FEATURES

42 Ten Tips for Success
A New Librarian’s Guide
Sung’s workplace-savvy tips can help both new librarians and seasoned pros achieve success in their careers.
MYUNG SUNG

47 Promoting Visual Literacy
Using the Mother Goose on the Loose Program
Authors detail how the Enoch-Pratt Free Library, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and a student from the Maryland College of Art successfully collaborated to develop a library program promoting visual literacy for the very young.
BETSY DIAMANT-COHEN AND DOROTHY VALAKOS

55 Consequences of Promoting the Public Library’s Educational Role
It has been suggested that the public library play down its role as information provider and instead emphasize its role in continuing education. Consequences of adopting this idea are examined in light of public library history and recent trends.
S. RANDLE ENGLAND
Editor’s Note

Remember your first library job? A little career advice would’ve helped, right? In this issue, Myung Sung’s “Ten Tips for Success” is full of common sense advice that can help new library staff members (or those looking for a fresh start) to thrive in their careers.

Also inside, if you’re looking for ideas to spice up your children’s services, take a look at “Promoting Visual Literacy.” If you’re one of those who loves a good “role of the public library” debate, you won’t want to miss Randle England’s take on the subject in “Consequences of Promoting the Public Library’s Educational Role.”

Our new Internet Spotlight editors debut with this issue. The tech-savvy duo of David Lee King and Michael Porter, aim to collaborate on the column to bring you the best information on Internet and Web topics.

Finally, with this issue we say goodbye to to Bringing in the Money columnist Stephanie Gerding. We have enjoyed working with Stephanie and will miss her enthusiastic and thought-provoking columns. Lee Price, director of development, Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia, has been selected as the next editor of Bringing in the Money, beginning with the May/June 2007 issue. Thanks for reading! As always, send comments and questions to khughes@ala.org

Kathleen M. Hughes
Editor, Public Libraries

Kathleen is reading Bram Stoker’s Dracula.

Readers Respond

Further Guidance for Book Sales

I enjoyed reading the article “Online Book Sales for Libraries” (Bringing in the Money, Public Libraries, Jan./Feb. 2007). Our local Friends of the Library group began selling items on the Internet last year, and I plan to share this article with them.

However, I was surprised to see that the bibliography contained some old editions. I think some readers will skip over this list thinking that many of the books are old and contain out-of-date information, which would be unfortunate when, for example, ABC for Book Collectors is now in its 8th edition, published in 2004 (others on the list also have more recent editions) and Bookman’s Price Index by Gale, a really great reference for book prices, is not even included. —Janet L. Van De Carr, Library Director, Park Ridge (Ill.) Public Library
News from PLA

New from PLA! Nursery Rhymes, Songs & Fingerplays

Young children who hear rhymes develop phonological awareness, the ability to hear the different sounds in words, an important prereading skill. Librarians are in a unique position to help parents and caregivers understand the importance of reading rhyming books and playing with rhyming words.

Encourage parents to read nursery rhymes to their preschool children by sending them home with a copy of Nursery Rhymes, Songs & Fingerplays, a delightful collection of more than eighty of the best rhyming verses for children, including classics as well as lesser-known rhymes. This colorful, twenty-page booklet was developed by the West Bloomfield Township (Mich.) Public Library and is available for purchase in packets of fifty via the ALA Online Store (www.alastore.ala.org). Product number is 73-701. Price is $64 per packet of 50.

Public Library Data Service Statistical Report 2007—New this Year!

The PLDS Statistical Report, an annual project of the Public Library Association, is designed to meet the needs of public library administrators and others for timely and effective library-specific data that illuminates and supports a wide variety of management decisions. Each year, exclusive, timely data is gathered from more than 800 libraries and compiled into a print publication that provides invaluable quantitative information on library finances, resources, annual use figures, technology, and more. This year, in addition to the print version of the PLDS report, PLA is offering access to the online PLDS database. The online database features a dynamic web-based format. The print version of the report is $120; the online database subscription is $250 for one year (12 months) of access to the data. Visit www.pla.org for more information and to get the PLDS order forms.

Elizabeth Edwards to Keynote PLA President’s Program

PLA President Susan Hildreth is pleased to announce that Elizabeth Edwards will deliver the keynote address to the PLA President’s Program and Awards Presentation at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. The program will take place Monday, June 25, 2007, 5–6:30 p.m. in the Washington Convention Center.

A passionate advocate for children and families as well as an accomplished attorney, Elizabeth Edwards has been a tireless advocate for many important causes. Both Elizabeth and her husband are strongly committed to strengthening communities and expanding educational opportunities for all children. She charmed America with her smart, likable, down-to-earth personality as she campaigned for her husband, then vice presidential candidate John Edwards. She inspired millions as she valiantly fought advanced breast cancer after being diagnosed only days before the 2004 election. She touched hundreds of similarly grieving families when her own son, Wade, died tragically at age sixteen in 1996. She shared her experiences in Saving Graces, an incandescent memoir of Edwards’ trials, tragedies, and triumphs, and of how various communities celebrated her joys and lent her steady strength and quiet hope in darker times.

PLA is pleased to present Elizabeth Edwards as part of the ALA Auditorium Speakers Series. Following her talk and the awards presentation, attendees are welcome to join President Hildreth for a gala, music-filled reception. For a complete list of PLA programs and activities at the upcoming ALA Annual Conference, visit www.pla.org.

Spring Symposium Wrap Up

More than 700 public librarians gathered in San Jose, Calif., March 1-3, 2007, for the Public Library Association’s (PLA) 2007 Spring Symposium. The biennial event included six day-and-a-half long workshops, sold-out tours of San Jose’s public libraries, and an author luncheon featuring best-selling author Po Bronson. Though the event has traditionally been held in Chicago, PLA chose to hold this
year’s symposium on the west coast. “The symposium was a great success,” said Susan Hildreth, PLA president and state librarian of California. “We were thrilled to have such an enthusiastic audience in San Jose.”

Mary Baykan, Library Journal’s Librarian of the Year 2007, kicked off the event with a thought-provoking keynote address. A podcast of Baykan’s remarks is available on the PLA Blog, www.plablog.org.

The symposium workshops addressed topics of vital importance to public libraries, including customer service, buildings, literacy services, staffing trends, and advocacy. Attendee feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and included such comments as: “PLA programs are never a disappointment,” “Great speakers and excellent presentation!” and “Presenters were engaging and energetic . . . I am excited about getting back to my library on Monday and getting started!”

Po Bronson, author of What Should I Do with My Life, a New York Times bestseller, discussed his work and the people he has encountered while doing research for his books.

Students from San Jose State University and other volunteers, contributed to the event by writing about the workshops for the PLA Blog. A complete account of their experiences, along with podcasts of the Opening General Session, Author Luncheon featuring Po Bronson, and an impromptu wiki instructional workshop, can be found at the PLA Blog, www.plablog.org.

Winners of PLA Feature Article Contest Announced

PLA is pleased to announce the 2007 winners of its annual feature article contest. The contest awards cash prizes to the authors of the best feature articles, written by public librarians, and published in the previous year’s issues of Public Libraries.

The first prize award of $500 goes to Meagan Albright, youth
services librarian at the Alvin Sherman Library (a joint use public library) at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for her article “The Public Library’s Responsibility to LGBT Communities: Recognizing, Representing, and Serving,” which was published in the September/October 2006 issue.

Second prize of $300 goes to Mary Cosper LeBoeuf, director of the Terrebonne Parish Library System in Houma, Louisiana, for her article, “Ill Winds: Hurricanes and Public Libraries Along the Gulf Coast,” which was published in the May/June 2006 issue.

Members of the Public Libraries Advisory Committee select the winners of the contest. The prizes will be awarded during the PLA President’s Program at the 2007 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. Public librarians interested in being considered for the 2008 awards, should visit www.ala.org/ala/pla/plapubs/publiclibraries/contest.htm for submission guidelines, or e-mail khughes@ala.org for more information.

New Bringing in the Money Editor Selected

Public Libraries is pleased to announce that Lee Price has been selected, from among several applicants, for the Bringing in the Money column. During the past twenty years, he has raised millions of dollars for cultural organizations, including many Pennsylvania libraries and archives. For much of that time, he worked as a fund-raising consultant with a variety of cultural clients, including Friends of Libraries USA.

Currently, Price serves as director of development at the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), the country’s largest nonprofit conservation center. In this position, he not only raises money for the conservation center, but also assists libraries and archives to raise funds to preserve their collections. Lee’s first column will appear in the May/June 2007 issue of Public Libraries. We look forward to his contributions!

On the Agenda

2007

ALA Annual Conference
June 21–27
Washington, D.C.

2008

ALA Midwinter Meeting
Jan. 11–16
Philadelphia

PLA 12th National Conference
March 25–29
Minneapolis

World Book Wants You to Help Choose the Design for the 2008 Encyclopedia


Bibliophiles from around the world will vote for their favorite Spinescape among four finalists, each of which draws readers in through rich imagery and encourages them to learn and explore more about their world:

- Face of Culture depicts masks from around the world, including ancient Rome, the Mayan civilization, the Congo region of Africa, and 18th century Asia.
- Global City showcases a composite urban skyline in honor of the fact that for the first time in history the majority of people on the planet now live in cities.
- Microscopic World captures up-close views of the natural world and brings them to life in a way not possible with the naked eye.
- Urban Travel features such modes of transportation as car, subway, airplane . . . and foot.
Rural Libraries
The Heart of Our Communities

I know there is concern about the viability of all types of public libraries, but I hear the most serious worries voiced about the future of rural libraries. Rural libraries are at a turning point; I believe that they can become the catalysts that strengthen and unite their communities. To prepare this column, I have generously used information that was gathered by Carla Lehn, California state library programs consultant, for her presentation to the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) Conference in September 2006.

To set the stage, I would like to put rural communities in context with their metropolitan neighbors. This information comes primarily from the Rural Policy Research Institute (www.rupri.org).

- Eighty-four percent of all land in the United States is rural, and 25 percent of the population lives in a rural area.
- Rural areas experienced dramatic outmigration in the 1980s. This trend reversed itself in the 1990s, when 2.2 million more Americans moved from city to country than from country to city. These new residents often bring service expectations that were developed in more urban settings.
- The outmigration of rural residents that continues is largely the young and the most highly educated.

Here are a few striking rural living conditions:
- The rural poor experience 30 percent more inadequate housing conditions than the urban poor.
- Fifty-seven percent of the rural poor do not own a car, and nearly 40 percent of the rural population live in areas without public transportation.
- Twenty-two million rural residents live in federally designated medically underserved areas.

Employment issues are challenging in rural areas:
- Rural workers are nearly twice as likely to earn the minimum wage than urban workers.
- Rural poor families are more likely to be employed and still poor. In 1998, 66 percent of poor families had at least one family member working, and 16 percent had two or more members working.
- In 1999, 27 percent of rural workers older than age 25 received wages that, when earned full time for a full year, would not lift a family of four above the official poverty line.

Education is limited in rural areas:
- Fewer rural residents than urban residents ages twenty-five to thirty-four have a B.A. degree or higher.
- More rural residents than urban residents eighteen years and older have no high school diploma.
It is clear that rural communities have some challenging differences from more metropolitan areas. Now let us see how rural service delivery is also more challenging. Marilyn Bok, writing about rural America and welfare reform, has documented rural communities’ unique challenges:

- isolation;
- low population density;
- mobility disadvantages;
- scarcity of financial resources;
- lack of expertise and human resources;
- personal familiarity;
- resistance to change and innovation; and
- lack of ancillary services.¹

We also have specific information about rural library issues. Bernard Vavrek, in his 1995 article, “Rural and Small Libraries: Providers for Lifelong Learning,” identified these planning issues that must be taken into consideration when working in or with rural libraries:

- library financing;
- traditionally conservative nature of rural and small towns;
- lack of academically trained staff;
- need for skill development of library trustees;
- limited, if any, analysis of community needs;
- perception that rural library typically is a place of books;
- technology is huge challenge; and
- provision of targeted services to Native Americans and tribal libraries.²

Rural Needs and Solutions
In 2004, the American Library Association (ALA) Task Force on Rural School, Tribal, and Public Libraries was established. They succeeded in getting more than eleven hundred responses to a survey regarding rural libraries. Information on the task force and the survey is available at www.ala.org/ala/olos/outreachresource/ruraltf_finalrpt.pdf. Here are some highlights.

- Survey respondents identified money as their greatest library challenge.
- Specific rural area concerns were poverty, depopulation, population growth, and illiteracy. Although it may seem contradictory that both depopulation and population growth are concerns, it relates to the fact that the young and educated are leaving, and the new residents are primarily outsiders who have service expectations based upon from whence they came, a challenging dynamic that many rural communities face.
- Rural library training needs are also significant. The greatest needs are computer skills training for both staff and library users. This is closely followed by training in basic library skills, again for both staff and users. Another very specific training need is the opportunity to provide library staff with academic training and the funds to be able to take advantage of that training.
- The greatest technology needs are hardware, followed by technical support and training.
- When asked what ALA resources would be of benefit, 71 percent answered that they would like “advocacy for library funding and support.” Other potentially beneficial resources included staff development events, such as conferences and institutes, and online communication and continuing education.

All this data would suggest that the challenges for rural libraries are virtually insurmountable, but that is not the case. How can we move rural libraries from a negative, deficient place to a positive, strong position in their communities?

A technique called asset mapping is an important tool of asset-based community development that is described in Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets.³ This model suggests the development of activities based on the capacities, skills, and assets of a community, rather than on just trying to fix what is wrong.

The assets model starts with the assumption that even though there are issues to be addressed or problems to be solved, everyone in a community—individuals and organizations—has something positive to contribute. In the assets model, the glass is seen as half-full. It assumes that the community can help itself. It also suggests that if assets can be identified, then mutually beneficial connections can be made between those assets. Building on these connections, often scarce resources can be stretched farther, and a greater impact can be made for the benefit of the community. Libraries are specifically included in the book...
because they are viewed as rich local institutional assets.

The more traditional approach to community building focuses primarily on what is wrong and is referred to as the deficiency model. This approach looks at the glass as half empty, meaning that it assumes that the community or organization has little or no ability to help itself. Starting from this position has additional negative results. First, looking at only what is wrong makes people in the community believe they are deficient and keeps them from feeling empowered. Second, it makes people believe that only someone from the outside can help them with their situation. Finally, this approach also tends to fragment efforts to provide solutions because everybody picks off one of the problems or issues to solve.

Given the context of the assets model, I think we can identify a number of assets in our rural communities and libraries.

- Rural people are the biggest asset. These folks love where they live, want to stay there, and are dedicated to strengthening their communities so their children will be able to stay in their community if they want to, after they finish high school or college.
- Rural human resources are another significant asset. This includes library staff who are truly dedicated and work with very limited resources. Also included are library trustees, library volunteers, and library supporters. We also must include the library users because meeting their needs is the rural librarian’s top priority.
- Library buildings are huge rural assets. They are often the only governmental presence in rural communities and may be a point position for a variety of public services. They serve as community centers and the town gathering place. Bookmobiles that travel throughout the rural landscape are also very visible assets when visitors are few and far between.

### National Responses

We also have national rural assets that we must consider. We cannot begin that conversation without acknowledging the contribution of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, whose infusion of technology and support for rural libraries is unparalleled. That support has taken the form of not only hardware and software, but also funding of support projects. The foundation has clearly focused their endeavors on identified rural library needs. Current initiatives include:

- The Rural Library Sustainability Project is providing support in participating states for training workshops. It also is aiding in developing technology sustainability action plans to ensure that public access computing continues in rural libraries far into the future.
- WebJunction is addressing many of the online communication and training issues that were identified in the 2004 rural libraries survey. It is a huge resource in creating the online communities of practice and peer connectivity that is necessary to sustain public access computing and staff excellence.
- The Maintain IT project is just getting started and is designed to promote sustainable best practices and models of technical support for public access computers in public libraries.

Although the Gates Foundation has been inordinately supportive, their generosity is not common in rural communities. In California, the James Irvine Foundation recently released a report that showed that 90 percent of private giving occurs in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. While the average California county received $102 in foundation giving per person per year, most rural counties receive fewer than $10 per person per year. I think that similar trends can be found in other states, but I believe that the trend could be mitigated by presenting an assets model approach to rural communities and foundation funders.

### The Library Community

We are fortunate that the national library community is stepping forward to provide support for rural libraries.

The ALA task force that commissioned the rural survey also made recommendations that are being followed. The Committee on Rural, Native, and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds has been established and is addressing one of the highest needs identified in their survey—the interest of rural libraries in advocacy. The committee released its advocacy tool kit last summer in New Orleans. Check it out at www.ala.org/ala/olosbucket/supporttoolkit/toolkithome.htm.

PLA also has a Rural Library Services Committee. That committee has been in place for a number of years and serves as a forum for discussion of rural library issues and also develops programming to address those issues at ALA and PLA conferences. PLA is also
preparing an advocacy tool kit which was tested at the PLA Spring Symposium in San Jose, California, and hopefully will be available for distribution by the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

For many years, ARSL and its conference have been the most significant annual opportunity for rural librarians and library staff to come together to share their knowledge and success stories of effective public library service in rural America.

The Western Council of State Libraries (state libraries that are west of the Mississippi River) is addressing the need for access to library staff education through the development of the library practitioner certification program. This effort was funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and will be administered by the Bibliographical Center for Research (BCR) located in Aurora, Colorado. It was available as of January 2007.

California Initiatives

Many state libraries around the country are also busy developing assets for rural libraries. I am most familiar with California’s rural library initiative, which is funded by Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. The program goal is to overcome the barriers that deter rural library staff from participating in many activities that their colleagues in more urban areas take for granted.

To overcome barriers for access to staff development opportunities, a library video-conferencing network has been created in about forty libraries throughout the state. Through collaborations with community colleges and county offices of education we have been able to gain coverage throughout most of the state. We video-conference training sessions and meetings that rural library staff would otherwise not be able to access because the trainings are held in areas which are not accessible for them, particularly in the winter months. We also use video-conferencing to ensure rural library participation when we are gathering information on all types of issues.

Webcasting and webinar technology has expanded the use of virtual meetings and workshops. Depending on the topic, the audience and the time required, some sessions are video-conferenced, some are webcast, and some are simultaneously video-conferenced and webcast. All these meetings and workshops are archived on the Rural Library Initiative Web site (www.rurallibraries.org) so they can be accessed by library staff when convenient for them or for later reference. Check out the Rural Library Training Resources (www.rurallibraries.org/training/index.html).

The rural electronic clearinghouse (http://resourceroundup.net) is an online archive of commonly needed resources that enables libraries to “share the wheel, rather than reinvent it.” The clearinghouse was designed by rural librarians. In 2003, a task force of rural librarians identified and prioritized the topics. Editorial guidelines were developed stipulating that materials and resources available through the clearinghouse should either be from rural libraries or clearly relevant to rural libraries. The philosophy of the clearinghouse is to be selective and representative, not encyclopedic. There are a number of categories grouped under “Model Projects and Best Practices,” “Library Administration,” “Policies, Procedures and Manuals,” and “Training.”

Conclusion

In summary, those of us who work in rural libraries and those of us who are charged with supporting rural library services, are in a potentially positive position right now. Probably more than ever before, there are dollars, people, and resources being expended in huge numbers on our rural library issues—some wonderful assets are being developed for rural libraries.

But we may be suffering from a wealth of those riches because there are so many different initiatives. It can be challenging to keep them all straight and to strategically integrate these resources into a cohesive service model. I think we need to focus on three key issues:

- **Reduce project fragmentation and create synergy.** We have to develop a comprehensive plan that takes all these great resources and creates synergy. We have to work to ensure that rural libraries reap the benefits of what is available.
- **Get more people in the circle and out of isolation.** We must find a creative solution to allow more rural library staff to participate in national, state, and regional activities. The Gates Foundation has sponsored some meetings where this participation has begun but it must occur nationally and in each state and region.
- **We need to expand the circle.** We need to connect rural-affiliated groups who have a concern about and a stake in the successful development of local rural libraries. We need to bring people together who care about rural issues, not just about rural libraries, so that
we can use all our assets and demonstrate that rural libraries are essential to rural communities.

Using the assets model in developing a sustainable future for rural libraries is critical. With the current national interest in rural library sustainability, we must seize the day and take advantage of all the knowledge and services at our fingertips. And none of us has the resources alone to do what needs to be done. If we strategically partner with other organizations that are interested in supporting strong rural communities, our assets will be recognized, our capacity would be expanded, and we can be assured of a sustainable future for rural libraries.

References and Notes
Cybertorials
Teaching Patrons Anytime, Anywhere

Thanks to the continual influx of online services, the idea of the twenty-four-hour library is now a reality. Unfortunately, the idea of the twenty-four-hour librarian remains just that... an idea. As librarians, an inherent part of our jobs is to promote our databases and provide instructional assistance for their use. However, now that the information contained within the library can be accessed at anytime and from anywhere, this responsibility is increasingly difficult to fulfill.

How are we to help patrons in the wee hours of the night when our online resources and services are available but we are not? During regular business hours alone, the demand for electronic assistance is high. Patrons frequently have questions about navigating the library’s catalog, managing their accounts, and using our databases. Because these questions do not suddenly stop once we close our doors for the day, the members of the reference department at the Winter Park (Fla.) Public Library (WPPL), began discussing how we could meet these after-hours needs. And that’s when we decided to go virtual.

