

LAWRENCE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Lawrence, Kansas

Report To The Board Of Directors For 1967

To The Board Of Directors:

Perhaps the 1967 development which has the most far-reaching potential was the designation of an official system of cooperating libraries by the State Library Commission in November 1967. At this time, recognition was given to an experiment in library cooperation which had its beginnings in 1965. Official designation of the system included recognition of Lawrence Public Library as resource center and administrative headquarters for the seven-county regional federation.

Lawrence has, of course, been acting in this capacity since July, 1966. During this time much trial and error has taken place in an effort to develop a pattern of cooperation between 30 varied public libraries. Progress has been made. Much remains to be made. Public libraries as a whole in Kansas are experiencing the pains and rewards of learning new ways of doing things. Learning ways to work together to avoid having each procedure and expenditure repeated 360 ways in needless duplication. As this system will benefit other libraries in the area, so it will benefit Lawrence. The benefits will be varied, and will increase with the growth of the system concept itself. But among them will include access to centrally cataloged and processed books (possibly state subsidized), availability of large central collections of films and special resource materials, and hook-ups with large reference centers. As administrative and reference center for the system, Lawrence will benefit from increased professional personnel and resource materials. An immediate example would be the anticipated \$5,000 - \$8,000 reference grant expected to be made by the State this Spring.

As system headquarters, Lawrence in 1967 instigated a central reference and inter-library loan service to libraries in the system area. In addition, late in 1967, we began a service of central purchasing and processing of materials for libraries in the system. Materials are bought through Lawrence and sent to Kansas City, Kansas, for processing. One major benefit to all libraries, Lawrence included, is a larger discount on materials through bulk buying.

Other major points of interest for 1967 include:

BALLARD CENTER COLLECTION. In December, we loaned some 600 children's and young adult books to the Ballard Center to begin their library. The library, staffed on a volunteer basis, is under the direction of Mrs. Helyar, who has worked part-time for the Lawrence Public Library for over six years. Gifts of area residents, in addition to the loan collection, have made the Ballard Library a very useful educational tool for all ages in the North Lawrence area.

INVENTORY. To keep our collection up-to-date and to insure accuracy of the card catalog, a complete inventory of our book holdings was made in December of 1967. The library closed its doors December 15-18 and during those four days all of the full-time staff plus 7 temporary persons inventoried some 64,000 books. Initial results indicated approximately 2,500 adult books and 1,270 children's books were missing. These represent books presumably stolen and

do not take into account those legitimately charged out but not returned. A monthly check will be made for items presumed missing. This will continue until Summer. Undoubtedly, a number of these items will turn up due to errors, etc. We anticipate that our final count will be 3,000 books missing - 2,000 adult and 1,000 children's. These will then either be replaced or withdrawn from the card catalog.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES. Major physical problems for 1967 included replacement of the roof and of the front stairs. The roof had deteriorated so badly early in 1967 that it had to be replaced. Late in the same year the front stairs began to collapse and presented a danger to library users. Both the roof and the stairs were replaced by the city. Problems of outdated electrical wiring and of seepage of water in the basement continue to exist. During 1967, lack of space for books became critical. It became necessary late in the year to purchase some 27 sections of library shelving to house anticipated book purchases through the year 1968. Several investigations by architects and the city engineer disclosed the danger in placing additional load-bearing book shelves in many areas of the first floor. This problem will become even more critical by 1969 when virtually no safe area will be left in the adult area for the placing of more stacks. It may be that material will then be put in storage, until such time as additional facilities become available. The above items merely serve as added indications that the current library plant is physically obsolete and spatially inadequate for modern day library operations. A building initially built for a population of 10,000 now serves 46,000.

SALARIES. The 1968 budget drawn up in June of 1967 provided increases for professional, non-professional and part-time employees. To more closely meet prevailing area salaries for non-professional personnel, beginning salaries were increased by \$100 and an annual increment of \$150 was provided. This brings us nearer to competing institutions, but will need reviewing at the coming budget session. Part-time wages were increased to a minimum of \$1.00 per hour which would seem to be sufficient for the immediate future. Beginning salaries for professional librarians with no experience were raised to \$6,600. This is competitive with KU but still some \$400-700 less than prevailing national averages.

CIRCULATION OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS. The old method of using audio charging for children's books was replaced in 1967 by a self-charge method, similar to the system in the adult department. Initial reaction to this change seems to be favorable. One innovation, suggested by Mrs. Halfen, was to provide a carbon copy of each charge-out list, thus providing mothers with records of all materials checked out. Many patrons have expressed satisfaction with this added touch.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM AND STORY HOURS. 1,976 children enrolled in our summer reading program in 1967. Of this number, 1,202 read 20 books or more and a total of 1,515 read more than 10 books to qualify them for a reading certificate or a seal for their previous reading certificate. Spring and Fall story hours for pre-school children continued to be popular. 931 children attended the sessions, 354 during the spring period and 577 in the Fall. Story hours are held on Friday mornings at 10:30. One session is held for the 4 to 5 year old group and one for the toddlers.

