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NEWS RELEASE

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Library Circulation Breaks the 4 Million Mark

January 31, 2008 – The [Stark County District Library](#) for the first time in its history circulated more than four million items in 2007. Combined circulation for all 11 library locations, bookmobiles, and Kidmobiles was 4.05 million, an 8% increase over 2006.

Not only did people check out more books, movies, and music, they also attended the library's programs. [Library programs](#) experienced a 14.8% leap in attendance; more than 209,000 people attended the library's 8,370 public programs in 2007.

"We couldn't be more proud," said Kent Oliver, executive director of the Stark County District Library. "Our mission statement is Inspiring Ideas, Enriching Lives, Creating Community; the increase in our statistics across the board shows that we are doing just that. The library serves all of our area's information and entertainment needs and we continue to add materials and programming that will make us a vibrant and meaningful community center for a long time to come.

"Among the library's efforts in 2007 is the addition of a Lisa Szeles as our coordinator of volunteer and literacy services. She is already working with area schools and agencies to serve our community's needs for literacy services. In an information-based economy such as we have now, literacy is paramount," Oliver continued.

"One of the changing roles the library plays is providing equal access to technology for all citizens. For those who either choose or are unable to have Internet access, the library provides a porthole to the [World Wide Web](#). We have added [wireless Internet access](#) to all but three of our locations, and those will

come on-line in 2008, so the entire system will be wireless this year. We have added 30 public access computers, allowing our patrons to log on to the Internet and use the full suite of Microsoft Office programs. This brings our total of public access computers in our library system to 210. People used those computers 276,000 times in 2007, a 20.5% increase over 2006," he added.

"One of the accomplishments of which we are most proud is the opening of our [Perry Sippo Branch](#) in partnership with Stark Parks," Oliver continued. "Perry Township residents were very patient waiting for their branch of our library system to be rebuilt after the Perry Heights Branch burned in 2002. That we were able to dedicate our new building exactly five years after the fire, and reward township, and indeed all Stark County residents with this gem of a building is gratifying. And Perry residents are rewarding us with their patronage. Circulation from that location is up 66.8% over last year.

"We maintain our valuable community partnerships with Stark Parks, Plain Local Schools, Lake Local Schools, the Canton Symphony Orchestra, Leadership Stark County, Rotary International, Fishers Foods, and the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce to mention a few. We believe that by building and operating in partnership with these agencies we are able to provide county citizens with the best possible service in a more cost-effective way," he said.

The [Stark County District Library Foundation](#), incorporated in 2006, got up and running in 2007. Created to financially support and advance the library's mission, the Foundation is working toward building an endowment which will assist with value-added services, programs, and capital purchases that might not be possible within the library's annual operating budget.

And, while 2007 was a very good year for the library, 2008 promises to be just as exciting. The library will be launching a new catalog system in February, which will be more powerful, more exciting, and easier for patrons to use. New titles are regularly added to the downloadable book, audio book, music, and movie collection, as well as to the library shelves. The third season of [Listen @ the Library](#) in partnership with the Canton Symphony Orchestra begins next week, and the third annual [Opportunities Job Fair](#) in partnership with Job & Family Services, Canton City Schools, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, Stark Metro Housing Authority, and Mature Services, Inc., will be held in March.

"And," Oliver announced, "we are very excited to announce our second [Novel Event: A Celebration of Authors](#) will be April 18 and 19." Best-selling and award winning authors David Baldacci, Christopher Paul Curtis, and David Wiesner will be on hand to talk about writing and to sign their books. Baldacci will be in the Perry Sippo Branch Friday, April 18 at 7:00 pm, and Curtis and Wiesner will be at the Main Library Saturday, April 19 at 1:00 and 2:30 pm, respectively. And, of course, all of these events are free and open to the public.

“The library is the great equalizer,” Oliver concluded. “Our role in the community is to provide equal access to information, allow residents a gathering place, enhance the literacy of all citizens, and provide fun and entertainment. Our staff of 263 people does their best to make sure that all of these goals are met each and every day.”

About the Library:

The Stark County District Library is one of the best 100 libraries in the United States. Its Main Library, 10 Branch Libraries, and two Bookmobiles and two Kidmobiles serve 146,000 library card holders. More than 1.5 million people visited the Main Library or its Branches and Bookmobiles last year. Holdings number more than 970,000 items, and annual circulation is 4.05 million items. The collection includes books, audio-visual materials, and periodicals for all ages. In addition, the Library provides programs and classes for adults, teens, and children, computer and Internet access, inter-library loans, Reference and Genealogy services, and traveling collections on two Bookmobiles and two Kidmobiles, as well as Outreach services to shut-ins, nursing homes, and housing units. It is one of the nine largest library systems in the state of Ohio, serving 12 local school districts. For more information, call 330.452.0665 or visit www.starklibrary.org.

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