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# american libraries

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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- Friday Night Library Lights
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## Scoring Points with Sports Fans and History Fans

by Laurie D. Borman

On a clear autumn day, I sit on my balcony reading a book when I hear a muffled cheer and see fireworks erupt. Moments later, a slightly delayed TV signal repeats the same sounds from the Chicago Bears game at nearby Soldier Field. All day, people in orange and blue shirts parade down the streets, heading for the stadium or just to grab lunch and watch the game on TV. Switch out the jerseys and it's a ritual repeated all across the US. For those of us who left our team-cheering days behind at college, this is quite eyeopening. I'm lost after singing the first line of the Bears fight song and certainly know nothing of building my own fantasy football team. But I'm in the minority. This is a great way to get—let's face it—a primarily adult male audience into the library. In this issue, Adam Doster tells us how to tap into this avid fan base

to research, read, and slot their fantasy sports teams at your library. Check out all his suggestions on page 30.

Each November 22 we recall with sadness the day when President John F. Kennedy was shot. Whether you are

researching his final White House days, or want to help students learn more about his stand on civil rights and the space race, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum is working to get that information digitized, just in time for the 50th anniversary of his assassination. With documents, films, audio recordings, and photos, the library already provides 150 terabytes of information on its website. Our story, by Timothy Inklebarger, gives you the library's and librarians' view of this massive project. See the article on page 26.

MLIS students around the country headed back to class this fall. Some went straight to their university library to work, as interns. Not only are the students building their résumés and earning a little cash, they're gaining practical skills that will give them an edge to a potential employer. ALA has a history of hiring interns, and several are here again this year. Abigail Wise tells the story (page 38) about how library schools are readying students for the workforce.

On October 1, the Affordable Care Act rolled out across the nation. Libraries geared up to learn the resources and guide staff. The primary question to answer is: What can your institution do best, given staff availability and patron needs? For a quick primer on where to find information, as well as hear what other libraries are already doing, see the story on page 42.

Finally, in between your football revelry, insurance sign-ups, and holiday planning, be sure to see all that's in the works for the ALA Mid-winter Meeting and Exhibits in Philadelphia. We offer a glimpse into programs for the meeting, as well as sightseeing side trips (like the original *Ulysses* manuscripts or Maurice Sendak illustrations at the Rosenbach Museum and Library, for example). Details on page 12. ■

This is a great way to get an adult male audience into the library.

# american libraries

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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# The Future of Libraries

Innovating, one step at a time

by Barbara K. Stripling

**H**ave you noticed a tidal change in public perception about the future of libraries? I certainly have. I rarely hear the gloom-and-doom question from a reporter, “Do libraries have a future in this age of technology?” Now I am asked, “Libraries seem to be changing in interesting ways. What’s happening?”

Libraries of all types are using innovative thinking to change their resources, instruction, programming, and services to meet the emerging needs and priorities of their communities. Innovation is one area I am highlighting during my presidency. What does innovation look like in public, school, academic, and special libraries, and how can we be sure we are doing real library innovation?

ALA will be offering a series of webinars this winter that feature innovative transformational programs being implemented. Libraries have changed their programming and physical presence to enhance the culture of collaboration and learning—creating learning commons and makerspaces; pushing out services to the community through pop-up libraries and mobile beach buggies; establishing virtual learning opportunities; and offering engaging activities like gaming, video production, poetry slams, micropublishing, community forums, TEDx events, and civic discussion.

Librarians are also redefining the concept of “library collection” by

balancing print and ebooks; establishing libraries entirely without books; acquiring materials in multiple (and multiplying) formats; providing tools, technology, and software to enable patrons to participate actively in the information world; offering unusual items for checkout, including cookware, fishing poles, comfort dogs, and human “books”; and preserving and curating local cultural artifacts.



**What does innovation look like?**

Teaching has gained new prominence in the librarian’s role in recognition of the need for every member of society to develop new literacies to make sense of and use information presented through multiple formats. The face of learning has changed, with increased emphasis on connectedness, collaboration, and distributed knowledge. As a result, libraries and librarians are exploring new ways to deliver educational opportunities through mobile technologies, use of social tools, distance education, and MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses).

These innovative ideas are attractive and relatively easy to implement but will have limited impact unless we honestly gauge the priorities of our communities and challenge our assumptions about the best ways to meet those priorities. Before implementing any transformative change in our libraries, perhaps we should ask ourselves some provocative

questions. The following questions have been adapted from an October 4 *Forbes* article by Lisa Bodell, CEO of futurethink, called “10 Disruptive Questions for Instant Innovation” ([forbes.com/sites/groupphink/2013/10/04/10-disruptive-questions-for-instant-innovation](http://forbes.com/sites/groupphink/2013/10/04/10-disruptive-questions-for-instant-innovation)):

- What do we, as a profession, believe that our patrons want? What if the opposite were true?
- What core do we need to hold on to even as we transform our libraries to adapt to the changing demands and information landscape?

What unique services and opportunities do we offer to our communities?

- If we could work on only one innovation for the next year, what would it be and why?

As we think about library transformation and innovation, we can take heart that ALA is establishing the Center for the Future of Libraries. Funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), in its start-up year this center will provide resources and tools to help us understand emerging trends. Alan Kay said, “The best way to predict the future is to invent it.” Through the center, ALA will be helping us invent the future of libraries. ■

**BARBARA K. STRIPLING** is assistant professor of practice at Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y. Email: [bstripling@ala.org](mailto:bstripling@ala.org).



# ALA: Dollars and Sense

Financially viable, financially solvent

by Mario González

This is my first column as ALA's new treasurer, and I would like to use this opportunity to share with you my overall observations about ALA's current financial situation.

Despite the recession, ALA is a financially viable and financially solvent organization. One of these strengths is the fact that the Chicago headquarters—both 40 East Huron and 50 East Huron—are owned outright by ALA and have no mortgages.

While our membership numbers are slightly lower than they were at the beginning of the recession, membership continues to be steady and strong. Nearly two out of every three library school students and about half of all library professionals are ALA members. The Association has thousands of active committee and interest group members, dedicated elected leadership, and a dedicated and hard-working staff.

ALA's endowment continues to grow, and it now contributes significantly to the annual operating support of the ALA offices, divisions, and round tables. In addition, ALA's other operating net assets—which include division, round table, and short-term investments—help contribute to the organization's stability and operating support.

The Association is also strong in that three-quarters of the revenue that supports our library advocacy and legislative activities, as well as our work on intellectual freedom, user privacy, copyright, and other

critical issues, is derived from non-dues revenue. These sources include professional publishing, conferences, online learning, and corporate and foundation grants.

In all of these revenue-generating areas, our business models are evolving to keep pace with a changing environment and changing member needs. ALA conferences are constantly being improved upon based on member comments and suggestions. Publishing now offers a wide variety of print and digital formats and products to meet the needs of today's professionals, and ALA is offering hundreds of online webinars and courses on every conceivable topic. Resource Description and Access (RDA), the global successor to AACR2, is now being adopted worldwide (30 countries and counting) and is being translated into dozens of languages. As always, we continue to explore new ways to create the revenue needed to support important member programs and services.

There is no denying that the last four years have been as challenging for ALA as they have been for all types of libraries. Revenue has been flat since the beginning of the recession, and the ALA staff is now smaller than it was four years ago.

Throughout this difficult time,

ALA member leaders and management have concentrated on sustaining the member services and programs that libraries and the public depend on, and have managed to move ahead on a number of

important new initiatives. ALA continues to be creative and well managed, and we expect to end the current year on track despite another financially challenging year.

I haven't talked a

lot about numbers in this first column, but over the course of the next three years, I will be reporting in *American Libraries*, *American LibrariesMagazine.org*, and *AL Direct* on key developments and trends, as well as on our annual budgets and year-end results. For up-to-date information on ALA's budget and finances, I hope that you will visit the treasurer's web page, [ala.org/about\\_ala/governance/financialdata/treasurerspage](http://ala.org/about_ala/governance/financialdata/treasurerspage), where I will be providing regular updates on where we stand and how we're doing.

I am honored to serve as ALA's treasurer and am always happy to hear your thoughts on how we can best manage the finances that support our good work and how we can keep members informed about financial issues and developments. ■



We continue to explore new ways to create the revenue needed to support important member programs and services.

MARIO GONZÁLEZ is director of the Passaic (N.J.) Public Library.

# ALA Calls for FCC to Advance E-Rate Funding

The American Library Association (ALA) has filed comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to accelerate access to high-capacity broadband for libraries and schools (*AL*, Sept./Oct., p. 6). More than 16,000 US public libraries serve more than 77 million computer users each year, but only half offer internet speeds above the FCC's home broadband recommendation of 4 Mbps.

"The nation is facing a sea change in what robust technology infrastructure can enable, and libraries are perfectly positioned to light the way forward and ensure no one is ex-

cluded from digital opportunity," said ALA President Barbara Stripling. "America's libraries must move from basic connectivity to high-capacity broadband so our students and our communities can compete globally. The e-rate program is essential for fulfilling this digital promise."

The September 16 filing aligns with President Barack Obama's ConnectED goal to provide America's students with access to high-speed broadband and high-speed wireless within five years. ALA calls for new e-rate funding to implement and sustain high-capacity and high-speed internet connections for libraries and schools. The cur-

rent funding cap falls short of meeting demand for internet-enabled education and learning services.

"Current funding does not reflect the economic reality faced by libraries and schools as they try to upgrade their broadband services," said Emily Sheketoff, executive director of the ALA Washington Office. "This FCC proceeding provides an important opportunity to add more funding to the program and increase its value to libraries, schools, and our communities."

The complete FCC filing is available at [districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ALA\\_E-rate\\_Comments.pdf](http://districtdispatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ALA_E-rate_Comments.pdf).

## Farrell, Feldman Seek 2015–2016 ALA Presidency

Maggie Farrell, dean of libraries at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, and Sari Feldman, executive director of Cuyahoga County (Ohio) Public Library, are seeking the 2015–2016 presidency of the American Library Association.

Farrell has been an ALA member since 1988. She served as the Association for College and Research Libraries division councilor in 2010–2013 and ALA councilor-at-large in 2004–2007. She holds an MA in public administration from Arizona State University and an MLS from the University of Arizona; a BA in American Studies from the University of Missouri–Kansas City; and a Russian linguist certification from the Defense Language Institute.

Feldman has been an ALA member

since 1990. She served as president of the Public Library Association in 2009–2010 and chair of the ALA Office for Literacy/Outreach Services Advisory Committee in 2000–2003. She currently cochairs the ALA Digital Content and Libraries Working Group, a position she has held since 2011. Feldman received an MLS from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and a BA in English from Binghamton University.

Farrell and Feldman will engage in a candidates' forum on January 25 during the 2014 ALA Midwinter Meeting and Exhibits in Philadelphia. Each candidate will have an opportunity to make a statement and answer questions from the audience.

Ballot mailing for the 2014 ALA election will begin March 19.

## Take the Public Library Digital Inclusion Survey

Public libraries are encouraged to participate by November 15 in the first Digital Inclusion Survey, which will document public library service in the areas of digital literacy, economic and workforce development, civic engagement, educational support, health information, and public access to the internet.

The survey will allow libraries to view their services in the context of population demographics such as local poverty and unemployment rates, household income, education levels, and English proficiency. This will enable libraries to identify and demonstrate the impact on their community of providing public computer and internet access. Opportunities to improve public access technology services based on community needs and demographics will be measured as well.

The Digital Inclusion Survey is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and conducted by the ALA Office for Research and Statistics and the Information Policy

and Access Center at the University of Maryland. The International City/County Management Association and the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy serve as partners.

The survey is accessible online at [digitalinclusion.umd.edu](http://digitalinclusion.umd.edu). More information is available at [ala.org/digitalinclusion](http://ala.org/digitalinclusion).

events with Jane Pauley, Craig Johnson, Lisa Unger, Mary Kay Andrews, Andre Dubus III, Walter Mosley, and others.

PLA members save \$130 (over ALA members) and \$195 (over non-members) if they register before January 10, 2014. Members of the Indiana Library Federation also qualify for the early registration rate. Everyone can take advantage of special advance registration rates before February 7, 2014. For complete prices and additional details, visit [placonference.org](http://placonference.org).

## CALENDAR

### ALA EVENTS

**Nov.:** Picture Book Month, [picturebookmonth.com](http://picturebookmonth.com).

**Nov. 7–10:** 2013 LITA National Forum, [ala.org/lita/conferences/forum/2013](http://ala.org/lita/conferences/forum/2013).

**Nov. 16:** International Games Day @ your library, [ngd.ala.org](http://ngd.ala.org).

### 2014

**Jan. 24–28:** ALA Midwinter Meeting and Exhibits, Philadelphia, [alamw14.ala.org](http://alamw14.ala.org).

**Feb. 5:** Digital Learning Day, [digitallearningday.org](http://digitallearningday.org).

**Mar. 9–15:** Teen Tech Week, [teentechweek.ning.com](http://teentechweek.ning.com).

**Mar. 16:** Freedom of Information Day.

**Apr.:** School Library Month, [ala.org/aasl/slm](http://ala.org/aasl/slm).

**June 26–July 1:** ALA Annual Conference, Las Vegas.

**Oct. 31–Nov. 2:** YALSA Young Adult Literature Austin, Texas, [ala.org/yalitsymposium](http://ala.org/yalitsymposium).

### Apply Online for 2014 ALA Scholarships

More than \$300,000 in scholarship funds is available for students studying library science or school library media. Scholarships range from \$1,500 to \$7,000 per student per year and are available for those interested in children's librarianship, youth librarianship, federal librarianship, new media, and library automation. There are also scholarships for minorities, persons with disabilities, and for people who are already employed in libraries but do not have an MLS.

Applicants interested in school librarianship must attend a master's program that meets ALA curriculum guidelines for the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

The deadline for application is March 1, 2014. For more information, visit [ala.org/educationcareers/scholarships](http://ala.org/educationcareers/scholarships).

### PLA 2014 Registration Now Open

Registration for the Public Library Association's (PLA) 2014 Conference is now open.

PLA 2014, which is being held March 11–15 in Indianapolis, features more than 150 educational programs, as well as keynote addresses from Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, and author David Sedaris, PLA's new Big Ideas Series speaker, and author

### ALA-APA Recognizes Spokane Graduates

The American Library Association–Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) and the Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC) in Spokane, Washington, have reached an agreement that allows SFCC graduates who meet criteria from their library and information services program to receive the Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) designation. ALA-APA proposed this agreement after reviewing SFCC curriculum and finding that its graduates have completed coursework that meets the majority of LSSC's competency requirements. ALA-APA and SFCC concluded that the SFCC degrees or certificates, coupled with the LSSC, will benefit graduates, the library in which they work, and library users.

ALA-APA has similar agreements with 11 other community- and junior-college programs across the country. To learn more, visit [ala-apa.org/lssc](http://ala-apa.org/lssc).

### Nominations Sought by PLA, ACRL, ALCTS

Nominations are currently being accepted for PLA, Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), and Association for Library Collec-



## LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE LAUNCHES

tions and Technical Services (ALCTS) awards and grants for 2014.

PLA is offering nine awards and grants designed to highlight the best in public library service and to honor those bringing innovation, creativity, and dedication to public libraries. Nominations are open until December 2 at 11:59 p.m. Winners will be announced in February and awards will be presented at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference in Las Vegas. Learn more or apply at [ala.org/pla/awards/apply](http://ala.org/pla/awards/apply).

Fifteen awards and grants are available from ACRL for those whose work has influenced the thinking and growth of the academic library profession. Nominations and supporting materials for most awards must be submitted by December 6. More information, including submission procedures, criteria, and contact information, is available at [ala.org/acrl/awards](http://ala.org/acrl/awards).

ALCTS is accepting nominations for two publication awards for outstanding achievement in research and writing in the field of library collections and technical services. The deadline for both award nominations is December 1. Submission and application information and lists of past recipients are available at [ala.org/alcts/awards](http://ala.org/alcts/awards).

### Applications Open for Immersion 2014

ACRL is accepting applications for the teacher and program tracks of the 2014 Information Literacy Immersion Program. Participants will take part in an intensive four-and-a-half-day information literacy training and education program July 20–25 at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont.

The Teacher Track focuses on individual development for those interested in enhancing, refreshing,



Forty participants pose for a historic photo of the first ALA Leadership Institute, an immersive leadership development program held August 12–15 at the Eaglewood Resort and Spa in Itasca, Illinois. Led by ALA Immediate Past President Maureen Sullivan and ACRL Content Strategist Kathryn Deiss, the institute covered topics such as leading in turbulent times, interpersonal competence, power and influence, the art of convening groups, and creating a culture of inclusion, innovation, and transformation.

or extending their individual instruction skills.

