

# Wasilla Public Library

391 No. Main  
Wasilla, Alaska ~~99687~~ 99654  
(907) 376-5913

INFORMATION NO. 92-09

April 9, 1992

TO: Mayor Stein

FR: Mary Ellen Emmons *ME*

RE: USER SURVEY - WASILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY - PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Attached are preliminary results of the user survey being conducted at Wasilla Public Library from April 1 - 15. To date, 105 surveys have been tallied. This summary includes all responses; nothing has been edited.

The surveys have been offered to patrons over the age of 12. I have asked staff to explain that we are requesting the patrons' evaluations of library services. The purpose is to determine the present level of satisfaction and to use the results for future planning. Staff have been asked to not discuss any impending budget cuts -- or any issue which might influence the survey responses -- when distributing the surveys. Separate collection boxes have been set up in the library.

This survey will not tell us what non-users think about libraries. When reviewing the results it is necessary to remember that these individuals already are favorable toward the library, because they're using the services. It is still important to assess the users' level of satisfaction. The comments about staff are very positive (and they are unsolicited!). I think the comments reflect the role played by staff in the library operation.

Complete results of the survey should be available by April 27.

WASILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY  
1992 USER SURVEY

The Wasilla Public Library needs your help to evaluate library services and to plan for the future. Please drop your completed survey in the collection box (or the book drop) by April 15.

1. Please indicate which of the following public libraries you use:

SEE ATTACHED FOR RESPONSES

Wasilla Public Library \_\_\_\_\_ Palmer Public Library \_\_\_\_\_  
Mat-Su Community College \_\_\_\_\_  
Big Lake \_\_\_\_\_ Willow \_\_\_\_\_ Talkeetna \_\_\_\_\_ Sutton \_\_\_\_\_  
Anchorage Municipal Libraries \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which one of the libraries listed above do you use most often?  
SEE ATTACHED FOR RESPONSES

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THE REMAINING QUESTIONS PERTAIN TO WASILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY.  
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3. The Wasilla Public Library is open during the following days and times.

Tue 10-8      Wed 10-6      Thu 10-8      Fri 10-6      Sat 10-5

Are these days and times convenient for you?

YES 86      NO 13      No Answer 2      Both 4

If NO, what days and/or hours would be more convenient?

SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

4. Why do you use the Wasilla Public Library? (Check all that apply.)

Adult Collection 88      Children's Collection 66      Videos 38

Paperbacks 47      Magazines 31      Audiocassettes 22

Reference 62      Storytime 15      Summer Reading Program 28

Photocopier 32      Tax Forms 21      Other (Specify) 6

SEE ATTACHED

Inter-Library Loan Services 37

5. When you use the Wasilla Public Library, do you find what you need without assistance?

ALWAYS 11      USUALLY 79      SOMETIMES 13      NOT OFTEN 3

Do you ask the staff for help?

ALWAYS 14      USUALLY 18      SOMETIMES 57      NOT OFTEN 15

If not always, why not?      SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

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If you do ask for help are you satisfied with that help?  
 ALWAYS 90 USUALLY 9 SOMETIMES 0 NOT OFTEN 0

No answer 6

Comments: SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

6. Do you use the computers to find library material?

SOMETIMES 51 ALWAYS 47 NEVER 7

If NEVER, please let us know why:

- 4 a. I don't know how to use the computer.
- b. I don't like to use the computer.
- 2 c. I prefer to browse.
- d. Other b & c

7. If the item you want is checked-out do you:

- 26 a. Reserve it for yourself, using the computer? a,b 2
- 29 b. Ask library staff to reserve it for you? a,c 3
- 34 c. Check for it during your next library visit? a,b,c 2
- 2 d. Other b,c 6
- 2 No answer

8. If the item you want is unavailable, do you ask staff to get it for you from another library?

SOMETIMES 55 ALWAYS 16 NEVER 30 No Ans 4

9..Do you think parking is a problem at Wasilla Public Library?