Tutorials
Going virtual, through the use of online tutorials, proved to be a solution with many benefits. First, the tutorials offer patrons step-by-step demonstrations of how to use specific databases and services. Second, we did not have to be present for patrons to use them. Much like the library’s other online services and resources, these tutorials would be available twenty-four hours a day and accessible from anywhere. Third, patrons could watch the tutorials at their own pace. If they didn’t understand a particular concept, patrons could rewind the frame, or they could fast forward through those frames with which they were already familiar.

We soon found even more ways to utilize the benefits of these valuable learning tools. As we assisted patrons during business hours, we used the illustrative tutorials to give them more practice and instruction. Likewise, the tutorials have also been used to train new employees. Staff, too, need practice with the library’s online offerings, and the tutorials provide a multimedia source for dispensing this information.

Software
Because we are not technology aficionados, we wanted to use a simple, straightforward program to create the tutorials. Therefore, we chose Camtasia Studio, a screen recording and presentation program. Its user friendliness and production wizards made it the clear frontrunner for our project.

Camtasia is easy to use because it does a lot of the work for you. It automatically configures the settings for the tutorials and sets the parameters—
any of which may be changed to suit individual purposes—before publishing them to the Web.

In addition, many of its features resemble those in PowerPoint: The recording feature is comparable to PowerPoint’s slideshow, the callouts are comparable to the text boxes, and the title clips are comparable to the slides. These similarities further shortened our learning curve for using the software.

Camtasia’s recording feature, which captures every movement of the mouse and change of the screen, acts as a video that shows patrons real-time examples of how to find the information for which they’re looking. During the editing process, these recordings are easily modified to allow more or less time on particular screens.

**Content**

“Keep it simple!” was our motto for the tutorials. Of course this is easier said than done. As librarians, we are the number-one champions of our databases. We want to showcase all the bells and whistles of these costly gems. However, it is important not to overwhelm the patron with too much information. By focusing on just the essentials of each database and resource, we hoped the patron would have greater success using them in the future.

So how did we decide what to include? We looked to our target audience—the patrons. The questions they asked at the reference desk served as an outline for which subject matters needed the most attention.

We also encouraged input from other public services departments because they handle different types of patron questions. The circulation department, for instance, suggested we include a section about renewing books online because patrons frequently asked them how to do it. As a result, the tutorials also help patrons maintain their library accounts.

**Evaluation**

In a series of sit-down sessions, staff and patrons of varying ages and levels of computer skills were asked to comment on the tutorials and to rate them on criteria such as quality and
helpfulness. While their feedback reinforced the benefits of the tutorials, it also revealed a few problem areas that needed tweaking. For one, many noted that the speed was too fast. They felt they were not given enough time on the different screens to fully comprehend the lesson. Others had problems with some of the examples we used. They either felt the examples were confusing or were too obscure for their needs. The merit of each comment was taken into account, and we revised the tutorials accordingly.

Once we saw how valuable the initial feedback was, we decided to create a short, two-question survey to provide us with continued evaluation. The survey appears at the bottom of our tutorial Web page. It asks if the tutorial was helpful and if the patron has any suggestions. These comments are closely monitored and will help us in future tutorial revisions.

Placement
Once completed, we did not want our tutorials to sit in their Internet havens collecting cyber dust. We wanted these useful tools to be visible and easily accessible to patrons. We created a tutorial Web page (www.wppl.org/resources/tutorials.html) that appears as a library guide under our electronic resources section. In addition, a link to the tutorial Web page was added to the OPACs to benefit those patrons using the physical library.

We also placed tutorial icons—graphical question marks—by each of their respective databases. Tutorial icons were used in connection to the listed databases because we felt they would be more noticeable than text, and thus heighten patron awareness of the tutorials. These icons provide direct access to the selected tutorial. Once all of the tutorial links were up, an announcement was placed on our library’s homepage announcing this new tool’s availability.

Future Endeavors
Our goal is to create new, shorter tutorials that can be used for quick reference. These “How Do I . . .” guides will serve as a visual collection of frequently asked questions and will highlight segments of the tutorials such as renewing books, logging into accounts, checking online profiles, and accessing full-text articles. Not only are they shorter in length, the “How Do I . . .” guides focus on answering one question or process at a time. We are also preparing mini-workshops on the tutorials. These workshops will be yet another way to ensure patron awareness of our library’s databases and resources.

Conclusion
While the new tutorials do not provide all the answers to the twenty-four-hour librarian conundrum, they are a proactive approach to treating some of its symptoms. In those instances when we are not available, our patrons now have an additional tool to assist them with their questions. The tutorials, written in our voice and customized for the specific needs of our patrons, give them access to the benefits of the reference desk long after we’ve closed shop for the day.

Show Your Library’s Teens How to “Do Something”

Do Something (www.dosomething.org), founded in 1993, began as a youth service organization with local offices throughout the United States. Today, the organization functions nearly 100 percent through the Internet. Hundreds of thousands of teenagers—mostly in the United States and Canada, but some from around the world—visit the Web site daily to learn about world problems, participate in discussions about how to lend a helping hand, and offer lessons learned from service projects completed.

Want to get your teens involved? Do Something offers resources—including suggested causes, message boards, and project listings—for teens to start working on their own service projects, as well as tips for groups and students who want to volunteer in a variety of ways. Teens can also apply for grants at Do Something to sponsor their volunteer work.
Anime Movie Marathon @ your library®

The teen coordinators at Orland Park (Ill.) Public Library wanted to tap into an audience they didn’t typically see at their teen programs. The teen program attendees consisted primarily of girls, grades six through eight. To encourage boys to attend their programs, the teen coordinators began to look for new program ideas that would appeal to that audience. They noticed a surge in requests for anime materials—graphic novels, how-to-draw anime books, and anime movies. Because of the popularity, the coordinators saw an opportunity to appeal to teens that loved anime and utilize their movie licensing. Thus, the Anime Movie Marathon was born.

The program was a huge success as it attracted a wide variety of teens, including boys, grades six and up. To determine which anime movies were teen favorites, the coordinators conducted a survey asking for movie suggestions. The survey began about six weeks before the actual movie marathon event. It helped determine what the teens were interested in as well as presenting an opportunity to promote Anime Movie Marathon.

Five titles were chosen that were both appropriate and appealing, including Astro Boy, Kiki’s Delivery Service, Inu Yasha, Princess Mononoke, and Sailor Moon. Allowing teens input into the content of their programs was vital to the success of the program.

The Anime Movie Marathon was held on a Friday night from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Popcorn and other movie-style snacks were served to more than thirty teens. After the marathon ended, several of the attendees checked out the library’s manga and anime collection, which many of the teens did not know circulated. All in all, the night was quite a success. For more information, contact Robin Wagner at (708) 428-5205 or write rwagner@orlandparklibrary.org.

Harris County PL Establishes Brand

Using buzzwords usually reserved for high profile, for-profit companies, Harris County (Texas) Public Library (HCPL) Director Cathy Park announced the creation of a brand manual for the library system. “It is essential that the library system brand of an open book and shooting star is represented consistently to the public. The Harris County Public Library System Brand Manual provides the means to present a unified image to the community.”

The brand manual contains components including the library’s mission statement, logo, tagline, and colors. All twenty-six branches of the library system and eight administrative departments received a copy of the brand manual. Additionally, ten workshops were presented for the staff that covered the material in the manual. “Even though we are the largest circulating library system in the State of Texas,
many of our customers don’t realize who we are,” said Sarah Booth, HCPL marketing and programming coordinator. “Our goal is that with consistent logo usage customers will recognize our brand.”

Using business and corporate practices for the nonprofit public library world is not uncommon but is still not widespread. “Before creating the brand manual, we looked for other public library systems that had one. The only other one in the country is King County Library System in Seattle,” said Booth. The brand manual is not a finished product, she noted. “As the goals for the library system change, we will continue to add to the manual,” Booth explained. “The manual will be a reflection of how we are perceived in the community and how we can meet community needs.”

For more information, contact: Sarah Booth at (713) 749-9000.

Links to Literacy Raises Six Figures

The 13th annual Marriott Links to Literacy golf tournament recently raised more than $120,000 at Ko Olina Golf Club in Hawaii, topping last year’s record high by $10,000. This fund-raiser is a benefit for the Hawaii State Public Library System through the Friends of the Library of Hawaii.

The team of George Aipa, Siitia Lilii, and Christy Remular won the tourney, closely followed by the second-place team of Dean Mori, Kelly Nakama, and Naoyuki Takahashi. Both teams were awarded vacation getaways at the Wailea Beach Marriott Resort & Spa on Maui or the Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa on Oahu.

Funds were also raised during a silent auction at the awards banquet at the JW Marriott Ihilani Resort and Spa in Ko Olina. Marriott International is the title sponsor for Links to Literacy. The golf tournament has netted more than $700,000 during its thirteen-year history.

For more information, visit www.friendsofthelibraryofhawaii.org and click on “Links to Literacy.”

A New Medium for Your Message

Taking advantage of local cable TV access proved an award-winning move for the Mount Prospect (Ill.) Public Library (MPPL). Library Life, a monthly television program featuring the services, programs, and activities of MPPL recently received a prestigious Telly Award. The award honors outstanding local, regional, and cable TV programs, as well as video and film productions. More than 12,000 nominations for the Telly Award were received from around the world last year.

The thirty-minute Library Life program uses a magazine format that includes author and staff interviews, library program highlights, and library trivia as well as monthly book reviews by library staff. Library Life is written, produced, and edited by host Cathy Cushing and is taped in cooperation with the Village of Mount Prospect’s cable TV station.

It even makes local celebrities out of library staff. “I’ve had people come up to me in the grocery store and say ‘Oh, I saw you on TV’” said Reader’s Advisory Librarian Linda Burns.

Library Life runs daily on the local access cable TV channels. “It’s another way to let people know about all the great things the library has to offer,” said Executive Director Marilyn Genther. “We’re very proud of the program.”

For more information, contact Jo Robinson at (847) 253-5675.

Solo Ultramarathon As Library Fund-raiser


In an eleven-hour odyssey, Franz covered a total distance of 50.2 miles, twenty-four miles beyond standard marathon length. Franz passed by fifteen BCCLS member libraries along the initial twenty-nine-mile course, collecting a library card at each stop. What a perfect way to celebrate September as National Library Card Sign-up Month. At 2:05 p.m. he reached Beechwood Park, where residents were celebrating
Hillsdale’s Day-in-the-Park event. Franz ran one-mile loops around the park until 6:55 p.m., long after the blow-up slides were deflated and the hot dog grill embers burned out. The department of public works trucks left, honking encouragement, at 6:20 p.m. Soon after it was dark.

After completing Mile 31, an anonymous donor agreed to pledge $100 for every additional mile beyond thirty-one. Inspired by this news, Franz continued on for another nineteen miles. “It was also the hot dogs. Of all the Twinkies, gels, and Gatorade consumed, I found the hot dogs really picked me up,” commented Franz. “They should charge more than the $1.”

Preliminary publicity included a donated poster modeled after ALA’s READ posters with a twist on Runner’s World magazine. The poster was on display at the libraries on the course.

Commercial sponsors for the event included the New York Yankees Foundation, Starbucks Coffee, Commerce Bank, Turner Construction, and Westwood Cardiology.

The event raised $10,000 to be evenly split between the two organizations. For photos and more information visit www.readersrun.org or contact: David Franz at (201) 358-5072.
Would You Like Fries with That?
The Changing Face of Library Book Discussions

In the July 2006 issue of Library Journal, Barbara Hoffert declared that “buffed, blended, and hooked up to other media, today’s book club looks nothing like yesterday’s modest tea party.” It is true that in today’s age and changing demographics, book groups are expanding in new ways to meet user needs, but is the traditional book group dead? I posed that question to public librarians across the country, asking for examples of how their own book discussions have, if at all, changed.

Keeping the Camp Fires Burning:
The Library Book Discussion Is Alive and Well

“...But our way is simpler, and, we think, better. All we want to do is keep the knowledge we think we will need intact and safe... We’ll pass the book on to our children, by word of mouth, and let our children wait, in turn, on the other people. A lot will be lost that way, of course. But you can’t make people listen. They have to come ‘round in their own time, wondering what happened.”

And so Granger informs the former fireman Montag that the books the firemen have been burning are not lost. Rather they are still alive in the memories of the people who carry them. This is the punchline to Ray Bradbury’s classic horror novel, Fahrenheit 451 (Ballantine Del Rey, 1953). I see the children in the above quotation as a metaphor for book discussion leaders.
While I do not see myself as a Luddite, I do find that with readers bombarded by cable television, bestseller lists, the Internet, big-box bookstores, DVD box sets, celebrity confessionals, downloadable audio books, electronic discussion lists, and blogs, it is hard to attract their attention.

We can't make all people read and discuss at the library. Why can't we be happy with the success stories we have?

The traditional book discussion lives. In my community of 14,000, we have a crime fiction book discussion at our library that has thrived for fifteen years, attracting twenty to twenty-five people each month. Across the street from our library, our local bookstore holds a contemporary fiction book discussion. Many other private discussion groups meet in our community as well, including the staff of our local middle school and two groups in our local Woman's Club.

Throughout the years, I have come in contact with some very dedicated book discussion groups. For a number of years I have been a resource for the Fond du Lac (Wisc.) Public Library, where its local book discussion group read a book a week for four straight weeks, an effort I still look upon with dazed amazement.

My system resource library, the Milwaukee Public Library, has just developed twenty-four adult book club kits that include multiple copies of the book and a discussion guide that may include miscellaneous notes, discussion questions, biographical information, and reading lists to assist book group discussion leaders.

On a national level, ALA's Let's Talk About It program is based around the commitment to a ten-week discussion program and deals with challenging themes that promote community-changing discussions. It has been championing book discussions since 1982. Like a wildfire, the concept of a One Book, One City discussion has been adopted with great success in numerous sites.

Each title picked to discuss must reveal the unknown, challenge with its perspectives, and give new insight into what it means to be alive. Leaders must have a passion for story. Avoiding pendant behavior, the book discussion leader can still be a cheerleader. Gather the flock with as much enthusiasm as you can.

This is what I want to experience when I discuss a book. I want to be able to look into another person's eyes and see the passion. It completes the circle of reading for me and keeps the campfire's warmth.

As Montag marches with his fellow book-bearing travelers toward the end of civilization and its new beginning, he:

felt the slow stir of words, the slow simmer. And when it came his turn, what could he say, what could he offer on a day like this, to make the trip a little easier? To everything there is a season. Yes. A time to break down, and a time to build up. Yes. A time to keep silence, and a time to speak. Yes. All that. But what else. What else?

Perhaps at his local library's book discussion, he could find out.

The Library Book Discussion Will Not Lay Down and Die

HEDY N. R. HUSTEDDE, INFORMATION LIBRARIAN, BETTENDORF PUBLIC (IOWA) LIBRARY INFORMATION CENTER; HHUSTEDDE@BETTENDORF.LIB.IA.US

I do not believe that the days of book groups where the librarian picked the title, and everyone read it and came to the library to discuss it, are finished. That is still the base for most book groups.

In my current position, I found myself the library liaison for our oldest book group. Coming in, I kept the format they'd been using since 1960. Titles are picked by the group, which also produces volunteer leaders.

The group initially met weeknights, once a month, September through May. Since those early days, the group has gotten too large, so we decided to break up into two groups discussing the same book.

We started adding other discussion groups in the summer. We received a grant for the scholar-led program Let's Talk About It: Jewish Literature. We hope to repeat this program next year, interspersing the Jewish literature with examples of Arabic literature.

I started a mystery book discussion group to help educate myself in this genre. This has been a popular Saturday morning program. I typically lead this discussion. I do encourage the group to suggest titles, and we usually have a theme. The theme this year is Sherlock Holmes.

Periodically, the library offers a special discussion on both a book and its movie version. Book discussion tie-ins with local organizations have also become popular. Our partnership with the Figge Art Museum involves their providing a scholar to lead the discussion. We provide a venue and the books. Each title chosen ties in with an exhibition at the museum. Sometimes the discussion is part of our regular contemporary books series.

The One City, One Book concept has morphed into all kinds of challenges. We always try to sponsor a discussion of whatever this book might be. We participate in both the All Iowa Reads and Quad-Cities Area Reads promotions and will partici-
As the new readers’ services coordinator for the Johnson County (Kans.) Library, I took up the challenge to forge ahead with some of the innovative ideas presented at Book Expo in May 2006. The most intriguing was a narrative nonfiction book club that would appeal to those readers who were only interested in reading nonfiction, particularly men. One suggestion that caught my attention was to focus on a subject, not a specific book. Unfortunately, I walked away from the seminar without further clarification of just how one went about setting up such a book club. Could participants read any book, one of several suggested books, or should the list be limited to two titles with the expectation that members read both selections?

After much debate among the readers’ services team members, we decided to try a subject, such as true crime, and ask the participants to read two selected titles that could be discussed and compared. One member in particular was adamant that we couldn’t expect patrons to read two books, that it would never work, and wondered how participants would communicate effectively with each other if they didn’t read both books. By the time all of the arguments were set forth, we had come full circle, and all members were in agreement with the plan. However, we agreed that we needed to choose our books wisely, so there could be a basis for comparison and evaluation that would foster discussion among all participants.

When choosing nonfiction titles, it is important to have a broad understanding of your community. Certain titles may be better suited for a more cosmopolitan environment, while others may be more appropriate for rural or suburban communities. Opting for titles that are written by an author native to your area, or written about your particular locale, provide interest and a connection to which your readers can relate.

Planning ahead is vital to ensure that patrons have access to selected titles. We generally choose titles that are already in the collection in sufficient numbers to accommodate our readers. If there are insufficient copies available, we notify our collections department and request that additional copies be ordered. If we do not own the selected title, we request that copies be purchased several months prior to the book club session. This allows enough time for the books to be processed and for patrons to read them before the scheduled event.

The selections for our first two sessions were culled from “Sure Bet Narrative Nonfiction Suggestions,” compiled by the members of the Reference and User Services Association Collection Development and Evaluation Section Readers’ Advisory Committee and members of the PLA Readers’ Advisory Committee for “Taking the Guess Work Out of Nonfiction Readers’ Advisory,” presented at the ALA Annual Conference, June 26, 2005. For our first session, we chose Green River, Running Red by Ann Rule and Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper—Case Closed by Patricia Cornwell. In Rule’s book, the case was resolved; whereas, even though Cornwell presumed to have solved the crime, the case remains open. The first crime was a contemporary one compared to the historical Jack the Ripper case, and in both cases, the criminal was a serial killer whose victims were prostitutes.

"Book Clubs and a connection to which your readers can relate.

Opting for titles that are written by an author native to your area, or written about your particular locale, provide interest and a connection to which your readers can relate.

We have offered children and young adult discussion groups in the past. One of my colleagues hosted a chick lit discussion series that was well attended. Next year, my library director is arranging a scholar-led discussion of all six of Jane Austen’s novels. I am interested in exploring the possibility of a poetry discussion group. Because the library is the location of an Emily Dickinson garden, I am scheduling a discussion of her poems twice a year.

At our staff’s next inservice day, one of the sessions will be a discussion of one of the books from ALA’s Notable Books list. The library will be providing each staff member with their own copy of the book.

We are certainly not averse to investigating and instigating other ideas. The library book discussion group lives on in many guises.

Narrative Nonfiction Book Clubs

CINDY GUYLER, READERS’ SERVICES COORDINATOR, JOHNSON COUNTY (KANS.) LIBRARY; GUYLERC@JOCOLIBRARY.ORG

As the new readers’ services coordinator for the Johnson County (Kans.) Library, I took up the challenge to forge ahead with some of the innovative ideas presented at Book Expo in May 2006. The most intriguing was a narrative nonfiction book club that would appeal to those readers who
The second book club selections were based on the memoirs theme and included *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls and *A Girl Named Zippy: Growing up Small in Mooreland, Indiana* by Haven Kimmel. The darker Walls book was highly recommended by one of our staff members and was balanced by the lighter, more upbeat title by Kimmel. In both memoirs the children were raised in dysfunctional families with alcoholic fathers and mothers who faced difficulties in raising their offspring.

Our next selections include Paul Theroux’s *Dark Star Safari* and Osa Johnson’s *I Married Adventure: The Lives and Adventures of Martin and Osa Johnson*. Both of these true adventure stories take place in Africa during different time periods, which provides opportunities for discussing the changes that have taken place throughout years of colonization and independence. *Dark Star Safari* is a darker and more gloomy narrative written by a former Peace Corp worker revisiting Africa after years of decolonization, whereas *I Married Adventure* provides a very different view of Africa. The Johnsons were both photographers and filmmakers who are credited with providing an astounding pictorial view of African wildlife. Our rationale for choosing the Johnson book was the author’s relationship to Kansas. Both she and her husband were well known Kansas natives whose work is collected and preserved in the Martin and Osa Johnson Safari Museum located in Chanute, Kansas.

Our club meetings are led by two rotating members of our readers’ services team, who provide a summary of the books, author biographies, discussion questions, a list of read-alikes, as well as selected reviews of both titles. Participants are asked to share their favorite and least favorite aspects of both books, a tactic that generates lively discussion. Discussion questions may often be obtained through Web sites that are listed on our Readers’ Corner Web page, or through searching Google. If discussion questions are not available, team members design their own set of questions.

Publicity is crucial to the success of a new book club. We had fliers printed, included our club information in the quarterly *Special Events and Activities for All Ages* published by our library, and created an easel display complete with a poster and book club fliers. Information is included on our Web page in both the readers’ corner and online event calendar. We also distributed fliers to local book stores, grocery stores, and other retail establishments for placement on their bulletin boards. In the near future, we are hoping to create a display for each book club session, complete with a poster, fliers, and a stack of each of the two titles for patrons to check out. These displays will be set up several months prior to the event to provide ample time for patrons to read the selected titles.

