Political Engagement, Intellectual Freedom

Inspiring today’s college students to become active in the political process and explore intellectual freedom issues is the focus of two ACRL programs taking place today at the ALA Annual Conference. The ACRL Law and Political Science Section is sponsoring “Political Engagement: Facilitating Greater Participation in Civil Society.” An expert panel provides important tips on how libraries can help create politically active and engaged students, while facilitating the development of critical thinking and research skills.

Annual Diversity & Outreach Fair

This afternoon, conference attendees are invited to celebrate extraordinary examples of diversity and equity of access in America’s libraries at the annual Diversity & Outreach Fair. The Fair will take place from 3 – 5 pm today in the McCormick Place Exhibit Floor, Special Events Area.

The Diversity & Outreach Fair is coordinated by ALA’s Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) to highlight “diversity and outreach-in-action” initiatives from academic, public and special libraries, library associations and library schools across the country. The Fair enables librarians involved in a wide variety of diversity and outreach programs, activities and services to share their resources and experiences with others. Following the conference, abstracts of this year’s presentations and presenter contact information will be available on the OLOS web site at http://www.ala.org/olos/divfair.

Learn about the African American Baseball Experience This Morning

At this year’s ALA Annual Conference, the spotlight will shine on the contributions of African Americans to the national pastime. Librarians interested in learning more about their achievements can attend “Pride and Passion: The African American Baseball Experience,” hosted by the ALA’s Campaign for America’s Libraries and Public Programs Office (PPO) in conjunction with ALA’s Public Awareness Committee and Public Information Office.

The history of African American baseball reaches back more than 150 years, its pages filled with such heroes as Satchel Paige, Moses Fleetwood Foster and Jackie Robinson, who stood against discrimination to become American legends.

“Pride and Passion” will take place from 10:30 am to noon today at McCormick Place West, in room W192B.

The program features a distinguished panel of speakers, including Lawrence R. Hogan, author of Shades of Glory: The Negro Leagues and the Story of African-American Baseball; author Sharon Robinson, daughter of Jackie Robinson; Coretta Scott King Book Award winner Kadir Nelson, author and illustrator of We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball; Susan Brandehoff of ALA’s Public Program Office and others.

In addition, librarians are invited to visit PPO’s “Pride and Passion: The African American Baseball Experience” traveling exhibit, based upon a permanent exhibit at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum.

Established in 1992, the ALA PPO has a track record of developing library programming initiatives, including the acclaimed reading and discussion series “Let’s Talk About It!” film discussion programs on humanities themes, traveling exhibitions, LIVE! @ your library®, and other programs (visit www.ala.org/publicprograms). The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum is a Partner in The Campaign for America’s Libraries, ALA’s public awareness campaign that promotes the value of libraries and librarians. Thousands of libraries of all types — across the country and around the globe — use the Campaign’s @ your library® brand. The Campaign is made possible in part by ALA’s Library Champions, corporations and foundations who advocate the importance of the library in American society. Other Partners include Carnegie Corporation of New York, Dollar General, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Univision Radio, Verizon and Woman’s Day magazine.

What’s New for Fall 2009?

Find Out Today!

The HarperCollins Library Marketing Team cordially invites you to attend our

FALL 2009 TITLE PRESENTATION

Saturday, July 11, 2009
10:30AM—12:00PM
McCormick Place South, Room S101a

(Please note that we will be presenting adult titles only. . . no children’s books.)

Get the inside track on your favorite authors and discover a few new ones along the way! Light refreshments will be served. Hope to see you there!

HarperCollinsPublishers
Visit our blog: www.librarylovefest.com
Join RUSA for Breakfast and Books at 2009 Literary Tastes Event

Award-winning authors and a delicious breakfast are on the menu for the 2009 Literary Tastes Breakfast, which will be held Sunday, July 12, from 8:00 am to 10:00 am in the Red Lacquer Room at the Palmer House Hilton, 17 E. Monroe St., Chicago. This conference tradition features amazing authors selected from the 2009 Notable Books List of fiction, non-fiction and poetry; The Reading List for outstanding genre literature; and the Sophie Brody Medal for achievement in Jewish literature—all sponsored by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). Each author will speak about his work and ruminant on the writing craft, followed by a book signing session.

