The Public Library Association store on cafepress.com is now open for business. Visit www.cafepress.com/librarystore to see our selection of premium products.

Show your public library pride with a distinctive collection of products from PLA, including items featuring the popular “Smartest Card” and “Ask Me Why I Love My Job” graphics.

We add new products regularly, so be sure to check back often.
A Common Purpose
Public/School Library Cooperation and Collaboration
JEFF KATZ
Public and school librarians have a shared goal of providing young people with the resources, skills, and tools that they need to succeed in school and life in general. This article describes the ways in which an optimal relationship can be developed focusing on communication, cooperation, and respect.

Teens and Social Networking
How Public Libraries Are Responding to the Latest Online Trend
DENISE E. AGOSTO AND JUNE ABBAS
Public libraries are beginning to use social networking to connect with teens in novel ways. The authors detail research about this social phenomenon and provide suggestions for public libraries regarding the use of social networking sites.

Thinking Inside the Box
MAUREEN O’CONNOR
Shows how Queens (N.Y.) Library used existing library space to its advantage, instituting operational and architectural strategies to create enough room to accommodate their growing number of customers and busy programming schedules.
You Already Have a Marketing Department

Each library staff member—from administrator to maintenance person to shelver to librarian—is a marketer for the library. So if you are thinking “marketing is not in the budget,” you are already employing marketers on the “sales floor.” Each individual leaves an impression on the patron through interaction, direct or indirect. Marketing goes beyond just being able to remember to tell the patron about the latest library program, it is discovering what you are thinking “marketing is not in the budget” and creating a memorable experience for the patron.

As the economy continues to dominate the news, it seems like we’re constantly barded with dire tales of worsening conditions. While we know that Public Libraries can’t single-handedly turn the economy around, we’re doing what we can to provide you with sound advice to make it through these tough times. “A Common Purpose” details how public and school library partnerships can strengthen the services both institutions provide to their student users. “Thinking Inside the Box” shows how the Queens (N.Y.) Library was able to successfully do more with less. Finally, “Teens and Social Networking” shows how libraries can maximize the impact of social networking sites with their teen users—a theme that dovetails neatly with the “Internet Spotlight” commentary on the battle between Twitter and FriendFeed.

Also, be sure to watch for the next issue of PL, which will focus entirely on libraries and the economy. Let us know what you think! What is your library doing to navigate budget cuts? Write us a letter or drop us a line at pla@ala.org. By sharing our expertise, librarians will be able to remain successful, valued, and viable.—KH

Editor Kathleen M. Hughes is currently reading Shadow of the Silk Road by Colin Thubron.

continued on page 15
PLA President's Program Featuring Cokie Roberts
Cokie Roberts will headline the 2009 PLA President's Program and Awards Presentation on Monday, July 13, during the 2009 ALA Annual Conference. Roberts is a political commentator for ABC News and a senior news analyst for National Public Radio. From 1996 to 2002, she and Sam Donaldson coanchored the weekly ABC interview program, This Week. PLA is pleased to present Roberts through the support of HarperCollins.

Immediately following the President's Program, join PLA President Carol Sheffer at a fun-filled reception. Mingle and enjoy refreshments and entertainment from 6:30 to 8 p.m. This event will be held at McCormick Place; visit www.pla.org for updated room location information.

Take Advantage of Public Libraries Discounted Group Subscriptions
For a limited time, PLA is offering a discounted price on group subscriptions to Public Libraries, ALA's only journal devoted exclusively to the needs of public library staff, leadership, and trustees. Public Libraries offers:

- articulate and thoughtful articles on current library issues;
- innovative ideas and expertise from industry leaders;
- product news and reviews;
- real-life case studies about library programs and services;

- effective strategies and ideas that can make a difference at your library; and
- the latest news and events from ALA and PLA.

Regularly priced at $50, PLA is pleased to offer a 40 percent discount on group subscriptions. That's just $30 per subscription when you order five or more. This offer is good through June 30, 2009 (postmarked). The order form is located on the inside back cover of this issue or at www.pla.org.

Congratulations to Harvard University Fellowship Award Recipient
PLA has awarded Ishwar Laxminarayan, director of the Jackson (Mich.) District Library, a PLA Leadership Fellows scholarship for the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

The Leadership Fellows program offers PLA members who are public library managers a chance to attend executive leadership training at some of the best universities in the United States. The programs are reviewed and chosen by the PLA Leadership Taskforce because they focus on teaching management concepts not generally learned in a library school setting. This was the first year for the PLA Leadership Fellows program.

Fellows will share their experience at a PLA program during ALA Annual Conference and provide input to the Leadership Taskforce in an effort to help shape a comprehensive leadership development program for PLA. Visit www.pla.org for more information.

2009 PLDS Statistical Report: Orders Now Being Accepted
PLA is now accepting orders for its Public Library Data Service (PLDS) Statistical Report 2009. Order forms for both the print version of the report and the database are available at www.pla.org.

To order a copy, please fax the order form to the PLA office at (312) 280–5029. If you already receive the PLDS Statistical Report as part of a standing order, you do not need to reorder. Please contact the ALA Store at (866) 746–7252 with questions regarding standing orders.
The Future of Public Libraries

It is interesting to me how many people want to discuss the impending demise of public libraries. After all, they say, there is the Internet. What more could the average person need to get the information he or she wants? Besides, there are online book purveyors who can sell people the books or other materials they need, either in print or electronic format. And there are always online auctions for the hard-to-find items, right? What can libraries offer in this new environment? Isn’t the concept of a brick-and-mortar library obsolete?

What do you say when someone asks you that question? I polled a few friends to see how they responded. Each said that personal interaction was what made public libraries special and what made them vital to the communities they serve. Librarians:

- can help vet sources of information;
- recognize trusted websites and help users obtain the most accurate and timely data; and
- understand that not every answer appears on the first screen of results from an Internet search engine and that some organizations pay for prime placement.

Even more importantly, perhaps, are librarians’ skills at question negotiation. They can determine what information is really needed as opposed to answering the first question posed by the user. Librarians use their knowledge and skills to recommend information and suggest pleasure reading. Librarians offer moral support and a friendly ear. Librarians also know when to let more independent users go their own way and play a back-up role. They are available but not overbearing. Unlike big retailers or search engines, librarians have no product to sell; they serve as neutral advisors.

The other response that my friends gave me was that libraries are the “third place” (home being first and work/school being second)—a physical place to visit and use. People need a community space where they can come together; a modern replacement for the general store. Older adults often lead solitary lives and find a sense of belonging at the public library. Children and teens find a safe place to study, learn, and meet with their friends. Unemployed or underemployed people find help and support when they enter the library. Families can access free recreational activities. Anyone can enter the public library for whatever reason.

I have been a librarian long enough to remember when pundits and
professionals alike believed that paperbacks would be the death knell of hardbound books. They weren’t. I also remember being promised that computers would result in a paperless society. I look at my desk and still hope that someday at least some of the paper will go away. That seems unlikely, but hope springs eternal. Will public libraries change? Absolutely. Will public libraries become extinct? Absolutely not!

This is my last column as your president and I can hardly believe how fast the year has gone. I have met so many wonderful people and know that I will meet even more in Chicago at the 2009 ALA Annual Conference. We are extremely fortunate to have a terrific staff at PLA. The PLA board of directors is a wonderful group of dedicated individuals and it has been a real privilege to work with them this year. Thank you all.

Caplan Chosen for Vice President/President-Elect

Audra Caplan, director of the Harford County (Md.) Public Library, has been elected vice president/president-elect of PLA. Caplan will become PLA vice president/president-elect in July 2009 and will assume the PLA presidency in July 2010 for a one-year term. “I am extremely honored to represent this extraordinary organization in this position. I am looking forward to working with the membership and developing partnerships with colleagues across the association as we face the challenges ahead,” Caplan said.

Sari Feldman, director of the Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library and current PLA vice president/president-elect, will become PLA president with the conclusion of the 2009 ALA Annual Conference.
Library Service to People with Mental Challenges

Progress Since the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Non-violence leads to the highest ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all other living things, we are still savages.—Thomas A. Edison

Nearly nineteen years have passed since President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law in July 1990. As the mother of a thirty-seven-year-old man with Down syndrome, I am elated by the many strides society has made in advancing the cause of people with all types of disabilities. Lowered curbs, sinks, and drinking fountains; ramps; wider aisles and doorways; larger bathroom facilities; wheelchair lifts on buses; and automatic doors signal more manageable access for people with disabilities.

Barriers, with some wrestling, are slowly being broken. People-first language (a semantic technique used when discussing disabilities to avoid perceived and subconscious dehumanization) highlights awareness that a particular disability does not define the whole person. Athletes with different abilities get the chance to taste victory because of Special Olympics. Jason Kingsley, Mitchell Levitz, and Nigel Hunt, all with Down syndrome, have written books. Other people with Down syndrome, like actor Chris Burke, have appeared on television programs such as Life Goes On and Sesame Street.

Many people with disabilities are more visible in the community at large, holding jobs in grocery stores and in other service employment, paying taxes, and contributing to society in meaningful ways. All of this spells so much progress since I entered the world of the mentally challenged in 1971 and found only two books on the library shelves pertaining to disabilities—none specifically addressing Down syndrome.

I think that, even today, parents who have children with mental challenges hardly think about libraries as a place to bring their offspring. Or that perhaps a program for their kids, either inclusive with non-disabled children or
segregated, might be in order. By the same token, I ask this question: have libraries reached out to the mentally challenged and is this population considered to be a responsibility and “covered” under ADA as it applies to libraries? Many library directors are under the impression that ADA addresses only physical barriers and that if the aisles are wide enough then they are in compliance. Sadly, this has largely been the interpretation of the law, but it was not the mandate.

Since 1990, the U.S. Supreme Court, “has slowly chipped away at the broad protections of the ADA and has actually created a new set of barriers for disabled Americans.” Because of this, Congress proposed a bill (never passed into law), The Americans with Disabilities Act Restoration Act of 2007, which states that:

- In enacting the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Congress recognized that physical and mental impairments are natural parts of the human experience that in no way diminish a person’s right to fully participate in all aspects of society, but Congress also recognized that people with physical or mental impairments having the talent, skills, abilities, and desire to participate in society are frequently precluded from doing so because of prejudice, antiquated attitudes, or the failure to remove societal and institutional barriers . . . Congress modeled the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 definition of disability on that of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which had, prior to the date of enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, been construed broadly to encompass both actual and perceived limitations, as well as limitations imposed by society; and the broad conception of the definition contained in section 504 had been underscored by the Supreme Court’s statement in its decision in School Board of Nassau County v. Arline, 480 U.S. 273 (1987), that the definition “acknowledged that society’s myths and fears about disability and disease are as handicapping as are the physical limitations that flow from actual impairment.”

What about Libraries?
The American Library Association (ALA) Council adopted a resolution in 1988 which denounced discrimination against handicapped individuals—persons who have physical or mental impairment, including those with HIV.

In 2001, the ALA Council approved a policy written by the ADA Assembly, a representational group administered by the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA), now called the Accessibility Assembly. The policy recommended adaptations in extended loan periods, waived late fees, extended reserve periods, library cards for proxies, books by mail, home delivery service, and American Sign Language interpreters or real-time captioning at library programs, among several others. The ALA Council also placed this stipulation within the policy, “Libraries must provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities unless the library can show that the accommodations would impose an ‘undue hardship’ on its operations.” Does this get libraries off the hook with regard to the mentally challenged?

I don’t think so, given the many modifications and adaptations to buildings, equipment, and electronic assistive devices incorporated for the physically disabled.

ASCLA recommends that “all graduate programs in library and information studies should require students to learn about accessibility issues, assistive technology, the needs of people with disabilities both as users and employees, and the laws applicable to the rights of people with disabilities as they impact library services.” A further endorsement states that “libraries should provide training opportunities for all library employees and volunteers in order to sensitize them to the issues affecting people with disabilities and to teach effective techniques for providing services for users with disabilities and for working with colleagues with disabilities.”

However, does any of this happen in the real world of libraries? Certainly, in-service days could be worked into the schedule and there are several qualified facilitators nationwide to coach staff on these issues. The nonprofit advocacy organization The Arc of the United States (formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens) has a national database, TheArcLink, with three instruction modules on its website specifically aimed at librarians serving people with disabilities. And Rhea Rubin, a library consultant, writes:

When asked to rate themselves on their comfort level in serving people with disabilities, the great majority of library staff members inevitably refer to themselves as “uncomfortable” or “very uncomfortable.” Library staff must be given the chance to reduce their own anxiety and
increase their knowledge about disabilities before serving people with disabilities.9

This training cannot be shoved under the table and ignored any longer. People with disabilities are members of the community and library staff members will encounter them in the course of daily activity. As librarians, we need to ask ourselves how we have responded to the original ADA throughout the last nineteen years and how we will respond in the future.

Pioneering Work

While researching this topic, countless respondents told me I was doing “pioneering” work. To me, there is a vast incongruence between the real world of libraries today and ALA’s 1988 resolution on access and the ASCLA policy adopted in 2001.

Brian Campbell, the systems and special projects director of Vancouver Public Library and the national director of the Working Together: Library-Community Connections Project, wrote about a Vancouver program initiated to develop methods for libraries to overcome systemic barriers to library use by people with physical and mental disabilities.10 He states that, traditionally, libraries are structured and organized by “mainly middle-class professionals who have absorbed their professions’ and their class’ norms.”11 He describes the library as a place where “the rules of behavior have been established to ensure an organized, functional and controlled environment.”12 In a word, we operate with efficiency. As librarians, we are comfortable being approached by our patrons from behind the physical barrier of a reference or circulation desk and we are secure and psychologically powerful with this physical model. Most patrons have grown up with this tradition of ours and feel a similar comfort and acceptance.