Curriculum includes classroom techniques, learning theory, leadership, and assessment framed in the context of information literacy. Participants will prepare a description of an instructional situation and a related presentation before starting the program, and revising it based on feedback from colleagues and faculty.

The Program Track focuses on developing, integrating, and managing institutional and programmatic information literacy programs. Participants will develop individual case studies in advance of the program. Change dynamics, systems thinking, institutional outcomes assessment, scalability, and the integration of teaching, learning, and technology will be used to analyze the various programmatic

challenges in the studies.

The application deadline is December 6. Acceptance notifications will be issued in February 2014. Complete program details and application materials are available at [ala.org/acrl/immersionprogram](http://ala.org/acrl/immersionprogram).

### AASL Seeks School Library of the Year

The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) is accepting applications for the 2014 National School Library Program of the Year Award. Winners will receive \$10,000 to invest in their school library program.

The deadline for submissions is 4:30 p.m. Central time January 1, 2014. Application forms, submission requirements, and additional information are available at [ala.org/aasl/awards/nsly](http://ala.org/aasl/awards/nsly). ■

# 2013 ALA Nominating Committee Council Candidates

## Denice C. Adkins

Associate Professor  
School of Information Science  
and Learning Technologies  
University of Missouri  
Columbia

## Anya N. Arnold

Resource Sharing and Courier  
Program Manager  
Orbis Cascade Alliance  
Eugene, Oregon

## Audrey Barbakoff

Adult Services Librarian  
Kitsap Regional Library  
Bainbridge Island (Wash.)  
Branch

## Latrice Booker

Coordinator of Library  
Instruction  
Indiana University Northwest  
Gary

## Vivian Bordeaux

Librarian/Customer  
Service Team  
Bridgeport (Conn.) Public  
Library

## Steve Brantley

Head of Reference  
and Instruction/  
Associate Professor  
Eastern Illinois University  
Charleston

## Frank Alan Bruno

Library Director  
Dorchester County Library  
St. George, South Carolina

## Tina Chan

Assistant Coordinator of  
Reference/Reference and  
Instruction Librarian  
State University of New  
York at Oswego

## Emily E. Clasper

System Operations and  
Training Manager  
Suffolk Cooperative  
Library System  
Bellport, New York

## Alexander H. Cohen

Library Consultant  
Aaron Cohen Associates, Ltd.  
Croton-on-Hudson,  
New York

## Roberto C. Delgadillo

Humanities, Social Sciences,  
and Government  
Information Services  
Librarian  
Peter J. Shields Library  
University of California–Davis

## Kathleen May DeLong

Associate University Librarian  
University of Alberta Libraries  
Edmonton

## Renée Di Pilato

Central Library Manager  
Alexandria (Va.) City Library

## Tyler Dzuba

Head, Physics-Optics-  
Astronomy Library  
University of Rochester  
River Campus Libraries  
Rochester, New York

## Tanya Ducker Finchum

Professor/Oral History  
Librarian  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater

## Marianne Crandall Follis

Senior Librarian  
Irving (Tex.) Public Library–  
Valley Ranch Branch

## Ed Garcia

Library Director  
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Manager  
Queens (N.Y.) Library

## MEMBER ALERT

### PREPARE FOR THE 2014 ALA ELECTION

Individuals who are interested in running for ALA Council by petition may file an electronic petition or send a paper petition to the ALA executive director until 11:59 p.m. Central time on January 31, 2014. The petition must have the signatures (or e-signatures) of no fewer than 25 ALA current personal members. An additional form containing biographical information and a statement of professional concerns must be submitted electronically.

Instructions for filing petitions and additional voting information can be found at [ala.org/aboutala/governance/alaelection](http://ala.org/aboutala/governance/alaelection).

Ballot mailing for the 2014 ALA Election will begin March 19. Election polls will close at 11:59 p.m. April 25, 2014. Election certification will take place in May.





# Midwinter Must-Dos



Just a few of the many activities on offer at the 2014 meeting in Philadelphia, January 24–28

## The conversation starts here ...

Midwinter provides several opportunities to share and engage with colleagues. Experts give the latest updates on policy, research, statistics, and technology in the “**News You Can Use**” segment. Sponsors include ALA divisions and offices and the ALA Digital Content and Libraries Working Group.

Hear library specialists describe their latest in-house innovations at the **ALA Masters Series**.

Discuss your aspirations for your professional community in “**Kitchen-Table Conversations**,” and help make ALA an innovation space where members and staff

collaborate and create together.

The **Library Unconference** (January 24) and **Library Camp** (January 27) bookend Midwinter by offering the chance to ask questions, network, and reflect on the implications of all these updates.

Follow up or start a small-group discussion in the **Networking Uncommons** area.

## Register now Special ticketed events

Clear your mind and have fun with like-minded colleagues with a new twist this year at the **ThinkFit Resistance Band Workout** (January 25).

## Professional development

For information about the various **Institutes** being offered for professional development, visit [alamidwinter.com/ticketed-events](http://alamidwinter.com/ticketed-events).

## Awards and honors YMAS

Every year, committees of librarians and media experts dedicate themselves to selecting the winners of the **Youth Media Awards**, which honor



## National Constitution Center

Relive history at the National Constitution Center and experience the three attractions in its main exhibition:

- **Freedom Rising:** This 17-minute multimedia theatrical production takes visitors on a journey through history, depicting the nation’s quest for freedom from 1787 to the present day;
- **The Story of We the People:** Visit this interactive exhibit for a guided tour through America’s history, with a rotating collection of artifacts, and even take the presidential oath of office;
- **Signer’s Hall (pictured):** Add your name to the Constitution alongside 42 life-size bronze statues of the Founding Fathers.

The center also frequently hosts guest lectures and other events that explore the relationship of the Constitution to various themes.

For more information, visit [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org).

Photo: Courtesy The National Constitution Center.

books, videos, and other outstanding materials for children and teens. Winners of the Newbery, Caldecott, Printz, and Coretta Scott King are among the prestigious awards and medals that will be announced January 27.



### MAURICE SENDAK

In honor of the 50th anniversary of *Where the Wild Things Are*, visit the Rosenbach Museum and Library, which houses a collection of more than 10,000 of Sendak's items, including original illustrations, sketches, and manuscripts. The museum store is the only authorized seller of signed Sendak materials and offers unsigned books, prints, and toys.

### Arthur Curley Memorial Lecture

Don't miss the opportunity to hear from human rights advocate and bestselling author **Ishmael Beah** at the **Arthur Curley Memorial Lecture** (January 25). Beah's first book, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, chronicles his time as a child soldier in his native Sierra Leone and has helped shine an international spotlight on critical issues related to children and war. Beah crosses over to fiction in his forthcoming novel, *Radiance of Tomorrow* (Macmillan, 2014).

### Give me books!

Join *Booklist* Books for Youth Senior Editor Ilene Cooper as she moderates the **ERT/Booklist Author Forum** (January 24) with five acclaimed authors: Tonya Bolden, Brian Floca, Kadir Nelson, Steve Sheinkin, and Melissa Sweet. Find more recognized authors at the **Book Buzz Theater**.

### Stay connected and informed

- Visit [alamidwinter.org](http://alamidwinter.org)
- Track #alamw14 on Twitter
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- Watch the fun on the Conference Tumblr page at [ala-con.tumblr.com](http://ala-con.tumblr.com)
- Check out the **ALA Midwinter Scheduler** in late November—and the mobile app in December—which allows you to receive updates, plan and organize your Midwinter time, get tailored recommendations, and create a shareable calendar. ■



### The Barnes Foundation

Take a break from the Founding Fathers and visit the Barnes Foundation, home to an impressive collection of impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modern art, as well as African sculpture and Native American textiles and metalwork. The collection follows specific instructions on presentation from its founder, Albert Barnes, who was inspired by the ideas of William James, George Santayana, and John Dewey about how people look at and learn from art. Just remember that the rooms in the Collection Gallery are small and space fills quickly, so try to book tickets in advance.

Don't forget to visit the Honickman Library and its collection of more than 4,000 books, periodicals, and other resources on art, art history, visual literacy, conservation, and art education.



Attendees at the Networking Uncommons during Midwinter 2013 in Seattle.



# Toy Libraries: A Place to Play

Lois Eannel gets teary-eyed when she remembers that afternoon. She saw a mom bring her son into the early childhood section of the Palm Harbor (Fla.) Library and lay him down on the brightly colored rug. He must have been about 8 years old, she thought, but a physical disability left him unable to sit up.

Eannel, then director of the children's library, tapped the mom on the shoulder and told her she had something for her son. A short while later she brought out a Side-Lyer toy—a device made for children with special needs, with beads and lights that make sounds and vibrate when lightly touched.

“Within a minute, he was smiling and laughing, stimulating the toy to make the music and the lights,” Eannel tells *American Libraries*. “He was so happy.”

It was a moment made possible by Eannel's efforts to create an adaptive toy library for her patrons. The Toys and Tools to Go collection at Palm Harbor now has more than 100 toys available on loan for any family that wants to borrow them. Each toy is specially adapted—some with switches, lights, or other adjustments that enable children with physical or mental disabilities to play with them.

Eannel first learned about adaptive toy libraries at her previous job at Middle Country Public Library on Long Island, New York. When the library got a grant from the state health department's Early Intervention Program to build an adaptive toy library, she was assigned to create it: “It has been amazing to see the children enjoy and learn by having these types of toys and devices.”

## Creating access

There are about 400 toy libraries around the United States, about a quarter of which offer adaptive toys, estimates Judy Iacuzzi, executive director of the USA Toy Library Association in Evanston, Illinois.

The nation's first toy library started in Los Angeles, around the Depression, when a store owner noticed children stealing toys because they couldn't afford them, says Iacuzzi. He created a library where they could borrow and return toys, eventually expanding into a network of about 60 sites around the city—some mobile—that allowed low-income kids to access quality toys.

“Play is getting short-circuited for other things these days—working toward a test, getting skills measured,” says Iacuzzi. “But play allows kids to learn about themselves and develop skills. They can just relax and create their own opportunities to learn and grow.”



Several libraries and nonprofits are making adaptive toys available for checkout to children with special needs.

While some toy libraries are associated with public libraries, like Palm Harbor's, others are located within a social service center or child development organization. Some are freestanding nonprofits, like the National Lekotek Center, a network of 17 nonprofit adaptive toy libraries across the country. Macy Kaiser, executive director of Lekotek, tells *AL* that its programs pair families with a developmental play specialist who meets with the family once a month to help them choose appropriate toys for their child. Then, the child gets to check out five or more toys for the month and play with them at home.

Access to adaptive toys is incredibly important to these children, says Kaiser, many of whom have few chances to play in their everyday life.

“For children in wheelchairs, maybe the only movement they have is their head,” says Kaiser. “But with an adaptive toy, we can put a switch next to their head and plug it into a toy so they can play, maybe for the first time.”

Some adaptations can be as easy as adding Velcro to a common toy, like the Fisher-Price plastic barn that many kids grow up with.

“For children with cerebral palsy, their involuntary movement would make that barn frustrating because they would knock the animals over,” says Kaiser. “But

put a little Velcro on the pieces and the base, and it's fun for them. Play is work for a lot of kids who have disabilities, and we take that work out of it."

Having a library of toys from which to borrow is especially important when it comes to adaptive toys because they're so expensive, says Mary Jo Wendling, manager of the Toy and Technology Library at Ohio State University, which has one of the largest collections of adaptive toys in the nation.

"Often the markup may be two to three times the cost of the original toy," Wendling tells *AL*. "There are only a handful of companies that modify these toys, so it is often not easy for a family to even know where to begin their search."

### Building a collection

Wendling says the process of starting a toy library may seem daunting, especially for those who don't know much about children with special needs. To help get started, she suggests contacting a therapist who's well versed in disabilities and assistive technology. The upside, she says, is that most libraries have much of the infrastructure already in place: "They have a cataloging system and a borrowing system, so in a sense they are simply adding a new category," she says.

The USA Toy Library Association publishes guides for libraries that are interested in starting toy libraries, including suggestions of toys to buy. Iacuzzi also suggests visiting and consulting with other local toy lending libraries to see what works for them. Funding for adaptive libraries often comes through donations and small grants, although a regular funding stream is needed for staff, the toy collection itself, and repairs.

Eannel also recommends educating staff members about the kinds of disabilities they may encounter and how toys can be adapted to help all children play. "You need to help staff learn to approach patrons, letting them know the resources you have," she says. "You can have a wonderful collection, but if the staff doesn't buy into it, it won't be successful."

Eannel left Palm Harbor Library to become director of the East Lake Community Library, also in Palm Harbor, and hopes to one day build a toy library in this community too. "It's a wonderful thing, and one that should be available in communities both large and small—cities, suburbs, rural communities—because there is a need everywhere," she says. "Toys are the tools of learning, and every child should have access to them."

—Megan Cottrell,  
writer, blogger, and reporter, Chicago

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# E-Reader Firms Fight Rules Requiring Accessibility

Several manufacturers of e-readers have asked the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to permanently exempt their products from a 2010 federal law mandating that electronic devices come with assistive features that enable people with print disabilities to access e-content. The move has raised the ire of library groups and disability-rights advocates nationwide.

The filing of the petition (submitted in May and last amended on September 20) was concurrent with the approval of an international treaty by the World Intellectual Property Organization to ensure exceptions in copyright law for the provision of accessible-format text for print-disabled people (*AL*, Sept./Oct., p. 14).

According to the petitioner, the Coalition of E-Reader Manufacturers (made up of Amazon, Kobo, and Sony), the e-reader is “designed primarily for accessing text-based digital works” and therefore does not fall under the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA). CVAA requires that electronic devices used for advanced communications services (ACS) contain assistive technology so people with disabilities can use them.

The coalition argues that the “purposeful hardware limitations” of e-readers, such as lack of audio speakers and text-to-speech features, make them unsuitable for individuals with disabilities to use effectively and that redesigning e-readers would change their nature without benefiting print-disabled people. Instead, the group contends, the availability of free apps such as Kindle Reading, Sony Reader, and Kobo eReading for download to mobile devices and computers fulfills the CVAA mandate by providing access “to the same range of e-publications available to the owners of the respective companies’ e-readers.”

ALA, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and 23 disability-rights organizations were among more than 500 groups and individuals filing comments with the FCC in opposition to the waiver. (Only a few commenters backed the petition.) “The print-disabled are readers and consumers just as sighted people [who] want what others have—same book, same time, same price,” wrote Emily Sheketoff, executive director of ALA’s Washington Office.

Comments from ARL emphasized that “print-disabled students will not be adequately served if institutions of higher education can offer them only a limited

range of relatively less portable (and more expensive) reading technologies.”

Representing disability-rights groups, National Federation of the Blind (NFB) President Marc Maurer refuted manufacturers’ claims that e-readers cannot be made accessible without significantly altering their functionality. Amazon offered three Kindle models with text-to-speech functionality at NFB’s urging between 2009 and 2011 before discontinuing “even rudimentary accessibility” in 2012, Maurer wrote. “The coalition attempts to show [in its FCC petition] that inaccessibility is a necessary evil when in reality it is an unjustifiable business choice.”

It was unclear as of early October when the FCC would decide whether to grant the waiver due in part to the government shutdown. Whatever the commission decides, however, will not affect the legal responsibility of libraries and schools to provide equal access to materials as spelled out in the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, the 1996 Chafee Amendment to the Copyright Act, and in the 2012 *Authors Guild v. HathiTrust* decision (*AL*, Jan./Feb., p. 40–43).

The FCC decision may also have little impact on the future of limited-function e-readers; industry research firm IHS iSuppli Consumer Electronics summarized a December 2012 report on the devices’ commercial viability by stating that “single-task devices ... are being replaced without remorse in the lives of consumers by their multifunction equivalents, in this case by media tablets.” The report also predicted, “For the manufacturers of ebook readers, the pressure to keep costs to an absolute minimum will be extreme.”

In the meantime, Amazon and Kobo were slated to release enhanced e-reader models this fall: a second-generation Kindle Paperwhite with higher-contrast display, better light, and faster processor, and the Kobo Aura, a less expensive alternative to the Aura HD e-reader. Their introduction came just before e-reader manufacturers were required to begin complying with CVAA as of October 8.

**“The print-disabled are readers and consumers just as sighted people [who] want what others have: same book, same time, same price.”**

—Emily Sheketoff  
executive director  
ALA Washington Office

—Beverly Goldberg

# Libraries on the Vine

When Twitter unveiled Vine in January, reviews were mixed about the free app that allows six-second-long video loops to be created, viewed, and shared on mobile devices.

