Outpost Reference: Meeting Patrons on Their Own Ground

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Business

President’s Message 2 Connie Forst
From the Editor 3 Mary K. Bolin
Call for Submissions 3 Editor
Submission Guidelines 3 Editor

Papers and Presentations from the PNLA 2007 Annual Conference

“I Thought I’d Find Myself at the Library”: LGBTQ Services & Collections in Public and School Libraries 4 Alvin M. Schrader

The Human Right To Know and the Open Access Movement: An Optimal Path for Scholarly Journals 10 Melinda Spears, Rachel Vyse

Outpost Reference: Meeting Patrons on Their Own Ground 12 Samantha Schmehl Hines

Reach Out and Touch Someone: Public and School Libraries Collaborate for Student Success 14 Rhona Klein

e-Branch in a Box: How Idaho Libraries Created an Easy and Sustainable Web Presence 17 Michael Samuelsen, Erin McCusker

Does It Matter Where the Books Are Shelved (Floating Collections)? 19 Honore Bray, Gloria Langstaff

Something For Everyone – A Mid Sized Library’s Experience With Programming for Babies to Seniors 20 Hilary Munro

What is the Balanced Scorecard and What Can It Do For Your Library? 23 Dan Howard, Dean Marney

Real, Live, Literature in your Library: Hosting a Literary Artist 24 Young Alberta Book Society

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The PNLA Quarterly is indexed in Library Literature and Library and Information Science Abstracts.
I am a country farm girl. My parents are farmers and as such, I grew up in much the same manner. I went to a small town school where we had classes from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and when I graduated there were 250 children in the whole school, though in my class there were only 15 of us. I was the first one in my family to graduate from high school and one of my favourite memories was seeing how proud my parents were of me when I got my degrees. From our place to school it was an hour on the school bus. The nearest town is 20 minutes away, and for the longest time, the easiest direction to our place was that you turned off the secondary road onto our gravel road when the blacktop ended. I grew up on a mixed farm where we had hogs, milking cows, cattle, chickens and fields of grain. Over the years, the course of farming has changed and we’ve downsized a bit but still maintain a grain and cattle operation. Once I completed my library degree I began working in a mid-size rural community, and though I’ve changed positions a few times over the years, the rural focus has remained.

My parents instilled a love of reading in me at an early age, and while the nearest town was only a short distance from the farm, it did not have a library that was open over the summer. I had my first public library card, just for the summer, in a community that was half an hour away. I think I used it three times because that was as often as my parents could bring me when they were busy doing farming things the rest of the time. My school library was the only thing that I really had growing up and I loved my librarian dearly. I don’t think she knew how much she impacted my life and how my career has taken off since those school days.

When I finished university and began working it was a bit of a culture shock for me to be back in a rural area. As much as I loved it, it was definitely different to be in a place where things weren’t moving at a lightening pace and if an answer to a question came in a weeks time it would be plenty fine. I realized how much people valued my assistance and how much of a difference I was making in their life by opening their world to new possibilities and ideas. My enthusiasm and passion for the profession was (and I still hope is) evident in what I tackle daily. I’ve been extremely fortunate to have had some amazing experiences in my career so far and have been blessed with the ability to take on some challenging topics. I’ve had opportunities to travel and see the country, and leadership opportunities to help me grow into other positions.

Now I’m starting another new adventure and that is as I begin my year as PNLA President. I am looking forward to it with excitement. PNLA has always been such an amazing organization and I feel so privileged to be a part of it. When I consider my rural beginnings I think of all the countless others who are in places such as I am, all across the Pacific Northwest. Those who do the best with what they have, who strive to make things better, who do what they can to make a difference no matter how small it may appear. There is a tremendous amount of talent and potential in our area in individuals who are making an impact one day at a time. I mention this to get you thinking about the next PNLA Leadership Institute that will be taking place in the fall of 2008 and perhaps you know of an individual who would benefit from attending. I’d urge you to take advantage of the Leadership Institute to grow, hone and develop the talent in each of your libraries - in the staff that you possess. It is so overwhelmingly worth taking part in as we are developing talent from our own region and seeing rewards in the participants who have come out of the program in the leadership roles they fill. It is exciting!

I recently picked up a copy of Denzel Washington’s “A Hand to Guide Me” and I must say it is very good. A colleague had recommended it to me after her supervisor bought a copy for all her managers to read. I was intrigued, picked up my own, and I am glad that I did. The book is a series of letters that American personalities have written about people who have helped guide or influence them in their lives. These personality figures come from theatre, sports, politics, and business backgrounds and tell of their live-changing stories of mentorship. They are fascinating because the common thread is that people don’t get to be where they are
From the Editor

MARY K. BOLIN

This issue features many fine papers and presentations from the PNLA 2007 Annual Conference, which was held in Edmonton, Alberta in August. The articles in this issue represent a range of interesting and important topics and reflect an excellent conference. So refresh your memory or get a look at what you missed. Thanks to the authors in this issue for submitting their conference papers.

Call For Submissions

All contributors are required to include a short, 100-word biography and mailing address with their submissions. Each contributor receives a complimentary copy of the issue in which his/her article appears.

Submit feature articles of 1,000-6,000 words on any topic in librarianship or a related field.

We are always looking for short, 400-500 word descriptions of great ideas in libraries. If you have a new project or innovative way of delivering service that you think others might learn from, please submit it.

Winter 2008 Issue (Deadline December 1, 2007)
Spring 2008 Issue (Deadline March 1, 2008)

Please email submissions to mbolin2@unl.edu in rtf or doc format.

Submission Guidelines

Format
Please submit all documents as either a .doc or an .rtf

Font style
PNLA Quarterly publishes in the Verdana font, size 8.

Spacing and punctuation:
• Please use a single space after a period.
• Please use full double dashes (i.e., “—” not “——” )
• Please place punctuation within the quotation marks.
• Please omit http:// when quoting Web site addresses
• Please place titles within text in italics (not underlined).
• Please do not capitalize nouns such as “librarian” unless the word is included in a title.

Spelling
Web site, Internet, email, ILL; please use the spelling conventions of your country.

Citation Style
Please use whatever style you wish, as long as it is used consistently.

Additional Information
Please submit a 100-word biography and postal address with article.

PNLA Past President Jason Openo and current President Connie Forst

President’s Message cont.

today just by acting alone. There is a network of people in the background who help each and every one of us. My goal, after reading this book, is to share it with my colleagues and then challenge them to write their own story of a mentor who has helped guide their life. Imagine how powerful it would be to share that with an individual and just say thank you. It’s the concept of paying it forward, it’s the idea of being respectful, it is knowing that sometimes the biggest help in life came from the smallest thing. I share this because I am interested in mentorship and leadership. I know I have a strong network of caring individuals who are concerned about my career and my life path. I try to thank them for helping and just for being there for me when I can. Perhaps this will motivate me to do more than that. I am definitely encouraged to do more.

If you have an idea or thought, please feel free to share it with me. I’d love to hear from you. Just remember to “never let the demands of tomorrow interfere with the pleasures and excitement of today.”

Till next time, Connie.
“I Thought I’d Find Myself at the Library”: LGBTQ Services & Collections in Public and School Libraries

Alvin M. Schrader

Alvin Schrader is a professor and former director in the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alberta. He joined the School in 1982. His teaching and research interests are in the areas of library leadership, school to work transitioning, professional education, research methods, library service measurement and evaluation, intellectual freedom, and sexual minority library services and collections. Dr. Schrader supervises the School’s Practicum and has taught graduate MLIS courses on Leadership and Management, Publishing, and Research Methods. Before taking his doctoral degree at Indiana University, he worked in special libraries and later as a public library deputy branch head. Dr. Schrader is currently President of the Canadian Library Association and was elected Councillor-at-large in the late 1990s. He has also served as President of the Library Association of Alberta and chaired the conference planning committee for the 2001 Alberta Library Conference. Dr. Schrader was consultant to the National Core Library Statistics Program sponsored by the National Library of Canada, and has written extensively about library service evaluation, most recently for a special publication in honour of the annual conference of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) that will be held in Quebec City in August 2008. He can be reached at: alvin.schrader@ualberta.ca

In an age when mainstream television in the United States and Canada presents programs with sexual minority depictions, and when same-sex civil marriage is the talk – and now, in Canada at least! – the law of the land (and even RCMP officers are tying the knot), what is the social and ethical responsibility – if any – of library staff and trustees to address this rapidly changing reality, and to provide services and access to print and Web resources for, and about, sexual minorities? Do librarians and libraries – should librarians and libraries – play a central role in diversity and inclusivity issues in our increasingly multicultural and pluralistic societies, in a rapidly digitizing world? Or are we just bit players on this particular stage?

These were the questions I posed at the beginning of my presentation about meeting the information and collection needs of LGBTQ users and allies (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirited, queer, and questioning). I demonstrated the breadth and depth of the issues by discussing references and resources for librarians in school and public libraries, a broad policy framework, the state of LGBTQ collections for young people in Alberta public libraries, subject access to library collections, Internet access and filtering in libraries, the reasons that librarians have given for not collecting LGBTQ materials, and some strategies for developing LGBTQ collections and services. I also invited participants to share their own experiences and practices throughout the session, so that we could learn from each other, and everyone was agreeably forthcoming in this regard as we went along. I also provided an 11-page handout for reference; some of that material is reproduced here.

I continued with a DVD called “Reaching Out” by Lynn Barnes. LGBTQ youth as well as adults such as author and activist Jewelle Gomez speak about their own experiences, and they are joined by librarians Jim VanBuskirk and Jennifer Collins with the San Francisco Public Library. Although the film is American, and LGBTQ youth are not visible library patrons, this film highlights ways in which the public library in any country can serve as a lifeline and make a difference in the lives of LGBTQ youth. The title for my talk came from a comment that Ms Gomez makes in the film when she describes her own search at a young age for information about what it meant to be a lesbian, and she says at one point, “I thought I’d find myself at the library.” And at another, “I thought I’d find myself in the word.”

The film points to the importance of LGBTQ teens connecting with the LGBTQ community. Is there a role for the public library in this? Several participants talk about individual librarians being strong and powerful, and also about the importance of “seeing themselves in the library”. What’s your reaction to these ideas? How can this information be used to inform what and how we collect information and materials and provide access to them?

Librarians in the film talk about having to be creative to serve invisible youth, about having to reach out through:

- symbols and signs
- posters
- rainbow flag or colours
- exhibits and displays
- brochures and reading lists
- programs
- workshops
- author readings
- an honour checkout system
- relationships with community organizations and professionals.