However, it is hard for us to accept that some of our patrons aren’t comfortable with this setup. The truth is many individuals have been made to feel that the library does not want “their kind.” Libraries do not do a satisfactory job of providing library service to the socially excluded, and I include the mentally challenged in that definition. Perhaps the social awkwardness of these people influences the discomfort level of staff members and that of more traditional patrons. Fear on the part of inexperienced librarians perhaps plays a role, as well as an unwillingness to venture into unknown territory. Many librarians choose to ignore the fact that people who have developmental or behavioral disabilities are part of our communities.

Campbell further asserts that as far as community presence is concerned, libraries mainly work in the community—taking outreach programs offered in the building into the community to a designated external location such as a senior center, school, or daycare facility. The planning arrangements usually do not involve input from those receiving the service. Campbell says “it is usually the library that determines the service, how it is provided and whether or not it is a success,”13 and that success is determined by the attendance.

But what of the individual’s needs in the community? How can the library begin to fulfill those? Campbell proposes a different paradigm for libraries. His approach would begin from the position of the individual and would recognize and acknowledge conditions that define the lives of the socially excluded. He calls this the community development model and it begins by building relationships—the library working with the community, not just in the community.

Socially marginalized people need to develop a foundation of trust, receive respect, and feel they are being treated with dignity before they will sincerely discuss their needs. Above all, libraries must earn the trust of individuals who are mentally challenged, as well as their parents and caregivers, who sometimes must speak for them. These relationships are key.

I once worked in the field of mental health as a recreation therapist. I never read patients’ charts before interviewing them. I felt that knowing a patient’s diagnosis would perhaps predispose me toward a judgment or stereotype. I found that patients confided in me more freely and openly than they did with other members of the treatment team.

In getting to know their individual stories, and not their diagnoses, I could help, advocate, and intervene by using expressive modalities which were not as threatening to them as traditional therapy and analysis.

I found, as Campbell encourages, that “once relationships have been established, the process of working with individuals to discuss and articulate their needs, and to establish a path to meeting those needs, can begin.”14 It doesn't take just one program to have a breakthrough with an individual or with a group. We are all multifaceted and learn in small “aha” increments of revelation that are sprinkled with moments of frustration, anger, and distance. We owe ourselves the patience to grow and stretch and we owe the mentally challenged that, too.
Can Libraries Be User Friendly?

While referring to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Quincy Abbot reminds us that “fifty years ago, when custodial care in institutions was the norm, people with disabilities were stuck at the bottom. Their physiological needs and their safety needs were met and little more; sometimes not even that.”

As individuals moved into the community, quality of life issues remained at this lowest level. Possibilities today include the opportunity for people who are mentally challenged to move into the third level of the hierarchy: satisfying the needs of love, affection, and belonging.

In preparing for the 1990s, members of the Minnesota Governor’s Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities switched their focus from federal priorities to positively making a difference in the lives of individuals and their families.

A consumer survey conducted in preparation for the “1990 Report: The Heart of Community is Inclusion” reinforced the council’s observations—that people with disabilities are lonely and isolated. The overwhelming concern was lack of friends and relationships, which are the essence of life.

As a result of the survey, the council’s ten-year priority was helping people with developmental disabilities achieve full integration and participation in the community. In more recent years, the council has funded projects that encourage self-determination and a move toward independence, including:

1. Partners in Policymaking
   (an intensive course to train individuals with disabilities and family members to become community leaders);
2. Parents as Case Managers
   (projects which train parents for this role);
3. Personal Futures Planning
   (a group planning and support process to help an individual toward a better future);
4. the voucher system
   (in which families and individuals select among service options and are reimbursed with government money);
5. youth leadership
   (which fosters integrated friendships and develops leadership and self-determination skills);
6. People First
   (which uses a group format to teach self-advocacy skills); and
7. career vision
   (which focuses on identification of individual skills and goals and matching these with employment possibilities).

Activities of the projects have included a survey of “best practices” in empowerment and self-advocacy, and establishment of contacts in each state with the developmental disabilities council, the university affiliated consumer/parent organization.

By empowering people, providing them with timely information, connecting them with resources and their communities, and backing their choices and the decisions they make about their own lives, the mentally challenged can begin to move to the fourth level of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs pyramid—self-esteem. Librarians are purveyors of information, connecting people with resources both within and outside the community. The time has come for libraries to extend and push boundaries, for it is with the removal of limitation and shortsightedness that real change occurs.

Some Library Boundary Pushers

In doing research for this column, I found a program in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, where a teen/youth librarian, Elsworth Rockefeller, hosts a twice-monthly anime program for young adults that draws around twenty to twenty-five teens, and about 75 percent of them have observable disabilities. His philosophy is refreshing. He said:

I really believe that even if individuals are lower functioning and don’t seem to get a lot out of visits to libraries and other community spaces, it’s still healthy to get diverse exposure. It’s also great for other library users to see active diversity within library patronage. I often suggest that groups use meeting spaces to do things that they do anyway, like light physical activities—like the parachute game we had not too long ago. It’s fun to get out and explore a new place for most people, even if they don’t show it or cannot clearly articulate feelings.

My son, Marc, lives in a group home thirty minutes from Rockefeller’s library. Rockefeller has invited my son’s group to visit and attend his innovative program. The group home manager, Eddie Jones, is excited about the prospect and a “new place to go, where we are welcomed.”

Rockefeller recently did some targeted outreach to local families, schools, and agencies that work with teens with behavioral or developmental disabilities. He said that he “knew there were many youth in the community who were not taking part in library programs and events and I didn’t want anyone to
feel unwelcome because of a disability.” His motivation for doing outreach to youth with special needs stems “from my belief that practicing natural inclusion of all different types of people with the youth fosters an appreciation and awareness of diversity which teens will carry into adulthood.”

Hospitality is a trademark of Rockefeller. “Whenever I see a population in the community at large but not in the library, I see that as a challenge to increase outreach and I really put some effort into welcoming that particular group,” he said. His programs are open to people at sixth-grade level and up. A young man of nineteen, who has a hearing loss and some developmental delays, comes regularly to the program. Rockefeller does not seek out an explanation of any person’s disability from the parents who bring their kids to his program. “Diagnosis really doesn’t matter to me and I encourage all parents to leave the premises during our program,” he said.

Rockefeller and I agree that there are more resources available and accommodations made in libraries for people with physical disabilities than for the developmentally, mentally, and behaviorally challenged. Marilyn Irwin, associate dean of the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science, also agrees that “librarians have made little headway on implementation of ADA and few provide services for special populations.” She added, “Most parents and other caregivers don’t consider libraries as a venue for those with cognitive disabilities. So it turns into a chicken and egg situation. That doesn’t mean that more work isn’t needed.”

The Jack Rubinstein Library at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center, managed by the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, provides early intervention identification training programs for public librarians to aid them in directing parents to the appropriate resources within their libraries or the hospital’s library. According to Library Manager Barbara Johnson, “Our affiliation with public libraries is through a collaborative United Way funding program whereby the Rubinstein Library purchases books to establish a ‘special needs’ resource center within select Cincinnati public libraries.”

The Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics’ toy library lends toys and educational software to parents and teachers at no cost. The Jack Rubinstein Library provides extensive information services in developmental and behavioral issues, children’s health conditions, and topics ranging from well-child care and parenting to acute and chronic illnesses. This library is open to the community in addition to being available to hospital patrons.

Francie Gilman, senior librarian of Montgomery County (Md.) Public Libraries Disability Resource Center, said that her library system “provides library tours for groups from the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) of Montgomery County and other agencies and organizations. We provide inclusive programming for children of all abilities. We employ people who have intellectual disabilities.” She also related that the “entire Montgomery County Public Libraries staff attended ‘People First’ training in 2006 which raised awareness and promoted sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities. This staff training day also included statements and performances by young people with various intellectual disabilities.” Yet, Gilman admitted, “While I know that our staff is making progress, there is more that we can do to involve and interest people with intellectual disabilities.”

Nancy Fletcher, public relations and special needs librarian for the Waukesha County (Wis.) Federated Library System, wrote a grant with colleague Claudia Backus during 1996–97 to improve library services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Both librarians developed a workshop that was taken to each library in the system for staff awareness and lowering of barriers to service for individuals with developmental disabilities. The two also encouraged libraries to purchase picture books suitable for adults and they compiled a bibliography of library materials for individuals with developmental disabilities. For their efforts, they were recognized by the Full Citizenship Initiative (a coalition of groups serving individuals with disabilities in Waukesha County) for efforts on behalf of the rights of people with disabilities in the community.

C.J. Sullivan, outreach coordinator of the Johnson County (Kans.) Library (JCL), said that their college (Johnson County Community College) has a “wonderful program called CLEAR—College Learning Experience Activities and Resources. It is a continuing education schedule for adults with learning disabilities.” Her colleague, Kathryn Kennedy, elaborated: “The CLEAR program serves individuals with mild retardation and other developmental cognitive delays. Most of the students took special education in high school and the majority read at about the second- or third-grade level, some much higher and a few are nonreaders.” Kennedy added that “classes are offered in life skills, basic academics, and personal
enrichment. Some students have driver's licenses, live in their own apartments, and are employed full or part time. Others live with family, in group homes, or other assisted living. \(^3^6\)

Webster Groves (Mo.) Public Library Director Tom Cooper stated that:

Our library has what we consider a pioneering project—to provide story hour and craft times to families with autistic and other developmentally challenged children. We hold the programs after hours, to make these folks, who are usually self-segregating, more comfortable. Needless to say, the parents love it. They can finally take advantage of what other parents in our community get all the time—the simple joy of a library story hour for their little kids. It's expensive, since we have to hire various professional facilitators to make the events worthwhile. We have received some corporate grant support, support from our Friends group, and a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant for our summer schedule. \(^3^7\)

Next Chapter Book Club

The most wonderful program I found, however, is not held primarily in libraries. It is the Next Chapter Book Club (NCBC), a program of Ohio State University’s Nisonger Center. The purpose of the club is to promote literacy, social connectedness, and community inclusion for adolescents and adults with intellectual disabilities. No single component is given more weight than the other two. NCBC Program Coordinator Jillian Ober said that the appropriateness of a library as a community host site for a book club greatly depends on the library itself. \(^3^8\) The majority of clubs do not usually meet in libraries because the noise restrictions in a traditional library setting are not conducive. “Being immersed in the community around us is what we strive to do for the book club members. If we hold a book club meeting at a public library and then convene in a separate conference room off the beaten path, we defeat our purpose, although some libraries are now featuring a café or coffee shop and that works well with our groups,” Ober said. \(^3^9\)

NCBC began in 2002 in Columbus, Ohio, and now boasts more than one hundred clubs in fifty-three cities and three countries. In five U.S. cities and one Canadian city, a public library serves as the host site for the book club. NCBC Program Director Tom Fish described the routine:

A group of five to nine people with intellectual disabilities gather with two trained volunteer facilitators in a local bookstore or café to read and discuss a book for one hour a week. Much like members of other book clubs, NCBC members choose the book they want to read and how they want to structure their club. \(^4^0\)

Although not planned, each club is racially and ethnically diverse and includes both readers and nonreaders. As many as 60 to 70 percent of members are not conventional readers and it does not matter that it takes twelve to sixteen weeks to complete a book. Some NCBC members do not read or speak. Of most significance is that NCBC meetings occur in busy, inviting community settings such as bookstores, coffee shops, and cafés. \(^4^1\)

Conclusion

No longer hidden, people with mental challenges are out in the world, happy, feeling a sense of belonging, enjoying friendships, and applauding one another’s achievements. I’d like to think that with time, people with disabilities hanging out with friends in cafés will become commonplace and we will finally drop our fears and prejudices and learn that each life has value. Perhaps libraries, those bastions of learning and culture, will pave the way to that goal. \(\text{ref} \)

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7. Ibid.


11. Ibid., 1.

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13. Ibid., 3.


24. Ibid.


27. Ibid.


31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Nancy Fletcher, personal communication with the author, Feb. 27, 2008.

34. C.J. Sullivan, personal communication with the author, Mar. 21, 2008.


36. Ibid.

37. Tom Cooper, personal communication with the author, Mar. 11, 2008.


39. Ibid.

40. Tom Fish, personal communication with the author, Mar. 15, 2008.

“Tales from the Front” is a collection of news items and innovative ideas from libraries nationwide. Send submissions to the contributing editor.

Texas State Library and Archives Commission Joins with EBSCO in Promoting Library Usage

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) in partnership with EBSCO Publishing are promoting the usage of Texas public libraries through statewide radio ads. The sixty-second ads promote Texas libraries as a resource with knowledgeable staff and Internet access, along with programs and services for the entire community.

“Children, teens, adults, and senior citizens can all benefit from the materials and available TexShare database at Texas libraries,” said Peggy D. Rudd, TSLAC director and librarian. “This is an important message and we thank EBSCO for partnering with us in delivering this message.”

TexShare provides a wealth of electronic database resources to more than seven hundred public, academic, and medical libraries in Texas, at a significant cost savings because of TSLAC’s negotiated group purchasing agreements. It’s a cooperative program designed to improve service to Texans and offer a broader range of materials and services than any single library can provide.

