

**2016 - 2018  
Long Range Plan For The  
Bell Memorial Public Library  
Mentone, Indiana**

This plan with its goals, objectives and actions is our vision of what the future will become for the Library, its staff, its community and its patrons.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Bell Memorial Public Library's Mission Statement:

To provide materials and services to help meet the informational, educational, cultural, recreational and social needs of the community. To provide these in an atmosphere that evokes friendliness, warmth and security.

## HISTORY

The first actual library service for the town of Mentone was the H. Parmalee Company of Chicago. By subscribing to a particular amount, a town or neighbor was entitled to the use of 2000 volumes for two years, sent by Parmalee in installments of fifty books. Parmalee also encouraged the establishment of book clubs, and would, for a fee, arrange for home delivery. The Parmalee Library is first mentioned in the Mentone Tri-County Gazette in late 1899.

In April, 1916, a petition of 55 citizens of the Mentone Community subscribed a total of \$158 as a guarantee of good faith for a proposed library in Mentone. A Carnegie Library was first suggested but was voted down. After the Court found the list according to the law, the Mentone Council, the Mentone School board, and the judges of the Circuit Court appointed the following people to serve as a library Board of Trustees: Charles Dillingham, Mrs. Flavia Myers, Levi Jefferies, Mrs. Emma Yocum, LeRoy Smith, Mrs. Allen Jefferies, and George Ralston.

A room was found over the bank to serve as temporary headquarters. The Board of Education donated all books in the school library, except reference books, and 50 books were borrowed from the State Library. In March, 1917 the librarian reported a total of 644 volumes in the library and stated that 53 books had been loaned.

On Nov. 1, 1918, the library was moved to a room in a building owned by Carlyn Myers on the north side of Main Street. In 1936 the Library Board voted to purchase a building and lot on the south side of Main Street for \$2600 as permanent quarters for the library. The library remained there until 1960 when the present library building was opened to the public.

The new building was built with a \$20,000 grant to the town of Mentone from the will of Lawrence D. Bell. Mr. Bell had requested that the money be used for a suitable memorial to his parents, Isaac and Harriet (Sarber) Bell, and the Mentone Board made the decision to use the money, plus \$3000 from the sale of the old building to build a new library. The decision was also made to change the name from Mentone Public Library to the Bell Memorial Public Library.

The library remained a "town library" taxing unit (with Harrison, Franklin, and Seward

Townships donating funds)until the summer of 1980 when Harrison Township agreed to merge with the town to form a new library taxing unit. From the first 644 books in 1916, the library now has over 38,000 volumes for loan.

Above written by Ruth L. Klein May 2000

On April 28, 2003, Bell Memorial Public Library relocated to 101 W. Main Street, Mentone, Indiana, into a renovated building that was the former Frank Manufacturing Building. (The project was partially funded by a Community Focus Fund Grant from the IN Department of Commerce). The Bell Memorial Public Library, Mentone Senior Center and Mentone Daycare share this building.

### **Square Footage:**

Library	main floor	4,330 sq. ft.
	loft	1,071 sq. ft.
Senior Center		1,441 sq. ft.
Daycare		2,320 sq. ft.
Bell X-1 Room	(mtg. rm)	1,753 sq. ft.
Shared Space		1,909 sq. ft.
Total building square footage		12,524 sq. ft

### **2014 Update**

After the Mentone Day Care vacated the three daycare rooms, the space became fully available to the Library for whatever use as Library space. The process has begun to refresh these three rooms for use as:

Room #1 will become a media center for DVDs, 3 additional patron computer workstations and select reference and genealogy materials.

Room #2 is to provide another community room in addition to the Bell X-1 room, to assist in creating additional space for Library, community and social events. The room will accommodate up to 40 people theater style or approximately 20 classroom style.

Room #3 (the smallest of the three rooms) will provide much needed room for storage in a temperature controlled area. (The current mezzanine storage room has floor loading limits as well as inadequate/inappropriate air handling equipment to handle Library documents intended for long term storage).

Painting is still being done in room number 2, though the room is already being used

and has already been booked for future activities. Room number one (media) is planned to be opened on or about April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

In 2014 considerable work was done on the outside back exterior of the building to create a very (almost elegant) outdoor space with nighttime lighting a pergola and space appropriate plantings. This area is directly accessible from room number two and would provide a beautiful space for a small wedding or other outdoor/indoor event.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE AREA OF THE BELL MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Bell Memorial Public Library serves the Town of Mentone and Harrison Township. Residents, or those paying property taxes in either of these two areas, are eligible for all library services.

