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Her job -- reviving a library

By JUDITH BERNE

What does a librarian do without a library? Clarenceville Junior High School librarian Brenda Diven hasn't really had time to ponder that question, even though that is precisely her situation.

The pert redhead's life hasn't been the same since she received a phone call telling her that the school's library had been destroyed by fire on the first Saturday of Christmas vacation -- a fire that is alleged to have been deliberately set.

"I was sort of in a daze when I heard the news," Miss Diven said, trying to recall her exact feelings. "I cried a lot... and for a whole day I really couldn't sit still."

"When I came in the day after Christmas, I just couldn't believe that blackened room. The books, when you touched them, fell into ashes. The new audio visual room, which was in the process of being completed, was a ruin."

"I couldn't believe I was looking at a world which had been familiar to me. All I could think of was who would ever do something like this?"

When Miss Diven walked into her office, adjacent to the library and found it relatively unscathed, "it was such a relief! My battery operated clock was ticking away, and a can of coffee left in a cupboard was good enough to drink."

The magazine collection, which had been temporarily stored in another classroom until shelving could be erected, was safe. And best of all, a duplicate listing of the entire contents of the library remained intact.

But more than 6,000 books were destroyed along with as yet uncounted records, tapes and film strips. Miss Diven's present task is to come up with a cash total for all the things which were lost.



LIBRARIAN BRENDA DIVEN culls the debris of the recent fire at Clarenceville Junior High School in a salvage effort. (Observer photo)

Edward Saliz, business manager for the Clarenceville School District, predicts a book loss of somewhere between \$20,000 and \$30,000; and a total loss "in the vicinity of \$100,000."

When the loss analysis is completed, Miss Diven sees her job as a twofold one: setting up a temporary library in an available classroom and taking the necessary steps toward resurrecting the library which was destroyed.

Other Clarenceville schools as well as neighboring school systems have offered to loan reference materials until the junior high can replace what was lost. In addition, private citizens have called to offer books from their homes. "I knew I could count on the Clarenceville parents," Miss Diven related. "They are really behind their schools."

Realistically, Miss Diven does not see getting back into the burned out library until September -- at the earliest. Business manager Saliz agrees that rebuilding the library -- not including books -- may take three to four months to complete.

Meanwhile, Clarenceville Junior High is all but back to normal. The library has been sealed off, damage to halls and adjacent rooms including replacing ceiling tile, repainting, cleaning every room and every locker and refitting the floor was repaired in time for the students' return from their Christmas holiday.

What was student reaction to the fire? "I think that most of the students felt bad," Miss Diven related. "They seemed rather subdued. Several brought in copies of the newspapers which carried the story."

Miss Diven was nearly moved to tears by one seventh grade girl who collected quarters from her friends "so you can start buying books right away." "Although the girl proposed taking up a school-wide collection, Principal DeWayne Nutter assured her that insurance money would take care of most of the replacement costs."

"I look upon the job ahead as a great challenge," Miss Diven quietly said. "Even though there are a great many books to replace, I was familiar with most of them. I try to read as many as I can -- I feel it's part of my job."

"It's really the good and bad all mixed together. I feel terrible about what happened. But once I get my bearings and get rolling, I get how many librarians get to build up a library from scratch. I'm not making long-range plans for a summer vacation."

Bonsai group meets tonight

PLYMOUTH The Plymouth area Tokiwa Bonsai Club will meet Wednesday, Jan. 9, at 7:30 p.m. at Central Middle School, N. Main and Church Sts., Plymouth.

Speaker will be a club member, Richard Smith, and his topic will be "Mum's the Word." The club mascot also will be presented.

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TO THE GAS CUSTOMERS OF CONSUMERS POWER COMPANY

NOTICE OF SPECIAL CONTRACT HEARING BEFORE THE MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

On December 21, 1973, Michigan Consolidated Gas Company applied to the Michigan Public Service Commission under § 11 of 1909 PA 300 (MCLA 462.11), § 4 of 1919 PA 419 (MCLA 460.54), and Commission Orders No. D-3096 and D-3096-50.2 for approval of special contract provisions relating to sale of natural gas by Michigan Consolidated to Consumers Power Company (Case No. U-4498).

The application states that, following Commission approval in Case No. U-4333 of a special contract between Michigan Consolidated and Consumers Power, Michigan Consolidated delivered 10 billion cubic feet of natural gas to Consumers Power during the period May 29 - August 9, 1973, and an additional 2 billion cubic feet during the period August 10 - September 6, 1973. All such gas was delivered under the terms of the special contract approved by the Commission, at the Commission-approved price of 87 cents per Mcf.

The application further states that Michigan Consolidated and Consumers Power entered into a storage contract dated October 16, 1973, under which Consumers Power agreed to store gas which Michigan Consolidated would deliver during the period October 15 - December 31, 1973, if from time to time deliveries of gas to Michigan Consolidated by its pipeline suppliers exceeded the total of the requirements of Michigan Consolidated's customers plus the volumes it could inject into its own storage fields. This contract grants to Consumers Power the right to purchase one third of all gas stored and an additional right to purchase any part of the remainder of the gas that Michigan Consolidated does not elect to withdraw from storage by June 15, 1974. The contract price is 87 cents per Mcf. The application states that, as of December 20, 1973, approximately 10 billion cubic feet of gas had been stored.

The application requests that the Commission (1) approve the sale to Consumers Power of the additional 2 billion cubic feet under the special contract approved in Case No. U-4333, (2) approve the agreements relating to sale of gas contained in the contract dated October 16, 1973, and (3) retain jurisdiction in the case and hold the proceeding open so that future special contracts for sale of gas by Michigan Consolidated to Consumers Power (should the two companies agree to any such contracts) could be submitted for Commission approval by motion, on notice to the Commission Staff and to intervenors.

A public hearing will be held at 9:30 A.M. on January 25, 1974, in the offices of the Commission, Law Building, Lansing, Michigan 48913, for the purpose of determining whether the relief sought should be granted. Any interested parties may attend the hearing and participate, subject to the provisions of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. Copies of the application may be obtained from the Secretary of the Commission, Law Building, Lansing, Michigan 48913, the Secretary of Michigan Consolidated Gas Company, One Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48226, or the Secretary of Consumers Power Company, 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan 49201.

This notice is published by direction of the Michigan Public Service Commission.

Consumers Power