For more information about TSLAC, visit www.tsl.state.tx.us. For more information about TexShare, contact TSLAC TexShare Database Coordinator Russlene Waukechon at (512) 463-7402 or e-mail rwaukchn@ tsl.state.tx.us.

Des Moines Public Library Offers MyLibraryDV

MyLibraryDV is a video-on-demand service that offers cardholders free Hollywood movies, network and cable TV programming, and original digital video content downloadable direct to personal computers.

Users will find hundreds of hours of lifestyle programming videos, including Rick Steves' Europe, Antiques Roadshow, America’s Test Kitchen, Today's Homeowner, independent and foreign films from Film Movement, and an array of classic and Hollywood favorites.

Special features of MyLibraryDV include:

- 24/7 access to more than five hundred on-demand videos downloadable from anywhere there’s a broadband Internet connection;
- four hundred videos from the Hollywood Favorites and World Cinema collection; and
- simultaneous access to all programming so you don’t have to wait for a video to be checked back in before it can be downloaded again.

It’s easy to use. A simple two- to three-minute download containing special software is all it takes to get started. Visit the Des Moines Public Library website at www.desmoineslibrary.com and click on digital downloads for more information.
Eden Prairie Library Holds Somali Book Festival

The Eden Prairie (Minn.) Library (EPL) recently held its first Somali Book Festival. Kathleen Moriarty and Jamal Adam presented the story *Wiil Waal*, a Somali folktale for children. The book has been named a 2008 Honor Book for Young Children by the African Studies Association. The folktale, retold by Moriarty, was translated into Somali by Adam, and published by the Minnesota Humanities Center as part of the Somali Bilingual Book Project.

“For more information, contact Carla Knutson Biermaier at (952) 847-8593 or e-mail cbiermaier@hclib.org.

Have You “Red” At Your Library Lately?

Over the years, Jefferson County (Colo.) Public Library (JCPL) has offered its neighborhood locations for the Bonfils Blood Center mobile blood drives. Through this partnership, the library helps Bonfils reach its goal of more than four thousand donors each week—the number of donations needed to meet ongoing needs.

“Blood donation declines by as much as 20 percent or more in winter months due to travel, the cold and flu season, and adverse weather and road conditions, according to Bonfils.

“In these times of economic uncertainty, blood donation remains a volunteer opportunity that continuously makes a positive impact in the community,” said Jessica Maitland, vice president of marketing and community operations for Bonfils Blood Center. “In about an hour, you can save and enhance the lives of up to three patients with a single blood donation. The gift of life is inside all of us.”

Bonfils operates nine community donor centers, serves more than two hundred healthcare facilities in

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Author Kathleen Moriarty and translator Jamal Adam.

Book Fair at Mukwonago Community Library

The Mukwonago (Wis.) Community Library attracted ten local authors to sell and autograph their books at the library’s annual auction, raffle, and bake sale. An open invitation was posted to the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators electronic discussion list for southeast Wisconsin and was also extended to authors who had done book signings at the library in the past.

Participants brought their own supply of books and committed to a three-hour block of time. Each of the authors sold and signed books, several donated a copy of their work to the library, and others offered handouts such as bookmarks or posters. One writer presented a book as a door prize to those who entered their names in a drawing, all of which stimulated lively dialogue and served the goals of connecting writers to readers of all ages and promoting literacy.

For those who would like to host a similar gathering, go to the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators’ website at www.scbwi.org/regions.htm to find a chapter near you. There are local organizations in all fifty states as well as in many foreign countries. Many regions have speaker directories that you can access, or for help in disseminating the call, contact the regional advisor. You can also rely on your own homegrown authors who have already established a relationship with your library.

For more information, contact Janet Kosky at jjkosky@mukcom.lib.wi.us or call (262) 363-6411.
Colorado and beyond, collects more than two hundred thousand units of blood annually, and offers a variety of services to better meet the needs of the community. Visit www.bonfils.org for more information.

**Greensboro Public Library Offers Third Winter Series to Homeless**

Greensboro (N.C.) Public Library (GPL) is taking an innovative approach to the longstanding issue of serving patrons seeking daily refuge in the library. Through a partnership with a local chapter of Food Not Bombs, the library hosts a meal and provides a forum for community building, networking, needed services, and has spun off many unique experiences for attendees, volunteers, and library staff.

The conversations people have when they are invited to relax and stay a while have really been invaluable to the library. GPL learned that homeless people often felt unwelcome in their facilities because they feel unwelcome almost every place they go. This perception keeps them from approaching staff with questions for needed information.

“I have learned that conducting the reference interview sitting down in a casual atmosphere is more productive than across the desk,” said Program Coordinator Jennifer Worrells. “We have put together a resource guide based on the questions that have come up—not just about jobs and shelter, but about how to obtain identification and where to seek help for disability claims. As reference librarians, we deal all the time with people who don’t know the ‘right’ question to ask for the answers they seek. With this particular audience, a different approach is required to let them know that we welcome their inquiries and want to help them find assistance.” Often the best answers are found from people within the homeless community.

Now in its third year, the Winter Series continues to introduce new ways to reach out. This year, participants contributed to an exhibit that is on display in the library. The artwork includes painting and sketches, jewelry and sculpture from found objects, and decorated walking sticks.

For more information, contact Worrells at (336) 373-4157.

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**2009 ALA Annual Conference: Call for Bloggers!**

Are you going to the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago? Looking for an interesting way to document your conference experience and share your thoughts? Consider volunteering as a conference blogger for the PLA Blog.

If you are interested, drop us a line through the “contact us” link at http://plablog.org as soon as possible, including your full name, title, library, or organization and blog URL (if you have one and feel like sharing it) so we can get you all set up. For our readers who can’t join us in the Windy City, keep an eye on the blog for reports from sessions, meetings, social events, and more!

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**Readers Respond** continued from page 2

makes the person on the other side of the desk tick, and then responding to that information.

Librarians should be allowed and encouraged by administrators to enthusiastically engage with patrons. The return on that investment will be counted in the voting booth in support of the library, in strong volunteer ranks, and as happy customers spread the news—it’s word-of-mouth marketing at its finest. Part of marketing means getting people to come back for more. That is why supermarkets, retailers, and a host of other businesses spend time, effort, and money developing and nurturing customer-loyalty programs. Thus, librarians can offer advice on books or movies for patrons to get started with and then remind them to come back and “let me know how you liked it.” By continuously improving patron experience, building strong relationships, and remembering that each interaction is an opportunity to market the library, librarians will keep patrons coming back for more.—*Julia E Cooper (jfcoppe15@hotmail.com), MLS, MBA, Columbus, Ohio*
Cultivating Support for Library Advocacy

Turning the Page (TTP) is a series of workshops to train public library advocates, made possible by a grant to PLA from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. TTP training is scheduled for three years, 2007–09. It has been available to public library staff and supporters from libraries participating in the Gates Foundation’s Opportunity Online program for upgrading computer hardware.¹

This Perspectives column contains excerpts from a panel discussion at the TTP workshop held at the Sagamore Hotel in Bolton Landing, New York, in April 2008. Judy Drescher, former director of the Memphis Public Library Information Center, moderated the conversation with PLA Executive Director Greta Southard; Frank Mezzano of Lake Pleasant, New York; and John Hosley of Long Lake, New York. Mezzano and Hosley are former town supervisors who have helped raise funds and awareness for local libraries.

Judy Drescher: We hear a lot from public officials about the fact they either got caught by surprise whenever the library or library board had a bright idea or they weren’t prepared to understand exactly what the library wanted to do. Could we have some thoughts from both of you about timelines and process and your advice on the best way for our libraries to relate to elected officials and others in a community, please?

Frank Mezzano: First of all, it is going to depend on what the municipality is, whether it a town, village, state, county, whatever, because each municipality may have a different fiscal year. Towns and counties happen to be on a calendar year. We start our budget process around the first of August each year. We send out requests to the various departments and so forth for their
funding needs for the year ahead . . . we get our responses back from the departments and they will outline what they anticipate for the revenues as well as expenses.

So the main thing is to have a budget committee in place that does limit themselves to only reasonable requests. And, the fact of the matter is, once the budget year starts, there really isn’t a whole lot of change—there can be some changes but not big ones.

Greta Southard: John, what do you think? What kind of tips do you have for us on timelines and process?

John Hosley: I did have somebody walk in one time and say they wanted to have a building right after we finished the budget. They didn’t get that building that year, they got it the following year.

You negotiate some place in the middle and maybe you start up for two years and then do it the third year. The people that love your library are your success votes for whatever you need to do budget-wise. So you need to keep your Friends of the Library, your volunteers, and your board members active in that political community.

JD: Now, many of the people here in this room are eligible for the online opportunity grants from the Gates Foundation and they need to raise some matching funds in order to get that grant. So, Frank, because you are on the unreasonable “no” side, talk a little bit about what you would need to hear from some of these people when they say we have the opportunity to get a grant that will bring more resources to our community but we need to have matching funds. What do you think when people come and say things like that to you?

FM: To be perfectly candid we are a brand new library, only a few years old, so that has not happened to me yet. So I couldn’t answer your question directly, but I think my reaction would be . . . what is the benefit going to be to the community versus the cost of helping to match the grant?

GS: Let’s talk about in-kind cost and in-kind donations.

We have a real tendency to forget that a lot of communities can get a lot done with their businesses and the talent in their community if they donate either their resources or their access. Frank told me out in the lobby that a lot of people who live in Lake Pleasant are retirees or have second homes from IBM. Well, you only need one IBM person in your town to make a donation to the library because IBM will donate the same amount. And lots and lots of corporations have that program where they will make a monetary contribution to a 501(c)(3) that is important to one of their employees or their retirees. So [an] interesting way for you to make some of your match money is find some people in town that work for or are retired from one of these large corporations that will do that. If they make a $500 donation to the library, you have $1,000 in your pocket. And that is a very easy way to find a local contribution that can be doubled.

John, do you have any comment on this particular issue about in-kind and/or when people come and say we are applying for a grant, but we have to find some money upfront first; how do you respond to that?

JH: The in-kind help is what builds the fiber or the character of your library. When we proposed the current addition, which was completed this year, we had anticipated that one third of the cost on $150,000 was going to be in-kind. But we ran into some problems. First of all, we were very graciously granted a quarter of a million dollars by Mrs. [Marylou] Whitney and that is a wonderful donation to a town that is looking to raise $500,000. There is half of it, you know, and she just called and asked if there were some naming opportunities. I said, yes, and named the ones that the board had set up. She said, well, would you change the name of the library for $250,000. And I said it will take me about forty minutes because we have a five member board and I have to make a few phone calls.

When I called her back she said, you know, I may have killed your endowment fund drive, John. And I said no. And she said yes. So be very careful because she did kill our endowment fund drive.

GS: First of all, she must be a very experienced philanthropist for her to actually realize that. I wish she had waited longer to give you the money. Because it is not always good to get the big gift first. If you are going to have a public campaign with private funders, it is a really good idea to have a plan where you start out with your community campaign and let people get really revved up, and you can finish off hopefully with a big gift. And I’m sure she didn’t intend to do that. You did get $250,000 but the private fundraising piece is so different than the public fundraising piece that you really need a very good strategy for figuring out whether you want to say yes to the gift or not. So the private fundraising piece requires a strategy that includes what you really want to do, and, more importantly, how you are going to say no or, best of all, redirect the giver. But there have been
occasions when libraries literally had to say that doesn't fit in our plans, we won't take your gift. So you need to be really clear about who you are and what you want to do.

I have some questions about credibility. Everybody wants to be bigger, better, open twenty-four hours a day, with a five-acre parking lot, and a hundred computers with high-speed Internet. So we are really credible. But when it comes down to competing with other departments, divisions, or town priorities, libraries are never, or rarely, seen as the highest priority. So we would like to hear your thinking about our perceived credibility. How do we use it to become more competitive and get more resources from a very small pool?

FM: In our community, our Friends of the Library, the library, and board make a conscious effort to reach out frequently to the rest of the community with programs. They put on a variety of programs that are designed to involve as many people within the community as possible and also to work with the school and the school district. This goes to credibility: in other words, how much does your library reach out and interact with the rest of the community that is going to ultimately be expected to fund the library itself.

I think the more insular a library is, the less chance there is to really getting a whole lot of sympathy when it comes to budget time. But the more outreach there is and the more interaction there is, I think it is an easier lift to go and say next year . . . we are going to improve on this program or that program that has already been successful, and we are going to need a little extra help to do that.

JH: It is hard to pat ourselves on the back, but you as a group represent such a tremendous amount of volunteer work and community service, and it doesn't get much recognition in the paper. I almost guarantee you that in today's newspapers there will be a couple of car accidents, a politician that has done something incorrect, and some news about the cost of food, but there won't be a celebration of the fact that 150 children at Queensbury (N.Y.) High School participated in a poster contest sponsored by the library or the Friends of the Library. So you have to make a conscious effort to make your library part of your everyday intercourse with the world. You have to say to the carpenter who is fixing your steps, did you get over to the library to hear the speaker Friday night—or are you going to go next Friday? It doesn't take a lot. It takes a lot of a little bit. Everybody that mentions the library once in a while will help you as a group.

JD: Both of these gentlemen have talked about ways that the library can be more obvious, and John's recommendation right there was the best. And that is you just talk about it all the time to everybody you know until they cry uncle and they go away and when they come back you start all over again.

