

## ST. JOSEPH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

DATE: June 6, 1999

TO: Mr. Ceaser Stravinski  
Mr. Anthony Luber

FROM: Debra Futa, Assistant Director

RE: Service Directions for 2000

The intent of this document is to provide you with a very general update on the year's progress and to present an overview for 2000.

### **Year-to-Date Progress**

This is very much a year of transition. Our long range planning task force is in full swing although service directions have not yet been identified. We are still in the process of listening to valuable input from the public sector. In June of 1998, five service initiatives were outlined for 1999. Although this year is far from over, progress has been made in several areas. To briefly bring you up to date:

#### **I. Centre Township Branch Construction**

Construction is well underway and the building exterior is taking shape. Hiring has been completed for the three full time professional positions and is underway for the head clerical. Discussions are taking place with vendors for the café. Planning for the dedication and beginning services including hours of operation are also in progress. We continue to monitor progress closely and are regular communication with the architect and contractor. Opening is currently slated for mid-October with a probable dedication date in early December.

#### **II. Training**

Creation of a training package is still underway but moving at a much slower pace since the loss of a Financial Services person. We continue to offer many opportunities for training in technology-related areas. Covey's Seven Habits training still takes place regularly with two full-length workshops per year and refreshers sessions several times monthly. We believe customer service will be our next big training push and will be working on some innovative ways to accomplish that initiative.

#### **III. Audio Visual Remodeling**

Planning is underway for the Audio-Visual remodel. A staff team has been formed and is being facilitated in-house. By end of summer, we will be negotiating an architectural contract to begin the task of developing specifications for this project. We hope to create an exciting department with a range of services and materials, which will be attractive to all ages.

#### **IV. Values Based Services**

This initiative goes hand-in-hand with the customer service package we intend to create. Plans are moving more slowly than anticipated but this still remains a viable objective.

## **V. Long Range Planning**

As mentioned above, the Long Range task team is working on shaping the direction of library service for the next five years. The heaviest input from the community is almost finished and more staff involvement will soon be demanded.

### **Other Items of Interest**

Our efforts in the areas of collection development are bearing fruit. Circulation, especially in the fiction and non-print areas of the collection has been up consistently. Other areas continue to receive scrutiny as we continually assess our processes. Technical Services has refined our reporting capabilities so we do more thorough tracking of which items are circulating, how many titles we're purchasing, how much and what we withdraw, etc. The title count for 1999 has been further reduced from 17,500 in 1998 to approximately 16,000 for 1999.

Merchandising continues to be a focus in all public service departments. Our displays have increased in both quality and quantity. Public comments as well as circulation in display areas have been very favorable.

Programming is also up throughout the system. In an effort to better organize and publicize our programs, we are initiating a monthly calendar of all events instead of producing fliers for each program. This fall will see an emphasis on mini-series program offerings. Programs in the series may be offered at a variety of agencies to attempt to introduce the public to our facilities as well as to bring them programs in a variety of convenient locations.

The Readmobile will be continuing its service program for a fourth year. Readmobile service has proven to be enormously popular with the 700 children it now serves. Library staff will also continue to track the data.

## **Year 2000 Directions**

### **I. Long Range Plan Implementation**

The Long Range Plan task force is currently in the process of assessing community needs and determining how the Library might begin to meet those needs. They have identified five major areas of community needs: Education, Transportation, Parochial Thinking, Lack of Intergovernmental Cooperation and Competitiveness in the Global Electronic Community. These community concerns will be compared with the Library's strengths and the ability to meet the public demand. Taken together, all the elements will play a part in forging a new plan of service for the next five years.

### **II. Customer Service Training**

Customer Service training is an area which will have very direct public impact on our customers. As mentioned above, this training initiative will marry values-based service philosophies with new customer skills to create a higher level of friendly and personalized service.

### **III. Customized and Computerized Services**

This area really needs to be fleshed out and could include:

Laptops to check out at Centre, drive-up window, Millennium circ from Innovative which will include card access for leased databases (Nancy K. is working on something for this), time limits on Internet through smart-card access, coffee shops, etc.

#### **IV. Audio Visual Services Remodeling**

Actual work in the Audio Visual department will probably begin late in 1999 with a completion date sometime in 2000. We are in the process of deciding a new look for the department as well as assessing current services and collection.

#### **V. Children's Services Remodeling**

Much of the Capital Projects budget for 2000 has been set aside to renovate Children's Services and the Children's areas of the branches in 2000. Rather than a complete remodel, this effort is primarily to brighten up the areas and make them more attractive to children and adults. We plan to form the team for this project in February of 2000

#### **Conclusion**

As stated in the opening paragraph, SJCPL is still in the midst of a transition as we continue with the projects slated for completion in 1999 and plan for more capital improvements in 2000. Our new long range plan will provide the focus necessary for new efforts in services and programming. (As in the past, the Board will regularly be kept informed of the Long Range Task Force's work until adoption of the new plan later this fall.) Libraries continue to change with ever more advances in technology and part of the struggle in devising a new plan of service is the constant shadow of how to remain a viable entity with our public. We continue to be information navigators and we continue to strive to bring access to information and to enhance the quality of leisure time. Undoubtedly, there are new roles to assume as we work to discover how to meet the community's needs.

**These Service Directions were approved by the St. Joseph County Public Library Board when the Library Board formally adopted the 2000 Library Budget and Levy on September 13, 1999.**