“We avoided it for awhile,” says Gail Shackleton, director of library services at Appleby College, a 7–12 grade school in Ontario. She and library technician Stefania Mulyk administer the library’s social media presence, which already includes Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, and YouTube. They waited to adopt Vine until four months after the app’s introduction because of its newness. Like many librarians, they were weary of adding another tool to an already full social media campaign—especially an untested one that had yet to establish a direction and audience. That soon changed.

Celebrities, comedians, musicians, and artists flocked to Vine to produce and distribute everything from music videos and stop-motion animation to slice-of-life clips and narrative shorts. The general public—as well as commercial and nonprofit institutions—soon followed suit, transforming the site to a social media force that reported 40 million users in August. Vine’s success has led organizations and companies—libraries included—to integrate it into existing social media strategies.

Libraries are using Vine to create clips that highlight new book and media acquisitions, advertise events, showcase makerspaces and 3D printers, and instruct patrons on library features. The moving images give these

promotions a vibrancy that’s not feasible in text-heavy social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

“We’re having fun with it now,” says Shackleton. “It’s a way of broadening our reach. Vine has a large community and we enjoy that. The connections that come out of one unique item like a [stop-motion] film of racks filling up with new magazines are interesting.”

Sprucing up promotions with a creative slant was a strong draw for Jennifer Smith and Nick Ferreira, reference and instructional librarians at the School of the Art Insti-

tute’s (SAIC) John M. Flaxman Library in Chicago. Both Ferreira and Smith are artists and saw Vine as a perfect way to use their talents to reach a specialized set of patrons and students.

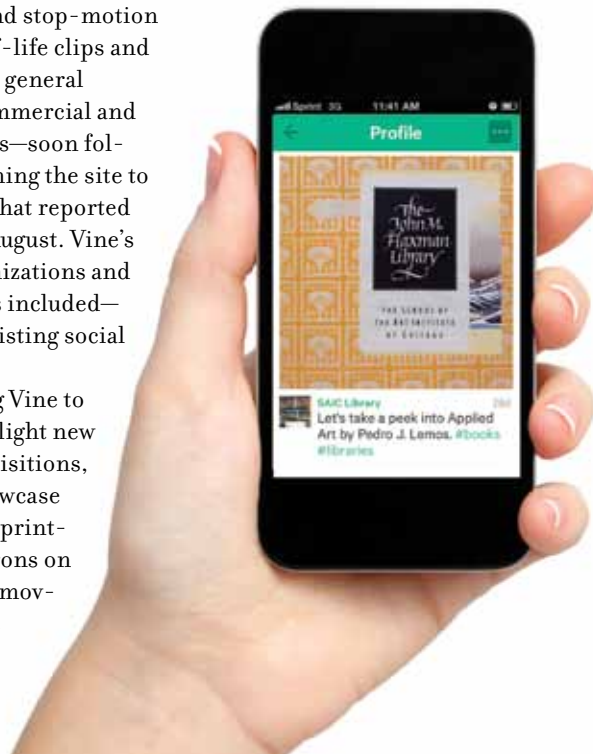
“We’re an art college. Our community responds to images over text,” says Smith. SAIC’s Vine page reflects that: clips of books and DVDs flashing by so fast that their covers become a blur of changing colors; a moving collection of old library rubber stamps; and highlights from the insides of books devoted to particular artists. SAIC also used Vine to introduce students and the public to new library renovations.

Vine’s current popularity is a mixed blessing, however. “Vine fits into our wider social media goal of becoming content creators and makes us better able to spread our message,” says Ferreira, “but it might not be popular in a year.” Maryann James-Daley, web and social media librarian at the District of Columbia Public Library, had similar apprehensions when she started using Vine in March. “It was an experiment,” she says. “But I’m pleasantly surprised at the response.” D.C. Public Library has been using Vine to promote events at its branches and has held a popular Vine how-to class at the new digital commons at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library. The class was one of the first offered at the commons, which opened in July.

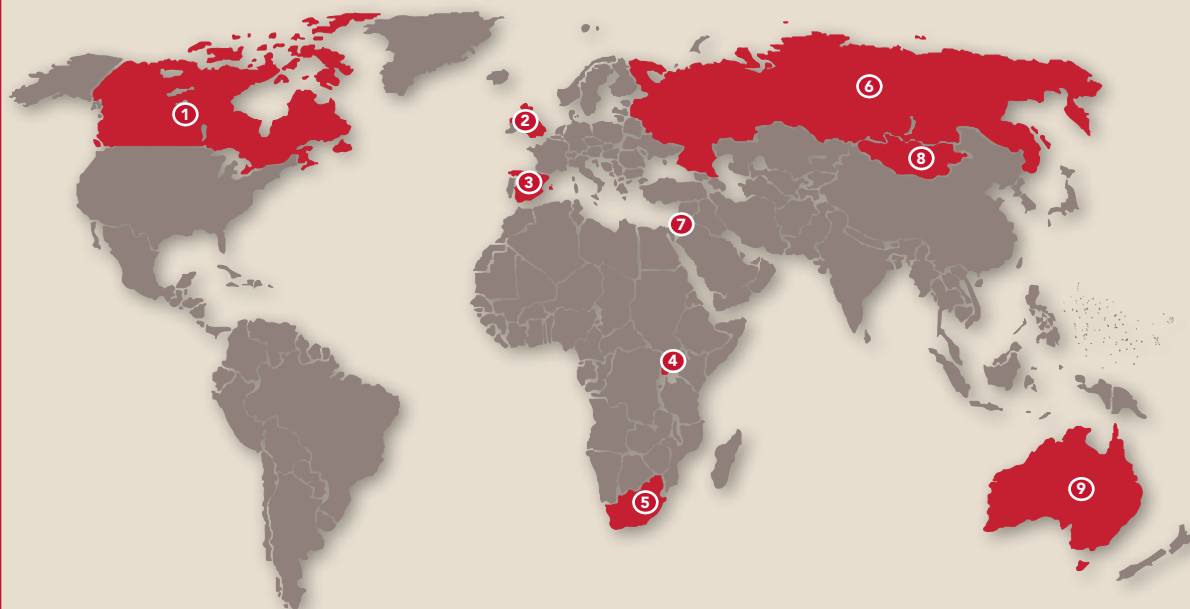
“We’re still playing around with it,” says James-Daley—a remark echoed by Shackleton, Smith, and Ferreira. “But it’s been great to have been a part of it and see it grow from a little seed to what it is today.”

—Phil Morehart

**Vine’s success has led organizations and companies—libraries included—to integrate it into existing social media strategies.**



# GLOBAL REACH



## CANADA ①

Late fees are returning to the Windsor (Ont.) Public Library, following the release of an October 4 report that said a 21-month no-fine experiment was an abject failure. The pilot project was approved two years ago at the urging of former Library CEO Barry Holmes. The library had lost about \$200,000 in fines it would otherwise have collected.—*Windsor Star*, Oct. 4.

## UNITED KINGDOM ②

The Senate House Library at the University of London scrapped plans to sell a set of four Shakespeare Folios at auction after leading academics attacked the proposal as “an act of stupidity.” Library Director Christopher Pressler resigned for “personal reasons” weeks after he admitted breaching financial rules by not disclosing his relationship with an employee at the auction house overseeing the sale.—*The Telegraph*, Oct. 1.

## SPAIN ③

The National Library of Spain has discovered in its archives a rare single page of an opera score for *Il Pirata* (*The Pirate*) handwritten by 19th-century Italian composer Vincenzo Bellini. The fragment was discovered after the library’s cataloging service requested the identification of a “sheet of music bound in an album of 19th-century photographs and drawings with landscapes of Malta and Sicily.”—*Agence France-Presse*, Sept. 18.

## UGANDA ④

Any Ugandan with a mobile phone can now download ebooks, thanks to South African-based telecom company MTN Group, which partnered with the ad agency Metropolitan Republic Group to promote literacy through an “Everywhere Library” using newspaper and cellphone PSAs.—*PSFK*, Oct. 3.

## SOUTH AFRICA ⑤

Sony Electronics rolled out a national book collection program September 16 to benefit the South Africa Mobile Library Project, part of the Department of Education’s efforts to improve literacy levels. Recycling vendors are enabling public donations of gently

used children’s books through November 16.—*Sony Electronics*, Sept. 16.

## RUSSIA ⑥

All 400 Moscow city libraries are getting a makeover, offering multimedia content, film screenings, lectures, and extended hours. The man behind it is bookseller Boris Kupriyanov, who was asked by Sergei Kapkov, the city culture director who transformed Moscow’s parks, to take on the libraries. The Fyodor Dostoyevsky Library was one of the first to get completely renovated.—*Moscow News*, Sept. 26.

## ISRAEL ⑦

The National Library of Israel has signed an agreement with the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma, Italy, to digitize and display online some 1,600 Hebrew manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages to the 19th century. More than 1,400 of them come from the private collection of Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi (1742–1831), a Catholic priest and scriptural scholar.—*La Repubblica (Parma)*, Oct. 4.

## MONGOLIA ⑧

The National Library of Mongolia has joined OCLC through an agreement negotiated by Middle Tennessee State University Catalog Librarian Enerel Dambiinyam. The library is the first in the country to introduce the OCLC cataloging system and will contribute up to 1,000 titles on WorldCat.—*American Center for Mongolian Studies*, Sept. 12.

## AUSTRALIA ⑨

After 133 years, a letter containing an eyewitness account of the dramatic capture of famed outlaw Ned Kelly during the 1880 siege at Glenrowan has been donated to the State Library of Victoria by the descendants of its author—Scotsman Donald Gray Sutherland. The letter addressed to Sutherland’s family on July 8, 1880, proclaims “the Kellys are annihilated. The gang is completely destroyed.” It continues by describing Kelly’s famous homemade armor and the gunshot wounds that finally brought him down.—*State Library of Victoria*, Oct. 9.

## NEWSMAKER: KATHLEEN SHEARER

In August, the Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and two other groups launched a Joint Task Force on Librarians' Competencies in Support of E-Research and Scholarly Communication. Its first task will be to identify expertise and skill sets that academic librarians will need for expanded roles in e-research, repository management, and scholarly communication. The task force plans to issue a preliminary report in spring 2014.

Meanwhile, *American Libraries* caught up with COAR Executive Director Kathleen Shearer to find out more about the project.



### How did this effort to identify new competencies get started?

**KATHLEEN SHEARER:** This was very much a collaborative project from the beginning that was initiated after discussions between COAR and LIBER (the European Association of European Research Libraries). Both organizations recognized that libraries are rapidly evolving and that innovative services will require a range of new skills and competencies. We then asked ARL and the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) to participate, because they have similar requirements and could also bring considerable expertise to the project. Research and scholarly communication are increasingly global and we are all dealing with similar issues. So why not address the challenges together?

**Do you plan to start with a survey of existing practices?** We are now in the process of documenting the range of new and existing services for research libraries. The next step will be to undertake an analysis of the competencies required to tackle

these services successfully. Much work on skills and competencies in different service areas has already been done, so a large portion of our charge will be to review the existing literature.

**How many countries will be involved?** If we look at all the countries represented through COAR, LIBER, ARL, and CARL, it is about 55 countries. Of course, a much smaller group of us are working directly on the task force.

**How can academic librarians currently keep up with the skill sets needed to manage new e-research?** This is very difficult. The environment is evolving so quickly that it is hard, if not impossible, for library schools to keep up. Conferences, workshops, and other one-off training opportunities are filling in the gap in terms of training, but even those can lag behind new developments in the field. Right now the onus is on individual librarians to learn on the job and keep up to date through reading and monitoring the environment.

**Have any LIS schools created course concentrations in scholarly communication and e-research?** There are individual courses at LIS schools that address topics such as digital libraries, digital preservation, data curation, scholarly communication, and open access, as well as a few intensive programs at select universities. Still, these topics have not yet become part of core curriculum for many academic library programs.

**Will you be looking at Big Data management?** Big Data, yes. But perhaps even more importantly for libraries is managing small data, or the so-called "long tail" under which thousands of heterogeneous data sets fall. Managing these disparate data sets comes with its own unique challenges.

**Can you recommend any best practices for open-access repositories?** In terms of best practice, it really depends on the organizational structure of the institution. What we do know is that, for repositories to be successful, libraries must devote sufficient staffing resources toward advocacy, populating the repository, maintaining the software, and developing end-user services.

**How do you plan to promote the competencies?** We will be making the results of our work openly available to all. We also aim to produce a variety of resources and tools that can be used and adapted to different organizational models and regional contexts around the world. ■



# Start-Up Librarian

Expanding our skills into new arenas

by Cen Campbell

Remember all those library jobs that were going to open up once the boomers retired?

Pundits prophesied librarians being in demand everywhere, with libraries scrambling to fill empty positions. There weren't going to be enough librarians to go around!

Things haven't turned out quite as we expected, and now the rhetoric has shifted to the plight of new librarians trying to break into the job market, plus some doom and gloom about how libraries are becoming obsolete.

Librarianship is changing. It's expanding into content development and production, and extending way beyond buildings, collections, and services as we have known them. As that shift begins to happen on a larger scale, there will also be a shift in where and how librarians find employment.

Today's librarian is a combination of traditional skills and advanced technological know-how. The things we learned in library school (bibliographic control, readers' advisory, and outreach) are hot commodities in high-tech environments. Many new librarians have an aptitude for new technologies that make us the people who can bridge the gap between producers and consumers. There's a catch, though; you probably won't see any postings for these

kinds of jobs because they may not even exist yet. You might have to create them yourself.

Trust me, it can be done. After taking some time off to start a family, and then trying to break back into the library workforce by filling in at reference desks whenever I could, I began a library blog and started experimenting with using new media in storytimes. One day as I browsed Digital Book World, I saw an article about a reading service, Bookboard.com, whose office was

near where I lived. I looked at the firm's product and mission, "to encourage children to develop a lifelong love for reading," and saw how the company's values align with

mine. I contacted them to ask if I could use their books in my digital storytelling pilot projects. They agreed, then asked if I could help them with:

- Managing a growing digital book collection;
- Developing and maintaining relationships with publishers, authors, illustrators, and other stakeholders;
- Recommending functionality for use in library and school settings.

I'm now the library manager at Bookboard, and I don't think this kind of position will be an anomaly for long; other high-tech content producers are realizing the value of traditional librarian skills in the

new digital marketplace. What has been especially heartening about this "start-up librarian" phenomenon has been the response of the technology and business worlds. Both TechCrunch and *Forbes* highlighted that it's a librarian who provides the "secret sauce" for Bookboard, in addition to algorithms, graphic design, and other high-tech mojo.

Start-up librarians could potentially have a greater impact on literacy and society than their more traditional counterparts because they work directly with the people producing the content that our communities use. Instead of pointing to prepackaged content on shelves or in databases, we can help create the information, tools, and services that are relevant to today's library patrons, and help ensure that we do so economically and effectively.

Take a look around the digital marketplace; find a start-up or an organization that is working toward an ideal or a goal that appeals to you, and give them a call. Tell them about your ideas and skills, and propose a potential partnership. Remember that it's often attitude, enthusiasm, and the ability to make things happen that attract employers in the start-up world, and that a large, strong network of healthy relationships is probably the best way to land your first job as a start-up librarian. ■

CEN CAMPBELL is library manager at Bookboard.com and founder of LittleLit.com. She also serves on the Children and Technology Committee of ALSC.



The things we learned in library school are hot commodities in high-tech environments.

# What They Said

"We need to think of it, really, as a kind of center for the study of George Washington. Anybody writing anything on Washington or his era—we want them to feel like they need to come here."  
DOUGLAS BRADBURN, director, the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington in Mount Vernon, Virginia, on the library being a resource for anyone interested in the first US president, in "200 Years Later, George Washington Finally Gets His Presidential Library," *Washington Post*, Sept. 26.

"The idea that a shelf full of books somehow replaces a librarian is wrong. If I'm exploring things about, say, my sexuality, drug issues, health issues, I can't grab those books in front of my peers."  
CHRISTIAN ZABRISKIE, executive director, Urban Librarians Unite, in "City Schools Ask State to Waive Librarian Requirements," *The Brooklyn Bureau*, Sept. 26.

"It's really important that we have this support. We try to do as much as we can, but it really takes organizations like libraries to get the message out to their customers and their communities."  
TIM MAKINEN, communications director, Gift of Life, on libraries helping local residents sign up for the organization's organ and tissue donor registry, in "Canton Library to Register Organ, Tissue Donors," *Canton (Mich.) Observer*, Sept. 29.