I do a lot of activity and volunteer my time a lot in the Memphis area as well, but I have never agreed to raise money for any organization other than the library because I want them to know that when I'm talking to them, I am not schizophrenic about my use of money. I only talk about money for the Memphis Public Library. I always say when people see me coming through the door I don't mind at all if they say,"Uh-oh, here comes Judy Drescher." Because what I want from them is either resources or their time or their money or their in-kind or their general support.

But to tell the carpenter at your house that there is a small business development meeting at the library next Tuesday and if he has time to go he could improve his margins while he is running his carpentry company is a great service to him and a wonderful service to the community. In fact, even if the carpenter doesn't go, he will go home and tell seven people, "you know, there is a small business development meeting over at the library." And even if they don't go, they all know it happened.

We wanted to hear about who you will listen to. For instance, I talk to Frank—I could be the library director and Frank could be the town supervisor and we are talking on a semi-peer relationship, we are both working. But I'm not the person to go ask Frank to consider more money in the budget. So I would like to hear you muse a bit about what our group needs to know about who talks to whom and how we develop those strategies so that trust is in play and we can get more resources.

JH: Well, I think that takes us almost full circle back to the beginning when I said that you as the library management people . . . have to be thoughtful about going after the people in the community who can talk.

I can't emphasize how important it is to select a group of people ahead of time that you would consider for board membership—you never know why you will have to fill the board seat. But what you really need to be doing all the time is [thinking about] who is going to sit here next year. You know, bring some names in here, talk to some people, see if they are interested, see if they would give
up the time and effort to be a member. That is probably as important as funding. It’s certainly equal. Because if you don’t plan that well and you don’t have people that speak to the right people . . . the power to sway the county board rotates depending on the issue and the economic times. It’s time for us to be looking over library users for the future board members, volunteers, and staff.

GS: Frank, who do you listen to? Who is the most effective lobbyist, advocate, supporter for the library in your town—not the person but the type—who would have the most impact on you when they came to speak with you?

FM: I think the people that are going to approach whatever administration it is, for budgetary purposes, needs to have a reputation for integrity. Not to be coming in every so often and just “we want, we want, we want.” But come with a good request, a reasonable one, one that shows that, first of all, you have explored all the possibilities for other funding. That is very important. When you get to that point and you say, look, we have done our sales, we have applied for our grants, we are going to be short “x” dollars, and this is where we really need your help. There is no real room here to fudge.

John mentioned the approach that Mrs. Whitney had with him. I had a bit of a different experience, one which I appreciated very much. We were building a medical center that was around half a million dollars and we had raised much of the money and we had stalled. We had done community outreach, gone for the grants, everything like that, and I got a phone call one day from our local philanthropist and he said how much are you short—first he asked me did I explore all possibilities for grants. He asked a series of questions and then he said how much are you short, and I said $60,000. He said okay I will bring you a check with the idea that no one is to know that I made this contribution. And that was his price for doing it. He didn’t want to have any acknowledgment.

JD: If there is one short question that somebody would like to ask before you go off, I will be glad to let you do that.

From the audience: What is the best way to approach public officials who are completely preoccupied with something else besides the library?

JH: The best way to do that is . . . personal contact through the network of personal friendships that really connects with the political world. In your own community the politician is very busy doing a lot of things and doesn’t seem to give you time. If he has some friends that you know that spend time playing golf with him, or bowling or hunting or whatever his relaxation is, that is the guy you want on the eighth hole to say, “You know, the library is looking at a need here that they are not able to meet without some support on the council. How about considering it?” Because that relationship, that personal relationship, is basically the core of all of this.

Conclusion

The dictionary provides these definitions for the word “cultivate”: to nurture or foster; to form and refine; to seek the acquaintance or goodwill of; make friends with.³ For this session’s panelists, cultivating their libraries meant refining their needs, creating goodwill, and keeping up friendly relationships with patrons and supporters. The end result: a thriving library!

References and Notes

1. For more information on Turning the Page, see www.sustaininglibraries.org (accessed Apr. 23, 2009).
The Great Twitter/FriendFeed Cage Match
A Short Play about Web Functionality

This column may raise a few eyebrows. For one, it is mostly written as a play about two announcers’ commentary during a cage match, which you will hopefully find amusing despite its non-traditional style. Additionally, some will argue that we are comparing apples to oranges in this piece. Before you draw that conclusion, please know that over the last several weeks a group of folks has been comparing these tools on an even playing field in a manner that, by design, forced a “one or the other” selection. Those online conversations spawned this piece and its format. We share the belief that functionality is what matters, and while Twitter (www.twitter.com) and FriendFeed (www.friendfeed.com) are sort of like apples and oranges, that isn’t necessarily the case. And, if you disagree, we would love to hear from you. And, even if we don’t, hopefully this will make you stop and say “hmmm.”

David (speaking loudly in a deep announcer’s voice): Ladies and gentlemen, Luddites and technogeeks, library staff and patrons of all ages, welcome to the first annual Public Libraries Internet Spotlight Functionality Cage Match!

[Sound of a screaming crowd]

Michael: In this corner, weighing in since 2006 as a social network aggregator . . . FrrrrriendFeeeed!!!

[Sound of loud cheers and whistles]
Michael: And in this corner, front of mind to people around the planet, thanks in no small part to recent media and election coverage, weighing in with hundreds of thousands of new users a month . . . Twwwwwitter!!!

[Sound of clapping and wild screaming]

David: Wait, wait, wait. This match can't be fair! Twitter and FriendFeed do two different things. It'll be a bloodbath!

Michael: Exactly! That's half the point of this column. Let's tell the folks out there the other half.

David: Tonight's cage match pits two powerful tools that offer similar functionalities in two very different ways. Crowd favorite Twitter currently offers an easy-to-understand, clean interface and functionality that people see and say "I get it" and "I'd like to give that a try."

Michael: Meanwhile, FriendFeed lets you do exactly what Twitter does—send short messages to all your friends using the service—with a vital twist: FriendFeed also lets you import your activity to other social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace); tools (YouTube, Flickr, Pandora); or your blog.

David: Then people can comment on each of these entries, just like they were a blog post.

Michael: Oh! That's got to be making Twitter a little nervous.

David: And all Twitter has to do is step into the room for folks to see its most powerful asset.

Michael: Twitter is a looker, that's for sure.

David: And just plain works.

Michael: Well, except for when it doesn't.

David (chuckling): Excellent point, though their down time problems appear to be behind them for the most part. Remember all those outages last summer? Oh boy! And hey, didn't you blog about that and then e-mail them when it was all going down? In fact, if I'm remembering correctly, they sent you a Twitter T-shirt!

Michael: That they did! In fact, Twitter has a reputation for being very responsive that way. A good way to spend part of the $55 million in funding they have acquired!

David: And when compared to FriendFeed's comparatively paltry $5 million in startup fees, it's no wonder Twitter can afford to send you a free shirt.

Michael: Yep, parts of this match are...
more than a little lopsided, eh?

David: Especially when you consider that during those outages on Twitter last year, users started to migrate to FriendFeed in droves they even . . . hey, it looks like FriendFeed is making another move!

[FriendFeed blinks hard, shakes its head, and strongly focuses its gaze on Twitter and shouts . . .]

FriendFeed: That's a nice trick you behemoth, but I've got friends!

David: Oh it's gonna get good here now! Here we go!

FriendFeed (yelling): Automatic reposts form a jumble of other unintegrated sites! In a single location!

[Twitter looks mildly woozy]

FriendFeed (still yelling): And I do what you do too: short messages my friends can see!

[Twitter stumbles slightly]

[FriendFeed, looking very tired but completely determined, screams out . . .]

FriendFeed: Except with me, they leave their comments as a new post or as blog-like comments right below a message! I don't force my users into a Twitter box!

[Twitter spins in a circle and falls to its knees in front of FriendFeed. As soon as Twitter hits the floor, FriendFeed starts to wobble, also falling to its knees. Twitter and FriendFeed are now both on their knees, eye to eye.]

Twitter (panting): But . . . but we are friends! I let Twitter users repost tweets to FriendFeed.

FriendFeed: I'm a lover, not a fighter. And I also facilitate posting FriendFeed posts to Twitter. I just love helping people sort out communication over disparate networks.

Twitter: I just want people to communicate more efficiently and effectively in a complicated information environment.

FriendFeed: So in a way we are on the same team.

Twitter: Yeah, and while we have some similar functionality, we also have distinctly different types of functionality.

[Twitter and FriendFeed slowly get to their feet, shake hands, then come together in an exhausted embrace.]

David: Well that's the way it should be, right? Violence isn't really the answer anyway.

Michael (looking at Twitter and FriendFeed): I hope they can make it, but what I really care about is what they do.

David: Functionality is what we care about.

Michael: Not a brand name.

Reference
“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.

Celebrating the Humanities

From Frankenstein to Franklin

Humanities programs in libraries are essential. Not only do they widen the horizons of participants, but the publicity they generate reaches far beyond the four walls of the library. Successful programming insures continued community support.—Wicky Sleight, director, Kirkwood (Mo.) Public Library

As this issue of Public Libraries goes to press, the traveling exhibition “Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World” will be concluding a six-week gig at the Williamsburg (Va.) Regional Library (WRL). Next stop: Cedar City (Utah) Public Library, a location that Franklin never visited in his very busy life, but one that is geared up for his arrival now.

WRL Program Services Director Patrick Golden is a strong advocate for these traveling exhibitions, sponsored by the American Library Association’s (ALA) Public Program Office (PPO). Prior to the Franklin show, the WRL system hosted seven other ALA traveling exhibitions, bringing public programs on King Arthur, the Western frontier, Duke Ellington, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Alexander Hamilton to their Virginia constituents. Noting that they always get a positive community response to these programs, Golden said, “It’s a great way to bring a quality exhibit with world-class, cutting-edge research to your community.”

As new traveling exhibitions are announced by the ALA PPO, the grant applications are posted on the ALA website (www.ala.org/publicprograms). Applications for exhibitions funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) can also be found on the NEH website (www.neh.gov), where they are listed under the public programs category as “Small Grants to Libraries.” These grant requests are relatively easy to fill out, but keep in mind that competition can be stiff. The best applications demonstrate strong planning skills and a challenging breadth of community outreach.

Each selected library hosts the traveling exhibition for six weeks, and then there’s a two-week break as the exhibition is dismantled at one site and shipped to the next. Shortly before the exhibition opens, the host library...
receives six large cases on wheels. Folded within each of these shipping cases is a single, large, free-standing exhibition panel, all ready for easy assembly.

Most libraries recruit community partners—often nearby museums or colleges—and sometimes these partners provide additional resources to supplement the information on the panels. For instance, Terrilyn Chun at the Multnomah County (Ore.) Library embellished their presentation of the “Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature” traveling exhibition with texts, medical tools, instruments, and specimens from anatomy classes of their partner, the Oregon Health Sciences University. As one of the many benefits of sponsoring a traveling exhibition, Chun notes the value of building these positive relationships with community partners, potentially extending the outreach potential of the library to new audiences.3

In addition to volunteering to host the exhibition, the library must make the argument in their grant application that they will be extremely creative in supporting the exhibition with a wide variety of public programming for all ages. The grant provides some limited funding for programming, but most libraries choose to match this with additional funds, volunteer contributions, and in-kind support. Sue Scott at the Cameron Village Regional Library in Raleigh, North Carolina, had fun developing the programs for “Elizabeth I: Ruler and Legend” in the summer of 2006, working closely with their partner, the North Carolina Renaissance Faire. Skilled leaders from the faire brought period dance performances and fashion programs to the library, and “they also arranged for us to have a Queen Elizabeth impersonator and a royal court for the opening event and another Queen Elizabeth [impersonator] for a tea event.”4 The exhibition attracted more than four thousand people to the library. Scott recalled the six weeks with pride, saying “Our patrons loved these exhibits and the programs that went along with them.”5

Whether they bring Queen Elizabeth and her royal court to town or provide an opportunity to converse with Dr. Franklin about his revolutionary activities, these ALA traveling exhibition programs offer unrivaled opportunities to place the public library at the forefront of community life.

Ben and Me
My particular interest in the subject of ALA traveling exhibitions stems from my relationship with Franklin. In 2003, I wrote the Save America’s Treasures grant request that raised much of the money used to conserve Franklin artifacts, including the Franklin imprints and manuscripts, the Lion’s Mouth box, the eighteenth-century fire bucket, and the cast iron stove plate that are pictured on the Franklin traveling exhibition panels. In 2003, however, we weren’t thinking about a national tour of public libraries—our minds were focused on Franklin’s rapidly approaching birthday.

The Save America’s Treasures request was just one small component of an enormous effort to celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of Franklin’s birth in 1706. The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary (BFT), a nonprofit consortium, was formed in 2000 to bring together Franklin’s widely scattered legacy into a cohesive presentation of the life of this great man. As is probably appropriate for a man who was simultaneously a writer, printer, scientist, politician, statesman, and philanthropist, the artifacts of Franklin’s life were strewn across a bewildering sea of libraries, museums, historic sites, hospitals, and private collections. No one single collection came even close to capturing his multifaceted brilliance.

Initially, the principal objective of the BFT was to appropriately celebrate Franklin in 2006, the actual anniversary year. A consortium of cultural leaders from major museums and libraries envisioned a multimedia extravaganza, with an interactive website, a handsome coffee table book on Franklin, and a blockbuster traveling exhibition. Thanks to the expert leadership of BFT Executive Director Rosalind Remer and Associate Director/Chief Curator Page Talbott, the pieces all meshed together seamlessly and 2006 really turned out to be an amazing, Franklin-filled year in Philadelphia with the showing of “Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World” at the National Constitution Center. Over the following two years, the exhibition traveled to the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, the Atlanta History Center, and the Musée des Arts et Métiers and Musée Carnavalet in Paris.