SOMETIMES 68 ALWAYS 25 NEVER 11

Comments: SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

10. Do you think a larger library should be built in Wasilla?

YES 45 NO 18 MAYBE 39 No Ans 3

Comments: SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

11. If a new library was planned, which of the following features would you like to see included? (Check all that apply.)

- 82 Increased Collection No ans 4
- 51 Quiet study areas All 1
- 32 Community Meeting Room
- 30 Story Program Area
- 39 Public Telephone
- 25 Display Area
- 46 Personal Computers for personal use
- 47 Reading areas
- 27 Other SEE ATTACHED

12. While some money is received from special service fees and and voluntary contributions, primary funding for public libraries is basically limited to two methods. Which is most acceptable to you?

SEE ATTACHED

Sales Tax

Property Tax

Other? -

13. If you could improve areas of Wasilla Public Library, which of the following would you choose? (Check all that apply.)

- 27 Children's Books (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 41 Adult Books (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 11 Magazines (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 20 Videos (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 11 Audiocassettes (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 22 Reference (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 6 Programs (Subject \_\_\_\_\_)
- 1 Staff Assistance ( \_\_\_\_\_)
- 4 Services ( \_\_\_\_\_)
- 12 Other SEE ATTACHED
- 34 No answer

14. If the Library was forced to reduce its budget what should be cut back? (Check all that apply.)

- Books—1      Magazines—43      Videos—46      Audiocassettes—36
- Staff—1      Hours—26      Programs—27      No ans—15
- Other—7      Little of each.      Fundraisers.      None—3
- Charge for services.
- Energy efficient improvements.
- Get rid of people in office.

15. Of the following roles, please check those THREE you consider to be most important for WASILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY:

- 9 Community Activities Center (The library is a central focus point for community activities, meetings and services.)
- 27 Community Information Center (The library is a clearinghouse for current information on community organizations, issues and services.)
- 56 Formal Education Support Center (The library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal course of study.)
- 47 Independent Learning Center (The library supports individuals of all ages pursuing a sustained program of learning independent of any educational provider.)
- 34 Popular Materials Library (The library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.)
- 50 Preschoolers' Door to Learning (The library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children, and for parents and children together.)
- 45 Reference Library (The library actively provides timely, accurate and useful information for community residents.)
- 18 Research Center (The library assists scholars and researchers who are conducting in-depth studies, investigating specific areas of knowledge, and creating new knowledge.)
- 4 Other (All of above)      No answer      6

16. Do you consider a public library to be an essential  
community service? YES 99 NO 0 MAYBE 0  
No answer 6

Comments: SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

17. Are there any other comments you would like to make about  
Wasilla Public Library? \_\_\_\_\_

SEE ATTACHED FOR COMMENTS

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Thank you for your time and comments.

QUESTION 1 INDICATE WHICH LIBRARIES YOU USE:

Wasilla Public Library	47
Wasilla P.L. & Anchorage Municipal Libraries	7
Wasilla P.L. & Palmer P.L.	14
Wasilla, Mat-Su, & Anchorage Municipal	7
Wasilla, Anchorage & Other (UAA)	1
Wasilla, Palmer & Mat-Su	5
Wasilla, Palmer & Anchorage	4
Wasilla, Palmer, Mat-Su, & Big Lake	1
Wasilla, Mat-Su & Other (UAA)	2
Wasilla & Mat-Su	7
Wasilla & Big Lake	4
Wasilla, Palmer, Mat-Su & Other (UAA)	1
Wasilla & Other (Wasilla High School)	1
Wasilla, Palmer, Mat-Su & Anchorage	1
Wasilla, Mat-Su, Anchorage & Other (UAA)	2
Wasilla, Mat-Su, Big Lake & Anchorage	1

QUESTION 2 WHICH LIBRARY DO YOU USE MOST OFTEN?

