



Libraries are powered by people

By JULIE BROWN
STAFF WRITER
jbrown@oe.hometown.com

Public libraries spend the biggest chunk of their budgets on staff — people helping people.

"The materials would not be well-used if they sat here," said Jean Tabor, director of the Canton Public Library.

"Without trained people, you can't run a decent library," said Fred Paffhausen, director of the Redford District Library.

He budgets 60 percent for salaries and benefits, 28 percent for books and materials.

Libraries compete with industry for good staff. And the tight job market presents challenges. Especially when it comes to finding children's librarians.

"They're so difficult to replace," said Beverly Papal, director of the Farmington Community Library. That work takes a special person, a different approach including educational learning concepts, she added.

When she needs one, Papal advertises in local newspapers, the newsletter of the public library cooperative (The Library Network), and the library schools at Wayne State University and the University of Michigan.

"We have a little over 100 people on the payroll between the two branches," said Papal, who oversees branches in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The Plymouth District Library has eight full-time librarians including herself, said Director Pat Thomas.

It's much more useful to have generalists, staff with varied undergraduate backgrounds, as librarians, Thomas said. Specialties include journalism and genealogy.

Support staff qualifications vary. All adults are high school grads and a few have master's degrees. The job market is tight now, with more women working outside the home.

"I told the women want to go back to work full time," Thomas said. That's also true for volunteer recruiting.

Support staff in Plymouth numbers 11-12 FTEs (full-time equivalents). Librarian jobs now require a master's degree in library science, and some have degrees in education.

Their salaries have started to improve, Thomas finds. Her profession was dominated by women for a long time, but as society becomes more information-oriented salaries improve.

A statewide publication listed \$30,000 as starting salary for librarian with a master's and no experience.

"It's low for a master's degree, there's no doubt it's low," Tabor said. "They're better, but they're not what they should be."

Page is an entry position, pays \$6 an hour in Farmington. "We likely will be increasing that," Papal said.

Her library has seen healthier, more active seniors, some of whom work as pages, which used to be a student job.

Volunteers are becoming an important part of the staffing equation. Plymouth gets many copies as volunteers, including some who took early retirement. "We have to get people who have to be more creative," Thomas said.

There are about 30 regular volunteers who come in at least once a week. Canton has a paid volunteer coordinator, Marcia Barker.

"We have excellent volunteers," Tabor said. "We do use volunteers extensively ...

people who are just looking to make a contribution to the community." Many are retirees, younger people.

The Canton Public Library has 22 librarians, with 14 part time. "We're pretty lucky," Tabor said. "We have a lot of people who want to work here."

Canton's library has 49 full- and part-time support staffers, some with high school diplomas, some with additional education. "For the most part, we do pretty well. We don't have a lot of turnover," Tabor said.

She attributed this to a good workplace with accommodating schedules and camaraderie. The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland has a director, four classified as librarians, and two publicists.

There are 11 full-time supervisors who are full time; two as Librarian I who are full time; two part-time Librarian I; four library associates in children's; two full-time and nine part-time library associates; 20 part-time pages; and five other full-timers in assistant or clerical roles.

"Hiring a skilled and qualified staff is a requirement to providing excellent service," said Sandra Wilson, Westland director. "We have been fortunate with the staff we have selected. We emphasize both ability and a user-friendly attitude."

Westland volunteers come primarily from high schools and seniors and others from the community. Community service workers from local district courts and others help out.

"It's always a challenge to recruit and retain good volunteers," said Joe Burchill, volunteer coordinator. "Because we compete with other organizations for volunteer time, we strive to provide our volunteers with challenging tasks, a pleasant

environment and, most importantly, recognition that they are providing a valuable service to the library and their community."

Joan Elmouchi, director, Garden City Public Library, is one of two full-timers. The other, an assistant, has a teaching degree. The library has two part-time librarians and two reference aides, both with teaching degrees. Staff totals 13, including support.

"Competition to get part-time people can be kind of tough," Elmouchi said. A. Michael Deller, city librarian, Livonia, oversees Livonia Civic Center Library, plus branches of Sandburg, Noble and Vest Pocket in the senior center.

The system has 22 full-time librarians, including Deller, and one 20-hour librarian. Support staff, whose duties include checking materials out and in, numbers about 30 full-time equivalents.