My part in all of this activity was small, but I still take an enormous pride in it. I love my fundraising job partly because it allows me to explore these fascinating subjects, and Franklin became a happy obsession of mine while I dove into the research needed to write a compelling grant request. After the funding arrived, it was thrilling to watch the treatments of the Franklin items as they moved through Philadelphia’s
Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (where I work). And it was even more exciting to see the grand exhibition itself at the National Constitution Center, knowing that I had contributed.

Then it all ended. Or, at least, I thought it ended.

The Birth of an ALA Traveling Exhibition

Apparently, the ALA PPO had its eye on Franklin all along. Just months after the exhibition opened in Philadelphia—and encouraged by a note from then ALA Board member Nann Blaine Hilyard—Susan Brandehoff contacted the BFT in her role as ALA’s program director for traveling exhibitions and broadcast media. She was interested in their thoughts on converting the blockbuster exhibition into a smaller, panel-based exhibition that could tour libraries throughout the United States.6

Notebooks in hand, Remer and Talbott flew from Philadelphia to Chicago to meet with the ALA team to work out the details of the project. ALA walked them through the process. As co-curators, Remer and Talbott would need to be fully involved in the development of content for the panels. As for the construction of the panels and marketing of the project, ALA would take care of everything. Their primary exhibition designer, Pat Chester of Chester Design Associates, is a master at working artistically within this particular format.7

Interested libraries would apply to present the traveling exhibition through a system established jointly with NEH. Remer and Talbott reviewed the grant guidelines for accuracy and they were posted on the ALA and NEH websites. Ultimately, so many libraries applied for the Franklin exhibition that a decision was made to apply to NEH for funding to create a second set of panels, effectively doubling the outreach of the project. Forty libraries received grants from NEH to host the Franklin exhibition, with the program running from December 5, 2007, to July 8, 2011.

It All Comes Back to Libraries

There’s every indication that ALA’s traveling exhibitions program is here to stay. The application deadline for the most recent traveling exhibition, “Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War,” a collaboration with the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, passed back in January 2009, but there will be more. Watch for announcements on the ALA PPO or NEH website, or join the PPO online discussion list to be notified of new cultural programming opportunities. And then consider if the new opportunity might be one that could resonate in your community.

Based on his success with ALA’s traveling exhibitions, Poughkeepsie (N.Y.) Public Library District Executive Director Tom Lawrence strongly encourages libraries to apply. “We are scheduled to host ‘Abraham Lincoln’ in September, ‘Lewis and Clark’ in 2010, and ‘The African-American Baseball Experience’ in 2013. We love these exhibits and all of the adult programming offered through ALA, NEH, and NEA,” Lawrence said. “They offer great opportunities for collaboration with common (and uncommon) community groups. Get a community-based planning committee together and go for it! You will be richly rewarded and your community will look at you in a different light.”8

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Embrace the Dark

We need to scare kids more. No, I have not decided to finally embrace my advancing years, take up residence on my stoop, and begin shaking my fist at those darn teenagers and their loud music. I am not calling for boot camps, forced marches, and early morning calisthenics. I simply think we need to scare kids, especially tweens and teens, more.

The first stories we encounter are simple fables. A quick review of one we should all know just for example's sake: Little Red Riding Hood brings treats for her sick grandmother and is accosted by a big bad wolf, who swallows both the kindly old woman and Red and, one would presume, the basket of treats. The wolf is eviscerated by a passing hunter, saving Red and her grandmother (though again, no word on the treats).

The story can be, as the literary wonks will say, unpacked quite a bit. There is the lingering sexuality of the wolf accosting the girl. The color red, with its many cultural associations from the Bible to brothels to stoplights, is a wide field. The act of devouring represents consumption as both violation and absorption. The violence of the story mimics that of nature. Predating Darwin, the story is about survival of the fittest, in this case the hunter with his axe.

It is also about a big scary thing with fangs that wants to hurt you and those you love. A story that still manages to chill many a child. Past the simpler stories of childhood, tweens and teens crave more elaborate scares. They're not scared of cross-dressing anthropomorphic wolves, but give them a bloodthirsty vampire or a magician with a destiny or, more down to earth, a young girl chronicling the annihilation of her people while hiding in an attic.

Being scared is primal. It engages our brains and teaches us to cope with startling sensations and unexpected emotions. Our brains are shaped by real-life trauma. Horrible events in our daily lives shape us from the start. A sudden loss, death, abuse, or humiliating experience changes our wiring in profound ways.
Books that scare offer a chance to experience these powerful emotions without being damaged by them. We are able to face a fear of the dark because we know that the monsters residing there are simply the stuff of fiction. Sometimes though, the monsters are real. In my career, the book most often stolen or lost by patrons has been Dave Pelzer’s *A Child Called It*. This is a book so savage and unyielding in its depiction of one boy’s abuse at the hands of his mentally ill mother that I, as an adult, felt a cold sink of fear reading it. Actually, in many instances, fear became nausea, even anger. After reading the book, I felt a redoubled urge to be an advocate for young adults. I have used the book in a number of book discussion groups over the years, always to astonishing effect. Invariably, one young adult will make a comment that raises my suspicions about their own home life, past or present. In experiencing the fear of the young boy, the young reader is empowered.

This generation is the last that will be able to speak face-to-face with a survivor of the Holocaust. Every day more of that story vanishes into history. Every day, young men and women return from war with stories to tell. Soldiers and sailors, not much older than teens themselves, who can put a human face to stark battlefield numbers. Prisoners, police officers, and survivors of abuse and sexual assault all have stories to tell. Bring them into the library, let their stories be heard, and have faith that young adults will be all the better for having heard them.

Do not shy away from books and programming that are intense or even frightening. Embrace the dark and find that fear is much like a vaccine, a dose of something not quite virulent to inoculate against a far more potent scourge.

In facing our fears, understanding them, moving through and past them, we are stronger. The notion that young adults need to continue into an extended childhood is more dangerous than scary stories, even true ones.

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When I began my career as a youth services public librarian, fresh out of library school and filled with an enthusiasm that bordered on manic, one of the first pieces of well-honed knowledge that was passed along to me by a seasoned colleague was that I should not expect much cooperation from the local school librarians. Indeed, according to this purveyor of wisdom, the school librarians in the neighborhood were territorial, paranoid, and just plain rude and I was in for a great deal of grief if I had any hopes of cooperation, to say nothing of collaboration. As one may imagine, I felt shocked and deflated—this was not the “welcome to the neighborhood” greeting I had been expecting. And not a great image to have planted in my mind as I prepared to do my outreach at the start of the school year!

Bravely, I did venture forth to all the local schools, toting my planning book and large piles of attractive flyers and useful resource lists, as well as a couple of bags of candy to help sweeten my visits. I was ready for anything (or, at least I thought so).

I was not at all prepared for what happened. Much to my surprise, when I arrived at the first school on my list, I was greeted quite cordially by the school’s front office staff; and, to my happy amazement, when I made my way up to the library, the librarian was not the terrifying ogre I had been warned about, but a friendly—though clearly overworked—woman who immediately offered me a cup of tea. Apparently, she was surprised to see me, too, and let me know how glad she was that the public library was once again interested in working with her school. As it turned out, her feelings about the public library were almost identical to those expressed by my colleague about the school library! After what she termed a “string of unfortunate experiences,” she began to think that a real, mutually beneficial relationship between the two institutions was not to be. Even though she wanted such a relationship. I was astounded.

And so what did this eye-opening little episode teach me? I quickly understood how important it is to connect. And how important it is to keep the idea of common purpose in mind: Public and school librarians have a shared goal of providing young people with the resources, skills, and tools they need to succeed in school.
and life. It is a strength to work together on behalf of young people and a terrible disservice when public and school librarians fail to cooperate and collaborate. Moreover, it is an absolute reality that public and school librarians are colleagues and that issues of superiority and inferiority (in terms of work) are not merely absurd, but also extremely dangerous. As Patrick Jones has said, “When schools and libraries do not work together, students—clients for both—suffer.” Indeed, a lack of cooperation and collaboration between school and public libraries results in the suffering of everyone, from students and parents to teachers and librarians to the community as a whole.

So what precisely is required to help public and school librarians achieve this optimal relationship and what are the prime elements that must be present in order to encourage its growth and success? Essentially, there are three words to keep in mind: communication, cooperation, and respect. I will talk more about these three words very shortly. First of all, though, it is important to state one obvious fact that should not be taken for granted: Young people are in school during the day and have access to school libraries during school hours, but need other facilities (such as a public library) after school, on weekends, and during holidays. Thus, both school and public libraries need to provide assistance, materials, and resources that are useful, accessible, and of the highest possible quality.

This being understood, it is now possible to discuss the aforementioned three prime elements of success. In the next section, I will provide a brief description of each element. Following that, I will present some practical ideas that have been used by many public and school librarians to achieve smooth-running communication, dedicated cooperation, and sincere respect. Finally, I will offer a few useful tips related to class visit preparation that are designed primarily for public librarians.

Elements of Success
Communication
It is critical for public and school librarians to create or establish a communication flow, which should also include teachers and administrators. A good, continuous communication flow makes it possible to share information, not only about classes, assignments, and students, but also about what situations, realities, and news updates exist within each institution (for example, staffing and scheduling issues and budget problems).

Cooperation
It is important to come to an understanding that public libraries and schools are partners and are essentially interested in achieving the same goal—providing the best services and resources to young people. This is particularly crucial in this time of terrible budgets, because cooperation leads to a sharing of the load and increases the power of librarians. It also adds a new set of advocates and supporters into the mix. Wonderful results will occur when cooperation exists: fabulous programs, joint presentations, magnificent book/resource lists, and so forth. School librarians, often isolated from peers, may benefit tremendously from a community partner.

Respect
An understanding of the responsibilities faced by one’s public or school library counterpart will lead to respect. Too many misunderstandings exist, too much fear and contempt, too many feelings of superiority (on the part of both). Public and school librarians must understand that they are equals, colleagues, and teammates—with mutually valuable roles to play in the community.

Practical Ideas
As one may surmise, there are many approaches that may be undertaken by public and school librarians to ensure that these three elements of success continue to inform all aspects of the work that takes place in each institution. Here are some I have used with extraordinary results:

- If you are a public librarian, set up a meeting with the local school librarian(s) early in the school year to review the coming term and the ways in which you may be able to work together. Establishing clarity of purpose is all-important!
- If you are a public librarian, get yourself scheduled as a presenter at a school staff meeting early in the year. You may only be able to get a five-minute timeslot, but that is ample time to introduce yourself, let teachers and administrators know what you can and want to do, hand out flyers and business cards, and announce that you will be available to set up tentative appointments at the meeting’s break or by phone or e-mail afterward. Be sure to bring a one-page handout that illustrates the main points of your presentation and provides your contact information and basic work schedule. Even if just a handful of attendees respond to your offer, that opens a door that will
grow wider once word of your fabulous class programs and presentations gets around.

- During the meeting between the school and public librarian (and during any meeting or discussion that takes place between a public librarian and a teacher or school administrator), it should be possible to organize a short-term or long-term schedule of class visits.

- Establish or fine-tune an “assignment alert” scheme, whereby teachers and school librarians may be able to transmit advance information to public librarians about upcoming class or school-wide assignments, or subject concentrations. These assignment alerts may be in printed form (postcards, letters, and so forth) or sent electronically. Either way, the benefits for students are enormous, because materials and resources may be gathered and created in advance, thereby reducing the chances that eager students will be disappointed when they arrive at the public library to conduct research.

- Along these same lines, public and school librarians should make every effort to educate teachers about the reality of library services, materials, and resources. A number of teachers in every school lack familiarity with libraries—either in terms of what libraries actually contain, what they can do, or how they may be used. One very nice idea is to hold a faculty meeting inside the library. This meeting should feature a library tour and database demonstration and may prove to be remarkably enlightening for many of those in attendance.

- When public librarians are planning special programs, school librarians can offer assistance by identifying classes they may be able to attend or participating in such programs (indeed, programs may be cosponsored by public libraries and schools). Additionally, school librarians can identify students who may be interested in volunteer opportunities that are offered by the public library (this is especially useful in those cities and towns where community service credit is mandatory for all secondary school students). Reciprocally, public librarians can assist school librarians with resources and presentations.

- Public librarians could arrange for local school reading lists—summer reading lists in particular—to be accessible through the public library’s website or online catalog. Recommended or required books can be gathered by public librarians and made easily accessible. It is also possible for public and school librarians to work cooperatively with selected classes or school-based groups to create recommended reading lists that may be available in print, online, or even in the form of “special picks” cards to be placed alongside corresponding materials in a public library display.

- A “homework help” center or special study area can be set up at a local public library. This center or area may offer a variety of options, including student or adult volunteers available to provide homework assistance, duplicate copies of school textbooks, a sampling of useful reference works, magazine and pamphlet files, a dedicated catalog/periodical database computer (preferably with word-processing capabilities), writing implements and paper for assignments, and tables and chairs that are temporarily reserved for those doing homework.

