



# contents

- 4 President's Perspective  
Steve Brown
- 6 Editorial  
Gloria Meraz
- 8 Graphic Novels in Libraries: One Library's Solution  
to the Cataloging Problem  
Robert G. Weiner
- 18 In the Trenches  
*Dewey No More*  
Kerry McGeath with Jennifer Tucker  
*Curing Resistance to Student Research by Infecting 'Em  
with the Plague: A Technology Infused Course of Treatment*  
M. Joy Wright  
*The Birth of a Community Library Automation System*  
Beth Wheeler Fox
- 24 State of Tomorrow™: A Resource for Students Today  
Randa S. Safady
- 26 Annual Conference 2008
- 34 Wrestling with Your Friends Group  
PART 2: Care and Feeding of Your Friends and Advocates  
Julia Ousley
- 37 Transforming Texas Libraries  
*Transforming Begins at Home*  
Julie Todaro  
*School Libraries and the Future*  
Shonda Brisco
- 40 Newsnotes  
*A Status Report on K-12 Databases*  
Russlene Waukechon and Barry Bishop  
*Continuing Education Corner*  
Ted Wanner  
*Legislative Update*

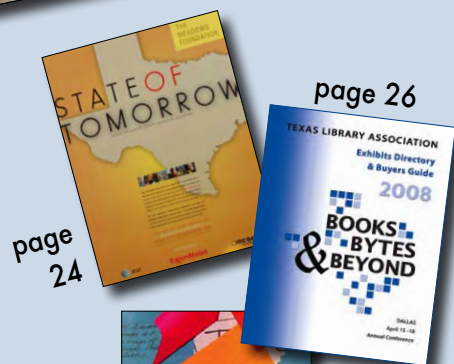
COVER PHOTOS: upper left by Terry Cockerham, upper  
right by Ed Seidenberg, bottom courtesy of Robert Weiner

## TEXAS LIBRARY JOURNAL

Volume 84, No. 1 • Spring 2008

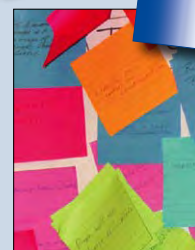


page 8



page 24

page 26



page 37



page 42

© 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, \$20 per year for domestic, \$25 out-of-country. Single issues: \$5.

## Libraries and Education



BY STEVE BROWN

Elsewhere in this issue of *TLJ*, you can read Randa Saffady's account of a new grant-funded partnership between the University of Texas System and TLA. With funding from the Meadows Foundation, TLA will facilitate the distribution of the inspiring television series, *State of Tomorrow™*, to all the junior and senior high schools across the state. The series of 13 segments highlights in an exciting way some of the research being conducted in Texas universities and helps young people understand the range of possibilities open to them.

I am pleased that TLA is a partner in this project. One of the great strengths of our association is that TLA involves all types of libraries, and it is this strength that made TLA the logical choice as a participant. Involving school libraries across the state calls attention to the positive educational force that a good school library contributes to its campus.

My own background in public libraries might at first seem to separate me from a full awareness of how powerful a tool for education a school library can

be. I have worked with enough school libraries (and school librarians) over the years to appreciate the importance of what they do. The chance to work with school librarians within TLA has been an enriching experience.

This brings me to consider the interim study of school libraries being conducted for the legislature jointly by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. We have high hopes for a positive outcome from this study, but turning study into action will require all our efforts.

Earlier this spring came word of yet another study, this one conducted in New York, showing the positive link between well-funded and well-staffed school libraries and student achievement as measured by their scores on standardized tests. We know by now that the connection between school libraries and student achievement is real. Still, too many schools have inadequate libraries; too many students have no access to trained library media specialists. In the worst cases, schools have no library resources at all.

How many of your local school board members do you think are aware of this study, or the 18 other studies like it from other states, including Texas?

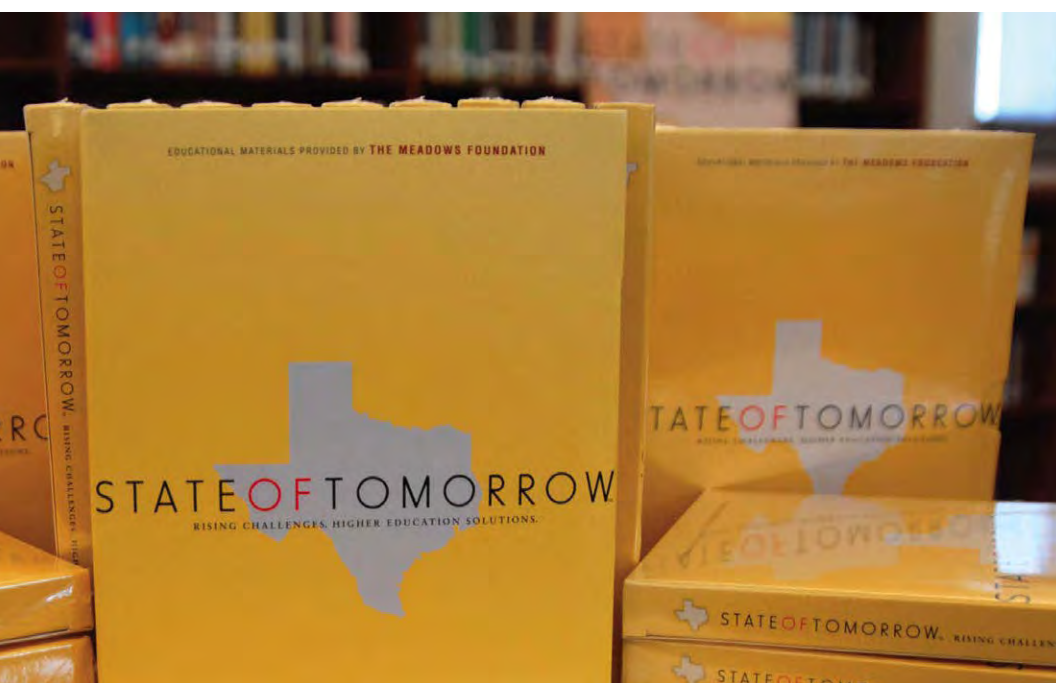
Several years of offering the school administrator conference-within-a-conference have begun to spread the word to those who make the funding decisions at the local level about the importance of the school library. We need to continue to support these efforts.

Even more important, we need to approach the next legislative session with a new determination to strengthen the role of school libraries in elementary and secondary education across the state.

And finally, we need to carry the news home and share it with the people at the local level who make the funding decisions that determine how education dollars are spent.

Libraries are an incredible investment and a resource for all the people of Texas. I have been honored to serve as president of TLA, and I want to thank all of the individuals who have volunteered their time and experience over the last year. I offer a special thanks to my conference committees, staff at the North Richland Hills Library, and all of the members of TLA. You are an amazing group of people! ★

Photo by Terry Cockerham



# Out of Our Comfort Zones

BY GLORIA MERAZ

Victorian writer Thomas Carlyle once wrote that he would begin every morning with a dousing of ice water. He commented wryly that he didn't know whether the ritual completely made him or destroyed him. While I would be the last person on earth to promote hypothermic motivation, I do rather understand the need for a daily, required task that pushes one past comfort.

We have all heard the expressions: no pain, no gain; if you're not trying something scary, you're stagnating; and on and on. And few things are as frightening as change.

Intellectually, we all love the idea of change and boldness. In reality, though, we have an established (and often cherished) routine, expectations, and a dear love of peaceful nights. We like knowing what tomorrow will bring.

The trouble is, as a library industry, we don't know what tomorrow will bring. As a profession, we talk a lot about the future and dynamic opportunities for libraries – if we will only meet them and “be all that we can be.” I love those discussions. They fill me with hope and enthusiasm. To a large extent, that visioning is at the heart of TLA's *Transforming Texas Libraries* initiative. We are looking at our future. That task, however, is only one-half of the recipe. The other half – the first half – is beginning the transformation within ourselves.

As library workers, volunteers, and supporters, we must not only embrace the prospect of change for our libraries, we must be willing to transform our own knowledge base, expectations, and outputs. Change begins at home – and that work is by far the hardest.

I wish that I could say that trying new things and making changes are rarely frightening or hard. We all know that's not true. A fear that we might have to divest ourselves from hard-won experience, expertise, and authority is daunting, frustrating, and baring. Answer these questions, see how you feel?

*Are you ready to abolish the reference desk?*

*Do you promise never to require another constituent to use a library classification system to access information?*

*Can you give up on the notion of bringing folks into your library and instead work on getting information out to them?*

*Don't we need to completely overhaul LIS education?*

These questions are not a defacto series of lead-ins to a desired future. They are, however, some of the questions that colleagues are thinking about for the future of libraries. As radical as some of these questions seem to be for us, are they really radical to anyone (non-library folks, that is) that we serve?

The fact is that we are in a hard and frightening time. We are threatened with elimination – either by funding or by public perception – all too frequently these days. The tough questions we ask of ourselves are not any more difficult than the reality we face. And, as with most challenges, the worst part of fear is the dread of it. Once we start working, making changes, and taking that first icy plunge, we start to acclimate and get stronger. Let's make sure we get to new shores and not get left behind. ✨

# GRAPHIC NOVELS in Libraries:

BY ROBERT G. WEINER

## One Library's Solution to the Cataloging Problem

Graphic novels are now standard library fare, and a category of material that is highly in demand. Ten years ago, it might have been possible for even a modestly budgeted library to acquire much of the published graphic novel output available. Now, it is almost impossible for libraries with big budgets to afford everything published in this format. I first wrote about graphic novels – specifically, how we dealt with them in my own institution, the Lubbock Public Library – a few years back. Since that time, graphic novel publishing has exploded; and we have built a fine collection with over 4,000 titles in our catalog and have had to make adjustments and innovate to make these materials available in the most effective manner possible for our patrons. While changes to our cataloging and shelving systems were met with early resistance by staff, we have incorporated a system that is working well for our users and staff.

### *Graphic Novels – A Very Quick History*

What was once a “cult” of devoted readers and fans has become part of the mainstream demand. Graphic novels is the one area of publishing that continues to grow year by year. What was a small publishing field from the 1970s to the late 1990s has now become the fastest growing book area. It is estimated that over 300 million dollars worth of graphic novels were sold in 2006. Now *Library Journal*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *Booklist*, and *Entertainment Weekly* have graphic novel review sections, and even the *New York Times Book Review* has reviewed a graphic novel or two.

In the past, many, but not all, of the published graphic books centered on superheroes like Batman, X-Men, or Spider-Man. Over the years, “deeper” superhero books, including Alan Moore's *Watchmen* (which has sold almost 100,000 copies), Frank Miller's *Dark Knight Returns*, Alex Ross's *Marvels* and *Earth X*, Marv Wolfman's *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, and Brad Meltzer's *Identity Crisis*, have appeared. These, along with hit movies like *300*, *Spider-Man 1-3*, *Superman Returns*, *Ghost World*, *Fantastic Four 1-2*, *X-Men 1-2*, *Ghost Rider*, and the forthcoming *Batman*, *Iron Man*, and *Hulk* movies (summer

2008), which are based upon graphic literature, have generated a wellspring of interest. Hollywood seeks practically any story that is based upon graphic narratives.

Despite these constant fixtures, graphic novels have also looked beyond the superhero genre. For example, some of the first graphic novels include Lynd Ward's 1929 *God's Man* and the recently re-published *Graphic Witness: Four Wordless Graphic Novels* by Frans Masereel, Lynd Ward, Giacomo Patri, and Laurence Hyde. The earliest book in this collection dates to 1918, while the Japanese history of graphic literature goes all the way back to the 10th century and *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals*. In Japan there have been book-sized graphic narratives since the 1920s. Many people remember *Classic Illustrated* books from the 1940s and 1950s, which took “classic” literary stories and put them in comic book format. Since then, some of those early comics have been reprinted in graphic novel format with supplementary material.

Now, several publishers including Puffin and Eureka Productions (in its graphic classics series) are publishing classic stories in a modern style. Other “serious” modern graphic novels include Art Spiegelman's award-winning *Maus*, Will Eisner's *Contract with God*, Craig Thompson's *Blankets*, and Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*. Just as Hollywood has the Oscars, the graphic narrative community has the Eisners, which are awarded every year to those titles that have outstanding content and are deemed noteworthy.

Even five years ago, it was difficult to find a wide variety of graphic content in book form. However, things have changed, and there are many examples of graphic novels with varied content. Examples include: Capstone Press's history and biography graphic novel imprint (Graphic Library); Papercutz's published graphic biography of *Pope John Paul*; Hill & Wang's *President Ronald Reagan*; science graphic novels, such as Jay Hosler's delightful *Clan Apis* and *Sandwalk*; and Jim Ottaviani's *Dignifying Science*, a book about women scientists. Rick Geary has his series of true crime graphic novels; David Gantz has his *Jews In America: A Cartoon History*; AK Press has their politically oriented *Addicted to War*; and Paul Buhle recently edited *Wobblies: A Graphic History of the Industrial Workers of the World*.

As we know, non-fiction graphic narratives are nothing new either. Larry Gonick has been publishing his cartoon histories

for years, and Writers and Readers and Totem Books have been doing their *For Beginners* and *Introducing* series of documentary comic book/graphic novels for several decades now. These include everything from Shakespeare to Wilhelm Reich, the history of cinema, and the Holocaust. There are graphic histories of Latino and African Americans in US history. Perhaps the strangest graphic novel recently published is *Warren Buffet: An Illustrated Biography of the World's Most Successful Investor* by Ayano Morio, done in a Manga style.

There is even an Internet library-related strip called *Unshelved* which has now been published in several hilarious volumes. We have only just scratched the surface here, and it is beyond our scope to give a long history of graphic narrative and comic books or to provide a detailed annotated bibliography of the wide variety of graphic novels published in the last 100 years. But, this sampling does illustrate the point that there is much more than “schlock” to graphic literature.

### Graphic Novels in the Library

While using narrative and pictures works very well to teach children to read, it is actually hard for some adults (including my father) to read graphic novels. One has to use both the right and left sides of the brain to comprehend and interpret. It is constantly amazing to me that some adults have a hard time trying to read a Spider-Man or X-Men book and state, “I just could not get into it,” or “It was too confusing to understand.” People who have not been acclimated to reading graphic literature do sometimes have trouble.