NEW LAW TO AFFECT LAWRENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY. Under a law passed in the State Legislature in 1967, local communities will base their population figures on Federal census procedures. Douglas County will begin this with its census

report in the Fall of 1968. This will mean that Lawrence should register a population count of well over 40,000. Under a previous state law, cities over 35,000 population fall into a special library category. Library boards in these cities are authorized to turn in levy request directly to the County Clerk for a maximum of 2.5 mills. Thus, the budget for 1970 will no longer be a integral part of the total city budget as in the past. Hutchison, Salina and Topeka now come under this category.

BOOK CIRCULATION. Reversing a two-year drop in book circulation, the library experienced an increase in books checked out of 2,188 over 1966. In the total pattern of book circulation, adult books increased 3,460 over the previous year while circulation of children's books dropped 1,272. This has been a continuing pattern for three years. Circulation of adult books has continued to rise while juvenile circulation has decreased. This pattern would seem to be following a nation-wide trend toward decreases in circulation of children's books in public libraries. The most obvious reason for this decrease is growth, through Federal funds, of resources and personnel in school libraries across the country in the last few years. Much of the service provided by public libraries to children in the past was in lieu of needed services at the school level, especially in the elementary grades. A fair assumption is that schools and public libraries will work out their individual roles in the years to come and that the public libraries, more to their nature, will become resource centers concentrating on building collections of informational materials which are being increasingly demanded at the elementary level. This would follow the pattern of the public library at the secondary level. Many of the more commonly used materials are available at the school level while the public library serves more in the capacity as a factual and informational resource center for the student. In addition, of course, the children's library will continue its role in providing pre-school materials as well as supplementary reading for students of all levels. In the long run, increased excellence of school libraries will mean increased awareness of the importance of books and the public library will continue to fill a vital, if changed, need.

REFERENCE SERVICES. In conjunction with services performed for the Northeast Kansas Libraries, we have been able to increase our reference services to local patrons by additional personnel in our reference dept. We have not yet managed to make this service available at all times the library is open, but are slowly reaching this goal. Gradually, as the patron is able to have the services of a professionally trained person when he needs it, he takes increasing advantage of the service. For the Lawrence Public Library, this can be considered the single most significant step forward for 1967 - the strengthening of our informational services to the patron. Eventually, we would hope to have a staff of at least 3 full time persons for the most consistent service, but the current availability of one and 3/4 persons is a marked improvement over the past. Thus, a major function of the public library is being built up - direct service to the public by professionally trained information librarians. For years we have had a fine collection of materials and much better than average circulation of these materials. But we have lacked the trained staff who could be consistently available to interpret this collection to the public.

INTERLIBRARY LOANS. Lawrence continues to make use of the state-wide teletype service (Kansas Informational Circuit) in borrowing books for its patrons. In addition, in 1967 we began a weekly circuit of sending lists of reserved materials between here and Johnson County. Each week lists of books on reserve

for patrons are exchanged between the two libraries, each of which fills what it is able to for the other. This has worked out very well, decreasing the wait for books by several weeks in many cases. Of course, this does not work for books such as best sellers, but has proved very useful for individual titles which are asked for in one area but not being used in another. Some 15-20 books a week are exchanged by this method.

Thanks go again this year to all of the staff for a job well done. Special thanks to Mrs. Osma, whose excellent book selection throughout the years has made the collection one of the best in the state; to Mrs. Halfen, our Children's Librarian; Mrs. Weeks, our bookkeeper; Mrs. Meyer, head of circulation and Mr. Anthony, our custodian, who somehow manages to consistently keep the library presentable and inhabitable - a formidable task.

In summary, new physical innovations in many areas will continue to be impractical due to space limitations. But new ways of doing old tasks can always be found. Our role in working with other libraries brings new insight into such ways. Better library service will be the result of cooperative library practices. It is my opinion that the future of top quality library service in Lawrence is excellent. With the continued support of the Board, the Staff and the City, I think we can look forward to a very high percentage of improved library service to patrons over the next few years.

Wayne Mayo
Head Librarian

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Total number of registered borrowers increased by 446 for 1967. Of this, 273 represented additional adult borrowers and 173 new juvenile borrowers were registered.

BOOK STOCK

1966	Juvenile	Total
3,125	3,271	6,396
41,839	22,229	64,068

Total book stock increased by 2,780 over the previous figure of 61,288 for 1966. 123 gift books were accepted during the year.

BOOK STOCK

1967	Juvenile	Total
1,608	129	1,737

The above represents a net increase of 237 records over the previous year.

2,558 requests for information were answered by our Reference Department in 1967.