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COVER: "Nightmare" by Megan Emerick; winner in the digital photography division, high school level, as well as Best of Show in the 2009 Texas Media Awards. Information on the yearly awards, which are announced each year at annual conference, is available on the TLA website.

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Directions



BY
PATRICK
HEATH

One of the slanders perpetrated upon the male of the species is that we won't ask for directions. This is not true. I would be perfectly willing to ask for directions if I ever got lost, but I never do! (I can hear people snickering in the background, including my wife.)

Yet, I have to admit that we all (even men) do need to be clear about the direction we are heading in our individual and collective lives. As TLA is considering some new directions in its movement forward, and we look at the possibility of transforming the way we serve our membership, I offer these goals for the work we are doing together and I do ask for your help with directions.

During this period of flux in our nation's policies and fundamental changes in our civil society, we should advance the transformation of TLA's structure to ensure that our organization is flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the stated needs of our members. Many of you have already helped TLA's leadership team by responding thoughtfully to the two online questionnaires which have been posted asking about desirable changes in TLA's structure and services. It's important for us to keep in touch with the expressed needs of our members and to respond carefully and appropriately to what we hear. Look for future opportunities to help us with your insights.

Let's encourage increased participation of lay persons in TLA, since they are one of the strong elements of support for the crucial role of libraries in our communities. I obviously have a bias on this issue, but many of you likely share my conviction that communities of supportive constituents are key to the effectiveness and relevance of all types of libraries.

I was a late arrival in the world of websites, but now, of course, I'm an expert on what a site should be and do! I hope we can re-design the TLA website to make it even more attractive, useful, and friendly.

Building on the work of past presidents Steve Brown and Melody Kelly, let's continue helping our members and their communities transform libraries to meet the changing needs of constituents. We don't need change just for the sake of change, but we do need to be alert to what our constituents need and want.

I'm willing to ask directions if you are. Let's do it together! ★

**FILTERING
CHAOS**



The 2010 conference logo is evolving from a word cloud created by the program committee.

21st Century Libraries: Are We Really Ready?

Ask any librarian

or library supporter about the “challenges” libraries face and most (if not all) will say that the public still does not fully understand the impact and role of the library. How many times have we, as a profession, talked about modernizing the perception of the library? How many times have we bemoaned the fact that most decision-makers and certainly the new generations of kids see libraries as icons (however trusted) of the past? If only we could get those people to see libraries as dynamic 21st century institutions...
If only...

This line of thinking rests on the assumption that libraries today are, in fact, 21st century libraries and that our problem is simply aligning public perception with the reality of who we (libraries) are now.

Many of us recognize that not all libraries are on the mark here. We’ve started various conversations about transforming libraries, and I think people are immediately animated by that discussion. That discussion is hopeful and innovative, and it lets us imagine what we want to be, what we could be, and what we believe will be so vital and integral to daily life that libraries (as an industry/endeavor) and librarians (as professionals) will be so respected and valued that we’ll never have to worry about budgets, layoffs, or obsolescence ever again.

We all want that magic, silver bullet that will dispatch our enemy – a multi-limbed beast of growing public indifference, perceived obsolescence from decision-makers, and an information infrastructure that is rapidly developing without us. I hear the following all the time: What we need is a real slogan that captures today’s library; What we need is an image of tomorrow’s library; We need to focus on reading and books because that’s still what’s most important to current users; We need to focus on non-users who don’t see the need for library; and so on. And, we want a brand (like Nike’s or Microsoft’s) that

will convey all of these messages shortly and succinctly. Oh, and we want it to be universally understandable. Once we have this message (brand, slogan, etc.), surely all good things will follow.

We want to use this message in some broad statewide campaign that permeates the airwaves (radio, TV, etc.). We want it on billboards, buses, and anywhere people are likely to look.

We want it to speak to school libraries, public libraries (large and small), special libraries, and academic libraries. We want librarians and library supporters to love it, and we want it to speak to the public.

Does all this seem a little unrealistic to you? I’m all for thinking big, but the fact is that before we can really take a step forward, we have to assess ourselves critically and figure out where we want to go.

Furthermore, we have to recognize that not every library wants to and is ready to bill itself as a 21st century library. I’m not even sure that, collectively, we even know what that means.

I suspect, though, that coming up with an answer is going to involve letting go of some truly sacred cows. During the transforming Texas libraries discussion, there was much debate over “getting rid of the reference desk.” The idea was based in offering more flexible and tailored services when and how customers needed support.

If our primary concern is to improve the perception of libraries, how will we get the most bang out of a central unifying message. . .

That's just a beginning.

We all know that the most dynamic libraries today (and that includes all types in all sizes) offer a variety of services and resources. Books and story times are still incredibly important, and our online services and resources in many libraries are sophisticated. We know that libraries are still well-used today and that those who use libraries are big fans.

But here's the question (and this is a big one): If our primary concern is to improve the perception of libraries, how will we get the most bang out of a central unifying message?

Here are my thoughts.

1. We need to focus and accept that there is no silver bullet.
2. Our priority should be to present the 21st century library – what we can be today; not what we were yesterday.
3. Leave the building behind. While library as place is still incredibly important and will continue to be so, we have to evolve the concept of a library from primarily a thing to a service. We are in the service economy plain and simple. We have to move from the manufacturing age to the service industry. That's where our competition is. So, hard as it may be, promoting the 21 century library isn't about promoting libraries; it's about promoting library services and resources.
4. If we truly want to present cutting edge libraries (remember, we are talking about evolving that concept

to services rather than things), then we no longer showcase buildings, shelves of books, etc. We should show people – businessmen in their offices; students gathering at a favorite hangout; parents reading to their children – using library services in meaningful ways that fit into their lives, their schedules, and their environments. We have to rethink how we describe our role and what that role is.

5. We have to actually deliver 21st century library services. I had a lobbyist once ask me why the TexShare databases couldn't all be searched through one easy-to-use Google-like portal without multiple clicking, etc. I valiantly explained current efforts to provide a unified search tool and the requirements for making licensed information freely available, etc. "So what?" was the reply. "I still want it to be easy." Indeed, everyone does. If we really want to bill ourselves as 21st century libraries, then we had better well deliver. Progress is slow, I understand, but we need to have a very realistic sense of where we are now and a very ambitious plan for moving forward.
6. Survival of the fittest. I know, in library land, we are all about equality in service, in bringing opportunity to everyone. I'm all for that. What I'm talking about here is survival of the fittest among libraries. I know I'll likely be throttled for this, but here goes: If a library (small or large) still wants

only to be about books, is happy enough to serve current customers with current services (print bestsellers, for instance), that's fine. That's a choice. But, we as the library community cannot impede our progress because of the inertia of others.

We must become ready for the future and, for those libraries (and librarians) unwilling to commit to new service paradigms or ideas, they will be left behind. And, I don't believe it is the responsibility of the statewide library community to expend limited resources to help libraries merely keep the status quo.

We have a responsibility to move forward in services and planning. We owe that to those professionals and supporters who carved out library services at the turn of the 19th century. We own them keeping our important work alive, and we can only do that by evolving into the 21st century.

Libraries are not our fiefdoms. They are what we always tout them to be: creatures of and for the publics we serve. There are no silver bullets (or mythical monsters for that matter). We have our work, our mission, and our skills. Librarians also have a tremendous amount of courage and ingenuity. We have the most important ingredients already, but we have to use them in new ways. We must do – become, change, leave behind, adapt – whatever is necessary to move ahead. ✪

Top Technology Trends in Texas Libraries, Part I

BY TODD J. HUMBLE

Todd C. Peters and I are continuing the service that Richard Wayne has provided for many years to Texas librarians. This year's survey went out to all TLA members with an email account, and 700 librarians responded just a few weeks before the 2009 TLA Annual Conference. Each participant was allowed to select three of the trends that they saw as most important to their library. They were also given the chance to write in their own.

Since everyone is unique, you will see that the survey format changed some this year with some questions that are important to consider as to the actual state of Texas libraries. Some trends that truly are cutting edge cannot be addressed well when many libraries and librarians are still technically challenged in meeting basic customer demands such as Wi-Fi access (24% said they have none).

Does your library offer laptops for checkout? This question had a surprising 39% yes answer with nearly 10% of all respondents allowing the patron to take the laptop home.

How are you providing audio services to your patrons? 35% of respondents are providing downloadable eAudiobooks, and 27% are providing preloaded MP3 devices for patrons to utilize. 20% of the respondents are producing podcasts for their patrons as well.

How are you providing video services to your patrons? Almost everyone has DVDs (95%), but did you know almost 50% are providing streaming video, and 18% are creating streaming content of their own? There were actually a few libraries with no video resources at all though, and as expected, Blu-Ray is still below 5% adoption overall. Streaming video is a serious challenge to the Blu-Ray market as those that can afford broadband access increases. Will Joost, Hulu, and BlinkX be the networks of tomorrow?

Those who participated were asked about RIA platforms and approximately one third of the survey participants provided information that their institution was using one of the RIA technologies listed. RIA is a key element of the number one selected trend for 2009: implementing Web 2.0.

Web 2.0 is based on RIA (Rich Internet Applications – i.e., AJAX and Flash), SOA (Service Oriented Architectures – i.e., Feeds, RSS, and Mash-ups), and the Social Web (end user participation in creating content and tagging logic – i.e., Wikipedia, Facebook, youTube, and delicious). Several of the survey questions overlapped, but for those who were not aware, please realize that you likely already use Web 2.0 applications everyday.

