selections in the physical collection. Even highly satisfied respondents noted that the physical collection is often too small to meet their needs: "I just wish there could be more - more programming, more books to chose [sic] from, etc. but I know we're a small town and think you do a lot with the resources you do have!!"

Since the 2016 Survey, the Library has continued to struggle with space limitations for the physical collections. This problem has become particularly apparent in the Blu-ray, DVD, and video game collections for all ages. High usage rates coupled with limited space has resulted in more aggressive weeding criteria that is based more on space than usage. For example, materials that have not circulated in two years or more are generally candidates for deselection; for the Adult DVD collection, materials that have not circulated in the past few months are candidates for deselection.

Usage patterns for physical materials are relatively consistent with past Survey data, with a few exceptions. Both A/V Materials for Teens and Children's Magazines experienced significant spikes in usage in the 2016 Survey; in the 2018 Survey, both categories dropped back down to usage levels more consistent with the 2013-2014 Survey. The reasons behind both surges is unclear—they did not coincide with any significant changes in demographics or increases in the number of respondents who have children or teenagers in their households—but it seems that 2016 may have been a fluke as far as usage for these categories. Looking at format usage, the number of respondents reporting using Graphic Novels has been on an upward trend since 2013-2014; Music CDs and Large Print Books have experienced slight decreases. Children's department usage is comparable to previous Surveys,

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although the number of respondents who report not using the children's department increased by 15.19 percent from 2016 and by 40 percent since 2013-2014.

## Library Website

Usage patterns for the Library website continue to fall within an expected range. Infrequent usage (never or one or fewer times per month) increased by 9.02 percent since 2016 and 27.19 overall since 2013-2014. Fewer respondents reported using the Library website multiple times per month than in 2016 and there was a corresponding increase in respondents who reported using the website more infrequently. However, personal preference continues to drive infrequent usage: most infrequent users stated that their current level of usage meets their needs or that they prefer to visit the Library in person. There were slight increases in the number of respondents who said that they do not like the website or do not know how to use the website. As in previous years, most respondents say they use the Library website to search for materials, place ILL or hold requests, or to renew materials and pay fines.

The average satisfaction rating dropped from 4.10 in 2016 to 4.06. The breakdown of satisfaction ratings is comparable to previous years. As in 2016, response to the website was fairly tepid, but several respondents expressed strong frustration with different elements of the site. Additionally, as in previous Surveys, it was one of the few service areas that didn't earn any specific praise from respondents.

The separation between the Library catalog and the Library website was not always fully clear to patrons: many respondents referred to problems with the OPAC under the umbrella term "website." Specific concerns about the OPAC will be discussed in the OPAC section of this report.

## Online Catalog

As in the 2016 Survey, usage patterns for the online catalog continue to fall within an expected range. There has been a slight increase in participants who report never using the online catalog since the 2013-2014 Survey. As in previous years, infrequent usage continues to be driven by personal preference, with a majority of infrequent users saying that their level of usage meets their needs or that they prefer to call or visit.

In the free response sections, several users expressed frustration with specific features of the online catalog. At present, users cannot use the "remember my password" function to have the web browser remember the username and password; this was mentioned as a point of frustration on the Survey and has also been mentioned to staff members in person at the Library. The ability to create a username—a feature that already exists—was named as a desired feature. Several respondents reported difficulty renewing items, logging in, and placing holds. Respondents also questioned why the Library's catalog was not connected to Lake Forest's or other libraries in the area.

As noted previously, patrons frequently use the term "website" as a catchall term to refer to features on the Library website and the online catalog.

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## Digital Resources

Satisfaction with Digital Resources increased fairly significantly from 2013-2014 to 2016; this higher level of satisfaction continued to the 2018 Survey. While there is still room for improvement, these numbers suggest that the Library's Digital Resources are more effectively meeting patron needs than they were during the 2013-2014 Survey. The number of respondents reporting low satisfaction (1 or 2) increased from 8 to 16 respondents, but the number of respondents reporting high levels of satisfaction showed a slight increase. Overall, satisfaction with Digital Resources has shown an upward trend since 2013-2014 when satisfaction levels were at their lowest. Low satisfaction continues to be driven by frustration with availability in the eBook and eAudiobook collections; however, these numbers have dropped since 2013-2014. As in 2016, frequency of use is primarily impacted by preference: most infrequent users indicate that they prefer print materials or that they don't need to use digital resources more frequently.