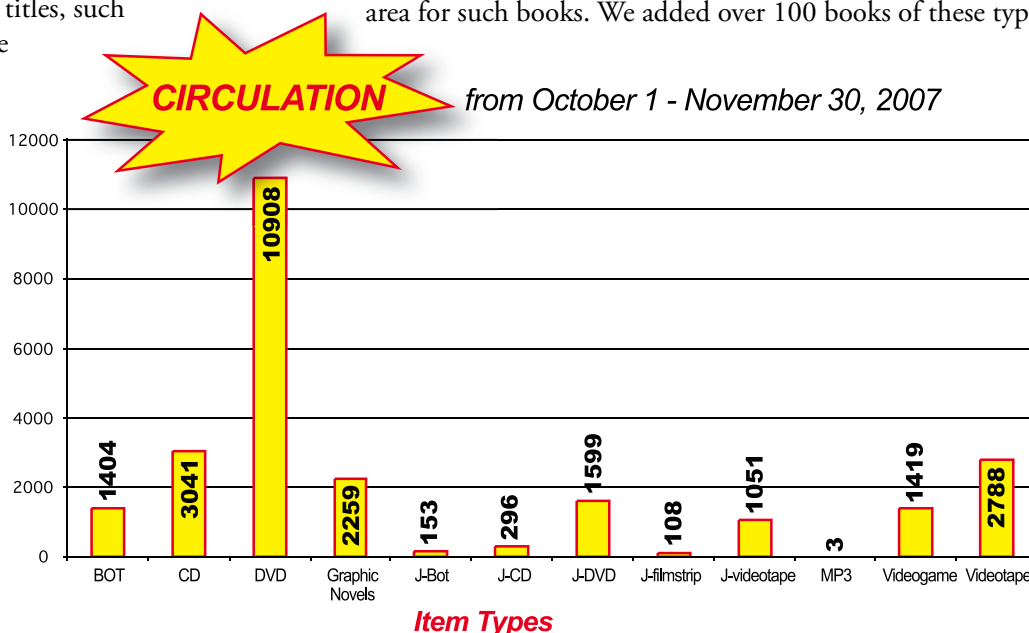
Many libraries that would not have considered carrying graphic novels a few years ago now feel it is important to have at least a few of the more popular titles, such as *300* or *Spider-Man*. So what are some of the basic things the Lubbock Public Library System has learned in the past six years? First of all, it is important to have a separate area for a graphic novels collection: a well lighted area suitable for browsing as well as circulating. We all know that graphic novels circulate like crazy; and given that budgets are often related to circulation statistics, it is important to get the most out of your graphic novel collection. Many libraries have in-house use statistics for magazines and books, and they can also measure in-house use of graphic novels.

There are plenty of patrons who may not check out any of the books but will read them in the library.

If you can account for the use of these books, your circulation stats will go up. In Lubbock we put a cart in the graphic novel area with a sign on it telling folks not to re-shelve but to put the books on the cart after they are done with them. One still has to look for books laying around in the collection, because some readers will leave them there (although not as many as before we started using the cart). We scan each book not in its proper place on the shelves and classify it as an item that had been used. Over a two month period (October-November 2007), the graphic novel collection had 858 in-house uses. During that same period, the Children’s Easy Book collection (the second most used collection in the library) had 793 uses (see circulation graphs on this page and the next).

Another thing we learned is to use our Friends of the Library group. We ask them for any graphic novels that are in good shape (including newspaper funnies like *Get Fuzzy*, *Kathy*, and *For Better or Worse*). We have cultivated a positive relationship with our Friends group, and the Lubbock Public Library System will never have to buy another *Calvin and Hobbs*, *Garfield*, or *Far Side* book. We just add them to our collection from donations the Friends receive.

We have even occasionally received more serious works like the *Dark Knight Returns*, *Strangers in Paradise*, *Shaman King*, and *The Watchmen* from donations. Don’t discount those little paperbacks of “newspaper funnies” from the 1960s and 1970s such as Peanuts, Beetle Bailey, Archie, and Dennis the Menace. If they are in good shape and the spines are not broken, add them to your collection. Raid your Friends of the Library area for such books. We added over 100 books of these types;



This graph shows an example of graphic novel circulation against multi-media. Keep in mind that the collections of audios are much larger than the graphic novel collection and that DVDs only have a three-day check out period, while Graphic Novels have a three-week check out time. It is not surprising that DVD check outs are very high; and when compared to the rest of the media, graphic novels are nothing to sneer at.

and even though they look and are old, they still circulate. We found that, in addition to their high check-out rate, the in-house use of these types of books goes through the roof, especially items with Garfield and Archie.

Although this may seem like a given, not every library takes advantage of the Scholastic and similar book sales. I recently gave a seminar on collecting and cataloging graphic novel collections for rural libraries. Many of the attendees did not realize that Scholastic published and carried graphic novels, much less that it conducted yearly sales. Scholastic publishes some graphic novels that are not published by regular publishers and are not available through vendors like Baker and Taylor or Ingram. Your library can get terrific deals on unique items. Libraries that are hesitant about carrying graphic novels will find books at these sales that are all age appropriate.

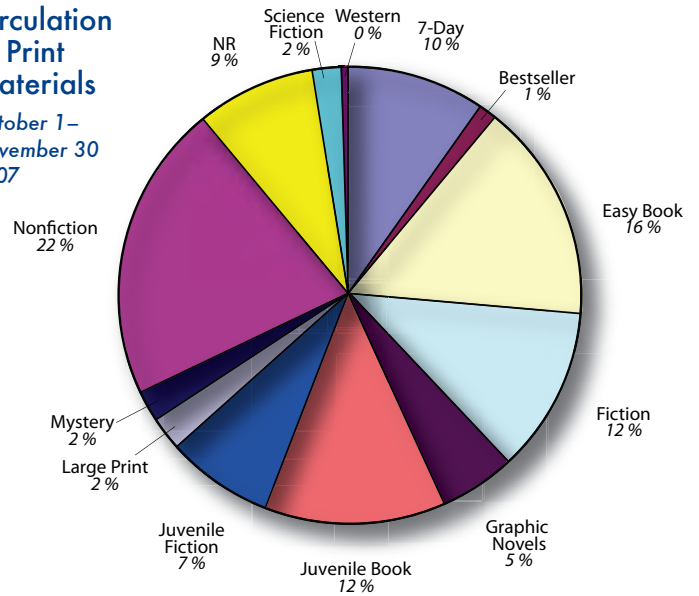
### Cataloging

Perhaps the biggest problems libraries face is the dilemma of just what to do with graphic novels once they collect them. The cataloging debate is one that has been raging for years. While there is some literature on how to solve this problem, it is sparse at best. The debate rages on as to whether one should follow the Dewey or Library of Congress traditional cataloging method, or whether there is an in-house system that works better. Please note that what I am about to suggest is

based only on our experience at the Lubbock Public Library System, but *Texas Library Journal* readers might be interested in knowing what worked for us in Lubbock.

When we first started collecting graphic novels 10 years ago, we cataloged them by the Dewey 741 number. Shortly after the first *X-Men* movie came out, someone suggested that we should showcase the graphic novels in a separate area, away

**Circulation of Print Materials**  
October 1–November 30 2007





has to find the books for ILL patrons and branch libraries. Up to this point, the graphic novel area had only been set up at our main library. Needless to say, there was much skepticism about the classification and cataloging system proposed. There was a debate about whether we should have children's books together with the regular graphic novels, and a compromise was reached: some Easy Reader books would remain on the children's shelves, but some would also be with the graphic novels.

This compromise seems to have worked. Of course, at first, the catalogers were reluctant and dubious, but eventually they accepted the plan. Our branch libraries also were unconvinced. Perhaps the biggest controversy was over separating DC and Marvel books. This was the hardest distinction for my colleagues to understand. But I explained that from a fan's perspective it really does make sense to separate the "big two" publishers into their own sections. We have patrons who only will read Marvel and others who only will read DC; they don't want to see Superman next to Spider-Man. There also are plenty of folks, like me, who like both companies and all graphic literature. Sometimes, it is important to think outside of the box to serve your users; and if you know who the majority of your graphic novel patrons are, this distinction does indeed make some sense.

Library staff developed general guidelines based on an idea I developed and were written with Susan Durett, Beth Carlberg, and Ed Veal. We absolutely note that this system is not perfect, and it is subjective. It is designed to be adaptable and easy to change. It only took about two months for the technical services staff to re-label and catalog the books; and while we still get a straggler book or two after several years of using this system, they did a terrific job! We have found that this system really does seem to work; even those folks at the branch libraries who were skeptical have warmed up to it rather quickly.

Patrons love the graphic novel area, and we have not yet had any complaints from patrons about how we have classified the collection. Basically, we have a catalogued collection that is eminently browser and staff friendly, and the catalog reflects the items. We also coded the shelves with labels related to where the items belong (see the shelf and

Photo courtesy of Robert Weiner



alphabetical indexes on page 12). Anyone can shelve under this system; and if a patron wants to put a hold on a book, the staff can find the materials much easier than before. It is my hope that *Texas Library Journal* readers will find our system easy to adapt to the needs of their libraries.

Robert G. Weiner is a reference librarian at the Mahon Library in Lubbock, TX.

### Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Beth Carlberg, Jane Clausen, Ed Veal, Susan Durett, Charles Clair, Janet, Portia, Thelmer, Velia, Pat, and the staff of technical services. Thanks to Len and Marilyn and to the *Texas Library Journal* for allowing me to share our library's experience.

### References and Notes

- Andreas, Joe. *Addicted To War*. Oakland: AK Press, 2004.
- Barnes, Bill, Gene Ambaum. *Unshelved Volume 1*. Seattle: Overdue Media, 2003.
- Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
- Bendis, Brian Michael, Bill Jemas, Mark Bagley et al., *Ultimate Spider-Man Vol 1: Power and Responsibility*. New York: Marvel, 2001.
- Bresheeth, Haim, Stuart Hood, Litza Jansz. *Introducing the Holocaust*. New York: Totem Books, 1997.
- Buckley, James. *Spider-Man's Amazing Powers*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2001.



- Buhle, Paul, Nicole Shulman eds., *Wobblies: A Graphic History of the Industrial Workers of the World*, New York: Verso, 2005.
- Castro, Adam-Troy, Mick Zeck. *Spider-Man: Sinister Six Combo*. New York: Ibooks, 2004.
- Conley, Darby. *The Get Fuzzy Experience*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 2003. (FOL donation)
- Conway, Gerry ed., *Webslinger: Unauthorized Essays On Your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man*. Dallas: BenBella Books, 2006.
- Crane, Stephen, Wayne Vansant. *The Red Badge of Courage: The Graphic novel*. New York: Puffin, 2005. (An example of a recent classic done in graphic narrative format)
- Davis Jim. *Garfield Weighs In: His Fourth Book*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1982. (FOL donation).
- DeFalco, Tom ed., *Comic Creators on Spider-Man*. London: Titan, 2004.
- DeFalco, Tom, Ron Frenz, Bill Sienkiewicz, et al., *Spider-Girl Legacy in Black and White*. New York: Marvel Spotlight/Abdo, 2006.
- DeHaven, Tom. *It's Superman: A Novel*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2005.
- Eisner, Will. *Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*. New York: Baronet, 1978.
- Gantz, David. *Jews In America: A Cartoon History*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006.
- Geary, Rick. *The Beast of Chicago: The Murderous Career of H.H. Holmes*. New York: NBM, 2003.
- Gladir, Glen, Fernando Ruiz, Rudy Papik et al., *Archie's Holiday Fun Digest: 3*. New York: Archie Comic Publications (February), 1999. (FOL donation)
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, Norman Nodel, Debra Doyle et al., *Classics Illustrated Faust*, New York: Acclaim Books, 1997. (Example of an original *Classics Illustrated* comic reprinted in graphic novel format)
- Gonick, Larry. *The Cartoon History of the Universe Volumes 1-7: From the Big Bang to Alexander the Great*. New York: Doubleday, 1990. (One of the many Gonick histories and nonfiction graphic novels)
- Guisewite, Cathy. *I Am Woman: Hear Me Snore*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 1998. (FOL donation)
- Helfer, Andrew, Steve Buccellato. *Ronald Reagan: A Graphic Biography*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2007.
- Hosler, Jay. *Sandwalk*. Columbus, Ohio: Active Synapse, 2005.
- Hosler, Jay. *Clan Apis*, Columbus, Ohio: Active Synapse, 2000.
- Hughes, Francine, Aristides Ruiz, Dana and Del Thompson. *X-Men Wolverine: Duty and Honor*. New York: Bullseye Books, 1994.

