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Public library augments campus book collections

By ERIC JONES
Of the Emerald

The Eugene Public Library isn't intended to back up any of the schools in the area, including the University, according to assistant librarian Helen Howard.

"However, there are lots of things the general populace is interested in that may be useful to students," Howard says, adding that the library has a comprehensive collection of Oregon history, and student groups often use the library's meeting rooms.

Proof of residence (dormitory addresses are OK) and some form of identification with a name and signature are all that's required for a library card and access to a wide range of free services available to all city residents.

Howard admits that the library doesn't have everything a student might need for a research project, but she says, "If we've got it, it's going to be very accessible."

The public library operates on a \$1.5 million annual budget and has catalogued 210,000 items for circulation, not including the periodical collection. Service is provided by a 45-person staff, plus a number of part-time workers and volunteers. The library also employs a number of work-study students and sometimes offers student internships.

Recently compiled statistics indicate the popularity of the library among city residents — more than one million books were lent last year, which breaks down to an average of 306 books checked out every hour the library was open.

In addition to an extensive collection of fiction and reference books for children and adults, the library lends records and art prints.

More than 4,000 records — ranging from classical to rock — can be checked out, and the listening facilities in the art and music room may be reactivated this fall. Several hundred framed art prints are loaned for

one-month periods.

Other library services include meeting rooms and display cases, audio-visual equipment, a bookmobile, photocopiers and typewriters for use by the general public, a telephone-reference system, a television program (EPL Spaceship) and special library programs.

Meeting rooms that accommodate 150 people can be reserved by non-profit groups for free programs. Glass display cases are available for hobbyists — young and old — and a gallery can be scheduled for artists' displays.

The bookmobile travels throughout the city and stops near both Amazon and Westmoreland housing.

A three-quarter-inch video tape player, a 16mm film projector and overhead and opaque projectors may be used in the library. Video tapes occasionally are loaned to organizations with three-quarter-inch players.

Special programs include free entertainment films. For more information on reserving a meeting room and for the schedule of displays and programs, visit or call the librarian's office.

Sometimes the library is "wall-to-wall people," says Howard, who adds that she is hoping a bond issue to expand the library will come before Eugene voters in the next couple of years.

Until then, the public library probably will remain a "cozy" place, with dozens of tables for reading and studying on the main floor and in the periodical room downstairs, art displays on the walls and large windows facing 13th Avenue and Olive Street.

For more information, visit the library at 100 W. 13th Ave., or call 687-5450. Winter hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday and, starting October 1, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.



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