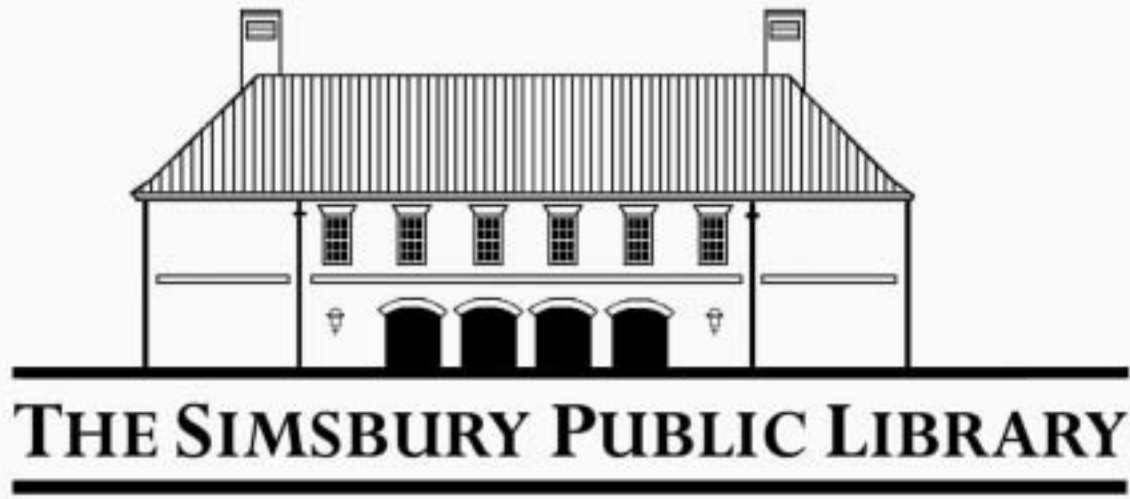


A large, leafless tree with a thick trunk and many bare branches stands in a snowy landscape. The ground is covered in snow, and a body of water is visible in the background. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Business Services Rooted in the Community

