

CLENEExchange

March 2003

“School ends, but education doesn’t.”

Volume 19, Number 3

Secret Patrons and Virtual Field Trips: The Sequel

by Mary Bucher Ross, Training and Development Managing Librarian, Seattle Public Library (mary.ross@spl.org)

In the December 2002 issue of the CLENEExchange, I wrote about a training program that I designed for the Washington State Virtual Reference Project (“Secret Patrons and Virtual Field Trips: Adventures in Training Staff for Virtual Reference”). At that time, we had just completed the train-the-trainer sessions and two classes were about to begin—one in Seattle, the other in Spokane. Since then, we have trained over 50 people throughout the state. The project coordinator, Buff Hirko, and I gave a presentation on the training at the 2002 Virtual Reference Desk Conference in Chicago.

The recognition that the training has received since then is due mainly

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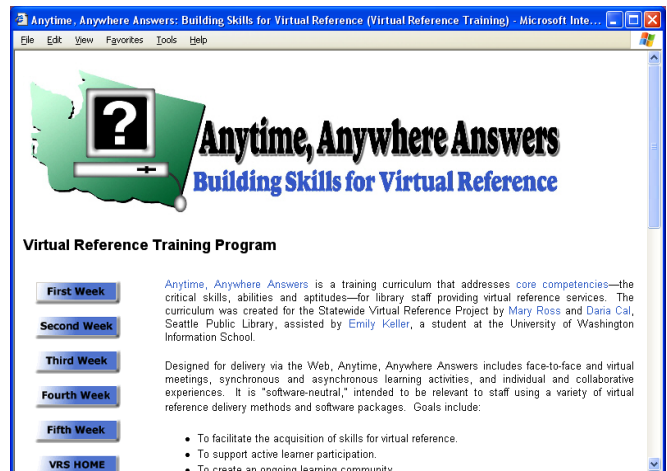
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to a unique blend of activities that explore virtual reference from the user’s perspective.

The training program—called Anytime, Anywhere Answers—is a blended curriculum, combining a one-day face-to-face orientation with five weeks of distance learning activities.

At the orientation the trainers offer previews of the curriculum, hands-on experience with chat meeting software, and tips for success in distance learning. In addition to preparing the learners for the on-line activities that will follow, the focus is on encouraging interaction. Common experiences and interests are shared via a get-acquainted game called Walking Billboards (from *Still More Games Trainers Play*).

Three primary on-line tools are used to deliver the training. A Web site maintained by the



Washington State Library contains the complete curriculum. A listserv is set up for each class. The third tool is weekly chat meetings, building chat skills using two different programs—first, free Web-based AOL Instant Messaging, then the 24/7 Reference on-line meeting software.

These on-line tools deliver training effectively to every part of the state. By providing the entire course content on the Web, learners can access it anytime, anywhere. The listserves are used for posting and comment-

ing on assignments, sharing observations, and offering additional resources. Chat meetings allow real-time interaction focused on pre-arranged topics. Using chat-based on-line meeting software means that the learners gain valuable experience in the same mode of communication used by their virtual reference patrons. And they have to deal with the same technical problems and limitations.

The weekly assignments encourage a view of virtual reference through the eyes of users. Each learner is

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responsible for taking Virtual Field Trips, exploring the Web sites of libraries providing virtual reference and answering questions about the service's "branding," accessibility, and scope. In their Secret Patron activities, the learners have specific scenarios to use with three virtual reference services, comparing the responses. The scenarios describe a type of patron, an information need, and an "escalator" question that starts with a general inquiry and progresses to a specific one. For each interaction they evaluate the effectiveness of the reference interview and the appropriateness of the answer, and give their overall impressions of the service received.

Later in the course, the learners explore popular Web-based question-answering services such as Google Answers (<http://answers.google.com>) and reflect on what they can apply to their own services.

So what are these folks learning about virtual reference, and what are they applying in their own libraries?

