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Crossing Boundaries

BY
MARIBEL
CASTRO

I HAVE BEEN ON A HIGH

since the 2010 TLA conference in San Antonio. My euphoria was not only because I officially became TLA president at the end of conference; it was also due to the fact that this year's conference was wildly successful and indicative of the commitment that Texas librarians have to the profession and our association. Moreover, the evaluations from conference attendees indicated a desire for new and innovative programming, consistent with the TLA 2011 theme: *Libraries: Crossing Boundaries – Bibliotecas: Cruzando Fronteras*. Your constructive feedback has charged the 2011 Program Committee with the mission to offer the best programming in order to retool and redefine ourselves as librarians in our ever-changing environments.

And then it hit. This euphoria I had been experiencing gave way to uncertainty and confusion when my husband came home and shared with me his interest in applying for a position with Lubbock ISD (which he has now formally accepted). As you might imagine, my head was spinning in circles with all the *boundaries* that seemingly surrounded this idea. Both my husband and I have great positions in Houston, a charming 1910 bungalow (recently remodeled), family, close friends, and great colleagues. Why would we uproot ourselves out of our comfort zones, leaving behind a network that we have spent years growing and nurturing? I thought, "*We are happy and comfortable; no need to rock the boat!*"

As you might have anticipated, it was not long before I realized that I was setting up these *boundaries* in my head. In fact, after visiting Lubbock, I was introduced to some of the friendliest people in Texas and beautiful

neighborhoods, and I have quickly started developing transition plans for the move to our new residence. I hated to admit it, but I needed to take a spoonful of the medicine I've been dishing out for years – change is good.

Change is not easy, and for some us, change is something that we try to avoid at all costs. Think of how many books and professional development sessions exist to help us deal with change! Should I worry about my cheese being moved, that my saw needs sharpening, or if I need pay myself first or pay my credit card? No doubt that the business of change is a huge industry due to the fact that humans have difficulty in adjusting to change.

I have always prided myself on being a dynamic individual, flexible in thought and practice. However, the decision we have made to move to a new city greatly emphasized how adverse I had become to change, how this adversity blinded me to new and exciting possibilities, and how complacency can slowly overtake us unless we take the initiative to try something new, personally or professionally, in order to open new doors and new opportunities.

The Texas Library Association is also undergoing quite a few changes. The TLA Bylaws and Resolutions Committee has streamlined protocols and processes so that our units can be more fluid. In addition, TLA has launched a website that is socially interactive, allowing our members to be more engaged based on need and interest, and the Task Force on TLA Districts is currently working on re-drafting the districts to be more representative of their geographic areas and interests. While these initiatives were not easily accomplished, all were absolutely essential in making our

association stronger, vibrant, and relevant for all librarians.

For me, this move to Lubbock personally embodies the spirit of our 2011 conference theme and has energized my professional commitment to serve you as president of TLA. I look forward to the changes and challenges ahead and encourage all of you to cross a boundary by taking on something new in both your personal and professional lives.

Hasta pronto amigos!

Annual Assembly is almost upon us and, if you plan on attending, we need your creative energy to help us do the following:

Unit planners, think across boundaries! As you start to finalize your programs for TLA 2011, ask yourselves, "What are we offering that is completely new, unique, or different from the year before?" Our ability to be at the forefront of the best practices and trends in our profession is what makes our annual conference a spectacular event.

The Public Communications Committee wants us all engaged in the all-Assembly conversation on creating a new TLA tagline. We want something that flows off the tongue, is easily remembered, and makes a powerful statement. So start jotting down those thoughts and ideas!

You still have time to voice your comments/concerns regarding the TLA districts. It was a hot topic at annual conference, and if you have not had an opportunity to share your thoughts, please do so by contacting your TLA district chair.

✪

by Gloria Meraz

The Culture of Yes

I HAVE FOUND THAT ONE of the hardest things to do in life is to follow one's own strictures. I believe there aren't many among us who would disagree with the notion that life (and careers) should be pursued aggressively, energetically. We all believe in learning new things, trying new activities, and improving ways of doing things. I suspect most of us see ourselves as resilient, adaptive people – people who say yes rather than no.

Over the past years, we've talked at great length about transforming libraries and evolving into the next generation of what we, as librarians, and our libraries should become. All of these discussions are predicated on the willingness of practitioners (that means us) to embody that new expectation.

We acknowledge that there are some librarians who are unwilling to move forward, to leave behind old ways to try something new. In short, we acknowledge that a persistent and sometimes deep-rooted culture of no exists in our ranks. Who among us cannot immediately picture the nay-sayers – those people who tend to focus on why things can't be done instead of how to accomplish them?

The funny thing is that I suspect most of these naysayers would be truly surprised to find themselves cast in that category. Any of these sound familiar?

- But things work just fine for me; there's no need to change.

- I'm the boss – I just need my staff to things differently. I provide the vision that others must implement.

- I'm just on the low end of the totem pole. My daily tasks continue pretty much whatever decisions the bosses make.

- I just do what I'm told to do.

- I'm too busy just dealing with my current duties. Social networking and all that other stuff is great – and I'd love to do it – but I simply do not have the time.

- I'm here working pretty much on my own. I do what I can, but I have no help, no one to teach me, no budget.

- Why bother? I try to make a difference, and I just get shot down around here. I'm not the problem.

- I have changed and done new things, but there is a limit.

- Why change something just to change it? If I can do something one way, why muck with it?

Of course, the real question is: are we delivering services and resources our customers want in the way that is most dynamic *for them*? To some extent, we all need to say yes to more things. The bottom line is that living the culture of yes involves change to some extent. And change can be scary and certainly creates an imposition (at least at the start).

We have to figure out how to do something new or something differently. We have to change our lives to some extent. That's hard. For the most part, people like routine; routine is comfortable, and it lets us carry on with the least amount of active engagement. In a biological way, this makes sense. Conserve energy.

Of course, if we were stuck on the frozen tundra, conserving energy would be wise. Librarianship may be facing some challenges, but I don't really equate our circumstance with the dire straights of being stuck on frozen tundra. So, let's toss out the conserving energy model. Let's use energy instead. Inertia and routine are facts of life, but they are not conducive to a dynamic profession.

I'm not talking about changing just for change's sake; I'm talking about embracing new, exciting things. Even if we do it reluctantly, with a bit of muttering, that's okay as long we take a first step, then a second, and then keep moving.

If enough of us live up to our own strictures, we'll create a momentum to help us all advance and that will clearly set the pace for everyone in our profession. Wouldn't it be wonderful to finally obliterate that horrible stereotype of the sshing librarians with an image of us responding with an enthusiastic YES to something being asked of us? The answer is YES! ✪

Texas Library Snapshot Day

Spring 2010

ZOOMING IN ON YOU

by Gloria Meraz

THIS SPRING, HUNDREDS OF LIBRARIES in Texas joined libraries across the country in participating in Library Snapshot Day. This event was created to let all types of libraries record information about what happens in a day in the life of libraries. From statistics about visitors and circulations to keeping track of why people come into the library, information gathered on library snapshot day is intended to help libraries promote their services and advocate their value to the public and decision makers at all levels.

The American Library Association (ALA) encouraged all states to participate with a snapshot day in April. Given the tight scheduling in Texas due to the end of the school year and TAKS testing, a range of dates was provided. Libraries could select any day between April 26 and May 7 for Texas Library Snapshot Day. This information will used to support national advocacy efforts this summer.

For the Texas community, this event marks a first-ever effort to collect statewide information on daily activities from all types of libraries. This spring event will be used as a guide for TLA's fall Texas Library Snapshot Day, which will take place in October. Libraries will again be given a time range from which any single day can be selected to hold snapshot day. Information from the fall event will be used for TLA's legislative efforts during the upcoming 82nd Legislative Session, which begins in January of 2011.

A total 501 libraries (includes branch libraries and school campus libraries) participated in Texas Library Snapshot Day, Spring 2010. This number is a great start, and we look forward to many more libraries participating in the fall. We will take the opportunity to publicize and streamline the process for the fall.

In the meanwhile, this snapshot day gathered some wonderful input from patrons statewide. And, it is of little surprise that Texans really do love libraries!

The full report is available at www.texaslibrarysnapshotday. org. Sample press releases and summary information is also available on that website. Hundreds of Texas Library Snapshot Day photos are available on TLA's flickr Snapshot Day group page: www.flickr.com/groups/librarysnapshotday/.

We thank all of the libraries that participated!

SUMMARY

ABOUT TEXAS LIBRARIES

- Total Libraries Completing Texas Library Snapshot Day Survey: 501
- Total Number of Libraries in Texas[1]: 6,406
- Percentage of Libraries Participating in Snapshot Day (Spring '10): 7.8%

By Type of Library Participation in Snapshot Day

- Academic Libraries: 21 libraries[2] (4.1% of 501); 10% of all academic libraries in the state
- Public Libraries: 109 libraries[2] (21.7 % of 501); 12% of all public library OUTLETS in the state
- School Libraries: 367 libraries[2] (73.3% of 501); 7% of all school libraries estimated in the state
- Special: 4 libraries[2] (0.9% of 501); 2% of all special libraries estimated in the state

[1] This figure is an approximation and is derived on a count of all public library outlets (total of 878 includes main libraries, branches, and outlets); school libraries (total of 5,136 is equivalent to number of certified school librarians); special libraries (number 190 is equivalent to count of TLA special librarians); and State Library count of 202 of academic library institutions.

[2] Total number of libraries participating in the survey is calculated based on total number of libraries completing the survey in proportion to self designation of type of library.

Results by Library Type

In ONE TYPICAL DAY, an ACADEMIC LIBRARY …

- is visited (onsite and online) by 10,911 students and faculty
- has over 1,300 visitors to databases
- has over 900 computer sessions
- circulates 388 materials
- has over 150 students participating in library programs or instructional sessions
- answers 71 reference questions
- fulfills almost 30 interlibrary loan requests
- has an average attendance of 50 students in computer and technology classes
- serves over 61 students in bibliographic instruction
- is used for completing homework/coursework, accessing databases, conducting specialized research, reading newspapers & magazines, finding entertainment, accessing general reference sources, conducting health or business research, preparing for certification and test-taking, searching for jobs, and building resumès

In ONE TYPICAL DAY, a BRANCH or PUBLIC LIBRARY Outlet …

- is visited (onsite and online) by 1,092 people
- has over 368 visitors to databases
- offers 176 computer sessions
- circulates 913 print and AV materials
- issues almost 12 new library cards

- has 182 people attending library programs and instructional sessions
- answers 156 reference questions
- fulfills over 7 interlibrary loan requests
- has 115 children, 22 teens, and 19 adults attending programs
- offers computer classes serving 18 people and library instruction sessions serving 38 people
- has 37 people in the library for meetings
- reaches about 91 people through outreach efforts
- is used for completing homework/coursework, accessing databases, conducting specialized research, reading newspapers and magazines, finding entertainment, accessing general reference sources, conducting health or business research, preparing for certification and test-taking, searching for jobs, and building resumès

In ONE TYPICAL DAY, a SCHOOL LIBRARY …

- is visited (onsite and online) by 256 students and faculty
- has over 621 visits to databases
- offers 169 computer sessions
- circulates 235 print and AV materials
- has over 110 students participating in library programs
- provides instructional sessions for over 120 students
- answers almost 25 reference questions
- offers over four sessions on computers and technology attended by over 90 students
- provides tutoring or homework assistance to over 22 students
- provides bibliographic training to almost 75 students
- has almost three collaborative sessions with faculty involving almost six other teachers
- holds over two organized meetings serving almost 40 people
- is used for completing homework/coursework, accessing databases, conducting specialized research, reading newspapers & magazines, finding entertainment, accessing general reference sources, conducting health or business research, and preparing for test-taking

In ONE TYPICAL DAY, a SPECIAL LIBRARY…

- is visited (onsite and online) by 671 people
- has over 707 visits to databases
- offers 127 computer sessions
- circulates 170 print and AV materials
- conducts programs serving 52 people
- offers two instructional sessions serving 21 people
- answers 14 reference questions
- processes 21 interlibrary loan requests
- has almost 84 children and teenagers attend programming
- has over 13 people attend meetings
- is used for completing homework/coursework, accessing databases, conducting specialized research, reading newspapers and magazines, finding entertainment, and accessing general reference sources

In ONE TYPICAL DAY, 7.8% of TEXAS LIBRARIES report:

- 205,188 people visiting libraries
- 154,967 web visits
- 173,587 circulation total
- 27,151 children participating in programs
- 8,019 adults and teens participating in programs
- 22,748 reference questions
- is used for completing homework/coursework, accessing databases, conducting specialized research, reading newspapers & magazines, finding entertainment, accessing general reference sources, conducting health information and business research, preparing for certification and test-taking, and searching for jobs and building resumès

Typical reference questions during a day in the life of Texas libraries…

- How do I apply for this local grant?
- Can you help me get an e-mail account?
- I found a big black rock in the woods on my farm. What is it and how did it get there?
- How to cite using MLA format?
- How to use Creative Commons and cite photos?
- How do you use a computer?
- Which database should I use for 3rd grade study of Cinco de Mayo?
- Do you have titles with female protagonists?
- Where do I find books on UFOs?
- How can I figure out how to make money off of my ranch?
- Do you have Wednesday's paper?
- I need information on African women body modification.
- Do you have AV materials that teach Vietnamese?
- How do I do citations?
- Where dinosaurs real or just cartoons? (from a toddler)
- I'm looking for certain career information. Which database should I use?
- Where do I find information on 1920's music?

