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COVER: This year's conference raffle masterpiece, donated by artist Don Tate to raise funds for the Texas Library Disaster Relief Fund, is a study for *Duke Ellington's Nutcracker Suite* by Anna Harwell Celenza. The book will be published by Charlesbridge in 2010. For more information on this piece of art and on the raffle, follow the link to the Itsy Bitsy Gallery on the left sidebar of the TLA homepage (www.txla.org).

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New Rule for Legislative Day – Failure is Impossible When We Build a Coalition

**"Rule No. 1: Assume Failing Is Impossible" – Anne Sweeney,
Co-Chair, Disney Media Network**
(*Fortune*, September 29, 2008, p. 42)

Recently, I leafed through a back issue of *Fortune* and was struck by a very brief column, "The Best Advice I Ever Got," by Anne Sweeney, co-chair of Disney Media Network. One phrase caught my attention, "What would you attempt if you knew you could not fail?"

That is a huge question and a tantalizing one. Sweeney goes on to say that, "It speaks to dreams, innovation, challenging yourself and pushing to create what's next. It's the kind of advice that makes you take professional risks, too."

Well, risk taking has never been something I'm comfortable with – most of us aren't. We analyze the situation to death before acting. More often than not, we approach personal and professional decisions cautiously by first applying the techniques of the SWOT analysis – what are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a given situation. We then make our plans accordingly and proceed with caution using familiar methods, even if they were only partially successful in previous situations.



BY MELODY
KELLY

What would happen if we changed our behavior? What if we applied Sweeney's Rule No. 1 to help transform TLA's Legislative Day? What if we declared – "Failure is impossible!" How would we challenge and push ourselves to create a different experience for Legislative Day that would catch the attention of the legislators and their aides?

We can begin the transformation with two of Frances Hesselbein's hidden leadership powers: the power of shared interest and the power of coalition building. Let's apply those two powers to the TLA legislative agenda on the K-12 databases. We can begin by building grassroots movements in our communities by approaching the membership of the Texas Parent Teacher Association (PTA) chapters within our school districts. These active, caring parents share our interest in improving the educational experience of Texas children and preparing these students for higher education and the world of work.

One of the Texas PTA Legislative Priorities is to "Reform Accountability Systems in Texas Public Schools to focus on what children know and are able to do, without overemphasis on one single test score, holding schools accountable for ensuring that all children succeed..." (www.txpta.org/). What better way to ensure student success than with fully funded K-12 databases that support all of the curricula while encouraging the development of critical thinking skills essential for the economic future of Texas.

Our Legislative Day is February 25, and the Texas PTA Legislative Day is February 26 – a perfect opportunity for us to work together to ensure success for our shared interests. I suspect that TLA members with school age children are also very involved in PTA so that the local link between our two organizations is already in place. Asking PTA members to join our district delegations creates the perfect coalition. It's Kismet!

Remember wearing red, drumming, and chanting for the TLA rally on the Capitol in 2005? Perhaps, this year we can schedule another event at the Capitol. Our expanded district delegations of TLA and PTA members would be a formidable coalition to carry the message that the K-12 database programs is a vital part of quality school libraries which serve all Texas students and teachers. We can also reinforce this message by volunteering to stay over another day to support the Texas PTA Legislative Day.

For a coalition such as this to survive and thrive, one event such as Legislative Day is not enough. We need to continue the collaboration and make it even broader. The Texas Association of School Librarians (TASL) plans to present a program at the winter Texas PTA conference on the K-12 databases with a panel to discuss how Texas PTA can partner with us to support school libraries. And, TLA/TASL will again host the School Administrators Conference at the TLA 2009 Conference – another good opportunity to encourage advocacy for school libraries.

So, let's transform TLA Legislative Day by building grassroots coalitions of librarians, parents, and teachers. Working together, and prove that failure is not an option! ✪

Sometimes I take the opportunity of the winter issue of *TLJ* to write a year in review. This time, I want to look ahead – past troubles and worries – to the events, people, and opportunities in the year ahead. As a community, those of us involved with libraries have a rich heritage and long history of providing comfort and support. This year, more so than in many recent years, we need each other; and our communities need us.

Legislative Day

Of course, one of the big days ahead for us is Legislative Day. TLA President Melody Kelly in her president's column so rightly extols the need for partnership and collaboration in our advocacy efforts. We need all of us working together to make our requests for increased support for libraries heard. We need you, and your communities and students need you to fight for their right to better funded libraries. While Legislative Day is February 25 (and I'll look for your smiling face), please do keep in contact with your elected officials. Write them or call them to tell them of the need for greater support for libraries. They need to hear from as many of us as possible throughout the coming months.

TLA 2009

If you haven't yet committed to attend conference, do so now. Not only will the 2009 conference be a spectacular continuing education opportunity; it will provide a time for networking and regrouping. From talking with friends who lived through Ike to learning firsthand how your colleagues are dealing with these economic hard times, conference is a time to come together,

celebrate the hard and important work we do, and most importantly, to recharge and garner innovative ideas to help us better serve our customers. You'll want to hear the latest in library developments, the legislative session, and perhaps news on the sought-for economic stimulus plan for libraries. We are working on a special surprise for the 2009 conference. Let's call it a Dewey Special.

TSLAC Centennial

2009 will also be a grand year marking a pivotal anniversary for Texas libraries. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) will turn 100 – an accomplishment that belongs to the whole library community. TSLAC is our agency, the one first established through the collective will of the library community and that has endured to support and enrich the lives of Texans through the library, archival, records, and government-related functions it promulgates. Our State Library represents one of the finest achievements in state government; it is a true investment in the people and institutions of our state, and it is a symbol of faith that education, enlightenment, and community unity are attainable goals that we, as individuals and as a people, must pursue.

In celebrating the 100th anniversary of the State Library, we honor these beliefs and the committed and extraordinary people who have supported the agency throughout its history, its staff (who are often the unsung heroes of our library history), the lay supporters who

have rallied around the agency and its causes, and the people of the state – from the visually impaired who rely on the talking book program to local city clerks who need guidance in records administration; from the genealogist tracing back that last family branch to the person wanting to consult with the state's archives. I hope you join me this year in celebrating our State Library.

As many of you know, the agency is undergoing renovations. While legislative funds were appropriated for this process, much work – including adding space to house the next 20 years of archival materials – remains. To contribute to fundraising activities or to learn how you can support efforts to protect State Library facilities, go to www.texaslibraryfriends.org/.

Next year is full of possibilities and promise. In many ways, those of us in libraries are in the best possible position to help make next year a good one for many people. Collectively, Texas libraries serve over 20 million people – students, faculty, the elderly, preschoolers, people looking for jobs, researchers needing support, business people, stay-at-home moms (and dads), and just about everyone else. We have the power to reach so many; and what is more, we have the passion, the resources, the heart, and the hope to make this state and our communities strong even in the toughest of times.

*I'll see you all at Legislative Day.
I'll see you all at conference in
Houston. I'll see you all in 2009.
Happy New Year. ★*



The Future of Public Libraries Is in the Community

BY LING HWEY JENG

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This paper is an adaptation of the keynote address given at the Freda K. and Robert B. Giles Lecture at the Friends of Dallas Public Library Annual Meeting, May 20, 2008.*

The Global Networks in a Local Community

A student of mine, knowing my fascination with Ang Lee's film, *Lust, Caution*, bought me a collector's limited edition of the story during a recent school break she spent with her family in Taiwan. Looking at the beautifully crafted edition of *Lust, Caution* that had just been delivered to me from so far away and recalling the global nature of the film's creation, I was struck by the multi-nationality – or more precisely, the lack of a specified nationality – embodied in the work. As a first generation immigrant, I am very aware of the movements of people and the increasingly cross globalization of their art, work, and careers.

Interestingly, the movie, *Lust, Caution*, which was sent for competition in the Oscar Best Foreign Film category, was disqualified because it was too international. The movie was financially supported by five different production companies – two in the US, two in Taiwan, and one in China. Cast members were born in different countries; some worked or lived in others; and the film was shot in China, Hong Kong, and Malaysia.

That's the world we live in. Unlike their counterparts of the past, immigrants today may have citizenship of one nationality but may very likely live a global life. The movie's second generation Asian-American supporting actor, Wang Lee-Hom, was born and raised in New York and educated at Williams College in Massachusetts. He visited Taiwan with his family during his first summer in college where he was contracted by a record company, and he has since become a pop star in Taiwan, China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia. Today's technology and global economy allow us to live and work with decreasing emphasis on geography. And, the immigrant in each of us has a personal global network as an integral part of our life.

It's no secret to those of us involved with libraries that the shape and expectations of our communities are changing. Shifts in demographics, advances in technology, and mass globalization of all spheres of work and life make our communities vibrant, evolving, and challenging. So, what is the work of librarians and libraries in these times? What, as a profession, remains constant and what gives way to innovation? Let's start with the people.

Who Become Librarians?

Over the years, I've discovered that one of the most informative indicators of who become librarians is the two-page essay that comes in each application for library school admission. The one most common reason cited among the applicants is the love for books and readings. The applicant is committed to being a lifelong book lover. The second reason is that the applicant is fascinated with technology and would like to be a librarian who can take advantage of cutting edge technology in libraries. The third reason cited among applicants is that the person is attracted to a career in libraries because of their passion for working and interacting with people. Students who cite this reason are community activists with a passion for public services. When I look at the relationship between the motive for becoming librarians and the success of individuals' careers, I am convinced that students who call themselves people lovers and who are active in their community tend to be the ones who are successful in libraries (Orme 2008).

Libraries in the United States were established in communities when certain social conditions were ripe. When the residents in a community achieved social, economic, and educational attainment, a public library was created (Rural Library Project 2003). Andrew Carnegie spent three decades at the end of the 19th Century helping to build public libraries across the country. In Texas, for example, Carnegie donated \$645,000 to 31 communities from large cities such as Houston, which had only 44,600 people at the time, to small towns such as Pecos, which had only 639 ("The Library World: Southwest: Texas" 1917). As we acknowledge Carnegie's contributions to the establishment of public libraries, we must recognize a very important element in Carnegie's plan. A town didn't just get money for a library because it requested one; it had to provide a location for the building and annual taxes to support the library. The commitment from the community is an essential element in the sustainability of a public library. Public libraries are the center for democracy participation (Kranich, 2004).

The Demographic Shift

Stephen Klineberg of Rice University has been tracking the demographical changes in the Houston area and in the state. In the last 25 years, the wealthiest 5% of the US population has seen its income growing by 68%, while the poorest 20% of the population has experienced only a 4% growth in its income (Thurow 1996). According to Klineberg, the "resource economy" that our society has relied on for centuries



has begun to be replaced by “Hi-tech, knowledge-based, worldwide marketplace” (Klineberg 2008).

The unprecedented mobility that allows a musician – born and raised in New York – to be educated in Massachusetts, work and live in Taiwan, become a singer in half a dozen countries in Asia, and still go home to New York for Thanksgiving dinner means that an individual is no longer bound by place. The global nature in which a film director like Lee could work with five production companies in three countries to assemble a multinational crew filming in five locations in three countries means that a talented person is now able to choose any geographical location that best fits his or her needs at any particular moment.

This means that a city like Dallas now has to compete with many other places in the world for resourceful residents the city would like to attract. This adds to the new importance of the concept of “quality of place.” Economy is no longer about land-bound natural resources. It is about human resources. Talented individuals and leading corporations are free to choose where they live based on the quality of place they enjoy. The quality of a place is determined by the quality of life the city can offer which is now among the most significant determinants of urban prosperity in the new economy (Klineberg 2007).

Libraries: The Cultural Center of the Community

To position itself firmly in the future of technology and globalization, the public library must be situated to make the most contributions to the quality of life for the quality of place. The library must be the center of the community to promote its quality and well-being.

A public library is the place for both formal education and adult lifelong learning activities in the community. The library plays an even more important role in supporting higher education in the community. The library is also essential for improving student learning in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). With the help of a library collection and their knowledge and skills, librarians are natural champions for reading and writing. One of the missions of a public library is to promote literacy among residents in a community. This endeavor includes not only language literacy and English as Second Language; it also includes information literacy and technology literacy. Librarians are in the position to promote critical thinking as the best protection against ignorance, and public libraries are the place to preserve knowledge, artifacts, and activities of local culture.

In doing so, the public library should be a major contributor to the quality of life in the community by promoting a green environment: green space, quality of air, and an overall green environment within the library and in the community. It can

also enrich community activities, such as sports, arts, health and recreational programs, such as biking, hiking, birding.

In Support for the Library

Given that the future of the library is in the community, how do librarians and library supporters make it happen?

The first thing is to help transform the library into a cultural center for the community. We can expand library facilities and activities to reach out to community groups not often approached by librarians. For example, the public library in Stillwater, Minnesota created a new outdoor facility available for rent by anyone in the community. It was so successful that some senior citizens in the community have gone to the City Council of Stillwater to complain about the noise (Shah 2008).

We should keep the library where it is most convenient for people in the community—whether it is in the shopping mall, right next to city hall, or as part of the civic center park. This means not only establishing a new library in a place where people congregate but also defending our right to be the center of the community. This is the case with the Buckhead Branch of Atlanta-Fulton Public Library, where the library trustees rejected a proposal by a developer to move the award winning building to make way for more profitable commercial development. We can celebrate when our library café is voted as the best hangout place in town.