I asked the audience, do you have any materials in your library that are for or about LGBTQ teens? Do you have picture books that show all types of families, not just the stereotype? (Figures for Canada show that 15% of lesbian couples and 3% of gay male couples live with children; and...
34,000 same-sex couples self-identified on the 2001 Canadian census, made up of 15,000 lesbian couples and 19,000 gay male couples). Have you read any of the LGBTQ books for teens or for children? Do you know anyone who is LGBTQ? (This is an important question because 6 out of 10 Canadians have a relative or friend who self-identifies as having a sexual minority orientation.)

Obviously for some this is a sensitive topic, even controversial. But our focus is on young people who self-identify, and their friends and family, as well as those who are the children of same-sex parents. Our concern as library and information professionals is to provide inclusive, safe, and caring library service in order to help raise healthy young people, so that they realize their potential and become engaged, productive citizens. We need to keep our focus on asking the question: Do we as a public service profession – and as a society – believe that all young people should be safe and deserve dignity and respect at the library and at school?

There are several articles about ways in which teacher librarians and public librarians can improve the social climate and everyday experiences of sexual minority youth. Becoming familiar with these and other such resources is important because, as Stephen Abram has said, “You cannot serve well what you do not understand.”

There are many useful resources and published research results that inform the service needs of LGBTQ young people. I presented the following list of recommended readings that related to collections and services:

**LGBTQ Checklist Studies and Service Issues in Canadian Public and School Libraries**


Reaching out: Library services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. 2004. Film by Lynne Barnes. Order from lynneword@hotmail.com ($20 US, DVD or VHS). 16 minutes.


Schrader, Alvin M. 2006. The Last taboo: Diversity, equity, inclusivity, and law in Canadian libraries. Ottawa:


And last but not least: Camp FYrefly, the youth leadership retreat, at the URL: www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca/

What should we be doing? Before jumping into action, we need to be sure we have a solid policy framework grounded in the human rights context, international and local that focuses on core concepts of safety, inclusion, non-discrimination and equality rights, harm, duty of care, and professional service. Relevant policy categories are:

**Policy Framework for LGBTQ Services and Collections in Libraries: Non-discrimination, inclusion, safety, duty of care**

**Constitutional & legislative – int’l, national, local**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Convention on the Rights of the Child; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Canadian Human Rights Act; Criminal Code of Canada

**Administration of justice**

Hate and Bias Crimes Unit, Edmonton Police Service

**Public schooling**

Alberta School Act: “A board shall ensure that each student... is provided with a safe and caring environment... that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviors” (s. 45(8) School Boards – Responsibilities to Students). “All education programs offered and instructional materials used in schools must reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect common values and beliefs of Albertans”(s. 3(1) Diversity of Shared Values).

**Teachers’ associations**

Canadian Teachers’ Federation: “CTF advocates for educational systems that are safe, welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for people of all sexual orientations and gender...”
I Thought I’d Find... cont.

identities.”

Alberta Teachers’ Association: “The teacher teaches in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical characteristics, disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, place of residence, socioeconomic background or linguistic background.”

ATA Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Committee; website at: www.teachers.ab.ca/Issues+In+Education/Diversity+and+Human+Rights/Sexual+Orientation

Library associations – international, national, regional, local

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions:
- Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom; IFLA Internet Manifesto; IFLA Position on Internet Governance

Canadian Library Association:
- Code of Ethics Statement on Intellectual Freedom; Young Adult Services in Public Libraries; Information and Telecommunication Access Principles; Statement on Internet Access; Statement on Effective School Library Programs in Canada Students’ Bill of Information Rights / Charte des droits de l’élève à l’ère de l’information:
  "We believe that all students should have the right to: access a wide range of print, non-print and electronic learning resources at an appropriate level; explore materials expressing a variety of opinions and perspectives; and freely choose reading, viewing and listening materials for recreational and study purposes.”

American Library Association:
- Library Bill of Rights; Labels and Rating Systems; Free Access to Libraries for Minors; Evaluating library Collections; Restricted Access to Library Materials; Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights; Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program; Access for Children and Young Adults to Nonprint Materials; Universal Right to Free Expression; Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation; Code of Ethics; Libraries: An American Value; Core Values of Librarianship; Resolution on Threats to Library Materials Related to Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table (GLBTRT)
- www.alal.org/ala/glbrt/welcomeglbtround.htm

American Association of Law Libraries:
- Standing Committee for Lesbian and Gay Issues

Among the most troubling concerns is the quality of school and public library reference services provided to LGBTQ students. A recent study by Ann Curry (2005) asked a female proxy appearing to be a teenager to visit twenty public libraries throughout the greater Vancouver, British Columbia, area that belonged to 4 or 5 different library systems. At each library she explicitly asked for information about starting a gay-straight student alliance, and other similar groups, about relevant school and community issues, and about a good novel for the group’s discussions.

Curry found that “definite censure” was communicated by public librarians to the proxy customer in three out of the twenty interactions, but she also reported that the proxy student would not return to a total of twelve of the twenty public librarians (including of course the three who conveyed overt censure). The proxy reported experiencing negative physical reactions from the public librarians, such as raised eyebrows or frowns, she encountered abrupt or very hurried communication from them even when no one else was around waiting for service, and she received no positive closure thus making her feel that the librarians had “sent her away”. Given such attitudes, which ranged from cold indifference to outright antagonism, it should come as little surprise to learn that LGBTQ publications are significantly under-represented in both school and public library collections in Canada and the United States. Indeed, in a U.S. study of nation-wide school climate conducted under the auspices of the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, found that nearly 50% of high school students reported they had no access to gay-related resources in their school libraries (Kosciw et al., 2005).

It is ironic that at the same time that prejudice persists against sexual minority youth and adults in our society, there is a growing body of LGBTQ literature available for all ages and orientations. This literature, however, has been found, through various recent studies, to be under-represented in Canadian school and public library collections in large urban centres. Moreover, only a few of the large urban public libraries in Canada were doing an adequate job of collecting materials about and of interest to sexual minorities. (Fewer American studies are available.)

I reported on a checklist study of Alberta public libraries, in light of the (undeserved) reputation the province has for being socially conservative. Where do Alberta public libraries stand, and especially the medium and smaller ones? Are they “in the closet”? How much of the growing publishing field on LGBTQ-related topics is represented in the collections of these libraries?

Highlights of the checklist study showed that:

- 63 libraries across Alberta owned True Believer written by Virginia Euer Wolff = 60% of the 105 libraries serving populations of 1,200+ (28% of 229 libraries incl. 124 serving <1,200)
- Bad Boy, Diana Wieler, and Touch of the Clown, Glen Huser, owned by about half of the libraries (55%, 58 libraries; 50%, 53 libraries)

- Half of the titles were owned by 10 or fewer libraries

Subject access is another important aspect of collections, and particularly with fiction materials where access is significantly affected by the subject headings assigned to titles. A pilot mini-study showed that only about half of a small sample of titles had an LGBTQ-related subject heading. Here is a sample of headings used in library records for LGBTQ-related titles:

**Headings that were used to reflect LGBTQ-related content:**

- Bisexuality -- Fiction
- Homosexuality -- Fiction
- Homosexuality -- Juvenile Fiction
- Lesbians -- Fiction
- Lesbians -- Juvenile Fiction
- Lesbianism -- Fiction
- Lesbianism -- Juvenile Fiction
- Gay teenagers -- Juvenile Fiction
- Gay men -- Fiction
- Gay Parents -- Fiction
- Gay youth -- New York (State) -- New York -- Fiction
Inconceivable array of topics. This censorship is not simply attributable to the publicly
dominate filters used in school and public libraries. Many
content is singled out for censorship by many of the most
impact do filters have on a young person's ability to access
huge impact! In fact, LGBTQ
content on the Web?

The short answer is... enormous impact! In fact, LGBTQ and related
impact for a young person's ability to access
is machine intelligence, not human intelligence!
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is, on exact match character recognition. Filtering software
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the lives of LGBTQ and questioning youth — all young people,
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In addition, young people are “coming out” at much earlier
ages than in previous decades, and therefore are still living
at home. In recent years the average coming out age for
gay men and lesbians has dropped to age 15 or 16 (Ryan &
utility of the Internet. Internet access is even more critical for LGBTQ,
questioning, and rural youth, who typically need to maintain
complete anonymity when they seek out sources of information
and support that might help them come to terms with sexual
feelings, questions, and concerns. Rural youth are less
likely than their urban peers to have computers, especially
high speed access, and therefore more likely to use library
computers.

In addition, young people are “coming out” at much earlier
ages than in previous decades, and therefore are still living
at home. In recent years the average coming out age for
gay men and lesbians has dropped to age 15 or 16 (Ryan &
Futterman, 1998; Savin-Williams, 2005).
In light of the significant impact that the Internet plays in
the lives of LGBTQ and questioning youth — all young people,
in actuality — it is astonishing to learn that by 2002, 73% of
American schools had employed some sort of Internet filtering
software. Many studies have demonstrated that Internet filters
block millions of completely legitimate websites on an almost
inconceivable array of topics.

These serious filtering weaknesses are explained in part
by the limitations of the technology itself. But the personal
biases of commercial owners and designers, the very nature
of language and the indexing of language, and general
-cultural values are also other major factors contributing to the
egregious levels of error found in study after study of Internet
filtering effectiveness (Schrader, 2000; Schrader, 2002) .
In spite of the political and commercial rhetoric to the contrary,
such as specious claims of “intelligent searching” capability,
filtering software relies primarily on keyword blocking – that
is, on exact match character recognition. Filtering software
is machine intelligence, not human intelligence!
In view of these levels of inconsistency and error, what
impact do filters have on a young person’s ability to access
relevant LGBTQ content on the Web?

The short answer is... enormous impact! In fact, LGBTQ
content is singled out for censorship by many of the most
prominent filters used in school and public libraries. Many
of these filters contain a pervasive anti-gay bias in filtering
results.

This censorship is not simply attributable to the publicly
stated goal of regulating sexually explicit sites. In fact, almost
all filters go far beyond offensive sexuality in the topics
that they censor. For example, many LGBTQ and related
sexual health sites are commonly blocked by a wide variety
of software filtering products. Of special note is that 2002
Kaiser Family Foundation study, which tested access to health
information sites for teens by surveying seven commonly
used filters (CyberPatrol, Symantec, BESS, Be, SmartFilter,
Websense, and AOL Parental Controls).

For topics on sexual health, such as safer sex, the blocking
rates were as high as 50%. This is already bad enough, but
when lesbian and gay health information sites were examined
for accessibility, 60% of such sites were censored.

Given the general sense of discomfort with – and
sometimes indifference to – LGBTQ access issues reflected in
the practices of school and public librarians, it is not surprising
that many jurisdictions across Canada and the United States
have accepted discriminatory filtering software without protest
– software that egregiously denies access to information and
sites that are without any doubt legal and thus constitutionally
protected in both countries. But the technology and the young
people who are early technology adaptors will always be
ahead:

Over 70 million blogs were created by March 2007: 1.4
blogs are created every second (Sifry 2007)
MySpace has over 200 million registered users (including
repeats, pets, bands and other types of users) (MySpace
2007)
Facebook has 34 million users who logged on in July 2007
(Maestri, August 8, 2007).