Denton Public Library: a good place to read. . . and knit!
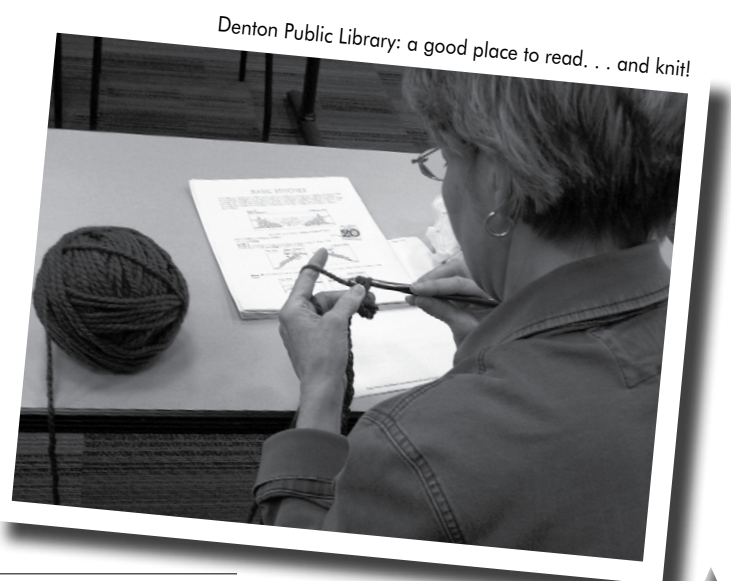
- Where can I find information on home finances?
- Where can I find information on jobs without a degree?
- Defensive driving DVD check out
- How do I create a resumè?
- GED classes
- Do I need a Hepatitis B vaccine to travel to Central America?
- I need information on colon and kidney cancer.
- What test prep books and videos do you have for the pediatric board exams?
- I need help searching journals not indexed by PubMed.
- How to make a 2-minute video clip from a DVD
- How to find financial ratios on a particular industry segment
- What books do you recommend for toddlers?
- Do you have a super awesome super hero book?

Examples of customer/student comments about the library

- I (heart) it!!!
- It's cool in here! (The school has AC issues.)
- I love the resources, but it's always cold!
- Thank you!
- I'm really glad you carry a large selection of audio books. They were (and are) an invaluable aid to my recovery from a long illness.
- I love this library. I like that it has an open and airy feel. I find that the most helpful resource is the Refworks.
- I love that we can check out laptops. It gives Denton campus library a personal and glamorous touch.
- Not only is the library a beautiful building, but it is a vital part of the University experience. From the many departments that utilize the Library facilities for presentations to the wonderful displays created from the Library vault, it is a place that houses the University's history and actively supports student learning. I love our library!
- The library provides excellent online service and helpful staff that allows me to become an educated adult.
- I love coming to the place to study, quiet environment.
- It's the best thing in the community.

Sinton Public Library

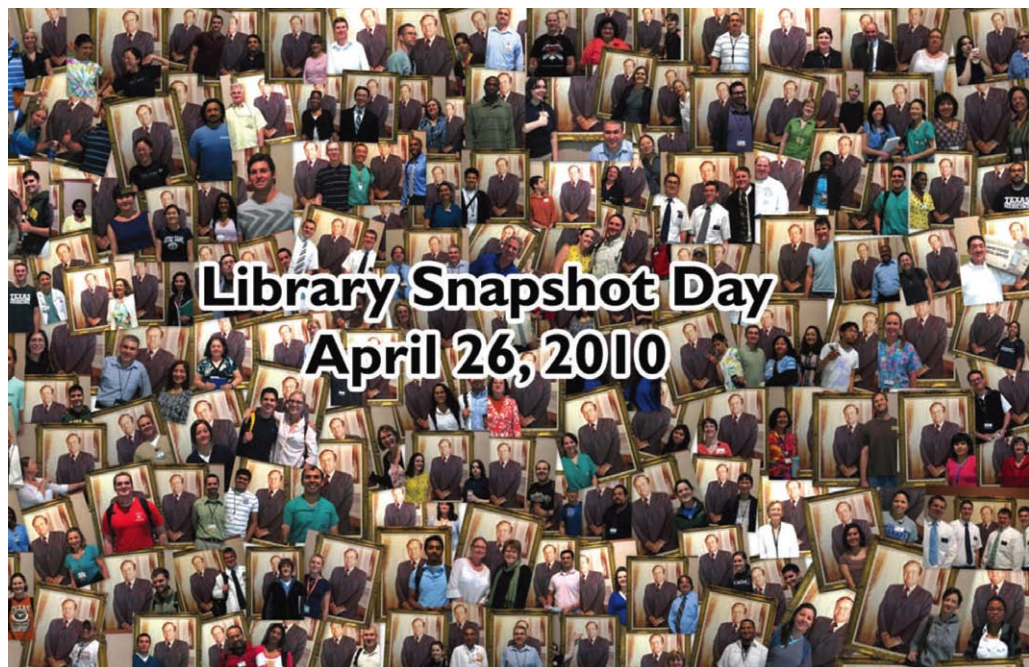Cinco de Mayo at the Andress Library

- I love being able to get materials sent from other branches so that I can pick them up here close to home.
- I want to come here every day.
- We love it here. We always feel at home and welcome!
- They [librarians] always make teaching reading easier. Thank you!
- Wow! I met a real live author!
- Very friendly staff. Always helpful. Without them, I would not have gotten my EMT Basic License. Thanks for the wonderful help I always receive from them.
- We need funds for a renovated building.
- I utilize the library 3x weekly for tutoring elementary students.
- Great staff.
- La biblioteca (El Paso Memorial Park) es como un oasis para mí, puedo encontrar los libros que busco y las revistas también y libros para me pequeño Terremoto!
- Enjoyed the Texas Bluebonnet Award Tea and mini contest.
- I don't know what we would do without the library. The Harris County Library System is the best. We are blessed.
- We use this library every week. When I was out of a job, I came every day. The less money you have, the more important the library becomes.
- I truly enjoy the Learning Commons because of the relaxed social atmosphere, yet scholastic environment. I have used this space to complete most of my reading assignments this semester and have grown deeper in many friendships because of this place.
- I love the e-books!
- This library comes in handy A LOT!
- The library is the bomb.
- I have read all the Bluebonnet books. Now what?

Some examples of programs and/or training sessions held on Snapshot Day.

- Reinacting a time travel to 1600's to attend a play at the Globe Theater.
- Homework help.

- Coffee with Counselors – a library-hosted event for parents and teachers
- Science fiction club
- Children's story time
- Dyslexia training
- MS Excel
- Lesson on poetry slam
- Bilingual studies for 2nd graders
- Digital photography class
- Finding medical images
- Introduction to online career searches
- Educator Glogster training
- Using iMovie to create video
- Teen literacy club
- Adult computer class
- Family film night
- Arbor Day and Earth Day celebrations
- Database use
- Plagiarism
- How to create a works cited page
- El día de los niños/día de los libros
- Math masters
- Conducting research
- Health students designing websites
- Book club

Sample comments about Snapshot Day…

- Our patrons and staff had a lot of fun participating and may make it a tradition.
- We tried to make it a big event on campus. I believe it can help in staff bonding and camaraderie.
- This was an excellent way to demonstrate how libraries are used. It should be continued.
- We had a wonderful day during Snapshot. We helped out lots of patrons and each one enjoyed having their picture taken.
- I hate that "Snapshot Day" was limited to one day. We have so many great programs and activities all week long!
- It was interesting to see how much happens in just one day.
- Next time – avoid the end of the semester and TAKS time.
- Snapshot leaves out a lot of information – all the behind the scenes work. How much time was spent in clerical tasks, like checking out books, repairs, students paying for lost items, etc.? Also, professional activities like placing book orders and lesson planning. Those also take up a big chunk of the day even though they aren't all things you do with interacting with patrons.

Sample comments on "How will you use this data?"

- put in a blog
- create a brochure

UT Health Science Center, San Antonio: On April 26, visitors to the Briscoe Library were invited to have their photos taken by the portrait of Governor Dolph Briscoe near the main entrance to the library. Briscoe, governor of Texas from 1973 to 1979, has been a strong supporter of public and higher education in his career as well as in his private life.

- share with city council and city manager
- compare my library with others
- share with other librarians
- show what happens on a daily basis
- show the need for a fulltime librarian
- market the library
- staff development
- self-appraisal
- I'll use it in my annual report!
- will share the information with administrators and teachers
- will use data to help in grant application

Sample of closing comments

- This was a GREAT idea, and we are glad we participated.
- Create different form for libraries and provide glossary of terms.
  - It will be nice to see the comparisons.
  - Wonderful idea!
  - It was fun!
  - Library Snapshot Day is a great tool to use for providing proof to our community leaders, county commissioners, and library director how important our library is to our community. This is also an excellent advertising tool!
  - The Snapshot Day forms from the website were very helpful. Thank you for organizing this event.
- Very insightful for us.

Hundreds of more comments are available on the full report on www.librarysnapshotday.org ✪

INNOVATIONS

in School Librarian and Parent Relations

by Jennifer LaBoon, Chris Salerno, and Gloria Meraz

THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN the Texas Library Association and the Texas PTA, we are working to support parents in their efforts to help Texas children succeed and to strengthen school libraries across the state. TLA and Texas PTA are working together to promote the importance of school libraries and librarians.

For almost three years now, TLA and Texas PTA have participated in each other's conferences and offer the Shirley Igo Texas PTA & Texas Library Association Joint PTA/School Library Collaboration Award. The award recognizes an outstanding collaboration between a PTA organization and school library media center during the school year. Projects and efforts at both the local campus and district levels are eligible. This award honors the memory of Shirley Igo of Plainview, a past president of the Texas and National PTA and a longtime champion of libraries, education, and literacy.

The Texas PTA has also just recently adopted an official position (see Resolution on page 50) in support of school libraries. This means that Texas PTA is a committed partner in promoting the role of school libraries. And, school librarians are committed to serving as a resource for parents. In a significant action, the Texas PTA also appointed a former TLA Board member to sit on the Texas PTA Executive Board to help represent the interests of Texas libraries.

The organizations are also collaborating on new ways to support learning, libraries, and parent involvement. Most recently, TASL (Texas Association of School Librarians) leaders are working to create a series of communications and information tools for parents. TASL will be developing quarterly pieces for the Texas PTA newsletter, *The Voice*, and is now working on developing brief informational videos aimed at parents. These videos will be resources to help parents understand how the school library helps their kids and what tools are available to them. Parents are keenly interested in issues of cyberbullying, the safe use of the Internet, resources to help their kids with homework,

the concept of "educating the whole child," 21st century learning, and accountability. Accordingly, the videos are aimed at these areas.

We will also be working on developing some template resources for school librarians to help them reach out to parents and to help explain how a school library program (and a certified school librarian) serve as their partners in helping kids achieve. In our discussions with PTA leaders, we've learned that parents are hungry for easy-to-use resources that make them aware of how they can help their children. Parents often struggle to find a way to help their kids and to connect with their school campuses. PTA organizations are wonderful at bringing parents together, and we believe there is a statewide role for school libraries to be the welcoming portal for parents and PTA organizations. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the first stop for every Texas PTA chapter was the school library?

We hope to build resources – for both parents and school librarians – to meet this need. Our September webinar will focus on showing you some of the template materials – how-to's, sample presentations, and action ideas – that you can implement immediately. It will also be your chance to find out more about the resources TASL is making available to parents statewide.

Jennifer LaBoon is coordinator of Library Technology at Fort Worth ISD Library Media Services.
Chris Salerno is a clinical professor at Texas Woman's University and serves on the board of the Texas Congress of PTAs.
Gloria Meraz is director of communications for TLA.

Be sure to join school library leaders for a webinar unveiling the tools and resources created to help parents. These resources are part of a repository of reference materials school librarians are designing to help parents in their efforts to support their children's learning and to become engaged in school library services. The webinar will also present template materials to help school librarians provide a quick introduction (at formal PTA or board meetings) on the school library program.

Continuing education credit will be available for registered participants. This free webinar is part of TLA's Strategic Initiative Series. Registration is limited to the first 150 participants. The webinar will take place Tuesday, September 28 at 3:30 Central Standard Time. To register, go to TLA's CE page at: www.txla.org/CE.

RESOLVED *that Texas PTA encourages districts to provide highly qualified certified librarians and quality school library programs at every campus.* [see full resolution on page 50.]

21ˢᵗ Century Skills @ Your School Library

by Jennifer LaBoon

Editor's Note: First piece published in The Voice, *the newsletter of the Texas PTA.*

Dr. Seuss and Jane Austen are still there, but did you know that in today's school libraries children also have access Internet resources and electronic content? School librarians are trained not only to champion literacy but also to teach students to navigate the information superhighway safely and with finesse- to teach information literacy skills across the curriculum.