"Places that serve us well every day serve us best when disaster strikes. Health and safety go hand in hand with lively urban spaces. Invest in one, and you aid the other.... Branches have become our de facto community centers, serving the widest range of citizens—indispensable in countless, especially poorer, more vulnerable

neighborhoods. They are much threatened by budget cuts, but never more in demand by toddlers and teenagers, working parents, the elderly and the unemployed, new immigrants and traditional readers."

MICHAEL KIMMELMAN, architecture critic, on libraries serving as disaster shelters if they were given the resources, in "Next Time, Libraries Could Be Our Shelters from the Storm," *New York Times*, Oct. 2.

"While deciding that libraries can double as disaster centers could allow for some sensible efficiencies in facing certain scale disasters, the idea could also be criticized as being a piece with the across-the-board, general and extreme reductions of social services and government functions and their sometimes transfer to private ownership or to other, less well-equipped branches of the government."

MICHAEL D. D. WHITE, former senior government finance and development official responding to a *New York Times* piece on libraries serving as possible disaster relief shelters, in "Michael Kimmelman's Scary Tightrope Act on Library Design: A Dance with the PR Machine of Library Officials Intent on Selling Off Libraries," *Noticing New York*, Oct. 3.

"Books that are loved by children are often the books that scare adults."  
JUDY BLUME, children's author, on banning children's books that deal with controversial topics, in "NYC Library Offers List of 100 Great Kids' Books," *Associated Press*, Oct. 3.

"We don't want the place of interaction to be food courts or clinics, to be about food or sickness, but books and culture. We want our city to become more and

**"Among other things, the Library of Congress is closed as a result of what the vandals have done."**

CHARLES P. PIERCE, blogger, on the federal government shutdown, in "The Reign of Morons Is Here," *Esquire*, Oct. 1.

more comfortable to live in.... We do not want to make a library that excludes anyone. We want all those who come to the library to keep coming."

BORIS KUPRIYANOV, independent bookstore owner, on his vision for reviving Moscow's libraries, in "Moscow's Library Makeover Starts with Dostoyevsky," *Moscow News*, Sept. 26.

"We only had two in the house, an illustrated Old Testament and volume 1 of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. I was well versed in everything from 'aardvark' to 'azimuth,' but little else. The public library became a sort of refuge."

STING, singer-songwriter, on growing up without many books, in "Sting: By the Book," *New York Times Sunday Book Review*, Sept. 19.

"If they have a library card, they all get the online tutoring. And it's all year. So, it doesn't just go with the school year and it just doesn't go with the Teacher in the Library program.... All they need is their library card and that library card is their passport."

RAHM EMANUEL, mayor of Chicago, on the Chicago Public Library offering online tutoring via Brainfuse chatroom seven days a week in addition to other initiatives involving education, in "City Library to Provide Online Tutoring to Chicago Students," *Chicago Sun-Times*, Oct. 3. ■

# Common Ground

Meeting spaces of the minds

by Joseph Janes

There are many benefits to spending one's life on a college campus: beautiful settings, the rhythm of the academic year, and of course continually being surrounded by bright, energetic students. Each summer they come for orientation, eager, excited, and younger by the year. You too can play the "where were you the year they were born" game. 1995? Gulp.

By the time you read this, this year's freshmen have settled into their routines, dug into classes, and in many cases, engaged for the first time with an academic library. And in many of those libraries, they have found a research- or learning-commons space where they can attend tutorials, find a place to do coursework, collaborate on projects, create presentations, write, or just sit around and think or read.

These are great spaces and I'm delighted that so many academic libraries have dedicated space and resources to building and maintaining them. (Much of the following could also be said for makerspaces and the like in public libraries.) I use ours regularly—for my own work, for office hours, for class sessions to work in small groups, and for consultations with students

working on research projects. My favorite part is the whiteboard-topped tables on wheels (as are most of the furnishings, for flexibility in use of space). So cool, as are the refillable markers and erasers available for checkout.

All very useful, all very busy—there's lots of time when there's not a seat or table to be had. Whenever I go

over there, though, I have one nagging question that won't go away: Why is this space here? Why is this in the library?

Don't mistake me—I'm glad it is, for all the reasons I listed. There is, however, no real reason why this

space belongs *necessarily* in a library. It could just as easily be in the student union, or a classroom building, or a residence hall, or anywhere else. By the same token, a makerspace could just as easily be in a community center. No matter how popular or useful they are, if a provost or dean or mayor asked why these spaces were in libraries, I'm not sure our answers would be all that specific, or convincing.

Which is a shame, because there are lots of possibilities. Research/consultation/reference-type services are obvious, though almost certainly they'd have to be roving or outreach-y in nature. So is support of enhanced use of collections and resources. Less obvious might be

assistance in the creation and formatting of various intellectual products. Intellectual property/licensing tutorials? Advice on publishing and distribution of scholarly products and insight into the open access/open source journal/scholarly book/digital product models? Use of metadata to allow web-based products to be found? We know—and have—a lot that could be put at users' disposal.

Imagine this: If you had 90 seconds with your chief decision-maker, the person who really holds the power (board chair, president, dean), how would you portray, *in words your decision-maker would use*, the practical value of this sort of space in advancing the agenda of the college or city, and not just as a space that is nice, useful, helpful, or pretty? It's harder than it sounds, this elevator-speech thingy; some time and forethought into precisely what such a space is meant to achieve can pay big dividends when the questions come.

These kinds of spaces could well become a significant component of our continuing reimagining and reinvention. Thus, once you've got the elevator speech ready, you need to find the elevator. Don't simply wait for the moment to pounce; orchestrate it, and dazzle the powers that be with your logic and persuasion.... Don't be just another story. ■



**If a provost or dean or mayor asked why a learning commons or makerspace was in your library, what would be your 90-second elevator speech?**

JOSEPH JANES is associate professor and chair of the MLIS program at the Information School of the University of Washington in Seattle.

# Not Just Angels on a Pin

Defining technological innovation

by Jason Vaughan

In its *Most Innovative Companies 2012* report that analyzes survey data from more than 1,500 senior executives, the Boston Consulting Group noted: “Innovation is rapidly moving up the CEO agenda across regions and industries. Seventy-six percent of respondents ranked innovation as a ‘top-three’ strategic priority—the highest level in our survey’s history.” Innovate on Purpose blogger Jeffrey Phillips observed:

“I’m sure we could spend hours debating the definition of innovation, much like ancient scholars



**76% of CEOs ranked innovation a “top-three” strategic priority.**

argued about how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. Unlike the angels on a pin, however, the definition of innovation matters.... A definition signals intention, commitment, direction, and importance.... If innovation is poorly defined, innovation is like discovering a new continent without a map, without a compass, and without knowing what’s important when you discover it.”

“Innovation” is a broad, amorphous concept. In today’s volatile higher education environment, the day is long past where the word does not crop up—whether in library meetings, memos, coffee conversations, or annual conference themes. To gain further insight, I explored several avenues that extend the con-

versation and shed more light on the library community’s use of the word. This included a look at library job advertisements, strategic plans, and awards (both in the library community and the corporate world). I also examined technology trends mentioned in a variety of outlets: *Library Technology Reports*, the *Horizon Report*, Library Information and Technology Association (LITA) National Forum topics, and LITA Top Technology Trends presented at ALA annual conferences.

But I still needed a better sense of what the academic and research library community means when

it uses the word “innovation.” So in early 2013, I surveyed library directors—members of the Association of Research Libraries—on the concept of *technological innovation*, a subset of the extremely broad, overarching concept of innovation (that might or might not involve technology). Two dozen library directors responded to my 10 questions, many of which were multiple choice but also allowed the respondents abundant opportunities to express their own thoughts. An introductory question asked them to select three (out of 20) words and phrases that seemed to capture the essence of technological innovation. A later question listed 32 discrete technologies currently found in (or being evaluated by) the library community and

asked respondents to score each item from zero to 10 according to how “innovative” they considered it.

A few factors emerged as important to these leaders’ perception of technological innovations:

- newness;
- the origin of the innovation (within libraries or outside libraries);
- whether the innovation is applied differently or uniquely in a library setting, versus its use and application outside the library environment;
- whether the innovation is incremental or fundamental change;
- its adoption rate among other libraries;
- the improvement in user experience.

My research emphasizes the need for focus, strategy, and direction in adopting technological innovations. Writing in *Library Trends*, Kathryn Deiss, content strategist for ALA’s Association of College and Research Libraries, notes: “While strategy can exist without innovation, it is unlikely that effective innovation can occur without the use of strategy.” In short, what comes to mind when you think of technological innovation? Apple? Google? Or the new James B. Hunt Jr. Library at North Carolina State University? ■

JASON VAUGHAN is director of library technologies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. This article is adapted from his November/December *Library Technology Report*, “Technological Innovation: Perceptions and Definitions,” which provides the full survey results and selected quotes from respondents’ answers.



# Open Access Everything

Libraries are making scholarship accessible to all

by Meredith Farkas

With the growing cost of higher education, declining library budgets, and the crisis in scholarly publishing, it can sometimes be difficult to feel optimistic. Looking at the creative efforts to address these issues through publishing gives me ample hope. Many academic libraries are working to make the scholarly and creative output of their communities widely accessible. They are also supporting the creation of sustainable publishing models through education, institutional repositories, and open access (OA) publishing.

Academic libraries around the world are collecting the scholarly products of their communities in institutional repositories. At my university library, PDXScholar ([pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu](http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu)) collects and makes freely available online theses, dissertations, culminating papers, and faculty works whose copyright agreements allow for archiving in an institutional repository. We do this to make visible and accessible the amazing work happening at our university.

Some libraries are also developing their own digital publishing imprints in an effort to offer a solid alternative to traditional publishing. The University of Pittsburgh Library System, for example, offers a platform and support for OA journals ([library.pitt.edu/e-journals](http://library.pitt.edu/e-journals)). It already publishes 30 OA scholarly journals using the Open Journal

Systems platform and offers print-on-demand via an Espresso Book Machine. This arrangement supports journal editors in making their publications open access.

Some libraries that have always been engaged in publishing have begun publishing OA books and are experimenting with new forms of scholarship. MPublishing ([publishing.umich.edu](http://publishing.umich.edu)), through the University of Michigan Library, offers a number of series and even some UM Press books that are OA. They have also formed Maize Books to produce OA and shorter-form works and will experiment with emerging forms of peer review.

Libraries are also encouraging faculty and graduate students to publish in OA journals. More than 40 libraries listed under the Compact for Open Access Publishing Equity ([oacompact.org](http://oacompact.org)) help pay associated author fees. Scholarly communications librarians at many other institutions can help scholars navigate the complex world of author agreements.

Textbook prices are a major issue, with each student spending an average of \$1,200 on textbooks each year. Many libraries make textbooks available on reserve, but this doesn't fully address the issue. The open textbooks movement seeks to produce digital textbooks where the only cost to students would be

printing. Most open textbook projects are spearheaded by state governments and foundations, but



Libraries offer a solid alternative to traditional publishing.

libraries are also beginning to lend their support to this initiative.

Through grants and library funding, the SUNY Open Textbooks Program ([opensuny.org](http://opensuny.org)) will publish 15 OA textbooks by SUNY faculty this year, with graphic design, copy editing, and instructional design services provided by participating SUNY libraries and the SUNY Press. Kansas State University is also engaged in an Open/Alternative Textbook Initiative ([lib.k-state.edu/open-textbook](http://lib.k-state.edu/open-textbook)), offering faculty stipends to either create a free textbook or use OA resources. These initiatives provide a valuable contribution to addressing the growing unaffordability of higher education.

These can be frustrating times for libraries struggling to provide access to materials our patrons need. But groups such as libraries, governments, and nonprofits have spearheading many projects designed to improve or transform publishing. Individually, they are simply intriguing; when viewed together they indicate a growing movement to help make publishing sustainable and research accessible. ■

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*Archive staff at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum have been working feverishly for eight years to provide digital content for historic events leading up to the 50th anniversary of the president's assassination in November. Now it's their time to shine*



# DIGITIZING CAMELOT

By Timothy Inklebarger

The anger, frustration, and worry that the situation could turn out very badly were evident in the president's voice.

It was September 1962 and pro-segregation forces were readying for a violent clash with US troops over a court order entitling James Meredith, an African-American student, to enroll at the all-white University of Mississippi. Days before riots erupted that left two dead and hundreds wounded, President John F. Kennedy spoke on a recorded phone call with Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett, at times almost pleading with him to maintain law and order.

"You just don't understand the situation down here," Barnett snaps at Kennedy.

Kennedy cuts him off, his voice terse and unwavering. "Well, the only thing is I got my responsibility," he says, referring to the court order.

Barnett implores Kennedy to postpone enrolling Meredith and to tell the public that "under the [potentially violent] circumstances at this time, it just wouldn't be fair to [Meredith] or others, uh, to try to register him."

"Well, then at what time would it be fair?" Kennedy retorts.

The "Integrating Ole Miss" audio recordings and hun-





Left: Caroline Kennedy whispers to her father during an August 26, 1963, visit to Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. Bottom: President-Elect John F. Kennedy speaks to reporters December 6, 1960; a Kennedy campaign pin.

dreds of others are available online through the vast digital archive at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston.

The library has been building the “Access to a Legacy” digital archive since

2006 and made it public in January

2011, marking the 50th anniversary of Kennedy’s inauguration. Through its website ([jfklibrary.org](http://jfklibrary.org)) the library provides access to 150 terabytes of information, including approximately 593,500 paper documents, 22,642 photographs, 1,436 sound recordings, and 121 moving images, according to James Roth, library deputy director. It is the most extensive digitization effort in the presidential library system, and the archive is growing every year.

The website gives visitors an insider’s view of the Kennedy White House, allowing them to listen to tape-recorded phone calls and closed-door meetings, read handwritten notes by the president in the margins of official documents, and view never-before-seen pictures of Kennedy and his staff. Visitors can pore over unabridged folders of information and tour interactive exhibits that highlight documents, television newscasts, presidential speeches, and other information associated with the JFK administration.

Archivists have already finished digitizing Kennedy’s personal papers, documents related to the 1960 election, and the president’s speeches. Roth says they’re now working to complete the White House photographs collection, which includes thousands of images taken by the president’s photography staff. Archivists are also working to declassify documents in the president’s national security files and put them online, Roth says.

Online visitors will soon have access to speeches, public events, and other moving images that are being digitally remastered by Deluxe Entertainment Services Group, whose clients include top Hollywood studios. For instance, Kennedy’s speech for his inaugural address was recently digitally remastered, Roth says, and the archive is looking to remaster additional speeches, televised press conferences, and Kennedy’s home movies.

Eight years in the making, the digitization effort has paid dividends, technologically speaking. The library has doubled traffic to its site to more than 2 million visitors

a year since the archive went live.

Library staffers—made up of employees from the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation and the National Archives and Records Administration—have been working in high gear in preparation for the 50th anniversary of a number of historic events leading up to Kennedy’s assassination on November 22.

Library Director Tom Putnam says that while thousands of documents from Kennedy’s presidency have yet to be digitized, archivists have more recently focused their efforts on Kennedy-related events from 1963, such as the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, Martin Luther King Jr.’s March on Washington, and the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, to name a few.

“It’s getting toward November, so people are getting a little frantic,” archivist Erica Boudreau told *American Libraries* this summer.

## ★ PUTTING JFK IN CONTEXT

The digitization project also has helped bolster the library’s education outreach efforts using interactive content from the website. In the “Integrating Ole Miss” interactive exhibit, for instance, students are challenged to review documents and other media to understand the event and its place in history.

Putnam says the digitization effort has made it easier for the library’s education department to assemble new lesson plans and teaching materials as more information is made available online. “Our director of education used to, like the others, have to go down to the reference room and spend hours going through files,” Putnam says. Now the documents are just a few keystrokes away.

Nancy McCoy, director of education and public programs, says the library develops lesson plans and curriculum guides for



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## THE ARCHIVE HONORS KENNEDY'S LEGACY AS A CHAMPION OF TECHNOLOGY.



says that as time goes on, digitization is going to “save a lot of time and money.”

Publishing information in its entirety is a guiding principle at the library. The website notes that providing “file level” access to data has the advantage of making digital archiving more efficient for archivists—who make the information discoverable through metadata. An added benefit: Providing access to unabridged folders also mirrors the research room experience.

Porter says maintaining the integrity of a folder's contents is important because it creates a context for “what was happening in the White House that day.”

“I think people don't understand that these [folders] were created at the White House level,” she says. “You can put yourself right in the Oval Office.”

### ★ TREASURES IN THE VAULT

While the library's interactive exhibits provide context for important historical events, the data available at the file level is abundant with hidden gems of information about Kennedy.

