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Libraries Serve Key Role as E-Government Expands

Rapid City, S.D. - July 10, 2009 – According to a study released by the American Library Association, as E-government expands libraries are on the front lines of connecting people with essential government resources. From providing computers with internet access to apply for unemployment or complete government forms to helping patrons navigate government websites and find resources, libraries are essential to providing E-government services.

E-government refers to the use of information and communication technology to provide and improve government services, transactions and interactions with citizens. According to the State of South Dakota’s website, sd.gov, 97 percent of the state’s transactions with citizens can be done online.

“The Rapid City Public Library is a valuable resource for access to E-government services in the Rapid City community,” said John Pappas, outreach services coordinator. “The library staff strives to help patrons learn how to use computers and find the information they need.”

The Rapid City Public Library has 93 computers at two locations as well as free Wi-Fi access. These computers offer internet access for patrons to use to search government websites, set up email accounts, apply for assistance or complete any other task the patron may need to do. The library also has computers specifically for patrons that need to use word processing software for such items as creating resumes, writing letters, or typing reports.

In addition, the Rapid City Public Library offers free access to numerous online databases including Career Library, a database that allows patrons to create resumes, research occupations, and complete assessment tests; Morningstar, an investment research center; and Medline Plus, a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health that offers medical information.

For additional information on the library and services offered, visit www.rapidcitylibrary.org. To read the complete American Library Association report on U.S. Public Libraries and E-Government Services, visit <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/ors/plftas/IssuesBrief-Egov.pdf>.

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The Rapid City Public Library has served the Rapid City area since 1879, and now has two locations, the downtown library at 610 Quincy Street and the north library within General Beadle Elementary School at 10 Van Buren St. Both offer print and electronic resources for adults, young adults and children as well as computers and Internet access and a variety of programs and events. In March 2008, USA Today named the Rapid City Public Library's downtown library as one of the nation's 10 greatest places to "Find a Nook and Read a Book."

Find video footage of RCPL events at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/rapidcitylibrary>

Find photos of RCPL events at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/rcpl/>