- Johnston, Lynn. *The Lives Behind the Lines: 20 Years of For Better or Worse*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 1999. (FOL donation)
- Jones, Jasmine, Alvin Sargent, Sam Raimi et al., *Spider-Man 3: The Junior Novel*. New York: Harper Entertainment, 2007.
- Ketcham, Hank. *Dennis the Menace: Teacher's Threat*. Greenwich, Ct: Fawcett Crest, 1960. (FOL donation)
- Kupsc, Jarek. *The History of Cinema for Beginners*. New York: Writers and Readers, 1998.
- Larson, Gary. *Far Side: Night of the Crash Test Dummies*. Kansas City: Andrews & McMeel, 1988. (FOL donated numerous copies).
- Lee, Stan, Gerry Conway, John Romita et al., *Death of the Stacys*. New York: Marvel, 2007.
- Lovecraft, H.P., Gahan Wilson, George Kuchar et al., *Graphic Classics Vol. 4: H.P. Lovecraft*. Mount Horeb, WI: Eureka Productions, 2002. (An example of recent classic literature adapted as graphic literature)
- Mainardi, Alessandro, Werner Maresta, Federico Pietrobon. *Life of Pope Paul II in Comics*, New York: Papercutz, 2006.
- Mairowitz, David, German Gonzales. *Reich for Beginners*. London: Writers & Readers, 1986.
- Masereel, Frans, Lynd Ward, Giacomo Patri, Laurence Hyde. *Four Wordless Graphic Novels*. Buffalo, NY: Firefly Publications, 2007. (Originally published, 1918, 1932, 1939, 1951)
- Mantell, Paul, Michael and Mark Edens et al., *X-Men: Slaves of Genosha*. New York: Random House, 1994.
- Meltzer, Brad, Rags Morales, Michel Bair et al., *Identity Crisis*. New York: DC, 2005.
- Miya, Tsugio, Choju Giga, *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals*. Tokyo, Kodakawa, 1958. (Also see the following Internet examples: <http://www.kokingumi.com/ChojuGiga/index.html>; [http://akituya.gooside.com/choujyu\\_allall.htm](http://akituya.gooside.com/choujyu_allall.htm))
- Miller, Frank, Lynn Varley. *300*. Milwaukie, OR.: Dark Horse Book, 2006.
- Miller, Frank, Lynn Varley, Klaus Janson. *Dark Knight Returns*. New York: DC, 1986.
- Moore, Alan, Dave Gibbons, John Higgins. *Watchmen*. New York: DC, 1987.
- Moore, Terry. *Strangers in Paradise Vol. 5: High School*. Houston: Abstract Studio, 1998. (FOL donation)
- Olson, Kay Melchisedech, Phil Miller, Charles Barnett III, et al., *The Great Chicago Fire of 1871*. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2006. (An example of Capstone's historical Graphic Library series of graphic novels)
- Ottaviani, Jim. Donna Barr et al., *Dignifying Science: Stories About Women Scientists*. Ann Arbor, MI: G.T. Labs, 2003.
- Ross, Alex, Kurt Busiek. *Marvels*. New York: Marvel, 1994.
- Ross, Alex, Jim Krueger, John Paul Leon et al., *Earth X*. New York: Marvel, 2000.
- Sanderson, Peter, Timothy Shaner, Brett Ratner. *The Art of X-men, the Last Stand: from Concept to Feature Film*. New York: Newmarket Press, 2006
- Schulz, Charles. *Don't Bet On It Snoopy*. New York: Fawcett Crest, 1982. (FOL donation)
- Smith, Dean-Wesley, Chuck Wojtkiewicz. *X-Men: Jewels of Cyttorak*. New York: Boulevard Books, 1997.
- Spiegelman, Art. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.
- Stavns, Ilan, Lalo Alcaraz. *Latino USA: A Cartoon History*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.
- Takei, Hiroyuki. *Shaman King: Reincarnation 1 The Boy Who Dances With Ghosts*. San Francisco: Viz, 1998. (FOL donation)
- Thompson, Craig. *Blankets: An Illustrated Novel*. Marietta, GA: Top Shelf, 2003.
- Toropov, Brandon, Joe Lee. *Shakespeare for Beginners*. New York: Writers and Readers, 1999.
- Turner, Morrie. *Super Sistabs: featuring the accomplishments of African-American Women*. Oakland, CA: Bye Publications, 2004.
- Walker, Mort. *Beetle Bailey: The Rough Riders*. New York: TOR, 1982. (FOL donation)
- Ward, Lynd. *God's Man A Novel in Woodcuts*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004. (Originally published in 1929)
- Watterson, Bill. *Calvin and Hobbs: Attack of the Deranged Mutant Killer Monster Snow Goons*. Kansas City: Andrews & McMeel, 1992. (FOL donation)
- Wolfman, Marv, George Perez, Jerry Ordway et al., *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. New York: DC, 1998.
- Yaco, Link, Karne Haber. *The Science of the X-Men*. New York: BP Books, 2000. ★

# IN 'THE 'TRENCHES

## Dewey No More

BY KERRY McGEATH WITH JENNIFER TUCKER

I arrived in libraries nine years ago after a 25-year retail career and have never been able to shake that existentialist bone. One does not find many Platonists in retail – there is no ideal to be achieved because once you achieve it, if you don't constantly change or reinvent yourself, you go out of business. Retailers deal in what presents itself. If you open a store and provide a product that you think is really cool but no one wants to buy it, you have to deal in that reality – you simply cannot continue to be in business if you do not adapt and understand changing customer needs.

In many respects, libraries and other government institutions have avoided the pressures that force businesses in the private sector to have to adapt to the changing world. One truth about most libraries – but public libraries in particular – is that, by and large, they are horribly under funded. I believe there is a connection. We have been creating bad Karma for years by our inability or unwillingness to adapt to the world as it presents itself to us and, most importantly, to our customers.

The Southlake Library serves a customer base that has its own peculiarities, just as any library market does. The library serves a population whose zip code has the second highest per capita income in Texas. The library is in a town hall building in the middle of an upscale shopping district, and there is a two story Barnes and Noble about a block away.

We have found through a thorough analysis of how our collection is used that we do best by providing popular materials in both fiction and non-fiction and have a limited non-fiction collection. We tried to provide a mix of materials in the past that fit the mold of a more traditional library, and it failed utterly – the users in Southlake needed the library to be something else. There is plenty of disposable income in the area so a trip to Barnes and Noble was not an issue. The library was quickly becoming irrelevant to the users.

But, that is not what happened. The revised product mix based on the world as it presented itself to us changed everything. We have experienced over a 200% increase in circulation over the last three years, and fully 70% of the citizens in the community have library cards. For a town of 25,000, we had over 18,000 attend programs last year. Parking is difficult, and it is just as easy for a citizen to buy a book, and yet we have become an integral part of community life.

Southlake has city wide surveys performed every three years, and in 2003, 60% of the taxpayers were dissatisfied with the library service. By contrast in 2006, 97% were satisfied with the service and of the 3% that were not satisfied, their issues were related to difficulty in accessing our facility (parking). We were also just a couple of percentage points behind DPS as the second most visible department in the city in terms of customer interactions, and we don't drive around the streets in marked cars all day or big red trucks.

Our organization is instilled with the idea that to be viable in our community we have to be innovative. If we became stale, our users would simply do without us. After a considerable analysis, we opted to stop using the Dewey Decimal System as the method by which we categorize the materials we make available for our customers. Since the majority of our collection is fiction (60%), it will make the transition less time consuming and will only affect the remaining 40% of the collection.

Adopting a new method by which we categorize our collection has caused us to review many of the assumptions that we had taken for granted until now. We could no longer rely on signage at the end of the shelf run that just indicated the Dewey numbers that resided on those shelves. We had to develop signage that was much more effective in getting the customer to the item. We have also had to work to beef up our catalog records by including more access points and also change how we indicate where something is on the shelf.

We felt that in our specific circumstance that not having the collection organized by the Dewey Decimal System created a better delivery system to satisfy customer needs. We currently have a virtual branch in the Sabre International Corporate Headquarters where our catalog resides on their intranet, and staff from around the world can place holds on items that are transported from the library to Sabre's mailroom where the item is delivered directly to the customer's desk. It is all done virtually; the customer has no idea and does not care how we categorize the books. They just want them to appear on their desk. We could have them in any order we wanted as long as we could readily access them.

The result of our experience with Sabre (it is about 15% of total circulation), which is the first virtual branch of its kind in the United States that I am aware of, is that we did not have to categorize our collection the way it had always been done. We are not big on doing what has always been done in the first place, but we also don't believe in throwing something away just to do it either. We make decisions in our organization following a rational analysis of how effectively we are satisfying

our user and throw in a fair pinch of risk, developing what we believe is an effective solution to enhancing our service.

Our supposition was that enhancing access to the popular materials that are the focus of our collection was more closely related to how a book store categorizes materials than how we were. We feel that in our particular situation it would be easier and more user friendly for our customers if we presented the materials much in the same way a bookstore does. That does not mean we become a bookstore; the level and types of service we provide are far superior to bookstores. It just means we categorize our selection in a similar manner.

Jennifer Tucker is the Southlake Public Library's technical services librarian, and she shares my passion for adapting ourselves to better satisfy user needs. A lot of it we will figure out as we go. Necessity is the mother of invention, and change always creates interesting, albeit oft-times unknown opportunities. I have asked her to write about some of the details.

The remainder of this article is devoted to details specifically concerning the Southlake Public Library and its transition to a new classification system. Please keep in mind that, while we are adamant about this change for our library, we are by no means advocating that every library should drop the Dewey Decimal System. This idea would be preposterous, as it simply would not work in many libraries. What we do advocate is examining old systems and processes and developing new methods to enhance accessibility and convenience for library users.

The way people look for and expect to encounter information has changed. We live in a Google universe – people want instant access. They also like the opportunity to browse through materials. We have to dramatically rethink the way we organize our collections to actively reflect this change in how our customers think about and seek out information.

Once we had established that many of our in-house users prefer to locate materials through browsing, it was necessary to look at the OPAC for our virtual users. Since the Southlake Public Library has two virtual branches, it is critical that our catalog is easy to navigate and understand. Using an alternative classification system guided by subject headings will provide users with an instant glimpse into which category their selected materials fall under.

With the Dewey Decimal System, customers that are searching under the subject keyword "India" would find a list of results with a call number of seemingly nonsensical numbers. Under a new classification system that relies on subject headings, the customer is provided with an immediate clue as to whether the material is what they want *History, Cooking, Art*, etc.

We will continue in the use of LC subject headings in bibliographic records; we will also be adding *Library Thing* to assist virtual users. This will add subject tags and provide

instant readers advisory services that will benefit experienced and non-experienced catalog users alike.

The library will classify all its nonfiction materials using the Book Industry Standards and Classification (BISAC) subject headings. This is the same classification system that the Perry Branch Free Library, the only other library in the county that has dropped Dewey, currently uses. The BISAC subject headings are broken down into 50 categories, with each category having a multitude of subcategories. Our present collection size is a little over 50,000 items and although there may be slight growth, it will essentially remain this same size. The depth of classification using BISAC provides a similar level of detail to that of the Dewey Decimal System for a collection this size.

The fiction collection will be separated into four categories: Fiction & Literature, Romance, Science Fiction, and Mysteries. At a later date, we may include additional categories, such as Story Collections. The DVD and video collection will be divided into genres comparable to Blockbuster.

Unlike the Perry Branch Free Library, our collection will be divided according to audience. Juvenile nonfiction will be separate from the adult and young adult nonfiction collection and will be distinguished by the letter J on the spine label. Juvenile fiction, young adult fiction, and adult fiction will remain separate collections.

We will also be using a lot of visual clues and representation for guidance in the physical collection. There will be signage to distinguish each subject heading and magnetic labels to identify subcategories.

Tucker, a great addition to staff, recently received her MLS from UNT and is just as comfortable cataloging as working a public service desk. She was also a long time Barnes and Noble employee and knows how bookstores classify their materials. I was also general manager for bookstores at DFW and Denver International airports in the mid 1990s, so I have a decent understanding of the method and process as well. Airport bookstores, as an example, to be successful have to be focused on getting people to materials as quickly and easily as possible.

We are looking forward to the challenges this will bring to our efforts to provide the most effective service possible to our customers. The target is always moving and at the Southlake Library we are committed to being relevant and necessary in our community, neither of which we can do if we don't provide the materials required to satisfy their demand and make access to those materials as easy as possible. ★

Kerry McGeath is city librarian and deputy director of community services for the City of Southlake. Jennifer Tucker is the technical services librarian for the Southlake Public Library.

# Curing Resistance to Student Research by Infecting 'Em with the Plague: A Technology Infused Course of Treatment

BY M. JOY WRIGHT

Their eyes glaze over. There is a rustle of discontent. No one makes eye contact. It is that dreaded time of year when we announce that it is time to learn to research. You have all seen it – the grumbling turns to apathy and yields note taking that is little less than source robbery. The final projects vary from decent to abysmal. There is little or no stellar work. Even your brightest kids are bored.

Student research does not have to be painful and should not be only partially understood. Researching can be fun and filled with life and laughter and a surging desire to know – really know about a topic. I know you are skeptical. Let me tell you the tale of a librarian-teacher who hit the proverbial brick wall when it came to teaching students to research in isolation or with “bird units.” It is a tale with a happy ending, I promise.

A while back, I starting growing concerned with the statistics showing the loss of reading ability in our boys at about the 5th grade. I have always been a true believer in students’ ability to learn to find information independently. So, I started devising projects and methods to help foster interest and skill in our students. As I discussed plans with colleagues, I found I was meeting with some resistance from overwhelmed classroom teachers who did not want to make their lives even more complicated that they already were.

I knew I had to come up with a project that would energize both students and teachers. The best way, I thought, was to fashion a course that would so motivate students that learning was fun and that would entice them to take the lead in researching and moving ahead. I just had to find the right subject. I watched students closely and noticed that they loved to read the gross (but true) books in my collection. The more sensational the topic, the more they liked it. So...

I infected them with the plague. I looked up the really juicy diseases that had at some time in history reached pandemic proportions. I brought classes in and let them choose groups (this will be important later). Then, I let each group draw from the “cup-o-death.” After students chose their respective diseases, each was given an infection card to let them know how long they had to live. It looked like this:



## 5th grade Research

You have contracted the disease you chose in the draw. You have three weeks to live. You must find out as much as possible about your disease, the historical period in which you might have contracted it, and the medical treatments of the time. You will have several choices for presenting your findings. Should you complete your task, you may survive. Any waste of time or resources will insure that death follows.

A rubric set them on the path, but I let them determine how to blaze the trail. I wanted them to use lots of print resources, use online databases, and be on the lookout for anything in current news about diseases that might be useful in their presentation.

Having conducted this assignment several times already, I follow a series of activities designed to keep students engaged. They keep notes on any Thinking Map they find useful. I give them lots of choices and not much interference. It is a test of what works to keep them interested and working without getting so frustrated that they gave up.

An important comment to make at this point is that reading level really comes into play here if you are teaching below the middle school level. Many of the books that are available on this topic are at the 5th grade level or above. Your really delayed readers can’t make much sense out of some of the resources. You may have to guide groups to divide the work up in such a way that these students are looking at the databases or looking for great pictures for the final project or buddy reading.

After the groups have had enough time to really get a baseline understanding of their disease, I have them write independently 10 questions they would still like to answer. The questions can relate to anything the students find interesting. I have them use their questions to guide the next phase of research. Since they have each written questions, when they get back into groups, they should have plenty to work with.