T4

To truly learn Web 2.0, you must do it. As we become more social and create links between topics ourselves using tagging technologies, computer programs are being taught how things are connected. I did not list Web 3.0 as a topic to choose from because creating the Semantic Web (a.k.a. Web 3.0) takes the true use of Web 2.0 that most libraries are just starting to do now.

In the simplest definition, Web 3.0 joins the logic of how we see things related in the search results (i.e., “I ♥ libraries” = “I love libraries”). In reality, the linking of the ideas between the millions of pieces of information on the Internet is the goal of Web 3.0. Could this result in the creation of the singularity? Not sure what the singularity is? Read about it at www.spectrum.ieee.org/singularity. Although the Semantic Web is coming, it will not likely fully arrive in the next 12 months.

Ma.gnolia (a key social bookmarking site) died earlier this year and caused many people to loose what they had been building and relying upon. It was an open source project, and creators did not have enough expertise to know what they needed to protect their data. You may become a rising star by utilizing the freely available work of others, but if something goes wrong, what are the risks and possible consequences? Ma.gnolia may bloom again, but could you survive without your data for an extended period of time? The rapid creation of data without thought as to the backup of the collected information has to be overcome before Web 3.0 technologies can be relied upon.

I have gathered together the best tutorials I could find regarding Web 2.0 and have them organized for your complete introduction to this topic (including a brief discussion of Mashups and Web 3.0). This review and a discussion of the implications of not becoming Web 2.0 literate can be found in my updated PowerPoint presentation stored at www.slideshare.net/TechnoFlavo/t4-trends-2009-updated-version-1405375.

Todd C. Peters has also defined some of the trends that people asked for clarification on in his article that follows. I will continue to compile and provide you with entertaining and informative introductions to Technology Trends at <http://TechnoFlavo.blogspot.com>.

Todd J. Humble is a supervisor at North Richland Hills Public Library.

2009 Top Technology Trends in Texas Libraries

ANSWER OPTIONS	%	Response Count	Academic	Public	School	Special
Web 2.0 applications built on online technologies	15.8%	335	48	93	196	8
Virtual reference services (e-mail reference, chat reference through AIM, Yahoo, MSN messenger, meebo or other web-based chat applications)	9.2%	195	56	79	60	4
eBook readers (i.e., Kindle2)	9.2%	194	19	50	122	4
Online social software (i.e., FaceBook, MySpace, Twitter, Google tracking, LinkedIn)	7.8%	165	33	67	53	9
Information commons – facilities or resources to encourage gathering and production of data for future generations to utilize.	7.3%	154	65	38	53	2
Federated searching	7.1%	150	58	43	46	5
Gaming at the library	5.3%	113	3	68	42	3
Open source Integrated Library Systems (ILS) (i.e., koha and Evergreen)	5.0%	106	19	54	27	7
Designing for small screen Wi-Fi enabled devices	5.0%	105	44	35	25	6
Cloud computing (utilizing online storage and software rather than specific hardware)	4.9%	103	13	32	58	5
RFID	4.6%	98	13	74	11	0
Automated analysis to improve website design (i.e., Google Analytics)	3.8%	81	26	25	27	3
Learning object repositories	3.0%	63	23	6	16	2
RDA (Resource Description and Access) adoption	2.8%	60	16	22	21	1
CMS (Content Management Server) for website	2.1%	44	17	18	11	3
Perpetual BETA (always trying new add-ons and features to improve services even if not perfect)	1.8%	39	17	14	8	0
VM (virtual machine) based servers instead of dedicated hardware	1.7%	37	3	12	24	0
RIA (Rich Internet Application platforms)	1.4%	29	3	10	17	0
SaaS (Software as a Service)	0.9%	18	1	8	8	1
Shibboleth implementation	0.7%	14	13	0	0	2
SMS (short message service)	0.7%	14	2	8	4	0

First

Second

Third

multi-type libraries account for slight variation

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Top Technology Trends in Texas Libraries, Part 2

BY TODD C. PETERS

In the previous article, Todd J. Humble provided the results of the 2009 Top Technology Trends in Libraries Survey. Many recipients of the survey were not familiar with all of the technologies listed in the survey. Below are brief descriptions of some of the technologies mentioned in the survey that are most likely to be unfamiliar to all librarians.

Information Commons

Information commons are being developed primarily at college and university libraries. Most are operated as a partnership between libraries and computer and academic support staff in order to provide integrated support. Technology staff can handle computer problems and library staff can provide research support. They consist of a central organized workspace for research and group collaboration with computers for individual and group use. They usually provide a variety of technologies to support multimedia projects. Enclosed areas with projectors which allow students to practice giving presentations are also common.

Shibboleth

Shibboleth is a standards-based method of federated authentication under development primarily in higher education. The term, of Hebrew origin, generally refers to any phrase or custom that can be used to identify individuals as members of a specific group. The Shibboleth protocol allows users to authenticate with their home institutions when accessing external resources instead of authenticating separately with each resource. After authenticating a user, the home institution will pass information (attributes) about the user, such as university affiliation, to the remote resource which can then decide whether to permit the user to access resources. Federated authentication can eliminate the difficulty of managing multiple usernames and passwords for resources. It is more secure than IP based authentication and offers the possibility of a user's identity remaining anonymous to remote resources. More information can be found at: Shibboleth.internet2.edu

Virtual Machines (VM)

A Virtual Machine (VM) is a single system configured as multiple smaller systems, each capable of running its own copy of an operating system. So instead of purchasing separate hardware for each server you operate, you purchase one server and run multiple virtual servers on it. According

to Gartner, 80% to 90% of the computing capacity of a typical server is unused at any one time. So, virtual machines are a more cost efficient use of processing power and libraries can realize a savings in hardware costs. Virtual machines have additional benefits. VM instances can easily be copied to other servers running VM software. This allows for rapid disaster recovery, ease of setting up "sandboxes" for testing, and faster rollouts. Other uses for VM's than supporting servers include installing and configuring an application on an OS as a ready-to-run package for an end user that can be downloaded and used with a VM Client. The major players in VM software are VMware, Microsoft Virtual Server 2005, Oracle VM, Sun xVM, and Xen.

CMS

Content management systems (CMS) have been around for a number of years. Their primary purpose is to simplify website management. In recent years, there have been a number of open source CMS applications that have become popular. Using a CMS is beneficial for an organization because content owners can be responsible for updating pages through a web-based interface, usually without having to code HTML. Consistent look and feel features, such as graphics, headers, footers, and pull down menus can be applied uniformly by the system without the intervention of the page owner. There are many other benefits using a CMS from common features such as versioning, content approval, and sandboxes for development. There are many, many open source examples such as Drupal, WebGUI, and Joomla! The CMS Matrix is a good source for finding more information about specific CMS applications: www.cmsmatrix.org/

Learning Object Repositories

Learning objects are objects or sets of resources used for instructional purposes. Examples include text documents, PowerPoint slides, flash animations, and data sets. Learning object repositories have become more of an interest to institutions of higher education as the use of online course information systems such as Blackboard, WebCT, and Sakai by faculty has increased. This has increased the amount of digital instructional materials being created by instructors. Often, faculty likes to reuse or recombine these materials for subsequent semesters or related courses. Repositories are intended to help organize, search, re-use, and preserve learning objects. ☛

T4

Todd C. Peters is head of the Computer Information Services Department at the Alkek Library, Texas State University.

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Translating an Academic Library into

Second Life

BY LISA ANCELET, LORIN FISHER, AND TARA SPIES



Images courtesy of Alkek Library, Texas State University

In our drive to accommodate and meet change, we often face the point where old and new collide, a space where we carefully select the things we deem most central and vital to what we do and then push them forward into the new. Every time we implement innovations, especially radical ones, we must learn a new language. In a sense, we are translating our work into a new mode of practice. Nowhere is this process more apparent than in virtual worlds, which are literally like entirely separate countries with their own culture and lingo. Marc Prensky uses the metaphor of “digital immigrants” and “digital natives” to describe the divide between those who were born with the Web and those who were born before it (Prensky, 2001, 1-2). This is a useful concept to relate to the development of virtual worlds where even the “digital natives” are immigrants too.

Texas State University-San Marcos, in common with other universities and educational institutions, has been developing different modes of technology to deliver, enhance, and expand learning. One facet of these projects/initiatives is the university’s Second Life campus. In the fall of 2008, an informal task force composed of three volunteer Alkek Library reference librarians participated in a pilot to expand library services in Texas State University-San Marcos’ virtual campus in Second Life.



known as “avatars,” and use these avatars to interact with the game environment and other users’ avatars.

Second Life’s growth has been fueled in part by its unique structure which allows users, commonly known as “residents,” to build their own content within the Second Life world and to retain intellectual property rights over what they create. In fact, nearly all in-world content is produced by residents, and Second Life can be thought of as a platform for creative efforts. Second Life content can take various forms, such as avatar clothing, buildings, avatar skins, and also services which are then freely bought and sold using the Second Life currency, the Linden dollar. Linden dollars can be converted into US dollars and can be bought and sold on the Linden Exchange. It is also stated on the official Second Life website that this in-world economy generates \$35 million US dollars per month in financial transactions.

Educational Institutions and Libraries in Second Life

It did not take long for educational institutions to realize the possibilities for new and interactive ways for enhancing educational content, delivery, and new modes of learning using Second Life as a platform. In particular, institutions of higher learning became quickly involved in developing sites (simulators or sims) with interactive educational content, virtual meeting spaces, and developing classes and class projects in-world. As educational institutions migrated into Second Life, libraries and librarians followed and established library services in the developing online campuses. In addition to these individual libraries, the Alliance Library System, an Illinois-based consortium of public and academic libraries, founded the Second Life Library in 2006, which grew over time to encompass an archipelago of surrounding islands, housing subject area libraries and specialized reference desks in addition to the main reference desk on Info Island.

