

Hall Library Public Services Board Report
April 2013

Prepared by Lisa Bailey, Public Services Coordinator

When the public first enters the Roy and Helen Hall Memorial Library (RHHML), chances are good that the first staff person they encounter will be someone from the Public Services Department. Public Services encompasses circulation, genealogy, volunteers, staffing of several service desks, and many of the routines that go unseen, but that make it possible for the public to leave the library happy. This department consists of a Library Coordinator (me), a Librarian I - Susan Kusterbeck, two Senior Library Technicians, Elfi Roberts and Marci Chen, and two part-time couriers, two part-time shelvers, seven part-time library assistants, and three full-time library assistants.

Susan Kusterbeck has been with the library for 16 years, starting out in the Children's Department, moving to the Public Services Department as Circulation Supervisor, and several years ago becoming the Genealogy Librarian. While her specialty is genealogy and local history, she also coordinates and assists with the E.S.L. program in addition to working at many staff desks, and acting as unofficial historian for our department

Staff from this department handles the progress of items as they are first added to our shelves, are checked out, returned, and reshelved. Elfi Roberts began her Public Services life in 2001. She, and Taylor Thomas and Lisa MacIntyre, her shelvers, see that the shelves stay in good order, shift huge sections of shelving to make room for everything, and reshelve the items that are returned. Elfi also supervises our two couriers, Bobby Marek and Jerry Royal, who convey requested books, magazines, furniture, items for Youth Services programming, etc. between branches, and collect items returned in our remote book drops, in the library van. Elfi also serves as the Volunteer Coordinator at Hall, and library staff members let her know what their volunteer needs are, and she works hard to fill those needs.

Marci Chen, Circulation Supervisor, has been with us about six months. She came to us with lots of great experience as a Circulation and Librarian Supervisor, and quickly learned the details of Polaris (our library system), our policies and procedures, and got to know the staff of ten she supervises. The Circulation Supervisor position is a challenging and important position because that person must explain policies to patrons who might have returned late or damaged materials, and who are reluctant to pay or who need further explanation of our policies. The staff she supervises has the most hours of direct contact with the public, so the positive attitude that she models is essential.

Our full-time Library Assistants are Bill Olsen, Ann Gustafson, and Monica Almonte. They have been with us for thirteen, eight, and five years respectively. All of the Library Assistants work at the Fiction Desk, Lab/Info (upstairs), Circulation, and all are also trained to work at the Children's desk. They share tasks such as issuing new library cards, helping patrons find items, checking materials in and out, and accepting library fees. In addition, they have other responsibilities such as managing the Item Search process for items claimed returned, tallying monthly circulation statistics, and handling items that belong to other libraries that are returned to us.

Our part-time Library Assistants work 16 hours per week, and staff many of our crucial weekend and evening hours. Libby Slay and Karen Mattingly have been with us for ten years, and our other part-time folks are newer: Holly Malone, Malaina Joshua, Millicent Macharia, and Heidi Cline. We are sad to lose Roben Closs this week, who has resigned in order to have more time for her college studies. In addition to working at all of the service desks mentioned above, these staff members are responsible for additional tasks including maintaining our informational brochures, searching for items that have been claimed as returned or have been somehow misplaced, updating the What's New notebook every month, and updating the status of no-longer NEW fiction and nonfiction.

One project that all the Public Services staff will be working on this spring and fall will be to update patron cards. We started last month to verify the addresses and contact information that we have on file for all of our card holders. This March and April, all Collin County resident cards (not McKinney) are expiring so that we can have the opportunity to update them. No cards will expire during the summer months, but in the fall we will continue working on this project.

To give you an idea of the volume of business that we have at the Hall Library, here is a snapshot of the past month of March. 54,195 items were checked out (including 2,916 Overdrive items that the Public Services staff does not handle directly), and 28,806 items were checked in here. We collected \$3,978.15 in fees, and added 297 new patron accounts. In the summer months, we expect to check out at least 7,000 more items each month, and increase our new patron accounts by several hundred more each month.

When I returned to RHHML to coordinate the Public Services department this past September after nearly three years as Library Manager at the John and Judy Gay Library, I met with my staff members individually. One of the questions I asked each of them was to tell me something that the Public Services Department did that they were proud of. Here are some of the responses. They were:

- proud that the department works well together as a team to meet patron needs
- proud that the Circulation staff smile, greet patrons, and provide friendly customer service
- proud of the volume of items and customers which are handled by the Circulation Department
- proud of Public Services because most patrons leave happy, and
- proud that the library goes out of its way to meet the needs of people

In the past seven months, I have enjoyed seeing members of the public that I did not see while I worked at JJGL, working with the Hall staff, and I am also enjoying the different challenges presented here. The Public Services department is committed to making the library experience a pleasant one for our patrons, and I am proud of the Hall Public Services staff.