This year’s featured authors are: Toby Barlow, author of Sharp Teeth. The insiders’ perspective and lyrical language of this haunting free verse novel offer a sympathetic glimpse into the lives of urban werewolves, a nightmarish noir world where violence and heartbeat go hand in hand. A 2009 Reading List selection for horror.


Nick Taylor, author of American-Made: The Enduring Legacy of the WPA: When FDR Put the Nation to Work. Taylor provides the first comprehensive look at the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the eight-year program that provided employment for eight and a half million Americans and lifted their spirits and the economy out of the Great Depression of the 1930s. A 2009 Notable Books pick.

Peter Manseau, author of Songs for the Butcher’s Daughter. A young American Catholic translator narrates the colorful story of an elderly Yiddish poet, and in so doing covers a century of events in Israel, Poland, Russia and the United States, while recounting intricate histories of religion, love and faith in the power of words. Winner of the 2009 Sophie Brody Medal.

Meet YALSA’s President, Author at Membership Pavilion at Annual Conference

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), the fastest-growing division of the American Library Association (ALA), will host two special events at its booth in the Membership Pavilion at ALA Annual Conference: a meet and greet with YALSA President Sarah Cornish Debraski and Pam Spencer Holley, editor of the new Quick and Popular Reads for Teens. Holley, a YALSA past president and former chair of the Printz Award, will discuss her new book published this month by ALA Editions from 3 to 4 pm today in the YALSA Booth.

quick and popular reads for teens highlights two of YALSA’s most popular booklists, Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers and Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults.

Debraski, the 2008-2009 YALSA president, will answer questions, take suggestions, and chat about concerns at the YALSA booth in the pavilion from noon to 1 pm on Sunday, July 12. This informal opportunity to speak with YALSA leadership underscores Debraski’s commitment to her presidential theme, “Engaging the YALSA Community.”

ALAs Membership Pavilion will be in the exhibits hall at booth 3034. Complete details on all of YALSA’s special events and programs for Annual are available on the YALSA Wiki, http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa (click on “Upcoming Conferences.”)

For more than 50 years, YALSA has been the world leader in selecting books, videos, and audio books for teens. For more information about YALSA or for lists of recommended reading, viewing and listening, go to www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists, or contact the YALSA office by phone, 800-545-2433, ext. 4390; or e-mail: yalsa@ala.org.

Wizards of the Coast has developed a reputation as a world leader in fantasy fiction—and for good reason. Our fantasy settings are some of the most detailed worlds ever conceived and our stories are crafted by some of the top names in fantasy fiction. And with an ever-growing fanbase of loyal readers, it’s no wonder our titles consistently appear on The New York Times best-seller list.

To order Wizards of the Coast books, please contact your local wholesaler.

Stop by Booth 1442 and meet a Weis, co-author of The New York Times Best-Selling Dragonlance series.

Wizards of the Coast has a long history in the world of fantasy, having published books, board games, and role-playing games since the 1980s. The first book in the Dragonlance series, _Dragons of Autumn Twilight_, was published in 1984, and the series has since grown to include over 100 novels, as well as countless other products. The series is set in the fictional world of Krynn, and follows the adventures of a group of heroes as they navigate the challenges of this colorful and complex world.

Our books attract more than just readers, they have fans!


Wizards of the Coast has developed a reputation as a world leader in fantasy fiction—and for good reason. Our fantasy settings are some of the most detailed worlds ever conceived and our stories are crafted by some of the top names in fantasy fiction. And with an ever-growing fanbase of loyal readers, it’s no wonder our titles consistently appear on The New York Times best-seller list.

To order Wizards of the Coast books, please contact your local wholesaler.

Stop by Booth 1442 and meet a Weis, co-author of The New York Times Best-Selling Dragonlance series.
Reconnecting with Your Passion

Sometimes we wonder how we can cope during these difficult and challenging times. Almost every day we hear of another library slashing their budget, closing branches, reducing hours, laying off staff. No one is immune. No one is safe.

