

ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE CITY LIBRARIAN  
1986/1987

Personnel, automation, and policy changes played major roles in shaping the events of 1986/87. The Library is in a state of change - change in personnel who make the decisions and implement the policies; change in the methods and procedures used to catalog books, record statistics, do word processing, and accounting procedures; change in policies relating to circulation, administration, personnel and material selection.

Mr. James C. Seidl was hired as city librarian on August 7, 1986. He has been employed by the library for the past eleven years as Extension Librarian, Head of Home Reading, Supervisor of Adult Services and Assistant City Librarian. Miss Helen Schwegman, administrative secretary to the City Librarian, retired after twenty years of service. Her extensive knowledge of procedures, regulations and library history will be missed. She was replaced by Ms. Linda Humphreys, a former library employee who returned to the library after working nine years in various city offices. Her knowledge of city procedures and policies has made the transition very smooth.

The cataloging department experienced a major personnel change when both Miss Hadley and Mr. Inman left. Twenty years of cataloging experience was lost when they left. Ms. Shirley Apley assumed the position of head cataloger while ads were placed, resumes reviewed and a cataloger was hired. Her can-do attitude in attacking problems and supervising technical services staff resulted in only a minor backlog of books. The technical services staff did a tremendous job by taking on jobs that were not normally assigned to them in order to keep the flow of work moving. Without their willingness to assume this responsibility, the cataloging department could have backlogged a large number of materials. Mrs. Sharon Bakula was hired in November, 1986, as the head cataloger. Mrs. Grace Veach was hired in April, 1987, as a cataloger.

During January, 1987, Mr. James Scholtz, young adult/audio-visual librarian, resigned to accept a position at Northern Illinois Library System. Miss Cathy Ritchie, general service librarian, has been performing the duties until the new young adult/audio-visual librarian, Mr. Peter Hsu, arrives.

Nine of the ten professional library positions will have been filled with new personnel within the past two years. Their new ideas and experiences have started to have an effect on the library and its programs, collections, and policies.

The use of the OCLC bibliographic data base for the production of catalog cards and bibliographic cataloging data enables

the library to increase its speed in cataloging materials while reducing the cost. After numerous delays, the first catalog cards were produced in early January, 1987. During February, the innovative interface was installed, allowing the library to enter OCLC cataloging records directly into the CLSI circulation computer. Staff members and their supervisors have attended special training classes and seminars. The willingness of the staff to adapt to new technology and to learn new procedures is appreciated. One of the goals of the library is to retrospectively convert its circulation data base to an on-line catalog. This conversion will allow the library to electronically update records for new subject headings, authors' names, etc. Presently the library spends large amounts of staff time to update these records manually.

The purchase of an IBM personal computer has reduced the number of hours spent each month recording and totaling circulation figures. What used to take days is now produced in an hour. Additionally, this material can be changed electronically into graphic displays. Patrons paying fines and monies received by the library are now recorded daily on this computer. A list of the obituaries from the Decatur Herald and Review is now being entered into the computer.

Internal and external communication was improved by the installation of a new phone system. Calls are now forwarded by each department rather than by the central operator. Call forwarding and call waiting allow departments to receive and place calls to busy lines. Patrons are never kept on hold longer than 90 seconds without someone checking on the call status. The circulation department has to handle fewer calls since transfers are now handled internally, which allows for additional time for checking out materials. Another feature is the message button on each phone which informs the staff that they have a message.

Two new laser terminals were added to the circulation department to replace eight year old light pens. The laser operates at three times the speed of the light pens, reads on the first pass, and has a screen and keypad which allows the staff to input data about a patron rather than going to a different station. Patrons are informed of fines or overdue materials and can see the information on the screen. Patron reaction to the terminals has been overwhelmingly positive.

Changes in policies and procedures have been made in personnel, procedures, circulation, use of meeting rooms, and material selection. Opening the rest rooms has reduced the workload on the reference staff (from having to issue and collect the keys). Vandalism of the rest rooms has not occurred, while reaction from patrons has been positive. The library board revised the meeting room policy to allow use by an individual as well as groups. A systematic review of all current library policies has been under-

taken by the Board. Many hours have been spent and additional time will be required in 1987/88 to complete this task.

The Library Board authorized a citizens survey in October, 1986, to determine how the library is received in the community, its use by the residents and the future course of the library based upon citizen input. The University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science Research Center is conducting the survey during April and May, 1987. Results will be reported to the Library Board by mid-summer.

Four grants were received during the year. The annual per capita grant totaling \$91,900 was received. Community development block grants (\$9000) were requested and approved for new front door openers that will allow handicapped patrons easy access and for new bookmobile stops in inner city parks during the summer. A \$500 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities was received to match the \$500 grant from Archer Daniels Midland for material relating to the U.S. Constitution. In addition, the library has applied for a \$35,500 grant from the Illinois State Library for the Baby Talk program.

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT:** A total of 753,267 items (eight items per capita) were checked out, up 26,685 items over last year. A survey conducted in February, 1987, indicated that 259,000 items were used in-house by patrons and staff during the year. Combined in-house use and circulation total 1,012,427 items. During the past three years, 37,937 patrons have been registered (25,644 adults, 3,600 youths, and 8,693 juveniles).

There were 25,685 first and second overdue notices sent to 12,551 patrons. Two hundred thirty accounts were turned over to the Credit Bureau, from which the library received \$644.42. The need for additional personnel to staff the circulation desk must be addressed in 1987/88 or long lines and delays will develop. Circulation has increased by 26%, while staffing has remained the same.