As in any new venture, patience and persistence are requirements for success. Our first two sessions each produced only a handful of participants, but we fully expect that attendance will increase. With a sign posted on the readers’ services desk and staff promotion during patron transactions, we have generated greater interest in our newest book club.

Our library also provides two other book discussion groups that vary from the normal book club. One is a monthly online chick lit book discussion through Online Programming for All Libraries (OPAL). The discussion is a live, Web-based program where patrons and often the author engage in text chatting and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). The second is called Brown Bag Book Discussion: Read Any Good Books Lately? Patrons bring their lunches and discuss books that they read or are reading. Patrons particularly enjoy being able to read whatever titles appeal to them, rather than being required to read a specific title. Often other members have read or are planning to read titles that are discussed. A list of titles with short annotations is then compiled and distributed to members by the discussion leader.

**A Nontraditional Book Group for Lifelong Access**

*Ann Keefe, Collection Development and Technical Services Manager, Springfield (Mass.) City Library, and Lifelong Access Libraries Fellow; akeefe@springfieldlibrary.org*

Any book group that has met twice a month for more than forty years must be doing something right. While the Springfield (Mass.) City Library is home to several traditional book discussion groups, including one group conducted in Russian, it is a group with a nontraditional format that has thrived and grown for four decades. This group is a sharing of recent reads rather than an in-depth discussion of a single book read by all. It is an excellent reader’s advisory training opportunity for the librarian leading the group, because readers with diverse reading tastes describe the appeal of many different types of books. The group attracts a membership that is both loyal (the most senior member joined the group when she retired in the mid-1960s) and dynamic. During 2006 alone, the group welcomed four new members, and the average attendance has been sixteen. Some members attend only
One popular change in recent years has been the addition of advance reading copies to the mix... Book group members especially appreciate having the opportunity to be ahead of the curve, to read and spread the word about the newest titles.
Boomer-age readers join our own book group, we will increasingly look to it both as a source of perspectives on the needs and interests of our active older adults and as an experienced pool of potential volunteers who can help the library expand services while meeting their own needs for meaningful community engagement. Lifelong Access Libraries, libraries that are centers of lifelong learning and civic engagement for active older adults, will want to explore a whole array of collaborations and projects to meet the needs of both this target audience and their communities, but a nont Oakland, easy-to-join book group that involves active older readers and would-be readers with books, each other, and the library is a satisfying first step.

### Serendipity

**Mindy Donohue, Youth Librarian, Wiggins Memorial Library, Stratham, N.H.; mindydon@hotmail.com**

“So,” I asked the teens who gathered for the first meeting, “do you want to name the group? What would you like to call yourselves?”

“How about Serendipity Readers? Because when you read, you’re always making wonderful, unexpected discoveries.”

And so began our library’s teen book discussion group. Seven years later, I think of it as the jewel in the crown of my work with the teens, and we’re still making delightful discoveries in each book and at each meeting. I feel honored to be involved with a group of teens exchanging ideas, discussing issues that matter, and learning from each other.

During the school year, we meet one Saturday a month at a different local coffee shop. Each member who’s at the meeting can nominate a book for next month’s selection, which they book talk, to persuade the others that it would make for good discussion. The members then vote on the suggested titles, and majority rules. Fortunately, inappropriateness hasn’t been an issue, so I’ve never had to veto any suggested titles. They also vote on where to meet the next month.

I try to make it their group, leaving as many decisions in their hands as possible. Instead of going to a café, we’ve started holding our December meeting at the library and making it our holiday party. We each bring some type of goodies, listen to music, discuss our book selection, and play literary trivia or hangman.

During the summer, Serendipity is part of our Teen Summer Reading X-Perience. We meet once a week for five weeks at the library. I choose the books so I can interlibrary loan the copies far enough ahead of time to hand them out at each meeting. I look for titles easily read in a week, and at least one or two that they probably wouldn’t choose to read on their own. For all our meetings, I prepare a list of questions, but leave the discussions as teen-directed as possible.

It’s no secret that teens are busy people, with plenty of activities vying for their attention. I’m always on the lookout for new ways to supplement the discussions and keep things interesting. Occasionally I call the local newspapers and let them know when and where the group will be meeting—which the press loves to cover, so they’ll usually send a reporter or photographer. The café owners always appreciate the extra publicity, and we know how kids feel about getting their picture in the paper! At their request, the group painted a mural in the library of scenes from five of the books we had read.

We went as a group to see the second Harry Potter movie when it came out, then met to compare it to the book. Of course the book won out. As I always tell the group, “Never judge a book by its movie” (attributed to J. W. Eagan).

It is no surprise that some of the readers are also writers at heart. I encourage them to write reviews of the books we discuss. The features editor of a local paper taught a session at the library on writing reviews and is happy to publish them for us anytime. He puts them together into a feature article in the Sunday paper, with each teen’s picture beside their review.

The most exciting thing we’ve done as a group was attending the U.S. film premier of *The Mighty*, a movie based on Rodman Philbrick’s book *Freak the Mighty*.

Here’s to many more years of libraries sponsoring groups of book aficionados, young and not so young, who always find “serendipity” in whatever they read.

### Genre Book Discussions

**Leanne M. Ellis, Readers’ Advisory and Reference Librarian, Lucius Beebe Memorial Library, Wakefield, Mass.; ellis@noblenet.org**

Supper Sleuths, our mystery genre discussion group, began as a great way to provide another book group for our clamoring patrons without adding too much of a workload on an already overextended staff. Our then-assistant director, Nanci Milone Hill, originated the idea and pitched it to me as something we could easily host together—sharing our love for mysteries and our workload.

Supper Sleuths meets once a month on a Tuesday from 6 to 7:30 p.m., encourages its participants to bring a brown-bag dinner or snack with them, and explores the many

---

**PERSPECTIVES**

---

**PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

---

24
genres of mystery fiction. Every month we explore a subgenre, generating a print and Web list with a brief overview of what a reader should expect from that subgenre. Everyone attends the meeting having read one or more of each title on the list and gives a brief synopsis (hopefully without spoilers!) of each title, as well as a critical reaction to the book. My job as the leader of the group is to provide some background material and the genre definition, the lists, and the books that we keep on display. I also make sure that we do not wander too far from the original intention in the discussion and that everyone gets to contribute.

When Nanci was my coconspirator, we shared the job of compiling and editing the lists. She and I would present together, interjecting wry comments, and sometimes asking pertinent questions as each person took his or her turn. There were evenings we considered ourselves the entertainment as well as the moderators, and that contributed to the informal and friendly atmosphere. Because Nanci has moved on to another library, I have been flying solo and hosting the meeting myself; however, I have other staff librarians who assist me. Sue Jefferson, who has been a stalwart Supper Sleuths member since our first meeting and is also our library’s administrative assistant, provides me with a reality check when I need it and makes sure we have hot water for tea. So I consider my coordination of Supper Sleuths as flying solo with a net, providing an excellent opportunity for other library staff to collaborate on a popular endeavor and truly make it a library-run program.

Not only do we have a great deal of fun in Supper Sleuths, the group members walk out with a list of new titles or authors to explore (or eliminate). Our group members are serious mystery readers, and they enjoy sharing their opinions. We have a variety of patrons who participate in Supper Sleuths—aged from early twenties to retired seventy-year-olds. About fifteen people come and go as their schedules allow; however, there is a core group of ten members who have seldom missed a meeting. Among our regulars are several males who come to Supper Sleuths—a rarity in our book discussion population.

Everyone makes a concerted effort to attend the potlucks that occur twice a year—in December and June—when we have a Free Reading, when any mystery title will do. Free Readings began as one of dozens of topics on a ballot and we vote, usually placing the top sixteen on the calendar for the following two years. So far we have not run out of subgenres. We have read books on women who are private investigators, human and animal pairs, art mysteries, campus crimes, forensic mysteries, husband and wife teams, locked room mysteries, and senior sleuths.

The discussion and genre exploration at Supper Sleuths adds excellent material to my readers’ advisory mystery knowledge base. During a discussion, I have often experienced one of those “ah-ha” moments about an appeal aspect that I use in training staff or advising readers. The connections our group members make in the discussion always helps to define the mystery genre itself and the subgenre in particular. The Supper Sleuths experience has allowed me to grow as both a discussion leader and a readers’ advisor.

How do we come up with topics? I take suggestions from the group and create the lists, or I borrow existing lists on subgenres I find on the Web or in print and modify the list to reflect our community and collection. Every few years, I put two dozen or more topics on a ballot and we vote, usually placing the top sixteen on the calendar for the following two years. So far we have not run out of subgenres. We have read books on women who are private investigators, human and animal pairs, art mysteries, campus crimes, forensic mysteries, husband and wife teams, locked room mysteries, and senior sleuths. We have investigated historical mysteries, subsets of ancient Roman mysteries, and real detectives. We
have explored African, European, and Far Eastern sleuths.

Last October, as an experiment, the group decided to choose one title and discuss it. We all read Faye Kellerman’s riveting historical mystery, *Straight Into Darkness*. It was such a success, we may do this once a year now. In 2007, we are looking forward to exploring mystery short story collections and the domestic arts: mysteries involving crafts of knitting, quilting, and sewing.

During the summer, we take a two-month break and read a lot of pages. The first year we read Dorothy L. Sayers and Agatha Christie; the next summer, Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett; last summer, Marcia Muller and Sara Paretsky, and this summer, we are comparing Ed McBain and Reginald Hill. What appeals to group members about these pairings is both the opportunity and the challenge of exploring an author’s whole body of work—and trust me—many Supper Sleuths do just that, coming to the September meeting with “expert” opinions and reactions to the authors and the subgenres the authors represent. It is a real pleasure to see people who had narrow likes and dislikes discover an author who stretches them as readers. Our Web site is [www.wakefieldlibrary.org/ztasuppersleuths.htm](http://www.wakefieldlibrary.org/ztasuppersleuths.htm), where you will find links to all Supper Sleuths lists. The Web list is linked to North of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) catalog to make it easier for our community’s patrons to locate a title or author. Comments and corrections are welcome.

Conclusion

As you can see from these varied responses to the question posed, library book groups are expanding and changing in a variety of ways to meet user needs. The traditional book discussion however, is still the foundation from which all of these groups grow. Patrons may download audio books, listen to podcasts, or watch a book review on YouTube, but many are also still flocking to the public library for a good, old-fashioned discussion about a book they have read.

---

Save the Date! PLA 2008, 12th National Conference

Join the Public Library Association in Minneapolis for the 12th National Conference, March 25–29, 2008. The PLA National Conference is the premier event for public librarians, public library staff members, trustees, Friends, and library vendors.

The PLA National Conference has a reputation for excellence and offers attendees more than a hundred high-quality educational programs, world-class speakers, a bustling exhibits hall, and countless networking opportunities and social events, making the conference one of the most popular and successful events for the public library world.

The 2008 conference promises more of the same in Minneapolis, a city that continually tops travel destination lists for its cutting-edge architecture, vibrant arts scene, award-winning theatre, tax-free shopping, and renowned restaurants.

While the deadline for program proposals has passed, those interested in leading talk tables can apply through July 1, 2007. For more information, visit [www.placonference.org/talk_table_app.cfm](http://www.placonference.org/talk_table_app.cfm).

“Book Talk” provides authors’ perspectives on libraries, books, technology, and information. If you have any suggestions of authors you would like to see featured in Book Talk, or if you are interested in volunteering to be an author-interviewer, contact Kathleen Hughes, Editor of Public Libraries, at the Public Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611; khughes@ala.org.

Burning Bright
An Interview with Tracy Chevalier

Tracy Chevalier is the best-selling author of The Virgin Blue (Dutton, New York, 2003); Girl with a Pearl Earring (Dutton, 2000); Falling Angels (Dutton, 2001); and The Lady and the Unicorn (Dutton, 2003). In 2003 Girl with a Pearl Earring was released as a film starring Colin Firth and Scarlett Johansson. She spent some time with Public Libraries discussing her fifth book, Burning Bright, due out in March 2007 from Dutton. Her subject for this historical novel is British poet, printmaker, and painter William Blake. Tracy explains her fascination with Blake, her research and writing style, and offers a sneak peak of her upcoming project. She currently lives in London, England, with her husband and son. Her Web site is www.tchevalier.com.

Public Libraries: Many people are anxiously awaiting your new novel Burning Bright, which is about English poet and artist William Blake.

Tracy Chevalier: I talked to my father awhile back, and he said, “I’ve just come back from the library. I was looking up William Blake,” and I said, “Oh, why were you doing that?” and he said, “Well, I don’t know who he is, so I better find out what you’re writing about.” I live in England, and everybody knows who he is . . . he’s like Abraham Lincoln, and he’s kind of a touchstone, an English touchstone, and everyone here in school would have learned “Tyger Tyger, burning bright.” It’s one of those poems everybody knew. A lot of people studied Songs of Innocence in school. Not in college, but earlier. But I think in the States, he’s more a part of the college set. You know, if you majored in English or went to library school or were interested in books, or the making of books, or art. That does cover a lot of people, but he’s not as common as he is here, so I hadn’t realized that until I talked to my dad.

PL: What was your inspiration behind choosing Blake as your subject?

TC: There was an exhibition of his work, both his poetry and his painting and engraving, everything, in fact, a huge exhibition that was in London at the
Tate Gallery in 2001, and I went to see it. I knew his poetry, and I knew his engravings a bit, but I had never seen it all together. I had never really thought about the process by which he came up with all this. I just had never really seen the extent of his mind and what a radical thinker he was, and I thought, “This guy, is he crazy? Is he on drugs? What’s going on here?” I was fascinated by him.

I left the exhibition and went into the shop, and I bought a notebook. On the cover was one of his illustrations, and I thought, “This is the notebook I’m going to use to do my research when I write my Blake novel someday,” and it was as quick as that, you know. I stood in that exhibition, and I thought, “I’ve got to write a novel on him.” I certainly didn’t go to the exhibition thinking that I would, but that’s how all my ideas come. It comes in a moment, and you never quite know when you’re going to have an idea. So it’s always a relief when you do, because you think, “Oh, good.” I didn’t write it right away. I knew I’d have to be ready for it. And then, a few years later, I decided to crack him.

PL: How much of his work did you read in preparation?

TC: I read quite a bit, but he’s, as you probably know, he’s very hard going. He wrote a lot, and he wasn’t really thinking of other people when he was writing. He was writing for himself, and I think that makes him very hard to find a way into. He’s created a whole world with people of his own making, and if you don’t know who all these people represent it’s really hard, and that’s why there’s a whole lot of scholarship that has grown up around his writing, which tries to help you find a way in. I tried that, but I thought, “I still don’t get him. I still don’t get what he’s doing,” but the one thing I did get are his Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience. I thought I’d like to stick with the writing that the people know him by, and can still find a way in. And so, I decided I would write the book about his creation of Songs of Experience.

PL: Do you have a particular work of his that you found reached you the most?

TC: I think one of his poems called “London,” which is very sad. Because there are times that I’m in London when I just think, “Oh, this place is just getting to me.” It’s the one that goes:

I wander thro’ each charter’d street,
Near where the charter’d Thames does flow.
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

It’s sort of that feeling you get when you walk through London, and it’s been raining, and it’s grey and everything, and it’s winter, and people are really tired, and you just see them and think, “Oh my God,” and I thought how did he get to a point where he was feeling that. I particularly like that. But I just like the whole experience of looking through Songs of Experience and Songs of Innocence. The fact that he wrote the words, but he also illustrated them in his own particular style, the whole process of printing it, the whole thing appealed to me. It’s hard, in a way, to take one poem or one image out. You just have to look at it as a whole.

PL: In terms of immersing yourself in a particular time period when you write, did you read or look at any of the works of Blake’s contemporaries to get a feel for what it was like during his lifetime?

TC: Yes, I was very lucky because there was an exhibition of Henry Fuseli, and also Samuel Palmer, contemporaries who were friends of his. I went to both of those exhibitions, and I also looked at other paintings at the Tate and at the Victoria and Albert Museum here. So, yeah, I did definitely look at other visual things. I also went to the area of London where Blake was living, and I walked around, but the problem with that is that it was the area of Lambeth, which was bombed during World War II, so the place where Blake’s house stood is now a block of apartment buildings called the “William Blake Housing Estates.” It’s not quite the same, you know. So I actually found it more useful to look at a period map of the time to get a flavor of what the London streets were like rather than actually
walking in those streets themselves. It’s a strange feeling, but that was how I felt every time I went over to Lambeth. I would go over because I felt like I had to, but I would walk around feeling depressed at how different it was from what I was trying to imagine.

PL: If you could time travel and ask Blake any question, what do you think you would ask him?

TC: Oh, that’s a good question. I guess I would ask him if he thought his work was going to last, and then when he probably would say, “I hope it does, but I don’t know if it will,” then I would love to be able to tell him that he’s incredibly famous now. It was amazing because he wasn’t famous at all during his day, and he was always on the verge of poverty. He was quite poor when he died, and I think he’d just be astonished that children are learning his poems in classrooms now, and everybody looks up to him as this great hero, and one of Britain’s greatest artists. Occasionally, I move to their parents or other people. The one person whose shoulder I don’t film over is William Blake himself. He’s always slightly mysterious.

PL: Can you tell me about the structure of your new novel? Does it have multiple narrators like Falling Angels, or is the new one told from just one perspective?

TC: I decided with this book I wanted to write it in third person, and I wanted to move away from characterizing someone through their words, so I have a third-person narrator. But it mostly follows two children who live near Blake, his neighbors. I did this deliberately because Blake—I know that people are quite frightened of him, or find him hard to understand, and a lot of people don’t know who he is—so I thought the best way was not to approach him directly, but sideways, through the eyes of the people who live near him, particularly through these two twelve-year-old children. In a way, the book is about their growing up. It’s that you’re on this cusp of growing up at twelve and on the cusp of big changes in your life. It’s about their experience of William Blake and how he is guiding them through these very big changes, and how you move from innocence to experience and back in a way.

The structure is reasonably straightforward. It’s linear and third-person, but it’s not multiple. It’s sort of like I have a camera mounted on my shoulder, and most of the time I’m filming over the shoulders of the children. Occasionally, I move to their parents or other people. The one person whose shoulder I don’t film over is William Blake himself. He’s always slightly mysterious.

PL: How long did it take to write the book from research to the end?

TC: I think it’s three years altogether. Let me look. Yep, three years. September 14, 2003, I started, I finished it last month, so that’s just under three years.

PL: How does that compare with your other novels?

TC: It’s about a year longer. I knew I was going to take longer for this one because I know Blake is more complicated, harder to get a grasp of, and there’s so much written about him. I spent a whole year doing research without writing a word of the novel itself. I just took notes. I had to become more and more selective about what I read. There came a point, too, where I think I was looking for that perfect piece of research that was going to tell me all the things that I suspected about Blake but didn’t quite understand. It was all going to put them in place and make me suddenly understand Blake, and that didn’t happen. I realized after awhile that what I was searching for was the book that I had to write. But actually, that’s pretty much the case of all of my books in the research process. I feel like there’s something unfulfilled, that I haven’t quite found the right thing, and then I realize it finally one day—I have to write the book so I can fill that gap.

PL: How much of a role does the Internet play for you in your research process, versus a traditional library or museum archive?

TC: I resisted the Internet for a long time to do research, but there’s only so long you can resist it before you succumb. I use it mostly as a tool to find the articles and books I need. So, I might hear about a book, and I’ll look it up on the online catalog for my public library in the borough of London I live in. I’ll see if I can find the book in one of the libraries, order it online, and it will come to my local library. But I still have to read the book, so the actual tool of research itself, the knowledge, is still in book form. It’s like the Internet provides a good bibliography, and I’ve been able to get an article I need. I prefer to read it in book form, or on paper. I don’t really like reading it on the screen all the time. It drives me crazy. So, I’ll find the stuff, and use the Internet to locate it, but then I’ll go to that library, or order it, or download it, and print it out.

Occasionally, you know, toward the end, I have spot-checking to do when I might write a draft and
keep notes of things like what sort of glasses they used in a pub in the late eighteenth century, what kind of glasses did they drink wine from, or what would you drink rum in if you were in a pub. I might have a quick look online to see if I could find an answer. Sometimes you can find it; that is what the Internet has been very useful for, those sorts of bits and pieces of little bits of knowledge, and I think that’s great for it. For more general knowledge, to steep myself in a period, I can’t do that on the Internet. I have to look at stuff. I have to go to places. I have to read books.

PL: How big of a role did libraries play in your childhood?

TC: Oh, that’s crucial, essential. I used to go every week to Takoma Park Neighborhood Library in upper northwest Washington, D.C., and I had my favorite librarian, named Mrs. Carney, and I was a bit of a librarian’s pet with the children’s librarian. I loved going every week. I’d get a stack of books, and she always set aside a special book for me that she had chosen, and she was great because she knew me well, and she sort of knew when to introduce certain books. You didn’t buy books for the most part. You got them out of the library; that was just normal for me and for everyone. I think it’s changed a lot since then because we didn’t have Barnes & Noble back then or Borders. It was a different place, so it was a very special place for me—libraries.

PL: Do you think libraries influenced you in your choice to become a writer at all?

TC: Possibly. Certainly, it instilled a love of books that was very strong.