Francis says she discovered one of these hidden treasures when she came across a letter from author Kurt Vonnegut Jr. when he was volunteering for Kennedy's 1960 presidential campaign. It would still be another nine years before he would publish his seminal novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

“I've published two novels and am a regular contributor of fiction to the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *McCall's*, and so on. On occasion, I write pretty well,” Vonnegut wrote in 1960.

Not all discoveries are so obvious, says Lindsay Closterman, the library's audio/visual metadata cataloger. Closterman often has to play history detective as part of her duty scanning and providing information about photographs from the Kennedy White House. About a third of the 30,000 images in the White House photograph archive are available online, according to Closterman. She says

Top Left: A Kennedy/Johnson campaign pin; watching the liftoff of the first American in space, May 4, 1961. Left: Kennedy poses with his brothers (L-R), Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and Senator Edward M. Kennedy (Massachusetts) in the West Wing Colonnade outside the Oval Office, August 28, 1963. President Kennedy stands in the presidential limousine as his motorcade passes crowds lining Kapahulu Avenue in Honolulu, Hawaii, June 6, 1963.

teachers—elementary through high school—on an ongoing basis. Most recently, the library launched its “1963 Civil Rights Movement” interactive exhibit, which includes 10 lesson plans, she says.

The civil rights movement was also the focus this year of the library's annual spring conference for librarians and 3rd-to-8th-grade educators. Breakout sessions included workshops on selecting books on the civil rights movement for library displays and gave attendees the chance to meet with authors and historians. Past topics have included science and technology, the Peace Corps, and photography and illustration used in education.

The digital archive and education outreach work at the library is in addition to the hundreds of requests for documents the museum receives every year. Requests have spiked in recent months because of the anniversaries, but library staffers are using the museum's digitization infrastructure to their advantage, encouraging researchers to order digital prints instead of photocopies by charging slightly less for the digital option.

Kelly Francis, assistant digital archivist for textual collections, says when the museum receives an order for digitized copies of a document, the archive staff will scan

the entire folder containing the information. “Once the folder is done and we can publish it to the website, then it's done and available to everyone,” she says.

Maura Porter, the library's declassification archivist,





“shot cards” by the president’s photographers, which include information about the photos, are sometimes vague or incomplete. It’s her job to fill in the blanks.

Closterman says she was recently reminded of a discovery she made about two years ago when trying to identify a White House staff

member serving food at a luncheon for First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy. She finally identified the man by cross-referencing the photo with another picture of White House staff from a 1967 issue of *Ebony* magazine. In that photograph, Sammy Davis Jr. was pictured with three White House staff members, one of whom was identified as Eugene Allen. Allen served as a butler at the White House through several administrations and was memorialized in the 2013 film *The Butler* starring Forest Whitaker (as Allen) and Oprah Winfrey.

“A few months ago I found out about the movie and I thought, ‘I know who that is,’” Closterman says.

Porter says the digital archive allows anyone to play history detective.

“I tell people, ‘Do some research, spend an afternoon,’” she says. “It’s not just for scholars; it’s for everyone. Pick a subject and spend four hours and review the files. You won’t regret it.”

## ★ HONORING KENNEDY’S LEGACY

While the digital archive has a seemingly endless supply of information about Kennedy, it is short on documents concerning his assassination. That’s because the information is stored at the National Archives and Records Administration. Putnam says the library primarily focuses on Kennedy’s life and accomplishments in office rather than the way in which he died. But the library will hold a “simple ceremony” on the 50th anniversary of Kennedy’s death, he says.

The digital archive honors Kennedy’s legacy as a champion of technology, he says, noting that the president had the foresight to realize that technology would allow scholars remote access to his papers. He says Kennedy summed it up best during a 1962 press conference: “Through scientific

Left: Kennedy aboard the yacht *Honey Fitz*, off Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, August 31, 1963. Bottom: The president delivers a radio and television address to the nation regarding desegregation at the University of Alabama, June 11, 1963.

## ★ ONLINE INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS

Visitors to the Kennedy Library website ([jfklibrary.org](http://jfklibrary.org)) can use the library’s internal search engine to dig through unabridged files. Library staffers suggest picking a topic and spending a few hours putting the pieces together yourself. *American Libraries* recommends visiting these interactive exhibits and historic archives to jump-start your journey.

- Civil Rights Timeline:** This interactive exhibit draws from 230 primary sources, including paper, film, and audio files, to explore milestones in the civil rights movement.
- World on the Brink—JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis:** The 13-day standoff between the US and the Soviet Union comes to life in this exhibit that gives a day-by-day account of the crisis. Listen to secretly recorded meetings with the president, review formerly classified documents, and much more.
- We Choose the Moon:** Blast off virtually with the crew of *Apollo 11* in the historic 1969 moon landing. This computer-animated tour of the flight features historic audio and video footage of the launch and Kennedy’s call to action.
- The President’s Desk:** This virtual tour allows visitors to sit at the president’s desk, read his daily calendar, look at his personal photographs, and listen to his phone calls.
- JFK50:** The library’s award-winning site uses a graphic novel-style approach to educate visitors about historical events from JFK’s presidency, from the Bay of Pigs to the moon landing to his work in the civil rights movement.

means of reproduction, microfilms, and all the rest, it is possible to make documents available generally here in Washington, and through the Archives, the Library of Congress, and at the libraries.... As time goes on, we will find it possible to reproduce the key documents so that they will be commonly available.” ■



TIMOTHY INKLEBARGER is a freelance reporter in Chicago. He has written for the *Associated Press*, *Consumers Digest*, *Chicago Journal*, and *Pensions & Investments*.







# FRIDAY NIGHT LIBRARY LIGHTS

To reach sports fans, libraries offer resources to a growing number of fantasy league players

**P**aul Waelchli loves football. As a teenager growing up outside Green Bay, Wisconsin, he played the sport in high school. Watching Packers games on Sunday afternoons was a firm family tradition. When Waelchli took over as director of Cornell College's Cole Library in Mount Vernon, Iowa, three years ago, it seemed only natural that he would bring his passion for the gridiron to the stacks.

By Adam Doster

Helping patrons manage their fantasy football rosters was one way Waelchli thought to do it.

“I really enjoy helping people research and problem-solve and crack the nut of trying to find the information that they’re looking for,” he says. “I enjoy playing fantasy football, too.”

Nothing in America brings people together quite like sports. Although hard-core football and basketball fans aren’t necessarily thought of as serious readers, libraries have the ability to offer a variety of resources that would hold considerable appeal for them, particularly those seeking an edge in fantasy leagues or NCAA March Madness pools on college basketball.

If librarians can find innovative ways to connect with that population, they have a real opportunity to attract new, hard-to-reach patrons.

“Playing fantasy sports, you’re reaching a different demographic,” says Waelchli. “But you’re still bringing people together as a cultural and community center.”

## A powerhouse league

Fantasy sports are a \$2 billion industry now, catering to 36 million North American players, a bloc that has nearly doubled since 2007. The concept is a draw, in part, because of its simplicity; fans act as franchise owners, building teams of real professional athletes who then compete, based on weekly statistical performance, against other teams organized by friends or colleagues.

Not surprisingly, hundreds of websites have sprouted in recent years, all peddling detailed and insightful information as they try to gain a foothold in the growing market. Some are more reliable than others, and librarians are well positioned to help interested players sift through what’s available.

## Already in the game

Some libraries are already sites of sports activity. Justin Keiser, a librarian at Jacksonville (Fla.) Public Library, points to a group of fantasy football players that has been using his branch’s electronic classroom for its draft for three years running. “This way,” he says, “the league members could meet in one place, they each had a computer, and the full draft could be displayed on the projection screen.”

Similarly, Brent Lipinski, a manager at Chicago Public Library’s (CPL) Wrightwood-Ashburn branch, says he sees lots of people using the public computers to create their fantasy teams. “Because we have computer access, people come in, they look up scores, watch videos,” says Lipinski.

Sara Gore Holladay, an electronic resources librarian at the Frick Art Reference Library in New York City, hosts the website Fantasy Football Librarian. Each year, in conjunction with the Fantasy Sports Trade Association (FSTA),



Holladay runs an “accuracy challenge,” in which she takes the preseason rankings of more than 60 different sites and measures their estimates against the actual end-of-season results.

“There’s a wealth of information, and there’s a ton of small places that are providing [it],” says Waelchli, who has given presentations with Holladay in the past on the intersection of fantasy sports and information literacy.

Waelchli’s library on campus doubles as the public library for Mount Vernon, Iowa, a town of 4,500. This fall, he’s working with his youth services library assistant to organize a research event for middle school students dubbed “How to Dominate Your League Night.” Utilizing Holladay’s rankings, he wants to point his kids toward less obvious sources and teach them what football skills they should value in a potential draftee. Fantasy sports “opens the door for a wide range of people to get engaged in talking about how they use information,” he says, “and to do it in a fun way.”

Some library systems, like the one in the Topeka and Shawnee County (Kans.) Public Library, have gone so far as to set up the library’s own internal leagues. All experience levels are welcome, their public flier notes, and there’s no fee for entry.

## Build it and they will come

The benefits of engaging sports fans are diverse. At the most basic level, fantasy sports can provide an entry point for potential patrons who might not think regularly about what services and goods libraries make available.

For those with an interest in athletics but without a computer at home, the library is a lifeline; a 2010 report from the Institute of Museum and Library Services found that 44% of people in households living below the federal poverty line used public library computers and internet access. For others, the library serves as a safe place to hang out with peers and indulge in hobbies. In June 2013, the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project found that people in their 20s are just as likely as older Americans to visit a library but are much more likely to study, read, or surf the internet at the facilities themselves.

The mean age of fantasy sports players is 41, according to FSTA data, and the vast majority of participants are



men. “We in libraries sometimes have a hard time reaching men, especially adult men,” says Lipinski. “The dads do come in with their kids, but they don’t do a lot of pleasure reading themselves.”

Aside from providing commercial sports magazines like *Sports Illustrated* and *ESPN The Magazine*, some libraries also carry annual fantasy guides and publications that examine a sport’s numerical data. Via EBSCO, some libraries have purchased issues of *Lindy’s Sports Annuals*, a preseason sports periodical. Each spring, for example, Chicago Public Library buys copies of *Baseball Prospectus*, the yearly guide favored by baseball’s sabermetric community. (Think *Moneyball*.)

In March, when college basketball brackets begin circulating, some libraries could purchase a \$20 subscription to KenPom.com, a leading college basketball website and statistical archive. “You can go to the library, sit down and look at [these guides], take all of your notes, and it costs you zero dollars,” says Lipinski. “It’s really appealing, especially because that little bit of research gives you a big edge.”

### Welcoming sports lovers

Outreach is critical. Lipinski makes a public display when the sports seasons change, lifting from the shelves his

branch’s best baseball stories in the spring and then swapping in books on the Chicago Bears in the fall.

Professional sports teams love to partner with libraries, and there’s room to leverage those relationships creatively. The Chicago White Sox offered baseball tickets this summer to a handful of children who completed CPL’s summer reading program.

Chicago Bulls all-star forward Luol Deng, meanwhile, was 2013 honorary chair of September’s Library Card Sign-Up Month, sponsored annually by the American Library Association.

Librarians need not be baseball nerds or linebackers themselves to create an environment that is welcoming to sports lovers.

“As librarians, we research things we don’t know. That’s what we do,” Lipinski says. “It’s the same way you can approach this problem. If you know nothing about sports, use the tools at your disposal.” ■



ADAM DOSTER is a freelance writer and editor based in Chicago. His work on sports and sporting culture has appeared in *ESPN The Magazine*, *The Classical*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Reader*, *Chicago*, and *Deadspin*, among other publications.

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# Navigating the News

By Deniz Koray

Program empowers teens to discern fact from

fiction and become savvy information consumers



Teens learn about media literacy at the San José (Calif.) Public Library.

The workshop was part of an ALA program that was funded for two years by the Open Society Foundations.

**L**ibrarians have always been major proponents of literacy campaigns, and now, for the past two years, many librarians have been participating in a new type of initiative: media literacy.

To help high school students differentiate between fact and fiction in today's increasingly chaotic news—in which opinion-based cable news programs, blogs, and social media sites have proliferated—the American Library Association (ALA), in partnership with local library branches and a nonprofit media literacy organization, created News Know-How, a program that helps young adults become better, more savvy media consumers.

"The goal was to make librarians and the general public aware of media bias and to teach them how to read the news in a critical way, whether it's a Facebook post, a newspaper article, or a radio report," says Barbara Jones, director of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF), who spearheaded the program.

In 2010, George Soros's Open Society Foundations approached ALA about starting a media literacy initiative. Soon, OIF received a \$750,000 grant from the foundation to develop and carry out the program for two years.

Jones says libraries were the right fit for the News Know-How program because they have the resources on hand—from knowledgeable librarians to extensive databases—to show students how to be their own watchdogs. "[Students and the public] need to be able to pick out bias and propaganda and check facts," she says, "since facts and statistics are often mentioned in a way

that makes them meaningless or misleading without context."

### The genesis

ALA introduced the first version of the full News Know-How program in the summer of 2012, following a trial run a year earlier during the Iowa Republican caucus. This version centered on the 2012 presidential election, with groups focusing on topics such as the media's coverage of the candidates' positions on health care and gun control.

OIF selected libraries in Chicago; Oak Park, Illinois; and eight branches throughout Iowa for the program.

The first year, OIF chose libraries with which it had a past relationship, "but we also wanted a variety of libraries," Jones says. A rural state was especially ideal because she and her team wanted to see how the program would work in small towns and in multiple locations. The proximity to the Association's Chicago headquarters made Iowa a good fit.

To round things out, Jones says, they also wanted a city library and a suburban library in the mix, so they selected Chicago and Oak Park, a nearby suburb.

"The goal of the program was to teach librarians and the general public how to read the news in a critical way, whether it's a Facebook post, a newspaper article, or a radio report."

—Barbara Jones, director of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom

After a successful initial run, Jones decided to open the program to libraries outside the Midwest. In 2013, the program was held in cities with highly concentrated populations. From more than 60 libraries that applied, OIF selected San Antonio (Tex.) Public Library and San José (Calif.) Public Library to implement News Know-How in its second year.



# Information for Students Interested in News Know-How

## 1. Who is the target audience for News Know-How?

Many of the students involved are interested in journalism as a profession. However, Erik Berman of the Educational Park branch of the San José Public Library says there were students from various backgrounds. "Some of them definitely had an interest in journalism, but others were tech-savvy and wanted to distinguish truth from lies. There were also students who wanted to help out the community by producing and presenting their final project," he says.

## 2. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

Elise Westhoff participated in News Know-How in 2012 and said her biggest piece of advice for future participants was to keep in touch with librarians and mentors when confronted with questions or problems. Each group was assigned a professional journalist to serve as a mentor for the group after the initial training sessions. Westhoff said her group kept a biweekly correspondence with their mentor, Jamie Gold, who spent more than a decade at the *Los Angeles Times*. "Definitely utilize your mentors," Westhoff says. "They are there to help you and can answer almost everything, if you just ask."

Each group puts together a video and final presentation at their local library. Several groups also presented at their schools or for civic organizations. The presentations were generally 10–15 minutes long and used both PowerPoint and video editing software.

## Partnerships

ALA partnered with the News Literacy Project (NLP), a nonprofit entering its sixth year teaching media literacy, to run the training sessions for students and librarians. NLP has worked with teachers on media literacy programs in New York; Washington, D.C.; Bethesda, Maryland; and Chicago.

Darragh Worland has been the New York program manager for NLP for almost three years and has led multiple media literacy programs for students in New York City. While NLP has worked with students as young as 11, most of its programs cater to high school students, and the vast majority of News Know-How participants have also been high schoolers.

Because of the NLP's experience in working with teachers on media literacy programs throughout the country, Worland says NLP was asked to serve as lead trainers for ALA's program.

## The role of libraries

Erik Berman is a librarian at the Educational Park branch of San José Public Library and was immediately interested when he heard about the program earlier this year.

"Media literacy ties in with information literacy, which is one of the most important things libraries can teach these days. I immediately recognized that a lot of the techniques that were most important in teaching media literacy also applied to information literacy," says Berman, whose library offered the program June 17–28.

He says local students expressed a lot of interest in the program, but since there was room for only 16 students, he had to turn away more than 50 others. At the end of the two-week program, these teens—divided into groups of four—presented their findings at the library, and even some members of the city council attended.

Most groups did a straightforward presentation in which information was delivered through PowerPoint slides.

But Berman says students took creative approaches, including one group that produced an interactive game show about whether the information presented in the news was true or false.