What is Second Life?

Second Life is an online virtual world created in 2003 and is run by Linden Labs, a private company. Since then, it has increasingly grown in popularity and prominence. Second Life began to attract widespread media exposure in 2006, which in turn generated interest in Second Life business and educational applications in addition to its obvious recreational aspects. According to the Linden Lab Second Life login screen, 1,444,530 residents logged in to Second Life in the last 60 days.

Visually, Second Life resembles a video game. Users create a customizable three dimensional representation of their bodies,



Texas State University-San Marcos and Alkek Library in Second Life

Texas State University-San Marcos established a Second Life presence in August 2006. The campus was built by Emin Saglamer (Troy Vogel), a prominent Second Life builder and long-time resident who also works as technical lead for the Texas State University-San Marcos Instructional Systems Design Team. In the summer of 2007, a steering committee for the university's Second Life presence was formed consisting of Emin Saglamer and Robyn Herry from the Instructional Systems Design Team; Lorin Fisher, a reference/instruction librarian; and a volunteer librarian at the Second Life Library Info Island reference desk. The virtual campus included various buildings including classrooms, meeting areas, and recognizable campus landmarks. The Second Life Alkek Library building was added in 2007. The primary purpose of this first version of the campus was to provide a meeting place for future classes and also to serve as a marketing tool.

Development of the Second Life Alkek Library

Throughout 2007, the Second Life library building contained a few links to major library resources as well as contact information to connect to a librarian developed by Emin Saglamer and Lorin Fisher, and later Tara Spies. In the fall of 2008, a volunteer group consisting of Lisa Ancelet, Lorin Fisher, and Tara Spies began piloting reference hours in the Second Life Alkek Library building.

The pilot reference desk hours were from 2-4pm Monday to Friday, with the proviso that hours might be adjusted according to librarians' schedule. As all three volunteer librarians are very active in committees, instruction, and other duties, and it was felt that, at least during the pilot phase, that real life duties should take precedence over Second Life duties.

The Second Life Alkek Library collection continued to be built and developed during this pilot period. More scripted objects were added that enable the user to open up Web resources in a separate browser window. Each object carried a floating label identifying the resource and simple directions, such as "click here." Some of the resources made accessible in this manner were the library's electronic reserves, the library's databases

page, and the library catalog. However, these resources require a university login, which in practical terms means that only university students, staff, and faculty can access these sources from Second Life. Other freely accessible Web-based resources like Google news and Wikipedia were also added in an effort to have resources available for non-university affiliated visitors.

Wittliff Collections

Texas State University's Wittliff Collections, part of the Alkek Library, also maintains a virtual presence in Second Life. The Wittliff Collections comprise the Southwestern Writers Collection and the Southwestern and Mexican Photography Collection. The Second Life Alkek Library has a virtual version



architecture
planning
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of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *La Relación* to represent the original 1555 edition of *La Relación* which resides at the Southwestern Writers Collection.

The Wittliff Gallery is a separate two story building on the Texas State Second Life Campus. Both floors of the gallery contain a virtual collection of photographs from the Southwestern and Mexican Photography Collection. The photographs are interactive, and when clicked on, they give notes with the photograph's title and name.

Reference/instruction librarian Tara Spies started working with Emin Saglamer in the fall of 2008 to find a way to manipulate the frames that he had made for the photographs so the Second Life Gallery's exhibits could change with the Wittliff Gallery's exhibits in real life. There were a couple of reasons why this became very challenging. First, Emin Saglamer is a programmer and had built somewhat complex frames to be edited by an amateur Second Life resident.

The second challenge was working in a three dimensional world instead of a two dimensional world. The Second Life canvas is made of three axes—height, width, and depth—rather than that of a two dimensional photo editing program with height and width only. Spies had experience working with digital versions of photographs in photo editing programs, but the three axes of dimensions in Second Life were more difficult to manipulate. To resolve the problem, Saglamer found and bought a frame maker that has a user-friendly interface and can be easily edited to contain different sized virtual photographs. With this tool, Spies can now meet the goal of rotating the photographs in the virtual Wittliff Gallery to coincide with current Wittliff Southwestern and Mexican Photography exhibits.

Future Collaborations and Growth

In addition to populating the Wittliff Gallery with exhibits, Alkek Library is also planning to add a screen for streaming videos. The library currently has video tutorials available via the library website. The screen will allow visitors to click on the different links to stream the tutorials within Second Life. Also, the *Ask a Librarian* service is offered in Second Life. We added information about the available hours on the *Ask a Librarian* Web page, making it "official." Future plans include possibly adding the *Ask a Librarian* chat widget directly in the Second Life Alkek Library. The feasibility of this element still needs to be investigated.

Plans are underway with members of the cataloging department to create a presence for Cataloging in Second Life. Some of the ideas generated in a brainstorming session include: having "Ask a Cataloging Librarian" hours; offering a way to contact a cataloging librarian via an email link or online form beyond "live" hours; adding a link or an "object" for users to access the online catalog problem reporting form; and adding a link to "My Account" for users to check the

status of their circulation records. Another idea is to work with instruction librarians to create a tutorial to teach the Library of Congress (LOC) classification system or perhaps create a game on LOC subject searching.

Other suggestions stemming from the brainstorming session include creating a bookcase with note cards that link to the library FAQs. Such action would help bring awareness to the most common questions the library gets at the physical desk and those we have posted on our website. Creating a section in the Second Life library that promotes the university archives and history of Texas State is another future endeavor we hope to add in order to bring awareness to the university's historical documents located in the university institutional repository, eCommons. This project will include collaborating with the university archivist to work with the digitized university archives.

In late April 2009, Texas State University's virtual campus was publicized on the university's website, thus increasing the visibility of the project to all campus users. This will most likely lead to more traffic and student use of the virtual campus and also by extension increase visits to the virtual library. It remains to be seen how classes and other activities will develop in this new area.

Lisa Ancelet is head of reference services.

Lorin Fisher is information literacy coordinator.

Tara Spies is reference instruction librarian.

All are with Texas State University-San Marcos.

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Great Expectations:

How Digital Project Planning Fosters Collaboration between Academic Libraries and External Entities

BY SHELLEY BARBA AND JOY PERRIN

Introduction

Academic libraries strive to connect people with information to enhance teaching, learning, and scholarly pursuits. Within this dynamic environment, digital libraries are increasingly at the forefront of services and offerings. Digital librarians and staff must connect with donors, professors, and other university departments to develop these new libraries and to ensure the success of these ventures.

For librarians and staff charged with growing and maintaining a digital library, one of the more difficult aspects is gathering material from others – different departments within the library, university departments, societies, or professors. It is a process of true collaboration and trust. Library staff (the technical professionals) contribute the expertise and equipment to digitize, organize, and present the information and to ensure the successful completion of the project. The contribution of the collaborators is their information, willingness to share, and guiding view of the project's end result. Neither group can work well without the other. Ever-improving technologies make the digital new world amazing, but what the donor envisions may not be what the library envisions or is even capable of doing. In order for this needed partnership to succeed, the roles and expectations of planners and contributors must be met.

Digital project planning enables library staff to design digital projects so as to be a positive collaboration between a digital library and any external entity. By having a standardized system in place to plan out and implement the specifics and expectations of both parties involved, the library forges better relationships with donors, professors, and other university departments. Digital project planning breaks projects into manageable parts and keeps all players well informed. The success of project planning is its clear communication.

This article is not about which technologies, software, or scanners digital libraries should use; nor is it about which kind of projects digital libraries should pursue. These topics are best left to the individual organizations, specifics that would reflect the goals and constraints of each library. This article focuses on digital project planning, the foundation

work that enables items not born digitally to be successfully represented in an electronic format in a relatively painless fashion.

What is Digital Project Planning?

Digital project planning is the consideration and documentation of the needed elements and processes to make a digital project efficiently successful. In short, it is about taking the time before implementation to make sure the project will move smoothly. It ensures that resources are utilized effectively with less stress, allowing the project to be a positive experience for both library staff and others. Some will contend that project planning is a waste of time; that too much time is spent talking about what to do rather than doing it. However, it can actually save time and money by streamlining the work, identifying problems beforehand or by discovering the project is not worth the effort for the library to pursue at the present time. A project may sound great when it seems to be cheap and easy, but minds may be changed once the project has been carefully planned, and it is revealed to be expensive and difficult.

The most important part of project planning is the people. In the project planning process, there are many “players” involved. The sponsor is like a super customer and is either from within the organization or outside of it. The sponsor is the guardian of expectations and defines the parameters of success or failure. For the project plan, nothing should be changed without sponsor's approval.

The next player is the project manager, who oversees the project in its entirety and makes sure each step in the process happens appropriately. He or she defines the project and directs communication. Most importantly, the project manager becomes responsible for the success of the project as defined by the sponsor. It is the project manager's job to take the sponsor's goals and then figure out who and what it will take to meet those goals. Before any work starts, the project manager must estimate how much time the project will take, how much it will cost, and what other resources will be needed.

Stakeholders form the third group of people involved in the project planning process. In the case of a digital project, stakeholders are those who benefit from having the items digitized and made available online. They can include students, scholars, professors, institutes, and the general public. Once the sponsor, project manager, and stakeholders are identified, a project planning team is formed. Everyone in the planning team should represent either a group or a skill set. After all the people are identified, the digital project planning can begin. The process starts with the sponsor telling the project manager of *what* is wanted, *how* it is wanted, and by *when* it is wanted.