How can a library staff maintain their excitement for their job when the passion is simply worn out? Reconnecting with that spark that caused you to enter the profession of librarianship — or caused you to stay in the profession — is what we need to rekindle. Has your job ever charged you with an overpowering emotion? Have you felt passionate about a book? Have you been outraged over censorship attempts?

Have you felt deeply rewarded and satisfied having helped patrons access the information they need on a daily basis to make informed decisions about their lives? This is the passion we want to rekindle.

To reconnect with your passion you must first identify what it is that you are passionate about? What “cranks your tractor” so to speak? In your personal life is there an activity that you really enjoy but you have fallen away from? Perhaps you have always wanted to learn to paint, but it keeps getting put on the back burner.

Now is the time to heal your soul and provide food for your passion. By prioritizing your life and reconnecting with what makes you passionate, you will be better equipped to face the everyday trials and challenges of your library job.

Librarianship still remains one of the most worthwhile professions one can choose. Surrounded by a wealth of knowledge and only limited by the imagination, library staff is primed to be the most well-rounded, well-read group of individuals in your community, with a plethora of trivia at their disposal. But, to be well-rounded, your passions — not only at work, but at home, must be nurtured.

Rural library staffs have unique challenges when facing concerns and hardships. Limited staff and space issues add to the commonly shared challenge of inadequate and shrinking revenues. Many rural and small libraries are operated by as little as a single person. Libraries serving populations of up to 25,000 still try to operate on what can only be considered a skeleton crew. The Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) [http://www.bcr.org/ARSL/index.html] is primed to help connect you with others who share common struggles. And, the ARSL is sponsoring a program on reconnecting with your passion: “Only for Passionate Librarians: Working in Rural and Small Libraries,” from 3:30 – 5:30 pm today.

Strategies such as picking up where you left off with a hobby, focusing on areas of your job where your talents are strong; organizational and management skills and networking will be addressed.

Participants will laugh and they may cry, but they will definitely come away with a fresh perspective and new attitude for coping during these most challenging times.

Washington Office Update Set for This Morning

For the Washington Office, 2009 has been “the year of the stimulus.” Come hear what it’s all about during the “Washington Office Update” from 8 to 10 am today in McCormick Place West (MCP), Room W-474.

The update will highlight issues including the Google Book Settlement, the reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), copyright issues, an overview of the new administration and advocacy before diving into an hour-long discussion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) with an introduction from Bob Boucher, an overview of broadband funding program led by Chris McClean, and a question-and-answer session with Boucher and McClean as well as Alan Inouye, director of the Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP), and Carrie Lowe, director of OITP’s Program on Networks.
JCLC2012 K.C. Details at ALA Diversity Fair Today

This afternoon in Chicago there will be a special Joint Conference of Librarians of Color—JCLC2012 Poster Information Table at the ALA Diversity Fair from 3:00 – 5:00 pm on the exhibit floor. The JCLC2012 Steering Committee will be announcing their new Web site www.ala.org/JCLC2012 and accepting donations for a limited edition JCLC2012 Lapel Pin.

Many already know that Kansas City, Mo. is famous for its many fountains and delicious barbecue. On September 19–23, 2012, Kansas City will also be known for hosting the 2nd National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC2012). Following the success of the first JCLC in 2006 held in Dallas, TX, the conference will again take up the issues of diversity as well as outreach for the profession. The JCLC2012 Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the five ALA affiliate ethnic caucuses, wants to make it clear that all librarians, library staff, advocates and friends, of all backgrounds, are invited to participate, to learn from each other, and to come together in Kansas City at JCLC2012.

The conference will offer tools to create and support diversity policies, programs, and services for library staff who serve diverse communities. Its programs will focus on literacy, equity of access, diversity best practices, multicultural collection development, recruitment, service delivery and much more. Save the date for JCLC2012—September 19–23, 2012. For more information you may contact Marcellus Turner, JCLC Steering Committee Secretary at mturner@jefferson.lib.co.us.