Jennifer O. Keohane
Business Outreach Librarian

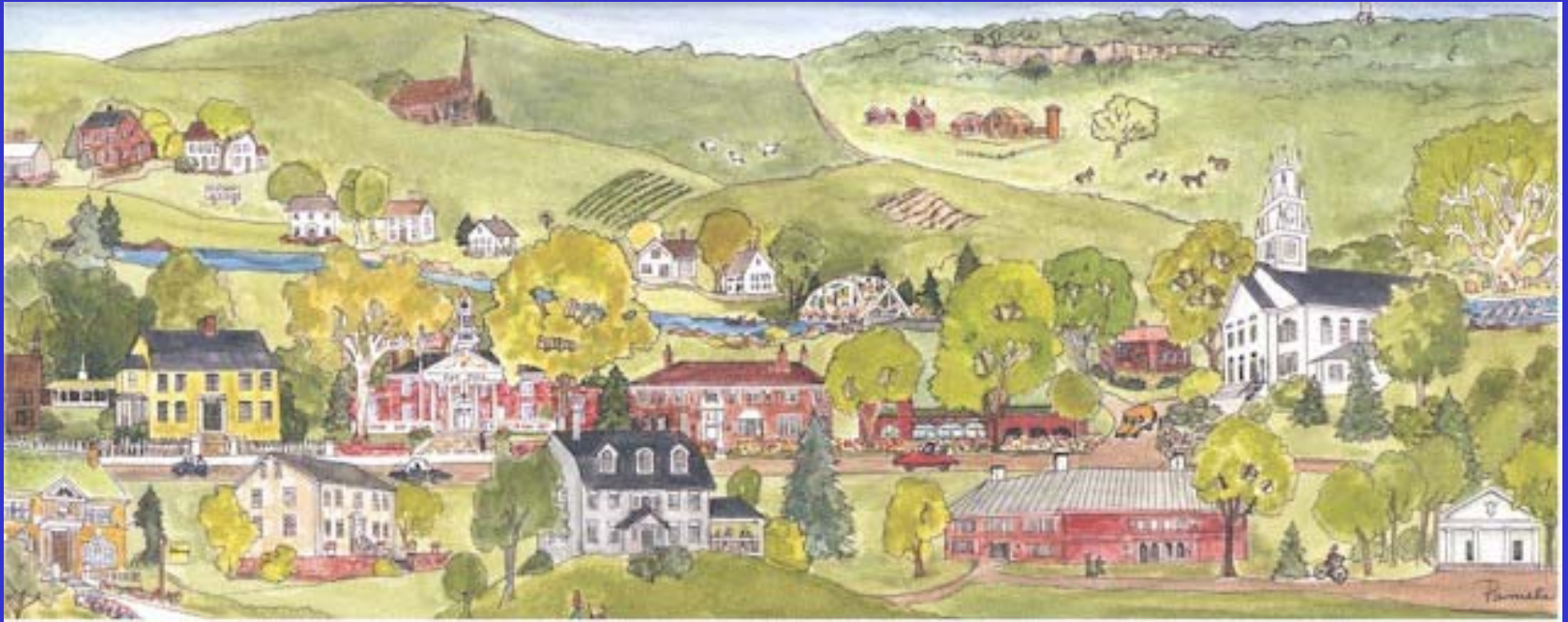


Business Resource Center

What I'll cover

- ❑ Visual Tour of Simsbury
- ❑ Simsbury Public Library
- ❑ Business Resource Center
- ❑ Role of Business Outreach Librarian
- ❑ The Future

Simsbury



- ❑ community of 23,000 people
- ❑ located in the Farmington River Valley
- ❑ simultaneously suburban, industrial and rural
- ❑ ranks 33rd in wealth of CT's towns
- ❑ Schools ranked #1 in state

Come along on a tour of
our town....