In a planning meeting, the project manager tells the project planning team what the sponsor wants. Then, the project manager and the planning team document their path. There are three important documents that should be created. The first is the definition document; it defines what should be done, how it should be done and includes things like a goal statement, a completion criteria, limitations of the project, and a list of deliverables, or specific desired outcomes. The second document is the estimation of work or timeline; this defines what can realistically be done and who will be doing them. The final document the team produces is the risk management plan, defining what the risks are and how to mitigate them. The project manager presents these documents to the sponsor who then can decide with the organization whether or not to proceed. It took Texas Tech University a year to successfully internalize this process, and it greatly changed how we approached digitization.

The Digital Dickens Project

Texas Tech University Libraries began their Digital Library Initiative in the summer of 2006 to create a digital library collection representative of the physical holdings. A part of that initiative was the purchase of a Kirtas Scanner that could digitize books very quickly and without damaging the original item. The technology was rather innovative at the time, and the process of digitization was completely new to the library staff. Staff did not know who needed to be involved or how to establish the proper workflows for the process. A group was established, the Digital Libraries Initiative Team (DLIT), to work out these issues and manage the development of the digital library and its projects. The team looked for smaller projects with which the library could gain experience.

An English Department's pet project came to the team's attention in October of that year. The Texas Tech University Library owned the full collection of *All the Year Round*, a 19th century weekly literary journal edited by Charles Dickens and his son, Charles Dickens, Jr. The journal contains both literary pieces and non-fiction essays chronicling contemporary life around the world. The English Department was interested in digitizing the collection, but it did not have the resources to scan the items. The English Department became aware of the library's purchase of the high speed book scanner and then asked the library for help. The DLIT judged that the proposed project's small number of items (40 bound volumes with about 600 pages each) and the scholarly value of having the material easily accessible was ideal for selecting it as one of the library's first digital projects. The project was approved and ready to begin. Volumes were pulled from the library's shelves, and then promptly sat in the digitization lab for the next 12 months without anything being done.

What went wrong? The finished product was valuable to the scholarly community, all the necessary equipment was available, and the volumes were there ready to be processed. The problem was no one was responsible for the success of the project, and no one involved knew who had the authority to decide what needed to be done and how.

Digital Project Management to the Rescue

In the spring after the Digital Dickens Project had been approved, the university library began to integrate project management practices into its culture. A group of administrators, librarians, and support staff attended a three-day workshop presented by Brigham Young University to learn the methodologies and vocabulary for project management. After this training, projects that had been languishing were re-evaluated by the Digital Library Initiative Team. By fall, they appointed a project manager to the Digital Dickens Project and planning began for the digitization process. It took only one month to completely plan out this project. This involved working through logistics of the technology available, workflows, and establishing in writing what the English Department was expecting the finished project to look like and what the library was going to deliver. Scanning began in November of 2007, and the project was fully completed, including the creation of original metadata, by December of 2008.

The success of this case study lies in how the project moved along once a digital project plan had been established. All those involved knew what role they needed to play and whom to speak with when there were problems or better approaches. For example, once the project plan was accepted and started implementation, the student assistants who were working on the project had a question about how much they should clean up the images. They were spending five hours on each book cleaning the image, and they wanted to know if they really had to maintain that level of perfection. The manager was able to take the issue directly to the project manager, who took the issue to the sponsor (someone from the English Department). The project sponsor had the authority to approve the change in requirements, or acknowledge that the project could take longer than original expected. In this case, the sponsor approved the changes in processing and allowed the project to finish sooner than expected. The digital project planning process defines where there might be "wiggle room" and allows for honesty about expectations and abilities. Digital project planning works because everybody is aware of any problems and their solutions, so nothing is a surprise at the end of the project.

The Digital Dickens Project, Transformed

Implementing the digital project planning process gave this project the three things it needed in order to be successful: authority, a path, and communication. A large part of the

digital project planning's triumph is how project managers and sponsors are seen as authorities in regards to the project. They must be able to bring those they choose into the project team and receive deliverables from them. This authority is a resource for the project manager to make things happen and balances the responsibility of having getting the project done.

Digital project planning produces a path detailing how the project will be completed. The path includes project definitions, workflows, metadata schemas, and project deliverables lists. One of the biggest advantages to having a path is, if people leave the project, it does not fade away. People are promoted, retire, graduate, and some even leave the library. As most digitization projects are longer than a week or even a couple of months, it is likely that someone who is there at the beginning of a project will not be around to the end. The documented path allows the project to continue on and even helps the new players when they join.

Finally, communication is the biggest advantage to digital project planning. Planning's very nature requires communication among all the people involved with digitizing materials. The planning allows workers (those scanning or creating metadata) to estimate and express the resources and time necessary for them to complete their tasks. Everybody knows what is expected of them and, if they need help, that they can turn to the project manager, who in turn knows who needs to be contacted. By gaining these three tools, those involved on the Digital Dickens Project were able to work in a cohesive and collaborative manner.

Conclusion

Through the digital project planning process, the Digital Dickens Project received the three parts of project success: authority, a path, and communication. Without these tools, the project was doomed to fail and possibly sour a good partnership with the English Department. Through the planning process, both parties were able to express what they needed and now the digital library has a positive relationship with the English Department and is developing further projects. Even more valuable, the digital library has a great reference when trying to pursue similar projects with other departments at the university.

Texas Tech University Library staff learned to document planning considerations, assign someone to the project, and make it part of his or her job to get it completed. Those involved with digitization learned that having all the resources is only a part of doing a project. It is vitally important to make sure someone had the authority to approve changes and to make the lines of communication clear.

Other libraries, including public and special libraries, seeking to develop their digital collections by collaborating with external entities would benefit greatly by implementing

project planning procedures. There is a vast amount of literature available and most likely already sitting in the shelves in the libraries. To make this work the best for each organization, the digital librarian, team, or administration should learn as much as they can about project planning and then adapt the knowledge to his or her organization: use what works and throw out what does not. The important thing is to make *great expectations* clear, assign responsibility, and communicate by writing things down in formal documents that then can be passed on.

Shelley Barba is a metadata librarian, and Joy Perrin is a digital lab manager. Both are at Texas Tech University.

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Implementation of an Authoritative FAQ Database

BY RANDY WALLACE, CATHERINE SASSEN, AND MONIKA ANTONELLI

An FAQ is a logical, consistent, and efficient way of providing answers to commonly asked questions. Over the years, the University of North Texas (UNT) Libraries have experimented with several innovative approaches to enhancing delivery of its reference services. One such effort was the creation of rich online FAQ. The original incarnation of this effort began in July 2004. While the UNT Libraries are now on the next generation of virtual reference services (including the FAQ), the creation and implementation of the original FAQ, using the VRLplus client software, provided valuable lessons in the design of such a tool and offered students and faculty an important support tool.

FAQ – The Beginning

UNT Libraries implemented the FAQ Knowledgebase of Docutek's Virtual Reference Librarian (VRL) plus interface in July of 2005 after several months of revision and input. The purpose of the FAQ was to: 1) enrich online reference information provided to library patrons particularly during times when reference assistance was unavailable and 2) provide support to librarians and new staff members. A link to the FAQ was made available through the Docutek chat/email reference services offered by UNT Libraries so students and faculty could assist themselves more easily.

This service served as a complement to UNT's online reference help desk and provided information to users 24 hours a day, seven days a week from almost any location since access was guaranteed through the Internet. This was an important undertaking considering that many students begin their homework after 9:00 p.m., when reference desks are not staffed (Carlson 2007, 34).

Because the FAQ was based on questions received from students at multiple reference points, it was designed to address everyday information needs. The FAQ also supported librarians in answering reference questions, whether face-to-face or virtually. The well-formulated entries provided step-by-step answers in a variety of reference contexts. The time and energy saved by utilization

of the FAQ allowed librarians to concentrate on answering unique questions.

The FAQ also facilitated the training for new staff members. Each semester, new staff members were trained, and the FAQ served as an important part of that training. The FAQ provided a safety net to lessen the learning curve inherent for new employees. The FAQ also provided a means for ensuring consistent and accurate delivery of reference information.

Features of the FAQ database – The Users' View

The FAQ database allowed users to search by Title or by Keywords.

FIGURE 1: *Users' View of Search*

The screenshot shows a search interface with the following elements:

- Search Online Expert Entries** (header)
- Search...** (input field)
- Search tips:** Comma delimit search terms to return entries that contain at least one of the terms.
- Title** for [input field] **Search** (button)
- Keywords** for [input field] **Search** (button)
- Filtering Options** section with a **Category** dropdown menu set to **Any**.

Users could also browse the list of category headings and subheadings using the drop-down menu under the Filtering Options section.

FIGURE 2: List of Category Headings

Here is an example of a keyword search for "books" which retrieved 13 results.

- Any
- About the Libraries : General
- About the Libraries : User Name and Password
- Art : General
- Books : Borrowing
- Books : Electronic
- Books : Learning
- Books : Recommended for Purchase
- Citations and Research Papers : General
- Citations and Research Papers : Style manuals
- Comments : General
- Electronic Resources : Access
- Fines : General

FIGURE 3: *Sample Keyword Search "books"*

The screenshot shows the search results page with the following elements:

- Search...** (input field)
- Search tips:** Comma delimit search terms to return entries that contain at least one of the terms.
- Title** for [input field] **Search** (button)
- Keywords** for **books** **Search** (button)
- Filtering Options** section with a **Category** dropdown menu set to **Any**.
- 13 results** View: **10 results** per page
- Page 1 of 2 **First** | **Previous** | **Next** | **Last**
- Search results...** (header for results)
- Can I download an entire ebook?**
Due to licensing restrictions and copyright laws, patrons can not download ebooks. Entry reviewed May 22, 2006. Entry created October 14, 2004.
Date entered: 8/11/2006 10:54:56 AM

To access the full entry, the user clicked on the title.