In today’s global community, we must keep in mind that it is not enough for the library to be the center of the physical community; the library must also be the center of our customers’ virtual community. When residents in our community are using resources on the Internet in different languages and when people in our community are reaching out to people all over the world on the Internet, it is essential for us to make sure the library is present at the center of these virtual dialogs and societies. We can showcase our library as the technology center for all residents, using the technology our residents use, such as Flickr, MySpace, Facebook, SecondLife, etc.

Being a library supporter means that you are best anchored in the community to be informed of community needs. You are a conduit for keeping the library abreast of what is needed in the community. This is evident in many library innovative projects that are initiated by friends groups. Many friends groups have also been very active in non-profit community development and fundraising.

With all the library services and programs we initiate for library users, it is equally important for friends and supporters to help the library develop one of its most important assets; that is, the librarians. Recruitment, education, and training for librarians are the key to the success of all library activities. In today’s multicultural and multiethnic society,

we must grow our own multi-lingual librarians. Professional development of librarians is a necessary investment for the library to ensure the sustainability of library expertise to serve our users. Studies have shown that one third of librarians will retire within the next 10 years. We must have a library leadership succession plan firmly in place to ensure generations of new leaders to come.

Transforming the Library

Change is never an easy thing to do. Anticipating changes is probably the primary cause of fear among many of us. As we enter the new reality where our population is aging, our color is browning, our daily living network is ever expanding, and our youth are fully embracing the newer, smaller, and faster technology, we are ever more confronted by the question of where is the world that we used to know. Now that we have books and all other resources online, what will happen to the books on our library shelves?

In the foreseeable future, we are not seeing any evidence that books as we know them are less important than they have been. Statistics has shown that circulation in public libraries has not decreased since the popularity of online books and resources (Moskowitz 2007). On the contrary, in providing library services and resources in electronic venues, such as eBooks, eJournals and Internet access, the library is attracting library users who would not have come to use the library. The new formats of library services and resources are an asset to help the library reach out to non-users in the community.

But, the impact of our digital world on library services goes further than that. While in the short term we do not see life changing alterations in the library, we must recognize the opportunities the digital world has brought us to transform our library. Traditionally, librarians were the authority of information. Information was hard to find. Librarians fulfilled their service mission by coming to the rescue of users. Librarians helped users understand their needs and find information. Now with the Internet, anyone can find information. Most people are confident in a “self-service” environment for information searching. While most Internet searches are far from sophisticated, most users are satisfied with the imperfect information they receive. With Internet search engines readily available for anyone in the privacy of their own homes, the library must look beyond providing information users need and consider customized library services and resources as a way to sustain our service values to our communities.

Customizing library services means not only personalized services to each library user; it also means that the service provided is timely, useful, and interesting. There are plenty of examples both within and outside libraries that we can implement without reinventing the wheel. Yorba Linda Public Library has “book feed” to help its users find out instantly the

circulation status of a book. Other possibilities for real time buzz include, for example, live webcam broadcast of library programs; audio, visual, or textual Podcast of library programs; and RSS feed on today’s hot topics, community events, and new titles just in. Instead of a source of fear, the digital world is a great venue to reach out to users who will benefit beyond traditional library services. It could be an effective advertisement tool for the public library.

Collaboration is the Key

The future of the public library is in our community. Technology and telecommunication tools have expanded our community neighborhood to the whole world. The library must be involved in full force in all community activities. The key to success in positioning the library into the future is to be a collaborator with all players in the community.

St. Paul Minnesota’s Public Library and Metropolitan State University jointly head the “Teen Knows Best” reading group, which involves teens, university faculty, college students, and community members giving teen readers the privilege of having access to college library cards, book review publishing, and homework tutors. This is one of the 15 similar programs across the country (Brookes & Ryan 2007). A “Reading Passport” program was created jointly between a public library and a high school library in Sacramento, California which encourages high school students to visit businesses and answer trivia questions based on popular series enjoyed by all reading levels (Rondeau 2007). The Library District of Las Vegas-Clark County collaborates with local ethnic chambers of commerce to celebrate ethnic heritage (“On the Same Page” 2008). These are just a few examples of successful collaborative programs between the library and its community.

Time is changing. The population is changing. Our lifestyle is changing. Technology is fast moving forward. Information resources are more fluid, flexible, and versatile. While there is no danger for the books on library shelves to be replaced entirely by electronic resources in the foreseeable future, we will be neglecting our fundamental duties if we do not take advantage of the technology that allows us to shape that future. The future of the public library is in the community. Let’s partner with all groups and all leaders in the community to transform our library into the community center of the future.

Ling Hwey Jeng is a professor and director of the School of Library and Information Studies at Texas Woman’s University.



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Multi-Format Access, eBooks, and the Future: *ATLJ Interview with UT's Dennis Dillon*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Dennis Dillon is associate director for research services at the General Libraries at The University of Texas at Austin.*

1. Tell us about UT & eBooks & multi-format access and how these changes came about?

Texas was an early adopter of eBooks beginning our first collections about 10 years ago. When we checked on the usage of those first eBooks, we were startled to find how heavily used they were, despite the lack of records in the OPAC or any type of promotional activity. Over the intervening years, we have added eBooks from all of the major vendors. Currently, our primary eBook usage occurs with our pay-per-view eBook program in which we add records for the books to the OPAC, and the library doesn't pay for anything until a user clicks on a book and continues to read it for more than five minutes. After five minutes, the library is (unbeknownst to the user) charged a small fee. We have made a decision to automatically and invisibly purchase any of these eBooks on its fourth usage. This has worked out quite well for us, and so we recently began blocking certain publishers from our print approval plan if they were included in our pay-per-view program. Since a majority of the books we receive on approval don't circulate within the first three years, there have been no complaints from library users, and we take the money we save and use it to purchase critical research materials.

We also set aside a small amount to buy a print copy of any book a user wants that has been excluded from our approval plan by this strategy. We also purchase eBooks for UT System through a network of 60 selectors at the 15 UT components. These librarians make monthly selections from a central website using central funds. UT Austin also purchases various publisher packages as well as title-by-title odds and ends from most of the eBook vendors. Overall, UT-Austin currently has over 600,000 eBooks – many of which we also own in print. Our long-term strategy is to determine which types of books work best in print and which types work best as eBooks and then to develop our collection accordingly. We are also interested in innovative business models, because we prefer both to keep our costs down and not to pay for a book unless someone uses it.

2. How has UT built on changes in publishing and with online search engines?

We've been adding eJournals, eBooks, and online databases as fast as we've been able to since 1995. We've also been an early adopter of OpenURL technologies, federated searching, electronic resource management tools, Google Scholar, Google Books, Worldcat Local, digitization, chat reference, Web 2.0, and a variety of other behind the scenes technologies. All of these efforts have the goal of better managing our resources and saving users' time.

As it became obvious in the 1990's that the world was becoming awash in information and that information was no longer the scarce commodity it once was, we realized that we needed to adjust our thinking accordingly. Users didn't want to learn how to use a library; they just wanted the library to work. They wanted the library to have the information they couldn't get elsewhere, and they wanted the library to be able to help them when they needed it. Like all libraries, we have struggled a bit with the new reality that what is most scarce nowadays is the user's time. We also wrestled with the knowledge that we needed to design the library and our tools so that they didn't require librarian intervention in order for a user to succeed. This hasn't always been possible, and we've had some false starts and stops along the way. We've repeatedly reminded ourselves that, while technology can help, it isn't yet always the answer; and there are times when the only thing that will get the job done is a friendly human face backed up by a knowledgeable librarian.

3. What in particular were some of the opportunities you saw with changes in publishing that opened up a new gateway for academic libraries?

Online resources such as eJournals, eBooks, and databases opened up a world of convenience for users. Suddenly people didn't have to wait for the library to open, they could print what they needed at home, and they could quickly search through mountains of information to find just what they needed. For librarians, these same new digital resources open up the possibility of all kinds of new business models, including consortia purchasing and pay-per-view. These new resources also allowed librarians to develop new skills, create entirely new job categories, and reach out and have an effect on a far wider range of people than they were able to do in the purely print world.

In a nutshell, online resources meant that libraries and librarians were able to escape from the boxes, barriers, and boundaries (physical and mental) that had bedeviled us since the opening of the library in Alexandria thousands of years ago. A library was no longer just one room, in one building, affecting people who happened to live nearby; instead the entire concept of a library changed. Unlike the print-based world in which a book on Roman architecture had to be sent to either the classics collection or the architecture collection or the art collection, an eBook could be enjoyed equally by users of all three collections. New online resources also energized the profession of librarianship leading to the birth of countless new consortia, organizations, conferences, and training opportunities. Changes in publishing have allowed librarians a chance to re-examine what it means to be a librarian and to recreate the concept of the library in a networked world. This is exciting, but it is also somewhat daunting.



4. *What is UT's experience working with non-commercial platforms like Project Gutenberg or Openberg? Why did UT choose MyILibrary in particular?*

We make available books from all the various open access providers. We were strongly considering a partnership with the Open Content Alliance and Internet Archive in which we would scan and upload public domain books to their servers, but then we became involved in the Google Books project instead. Google operates on an entirely different scale and, working with them, we were able to do in one year what would have taken us several hundred years to do working on our own. Google currently provides millions of free full-text books for reading online or for downloading to your computer through Google Books, including titles from UT-Austin.

UT chose to become involved with MyILibrary, because they were innovative and flexible with an easy to use intuitive interface, and because they demonstrated a willingness to entertain different business models and allowed us to make bulk purchases of certain publishers. They are also part of Ingram with its massive resources in book distribution, approval plans, print-on-demand, media, digital textbooks, periodical distribution, and other related businesses; and we are interested in the synergies this can provide. Also part of our current strategy involves acquiring the books of certain publishers in print, and other publishers as ebooks. MyILibrary is part of an ongoing UT experiment with different formats, different vendors, and different business models in which we are attempting to determine what is the optimum effective mix for UT library users.

5. *How is UT responding to demand for expanded delivery of ebooks and audiobooks to mobile devices?*

UT's users have been able to use a Web interface to download audiobooks to their MP3 devices for several years. This has worked well, and we are looking to expand these offerings in the future by adding additional titles and vendors. UT currently has over 600,000 Web-based ebooks from a variety of vendors. Few of these ebooks currently work very well with mobile devices, though we are impressed with the Stanza ebook reader, which works with the iPhone and makes use of the epub format, the open ebook format from the International Digital Publishing Forum. Over the long run, the epub format, which employs XML, represents the best hope of effective delivery of ebooks to mobile devices such as cell phones (especially as these devices become more powerful with larger screens).

6. *How is UT working to simplify user access to a library's digital collection with search and discovery tools linking diverse content?*

Like other large libraries, we use OpenURL linking, federated searching, and we have enriched our OPAC with the embedded Google Books viewer api, book covers from Amazon, cloud tags from Library Thing, and Web 2.0 features

such as allowing users to write online reviews of library books – but we realize that the OPAC with its limited capacity and functionality, is very close to reaching the end of its useful life as an effective discovery tool. Today's users expect to be able to both discover and access articles, books, and a variety of certified full-text works all through one easy to use window. This is the reason we have worked with OCLC to bring up Worldcat Local, why we have been working with Google on Google Scholar and Google Books, and why we are adding a tabbed search box to the library's home page in January – all in order to make it more obvious what a user's options are.

As worthy as these steps are, however, none of them represents a real solution to the problem. As long as we expect the user to start their search with knowledge similar to that of a librarian in terms of where they should begin and how they should search, the user will end up dissatisfied and confused (i.e., libraries tend to expect their customers to know which particular database to use, to know that they need to type the author's last name first, to know that articles aren't in the OPAC, etc.). What we need are databases that integrate masses of validated content for the basic searches (which constitute 98% of all academic searching) and that allow sophisticated users to disintegrate and drill down into this same authoritative content for specific searches of specific content. In other words, we need a database that allows one user to search for basic information on boats and another user to search with more depth and precision for engineering-related content on the physical characteristics of boat building materials. Of course, no matter what tools we build, even large research libraries cannot hope to have everything a user needs; so if we are smart, we will build trust with our users by helping them in whatever ways we can to find what they need, even if this includes the use of non-library search tools.

7. *What are the other challenging areas academic libraries are facing and how is UT addressing these issues? Has UT faced any direct legal challenges as a result of its digitization work?*

The most challenging issues academic libraries face are sustainability and relevance. Maintaining the financial resources to continue to develop our collections and technologies while simultaneously recruiting and retaining talented staff during this period of budgetary constraint and technological change is not going to be easy. We also know that fewer people are coming into academic libraries, fewer people are checking out books, and more people are using electronic resources. This behavior has begun to weaken the once strong ties between the academy and the library to the point where a small but increasing number of faculty and administrators question just how critical the library is to their research and teaching needs.

Texas has responded to these issues by increasing its consortia purchasing (primarily through the UT System Digital Library), working with faculty on their storage of digital



research and teaching materials through the creation of an institutional repository and digital publishing platform, and (along with Texas A&M) providing leadership and reaching out to other academic libraries in Texas through the formation of the Texas Digital Library, a shared platform for the long-term storage of an institutions' digital materials including dissertations and theses. We have also strengthened the role our liaison librarians play with faculty and increased our outreach and instructional efforts with undergraduates.

Most of the legal issues that have arisen as a result of our digitization work have been routine, though our protracted involvement in the proposed Google settlement of the lawsuits by the publishers and authors has proved to be both intellectually draining and endlessly fascinating. Depending on whether or not the settlement is approved by the courts, it has the potential to fundamentally alter the practices applied to fair use, orphan works, and the public domain, as well as forever changing both the publishing industry and libraries. It is entirely conceivable that even small public libraries will soon have access to more titles via Google Books than are currently in the UT libraries. This will undoubtedly have implications, but what they are none of us can foresee.