From the Secret Patron summaries posted to the listserve, it's clear that the learners realize how important an effective reference interview is for the success of this service. In the hundred or more Secret Patron transactions, only a relatively few virtual reference librarians successfully clarify the questions that our learners are

asking. Launching into a search without clarifying the real question leads to a surprising number of unsatisfactory or incomplete answers.

Learners frequently comment about the importance of keeping the patron informed about what is happening and the progress of the search for an answer. They experience first-hand the discomfort of not knowing whether they are still connected or how long the transaction might take.

One questioned whether the librarian was sending easy-to-find Web sources rather than taking the time to find more authoritative information to answer her question. This led to a good discussion about how information literacy can be fostered in virtual reference.

The Virtual Field Trips prompt learners to take a more critical look at their own library Web pages, reflecting on how they can be re-designed for clarity and usefulness. One library reported that their Web page on policies for virtual reference was revised based on feedback from staff participating in the training.

Bringing library staff together from all over the state, via the training, is one of the most valuable benefits. One class partnered staff from the University of Washington, a county law library, two public libraries, and a private university. Training together is a trust-building experience for those who will later collaborate in virtual refer-

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CLENE at Midwinter What You Missed

The CLENE Board met twice during the January 24-29, 2003 American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter conference in Philadelphia.

As always, program planning was an important topic. Plans were finalized for sessions to be held at the ALA June 19-June 25, 2003 Annual Conference in Toronto. The events scheduled are: Friday 9-4 preconference on e-learning (see specifics in the article adjacent to this one), Saturday 9:30-12:30 board meeting, Sunday 10:30-noon program on Using 'Story' to Train with David Hutchins, and Monday 2-4 staff development discussion group meeting. In addition, CLENE will have a table in the exhibit area.

Another key topic was CLENE's on-line communications. CLENE Board Member and Secretary Curtis Rogers manages CLENE's website presence and on-line Board meetings. He reported on his attendance at the Content Manager Training for ALA's new website. ALA's entire website will have a new look in April; for a preview of the new look, go to <http://staging.ala.org>. Curtis also coordinates CLENE's on-line Board "informal" chat meetings (using AOL Instant Messenger) held between ALA conferences.

Upcoming ALA Conferences

Annual

June 19-June 25, 2003 - Toronto
June 24-June 30, 2004 - Orlando
June 23-June 29, 2005 - Chicago

Midwinter

January 9-14, 2004 - San Diego
January 20-25, 2005 - Boston
January 20-26, 2006 - San Antonio

CLENE Preconference on E-learning in Toronto

Mark your Toronto ALA Annual schedule for Friday, June 20, 2003

from 9:30 am - 4:00 pm.

You won't want to miss CLENE's exciting preconference titled, Adventures in E-Learning.



Well aware that staff and professional development will continue to be a critical area for librarians, CLENE planners have brought together an impressive array of presenters from across the country who will examine a variety of programs that use electronic learning.

The featured speakers and their topics are:

- Gina Persichini, Idaho State Library, Idaho State Library's ABLE (Alternative Basic Library Education) program targeted at non-MLS library staff who are starving for education in very rural areas that uses TrainerSoft to get the courses on-line.
- Brad Ward, Northeast Florida Information Network (NEFLIN), NEFLIN's e-learning program, NOODLE that features Element K and Socratease web-based learning systems
- Stacey Aldrich, Maryland State Library, Maryland's In-house created e-learning product and how it is used statewide
- Gail Griffith, Carroll County Public Library, Westminster (MD), Implementing e-learning using interactive on-line management training tools from Ninth House

In his overview, moderator Curtis Rogers, South Carolina State Library, will compare and contrast each type of model presented.

And, of course, mouth-watering door prizes will be awarded.

Attendance is limited to 50 participants.

Costs are: CLENERT members - \$150, ALA Members who are not CLENERT members - \$165.

