

**PRESENTATION TO THE REGINA PUBLIC LIBRARY TASK FORCE
February 16, 2004
by Joanne Havelock**

Bolded text will be presented at the Cathedral Neighborhood Centre on February 16th.

I have lived in Regina since 1979, and in the Cathedral area since the early 1980's. Members of our family use the library at least twice a week. We visit the Dunlop Art Gallery when we are in the downtown library. I have used the Prairie History Room for advice on researching family history.

Rescind the Decision

Firstly I urge this Task Force to recommend that the RPL Board rescind its hasty and ill-informed decision to close the Connaught, Glen Elm and Prince of Wales Branches of the Library, close the Dunlop Art Gallery and dismantle the Prairie History Room collection and disperse its staff.

This is not just a financial management decision within the prerogative of the Library Director. It is more than a financial decision.

Take the time to properly consult the School Boards, the Schools, and the daycares. Take time to talk to people with differing abilities – physical, mental and emotional, and learning abilities. Take time to properly consult Aboriginal peoples - First Nations and Metis. Take time to properly consult the community. This consultation process may have some good intentions. But people without Internet find it hard to participate. Organizations that meet only monthly did not have time to prepare a submission and submit it to their Boards for approval. Regina is a City of many communities – both geographic and cultural. Allow time for the dialogue to take place. For Elders to be consulted in the proper way following proper protocol. People concerned about the libraries have been working day and night since November 26th - because they care about their libraries and they care about this City – but occurring over Christmas season, this is not nearly enough time for people to become informed.

Program Attendance and Circulation

Based on the 2002 figures in the 2003 budget, cutting the three Branch Libraries will cut 14% of the RPL's circulation. The Dunlop Art Gallery accounted for 48% of the program attendees for the RPL. Adding that to the program attendance for the three Branches - a total of 58% of the RPL's program attendance would be cut. Does this make sense? And how many people were attracted to Central Branch, just to work in the Prairie History Room?

Dunlop Art Gallery

Dunlop Art Gallery is unique across Canada. The location of the gallery makes it easy for children and others to see some of the latest in creative art. Recently we had a 14-year-old visitor from Windsor Ontario who had never been to an art gallery of any kind. We soon took her to a Gallery – anyone who visits Regina's Central Library can easily visit the Dunlop Art

Gallery. Text is not the only source of knowledge about the world – visual art is an important expression of insight and knowledge into our world.

Prairie History Room

The Prairie History Room has a unique collection of historical books and the resources for genealogy research for those researching early settlers and First Nations and Métis history. Also critically important is the qualified and expert staff who are able to assist individuals to quickly find what might otherwise take weeks or months. Many Saskatchewan books have been authored using the resources of the Prairie History Room.

Connaught Library

Since I live in the Cathedral area I want to talk about Connaught Library, but I know that Prince of Wales and Glen Elm Libraries would have similar stories.

Others have presented or will be presenting other information about Connaught Library. I will be sending in with a written submission the list of 10 schools or educational centres and 6 daycares that make use of Connaught Library and a description of the neighborhood. I personally spoke to staff at each of the schools and childcare centres – this is not an exaggerated number.

When my children were younger they attended Wise Owl School Age Care and made frequent use of the Library as part of their activities. This excellent childcare will sorely miss the availability of the Connaught Library and its programs, especially during the summer months.

Ecole Connaught Community School is right across the street and everyone at the school appreciates the value of the Library. The school does not have extra space to take over functions of the Connaught Library. The library's role supports the ideals of the new SchoolsPlus initiative.

There are some people who argue that we can't put a little branch on every corner, therefore we should tear down Connaught Library. The point is that this Library is here now, it was here when people moved into the neighborhood. It has been here since the 1930's – seventy years. Families have long traditions with the Connaught Library – three generations of experience. Many people who still live in Regina or elsewhere have fond memories of the library and how it helped them develop reading and subsequently writing skills, including award-winning authors.

People in other newer areas of the City have other amenities. Each area of the City has its own character, and it is on this basis that people chose to live in an area. . The Cathedral area was once a bit run-down, but efforts by the community and its businesses, and support by the City, have revitalized the area. With the Cathedral Arts Festival, the area is now a tourist attraction. Why would the City remove from the Cityscape of this area a public library in a heritage building?

The people of the Cathedral area are a varied group.

Twelve percent are seniors over the age of 65. There are seniors' condos one block from the library and a large seniors' apartment complex about 2 blocks away.

Sixteen percent of the Cathedral area population is children under the age of 15.

Single parent families comprise 28% of families in the area – higher than the Regina average of 20%.

Nine percent of people responding to the Census self-identified as having Aboriginal background. This is the average for the City of Regina, but significantly higher than the suburbs of Regina.

The percentages of persons who are from visible minorities (5%) and the percent who speak a language other than English at home (6%) are about the same as the Regina averages. One percent of the population are people who have immigrated to Canada – one of the lower rates in the City.

Nineteen percent of Cathedral area residents over the age of 15 have less than a Grade 12 education, compared to the City average of 26%. The area also has one of the higher rates in the City of people with University degrees.

Sixty-eight percent of adults over the age of 15 are employed, about equal to the Regina average. But of those not working – a few more were looking for work than the Regina average since the unemployment rate of 7.6% was slightly higher than the Regina average of 6.3%.

Many Cathedral residents have low incomes. Twenty-two percent of individuals in the Cathedral have low incomes – the City average is 16%. The median income for the Cathedral area is the tenth lowest in the City.

Forty-five percent of the dwellings in the Cathedral area are rented – this is higher than the Regina average of 33%. Nineteen percent of people had moved in the year before the 2001 Census – just slightly higher than the Regina average of 17%. There are several social housing apartment complexes for families that are owned by the Regina Housing Authority in the Cathedral area.

Many parents in the Cathedral area work outside the home. Demographic statistics show that the area has an unusually high proportion of lone parent families. The library serves a significant portion of Aboriginal families. Many seniors drop by. Parents with pre-schoolers attend the programs and get an opportunity to meet people in the community. The library provides a safe and caring place, within safe walking distance, where children can go after school for story programs, to get books for school assignments and visit with their friends. My daughter and son spend many enjoyable, and educational, hours there. The Librarians know the children, we know the Librarians. We can get information about what are the best books on a variety of topics important to parents. The children love their library. What message are we sending the children if we take away their place?