At this point, I ask the students to find a time and place to focus on a pandemic outbreak of their disease. I want them to be able to use Timeliner to plot not only the outbreak, but the general historical time – agriculture, population, church, medicine – as well. I ask them to think of this as a “you were there” sort of piece. This component becomes one of the most powerful learning tools when all of the research pieces are

placed together. Diseases of such a large magnitude change everything. When they realize that governments, churches, and whole ways of life change in the face of these outbreaks, they respond with genuine wonder and understanding; and it gets them thinking about a whole new level of consequences.

A comment here about the group selection process I mentioned earlier. I let students choose their own groups because that is how they say they work best. I also ask students to evaluate the project at the very end and tell me what they would change if they did it again. Every single group has said they would change their partners. This is an important lesson learned, that your best buddy may not be the best group member if you have to depend on him to do his part. I have tried the project by assigning groups, and that practice seems to work less well. They blame me for putting them together. I think of this as a real-life skill because so many of them will have to work with others in a productive way to be successful in their chosen careers.

The final element of the project is chosen by the group, and the work is divided up among its members. Final dates are duly given. Most students choose computer projects including Powerpoint shows, detailed timelines, podcasts, recorded biographies, and movies. A day is given for everyone to share information about their disease. By this time, students have been told that they will participate in a game at the end of all the presentations. So, they listen closely so they can win the game! The projects are full of grisly detail, interesting pictures of victims, and little known, but true facts. The students are riveted!

The game is simple. I steal the questions they wrote, their pictures of the bacteria or virus, and anything else I see from their work. I also let them suggest questions. I use this information as the source for about 20 questions on each pandemic. I mix them up, and the teachers keep score. They play against another class until one is victorious. They gain bragging rights, and this part has brought many a student into the library before and after school to research someone else's topic. It is too much fun to watch!

We end this project with a distance learning connection with an epidemiologist at the medical school in our area. They hear about what is currently a concern, learn about a career they may never have heard about, and get to ask thoughtful questions based on their research. It really makes them think about why they might need math and science after all.

So, dear colleagues, throw out those “bird units” and infect them with the desire to ask authentic questions for themselves and learn to find the answers in (where else) the library. ✨

**M. Joy Wright is library media specialist at  
J. L. Hughes Elementary School, Northwest ISD.**

# The Birth of a Community Library Automation System

Need and opportunity. The needs of small public libraries are usually great, while opportunities are few.

A need can require significant risk to resolve. An opportunity can seem too good to be true. The positive alignment of significant needs and opportunities is rare indeed, but sometimes, they can come together fortuitously and fruitfully.

This is a story of just such a case. It's about one Texas library and a teen volunteer with some very special talents. The result was an unprecedented high-tech focus on community libraries, creating a variety of applications uniquely for them.

## The Need

The library is The Westbank Community Library in Austin. As the library director since its inception in 1983, I have seen our library long pride itself on its ability to change and to adopt innovative ideas. When we first automated back in 1989, the choices among affordable systems were slim. Automation systems (or ILS) were designed for schools or for large libraries, and cost was prohibitive.

Over the years, as our growth accelerated, deficiencies in the existing automation system limited the library's ability to provide a number of desirable services as well as to use staff efficiently. Problems with corrupted data meant sending our records away for a month – a terrifying prospect.

By 2002, attempts to migrate were stymied because other automation systems could transfer only MARC records from the existing system to the new one. Critical data like patron records, fines, history, items out, reserves, etc., could only be handled by having all items returned to the library. While possible in a school, this is a nightmare for a public library.

## The Opportunity

Independent of all these trials and tribulations, a 13-year-old volunteer appeared on the scene. It was summer 1994, when Xan (Alexander) Charbonnet began what would be a long relationship with Westbank. Soon, he became "the computer guy." He solved numerous library problems, ranging from hardware to software to networking.

On two occasions, we actually phoned the high school principal to explain that the library needed Xan urgently and requested that he be excused for a few minutes. Xan's expertise became so critical that he was finally "hired" by the library for a pittance.

Xan graduated from high school, and we woefully waved goodbye as he headed off to Tulane University with a full academic scholarship. During the school year, he focused on database manipulations, programming, and the technical Internet. However, as each summer arrived, the library beckoned anew and each time, Xan was drawn back. Armed with an array of new skills and the staff's penchant for

innovation, he created solutions previously unthinkable. Staff members knew that if they could identify a problem, Xan could almost assuredly fix it.

## First Steps

One of these "fix it" opportunities was that lack of data was severely limiting our effectiveness in the weeding and selection process. With his newfound database and programming capabilities, Xan took a myriad of disparate data and reports from the ILS and reconstituted the information into a useful, meaningful format. Elaine Miller, our collection development and technical services supervisor, had clearly identified a problem and Xan's expertise had provided the solution. Weeding and selection decisions were now made with timely, reliable, and accurate data.

Management of reserves had also become time consuming and increasingly frustrating as circulation staff struggled to track who was next in line for bestsellers, who had what copy out, and even trying to figure out what material was due when. Xan designed custom reports to more effectively manage the process.

In 2003, Xan graduated from Tulane and again could not resist the draw of the library. We continued to collaborate to solve irritating and labor intensive problems. He created a streamlined tracking system for ILLs, from inception to return; an online system for staff schedules; and simple online management of the public computers. With our encouragement, in 2003 Xan created a business entity to offer these services to other libraries. And so, Biblionix was founded.

## The Plunge

Meanwhile, the effectiveness of Westbank's existing automation system continued to decline in the face of our skyrocketing usage. Feature requests fell on deaf ears and software bugs persisted in causing data corruption. Pondering the dead-end ILS, along with increasing confidence in Xan's work, David Montoya, our technology manager, had a flash of insight. Why not create a totally new automation system with Xan and Biblionix? With several deep breaths and all in agreement, we undertook the bold, unprecedented project.

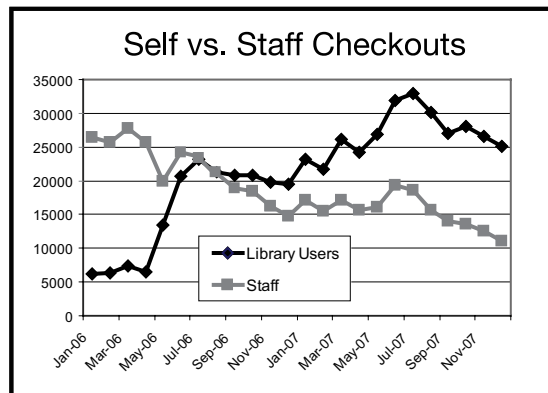
My staff was committed to collaborate on every aspect of the new automation software that would become Apollo. The goals were to create an easy-to-use ILS that would provide an array of new services to our users as well as automate repetitive functions, thus improving staff efficiency. Also, the resulting ILS would be a hosted solution (no server required) designed for any community library. Further, with the "dream it and it will be" notion, the entire staff contributed ideas for saving time, avoiding errors, and helping the "right thing" happen.

For 18 months, Xan and the library staff sat side by side meticulously creating the new ILS. Collection developer Elaine Miller, cataloger Leigh Cody, and the technical services team ensured all the cataloging features were there; David Montoya

advised on usability and patron features; and everyone at the library examined their workflow to find out how things could be improved. You will laugh to know that we originally estimated this would take 100 hours. With a great deal of testing and poking and prodding, the complete system was validated as functional and reliable; Westbank's dream catalog was a reality and Xan's new automation system, Apollo, was born.

The more we learned about the software, the more excited we became. Xan found a way to migrate ALL of Westbank's data (MARC/holdings, history, fines, overdues, notes, patrons, reserves, items out). This completely avoided the data losses of the previous migration attempt. With a deep breath, we decided to implement the new system. Open seven days a week, we decided to close for a day for the migration. Incredibly, the verification of the new import was so fast, that we opened in two hours. On May 6, 2006, Apollo was fully operational and we've never looked back.

Within hours library users started to express their delight with the new system. Within a month, our library was running so much



Library users clearly prefer to check out their own materials and renew materials from home through the Biblionix catalog.

more efficiently that we needed 20 fewer volunteers each week. Over the last 18 months, the collaboration has continued. We dream up a clever new feature and within a few weeks, Xan rolls out the response. And now, other customers of Apollo are contributing as well.

Just as Westbank took a deep breath and created library districts in Texas, we believe we've been a part of creating a wonderful new ILS system that will thrill community libraries across the country.

## Onward

Biblionix has since taken Apollo to new heights, steadfast in its commitment to small- and medium-sized public libraries. With customers in four states, the Apollo family continues to grow.

Westbank continues its innovation, delighting library and driving double-digit circulation increases. With the existing building being used beyond capacity, a branch is being planned. ★

Beth Wheeler Fox is director of the Westbank Community Library.



# State of Tomorrow™: A Resource for Students Today

BY RANDA S. SAFFADY

Restless while the grown-ups were talking, the 30 students gathered in the library of Hillcrest High School quieted down as the video began. As vivid images filled the screen, the young people began to pay rapt attention to the stories of researchers, scientists, teachers and doctors finding solutions to some of the toughest challenges facing Texans.

Hillcrest High School in Dallas was the first of nearly 3,000 schools to receive copies of the groundbreaking PBS documentary series *State of Tomorrow*™ and an accompanying curriculum package. An innovative partnership between the Meadows Foundation, the University of Texas System and the Texas Library Association made this initiative possible. The Dallas-based Meadows Foundation donated \$75,000 to fund the project, and the Texas Library Association facilitated the distribution to every middle and high school library in all 1,040 public school districts in Texas.

*State of Tomorrow* was produced by the UT System to convey the crucial role played by public higher education in developing solutions to global challenges like public health, homeland security, disaster response, energy policy and education. The series highlights the research taking place on the campuses of UT System as well as the other eight public university systems in Texas. The production was sponsored by AT&T, ExxonMobil, and IBC Bank and received two Lone Star EMMY awards last year after its initial airing on Texas PBS stations.

Through their school's libraries, teachers in any discipline will be able to use the series in their classrooms, supplementing their current lesson plans with any of the 34 different topics covered in *State of Tomorrow*. Designed for grades six through 12, the curriculum offers previewing and post-viewing activities that can be used for any of the 13 *State of Tomorrow* episodes. Lesson plans have been aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The exciting and practical

applications of research to technological, social, environmental, and economic problems will serve to inspire students.

Carol Mills, librarian at Hillcrest High School, says that she believes the series and curriculum will help make college more relevant to students as they see how real-world research takes place in numerous career paths in the fields of technology, science and the arts. The *State of Tomorrow* curriculum will also help students understand the important relationship between universities and communities.

TLA President Steve Brown, director of the North Richland Hills Public Library, was on hand at a February event to present the first *State of Tomorrow* package at Hillcrest High School and to recognize the Meadows Foundation. On TLA's behalf, he expressed gratitude to the UT System and Meadows Foundation for its vision in providing such an inspiring tool to school libraries. He told the students in the room his prediction that some of them will become the researchers of the next generation.

One of the biggest challenges in producing the first season of *State of Tomorrow* series was to select which stories to tell in 13 episodes. The quality and quantity of research taking place on Texas campuses is simply amazing, and is relevant to all of us because of the role research plays in protecting and enhancing the quality of life in our state. We hope to produce a second season of *State of Tomorrow* to capture more of these stories and to show an even greater audience how important public higher education is to everyone.

The entire *State of Tomorrow* series, as well as the accompanying curriculum, can be viewed at [www.stateoftomorrow.com](http://www.stateoftomorrow.com).

Randa S. Saffady is vice chancellor for external affairs at the University of Texas System and executive producer of *State of Tomorrow*.

Photo by Terry Cockerham



Presentation of the first *State of Tomorrow* set. LEFT TO RIGHT: Hillcrest principal, Marty Crawford; librarians Merri Lynn Alexander and Carol Mills; Vice Chancellor Randa Saffady; Don Carlton, director of the Center for American History; TLA President Steve Brown; Cynthia DuBois, author of the curriculum guide; and series director, Mat Hanes.

# State of Tomorrow Is Here Today!

Libraries have a vital role in promoting the valuable research in Texas institutions of higher education. Librarians and teachers now have a new resource to promote the compelling and exciting world of higher learning to Texas students. As the center for resources and research, school libraries are the natural depository for the *State of Tomorrow*, a wonderful resource of 13 episodes and a curriculum guide.

We hope that school librarians in middle and high schools work with teachers to get students familiar with the *State of Tomorrow*, which represents a first such collaborative effort.

The 13-part DVD set was mailed at the end of February. We'd love to hear how this program is working for your school. Please send comments to: [feedback@stateoftomorrow.com](mailto:feedback@stateoftomorrow.com). For more information about the series, go to [www.stateoftomorrow.com](http://www.stateoftomorrow.com).

## Sample Episodes

**Tornado Alley:** On May 11, 1970, a tornado swept through Lubbock, killing 26 people, injuring more than 500 people and causing more than \$500 million in property damage. In the wake of this disaster, Texas Tech University founded the Wind Science and Engineering Center to mitigate the damage from future tornados. Professors Kishor Mehta and Ernst Kiesling demonstrate the destructive power of wind and talk about how professionals are being trained to design buildings to withstand severe windstorms and minimize damage and loss of life from nature's deadliest type of storm.

**Skeletons in the Closet:** Techniques used by forensic anthropologists to gain important information from human remains yield clues that can solve crimes. The University of North Texas in Denton has one of the most advanced forensic labs in the state, and professors from the anthropology department have contributed to helping with numerous murder cases. Specific cases that have been solved with forensic evidence are discussed by Dr. Harrell Gill-King, along with higher education's role in the future of forensic science. The University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth and Dr. Art Eisenberg's groundbreaking forensic work are also featured.

**Shadow of a Doubt:** The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has 150,000 inmates incarcerated. Even if the system is 99.9 percent accurate, this means there are still 150 innocent people in prison. Innocence clinics are being formed within public higher education institutions across the United States in the wake of scientific advancements in DNA evidence. David Dow of the University of Houston School of Law founded the Texas Innocence Project, in which law students work to determine the innocence of inmates on death row. William P. Allison, president of the Texas Center for Actual Innocence at The University of Texas School of Law, is also featured.



Librarians Merri Lynn Alexander (left) and Carol Mills (right)  
Photo by Terry Cockerham

# BOOKS & BYTES & BEYOND

Be sure to finish up your taxes because the 2008 Texas Library Association Conference convenes in Dallas, April 15-18. A crowd of almost 8,000 of your colleagues and friends will assemble to learn about the newest practices, technologies, and innovations – and, of course, to network and have fun!