I knew by the time I was a teenager that when I grew up, I wanted to have something to do with books, whether it was writing them or working for a publisher. I didn’t know, and for a long time, I did say I wanted to be a writer when I was a kid, but I also wanted to be a librarian. I wanted to be the source of books. In my later teens, I realized that there was publishing, and I thought, “Well, I want to be an English major and go into publishing when I grow up,” and that’s what I first did when I finished college. I was a reference book editor for a publisher, and we made books. We created books specifically for the library market. My first publishing job was working on a dictionary of art, which is a big thirty-volume encyclopedia, which was mostly for the library market. So, I was very aware of libraries. I used the British library constantly when I was an editor. I spent months, literally months, there compiling bibliographies on writers and literature, and so I knew it very, very well.

PL: Which book or character of yours was the most fun to research and write about, and which one was the most challenging?

TC: I would say the most fun I had with a character would be Lavinia in Falling Angels. She’s an Edwardian girl who is quite opinionated and cares a lot about the kind of muff she carries and what ribbon, and she’s seemingly shallow, but she’s not actually. I really enjoyed writing her. I think the most challenging character would be Aliénor in The Lady and the Unicorn, because she’s blind. I had to try to put myself in what it would be like to be a blind woman in fifteenth-century France, and it was really challenging. I feel like I wish I could go back because I’ve read more books now. I’d like to go back and retry it, but it was really interesting to do that.

PL: Can you describe your writing process?

TC: I write longhand, but at the end of the day, I type into the computer what I’ve written. I edit as I type it in, and then the next day, I will read over what I’ve written on the computer and make some more changes, and then I’ll start writing again, just do the same thing over and over again. Until this Blake book, I always wrote on paper, just loose sheets of paper, usually scrap, like it was printed on one side, and I’d write on the other side and at the end of the day, I’d be finished with it, and I’d throw it all away, and I’d have what I had on the computer. For Burning Bright, I decided to keep a notebook and write it in a notebook. I’m glad I did because it’s really nice to look back over it, and just see all that writing. It sort of comforts you. You feel like you actually have something substantial. Whether that’s actually true, I don’t know. For all my books, I’ve had notebooks that are research notebooks, but for the Blake book, I’ve actually kept the writing notebooks as well. And I don’t think I’ll ever write directly onto the computer.

PL: Do you write your novels from beginning to end, or do you write bits and pieces and weave everything together?

TC: No, I write beginning to end. Writing is very closely knit together, and what you’ve said before has a bit of influence on what you say after, so I’m always astonished when I hear of writers who say, “Oh, I write a bit here, and I write a bit there,
and I just sort of pull it all together.” I think, “How can you do that?” It’s impossible for me. It just has to be woven very carefully together, so I tend to go from start to finish.

PL: When you start a new novel like *Burning Bright*, do you post pictures in your workspace for inspirations?

TC: Yes, definitely. I work in a little room at the back of the house, and on a wall next to me, I start pinning up all kinds of things. With Blake, I had pictures of various paintings and engravings he did. I pinned up this big map of that period, a reproduction of it, and I started plotting where various characters lived, and I wrote that down on there. I found engravings of various buildings in the neighborhood and put them up. I typed out quotes that I particularly liked and put them up on the wall as well; I always do that. I think it’s one of those things. I just like stuff to look at, to inspire me while I’m thinking about it.

PL: Do you see any trends in adult historical fiction or adult fiction in general?

TC: I would say there’s a hell of a lot of historical fiction now that there wasn’t before, and I’m afraid that I’ve been told that I started that, and I was horrified! I said, “Oh, no, that had nothing to do with me,” but I find that sometimes it’s a little daunting. I get sent proofs all the time from publishers, which I never have time to read. They’re all set in revolutionary this, and thirteenth-century Wales, and eighteenth-century America, and I just think, “Oh no, what do I do? What have I done?” It’s like Pandora’s box. But other than that, I couldn’t really say what trends there are.

PL: Who are you reading now?

TC: An English novelist named Maggie O’Farrell, and she’s written a novel called *The Vanishing Act of Esme Lennox*. Maggie’s a friend, and her book has just come out, and it’s had very good reviews, so I thought, “Oh, I want to see.” I recently read *Special Topics in Calamity Physics*, which is going great guns over in the States. We went on vacation in August to Maine, and there was a big review of it on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review*, and I thought, “Oh, this sounds kind of fun.” It was one of those things because I don’t spontaneously purchase books that often, but that I thought, “Yeah, I’ll have a bit of that,” and it’s quite an interesting book.

PL: What favorite authors do you have that you’ll read everything by them?

TC: Margaret Atwood. And I would say Anne Tyler, although I sort of went through a patch where I got bored and thought, “You know, it’s all the same.” I’ve come back to her because I read *Digging to America*, and I liked that a lot. I think it was very smart of her to sort of open out her world a little by including an Iranian family and Korean adopted kids. Sometimes you want it to be different, and I think she got that, and she challenged herself a bit by portraying the Iranian community. I thought it was really brave and smart, and it worked. I was very pleased to read that.

PL: Do you have a book tour planned for the States after the new book comes out?

TC: Yes, I’ll be there the end of March. I’m going on tour, and if anyone wants to know if I’m going to be near them, I have a [Web site](www.tchevalier.com) and I’ll put up on that where I’ll be.

PL: Are you working on a new book?

TC: Yes, I’ve just started research on a book. It’s going to be about a fossil collector in nineteenth-century England. A real woman, whose name is Mary Anning. She’s a very interesting, prickly character, so I’m looking forward to that.
Collaborating with Wikis

It would have taken quite a tornado to blow Dorothy and Toto all the way to the Space Needle. Yet, here we are, David King in Topeka, Kansas, and Michael Porter in Seattle, Washington, trying to work together on this column. What, we pondered, would be the most effective tool for collaboration? Hence, the birth of our first article. We offer you: “Our online collaboration wiki story.”

To build the suspense, we’ll insert a brief introduction:

David works at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library (www.tscpl.org) as the Digital Branch and Services Manager. David received his MLS degree in 1994 and has been working with, speaking, and writing about technology in libraries ever since. He dusted off his middle name so his blog (davidleeking.com) didn’t have to be named “davidkingonline” or “davidking22.”

Michael works with technology, community and libraries at WebJunction.org as a community associate. He has worked in libraryland since 1990, obtaining his MLS degree from Indiana University in 1999. In the years since library school, Michael has somehow managed to teach workshops and give presentations to public librarians in thirty states and teach technology to people in more than thirty foreign countries (it’s a long story, that one). He blogs at www.libraryman.com, uploads lots of pictures to Flickr (www.flickr.com), and collects PEZ dispensers. Lots and lots of PEZ dispensers.

Now, back to our story . . .

What Is a Wiki?

We immediately thought of wikis as the best avenue for our collaboration with this column. What is a wiki? According to everyone’s favorite wiki, Wikipedia, a wiki is “a type of Web site that allows the visitors themselves to easily add, remove, and otherwise edit and change some available content, sometimes without the need for registration. The ease of interaction and operation makes a wiki an effective tool for collaborative authoring.”

There are two types of wiki software: hosted and installed. Wikipedia uses the installed variety—they use MediaWiki as their wiki platform, which is free, open source software that can be downloaded and installed
on a server. PBwiki is a popular example of the hosted variety of wiki. Instead of having to install PBwiki software (and other hosted wiki services) on a server, all the hard stuff has been taken care of for you.

**Signing Up for PBwiki**

We found PBwiki extremely easy to use. The hardest part of setting up a PBwiki, honestly, is creating a site name for it. We created one called Spotlight for our testing purposes. To create your own PBwiki, enter a site name and an e-mail address. Just click the “Create My Wiki” button, and the fledgling wiki is created. A confirmation e-mail is sent to your e-mail address, and you’re ready to edit and collaborate.

**How Do You Use PBwiki?**

Simply go to your new wiki home page (for example, yoursitename.pbwiki.com) and click the “edit page” button. You will see a text box where you can start typing. It provides some easy-to-use and familiar text tools, such as bold, italic, underlined text, strikethroughs, bullets, numbered lists, horizontal lines, tables, and text centering options. Once done entering text, click the save, preview, or cancel button. If you click the save button, your text is immediately published on your wiki! It’s really that easy.

Add brackets around a word to create a new page. This will trigger PBwiki to create a new page template with the bracketed text as the title of the new page. You also can type a word with SeveralCapitalLetters (also called camelcase) to create a new page. Then click save, and the text is underlined with a dotted line. That text is a link—click it, and you’re taken to the new page and are presented with this text: “the page/the title of your new page does not yet exist . . . but you can create it.” When you click the “but you can create it” link, you will see the “create a new page” page. Rename the page here, and you’re asked if you want to use a template for the page. Click the “Create New Page” button, and your new page is created.

**Collaborating with PBwiki**

PBwiki makes collaborating easy. Once David set up the PBwiki for this column, he e-mailed Michael the password. Then, we made use of the RSS feed that comes with every PBwiki. PBwiki’s RSS feed tracks recent changes made to the wiki and sends those changes out via RSS. So, when David added text to the article, Michael immediately knew about it via RSS (assuming he was checking the RSS feed). Then, Michael could log in, make changes, add text, and voila! We have collaboration, despite the intervening miles.

**Google Docs & Spreadsheets**

Google Docs & Spreadsheets (http://docs.google.com) is another collaborative tool that we tested. While not perfect, it proved both useful and practical in our real-world collaboration tests. The Google Docs & Spreadsheets page states: “Google Docs & Spreadsheets is a free, web-based word processing and spreadsheet program that keeps documents current and lets the people you choose update files from their own computers.” This is much the same idea as PBwiki, just more from the word processing side instead of the wiki side. A little history: In March 2006, Google bought Writely, a collaborative, Web-based, word processor. In October, Google combined Writely with an online spreadsheet and relaunched it as Google Docs & Spreadsheets.

**Signing Up for Google Docs & Spreadsheets**

Simply go to Google’s sign-up page (www.google.com/accounts) and sign up for a Google Account. You also will have access to Gmail, Google Calendar, and a host of other Google tools. Next, sign in to the Google Docs site using that username and password. Ta-da! You’re in.

**How Do You Use Google Docs & Spreadsheets?**

Click on the “New Document” link. Then, start typing. You have all the usual text tools, such as bold, italic, underlined text, bullets, indent tools, and paragraph alignment. There also are tabs (you will be on the Edit tab already). Click on the Insert tab, and you will have the option to insert links, images, comments, and tables.

The last tab is the Revisions tab. This is where Google Docs starts resembling a wiki. This tab keeps track of revisions. It allows you to browse through revisions by date, compare two revisions, or to see all revisions in a handy list (the Revisions History link). You also have the option to revert back to an older revision if needed.

Sharing a document also is easy. From the main Docs page, click the “Share Now” link beside each of your documents. You have two options: invite collaborators and invite viewers. Collaborators are given permission to edit the document and invite other collaborators; viewers can only see the document.
To grant someone permission, simply enter an e-mail address in the Invite box, and click the “Invite These People” button. The person you invited receives an e-mail with the link to the document.

Document changes can be tracked via RSS. When you’re ready, you have the option to save the document as HTML, RTF, Word, OpenOffice, or as a PDF file. You also can publish the file to your blog or to the web. Google assigns a http://docs.google.com url to the document. You have the option to remove the document from public view at any time.

Public Libraries Using Wikis

Here are some examples of public libraries using wikis:

St. Joseph County Public Library

St. Joseph County (Ind.) Public Library’s (SJGPL) subject guides section was created with a wiki (www.libraryforlife.org/subjectguides/index.php/Main_Page). This allows library staff to quickly post new information to the subject guide and also allows patrons to add information via the discussion section found on each page.

Interestingly, Marianne Kruppa, SJGPL librarian and technology expert, shares:

SJGPL also has a staff wiki which includes position competencies, department manuals, training handouts, and some fun stuff. The wiki-ness of it allows everything to be up to date without having to use the ‘c’ word (committee). And guess which department contributes the most? Nope, not reference...nope, not administration...out of guesses? CIRCULATION! I’d say there are at least six constant contributors from circ, though I do believe 90 percent of circ staff have contributed. How neat is that?

Stevens County Rural Library District

Stevens County (Wash.) Rural Library District (SCRLD) has created the Stevens County Wiki Project (www.scrldwiki.org/index.php/Main_Page), a guide to Stevens County, Washington, using a wiki. The library district allows anyone to edit the wiki pages, which include activities, places, services, and people. What a great idea!

Allen County Public Library

Allen County (Ind.) Public Library (ACPL) librarian and technologist Sarah Patalita explains that ACPL (www.acpl.info) has experimented with several types of wikis across its fourteen-branch library system. From their young adults wiki to their successful Voice Over Internet

Top Five Wiki Resources

1. www.wikipedia.org: Love it or hate it, with millions of daily users and contributors, it is worth seeing this highly successful wiki in action. We especially like to do pop culture searches here.

2. www.pbwiki.com: Our easy-to-use, free wiki creation tool of choice (when we wrote this article in early 2007 anyway!)

3. www.libsuccess.org: “This wiki was created to be a one-stop-shop for great ideas and information for all types of librarians.”

4. www.mediawiki.org: “MediaWiki is a free software wiki package originally written for Wikipedia. It is now used by several other projects of the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation and by many other wikis, including this very website, the home of MediaWiki.” Mediawiki software takes server space and a deeper level expertise to use. However, it works very well once you figure out how to make it go. The Libsuccess wiki (www.libsuccess.org) runs this software as well.

5. www.jot.com: Jotspot is a very interesting chapter in the story of wikis and the emerging world of online collaboration. Jotspot worked pretty well, and Google wanted in on more of this action. Check out this quote taken from the Jotspot Web site in January 2007: “Google shares JotSpot’s vision for helping people collaborate, share and work together online. JotSpot’s team and technology are a strong fit with existing Google products like Google Docs & Spreadsheets, Google Apps for Your Domain and Google Groups.” Interesting, eh?
Protocol phone system training wiki (and accompanying YouTube video), ACPL has demonstrated creative and practical uses of online collaboration across their organization. In fact, Sarah reports, “We’ll also be running a wiki workshop at our staff day in a couple of weeks, and I hope that we start at least two or three new wikis after that session.” Indeed!

**ALA Wiki**

In addition, PLA and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) have been using a wiki for collaboration on a national level. The *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® wiki* (wikis.ala.org/ecrr/index.php/Main_Page) was created as an online support and idea tool that goes along with PLA and ALSC’s Every Child Ready to Read @ your library® program. From the wiki: “If you have used the Every Child Ready to Read @ your library materials, ideas or training, please share in this wiki, your successes, challenges, materials you have developed, anything you feel would be helpful to others.”

So you see, wikis are wonderful tools. They can be a great way to collaborate with other librarians, as we found while working on this article. We think Google Docs, PBwiki, or some of the other wiki tools and Web sites mentioned in our Top Five Wiki Resources sidebar could work for you, too. Go forth and wiki!

**References**

3. Marianne Kruppa, e-mail to authors, Jan. 4, 2007.
4. Sarah Patalita, e-mail to authors, Jan. 4, 2007.

---

**Customize Your Own Every Child Ready to Read® Brochures!**

Have your library logo and contact information printed on the Every Child Ready To Read® brochures. PLA and the Association for Library Service to Children are currently taking orders for customized Every Child Ready To Read® brochures. Because of the large quantity being ordered, special pricing allows you to purchase brochures at a substantial savings.

Orders are being accepted for only the quantities listed below:

- 5,000 each of the three brochures (15,000 brochures total) $2,850 ($0.19 each)
- 10,000 each of the three brochures (30,000 brochures total) $4,500 ($0.15 each)
- 20,000 each of the three brochures (60,000 brochures total) $7,200 ($0.12 each)
- 30,000 each of the three brochures (90,000 brochures total) $9,000 ($0.10 each)
- 50,000 each of the three brochures (150,000 brochures total) $13,500 ($0.09 each)

Please add a $45 set-up fee for each brochure and shipping cost. Your library’s logo, address, phone number, and Web address will be imprinted on the back panel of each brochure. Place your order by May 18, 2007. To order or for more information, visit www.ala.org/everychild.
“Bringing in the Money” presents fund-raising strategies for public libraries. Many librarians are turning to alternative funding sources to supplement shrinking budgets. Fund-raising efforts not only boost finances, but also leverage community support and build collaborative strategies.

Advocate for More

Focus on Legislative Funding

Bringing in the Money’s normal focus is on alternative funding sources, such as grants, library cafés, and book sales, but these strategies should never be employed without ensuring that more traditional revenue streams are safeguarded. One important way to do this is to enlist the support and assistance of library advocates to speak on behalf of your library. We may think of going to our local city council for funding support, but we should also not forget the importance of the large amount of state and federal dollars that are allocated for libraries each year; for example, consider the $262,240,000 that is the IMLS 2007 budget appropriation for library programs.¹ According to ALA’s handbook for advocacy, “Keeping legislators informed about library concerns, trends, and successes is the best way to turn them into supporters and even library champions.”² Reinforcing the value of our libraries to our elected officials and community leaders can help support local, state, and federal library revenue.

Finding the Right Advocates

First, you should determine who should represent the library. If the thought of meeting with elected officials or other funders sends you in a panic, remember that a library advocate can be the perfect person for this task. If you think of the true meaning of an advocate, it is someone who speaks on behalf of another. For example, a child advocate or an attorney that represents the interests of someone else. We can advocate for ourselves, for our libraries, but it is not nearly as effective as when someone else does.

The claim is sometimes made that the person delivering the message can be more important than the message itself. If you think about how likely you are to listen to a political telemarketer regarding an issue versus a family member, friend, or coworker, you can see the importance of having the right people delivering the library’s messages.

Contributing Editor

STEPHANIE GERDING
is Continuing Education Coordinator at Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, in Phoenix; stephaniegerding@earthlink.net. She is coauthor of Grants for Libraries: A How-to-Do-It Manual (Neal-Schuman), and the library grants blog (librarygrants.blogspot.com).

Stephanie is currently reading Sufficient Grace: A Novel by Darnell Arnoul.
Often requests from library directors that previously were not funded were realized when the appeal was made by a community member instead of a library employee.

In Arizona we’ve seen the power of library advocates. The Arizona State Library initiated a statewide program for strategic planning using PLA’s *The New Planning for Results.* In 2002, Sandra Nelson, the book’s author, trained twenty librarians who were then charged with taking another library through the strategic planning process. Each library formed a community committee. This committee was made up of stakeholders, representatives of all major segments of the local populace. The committee was involved in the initial steps of the process, a needs assessment of the community, focused not on the library, but on the local situation and the true issues the community was facing. These leaders became engaged in the work and the purpose of the library; many are now true library advocates. The success stories of the strategic planning process have been compiled, and a recurring theme has been an increase in budgets and funding to the libraries. Often requests from library directors that previously were not funded were realized when the appeal was made by a community member instead of a library employee.

The right person to be your advocate will vary according to what the message is. A library advocate communicates the value of the library to their audience. And that value will depend on what is important to the individuals present. A mother who brings her child to storytime every week values the library for different reasons (her sanity?) than someone who is beginning a home business and is using the library’s computers for research and to write a business plan. Decide what audience you want to target first and then find advocates from their peer groups. For example, some libraries are finding great success in using teen advocates to speak to their classes and other groups about the resources a library can offer rather than having a librarian who may have less influence. While you probably don’t want to appeal to teens for funding, they can be great advocates to take with you on library legislative day to tell their stories of why the library is valuable.

We know what amazing outcomes public libraries produce everyday, but many community leaders don’t. Most of them will share with you their happy memories of going to the library as a child. But they also think that by working in a library, you spend most of your day reading books, right? Many adults who don’t use the library—but do hold the purse strings or do believe in the importance of public libraries—have no idea what the library is doing today besides providing books. They aren’t aware that libraries are in need of funds and support.

As GladysAnn Wells, Arizona state librarian, has said, “Build connections before you need them. Think of your contacts as a savings account. Determine well in advance of your need: who might be willing to help you, who can stop you, and what each of them might want that you could supply.”

The American Library Association has an online advocacy resource center (www.ala.org/ala/issues/issuesadvocacy.htm) with a lot of helpful information, including the *Library Advocate’s Handbook* (www.ala.org/ala/advocacybucket/library-advocateshandbook.pdf).

**Mobilizing for Legislative Action**

The most influential role of an advocate can be to mobilize people to a course of action. An important action is, of course, to direct finances to support and maintain libraries. By educating and organizing advocates, libraries can influence legislative actions. And advocating for a particular cause is a huge component in the democratic process.

When thinking of who you should invite to meet with a legislator or accompany you as a delegate, think of who those elected officials consider the most important people. Of course, it is the voter that is the most important. Other VIPs include campaign supporters and donors, local leaders, newspaper editors or other media executives, and personal friends or acquaintances. Think of who you know that can champion your library’s causes.

Some libraries even advertise online for library advocates. Providing a few tip sheets and having some structured meetings, which can even be run by your Friends group or a board member,
Meeting with Elected Officials

There are many ways library advocates can help you increase funding for your library. Let’s examine just one of these—contacting elected officials.

There are many ways to contact your elected officials. These tips describe effective methods for making an impact. Attorney Roberta Voss, past lobbyist for the Arizona Library Association and a former three-term legislator, provided them. Use one of several modes of communications to get your message across. Remember to focus on the people in your community and their needs.

In-person Meetings with Elected Officials

Prepare for the Meeting

- Arrange for a small group of people who share your concerns to participate; this can include members of your community.
- Decide what the group will say and who will speak on each issue.
- Limit your visit to one or two topics.
- Determine what you hope to get out of the meeting—an agreement to sponsor a bill, for example.
- Find out if there are any personal, professional, or political connections to the elected official among your advocates.