Many people in the Cathedral area have lower incomes. At the Connaught Library these people can borrow books, videos, music, and popular magazines. The children can use the computer for homework, the adults can use it to search for a job. One aspect of poverty is not being able to access the common things in one's culture. Having the local libraries in the working class neighborhoods helps provide the opportunity to access these things.

Connaught Library is a jewel in the heart of the Cathedral area. It is what people talk about when they are trying to create a sense of community, to create places that are supportive of parents and families, inclusive of people from a variety of backgrounds. And with reasonable hours and additional involvement of the community, the role of Connaught Library could be even better.

Parents will not allow their children to walk to the Central Library on their own to get books.

Connaught Library is a beautiful building. It has been designated a heritage building by the City of Regina. In Europe they preserve buildings – there is a sense of history, and that is why we like to visit Europe. In Regina we all too often just look at the short-term dollar value, and tear down buildings that could have maintained Regina’s unique character. Or the building is converted to some commercial use, so that an historical site is not accessible to children.

Have you been to the Connaught Library when the children are using resources after school? When parents meet each other and use the library resources about parenting skills while their children are in pre-school activities. Have you been there for the Christmas party when half the neighborhood is there? Libraries are about more than just lending books. There are community places. They are public spaces where people can go in the winter and summer where the focus is not on spending money.

People can walk to their local Branch libraries. They don’t have to drive. It is better for the environment. Cutting Branches will mean extra pressure on parking at the Central Library and other libraries for those who can drive. People with lower incomes live in the Cathedral area because they can walk places, they don’t have to own a car.

Some people in the Cathedral area do go to Central Library. But it is open on Sundays. I’ve looked at the circulation statistics and people from all Branches use the Central Library to some degree – after all it also has the Dunlop Art Gallery and the Prairie History Room, and the Film Theatre. Connaught’s two key roles are:

- Pre-Schooler’s Door to Learning, and
- Popular Materials.

So it is a bit unfair to give the Connaught Branch these Roles, then criticize when people go to Central for reference material that is not carried at Connaught. As people who have computers get used to the new on-line book reserve system of the RPL, more people are choosing to have their books sent to Connaught Branch, because of its location.

Circulation statistics show that Connaught gets a noticeable portion of its patrons from other neighborhoods, such as Old Lakeview/Normandy area, Parliament Place/Lakeview, Hillsdale, Washington Park, the Airport area, McNab neighborhood. The RPL’s Branch Siting Policy of giving Connaught, Albert and Prince of Wales a territory of only one-kilometer radius is old-fashioned and outdated.

Those people that can be mobile use branches in differing locations. But those that cannot be so mobile need an easily accessible branch in their neighborhood.

Women

Another point that has not been stated too often is that these library closures will disproportionately affect women. Most of the Librarians are women. Many are the sole support of their families. **Women still bear the primary responsibility for childcare – of their own families and as child care workers.** The Libraries are a valuable resource for people caring for children. And many of the young readers are girls, who have a safe and friendly place that they can go to after school – their parents know where they are and that they are in a positive environment. It is a safe and free place that women of all ages can go to.

Women still have lower average incomes than men, especially single parent women, and many senior women. People with lower incomes live in the downtown area of the City due to lower rents and easier transportation.

RPL Staff

I cannot say too much in praise of the RPL staff at all branches. And especially at Connaught Branch. They are professionally skilled, and well informed about all the resources. They are also aware of the cultural and social dynamics of our area. They are kind and fair with all the children. They are not just shelvers of books – they are educators and role models.

Over the years the staff have chosen to work in jobs and in locations that suit their skills and interests. The bumping process will move them into other jobs.

What about succession planning at RPL. Many employees are near retirement – are we cutting many staff just before there will be a number of retirements, leaving us with no one to hire and a real lack of experience among the staff?

Albert Library

Did you know that it is quite possible that after the bumping process there will not be any Aboriginal person working at Albert Library? Already it is certain that the Branch Head, an Aboriginal woman who is a leader in the community, will be bumped to Central.

The library employees union, CUPE, twice asked RPL management to have an Employment Equity program, but RPL management refused to do so. Because there was no Employment Equity Program, the positions at Albert Library were not designated to be filled by Aboriginal people. Therefore when the bumping is occurring after the staff cuts, non-Aboriginal staff can bump into the positions. Now the staff that will bump into the positions are lovely well-qualified people who work well with the community – that is not the issue. The issue is that Albert Library has a mandate to reflect the community surrounding it – which includes many Aboriginal people. The Library has special collections, artwork and program related to Aboriginal people. There needs to be Aboriginal people working there to be role models and mentors for the neighborhood.

Basically employment equity programs are created to make the workforce more equitable - to ensure better representation of people from groups that in the past have been under-represented in organizations, or in certain types of positions in an organization. In Saskatchewan employment

equity programs usually apply to Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, people from visible minorities, or women in management and non-traditional positions.

Employment equity programs must be approved by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. (Canadian Human Rights Commission for federal agencies.) Employment equity programs contain plans for employers to take special measures to increase the representation of people from under-represented groups. Unions are involved and consulted and their support is needed for employment equity programs related to their union members.

Ordinarily the Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination - (see the protected categories below)- which would mean discrimination against hiring particular kinds of people or discrimination in favour of hiring them. Before they are approved, employment equity programs are carefully reviewed to ensure they will have their intended effect. Then the employer can undertake special measures in hiring and retaining employees. And these measures are not considered to be discrimination.

One of the special measures that can be taken is to "designate" a position. When a position is designated it is reserved for people from a particular group of people - the employer must specify the reason why the position should be designated.

If RPL had set up an Employment Equity program, then they could have obtained approval to designate the positions at Albert Library as jobs that should be filled by Aboriginal people. CUPE had twice suggested to RPL management that they set up an Employment Equity program, but management did not choose to do so. Therefore the jobs at Albert Library could not be designated for Aboriginal people.

So when the RPL Board made its decision to cut jobs, which led to the bumping process that has occurred, there was nothing in place that would ensure that the people bumping into positions at Albert would be Aboriginal.

At this point it is clear that the Albert Branch Head will be moved to a position at Central, and other Aboriginal staff at Albert will likely be bumped.

Because management did not have an Employment Equity program, when the cuts were made and the bumping took place, the result will be non-Aboriginal staff at Albert Library.

The problem with that is that Albert Library is an area with a large proportion of Aboriginal people, and years have been spent building up the programs and staff at Albert to directly relate to the surrounding community, enhance literacy, etc. (See the article "Improving & Delivering Effective Library Services for Aboriginal Peoples in Saskatchewan") Programs could be continued, but it would not be the same as having the programs delivered by Aboriginal people.