## *What's New and Keeping Great Traditions*

One great innovation to this year's conference is providing attendees with access to session handouts before conference. That's right: TLA is going green! Instead of having thousands of handouts piling up onsite, we will be providing conference-goers the chance to download handouts they want before they arrive at conference. We have asked all presenters to submit their handouts to us for posting prior to conference. We'll post everything we receive by the deadline, and we'll update the handouts after conference. So, not only will we be saving

Need information on the TLA Conference? The Local Arrangements committee has developed a fabulous blog for your information needs concerning the TLA Conference. Check it out at [www.txlablog.org](http://www.txlablog.org). Here you will find all kinds of information on preconferences, programs, parking, DART, shuttles, stipends, volunteer opportunities, and much, much, more! If you are interested in contributing to the blog contact Jennifer Strange at [jennifers@plano.gov](mailto:jennifers@plano.gov).

trees, we're making it easier for you to get a taste of the various sessions before attending conference.

We will continue our landmark program for Texas school administrators, "Strong Libraries, Strong Scores," and will also highlight sessions focusing on transforming libraries, the organizing theme of one of TLA's ongoing and critical statewide initiatives.

## *Keynote Speakers and Events*

This year's talented Program Committee has also designed an impressive assembly of adult authors and is bringing a new twist to the General Sessions. Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Dave Barry and bestselling author Ridley Pearson have joined literary forces and have delighted audiences with their humor and incomparable stories. They will kick-off conference with General Session I on Wednesday, April 16. General Session II will feature Stephen Abram, Joe Janes, Karen Schneider, and Roy Tennant talking about (and actively debating) hot topics, the role of libraries, and our future.

This year's All Conference Opening Luncheon, sponsored by the Library Friends, Trustees, and Advocates Round Table, serves up literacy champion and award-winning author Rosemary Wells, first daughter and first-time author Jenna Bush, and bestselling author Elizabeth Noble.

In addition to all the wonderful programming, conference also offers a wealth of opportunities for networking and having fun – one of the most important priorities for any library gathering. The Local Arrangements Committee has done a fantastic job of scouting out great venues and planning terrific parties. We hope to see you all at the Welcome Party at the stunning Nasher Sculpture Garden and at the President's All-Conference Party at Eddie Dean's Ranch, featuring Grammy Award-winning Brave Combo.

## *Awards and Book Cart Drill Competition*

Of course, conference is also a time for awards and recognition. Along with TLA's association-wide awards, units will also honor the best and brightest in their ranks. And, you'll want to schedule time for the Third Annual Book Cart Drill Team Competition – brought to you this year with stadium seating!



## *Exhibits*

No TLA conference would be complete without extended visits to the TLA exhibits. Featuring the third largest library tradeshow in the country, the TLA exhibit hall offers over 450 companies showcasing all the latest technologies, tools, and materials needed to run Texas libraries.

Of course, you may want to get a head start on all your shopping. Everything you need – vendor names, product descriptions, hall maps, and links to companies – are available at TLA's 24/7 one stop library shop. Go to [www.tsla.org/conference/exhibits/exhmain.asp](http://www.tsla.org/conference/exhibits/exhmain.asp) and click on "Shop the Exhibits."

The TLA tradeshow and its online site are designed to provide you with multiple ways of finding the products you need. We created the Quick-Read-Guide which gives you a quick overview of some of the offerings. Whether you visit the TLA tradeshow online or at conference (or both), shopping exhibiting companies lets you save time and money!

## *Placement Center – Bigger, Better, Sooner, Everywhere!*

You all are familiar with the TLA conference service for matching employers with potential employees. As in the past, individuals and employers can continue to submit resumés and job postings to the Placement Center.

This year, beginning April 1, 2008, a new interactive feature will allow employers and seekers to communicate with each other in advance so that interviews can be set up prior to arriving at the conference. As long as you are registered for the conference, and the system has been activated, you will be able to access the Placement Center information anywhere you have Internet connectivity. Don't let this opportunity get away from you to take advantage of the new and improved Placement Center!

## *Hotel Rooms Are Still Available*

Have you made your housing reservations for TLA 2008? Even though the housing has been active since April of 2006, rooms are periodically added to the blocks, and there are still conference hotels available from which you can choose. For more information, access the housing form on the TLA website or contact Ambassadors by sending an email

### **Don't Get Turned Away by the "Room Too Full" Sign**

In order for staff to assign the appropriate size meeting room for each function, please complete the Session Preference form when you preregister. The Session Preference Form can be completed online or can be submitted by fax or mail. This information is invaluable for knowing how many attendees plan to attend each session and helps reduce the possibility of meeting rooms overflowing.

to [sla@ambassadors.com](mailto:sla@ambassadors.com) or by calling 1-800-243-1205 for assistance. We encourage you to use the "waitlist" feature offered by Ambassadors for the hotel of your choice. They have always been able to accommodate each of the folks who have waitlisted.

## *Airport Transportation Discount*

Yellow Checker Shuttle is offering discount airport transportation (from either DFW or Love Field) for attendance to the 2008 Texas Library Association Conference. Transportation options include Airport Shuttle Web tickets at \$13 each way (a saving of \$12 roundtrip); exclusive (private non-stop) van service for up to 10 passengers at \$85 each way; and Airport Lincoln Town Car Service Web tickets at \$74 each way.

An online reservation qualifies you for discounts from your city of origin through Go Airport Shuttle.com. Once the online reservation is made for your DFW transportation, the system will automatically make these discounts if available. For complete information and to make a reservation, look for the yellow button on the conference page of the TLA website: [www.tsla.org/conference/conf.html](http://www.tsla.org/conference/conf.html)



*Our vendors and especially our CORPORATE SPONSORS help make the TLA conference possible. We hope you all spend time shopping in the exhibit hall. Please do take a moment to thank our corporate partners for their support of Texas libraries.*

- Authors Area ..... Librarian's Yellow Pages
- Author Session with  
TBA Award Winner ..... Bound To Stay Bound
- Badge Holders ..... Capstone Press/Compass Point Books/  
Picture Window Books/Stone Arch Books
- Black Caucus Round Table  
Author Session ..... Follett Library Resources,  
Renaissance Learning, Inc., & Stone Arch Books
- Book Cart Competition ..... DEMCO, Inc.
- Breakfast Bytes with Texshare ..... Gale, a Part of  
Cengage Learning; EBSCO Information Services;  
ProQuest, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.; Bowker
- Closing Author Session ..... SMART Technologies
- Conference Attendee Survey ..... America Reads Spanish
- Conference Information Center ..... Gumdrop Books
- CONFERENCE TIMES Newsletter ..... Gumdrop Books
- Conference Programs
- Designing Projects for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners . Highsmith, Inc
- Oh No, I Have to Catalog, too?.....Auto-Graphics, Inc.
- Getting Them Where They Live.....Garrett Book Company
- Diversity Fair..... DEMCO, Inc.
- Exhibits Directory & Buyers Guide...SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL
- Exhibit Hall B Café .....Davidson Titles, Inc.
- General Session I ..... netTrekker d.i.  
Opening Entertainment ..... Thomson Scientific
- General Session II .....Brodart Company
- Hetherington Fun Run/Walk..... ProQuest
- Internet Room .....MAXIMUM RIDE
- Net Fair ..... netTrekker d.i.
- Pocket Program..... Gumdrop Books
- President's Party ..... Baker & Taylor
- President's Party Spirits .....EBSCO Information Services  
& Encyclopaedia Britannica
- Small Community Libraries  
Dessert Social .....Star Book Sales
- TALL Texans Leadership Institute ..... DEMCO, Inc.
- TLA/TBA Store.....Sentry Technology Corporation  
& Library Design Systems
- Welcome Party .....Ingram Library Services Inc.

TLA thanks the following exhibiting companies for their support of the "Strong Libraries, Strong Scores" mini-conference on April 16:

ABC-CLIO, Follett Library Resources, Perma-Bound, and Tandem Library Books.

## TLA 2008 EXHIBITING COMPANIES

- 3M Library Systems
- A.** Bargas & Associates, LLC
- A+ Images, Inc
- ABC-CLIO
- ABDO eBooks
- ABDO Publishing Company
- Abrams Books for Young Readers/  
Amulet Books
- Accelerated Reader
- AccuCut
- Action! Library Media Service
- Advance Publishing, Inc.
- Adventure Land Book Fairs, Inc.
- The Adventures of Stevie the  
Guide (Bilingual)
- Albert Whitman & Company
- Alexander Street Press
- Alexandria by Companion  
Corporation
- All About Texas
- AlphaSmart, A Renaissance  
Learning Brand
- Amber Art by Bella Mia
- America Reads Spanish
- American Library Association  
Publishing
- American Psychological  
Association
- Amigos Library Services
- Ann B. Fiala, M. Ed., Reading  
Instruction Co.
- Another Sommer-Time Story Series
- Arte Público Press / Pinata Books
- Asia for Kids / Culture for Kids
- American Society for the  
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Audio Bookshelf
- Audio Visual Aids Corporation
- August House Audio
- August House Publishers, Inc.
- Author Jeff Savage - School  
Assemblies
- AVerMedia Technologies
- Averus Corporation Library  
Consulting
- AWE
- B**ackstage Library Works
- Baker & Taylor / YBP Library  
Services
- Barbie Smith and Susan  
Blankenship
- Barnes & Noble
- Basch Subscriptions, Inc.
- Bayou Publishing
- BBC Audiobooks America
- Bearport Publishing
- Bellwether Media
- Biblionix
- Bibliotheca Inc. RFID Library  
Systems
- Big Brazos World Village -  
A Multicultural Experience
- Big Cozy Books
- Big Time Illustrator,  
Timothy C. Raglin
- Bilingual Motivational Storyteller
- Bilingual Storyteller, Consuelo
- Bilingual Storyteller, Sue Young
- Black Rabbit Books
- Blackstone Audio, Inc.
- Blackwell Book Services
- Blooming Tree Press
- Bloomsbury Children's /  
Walker & Company
- The Book Fair
- Book And Puppet Sets  
the Book House, Inc.
- Book Systems, Inc.
- Book Wholesalers, Inc.
- BOOKBINS Shelving on Wheels
- Booklist & Book Links
- Books Are Fun
- Books on Tape
- Bookshare.org / Levelstar
- Borders Group Inc.
- Bound To Stay Bound Books
- Bowker
- Boyd's Mills Press
- Bretford Manufacturing, Inc.
- Bright Sky Press
- Brilliance Audio
- Brodart Company
- Buckstaff Company  
BWI
- C**andlewick Press
- Capstone Press
- Carolrhoda Books
- Carpets for Kids
- Carranza Puppets
- CASPR Library Systems, Inc.
- CCS Presentation Systems
- Cdigix
- Centro Santa Catalina
- Changeable Sign Systems
- Charles Scribner's Sons
- Charlesbridge Publishing

*"Besides seeing new products and the latest titles, I particularly like the opportunity to talk with representatives directly. It's nice to put a face to a voice. You get a chance to visit professionally and personally – some vendors I seek out at TLA!"*

MARY ALFORD, LIBRARY DIRECTOR, BELLAIRE CITY LIBRARY

Checkpoint Systems, Inc.  
 Chelsea House  
 Cherry Lake Publishing  
 Children's Books All Half Price  
 Children's Plus, Inc.  
 Children's Press / Franklin Watts  
 Child's Play  
 The Child's World Books  
 Chronicle Books  
 Cicada+A218Sun  
 Cinco Puntos Press  
 Clarion Books  
 Cliphanger  
 CoLibri Systems  
 ColorMarq Shelf Management  
 ID Systems  
 Combined Book Exhibit  
 Compass Point Books  
 Congressional Information Service  
 Congressional Quarterly Inc.  
 Consuelo Samarraipa  
 CountryReports.org  
 Cover One  
 CQ Press  
 Crabtree  
 Creation Station, LLC  
 Creative Bookwear Apparel  
 The Creative Companies  
 Critterman, Live Wildlife  
 Education Programs  
 Cross-Eyed Cricket Wildlife  
 Cultural Surroundings  
 Culture for Kids

**D**an Gibson, Storyteller  
 Dave Kleven, Critterman,  
 Wildlife Education  
 Davidson Titles, Inc.  
 Deanan Gourmet Popcorn  
 DEE, Inc.  
 Delaney Educational Enterprises  
 DEMCO, Inc.  
 DEMCO Library Interiors  
 Digital Knowledge Central / K-12  
 Databases Program  
 Digital Library Reserve  
 Digital Library Systems Group  
 DiscountDictionaries.com  
 Discovery Education  
 Disney Educational Productions /  
 Bill Nye the Science Guy  
 DKC  
 DLB Educational Corporation  
 Doc Moore, Storyteller  
 DOC's Books  
 Don Sanders, Storyteller  
 Donna Ingham, Storyteller  
 DTI  
**E**BSCO Information Services  
 EbzB Productions/Mike Wiley  
 Productions  
 eCommerce software and  
 hardware.  
 ediciones Lerner  
 Editorial Oceano, Inc.