Text messaging
There are many excuses and myths about lesbian and gay
library users offered as reasons for not collecting materials of
interest to LGBTQ children, young people, parents, and the
general library user:

Young library users are not searching for gay and lesbian
materials.

My library doesn’t provide materials geared to specialized
needs.

Gay people don’t live in my community. At least they don’t
seem to use my library.

Aren’t most of those materials too technical for most
libraries?

It’s too difficult to find reviews of these materials. How can I
tell what’s worthless and what’s worthwhile? And those
materials require ordering form special vendors.

I don’t feel qualified to order these materials.

My library’s vendor doesn’t handle those items.

Can’t people just use interlibrary loan to get these
materials instead of my having to buy them?

I’m uncomfortable with what some of these materials
are about. That stuff doesn’t belong in libraries—at least not in my
library.

I don’t approve of homosexuality or of homosexuals.

My library can’t afford gay/lesbian materials.

Librarians handle all library materials, including those
dealing with sexual orientation, equally and neutrally.

The library’s books about AIDS adequately address the
information needs of its gay and lesbian patrons.

continued on page 8
I Thought I’d Find… cont.
Buying library materials for gay and lesbian library users endorses the way these people live.
We don’t need special booklists or indexes; gays and lesbians can use the catalogue and periodical indexes like anyone else.
We simply haven’t yet found the time to devote attention to covering this particular subject area (Gough, 1990; Gough & Greenblatt, 1992).
What do you and your library need to be enabled to support LGBTQ services and collections? Building inclusive collections in school and public libraries involves considerations of both policy and process. Sometimes this may seem like a chicken-and-egg situation; for example, one recommendation for developing a robust and meaningful collection is to know your student users – but if there’s nothing in the collection to attract certain student communities to the library, how can this be done? Here are some strategies for building LGBTQ-themed library collections and services (Schrader, A. & K. Wells, 2007):

Library Services and Collection Strategies for Supporting LGBTQ Communities

Board Policies
- board philosophy, mandate and mission
- national and provincial guidelines
- relevant legislative frameworks at the provincial and national levels (esp. the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Human Rights Act)
- library association policy statements

Community Development
- Professional Networking
  - relationships with other librarians, teachers
  - relationships with gay-straight student alliances (GSAs) in their area and other local LGBTQ groups such as PFLAG Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Canada

Selection Criteria
- inclusive selection guidelines
- procedures for obtaining input from teachers, students, parents and other community members

Reconsideration of Materials
- policy and procedures in accord with CLA intellectual freedom principles
- Collection Development
  - bibliographies, “best” books lists, book award lists and multiple review sources
  - selection decisions supported by a range of reviews, e.g., School Library Journal and Booklist

Collection Access
- fiction and non-fiction catalogued under an imaginative diversity of user-friendly subject headings
- some librarians advise against labeling
- relevant bibliographies — visible, accessible, and available without going through the normal checkout process

Web Access
- ensure filtering software does not exclude LGBTQ sites and information — better yet, avoid filtering software
- develop acceptable use policies with comprehensive training and parental awareness information and training

Library Access
- promote the library as a “safe space,” through signage and other communications
- use inclusive language in all library communications and on websites

Promotion and Marketing
- maintain an LGBTQ presence on the library website, including bibliographies, new titles alerts and links to relevant websites including those of other libraries
- include LGBTQ titles in displays, book talks, presentations, communications
- support Freedom to Read Week (www.freedomtoread.ca) in February every year as well as local initiatives

Community Advocacy
- engage in well-planned public education programs to inform their constituencies about the library’s mission to serve inclusive populations
- develop a support network of like-minded teachers, counselors, parents, community leaders, and other librarians
- establish working relationships with local media

Professional Development
- expand your knowledge of LGBTQ issues and information resources by attending conferences, symposia or by staying current with the latest research

Library Service Charter/Guarantee
And finally, seize the moment to educate!
Cultural transformation for effective LGBTQ library services and collections will have to be accompanied by yet another important project in the arsenal of social justice. Freedom from sexual oppression and harassment, from homophobia and transphobia, must also be linked to confronting sexism, misogyny, racism, and dismantling gendered privilege. Unfortunately, sexism is still the popular weapon of homophobia (Pharr, 1997). The modern stereotype of male gayness is frequently described as “sissy”, which the dictionary defines as “a person who is effeminate or cowardly” — but who would call any woman “effeminate”? The absurdity of this word — in one fell swoop insulting both sexual minority males and all women as weak — is rooted in the intractable delusion of heterosexual male superiority (Russo, 1987, 4), and in the harsh sexism of male privilege, power, and hegemony.
There can be no hierarchy of oppression. If we fight against one form of injustice, we must strive to fight against them all. Ignorance is based in fear that leads to violence (Grace & Wells, 2001). And just as there is no hierarchy of oppression, there can be no hierarchy of equality and of equality rights. Truth to power has many voices.
Many gay and lesbian young people do not have support at home or at school, and certainly not at faith centres, so where can they turn for support, for safe space, for information, for materials that speak to their lives, for confidential access to materials through properly assigned subject headings, and for confidential reference service in answer to their questions? Many LGBTQ young people have no other place to go than libraries and nowhere to turn but to library staff.
With the potential to play a critical role as safe places for diversity, libraries and library staff can turn pain into opportunity, tolerance into celebration and optimism, abuse into resiliency. “We show wisdom in how we present
information to the public,” said the mayor of Burnaby, British Columbia, at the 2006 British Columbia Library Association annual conference. And the mayor of Edmonton, Alberta, declared at the Mayor’s Pride Brunch this past June that: “The health of the LGBTQ community is a barometer of the entire community.”

I ended my presentation with a question: What message are we giving to teenagers and children, to their families, and friends, if we leave the life experiences of sexual minority youth out of our library collections and services?

References


– information shown to registered users only on users personal MySpace page. To register go to: www.myspace.com/


Many thanks for my graduate assistants at various times, Claire Banton (MLIS 06) and Rachel Vyse (MLIS 08), for invaluable research and writing.

Corks, Cans, and Pops revellers
The Human Right
To Know and
the Open Access
Movement: An
Optimal Path for
Scholarly Journals

Melinda Spears
Rachel Vyse

Introduction
As the Internet infrastructure continues to grow throughout the world, a new method of dispersing scholarly wisdom is becoming more viable and desirable - open access to scholarly journals. Increasing in its momentum, especially over the last two years, the open access movement is truly supporting our world-wide community by allowing global sharing of current scientific and scholarly research. This resource guide is a supplement to our presentation and offers useful information for those who wish to explore this topic further. For a more thorough introduction to the open access movement, see Peter Suber’s overview: www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm

Definitions
Open access: “Information content made freely and universally available via the Internet in easily read format, usually because the publisher maintains online archives to which access is free or has deposited the information in a widely known open access repository. Open access is a new model of scholarly publishing developed to free researchers and libraries from the limitations imposed by excessive subscription price increases for peer-reviewed journals.” Dictionary for Library and Information Science (2004)

Open access journal: “A scholarly periodical that makes the full text of the articles it publishes universally and freely available via the Internet in easily read format, in some cases by depositing them immediately upon publication without embargo in at least one widely recognized open access repository. In this new model of scholarly communication, the costs of publication are recovered not from subscription fees, but from publication fees paid by authors out of their grant funds and from other sources. Dictionary for Library and Information Science (2004)

Four Major Open Access Statements
Budapest Open Access Initiative (February 2002) www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml
Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing (June 2003) www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm
Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and the Humanities (October 2003) oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html

Useful Resources
Associations
ACRL – Association of College and Research Libraries
ACRL is the largest division of the American Library Association and is very active in the open access movement. In 2002 they launched their Scholarly Communication Initiative which supports increased access to scholarly information. acrl.org/ala/acrl/index.cfm

ARL – Association of Research Libraries
ARL has incorporated into their 2005-2009 strategic plan a goal to develop effective, sustainable, and economically viable models of scholarly communication that are barrier-free. Last month (July 2007), ARL, jointly with ACRL, sponsored a 2½ day workshop (Institute on Scholarly Communication) for academic librarians that addressed current issues in scholarly communication. www.arl.org/

CLA – Canadian Library Association: Task Force on Open Access
Within the last year, CLA has formed an open access task force with a mandate to draft policy and position statements regarding open access for CLA. www.cla.ca/about/committees/openaccessmandate.html

IFLA/FAIFE – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions: Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression

Melinda Spears, while a student in the master’s program at the University of Alberta’s School of Library and Information Studies, discovered that “Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility” was a key course in her library education. The passion engendered from this stimulating course and a class assignment resulted in a joint presentation at this year’s PNLA Conference in Edmonton. Melinda also works part-time as a library assistant at Grant MacEwan College’s South Campus Library. When not studying or working she loves to take long walks with her beautiful dog, a Eurasier named Tango. She can be reached at: mspears@ualberta.ca

Rachel Vyse is in her final semester of the MLIS program at the University of Alberta. She greatly appreciates the opportunity to bring together in a course and at PNLA two very important aspects of her life, librarianship and social activism, while working with Melinda Spears on their co-presentation on Open Access and Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility. Rachel is looking forward to graduating and working amongst the many librarians who are also socially active in the community of Calgary, her new home. She can be reached at: vyseeyes@gmail.com
With over 1700 members from 150 countries around the world, IFLA is considered the global voice of the library profession. Their core values speak directly to the importance of freedom of access to information. FAIFE is a committee within IFLA that further supports free access to information and freedom of expression. FAIFE also defends and promotes basic human rights as defined in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

www.ifla.org/faife/

SPARC – Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition
In reaction to the tremendous rise in journal prices through the 1990s, ARL librarians banded together and created SPARC. Operating in collaboration with ARL, SPARC is an international alliance of academic and research librarians that are actively involved in correcting the imbalances of the scholarly publishing system. The University of Alberta is a SPARC member.

www.arl.org/sparc/index.html

University of Alberta Open Access
OA / U of A – Open Access Publishing Information for the University of Alberta Community
This website is an excellent resource covering all areas of open access within the University of Alberta community including funding agencies, relationships with the Academy, news, publications, publishers, reading lists and information on how the University of Alberta Libraries are supporting open access. Open access publishing services are also provided.

blogs.library.ualberta.ca/oa/

Movers and Shakers

Michael Geist
Geist is the Canada Research Chair of Internet and E-commerce Law at the University of Ottawa. He has obtained a Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) degree from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto, Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees from Cambridge University in the UK and Columbia Law School in New York, and a Doctorate in Law (J.S.D.) from Columbia Law School. His blog covers issues on the Internet and law. Use quick search or Topic Column to find postings on Open Access.

www.michaelgeist.ca/content/blogssection/0/125/

Denise Koufogiannakis
Koufogiannakis is the Collections and Acquisitions Coordinator in Bibliographic Services at the University of Alberta, and is a member of the CLA Task Force on Open Access. Koufogiannakis has recently been chosen by Library Journal as one of 50 select librarians who are considered the ‘movers and shakers’ of 2007. She is the driving force behind the International Evidence-Based Librarianship movement and co-founded the new open access journal Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice.

www.library.ualberta.ca/staff/denise_k/index.cfm

Heather Morrison
Morrison is a Project Coordinator at BC Electronic Library Network housed at Simon Fraser University. Morrison co-chairs the Information Policy Committee of the British Columbia Library Association, and is a member of the Committee on Intellectual Property and Public Access Working Group on Information Policy of the Canadian Library Association. Morrison is also the E-LIS Editor for Canada.

poetteconomics.blogspot.com/

Peter Suber
Suber is a Senior Research Professor of Philosophy at Earlham College and a Senior Researcher at SPARC. He is also the Open Access Project Director at Public Knowledge. Suber is the author of the Open Access News blog and the SPARC Open Access Newsletter which are considered the most authoritative and up-to-date resources on open access.

