

PNLA QUARTERLY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PNLA QUARTERLY

PNLA Quarterly: The Official Publication of the Pacific Northwest Library Association

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President's Message

CHARLOTTE GLOVER



MISSION

The Pacific Northwest Library Association is an organization of people who work in, with, and for libraries. Its mission is to facilitate and encourage communication, networking, and information exchange for the development and support of libraries and librarianship in the Pacific Northwest.

The Serendipity of the Shelves

I was talking to my father the other day about how annoying I find my iPod. I think iTunes is a librarian's worst nightmare to navigate and I have a bad habit of draining my battery by accidentally turning on the power while carrying it in my bag. Now, don't get me wrong; I love the little gadget. It's ingeniously designed, a marvel of invention and the greatest thing since sliced bread for airline travel or exercise, but ultimately I find it boring. I get tired of listening to music that I have selected because I know exactly what to expect. I much prefer the wonderful variety of radio and recently signed up for satellite radio to have an even greater selection of stations than I have available on my island community.

While we were talking about my frustrations with my iPod my dad hit the nail on the head when he said, "well of course the iPod is boring to you. Uploading your own music assumes you know everything, while the radio is still full of surprises."

I feel exactly the same way about the library. I love not knowing everything! I rarely wake up in the morning and decide to find a book about the Dust Bowl (*The Worst Hard Time*) or World War Two escapes (*The Journey that Saved Curious George*), but when the books beckon from the shelves, they are hard to resist, and I learn something new with every page.

In this day and age of content on demand, books on hold, and required reading lists, I don't think enough people take time to discover what I call the "serendipity of the shelves." In my children's library, I often see kids staring at the computer screen, randomly typing, until I approach and ask, "can I help you find something?" Invariably the patron will reply "I was looking for a good book to read." I always lead them back to the shelves of new books and old favorites where covers beckon and spines have genre stickers. Browsing is much easier and much more fun than trying to pull a rabbit from the proverbial hat by using previous knowledge of books and authors to discover new ones.

Uploading a good read from a database of any kind assumes a tremendous amount of prior knowledge about authors, titles, and genres. In this day and age, I think librarians are needed more than ever to help save the time of the user and to help them discover new worlds. As Umberto Eco so eloquently wrote: "the whole idea of a library is based on a misunderstanding: that the reader goes into the library to find a book whose title he knows ... the essential function of a library ... is to discover books of whose existence the reader has no idea." Of course, with our years of experience, we have some ideas of what readers of all ages would enjoy, but how wonderful it is to be surprised again and again each day, by our own discoveries and by patron requests.

It's been my greatest surprise and pleasure to serve you as PNLA President this past year. I hope all of you will keep on discovering the value of the role you play in the lives of your libraries and in your library associations. ■

From the Editor

MARY K. BOLIN

The summer 2006 issue of the *PNLA Quarterly* continues the theme that began in the Spring issue: advocacy and marketing. The authors in this issue focus on a number of different and very interesting aspects of these topics, including the role of student assistants in marketing the library's

program and whether and to what extent libraries should emulate commercial enterprises.

It's almost time for the annual conference in Eugene! Take a look at PNLA's Web site (www.pnla.org) for more information.■

Call For Submissions

All contributors are required to include a short, 100-word biography and mailing address with their submissions. Each contributor receives a complimentary copy of the issue in which his/her article appears.

Submit feature articles of 1,000-6,000 words on any topic in librarianship or a related field.

We are always looking for short, 400-500 word descriptions of great ideas in libraries. If you have a new project or innovative way of delivering service that you think others might learn from, please submit it.

Fall 2006 Issue (Deadline September 1, 2006):
Winter 2007 Issue (Deadline December 1, 2006):

There are no themes for these issues.

Please email submissions to mbolin2@unl.edu in rtf or doc format.

Submission Guidelines

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Please submit all documents as either a .doc or an .rtf

Font style

PNLA Quarterly publishes in the Verdana font, size 8.

Spacing and punctuation:

- Please use a single space after a period.
- Please use full double dashes (i.e., "--" not "--")
- Please place punctuation within the quotation marks.
- Please omit <http://> when quoting Web site addresses
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- Please do not capitalize nouns such as "librarian" unless the word is included in a title.

Spelling

Web site, Internet, email, ILL; please use the spelling conventions of your country.

Citation Style

Please use whatever style you wish, as long as it is used consistently.

Additional Information

Please submit a 100-word biography and postal address with article.

Students as Story-tellers: Advocacy from the Ranks

LYNN N. BAIRD

A young woman, hair gathered carelessly into a ponytail, her out-of-season-shorts and her tropical camp shirt announcing that fashion trumps sensibility, stands in the middle of the open area, assessing two service desks before her. The first desk is occupied by a woman who represents the sensibility set. She is gazing at a computer screen, with an open journal in one hand, obviously engaged in an activity. A younger man sits at the other desk, forehead in his palm, perplexed, as he seeks the missing word in today's crossword puzzle. The young woman takes an uncertain step towards him and then, recognition lights up her face. "It's the guy in my Psych class," she says to herself. With more confidence, she turns to him for help with her question.

Scenes like this repeat themselves frequently, much to the consternation of reference librarians. It is nearly impossible to discount the important role that relationships play in making the leap from a place of being a stranger to being a member of the in-group (Giles and Coup-land, 1991). And it points to an important consideration in planning the workforce education that we offer our student employees. They are vital members of our service team. They are more visible, social, and mobile than we, and are members of a powerful group on campus: the student body. When we consider how we can provide advocacy from the front lines (Lee, 2006), we should look at fully engaging all of our staff members.

Library advocacy is something that our profession has been working on for decades. The American Library Association has invested many dollars in creating library advocates, people who are willing to and capable of telling the library story. The programs have sometimes seemed larger than what a mere mortal could achieve in a lifetime, with media relations advice, legislative contact lists, and other elements targeted to create effective programs. However, in its simplest form, advocacy is storytelling. Carol Brey-Casiano, former ALA president, characterized library advocacy as "the ability to talk to your neighbors about the library" (Brey-Casiano, 2004, p.5).

The best storytellers in advocacy circles are those who earnestly believe in the products and services they receive. Grassroots advocates who have little to gain financially from their stories are given more credit than professionals in the field. This is why people who are trying to communicate with power brokers are seeking to use these tales to illustrate their points.