In addition to groups' findings on such issues as media bias and news reliability, Berman thinks the News Know-How program was beneficial for getting teenagers engaged in the library. "The program is great for outreach," he says. "One of the students involved





Students participate in the ALA News Know-How workshop at the San José (Calif.) Public Library's Educational Park branch. At the end of the two-week program, some members of the city council attended the teens' presentations at the library.

in the program is now our teen volunteer coordinator, while several others are also volunteers.”

He says programs like News Know-How are essential for youth. “The role of libraries in the digital future is not just finding information, but how to know in a limited time if you can trust a source and know that the information you are receiving is credible,” Berman says. “There is a difference between the type of information you get from a blog or a Facebook post and the news you get from a credible reporter or from an [Associated Press] report.

“We have to go beyond what was once considered library work and move to where libraries are at the heart of a community, something more akin to community centers. In academic libraries, there is this idea of being a ‘third space,’ and that’s just as important for public libraries.”

## Students' views

Students who expressed interest in the program were chosen after librarians interviewed them. In Iowa, 22 students participated in a centralized meeting, either in Cedar Rapids or Des Moines, based on where they lived. But even with the two sites, some students had to travel up to 200 miles to get to a training meeting.

Elise Westhoff of Dyersville, Iowa, found the sessions valuable. “The NLP staffers gave us a lot of information and direction and let us run with it,” she says. Westhoff was part of a team that focused on how accurately different forms of media quoted presidential candidates. She focused on blogs such as the Daily Beast and the Iowa Republican, while other team members reviewed newspapers and social media for accuracy. She says that all forms of media they analyzed were mostly accurate in quoting the candidates.

Megan Molloy, from Knoxville, Iowa, says she and her team fact-checked election coverage from the *Des Moines*

*Register*, *USA Today*, and the *Wall Street Journal*, and their research continued through the presidential election. Molloy was drawn to the program because she was interested in becoming a journalist after college. But as she learned more about the demands of the profession, her interest waned.

“I would have to think very long and hard about it because I didn’t realize how much stress and pressure they [journalists] are under and how easy it is to have a minor slip-up,” she says.

Still, Molloy says, the program was informative and made her a wiser news consumer. She has also stayed involved with her local library after finishing the project.

Molloy, like Westhoff, began work on her project soon after training in late July and early August and made her first presentation in November. Additionally, Westhoff made additional presentations at 4-H meetings at county and state fairs.

“Last year, the goal was to have students look at the election over time—a very challenging project since the students were following a story and reading multiple sources,” says Worland. To make up for the shorter window, Worland says students in the 2013 News Know-How did a week of preliminary work before the two weeks of training, which included several readings and several videos. Librarians led sessions on Mondays and Tuesdays, and NLP staffers covered the rest of the week.

**“Media literacy ties in with information literacy, which is one of the most important things libraries can teach these days.”** —Erik Berman, librarian, San José Public Library

## The future

Although News Know-How’s two-year grant is up, OIF’s Barbara Jones is optimistic that she will be able to find financing for future programs and possibly expand the scope of the program beyond the United States. She says people in Lebanon, Japan, Serbia, and Ukraine have expressed interest. “In a lot of countries, there is a real awareness of how their media is neglecting their people,” Jones says. “The idea that the public can shape the kind of news they want really intrigues people who have not had a free press.” ■



**DENIZ KORAY** is a freelance journalist based out of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His writing has appeared in publications such as the *Los Angeles Business Journal* and the *Columbia Missourian*.



# LIS on the Job

*How library schools are preparing students for today's workforce*

By Abigail Wise

As states continue to report decreases in library funding, budget cuts remain a persistent issue in libraries. The situation demands that library schools produce well-educated students with real-world experience who can work within today's constraints. In 2011, libraries across the country saw devastating losses of funding. Nine percent of the Library of Congress's budget was cut, which resulted in losing 10% of its workforce.

Due to loss of funding over the years, many libraries opted to hire less expensive staff members who were not certified librarians. Now, even though people with the title "librarian" make up one-third of library staff, only half of all libraries reported having a credentialed librarian on staff in 2010, according to the *Public Libraries in the United States Survey* published in 2013 by IMLS. While libraries have been dealing with budget constraints for decades, these cuts mean LIS programs across the country—such as those at the University of South Carolina (USC) and the University of Wisconsin—Madison (UW)—are seeing a drop in the speed of placement rates

post-graduation.

USC's library program has a job placement rate of 95% within six months of graduation, but that rate used to be 95% within six weeks. Although lower than it once was, the placement percentage is able to remain high due to decreased incoming class sizes. The university's library program cut back in an effort to avoid flooding the workforce with too many new graduates entering the job market.



▶ Benjamin Richards, MLIS student at Kent State, works as a graduate student assistant for the University Libraries. He hopes to work either at an academic library or at a major city library when he completes his degree.

The decrease in graduates landing jobs makes workforce preparation more valuable than ever before. In order to compete in the library job





market, applicants must have work experience in addition to their degree. In many programs, academic libraries play a large role in providing their universities' LIS students with real-world experience and training.

## Working in academic libraries

The LIS program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) has a strong relationship with its university libraries. Recent graduate Lauren Chenevert, youth services librarian at Hennepin County (Minn.) Library, credits this relationship with allowing her to gain work experience through an hourly position at the UIUC's Center for Children's Books, without which she may not have qualified for her current position. "In libraries, if you don't have work experience, forget it," Chenevert says. "I can attribute the fact that I got the job that I have now to that work experience."

Much like UIUC, the academic libraries at Kent State University (KSU), USC, and the University of Texas at Austin (UT) employ some LIS students as graduate assistants or hourly paid student workers. During an average semester, nearly 40 graduate research assistant positions are available at UT's School of Information. Available positions are spread over several departments, from the reference desk to the historical music recordings collection in the Fine Art Library. At USC, library students are given preference over law, medical, or any other student applicant for internships in the university's libraries. In fact, many of the academic librarians at USC are alumni of its SLIS program.

## Gaining practical skills

Donald Wicks, associate professor at KSU's SLIS program and director of the Center for the Study of Information and Religion, said that one could argue that recent funding cuts have increased LIS students' involvement with KSU's academic libraries as work experience becomes more critical to landing a job. Student workers have a hand in all parts of the campus library system including reference, cataloging, and special collections. LIS and library faculty members sometimes work on research projects together, and these, too, may involve a student research assistant. A few of KSU's library faculty members have taught as adjuncts in the LIS program, and several volunteer as guest speakers.



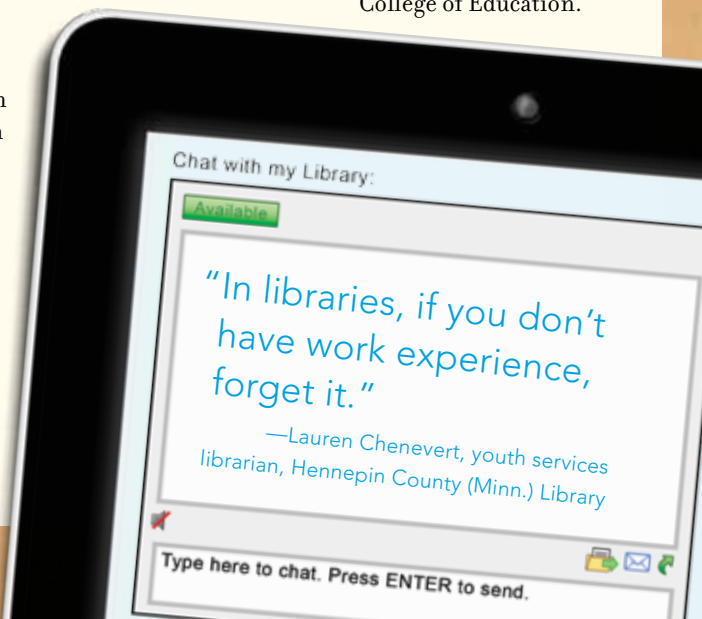
► Mary Vogt, MLIS student at UW, with undergraduate Beau Blakeley. Vogt works as a graduate student assistant at the Media, Education Resources, and Information Technology Library in the School of Education.

Academic librarians also speak as guests in courses at UW's School of Library and Information Studies. Associate Director Michele Besant says, "The academic librarians on campus, in the city, around the state—and increasingly beyond—are partners with us."

UW requires its students to complete a 120-hour practicum before graduating from its library program. Many academic librarians work as practicum supervisors. Students interested in an instruction-based field may choose a field project in library and information literacy instruction, where they partner with campus instruction librarians for a semester, getting hands-on experience in the working world. For younger students who may not

have much, if any, experience, it's a great way to beef up résumés, gain workplace skills, and make connections with potential references. "It is a reality check about an environment," says Besant. "It offers them the ability to show potential employers they have experience doing X."

Positions at academic libraries aren't the only roles helping LIS students prepare for the working world. At the University of Denver (DU), while the academic libraries don't play a particularly large role in prepping LIS students for the workforce, students must either complete a 100-hour practicum or a capstone project that is similar to a thesis. "Historically speaking, students who have little practical experience should pursue the practicum to gain that needed exposure," says Katie Yashiro, a recent MLIS graduate from DU's Morgridge College of Education.



Students must actively begin searching for work while still in school, expecting that it will likely take several months to land a job.

ties to gain practical experience in their own academic libraries as she did. At KSU, this problem is being addressed somewhat. Many online courses use library staff as guests or as adjunct instructors, featuring them in video tours or recorded interviews. One of the most popular online sessions is a course Wicks teaches on collection development. He has a librarian provide information about her own experience in collection development and answer students' questions. "This guest does a wonderful job and sparks considerable interest, making the practice of librarianship come alive for students," Wicks says. "So, even in an online environment, the practice of librarianship can be made real for students."

Even with the many tools, work experience, and networking opportunities most library programs offer, in many cases recent library grads must adjust their expectations in the competitive job market of the library workforce. Applicants have to send out more applications than ever before and location flexibility will increase their job-placement odds. Students must actively begin searching for postgraduate work while still in school, expecting that it will likely take several months to land a job. Their career starting point may be different than what they hoped or even expected. "Within the academic library community, we feel the greatest opportunities will be for new professionals who can com-

bine technical skills with a real understanding of user experience and design," says Andrew Dillon, dean of UT's School of Information. "Naturally, graduates who have this combination of skills can find work in many areas, not just academic libraries."

For those pursuing online degrees, involvement with academic libraries can be scarce. Chenevert pointed out that online students may be missing opportuni-

## New workforce expectations

Carole Palmer, professor and director of the Center for Informatics Research in Science and Scholarship at UIUC's GSLIS program, agreed that there are new expectations for librarians to have solid digital skills. Despite budget cuts in libraries, she stressed that the skills of librarians are still very much in demand. Librarians are now needed to curate not just publications, but are also increasingly re-

sponsible for curating research data as supplementary materials or important digital objects in their own right. Samantha Hastings, director and professor at USC's SLIS, believes these new demands have added value to students' tools. "We add more tech skills to portfolios so they can be stellar reference librarians but also know how to build and maintain a website," Hastings says.

UIUC GSLIS graduates who specialized in data curation have taken on new roles at libraries across the country. Some of these recently devel-

oped roles include digital project coordinators, data management consultants, data curators, and digital curation librarians. "Despite cutbacks, newer areas are growing," Palmer says. "Our programs are designed to have our students step into those positions as leaders."

The changing industry has become more demanding in terms of technology advancement, but library expectations are broadening in other ways, too. New librarians need to have planning, evaluation, advocacy, and developmental work skills. "You have to be comfortable and even excited to be in an environment of rapid change," Besant says. "You have to be willing to constantly be in a learning mode. You have to be comfortable trying things, failing, and moving on fast." ■



► Laura King (right), first-year student in the Information Architecture and Knowledge Management program at KSU, is a graduate student employee in the University Libraries, working both in reserve services and reference.



ABIGAIL WISE is a freelance writer, editor, and marketing specialist.

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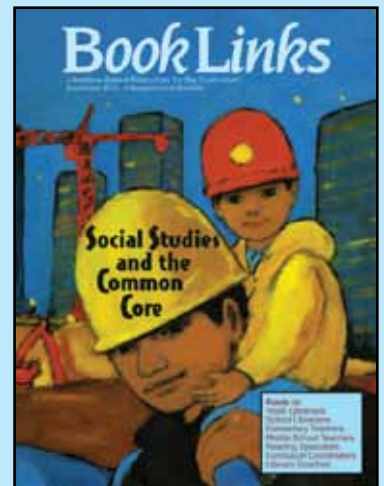
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# Studying Up on

# Health Care Literacy



By Laurie D. Borman

**T**he Affordable Care Act (ACA), with open enrollment for health insurance running from October 1, 2013 through March 14, 2014, may turn out to be as busy as April tax time for libraries.

And as with taxes, those manning the reference desk are not expected to be experts or to help people complete the paperwork, but they do need to be able to direct them to appropriate resources. Librarians will also want to determine how to assist patrons who may have limited computer experience or aren't health insurance savvy.

## Patrons rely on library assistance

A 2011 study by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) noted that 37% of library computer users go online to research health and wellness issues, including health insurance options, so it seems clear that many of the 45 million Americans who are uninsured will be looking to the library for help in finding information and signing up. The ACA requires US citizens, with a few exceptions, to have health insurance in 2014 or pay a non-compliance fee come tax time.

To ensure librarians have the help they need, several organizations have been offering online educational seminars that provide ideas for connecting with local community experts who can provide assistance. One such seminar reprised a 2013 ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition panel presentation, "Libraries and Health Insurance: Preparing for October 1," with representatives from IMLS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, OCLC's WebJunction, and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. The WebJunction event, online

chat, and documents are archived at [webjunction.org/news/webjunction/libraries-lead-way-preparing-for-aca.html](http://webjunction.org/news/webjunction/libraries-lead-way-preparing-for-aca.html). In addition, at [webjunction.org/explore-topics/ehealth](http://webjunction.org/explore-topics/ehealth), librarians can find contributions from WebJunction members, online seminars, articles, and news on health resources.

## Web pages and FAQs

The Topeka and Shawnee County (Kans.) Public Library (TSCPL) created a useful web page that other libraries may want to mirror. It includes questions and answers, facts, upcoming programs, and links to helpful videos.

"I'm updating the page almost every day as I get more information about local events and find more contact information for locally trained navigators and certified application counselors," says Lissa Staley, TSCPL librarian. "The library is actively at the table for local public health meetings, convening meetings of partners, and [we have] positioned ourselves as the go-to place for local information on this topic."

Staley says the library has been training staff to refer people to [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov); promoting nearby events; offering to let organizations—like the Kansas Insurance Department and the insurance commissioner's office—hold public meetings; and referring visitors to trained people who can assist.

ALA also has prepared an ACA-specific page at [ala.org/](http://ala.org/)

tools/affordable-care-act with links to the ACA and government health care sites, as well as resources on providing health care information in libraries. ALA Librarian Karen Muller says this page “was one of the top 100 most popular pages on the ALA website in the late summer.”

Probably the most common questions that patrons want answered are:

- What are my choices for health insurance?
- How do I get it?
- How do I use it?
- How much will it cost me?

These are detailed in a discussion paper on the Institute of Medicine’s site: [iom.edu/Global/Perspectives/2013/LetsAsk4.aspx](http://iom.edu/Global/Perspectives/2013/LetsAsk4.aspx).

Some libraries offered programming prior to the October launch to anticipate questions. The Waukegan (Ill.) Public Library (WPL) began in August with a multisession bilingual health literacy program and individual help for patrons to determine health care eligibility. The program was paid for by the Building Bridges through Health Navigation grant funded by the Health Care Foundation of Northern Lake County in partnership with the Alliance for Human Services.

Richard Lee, WPL’s executive director, told Liz Morris on WebJunction: “Knowing how to navigate the health care system is essential to our community, especially when almost 72,000 Lake County adults are uninsured. As a library, our mission is to ensure that our patrons have access to the information and resources that they need to be successful. When access to health care is a barrier to that success, we must do what we can to remove the obstacles. Health literacy has become one of our most important recent initiatives.”

## Low-cost or no-cost programming

Short of getting a grant, however, there are many options to support programming and partnerships. Each state has a designated “navigator.” The navigators and in-person assistance (IPA) programs are certified to offer help with the marketplace, must be accessible for persons with disabilities, and cannot be connected to the health insurance issuers in their state. In other words, they are impartial. Navigators may also be able to provide handouts to your library, as they have for Geneva (Ill.) Public Library. “The fliers include contact information as well as addresses for the sites where certified specialists will be available to help one-on-one,” says Deb Walsh, head of adult services. “There is nothing unprofessional

about making a reference referral—we do it all the time when the best source of information is determined not to be a library staff member or a library-owned resource.”