Suber’s Open Access News blog:
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/fosblog.html

SPARC Open Access Newsletter:
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/archive.htm

Suber’s comments and writings on the open access movement:
www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/oawritings.htm

Suber’s homepage: www.earlham.edu/~peters/hometoc.htm

John Willinsky
Willinsky is a professor at the University of British Columbia in the Department of Language and Literacy Education, and author of The Access Principle: The Case for Open Access to Research and Scholarship. In 1998 he spear-headed the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), a federally funded research initiative aimed at improving scholarly and public quality of academic research. PKP has developed free, open source software for the management, publishing, and indexing of journals called Open Journal Systems. The first ever international PKP Scholarly Publishing Conference was held in Vancouver, July 2007.

Willinsky’s homepage:
www.ied.educ.ubc.ca/faculty/willinsky.htm

Public Knowledge Project website: pkp.sfu.ca/

Books and Bibliographies


This authoritative bibliography available in PDF format contains over 1,300 entries and addresses the arguments and issues involved in the open access movement. Most sources listed have been published between 1999 and 2004.


Directories

DOAJ – Directory of Open Access Journals
Hosted and maintained by Lund University Libraries in Sweden, DOAJ is an on-line directory of scholarly journals that aims to increase the ease of use of open access scientific and scholarly journals from all subject areas and languages. Currently the DOAJ has 2,797 journal titles available on the World Wide Web that offer free, full-text, quality controlled articles.

www.doaj.org/

E-LIS – E-prints in Library and Information Science
Formed in 2003, E-LIS is the largest open access archives for the Library and Information Science domain. Currently E-LIS houses 6,217 scientific and technical documents, published or unpublished, on topics related to librarianship and information science.

eprints.rclis.org/

Note: Many open access directories exist. To keep this resource guide manageable, we decided to list a couple of the potentially most useful ones for you.

“The ideal library of the future will be one in which access to all materials and services (including electronic materials and services) will be freely available, without barriers”

As universities try to engage their students and ‘meet them on their own ground,’ libraries are following suit. One such approach is outpost reference: providing face-to-face reference assistance outside the physical library building. My library at the University of Montana provided an outpost reference service in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2006, which led me to wonder how others’ experiences had gone and what could be learned from these projects. These were perhaps thoughts I should have had before we launched our own service, but my presentation at PNLA and the resultant discussion demonstrated that we are not alone in leaping before we look. To add the proper perspective, I will begin by looking at what other, primarily academic, libraries are doing in the area of outpost reference, then discuss our experiences at University of Montana. I will also touch on the concept of roving reference, where there is not necessarily a set service point for reference questions but rather librarians roam the library looking for questions to answer.

Libraries generally provide a number of contact points for their patrons. A reference desk is almost universal, along with telephone and email reference. Chat paid service like Questionpoint or Tutor.com or via instant messenger software like AOL Instant Messenger or Meebo, is becoming more and more commonplace. Outpost reference and roving reference can be seen as a continuation of previous outreach efforts, a way to meet patrons at their point of need.

Public libraries have been pioneers in many cases with outreach, and Bookmobiles and branch libraries could be seen as the very first outpost reference stations, going where the patron is and reaching those who can’t or won’t go to the library building. However, for my own research, I took a look at academic outpost reference projects. In the literature and in practice, there were two types of outposts: academic or work-related places like department offices or classroom buildings, and social spaces like dorms, student unions or coffeehouses.

The first program I looked at took place at the University of Calgary (Lee, Hayden, and MacMillan, 2004). Librarians held office hours in the biology learning centre and the nursing learning centre. They found that they didn’t receive a high number of questions, but the ones that they got were very deep, requiring research knowledge and a bit of time. They also discovered that the project increased the visibility of the library to faculty and students, and helped librarians become more fully members of the learning community on campus. The title of their article, a quote from one of the students they assisted, is telling: “I wouldn’t have asked for help if I had to come to the library.”

The next project I examined was at SUNY Buffalo (Wagner, 2004). All subject specialists at this library were encouraged to hold office hours in departments, and this particular article focused on the librarian for Physics and his experiences in that department. He set himself up in the hallway of the building with a hanging sign advertising his presence, and proactively sought out opportunities to sell the library and its services. He would ask students and faculty about assignments and research, and suggest ways that the library could help. This article again talked about how outposts helped build relationships between the library and the academic community, and the author noted that existing outreach approaches tend to be highly passive (i.e. the reference desk) or virtual and anonymous (i.e. email or telephone).

The Rutgers New Brunswick campus student union was the home of the third outpost that I looked at (Kuchi, Mullen, and Tama-Bartels, 2004). In the student union, the librarians didn’t get many questions but found a good location for publicity and promotion. They theorized that since the student union was more a place for eating and socializing than a place to work or study, perhaps students in this location were not looking for reference help.

Dorm computer labs at Central Michigan University were where the final project I examined took place (Nims, 1998). Librarians noted that the students in the dorm computer labs weren’t doing much research but were rather finishing up projects or going online for personal reasons. Furthermore, the students felt the librarians were intruders in their labs.
The project was described as a “bitter disappointment” (87) by the participating librarians.

These four articles showed the two spheres I mentioned previously, and furthermore they showed that the more academic a space was, the more likely it was to be a successful outpost location. The first two studies I looked at emphasized relationship building with departments and reducing fear of the ‘big desk’ that librarians and libraries seem to symbolize.

Speaking of the ‘big desk,’ many librarians bemoan the lack of rigorous questions they get at the desk. We’ve discussed one way of going where the juicy questions might be by going outside the library, but another approach can take place without leaving. Roving reference is the practice of walking throughout the library answering patron questions at the point of need, whether it be at a computer terminal or working at a table or anywhere else in the building. For roving reference to be a success, you must have proactive, outgoing staff and patrons who are not shy.

I looked at two different academic roving reference services. The first was at University of California Merced (Carlson, 2007). This new library has no reference desk at all. Instead, students, faculty and staff contact librarians wherever they happen to be—in their offices, at conferences, in the classroom, or walking around the building. When they were constructing their library, they decided that since desk questions were in decline and lacking in rigor they would eliminate that service point.

The second academic roving reference project took place at George Washington University (Courtois and Liriano, 2000). They had two approaches: passive roving, in which librarians roamed the library waiting to be approached by patrons; and active roving, in which librarians approached users and asked them if they were finding what they needed or if they had any questions. They kept the traditional reference desk but used this project as an additional service outlet.

One key concern with roving reference projects is that of patron privacy. Taking too close a look at computer screens or what users are reading can be a little too ‘in your face’ for patrons and also for librarians.

Roving reference, along with outpost reference, requires knowing a fair amount about how your patrons want to be served and prefer face to face interaction? Do they want to be approached? Would they rather have virtual services? You should also know how your staff would like to serve the public. Do librarians feel comfortable approaching users? Would they rather provide a static service point with known and understood expectations, or would they want to try something more innovative that may not work? Knowing what our staff and users want is essential before we spend time and money on outreach services like outpost and roving reference, yet it’s often an afterthought.

University of Montana’s outpost reference project ran during the Spring and Fall 2006 semesters. The concept had been handed around to a number of people and eventually landed on my desk, where I and a team of volunteers decided to take the leap. We started out in the dorms in the Spring semester, then expanded into the student union in the Fall. In Spring, we spent two hours a night, four nights a week, in each of the eight dorms on campus. This took place over the two weeks around midterms. We had a librarian stationed in each dorm, usually in the lobby or a computer lab, with a sign saying that “The Librarian is IN.” In the sixteen hours we worked in the dorms, we got a total of seven reference questions. The students were receptive and welcoming, but we didn’t get too many of them. Many of them said to us that they do not go to the library to do their research and weren’t sure why we would come to them. It was good publicity though, and many students were quite touched that we would care enough to come to their dorms.

In the Fall of 2006 we focused on the two largest dorms on campus and also the student union. Over the two weeks corresponding with midterms, two library staff members armed with laptops, candy, and the sign from before took up stations in the dorms in the evenings and in the student union over lunch. Over 26 hours of service, we received 30 reference questions this time. However, 21 of those questions came from the student union location, which is a common setting for students studying between classes.

It can be concluded that our student union is a more academic and less social space than the dorms. Our work in both locations was well received, but was definitely used more in the student union. This project in general, though, was great for building relationships across campus, especially with Residence Life. They are eager for us to continue providing some sort of programming in the dorms. Participants on both sides of the project felt that outpost reference is a worthwhile and fun endeavor. Library staff enjoyed getting outside the building and meeting users where they research, and users appreciated our efforts to reach them. However, we have some recommendations for anyone attempting a similar project.

1. Location

We learned that the student union location provided higher traffic and interest, because the union during the day is a location where people like to study. We got this same sense about the dorms during the early evening hours while we were there. In addition, the student union location provided us with easy internet access—a must! Upon further research for this presentation, I would recommend targeting departmental offices and other academic hangouts.

2. Consistency

We also learned that having a consistent and reliable location and schedule is worth more than publicity. Many students who initially didn’t know who we were or why we were there in the Fall visited our dorm locations every evening we were there in the Spring to say hello and grab a piece of candy. Occasionally they even had questions about the library. Providing a reliable presence helped increase their comfort with us and gave them a known information resource.

3. Focus on PR rather than research assistance

Noting how many of our interactions were promoting and publicizing the library, perhaps it would be a better use of time and energy to focus this project more on library publicity and relations and less on research assistance.