8. *What has been the student and faculty reaction to these changes? Does UT have any data on ebook usage among faculty and students?*

Faculty and students have overwhelmingly embraced electronic resources of all kinds. We do receive occasional reports of users having problems using ebooks on their home computer, but this is almost always caused by conflicts between the digital rights management controls on the ebook and the way the user has configured their particular computer. This happens remarkably seldom, but it is a reminder that ebooks can still present challenges that have been largely solved with ejournals. Ebooks have also proven to be very popular for assigned reserve readings, so faculty increasingly are including ebook urls in their e-reserves and course management listings.

UT has been tracking ebook usage for 10 years and depending on the parameters of the particular study, ebooks are used 10 to 50 times more frequently than print books. In studies where we have compared the usage of all print books and all ebooks purchased over a set time period, ebooks get around 20 times the usage of print books. This is not to say, however, that ebooks and print books are interchangeable. Every librarian can think of situations where a print book is preferable to an ebook and vice-versa. At UT, we have never hesitated to purchase a print version of an ebook whenever a user has requested it, or to purchase a requested ebook when we already have the print version.

9. *What changes in perception or use have these efforts brought about within the institution with regard to the role of the library?*

The library is viewed as both extraordinarily responsive to user needs and extraordinarily competent with new technologies. The challenge is to find the right mix of the traditional and the new; but over the years, we have found that it is always better to provide leadership and to be slightly ahead of our users, rather than to be viewed as slightly clueless and out-of-it. Universities are highly competitive environments, and we would quickly lose the respect of our faculty and students if we were viewed as being afraid of change, afraid of experimentation, and afraid of the future.

10. *What do you think are critical issues that academic librarians need to be discussing more than they do now? What are the trends?*

I believe we need to continually re-examine our assumptions and ask ourselves why we are doing what we are doing, and to use our imaginations and intelligence to design a better library. All too often libraries move in a herd or, when in doubt, conduct surveys, which by their very nature produce recommendations for small conservative incremental changes to the way things have always been done. It was this kind of behavior that caused early car makers to add buggy whips to cars (in case a horse was needed to pull the car out of the mud), that caused GM, Ford, and Chrysler and their market surveys to conclude that the future of the automobile lie in building 10 mpg SUVs, and libraries to design early OPACs to replicate the card catalog, instead of re-imagining the search like Google later did with a single search box.

With all the challenges in front of us today, we need to be careful to think for ourselves and not to get locked into an OPAC and book-centered traditional library box, which would be a detriment to many of the other roles we could play both on campus and in society. We may be no more than a year or two away from an environment where Google is selling millions of books directly to consumers instantaneously for \$1.99 per online book – so libraries need to be able to provide their users with very good reasons to spend \$5 in gas to drive to the library, as well as a very good reasons to leave the Google website and use the library's online resources. Options such as having print-on-demand machines like the million title espresso 2.0 installed in the library is one possibility since this is a way of bringing those users into the library who want to have a printed book made for them in under 10 minutes while they wait.

The important thing for librarians to do is to be flexible and nimble and to think imaginatively about two huge advantages we have that Google and Amazon do not: libraries already have comfortable physical spaces on every campus in America, and libraries have clearly defined user groups that already trust and use the library. If we can marry these two advantages with effective use and understanding of the global online environment, we'll be just fine no matter what the trends of the moment are. ☛

Keep Public Computers Running with a Little Help from Your Friends:

The MaintainIT Project tracks down good ideas so you don't have to reinvent the wheel

BY SARAH WASHBURN

According to several recent news articles, public libraries across the country are reporting significant increases in circulation and usage – primarily attributed to the country's current economic woes. Outpacing the increase in book and music checkouts is the use of library computers. Being used by everyone from college students who've canceled their Internet subscriptions to older individuals re-entering the workforce, these machines are getting a more strenuous workout than ever. Since libraries rarely have their own IT staffs, librarians are tasked with maintaining their public computers. How do they do it? With a little help from their friends – fellow librarians.

Three years ago, a nonprofit called TechSoup Global started the MaintainIT Project with a grant from the Gates Foundation. With the purpose of sharing experiences to spark learning and sustainable practices for keeping public computers running, the project created "Cookbooks" -- free guides filled with experiences from librarians from around the country. Librarians contributed their knowledge on topics ranging from troubleshooting, planning, security solutions, and strategic maintenance practices to community-building experiences involving Web 2.0 tools and vital partnerships.

MaintainIT has just launched its third and final Cookbook, entitled *Planning for Success: A Guide for the Overworked Librarian*. Its sole purpose is to provide the details librarians need to know to get the library's technology up and running properly, sustain its growth, and ensure its viability. All of the information provided is based on the real life experiences and successes of librarians from across the country and is supported by a complete set of online tools. This guide is packed with ideas, tips, resources, and techniques from over 100 librarians and community technology providers from across the country, including 11 from the great state of Texas:

Chris Jowaisis, Texas State Library and Archives
Commission
Connie Barnes, Watauga Public Library
David Emprimo, Jacksonville Public Library
Edward Melton, Houston Public Library
Linda Rees, Reagan County Library
Lori Krasienko, CTC Waco TECH
Kam McEvoy, Central Texas Library System
Mike Praether, Canyon Area Library
Mitchel Shows, Grand Prairie Public Library
Sandra Munger, Canyon Area Library
Sue Cole, CTC River City Youth Foundation

Planning for Success is organized into six key segments. Here's a brief description of what you'll find:

Planning and Decision Making covers the ins and outs of creating a technology plan that ties to your strategic priorities and goals.

Communication and Partnerships delves in the fundamentals of day-to-day technology communication from a "techie" and "non-techie" perspective. It also includes some important guidelines for working and collaborating with key stakeholders.

Buying and Deploying Technology covers some of the core actions and decisions you need to consider when planning deployments, installations, and upgrades.

Maintaining and Sustaining Technology offers important insight into the daily management of public computers.

Networking and Security covers some of the basic standards and practices for ensuring your library's network security.

Close up: Menu options under Networking and Security

Whether offering Internet access to patrons or providing an online catalogue, steps must be taken to implement effective network security to protect your resources. With a proper technology plan in place, you should have already addressed many of the issues surrounding network security. Our purpose here is to provide insight for the particular issues regarding network security, including:

- Understanding networking concepts
- Identifying vulnerabilities on your network
- Creating security policies and selecting and configuring a firewall

We also focus on wide area networking and network management. For more information about LANs and the basics of networking, refer to the Further Resources section.

- Introduction to Network Security
- Identifying Vulnerabilities and Risks on Your Network
- Creating Security Policies
- Selecting and Configuring a Firewall
- Introduction to Broadband and Wide Area Networks
- Monitoring the Performance of Your Network
- Internet Access and ISPs
- Wide Area Networks (Internetworking Your Library Branches)
- Bandwidth Management
- Further Resources
- Tools



find reviews. *Consumer Reports* magazine is another place to look. MySimon (www.mysimon.com) is a great place to do price comparisons.

- Know the basics. A grasp of computer hardware and software fundamentals can help you make informed decisions. If thinking about hardware specifications is new to you, then you might begin by focusing on three essential things:
 - Processor speed. The faster the processor, the more quickly it can process computations.
 - RAM (Random Access Memory). More memory lets you run more applications at the same time without slowing down your computer.
 - Size of hard drive. The larger the hard disk, the more data you can store. The How Stuff Works (<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/>) website has easy-to-understand explanations.
- Make your computer purchase decisions make sense for your public computing environment. You should ask yourself: How will the library's computer be used? How much software will be loaded on it? What sorts of applications will run on it?
- Be sure to get any possible discounts. You may be able to get a lower price by purchasing your computers as part of a group or through an existing county or statewide contract. For software purchases, be sure to take advantage of donated and discounted software available to public libraries through TechSoup Stock at www.techsoup.org/stock/libraries.

From Chapter Six, "Innovation": What You Need to Stay Future-Focused

By creating an environment of continuous learning, by finding ways to stay aware of changing trends and needs, and by staying committed to thoughtful planning, it is possible to achieve that future-focused service vision in your rural library.

How can your library achieve goals and prepare for an unknown future? When doing strategic technology planning, here are seven key areas to consider:

1. Staff technology skills (and volunteers and trustees) as a continuous priority. Make learning an expected part of everyone's work routine. Find ways to teach one another and to help keep each other apprised of changes and ideas. This culture of learning will help alleviate some of the stress around not feeling "caught up." The reality is, there will always be more to learn. Try to embrace this thought and even make it fun!
2. The continued development of patron skills. Some people come to the library with strong technology skills and high expectations. Find ways to stay aware of popular tools and "gadgets." Are you noticing a lot of people carrying iPods or other MP3 players? Ask questions and pay attention

to the uses. There is also a need, however, to always look at the gaps. Who does not know about technologies that could potentially benefit them? What role can the library play in closing that gap?

3. A means for continued awareness and planning need to be in place. Some ideas to be discussed in more depth later in this section include the development of a new technology advisory group, a guest speaker series, and/or panel discussions on technological topics.
4. A larger library world connection to glean new ideas/create partnerships for learning, purchasing, and more. Use online resources like WebJunction at www.webjunction.org to connect with librarians from many places. Consider organizing face-to-face meetings or partnerships with libraries in your geographic area, too.
5. Community outreach and communication to develop relationships. The goal here is for the library to be seen as a center of technology in the community.
6. The Pew Internet Reports (www.pewInternet.org) site offers an overview of the changing ways in which people use technology. You may also find it useful to view census data (www.census.gov) for your community – past, present, and future predictions – and to think about the implications they may have for library services, including public computers.
7. Advocating for the library! Make sure that you get the word out about all of the great services you offer. Do not take for granted that people know about the technology that is available in today's libraries. Many do not. When you begin offering a new service, make sure to highlight it prominently with publicity efforts. Develop relationships with your local legislators. When a library technology issue is being discussed in the legislature, make sure your local legislators know how the issue affects your library and community.

This is just a tiny sample of what is available from the MaintainIT Project. Visit the MaintainIT Project website for Cookbooks, Spotlight articles, and free webinars for the most current ideas and best practices for planning, building, and managing your library's public computers. And like all MaintainIT materials, everything is free and available on the MaintainIT website: www.maintainitproject.org/. ★

Sarah Washburn is the strategic communications manager for the MaintainIT Project of TechSoup.



Texas Teens 4 Libraries

BY SUSI PARKS GRISSOM AND VALERIE JENSEN

For several years, the Executive Board of the Young Adult Round Table (YART) and its subcommittee, the *Texas Teens Read!* Advisory Committee (TTRAC), pondered the question: “How do we get the audience that we represent – Texas teens – involved in TLA?” With both YART and TTRAC dedicated to developing and maintaining library services to meet the needs of young adults in Texas, these YA advocacy groups explored conference possibilities during meetings and through informal conversations. The challenge was planning a conference event that would attract teens to annual conference while making registration and sponsoring procedures straightforward and appealing to YA librarians.

The stars aligned in fall 2007 when the 2009 Conference Program Committee and YART, with the enthusiastic endorsement of the TLA Executive Board, joined forces to sponsor a special conference experience for teens at the 2009 TLA Annual Conference in Houston. Last spring, 2009 Conference Program Committee members Susi Parks Grissom, 2008-2009 YART past chair and Dallas ISD school librarian, and WyLaina Hildreth, former member of TTRAC and a Denton Public Library librarian, posted a call for volunteers to help plan this first-ever all-day annual conference event just for Texas teens. School and public librarians from across the state responded to this request, and an enthusiastic planning committee was formed. This planning committee with members of the TTRAC maintained a lively discussion throughout the summer about broad goals and program specifics. The result of their labor is *Texas Teens 4 Libraries (TT4L)*, an all-day event for young adults, grades six through 12, scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2009. *TT4L* is designed to encourage the active participation of teens in TLA’s annual conference, offering them the opportunity to attend programs, visit the exhibit hall, and talk informally with YA authors. The conference within a conference will also provide a chance for teens to interact with other Texas young adults who share their interest in reading, technology, and libraries.

Teens who attend *TT4L* must be sponsored by a TLA librarian who is attending the 2009 annual conference. As an incentive for attending, TLA has approved a \$25 one-day registration fee for teens participating in *TT4L*. Sponsoring librarians may recruit non-librarian chaperones (typically teachers or parents) who may also register for the Thursday event for a \$25 one-day fee. A room will be designated for registered teens and sponsors, and YA’s will be able to meet there to plan their schedule, touch base with their sponsors, meet other teens, and regroup throughout the day. YART volunteers will be stationed in the *TT4L* room all day to talk about programming and the exhibit hall and to assist teens with questions or concerns about the conference.

A special feature of *TT4L* is the opportunity for teens to talk informally with YA authors who will present at the Houston conference. Registered teens and their sponsors will receive a schedule of author conversations planned throughout the day for these YA readers. Teens and authors will exchange ideas in a casual setting, providing a memorable experience for both young adults and the writers who create for them.

Valerie Jensen, a member of both the *TT4L* Planning Committee and TTRAC, speaks from personal experience on the power of bringing teens to annual conference. Each year the assistant county librarian at Chambers County Library System fields questions like, “When is TLA? Can I please go?” These questions, however, aren’t just coming from her library staff. The interest in the Texas Library Association has grown beyond librarians and staff members and has reached a tough target audience: the teenager. The teens in Jensen’s library clamor to be involved in the state conference. As a librarian interested in young adult participation in the library, Jensen sees TLA as an excellent opportunity to introduce teens to the world of libraries far beyond how they know them. So in 2007 and 2008, Jensen sponsored several teens who are active in her library program as annual conference attendees.

