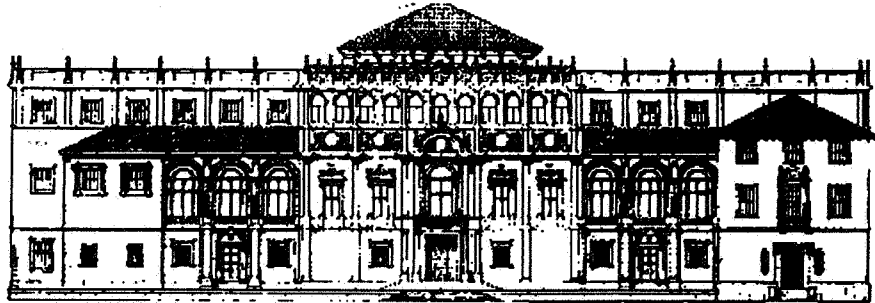

Between Friends



Special Issue

June 1991

News about Friends of the Houston Public Library

Friends Can Make a Difference!

PROPOSED '92 CITY BUDGET WILL INCLUDE LIBRARY SERVICE CUTS WITH HIGHER FEES

If the proposed FY1991/92 City Budget passes in its present form, Houston Public Library will lose nearly \$1million in funding. Also, Houstonians will lose major services and pay increased fees in all areas. The new fiscal year begins July 1.

The proposed budget doubles fines on overdue materials for both adults and children. Reserves on popular titles will go from 50 cents to \$1. Parking beneath the Jesse H. Jones Building at 500 McKinney will climb from \$1.50 to \$2 per hour.

The Telephone Reference service (TR) at 236-1313 currently answers 1,200 to 1,400 questions every work day, over 540,000 a year. These heavily used information lines will be replaced with a recorded message.

The Houston "Post" (June 16), on its editorial page, already called on City Council to save "one of the city's most popular services in an unfairly maligned department."

The materials budget will remain the same next year, meaning fewer new books due to inflation.

The library's outstanding free service of answering questions of all kinds

by telephone will be discontinued. Last year, Houston Public Library answered 3.8 million questions--almost a third of them by phone!

The Film/Video Library, which loaned 103,814 16mm films and videos last year, will cease walk-in service. Over 3,000 popular videos will move to open shelving.

Another service that could be lost is the TDD-TTY line for the deaf, which answered 482 questions last year and provided a high level of service through the "Connections" program. Books By Mail, serving the elderly and homebound, will be cancelled, despite circulating 157,040 items to shut-ins last year.

BUDGET-CUTTERS TARGET LIBRARY AGAIN

"Reductions" proposed in the FY1991/92 City Budget mean yet another bad year for Houston Public Library. Houston "Chronicle" business columnist Jim Barlow observed (June 20) that HPL "has already lost both fat and muscle, with the new budget there will be bones sawed."

Since 1986, the Library Department has gone from 2.8% of the City Budget to the 2.25% proposed for next fiscal year. Year of budget cuts have led to:

•**Fewer Books**--In 1983, Houston Public Library purchased 221,040 books and 13,051 periodicals subscriptions. With the FY1991/92 budget, the Library will

only be able to afford 82,606 new books and 6,649 subscriptions. Adjusting for inflation, the Library would need \$6.8 million (not the \$2.6 million budgeted) to buy the same number of books as it did in 1983.

•**Fewer Services**--The loss of telephone reference service would join such pioneering efforts as the Community Information Service (C.I.S.), lost in the 1986 budget.

•**Fewer Staff**--The Library has a vacancy rate as high as 20% in some units, losing staff to better salaries, less stress and brighter fiscal futures.

How Can a Friend Make a Difference?

Friends members and other library supporters may want to contact their City Councilmember while the FY1991/92 Budget is being discussed between now and July 3. Names and office telephone numbers of the Houston City Council appear below:

District A	Larry McKaskle	247-2010
District B	Ernest McGowen	247-2009
District C	Vince Ryan	247-2004
District D	Al Calloway	247-2001
District E	Frank Mancuso	247-2008
District F	John Goodner	247-2001
District G	Christin Hartung	247-2007
District H	Dale Gorczynski	247-2003
District I	Ben T. Reyes	247-2011
At-Large, 1	Beverley Clark	247-2014
At-Large, 2	Eleanor Tinsley	247-2013
At-Large, 3	Jim Greenwood	247-2005
At-Large, 4	Sheila Jackson Lee	247-2006
At-Large, 5	Margarette Robinson	247-2012

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251

What are other choices?

Houston library users would be better-served by an overall reduction in hours of operation, instead of losing services it has taken decades to build. Half a million dollars could be saved by closing smaller branch libraries on Saturday and Sunday. Regional branches could close one week-day, while Central Library would close at 6 p.m. instead of 9 p.m. on Friday and all day Sunday

--Cut hours, not services!!

Between Friends

Editor

Maya Durnovo

Between Friends is a bi-monthly publication of the Friends of the Houston Public Library. Member news and items of interest should be sent to :

Maya Durnovo
1300 Holman
Houston, TX 77056

Houston Public Library



Julia Ideson Building

Friends of the Houston Public Library
500 McKinney
Houston, Texas 77002