In the marketing world, these advocacy stories are characterized as a word of mouth (WOM) marketing communication. Word of mouth marketing is a powerful tool that affects consumer purchasing behavior. Negative comments are spread almost twice as fast as are positive comments (Mangold, Miller, and Brockway, 1999), and WOM, because it is nested in interpersonal communication, has more of an impact on consumer decisions than does the printed word. An indication of the power of WOM is that companies have created new advertising campaigns built upon "buzz agents" (NPR, April 18, 2006). While this article does not suggest that libraries need buzz agents, the social behavior of students is such that the library employers should create training programs that reflect on this part of human nature.

Advocacy to overcome anxiety

Libraries, in spite of good intentions, find that some users rebuff their offer of services. This may be related to individual feelings of comfort with using libraries, with some users experiencing a state of anxiety when faced with the prospect of doing research in the library. Mellon's research showed "that between 75% and 85% of undergraduates described their initial library research experiences in terms of anxiety" (Onwuegbuzie, Jiao, & Bostick, 2004, p.30). The authors offered suggested preventive measures dealing with the physical environment of the library, instruction programs, and specialized reference services (Onwuegbuzie, et al., p.273). One important strategy that these authors overlooked is based on the power of relationships. When a student sees a classmate working in the library, there is an existing relationship upon which communication can be built. If the questions posed by our anxious student are met with good answers, a bridge to the library has been built.

Lynn Baird is the Associate Dean of Libraries at the University of Idaho in Moscow. She can be reached at: lbaird@uidaho.edu

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Summer Reading Dreams

ANNE ABRAMS

If you could have anything you wanted to support your Summer Reading program, what would it be? Would you want every child in your service area to have a library card, read at grade level, and attend your Summer Reading program?

And, if you are a practical type of librarian, would you want your Summer Reading program, including the facility, staff, incentives, and collections, to be adequately funded?

That's the dream we had at the Idaho Commission for Libraries in 2004. But we knew we couldn't do it alone—we needed leaders from around the state representing both rural and metropolitan libraries to seize our vision. With their help, we created the Summer Reading Advocacy Steering Committee, also known as the Daring Dreamers.

To qualify for Daring Dreamer status, the six youth services librarians had to distinguish themselves for outstanding library services. And, their directors had to agree to attend the two annual meetings with them. This was an important element because we were asking our Daring Dreamers to commit their time and energy and we needed buy-in and support from the top. The library teams also had to consent to help us plan the statewide Summer Reading promotional campaign.

What the Commission for Libraries brought to the table was the "Summer Reading Dream," membership in the Collaborative Summer Reading Program, research, some Institute of Museum and Library Services grant money, and staff support. Library leaders brought their sharp minds, their working knowledge of Summer Reading programs, and their willingness to look at Summer Reading from a statewide perspective.

Summer Reading 2005

The first meeting in November 2004 challenged the Daring Dreamers to develop strategies for dealing with higher Summer Reading enrollment, come up with ideas for building commitment among staff, parents, and educators, and create a plan for tying the statewide Summer Reading promotion in at the local level. They had six hours to do it in, and they succeeded:

Strategies to handle increased Summer Reading enrollment:

- Simplify your incentives, rules for participation, and registration process where possible.
- Hold Summer Reading programs where children and their families already go.
- Set up a registration table apart from the circulation area.
- Train volunteers to help. This is a great way to use your teen advisory group.

Strategies for building commitment among parents and educators:

- Offer incentives to schools to increase partnerships with public libraries.
- Design a presentation for parents and teachers about the importance of Summer Reading.
- Tie Summer Reading to academic achievement.

Strategies for enlisting library staff support:

- Hold an orientation meeting to elicit exciting ideas from the entire staff.
- Make staff feel they're part of the solution by asking them to share special skills, help plan or run programs, and talk about what stresses them out and what would make their jobs easier.
- Share with staff why Summer Reading is important.
- Make it as easy as possible for staff to give away weekly incentives. Label bins with each week's prize and post a list of weekly prizes. Make sure everyone—pages, circulation and reference staff—know what to do when children arrive with their reading logs.

Anne Abrams says she has the ideal job—helping library supporters develop advocacy and marketing skills to into garner strong financial backing for services. As a consultant for the Idaho Commission for Libraries, she helps secure funding for statewide projects, orchestrates marketing campaigns, presents continuing education workshops, and works with boards and staff on advocacy issues.

Anne is the Idaho PNLA Representative, and sits on the Idaho Press Club and Idahoans for Openness in Government boards. She received her MLS from San Jose State University and her BS in Communications from California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. Contact Anne at anne.abrams@libraries.idaho.gov.

cont.

Summer Reading Dreams - cont.

Strategies to tie local libraries into the statewide promotional campaign:

- Develop and distribute a customizable PowerPoint presentation about the importance of Summer Reading.
- Offer an incentive to public libraries to increase partnerships with schools.
- Launch a statewide radio campaign.
- Distribute a direct-mail package to public librarians and elementary school librarians and principals.

We met again in February 2005 to unveil the "Bright Futures Begin with Summer Reading" campaign. By now we at the Commission had gone from a one-year to a three-year campaign to win legislative support for state funding of Read to Me, the umbrella program that includes Summer Reading.

Parents and educators were targeted the first year. The second year would include community members, and year three, opinion leaders. The overall campaign goals were to raise the visibility of libraries and increase attendance and school partnerships. The three-pronged approach included:

1. Radio commercials targeted to educators and parents with the message to get kids to their local Summer Reading programs;
2. A bright red direct-mail package to public and elementary librarians and school principals with materials to support our message. Youth services librarians received a customizable PowerPoint presentation in their package.
3. A partnership incentive program that included free books to public and school libraries.

It was the incentive program, "Read for your Library" that hit home with the schools. Principals and school librarians agreed to help set the participation goal and attend one Summer Reading program. Public librarians also worked with the school to submit reading indicator scores, make presentations to teachers and parents, and evaluate the school's Summer Reading participation. In return, the Idaho Commission for Libraries sent \$200 worth of books to both public and school libraries. The school library received an additional \$100 in books if the principal recognized Summer Readers at a fall school assembly.

We followed up with a telephone survey to discover how well the "Read for your Library" incentive program worked. Out of the 32 participating libraries, over half reached their school goal and had the customizable press release published. All but one made presentations to educator and parent groups and the same number said they would participate again. What's more, the librarians characterized 20 of the 32 principals as being extremely interested in and supportive of the program.

The Commission's goal was to increase Summer Reading attendance by ten percent. When the statistics came in, we found that attendance increased by 32 percent from 27,610 in 2004 to 36,620 in 2005. Sixty-six of the 111 libraries reported an increase. One library reported increasing participation by 400 children, doubling their attendance.