©Linda Kennedy 2003

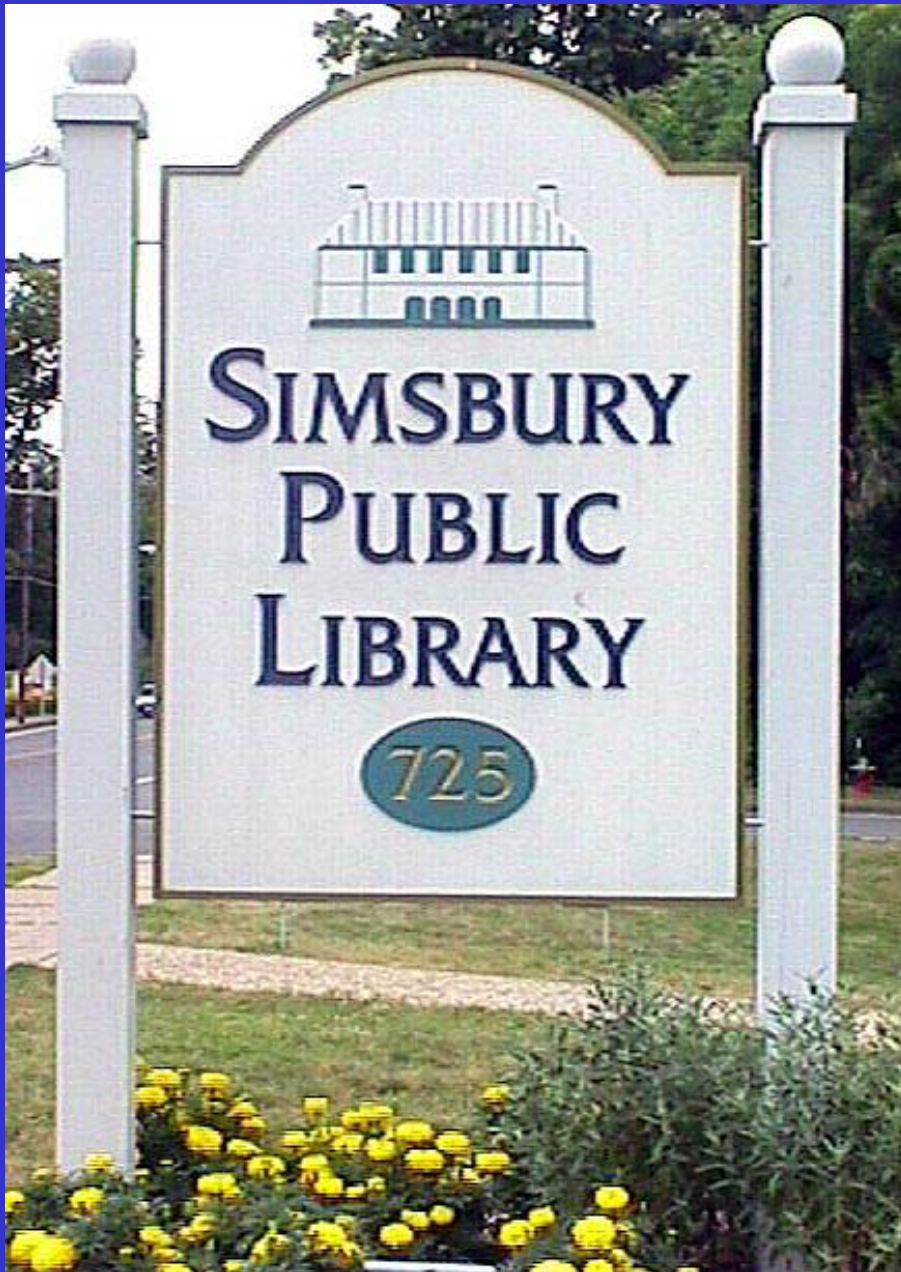
As you approach the center of town



©Linda Kennedy 2003



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Our library is on
the main street



©Linda Kennedy 2003



Situated on a
former estate with
landscaped grounds



©Linda Kennedy 2003

Next to a historic inn



©Linda Kennedy 2003

Our Chamber of Commerce is in the former library



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An old cemetery right in town





Simsbury is a nice
place to walk



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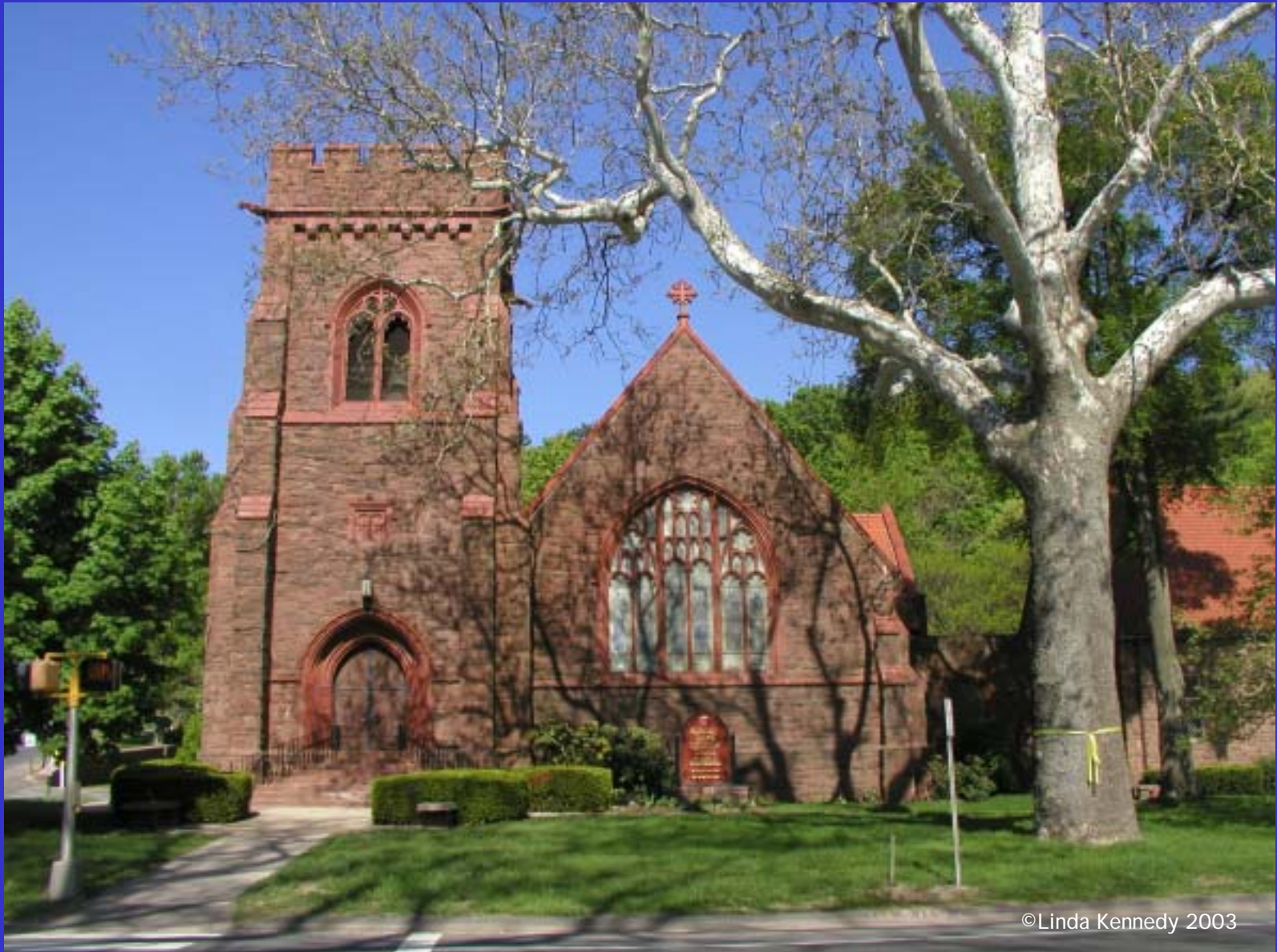