Freedom to Read Foundation Benefactor Forsman Returns to Exhibits

Visit booth #3431 in the exhibits to check out the designs of Carolyn Forsman, the New York-based jeweler who donates proceeds from her ALA booth to the Freedom to Read Foundation.

Forsman’s terrific assortment of affordable gifts (top retail price of $50) will make you smile. Are you “perfect,” “quirky,” a “blogger” or a “drama queen”? If so, then she has the rubber band bracelet for you for only $1.00. She will be featuring her standard assortment of flashing “spike” rings (perfect for fireworks), glowing necklaces, newspaper headline pins, original “I Read Banned Books” bracelets (now featuring Huck Finn), and brand new peace symbol and bug jewelry for summer reading programs. Her jewelry is currently in MOMA San Francisco, MOMA Tokyo, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, Guggenheim Berlin, and various other museums and book/gift/library shops worldwide.

The Freedom to Read Foundation has been the First Amendment legal defense arm of ALA since 1969. Forsman, a former librarian and ALA Council member, has raised more than $100,000 for FTRF, and was named to the Foundation’s Roll of Honor in 2001. We encourage you to visit her at booth 3431 and support the critical First Amendment work of the Freedom to Read Foundation.
Visit Swets Booth 1229 for SwetsWise Presentations!

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√ **eBooks & MyiLibrary** – Simplify your library’s electronic resource needs—order serials and eBooks from a single source. Gain access to MyiLibrary’s package of nearly 180,000 eBook titles.

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ALa Gaming Pavilion to Showcase Link Between Gaming and Literacy

In today's technology-driven world, learning reaches beyond the classroom. As literacy formats change, the demand increases for these new resources. Beginning this morning in the Exhibits, the ALa Gaming Pavilion will showcase the latest format to support literacy in libraries — gaming.

The Gaming Pavilion, sponsored by Verizon, features game manufacturers, platform companies and vendors offering electronic games, board games, card games and other products and services used for curriculum-based teaching and recreation. The Pavilion will also feature live workshops and multi-media resources for librarians who are interested in adding gaming programs for youth and adults.

"Gaming is a powerful tool for both literacy and learning," said ALa President Jim Rettig. "Gamers are writers and readers. They write fan fiction and game reviews, create Web pages, design game modifications, read strategy guides and blog about their game play."

Throughout the country, libraries of all types are gaming. Public, school and academic libraries are holding video tournaments, creating gaming clubs, bringing in gaming equipment and video screens and providing the kinds of educational and social experiences that only a library can provide. As a result, library attendance within some of the hardest to reach demographics — children, teenagers and college students — is growing exponentially.

Many games reach across generations. With new systems like the Nintendo Wii and a mix of traditional and modern tabletop games available, everyone can play — from kids to grandparents.

Gaming Pavilion exhibitors include A+ Child Supply, The Burgeon Group, Chicago Toy & Game Fair, DEMCO, Gen Con, LibrarySkills.com, Out of the Box Publishing, Screenlife Games, Top Trumps, Wizards of the Coast and Zillio.

In 2008, the ALa launched "Libraries, Literacy and Gaming," an initiative funded by a $1 million grant from the Verizon Foundation to track and measure the impact of gaming and literacy in youth 10-18 years of age, and build models for library gaming that can be deployed nationally. In April 2009, ALa and Verizon funded 10 libraries in 10 states from New York to Alaska. The winners — seven public, two school and one academic — will use the funds to develop and implement gaming and literacy programs that provide innovative gaming experiences. The 10 libraries were selected out of 390 that applied for the grant.
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Hemingway Birthplace Home and Hemingway Museum in Oak Park

Ernest Hemingway first put pen to paper in Oak Park, Illinois, in a Victorian home built by his maternal grandparents. Later renowned as an author, journalist, adventurer and Nobel Laureate, Hemingway was known to Oak Parkers as a high school student, an athlete and unruly scholar whose ambition was “to travel and write.”

Today, the Hemingway Birthplace Home and Hemingway Museum in Oak Park stand witness to the start of Hemingway’s remarkable journey. Here Hemingway was born in 1899 and here he lived until he left for the exciting world of newspaper reporting and, later, for war.