The challenge before the Daring Dreamers was how to keep attendance growing in 2006.

Summer Reading 2006

The Daring Dreamers reconvened in October 2005 to plan for year two—broadening community members' awareness. The Dreamers had their work cut out for them. They were asked to find ways to reach at-risk children, develop a model for building a local Summer Reading Steering Committee, and decide on the components of the 2006 Summer Reading marketing effort.

Reaching at-risk children:

- Offer special programs at schools to help kids get to know librarians.
- Partner with organizations that already work with at-risk families.
- Connect with summer nutrition programs in the parks and at the schools.
- Visit daycares with storytimes and books.

Develop a model for building a Summer Reading steering committee:

- Decide what you want the steering committee to focus on. For example, it could be planning, programming, fundraising, or publicity.
- Invite community members to join. Members might include anyone from working moms to business leaders.
- Determine how often, what time, and where the steering committee will meet.

Decide on the components of the 2006 Summer Reading Marketing campaign:

- Focus radio ads in one area of the state to see if saturation increases visibility.
- Keep the Summer Reading support packet simple and easy to read.
- Expand incentive programs to encourage libraries to visit schools, increase outreach efforts to at-risk children, develop steering committees, and partner with schools.
- Publicize the incentive opportunity earlier to give public libraries more time to sign up.

When the Daring Dreamers met again in February 2006, the promotion plan was already being rolled out. Again, the campaign consisted of three elements, but with significant changes.

Two direct mail pieces went to youth services librarians in January. The first was a Summer Reading Count Down announcement, letting them know that an application packet for Summer Reading support was coming their way. Within two weeks they received their support packet. The new, improved version was redesigned into a four-page booklet, complete with the application forms.

"Read for Your Library" was enhanced. Public libraries could choose to partner with as many as three schools, and all received a Summer Reading banner. The public libraries also received the new and improved PowerPoint presentation. It contained three versions of the presentation, customizable to educators, parents, and civic organizations.

Three more incentive opportunities were added to "Read for Your Library." Youth service librarians who agreed to visit classrooms received enough bendies (small soft-plastic cats

Summer Reading Dreams - cont.

and dogs) and bookmarks to give to the students; those who held at least two Summer Reading programs off-site received enough books for those attending the events; and those forming steering committees received \$100 worth of books for their libraries.

The radio campaign was consolidated to one area of the state to see if concentrating marketing dollars would raise the visibility of Summer Reading. We also added English and Spanish newspaper ads and created a bilingual poster targeted to parents and educators.

In addition, the Summer Reading Web site, www.lili.org/read/summer, was revamped. A library directory for public use, an activities page for kids, and support materials for librarians were included. The support materials linked librarians to online registration, demographic links, fact sheets and tools.

Although Summer Reading programs are just beginning to gear up, we already have some indication of success. Out of 140 public libraries, 61 signed up for classroom visits; 40 are holding Summer Reading programs offsite; 21 have convened steering committees; and 44 are participating in "Read for Your Library." With such strong support at the local level, we expect to see the number of children enrolling in Summer Reading continue to rise.

And that's a good thing. Our next phase, targeting opinion leaders for state funding, is already in the planning stages. The Idaho Commission for Libraries and our Summer Reading advocates will be asking for \$207,000 from the state's budget to match our Institute of Museum and Library Services funds. With the Daring Dreamers on board, it is a dream that can come true. ■

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Selling Our Souls or Saving Our Skins?

JASON OPENO

SONJA SOMERVILLE



Not long ago, in November 2004, Salem Public Library was at a crossroads. Library supporters had made an unsuccessful bid to create a library district. City Council was hinting that the failure might result in drastic budget cuts and they wanted the library to generate more of its own revenue. Members of the Friends of the Library Board were muttering that they didn't want to keep "giving money away to an ungrateful public." And the staff had to retool its images of the future, which for two years had been based on establishing a library district.

It was in this climate that discussions began between Outreach Services Manager and Program Coordinator Jason Openo, Community Relations Coordinator Sonja Somerville, and Management Analyst Chad Reisig. The question was simple: How do we succeed in such a difficult situation?

After a lot of thought and discussion, and with tremendous and consistent support from Library Director Gail Warner, the team developed a group of initiatives that were internally referred to as "The Entrepreneurial Projects." Over several months, the library implemented a print management software system, created a new fee schedule for meeting room users, began selling advertising space in the Library's entrances, and started selling tickets for cultural programs such as author visits and concerts. We also started paying for print, television and radio advertising for events and for library services in general. These projects were entrepreneurial because we sought venture capital from our Friends and Foundation, analyzed market price points for similar services, developed a price point, and dedicated substantial resources to marketing.

There were several goals. We wanted to reach new customers and generate excitement about the library. We wanted to increase attendance at library programs targeted at adults and establish the reputation of the library as the cultural center of Salem. We also wanted to make money. This was not something we felt we had much choice about. The Library District's main goal was to secure additional funding for library services. The district had failed, but the need for more resources remained. The other choices were service cuts, staff layoffs, or further trimming an already lean materials budget.

We ultimately felt we were protecting our patrons by being proactive about developing these ideas. This notion came from experience: In July 2004, a City Council-imposed fee established a \$1 charge for each video rental from the library. Our circulation figures for those materials have plummeted and patron complaints continue to roll in. When we started our discussions about generating revenue, a basic caveat was that we would not charge for "core" services – for the things the taxpayers already paid for, such as books and other materials, reference services, computer time, etc.

In April 2006, Jason, Sonja and Chad presented a session at the Oregon Library Association conference about these activities. The session was titled, "Selling Our Souls or Savings Our Skins?" to reflect the soul-searching that accompanied this process.

At our OLA session, we were able to report a great deal of success. We increased our average attendance at our programs by over 100 individuals per event, secured a half dozen front page articles increasing our visibility over one year, raised approximately \$50,000 for library services, and drew a favorable response from our City Council which helped increase Library funding for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

So, when we asked ourselves in April whether we had sold our souls or saved our skins, it was an easy answer for two members of the team. Sonja and Chad both come from private industry and were already comfortable going at projects in a businesslike way. For Jason, a librarian and former social worker, the answer is more complex.

Jason's Perspective

I was torn. I wholeheartedly embrace Paco Underhill's comments voiced at the 2006 Public Library Association conference. "I want you to throw out the concept that being commercial is inappropriate to your profession." This is not an entirely novel suggestion. I remember reading an article about seven years ago where a member of the New York Public Library said, "We're a retail business and we want to be high-end retail."

