

# TexasLibraryJournal

VOLUME 88, NUMBER 3 • FALL 2012

**F** **READ** **OM**  
BANNED BOOKS  
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## Autumn

A SEASON for  
CELEBRATION  
and PREPARATION

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# WHEN YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAM IS GONE, THE LOSS TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY IS BEYOND WORDS

## **SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE MUCH MORE THAN LITERACY CENTERS.**

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Membership in TLA is open to any individual or institution interested in Texas libraries.

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A directory of TLA membership is available in the "Members Only" section of the website.

Opinions expressed in Texas Library Journal are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by TLA.

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**Layout/Graphics** Mary Ann Emerson  
**Advertising Mgr.** Kasey Hyde  
**Printer** Capital Printing

© Texas Library Association

Texas Library Journal (ISSN 0040-4446) is published quarterly in spring, summer, fall, and winter by the Texas Library Association, 3355 Bee Cave Road, Suite 401, Austin, Texas 78746-6763. Periodicals Postage Paid at Austin, Texas. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Texas Library Journal, 3355 Bee Cave Road, Suite 401, Austin, Texas 78746-6763. Subscription price: to members of TLA, 94 cents, included in annual dues; to nonmembers, \$25 per year for domestic, \$30 out-of-country. Single issues: \$7.

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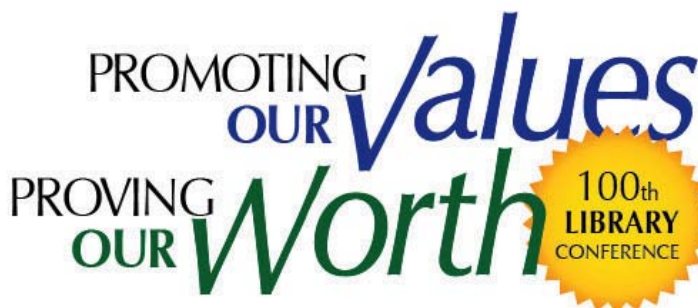
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## Responding to the Tough Questions

What are the tough questions that you and your library organization are grappling with? In a time when library budgets continue to be impacted by the 2008 economic downturn and librarians remain eager to deliver analog and digital information sources for recreational, scholarly, and job related activities; respond to users' expectations for technology based services; and deliver quality customer services in treasured library spaces that address community specific needs, it is important to find answers that overcome handicaps, focus our energies, and enable us take ownership of our own fates.

In my library, we are asking ourselves what services will matter most over the next three to five years and how can we transform our libraries to provide what is most valuable to our public. We are raising our profile by inviting our community to answer the question with us. Interestingly, participation in our professional association has suggested ways in which to find the answers to these questions.

Over time, TLA has demonstrated its value by:

- Helping us understand the Texas environment for libraries and library workers;

- Involving the membership in a planning process that sought answers for the Association;
- Providing cost-effective continuing education that addresses relevancy, value, and transformation;
- Delivering opportunities for members to advocate for libraries; and
- Modeling exemplary customer service and encouraging community engagement.

If you are struggling with how to shape a brighter future for your library, stay the course. The best solutions come from a holistic approach.

- Give yourself time to think about community needs as each library in Texas makes a unique contribution.
- Talk to community members and learn what they value most about library services.
- Listen for opportunities to demonstrate value by solving community problems.
- Learn what is working for other Texas libraries from your peers across the state by participating in TLA.

Remember the precious history of libraries and become reenergized to answer those tough questions. ★

### *I want to share with you some recent examples of how libraries are integral to shaping strong communities and schools.*

The *Houston Chronicle* reported that the Houston Housing Authority (HHA) was opening the waiting list for housing vouchers for the first time in six years. Anticipating huge demand and wanting to make the process efficient, sign-up was only to occur online. The HHA understood that many of the applicants would likely need Internet access and help navigating the forms, so it partnered with local libraries to assist in this process.

The *Star Local News* reported a celebration at Little Elm Public Library. Both students and volunteers of the Little Elm Adult Literacy Program gathered to celebrate a terrific program, and the mayors of Little Elm and Oak Point remarked on the impact of the library's program. Little Elm Mayor David Hillock said, "This brings so much value to the town." While Oak Point Mayor Jim Wohletz extolled, "It's a tremendous accomplishment and I'm very, very proud." One student summed up the experience: "Learning English was my dream," said Mercedes Martinez. "Thank you to all you teachers. English is hard, but my English is much better."

The Molly Pruitt Library at Roosevelt High School hosted a Youth Code Jam, a one-day technology camp that aims to teach kids about digital game development, computer programming, and Web design. The *San Antonio Express News* reported the event filled up with more than 60 kids ages 7 to 17. Trevor Winters, a parent who has worked in the IT industry, was quoted as saying, "I know what kind of doors you can open by being good with computers." He planned on taking his daughter to the event.

See you in Austin!

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# TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL

## October 27-28

### Texas State Capitol ★ Austin

Be among the more than 40,000 guests expected at this year's event featuring 250+ authors, including headliners Cheryl Strayed, Tony Danza, Robert Caro, Junot Díaz, Jewel, Jeffrey Toobin, Zane, Tim O'Brien, Justin Cronin, and David Maraniss. Visit the festival site at [www.texasbookfestival.org](http://www.texasbookfestival.org) for the most up-to-date lineup.

### DID YOU KNOW?

In its 17-year history, the Festival has connected readers with the nation's most accomplished writers, contributed more than \$2.5 million to Texas public libraries, and reached more than 40,000 children in economically disadvantaged Central and South Texas schools, providing many with the first book of their own.

### VOLUNTEER!

Help with book signings, escort authors, sell merchandise, direct attendees: for detailed information about the many opportunities available and how to sign up, visit [www.texasbookfestival.org](http://www.texasbookfestival.org)

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book signings  
live music  
& MORE!

The illustration on the 2012 Texas Book Festival poster is *Cliff Swallows* by Elgin artist Margie Crisp.





One of the requests I get most often is for responses to some of the tough questions library advocates sometimes face. In particular, library supporters ask for some ideas on responding to the question: Why should Texas support libraries?

Here are some of my ideas. Please share your own on TLA's Facebook page.

## *How much does the state actually spend on statewide library services?*

In the 2012-13 biennium, lawmakers allocated only about \$6.2 million in state general revenue for library resource sharing, library development, and library services for the disabled. That's a cut of about \$28 million in state funding, including the loss of funds for K-12 e-resources. The majority of funds for state library services this biennium are from federal matching funds (an estimated \$15.5 million), one-time federal broadband funding (\$1.7 million), and fees collected from libraries (about \$2 million).

## *But how much is that \$6.2 million of the state's total general revenue funds of \$81,290,400,00?*

It's only about .0076 % of total state dollars!

## *Should the state spend money on libraries?*

Yes! At only 0.0076%, state support for library services is a relatively minor investment but an important one.

For that 0.0076%, the STATE GETS:

### • **Tremendous Savings on Digital Learning Resources**

In 2010, for every \$1 spent on library e-resources, the state saved almost \$13. Through the combined and centralized purchasing power of the state, Texans have access to a multitude of materials (e.g., journals, ebooks, business reports, curriculum materials, and subscription research among others)

that help them complete school work, start a business, prepare for a job, increase literacy levels, and succeed educationally and economically.

### • **Matching Federal Dollars**

Texas may lose almost \$9 million in matching federal funds in 2015 if the state does not restore a portion of state funds for library services. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) budget requests \$13 million in exceptional items for statewide library programs.

### • **Top Tier Higher Education Institutions**

Over 150 colleges and universities benefit from high quality research and digital resources available through libraries. Several institutions rely on these resources to meet accreditation standards for certain programs.

### • **Valuable Community Public Libraries**

The network of Texas community public libraries provides free access to the Internet. What happens when people can't afford home Internet access or need help navigating online services and forms, especially those required by the state? They go to the public library. The majority of public libraries in Texas (64%) report they are the only free source of Internet access in their communities. In fact 97% of Texas public libraries report they act as the bridge between government and its services, offering free access and assistance to help people complete online government forms.

### • **Strengthened Public School Libraries**

School districts need to meet college and career readiness standards and provide 21st Century workforce skills to students. Research and accessing digital content via the Internet is

provided by school librarians, arming students with critical research and digital literacy skills.

### • **Support for Workforce Development and Economic Vitality**

Texas libraries are uniquely equipped to target the state's priorities of promoting educational opportunities and success, establishing favorable environments for business, and raising literacy at all levels.

## *Why don't local communities, school districts, and colleges and universities just pay for all library services?*

- The Texas Legislature cut over \$6 billion in Article III (funding for education) last session. With rising enrollments at public schools and colleges and universities, the education community does not have the resources to meet their respective missions.
- Local communities already pay the vast majority of funding for community libraries. The state provides less than 1% of funding for public libraries – a figure well below the national average.

## *Can the state support libraries and still make government smaller and better?*

**YES!**

- Funding TSLAC's exceptional items IS smart and lean government considering all Texans, including 5 million public school students, over 1 million higher education students, and millions of others, benefit.
- Without additional state support for library services, Texas may also lose up to \$9 million in matching federal funds in 2015.
- Last session, about \$28 million was cut from library services. Today, Texans need the state to recommit to our community, research, and school libraries. ★

# Teaming Up to Teach @ Your School Library

BY NICOLE CRUZ

Football is king in Texas. *Friday Night Lights* is a reality across the Lone Star State. Sports in general teach many life skills. Coaching staff are essential to a high school campus. In one 5A South Texas high school, two librarians decided to collaborate with their athletic coaches in order to teach cyber safety lessons, research skills, and email etiquette. These librarians also taught lessons ranging on topics as diverse as domestic violence to preventing students from texting and driving. This collaboration started during the 2009-2010 school year and has continued due to the active participation of athletic teams and coaches. During the 2010-2011 school year, Sharyland High School placed ninth in a national Channel One competition titled “X the TXT.” The campaign educated students on the dangers of distracted driving and encouraged students to sign an online pledge not to text while driving.

The Sharyland Independent School District implements block scheduling at the high school. Four of the five classes offered to students daily are 90 minutes long including athletic and fine arts classes. The school year is divided into nine week semesters. Students change class mid-year as opposed to having the same class for an entire year. Students have core content classes for a semester which are in two nine week periods. According to University Interscholastic League rules, only a portion of the 90 minutes per day may be used for practice on the field, court, pool, weight room, or track. The other portion must be spent in the classroom for instruction, study, or academic tutorials.

Sharyland High School librarians Nicole Cruz and Janie Flores viewed the extended 90 minute athletic block as a door into the locker room. Athletic teams are limited to 300 minutes of instruction per week during the instructional day. Thus, in a normal five day week, athletes have a total of 450 minutes of class time. A total of 300 minutes may be spent physically training, while the other 150 minutes should be spent as classroom instruction or academic tutorials.

“My first year at Sharyland High School in 2009, I knew I had a wonderful opportunity to reach a massive student population via the athletic study halls. Approximately 1,200 students participated in sports this year which is almost half of the entire student population,” Nicole Cruz, Sharyland High School head librarian and Sharyland Independent School District lead librarian stated. Along with her coworker librarian Janie Flores, she pitched the idea to then High School Principal Diamantina Chapa and current Athletic Director Richard Thompson. Both of these administrators supported the idea whole-heartedly. SHS librarian Janie Flores said, “Our athletic director even invited us to his coaching meetings. We used this opportunity to have them sign up for a library lesson date.”

