

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY LIBRARIAN
1989/90

The Decatur Public Library Board of Trustees adopted a five year long range plan in September 1989. This plan is a road map for the library to follow in meeting the needs of the citizens of Decatur. Seven major goals were established for the library to accomplish during these five years. A mission statement was also adopted. This annual report is based upon the library's progress toward meeting its mission.

"The mission of the Decatur Public Library is to provide access to and promote the use of materials that serve the informational, recreational, educational, and cultural needs of the community. Access to information and ideas will be assured through an efficient and effective staff, working in adequate facilities commensurate with sound and responsible fiscal planning."

1. "Provide access"

The statement "Decatur Public Library is to provide access" requires the library to constantly review its services and resources and determine how they are meeting the needs of the citizens of Decatur. A need existed in Decatur for a centralized location of information concerning economic development. The Business Information Center (BIC) was established with a \$78,535 LSCA grant to purchase materials and develop programs relating to economic development.

Jan Mandernach was hired as project coordinator and has done an excellent job of promoting the BIC. Since its opening in November 1989, 900 people have received assistance and an additional 2,500 people have used its resources. One of the BIC's major resources has been the INFOTRAC computerized bibliographic database. INFOTRAC is used almost constantly by business people and students in their search for information. Because of the success of the BIC program, a second year grant proposal has been written to continue expanding the services provided.

Access to the library's resources was improved with the installation of a direct telephone line to the reference department. Additionally, a fax machine was purchased with funding from the Illinois State Library to provide faster exchanges of information. Fax service is now available to all library patrons.

dropped the grace period. The Adult Services department removed the limit on the number of fiction titles a patron could check out at one time. Both of these changes received public support, and increased circulation has been a direct result of these changes.

Circulation for 1989/90 increased 5% (39,750 items) over 1988/89. In less than five years, annual library circulation has increased from 700,000 to 817,697 items. Decatur's per capita circulation rate is 8.7 items, compared to the state average of 6.5.

As circulation has grown, so has the number of patrons using the library. A record 346,083 people used the main library facilities, a 5% increase over 1988/89. Staff contacts in providing service to patrons increased 2.5% over 1988/89, for a total of 96,343. In addition, the library received 52,019 telephone calls.

Increased access to Decatur Public Library was provided by an agreement with Millikin University which allows patrons from both organizations to use their library cards at either facility. In addition, Decatur patrons are now eligible to borrow materials from 500 Illinois public libraries through the Illinois intra-system reciprocal borrowing agreement.

Access to a wide variety of materials is essential to library patrons. In 1989/90, \$287,988 was spent on new materials, which is \$47,083 more than the previous year. A total of 17,029 new items were added to the collections, for a grand total of 256,906 items owned.

The Technical Services department improved access to the collections by reclassifying the adult biographies, updating the music authority file heading to the correct AACR2 form, and updating subjects with changed dewey numbers. Changes and new purchases resulted in 179,210 catalog cards being filed or pulled, 2,465 items recataloged, 12,338 volumes withdrawn, and 5,640 subject headings changed.

Services were expanded to serve people outside of the library. Collections of materials were made available to residents of the new county jail, to the adolescent unit of St. Mary's Hospital, for storytellers in the pediatric ward at Decatur Memorial Hospital, at the Orlando House, and at St. Patrick's school. The Extension department outreach services circulation increased almost 100% from 7,446 in 1988/89 to 14,573 in 1989/90.

2. "Promote the use of materials"

The library is a business. Businesses must "promote the use of materials" or remain stagnant or possibly fail. Use of the local media to get the business message out is vital. In 1989/90, we issued 34 media releases and received coverage in approximately 34 additional feature news stories in the Herald & Review or the Decatur Tribune. We aired on local radio stations WSOY, WXFM, and WDZ approximately 119 times through interviews and spots--in addition to 36 paid advertising spots funded with LSCA money--for a total of 155. We also received television coverage on at least 13 occasions.

Internally, the library re-designed the monthly newsletter to enhance public awareness of library services and events. A weekly listing of events at the library is being posted near the main entrance. Library materials were featured in 98 displays around the building.

Library programs were attended by 7,649 people, representing 8% of Decatur's population. We provided a learning experience to 159 groups for tours and class visits, 64 adult and young adult programs were sponsored, and the children's department held 178 programs. The general public used library meeting rooms to hold 145 meetings attended by an estimated 3,037 people.