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The idea that the library is a business has been around and been successfully executed by a number of libraries.

Opposing the business model is the philosophy of the Library as Public Good, voiced well by John N. Berry in a 1991 editorial. "There is, obviously, a simple reason we don't run it (a library) like a business: a library is not a business. What is more, a library is not trying to complete with business. . . . We decided, long ago, that things like education, police and fire protection, roads, and certain nourishment and health programs should be provided by government, simply because you couldn't make money providing them. . . . Even though they are marketplace failures, these public services are needed in our society, so government must intervene."

Berry wrote that comment in 1991, and I think a couple things are obviously different now. One of the key trends is the erosion of the idea of the Public Good and the rise of user fees for government services such as national parks, state parks, etc. The compact that the government should provide certain services has been replaced by the idea that the public using a good must be willing to pay for the support and preservation of that good. The second difference is that

libraries now operate in an environment where, whether they wish to compete or not, they are the target of competition. The idea that the library is a "marketplace failure" has been proven wrong. Barnes & Noble is offering free classes online and opportunities to interact with authors. Google is the first (and frequently only) port of call for students completing research projects. Bookstores and search engines are rapidly encroaching upon the library's traditional sphere and are actively competing with our services. If the library is a marketplace failure, it is mainly because it refuses to compete in the marketplace. If businesses can make money by offering library-like products and services, libraries are offering products and services people are willing and happy to pay for. And if people are not using library services, it may be because the libraries have weaknesses. Perhaps they are not creating comfortable spaces, not responding to the changing needs of the customer, or because they are not successfully marketing their services. Organizations tend to see themselves through rose-colored glasses and see only the good they do, and I think this is a big problem for libraries and librarians who continually tell themselves how necessary they are. I believe libraries are an essential part of a free and civilized society, but after a 59-41 loss, I had to accept that there were a lot of people not using the library or willing to support its existence. To reach this group of people, the best approach seemed to start thinking and acting more and more like the businesses.



Still, the library profession tends to cling to the idea that being commercial is a betrayal of our professional ethics—that in the pursuit of commerce the Mission must be lost. This is because most librarians believe, on a deeply personal level, that there is something wrong with business—something distasteful and

corrupting about the search for profits. Or, perhaps I am making too broad a generalization about the profession based on my own personal ethics. After all, with all of the things I could have chosen to do with my life, I chose to become a librarian—not go into business. I knew full well that this path meant I would be sacrificing a certain amount of monetary income for what is referred to as "psychic income." I did not want to "join the general scramble and pant with the money-making street," as William James put it. I believe in Intellectual Freedom and the glorious democratic principle of freedom of inquiry. In a world that seems to be becoming increasingly uncivilized, intolerant, and polarized, the library remains the place where all are welcome; where Al Franken and Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter and Molly Ivins can co-exist. Above all other things, I believe in privacy, confidentiality, and the right to say and house ideas that some might wish to eliminate because I believe democracy is made stronger by debate and dissent.

There is still, then, this dissonance between why I became a librarian and the acceptance that libraries can, and should, adopt the practices of business that will make us more competitive in the environment in which we find ourselves. If there is a book that has been able to reconcile these opposites, it is Jeannette Woodward's 2005 ALA publication, *Creating the Customer-Driven Library: Building on the Bookstore Model*. Woodward takes a hard look at library operations and her main tenet is that the library does not need to sacrifice its mission in the pursuit of business practices. After one year of advertising and special events and reputation building, I am on board and am looking forward to using sound business strategies to further the mission of Salem Public Library.

Sonja's Experience

As Woodward points out and as Salem Public Library is experiencing, marketing the library can be a crucial part of the mission. Libraries seek to extend education by connecting people with the information they are seeking. I think of marketing at the library as a way to extend education by giving information about the library. It's a pro-active reference service – as if the whole community were standing at the reference desk asking, "So, whatcha got?"

I am not a librarian. I am a former newspaper reporter and editor, a grant-writer, and a marketing specialist. At the same time, I'm working in a library and not a corporate setting because I, too, hunger for work that feels meaningful. I thrill at the idea of the library as a bastion of intellectual freedom and firmly believe in its essential role in the quality of a community's life. But the truth is, when I market the library, I don't really reference these heady ideals because heady ideals don't generally motivate people. One of the things Woodward points out is that customers want to be informed, entertained, and get a good deal. In my marketing efforts, therefore, I mostly aim to convince the community that the library is potentially useful, possibly fun, and generally kind of neat.

Marketing may sound expensive, hard and time-consuming, but in the big picture, it's not nearly as costly as an erosion in support and services if you begin to look irrelevant to your community.

Before discussing the things I've done at Salem Public Library, I will point out that having a few key advocates for marketing projects has been pivotal. Library Director Gail Warner fought to create and keep the position of Community Relations Coordinator for the library and provides continual support. Management Analyst Chad Reisig has championed the need to budget for marketing funding on many occasions.

I stepped in to a library that had some established marketing and promotional systems. Salem Public Library has printed a monthly newsletter since 1968. The main focus has traditionally been to promote library programs and activities. I have made design and content changes. We still promote all events, but now include more book recommendations, articles about library services, a monthly column by our reference staff titled, "Who Knew?" that highlights interesting reference questions, and this month we're launching a new feature suggested by a reference librarian that will highlight artists whose works are displayed in our permanent collection.

Faced with severe cost overruns in the year prior to my arrival, I also worked with Chad Reisig to find ways to cut the costs of printing the newsletter by more than half. We now sell ad space in the newsletter to help defray the remaining costs and to support the technology (high-end design and graphics software) that it takes to produce the newsletter.

Printed materials such as brochures and posters were common tools already. *Creating the Customer-Driven Library* and any number of books on graphic design offer basic guidelines for creating print material. My cardinal principles are to keep it simple; put the most important information in the biggest type; use words sparingly; use only a few, easy-to-read fonts per publication; and use clear, large, eye-catching pictures.

A couple of investments we have made are items I would encourage libraries to consider as part of launching or improving promotional and marketing efforts: color and better graphics. Full color posters attract attention and look professional in a way that black ink on colored paper just doesn't. Our most recent investment is an 11x17 color printer which allows me to produce big color posters in house. In the past, I used a local print shop that printed large color for me for about \$2 a print.

An investment of \$30 brought to my fingertips some 350,000 print-quality photos and drawn images, freeing me from low-quality clip art. I always prefer actual photos of the library or events or performers, but my purchased graphics are bright and appealing and frequently enhance my printed materials.

