Internet Usage Policy

Our policy outlines our regulations and policy regarding Internet usage. This policy has been reviewed and adopted on September 17, 2013. The library reserves the right to update and change our policies at any time without notice.

PUBLIC USE OF COMPUTERS & INTERNET ACCESS POLICY

PURPOSE
- Access to the Internet is a basic service of any library.
- Alma Carpenter Public Library provides computer workstations for public use with filtered Internet access;
- However these Internet resources are intended for educational, informational, and restricted recreational purposes.
- Access is provided to everyone who requests it, whether they are a card holding patron or an out of town visitor.
- Computers are available on a first come, first serve basis.
- Access to the Library's computer network and Internet is a privilege, not a right.
- By providing access to computers, the library enables the public to participate in the benefits of the information age. Juvenile users under 18 years of age are required to obtain parental consent for access.

WHAT WE OFFER
- Our Library website address is (under construction).
- Alma Carpenter Public Library assumes responsibility for the content of its own homepage and for accompanying Web pages.
- Access points and links to third party information resources on the library's home page are provided with the intent of aiding users in locating educational, informational or recreational content.
- Our web links are checked as time allows making sure they are still valid and consistent with the roles of the library.
- The library specifically disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, timeliness, authoritativeness, usefulness or fitness for a particular purpose of information obtained on the Internet, and the library will have no liability for direct, indirect or consequential damages related to the use of information accessed through the library's Internet service or website.
- Computers and software programs are provided to permit patrons to improve computer skills, test new computer programs, and enhance self-learning.
- The library does not attempt to have the latest version of any particular software program. All computers run at the same speed.

- The library is not responsible for busy internet traffic. Alma Carpenter Public Library is also not responsible for the unavailability of resources on the Internet computers due to technical difficulties.
- Our OPACs (Online Public Access Computers) aid the users/patrons in locating the library holdings but are not available for access to the Internet.
- Wireless access is provided. Library users must provide their own computer with a wireless network card.
- Users are responsible for setting up their own equipment.
- Library staff members are not permitted to provide direct assistance configuring laptops.
- Printing is not accessible via the wireless network.
- Users should possess a laptop with a charged battery (electrical outlets are available in some areas of the library, but not all).
- The library's wireless network may be less than secure. Information sent from or to your laptop can be captured by anyone with a wireless device and the appropriate software.
- We recommend that users do not use this network for the transfer of sensitive data, such as credit card numbers or bank account numbers, even while using the encryption built into users' web browsers.
- This data would be vulnerable during transit on the network.
- Users are responsible for virus protection, personal firewall, and other measures to protect the information on their laptop.
- The library is not responsible for any loss of information or damage to a laptop that might result from using the wireless network.
- The Library cannot guarantee equipment will work with the Library's network.

SIGNING IN
- Our Library's Time and Print Management records each internet session of a patron.
- However, anyone not possessing a current library card will be required to show Valid Driver License or State issued ID card before receiving a guest pass.
- Users agree to abide by the rules and procedures established for computer use and willingness to comply with relevant copyright laws.
- The library is not responsible for damage to users' disks, CDs, computers or jump drives or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the library's computers.

STAFF ASSISTANCE
- If requested, the staff will assist patrons with searches and suggest search strategies, but the staff cannot provide training of computer technology or software.
- The staff will aid the patron with simple printing and formatting questions or troubleshoot a computer issue.
- The staff cannot provide aid in filling out forms or paperwork on the Internet for users.

RULES OF CONDUCT AND USER'S RIGHTS

- Users have the right to equitable access to electronic information networks.
- Users who download files must verify that the files are free of computer viruses. Since software and information downloaded from any source, including the Internet, may contain computer viruses, users are advised to utilize virus checking software on their home computers. The Library is not responsible for damage to users' disks or computers

or for any loss of data, damage or liability that may occur from use of the Library's computers.

