

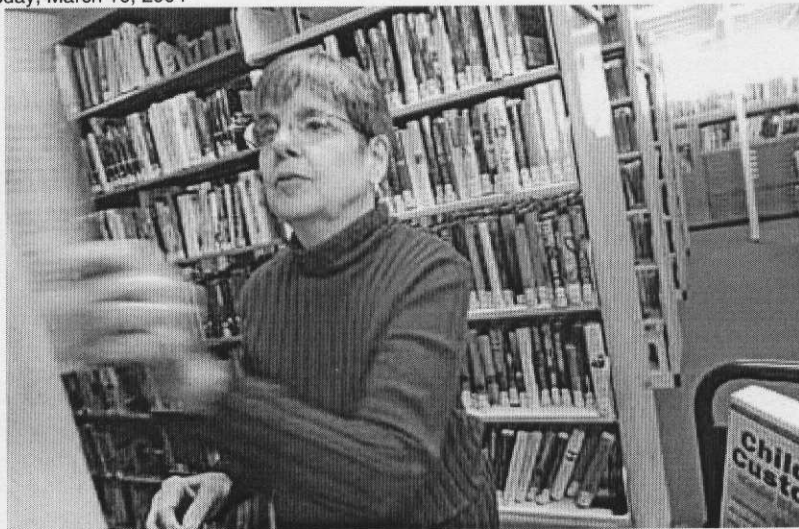
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Wednesday, March 10, 2004

- Home Page
- Essentials
- CyberSurveys
- Forums
- Photo Galleries
- Weather
- Horoscope
- Lottery
- Giveaways
- Crossword
- Contact Us
- Autos
- Autos Insider
- Drive
- Car Reviews
- Latest Deals
- Model Reports
- Joyrides
- Business
- Business
- Money & Life
- Careers
- Find a Job
- Real Estate
- Find a Home
- Metro
- Metro/State
- Wayne
- Oakland
- Macomb
- Livingston
- Commuting
- Obituaries
- Death Notices
- Schools
- Special Reports
- Editorials
- Columnists
- Detroit History
- Nation/World
- Nation/World
- Politics/Gov
- Census
- Health
- Religion
- Technology
- Sports
- Sports Insider
- Lions/NFL
- Pistons/NBA
- Red Wings/NHL
- Tigers/MLB
- MSU
- U-M
- More Colleges
- High Schools
- Golf
- Motor Sports
- Outdoors
- More Sports
- Scoreboards



Elizabeth Conley / Associated Press

Part-time Ferndale Public Librarian Assistant Sandra Duggins is one of three staff members being let go because of the city's budget shortfall. The move will save the department \$26,000.

Ferndale library eliminates 3 jobs

City trims 5% across board to cut \$750,000 from budget

By Lisa Martino / The Detroit News

FERNDALE — Sandra Duggins is concerned about the future of her city and its library.

Duggins, a 17-year part-time employee of the Ferndale Public Library, was told last week that her job was one of three being eliminated in light of a citywide directive to shave 5 percent from each department's budget — a move which city officials hope will help reduce a \$750,000 gap between expenditures and revenues this fiscal year.

"I don't know what lies ahead for the library — I'm

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- Autos Talk
- Wings Talk
- Lions Talk
- Pistons Talk
- Tigers Talk
- Big 10 Talk
- High Schools
- Movie Talk
- Tech Talk

concerned and not very happy," said Duggins, who has lived in Ferndale 40 years and survived another lay-off from the city's water department in the mid-1990s. "I really didn't expect them to cut all three of us."

The cuts mean a \$26,000 trim from the library's \$526,000 budget and the elimination of part-time positions in reference and circulation, as well as a reduction of library hours from 48 to 40 per week, beginning March 8.

"(Patrons) will have to come in a little later, and they might have to wait a little longer to get help, but we'll still have the materials and computers needed," City Librarian Mary Trenner said.

To adjust to tighter times, she said the library — which checked out about 125,000 items in 2003 — has had to become resourceful in its fund-raising. To start with, meeting room fees and nominal inter-loan fees have been instituted, nonresident fees have increased, and Trenner said there are plans to install vending machines in the library for snacks and supplies such as paper and pens.

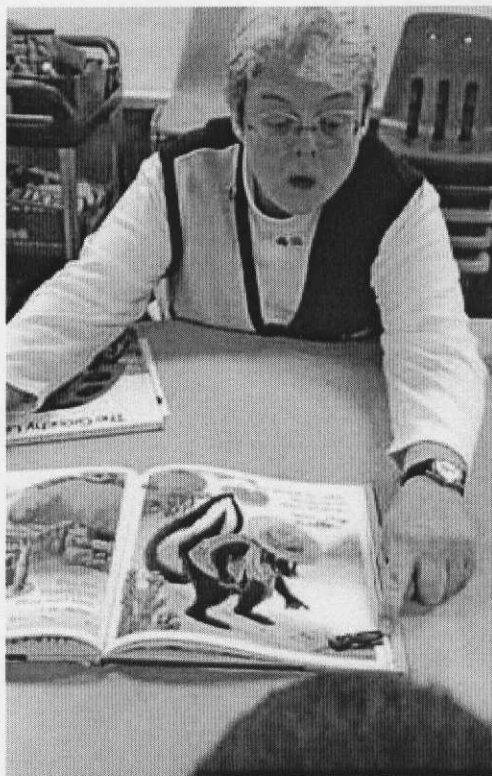
Even the property's Troy Street lawn will be made available for wedding ceremonies or party rentals. "A lot of ideas are floating around," she said, adding that the library could post books onto Amazon.com's wish list program, which has been used like a bridal registry for libraries needing new books.

"Some people can't afford (to donate) a lot of money, but they could afford a book donation if they choose," Trenner said.

Trenner said the library board is also discussing the possibility of turning to residents with a 1.5 to 2 mill tax levy dedicated to supporting the library.

"I think it's something we're going to have to do," she said.

While all departments are experiencing a hiring freeze, the Ferndale Public Library is the latest public service to feel the sting of the city's



Elizabeth Conley / Associated Press

Librarian Mary Trenner reads during story time at the Ferndale library, which is reducing its hours from 48 to 40 per week beginning March 8.

New hours

Effective this week, the Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile, will be open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday and Saturday and closed on Friday and Sunday. Contact the library at (248) 546-2504.

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- [Downtown debuts new](#)
- [Police to emergency](#)
- [Cingular building to](#)
- [City Hall renovation](#)
- [Royal Oak](#)
- [Clawson park shelter](#)
- [Youth group mural](#)
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- [On The](#)
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shrinking budget. City Council will discuss trims to other departments in coming weeks, including the elimination of one position in the Public Works Department.

“All departments are going to feel a pinch this year,” Councilman Scott Galloway said at a recent budget session. “It’s going to be tough for everybody — from the library to the DPW to the police and the Fire Department — everybody’s going to have a little pain, but we’re going to get through it, and we’re going to have a library and a Fire Department when we’re all through,” he said.

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