Other potential partners include representatives from local and state government, such as someone from a local congressperson’s office. Kathy Silks, project manager of PA Forward at the Pennsylvania Library Association, says PaLA

“developed a task force of representatives from the PA Insurance Department, state-wide medical organizations, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, and others” to help librarians find the best resources to respond to consumer information needs.

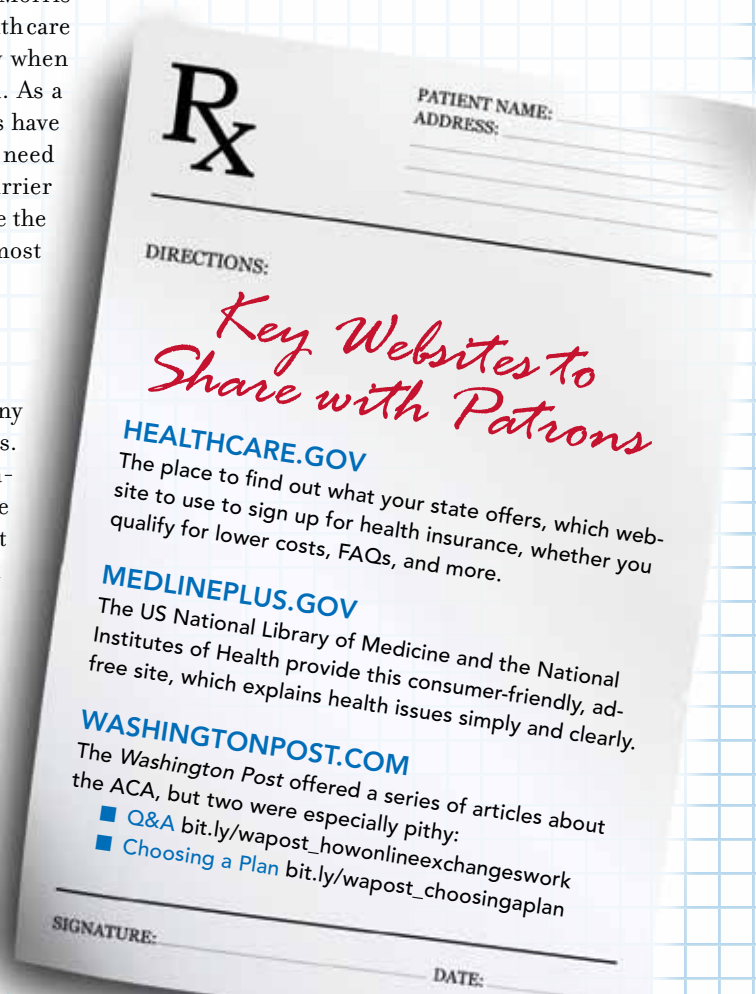
At the Spokane County (Wash.) Library District, selected public service staff received training from Community-Minded Enterprises, a 501(c)(3) that is part of the

in-person assisters who are trained and certified to help people apply and enroll in the plans. “After certification, we anticipate providing additional access to computers and modest direction to use [wahealthplanfinder.org](http://wahealthplanfinder.org),” says librarian Debra Park.

Each library will have its own response to the demands of patrons. “At the local level, you have to decide your priorities,” says Susan Hildreth of IMLS. ■



The ACA page was one of the top 100 most popular pages on the ALA website this summer.



# ASSISTIVE- ADAPTIVE Technologies

An excerpt  
from *Library  
Technology  
Companion*,  
4th edition



BY  
John J.  
Burke



## LIBRARIES

are all about people—both the people who use their services and the people who work there. Some key areas of concern for libraries relate to patrons with disabilities and patrons who use the library as their primary access point for technology. Library staff members need to know what technology barriers patrons may face and how staff members can be open to overcoming them.

Assistive and adaptive technology makes the library and its resources work for users with disabilities. The terms *assistive* and *adaptive* are applied to aids that either assist the user in accessing a library resource or adapt that resource in such a way that it becomes usable. Many of these technologies are aimed at adapting computer-based resources (e.g., screen magnification software, trackball controllers), but several technologies are available for helping with more traditional library sources (e.g., teletypewriters, recorded books). A careful assessment of the needs of those with disabilities in the community can help a library staff decide which of the following technologies are required. This assessment and the added technologies can help the library meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). More important, it can ensure that the library is meeting its mission by providing all of its users with the information they need.

### Technology for public computers

A standard library computer is not usable by patrons with certain disabilities, such as blindness or limited motor ability. Many technological products are available to make computers easier to use for those with disabilities:

- *Screen-magnifying software.* Software that magnifies the text and images on a computer's monitor is extremely helpful to patrons with low vision. It allows users to control the level of magnification on the screen to fit their specific requirements. These programs offer several options for controlling the area of the screen that is to be magnified at any one time. For example, users can magnify the entire screen at once and scroll through all of the enlarged web page or document using the mouse. Users may also choose to magnify a defined area of the screen, and they can maneuver a box-like frame around the screen to center on

a specific section to magnify. Many other settings and options are available.

- *Screen-reading software.* For those with extremely low or no vision, screen-reading software can extend and improve the accessibility of any material that can be displayed on a computer monitor. The software reads aloud whatever text appears on the monitor, whether it is the library catalog or another resource. Patrons can use different voices, adjust the speed of the reader, and train the reader to skip certain unreadable characters or improve its pronunciation of other words. Of course, anytime a sound-producing device or software appears in a library, there is a need for headphones to accompany the software.

- *Touchpad or trackball controllers.* Patrons who are unable to use a standard mouse (such as those with developmental disabilities or carpal tunnel injuries) can use trackballs and touchpads that exert less pressure on their hands, wrists, and arms. Rotating a trackball with one's palm removes the need to grip a controller with the whole hand. Touchpads allow users to control a mouse by moving an index finger along a pad that corresponds with the layout of the monitor screen.

- *On-screen keyboard.* Patrons who cannot enter text using a traditional keyboard may be able to use an on-screen keyboard via software that allows a keyboard to appear on the screen. A user can then click the board using a mouse to select—in other words, type—letters that will appear in a web browser or other application.

### Technologies for other services and materials

There are also technologies that can make noncomputer resources and library services easier to use:

- *Teletypewriter.* For patrons who have difficulty hearing, a teletypewriter (TTY) connection offers a means for

communicating with library staff members. A TTY device is connected to a telephone at a patron's home and to a telephone at the library so messages can travel back and forth. Some libraries set up a separate line for this service. This can be extremely helpful for obtaining library information, asking and answering reference questions, and making other requests of library staff. Some libraries are finding that virtual reference through web-based chat or instant messaging can be an effective replacement for standard TTY devices.

■ *Closed-captioning.* DVD/video equipment should include the option of closed-captioning so that users with hearing difficulties can still make use of videos. Most televisions or television/DVD/VCR combinations include this as an option.

■ *Magnifiers.* Book and periodical magnifiers can make traditional library materials more usable for patrons with low vision. These units have a tray on which one can place a print publication. Over the tray is a magnifier unit that displays the publication on a screen. As with the computer screen magnifier, setting adjustments are available. Another version of this technology is closed-circuit television, in which the magnifier is hooked up to a television of any size for ease in viewing.

■ *Audiobooks.* For patrons with extremely low or no vision, recorded books in various storage formats should be made available. Wonderful work is being done by dedicated talking-book libraries throughout the world. This particular medium is an easy one to add to any library's collection. Many titles are available as audio ebooks in addition to earlier audio formats (e.g., compact discs).

■ *Kurzweil readers.* The Kurzweil reader in its many varieties has had an immeasurable impact on making printed materials available to individuals with no vision. This device scans and audibly reads the information printed on a page.

■ *Braille equipment.* Braille translators and printers may also be of use to those patrons who prefer having Braille copies of printed materials. These devices require a computer set up with translating software and an accompanying printer that prints Braille characters on paper. The equipment can be quite expensive, but not many libraries need such a device.

## Web and interface design considerations

When designing a library website or database, remember individuals with extremely low vision or no vision who are accessing these electronic resources using screen-reader software.

A number of items (such as images) are completely ignored by this reading software. Typically, people who use screen-reading software are also using a simplified, non-graphical web browser. Web designers should review how their pages display in text-based browsers such as Lynx. Images will not display, but in the HTML (hypertext markup language) coding used to make web pages, there are image tags that will appear as captions. Designers should make sure all images have image tags. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (section508.gov) provides standards on web design that are now required of all US federal agencies. Other community and public institutions (such as libraries) are following these site design standards as well. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), a web standards organization, has a page on its Web Accessibility Initiative that can help with accessibility questions ([w3.org/WAI](http://w3.org/WAI)).

Libraries must rise to the challenge and accommodate the needs of patrons who depend on them for technology access and assistance. This need calls for resources that libraries do not always have in abundance and for policy changes that may take time to work out to the satisfaction of patrons and staff. Libraries must make the case to their funding agencies that they are not just the "people's university" of old but also the "people's technology lifeline." This means more than just offering internet access; it may mean offering word processing for job applications or assistance in navigating the websites of government agencies. No matter their size or equipment, libraries stand as beacons and sources of hope to those who need access to technology. ■

JOHN J. BURKE is the library director at Miami University's Middletown, Ohio, regional campus and the author of the *Neal-Schuman Library Technology Companion* and (with Beth Tumbleson) *Embedding Librarianship in Learning Management Systems (ALA Neal-Schuman)*. This is an excerpt from *Neal-Schuman's Library Technology Companion, A Basic Guide for Library Staff*, 4th edition.



Libraries must rise to the challenge and accommodate the needs of patrons who depend on them for technology access and assistance.

# Currents

■ October 14 **Martha Bedard** became vice provost for the University of Connecticut Libraries in Storrs.

■ August 30 **Maria Bonn** became senior lecturer at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

■ September 25 **Emily Brown** became coordinator of youth services at the Cranston (R.I.) Public Library.

■ September 3 **Damon Campbell** became acquisitions librarian at the University of Oregon Libraries in Eugene.

■ August 1 **Leslin Charles** became instructional design librarian at Rutgers University Libraries campus in Piscataway, New Jersey.

■ October 5 **Cynthia Cowell** retired as director

of library services at Newport Beach (Calif.) Public Library.

■ August 9 **Sheila Crosby** became manager of the Solana Beach branch of the San Diego County (Calif.) Library.

■ August 1 **Adriana P. Cuervo** became associate director of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University Libraries campus in Newark, New Jersey.

■ August 19 **Anna Doyle** became youth services supervisor at Freeport (Ill.) Public Library.

■ September 3 **Lois Eannel** became director of the East Lake Community Library in Palm Harbor, Florida.

■ August 19 **Lee Ann Fisher** became director of the Moline (Ill.) Public Library.

■ August 16 **Kathy Fowler** resigned as assistant head librarian of the Arkansas



Emily Brown



Karen Grigg



Barbara O'Hara



Eva Poole

history and genealogy department at the Pope County Library.

■ August 1 **Karen Grigg** became science librarian at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

■ August 14 **Pat T. Hawthorne** became associate dean for exploration and engagement at the University of Oklahoma Libraries in Norman.

■ August 1 **Manuel Jusino** became School of Communication and Information/Rutgers University Libraries intern/resident for 2013–2016.

■ August 31 **Julie LaSata** left her position as librarian at the Bakerville Public Library in New Hartford, Connecticut.

■ August 30 **Cheryl Mathias** retired as bookmobile librarian for Henderson County (Ky.) Public Library.

■ December 31 **Janifer Meldrum** will retire as director of marketing at Marcive, in San Antonio, Texas, after 28 years.

■ August 14 **Richard G. Moon Jr.** resigned as director of North Adams (Mass.) Public Library to become library director of McCann Technical School.

■ August 1 **Rebecca J. Morris** became assistant professor in the LIS department at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

■ October 31 **Catherine Nathan** retired as director of the First Regional Library, headquartered in Hernando, Mississippi.

■ August 1 **Barbara O'Hara** became director at Scott County (Ky.) Public Library.

■ August 19 **Carol Phillips** retired as youth services manager at East Brunswick (N.J.) Public Library.

■ August 16 **Eva Poole** became director of the Virginia Beach (Va.) Public Library.

■ September 30 **Trish Ridgeway** retired as director of Handley Regional Library in Winchester, Virginia, after 20 years in that post.

■ August 21 **Julie Rothenfluh** became executive director of the Naperville (Ill.) Public Library.

■ September 1 **Jonathan Saucedo** became music and performing arts librarian at Rutgers University campus in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

## CITED

■ **Linda Lord**, Maine's state librarian, received the Maine Development Foundation's Champion Award for Education, Training, and Leadership Development.

■ **Daniel Tsang**, data librarian for the University of California, Irvine Libraries, has received the William H. Flanigan Award for Distinguished Service from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.



- August 15 **Dianne Schlosser** became head librarian at Pequot Library in Southport, Connecticut.
- September 9 **Kari Schmidt** became library technical services manager at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland.
- August 31 **Marcy Sims** retired as director of the Virginia Beach (Va.) Public Library after 37 years.
- November 1 **Mark Smith** will become director and librarian at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- August 9 **Diane Tanaka** retired as circulation manager at the Courtenay branch of the Vancouver Island (B.C.) Public Library.
- September 3 **Beth Trupp** retired as children's librarian at Gering (Neb.) Public Library after 33 years of service.
- August 1 **Candy Warren** became children's librarian at Livingston County (Mo.) Library.
- August 16 **John P. Wilkin** became university librarian and dean of libraries at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- August 13 **Gail Wilkin-son** retired as manager of the Becker, Minnesota, branch of the Great River Regional Library after 28 years.



Trish Ridgeway



Mark Smith

## OBITUARIES

- **Linda Bauman**, 62, died September 10 of cancer. She worked with the Codington bookmobile and as the children's librarian at the Watertown (S.Dak.) Regional Library.
- **F. W. "Wilf" Lancaster**, 79, professor emeritus at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, died August 25. Lancaster graduated as an associate of the UK Library Association from the University of Northumbria at Newcastle, England, in 1955. After gaining experience as a senior assistant at the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Public Libraries, Lancaster emigrated to the United States in 1959. He became known for his revolutionary work in the evaluation and management of MEDLARS, the National Library of Medicine's computerized bibliographic retrieval system for articles in academic journals in medicine and allied health professions. Though one of the earliest evaluations of a computer-based retrieval system, it continues to have a lasting impact on information systems today.
- **Elaine Leppert**, 60, former director at Caldwell (Idaho) Public Library, where she served more than 30 years, died August 2.
- **Jeanne S. Roach**, 65, died September 9 of graft-versus-host disease. She worked as a public school teacher and librarian in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.
- **Nasser Sharify**, 87, died August 23. Considered the "father of international librarianship," Sharify was distinguished professor and dean emeritus at the Graduate School of Information and Library Science at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, where he served as dean from 1968 to 1987. Sharify helped introduce the concept of modern librarianship to Iran, where he also planned the establishment of the National Library of Iran; founded and directed the International Library Information Center at the University of Pittsburgh; and headed the International Documentation Center for the State University of New York system. He was also instrumental, through his work with UNESCO, in designing Morocco's first and only school of information science, a major center for information studies in North Africa and the Middle East.
- **Sharon Sullivan**, 65, died August 17. She was reference and adult services librarian at Truro (Mass.) Public Library and had also served at various educational institutions, including Duke University Library, OCLC, Ohio State University Library, and the Widener Library at Harvard University.

### At ALA

- August 23 **Brett Beasley**, ALA Editions marketing assistant, left ALA.
- August 16 **Neida de la Torre**, console operator for Member and Customer Service, left ALA.
- September 20 **Clara Gomez**, staff lounge attendant, left ALA after 23 years.
- August 2 **Marc Huber**, assistant director of development, left ALA.
- August 30 **Janice Kanis** retired as senior employee benefits specialist.
- August 9 **Jenny Najduch**, ALSC program officer for continuing education, left ALA.
- September 30 **Sylvia Knight Norton** became AASL executive director.
- September 3 **Chase Ollis** became ACRL program coordinator. ■

Send notices and color photographs for *Currents* to Mariam Pera, [mpera@ala.org](mailto:mpera@ala.org).

# Moving Beyond Same-Old

Outreach that's way outside the box

by Linda W. Braun

**A**s I wrote this column, I decided to check my go-to dictionary, the *Merriam-Webster*, about the definition of “outreach.” It stated: “the extending of services or assistance beyond current or usual limits <an outreach program>; also: the extent of such services or assistance.”

Youth services outreach frequently centers on luring young people inside the library by visiting schools to book-talk or promote programs such as summer reading clubs. But is that really “the extending of services” in

ways that go “beyond current or usual limits?” I’d say no. In a world of mobile devices and e-content, what should outreach to youth look like in the second decade

of the 21st century?