Being literate in the 21st century is not just about reading and writing and the ability to do math. Library programs in our schools focus on your children, who are digital natives and will be the leaders of tomorrow. Librarians help students learn to collaborate with others on campus, and also globally. We must teach students how to transfer their knowledge of gaming techniques and social media like Facebook to real life classroom learning experiences.

Preparing students for a future that is difficult to predict is a challenging endeavor, but according to the American Association of School Librarians Standards, 21st century school librarians should prepare students to:

- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge.
- Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge.
- Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society.
- Pursue personal and aesthetic growth.

These are all skills that will help students be successful, whatever their future holds. Good library programs and certified librarians will continue to challenge students to become better readers, more skillful researchers, critical thinkers, and ethical users of information. Our mission is to teach the skills children need to effectively and efficiently find, evaluate, and use information to meet their educational and personal needs. Our goal is to continue to increase the use of the libraries and be an integral part of student success on every school campus in Texas.

Resource Links

Texas Library Association Reading Lists for Students (to promote voluntary reading): www.txla.org/html/reading.html

Standards for 21 Century Learners: www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/standards.cfm ✪

Resolution for Strong School Libraries

WHEREAS, public school accountability requires school districts to raise standards to improve student performance; and

WHEREAS, 21st Century students and educators must have the resources, information, and skills to use effectively; and

WHEREAS, *The Needs of Public School Libraries*, a study completed in 2008 by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, reports that school libraries support core curriculum areas, enabling students to achieve their potential and fully participate now and in the future in the social, economic, and educational opportunities of our state, nation, and world; and

WHEREAS, school libraries are a vital instructional component of education in the K-12 learning environment, providing specialized programming for at-risk students and conducting programs that are proven to help keep kids in school; and

WHEREAS, the National PTA has, by resolution, firmly established the need for afterschool programs and urges state and federal lawmakers to increase investment in such programs; and

WHEREAS, school library programs are among the most established and versatile forms of afterschool programs, and communities would benefit from having specific efforts directed and strengthening school library programs; and

WHEREAS, Texas research has demonstrated that over 10% more students in schools with professional librarians and quality library programs than those students in schools without professional librarians and quality school library programs met minimum state expectations in standardized testing reading scores; and

WHEREAS, school librarians are frontline educational professionals who teach students and faculty how to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively and ethically; and

WHEREAS, school librarians are certified and must hold a master's degree, pass a graduate level exam on library media functions and supporting school curricula, and have two years of classroom teaching experience; and

WHEREAS, the school librarian works with students to safely and efficiently navigate the Internet; and

WHEREAS, a statewide 2008 poll of Texas registered voters indicated that 84% *strongly agree* (and 99% total agree) that school libraries are an essential part of the education experience, and 94% agree that school librarians are critical to student achievement; and

WHEREAS, incentives to improve and raise the standards of learning and preparing for higher education, or substantive work knowledge must logically include a certified, highly qualified librarian who serves as the guide and provider of knowledge for the school's students, teachers, and administrators; and

WHEREAS, NCLB requires highly qualified teachers in instructional settings and school libraries are prime areas of instruction; and

WHEREAS, standard textbooks or course-specific instructional materials only provide the beginning for learning, and true cognitive development is best served from supporting research to offering incentives for voluntary reading, providing specialized age-appropriate and authoritative e-journals, and resources such as those available through school libraries; and

WHEREAS, state funding of school districts has put a financial strain on public schools and has endangered the provision of quality school library programs staffed by highly qualified certified school librarians and thus sacrificing the quality education for students; and

WHEREAS, Texas had 5,061 librarians serving over 4, 651,516 students in 8,195 schools during the 2007-2008 school year,

RESOLVED that Texas PTA encourages districts to provide highly qualified certified librarians and quality school library programs at every campus; and

RESOLVED that Texas PTA urges the state of Texas to recognize all districts that provide highly qualified certified librarians and quality school library programs at every campus.

Strong Beginnings in Academic Libraries:

INNOVATING

Employee Orientations as a Start to a Learning Organization

BY DAMON CAMILLE AND ANNIE WU

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 2009, Dana Rooks, dean of the University of Houston Libraries, appointed a training committee to plan and develop a training and orientation program that would meet the needs of all library employees. The committee was charged to develop internal training activities and to identify external training opportunities as appropriate. Another important charge was to develop and oversee a structured orientation program for new staff.

As the training committee began developing its plan, the members became convinced that their overarching goal was to begin building a learning organization. The committee was inspired by Peter Senge's description of "an organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together."

In response to this challenge, the committee created a training structure with an intranet page that helped employees indentify and take advantage of a variety of training opportunities. In addition, the committee created a comprehensive orientation program that was designed to create a welcoming environment; help new employees learn about the libraries' goals; understand the role of their department as well as their own contribution to the success of the libraries; and increase employee satisfaction and retention.

INSIGHT FROM THE LITERATURE

An orientation does not take place in a single day. It is an ongoing process in which the libraries hope to help new employees make an easy adjustment to their jobs; teach them something about the history, culture, and values of the libraries; to create a favorable impression of the libraries as an exciting place to work; provide them with information about their job and what they are expected to do; and answer questions about basic policies and benefits.

Taking a position with a new employer is a stressful experience for the new employee as well as for the employer and the rest of the staff. Emotions are high with the prospect of a time-consuming process that is required to take an employee from "newbie" to an integrated member of a well-functioning staff. The new employee is generally overwhelmed and over-stressed. A well-designed orientation program can help change this mindset and make the employee feel welcomed and prepared.

According to a recent article in *Library Leadership and Management* by Karen Wallace, the benefits of an orientation program include increased organizational commitment, reduced turnover, clear expectations, shortened learning curve, faster integration to work teams, increased confidence, reduced anxiety, positive work relationships, and better communication.

GATHERING FEEDBACK

To create a training and orientation program that met employees' needs, the committee undertook a number of feedback gathering activities. These included a survey of all library staff, interviews with department heads, focus groups with librarians and staff members, and focus groups with new employees to learn about their unique needs. This final focus group provided valuable insights into the current situation and to the orientation needs of our new employees.

Every new employee at the University of Houston spends their first day in a university-sponsored orientation. There, they learn about the university, its policies and procedures, and they register for benefits and parking. Previously, once the new staff member reported to their department, the

orientation activities within the libraries were inconsistent. The committee learned that many departments did a good job of welcoming people the first day, and many also had well-defined programs that included tours of the library and introductions to co-workers and others outside the department with whom they might have close working relationships. However, the focus group feedback also showed that some new employees were not greeted the first day; they did not have tools for their work; their offices were not prepared for their arrival; and that they were left alone for breaks and lunch. Clearly, not all of our employees were joining us with the positive impression we would like.

Focus group members had a number of valuable suggestions for the committee. These included the need for a highly structured first day in the University of Houston Libraries, a set itinerary for the first few days, a list of acronyms and terms used in the work setting, description of training and travel opportunities, list of important library committees, safety and emergency procedures, discussion of workplace rules and policies, meetings and introductions to colleagues, and a meeting about the promotion and governance documents for librarians.

Based on analysis of the new employees feedback, the training committee created a comprehensive new employee orientation program including a new employee orientation checklist, the *UH Libraries Orientation Reference Guide*, and departmental orientation program. This program was communicated to all library employees via presentations at different department meetings.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

The new employee orientation checklist is designed to make sure the new employee and their supervisors are informed about the activities that should take place for all new staff. The orientation checklist is divided into pre-arrival, 1st day, 1st week, and 1st month activities. These are distributed in an attempt to make sure the new person is not overwhelmed. Responsibilities for these activities are defined in the checklist.

Pre-arrival activities include ordering keys, a telephone, an email account, requesting logins for necessary computer accounts, and obtaining office supplies so the new staff member will have them as soon as possible. The new employees' desk should be clean and ready for use.

One other very important thing the committee recommended is the appointment of a "first month buddy" for each new staff member. This buddy should be someone from the same department. There are many ways the buddy can help the new employee adjust. They can answer questions. These might be simple questions about where supplies are located, where the break room is located, and when/where do people go to lunch. The buddy can also refer the new person to someone more knowledgeable when a complex question is asked. Often, new employees do not want to bother their supervisor with simple questions, and the buddy can provide these easy answers.

Buddies can also help socialize the new employee. Having a buddy means the new employee has someone they can turn to and increases their comfort level. The buddy can include new staff in a lunch or break group that might include people from other departments thus expanding the new employee's social contacts in the organization.

1st Day activities include a welcome packet with a welcome card signed by the staff, introductions to other staff members, a tour of the building, short introductions to the telephone system, email and online calendar, and lunch with a few colleagues.

1st Week activities include brief meetings with department members to understand their work, a review of the libraries' organization chart, more in-depth introduction to software and tools the employee will need to use, and introduction to important policies and sources of information such as the libraries' intranet and policy manuals.

1st Month activities include meetings with heads of other library departments, tours of the branch libraries, an overview of training opportunities, and a meeting with the dean.

The committee hopes that the orientation checklist provides a consistent guideline for orientation activities across the library.

NEW EMPLOYEES ORIENTATION REFERENCE GUIDE

The purpose of the *Reference Guide* is to provide important information about the UH Libraries and the campus itself. Information in the *Guide* was chosen to help new employees get situated sooner in their new working environment.

The first page of the Guide is a welcome letter from the UH Libraries dean. The letter introduces the new employee to the libraries' values such as building relationships, innovation, and dedication. It challenges the new employee to get involved. Dean Rooks concludes her letter by saying: "we work hard, we have some fun along the way and at the end of the day, we can be confident that we have made a difference."

In addition to the dean's letter, the *Guide* includes the libraries' mission and vision statements, the organization chart, floor maps, a list of training opportunities, information about branch libraries, a summary of the libraries' strategic directions plan, safety and emergency information, useful library and campus links, a schedule of departmental orientations, and a list of library acronyms and terminology.

The *Guide* was given to every current employee and to new employees. A PDF version is continuously updated and available to all staff on the training committees' intranet site.

DEPARTMENT ORIENTATIONS FOR NEW EMPLOYEES

From focus group feedback, the training committee also learned that many staff members were not well informed about the work that took place in areas outside their own department. In response, the committee created the department orientation program. This program is divided into four modules which are offered consecutively each month except for December, January, June, and July. Three departments are featured in each module. Typically, each module includes introductions of staff members, an overview of the work of the departments, and a tour of the workplace. They are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and last approximately 90 minutes. At the end of each module, participants have snacks and a chance to mingle with colleagues.

Because many of the existing staff had never had this kind of opportunity, the initial round of department orientations is open to all staff members. This has proven to be a popular program with 25-30 people attending each session. In the future, groups should be much smaller and more informal, and the sessions may be shorter.

Because of the cyclical nature of the department orientation program, new employees can start attending within a month or two of joining the University of Houston Libraries.

CONCLUSIONS

The orientation and training program is designed to welcome new staff and to make them feel they are part of an organization that values their contributions and that encourages them to learn and grow throughout their career.

The UH orientation program has been in place approximately eight months. Already, we know that over 100 people have participated in the department orientation program; and that, as a result, they have a better idea of the work their colleagues are doing and of their own

contribution to the libraries' efforts. We also know that departments have made an effort to welcome their new colleagues and that new staff have received a clearer and more consistent message about the goals and vision of the University of Houston Libraries and that they have a place to go when they have questions. Supervisors have told us that the orientation checklist and the *Reference Guide* have been helpful in guiding their orientation activities.

A more formal assessment program is planned after one year of operation. The training committee is keeping a database that shows participation in training and orientation activities. The committee is also conducting its second annual survey about ongoing training and orientation needs and participation to continue developing and enhancing the program.

The challenges facing libraries are evolving rapidly. To remain successful, libraries need staff who are committed to life-long learning and the staff need the support and encouragement from their employer. A well-designed orientation program can definitely help fulfilling the needs of both the libraries and their new hires.

Damon Camille is the training, assessment statistics coordinator for the University of Houston Libraries.

Annie Wu is the cataloging coordinator at University of Houston Libraries.

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In their free webinar on September 27, 10-11 am, Camille and Wu will cover the concept of creating a learning organization – what it is, and why it is important for a library to strive to become one. They will describe the processes the University of Houston Libraries used to design a training program to meet the needs of all its employees. They will also share the skills that UH Libraries staff felt they needed to be successful in today's environment. Register at www.txla.org/ce.

INNOVATING

Community Conversations through Online Tools

by Grace Lillevig and Linda Stevens

BACK IN THE DAYS OF WEB 1.0, the only thing most websites did was talk at the visitor. There might have been a contact us link, but that was about it. That was certainly the case with the old Harris County Public Library (HCPL) website. We had information on our locations, some book lists, sites for kids and teens, email and chat reference, and one blog – but no real community focus and certainly no way for the customer to communicate back to us. This changed when we redesigned our site using Drupal (http://www.drupal.org), an open-source content management system.