### **Demographics – Mentone: 2010 census**

As of the census[2] of 2010, there were 1,001 people, 369 households, and 267 families residing in the town. The population density was 1,725.9 inhabitants per square mile (666.4/km<sup>2</sup>). There were 423 housing units at an average density of 729.3 per square mile (281.6/km<sup>2</sup>). The racial makeup of the town was 94.1% White, 0.3% African American, 0.8% Native American, 3.1% from other races, and 1.7% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 4.8% of the population.

There were 369 households of which 38.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 53.1% were married couples living together, 14.4% had a female householder with no husband present, 4.9% had a male householder with no wife present, and 27.6% were non-families. 22.8% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.2% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.71 and the average family size was 3.13.

The median age in the town was 31.2 years. 28.8% of residents were under the age of 18; 10.9% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 26.6% were from 25 to 44; 22.6% were from 45 to 64; and 11.2% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the town was 49.7% male and 50.3% female.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentone,\\_Indiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentone,_Indiana)

**Demographics – Harrison Township:** Harrison Township is one of seventeen townships in Kosciusko County, Indiana. As of the 2010 census, its population was 3,587 and it contained 1,538 housing units.[3]

Harrison Township was organized in 1838.[4]

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harrison\\_Township,\\_Kosciusko\\_County,\\_Indiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harrison_Township,_Kosciusko_County,_Indiana)

Residents who do not reside in either Mentone, or Harrison Township can purchase an out-of-township family membership for \$88.77 which is set annually by the Library Board of Trustees. Current students of the Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation, who do not otherwise qualify for a regular library card, are eligible for what is referred to as a "Valley Card." This card allows a non-resident Tippecanoe Valley student (only the student, not family members) to check materials. These "Valley Cards" are valid for a period of one year and are updated yearly.

**2015 BUDGET INFORMATION**

NAV of taxable property in service area		\$154,341,965.00	
Fund	Levy	Rate	Approved Budget
Operating	\$230,000.00	\$.1826	\$386,900.00
Debt Service	\$35,559.00	\$.00283	\$40,608.00

**2014 CIRCULATION INFORMATION**

A total of 35,875 items were lent in 2014. The Library owns 42,144 catalogued items.

I. **To ensure that the Library is as invested, integrated and visible as possible in the community.**

A. Objective: Study ways in which the Library can be more visible and better represented in the community.

1. Potential Actions (dependent upon funding for some)

a. investigate cost/installation of banners in the Library's parking lot and around the building

b. research alternative means of marketing the Library outside of the Library building.

(1) create a Community Calendar in addition to a Library only calendar and advertise both on outdoor sign.

(2) inserts in church bulletins

(3) participatory advertising with local stores -- post a link to ads in the Library's own advertising, mention a particular local business on the Library's webpage and newsletter on occasion.

(4) advertise community events on the Library's electronic outdoor sign.

(5) Utilize the Library's Facebook page (and other social media outlets) to further enhance the Library's online presence. Secure participant permission to potentially utilize their photograph in online publicity.

2. Participation in community organizations and groups

3. Purchase locally whenever possible and fiscally responsible.

B. The Library very much needs to become much more user centric rather than Library centric. How much a patron/user feels welcome, comfortable and safe will determine the success or failure of all of the Library's work.

1. Consider: colors (or lack of), lighting (lack of), seating, workspaces, privacy etc.

2. Reconsider how items are shelved and placed. Use of "power aisles" and "impulse buy" concepts can be used to achieve a more positive user experience.

C. Be sure that the Library is as transparent as possible. All plans, policies, budgets et. al. will be available via the Library's website.

D. General timeline – ongoing.

**II. To achieve the highest possible user experience.**

A. Marketing and public relations do not stop once the patron enters the building.

1. Maintain a fresh and clean building.

a. Timeline – ongoing.

2. Better than adequate lighting in patron areas.

3. Logical signage, not just Dewey numbers on endcaps.

4. Embrace utilization of endcaps as display areas for books found in those sections.

a. Timeline for items 2-4: Begin January 2016

5. Better than required space between shelf stacks. Many patrons will not browse an aisle if someone is already in that space.

6. Tall shelves may be good for Libraries, but is it also good for patrons?  
Claustrophobic patrons will avoid narrow and confined areas.

a. Timeline for items 5 and 6: Will be dependent upon financing; 2017 would be the soonest to begin.