"We have volunteers who are very important to us in our Vest Pocket Library," Deller said. "Without them, it would be impossible."

Those volunteers shelve books, check them in and out and serve as a PR link. "Their role is important," Deller said.

Volunteers include organizations that work with library on projects, including Western Wayne County Genealogical Society, Livonia Heart Fund and two Lions Clubs.

Paffhausen said the Redford library has five full-time librarians, including himself, and four part-time aides, one with a master's in library science; others are teachers (two) and an author.

There are two clerk-typists, two circulation supervisors and five pages for processing and shelving.

Volunteers include a couple of Mormons on mission work a couple days a week. Redford also gets district court assignments. "They bring skills that sometimes are needed," said Paffhausen, adding that he learned Lotus 123 that way.

LIBRARY HISTORY

Editor's note: Each of the libraries in the Observer coverage area has its own unique beginnings, which have in one way or another determined what they are today. Here's a glimpse of the Farmington Community Library's history:

■ In the Farmington area's early history, school trustees served residents with books and delivered books to people who wanted them.

■ In 1903, a state law was passed that allowed at least one library to be established in each township and city.

■ The Farmington Township Board of Trustees authorized \$2.11 for library services in 1913.

■ The master of a library was turned over to teacher M. H. Schroeder and the Ladies Library Club. A total of \$600 was given for both the cemetery and a library. The women organized the Ladies Library Association. The first library was in the Sunday School room at the Baptist church on Farmington and Shawness.

■ Growing pains began almost immediately and an addition to the town hall was completed in 1919. A library board with three representatives from the city and the township was organized.

■ In 1920s, area residents, one a nephew of the first members of the Ladies Library Club, had been moving for the building of a library.

■ In 1925, the city council and the township board established the first district library in Farmington in accordance with the state Legislature's Act, No. 1304 that allowed two or more municipalities to cooperate a library jointly and to set up a district library.

■ The Farmington District Library was organized March 2, 1929 in the old Post Office on Farmington Road.

■ As early as 1920, concern was expressed for at least one branch library to serve the northern township. A 2-cent increase was requested and defeated in April, 1921, but it passed in 1922.

■ In June, 1922, the library was incorporated and defeated in the 1920s. But by 1927, funding was in place to build a library on 12 Mile. But it took until January, 1928 — following financial setbacks — before a decision was made to go ahead with the new library.

■ In June, 1928, the library was dedicated and offered 34,000 square feet.

■ In June, 1928, a site was chosen to house the new library on the existing site was being out of the scene.

■ On Dec. 7, 1928, the Farmington branch was dedicated.

■ Over 1930s, the current library director, was promoted from assistant director to director in July 1935. She replaced director Gordon Lewis.

■ The 1940s and 1950s saw increased use of both libraries and proposal put to voters to expand to self new. Proposals were consistently defeated until August, 1958, when voters approved an expansion of the Hills branch and improvements at the downtown Farmington branch.

Two missions: Kay Marshall, who shops for music at Harmony House, intends to visit a library to research music and videos for her wedding.

Video Premier in Redford, has been around for years and doesn't consider libraries to be a business threat.

"They cannot carry all the variety we have here," Dabish said. "Number two, the movies they have aren't going to be top quality. Libraries are good for documentary, special-education tapes. We have some. I believe they have more."

"We have more selection," added Mike Mosier, assistant manager at Blockbuster Video in Canton.

Jamie Smith, regional manager for Harmony House, said his company looks at libraries as cultural community resources.

"People use libraries as an entertainment/intellectual tool more so than a shopping experience at Harmony House or one of our true competitors," Smith said. "We don't actually consider libraries our competition. Some actually buy from us."

Deller said libraries and music stores sometimes complement each

other. "Many people will use our collection to see if they like something, then go out and buy," he said.

Even bookstores, apparently, have gone way beyond competing with libraries. Matt Brooks is a manager, Jill Janavikas is a sales clerk at Waldenbooks in Westland Center.

"A library is more reference than anything," Brooks said. "Libraries are limited in quantity. Here, we can have upwards of 60 copies. At the library, you have to sign up on a wait list."

