

Libraries of the Future: Vibrant Community Resources

Libraries are changing. Rather than being warehouses for the storage of books, they are offering a wide range of services and are important family destinations and cultural centers.

There are 9,198 public libraries in the United States. Usage is breaking all previous records. Visits to public libraries totaled 1.4 billion in 2005. The circulation of materials topped two billion items. Over 68 percent of American adults today have a library card. In Falmouth membership has increased 191% since 1996, when the last renovation/expansion took place.

- Circulation of books and other materials at the Falmouth Library increased from 73,932 in 1996 to 190,525 in 2009 – an increase of 158 %. Advances in technology and delivery have made it much easier for libraries to share a wealth of materials. Interlibrary loan has increased more than 7,000% since 1996.
- The library is becoming a technology resource center: nearly one-third of Americans age 14 or older — some 77 million individuals — used a public library computer or wireless network to access the Internet over the past year. They used them to seek jobs, research health issues, educational purposes and more. Usage of Falmouth Library’s Internet computers has increased from zero in 1996 to 7,272 in 2009.
- Libraries are in the forefront in providing access to reliable, reputable resources and databases and guiding people through the morass of information now available on-line. Falmouth Library offers access to accurate and reliable information through Marvel! and other databases.
- Libraries have become key gathering centers promoting community dialogue. Usage of Falmouth Library’s meeting spaces by community groups has increased 430% since 1996. Attendance at story hours, author visits, and other library events has increased 166%.

More than 127,000 community members made use of library services at the Falmouth Memorial Library in 2009, reflecting national trends.

References:

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