

City Librarian's Report

March 1989

I. Statistics

March circulation increased 2% (1,653 items) over March 1988 and is the highest March circulation recorded. Twelve month circulation is up 2.5% (18,647 items) compared with the previous twelve months. Gains were recorded in adult (2%), young adult (13%), videocassettes (14%), and audiocassettes (76%).

Use of the library by patrons closely paralleled circulation with a 4% (1988 patrons) increase over March 1988. Average daily attendance was 1,122 patrons for March 1989. Service statistics increased 3% over March 1988, however, they are down 14% for the twelve month period. As I explained in previous reports, part of the reason for the decline in service statistics is the fact that we counted opening the locked videocassette cases as service statistics. When the cases were unlocked, service statistics dropped. In July 1989, service statistics will no longer reflect videocassette assists, and I expect a slow but steady increase in service provided by the staff.

At the City Council budget hearing on March 27, Mayor Anderson expressed concern about the increasing usage of DPL materials by patrons who live outside of Decatur. During calendar year 1988, 37,036 items were borrowed from Decatur Public Library through reciprocal borrowing. An additional 7,209 items were borrowed through inter-library loan, or 6% of DPL's total circulation. As area libraries convert to district libraries and annex the land surrounding Decatur, I see a continued increase in the use of Decatur Public Library's collections with a corresponding decrease in funds generated from the sale of non-resident library cards.

II. Budget

The 1988/89 budget is 90% spent. I estimate that the library will save \$12,000 in regular salaries, however, this will be offset by temporary salaries and insurance costs. I estimate saving \$26,000 of the 1988/89 budget due to large savings in natural gas, electricity, and the \$5,000 contingency line item.

In study session on March 27, the City Council reviewed the proposed 1989/90 budget. The budget was tentatively approved with formal Council action scheduled for April 17. I want to thank the Board for their appearance at the study session.

weeded is several months behind schedule. A volunteer (a former professional librarian) is now helping and has reduced the time period between when the book is withdrawn from the shelf and when the catalog cards are removed. Weeding is helping to increase circulation, according to Ms. Apley in Adult Services. Weeded materials will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale to be held on April 15.

The Adult Services Department has brought the science fiction titles together to form a Sf collection. This collection will be housed on the south wall of the main floor of the library in the fiction area. The mystery collection, formerly housed there, has been moved just to the east and where additional shelves were added for future growth of the mystery collection.

Mr. Merrick, Reference Librarian, reports that the number of inter-library loans not picked up has increased during the past few months. We believe the reason for this is that patrons feel less obligated to pick up the materials when they have not paid for the service.

I would like to remind the Board members to use the CD-ROM magazine index on display in the reference department. CD-ROM is one of the major advances in providing large amounts of data at a relatively inexpensive price. The magazine index on display indexes 200 titles for the past five years.

IV. Personnel

Staff training in March was extensive. Shirley Apley, Arthur Gross, and J. Merrick attended training sessions at the Public Library Association workshop. Carol Gibson and several members of our LSCA grant advisory committee toured Schaumburg Public Library. Thirty staff members attended a shoplifting seminar arranged by the staff development committee.

Katie Gross and Kellie Flynn attended a story telling program at Lincoln Library. Joyce Robinson, Mary Lou Dwyer, Katie Gross, and Leta Burch attended a program given by author/illustrator Steven Kellogg at Decatur's Young Authors program.

Sharon Bakula, Robbie Brooks, Susan Gentry, and Grace Veach attended workshops on cataloging.

The number of staff and the time for staff training has greatly increased during the past two years. I want to thank the Board for its strong support in promoting staff training and for providing the funding for this training.

V. Public Relations

The Library continues to receive heavy coverage in the local media with Mrs. Gibson frequently speaking on WSOY. The extension staff records mini book reviews on WXFM, and there were several articles in the Herald & Review.

Special library programs included a book talk by Leta Burch (Staff Artist) to the Barn Colony Artists, the YA Connection programs, Wally Ward's presentation of Frog and Toad stories, and numerous children's story times and class tours.

The candidates meeting on Saturday, April 1 was attended by 84 people.

A major public relations effort will be made during National Library Week, April 10-15. Staff will speak every day on WSOY and WDZ about library programs and events.

During the past year, publicity about the Library and its collection and programs has increased. I believe that the two new circulation records set during January and March are directly related to our increased public relations and the hard work of the staff to serve the public.

VI. Other

Report on Board/Staff Relations Task Force.

1. Communications: A quarterly meeting of the staff and administration was held in early March for all staff. A monthly administrative newsletter was issued in March informing staff of upcoming events and what the administration was working on. Department heads were advised to hold regular department meetings and to report any findings from these meetings in their monthly reports to their supervisors.

2. The staff development committee has been tasked with the responsibility of developing an orientation program for the staff.

3. Some of the many continuing educational opportunities available to the staff are listed in this report.

4. Security for library employees will be improved with the installation of a keyless lock for the rear entrance on April 17. Air quality in the library was tested by the Illinois Department of Labor and was found to be within all recommended limits. A copy of the report was provided to the staff.