Erdmans Books for Young  
 Readers  
 Ellie Lance Creations  
 Elizabeth Ellis  
 Ellison  
 Embroideries + More  
 Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.  
 Engage Educational Technologies  
 Enslow Publishers, Inc.  
 EnvisionWare  
 Eric Emmerson Strong, Storyteller  
 Erickson Press  
 ESC Region XI  
 Escue & Associates  
 Estey  
 Esther Malone, Teaching Artist  
**F**&S Partners, Inc.  
 Facet Publishing  
 Facts On File  
 Family History Library  
 Farrar Straus Giroux Books for  
 Young Readers  
 Favorable Impressions  
 Feiwel and Friends  
 Films for the Humanities  
 & Sciences  
 Firefly Books, Ltd.  
 Five Star  
 Follett Library Resources  
 Follett Software Company  
 Footnote.com  
 Fort Worth Public Library

*We thank the following TPALS members for their contribution  
 of the complimentary water during the  
**TPALS Rush Hour** with Exhibitors  
 Wednesday, April 16, 4:00 - 5:00 PM*

*Phil LaBoon  
 Roberto Rodriguez  
 Baker & Taylor*

*John Carson  
 Jim Hollingsworth  
 Brodart Company*

*Brenda T. Davidson  
 Danna E. Davidson  
 Davidson Titles, Inc.*

*John Ison  
 DEMCO*

*Brian Duncan  
 Cheryl Duke  
 EBSCO Information Services*

*Greg Escue  
 Escue & Associates*

*Kit Carson  
 Follett Library Resources*

*Tammy McGee  
 Jeff Scott  
 Gale, a Part of  
 Cengage Learning*

*Kay Bowin  
 Jay Blint  
 Ingram Library Services, Inc.*

*Michael Kocha  
 Journey Back in Time*

*Kary Barth  
 Kapco*

*Trevor Taylor  
 Library Interiors of Texas*

*Elizabeth Willoughby  
 Lisa Winter  
 Llibrary Integrated  
 Solutions & Associates*

*S. L. Fuller  
 Barbara Swanson  
 Perma-Bound Books*

*Dan Welsh  
 Spoken Arts*

*Stephen Wagner  
 Tyndale House Publishers*

*David Caven  
 H.W. Wilson Co.*



## PURPOSE

of the Texas Professional Association for Library Sales (TPALS), a round table of the Texas Library Association.

To better support TLA in bringing Texas library vendors and their representatives together with all librarians in the interest of fostering a better understanding of their mutual needs.

*[www.txla.org/  
groups/tpals](http://www.txla.org/groups/tpals)*

Frameworks  
 Freedom Scientific, Blind/Low Vision Group  
 Frozen Light  
**G.K. Hall**  
 Gale, a Part of Cengage Learning  
 Gareth Stevens Publishing  
 Garrett Book Company  
 Gaylord Bros., Inc.A247  
 Dan Gibson, Storyteller  
 Gold Co  
 Graham & Whiteside  
 Grand Prairie Independent School District  
 Graphic Universe  
 Great American Opportunities  
 The Great Courses  
 Greenhaven Press  
 Greenwood Publishing Group  
 Greg Escue & Associates  
 Grey House Publishing  
 Grolier Publishing Company / Grolier Online  
 Greenwood Books  
 Gumdrop Books  
**Hannah, Martha, Medieval Commediene**  
 Happy Feet  
 Harcourt, Inc.  
 John M. Hardy Publishing Co.  
 HarperCollins Children's Books  
 HarperCollins Publishers  
 Heinemann - Raintree Library  
 Henry Holt & Company  
 Heritage Makers  
 Heroes & Leaders Publishing  
 Hidell Associates Architects  
 Highsmith Inc.  
 History Education  
 Holiday House  
 The Horn Book, Inc.  
 Houghton Mifflin Books for Children  
 Houston Chapter - Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators  
 Hyperion Books for Children  
**I**mage Retrieval, Inc.  
 INDECO Sales / Maco Manufacturing  
 Independent Publishers Group  
 India For Everyone  
 Infinite Furniture Solutions  
 Infobase Publishing  
 Donna Ingham, Storyteller  
 Ingram Library Services Inc.  
 Innovative Interfaces, Inc.  
 Insignia Software  
 Integrated Technology Group  
 Invitation to Cat Spring: From European Tyranny to Freedom to Civil War  
**J**an Seides, Yiddish Stories and Songs

Jasper Chair Company  
 JAZ Holdings dba Regent Book Company  
 Jiaan Powers, Storyteller  
 Journey Back in Time  
 Judi Moreo  
 Julian Franklin, Storyteller  
 Junior Library Guild  
**K-12** TexShare / Digital Knowledge Central  
 Kane/Miller Book Publishers  
 KAPCO Book Protection  
 Keene Publishing/Moo Press  
 Kelowna Software Ltd.  
 KelHaven Press  
 Kids Can Press

Library Video Company  
 LibraryCom/Library World  
 LibrarySkills, Inc.  
 LibraryWorld  
 Libra-Tech Corporation  
 Lincoln Library Press, Inc.  
 Linworth Publishing, Inc.  
 Listener's Digest  
 Listening Library  
 Little Sportsman, Inc.  
 Little, Brown Books for Young Readers  
 LLibrary Integrated Solutions & Assoc. Inc.  
 LMC Source  
 LRMS - Library Resource Management Systems, Inc.

Motivational Bilingual Storyteller  
 MyReportLinks.com Books  
**N**ational Book Network  
 National Geographic Children's Books  
 National Library of Medicine  
 Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.  
 Neschen Americas - SEAL & Neschen Brand Products  
 NEST Family Entertainment  
 netTrekker d.i.  
 New Harbinger Publications, Inc.  
 The New York Times  
 Newbart Products, inc.  
 NewsBank inc.  
 Northern Micrographics  
 Norwood House Press  
 Nystrom Education Division of Herff Jones

**O**CLC  
 One Shot Productions  
 OpinionArchives  
 Orca Book Publishers  
 Otter Creek Press  
 OverDrive Inc.  
 Overlooked Books

**P**aragon Furniture, LP  
 PBS Video  
 PC Management Solutions  
 Peachtree Publishers, Ltd.  
 Pelican Publishing Company  
 Penguin Young Readers Group  
 The Penworthy Company  
 Perma-Bound Books  
 Picture Window Books  
 Plunkett Research, Ltd.  
 Poisoned Pen Press  
 Pokemon Learning League  
 Polaris Library Systems  
 Possum Grape RHK  
 Power Kids  
 Powers, Jiaan Storyteller  
 Priddy Books  
 Primary Source Media  
 Pro Forma Architecture, Inc.  
 Professional Concepts  
 ProQuest  
 PSA-Dewberry  
 Publishers Group West  
 Puppeteer, Lynn Baskind  
 Puppeteer, Sandy Shrou  
 Puppets At Half Price  
**Q**SP/Reader's Digest  
 Quality Books, Inc.  
**R**ainbow Book Company  
 Ramco/Susis Paper Cutters  
 Rand McNally & Company  
 Random House Children's Books  
 Random House Large Print Books  
 Random House Library & Academic Marketing  
 Random House, Inc.  
 Read Across the Prairie

*"Exhibits! Wow! Everything for all types of libraries. And librarians. I love to look at furniture and try out the chairs. The technology demos keep me up to date. Of course there are all types of books and storytime materials. A great place to meet friends and build relationships with the vendors."*  
 CONNIE MOSS, ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR,  
 WILLIAM T. COZBY PUBLIC LIBRARY, COPPELL

Komatsu Architecture  
**L** & Jay's Hang-Ups  
 L4U (Library 4 Universal)  
 Lakeshore Learning Materials  
 Lance Armstrong Foundation  
 Large Print Press  
 LAT - Library Automation Technologies  
 Lawrence J. Clark - The Singing Poet Guy!  
 LE@D (Lifelong Education @ Desktop)  
 Lectorum Publications, Inc.  
 Lee & Low Books  
 Legacy Project  
 Leo A Daly  
 Lerner Publishing Group  
 Levelstar  
 Lexicon Bilingual Resources  
 LexisNexis  
 Liberty Fund, Inc.  
 Libramation  
 Librarian's Yellow Pages  
 Librarica LLC  
 Libraries Unlimited  
 Library Binding Company  
 Library Bureau - Vance Hunt & Associates  
 Library Bureau Steel  
 Library Design Systems, Inc.  
 Library Interiors - Vance Hunt & Associates  
 Library Interiors of Texas - The Library Interiors Group  
 The Library Store, Inc  
 Library Strategies

Lucent Books  
 Lynn Baskind, Puppeteer  
**M**ackin Library Media  
 Macmillan Reference USA  
 Magazine Subscription Service Agency  
 Magic Wagon  
 MARCIVE, Inc.  
 Margaret Clauder Presents Mother Goose and THE Bookworm  
 Marshall Cavendish Corporation / Benchmark Books  
 Marshall Styler - Styler Music  
 Martha Hannah, Medieval Comedienne & Stand-Up Historian  
 Mary Frances Chupick Bennett  
 Mason Crest Publishers  
 Master Audio Visuals, Inc.  
 Maverick Books, Inc. (Hank the Cowdog)  
 McDermott, Tom Storyteller  
 McFarland Publishers  
 Midwest Tape  
 Millbrook Press  
 Minisis  
 Mitinet, Inc.  
 Moody Press  
 Moody Publishers  
 Moody Video  
 Doc Moore, Storyteller  
 Morgan Reynolds Publishing  
 Morningstar  
 Mostly Microfilm Scanners  
 Mother Goose Programs

*“After serving on Local Arrangements - Exhibits Registration, I gained a whole new perspective on our vendor partners. Our vendors allow TLA to keep librarian conference registration fees affordable. Without their financial support, conference might be out of reach for many of us in these days of tightening budgets. So, as you plan your schedule, please include time to walk through all the exhibits, not just your favorites. I guarantee you will learn something new, make new friends and catch-up with old friends.”*

KATHY EDWARDS, LIBRARY DIRECTOR,  
WILLIAM T. COZBY PUBLIC LIBRARY, COPPELL

Readex  
Reading Instruction Co.  
Reading Rainbow/Destination Education, Inc  
Recorded Books, LLC  
ReferenceUSA a division of InfoUSA  
Regent Book Company  
Region 4 Education Service Center  
Reliance Label Solutions  
Renaissance Learning  
RFID Solutions  
Rhythmweb Programs  
Roaring Brook Press  
RockSports  
Greg Rodgers  
Rosen Publishing/Power Kids  
Rourke Publishing Group  
Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group  
RTI - DVD Repair  
**S**AGE Publications  
Salem Press  
Sam Houston State University - Department of Library Science  
Sand Sage Press  
Don Sanders, Storyteller  
Sandy Shrout, Puppeteer  
Santillana USA Publishing  
Sasquatch Books  
Sauder  
Save Half on Books  
Scheduline  
Schirmer Reference  
Scholastic Book Fairs, Inc.  
Scholastic Classroom & Library Group  
Scholastic Reading Counts!  
Scholastic Trade Books  
School Library Journal/Library Journal  
School Specialty Education Essentials  
School Specialty Media  
School Zone Books / Author John Morrow  
Sebco Books  
Seides, Jan - Yiddish Stories & Songs  
Sentry Technology Corporation  
Shader Productions  
Sharpe Reference  
Simmons, Toni Storyteller  
Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing  
Simply Silver & Sassy Apparel  
The Singing Poet Guy  
SirsiDynix  
SJB Productions  
Skies Over Sweetwater  
Sleeping Bear Press  
SMART Technologies  
Barbie Smith, artist  
Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators - Houston Chapter  
Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators - Texas Chapters  
Sommer Associates  
Soundzabound Music Library  
Southwest Book Company  
Spacesaver/Southwest Solutions Group  
Spark Publishing  
Speech Kids Texas Press, Inc.  
Spoken Arts  
Spotlight  
Springer  
Standard & Poor's  
Star Book Sales  
Star Bright Books  
State House/McWhiney Foundation Press  
Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.  
Stone Arch Books  
Stop Falling Productions  
Story Edutainers Esther Malone, Sandy Shrout, Critterman Dave Kleven, Lynn Baskind  
Storybook Theatre  
Storyteller, Esther Malone  
Storytellers Dan Gibson and Tipi Tellers  
Storytellers Donna Ingham and Don Sanders  
Storytellers Tim Tingle and Doc Moore  
Storytellers Tom McDermott, Toni Simmons and Jiaan Powers  
Styler Music  
Sue Young, Bilingual Storyteller  
Susan Blankenship, artist  
Sylvan Dell Publishing  
SYTEK  
**T** & G ID Systems

T.R. Books  
Talkingtech Ltd.  
Tandem Library Books  
Tantor Un-abridged Audiobooks  
Teacher's Corner  
The Teaching Company  
TeachingBooks.net  
tech logic  
TELL ME MORE powered by Auralog  
Ten Speed  
TESCO Industries, Inc.  
Texas A&M University Press  
Texas Book Festival  
Texas Center for the Book at the Dallas Public Library  
Texas Christian University Press  
Texas Connection  
Texas Educational Technology Purchasing Consortium  
Texas Library Association sponsored exhibits:  
Automation & Technology Round Table  
Black Caucus Round Table  
Library Support Staff Round Table  
New Members Round Table  
Reference Round Table  
Small Community Libraries Round Table  
TALL Texans Round Table  
TPALS - Texas Professional Association for Library Sales Round Table  
TLA 2009 Houston Young Adult Round Table  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission  
Texas State Securities Board  
Texas Tech University Press  
Texas Woman's University - School of Library and Information Studies  
Texasoverlookedbooks.com  
Texwood Library Furniture  
That's Me, Too!  
Thorndike Press  
Tim Ryherd Publishing  
Tim Tingle, Storyteller  
Timothy C. Raglin / Big Time Illustrator  
Timeless Treasures by Maria  
Tipi Tellers

TLC - The Library Corporation  
Tocker Foundation  
Tom McDermott - Storytelling  
Toni Simmons, Storyteller  
Traditional Sounds  
Troxell Communications, Inc.  
TTUP  
Tutor.com  
Twayne Publishers  
Twenty-First Century Books  
Twice Upon A Time Storytellers  
Tyndale House Publishers  
**U**\*X\*L  
University of North Texas School of Library & Information Sciences  
University of North Texas Press  
University of Texas Press  
The University of Texas - School of Information  
UNT - LE@D  
Upstart, A Division of Highsmith Inc.  
Usborne Books at Home / Educational Development Corp.  
**V**EA Inc (Video Education America)  
Vernon Library Supplies  
VIS Enterprises  
Visual Techniques, Inc.  
**W**. W. Norton & Company, Inc.  
Walden Media  
Walker and Company / Bloomsbury Children's Books  
Walker Large Print  
Wells Consulting & Continuing Education  
Wheeler Publishing  
H.W. Wilson Company  
Women's Storybook Project of Texas  
Workman Publishing Company  
World Almanac Education  
World Book, Inc. School and Library Division  
World Trade Press  
WorldandISchool.com  
Worthington Contract Furniture  
WT Cox Subscriptions, Inc.  
**Z**ertelo and the Quest for CastleOak  
Zytron Imaging Services

*As a new librarian, plan to spend lots of time in the exhibit hall. It's a great way to get a "feel" for the variety of materials available to you. You can preview new books, see the latest in technology and even shop for gifts! When I was a "newbie" myself, the exhibit hall was a lifesaver, as I was able to "see" before I "bought" - and able to make wiser decisions on how to spend my budget.*

CINDY BUCHANAN, SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR,  
LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES, ALDINE ISD



# Wrestling with your Friends Group

BY JULIA OUSLEY

## PART 2: Care and Feeding of Your Friends & Advocates

*Editor's Note: "Wrestling with Your Friends Group, Part I" was published in the 2007 fall issue (Vol. 83 no. 3) of the Texas Library Journal.*

### *Cliff Notes of Part 1:*

Relationships between library professionals and "civilians" are not always ideal, and sometimes more nearly resemble professional wrestling rather than graceful ballroom dancing, but symbiosis and synergy are desired goals in all library partnerships. Since library professionals and their supporters are in the battle together for funding and culture, they share a common foxhole, and everyone knows that you don't shoot your companions in the same foxhole with you!