Head girls soccer coach J. J. Lopez notes:

We are very fortunate to have librarians that care so much about our students. These lessons have benefitted our student athletes as well as our coaching staff. Education is the key to dealing and overcoming a lot of challenging situations that

teens today must face. Whether it is to understand how to report bullying or why it is important not to text while driving or how to face domestic violence, the topics covered are very educational and helpful. These are topics that students don’t necessarily want to talk about or don’t think much about, but once they hear about it, it changes their mind and opens new lines of communication.

Coach Lopez was named the Texas Association of Soccer Coaches “Coach of the Year.” His varsity team won the title of semi-final champions. School senior Bradley Klein said, “The X the TXT campaign was my favorite lesson. Nowadays with every student having a smart phone, kids need to understand that texting and driving can lead to a serious or even fatal accident. My friends and I still talk about the gruesome video the librarians showed about a reenacted texting accident.” Bradley Klein, 2012 football player, added that he visited the library more independently because he had attended library lessons with athletic classes since his freshmen year. “I feel comfortable there; I know the librarians personally and that helps, too.”

Each year, every varsity head coach is required to schedule a training period for not only his/her varsity athletes but their entire program including junior varsity and freshmen teams. The lessons are usually held in the library lecture hall which can seat 200. The facility is equipped with technology. Athletic Director Richard Thompson said, “My coaches know that I expect them to schedule lessons at the library. The librarians keep me informed about which teams have had library lessons. They also send a report on the student participation and respect skills after each session. In fact Mrs. Cruz has been invited to present to our parents at evening Sharyland Rattler Booster Club meetings.”

When the library programming was first implemented, some of the coaches were hesitant. The resistance ended as soon as they attended the first



library lesson. Coaches are expected to attend the lessons along with their athletes. “To be honest, we did not get 100% participation the first year we implemented the lessons. One of the teams absent from the library roll call was the football program. I was positive and persistent and finally we were invited to present at the gym,” Nicole Cruz said. “Without a moment’s hesitation we wheeled our tech cart and carried a portable screen to the old gym and were surrounded by no less than 200 football players and 10 coaches.” Sharyland librarian Janie Flores said, “It was a little intimidating because one of the topics we planned to cover that day was sexting.” Sexting is the inappropriate sharing of sexually explicit photos or text between individuals. The librarians explained to the young men that they could ruin their college future and be labeled as a sexual offender/sexual predator if they shared cell phone messages or photos of underage minors. After the session, then head coach Fred Sanchez and his entire football coaching staff congratulated and thanked the two

librarians. This year, the football team signed up twice for lessons. After the retirement of Coach Sanchez, veteran teacher and Rattler Coach Ron Adame was approved by the SISD School Board as the new head football coach. Coach Adame has assured us that his players will attend the library lessons.

One of the best resources is the Texas Young Lawyers Association website. This organization has created truly engaging and thought-provoking media clips on a variety of social issues, particularly Internet safety and digital citizenship. Library staff is always searching for reliable resources that may or may not be typical library sites. By explaining how information is used in real world scenarios, students see a true credibility to library staff presentations. In the case of the Texas Young Lawyers Association, librarians describe how this organization is involved with proactive campaigns to educate youth to prevent them from ending up in court rooms due to ignorance of the law regarding Internet activity.

Our Sharyland High School athletes are expected to be role models. They know that their coaches care about their performance on the field, track, pool, weight room, or court, but also expect them to be model students in the classrooms and in the community. “We have actually invited the teams to participate in community service opportunities like our local Cystic Fibrosis Walk-a-Thon. The athletes are better citizens and do their part to raise awareness in the community about topics we teach them @ the library,” Janie Flores commented. Current Sharyland High School Principal Cynthia Wilson supports the library, librarians, and library programming. Working with coaches comes naturally to both of these librarians because they are both married to coaches. “We know the concepts of teamwork, discipline, and respect are critical to sports and to life,” Nicole Cruz stated. ★

Nicole Cruz is head librarian at Sharyland High School and lead librarian for Sharyland ISD.

Sharyland Rattler Football Spring Team 2012 – Front Row: R. Gonzalez, R. Saenz, M. De la Fuente, T. Lee, J. Flores (librarian), R. Adame (head football coach), N. Cruz (librarian), A. Leal, T. Flores, J. Gray, and J. Penbrook



PHOTO PROVIDED BY BALTAZAR CASTILLO, FORMER SISD WEBMASTER AND USED WITH PERMISSION.

# LONG-RANGE PLANNING LEADS TO NEW TECHNOLOGY

BY NICKI STOHR

The staff of the Sam Fore, Jr. Wilson County Public Library in Floresville, Texas, would like to introduce you to a new solution to a branch library – a vending machine (book kiosk) for library materials! Lovingly called “Lavern” because she rides in La Vernia, Texas, at the Life-Chek Pharmacy, the book kiosk went “live” online February 6, 2012, after a year in the planning. Wilson County is approximately 806 square miles and has a population of just over 42,500 people. So the need to bring library services to all corners of the county is a tall task indeed. In 2010, it became part of our main library’s long-range plan to see just how far we could stretch our existing services and to investigate the possibilities of new services.

Our library is the *only* state-accredited public library in Wilson County. There are four independent school districts in Wilson County (La Vernia ISD, Stockdale ISD, Floresville ISD, and Poth ISD), each with a school library. Stockdale, the only other city with a public library, is run 100% by volunteers and is only open 15 hours a week to the public. We are working closely with them as they work toward state accreditation.

We started a Book-By-Mail service. (Unfortunately, this service is underutilized because of the distance to the nearest post office.) We pushed to be in an early batch of libraries migrating to WorldCat Navigator so patrons not finding a particular book in our library could order their own material from home. We joined a digital consortium to offer downloadable ebooks and audiobooks. We also participate in the TexShare Card Program, to give our patrons more options. We even kicked around the idea of restarting the bookmobile. Our first librarian, Lillian Jackson, ran a bookmobile route in 1940 for 15 years. It had stops at 57 area schools and an inventory of 600 books. Today, 72 years later, it has become too expensive to maintain either a physical branch library or a mobile book service. Thus, we entertained the idea of an unmanned vending machine – a book kiosk.

Money for our book kiosk was made possible by the generous donation of the Friends of the La Vernia Public Library (President, Winona Alder; Vice President, Janie Cartwright; Secretary, Jean Malloy; and Treasurer, Helen Taylor). These ladies once operated a branch library of the Wilson County

Public Library. In 1996, this all-volunteer library lost its lease on the building and was forced to close its doors. When no other location was available, they raised money in the hopes of some day reopening a public library in La Vernia.

Our library’s solution for a new branch library is an Internet-based book kiosk operated by a Dell personal computer and a Verizon aircard. The upside of this venture and the biggest plus in our plan is that we are now able to put books and audiobooks back into the hands of people who had no public library service in 16 years! This county does not even have a bookstore. Citizens can purchase books at the local grocery store, buy online, or drive into the big city of San Antonio.

Extra testing was done to insure that the secure channel would hold via the aircard, thus protecting the exchange of private information needed for the library’s secure Internet checkout system, Biblionix Apollo. This vending machine-style kiosk holds approximately 200 items depending upon the configuration. At this time, we have chosen to include only paperbacks, audio CDs, and hardback books.

Dr. Richard Nimz, a library advisory member, demonstrates the use of “Laverne” as he enters his pin number, then receives and returns materials at the kiosk.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WILSON COUNTY LIBRARY





From a patron's viewpoint, the use of the kiosk is as easy as swiping your valid library card, entering a 10-digit pin number, and making a selection. The kiosk prints a receipt so the patron knows when to return his or her items to the book return next to the machine. (If more convenient, that patron may also return items to the main library.)

We have encountered only three downsides to this new venture:

Just like a home computer, the aircard is subject to all kinds of interference such as weather signal searching, etc.

The system requires the 10-digit pin number, usually the patron's home phone number. Unfortunately, when people move and change their phone numbers, they do not think of notifying their library of the change.

Staff time is required to stock and check on the machine three days a week. The machine is approximately 44 miles round trip from the main library.

I will note that 100% of the kiosk materials have been donated by Wilson County.

In our first 30 days of operation, library customers registered almost 260 checkouts. Future plans for the kiosk include reviewing how we load our rows of materials, providing chapter books for our younger readers for the summer, and promoting the book selection for our first-ever One Book One Community program.

We believe purchasing the book kiosk from Pik Inc. was our best solution to helping the Sam Fore, Jr. Wilson County Public Library achieve its goals of stretching already available services and creating new services to accommodate as many members of our population as possible. 🌟

Nicki Stohr (librarian.wcpl@gmail.com) is library director of Wilson County Public Library.

**New Releases**

**Ken Burns: The Dust Bowl**  
This film chronicles the worst man-made ecological disaster in American history. Vivid interviews with twenty-six survivors, combined with dramatic photographs and seldom seen movie footage, bring to life stories of incredible human suffering and equally incredible human perseverance.

**American Experience: Death and The Civil War**  
Based on the best-selling book by Drew Gilpin Faust, this film explores how the American Civil War created a "republic of suffering" and charts the far-reaching social, political, and social changes brought about by the pervasive presence and fear of death during the War.

To purchase this and other educational resources, visit [shopPBS.org/teachershop](http://shopPBS.org/teachershop) or other authorized distributor sites.

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# DISASTER PREPAREDNESS for Colleges and Universities

BY DIANE BRUXVOORT

Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, and nothing was ever the same. Tropical Storm Allison hit Houston and caused \$5 billion in damage. With Hurricane Rita, dozens of people died in the evacuation before the storm even hit. Hurricanes and tropical storms are a fact of life on the Gulf Coast, yet the preparation never seems to be quite adequate. What is adequate? Is it possible to prepare for storms of this magnitude? The answer, regardless of how we define adequate, is that colleges and universities must prepare broadly for natural disasters, just as they prepare for any other crisis, with resources and perseverance.

The literature on disaster preparedness within higher education is not extensive, but there has been some good work done on the steps any university can and should take for disaster planning as well as on lessons learned from disasters. Works on creating a disaster plan, identifying basic elements of a plan, and learning lessons from disaster survivors will be reviewed here with the goal of establishing basic practices for an institution of higher education engaging in disaster preparedness.

## Literature Review

In 2006 Mitroff, Diamond, and Alpaslan surveyed the higher education community to see how prepared American colleges and universities were for a crisis. Their first major finding was that “the surveyed colleges and universities were generally prepared only for those crises that they had already experienced” (66). They had learned from previous experience, but

had not made an attempt to apply that experience in a broader context. While most institutions had a crisis plan of some sort, few had a broad based plan for dealing with a variety of different types of crisis – a crisis portfolio. An important finding in this review was that crisis management had the lowest degree of support among all activities and programs listed on the survey (undergraduate education was first). Many acknowledge today that disaster preparedness is a key item is a crisis portfolio, and systems put in place within this plan may translate to other crises.

Beyond this general survey, the literature takes two directions: theory of various methods for creating a plan and practical, how-to’s for the plan itself. In *Organization-based Incident Management*, the authors lay out the role of volunteers during a disaster. A study was conducted at New York University (NYU) to test how members of a large organization might respond within an emergency, and concluded that “volunteers can and will help and that disaster preparedness drills are a logical step for university-based volunteers” (Fulmer et al. 2007, 74). Another grouping of faculty at NYU studied the effects of disaster on individuals and how the needs of the individuals affect the institutions’ ability to maintain a strong workforce during and directly following a disaster. They concluded that the institution needed to create “an atmosphere of perceived safety” through communication, pre-disaster preparedness, strong leadership, training, and the institution of “comprehensive, coordinated and flexible systems” (Chachkes, et al. 2007, 414) – an organizational safety net.

