

Scenic's 2010 budget takes hit

Scenic Regional Library took a significant hit in its operating budget for the new year -- down almost 11 percent from this year's plan, thanks to a court-ordered reduction in the library's property tax rate.

The Board of Trustees of Scenic Regional Library approved the system's new operating budget at its meeting on Dec. 15. The total operating budget for the library system that serves Franklin, Gasconade and Warren Counties is \$2,081,883. This is an overall decrease of 10.92 percent from the 2009 budget.

The budget is based on the library system's estimated income for 2010. Included is an estimated \$1,792,599 from the operating tax levied in each county served by the regional library system.

The anticipated receipts are \$1,231,169 from Franklin County, \$200,865 from Gasconade County and \$360,565 from Warren County. These estimates are based

on historical trends and when actual assessed valuation figures are released, reductions in the anticipated receipts as well as projected expenditures may be required, system officials said.

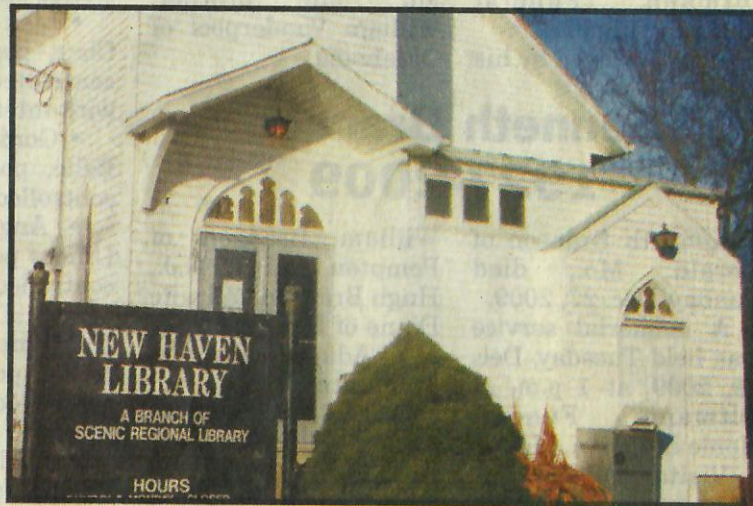
The major drop in income came from a court-ordered reduction of the Franklin County levy from 9.11 cents to 7.58 cents. This represented a 16.7-percent decrease in revenue, or a projected \$242,233.

Further budget adjustments will be necessary after the final disposition of lawsuits involving the Franklin County Library District's tax levy.

Other estimated receipts included in the operating budget are: \$33,900 from surtax; \$2,150 from intangible taxes; and \$34,000 in interest with \$16,500 of that interest remaining with the reserve funds.

Also budgeted is \$45,400 in Miscellaneous Income, which includes payments for lost or

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How budget cuts will affect the local branch of Scenic Regional Library, above, remains to be seen. However, library system officials warn that service cuts at all locations are possible.

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damaged materials, video fines, copy machine receipts, book sales and donations.

State Aid to Public Libraries is expected to be \$63,864 and is determined by the population of the three county library districts based on census data from 2000. No revenue from state equalization funds or the out-of-state Athletes and Entertainers tax has been budgeted.

Funds Forward is budgeted at \$85,084, which includes end-of-the-year operating bank balances, petty cash, and gift or endowment funds.

The total amount budgeted for the three county library system is \$2,081,883. The 2009 budget total was \$2,337,022.

The reduced budget will affect services in a number of ways, system officials said. Fewer materials will be purchased, specialized databases may be discontinued, expansion and improvement of facilities will be postponed, children's and adult programming will be restricted, equipment upgrades will be delayed and new initiatives to provide service to underserved populations will be curtailed.

For 2010, the "Materials" section of the budget has been dropped by 20.34 percent down to \$495,829. Of this amount, \$249,829 has been earmarked for the purchase of books; \$75,000 for videos, DVDs, compact discs, recorded books and downloadable books; and \$16,500 for magazines and newspaper subscriptions for the seven libraries in the regional system.

Other expenditures in this section include \$100,500 for printed reference materials and online databases that may be accessed at the libraries as well as remotely from home or businesses. The remaining \$8,000 is for purchase of local newspapers on microfilm.