While fewer respondents name difficulty accessing digital resources as a barrier to their usage, comments in the free response sections indicate that there is a need and interest in digital resource instruction. One respondent indicated a need for more clarity in Library literature that discusses digital resources: "I use a kindle. So...how does an e-book or a digital mag from the library work with my kindle? I think you need to dumb down the offerings to a 'did you know?' and not only educate 'We offer e-books!' But drive that point home by telling patrons what that means. ie: 'if you use a kindle or other e reader you can...' (and go on to explain)." Other respondents noted that they would like to learn more about digital resources or have a better understanding of what the Library has to offer in this area.

Additionally, several respondents spoke positively of the Library's Digital Resources and noted that the eCollection presented a more attractive alternative than the physical collection: "We love your online services (Media Mall, Overdrive). We find the library as a whole cramped and dark. Would love more open spaces with natural light, like Deerfield library and others. It's not a place we look forward to spending much time at, unfortunately."

## Library Programming

Overall satisfaction with Library programming dropped from 4.08 to 4.05; however, the number of satisfied respondents has increased each year since 2013-2014 and the number of unsatisfied respondents has decreased. For the first time, no respondents gave Library programming a satisfaction rating of 1. A majority of respondents who reported low levels of satisfaction with Library programming stated that they were not satisfied with Library programming because they are not able to attend Library programs. Lack of variety and not enough programs were also primary drivers of low satisfaction. Since 2013-2014, the number of respondents reporting that they are not interested in Library programs has decreased from 5 respondents to 1 respondent. The Library has continued to see upward trends in programming since the 2016 Survey. Following the 90.22 percent increase in adult program attendance between fiscal year 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, adult program attendance has held steady at approximately 1,500 attendees each year, compared to 800-900 attendees prior to fiscal year 2014-2015. Attendance for children's programs has remained fairly steady, while teen programming has experienced a slight decrease.

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Similar to previous years, frequency of program attendance continues to be driven by schedule constraints. A total of 31.84 percent of infrequent program attendees said that they attend the programs that interest them. Schedule conflicts were further discussed by respondents in free response questions. Several respondents indicated that more programs on the evenings and weekends for people who work would be well-received. Scheduling constraints for children were also mentioned, including more afternoon programming opportunities for children in school and more programming that doesn't interfere with toddler naps. Weekend and evening storytimes were also requested, as well as concurrent adult and children's programming.

Respondents also expressed interest in additional programming opportunities. Specific suggestions included technology instruction programs, STEM/STEAM programs, maker programs, and cooking programs. Several respondents indicated interest in more programming opportunities for toddlers and children under 5; middle school and tween programs were also mentioned by several respondents. A Library open house was mentioned by several respondents who were interested in knowing more about the Library and what it offers.

The Library also solicited feedback about its communication. In general, respondents felt that the Library communicates effectively. The newsletter continues to be the primary source for most information about Library programs. Several respondents stated that analog methods—print flyers, print newsletter, and talking to Library staff—tended to be more effective than digital methods, as they are inundated with email newsletters. Many respondents indicated that they were happy with the eNewsletter; however, a large number of respondents requested that the Library add this as a feature. Some respondents also suggested increasing the frequency of both eNewsletters and print newsletters.

Respondents were also interested in the ability to customize more of the information that they receive from the Library. The ability to sign up for specific newsletters (adult, children's, teen, or by topic) was mentioned as a desired feature by several respondents. Text message notification for programs—both for upcoming programs and as a reminder—was also suggested by several respondents.

Several respondents commented positively on the variety and amount of the Library's programming.