So whether it is intended to do so, the RPL cuts are having a detrimental effect on a particular Branch that has a particular mandate to work with Aboriginal people.

I want to talk about Albert Library for two reasons. First, I am proud of this library and what it represents about the positive things First Nations and Metis people are doing in this City. It represents a positive step by RPL to respond to the concerns and aspirations of the

North Central neighborhood. Second I have friends and colleagues that live and work in the neighborhood.

Regina stands to lose an opportunity to host an international conference if the staff cuts go ahead. The Albert Branch Head, has been an active member and attended the first three conferences of the Indigenous Librarians Forum. These Forums are held every two years – in locations such as New Zealand, Sweden, and Santa Fe Arizona. Through the Albert Branch Head's participation and persuasion, the 4th Annual Indigenous Librarians Forum was to be held in Regina in September 2005. Over 300 delegates from around the world would be in attendance to see the innovative things being done to work with and involve Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan's libraries. The organization's policy is that all people involved in organizing the conference should be Indigenous people and it is not clear that the Albert Branch Head could continue her major leadership role from her new non-managerial position. The two hosting organizations are Library Services for Saskatchewan Aboriginal Peoples Committee and the Albert Library Committee. The two groups are currently reviewing what they will do with regard to the conference and the financial commitments. The \$1000 deposit on the hotel must be paid by the end of February. (Regina Inn kindly extended the deadline for a month for the committee.) After that there will be a \$25,000 cancellation fee

The Albert Branch Head has played a leadership role in many capacities, working for RPL for 18 years and being Branch Head at Albert Library for the past 12 years. She has also participated on boards and committees on community and educational issues, youth and Aboriginal health and as chair of the Library Services for Saskatchewan Aboriginal Peoples. It is not clear that these skills would be fully used within the scope of the position she will be moving to.

This concern about skills not being used will apply to all of the bumped staff from all Branches.

The City of Regina has received a provincial government grant of \$25,000 for April 2003-March 2004 to enhance service delivery to Aboriginal people. The ten Library systems in the province were all given grants; Saskatoon City, Regina and the North got \$25,000 grants.

How can the RPL continue to accept such money if it is putting cuts into place that will so negatively affect Aboriginal people around 4 branches in the City? All of the three cut branches are in central areas which statistics show have a higher concentration of Aboriginal people and a higher concentration of lower income people than in the outer edges of the City. These statistics were provided to the public during the Friends of the RPL court case which said that the cuts were a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms due to the particularly detrimental effects on people with low incomes and Aboriginal people in the City.

Sources of funding

The process of cutting services to balance the City budget is a very narrow view of economics. Why can't we see that Regina has its own economic patterns? It is okay for us to pay Librarians to do work, who will then spend their money on food and clothing and housing, supporting the businesses in Regina. We do not need to cut their positions, so an outside business can come in and perhaps offer them call centre jobs. We are trying to increase the population of our City – cutting these jobs would not help.

Cutting Branch libraries does not send a positive message to businesses that might want to relocate here with their employees.

People in general need to have a fuller understanding of the RPL budget – revenues and expenditures. We need more options for funding expenditures to keep services free and complete – whether it is grants for infrastructure or modifications or the funding base for the RPL. If it is a City priority we can find a way.

We have found the money to finance other capital expenditures or entertainment such as the Grey Cup. The Grey Cup attracted people who spent money in the City and had fun. The Libraries are also an asset – they attract people who want to live in the City.

There were concerns about the future of Connaught Library 6 years ago. As far as the general public knew, the Library was putting into place a Strategic Plan, with fund-raising options, which the public assumed was addressing funding issues. Although the 2003 budget did express some concerns about potential financial shortfalls, there was no indication that major cuts were being considered. The public was not consulted or forewarned. The Library Board faces financial constraints and this burden should have been shared with the public to find positive solutions.

I have worked on other projects where the lack of public consultation led to problems, but with public consultation some solutions were achieved – it seems to me that is the intent of the City’s policies on public participation and involvement.

This has not been an open process questions I raised in November and December have never been fully addressed – a short letter comparing Regina to Calgary does not make up a complete response.

Looking at the issue more closely, questions about administration and finance have arisen.

- I had asked the Mayor for documents related to the decisions that were made by the Board, and he directed the request to the RPL Administration, Why were the pertinent documents not readily available to the public? We have been waiting a number of days to obtain copies of very basic budget and decision-making documents.
- What is the role of the Board in decision-making versus the Executive Director?
- What Board discussions and decisions should be “in camera” and what should be discussed fully and openly with the public?
- Where is the budget? The document that we have been able to obtain for 2003 does not provide sufficient detail and I would hope that this is not the document on which decisions were made.
- Are budget expenditures cost-effective? A prime example is the outsourcing of cataloguing that sent revenue and jobs out of the province. Are the library materials returned in a timely manner and well catalogued? I have certainly heard some concerns expressed about this. Who contributed to making this decision? Who is benefiting from this decision?
- Why has the pension over-run suddenly become an issue?
- Where is the facilities plan for the library buildings? (Does this plan identify the costs of capital improvements? What kind of assessment was used to estimate costs? Why wasn’t there a capital development plan that phased in repairs over time?)
- If we have so much money in the capital expenditures fund, why can’t it be used for needed repairs? Or is it being saved for some unknown plan that was developed in camera? I have heard that there are plans to implement a simplified model of libraries for Regina, with one central branch and four branches on the edge of the City, and that there are plans to tear down

the Central Library to rebuild a larger Central library. Whose ideas are these? Have you asked the people of Regina what we want?

- Were the expenditures on a human resources firm from Calgary necessary? Why did the staff need to have this type of resources expended?
- What happened to the fund-raising plan that was supposed to be developed according to the Strategic Plan? (Funding the libraries to the operating level they would need would only cost \$10 a year on the average tax assessment.) Do we need to look at alternative ways of funding our libraries in Regina that are used in many other cities? Libraries are more than just books, and librarians are more than just shelveers of books. Libraries are providing a great range of services and maybe funding should come from sources to support those services.

Future Vision

What about the future?

I would like a future where planning discussions about the library don't have to come forward in such a way as to create a major conflict.