Website

Drupal changed the website dramatically. We expanded the books, movies, audio, and website sections to include topical blogs; we also added blogs for kids and teens, and we introduced a blog on the front of the site. Perhaps the biggest change was to the branch pages, where we also added blogs, thus giving branches some control over the content on their pages. These changes increased the number of voices on our website from three (the eBranch staff) to 80 plus. These staff members range from shelvers to branch librarians and department heads. They were given training on blogging and moderation of comments. Customers are also given a variety of ways to contact library staff and provide input on library services through contact forms, blog comments, and feedback on options for materials suggestions.

Comments and Blogging

The contact form that offers one generic form to send in any question is still prevalent on most websites today. While we do offer this sort of form for people who wish to use it, we also decided to set up a staff directory (www.hcpl.net/users/staff-list) on our site that gives customers the ability to personally contact any blogger, branch librarian, or administrative staff member – yes, even the library director. They can search for a staff member by function or click on their name to find information about that person and see their picture, get access to their blog posts, and send them an email. You get

the most feedback from customers if you ask for their opinion where they're looking to give it, so they don't have to contact an individual if they don't want to do so. They can use a form to make a purchase suggestion, find answers to reference questions through "ask a librarian" or chat reference, or submit their information and get tech support for downloadable materials. We are currently working on a reader recommendation service to provide title and author suggestions tailored to an individual's tastes.

Although not a traditional conversation, customized content allows eBranch customers to select what they want to regularly hear from the library. We offer original newsletters for children's services, teen services, and adult services that profile staff members and customers, highlight new titles and booklists, and promote the most read titles in the library each month. Customers can subscribe to these newsletters or one of our customized Bookletters (www.booksite.com/) lists that highlight new titles by genre or interest, and they receive each new issue by email or RSS feed. RSS feeds also allow customers to receive updated library content as soon as it is posted. They have the option to subscribe to their branch's news feed, a news feed for the genre or topic of their choice (DVDs, mysteries, etc.), or even one individual's blog posts and receive them all through a feed reader.
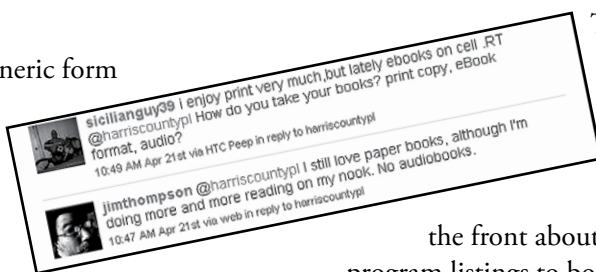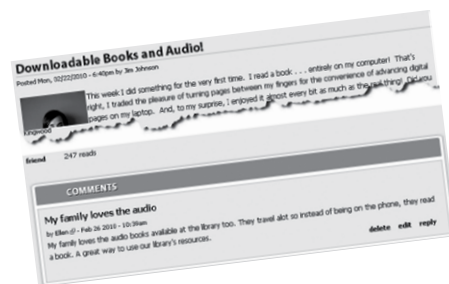
The forum that generates the most back-and-forth public conversation would be the comments made on individual blog posts. Customers can (and do!) comment on any post made on the site, from announcements made on the front about system happenings or events to branch program listings to book or movie recommendations. They are offered the option of leaving their contact information or remaining anonymous. Topical bloggers (those who write about books or movies or websites) often receive feedback if a person agrees or disagrees with their opinion or offering additional suggestions for items to read, listen to, or watch. Staff members are encouraged to respond promptly to each

comment to keep the conversation going. Bloggers can also set up polls to solicit opinions on topics like the best time to offer a book discussion group or what are reader's favorite types of romance. When logged in to the website, bloggers can see how many times their post has been read and that information also offers a form of encouragement that an audience is out there reading their work. Looking at the topical blog posts and the comments as a whole, you can follow how the voices of individual bloggers gather their own groups of readers.

Branch blog posts have a different type of style and content from the topical posts and receive different sorts of feedback. Branch pages are set up to be the home page for all of their location's computers and the content for those pages is geared to be of interest to that community. Because of this, they offer a very practical avenue for conversation. Branch posts about ESL or computer classes often receive comments that ask for further information about registration. Posts about Library Friends meetings may receive comments that lead to new members and, in one case, even had someone asking about donating money. Some branches post instructions for craft projects or family activities that offer customers the opportunity to create from home, and comments indicate that this service is appreciated. Less directly community related but certainly thrilling for the branch book club was when their librarian's post about the monthly selection of *The Ha-Ha* received a comment from author Dave King thanking the club for reading his book.

Some of the most important conversations you will generate through this open conversation with the public are the conversations you may not really want to have. By far, the two most read and comment-provoking posts from our website are "Welcome to HCPL's New Website" and "Hours Change at Five Library Locations." Library Director Rhoda Goldberg's welcoming post for the new site has currently been read 2,583 times and has received 54 comments, ranging from compliments to directional questions, from complaints to technical support. She was able to address their concerns and respond to them publicly, where the entire story could be read and understood by others. If they chose to leave their personal information, she could also respond privately, where appropriate. The "hours change" post concerns weekday schedule changes at five libraries, including one new facility. It has currently been read 8,865 times and has generated 31 comments, many of them unhappy. The resulting conversation offered the library the chance to explain the reasoning behind the schedule changes and even had customers responding to each other about library services that are important to them, which provided valuable feedback for library staff.

The same principles used for creating conversations with the public apply to group communications with staff. A feature called "Shop the Problem" was added to our staff intranet within the past year. This form was set up so that one person could post a problem that they were having difficulty resolving and other staff members could offer possible solutions through comments. With a large system as spread out as HCPL is, communicating online is an attractive option. This feature works quite well when submitted as intended, but we soon discovered that staff members had other topics they wanted to discuss. When Sunday hours became part of a regular work week due to budget cuts, a post was submitted to "Shop the Problem." This post was read 5,279 times and received 92 comments from staff members, who were sometimes reacting more to each other than the original post. After a two week comment period, the director posted a response to their concerns. While this didn't appease all of those making comments, it did provide them with explanations and some suggestions were implemented. This and other submissions led to a general suggestion and idea form for the intranet.

Social Networking

Conversations on your website are a first step, but you need to take the conversation beyond your website to where your customers are gathering online. At HCPL, we got our feet wet with social networking during Hurricane Ike in 2008. During the hurricane, our administrative offices were closed, and the servers were down. In the aftermath, while the servers came back up, we recognized that many of our customers did not have computer access due to power outages. As such, we decided to begin posting updates on Twitter, Facebook, and MySpace in addition to what we posted on the website.

After the emergency postings from the hurricane, it took us about a month to come up with a plan to continue our social networking presence. The eBranch and marketing department share an administrative assistant, Veronica Garza, and she was assigned to be the "voice" of HCPL on social networks. We think having one voice is important as it provides continuity to postings. In addition, we have one central page on each network rather than pages for each branch. We feel that a unified message works better for us. At that time in October 2008, we decided to continue posting to Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace and add LibraryThing.

Over the past year and a half, we have made some adjustments and learned a lot in our use of social networks. To give you the benefit of our experience, here are some of our lessons learned.

- MySpace is dying. At this point, we are no longer posting to MySpace. It's simply not where the majority of customers are.

- Ask questions. We have recently started asking questions to have a true conversation with our customers. These have ranged from what are you reading now? to what's your favorite format - paper, audio, or ebook? We've had good success with this on Facebook.

- Remote Reference. We get reference questions through Twitter. It hasn't been a huge influx, but people do ask us questions through @harriscountypl.

- Be Flexible. While we think a unified message is important,

we are strongly considering a second Facebook page geared specifically towards young adults. The reason for this is the message to young adults is different than for adults.

- Post Regularly. Posting regularly is important to staying relevant to your customers. Remember, "out of sight, out of mind." One thing we use now to keep Twitter and Facebook updated regularly is HootSuite (http://hootsuite.com) and TweetDeck (http://tweetdeck.com). Both services let you to post to Twitter and Facebook pages at the same time. In addition, HootSuite lets you schedule posts so you can post on the weekend or evening without being there.

- Direct Message on Twitter. We have used direct message (e.g. @harriscountypl) to alert other tweeters to events that pertain to their followers. For example, an event at our Katy branch, would be tweeted to selected Katy oriented tweeters; or a business program would be tweeted to a business oriented follower. They usually retweet (RT) what we send, thus getting our message out to targeted groups.

- Follow blogs. Get tips on getting your message out; it's especially useful to follow non-library blogs for this. We use TwiTip (www.twitip.com/), Mashable (www.mashable.com) and iLibrarian (http://oedb.org/blogs/ilibrarian/) to name a few.

- Add yourself to directories. We've added our libraries' information to sites such as Yelp (http://www.yelp.com).

- Sign up your location(s) for Google Local Business Center (www.google.com/localbusinesscenter). You can get reports on how often people search for your library, click through, and where people want directions from. You can also customize your search results with hours and available services.

In addition to posting to various social networks, it's important to see what people are saying about your library unsolicited. We use various tools - all free - to monitor what people are saying about our library and our branches. With most of these services, you just plug in a search phrase; use quotations for best results.

- Google Alerts (www.google.com/alerts). If you do nothing else, subscribe to a Google Alert search on your library's name. You can receive the alert by email or RSS feed. Google alerts give you the latest search results on a topic so you can see when your name appears on the web.

- Netvibes (www.netvibes.com/). Using widgets, you can set up custom tabbed pages on multiple topics. Our Netvibes has a general HCPL tab as well as tabs for branches, etc.

- Addict-o-matic (http://addictomatic.com). This service lets you create a custom page "with the latest buzz on any topic." It's an automated version of Netvibes.

- Socialmention (http://socialmention.com). This service is similar to the above but focuses on blogs, microblogs and other social sites.

- Community websites. Look at your community newspaper sites, city/county oriented pages, and sites like Yelp (www.yelp.com/), Google Maps (http://maps.google.com), and Yahoo Maps (http://maps.yahoo.com) to see what people are saying about you. Many of these sites, especially the last three let users rate and review businesses.

We continue to experiment with new ways to communicate with customers online. We are always on the lookout for the next place we'll find them as well as the next way to communicate with them. Because we have the option, we use a lot of people to blog, but we use a single voice for social networking; it's what works for us. The number of people you use will depend on the organization of your library. The way we do it is not the only way it can be done, but we hope we might have inspired you to start a new conversation of your own. ✪

Grace Lillevig is the e-Branch manager, and Linda Stevens is coordinator of marketing and programming. Both are with Harris County Public Library.

Grace Lilleveg

Linda Stevens

Join Lillevig and Stevens in a free webinar on August 25, 2-3 pm, for a practical guide to starting your own conversations with tips on writing effective blog posts and responding to comments. They will also cover how to get started in social networking and discuss how to find the right forum for your library. Libraries of any size can use online tools to communicate with their customers, and they will provide resources to get even the smallest library started. Register at www.txla.org/ce.

2010 Top Technology Trends in Texas

Libraries: Our State of Affairs

BY TODD J. HUMBLE

> The digital world continues its dive into the real world; and as these two lives merge, are we gaining or losing ground as information professionals?

This year's Automation and Technology Round Table survey again went to the masses and included both technically specific questions and more general questions that need to be kept in mind when providing services to the public. All TLA members were given the opportunity to participate with 308 school librarians, 179 public librarians, 102 academic librarians, and 17 special library librarians taking the challenge for a large sample of 597 unique opinions.

Of the 21 most popular social network destinations on the Internet, the majority of respondents did not know of 16 of those sites. Facebook (69% personal use / 24% library use), YouTube (48% personal use / 26% library use), and Flickr (39% personal use / 22% library use) were the top three social media sites for both personal use and library uses. These same sites were not utilized by libraries at rates that exceed their adoption. Reasons for not using these sites are as follows: Facebook: 38% not allowed access, 7% no interest, 1% not known; Flickr: 19 % not allowed access, 17% no interest, 13% not known; and YouTube: 30% not allowed access, 9% no interest, 3% not known. These days, when libraries need to make such a proactive effort to reach patrons, one wonders what reasons justify not creating a library's presence on social media.

Small screen Internet enabled devices are here to stay, and 44% of respondents use it on their phones now. The Internet enabled iPod received a 33% personal use and additionally, 24% of the sample has the iPhone making these Apple platforms the most popular small screen devices being used by librarians in Texas. The Blackberry, Android, and Nintendo DSi round out the top five used devices. Rates of non-allowance exceed personal adoption rates for almost all devices, thus putting library adoption rates extremely low.

While fear of being distracted from work can be of real concern, failure to actively serve our patrons through their regular communication forums is a dangerous path to follow. Micro-blogging (i.e., Twitter) is a major trend among our patrons with 31% of librarians and 21% of libraries already participating. Micro-OPACs (OPAC search and results designed for the small screen) are a trend that has been coming for many years; yet, we are still only at a 2% adoption rate according to this year's survey.

