

### **Albert Branch**

In the freeze/thaw cycles that Regina has experienced recently, the Albert Branch basement has been showing its age. Starting in early February, the branch experienced several incidents of flooding due to ice damming, as well as some foundation cracking and roofing issues. The flooding has impacted the teen area on the main floor as well as the small programming room, staff room and computer room in the lower level.

Several of the sewing machines stored in the small programming room suffered damage but are fixable. To prevent further incidents, the Albert branch staff ordered better plastic storage cases for all sewing machines. Two computer monitors and keyboards were damaged in the computer room. IT Services removed from the room the five PCs nearest to the water flow to prevent further damage. An insurance claim has been submitted.

### **Purchasing/Procurement Policy**

The Library's current procurement policy is out-dated and has been under review by the Library's Head of Finance & Administration, Gail Kruger. A draft revision is being prepared for the March Board meeting. In reviewing the Library's policy, Library Administration has followed, substantially, the City's policy with modification reflective of the size differences between the organizations.

### **Circulation Practice**

With the implementation of the Millennium (Innovative Interfaces) Integrated Library System through the SILS Consortium came a number of changes to circulation practice in order to harmonize, as much as possible, the user experience throughout the province and minimize the load on the servers. The vast majority of the new practices were consistent with RPL's prior practices. The Consortium committed to review policies and practices after the initial implementation period and a subset of circulation practices were included in a public and staff survey to gather input for possible changes.

The net result of the assessment is a relatively short but impactful list:

- Library cards are transferable. RPL Library cards were transferable before the implementation of the new system and, while there are arguments to support either approach, it is becoming more technologically likely that physical library cards will be less prevalent in future and libraries will use technological means (PINs and other digital security) to ensure that use of a library card is done with the permission / knowledge of the owner.
- Magazine loan periods will allow one renewal.

- Institutional library cards will be able to check out 600 items. This is a change to accommodate logistics rather than an increase in number of items loaned.
- The limit on the number of holds a patron can have has been increased from 50 to 100. This new limit continues to be lower than RPL's previous limit.
- Items returned after having been declared lost and billed to a patron will carry a charge of the amount of accumulated overdues or the amount of the lost billing, whichever is greater.
- DVDs have been loanable throughout the province for many years, but starting on 1 March, patrons will be able to place holds on DVDs no matter which library system owns them. This particular item came back from the surveys as a significant item for users and, with recent changes in the various library systems' ability to reciprocate loans, allowing holds has become possible and will reduce the incidence of technical issues created in the software.
- DVD (multi-disc items such as TV series) will circulate as sets. Up to this point, DVD sets have been broken into individual discs to maximize circulation. Feedback from the surveys indicated a strong desire to keep sets together.

The Consortium is committed to continuous evaluation and assessment of services based on staff and user feedback, as well as managerial efficacy. As has been done to this point, these services will be monitored to ensure that services remain effective and efficient.

### 2012 Audit

The Library's audit for 2012 is still under way and will not be ready for presentation to the Board until the March regular meeting.

### Collections

Noted in the Library's budget presentation and in some of the Library's promotional material, digital collections are expanding and RPL has added two new services – *Freeding* and *Freegal*. *Freeding* is an ebook service and *Freegal* is downloadable music. These are both great additions to the Library's collection service for Reginans and, on a business level, they represent some of the new ways that vendors and libraries are adapting to the digital environment.

One of the constant comments from libraries and users about most digital formats and services is that some services, like RPL's *OverDrive* service, lend ebooks to users on the same basis as libraries lend physical materials – that is, a number of copies are purchased and each copy can be out to one person at a time. In the digital environment, this limitation doesn't make sense, since an infinite number of copies can be made of any item without damaging or altering the original and at minimal cost.

There are many business reasons for services like *OverDrive* to limit use as they do, but *Freeding* and *Freegal* work under a model that thinks differently. In each of these services, the Library purchases a type of subscription with a maximum number of uses – whether these uses are made in one month or one year does not matter. As a result, anyone wanting a particular ebook or a particular song can have it, regardless of how many other people are reading it at the same time.

In the case of *Freeding*, the loan period still “expires” and the ebook is erased from the reader’s device. In the case of *Freegal*, the item remains indefinitely with the borrower. The difference in this regard is due only to the differences in licensing among vendors and content owners. This model makes a great deal of sense for the digital environment and ensures that RPL can fill user demand quickly. The model is not universally adopted in the industry and that means that, at the moment, each of these services has limited selection – the digital services offered by the Library cannot replace each other and they depend on the coverage and models represented by both. RPL’s ongoing program of assessment will monitor these services and will be very interested to see what Reginaans think of them.

### **Freedom to Read Week**

February 24 to March 2 is *Freedom to Read Week* across the country. It is an annual event sponsored by the Book & Periodical Council, an organization that includes almost every facet of the print information industry. It encourages Canadians to think about, commit to, and protect our intellectual freedoms, including our right to choose for ourselves which books, films, and artworks we create – and enjoy. The RPL poster, from which the above text is drawn, is included in the Board package and outlines a number of RPL events taking place throughout the week.