- Users must not compromise the safety and security of minors when using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electric communications;
- Users should not use Internet computers for illegal activity, to access illegal materials, or to access materials, which by local community standards would be obscene. There is a "research" clause that may take effect if we need to suspend the filters to accommodate student research.
- Users should not disclose or share their passwords with others; impersonate another user; use one's own software programs on the library's computers; or alter the library's computer settings. Library equipment may not be unplugged, moved, removed, or otherwise modified.
- Users should not attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files or networks
- Users should not engage in defamation (harming another's reputation by lies); uploading a worm, virus, "Trojan horse," "time bomb" or other harmful form of programming or vandalism; participating in "hacking" activities or any form of unauthorized access to other computers, networks, or information systems.
- Users agree to observe all copyright and licensing laws and will not duplicate any computer programs or documentation unless expressly labeled as being "in the public domain" or "shareware."
- Users who are patrons of the library and owe fines to the library may be barred from using the library's computers until the fines are paid in full.
- Users should not load any personal software onto the library computer workstations. Peripheral devices that need software to be installed on the library computer's hard drive in order to work are not allowed.
- Users should not leave files stored on the library computers, and if any files are found, the library staff will delete them.
- Users should supply their own recording media (diskettes or portable storage devices).
- Users wishing to use Jump drives and other portable storage devices should alert the staff in advance of their doing so because some computers may not allow jump drive access.
- Users must not change system or browser settings.
- Users must not eat or drink while using the computer.
- Users should notify the staff if problems are encountered during an Internet session
- Users should not turn off the equipment or attempt to correct any equipment problem.

AGE RESTRICTIONS AND ASSIGNED AREAS
- **Ages 12+** - At this time all computers are visible in the center of the library, and all computers are monitored for inappropriate material. There is a one hour limit on usage for computer sessions.
- **Juveniles younger than 12 years of age** are advised that all computer sessions are with parental supervision only, and will be monitored for inappropriate material. Parents are encouraged to share their child's online experience. One hour limits are placed on this age group.
- Alma Carpenter Public Library supports the rights of all library users to access information and will not deny access to electronic information networks based solely on age.
- It is not the job of the staff to supervise the children's use of the computers.
- Parents are expected to monitor and supervise their children.
- Parents are encouraged to discuss with their children issues of appropriate use and electronic information network safety.

- Parents: Some of the material on the Internet may be objectionable. You may see things on the Internet that you do not wish your children to view.
- The library cannot act loco parentis; parents are responsible for restricting the materials and services accessible to their child.

However, in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA ~ Public Law 106-554), the Library does filter Internet access for both minors (persons under the age of 18) and adults to certain visual depictions that are (1) obscene (as defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code), or (2) child pornography (as defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code), or, with respect to use of computers with Internet access by minors, and (3) harmful to minors. Furthermore, all users must abide by §43.22 and §43.24 of the Texas Penal Code, which prohibits the intentional or knowing display of such materials, while being reckless about whether a person, and especially a minor, is present who will be offended or alarmed by the display.

Juvenile users under 18 years of age are required to obtain parental consent for unfiltered access.

PRIVACY AND SECURITY ISSUES
- Library users have the right to confidentiality and privacy in the use of electronic information.
- However, the library is a public facility with close proximity of other patrons and staff.
- To ensure patrons' privacy and the confidentiality of library records, the library shall not disclose personally identifiable information about library users except to law enforcement authorities as required by law.
- Users, including minors, are warned that other individuals may obtain unauthorized access to personal information and/or may misrepresent themselves.
- Users, including minors, are advised not to share personal identification information to unknown or otherwise unverified sources via electronic communication.
- The library collects non-personal information from visitors to the website for statistical analysis, site assessment, server performance, troubleshooting and other management purposes.
- There is no inherent link to personally identifiable information in computer communications, unless you have provided that information in the content of your transaction.

ACCESS LIMITS
- All sessions will be limited to one hour.
- Users must end their session and leave the terminal when asked to do so by the library staff.
- The Library Time and Print Management automation allows one 60 minute session per day. Patrons needing the computer for longer than 60 minutes for research, filling out forms, writing papers, etc., but not game playing, may make arrangements with the reference staff for additional time.
- Children and teens are limited to one 1 hour session.
- All public computers will be turned off at approximately 30 minutes before the Library closes.
- Patrons still using a computer will be notified by the time management system before computers shut off in order to complete their work before the computer is turned off.

RIGHTS OF OTHERS

- Users will respect the rights of others, and will refrain from attempting to view or read material being used by others.
- By mutual agreement, two persons may share one access session as long as their behavior does not disturb others.

LIBRARY RIGHTS

- Library Staff may terminate a user's session without notice.
- Library Staff may limit the amount of computer time at any one sitting.
- Library Staff may erase any and all users files stored on library equipment, without notice.
- Staff reserves the right to immediately suspend persons from computer use for violating rules and regulations.
- We encourage staff to guide minors away from materials that may be inappropriate.
- Library staff may limit use of computer equipment, which has been purchased with grant funds according to the terms, or intent of the grant agreement.
- Library Staff may deny computer and Internet access to a library patron if any overdue fines are pending on a library record.
- Library Staff reserves the right to set aside a block of computers in order for them to be utilized for a computer class, work shop, proctored test, or routine updating.