Writing shortly after the 9/11 terrorist attack, Knapp, Benton, and Calhoun stressed the importance of “connecting the dots” in disaster planning. They reviewed disparate portions of the university community that must work together in disaster preparedness including finance, information

technology, facilities, human resources, admissions, and academic and student affairs. “Turf war and politics must evaporate now that we realize that no one on campus is untouched by disasters of this magnitude” (2002, 25). Stein, Vickio, Fogo, and Abraham also recommended a network approach to disaster preparedness at a university. “By highlighting existing organizational structures and untapped resources, a network approach allows for the identification of patterns of relations among organization that can play key roles in times of disaster” (2007, 332). Most universities are highly decentralized organizations, yet within this seeming chaos, the authors relate that individuals and departments build strong networks on campus that can be built into disaster preparedness.

Two articles in *College Planning and Management* stand as exemplars of practical, how-to advice for disaster preparedness. In *Are you Ready? Basics of Emergency Operations Planning*, Michael Dorn explains the basic organization of a plan. “A ‘master’ or ‘base’ plan should be developed for the entire institution that includes fundamental procedures such as evacuations and lock down facilities. In addition, specific protocols should be developed for each type of situation” (24). One basic plan is not going to cover all types of incidents and every aspect of the university, but specific protocols within the plan allow expansion of specifics and further tailoring. Dorn also points out the importance of working with local emergency management agencies and of widely distributing and marketing the plan so that it does not become a document in a file drawer that can’t be found when needed. However, posting of the plan on a publicly available Internet site is not the way to make it widely distributed. “Making it easy for potential offenders to review how you would respond could increase the chances of a planned assault and put the safety of responding personnel at risk” (25).



In *Because One Day the Emergency Will Be Real* Danielle Przyborowski looks at the importance of testing and drilling on the emergency operation plan. She outlined four key factors for an effective drill:

1. Start the planning process early.
2. Market heavily for broad participation.
3. Cost is a factor, but use of in-house resources and outside agencies can keep it reasonable.
4. A drill is not beyond your capabilities – and is worth the stretch (2000, 29-30).

The disaster fair staged at California State Polytechnic University had multiple effects. Students were involved and educated, and outside agencies were identified and contacted that would be involved in a true emergency. Much can be learned from what went well and what went wrong during a drill, and these lessons can be worked into the disaster preparedness plan. This process also yielded the important opportunity to raise awareness in the community of issues around disaster planning.

### *Creating a Disaster Plan*

In most cases, organizations – unless they are brand new – who are considering disaster preparedness are not starting from scratch: a basic plan is probably in place. However, the plan is also likely to be dated and incomplete, and even if it was once a comprehensive plan it may no longer fit the current organization. Still, it is a good starting point. From there, consider other sources of plans that may be used to expand and/or update the plan already in place. There are a variety of sample plans available online for all types of organizations. While one would hope that disaster preparedness is being considered at a university wide level, sometimes that is not feasible. This should not stop segments of the university community from planning while they continue to lobby for a comprehensive plan.

As a librarian, I found the International Federations of Library Associations and

Institutions (IFLA) *Disaster Preparedness and Planning Manual* to be an excellent general guide with specific and useful pieces of advice for libraries interested in disaster preparedness, and much of the general guide could be used by any organization. IFLA conducted a survey when considering the need for such a guide, and found that only 39 out of 177 responding libraries (McIlwaine 2006, 5) had a disaster plan in place. They decided to proceed with the guide.

While conducting research for her dissertation, *The Great Comeback: a Comparative Analysis of Disaster Recovery Actions*, Lea Johnson found over 90 examples of disaster plans available online from colleges and universities. However, she warns: “The vast majority are hypothetical plans to be used in the event of disaster – not based on any actual disaster experience at the institution” (11). Dorn and others warn against the use of “canned plans.” “Only a comprehensive, locally tailored plan, developed and tested with the assistance of local public safety officials, works during a major event” (2001, 23). However, starting with a canned plan and tailoring it to the needs of your university is certainly better than going without a plan because of the difficulty of starting from scratch.

A variety of federal resources are available to assist with disaster planning. In 2003 the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) published a set of guidelines entitled *Building a Disaster Resistant University*. The FEMA website describes it as “both a how-to guide and a distillation of the experiences of six universities and colleges that have been working to become more disaster-resistant.” The guidelines are meant both to provide basic information for beginning a plan and specific suggestions and ideas for those further along in the process. Additional assistance from FEMA is available through the FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Project, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants, and the Building Partnerships to Reduce Hazard Risks program.



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The U.S. Department of Education and FEMA created the Emergency Management for Higher Education grant in 2008 to “aid in the development, review and improvement of emergency plans for higher education institutions” (Russell 2010, 1). As of 2010, Ready Campus grants had been awarded to 43 institutions, a relatively small number compared to the number of institutions of higher education in the United States. Pennsylvania colleges and universities worked together to implement one of the first grants, and North Dakota State University (NDSU) used the grant to create a Ready Campus Initiative Team “designed to create a comprehensive emergency management plan for the university and spread awareness about emergency management to the surrounding community” (Russell 2010, 1). Ready Campus initiatives are designed with two goals: to provide colleges and universities with assistance in disaster preparedness and to become valuable resources to their communities in emergency situations.

### *Elements of Disaster Preparedness Planning*

The IFLA guidelines break disaster preparedness planning into five elements: risk assessment, prevention and protection, preparedness, reaction, and response and recovery (McIlwaine 2006). The plan must also be comprehensive enough to include these elements for all facets of the university. Today, a typical university campus is a small city running enterprises from retail bookstores to hotel services to restaurants, each with their own risks and needs.

#### **Risk Assessment**

The first step requires participants in the planning to take an in-depth look at the risks to the organization. Facilities and location are two key factors here. How are the buildings situated? On hills? In valleys? Do they have basements? How tall are the buildings? Are they built to withstand high winds? Where are trees located in relation to the buildings?

Where are communication centers located? Does the university generate its own electricity, or is it dependent on external vendors? Are the risks urban or rural? Is the institution located near an airport? A railroad? Is it in hurricane country? Tornado Alley? The questions are many but illustrate that one plan does not fit all. A university in rural Kansas is going to plan for different risks than one in urban Miami.

#### **Prevention and Protection**

“Prevention is concerned with measures to prevent an event happening. Protection is concerned with measures to limit the damage...if an event does happen” (McIlwaine 2007, 10). For example, if the risk assessment indicates that a tree is too close to a building in a hurricane prone area, then removal of that tree will prevent a lost roof, or worse, in the event of a hurricane. Regular inspection of life safety systems, such as fire alarms will help mitigate damage with early warning signals to responders.

#### **Preparedness**

The IFLA manual refers to this stage as “getting ready to cope.” The oft-revised plan is readily available, the disaster preparedness team is in place, and the roles of each team member are clearly defined. Staff are well-trained, and drills are held to reinforce training, heighten awareness, and find (and repair) weaknesses in the plan. The plan itself should include or be supplemented by building plans, and extensive, up-to-date contact information. Contacts with outside support agencies are maintained and nurtured. Standing contracts are in place with vendors who will help with recovery.

#### **Reaction and Response**

In the event of a disaster, the safety of staff, faculty, and students, as well as emergency responders is always the first priority. Activate the plan in a timely manner, and use it. In any disaster, there will be situations that don't fit within the plan, and you will need to think on your feet and change

direction. This does not mean that it is time to throw out the entire plan. Deal with that situation and get back to the plan. Provide as much communication as possible to staff, faculty, students, and parents using whatever method is currently available.

#### **Recovery**

Attempt to maintain services or to reopen services as soon as possible. Work with pre-contracted vendors to re-establish communication systems and to prepare buildings for re-opening. Be clear to your faculty and staff on a timeline for their return to work but be flexible with individual cases, since employees may also be dealing with personal disaster related situations.

### *Lessons from Survivors*

The literature around disaster preparedness includes a good number of articles on how universities responded to and recovered from specific events. Lessons learned from these “survivors” fall into two categories: best practices for planning and best practices for recovery and response. Those who have dealt with a disastrous event are better prepared for the next event, and the rest of us can learn from them.

### **Tropical Storm Allison and Hurricane Ike**

Tropical Storm Allison formed in the Gulf and moved through Houston on Tuesday, June 5, 2001, depositing 12 inches of rain. This was not a crisis. Unfortunately, on June 8, the storm then turned, strengthened, and came back through Houston where it stalled, depositing an additional 28 inches of rain Friday evening and Saturday morning on already saturated land, an overwhelmed pipe system, and full bayous. “When the local rains finally eased, Allison had left Harris County with 22 fatalities, 95,000 damaged automobiles and trucks, 73,000 damaged residences, 30,000 residents in shelters, and more than \$5 billion in property damage in its wake” (HCFCD 2010, 1). In the summer of 2008, Hurricane Ike came off the Gulf



Coast and Galveston and Houston as a Category 2 storm with 110 mile per hour winds taking down thousands of trees and leaving 2.15 million residents without electricity and was one of the most costly storms ever to hit the United States. However, colleges and universities in the area that had sustained heavy losses during Tropical Storm Allison were better prepared for this storm and had much less damage and fewer losses than expected.

### Lessons Learned

- At the University of Houston (UH) the lack of personnel on campus exacerbated the effects of Tropical Storm Allison, so during Ike, UH had “a full ride-out team, including electricians, landscape experts, and plumbers on campus during the hurricane, which allowed us to evaluate the situation immediately...As the eye of the hurricane was moving over the area, the team was assessing the damage” (Parker 2008, 1).
- No critical functions are located in basements anymore. None. This was reported for UH, the Baylor College of Medicine, and the University of Texas Medical School at Houston.
- Definitions of critical systems morphed. “The Baylor Web site had not been considered an essential system, but we learned that it was indeed critical, both for posting announcements and for soliciting information” (Jarriel and Shomper 2005, 7). Another survivor recommended having “alternate off-site web hosting capabilities, enabling the distribution of campus information to a widely dispersed staff” (Goodwin and Donahoe 2010, 117).
- Complacency and denial must be recognized and addressed early in the process (117). Quick response and action from team members are essential.
- Use the people and resources you have on hand. Through a bit of luck, there were a number of IT personnel on campus in the early morning hours of Tropical Storm Allison, but officials re-deployed all of them from restoring

IT systems to saving research animals. The systems were down longer than expected, but UH lost no research animals as a result.

- Send the right messages to your constituency. “Like Baylor, UH was focused on restoring classes as quickly as possible. Symbolically, we tried to close the official command center as quickly as possible, as a statement that we were focusing on the return to normal operations” (Jarriel and Shomper 2005, 9). The community needed to see progress, even if the IT help desk was still operating from the sports arena.
- Thousands of research animals in the medical center were lost during Tropical Storm Allison. Researchers are now encouraged to cryopreserve rare lines or collaborate with researchers in other parts of the country to protect unique genetically engineered animals.
- Flood gates were added on several campuses after Allison. The flood gates were effective during Ike, but caused new difficulties. They now recommend that emergency exits are placed above the level of the flood gates, so faculty and staff can exit the building after they have been closed.
- On one campus, high security after the storm inhibited recovery. With all facilities manually locked, hours were wasted waiting for buildings to be reopened.

### Hurricane Ivan

In September of 2004, Hurricane Ivan came ashore over Pensacola, Florida, and it remains one of the worst hurricanes ever to hit West Florida. The University of West Florida was hard hit, and John Cavanaugh wrote about this and other experiences as an administrator dealing with disasters in *Effectively Managing Major Disasters* (2006).

