

The Free Library of Philadelphia Celebrates 7 Million Mark

Philadelphia - - For the first time in its history, the Free Library of Philadelphia has reached a major milestone of circulating more than 7 million items annually as Library users checked out books, audiotapes and videotapes, CDs, and DVDs. The previous record of 6,716,174 was set in 1964, when the City's population was over two million.

“Reaching this goal is a testament to the important role the Free Library continues to play for the citizens of Philadelphia, and is a ringing endorsement of our efforts to improve our libraries and enrich the collections in recent years,” said Elliot L. Shelkrot, president and director of the Free Library.

Even in the face of tough times from the private sector – both walk-in and ‘virtual’ bookstores - people are using the Free Library of Philadelphia more than ever. Registered borrowers at the Library increased dramatically over the past two years.

Natalie Appetta is the Library user who checked out the 7,^{000,000} item *Nanny Diaries*, at the Independence Branch Library, located at 18 South 7th Street in the Balch Institute. This branch is the newest addition to the Free Library system and it has the largest circulation of all the branches.

Among the many items circulated system-wide, the top ten most-requested adult fiction titles are (the number indicates request frequency):

- Nanny Diaries*, by Emma McLaughlin - 469
- Summons*, by John Grisham – 462
- 2nd Chance*, by James Patterson – 299
- Corrections*, by Jonathan Franzen – 275
- Violets Are Blue*, by James Patterson – 215
- Daddy's Little Girl*, by Mary Higgins Clark – 211
- Last Man Standing*, by David Baldacci – 203
- True to the Game*, by Teri Woods – 180
- Up Country*, by Nelson DeMille – 166
- Skipping Christmas*, by John Grisham - 150

The most-requested children's title was *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, by J.K. Rowling – 260.

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