Experiencing the FISH! Phenomenon

by Mark Gadson, DES Training Specialist
Arlington (VA) County Government (mgadson@co.arlington.va.us)



In December of last year Arlington County Government in Northern Virginia conducted its second series of Leadership Learning Conferences for department managers and first-line supervisors (*Editor's note: including those from the Arlington County Dept. of Libraries*). Offered at the conference by two co-instructors and myself were the highly motivational and fun FISH! sessions. The sessions were designed to ensure that participants would experientially interact around the four FISH! learning points: **PLAY, MAKE THEIR DAY, BE THERE, CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE.**

As a Training Specialist for several years, it was refreshing to see so many Arlington County employees receptive to a unique approach for communicating relatively old concepts. FISH! has become a phenomenon in the business world and particularly Arlington County Government. It was wonderful to see Arlington County employees from diverse backgrounds thoroughly enjoying interacting, talking, and thinking about FISH! Although, in some cases, I am sure that a few participants probably thought more about how they prefer their fish cooked; grilled, broiled, stuffed, baked, etc., than the learning points.

Never the less, here's what we continue to do in the Arlington County sessions to facilitate employees grasping of FISH!.

In keeping with the spirit of FISH! and its concepts, designers of the session thought it would be beneficial if we could relate the participants' in-class experience to a childhood memory. We can all remember how much fun it was learning and playing as a child. So, after reflection, group discussion, and some childlike behavior of our

own, the instructors agreed that a 'Cat In The Hat' theme would be ideal for our purpose. No one likes fish and having fun more than the 'Cat In The Hat' from the 'Dr. Seuss' books, right? Many people immediately smile or laugh as soon as they see the funny looking stovepipe hat that the cat wears. During our session participants and instructors happily wear a 'Dr. Seuss' multicolored stovepipe hat the entire time. This is a huge success for us because it immediately makes people intrinsically reflect on their childhood feelings and subtly challenges them to relax certain behavioral barriers (i.e., choose to have a positive attitude). The hats also work as symbols



briefed on the session format and the FISH! video featuring the PIKE PLACE FISH MARKET. After watching the video, participants share their insights about the fish market atmosphere, the (4) concepts, and how they can be applied in the Arlington Government work environment. This activity is very energizing and generates a lot of participation. It also reinforces the learning points: **MAKE THEIR DAY, BE THERE, and CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE.**

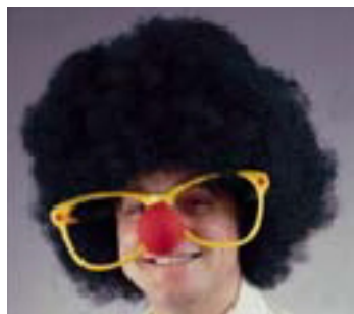
One of the central focus points for the Arlington County sessions is to ensure that participants have fun and get an opportunity to play. Using the energy created during the previous discussion,

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participants are requested to engage in two child-like activities intended to promote fun at work while communicating the FISH! learning points.

In this exercise, participants are led to believe that they are going to toss and catch a real fish bought from a grocery store. Surprisingly, many participants are so energized after the video discussion that they're actually willing to toss and catch a real fish. Of course, the fun is talking to and seeing the facial expressions of those who are seriously apprehensive about engaging in this activity. Participants are divided into teams of 6 to 10 and begin to unwrap their cold fish. Everyone begins to howl with laughter and relief when they realize they've been conned (their real fish is actually a rubber fish stuffed with water balloons to give it weight and form). Then team members take turns tossing and catching the fish from a challenging distance, with those dropping the fish having to



wear a clown's rubber nose and glasses throughout the remainder of the class. This exercise highlights all four concepts: **PLAY, MAKE THEIR DAY, CHOOSE YOUR**

ATTITUDE, BE THERE)

After having fun with the toss and catch, and celebrating the successful teams, participants play musical chairs to the sound of reggae music. This energy-filled activity has participants rhythmically moving around the chairs and laughing when the music stops and a chair is missing. A little competition is created and becomes the highlight of the session. Questions and statements based on the FISH! Workbook and video are taped to the back of a few chairs. Whoever sits in a chair that has a question or statement on it must respond appropriately. Those who could not find a seat are required to operate the CD player boom box for the next round of musical chairs. The eventual winner of

musical chairs is celebrated and receives a prize. At the end of the activity participants are randomly asked about the class experience, the (4) learning points of FISH!, and specifically what they would do to promote the FISH! Philosophy in their work environment.

