

MENOMINEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE COLLEGE

Briefing Paper – College of Menominee Nation presentation
to the State Tribal Relations Committee
October 16, 2014

The Menominee Public Library was merged with the academic library of the College of Menominee Nation in December 2012. The action followed lengthy discussions among representatives of Menominee County, the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, and the College of Menominee Nation.

Public library holdings and operations moved to the Keshena campus of the College, which is a chartered entity of the Menominee People. The blended facility is now known as the S. Verna Fowler Academic Library / Menominee Public Library. It functions from a dedicated building which opened on the campus in 2008.

- **Purpose:** The combined academic and public library serves a dual purpose:
 - **Academic** – As an academic facility, the library meets the scholarly needs of faculty and students with educational resources and a growing archive of original documents and material on tribal governance and other matters.
 - **Public** – As a public facility, it brings general library services and literacy-enhancement programming to residents of the Menominee Reservation/ Menominee County and neighbors throughout the primarily rural region.

- **Goal:** Under merger, the goal of Menominee Public Library is to address literacy issues on the reservation, in the county and throughout the surrounding region.

- **Service:**
 - **Standard services** – The library is operated by trained librarians and degree-holding staff. Through its participation in the Nicolet Federated Library System, the library provides the public with inter-library loan services and engages in material acquisition and staff training opportunities.
 - **Hours** – The library is open 61 hours a week, Monday through Saturday.
 - **Facility** – The 7-year-old building has 18,600 SF on three floors served by an elevator and easy-access entries and automated doors.
 - **Access** – Public and handicap parking are adjacent to the building. The Menominee Transit bus comes directly to the library building. Service is free for students and elders; those age 55 and up can be picked up at home.
 - **Special programming** – Literacy events for children are scheduled weekly. The library hosts community reads, distributes free books, holds public lectures by authors, and sponsors adult and youth book clubs. (In 2014, more than 160 attended the March lecture by *Gap Creek* author Robert Morgan and more than 400 the September talk by author Sherman Alexie.)

**College of Menominee Nation Academic Library and Menominee Public Library
CHARTING PATRONS AND SERVICES**

To address the needs of Menominee Reservation/Menominee County residents, the Menominee Public Library merged with the College of Menominee Nation's S. Verna Fowler Academic Library in December 2012. The decision has resulted in favorable outcomes as detailed in charts tracking aspects of public library patron and service development.

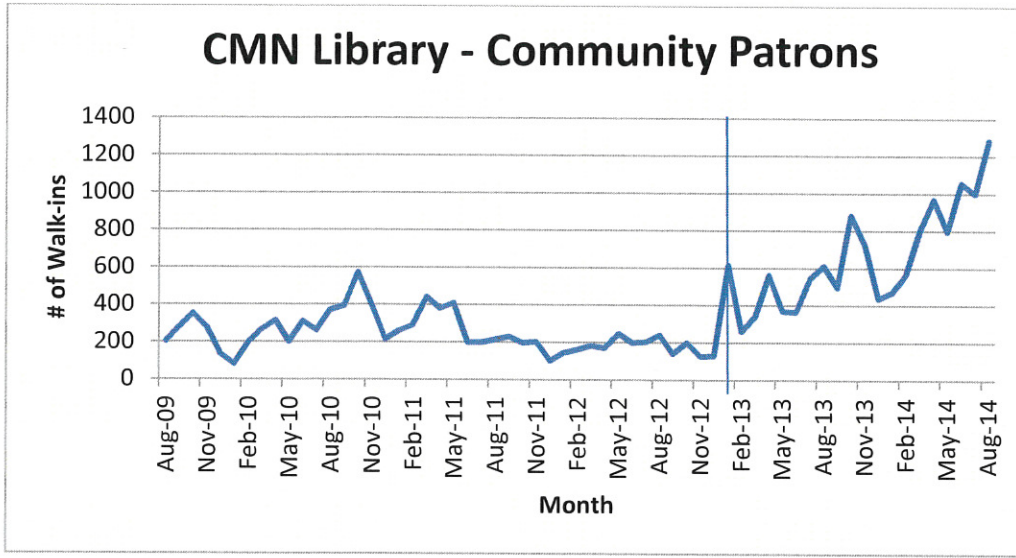


Chart 1: Community Patrons ■ August 2009 through November 2012 tracks community residents patronizing the College's academic library facility. Increasing numbers since early 2013 indicate that public library patrons have readily embraced the merger.