### Lessons Learned

- Some natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, and blizzards) have the advantage of lead time – use it. “Use the available time to clearly and concisely communicate the steps people should or must take” (6).
- Back-up information on staff, students, finance, etc., needs to be sufficiently remote from the location of the disaster as to be accessible during the disaster. Work with a sister school in another part of the country to trade back-up information.
- While insurance and FEMA will pay out eventually, cash will be needed to get through the emergency. This means cash in the bank for operating until assistance is available and may also literally mean cash in hand to buy drinking water and batteries. Purchase orders are not helpful in an emergency.

### Hurricane Floyd

Hurricane Floyd hit the east coast of the United States on September 15, 1999. A Category 2 storm at that point, it triggered torrential rains in an area already soaked by Hurricane Dennis just two weeks earlier. As in Tropical Storm Allison, the worst damage came from flooding, which in this case went on for weeks. East Caroline State University was forced to cancel classes for a week and evacuate the campus through the one road still open.

### Lessons Learned

When planning assume you will lose all vital utilities for one week. This may not be the case, but you need to have a



plan in place in the eventuality that it happens.

- When planning, assume you will lose all vital utilities for one week. This may not be the case, but you need to have a plan in place in the eventuality that it happens.
- “Make alternative arrangements for producing your payroll should the disaster come at such a time. Employees will need their paychecks even more during these times” (Brown 2000, 42.)
- Consider that local emergency personnel may be asking you for assistance. If these relationships are built before the disaster strikes, the situation will be easier to navigate during the disaster.
- “Celebrate the success of the recovery effort and thank all involved” (42).

## Conclusions

Disaster preparedness is neither easy nor quick: it is essential, however. Colleges and universities have essential assets and investments to protect during a natural disaster: human life, buildings, and research, along with the continued operation of the organization. A well-formed, well-rehearsed disaster plan is a crucial element in protecting these resources. Federal assistance is available to assist colleges and universities with planning, and local resources should certainly be considered. Much can be learned from fellow academics who have been through disasters, and area colleges and universities can benefit from working together in planning as well as response and recovery. Create a plan, train on that plan, and communicate that plan. What you will learn about your organization will help you be more effective now and during a disaster.

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# Approaching the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session

BY GLORIA MERAZ

## Summary of the 82nd Legislative Session

The state faced a massive budget shortfall in 2011 and made unprecedented cuts to statewide programs. Elected officials voted to cut about \$4 billion in funding for schools along with significant cuts to higher education, healthcare, and almost all areas of the state's budget. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), which manages statewide library programs, sustained a significant cut in funding. This sum represents a loss of about \$30 million in support for library programs over the 2012-13 biennium.

These drastic state cuts have an additional devastating impact: the potential loss of almost \$9 million more in federal funds in 2015 since the state can no longer meet federal requirements for eligibility for all matching federal funds for library services.

*These cuts affected just about every community, school, and institution of higher education in the state.*

## *Other Legislation*

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature also passed legislation to extend the state's telecommunications program for libraries, schools, institutions of higher education, and hospitals through January 1, 2016.

Texline 282 ([www.txla.org/texline](http://www.txla.org/texline)) contains a full summary of the session and library initiatives.

## Preview of the 83rd Legislative Session

The State Comptroller recently noted an improvement in the Texas economy with sales tax receipts and the Rainy Day Fund exceeding budgeted expectations. Despite the improved financial outlook for the state and higher revenue available for the 2014-15 biennium than for the 2012-13 biennium, the state budget may remain stagnant, as the Governor reiterated his pledge to support legislation that shrinks government spending and oppose legislation that raises taxes or raids the Rainy Day Fund. All state agencies have been required to submit proposed budgets that reduce current funding by up to 10% (in 5% increments). The state must also make payments in the 2014-15 biennium that were delayed from the 2012-13 biennium (i.e., Medicaid and the Foundation School Program). Additionally, the anticipated lawsuit by several school districts against the state for failing to adequately fund public schools is about to begin this fall in a district court, but without a Texas Supreme Court decision, we will not likely see any legitimate legislative proposals to remedy the situation.

State funding for library services is at a critically low level. With only \$2.5 million appropriated last session for TexShare, TSLAC requires an infusion



of state general revenue funding to maintain the TexShare program, provide statewide resources for K-12 campuses, and assist libraries in providing workforce training, literacy programming, and educational services to the people of Texas. It is also critical to note that, without additional state funds directed to library programming, the State Library may not be able to make the case to the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services for a continuation – even at a smaller level – of federal matching funds for library services. Federal funds currently help support interlibrary loan, TexShare, and other critical statewide library services.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> State Legislature will include a large number of freshmen legislators. Although these newly minted elected officials will face a steep learning curve, this change represents an opportunity for all library supporters. It is critical that all the members of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature hear from constituents about the potential loss of federal matching funding, the list of reduced or eliminated programs and services, and the importance of libraries to the people in their home districts. Many lawmakers are campaigning on promises of fiscal conservatism. All elected official must be made aware that statewide library services represent a cost-effective and highly beneficial deployment of state dollars. Funding of library services yields support for under-employed or unemployed individuals seeking to build their skills and résumés in the sluggish economy; small business use of resources to help grow and market their enterprises; and millions of library users (i.e., students, families, and researches) who rely on the Internet access, instructional programs, and resources available at their libraries.

Other key issues that may be addressed include the state's telecommunications discount program (which was extended last session in a bill by Sen. J. Zaffirini of Laredo). The Senate Business and Commerce Committee was charged with reviewing the program during the interim. At a hearing on



August 14, Roosevelt Weeks, deputy director of Houston Public Library, offered testimony on behalf of TLA in support of the discount program. Telecommunications providers renewed their desire to eliminate the program. TLA, along with other eligible institutions, discussed the need for the continuation of the discounts and noted that telecommunications providers are able to recoup the cost of the service and make a small profit. We also expect proposed legislation that would permit local economic development corporations the option of using certain local funds for library projects.

## TLA Platform for the 83rd Legislative Session

Texas libraries are essential to the state's information infrastructure which fosters the economic and educational success of Texas. The statewide library initiatives brought before the 83rd Legislature represent a unified statewide approach for supporting library services and are built on the principle of promoting equity and maximizing economies of scale. The goals of these programs are to promote economic vitality, workforce and college readiness, and educational attainment. These statewide library programs:

- Offer a broad vision and mechanism of support for all types of libraries now and into the future
- Focus on the State's articulated goals of workforce development, educational success, and college & workforce readiness
- Promote increased reading, writing, and digital literacy

The two primary initiatives for consideration before the legislature are represented as budget items in the proposed 2014-15 budget for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC). (See Article I, General Government, HB 1/SB 1.) The State Library Commission approved the agency's proposed budget (i.e., the Legislative Appropriations Request) for 2014-15 at its August 2 meeting. The approved budget contained the following two exceptional items requests for library programs.

### 1. E-Content Learning Resources – \$9.25 million over the biennium for:

- Digital (electronic) materials in libraries for online homework help, college preparation, research, job searching, career and test preparation, and other assistance in helping people reach their economic goals;
- Shared resources available to persons of all ages, such as databases, ebooks, interlibrary loan networks, and training aids.

#### *Why we need e-content...*

- Economic vitality is a product of a well prepared workforce and a robust business environment. Texas libraries form a broad and efficient foundation that provides Texans tools for education, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Library e-content supports these strategic statewide goals.
- This request would strengthen and consolidate the provision of digital content – online research on science and business; ebooks; online homework help; job search resources; and career preparation services – available through libraries and library websites statewide.
- This program leverages the purchasing power of the State of Texas and reaps enormous savings and realizes the best value possible for Texas taxpayers.
- The funds requested would strengthen TexShare, the statewide program that makes resources readily available to learners, job creators, college and university students, and faculty throughout the state.



- The requested funding would allow the millions of K-12 students and educators to have access to these materials at their school campuses.

## 2. Incentive Grants for Increasing Literacy and Educational Success – \$3.4 million/biennium for:

Training and programming built on local partnerships and innovative practices to advance educational attainment, workforce development, and written and digital literacy

### *Why we need to support these strategic partnerships and programs...*

- According to the report *Addressing Long-Term Unemployment*, almost five unemployed workers exist for every job opening. Yet, many workers do not possess the skill set necessary to perform those jobs. The report finds that policymakers will need to invest in education and training programs that can prepare workers for new employment opportunities.
- Texas libraries provide services and resources that address gaps in education, workforce skills, and literacy levels. 64% of Texas public libraries offer the only free source of Internet access in their communities.
- Libraries provide a significant avenue to assist in meeting the state's priorities of promoting educational opportunities, establishing favorable environments for business, and raising literacy at all age levels.
- With the closure of some local Workforce Solutions offices statewide, libraries must meet ever-increasing demands for training and educational programs.

### Tasks to Accomplish before December 15, 2012

- Recruit supporters and persons of influence within your community. Have them contact elected officials and candidates asking for support of library issues. Give them a list of the local programs and services reduced or eliminated as a result of the state

budget passed in 2011 and share TLA's platform.

- Meet your state representative and senator (and any strong candidates for those offices). Visit them at their offices. Take a couple of supporters with you to discuss the importance of library services. Be sure to meet the elected official's staff members.
- Invite those elected officials and candidates to your library if you are able.
- Prepare information about the value of your library to your community, students, etc.
- Send a letter to the editor about the value and needs of your library. Invite the media (or a known reporter) to cover an event at your library, perhaps a Library Snapshot Day event in October.
- Continue communications with your state senator and representative. Write them and have your supporters write them about the library and the need for state funding.

### Resources Available at [www.txla.org/advocacy-tools](http://www.txla.org/advocacy-tools)

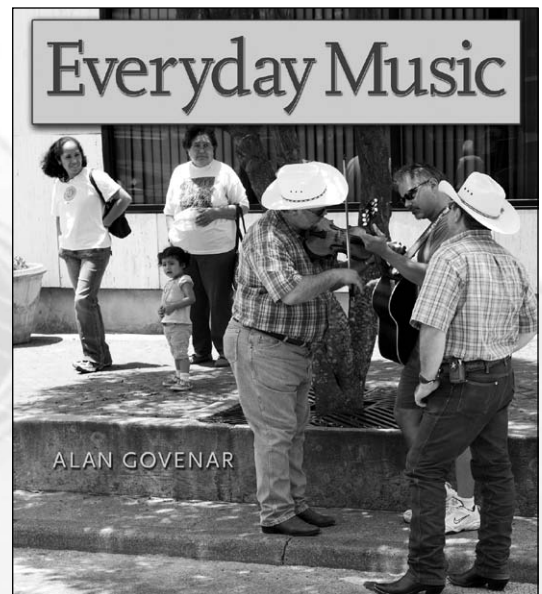
- Handout of TLA Platform
- Video of library activities and need for funding (can be used in presentations to boards, community groups, and elected officials)
- PowerPoint Presentation on library funding and the need to support library initiatives
- Template resolution that library supporters can ask city councils, county commissioners, school boards, parent groups, student unions, faculty groups, and others to pass and send to their state senators, representatives, and candidates for office
- Sample letter that can be sent to elected officials
- Calendar of activities and events
- Audio (MP3) of Texline 284 highlights 🎧

Gloria Meraz is director of communications at the Texas Library Association.