Outpost and roving reference raises several questions: does the presence of a librarian in a social space make sense? Should librarians set up stations in study locations outside the library? What makes more sense—library as place or library as partner? Are the two exclusive? And, of course, what do our patrons want from us, and what can we afford to provide?

Careful consideration of these issues and examination of past successes (and failures!) can help create a thriving outreach program in these areas.

**Bibliography**


Reach Out and Touch Someone: Public and School Libraries Collaborate for Student Success

Rhona Klein

In 2003, the Washington State Library launched the Connecting Learners to Libraries (CLL) initiative funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The overall goal of this project was to improve students’ ability to effectively locate, evaluate, and use information to become independent life-long learners, and to increase students’ ability to meet the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). The specific CLL objectives included:

1. Provide funding for collaborative projects between public libraries and schools focused on improving students’ information literacy skills.
2. Increase awareness in public library and school communities of K12 students’ information literacy behaviors.
3. Improve public libraries staffs’ knowledge of Washington State EALRs, especially as assessed in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), and research models as they relate to K12 students’ information literacy skills.
4. Improve school communities’ knowledge of public library programs and services as they relate to K12 students’ information literacy skills.

The major interventions of the CLL project included:

Two annual cycles of noncompetitive mini-grants were offered throughout the state of Washington. Over the two year period, 90 projects were funded that involved hundreds of school and public libraries.

An online workshop on collaboration, information literacy, grant-writing and outcomes based evaluation (OBE) was provided.

A two-day seminar for grant recipients on OBE and marketing their projects to the local community was offered.

The map on the following page (fig. 1) shows the communities that were awarded CLL mini-grants over the two year period.

Using an Outcomes Based Evaluation framework, the CLL project provides evidence on the extent to which the initiative achieved its goals in terms of four outcomes. Key findings are summarized as follows:

**Outcome 1: Public Library and K-12 staffs increase level of collaboration.**

Public librarian grant recipients are four times as likely than non-grantees to meet on a weekly basis with school librarians in their local community.

Public librarian grant recipients were almost ten times as likely than non-grantees to participate in cooperative purchase agreements for databases with their partners.

The depth of collaboration was measured on a five-point, cumulative scale ranked from low to high: Consumption, Connection, Cooperation, Coordination, and Full Collaboration. Over 85% of grantees reached or surpassed the third level, and over 50% of grantees reached the fourth level or higher.

**Outcome 2: Public Library and K-12 grantees demonstrate awareness of each others’ services and resources.**

Public library grant recipients were 20% more likely than non-grantees to have visited their local school libraries in order to meet with staff or students.

Public library grant recipients were twice as likely as non-grantees to create links to the school library website.

In the first mini-grant cycle, 27% of grantees on average reported strong improvement in awareness of their partner’s databases, collections, and programming. In the second mini-grant cycle, 15% reported such improvement.

**Outcome 3: Public Library and K-12 grantees demonstrate awareness of education issues that affect student achievement.**

Non-grantees were twice as likely as public librarian grant recipients to
express great concern about their lack of knowledge of the school curriculum. Grant recipients were more confident in their knowledge of the curriculum.

In the first mini-grant cycle, 17% of grantees on average reported strong improvement in their knowledge of academic tests and standards, such as the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) or Grade Level Expectations (GLEs). In the second mini-grant cycle, 5% reported such improvement.

Outcome 4: Public Library and K-12 grantees increase their information literacy skills (as measured by knowledge of research models).

In the first mini-grant cycle, 15% of grantees on average reported strong improvement in their knowledge of information literacy concepts. In the second mini-grant cycle, only 1% reported such improvement.

Outcome Performance of Public Library Grant Recipients

Public library staff were surveyed statewide in 2004 before any CLL grants were awarded, and again in 2006 after the two CLL grant cycles. The chart on the following page (fig. 2) illustrates grant recipients’ stronger performance than non-grantees. This evidence suggests that participating in the grant project is associated with desired changes in knowledge and behavior.

Overall, the project succeeded in showing positive improvement for all four outcomes and exceeding the specific targets set by the project advisory committee.

Grantees participated from all regions of the state and included numerous small and rural libraries. Grantees also reported high satisfaction with the mini-grant process, and appreciated the streamlined application process and reduced reporting requirements.

Mini-grants appear to be an effective way to promote “grass-roots” activity among a large number of diverse institutions. The mini-grants were largely successful in meeting the combined objectives of simplifying the application process, encouraging smaller institutions to apply, enabling professionals with no previous grant experience to learn about the process, and stimulating numerous projects in all regions of the state.

While CLL targeted a specific audience and type of collaboration (public library-public school), the success of this project is rooted in the idea that the opportunity to learn and practice information literacy skills permeates all aspects of life, and that no single institution can meet all of the community’s needs. Strategic collaboration and broad communication are critical keys to achieving desirable levels of information literacy in the population.

Best Practices

The best practices found among the mini-grant projects can be categorized in seven thematic groups:

- Increasing access to and use of library resources

Reach Out cont.

fig. 1

continued on page 16
Increasing use of library facilities
Creating opportunities to learn information literacy skills
Supporting continuing education
Building capacity for public/school library collaboration
Creating outreach opportunities to the community
Aligning services to meet state education standards and expectations

These themes are centrally related to the CLL project’s mission and goals in terms of “encouraging collaborative efforts among libraries, learners, and schools through information literacy activities, opportunities, and demonstration projects.”

Grant recipients demonstrated wide recognition of the need to provide access to information resources across boundaries of time and space. Students have access to the school library during the school day, but are limited at other times. The public library is available after school and on weekends. Students also have a frequent need to gain access to digital resources at home in order to complete their work. Many projects focused upon informing students and others of the capacity of school and public libraries, sharing resources across institutions, and sharing information about learning projects so that both agencies could optimize working with students. The improved communication between school and public library agencies enabled school librarians to promote use of the public library more effectively, and increased the variety of resources that students could access.

Both public and school libraries were able to create opportunities for teaching information literacy skills to students, especially as they worked collaboratively to help students build strong learning habits. While the primary intent was to provide benefits to students, these grant projects also enabled professionals to jointly plan and share continuing education opportunities.

All of the best practices focused on student learning, both in the school and public library arenas. There was focus upon the understanding that they shared a common audience – that of the K-12 student. There was an understanding that in sharing this common audience it was beneficial for both to not only communicate about this audience, but share common expectations and facilitations for them.

Lessons Learned

In their grant report narratives and post-project interviews, many grant recipients made observations of where they encountered obstacles and challenges, and where they would have done things differently. Lessons learned from their experiences include:

Keep your primary focus on the initial purpose and scope of the grant project; don’t attempt to expand beyond your means.

Keep your eye on short-term accomplishments with a high return in terms of participation and student engagement. Remember that you only have a small amount of money to work with and a relatively short time frame.

Consider how to sustain the work you’ve accomplished in terms of maintaining a collaborative relationship, seeking support for planning future projects, and re-using resources of materials that you prepared for this project. In several cases, nurturing a collaborative relationship was just as important for the long run as the project itself.

Time to meet is often difficult to schedule; make meeting time effective by setting an agenda or a checklist of things to discuss.

Transportation and safety considerations for minors require planning and approval from school authorities; many public librarians may be unfamiliar with the processes involved in planning school visits.

Investment in the work is correlated with understanding of the benefits of this work by all. Librarians need to make sure that all staff members in both institutions know what the project is trying to achieve.

Most of all, the level of communication between the different agencies and the involved parties is paramount to the success of the project. Something good can come out of the most basic understanding of each other’s challenges with this population and have significant impact on actions with this population.

About the Connecting Learners to Libraries Project

To learn more about the CLL initiative, please visit the initiative’s home page: www.secstate.wa.gov/quicklinks/CLL. The slideshow presented at the PNLA Conference may be viewed at www.secstate.wa.gov/quicklinks/CLL-presentation.

In 2005, the Idaho library community gathered to discuss the future. Together, they created the 2020 Vision for Idaho libraries. Within the Vision is a strategy that challenges libraries to create an e-branch—a website through which users can access library services. The staff at the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) wanted to help make that happen. They began by assessing the situation.

Defining Success

The first step in any such undertaking is to determine what success would look like. What does a “good website” look like? The ICFL staff took that first step by creating a working definition of web presence. The Idaho Commission for Libraries defines web presence as a vital website that provides information about or access to library services. A basic level of web presence for public libraries should meet the following criteria:

- Library name
- Library address, both physical and mailing (including branch information if applicable)
- Library phone number
- Online contact (e-mail address or online contact form)
- Hours of operation
- Library board member names
- Link to the online catalog (if applicable)
- Link to the LiLI Portal (Or, a link to the individual LiLI Databases and the LiLI Unlimited Catalog with the “funded by LiLI” icon/button)
- Description of library services available to patrons
- Current site content indicated by a date when last updated or last reviewed

Armed with a point of reference to evaluate library websites, ICFL set about reviewing them one by one. The first finding was that just 58 percent (60 of 104) of Idaho’s libraries had any kind of web presence. Of the existing websites, many were out of date or lacked any information useful to potential customers. In fact, only five library websites met all the criteria for a web presence.

While the Commission staff wanted to improve the situation, the libraries had yet to specify their needs. What kind of tools would help them to create a web presence? A survey of the community indicated a few key factors. They lacked the HTML and web design skills needed to create websites, they lacked the time to learn those skills and keep up with website maintenance, and they lacked the funding to pay someone to do it. They welcomed a system that was fast, easy, and cheap.

Finding a Tool

ICFL’s web team investigated options for a content management system (CMS) that would serve the needs of Idaho’s public libraries. The desire was a system that would allow for web site management through a web browser interface. A number of options were considered including a home-grown CMS and the Plinkit system that was highly regarded and in use in the neighboring state of Oregon. In the end, ICFL’s staff chose Drupal, an open-source content management system.

Drupal has a number of features that were attractive to the project. The software is compliant with accessibility standards. In addition, it has the ability to run multiple sites with a single installation of the software. Its modular design allows for use of only the features needed. The documentation supporting the software is plentiful and the community of users is vibrant and active meaning that support was readily available for the technical staff working with the system. Among the stronger arguments for moving forward with Drupal was the programming experience of ICFL’s web staff. They were already experienced with using PHP and MySQL: programming tools that are part of the foundation of the Drupal software. From there, they created Idaho’s e-Branch in a Box program.

continued on page 18
Lesson #2. Jumping in Works.

The Library Experience

The technical staff was sold on the software. But how about library staff who are less comfortable with technology? Garden City Public Library Director, Lisa Zeiter, tells of her experience. The Garden City Library had a website. It was created by a former staff member. When the staff member left the library, all the passwords and access to that site went with her. Current staff could not access the page to make changes or even delete it. So the page remained accessible to the public, yet static. Content became outdated quickly.

