

# A #1 YEAR

## Westlake Porter Public Library's 2005 Annual Report

When 2005 began, the library's staff and trustees already knew it was going to be a great year. The Bernice Yates Community Reading Garden groundbreaking and construction were being planned, as was the WestFest author series. In addition, we knew that if you continued to borrow materials at the same pace as you did in 2004, the library would achieve another annual circulation record. But we barely dared hope that WPPL would be ranked #1 in the nation among libraries in our population category by the Hennen's American Public Library Ratings.

The year wasn't one continuous high point, however. During the state's biennial budgeting process, library funding was again cut/frozen, and faces additional challenges in 2006 and beyond. And, late in the year, Library Director Paula Miller announced that she is leaving WPPL to become Executive Director of Pikes Peak Library District in Colorado Springs, CO.

Following is a synopsis of the library's 2005 highlights and challenges

### We're #1!

In October the library's staff, board and Friends group were thrilled to learn that WPPL is ranked #1 in the nation among libraries in its population category by the annual Hennen's American Public Library Ratings (HAPLR). Since many of the statistics used to compile the ratings reflect your usage (number of visitors, circulation per capita, etc.), this honor is as much attributable to you, our loyal users, as it is to the dedicated staff, board and Friends. Thank you for your loyal support!

In addition to the HAPLR ranking, WPPL was named "The Best Library in Greater Cleveland" by *Scene Magazine* in September.

### The Reading Garden

On a cold March day several people, including Mayor Dennis Clough, representatives from Holzheimer Bolek Architects and Kiczek Builders, and members of the Friends of the Library gathered to break ground for the Bernice Yates Community Reading Garden. Named

for the generous library user whose bequest made it possible, the garden was constructed during the spring and summer, and opened in late July. Many people enjoyed reading, researching, and eating there during the Fall. Currently the Westlake Lions Club is sponsoring a tile mural to be installed on the curved walls in the garden. See page 9 to find out how to buy a tile and be a part of library history.

### WestFest 2005

In September and October the library presented its first-ever author series. Featuring best-selling and award-winning authors Richard Preston, M.E. Kerr and Kevin O'Malley, the series had something for all ages. The library presented programs by Kerr (for teens and preteens) and O'Malley (for elementary school students) at several of the schools, in addition to their public presentations at the library and Performing Arts Center. Funded by the Friends of the Library, the series was so well received that another one will be scheduled in the future.

### A New Circulation Record

By the time the library closed at 5 p.m. on December 31, our users had checked out a record 1,323,226 items in 2005. Usage has grown at a steady rate for the last several years, showing that Westlake continues to be a community of readers.

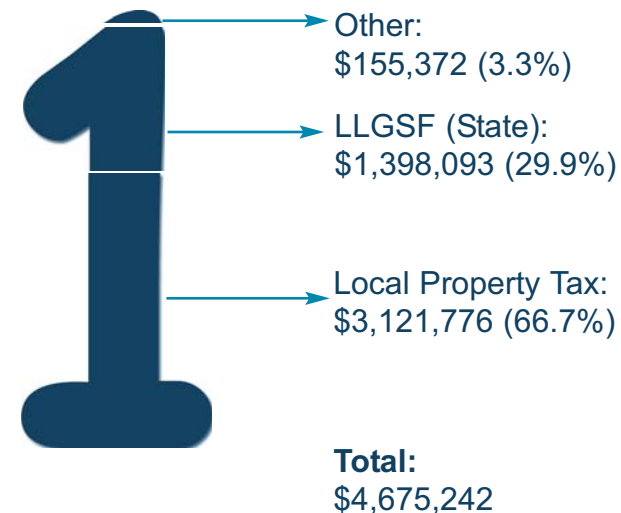
### Funding

State funding for libraries continues to be at risk. Funding of the Library and Local Government Support Fund (LLGSF) was frozen in the state's current budget, and faces reduced revenue in the near future. WPPL's staff were again challenged with keeping up the level of service you've come to expect from us, while stretching dollars. Ohio's tax reform initiatives also threaten library funding in the future. Currently, a state committee of legislators is looking at ways to reform library and local government funding in Ohio.

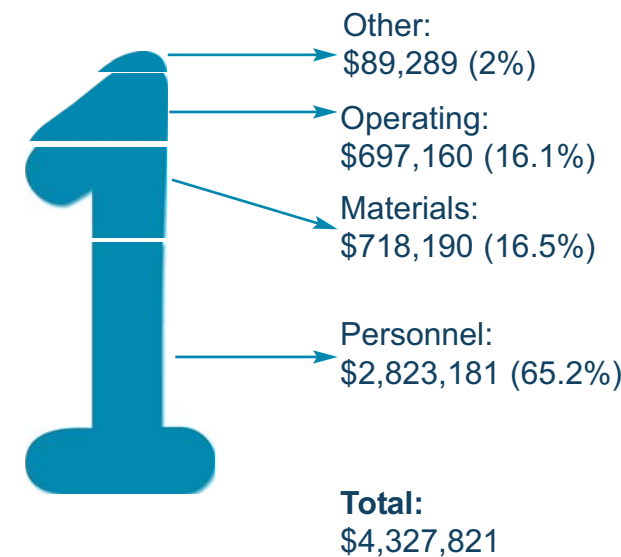
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## 2005 By the Numbers — Financial Report

### Revenue



### Expenditures



### A Year of #1 Services and Activities

**#1 in Annual Circulation:** 1,323,226 items were checked out in 2005 — the highest number of items ever checked out in one year in the library's history. Westlake is still a community of readers!

**#1 in Monthly Circulation:** Last year was the first year that library users checked out over 100,000 items each month. In addition, the new all-time monthly circulation record was set in August 2005, when 118,658 items were borrowed.

**#1 in Website Visitors:** The library's website had 396,970 visitors in 2005, triple the number who used our "virtual" services in 2004, and the highest number of web visits since the website's launch. Clearly you value the convenience that technology adds to library services.

**#1 in Visitors:** The library continues to be a center for lifelong learning. 473,909 individual visits were made to the library last year to pick up material, do research, attend programs and meetings, use library computers, and much more. That's more than ever before!

**#1 in Programs and Meetings:** The library's meeting rooms were busier than ever in 2005. Over 20,100 of you participated in the 631 programs, contests, and other events offered by the library this year, another record for WPPL. In addition, over 19,000 individuals attended the 2,449 meetings held here by outside organizations. "Village Green," or meeting place, continues to be an important role for the library in this community.

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### Farewell, Paula

Library Director Paula Miller announced her impending departure in December. During her 13 years at WPPL, she has led the library through substantial growth and major changes. Her leadership has also been integral to the library's continual high placements in the HAPLR ratings, including the current #1 ranking. Interim Director Jackie Duffy and the staff will strive to maintain her tradition of excellence, while the Board of Trustees searches for a successor who can build on it — but Miller will

"Congratulations to the staff and trustees. Such an achievement is a true indicator of everyone working together to create a great community library!"

Patricia Belcastro,  
Former Assistant Director,  
Rocky River Public Library,  
on WPPL's #1 ranking