"There's a big difference between people who want to own books and borrow," Janavikas said. "I like to read them over and over. You can read at your own pace (owning)."

"Most libraries are coming in and buying from us," Brooks said.

Even computer access, which most libraries offer free in half-hour reserved blocks, isn't a threat to businesses like Kinko's that charge to use computers, library directors say.

"Their market is different, mostly business types," Paffhausen said. "They have on-staff people who can help them, do full service printing, maybe run laser copiers. They could care less about us."

Kids are most likely to use library computers for research, typing school reports or playing games, adults for research and typing resumes or letters.

"Complaints we've gotten in the past is copies at a library aren't really good, clean copies for a resume," Deller said. "No, that's what Kinko's does. If what a person is looking for is a clean, sharp, clean copy to impress someone, they're not going to copy here. They will go to a professional."

That's exactly what brought Michael Game to Kinko's in Livonia — service preparing resumes and envelopes.

"It's better quality work," he said. "They re-did the whole thing. It's kind of an eye-catcher."

Customers shopping in other business also sounded the no-competition horn.

"They have a bigger selection here," said Barbara Thornton, a Canton resident visiting Blockbuster Video in that community. "The kids want all the newer types. I find library movies aren't clear. It looks like they've been used a lot."

Kay Marshall of Farmington Hills spoke about going to the library to research music and travelogues for an upcoming wedding and honeymoon while browsing at the Farmington Harmony House.

"I know they have specific sections for that, more subject-based information," Marshall said. "When I buy something, usually I want it for a long period of time, to listen to it over and over again."

But some people watching their dollars or as a matter of convenience know exactly what to expect from the library.

Pamela Hall of Wayne was sending e-mail at the Canton Library because she had phone problems at home. She knew that Kinko's charges \$12 per hour. "I like coming to the library. It's free," she said.

Joyce Treeng of Plymouth had a couple of older videos in hand at the check out stand. "I can get them free here. I come to the library more often than I go to the video store."

Don't look for latte at the library

Even if similar collections were offered at retail stores and libraries, Wilson noted the stores don't have trained librarians to provide assistance in locating information.

"Another obvious factor working in the library's favor is the cost — books are checked out at no charge.

"New books are \$24-30 for fiction. People can't afford to buy five or six new books a year," said Wilson. "Our library is really 56 libraries (belonging to The Library Network) and other libraries through interlibrary loans."

Livonia City Librarian A. Michael Deller agreed that libraries can offer materials that can't be obtained in book stores that need quick merchandise turnover.

"We look to other libraries for materials we didn't buy or that have been damaged," Deller said. "We get 500 interlibrary loans each month in here and 500-700 go out. We keep the delivery trucks moving."

Interlibrary loans, which take place across the country, allow patrons to get specialized books that their local library can't justify buying.

"We have people in the community who are highly trained in their fields," said

Deller. "We had someone who needed materials on American Revolution music. Another got materials on yachts that are sailed races."

The libraries don't see an impact from retail competition in their circulation figures — although that number doesn't reflect people who use research materials or other items that aren't checked out.

Before the Civic Center branch opened in 1988, the Livonia library circulated 300,000-400,000 items annually. Now, that figure is over 700,000.

"That's a major difference in the amount of use. People find the library easy to get to," Deller said. "It's bigger. They can use the gift shop and other things that weren't in place 10 years ago."

During his seven years heading Redford's library, Paffhausen reports a similar increase. The annual circulation more than doubled to more than 250,000 items and the number of library cards issued went from 10,000 to more than 22,000.

"Usage is up dramatically. Our goal plan was to make the library more user-friendly and introduce automation," said Paffhausen. "Then there was a district library millage campaign and the millage was passed. It tripled our book budget."

Redford's library building was constructed in 1960 with an addition built in 1962. Over the last five and a half years, \$800,000 has been invested in new carpeting, air conditioning, computers and other improvements.

The libraries aren't adverse to looking at amenities to entice patrons. The Westland library had considered adding a coffee bar, but Wilson said there was no suitable area available in the building.

At the Westland library, the Friends of the Library run a used bookstore which gets about 3,000 books donated monthly and raises \$1,200 each month.

Garden City Public Library Director Joan Elmouchi knows that other libraries — newer and larger than Garden City's — have amenities such as gift shops.