Editor's Note: The FISH! Philosophy originated with filmmaker, psychologist, MBA professor, business consultant and motivational speaker, Stephen Lundin. He was inspired by observing a group of employees at Seattle's Pike Place Fish Market (see website at www.pikeplacefish.com).

Excited by their ability to bring fun, passion, focus and commitment to a job others would have thought tedious, boring, noisy and stressful, Lundin documented their working day on film. While editing the footage, he studied and analyzed their behavior, arriving at the FISH! philosophy — learn to love what you do, even if, at the moment, you may not be doing exactly what you love.

Following the phenomenon of the best selling FISH! books and videos, FISH! 'Camps' (or workshops) have become a worldwide success as they assist leaders, managers, teams and individuals, across all industries and levels of management, learn practical tips, discuss real-life examples and experience hands-on exercises that teach them how to create a more rewarding workplace. More information about FISH! books, films and training is available from Chart House Learning at <http://www.charthouse.com/> or by phone at 800-328-3789.

I had seen messages on the CLENE Discussion List about libraries that also had staff engaged by the FISH! Philosophy and contacted them to see if they would be willing to share specifics with CLENExchange readers. Feel free to contact Anne Masters, Associate Director for Training and System Services at Pioneer Library System (OK) at amasters@pls.lib.ok.us and/or Karen Wilber, Continuing Education Coordinator at Tampa Bay (FL) Library Consortium at wilberk@tblc.org.



Internet Resources for Trainers

by Gail McGovern, CLENExchange Editor (gmcgovern@macnexus.org)

Computer Help for Senior Library Users

(<http://www.multcolib.org/seniors/tutor.html>)

Multnomah County Library has simple tutorials and the article, *Surf's Up for Seniors*, is an example of the information you can find about computer training from **Computers In Libraries**, (<http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/sep00/puacz&bradfield.htm>)

Current Clips (<http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/clips>)

This joint project of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and the Library and Information Science Library, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign offers free easy-to-read summaries of key recent publications aimed at librarians.

Effective Meetings

(<http://www.effectivemeetings.com>)

Articles, guidelines and tips for making your meetings more effective.

Library Education

Educating Tomorrow's Information Professionals Today (<http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/jul02/tenopir.htm>)

This **Searcher: The Magazine for Database Professionals** article will make you aware of both its topic and this on-line magazine site you might wish to visit for continuing education updates.

Library Instruction Teaching Tips

(<http://www3.baylor.edu/LIRT/brochures.html>)

You can download pdf brochures created by the Library Instruction Round Table (LIRT) Research Committee on 4 topics: classroom management, materials, presentation skills and technology.

Library Instruction Tutorials

(<http://www3.baylor.edu/LIRT/lirtproj.html>)

Also from LIRT, this page includes links to web based library instruction tutorials.

Library Staff Development Programs: Key Components (http://www.arl.org/olms/staffdev/key_components.html)

This feature at the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) site provides help in defining successful staff development programs and how to identify best practices using seven key characteristics.

Museum Marketing Tips

(<http://www.museummarketingtips.com>)

Even though this site is aimed at museums, there is a wealth of information that relates just as well to libraries.

Planning Effective Training Events

(<http://www2.edc.org/NTP/trainingdesign.htm>)

From the National Training Partnership Clearinghouse, this site outlines an eight-step model for designing an effective training event that meets the needs of participants and trainers alike.

Training Games

(<http://web10.eppg.com/training/toolchest/games.html>)

McGraw Hill offers samples from its best selling books of openers, icebreakers, closers, energizers and leadership activities.

Training Tips

(<http://www.bobpikegroup.com/support/free/ttarchiv.html>)

Well known training consultant and frequent speaker at American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) conferences, Bob Pike, shares articles on a variety of training topics.