One of Jensen’s enthusiastic teen library users, Maritza Hernandez, was the first Chambers County Library teen to attend TLA. Hernandez says her time at the conferences has been something she will never forget. Contemplating her TLA experiences, Hernandez shared with her sponsoring librarian, “The conferences have influenced my life so much that I know in the future my life will still revolve around books. Everything that I got to see and learn from TLA has let me be even more involved in helping plan events, programs and helping other teens find a book to read at my home library.”

Hernandez’s experience was one that was envied by many teens at her library. As a part of the MySpace trend, many young adult authors use that technology as a way of marketing to their teen audience. Librarians jumped on board and became “friends” with many of them and felt a small personal connection with someone whose books were some of the most requested. Popular young adult author Ellen Hopkins is one of



those authors who was the first to realize this was a unique way to communicate with her readers.

At the 2007 conference in San Antonio, Hopkins was a scheduled YART author and speaker. After being introduced at conference to fan Maritza, Hopkins wrote in an email to Jensen in October commenting, "Meeting Maritza was a highlight of my whole weekend. She is so open and inquisitive – an exceptional young woman. Our short time together is something I'll always remember, and I hope we meet up again on one of my trips to Texas."

Jensen enthusiastically states,

The results to our library of bringing teens to TLA have been wonderful. These kids come back and share their experiences with their friends. This sparks an interest in the library and increases teen participation a great deal. They get the latest ideas from the programs they attend and want to bring them back to their library and put them into action. They get advance copies of teen books and end up recommending them to their friends who come in to ask for them. It creates excitement and enthusiasm about libraries.

The 2008 TLA Annual Conference in Dallas offered equally exciting opportunities for Jensen's YA customers. Two students who attended this conference with Jensen shared their library experiences at the TTRAC meeting in Dallas. Christine McNew, youth services consultant for the Texas State Library, was so impressed with their enthusiasm that she asked if they would co-author the 2010 *Texas Teens Read!* manual with several other TTRAC members.

For librarians and teens for whom transportation or housing costs for TT4L might be an issue, Jensen has some suggestions based on her experience in bringing teens to two TLA annual conferences.

- Write an article in the local newspaper explaining a little about TLA and about the teens who want to attend. Ask local businesses to donate money to fund the transportation, housing, or registration.
- Make a formal request to the friends of the library board. To them, the teens are future board members and they would welcome the opportunity to assist them any way they can.
- Have the Teen Advisory Board raise money by making crafts or having their own book sale.
- Host a gaming tournament and charge a small entry fee. Money raised would go to fund the teens with any leftover amount going back to teen services.

The deadline for registering teens and non-librarian sponsors is March 1, 2009. A TT4L link to information and registration forms can be found on both the YART and 2009 conference webpages. Librarians can download the TT4L registration form from the TLA website and should send all registration fees and the completed forms for teens and non-librarian sponsors to: WyLaina Hildreth, 502 Oakland, Denton, TX 76201. Checks should be made payable to: TLA. Credit card

information may also be written on the registration form. NOTE: Sponsoring librarians will register for the 2009 conference as usual. Registration procedures and fees will not vary for TLA member librarians. Librarians should direct questions concerning TT4L or *Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All* session to Susi Parks Grissom at susi.grissom@sbcglobal.net.

The 2009 Conference Program Committee and YART hope that YA librarians will talk with teens about attending this special TLA conference experience. Encouraging students to participate in *Teens Booktalk 4 All* will lead to a memorable experience for them. Offering teens the opportunity to be a part of the big TLA picture and could create a library fan for life.

Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All

An exciting TT4L opportunity for teens and librarians is the conference program, *Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All*. Scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 12:00-12:50pm, this session features teens booktalking their favorite new titles. Teens may also submit video trailers for this program, opening up participation in this session to teens who might not be able to attend the Houston conference. Beth Yoke, the executive director of Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), will moderate this teen program which will include the chance for teens to share their candid views on reading, YA literature, and graphic novels with attending librarians.

Sponsoring librarians must register their teens as presenters for *Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All*.

Registration forms and guidelines for participation are available on both the YART and 2009 conference webpages. Because session planners need presenter information well ahead of the TLA Annual Conference, the registration deadline to participate as a *Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All* presenter, including teens contributing video trailers, is Friday, February 13, 2009. Registration forms, which include a media release for all presenters, should be sent to Susi Parks Grissom, 504 Largent Avenue, Dallas, TX 75214, by the February 13 deadline. Sponsoring librarians will be responsible for working with teens on their presentations, following the guidelines established for this session which will be open to all conference attendees.

Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All creates an exciting forum in which to hear teens' perspective on current YA titles. TLA is thrilled to include the teen voice in its programming this year.

For more information on *Texas Teens Booktalk 4 All*, contact Susi Parks Grissom at susi.grissom@sbcglobal.net. ★

Susi Parks Grissom is a school librarian at Travis Vanguard Academy, Dallas ISD. Valerie Jensen is the assistant county librarian at Chambers County Library System.

The Needs of Public School Libraries Report:

Executive Summary

EDITOR'S NOTE: The *Study of the Needs of Public School Libraries*, a report prepared by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas Education Agency, is to be submitted to various offices in the State Legislature. We publish here the main findings of the study. The sections omitted detail the full results of the data-gathering survey conducted by TSLAC and TEA to begin crafting the report. To access the full report online, go to www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schoolneeds/.

The 80th Texas Legislature directed the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to conduct a study of public school libraries, to determine the needs of public school libraries, which agency is best suited to meet the needs, and issue a joint report on the study with agency recommendations.

Both agencies have a long history of support for public school libraries and recognize the importance of school libraries in public education.

The study methodology used the *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* as the basis for a survey of the public school community on the critical needs facing public school libraries. The agencies jointly appointed a steering committee to assist in determining the study methodology and implementation, and reviewing the draft report.

The findings show that adequate funding, resources, and recognition of the vital role the school library program and school librarian play in student success are needed. Respondents see a strong role for the local district to work with TEA, and to a lesser extent TSLAC, to accomplish this goal. Ideally collaboration among all entities to meet needs is best.

Recommendations covering seven key needs are:

- Funding - Additional funding is needed from local districts and the state and is key to enabling public school library programs to meet educational goals.
- Needed resources - As more funding is available, school library programs will be able to acquire the resources identified as necessary to a good program such as current materials, staffing, facilities, and technology.
- Collaboration - Collaboration among school librarians and teachers is key to supporting student success. Both TSLAC and TEA can work with local districts in areas such as collaboration among libraries and with community organizations, as well as continuing education for school librarians.
- Online research and information resources (K-12 Databases) - The partnership between TSLAC, TEA, and Education Service Center, Region 20 has worked well to make the K-12 Databases available to all public and charter schools in the state of Texas, as well as to provide training and support for the resources. The combination of TEA funding through Rider 88 with the market power of

statewide database license negotiations by TSLAC has been successful and should continue.

- Standards – To ensure that the necessary funding, resources, and services needed for school library programs to contribute to student success are in place and that funds are actually allocated to the library program, TEA should engage in discussion with the school library community regarding the issue of mandatory standards, and consider using the Standards as the basis for data collection to document progress in providing quality library programs.
- Statistics - Data are essential for evaluation, and the annual collection of data on public school libraries is highly recommended for use by both state and local decision-makers. Since it already has a large data collection program, the collection of statistics on school library programs should be a responsibility for TEA.
- Role of school librarians - TEA should determine methods to promote the professional status of librarians as teachers critical to student success.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Report

The 80th Texas Legislature directed the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to conduct a study of public school libraries.

Government Code Sec. 441.021 codifies the legislative mandate.

PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARY STUDY.

The commission and the Texas Education Agency shall conduct a joint study to identify the needs of public school libraries in this state and determine which needs each agency is best suited to address.

Not later than December 31, 2008, the commission and the Texas Education Agency shall submit a joint written report containing the findings of the study and the recommendations of the commission and the education agency to the: (1) governor; (2) lieutenant governor; (3) speaker of the house of representatives; and (4) appropriate oversight committees of each house of the legislature.

Staff from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas Education Agency, in consultation with a jointly appointed steering committee, devised an online survey for the Texas school community as the primary means of gathering perceptions on the needs of public school libraries and which agency was best suited to meet those needs. TSLAC staff compiled survey responses and the agencies worked together on recommendations and the final report.

Background

The Texas Education Agency has a long history of working with public school libraries. Dedicated state level library personnel at TEA provided assistance and leadership to Texas schools from 1949 to 2003. Due to a budget shortfall in SFY 2004, funding for public school library programs and dedicated library personnel at TEA were eliminated. Among the programs that were discontinued were those providing free access to online research and information sources statewide, a combined catalog of school library holdings, and technical staff assistance. School librarians, individually and through the Texas Library Association, began to press the Texas State Library and Archives Commission for support.

TSLAC has had some limited relationship with public school libraries. In 1995 the Texas Legislature transferred responsibility for developing voluntary school library standards to TSLAC from TEA. These standards were to be developed in consultation with the State Board of Education, and were revised and keyed to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in 2005. In addition, TSLAC administers the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) in Texas, which consolidates all federal support for libraries of all types, including school libraries.

In 2005 the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 483, which authorized TSLAC to negotiate online database contracts for public school libraries. No appropriation was made to pay for

access. As a result only 50% of school districts were able to pay for access. In 2007 the Texas Legislature appropriated \$2.5 million to pay for public school access to online databases so that every student could have access to reliable, authoritative, and current information. Funds were allocated from the Technology Allotment administered by the Texas Education Agency. As a result, TSLAC was able to license a core of online databases as well as an online encyclopedia for public school students and teachers to use.

State of the State

With the focus on ensuring that 21st Century students and educators have 21st Century resources and information and the skills to use them effectively, the library continues to play a critical role in Texas public schools. Public school library programs increase student ability to learn and provide a more successful learning environment. 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.

Library media specialists collaborate with teachers and curriculum coordinators and work with students to develop information literacy and digital technology literacy (Technology Applications) knowledge and skills, which strengthen student achievement in English language arts and

THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

Why Care About School Libraries?

SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE CRITICAL FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Across the United States, research has shown that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized test scores than their peers in schools without libraries. From Alaska to North Carolina, more than 60 studies have shown clear evidence of this connection between student achievement and the presence of school libraries with qualified school library media specialists.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN TEACHING

Today's library media specialists are important instructional partners or consultants in supporting and expanding existing curriculum. These specialists are working with teachers to change what is possible in the classroom and support exciting learning opportunities with books, computer resources, and more.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES ARE LEADING THE WAY FOR TECHNOLOGY USE IN SCHOOLS

No longer are school libraries just for books, they have become "school library media centers" with computer resources that

enable children to engage meaningfully with a wide variety of information. These centers with trained staff support the use of electronic information resources not just in the center, but help to integrate these resources in classrooms and throughout the curriculum.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES INSPIRE LITERACY

When learners of all ages have the opportunity to read stories and explore information that matters to them, various forms of literacy and numeracy can emerge. Research has shown that school libraries have the tools to inspire literacy in learners of all ages.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES DON'T MATTER WITHOUT HIGHLY QUALIFIED LIBRARY MEDIA SPECIALISTS

Research has shown that school libraries staffed by qualified library media specialists are needed to have a positive impact on student academic achievement.

¹ Excerpted from a publication of the defunct U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, March 2005. For a complete copy of this position paper, including all citations, visit www.nclis.gov/info/whycareaboutschoollibraries.pdf.

reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. The role of the library media specialist has expanded to include helping students develop research skills using a wide variety of learning resources, including books and other print materials, reference sources, online databases, the World Wide Web, and Web 2.0 tools. Such research skills are required by the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Further, libraries help develop critical thinking skills which form the foundation for lifelong learning.

Library programs across the state have assisted students in the acquisition of curriculum area TEKS. They have been instrumental in supporting student acquisition of information literacy skills and helping students meet Technology Applications standards. This support from certified librarians directly benefits student performance on TAKS. Library media specialists have taken the lead in assisting educators and students in meeting targets for technology literacy and integration. In this information age, they have helped students and educators gain critical skills necessary for 21st Century learning.

With the requirements and focus on technology literacy and integration of technology across the curriculum, school library programs have been instrumental in assisting schools in making progress and affecting teaching and learning. School libraries and library media specialists facilitate the integration of all curriculum TEKS, including the Technology Applications TEKS, into collaborative teaching and learning opportunities for Texas students and teachers.

School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas

The *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* was adopted on May 16, 2005, by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in consultation with the State Board of Education. They provide direction for Texas public and charter schools' library programs. A school district shall consider the standards in developing, implementing, or expanding library services.

Successful library programs in Texas use these standards in building strong, effective library programs that meet the needs of Texas students and educators. For additional information, visit: www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/schoollibs/sls/index.html

Online Research and Information Resources: K-12 Databases

Through Rider 88, the 80th Texas Legislature funded online research and information resources for all libraries in public schools. These resources called K-12 Databases are available to educators, students, and their families at school or home through a partnership with the Texas Education Agency, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC), and Education Service Center Region 20 in San Antonio. The resources are funded from the per student Technology Allotment.

Thirty-four online databases from EBSCO Publishing with three age-appropriate interfaces for K-12 were made available in September 2007. They support K-12 learning with reference materials for students at every grade level. These include full-text articles from newspapers and magazines; maps and charts; photographs; educational and health reports; historical and current event information; biographies; country and state reports, and much more. Educators will also find professional journals and research studies.