FIGURE 4: *Full Entry*

Can I download an entire ebook?

Due to licensing restrictions and copyright laws, patrons can not download ebooks

Entry reviewed May 22, 2006
Entry created October 14, 2004

[< Go back to search list](#)

Created by: Sassen, Cathy **Category:** Books

Keywords: download ebooks, electronic books, online books, netLibrary, licensing, license, copyright **Subcategory:** Electronics

When using the category browsing option, the search returned seven items for the heading “Books: Borrowing.”

FIGURE 5: *Category Browsing*

Filtering Options

Category: Entries with category: Books: Borrowing

7 results View: 10 results per page Page 1 of 1 First | Previous | Next | Last

Search results...

Can I get access to books if I'm out of town?
Students enrolled in a distributed learning class may request books and journal articles that are available at the University of North Texas Libraries. There is no charge for this service. A mailer, along with packing materials is provided to return bo...
Date entered: 10/4/2004 5:39:04 PM

Does the library provide courier service?
Document delivery of articles from journals owned by the University of North Texas Libraries is available electronically to UNT faculty, staff and students if the library material is located in a facility that is physically removed from the

Questions in the FAQ Database

Each entry in the database originated as a reference question. The questions came from a variety of sources. First of all, transcripts from online reference chat sessions were analyzed to identify the questions that were consistently asked by library users. Questions also were taken from a “frequently asked questions” file housed at the UNT social sciences and humanities reference desk. In addition, reference librarians reported the questions that were often asked of them. The majority of the questions selected concerned access to library services, such as how to use electronic reserves and how to check out an online book. Additional questions were directional, such as how to locate specific library buildings and collections. Other questions concerned specific research processes, such as how to write a research paper and how to cite sources.

After specific questions and answers were selected for the database, reference librarians reviewed the answers for clarity and accuracy. In many cases, questions and answers were rephrased so that they would be easier for users to understand. Designers made an effort to avoid using jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms. A date was added to each entry to show when it was created. If the entry was subsequently revised, a revision date was added to the entry. (See Figure 4.)

Mechanics of Docutek

Because Docutek required that all modules of the VRLplus client reside on its server (not UNT’s server), the ability to document usage was limited. A poll of the reference staff indicated that the most commonly used questions were:

1. How do I create a NetLibrary account?
2. Where can I find full-text articles?
3. How can a distance education student borrow a book?
4. How do I apply for and use a TexShare card?
5. What is Remote Storage?

Keywords

FAQ database entries could be retrieved with keywords. The keywords assigned to an entry included not only the significant terms used in the question and answer, but also synonyms. For example, the FAQ entry about periodicals included the keywords “periodicals,” “journals,” “serials,” and “magazines.” Although a librarian might prefer the terms “periodicals”

and “serials,” the user might refer to these publications as “magazines” or “journals.” It was important to reflect users’ language in FAQ entries to increase the probability of user retrieval and to avoid “lexical disagreement problems” in searching (Kim, Lee, and Seo 2007, 420-430). Synonyms were also included among the keywords assigned to the entry because the Docutek VRLplus software currently did not treat keywords as part of a controlled vocabulary, and it had no mechanism for making cross references among keywords.

The plural form of the keyword was used because of the nature of the search feature in the Docutek VRLplus software. For example, if the keyword “periodicals” was used, a search key of “periodical” or “periodicals” would retrieve the entry. However, if the keyword of “periodical” was used, a search key of “periodicals” would not retrieve the entry.

The method of searching the FAQ was accomplished by a string search in both the “Title” and “Keywords” areas. The term searched was automatically truncated at both ends of the string of characters. For example, entering the term “ook” returned results containing the terms book, books, ebook, ebooks, etc. This technique allowed for greater flexibility and yielded more results than either standard truncation or wildcard searches. Since the FAQ automatically truncated the

string, no special characters were used to indicate truncation. The same was true for wildcard searches. The FAQ did not accommodate the use of any special characters within the search string to indicate truncation.

Category Headings

The Docutek VRLplus software required the use of category headings to group the entries. When choosing category headings, it was important to select terms that will be easy to understand, such as “Books,” “Fines,” “Hours,” and “Periodicals.” The system software further required that each category heading have two levels. (See Figure 4.) For example, the category heading of “Periodicals” could not be used alone. The heading had to be “Periodicals” with a subheading. In the cases in which a narrower term was not appropriate, a policy was established to use the subheading “General.”

The database could be searched by using a dropdown list of categories assigned to the questions. Users wanting to browse the entries could select a category from the dropdown menu and retrieve a list of questions with answers. Selecting the “Any” category from the list returned all questions in the FAQ.

Maintaining the FAQ Database

The information in the FAQ database, like any reference tool, was reviewed regularly to ensure its usefulness and accuracy. The virtual reference coordinator and department head were responsible for reviewing questions and answers annually and as needed. Library staff examined existing entries and rephrased for clarity. They also checked for accuracy, especially in view of any changes that may have been made in library practices or policies. The URLs in answers were checked as well, and faulty links were corrected. Staff added to the database as reference librarians become aware of new repeated queries.

Where We Are Now

Today, UNT Libraries reference services are based on a collaborative effort, AskAcademic, with academic libraries in the State of Colorado. Through this protocol (which affords an increased number librarians staffing the online environment), the university is now able to provide personal reference support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The role of the FAQ in providing consistent and “self-help” narrative to users continues and can help maximize the use of live reference help for questions and issues requiring greater interaction.

Accordingly, the questions and answers in the FAQ are currently being assessed for inclusion in the UNT Libraries’ FAQ which resides on the local website. The infrastructure of the website FAQ provides more flexible indexing of the questions. The timeline for this conversion is currently being negotiated, but the goal is to have the FAQ migrated by September 2009.

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Partnerships for a Healthy Community: Laredo Public Library's Children's Health Fair and Outreach Program

BY AND RENA REN, ALEX POTEKIN, AND KEITH W. COGDILL

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Introduction

The Laredo Public Library (LPL), serving the Texas-Mexico border community of Webb County, has a history of offering extensive programs for children and adults. The programming developed each year targets all age groups and includes computer classes in English and Spanish, story time, after-school art classes, movie nights, book clubs, and knitting classes. Many of these programs have relied on collaborations and outreach with schools and other community organizations.

In 2008 the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UT HSC) opened a new branch library in Laredo and expressed interest in collaborating with LPL on community projects. After discussing the health needs of the community and possible projects, LPL applied for a \$5,000 award from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine - South Central Region (NN/LM - SCR) to support a summer program focused on health information outreach to children. UT HSC agreed to serve as a primary partner for this project, and other key partners included the City of Laredo's Parks and Leisure Department and the Health Department. Additional partners included Laredo's PBS station, KLRN, as well as the Laredo Children's Museum and the Laredo Fire Department.

The residents of Laredo and Webb County, 95% of whom are Hispanic, experience health disparities as a very real part of their lives. Access to health services is a significant concern within this community, and the prevalence of preventable diseases such as diabetes is higher than in many other Texas communities and in the United States as a whole. To help address these community challenges, LPL decided to focus its project on promoting the health of children and families, with programming to be delivered in a fun and interactive environment during the summer months.

Program Design

As originally proposed, the project aimed to use LPL's bookmobile to deliver health-oriented programs to children at five of the summer day-camps organized by the city's Parks and Leisure Department. The project's second focus was a children's health fair at LPL's main library, scheduled for a Saturday in July. Ultimately, the Parks and Leisure Department included the library's summer health program at eight day-camps, allowing

LPL to reach 815 children. The children's health fair at the main library attracted 334 attendees.

The plan for LPL's outreach to the summer day-camps called for library staff to bring LPL's bookmobile to the community center or school where each day-camp was being held and lead programming for three hours in the morning. The children were divided into three groups: ages 7-8, 9-11, and 12-15, with each group rotating among hour-long activities. The plan called for each group to spend an hour exploring and using the bookmobile. The second hour was intended for a session about sources of health information led by librarians, and the third hour was a health-oriented activity supervised by day-camp staff.

The staff from the library who conducted the sessions at the day-camps included two children's librarians and the bookmobile driver. A school librarian from the public school system also volunteered to assist with some of the day-camp sessions. To prepare for the session about sources of health information, library staff developed separate handouts for each age group, highlighting LPL's website and important sources of health information such as MedlinePlus and MedlinePlus en español (www.medlineplus.gov). They also planned to demonstrate these resources using issues and questions relevant to each age group. When library staff realized that Internet connections would not be available at the day-camps, they developed a "Health and Nutrition Bingo" for small prize bags, which included books, stickers, and bookmarks. All children received the age-specific handouts about sources of health information, but library staff were not able to conduct the live demonstrations they had planned.

The children's health fair at LPL's main library was scheduled for four hours on the afternoon of Saturday, July 19. Based on previous experience, LPL staff knew the importance of promoting special events through multiple sources. They notified the city's public information office three weeks in advance to ensure that announcements would be made on local radio and television stations as well as the newspaper. They also posted an announcement on the library's website and notified staff at schools and children's organizations in the area. Finally, the project's planners made sure that all library staff were aware of the event and were prepared for questions about it.

