

City Librarian's Report
For the July 21, 1994 Meeting

Of The
Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees

On June 30, 1994 Elizabeth Kent assumed the position of Head of Circulation Division. She comes to us as a recent graduate of the Master's Degree program at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Her previous library experience includes directing a mental health institute library, branch library work at a regional public library, and interlibrary loan work at a public library. I am delighted to have her on the staff.

The management negotiating team met with bargaining unit negotiators on June 20, 1994. The result of that meeting was a basic understanding on the terms for a new contract. A complete contract proposal has been sent to the bargaining unit negotiation team for consideration and a meeting should be set shortly to discuss remaining questions on the proposed contract.

From June 24th through June 28 I attended the Annual Conference of the American Library Association at Miami Beach. While there I completed a three year term on the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association and participated in deliberations of the PLA Ad-Hoc Committee on LSCA Reauthorization of which I am a member. In addition to visiting exhibits, I held discussions with representatives from GEAC about the costs of automation upgrading including the possibility of our rejoining the Rolling Prairie Automation Network. A highlight of the conference was a daylong pre-conference on Violence in the Library: Protecting Staff and Patrons put on by Library Administration and Management Association, a division of ALA. This preconference presented many ideas on building security and staff security procedures. I will be discussing with the Board and library staff in the coming months additional security measures that we might take to increase both staff and patron security.

As of July 18, we will have completed 21.15 % of our fiscal year. Expenditures and encumbrances stand at 28.4% of our budget. As mentioned last month our book budget encumbrances are high (currently 77.2% of budget) due to annual purchase orders with our major suppliers.

On Friday July 15th, as I write this, we are in the process of switching to our new phone system. Included in this process is joining the City of Decatur's Centrex system

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which will entail new phone numbers for the Library. By joining the city's centrex system all calls to the city as well as all bookmobile computer use will be treated as intercom calls and will result in considerable savings on an annual basis. As mentioned in my last report, the voice mail and full automated attendant features of the new system will be installed several weeks after the initial switchover.

On June 15th I received a request for reconsideration of library material from a library user for the book: *The Penguin Book of Lesbian Short Stories*. As per library policy for such requests, I have appointed a committee of three librarians who are reviewing the book in light of our materials selection policy and will be making a recommendation to me concerning the status of the book. I have indicated to the individuals questioning the book that I will have a decision on its retention in the collection by the first of August. The book is being objected to not for its content but on the basis of its title.

Use statistics, as indicated on the enclosed statistical sheets, were up substantially over June of 1993. Children's circulation was up 22.22% over last year. The Summer Reading program has been enthusiastically received by participants and current main library registration figures show that 1,880 individuals have joined the program so far. In addition the department recorded 31 group visits during the month. The Extension Department shows an 18.9% increase in circulation for Bookmobile 547. Much of this increase is due to the Maryland and Linwood stop benefitting from the closure of Lost Bridge Road. User assists continue to show an increase.

During the month of June 71 volunteers gave 309 hours of service to the Library. In coming months an increased effort will be made to find additional volunteers for the Shilling Local History Room to meet the demand for additional hours of service for the room.

Marilyn Shroyer our outreach coordinator, participated in the Senior Citizens Health Fair on June 16th. She is exploring new sites for community collections including the St. Mary's Life Enrichment Center and a new day care center on the city's near north side. Currently, through volunteers, the Library provides home library service to 35 individuals.

Bookmobile staff are considering ways of increasing the visibility of our bookmobiles. One method would be to put graphic designs on the sides of each bookmobile. This idea is currently under exploration. Additional effort is going into planning uniform signage for each bookmobile stop so that stops, and service times will be more visible for potential users.

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In addition to my attendance at the ALA Annual Conference, Arthur and Katie Gross attended courtesy of the Friends of the Library. Both report that the conference was a valuable experience and brought back new ideas for library services and programs. Joan Bauer attended a workshop on economic development and the role of the librarian sponsored by the Rural Affairs department at Western Illinois University. Joan Bauer, Harriet Berbaum, and Margie Woollitz attended the MIRAGE workshop on writing annotated bibliographies. Jerald Merrick continues his work with the Chamber of Commerce and was named Commodore of the Month for the month of June. Steve Craven is working with Kathy Miller from the City concerning the historic sites in Decatur and what information is in our Shilling Local History Room. Elizabeth Kent is attending a grant writing course at the University of Illinois.

Our building service personnel remain busy. Projects completed during the month included the installation of a new toilet in Bookmobile 547, pulling cable to extend access to the technical service network to adult service office areas, repairing several faucets, installing the new coin changer given by the Friends of the Library on the main floor, patching roof cap, repairing holes in roof flashing and repairing 85 videos.