### NEW FROM TEXAS A&M

## Everyday Music

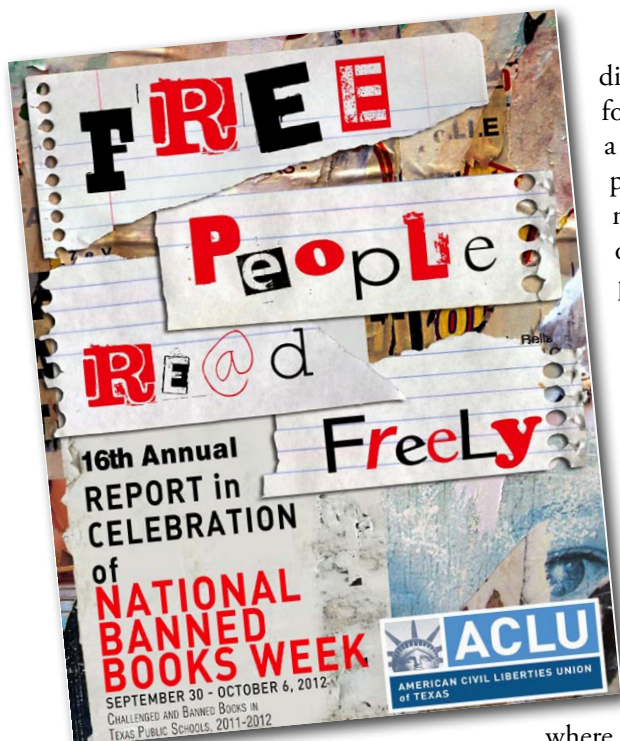
Alan Govenar  
Online Teaching Resources  
by Paddy Bowman



Govenar traveled more than 35,000 miles around Texas, interviewing, recording, and photographing the vast cultural landscape of Texas. Here, he brings readers face-to-face with the stories and memories of people who are as varied as the traditions they carry on. Online teaching resources accompanying the book include video clips, recorded interviews, and performances.

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A PROJECT OF  
THE AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION OF TEXAS

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The version of the report published here has been edited for length. The full report is available on the ACLU of Texas website ([www.aclutx.org/resources/banned-books/](http://www.aclutx.org/resources/banned-books/)) and was released in mid-September. The report details challenged and banned books in Texas public schools during the 2011-2012 school year, and is published in celebration of National Banned Books Week, September 30 - October 6. The Texas Library Association and all people who value the right to read thank the ACLU of Texas for its unwavering and longstanding support of the freedom to read.*

### REFLECTIONS from ACLU Executive Director Terri Burke

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Banned Books Week when Americans and Texans celebrate their right to read what they damn well please...or not. The ACLU of Texas pays tribute to this fundamental right – and the First Amendment that safeguards it – with an investigative report on books banned in Texas public schools. This is our 16th annual banned books report: *Free People Read Freely, Challenged and Banned Books in Texas Public Schools, 2011-2012*. We will continue to investigate and report as long as Texas school districts continue banning books.

Each year when we contact every one of the state's more than 1,000 school

districts, we ask which of the following categories were cited for a book's challenge or banishment: profanity; sexual content or nudity; violence or horror; offensive to religious beliefs; politically, racially, or socially offensive; and drugs or alcohol. The answers usually involve some or nearly all of these categories. Although I continue to be surprised at some of the books that are challenged and the reasons why, I am happy to report fewer books were banned last school year. In many cases, those that were banned or restricted were in elementary school libraries

where their content was considered too mature for younger children. The books weren't denied to older students.

Intellectual freedom – the freedom to access information and express ideas even if unorthodox or unpopular – provides the foundation for Banned Books Week. The ACLU of Texas believes that one person's views should not govern what others may read. At the same time, we believe parents have the right to limit what their own children read. In the main, however, we are persuaded by the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart who wrote: "Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself." Unconventional or minority viewpoints are as important for learning about our world and imparting society's values as conventional perspectives.

Banned Books Week draws attention to the danger that exists when restraints are imposed on the availability of information in a free society. We feature the story of "book trafficker" Tony Diaz who trekked across Texas to "smuggle" banned books into Arizona. Mexican-American history and culture classes, along with books in the curriculum, were forbidden in Tucson schools following passage of a state law that deemed ethnic studies seditious.

We hope you will join with Houston Community College professor Tony Diaz and stand up for your **Freedom!**

### FOREWORD by Dotty Griffith, Public Education Director

If there's one thing that the ACLU is known for, it's free speech. That's why every fall for the last 16 years, the ACLU of Texas has marked Banned Books Week with the release of our exclusive report on the state of censorship in our state's public schools.

This report underscores our belief in a society where ideas are openly discussed and debated. We believe in your right to access information, and the right to make up your own mind about what you want to read and about what your school age children read.

Since the inception of Banned Books Week in 1982, sponsored by the American Library Association, libraries and bookstores throughout the country have staged local read-ins as part of their activities.

Join with us against censorship. Consider holding a read-in, an event where community members gather to celebrate and read challenged books. You can "read-in" at a school, local bookstore, library, community center, or even in your home or with your book club. Contact us ([gwilliams@aclutx.org](mailto:gwilliams@aclutx.org)) and we'll help.

You may also choose to become part of a Virtual Read-In. Proclaim the virtues of your favorite banned books by submitting two-minute videos of you or friends reading excerpts from a banned or challenged book on a dedicated YouTube channel. Or you may be vigilant enough to have video eyewitness accounts of local challenges to post.

Once you have posted your video, send an email with the subject heading "Link for the BBW Virtual Read-In!" to [bbw@ala.org](mailto:bbw@ala.org) with the link to your video. Send the ACLU of Texas a link as well to [media@aclutx.org](mailto:media@aclutx.org). We'll post your video on our ACLU of Texas Facebook page.

**ENJOY BANNED BOOKS WEEK  
BY READING A BANNED BOOK!**



## An Overview

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Banned Books Week. Across the country, people will hold read-ins of “contraband” materials such as *Love and Other Four-Letter Words*, *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, and *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (which happens to be over 100 years old!)

This year’s report, which accounts for about 91 percent of the total number of Texas school districts, reveals some good news on the reading front. Over the past decade we have seen a steady decline in the number of books that have been challenged and banned, with 2003-04 and 2006-07 school years seeing a slight spike in challenges and bans. 2011-12 shows the lowest number of challenges and bans for the decade, with 50 challenged and 13 banned. This is an enormous step for Texas and a trend we hope will continue in the years to come.

Subject matters that concerned parents, teachers, and even a bus driver, included topics such as LGBT; teen and race issues; cursing; bad behavior; creepy illustrations; and even works by Leonardo da Vinci!

Many of the challenged books, which might not have been intended for an elementary reader in the first place, such as DC Pierson’s *The Boy Who Couldn’t Sleep and Never Had To* or Dan Santat’s *Sidekicks*, found their way to library shelves or classrooms of younger readers. Some schools indicated they “restricted”

these books from the elementary schools, either moving them to a higher grade level or restricting use only for the child whose parents protested. Some chose to ban the challenged books all together.

## Due Process Before Pulling a Book

The process to ban a book begins when someone makes a complaint. Books are almost always challenged by a parent or, every so often, by a teacher. When a book is challenged, a school might ban it, sometimes permanently. Fortunately, most districts report they have retained the challenged books or have restricted the book’s use to a certain age or class level; or restricted it only for the child whose parents complained.

The process schools use to respond to parental or a community complaint usually determines the outcome of a challenge. It may come as a surprise to some that even the most prestigious of titles consistently return to the banned and challenged books list, even if they are more than a half century old.

In Huffman ISD, J.D. Salinger’s classic *Catcher in the Rye* was challenged for its “profanity, sexual content, nudity, offensiveness, and alcohol use” by a parent at Hargrave High School.

In the tradition of Salinger, taboo topics of discussion get at the most uncomfortable parental scrutiny, such as the issues raised in Marcus Ewart’s *10,000 Dresses*, a children’s book about

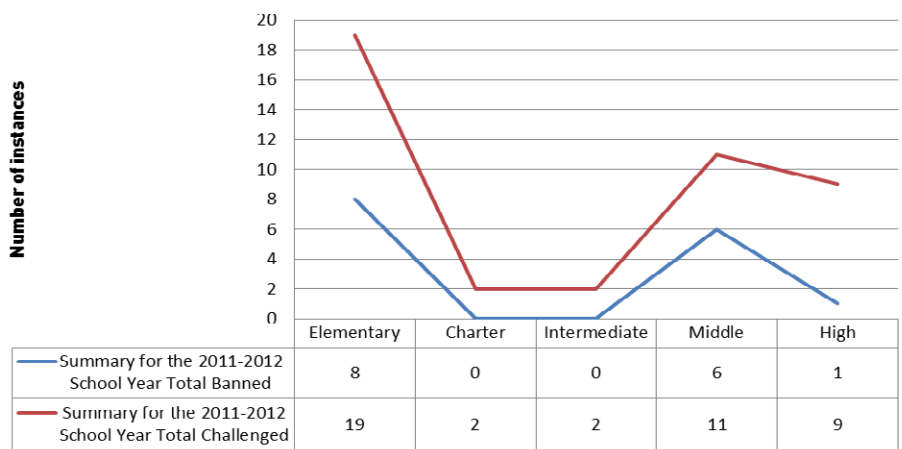
## BANNED BOOKS

*10,000 Dresses*, Marcus Ewart  
*Bone Series*, Jeff Smith  
*Call Me Hope*, Gretchen Olson  
*Dark Rivers of the Heart*, Dean Koontz  
*Dash and Lily’s Book of Dares*, Rachel Cohn  
*Love and Other Four Letter Words*, Carolyn Mackler  
*Num8ers*, Rachel Ward  
*Sidekicks*, Dan Santat  
*The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, Dav Pilkey  
*The Boy Who Couldn’t Sleep and Never Had To*, D.C. Pierson  
*The Storm in the Barn*, Matt Phelan  
*This is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness*, Joyce Sidman  
*Vampires*, Jennifer Besel  
*When is it Right to Die?*, Joni Eareckson

## RESTRICTED BOOKS

*A Farewell to Arms*, Ernest Hemmingway  
*A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah  
*Beloved*, Toni Morrison  
*Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger  
*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez  
*City of Glass*, Cassandra Clare  
*Incredible Journey through the Human Body*, Nicholas Harris  
*Jake Reinvented*, Gordon Korman  
*Molly’s Family*, Nancy Garden  
*Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry  
*Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, Jennifer Armstrong  
*Tess of the d’Urbervilles*, Thomas Hardy  
*The Awakening*, Kate Chopin  
*The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini  
*The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton  
*The Princess Diaries, Vol VI: Princess in Training*, Meg Cabot  
*The Things They Carried*, Tim O’Brien

### Summary for the 2011-2012 School Year



Most often books at the elementary and intermediate level are challenged and banned due to the age appropriateness of the content.

a transgender child. Cuero ISD banned the book from French Elementary School for its reported “politically, racially, or socially offensive” content.

There are generally three ways for school districts to evaluate books: by the librarian or principal, by the school board, or by a review committee. For the 2011-2012 school year, more than half of the districts surveyed (59 percent) reported that when a book is challenged, it is reviewed by a “review committee,” a stark difference to last

year when half of the districts surveyed reported that review was an “administration only” procedure. “Administration and other” and “administration” officials now monopolize the process at only 21 percent of schools surveyed for 2011-2012.

“Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him.”

Maya Angelou



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According to the American Library Association, “A challenge is an attempt to remove or restrict materials, based upon the objections of a person or group. A banning is the removal of those materials. Challenges do not simply involve a person expressing a point of view; rather, they are an attempt to remove material from the curriculum or library, thereby restricting the access of others. Due to the commitment of librarians, teachers, parents, students and other concerned citizens, most challenges are unsuccessful and most materials are retained in the school curriculum or library collection.”