It should be noted that those public and school librarians who do make every effort to connect with each other but wind up meeting with unsatisfactory or no responsiveness do have other resources. For public librarians, it is possible to be in touch with school department heads, targeted teachers, assistant principals, or school secretaries. For school librarians, a great option is the local public library branch manager or assistant branch manager. That being said, it is absolutely critical to remember that the first point of contact should always be the local YA/youth services public librarian (for school librarians) or the local school librarian (for YA/youth services public librarians). Generally speaking, this first point of contact will prove to be the key to a beautiful, mutually beneficial relationship.

Useful Preparation Tips

It is worthwhile to spend a few paragraphs specifically addressing public librarians and offering some tips regarding class presentations. These tips are being included for the purpose of improving the overall presentation experience for everyone involved: students, teachers, group leaders, and librarians alike.

It is essential for you to make every effort to be in touch with the leader (school librarian, teacher, counselor, and so on) of the group that you are scheduled to see before your visit in order to gather as much information as possible about the group and, in terms of the offsite visits, the venue. The benefits of such a discussion are numerous. For the sake of brevity, let me suggest four very clear benefits and
then offer one very important point to keep firmly in mind at all times:

1. **Know your group**: A pre-visit discussion will allow you to learn about the students themselves and the work they are doing. Ask about students’ age ranges; reading levels, needs, and tastes; behavioral, language, personal, and social issues; and so on. In terms of class work, find out topics currently being covered, topics that will be covered in the near future, those of special interest to students and teachers, and those that need to be avoided.

2. **Know your facility**: The teacher or leader can describe the room layout, institutional rules and regulations (including possible restrictions), available furniture and supplies, and general environment.

3. **Convey your needs**: A pre-visit discussion affords you the opportunity to relate your own needs to the teacher or leader. For example, you may find that your presentation would be facilitated by having a black- or whiteboard, video/DVD player, writing paper, or computer projection system available. You can also make it clear that you require the presence of a school or agency representative at all times.

4. **Prepare the group**: Your pre-visit discussion also makes it possible to review with the teacher/leader how best to prepare the group for your upcoming presentation. For example, you may wish the students to read a certain article or select a particular topic or think about a specific issue prior to your visit. Furthermore, you may wish to hand over relevant materials or copies of your agenda to the teacher/leader that may be distributed to students in advance. And, perhaps most importantly, the pre-visit discussion gives you the chance to remind teachers/leaders of the absolute urgency (in most cases) of communicating to students the simple fact that a public librarian will be conducting a presentation for them on whatever day has been chosen for this event.

**Conclusion**

Finally, the so-called very important point to keep firmly in mind at all times is . . . be flexible! In other words, be prepared for anything to happen and for anything or everything to change at the last minute. Even with the most thorough preparation and most fruitful and satisfying pre-visit discussions, the possibility of the unexpected occurring must always be factored into your plans. And, while such unpredictable experiences will occasionally prove to be a bit disconcerting, more commonly you and the students will find these instances to be inspiring, educational, and fun. Moreover, the spontaneity serves to strengthen your “librarian muscles” and prepare you for future situations.

There is no doubt that strong community partnerships, complete with an excellent, continually flowing communication network, will generate magnificent results. Quite literally, **everyone** benefits and the lovely flowers that blossom and continue to grow are those of authentic respect and sincere understanding. Working together, treating everyone as an equal, and being sensitive to the needs of one’s partners and charges—these are the steps that lead to success in terms of serving young people.

**Reference**

TEENS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

HOW PUBLIC LIBRARIES ARE RESPONDING TO THE LATEST ONLINE TREND

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The online social networking trend is huge and growing. In June 2008, social networking websites received more than five hundred million unique visits, with Facebook being the most popular, followed by MySpace. Teens are playing a major role in this trend and have been users of these sites since their inception. This article will review the research related to adolescents’ use of social networking utilities, show how public libraries have responded to the trend, and argue that social networking utilities can be beneficial both to public libraries that serve teens and to their adolescent patrons as well.

What is Online Social Networking?
Online social networking is a relatively new phenomenon. Friendster (www.friendster.com), MySpace (www.myspace.com), and Facebook (www.facebook.com)—three sites that have been especially popular with adolescent users—began in 2002, 2003, and 2004, respectively. Social networking utilities are a specific category of social technology:

Social technology refers to computer-mediated communication environments that connect people for collaboration, communication, and information sharing. The result is a dynamic online community. Weblogs, wikis, forums, instant messaging [IM] and e-mail are all social technologies that facilitate information sharing and online community formation.  

A social networking site has a unique community of registered users who read other people's profile pages, create profiles describing themselves and their interests, and communicate with each other electronically.
Typically only a small portion of a person's profile is open for public viewing, most commonly a user name and photograph. Users can invite others to join their group of friends. "Friending" someone enables both friends to see the full content of each other's profiles and pages. Friends also receive status updates when their friends change their profiles, add new content such as pictures and video clips, join new interest groups, and so on. Avid users check their pages frequently to learn the latest news about their online friends.

Most people use social networking for building and maintaining personal or business relationships, and for expressing personal interests and opinions about the world. For example, users of Facebook can join groups to express their opinions about everything from cars ("I Drive a Mustang" group) to religion ("My pastor ALWAYS rhymes while preaching the sermon!!!" group) to movies ("The Princess Bride is NOT a chick movie . . . it has sports" group). Often membership in these special interest groups goes no farther than simply signing up to express an opinion, but sometimes people join them to meet others with similar interests.

How Widespread is the Social Networking Trend among Teens?
The media often portrays social networking sites as being dominated by adolescents, but these sites are popular with adults as well. In a study of MySpace users based on data collected in 2007, the median age of MySpace users was found to be twenty-one, with slightly more female than male users. Facebook, originally restricted to college students, was opened to the public in 2006, and it now serves a generally older audience, with users twenty-five and older comprising more than half of the community.

This is not to say that social networking has limited appeal to adolescents—quite the contrary. A 2008 report found that social networking and other modes of computer-mediated communication are common fixtures in the everyday lives of today's youth. A 2007 Pew Internet & American Life Project survey found that more than half of U.S. youths ages twelve to seventeen use social networking sites. The Pew survey also found that more girls than boys use these sites, and that more older teens use them than younger teens. According to the study:

The vast majority of teens who use social networking sites say they use the sites to maintain their current friendships, while half report using the sites to make new friends.

The Pew study also found that the most popular way of communicating through social networking is to post a message to a friend's profile (or "wall"); more than four in five social network users (84 percent) have posted such messages. Teens in the study who reported using these technologies reported doing so on a frequent basis, with about half visiting the sites at least once a day.

In the 2007 Pew study, MySpace was the most popular site, with 85 percent of responding teens using it more often than any other social networking site. Facebook was the second favorite, but it was the first choice of just 7 percent of the responding teens. No other site was the first choice for more than 2 percent of the respondents. Facebook has since gained prominence over MySpace for users of all age groups, so it is likely now the first choice of a greater percentage of teens.

Why Do Teens Use Social Networking Utilities?
Because it is a recent trend, studies of adolescents' online social networking habits are relatively few. A few studies have examined young adults' motivations for using these sites, such as the Pew study discussed previously. A related study examined high school students' use of MySpace. The author concluded that teens use it mainly to further preexisting relationships with known friends.

A 2007 survey of undergraduate Facebook users found that the most frequent reason for use was for social activities, including reading, commenting on, and viewing friends' profiles and photos. The second most frequent reason for use was for compiling contact information for existing acquaintances. Subrahmanyam and Greenfield found that for all kinds of online communication, from IM to blogging, "adolescents use these communication tools primarily to reinforce existing relationships." Ito et al. came to the same conclusion.

How Have Public Libraries Responded to the Social Networking Trend?
Public libraries have had mixed responses to this trend. Some have embraced social networking sites as useful venues for promoting and delivering library services to young adults. Others have refrained from creating library profiles and pages and even blocked teens from using social networking sites on library computers. One reason for these mixed responses has been concern about online safety. Although the
scholarly research into teens’ use of social networking is still limited, there have been several reports published in the popular news media. Many of these reports have focused on online predators using social networking sites to prey on unsuspecting minors. However, most of the existing research suggests that these reports are largely overstated. For instance, Hinduja and Patchin analyzed the content of 1,475 teen MySpace profiles to see how common it was for teens to make personally identifying information, such as phone numbers and physical addresses, publicly available. They found that:

youth are including a variety of types of information on their public MySpace profiles, but that the vast majority of youth seem to be responsibly using the web site. That is, only a small minority included personal or private information. In addition, approximately 40% of adolescents restricted their profiles so that only friends could access their contents.

The authors also noted that “the popular media has been quick to demonize MySpace even though an exponentially small proportion of its users have been victimized due to irresponsible or naive usage of the technology.”

In a related 2008 study, Livingstone interviewed sixteen teens about their use of social networking sites. She noted that “it would be mistaken to conclude that teenagers are unconcerned about their privacy. . . . Teenagers described thoughtful decisions about what, how and to whom they reveal personal information, drawing their own boundaries about what information to post and what to keep off the site.”

While negative messages in the popular media might have influenced many public libraries to restrict the use of social networking sites early on, more and more libraries are using them for library operations and allowing users to access them from library computers. Some public libraries have created library profile pages just for publicity purposes, but others use them as reference portals, for communicating library news and events to users, and for a host of other interactive purposes. As of March 2009, there were more than five hundred Facebook search results with “public library” in the page name.

For example, 2,686 users had signed up to be linked as “fans” of the Seattle Public Library System’s Facebook page as of March 18, 2009. The page includes links to the library’s website, reference service, and online homework help service. It also offers photos of library events, an open discussion board, and information about past and future library services and events.

MySpace also is increasingly popular with public libraries. It does not offer a search function that can show exactly how many public libraries have MySpace pages, but a general search on March 18, 2009, using the keywords “public library” did return 62,000 pages with the phrase included somewhere in the page content. Some of these pages are the official MySpace pages of public libraries, such as the Denver Public Library’s MySpace page for teens, which offers basic information about the library, a virtual bookshelf with recommended titles, a blog, a reference portal, and more. As of March 18, 2009, 911 MySpace users had become friends of the Denver Public Library’s page.

Why Should Public Libraries Use Social Networking Utilities?
As we have seen, social networking is a growing trend that is especially popular with teens. Why would public libraries want to be a part of this trend? Public libraries can benefit from their use in a number of ways. Three major benefits include:

1. broadening the reach of the library’s young adult programs and services;
2. enabling the library to better support teens’ healthy social development; and
3. facilitating opportunities for public librarians to teach teens how to engage in safer online interactions.

Broadening the Reach of Young Adult Services
Probably the most compelling reason why public libraries should use social networking utilities is their strong appeal to teens. Using these sites can be a form of outreach, taking library services to where the users are instead of waiting for users to seek out the library.

Chu and Meulemans explained that most young adults spend much more time on social networking sites than on library websites, meaning that librarians can use social networking to increase library reach and visibility. Social networking sites receive literally thousands more hits than library websites, and the two biggest—Facebook and MySpace—are two of the most popular sites on the entire Web. Chu and Meulemans concluded that “these data are a compelling reason . . . to meet students at
their technology of choice—their choice is not the library's website." This is not to suggest abandoning the active creation and maintenance of library websites, but to highlight the fact that libraries need strong representation and services in multiple online arenas. This also suggests that library websites should be linked to libraries' social networking pages to offer increased online access points and to offer users multiple ways to interact online with their libraries.

Social networking sites can also be used to promote library services, from traditional services such as book circulation and reader's advisory, to Web-based services such as online homework help programs. Many YA authors have set up MySpace pages where they blog about their current projects, let fans discuss their favorite books, and give biographical and other personal information about themselves. For examples, see Meg Cabot's (www.myspace.com/meg_cabot) and Ellen Hopkins' (www.myspace.com/ellenhopkins) MySpace pages. Libraries can link to these pages and get teens excited about reading and using library services. These sites are also useful in promoting online library services, such as chat reference, as they tend to appeal to adolescents who are avid users of online technologies and therefore more likely to take advantage of these offerings.

### Supporting Adolescents' Healthy Social Development

Some authors have argued that social networking sites can help teens learn how to function in a highly networked world. That is, online social networking is an important part of the healthy socialization process for many of today's teens, and public libraries can play a part in helping teens to mature socially by facilitating their interaction with peers, family members, and others online.

These sites also promote healthy self-expression. As Rapacki has pointed out, teens develop their profile pages as a form of personal expression, which is an important component of defining one's own identity. Rapacki also sees blogging within social networking sites as a modern form of journaling—another outlet for healthy self-exploration and expression. Hinduja and Patchin reinforced this idea of social networking as promoting adolescent identity building. Ito et al. argued that not only does engaging in online communication help young people learn rules for appropriate social behavior, but also increases their technical literacy and helps them to develop self-directed learning skills. As a result, public library support of social networking utilities is not just beneficial to libraries, but to their adolescent users as well.

### Promoting Teens' Online Safety

In actuality, the number of dangerous incidents in social networking sites is small and using these sites is generally safe. On the other hand, librarians must not forget that online encounters can be risky. This means teaching young people that they should never reveal personal information (such as home addresses or phone numbers) in these or any other online environments, and teaching them how to handle problematic encounters online.

Of course, public librarians need not take on the full responsibility. Part of this responsibility lies with the companies that host these utilities and some of them have taken increased safety measures. For example, the minimum user age for MySpace is thirteen, and users aged thirteen to fifteen are required to set their profiles as private (viewable only by friends, not the general public).

Schools also must share this responsibility. The Broadband Data Improvement Act, signed into law in October 2008, mandates that schools receiving federal e-rate discounts teach students about appropriate online behavior in social networking sites and other interactive online environments.