LPL's relationships with other community organizations and UT HSC contributed to the success of the children's health fair. The event was held in the library's 3,600 square-foot multipurpose room, with space allocated for each community partner to have a booth or activity area. Planning for the children's health fair entailed communication with community partners about their space, Internet, and electricity needs. Two weeks prior to the event LPL staff also began developing a banner for the children's health fair as well as other decorations. They also contacted a local grocery chain and received bottled water and other refreshments.

Five booths were arranged for the city's health department. The city planned to provide free immunizations as well as dental

screenings. The health department also had booths staffed with personnel responsible for environmental safety, animal safety and control, nutrition, and children's and women's health. The health department decorated each booth and supplied information packets as well as small gifts. The immunizations were provided in a separate area, apart from the other booths at the children's health fair.

All the children at the health fair had the opportunity to have their photographs taken with two costumed characters. KLRN arranged for the appearance of a character known as "Piggle Winks" from the PBS show *Jakers*. KLRN coordinated the shipment of the Piggle Winks costume to LPL and provided staff who brought the character to life and who introduced the children and families to Piggle Winks. The children were also photographed with "Reader Bear," LPL's new mascot.

At their booth, staff from the Laredo Children's Museum facilitated hands-on activities for the children. These included making toys and participating in educational games. The fire department parked an ambulance as well as a fire engine in LPL's parking lot and provided tours of both. Staff from the fire department also distributed information about household and personal safety.

LPL staff prepared a booth to display a sample collection of health-related books, videos and DVD's available for checking out. The UT HSC Libraries occupied a corner space at the health fair, where two medical library staff conducted demonstrations of health information resources from the National Library of Medicine, highlighting MedlinePlus en español (<http://medlineplus.gov/esp/>) and the Medline Plus Go Local directory of health service providers (<http://medlineplus.gov/golocal>). Library staff from UT HSC also demonstrated environmental health resources of interest to children such as Tox Town (<http://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/>) and ToxMystery (<http://toxmystery.nlm.nih.gov/>).

H-E-B, a local grocery chain, provided a thousand bottles of water and other refreshments. An area was set aside for children and families to sit, enjoy the refreshments, and review the materials they had collected from the booths.

Budget

Staff from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine – South Central Region office were very helpful with suggestions about the project's \$5,000 budget while the proposal was being developed. The major expenses for this project were related to information technology, including a laptop computer, projector, and mobile printer. The health department charged LPL a modest fee for the services provided as part of the children's health fair. Incidental expenses included gas for the bookmobile and office supplies used for publicity materials. The local grocery chain, H-E-B, greatly reduced the charges for printing the photographs from the health fair and also donated the bottles of water and other refreshments.

Lessons Learned

The staff at LPL responsible for the children's health fair and the day-camp programs gained valuable experience from this project. Perhaps the most important lesson learned was the importance of collaboration and partnerships. LPL's success with this project relied on strong partnerships with other community organizations. In planning and implementing this project, LPL staff drew on existing relationships with staff at other city agencies and community organizations, and fostered a new partnership with UT HSC.

Regular communication among and within partnering organizations about this project contributed to its success. A minor setback occurred as staff at LPL were preparing to implement their programs at the eight day-camps and discovered that their contact at the city's Parks and Leisure Department had not informed the staff at each of the day-camps about the project. This did not create a significant problem, but it was a reminder about the importance of communication.

To attract the desired number of participants at the children's health fair, staff at LPL knew it would be important to promote it through multiple channels. To do this, they relied on traditional media as well as word of mouth among colleagues at other community organizations.

This project also reinforced the importance of flexibility when planning and implementing outreach. LPL staff had to respond quickly when they discovered that the Internet connections they were expecting at the day-camps proved to be unavailable. While they were unable to conduct the online demonstrations they had prepared, LPL staff were still able to use their age-specific handouts and to introduce health and nutrition concepts to children at the day-camps.

Through the programs at the day-camps and the children's health fair, this project reached a total of 1,149 children and parents in the Laredo community. It succeeded in raising awareness about LPL as resource for health information. UT HSC also benefitted from this project by promoting the availability of in-depth health information at its new branch library in Laredo, which is open to the public. This project included LPL's first experience hosting a health fair, and it was gratifying to help families become aware of health services available in the community as well as specific sources of health information.

Keith Cogdill, director of South Texas Regional Information Services, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Libraries. Rena Ren and Alex Potemkin are librarians at Laredo Public Library.

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Conference Wrap-Up and Awards



The Welcome Party on Discovery Green

The 2009 TLA Annual Conference, held in Houston March 31-April 3, drew almost 7,000 librarians, library advocates, and vendors. The event's headliners included comedian Paula Poundstone and activist Gloria Steinem. Poundstone delivered quite possibly one of the funniest TLA general sessions on record – an event that culminated in an impromptu comedic routine between Poundstone and then-TLA President Melody Kelly. (We'll be talking about that one for years.) Steinem, who began with the story of how librarians saved *Ms. Magazine* in its early years, held the audience in rapt attention, and she discussed the ongoing challenges and need for championing equal rights. An icon of the women's issues, Steinem remains energetic and vigilant in pursuit of equality

Conference also featured the School Administrators Conference and new programming for museum professionals, Texas teens, and IT administrators. Houston's Discovery Green Park made a wonderful venue for the Welcome Party. Great weather, a beautiful sunset, and a terrific band helped kick off conference in style. The President's Party on Wednesday, which featured a gaming pavilion complete with the latest high tech games and longstanding board game favorites, was a hit and had attendees showing their competitive side.

TLA's conference is the nation's largest statewide gathering of its kind. In addition to Poundstone and Steinem, dozens of renowned authors, information technology experts, academicians, artists, and commentators delivered almost 250

presentations on a range of issues including technology, advocacy and legislation, fundraising, collaboration, literacy, trends in publishing, career and professional development, social media, green libraries, and, of course, books and authors.

TLA Awards

Lifetime Achievement: **Barbara Immroth**, School of Information, University of Texas at Austin (AT BOTTOM RIGHT)

Distinguished Service: **Dana Rooks**, University of Houston Libraries (AT RIGHT WITH **Karen Wielhorski** OF THE AWARDS COMMITTEE)

Librarian of the year: **Kerry McGeath**, Southlake Public Library (PICTURED BELOW)

Outstanding Services to Libraries: **Gretchen Trominski**, Friends of the Westside Libraries, El Paso (NOT PICTURED)

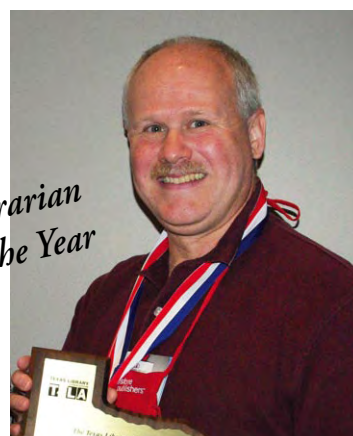
Wayne Williams Project of the Year: **Houston Public Library, Emergency Children's Zone** (SEE NEXT PAGE)



Distinguished Service



Lifetime Achievement



Librarian of the Year



Eric and Carolyn White

FROM LEFT: Mary Wagner, HPL District Manager; Dr. Rhea Brown Lawson, HPL Director; and Council Member Sue Lovell are shown with the Project of the Year Award. PHOTO COURTESY OF HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Awards Committee chair Jeanne Pyle (left) presented the Libraries Change Communities Award to Dolores Owens.

Libraries Change Communities:

Ella Mae Gratts Shamblee Branch, Fort Worth PL

Benefactor Awards: T.L.L. Temple Foundation; Landa Gardens Conservancy; Eric and Carolyn White (RIGHT)

Unit Sponsored Awards

Siddie Jo Johnson: Jacqueline Bridges Sheppherd



Eric and Carolyn White were present at the LiFTA (Library Friends, Trustees, and Advocates) Luncheon to accept their Benefactor Award.

Young Adult Reading Incentive Award:

Susan Geye, Summer Creek Middle School librarian, Crowley ISD

Black Caucus Encourager Award:

Janice Newsum



Jacqueline Bridges Sheppherd

Distinguished Library Service Award for School Administrators: **Gay Patrick**, Dallas ISD director of library services



Gay Patrick



Loretta Wallace

Library Instruction Project of the Year:

Signature Course Information Literacy Integration initiative by Library Instruction Services team members (UT-Austin): **Michele Ostrow, Cindy Fisher, AJ Johnson, Meghan Sitar, and Emily Wood**

Texas Reference Source Award (RRT):

Doug Welsh's Texas Garden Almanac (Texas A&M University Press, 2007)

New Members Round Table Outstanding New Librarian Award:

Jamie Eustace, Sterling Municipal Library, Baytown

New Members Round Table /Quality Books Inc. Professional Development Grant:

Kelli Wilder, St. Philip's College, San Antonio

Vendor Sponsored Awards

ProQuest Intellectual Freedom Award:

Mary Suhm, Dallas city manager

Demco, Inc./TLA Research Grant:

Loretta Wallace, University of Houston Libraries

Highsmith Awards:

"Amarillo Reads" Program (Amarillo PL) and **Kreinhop Student Council Book Drive**, Kreinhop Elementary School (KISD)

TASL Scholarships:

DeVona Wilkinson, Holly Hammonds, and Stacie Watson (TWU);



Catherine Lee (left) and Barbara Knotts (right) are shown with Janice Newsom who received the Black Caucus Round Table Encourager Award.

