



Friends of the Library

NEWSLETTER

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Dear Friend of the Library:

"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirates' loot on Treasure Island ... and best of all you can enjoy these riches every day of your life." Walt Disney.

Our Library is indeed a treasure chest for all to enjoy, and to continue enjoying in the future. The good news is: the treasure keeps on growing; the bad news is: the chest is the same size, and we now find that we can't close the lid, even with everyone sitting on it! You know what happens when we sit on a problem? Nothing!

BUT SOMETHING IS HAPPENING

Last month's Newsletter took a hard look at how our Library performs, and we hope you discovered just how good it really is. It has done so well that its own momentum is already pushing it on to even bigger and better things.

This month we look at the library consultants' report and their recommendations, which were so well presented at our February meeting by Bob Wychham, Chairman of the Library Board. To refresh your memory, the consultants found that:

- the Library is seriously overcrowded,
- service is beginning to suffer,
- shelves are 90% full (optimum level is 70%),
- seating is insufficient,
- staff working conditions are poor,
- there is not enough parking,
- the library collections are growing and so is the level of utilisation,
- the present building is no longer able to absorb this expansion.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

Four alternatives were examined by the consultants.

1. No Growth Policy: This would mean getting rid of as many books and other materials as we buy each year. Unfortunately this would lead to the collection becoming increasingly heavy in non-fiction materials; whereas fiction usually experiences an initial high demand for a new title followed by decreasing popularity, non-fiction (particularly reference material) becomes more valuable as time passes and is therefore not discarded at the same rate as fiction.

So the collection would become less attractive to patrons who naturally want access to the latest fictional titles, because, as non-fiction accumulated, fewer and fewer new fiction titles would be added to the collection.

As it is likely that demand for the present balance of the collection and library services will continue to grow, the conclusion is that the No Growth Policy is not a viable alternative.