



**Newsletter # 5**

**May, 2007**

**Published by the Wyoming State Library**

### **Sublette County Library Given Approval for Expansion**

After two years of planning, the Sublette County Library Board received the go-ahead from the County Commission to accept bids from contractors on the plan to build a 10,000 square foot building expansion between the existing Pinedale Library and the town's fire hall. The new facility will contain a meeting room that can accommodate over 200 people, and a climate-controlled room to showcase the library's western history print, archival and art collection. Commission chair Bill Cramer and Commissioner Joel Bousman were supportive of the project. The library is an important public building worthy of a substantial commitment from the county, Cramer stated. "Yeah, it's a lot of money, but it's going to be here for a long time," he said.

Daphne Platts, library director, said "We're trying to build a public building that's beautiful as well as useful. Energy conservation is a primary consideration; so many green features are in the design, including recycled materials such as rammed earth walls, old snow-fences and geothermal heating." Laurie Latta, a member of the library board, told the Commission, "The human factor here is huge. I think the library is larger than any other institution in the county in the number of people it serves."

(Adapted from an article by Annie O'Brien, Pinedale Roundup, April 5, 2007)

### **Michigan High Court Weighs Library Controversy**

#### **Plaintiff wants to check out materials even though his town doesn't support a library.**

Librarians monitored a Michigan Supreme Court case over whether residents of communities that don't support libraries should have access to material from libraries that are taxpayer funded. "It's very important," said Midge Lusardi, Chesterfield Township Library director. "It has implications for government services across the board."

The case involved a senior citizen who filed a lawsuit after the Bloomfield Township Public Library denied him a library card. The 89 year old senior, who lives in a nearby community which does not support a library, was denied a non-resident library card in 2004 after talks broke down over how much the township could charge the city to let city residents check out material. Some libraries will provide cards to non-residents if they pay annual fees.

"He is saying all people should have access to everybody's library and everything in it," said Judi Chambers, Shelby Township Library director. "There's something inequitable there." Larry Neal, director of the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, agreed. Residents of Clinton and Macomb townships made a decision to fund a public library and pay taxes annually for the privilege, Neal said.

Lusardi said anybody is welcome to come into most public libraries regardless of where they reside. "The question comes when you're checking out material to take home bought by your local tax dollars," she said.

Goldstone, who obtained a non-resident card in Pontiac, lost his argument at both Oakland County Circuit Court and the Michigan Court of Appeals.

(Adapted from an article by Frank DeFrank, Macomb Daily Staff Writer. Associated Press contributed to this report.)

**Commentary:** *Wyoming Statute 18-7-105[c] states that every library established and maintained under the provisions of the Wyoming Statutes is free to all residents of the county. Our statutes do not say anything about serving residents of other counties but starting in the mid-80s the county libraries began a proactive approach to statewide service through informal agreements that allowed residents of the state access to all the county libraries. This was possible due to the introduction of the shared library automation system and barcode-able library cards. Today, librarians in the state take a strong stance that all the county libraries should be available to all residents of the state to reflect the strong commitment to resource sharing, demonstrate cooperation with the least impediments, and to be responsive to the continuing support from the Wyoming Legislature for WYLD products and services. Wyoming libraries are extremely fortunate to provide such openness to all residents of the state.*

### **Tennessee Library Able to Privatize**

The Tennessee Court of Appeals has upheld a lower court ruling, stating that the Madison County Library Board had the right to seek privatization of the library management.

This is the first Tennessee ruling to deal with whether a public library has the right to privatize its operations. In April 2006 the county commissioners asked for a determination if the library's board had the right to seek privatization. That July a judge issued a decision saying that the library board does have the authority to enter into a private management contract. The upper court's ruling recently upheld that decision.

County Commissioner Fred Birmingham said the county filed the injunction because it funds 50 percent of the library's annual budget. The other 50 percent, not including any grants, is funded by the city. "We were trying to find out if they had that authority," he said. "I was curious if every library across the state has that authority to outsource the operation of their entities."

(Adapted from an article by Ned Hunter, Tennessee Jackson Sun)

**Commentary:** *A number of cities around the country have outsourced management of the library. One of the better known firms is Library Systems & Services <http://www.lssi.com/>. No Wyoming county library has ever found need to outsource its management either in the hopes of saving money or hiring a quality director. An optional approach is identified in Wyoming Statute 18-7-105[d] which allows two or more county library boards to contract to establish a federation of libraries under their jurisdiction for the purpose of providing cooperative library services. This would make for a larger library system but, with the right library director, staff and joint board, could provide efficiencies and better service.*

Have you looked at “**101 Things to Know or Do As A Wyoming County Library Board Member**” recently? Here is point number 71:

*As the principal advocate for the library you need to help create a vision for what the library can and should be for residents. Do not let financial conditions deter you from thinking positively.*

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