The Birthplace Home and Museum are a short L ride from downtown on the Green Line (Oak Park stop). Tours are given at the Home hourly and the Museum is open for self-guided tours from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm today, and from 1:00 – 5:00 pm Sunday through Friday, and Admission is $8 for adults, $6 for seniors.

For more information please see our web site at http://www.chfo.org.

Technologies

From page 1

cell phone, go to http://ala.boopsie.com from your mobile phone’s browser; or, simply text the word “ALA2009” to 41411. You will receive a text message back with a link to download and install the small application to your phone. Just follow the short simple steps. Then click on the ALA Logo and select “ALA 2009 Exhibitors” or “ALA 2009 Sessions.”

To find an exhibitor, select the “ALA 2009 Exhibitors” channel and start typing an exhibitor name. For example, to find “Ingram Library Services, Inc.” all you have to type is ‘ing l s’. You only have to type the first few letters of each word of the company name.

To view a list of the sessions at the show, select the “ALA 2009 Sessions” channel. You will see a list of sessions. To find the “Catalog Management Interest Group” session, just type ‘cat man’ or ‘catm’. Clicking on a session will transfer you to your mobile phone’s browser and give you an overview of the session.

ALA Mobile also has channels that focus on local restaurants, hotels and even taxi services. Just click on a channel, and search as described above.

Large Print Format

Australian publishing innovator of accessible formats, ReadHowYouWant, has teamed up with ALA to offer the conference programs in seven large print formats optimized for readability, as well as in BRF Braille and DAISY files. More than 1,000 librarians accessed these versions prior to the conference.

“We were impressed by the tremendous response from the library community,” said Chris Stephen, ReadHowYouWant’s founder and CEO. Stephen, a pioneer in electronic publishing, founded the new technology company after his sister developed MS and had difficulty reading.

Moso’s Text a Librarian

ALA is partnering with Mosio to offer mobile information via text messaging. Using Mosio’s Text a Librarian technology, 250 volunteer ALA Ambassadors will be able to respond to questions from attendees wherever they are. This “Text an ALA Ambassador” service will enable attendees to text questions from their mobile phones about programming schedules, member services, exhibitor locations, and things to do in Chicago.

In addition to the printed and online PDF issues at the Chicago conference, interactive digital preview issues have been emailed by ALA to its entire membership. Designed in page format, each issue reads like a printed publication, but readers can use embedded Web links to take them to a plethora of conference, program and advertising-related Web pages.

Lois Wallentine sets up a display featuring books on juvenile and upper grade science at the Lerner Publishing Group booth. The Exhibits open at 9:00 am today.

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Indisputably the most widely read and influential book ever written about the mind, Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health has remained a best seller for over fifty years, with over 20 million copies sold.

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• Hardcover and audio book formats available in 16 languages.
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SATURDAY, JULY 11TH

10:30am – 11:30am
ALA Auditorium Speaker Series featuring JAMES ELLROY (Blood’s A Rover – Knopf). Signing to follow in Random House, Inc. booth #1834.

1:30pm – 2:00pm
LIVE! Reading Stage featuring BEN GREENMAN (Please Step Back – Melville). Signing to follow in Random House, Inc. booth #1834.

3:00pm – 4:00pm
Michael Greenberg (Beg, Borrow, Steal: A Writer’s Life – Other Press) signs in Random House, Inc. booth #1834.

SUNDAY, JULY 12TH

8:00am – 10:00am
RUSA Literary Tastes Breakfast featuring Nick Taylor (American-Made – Bantam). Signing to follow on-site. Palmer House Hotel, Red Lacquer Room. Ticketed event

8:00am – 12:00pm
YA Author Coffee Klatch & The 2009 ALEX Awards featuring PETER FELDSTEIN & STEPHEN BLOOM (The Oxford Project – Welcome). Signing to follow in Random House, Inc. booth #1834.

10:00am – 12:00pm
ALTAFF “Diversity in Literature” panel featuring CARLEEN BRICE (Children of the Waters – One World). Signing to follow on-site. McCormick Place West, W-476

10:30am – 12:00pm
“Things That Go Bump in the Stacks” featuring CHARLIE HUSTON (My Dead Body – Del Rey). Signing to follow on-site.