When asked why she chose to participate in the e-Branch program, Zeiter explained that they had no IT staff and no time. ICFL was offering to provide the space to host the site and IT support. "Plus," she explained, "They told us it would be easy." She goes on to say, "e-Branch was a snap!" Two staff members went to the training, passed out the login and password to administrative staff, and no training was required. "We love it," they shared. Not only is the system easy to use, but "we can always find the answers to our questions."

No system, however, is perfect. There are always opportunities for improvement. While recognizing that the system is easy to use, library staff still need time to play with it, to create content, and to put their ideas into action. Repeatedly, the library community has indicated a desire for more training and, specifically, training on advanced features. They are ready, they say, "to learn more bells and whistles." The Commission is working to meet those requests. The basic training will be repeated in Fall 2007. However, how does one offer a workshop on advanced features when all the necessary functionality is wrapped up in the basic operation? Requests for advanced functionality vary depending upon the individual making the request. So, ICFL will focus on one-on-one training in a group setting.

ICFL staff offered advanced workshops, however, not in the traditional sense. e-Branch users were invited to attend an open session. They were asked to bring their unique questions for their e-Branch site. Trainers offered one-on-one support to meet the unique needs of the users who attend. This training event demonstrated the high-level of flexibility needed for a program that started a simple idea of creating a pre-loaded web site. ICFL learned a number of other lessons in the process, too.

Lessons Learned

Lesson #1. Preparation is Key. The project held on to a mantra of "fast, easy, and cheap." That meant that the user's training experience had to model this theme. Doing so involved creating a basic template for each library's website ahead of training. Users were able to walk in to training and work on their site immediately. In order for workshop participants to add content during the workshop, they needed to know what content they would add. There would be no time during the workshop to draft any prose. ICFL staff developed pre-workshop homework allowing participants to create content ahead of time and focus on design and technical functionality at the workshop. But how would they get that content into the system? Copying and pasting was logical, but experience showed that many computer labs blocked portable storage devices. Staff went to considerable effort before the training to resolve access issues with the various computer labs ahead of time. As a back-up, participants were encouraged to send their content to ICFL ahead of the workshop, so their documents could be placed in a temporary online storage space accessible during the workshop. For all the administrative preparation that went into the workshops, staff still had to learn how to use the software. After all, they would be presenting the training.

Lesson #2. Jumping in Works. Staff who were delivering the training had an experience quite similar to that of the end user. That is, they learned how to use the system just prior to teaching it. Trainers were admittedly nervous up front, but as soon as they started using the system, they realized how easy it was. The ability to share this "newbie" experience with the workshop participants was a positive aspect in delivering the training. The trainers could really relate to the situation of those being trained.

Lesson #3. It Takes a Village. ICFL decided to deliver the training in teams. There were 2-3 trainers per session, plus an additional person available to assist during hands-on activities. Participants at the workshops had varying skills levels. While trainers were aware, thanks to the earlier needs assessment, that library staff lacked the skills, the situation went beyond HTML skills. Workshops were adjusted to include basic computer skills at the beginning of each session. Participants needed reviews on copying and pasting, navigating among multiple windows, and some document formatting functions. Having a team of trainers available during hands-on exercises helped, but pairing participants with others with higher skills levels was also an advantage. Beyond the workshops, the library 'village' went into action. Some found they had a real knack for working with the system and they volunteered themselves to work one-on-one with their peers in neighboring libraries. Their skills and desire to work with the system was a real advantage, but also led ICFL to another lesson.

Lesson #4. Beware of Scope Creep. The basic pre-loaded e-Branch site incorporated the minimum requirements that defined web presence in Idaho, but the template and the Drupal system had a lot of room for enhancements. The Commission's web staff quickly found that many of the participants in the program were wanting more enhancements than previously anticipated. So much was possible, but enabling features and assisting libraries with implementing those features quickly exceeded the web team's ability to provide reasonable support and accomplish the rest of their responsibilities. The web team identified their abilities and limits. What functions could be supported and supported well? How would requests for additional functionality be handled? Were system upgrades and maintenance being sacrificed in order to assist with special enhancements for individual users? These questions are currently being addressed, and progress has been made by incorporating some change management processes and planning for the long-term maintenance of the program.

Lesson #5. It's a Long-Term Commitment. When the program began, the purpose was to help libraries create a viable, sustainable web presence. While just a few libraries met the minimal criteria in the beginning, about half are there at the time of this writing. The focus, to date, has been on public libraries, but school libraries have similar struggles with websites. The currently participating libraries continue to need training as they experience staff turnover or simply want to learn about advanced features. The program is no one-night-stand. It is not even a fling. e-Branch in a Box is a long-haul relationship that includes planning, support, counseling, and long-term care. And, the good news for Idaho Libraries, is that the Idaho Commission for Libraries is in it for the long-haul.
In 2002, seventeen multi-type Montana libraries joined together to start the Montana Shared Catalog. Some of the libraries had a dated automation system that needed upgrading while others were still not automated. For the system to work it was very important for all libraries to look at their current policies and procedures, home locations of materials and material types. After many grueling hours all the information was pulled together in a circulation map which still dictates the way we do business. Today the MSC (Montana Shared Catalog) has 82 member libraries in 63 communities, stretching 854 miles from the mountains to the actual prairie.

In 2004, six MSC libraries and their branches started a new project called "Partners". This involved removal of the walls separating libraries in the circulation system so that the users from the six libraries were able to access materials from the other Partners by simply placing a hold on the item. It sounds simple but cooperation was the only way this could work. It meant everyone looking at their circulation rules, times for checkout, fine structures and maximum fines before barring a user. This was also a grueling process. Policies needed to be changed in libraries so all six of the systems were using the same procedures. It was definitely a game of give and take and everyone ends up the winner. An added bonus to this project was users could now walk into six other libraries and use their home library card to check out materials. When they were finished with those materials they could return them to any of the six libraries and be sure they would make it back to their rightful owner.

So, back to a hold being placed at a Partner Library; the user places the hold and the next day the owning library pulls the hold from the shelf and the materials are sent by courier, bus, or US Mail to the library the patron requested as a destination. The decision was made to set a trial period and then reevaluate. The project was so popular that there was no turning back.

After several months of sending items back and forth a discussion took place about materials that were returned form a library one day and the next day another user would want the same material sent back to the same library. This seemed like such a waste of postage that the "Floating Collection" component was added.

The first collection to float was adult fiction both new (ten day checkout) and regular (28 day checkout). When a fiction item checked in at any of the participating libraries and did not have a hold on it, the item would stay on the shelf at that library until checked out by another user. After a month of floating fiction it was apparent that the older titles of floating fiction were not moving from the shelves and some libraries didn’t have shelf space for the items. At that point the decision to float only new fiction was made. The floating collection has grown to include video (VHS) and cassette audio books at this time. The goal is to float the entire collection.

If an item is not moving off the shelf it can always be returned to the owning library. Monthly reports are run to show what has been on a shelf for 6 months and the items are pulled and returned to the owning library. Not many items are remaining and need to be pulled to return to the owning library. When scanning Missoula Public Library Shelves prior to PNLA approximately 10 items on the new fiction shelf belonged to a Partner Library and not MPL. The number of Partner Libraries has grown to nine with one new library coming on in September, raising the number to ten libraries plus branches (total – 16 locations).

In order for the Partners to grow it was necessary for all interested libraries to adopt the policies and procedures developed by the group and to have a plan of how they would move items around the state. For libraries on the bus route this is not a problem. Crates of materials ship by bus for a very low price compared to shipping through US Mail. If a library were to join that could only use US Mail for getting materials to and from their location it would put a burden on the entire group. Montana has no formal courier service that serves the entire state so it is up to each individual library to find what will work to get materials around. As the group has grown the need for HUBS has arisen. There are now two hubs, one in the west and one in the east that act as the center to receive and re-crate materials before moving to their destination. An example would be that materials come in through a courier service to the hub. The crates continued on page 26
Our public library, like most libraries, offers the gamut of programming for all ages. These range from small babies and their parent/care giver to seniors. Programs range from the staple story times, crafts, author visits, films, introduction to computers, etc. For the purposes of this article I plan to highlight some non traditional programs which I hope will act as an inspiration for programmers to try something new.

Monoporead
Many years ago, the Children’s Services librarian initiated a summer reading program called Monoporead. Modeled on the popular Monopoly game, it is a board game which encourages reading rather than property acquisition. The library has developed two boards; a smaller one for prereaders and a larger board for independent readers. On the first visit, the player receives a flag with their name on it. The player rolls a pair of dice to determine how far to move along the board. Each square on the board leads the player to a type of library material, many of which are genres of books (both fiction and nonfiction); however, movies, music, and CD-ROMs are also included. The staff person then takes the player to the collection to find a relevant item for the child. The child may choose to look at the material in the library or check it out. Players are limited to playing once a day and they must sign into a log book before playing. There are a number of prizes to be won during the game at corner squares and in some of the Take A Chance and Community Chest cards. This program has garnered many players over the year and has become a staple of the library’s summer reading program.

The Mitten Tree
Inspired by the spirit of generosity of Jan Brett’s The Mitten and Candace Christiansen’s The Mitten Tree, the mitten tree has become an annual tradition in the Children’s Library. Each year a Christmas tree appears and the public are invited to donate mittens for local children. Last year close to 300 pairs of mittens were donated, which went to local agencies, such as the women’s shelter, immigration society, schools, etc. A range of mittens (and scarves and hats) are received – some are from local department stores, others are made by local knitters and all are donated with love.

Ride the Road to Reading
Ride the Road to Reading is an outreach program for children in the fourth grade. Research has shown that children tend to use library resources less as they enter upper elementary school which is why we have targeted these students for our program. The library contacts local school to have library “ambassadors” visit fourth grade classrooms to promote library services, programs, and reading for knowledge and enjoyment. The library ambassador brings a suitcase with high interest books to each class and spends about an hour book talking and storytelling; then they provide each student with a passport card which must be returned to the library in order for the child to be entered into a prize draw. At the library the child is either given a new membership or will have their existing membership renewed. If the child has any fines or fees owing they are waived to eliminate any barriers to borrowing. The child is then taken on a tour of the library and shown how to access and search online databases from home. In keeping with the program’s theme prizes are either things that a child might use in transporting themselves to the library i.e. bikes, inline skates, a skateboard, safety equipment (helmets), backpacks, or items that a student might find at the library such as books, DVDs, and CD-ROMs. In past years we have had up to eighteen separate prizes for students. In addition to the student prizes we have added a prize for one participating parent (must have attended the library tour) and one participating teacher in recognition of the valuable role both parents and teachers play in the success of the Ride the Road to Reading program and in a child’s continued use of the library and its resources. The donation from Trans Canada Pipelines supplies coverage to allow the Library Ambassadors’ visits and to purchase the prizes.

