

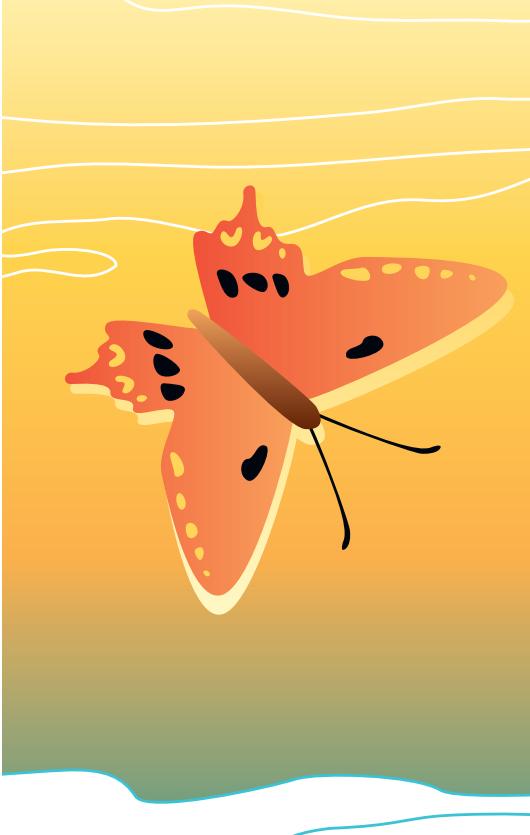
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PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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Cataloging Kudos and Questions

Myung Gi Sung wrote a fine article in *Public Libraries* ("Increasing Technical Services Efficiency to Eliminate Cataloging Backlogs," Nov./Dec. 2004). I also inherited a big backlog when I started my last job and congratulate Sung for having licked hers.

I liked Sung's approach very much. It showed a great mix of common sense, careful study, and the use of existing resources, while at the same time keeping the big picture firmly in mind. I particularly appreciated her comments on cooperation. A backlog, really, is not just a technical services problem, but one for the whole library. Library cooperation is tricky business and hard to achieve.

Reading Sung's article taught me something new. She seems to have parallel processing streams for adult and youth services materials. Having only worked in academic libraries, it had not occurred to me that this would be the case. I am wondering if this way of doing things is a general practice of public libraries. If not all do it, why not?

Also, since I know from experience that staff members can be leery of a big project like Sung's, convincing them and motivating them are particularly important. She mentions the importance of recognition and I agree, but she must have done something else that she was too modest to mention in the article. The staff may have done the work, but it is the manager who gave the impetus and leadership over time for it to get done.

Congratulations on a job well done and a fine article.—*Christian Boissonas, retired Head of Central Technical Services, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.*

The Author Responds

I should qualify my response by stating that I have worked in only three public libraries. However, from my experience and observation, I would say that parallel processing streams for adult and youth services materials is *not* the general practice in public libraries. The reason for this is that few public libraries (other than the large ones) meet the two basic requirements for parallel processing streams.¹ First, the volume of adult and youth services materials must be large enough to allow for having concurrent operations and also keep the staff busy. Second, there must be stability in the volume of adult and youth services materials and in staff attendance.

However, most public libraries have parallel processing streams for fiction and nonfiction materials, or book and audio-visual materials due to the larger volume of these materials as a whole.—*Myung Gi Sung, Technical Services Manager, St. Charles (Ill.) Public Library District*

Note

1. 7,179 of 9,133 U.S. public libraries serve populations fewer than 25,000 (*Statistical Report 2004 Public Library Data Service* (Chicago: PLA, 2004)).

Raves for Readers Advisory

Thank you for the Jan./Feb. 2005 issue focusing on readers advisory. It is quite simply the most useful, relevant, and practical issue of any journal I've read. From start to finish, it was a joyous learning experience. You have encouraged and motivated this reluctant readers advisor. Read on!—*Shawna Thorup, Reference and Cultural Services Supervisor, Torrance (Calif.) Public Library*.

Public Libraries encourages letters to the editor. Letters are used on a space-available basis and may be excerpted. Preference will be given to letters that address issues raised by the magazine. Acceptance is at the editor's discretion. Send to Renée Vaillancourt McGrath, 39 Stevi Cutoff Rd. W., Ste. C, Stevensville, MT 59870; publiclibraries@aol.com.

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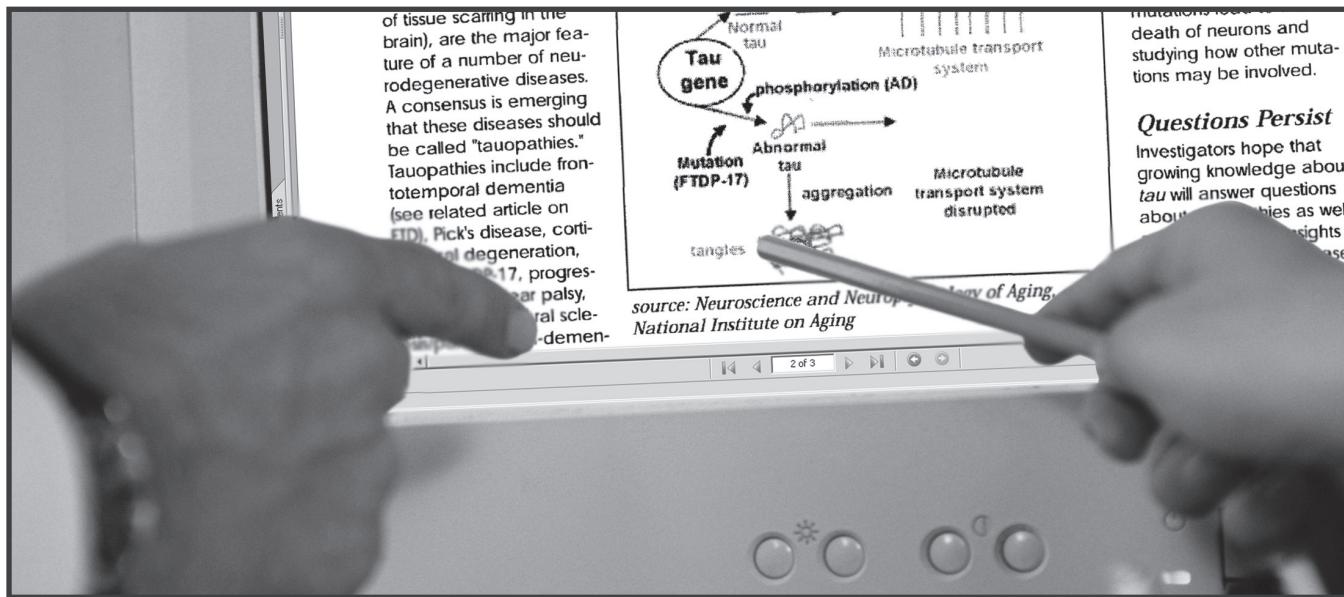
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I graduated from library school in 1993. This is significant, because it was a few years before Internet use became widespread. In library school, I learned how to take apart a computer (an exercise designed to make us less afraid to use the technology) and create organizational databases, but I didn't create a Web site, blog, or even use e-mail.

Although I have now been a librarian for twelve years, at age thirty-five, I am still one of the younger members of our profession. When PLA launched its blog (www.plablog.org) at the ALA Midwinter Meeting in January, nearly all of the bloggers were younger than I am. These post-Internet-trained librarians appear to embrace technology in a way that their elders (most of us in the profession) do not. Not only do they tend to be less afraid of new technologies, but also they seem to be quicker to recognize their benefits and applications to librarianship.

As a freelance editor of professional library books (separate from my work on *Public Libraries*) I acquire titles that could be grouped into two distinct categories: things that people know they need to know, and things that people need to know, but don't yet know they need to know. The latter are a harder sell, but I believe they have a greater impact on the profession.

Often these titles focus on technology and its applications in libraries. There is a core group of Internet-savvy librarians

[Professional library books can] be grouped into two distinct categories: things that people know they need to know, and things that people need to know, but don't yet know they need to know. The latter are a harder sell, but . . . have a greater impact on the profession.

who will seize on these books (or perhaps don't really need these books, because they've already figured it out on their own—probably online) and then there are the rest of us . . . who either feel like we probably should learn about these things, but we don't have the time, they're too complicated, and so on; or we don't think we need to learn about these things because our patrons aren't coming in asking about blogs and wikis.

These librarians remind me of my mother. She resisted getting a computer for years because she didn't see the need for e-mail. She was content to use the telephone and U.S. Postal Service for communication. Now that we've finally got her online, she can't go a day without checking her e-mail when she comes to visit. She brings along her thirty-five-millimeter, point-and-shoot

BiblioTech: Things You Need to Know

Renée Vaillancourt McGrath
Features Editor



camera and takes hundreds of photos of my daughter on her trips. She spends a fortune on film, and many of her photos don't come out the way that she'd like. Yet, she doesn't see the need for a digital camera. (My brother bought her one for Christmas, anyway.)

Unfortunately, what we don't know *can* hurt us. Many of the technological advances that have come about in the past decade have improved the ability to communicate and share information. This is precisely what libraries are all about. It is imperative that we take advantage of all of the tools available to provide the highest level of service to our customers.

I am, by no means, an early adopter. I'm a post-Internet-trained librarian myself, and I admit to feeling out of my league when I hear new technology terms that I'm not familiar with. Much of my education in this area has come from reading the Tech Talk and Internet Spotlight columns in *Public Libraries*, and in talking to my Internet-savvy friends.

But I am energized when I read and hear about technological developments because I can see how blogs, RSS feeds, news aggregators, password managers, adblockers, URL shrinkers, social networking tools, and wikis can make librarians' and patrons' lives easier. If any of these terms don't sound familiar to you, start by rereading the Tech Talk and Internet Spotlight columns in the last few issues of *Public Libraries*. These columns are always written in accessible language for the technologically unsophisticated librarian and present much valuable information.

The longer that we drag our feet about converting to a digital camera, the more money we waste on film. And if we refuse to keep up with the latest technological advances and adapt them to their greatest advantage in our libraries, our patrons will hear about them elsewhere and have less incentive to come to us with their information questions. If you're in a small library, with a limited technology budget, the incentive is even higher to educate yourself about these issues because the Internet can provide resources that your library may not be able to otherwise afford. (See this issue's Perspectives column for more on small and rural libraries.)

If you've been putting off learning more about the latest technology, now is the time to get online. Like my mother, I think you'll find that you don't know how you survived without it. ■

Renée Vaillancourt McGrath

Written March 2004. Renée Vaillancourt McGrath is currently reading *Emotional Alchemy* by Tara Bennet-Goleman. She highly recommends *Keeping Current: Advanced Internet Strategies to Meet Librarian and Patron Needs* by Steven M. Cohen.

Many of our users think learning to read begins when a child enters school. We know that learning to read is an active process that begins at birth. We can all be excited by the increasing numbers of public libraries that are reaching out to families with young children to actively support early learning and early literacy.

From Baltimore to San Jose, public libraries are using early literacy research and staff resourcefulness to transform library spaces into dynamic learning centers with a rich environment that focuses on developing literacy in young children. We are institutionalizing the concept of the library as an early literacy center as we incorporate early literacy principles into library buildings. We are more visibly establishing ourselves as leaders in this field and using this role to dispel some outdated stereotypes sometimes associated with public libraries.

Research clearly suggests the types of experiences that help young children become successful readers. It's also clear that these practices are absent from the homes of many children during their preschool years. Public libraries are uniquely positioned to help young children learn crucial early literacy skills. We interact with parents and caregivers in the years before children enter kindergarten classrooms, whether it's in our facilities or through outreach efforts. This gives us repeated opportunities to equip parents and caregivers with knowledge and skills that can help children get ready to read.

Taking that a step forward, public libraries are now translating research findings about early literacy into exciting physical spaces where families can engage in early literacy experiences. When we renovated and expanded the West Bloomfield (Mich.) Main Library and branch several years ago, we used information from early childhood researchers along with input from parents and educators to design highly interactive youth spaces. Our youth services rooms incorporate developmentally appropriate features and activities that facilitate a wide spectrum of learning and growth in young children, including language development, cognitive skills, dramatic play, creativity and artistic expression, problem-solving, and social and emotional growth.

Other libraries are opening or planning similar spaces. The Tully Community branch of the San Jose (Calif.) Public Library opened in January 2005 with a Family Learning Center that incorporates collections and programming for family literacy and lifelong learning. The King County Library System in Issaquah, Washington, will build, replace, expand or renovate forty-three buildings during the next ten years. The building program for each project will incorporate early literacy principles and the resulting space will promote, model, and reinforce early literacy skills.

This summer, the Norfolk (Va.) Public Library begins construction on a regional branch library that will include a 10,000-square-foot Children's Library and Learning Center. The space

Libraries As Early Literacy Centers

Clara N. Bohrer



will house a training and activity room for literacy workshops and experiences, areas with developmentally appropriate activities and toys in four age groupings, and computer stations where parents can sit with their children and play educational games.

Other libraries are reinventing and reenergizing youth services space to provide a more effective early literacy environment. The Baltimore County (Md.) Public Library is creating an Early Literacy Activity Center at six libraries that serve preschoolers at risk of not entering school with critical pre-reading skills. Each center will offer interactive experiences that help stimulate cognitive development, teach pre-reading skills like print awareness and phonological sensitivity, instill a love for reading, and show how parents and caregivers can interact with children to develop reading readiness. By the end of 2007, all branches of the Phoenix (Ariz.) Public Library will have interactive

learning spaces where families can engage in early literacy activities.

The success of these initiatives is tied to the expertise of staff that plan, implement, evaluate, and enhance early literacy spaces and programs. That's why we see more and more librarians around the country participating in PLA's Every Child Ready To Read® training, which focuses on how to provide parents and caregivers with information needed to develop the skills children need to be ready to read. In West Bloomfield, we recently hired a certified early childhood specialist and a reading recovery specialist—who also happens to have an MLS. Other libraries, including the Multnomah County Library in Portland, Oregon, have used similar positions for many years to direct highly successful early childhood outreach programs.

The Phoenix Public Library trains volunteers as early literacy coaches to help parents understand the most optimal ways to use interactive learning stations. Phoenix is also partnering with Arizona State University to use college interns in the library's early literacy programs. In West Bloomfield, we have partnered with local school districts to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of engaging in literacy activities at the library before children reach school. This has dramatically increased our visibility, building usage, and circulation, and further positioned the library as an early literacy center.

The public library is a great place for young children to get ready to read. We must continually reinforce that message. First, we need to do all that we can to create active and exciting learning environments where families or caregivers with young children can engage in meaningful early literacy experiences right in their neighborhood. When you think about it, where else can a parent or caregiver go to get such a rich experience for babies, toddlers and preschoolers? What other institution or organization is as accessible as a public library and combines professionals with expertise in early childhood development and literacy with an environment designed for young families? Public libraries stand alone in their capabilities.

Next we need to tell parents, caregivers, educators, com-
continued on page 132

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Got ACCESS?

Turning a Library's Loss into a Community's Gain

Diane Huerkamp

In August 2002 the Mooresville (Ind.) Public Library (MPL) was notified that one-third of our patron base would be forced to purchase an annual state Public Library Access Card (PLAC) for \$26 to continue to receive our services. What to do? The announcement of an annual fee brought out a public outcry. However, in 2003, that initial outcry was quieted by a marketing and public information campaign that made the charge not only acceptable, but also popular. So popular in fact, that we have expanded the program this year.

Our county is serviced by two library systems, Morgan County Public Library (MCPL), which serves thirteen of the fourteen townships, and Mooresville Public Library (MPL), which serves the town of Mooresville and Brown Township. As separate entities, supported by different taxing units, the libraries faced different budget challenges. For a decade, however, reciprocal borrowing had allowed any county resident to use either library system. In December 2002 MCPL rescinded the agreement due to funding issues. At that time, 34 percent of MPL patrons were reciprocal borrowers who lived within the MCPL service area. These patrons accounted for nearly 33 percent of the total circulation at MPL. MPL is a primary library service point for the northern part of Morgan County. The library needed to salvage goodwill and assuage the resentment from the disenfranchised reciprocal borrowers. We needed to raise the profile of the library in a positive manner within the Mooresville community to attract more patrons from within the district and to reestablish our reciprocal patronage.

We immediately stepped into action, acknowledging that these patrons would need to purchase a PLAC for the \$26 annual fee. However, we wondered why patrons would be willing to pay for services they had previously received without fees. We were aware that patrons had grown accustomed to our convenient location, state-of-the-art technology, and the customer service our staff provided. We realized that our library card had to offer additional value. We reinvented our library card with a "Got ACCESS?" campaign to ensure the community that MPL had many resources and services to offer. We also worked with local community businesses, industries, and retailers for help in making the charge palatable to our patrons.

Moreover, the state-issued PLAC would provide access at any public library in Indiana for one year.

Our first objective was to attract adult nonusers, increase new registration by 10 percent, and increase local library district circulation by 25 percent. These objectives used target mailings, concerted efforts within the library with visiting patrons, ads, and other promotional materials. We began mailing more than three thousand letters to registered reciprocal borrowers to inform them of the opportunity of continuing their patronage by purchasing a PLAC or by volunteering at the library for two hours per week. Information was also included about the other benefits of the "Got ACCESS?" campaign.

Our second objective was to extend services to all public and private K-12 students in the area, regardless of library district residency. Our goal was to put a library card in the hands of every child to create lifelong library users and lifelong learners. MPL enlisted the support of TOA (USA) ILL (www.toaweb.co.jp/us_html/usa_loca.htm), a leading provider of automotive parts and stamping services, which funded key tags for all students from the six participating elementary schools, redesigning the "Got ACCESS?" card into a clip-on for book bags and backpacks. Bank One and Citizens Bank provided additional funding. Their generous contributions were used to purchase Scholastic books, which became the incentives for the students to carry their library cards.

The Mooresville Consolidated School Corporation and the Mooresville Christian Academy supported our efforts by allowing MPL to visit and promote the student "Got ACCESS?" campaign within the schools. Librarians made three announced visits during the school year to each of the six elementary schools and provided free books to each student showing the "Got ACCESS?" card. The book giveaway program was announced two weeks before a visit, ensuring that students who did not have the student "Got ACCESS?" library card would have ample time to visit the library and register. When the library collaborated with schools and corporations, everyone was a winner: the students got a free book and a free "Got ACCESS?" card, the companies funding the books received additional advertising (each book had an imprinted bookplate inside), and we all received media coverage.

Our third objective was to raise the profile of the library within the business community by creating partnership opportunities beyond the usual "summer reading program" sponsorship model. Our goal was to offer merchants additional advertising opportunities within our library's environment via the library kiosk in the local Marsh supermarket, our Web site, and monthly newsletters, in exchange for providing discounts to customers who presented the MPL "Got ACCESS?" library card. This was the "added value" we were seeking to reestablish our reciprocal patron base. It also paved the way for future partnership opportunities.

The fourth and final goal was to provide an incentive to our loyal out-of-district and disenfranchised patrons who now would need to "purchase" library services. Developing partnerships with area merchants enabled the library to boost patron interest in the new "Got ACCESS?" cards by offering discounts at participating retailers. This made purchasing the PLAC seem less of a financial burden, and more of a "free pass" to great deals in the community. For example, signs and ads appeared in the local papers with the headline "ACCESS Savings" with lines declaring "Show your MPL 'Got ACCESS?' card here and get \$1 off any dry cleaning order" or "10 percent off any purchase." In addition to the ads, local papers ran stories about the

"Got ACCESS?" campaign highlighting the retailers involved, discounts offered, and public perception of the program. Local families, the school superintendent, and the manager of the local grocery store were featured in the ads that encouraged patrons to show the library "Got ACCESS?" card for merchant discounts and generated enthusiasm for the program (see figure

Sample Advertisement for the Got ACCESS? Campaign

The advertisement features a large title "GOT ACCESS ?" at the top. Below it is a black and white photograph of Curt Freeman, a man with a mustache wearing a suit, sitting at a desk and holding up a rectangular card with the "Got ACCESS?" logo on it. The text "Curt Freeman" is prominently displayed in large, bold letters above his photo, followed by "Superintendent of Mooresville Consolidated School Corporation". Below this, in large letters, is "HAS IT!". A section titled "Show your ACCESS Card at these participating merchants" lists various local businesses. At the bottom, it says "Mooresville Public Library 831-READ" and provides the website "www.mooresvillelib.org".

FIGURE 1

1). Merchants received free advertising and frequent exposure to library patrons through customized bookmarks, ads in the local papers, the library Web site, the library newsletter, and the library kiosk at the local Marsh supermarket.

This campaign proved so popular, we received letters from merchants thanking the library for the creative idea that increased their sales and brought the community closer. All twenty-four merchants who joined the inaugural program in 2003 renewed in 2004, and other retailers continue to join the program, with more than thirty now participating. Library patrons were also excited: circulation and floor traffic increased at the library and patrons remarked on the "great deals" they received when they showed their "Got ACCESS?" card.

More than 50 percent of students are using the program and benefits. The McDonald's in Mooresville noted that "Got ACCESS?" cardholders represented roughly 10 percent of the annual sales. While the library originally planned only to

Our objectives were met, but more importantly we formed a stronger relationship with our community, our schools, and the local merchants.

have one or two merchants participate per month, we discovered that merchants began asking for yearlong participation because of the increased traffic they received through the "Got ACCESS?" card program.

Our evaluation of the campaign's success was measured using our library's OPAC system. Our data showed circulation increased by 40.3 percent and new patron registration increased by 11.44 percent. Overall, the number of state PLACs sold to reciprocal patrons reflected an increase of 360 percent.

In 2004 the Indiana Library Federation named MPL "Outstanding Indiana Library." This award is given for outstanding library service, which consistently exceeds the expectations of the users and serves as an exemplary model for other libraries. The "Got ACCESS?" program became recognized as an excellent marketing campaign and has been simulated by at least one other Indiana library. Our objectives were met, but more importantly we formed a stronger relationship with our community, our schools, and the local merchants. Our mission is to provide library media materials and services that fulfill the professional, civic, and educational needs of Mooresville and Brown Township residents. The library is committed to supporting lifelong learning by serving as a center for self-education. By reaching out to our community, we are extending our services beyond our four walls and providing equitable ACCESS. ■

Diane Huerkamp is the Director of the Mooresville (Ind.) Public Library. She holds a Level V Indiana Librarian Certificate and is currently enrolled at Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis earning a B.S. in Liberal Arts; DianeH@mooresville.lib.in.us. She is currently reading *Ariel: The Restored Edition* by Sylvia Plath, *Gettysburg: A Novel of the Civil War* by Newt Gingrich, and *Accidental Happiness* by Jean Reynolds Page. Diane Huerkamp would like to thank Stephanie Westbrook, former Public Relations Manager with Sirsi Corporation, (www.sirsicom) for her assistance with this article.



What Does a Cable Car Ride Have to Do with Customer Service?

Patricia Belcastro

Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of words have been written about customer service: how to approach customers, what to say, how to say it, what to do, and when to do it. At this moment, there are probably hundreds of trained experts presenting day-long seminars to captive audiences of business and public service employees across the nation. As a former manager and administrator of a public service library, I was part of that attentive body. However, it was not until a recent visit to San Francisco as a tourist that I met a *natural* customer service master—a cable car brakeman.

What could a cable car brakeman possibly teach me that would equal the hundreds of hours of customer service training over my career? Everything! My short ride on his cable car illustrated the basics of customer service so clearly that I still remember the experience and marvel at its completeness. **Point one: I remember the experience more than the product.** If you have ever ridden the Powell-Hyde Cable Car Line in San Francisco, you know how stunning the view is as you look down to the San Francisco harbor from the top of the city's towering hills. It is a major reason people visiting San Francisco ride the cable car. One of the products the cable car system is selling you is that panorama of city sights and sounds while someone else (the cable car) takes you to your destination. Though I did delight in the views, I enjoyed—and remembered—my interaction with the cable car brakeman even more.

In public libraries, we deliver information in a multitude of forms and media, including books, DVDs, CDs, storytelling, magazines, newspapers, bestsellers, computer software, and more. That is our product, and we deliver it very well. We sometimes forget, however, that we truly are in the business of service, as well as information. Customer service is about ensuring that the patron or customer remembers his or her encounter with you as a pleasant experience. “The total customer experience—the service, the quality, the design, the brand attributes—connects on an emotional level, keeping customers satisfied and feeling well-served, as well as loyal.”¹ We could just deliver what the customer wants, the product, but without

that extra attention to providing an exceptional experience, we lose the opportunity to have a satisfied and loyal clientele.

My San Francisco customer experience started on a hot, late Sunday afternoon at Hyde Park near Fisherman’s Wharf. After an hour-long wait in a very long line (who knew that a cruise ship in the harbor could generate so many people for a cable car ride?), I was next in line to board the cable car. Since we were going to be riding up the hills, away from the Wharf, the prized spot was on the back platform with the brakeman for an unobstructed view of the harbor. People in front of me in line asked the brakeman of the car that would leave before mine if they could ride on the platform. With a snarl, he said no, that he needed the room to brake and did not want to be crowded. When my turn came with the next car and a different brakeman, my companions and I asked if we could ride with him. With a smile, he said, “Sure, just leave me room to maneuver the brake by staying outside the painted lines.”

With a smile, he had already made our day. And what had it cost him? He had set the parameters with which we were very happy to comply. Give him room to do his job, and we could have the great views that the back platform provided. And he did it graciously and with a smile, rather than as a grudging, “I’ll make an exception for you this once.” **Point two: If you can go beyond what is required, without harm to someone else, then why not give the customer that special attention?** And why not do it with a smile rather than a snarl? If you can leave the desk and take a patron to the stacks, or go out of your way to track down what the patron needs, do it. If a patron questions you, and it is not your responsibility for that type of question, go the extra step and find the person who does have the answer. If a patron is struggling with items, children, and bags, offer to help, even if normally you are not on the public floor, but just passing through. Do it with a smile and do it courteously. I guarantee your action will be remembered in a positive light long after the encounter.

What about the brakeman who did not want to be crowded by his customers? He could have at least made the experience a neutral one by not snarling his answer and making a joke about needing more room. It would have left a better impression on his hot and tired customers. There is a strong probability that they still enjoyed the ride, but that it was soured by their brakeman’s brusque attitude. Remember: The product is more than just the ride.

Once the cable car started its steep climb, I was captivated by the sights of the city and the magnificent harbor scenery spread out beneath my view. It was not long, however, before I started observing the brakeman and admiring his ease in dealing with customers.

He continually had to be alert to know when to apply the brake when the cable car stopped on the steep inclines, he checked tickets of passengers, he took money and made the correct change from passengers who were jumping on at stops along the way, and he watched the traffic on both sides of the cable car to ensure the safety of passengers jumping off to exit. He did it all with courtesy, gentleness, and good humor. **Point three: Learn to juggle the demands of your customers so that you handle their needs without neglecting anyone or forcing them to wait a long time.** If there are too many patrons at one time, then at the very least, acknowledge their presence and assure them that you will attend to them as soon as possible. Do it with a smile and courteous attention, and you will make your patrons feel recognized and valued. Again, your consideration will be remembered long after the patron leaves the library.

In between checking tickets and collecting fares, the brakeman returned to the platform to chat with us and other customers while he was braking. From his interactions, it was clear that he saw each of us as individuals. He talked, joked, and answered questions that he had most assuredly answered thousands of times before (Do you stop at Sutter Street? Where do I get off if I want to visit Chinatown? Where do I pick up the California Line?). At no time did he imply by attitude, voice, or inattention that anyone was bothering him, distracting him, or irritating him with their questions. By the ease and pleasure he exhibited in doing his job, he superbly demonstrated that *we were his job*. Point four: Each encounter with a patron is a "moment of truth" during which the quality of the experience determines satisfaction. "Every employee is a manager in a way. Each one controls the outcome of the moment of truth by having control over his or her behavior toward the customer."²

At the end of my ride, when I thanked the brakeman and exited the cable car, one of my companions exclaimed, "That was terrific. He really made the ride great!" The cable car ride, by itself, was a memorable experience; the brakeman took it to the next level and made it exceptional.

Libraries have a valuable product that we encourage people to use daily. The mechanisms we use to provide access to a wealth of information and materials are efficient and impressive, from ordering (acquisitions), organizing (cataloging and technical services), distributing (shelving and circulation services), and assisting (adult and children's reference services). Though we may do an excellent job of providing the product, what the patron will remember most is the personal interaction with each of us during those activities. "Customers don't believe what you tell them. They believe what you do. Behavior is genuine. It is the purest form of the expression of your intent,"

your priorities, and your feelings. No matter what language you use to describe your business and products, no matter what promises you make or how sincerely you tell customers you want their business, the truth about you will always emerge in how you act. You are how you behave."³

The next time you interact with a patron, I hope you will remember that natural master of customer service, my cable car brakeman. Just as he did, you have the ability to take the "ride" to the next level by enhancing the experience through your behavior. And like him, you have the ability to make it look effortless. ■

Patricia Belcastro is the former Deputy Director of the Rocky River (Ohio) Public Library. She is the author of *Evaluating Library Staff: A Performance Appraisal System* (ALA Editions, 1998); pbelcast@comcast.net. She is currently reading *Where the Truth Lies* by Rupert Holmes, an amazingly witty, sexy, and entertaining story of a mystery haunting a 1950s comedy-singing team, and *An Unpardonable Crime* by Andrew Taylor, in which Edgar Allan Poe's youthful years in England are the catalyst for a web of deceit, scandal, and romance in the 1820s. She also recommends The Reading Room (www.rrpl.org) for library staff-written critiques that link books to other authors and titles.