Wasilla Public Library	95
Palmer Public Library	2
Mat-Su	1
Big Lake	2
Wasilla & Mat-Su	1
Wasilla & Big Lake	3
Wasilla & UAA	1

QUESTION 3 COMMENTS ON LIBRARY HOURS

Please Note: Some people checked YES, but also added comments.

Saturday 10-6	Sundays (2)
Earlier Saturdays	Sunday 11-3
Monday (4)	Sunday 10-5
Later Fridays	Sunday 10-6
Open 7 days/week	Wednesday/Friday 'til 8
Weekdays 'til 10	All weekdays 'til 8 (2)
Sunday & later on weekdays (understand budget constraints)	
Wednesday 'til 8, Saturday 12-6, Sunday 12-6	

QUESTION 4 WHY DO YOU USE WASILLA PUBLIC LIBRARY - OTHER

Poetry series (1991)  
Good Books  
Friendly Staff  
Helpful Librarians

QUESTION 5 DO YOU ASK STAFF FOR HELP? WHY NOT?

They usually offer first.  
I like the challenge of looking myself.  
I'm not always sure of what I need.  
It's not always necessary.  
I understand the system.  
I only ask if needed.  
I usually find what I need.  
I like to browse.  
The computer is great!  
I'm lazy!  
I know my way.  
Since the computers, I can help myself more often.  
Computer system is self-explanatory.  
I can usually find things myself, but sometimes I need alternative suggestions.  
I like to look around.  
Sometimes staff is busy with other customer, and I don't have time to wait.  
They trained me well on how to use their computer.  
The library is so organized that many times I can find what I've come for without help, but there has always been friendly staff when needed.  
It's nothing I need immediately and I will come back and try again.  
I'm not exactly sure what is all available.  
They usually have customers at the counter.  
Because the only thing I need help on is the printer, and I hardly ever use it.  
Everything is so easy to find.  
Except for inter-library services, I am well-versed in the use of libraries.

QUESTION 5 IF YOU ASK FOR HELP ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THAT HELP?

Very helpful.  
A together staff - professional & considerate.  
The staff is extremely helpful.  
Very helpful.  
Very helpful and friendly.  
The staff is always friendly and do the most they can to help.  
The staff is very friendly and comfortable.  
Everyone is always very friendly and personal.  
The people are always very friendly and helpful.  
Always very helpful & courteous! The best library I've used regarding above.  
Great staff!  
Wonderful staff!  
Library personnel are always polite and very helpful.  
Always informative, cheerful and helpful.  
Great staff. Very friendly and helpful.  
The entire staff is always courteous and helpful.  
Librarians are most helpful.

QUESTION 9 DO YOU THINK PARKING IS A PROBLEM - COMMENTS

Not enough parking space.

Not enough spaces.

Congestion on Tuesdays.

Getting into the parking lot is also a problem.

I don't drive yet.

More parking would be helpful.

Not enough parking, ever.

Isn't enough available.

Too few parking spaces.

Suburbans are tough to park anywhere.

For the size of this library, parking is deplorable.

Front lot usually filled.

Not often at all. (not often a problem)

Depends on what time of day.

I often need to park at the post office.

The biggest problem regarding the library.

More parking would help!

Please expand - I always have to park at the Post Office.

It is difficult to park across the street with small children.

(Parking at Post Office for storytime.)

Sometimes it's very difficult to find parking.

Dangerous 4-way stop sign makes parking at Post Office and walking  
over almost impossible.

Main Street parking area needs to be redone.

I usually walk.



QUESTION 10 DO YOU THINK A LARGER LIBRARY SHOULD BE BUILT? COMMENTS

I like this "small town" library - it's convenient and nice for our small town.

I would like to see a larger collection of books.

I'm very satisfied now, especially with the inter-library loan.

When it comes to knowledge, there's always a need for larger capacities.

