

Library computerizes

By JAN TIGAR

(Of the Sun Journal Staff)

Card holders at the Lansing Public Library will convert to a computer check-out system early next month.

On Jan. 2 the library begins the first phase of a computer method and all card holders must re-register as the conversion begins, librarian Joan Jensen said this week.

Nine other area libraries now use the computer method and patrons of these libraries will be able to borrow books from any one of the nine including Alsip, Dolton, Eisenhower, Elmhurst, Harvey, Oak Park, Oak Forest, Park Forest, Crestwood and Riverdale in addition to Lansing.

The new system, called LIBS 100, is a complete library information system, Mrs. Jensen explained. She believes it will ultimately improve service to the patron, reduce costs, provide rapid returning and checking out library materials. It will also produce automatic overdue and reserve notices, she said.

Replacing the traditional hand check-out method, the computer will provide instant identification of delinquent patrons and produce all statistics concerning the book usage and cardholders activity.

Also with the new method the library will have instant information concerning the availability of materials in the other network libraries.

Although the hand check-out method has been used since the Lansing library opened, Mrs. Jensen said the new system will not reduce the "personal attention" or "reduce the individual to a series of numbers."

"It has always been the goal of the library to provide warm, personal library service," she said. "Many automated systems were considered and rejected due to the depersonalizing

effect," she added.

In addition to the new card system, crowded conditions at the library will be eased next year when facilities are relocated to a new Indiana Avenue site.

Village officials are expected to advertise for construction bids on the 180 by 120-foot building early next month with construction to begin shortly after a contractor is selected.

Although interior remodeling was completed at the library on Ridge and Chicago Avenue several years ago, cramped conditions allow seating for not more than 50 persons. Library board officials said larger rooms and wider aisles will be included in the new building to serve more people and space for additional materials.

Library officials have been planning the new building for the past four years, but the biggest surge in construction plans occurred last February when bonds to finance the estimated \$990,000 building were sold.

The \$40,000 Indiana Avenue site was purchased through library funds from School District 158 which found the property unsuitable for school use.

School officials are now interested in the Ridge Road library for a possible administration center and hope to have first option on the building when the new library is complete.

The new site is located within Lansing's two main shopping areas on Ridge Road and Torrence and lies near TF South and Memorial Junior High School. The Indiana Ave. location will also allow parking for more than 100 cars and is close to public transportation on Ridge Road.

The proposed building is geared to serve a population of 45,000 and will have enough seating for 100 persons.

About 600 feet of the 27,000 sq. foot building will include meeting rooms and areas for public exhibits.

Also included will be storage areas for audio visual equipment and additional tables. Other new features include individual reading carrels, typing booths and conference rooms.

Currently the library houses well over 29,000 books, but was built to accommodate only 25,000. When the library reached its peak several years ago Mrs. Jensen said the lack of space has caused the inability to keep enough magazines and records available for patrons. Also needed, she said, is a room for book repair and an office.

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LOCAL HISTORY
LANSING PUBLIC LIBRARY
NEWS ARTICLES
PAMPHLET FILE

For Reference

not to be taken from this room