What do I see for the future of Connaught Library? First that it remain open. Second that the librarians continue their excellent programming: reading for literacy in the schools, puppets shows introducing children to theatre and drama, Spell-binders story time, Looking Glass Book Club, programs for seniors, arranging visits by authors and contributing to the literary component of the Cathedral Arts Festival. Third – an expansion to those needs identified by the local communities – Cathedral and Lakeview. Perhaps books and videos discussion for single parents, job searching resources, programs on First Nations and Metis cultural traditions, retirement planning. Fourth, a realistic appraisal of the physical needs of the building for repair and greater physical accessibility and a long range plan to deal with these matters, including fund-raising.

Regina needs its own plan – we are a unique city with unique needs. We need learning resources that are accessible to all parts of the City. But we do not need to destroy what is good to create this vision.

Let us have a realistic vision. Can a local library really be replaced with a library in a school, that is up four flights of stairs and already filled to capacity? Can quiet reading time be found in the midst of an overcrowded and busy recreational centre? Would many parents send their 7-year-old to walk across Victoria Avenue East to go to the Library?

Let is also talk about numbers. I like numbers – they can help us understand our situation. But as a person who has worked with statistics for many years, I also know they have their limitations. I am dismayed by people quoting crude comparisons about numbers of libraries per city as a basis for decision-making. These figures leave so many factors out. The character of neighborhoods. Traffic patterns. Access to other facilities of a similar nature. The willingness of a community to prioritize and support a facility. The value of a library beyond that of a resource material lending service.

So now we are in a difficult situation and people are clamoring for solutions. Solutions to problems such as this do not come instantly. The first step would be for the Regina Public Library Board and management to put on hold any steps they are taking to dismantle the library services.

I know that people have joined the Library Board and have volunteered for this Task Force because you are dedicated people with an interest in seeing that Regina has a good library system.

I have been talking to people from all over the City. The overwhelming majority of people in Regina are opposed to these cuts and want to work out an alternate solution. Keep this a democratic society and listen to what the people have to say. Ask for sufficient funds to run the library in the way it should be run – for the people of Regina. Regina is not just a small little town that can be served by a small number of library branches. It is a vibrant City with a history and many unique neighborhoods. Let us respect that diversity and let us build upon it.

Recently my daughter was Mayor for the Day. When asked what her one vote would be if she could vote she said “I would vote to keep the Libraries open.”

At the edge of town, in addition to the advertisements for the RCMP Museum or the Science Centre, how about advertising Regina as a cultural centre, a caring community, and a community with a love of learning? A cultural mosaic. A community that respects women. A community that listens to its residents. Let’s keep all our library branches alive, and the Dunlop Art Gallery and the Prairie History Room, and then we can proudly build a statue of children reading books at the edge of the City.

Task Force Questions

It is unfortunate that there is little or no time to consider the questions that the Task Force is asking.

1. What other mechanisms do you think the RPL needs to pursue - other than a mill rate (property tax) increase - to respond to the challenges facing the library system?

A mill rate increase is fine. Also pursue other grants and other fund-raising options. Do not have user fees – it is against the Libraries Act, and poorer families, children and individuals without access to cash, who need the services the most, would not be able to afford it. Ask the provincial government to get the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency to process tax appeals more quickly. The federal and provincial governments need to recognize the need for additional funds for services in the cities. . Stop costly outsourcing of cataloguing operations, unneeded consultants fees, and other money-wasters. Streamline Library management.

2. Given an expected 2004 budget shortfall, should the RPL Board request that City Council approve a mill rate increase? If so, how would you want the tax increase to be invested to strengthen the library system?

Yes – ask for the money. Keep in mind that the pension shortfall may not be as bad as it seems. And as the recently uncovered engineering report indicates, we do not need to spend \$500,000 on Connaught Library’s foundation in the near future – it has been fixed for now with mudjacking. Some money will be needed due to the negotiation of the new contract with the union. Keep the branches open. Ask the community what hours of being open are best. Reduce other expenditures for one year if needed, e.g. acquisitions. We do not need a copy of the same thing at each branch. Do not rush ahead into additional expenditures on computer technology. Why are all the Libraries carpeted – put down some long lasting linoleum or other flooring to avoid this constant cost of replacing carpeting. Use some resources for creating mechanisms for ongoing consultation with the public. Invest some money investigating the options and pursuing fund-raising options. Implement an Employment Equity program.

3. Do you think the library should develop additional revenue sources? Which, if any, of these additional sources would you personally contribute to or support?

Grants from other sources. Try Heritage grants. Try grants for energy saving insulation measures. Get grants for programming that is related to government services or initiatives such as literacy (RPL already gets some funds in this area), parenting education, job search resources. No corporate sponsorships – I don’t want to be seeing a corporate logo at the library like we see around the international skating competitions. Set up a Foundation if that is necessary for major charitable donations or endowments. Sell useful items such as the Regina Public Library Book Bags. Do not have user fees – it is against the Libraries Act, and poorer families, children and individuals without access to cash, who need the services the most, would not be able to afford it. But I think the money is available from the public purse – it’s a matter of priorities.

4. It is possible to configure the delivery of library services in several ways. What should be the role of the central library, full service branches and community or neighbourhood services?

This is a question that should be answered in consultation with the communities. We need our local branches and services. Keep them. Rescind the decision to cut the Prince of Wales, Connaught, and Glen Elm Branches, and keep the Prairie History Room and the Dunlop Art Gallery. Provide displays of books and other resources to harmonize with Dunlop Gallery Displays. Involve the public more in choosing themes for exhibits so there is a combination of accessible and popular art and the more avant-garde art.

Make all libraries stream-lined. Don't overspend on the so-called full-service centers. What is a "full service center"? Where does this concept come from, that a mega-branch is better than two smaller branches? Just like Superstore and Wal-Mart are considered better than 13th Avenue by some people – but not by me and many other people? Own our own library buildings – don't waste money on leases in malls.

Make sure Albert Library continues to be able to fulfill its mandate regarding Aboriginal staff, programming, resource materials and art displays. Hire Aboriginal staff for other library branches as well.

Central Library is the most accessible to the greatest number of people because it is near the intersection of the bus routes. Keep a variety of services there – the Prairie History Room, the Dunlop, the Literacy program, the Film Theatre, the audio and video collection, the reference section. Move management out to Glen Elm or Sherwood Village if there is more room there. That will make some room at Central. Find a bigger space for Library Board meetings – they can expect a large turnout from now on. Put ideas about replacing Central on hold for a long time – have a discussion of what is really needed.

Do the repairs that are needed on the branches that we have now, or over the next 2 or 3 years. Then start putting funds away for capital spending.