References

1. Jena McGregor, "Putting Customers First," *Fast Company* 87 (Oct. 2003): 79.
2. Harvey Goldblatt, "When Your Product Is a Service," *Pest Control* (Feb. 1, 1998): 16.
3. Terry Bacon, "You Are How You Behave: Customers Can't Be Fooled," *The Journal of Business Strategy* (July 1, 2004): 35.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

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munity leaders, funders, newspaper reporters, Friends, and the community at large that their local public library is the place where young children can begin to grow into proficient and prolific readers. We need to repeatedly tell our success stories—stories that illustrate how we have impacted lives in our community. As we show these outcomes of our service, we reinforce our value.

Parents of children from birth to age five have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to positively impact their children's literacy

skills. We can help parents and children make the most of these important years. Let's make our libraries *the* destination where parents, grandparents, caregivers, and educators bring young

Clara N. Bohrer, West Bloomfield Library, 4600 Walnut Lake Rd., West Bloomfield, MI 48323-2557; bohrercn@wblib.org. She is currently reading *Hot Kid* by Elmore Leonard, *Saturday* by Ian McEwan, and *In the Company of Liars* by David Ellis.

Goodbye Renée, et al.

The Public Library Association Board, the PLA staff, and the *Public Libraries* staff would like to say thank you and goodbye to Renée Vaillancourt McGrath. McGrath, who has served as features editor since 2000, is resigning her position with the conclusion of this volume year (the Nov./Dec. 2005 issue). She will be cutting back on her editorial work to focus more time and energy on raising her one-year-old daughter, Lucy.

During her tenure with the journal, McGrath instituted several new features, including new regular columns, an annual special issue devoted to one topic, and many other innovations. She has been lauded for revitalizing and mod-

ernizing the journal; interest in the journal, advertising, and subscriptions have thrived during her time at the helm.

In addition to McGrath's departure, Tech Talk columnist A. Paula Wilson is resigning with the conclusion of the volume year to focus more on work and family responsibilities, and Editorial Assistant and Book Talk contributing editor Brendan Dowling departed in May to pursue a career touring with Second City comedy troupe. Thanks Renée, Paula, and Brendan, and good luck—we'll miss you!

As PLA works to fill the features editor position, please send all journal-related correspondence to Kathleen Hughes, Public Libraries, 50 E. Huron, Chicago, IL 60611; khughes@ala.org.



Fargo Voters Approve Library Sales Tax

Fargo, North Dakota, citizens approved a Home Rule Charter Amendment for a half-cent library sales tax to fund new library facilities for their city, starting in January 2005 and slated to last eighteen months. Sixty-two percent of voters approved the tax, which was on the ballot as an amendment to the city's Home Rule Charter. It needed 60 percent approval to pass.

Over the eighteen-month tax period, this sales tax is expected to generate at least \$12 million dollars. These funds will allow Fargo to fund new library facilities and services to better meet the current and future needs of its citizens and surrounding communities. For this eighteen-month investment, the citizens of Fargo will get: a new 45,000-square-foot main downtown library, a 15,000-square-foot Southpointe branch library, a 2,500-square-foot north side branch library, 110,000 new books for adults and youth, 64 new computer and Internet stations, and 206 parking spaces. The Fargo Public Library's facilities master plan gives an outline of what facilities are required to meet the current and future needs of the city.

Planning is currently underway to organize a capital campaign committee to raise additional private funds in order to augment the sales tax revenue and offset some of the operating costs of the library's expansion plans.

For more information, visit **Fargo Public Library** (www.fargolibrary.org).

Rochester Public Library Embarks Upon Major Local History Digitizing Project

Substantial gifts to Rundel Library Foundation from the Gleason Foundation, the estate of Josephine Tait, and other individuals will allow Rochester (N.Y.) Public Library (RPL) to digitize over 1.5 million pages of its local history division's bound material. The purchase of a Kirtas Technologies APT BookScan 1200 system will not only make this effort possible, but will also earn RPL the distinction of being the first public library location to adopt revolutionary book digitizing technology. The acquisition of this system (bought in February 2005) is part of a three-year, \$500,000 digitization project recently launched by RPL.



"Tales from the Front" is a collection of news items and innovative ideas from libraries nationwide. Send submissions to the contributing editor, **Jennifer T. Ries-Taggart**, Director, Seymour Library, 161 East Avenue, Brockport, NY 14420; jtaggart@libraryweb.org.

Jennifer Ries-Taggart is currently reading *A Redbird Christmas* by Fannie Flagg, *Blackbird House* by Alice Hoffman, and *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* by Susanna Clarke.

RPL owns a large and significant collection of regional history materials, dating as far back as the early 1800s, that provide a unique window into the history of the city of Rochester, Monroe County and the Genesee Valley, as well as genealogy materials for both this area and New England. The fifty thousand items in the collection include city and suburban directories, scrapbooks, yearbooks, maps, catalogs, Civil War and World War I materials, and library, city, and county governance records. Much of the heavily utilized collection, which can currently only be accessed onsite at the library, is in such fragile condition that portions are in danger of being damaged beyond recovery, according to Larry Naukam, Local History Division Head. High-quality, digital versions of these documents will be archived and a special highly compressed PDF file will eventually be accessible through the RPL's Web site (www.libraryweb.org) and made available for free to anyone with a library card.

MLA Auction a Success

The Michigan Library Association (MLA) Auction Committee hosted three events last year—a silent auction, a live auction, and a raffle drawing.

In line with the auction theme "Life Is Just a Bowl of Cherries," bidders munched dried cherries while bidding on the silent auction's 205 lovely items. The resulting antioxidant rush resulted in fantastic bargains for bidders and an impressive profit for MLA member services.

The live auction lived up to its name, being a lively and convivial event for the hundreds of people in attendance. The auctioneer brought the crowd to a rowdy bidding war over eleven items. In total, the auctions netted almost \$11,000—the proceeds

of which benefit MLA member services.

One highlight of the live auction was the "Librarian on the Loose" action figure, which was accompanied by a photo album documenting her around-the-state tour, souvenirs, and a copy of *Book Lust* autographed by author and action figure model Nancy Pearl. The auction and publicity committees developed this promotion, in which the librarian action figure spent summer 2004 touring many fascinating Michigan towns and libraries.

On her journey, the librarian was photographed in many interesting locations, wearing a variety of fetching costumes, and finding herself in a variety of tight spots. Rumors of romance—and even marriage—followed her around the state as she promoted the upcoming MLA Conference. Many host libraries used the event within their own communities to promote library activities.

The librarian's visit to the Michigan library included a meeting with state librarian Christie Pearson Brandau, who was advised by the librarian, "If you want to be a good state librarian, try to dress a bit more conservatively. Those open-toed shoes are just a bit over the edge!" At the Bloomfield Township Public Library, she headlined as "Nancy and the Pearlettes," with three adult services librarians appropriately dressed and doing synchronized shushing.

The librarian also visited Noir Leather in Royal Oak in search of a new image. She



The "Librarian on the Loose" takes a canoe trip on the Grand River through Delta Township, home of the Delta Township District Library.

checked out the construction in the technical services department at the Baldwin Public Library in Birmingham, participated in the Woodward Dream Cruise, tried on jewelry at the Milford Township Library Store, visited the Shelby Gem Factory, had a cozy rendezvous on the porch of a Victorian dollhouse in Fremont, and sipped wine at Brandon Township Public Library . . . believe me, she gets around!

This unique promotion for the MLA Annual Conference was the brainchild of 2004 conference auction committee member Stephanie Perentesis of Michigan State University. Visit www.mla.lib.mi.us/test/development/conference/2004/auction.htm to see a selection of photos from her journey.

The real Nancy Pearl participated in the promotion by donating an autographed copy of *Book Lust* for inclusion in the fundraising auction. Pearl was presented with her own copy of the photo album and is reported to be delighted with her tour of the state and with the number of libraries that participated.

For more information, contact Kathleen Weessies at Michigan State University at weessie2@mail.lib.msu.edu.

Toledo–Lucas County Public Library Receives a New Book Hauler

The Toledo–Lucas County (Ohio) Public Library has received a new book hauler. A custom-built 2005 Chevrolet, the book hauler enhances the outreach services department's ability to take library materials directly to county residents unable to visit their neighborhood branch library. These services bring the world to homebound patrons and ensure high-quality library service for all community residents.

Offering a fundamentally new concept in outreach services, the book hauler carries approximately fifteen hundred library materials and can transport these items off the hauler and into any facility. This unique distinction from traditional bookmobile service



Toledo–Lucas County Public Library director Clyde Scoles and outreach services manager Pat Nigro check out the library's new book hauler.

provides patrons with limited physical abilities an opportunity to view a wide selection of materials.

The \$54,000 book hauler is made possible through a bequest from Dorothy Strouse to the Library Legacy Foundation. Strouse served as the director of the Lucas County Public Library system from 1929 to 1969. Under her guidance, the library first developed and implemented bookmobile service in 1937.

Library outreach services are available throughout Lucas County, offering free, monthly home delivery of library materials to those with disabilities that limit mobility. For more information, please call (419) 259-5315.

Among the speakers and workshop leaders participating were: Mark Winston, Rutgers University School of Communication, Information, and Library Studies, New Jersey; Ingrid Bethancourt, Newark (N.J.) Public Library; Allan M. Kleiman, Westfield (N.J.) Memorial Library; Salvatore Avila, Las Vegas (Nev.) Public Library; Fred Gittner, Queens Borough (N.Y.) Public Library; and Homa Naficy, Hartford (Conn.) Public Library. The Ocean County Library System staff, based in Toms River, were featured at several sessions, as they have been at New Jersey's forefront in establishing diversity priorities for their library system. The keynote speaker was noted deaf author and educator, Frank G. Bowe, Hofstra University in New York.

"What is different about this conference," said Peggy Cadigan, consultant with the New Jersey State Library, "is that all those who attended left with an action plan in the areas of staffing, training, outreach and collections. This conference is just the beginning here in New Jersey."

Based on conference evaluations, follow-up workshops and meetings will continue to give library staff members throughout New Jersey support, instruction, and direction. A Web site has already been established at www.infolink.org/diversity to provide statewide support.

The diversity initiative conference was sponsored by the New Jersey State Library, Infolink Regional Library Cooperative, Highlands Regional Library Cooperative, Rutgers University School of Communication, Information, and Library Studies, and John Wiley and Sons.

For further information contact Cheryl O'Connor, Infolink Region, (732) 752-7720, coConnor@infolink.org; or Peggy Cadigan, New York State Library, (609) 292-4161, pcadigan@njstatelib.org. ■



June 23–29
ALA Annual Conference
Chicago

September 19–23
PLA "Results" Boot Camp
Salt Lake City, Utah

2006

January 20–25
ALA Midwinter Meeting
San Antonio

March 21–25
PLA National Conference
Boston

N.J. Libraries Meet on Diversity Initiative

More than two hundred librarians and library staff members from throughout New Jersey met in Long Branch to begin a diversity initiative to transform the state's libraries. "The idea behind this conference," noted Cheryl O'Connor, executive director of the Infolink Regional Cooperative, "is to get libraries to jump start the process. We have assembled some of the best workshop leaders and speakers in this field for this training. With the changes in New Jersey's demographics affecting every community, it is essential to move forward quickly."



Small Is Beautiful

Nann Blaine Hilyard

The caption for a line drawing that I cut out of a library newsletter many years ago reads, "Good libraries create good communities. Good communities create good libraries."

The contributors of this issue's essays exemplify this slogan. Their libraries serve populations from five hundred to six thousand. The library's role as a community center is important to each, whether the library is in the mountains, on the prairies, or on an island.

Small libraries are actually the majority in the United States. According to *Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2004* (www.haplr-index.com) 4,013 of the 7,719 libraries serve populations of fewer than 10,000. What is it like to work in a town where everyone knows your name? Find out what these librarians are doing to share their passion for the profession.

Multi-Tasking? Must Be the Librarian!

Ann Paietta

Deep River (Conn.) Public Library; apaietta@att.net

As I stand over the plugged-up toilet, holding a plunger in my hand, I hear my name being called. It seems that a patron needs help with e-mail, and the computers are doing odd things. These are just a few tasks I face each day as the director of a small public library. Multi-tasking is just part of the job! One day I may meet our congressman in the morning and tell stories to preschoolers in the afternoon.

I began my professional career as an academic librarian. As medical libraries became my specialty, I always was concerned about the need to provide more health information to lay people. One boss told me that I would be committing professional suicide if I became involved with consumer health information. My desire to help patrons won out over the demand to publish

and write about the theoretical. I took a private-sector job with indirect public contact, giving human resources information to staff of subscribing companies. That wasn't enough. I knew I wanted to work directly with the public.

In 1999, I became director of the Deep River Public

Library in Deep River, Connecticut, population 4,600. Deep River is nestled in the Connecticut River valley. It has characteristic, small-town New England charm. Its commercial district has the grocery store, hardware store, barber shop, and so on, that draw shoppers from surrounding areas.

At my interview with the library board I felt very comfortable. Even though the pay was less than my previous jobs, I knew that having a job working to make a difference was much more important than money.

The Deep River library has a limited budget. It is supported by the town with the help of the Friends of the Library and donations. During my tenure, the town has increased its allocation to the library. The library is located in a beautiful old house built in 1881 and was purchased by the Deep River Library Association in the 1930s. In 1995 the library was remodeled and a new addition was built. This project added an elevator, community room, children's area, and more stack space. People often don't realize that there is even an addition because of how well it blends in with the original structure. Recently a ghost hunter spoke at the library and during a walk-through, informed us that we have two ghosts living in the old kitchen.

At thirty-two hours per week, I am considered a full-time employee. The other five staff members work from eight to twenty hours per week. We rely on volunteers to assist at the circulation desk and shelve materials. Often I come in when the library is closed to write reports, order materials, read the mail, plan programs, research funding possibilities, and so on. The phone still rings and people knock on the door—they know I'm there! Patrons never seem to know library hours or that it takes time before a book reaches the shelf.

Public libraries must now offer so much more than books, and Deep River is no exception. We offer a window into the world. We provide homebound delivery service. The coffee pot is always on, and a cup is complementary. Our community room is constantly used by local groups. Planning programs is great fun (though I'm frustrated when attendance doesn't meet my expectation).

Computers and technology create the most headaches for me. I must first try to fix the problem myself. If I can't take care of the problem, then I must call an outside company. I have discovered that rebooting cures many a problem. If people can't decipher library hours then it is a losing battle to stress our few computer rules. I spend a great deal of time dealing with patrons whose Web-based e-mail accounts are acting up.

The phrase "jack of all trades but a master of none" could be rewritten "jack of all trades and expected to be a master of all" for those of us who have chosen to work in small public libraries.

2.3 Persons Per Square Mile

Susan Polumsky

Director, Wallowa County Library
Enterprise, Oregon; wclib@eoni.com

The Wallowa County Library is located in rural northeastern Oregon, bordered by Washington and Idaho. The county is home to Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, Wallowa Lake, and the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area. Wallowa County covers 3,150 square miles with a population of 7,250 residents.



Deep River Public Library

With 2.3 persons per square mile, transportation and isolation are main issues for county residents. The nearest freeway is sixty-five miles away. The former timber-based economy now struggles with consistently high unemployment rates along with 14 percent of the population having incomes below the state's average poverty levels.

I am the only full-time library employee. The main library is in Enterprise. The branches are in Troy and Imnaha, with a combined population of 121. The branches are open eight hours per week with part-time staff. They are housed in the one-room schools that serve grades K-6. The road to Troy resembles a goat trail full of snaking curves that descends down an unpaved steep hillside, where sheer cliffs drop off into deep canyon bottoms. Each week the local garbage truck hauls books from the county library to the branch site.

Despite unemployment and rural isolation, people choose to live in Wallowa County because of the quality of life. I'm one of those people! Working in a small library has many benefits and allows for community involvement. Programs and services target community needs and issues allowing the library to be a valuable community resource. I serve on boards for Healthy Start, Building Healthy Families, Tuition Assistance for Preschool, and S.M.A.R.T. (Start Making a Reader Today). I'm also an active member of the Early Childhood Committee. Community involvement allows the library to better serve the population and help to address their needs.

In 2001 we received a \$32,000 grant from the National Library of Medicine. The branch libraries got new computers and access to the latest medical and health information. Three years later we can report that access to these computers and medical information makes a positive difference to patrons when they are facing a diagnosis. Instant access to information helps people understand their conditions and learn about the latest treatments. Anxiety is greatly reduced as knowledge is gained. Our NLM grant led to being named the winner of the PLA/EBSCO Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Libraries Service Award in 2002.

In 1995 we started a community partnership with Child Care Resource and Referral. There was a concern that local day-care children were not receiving library services because it was impossible for childcare providers to transport children to the library. We created a program called Training Wheels, which supports emergent literacy for children and teaches caregivers the importance of early learning environments for kindergarten readiness and school success.

This partnership has resulted in 100 percent of registered family day-care homes participating in free programming and resources that include story times with books, music, and activities; children's books; rotating literacy box collections; educational toys; parent and caregiver training; resource libraries; and ready-to-learn science, math, and nature kits. In a recent four-month period, 190 story times were presented along with 1,200 free books to child care sites, the local food bank, schools, city libraries, and agencies that serve children.

Training Wheels received two Outstanding Ready to Read Grant Awards (1995-1996 and 2002-2003) from the Oregon State Library for excellence in library services for children. The library has played a role in Wallowa County third graders



Wallowa County Library

testing number one in the state in meeting reading standards for the last two years. Training Wheels has also served as a model for programs in surrounding counties. Currently the Early Literacy and Learning League is a multi-county partnership among five neighboring counties that have replicated the Training Wheels services.

Deliver-Me-A-Book! is a new outreach program developed by the library. Modeled after the Training Wheels program, Deliver-Me-A-Book! offers services to the homebound and elderly who cannot access existing library sources. In a pilot program last year targeting Meals on Wheels' clients and an assisted living home, the program delivered more than fourteen hundred books to forty-six patrons. An Oregon State Library Services and Technology Grant will expand the program in the coming year by updating the existing collection of large print materials along with identifying new patrons.

Support from the local community has played a key role in the library's success. The building where the library is housed was donated by the Jaycees, and volunteer community members renovated the outside of the building. Other local service groups and organizations have contributed library shelving, free children's books, and start-up funds for Deliver-Me-A-Book!

Working in a small, rural library allows me to see firsthand the impact that quality library services and programs have on people and community members in improving their lives.

Sometimes Small Is Better

Jo Nell Castellani

Director, Chadwick (Ill.) Public Library;
jonellc@chadwicklibrary.org

In my town of Chadwick, Illinois, "small" means 550 people in the village and 1,212 in the district. "Small" means having one stop light in the whole county, right by the only McDonald's, oddly enough. There are no such things as traffic jams, long check-out lines at the grocery store, reliable cell phone service, or cable TV access for more than a third of the residents. An exciting night in Chadwick is having your favorite author's newest book to read—one of the reasons why it's fun to be the town librarian!

Chadwick has had a library since 1937 and built the new building in 1994. In a small town like this, emotions and opinions run very strong so it was quite a feat for a dedicated group of people to convince the frugal taxpayers that the town needed a good building to house the library. After years of putting up with leaky roofs and cramped quarters, Chadwick "opened the doors in '94," and the present library was born.

Living in our delightful little town is like time-traveling back a few decades. It's safe to walk home from the library after dark, children say "thank you" at Halloween, and if you lock your keys in your car, the shopkeeper will take you home to get your keys without having to lock his store. The townspeople identify newcomers by the names of the people who used to live in their house. "Oh, they live in Jane Doe's



Chadwick Public Library

old house," they say. Instantly the new people are bonded to Chadwick with lovely ties of tradition.

The library comes as close to being a community center as there is in Chadwick, and frequently the librarian is the town chronicler. The overworked catch phrase, networking, must have originated in small towns like ours where someone is sure to offer exactly what someone else needs. Books and magazines from private collections are loaned back and forth to supplement the library's collection, and the people's innate generosity is expressed in the large number of donations made to the library. Everyone shares.

Our tiny town is right in the middle of rich farmland so the library cannot avoid being swept along with the cycle of the seasons. Gate count is an accurate indicator of the time of year because when fields need to be planted or crops harvested, the librarian can be fairly sure that she'll have plenty of time to catch up on all the little details she has had to let go during the busier times. I assumed the directorship during the summer reading program—a really hectic time, as every librarian knows. Once school started and harvesting began, the steady stream of people through the library doors slowed and I felt as though I had been abandoned by every patron in Chadwick. It took a bit to get used to the natural ebb and flow of things.

Even though I've been here more than a year, I recently forgot to take the season into account when I scheduled a big project at the library. My board of trustees and I decided on an October date to rearrange the library furnishings and computers, a task sure to entail a lot of lifting, moving, and reconnecting. As the time drew near, we realized that most of the men were going to be picking beans or corn that Saturday and wouldn't be able to help. I had made a potentially costly error in timing, but fortunately I had enough trustees and friends of the library who were not involved in farming or could spare a few hours to make the move a success.

Typical of very small towns everywhere, Chadwick was made up originally of a group of farming families who lived beside one another, built homes and schools together, and eventually married into one another's families. Everybody knows who married whom and when they did it—except for the librarian whose eyes glaze over when lifelong Chadwickians try to explain the relationships. As the director, I have the chance to hear the stories and tales of when the town was booming. Listening to the memories, I can smell the cotton candy and hear the sound of the Ferris wheel when the fair used to come to town. I can shop at the three grocery stores that used to line Main Street, and I can watch a movie at the theatre or stay in the big hotel downtown. Though all these places have long since gone out of business, they are alive in the memories and hearts of my patrons and, therefore, in me.

If I were asked to choose the most remarkable aspect of being the director of a very small public library, it would have to be the way the people of the town feel about their library. It is indeed "their" library, and they work very hard to improve it. I am usually the only compensated employee at the library during the week, but I'm rarely the only one working. My patrons will pop into the library to shelve books, straighten shelves, help with circulation duties, or plan programs "just for fun." I may be the only one paid to be at the library, but I'm certainly not the only person who takes responsibility for what happens here.

To crudely paraphrase an inspiring ideal, my patrons don't ask what their library can do for them, but what they can do for their library, and how soon they can do it.

The PLA/EBSCO Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award

The Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award has been presented since 1992. It is sponsored by the Public Library Association and EBSCO Subscription Services. The award recognizes a public library serving a population of 10,000 or fewer that demonstrates excellence in service to its community as exemplified by its overall service program or by a special program of significant accomplishment. A \$1,000 cash award is given to the winner to spend as they see fit.

Applications are available at www.pla.org/ala/pla/plaawards/excellencesmall.htm

Libraries who have received the award include:

- 1992—Kingman (Kans.) Carnegie Library
- 1993—Decorah (Iowa) Public Library
- 1994—Alan Bolster Ricker Memorial Library and Community House, Poland, Maine
- 1995—Franklin County Public Library, East Point, Fla.
- 1996—Waialua (Hawaii) Public Library
- 1997—Littleton (Colo.) Public Library
- 1998—Littleton (N.H.) Public Library
- 1999—Little Boston Branch, Kitsap (Wash.) Regional Library
- 2000—Clearwater County (Idaho) Free Library
- 2001—Alpine (Ariz.) Public Library
- 2002—Wallowa County (Ore.) Library
- 2003—Haines Borough (Alaska) Public Library
- 2004—Tecumseh (Okla.) Public Library
- 2005—Curtis Township (Mich.) Library

A Library in the Mountains

Robin Maly

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The Alpine Public Library is one of six in the Apache County Library District. Apache County is in the White Mountains of northern Arizona. Alpine has a year-round population of five hundred that grows to twenty-five hundred in the summer. We have 9,447 volumes in the library. We have 1,193 registered borrowers.

I became the library manager for the Alpine Public Library in 1989 out of necessity. There were hardly any jobs in Alpine and I needed to help support my family. At \$5 an hour, it wasn't the best job in the world, but it was added income. From the very beginning of this new job, I started loving the library and tried every day to make everyone around me love the library as much as I did!

I had no prior library experience or education. I immediately realized my limitations and went back to college at age thirty-six. I received an associate's degree in library science and had a 3.8 grade point average. My husband and sons were



Alpine Public Library

very supportive during those years, though I think my mother was the most proud of my accomplishment.

The Alpine Public Library won the PLA/EBSCO Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award in 2001. I believe we were chosen because of the services and programming offered to Alpine and the surrounding communities. This award couldn't have been won without the support of our community, library volunteers, and the hard-working staff.

We strive to make sure we offer a wide variety of educational programs that are unique to our community. We can get away with this because our town is so small.

We make it a challenge to come up with new kinds of programming. These programs will vary from the "usual"—computer and Web classes, quilting workshops, cheesemaking, dollmaking, horse care classes—to the "unusual"—goats and rabbits visiting the library, horseshoe forging, and even a spinning and weaving presentation. You never know what is going on at the library, so everyone comes often because they might be missing out on something!

People use and support the library as the community center. It's a place to come in and sit awhile, visit with the locals, see what's going on, use the computers, and maybe check out a book or two. We try to make the library an inviting place to visit. The section of our Web site called "**What's Happening**" (www.cybertrails.com/~rmaly47/page1.htm) details all the up-to-date programs we are offering for the month.

We have increased our programming from 49 programs and 346 patrons attending in 2000–2001, to 61 programs and 709 patrons attending in 2003–2004. Our patron use has gone up from 8,586 patrons in 2000–2001 to a total of 10,518 patrons for 2003–2004.

We have worked very hard to keep up with computer technology. We have six new Dell computers for public access. We purchased them with the help of our Friends of the Library group, our community, and the PLA/EBSCO Award. We have two computers for the staff, but we share them with patrons if the others are all in use.

The library is beginning PLA's New Planning for Results strategic planning, which helps identify priorities and effectively reallocate resources. This planning process will include the community so that the library will be aware of those areas in which we are lacking, and what the *community* wants from this library! This is a very exciting step for our library.

I have found my niche in life. I love helping people, and that is what libraries are all about. Finding answers to reference questions, finding "just what someone wants," teaching computer classes, offering exciting and interesting programs, and giving patrons an occasional hug or smile when they need one are all rewarding. I really mean it when I say "I love my job," and it is a wonderful feeling to love what you are doing.

A Small Library with a Big Heart

Candy Emlen

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The Southwest Harbor Public Library is located on an island off the coast of Maine. We serve a year-round population of 1,952 (the population is much higher in the summer) but our

circulation is more than 65,000. We are a busy, small library. Part of the reason we are so active for a library our size is our ability to not only match the right book with the right person, but also to match the right program with the right group. Serving a small community allows us to really get to know our patrons. We sponsor four unusual programs that appeal to a wide range of ages and offer something for every member of our community.

Reader Dog Downeast is open to children who are learning to read or want to improve their reading skills. Kelvin, the reader dog, is a certified service dog who, with his handler, spends twenty minutes a session with each reading buddy. Kelvin is a patient and nonjudgmental listener. His demeanor encourages children to challenge themselves while gaining confidence. His handler helps the reader work through words or context they do not understand. She speaks to the children through Kelvin. Because we are a small library and know our community well we have been able to identify new or struggling readers and suggest they participate in Reader Dog Downeast. No kid has turned us down yet. They all love reading to Kelvin.

The Peace Crane Project began as a response to September 11, 2001. Families were looking for a way to deal with their sadness, and because our patrons feel so comfortable in our library, they came to us for solace. Once a week, after school, on a drop-in basis, kids, parents, and community members come in and fold peace cranes. The first thousand were sent to the Seasons Art School for Children in Baghdad, Iraq. The second thousand were sent to Naistari, a women's center for immigrants and refugees in Tampere, Finland. The third thousand are being folded now and the group will decide together where to send them. The size of our library allowed the community to come together for this peaceful activity.

Friends of the Library Teas started one day when several women were sitting on the window seat talking about what they were reading and what was new on the shelves. They thought it would have been so nice to have their conversation over a cup of tea. Inspired by that thought the next month the Friends group put on their first tea party. Anyone can come, even if they are just passing through the building. There is no agenda, just tea, cookies, and conversation. We have found it to be a great way to reach out to people who may not ordinarily come into the library. The elderly particularly like it and consider it a great social event. The teas are put on once a month and are now part of our library community.