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## Summaries of Challenged Books

Red = Banned    Orange = Restricted    Black = No Action Taken

### **10,000 Dresses**, Marcus Ewert

A young boy named Bailey dreams about dresses. Because he is a boy, his parents don't want him to think about dresses at all. Bailey meets a friend who supports his dreams, and they start making dresses together.

### **A Farewell to Arms**, Ernest Hemmingway

During WWI, a young American ambulance driver serving in the Italian army and an English nurse fall in love. They stay devoted to each other during the challenges of wartime.

### **A Long Way Gone**, Ishmael Beah

This is a memoir of a child soldier in Sierra Leone.

### **Amelia Rules: The Gym Class System**, Jimmy Gownley

After her parents' divorce, an elementary school girl moves to a new town. On her first day of 4th grade Amelia meets some challenges in gym class.

### **Behind the Secret Window**, Nelly S. Toll

A young girl's memoir of her childhood during World War II. Through artwork and text, fantasy and hope balance heartbreaking and tragic moments.

### **Beloved**, Toni Morrison

Set in 1873, a mother tries to kill her children so they can escape the horrors of slavery. She successfully kills one daughter, whose ghost returns to haunt the family.

### **Bone Series**, Jeff Smith

The Bone cousins face many adventures after being run out of their hometown. As they travel through different places, they meet new people, learn about sacrifice, and enjoy fun times.

### **Call Me Hope**, Gretchen Olson

Hope, a pre-teen who is not treated well by her mother, thinks about running away. Instead, she decides to stay home and confront her mom.

### **Catcher in the Rye**, J.D. Salinger

After being expelled from prep school, young Holden Caulfield takes a few days for himself in Manhattan. He looks up people he knows, has some new and surprising experiences, bonds with his sister, and changes his outlook.

### **Chronicle of a Death Foretold**, Gabriel Garcia Marquez

This murder mystery is entangled with love and deception.

### **City of Glass**, Cassandra Clare

To save her mother's life, Clary risks her own by traveling to the City of Glass. She is unwanted in the city, but finds an important ally who helps her succeed.

### **Dark Rivers of the Heart**, Dean Koontz

Before he knows it, Spencer Grant finds himself on the run from mysterious men, in love with a mysterious woman, and is reminded about some moments of his own past that could ruin him if his new enemies don't get to him first.

### **Dash and Lily's Book of Dares**, Rachel Cohn

A love story begins as a list of dares in a notebook on a bookstore shelf. Lily and Dash learn about each other at first only through their writing. Their relationship becomes more interesting as they get to know each other in person.

### **Da Vinci and His Times**, Andrew Langley

A history book about the Renaissance that goes into illustrated detail about Leonardo da Vinci, his contemporaries, and general life in Europe.

### **Fade**, Lisa McMann

After tapping into a classmate's nightmares, Janie is learning about the consequences of being a dream catcher. Learning the truth about herself, along with her confusing relationship with Cabel, keeps her life in scary suspense.

### **Fallen Angels**, Walter Dean Myers

A teenager volunteers for the military when his dream of attending college falls through. Sent to the front lines, Perry comes face-to-face with the Viet Cong and the horror of warfare. As Perry struggles to find virtue in himself and his comrades, he questions why black troops are given the most dangerous assignments and why the U.S. is there at all.



**Hoot**, Carl Hiaasen

Roy and his friends fight to stop the building of a pancake house in Coconut Cove, Florida, because they want to save a colony of owls that live on the site.

**I'm Your Peanut Butter Big Brother**, Selina Alko

A boy is very excited about becoming a big brother and wonders what his new sibling will look like.

**Incredible Journey through the Human Body**, Nicholas Harris

This journey through the human body offers explanations and colorful descriptions of all of the body's systems.

**Jake Reinvented**, Gordon Korman

Jake Garret is a wealthy, athletic, and popular new student at Fitzgerald High. He has his eyes on the girlfriend of the quarterback, and the other students start to fear Jake as they learn his secret.

**Katy Perry**, Sarah Tieck

A biography of pop star Katy Perry, this book follows her life and the decisions she has made in her career.

**Love and Other Four Letter Words**, Carolyn Mackler

Upon her parents' split, 16-year-old Samantha Davis moves to Manhattan, where she struggles with the changes in her location, her parents, and herself.

**Marked: A House of Night Novel**, P.C. Cast and Kristen Cast

In this introduction to the *House of Night* series, fledgling vampire Zoey finds friendship, love, and adventure.

**Molly's Family**, Nancy Garden

Molly is a kindergartner who has two moms. When she puts up a drawing of her family, she is challenged by another student who tells her that a family cannot have a mommy and a mama. Molly becomes sensitive to the fact that her family is different than the others.

**More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark**, Alvin Schwartz

This sequel to *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* adds to the collection of spooky, gruesome, and sometimes funny stories.

**Num8ers**, Rachel Ward

Each time Jem meets a new person, she instantaneously knows the date that person will die. When she sees that a bunch of tourists are going to die today, she realizes there will be a terrorist attack.

**Number the Stars**, Lois Lowry

In 1943, a 10-year-old Danish girl learns to be courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis.

**Seventeen**

This magazine for teenage girls contains stories that range from nightmares and family embarrassments to advice for teens, school mishaps, and fashion guidance.

**Sheep**, Valerie Hobbs

A sheep herding dog loses his way and finds himself in strange places without his family. He finally finds his way to something that feels like home.

**Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World**, Jennifer Armstrong

This true story follows a team of explorers who attempted to cross Antarctica in 1914. Their ship gets trapped in ice, and the journey overland to safety is very dangerous. In the end, the leader, Ernest Shackleton, brings every man home alive.

**Sicko** (movie), Michael Moore

Michael Moore explores the topic of the profitable health care industry in the United States.

**Sidekicks**, Dan Santat

Superhero Captain Amazing needs a sidekick and plans on turning one of his four pets into just that. The pets compete for the position because each one wants to be the one to help save Metro City.

**Tess of the d'Urbervilles**, Thomas Hardy

A young peasant woman finds out she is a descendant of the noble d'Urbervilles family. She leaves home on a journey to learn more about her history and finds disappointment, rejection, and love.

**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**, Mark Twain

Huck Finn goes on a journey down the Mississippi River. He meets interesting, and often hilarious, people along the way.

**The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby**, Dav Pilkey

After acting out in the cafeteria, George and Harold are assigned an essay on good citizenship. Instead of writing about their superhero, Captain Underpants, they write about a new superhero, Super Diaper Baby and his fight against evil Deputy Doo-Doo.

**The Awakening**, Kate Chopin

A woman desires to find and live fully within her true self. Her devotion to that purpose causes friction with her friends and family and also conflicts with the dominant values of her time.

**The Blood-Hungry Spleen**, Allan Wolf

Allan Wolf covers everything from the titular spleen to boy parts and girl parts with an admirable combination of scientific accuracy and poetic abandon. The poems explore the workings of our bodies with great animation, enthusiasm, and plenty of illustrations.

**The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep and Never Had To**, D.C. Pierson

15-year-old Darren spends his time at school trying not to be noticed while drawing characters for a planned film series. He becomes friends with Eric who also has a love for drawing and creates a graphic novel series that is shaped by Eric's increasingly hallucinatory sleeplessness.

**The Kite Runner**, Khaled Hosseini

Haunted by an act of childhood disloyalty, protagonist Amir returns to Afghanistan and witnesses many of the injustices perpetrated by the Taliban.

**The Outsiders**, S.E. Hinton

Ponyboy lives on the fringes of regular society. He always has to watch out for the Socs, a gang of rich kids who enjoy beating up "greasers" like Ponyboy.

**The Princess Diaries, Vol VI: Princess in Training**, Meg Cabot

Mia begins her sophomore year dreading school life without boyfriend Michael. She experiences situations ranging from Lily nominating her for president, missing Michael, taking care of her princess responsibilities, and experiencing her sexuality.

**The Storm in the Barn**, Matt Phelan

In 1937 Kansas, 11-year-old Jack Clark has his good days and bad. He faces different challenges and also has to deal with the effects of the Dust Bowl, including rising tensions in his small town and the spread of a shadowy illness.

**The Things They Carried**, Tim O'Brien

The author remembers the past and searches for meaning in the details of his memories of service in Vietnam. O'Brien describes in full detail soldiers' conditions and experiences in Vietnam and other details of the war.

"Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself."

US Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart



***This is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness,* Joyce Sidman**

Mrs. Merz asks her sixth grade class to write poems of apology, and they end up liking their poems so much they decide to put them together into a book. The poems were written about

loving and losing pets, and more.

***Tricks,* Ellen Hopkins**

Five teens from different backgrounds find themselves in places and situations they never could have foreseen. The novel tackles issues about survival and how decisions can change your life.

***Vampires,* Jennifer Besel**

This book describes the history and myths of vampires, their features, and the portrayal of vampires in popular culture.

***Water for Elephants,* Sara Gruen**

Jacob Jankowski is pushing 90 and living in a nursing home, abandoned by his family. As Jacob lies in his bed, drifting in and out of sleep, the compelling story of his experiences as a young man unfolds.

***When Is It Right to Die?,* Joni Eareckson**

Tada has been a quadriplegic since a diving accident in 1967. This book explores the lives of families, the elderly, the disabled, and the terminally ill; and it lets them speak about assisted death.

***Things Fall Apart,* Chinua Achebe**

Through the personal story of Okonkwo, the book documents the civilized and rich life the Igbo lived in Africa before the arrival of Europeans and describes the ruinous social and cultural consequences of the arrival of missionaries.

## Challenged Books by ISD for 2011-2012

**Aledo ISD,** Coder Elementary

BOOK: *Hoot*, Carl Hiaasen

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Retained

NOTE: Curse words including "damn and smartass" are in the book.

**Allen ISD,** Ereckson Middle School

BOOK: *The Boy Who Couldn't Sleep and Never Had To*, D.C. Pierson

REASON: Profanity; violence or horror; drugs or alcohol; sexual content or nudity; age inappropriate

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: It was determined that this book was not appropriate for the middle school age group. The committee recommended that it was more appropriate for high school.

**Axtell ISD,** Axtell Middle School

BOOK: *Tricks*, Ellen Hopkins

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Unclear

NOTE: A bus aide overheard a student reading aloud a passage including profanity to a younger student.

**Bandera ISD,** Bandera Middle School

BOOK: *The Princess Diaries, Vol VI: Princess in Training*, Meg Cabot/  
*Seventeen* magazine

REASON: None provided

ACTION: Retained, use restricted

NOTE: The magazine has been sent to the high school library and restricted from the middle school library.