More videos, more reference.

I like this size library.

Not much of a need.

Not money available.

You need more reading spaces and increased collection.

Doesn't matter to me.

Very crowded!

This one is fine for my needs.

Or relocation.

Need more room.

This one is very accomodating, but I've heard that you're running out of room and having to sell books, which is sad.

I always think libraries could be bigger to hold larger collections, but if it's larger in structure, would there be \$ for a larger collection?

Not until there is a proper tax base = sales tax, state income tax.

Larger parking lot.

Very satisfied with what is now available.

We need a larger variety of books.

For our population and use a larger library is needed.

Just more parking space.

And employees paid like Bush.

Don't know. It's busy but tolerable at the times I come.

In order for us to be able to grow, we need readily available info.

This library meets my family's needs.

The Meadow Lakes area could be better served if a small resource center were built there.

Money's tight. This library is adequate considering the size of Wasilla's population.

Eventually we will outgrow this.

Increased school system/library coordination.

QUESTION 11 OTHER FEATURES TO BE INCLUDED IN LIBRARY

- Larger music selection.
- An area for children, while adults get books.
- Sound proof study area.
- More books.
- Update books.
- Better parking (7)
- More topo maps.
- Audio/visual booths.
- Typing booths.
- Magazine, newspaper lounge area.
- Movie room.

QUESTION 12 LIBRARY FUNDING

Sales Tax	36	Sales tax OR Property Tax	1
Property Tax	37	Sales Tax AND Property Tax	3
Other	12	Sales Tax AND Other	4
		Property Tax AND OTHER	3
		All	1

Suggestions for other sources of funding:

- Sales Tax when Anchorage has a sales tax.
- Bond.
- User fees or increase fines.
- Federal funds.
- Sales Tax on specific items.
- Booksales with matching funds.
- Lottery.
- Fund raisers.
- User fee \$25/household
- 25 cent charge per visit.
- State funds.
- State Income Tax.
- Let me think on this. I'm strongly opposed to taxation because it never gets funneled to where it's needed. eg: educational system.

QUESTION 13 OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

- I'm happy with the small town selection: if they build a bigger library it just increases taxes and people.
- Hours.
- Generally expand size of collection.
- If possible, more selection like Anchorage - more books on the shelves.
- Skydiving, recreational studies.
- Update all areas.
- Parking, parking, parking.
- Computer.
- More of everything.
- More current new books.
- Computer use.
- Study Booths.
- Biographies.

QUESTION 16 DO YOU CONSIDER LIBRARY TO BE AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE - COMMENTS

The alternative is increased stupidity.  
Absolutely! How could there be any doubt?  
If there weren't any libraries, we would be in the Dark Ages still.  
The health of a community is their library!  
Very much so!  
Important to educational system of borough - should offer high quality reference materials, different from schools.

QUESTION 17 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Every "small town" wants to expand and grow bigger & bigger. And one day you look around, and you're living in that "crowded city" you left years ago. I'm happy we have this simple, small-town library and I hope expansion in this area doesn't explode. If I wanted a big library, I'd be in Anchorage. I'm all for learning, but I'm not for increased taxes or for expansion.  
A very positive influence on the community.  
You do a good job with the staff and collection you have.  
For the size of this library (its limitations) it is an excellent library and absolutely necessary to the community! The staff is wonderful! Always friendly, pleasant and helpful.  
My children and I enjoyed the Summer Reading Program 3 years ago. The last few years they were not challenging enough.  
I would love extra funding for updated materials.  
One typewriter available - perhaps a typing/PC room - can assess a semester lab fee or charge by the hour. Kinko's in Anchorage charges \$9/hour and \$1/page for Mac computer time. Locally no computer service except Community College. Having a centralized facility would provide a needed service.  
It's one of my favorite places in Wasilla.  
No - use Anchorage libraries most.  
The library is a big help to us students with the big projects our teachers give us. Without the library I would die!  
I'm very happy with the Wasilla Library and don't want to have it close. They do a great job.  
I think it's a good library and should stay forever.  
It is a great place.  
In your reorganization please include more typewriters - 3 to 5 would be nice - electronic and self-correcting. They would be very helpful for writing resumes, business letters, etc.  
Networking for job search section in the library would also be a perk for this library.  
This library is used to capacity. Wasilla is a rural community and reading and all library has to offer is essential to this area.  
Our family truly appreciates all that the library has to offer, especially the friendly and accomodating staff. I can always count on the library for school projects.  
I have used libraries all over Alaska and the United States. This is a great library. I just wish it had a larger collection.  
If there was a space for large meetings I would always use it.  
Keep up the good work!  
I appreciate the high quality of the staff -their dedication to the library and to assisting the patrons. It is the most positive statement that Wasilla is a good town to live in, that city officials appreciate what is important to a community.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (continued)