Do you provide notices via **text messaging to these small screen devices**? Why not? Texting was the number one personal communications response (46%) given this year. A text message can be sent to Internet enabled devices with any email notice system. Don't know the email address of the cellphone or iPod? Just send a text message to an email, and you'll discover the server extension you need to add for your carrier (i.e, 8171234567@att.net). Smartphones will receive your notices in full, but pagers and other types of cellphones with texting will only receive the first 140 characters (the same length limitation of tweets). When you start this, just remember the patron will incur whatever fees are associated with their texting plan and that notices may be limited in character length. Adjusting your email settings to communicate information as briefly and concisely as possible will insure maximum benefit of actual material details that are being transmitted to the patron.

Slightly more than 50% of participants stated their library is using a **blog** to communicate information to patrons. Although most blogs are less polished than newsletters, there is no reason they have to be. The electronic newsletter (58%) outnumbered the paper newsletter (46%), but wikis were a close third at 43% of libraries using this technology for library communications. Hopefully, those that are not doing a newsletter are doing a wiki or blog to communicate their monthly, weekly, or daily library events.

Email notification systems are not as prevalent as one would hope. Only 52% of respondents stated they notify patrons when materials are overdue via email, but when materials arrive, 58% stated they send patrons an email. Reminder services before an item is overdue were at 38% and help explain why online services such as LibraryThing have found a market serving our patrons.

Library communications are offered in Spanish at 45% of the respondents' libraries, which seems like a good response to patron needs. However, the other top nine languages (other than English) that are commonly found in Texas were offered at less than 2% of the libraries surveyed. This is hard to address, but community outreach could help provide the library with volunteers to assist in providing library communications in alternate formats. Documents could be translated with Babelfish (or other free online services) and presented to community volunteers for grammar and context corrections.

RSS is personally used by 46% of those surveyed and 30% of the libraries. The number one method for tagging and bookmarking information for future reference was creating "favorites" in their browser (72%), with Delicious (45%) and Google bookmarks (42%) rounding out the top three. I am personally guilty of this place saving method as well. If we really want our links available from anywhere we need to utilize methods other than favorites on our computers.

As more services are offered, **online analytics** is an important tool in understanding how patrons are using these services. Simply put analytics is the science of analysis. Analytic software helps to identify ways to improve expected behaviors by giving you the data of what is actually being done on various screens that are presented to our patrons. They can go far beyond page counters by providing browser type and action selected information that may identify issues that are beyond our reasoning of what is happening. Analytics are definitely not everyone's cup of tea, but each library should strive to find someone that can help implement some type of analytics software on the library's website to correct unforeseen issues that patrons may not be communicating to staff. The 19% rate use of Google Analytics may be a fair number, but 59% of respondents not knowing what it is needs correction.

Materials formats are still very traditional at this point; but, with 69% of our libraries offering eBooks and 46% offering eAudiobook formats, we seem to be moving in the right direction. Although Kindle, Nook, and other eBook readers are still a growing market, I am certain this market will be short lived. PlayAways seems to fit in this category as well at a current 42% adoption rate based on survey respondents, but less than 11% personally use this format. Specialized devices for single tasks will always exist, but as these capabilities are now standard on most smartphones and available for all gaming systems, we should see the writing on the wall. The number one selection for all eReader devices asked about was not affordable. The real problem we will all have to address is the cost and access issues associated with moving to eMaterial formats. Are publishers providing library pricing models for these formats of their best selling materials?

In closing, one of the most important questions was near the end of the survey, *Does your library have a written and approved technology plan?* Twenty-two percent responded that they did not know if their library had a technology plan, and 19% stated no. If you want to address technology issues, you need to have a written and approved plan that is reviewed and updated annually. Librarians that knew their plan was updated within the past year were at 24%, and an additional

35% knew they had an older one. Hardware replacement (27% at no set cycle) and software updates (17% at no set cycle) should be addressed in a good technology plan so costs can be budgeted to support the goals of the library.

The full survey results are available through a link on my blog http://technoflavo.blogspot.com. There is a large amount of information available for analysis but checking into the application of some of the everyday technologies described here is a good starting point to better meeting the needs of our patrons.

This year's questions were developed by the author with the assistance of Todd Peters of Texas State University and other officers of TLA's Automation and Technology Round Table (ATRT) and the survey was hosted by the North Texas Regional Library System. ✪
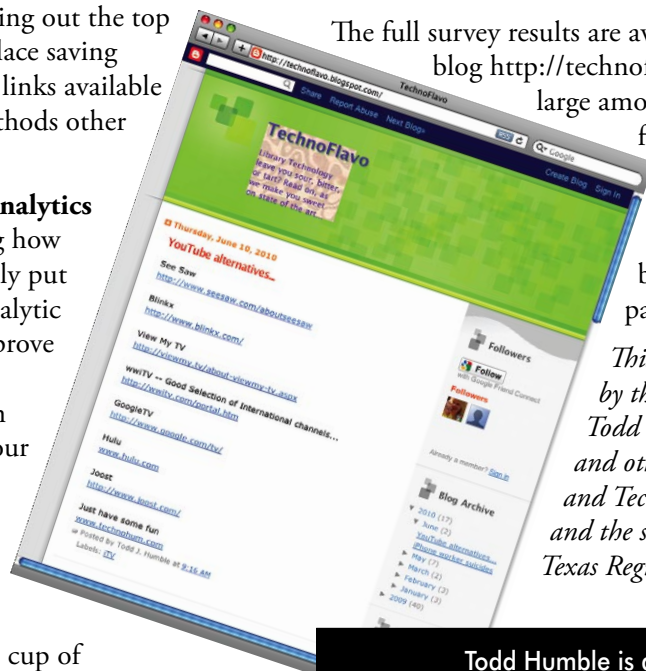
Todd Humble is a library supervisor at North Richland Hills Public Library.

Google Docs, EtherPad, and Then Some: *Word Processing and Collaboration in Today's Portable Work Environment*

by Billy Hoya

REMEMBER THE DAYS WHEN WORD processing was an endless sea of plain text flickering on a monochrome screen? Modern word processing programs not only allow users to format content in sophisticated ways, but they also allow for the seamless integration of graphics, tables, and other features. Most now include sophisticated page layout, spelling, grammar, and style sheet tools, allowing the user to do even more. These tools are part of the customary, everyday experience of content creation.

The latest development is the word processors move from the desktop onto the Internet, with users' documents stored on Web servers and access provided to them via a local Web browser. The most immediate benefit of this is that users have access to their documents from any computer with an Internet connection, freeing them from the burden of shuffling USB drives or other media between computers to transport documents.

But the revolution known as online word processing has opened other possibilities, particularly in the realm of collaboration. Imagine for a moment that you are working on a grant with several parties located throughout the state. Collaboration is difficult, as you are not able to meet in person to discuss the grant proposal. One option is to send the application by email to the other parties for revision and review, but this can cause chaos as more and more versions of the proposal start to circulate, and this will eventually need to be compiled into one document. To add to the confusion, you need to make sure that the document is in a format that everyone can open.

Word Processing Today

The solution is to create your draft proposal in an online word processor. Most online word processors allow users to share documents. For some, sharing documents is as easy as copying a link and sending it to users you wish to have access. With your draft proposal in place on an online word processor, you can share it with others in your group who can edit the document directly. These same edits can then be viewed by other members of the group, saving you the trouble of having to organize and re-email various versions of your document. Since all edits are kept in one place, you are also saved the burden of having to compile each change.

If you haven't already taken the opportunity to try out an online word processor, now may be the time. There are several to choose from, and even those that charge a fee for corporate use offer free accounts to individuals.

Google Docs *(http://docs.google.com)*

Perhaps the best know of the online word processors, Google Docs was created in 2006 when Google acquired Writely and merged it with Google Spreadsheets. Today, Google Docs offers not only word processing and spreadsheets, but it also has presentation, database, and survey tools.

The Google Docs Word Processor has most of the features found in standard word processors. It can be a little bug prone at times, with picture and table insertion being somewhat difficult. Where it really shines is in its collaboration features. Documents can be "published" as read-only Web pages, or others can be invited to edit documents. Google Docs keeps a history of all changes made, so a document can be rolled back to a previous version if needed. Finished documents can be downloaded as HTML, PDF, RTF, text, OpenOffice, and Microsoft Word documents.

In addition, documents in different formats can be uploaded to Google Docs for editing. Supported file types include Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, StarOffice, RFT, text, and HTML of up to 500KB. While imports are usually converted

true to their original format, documents with large numbers of complicated tables will convert poorly.

One of Google Docs' newest features is the ability for multiple editors of a document to chat while editing the document. Other unique features include a "lookup in dictionary" command and the ability to translate documents into other languages.

While accounts for individuals are free, Google offers a subscription service for businesses called Google Apps Premiere. This service offers a number of additional features as well as 24-hour tech support. For schools, universities, and select non-profits with fewer than 3,000 users, Google offers a free "Education Edition" of Apps Premiere. For more information, visit www.google.com/apps/intl/en/nonprofit.

Google Wave *(http://wave.google.com/)*

In May, 2009, Google introduced a powerful new communication tool known as Google Wave. While not an online word processor in a traditional sense, Google Wave possesses a number of features which puts it at odds with online word processors.

While Google Wave has been billed as a replacement for email, a better metaphor is that of a built document. Users start with a blank document, known as a "wave" in honor of the science fiction television show *Firefly*, to which they invite others to edit. As the document grows, users can add features to it, such as a map widget or a tool for planning a meeting. All changes to a wave appear instantaneously to all other users.

Despite its fascinating array of tools, Google Wave does have some draw backs. Since Google Wave is still under development, many of its features are still rather quirky, and at first glance, the interface is intimidating. Also, there is no import or export feature, forcing users to cut and paste finished documents into a local word processor.

Currently, creation of new Google Wave accounts are by invitation only. You can request an invitation at the Google Wave website: http://wave.google.com.

EtherPad *(http://code.google.com/p/etherpad/)*

While EtherPad is not as full featured as Google Docs, it does allow for real-time editing of documents. Unlike other online word processors where changes may take some time to display, edits in EtherPad display instantly to all users. Because of this, EtherPad is often described as an easy-to-use version of Google Wave.

Google perceived EtherPad as such a threat that, shortly before the premiere of Google Wave, Google purchased EtherPad with the intent to close down the site and to migrate its users to Google Wave. Due in part to outrage from a large group of loyal EtherPad users, Google released the website's source code under the Apache Open Source License.

What makes EtherPad so remarkable is its ease of use. To create a new document, simply go to an EtherPad host, such as http://typewith.me/ and click "create new pad." To invite others to edit, copy the link to the document and send it to them. This ease of use makes it ideal for classrooms and workshops. No worrying about whether others have accounts - just send the link.

EtherPad also has a number of unique features, such as the ability to "playback" the creation of a document, color coding of edits, and a chat window to allow participants to communicate during the session. Finished documents can be exported as Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, PDF, HTML, and text documents. Microsoft Word, RTF, HTML, and text documents can be imported for additional editing, though documents with complex formatting or tables and large documents are not true to the original and will sometimes fail to import.

Because EtherPad is now open source, several websites are hosting their own EtherPad servers. For example, PrimaryPad (http://primarypad.com) hosts a free and subscription EtherPad service geared toward elementary schools. Users can even download and install EtherPad on personal Web servers, giving them access to many features, such as the creation of password-protected pads, which they would have to pay for at other EtherPad websites. For the adventurous, Nuba Prinicalli gives excellent instructions on setting up an EtherPad Server at his website: http://pauleira.com/13/installing-etherpad/.

Feng Office *(http://www.fengoffice.com/)*

Unlike the other online processors, FengOffice does not support the simultaneous editing of documents by multiple users. Despite this, FengOffice does have a number of valuable features.

The Feng Office Word Processer is rather full featured with a user interface similar to Microsoft Word. Table creation and image insertion is easy. While users can upload other file types to share, only HTML documents can be further edited. Additionally, finished documents can only be exported in HTML.

In addition to the word processor, FengOffice provides a calendar, notes and contacts manager, and a task list creator. One interesting feature is the time reporting system, which allows users to keep track of the number of hours spent on various projects.

Sharing documents in FengOffice is accomplished using a workspace system. Various workspaces can be created, and then documents, calendars, and task lists can be added to the workspace. Workspaces can be made available to various users and groups for review and editing. For example, system administrators can construct workspaces where students and teachers can post documents and tasks related to a class, as well as a workspace that only teachers have access to for posting of professional development material.

Like EtherPad, FengOffice is open source. While the FengOffice website offers various subscription hosting plans, you can also download and install FengOffice on your own Web server. The FengOffice download and install instructions can be found at www.fengoffice.com/web/community/.

Adobe Buzzwords *(http://acrobat.com/)*

Adobe Buzzwords is relatively new to online word processing. Part of the Acrobat.com suite, Buzzwords features a polished, easy-to-navigate user interface. While creating tables can be difficult, picture insertion is easy and text formatting is a breeze.

Buzzwords has a document sharing system similar to that of Google Docs, allowing users to invite others via email to read, review, or edit a document. To send an invite, click on the share button and enter the email addresses of those you wish to share the document with. After selecting the permissions for each person, an email will be sent to them with a link to the document. Unlike Google Docs, there is no sharing option to allow people to view a document without logging in or creating an account at Acrobat.com.