TERMINATION OF INTERNET PRIVILEGES

- If the library staff observes a patron violating the terms of this agreement, they are authorized to terminate that users access session.
- Misuse of the computer or Internet may result in the loss of privileges......
    - 1st offense: Verbal warning and user must cease action or cause for warning.
    - 2nd offense: Written warning, suspension of privileges (length of time at the discretion of Director)
    - 3rd offense: Loss of privileges at this library.

INTERNET ASSISTANCE

- Library employees provide basic training concerning how to access the Internet, as time permits but cannot give training concerning how to use the computer.
- The library's purpose in having computers for public use is to provide the service, not to educate.
- Staff will be glad to help locate books and other library resources dealing with computer related topics and can provide referrals to area computer classes that may be available.

UNACCEPTABLE CONTENT

- It is a violation of the Alma Carpenter Public Library Internet Use agreement and of common correct behavior in the library for users to attempt to view unacceptable content on the library's computer workstations.
- This is not a tolerable use of a library's resource.
- We expect our users to observe the Internet Use agreement, and if a user does not uphold the agreement, they will be asked to leave.
- **This is the initial warning.**
- If the user returns and is again in violation of the agreement, the user will be given a written warning and suspended for a period of time.
- **This is the second warning.**

- **If the user returns after the time period in the second warning and again violates the agreement, the user will lose their privileges for life.**

CONDUCTING COMMERCIAL BUSINESS
- The library's Internet resources are intended for educational, informational, and limited recreational purposes.
- Therefore, conducting commercial business activity or enterprise or distributing advertisements using these resources is not permitted.

E-MAIL
- Use of email accounts are permitted if the user signs up for an account at a site such as Yahoo, Hotmail or Google or other 3rd party sites.

WIKIS, BLOGS, SOCIAL NETWORKING, CHATTING AND INSTANT MESSAGING
- Users accessing wikis, blogs or social networking sites are not prohibited;
- However, Alma Carpenter Public Library neither encourages nor offers technical support for their use.
- The Library does not provide electronic mail accounts, Internet Relay Chat, or Newsgroups.
- Users should not access chat rooms, unless a particular type of chat room is needed (i.e., for a college class).
- In that case, please inform the staff.
- The library does not generally support any interactive services unless in the educational context.
- Instant messaging, which requires the user to download special software on the public computers, is not allowed.

HEADPHONES
- Headphones are available for use by users at the circulation desk.
- Users need to sign in on a sheet and note the number of the headphone set they will use.
- The time the headphones are being checked out should be noted.
- When the headphones are returned the user/patron should note the time the headphones were checked back in.

CELL PHONE USE
- Users should refrain from using their cell phone in the library while on the computers.

PRINTING FEES
- Alma Carpenter Public Library does allow patrons to print.
- The library charges 20 cents a page for printing and printing is only available in black and white or color.
- Users should be aware of what they print and how many times they instruct the computer to forward the print job.
- All pages will be charged to the user whether duplicated or not.
- If the print-outs are not paid for, this will result in loss of computer privileges in the future.

- If the user is a library patron and does not pay for pages printed, staff will put a hold on that patron's account. There is a limit of 15 copies per patron.

HANDICAPPED USERS
- Handicapped users will be given priority to computer spaces.
- Reasonable accommodation will be made for handicapped patrons.

FILTERING
- Filters work in three ways: keyword blocking, site blocking and web rating systems.
- No filtering software is 100 percent effective.
- The Alma Carpenter Public Library has installed all filter blocking.
- Because the Library receives federal funding for public Internet access, federal law requires the library to install blocking software on the library's Internet terminals.
- As the law requires, the library will provide unfiltered Internet access to persons 18 or older who request it for bona fide research or any other lawful purpose unless computers are visible to a child.

LIABILITY ISSUES
- *Some material on the Internet may contain items that are illegal, inaccurate, defamatory, and potentially offensive and/or disturbing to some people.*
- *Information on the Internet may be reliable and current or it may be inaccurate, out-of-date, or unavailable at times.*
- *The Alma Carpenter Public Library and the City of Sour Lake, Texas assume no responsibility for what a customer may see or be subjected to once on the Internet. The library is not responsible for down time, delays in accessing a site or delays in transmission of data.*

Reviewed and Adopted
By Sour Lake City Council
September 17, 2013

_____
Mayor – Bruce Robinson