

ALBERT LEA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Lori Barkema, Library Director

The year 2002 marks another milestone in Library history. This year library staff circulated **421,913** items to residents of Albert Lea and Freeborn County. It is interesting to note the progression of these circulation milestones within the context of being in this library building over the past 35 years.

LIBRARY MILESTONES

- 1968 The new Library opened in the City Center location
FRIENDS of the Library organization is founded
- 1969** Library services are extended to all Freeborn County residents
Annual circulation tops **100,000 items** for the first time
- 1973 Freeborn County agrees to a library tax assessment for library services to rural residents
- 1986 Library's card catalog moves to the computer age
- 1994 Lori Barkema appointed new Library Director and implements new policies, services and collections
- 1995** Internet access made available to the public
Annual circulation tops **200,000 items**
- 1996 Library service hours are expanded to seven days per week with the addition of Sunday afternoon hours
Library is open 69 hours per week year round, the most hours of any public library in Minnesota
- 1998** Library survives damaging winds that removed portions of the roof and is closed three weeks for repairs
Library still manages to hit another circulation milestone as circulation tops **300,000**
- 1999 Library celebrates 100 year Anniversary
- 2002** Circulation tops **400,000**
Library Internet workstations are used 27,289 times

Library use has quadrupled since moving into this location in 1968, almost 35 years ago. There is obviously inadequate space for customers, computers and collections due to this growth in demand for services. The city council, manager, library advisory board, staff and FRIENDS will be studying how to solve this space crunch.

Library Advisory Board Members

Ken Bertelson
Harlan Bang
Richard Vander Waerdt, Board President
Veda Harris
Jane Saunders
Del Stein
Gail Batt, Freeborn County Representative

Library Staff

Lori Barkema, MLS, Director
Theresa Schmidt, MLS
Sarah Clendineng, MLS
Staci Waltman
Denise Sande
Jan Rogness
Teresa Haugen
Gail Rasmussen
Sandy Soli
Patty Greibrok
Terri Tinman

City Council Liaison

Warren Amundson

SELCO Advisory Board Representative

Roger Lonning

FRIENDS of the Library Board President

Elaine Baer

LIBRARY CIRCULATION

Circulation	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>
Total	421,913	387,903	337,354	326,483	306,743
City Circulation	272,725	250,853	218,114	208,742	202,673
County Circulation	144,310	128,968	111,675	111,259	98,614
Interlibrary Loan	4,878	8,082	7,565	6,482	7,461

LIBRARY COLLECTION

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>
Books	69,752	66,577	63,385	59,713	57,561
Books on Tape/CD's	4,202	3,859	3,709	3,397	3,026
Video Cassettes/DVD's	7,198	6,604	6,223	5,523	4,881
Music CD's/Cassettes	2,882	2,650	2,325	1,903	1,320
Software/CD-ROMS	219	211	203	190	133
Magazine Subscriptions	293	297	281	263	242
Newspaper Subscriptions	16	16	15	18	17

LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY

This year the Library's Internet workstations were used **27,289** times, up from 19,382 uses last year. In January the Library received four computers and a server from the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**. This equipment allowed the Library to add more public Internet workstations to meet the high public demand for this service. Library staff also continued to teach one-on-one **Internet classes**. 51 people took advantage of this opportunity to join the Internet age.

Library staff spent many hours updating and revising the **City web page** to provide the most current and useful information on city services. This website, located at www.city.albertlea.org, saw a resulting surge in use, receiving 15,804 hits over the year. Staff added new content including city council agendas, minutes, and the city charter. Also available online is the city's annual financial report. These enhancements were added by library webmaster Teresa Haugen. Staff photographer, Jan Rogness, added the many attractive photos of our beautiful community and city services.

Librarian Theresa Schmidt wrote a successful LSTA grant for a LCD Power Zoom **Text Magnifier** to provide access to library resources for our low vision users.