Britannica Online School Edition was added to the K-12 databases package on December 1, 2007. The School Edition serves K-12 students with four complete encyclopedias in English and two in Spanish, as well as atlases, dictionaries, timelines, and more than 600 multimedia-rich student activities. Both learning materials and encyclopedia articles are aligned to the TEKS. Britannica's online reference resources are available in Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and French.

A Fact Sheet with more information is available at any of the following websites:

- www.texshare.edu/k12;
- <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/imet/libraries>; or
- <http://web.esc20.net/k12databases>.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

Staff from TSLAC and TEA met in fall 2007 to discuss and agree upon a process for conducting the study. The agencies agreed to form a steering committee to advise on key points of the suggested methodology and to provide structured comment on the draft report. TSLAC staff recruited public school librarians, and TEA staff recruited school administrators to serve on the steering committee.

Agency staff discussed at length the concept of the needs of public school libraries. Need could be determined in a number of ways, including a gap analysis, which would mean defining the ideal school library, and assessing where Texas school libraries fell short. Staff agreed after discussion that a gap analysis exceeded agency resources. Instead, the agencies agreed to use the TEKS-aligned *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas*, since both agencies had adopted the revised *Standards* in 2005. This document lays out the standards developed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission in collaboration with the State Board of Education as defined in Texas Education Code § 33.021. Library Standards:

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission, in consultation with the State Board of Education, shall adopt standards for school library services. A school district shall consider the standards in developing, implementing, or expanding library services. *Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995.*

The *Standards* were adopted after an extensive statewide process involving many school librarians, agency staff, and other school officials, a review of the literature and models for school library programs, and receiving feedback on draft proposals. The *Standards* are available at www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/schoollibs. As stated in the introduction to the *Standards*:

Student achievement is the objective of school library programs. The *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* originates in the ongoing effort to support effective schools, results-oriented education, and accountability. These aims are at the forefront of the school librarianship.

Standards are a professional tool for objective assessment based on recognized measures of performance. The revised *Standards and Guidelines for Texas* is based on research that shows a correlation between school library resources and services and greater student achievement. In preparation for revising the *Standards and Guidelines*, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission conducted a study entitled, *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance* (Smith, 2001). The report of the study is available on the Texas State Library and Archives web site at www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schlibsurvey/index.html. The findings of the study,

which are similar to results of research in other states, are summarized in the article "Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services, and Students' Performance" (Lankford and McNew, 2001).

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) *Guidelines for Certification of Texas School Librarians* describes six major components for Learner-Centered school library programs. The *School Library Programs: Standards and Guidelines for Texas* is built on the framework of these six Learner-Centered components.

The *Standards and Guidelines for Texas* establish four Levels of Support of Student Achievement for school library programs. Three of the Levels of Support of Student Achievement meet standards, one falls below standards. The Levels are identified as *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, *Acceptable*, and *Below Standard*.

Staff reviewed these six components, derived needs statements from each section, and outlined what each agency could do in support of the needs. This draft document was discussed with the steering committee at their meeting in December 2007, and staff suggested using the needs statements to form the basis for an online survey of the school community. The online survey was the primary means for gathering data, given the time and resources available. The steering committee agreed

with this approach to study design and implementation. A draft survey was reviewed by the steering committee and the survey itself was conducted in February 2008.

The survey asked respondents to choose which 8 of the 17 needs listed they felt were most critical, to choose for each of the 17 needs whether TEA, TSLAC, or the local district was best suited to meet the need, and then to answer a few general questions about their position and the size and location of their district. The list of 17 needs derived from the *Standards* assumed that all of the needs listed were essential to good school library programs.

The survey asked respondents to choose half of the listed needs as the most critical as a way to determine the priority needs of the school library community. Respondents had the option to add a need not listed. Further, respondents had to make a forced choice in the second question by indicating which agency was best suited to meet the need. As the needs document outlined, each agency might have a role to play in helping school libraries meet each need. The goal of the survey was to determine where respondents placed the primary responsibility. The steering committee felt that there would be more responses to the survey if responses were anonymous, so only a few general questions were asked about respondents, to determine the distribution of responses received.

Information about the study was widely distributed on electronic lists by both agencies. TSLAC created a website for the study at <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/schoolneeds/> that provided information on the activities and timeline, links to related documents, a link to the survey, and invited posting of comments on the study and the draft report. TSLAC staff held an open forum on the study at the Texas Library Association annual conference in April 2008, and TEA staff presented information on the study at meetings and conferences of school staff during 2008.

FINDINGS

All of the needs listed in the survey are considered important to good school library programs. The needs survey respondents ranked the highest are funding and resources to ensure a strong and successful school library program, while emphasizing that school librarians are key contributors to student success and there should be support for and recognition of that role.

Overwhelmingly, the survey respondents indicated that adequate funding, resources, and recognition of the vital role the school library program and school librarian play in student success are needed. Respondents see a strong role for the local district to work with TEA, and to a lesser extent TSLAC, to accomplish this goal. Ideally collaboration among all entities to meet needs is best.

Both agencies and local districts will need additional resources to make Texas public school library programs as strong and successful as needed to prepare Texas public school students for lifelong learning and accomplishment.

Table 1 – Eight Highest Ranked Needs in Rank Order

Need	Percent %
1.7. Funding to enable school libraries to meet the recommendations of the School Library Standards and the Long-Range Plan for Technology, 2006-2020.	93.84%
1.1. Collaboration among librarians and teachers to integrate library resources in lesson plans to support student achievement, across the curriculum.	84.95%
1.4. Professional library staff to meet needs of students, teachers, & the school community, in accordance with the School Library Standards & the SBEC Standards for Certification.	80.12%
1.8. Current library materials (such as books, journals, and multi-media) to support TEKS and student success.	74.80%
1.12. Library facilities that support the learning community.	61.27%
1.9. Online databases to support TEKS and student success.	52.59%
1.13. Continuing education on topics critical for the success of students and the success of the school library program.	46.38%
1.14. A long-range plan for improving the school library program based on evaluation of the program using School Library Standards & Texas Campus and Teacher STaR Charts.	43.40%

The highest ranked need at 93.84% is “funding to enable school librarians to meet the recommendations of the School Library Standards and the Long-Range Plan for Technology, 2006-2020.” Needs prioritized in the top eight that speak to the resources required for successful programs are professional staff to meet the needs of the school community, current library materials and online databases to support TEKS and student success, and library facilities that support the learning community. For the role of the school library and librarians in student success, collaboration among librarians and teachers to integrate library resources into lesson plans across the curriculum was the second highest ranked need at 84.95%. Continuing education on topics critical for student and school library program success, and a long range plan for improving the school library program based on evaluation of the program using the Standards and Texas Campus and Teacher STaR Charts were ranked seven and eight respectively at 46.38% and 43.40%.

The other nine needs followed closely behind the top eight in percentages. The ninth also reflects a critical resource for library programs, “technology to support TEKS and student success as specified in the Texas Campus and Teacher STaR Charts,” (41.93%).



Many respondents chose “other” and expressed a need in their own terms. Reviewing this list, most reflect the themes of the highest priorities; that is, the need for funding, resources, and recognition. The need for mandatory, enforced standards for school library programs was often expressed or recognized by the respondents.

The second question on the survey asked respondents to indicate which agency, including the local district, was best suited to meet each need. Of the 17 needs listed, the local district was identified as best suited to support ten needs, the Texas Education Agency to support seven needs, and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to support two needs. Overall, the agency designated as best suited to meet each need had a very high percentage score compared to the percentages for the other agencies. For three of the needs, however, the ranking was very close. For “collaboration with other libraries to share resources, programs, and expertise” 38.6% of respondents selected TSLAC, while 34% selected the local district. For “continuing education on topics critical for the success of students and the school library program” 35.7% of respondents selected TEA, while 32.8% selected the local district, and for “technology to support TEKS and student success” 43.1% selected TEA and 41.4% selected the local district.

Steering Committee

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The Texas Library Association offers its sincere thanks to the staff at both agencies and members of the Steering Committee for their outstanding work preparing this report.

Table 2 - Agency best suited to meet each need

Need	Local district	TEA	TSLAC	Not sure
Texas Education Agency				
2.6. Professional status of school librarians as teachers critical to student learning and achievement.	27.3%	59.5%	8.3%	4.8%
2.7. Funding to enable school libraries to meet the Standards and Guidelines.	21.1%	59.3%	10.9%	8.7%
2.9. Online databases to support TEKS and student success.	20.9%	50.3%	23.3%	5.5%
2.10. Technology to support TEKS and student success.	41.4%	43.1%	9.6%	5.9%
2.13. Continuing education on topics critical for the success of students and the school library program.	32.8%	35.7%	25.2%	6.3%
2.14. A long-range plan for the school library based on evaluation of the program using the Standards and Guidelines.	29.9%	37.6%	26.9%	5.6%
2.17. Statewide standards for public school libraries.	3.9%	60.8%	29.7%	5.6%
Texas State Library and Archives Commission				
2.3. Collaboration with other libraries to share resources, programs, and expertise.	34.0%	20.1%	38.6%	7.2%
2.16. Collection of data and statistics on public school libraries statewide.	7.7%	38.6%	46.1%	7.6%
Local District				
2.1. Collaboration among librarians and teachers to integrate library resources in lesson plans to support student achievement.	80.2%	10.9%	5.1%	3.7%
2.2. Collaboration between the school library and community organizations to support student and family success.	72.8%	6.7%	12.0%	8.6%
2.4. Professional library staff to meet the needs of students, teachers, and the school community.	54.7%	34.7%	6.9%	3.7%
2.5. Paraprofessional library staff to meet the needs of students, teachers, and the school community.	65.4%	23.9%	4.9%	5.8%
2.8. Current library materials to support TEKS and student success.	46.9%	38.8%	10.0%	4.4%
2.11. Access to school library resources beyond the instructional day & during the summer months, & beyond the physical boundaries of the library.	60.9%	15.1%	14.1%	9.9%
2.12. Library facilities that support the learning community.	71.6%	15.1%	8.0%	5.3%
2.15. Board-approved policies on issues that affect the library program.	70.4%	16.4%	8.1%	5.0%



Survey respondents indicate they expect the local school district to play a strong role in addressing needs. In addition, while survey respondents had high expectations for local districts to address needs, they also had significant expectations for the role TEA should play in meeting needs. Survey respondents indicated only a limited role for TSLAC, with few exceptions as stated above.

School library programs are embedded in the local school district and state educational structures, and these results reflect that reality. At the same time, the survey results indicate that more often than not, meeting a need is not the sole responsibility of one agency, but requires the combined effort of two or more agencies to fully meet the need.

The overall response to the survey was very good. While not every person answered every question, 3,687 started and responded to the first question ranking the top eight needs. Responses were received from school staff across the state. Every size district (as measured by UIL designation) is represented in the responses, as well as every area of the state (as indicated by ESC region). Of those responding, 54.32% indicated they were a librarian/library coordinator/library director, 32% were teachers, 5% campus level administrators, 3% superintendents/district level administrators, and 5% other. The list of "other" represents a very broad range of job titles. While effort was made to get more responses from campus and district administrators, most indicated that they relied upon the expertise of the librarian to respond to the survey.

The survey instrument was useful in determining broad perceptions of the needs confronting public school libraries. As time and financial constraints prevented the use of a stratified random sample (SRS) survey instrument, or wide use of other methods such as focus groups, the data does not give a statistically representative body of responses for educators and cannot be extrapolated to non-respondents. It would be beneficial to conduct a future survey, using an SRS instrument to more precisely identify the concerns of constituent groups within the larger public education community. Further, survey responses are limited by the knowledge of needs, and TSLAC and TEA programs and mission, which each respondent brought to the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Survey responses indicate that a strong and successful Texas public school library program needs recognition by the entire school community that the library program has a strong role in student success, and the funding and resources needed to produce good programs. Recommendations in seven key areas are outlined below.

Funding

Additional funding from local districts and the state is key. It will require a consensus on the need for and a commitment

to allocate or ask for the funding needed. This is a role for the Texas Education Agency. TEA needs to provide leadership in communicating the need for additional funding and requesting state funding.

Needed resources

As more funding is available, school library programs will be able to acquire the resources identified as necessary to a good program such as current materials, staffing, facilities, and technology. Other needs, such as long-range plans and board-approved policies or collaboration with teachers, are less resource dependent, but rather goals that every program should incorporate.

Collaboration

Collaboration among school librarians and teachers is key to supporting student success. Both TSLAC and TEA can work with local districts in areas such as collaboration among libraries and with community organizations, as well as continuing education for school librarians. TSLAC and TEA have programs that encourage local, regional, and statewide resource sharing, collaboration, and continuing education. The Texas library community has nurtured a vision for cooperation among all types of libraries for decades.

Online research and information resources

TSLAC has successfully included negotiations for online research and information sources for school libraries along with its TexShare database program, and TEA provided library resources for schools for nine years through the Texas Library Connection (TLC). Both programs achieved significant cost savings for Texas schools. Although more respondents indicated online databases as a responsibility of TEA, the partnership between TSLAC, TEA, and Education Service Center, Region 20 has worked well to make the K-12 Databases available to all public and charter schools in the state of Texas, as well as to provide training and support for the resources. The combination of TEA funding through Rider 88 with the market power of statewide database license negotiations through TSLAC's TexShare program has been successful and should continue. Online research and information resources available at all types of libraries support the continuum of library access for Texans, and the learning that begins with a child's first visit to a public library, then use of school libraries, academic libraries, and back to public libraries for life-long learning.