**AUDIO-VISUAL/YOUNG ADULT DEPARTMENT:** 1986/87 has been a year of transition for the department, with Mr. Jim Scholtz resigning and Ms. Catherine Ritchie acting as department head. Videocassette circulation totaled 48,222 items, a 31% increase. This increase has seriously strained staffing the YA/AV and Home Reading departments. Video lists of westerns, romances, musicals, children's stories and fables, and other children's videos were produced and distributed to help patrons identify and locate these videos. Soviet bloc films were shown in October and Cary Grant films were shown in March. Phonolog Service (a list of all the records and the cuts on each record) was purchased to help patrons identify songs. The ever increasing demand for greater

video services and resources will require the library to re-evaluate its policies and procedures in 1987/88.

**CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT:** Circulation climbed to 195,642 items, up 16,973 from last year. A teachers' strike in September, 1986, greatly helped juvenile circulation with a 36% increase for that month. A successful summer reading program, "Readers on the Move", had 1,358 participants. Preschool story times continued to be very popular. A gift of \$1,300 was used to purchase books in memory of Winifred Lowen. Special efforts were made to increase the number of titles held in the 500's, 700's and juvenile board and preschool concept books. The holiday books were changed from a one week circulation period to three weeks except during the holiday season for each book.

**EXTENSION DEPARTMENT:** A new bookmobile stop was established at Copenbarger School to replace the Brettwood Village stop that was closed. A nursing home collection was established at Monroe House. Changes in the bookmobile schedule, the loss of the Brettwood stop, and a decline in the outreach circulation resulted in a 1% decline in extension circulation for the year. Three new bookmobile stops in inner city parks and a stop near the Boys Club will be established during the summer of 1987 to encourage children to read. Publicity about the bookmobile and outreach services included two newspaper articles and an article in the Office of Aging monthly bulletin.

**HOME READING DEPARTMENT:** Home Reading circulation was up 1,000 items, with non-fiction gaining circulation while fiction declined. The number of fiction titles and volumes increased in 1986/87, but overall, circulation decreased. I believe that since fiction is recreational reading, people who would normally be reading fiction are now spending part of their leisure time watching videos. Library tours are now given. Book talks were given to several local groups and clubs. Ms. Apley produced a book list and talked to three groups of A.E. Staley employees about library resources to use to find new jobs.

**REFERENCE DEPARTMENT:** Retrospective work on the Macon County obituary index started when Mrs. Dorothy Butts volunteered her help. Since October 1986, Mrs. Butts has been working two mornings per week indexing the obituaries from 1976 to 1973. The department participated in a two month program to determine the effectiveness of CD ROM computers as an inexpensive method of providing bibliographic access to the University of Illinois library's card catalog.

#### **SUPPORT SERVICE DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**ORDER DEPARTMENT:** The order department ordered and received materials costing a total of \$240,744.35, broken down as follows:

15,086 books, 598 records, 166 cassettes, 112 microfilm reels and 413 videocassettes.

Automation of the order department and its records was investigated. Starting in May 1987, purchase orders will be entered into the city computer, thereby eliminating the practice of keeping a duplicate set of records at the library. The use of an electronic ordering system was considered, but was rejected until a system is found that is able to record all of the various departments' funds.

**CATALOG DEPARTMENT:** The volume of new materials cataloged was considerably lower than in past years due to the loss of both professional catalogers. In addition, the introduction of the OCLC bibliographic data base has required extensive staff training. The cataloging staff has accepted added responsibilities and kept the bulk of materials cataloged. Without the generous cooperation of the cataloging staff in accepting the many changes brought about by the changes in personnel and OCLC, the minor backlog of materials would have been much greater. OCLC is reducing the number of titles that require original cataloging and is producing the cards for the various card catalogs in the library. In March, 1987, the library started using an interface to transfer cataloging data from the OCLC terminal to the CLSI circulation computer. Three hundred twenty-one names were changed on 6,051 cards, and 87,562 catalog cards were filed.

**MATERIAL PROCESSING & MENDERY:** The Department processed 60,695 items during the year. Mending torn pages, repairing broken bindings, fixing loose book jackets, typing new book labels and pockets are just some of the important tasks performed.

**STAFF ARTIST:** The library was selected to present a poster display at the 1987 Illinois Library Association. Mrs. Burch displayed materials for "The Importance of Reading: A City That Reads" campaign in March and April, 1986. In addition, 183 displays were produced; 41 calendars, brochures, etc., were produced; 58 sculptures and art prints were repaired.

**MAINTENANCE/CUSTODIAN DEPARTMENT:** We all take for granted the excellent condition and appearance of the library. Through the constant vigilance and efforts of these staff members, the library is probably the best maintained city building. The exterior walls were tuck-pointed and sealed. New controls were added to the air conditioners to improve conditions for the staff and public. Numerous improvements were made inside to facilitate program and staff changes.

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:** Forty-five thousand copies were made of 60 calendars, book lists and fliers. Three years of circulation statistics were entered into a new personal computer to eliminate the time consuming process of recording and calculating over 200

circulation categories. Library records were reviewed to meet the Local Records Act.

**Conclusion:** A review of the past year indicates that a tremendous number of changes have taken place. The cooperation and dedication of the library staff has made my job as City Librarian possible. Their willingness to accept new challenges while meeting an ever increasing demand for library services is greatly appreciated.