The Wednesday Night Knitters began when a few local women were looking for a place to knit together. The group has been meeting at the library for more than a year and has grown to include participants ranging in age from seven to eighty-five. The more experienced knitters help the novices. This is a true community activity where age makes no difference.

A large urban environment might present us with more possibilities: author visits, lecture series, classes. But it seems, because of the large numbers served, there would be a distance felt between the patrons and the library. Our small rural setting has allowed us to get to know our community on a level that goes much further than the traditional library-patron relationship. We are an intricate part of our community. Because we are a free public library we



Southwest Harbor Public Library

can offer what other organizations in town cannot offer, a place that responds to community needs and a place that offers opportunities to everyone equally.

Watching the Sun Come Up

Cheryl J. Heser

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When I wake up in the morning to the beauty of the sunrise over the Yellowstone River in southeastern Montana, I know that I am headed to a place and a job that I love. I am the director of Rosebud County Library, a small public library in Forsyth, Montana, serving a community of about two thousand people plus rural patrons in the surrounding area.

When I arrive at the library, I will probably be working with one of the other three part-time staff members, although there are days when I work alone. The staff members in such a library are "family," and we operate as friends who openly communicate with each other, and each of us, in our own way, keeps a finger on the pulse of this community. We see almost no strangers here, and when we do, we greet them and encourage their involvement with the library as part of abandoning the role of strangers and becoming part of the community. Occasionally in the summer we have tourist or genealogist visitors, who also are welcomed as one of us until they head out of town.

As library staff, we are known to just about everyone in town whether they use the library or not, and we are identified with the library to the point of us wondering if anyone realizes that we have lives beyond our work. One day, as often happens, I saw a small child with his mother at the grocery store, and with a look of amazement, he said, "Do you come here too?"

A fellow librarian from another small public library and I do a radio show called "Library Connections" for our radio station, which still has local programming, something that is less and less common in our world. People stop us on the street regularly to talk about our Saturday morning radio show, which comes just before "The Country Store" and after "The Pet Post." We record the show ahead of time, and so there have been occasions when small children have been amazed to see me around town when they just got out of a car with "Library Connections" playing on the radio.

Although there are times when being less in the public eye would be a relief, our visibility and availability are usually an asset. Collaboration is a given assumption here, and we have many programs in which we work with community groups for the benefit of everyone as well as for the library. We currently are part of "Safe Schools, Safe Community," a program that includes providing safe after-school activities for students in grades one through eight at the library. Upstairs in the main library, they can study on their own or get homework help or direct tutoring from volunteers ranging from senior citizens to high school students, and downstairs they can participate in games, crafts, kitchen creations, and other activities. In response to a community crisis in which a student who had been bullied on the playground came to school with a gun, a task force was formed looking for ways to encourage students to be safe and keep others safe, and they assumed that the public library could play a role, which we gladly have.

The dichotomy of being a "conventional" library—where adults can find good old literature plus the latest novels, where children can go to "Story Hour" and find picture books, where teens can find research help as well as videos—combined with being an "unconventional" library that spends nearly as much time on community projects as on collection management and circulation, is our challenge as well as our glory. While we're ordering new books, we're working with the local quilt club in planning their annual display in the library, which brings in many residents who look over our book sale while they're enjoying the quilts. While we're working on policies and procedures, we're setting up a traveling art exhibit that will be a highlight, here where the humanities have their main outlet at the library. While we're worrying about computer replacements and repairs, we're planning a luncheon along with the Women's Club, which will bring in a speaker to inform and entertain local people on the subject of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. And finally, while we're having a staff meeting to make plans for the latest in library developments and needs, we take a moment to smile over our latest projects—from a pumpkin-carving party before Halloween to a series of adult community education classes for beginning computer users to advanced eBayers—which not only have made the local newspaper but have also resulted in positive comments from many patrons. No wonder I love to see the sun come up on a "work" day!

Where the Community Happens

L. S. Moyer

Education Coordinator, Haines Borough (Alaska) Public Library; dragonfly@aptalaska.net

In the small and beautiful southeast Alaskan community of Haines, near the tip of the Lynn Canal, eighty miles north of Juneau, is a small and beautiful library with a lot of heart—and a lot of pride in the programs that serve the residents and visitors.

Admittedly, Haines is off the beaten path. But for the twenty-six hundred folks who live here, it's home, even though there is no movie theatre, shopping mall, Wal-Mart, fitness club, teen center, or traffic lights. If you were to visit, you couldn't help but notice the library. It's where community happens.

The public library has an inspiring history. It was first started by the Haines Women's Club in the 1920s in a sixty-four-square-foot room behind the Alaskan Steamship office along the waterfront. It is now on South Third Street, just off Main Street, in a recently completed 8,400-square-foot building designed by Juneau architects Minch Ritter Voelckers, and is funded by the Haines Borough government. Since the doors opened on January 28, 2003, with more space for its increasing collection, ten computer stations, five laptops for in-library use, soundproof children's room, conference room, and community and reading rooms that look out on the snow-topped Chilkat Mountain Range, use has skyrocketed.

In 1996 when the members of the library board and staff decided to begin the process



Haines Borough Public Library

of fundraising for a new building, we worked with the state library to create a vision of the library's future and correlating mission statement. As a result of this exercise, it was decided that the new library would also take on the role of a community center. This not only helped us in our fund-raising efforts, but it has also helped in applying for grants to fund programs and in creating partnerships with other organizations.

Another tenet of our mission statement is to be responsive to community needs, which means listening to all the different voices of our community. In the fall of 2000, we were listening to a lot of voices—residents and visitors wanting better access to the Internet and other computer technology; parents and the Native community wanting programs to help at-risk teens and young adults; and the superintendent of the school district forecasting budget cuts. Though we were still two years from moving into the new facility, we decided it was time to create a program that would hopefully address these concerns.

By partnering with the Chilkoot Indian Association Tribal Government, a Tlingit tribe, and applying for a Native enhancement grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, we were able to create a technology mentoring program that allowed us to purchase more computers, update software, engage young people to become mentors, and provide computer instruction to people of all ages. We called the program the Dragonfly Project, which is now in its fourth year and still helping people of all ages learn everything from how to use a mouse and search the Internet to how to make brochures and create databases.

With another grant from the Alaska State Library, we were able to add a digital movie component in 2003. We hired a part-time digital media coordinator who worked with students to teach them how to make digital movies, from pre-production to post-production, and then produce five short documentaries on Native culture. We now realize it was a Herculean task—but two high school students stuck with the program and were able to see their films premiered at the library to great appreciation and acclaim. The films are now part of our collection and are being requested by other libraries and Native organizations. And for the students who participated, their skills are in demand. They are often asked to film other programs, including concerts, drama, debate and forensics tournaments, and sporting events.

Because this program reached out to the community in a new way, it created a whole new dimension to the library. It has brought in people who had never used the library as well as those who have been frustrated by computer technology. It has become such a positive force in the community that the borough decided to fund it for an additional two years.

The program has also won a number of awards, including the Marshall Cavendish Award for Excellence in Library Programming (2003), the PLA/EBSCO Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award (2003), and two Outstanding Effort in Technology Awards from the Alaska Spirit of Youth Foundation, which recognizes positive contributions youth make to their communities.

Because of the success of the Dragonfly Project, we've been able to receive other grants and expand our programs. With a grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum, we offered a year-long humanities program called Perspectives: Inside/Outside, which showcased speakers from inside and outside the community on twelve different topics that ranged from Native art

and world music to world religions and community activism. We've also been able to expand our children's programs, which we achieved by continuing our partnership with the Chilkoot Indian Association Tribal Government and applying for another grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The library is now the place for kids to be after school—whether they are with the Youth Services Coordinator enjoying a story, learning a craft, or getting a little homework help, or just using the laptop computers to do homework or communicate with friends around the world.

To the Tlingit, a dragonfly is believed to be a transport of the human soul, a symbol of transformation. At the Haines Borough Public Library, the Dragonfly Project and all the other programs are not only bringing a new spirit to the library, but also they are enriching and transforming the lives of the people in the community. Like the dragonfly, for us, it's good to be small and beautiful.

Conclusion

Small libraries are like their larger kin in that there is never enough space, staff, books, computers, or money. Small libraries differ in that all the staff must know a great deal about the day-to-day operations. The small-town librarian rarely leaves the job completely at the end of the day. She's asked reference questions at the grocery store or is given books to return when at church. These requests are accommodated with a smile and the knowledge that these patrons are an extended family.

Thirty years ago this month I started my first "real" job as the head librarian of the Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library in Brenham, Texas, population 8,922. The main desk served all purposes for all patrons: circulation, reference, and children's services. The budget was \$40,000. There was one full-time and one part-time assistant. My library school classes had provided lots of theory. I relied on common sense and my own experience as a library user to organize the summer reading program, create book displays, and answer real-life reference questions. Though small-town Texas was a new cultural milieu for me, I thrived. Without those four and a half years in a small library my philosophy of library service would likely be very different (and not necessarily improved).

Great things indeed are going on in small libraries! ■



Hampton (Skip) Auld is Assistant Director, Chesterfield County Public Library, 9501 Lori Rd., Chesterfield, VA 23832-0297; (804) 748-1767; auldh@chesterfield.gov. He is currently reading *Homage to Robert Frost* by Joseph Brodsky, Seamus Heaney, and Derek Walcott; *Birdman* by Mo Hayder; *Heavy Lifting: The Job of the American Legislature* by Alan Rosenthal; and *The Tragedy of American Compassion* by Marvin Olasky.



Nann Blaine Hilyard is Director, Zion-Benton Public Library, 2400 Gabriel Ave., Zion, IL 60099; nbhilyard@zblibrary.org. She is currently reading *Uncommon Grounds* by Sandra Balzo, where the opening day at a suburban coffeeshop is the setting for death by espresso, and *My Kind of Place* by Susan Orlean, travel stories from a woman who has been everywhere.



The Bounty of Creativity

An Interview with Gayle Brandeis

Dominique McCafferty

Gayle Brandeis's novel, *The Book of Dead Birds* (HarperCollins), received Barbara Kingsolver's 2002 Bellwether Prize for Fiction. Kingsolver called her novel "lyrical, imaginative, beautifully crafted, and deeply intelligent." Brandeis is also the author of *Fruitflesh: Seeds of Inspiration for Women Who Write* (HarperSanFrancisco), which was selected by the American Bookseller's Association as a notable book in May 2002. A collection of poetry, *Dictionary Poems* (Pudding House Publications), was released in 2003. Brandeis was named one of "Six Writers Who Make a Difference" in the January 2005 issue of *The Writer* magazine. Her essays, poems, and short stories, which have appeared in numerous publications, including *Literary Mama*, *Salon*, and *McSweeney's*, explore motherhood, relationships, and the sacredness of the senses. Brandeis lives in Riverside, California, with her husband, Matt McGunigle, and their two children, Arin and Hannah.

Public Libraries: Can you tell us about your childhood?

Gayle Brandeis: I grew up in Evanston, Illinois, on a little, one-way L-shaped street, Sheridan Square, that emptied out into Chicago. I loved growing up on an L-shaped street. Even as a little girl, the letters of the alphabet were important to me, and L was one of my favorites.

PL: What did you read as you were growing up?

GB: I taught myself to read when I was three; I surprised my parents by asking them if they knew that President Nixon had plubitis. It was actually phlebitis. I hadn't figured out the "ph" thing yet, but I had figured out how to read the paper as we all sat around the breakfast table. My parents read to me constantly, tirelessly. My favorite picture book was *Just Only John* by Jack Kent, which was about a little boy who bought a peppermint-flavored penny magic spell, but didn't know what kind of spell it contained. It turned out that when people called him a name—"my little lamb," "bunny," "little pig"—he turned into that thing. That made sense to me. I knew words were magical. I read constantly, voraciously, myself as I got older.

Book Talk provides authors' perspectives on libraries, books, technology, and information.

Some favorite books of my childhood included *The Secret Garden*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*—which I recently reread and realized how much escaped me when I was younger—and books by Judy Blume.

PL: At what age did you begin writing?

GB: I wrote voraciously, too. I wrote my first poem, "Little Wind," when I was four, and started writing little stories shortly thereafter. I was constantly stitching together little books with yarn; I had a whole series of stories called "The Elves and I" about elves who lived in the drainpipe in front of our apartment building. I wrote my first novel, *The Secret World*, when I was nine; it was about twenty-five handwritten pages, including illustrations, and paid a huge debt to *The Secret Garden*. My teacher had a typewritten version of it spiral-bound and laminated. She put it in the elementary school library, with its own entry in the card catalogue. That was such a thrill for me. I often looked at the little card to see who had checked my book out; it made me feel like a real author.

PL: When did you decide you wanted to make writing your career?

GB: When I was in second grade, my parents went to a parent-teacher conference. My language arts teacher, Mrs. Koch, told my parents I should be a writer when I grew up. They came home and relayed this information to me. I responded essentially by saying "Duh. What else would I be?" I had a Dr. Seuss book called *All About Me*, where you fill in answers to questions like "How many doorknobs are in your house?" or "Can you make a sound like a pig?" One of the questions was "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I wrote "A writer-mother-doctor-Olympic skater-millionaire." I've accomplished two out of five!

I have to say, though, that I haven't always had the confidence in myself as a writer that I did when I was a girl. I went through long stretches where I was impatient and frustrated with words. I thought dance could express emotions so much more directly than language ever could. It took me awhile to fall back in love with words again, but when I did, I fell hard. I had a hard time calling myself a "writer" for many years, though. Writing was at the center of my life, but I thought of myself as someone who wrote rather than someone who was a "writer." It was only when one of my short stories won a national award that I could begin to claim that as a title out loud.

PL: You say you had a hard time referring to yourself as a writer? How did you work through that?

GB: It makes me sad to think of that now—if a person writes, that person is a writer, but I didn't see it that way for a long time. I used to be very protective of my work, very private with it. I was writing for myself, and saw no need to try to publish it; only my professors and fellow workshop students needed to see it. At some point, one of my professors told me I was writing publishable work, but even then I didn't have the confidence

to start sending my work out. I didn't even harbor any dreams of being published.

More and more people kept encouraging me to send my work out, and at some point, someone gave me a gift subscription to *Poets & Writers*. I saw all the calls for manuscripts in the back of the journal. I tentatively began the submission process, and ended up having a lot of beginner's luck; some of my first publications included an essay about childhood and ritual in Bali, which appeared in *Mothering*, and a prose poem, "Scavenger to Angel," which appeared in the anthology *Eating Our Hearts Out* (Crossing Pr., 1993). Seeing my work published was very gratifying. It took me a while to picture myself writing a book, however. I was happy sending out a poem here, an essay there. And then, eventually, books began to call me.

PL: When did you begin working on *Fruitflesh*? Were you working on *The Book of Dead Birds* and *Fruitflesh* simultaneously?

GB: I started working on *Fruitflesh* shortly after I graduated from college. I was hoping to go to Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, to get my masters in dance therapy or writing and poetics, but I found out I was pregnant with my son five months before I graduated and my plans changed accordingly. My husband Matt, who was working in construction at the time, decided to go back to school so he could create a better future for our baby; we moved into family student housing at UCR [University of California–Riverside], and I settled in to life as a writer and a mom-to-be.

In my undergraduate work with writing and dance, I had discovered that the place where the two arts intersected was the body. I became obsessed with the connection between writing and the body, and, after graduation, began writing, essentially, a treatise on the subject. I called it "Writing from the Body," and felt that I had something unique and important to share with the world. After I had written almost an entire draft—it was very theoretical at this point—I saw an ad for a book called "Writing from the Body" by John Lee. I was devastated. I really felt as if my life's work had been taken from me. I thought that because he had written such a book, there was no place for my book. I set it aside, and focused on different projects.

I assiduously avoided looking at John Lee's book because I was so upset. At some point, though, my curiosity got the best of me, and I pulled it from a shelf at the bookstore. It's a lovely book, but I was thrilled to discover it didn't cancel out what I wanted to say. I went back to my project with renewed passion. I realized that I wanted to focus on women's bodies, since that's what I understood most intimately.

I wrote a draft fairly quickly, obtained an agent, and she started shopping it around. At the time I called the book *Fruitflesh: Living and Writing in a Woman's Body*, but there was only fruit in one chapter, a chapter about my experience with the strawberry in high school. We got a lot of nice feedback from editors, but many of them said the same thing: there's not enough of the author in the book. This made sense. It was still very theoretical at this point, and I thought including more of my own experience would make the book more accessible. I rewrote it almost as a memoir, sharing a lot of my personal explorations. My agent sent it out again; this time it



Gayle Brandeis

came back with a lot of nice comments, but with a different concern. Many of the editors said there was too much of the author in the book now. At that point I was totally confused; I had no idea how to approach the project, so I set it aside and focused on other writing. It was around this time that I started to write fiction.

A couple of years later, I went to an estate sale, where I purchased a gorgeous print called "Virgin de la Sandia" or "Our lady with the watermelon." It looks like a traditional picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, except the woman is naked, and she is surrounded by watermelons. As I walked home, holding my \$3 treasure, I looked at the picture and had an epiphany—I needed, I realized, to bring more fruit into *Fruitflesh!* I started rewriting it, using fruit as a central metaphor, and it all flowed freely from there.

I knew I had finally found the right form for the book. This was at the same time that I was working on *The Book of Dead Birds*. HarperSanFrancisco offered to buy *Fruitflesh* while I was working on my MFA, so I was writing the novel and doing intensive *Fruitflesh* revisions concurrently. It was slightly crazy-making, but very energizing!

PL: Library customers have responded enthusiastically when I've recommended *Fruitflesh* to them. I'm sure veteran writers could also benefit from your book; what has the response been like?

GB: I don't think *Fruitflesh* has found a huge readership at this point, but the readers who have found it have been so incredibly enthusiastic and wonderful. It makes my heart sing when I hear that the book has helped people—men as well as women—find their voices, break through creative blocks, and see the world and themselves in a new way. I couldn't ask for anything more as an author.

I recently received a lovely letter from Carolyn See, a writer I deeply admire; she has her own writing book out, the fabulous *Making a Literary Life*, along with her stellar novels. It blew my mind to hear how much she loved the book. I am still so tickled that I occasionally get to rub elbows with writers whose work I adore.

Another fun thing—people have created their own workshops and retreats based on *Fruitflesh*, which makes me very happy. It's nice to know that the book has a life of its own, that it doesn't need me any more. I love the thought of people stumbling upon it, finding a way to unlock their juiciest creativity, and then helping others do the same. I have been inspired by so many writers along the way and hope I can provide a similar spark.

PL: How were you inspired to write *The Book of Dead Birds*?

GB: In 1996, I started to write a poem about a dead bird I saw when I was six years old. It was a baby bird that had fallen out of its nest. It had no feathers yet, its eyes had never opened. I had never seen anything dead before, and it had a huge impact upon me. I created a ritual to memorialize the bird; I felt this strong need to honor the bird's life, to make sense of the bird's death. It was a moment that had stayed with me over the years, and I finally felt compelled to write about it.

The poem turned into a chronicle of all the dead birds I had seen in my life, including our pet finches, who had pecked their babies to death—my only pet bird experience, since we later found out I was allergic to feathers. The poem kept getting longer and stranger, and at some point, I realized it didn't want to be a poem any more, and it definitely didn't want to be about my own experience any more. But I had no idea what it wanted to be, so I set it aside.

It was around this time that articles about the Salton Sea bird die-offs began to appear in the local paper. I clipped the articles and put them in my notebook, thinking I could tie the situation—which ended up being the worst bird die-off in American history—into my poem-hybrid project, although I wasn't sure how I'd be able to do that yet.

Then, one day, I randomly happened to see a documentary on PBS called *The Women Outside*, about women who had been forced into prostitution on United States military bases in Korea. The characters of Ava and Helen were suddenly right there in the room with me; they materialized vivid and whole. I knew that Helen had been a prostitute, that her daughter Ava had a habit of killing Helen's pet birds, that she had to travel to the Salton Sea to help with the bird rescue effort and try to make amends. It was clear that this was what I'd been working toward, been waiting for, but I froze. I felt I had no right to write about people whose ethnicities were so different from my own. I didn't want to appropriate someone else's culture, didn't want to appear to be a cultural imperialist. I tried to keep the characters at arm's length, to tell them to disappear back into the ether, to tell them I couldn't write about them, but they wouldn't go away. They were persistent and insistent. At some point I realized I needed to start doing intensive research so I could write about them with as much knowledge as possible.

At first, I wrote Ava from the third person, because the first person felt too close. In the third person, I could just observe her, which felt safer than claiming to be her. The book wasn't coalescing, though. It felt flat and uninspired. I was ready to throw it away several times, until two things happened: first, a dead crow appeared on my patio, which seemed like a sign to keep going. Then, I came down with a case of strep throat, and had a high fever which led to fever dreams in which I became Ava—a very intense experience. When the fever broke, I realized that she needed to tell the story in her own voice. When I started writing in the first person, the novel really came to life for me.

Shortly before the book came out, a photographer and feature writer from the *Press Enterprise* in Riverside, California, came to do a story about me and the novel. The writer was my friend, Donna Kennedy, who grew up at the Salton Sea—she was actually Miss Salton Sea as a teenager! The photographer looked for a place to take the picture as I spoke with Donna. She decided that the bench on our front porch would be a good place, and she came up to me and asked if I had a broom—there was a dead bird there on the bench. My heart skipped a beat. I went to look, and it turned out to be a baby bird, just like the one I saw when I was six years old. I created a ritual around this bird, too, with my daughter this time, and felt my whole life swooping around into a very big circle. The whole process of writing the book was full of such magic and synchronicity, and took me to places I never thought I would visit.

PL: In 2002, *The Book of Dead Birds* won Barbara Kingsolver's Bellwether Prize for Fiction. What impact has this award had on your writing life?

GB: Barbara Kingsolver is such an inspiration for me. She has long been a model for how to weave together art and social responsibility. To have been given her blessing through this award is almost more than I can wrap my mind around. I am so deeply grateful. I also feel a real responsibility to continue to do good work in the world through my words.

I found out I won the award while I was on my book tour for *Fruitflesh*. I was in San Francisco; I had the day to myself, so I went to see a movie, *Y Tu Mamá También*. When the movie was over, I realized I was right across the street from the HarperSanFrancisco offices, so I decided to drop in and say hello to my editor. As I waited for her in the reception area, I turned on my cell phone, and it rang immediately. It was my husband. He sounded frantic. He asked if I had listened to my messages. "You better listen to your messages and call me right back," he said. I got very nervous. I thought something had happened to one of my parents, and he didn't know how to tell me. I pushed the voice mail button, my heart pounding. Then the message came on: "This is Barbara Kingsolver and I have some very good news for you . . ." I started bawling immediately. My editor came out and saw me crying and asked what was wrong. I told her "I just won the Bellwether Prize," and then she started crying, too. It was a very teary day. I called Barbara Kingsolver back after I got back to my hotel room, and we had an amazing conversation. She was so easy to talk to. When I found out that Toni Morrison and Maxine Hong Kingston had been the other Bellwether judges, I was even more blown away. I admire both of them so much, and to know that they held my work in their hands, much less read it, much less chose it, was almost too much to comprehend. My heart bursts thinking about it still.

PL: I was especially drawn to Helen's character; how did she come to you?

GB: As far as developing characters, that is a totally intuitive process for me. The characters reveal themselves as I write. I try not to have any preconceived ideas about them. I try to get as transparent as possible when I write so my characters have room to come through me without me getting in their way. Helen was like that. She was herself from the very beginning. I just had to sit back and follow her and let my heart break right along with her.

PL: Can you recommend any good online reading and writing groups to our readers?

GB: I think Readerville (www.readerville.com) is the ultimate online forum for readers and writers. There are dozens upon dozens of discussions about books and publishing and creativity. I found it particularly helpful to connect with other writers when my first book was going to come out and I had no idea what to expect. There is a discussion at Readerville called "OK, the book's sold, now what do I do?" where published authors share advice about how to help promote your book, and how to stay sane during the process. Many well-respected writers, such as Katharine Weber, Caroline Leavitt, and Sandra Gulland, participate in these discussions, and I learned much from their wisdom and experience. I also always get great book suggestions in the "What are you reading?" thread. Readerville's subtitle is "The social life of the mind," which I think is perfect. And I've met many of my "imaginary friends" from Readerville in person and have created friendships in the real world as well as the virtual one.

Poets & Writers (www.pw.org) has a great online forum for writers—the Speakeasy. *Poets & Writers* has been such an important resource for me; it's nice that they've extended their reach and created an online community, as well.

Bookcrossing (www.bookcrossing.com) has some good book discussions, and you can find out where free books have been left “in the wild.” It’s like a big literary scavenger hunt!

There are also several literary blogs I like to visit that post great information about books and the publishing world. My favorites include **Maud Newton** (www.maudnewton.com) and **The Elegant Variation** (<http://marksarvas.blogs.com/elegvar>).

PL: You once said you consider poetry your true calling, that novel writing is somewhat of a departure for you. Why is that?

GB: Poetry has always been at the heart of my writing life. I've been writing it since I was 4, so it's something that has always been with me, like my brown eyes or my curly hair. I wrote stories when I was a girl, but I drifted away from fiction when I was around 12, and never imagined I would return to it. Poetry was how I could express myself most honestly and directly.

It was a huge surprise when fiction came calling many years later. My daughter's birth unleashed a flood of novels. I wrote three novels within three years of her birth. I had no idea what I was doing. I had no idea how to revise them, how to polish them up. After I started writing my fourth (*The Book of Dead Birds*), I decided to go back to school to learn something about the craft of fiction. I wanted to write in a more conscious way.

Now I feel very comfortable flitting in and out of genres. Fiction has become part of me, part of my bloodstream. But poetry will always be pulsing away loudly inside me.

PL: Who was influential in your development as a poet?

GB: Because I started writing poetry so young, I was very influenced by the books my parents read to me, and the ones that I read to myself as soon as I could—fairy tales, nursery rhymes, Dr. Seuss. . . . I was primarily a self-taught poet, learning from the books around me and following my own native impulses, until my freshman year at the University of Redlands. I took two poetry classes my first semester that had a huge impact upon me—“The Eye and Voice of Poetry,” with Ralph Angel, and “Poetry I,” with Barney Childs. Ralph introduced me to so many poets—Mary Oliver, James Tate, Jorie Graham, Jane

A Fond Farewell

It is with great sadness that the Public Library Association (PLA) announces the departure of Brendan Dowling. Brendan worked for PLA for six years, most recently as a technical services specialist, focusing on the PLA Web site. As co-contributing editor of *Public Libraries* Book Talk column, he also conducted many insightful interviews with noted authors such as Ray Bradbury, Dennis LeHane, David Sedaris, Elizabeth McCracken, Anne Fadiman, and E. Annie Proulx. Brendan will be leaving Chicago to perform with the Second City comedy troupe aboard the Norwegian cruise ship, Dawn. All of us at *Public Libraries* wish Brendan Dowling smooth sailing toward a bright future.

Miller, Galway Kinnell—and taught me how to read a poem closely. He also made me feel safe to experiment with language, to both expand and refine my voice as a poet. Ralph's class focused on free verse, while Barney's class focused on formal verse, which exercised my poetic muscles in very different ways. I learned so much about meter and rhythm and how formal constraint can free up the subconscious. The conscious brain is so busy worrying about iambs and trochees, and surprising stuff can bubble up as a result. Barney had us read poets from many centuries, which exposed me to so much work that I wouldn't have discovered on my own. Both Ralph and Barney were important mentors to me. They opened doors to the wider world of poetry, and helped me open doors within myself, for which I'll be forever grateful.

PL: What are you reading right now?

GB: One of the cool things about being published is the fact that every once in awhile, publishers will send advance copies of novels for possible endorsement. Blurb writing has become one of my favorite pastimes! I'm currently spending time with *The Distance Between Us* by Masha Hamilton, a very intense novel about a war correspondent in the Middle East whose lover is killed during one of their assignments. It's very timely and gripping. It will be released this fall by Unbridled Books, a new press founded by Fred Ramey. And I recently blurbed an amazing book, *The Bitch Posse*, by Martha O'Connor, which comes out next year from St. Martin's Press. It explores a life-changing friendship between three girls in high school—very dark and beautiful and honest.

PL: Which writers have influenced you the most?

GB: I've been influenced in some subtle way by every author I've read. I think the ones who have had the most lasting impact upon my work, however, include the poets Mary Oliver and Sharon Olds, whose work gave me permission to tell the truth about living in a woman's body on this earth; Barbara Kingsolver, who showed me that art and social responsibility can be woven together into one rich fabric; Diane Ackerman, whose deep curiosity about the world always inspires me; Rilke, who found a way to meld sensuality and spirituality so beautifully; Whitman, who did the same; and Thoreau, whose *Walden* and *Civil Disobedience* blasted my mind open wide in high school. I am so grateful for all of them, and know my writing pays a large debt to theirs. ■

Dominique McCafferty is a Librarian at the Riverside (Calif.) Public Library. She is currently reading *A Star Called Henry* by Roddy Doyle, *Iron and Silk* by Mark Salzman, and *The Calling* by Catherine Whitney. She interviewed Gayle Brandeis via e-mail in summer 2004.