During the Meeting

- Be prompt and patient. Schedules often change.
- Present your case. Explain what you want your legislator to do and why. Keep it short and focused; you may have only ten minutes.
- Give personal and local examples of the impact the proposed legislation will have on your home state or district.
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, offer to find out and send the information back to the office later.
- Keep control of the visit. Don’t be put off by long-winded answers or avoidance. Your appointment time is limited.
- Find out if your legislator has heard opposing views. If so, find out what the arguments are and what groups are involved.
- Do not confront, threaten, pressure, or beg.
- Leave a brief position paper or fact sheet when you leave.

Follow-up

- Send a thank-you note that reiterates the important points of your issue.
- You can always invite your elected officials to participate in your library’s activities. You might ask them to address a group, present them with an award, or have them tour a facility. These events leave a lasting impression about the library and build a relationship with the legislator that can be useful.

Telephone Calls

A phone call is a good way to let your legislator know how you or your organization feels about a particular issue. Elected officials pay close attention to these calls as a measure of voter sentiment. An outpouring of calls can sometimes change the vote of a legislator; even a small number of calls can make a difference.

When you call, ask if your senator or representative could send you a written response. This will help ensure that your call gets counted. You can also ask if the office has received other calls from constituents on the same issue, and if so, what position most of the callers took on the issue.

Letters

Letters can also make a difference. Legislators rely on letters to find out what the people in their districts are thinking. Letter-writing can be the first step in building an ongoing relationship with your legislators. Here are some guidelines to follow when writing:

- Spell the legislator’s name correctly.
- Write legibly or type your letter.
- Address your legislators properly; for senators or representatives, use “The Honorable [insert name]”
- For a salutation, use “Dear Representative [last name]” If you know your legislators at all, use their first names; your letter will receive more attention.
- Use your own words. Personal letters are far more effective than preprinted postcards or petitions.
- Clearly state the topic you are writing about and your position on it in the opening sentences. For example, “I’m writing to oppose steep cuts in education and libraries.”
- Refer to bills by name and number if possible.
- Stay on one topic. If you want to write about other issues, send another letter at a later date.
- Give reasons for your position. As appropriate, use personal experience or a concrete example to make your case.
Bring in the Money

March/April 2007

3

E-mail
You can e-mail your legislators to save time and stamps. Keep e-mails short, and make sure you let them know if you are a constituent.

Editorials
Writing editorials can be an effective way to develop community support and drum up editor interest in your position. Comments are more likely to be published if concisely and thoughtfully written.

Finding Your Elected Officials
ALA provides a database of elected officials and media outlets (www.capwiz.com/ala/dbq/officials) that includes background information and contact details that you can search on by state or zip code. If you wish to call a Washington, D.C., office, you can reach your senator or representative through the Capitol Switchboard. Simply dial (202) 224-3121, and ask for your member of Congress.

Many state library associations help coordinate a library legislative day. This can be a great time to meet with your governmental representatives. Usually there will be a meeting for librarians that will summarize the legislative agenda and give tips on advocating for library issues and legislation of importance to the library community.

ALA coordinates the national Library Legislative Day, a spring event in which people who support libraries go to Washington, D.C., and participate in advocacy and issue training sessions, interact with Capitol Hill insiders, and visit congressional offices to ask Congress to pass legislation that supports libraries. For more information, visit www.ala.org/ala/washoff/washevents/nlld/nlld2007.htm.

With that, Farewell
Thank you to everyone at PLA for the opportunity I’ve had to write this column for the past two years. I’ve learned so much with each article and am grateful to the many librarians who have contributed through ideas, photos, inspiration, and their own words. I sincerely hope that libraries have been helped to bring in the money. I’m building my life in other ways and am looking forward to building my family, doing more training, and finishing my next book, The Accidental Technology Trainer, to be published by Information Today. Keep your dreams big!

References

Goodbye and Thank You!

With this issue, Public Libraries offers a reluctant goodbye to Bringing in the Money columnist Stephanie Gerding. Stephanie was the first editor of this column, which debuted in the March/April 2005 issue of the journal. She has been a great editor, infusing her columns with energy, enthusiasm, and excellent information and tips for readers seeking new funding source ideas. We will miss her contributions to the journal, but wish her much luck in her future endeavors.
“Passing Notes” focuses on young adult service issues, including programming, collection development, and creating stronger connections with young adult patrons. The column will address these topics with a humorous bent and an awareness that the key to working with young adults is constant reinvention.

Unleashing Your Inner Man

It was in my third day at my first library position that I realized I was The Man. Not in the Federline-esque sense of inflated ego, but rather in that I was that thin blue line betwixt order and chaos in the library. I felt ill. To explain why I have to take you back to those halcyon days of the mid-1990s.

There's a young (well, younger) Michael Garrett Farrelly, dressed in bright green Doc Marten combat boots, black jeans, and a Bad Religion t-shirt. Thrill to seeing me pretending to enjoy ska music and adopting the dress style of a rude boy (or, alternately, a member of the Mighty Mighty Bosstones). There I am at the Sex Pistols reunion tour, close enough to be spit on by Johnny Rotten, an act I equated with an a kiss of an angel. When the yearbook asked what my quote should be, I tried to think of the most vile thing I could say, a statement of contempt for my hated high school.

Of course it was easy to slip horrid things into the yearbook, as I was one of the editors. I was also on the school newspaper, the chess team, in every drama and musical for all four years of school, and a member of a religious service organization. Not quite the second coming of Sid Vicious.

My hated high school, which I’ve actually grown somewhat fond of in the years since graduation, was run by the Christian Brothers. In the event of a nuclear apocalypse, I'd like three kinds of people in my shelter: nurses (because doctors are useless when it comes to healing), librarians (of course), and the Christian Brothers, because someone has to go out there and slap some sense into the mutants.

The brothers I had were unique, to say the least. I remember, with some fear, my first Spanish instructor, a brother who measured the perfection of the rows of desks with a special ruler. Another brother introduced himself to his class by saying “I believe in patience” and then pulling out a cricket bat with air holes drilled in it, to cut down wind resistance when you got swatted.

I should note a Christian Brother never hit me. They didn’t need to hit you to maintain order. It was an all-boys’ school; piranhas would have been scared to roam the halls. That is, if piranhas could walk on land. Which, thankfully, they cannot. Yet.
I don’t believe that there are bad kids, but that every kid can have a bad day, week, month, or span of years. It saves your sanity and reduces burnout to think of it that way . . .

Do you need to be feared to maintain order? Fear of getting caught is part of everyday life. Just posting a sign about a traffic camera can keep people from running red lights, even if the camera itself is just an empty box on a pole. But fear may not help you with teens in the library. Keeping young adults as active patrons means not alienating them during the age when testing limits and boundaries is normal and healthy.

The overwhelming majority of my workday experience with tween and teen patrons has always been marvelous. I love the real connections you can make with them, how you can be the first person to hand them Salinger or convince them that not all Shakespeare is as boring as the grave-digger scene in Hamlet. Those connections make instances when you need to discipline so much easier. The teens you connect with will actually become stewards of order themselves, helping you keep the noise down or telling their friends to knock it off.

In every job interview I’ve had, the question comes up: “How have you dealt with problem patrons?” I start by saying that I don’t believe that there are bad kids, but that every kid can have a bad day, week, month, or span of years. It saves your sanity and reduces burnout to think of it that way, rather than assume some teens aren’t looking to raise a ruckus; they’re just like water looking for a level. Giving them a boundary in a personable and non-confrontational manner gives them a measure of respect.

The second strike is more forceful, and adds the notion of consequence. (At libraries I’ve worked in, that consequence is usually being asked to leave; more on that later.) It’s more forceful, more direct, and it introduces the idea that the next incident is going to have a consequence. This is usually enough to quiet the seas. Some libraries won’t ask a patron to leave or may require that the police are called to do that. It varies wildly by library, of course, and it’s always good to discuss those procedures with your supervisor early on.

The third strike—drum roll please—is the consequence, which again can vary depending on your library policies. Whether it’s getting kicked off the computers or being escorted from the grounds, it’s important to show that if you continue to do something disruptive, something will happen.

Of course this is just one simple framework, not a rigid and formal one either. I’ve called the police when I’ve seen acts of violence, and I’ve let things slide with some ram-bunctious kids when it was storming out, and they were just goofy from being “trapped” in the library. It’s a sliding scale, but I’ve found it surprisingly effective as a guide.

It’s incredibly important to have a clear guide that works for everyone in your department from the top down. If you’re consistent in your approach, you can avoid the “But, but, Miss Elise said we could duct tape people to the ceiling!” Some go so far as to post codes of conduct, which can be effective but can also turn teens into mini-lawyers who argue the finer points of law. As in “It says no talking, but I was whispering, not talking.”

Often when I tell people I work with teens I get the “Oh my god, aren’t they horrible?” reaction. I usually brush it off but sometimes I engage them. The assumption that teens are inherently unruly, horribly behaved, and impossible to manage seems to come more from movies and television than actual interactions. Fighting the simplistic stereotype of young adults is part of being a youth advocate. It can make you The Man, regardless of gender, in a very positive way.
Cultivating a successful library career takes much more than just the mastery of basic tasks. Developing a good relationship with your supervisor; practicing punctuality, professionalism, and good manners; and improving your communication skills can have a major impact on your future successes. If you are a new librarian—or even a seasoned librarian looking for ways to excel in your job—these ten tips, which you can immediately put into practice, will provide inspiration and encouragement, as well as help you to adapt to your library’s professional environment and thrive in your career.

**Work for the Best**

Nothing is more important on the job than doing good work. Your ability to consistently produce high-quality work is the most important factor in enhancing your opportunity for promotion, salary increases, and desirable assignments.

Aim to be the best in your area of work. This means that you must thoroughly know your responsibilities and duties as stated in your job description. Make every effort to fulfill all the requirements stated in your job description and acquire the skills needed in your job.

Prioritize work when you have multiple duties or projects, and manage your time effectively so that you can allocate some time for important long-term goals. Periodically report the status of your projects and give advance warning of problems. Be proactive and do not wait for your supervisor to make the first move.

Request a blank performance evaluation form to see how you are measured before review time. Find out if your library has official performance standards for your position. If so, make sure your work always meets those standards. If you are not clear about the performance standards, ask for clarification and for feedback on how you are doing. Work hard, efficiently, accurately, and consistently to exceed your performance standards.
You will be closely supervised and trained during your probationary period, so you will constantly receive appropriate feedback. After the probationary period is done, you will usually receive an annual formal performance evaluation. Between these performance evaluations, you should periodically evaluate your own performance. Inform your supervisor of any problems and concerns about your work. Also, try to let your supervisor know about your accomplishments at least on a monthly basis.

**Develop a Good Relationship with Your Supervisor**

Your supervisor has a significant impact on your success. Your relationship with your supervisor will set the tone for your working life. To build a positive and productive relationship, you will need to know your supervisor's work style, goals, and expectations for you.

What are your supervisor's professional likes and dislikes? Does your supervisor prefer to make decisions alone, to talk to you before or after making decisions, to take your questions anytime or once a day, once a week, or once a month? How does he or she prefer to receive information or reports from you and to give you ongoing feedback on your performance? Does your supervisor value your suggestions, effectiveness, and efficiency? Does he or she use e-mail more than face-to-face communication, or vice versa? Does he or she come to work on time? The answers to these questions could be helpful in determining your supervisor's work style, and this will contribute to your success.

What are your supervisor's goals? Make sure you are in tune with them. Support and help your supervisor achieve his or her goals by providing honest and constructive feedback. This will be appreciated. Knowing and satisfying your supervisor's needs is one of your most important duties.

What are your supervisor's expectations for you, including daily work and long-term goals? Your supervisor should make these clear. If not, you should ask for clarification. You need to look for ways to not only meet expectations but to exceed them.

Establish and maintain an open and candid relationship with your supervisor based on honesty and trust. Demonstrate total loyalty and respect the chain of command. It takes a long time to rebuild the relationship once you lose honesty and credibility. If you do not like your supervisor's work style or you have difficulty getting along with your supervisor, try to work it out at least for a year by focusing on the positive and maximizing your performance. It takes time to build up a relationship. However, it is not healthy to work in an unhappy environment for more than a year. Look for another job and think about how your experience working in a difficult environment can help you deal with difficult situations in the future.

**Have Solid Theoretical Knowledge in Your Professional Area**

If your academic concentration in library school matches the professional area of your current job, you need to keep current with new developments. However, if you have a job in an area other than your academic concentration, make sure that you have the requisite background knowledge for that area. For example, if you are hired as a cataloging librarian, you need to have solid knowledge of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (2nd edition, 2002 revision), the *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (latest edition), and the classification scheme that your library uses. There are many potential dangers and limitations in cataloging by example, and these should be avoided as much as possible. If you are hired as a reference librarian, to be truly effective you need to know the basic tools for doing reference and selecting or deselecting materials as well as online searching. Without the proper background or knowledge in your professional area, you will not only produce low-quality work but will not be comfortable doing your job.

As you gain more experience, you will train support staff or other librarians. Theoretical knowledge will help you supervise them effectively. It will help you answer the “why” questions, such as “Why do we need to do this?” or “Why can’t we have it this way?” When you offer a suggestion to your supervisor or coworkers, you should explain the reasoning behind it and explain how you arrived at your conclusion. Also, as you gain more experience, you will come to be involved in the decision-making process. A solid theoretical background will help you better understand the problems and propose logical solutions.

**Obtain Practical Experience and Training**

As a new librarian, you lack hands-on experience and practical skills and training in your professional area. There is no substitute for experience; it requires time, knowledge, and effort.
You should seize and utilize opportunities to gain more practical experience whenever they arise—workshops, online courses, seminars, and self-study. These will help you stay current in your professional area and will give you opportunities to expand your knowledge or fill the knowledge gap between theory and practice.

Experience is a good teacher. Learn from your successes as well as your failures. They will help you understand how to manage your time and efforts more effectively and give you more confidence in your existing abilities.

**Be Punctual**
You should think of the work schedule as an appointment between you and the library. Make a commitment to adhere to your work schedule no matter what your position is. Be punctual in coming to work and returning from lunch and breaks. Realize that staff from the previous shift must stay longer if you are late. Attend meetings on time. If you are late, you are wasting other people's time; you can give the impression that you lack respect for the people you are meeting.

Strive to meet deadlines for projects or special assignments. If you are behind schedule, the other people involved in the project have to adjust their schedules, which could undermine your relationships with them.

Realize that you can best achieve your goals as well as those of your department and library by being an on-time individual who makes the most of the working hours.

**Learn Your Role in the Department and Library**
Learn your role in the department first and then your role in the entire library. Every position makes unique contributions to the department and the library. Be proud of your role and of its significance.

It is important to know where and how you fit into your department. Be familiar with the department workflow and learn everything you need to know about your department thoroughly. Know who will impact your workload and whose workload your performance will impact. Inform those people and your supervisor if you need to take time off, so they can plan ahead.

It is also important to understand your role in the context of the whole. Try to see the “big picture” in your library. Learn and understand the functional relationships between your department and other departments, and be careful not to overstep the departmental boundaries of your authority and responsibility. Reference and cataloging librarians need to know that they both work for the same library and its patrons and need to understand each other’s point of view. Knowing how each department uses the integrated library system (ILS) is helpful in doing your job more effectively. For example, when cataloging librarians create or add bibliographic and item records into the ILS, they must consider the needs of the circulation staff and reference librarians who also use those records. Similarly, reference librarians need to understand that the information put into ILS by the cataloging librarians is subject to constraints based on cataloging software, rules, and precoordinated tools.

You, as a new librarian, will most likely bring many good ideas and suggestions because you will be able to see the library from a fresh perspective. Expect to encounter many differences between ideas and theories learned in library school and their practical applications in the workplace.

Knowing the library as a whole will help when you bring up a new idea for the library. Be sure to think about the cost and benefits and timing of your idea. Even though your idea may be a good one, its implementation may not be cost effective for the library as a whole. Do the cost-benefit analysis and see if the outcome of the implementation of your idea can justify the cost. By all means, try to make saving the library money as big a priority as is saving your own. In regards to timing, for example, the idea of circulation of MP3 players may not have been a good idea before, but now its implementation would be appropriate. After costs, benefits, and timing are taken into consideration through diligent research, make sure you understand the library's and department's policies and procedures to present your idea in the most effective manner.

Do not be discouraged when your idea is not welcomed. Be realistic and patient. Bring it up again under other circumstances (such as when the timing is right or the library is in a better financial condition). You can request a short trial period. This does not require a long-term commitment and will allow your library further time to consider, as well as giving you an opportunity to prove that your idea works. You can also search for grants to implement your idea if there are financial issues. Know who has the decision-making power in your department or library and consult with that person.
Communicate Effectively and Efficiently

Communication in the library can be done in person, via e-mail, or by interoffice mail. Choose the form of communication that will be the most effective and efficient to achieve your goals.

Whatever form of communication you use, make sure that you are the right person to communicate certain information and that you are communicating with the right person. This will avoid wasting time, unnecessary duplication of communication, and misunderstandings.

Identify the informational needs of others when you receive requests to provide information. Comply with reasonable requests. If you are unable to comply, explain why. Respond within the designated time frame. Do not intentionally withhold any information. Do not use initial findings as a conclusion. Do not fabricate stories or documents.

Presenting library programs is part of communication. Prepare your message and match your message to your audience. Use simple language. Try to avoid using library jargon. Avoid the mixed messages involved in joking or sarcasm. Be specific. Be clear. Be concise. Do not make derogatory comments about anyone or tell inappropriate jokes.

Giving and receiving feedback are part of communication. Learn how to handle negative feedback or criticism in a positive way. Do not react or be defensive. Be calm and ask for examples and evidence. Clarify any misunderstandings and explain your perspective clearly. If you made a mistake, admit it and apologize. Accept responsibility for your poor performance. Correct your mistakes immediately, and strive not to make the same mistake again. Give positive feedback to acknowledge accomplishments. Positive feedback is important because this helps reinforce the person’s continued efforts.

Negotiating and reaching agreement are part of communication. Make sure that you have all the supporting documents and relevant information. Do not let your personal views or feelings interfere with your judgment. Do not make any assumptions. Your perceptions or interpretations can be different from the other person’s intentions. Keep the focus on facts rather than on opinions, and request clarification of the other person’s intentions if they are not clear to you. Do not yell, intimidate, or retaliate against the other person when he or she does not agree with you or when you do not get what you want. Once the decision is made, accept it and comply with it even though you are not happy about it. Also, inform everyone who may be affected by the decision.

What you say is important, and how you say it is equally, if not more, important. Research indicates that the impact of messages is 7 percent verbal, 38 percent vocal, and 55 percent nonverbal.\(^1\) This research proves indeed that actions do speak louder than words. Therefore, do pay attention to your nonverbal communication, including eye contact, tone of voice, and body language. Appearance is part of nonverbal communication, and professional image counts. Know and follow the dress codes of your library.

Maintain Professional Manners

Studies show that incidents of rude behavior are tied to less job satisfaction for the employee and lower productivity.\(^2\) To optimize job satisfaction and productivity of the library staff and to maintain a pleasant working environment, professional manners are necessary for everyone from the library director to the support staff at the library. As a new professional, you should make an effort to practice good manners and become a role model for support staff and other librarians.

Be considerate. Unless it is necessary, do not speak loudly at work. Choose words carefully to avoid offending someone. Be self-disciplined and try not to have lengthy personal conversations or phone calls during working hours. Avoid gossip and try not to be negative in your discussions within the library.

Be courteous, respectful, and sensitive when you talk with your supervisor, coworkers, or patrons. Do not humiliate them in front of others. Always treat individuals with respect and dignity. Apologize for your mistakes or misbehavior. Yelling, snapping, rude manners, and personal attacks in the workplace are not acceptable under any circumstances.
Practice Good Customer Service
Because libraries are service organizations, the successful library professional should be service oriented. Your supervisor is your customer. Your coworkers are your customers. Your patrons are your customers. Make sure that you are satisfying your customers’ essential needs by putting yourself in their shoes. Respond to patron’s questions and requests as effectively and efficiently as to those of your coworkers and supervisor.

Be a good team member. Be approachable, available, cooperative, dependable, and always support the people you work with and for. Be flexible and patient with changes. Try to be helpful to patrons and staff members, and make new patrons and staff feel comfortable. After attending conferences or workshops, share what you have learned with other librarians so that they can update their knowledge and skills. As a result, overall library service quality will be enhanced.

Have a good work ethic. Practice fairness. Act with integrity. Be honest and do what you said you would do. If you cannot keep your word, inform others as soon as possible. Offer a sincere apology, and tell them about what you can do instead. Do not complain to others about your library, your supervisor, or coworkers. Instead, address your concerns or problems to your supervisor or director. Realize that the problems will not be solved if your supervisor or director does not know about them. Be sure to have solid specific evidence when you mention your concerns and complaints.

Plan to Grow Personally and Professionally
A career is not a short-distance sprint but a lifelong race. Needless to say, personal health is very important for a lifelong career. Improve your health if you need to and keep fit physically and mentally. Maintain a good balance between work and personal life. Develop and keep a sense of humor because you will need it when you deal with difficult patrons and staff.

Personal goals are as important as professional ones. Plan to practice lifelong learning to fulfill personal and professional goals. In the ever-changing library profession, continuous learning is the minimum requirement for success. Identify the most important things you need to do and then plan to continually upgrade your skills and knowledge in those areas. Identify a skill or an area needing improvement. Identify the difference between where you are today and where you would like to be in the future. Sharpen your existing skills and enrich your work by learning new skills. Once you learn a new skill, keep practicing it until you have mastered it.

Read publications in your professional area to keep abreast of the current developments in your profession. Keep up to date on the latest trends in technology; it can help you work more efficiently.