Finished Buzzword documents can be downloaded as PDFs, Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, HTML, RTF, text, and EPUB documents. Additionally, Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, RTF, and text files can be uploaded for editing in Buzzword. Most documents convert true to the original, the exception being those with complex tables or embedded images.

A free Acrobat.com account is all you need to use Buzzwords, with the subscription accounts providing access to other Acrobat.com features such as advance Web conferencing tools.

These are but a few of the online word processors that the Web has to offer. As we are increasingly required to work with others online – some of whom we may never see in person – our dependence on online word processors will continue to grow. Most online word processors are still not polished enough to fully replace standard word processing applications on desktop computers, but the day may come when, instead of launching your favorite word processing application, you open a new browser window and go to a website to create a new document. ✪

Billy Hoya is a program coordinator in the Collection Development Department at the University of Houston Libraries.

The Mission is Dynamic Libraries and Librarians for Every School

by Lisa Layera and Susan McBurney
(a.k.a., the Spokane Moms)

"I'm just a pizza lady. Any chance my kids have of going to college will be because of the computer skills the librarian was teaching them – it's too late for me. Please, can you help bring back their librarian?"

- Spokane parent, in 2007.

"I have colleagues that say, 'Technology is not a professional interest of mine.'"

- Anonymous Texas teacher-librarian, overheard at the Spokane Moms' TLA presentation in April 2010

"Well, I'm a kid and I want to tell you what I need – it's important for me to prepare for my future. I need you to teach me technology. Teachers need to be aware so I can be prepared."

- Jaycee, Melba, ID High School Junior, at a workshop the Spokane Moms facilitated a week after the 2010 TLA conference

As Moms who champion school libraries and information technology, we're often asked to describe the successes in Washington State. The short version reads like this:

- Year 1: $4 million in emergency bridge funds for school libraries secured during a 12-week legislative session.
- Year 2: Line-item for teacher-librarians and library materials, codified within an historic education reform bill; cuts to the school library program in our hometown are reversed.
- Year 3: Initiative launched to certify all Washington teacher-librarians as peer coaches of technology integration.

How was this possible?

- Step 1: Create a coalition, engaging key stakeholders: parents, teachers, librarians, administrators, students, legislators, businesspeople, and academics.
- Step 2: Develop an "ask" that is specific, concrete, and attainable.
- Step 3: Harness stakeholder voices using multiple mediums.
- Step 4: Show up in person. Build relationships with legislators all year long. Have a strong lobby presence. Give back.

The *what* and *how* still don't explain *why* three moms became citizen activists, and why over 15,000 Washingtonians were willing to speak out for school libraries. Understanding the nexus between passion and action is the starting point of creating a movement, and unless massive resources become available to support library programs, it will take an organized and sustained effort to attain a specific goal and ensure libraries and librarians flourish in this century. It cannot only be librarians advocating on behalf of librarians; *that* kind of movement simply will not work – legislators call it a "special interest," no matter how good your intentions really are.

The pizza lady mom and the student, Jaycee, embody why we felt compelled to take action three years ago – equity, access, and information fluency for all kids. Though traditional (print) literacy has always been important (for the record we're huge fans of books and reading), 21st century library programs simply must lead the way in providing every student with the information and technology training they need to flourish in today's world.
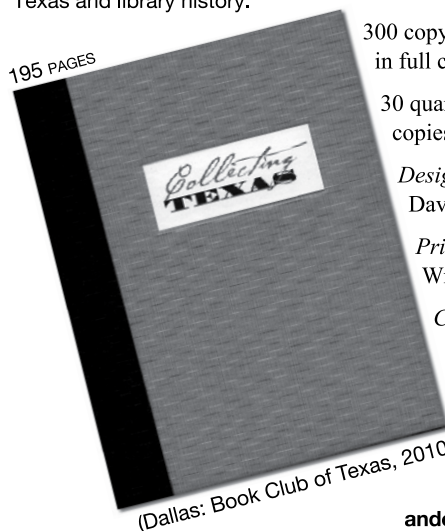
While students and parents have provided the impetus, it is the voice and mindset of the "entrenched librarian" that prevent us from stopping our work while simultaneously

driving us to imagine quitting. We don't think it's an overstatement to say it is the voice and practice of the "entrenched librarian" that could bring about the demise of the profession.

This said, we recently left Texas giddy with hope. We believe the prospects for libraries in the Lone Star state are as robust as the San Antonio River Walk is popular.

What might the fate of Texas libraries and the San Antonio River Walk have in common? **Vision**. What else? **Mission**. Robert Hugman was an architect who, in the 1920s, advocated for saving a bend in the San Antonio River because he held a vision that it could maximize commercial development. Hugman went as far as to place his own office at the bend, and he endured much admonishment that he'd "be drowned like a rat."[1] The bend wasn't paved, and any Texan worth their salt knows how Hugman's vision turned out.

Librarians are professionals with a mission to ensure students are effective users and producers of ideas and information – this is what you *do* (or should do).[2] Librarians steward the vision that a library (both virtual and physical) is a space in which intellectual and creative development can and should be maximized. Some of you have gone so far as to transform your practice and your physical space to encompass the emerging technologies and atmosphere kids need and desire, this *despite* claims that the library is becoming obsolete and librarianship is going the way of the Dodo.

Far from becoming a storm sewer, the San Antonio River Walk is described today as an "oasis," "retreat," and "sanctuary." It also serves as a linchpin to the city's economy and identity. Texas librarians have the opportunity to lead the nation in supplying what Christopher Harris has prescribed: he has said librarians need to deliver "what kids can't get anywhere else in the school." The Spokane Moms and Washington teacher librarians call it the "LIT program" – the Library Information and Technology program. The name reflects a central lesson we learned early in our campaign: set straight the misconceptions people hold about what libraries and librarians "do" as often and as clearly as you can.

The pay-off could be amazing. How? We believe Obama's newly released "Blueprint for Reform" (the framework that will scaffold the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) can be for school libraries what Hugman's "Shops for Aragon and Romula" (his blueprint for the River Walk) became for the San Antonio River.

Obama's "Blueprint for Reform" provides clear directives on where to focus. Given the fact that the Obama administration's proposed budget for next year shifts almost all education funds from formula grants to competitive grants, it's crucial to pay attention.[3] Here are specific areas of impact, taken directly from Obama's blueprint, where Library Information and Technology (LIT) programs could hit the jackpot:

- Effective use of technology to improve instruction
- Programs that promote schools as the center of their community
- Programs to develop study skills
- Grants for the creation of high quality educational digital content
- Effective family engagement strategies
- Programs for homeless students and children of migrant workers
- Strengthening literacy programs, including family literacy
- Accelerated learning opportunities
- Closing achievement gaps
- Increased resource equity

> It's the delivery of quality, indispensible services that matters most for the profession and for the students.

Texas is lucky, as usual, in that its "natural resources" are waiting to be tapped.

With whom can TLA partner? Who might believe it is imperative that Texas children are effective users and producers of ideas of information? The short-list we presented in San Antonio included: Texas Emerging Technology Fund; Texas PTA; TSTA; Dell; NASA; EDS; Texas Instruments.

When we listed the companies and organizations during our April TLA talk and asked people to raise their hands if they knew anyone affiliated with them, there wasn't a single company or organization that wasn't "known personally" by Texas librarians. Launching a WDYK (who do you know) campaign will yield surprising and exciting results, but partnerships won't happen unless you see that they do. People often ask us how we got so many people to speak out on behalf of libraries in WA. Our answer? We picked up the phone and asked them to.

Hugman is not exactly a household name in Texas or beyond, because his work was about the river not about him. Two key components of this plan of action can be understood by following Hugman's lead. It is *not* about a librarian's job; it's about the kids. It is *not* about creating isolated pockets of excellence; it's about creating a Texas standard for the profession that is delivered to every Texas student and teacher within every schoolhouse of every Texas district. In short, it is about creating an excellent program that any administrator can count on.

The key to effective advocacy is rooted in the ability to imagine an entirely new landscape. The key to effective marketing is the ability to create and communicate the vision. The key to an effective practice is delivering what is needed of you. Certainly, advocacy and marketing are necessary, but

what will determine success and sustainability is effective practice. ***It's the delivery of quality, indispensible services that matters most for the profession and for the students.***

What would need to happen in order for Texas librarians to become indispensable? TLA would make the "Hands On Lab" concept that premiered at the April conference an ongoing, on-demand service for members, with virtual and local training. Texas librarians would issue on-going "Horizon Reports" so that librarians on the ground can meet their district's strategic planning needs like never before. Texas would join WA and MT in certifying teacher-librarians as peer coaches of technology integration.[4] Texas librarians would provide website support so that by next conference 100% of Texas librarians will have upgraded their websites to reflect the portal and destination that they can and should be. Texas librarians would support Texas being the first state to institute a librarian-led student IT fellow program, complete with showcasing of student projects at next spring's TLA conference. Collaboration with Silicon Hills and Silicon Prairie companies, as well as with NASA, would allow Texas to become a leader in STEM learning opportunities for students, with the school library being recognized for its transformation to libratory. TLA would lead its coalition in lobbying for digital portfolios for every K-12 student. The creating and producing of information on the part of students would be unparalleled, as would the funding for school library programs. San Antonio's Alamo may continue to be the cradle of Texas liberty, but its school libraries would represent the cradle of intellectual and creative freedoms.

Notes

[1] http://visitsanantonio.com/visitors/play/explore-the-river-walk/index.aspx

[2] Revised mission for school libraries as discussed by Mike Eisenberg and Joyce Valenza

[3] http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/education/stories/DN-librarians_13met.ART.State.Edition1.4c6f5a3.html

[4] http://peer-ed.com/default.aspx. Contact: Dr. Les Foltos, director, lfoltos@peer-ed.com ✪

Lisa Layera is co-founder, fundourfuturewashington.

Susan McBurney is co-founder, fundourfuturewashington.

Annual Conference

FILTERING CHAOS: FROM INFORMATION TO KNOWLEDGE, the theme of the 2010 Annual Conference, served as a thought-proving framework for the Association's convention. Held in San Antonio, April 14 – April 17, the conference drew 7760 attendees, authors and speakers, and corporate partners. This year also included a surprise visit from Governor Rick Perry, who appeared in the TLA Exhibit Hall to sign copies of his 2008 book on the Boy Scouts of America.

Featured Speakers

This year's featured speakers included National Public Radio's award-winning journalist Scott Simon and Julie Powell, author of *Julie & Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, and 1 Tiny Apartment.* Both spoke to capacity-filled ballrooms. Other featured speakers included international best-selling author Adriana Trigiani; opening author session speakers Elizabeth Berg, Katherine Center, and Ingrid Law; and authors Amy Wilson and Ken C. Davis. Library experts in attendance included Ginnie Cooper, director of the Washington, D.C. Public Library; ALA President Camila Alire; information systems expert Steven Bell; innovation leader Stephen Abram; futurists George Needham and Joan Frye Williams; and information policy guru Charles McClure.

Highlights This Year

Lariat Reading List *(www.txla.org/lariat-list)*

Book lovers across the country have a new tool in making selections of the latest titles in fiction literature. The Texas Library Association unveiled its first reading list for adult readers. Corinne Hill, the first chair of the group and assistant director of resource management at Dallas Public Library, said "The Texas Library Association has an outstanding reputation in the country for its many youth reading lists. Now, we felt the time was right to focus on our adult readers. As librarians, we get so many requests from book clubs and library clients for the best reads. So, we decided to put our collective skills together to create a tool to assist adult readers by providing them with a list of books that are simply a pleasure to read."

Librarians placed their final votes on the nominations during the Association's conference and revealed the new Lariat List at the Adult Services Breakfast on Saturday, April 17. According to Diane Bruxvoort, associate dean for collection services at the University of Houston, who also served on the selection committee, the members of the group read nearly 300 titles for this year's list. "It's fascinating to see the diversity of titles available in a given year, and we are working to present a list of 'great reads' to appeal to a broad spectrum of fiction readers."

Roving Reporters

Did you get your five minutes of fame? This year, TLA had a group of intrepid TLA reporters roaming the conference halls recording your impressions of the conference, programs, library issues, and TLA. A montage of video footage was showcased during the break between General Session II and the start of the Bookcart Drill Team Competition.

To see some of the video footage (including an interview with Julie Powell), go to TLA's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/TexasLibraryAssoc.

We offer our deep thanks to our crew of reporters: Janis Test (Abilene Public Library), Robert Ayala (San Antonio Public Library), Mary Christmas (Corpus Christi ISD), Jane Jergensen (Kerr Elementary, Allen ISD), and Sandra Farmer (Houston Public Library). They did a super job and helped create a lasting and personal record of the TLA conference experience.