If you have any suggestions of authors you would like to see featured in Book Talk, contact the contributing editors: Kathleen Hughes is Managing Editor of *Public Libraries*, and Brendan Dowling is the Editorial Assistant. Both can be reached at the Public Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; khughes@ala.org, bdowling@ala.org. Kathleen is currently reading *The Bookseller of Kabul* by Åsne Seierstad. Brendan is currently reading *Blue Angel* by Francine Prose.



The PLA Blog

Steven M. Cohen

One of my objectives in articles, presentations, and regular weblog posts has been to get librarians really excited about blogging. I've approached it from many angles. First there are the benefits to the information professional: self-publishing, the ability to reach a wide audience, and the networking capabilities. Then there are advantages for libraries themselves: having a blog will allow the library staff to reach out to their communities, share news easily and cheaply, have their content syndicated elsewhere, and help build a cooperative workplace. But there still are two other audiences who can benefit from blogs—library conference attendees and library associations.

Library conferences are a great way for us to keep current with new and exciting technologies, case studies, and research in our profession. By attending conferences, we not only are able to get out from behind the reference desk and network with colleagues from around the country (or region, depending on what type of conference one is attending), but also we legitimize our profession. Doctors go to conferences. Lawyers attend conferences. So should librarians. And we do. In droves. The recent ALA Midwinter Meeting in Boston was attended by more than thirteen thousand librarians.¹

However, not all librarians are lucky enough to get to conferences on a national or even regional level (someone has to stay back and hold down the fort, right?). The key is to find ways to get the information from these meetings back to them. I was thinking about this on my drive to work one day and realized that a blog was the perfect way to do this. Have conference attendees attend meetings and presentations and have them blog about it on the spot, in real-time (or when they next get to an Internet-enabled computer).

Once I had the idea fully thought out, I approached PLA and pitched the idea for the first national library association weblog, which we would kick off at the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Since I couldn't attend every meeting, I would use the collective intelligence of as many librarians as possible and have them blog every meeting, dinner, or event that they attended. This would allow those who missed a meeting (or had a conflict) to be able to catch up on what had happened. Also, those who could not attend the meeting could follow along from home. PLA thought it was a great idea, and I received the go-ahead to recruit bloggers.

And where else to get bloggers than from posts to library-related weblogs? After initial posts to my weblog and asking others to follow suit, I had twelve librarians ready to take part in a historical event in librarianship.

As the conference neared, I had to make some tough decisions that would affect the nature of the blog. Of course, all of

Internet Spotlight explores Internet and Web topics relevant to librarians in the public library sector. Your input is welcome.

the decisions would have to get approved by the PLA office. I was used to blogging on my own without asking others for help or getting approval from other sources (not to mention being responsible for the content generated by twelve librarians, some of whom I had never met before). So, there were introspective issues that needed to be worked out before anything else could be accomplished. In other words, I had to view this weblog differently than any other that I had worked on in the past.

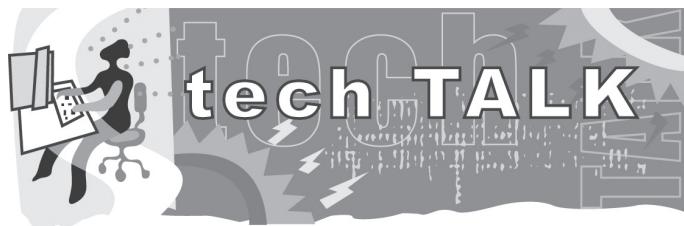
As we got closer to the meeting, there were other issues that kept popping up that I knew had to be dealt with. The first one was the vendors. Would we allow vendors to participate in the blog and would we mention any of their products? After discussing this with PLA, we decided that it would not be fair if some vendors were mentioned while others were not. So, to keep it fully neutral, there would be no mention of the exhibit hall. Second, and more potentially controversial, was the issue of comments on the weblog. Would we allow anyone to comment on any one of the posts? Thinking back to the mission of the blog (to allow a communication between those attending the conference and those not in attendance), I wanted to have comments active. That said, there was a possibility that unwarranted comments would be posted. We decided not to have any rules on comments until an issue arose. Once one did, we would react as needed. Thus, when a comment came in that had nothing at all to do with the post, it was deleted from the blog. These comments would be monitored throughout the meetings. We deleted only two comments, both from someone who added nonsensical issues about nothing having to do with the posts from the bloggers. This became our commenting mission statement: Learn from experience.

The PLA Blog (www.plablog.org) was officially online on January 11, two days before the start of the meeting. I asked all of the bloggers to post a note introducing themselves, what they hoped to gain from this experience, and what meetings they planned to attend. We also put out a press release to ALA, which was posted on their Web site, as well as written up in the first issue of *Cognotes* (the daily newspaper at ALA Conferences).

As the first round of posts crept in, I knew we were onto something special. Not only were we posting extensive reports from the meetings (some read like transcripts), but we were helping out the attendees with places to find the clearest and cheapest (read: free) wireless access (www.plablog.org/2005/01/free-wifi-at-hynes-contention-ctr.html) and recommending places to eat (www.plablog.org/2005/01/charlies-sandwich-shoppe.html). The PLA Blog was quickly turning into a full-access pass to the meeting. Librarians were acting like librarians should—providing as much information as possible about what was going on in and around the convention center.

The hit count to the blog soared as more and more people got wind of what we were doing. As of the writing of this column (one week after the conference), there were more than ten thousand pageviews to the blog, which was much more than I expected. We were a hit!

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Dynamic Library Web Sites

Vendor Services

A. Paula Wilson

Web sites can be of a static nature, but if designed properly, they can display dynamic content based on a user's interaction with the site. Scripting languages such as ASP, JavaServerPages (JSP), ColdFusion, and PHP retrieve information from a database and display the results of a query in HTML, thereby creating pages "on the fly." What visitors actually see is a Web template that displays the stored content. Customers or staff generate the content while the database and programming codes present the data. Customer-driven content include surveys whose results are posted on a page or book reviews that post to the site after receiving staff approval. It is used, for example, to make images change when viewers pass their cursors over them (rollovers) or to suppress or reveal content based on the date (if-then statements).

Library webmasters have many methods and techniques for creating dynamic content at their disposal, but for libraries without Web developers versed in programming, there exist user-friendly services that can help create a dynamic Web site. This article covers some of the services and content available from vendors that can supplement a library's Web site.

The online catalog already offers an ideal haven for dynamic Web sites. You can create links that reach into the catalog and connect customers to bibliographic records. As a rule, each time an author or title appears on your site, link it to the catalog. Your integrated library system (ILS) vendor can help you construct the best possible links.

Additionally, if your library uses the services of companies like Syndetics Solutions (www.syndetics.com) or The Content Café (www.btol.com) you already have a dynamic Web site. These products provide an array of content for library catalogs such as cover art, book summaries and reviews, table of contents, fiction profiles, plot summaries, author notes, excerpts, and first chapters. This content is updated automatically. Video Detective (www.videodetective.com) provides a hosted solution for additional catalog content by providing trailers and previews for thousands of videos and DVDs that link back to the library's bibliographic records.

Vendors have been very slow to identify and fill library needs in developing utilities and content for their Web sites. There are finally a handful of providers that can assist with some of the more common needs libraries have such as events and newslet-

Tech Talk explores issues that public librarians face when they offer electronic services and content. It aims to create a bridge between the practical and theoretical issues related to technology.

ters. There are also vendors outside of the library field that offer solutions libraries may want to try on their sites.

BookLetters (www.bookletters.com), a product of Book Page and Booksite.com, offers libraries a simple way to create an electronic newsletter for their patrons. BookLetters has been quietly building up a customer base of two hundred libraries using its services. A trial of this product, which included integration with my ILS system, was up and running within a day. The integration between BookLetters and my library's catalog was so seamless that customers would not even recognize that they had left my library's site.

This service includes fifteen BookLetters, or newsletters describing book content. Libraries may add an introductory message to the newsletter that can be customized with the library's logo and color scheme. These newsletters are e-mailed on a periodic basis to subscribers (see figure 1). Libraries can also prepare up to twenty custom newsletters by selecting their own titles. Entering an ISBN triggers the display of annotations, reviews, and cover art. BookLetters also allows the library to choose seventy-five "spotlight pages" a month that focus on author profiles, book discussions, multimedia movie previews, and music clips.

BookLetters may also be included as content pages of the library's Web site. There are some extremely appealing features of this service such as the ability to link from the newsletter or content page into a library's OPAC. Additionally, customers manage their own subscription by opting in and out of each newsletter. BookLetters works with several ILS vendors to connect ISBNs to bibliographic records. The BookLetters service also includes an author directory with hundreds of popular authors, biographies, and lists of their works linked to the library's catalog.

The screenshot shows the 'Children's Picture Books e-newsletter' interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Ask Us', 'Kids', 'Teens', 'Reserve Computer', 'E-Sources', 'Other Libraries', and 'NYT BestSellers'. Below the navigation is a search bar and a login area indicating 'Currently logged into: MCLOUD System'. The main content area features several book reviews:

- Hello, Snow!** By Vestergaard, Hope Westcott, Nadine Bernard 2004/08 - Eerdmans Books for Young Readers 0374329494 Check Our Catalog
- Now It Is Winter** By Spinelli, Eileen DePalma, Mary Newell 2004/08 - Eerdmans Books for Young Readers 0802852440 Check Our Catalog
- The Greatest Skating Race: A World War II Story from the Netherlands**

FIGURE 1

DearReader.com (www.dearreader.com) initially entered the library market with their online book clubs offering library patrons the first chapter of books via e-mail. They have since expanded their offerings to include electronic newsletters that can not only be e-mailed to customers, but can also be published to the library's Web site. (This product was just released in March 2005.)

E*vanced Solutions (www.e-vancesolutions.com) offers an array of services including a very robust and full-featured events management system. The system allows staff in a single or multi-branch system to log in, create, and edit events. Events can be coded in up to three categories that the library configures. This coding allows customers to search by a certain category (i.e., story times, computer classes, or teen programs). Each event has

Dynamic Library Web Site Service Vendors

BookLetters (BookSite)

14 W. Winter St.
Delaware, OH 43015
1-800-515-3322
www.bookletters.com
Info@Booksit.com

Content Café (Baker & Taylor)



If You Don't Ask, You Won't Get

Stephanie K. Gerdin

As the contributing editor of this new column, I am delighted to have the opportunity to share information and discuss opportunities, ideas, and experiences concerning innovative ways to supplement public library budgets. The title of this column is *Bringing in the Money*, which encourages appropriately broad perspectives. This column will not only focus on fundraising and grants, but also on all approaches for bringing in money and increasing library budgets, including advocacy, support in the local community, and communicating the need for increased local funding. Relatively little has been written regarding fund-raising in the library world. This is alarming in light of recent library closures and budget cuts. Increased funding is a common need in most libraries, therefore I applaud and thank PLA for having the initiative to realize the importance of this topic and to highlight it in *Public Libraries*.

Money: We Need It, and We Deserve It

According to the National Center for Education Statistics' report on public libraries in the United States, 31 percent of public libraries had operating expenditures of less than \$50,000.¹ So \$5,000 in fundraising could increase the budget by 10 percent. Is this achievable? I have seen proof that it is. We'll examine what small libraries are doing to raise funds and to increase their budgets in upcoming articles.

Do the larger libraries need money as well? ALA has announced that "projected and announced library funding cuts have topped \$111.2 million in the past eighteen months."² In December 2004, all fifty-two libraries in Buffalo and Erie County, New York, almost closed. Thankfully, the Erie County legislature ultimately agreed to share part of a one-cent sales tax increase. This allowed the libraries to stay open, but still reduced their budget by \$2.5 million.³ And in November, the Spokane (Wash.) Public Library was forced to reduce operating hours and dismiss staff when \$1 million was eliminated from the budget. So yes, small and large libraries need funding.⁴

Do we deserve it? Visits to public libraries have more than doubled from 1999 to 2001, and reference librarians answer more than seven million questions each week.⁵ More than 1.8 billion public library materials are circulated a year—that is 6.5 material circulations per capita.⁶ I would say we are serving our communities very well.

Bringing in the Money presents fundraising strategies for public libraries. Many librarians are turning to alternative funding sources to supplement shrinking budgets. Fundraising efforts not only boost finances, but also leverage community support and build collaborative strategies.

The library deserves it. And you need to let everyone you encounter know this. Have your two-minute elevator speech ready for when someone asks you why the library deserves funding—just a few sentences that pack a punch. (See the sidebar for some suggestions.) What do you do for your community? Make sure you let them know the library isn't just about books. Highlight your diverse services, whether it is a DVD collection, computer classes, wireless access, or assistance with genealogy research by phone. Libraries are very innovative, but often the politicians and others holding the local purse strings are unaware of all that they offer. Libraries might only remind them of story time. Get the politicians into your library. Invite them to events and meetings. Ask for what you need.

Current Advocacy Campaigns

Libraries are fortunate because their focus and standing as centers of their community bring credibility to fund-raising and financial requests just by their reputation and the services they provide. But to repeat this article title, if you do not ask, you will not get anything. First of all, your community has to know what libraries do and why they should be funded—advocacy. Many people have no idea how much it costs to run a library and how poorly funded most are. So what can we do to advocate for our libraries? ALA and PLA currently have two major initiatives that provide inspiration and assistance.

ALA's Campaign for America's Libraries is focused on showcasing the value of libraries and librarians. The campaign's goal is "to increase awareness about the vibrancy, vitality and real value of today's libraries, to galvanize public support and ultimately influence public policy and impact funding."⁷ For additional information about the Campaign for America's Libraries visit the *@ your library*[®] campaign's Web site (www.ala.org/@yourlibrary).

Two of PLA's Smartest Card Campaign's goals are to make the library card the most valued and used card in every wallet and to ensure that funders and community leaders will value and support America's public libraries.⁸ The economy is not in the best shape, so I believe the more people reaching for library cards rather than credit cards, the better. This campaign is catchy and easily understood by the general public. It reminds me of the adage that public libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries. A library card can be a powerful symbol of what the library represents in a democracy. An entire toolkit with a ton of amazing material is available as well. For more information, visit The Smartest Card Get It Use It *@ your library*[®] campaign (www.pla.org/ala/pla/plaissues/smartestcardcampaign/smartestcardcampaign.htm).

While not a campaign, another important resource for advocacy is ALA's new online *Communication Handbook for*

Libraries (www.ala.org/ala/pio/availablepiomat/commhandbook.htm).⁹ It details important outreach techniques to get the word out to the media and advocates by: developing a communications plan; creating visibility, both through events such as press conferences and also through use of print materials such as news releases and letters to the editor; becoming an excellent spokesperson; and determining if a story is newsworthy. By following the recommendations, you can enhance the public image of your library and win support by mobilizing community opinion leaders to advocate for the library.

Relationships

If you think about it, advocacy and fund-raising are both really about relationships. A well-publicized and recognized library faces less risk of closure or budget cuts. Libraries must address their community's needs, and also must involve community members in library activities, including fund-raising. Building partnerships and connecting with the library community are

Sample Two-Minute Elevator Speeches That Pack a Punch

Funding Talking Points

From ALA's 2004–2005 Online Message Book, www.ala.org/ala/issues/onlinetools/keymessages/budgetpoints.htm.

- Investing in libraries is an investment in education and lifelong learning.
- As confirmed by an ALA study, when the economy is down, library use is up. Unfortunately, at the same time, tight city and state budgets are closing library doors and reducing access when it's needed most.
- Libraries are part of the solution when a community is struggling economically. From free access to books and online resources for families to library business centers that help support entrepreneurship and retraining—librarians support lifelong learning.

Why Do We Need Libraries When Everything Is on the Internet?

Adapted from: Cynthia Kahn and Michelle Mallette, "Why Do We Need a Teacher-Librarian or a Library When We Have the Internet?" *Teacher Librarian: The Journal for School Library Professionals* 29, no. 4 (Apr. 2002); www.teacherlibrarian.com/tlmag/v_29/v_29_4_feature_bonus.html.

- The Internet is like a library with all the books on the floor; there is chaos. The key isn't the library; it is the librarian.
- The Internet is like a mountain of knowledge. Anyone can start climbing it, but it's so much easier if you have a guide. Librarians are the mountain guides. They know the best and quickest routes to the top.
- Information on the Internet is free, but you get what you pay for.

essential to bringing in the money. You really cannot fund-raise without advocating and often when you advocate, you will increase funding. Many libraries that have increased use of community committees and focus groups have benefited by increases in the budget from the customary local sources.

Don't forget that the entire staff should know what the library is doing in terms of bringing in the money, and also why it is being done. Staff relationships are an extremely important element to a library's success. I have heard horror stories of fund-raising gone awry due to lack of staff knowledge and support.

Increasing the Incline

We have been on the fund-raising treadmill before, but perhaps it is time we raised the incline and increased our efforts. For many years libraries have had Friends groups and even Foundations that have focused entirely on raising money, though often not large amounts. More than 75 percent of funding for the nation's more than 15,000 public libraries and branches comes from local sources. Only about 9 percent of library budgets come from sources such as monetary gifts and donations, interest, library fines, and fees.¹⁰ This income is probably generated mostly through used book sales rather than large development efforts involving wealthy donors. We should not be satisfied with the old ways of increasing funds, but instead raise our expectations and look at what other organizations are doing.

For example, some police departments conduct telephone solicitation drives to raise funds. I have to admit my heart always pounds a little faster when I hear that Officer Whoever is on the line. What if that call was from a librarian instead? Or a library volunteer? Or a phone bank of teen callers coordinated by a volunteer?

I recently toured an impressive and very well-organized library Friends operation at the Tucson-Pima (Ariz.) Public Library (www.ftpl.org). It included a large warehouse full of books, online sales, and a part-time director. Their gross sales totaled more than \$200,000. At first this impressed me, but then I learned that there are around 450 volunteers doing the sales and about 80 who work in the warehouse every week. Was this a good use of their time, all those hours of work? Yet, after talking with them and hearing how passionately they support the library, I could only think that selling books and bringing in the money wasn't the only benefit gained. Perhaps the greater profit produced by this Friends organization was that they produced a multitude of advocates. Selling books: \$200,000. Having 500 library advocates: Priceless. As the MasterCard commercials say, there are some things money can't buy.

Professional Development Staff

I do believe the libraries that are hiring professional fund-raisers are not only innovative, but are also good planners. Libraries such as the Great River Regional Library in Minnesota, which was showcased in the first *Bringing in the Money* column, realize the need to be smart about raising funds.¹¹ Some of the justifications that libraries use to denounce fund-raising are very legitimate. For example, this is one of those cases where to make money you need to spend money. How many libraries have organized events that were planned as fund-raisers, yet barely broke even? We don't have the time and resources

to waste on unsuccessful attempts. A librarian can be a fundraiser though—it is not rocket science, and many of the skills we have as librarians are applicable to fundraising (research, community awareness, and programming).

In upcoming issues we will detail designing and implementing a fund-raising plan and discuss options for determining who will manage your library's efforts to bring in the money. Please e-mail me and let me know your thoughts on Bringing in the Money. Has your library done innovative things that other libraries could replicate? Let's share ideas! ■



The contributing editor of Bringing in the Money is **Stephanie K. Gerding**, Continuing Education Coordinator at Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, in Phoenix. Please direct all correspondence about the column to her at stephaniegerding@earthlink.net.

Gerding is currently reading *Better Together: Restoring the American Community* by Robert Putnam and *The Cambridge Curry Club* by Saumya Balsari.

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INTERNET SPOTLIGHT

continued from page 145

We are already in the planning stages for the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago and the PLA bi-annual conference in Boston in 2006. There are some procedures that will need to be revised for the next conference. First, I left the formatting of the posts up to the individual bloggers the first time around. They had full range to use whatever coding tags that they wanted. Some utilized the What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) editor inside Blogger (www.blogger.com—the software we use to power the weblog), and there were posts that were so wrought with code (not the fault of the blogger), that it crashed most browsers. Also, some of the pictures that were uploaded were either too large or came from third-party providers that also slowed down load times in browsers. Both of these issues will be looked at carefully in the future (and guidelines set up) so that the blog doesn't crash all of the computers in the Internet Café in Chicago.

Our goals for the next conference are the same as at ALA Midwinter: To report on as many of the conference sessions as possible. This won't be easy as there are a lot more formal presentations at ALA Annual Conference than at Midwinter Meeting. How will we be able to do it? With more bloggers on staff. It is my hope to have more than forty blogging librarians writing about presentations, taking pictures, and having fun doing it. (If you're interested in participating, please contact me at stevenmcohen@gmail.com.)

What does the future of the PLA Blog hold? The fact that it was a hit at ALA Midwinter Meeting shows that there is a general interest in blogging conferences. While the details haven't been forged out yet (as of this writing), there are plans for the blog to be maintained year round. One of my goals is to utilize the resources at PLA to help start weblogs at the local level, whether that be in the reporting of conferences, workshops, or meetings, or working with libraries and librarians to start weblogs of their own. Weblogs have so much to add to the

library community. Time, hard work, creativity, and the assistance of public libraries and librarians will be the determining factor in their success. ■



Steven M. Cohen is a Librarian with PubSub Concepts in New York. He is also the creator of librystuff.net, a weblog dedicated to resources for keeping current and professional development. You can reach him at stevenmcohen@gmail.com. Steven M. Cohen would like to thank the following bloggers for making the PLA Blog a success at ALA Midwinter Meeting: Sophie Bookover, Nanette Wargo Donohue, Gabriel S. Farrell, Chris Jowaisas, Jenifer May, Jennie Pu, Beatrice Pulliam, Beth Gallaway, Rochelle Hartman, Andrea Mercado, and Karen G. Schneider. He would also like to thank Kathleen Hughes at PLA for her hard work in getting the blog together on such short notice. Cohen is currently reading *The Inner Circle* by T. C. Boyle, *Prep* by Curtis Sittenfeld, and *Please Don't Come Back from the Moon* by Dean Bakopoulos.

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Resources

- PLA Blog—www.plablog.org
- PLA Blog—Wireless access—www.plablog.org/2005/01/free-wifi-at-hynes-contention-ctr.html
- PLA Blog—Recommending Places to Eat—www.plablog.org/2005/01/charlies-sandwich-shoppe.html
- Blogger—www.blogger.com

Teaching Computers to Seniors

What Not to Do

Mary Kelly and Holly Hibner

The Salem–South Lyon (Mich.) District Library offers public computer classes for senior citizens. The classes have undergone drastic changes since their inception in 1998, and the instructors have learned valuable lessons in the process. This article explains how and why the instructional hardware and the teaching methods used have changed and details the success of the new format.

Librarians provide bibliographic instruction for a variety of reasons. Public libraries are more technology-oriented than ever, and patrons often need special training in order to use our online catalogs and databases. All patrons—senior citizens, teenagers, moms returning to work, business people, and others—have specific needs to be addressed in technology training. We learned this the hard way, and we would like to share what went wrong and how we changed our approach to bibliographic instruction, specifically for senior citizens. We have read about the librarians who always seem to do it right, but we feel it is just as important to share how not to do it. Let us spare you the lessons we learned the hard way!

Learning from Our Mistakes

Five years ago we had only a few public work stations. They seemed to be constantly in use. Initially, our idea to teach computers was to focus on those issues that kept coming up at the reference desk: How do I save to a disk? Can you help me set margins? How do I open my file? Word processing was the primary source of questions, so we began with a seminar in word processing. Seniors particularly seemed to have the most difficulty with computers.

Emerson states that most seniors prefer to learn in a hands-on environment.¹ He cites a survey carried out by the American Association of Retired Persons, which shows that 89 percent of seniors prefer hands-on training. This implies creating a computer lab, and we proceeded to do just that.

When we started creating our lab, we thought our equipment choices were pretty good, given that we are a small suburban library. We had six laptops with Windows

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98 and the Microsoft Office Suite. We also had an Internet connection with a cable running from each laptop into a central hub (which was placed on a cart in the middle of the library meeting room). The laptops had touch pads for mice. The meeting room had a good-sized closet for laptop storage, and comfortable tables and chairs. We were ready to go, and congratulated ourselves on how easy this would be for us. We would just pull the laptops out of the closet, set them up, and teach a class.

Equipment Mistakes

There were almost too many things wrong with this scenario to count. What had seemed like a brilliant idea in the beginning came back to haunt us several times over. We had ignored the most basic needs of our senior patrons. Not intentionally; we had concentrated on what was easiest for the instructors and the library rather than what was best for the senior learners.

While initially we had no control over the equipment we used, we immediately noticed that some serious errors had been made. Laptop computers were a poor choice for senior learners for many reasons.

First, the laptop keyboard was difficult to navigate. Most seniors had some familiarity with the typewriter, but the tiny laptop keyboards were awkward for them. Anyone with a twinge of arthritis experienced real torture.

The laptop screens were difficult to see, especially from an angle. Since we only had six laptops, we were doubling



Salem–South Lyon District Library patrons Andrew and Corrine Onuskanich attend every computer class they can during their summers in Michigan.

students up on each machine. Sharing the screen and keyboard was just about impossible.

The Internet access hub was quite a sight. The room was an intimidating maze of cords spilling out in every direction. This octopus of cords was an overwhelming sight for students who were apprehensive about equipment. In addition, whenever a senior with a cane or any difficulty walking came into the meeting room, we cringed at the potential safety hazard.

The biggest mistake of all, in regards to equipment, was the touchpad mice. As experienced computer users, we could not even make them work half the time! The students were constantly clicking by unknowingly tapping the touch pad and moving the mouse pointer around the screen with their sleeve. Clicking and dragging concepts were just not working with our equipment.

Instruction Mistakes

On top of the equipment problems, we realized that our methods were off the mark too. As we clued in to how seniors generally learn, we realized just how wrong we were. Hands-on instruction is important, but how that hands-on instruction is presented is also crucial.

We assumed too much. We used terms like “click on” and “Internet” without explaining ourselves. We took for granted that everyone knew these terms, and we used them freely and without clarification. No wonder the students were so slow to “click on” the icons. They didn’t know what they were supposed to do.

We tried to teach too many concepts at once. Thinking that more was better, we overlooked the fact that most students had difficulty with even the most basic computer functions. We jumped right into Web searches and changing margins when the students were still trying to understand how a mouse worked. We presented more than two hours worth of concepts to make sure our students got enough information. It was just too much information for one session.

Senior Learners

Of course, there are seniors who are technologically savvy, but we learned a lot about the average senior new



Salem-South Lyon District Library staff members Gerri Dorais and Mary Kelly

computer learner—stressing the words “average” and “new.”

We were not ready for how seniors deal with technology nor their approach to learning about technology. Many of them are very intimidated by technology changes—and not just computers. Many are overwhelmed by cell phones, cash machines, self-check out, VCRs, and other technology that the rest of us take in stride (or even for granted!).

The seniors in our computer classes were terrified that they would break something on the computer. They hesitated to touch the machines. This was a huge obstacle and a big difference from our younger learners. Younger people with the same level of computer knowledge will not hesitate to try out a computer. Seniors behave in just the opposite way.

Many of our senior students were baffled by computer jargon. It was equivalent to hearing a foreign language. Terminology was a barrier and stress-inducer for them. We also learned that seniors appreciate the opportunity to learn with their peers. They were intimidated when they had to share a computer with someone significantly younger. They wanted to learn with others who had similar backgrounds and experience levels. The Tremont branch of the New York Public Library installed special senior-friendly software on some of their computers and designated them for use by seniors only. Richard Sabino, a

librarian there, said, “Many of our senior patrons had expressed interest but were very intimidated, especially when very computer-savvy kids started coming in.”² Seniors welcome learning experiences that are specific to their age group.

Finally, seniors were mystified by the capabilities of computers. In many cases, they just could not fathom what a computer could do, and why they needed to use one, despite whatever their children and grandchildren told them. Toby Dichter, founder and chief executive of Generations On Line, said it best: “Why start with the complexities of understanding this technology for which they don’t yet perceive value?”³

Changes We Made

Mani points out that “patrons may feel that if they participate in a particular program that they are considered to be ‘information illiterate.’”⁴ She goes on to say that librarians must take a positive approach to teaching any information session. “If we alter our approach to instruction and foster a more positive environment that is conducive to learning, patron participation and feelings of confidence may increase, and so will their knowledge base and fluency level.”⁵ Our new approach to teaching computers to seniors revolves around this idea. We strive to make our classes as fun, stress-free, and informative as



Authors Holly Hibner and Mary Kelly show off a tablet PC

possible. The term “computer illiterate” is banned from our students’ terminology after the first class. We truly believe that they have learned something that they can take with them.

