

July  
2008

# Library News



**Plainfield Public Library**  
800 Park Avenue  
Plainfield, NJ 07060

908-757-1111

[www.plainfieldlibrary.info](http://www.plainfieldlibrary.info)  
[ref@plfdpl.info](mailto:ref@plfdpl.info)

## Capital Campaign Kicks Off

In recent years Library officials have made substantial improvements to the library, inside and out. The Library Board of Trustees is now focused on completing the renovations that were part of the Library's 1996 Master Plan. To do this, the Trustees have authorized the start of a capital campaign, with a goal of raising \$1 million dollars from private donors and foundations.

According to Library Board President **Kate Mason**, a community feasibility survey was conducted in 2003 that verified there was ample community support to raise this amount. Library Director **Joe Da Rold** says it will actually take \$2 million dollars to complete all the building upgrades necessary to keep services up to date. His role will be to secure the second million dollars through grants from governmental sources.

The Library is now in the "silent phase" of the campaign, where civic leaders are being made aware of the library's plans.

Not all of the recent library renovations have been visible to the public, and others have just recently been completed. Exterior improvements to the library have included: a new roof, handicap ramps, new sidewalks and new front steps. Additional "invisible" construction has just begun on the replacement of the building's chiller and boiler.

The **Local History Room**, which was completed in March of 2002, has become the largest source of local history in Union County. Library staff assisted over 2,500 researchers during 2003, and is now handling 600 questions a month on local history and genealogical topics. The Local History Room holds major collections of photographs, blueprints, published and unpublished texts, and archival records of Plainfield and County history.

To mark the completion of interior library improvements, a ribbon-cutting ceremony took place in June 2004. Former storage areas have now been transformed into new public areas, including Literacy offices, upgrades to the Young People's Room, a Computer Training Lab two "quiet study" rooms, and three new community meeting rooms.

Primary among the improvements still needed by the library is better lighting. The entire **Main Reading Room** is underlit and in need of new ceiling fixtures. Other electrical upgrades are required to allow for the expansion of computer technologies. To keep up with the public's demand for greater computer access, a two-story **Technology Center** is planned for the open space at the core of the building. This structure will incorporate a new public elevator, which will make it easier for the public to access services on the lower level.

The "silent phase" of a capital campaign continues until half the funds have been raised from foundations and major donors. During this time a Steering Committee is established and a variety of "awareness" activities are held to spread the word. An informational brochure and pledge cards have been prepared and is available for those who wish immediate information. The brochure explains in greater detail all the library's needs and plans.