1:30pm – 3:00pm
ALTAFF “First Author / First Book” panel featuring MARGOT BERWIN (Hothouse Flower – Pantheon). Signing to follow on-site. Hyatt Regency Chicago, Columbus Hall E/F

5:30pm – 7:30pm
ALTAFF “Laugh’s On Us” panel featuring PAULA POUNDSTONE (There’s Nothing In This Book That I Meant To Say – Three Rivers Press). Signing to follow on-site. McCormick Place West, W-187

MONDAY, JULY 13TH

10:30am – 12:00pm
ALTAFF “Memoir” panel featuring CARLOTTA WALLS LANIER (A Mighty Long Way – One World). Signing to follow on-site. McCormick Place West, W-194a

3:00pm – 4:00pm
ALA Auditorium Speaker Series featuring TRACY KIDDER (Strength in What Remains – Random House).

3:00pm – 4:00pm
ALTAFF “Diversity in Literature” panel featuring CARLEEN BRICE (Children of the Waters – One World). Signing to follow on-site. McCormick Place West, W-476

5:30pm – 7:30pm
ALTAFF “Laugh’s On Us” panel featuring PAULA POUNDSTONE (There’s Nothing In This Book That I Meant To Say – Three Rivers Press). Signing to follow on-site. McCormick Place West, W-187

THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE:
Visit our booth daily to pick up copies of an assortment of fabulous FREE advance readers’ copies!

Don’t Miss the Random House, Inc. Fall 2009 Book Buzz: Sunday, July 12th
McCormick Place West, Room W473
Join us for a slideshow of the big books you must have and the important mid-list books you don’t want to miss! All attending will receive a selection of FREE, hot advance readers’ copies!
Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to library@randomhouse.com.
Children’s Titles: 10:30am – 11:30am | Adult Titles: 12:00pm – 1:00pm

Please check the conference program for ticket info and updates | www.randomhouse.com/library
New Research Highlighted in LRRT Programs

The Library Research Round Table (LRRT) will feature new and important research from faculty and graduate students throughout the ALA Annual Conference. Programs include:

- **Research to Understand Users: Issues and Approaches;** Today, 10:30 am to noon; McCormick Place (MCP) West 194B. Presenters include: Patricia Rempel (Costa Education Library, University of Alberta), “Insights from the Under-Served in Rural Washington”; Lynne Westbrook (University of Texas) and Maria Gonzalez (Wayne State University), “Silent Crises: Understanding the Information Landscape in an Online Community of Individuals in Crisis”; and Barbara Fister and Julie Gilbert (Gustavus Adolphus College), “Reading and Information: Examining the Role of Recreational Reading in Academic Libraries.”

- **Children, Teens, and Librarians: Research from the Field;** Monday, 10:30 am to noon; MCP West 194B. Presenters include: Kate McDowell (University of Illinois), “The History of Youth Services Librarianship”; Valerie M. Nesset (University of Buffalo), “The Information-Seeking Behavior of Grade-Three Students: Informing Information Literacy Instruction”; and Joyce Valenza and Julie Gilbert (Gustavus Adolphus College), “The Online Social Networking Habits of High School Seniors.”

- **Four-Star Research;** Sunday, 10:30 am to noon; MCP West 470A. Presenters include: Matthew Richard Griffis (University of Western Ontario), “Examining the Power Relationships in Public Library Management Outsourcing”; and Linda Most (Florida State University), “The Rural Public Library as Place: The People’s Place for Community, Reading and Information.”

Exhibit Changes

**Change**

PTSF, Inc. is now in booth 1040.