We changed our goal, and everything else followed suit. We started teaching computer classes to relieve some of the tech support we were doing at the reference desk. Our original goal was to give people an option for in-depth instruction away from the reference desk. Our new goal is to make people confident enough to try things on their own—to get on a computer and see what happens. We want to give them a foundation for future independent learning. We try to create a comfortable, nonstressful, enjoyable atmosphere for learning about computers. All the changes we have made return to this goal.

Changes in Equipment

First, the equipment had to change. When our library upgraded four of its public computers, we snagged the old computers for our classes. They only needed to support Windows 98, Microsoft Office Suite, and an Internet connection, so they were just fine for our instructional purposes. We put them on rolling carts and created a new “rolling lab.” We could roll them into a closet in the meeting room when they were not needed, and pull them out when we did.

These “new-old” computers had full-sized screens, full-sized keyboards, and traditional mice. We made the screen resolution a little bit bigger to accommodate another common senior problem—vision impairment. It was much easier for students to share a machine and still comfortably see, type, and click. They did not need to worry about fitting arthritic hands on a tiny laptop keyboard or not being able to see the icons. Additionally, these computers were more likely to resemble what we offered the public, and what students had available at home. Teaching concepts became much easier.

While the traditional mice were a big improvement over the touch pads, we noticed that learning to use a mouse was still a big stressor for many seniors. Arthritis, hand tremors, and sheer inexperience had them struggling to move the mouse pointer gracefully around the screen. Many of the seniors just could not hold the mouse still. We introduced a few trackball mice into the lab, and the tension immediately subsided. Because the ball and the buttons are independent of each other on trackballs, the seniors can easily move the mouse pointer around and then double-click without fear of moving the mouse pointer off the target. Trackballs are more ergonomic and comfortable for those with physical impairments, too.

The best equipment change we made was going wireless. We gave each

of the rolling lab computers a wireless Internet connection, eliminating the maze of cords around the room. The cleaner look and safer environment was less intimidating to everyone.

Changes in Instruction

Our original computer classes were two hours long. We noticed that after about an hour, the class participants started to glaze over and stopped paying attention. Worse than that, our own attention spans were not any longer. We shortened our classes to one hour and limited the number of concepts we presented.

Olgren indicates that courses should be structured so that the material is separated into controllable chunks.⁶ We learned to teach the students one way to do each task. Beginners did not need to know about menu bars, tool bars, right-click shortcuts, and keyboard shortcuts. It is better for the students to remember one way to do a task than to forget twenty. Focusing solely on the menu bar teaches the relationships between tasks and how Windows is organized.

We also learned to start with absolute basics. The students are told that there are no expectations. They are not expected to have ever laid eyes on a computer. We start with true basics like computer parts and terminology. The class begins with a lesson on how to turn the computer on. Carefully explaining the equipment in terms they are familiar with makes it easier for seniors to pick up on the vocabulary. The typewriter is technology that most seniors understand. By using this as a reference point, most seniors get the gist of word processing much more quickly.

Seniors begin to identify with how computers benefit them when they see examples that fit into their lifestyle. Choosing topics that are interesting to seniors helps them gain appreciation for technology and its capabilities. Popular activities are making mailing labels for holiday cards, searching for stock information on the Internet, and online travel planning.

Adams states that adults remember about 10 percent of what they hear, 50 percent of what they see and hear, 70 percent of what they can discuss learning with others, and 90 percent of what is demonstrated to them.⁷ We use a four-step approach to learning in our senior computer classes. For example, in teaching the class how to save a file, the students watch

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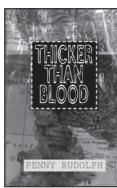


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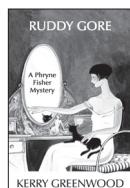


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the steps on the big screen first, then we do it all together in the hands-on environment. The class then talks the instructor through the steps once again on the big screen, telling the instructor where to click and what to do. Finally the instructor talks the class through the steps again. We accommodate all of the major learning styles in this way: the visual learners get to watch the procedure several times, the kinesthetic learners get to practice

the steps and demonstrate them aloud, and the auditory learners hear the steps verbally several times too. We believe we approach the 90 percent retention rate that is discussed by Adams.

Changes in Attitude

We began to realize that attitude is everything when teaching computers.

The instructor's attitude either creates tension in students or relieves it, and the students' attitudes toward learning affect the class too. Our first computer classes were very serious. We were new librarians, fresh out of library school, and we were going to provide our patrons with "bibliographic instruction." We felt very important and very professional. We also started to feel bored very quickly! The students were bored, the instructors were bored, and no one was having any fun. We were making the seniors feel like they had better pay attention and take notes, because what they were learning was critical to their future. This formal style created more tension for everyone.

We learned to have fun and to not take ourselves so seriously. We started team-teaching the classes and keeping it light. The team-teaching setup helped us play off one another to set the mood for energy and excitement. We make jokes at each others' expense, we make the students laugh, and we act silly.

For example, we made up chants to teach important ideas: the floppy disc goes in the computer "metal side first, dot side down" and "where the cursor is, is where you are." After completing one of our classes, we often see our senior students sitting at a public computer terminal, mouthing the words to the chants as they put in a floppy and find their cursor. Chanting breaks up the monotony and encourages the students to participate.

We have noticed that our students now laugh, participate better, and learn a lot more than they had with our original techniques. Going to a library computer class doesn't have to be so serious; it should encourage people to have a fun hour at the library, meet people who are in the same situation they are in with regards to technology, and build confidence.

Handouts

Every good class has a good set of handouts. Our theory on handouts is that if you give a brand new computer user a ten-page handout titled "Introduction to Computers," they will become overwhelmed because ten pages is a lot to memorize. We give our students one page when they walk through the door each session. They learn that page at whatever pace the class sets for itself. When the class is ready for another page, we give them another page. If we never get to the second page, the students do

not feel like they are behind or stupid. If we do get to the second page, they feel like they must be doing pretty well to get another handout. Each class is different, and the pace depends on the makeup of the particular class. Some students learn faster than others, and some learn slower. This is another area where team-teaching is beneficial. One librarian can teach the class as usual, and the other can help those who may need more individual attention, whether it be moving ahead of the class or catching up.

Our handouts are topic sheets, and each handout covers one topic. The first handout is "Computer Parts." The second is "Windows Words" (terminology). The third is "Minimize, Maximize, and Close." There are topic sheets for opening and saving, cutting and pasting, Internet terminology, Internet search tips, and more. One topic per page is our rule, because too much makes for overload. (Visit <http://salemouthlyonlibrary.info/adult/classhandouts.htm> to view all handouts.)

These handouts are similar to the "LTA (low-threshold application) Production Kits" that Steven Bell uses to instruct college faculty to use technology. He says that, "We often take for granted the inherent complexity or confusion of our information technologies, so develop the steps from the perspective of a completely inexperienced user."⁸ Bell uses screen shots and lays out his LTAs in steps required to accomplish each task. Bell recommends writing step-by-step text and using screen shots to show what those steps look like. He also suggests using the drawing tools in word processing programs to draw arrows to the screen shot to show where specific buttons are or where the user should look on the screen. Our handouts often include screen shots and step-by-step instructions, and Bell gives good advice to add drawn arrows to the screen shots. Our students appreciate seeing parts of the screen pinpointed, since computer screens can be overwhelming and intimidating to new users.

The Results Are In!

After five years of doing this, we can definitely see some positive results. As instructors, we have improved our computer skills. We tell our students that we are not experts, just confident and experienced users. The breadth of technology knowledge is huge, and a one-hour class

Salem-South Lyon Library's Computer Parts Handout

Computer Parts

Monitor

- The screen



Tower

- Holds the hard drive and the processor
- The "brains" of the computer are in here
- Where the disk drives are located



Mouse

- The pointing device.



Keyboard

- Similar to a typewriter, but with some extra keys.
- Allows you to input information.



Disks and Disk Drives

- The floppy drive is where you put a floppy disk (it goes in "metal side first, dot side down")
- A floppy disk is a *portable* storage device.
- The "hard drive" is located inside the tower. It *permanently* holds the hard disk.
- The CD-ROM drive is where you put a compact disc.



Power Button

- Powers on or off your computer.
- There is a power button on the tower, the monitor, and on some accessories like printers, speakers, and scanners.
- The mouse and keyboard do not have a power button. They plug into the tower, so they use the tower's power.

Reset Button

- Use this button to re-boot your computer if it "crashes" (stops responding), rather than powering off and then on again.
- The reset button is located on the tower.
- You only need to reset the main case (the other computer parts don't have reset buttons).
- Some new computers do not have reset buttons. These can be powered off with the power button without hurting the computer.

Salem-South Lyon District Library
<http://salemouthlyonlibrary.info/adult/classhandouts.htm>

FIGURE 1

is only going to get them on the road; it is not the whole trip!

More selfishly, we have spent less time at the reference desk doing tech support and more time on helping patrons find information. Over time, just about all of our regular patrons who use the public computers have sat through a class or two. It is so helpful to be able to offer a class when patrons are in over their heads. It is a nice alternative when you can't give those patrons the in-depth help they need during busy times at the reference desk.

Best of all, we have seen a huge improvement in our relationships with our patrons. They feel comfortable coming to us with other questions, and they refer their friends to the library. Many of them have started thinking of the library as a real source of information—and not just computer information. They have begun to see what the library can do for them in other capacities. The computer classes have brought attention to the library's reference services, the collection of materials, and other programs that we offer.

Computer classes can be one of the greatest services you can offer the public. The return for the library is equal to what students get out of the classes. What story times do for youth departments, a computer class can do for adult and senior services. ■

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The Public Library

An Early Teen's Perspective

**Sherry J. Cook, R. Stephen Parker,
and Charles E. Pettijohn**

This study examined the perceptions of more than six hundred teens in terms of their views of the Springfield/Greene County Public Library in Missouri. The results of this study indicate that teens respond positively to updated libraries that offer inviting spaces, specialized teen areas, food services, and other amenities. Creating awareness of the library through the use of e-mail, Web sites, and postcards may enhance usage rates. By determining the perceptions of future users and supporters of the public library system, staff should be better prepared to implement marketing strategies to compete with alternative information providers.

It all started with a request from a twelve-year-old. Could she and a group of friends go to a Barnes and Noble bookstore to hang out on a hot summer day? They wanted to be dropped off to browse through the stacks of books, listen to music, eat snacks in the café area, and then be picked up a couple of hours later by a nonintrusive parent-chauffeur.

Why did these youngsters not make the same request to go to their local public library, since those resources in Springfield, Missouri, the authors' hometown, were exemplary, with plenty of books and music, beautiful décor, and bistro-like cafés? What made the retail store okay in the mindset of what we will call an "early teen," while the public library was not even considered?

This became the impetus to create a research tool to measure how young teens perceive public libraries. Were libraries viewed as being decidedly "uncool" to this media-savvy Gen Y group? Or were libraries simply not "fighting" as hard or as effectively for the mindshare of young teens as others vying for their time and attention. These and other issues would be explored in trying to better understand this group and the role public libraries play in their lives.

Rivkah Sass, reference and information services coordinator at Multnomah County Library in Portland, Oregon, suggests that libraries are starting to fade into

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the background for the general public, ranking eleventh in places to search for information, and are presently seen as being a place that offers books for lending but lacking in terms of higher-level technology needs.¹ Sass further notes that libraries must now fight to gain the attention of information users, particularly young users, and are finding themselves in a situation in which they must battle for a positive position in a competitive marketplace.

As an initial step in understanding the young teen market, this study was designed to examine the attitudes of approximately six hundred early teens in terms of their views toward the public library system. By determining the perceptions of future users and supporters of the public library system, strategists should be better prepared to develop and implement marketing strategies and other plans that will enable public libraries to better compete with alternative information providers.

Research

Several previous studies have been conducted that examine attitudes of potential patrons of public libraries. The findings of these studies should serve as a warning to public libraries of the dangers of continuing with their current strategies. For example, a 1996 study conducted by the Benton Foundation found that the youngest respondents (18–24) were the least supportive of public libraries and their abilities to provide the services needed in a digital environment.² This finding is particularly worrisome to Elaine Meyers, former project coordinator for the Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development Initiative at the Urban Libraries Council, and author of "The Coolness Factor: Ten Libraries Listen to Youth." She suggests the future of libraries may very well depend upon the degree to which the opinions and input from young people are used in the formulation of marketing strategies.³

Meyers reports on the Public Libraries As Partners in Youth Development initiative that was funded by the DeWitt Wallace–Readers Digest Fund and conducted between November 1998 and May 1999. Funds were awarded to public libraries in ten major urban areas to conduct surveys

of young people in an attempt to reveal their views regarding public libraries. The results of these interviews revealed the following attitudes: libraries are not cool; they are frequented by nerds, dorks, and dweebs; library staff is not helpful or friendly; teens need more access to technology and more training in using it; teens want help with their school projects and research; libraries need to provide better books and mate-

approximately 16.7 hours a week on the Internet, in addition to approximately 13.6 hours watching television.⁵ There is little doubt that technology plays a major role in the early teen lifestyle. Stephanie Azzarone, president of Child's Play Communications, finds that early teens are presently using the following technologies: Television (99 percent), VCR (95 percent), PC (88 percent), Internet (76 percent), Video game equipment

find the public library a place that they would wish to visit on a regular basis. Secondly, we wished to determine what specific types of behaviors might be associated with early teens and library use. This question is based upon the supposition that early teens are heavily involved in technology and that if the public library is simply seen as a building that houses books, it is not likely to be viewed as an acceptable source of current information. The third research question examines the differences between early teens' behaviors based upon demographic differences. This question specifically examines the sample to determine if there are differences in attitudes based upon gender and age. By combining the results of these research questions, a public library would be in a much better position to formulate successful youth and teen strategies.

... it is vital that libraries pay attention to the opinions of younger users if these individuals are to become long-term users of library services.

rials; teens need welcoming spaces—not morgues; library hours of service are not convenient to teens; teens want jobs and volunteer service opportunities; libraries need to eliminate restrictive rules and fees; teens offered to help make libraries better. While these comments are not particularly flattering, they do provide guidance, and fortunately, they raise concerns that are not that difficult to correct with the proper remediation strategies.

Early Teens As a Target Market

As previously noted, it is vital that libraries pay attention to the opinions of younger users if these individuals are to become long-term users of library services. The early teen market is an obvious place to begin in developing strategy. Kantrowitz et al., in their 1999 *Newsweek* article, "The Truth about Tweens," report that this group encompasses approximately twenty-seven million children between the ages of eight and fourteen, which represents the largest number of this age group in twenty years.⁴ Furthermore, these early teens are described as being extremely well-educated, having expectations of going on to college, and representing approximately \$14 billion per year in spending power. Kantrowitz et al. also note that this group tends to be very optimistic in their approaches to life and, contrary to stereotypes, early teens view their parents as their most important influencers in terms of morals and life goals.

Additionally, much has been written about early teens' use of leisure time. Teens in the United States spend

(75 percent), DVD player (75 percent), Instant Messaging (60 percent), E-mail (52 percent), Portable video games (50 percent), and Digital cable (38 percent).⁶ Azzarone further notes that early teens are not giving up older technologies, but are adding new technologies. This is of particular importance in designing strategies for libraries, because if early teens are currently using technology to locate information, but view the library as simply a place to store old books, they are unlikely to place the library high on their lists of informational sources. Turner seems to agree that the library must promote itself to specific groups or it will become "... a lifeless institution that misses its aim ..." and that librarians must take new approaches and attitudes toward actively marketing their libraries.⁷

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer several research questions regarding early teens' behaviors and attitudes as they relate to the public library system. First, as a group of marketing professors with ties to the public library in our community, we sought to discover the overall attitudes early teens hold about public libraries to provide insights for our own library system. This question was based upon the previously mentioned research conclusions of the Benton Foundation suggesting that eighteen to twenty-four year-old respondents to their surveys were the least supportive of public libraries. If this finding carries over to the early teen generation, we would anticipate that early teens would not

The Sample

The sample used in this study consisted of 616 students attending public or private schools in Springfield, Missouri, a Midwest city representing a trade area of approximately 800,000 people. The Springfield-Greene County public library system is comprised of eight branches throughout the county. In 2002, citizens of the county voted to increase the operating tax levy, which allowed for more hours, more technology, and a new library center. The two largest of the eight branches offer dedicated teen spaces, coffee shops, dining facilities, community rooms, and gift shops, along with other amenities. Selected sixth-, seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade teachers from six different middle and secondary schools representing a diversity of students in terms of gender, age, and socio-economic backgrounds, and who would tend to be served by different branches of the public library, were asked to distribute a self-response questionnaire to their students. Students were assured of their anonymity and that the data would be reported in the aggregate. The questions included were scaled questions, requiring the students to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with attributes of public libraries. Additionally, to gain further insights, open-ended questions were also asked to further understand their preferred activities, media, Web sites, as well as top-of-mind perceptions of the Springfield-Greene County Library sys-

tem. Of the students who completed the questionnaire, 182 (30 percent) were sixth graders, 216 (35.6 percent) were seventh graders, 181 (29.8 percent) were eighth graders, and 28 (4.6 percent) were ninth graders. Students reported their gender as being 283 (46.9 percent) male and 321 (53.1 percent) female.

Findings

The first research question sought to discover the overall attitudes that early teens hold in terms of their views of the public library system. Table 1 clearly shows that the public library system meets the needs of the vast majority of the early teens responding to this study. They visit the library for purposes other than research for school. They tend to go to the library to check out books and enjoy the restaurants. They find the people working at the library to be nice and disagree that the library is old fashioned and stuffy. The primary problems that seem to exist are that this segment of the population still has no means of getting to the library without a driver's help. Furthermore, research suggests they need to be reminded more often of the library and the resource it offers them. It appears that teens would attend activities sponsored by the library if a friend

invited them. The responses indicate that the public library has the opportunity to appeal to early teens in terms of some type of social activity. The library may very well be a place where this segment feels comfortable and willing to meet their friends for social events.

The second research question was intended to determine the types of behaviors, which might be associated with early teens and library use. The responses are shown in table 2. As previous studies have indicated, early teens are very involved with technology. The vast majority of the respondents report that they use the Internet on a daily basis, like to surf the Web, and like to get e-mail. It is interesting to note that they also enjoy family activities, eating out with their friends, reading books, participating in sports, playing video games, and browsing through stores such as Barnes & Noble. Each of these activities could be exploited by the public library in an attempt to gain new consumers at an early age since libraries offer many of the activities cited as enjoyable to young teens. For example, while parents may be hesitant to drop their teen off at the mall or a store such as Barnes & Noble, they may be much more inclined to drop them off at the public library. If the teen's perception was that the library

would be a fun place to be as they would have access to a restaurant, the Internet, video games, and a wide assortment of interesting books and magazines, they may be much more willing to go than if their perceptions are those of a typical library scenario. The answer may be as simple as directly communicating with teens to let them know they are welcome and that these services or activities are available to them.

The third research question examined the differences age and gender might have on the attitudes held by early teens. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether significant differences existed in attitudes towards libraries that might be attributed to the respondent's age. When age is considered several rather apparent problems arise. Of particular interest is that when each question was considered using ANOVA, the overall image of the public library tends to decline steadily with age. In almost every case, by the time these students reached the eighth grade, the use and acceptance of the library had diminished rather dramatically. While the reasons for this are probably varied and beyond the scope of this paper, it would seem reasonable that as teens get older and have the ability to drive, their choices are rather dramatically

TABLE 1

Early Teens' Views of the Public Library

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I think the public library offers services that meet my needs.	30	4.9	45	7.3	134	21.8	249	40.5	157	25.5
I like to go to the public library.	53	8.6	93	15.1	141	22.0	201	32.0	128	20.8
I rarely go to the public library.	114	18.5	143	23.2	80	13.0	180	29.2	99	16.1
I don't go to the public library because I do my school work on the Internet.	55	8.9	78	12.7	142	23.1	177	28.7	164	26.6
I use computers for things other than research when I go to the public library.	85	13.8	80	13	126	20.5	145	23.5	180	29.2
I use the public library for school research projects.	106	17.2	125	20.3	132	21.5	174	28.3	78	12.7
I have called the public library for help with schoolwork.	345	56.0	162	26.3	74	12.0	25	4.1	10	1.6
I like to check out books at the public library.	67	10.9	86	14	122	19.8	198	32.1	143	23.2
People who work at the public library are nice to me.	20	3.2	33	5.4	149	24.2	228	37.1	185	30.1
I have gone to teen activities sponsored by the library.	313	50.8	147	23.9	103	16.7	26	4.2	27	4.4
I would go to teen activities sponsored by the library if I knew about them.	143	23.3	121	19.7	138	22.4	135	21.9	78	12.7
I would go to teen activities sponsored by the library if a friend invited me to go.	68	11.1	58	9.4	104	16.9	251	40.8	134	21.8
I go to the public library because my parents suggested it.	102	16.6	144	23.4	158	25.7	147	23.9	64	10.4
I like the way the public library looks.	41	6.7	41	6.7	168	27.3	253	41.0	113	18.3
I would go to the public library more if I just thought	79	12.8	123	20	157	25.5	180	29.2	77	12.5
The fact that services are free at the public library is important to me.	42	6.8	69	11.2	125	20.3	194	31.5	186	30.2
I like the restaurants in the public library.	36	5.9	40	6.5	133	21.6	165	26.8	241	39.2
I would go to the public library more if I had transportation.	98	15.9	132	21.5	143	23.3	114	18.6	127	20.7
Libraries are old fashioned and stuffy.	184	29.9	182	29.6	130	21.1	75	12.2	44	7.2

increased. If there has not been a pattern of use behavior established early on, it will be much harder to bring them back as an older teen. As the Benton study suggests, this lack of support continues well into young adulthood. Additionally,

at the library are nice to me; I would go to teen activities at the library; I like the way the library looks; and I like the restaurants at the library.

Despite this drop-off in use, the survey data indicates that public librari-

ply helping them with their homework. More emphasis should be placed on cafés, technology, and making the teen feel comfortable in the library. As most teens indicated that they enjoyed receiving both mail and e-mail, it is likely that having someone at the library make a direct contact with the teen would help make an early teen feel more welcome, as well as keeping the library in the forefront of their mind when they choose activities. Placing a librarian, familiar with young teens, to be in charge of developing activities for early teens, as well as letting teens help develop activities, may also be beneficial in enticing this younger audience to the library.

... public libraries are in a position to increase the likelihood that younger teens seek and enjoy the services that can be provided by public libraries.

Kantrowitz et al. suggest that organizations are interested in youth markets "because it's an opportunity to lock in highly impressionable consumers."⁸ James McNeal, professor of marketing at Texas A & M University, is quoted in Kantrowitz as saying, "They have more market potential than any other demographic group simply because they have all their purchases ahead of them."⁹ If the public library has not reinforced the positive attributes that teens hold early, they will find alternative avenues of fulfilling their needs.

Along with age differences in library use, there were also differences in the perceptions of the public library based upon one's gender. Females were much more inclined to rate the services of the library higher than were males. This was particularly true for rated statements such as: I like to go to the library; I like to check out books; People who work

ies are in a position to increase the likelihood that younger teens seek and enjoy the services that can be provided by public libraries. This is supported by their positive response to questions regarding activities associated with what the public library can offer (see table 1). For example more than 55 percent surveyed stated they liked to go to the library, 67 percent said the library met their needs and 56 percent said they liked to check out books at the public library. Furthermore, almost 41 percent said they would go more if they just thought about it. Finally, when assessing the Springfield Public Libraries, only 18 percent of those surveyed said that libraries are old fashioned and stuffy.

So with appropriate strategies, public libraries can be relevant to young teen patrons. However, it will require the library to focus more on the social aspects of a teen's life rather than sim-

Conclusion

Some of the research cited in this study, as well as other studies, suggests that many public libraries are perceived negatively by teens. It seems that many of these perceptions are based on stereotypes held by teens or by stereotypes of what librarians think teens think. These stereotypes include the perceptions that libraries are locations that store books, have long tables, and have prim and proper old maids who supervise and demand "mature decorum." However, the results of this research indicate that teens seem to respond positively to libraries that have addressed these negative stereotypes. These actions include the creation of inviting spaces,

TABLE 2

Early Teen Behavior

Statement	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I use the Internet daily	84	13.6	97	15.8	79	12.8	141	22.9	215	34.9
I like to read books	62	10	48	7.8	101	16.4	192	32.1	213	34.6
I like to surf the web	32	5.2	31	5.0	63	10.2	186	30.2	304	49.4
I like to eat out with my friends.	14	2.3	18	2.9	49	8.0	163	26.5	370	60.3
I like to get mail at home	23	3.7	22	3.6	52	8.5	194	31.5	324	52.7
I like to get e-mail	51	8.3	30	4.9	81	13.2	162	26.4	289	47.2
I read my e-mail daily	111	18.1	93	15.2	122	19.9	124	20.3	162	26.5
I enjoy family activities	12	2.0	22	3.6	80	13.0	335	54.5	165	26.9
I like to go to Barnes & Noble to hang out	94	15.3	138	22.5	152	24.8	140	22.8	90	14.6
I like to go to Barnes & Noble to browse through books	54	8.8	83	13.5	98	15.9	222	36.0	159	25.8
I like the snack areas at Barnes & Noble	33	5.4	58	9.4	158	25.7	211	34.3	155	25.2
I usually buy a book or CD when I go to Barnes & Noble	32	5.2	87	14.1	115	18.7	227	36.8	155	25.2
The way a store looks, smells, and is decorated is important to me	61	9.9	113	18.3	120	19.5	185	30.0	137	22.3

specialized teen areas and activities, food service, and other amenities.

This survey further suggests that even though teens responded positively to updated libraries, almost 40 percent stated that they rarely go to the library and almost 43 percent said they would go more if they simply thought about it. Thus, from a library's perspective, one surmountable challenge entails placing libraries in the teen market's evoked set and thereby obtaining top-of-mind awareness. This challenge is exemplified by the finding that few teens had attended a teen activity (8.6 percent), but almost 35 percent said they would attend if they knew about it. Perhaps even more telling, more than 62 percent would attend an event if a friend invited them to go.

As for specific strategies, this study suggests opportunities exist to reach young teens electronically—via e-mail

and compelling Web sites. However, low-tech strategies should not be overlooked. Young teens indicated a positive attitude about receiving mail. Something as simple as a postcard announcing an upcoming event might prove beneficial. Also, peers played an important role in influencing this group. The survey suggests that utilizing teen opinion leaders may pay large dividends. Finally, these survey findings would suggest that promoting to parents, as a secondary target market, might prove effective as well since the survey indicates young teens are still very affected by family influences. ■

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Public Printer Bruce James Announces New Appointees to the Depository Library Council

Bruce James, the public printer of the United States, announced the appointment of five new depository library council (DLC) members during the 2005 spring depository library council meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"We have gathered a superior group of individuals dedicated to continuing the important mission of providing all Americans with access to government information. These new members bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the council as we forge ahead with our common goal to ensure the digital future of information dissemination," James said.

As members of DLC, appointees serve as advisors on policy matters pertaining to the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). The core task of FDLP is to provide access to the American public through the dissemination of information products from all three branches of government to the more than 1,250 libraries across the country participating in the program. The FDLP involves the acquisition, dissemination, and distribution of depository materials and the coordination of Federal Depository Libraries across the country.

The five new DLC members are:

Peter Hemphill is a senior manager of software development with Information Handling Services in Englewood, Colorado. He has been in the information technology field for more than twenty-five years, specializing in large-scale computer system application design and development and maintenance of worldwide data collection for engineering and technical information. He is an expert on version control.

Marian Parker is presently serving as associate dean for information services, director of the Professional Center Library, and professor of law at Wake Forest University. Parker's law and library background include her serving as

associate librarian for research services and administration and acting director of the Harvard Law School Library. She was also director of the New York University Law Library.

Linda Saferite is CEO of the Tulsa City-County Library and was recently awarded Tulsa's Pinnacle Award for Arts and Humanities. Tulsa City-County Library was named the first-ever Federal Depository Library of the Year in 2003. Linda has served as library director in Fort Collins, Colorado, and Scottsdale, Arizona. She is past chair of the AMIGOS Library Services board serving seven Southwestern states.

Mark Sandler is collection development officer for the University of Michigan Library. Throughout his tenure at Michigan, Sandler has been instrumental in digitalization initiatives and the Google E-Print partnership. He previously served as chair of the chief collection development officers of large research libraries discussion group.

Geoffrey Swindells is head of the government documents department at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He also serves as regional federal depository librarian for Missouri. Swindell's expertise on the preservation and digitization of government documents has been referenced in a recent Rare and Endangered Government Publications (REGP) report. He is an active member of the American Library Association's government documents roundtable.

The DLC advises the public printer and superintendent of documents on matters related to the FDLP. The council consists of fifteen members with diverse expertise from the government information community who each serve three-year terms. The council meets biannually and the public printer appoints five members every year. For more information about the FDLP or the GPO, please visit www.gpo.gov.

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Honors a public library director who, over a period of seven (7) years, has been a risk taker, an innovator and/or a change agent in a public library. The recipient should have been active in national and other professional associations and be known for developing and implementing programs that are responsive to the needs of community residents. The award consists of \$1,000 and a gift. Sponsored by Baker & Taylor.

★ Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award

Honors a public library serving a population of 10,000 or less that demonstrates excellence of service to its community as exemplified by an overall service program or a special program of significant accomplishment. Award includes a plaque and a \$1,000 honorarium contributed by EBSCO Subscription Services.

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Lasting Lessons in Leadership

How a Former Book Trade Rep Took a Library from Good to Truly Great

Gary Deane

The recent series of events related to threatened closures of several branches and central services at the Regina (S.K.) Public Library have drawn international attention. However, the library has been in the news before, having been put firmly on the map by former chief librarian Ron Yeo, whose extraordinary vision and leadership led to a new order in Canadian public libraries. Though he passed away several years ago, Yeo's lessons in leadership today are more meaningful than ever—in a time when many public libraries are struggling to hold their place in a society that often fails to apprehend their role or value.

In November 2003, when facing cuts to its funding, the Regina (S.K.) Public Library (RPL) board announced a decision to close three branch locations as well as the library's prairie history room and its nationally regarded art gallery. The community responded in anger, with the protest being led by the RPL's own Friends of the Library. The group first mobilized a massive petitioning that ultimately gathered more than 26,000 signatures and then followed with legal actions challenging both the board's and the city of Regina's very authority to enact such closures.

Though the cases did go to court, they were lost in April 2004. Undeterred, the Friends moved to have the provincial government amend public library legislation toward having library board members publicly elected, rather than appointed by city council, thus making the board more directly accountable to the public.

In the meantime, a concerned city council intervened in the board's 2004 budget process by directing the library to use more than \$700,000 from its reserves to avoid the closures in the shorter term. In protest, four board members resigned over what

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they deemed an affront to the board's authority. Last August, a reconstituted board announced that it would maintain services until such time that the public had been consulted and a new plan for the library system developed. And then on January 17 of this year, the board issued a press release announcing, "Library Director Sandy Cameron is leaving his employment as Library Director today" saying that "We (the Board) felt that we needed to have a change in the leadership of the library as part of our new approach to operating the library."¹

This never-ending story has garnered international attention, with stories and updates appearing in publications such as *American Libraries* and *Library Journal*, as well as through a steady posting of related news items to LISNews.com. However, what was not clear in the telling is *why* so many in this isolated prairie capital of fewer than 200,000 would react so vehemently to the proposed service cuts.

In fact, there are several threads to the story, some of them having to do with the unique political and social culture of Saskatchewan itself, a province that gave birth to such very Canadian institutions as socialized medicine and healthcare, as well as agricultural marketing boards, state-run auto insurance, liquor control, telecommunications, power, and other government-controlled and run monopolies.

Equally, it is a place that has long-championed its public library systems—with no greater support being given than by the citizens and taxpayers of Regina. In fact, the library first came to international attention more than a decade ago as a result of its consistent posting over time of some of the highest per capita funding and output statistics on the continent.

Ironically, these library milestones came about as a result of the efforts and determination of a man who came to Saskatchewan only later in life and one who would never have been mistaken for a prairie progressive or social democrat. He was, however, a public library leader of extraordinary dimension who presided over the transformation and growth of a library system that became known as one of the most innovative and successful in North America.

From 1972 to 1988, Ron Yeo served as chief librarian of RPL. This library system, for which so many have fought in defense of its support and reputation, continues to be remembered in Regina and in Canada as having come to greatness during Yeo's tenure. What follows is an account of his legacy of leadership—organizational, community, and professional—and these are his lessons.

Lesson 1: Want to Succeed

One of the essential traits of leadership is a readiness and ability to take calculated risks toward attaining success. Whether or not he was a true “bettin’ man,” Ron Yeo was more than ready and able to make the bets that he felt needed to be made on behalf of the library. He was never slow to make them and during his time as head of RPL, he would make many—nearly all of them winning.

It was true that under the prior administration of Marjorie Dunlop, RPL had been well-enough regarded, as was its sister institution in Saskatoon, led by the redoubtable Frances Morrison. However, whatever similarities there may have been between Regina and Saskatoon (and for that matter, between Regina and most other public libraries) began to quickly erode following Yeo’s appointment.

Ron Yeo came to Regina with fire in his belly. Into his forties at the time he graduated from the University of

was to succeed Dunlop, who was scheduled to retire. The decision to move to Saskatchewan from Toronto was not without personal challenges for Yeo and his family—but it was a decision that few would come to regret and many would celebrate.

In some quarters, Yeo’s arrival in Regina was viewed by his peers at best with caution and at worst with outright alarm. No one quite knew what to expect of a man some regarded as “not enough of the profession.” Many thought he had not paid his dues. However, Yeo soon found and took his place. His commitment to the public library cause became evident, as did his intention to begin to move RPL, and any other libraries paying attention, in a new direction.

Lesson 2: Have a Central Vision

Yeo’s vision for public libraries was clear and was driven by the conviction that they must fundamentally change the way they do business. Primarily he was looking toward the creation of public libraries that were much more open and responsive. He firmly believed that libraries needed to find more and better ways to engage existing users and to win over and confirm others, never taking it as a given that people would use libraries just because

opportunities to get the library message and product out in front.

Most importantly to Yeo, this meant libraries that were both better-managed and more cognizant of user needs (he was the first person the author ever heard refer to library users as customers). At Regina, this belief would find its way everywhere into library operations—from the way in which reference services were to be organized and delivered (in teams, structured around both professionals but also highly trained paraprofessionals) to how new suburban branches were to be brought on (ahead of all other development to ensure the library’s physical anchorage and service presence in the community).

Lesson 3: Share the Power

Yeo soon got down to working with the library board and staff to realize his vision. He told senior staff members that the responsibility for making the kinds of changes he envisioned would be a shared one. He both wanted and expected them to think for themselves and to be forceful in bringing forward their ideas. He didn’t want just housekeepers, and as opportunity permitted, he began to actively recruit department heads and managers who were aggressive self-starters and were comfortable with being given enough rope to hang themselves.

A prime example was Anne Campbell, whom Yeo hired because he decided he needed an experienced public relations professional on his senior management team. A non-librarian, Campbell was brought in at the department head level, allowing her to work directly with Yeo and the board, and giving her considerable functional authority across the system. Few public libraries showed such a position on their organizational charts and even fewer invested it at that level.

Campbell was one of the first people working in a Canadian library to hold the designation of certified public relations professional, and she sat at the table in the capacity of what today would be chief marketing officer, responsible for development and execution of marketing programs to support the overall business goals of the organization. Thus, she was called upon to sit at a lot of tables. Virtually every library policy discussion, program initiative, or service option would be weighed and measured according to its

He firmly believed that libraries needed to find more and better ways to engage existing users and to win over and confirm others, never taking it as a given that people would use libraries just because they were there and had good things to offer.

Toronto’s Faculty of Library Science in 1966, he was starting out in libraries at an age when most people are mid-career. Yeo had been a successful manager in the book trade, but now needed to make up for both lost time and opportunity in his newly chosen profession.

He was first hired by John Dutton, the formidable director of the North York (Ont.) Public Library. Yeo stayed with Dutton and North York until 1971, when he got the offer to go to RPL. He

they were there and had good things to offer. He thought that librarians’ notions of their own importance should correspond to those of their users and that libraries had to act to connect with users in ways that they would appreciate and most value. His many years in the business world told him that libraries only could benefit by going to where their markets were. To get there, they had to start to think and act more like marketing organizations and look for

potential to extend the library's reach within the community. It became apparent that Yeo was setting out to create a new brand for the library—one focused around a commitment to the needs of the public rather than narrow professional beliefs and authorities. Campbell's office was to ensure that the library's message would be consistent and held to. Campbell eventually left RPL for a position with the Saskatchewan Roman Catholic Archdiocese and is now a full-time writer.

Lesson 4: Be Strategic

Yeo admittedly was anxious to look at fresh program opportunities that would give added or new value for users. However, he wisely began by granting priority to existing programs that, if revamped and properly leveraged, could achieve the same ends.

One of these was RPL's Art Gallery (later to become the Dunlop Art Gallery), which was part of the central library. Though Yeo would be the first to admit he did not know that much about art, he realized there were many in Regina who did, especially among the city's influentials. Curator Wayne Morgan received increased support and began offering a greater richness of programming with shows by newer artists such as Joe Fafard and David Thauberger, both headed for national acclaim and international recognition.

Morgan also gave his passion for popular culture freer reign, producing exhibitions like *Tilt! Pinball Machines 1931–1958* in which the gallery was transformed into a working vintage pinball arcade. The show was a huge hit with the public and the media and later toured for a year through major Canadian art galleries. Morgan went on to the Winnipeg Art Gallery and subsequently became a freelance curator and writer in Grimsby, Ontario.

When Morgan left, Yeo hired Peter White, an edgy and highly connected young gallery director from Toronto, who dramatically upped the cultural ante in Regina. White curated a series of conceptually brilliant, but highly accessible shows that were reviewed in the *Globe and Mail* and *MacLean's*, both major national publications—furthering the library's growing reputation as a hugely vibrant and exciting public institution. White later became the director of the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon.

He now lives in Montreal, Quebec and is freelance curator and consultant with an international client group.

Lesson 5: Keep a Wide-Open Mind

A less likely project to which Yeo gave his endorsement was RPL's Film Theatre. This was the brainchild of Margaret Scratch, RPL's head of reference (who later became a consultant with the Southern Ontario Library Service, was the 2001 recipient of the Ontario Library Association's Librarian of the Year award, and has since retired) and Jim Hall, supervisor of audio visual services. Under Yeo, he began what became the largest public library audio-services department outside of the Toronto area, at one time accounting for more than 30 percent of the central library's circulation. Hall went on to become a prominent Regina lawyer. They both thought that it would be good if people had access to screenings of international and independent movies available elsewhere, but not so easily found in Regina. The two pitched a proposal to Yeo that would have the library begin to regularly present new feature entertainment films, and charge admission to cover costs. Again, Yeo may have cared little about foreign or "art" movies with subtitles (and often it was just as well that he did not). However, among his greatest assets as a leader was that he kept an open mind, making a conscious effort to look beyond his own limitations or prejudices. He decided to take the Film Theatre forward.

Lesson 6: Don't Back Off from Conflict

The Film Theatre, which launched in 1974, proved an instant success and soon was screening four evenings a week, two showings per night. However, later when the auditorium was upgraded and its projection system changed to 35mm, the Saskatchewan Film Exhibitors' Association in an unholy alliance with the Provincial Film Classification Board challenged the library's move into what they said looked like commercial film exhibition and threatened to shut down the operation. Yeo stood what ground he felt was his, arguing that RPL had every right to provide the program, both

as permitted under the Public Libraries Act and as a project falling within the library's cultural mandate. As it became evident that the library was prepared to go to court if that's what the classification board really wanted, the agency conceded and the Film Theatre went on to establish itself as a continuing and vital part of the cultural life of the community.

Lesson 7: Make Some Key Commitments

Yeo offered his strategic support to a number of exceptional projects that extended the library's cultural presence and recreational role in the community. He also showed his commitment to initiatives and projects that would support and strengthen the library's primary role as an information provider and platform for literacy and learning. That commitment was confirmed by his abiding belief in the principles of intellectual freedom and equity of access and, accordingly, one of the achievements of which he was the most proud was RPL's Learning Center.

The concept for a library learning and literacy center had been presented to him by Sarah Landy, RPL's head of adult services. Landy proposed a program that would enable and provide community-based literacy training and associated learning opportunities for children. It would also offer resources for parents and teachers, including access to the services of a clinical psychologist to be employed by the library. A graduate psychologist as well as a librarian, Landy later left RPL to pursue doctoral studies and become a practicing psychologist and researcher.

Yeo was impressed by Landy's proposal. He won board approval for what was to be one of the first and most ambitious library-sponsored child literacy programs in Canada, providing a delivery model that libraries in Canada and other countries were to follow. The program eventually would expand to include adult learners, largely through the efforts of a young and extraordinarily dedicated new hire, Mary Cavanagh. (Cavanagh eventually went on to work at public libraries in Kingston, Ontario, and Ottawa. She is currently project manager of the Ottawa *SmartLibraries* project and is completing a Ph.D. in information and knowledge management at the University of Toronto.) Yeo's commitment to literacy development

later was appropriately recognized by the University of Regina, which awarded him an honorary doctorate.

Lesson 8: Act with Conviction

Yeo was the kind of a leader who resolutely seized the territory he needed to serve and advance the library's mission. He made a point of pursuing opportunities to increase both basic literacy and active reading in the community. He was wholehearted in his support of Canadian writing and publishing, and the library's ambitious literary promotions and events became another of its

they would be provided, and who would provide them. Yeo listened and ended up recommending that the library board sign a partnership agreement with the city's North Central Community Society. Thus the Albert Community Library Committee was born, a successful community partnership that continues to be a model for extra-board library governance relationships. For more information, visit the [Albert Library](http://www.reginalibrary.ca/albert.html) (www.reginalibrary.ca/albert.html).

The arrangement initially presented a daunting array of issues for RPL—everything from labor relations matters to operational questions. True to form, Yeo saw only opportunity, one that

Yeo was the kind of a leader who resolutely seized the territory he needed to serve and advance the library's mission. He made a point of pursuing opportunities to increase both basic literacy and active reading in the community.

cornerstones. He persuaded the board to underwrite an ongoing writer-in-residence program (another first for Canadian libraries) in order to give would-be Saskatchewan writers and others ready access to well-known Canadian authors such as Lorna Crozier, Myrna Kostash, and Janet Lunn. On one occasion, Yeo authorized library purchase of ten complete sets of books shortlisted for the Canadian Association of Children's Libraries' awards—one set for each member of the selection committee. He did this when he found out that some of the librarians on the committee did not have access within the holdings of their respective institutions.

Lesson 9: Exceed Expectations

In 1981 staff recommended closure of an inner-city branch because of falling use. The location was an older Carnegie building in a neighborhood heavily populated by First Nations' indigenous people and the Métis, mixed-blood aborigines. In response, the local community society came forward with a proposal that would give the community a direct and meaningful say in what services and programs the branch would provide, how

could rescue a library location from possible closure, as well as addressing equity of access challenges to which the library perhaps had been slow to respond. In further acknowledgement of this, he then had the library's outreach service extended to the Regina Correctional Institute, a prison facility in which much of the inmate population was of aboriginal origin.

Lesson 10: Harness Respect

To manage the implementation of the partnership agreement, Yeo looked to Maureen Woods, a young activist librarian whose political savvy and organizational acumen ultimately made for the success of the project. As time went on, Yeo found himself with a larger and larger selection of quality candidates like Woods from whom he was able to select for his team. Despite supposedly being in the middle of nowhere, the library was building a national reputation for dynamic leadership and had become a true magnet library for smart, young librarians and managers from across the country with hurried ambition and the right attitude. Woods later became Saskatchewan provincial librarian and is now director, public

library services branch, in the province of British Columbia.

Lesson 11: Favor the Best

One of those new managers was André Gagnon, whom Yeo hired away from Toronto to be RPL's head of children's services. Gagnon was someone who demonstrated the spirit of constructive discontent that Yeo was pleased to encourage. Gagnon soon placed Regina's children's programs on the national stage and became widely known for his tireless advocacy on behalf of children's services in libraries both through his articles and work on countless committees, boards, and advisory groups (including as a member of the jury for the Governor General of Canada's Award for Children's Fiction). Gagnon also obtained a masters of public administration degree and has continued his career as head of public services at RPL. Most recently, he initiated and secured the funding for a celebrated national research study called *Opening Doors to Children*, which had provided a mass of data to help libraries better meet the informational and recreational needs of children, as well as enabling them to develop the critical marketing plans needed to reach those in the middle-years.

Lesson 12: Make More Leaders

Yeo encouraged his staff to move beyond organizational leadership to professional stewardship—as a way for both individuals and their sponsoring institutions to advance the cause of public libraries and the profession. Yeo himself served as president of the Canadian Library Association (CLA) and chaired the National Library of Canada Advisory Board. His deputy, Ken Jensen, later served as chief librarian from 1989 to 1999 and headed up both the Saskatchewan and Canadian library associations. (He now runs an eco-tourism company in southeastern Saskatchewan.) Penny Marshall, head of branch services and active in the Canadian Association of Public Libraries while at Regina, later took a turn as CLA president. She eventually left Regina to become university librarian at the University College of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. For more than a decade, RPL staff and board members assumed primary leadership of many of the professional associations to which they belonged.

Yeo also was committed to underwriting management and leadership training for senior staff. In 1983, he approved the first of many leaves and sabbaticals to be taken under different funding and support arrangements. Under the program Yeo initiated, Gagnon studied for an MPA, Jean Dirksen, head of adult services, went for her MBA, and Peter White, his MFA in arts administration. (Dirksen later became assistant chief librarian at RPL. She recently retired as director of the Fraser Valley Regional Library in British Columbia.) Several department heads and managers who had been hired with credentials other than an MLS also were able to attend library school to obtain their professional designation.

Yeo believed that there was nothing wrong (and a lot right) in hiring for attitude and aptitude, then providing training for skills. When Yeo retired in 1988, the library board continued to honor his commitment to learning by establishing the Ron F. Yeo Bursary Fund, which would award a scholarship each year to a promising individual intending to pursue a career in public library management.

Lesson 13: Don't Confuse Scholarship with Leadership

In spite of Yeo's achievements, a one-time colleague of his to whom the author spoke in preparation for this article said that while she acknowledged his efforts she had never found him to be that personally impressive. Despite the great measure of his accomplishments, Yeo may not have measured up to the expectations of some of his more traditional peers. He probably was not as erudite or grandiloquent as some of them felt a chief librarian should be. However, Yeo could be a very convincing communicator in small groups, and when one-on-one he was very effective.

The character and strength of Yeo's leadership came as much from his heart and his gut as it did from his head. If his passion and straightforwardness tended to rattle some of his peers, it hit the mark with those who mattered. As they say in politics, "People don't care what you know until they know that you care," and Yeo was one who cared in a big way.

Lesson 14: Be an Intrapreneur

Ultimately, Yeo would be acknowledged for his effectiveness in obtaining the

resources required to achieve his goals. This effectiveness was grounded squarely in what now would be called intrapreneurship. Intrapreneurs are those who, while working within the constraints of bureaucratic and other fundamentally risk-averse environments, still manage to act in ways essential for achieving superior organizational performance and results. Yeo was a thoroughly modern leader in this regard who demonstrated these behaviors in spades. As illustrated, he showed a remarkable awareness of opportunity; he pursued and enabled innovative and creative approaches to problems and had the ability to lead and manage often disruptive transformations; he was always more interested in results than process; he was politically astute and adept at both creating and managing important relationships and partnerships; and most of all, he was able to get along with people at all levels and to get their support.

Lesson 15: Make Your Cause Their Cause

It was the latter qualities that were among Yeo's strongest assets. On one hand, he was able to establish winning relationships with his boards, municipal partners, and within the community at large. He served as president of the local Kiwanis and was active in his church and Regina's Globe Theatre. On the other hand, when enlisting those who would work alongside him, Yeo would defy convention, deliberately hiring and encouraging a succession of library mavericks—managers and professionals who were prepared to argue insistently for more and more of that rope that came with trying to create a different kind of library. Yeo was always ready to do what needed to be done to cut a deal. He realized that what mattered was not the rectitude of one's position, but the ability to put one's ideas into practice, something that can require a large dose of realism to go along with one's idealism. The failure to do so often can result in an unfortunate and unnecessary failure of leadership.

Lesson 16: Bet on the Future

Although it would have been premature to speak of a "library of the future," Yeo at least foresaw the "library of now," rather than just another one repeating the past. Though not immediately

embracing new technology, in 1982 he went forward for funding of one of the first implementations of the new integrated library systems in a major North American public library. He also successfully lobbied to have RPL be the public beta-site for the Telidon project, a revolutionary interactive and "online" videotex system whereby users would be provided access to such content as news, community bulletins, information on government, education programming, as well as on-demand video from the world-renowned National Film Board of Canada. Again, he was willing to roll the dice if he believed there would be a payoff down the road for library users.

Lesson 17: Take Responsibility

Much of the credit for the library's technology lead-out went to assistant chief Ken Jensen, who was an enthusiastic early adopter and champion of both enterprise and personal computing. It was Jensen and Alan Ball, one of a few library automation consultants in the country at the time, who encouraged Yeo to make the bet on behalf of the library. But, it was just another example of Yeo's willingness to take on risk (and to persuade the board and municipal partners to do likewise) once he was convinced that he had received the straight goods from sponsoring managers. This understanding was always tied up and knotted with a quid pro quo that meant, "if you're willing to bet your credibility or even your job on this one, then I will be prepared to bet mine." As the leader he was, Yeo was always ready to offer his full support and assurance as needed and when deserved.

Lesson 18: Be Undeterred

There were times when Yeo and the board's ambitious agenda was challenged or tested. Yeo's relationship with the library union became strained, to say the least, and the library went through a strike that some saw as damaging. Despite having the highest regard for his staff, he came to view some of the library unionists as enemies of the library's future, and he engaged the province's top labor-law firm to deal with them. However, his responses to the union were never personal nor ideological. It simply was a case of resolve and a militant spirit of leadership becoming

impatient with what it saw as misplaced or misguided opposition.

Yeo's difficult relationship with the union sometimes was regarded as his Achilles heel. However, he himself was of the conviction that too many public library administrators and senior staff, as former professionals and workers themselves, were often uncomfortable with their roles and responsibilities as appointed representatives of management. As such, they tended to be too compliant in dealing with the often immoderate demands of their unions—which was often to the public detriment. Yeo simply was a realist who felt no conflict, only the need to do the job for which he was getting paid, which did not include appeasing organized labor at all times and at all costs.

Lesson 19: Raise the Bar

In the wider world of 2005, the type of leadership that he exemplified and the organizational behaviors to which Yeo subscribed may not be that uncommon. However, in most public libraries of the time, they were virtually unheard of. It was the opportunity of a career to have known or to have been associated with Yeo and, fortunately, there were many who had that opportunity. During the time of Yeo's tenure, Saskatchewan

hosted a richness of librarians who themselves were showing their own capacity for leadership—library notables such as Stan Skrzeszewski, Patricia Cavill, Ernie Ingles, Beth Barlow (all of whom would also serve as presidents of CLA), Karen Adams (a former executive director of CLA), Don Meadows, Paul Wiens, Sandra Anderson, and numerous others who continue to distinguish themselves in the top jobs in Canada's libraries. It would be too much to suggest that all fell directly under Yeo's influence, but not too much to say that they were all there to bear witness to his efforts and his accomplishments first hand. And, of course, there were many more at various times and under different circumstances that would fall within his ambit.

Lesson 20: Go to the Community

When Ron Yeo retired due to health reasons in 1988, RPL lost a singular chief librarian, a man who never failed to display the primary colors of leadership and the character on which it is built. This library, in this small prairie city, had become a champion and, by any and all metrics, one of the most heavily used and enthusiastically supported in North America. Ultimately, Yeo always looked to the good of the user community and

measured success in their terms alone. The opportunities were there. Libraries just had to be prepared to recognize and respond to them.

Lesson 21: Lead from the Outside

Despite the weight of his achievements, Yeo was a modest man, motivated not by a need for personal or professional self-aggrandizement but the desire to create increasing value for the library and its users and to deliver on what he promised. He was what Aristotle called the great-souled man—a man who does the right thing in the right way at the right time. However, it takes uncommon conviction and courage to do so, especially to look and move beyond library orthodoxies. If leaders want to shape a new consensus then they have to risk alienating those who choose to support the status quo. Ron Yeo, who passed away in May 1999, was prepared to lead from the outside, as though the future of public libraries depended on it. In 2005, we have seen that it does. ■

Reference

1. Darlene Hinks, press release, Jan. 17, 2005.

Donald J. Sager receives 2005 Lippincott Award

Donald J. Sager is the 2005 recipient of the ALA Lippincott Award, which recognizes an individual for distinguished service to the profession of librarianship. The award was founded by the late Joseph W. Lippincott and consists of a citation and \$1,000 donated by Lippincott's grandson, Joseph W. Lippincott, III.

Sager's professional career spans more than forty years of dedicated service within the library profession, serving in such diverse roles as public library administrator, teacher, speaker, author, publisher, and indefatigable volunteer on behalf of libraries and librarians. Sager is president of Gossage Sager Associates, a library recruitment company. He was the publisher and editor of Highsmith Press.

"I recruited Don to be the first publisher because I have always admired his reputation for integrity under pressure and his uncompromising loyalty to the library profession and those it serves," said Duncan Highsmith, chairman, Highsmith, Inc.

Sager is a prolific writer and contributor to library literature. He has authored several publications, articles, and book

chapters and was a contributing editor to *Public Libraries* for ten years.

"The Joseph W. Lippincott jury is thrilled with the choice of Don Sager as this year's recipient," said Ann Symons, award chair. "Don's long history of service to the association through his participation and writing is a vehicle for the expression of library values. He personally lives the values of librarianship and has inspired many librarians throughout his career. We are pleased that he joins a list of distinguished Lippincott winners."

Sager is an active member of ALA, a former councilor-at-large, and PLA past-president. He also is a member of the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates and International Relations Round Table. Sager was the ALA representative to the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Science and chaired ALA Core Values Task Force. He has won numerous awards, including the Office of Intellectual Freedom/Freedom to Read Foundation Roll of Honor.

The Lippincott Award will be presented Tuesday, June 28, during the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago.

Library Impact Fees

Thomas J. Hennen Jr.

Library staff can develop a plan for setting library impact fees.

Impact fees are set on new houses as they are being built and are designed to offset the impact that new residents will have on expanded library operations. The author provides a summary of the steps that must be taken, suggests a recommended plan to implement impact fees, and offers advice on dealing with local officials when developing the fees.

In communities that are growing, the use of impact fees can be a very effective tool in library capital funding and development. An impact fee is a property tax assessment placed on a new home while it is being built.

The theory behind impact fees is that new residents impose an impact on the library that should be borne by the *new* resident rather than *current* residents. The cost of the impact fee is usually rolled into the purchase price of a newly built home. State law must authorize impact fees for library purposes. The community taxing authority, usually the city or county (unless the library is an independent taxing district), must endorse the proposed fees based on a plan presented to it by the library. The impact fee plan will ordinarily need to be developed by the library or its agents unless the municipal planning department or a hired consultant can develop it.

Revenue from impact fees may only be used by the library for capital costs. Capital costs, for purposes of impact fees, are defined in state legislation. The definition usually includes buildings and furnishings, of course. Depending on the state, the definition may also include library materials and major maintenance on the building. If statutes allow the use of impact fees for library materials, remember that a fee on a new home will only cover the *initial* investment in materials. The household will continue to be taxed like other households in the community for operating purposes to maintain the collection.

One planning team puts it this way:

These newcomers bring with them all their fondest dreams of the future. They bring dreams that are the same as ours—dreams of a better life and a better future. What they don't bring with them are the roads, the bridges, the schools, the hospitals, the libraries, the parks, the utilities, the sewers, the waterlines, and all the vast and varied human services that will be needed to realize our dreams.¹

Impact fees are far more workable in larger units of service and growing suburban areas than in smaller units or established urban areas, but librarians in all sizes of libraries should consider impact fees as part of their overall planning process. Different states have different names for impact fees, and the laws are structured in a variety

Thomas J. Hennen Jr. is the Director of Waukesha County (Wisc.) Federated Library System, the creator of the **HAPLR Library Rating** (www.haplr-index.com), and the author of Hennen's Public Library Planning (Neal-Schuman, 2004); thennen@haplr-index.com. He is currently reading Measuring for Results: The Dimensions of Public Library Effectiveness by Joseph R. Matthews, The Price of Government: Getting the Results We Need in an Age of Permanent Fiscal Crisis by David Osborne and Peter Hutchinson, Developing a Profession of Librarianship in Australia: Travel Diaries and Other Papers of John Wallace Metcalfe by W. Boyd Rayward, and The Unconquerable Earth: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People by Jonathon Schell.

of ways. In some states they are called "quality of life" assessments, in other states, such as Colorado and California, the fees are based on the establishment of "Community Facilities Districts."

Many libraries in Illinois use impact fees for library development. Robert P. Doyle, executive director of the Illinois Library Association reports that "Senate Bill 2158 entitles library districts to seek reimbursement for the cost of providing services to residents in tax increment finance districts. The legislation signed into law as Public Act 93-961 provides a precise formula for guaranteeing that library districts are fairly compensated."²

The specific legal requirements of the state and the legal and procedural requirements of your local government will vary. Check with your legal counsel, local planning office, system staff, or state library personnel on the requirements for your library.

In most states impact fees cannot be used to close existing deficits. The fees can only be used to maintain standards levels such as volumes per capita that are based on the impact of new residents. A library therefore needs to know what the existing standards are and how the library compares to those state standards. The use of such standards only works in states that have specific numerical standards, of course.