Editor's Note:

*Information about many of these websites was posted on the **CLENE Discussion List**. If you are not a subscriber yet, find out how to sign up free at (<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/rtables/clene/discussionlist.html>).*

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New Children's Services Training Manual

Completely Revised and Still an Invaluable Tool!

by Gail McGovern, *CLENExchange* Editor (gmcgovern@macnexus.org)



During my over 20 years of administering Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grants as a library consultant at the California State Library, I saw many wonderful programs fade away not long after project funding ended. So, I was amazed and thrilled to hear that one product of a 1982 California LSCA grant, the North State Cooperative Library System's **Children's Services Correspondence Course** had not only evolved into a training manual, but also had been completely revised in 2002 and was still in demand in 2003!

The training manual evolved as a result of a grant for the production of a children's services correspondence course and was published by project director, Susan Peterson in 1983. In 1985, the course was revised under the direction of CLENE activist, Marie Bryan. Next, Lynn Eisenhut, Coordinator of Children's Services at Orange County (CA) re-edited the content for revisions published in 1992 and 1997. In 1997, the name of the course was changed to **Children's Services Training Manual**.

Dedicated to Effie Lee Morris, San Francisco Public Library's first Coordinator of Children's Services and the first African American to be elected President of the Public Library Association, the 2002 Manual was edited by Cheryl Cruse and Michael Cart. It is designed for 1) those who have little or no background, training or experience in the field of children's library work (e.g. paraprofessionals, clerical staff, volunteers, and parents as well as librarians who have specialized

in other areas of library service) and 2) those who currently work with children, but do not have access to other sources of continuing education.

The 417 pages are presented in an attractive and practical looseleaf binder format. The content is divided into ten chapters, each of which have their own table of contents, worksheets, bibliographies, etc. can be used as a single class unit and/or as an in-depth course. The chapters cover the following topics: Public Library Service to Children, History of Children's Literature, Collection Development, Service to Different Age Levels, Children's Library Reference Service, Reader's Advisory, Booktalking and School Visits, Storytelling and Storytime, Services to Multicultural Populations, Programming and Children's Library Services and the Internet.

When the 1997 edition was published, then CLENE-Exchange editor, Marie Bryan, wrote, "Over the past 15 years, hundreds of libraries in the United States and other countries have utilized the Manual as a staff training resource. We hope that this new edition of the Manual will be of interest to you and your library staff." Her editor's note added: "I have a soft spot in my heart for this training tool, since I spent hundreds of hours on its development and revision. I'm glad to see that others find it useful enough to have it stay in print for 15 years!"

And now another five years have passed bringing updated information for the 21st century and time-tested quality!

The manual is \$50 (US) if prepaid; \$60 (US) if billing or an invoice is required. The manual may be purchased by contacting Brenda Stanbery, North State Cooperative Library System, 259 North Villa Avenue, Willows, CA 95988
e-mail: bstan@glenncounty.net
phone: (530) 934-2173
fax: (530) 934-7156

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ence services.

All conclude that the traditional reference skills of welcoming, clarifying, instructing, evaluating and citing sources, and following-up on patron satisfaction are essential for effective virtual reference. They are learning that each skill has a new context in the on-line environment, where there are no visual or verbal cues to the patron's reaction. The challenges are to overcome the limitations imposed by chat communication and to harness the power of interactive, point-of-need reference service.

Just as our personal experiences as library users inform our face-to-face reference skills, our experiences as users of virtual reference will build our capacity to provide this new service. For library staff planning and implementing virtual reference, Anytime, Anywhere Answers provides resources and activities to explore, practice and reflect on the skills they need.

If you want to check out the Web site for Anytime, Anywhere Answers, the URL and password can be obtained from the VRS project coordinator, Buff Hirko. She can be reached by phone at 360-704-5206 or e-mail at bhirko@secstate.wa.gov.

CLENE Publications



Still Available for Sale

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Program Planning | \$15.00 |
| Workshop Evaluation | \$ 6.00 |
| Focus Group Interview Manual | \$10.00 |
| Self Assessment Guide For Children's Services | \$11.00 |

To order, contact:

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