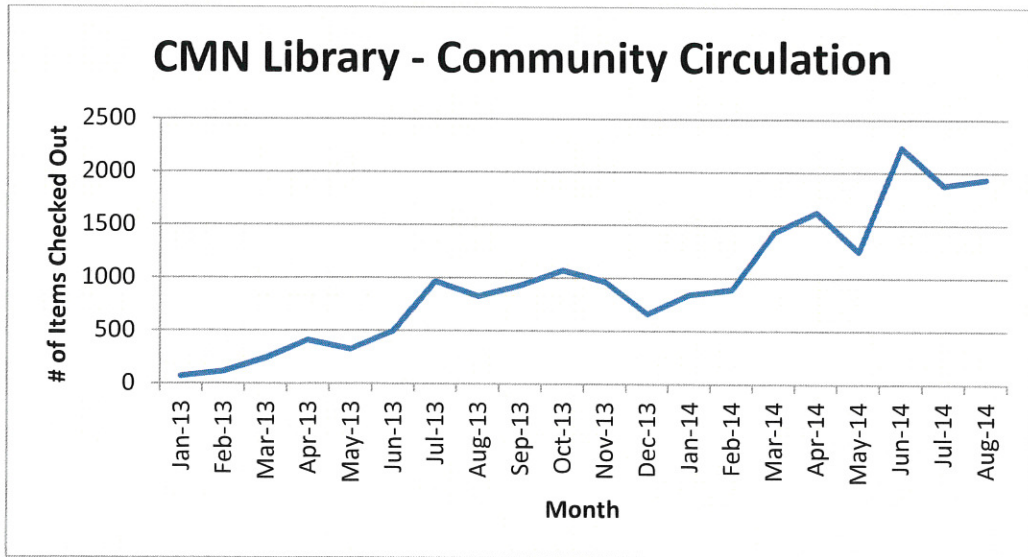


Chart 2: Community Circulation ■ The Menominee Public Library circulation figure for 2012 was 1,820. The merged libraries attained a circulation of 7,078 for 2013 and 12,101 as of August 2014 – and impressive increase of more than 70%.

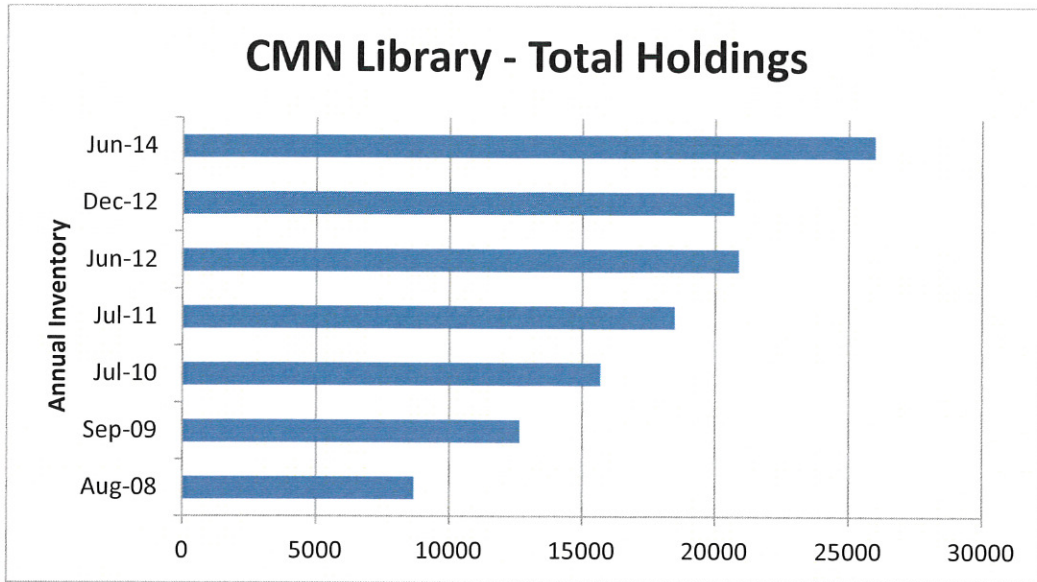


Chart 3: Total Library Holdings ■ Since merger of the libraries in December 2012, the inventory in the facility increased by more than 20%.

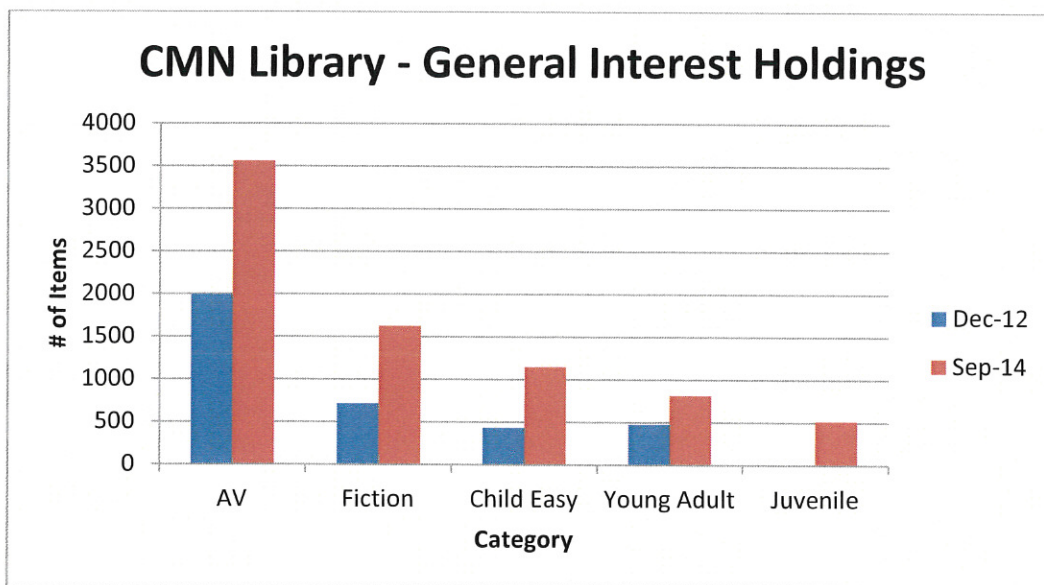


Chart 4: General Interest Holdings ■ Evidence of the commitment to serving public library patrons and addressing literacy development is detailed in the growth in inventory for adult and young readers. Acquisitions mirror public programming efforts of the library, which include special events and ongoing literacy activities for all ages.