**Burleson ISD**

Centennial High School

BOOK: *Things Fall Apart*,

Chinua Achebe

REASON: Violence or horror; politically, racially, or socially offensive; offensive to religious sensitivities

ACTION: Retained without restriction

Clinkscale Elementary

BOOK: *Molly's Family*, Nancy Garden

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive; drugs or alcohol; educational suitability of the book

ACTION: Restricted

Hajek Elementary

BOOK: *The Storm in the Barn*,

Matt Phelan

REASON: Profanity; violence or horror

ACTION: Retained without restriction

**Calhoun Country ISD**

Travis Middle School

BOOK: *When is it Right to Die?*,

Joni Eareckson

REASON: Offensive to religious belief; politically, racially, or socially offensive

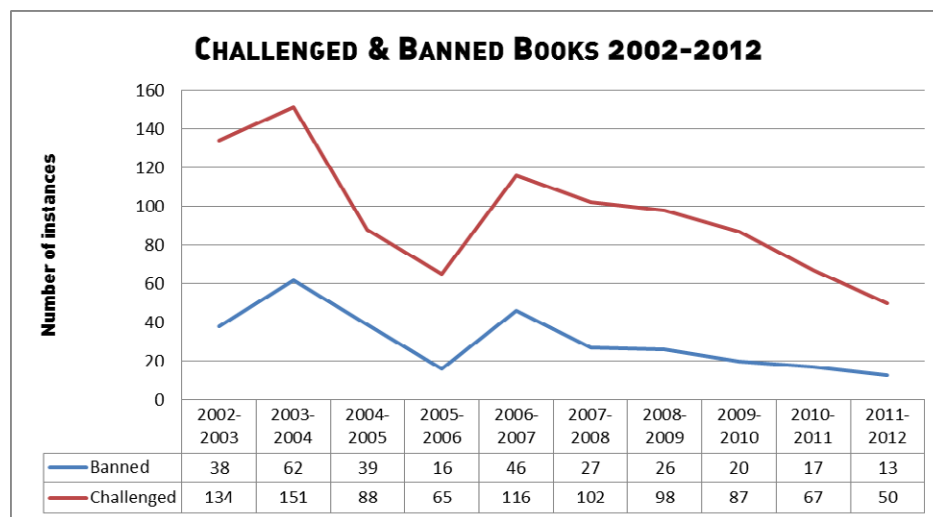
ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Suicide, euthanasia, suffering

**Channelview ISD**

Harvey Brown Elementary

BOOK: *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, Dav Pilkey



Over the course of 10 years, 958 books have been challenged, and 304 banned, in Texas schools. Bans have been in steady decline since 2007.



REASON: Name calling, boycotting testing, etc.

ACTION: Banned

**Comal ISD**, Rahe-Bulverde Elementary

BOOK: *Vampires*, Jennifer Besel

REASON: Violence or horror

ACTION: Banned

**Conroe ISD**, York Junior High

BOOK: *Fade*, Lisa McMann

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Referred for reconsideration as library material

NOTE: The request was initiated by a parent. The reconsideration committee has not yet convened.

**Corsicana ISD**

Drane Intermediate School

BOOK: *Behind the Secret Window*, Nelly S. Toll

REASON: Profanity; offensive to religious sensitivities

ACTION: Retained without restriction

NOTE: Use of the word “goddamn” offended a Christian parent. Use was reviewed and found to be in context and appropriate to the content of the memoir written by a Holocaust survivor who in two instances refers to being called a “goddamn Jew.”

**Cuero ISD**

French Elementary

BOOK: *10,000 Dresses*, Marcus Ewert

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive

ACTION: Banned

Cuero Intermediate School

BOOK: *Water for Elephants*, Sara Gruen

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Retained

**Eagle Mountain Saginaw ISD**

Eagle Mountain, Elementary

BOOK: *Katy Perry*, Sarah Tieck

REASON: Offensive to religious sensitivities

ACTION: Retained without restriction

**Edna ISD**, Edna High School

BOOK: *Sicko* (movie), Michael Moore

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive; parent felt views were too liberal

ACTION: Retained without restriction

NOTE: Movie challenged in government classroom. Teacher also planned to show alternative side of

issue. Challenge resolved informally without appointing committee.

**Frisco ISD**

Sem Elementary

BOOK: *Sheep*, Valerie Hobbs

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Decision pending

NOTE: Formal paperwork was filed on March 17, 2012. A review committee is in the process of reading the book.

Cobb Middle School

BOOK: *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, Jennifer Armstrong

REASON: Profanity; violence or horror; offensive to religious sensitivities; politically, racially, or socially offensive; sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry

REASON: Sexual content or nudity; offensive to religious sensitivities; politically, racially, or socially offensive; violence or horror

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

**Graham ISD**

Crestview Elementary

BOOK: *Bone Series*, Jeff Smith

REASON: Not appropriate for age group

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Moved up to junior high, where more copies of the series are needed; not banned from district.

**Grand Prairie ISD**

Moseley Elementary

BOOK: *The Blood-Hungry Spleen*, Alan Wolf

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Retained

NOTE: The image was a representation, not actual nudity.

Moore Elementary

BOOK: *Incredible Journey through the Human Body*, Nicholas Harris

REASON: Showing male and female body parts

ACTION: Use restricted

BOOK: *Amelia Rules: The Gym Class System*, Jim Gownley

REASON: Offensive for younger children

ACTION: Not clear

**Huffman ISD**, Hargrave High School

BOOK: *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien

REASON: Violence or horror

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

NOTE: All challenges made by a parent

BOOK: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*,

Thomas Hardy

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *The Awakening*, Kate Chopin

REASON: Sexual content or nudity and offensive to religious beliefs

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

REASON: Sexual content or nudity and offensive to religious beliefs

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *A Farewell to Arms*, Ernest Hemmingway

REASON: Inappropriate for grade level

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah

REASON: Inappropriate for grade level

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

BOOK: *Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger

REASON: Profanity, sexual content or nudity, offensive, alcohol

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

**Humble ISD**

Bear Branch Elementary

BOOK: *More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, Alvin Schwartz

REASON: Parent felt that it was disturbing for her son to read

ACTION: Decision pending

NOTE: Forming a review committee and trying to find date for meeting to discuss the material in question

Pine Forest Elementary

BOOK: *Da Vinci and His Times*,

Andrew Langley

REASON: Nudity

ACTION: Retained

NOTE: A parent challenged this book.

While the book was retained, it was documented in the child's library account that his parent did not give him permission to access this book.

**Joshua ISD**, Joshua High School

BOOK: *Fallen Angels*, Walter Dean Myers

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Use restricted and alternate book allowed

**Kennendale ISD**

R. F. Patterson Elementary

BOOK: *The Storm in the Barn*,

Matt Phelan

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Banned

**Leander ISD**, Wiley Middle School

BOOK: *Marked: A House of Night Novel*, P. C. Cast and Karen Cast

REASON: Profanity and sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Decision pending

**Linden-Kildare CISD**

Mae Luster Stephens Junior High

BOOK: *Dark Rivers of the Heart*,

Dean Koontz

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Parent complaint

**Mansfield ISD**, Mansfield High School

BOOK: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive

ACTION: Review in process

NOTE: Objectionable aspect of book: "the word 'nigger' over and over"

**Nederland ISD**

Helena Park Elementary

BOOK: *Sidekicks*, Dan Santat

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Language was inappropriate for the ages of the students on campus

**New Caney ISD**

New Caney 6th Grade Campus

BOOK: *Dash and Lily's Book of Dares*, Rachel Cohn

REASON: Profanity and sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Banned

Robert Crippen Elementary

BOOK: *This Is Just to Say: Poems of Apology and Forgiveness*, Joyce Kilmer

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Banned because there was a poem about suicide

**Northside ISD**

All Middle and High Schools

BOOK: *Love and other Four Letter Words*, Carolyn Mackler

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Decision made by the district to remove it from all middle and high schools

**Plano ISD**, Mitchell Elementary

BOOK: *Call Me Hope*, Gretchen Olson

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Banned

NOTE: Suggested title moved to middle school

**Richardson ISD**, Meadow Junior High

BOOK: *The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton

REASON: The parent objected to the content (suicide, gangs, lack of uplifting content)

ACTION: School offered to provide student alternate reading material.

NOTE: The parent chose not to file an official request for reconsideration, which would have resulted in forming a committee to review the book

**Sheldon ISD**

Sheldon Early Childhood Academy

BOOK: *I'm Your Peanut Butter Big Brother*, Selina Alko

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially offensive

ACTION: Retained without restriction

NOTE: The committee investigation found no negative reviews about the book or author. The book has been in the library for three years and has been checked out 15 times without concerns. The committee recommended that the book remain available. The parent who challenged the book was given the option to speak with the librarian and help choose books for her child or to attend library sessions and help her child pick out books.

**Spring Branch ISD**

Spring Branch Middle School

BOOK: *Numb8rs*, Rachel Ward

REASON: Profanity

ACTION: Banned

**Tidehaven ISD**, Blessing Elementary

BOOK: *The Adventures of Super Diaper Baby*, Dav Pilkey

REASON: Politically, racially, or socially

offensive; inappropriate language and behavior

ACTION: Retained without restriction

NOTE: A parent believes that the book is inappropriate for lower elementary students. The parent met with

the principal using the informal reconsideration procedure listed in board policy. The parent stated that he would be researching the book more in-depth before deciding to make a formal complaint.

**Tomball ISD**, Tomball High School

BOOK: *Jake Reinvented*, Gordon Korman

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

NOTE: The committee decided to continue using the book but to offer an alternate book if necessary. The book has been used for many years. The teachers focus on the themes and the opportunity for reading skills development.

**Uplift Education - North Hills**

North Hills High School

BOOK: *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez

REASON: Profanity, sexual content or nudity; depiction of women

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

NOTE: We did not nor do we intend to pull the book from our reading list, but we did offer an alternate book and assignment.

**Westlake Academy**

BOOK: *City of Glass*, Cassandra Clare

REASON: Implied reference to incest

ACTION: Use restricted

**Wichita Falls ISD**

Wichita Falls High School

BOOK: *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini

REASON: Sexual content or nudity

ACTION: Alternate book allowed

NOTE: The book was retained as a "choice" book. Students have a choice of four books total in an English III pre-AP class. Teaching suggestions were also offered.

"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them."

Ray Bradbury







PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY DIAZ

*In a world where we're swamped with information, few things outweigh the pleasure of getting lost in a good book. Literature takes the powerful forces that propel society and defines them in ways that influence our lives. We come out wiser, more compassionate, and braver for having dipped our imaginations, our intellects, and hearts into worlds beyond the confines of our own. Unfortunately, not everyone sees it that way.*

Houston Community College professor, writer and activist Tony Diaz, addresses the crowd at a Librotráfico event last March in San Antonio, Texas.

## Speaking with Tony Diaz: **BATTLING for BOOKS**

BY MAIDA ASOFSKY &  
MICHELLE SERRANO

**T**ony Diaz is no stranger to battling for books and the right to read. The Houston Community College (HCC) professor and novelist is the founder of Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say, and Librotráfico, or book traffickers, an organization that runs “banned” school books to Arizona.

The academic activist became a book smuggler early this year after he learned that Tucson schools had dismantled a popular Mexican-American studies program and removed Hispanic history books from classrooms, including two titles published by the University of Houston's Arte Público Press. During the 2012 spring break, Diaz organized a grassroots caravan of writers, students and activists to travel from Houston to Tucson, trafficking banned books into Arizona.

### Ethnic studies ban

While Arizona's anti-immigrant “papers, please” law (SB 1070) is infamous, the state's ban on ethnic studies isn't as well-known. “A lot of folks don't know that Arizona passed this law,” said Diaz. Under Arizona law (HB 2281) signed by Governor Jan Brewer in 2010, ethnic studies may be barred from that state's public schools for fostering “resentment” of another race. The bill's text does affirm that instruction about

the “holocaust, any other instance of genocide, or the historical oppression of a group of people based on ethnicity, race or class” is still allowed.

“Here's the mind-boggling part. The law was created to prohibit courses that promote the overthrow of a government,” said Diaz, adding for emphasis, “Let that sink in.” In other words, the Arizona law equates ethnic studies with promoting revolution.