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Businesses are located in former residences



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There are many churches on the main street



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Simsbury Town Hall & Police Department



We try to preserve parks and “open space”



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There are several shopping centers in town



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Located between the main street and a walking boulevard



Ironhorse Boulevard has sports fields and nature walks



Nearby restaurants



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©Linda Kennedy 2003

Simsbury is located beside the Farmington River



Our “old”
bridge is
now a
“Bridge of
Flowers”
pedestrian
walkway.



©Linda Kennedy 2003

We have one of the oldest trees in the State



©Linda Kennedy 2003

People live here because of the historic charm



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Simsbury's Business Base



- Approx. 1300 total in town
- we believe about 600-700 of these are either
 - Home based
 - 1-2 person

There are 3 major
employers in Simsbury....



Ensign-Bickford Company - Explosives





The Hartford Insurance Company





©Linda Kennedy 2003



The Town of Simsbury



©Linda Kennedy 2003

And there are still farms in town



©Linda Kennedy 2003



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As you leave town you go through some small neighborhoods like Tariffville





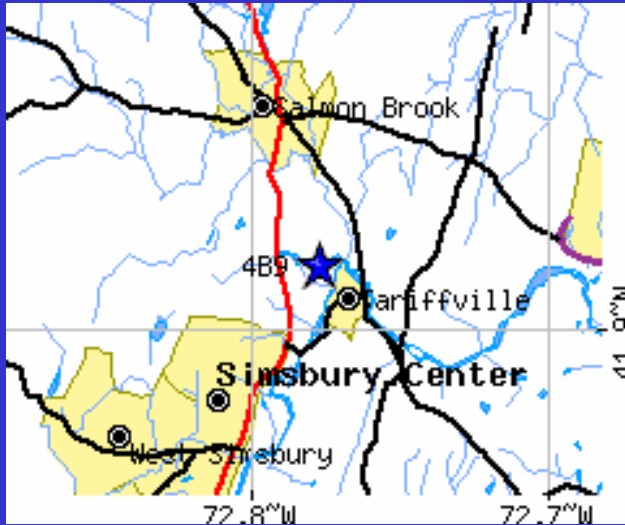
©Linda Kennedy 2003

Good bye!