Some areas of the City are underserved – e.g. the western part of the City – what's the best way to address that? Let the public know the details of the ideas about bookmobiles – are they a step forward or a step back in time? Should we have satellite learning centres in some locations – with the expectation that they will have services specifically needed in that area.

Recognize that even a smaller library has a greater service area than is currently recognized in the Branch Siting policy. Have some core services, then allow specialization to suit the local neighborhood – this may be done already – but was the public consulted about what they thought was important? Have complementary hours of opening in adjacent libraries.

5. Are current library programs and services too broad? Or, are they not broad enough? Current library programs and services can be reviewed at the RPL site <http://www.reginalibrary.ca/>

This question is too general to answer. We need to support all forms of literacy: written, visual, media and film, audio, computer literacy. I don't know that we need to have a wider range of services – just continue to support what we have. Expand programs to look at needs for things such discussion about resources available on parenting, how to get a job.

6. Is there an increased role for broader community involvement and volunteers in the library system? What benefits would you see for the RPL overall as a result of greater involvement, and what contribution might you be willing to make?

More community involvement is needed in decision-making. Don't offload the paid work of the women library workers into unpaid work for female volunteers. Any work done by volunteers should be in optional programming, not in core services.

7. How do you think further developments in technology will change the way the library serves the community?

Many people will order books over the Internet and pick them up at a convenient location – which may be a small branch like Connaught. Others will need to use the computers at the Library – ensure they are in good working order. Make it so people can print items but charge them for doing so, like we do for the photocopying. Many people will still not be using computers. The automatic checkout machines seem overly expensive.

8. Do you think the mandate of the public library should include an art gallery like the Dunlop?

Yes. Dunlop Art Gallery is unique across Canada. The location of the gallery makes it easy for children and others to see some of the latest in creative art. Recently we had a 14-year-old visitor from Windsor Ontario who had never been to an art gallery of any kind. We soon took her to a Gallery – anyone who visits Regina's Central Library can easily visit the Dunlop Art Gallery. Text is not the only source of knowledge about the world – visual art is an important expression of insight and knowledge into our world.

9. The Prairie History Room is a special collection focused on the history and peoples of the Northern Great Plains. How can the core services of the Prairie History Room be protected?

Don't know what core means – this seems to be a tricky question. It is fine the way it is. People can't comment on this without more time to learn what the PHR does in more detail. Local history is connected to the broader history – so don't get rid of materials related to waterways that aren't in Saskatchewan. The Prairie History Room has a unique collection of historical books and the resources for genealogy research for those researching early settlers and First Nations and Métis history. Also critically important is the qualified and expert staff who are able to assist individuals to quickly find what might otherwise take weeks or months. Many Saskatchewan books have been authored using the resources of the Prairie History Room.

10. Are there other areas the library should explore to become more efficient and effective? What innovative approaches and solutions might the library consider?

Hard to think about innovations when I am fighting for the life of the local branch library that I love. Let's hear about people's ideas and discuss them, not handpick a few ideas brought forward in these hasty consultations.

Stop the expensive out-sourcing of cataloguing. Streamline management. Get management to ask the staff for their suggestions – don't ask staff to participate in a joint staff and management study

of a problem, then discard the staff ideas and recommend what management had wanted all along, e.g. the outsourcing of cataloguing decision. Treat staff properly without harassment. Positively recognize the role of the union.

Be proud of what we have here – many other libraries are trying to copy the example of the Dunlop and other innovations. Don't try to be Calgary.

Be more open and honest with information about the libraries, such as budgets and annual reports. Don't hold most of the Library Board meetings in camera. The bulk of the discussions should be in the open. Only selected financial and human resource matters should be discussed in camera.

Stop using the Carver model – it does not result in the Library Board being as informed as they should be about decisions that are made.

Work in a positive way with the public and the communities in the City.

APPENDIX

CONNAUGHT LIBRARY: SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE CENTRES

February 1, 2004

“Connaught Library should be a showpiece – it is an example of the library at its best.”

comment by a teacher

The following list includes schools and day cares in the immediate vicinity of Connaught Library, and in Lakeview and North Central. All of the schools use the services of Connaught. The students or their families may use Connaught. The services listed are the minimum services received.

Connaught's two key roles are:

- Pre-Schooler's Door to Learning, and
- Popular Materials.

Blocks of books and programming visits occur every two weeks with pre-kindergarten programming mentioned below.

There is a range of activities with the schools. Literary performances have been organized in sponsorship with The Cathedral Village Arts Festival, Coteau Books, and Saskatchewan Writers Guild and have been presented at the elementary schools and high school over the years. All author visits and literary presentations made by Connaught Library staff are presented to all three schools in the Cathedral area, plus other schools. Teachers order blocks of books on selected topics and inter-library loans. After school programs are provided at the library every Wednesday and Thursday and once a month on Friday. Many children use the computers. Many children go to the library after school very regularly even when there isn't a program. Films are shown when there is a no-school day.

In addition to their use of Connaught Services through their school, students from these school areas use the Connaught Library on their own and with their families.

Schools

Argyle School

- 2941 Lakeview
- K to Grade 8
- 173 students
- Gator Park Day Care in school
- Comments: Connaught librarians provide pre-school programs to Day Care. Librarians provide blocks of books on topics requested by teachers. Connaught provides liaison to RPL programs such as the Mayor's Literacy program and author visits. Outreach emphasis and general mandate of Connaught, plus staff experience and knowledge of community makes this good library for connections to school. Argyle School library field trips are to Bothwell but not more than once per year for a class since they must charter a bus – there is no library within walking distance.

Athabasca School

- 3905 Princess Drive
- Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8
- Ukrainian program
- 182 students
- Comments: Teachers take children to programs at Connaught, also to Central. Families in the area use Connaught Library. Librarians from various branches have brought programs to the school.

Ecole Connaught Community School

- 2124 Elphinstone Street. across the street from Connaught Library
- 310 students,
- French immersion
- Wise Owl School Age Care in school
- Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8
- Comments: Connaught librarians provide pre-school programs to the Pre-Kindergarten class at the school and programs to grades 2 and grade 5. Librarians provide blocks of books on topics requested by teachers. Students go to the library with their class frequently, e.g. for author visits or computer training. Students go to Library after school and also attend after school programs. Very close relationship with the school. Programs include author visits

Davin School

- 2401 Retallack St.
- Approximately 200 students
- K to Grade 8
- Dragon's Den Child Care in school
- Comments: School uses Central Library. Parents and students likely use Connaught as well as Central. Connaught Library visits Davin School regularly for stories and book talks to the grade 2 and 5 classrooms. Literary programming is presented to Davin School.