Standards

To ensure that the necessary funding, resources, and services needed for school library programs to contribute to student success are in place and that funds are actually allocated to the library program, many respondents call for the Standards to be mandatory. Mandated district programs and services are clearly a responsibility of TEA, and the agency should engage



in discussion with the school library community in this area, and consider the Standards as the basis for data collection to document progress in providing quality library programs. Legislative authority would be needed to achieve this goal.

Education Code §33.021 assigns the responsibility for school library standards to TSLAC. Respondents indicated that standards are primarily a TEA responsibility. Given the close relationship of school library programs with the local and state educational structure, this is understandable and a change to the statute should be considered. However, TSLAC should continue to collaborate with TEA on the development of standards.

Statistics

The survey respondents indicated that collection of statistics on public school libraries statewide should be carried out by TSLAC. TSLAC does collect, analyze, and distribute statistics on public and academic libraries. Collection of data on public school libraries would be a significant undertaking. Data are essential for evaluation, and the annual collection of data on public school libraries is highly recommended for use by both state and local decision-makers. Since it already has a large data collection program, the collection of statistics on school library programs should be a responsibility for TEA. This would require funds to be made available for this purpose. Adding school library data to that collected regularly by school districts would go far toward emphasizing the importance of school libraries and their impact on student achievement. TSLAC could also use the data gathered to evaluate and inform the statewide provision of all library resources and services

Role of school librarians

The presence of certified school librarians with adequate support staff has been identified as critical to the success of a school library program. Their role in working with classroom teachers to improve student achievement is essential. TEA should determine methods to promote the professional status of librarians as teachers critical to student success.

Action points for the recommendations

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

- Provide funding to enable school libraries to meet the recommendations of the Standards and the Long-Range Plan for Technology, 2006-2020.
- Call for the Standards to be revised to ensure appropriateness and usefulness over time, perhaps using the new American Association of School Librarians' Standards for the 21st Century Learner as well as other recent examples of library standards.
- Consider the Standards as the basis for data collection to document progress in providing quality library programs.
- Engage in a discussion with the school library community about the issue of mandatory standards.

- Seek necessary funding to support library programs and recognize those that are rated Exemplary.
- Ensure that all campuses in the State of Texas have identified a school library with library services available to students and educators.
- Provide support and training for school libraries through the twenty regional Education Service Centers across the state.
- Ensure that all campuses in the State of Texas have identified a school librarian who serves each campus and have entered this data into PEIMS and other data collection systems.
- Promote collaboration among librarians and teachers to teach state-mandated curriculum standards, integrate resources into student lessons, and share instructional strategies that can support student achievement across the curriculum and ensure the success of all students.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY AND THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

Continue to fund and support the online research and information resources – the K-12 Databases – to ensure equal access to quality educational resources no matter a school's size, location, or socioeconomic status.

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY AND SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION

- Provide support for the educator preparation and professional development needed to become a certified librarian, increasing the availability of these librarians for schools across the state.
- Include educational instruction at the academic/certification levels for administrators regarding school libraries, statewide school library standards, and the impact librarians and libraries make to student achievement

Future Direction

This study was intended to gather and use data to make joint recommendations from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and the Texas Education Agency to improve public school library services. While there are extant school library programs and resources, and the information gleaned from survey responses gives us a better picture of current needs, it is important to engage in ongoing review and data collection in order to further strengthen and refine efforts to improve this critical area of public education. Future efforts should include both agencies, working with a jointly appointed advisory group, to continue work on the report recommendations and assist both agencies in planning services. ★



Our Place in Democracy: Re-Committing to Our Ideals

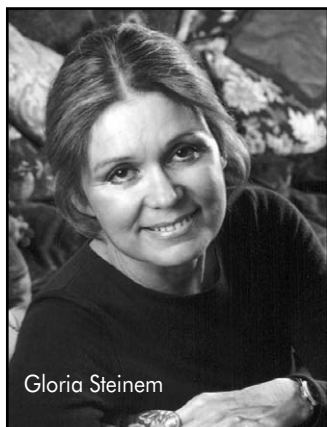
The 2009 Conference bears the theme “Creating Communities of Ideals and Innovation” and speaks to our collective focus on democratic rights and the role of libraries in supporting opportunity for everyone. The 2009 TLA Conference looks at the long struggles involved with achieving equality in opportunities while looking ahead to the ongoing and fundamental role libraries must have in supporting progress and leading the way toward innovation and learning. The general session speakers are well-known figures who have supported public causes – one, women’s rights; the other, libraries and literacy.

General Session Speakers: GLORIA STEINEM & PAULA POUNDSTONE

Gloria Steinem: her name alone evokes strong sentiment. A contemporary pioneer of women’s rights, Steinem’s interest in women’s issues originated from watching her mother’s marginalization after suffering a mental breakdown. Having given up a career for family, Steinem’s mother conformed to social expectations only to be divorced, dismissed by doctors, and ostracized for failing to live up to a social norm. As a journalist and author, Steinem has also chronicled diverse issues and taken strong positions against pornography and led efforts to increase awareness of women’s health concerns. The woman behind the legend is a complex amalgamation of toughness, compassion, fierce opinions, and personal principles. Gloria Steinem is provocative, fascinating, and an integral contributor to every modern woman’s story.

“If you haven’t been to the library, you’re overdue.” And so with this quote, Emmy Award-winning comedian Paula Poundstone has lent her talent and celebrity to the cause of libraries. She is the national spokesperson for Friends of Libraries USA and has participated in various public relations efforts to help promote libraries and equip friends groups across the country with messages to increase support for libraries. Her latest work, *There’s Nothing in this Book that I Meant to Say*, showcases the wry humor and keen insight that makes her one of today’s top entertainers. She was the

first woman to perform at the White House Correspondents’ Dinner and the first woman to win a Cable ACE for best standup comedy special. Don’t miss the opportunity to hear this hilarious student of human behavior.



Gloria Steinem



Paula Poundstone

Highlights

In addition to all the wonderful programming, conference also offers a wealth of opportunities for networking and having fun – one of the most important priorities for any library gathering. The Local Arrangements Committee has done a fantastic job of scouting out great venues and planning terrific parties.

We hope to see you all at the Welcome Party at Discovery Green Park, across from the convention center. Join thousands of your friends and colleagues for an enchanting evening

al fresco. The newly designed Green Park offers 12 acres of bewitching landscaping that sets a relaxing tone for a night of entertainment, refreshments, and fun. This family-friendly outing features a variety of local talent throughout the evening. Discover Discovery Green!

This year’s President’s Party is totally geared to fun – from dancing to gaming, entertainment is the main course this evening. Virtual dancing and real dancing will all be part of the festivities. Original Triumphs, B. J. Thomas’ former band, will provide live entertainment in the ballroom, and the gaming pavilion will offer the latest in gaming – Rock Band, Mario Kart, and DDR – along with some traditional table game favorites. Join your friends and colleagues for a memorable night. Let the games begin!

Spotlight on Gaming

Gaming is exciting, fun, and educational; and, libraries can be at the forefront of creating gaming venues to draw in kids from 2 to 92. TLA is planning an energizing evening to get you familiar with this up-and-coming programming while having fun yourself.

Don’t be left out. Join your more-than-slightly-competitive library friends to see who rules Gaming Night! ALA sponsored a similar event at its annual conference, much to the delight of members who give gaming night rave reviews.

For those of you who have spent years honing skills on table top games, you too can take the evening by storm. A myriad of traditional – albeit HIGHLY charged – games will be offered to round out the cornucopia of fun.



The TLA 2009 Annual Conference

LIBRARIES

Creating Communities of Ideals and Innovation

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Betty Sue Flowers

Holly Witchey

Jenny Levine

Michael Stephens

David Lankes

Sara Houghton-Jan

Awards

Of course, conference is also a time for awards and recognition. Along with TLA's association-wide awards, units will also honor the best and brightest in their ranks.

Exhibits

No TLA conference would be complete without extended visits to the TLA exhibits. Featuring the third largest library tradeshow in the country, the TLA exhibit hall offers over 450 companies showcasing all the latest technologies, tools, and materials needed to run Texas libraries. Be sure to visit the exhibitors in our new pavilions – Diversity Fair, Gaming, and Graphic Novel. The Authors Area, Technology Showcases, Bag Check/USPO and Exhibit Hall Cafes will be available the entire show so be sure to visit often! Stay tuned for more information by visiting the conference blog.

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

The TLA tradeshow and its online site are designed to provide you with multiple ways of finding the products you need. We created the Quick-Read-Guide which gives you a quick overview of some of the special show offerings. This will debut via the conference blog in early February with monthly updates. A final print-version will be available at conference. Whether you visit the TLA tradeshow online or at conference (or both), shopping exhibiting companies lets you save time and money!

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State series are the workhorses of middle-grade nonfiction collections, and this consistent and long-running series has recently been updated with substantive and cosmetic changes in its third edition. Packed with facts and photographs, it is an essential resource to gain a deeper knowledge of our country! - *Booklist*

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- Content-area vocabulary words defined
- New features such as "Weird Laws," "WOW Factor," and "Picture Yourself" make ATB3 a standout in states series books
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Author Session with Black Caucus Round Table: **Capstone Publishers, DEMCO, Inc., Renaissance Learning, Inc.**

Author Session with TBA Award Winner: **Bound To Stay Bound**

Badge Holders/Lanyards:
Capstone Publishers

Book Cart Drill Team:
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- **Linworth Publishing**

Top 10 Technologies & Ideas to Improve Library Productivity
- **Highsmith, Inc.**

Diversity Fair Pavilion:
DEMCO, Inc.

Exhibitor Directory & Buyers Guide: **School Library Journal**

General Session I: **netTrekker d.i.**

General Session I Entertainment:
Garrett Book Company

General Session II: **Brodart Company**

Hetherington Fun Run/Walk:
ProQuest

Lobby Café: **Davidson Titles, Inc.**

Net Fair: **netTrekker d.i.**

President's Party: **Baker & Taylor**

President's Party Spirits:
Britannica Digital Learning, EBSCO Information Services

Small Community Libraries RT
Dessert Social: **Star Book Sales**

Strong Libraries, Strong Scores Administrator's Conference:
ABC-CLIO, Perma-Bound Books, Texas Association of School Library Administrators, Texas Association of School Librarians

TALL Texans Leadership Institute: **DEMCO, Inc.**

Texas Bluebonnet Award Travel:
Mackin Library Media

TLA 2009 Attendee Survey:
America Reads Spanish

TLA 2009 Legislative Day:
Britannica Digital Learning, EBSCO Information Services, ProQuest

TLA/TBA Store: **Sentry Technology Corp. & Library Design Systems**

Welcome Party: **Ingram Library Services Inc.**

AWARDS/STIPENDS/GRANTS/SCHOLARSHIPS

Biblionix SCLRT Stipend
DEMCO/ TLA Research Grant
Garrett Scholarship
Greg Escue Conference Stipend
Highsmith Library Awards
ProQuest Intellectual Freedom Award
Quality Books NMRT Grant
YART/Linworth Publishing/ LMC Conference Stipend
Texas Book Festival Stipends
Tocker Foundation Stipends
Van Dusen/Tobin/Kaiser Scholarship
Walter H. Escue Memorial Scholarship

The TLA 2009 Exhibitors

as of: 11/26/2008

3M Library Systems
720 Design Inc.

A. Bargas & Associates, LLC
A+ Images, Inc
ABC-CLIO
ABDO iBooks
ABDO Publishing Company
Abrams Books for Young Readers/
Amulet Books
Absolute Backorder Service, Inc.
Accelerated Reader
Advance Publishing, Inc.
Adventure Land Book Fairs, Inc.
Albert Whitman & Company
Alexandria by Companion
Corporation
All About Texas
AlphaSmart, A Renaissance
Learning Brand
Amber Art by Bella Mia
Amber Way Jewelry Company
America Reads Spanish
American Library Association
Publishing
American Psychological
Association
Amigos Library Services
Another Sommer-Time Story Series
Arte Publico Press
American Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Audio Visual Aids Corporation
August House Audio
August House Publishers, Inc.
Averus Corporation Library
Consulting
AWE

Backstage Library Works
Baker & Taylor/ YBP Library
Services
Barefoot Books
Basch Subscriptions
Bayou Publishing
BBC Audiobooks America
Bearport Publishing
Bellwether Media
BiblioBanners
Biblionix

Bibliotheca Inc.
Big Cozy Books
Bilingual Storyteller, Consuelo
Samarripa
Bilingual Storyteller, Sue Young
Black Rabbit Books
Blackstone Audio, Inc.
Blackwell
Bloomsbury and Walker Books for
Young Readers
Bloomsbury Children's / Walker &
Company
The Book Fair
Book And Puppet Sets
the Book House, Inc.
Book Systems, Inc.
Book Wholesalers, Inc.
BOOKBINS Shelving on Wheels
Booklist & Book Links
Books on Tape
Borders Group Inc.
Bound To Stay Bound Books
Bowker
Boyd's Mills Press
Bright Sky Press
Brilliance Audio
Britannica Digital Learning
Brodart Company
Buckstaff Company
BUSCA INC.
BWI

Camcor, Inc.
Candlewick Press
Capstone Press
Carolrhoda Books
Carpets for Kids
Carranza Puppets
CASPR Library Systems, Inc.
CCS Presentation Systems
Changeable Sign Systems
Charles Scribner's Sons
Chelsea House
Cherry Lake Publishing
Children's Books All Half Price
Children's Plus, Inc.
Children's Press/Franklin Watts
Child's Play
The Child's World Books