## Overall Satisfaction

### Library Overall

The Library's overall satisfaction rating decreased from 4.48 to 4.36; the number of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction increased from 1.15 percent to 3.60 percent. As in previous Surveys, the Library is more successful at meeting broader needs than specific needs and respondent feedback demonstrates that user expectations are often lowered as a result of the Library's limitations. The Library's overall satisfaction rating had the largest decrease in satisfaction since 2016, with a loss of 0.12 points. While the decrease in satisfaction is relatively small, this should be a category to monitor going forward, particularly as it correlates to changes in satisfaction with the Library Building.

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### **Customer Service**

For the third consecutive year, customer service was the most highly rated category in the Patron Satisfaction Survey. Over 96 percent of respondents gave the Library a rating of 4 or 5 on Customer Service, making 2018 the Library's best scoring year on this metric. The previous all-time high was set in the 2013-2014 Satisfaction Survey with 94.85 percent. Free response comments were overwhelmingly positive. The Library continues to do extremely well in this area.

### **Improvement Priorities**

As in 2016, a plurality of respondents (34.89 percent) are most interested in improvements to the Library's physical materials. However, respondents who chose the Library Building increased by 33.82 percent. Additionally, the margin between the Library Building and Physical Materials is much slimmer than it was in 2016: in 2016, Physical Materials had 21 more respondent votes than the Library Building, whereas in 2018, only 6 more respondents chose Physical Materials. As mentioned in the previous Survey, this feedback highlights the fact that the Library's physical resources—materials and the building—need to be improved. In all, 67.63 percent of respondents indicated that the Library needs to make improvements to its physical resources; this represents an increase from 59.92 percent in 2016.

### **Additional Concerns**

#### ***Reciprocal Access***

Access to digital resources—specifically eBooks—continues to be a concern for respondents who use Lake Bluff in lieu of their home library.

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## Recommendations

### Library Building

#### *Communication About Building Expansion/Renovation*

A majority of Survey respondents have some level of confusion, misperception, or misunderstanding of the Library's space needs, the status of the building project, and the capacity/limitations of the current Library building. While the Library put out a press release when the fundraising feasibility study began, the literature about this expansion—particularly the *justification* for the expansion—is not particularly visible or accessible to the public beyond Board Meeting minutes and other meeting documents. While these documents are useful, they are written for Board and staff members who likely have a very thorough understanding of library needs and various phases of the project. Many people seem to be aware that the expansion/renovation is being discussed and evaluated, but a significant number don't understand why it's happening, why it's needed, or what solutions have already been pursued. These gaps in public understanding demonstrate that the Library's current level of communication is insufficient.

The Library needs to develop a cohesive communication strategy that is tailored for the general public, as well as supporting literature. This strategy should include patron-targeted literature and a centralized, accessible location for information about the building project, such as an FAQ page on the Library website. This communication should seek to address the following points:

- **Explain the Library's space needs in a more compelling and accessible way**

By far, the most critical issue that the Library needs to address is what can and cannot be accomplished within the existing footprint of the building. Survey feedback demonstrates a sizeable knowledge gap in this area. Communication regarding the Library's space needs should specifically address the following:

- Building changes should be discussed in terms of specific features ("a quiet reading area") rather than vague terms ("more space"). Jargon should be avoided.
  - Impact of building changes on specific services needs to be more strongly emphasized, *particularly* for changes that will provide solutions to known problems.
  - Limitations of the current building need to be more specifically and clearly discussed—for example, in order to offer one feature in the existing footprint, what other features would need to be eliminated? What impact would that have on service?
    - There seems to be general consensus that bigger collections, quiet reading areas, quiet study areas, and more comfortable seating are needed, even among those who believe that the Library's space is sufficient. Discussing what it would take to implement this—and whether implementation in the current space would reach a desirable outcome—would be particularly useful as an example.
  - Library needs to emphasize that the need for expanded/improved space is supported by Board, staff, and the expert opinion of space usage analysts who specialize in Library buildings.
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- The fact that space usage experts were surprised by what the Library was able to accomplish in existing space needs to be emphasized: the Library is going above and beyond what it should be able to do in this space.
- **Explain renovation/expansion in a more compelling and accessible way**