TLA AWARDS

Lifetime Achievement Award: Clara Mounce

Distinguished Service Award: Beverley Shirley, TSLAC

Librarian of the Year: John Augelli, Rosenberg Library, Galveston

Outstanding Services to Libraries Award: Friends of Abilene Public Library

Wayne Williams Project of the Year: West Public Library Tale Tellers

Libraries Change Communities: Arlington Reads, Arlington Public Library

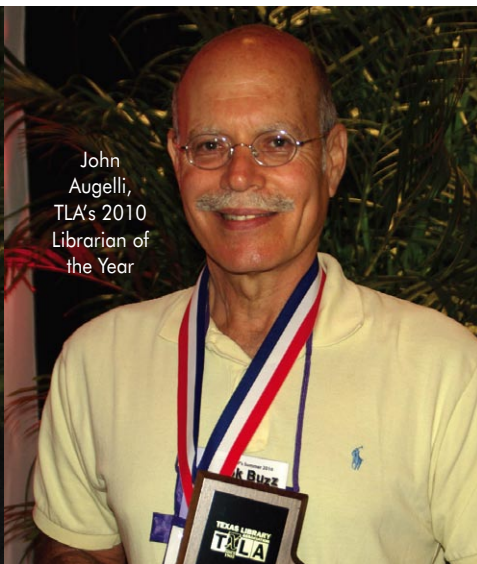**Benefactor Award:** AT&T Foundation (Dallas)

TLA Spectrum Scholar: Rebecca "Nicci" Cobb, UNT CI

Three Tale Tellers came with librarian Nancy Hykel to claim the Project of the Year Award.

Beverley Shirley, Distinguished Service

John Augelli, TLA's 2010 Librarian of the Year

Carlyn Gray (RIGHT) presented the ProQuest Intellectual Freedom Award to Linda Kay.

UNIT AWARDS & STIPENDS

ProQuest Intellectual Freedom Award: Linda W. Kay, in defense of *ttyl*, Ridgeview Middle School, Round Rock ISD.

Woll Memorial Fund Grant Winner: Scott Wille, Creedmoore Elementary, Del Valle ISD; and Sarah Parramore, Oak Meadows Elementary School, Manor ISD

Escue Conference Stipend: Anita Shaw, Baptist School of Health, San Antonio; and Nicole Cobb, UNT CI

Demco Research Award: Maria Cahill, TWU

Vivian Greenfield Education Award: Amy Gonzalez, Mendez Middle School, Austin ISD

Walter H. Escue Memorial Scholarship: Christopher Foster, UNT CI

Ray C. Janeway Scholarship: Jenne Yoder, TWU SLIS

TLA Summer School Scholarship: Nicole Cobb, UNT CI

Garrett Scholarship: Tracy Dotson, Crandall ISD

Jeannette Marquis Memorial MLS Scholarship & the Linda Becker TLA Annual Conference Stipend: Rosa Quintela, El Paso ISD

Van Dusen-Tobin-Kaiser Scholarship: Kelly Allen, UT-Austin IS

Laura Edwards Memorial Scholarship stipend winners: Sharon Cooper, Crockett Middle School (Amarillo); Julie Overpeck, Castleman Creek Elementary (Hewitt); and Susan Francis-Maldonado, San Antonio Public Library

Genealogy Round Table TLA Conference Stipend: Joe Moreno, Laredo Public Library

Government Documents Round Table/ Marcive Knowledge is Power Award: Theresa Hefner-Babb, Lamar University

Clara Mounce, Lifetime Achievement

Melissa Baker

Jerilynn A. Williams

Devery Johnson

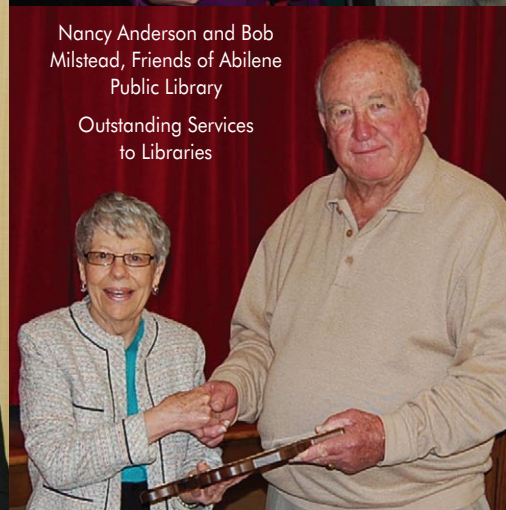Highsmith Award Montgomery County Memorial Library System

Arlington Public Library, Libraries Change Communities

Joyce Cope

Renee Flores AT&T

AT&T Foundation, Benefactor Award

Nancy Anderson and Bob Milstead, Friends of Abilene Public Library

Outstanding Services to Libraries

Walter Betts was given the boot at TLA 2010.

The new Standing TALL Award, presented by the TALL Texans Round Table, recognizes his leadership and contributions to the round table.

Library Instruction Round Table's Devin Zimmerman Conference Stipend: Lea Engle, Learning and Outreach Librarian, Evans Library, Texas A&M University

New Members Round Table's Outstanding New Librarian Award: Diane Michelle Ramsay, Chapel Hill ISD

New Members Grant Winner: Kristen Davis, TAMU-CC

Small Community Round Table/Biblionix Stipend: Pattie Mayfield, Bertha Voyer, Memorial Library, Honey Grove

Young Adult Round Table/Linworth Stipends: Kathleen Houlihan, Austin PL, and Alicia Vandenbroek, Arlington ISD

Highsmith Award: School - Duncanville High School Library for Rock Out with a Reading Buddy Other - Montgomery County Memorial Library System for Library L.I.T.E.

District 3 Conference Stipend: Geeta Halley from Round Rock Public Library

Public Libraries Division conference stipend winners: Rebekah Metcalf of Longview Public Library, Kandy R. Taylor-Hille of Brazoria County Library System, Danbury Community Library, Bonnie Barber of Carrollton Public Library at Hebron, and Josey Lindsay Faust of Helen Hall Library

ADDITIONAL AWARDS

J. Frank Dobie Awards: Alpine Public Library, Commerce Public Library, Jefferson Carnegie Library, and City of Wolfforth Library

Love Award: Rube Sessions Library

Priddy Charitable Trust Conference Stipends: Katy Morris, Decatur Public Library; Cheryl Beesinger, Archer Public Library; Hanna Wadsworth, Bowie Public Library; Lita Slaggle, Baylor County Free Library; Tiffany Thompson, Boyce Ditto Public Library; Curtis Burton, Bicentennial City County Library; Lisa Betham, Haslet Public Library; Stacey Rogers, Justin Community Library; Kathy Gilmore, Olney Community Library; Laura Klenke, Sanger Public Library

Tocker Stipend Winners:

- Patrick Wear, Central Texas Library System
- Valerie Howard, Alpine Public Library
- Lois Neff, Atlanta Public Library
- Pattie Mayfield, Bertha Voyer Memorial Library
- Joanne Buedtner, Bullard Community Library
- Dora Ward, Cook County Library
- Margaret F. Longoria, Crockett County Library
- Adreana Gonzalez, Dawson County Public Library
- Jessica Yancey, Dawson County Public Library
- Kristin Bowman, Herman Brown Free Library
- Sylvia Lawler, Kimble County Library
- Stephanie Bara, Richards Memorial Library
- Colette Turner, Vidor Public Library
- Lynn Hartfield, Vidor Public Library
- Virginia Garvin, Whitesboro Public Library

TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL

Book Grants

Abilene Public Library, Audelia Road Branch Library -Dallas, Balch Springs Library Learning Center, Bastrop Public Library, Bee Cave Public Library, Bulverde/Spring Branch Library, Carrollton Public Library at Josey Ranch Lake, Cedar Park Public Library, Central Downtown Branch - Dallas, Crystal City Memorial Library, George W. Hawkes Central Library - Arlington, Highland Hills Branch Library - Dallas, Howard County Library, Howe Community Library, Huntsville Public Library, Nellie Pederson Civic Library- Clifton North Oak Cliff Library - Dallas, Oak Springs Branch - Austin Orange Public Library, Richard Burges Regional Branch - El Paso, St. John Branch Library - Austin, W.O. Haggard, Jr. Library - Plano, Yorktown Public Library

Literacy Program Grants

Bertha Voyer Memorial Library - Honey Grove; Castroville Public Library; Dallas Public Library Outreach Division; Friona Public Library; Marathon Public Library

Technology Initiative Grants

Bachman Lake Branch Library - Dallas; Castroville Public Library; Dublin Public Library; George Washington Carver Branch Library - Austin; Watauga Public Library

See the related TBF article on page 71. ✪

Branding Iron Awards

Texas libraries are exciting places filled with activity and diverse programs and services that reach out to a broad population of our state. Librarians and library supporters work tirelessly to promote these efforts. After all, we can't serve our communities and schools if people don't know the full range of opportunities waiting for them.

Librarians, library staff, members of the education community, and volunteers conduct innovative and dynamic public relations work in all types of libraries across the state. The benefit of such work is not only increased use of library services; it also fosters public and policy support for libraries.

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 effective PR activities promoting libraries and library services.

TLA thanks all of the applicants, and we showcase here the 2010 PR Branding Iron Award winners.

Individual Category Winners

Outdoor Advertising: Austin Public Library

The Austin Public Library has won in the Outdoor Advertising Category. APL has consistently excelled in this category and has done so again this year. The bus wraps *(see below)* are colorful and creative and do a terrific job of promoting literacy and summer reading programs. Congratulations to everyone on staff who worked on these efforts.

Speeches/Presentation: Lisa Pilgrim, Library Media Specialist at Clinkscale Elementary, Burleson ISD

"The board of trustees needs to be provided with updated information regarding our Library Media Services budget and

Best of Show

Houston Public Library Brand and Logo

With a logo that reflects the modern and personal aspect of library service and a dynamic tagline "Linking YOU to the World," Houston Public Library reintroduced itself to the people of Houston. The brand and logo have been used to promote several new services and to unveil renovations in facilities. HPL had used the brand and logo to energize marketing efforts and has established a unique and recognizable signature for the library.

any new strategies and instructional practices currently in place through our professional librarians," said superintendent Mark Jackson. With this, the stage was set for Lisa Pilgrim to make a presentation to the Burleson ISD Board about the desperate need for increased support for the district's libraries. With a PowerPoint in hand, narration, and photographs from all the libraries of the most outdated books in the collection, Pilgrim not only created a persuasive picture of need; she also succeeding in getting the Board discussing the need to reverse the minimal funding for the district's school libraries.

AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY PRESENTS
GREEN WORLD
FOR AGES 0-17
JUNE TO AUGUST
2009 SUMMER READING PROGRAM
WWW.AUSTINSUMMERREADING.ORG
(512) 974-9820

Broadcast Advertising: TexShare Consortium and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission

The State Library partnered with EBSCO Publishing to produce radio public service announcements that aired in major state markets. The radio spots tell listeners of the powerful community resources (print and online) they have available to them at the library. A file of the spot is available on the State Library website so that libraries throughout the state can download and use the file. Go to: http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/texshare/radiospots/radiospots.html.

Print Media: University of Houston Libraries "Librarians are a Life Saver"

In 2008, 15 student groups competed to develop an advertising campaign promoting the services of subject librarians at the University of Houston. The winning campaign, "Librarians are a Life Saver," was implemented in 2009 and incorporates the UH Libraries' logo into print, electronic, and product advertising. The engaging and clever campaign was featured in the campus newspaper.

Non-Traditional Media: Texas State Library and Archives Commission and Education Service Center 20 – K-12 Database Promotional Videos

Working in partnership, Education Service Center 20 and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission produced a series of online videos promoting the K-12 databases. The first two videos have students explaining the use of the databases and the differences between searching the databases and the open Internet. A third video is geared for adults. Engaging and informative, the videos convey important information in an entertaining format. See: http://moodle.esc20.net/course/category.php?id=22.

Special Events: Denton Public Library – "Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World"

During May and June 2009, the Denton Public Library hosted the national traveling exhibit "Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World." The library developed a broad range of promotional activities to highlight the exhibit but also used it to partner with other institutions and draw people to the library.

Special Events (Honorable Mention): Westbank Community Library District, Grand Opening of the Laura Bush Community Library

The culmination of a well-planned development and promotional campaign, the grand opening of the Laura Bush Community Library was an exciting event that brought together library stakeholders and the community in a celebration of the new library and of learning. With creative promotional materials and excellent press coverage, the event proved a wonderful kick off to the new library's role in the community.

PR Plan/Campaign: Arlington Public Library: GOcard Campaign

Between September 2008 and August 2009, Arlington Public Library held a GOcard (library card) campaign for pre-K through 6th grade children who attend Arlington school. At the end of the campaign, 17,344 children had signed up for library cards, and the library realized a 21% increase in the number of children's books checked out. The campaign included a kickoff at City Hall, a video PSA, elementary school rallies, and sign-up incentives.

Brand and Logo (Honorable Mention): South Texas College

The logo for the South Texas College (STC) Library represents a recursive cycle of knowledge and change. It represents the potential for improvement of the self and the world around us through the acquisition of knowledge. The transformative nature of education and the library's role in that process are reflected in the slogan: "Discover, Create, Change."

Collateral Materials: Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Library

Using a creative logo design and play on the @ your library campaign, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Library created engaging promotional pieces for the library's services including eye-catching library "business cards."

LIS Student YouTube Category

Deborah Tomaselli (graduate student, University of North Texas); TexShare Databases

Plan now to submit your PR products and events for consideration in next year's competition. Information on deadlines the entry process will be on the TLA website in early fall. While the bulk of an entry should include actual products and examples of the PR effort, supplemental materials such as photographs, scrapbooks, CDs, DVDs, announcements, and documents may also accompany a submission.

