

## **Library - 1981, (updated 1988, 2015)**

The members of the League of Women Voters of Juneau believe that public library services should be provided to all area residents. Juneau libraries need continued support for space, staff, collections and patron services. The libraries should be accessible, visible and located where they can best serve population centers. There should be sufficient staff and budget to provide adequate library hours to meet community needs and provide for special programming.

- Collections should be both broad based and complete with continuous upgrading. The public library system should serve as a point of access to the collections of special libraries but the community's major use should be of the public library's own collections.
- Financial support of the library should come primarily from area wide city/borough support with supplemental funding from state grants.
- The League supports cooperation among libraries throughout the State including the Juneau Public Libraries' membership in the Joint Library Consortium, an organization that shares a library catalog and the resources of member libraries with each service population. The League also supports the Juneau Public Libraries' long-term, State funded, provision of library services to rural areas of Alaska that have no local library.
- The League supports the American Library Association's "Bill of Rights" which provides for free and full access to library material to meet the educational, informational, recreational, and cultural needs of all people.

### Amplification

Library service in Juneau should include:

- Centrally located branch libraries with adequate parking.
- Increased children's programming and collections, with careful consideration given to maintaining
- and growing both print and electronic collections.
- Services to institutions such as jails, nursing homes and hospitals. Services to state institutions
- should be a shared function supported by both the local community and the state.
- Outreach service to people with disabilities, shut-ins, and underserved populations.
- Cooperative activities between the major libraries in Juneau.
- Other service needs may become apparent in the future, but overall, we should strive for special services for special constituencies, including children, ethnic minorities, the elderly and any others not now served by the public library.

The following factors are necessary for adequate library service in Juneau and need to be evaluated regularly:

1. Space should be sufficient to provide reading and study room for patrons, staff work areas, book storage, study, listening areas and media, audio-visual centers. Future expansion needs should be considered regularly.
2. Accessibility and parking for all, including people with disabilities.
3. Visibility of the library is important, including adequate signage.
4. Location of the libraries should facilitate use by the population and should be examined periodically as population centers change.
5. Collections development should meet the needs of Juneau's literate and varied population. Because school and special libraries exist to service particular clientele, they should not be depended upon to serve the broader needs of the general public. The LWV supports the cooperative collection development activities undertaken by the Joint Library Consortium.
6. Staff should include specialized professional personnel such as: children's librarians, reference librarians, electronic services/outreach librarians, and a collection development librarian. In addition, the League believes that the library should be administered by a qualified librarian with a Masters in Library Science.
7. Free and full access includes access to the library for people with disabilities and for all without age or residency limits. The library may require on-site use by non-residents and may prohibit circulation of certain rare books or fragile materials.

Consensus was also reached on the following points:

1. School libraries serve primarily curriculum needs and their collections are not adapted to the broader public. The private schools now in Juneau use the public library heavily since they do not have their own libraries. All schools create a heavy demand on the public library for additional library materials in support of curriculum.
2. Support of libraries should be an area-wide responsibility since the library services the entire community. There should be continued city financial support to ensure local control. Because user fees are discriminatory, we are opposed to them unless they are fines or penalties, for damage to library materials.
3. The League of Women Voters of Juneau supports the following basic policies:
  - As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of the authors.
  - Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
  - Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

- Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- The rights of an individual to use the library should not be denied or abridged for any reason other than violations of the library's code of conduct.
- As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups on the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be free and open to the public.

### ALA Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.