Much of the misunderstanding in this area is directly rooted in misperceptions about the Library's space needs. The points listed in the previous section should help address some of these concerns. Additionally, the Library needs to emphasize that the building project includes renovation and updates to existing spaces, as well as the addition of new space.
- **Address concerns about the History Museum**

The relationship between the Museum and the Library is poorly understood in general; additionally, Survey feedback highlights some potential perceptions that could hurt progress on the building project if not effectively addressed. The Library needs to address the following:

  - This feedback should be passed onto the History Museum so that they are aware that there are community concerns.
  - The Library needs to communicate what solutions (buyout, relocation, etc.) have already been pursued.
  - The Library needs to communicate why these solutions were not pursued.
- **Address concerns about impact on customer service and service philosophy.**

Many respondents who expressed doubt or concerns about expansion also said that they love the cozy, personal, small town feel of the Library as it currently is. It is possible that these respondents are equating a building expansion to a shift in customer service that has more of a "big box" and impersonal feel. Some important points the Library needs to address:

  - The Library's customer service will not be changing, even though the space is.
  - An expanded space enhances the Library's ability to offer personalized, community-centric service. For example, an expanded programming space and small meeting rooms would expand our ability to offer programming, as well as enhance our ability to accommodate requests for meeting space from community members.
- **"We are such a small town..."**

Several respondents noted that the Library's size seems adequate for "such a small town." As noted earlier, the Library needs to do a better job explaining its space needs. This explanation must also include data and information on how the Library's usage exceeds the expected range for such a small town.

As stated previously, this information should be centralized and made very visible on the Library website. A webform for patrons to ask questions should also be included. Handouts and literature should be made available in the Library building as well. Additionally, the Library should also consider scheduling some open house or town hall style meetings to engage with a dialogue with residents. Beyond the 2015 Open House for the Long Range Plan, the Library has offered few opportunities for patron-centric discussions of the building. In a town that is

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engaged and civically minded as Lake Bluff, these opportunities have the potential to clarify the Library's plans to the public as well as generate a lot of good will from community members.

### *Short Term Solutions*

The Library should continue to be conscious and strategic in building improvements until a plan for the building is finalized—it is important to avoid doing work that would be immediately undone by a renovation or expansion. However, some minor updates and changes may be able to be made in the interim, including some concerns that were raised in the Survey:

- **Deep Clean:** This has already been addressed. The Library conducted a deep clean that included window washing, shampooing of all upholstered surfaces, waxing and buffing the floors, shampooing carpets, and more. The deep clean will be conducted on an annual basis going forward.
- **Bathrooms:** Several respondents stated that the bathrooms are in need of updating. At least one respondent indicated that they thought that the bathrooms always *looked* dirty. While respondents did not specify which bathrooms they found problematic, there is a strong likelihood that they were referring to the three that are part of the original building and have not seen many major updates. Updating the bathrooms may be a project that can be pursued outside of the building project. Additionally, the beige/grey color palette in the original bathrooms may be giving the appearance of a less clean space—the color choices for these rooms should be reevaluated.
- **Painting:** Several respondents indicated that they felt the Library could use a fresh coat of paint. Repainting walls may not be worth pursuing until more information is available about the building project, but this might be an area of building maintenance that the Library should consider keeping on a regular schedule (or at least a regular evaluation).
- **Minor Replacements and Upgrades:** Some minor replacements or repairs to Library furniture may be possible prior to any decision on the building project. These should be pursued as practicable.
- **Automatic door closure:** Several respondents reported that the front door has shut on them or they've had difficulty opening the front door because it is too heavy. The Library has been looking into replacing the front door, but moving up the timeline for this project may be advisable.