©Linda Kennedy 2003

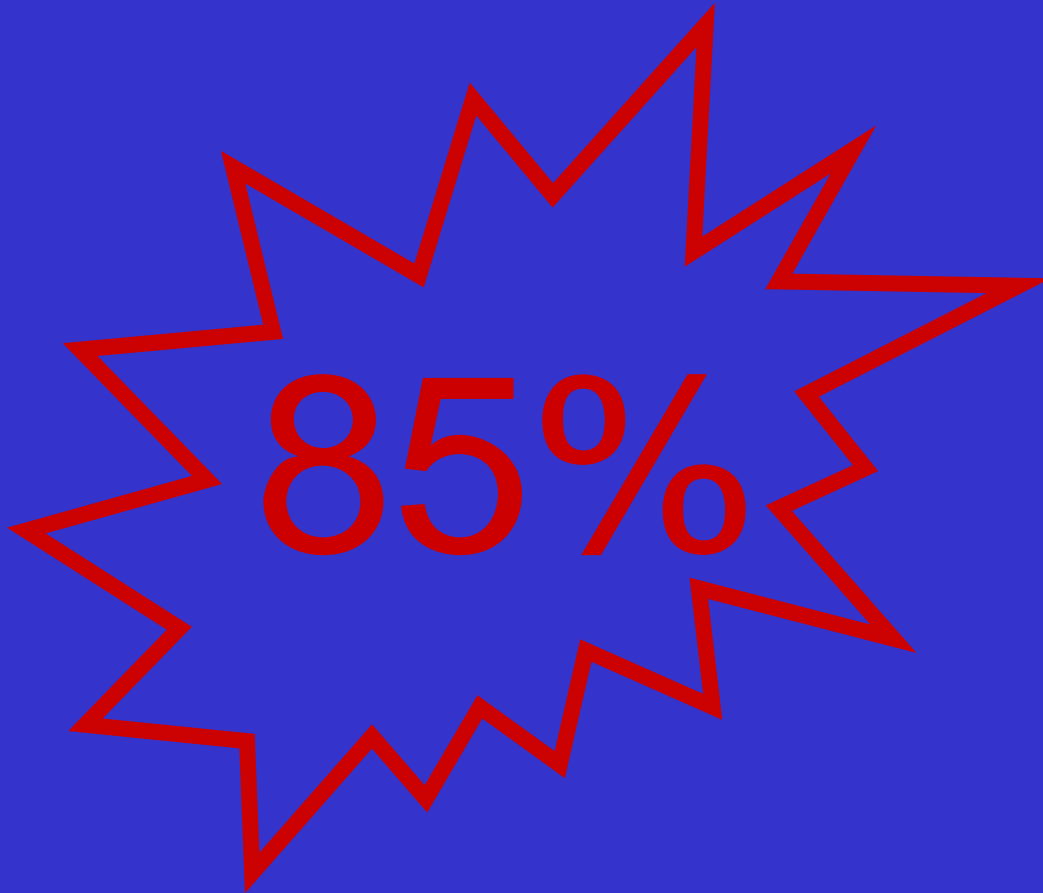
We are
surrounded by
beauty but we
still have our
challenges!



Economic Development Challenges

-
- ❑ While Simsbury is located 20 minutes from an international airport
 - ❑ We are 30 minutes from any major highways
 - ❑ Land prices are high!

The result..



85% of the
tax burden is
carried by
homeowners

Town's Challenge

**“increase business awareness
and utilization
of Library facilities”***

** per Town of Simsbury's Economic Development
Strategic Plan of 1995*

Our Response

- ❑ Create a Business Resource Center (BRC) within the Library
- ❑ Staff it with a Business Outreach Librarian who can work with town businesses, develop business programs and provide individual assistance

Why would they ask the Library for help?

- People in U.S. have high expectations of libraries.
- People use library for leisure, research, “lifelong learning” and for social interaction.
- Libraries mostly funded through town budget (taxpayers) & Friends Group
- In many cities libraries address social issues

Librarians are expected to:

- Be professionals with a Masters Degree in Library Science.
- "Know everything!"
- Perform thorough reference interviews.
- Identify & recommend resources.
- Foster information literacy & educated decision making.

In a typical day:

- ❑ We teach people how to use catalog, Internet, electronic databases.
- ❑ We show people where to find information on: purchasing a car, taking a trip, learning about diseases, what to read for pleasure, how to build a house, garden, invest, give driving directions, find words to a song and provide tourist information!

And we do this...

- by email, phone & in person
- 7 days a week
- from 9 am to 9 pm most days
- and sometimes after hours during special programs or events.