Chronicle Books
Cinco Puntos Press
Clarion Books
CoLibri Systems
ColorMarq Shelf Management ID Systems
Combined Book Exhibit
Compass Point Books
Congressional Information Service
Cornish, DeCee
CountryReports.org
Cover One
Crabtree Publishing Company
Creation Station, LLC
The Creative Companies
Cultural Surroundings

Dan Gibson, Storyteller
Davidson Titles, Inc.
Deanan Gourmet Popcorn
DEE, Inc.
Delaney Educational Enterprises
DEMCO, Inc.
DEMCO Library Interiors
Diamond Comic Distributors, Inc.
Digital Knowledge Central/ K-12 Databases Program
Digital Library Reserve
Disney Educational Productions/ Bill Nye the Science Guy
Disney-Hyperion Books for Children
DKC
DLB Educational Corporation
Doc Moore, Storyteller
Don Sanders, Storyteller
Donna Ingham, Storyteller
Dover Publications
DTI
Dynix

East West Discovery Press
EBSCO Information Services
ediciones Lerner
Eerdmans Books for Young Readers
Ellie Lance Creations
Elizabeth Ellis, Storyteller
Ellison
Ellsberry Enterprises
Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.
Endangered Animal and Tropical Rainforest Presentations

Engage Educational Technologies
Enslow Publishers, Inc.
Eric Emmerson Strong, Storyteller
Estey
Esther Malone, Storyteller & Educator

F&S Partners, Inc.
FactCite
Facts On File
Farrar Straus Giroux Books for Young Readers
Feiwei and Friends
Films Media Group
The Final Twist Writers Society
Firefly Books, Ltd.
Five Star
Follett Library Resources
Follett Software Company
Fort Worth Public Library

G.K. Hall
Gale, a Part of Cengage Learning
Gareth Stevens Publishing
Garrett Book Company
Gaylord Bros., Inc.
Gold Co.
Graham & Whiteside
Graphic Universe
Great American Opportunities
Greenhaven Press
Greenwood Publishing Group
Greg Escue & Associates
Grey House Publishing
Grolier Publishing Company/ Grolier Online
Groundwood Books
Gumdrop Books

Harcourt Children's Books
Harcourt Outlines, Inc.
HarperCollins Children's Books
HarperCollins Publishers
Heinemann - Raintree Library
Henry Holt & Company
Hidell Associates Architects
Highsmith Inc.
Highsmith Inc./FlashScan
Holiday House
The Horn Book, Inc.
Houston Chapter - Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

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In The Wind Books
INDECO Sales / Macco Manufacturing
Independent Publishers Group
Infinite Furniture Solutions
Infobase Publishing
Ingram Library Services Inc.
Innovative Interfaces, Inc.
Insignia Software
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Jasper Chair Company
Jiaan Powers, A Teller and A Teacher of Story
Journey Back in Time
Julian Franklin, Storyteller
Junior Library Guild

K-12 TexShare / Digital Knowledge Central
Kane/Miller Book Publishers
KAPCO Book Protection
Kelowna Software Ltd.
KidHaven Press
Komatsu Architecture
Kristina Whitehead

L4U (Library 4 Universal)
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Landmark Media Inc
Large Print Press
Laser Made Frames
Lawrence J. Clark
LE@D (Lifelong Education @ Desktop)
Learning ZoneXpress
Lectorum Publications, Inc.
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LexisNexis
Liberty Fund, Inc.
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Library Bureau Steel
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Library Interiors - Vance Hunt & Associates
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Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
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Lucent Books
Lynn Baskind, Puppeteer

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Mason Crest Publishers
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Moody Publishers
Moody Video
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National Network of Libraries of Medicine South Central Region (NN/LM SCR)
NEST Learning
nefTrekker d.i.
New Harbinger Publications, Inc.
New York Times Newspaper
NewsBank inc.
Norwood House Press

Nystrom Education Division of
Herff Jones

OCLC

Orca Book Publishers
OverDrive Inc.
Overlooked Books

Paragon Furniture, LP
PBS Video

Peachtree Publishers, Ltd.
Pelican Publishing Company
Penguin Young Readers Group
The Penworthy Company
Performing Artist Showcase
Perma-Bound Books
Picture Window Books
Pinata Books
Plunkett Research, Ltd.
Pokemon Learning League
Polaris Library Systems
Possum Grape RHK
Power Kids
Priddy Books
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Pro Forma Architecture, Inc.

ProQuest

PSA-Dewberry

Publishers Group West

Puppets At Half Price

QSP/Reader's Digest

Quality Books, Inc.

Rainbow Book Company

Rand McNally & Company

Random House Children's Books

Random House Large Print Books

Random House Library &
Academic Marketing

Random House, Inc.

REA Courier

Readex

Recorded Books, LLC

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic

ReferenceUSA a division of
InfoUSA

Region 4 Education Service Center

Renaissance Learning

Richardson Distribution & Books
Inc.

Roaring Brook Press

RockSports

Greg Rodgers, Storyteller

Rosen Publishing/Power Kids
Rourke Publishing Group

SAGE

SAIC

Salem Press

Sam Houston State University -
Department of Library Science

Sasquatch Books

Sauder

Save Half on Books

Scarecrow Press

Schirmer Reference

Scholastic Book Fairs, Inc.

Scholastic Classroom & Library
Group

Scholastic Reading Counts!

SRC!

Scholastic Trade Books

School Library Journal/Library
Journal

School Specialty Education
Essentials

SchoolVisit.net

Sebco Books

Sentry Technology Corporation

Sharpe Reference

Silpada Designs Sterling Silver
Jewelry, Belts & Watches

Simon & Schuster Children's
Publishing

Simply Silver & Sassy Apparel

Singing Poet Guy, Lawrence J.
Clark

SirsiDynix

SJB Productions

Sleeping Bear Press

Smith System Manufacturing

Society of Children's Book Writers
and Illustrators - Houston
Chapter

Society of Children's Book Writers
and Illustrators - Texas Chapters

Southwest Book Company

Spacesaver/Southwest Solutions
Group

Spoken Arts

Spotlight

Star Book Sales

Star Bright Books

State House/McWhiney
Foundation Press

State Securities Board

Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

Stone Arch Books

Stop Falling Productions

Storybook Theatre

Storyteller Dan Gibson

Storyteller, DeCee Cornish, Urban
Griot

Storytellers Donna Ingham and
Don Sanders

Storytellers Tim Tingle and Doc
Moore

Sue Young, Bilingual Storyteller

Surpass Software

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Teacher's Corner

Teachers Stamp Company

Tech Logic

Tejas Storytelling Association

Ten Speed Press/Tricycle Press

TESCO Industries, Inc.

Texas A&M University Press

Texas Book Festival

Texas Center for the Book at the
Dallas Public Library

Texas Christian University Press

Texas Connection

Texas Library Association:

Automation & Technology Round
Table

Black Caucus Round Table

Genealogy Round Table

Library Instruction Round Table

Library Support Staff Round Table

Reference Round Table

Small Community Libraries
Round Table

TALL Texans Round Table

Texas Professional Association for
Library Sales Round Table

TLA 2010 Conference - San
Antonio

Young Adult Round Table

Texas PTA

Texas Snakes & More

Texas State Library and Archives
Commission

Texas State Securities Board

Texas Tech University Press

Texas Woman's University - School
of Library and Information
Studies

Texasoverlookedbooks.com

Texwood Library Furniture

Thorndike Press

Tim Tingle, Storyteller

Tipi Tellers

TLC - The Library Corporation

Tocker Foundation

Toni Simmons, Storyteller

Troxell Communications, Inc.

TTUP

Tutor.com

Twayne Publishers

Twenty-First Century Books

Twice Upon A Time Storytellers

Tyndale House Publishers

U*X*L

Unique Books, Inc.

University of Houston Clear Lake
- School Library and Information
Science Program

University of North Texas College
of Information, Library Science &
Technologies

University of North Texas Press

University of Texas - School of
Information

University of Texas Press

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UNT - LE@D

Upstart, A Division of Highsmith
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Walker Books for Young Readers

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Weigl Publishers Inc.

WGBH Boston Video

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Library Division

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Yen Press

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Upcoming State Legislative Session

January 13, 2009 is fast approaching! For a copy of an overview of the TLA legislative platform and issue briefs, go to http://www.tsla.org/html/govt_aff.html. Legislative activities for the upcoming Texas Legislative Session include seeking increased funding (over current appropriations) for the following programs:

- TexShare--\$10.5 million over the biennium
- K-12 Databases--\$8 million over the biennium
- Loan Star Libraries--\$8.7 over the biennium
- Texas Library Systems--\$4 million over the biennium

A critical initiative this session involves advocating for a state policy ensuring that all the children of Texas benefit from a quality school library program and a certified school librarian. Our efforts this session will be crafted to begin a difficult but essential process to formally recognize that school libraries are a part of the state's educational infrastructure.

Take Action!

We urge all library supporters to take the time to contact their elected officials. Recruit students, parents, community members, faculty, and friends to write elected officials and ask them for their support of Texas libraries.

Legislative Day 2009

Make plans now to participate in TLA's 2009 Legislative Day, which will be held in Austin, February 24-25, 2009. Delegate training will be held the evening of February 24 at the Hyatt at Lady Bird Lake. Attendees will participate in visits to various legislator offices on the 25th. All meetings will be coordinated by assigned delegate leaders, who will work with their team of library supporters to make all 150 state representatives and 31 senators aware of the needs of Texas libraries.

Please be aware that you must reserve your own room. The TLA special rate for Feb. 24 and 25 is \$139 for a single/double, \$164 for triple, and \$189 for a quad. The firm hotel deadline is January 23, 2009. To make a reservation, call the Hyatt (512/477-1234 or 800/223-1234) and ask for the Texas Library Association group rate.

To register online, go to www.tsla.org and click *Register for Legislative Day*. The registration form is one of the options listed through TLA's online event registration system.

Statewide Public Opinion Poll on Libraries

KRC Research, a nationally-recognized polling company based in Washington, D.C., has just completed a statewide poll on voter opinions about libraries. The library survey is the first of its kind in Texas, and TLA plans to use the findings to increase support for the state's libraries and to spur continued research.

A broad and representative sample of Texas voters (1200) was surveyed to determine the level of public support for libraries. While many national surveys exist, the use of Texas information is an important tool in supporting specific state initiatives. The survey instrument will form the basis of survey training at the 2009 TLA conference and will be available for local communities to adapt.

The TLA survey will be used to present information to the statewide elected leadership, TLA members, and the media. The primary audience is state legislators who determine funding for public and school libraries. The findings will be released in early January 2009.

Texas Book Festival Now Accepting Grant Applications

The Capitol grounds were again abuzz with literary enthusiasts for the annual Texas Book Festival, which was held Nov. 1 and 2. First Lady Laura Bush continues to serve as the Festival's honorary chairwoman. This year, thousands of readers and library supporters filled the Capitol chambers and strolled along booths featuring books and other literary wares. A great addition this year was the announcement of the 2009-2010 TBA Master List.

The Texas Book Festival is now in its 13th year and benefits Texas public libraries. To apply for a Texas Book Festival grant, go to: www.texasbookfestival.org/Library_Grants.php and click on "How to Apply" at the bottom of the left hand side of the screen.

Legislative Day Sponsors



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Speed Kids Texas Press, Inc.



TLA LEGISLATIVE DAY IS FEBRUARY 24-25, 2009.

Read all about it! Visit the TLA website (www.tla.org) to see which books were selected for the newest (2009-2010) 2x2, Texas Bluebonnet Award, Lone Star, and Tayshas reading lists.

UNT SLIS Now a College

The University of North Texas School of Library and Information Sciences has joined with an academic department in the College of Education to become the College of Information, Library Science and Technologies – the eighth college on UNT’s campus in Denton.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved a proposal from the UNT Board of Regents to consolidate the School of Library and Information Sciences with the College of Education’s Department of Learning Technologies into the new college, which will consist of two academic departments – Learning Technologies and Library and Information Sciences.

Jeff Allen will continue as interim chairman of the Department of Learning Technologies, while a new chairman will be appointed for the Department of Library and Information Sciences. Herman Totten, dean of the School of Library and Information Sciences, will continue as dean of the College of Information, Library Science and Technologies.

Totten said the new college will result in increased opportunities to attract and retain top students and broaden the learning experience for students enrolled in the college. The new college will also increase the levels of research funding beyond that previously obtained by the Department of Learning Technologies and the School of Library and Information Sciences, and attain higher national rankings for the academic programs offered by the department and the school. Totten said the new college will be more comprehensive in its academic offering than either the department or the school individually. The two academic areas’ existing degree programs that will be offered in the new college include two bachelor’s degree programs, three master’s degree programs and three doctoral degree programs.

In addition to its academic departments, the new college will house the Texas Center for Digital Knowledge, which has been part of Library and Information Sciences, and the Texas Center for Educational Technologies and the Institute of Technologies into Teaching and Learning, which were both part of Learning Technologies.

Totten said the new college’s location at UNT’s Discovery Park campus will also provide for greater interaction among faculty members in the college and faculty members in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering and Department of Engineering Technologies. Totten said having a College of Information, Science and Technologies will help UNT better compete with exemplary colleges of information science and technologies in universities worldwide.