Early Learning Centre

- 2115 Athol St.
- 3 to 5 year old children
- 96 students, including morning and afternoon students
- Comments: Connaught librarians provide family literacy programming to children and parents. Many of the students are Aboriginal or New Canadians. Children go to Connaught for visits and programming, as well as Central.

Holy Rosary Community School

- 3118 14th Avenue
- Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8
- 158 students
- Comments: Connaught librarians provide pre-school programs to the Pre-Kindergarten class at the school. Students go to the library with their class. Students go to Library after school and also attend after school programs. Librarians provide blocks of books on topics requested by teachers. Librarians provide family literacy programming.

Lakeview School

- 3100 20th Avenue
- K to Grade 8, 2 Functionally Integrated Academic Program classes
- 288 students
- Turtle Park Daycare in school
- Comments: Connaught librarians provide pre-school programs at the school, including Grade 2. Librarians provide blocks of books on topics requested by teachers.

Regina Public Schools Fresh Start Program

- 1915 Retallack Street
- 14-18 year old students
- Comments: Use Central Library and Dunlop Art Gallery. Teachers value reference staff and materials in Prairie History Room as a resource for students and teachers.

Sacred Heart

- 1314 Elphinstone
- Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8
- 450 students
- Comments: Albert is the area Library. School usually use Albert Library but go to Connaught for programs occasionally. All students are from north of the rail line.

Sheldon Collegiate

- 2601 Coronation Street
- Grades 9-12
- Adaptation program
- Just over 600 students
- Comments: Connaught Library has organized literary events and performances for Sheldon Students, e.g. discussions on writing, poetry slam, young adult author visits.

St. Pius X School

- 3301 Garnet Street
- Pre Kindergarten to Grade 8
- 290 students
- French immersion
- Comments: a few students are from the Cathedral area. School tours are generally to Central. Teachers order materials from Connaught on a weekly basis, get interlibrary loans, and order French materials.

Child Care Centres

Cathedral Area Cooperative Day Care

- 2051 Cameron
- children 18 Months to 12 years
- licensed for 40 children, many single parents, low income, over half of children Aboriginal
- Comments: walk to Connaught Library for programs and puppet shows on no-school days and during the summer. Librarians go to Day Care for story time – pre-school literacy. Monthly block of books provided by librarians.

Dragon's Den Child Care

- 2401 Retallack St. (in Davin School)
- children 6 to 12 years, before and after school program
- licensed for 19 children
- Comments: About 10 children will walk to Connaught Library for programs on no-school days when available. Don't go to Central as a group.

Gator Park Child Care Centre

- 2941 Lakeview Avenue (in Argyle School)
- children 18 months to 5 years, plus school age to 12 years for before and after school
- licensed for 17 children
- Comments: Librarians go to Day Care for story time – pre-school literacy, every 2 weeks. Blocks of books provided by librarians. Walk or take the bus to attend no-school day and summer programs at Connaught and occasionally go to Central.

Turtle Park Co-operative Child Care Centre

- 3100 20th Avenue (in Lakeview School)
- children 6 to 12 years, before and after school program
- licensed for 56 children
- Comments: Librarians go to Day Care for story time – pre-school literacy, every 2 weeks. Blocks of books provided by librarians. Walk or take the bus to attend no-school day and summer programs at Connaught and occasionally go to Central. As well as a biweekly daycare visit to Turtle Park Daycare.

Twenty-four Hour Child Care Co-op

- 1561 Elphinstone
- children 6 weeks to 12 years
- extended hours evenings and weekends
- about 90 children attend, usually about 60 during the day
- Comments: Groups of about 12 can walk to Connaught Library for programs and puppet shows on no-school days and during the summer. In neighborhood for Albert Library.

Wise Owl School Age Care

- 2124 Elphinstone
- children 30 months to 12 years
- licensed for 34 children, about 40 with part-time attenders.
- Comments: Walk across the street to Connaught Library for pre-school story-time, and to borrow books. Take groups over to Library for programs, such as puppet shows and movie days, on no-school days and during the summer. Monthly block of books provided by librarians. About 20 children from Wise Owl use the Library at least once a week. Between 5 and 15 children attend Spell-Binders program weekly.

Co-sponsoring Events Involving Children

- Arts Festival - Connaught Library has organized literary events for the Cathedral Arts Festival, which touch all ages.
- Connaught also cosponsors events with Saskatchewan Writers Guild, Coteau Books, Common Weal etc.
- Connaught Library has cosponsored events with schools
- Connaught Library has cosponsored events with the Cathedral Area Community Association.

CONNAUGHT LIBRARY'S NEIGHBORHOOD

February 1, 2004

The immediate neighbourhood surrounding the Connaught Library is the Cathedral neighborhood. But the Library's influence does not stop there. It extends north to North Central and south to Old Lakeview and Lakeview neighborhoods. People from all areas of the City appreciate Connaught Library.

Getting to the Library

Connaught is a library that many people can walk to. This is especially appreciated by people with differing kinds of disabilities, including mobility impairments, seniors who no longer drive (or women of that generation who never learned to drive). People with low incomes cannot afford the bus. Parents without cars, and those who have cars, value the opportunity to walk to the library with their children

The Cathedral Area has a higher proportion of people that do not take a car to work. Previously the area has supported an innovative recycling program and a strong interest in environmental issues, health food, organic produce, etc continues in the community. There is a strong interest in the community in planning for more environmentally-friendly City transportation.

Connaught Library is located at the intersection of two major transportation arteries, Elphinstone Street and 13th Avenue. The Branch provides a convenient place for many patrons to pick up items on hold, or a have a quick moment of peace and quiet browsing through the books in the middle of a hectic schedule.

The radius of influence of the library extends out beyond 1 kilometer assigned to it in Regina Library Board planning documents.

Character of the Cathedral Area

The Cathedral area is a mixed neighborhood. There are medium and smaller apartment blocks, condominiums, houses split into suites, modest well-aged bungalows, wartime houses, and more stately houses in the Crescents area. The area has a shopping mall with a Safeway and boasts a number of small businesses: restaurants, hair stylists, book stores, hardware store, music store, auto repair, collectibles, and clothing. Some have been in operation for decades. Others are new operations run by young adults from this City. The area has 9 churches or spiritual centres. The Holy Rosary Cathedral gives the area its name.