### *Staff Areas*

While this report has primarily focused on concerns with the Library building as they relate to public service points, the impact of the building on staff is also important and deserves serious consideration. Staff office space is approximately 40 square feet per person: the recommended amount is 60 square feet per person. Desks are not comfortable or fully usable as space underneath desks typically doubles as storage areas. Storage for personal items such as coats and purses is inadequate and the number of workstations is insufficient. There is a single point of egress, which poses a number of safety concerns. It is imperative that improvements to these areas be included in any building plan or project as it goes forward.

### *Operating Hours*

Changes to operating hours have been well received, with approximately 73 percent of respondents reporting that they visited the Library during expanded hours. Working respondents and students in particular indicated that they found the new hours to be particularly valuable. The Library should continue with the expanded hours.

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A small number of respondents indicated interest in further changes to the schedule. The Library should continue to evaluate this in future Surveys, but at this time, the benefits of further changes to hours may not outweigh the cost of additional staffing. No changes are recommended at this time.

## Physical Materials

Survey feedback continues to show an interest in expanded collection of physical materials. The recommendation for the 2016 Survey still holds true for the 2018 Survey:

“The Library cannot significantly improve or expand its collection of physical materials within the existing building. This assessment was corroborated by the recent building study conducted by Engberg Anderson. Any collection expansion would require eliminating or seriously reducing an existing collection. The existing collection is made up of titles that are being used—collection managers do not have the shelf space to keep titles that do not circulate—and significant reductions would amount to a reduction in the scope of the overall collection and quality of Library service. In short, expanded physical collections require investment in an expanded building.”

It is also worth noting that expanding physical materials in the present footprint of the building would also eliminate or reduce an existing service or feature, such as study tables and seating.

Collection managers have made a number of efforts to use collection space more efficiently and effectively. In addition to ongoing weeding and collection management, collection managers have relocated collections, shifted materials, merged collections, and added shelves in order to make room for more materials. In all instances, the space gained has not been sufficient to address collection needs or problems; indeed, usage has often expanded to fill any incremental gains in space. While collection managers should continue to evaluate collections and pursue short-term solutions as practicable, the limits of such changes must be fully understood and clearly communicated to Library stakeholders.

Finally, the role of collection managers in the decision making process for Library collections is critical for any success in this area. As demonstrated in the Patron Satisfaction Survey, Library patrons have varying thoughts and opinions about what is and is not important in a collection. Collection managers exist as a neutral third party; they are adept at balancing individual needs with the needs of the community and have a nuanced understanding of usage metrics and benchmarks. This expertise is invaluable in any effort to expand or improve Library collections.

## Library Website

The problems with the Library website are well understood: it is nearly ten years old. The coding is dated, the aesthetic is unappealing, the navigation is poor, and it lacks a mobile/tablet view. A full redesign is necessary and going forward, the Library should take a more proactive role in evaluating and improving the Library website in order to prevent this situation from happening in the future.

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The redesign of the Library website has encountered a number of delays. Many of these delays have been a direct result of staff turnover and problems with staff workloads. Additionally, it is worth noting that apart from staff time, the Library has allocated no money for a website redesign. The Library may want to evaluate the feasibility of pursuing a website redesign in-house.

## Online Catalog

Frustrations with the online catalog appear to be a combination of lack of software functionality and general unawareness of features and functionality. Some changes to software functionality—such as the ability to save a password—may be possible, but will require settings changes or assistance from the software vendor. These changes should be pursued as practical. Additionally, the Library should ensure that patron tutorials and other information about the online catalog is more accessible and visible on the Library website. Video tutorials in addition to written tutorials may also be helpful. The Library should also look into offering more in-person demonstrations, such as a brief tutorial at card signup. More proactive effort should be made to reach existing cardholders as well.

As far as linking the catalog to local libraries, the Library has evaluated this option in previous years and has not been able to pursue membership in a consortium due to high membership costs. The Library should continue to evaluate the financial feasibility of this. Additionally, the Library may want to look into including an answer to this question on some sort of FAQ page on the Library website.