“Arizona legislators made me a librotráfico when they dared to make our history contraband,” said Diaz. The 2012 Librotráfico caravan to Tucson was intended to smuggle what Diaz calls “wet books” to students. “We started four underground libraries,” he said. The libraries were facilitated through a the caravan which started in Houston and went to San Antonio, El Paso, then to Albuquerque and Mesilla, New Mexico, and finally Tucson.

“The idea was that we wanted to compile at least one full set of the 85 books confiscated from Tucson classrooms,” explained Diaz.

[www.librotráfico.com](http://www.librotráfico.com)

Visit [www.txla.org/TLJ/more](http://www.txla.org/TLJ/more) to read Maida Asofsky's interview with Diaz.

### Banned Books Report Acknowledgements

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Editor/Designer: Claudia Michelle Serrano  
Interviewer: Maida Asofsky

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### Special Thanks

Kirsten Bokenkamp  
Maureen Bracho  
Tony Diaz  
Tony Lynn Fichter  
Texas Library Association  
Texas teachers, librarians, and school administrators

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## Assembly Wrap-up

Four hundred Association leaders convened in Austin for the TLA Annual Assembly on July 15-18, 2012. Committee and unit officers met with their respective groups to plan activities and programs for the upcoming year. Under the chairmanship of Becky Sullivan and Jennifer LaBoon, the hard-working 2013 Conference Program Committee met for four days to ensure quality continuing education programming for next year's conference.

Complimentary technology programs were provided to Assembly attendees by Carolyn Brewer and Paul Waak, North Texas Library Partners; Greg Hardin, Texas Woman's University; Craig Wheeler, Gail Johnston and Sarah Northam, Texas A&M Commerce; and Lannon Heflin, ESC XIII, on topics varying from Pinterest to MovieMaker, Project Share, Content Curation, and podcasting. Ron Pollock presented a preconference session on excellence in management, including strategic thinking and planning, assessment, knowledge management, and workforce focus.

The TLA Executive Board encouraged unit and committee officers and members to identify efforts that can help the Association implement

Strategic Initiative #1 of the 2012-2015 TLA Strategic Plan. This initiative, which is to demonstrate the value of libraries and librarians, was determined by the Executive Board to constitute the Board's highest priority in light of the current economic climate facing libraries. Throughout the All-Assembly Discussion Forums and the Idea Lab, many exciting ideas were identified for consideration by the units and Executive Board. The five action items within this initiative include the following:

- Cultivate a Diverse Community of Champions for Libraries
- Develop a Campaign That Will Raise Awareness of the Value of Libraries and Librarians
- Identify and Articulate What Users Value about Library Services
- Bolster Efforts to Enhance Funding for Libraries and Library Services
- Develop Mechanisms to Highlight and Recognize Best Practices in Libraries

Various evening networking activities included a barbeque dinner overlooking the beautiful Austin sunset at County Line on the Hill, dine-around dinners at local restaurants, and a surprise celebration of TLA Executive Director Patricia Smith's 25th anniversary.

after last spring's announcement by the Texas Education Agency of the state's new testing schedule, TLA worked extensively with the City of Fort Worth and hotels to slide the conference one day into Saturday to allow school librarians greater options for participation.

With this new schedule, TLA will now offer three general sessions and new and extended programming for the final day of conference. Stay tuned for updates. A preliminary conference program will be available after October 1. Be sure to check the TLA website for information.

## Fall Meeting Schedule

*Check individual TLA district webpages for additional meeting information.*

### **DISTRICT 1**

**Saturday, September 29**

Tom Green Library System - Stephens Central Library (San Angelo)

### **DISTRICT 2**

*with Herrington Library Consortium*

**Tuesday, September 25**

Hemphill County Library (Canadian)

### **DISTRICT 3**

**Friday, November 9**

University of Texas Libraries - Perry Castaneda Library (Austin)

### **DISTRICT 4**

**Friday, November 2 or 9**

Del Mar College (Corpus Christi)

### **DISTRICT 5**

**Saturday, November 3**

Van Zandt County Library (Canton)

### **DISTRICT 6**

BRLA/REFORMA/TLA

**Saturday, October 13**

El Paso Community College - Rio Grande Campus

### **DISTRICT 7**

**Friday, October 5**

Texas Woman's University (Denton)

### **DISTRICT 8**

**Saturday, September 29**

Lone Star College - CyFair Campus (Cypress)

### **DISTRICT 9**

**Thursday, November 15**

Andrews Business & Technology Center

### **DISTRICT 10**

**Saturday, October 13**

Boerne Public Library

## Conference Preview

Save the dates! April 24-27, 2013 in Fort Worth will be the place to gather for one of the nation's top library conventions. The annual TLA conference – the largest state library gathering – will convene from Wednesday through Saturday next year.

TLA conference planners made some quick changes to the conference schedule. Given its size and hotel and convention center requirements, TLA must book its conferences 10 years in advance. The original schedule held no major conflicts with other educational programming at the time 2013 contracts were signed. However,



## TLA Elections

On behalf of the TLA Nominating Committee, Chair Susi Grissom presents the following slate of candidates for the 2013 ballot:

### PRESIDENT ELECT

**Sharon Amastae** (retired),  
Ysleta ISD (El Paso)

**Cindy Buchanan**, Aldine ISD

### REPRESENTATIVE-AT-LARGE

**Jennifer LaBoon**, Fort Worth ISD

**Marty Rossi**, Educational Service  
Center 20 (San Antonio)

As Grissom noted, "TLA has a slate with four strong candidates who bring a breadth of experience and proven communication and leadership skills to the election." Also serving on the Nominating Committee were Stephanie Fulton, Larry Justiss, Tracey Mendoza, and Nora Galvan.

The deadline for petition candidates is December 1, 2012. Petition candidates must submit their vita, photograph, and statement of concern to the TLA Office, c/o Susi Grissom, chair of the Nomination Committee.

## EDUCATOR APPRECIATION

TLA has joined forces with the Texas PTA and other educational groups to give Texans an opportunity to recognize educators with a 180-day educator recognition marathon.

Texas PTA has created a website so that anyone can recognize a teacher, librarian, principal, or superintendent whose work ensures that Texas students succeed. The goal is to recognize at least 100,000 Texas educators by completion of the 180 days timeframe. The website officially launched September 12, and we encourage you to let students, parents, and fellow educators know about this important means to recognize the good work of colleagues:

<http://texasbesteducator.org/>

## Awards, Grants, Scholarships, Stipends: Apply! Nominate!

It is awards season again. Check the TLA website for links to information about association-wide awards and unit-level awards.

### TLA AWARDS ([www.txla.org/tla-awards](http://www.txla.org/tla-awards))

**Librarian of the Year Award:** *Recognizes extraordinary leadership or service within the library community within the past 12-18 months.*

**Distinguished Service Award:** *Recognizes outstanding and continuing service in one or more areas of the library profession.*

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** *Recognizes an exemplary career in librarianship.*

**Outstanding Services to Libraries Award:** *Given to an individual or to an organization in recognition of outstanding lay advocacy.*

**Wayne Williams Library Project of the Year Award:** *Recognizes a project that exemplifies the highest levels of achievement, professional standards, and inspiration to other libraries.*

**Libraries Change Communities Award:** *Given to a collaborative community effort that recognizes positive achievements and promotes outstanding library-based initiatives in Texas.*

**Benefactor(s) Award:** *Recognizes substantial donations.*

*For additional information about submitting nominations, please contact the TLA Awards Committee chair, Maribel Castro ([serialreader@gmail.com](mailto:serialreader@gmail.com)).*

### TLA SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AND STIPENDS

The Scholarship and Research Committee of the Texas Library Association invites TLA members to submit applications for scholarships, research grants, and conference stipends to be awarded in the spring of 2013. To apply for any TLA scholarship, grant, or stipend, applicants will need

to complete the online form found on the TLA website. Applicants must be TLA members to apply. Scholarship applicants must also be accepted as a graduate student at a Texas ALA-Accredited Library Program.

[www.txla.org/scholarships](http://www.txla.org/scholarships)  
[www.txla.org/grants](http://www.txla.org/grants)

*Questions about the application process should be directed to James Karney ([jamesk@ci.waco.tx.us](mailto:jamesk@ci.waco.tx.us)), chair of the TLA Scholarship and Research Committee.*

### UNIT AWARDS AND STIPENDS

Numerous awards, stipends, and scholarships are sponsored by the groups within TLA. ([www.txla.org/unit-awards](http://www.txla.org/unit-awards))

### PR BRANDING IRON AWARDS

Be sure to apply for TLA's Public Relations Branding Iron Awards. With multiple categories, make sure you and your staff are being recognized for all the good work you are doing promoting your library and its services!

<http://www.txla.org/branding-iron> ★

**Margaret Clauder tells the stories that kids want to check out! Are you ready to watch books fly?**



Margaret is a different kind of storyteller. She uses stories in your library. When she is done, the checking out begins!

[www.mcpsshows.com](http://www.mcpsshows.com)



TLA BOOTH  
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# Texas Library Snapshot Day

**October 31**

(or *ANY DAY* in the month)

**What happens  
in a single day at  
your library?**

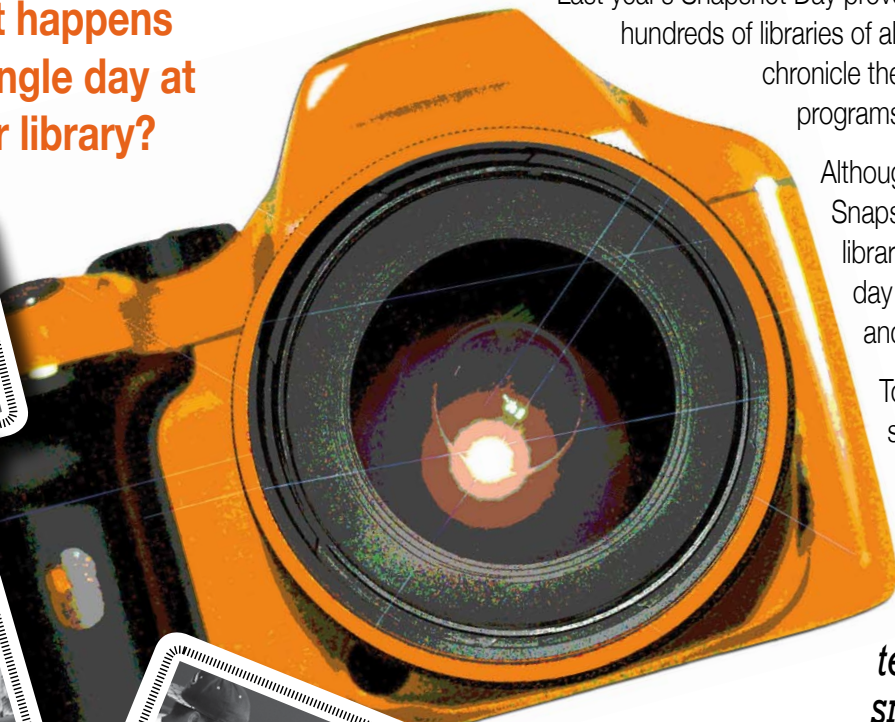
Library Snapshot Day provides an easy means to collect statistics, photos, and stories to help our public and stakeholders document the broad range of resources and services available through libraries.

Last year's Snapshot Day proved very successful, with hundreds of libraries of all types participating to chronicle their daily activities and programs.

Although our official Texas Library Snapshot Day is October 31, libraries can select any single day in the month to gather and submit information.

To keep data collection simple and consistent across the state, access the ready-to-use templates at

**www.  
texaslibrary  
snapshotday.org/**



Sponsored by Texas Library Association