Simsbury Public Library

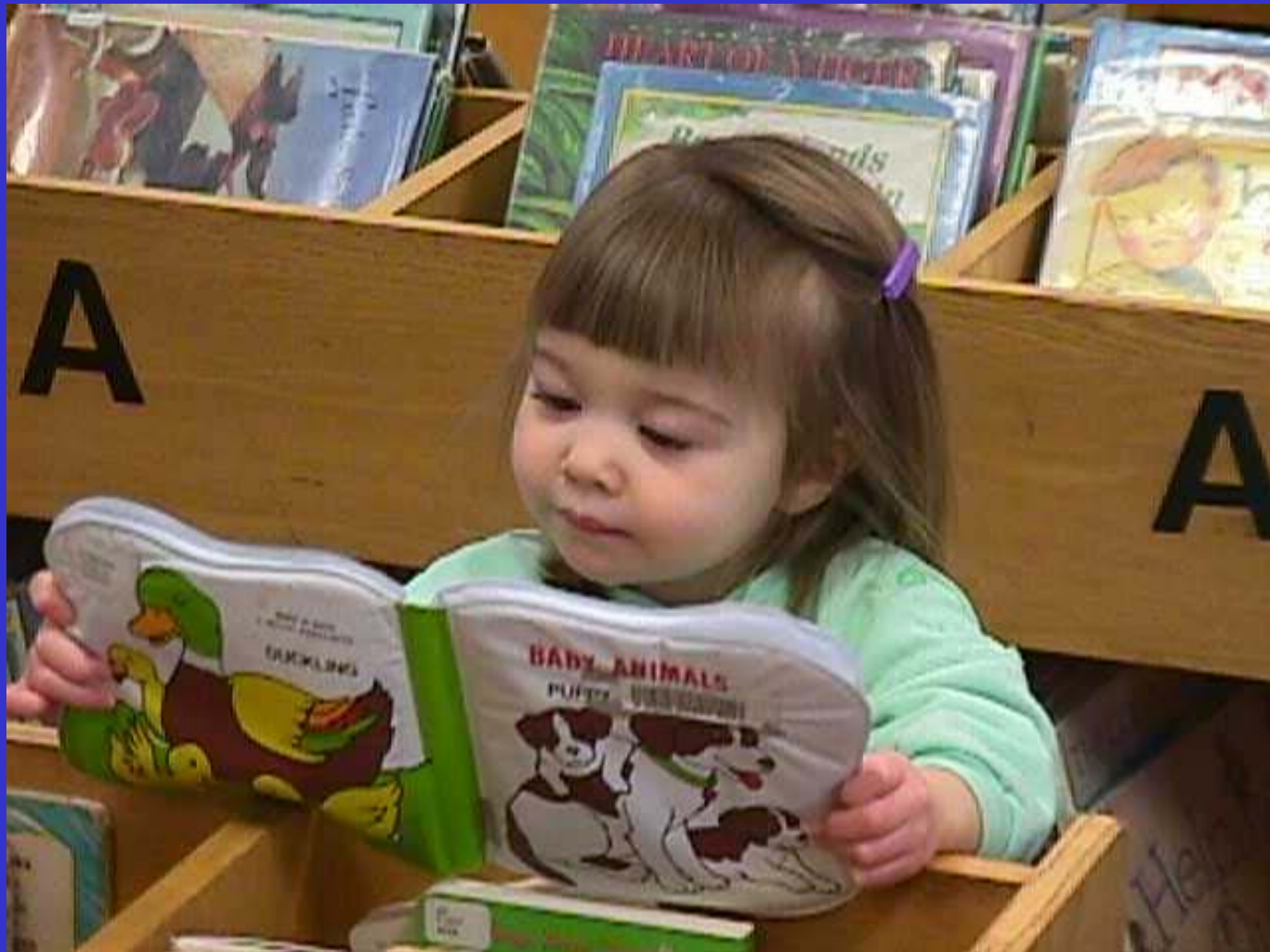


A typical public library

is a family place



We focus on early literacy



And have a very busy Children's Department



A place to play, read & talk



But not just for children



You can chat with friends



Even have a snack!



