

As we go forward into the New Year, there is much for the library to acknowledge and be grateful that occurred during 2014:

- Membership in the Friends of the Library grew significantly, achieving an all-time high of 251 members.
- The Foundation's Benefit at Schedel Gardens exceeded our wildest expectations: generous sponsors, donors, and event participants raised over \$100,000 for the purchase of new books.
- A resounding 70.37% of the voters in the library's service district voted for the library's renewal levy in the November election. Passage of this levy was critical to assuring the library can continue to offer storytimes and Summer Read Reading programs, the latest bestsellers and books by emerging new voices in fiction and nonfiction, internet access and online resources, programs for all ages, knowledgeable staff, and more.

These are but a few of the ways **you** have demonstrated your support for the library. All of us at WCDPL are mindful of and profoundly grateful for the trust you've placed in the library as we enter 2015.

Like Wood County, all of Ohio loves its libraries. In 2013, nearly 9 million Ohio citizens were active cardholders who made over 85 million visits to their libraries. Ohio's citizens value the role that their libraries play in their lives. The trend in state funding over the past 5 years has been annual decreases of 1.5%. Ohio's busy, valued, and popular libraries need state funding to stabilize.

Over half of WCDPL's revenue continues to come from the state, and the stability of this source is uncertain at this time. In 2014, state funding for public libraries is at 1996 levels (without any adjustment for inflation). Currently, libraries receive 1.66% of general revenue. This percentage used to be 2.22%. With this in mind, a major area of focus for WCDPL in the coming months will be in joining a state-wide advocacy effort in advance of the State of Ohio's budget process to "Restore the Public Library Fund (PLF)."

Even as we face these on-going funding issues, thanks to your support WCDPL will be here to provide the services you expect. Whether you're stopping in to pick up books to snuggle up with on a snowy evening, joining us for a lively book discussion or comforting story time, expanding your computer skills in a hands-on workshop, or checking out an eBook from the comfort of home, I look forward to seeing you at the library in 2015!

Michael Penrod,  
January, 2015