All of these printed items and the library's website, for which I act as overall webmaster, are essential tools. However, in the end, their primary purpose is to encourage the people who already visit us to take an interest in something else we offer. Some print items, especially the newsletter, are distributed or posted in other locations in the community, but the main purpose is to communicate with core supporters and give them reasons to keep coming back.

We need to take care of those core supporters, but we also need to get beyond them and reach into the greater community. When I approach the larger community, I have two goals: to turn non-users into users; and to at least convince those who will never use us that we're kind of neat and worthy of support. Even if you have no interest in seeing Jennifer Weiner, I want you to know someone did.

I set aside time early on to develop a library brand that includes a standard way in which the library's name appears and a slogan, which, after much debate is, "Search no further." The brand and slogan are included in all advertising as a way to identify us visually. It's colorful, but also looks good in black and white.

Using this brand and slogan and other tools to becoming more visible to the larger community has been a multi-step process.

One tactic embraced by Salem Public Library is membership in the Chamber of Commerce. Membership comes with some degree of opportunity to explain the library, its services, and its relevance to other members. As a direct result of attending Greeters, a networking group sponsored by the Salem Chamber of Commerce, I have been able to bring this group of some 150-200 local business people into the library six times in the last three years. During each of the meetings, we had a chance to hype the library and its programs. And during three of the visits, each attendee received a massage in the library. If that doesn't give people a warm feeling about the library, I'm not sure what will.

In the same spirit, our Bookmobile rides in local parades, we set booths at the Salem Saturday Market, at the annual ShowBiz trade show, at school fairs, or at mall events whenever we can staff them. It allows us to personally connect with community members, but it's time consuming and we're never going to meet everybody. So, I turn to the local media to help connect us to an even larger network.

The best stuff is the free stuff – calendar listings, brief, PSAs, and news stories. I work very hard to get what I can for free and use every trick I have up my sleeve from my past experience as a reporter to get reporters on my side.

A key initial point of contact is the media release. *Creating the Customer Driven Library* again offers a good primer for structuring a press release. The two essential components are

complete contact information at the top and a concise, clear summary of the happening after that. It's not the whole story. It will either run as a "brief" or PSA to give people a quick idea of what's up and how to get more information, or it will be tapped to become a full-blown story, in which case the rest of the work is done by a reporter.

We get a lot of coverage. We have had features of significant length on the front page of the newspaper six times in the last year. Library features have repeatedly graced the front of the local section, the weekly Weekender entertainment guide, and Life. We've popped up in columns and dominated the education page. We've had TV news cover our annual kids Halloween parade and preview at least one author visit. A local monthly is now running a book recommendations column and another has allowed me to author promotional articles under my own byline.

The authors who visited this year (J.A. Jance, Brian Jacques, Rick Bragg, Jennifer Weiner, and Victor Villaseñor) filled the Sunday morning Life section covers with long interviews and photos and book covers. Jacques, Bragg, and Weiner participated in online chats at Salem's Statesman-Journal website that were some of the newspaper's most successful online chats ever. Jennifer Weiner attracted questions from around the world. We now have an open invitation to bring any of our authors over. Our concerts were tapped for features and "best bets" mentions. My personal treasure is a small teaser that ran on the front of the entertainment guide the week of our Battle of the Bands that just said, "The library rocks!"

We get this kind of coverage partly because we are, after all, the library and media people are, for the most part, also lovers of the written word. It is also because:

- My press releases are sent in a timely fashion and in the format preferred by the media outlet in question. Most at this time prefer email submissions. It is becoming common for event calendars to be automated with an online form that can be filled in at the media outlet's website. It takes extra time, but I grit my teeth and fill them in, because I know if I send the same information as a release with the idea that they will type it in, they probably won't bother.
- I make it easy. Many of my press releases run verbatim. This is because an editor or reporter could cut and paste my release and move on to the next task. If my release required major editing, they are more likely to roll their eyes and move on. If a reporter calls for follow up, I'm available and informed. When they want to do a full-blown story, I make sure they are connected to information, sources, and photo opportunities as quickly as possible.
- I only send a release or call my media contacts when I have a real purpose. "The Entrepreneurial Projects" have given me many opportunities to sell stories of real interest to the community. Our former music series, a monthly jazz concert, had long since been relegated to tiny briefs or no mention at all. Our new concert series brings novel genres and better acts, which has resulted in more column inches.
- When I really want a story and not just a brief, I think of a convincing, fresh news angle, then call reporters and make a personal appeal. I call the entertainment reporter about concerts and the government reporter about library policies and issues. I only call TV when I can give them great visual footage. And I prepare tiny soundbites for the lightning fast radio newscasts.
- Since news coverage and PSAs are free, I accept that I don't control how our information gets presented, or when, or if. I need those reporters, editors and DJs on my side. Complaining to them will not endear me or Salem Public Library, so I don't do it.

As much success as we have had in the free arena, it only gets you so far. There comes a time in the life of every marketing and promotional campaign when you want to control your message. Then, it's time to advertise. True, that takes cash money, but not as much as you might think.

The first money I spent on advertising Salem Public Library came from grants. We wrote a few proposals to support special programs, and asked for marketing money. We made the

argument that if the program was to succeed, we needed to get the word out about it. When it was time to launch "The Entrepreneurial Projects," we used much the same argument to solicit a special grant from our Library Trust, administered by the Library Advisory Board. By paying for programming costs with sponsorship money, we have banked gate receipts this year to establish the marketing fund for next year.

Once the money is allocated, advertising itself is not that hard. I design, write, and participate in the production of all Salem Public Library advertising. I don't have to. All media outlets are equipped to take basic information provided by a client and develop the final product. I do it myself for about half the people who advertise in the library newsletter. Still, I develop the library's ads for two main reasons. First, even the most earnest designer or producer on their end will never care as much about my message as much as I do. Second, it's fun and interesting.

This year in particular, the grant from the Library Trust has allowed me to learn about advertising on two mediums with which I was largely unfamiliar as a client: radio and television. The first thing we learned is that the expense would be much less than anticipated. A little money buys you a lot of love when you're a worthy community institution, especially if you can convince a few DJs, station managers, or account executives that you're kind of neat.

By far my best deals have come from the most surprising source: television advertising. The people who sell the local cable advertising were so surprised to hear the library was going to advertise that they started piling on freebies and discounts until I was paying an average of \$2.59 per spot instead of the usual \$10. One local radio station matched my paid time and doubled my buying power. Another threw in a live remote that allowed us three hours of intermittent opportunities to share information about our Summer Reading Club. The monthly newspaper knocked off 25 percent instead of the usual 10 percent discount offered to non-profits.