In summary, success as a new librarian will largely be determined by your attitude and commitment to do well on the job. Success in your career will be determined by how well you serve and satisfy both the external and internal customers in your library. Periodically ask yourself “Would I hire myself for this position?” and commit to doing all the things that would enable you to answer yes. Good luck on your new career!

References
PROMOTING 
Visual 
LITERACY

USING THE MOTHER GOOSE ON 
THE LOOSE PROGRAM

Robert S. Martin, past director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), has described museums and libraries as social agencies that provide resources and services that stimulate and support learning throughout the lifetime. Referring to our “emerging understanding of the nature of learning”—that is, its collaborative and social dimension—“and the way learning interacts with other aspects of our environment,” Martin cites “the power of learning academic content through real-world examples, applications, and experiences both inside and outside of schools.”¹ He urges the development of “a seamless infrastructure for learning across all social agencies and organizations that support learning.”² Museum educators, archivists, and librarians serve in this endeavor as “different facets of a single unified profession.”³ As potential collaborators, these professionals can “reshape our practices, learn from each other, and better attend to our users.”⁴

Two Baltimore professionals, a children’s librarian and a museum educator, worked together in 2003 in the kind of joint endeavor that Martin envisioned. Betsy Diamant-Cohen, children’s programming specialist at Enoch-Pratt Free Library (EPFL), and Dorothy Valakos, then interpretation manager and formerly program specialist for youth and families at the Baltimore Museum of Art, designed and oversaw programs

BETSY DIAMANT-COHEN is Children’s Programming Specialist at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Maryland; bcohen@prattlibrary.org. Betsy is currently reading Endymion Spring by Matthew Skelton.

DOROTHY VALAKOS was formerly Interpretation Manager in the Division of Education and Interpretation at the Baltimore Museum of Art, where she also worked as Program Specialist for Youth and Families. She currently teaches painting and drawing and coordinates the Fine Arts certificate program for the Division of Continuing Studies at Maryland Institute College of Art. She is reading Caramelo by Sandra Cisneros, How We Die: Reflections on Life’s Final Chapter by Sherwin B. Nuland, and The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach: Advanced Reflections, by Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, and George Forman.
for the youngest patrons of their respective institutions. They shared the goal of creating optimal learning environments for the very young; their methods were similar as well.

Diamant-Cohen’s Mother Goose on the Loose (MGOL), a thirty-minute early literacy program for children from birth to age three and their caregivers, has been running weekly at EPFL since 1999. MGOL combines books, language activities, musical instruments, puppets, and movement in a warm, nurturing atmosphere. Interested parents are offered a monthly supplemental session on the various “brain tips” mentioned during the MGOL program.

At the Baltimore Museum of Art, Valakos initiated a series called Tours and Hands-On for Tots (THOT) in 2000, enlarging a long-standing but low-profile program. THOT offers three- and four-year-olds beginning museum experiences that are thematically meaningful, experiential, interactive, and fun. Guided by a museum educator or trained docent, children look at and actively respond to selected works of art in the museum galleries, then participate in a related studio art project that reinforces their experience and expands their understanding of art processes and concepts. Here, too, accompanying parents can learn by observation how to use the museum as a resource for engaging their child’s curiosity.

Both the museum and library programs exemplify the “contextual model of learning” identified by education researchers Lynne Falk and John Dierking: “free-choice learning that takes place in rich physical environments, filled with many real world objects and connections that help to meaningfully contextualize the presented concepts and ideas.”

Visual Literacy

From its inception, Diamant-Cohen and the librarians who presented MGOL had remained open to new ideas and had adapted activities and methods as they saw the need. Diamant-Cohen was intrigued by the connection between emergent language literacy skills and visual literacy skills, and began seeking ways to strengthen the visual literacy component of the program.

Visual literacy can be defined as “learning to look and construct meaning from objects and works of art.” The aesthetic experience is a sensory, affective, and cognitive response generated by the viewer’s interaction with a work of art. The viewer can “feel a wide range of emotions . . . joy, sorrow, fear, serenity, despair, pride. Creative expression though music, visual arts, drama, and literature connect us to the feelings and experiences of others . . . a new perspective of the world.”

According to child psychiatrist Robert Coles:

Visual literacy ought to be acknowledged as an important part of cultural literacy. Without visual literacy, I think, a person may know how to use a semicolon, or the name of a state capital, or the height of a mountain. But they may not know how to look at that mountain, or seascape, or cityscape, with some kind of intelligence and thought, to look at the world and try to make sense of it, even make sense of something larger than the earth itself.

Young children learn best through multisensory, play-based activities that are socially mediated by adults and peers. They are natural storytellers. The practice of using stories and involving as many senses as possible allows children to actively experience a work of art and is consonant with Howard Gardner’s influential Theory of Multiple Intelligences. (Gardner believes that there are at least eight different types of intelligence: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Naturalist intelligence is a recent addition. Each individual generally exhibits a blend of several intelligences and has “different cognitive strengths and contrasting cognitive styles.”) By structuring situations in which responding to a work of art becomes a dynamic, whole-body experience (and not merely a passive one), educators help young children with a variety of dominant intelligences to make a personal connection to that work of art. And by encouraging children to look closely, to describe in words what they see and feel, and to use art as a springboard to imagination and storytelling, they forge and fortify connections between emerging visual and language literacy.

Tours and Hands-On for Tots

To Valakos, working with children and families at an art museum where visual experience and visual literacy are primary values, these processes and purposes were fundamental. The inquiry-based approach of THOT encourages children to make personal connections with objects in the galleries by drawing on their own lived experiences. For example, they can gain a better understanding of a one-hundred-year-old beaded Lakota (Sioux) cradleboard by comparing it to a present-day molded plastic infant’s car seat. How, the tour leader might ask, are they alike and how are they different? THOT are multisensory and highly interactive, incorporating finger plays, rhymes, movement, drawing, dramatic play, and storytelling. They might include such typical activities as lying on the gallery floor and blowing at a Calder mobile to see how it moves, packing an imaginary backpack for a trip...
through a nineteenth-century landscape, matching or
drawing the vibrant patterns in a group of paintings
by Matisse, or looking at a portrait of a Renaissance
child-princess and figuring out what kinds of activities
she could undertake in her elaborate, jewel-encrust-
ed—and thus highly restrictive—costume (definitely
not ride a bike or make mud pies!). The tour leaders
read storybooks to establish and extend the particular
theme of each tour, and the programs culminate in a
related hands-on art activity.

This pattern exemplifies the constructivist
approach to education in which learners “actively
‘construct’ their own knowledge by testing ideas and
concepts based on prior knowledge and experience,
applying them to a new situation, and integrating
the new knowledge with preexisting intellectual
constructs.” As David Carr states, writing about the
social dimension of museums and libraries in The
Promise of Cultural Institutions:

Any cultural institution is educative when it
creates situations that invite, support, and expand . . . inquiry without imposing . . . when it offers the
user an array of possibilities to experience, then
offers a path to useful examples and interpretation
of the evidence . . . nurtures and engages.11

Visual Experience
Meets Visual Literacy

In consultation with Valakos, whose work at the
Baltimore Museum of Art focused on visual experience
as a stimulus to learning, Diamant-Cohen set about
upgrading the visual literacy component of MGOL.
Valakos herself was eager to discover how the museum
educator’s approach of facilitating multisensory explo-
rations and forging connections between art and a
child’s everyday life could be adapted to a library set-
ing and for a population of infants and toddlers.

Two ideas governed Diamant-Cohen’s efforts:
First, to create a positive and meaningful connection
between a child and a work of art, the parent or educa-
tor must always relate the artwork to something that
the young viewer can recognize and understand from
his own experience. It is by building on connections
to familiar objects and experiences that understand-
ing of art is gained. Second, active, hands-on learning
experiences, especially sensory-based ones, in a sup-
portive, nonobtrusive environment, are key to facili-
tating the developing relationship between the new
viewer and the work of art. Babies and toddlers are just
beginning to learn to decode pictures. Providing them
with opportunities to strengthen their visual acuity by

introducing them to stimulating and intriguing visual
images encourages them to become better observers.
It helps them not only to learn how to look but to dis-
cover the pleasure and variety of visual experience.

Visual Props and Tactile Objects
As Diamant-Cohen translated these ideas into activi-
ties, it became obvious that MGOL would require
visual props, tactile objects, and other special
materials, custom-made and suitable for the very
young child. In search
of an artist, she called
the Maryland Institute
College of Art (MICA) and
recruited Carole Schlein,
a work-study student
and fabric artist who had
experience working with
flannel, flannel boards,
and felt. Schlein was
intrigued by the opportu-
nity of designing a new set
of visual materials for MGOL storytimes but had no
prior background in educational theory or practice.
Joining the project, she attended MGOL sessions
and then, under the tutelage of Diamant-Cohen
and Valakos, embarked on an intensive reading
program. Schlein met weekly with Diamant-Cohen,
who assigned readings on baby brain development
in The Scientist in the Crib, on library programs in
general in Children and Libraries: Getting It Right,
and on library programs for babies in Books, Babies,
and Libraries.12 Diamant-Cohen also coached her
on presentation. Valakos shared some articles about
visual literacy and the philosophical underpinnings
of museum education. Under their guidance, Schlein
researched contemporary methods of art education
for early learners. With new understanding, she came
to redefine her own task. She, too, would find ways to
build connections between the flannel-board pieces
that she would create and the children’s experiences,
feelings, and ideas. Doing so, she saw, would have the
added benefit of modeling ways for parents to look at
and talk about art objects with their young children.

Choosing Rhymes
To get the project underway, Diamant-Cohen and
Schlein set to work choosing nursery rhymes suit-
able for representation on the flannel board (see
feature

Promoting Visual literacy

Public Libraries

March/April 2007

1

figure 1). They selected “Cobbler, Cobbler, Mend My Shoe,” for which Schlein crafted a shoe; “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” for which she crafted a lamb; “One, Two, Three, Four, Mary’s at the Cottage Door,” for which she crafted a plate of cherries; “London Bridge Is Falling Down,” for which she crafted a bridge; “I Had a Little Turtle,” for which she crafted a turtle; and “Pease Porridge Hot,” for which she crafted peas. Most of these pieces were silk-screened with acrylic ink on wool or craft felt. Schlein’s sheep was needle-felted (a process of felting wool with a specially designed needle), the plate of cherries was done with free-stitch sewing machine embroidery, and the peas in her pot were interactive, attached to the pot with yarn, enabling them to go in and out easily. All were sewn to a contrasting backing felt. The images came from a variety of sources, including library books and the Internet, but they were rendered in Schlein’s own style. She produced six pieces—approachable, brightly colored, recognizably abstract, and notably baby-friendly. Her turtles smiled and her peas jumped out of a pot of hot pease porridge.

Each piece could be used in several ways and in multiple sessions. Working with her London Bridge piece for the first time, Schlein placed the bridge on the flannel board as she recited the rhyme. At the second session, everyone was invited to recite the rhyme along with her. At the third session, she and a librarian stood and held up their arms to make a bridge. Parents and children were invited to go under the bridge while singing the song.

Parents were enthusiastic. Referring to the game of going under the bridge after seeing the flannel-board piece and singing the song, one parent said:

Activities always reinforce the idea that you are trying to convey—especially for someone who can’t talk yet. The more theatrics and interactivity, the more it helps the child understand the message, whether visual or verbal. Art really opens your brain, both mentally and verbally. It makes the synapses more fluid, and makes you more creative. It makes it easier for you to solve problems or come up with ideas. I think emphasizing creativity is one of the most important things you can teach your children.13

Learning by Doing

Some MGOL materials were modified in response to practical considerations and the needs of the program’s extremely young participants. In one session, a fuzzy wool lamb was used for “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” The librarians passed out small squares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Rhymes</th>
<th>Flannel Board Piece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m a little teapot short and stout. Here is my handle, here is my spout. When I get all steamed up, hear me shout, “Just tip me over and pour me out.”</td>
<td>teapot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe. Have it done by half past two. Stitch it up and stitch it down. Then I’ll give you half a crown.</td>
<td>shoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pease porridge hot. Pease porridge cold. Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old. Some like it hot. Some like it cold. Some like it in the pot nine days old.</td>
<td>pot of peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down. London Bridge is falling down, my fair lady. Build it up with silver and gold, silver and gold, silver and gold. Build it up with silver and gold. My fair lady. 1, 2, 3, 4, Mary’s at the garden door 5, 6, 7, 8, eating cherries off a plate.</td>
<td>bridge, plate of cherries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: The Nursery Rhymes
of two types of fabric, one soft and one rough. The idea was for parents to rub them on the backs of their babies’ hands, encouraging them to consider which square felt more like the soft, fuzzy lamb. However, small pieces of fabric pose a potential choking hazard with this age group. (Also, MGOL is built on the repetition of activities from week to week. Recreating this soft and rough comparison every week wouldn’t work as well as simpler activities such as those using colored scarves or bells.) The problem was solved with the fabrication of small tactile elements: For “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” a square of furry white fabric was sewn into a durable vinyl frame. This could still facilitate the cognitive connection between an image, an implied texture, and an actual texture; it was too large to swallow when passed around; and it was easy to wash for reuse.

Because she greatly enjoyed her initial stint with EPFL, Schlein chose to continue on as an unpaid intern for a second semester. Eventually she put in 120 hours of work and extended the idea of visual literacy in different directions. Coming on originally as a creator of materials, she eventually took part with the children’s librarians in the program activities, to her great personal satisfaction.

Her efforts culminated in an unanticipated but highly rewarding project, an ongoing display of her flannel-board pieces in the library, showcasing her work and promoting the MGOL program for which they had been made. While Schlein herself designed and curated the display, it was expanded with additional materials and came to highlight a joint venture in visual education of the museum and library. The additional materials included photographs of art objects from the Baltimore Museum of Art collections chosen by Schlein and the authors because they could be related in some way to the flannel-board pieces and nursery rhymes (see figure 2). These were in a variety of media and styles, and included a Baltimore album quilt from the 1800s appliquéd with cherries to match the rhyme about cherries on a plate. Another was an abstract painting of black dots overlaid with green by contemporary Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, which fit nicely with “Pease Porridge Hot.”

To invite young viewers to enter into a dialogue about the flannel pieces and art works, Schlein and the authors brainstormed a series of lead questions to include in the display, such as “What do you think is on the other side of London Bridge?” and “Can you find the cherries on this quilt? What other fruits do you see? Which is your favorite to eat?”

In final integrated form, each display consisted of a flannel-board piece, the corresponding nursery rhyme, a photograph of the related art object, and information about the art object. Each section of the display offered a suggested activity that parent and child could do at home, plus an easy-to-understand explanation of how the flannel art was created (see figure 3). Take-home flyers repeating the suggestions

| Teapot                      | Cast House Teapot and Cover |
|                            | c 1745, English             |
|                            | Baltimore Museum of Art     |
| Shoe                       | Vincent Van Gogh            |
|                            | A Pair of Shoes             |
|                            | Baltimore Museum of Art     |
|                            | Oil on canvas, 30cm x 41cm  |
| Pot of peas                | Yayoi Kusama                |
|                            | No. Green, No. 1            |
|                            | 1961                        |
|                            | Oil on canvas, 70" x 49-1/8" |
|                            | Baltimore Museum of Art     |
| Bridge                     | Claude Monet                |
|                            | Charing Cross Bridge (“Reflections on the Thames”) |
|                            | Oil on canvas, 25-5/8" x 39-1/2" |
|                            | Baltimore Museum of Art     |

**Figure 2:** The Reproductions

**Figure 3:** The Activities

**Activities to go with the flannel-board pieces and reproductions**

- Use modeling or air dry clay to make a teapot in the shape of something else.
- Design a “Super Shoe” for yourself. What would you add to a regular pair of shoes? Draw your new shoe on a big piece of paper with markers or crayons. Who else can you design a Super Shoe for?
- Use the eraser end of a pencil dipped in paint to create a picture entirely out of dots! What other objects can you find to make different sized dots with?
- Build a crazy bridge with toothpicks and marshmallows! Use the marshmallows to join together the toothpicks. How big can your bridge get before it falls?
- Make a quilt square! Cut out small squares of felt or fabric. What colors do you like? Arrange them in a special pattern and glue them down onto a piece of felt.

---

**Table of Artworks**

- **Teapot**
  - Cast House Teapot and Cover
  - c 1745, English
  - Baltimore Museum of Art

- **Shoe**
  - Vincent Van Gogh
  - A Pair of Shoes
  - Baltimore Museum of Art
  - Oil on canvas, 30cm x 41cm

- **Pot of peas**
  - Yayoi Kusama
  - No. Green, No. 1
  - 1961
  - Oil on canvas, 70" x 49-1/8"
  - Baltimore Museum of Art

- **Bridge**
  - Claude Monet
  - Charing Cross Bridge (“Reflections on the Thames”)
  - Oil on canvas, 25-5/8" x 39-1/2"
  - Baltimore Museum of Art
for related at-home art activities were available next to the exhibit. There also was a biography of Schlein, an advertisement for MGOL, and information about free family passes to the Baltimore Museum of Art that library visitors could check out from their local branch of EPFL.

For as it happened, the installation of the display corresponded with the ninetieth anniversary of the Baltimore Museum of Art and, as part of its celebration, the museum gave EPFL ninety free family passes for distribution throughout the library system. Conceivably, a family with young children could attend MGOL, see a photograph of a the Baltimore Museum of Art object on display with Schlein’s pieces, then check out a free pass for the museum and view the original artwork in the galleries. The entire experience, choreographed to stimulate visual literacy, was built on that “seamless infrastructure across institutions” that Martin advocated.

From the collaborators’ point of view, the project was a huge success. The library acquired custom-made materials for MGOL, advertisements for that program, and its new collaboration with the Baltimore Museum of Art. A colorful and charming array of images was installed in the hallway leading to the children’s department of the Central Library, enlivening an underutilized area and garnering lots of praise. Its children’s librarians gained considerable skill in nurturing visual literacy in the very young.

Schlein had the opportunity to create interactive artwork for use with children, to learn and apply educational theory to children's programming, and to design and curate her own exhibition. The exhibit generated publicity for the museum’s new free family passes. For Valakos, it provided a means for testing her ideas for integrating theories of inquiry-based art education into a library program.

**Conclusion**

Not all public libraries have the advantage of having an art museum and an art college nearby. But almost all public libraries are in contact with some type of school that has an art department, whether a junior high, high school, or community college. To adapt this program to their circumstances, librarians could try contacting a local secondary school to explore the possibilities with the head of the art department. Talented art students might like to earn community-service hours by designing flannel-board pieces and other interactive visual props such as puppets, tactile aids, puzzles, or masks for children’s programs.

Encounters with art can play a decidedly meaningful role in the library setting, opening up new dialogues and experiences for staff and patrons alike. Beginning viewers are storytellers. Even the youngest visitors to art museums use their own arsenal of unique associations to transform...
works of art into personal narratives. At MGOL, visual images are used to enhance the experience of hearing and learning nursery rhymes and songs. It seems especially fitting that babies and toddlers who are a few years away from constructing their own stories about works of art are presented with art-based images and accompanying stories; we hope that the inherent connections between art, words, stories, and life will begin to fascinate even the youngest viewers, opening them up to lifelong relationships with art and reading. As one MGOL parent put it, “Once you have been introduced visually, the door is opened and continues to be open throughout your life.”

References and Notes

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 12.
   Gardner defines “intelligence” as: biopsychological potential” that “entails the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community. . . . The problems to be solved range from creating an end for a story to anticipating a mating move in chess to repairing a quilt. Products range from scientific theories to musical compositions to successful political campaigns.
10. Maria Roussou, “Virtual Reality and Interactive Theatres: Learning by Doing and Learning


14. Children eighteen and under are always admitted free to the Baltimore Museum of Art.

15. Martin, “Charting the Landscape.”


---

**TechSoup.org’s MaintainIT Project**

What’s your story? Librarians want to know! The MaintainIT Project is gathering practical solutions for how libraries maintain their public computers. Techniques and tips will be shared in free guides tailored to specific types of libraries and distributed in print and online. **Tell us your story!**

- How do you maintain your library’s public computers?
- Do you plan for technology and software upgrades?
- Do you enlist the help of volunteers?
- Do you use disk protection software?
- Do you know another library that is successfully maintaining their public computers? Please tell us about them?

We’d love to hear from you. Share your challenges, your solutions, and your triumphs. If you’re a library staff person or someone who supports public computers in libraries, please get in touch at www.maintainITproject.com.

**Stay tuned for more information**

Visit www.maintainITproject.org for more information as the project progresses, such as:

- successful strategies from libraries;
- where you can find us at library conferences; and
- when and how you can obtain free guides for your library.

The MaintainIT Project is a part of TechSoup (www.techsoup.org), a nonprofit serving fellow non-profits and public libraries with technology information, resources, and product donations. The MaintainIT Project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
THE CONSEQUENCES OF PROMOTING AN Educational ROLE FOR TODAY’S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

S. RANDLE ENGLAND is a recent graduate of Dominican University’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science; srandleengland@yahoo.com

He is reading Sailing from Byzantium: How a Lost Empire Shaped the World by Colin Wells and The Fellowship: The Untold Story of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesien Fellowship by Roger Friedland and Harold Zellman.

It has been suggested that modern public libraries are poorly positioned to assume the role of information aggregators and providers using a business model, and that to promote that role in the face of modern competition is to court disaster. One recommended alternative is for the public library to return to its roots in education, emphasizing “the public library’s core mission . . . continuing education for all.”¹ This raises such questions as: What are some other roles of the public library that might be emphasized? Were these different roles equally present throughout the history of public libraries? Have any of these roles received any more consistent emphasis than others? What are the implications of emphasizing any one role over another?

