**Leonia Public Library – Facts & Figures (2010)**

- The Leonia Library is regionalized. The Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS), of which Leonia is a part, has been sharing services for over 30 years. Through the library's membership in BCCLS, Leonia cardholders can have access to the resources of virtually all the libraries in Bergen County and some beyond. Leonians borrowed 28,070 items (books, cds and dvds) last year from other BCCLS libraries, and Leonia lent 28,772 items to Bergen county residents.

- The library offers a variety of electronic services, plus guidance in using them. They include the online BCCLS catalog; online book reservations; online classes; ebooks and e-audiobooks; online access to current and past issues of hundreds of magazines, the *New York Times* and the *Record*; wi-fi; and public access Internet computers (all equipped with MS Office). The library’s online processing systems encompass ordering, membership records, and circulation transactions. We are also on Facebook and have started LibrarE-blasts.

- The library budget for 2010, after $84,000 in budget cuts (and after a $50,000 cut in 2009), was $764,748. To reach that point, we eliminated one full-time and one part-time position and cut two full-time positions to part-time, thus reducing costs of health benefits as well as salaries. We continued Sunday closings, and each staff member took 15 days of unpaid leave, which we managed in part by further reducing opening hours in the summer and other times.

- The reductions in opening hours affected use and circulation figures negatively. Still, there were nearly 150,000 visits to the building in 2010, 215,825 hits on our website, and nearly 108,000 items borrowed from the collections, three-quarters of them by Leonians. 5,447 persons have library cards, 61% of the town's entire population of 8,929 or nearly one cardholder per household.

- The library offers a variety of popular programs and services for all ages and interests, from lapsit storytimes for babies to book deliveries for seniors to information for job seekers. There are author talks, book and poetry groups, art and local history exhibits, holiday celebrations, and outdoor concerts. Professional librarians are on call to help patrons work with media and find information, whether online or in print. A professionally organized Local History Collection documents and celebrates Leonia's history and the people who made it.

- Some of the groups that regularly use the brick & mortar building for meetings are: The Scouts, AYSO, the Leonia Soccer Association, Leonia Health Department (flu shots), the Green Team, the Community Chest, AARP free tax assistance, US Census, the writers' group, Leonia community
garden, Economic Development Commission, English as a Second Language classes, Leonia website committee, and the annual Senior Luncheon.

- Speaking of bricks & mortar, the library was recently home, for about a week, to many Leonians who lost power and water during a vicious storm. They came to charge their cell phones and laptops as well as to sit and read. In the summer, the building is open to summer campers on rainy or unbearably hot days.

- The library is also a social center, a friendly, civilized gathering place, where people can read, write, or dream--alone but in the company of others. It's also a place to meet friends, discuss ideas, study together, exchange local gossip. And it's a haven for the lonely, the harassed, and these days, the unemployed.

- In our English as a Second Language classes, people from all over the world (e.g. Russia, Columbia, Korea, China) have learned to speak English and have taken citizenship lessons. A New Jersey State grant pays for the classes (50 students in 2010).

- The library subscribes to the New York Times, the Record, the Star Ledger, the Wall Street Journal, Korea Daily, Korea Times, and El Diario, all of which are read multiple times during the course of a day.

- Printed books, magazines, and newspapers are still being produced, sold, used, and wanted. Digitized books are still derived from traditional books. This may change radically in the future, but now we are in a transitional era, where traditional books are still significant. And printed books can't be hacked and distorted or erased with the touch of a finger or wiped out by cyber terrorism or made obsolete by the next new high tech fad. Furthermore, books are also works of art as well as means of communication and expressions.

- Public libraries reflect communities coming together to provide what individuals could not do for themselves and what we Americans cherish--free access to the whole world of knowledge, culture, and information. And in Leonia, as in many communities, the library is a beloved, vibrant cultural and educational center.

Americans believe that a decent community needs public libraries like ours and they've been traditionally willing to pay for them. In that spirit, the Borough of Leonia has generously supported the library. But recently municipal budgets have become very tight, and the Leonia Library has cooperated with the Borough to cut costs, drastically and painfully. It is operating on an austerity budget. This situation inspired the revival in 2010 of the Friends of the Leonia Library, spearheaded by a new generation of Leonians, quite technologically savvy, who highly value the library and respect its dedication to public service.