Shelli Nunciato and Beatriz Escamilla (Sam Houston State)

Letters for Literature Contest: Level 1 – **Sophie Muir**; Level 2 – **Lydia Liu**, Level 3 – **Xinyue Ye**

Christina Woll Memorial Grant:

J. Martinez, St. Peter St. Joseph Children's Home Library

Additional Awards

Love Award: **Bridge City Public Library**

Dobie Awards: **Smithville Public Library, Muleshoe Area Public Library, Taylor Public Library, Murphy Memorial Library (Livingston), Krum Public Library**

Conference Stipends

Automation & Technology Round Table:

Ebony Fondren, Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio

Devin Zimmerman Memorial Stipend (LIRT): **Ashlynn Wicke**, Alfred R. Neumann Library, University of Houston – Clear Lake

The YART- Linworth Publishing/LMC TLA: **Julia Riley**, Pflugerville Community Library, and **Shelli Nunciato**, Grantham Academy for Engineering Library, Conroe ISD

Laura Edwards: **Angela Hall**, Round Rock ISD; **Stephanie Angelette**, Fort Bend ISD; **Rebecca Hall**, Montgomery County Library; and **Ginger Heaton**, Pasadena PL

District 3: **Rebecca M. Taylor**, Pflugerville Community Library, and **Gail Woodward**, Marlin Public Library

2009 Escue: **Rebecca Taylor**, Pflugerville Community Library

SCLRT Biblionix: **Donna Pierce**, Krum Public Library

Genealogy Round Table: **Jennifer Coffey**, Pflugerville Community Library

TOCKER FOUNDATION:

Sharon Autrey, Atlanta Public Library
San Juanita Saenz, Benavides Library
Patrick Wear, Friends of CTLS
Roger Hummel, Ingleside Public Library
Amanda Rose, Marble Falls Public Library
Billy Mohr, Menard Public Library
Loretta Applegate, Noonday Community
Kelly Hover, Smith-Welch Memorial

Texas Book Festival Grants

BOOKS

Mesquite Public Library
 Richardson Public Library
 Armijo Branch Library, El Paso PL
 Sherman Public Library
 Alpine Public Library
 Mountain Creek Branch, Dallas PL
 Polk-Wisdom Branch, Dallas PL
 Gilbreath Memorial Library
 Irving PL-Central Children's Division
 Motley County Library
 Bachman Lake Branch, Dallas PL
 Muleshoe Area Public Library
 Gladys Harrington Library

City of Presidio Library
 Marathon Public Library
 Whitesboro Public Library
 Southwest Branch, Arlington PL
 Maribelle M. Davis Library
 Haslet Public Library
 Collinsville Community Library
 Seguin-Guadalupe County PL
 San Pedro Branch, San Antonio PL
 Leander Public Library
 Elsa Public Library
 Balch Springs Library-Learning Center
 Central Library, Austin Public Library
 Pflugerville Community Library
 Breckenridge Library
 Manchaca Road Branch, Austin PL
 New Boston Public Library
 Ector County Library
 Pauline and Jane Chilton Memorial
 Marlin Public Library
 Dustin Michael Sekula Memorial
 Library (Edinburg PL)
 Wharton County Library
 Rita and Truett Smith Public Library
 Dickens County-Spur Library
 Hebron & Josey Branch, Carrollton PL
 Taylor Public Library
 Elgin Public Library
 Sterling Municipal Library
 The Colony Public Library
 Poteet Public
 Library
 Pleasant Hill
 Branch Library,
 Austin PL
 Paul Lawrence
 Dunbar Lancaster
 Kiest Branch, Dallas Public Library
 Jungman Neighborhood Library,
 Houston Public Library
 El Paso Public Library-Main Branch



LITERACY

Alpine Public Library
 East Arlington Branch Library
 Dallas Public Library-Outreach Division
 Rita and Truett Smith Public Library

TECHNOLOGY

Bastrop Public Library
 Gilbreath Memorial Library
 Reeves County Library
 Dickens County-Spur Library
 Coldspring Area Public Library ★

Texas Library Association

2009 Branding Iron Award Winners

The Texas Library Association is proud to recognize the wonderful public relations work happening within the Texas library community. The TLA Library Public Relations Branding Iron Awards honor libraries, librarians, library supporters, and friends organizations that have conducted

impressive and effective PR activities promoting libraries and library needs. We received multiple entries for the various awards categories this year. TLA thanks all of the applicants, and we showcase here the 2009 PR Branding Iron Award winners.

Broadcast Advertising: University of Houston Libraries

In 2007 three University of Houston librarians received an in-house grant of \$1800 to produce three commercials in collaboration with the Student Video Network (SVN) to promote the library's resources and services. These videos focused specifically on: 1) remote access to library resources, 2) subject librarians' services, and 3) reference and instructional services. The commercials aired on SVN's cable channel and were uploaded to YouTube.



Outdoor Advertising: Austin Public Library

During August through October 2008, Austin Public Library introduced a billboard campaign to raise awareness of the library's valuable online databases. Using themes from Texas music for the billboard designs, the library promoted business, health and medical, and Spanish language databases. Slogans included: "Expand your Business across Miles and Miles of Texas" and "Medical Questions: Deep in the Heart of Texas."



During this time period, these subject databases saw an increase in usage. The health databases saw 17% increase, and the business resources saw an overwhelming 67% increase in use.

Editorial Page/Ongoing Media Coverage: Boerne Public Library

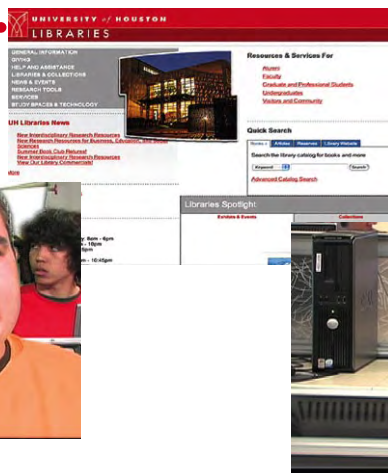
The supporters of Boerne Public Library are relentless in their enthusiasm, work ethic, and creativity. From the library director and assistant director to the foundation members and newspaper staff, the citizens of Boerne truly care about their library and work diligently to keep the local population informed about the library, its programs, and goals.



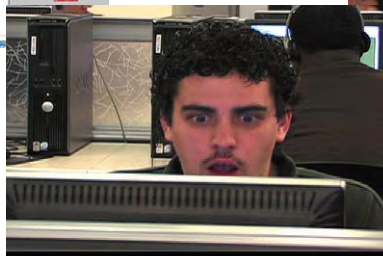
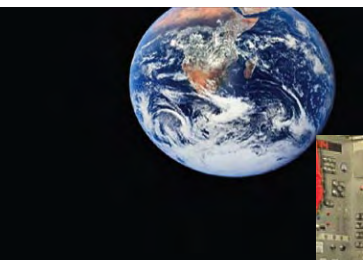
Over the last year, numerous articles about the library have run in *The Boerne Star*. The variety, frequency, and depth of coverage are impressive. That commitment of media coverage speaks to the efforts and support of library supporters.

Print Media: Denton Public Library

Denton Public Library invested its talent and resources into a year-long commitment to promote new materials and programs. The library purchased advertising in the *Denton Record-Chronicle* to 1) publicize new materials of a topical nature that were related to the time of year in which the ads appeared and 2) promote adult and youth programs, both regularly-scheduled and unique events.



Images from one of the commercials that earned a Best of Show award for the University of Houston Libraries.





The ads, designed by library staff, are direct, timely, and catchy. They include such memorable lines as: “Death and Dessert: A Mystery Reading Group for Adults; Come for the conversation, stay for the dessert.” “Gasoline is \$4 a Gallon: The Library is Free,” is also a standout.

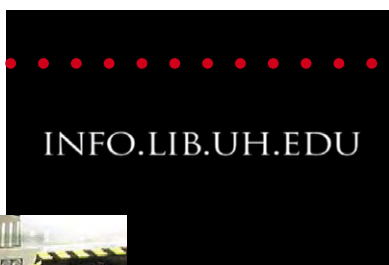
Non-Traditional Media: Visual Resources Collection, University of Texas School of Architecture



The Visual Resources Collection (VRC) launched the *Now You Know* campaign in the fall of 2008. Part of this effort involved the creation of educational videos to both promote use of resources and to teach students how to search for and use the VRC’s vast materials and tools. The videos are posted on YouTube and the website and were promoted through email messages, the VRC’s blog, and website.

Special Events: Abilene Public Library

The opening of the new Mockingbird Branch gave Abilene Public Library (APL) and Friends of APL the opportunity to re-introduce the library to the people of Abilene. APL used the PR activities for the opening as a broader campaign to raise awareness of the library itself, the modern services of today’s libraries, the role of APL in the lives of area residents, and (of course) the actual opening of the new branch.



APL used targeted resources to craft a broad theme, “Open you Mind. Open a Book.” With diverse products, including billboards, print and broadcast ads, and mailers, the APL message was delivered broadly into the community. The opening of the Mockingbird Branch served as the catalyst for positive community buzz and proved to be a huge success generating vast interest and a high number of visits and circulations for the new branch. The branch opening is a wonderful example of using one event to build a broad campaign with important and long lasting messages for constituents.

PR Plan/Year-Round Activities: University of Houston Libraries

The University of Houston formed a marketing committee in late spring 2008 to create an aggressive library orientation plan. The goal was to market library services to a sizeable number of new students, staff, and faculty members. The results were very positive and reached a greater number of new members of the U of H community.