Young Adult programming:
Over the years, the Young Adult Coordinator has built a very successful series of programs for young adults, aged 13 to 17. These generally take place on a Friday evening when the library is closed, adding an air
of delicious pleasure in being in a building which has closed to the public. The programs are planned by the young adult board and vary year by year, according to their suggestions. Examples of programs include:

- **Pirate Night** (participants come dressed as pirates, make pirate ships out of cardboard boxes used to ship refrigerators, etc., which they then race along a hall, watch pirate movies)
- **Medieval Night** (costumes, sword fights using cardboard rolls, apple bobbing, log rolling using large carpet rolls, making helmets with foil and duct tape, films with a medieval theme)
- **Anime Night** (a local anime artist comes and give tips on drawing anime, related movies shown, samples of Japanese food such as rice sushi rolls, okenomiyaki)
- **Oscar Night** (people come dressed to kill, walk a red carpet, present and accept awards, show an Oscar award winning movie).
- **Improv Night** (everyone chooses a prop and then makes up a story which is continued from prop to prop)
- **Monopoly Night** (played on a large cardboard board with participants moving along the board at the throw of the dice, and individual Monopoly games going on at the same time. Many adults will phone and ask if they could play as well – this is a possible adult program for the future)

An annual summer program for young adults has been the popular murder mystery evenings. These run Wednesday nights in July and August and are based on the murder mystery games by Max Haines, a Canadian chronicler of true crime. Each story line is based on the same premise: someone is murdered and the goal is to identify who done it, based on clues from each participant. Locales have included a Caribbean resort, a ski resort, a high school reunion, a coffee shop, an airplane cabin, etc. Participation is limited to eight teens per session and advance registration is required. Minimal props are given to each participant. These can range from a floppy straw hat to a pair of sunglasses to various outfits, usually purchased from the Salvation Army for a small cash outlay. Over the years the Library has built up a collection of props and clothing which reappear annually.

And most important of all to teens is the presence of food. This can range from munchies – chips, pop, popcorn for movie nights, to a pizza and Monopoly night – the way to a teenager’s heart is indeed through his/her stomach!

### Adult Programming:

Adult programming is varied, ranging from author visits, film presentations, vacation slides, memory suitcases, etc. Many of these events are produced in sponsorship with local organizations. Often the Library’s contribution is to provide a room or theatre, refreshments, some publicity and participation in the hosting duties. This has a two fold result: we share our resources with other groups and they publicize the event on their various networks. In addition, the financial outlay for each partner is either shared or non-existent.

An example of a long term partnership is a continuing program on legal topics for the public in partnership with the local community college. The college includes these in the semi annual continuing education calendar and looks after registration and publicity and the Library provides the room and coffee. Topics have included estate planning, duties of an executor, writing a personal directive (Alberta), grandparents’ rights, and many more. One series of programs takes place on Wednesday morning from 10.15 to Noon; the other is a lunch hour presentation, making it possible for business people to attend.

One of the fastest growing areas is the immensely

continued on page 22
successful Introduction to Computers classes. The participants are overwhelmingly seniors: often they’ve been given computers by their children or grandchildren because their families want to keep in touch via email. These are made up of four consecutive modules which are taught by Library staff. Funding for staff time comes from a grant from a local adult education organization.

In addition, we offer drop in computer help for seniors with the aid of volunteer seniors. The presentation of these sessions and the upgrading of the computer lab were made possible by a grant from the Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors program. A staff person oversees the program, looking for volunteers, making presentations and generating publicity information.

Promotion of programs:
In many communities, there are freebie outlets. These can be local radio and television stations, local newspapers, through public service announcements and local columns, events calendars, either online or hard copy, etc. In our community, the local media will run information for free as long as there is no paid advertising in one of the outlets.

Posters and where to display them are another way of publicizing a program. A check off locations willing to accept and display them has been developed and is used regularly. Targeting groups with specific areas of interest is another way of getting the word out. An example of this is the continuing programs with the local environmental group. The Library has a collection of DVDs and videos on current topics about the environment; the environmental group has the list of contacts. Pooling resources generally results in engaged and large audiences.

Partnerships:
As mentioned earlier, forming partnerships is a key ingredient for successful programming. Partners can be non profit groups such as the environmental group, academic institutions such as the community college, and neighbouring libraries or library systems to present author tours. The Library held a very successful partnership with the local Art Gallery several years ago: it was called Hand Read and consisted of commissioned works related to the art of reading and literacy in various media: ceramics, paintings, scrolls on which the public were invited to record their thoughts on reading and literacy, audiovisual media, etc. The works were displayed in both the Library and the Art Gallery and a booklet, which included written reactions to the exhibit by high school and college students, was developed at the end of the exhibition.

In conclusion:
In order to present successful programs, it is important to know the community and its idiosyncrasies. Equally important is knowing whom to contact as a partner or for feedback or further information. Being open to opportunities as they come along often brings in unexpected results: one of our most successful programs was one July (not generally a good time for adult programming) when a visiting professor from the mid West talked about the Japanese balloons which were sent to North America towards the end of the second World War. Several audience members could remember the shock of them landing in their farmyards and one had a small piece of the mulberry silk used in the balloon. This was mutually satisfactory as the audience learned or relearned about this event and the professor gained more first hand accounts for his research.

Tied in with seizing opportunities is the related quality of flexibility. Being willing to roll with the punches and unexpected events lowers the programmer’s stress level immeasurably.

And above all, programmers should maintain their sense of humour and have fun!
It’s About Change

Our approach to the Balanced Scorecard can be summed up in one statement: it’s about change. Right here and now, we’re going to ask you to make a change. Notice your next exhale and now inhale into your belly, continue upward filling your chest, keep going filling your throat and now exhale first out through the throat, then the chest, and finally empty your abdomen. Do that five times right now.

With five deep full breaths, you just made a significant change in your physiology. Your pulse is lower and your blood pressure is lower. You are generally more relaxed and your brain is functioning better. The process was measuring your breath and your outcome was a calmer, brighter you.

Strategic Planning

Although Planning For Results is great, we wanted to do something different. We wanted a performance management system that allowed us to measure our own performance before someone else did. We knew for a fact that “What gets measured, gets Managed”---Peter Drucker. We wanted a Strategic Plan that would be flexible enough to allow us to adapt to unforeseen challenges. That is when we discovered the Balanced Scorecard.

The Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard has been around in business for a while. It came out of Harvard by two gentlemen, Norton and Kaplan. They saw the need for businesses to adopt a management system that would focus on different areas of improvement rather than just the bottom line. They came up with a balanced system of perspectives. They are the Customer Perspective, the Learning and Growth Perspective, the Internal Processes Perspective, and the Financial Perspective. Your challenge is to balance improvements in all of these areas, not just one.

Now we’ll be honest, the learning curve through the maze of literature on the Balanced Scorecard is pretty daunting. However, we’re going to save you time and consultants’ fees. It took us awhile, but here is what we found out. The Balanced Scorecard is about change and to get that change, you set targets and measure your performance.

The Balanced Scorecard starts with a Mission and a Vision. That is traditional Strategic Planning stuff, right? Go ahead and be traditional about it and ask everyone what you should be doing and what you will look like when you were doing it. Now, here is the difference: we want you to simplify both statements. You get one sentence. It needs to be clear, compelling, and something people can remember. If your employees don’t remember your mission, then your mission is not clear and compelling. Our mission at North Central Regional Library is “to promote reading and lifelong learning.” Our vision is that we are clean, smart, and friendly. Pretty simple and yet we’re toying with the idea of shortening our mission to just promoting reading.

One of our caveats is what we call output, outcome, outhouse, who cares? That means don’t get hung up on the terms. In other planning processes you have to know the difference between an outcome, an output measure, a goal and an objective before you can make a move. Our advice is leave those details to people who think they matter. What you care about is change.

Cooking Up A Scorecard

Here is our basic recipe:

- Write a Mission Statement and Vision Statement.
- Now ask yourself, what do you want to change about the experience that customers have in your libraries?
- What do you want to change about the learning and growth or and the knowledge and abilities of your employees?
- Which internal processes do you need to change so that you excel at them?
- How do your finances need to be changed so that you can realize your vision?
- In each of the four perspectives, come up with a target for change and then measure your progress.

continued on page 26
Bringing an author, illustrator or storyteller into your library can be a daunting prospect, but with a little advance planning and lots of communication, literary artist visits can be terrific additions to your library’s programming.

Why host?
Libraries and schools host artists for a long list of reasons:
- Provides an opportunity for the audience to meet a working author/illustrator
- Learn about the struggles/challenges an author may have faced in their lives
- Learn more about the craft of writing.
- Children will see that finished product needed editing and lots of re-writing (just like their class assignments).
- Learn how the author comes up with ideas and what process they went through to write a book
- Learn how books are published
- Audience is exposed to excellent local children’s/young adult literature
- Makes books come alive
- Makes audience members identify with specific books once they’ve met the author
- Can encourage reluctant readers to pick up a book
- In school libraries, specific authors can enhance curriculum work
- Author visits can bring people into the library who have never been there before
- Can help publicize the library (e.g. through media attendance).

How to host:
First, you need to figure out who to host. Criteria to consider include:

1) What’s the age group of the audience? Adults, families, children? If it’s students, what grades?
2) What type of presenter would you like: author, illustrator, storyteller
3) Do you have a particular subject area in mind? A curriculum tie-in, a topic for a community group? This factor isn’t critical, but it can help you focus your search.

Several organizations have websites providing information on a variety of authors:

- **Young Alberta Book Society**: [http://www.yabs.ab.ca](http://www.yabs.ab.ca) -- you can call us, too.
- **Canadian Children’s Book Centre**: [http://www.bookcentre.ca/authors/author_directory.shtml](http://www.bookcentre.ca/authors/author_directory.shtml)
- **CANSCAIP (Canadian Society of Children’s Authors Illustrators and Performers)**: [www.canscaip.org/members.html](http://www.canscaip.org/members.html)
- **Federation of BC Writers**: [http://www.bcwriters.com](http://www.bcwriters.com)
- **Writers Guild of Alberta**: [www.writersguild.ab.ca/membership/member_directory.asp](http://www.writersguild.ab.ca/membership/member_directory.asp)
- **Writers Union of Canada**: [www.writersunion.ca/ww_alphaselect.asp](http://www.writersunion.ca/ww_alphaselect.asp)
- **The (American) Children’s Book Council**: [www.cbcbooks.org/contacts/visit.htm](http://www.cbcbooks.org/contacts/visit.htm)
- **The Library of Congress Centre for the Book**: [www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/cob4.html](http://www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/cob4.html)

Of course, if you have folks in mind, google’s a good start - but if you
can’t seem to track down their personal contact information, you can always contact their publishers. Other libraries and schools can also be a good source of information on the people they’ve hosted. If you’re considering hosting someone unfamiliar, it’s always a good idea to read through a book or two by the artist so you have some first hand knowledge of the artist’s work before you decide to book them.