7. Maintaining a heavily used collection can be a challenge at the best of times, but the physical condition and cleanliness of the collection cannot be overlooked.

a. Materials with obvious wear and tear should be repaired or replaced as necessary.

b. Wipe down DVD cases and book covers with a gentle cleaner (hand wipes) will present the best appearance to all users.

c. Timeline: Ongoing

B. Continue to provide positive and quiet study spaces for patrons.

1. Encourage the use of the small conference room as well as the large conference. The facility has no sound proofing between the walls and sound carries considerably throughout the building.

**III. Continue to work toward being the information, cultural and entertainment center of the community.**

A. Be able to answer ready reference and community related questions as correctly and expeditiously as possible.

1. Maintain a local intranet database with all relevant information regarding community events, local representatives, town contact information etc.

a. Timeline: Current to ongoing.

B. Being representative of the community includes people of all ages.

1. Works of art from all local schools should be encouraged as well as displayed throughout the building.

a. Timeline: Begin August 2015, in 2017 purchase and install “slatwall” or a tackable surface on which artwork can be displayed as well as proper lighting.

C. Patrons have encouraged the Library to begin offering computer classes.

1. A recent program using Apple products what extremely successful.

2. Secure computers (both Apple and pc based units) to hold basic computer education classes for both adults and children.

3. Timeline: October 2016

D. With the demise of the Library’s microfilm reader/printer patrons are no longer able to perform genealogical research.

1. Secure purchase of a new reader/printer or have the current microfilm digitized and made available via the Library’s intranet.

2. Begin digitizing all locally held items that have historical or genealogical significance following recommendations from the Indiana State Library.

3. Timeline: Begin development in 2018.

**IV. To update and maintain healthy collections in all areas: Fiction, Non-fiction and Reference for Children, Juveniles, Young Adults, and Adults.**

A. Re-examine the current shelving/display methods to ensure that the library is making patrons aware of the materials and formats of materials that are available to them.

1. Shelving and space will be examined to determine what is required for maximum visibility and usefulness.



a. Timeline: January 2016

**V. To maximize the Library's operating resources and to secure additional funding to assist with continuing the Library's mission.**

A. Investigate the relevance of maintaining Sunday open hours during the summer.

1. With the upcoming opening of the Media Center additional staffing will be of concern. Savings may be made by only being open on Sundays during the school year.

a. Timeline: June 2015

B. The Library's physical structure is showing a need for in-depth maintenance and funding is will be required very soon.

1. Options are limited, but available.

a. Use gift fund money

b. Appropriate additional monies from the Rainy Day Fund.

c. Request a distressed unit appeal

2. Timeline: June 2015

**VI. To have and maintain the highest quality staff possible**

A. Hiring guidelines

B. Staff meetings

1. Quarterly staff meetings with weekly "newsletter" style updates may provide the best communication possible with the least requirement of scheduling and planning.

a. Timeline: June 2015

C. In-depth staff training and in-service workshops which include the best way to welcome patrons into the Library as well as how to help them to the resources in which they are interested.

1. Educate staff in utilization of online resources

2. Telephone etiquette

3. Personal presentation

- a. Timeline: January 2016 staff in-service.

D. Secure effective benefits for both full and part-time staff.

1. Timeline: During the year 2016 depending on financial ability.

E. Meaningful and up-to-date job descriptions tied to annual staff evaluations.

1. Timeline: Beginning January 2016.

F. Educate Trustees on Library legislation and laws under which the Library operates.

G. Utilize a currently available Trustee Orientation handbook to which the Trustees may refer as questions arise. Handbook will also be online and searchable.

**VII. Library to expand programs for all ages and promote literacy/provide desired reading materials**

A. Integrate more community programs and activities at Bell Library

1. More exercise and fitness programs, health fair.

- a. Item is from a survey completed recently.

- b. Timeline: Ongoing

2. Outreach to the homeschooling community through offering programs and more library materials geared towards home and public school education.

- a. Timeline: Planning to begin August 2016 with schools due to how school planning for the upcoming school year.

3. Offer a coffee shop with a lounge area either operated by the library or an outside source. To offer patrons a place to relax, read, study, and get the full benefit of coming to the library. After all, what goes better with coffee than a book in hand?

- a. Timeline: Conceptual planning late 2015 with actual program to start in 2016.

**VIII. Strengthen services and programs to Young Adults ages 12 to 18.**

A. Create a space for teens specifically for them to spend time studying, socializing, and learning to love their library.