The Wasilla Library is such a well-used public service, I'd hate to see anything cut. I consider this library to be a hub of this area's educational system. The summer reading programs always seem to be an overwhelming success - great for encouraging kids to read.

As a retired teacher [I] have always appreciated the support of Wasilla Public Library in encouraging reading and information gathering from an early age (and on through a person's life). I use the facilities twice a week and maybe more. I'm always treated well and would be displeased if anything was cut back. The staff is always friendly - helpful. -need a list on the computer of all the new books.

I think the library is one of our most important resources. Let's grow!  
A+

Great place, great staff, great service - a highlight and oasis in a culturally deprived environment - an asset to the community which needs our continued support.

It is well-run, and the workers are friendly and efficient. It is always clean and comfortable to visit.

This is one of the best - speed of getting required books - selection of books on hand - location. - the first place I came to when moving here. All the people here are a joy!

Very nice children's area.

So far it is very nice, and staff is very friendly and helpful.

I appreciate the helpfulness of staff members; they are always prepared to offer suggestions and help in searching for materials I need.

The staff are really friendly and helpful - it just needs to be bigger. Please expand the parking space!

The staff has always been kind and helpful.

Wonderful staff!

Very happy with the staff.

Terribly undersized - poor study and reading areas - poor traffic patterns through study areas creates noise. Library staff is friendly, efficient and very helpful.

You do wonders with your resources. I will continue to speak up for libraries.

Do not close the library! We need it bigger & better - not closed!

If any area could be enhanced, I would say the summer reading program.

I heard from many people about their disappointment in last summer's program. I think this is a time to keep children's interest in books fun and motivating while no school is in session. My suggestions would be for a new theme that they could look forward to and see a way for the different age kids to see their summer progress since a 5-6 year old vs. a 9-10 year old would have a different attention span and different length of books read. I didn't complete areas that I don't have knowledge about - videos, magazines, audiocassettes, etc. & different programs. I couldn't suggest cutting something that I haven't used.

For its size, one of the best libraries with a great, pleasant staff who know what they are doing. They have been professional at all times.

Thank you for being available.

You are all doing a great job!

More preschool programs during the week and a reading time for the children during the summer.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (continued)

If a new library is planned, I would like to see us stick to essentials such as adequate space, trained staff and enlarged collection. I do not approve of space and money being wasted on making the exterior of the building stylish. For example, the Z.J. Loussac library is beautiful, but very impractical (ie: unusable exterior stairs, dangerous and energy-wasting skylights, malfunctional water fountain). A new library should focus on practicality, usability and economy. Thanks.

Thanks for asking.

I think it is great that you have 2 days of storytime, and I just noticed today that you have a third day for younger children. That is great.

Helpful and informed staff - wonderful summer reading programs - layout of children's level is terrific.

The public library is an essential element to enhance self-study of all age groups, but especially the youth of the community. Offering increased resources, special facilities and study areas in a new facility would measurably improve the opportunities for all residents.