The committee devised an energetic plan to ensure the librarians participated directly in orientations for new students, parents, staff, and faculty. While previously UH librarians had generally held their own separate orientations, the scheme planned for librarians to target existing orientations. To support this effort, subject librarians also crafted special resources, and promotional materials were distributed.

Collateral Materials: Austin Public Library

“Keep Austin Weird” has become a mainstay of Austin. Originally created by a librarian, the slogan truly captured the essence of the city. While many groups have created derivative forms of the phrase, Austin Public Library’s “Keep Austin Reading” hits high marks for translating a brilliant idea into collateral materials that also capture the heart – and quirkiness – of a community.

From elaborate book bags to the essential Austin bumper sticker, APL’s collateral materials have made the leap from representing library supporters to speaking to the ubiquitous and representative interest of Austin. ☆



81st Regular Legislative Session

It's been a long, hard session. The library community made some valuable gains this year, although not all our funding initiatives were adopted (specifically increased funding for library resource sharing). The library community was "in the fight" to the very last for funding and, as always, we will continue our work session after session to improve the quality of life, education, and opportunity for Texans through library services and programs.

Budget Status

The Legislature approved the following recommendations: Loan Star Libraries – an increase of \$3.5 million over the biennium; Systems – an increase of \$1.5 million over the biennium; and Digital Talking Books – an increase of \$275,000 over the biennium.

The request for increased funds for Library Resource Sharing (which encompassed requested funding increases for TexShare and the K-12 databases) was not funded. Please note, however, that the current (09) funding for both these programs remains in place.

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission has just released a statement noting that the agency is considering using additional federal funds (as the agency is receiving more than expected funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services) for offsetting some of the escalating costs for the database programs. However, (at the time of printing) no final decision has been made. For updates on library resource sharing, see TSLAC's statement at: www.texshare.edu/generalinfo/about/faq2009-06-02.html.

Final Status of Key Bills

HB 962 (Guillen/Sp. Zaffirini): Clarifies existing statute regarding the purchase and acquisition of library materials at community colleges. Sent to the Governor.



HB 3756 (Howard/ Sp. Ellis):

Updates, clarifies, and amends statutes related to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. The bill, filed at the request of TLA and TSLAC, updates language related to the library systems, the TexShare program, Talking Book Program, records management provisions, archival records and the state's right of recovery, and the Texas Reads license plate program. Sent to the Governor.

HB 3 (Eissler/Sp. Shapiro): Deals with school accountability and promotion. The final version of the bill stripped away a House floor amendment that would have authorized TEA to study the prospect of adding school library programs as a criterion for campus distinction designations. At the time of printing, the bill was being sent to the Governor for approval.

With Thanks

TLA is very grateful to all of the library supporters, legislators, legislative staff, and individuals who worked to support and promote library issues this session. While the list is too large to include in its entirety, we express our deep thanks to the following: Representatives Jim Pitts, Dan Branch, Ryan Guillen, Donna Howard, Dennis Bonnen, Patrick Rose, John Otto, Fred Brown, Mark Strama, Harold Dutton, Brandon Creighton, and Scott Hochberg. On the Senate side, we offer our sincere thanks to Senators Kip Averitt, Chuy Hinojosa, Judith Zaffirini, Rodney Ellis, and Chris Harris.

Of course, we offer our sincere appreciation to all TLA members who took the time to write, email, and work for library programs. We extend a special thanks to everyone who traveled to Austin for Legislative Day, led delegations, worked on legislative initiatives, and provided testimony throughout the session, including Susan Mann, Julie Todaro, Joe Dahlstrom, Tracey Mendoza, Martha Tandy, Rhoda Goldberg, and legislative committee chair Carol Brey-Casiano.

Stimulus Update

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act offers an opportunity for funding through local and federal grant applications. Unfortunately, details of how funding will be accessible remain vague. It appears that, for the most part, libraries and/or their parent organizations will have to apply directly for funds. Librarians are urged to speak with their local governing bodies (ISDs, city or county governments, or university or college administration) to see what plans (if any) exist for applying for funds. While education dollars have been allocated to institutions (primarily through formula allotments), local institutions must still determine how to use these funds in areas designated by the Act.

Librarians must be proactive in seeking opportunities to apply for funding or to make the case for inclusion in planned projects and programs. Partnerships and collaboration in applying for funds (especially from local workforce development boards) is especially recommended.

TLA's stimulus webpage – www.txla.org/html/legis/stimulus.html – offers resource information and suggestions. Topics are divided by broad areas (e.g., broadband and education), and links to guidelines for oversight agencies (such as TEA and NTIA) are included. The page also includes links to state testimony on state goals, including those for higher education and ARRA funding. A new link from

the Comptroller's website offers direct access to grant and loan opportunities.

For additional information, see *Texline* legislative alerts.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

The 2009 Annual Assembly will be held in Austin, July 27 – 30, at the Hyatt Regency. The meeting provides an opportunity for association officers to plan for the upcoming year. There is no registration fee, and the event is open to any TLA member wishing to attend.

The housing reservation form can be found on the TLA website at www.txla.org/conference/assembly/AAinfo.html. Please check this website for the deadline. The Annual Assembly registration form is available online. A tentative schedule of events is available at the URL above.

Major Assembly Events

On Wednesday, July 29, TLA President Patrick Heath invites you to join him and a key state legislator for lunch at noon. (Representative Jim Pitts, Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee has been invited.) Please note that no meal tickets will be sold on site, and you must submit your registration and purchase your ticket by mid July. (The deadline will be posted on the TLA website.)

Chairs Planning Session

All TLA unit chairs are encouraged to attend a training session on Monday, July 27, from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. This information sharing session for committee and unit (division, round table, district, interest group) chairs will help you with questions about TLA structure and operations and prepare you for the upcoming Assembly meetings.

Transforming TLA Structure

will be the hot topic for discussion in the all-Assembly idea sharing time from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 28. Facilitated by Joyce Baumbach and task force members, there will be ample time for attendees to hear about the task force recommendations for transforming TLA.

Legislative Update

Get the behind-the-scenes scoop on the 81st Legislative Session and find out what the impact is on libraries. This session will be from 7:00 to 7:45 p.m. on Tuesday, July 28. There will also be an update on federal stimulus broadband programs.

Assembly CE Offerings

(1-5 PM TIMESLOT)

The Magic of Marketing: What Great Libraries Know and Do in Tough Times!

– All Assembly attendees are invited to attend this leadership training opportunity on Monday, July 27, from 1pm to 5pm. Speaker David Bendekovic will lead you on an exploration of library leadership in today's time of unprecedented challenge – the worldwide economic downturn.

This new program offers insights and views from many of today's leading libraries to help you position your library in the mind of the community as an important economic driver while helping users understand what you have to offer them. This interactive workshop explores the marketing process and offers practical tips and techniques on how to make your library top of mind to members of your community. Participants will learn how to develop an integrated marketing plan and hear best practices and creative strategies from leading libraries across the country.

Dusting off Your Presentation Skills

– Whether you are new to delivering presentations and have perhaps some lingering anxiety or you look for opportunities to be in front of the audience, this session will provide you with a new way of preparing for your next presentation. This half-day session will reprise tried and true presentation techniques, including the good, bad, and ugly of PowerPoint, success in troubleshooting the inevitable technology issues, and mastery of some “tap dancing” skills. This session will be from 1 to 5 p.m. on Monday, July 27.

An Evening with Wildflowers

For the past several years, attendees have enjoyed an informal social time after Council I. This year, special arrangements have been made with Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to open for dinner and evening tours of the wildflower gardens. Docents will guide the tours through native Texas plantings. Bus transportation, tours, and dinner are provided in the ticket price of \$42. The bus will leave the Hyatt at 7:00 p.m. Dinner will include:

*Grilled Vegetables;
Sliced Grilled Chicken*

*Served with Bowtie Pasta;
Tri Color Fusili Pasta*

*Garlic Pesto Crème Sauce and
Fresh Tomato Basil Sauce*

*Garden Green Salad with Cilantro
Vinaigrette & Creamy Ranch Dressing*

Garlic Bread; Iced Tea & Iced Water.

TLA Technology Task Force Survey

The Technology Task Force is evaluating the use of TLA's information technology services for communication and education. This survey explores our use of information technology services and where we need change the most. Participation is voluntary and open to all TLA members.

Our survey gathers data on the value of the current and potential information technology services provided by TLA. We will use this data to inform our recommended long range plan. This survey is confidential and the record kept of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about you. There are only 15 questions, and the survey should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Completion of the survey constitutes voluntary consent to participate in the study.

The survey closes on July 16, 2009. This URL redirects to our survey: <http://txla.org/ttfs>

Social Networking

See you online! TLA has opened several social networking channels for information and member interaction. We welcome you all to tweet, post to our walls, and chat!

Here is where you can find us:
Facebook | LinkedIn | Twitter

- Texas Library Association
<http://twitter.com/TXLA>
- TLA Conference 2010
<http://twitter.com/TLAConf2010>
- TLA Continuing Education
http://twitter.com/TLA_CE
- TLA Legislative
http://twitter.com/TLA_Legis
- TLA Annual Assembly
http://twitter.com/TLA_Assembly



Honoring the First 100 Years of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Patrick Heath, a former TSLAC commissioner and now TLA president, presented a plaque honoring TSLAC's 100th anniversary to Commission Chair Sandra J. Pickett (left) and State Librarian Peggy Rudd during the second general session of annual conference in Houston.