Last summer, 2,120 children participated in "The Great Book Hunt", the annual summer reading program. Enrollment in this program has doubled over the last six years. I want to thank Dr. Richard Lockmiller, the Bridges Trust Fund, the Decatur Area Arts Council, and the Friends of the Library for their continued support of this program.

Three American Institute of Discussion read-and-discuss courses were held at the library this year: "Paths of Life", "Designs for Living", and "Human Relationships". Carol Gibson and Leta Burch moderated the courses.

The library also participated in numerous fairs and expos, including: Project READ-a-thon, Central Illinois Computerfest, Black History Fair, Small Business Expo, Baby Shower, and Summerfest.

September was designated National Library Card sign-up month, and 1,000 patrons were registered. For the year, 5,440 new registrations were recorded. The library has 57,171 borrower cards in force and sold 149 non-resident cards.

frequently call and request stories about the library and its programs. I want to thank all the staff and board members who have worked so hard in this endeavor.

3. "Access to information and ideas will be assured through an efficient and effective staff"

The Staff Development Committee played a key role in creating an effective staff development program in 1989/90. An employee handbook was produced to orient new employees. In addition, tours of eight libraries were scheduled for the staff to see how other libraries operate. The annual staff institute day is also planned by this committee. Featured speaker Linda Dowling presented a program on effective communications and win-win negotiations.

The Staff Advisory Committee, which was formed in June 1989, met monthly with administration to discuss concerns relative to the operation of the library. This committee was responsible for the development of an evaluation tool used by staff to evaluate supervisors and administration. The Board of Trustees dropped the "sick leave occurrence rule" on the recommendation of this committee. Other issues this committee worked on include a staff recognition program, a sick leave bank, and fairness.

Department heads attended a day-long seminar on teamwork. One of the lessons learned from this seminar was the need to have greater staff participation in planning this type of program. One suggestion which was implemented from the program was quality circles, which are now working in two areas of the library.

Staff development included seminars, institutes, workshops, classes, and programs for learning about jobs and new trends. Some of these include the Children's Literature Institute, Young Author's Program, Providing Excellent Customer Service, Working Smarter--Not Longer or Harder, Literature for Adolescents, Volunteer Management, supervisory safety training, In Search of Excellence, and Prejudice Reduction Training. Ideas and suggestions from these programs have been implemented in the operation of the library.

Three library staff members are working on advanced degrees. Kellie Flynn and Beverly Roelleke received grants from the Illinois State Library to work on their MLS degree. Seven additional staff members are taking college courses related to

indexed from the Herald and Review, deliver materials to homebound patrons, and perform numerous other tasks both in the library and at locations throughout the community. As finances have declined, volunteers have enabled the library to continue programs and in some areas to offer additional services.

4. "Adequate facilities, commensurate with sound and responsible fiscal planning."

This is the final portion of the library's mission statement. Over the past several years, library revenue has been unable to match the need for increased expenditures. The Decatur City Council, after receiving the library's long range plan, approved spending \$160,000 to purchase materials to upgrade the library bibliographic records to MARC format and purchase hardware and software for an on-line computer.

State funding of the BIC grant added \$78,535 to the library budget. As noted earlier, the library spent \$278,800 on new materials, including \$32,000 in grant funds.

A survey of magazine vendors was made to determine which vendor could provide the best service at the most reasonable price. Use of a vendor will save money by reducing the number of purchase orders required and checks issued.

The library was shocked when Ameritech Corporation decided to discontinue free telephone directories. Illinois Bell patterned this action by deciding to provide free directories only for the same area code. We have evaluated which directories are most heavily used and how often they should be replaced. This will cost the library between \$3,000 and \$7,000 each year.

Increased usage of the collections, facility, services provided, and staff development have caused staffing shortages. Present staffing levels are adequate only when all staff are present. When illness, vacations, holidays, or training takes staff off of the floor, the library is short-staff, increasing the stress on staff who are working. Use of temporary staff through Manpower has helped somewhat, however, the only real solution is additional staff to match the increased usage of the library. The use of off-duty city policemen as security guards has helped to reduce stress, leaving library staff free to assist patrons while the security guards maintain order. The number of discipline problems has greatly declined with the use of security guards.