

Do You Suffer From Library Anxiety?

Do you know anyone who hasn't come to the library in years? There could be a lot of reasons, the number one being that dear old friend, the now missing card catalog. HOW IN THE WORLD DOES ANYONE FIND ANYTHING IN THERE ANYMORE? Remember when you could just let your fingers do the walking in the card drawer and find the location of the book you wanted? Nowadays, some patrons feel silly when they need help on the card catalog computer. Please don't. We've all been there at some point or other. Our jobs got easier, but your life got complicated.

After you've been away from the library for a few years, you may walk in and be totally unfamiliar with where things are. The Reference Desk is moved. The DVD's are around a corner (not only for security purposes, but for easier browsing and checkout). Audio books and music cd's are up on the mezzanine. No more *Reader's Guide* that helped us as we looked up articles for reports and term papers. Now, there's something called *Inspire*, which is a huge computer data base of periodical or magazine articles. Gad.

And what's all this about downloadable books? Something else for the technology challenged to worry about? Rest assured, we still have a wonderful book collection. It continues to grow and expand to meet our reader's needs and tastes. And we're here to help you find what you are looking for. Be sure to ask a librarian if you need to. That's why we exist.

You may not be using the library because you've lost your library card. The good news is you are still in our system, we still have your number, and can reissue you a new one. The replacement fee is only \$1.00. This priceless little document can really come in handy when it means 90 minutes on a public computer, or DVD's to check out and take home, or that perfect book to while away the long winter hours.

Maybe you have outstanding overdue fines on your record. If you owe more than \$30, unfortunately you cannot check out anything. We do have a schedule of \$5 payments that allow you to continue borrowing items as you pay down your fines from that \$30 cap. And once it gets down to \$20, you can borrow items by paying only \$1 at each check out. This is a way to get your borrowing integrity back without using others' cards, which is not a good move.

While we're on the subject of integrity, are you in possession of a long overdue item? Think we forgot about it? You can do a drive-by in the dead of night (or day), no questions asked, and return it via our handy drop box out alongside the library. The item will be replaced on the shelf if it is still in good shape. Return the book. It's a win-win situation: patrons who have been requesting that title will have access to it, and you can get rid of that library guilt you've been carrying around. For complete forgiveness, come in and pay the fine. Increments will do. It's nothing to be ashamed of; people do it all the time.

If you don't like visiting the library because there's never a place to park, consider your timing. There are often a number of cars parked there belonging to folks who work downtown, even though parking on the roof of the new garage is free. Daytime meetings in the Visitors' Center or the library can fill up the lot, but when the meetings are over, those slots are empty. Both entities have employees that generally have to park from early on in the day. Parking spaces painted with yellow lines and with signage that states "Library and Visitors' Center Parking Only, Tow-away Zone" are clearly different from the white painted spaces for the portion of the lot that belongs to the City,

where you may park at will. We have mothers carrying babies, with toddlers trailing behind, needing to use the library. Senior citizens find it extremely difficult to walk long distances to get to our doors. The library functions as a peaceful sanctuary for many, many people for a lot of reasons. Fridays and Saturdays are usually good days to find a parking space, but Sunday afternoons are the best.

Libraries have been known to change lives. We never know who we're serving that could be a future Nobel Prize winner, statesman, or poet laureate. In this case, breaking rules hurts everyone, whether inside the library or out in the parking lot. It's not about getting away with something. Why not make a New Year's resolution to be a good citizen and honor those rules? It's no small thing. For our part, we resolve to help you to the very best of our ability. Let's get reacquainted.

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