SELCO has chosen Epixtech as the new **integrated library system** vendor and will begin the process of migrating libraries to this new automation system. This SELCO decision will greatly impact our local library due to the extremely high expense of this undertaking. Budget impacts will include increased fees for automation services, new required equipment and staff training.

LIBRARY HOURS

The Albert Lea Public Library is open the most hours of any public library in Minnesota. These service hours are available all year including during the summer months.

Monday – Thursday	9 AM - 9 PM
Friday	9 AM - 6 PM
Saturday	9 AM - 5 PM
Sunday	1 PM - 5 PM

The Library's catalog is accessible 24/7 via the web at www.city.albertlea.org.

The Albert Lea Public Library is very efficiently staffed in comparison with other public libraries of similar size in this region. While the Albert Lea Public Library is open the most hours and our circulation is also the highest, our staffing level remains the lowest.

ADULT LIBRARY SERVICES

Due to high demand from our adult library users, Library staff began hosting a book club called the **Fountain Lake Readers**. Two sessions, evening and morning, are held monthly with Librarian Sarah Clendineng organizing these events.

Again during this year the library hosted several **author events** including Minnesota authors Joan Claire Graham, Suzanne Riley, John Koblas, and also the Minnesota Crime Wave. Grace Haukoos of the Constant Reader, working with Librarian Theresa Schmidt, has been a wonderful partner for these events.

The Library continues to promote its **Senior Outreach Services** to Albert Lea residents and also rural Freeborn County residents. Librarian Theresa Schmidt presented many programs for service clubs, senior centers and other groups using the popular bi-folkal kits on World War II and the Great Depression.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SERVICES

The Children's Library hosted a **Freeborn County Fair Booth** again this year. Many area children enjoyed face painting and a variety of games and crafts with library staff. Special guest visitor was Al, the children's library alligator mascot. Al also attended several community events including the Park and Recreation Halloween carnival, the Albert Lea Child Care Center's Halloween party and was seen trick-or-treating at the Northbridge Mall. Al is quite the celebrity and has his own online fan club!

This year the Children's Library also had an entry in the **July 3rd parade**. Our summer volunteers entertained parade goers with a special book cart square dance routine choreographed by Jan Rogness.

The Children's Library also held several special events for kids during fall break and again during winter break since when school is out of session there are so many children looking for something to do. And of course, the **Summer Reading Program** continues to draw many children to the Library over the long summer school break.

The Library's **Daycare Delivery** program now serves 45 sites and reaches over 570 children each month in Albert Lea and Freeborn County with rotating collections of library materials and on-site programming. Sites served by this program include School District 241's Kinder Express, Even Start, Hollandale Christian School, United Preschool, all Albert Lea Community Child Care Center sites, Early Childhood Education, and Head Start, as well as many family in-home daycares. The Library provides books and other library materials to all of the above sites as well as daycares located in Clarks Grove, Manchester, Alden, Geneva, Glenville and Hayward. The Library continues to provide story times in the Library also for those parents who can bring their children here. Librarians Staci Waltman, Patty Greibrok and Terri Tinman present these story hours, manage the rotating collections and round up volunteers to make the deliveries.

The Children's Library again this year served as the school library for classes from St. Theodore's. School classes come every week and the Library provides materials, story hours, and library use skills training to children from kindergarten to sixth grade. The Library also presents a weekly after school program of games and crafts each Tuesday during **LAF (Library After School Fun)**.

FRIENDS

Many of our expanded library services depend on volunteers. Library staff hosted a luncheon buffet to thank our many volunteers. Attending the luncheon were members of the Library Advisory Board, FRIENDS of the Albert Lea Public Library, Senior Outreach Volunteers, and Daycare Delivery Volunteers and many of our elected officials. The Library is also fortunate to have many young volunteers after school and during the children's summer reading program. Our services would not reach as many people without the contributions of these volunteers. **THANK YOU!**