**Massaging Insoles** is now in booth 4937.

**New BookForum** is in booth 462.

**Future Claw** is in booth 1249.

**Come Meet...**

ROGER THUROW & SCOTT KILMAN
authors of

*Enough: Why the World’s Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty*

**SATURDAY • 11 AM**

GORDON LIVINGSTON, M.D.
author of *How to Love*

**SATURDAY • 2 PM**

NEVADA BARR
author of *13 ½*

**SUNDAY • 2 PM**

**MEET THE AUTHORS**

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DAVID SMALL

*Stitches: A Memoir*

978-0-393-06857-3

Sunday, 2:00-3:00pm: signing in the Norton booth

JOE MENO

*The Great Perhaps: A Novel*

978-0-393-06796-5

Sunday, 3:30-4:00pm: reading on the LIVE stage

Monday, 10:30am-12:00pm: Reflecting on the Past: Literary Memoirs (ALTAFF) panel. McCormick Place West, room W-194a
TRANSFORMING THE LIBRARY TO EMBRACE THE USER

Oklahoma State University Library removes barriers to collections and e-resources

“Simplicity is complexity done well,” said Jeff Jarvis in his widely-read book What Would Google Do? It’s a notion embraced by the Oklahoma State University Library in its continuing efforts to transform the way the library interfaces with its users. Early adopters of next-generation catalog Aqualogic®, the library is now taking that effort a step further, adding an innovative technology that allows the breadth of the library’s resources to be as easily searched as Google searches the web.

Anne Prestamo, Associate Dean for Collection and Technology Services, is leading the transformation effort. She feels libraries have spent too much time trying to teach users “rules” for finding information and too little time finding solutions to user frustrations. In reality, librarians see a very small proportion of their users in face-to-face settings.

She spent a year analyzing searches on the library’s traditional OPAC. After backing out staff searches, she found the results “incredibly informative and downright frightening,” she says. An extraordinary percentage of searches by lay-users yielded no or very few results.

The culprits: library systems that are complex and users that are often overwhelmed. She likes to quote Free Range Librarian blogger Karen Schneider when discussing how the library interfaces with students and faculty: “The user isn’t broken,” paraphrases Prestamo. “Your system is broken until it’s proven otherwise. Information flows down the path of least resistance. If you clock a tool the users want, users will go elsewhere to find it.”

Subscribing to that notion brought Prestamo face-to-face with the Summon unified discovery service, a ground-breaking technology from Serials Solutions. The library was the first to sign on as a beta site for the service, which allows libraries to align their broad array of collections and resources behind a simple, obvious starting place – a search box. It provides a view of the library’s content consistent with user experiences with Amazon or Wikipedia, and just as compelling.

Later this month, when the Summon service launches commercially, students and faculty at Oklahoma State U will access the breadth of the library from one starting point. The library-branded search box will seamlessly bring to the surface for the user the explosion of library materials relevant to the search – books, videos, e-content, local digital collections at the article level – whatever the format. “We see the ground-breaking scale of the Summon initiative as a unique opportunity to streamline the discovery-to-delivery process for our users. As a result, it allows us to maximize the return on our substantial investment in full-text content and authoritative databases,” says Prestamo.

The Summon service works by compiling content in a single index, allowing instant and true relevancy-ranked results. Serials Solutions has partnered with content providers of all types who provide direct feeds. Key among them are ProQuest and Gale, aggregators representing about 4,000 publishers. Others include Springer, Taylor & Francis, SAGE and a host of leading academic publishers – about 100 in all. Seeing an opportunity to display their content to the right user at the right time, publishers are signing on with the Summon service continuously. In fact, Serials Solutions has indexed almost half a billion records already.

Prestamo sees the service as a win-win: users can follow their own familiar search path, but use it to access high-quality, authoritative resources. It conquers a fundamental barrier that keeps users from getting the most from their library experience and keeps libraries from worrying that Google is “winning.”

Visit the Oklahoma State University Library at www.library.okstate.edu/.

Learn more about the Summon unified discovery service at ALA by visiting Serials Solutions booth #3026. Or visit www.serialssolutions.com/summon. Serials Solutions is a ProQuest company.

Hear more from early library partners and adopters of Summon unified discovery service in the free Webcast series, “Returning the Researcher to the Library,” hosted by Serials Solutions and Library Journal. Parts 1 and 2 of the series are archived at www.libraryjournal.com/nextgenuser. Parts 3 and 4 will be Webcast in Fall 2009.
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