Nonetheless, much of the responsibility of teaching teens safe online practices still falls to parents and other adult intermediaries, including public librarians. Hinduja and Patchin recommended that:

Adults can reduce the possibility of youth victimization [online] in multiple ways. These include supervising adolescents online whenever possible, promoting awareness of online safety and ethical use of computers and the Internet, and investigating incidents that are potentially injurious. Additionally, parents, educators, and other adults in supervisory capacities should work with teenagers to cultivate self-control, tolerance, and respect, as well as to learn conflict avoidance and de-escalation techniques.

Finally, as Harris wrote:

MySpace and other social networking sites are among the fastest growing areas of the Internet. It is unreasonable to think that they’ll simply go away. Our best bet is to become part of the conversation and help youngsters make good, safe decisions as they join the online community.
**Conclusion**

Miller and Jensen offered suggestions for academic librarians interested in using Facebook to connect with students. Their suggestions can be applied to public library settings as well. Some of their ideas include:

- posting descriptions of new databases or other new resources;
- uploading the library’s blog;
- announcing upcoming library programs and events;
- posting photos of new books;
- posting photos and contact information for library staff; and
- creating a library photo tour.  

Social networking utilities should not be viewed as static information resources, but as ever-changing information exchange venues. Merely creating a page or profile is not enough to attract and maintain users. Each of the ideas suggested above represents a frequently changing activity or event that necessitates regular updating of the library’s profile. Public libraries must actively seek out teen users and provide them with new and evolving reasons for wanting to visit the library’s social networking pages.

As Lamb and Johnson said, “Social networks are something that educators cannot ignore. They have become part of the culture of young people.” The same is true for public librarians interested in broadening and updating their library services for young adults.

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“I believe I would not have been able to advance in this profession without this class.”
“The course enabled me to see what other libraries are accomplishing or struggling with.”

For more information, visit http://www.ala-ap.org/certification/cpla.html or call 800-545-2433, x2424. Reviews are quarterly. See the website for details.
There are three things public libraries need to provide life-changing services to our constituen-
cies: (1) **Great ideas.** We have a wealth of talented public service staff members who observe
what customers need and are eager to implement programs and services that will enrich their
lives. (2) **Money.** There’s never enough. On the other hand, there are a lot of grant resources out
there. Tenacity goes a long way. (3) **Space** in which to provide the life-changing services. For
many libraries, this is the deal-breaker.

Queens Library (QL) is one of New York City’s three public library systems. It serves an urban population of
2.2 million in one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse counties in the United States.

Each of QL’s sixty-two locations is crowded during every hour they’re open. While elected officials are symp-
pathetic and generally willing to allocate funds for building and expanding public libraries, that is a multiyear
process at best. Very often, there simply is no room to build or expand. Our libraries average 7,500 square feet
in heavily built-up urban areas. We are, quite literally, boxed in and we need program space now.

Our service population needs many more English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. There
are long lines to use QL’s public computers. We need more family literacy programs. Teens who congregate in
the library when they are out of school need a space to call their own. Early childhood programs are oversub-
scribed and we need more sessions scheduled. We can fund and fill education programs for high school drop-
outs preparing for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) tests, but where do we put them? Today—in real
time—there isn’t a square inch of library to spare. That is not even allowing for circulation, which continues to
increase at a very healthy rate per year.

QL has developed a number of operational and architectural coping strategies to help make the most of
our tight circumstances.

**Create the Illusion of Space**
The clever use of flooring materials, such as carpet borders and tile, can create a separation of functional
areas and a feeling of intimacy. Focused lighting can also help create distinct areas within the library. So
can dropped or raised ceiling heights over discrete areas. Even in the smallest library, brightly patterned
flooring in the children’s area makes it feel special for them. QL is blessed with architectural talent on staff.
Consultants, or even home decorating magazines, can guide you in a pinch.
Carpe Corners
Some may see a dead corner, perfect for a potted palm. We see the raw material for a teen area or a laptop work space. No area in our library is too small to be useful customer service space.

Young adults are an important priority. We all know that teens need their own space in the library, psychologically as well as physically. But where? If we can group a few chairs surrounded by book displays with graphic novels and teen series, our young adults call it home away from home. Add a laptop or a chess board and it is paradise. A space as small as 6’ x 6’ is better than nothing. It goes a surprisingly long way toward managing noise and maintaining functionality in the rest of the library.

Be Flexible. Literally.
The more multipurpose we make our library spaces, the more successful we will be in making many kinds of programs work. As we remodel our libraries, we try to replace at least one fixed wall in the meeting/program room with folding partitions, and if possible, a second one to subdivide the room. This opens up the possibility of holding more than one class or program at the same time. Display furniture that moves is another big help, although it’s not easy to move when fully loaded.

Sprout
One of our community libraries typically draws more than one hundred teens every afternoon. That library has less than 6,500 square feet of total public service space! We desperately want to keep those teens coming into the library, so we are renting a facility on the next block. It is the community library’s young adult area. It has lots of computers, soft seating, periodicals, reference materials, and test prep books. Teen-centric programs happen here. Young library patrons have more relaxed privileges than they would have in the full-service library. Mobile phones and snacking are permitted, as long as it is kept to a reasonable level. A youth development counselor keeps order and gives homework guidance. In-depth reference needs are handled by the regular professional staff in the full-service library. It is not reasonable to duplicate the library’s infrastructure. Circulation functions, the full collection, and the reference staff remain in the “regular” library, just a few yards away.

The dedicated young adult area has had a profound effect on the library’s operations. The busy adult and children’s room operations work with many fewer disruptions. The teens behave very respectfully and have taken ownership of their library space. They are cooperative and will even help bag the trash at the end of the day. They have truly risen to the occasion. Pre-GED classes will begin there shortly. The surrounding community is economically depressed. We believe we have forged a strong psychological link between the library and a clean, bright, tranquil, well-equipped environment: the way up and out is contained between the library’s walls.

Cross-Merchandise
Mixed-materials displays and shelving equals saved space and higher circulation. As library people, we love to categorize, catalog, index, articulate, and subdivide. By mixing different kinds of materials in the same display furniture or shelving, we are able to offer customers the same number of choices in much less floor space. It takes better advantage of vertical space. Additionally, customers may become interested in something they hadn’t considered before, simply because it came into their line of sight.
**Unshackle the Computers**
The public-use computers—our most popular draw in recent years—are also the biggest space hog. We simply cannot find room to shoehorn more desktop workstations into our libraries. Since we are already providing free wireless access, it is a small step to lending laptops for use within the library. They take up much less room and are more energy-efficient. The number of available access points has increased. Laptops are also perfect for ad-hoc, computer-based workshops in the program room.

**Redefine “Open for Service”**
Community libraries in Queens are open to circulate library materials an average of forty-three hours per week. Rather than let the library sit underutilized during non-circulating hours, we take advantage of the open floor space to hold toddler learning centers, ESOL programs, family literacy programs, pre-GED programs, and more. We could not physically circulate material and hold these programs in the same space at the same time. It is an either/or situation. Because budget restrictions have handed us lemons a couple of mornings or evenings each week, we might as well make lemonade.

**Reengineer Staff Workrooms**
In order to maximize customer service areas, we are taking another look at staff areas. The question we ask is “how many staff members will work in here at one time?” By making use of countertops and work surfaces for book prep instead of traditional desks, we save square footage. We have also been successful in relocating staff workrooms to the front of the library, adjacent to the outside wall. The external book drop feeds closer to the workroom, with an internal book drop into the same area. That saves time and labor as well as space. Staff members’ personal belongings are kept in storage lockers in the staff lounge instead of the work area, which is actually more convenient for them.

**Ship Often**
Weeded materials that were awaiting a book sale clogged space in the workroom. Frequently shipping them out to a vendor who sells them online went a long way toward freeing up more space that we can return to library programs. It also has proved to be more cost-effective than in-library book sales.

**Double Book**
We could reasonably use twice the processing and prep capacity that we actually have. We can’t take room away from public service, but we can put on double shifts in the space we do have. QL purchases a significant volume of international language items and small press materials that can only be prepped in-house.

Second shifts have their own challenges, including security and supervision. We have used second shifts when our backs are against the wall to get new material out on the shelves in a timely manner.

Needless to say, we still need more hours of service and bigger libraries. Our customers can’t wait for that to happen. They need their libraries right now. With a lot of creative thinking, we have found ways to provide more service in the present tense.

**Reference**
“By the Book” reviews professional development materials of potential interest to public librarians, trustees, and others involved in library service. Public Library Association policy dictates that PLA publications 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.

Winning with Library Leadership: Enhancing Services through Connection, Contribution, & Collaboration


Winning with Library Leadership addresses shifts in leadership practices in the LIS profession. Library leaders must recognize that as trends and issues in the LIS profession change, so must leadership practices. Some of the areas the authors write about include demographic changes, marketing trends, and changes in technology.

The authors also discuss the important issue of retirement in the LIS profession. Leadership practices will change as current library leaders get ready to retire and the next generation prepares to take on leadership roles.

Library leaders must gain special competencies and leadership skills as librarians face these trends and issues. Competencies and skills should focus on technology trends, marketing forces, and an expanding customer base.

The purpose of this book is to offer a toolkit for current and up-and-coming library leaders, from any library setting, to manage these shifts in leadership. Subjects cover the spectrum of leadership including changes in personal as well as organizational leadership styles.

If you are a current library leader preparing for the future leadership of your institution, or are preparing to become a future library leader, this book may be beneficial to you. There are a good number of worksheets and figures throughout the book that complement the text very nicely. There are also examples of applied leadership theories in library systems as well as personal experiences of library leaders.—Christine Kujawa, Head of Circulation/Reference Librarian, Bismarck (N.Dak.) Veterans Memorial Public Library

Out Front with Stephen Abram: A Guide for Information Leaders


For librarians who have not seen Stephen Abram present at a conference, they are missing out on one of the most dynamic speakers
our profession has to offer today. Abram (vice president of innovation for SirsiDynix) keeps up a grueling schedule of conference presentations and journal submissions, as well as posting to his blog, Stephen's Lighthouse (http://stephenslighthouse.sirsi.com). Judith Siess and Jonathan Lorig have done an excellent job in selecting and organizing Abram’s best work.

The book is organized into four parts (Advocacy, Technology, Communities and Generations, and The Future), which reveals the wide scope in which Abram shows interest. Although he is perhaps best known for his work on library technology and generational differences in the library, the first chapter of the book is perhaps most relevant in these uncertain economic times. His article “The Value of Libraries” discusses the economic value libraries bring to their communities and how we can communicate that worth to policy makers.

Although Abram discusses many new technology trends and some open-source software, he makes no mention of any open-source integrated library systems, and he also plugs SirsiDynix products a few times throughout the book. However, these minor criticisms can be overlooked. See Abram in person if you can, but reading this collection is the next best thing. An excellent bibliography and index are included.—Jessica Jacko, Regional Coordinator, Indiana State Library

Canadian Fiction: A Guide to Reading Interests


Look in any college course catalog, and you will be hard pressed to find a Canadian literature class. Despite sharing a continent and a language, most Americans know nothing about our author neighbors to the north. Canadian Fiction tries to remedy the problem. The introduction contains a good overview of Canadian literature, themes, and influences of Canadian fiction, and discussion of recent award-winning Canadian authors.

As part of the Genreflecting series, Canadian Fiction is organized in similar fashion to other editions. Genres and subgenres are listed, with suggested titles for each subgenre. However, unlike other Genreflecting titles, the first half of the book contains suggestions for Canadian literary fiction, organized by the readers’ interest in story, setting, character, and language. Although listing literary fiction titles provides a good overview of Canadian literature, it deviates from the series’ mission to providing information about genre literature. The six genres included are mystery, science fiction, fantasy, romance, thriller, and horror. Special indicators for award-winning titles and book club favorites are next to title suggestions.

In addition to the introduction, the appendixes provide additional resources and websites, a list of literary awards, and information about Canadian publishers and publishing. An author/title index and subject index are also included. While not a mandatory purchase, Canadian Fiction would be useful for larger readers’ advisory departments, as well as for libraries near the Canadian border.—Jessica Jacko, Regional Coordinator, Indiana State Library

Getting Ready to Read with Readers Theatre


Readers theatre is focused on an “effective reading of the script rather than on a dramatic, memorized presentation” (ix) and because there are few props and movement on a stage it allows for more active participation by young readers. Getting Ready to Read with Readers Theatre contains scripts developed from nursery rhymes, clapping rhymes, jumping rhymes, and songs dealing with themes commonly familiar to children in kindergarten and first grade. Most of the scripts are on a readability scale of 0.0 to 0.5 according to the Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test. Many of the scripts will be familiar to the children and allow for active audience participation.

In the introduction, the authors provide thorough instruction on how to best utilize the scripts: preparing the scripts, getting started, presentation suggestions, props, delivery suggestions, audience, further development, online resources, and references.

Chapters are divided categorically by themes that will be familiar to a developing reader such as the alphabet, counting, colors, time, and animals. Each chapter begins with a brief description of each script included in the chapter, with additional suggestions to enhance the readers theatre experience rather than what is included in the original script. The scripts allow each reader to know their part as well as any audience participation.

This is a great resource and would be a welcome addition to
any elementary school library and a worthwhile read to any teacher working with beginning readers.—Jen Dawson, Coordinator of Academic Support Services, Citrus Research and Education Center, Lake Alfred, Fla.