1. Timeline: Conceptual planning on re-utilizing one of the former “daycare rooms” as a Teen Area in January 2016. Logistics of alternate places/spaces will be a concern.
- B. Provide more e-books for the YA section. Many YA series currently have books within a series only available in e-book format. Also, some series have had the books cancelled and only the e-book version is available.
  1. Timeline: completely dependent on funding.
- C. Work on having a Teen Advisory Group for ideas on programming and books and assuring them that yes, their ideas will be implemented when possible.
  1. Timeline: Begin mid 2015.
- D. Provide homework help and GED guidance and help to those wishing to finish their high school education.
  1. Will need to contact school corporations in both Fulton and Kosciusko counties for Library to be a study center for students enrolled in the GED program.
  2. Volunteer trainers/teachers will be required.
  3. Space is available in the small and large conference rooms as necessary as well as the Library’s mezzanine area.
  4. Will need to investigate the ability of students being able to use the Library’s Internet access for distance learning toward the GED.
    - a. Timeline: Begin further study in June 2016 and have answer of whether or not to proceed by the end of 2016.

**IX. Enhance library’s marketing to the immediate community and beyond.**

- A. Find additional sources of advertising beyond the Warsaw Times Union and The Rochester Sentinel.
  1. Consider putting local advertising in our newsletter to make it truly a community resource.
  2. Expand the use of social media.
    - a. Timeline: Ongoing.

**X. Provide children in the town of Mentone and surrounding areas with access to a variety of programs and materials to meet their general information and basic literacy needs.**

- A. Expand the collection of new, high demand children's materials by a minimum of 10% annually.
  - 1. Weeding and re-staging will be critical to both expanding the collection and increasing its circulation.
    - a. Timeline: Begin fall 2016.
- B. The children's dept. will strive to keep current with changing technology trends in software and hardware by providing 2 or 3 children's computers in the children's dept. for children to use for educational learning, homework, research, and recreation.
  - 1. Timeline: Dependent upon funding and logistics of creating a Teen Area to enable space for the computers etc.
- C. Publicize a "Reader's Corner for Kids" pamphlet/hand-out for kids to use as a tool for book selection.
- D. Increase the number of children enrolled in the Summer Reading Program and other children's department programs each year by 10%.
  - 1. Timeline: Ongoing.

**XI. Strengthen children's programs and services in the community by community outreach and involvement.**

- A. Visit preschool and elementary schools with materials regarding BMPL children's services, programs and contents.
- B. The children's dept. will promote programs and services to the public schools by offering class visits to the library and providing library flyers for students to take home.
- C. Provide a literacy program for children with community volunteers who can work one on one with struggling readers.
- D. Ask people in the community to share their talents, hobbies, favorite books, and craft ideas, in a children's program or story time.
- E. During the Mentone Egg Festival Provide a library booth to promote BMPL children's services, programs and contents and/or a float to promote children's programs and services to the community.
- F. Develop a volunteer list for those in the community who would like to help with different children's programs.

- G. Exhibit preschool/elementary school children's art or other projects in the display cases.
- H. Children's dept. will investigate partnering with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at local elementary school and using the PTO's email list to promote the children's library programs and services.

**XII. Provide children in the town of Mentone and surrounding areas with an attractive children's department/area to visit. Children of all ages should find the children's library a comfortable place that promotes reading, imaginative play, and the excitement of finding knowledge**

- A. Provide a larger children's area for expanding reading materials, more comfortable space for reading, a larger space for imaginative play, and for computers and e-materials.
- B. Provide a children's circulation desk for checking in/out of library materials.
- C. Provide updated adjustable wooden bookshelves with tops for displaying books and providing easier access to library materials for children.
- D. Provide Lego wall, magnetic wall, puppets and puppet stage, costumes, or other educational toys for imaginative play and learning.
- E. Provide updated children's dept. staff desk and storage area for organizing staff materials.
- F. Provide updated posters and decorations that promote the library and love of reading.
- G. Provide wooden magazine rack to hang on wall to promote more useable space.
- H. Provide adequate program and storage space for the materials and equipment needed for effective library services for children.
- I. Provide updated children's furniture and area rug to promote cozy atmosphere and encourage independent reading.

1. Timeline: Begin development in 2018.

**XIII. Evaluation of plan elements.**

- A. A much more detailed action plan will be developed for each section which will include:
  - 1. More specific timeline
  - 2. Person/s responsible (chair, co-chair)
  - 3. Finances
  - 4. Resources required
  - 5. Required research
  - 6. Location
  - 7. Persons to be served
  
- B. For each element a standard decision theory concept will be applied to judge the effectiveness of the planned element.
  - 1. Restatement of the objective.
  - 2. Did the action follow the plan? If no, explain to what extent the plan had to be changed.
  - 3. Gather relevant information regarding the event/action.
  - 4. Was the action worth the time/money involved.
  - 5. What was the planned return on investment and should such be considered in future plans.