**Things to discuss with the artist:**

1) **Your location:** some artists won’t travel far from home, others may be visiting your area as part of a larger tour.

2) **The proposed timing of the visit:** school visits should be arranged when there are as few other conflicts as possible. Halloween, for example, is not the best time for kids to be focussing on the material. As well, teachers should have time to prepare the students by introducing them to the presenter’s books. Prepared students are much more interested in the visitor and the artist will be more successful in holding their attention.

3) **Money:** Presentation fee (per session, half day, full day?); Travel costs - mileage rate, accommodations, meals, etc.; Sales tax status, Payment schedule -- at the session, afterwards, upon invoice?

4) **How many sessions & how long** in a half or full day? How much time is needed for set up & breaks?

5) **Which age groups** will s/he work with? If you’re focussing on students, we recommend a maximum of 3 grades together in any one presentation. Though some artists can do a session which interests a wider range, this is a rare skill. Generally, combining too many grades results in a presentation that is going to bore older grades or confuse younger ones.

6) **Audience size:** presenters have a limit as to how large the audience can be - particularly with children. Please respect this limit: libraries often want as many people as possible to experience the presentation, but an overcrowded session won’t be a good experience. Plan for an adequate number of sessions to cover the expected (or invited) audience.

7) **The content of the sessions** -- what sort of presentations does the artist do? Audience size and age may impact whether the artist does a reading with questions, a writing workshop, or something else altogether. If you have specific content in mind (eg. government, the author’s life, a particular book), now is the time to bring it up. If there are any issues surrounding cultural sensitivity, be sure to discuss them. Don’t spring a taboo subject on an artist as she’s about to present to your audience.

8) **Equipment & set-up requirements:** tables, chairs, projectors, sound system, piano, etc?

9) **Venue space:** This is more of an issue in schools, where the music room, library, or classrooms are usually preferred over a gymnasium. In larger libraries, check whether a small program room or the library theatre would be a better fit.

Many public library visits are planned to include a school class, but others are in the afternoons, evenings or on weekends. Without a pre-arranged audience such as a class or regular playgroup, these visits are somewhat riskier: you will need to do significant advertising to ensure that you get folks coming in. Talk to all of your local media, write press releases and of course invite library patrons personally when serving them. If you’re aiming for an older audience, consider inviting the local writing group, a special interest club, a service club, or arranging for a seniors’ group to be involved.

Now that you’ve talked, get it in writing: draw up a simple letter of agreement stating the expectations of both parties and a schedule of events. Once you’ve both agreed to the plan, stick to it! If changes need to be made, discuss them beforehand. Please don’t surprise the artist with a new schedule upon arrival. What may seem completely reasonable to you may present serious difficulties for the presenter. Most people are uncomfortable refusing a last-minute scheduling change -- don’t put them on the spot.

**Funding**

If, after your discussion with the artist, you realize your budget isn’t going to stretch quite far enough, there are a few options for you:

1) The Young Alberta Book Society’s Taleblazers Festival (Alberta only)

2) The Canadian Children’s Book Centre Children’s Book Week (Canada only)

3) The Canada Council for the Arts offers some funding for public library readings which are free, publicized and open to the public. (Canada only)

4) The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Artists in Education program offers some funding for literary artist residencies in schools. (Alberta only)

5) BC Federation of Writers has a program called Off the Page which organizes and subsidizes author visits in BC.

6) The Writing Centre maintains a list of writers-in-schools programs across the USA: http://www.twc.org/forums/contacts.html

5) Partner with a fellow organization: the art gallery, local museum, municipal arts groups, or other area schools or libraries might be interested in working together.

6) Talk to service clubs and local companies to see if they’d be interested in sponsoring a presentation.

**Preparing for the Visit**

1) Have copies of the artists’ books available for loan: there’s little point in interesting people in an author if they can’t borrow the books.

2) Invite groups or school classes to the event -- you may wish to work with the school while setting up the visit so that you ensure it happens on a workable day for the school. Remind the teachers to prepare their students. If you’d like to present an adult author in the daytime, consider inviting high school classes in addition to adult organizations.

3) Promote the visit in your library and using the media.

4) Shortly before the event, check in with your visitor, provide directions to your door and parking information, reconfirm the schedule and the artist’s arrival time, and talk about plans for lunch if you have any. Remember that some visitors bring substantial props and presentation items with them and require time to set up. You may need to arrange to be there earlier than usual to enable this.

**The Big Day**

1) Unless you’ve discussed it with the presenter well beforehand and obtained written permission, do NOT videotape a presentation. Artist presentations are intellectual property: artists rely on the income generated by touring and having a videotape of their presentation “out there” doesn’t help. As well, though hosts like to get as much mileage out of a presentation as possible, videotaped presentations don’t have the same impact as live, in-person visits, which is the other basis for artists’ objections. Please respect this.

2) Arrange to meet the artist as s/he arrives to show them around to the presentation room, washrooms, staff room, etc., offer water or refreshments, help with set-up as needed.

*continued on page 26*
Real, Live, Literature cont.

Be sure that reception staff know the artist is coming and introduce the presenter to the library director, school principal, etc.

3) Please have all special equipment ready - make sure BEFOREHAND that projectors, mics and other AV equipment are working.

4) As much as possible, keep the presenter in one room and bring the audience to him or her.

5) When your audience has entered and settled down, introduce the presenter and mention some interesting details from his or her biography.

6) During any school or library presentation with children, at least one staff person needs to be in the room with the kids at all times. Aside from the legal responsibilities in schools, artists are not screened. Remove the risk of anything untoward happening by simply being there the entire time.

7) Take your cue from the presenter in regards to discipline. Some presenters, particularly experienced veterans, are quite adept at handling disruptive behavior. Others are less able to get students back on track and will appreciate your help. Please model good behavior for the children by paying attention to the presenter and not marking or talking during the presentation.

8) After each presentation, thank the artist. During breaks, some artists just want to sit quietly, drink water and refresh their voices. Others are pleased to be welcomed into the staff room for a chat. As with everything else, just ask!

9) After the visit, ensure that the artist is paid for the sessions and reimbursed for any travel expenses, complete any funder reports, and thank your sponsors in writing.

And that’s all there is to it! This might seem like a lot to remember, but often organizing a great visit boils down to all libraries contain materials that go to four libraries. These materials are then rubber banded together with a slip showing where the materials are going before they are shipped to the hub. At the hub the materials are separated into the proper crates and sent to the bus or the proper courier for the destination point. Using hubs helps materials to move faster and more economically than using the US Mail.

Things to consider before creating a floating collection:

- Align your operating procedures so they are the same in all libraries
- Consider the space needed to house crates for each partner in the project
- Know who will be responsible for each step of the project
- Consider how to purchase the supplies you will need such as; crates, buggies, lids, etc.
- Know how much shelf space you have to house the collection at your library
- Join the Partner listserv so you can communicate.
- Educate your board, staff, and community on Policies, procedures
- Acceptance of all partner library cards in your library
- Budget for shipping and handling costs
- Plan on a workload adjustment among staff

The MSC Partner libraries now have approximately 757,916 items, circulated 1,328,420 in 2006 and served approximately 121,294 users.

Balanced Scorecard cont.

Time To Get Fit

We introduced the Balance Scorecard to our staff by using an example of improving your personal wellness. Let’s say your mission is to be healthy and physically fit. Your vision is that you are lean, attractive, and strong. Now, looking at the four perspectives - how are you going to get there?

Under the Customer Perspective, who are your most important customers? Is it your family, your colleagues, or potential romantic partners? Let’s say that your goal is to lose weight so that you improve the customer experience of your wife. Pick a target weight and measure your progress in pounds.

Under the Learning and Growth Perspective, consider what do you need to learn to become more fit. How about trying out a new sport? Maybe you’ll take an exercise class or a lean cooking class? Let’s say that you decide to attend a Yoga class twice a week for eight weeks. Your measurement is attendance. Your target is twice a week for eight weeks.

What Internal Processes do you need to address? Do you want lower blood pressure? Do you want lower cholesterol? Decide what you want, pick a target, and measure away.

Don’t forget the Financial Perspective. Take a look at what it is going to cost to get fit. How much money will you need for your new wardrobe once you are slimmer? How do you find the best deal for joining a gym? What are you saving on gas by cardio-commuting? Once again, choose a target and measure your progress.

By addressing your Mission and Vision from more than one perspective, you have a much greater chance of reaching your goal.

The Library Scorecard

Libraries have traditionally focused on Internal Processes for making change. Lately there has been a huge emphasis on the Customer Perspective. Lucky for you, that means all you need to do is add the Financial and Learning and Growth Perspectives to the mix and you have a Balanced Scorecard.

Our Best Advice

Go ahead and make mistakes. You truly will learn much from them. Don’t let your Scorecard get written in stone. Look at mistakes as a chance to model change.

Show your targets and measures to the people it will matter most to. They will let you know immediately what can and will be done. Give them the freedom to do what needs to be done to make the improvement.

Go after the hard problems. It isn’t a report card and you aren’t looking for A’s. You are looking for change and improvement.

Be the expert on your library. Get advice but trust yourself.

Keep it simple and if it isn’t working change it—now.

It all starts with the question of what you want to change.

Then trust us, what you measure gets managed.

Balanced Scorecard cont.


A NEW HOLIDAY ADVENTURE FOR YOUR CHILDREN’S COLLECTION!

HOW THE ELEPHANTS SAVED CHRISTMAS

Author: Linda L. Olson
Illustrator: Gretta Gretzinger
Gold Star Press, 2007
ISBN 978-1-4243-4044-6
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32 pages - fully illustrated
$18.95

How the Elephants Saved Christmas is a multicultural Christmas story that takes place in Africa. In this tale, Santa and his reindeer fall from the sky and get stuck in the mud of a watering hole. Wild elephants and the boy who lives with them rescue Santa, but can Santa save them when drums sound out great danger for the elephants?

“What a lovely multicultural-holiday-visual story. I found the characters rich in personality and easy to see. The sentences were clear and words well chosen; the story is easy to read. It would be a great read aloud with the drama of the elephants, setting, and the kindness of Santa with the leg brace. My favorite part was the ending – of dropping the snow for Katanga. Perfect and made me smile, too. A great idea for a children’s story!”

Debbie Schlinder, Director
Children’s Collection
Teton County, WY Public Library

***For more reviews including authors J. Patrick Lewis and Ken Thomasma, go to www.goldstarpress.com***

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