Crash Course in Marketing for Libraries


What are proven ways to attract people to library programs? What are the components of an effective flyer? What are innovative ways to do fundraising for the library? These are some questions that Crash Course in Marketing for Libraries aims to address.

The book is part of Libraries Unlimited’s Crash Course series. It is primarily directed toward public libraries, where physical, financial, and staffing resources are often much more limited.

The book includes four chapters plus an index. The chapters address the planning process, the development of a marketing plan, communication to the community, and the topic of fundraising. The ideas range from the quotidian to the less common but still practical.

There is ample text and detail with some jargon and a lot of theory. The prose can be rather dry, which can sometimes make for difficult reading. The appendixes include sample annual reports, sample newsletters, and a chapter-by-chapter marketing bibliography.

Crash Course in Marketing may prove useful for library administration for a top-down, overarching system plan, but librarians who are on the frontlines, so to speak—as in non-managerial and entry-level in medium to large systems—would likely be better off seeking out a reference tool that can more simply explain strategic marketing ideas that don’t involve bureaucratic steps such as implementing a marketing policy. Many public librarians are extremely busy and need solutions and ideas that can be immediately implemented to publicize their programs widely and boost their attendance numbers.—Rebecca Kennedy, Adult Services Librarian, Chicago Public Library

Read On . . . Fantasy Fiction: Reading Lists for Every Taste


Neil Hollands, librarian at the Williamsburg (Va.) Regional Library and fantasy fiction fan, compiles an informative read about the genre. Hollands’ introduction, titled “Take Off Your Mask—It’s Ok to Like Fantasy” grants permission for all readers to embrace this genre (not just the geeky ones he alludes to in the fantasy-fiction reader stereotype). Hollands defines fantasy, provides the history of fantasy fiction, and explains how to use this book. Each chapter contains authors, titles, and annotations.

Chapter one discusses story, chapter two deals with characters, chapter three describes books with settings, chapter four sets the mood, and chapter five talks about language.

The appendixes cover suggested trilogies, award-winning fantasies, and an index. This book is highly recommended for public librarians who engage in reader’s services.—Lori Sigety, Branch Manager, LaSalle Branch Library, St. Joseph County (Ind.) Public Library

Sex, Brains, and Video Games: A Librarian’s Guide to Teens in the Twenty-First Century


Jennifer Burek Pierce, assistant professor of library and information science at the University of Iowa, combines gaming, psychology, and sex to educate library professionals about an important and often overlooked population of patrons: teens.

In the introduction, Pierce states the following: “In the earliest years of the profession, librarians were concerned that their young patrons read too much and wanted the wrong sorts of books” (2).

Chapter one discusses myths and American teens; chapters two and three delve into the psychology of the teen brain, connections, and limitations. Chapter four talks about sex and teens; chapter five takes a look at diversity, multiculturalism, and teens; and chapter six provides concluding statements on working with teens in the library setting. A useful index is also included. This book is informative, holds the reader’s interest, and is well-written. A must-read for media specialists, academic, or public librarians.—Lori Sigety, Branch Manager, LaSalle Branch Library, St. Joseph County (Ind.) Public Library
Crash Course in Serving Spanish Speakers


The latest publication in Libraries Unlimited’s Crash Course series is designed to give readers a quick and convenient introduction to adult services for Spanish speakers. As with other books in the series, exhaustiveness is not the primary goal of the book, but rather, it contains numerous, brief chapters on a broad range of topics designed to give librarians just enough information to get started with the subject matter.

Any book-length treatment of library services for Spanish speakers is certainly a welcome addition. The amount of literature on the subject, while growing, remains disproportionately small compared to the increasing need. For this reason alone, Avila’s book will be of value to many librarians, particularly those searching for a convenient single-volume introduction to the field. Fundamental cultural nuances, including those crucial ones linked to Spanish speakers’ perceptions of libraries and reading, are explored in detail, and best practices based on such tenets are explored throughout the text. In addition, invaluable appendixes contain such handy resources as a sample library service plan for Spanish speakers, a directory of relevant Web links, and LC subject headings translated into Spanish.

Librarians who are already highly experienced in providing services to Spanish speakers will likely find very little new information in this book. Further, because the format of the series leads to several extremely important subjects receiving only the most cursory treatment, even librarians new to the field will be well served going elsewhere for more detailed, practical advice in areas such as collection development and Spanish-language program outreach. Nonetheless, Avila’s book does a good job of doing what it sets out to do, providing a quick and convenient starting place for librarians unfamiliar with services for Spanish speakers. Recommended as a resource for the many libraries dealing with new, rapid growth in their Spanish-speaking population.—Mark Steudel, Manager of Development Research, University of Alabama

The Accidental Fundraiser


Nonprofits, charities, and libraries may not be in a position to hire a full-time fundraiser. Therefore, staff members who lack formal training (through no fault of their own) may assume this job title: money-tree shaker. “While some people do go into fundraising intentionally,” writes Julie M. Still in The Accidental Fundraiser, “for most of us it is a gradual process of falling into it” (xiii).

Those thrust into a fundraising role will inevitably reap the benefits from the wisdom and experience of the author. Not only has Still penned myriad articles and books such as The Accidental Webmaster, but she also works as a community activist, volunteer, and librarian. This latest guide reflects her core values, and it is pleasantly cogent and comprehensive.

Still covers all the bases in eight chapters, including preliminary information gathering and organizational goal setting. Many readers will gravitate to Chapter 5, “Finding the Money.” Specifically, she covers in-kind donations (that is, merchandise and services), fundraisers and events, private foundations, sponsorships, and government dollars. Also helpful is Chapter 8, her distillation of tips for fundraisers. For instance, Still recommends signing up for appropriate electronic discussion lists in addition to pursuing free training opportunities in the spheres of nonprofit management, grant writing, and fundraising.

The author also includes an annotated bibliography of books and articles to consult. The Tipping Point and New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising are among her recommended sources. What’s more, she points readers to these helpful websites: GuideStar, TechSoup, The Foundation Center, Justgiving, and more.

Overall, this book is eminently readable and practical. Still’s passion for getting things done permeates the pages. The author even welcomes feedback and questions via e-mail. While employees may unintentionally wind up donning the fundraising hat, they should intentionally buy or borrow a copy of this book.—C. Brian Smith, E-Resources Librarian, Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library
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It’s a big world, we’ve organized it.
The following 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.

**SAT and ACT Test Prep DVDs**

**www.videoaidedinstruction.com**

Video Aided Instruction offers up-to-date SAT and ACT test preparation DVDs along with a variety of other educational programs. These programs feature real teaching by real teachers. Combining expert instruction, colorful computer graphics, and state-of-the-art technology, the user-friendly, step-by-step approach helps users master even the most challenging subjects.

Video Aided Instruction has programs to help users brush up on algebra, improve skills in English, earn their GED, study for the SAT, pursue a graduate degree, or learn a wide variety of other subjects.

**AudientZone: The Newest Entry in the Preloaded Audiobook Market**

**www.nexpak.com**

Nexpak recently introduced AudientZone, a preloaded Micro Secure Digital (microSD)-enabled digital audio player for books. The AudientZone digital audiobook comes preloaded, ready to play, and can utilize a microSD card for additional content. The preloaded digital player set includes one AAA battery, a lanyard, and earbuds. AudientZone measures $3\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{8}$ inches, weighs two ounces, and has built-in memory for preloaded content. AudientZone features large, intuitive, Braille-imprinted navigation keys.

The all-in-one AudientZone digital player makes audiobooks easier to display and maintain. In addition, the theft-deterrent packaging option, the SecureCase ONE DVD case housing the AudientZone, keeps it safe and damage-free until it is unlocked at checkout, using Nexpak’s standard SecureCase ONE magnetic key. Heavy-duty case construction, with full overlapping sidewalls and reinforced hinges, enables the AudientZone to withstand even extreme weather conditions.

**African-American History Online**

**http://factsonfile.infobasepublishing.com**

Exploring more than five hundred years of the African-American experience, African-American History Online offers many exciting features, including more than eighty-five videos that bring history to life. The extensively hyperlinked entries in this comprehensive database include subject entries, primary sources, images, videos, general and topic-specific timelines, biographies, maps, and charts. Culled from many of Facts On File’s critically acclaimed
African-American History Online boasts a highly accessible, user-friendly interface. Unique learning centers pull forward handpicked entries within each major era of African-American history, serving as ideal starting points for research. Each learning center and record has a persistent record link. Users can search for entries by keyword or phrase or browse by topic and time period—from eight historical periods relevant specifically to African-American history. In addition, biographies can be browsed by occupation and primary sources by type. Full citations are available throughout, and users can print, copy, and save all content for personal use.

Gale Makes Two Well-Known Literary Resources Available Online

www.gale.com

Gale recently released two of their literary biography series online: The Dictionary of Literary Biography (DLB) and Something About the Author (SAA).

Maintaining the familiar look and feel of the print source, DLB Complete Online provides 16,000 articles and thousands of images in a digitized format. Covering those who made a mark in the literary world, including ancient Greek authors, travel writers, and Nobel Prize laureates, the content of DLB Complete Online is both biographical and critical in nature.

With more than 420 volumes, DLB Complete Online tracks the development of an author's body of works and the evolution of their reputation. The collection contains more than 164,000 digitized pages.

Covering the lives and works of authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults, SAA Online provides electronic access to all volumes ever printed in SAA, the main series, and SAA: Autobiography Series.

With 217 volumes, more than 19,000 entries, and nearly 17,000 images, SAA Online is enhanced with personal photos and presents an entertaining and informative first-person perspective on the lives and careers of prominent authors and illustrators of this genre.

Each time a new SAA volume is published, it is automatically loaded to SAA Online.

EnvisionWare Offers New LibraryPDA

www.envisionware.com

LibraryPDA is a new Wi-Fi RFID/barcode handheld scanner for libraries, offering mobility, convenience, and power in a lightweight Windows Mobile device.

It can connect to any SIP-enabled integrated library system and then it's ready to check out, check in, query patron records, or check item status. Librarians may load one or more lists onto the device such as claims returned, holds, or weeding, making it easy to search the shelves quickly and easily. LibraryPDA can also be used to take inventory, check shelf order, or simply browse the Web to check the OPAC.

The LibraryPDA operates on an eight-hour battery and weighs just over six ounces.

WilsonWeb Debuts New Text-to-Audio Converter Feature

www.hwwilson.com

WilsonWeb's new ReadSpeaker tool converts the database's HTML full-text articles into audio files for immediate listening or downloading for later, with no plug-ins or special software necessary. Users can listen to articles as streaming audio or save the files in MP3 format to iPods and other portable devices, for listening as they commute, relax, or exercise. The new tool covers content from some 2,500 publications going back as far as fifteen years.

ReadSpeaker also makes WilsonWeb's full-text content accessible to a wider range of users, including people with dyslexia and other learning challenges; users whose low vision, blindness, or physical handicap makes it difficult to read a standard printed page; and others who might like to hear as well as read the words, such as users who struggle with English or those challenged by low literacy.

For the sight-impaired, ReadSpeaker opens up a new world of periodical content. For fiction lovers, ReadSpeaker also delivers the
more than 4,200 short stories provided in full text on Wilson’s Short Story Index database.

Cleveland Public Library First to Offer EPUB e-Book Downloads

www.overdrive.com

Cleveland Public Library (CPL) became the first public library to offer e-book downloads in the industry standard EPUB format. Readers at both CPL and CLEVNET member libraries can check out and download EPUB e-books from the library’s download website. The EPUB files are optimized for the Sony Reader and can also be read on a PC or Mac with free Adobe Digital Editions software. More than 8,500 libraries powered by OverDrive will soon be able to offer e-books in the EPUB format, along with more than 150,000 titles in audiobook, e-book, music, and video formats, many of which are compatible with both Mac and iPod.

Patron-defined lending periods will also be available for the first time. The new feature allows libraries to offer a variety of borrowing options, such as seven, fourteen, or twenty-one day lending periods. Fast readers can now select a shorter checkout time, allowing them to borrow more titles from their library.

SirsiDynix Announces Release of Horizon PocketCirc 1.0

www.sirsidynix.com

SirsiDynix announced the release of Horizon PocketCirc 1.0, a handheld circulation solution that allows library staff members to perform circulation tasks from any location—not just at the circulation desk.

With Horizon PocketCirc 1.0, staff members can perform circulation tasks in the library in online mode or outside the library in offline mode, such as at community events or in bookmobiles.

Horizon PocketCirc 1.0 allows staff members the freedom to perform inventory functions in the stacks, gather in-house statistical counts at sorting shelves or shelving carts, and perform circulation outside the bounds of the library.

Horizon PocketCirc 1.0 is available in English for use with Horizon 7.4.1 or higher.

PebbleGo: A New Children’s Online Resource from Capstone Press

www.capstonepress.com

PebbleGo is an animal database designed specifically for K–2 emergent readers. It features simple navigation, real photographs, more than two hundred animal articles correlated to life science standards, animal videos and sounds to make content come alive, carefully leveled text, word-by-word highlighting, educational games, and innovative read-aloud capabilities. It features easy-to-use searching tools and introduces early learners to database and research concepts.

Introducing Sony Reader Mobile Collections

http://library.netlibrary.com

NetLibrary has launched five new e-book collections developed specifically for the Sony Reader. Now librarians can enhance their services with business, leadership, young adult, romance, and popular fiction titles for readers on the move.

With pricing starting at $500, Sony Reader Mobile Collections come with everything necessary to get started, including the Sony Reader Digital Book, a collection of quality titles from leading publishers, and all required licenses.

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