### *Learn a lesson from the North Texas Web Developers*

Last fall, news outlets across the country were scampering to report from Lake Tawakoni State Park, which is east of Dallas and nestled between I-20 and I-30, where entomologists were marveling at a two football field-long spider web, the biggest any of them had ever seen. The hum of a million trapped mosquitoes rose to an inescapable distraction from a distance. Superlatives like colossal, monstrous, and enormous surfaced regularly, not to mention the names of Shelob and Aragog.

Although the worst kind of nightmare for arachnophobes, this gigantic freak of nature carries a reminder for library professionals and their civilian counterparts. This once-in-a-lifetime occurrence demonstrates that, while spiders tend to be solitary, a community working together can produce mindboggling results, worthy of international recognition. Just like the more than two dozen arachnid species involved, including some that normally cannibalize others, librarians can work in harmony with their layperson community to achieve common goals.

### *How can the professional reach out to the library family?*

Several years ago, when the new building of the New Braunfels Public Library (NBPL) was barely three years old, the library director, Vickie Hocker, approached the Friends of the Library group with a proposition. She was going to have to build an auxiliary building to house lawn equipment for the surrounding four acres, and since it was going to be expensive enough to require going out for bids, she wanted to know if the FOL would like to go together with the library and build a building large enough to house the FOL book sale sorting operation as well. The FOL had been working outside of four rented garage spaces in a remote location. Their mostly senior citizen volunteers were positively galvanized to action when included in the library's plans.

The Friends of the New Braunfels Public Library have raised more than a half a million dollars in cash and labor for the library since their inception 20 years ago, and their enthusiasm for their tasks directly relates to the enthusiasm the library staff shows toward them. In response to the director's proposition, they wrote grant proposals and built a \$150,000 multipurpose building next to the current NBPL building that houses their book sorting and storage needs, all because the library director included them as a partner in planning. Their volunteers (and profits from the annual sale) have multiplied, and they stand ready to be mobilized on behalf of their beloved library.

James Arthur Ray, in his upcoming book, *Harmonic Wealth*, calls this "psychic income." Volunteers want, or may even feel compelled, to be part of something meaningful. They've donated their precious time and energy to countless projects and causes without any financial reward, and they will generally continue to do so as long as they are receiving feedback that makes them feel fulfilled, a partner in a bigger plan, someone who could make a difference. Just because you don't issue volunteers a paycheck doesn't mean that they don't expect some kind of psychic income from you. Albert Einstein said, "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

### *Volunteers/Laypeople – What are they good for?*

Speaking from layperson sensibilities, I cringe every time I hear certain library professionals discuss volunteers and laypeople. As far as many are concerned, the primary reason for the existence of laypeople is to write orchestrated letters to powerful people and to show up in conspicuous numbers when needed. While those are good things for volunteers to do, libraries need laypeople for a more pressing need: to keep professionals grounded and connected to the very heartbeat of the community they serve. Especially as the TLA examines the future of all kinds of libraries in Texas, the layperson plays a critical role not only in the survival of libraries as we know them but in their creative metamorphosis for relevancy.

### *Obi Wan Kenobi says, "Use the Force" Advocacy experts say, "Use your Laypeople"*

Advocacy experts tell us over and over that our lay people are the professionals' most powerful ally in speaking to legislators and funding entities. They aren't dependent on library paychecks so their pure voices are un sullied by self interest. The professionals must therefore corral and utilize this great resource, because laypersons' voices will be listened to and their opinions respected when legislators examine library issues. They count!

Laying aside the possibly offensive terminology of “Using” someone for your own purposes (druggies are “Users,” psychopaths are “Users”), how in the world do you mobilize this vast untamed resource on the library’s behalf? And more importantly, how do you *keep* it mobilized?

Susan J. Ellis, from the Energizeinc.com website dedicated to managing volunteers, opines that,

Volunteering is, by definition, a *leisure time* activity. By this I mean that people can only engage in volunteering when they are not at a paying job, caring for family members, or fulfilling some other obligation. Our competition when we recruit is not paid employment; it’s whatever the person does in his or her increasingly rare free time. So the choice we’re asking people to make is whether to do volunteer work or play golf, see a movie, or just plain rest.

Knowing that our laypeople could just as easily invest themselves in other equally worthwhile endeavors, we find ourselves in a bidding war using a psychic payroll.

### *Developing a psychic payroll – Lessons from grant writing*

If you have difficulty articulating the worthiness of the library as recipient of their efforts, you might consider their own ambitions. Consider the comparison to grant-writing: Grant writing classes always advise applicants to find out what the donor foundation’s goals are and then write the grant application to show how the group receiving a grant from them will help the donor foundation’s goals. When library professionals are recruiting or trying to retain volunteer participation, they are like the grant petitioner in the face of a benevolent donor. They, too, must discern what those volunteers’ goals are as well and offer the opportunity of helping them realize them. As in grant writing, success in getting a foundation (layperson) to invest (himself and his time) in your project comes from helping the investor to see how you will advance his self-interest.

The library is in a unique position to help a person meet his personal as well as corporate goals, whether his goals are serving others behind the scenes (book repair, shelving), being part of a large effort (FOL book sale), developing job skills (like computer proficiency), or even just enhancing his resume by volunteering. Help him catch a vision!

A popular illustration dates back to “The Rules of St. Benedict,” circa 500 AD. Distilled to its essence, it imparts:

A traveler came upon a group of three hard-at-work stonemasons, and asked each in turn what he was doing. The first said, “I am sanding down this block of marble.” The second said, “I am preparing a foundation.” The third said, “I am building a cathedral.”

Details may change in each incarnation of the story, but the moral is always the same: even though their tasks are identical, the third mason is the one endowed with vision. Fifteen centuries have not dimmed the need for vision, and professionals and non-professionals alike must have it to function efficiently, if at all. But what of the vision that professionals must have?

### *Perspective = 80 IQ points*

Gone are the days when librarians could reign unilaterally over their mini-fiefdoms, doling out information and access to information. Today’s savvy patron disdains yesterday’s status quo model and wants a streamlined process of direct, quick efficiency. In this day of self-check-in at the airport and self-check-out at Wal-mart, if he is delayed or thwarted in his quest for quick information, he will take his information needs elsewhere, along with his good will. How can the library professional redirect this inevitable evolution, maximizing chances of surviving and thriving?

The wise librarian observes and tracks the winds of change, and recognizes that “patron-centric” has GOT to be the way to go. “But we’re already patron-centric,” I hear you cry. “We exist solely to serve the community! (or the school or the institution!)” Yes, but how much input do your constituents really have? Do you fully internalize their perspective? Does it direct your decisions?

“Perspective,” says celebrated library futurist Joan Frye Williams, “is worth 80 IQ points!” This is where your library friends, advocates, and volunteers can really do you a service. Have you surveyed them for what programs, services, and materials they want to see in their library? The adaptations they would like to see in the library? You might be surprised. Nobody likes being told what to do, least of all a trained professional, but your library-using civilians are the essence of the greater community, and their input can help you wisely captain your ship into the future. Your future depends on it. ★

Julie Ousley is a long time member of the New Braunfels Public Library Advisory Board, Alamo Area Library System 2006 Volunteer of the Year, and a 2006 TALL Texan.

# Transforming Texas Libraries

For several months now, the Texas Library Association and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission have been laying the groundwork for a statewide grassroots planning process. Through this planning process, the library community is examining what libraries of all types – school, public, and academic – should be doing in the coming years. What are essential services? How can we best support education and economic development? In short, how do libraries need to transform to meet the challenges ahead?

We invite anyone in the library community to participate in crafting this vision. To send comments, suggest themes, or provide draft language, go to [www.txla.org/temp/transform.html](http://www.txla.org/temp/transform.html).

One of the most basic principles in this process is getting people to think about transformation. What do we need to change about libraries? What do we need to change about ourselves? *TLJ* invited members of the Visioning Task Force to share some thoughts. We'd also like to hear yours. If you'd like to contribute comments especially for the *Texas Library Journal*, please email [gloriam@txla.org](mailto:gloriam@txla.org).

---

## *Transforming Begins at Home*

BY JULIE TODARO

From the very beginning of the Transforming process, I found myself thinking “big thoughts” for Texas libraries, librarians, and library supporters and our change process; but, I found myself always returning to my personal agenda of what I might be able to “transform” in my own library services environment.

I decided I would create a list of “made me think” moments, and my goal was to come up with some ideas that I could bring back to my staff to see if it interested them or made them think. Others on my staff were at the activities; and I hoped that they, too, would be noting ideas that might transform us and how we do business and serve our constituents.

My “made me think” moments:

1. Although for the most part, we have always evaluated what we do, last year I decided to form an *ad hoc* assessment committee to offer a more complete look at what we are assessing and what we are not assessing. I have written a commitment to assessment piece for librarians at my institution, but I need to move beyond that to move all staff to the position of questioning what we do, how we spend time, and ultimately, how we spend money. No matter what the activity, staff should be able to articulate why we do something as well as answer: Does it matter to our constituents?
2. In addition, as part of the re-commitment to assessment, I know we don't think enough about the customers and what they want. Yes, I'm in an academic library where we meet a variety of expectations, and yes we have user and non-user surveys, but I'm interested in more assessment based on constituents (as Transforming keynote speakers asked us to call them and see #3 below). I don't know how this will take place (perhaps standardized commercial surveys or general surveys), but I would like to know if we are meeting a range of needs and expectations and maybe meeting additional and/or unanticipated needs.
3. I love the “constituent” term for customer/patron/user, etc. To me, it signals an obligation on our part – or better said –

a responsibility to meet someone's needs and expectations.

4. We need to rethink our front line services. That is, I would like to open the discussion with my librarians on front line reference. And, this discussion will have to include our other public service desks (circulation services staff) as well as a review of our administrative rule on our librarian/faculty obligations for student contact.
5. How will we share the content we heard at the Transforming Summit with the staff and librarians? I am currently looking at the Transforming Texas Library blog and will meet with others to see how I might replicate some of the presentation of the content, in order to both educate and enthuse other staff members. We need to constantly look for – and act upon – ways for all library stakeholders to be involved in the transformation process.
6. I have long wanted to complete a physical space audit of our libraries to determine how our space is being used now and if there are additional/better ways to arrange our space to meet constituent needs. Although I have a risk analysis spreadsheet on each location with an inch-by-inch look at each location and the cost of replicating each environment (a post-911 initiative), we don't have a user analysis of space. I think this data would go hand-in-hand with the reference assessment to make for an interesting discussion.
7. Along that same line, last year I started the signage discussion with staff. We want a more user-oriented college-wide signage system. Our names of spaces match throughout our libraries, but the look varies dramatically. We need one look, one typeface, one brand! I will need to build in constituent survey questions to determine the best signage for meeting needs and work this data into the reference service/public service discussion.
8. I have the tools to communicate constantly to my managers, but I don't think I communicate to the rest of the staff as much as I need to. I have to find a way to move what I know and what managers are doing down to all levels of employees. I need to determine what I should move and what my managers should personalize to library environments and move themselves.
9. We need to capture firm results about our efforts to transform. The inspired and motivated changes my library

staff undertakes need to be part of a statewide accumulation of our successes and innovations. We need to share our work during this transforming process! Our steering committee talked about infusing this content into TLA conference programming and identification, and we will be doing that this spring. We need to go through many other forums. Most of all, though, we need the talent and commitment of everyone concerned with the future of Texas libraries to participate in this process.

Julie Todaro is dean of library services for Austin Community College and chair of the steering committee for the Visioning Task Force.

## *School Libraries and the Future*

BY SHONDA BRISCO

What does it take to make a transformation that is so significant that it will impact future generations? That's the task set before many school librarians as we embark on not only a change in our instructional standards (*Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*, ALA, 2007) but also in our professional thinking about how we address the needs of our students.

School librarians were probably one of the first groups to realize the impact that technology had on library users. As students grew more familiar with new trends and new technology applications, school librarians grew worried that print materials, online databases, and high-quality electronic resources would be ignored for the ease of use through the "less-than-reputable" Internet. As comfortable bookstores lured our best readers into coffee-house-styled surroundings with bookshelves packed with the latest fiction, we worried that perhaps "Barnes & Noble" suddenly became an exclusive club that did not include us as it once had before Starbucks arrived. As technology instructors suddenly intervened in the classrooms and began sharing ways to effectively begin research assignments using Google and Wikipedia, we began our adamant protest to encourage teachers to restrict the use of these resources entirely for the purpose of academic research. As a result of these behaviors, both our school libraries and we (the school librarians) suddenly found ourselves becoming an archaic after-thought in the instantaneous world of the millennial learner.

So how do we reclaim our status as "the place for all your research needs" for our library users? Research in 21st century learning suggests that in order to meet the needs of these new learners, school librarians need to step beyond their comfort zones and begin reaching out to adopt new ideas and new technologies, and to work with outside groups to integrate these ideas and community interests into the instructional curriculum. Through a pro-active stance of working with public and academic libraries to encourage use by K-12 students throughout the year, school librarians can begin a collaborative effort to teach students that there is a common mission among all libraries – to provide the

best possible information available at the point of need.