In the library world, we need model state laws, model local ordinances, and specific examples of successful impact fee development. Homebuilders and real estate agents will often oppose impact fees for libraries. They have much deeper lobbying pockets than libraries do, so the political aspects of an impact fee strategy must be considered on a local basis.

State laws usually require that impact fees cover only the capital costs of a library rather than the ongoing operating costs. However, for purposes of impact fee calculations and distributions, books and tangible library materials are often considered capital assets. Note also that new audit and accounting standards in GASB 34 indicate that library materials should be counted as capital assets in this context. This may make it possible in your state to argue that impact fees can be used to cover the cost of new library materials as well as buildings.³

The library board and administration should develop the impact fee statement.

Assistance may be necessary from the municipal planning department or from a planning consultant hired by the library for this purpose. This article provides a description of the thirteen sections I believe should be included in an impact fee statement. Be sure that the suggested recommendations in this article are relevant to your library circumstances before adopting them.

Summary of Suggested Impact Fee Statement Sections

1. Executive Summary and Fee Statement

The executive summary should indicate the schedule of impact fees recommended in the report and reference the calculations that went into the fee recommendation as indicated later in the report (see table 1 for a sample impact fee chart). It should also indicate the major planning considerations for this specific impact fee statement. This would include such things as the need for a new or remodeled building, the rate of growth for the community, and so forth. A reference should be made to the impact fee calculations as detailed in section 10. The executive summary should also state the author of the study and when it was approved by the needed agencies (the library board, planning council, and so forth). The figures listed in the sample impact fee chart should not be taken as model numbers for every community, although they are not atypical, as table 7 demonstrates with the range of fees in libraries around the country.

The summary should indicate the inclusive years for the study and recommended impact fees. The projections are ordinarily done for a ten- to twenty-five-year period. The plan should note that the fee structure is only accurate if the anticipated trends develop as projected in the report. Unanticipated develop-

ment will alter the planning needs and require a revision of the planning document and related fees.

Library planners should project residential development through a ten- to twenty-five-year planning period with assistance from the local municipal planners and preliminary plats of proposed development in the area.

Development outside the municipal (city, county, or library district) limits, but within the library's service territory, is not considered in the report because the municipality does not have the ability to impose impact fees outside its boundaries. Consider potential annexations and discuss them in the context of the planning report, however.

Assumptions for the purpose of the report should be clearly stated. For example:

- We estimated a city population for 2025 using the regional average of 2.88 persons per housing unit.
- The fees were established based on 2004 expenses, budgets, and cost estimates. In order to keep pace with inflation, the fees will need to be adjusted on a yearly basis, using an appropriate cost index.⁴

The report should indicate the context of impact fees in the municipality. If there are impact fees for other services such as schools or parks, indicate them. If not, explain why it is that the library alone should be considered for impact fees.

The executive summary should conclude with a clear statement of purpose for the report. For example:

The purpose of this report is to assist the City in developing an impact fee ordinance for libraries that is in conformance with the requirements of Chapter [XX] of the State Statutes. Substantial development is anticipated in the City, and the cost of expanding the library to adequately serve the new development will exceed the ability of current residents to pay for this service unless impact fees are assessed.⁵

TABLE 1

Impact Fee Chart Example

Type of household	Impact fee (\$)
Condominium	250
Rental units	300
1-2 bedroom home	350
3-4 bedroom home	450

from library resources and municipal planning documents.

3. Library Profile

With this section, you are setting the stage by putting the library into the context of the current community. Describe how the library serves the current community. Indicate the way in which new users will impact the library's service profile. The library profile should include statements on the primary as well as the extended service territory of the library. If there are competing libraries nearby, or if the library is a heavy draw to other communities with libraries, this should be noted. In this section use statistics sparingly and give them context. For example, note that the rate of visits per capita is one of the highest in the state rather than just giving the raw numbers. The library profile will include an indication of its membership in a library system. Provide a brief history of the library building as well. You are including these items because the decision makers on the city council, the county board, or the library district board will need to be familiar with the library's situation and needs when they decide to impose impact fees.

4. Community Growth Characteristics

An Impact Fee Statement requires context for community growth characteristics. This section of the report should provide planners and decision-makers with a broad overview of the type of growth that is happening in the community for the future.

Preliminary Plat Breakdowns

Include a table indicating projected housing developments in the community for the next ten to fifteen years. This is usually available from the local planning and zoning agency. Contact them directly.

Residential Equivalent Units

A statement similar to the following is often used:

Impact fees are not assessed on a per person basis, so the population was converted to Residential Equivalent Units (REUs) by dividing the projected population by the regional average of 2.88 persons per housing unit. (That number is fairly stan-

dard, but you should contact your local or regional planning agency for a more appropriate number for your community.) One housing unit is equal to one REU.⁶

5. Population and Building Projections

Place a local population projection table here. (See table 2 for an example.) This should be available from either your local planning agency, regional development commission, or the state population planning agency. The table should project population for ten to twenty-five years in the future since that is the ordinary time frame for an impact fee report. Note that if there are a large number of non-city residents that use the library, an estimate of the non-residents population must be made as well to adequately size the library and its collection.

6. Municipal Plans for Zoning and Development

The municipality will usually have zoning and development statements available. Reference those plans here and indicate important elements of the plans as they relate to likely residential development in the library's service area.

7. Current Library Circulation and Use

Include locally appropriate library circulation numbers in this section, of course. Indicate trends over the last several years. Put a library circulation report in this section. (See table 3 for an example.) Every library will have circulation and registration data for the past several years. Reproduce representative numbers here to indicate trends in the library's current use. If you have done satisfaction or user surveys recently, summarize the results and refer readers to the full report. Indicate other local library use factors such as annual visits, program attendance, and so forth. Include a narrative indicating how the data compare to regional, state, or national peers. Indicate future changes anticipated as the result of recent building activities, program changes, or budget changes for the library.

8. Narrative on the Library Building

Readers of the Impact Fee Statement need to know about the current condi-

tion of the library building(s). Remember that impact fees should not be used to remedy existing deficiencies, so this section must make that point. If there is a current building plan, reference that document in this section.

Introduction to the Narrative

The narrative here will vary with the library, of course. You will want to describe the current circumstances of the library as if you were writing an article for your newspaper. The reader should be able to determine if the library is old or new, crowded or spacious, by simply reading this narrative. Here is an example:

The original spaciousness of the library has gradually disappeared as more materials have been added to the library collection. The limit may have been reached. Books fill all of the shelves, and some books that the librarians would rather keep must be discarded to make space. There is no room available for proper display of the video or audio materials. . . . There is a definite lack of study rooms that are so often requested by library patrons. Meeting room space is very limited, holding just twenty-six chairs. Many groups who want to use it are turned away because it is heavily booked. Storage space is very limited. County (or state, if

applicable) minimum standards and the more expansive state materials standards indicate that the collection needs to grow to accommodate an expanding population of users, but there is no shelf space.⁷

You are outlining the needs of the library as a justification for impact fees, of course, but take care that you can distinguish between deficiencies that exist with the current population and those that will occur because of expanding population. Most impact fee laws prohibit the use of impact fees for existing deficiencies. A substandard existing library will need to use *both* current municipal revenue as well as impact fees to expand a building.

Specific Building Elements

Address building considerations in a brief narrative and with details on the numbers involved. For instance, how much seating is there in the current building and how does this compare to state or national standards for seating in this library's population size? The following are suggestions of elements that might be addressed:

- Seating
- Staff Space
- Reference
- Children's Department
- Juvenile

TABLE 2

Sample Population Projection Table

Year	2010	2015	2020
Low projection	102,500	104,550	106,641
Intermediate projection	104,300	107,429	110,652
High projection	106,400	117,040	128,744

Note: Current population is 100,000.

TABLE 3

Sample Circulation and Use Table—Anywhererville Public Library

Year	Population population	Annual circulation	Registered borrowers	Annual visits
1990	8,510	102,123	5,676	40,849
1995	8,936	112,393	5,844	43,338
2000	9,383	129,735	5,630	46,162
2001	9,488	133,628	6,575	47,345
2002	9,594	137,636	6,563	47,972
2003	9,702	141,765	6,724	51,422
2004	9,811	146,018	7,064	51,999

- Adult Fiction
- Adult Non-Fiction
- Periodicals
- Video Material
- Budget

Needs Assessment

If a library building assessment has been done, include the relevant citations here and summarize the conclusions as they relate to the current building planning by the library.

If there are design standards recommended by the state library agency regarding collection size, space needed, and so forth, cite them here. If there are such standards, include a calculation for the existing and future population needs for the building. If not, use whatever building planning considerations have been developed by the library to indicate that the library has carefully planned for the building and for its upkeep.

9. Narrative on the Library's Long-Range Plan

A library seeking to develop impact fees will almost always have a written, up-to-date, long-range plan that indicates the library's plans for the future relating to both its building and service program. Key elements of that plan should be indicated here and the reader should be referred to the entire plan for further information.

10. Impact Fee Calculation

An impact fee calculation statement will contain fairly specific information but should reflect the particular situation of the local library. For example:

The future gross area needed was calculated based on the projected population of twenty-five thousand. This is the total of resident and non-resident users. The space to be included in the cost estimates for the impact fee was calculated by taking the space needed in 2015 and subtracting the existing (2005) space and deficiencies. The impact fee was calculated by dividing the total project cost by the number of applicable Residential Equivalent Units (REU) for the City.

The library fee was determined to be \$525 per residential unit. Note that impact fees are frequently scaled by the type of unit—more for single family homes on large lots, less for condominium units, still

less for apartments of various sizes. This sample plan includes just one impact per residential unit, but gradations are frequently more appropriate. Talk to your local planning department for the usual practice in your community.⁸

The space needed to serve the existing population was determined. Table 4 provides a summary of the calculations for needed space. Note that the necessary detail for a space needs assessment is too extensive for reprinting in this article.⁹

The size of the collection needed to serve the population was calculated and used to determine the needed space. The cost of increasing the collection size and items the library will need to properly serve the additional population from new development is included below and was compiled with the assistance of the library director (see table 4).

Sample Calculation for Additional Building and Equipment Costs for Impact Fee

State library agencies are often able to provide standard per capita recommendations for space needs and equipment costs. For example:

The most recent state survey found that for libraries in the ten thousand to twenty-five thousand population range, the average square footage

was 0.92 per capita. This included quite a few inadequately sized facilities, of course, so a range of 1 to 1.5 square feet per capita is realistic. Using the building specifications in the appendix to Anywhereville Public Library's Long-range Plan, we calculated that [XX] square feet are needed for an extended service population of [XX]. That is about [XX] square feet per capita. Some of the space needed is fixed and not population sensitive, such as administrative and mechanical space. This needs assessment determined that a figure of [XX] square feet per capita was appropriate for impact fee calculation.

Assuming 2.88 residents per home, each household will add [XX] square feet to the needed facility. Current construction costs would indicate between [\$XX and \$XX] for library building and equipment costs.¹⁰

Building Costs for Impact Fee

See table 5 for a sample estimate of building costs per capita. This table represents a projected building space per capita of 1.2. If your state or region has a different standard you will want to use that. You will also want to verify building cost per square foot in your area and the number of persons per

TABLE 4

Sample of Costs for the Current Population and Projected Costs of a Growing Population to Be Addressed by Impact Fees

Category	Current population	Impact population
Population	10,000	1,333
Building costs per square foot	\$143.00	\$143.00
Equipment costs per square foot	\$26.80	\$26.80
Site costs—square foot	\$17.50	\$17.50
Other costs per square foot	\$20.60	\$20.60
Combined cost per square foot	\$207.90	\$207.90
Square feet needed	14,980	2,000
Building and furnishings subtotal	\$3,114,342	\$415,800
Volumes—capital	—	6,000
Unit cost/volume	\$20.00	\$20.00
Capital cost for volumes subtotal	\$0	\$120,000
Building and volumes total	\$3,114,342	\$535,800
Percent of cost to be borrowed	90%	90%
Bond interest rate	4.613%	4.613%
Capital amortization period	\$20.00	\$20.00
Annual payments	\$217,592	\$37,435
Total principle and interest	\$4,351,835	\$748,702
Square feet per capita	1.50	1.50
Annual payments per capita	\$26.95	\$28.07
Annual payment per \$1,000 market value	\$0.45	\$0.45

household (although 2.88 may work as a default assumption).

Materials Costs for Impact Fee

Table 6 uses the Wisconsin materials spending per capita standard. You will want to use your own state's standard. Note also that the funds generated here are for the initial materials stock only. Once residents of the home become taxpayers they will be paying for ongoing library materials from the library operating tax.

11. Statutory Reference

Place a chart of your library's comparison to state standards, if any, here (see table 7).

12. Municipal Plans and Code References

Reprint the state's impact fee statute here or at least provide statutory references.

Model Transfer of Funds Ordinance

State law will normally require a specific ordinance to transfer impact fee funds to the library fund. This one references statutes that may or may not exist in your state. Check on that fundamental point before using the document.

WHEREAS the City Board of the City of Anywhereville imposes impact fees in accordance with State Stat. § _____ pursuant to Anywhereville Municipal Code § ____; and

WHEREAS a separate impact fund for public library improvements exists pursuant to Anywhereville Municipal Code § ____ which consists of impact fees collected by the City for the purpose of paying the capital costs of public library improvements; and

WHEREAS Anywhereville Municipal Code § ____ authorizes the use of monies collected per its terms for capital costs for new, expanded or improved public facilities which are related to the effects of general population growth in the City of Anywhereville; and

WHEREAS the City of Anywhereville has experienced such population growth within its system and has made necessary improvements to the City's public library system pursuant to Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference, in conformance

with the Public Facilities Needs Assessment; and

WHEREAS the capital costs for the expenditures shown on said exhibit were paid by the City of Anywhereville Public Library System from various accounts as listed in said Exhibit A, and properly consist of public library system improvements capital costs:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Board of the City of Anywhereville, that, pursuant to the above, \$ _____ shall be transferred from the City of Anywhereville Public Library Improvements Impact Fee Fund to the City of Anywhereville Public Library System Operating Account and \$ _____ shall be transferred from the City of Anywhereville Public

Library Improvements Impact Fee Fund to the City of Anywhereville Public Library System Fundraising Account to reimburse the Library System for the capital costs for public library improvements expended through _____, having made the findings as follows:

These expenditures for these items bear a rational relationship to the need for new, expanded or improved public library facilities created by land development within the City of Anywhereville and the attendant population growth; and

The costs of these capital improvements do not exceed the proportionate share of the capital costs to serve land development compared to existing uses of land within the City; and these costs are

TABLE 5

Sample Estimate of Building Costs

Population	3,371
Building space per capita needed	1.2
Space need in square feet	4,045
Building cost per square feet	\$100
Cost for added building	\$414,520
Cost per capita	\$120
Cost per household of 2.88 persons	\$346

Note: Figures will vary depending on local numbers.

TABLE 6

Sample Estimate of Materials Costs

Population	3,371
Materials spending per capita by standard	\$5.20
Annual cost	17,529
Capitalized and depreciated over ten-year period	\$210,350
Cost per capita	\$62
Cost per household of 2.88 persons	\$180

TABLE 7

State of Wisconsin Library Standards Compared to John Doe Library Actual

Standard	Basic	Moderate	Enhanced	Excellent	John Doe Library actual
FTE per 1,000 residents	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.80	0.78
Hours open per week	42	49	53	56	50
Materials expenditures per capita	\$3.30	\$4.13	\$4.60	\$5.82	\$3.50
Collection size per capita	2.9	3.8	4.4	5.6	2.7
Print volumes per capita	2.7	3.5	4.1	5.1	2.1
Periodicals per capita	10.4	12.6	15.5	20.0	13.1
Audio materials per capita	0.1	0.13	0.18	0.22	0.5
Video materials per capita	0.08	0.12	0.16	0.23	0.2

actual and not estimated capital cost items; and

There are no special charges or offsets against these expenditures, and there are no federal or state contributions of any nature toward the acquisition of these capital assets; and

These capital costs were not incurred for the purpose of addressing existing deficiencies; and the City finds that it is in the best interest of the public library system of the City of Anywhereville to reimburse the public library system accounts for these capital costs.¹¹

13. Related Reports

If there are related reports done by the library, community, regional library, or state library agency, include the citations here. Such reports would include the library's long range plan, state library standards, local building and zoning plans, population projections, and so forth.

Proactive Planning Leads to Results

It is extremely unlikely that the city council or county board will come to

the library suggesting impact fees. The initiative must nearly always come from the library. You will usually hear that the timing is wrong. The reasons will vary, but do not let the first negative response stop you (nor indeed the second, third or fourth). Persistence will pay off. You may also hear that there are technical requirements that require high-cost consulting assistance. This article should give you a good running start at meeting those technical requirements. Close attention to the advice here will reduce, if not eliminate, the need for consulting assistance.

Check with your regional library staff or state library agency for assistance. Either your regional system or the state library agency will have a list of comparable libraries that have instituted impact fees. If not, table 8 lists nine libraries in the country that have impact fees and are willing to talk to other libraries about how to go about instituting them.

Developing an effective impact fee statement presupposes that the library has a good long-range plan to which it can refer. If you do not have an effective long-range plan, begin one now. Develop an impact fee statement at the same time. Your plan and impact fee statement will tell your governing body and taxpayers where you are going and why the fees are a necessary part of that journey.

Impact fees are designed and intended to help libraries meet the new demands of residents moving into the community and adding service requirements. The revenue generated should—in fact must—help the library to meet the *new* demands for buildings, equipment, and books that newcomers are generating.

Whatever you do, do not let impact fees substitute for the necessary ongoing support of the library through tax support. Some state laws even provide that impact fees must be repaid to the homeowner if they are not used to expand the ability of the library to meet new customer needs, and rightly so. Newcomers should not get a free ride from existing taxpayers, but nor should they provide a windfall to current taxpayers. Only the constant vigilance of the library board and administration, based on a solid long-range plan, and an appropriate impact fee statement, can guarantee that impact fees will expand services for newcomers rather than substituting for the traditional tax effort of longtime residents. ■

References and Notes

1. Adapted from "Florida State Comprehensive Plan Committee 1987," in *A Practitioner's Guide to Development Impact Fees*, Julian C. Juergensmeyer, Arthur C. Nelson, and James C. Nicholas (Chicago: APA Planners Pr., 1991), 1.

TABLE 8

Some Libraries That Have Established Impact Fees

Name of Library	Service population	Impact fee	Contact person/information
Maricopa County Library District, Phoenix, Ariz.	429,604	\$377	Harry R. Courtright www.chapterday.com/library/maricopa
Loveland (Colo.) Public Library	50,608	\$521	Ted Schmidt chmit@ci.loveland.co.us
Citrus County Library System, Beverly Hills, Fla.	120,471	\$121	Flossie Benton Rogers www.bocc.citrus.fl.us/library/library_services.htm
New Lenox (Ill.) Public Library District	28,759	\$107 to \$453	Jo Ann Potenziani japotenziani@htls.lib.il.us
Wilmington (Ill.) Public Library	9,229	\$40 to \$95	Mary J. Soucie mjsoucie@htls.lib.il.us
North Suburban (Ill.) Library System	Varies	\$120 to \$895	NSLS Fast Facts #430—Builder Impact Fees http://fastfacts.nsls.info/surveys/pff431sum_1.asp
Zion-Benton (Ill.) Public Library	40,526	\$225	Nann Blaine Hilyard nbhilyard@zblibrary.org
Waterford (Wisc.) Public Library	13,765	\$400	Pam Belden psbelden@waterford.lib.wi.us
Mukwonago (Wisc.) Public Library	18,375	\$450	Kathy McBride kmcbride@mukcom.lib.wi.us

2. Robert Doyle, "Hennen article—Impact fees," e-mail to the features editor, Feb. 2, 2005. For more information about the passage of this bill, see Sally Decker Smith, "Sally in Libraryland," *ILA Reporter* 22, no. 6 (Dec. 2004): 14–15.
3. For more information on GASB 34, see Thomas J. Hennen, "Do You Know the Real Value of Your Library," *Library Journal* 126, no. 11 (June 15, 2001): 48.
4. The author's book, *Hennen's Public Library Planner* (Neal-Schuman, 2004), outlines some of the issues and provides some worksheets on pages 203–15. Most states will have a guide for libraries to use. Wisconsin's is available on the Web at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dlcl/pld/plspace.html.
5. Ibid.
6. Thomas J. Hennen, *Mukwonago (Wisc.) Community Library Impact Fee Needs Assessment* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Waukesha County Federated Library System, 2001).
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

Are Public Libraries Criminalizing Poor People?

A Report from the ALA's Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force

In the wake of recent news reports, the Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force of ALA's Social Responsibility Round Table wishes to express concern about public libraries adopting punitive policies clearly targeted at homeless people.

"Odor policies" of the sort enacted by San Luis Obispo County, California, and the "civility campaign" launched by Salt Lake City (Utah) Library to "teach the homeless, children and others how to behave," are at best misguided and, at worst, contribute to the criminalization of poor people.¹

Libraries are now participating in a deliberate process that geographer Don Mitchell calls "the annihilation of space by law":

The anti-homeless laws being passed in city after city in the United States work in a pernicious way: by redefining what is acceptable behavior in public space, by in effect annihilating the spaces in which people must live, these laws seek simply to annihilate homeless people themselves . . . we are creating a world in which a whole class of people cannot be—simply because they have no place to be.²

Homeless people are forced to live and dwell in public places. Why? Because we fail to create adequate, dignified shelter and affordable housing options that provide private space—among other basic human needs—for our most vulnerable citizens.

We want to clarify that poor hygiene and homelessness are conditions of extreme poverty, not types of behavior, a view inadvertently promoted by "problem patron" literature in recent years.

We challenge policy makers and frontline librarians to review the ALA's Policy 61 ("Library Services for Poor People") and ask themselves the following questions:

- Do I understand the scope of poverty in my community and its human face?
- Are our programs and services inclusive of all poor people and their needs?
- Do we actively partner with social service providers and anti-poverty groups?

- Do we advocate for public funding of programs that help poor people?
- Do our actions address core problems or simply treat superficial symptoms?³

Jeremy Waldron, director of the Center for Law and Philosophy at Columbia University, describes the best alternative to what we view as a disturbing trend:

Fairness demands that . . . so long as people live among us in a condition of homelessness, our normative definitions of community must be responsive to their predicament . . . not only in articulating some vague sense of social obligation to 'do something' about the problem, but in accepting that the very definition of community must accommodate the stake that the homeless have—as community members—in the regulation of public places . . . But, as things stand, the call is most often heard in connection with schemes of regulation that simply try to wish homeless members of the community away.⁴

The democratic principles that govern our work demand a humane and informed response to people struggling with homelessness and poverty. With this goal in mind, we encourage much-needed conversation about these issues and recommend the resources listed below.

Note: The opinions expressed here are the views of the HHP Task Force and do not represent or imply the endorsement of SRRT or ALA membership as a whole.

References

1. Brady Snyder, "Salt Lake Library Attracting Homeless," *Deseret Morning News*, Mar. 9, 2005. Accessed May 10, 2005, <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/1%2C1249%2C600117373%2C00.html>.
2. Don Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (New York: Guilford, 2003).
3. American Library Association. ALA Policy 61, "Library Services for Poor People." Accessed May 10, 2005, www.ala.org/ala/ourassociation/governingdocs/policymannual/servicespoor.htm.
4. Jeremy Waldron. "Homelessness and Community." *Univ. of Toronto Law Journal* 50, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 371–406.



Save the Date! PLA 2006 National Conference

The best conference for the public library world will be held in Boston, March 21–25, 2006. You'll want to be there as thousands of public librarians and public library workers come together to learn, exchange ideas, network, conduct business, and renew their energy and enthusiasm. PLA's conferences have earned a reputation for excellence, and this one is shaping up to be our best yet. PLA 2006 will host more than 150 continuing education programs and talk tables, preconference programs, a bustling exhibits hall, social events, author events, tours, and more. Join PLA today to get the latest conference information sent directly to you, plus you'll get substantial registration discounts. Visit www.pla.org for our membership application or for more information about PLA or PLA 2006.

Walters to Become PLA President

Daniel L. Walters, executive director of the Las Vegas–Clark County (Nev.) Library District, will become president of the PLA with the close of the 2005 ALA Annual Conference. Walters hopes to focus his presidency on a number of library issues, stating: "In many communities, economic conditions have led to reductions or elimination of core library services, layoffs, fewer open hours, and even closure of libraries. As these fiscal challenges erode local services, public librarians struggle to provide the best solution for our communities. In addition, passage of the Patriot Act, and the Supreme Court CIPA ruling have led to intense and sometimes volatile debates within our profession, libraries, and communities regarding long standing approaches to privacy, the parent's right to choose service options for their children, and other library policy issues. As public librarians face these challenges, it is more crucial than ever for PLA leadership to remain responsive to its members and to ensure vital forums for member enrichment and professional development. I hope to continue that strong tradition."

An active member of ALA for nearly twenty years, Walters has chaired committees in both PLA and the Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA). In addition to his ALA activities, he is or has been an active member in several other professional groups including OCLC, the Nevada Library Association, the Washington Library Association, the Las Vegas Executives Association, and the New York Library Association. He also has served as a member of various civic organizations including the executive committee of the American Red Cross (Inland Northwest Chapter) and on the board of directors of the Spokane, Washington YMCA.

Under his stewardship, the Las Vegas–Clark County Library District has won several local and national awards including Best Public Sector Employer and the 2003 Gale/Library Journal Library of the Year. Walters also is a contributor to professional

journals and recently was named the Community Person of the Year, by the Las Vegas (Nev.) Asian Chamber of Commerce.

He earned his master's degree in librarianship from the University of Washington School of Librarianship and also earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Washington. For more information contact PLA at 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5752.

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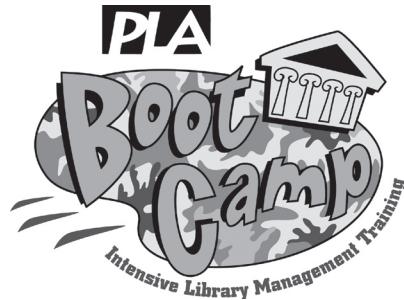
PLA Boot Camp— A Five Day Immersion Program

Monday–Friday, September 19–23, 2005.

Join PLA at our first-ever Boot Camp: "Results are What Matters: Management Tools and Techniques to Improve Library Services and Programs." This week of intensive training will be based on three of the titles in PLA's Results series of publications. The three titles are:

- *The New Planning for Results*
- *Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries*
- *Creating Policies for Results: From Chaos to Clarity*

Through group activity, case studies, and discussion, Boot Camp attendees will have the opportunity to explore issues and learn processes. Attendees also will apply what they have learned to a problem or issue in their own libraries. Instructors include Sandra Nelson, a co-author of all three Results publications, and June Garcia, a co-author of one publication and advisory committee member or reader for the other two. Visit www.pla.org for updates and more information about PLA's Boot Camp. ■





Chat Reference A Guide to Live Virtual Reference Services

By Jana Smith Ronan. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2003. 240p. \$45 (ISBN 1-59158-000-5) LC 2003-051639.

This book provides an excellent starting point for any library investigating the possibility of providing chat reference service. The stated intent is to provide "a blueprint to lead the reader through the many decisions and considerations involved in setting up" a chat reference service (xii). This is accomplished by providing a clearly structured guide both to chat service technologies and to the steps involved in the implementation of such a service.

One of the book's strengths is that its logical chapter division allows for reading straight through, without having to jump around from one section to another. Following the introduction, there are three chapters that discuss chat software and the audience served by real-time online reference service. The "meat" of the book

deals with considerations that need to be addressed before and during the implementation of chat services: staffing, training, administration, policies, promotion, and conducting reference interviews online. All of these considerations are dealt with in-depth, with attention paid to the practical aspects of each area. This is very much a "how-to" guide, with the practical given far more weight than the theoretical.

Each chapter contains a bibliography of both print and Web sites cited, which allows anyone interested to do further research. There is no shortage of libraries currently providing chat reference service, and a large number of them are referenced at various points in the book. Undoubtedly, those interested in chat reference will find these examples useful for further reference.

Those who are unfamiliar with chat reference, or who are confused by technical jargon, should not have difficulties with this book. The language is straightforward, and it is not assumed by the author that readers will understand the technical

terminology. This is especially important in the chapters where chat technologies are introduced and discussed, and Ronan does an excellent job of explaining the meaning of all terms and concepts. Screen shots of the various types of software are used generously, especially in the first few chapters, further helping the reader to contextualize what is being discussed.

If there is a weakness to be found in the book, it would have to be the case studies at the back of the book. First, the information included in each of them is at least two years old, so further study would be needed on the part of the reader to examine more current statistics regarding their use and value. Also, all four are from academic libraries, which does not help those looking for examples from public libraries.