## Digital Resources

Continued investment in the Library's digital collections is important. The Library has been proactive about adding new Digital Resources since the 2013-2014 Patron Satisfaction Survey; the most recent example of this is Kanopy, which the Library subscribed to fairly early. Continued evaluation of Digital Resources and proactive digital acquisitions should be continued. As recommended in previous Survey reports, additional funding for eBooks and eAudiobooks should be allocated as practicable in order to alleviate pressure on the holds lists.

Promotion, marketing, and instruction related to digital collections must be increased. Written handouts have been expanded since the 2016 Survey, but free response feedback suggests that a larger variety of instructional materials is needed by the community. Since the 2016 Survey, the Library has offered some instructional programs for digital resources, but seen lackluster attendance; in general, patrons express high interest in these programs, but that interest is not reflected in actual attendance. Strategies for addressing this problem were discussed at the April staff meeting. Potential solutions included shifting more toward an appointment-based system and strengthening staff training and knowledge to better accommodate walk-in requests. Instructional videos may also be a useful supplement for digital resource instruction: however, the amount of time required in order to produce video content may not be practical, especially given the rate at which software is updated. Some paid services (such as Niche Academy) provide video instruction and written handouts—the Library may want to pursue this as a more cost effective way to improve Digital Resource instruction.

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At present, the Library does not have a staff core competencies checklist for Digital Resources. Establishing basic benchmarks and training goals, as well as a framework for more formal ongoing training may also be beneficial.

## Library Programming

Efforts to expand Library programming and increase community engagement have been successful and should be continued. Schedule constraints have consistently been identified as a major obstacle to programming attendance. With expanded hours now on the schedule, the Library should evaluate its programming schedule and identify gaps and demographics that are not being served.

Interdepartmental cooperation between Youth and Adult Services may be an effective way to further expand programming and reach more patrons. Results of this partnership could include family programming as well as concurrent adult and youth programming. This approach may also allow the Library to address some of the scheduling and timing concerns raised in the Survey.

Programming staff should review the suggestions given in the Survey and evaluate feasibility. In particular, Youth Services should evaluate the possibility of expanding toddler and tween programming and Adult Services should evaluate technology instruction programming.

The Library communicates well through its established channels, but there is some room for improvement. The Library needs to make more of a consistent effort to market and promote its services. Digital resources in particular seem to be a point of confusion for many respondents and awareness of the Library eNewsletter seems to be lower than expected. In general, programs highlighting specific library services have not had strong attendance. While modifications to these programs may help boost attendance, the Library should also have another alternative for conveying this information to patrons.

The Library does not have sufficient staff or resources to increase frequency of the eNewsletter or print newsletter; separate newsletters for different age groups and interests is also likely not a change that can be made at present staffing levels. In lieu of that, the Library may want to investigate the possibility of subscribing to an online programming calendar that offers expanded features like text notifications and easy integration with Google calendar and other similar software.

Finally, the Library should evaluate its publicity and marketing procedures and timelines for efficiency and community reach.

## Overall Satisfaction

### Library Overall

The recommendation for this category is the same as it was in 2016:

“Similar to the recommendation of the previous survey, the Library should maintain its high standard of service and continue to capitalize on its strengths. Survey feedback should be read by both Library staff and Library trustees in order to further expand overall understanding of how the Library meets patron

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needs. Ideas and suggestions from the survey should be acted on as appropriate. Additionally, the Library needs to make strong efforts to address some of its weaknesses as identified by survey respondents. Issues that inhibit or negatively affect Library usage should be prioritized. The Library should continue to solicit feedback from the community outside of the biennial Patron Satisfaction Surveys.”

### **Customer Service**

Survey feedback affirms that the Library’s customer service is its strongest and most valued asset. Even respondents who were unhappy with elements of the Library—particularly those who were frustrated by the building or service limits such as collection size—indicated strong satisfaction with Library staff, which strongly suggests that the quality and work of the staff make up for other deficiencies in Library services. It is therefore critical that the Library commit to continued investment in hiring and retaining quality staff members. Particularly, ongoing concerns about uncompetitive salaries should be addressed. The building issues that affect staff areas (mentioned in the Library Building section) should also be taken seriously and addressed.