The Cathedral Arts Festival has become an annual event with a week of music, drama, art and other events culminating in a street fair. There are a number of artists and writers that live in the community. There is a community centre with a strong active community association. The area has been revitalized in recent years. (See history provided by Cathedral Area Community Association.)

Connaught is a key feature along 13th Avenue streetscape. Business owners appreciate the services provided by Connaught and its contribution to the attractiveness of the Cathedral area.

The People

The people of the Cathedral area are a varied group.

Twelve percent are seniors over the age of 65. There are seniors' condos one block from the library and a large seniors' apartment complex about 2 blocks away.

Sixteen percent of the Cathedral area population is children under the age of 15.

Single parent families comprise 28% of families in the area – higher than the Regina average of 20%.

Nine percent of people responding to the Census self-identified as having Aboriginal background. This is the average for the City of Regina, but significantly higher than the suburbs of Regina.

The percentages of persons who are from visible minorities (5%) and the percent who speak a language other than English at home (6%) are about the same as the Regina averages. One percent of the population are people who have immigrated to Canada – one of the lower rates in the City.

Nineteen percent of Cathedral area residents over the age of 15 have less than a Grade 12 education, compared to the City average of 26%. The area also has one of the higher rates in the City of people with University degrees.

Sixty-eight percent of adults over the age of 15 are employed, about equal to the Regina average. But of those not working – a few more were looking for work than the Regina average since the unemployment rate of 7.6% was slightly higher than the Regina average of 6.3%.

Many Cathedral residents have low incomes. Twenty-two percent of individuals in the Cathedral have low incomes – the City average is 16%. The median income for the Cathedral area is the tenth lowest in the City.

Forty-five percent of the dwellings in the Cathedral area are rented – this is higher than the Regina average of 33%. Nineteen percent of people had moved in the year before the 2001 Census – just slightly higher than the Regina average of 17%. There are several social housing apartment complexes for families that are owned by the Regina Housing Authority in the Cathedral area.

The Library and the Community

Connaught Library provides a social and educational hub that does not require spending money.

Connaught's two key roles are:

- Pre-Schooler's Door to Learning, and
- Popular Materials.

Connaught Library has a children's activity area for toddlers, reading tables, and quiet seating where children can read on their own. The Library offers story-time and other programs for pre-school children. Parents have the opportunity to meet other parents and get materials for themselves.

The Library also provides regular programs to other schools and daycares from the Cathedral Area and the Lakeview neighborhood and occasionally from North Central neighborhood. Nine schools, an early learning centre, and six childcare centres make either regular use of Connaught services or attend special programs.

There are two schools in the immediate vicinity. Ecole Connaught Community School is an elementary (K to 8) community school with 310 students. The school has a French immersion program, a pre-kindergarten program and a significant component of programs and education related to Aboriginal culture. Connaught School is across the street from the Library. Holy Rosary Community School is four blocks away, and has 158 students in pre-kindergarten to Grade 8.

Blocks of books and programming visits occur every two weeks with pre-kindergarten programming. There is a range of activities with the schools. Literary performances have been organized in sponsorship with The Cathedral Village Arts Festival, Coteau Books, and Saskatchewan Writers Guild and have been presented at the elementary schools and high school over the years. All author visits and literary presentations made by Connaught Library staff are presented to all three schools in the Cathedral area, plus other schools. Teachers order blocks of books on selected topics and inter-library loans.

After school programs are provided at the library every Wednesday and Thursday and once a month on Friday. Films are shown when there is a no-school day. The downstairs meeting room is used for toddler time, Spell-binders story-telling and Children's Book Club.

Many children go to the library after school very regularly even when there isn't a program. Many children from lower income households rely on the library to go after school and in the evenings to do homework since they don't have access to computers or reference books at home. The Library is used by many Aboriginal families. Programs are provided for seniors.

The 4 public computer terminals at the Library are well used by children and adults, in spite of not having the most capacity or being the largest or fastest in the City.

The meeting room downstairs is frequently booked for programs and community activities and has been used for meetings, crafts, film showings and poetry readings. The bulletin boards are full of notices about upcoming events in the community.

Many families from Lakeview prefer the small size and friendly atmosphere of Connaught.

There has been a consistent and steady increase in the circulation at Connaught Library – over 55% since 2000.

The Library works to meet the particular needs of those in its immediate neighborhood. It also provides a standard of excellence and attracts people from outside the immediate area to use the Library services. The Librarians always welcome ideas and suggestions about how the Library could better serve the community.

Connaught's hours were extended in September of 2003, adding time on Friday morning and on Saturday.

Heritage

Connaught Library is a classic red brick building constructed in 1930. It was part of the City of Regina's workers project employment initiative undertaken at the start of the Depression to help counteract the massive unemployment the City and the Province were beginning to suffer. The Connaught Library was designated a municipal heritage property in 1984. It was part of the first group of heritage buildings to be designated heritage by the City. There are grants that the Library Board or the City could apply for to cover repair costs. Connaught Library has been providing services to the community for over 70 years.

Conclusion

Connaught Library serves a community that has many people with low-incomes, Aboriginal people, single parent families, people with less than Grade 9 education, and adults who are not working or seeking employment. Thus there is more than one kind of need for social and educational opportunities, and opportunities to use the computer. There are also many seniors with time to read and a literary and artistic community that highly values the Library and written and visual literacy. Schools and daycares use and greatly appreciate the services provided by Connaught. There are nearby neighborhoods with people that appreciate the special character of the Library. The Library enhances the profile of reading and literature at community events. For all of these reasons Connaught Library is of great value to the immediate Cathedral community and the whole of Regina.

Albert Branch Library

Community Networks:

1. Albert Community Library Committee
2. North Central Community Society
3. Albert Community School
4. Herchmer Community School
5. Kitchener Community School
6. Sacred Heart Community School
7. Wascana Community School
8. Ken Jenkins School
9. Scott Collegiate
10. Aboriginal Head Start
11. Twenty-four Hours Child Care Centre
12. Circle Project Day Care
13. Little Memories Day Care
14. Little Bo Peep Day Care
15. Four Direction Community Health Centre
16. Indian and Métis Christian Fellowship
17. Circle of Life
18. Regina Indian Community Awareness – Chili for Children
19. Street Culture Kidz Project
20. Regina Fire Department – Fire Halls that respond to calls in the North Central community: Halls 1, 2, 4 and 6
21. Sinclair Family Centre
22. Regina Friendship Centre
23. Aboriginal Family Service Centre
24. Common Weal Community Arts
25. Cornwall Alternative School
26. Elder Isador Pelletier
27. Elder Lilly Daniels
28. First Nations University of Canada
29. Regina Family Literacy Network
30. Cuernavaca Project
31. Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism

Albert Library

Albert Library has been serving Regina's inner city community since 1913. The Albert Library provides basic library services enhanced by an in-depth Aboriginal collection, and culturally based programming. The branch also provides a safe environment for neighborhood children and youth.