"If you have the money and the space it sounds nice. If you have staff limitations and not a whole lot of flexibility, you're happy to keep your head above water with traditional programs," said Elmouchi, one of two full-time library staff members.

Elmouchi would like to start a book discussion group. "Especially if I could find a volunteer to run it. It's a whole lot of work."

There's no contest between libraries, business

BY DOUG FUNKE
STAFF WRITER
dfunk@oe.hometown.com

If everyone agrees that it must be so, they then must be so.

Public libraries don't compete with bookstores.

And as libraries have expanded their services to include videos, compact discs/tapes and computer access, they don't directly compete with stores that sell or lease those items, either.

That's what people say.

Why is this an issue? Because businesses pay municipal property taxes, a portion of which could be used to fund library operations and competition against themselves.

Libraries loan out books and magazines free, tapes and music at no charge or a very low fee, usually \$1.

"At first there was a lot of complaints from (video) merchants," said Fred Paffhausen, Redford District Library director.

"What they found out was libraries concentrated on things they didn't have: how-to tapes, non-fiction stuff, Civil War series, history. Things you won't find in video stores."

"A lot of things we concentrate on are classics. We don't buy new releases. I don't think we compete at all," Paffhausen said.

A. Michael Deller, city librarian in Livonia, picked up on the theme.

"When video tapes were new and very expensive, some stores were very concerned. They have developed a strength we can't afford — multiple copies of popular things. We were not there for instant gratification of need."

Edwin Dabish, owner/manager of

other. "Many people will use our collection to see if they like something, then go out and buy," he said.

Even bookstores, apparently, have gone way beyond competing with libraries. Matt Brooks is a manager, Jill Janavikas is a sales clerk at Waldenbooks in Westland Center.

"A library is more reference than anything," Brooks said. "Libraries are limited in quantity. Here, we can have upwards of 60 copies. At the library, you have to sign up on a wait list."

"There's a big difference between people who want to own books and borrow," Janavikas said. "I like to read them over and over. You can read at your own pace (owning)."

"Most libraries are coming in and buying from us," Brooks said.

Even computer access, which most libraries offer free in half-hour reserved blocks, isn't a threat to businesses like Kinko's that charge to use computers, library directors say.

"Their market is different, mostly business types," Paffhausen said. "They have on-staff people who can help them, do full service printing, maybe run laser copiers. They could care less about us."

Kids are most likely to use library computers for research, typing school reports or playing games, adults for research and typing resumes or letters.

"Complaints we've gotten in the past is copies at a library aren't really good, clean copies for a resume," Deller said. "No, that's what Kinko's does. If what a person is looking for is a clean, sharp, clean copy to impress someone, they're not going to copy here. They will go to a professional."

That's exactly what brought Michael Game to Kinko's in Livonia — service preparing resumes and envelopes.

"It's better quality work," he said. "They re-did the whole thing. It's kind of an eye-catcher."

Customers shopping in other business also sounded the no-competition horn.

"They have a bigger selection here," said Barbara Thornton, a Canton resident visiting Blockbuster Video in that community. "The kids want all the newer types. I find library movies aren't clear. It looks like they've been used a lot."

Kay Marshall of Farmington Hills spoke about going to the library to research music and travelogues for an upcoming wedding and honeymoon while browsing at the Farmington Harmony House.

"I know they have specific sections for that, more subject-based information," Marshall said. "When I buy something, usually I want it for a long period of time, to listen to it over and over again."

But some people watching their dollars or as a matter of convenience know exactly what to expect from the library.

Pamela Hall of Wayne was sending e-mail at the Canton Library because she had phone problems at home. She knew that Kinko's charges \$12 per hour. "I like coming to the library. It's free," she said.

Joyce Treeng of Plymouth had a couple of older videos in hand at the check out stand. "I can get them free here. I come to the library more often than I go to the video store."

Don't look for latte at the library

Even if similar collections were offered at retail stores and libraries, Wilson noted the stores don't have trained librarians to provide assistance in locating information.

"Another obvious factor working in the library's favor is the cost — books are checked out at no charge.

"New books are \$24-30 for fiction. People can't afford to buy five or six new books a year," said Wilson. "Our library is really 56 libraries (belonging to The Library Network) and other libraries through interlibrary loans."

