

VANPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY

FEBRUARY 1944

Comments from the people of Vanport about the Library continue to interest us greatly. One man with a Scandinavian accent who comes in a couple of times a week informed us recently that although he had been in this country 25 years, this was the first time he had ever been in a library! He had never had much time to read before but now he is determined to catch up on his reading. We asked him if he would like us to get him some books written in the Norwegian language and he said, "No. I'm an American and I want to read American books."

During February we made a change in the staff organization which already is proving very satisfactory. Dissatisfaction with the pages we have had brought this about. Instead of employing a full time page we now have an enthusiastic high school boy who works three hours a day shelving books and reading shelves. The number of books to be cataloged for the school libraries has decreased greatly so we are now able to have the services of the typist who was hired to do the school books. We pay half her salary and in return she is delighted to do general clerical work for us half the time. The improvement in the quality of the detail work was apparent from the day she took over her new duties. Of course we realize that this summer when the Fall orders for books are placed we will probably have to make different arrangements but for now we are happy in this new set-up.

We are now having an annotated list of new books in the school bulletin every two weeks and we are happy to discover that a surprisingly large number of teachers have noted it and are coming in to



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ask for the books. The mimeograph department has kindly agreed to give us 25 extra copies each time for distribution to our patrons. We shall have to ask them to increase the number for all copies are gone within two days after they appear. We are also happy to announce that all but a few of the folders about the Vanport Libraries have been distributed. They have proved to be popular souvenirs with the residents of Vanport City.

High school students are coming to us in ever increasing numbers for help with their studies. This has forced us in some cases to retain copies of books most in demand for use in the library only but a few of the students object as they seem to enjoy meeting their friends in the library and studying with them. Incidentally, we have no discipline problem at all. These young people are amazingly well behaved and most cooperative. We wish we could say the same for the very small children who come in with their parents, but we are becoming resigned to the fact that apparently parental discipline is a thing of the past!

Our only distressing problem at the moment is a purely physical one -- the heating system in the library. If we have a fire at all the temperature soars to unbelievable heights and stays there until the fire dies out. The public complains about this constantly and it takes little imagination to know how the library staff feels! We have had engineers and firemen tinkering with it constantly and they are all agreed that something must be done about the drafts--- but nothing is ever done! We feel strongly that something must be done before another winter approaches.

Respectfully submitted,

*Charles J. Souley*  
Librarian