Judging is done by public relations professionals who score according to the quality of the final product.

http://www.txla.org/branding-iron

Texas Book Festival

Celebrates Fifteenth Anniversary and Ongoing Support of State's Libraries

by Blair Newberry

An audience of Texas librarians are the last people on Earth who need to be reminded that librarians do far more than check out books to library users, but several recipients of Texas Book Festival (TBF) Library Grant Awards reveal just how innovative Texas librarians have been in the past year.

Since its founding, the Festival, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year, has served to provide additional funding to Texas public libraries through its annual Library Grant Awards. Since 1996, the Festival has awarded nearly $2.5 million in grants to more than 600 libraries in Texas. The most recent 2009 grant awards provided an additional $100,000 to 31 libraries in 22 counties.

One of those libraries, the East Arlington Branch Library, was able to purchase 50 individual white boards (among other items) using a TBF Literacy Award. You might wonder why 50 individual white boards are useful to a library. In May of 2009, the Arlington Public Library initiated a strong literacy drive, Arlington Reads, to increase literacy rates in the city's adult population and had owned only one large white board for volunteer tutors to use. With 50 small white boards, however, the tutors found levels of exasperation among its adult students rapidly declining. "What you find is that with adults, if they're writing on paper they're going to have all these mistakes," Yoko Matsumoto, an Arlington librarian, says. "Once you start trying to correct those, you might mark through the paper and it stops the students up. Individual white boards helped them with their writing, because they can correct their mistakes quickly."

One Arlington resident who grew up in Somalia and had no writing or reading skills in either her native language or English eventually learned to write Matsumoto a letter thanking her for connecting her with her volunteer tutor. "There're no words" to explain how wonderful Matsumoto felt after receiving that letter, she says.

> You're sitting there and you're thinking, "What change have I made in her life?" It enabled her to do a new task that's useful to her everyday living and it could help her in sending out a bill. Just learning that one skill has increased her knowledge of being a citizen here but also her self esteem.

The Texas Book Festival, a nonprofit organization based in Austin, was founded in 1996 by then First Lady of Texas Laura Bush. A former librarian, Mrs. Bush formed a committee of friends and interested parties who founded the Festival, providing a privately funded source of income for Texas public libraries.

Historically, the State of Texas has ranked very low nationally in the amount of money spent on libraries per capita (currently 48th out of 50 states). We need look no further than San Antonio for very recent proof of how crucial libraries are to their communities' economic and social development. Mayor Juliàn Castro, the San Antonio Public Library, and the San Antonio Public Library Foundation hosted a summit in May 2010 exploring how libraries world-wide are supporting economic growth and community development – not to mention the culture of literacy, support of education, and love of reading that libraries provide.

Texas Book Festival Grants are awarded in three categories: Book Awards – to increase or upgrade book collections; Technology Awards – to upgrade or provide new technology for public use; and Literacy Awards – to support the development and sustainability of community based literacy programs. Up to $2500 is awarded per Book Grant, and up to $5000 for Technology and Literacy Grants. *(See the list of 2010 recipients on page 67.)* The funds are generated from multiple sources, including gifts from foundations, corporations and individuals, revenue from book sales at the annual Festival, and proceeds from the annual Gala and Auction.

In addition to producing one of the top literary festivals in the nation, the Texas Book Festival provides author visits and new books to children in Title 1 schools across the State through its literacy outreach program Reading Rock Stars. Since 1999, Reading Rock Stars has provided more than 35,000 new books and priceless author interactions which foster a love of reading and writing in Texas school children. The Festival also hosts an annual Fiction Writing Contest for Texas 7th through 12th graders. First place winners in three categories are invited to read their winning stories at the State Capitol during the Texas Book Festival.

For more information on the Texas Book Festival and its programs, visit www.texasbookfestival.org We invite your participation and welcome your feedback. ✪

Blair Newberry is the director of outreach for Texas Book Festival.
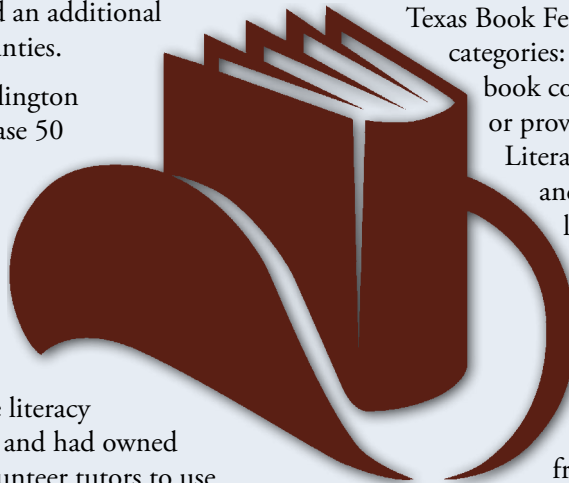
A New Look for TXLA.ORG

The Texas Library Association (TLA) website has a new look and functionality. The TLA website is now run on Drupal, an open source content management system, that allows for increased search abilities, greater consistency between TLA and unit pages, simplification of navigation, and easier content creation.

Here are a few highlights of new features on the website:

- MyTLA with CUSTOMIZABLE HOMEPAGE
- CONTENT ALERTS on MyTLA
- MEMBER MATCHING (find members with similar interests!)
- NEW CONTENT AREAS: Standards and Laws for Libraries, Research and Statistics, Overview of Texas Libraries

MyTLA is built like a hybrid of social networking sites. It allows TLA members to build customizable profiles and preferences. Members can form new groups with other members based on shared interests. Members can upload resources and get content alerts when something is added to the website that is of particular interest to them. And, of course, members have control over privacy settings.

The TLA Website Redesign Task Force, a group of representative members, advised the project on goals, design, functionality, navigation, and taxonomy. Over the coming months, TLA will work to build out additional phases of the new website and will work with unit webmasters

to complete migration of all content areas. TLA contracted with NFi Studios of Florida for the implementation of MyTLA and integration of the new site.

We encourage members to sign on MyTLA and create their profiles. The login for MyTLA is the same as for the familiar Members Only section of the TLA website. Features such as officer reports, the membership directory, registration and application forms, etc., are still in the Members Only section on a secure server. You'll find a link to that area at the top of the right column after you reach your profile page inside MyTLA.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

The 2010 Annual Assembly will be held in Austin, July 25 – 28, 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/annual-assembly. Please check this URL for the deadline and a tentative schedule of events.

Major Assembly Events

TLA President Maribel Castro invites you to join her and a key state legislator for lunch at noon on Tuesday, July 27. Please note that no meal tickets will be sold on site, and you must submit your registration and purchase your ticket mid July.

A page at **www.txla. org/members-only** differentiates between the features and functions of MyTLA and the Members Only section of the website.

CHAIRS Planning Session

Chairs of committees, divisions, round tables, interest groups, and districts are invited to meet with their executive board liaisons on Sunday, July 25 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Discussion topics include the new unit assessment form that is due in November, how your group might take advantage of TLA's new social media software, unit operating procedures, and much more!

TLA Brand Dessert Session

On Monday, July 26, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm, participate in the brainstorming process to identify a new tagline for TLA. This provocative session will be facilitated by Julie Todaro, chair of the Public Communications Committee. Chocolate and non-chocolate treats will be served to trigger creative thoughts!

Webmaster Training

Two sessions of training at the beginning and intermediate levels will be led by TLA Webmaster Mary Ann Emerson.

Evening Event

The special Tuesday evening outing will be a sunset ride on the Lone Star Riverboat, complete with dinner (fajitas!) and the opportunity to watch 1.5 million Mexican Freetail bats spiral out for their evening rounds. Tickets are $44 per person (in advance); the lower cabin is even air-conditioned.

READING MAKES CENTS at Barber Middle School

Students and staff at Barber Middle School challenged themselves to collect 20,000 pennies during the first semester – one penny for each book read or listened to by students and staff members. A penny went into the jar each time a student or staff member finished a book. Class novels and books read aloud by teachers in classes such as language arts, drama, science, and social studies added to the total. District guest readers in December also helped reach the goal.

Total pennies collected – 20,108!! Math classes worked on problems converting that amount to number of rolls of
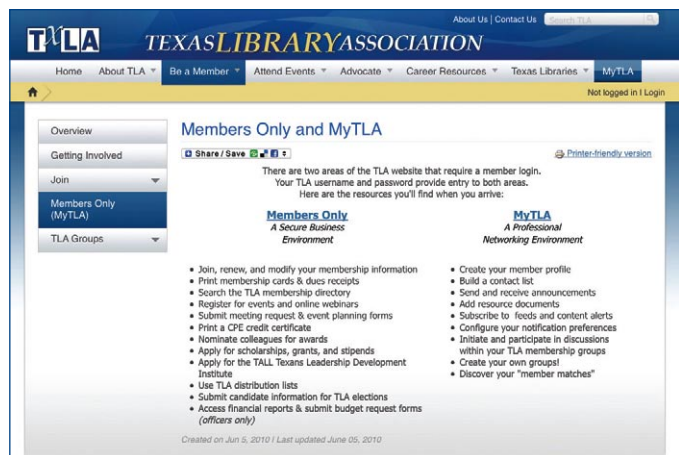
pennies and dollars, and they also used the weight of a roll of pennies to determine the weight of the total pennies. It really was a school-wide project: Student Council made posters and the Honor Society helped count and roll the pennies. All of the students were rewarded with an afternoon of movies, popcorn (thanks to Ziegler's!), and ice cream sundaes. One-half of the money was used to buy books selected by student ballot for the Barber library. The rest of the money was donated to the Texas Library Association Disaster Relief Fund, which provides funds for schools whose books are destroyed by fire, flood, hurricane, and other disasters.

Take a Peek at the Dish on TLA's Facebook Page

TLA fans were asked about their summer reading lists. We figured, who better to give us great ideas for vacation reads than other librarians?

- Cindy Pope: *Wind-Up Bird Chronicles*
- Ashley 'Farrell' Schmidt: *Twentieth Wife*
- Adam Brooks: *Marrowbone Marble Company*
- Paula Griffith: *Mockingjay!*
- Kevin Marsh: *Oath of Fealty*
- Bobbie Williams: *Mobile Technology and Libraries*
- Bill Whittaker: *Wuthering Heights*
- Gretchen Barnes Pruett: *Why We Make Mistakes*
- Linda Stevens: *Changes* and *The Imperfectionists*
- Barbara Ballew: *Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard*
- Patricia Hernandez Galindo: *The Magic Mountain*
- Dotti Enderle: *Keeper*
- Norman Howden: *Mission of Honor*
- Pam Quantz: *The Sky is Everywhere*
- Lonnie Beene: *Hellhound on His Trail*
- Jacqulyn Owens: *Saving CeeCee*
- Danny Jones: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

Read more titles as well as the complete comments and join the discussions at www.facebook.com/ TexasLibraryAssociation!

CONTINUING corner EDUCATION

Gretchen McCord Hoffmann will continue her webinar series, *Getting a Handle on Copyright*. Each program may be taken as a stand-along class. This six-part series (you can register for one, several, or all of the components) covers general copyright principles; the application of current copyright laws in your library, the use of various types of library materials and applicable copyright policies, and the possible implication of social media, libraries, and copyright laws. The series components will be tailored for public and school libraries. While advantages exist for taking the entire series, each webinar stands alone as a separate program.

Fair Use vs. Copyright

July 8 • 11 am-12 NOON CDT

Librarians and library users rely heavily on fair (use on a daily basis. Everyone has an idea of what constitutes fair use … and most of those ideas are a mix of correct and incorrect information. Learn not just what factors go into determining what constitutes fair use, but learn how to actually apply those factors in making a determination of fair use.

Digital Rights, Internet, and Social Media

July 13 • 3:30-4:30 pm CDT

Although there is no separate copyright law for the Internet, generally speaking, applying copyright to the Internet and social media offers its own particular challenges. Learn how to work through those often confusing and complicated situations so that you can best help your library and its users to exercise

their rights without crossing risky lines. This session will also address law that is specific to the Internet, such as certain aspects of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Copyright Issues in Public Libraries

August 10 • 3:30-4:30 pm CDT

Engage in discussion regarding how to deal with copyright concerns in situations commonly encountered in public libraries, such as the ability of the library to publicly display or perform different types of works, whether F2F or online; making archival copies; copying works from one medium into another; and the library's potential liability for actions of library users.

Copyright Issues in Academic Libraries

September 21 • 3:30-4:30 pm CDT

Engage in discussion regarding how to deal with copyright concerns in situations commonly encountered in academic libraries, such as the use of print course packs and content management technology such as Blackboard; electronic reserves; classroom photocopying; and the library's potential liability for actions of library users.

Copyright Issues in School Libraries

October 5 • 3:30-4:30 pm CDT

Engage in discussion regarding how to deal with copyright concerns in situations commonly encountered in school libraries, such as the conditions under which the school or library may show movies to students; copying works from one medium into another; classroom photocopying; and the library's potential liability for actions of library users. ✪