

City Librarian's Report

March 1990

I. Statistics

Circulation increased 5.5% (4,026 items) over March 1989. Circulation for the past twelve months is up 4.9% (38,285 items) over the previous twelve months. The library has experienced three record-breaking months of circulation since changing the loan periods in January. Adult services recorded a 5% increase. Removing the restriction on new fiction titles and allowing patrons to keep materials longer has proven to be very popular with the public.

Service statistics increased 2.6% and are up 2.8% (2,639 requests) for the past twelve month period. Increased circulation and staff assistance to the public is stressing our ability to provide adequate service. If circulation and service statistics continue to increase at the present rate, financial resources will have to be added to supply the personnel to provide these services.

The main library was open 26 days this month, one day less than last year. (We were closed for the staff institute day.) However, patron usage increased 6.4% (2,033 patrons) over March 1989.

II. Budget

The budget is 91.1% spent/encumbered. With \$23,041 remaining in the materials budget and \$41,700 in outstanding orders, this account should easily be spent.

Revenue from the replacement tax is still well below projections. As of April 12, the library has received only \$150,000 of the anticipated \$195,000. This amounts to a \$20,000 loss compared to revenue received in 1988/89 and a loss of \$45,000 for 1989/90 revenue. I estimate that the carry-over funds and the money in the three endowments will enable the library to pay its normal bills for the first two months of fiscal year 1990/91. Two additional replacement tax disbursements are anticipated.

Rolling Prairie Library has not been notified by CLSI as to when the new operating system for their Altos computer will be arriving. I will update this report at the Board meeting. (A copy of the annual report on automation from Library Journal is attached.)

III. Collection Development

Twenty laser discs (all feature films and mostly classics) were ordered. This new collection will be evaluated in a few months to determine its feasibility based upon circulation and patron response.

The adult services department has contacted various state libraries and historical societies for their recommendations on the best state history books, travel guides, and bed and breakfast guides. This information will be used to expand and update materials in our travel and history collection. Funds from the Cantoni endowment will be used to purchase new materials.

The Herald & Review is transferring part of their clipping file to our local history room. We have previously reviewed these clippings and used these materials to supplement our local history collection. In addition, we received a history on the Mueller family and business from Greg Ward.

A review of the "1989 Best Books for Young Adults" indicates that DPL either owns or has on order many of the titles listed. Thanks to the work of Cathy Ritchie, this collection is once again gaining circulation and responding to the needs of young adults. Ms. Ritchie has been asked by Rolling Prairie Library System to present a "YA Collection" workshop on April 20 for area librarians.

The technical services department has been working on decreasing the lag time in pulling cards for withdrawn items from the various card catalogs. In February and March, over 12,375 cards were pulled. In addition to many hours of staff time involved, a volunteer has been assisting the department in pulling these cards.

Only a few students from District 61 have used the Apple computer during its first month at the library. Hopefully, the use of this computer will increase during April and May.

IV. Personnel

The staff institute day was very successful. Mrs. Gibson and I received many comments from the staff about this event which was planned by the staff development committee. Compared to both state and national meetings I have attended, the quality of our program is superior because it is geared specifically to the needs of our staff.

Seven DPL staff members attended the "Working Smarter, Not Longer or Harder" workshop sponsored by DPL and the Small Business Council. The meeting was so popular that the location was changed from the library

Katie Gross, children's librarian, attended the Children's Literature Institute at Northern Illinois University which featured several well-known children's authors.

V. Public Relations

The children's department was visited by 15 groups during March. Mrs. Gross told stories to 500 people at the Young Author's Assembly at Dennis School and 100 fifth and sixth grade students at Baum School.

Shirley Apley, adult services librarian, gave a St. Patrick's Day program for the Americana Nursing Center.

More than 30 people per day are now using the Business Information Center. INFOTRAC continues to be one of the most popular features of the center and is used by patrons of all ages. The BIC also sponsored a booth at the Small Business Expo which was visited by over 500 people.

National Library Week is April 22-28. Some of the scheduled events include the "Wall of Stars" and "Night of a Thousand Stars", a family read-aloud.

VI. Other

Orville J. Miller, Jr. requested that I ask the Board to forgive his daughter's fine of \$4.20. This fine was incurred when his daughter kept seven books six days overdue, assuming that the library still had a grace period. I informed Mr. Miller that the library changed its policy effective January 2, 1990. Mr. Miller stated that his family was unaware of the change, as were some of their friends. Therefore, he feels that the Board should forgive his daughter's fine.

The library publicized the change during December 1989 through local newspapers, television, and radio. Patrons who checked materials out in December, January, and February were handed informational slips which explained the change. A copy of the information is also taped to each check-out station, with the part about no grace period underlined in red ink. I regret that Mr. Miller's daughter was unaware of our policy change; however, the materials were returned late. I believe that the Board would be setting a precedent by forgiving the fine. Mr. Miller stated that he plans to take this matter to the media if the Board refuses to forgive the fine.