If you have a question



There's lots of reference books



computers and technology



areas for group study



or for a portable office



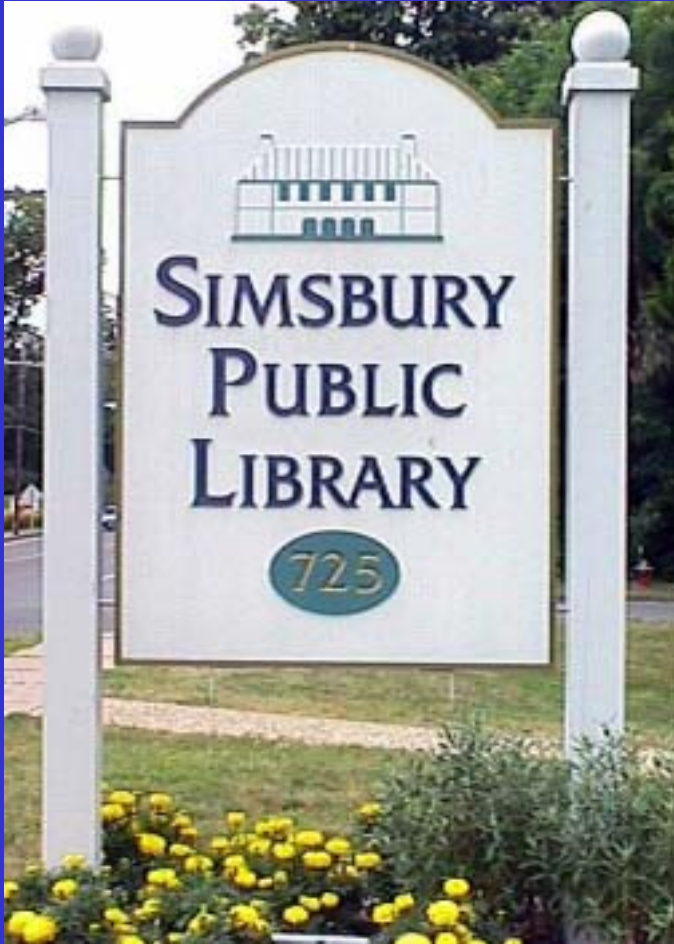
Community Information



Community Nonprofit events



And did you know?



- ❑ the Library is used by more than 850 people daily
- ❑ *About 60% of the population are active library users.*

The Simsbury Public Library

- in FY 2003, our budget is \$1,062,771 or \$46 per capita
- annual circulation, 468,405, or just over 20 circs per capita, *more than double the state average*
- circulation *jumped 7.5% in one year*
- in 2002, ranked among the top one hundred public libraries in the country (out of 9,000) by the Hennen American Public Library Ratings
- #1 out of Connecticut's 169 public libraries

Why a Business Resource Center?

- Highly visible, centrally located, neutral place
- Open a variety of hours (days & evenings)
- Web site offers 24 hour/day access
- Trained staff to gather & evaluate information & help patrons synthesize information

How did we identify need for BRC?

- ❑ Economic Development Plan of 1994
- ❑ Survey of library patrons
- ❑ Observation of Library Director and staff

The need defined

- Get potential entrepreneurs' knowledge up to level where they can articulate their business needs effectively to other organizations like S.C.O.R.E., banks, Small Business Administration (S.B.A.) etc.

BRC opened September 1999!



- Staffed initially with part-time librarian
- July 2000 became full-time position

What does it look like?

- Located in Reference Department
- Approximately 250 square feet
- Containing...



Business Reference Books



□ Business Reference arranged by function

- Job & Career
- General Business & Economy
- Company Information
- Personal Finance & Investing

Business Periodicals



Bulletin Board & Slat wall display

- Seminars & workshop information
- Information from SCORE, SBA and other area organizations



Business Services



→ 6 Internet workstations

→ 4 PCs with Office 97

→ Fax Machine

→ Photocopiers

→ Typewriter

Small Conference Area



Display table for new business materials



❑ Located near photocopy room


www.simsbury.lib.ct.us

Simsbury Public Library, Simsbury, Connecticut - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

← Back → Search Favorites History


Address <http://www.simsbury.lib.ct.us/> Go Links




THE SIMSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY
725 Highmeadow Street • Simsbury, CT 06070


Friday, 10-18-2002

Home
General Information
Catalogs/Databases
Reference Services
Business Resource Center
Business Databases
Genealogy
Young Adult Services
Children's Services
Special Needs Services
Friends of the Library
Internet Search Engines
Links
Ask A Question!



