

Downtown Library Contacts Police After Some Disturbances With Homeless, Proactive Approach Being Taken

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The Hayner Public Library is a welcome place to everyone in the community, however, in recent days, there have been some disturbances that prompted them to contact the police.

On Thursday, Library Director Bernadette Duvernoy had to contact Alton Police after a disturbance in a parking lot. She said most of the homeless population near the library are harmless when they come in and read and use the restroom, however, there has been a handful recently who have been disrespectful. The Alton Police are being proactive and have provided a twice-a-day walk-thru during the week at the Downtown Hayner Public Library Branch. Duvernoy said the Alton Police are extremely helpful and supportive.

“I applaud the police department for their help, they always exhibit professionalism,” she said.

Duvernoy said the Alton Police told her to contact them any time something occurs out of the ordinary with any of the homeless and she feels they need assistance. One officer said he wishes there could be a place in the Alton area for those who are homeless to stay because it has become a problem.

Since COVID-19, Duvernoy said the homeless crowd around town has changed somewhat and some are more aggressive than before.

Duvernoy said she didn’t want to frighten patrons, but believes with the police help, they are handling the situation the best they can. She agreed with the Alton officer that there is such a need for a place for the homeless to stay rather than roaming the streets.

Overall, she sees it as a community issue that needs to be approached in a broad fashion. She also said she has compassion for the people in that situation here, many of whom have a mental illness or are off their medications. Duvernoy said police are now going to warn anyone who is disorderly, but it may lead to an arrest if they have to be contacted again about a disturbance.