

City Librarian's Report
October 1990

I. Statistics

October circulation increased 3% (2190 items) over October 1989. Circulation for the past twelve months is up 2% (14,781 items) compared to the previous twelve month period. The largest gains were in adult, young adult, and audio-visual materials; however, circulation of children's materials declined in both the main library and the book-mobiles. This decline has occurred over the past twelve months.

Patron assists by the staff increased by 26% (887 assists) over October 1989. The number of patrons entering the Library also increased--up 14%. Overall circulation, patron usage, and patron assists have shown healthy increases over the past twelve months.

II. Budget

With one-half of the budget year completed, 47.3% of the funds are spent and an additional 2.8% is encumbered. The materials budget is 50% spent and 65.6% encumbered.

The per capita grant check arrived for \$93,939, along with the first quarterly BIC reimbursement of \$5,400.

October was the first month for increased fines on overdue materials. This increase, combined with recently changed circulation periods, resulted in a 35% increase in fine revenue this month.

	fines
October 1988	\$4,729
October 1989	4,685
October 1990	6,404

The library has a practice of allowing patrons to return overdue materials at any time and pay only the fine of \$6.30 (42 days maximum at \$.15 per day). These accounts which have been turned over to the Credit Bureau cost the library 33% of the total bill (materials and fines). After reviewing this practice with the staff, I recommend that returns only be allowed for one year after the due date. After one year, the patron will receive no credit for materials returned and will be required to pay the entire cost of the item plus the fine. One year allows the patron adequate time to return materials. The vast majority of returns are made within one year. After one year, the materials not returned are withdrawn or replaced.

III. Collection Development

The Altos computer is still producing a warning message at shutdown. Because of this problem, we have not accepted the system and have made only one lease/purchase payment. Our other problem--the printer error--was caused by incorrect data being inputted by our staff into the MARC PARMs program. This has been corrected and is working properly.

The catalog department has been working on refining the MARC PARMs options. Some of the initial choices made are being changed to correspond to our cataloging practices. As noted above, one error caused the printer to error. This fine tuning should be completed during November. Eight hundred thirty-seven new titles were cataloged and entered into the MARC database in October. Our database lists 140,435 titles as of October 2, 1990.

The service desks in the basement have been relocated into one large service area. This new arrangement will reduce the need to staff two separate service areas and provide increased visibility of the staff. This re-arrangement was recommended by the adult services and reference staffs. A similar arrangement will be considered for the main floor.

IV. Personnel

Ellen Durbin, audio-visual page, is on leave without pay for medical reasons. Our half-time and temporary pages have tried to cover most of Mrs. Durbin's hours. We were blessed when Bill Eisenhower asked to perform community service at the library. He has been shelving books and periodicals almost daily since October 18 and has been a big help in reducing the backlog of materials.

Several staff members have been used to fill staffing shortages due to illness and vacations. I want to thank these staff members for their willingness to help in times of need. I also want to thank all of the regular staff for giving extra effort to accomplish the work with fewer staff members.

V. Public Relations

The League of Women Voters and the Library sponsored two "meet the candidates" forums. For the first time, each meeting was attended by an overflow crowd. WSOY broadcasted the meetings and we received excellent coverage in the Herald & Review. The League also held a voter registration

drive at the library from October 1-6; 120 people were registered.

The Adult Services department's Illinois Author series held its first program on October 13, featuring mystery writer Barbara D'Amato. Attendance was 13.

We received a front page picture in the Sunday Herald & Review following a preschool storytelling program at the library by a group of senior Girl Scouts. Mrs. Gibson is on the Girl Scout board.

Mark Sorensen presented the October Books-Between-Bites program, entitled A Political Passage: The Life of William G. Stratton.

The Friends of the Library held their semi-annual book sale on Friday and Saturday, October 26 and 27. During the two days, \$1,800 worth of materials were sold.

VI. Other

The Library has received official notice that both the Hope Welty Public Library District and the Blue Mound Public Library District are expanding their territory. With the addition of these two new districts, we are almost surrounded by library districts. The exceptions are Forsyth and Harristown.

In addition, a proposed change in district library law would require municipal libraries (when the city annexes territory already in a library district) to prove that the annexation would not harm the library district. If this proposal is adopted, it will severely hurt the municipal libraries, including Decatur Public Library. Each time the city of Decatur annexes property, DPL would have to petition the court and prove that the library district would not be hurt by losing the property tax dollars. If we did not petition the court, the library property tax money would stay in the library district. I have asked the City Manager to help us lobby against this proposal.

I am reviewing two proposals for uninterruptible power systems (UPS). Because of the size and complexity of the programs in our Altos computer, any type of power disturbances (sags, surges, noise, brownout and blackout) could cause serious damage to our database. A UPS prevents this problem by filtering the power and providing an uninterruptible power supply. Damage to our database caused by a power disturbance could be very costly to repair, if repairable. A UPS costs between \$4,000 and \$6,000. Bruce Nims of Nims & Associates is assisting me in selecting the best UPS. The UPS is budgeted in the Bridges Fund.