As innovative thinkers, school librarians should develop a new philosophy of becoming a "first adopter" of 2.0 technologies. As such, school librarians can not only better understand ways to utilize these resources but also become technology integration specialists who can teach teachers ways to integrate these technologies into their curriculum. Using the concepts employed by bookstores and coffee houses to allow for social interaction while providing an inviting atmosphere (coupled with food, drinks, or activities that encourage interactive learning) school librarians can eliminate the outmoded idea of libraries being uncomfortable, unfriendly, and unnecessary for reading, research, or even social interaction and collaborative work.

School librarians who begin to mesh ideas for delivering information and library services can start to transform their school libraries into active, energetic, and information-rich reading and research environments that will extend beyond the physical place of four walls and become the location that students seek to visit (either physically or virtually) when they need to locate information, learn how to utilize the latest 2.0 tools, or quickly access resources for homework assignments. In addition, by providing students with the opportunities to engage in active learning through the use of these 2.0 tools, we must also take the responsibility to become actively involved in developing district policies for the educational access of these new technologies. By sharing examples of positive educational experiences and unique projects that can be completed through the access and use of these technologies, school librarians can help alleviate unfounded fears and encourage other educators to support the library in meeting the needs of our students for their future experiences in higher education and in the workforce.

As school librarians begin to integrate the concepts used in the business world that provide library users with comfortable physical spaces for social collaboration, along with the ability to access the library's resources through a variety of methods, we can begin to encourage students to become regular visitors of their school libraries and to develop a sense of ownership for their new personal spaces within the school. Through our encouragement, students can become active participants and partners in how their libraries will provide services; and we invite them to begin to think critically about their current needs as they work together with the librarian to develop library programs and resources for others.

As we move toward the idea of transforming our school libraries, it will certainly require us to re-think our own pre-conceived ideas about what a school library is and what a 21st century school library should be for millennial learners. Expanding our visions beyond four walls and reaching out toward new ideas and new technologies will ensure that we continue to have an impact on student achievement and on the future of school libraries for generations to come. ✪

Shonda Brisco is district librarian for Peaster ISD.

## A Status Report on K-12 Databases

BY RUSSELE WAUKECHON  
AND BARRY BISHOP



2007 proved an exciting year for Texas public school libraries. After intense lobbying from the field, the 80th Texas Legislature awarded funds for equitable statewide access to school library databases. This funding was enacted through Rider 88, which was added to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) budget. What did Rider 88 do for Texas public school libraries? It directed the commissioner of education to transfer amounts not to exceed \$2.5 million in each year of the 2008-2009 biennium to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) for the purpose of acquiring "online research and information resources for libraries in public schools, and for administrative expenses."

Groundwork for this legislation began in 2005 when the 79th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 483, authorizing the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) to negotiate online database pricing on behalf of public school libraries. TSLAC partnered with Education Service Center Region 20 (ESC-20) to provide a general content database package at a reduced price to K-12 public school libraries. The passage of Rider 88 builds on the successful implementation of Senate Bill 483.

Access to 36 online databases and six interfaces (Kids Search, Student Research Center, Searchasaurus, Consumer Health Complete, Ebscohost Standard Interface, and Ebsco Business Search) from EBSCO Publishing went live to all eligible Texas public school libraries on September 1, 2007. The great news is that enough funds were left to purchase another resource for the K-12 public school libraries in Texas. Beginning December 1, 2007, Encyclopaedia Britannica also became available to schools. These resources are available for free to every eligible public school and district.

Time was of the essence if a resource was to be selected during the 2007 academic school year, and it was important to select a product that would meet the needs of all

K-12 public school libraries. TSLAC called on the K-12 Transition Task Force (TTF) to provide guidance for the purchase.

When Senate Bill 483 was first passed in 2005, we knew a new group was needed to help keep us informed about Texas public school library issues and concerns. This new group, the K-12 Transition Task Force, patterned on the TexShare consortium's working group model, is made up of working librarians who volunteer their time, talent, and expertise to improve library resource sharing in the state. Transition Task Force members represent the K-12 community and communicate public school interests and priorities to TEA, TSLAC, and ESC 20. They also serve as a "bridge" between the K-12 public school library community and the TexShare consortium community, helping to build a statewide library services program to serve the lifelong library services needs of Texans.

TSLAC consulted with the K-12 Transition Task Force on the wisest use of the remaining Rider 88 funds (members of the TTF also sat on the Electronic Information Working Group, which selected the EBSCO package in 2005). After a lengthy review of options, the TTF recommended that the best purchase for Texas public schools would be an online general information encyclopedia. This resource would serve all grade levels and could be used in every school library.

A subcommittee of the Transition Task Force served as the review panel for the encyclopedia purchase. Members were: Laura Alfaro, librarian facilitator, San Antonio ISD; Barry Bishop, director of library information services, Spring Branch ISD; Carolyn McCown, director of library services, ESC 15 (San Angelo); Susan Touchstone, librarian, Vidor High School; Joann VanSchaik, technical services librarian, Texas Tech University Health Science Center Library (Lubbock), TexShare Electronic Information Working Group Liaison; and Russlene Waukechon, TexShare database coordinator, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

Four vendors responded to the bid for an online general encyclopedia: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Grolier, Gale, and WorldBook

In order to get as much input from K-12 libraries as possible, a statewide online trial was run from 9/4/07-9/21/07. K-12 school staffs were asked their opinions about the four encyclopedias using a survey attached to the trial website. Additionally, we established a wiki to garner feedback and facilitate discussion about the bid. The survey responses and the discussion on the wiki provided valuable information. The selection subcommittee took everyone's input into account.

Factors used by the subcommittee to compare the products were:

- Content
- Interface Capabilities and Ease of Use
- Access, Authentication and Availability
- Price, Including All Costs of Procurement
- Special Features and/or Content Offered

After thorough evaluation of the four encyclopedias, the subcommittee selected Encyclopaedia Britannica to be the online encyclopedia for Texas K-12 public school libraries. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission approved the TTF's selection at their meeting on October 12, 2007. Britannica Online School Edition was added to the K-12 Databases package on December 1, 2007.

Encyclopaedia Britannica and the EBSCO database resources are available to 100% of eligible public schools and districts without charge. We have established logons and passwords for every school. In order to activate use, schools just need to contact ESC 20 and request their logons and passwords. If your school hasn't activated your database account yet, visit: <http://web.esc20.net/k12databases/activation.htm> or contact ESC20 at: (210) 370-5623 or email [k12help@esc20.net](mailto:k12help@esc20.net). ★

**Russlene Waukechon is the TexShare database coordinator at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Barry Bishop is director of library information services at Spring Branch ISD.**

## Students Testify Before State Committee on K-12 Databases

Anna Gomez and Samip Sheth, junior high students from Travis Vanguard Academy in Dallas ISD, wowed members of the House Select Committee on Higher and Public Education Finance at a hearing in Austin held February 7. The Committee met that day to hear invited testimony on the use of technology in the classroom and the uses of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Technology Allotment.

The K-12 database program, for which the library community rallied hard last session, was funded at \$5 million over the biennium, with the funding coming from the Technology Allotment. TEA was directed to work with the State



Samip Sheth and Anna Gomez gave expert testimony.

Library and Archives Commission to fund the program. The result of the two-year program has been restored statewide database access for all Texas public schools.

Librarian Susi Grissom and technology specialist Linda French of Travis Vanguard Academy prepared a demo for the committee, wherein the students

would conduct searches on both Britannica and Ebsco resources for the committee. The questions of the day: Why is March 2, 1836 important?

The kids handled their testimony like olds pros and captivated the committee. Knowing that Chairman Dan Branch (who sponsored the initial rider for the funding) was a history buff, the kids searched research and primary documents. The members of the committee expressed their support for the program, and we hope that this hearing proves a successful first step in continued and expanded funding.

The library community owes a debt of gratitude to the extraordinary work of Grissom and French for preparing the demo. And, if Anna and Samip are any indication of the generation to come, we are in very capable hands.

## Other Legislation & Policy Update

### Public School Library Study

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas Education Agency were directed by the 80th legislature to conduct a study to identify the needs of public school libraries. To accomplish this mandate, agency staff and a steering committee appointed by the agencies conducted a survey and will disseminate information, invite comment, and circulate a draft report to the statewide school and library community. Your feedback through this process would be most appreciated and helpful!

An online form is available to post comments you have about the needs of public school libraries and this study and to view feedback. Comments may also be sent directly to steering committee members and staff.

For additional information, go to the library survey site at: <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schoolneeds/index.html>. We need everyone to participate!

The State Library will hold a forum on the study Friday, April 18, 10-noon, during TLA's Annual Conference.

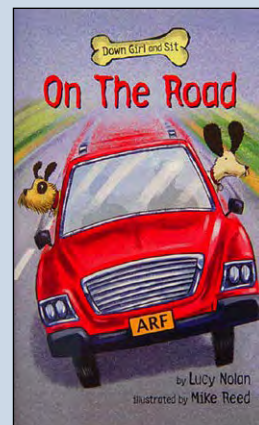
### Request for AG's Opinion on Public Library Districts

The State Library recently requested an opinion from the Attorney General on the following questions related to legally established library districts:

- 1) Is the authority granted in *Local Government Code*, Chapter 336, sufficient to enable Library Districts to assess and collect *ad valorem* taxes on property within the boundary of the district to provide revenue for the district, or is a constitutional amendment required to grant such authority?
- 2) Can the Lead Governmental Entity (Sec. 336.021), the county or municipality that by resolution creates a Library District, collect *ad valorem* taxes on behalf of the Library District and disburse those taxes tot the Library District under existing authority or is a constitutional amendment required to grant this specific authority?

The Texas Library Association filed a brief in support of the position that the existing statutory authority is sufficient. The AG will likely make a ruling by mid-summer.

### TBA Winner! Texas Students Choose Their Favorite



Lucy Nolan's book *Down*

*Girl and Sit: On the Road* is the winner of the 2007-2008 Texas Bluebonnet Award with 19,248 votes. *The Ghost's Grave* by Kehert with 15,830 votes and Bauer's *The Blue Ghost* with 15,738 were neck and neck for second and third place. The number of students who "got out the vote" this year was 151,107!

Nolan will be honored at the annual Texas Bluebonnet Award luncheon, April 17, at the TLA Annual Conference. Ten students from across the state will join forces to describe the book and present the award. The TBA recognition is one of the highest honors a children's book author can receive.

# Don't overlook Summer 2008 CE opportunities



BY TED WANNER, TLA'S CE SPECIALIST

Neal-Schuman Publishers' new online Professional Education Network continues with a wide selection of summer courses. Topics range from reference and outreach to collection assessment and outcome-based evaluation.

Many of the courses are offered as less expensive audio workshops, with a live instructor ready to answer questions. Julie Todaro, president of the Association of College and Research Libraries, will present "Customer Service: Strategies to Enjoy Success with Teens" on May 28. Programs on collaboration for academic librarians will run on May 30 and June 16. Technical services managers may wish to check out the Lipinski course on licensing on agreements on June 9.

Other courses are full Web-based multimedia presentations that still have a live instructor in addition to online content. Some of the webinars use multiple sessions for more in-depth coverage. For example, the four part series "Using Evaluation Results to Communicate Your Value" will be presented in June and September. A three part series on using spreadsheets in collection development will be given in July.

At one hour for each session, the PEN online courses can be a terrific addition to a staff development retreat or just a brief training session during the work week. TLA members still receive a 10% discount for early bird registration. For registration or more details on individual courses, please visit the PEN web site at [www.neal-schumanpen.com](http://www.neal-schumanpen.com).

## *Texas Library Polls*

As part of the Transforming Texas Libraries initiative, TLA will contract with a professional polling company to gather statewide public input on Texas libraries. The two basic goals of the survey are: 1) to assess public support for libraries (with a focus on evaluating the priority of libraries for the purpose of support from governing bodies and identifying key areas of need) and 2) to articulate the value of libraries.

The Brown Foundation of Houston has awarded TLA a generous grant to help cover the cost of professional polling. We expect the polls to be undertaken in late summer. The data from the surveys will help the Visioning Task Force complete its report as well as provide information for policy planning over the coming years.

## *Connecting to Collections*

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the Texas Historical Commission, the Texas Library Association, and three additional partners a \$40,000 Connecting to Collections Statewide Planning grant to establish processes and develop resources to assess the collection care needs of Texas libraries, archives, museums, and other institutions.

Texas is home to more than 700 public, academic, and special libraries; over 600 museums of history, art, science, and natural history; and innumerable historical and genealogical societies; corporate, government, and special archives; and other cultural heritage institutions. The six project partners will share information to form a single database of libraries, archives, government agencies, and museums in the state that can be used to coordinate disaster management and preservation efforts.

## **PEN Course Schedule** *for May 22 – September 30*

- May 28, Noon–1 PM (audio)**  
*Customer Service: Strategies to Enjoy Success with Teens with Julie Todaro*
- May 28, Noon–1 PM (audio)**  
*Serving New Immigrant Communities*
- May 29, 1–2 PM (audio)**  
*Preteen Programming*
- May 30, 1–2 PM (audio)**  
*Collaborative Information Systems and Reference Service*
- June 3, 1–2 PM, repeated 6–8 PM**  
*Genealogy Series – Spring 2008: Using Western Land Records (audio)*
- June 4, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Evaluation Results to Communicate Your Value, Part 1. What to Measure & Why*
- June 9, 1–2 PM (audio)**  
*Licensing Agreements 101 – in 2008*
- June 11, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Evaluation Results to Communicate Your Value Part 2. Needs Assessment*
- June 12, Noon–1 PM (webinar)**  
*e-Learning for Librarians: An Ideas Playground*
- June 16, 1–2 PM (audio)**  
*Pro-active Relationship Building: Reaching Out to Your Academic Faculty Clients*
- July 7, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Microsoft Excel to Analyze Library Collection Usage Data, Part 1*
- July 14, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Microsoft Excel to Analyze Library Collection Usage Data, Part 2*
- July 16, Noon–1 PM (webinar)**  
*Searching 2.0*
- July 21, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Microsoft Excel to Analyze Library Collection Usage Data, Part 3*
- September 17, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Evaluation Results to Communicate Your Value Part 3. Outcomes Measurement*
- September 24, 1–2 PM (webinar)**  
*Using Evaluation Results to Communicate Your Value Part 4. Culture of Assessment and Communicating Your Value*