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USA Today picks Rapid City Public Library in Top Ten Favorite Libraries in the Country

(http://www.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/10great/2008-03-06-10great-libraries_N.htm)

RAPID CITY, SD—If the measure of a community can be determined by its library, then the citizens of Rapid City can hold their heads high knowing that their library ranks among the best in the nation. Recently, the Rapid City Public Library (RCPL) was honored by USA Today as being one of 10 great libraries in the country to “find a nook and pick up a book”.

This national recognition demonstrates Rapid City Public Library’s commitment to honor traditional library services and also embrace innovation with new technologies. More than just a building, the Rapid City Public Library serves as a community gathering place, offering a large array of materials and services to the public who are thirsty for information, culture, entertainment ... and even a cappuccino.

What also makes RCPL appear in the top ten list is how it exists in the virtual world, bringing services directly to the patron through extensive databases, downloadable audiobooks, online tutor assistance, Ask-a-Librarian services and various social networking tools, all available on the library’s website, www.rapidcitylibrary.org. The website can be accessed through the library’s public wifi connection, at public access computer stations, from your office, or even from the comfort of your own home.

According to a December 30, 2007 Pew Research Center article http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/222/presentation_display.asp, libraries are crucial to address the needs of those who are not skilled in computer use or are unable to access the Internet. Libraries are still trusted sources for information, but how the information is delivered has changed.

With the advent of the Internet, staying relevant is a very real issue for many libraries across the country. The days of going to a dimly lit austere building full of moldering, dusty books and flipping through a card catalog are long gone now that a few keystrokes will bring the required information right to the user.

The Rapid City Public Library was among the first libraries in the country to recognize this challenge and assume the role of trendsetter, using new technologies in order to bring patrons a richer experience while still keeping the tradition of personal library service alive. Instead of trying to figure out how to compete head-to-head with online services, the library incorporates them to deliver a richer service that people can trust and rely on.

Come visit Rapid City Public Library Downtown at 610 Quincy Street, the new Rapid City Public Library North at the General Beadle Community School, or online at www.rapidcitylibrary.org. See why the Rapid City libraries are ranked among the best in the nation, but more importantly why they are the pride of the Rapid City community.

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