It’s time for youth-oriented library staff to embrace virtual and digital tools in their outreach. In today’s technologically rich environment, you can create programs in which youth can participate from anywhere at any time.

An example: Ask tweens and teens to create Vine videos as part of a STEM moviemaking program. You provide the program information virtually and allow youth to participate without setting foot in the

library. While they are taking part in the program, you communicate with them using Twitter, Facebook, Google apps, and other web-based tools—of course, providing digital literacy and technology tips along the way.

The library of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg undertook some particularly interesting outreach when it sponsored a Vine contest this fall, encouraging freshmen to use the hashtag #firstdayvt. While not aimed at the preschool and K–12 worlds, it definitely provides a successful model for virtual outreach ([bit.ly/firstdayvt](http://bit.ly/firstdayvt)) (see p. 17, this issue).

## Enhanced discovery

The fall 2012 Pew Internet & American Life Project report noted that Americans between the ages of 16 and 29 are interested in borrowing e-content from libraries. And yet the research made clear that library staffers need to do a better job of simplifying the e-content borrowing process and making it more visible to these potential users.

The first step requires outreach to vendors whose products you use. If a vendor’s user interfaces aren’t intuitive and easy to use, how can we possibly reach out to young people about innovative services with any enthusiasm?

This is all well and good, you may be thinking, but what about the youth services specialists who just can’t squeeze another professional initiative into their schedules?

Many library workers tell me they don’t have time for youth outreach because they can’t get out of their libraries, physically or even virtually. They have to be on the floor or on the desk. But you don’t have to be the one doing the outreach.

## Outreach through surrogates

Teens and tweens can be trained to be effective allies in this area. They can show their friends, parents, and teachers how to use your library’s digital tools. By spreading the word, they can bring your services to classrooms, youth development organizations, and homes.

You can also think of stakeholders as potential outreach partners. Those you’ve worked with on projects and who understand your goals and services can inform their constituents about what you have to offer and can help you understand what their users want and need and how to best reach out to them.

Don’t let yourself get into an outreach rut. Sure, book talks and class visits are traditional. But is that really the best way to connect to youth in today’s 24/7 mobile world? Start 2014 with a youth outreach plan that includes at least one new endeavor and that extends your tactics beyond the same-old, same-old. ■

LINDA W. BRAUN is an educational technology consultant for LEO: Librarians and Educators Online, professor of practice at Simmons College GSLIS in Boston, and a past president of ALA’s Young Adult Library Services Association.



In a world of mobile devices,

what should outreach to youth look like in the 21st century?

# Librarian's Library

## Continuous Learning

by Karen Muller

**F**unds shift, coworkers leave, a new director arrives. Such unexpected job changes may require you to learn a new skill—fast. In my experience, I feel as though I can learn nearly anything from books. Even if I need to take a class, watch a webinar, or participate in a hands-on demonstration, reading about a topic beforehand helps immeasurably. In that vein, one or more of these books may help you with your personal learning list.

Divided into two parts, the third edition of *Communicating Professionally: A How-to-Do-It Manual for Librarians*, by Catherine Sheldrick Ross and Kirsti Nilsen, addresses how communication skills apply to library work. The writing, listening, and speaking tips, along with annotated bibliographies in each chapter, will help with job interviews (on either side of the desk), reference transactions, writing disciplinary memos, collaborating on projects, or being persuasive to a board. The authors discuss the importance of understanding the audience for all communications and adjusting tone, length, vocabulary, and structure accordingly. Electronic communications, including those in collaborative on-



line workspaces, are also covered.

INDEXED. ALA NEALSCHUMAN, 2013. 472 P. \$70. PBK. 978-1-55570-908-2

Even if you are not interested in learning more about your ancestors, someone on the other side of the reference desk or perhaps at a social gathering may ask for genealogy help. In *Finding Your Roots: Easy-to-Do Genealogy and Family History*, Janice Schultz presents a solid overview on how to gather and record family information. Schultz devotes most chapters to defining and describing the records used for establishing the key facts—birth, marriage, death—for ancestors, using both online and paper archival resources for governmental, church, and military records. She also covers researching European sources and offers tips for researching Native American and African-American ancestors.

INDEXED. HURON STREET PRESS, 2013. 240 P. \$21.95. PBK. 978-1-937589-00-4

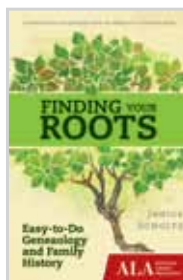
A few weeks ago I logged in to one of our subscription databases and discovered two options: the web-based portal I was used to and a mobile



**Unexpected job changes may require you to learn a new skill—fast. In my experience, I feel as though I can learn nearly anything from books.**

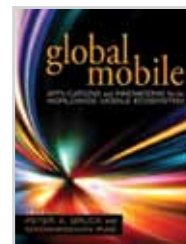
option. A database on a cellphone? *Global Mobile: Applications and Innovations for the Worldwide Mobile Ecosystem*, edited by Peter A. Bruck and Madanmohan Rao, explores the ramifications of the rapid rise of mobile technology worldwide.

There are case studies on how mobile technology has changed health care, banking, and government. The authors also look to the future—to regulatory challenges, the ever-increasing demand for data services, and sadly, cyberlaw. The issues and concepts presented in this update will be important ones for library planning. INDEXED. INFORMATION TODAY, 2013. 576 P. \$49.50. PBK. 978-1-57387-462-5



In *Developing and Managing Electronic Collections: The Essentials*, Peggy Johnson has applied her prodigious understanding of library collection

development to the current challenges of digital collections. Her definition is inclusive: digital resources selected by librarians, managed by the library, and made available for users through purchase, lease, or as free resources. After a description of the several types of digital items that





might be included, Johnson reviews selection processes, acquisitions considerations, licensing, and enabling discovery through cataloging and other means. She also looks at managing necessary workflows, purchase budgeting, and the communication needed to ensure ongoing collaboration between those who acquire and make collections available and those who interpret them for library users. Includes a glossary.

INDEXED. ALA EDITIONS, 2013. 200 P. \$65. PBK. 978-0-8389-1190-7



Library technology can be complex and often difficult to understand. To guide you through this maze, consider the fourth edition of *Neal-Schuman Library Technology Companion: A Basic Guide for Library Staff*, by John J. Burke (see excerpt p. 44). It starts with lists of technology skills that survey respondents reported needing. Email tops the list, which also includes using scanners and printers, working with a file management system, library databases, and presentation software. Other chapters have overviews of buying and implementing technology, current trends in library discovery systems, databases and digital collections, web-based delivery, social media, and security and privacy issues. Includes a glossary.

INDEXED. NEAL-SCHUMAN, 2013. 279 P. \$75. PBK. 978-1-55570-915-0



KAREN MULLER is librarian and knowledge management specialist for the ALA Library.

## ROUSING READS

### SALINGER AND THE MYSTERIOUS VAULT

Several questions linger about the vault that many people believe the late J. D. Salinger left behind, purportedly filled with nearly half a century's worth of unpublished manuscripts. Is there a vault? Does it really contain books soon to be published? And will the vault prove to be a treasure trove or a Pandora's box full of indigestible ramblings about Eastern spirituality, in the manner of Salinger's last published story, the ungainly "Hapworth 16, 1924"?

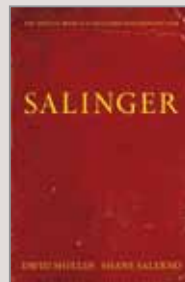
With the publication of David Shields and Shane Salerno's *Salinger*, a sprawling oral history overstuffed with commentary on Salinger from those who knew him and many who did not, and the release of Salerno's documentary film, also called *Salinger* (the book is a companion to the film), we have considerably more speculation about the vault and its contents.

But what of the book itself? Shields and Salerno take a much different approach to unveiling Salinger's hidden life than Kenneth Slawenski took in his *J. D. Salinger: A Life* (2011). Slawenski constructs a traditional biographical narrative from the stew of secondary sources, while Salerno and Shields present the stew one bite at a time, offering an enormous clip book that showcases the authors' research: excerpts from hundreds of interviews with all manner of subjects—too many of whom merely experienced some of the same things Salinger did (mainly World War II) or, in the case of various celebrities, were simply moved by his work. (Do we really need to know what *The Catcher in the Rye* meant to John Cusack?) But the authors have unearthed some genuinely new material, including interviews with Jean Miller, the first of many teenage girls, on the cusp of adulthood, with whom Salinger had a very peculiar relationship.

Salinger devotees will find all of this laundry airing either endlessly fascinating or cheap and salacious, depending on their tolerance for laundry. The bottom line in both books is that World War II had a traumatic effect on the writer, who wrote to escape the horror of battle (he was working on *The Catcher in the Rye* throughout the war); later, after the success of *Catcher*, fame—instead of war—became the horror that needed to be kept at bay.

What's lost in all this welter of detail about a troubled man and his contradictory life is Salinger's writing. There are snippets of perceptive analysis from Shields and from some of Salinger's fellow writers, but most readers will come away from this book feeling that what's missing in this messy, muddled hodgepodge of a biography about a messy, muddled life is the precision and clarity of Salinger's best stories.

But back to the vault. Shields and Salerno are convinced there is a vault and that sometime in the next five years we will see the publication of several new books, many of which are likely to take the form of meditations on Zen and the Hindu philosophy Vedanta. To my mind, that doesn't bode well, at least for fiction readers. I have to say I prefer that "David Copperfield kind of crap" that Holden warned us against on the first page of *The Catcher in the Rye*.



BILL OTT is editor and publisher of ALA's Booklist.

# Solutions and Services

## ^ ^ ^ sirsidynix.com/ mobilecirc

MobileCirc is a new app from SirsiDynix that lets library staffers carry a streamlined set of circulation, inventory, and shelving features with them at all times. MobileCirc can be used to perform check-ins, checkouts, and renewals, and to register new patrons by simply scanning the barcode on their driver's licenses or manually entering their information. MobileCirc integrates with Bluetooth scanners for inventory purposes, and includes both online and offline inventory modes. The app also provides real-time, customizable, sortable lists to track items selected for weeding or needed to fill holds. MobileCirc is available for Android- and iOS-compatible mobile devices or as an HTML5 browser-based web application for laptops and desktop computers.



## V V V encoreforlibraries.com

Encore ES, the latest version of Innovative Interfaces Inc.'s Encore discovery product, improves the service's delivery of articles, ebooks, e-resources, and print materials. Innovative Interfaces partnered with multiple vendors to create Encore ES. The integration of the EBSCO Discovery Service's central index provides access to tens of thousands of works and full-text articles. Its metadata is culled from publishers and information providers to offer deep indexing for journals and magazines. Encore ES also has access to the OverDrive and 3M ebook collections. Real-time availability of OverDrive and 3M materials is displayed in Encore's results browse, record-detail, and cart displays. Users can initiate ebook checkouts and holds for materials directly from the Encore interface and view the status of those materials. A personalized browse function and the patron pages also allow users to see what items they have checked out or on hold.

## acesstext.org >>>

The AccessText Network is a national online system that makes college textbooks accessible to students with print-related disabilities such as blindness and dyslexia. College disability service offices can use the network to connect to publishers on behalf of students with mobility, visual, and reading impairments in order to obtain electronic files that can then be used to create accessible versions of textbooks. Membership in the network is open to colleges and publishers. Colleges can use the AccessText database to search more than 350,000 titles by ISBN, title, and author. If a title is unavailable, a request can be sent directly to the publisher using AccessText. Publishers can use the network to manage requests for files and grant permissions. Publishers are also provided a complimentary FTP file transfer system to securely send requested files and track the resulting download.



To have a new product considered for this section, contact Phil Morehart at [pmorehart@ala.org](mailto:pmorehart@ala.org).

rosettastone.com >>>

Rosetta Stone's Lingo Letter Sounds app, geared toward kids ages 3–6, promotes English literacy and instructs children on Spanish-language basics. Available in the iTunes Store for use on Apple iOS-enabled devices, the free app uses bright, animated phonetic games and letter-and-word-matching games to reinforce still-developing English reading comprehension and speaking skills. Games use Rosetta Stone's trademark voice recognition software to teach Spanish phrases and vocabulary, and the app provides instant feedback to build and encourage improved pronunciation of words. A Parent's Corner section allows parents to see what skills have been introduced, adapt the game settings to fit their child's learning needs, and track their child's progress.



## HALAN ADOPTS SYMPHONY

[SIRSIDYNIX.COM/SYMPHONY](http://SIRSIDYNIX.COM/SYMPHONY)

The Houston Area Library Automated Network (HALAN), a computer network that services nine libraries in the Houston area, has implemented SirsiDynix Symphony Integrated Library System with SirsiDynix SaaS hosting. HALAN chose Symphony and SaaS to make it easy for libraries of all sizes to join the network while maintaining their unique character, look, and feel. They also chose SirsiDynix Enterprise, Portfolio, BookMyne+, and Social Library to provide seamless content discovery and access for patrons, as well as SirsiDynix Mobile-Circ to provide flexible mobile circulation, inventory, and shelving for library staff.

"HALAN is working toward providing a broader range of services on leading-edge platforms to more libraries," said Judith Hiott, chief at HALAN. "We have begun to meet these goals with our move to Symphony and Enterprise."



Symphony and SaaS gives HALAN the flexibility it needs to serve small, medium, and large libraries. Each member library can customize Symphony's features and policies to fit its needs, and SaaS hosting eliminates the need to worry about hardware maintenance, capacity prediction, and server monitoring.

Rhea Brown Lawson, director of Houston Public Library, the largest library in the HALAN consortium,

elaborated on the impact that SirsiDynix has had on HPL's operations.

"Web technologies have changed quite a bit since we implemented the previous catalog and customer accounts system,"

she said. "To provide an optimum online experience for our customers, [SirsiDynix] was chosen to provide improved usability, a more stable infrastructure, and the ability to add features and additional options in the future. These changes have resulted in improved service delivery and more efficient processes."



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# Warming Up to End Times

What the coming apocalypse means for libraries

by Will Manley

There is no longer any point in debating the reality of global warming (or, if you prefer to be politically correct, climate change). The handwriting is on the wall: 2012 was the hottest year on record and the polar ice caps are melting at an alarmingly fast rate. Then there's the August 2013 research report from the University of Cambridge, which says that the thawing of the Arctic permafrost layer could trigger the release of billions of tons of methane into the atmosphere, accelerating the dire consequences of climate change.

I was pleased to learn that ALA Council recently discussed whether to pull ALA investments out of Big Oil and Big Coal and put the money into Big Wind and Big Sun. The feasibility study that was done by the

ALA brass gave the inevitable recommendation that this would be a big money loser and would put ALA behind a financial eightball, which led to the resolution's defeat.

I hope that Council members who are concerned about global warming will continue that conversation, if for no other reason than to raise awareness. No one is under any illusion that ALA's withdrawal of funds will impact the world economy, but the publicity that would result would be significant.

I'm not sure when the phrase "long-term strategic planning" became the management fad du jour, but it was before all the gurus realized that because of the rapid change in digital technology it was impossible to plan from month to month, let

alone five years out. However, climate change redefines what the term should mean to us.

Library school gurus tell us that libraries' mission is now about information dissemination and no longer about reading and collections. Well, what's more important to disseminate than the research on global warming? And nothing would disseminate that information better than a large information-industry or-



**The handwriting is on the wall: Survivors need librarians.**

ganization like ALA ending its fiscal support of fossil fuels.

What can local libraries do? Three things: (1) provide easy access to the lat-

est research on global warming and highlight this research through public programming; (2) investigate how to make your library buildings less reliant on fossil fuels (the library where I am a trustee is involved in a project that will convert 85% of our electrical use from fossil fuels to solar power); and (3) begin building print resources on basic apocalyptic survival skills.

Given the high probability that the world's major economic powers will continue to ignore the warning signs of impending doom, we can anticipate a global apocalypse within the next 50 years that will involve violent storms, raging fires, the rapid spread of disease, drought, famine, rising seas, flooding, and wars over water supplies. High-tech systems will erode and then die.

What's the good news? Libraries will be needed as never before. Survivors will have to rely upon long-lost skills (farming, animal husbandry, carpentry) to stay alive. Lucky are the people who will have a library nearby to help them learn those skills. ■

*WILL MANLEY has furnished provocative commentary on librarianship for more than 30 years, has written nine books on the lighter side of library science, and blogs at willmanley.com. Email: wmanley7@att.net.*







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Dan O'Connor has seen a lot of change at Rutgers. After all, he's been teaching at the School of Communication and Information for nearly four decades.

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An active union leader and NJLA leader, Dan also has worked hard to connect SC&I to activities in the New Jersey legislature.

Today, he's spearheading a "big data" initiative at the school using his expertise in research methods and data analytics.

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