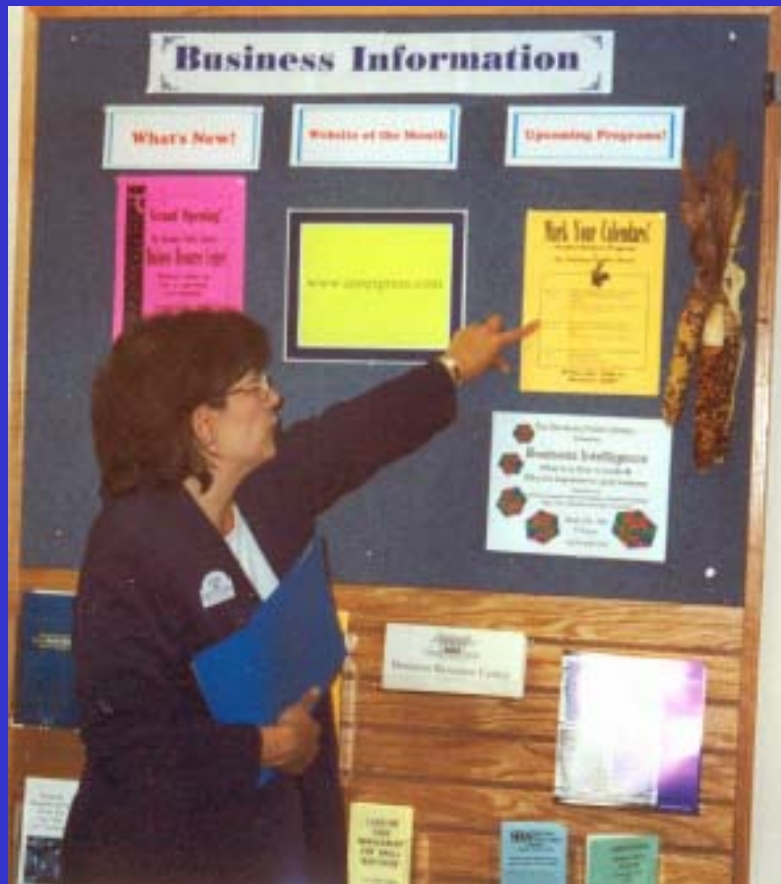


Welcome to the Simsbury Public Library!

Simsbury, CT
54 °F / 12 °C
Partly Cloudy
at 1:51 PM

[Click for Forecast](#)

Library Hours
Mon – Thurs. 9:00 – 9:00
Friday, 9:00 – 5:00
Saturday, 9:00 - 5:00
Sunday, September 15 - June 15

Business Outreach Librarian



- ❑ Very important part of service
- ❑ Visible advertisement for BRC
- ❑ Trained & knowledgeable

My Goal

- ❑ To help business people obtain quality information efficiently.
- ❑ An entrepreneur's priority should be on the synthesis of information not on the process of obtaining the information.

How do I identify needs?

- ❑ Talk with other libraries and organizations like Chamber of Commerce & SCORE
- ❑ Talk to & observe patrons
- ❑ Go out into the community

What does the Business Outreach Librarian do?

□ 17.5 hours a week I'm a "regular" Reference Librarian

□ 17.5 hours a week devoted to Business services

Business Services include:

- Collection Development
- Developing & hosting Library's business programs
- Networking & town meetings
- Outside speaking engagements
- Committee work
- Communicating with staff

Business patron #1

- Heard about BRC from Nancy
- Wants to buy health food store in town
- 1 year later wants to expand



Sheryl

Typical business patron #2

- Heard about BRC from wife
- Unemployed
- Decided to pursue dream of opening business
- 1 year later still attends workshops



Steve

What does all this cost?

- About \$75K a year
- Salary is biggest part (60%)
- Databases \$12K
- Materials - no significant increase since BRC opened
- Programs - almost nothing!

Managing the Budget

- We're more selective in our choices
- Our biggest purchase is our subscription to Reference USA database
- We take full advantage of the Digital Library databases and free web based resources
- Low cost promotion

Donations?

- No active solicitation
- \$500 donation from local bank
- "In Kind" donations- speakers fees

Keys to Success

- Commitment of Library Administration
- Flexible scheduling



Are we successful?



How do we measure success?

- ❑ # Programs doubled
- ❑ Attendance doubled
- ❑ From Sept 2002-May 2003 over 690 people attended programs
- ❑ Over 440 were “new” patrons

Connecticut Library Association Award 2002



- ❑ Excellence in Public Library Service Award
- ❑ A model for other libraries

Business Community

- ❑ Tells us how valuable the services are
- ❑ Are more willing to donate goods & services to library programs
- ❑ \$50K donated for new BRC in expanded Library
- ❑ Chamber of Commerce has offered to help fund databases

Increased Tax Base



- Hard to calculate
- We have aided new businesses
- We have kept existing businesses in town

The Future

□ Library's Long Range Plan (2000)

- 5% more business usage per year
- More databases & with remote access
- Computer Lab & Training Center
- Employment Room
- More meeting space

**To Put Business Services
on the same level as
Children's Services-**

Totally Indispensable!

Thank You!