A cursory scan of the current literature reveals a remarkably varied array of descriptions of public libraries. There is, unfortunately, no consistent terminology distinguishing “role” from “function,” “purpose” from “mission,” nor is it possible to separate discussion of what a public library does from what it is or even from why it does it. Public libraries are more than simple book warehouses. They also are:

- “repositories for the work of independent scholars, free-agent teachers, and independent self-directed learners”²
- a “sustaining contributor to American democracy”³
- living rooms for their neighborhoods
- America’s front porch (a centering institution, a place of gathering, a partner in building community)
- the center of a community, “the community’s de facto town square”
- “gateways to local governmental information and community resources”
- “social agencies”
- “agencies of public education, fundamental to the education infrastructure of our society”
- the people’s research and development department
- a place that links education and entertainment
- a refuge and sanctuary, especially for the homeless, the jobless, and latch-key children
- “a public good, worthy of tax support”
- “ornate temples of self-improvement”
- “a living force for education, culture, and information” and “an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women”
- “a social instrument created to form a link in the communication system that is essential to any society or culture”
- “a symbolic space, a type of collection, a kind of building . . . [that] gives institutional form to our collective memory”

One textbook offers a particularly thorough description.

The public library in cities and towns and rural areas across the United States is a community center for books and information. In any community, the local public library provides a sense of place, a refuge and a still point; it is a commons, a vital part of the public sphere and a laboratory for ideas. The public library supports family literacy, fosters lifelong learning, helps immigrants find a place, and gives a place to those for whom there is no other place to be. The public library provides a wide-open door to knowledge and information to people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, and economic status.

The authors of this literature are not to be faulted if their descriptions cannot approach consensus. As one observed, “Currently we lack a solid body of scholarship that critically analyzes the multiple roles that libraries of all types have played and are playing in their host communities.” Shifting to a perspective outside of the discipline of librarianship would clarify little. “The conditions and missions of libraries are subject to change, and librarians are not fully in control of either. The public image of any social institution is inevitably a social construction, representing the outcome of a process in which many participants are involved.”

Examining that process—the evolution of public libraries over time—might place these diverse roles in a more meaningful context.

A Look at Public Library History

The seeds of confusion were sown long before the first American public library was conceived. As has often been the case, a new technology caused a surge in productivity, a freedom of expression, which was greeted with skepticism and alarm by those more interested in control:

Following the innovations in paper production and the steam-powered press, the printed book was the first truly mass medium, one that to social elites and reformers seemed indifferent, if not corrosive, to moral standards and social hierarchies, indeed to the very inheritance of Western learning.

There was much concern that a glut of substandard printed material would distract less-discerning readers from the time-honored classics. Shera pointed out that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, voluntary support of the few social libraries belonging to groups of gentlemen scholars was:

inadequate for the book requirements of the new nation, and readers turned to municipal funds for support. Thus the public library was born and with it the need for a pragmatic justification to elicit public support. The public library as a new generic institutional form that was part of the public sector (of local government specifically) created a demand for its own justification” [emphasis author’s].

In other words, the public library’s role (function, purpose, mission) was a subject of debate from its very inception, and debate about its role was tied to attitudes about reading held at the time.

Although the first free, tax-supported public library was voted into being by the citizens of Peterborough, New Hampshire, in 1833, it was the creation of the Boston Public Library that is generally considered the beginning of the modern public library movement in the United States. As put forth in the 1852 Boston City Document No. 37 (“Upon the Objects To Be Attained by the Establishment of a Public Library”), the pub-
lic library’s expressed purpose was the continued self-education of the people. However, more recent research has suggested that the original Boston Public Library founders, all from Boston’s first families, set up the library as a way to civilize-through-education the city’s new wave of unruly Irish immigrants. They also sharply disagreed about the type of books the library should include. Nonetheless, in the 1860s and 1870s, other major cities followed suit, opening public libraries in San Francisco, Detroit, Cleveland, and Chicago. The American Library Association (ALA) was founded in 1876 and, although it includes in its mission the...
intent “to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all,” its official Charter of 1879 made no mention of learning or education. ALA’s 1879 motto, “the best reading for the largest number at the least cost,” suggests the emphasis of that era was more on careful materials selection and providing access to the right sort of books. In 1893 the ALA national convention was held at the Chicago World’s Fair and emphasized what then-ALA president Melville Dewey called the “library faith”: that “good” reading led to ‘good’ social behavior, ‘bad’ reading to ‘bad’ social behavior” and that by providing works authored and approved by the intellectuals of the dominant culture, librarians would “inevitably contribute to the nation’s progress and social order.” This emphasis continued through subsequent decades that saw the introduction of services distinct to the public library—for example, children’s departments in the 1890s and the first bookmobile wagon in 1905 at Maryland’s Washington County Free Library. Between 1881 and 1917, philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated $56 million for construction of public library buildings in the English-speaking world, resulting in 1,679 libraries being built in the United States. The reasons for his largesse, however, remained firmly rooted in the familiar “library faith.” As Carnegie declared in 1900:

I choose free libraries as the best agencies for improving the masses of people, because they give nothing for nothing. They only help those who help themselves. They never pauperize. They reach the aspiring, and open to these the chief treasures of the world—those steeped up in books. A taste for reading drives out lower tastes.

As Carnegie’s comment succinctly summarized, the “agency” of the public library was moral uplift and social control. These public libraries were not only “instruments” of social control, but also the nineteenth century’s most impressive symbols of what Astor termed the “general good of society.” of liberal capitalism’s capacity to create “civilization.”

As time passed, however, librarians began to see the “library faith” unravel at the edges. “Most public libraries had been experiencing circulation rates of 75 percent fiction since they opened,” in spite of ALA recommendations that only 15 percent of a model library’s collection should be fiction titles. By the time of World War I, that recommendation had dropped to only 10.8 percent fiction. Despite the exigencies of two world wars bracketing a global economic depression, public libraries continued to survive. The Great Depression did remind librarians that they were part of the public sector, that they were created by society, and that what affected the social fabric of which they were a part also had serious implications for them. It was a rude awakening, but even then not many librarians struggling against economic misfortune thought it necessary to ask themselves, “What is our function in society, and why are we here?”

The effect of both world wars was that many librarians purified their collections of pro-German and pacifist materials. Perhaps this was what led ALA to perceive the need for national standards; in 1943 it released its Standards for Public Libraries with a major emphasis on free service. In 1948 the Carnegie Corporation funded the “Public Library Inquiry,” examining the purpose of the public library. The report emphasized “serious” reading, disparaged popular reading, and heavily emphasized the public library’s role as a contributor to American democracy. The post-war era of McCarthyism found some librarians once again purging their collections while others stood their ground. As a result, ALA responded with the 1953 The Freedom to Read and U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower himself addressed a letter to the ALA conference encouraging librarians to resist book burners. ALA created the Public Library Division in 1950, which became PLA in 1959. ALA’s Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems, emphasizing service to all, was published in 1966. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw young librarians begin to address inequities in library practice and encourage alternative perspectives in library collections. In 1979, PLA issued The Public Library Mission Statement and Its Imperative Service, which stated, “Public libraries should step away from acculturation . . . and instead become educational, cultural, information, and rehabilitative agencies that celebrate and serve the multicultural heritage of their communities in nontraditional ways.” The social unrest and the resulting social awareness of the 1960s and 1970s also resulted in the 1980 publication of PLAs A Planning Process for Public Libraries, which finally replaced national standards with a focus on the community. It was followed in 1987 by their Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures. This effort continued the shift by emphasizing public library roles over considerations of mission, defining eight specific public library roles: Community Activities Center, Community Information Center, Formal Education Support Center, Independent Learning Center, Popular Materials Library, Preschooler’s Door to Learning, Reference Library, and Research Center.
Finally, in 1998, PLA's *Planning for Results: A Public Library Transformation Process* (soon followed by *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach* in 2001) shifted from discussing “library roles” to emphasizing library “service responses” to community needs. It includes a detailed planning process of surveying and assessing individual community needs and lists thirteen service responses: Basic Literacy, Business and Career Information, Commons, Community Referral, Consumer Information, Cultural Awareness, Current Topics and Titles, Formal Learning Support, Government Information, Information Literacy, Lifelong Learning, and Local History and Genealogy. (Editor’s note: The PLA Service Responses have been updated; visit www.pla.org for more information.) Despite the concerns of early librarians that the public must be properly taught what to read, library patrons, as Augst reminds us, were all the while “using institutions to their own purposes.” He adds:

To understand the role of the library in American life requires that we understand agency itself in terms of appropriation. To read a book is to borrow from established forms of cultural authority and to refashion that authority within personal and communal contexts of meaning and practice.

It may have taken more than a century and a half, but American public librarians seem to have finally relinquished notions of national standards and globally generalized roles (functions, purposes, missions) in favor of joining their patrons in those “personal and communal contexts.”

**Considering The Consequences**

In light of this evolutionary history of public libraries just described, it would seem a real regression to speak of any one major role of the general American public library. It seems to fly in the face of the hard-earned realization that individual public libraries serve and are defined by their individual communities. Still, there is the matter of the library-as-symbol, which, as emphasized earlier, is a socially constructed public image largely outside the control of librarians. Perhaps it is a blessing in disguise that the *Planning for Results* process requires public libraries to survey their communities to sample their socially constructed image of what a library is and should be. Librarians, as Wiegand points out, are subject to tunnel vision and blind spots, saying, “the cultures in which we are immersed—or to which we aspire—tend to control the range of questions we ask about ourselves and our profession.” The question of what image (or role, function, purpose, mission) a public library chooses to emphasize, and whether that image is consistent with the generally held public image, is of no small consequence:

In a media culture . . . images may be of greater political importance than reality. The images we present circulate in a discursive economy that can and does affect the reality of libraries. Their power derives from the talk they allow and generate and the action that flows from such talk. They represent discursive tactical positions in a diffuse politics of information that is constitutive of the information age.

It is in this sense, as a “discursive tactical position,” that Crowley’s suggestion (to deemphasize the library’s role as information provider and emphasize instead its role in continuing education) becomes wise advice. In a 1998 Clarion University study of public library use throughout the country, of those adults who responded that the public library made their lives better, “almost everyone believed that the library was a source of educational enrichment.”

That being the case, what are the possible consequences of choosing to emphasize the public library’s role in education? The word itself is a nominalization, a verb converted into a noun, and the conversion process deletes important information such as: who is doing the educating (or not)? Who is being educated (or not)? And how is it being done (or how is it not being done)? One of the service responses suggested in *Planning for Results* is Formal Learning Support. More people are relying on the public library as they engage in distance learning and home schooling.

**O**f those adults . . . who believed that the library was a source of educational enrichment, 87 percent viewed the library as a source of entertainment.
“As education becomes less campus based, the role of the public library in support of formal learning is likely to expand.” Public librarians do act directly as educators, offering classes to patrons in basic literacy and information literacy, and indirectly by offering children’s story hours and sponsoring opportunities for group learning such as adult book discussions and informational seminars. However, most of the educating done in public libraries is done by the patrons themselves as self-directed, free-choice learning. One champion of this viewpoint is the past director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Robert S. Martin, who emphasized the subtle distinction between education and learning:

We often hear it said that libraries (and librarians) select, organize, retrieve, and transmit information or knowledge. That is true. But those are the activities, not the mission, of the library. Certainly we perform those activities, but the important question is: To what purpose? We do not do those things by and for themselves. We do them in order to address an important and continuing need of the society we seek to serve. In short, we do them to support learning.

Perhaps it would be better to say that libraries—all libraries—are in the business of creating and sustaining learners of all ages. We live in an information society, but today, in the twenty-first century, we must do more than merely live among information. We must create a learning society.

Martin portrays public library patrons as engaged in lifelong learning in ways that are not easily structured or described, even by the learners themselves. He champions public libraries and museums as key participants in this process:

The responsibility for learning is not and should not be the exclusive preserve of formal educational institutions. It is a community-wide responsibility. Lifelong learning should be a continuum—with formal and informal learning opportunities complementing one another. Learning does not start at the schoolroom door; neither does it stop at that portal either. It is and should be ubiquitous.

He combines the public library’s image as community center and civic center with the education and learning emphasis:

We must recognize and embrace the social nature of continuous learning, free-choice learning, that lasts the length of the lifetime. Public libraries must be conceived as a learning environment, providing spaces that foster and support the individual learner, as well as learners in every imaginable form of social grouping.

Although this type of loose, unstructured learning might appear to be inconsequential, it is vital to the democratic process.

The purpose of the public library is education. The point of education is not to accumulate a lot of it, but that it be of high quality and that it continue when formal schooling ends. . . . The kind of education that libraries provide is, on its face, very different from that provided by our public schools. It is voluntary; it is self-directed; there is no curriculum. It is so different that it hardly seems like education at all. Despite this, libraries and schools share a purpose; they share a rationale. Both are publicly funded to create and nurture citizens . . . . Mere vocational and apprenticeship programs can be left in the hands of private enterprise, but the molding of future citizens is too important to be handed over to the marketplace and its values. . . . This is the deep curriculum for the library, the purpose that is buried so deep in the heart of the institution that it sometimes seems invisible.

Education Versus Entertainment

There is one consequence of emphasizing the public library’s educational role that may prove intolerable to many public librarians themselves. As pointed out earlier, public library history is steeped in disagreement regarding the place of entertainment in the library, often portrayed as the battle between the traditional intellectual canon and popular fiction. The attitudes of librarians have changed greatly throughout time, and most of today's librarians are pleased to find a person reading anything at all, so long as they are reading:

Even in an age of information, the reading of books is perceived as a powerful and empowering experience, capable of forging a unique link between entertainment and education. The library is a place that allows users access to the possibilities inherent in this link, not the least of which is a form of addictive escape and loss of self that is the beginning of enlightenment and self-culture.

The 1998 Clarion University study mentioned previously (that examined public library use throughout the country) also found that of those
adults who responded that the public library made their lives better, who believed that the library was a source of educational enrichment, 87 percent viewed the library as a source of entertainment. How will librarians respond when the public requires libraries to offer video games, not just for entertainment, but as a means of preparing children to enter college? Many universities are currently examining ways in which large, introductory lectures can be replaced by immersive digital environments modeled after those currently used in video games. They reason that most students already have video gaming skills when they enter college and that many of the skills used in playing video games are learning skills poorly developed by the large lecture method. In his 2003 book, What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy, James Paul Gee details thirty-six learning principles that are fulfilled by most video games and are seldom fulfilled in standard classroom education.

A major foundation has already funded a videogame for higher education. Designed to teach the skills and knowledge required to manage a college or university, Virtual U was conceived in 1997 and is supported with $1 million from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. Version 2, released in 2002, is used in courses in more than thirty colleges and universities, including Harvard, George Washington University, Stanford, Michigan State, New York University, Ohio State, and the University of Virginia.

As Crowley points out, “Librarians must understand that the ‘recreational’ activities of the public library, when analyzed, often support priority educational objectives.” In The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan, in the section “Traditional versus nontraditional content,” Clifford Lynch advises:

Rather than considering how to redesign or recreate or enhance libraries as digital libraries, we might usefully focus our attention on the human and social purposes and needs that libraries and allied cultural memory institutions have been intended to address. . . . [W]e must be careful not to overly emphasize the parts of this knowledge ecosystem that are familiar, that we are comfortable with intellectually, socially and economically, to the exclusion of the new, the unfamiliar, the disturbing, the confusing.

It is important to note that some librarians are already suggesting that libraries offer video games and consoles purely as entertainment. Will public librarians follow Lynch’s advice and consider the provision of video games to be a necessary, if disturbing, consequence of their educational mission or will they echo their disdainful forebears with an updated version of the “library faith”?

**Accountability and Measurement**

One current social trend is a demand for accountability. In 1993, the federal government passed the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which “requires every government agency to establish specific performance goals for each of its programs, preferably with performance indicators stated in objective, quantifiable, and measurable terms.” State and local governments are following GPRA’s lead to require evidence of how public dollars are being spent, and most major foundations are incorporating an emphasis on accountability into their funding guidelines. “From all sides, museums and libraries are receiving a clear message. If they are to compete for both public and private funds in an accountability-driven environment, they must develop evaluation practices that provide the most compelling picture of the impact of their services.”

If public libraries are going to emphasize their educational mission, how will they demonstrate their educational effectiveness to their funding bases? One traditional option is to perform return-on-investment studies using cost-benefit analysis. An example of just such a study is available on the St. Louis Public Library Web site. Although the cost-benefit analysis is the preferred business method of identifying the value of program dollars spent, “the cost of a service may not outweigh its direct benefit . . . there may be an intangible benefit that must be considered as well.”

An alternative, tailored to the needs of public libraries, has only recently been published. Joan Durrance and Karen Fisher’s 2005 release, How Libraries and Librarians Help: A Guide to Identifying User-Centered Outcomes, has been based on a large body of information-behavior research examining the complexity of information seeking and use, as well as on several research projects involving best-practice libraries. Borrowing from outcome assessments developed by social service agencies and other nonprofit entities, these library researchers have developed a model that can be used to apply contextual approaches to outcome evaluation in the public library setting. They point out that libraries have consistently provided a large number of benefits to
their communities over time and the only missing tool involves a way to communicate those benefits.

“The truth is that librarians have failed to explain to those outside the field what contributions they and their institutions actually make to society at large.” IMLS defines outcomes as “benefits to people: specifically, achievements or changes in skill, knowledge, attitude, behavior, condition, or life status for program participants.” Durrance and Fisher’s outcome model provides a way of gathering user feedback in the form of stories and testimonials that can be presented as indicators of a library’s real results (its outcomes) in its community. These outcome assessments can be used in strategic planning as well as in demonstrating accountability, especially any examples of negative outcome or negative feedback useful for designing improvements to service. In addition, these accumulated stories begin to demonstrate a larger “ripple effect” of benefits touching even those who do not use the library directly.

Ultimately, there is much that can be gained by emphasizing the public library’s educational mission. When used as a discursive tactical position, one that reflects PLA’s most recent emphasis on service responses and one that is verified using outcome assessments of real results, accentuating the public library’s educational image will provide a behavioral congruence of real power. After all, in the end, “...what we do with our libraries will have a greater influence on their public image than what we say about them.”

References and Notes

9. Ibid., 84.
14. Ibid.
20. Raber and Budd, “Public Images of the Role of Information Technology in Public Libraries,” 180.
21. Historical references throughout this section, unless otherwise cited, have been drawn from the following sources: Denise K. Fourie and David R. Dowell, Libraries in the Information Age: An Introduction and Career Exploration (Greenwood Village, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 2002), 26–35, 45–46; McCook, Introduction to Public Librarianship, 71–72, 187; Wiegand, “Tunnel Vision and Blind Spots.”
35. Raber and Budd, “Public Images of the Role of Information Technology in Libraries,” 180.
37. Raber and Budd, “Public Images of the Role of Information Technology in Libraries,” 181.
42. Ibid., 90.
44. Raber and Budd, “Public Images of the Role of Information Technology in Libraries,” 182.
53. Ibid.
57. Ibid., 4.
60. Raber and Budd, “Public Images of the Role of Information Technology in Libraries,” 186.
“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.

Poetry Aloud Here! Sharing Poetry with Children in the Library


Many public libraries celebrate National Poetry Month or hold poetry competitions for elementary-age children. Public and school librarians who serve on planning committees, selectors, and those who wish to inspire children with a love of poetry will want to take note of Sylvia Vardell’s Poetry Aloud Here!

Vardell, a SLIS professor at Texas Woman’s University, addresses how to create poetry activities for kids aged five to twelve. Children, she notes, have a natural affinity for poetry, especially humorous, contemporary, or animal poetry, yet adults often eschew sharing poetry with them. Vardell demonstrates how librarians and teachers can make poetry accessible and enjoyable, how they can encourage its use in performance “read aloud” type activities, and how poetry can become an effective learning tool.

Nearly all librarians know Shel Silverstein. Vardell provides excellent resources for finding additional quality poets, with sections such as “Meet the Poets: Fifty Names to Know,” in the second chapter. Tips for finding enjoyable award-winning poetry, such as Kalli Dakos’ If You’re Not Here, Please Raise Your Hand, abound in these pages.

Additional noteworthy poets, she writes, can be found by locating the recipients of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the Lee Bennett Hopkins award, the Claudia Lewis award, or by browsing the Horn Book Fanfare List. Vardell also highlights Web tools and other less well-known poetry formats.

The last half of Poetry Aloud Here expounds on how to promote poetry—from bookmarks to “spoken word” events (for example, poetry slams and competitions). Vardell lists several ways to display poetry, including creating poster-sized poems for National Library Week. Her suggestions for “pairing” poetry with fiction and nonfiction can be highly useful for the teacher or librarian.

Though Vardell believes reading poetry is enormously rewarding, getting children comfortable with performing poetry is the main focus of her work. Vardell gives ten strategies for inducing children to perform before an audience. Some poems can be paired with music or can be performed by two or more speakers. Children can also create and perform...
their own verse. Those searching for sources that help children create their own poems can do no better than Vardell’s compilation of writing guides near the end of her book.