Livonia City Librarian A. Michael Deller agreed that libraries can offer materials that can't be obtained in book stores that need quick merchandise turnover.

"We look to other libraries for materials we didn't buy or that have been damaged," Deller said. "We get 500 interlibrary loans each month in here and 500-700 go out. We keep the delivery trucks moving."

Interlibrary loans, which take place across the country, allow patrons to get specialized books that their local library can't justify buying.

"We have people in the community who are highly trained in their fields," said

Deller. "We had someone who needed materials on American Revolution music. Another got materials on yachts that are sailed races."

The libraries don't see an impact from retail competition in their circulation figures — although that number doesn't reflect people who use research materials or other items that aren't checked out.

Before the Civic Center branch opened in 1988, the Livonia library circulated 300,000-400,000 items annually. Now, that figure is over 700,000.

"That's a major difference in the amount of use. People find the library easy to get to," Deller said. "It's bigger. They can use the gift shop and other things that weren't in place 10 years ago."

During his seven years heading Redford's library, Paffhausen reports a similar increase. The annual circulation more than doubled to more than 250,000 items and the number of library cards issued went from 10,000 to more than 22,000.

"Usage is up dramatically. Our goal plan was to make the library more user-friendly and introduce automation," said Paffhausen. "Then there was a district library millage campaign and the millage was passed. It tripled our book budget."

Redford's library building was constructed in 1960 with an addition built in 1962. Over the last five and a half years, \$800,000 has been invested in new carpeting, air conditioning, computers and other improvements.

The libraries aren't adverse to looking at amenities to entice patrons. The Westland library had considered adding a coffee bar, but Wilson said there was no suitable area available in the building.

At the Westland library, the Friends of the Library run a used bookstore which gets about 3,000 books donated monthly and raises \$1,200 each month.

Garden City Public Library Director Joan Elmouchi knows that other libraries — newer and larger than Garden City's — have amenities such as gift shops.

"If you have the money and the space it sounds nice. If you have staff limitations and not a whole lot of flexibility, you're happy to keep your head above water with traditional programs," said Elmouchi, one of two full-time library staff members.

Elmouchi would like to start a book discussion group. "Especially if I could find a volunteer to run it. It's a whole lot of work."

There's no contest between libraries, business

BY DOUG FUNKE
STAFF WRITER
dfunk@oe.hometown.com

If everyone agrees that it must be so, they then must be so.

Public libraries don't compete with bookstores.

And as libraries have expanded their services to include videos, compact discs/tapes and computer access, they don't directly compete with stores that sell or lease those items, either.

That's what people say.

Why is this an issue? Because businesses pay municipal property taxes, a portion of which could be used to fund library operations and competition against themselves.

Libraries loan out books and magazines free, tapes and music at no charge or a very low fee, usually \$1.

"At first there was a lot of complaints from (video) merchants," said Fred Paffhausen, Redford District Library director.

"What they found out was libraries concentrated on things they didn't have: how-to tapes, non-fiction stuff, Civil War series, history. Things you won't find in video stores."

"A lot of things we concentrate on are classics. We don't buy new releases. I don't think we compete at all," Paffhausen said.

A. Michael Deller, city librarian in Livonia, picked up on the theme.

"When video tapes were new and very expensive, some stores were very concerned. They have developed a strength we can't afford — multiple copies of popular things. We were not there for instant gratification of need."

Edwin Dabish, owner/manager of

other. "Many people will use our collection to see if they like something, then go out and buy," he said.

Even bookstores, apparently, have gone way beyond competing with libraries. Matt Brooks is a manager, Jill Janavikas is a sales clerk at Waldenbooks in Westland Center.

"A library is more reference than anything," Brooks said. "Libraries are limited in quantity. Here, we can have upwards of 60 copies. At the library, you have to sign up on a wait list."

"There's a big difference between people who want to own books and borrow," Janavikas said. "I like to read them over and over. You can read at your own pace (owning)."

"Most libraries are coming in and buying from us," Brooks said.

Even computer access, which most libraries offer free in half-hour reserved blocks, isn't a threat to businesses like Kinko's that charge to use computers, library directors say.