Despite the limited usefulness of the case studies, this is a very well-written and comprehensive guide. With *Chat Reference* Ronan has created a work that should serve anyone interested in knowing what's involved when deciding on chat-based reference service. While it may be more useful for academic libraries, those in public libraries should also find it of great value.—*Craig Shufelt, Lane (Ohio) Public Library*.

Teen Volunteer Services in Libraries A VOYA Guide

By Kellie M. Gillespie. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2004. 133p. paper, \$26.95 (ISBN 0-8108-4837-6) LC 2003-17932.

Kellie M. Gillespie, now a fiction specialist for the Mesa Library in Arizona, brings her considerable experience as a children's and young adult librarian, and that of many other colleagues, in a small, beautifully produced, comprehensive guide on all aspects of using teens as library volunteers. After seven how-to-do-it chapters on why do it, how to get started, marketing and recruitment, recognition and retention, supervision, and program variations, the author includes interviews with teen volunteer managers

from five other public libraries around the country, and then provides detailed descriptions of programs in eight different public libraries through interviews with the librarians there.

This section quite deliberately includes both the good and bad things about the specific program or that librarian's experience. Of particular interest is Kimberly Paone's descriptions of working with court-appointed volunteers in the Elizabeth Public Library in New Jersey. The text is capped with a selected bibliography, further reading, and reprints of two articles on working with teen volunteers that first appeared in two different issues of *Voice of Youth Advocates* magazine. Replicable and adaptable forms from various public libraries are reproduced in the back to augment the text, such as Tucson-Pima's "Teen Volunteer Application Form," Mesa's "Volunteer's Annual Progress Review," Berkeley's "Teen Volunteer Tutor Job Description," Wake Forest's "Procedures for Teen Library Corps Volunteers," and Salina's "Summer Reading Teen Volunteer Contract." Best of all, the book's cover shows a photo of Travis Taugh, a teen who volunteered in his library and then worked himself up to becoming the coordinator of the teen volunteer program there.

The book includes boxed sidebars to the regular text that are very germane, including one about a strange man who followed a teen volunteer out of the library and what happened, or what to do about teens who don't want to volunteer but whose parents make them, a list of inexpensive recognition gifts that teens will like, and icebreakers and party games, among others. The entire tone of the book is supportive of such programs, their legitimacy in public libraries, and how to make them developmentally responsive to the teens who need them. If there's such a thing as a course-in-a-box, this book is it. The only book on services to young adults I have ever regarded as highly is *Connecting Young Adults and Libraries*, now in its third edition, but Gillespie's book gives



If you are interested in reviewing or submitting materials for "By the Book," contact the contributing editor, Julie Elliott, Assistant Librarian, Reference/Coordinator of Public Relations and Outreach, Indiana University South Bend, 1700 Mishawaka Ave., P.O. Box 7111, South Bend, IN 46634-7111; jmelli@iusb.edu. Julie Elliott is currently reading *The Olive Farm: A Memoir of Life, Love, and Olive Oil in the South of France* by Carol Drinkwater.

"By the Book" reviews professional development materials of potential interest to public librarians, trustees, and others involved in library service.

PLA Policy dictates that publications of the Public Library Association not be reviewed in this column. Notice of new publications from PLA will generally be found in the "News from PLA" section of *Public Libraries*.

A description of books written by the editors or contributing editors of *Public Libraries* may appear in this column but no evaluative review will be included for these titles.

Patrick Jones et al., a run for their money. This is a *must-purchase* for public library volunteer managers or coordinators and for librarians serving teens in public libraries, regardless of job title. It is just too good to miss.—*Mary K. Chelton, Professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens (N.Y.) College.*

Dictionary for Library and Information Science

By Joan M. Reitz. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004. 788p. \$45 (ISBN 1-56308-962-9) LC 2003 065653.

Developed in 1994 by an instruction librarian at Western Connecticut State University, this 786-page dictionary of approximately 4,000 terms began as a four-page handout of basic library terminology for undergraduate students. Reitz, a member of the reference staff in the Ruth A. Haas Library at West-

ern Connecticut State University in Danbury, teaches a one-credit course on library research methods to undergraduate students and provides instructional services on request for members of the teaching faculty who wish to bring their classes to the library to learn more about the library research process.

The dictionary is broad in scope and coverage. It defines terms commonly used in library and information science and includes selected entries relating to the fields of printing, publishing, the book trade, graphic arts, book history, bibliography, telecommunications, literature, and computer science when, in the author's judgment, a definition might prove helpful to librarians and information specialists in their work. Entries range from acronyms to single and compound terms, and from phrases to URLs. Many foreign and Latin terms and phrases are included, as well as a sprinkling of slang terms and idioms, obsolete terms, and cross references.

Because the dictionary was also developed as an online resource available worldwide, with an e-mail contact address for feedback, users from many countries have contributed to its growth, often suggesting additional terms and commenting on existing definitions, rendering the dictionary an ongoing process, a "work in progress."

In expanding the dictionary to its present form, the author relied on her own understanding of library terminology, on her routine reading of the library literature, and on research that included, but was not limited to, seventy-seven print and online sources listed in the book's bibliography—a valuable resource that can stand on its own, with its coverage of the most authoritative reference sources in the aforementioned areas.

Reitz's dictionary is a handy resource for library and information professionals, library technicians, or library school students and so it is highly recommended for all library school libraries,

as well as for public, special, and academic libraries.—*Diana Kirby, Librarian/Collection Management, Miami Dade (Fla.) Public Library System.*

Making Our Voices Heard Citizens Speak Out for Libraries

By Sally Gardner Reed and Beth Nawalinski. Philadelphia, Pa.: Friends of Libraries U.S.A., 2004. 14p. plus CD-ROM PowerPoint presentation. \$32 (ISBN 0-9753010-0-4).

It is not a book—it is a power tool. Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) has created a practical introduction to advocacy in a palatable PowerPoint format. The expert and experienced FOLUSA staff, Sally Reed and Beth Nawalinski, have teamed with two of their board members—Margaret Murray, Friends liaison with the Mississippi Library Commission; and Jeff Bantly, volunteer coordinator with the Albuquerque (N.M.) Public

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Library. They have produced a CD-ROM/PowerPoint presentation in three parts: "What Is Advocacy?" "Creating Public Awareness," and "The Advocacy Campaign." It is accompanied by a fourteen-page workbook with reprintable handouts.

From their opening, basic definition of advocacy, "Turning passive support into *action* for a well defined, well articulated goal," to a list of resources at the end of the final PowerPoint, the programs are realistic, clear, and wise. There are good data and examples to help make the case for libraries, a clear statement of the issues from national, state, and local perspectives, strong historical context, real-life success stories, and inspiring quotes. The "voice" of the writing is strong, confident, and believable. Each of the three presentations provides a solid basic introduction that will serve to get a Friends group moving in a positive direction toward increasing public awareness or launching a well-conceived, effective advocacy campaign. While the PowerPoint slides contain a lot of information, it is packaged in a way that is probably easier to absorb and discuss than an article or a basic text. And they don't gloss over the hard parts. There is even advice in "The Advocacy Campaign" about what to do if the library director is not supportive.

This is an excellent resource to help friends, library staff, and board members be informed about public awareness and advocacy, and be deliberate and decisive in doing what needs to be done.—Peggy Barber, Consultant, Library Communications Strategies, Inc., Chicago.

Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences

Jo Anne Boorkman, Jeffrey T. Huber, and Fred W. Roper, eds. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2003. 350p. \$65 (ISBN 1-55570-481-6) LC 2003-56209.

Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences, now in its fourth incarnation, is a detailed guide to this sub-

ject specialty. Detail, however, does not always provide depth. The book is a combination of succinct and relevant information in some chapters, with others lacking substance. While chapter headings, such as "Bibliographic Sources for Monographs," provide an accurate rendering of the text within, the style is stilted, rather than stimulating.

Listed sources are not necessarily specific to healthcare, as they are in both OCLC's WorldCat and *Publishers Weekly*. Do public librarians and library students with a reference course under their belts truly need a description of these resources? Additional sources obvious to any Internet user, such as Amazon.com are also noted. Such information could have been pared from the book allowing librarians to find information on subject specialty sources more readily.

However, other chapters immediately grab the reader's attention and list resources to be utilized in medical reference searching. One such example is in chapter four on "Indexing, Abstracting, and Digital Database Resources," which describes a clinical trial death case that upon review noted that a thorough literature search would have readily provided information that may have prevented this situation. The need for searching of print indices, as well as online sources is also outlined in an example of pre-1966 searches involving PubMed and Index Medicus.

The guide is further redeemed by excellent synopses of medical dictionaries, handbooks, and drug information sources. The chapters on these reference tools are pragmatic and potentially of the most use for reference librarians in public libraries.

Each chapter concludes with a recommended reading list of articles to obtain more information on a given health resource topic. The sole item in the appendix is a reference collection development policy from a university health sciences library. A variety of policies from medical libraries, academ-

Books in Brief Books Received But Not Reviewed

The Booktalker's Bible: How to Talk about the Books You Love to Any Audience. By Chapple Langemack. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2003. \$30 (ISBN 1-56308-944-0) LC 2003-47543. For anyone who has ever considered booktalking, Langemack provides the tools and encouragement to get started or keep going. Information covered in the work includes negotiating practical details such as time, money, and scheduling; how to book audiences, the "six golden rules of booktalking"; "building a no-fail booktalk"; booktalking to both children and adults; and much more. Quotes from successful practicing booktalkers are generously sprinkled throughout the work, providing additional points of view. Langemack provides numerous lists of potential booktalking titles, and additional resources for further research throughout the book and again in two well-organized appendixes. The book includes a table of contents and index.

Hands-On Information Literacy Activities. By Jane Birks and Fiona Hunt. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2003. w/CD-ROM. \$75 (ISBN 1-55570-456-5) LC 2003-268613. The book is a guide for librarians and instructors for building students' information literacy skills. The authors, Information Literacy Librarians at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates, share the hands-on instruction activities and worksheets they have created to assist their students in learning information literacy skills. Worksheets provided in the book (many of which are available for printing in Microsoft Word on the CD-ROM), cover topics such as brainstorming search terms, the research process, search engines, evaluating Web sites, databases, boolean searching, and more. This book also includes a list of resources for further research and an index.

ic libraries, and larger public libraries would have strengthened this section. (ISBN 0-910965-67-6) LC 2003-015424.

Nicholas Tomaiuolo, a librarian at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, has compiled a series of subject-specific Web links that act as a low-cost or free alternative for locating information. He has divided *The Web Library* into areas where he discusses particular links. For example, the first chapter deals with finding free articles on the Web using reputable resources. There is a companion Web site to this work at www.ccsu.edu/library/tomaiuolon/theweblibrary.htm. The Web site is updated frequently and contains additional links not featured in the book.

Since the advent of the Web and with the changing of resources, "many of the materials that used to cost considerable sums of money to access in either electronic or print form have actually become less expensive to

The Web Library Building a World Class Personal Library with Free Web Resources

By Nicholas G. Tomaiuolo. Medford, N.J.: Information Today, 2004. 440p. \$29.95

obtain via the World Wide Web, and are sometimes absolutely free" (3). One item he mentions is that people need to know how to find these items. Although he encourages finding resources on the Internet, he also says "it is unwise for individuals to trust everything they unearth on the Web" (3).

Each chapter deals with a different topic and although this work is focused on reduced costs and free materials, Tomaiuolo is very honest in that certain online materials have particular free services and other fee services. There are several unique features to this work, such as interviews with practitioners in the areas discussed. For example in the chapter about free articles online, the author interviews Bill Dimm, Magportal.com's CEO. Tomaiuolo compares many of the sites that he summarizes to common library materials, using a chart at the end of every chapter that has annual savings for these free items versus typical subscription fees in the different areas.

Every chapter includes recommended Web sites and a summary of services that each Web site provides. Print screens of several of the services are also included, as well as endnotes for further information. There is also an appendix with a chapter-by-chapter breakdown and more detailed subject descriptions of all the sites mentioned. The index is very detailed. With the ubiquity of the Web, this is a timely product and is highly recommended for all libraries.—Jen Dawson, *Electronic Resources Librarian, Kanawha County (W.Va.) Public Library*.

The Writing Group Book Creating and Sustaining a Successful Writing Group

By Lisa Rosenthal, ed. Chicago: Chicago Review Pr., 2003. 236p. \$14.95 (ISBN 1-55652-498-6) LC 2003-3522.

Where there are book lovers, there are also people who want to write. Libraries are hosting popular book clubs and writing groups of different forms. This marvelous collection of essays was gathered

from all types of writing groups and offers advice and lists of resources for starting—and even more important—maintaining a successful group.

From screenwriters to children's writers, and even memoirists, a writing group can be an inspiration. Part 1 of this collection focuses on "Starting a Writing Group." One essay discusses how a writer keeps a screenwriting group going in Chicago, a long way from Hollywood. Another offers tips on starting a critique group at work for all kinds of writing. One essay features a group that simply has writing in the round exercises to keep everyone stimulated and creating. An agent even offered an essay on her role and why work from a writing group is often more polished and professional than one simply sent in unread by others.

Part 2 discusses "Organizing and Maintaining the Group," and offers nuts-and-bolts direction, as well as best- and worst-case scenarios. Several essays outline how an online group might succeed or how to give good critiques. In "Why Writing Groups Flourish or Fail," readers can find out how to handle a dominant group member, members that discuss personal business more than written work, or even handling jealousy among members.

Part 4 illustrates how some groups moved their work from discussion to actual publication. One group worked together to write a science fiction novel. Another self-published an anthology and subsequently, members published their work. One essay highlights how networking and professional development motivated their group. A particularly fun essay mentioned how a Halloween party stimulated the group to write several scary stories (that were subsequently published).

Each essay is followed by favorite print and online resources from the author of that essay. The last section provides tips on getting published and more resources on groups. This is an excellent guide that is also a pleasure to read. Libraries may want to buy one for

New Contributing Editor Selected for By the Book

Public Libraries welcomes Julie Elliott as the new contributing editor of the *By the Book* column. Elliott received her MLS from Indiana University in December 2001. Previously a reference librarian at the Goshen (Ind.) Public Library, she has been a librarian in reference and coordinator of public relations and outreach at the Franklin D. Schurz Library, Indiana University-South Bend since July 2003. A longtime reviewer for *By the Book*, Elliott's areas of interest are readers' advisory and outreach, and she is most proud of starting her university's One Book, One Campus program.

reference for starting their own groups, and one for patrons to check out for their own use.—*Amy Alessio, Teen Coordinator, Schaumburg Township (Ill.) District Library*.

Performance Management and Appraisal A How-to-Do-It Manual for Librarians

By G. Edward Evans. New York: Neal-Schuman, 2004. 225p. \$75 (ISBN 1-55570-498-0) LC 2004046006.

One of the most uncomfortable and least appreciated necessities faced by staff at every level of a library organization is performance appraisal (PA). At the core of this discomfort, G. Edward Evans explains, is the conflict between two essential yet very different sets of purposes. The administrative goal of managing salary adjustment, promotion, and discipline requires a confidential, structured process that aspires to impersonal fairness and focuses on performance outcomes.

The staff development goal of encouraging individual performance improvement and career development requires honest, face-to-face feedback that personalizes the process and focuses on each employee's unique workplace potential. This recent addition to the publisher's excellent How-to-Do-It series effectively balances both purposes, transforming an often stressful, bureaucratic process into a means of creative feedback between staff and supervisors.

For Evans, the resolution of the conflict is found in two necessary conditions that both purposes share. The first is that appraisal instruments must have clearly defined, objective measures of job-related behavior over which the employee has actual control. Such appraisals are fairer and more meaningful, giving raters and employees a shared understanding of what is being measured and how it is relevant to job performance. The second condition is that PA must be a continuous process of skilled observation and communication on the part of managers and supervisors. Such skills reduce stress and resentment while supporting staff improvement, allowing appraisal to become a constructive, year-round conversation about performance.

Part 1 explores the managerial and supervisory planning, preparation, and decision-making necessary to satisfy Evans' second condition. Following a brief history of PA and its dilemmas, Evans discusses how to choose the best system for an organization. A particular challenge for libraries, he notes, is that they often must use the PA system of a larger parent organization with a very different staffing structure and operation. Chapter 2 describes seven types of appraisers (supervisor, peer, self, etc.) and what types of errors each is prone to making. It also addresses the concerns of staff development by discussing how to establish clearly defined, job-specific performance standards, and how

to use monitoring, mentoring, and coaching to help employees improve their performance.

Chapter 3 deals most directly with the central conflict of PA. The annual appraisal review with an employee is an administrative process, yet it is also a critical human interaction, with the potential to improve motivation and work relationships or to disrupt them. Evans underscores the importance of planning carefully for these sessions. He offers thorough guidance for dealing both with unsatisfactory performance and with satisfactory performance for which the supervisor can-

not offer the reward of a raise or promotion. Since the courts hold that a PA review is a form of test, Evans examines legal considerations and tort liability. Finally, he describes criteria for achieving sound data.

The rest of the book turns to the other necessary condition for good PA, that appraisal instruments be well-defined, objective, and fair. Part 2 examines five different appraisal methods: outcome-oriented, scaling (comparing an employee's performance to a standard), ranking (comparing employees to each other), appraisal of teams and appraisal of managers or executives. The

chapter on team appraisal exemplifies the author's approach throughout. He analyzes what good teamwork *is*, in order to show how appraisal instruments can be designed to guide staff to better performance. In a concluding chapter, Evans reviews approaches to the crucial step of training raters, underscoring in particular the importance of reducing rater bias.

Part 3 offers forty forms that illustrate each of the five appraisal methods. These forms are also available in Word and PDF format on an accompanying CD-ROM. The preceding chapters include twenty-five ad-

ditional examples. All the forms are either designed by Evans or contributed by actual library systems. Their sources range from academic and public libraries to the Maine Association of School Libraries, and they demonstrate appraisal of support staff, librarians, and supervisors.

Evans' manual will be a useful resource both for those who are designing PA systems for their libraries, and for those who need to understand, train for, and apply PA systems presented to them by their parent organizations.—Michael Shell, *Integrated Library Systems Librarian, Jacksonville (Fla.) Public Library.* ■

National Commission Takes on Nation's LIS Challenges

Special Report Describes *The New NCLIS* and Its Plans

The U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) released a special report titled *The New NCLIS* (www.nclis.gov/about/SpecialReporttNewNCLIS.pdf).

The purpose of the report, according to chair Beth Fitzsimmons of Ann Arbor Mich., is to inform the American people that the commission is investigating a number of areas in which recommendations to the President and Congress, as required by law, are needed.

"It is the policy of the U.S. government that adequate library and information services will be available to the American people," Dr. Fitzsimmons said. "The commission's role is to identify what needs to be done to ensure that adequate services are made available, and then to advise the President and Congress on policy with respect to providing these services. As described in the special report, the current Commission—with twelve newly appointed members and a limited budget—has been spending much of the past year looking at areas where its work is needed. The report describes the commission's current planning."

The planning is the first step in a larger process, according to Dr. Fitzsimmons. "What we really need to do, not only for American citizens but especially for the members of the library and information science profession, is to identify those issues that are most pressing. There are many, many issues that impact library and information service delivery in America, and the commission is enthusiastic about investigating these issues, and will do so as resources allow. But as they began their service on the commission," Dr. Fitzsimmons continued, "the members realized that they could not do everything. So they wisely came up with three goals and then began to identify activities that would enable them to achieve their goals for the commission."

As noted in the special report, the three goals chosen for the commission are:

- To appraise library and information services provided to the American people.

- To strengthen the relevance of libraries and information science in the lives of the American people.
- To promote research and development for extending and improving library and information services for the American people.

To achieve these goals, the commission has undertaken several initiatives. These include looking at the role of libraries in providing consumer health information and in promoting a healthy lifestyle for all Americans; studying how libraries can serve as the emergency preparedness and disaster response center for their communities; and investigating how library services for productive aging can be enhanced. These initiatives, and others currently in process or being planned, will generate findings to support the advice the commission is obliged to provide to the President and to Congress.

"It is important that we publish a record of these early stages of the Commission's work," Interim Executive Director Trudi Bellardo Hahn said in announcing the special report. "Since federal agencies are no longer required to provide the traditional annual report, the commission decided to publish *The New NCLIS* to describe its planning and how its work is moving forward."

Dr. Fitzsimmons also pointed out that the special report serves as a general information document about the commission's needs. "The commission's present challenge is funding since appropriation funding is insufficient to support the Commission's work," she said. "We must now identify strategic partners, sponsors, and other collaborating organizations to work with the commission. This document gets the word out. We hope that when more of the public knows of our work, the commission will be able to continue its leadership role, and continue to provide advice to the President and Congress that is sound and authoritative and benefits the American people."



National Child Care Information Center Online Library Offers Free Access

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), a service of the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, would like to introduce librarians to a new resource: the NCCIC Online Library, which is available to the public without a subscription fee of any kind.

NCCIC's Online Library, part of the NCCIC Web site, contains an extensive collection of summaries and links to full-text publications about child care and early childhood education. Users can access thousands of resources and publications containing summaries, availability information, and links to full-text documents; view customized "quick searches" on selected topics; browse new acquisitions; explore resources in Spanish; and submit questions about child care issues to "Ask NCCIC," an e-mail question and answer service. Questions can be submitted to info@nccic.org.

<http://nccic.org>

ProQuest Dissertations on Aging Added to AARP's AgeLine Database

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and ProQuest Information and Learning announce the addition of doctoral dissertations to AARP's AgeLine Database on aging-related research, policy, and practice. The dissertation content comes from Dissertation Abstracts International and includes gerontology and aging-related content from psychol-

ogy, social work, economics, sociology, political science, health sciences, and other disciplines, from 1999 to the present.

AgeLine is a comprehensive database focusing exclusively on research, policy, and practice affecting the population age fifty and older, and includes abstracts of more than six hundred journals as well as books, chapters, reports, videos, dissertations, and selected consumer content. It has a strong focus on the health and health care of older adults, including Medicare policy, long-term care, and health status and behaviors. AgeLine is produced by AARP's Research Information Center and can be searched free on the AARP Web site or through third-party providers.

www.aarp.org/ageline

New Software Offers Wireless Time Control for Private Laptops on a Public Network

Computers By Design announced the addition of CybraryAir software to its suite of PC management solutions. CybraryAir software will allow libraries and other public facilities that offer wireless networking to set a time restriction on those who use their networking services. Users will log on to the wireless network by entering a library card or ID number. Furthermore, libraries can restrict access to users based on fields in the patron record such as money owed, age, or the number of items a patron checked out of the library. Once the user has been granted access they then will have a predetermined amount of time that they can use the network and the library networking resources.

Using CybraryAir software on a library's wireless network will help overcome the security risks involved with

providing access to a wireless network. An appliance with CybraryAir software together will serve as a gateway for patron access to the Internet and other library resources. By requiring a patron to log on to the network using their library card, CybraryAir software will verify the identity of the patron in the Library System. The library will also have the ability to then gather statistics based on various wireless networking activities.

www.cybraryN.com

WebFeat Granted Patent for Federated Search Technology

WebFeat, the original federated search engine, used by more than fifteen hundred leading academic, public, and special libraries, has been granted a patent for its federated search technology by the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Granted in the fourth quarter of 2004, patent #6,807,539 covers WebFeat's method and technology for managing the authentication and session management necessary to perform a federated search across licensed resources. Managing licensed database authentication and sessions is widely considered to be the most challenging aspect of federated searching, determining whether or not a federated search engine is compatible with a library's collection of database resources.

www.webfeat.org

Full Historical Backfiles of the Atlanta Constitution to Be Digitized

ProQuest and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* announced a partnership that will bring premium historical content to all types of libraries. In the first release, historical news content from the *Atlanta Constitution* will be available online from its first published edition in 1868 through 1925. In each subsequent year of the agreement, another three years of content will be added. The newspaper publisher will retain rights to distribute the historical content to the consumer market.

Using advanced zoning and digitizing techniques, ProQuest will digitally reproduce every issue from cover to cover—not just news stories and editorials, but also



The contributing editor of this column is Vicki Nesting, Regional Branch Librarian at the St. Charles Parish Library, Louisiana. Submissions may be sent to her at 21 River Park Dr., Hahnville, LA 70057; vnestin@bellsouth.net.

She is currently reading *A Season for the Dead* by David Hewson, *Dead Famous* by Carol O'Connell, and *The Devil's Wind* by Richard Rayner.

The above are extracted from press releases and vendor announcements and are intended for reader information only. The appearance of such notices herein does not constitute an evaluation or an endorsement of the products or services by the Public Library Association or the editors of this magazine.

photos, graphics, and advertisements. The database will be completely searchable (by keyword, author's name, date, etc.) and browsable by issue, allowing searchers to browse through entire issues page by page as they would a printed paper.

www.il.proquest.com

Circulation Desk Design May Reduce Risk of Injury

Libramation has invested significantly in the design of its Circ-Desk library staff counter equipment. The Circ-Desk design ensures close proximity to the body's natural motor functions. Components of the Circ-Desk include an adjustable flat screen monitor, a built-in receipt printer, a specialized programmable mini-keyboard to avoid the overuse of a mouse, and a flat working surface that allows each item to slide across the barcode scan line and desensitizing coil to a location where the patron can pick up items at the end of each transaction.

Systems based on radio frequency identification (RFID) are even easier, as patrons need only place their stack of items on a target area of the circulation desk. All the items can then be processed simultaneously, including changing the security bit to allow them to be removed from the library as patrons pass through the security gates. By minimizing the risks related to lifting books and other repetitive tasks, Circ-Desk helps prevent repetitive strain injuries.

www.libramation.com

Thomson Gale Introduces Nineteenth Century Collections Online

Thomson Gale announced the launch of the Nineteenth-Century Collections Online project. It follows Eighteenth-Century Collections Online, the largest commercial digitization project ever undertaken that allows full-text searching of more than 150,000 printed works and editions.

Nineteenth-Century Collections Online will consist of books, newspapers, periodicals, manuscripts, and ephemera. Thomson Gale will provide digital fac-

simile images and full-text searching for all included materials.

The Times Digital Archive 1785–1985 already gives access to the newspaper of record for the nineteenth century. In 2004, *The Making of Modern Law: Legal Treatises 1800–1926* was launched, contributing ten million pages of primary documents to the Nineteenth Century Collections Online. In 2005, Thomson Gale will offer *The Making of the Modern Economy: The Goldsmiths-Kress Library of Economic Literature 1450–1850*, delivering several million pages on business, trade, and economics, with a focus on the first half of the nineteenth century. Digital collections in American literature and history, religion, warfare, and other topics also will be part of Nineteenth-Century Collections Online.

www.gale.com

GPO Proposed 21st Century Digital Information Factory

The Government Printing Office (GPO) announced the publication of *A Strategic Vision for the 21st Century*, which sets forth the agency's plans to transform itself from a nineteenth-century, heavy-metal printing operation into a twenty-first-century digital information factory. Central to GPO's plans is trading its existing building complex for new facilities, sized and equipped for its digital future.

As it has since 1861, GPO will continue to manage the content creation of the official journals of government, such as the Congressional Record and Federal Register, and will print these and other documents for Congress in its new facilities. But, the majority of the federal government's printing requirements will continue to be purchased in the private sector through a competitive bidding process. Last year, GPO awarded contracts to 2,568 vendors located in every state in the country.

"We see the government's printing requirements changing dramatically in the next few years. Not only will fewer titles be printed, but the quantities will drop as more government information is accessed through the Internet. Within a few years we will no longer order copies for ware-

house storage and later fulfillment, instead relying on demand printing, where our vendors print one copy for each individual customer's order," said Jim Bradley, GPO's managing director of customer services.

Judy Russell, superintendent of documents at GPO, is responsible for the dissemination of both printed and electronic documents to the public. "To fully serve the needs of our library partners and the public for finding and using government information on the Internet, we are proposing to begin with the Federalist Papers and digitize all significant federal documents following a set of standards that will allow users to search the Web for authentic federal information," said Russell.

For more information or to view GPO's *A Strategic Vision for the 21st Century* or the 2004 Annual Report, please visit www.gpo.gov/congressional/index.html.

Bowker Introduces New Link Resolver

Bowker introduced a brand new product to its serials suite of products—Ulrich's Resource Linker—that brings affordable full-text search and linking capabilities to librarians and library patrons. Bowker's new OpenURL link resolver currently tracks approximately 70,000 electronic periodicals from more than 1,100 publishers. The Ulrich's Resource Linker knowledgebase includes metadata and links for more than 580 databases and aggregator packages, and tracks more than 800,000 individual holdings from providers of all types.

Remotely hosted by Bowker so that the library staff is not burdened by setting up, maintaining, and updating a link server, Ulrich's Resource Linker can be configured to include the library's print, microform, and customized holdings, and extended services—giving librarians the power to choose the degree to which coverage dates, notes, preferred providers, and other elements of holdings are displayed to end-users. Plus, Ulrich's Resource Linker can be branded with the library's logo—giving library patrons a search and linking tool with a familiar look and feel.

www.bowker.com ■

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