Both the Library and its patrons agree that friendly and personal customer service is the cornerstone of the Lake Bluff Library; indeed, many respondents note that the Library’s quality of customer service is what sets it apart from other libraries in the area. However, the Library does not have any guiding document that defines its customer service philosophy. If the Library continues to name customer service as its most important service, it should devote some time to crafting a customer service philosophy that defines its goals and values. This document would allow the Library to ensure that uniform expectations are being communicated to both staff and patrons, as well as create a useful framework that can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses.

While the Library does extremely well in this area, the Survey also identified some areas for improvement. Several respondents noted that when they inquired about digital resources, staff members gave them a pamphlet and encouraged them to ask questions if they had trouble. Respondents reported that this interaction was not as helpful as it ought to have been. This feedback has already been discussed at a Staff Meeting and Library Staff spent some time identifying obstacles that were resulting in this interaction and brainstorming ways that this information can be more effectively communicated. Staff training on this service was also discussed.

### **Improvement Priorities**

Respondent feedback indicates a pretty clear interest in improving the Library’s physical resources. As mentioned in the previous Survey, the expanding the physical building is the most effective change the Library can make in order to meet the most needs for the most patrons, as it would allow the Library to address the concerns of 67.63 percent of respondents.

### **Additional Concerns**

#### ***Reciprocal Access***

The recommendation for this category is the same as it was in 2016:

“The Library’s practice in regard to digital resources is consistent with the practices of neighboring libraries. It is also reflective of terms and restrictions established by software and database vendors: as a

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general rule, vendors offer subscriptions based on the size of the community served. Reciprocal access is not included. At a minimum, adding reciprocal access to digital resources would require a significant policy change from the library's vendors. Adding reciprocal access to digital resources would represent an additional cost to the Library, especially for services like Overdrive, Freegal, and Zinio. Any effort to expand access to reciprocal borrowers would likely need to include a fee to offset the costs of additional users.

Reciprocal borrowers may access digital resources through their home library and with the exception of My Media Mall, Freegal, Zinio, and Lynda.com, all of the Library's digital resources are available to any patron using the Library computers or public wifi.

Circulating pre-loaded eReaders may also be an effective way to expand digital services to both Lake Bluff cardholders and reciprocal borrowers. However, the startup costs associated with this collection are fairly significant: it is important that a demonstrated need for this collection is established prior to investing any Library funds in this effort."

### *Future Surveys*

Based on respondent feedback as well as observations made by the author of this report, the Library may want to consider the following changes for the 2020 Patron Satisfaction Survey:

- **Shift the Survey response period from January – April to June – August; plan on having the report ready by October or November.**
    - The Summer Quarter is the Library's busiest time of year: it makes sense to have the Survey open during a period when foot traffic is highest. Additionally, there may be opportunities to incentivize Survey participation through the Summer Reading Clubs.
    - At present, the Survey is announced in the Winter newsletter, which arrives in Lake Bluff homes on December 1, several weeks before the Survey actually opens. This may be introducing an unnecessary obstacle to completing the Survey. In contrast, if the Library were to have a submission period from June through August, the Survey would be open when the newsletter arrives in Lake Bluff homes.
    - The June through August submission period would also avoid overlap with the Library's fiscal year end and planning/publicity deadlines for the Summer Quarter.
  - **Consider a "N/A" or "I do not use this service" option for Satisfaction Ratings.**

Several respondents expressed frustration with the fact that they had to choose an option to continue with the Survey, even though they had no opinion or did not use the service frequently enough to comment on it.
  - **Consider measuring patron awareness.**

In all Patron Satisfaction Surveys, there have always been requests for services that already exist. Measuring community awareness of different Library services may be a useful exercise for the Library and provide more coherent information about what information is making its way to community members.
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This may be more appropriate as a separate mini-survey that goes out during a year when the Library is not doing a Patron Satisfaction Survey.