Staffing

The staff includes the Albert Branch Head, one full time Library Assistant, one part time Library Assistant, and three part time Public Services Clerks.

Albert tries to hire staff members who live in the community. Such people usually have a better understanding and knowledge of the North Central community and of Aboriginal people. On all of the Albert Branch Library's job descriptions, one of the required qualifications listed is "knowledge of native culture and language".

The Branch Head attends and participates in organizations based in the North Central community and reports monthly activities to the library committee. For example, the Branch Head is a member of the Board of the Street Culture Kidz Project, thus enabling her to promote Albert Library programming and encourage use of library resources. Being involved in the community first-hand, with others who are working and/or living in the neighborhood, and with community residents, has enhanced the work of the library in its day-to-day operations. Meeting and working with the library staff outside the library building has reduced the "institutional" view of the library in the community. The Branch Head is also involved in provincial committees that deal with library services for the Aboriginal peoples of Saskatchewan.

The best way to understand any community is to become a part of that community. Staff members keep their fingers on the pulse of the neighborhood by attending meetings and socializing with library clients. The concerns of the community are the concerns of the library staff. In addition, staff members are given tours of community agencies (there are 47 agencies in North Central), to become more knowledgeable about groups in the area that they serve. This keeps the staff informed about the different resources available in the community and enables them to network to better serve the community's individuals. The branch staff regularly liaises with community groups to network, to keep in touch with what is happening in the community, to be a partner in community development issues, and to promote library services.

Aboriginal protocol workshops are also held for staff to create awareness and an understanding of the First Nations traditions and culture.

Collection

Albert provides a collection of adult and juvenile items focusing on Aboriginal peoples. Although some of the Aboriginal titles are duplicated in other locations of the library system, it is only at Albert that they are identified and shelved together as an Aboriginal collection. The Aboriginal collection includes fiction and non-fiction titles, picture books, periodicals, Cree language material, and audio and video materials. The Cree language material is suitable in content and format for all age groups, as many adult patrons wish to learn or re-learn their ancestral language. Albert's extensive Aboriginal collection has become a resource used by patrons across the city.

In addition to the Aboriginal collection, Albert also has a regular collection, which features current, high demand, high interest materials in paperback for both adult and juvenile clients.

Programming

Albert Library offers programs for children, adults and young adults with an emphasis on the Aboriginal culture.

Children's Programs:

Albert concentrates on children's programming for school aged children because of the large number of children who visit the branch on a daily basis after school. Programming that appeals to school age encourages this age group to become regular library users, thus having the potential to instill the love of books.

Approximately 20 Preschool Storytime Programs are offered each week. All the community schools in North Central, childcare centres and the Aboriginal Head Start program are invited to attend the program. The Preschool Storytime programs are taken out to four community elementary schools that are too far for small children to walk to the library. This creates an opportunity to promote upcoming library programs, hand out branch calendars, distribute application forms for library cards, and to inform teachers of the services the library offers.

Other programs include puppet shows, which are taken to all five community schools every year, in June, face painting for children and adults at Halloween offered in partnership with the Street Cultural Kidz Project, and movies. The number one comment made by parents, about the movie program, is that they are happy to "have a safe place to watch recent releases" with or for their children when they are on a limited budget.

Adult Programming:

Adult crafts programs are very popular and well attended. The library has constant demand for these programs.

Albert Library networks and partners with all the teachers in community schools in North Central. Teachers in the six schools in North Central are invited to a *Teacher's Open House*, held annually in the fall. The *Open House* includes a tour of the library and information about the services offered to schools by the library.

Aboriginal Content:

Albert Library has an Aboriginal Elder who provides cultural direction and advice.

Albert Library's main focus is to create programming that develops knowledge and understanding of the diverse cultural groups in Regina, while highlighting the Aboriginal culture. Programs deal with culture, traditions, and current issues. These include an annual children's Christmas feast, beadwork classes, dreamcatcher programs, Cree language classes, storytelling, pow wow dance classes, how to make bannock, Aboriginal author readings, incorporation of First Nation stories in the puppet shows at the branch, classes on how to make Inuit moccasins, mitts and vests, and programs on cultural awareness.

The 2002 annual *Children's Christmas Feast* was an enormous success. The Library had 139 people attending. This is by far our most successful program. The library will need to partner with another community agency next year, for our large program room is now too small. Because this was a traditional feast, Elders were consulted to ensure protocol was followed.

The branch hosted a video project for ten students from the local high school with a well-known Aboriginal film producer, Alanis Obomsawin. The students produced a short horror movie called 'Library 13'.

Literacy Programming:

Because of the low literacy skills in the area, Albert Library offers literacy programs such as the *Community Stories* program. The *Community Stories* program offered in partnership with the Regina Fire Department is taken to the five elementary schools in North Central. Four Firefighters and a Branch Library Assistant read stories to children in grades 1 to 3. The Library Assistant presented an in-service workshop to the fire fighters in the four fire stations in the Albert area. The workshops included a discussion of the literacy needs of children and a presentation on how to conduct an interactive reading program for early elementary students.

Albert Library is a partner in the *Sowing the Seed: a Family Literacy Project*. This program is a vehicle to bring parents into the school and teach them to read, work and play with their children based on the belief that having parents come into the school to learn with their children will ultimately lead these children to become more successful in learning. The program is incorporated within the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten classes. The Albert Library staff member facilitates a “Come Read With Me” story hour/library visit with the parents and children of these classes once a month. This allows for the staff member to show parents how to read with their children. This is followed by an inexpensive craft and library visit for families to pick out their own books to read at home. To aid the parents at home, they are given a list of books used in the storytime; a supplies list from the craft that was done that day; and a family literacy tip to incorporate in their everyday reading experiences. The program hopes to give parents the tools to develop reading practices within the home and give their children the tools for a successful future. Currently this project is active in one community school; next year it will be extended to include an additional community school.

Excerpt from “Improving & Delivering Effective Library Services for Aboriginal Peoples in Saskatchewan: A Canadian Province Approach to Answering the Needs of the Aboriginal Community”.

Median Household Incomes Regina 2000 from 2001 Census