Martin Bestowed with Presidential Citizens Medal

Robert S. Martin received the Presidential Citizens Medal on Nov. 17 at a ceremony in Washington honoring this year’s recipients of the National Medals of Arts and National Humanities Medals. President Bush conferred the honor to Martin, former director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and others cultural leaders, including current IMLS Director Anne-Imelda Radice.

“As leaders of our government’s cultural institutions, each of today’s recipients have made lasting contributions to American life and civic culture – and each is greatly deserving of this honor,” Bush said in his remarks. “Each of today’s honorees understands that encouraging individual creativity and freedom of expression through the arts and scholarship strengthens and enhances our great country. And so I want to thank them for their service. I congratulate them.”

The President noted that the Presidential Citizens Medal was created nearly four decades ago to recognize Americans who have performed exemplary service to the nation and that it is one of the highest honors that can be conferred on a citizen. ★



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NARRATIVES FROM THE STORM

More than everything else, though, people seemed to just have a need to . . . share their stories, get the latest news, and be connected. That's exactly what the library is for.

More than everything else, though, people seemed to just have a need to . . . share their stories, get the latest news, and be connected. That's exactly what the library is for.

Public libraries are a natural haven for the community. During times of crisis, though, the role of the library is essential not only in providing a wide range of needed resources and services; it is also about offering a place of calm, togetherness, and sense of community.

We've assembled here a few personal accounts of how libraries and librarians worked to help neighborhoods deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Ike and how they aided in the healing process.

*Rhea Brown Lawson, Director,
Houston Public Library*

In the devastation following Hurricane Ike, it was very easy for me to redirect "normal" operations to focus the entire resources of the library toward helping our city with post Ike recovery efforts. As history has revealed, the public library represents a place of calm in chaos and is used heavily when times are bad. By September 16th, four days after Ike hit the area, we were able to restore services at the Central Library and the Julia Ideson Building. All staff was asked to report to the Central Library.

By mid-day on the 16th, we were providing Internet access so customers could contact family and friends and file insurance claims; we were providing one-on-one assistance with FEMA applications and the Blue Roof project; and we were there providing other critical services and information. By Wednesday, we had deployed the HPL mobile lab to communities that needed our help with FEMA applications and other services. By the Thursday after Ike, we began responding to another recovery effort - the need of our colleagues in other city departments who needed to return to their jobs to help restore city services, but had school age children they did not want to leave alone at home. Most of the

Harris County Public Library:
Preparing craft projects by flashlight



A headlamp lights the entrance to the children's area (below).

surrounding school systems were closed so the need in this area was great.

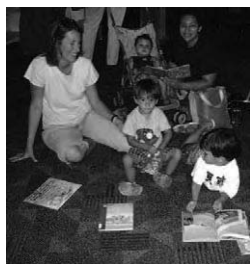
As we sought to re-open our facilities, our primary concerns were that they were safe, had power, and had IT connectivity. We used staff from locations that could not open to supplement staff at those we could, to provide one-on-one support to customers in navigating online emergency resources. We got the word out that we were back on line through daily press releases to various media outlets. In Houston, there was not a person left untouched by the storm. Although it was important that HPL stepped up to the plate as quickly as possible, I also realized that my staff needed normalcy as much as our fellow citizens. Coming to work, being around each other, being in air conditioning and enjoying electricity for a few hours and extending a helping hand to others provided a healing balm we all needed.

The services that HPL provided were very critical to the city's recovery efforts. I know that our Mayor, Bill White, our City Council members and, most importantly, our fellow citizens appreciate how HPL stepped up to the plate to help our community heal. The HPL post Ike services were only made possible through the collective team efforts made by staff from across the system. I have never been so proud to be a part of a team. The staff was at its best – planning, executing, leading, giving of themselves, doing whatever necessary to get the job done. It is this caring for our fellow community members, our commitment and dedication to quality customer responsive service delivery, and our ability to turn on a dime – even while dealing with our own challenges – represents the true spirit of HPL.

Harris County Public Library

From left

- Circulation innovation
- Family time in the lobby
- Storytime on the grounds



Mike Van Campen, Chief of Central Services,
Houston Public Library

When that first open morning came, it became apparent that – through subsequent calls and messages left – more people than we had thought got the message that we would be open. The Central Library normally has a staff of roughly 80 people. What we found was that nearly 240 people reported to work at Central that day. We divided staff up and assigned them to managers. In addition to offering service on the public floors, we had folks assist with every project we had ever wanted completed. What we ended up with after roughly two weeks of this dream staffing level were perfectly read and ordered shelves throughout the building (which is no small feat in a six story building), a cleared out sorting room (a task we had been struggling with since our grand opening three months before gave us the busiest weekend and largest backlog in the history of our facility), and brand new range end signs throughout the building.

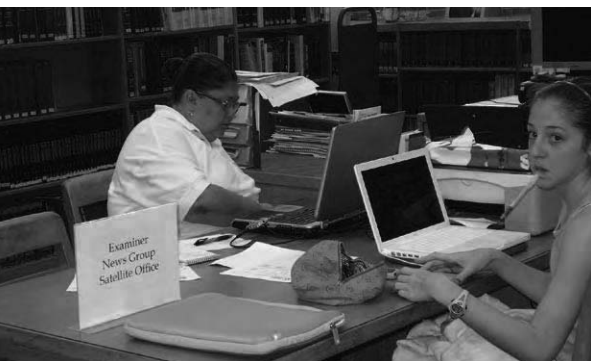
The most amazing thing throughout this entire experience was the enthusiasm and positive attitude of the staff at Houston Public Library. Even after working 12 hour plus days, I have to say I felt a little down going home. Not just because my house had no energy but because I was truly enjoying the energy created by a staff of hundreds working together to help our city recover.

Mary Wagoner, Northeast District Manager,
Houston Public Library

HPL played a central role in establishing the Emergency Employee Childcare Program for city employees in response to the huge need for child care services. Since the main library had been recently renovated and was in a convenient, centralized location, it was a logical choice for a childcare site. A committee was formed, and I was asked to help implement the childcare program.

Within a day, a program was planned and it was implemented the following day. The program had the primary needs of children as its priority. I knew the children no longer had basic services and their lives had been disrupted. The children needed structure because they were in a sea of chaos. Their routine would include food, breaks, a variety of activities, and storytimes.

In addition to participating in activities such as What's the Big Idea, fun



The *Bellaire Examiner* took up temporary residence at the city library.



The laptop population swelled at Bellaire City Library following the storm.

storytimes, and crafts, kids also enjoyed exercise activities and face painting.

On the first day, there were anxious parents worried about dropping off their children. By the end of the day, when the children wanted to stay and enjoy the library some more, parents were delighted. It was heart warming at the end of the program to hear from so many parents that we lightened their load during such a stressful time (we served more than 400 children as part of this program). The one thing they could count on during the day was that their children were in a safe place and enjoying well planned and executed programs operated by other city employees who truly cared.

Mary Alford, Director,
Bellaire City Library

The Bellaire City Library began its Hurricane Ike experience by being a shelter before and after the event. Once all city departments were officially closed, several Emergency Operation Center personnel bivouacked in the library through the storm due to the library's proximity to the EOC. Once Hurricane Ike left the area, we were delighted to find that the library still had power and Internet and WiFi on Saturday with no damage to the building.

By Sunday, the library had lost power only to have it partially restored by Monday. There was enough power to run most of the computers (we still had Internet!), lights, and some fans, no AC. Although city services remained closed to the public until Tuesday, permission was given to a local newspaper (*The Examiner News* group whose offices were damaged) to use the library's computers and Internet in order to continue their on-line reporting and to put out a paper issue on Wednesday. The library opened to the public on Tuesday with no evening hours but by had established regular hours by Saturday. The library staff fielded many questions about recovery efforts of the city and posted daily (sometimes hourly) FAQ's from the city to provide information.

During the five days after Hurricane Ike, over 1,900 people used the library for Internet, WiFi, fax service, borrowed books, and visited with neighbors and shared Hurricane Ike stories. Story times were conducted, movies were shown and



library staff set out some games for families to use with their children. Since power outages were widespread, people were looking for means to recharge cell phones and computers, so charging stations were established in the library. At one point on one day, there were 30 personal laptops throughout the building utilizing the WiFi. Several people were logged into their work, students connected to school, teachers were checking on their schools and the schedule, many were paying bills, several FEMA applications were made, insurance information was sought, and social sites and email were very, very popular. By Wednesday, the power to the library was



Teens relax in a nest of beanbags at Bellaire City Library while laptops and cell phones charge.

fully restored so AC was available and area residents had a place for heat relief.

Hurricane Ike brought new awareness of the library to city staff and to area residents. People were able to communicate to family members, work from “home,” and retain a sense of normalcy. City

staff became aware of the role the library plays in information dissemination. The city manager praised the library operation to the city council and stated that the library would be listed as a priority in all recovery efforts.

Rhoda Goldberg, Director,
Harris County Public Library

It seems that, in some way or another, no one in Southeast Texas was spared from the aftermath of Ike. Library employees from every quarter faced personal challenges; and yet—as only librarians can – they pulled together and worked wonders to help communities find solid footing and begin the recovery process. I am so proud of the work of HCPL staff and the entire library community. The reports coming in from our branches are just amazing – story after story of how libraries served communities, person by person. They were truly Chief Community Healers after Ike.

Christi C. Whittington, Branch Librarian,
Kingwood Branch Library,

Harris County Public Library

Hurricane Ike wreaked havoc all over Harris County, but in the aftermath of the storm, the Kingwood Branch Library opened its doors, providing a cool, comfortable, not to mention “highly-charged,” haven for our community.

On the same grid as the Houston Police Department's Kingwood substation, the library had electrical power restored within two days, making it possible for us to provide services 10 AM-5 PM for two full weeks, including Sundays, 1-5 PM. Staff members, most of whom did not have power in their homes for more than two weeks, stepped up on a daily basis, working together as a team to welcome first-time visitors, answer questions, offer instructions on computer use or, more often than not, sympathize with our friends and neighbors.

Within the first couple of days following the storm, word-of-mouth had crowds of people waiting for our doors to open each morning and lining up patiently (mostly!) to book an hour on our computers. Children played their favorite computer games, teens checked their MySpace pages and adults took care of business, all on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Our free WiFi was a big draw, as well. To accommodate all of those wanting to use their own laptop computers, we plugged in power cords, some generously provided by our patrons, and set up tables in our meeting room. FOLK (Friends of the Library Kingwood) provided free coffee, which went a long way toward lifting spirits, and we played movies on our big-screen TV to keep the kids (of all ages!) entertained. It was so funny to see adults, sitting at a table, hands poised over the keyboard of their laptop, as engrossed in the antics of the Muppets as the children sprawled on the floor in front of the TV. Many people also opted to use our WiFi before and after the library was open, some sitting in lawn chairs outside our front doors, others sitting in their cars on the parking lot.

Lots of people stopped by the library on a daily basis to charge cell phones, laptops and video game players. We had one elderly gentleman politely ask if he could charge his electric shaver. Of course, we said yes. One young lady, eager to look her best for a get-together with friends, asked if she could plug her blow dryer into the outlet behind our soft drink machine in our lobby, and again, we said yes.

We had people checking out books by the dozens, too. If nothing else, Hurricane Ike reminded many that reading is a great way to pass the time. Many of our regular patrons were surprised to see so many people in "their" library, most in a good way, but some not so much. First-timers were equally surprised at how much we had to offer, aside from a chance to access the Internet. We had more than 200 new card applications in the two-week period following the storm, with many people vowing to become regulars. We also had several work-at-home people who now use the library as their office.

Hurricane Ike disrupted the lives of people throughout our area for several weeks, but the adversity caused by the storm was no match for the staff of the Kingwood Branch Library. Pulling together as a team, they provided the residents of our community with a place where they could truly be a community in the worst of times.

Nancy Agafitei, Barbara Bush Branch,
Harris County Public Library

In the aftermath of Hurricane Ike, the two-story Barbara Bush Branch of the Harris County Public Library operated for a week with a complete power outage. The adaptation of the staff to this challenging situation was remarkable. Circulation staff moved into the lobby with notepads, and greeted customers with a smile while they checked items in and out with paper and pencil. A second team took the notepads to another branch where power had been restored and entered the data into the computer system to keep things current.

The children's area was windowless and completely dark. Staff members donned miners lamps and ventured into the darkness to retrieve wanted materials. The children thought it was a great adventure, and some even sat in the lobby and had impromptu family reading times. Taking returned materials to the second floor without a working elevator evolved into a basket brigade. It was inspiring to see these staff members put their hearts into their jobs, while many were still struggling with power outages, property damage, and debris cleanup at their own homes. Continuing to provide good customer service post-hurricane was truly a learning opportunity and a bonding experience for our staff team.

Angel Hill, Assistant Branch Librarian
Katherine Tyra Library

Harris County Public Library

The biggest need we saw in the weeks after the hurricane was the need for electricity. Some came into the library just to charge their cell phones. You could see despondency on so many who came to the library, then you'd see how appreciate they felt once you helped them with everything from small things to big things. One man came in to charge several cordless drills needed to start the recovery process. Another couple of men in construction desperately needed a book on building codes. Because of the situation, we worked out for them to borrow a reference book on the subject.

More than everything else, though, people seemed to just have a need to be around other people. They needed to share their stories, get the latest news, and be connected. That's exactly what the library is for. 🌟

Laura Bess McDonald wrote at 8:57pm on September 22nd, 2008 on Harris County Public Library's Facebook page:

"Kudos to you for opening so many branches, even many without power – that's dedication to your community!"



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