Radio has also been great. I discovered that buying a little ad time makes the DJs immediately much more inclined to read your PSAs. Also, I learned to ask my ad reps to help me get opportunities to come in and do live interviews on the air with various DJs. These chats are longer and more detailed than ads and are more humanizing, since the listener hears you chatting rather than reading a script. As a bonus, it's fun and when you do a good job, they ask you back. One of my favorite morning DJs in Salem now calls me when he feels it's been too long and we try to come up with reasons for me to stop in.

The effort is ongoing. I continue to hone my skills and look for new and novel opportunities to increase the community profile of Salem Public Library. For people interested in learning more about the particulars of how to put together marketing campaigns, or who want to learn some of the trade secrets that I bring from my past as a newspaper reporter, I will be leading a session on library promotions at the 2006 PNLA Conference in Eugene.

What Next?

We have taken a number of steps over the past year through our "Entrepreneurial Projects" and marketing efforts to increase community awareness of the Salem Public Library's services and generate additional revenue. There is always more that could be done. One of the most exciting outcomes our 2006-2007 fiscal year budget increase is that it contains money to hire a consultant to develop a new strategic plan.

The Salem Public Library's last strategic plan was completed in 1997, and we need a new one. In *Creating the Customer-Driven Library*, Jeannette Woodward points out the need for libraries to have clear priorities. "It is essential to look objectively at the resources at hand and decide what can reasonably be done with them. Librarians, in their angst over their libraries' inadequacies, feel better if they can do just a few things right." As part of preparation for the strategic planning process, the Salem Public Library is sending its entire Management Team to the 2006 Pacific Northwest Library Association's preconference featuring Jeanette Woodward. We are very interested in hearing her discuss:

- Creating ambience for internal merchandising
- The Art of Display
- Reaching E-patrons
- Helping patrons navigate the library easily, and

- Gathering more meaningful statistics

The Salem Public Library was rocked by the difficult loss of our library district measure. But the best thing about *Creating the Customer-Driven Library* is that Jeanette Woodward is that it gives all libraries a wake-up call to question their current practices and rethink their future.

"We must all face the fact that libraries are in danger. . . . Since statistics indicate that most residents don't use libraries, it's difficult to make a very compelling case for better funding. . . . librarians must look around for successful role models, and bookstores provide one such model. Obviously, not everything a bookstore does I better than a library, and we are right to see their materialistic aims as being out of line with the goals of library services. Nevertheless, on a more superficial level, they are doing a great many things right.

"Bookstore corporate headquarters assiduously control what they view as the 'bookstore experience.' Maybe we need to place the same emphasis on the 'library experience.' When the overall experience of our customers becomes our focus, the picture changes. It doesn't matter what marvelous resources we have if customers don't use them. It doesn't matter how skilled the reference librarian is if customers don't ask reference questions. It doesn't matter that we sincerely want to serve immigrant groups if no one on the staff speak their language."

Creating the Customer-Driven Library has been an incredibly useful guide for us as we prepare to meet the future, and it will be an indispensable tool as we continue to move ahead.



The Evolution of an Advocacy Group: the British Columbia Coalition for School Libraries

MICHAEL BURRIS

In an article dated Saturday, April 6, 2002, then National Librarian of Canada Roch Carrier called the situation in Canada's school libraries "desperate". His description was sadly very accurate. Across Canada, schools libraries were suffering from cuts to budgets and staff and misplaced priorities among administrators.

In his report "The Crisis in Canada's School Libraries", Dr. Ken Haycock provided ample evidence of the unrelenting erosion of Canada's school library programs. For example, in Alberta, there were 550 teacher-librarians working halftime or more in 1978. In 1998, the number had dropped to 252, and by 2000 was as low as 106. In British Columbia, provincial funding for teacher-librarians had reduced from a ratio of one teacher-librarians for every 400 students, to a ratio of 1:700 (Haycock, p. 14).

And yet, the link between strong school libraries and student achievement was unmistakable. Dr. Haycock's research made several interesting points. Increased school library acquisitions budget had a positive impact on achievement, as did library hours and staffing levels (specifically including qualified teacher-librarians). Somewhere, however, there was a disconnect between what seems immutable evidence and current practice.

The Haycock report was a result of the efforts of a group of concerned citizens who in March 2002 formed the Canadian Coalition for School Libraries (CCSL). The CCSL was made up of people from many walks of life. What they all shared was the belief that properly supported school library programs were central to strong schools.

Libraries across Canada were well versed in how to develop effective advocacy programs. Librarians across Canada had participated in the Advocacy Now! Program and had been putting the lessons learned into action on many fronts. The CCSL put out a call for members and began developing their advocacy campaign.

The CCSL was integral in getting the crisis in Canada's school libraries into focus. Besides giving the issue a national voice, however, progress was difficult. Unlike countries like the United States, there existed no mechanism for federal funding for schools. It soon became apparent that provincial coalitions were necessary to get the issue on the agendas of the governments with the direct responsibility for school library funding. That led provinces like Ontario and British Columbia to develop provincial counterparts to the CCSL.

The British Columbia Coalition for School Libraries was born on August 23, 2003. Dr. Ken Haycock, who at the time was (among many hats) on faculty at the University of British Columbia's School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies (SLAIS), invited a number of stakeholders to an inaugural meeting to discuss the evidence and put forth a proposal to create a group of parents, students, community members, writers, academics, literacy practitioners, teacher-librarians and publishers that would advocate for stronger libraries in British Columbia's schools.

Dr. Haycock agreed to serve as interim chair as the Coalition got established. At a follow-up meeting in November 2003, Dr. Haycock, in collaboration with three students from UBC-SLAIS, presented a marketing plan for the BCCSL. The marketing plan called for materials to promote the coalition as well as highlight the need for increased funding to BC's school libraries. These promotional materials included postcards and bookmarks for parents, a more "in-depth" brochure on the topic, and a report card that would allow parents to "grade" their children's school library. In addition, a website was established to focus on the plight of school libraries, give links to relevant research, provide advocacy tips and advise how people could get involved. The BC Library Association offered to give the Coalition an administrative "home" and provide logistical support.

At the November meeting, membership was discussed at length. A range of categories was established, ranging from \$15 for students to \$100 for institutions. Because of BCLA's status as a not-for-profit organization, tax receipts could be provided for donations. Subsequent meetings in the spring of 2004 saw the development of a more concrete action plan, as well as a tagline for all BCCSL materials, which was "...because student

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achievement is the bottom line." This was done to highlight the impact that school libraries had, as well as tie into calls for closer attention to student "achievement".