In short, Vardell’s research proving the educative value of poetry is effective. Even more impressive is the meticulous way in which Vardell intersperses practical advice with commentary from poets, teachers, and librarians who have personally witnessed poetry change a child’s life. This book is chock-full of tips, suggestions, and bibliographies that librarians can easily implement to promote poetry and poetry-related events.—Chantal Walvoord, Public Services Librarian, Christopher A. Parr Library, Plano, Texas

100 Most Popular Genre Fiction Authors: Biographical Sketches and Bibliographies (Popular Authors Series)


Whether for school-related, recreational, or personal interests, this book includes write-ups on one hundred successful, popular authors who are still active, with few exceptions (J. R. R. Tolkien, Louis L’Amour, and James Michener, for example). Each author gets approximately five pages that usually includes a photo, birthplace and year, genres, the name of the series or title the person is most known for, and sections called “About the Author and the Author’s Writing,” “Works by the Author,” and a list of print and online articles for further information. The compiler notes that librarians and educators reviewed a list of prospective authors and made suggestions, but because they are not named, one presumes that all final decisions about content have been made by Drew himself.

An interesting list of readings including everything from Genreflecting to a Writer’s Digest Book Club ad, also is included. While one can always quibble over omissions, just about everybody is there, and the various genres are well-represented. What is particularly nice about this book is that it includes Christian fiction as a category, puts authors who write in multiple genres into several categories, and makes no distinction by race or ethnicity. All the biggies, such as Grisham and Steel, are predictably included, as are authors and genres other than those mentioned in the examples. There are extensive author, title, and genre indexes.

This book will be a godsend for high school and college term papers and book reports, for book club discussion leaders and program organizers, and also for harried librarians who need a list of a popular adult author’s works in series and chronological order in one place. Bernard Drew has also compiled 100 Most Popular Young Adult Authors for Libraries Unlimited.—Mary K. Chelton, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Library & Information Science, Queens College

Ideas for Librarians Who Teach: With Suggestions for Teachers and Business Presenters


Lederer, associate professor and reference librarian at Colorado State University, brings more than seventeen years of teaching experience to her new book, Ideas for Librarians Who Teach: With Suggestions for Teachers and Business Presenters. Though many books dealing with library instruction already exist, this one stands out. With this new work, Lederer compiles the best ideas from her past teaching experience, along with recommendations collected from library, business, and education literature, and presents the advice as short, accessible tips; the result is a multifaceted, practical handbook that can be used by librarians teaching in any library environment.

This unique format of clipped information—often only one sentence—makes for easy reading and reference and also allows Lederer to condense a wealth of knowledge from a wide variety of sources. A total of seventeen chapters delve into the typical issues of instruction—tailoring assignments, understanding learning styles, developing evaluation techniques—but the author also discusses more uncommon topics. Many are extremely valuable to public libraries, including: promoting instruction to communities, designing classrooms effectively, using and producing traditional and modern visual aids, and creative suggestions for planning icebreakers and handling questions. Other useful chapters pertain to cultivating humor in the classroom and fighting feelings of burnout. Notes follow each chapter, and an extensive bibliography and index are included at the end. Lederer also appendixes two sample course syllabi and a workshop outline, with the latter being most beneficial for public libraries.

Those who teach in public libraries will greatly appreciate Lederer’s sensitivity in including ideas that apply to all age groups and learning styles and encouraging multilingual approaches for developing class materials. Whether you’ve been
teaching for many years or are just starting out, you’ll find *Ideas for Librarians Who Teach* enormously handy and inspiring. Highly recommended.—Jennifer Johnston, former reference librarian, San Bernardino (Calif.) Public Library


For those not familiar with the acronym mentioned in Siess’s title, “OPL” means “one-person library,” a term referring to a library where all tasks—acquisitions, reference, cataloging, budgeting, and more—are performed by a single librarian.

Siess brings years of expertise to her handbook. She has published two earlier editions of this book: *The Solo Librarian’s Sourcebook* (Information Today, 1997) and *The OPL Sourcebook: A Guide for Solo and Small Libraries* (Information Today, 2001) helped form the Solo Librarians Division of the Special Library Association. Siess also has taught numerous workshops specifically for special librarians.

In this new edition, Siess again details her personal background in solo librarianship, and follows with an extensive history of OPLs both in the United States and abroad. The remaining updated information in this guide, however, will benefit not only OPL professionals, but anyone working in library and information centers. Public libraries in particular can learn from Siess’s recommendations on how to offer superior customer service by creating “client-centered,” not “library-centered,” places, while other pertinent information includes technology’s role in library functions and affordable promotion strategies for libraries.

Newer public librarians and branch managers will also value Siess’s advice on professional development, with suggestions on how to manage one’s time, prioritize tasks, give group presentations, promote oneself, and get along with others. And reference librarians will relish the second part of Siess’s book: Eleven chapters devoted to annotated resources arranged—for the first time in this edition—by subject. Such topics as “Computers and the Web,” “Journalism and News,” “Libraryland Stuff,” and “Science, Engineering, and Technology” detail print and electronic resources, professional associations, and electronic discussion lists related to each subject.

Siess’s writing is sometimes meandering and overly opinionated, however, her tough, empathetic tone will help instill confidence in those new to—or timid in—the library profession. The unique tips on career development, and invaluable resource lists, make this new edition a must-have.—Jennifer Johnston, former reference librarian, San Bernardino (Calif.) Public Library

**XHTML and CSS Essentials for Library Web Design**


Despite its intimidating size, *XHTML and CSS Essentials for Library Web Design* is, in reality, digestible. “Librarians perform their jobs working closely with current standards, whether MARC or Z39.50 or LCSH or DDC,” writers Sauers in the preface (xvii). Therefore, it stands to reason that libraries would want to abide by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) protocols. Yet many library Web sites still run on outdated HTML code. Furthermore, many librarians are unaware of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), which allows Web designers to control the appearance of an entire Web site from a single file.

Divided into two parts (XHMTL Essentials and CSS Essentials), this guidebook helps libraries upgrade their markup for structure and standards for style. Thankfully, this instructional text provides screen-shots and tables for coders and visual learners; this feature offers a respite from the dense blocks of text.

In addition to teaching readers basic computer language skills, the author also covers such issues as metadata. “One of the purposes of metadata is to give your document additional information beyond the actual displayable content of your document that can be indexed by a search engine or other processing software” (247). Metadata—including keywords and descriptions for library Web sites—is essential for a library’s marketing and public relations endeavors.

Another interesting chapter (albeit a brief one) is Chapter 11 on “Validating Markup.” The author explains how to use the W3C markup validator that will parse your coded documents and identify errors. It is available at http://validator.w3.org.

The most helpful feature of this book is its real-life coding projects, For example, Chapter 8 covers Web forms. It provides a true-to-life model of building an interlibrary loan (ILL) request form.

Overall, *XHTML and CSS Essentials for Library Web Design* is...
recommended for novice and veteran Web developers alike as well as anyone involved in a library’s Web services. It could even serve as a solid primer for anyone interested in learning XHTML and CSS.—C. Brian Smith, Reference/Electronic Resources Librarian, Arlington Heights (Ill.) Memorial Library

There’s Another Way to Do It: Reflections on Librarianship


This book focuses on the author’s belief that there is another way to do anything, particularly in the library profession. There’s Another Way to Do It discusses collections, acquiring resources, and tools that help us in our profession along with chapters devoted to working with faculty and students. The focus of this book is primarily on librarians in academic library settings but is also useful for librarians in public libraries. The author offers insightful perspectives on how to constantly be aware of our assumptions and reexamine them so they do not become obstacles in our desire to share information. Chu’s view on tools such as OPACs and indexes are that while they may help us to do many things, we need to think about their purpose as well as how they function. He states knowing how—or when—to use these tools is not enough, as we should understand the nontechnical aspects to improve service in our profession.

The chapter on collections discusses the physical and electronic aspects of the collection in addition to the selection of materials based on authority and how the authorities we rely on have narrowly defined disciplines. A resource deemed useful for one discipline may not be appropriate for another. Barriers to information retrieval are also examined in great detail, with the ultimate goal being easier and more reliable information access to better serve students. The chapters on the author’s experience working with students, faculty, and the outside world discuss the need for structure for these collaborations to be effective. Chu’s philosophy is that we must work together to ensure a common goal of connecting users with their needed information resources, which is a goal any librarian should have. Highly recommended for academic libraries and strongly recommended for public libraries. —Susan McClellan, Director, Avalon Public Library, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Influence the Influentials—Advertise in Public Libraries

Engage with your target market: Public Libraries, the journal of the Public Library Association, goes to all 11,670-plus members of PLA (and more than 600 subscribers), many of whom are responsible for making purchasing decisions in their libraries. In addition, a recent PLA member survey indicated that many of our readers pass their copy of the journal along to five additional readers, giving you the opportunity for additional exposure.

Lasting impact: In that same survey, more than 50 percent of respondents indicated that they use Public Libraries to change or implement a new practice or program. Make sure that our readers have seen and read about your product or service when they are considering their purchasing options.

Valuable Content: PL is written by public librarians for public librarians. Your company will want to capitalize on the close relationship many librarians already have with PL.

Further advertising information is available on our Web site, www.pla.org or please feel free to contact Kathleen Hughes, khughes@ala.org, with any questions regarding advertising sales, editorial content, or anything else. We look forward to seeing you in the pages of PL!

Index to Advertisers

ALA-APA ..................................................5, 17, 53
Baker and Taylor ........................................ cover 2
BWI .......................................................... cover 4
Cambridge University Press .......................... cover 3
Crisis Prevention Institute .............................. 11
Greenwood ............................................... 18
Poisoned Pen Press ................................... 13
TLC .......................................................... 3
British Phone Books, 1880–1984, Now Available Online

www.il.proquest.com

British Phone Books, 1880–1984, by name, year, and county, allowing them to fill in many of the gaps in family and house histories left by other traditional genealogy sources. Perhaps more intriguing are the very particular details about the lives of the famous—and the infamous—including the likes of Sir Winston Churchill and Bram Stoker.

Millennium Drives Mountain View Public Library’s WiFi-Enabled Mobile Library

www.iii.com

The Mountain View (Calif.) Public Library has implemented Innovative Interfaces’ self-service library products on their wireless-enabled mobile library. Taking advantage of citywide wireless access provided by Google, the bookmobile allows patrons to check out books and register for library cards on their own through real-time access to Millennium, Innovated’s integrated library technology platform.

Launched in mid-2006, the mobile library vehicle is equipped with two laptops outside the vehicle, where users have wireless access to both Millennium and the Internet. At the inaugural visit to Google’s offices, eighty employees signed up for new library cards using Innovative’s online patron registration product. Inside the mobile library vehicle is
a laptop-enabled Millennium self-check station, where patrons use a barcode reader and a touch-screen monitor to view their patron record and check out books.

World Book Introduces All-New World Book Kids Online

www.worldbookonline.com

In fall 2006, World Book introduced World Book Kids, a new approach to online reference tools that reinforces children's learning through hands-on activities.

Created in conjunction with noted children's author and educational television producer, Douglas Love, the site starts with content from World Book's award-winning Student Discovery Encyclopedia and adds activities that apply to the thousands of informative, easy-to-read and visually appealing articles, to provide students with the active learning environment they need to best absorb and retain information.

World Book Kids was created for students in primary grades as well as special-needs learners, offering these students a learning environment that uses simple navigation, easy-to-read content, bright colors, and highly graphical presentations, including thousands of colorful illustrations and diagrams supporting the articles.

DocuSeek Welcomes California Newsreel

www.docuseek.com

DocuSeek recently welcomed California Newsreel as the newest participating distributor on its search site. DocuSeek Film and Video Finder is a search site for independent documentary, social issue, and educational videos and DVDs available in the United States and Canada.

Since 1968, California Newsreel has distributed cutting-edge social interest documentaries to universities, schools, and public libraries. Currently, California Newsreel is a leading resource for national and international issues, the study of race and diversity, African American life and history, and African feature films and documentaries.

DocuSeek users can simultaneously search the complete collections of eight leading film distributors: Bullfrog Films, California Newsreel, Direct Cinema Limited, Fanlight Productions, First Run/Icarus Films, Frameline, New Day Films, and Women Make Movies.

Advanced search features enable the user to search by distributor, title, general subject, geographic area, filmmaker, producer, director, awards, length, release date, grade level, and format. Additional options are closed captioned, study guide availability, classroom version, and subtitles.

Amazon Introduces Library Processing

www.amazon.com

Amazon has introduced library processing for corporate account customers. Corporate accounts may be set up for any kind of institutions, not just private sector companies.

The Amazon Library Processing program provides MARC records from partnering organizations (The Library Corporation, Marchive, and OCLC). Libraries can also receive mylar covers, labels, and more with Amazon orders, reducing the time and effort it takes to get books from the Amazon box onto library shelves. Library processing is available for books, CDs, videotapes, and DVDs.

EnvisionWare Renaissance Offers End-to-End Open Standard RFID System

www.envisionware.com

Library self-service solutions provider EnvisionWare has released Renaissance, a complete end-to-end, open standard RFID product suite that includes a barcode and RFID-based materials handling system. This new system offers a comprehensive, scalable turnkey solution from a single vendor.

Complementing EnvisionWare's PC management, eCommerce, and cash management systems, Renaissance provides RFID tags, media covers, staff stations, table-top self check and full-service kiosks, a handheld inventory system, security gates, encoding stations, and an automated materials sorting system with from three to 253 bins.

EnvisionWare has partnerships with many integrated library system providers including Polaris, SirsiDynix, TLC/CARL, and VTLS.

Free Software Streamlines Download Audiobook Use

www.overdrive.com

OverDrive, Inc. announced the release of Version 2.1 of OverDrive Media Console, free PC desktop software that enables download, management, and playback of digital audiobooks, music, and video. This free upgrade includes Transfer
Wizard, a feature that easily transfers a downloaded audiobook from a PC to supported portable MP3 players, personal digital assistants, or mobile phones.

The new software also provides audio book listeners with bookmarking, speed adjustment, chapter navigation, resume from furthest point played, and hot key navigation features.

OverDrive provides access to thousands of award-winning audio book titles from leading publishers, authors, and narrators including bestsellers by John Grisham, Richard Patterson, Tom Clancy, Amy Tan, Janet Evanovich, Mitch Albom, David Sedaris, Dave Barry, Meg Cabot, Dean Koontz, and hundreds more.

Thomson Gale’s recently released Price It! Antiques & Collectibles database now includes information from land-based auction houses.

Thomson Gale’s recently released Price It! Antiques & Collectibles database now includes information from land-based auction houses. Thanks to a partnership with GoAntiques, Inc., Price It! Antiques & Collectibles is the only product that offers land-based and online auction pricing. These bricks-and-mortar auction houses join a host of online sites, such as eBay, GoAntiques, and TIAS.com, to provide users with specialized valuation data on sales of art, collectibles, and antiques.

Price It! Antiques & Collectibles is a comprehensive antiques and collectible pricing tool, delivering more than 10 million images in 125 searchable categories, along with intuitive search functionality and more than twenty million realized prices on treasures nearly 30 percent of Americans collect, buy, and trade.

ProQuest Launches Digital Collection of Obituaries

ProQuest Information and Learning has launched ProQuest Obituaries, offering access to obituaries and death notices from the full runs of major national newspapers dating back to 1851. ProQuest Obituaries enables users to easily find ancestors and historical figures and to trace their family histories through a database of more than 10 million names.

Now available to libraries everywhere, ProQuest Obituaries is suitable for all levels of researchers. Historical obituaries and death notices represent some of the most valuable content available to genealogists, as often they are the only existing biographical sketch devoted to an individual and can provide valuable clues such as proper full name; maiden name; spousal information; names of parents, siblings, and children; occupation; religion; cause of death; and more.

SAFARI Montage Offers Video-on-Demand

SAFARI Montage is an affordable broadcast-quality, plug-and-play, video-on-demand server for schools and public libraries that comes preloaded with 1,000 quality educational programs from educational video publishers including PBS, WGBH of Boston, Scholastic, Weston Woods, BBC Worldwide, A&E Home Video, Disney Educational Productions, National Geographic, Sesame Street, and Schlessinger Media.

The SAFARI Montage server avoids the bandwidth problems associated with streaming. By bringing the video programs into the building on a school or library-based server, SAFARI Montage will allow up to fifty-five patrons within a branch to play a video simultaneously without slowing down the entire network.

Current Issues: Reference Shelf Plus Now Available on WilsonWeb

Current Issues: Reference Shelf Plus, a new full-text database, is now available on WilsonWeb. The database presents carefully selected articles from key publications on social, scientific, health, political, and global issues—all chosen to make up a well-rounded overview.

Organized by topic for easy access, the database also allows users to launch searches for new information on each topic via WilsonWeb or the Internet, and links to biographical profiles of prominent figures for each topic from the acclaimed reference magazine Current Biography. With in-depth, balanced examinations of modern issues, background information on key players, plus updating of each topic at a click, Current Issues: Reference Shelf Plus will serve as an “information hub” for students, educators, debate clubs, journalists, and others.
Heading to Washington, DC for the 2007 ALA Annual Conference? Begin your conference experience at a PLA Preconference! And don’t miss PLA’s conference programming. PLA is offering more than 20 programs focusing on the issues important to public libraries!

Can’t make it for the entire conference? You can still attend a PLA Preconference! Register by May 18, 2007, and save! Please note: Registration is available onsite, but limited; register in advance to ensure you can attend the preconference of your choice.

PLA Preconferences—Friday, June 22, 2007

Extreme Makeover: Redesigning Your Library to Promote Usage and Circulation
1–5 p.m.
As libraries face competition from retailers and web-based information sources, and customer expectations change, business strategies must be employed to remain viable in our communities. This humorous and practical presentation offers crucial insight on changing how we do business without sacrificing tradition. Library zoning, including vibrant children’s areas, customer-centered collections, and policies and merchandising, will be addressed with one overarching theme: libraries do not need a lot of money to remodel and retool.

The Fun and Facts of Early Literacy: Communicating with Parents and Caregivers through Storytime (co-sponsored by ALSC)
9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Storytimes promote the joy of reading while modeling and explaining behaviors that parents and caregivers can use to develop early literacy skills in their children. Learn how to present dynamic storytimes while incorporating proven techniques and activities parents and caregivers can use to help children master critical pre-reading skills. Attendees will take away research and information they can use to make a case to library administrators, staff, community partners, and funders about the importance of early literacy programs.

Recruit Teens to Work for Your Library—Now and Later
9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Learn how to use positive youth development techniques and an IMLS-funded library careers/skills curriculum to recruit and retain teen workers for your library. Discover how they can enrich the present and help shape the future of library services, staffing, and community connections. This program will be presented by a panel of teen workers and library professionals.

PLA President’s Program and Awards Presentation

Featuring Keynote Speaker Elizabeth Edwards
Monday, June 25, 5–6:30 p.m.

PLA President Susan Hildreth invites conference attendees to the PLA President’s Program and Awards Presentation, PLA’s premier event at the 2007 ALA Annual Conference. The program will feature keynote speaker Elizabeth Edwards. A passionate advocate for children and families, as well as an accomplished attorney, the country had the opportunity to get to know Elizabeth in 2003 and 2004 when she campaigned extensively during her husband’s presidential and vice-presidential campaigns. The day after the general election in 2004, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her doctors believe her treatment went extremely well, and the prognosis continues to be very positive. Her book, Saving Graces: Finding Solace and Strength from Friends and Strangers, chronicles her struggles and triumphs, and how various communities celebrated her joys and lent her steady strength and quiet hope in darker times. PLA is pleased to present Elizabeth Edwards as part of the ALA Auditorium Series. Following her talk and the PLA awards presentation, mingle with friends and colleagues at a special reception.
PLA Annual Conference Programs

Full descriptions of preconferences and programs, as well as presenter information, can be found at www.pla.org. To register, visit www.ala.org and click on the 2007 ALA Annual Conference logo. If you have questions, please call 800.545.2433, ext. 5.

Advanced registration closes May 18, 2007.

Saturday, June 23

8–10 A.M.
• PLA 101: ALA Annual Conference for First-Time Attendees

10:30 A.M.–noon
• Word of Mouth Marketing Is Everybody’s Job
• More Shining Stars: Award-Winning Programs from Small and Medium-sized Public Libraries
• It’s Logical! Evaluating Your Summer Reading Program in Context of Your Library’s Strategic Plan
• Diplomacy 101: Dealing with Difficult Customers
• Who’s In Charge? I Am?! How to Be the Person in Charge; How to Train Your Staff to Be in Charge
• Celebrating Excellence in Audiobooks for Children and Young Adults

1:30–3:30 P.M.
• Not Just for Boomers: Programming and Services
• Roadmap to Targeted Marketing: Collections, Campaigns, and Customers

1:30–5:30 P.M.
• Teen Graphic Novels: Maintaining Your Collection for Maximum Impact

Sunday, June 24

1:30–3:30 P.M.
• The Art and Science of Staffing, Structure, and Organizational Design in an Age of Permanent Change
• Snips and Snails and Puppy Dogs’ Tails: Every BOY Ready to Read @ your library®
• The Best of the Best from the University Presses: Books You Should Know About
• Innovative Public Library Services around the Globe; or, Learning from our Global Neighbors
• Libraries Prosper with Passion, Purpose, Persuasion: A PLA Toolkit for Success

4–5:30 P.M.
• Survivor @ the Library: Staff Redistribution in Trying Times

8 A.M.–noon
• The Insider’s Guide to Capitol Hill—Session Full!

Monday, June 25

10:30 A.M.–noon
• Mildly Delirious Libraries: Transforming Your Library from Top to Bottom
• Marketing Library Services to the Melting Pot
• Zine-a-paloosa 2007! or, Zines in Public Libraries, A Panel
• Wiking the Blog and Walking the Dog—Social Software, Virtual Reality, and Authority Everywhere

1:30–3:30 P.M.
• Put Your Money Where Your Circulation Is: The Fine Art of Budgeting for Audiovisuals