During the spring, a committee worked on the materials that had been agreed to. Additionally, a number of advocacy opportunities were quickly identified. There was an already established Canada-wide School Library Day in October, in addition to the annual Word on the Street, one of Canada's biggest literacy festivals.

The 2004 Word on the Street festival is held each year in cities across the country. The expected attendance for Vancouver was 30,000. In Vancouver, volunteers for the BCCSL handed out postcards for parents to send to the Minister of Education, as well as the aforementioned bookmarks and report cards. The response was very positive. The range of knowledge on the part of the public was quite varied, but overall it was felt that there was much public education to do. The Coalition was also in attendance at the 2005 Word on the Street. This time, BCCSL took advantage of the opportunity to place a "prize" in the official festival bag, which drew considerably more people to BCCSL's table.

From the outset, the BCCSL has been careful to recruit support from the community at large. There was recognition that as an advocacy effort, having teacher-librarians as the primary spokespeople would not be as effective as having parents making the case for strong school library programs. Teacher-librarians are most welcome, and in fact are central to the work of the Coalition, but as much as possible, members of the community are the public face of BCCSL.

The creation of the British Columbia Coalition for School Libraries has coincided with literacy becoming a major issue in the province. Premier Gordon Campbell has declared that BC will be the most literate jurisdiction in North America by the time of the Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010. This very public goal provides great opportunities for school libraries. Another reality is the strained relations between the provincial government and the teacher's union. Since the only association of teacher-librarians is part of that union, the need for wide public support on the part of the public is even more vital. In addition, the move of public libraries into the Ministry of Education offers many opportunities for collaboration at the same time it increases nervousness about perceived hidden agendas.

The British Columbia Coalition for School Libraries has only been in existence for less than three years, but is still going strong. There is much work to do, and many to educate as to the role that school libraries play in a quality education system, but like any advocacy campaign, victory is measured in baby steps, and there is much confidence that school libraries will soon re-establish their rightful place as the heart of the school.

Works Cited

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PNLA ELECTIONS: 2006

The following PNLA members have generously agreed to put forth their name as candidate for PNLA office. Watch for your official ballot sometime in June. Becoming a candidate and voting are just two ways to become involved in your association.

Other potential opportunities for PNLA members include:

- ⊙ Leadership Institute planning committee - Contact Mary DeWalt, 2006 Leadership Institute Coordinator
- ⊙ Centennial Anniversary (2009) celebration planning committee - Contact Charlotte Glover, President
- ⊙ YRCA committee work - Contact Barbra Meisenheimer, YRCA Chair
- ⊙ Annual Conference (2007 - Alberta) committee - Contact Connie Forst, AB Rep
- ⊙ Submissions to the *PNLA Quarterly* - Contact Mary Bolin, Editor

Vice President/President Elect



Connie Forst

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Candidate Information:

Currently I work at the Vegreville Centennial Library in Vegreville, Alberta as Special Events Coordinator in charge of programs, special events, advocacy and promotions. Prior to this I was

the Manager of Information Technologies, Marketing & Communications at the Northern Lights Library System and the Director of the St. Paul Municipal Library.

I've served as Second Vice President of the Library Association of Alberta from 2004-2006 and was the Alberta Representative to the PNLA Board; President of the School of Library and Information Studies Alumni Association with the University of Alberta in 2003; and was a participant of the sixth Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute in 2002. I am a member of the Canadian Library Association and sit on the Member Communication Advisory with CLA, and will be the guest editor of an upcoming issue on advocacy in *Felicitier*. Last year I was the editor for the Alberta Library Trustees Association's centennial edition newsletter. In the coming months I will also work as the Centennial Celebrations Coordinator for the Town of Vegreville as the Town celebrates its anniversary this summer. I've led workshops on advocacy, public relations and issues surrounding technology as well.

I would enjoy contributing back to the profession by working with PNLA as I have a lot of enthusiasm, passion for libraries, and will do my best to work with the Executive on behalf of the membership to fulfill those duties. I would look forward to the challenge and opportunity of continuing to support and strengthen the membership of the Pacific Northwest Library Association in the upcoming years.

2nd Vice President



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Candidate Information:

I have been a children's librarian for 16 years, and am looking for ways to expand my involvement in the library community. I have been a board member of AKLA and PNLA, and have been the membership chair for the local chapter of the Alaska State Library Association. I appreciate the chance to become further involved in PNLA.



Susannah Price
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Candidate Information:

Susannah Price holds an MLS from the University of Washington (1970). She has been LSCA Title IV Consultant; Children's Librarian and Youth Services

Manager, Resource Center Manager, College Instructor, School Librarian, and, from 1979 to the present, Youth Services Division Manager for Boise Public Library. She has served as the VP and President of the American Association of University Women, VP and President for the Idaho Library Association (ILA), Idaho Representative to the PNLA Board, ILA conference chair, and ILA Intellectual Freedom Chair. For PNLA she has served as VP, President, Leadership Institute Coordinator (2004), board member, and PNLA conference chair. She was a member of ALA for many years and has been named on the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom Honor Roll.

Susannah's goals in her work with PNLA include:

- Lead and facilitate PNLA membership retention and growth.

- Encourage PNLA members in new and continuing partnerships and networking.
- Promote increased communication by listening to individuals and membership groups.
- Act as an Association leader-facilitator working to address concerns and issues.
- Carry out the PNLA strategic plans.
- Assist with the regional Leadership Institute and conferences.
- Promote PNLA by actively working on the vision and mission.
- Promote increased membership and increased member involvement.
- Work with other members to protect and support intellectual freedom in the Pacific Northwest.
- Promote continuing education opportunities for library staff members and trustees and library associates.
- Support the PNLA YRCA Award program.
- Maintain all PNLA Membership lists, files, applications, brochures, and PR.

Secretary



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Candidate Information:

A native of Moses Lake, Washington, Brent Roberts received his MLIS at the University of Washington in 1999.

Since then he has been shaking up Montana libraries, first at Montana State University—Northern in Havre, MT (1999-2000), and then at Montana State University—Billings (2000-present). At MSU—Billings, he has designed and maintained the library's Web pages, coordinated the library instruction program, and arm-wrestled information literacy into the general education curriculum. He was recently (October 2005) appointed Associate Director of the MSU—Billings Library. ■

Students as Storytellers: Advocacy from the Ranks - cont.

Student employees in the library workplace are more visible than many career staff. They push book carts through the stacks, they stand behind the circulation desk or the other service points for hours on end, and they are often the people who answer the telephones. They then leave the library and spend the rest of their week in approximately six classes, time in some living arrangement often with other students, and social time around their favorite beverage or food choices. In each of these settings, the student may be engaged in a conversation about his or her work at the library. As an employer, what do you hope for in these conversations? And how can you assist with creating the message that your employees are sharing?

Challenges

Training programs for individuals who are not considered career employees are typically given less than full consideration, because of the perception that these individuals are not necessarily invested in our programs. Students present particular challenges, as noted by Kathman and Kathman (2000): they have a partial commitment to their work, they need to be trained in a short period of time, and a large number of people are trained at the same time. These challenges can be converted to opportunities when training programs are developed.

Opportunities

The first step is awareness. When we create training programs for students, we should be aware of their levels of commitment they are making to our organizations. Initially, they are making a behavioral commitment. They are interested in learning the job, participating in such a way as to maintain their employment status, and their primary concern is getting paid on payday. As employers, we are very aware that our students' primary focus is (or should be) on their educational activities. We should also be aware of how we are providing a platform for adding meaning to their educational activities. Through campus employment, students experience a deeper identification with the university and part-time campus employment contributes to persistence and retention (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Wilkie & Jones, 1994). In our training programs, we can offer opportunities to move from a behavior commitment to an attitudinal commitment. This is "a mind set in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization" (Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982, p.26). By clarifying and sharing the library's mission in ongoing, continuous training programs, a student may find personal satisfaction in working for the library.

If we envision our student employees as our ambassadors, we are looking to construct consistent messages for them to carry to these other territories. Our training programs must go beyond the initial orientation to job tasks and be developmental in nature. Infusing the training with the big picture of why the library works in certain ways helps the student understand his or her contribution. Training programs that are designed with an awareness that our students will be communicating with the rest of campus will want to include clear messages about the services the library offers. Team-based learning is a great method of delivering training programs because it offers an opportunity to discuss and clarify the messages. Using tasks that help the group continue the learning process will help reinforce the messages.

Team learning for student employees can be promoted through inclusion in staff training programs. A student commented in a survey following one such experience, "[it] make[s] us feel more comfortable talking to our supervisor about issues that arise and talking with our co-workers when problem solving issues arise" (Baird, 2006). Supervisors feel more secure in observing the students' knowledge in such settings, noting that they came away from the experience with much more respect for the students' abilities. While these events may incur costs, the outcomes may well be worth the investment.

Training of our student employees, then, must be recognized as a program rather than a one-time experience. At best, it is inclusive, on going, and promotes open inquiry. We are sharing not only the methods by which they will perform the tasks of their work but we are sharing too our vision of how they support the overall mission of the library and serve the university in a larger sense. Through this open dialogue, we are able to align their learning with our desired outcomes and are better prepared to see how their values may be expressed in the workplace.

Campus advocates

Student training and learning happens with nearly every work shift. It happens in the informal conversations with career staff and it happens with their co-workers. Information is shared and disseminated. As a supervisor, you want to contribute to the conversation so that your crew is informed of current projects and future dreams. When our students punch out, we know they are going back into a wider audience. We want to be sure that they have learned what our mission is, what we value, and how we support the learners in the broader community. We want our WOM message to be strong, positive and clear.

We encourage our student employees to be well acquainted with the library's purpose because we know that, somewhere on campus, someone is going to ask them a question about how to find something in the library. If they can respond in a masterful fashion and share our story of how our services are designed to help people succeed in their inquiry and research, we have invested our time and money wisely in our students' development. Advocacy is merely a by-product.

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2006 PNLA Conference

Common Spaces and Far Out Places: Libraries in the Pacific
Northwest
August 9-12, 2006
Valley River Inn
Eugene, Oregon

Preliminary Conference Program

Wednesday, August 9, 2006

7:30 - 6:00 Registration
9:00 - 4:00 Preconference: *Taking Charge of the Customer Service Experience*
1:00 - 4:00 Preconference: *Poems, Picasso, and Programs: Introducing Art and Poetry to Children*
3:00 - 5:00 Vendor Setup
5:30 - 7:00 Exhibits open with Vendor Reception in vendor area with cash bar and Hors d'Oeuvres
7:00 - 8:00 Keynote Address: Shannon Applegate and Esther Stutzman*
8:30 - 9:30 President's Reception at the Eugene Public Library

Thursday August 10, 2006

7:30 - 5:30 Registration
8:00 - 5:00 Exhibits
8:00 - 5:00 Intellectual Freedom Auction
8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast*
9:00 - 10:30 Conference Sessions 1
10:30-11:00 Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Area
11:00-12:30 Conference Sessions 2
12:30 - 2:00 Author Luncheon with Craig Lesley*
2:00 - 3:30 Conference Sessions 3
3:30 - 4:00 Break
4:00 - 5:30 Conference Sessions 4
6:00 - 8:00 Corks and Cans at Eugene Wine Cellars*

Friday August 11, 2006

7:00 - 12:00 Registration
8:00 - 2:00 Exhibits
8:00 -11:00 Intellectual Freedom Auction
8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast*
9:00 - 10:00 Membership Meeting
10:00 -11:30 Conference Sessions 5
11:30 -1:00 YRCA Award Luncheon*
1:00 - 2:30 Conference Sessions 6
2:30 - 3:00 Break
3:00 - 4:30 Conference Sessions 7
6:30 - 9:00 Banquet and Entertainment with Mason Williams*

Saturday August 12, 2006

9:00 - 12:00 PNLA Board meeting
8:00 - 5:00 Whitewater Rafting Tour with Oregon River Sports*
12:00 - 4:00 Oregon Winery Tour*

* **Ticketed Events.** Tickets must be purchased with Conference Registration or separately by July 19, 2006. ■

A Guide to Dues Reimbursement for Your Employer

JOHN CHRASTKA

If you're not the only one benefiting from your association membership, then why are you the only one paying for it? Your library association membership isn't just valuable to you, it's valuable to your library, too. As a member, you know you receive top-quality professional publications, gain opportunities for essential continuing education, and have access to a unique set of resources to improve your own worklife. But is your employer aware of how these benefits can advance your entire library's mission and work?

By demonstrating how your library association membership improves your work, and therefore your workplace, you can encourage your employer to pay your association dues. Here are 4 simple steps to help you build a compelling case with your boss or board to pay for your professional memberships:

1. Make a list of all member benefits that directly AND indirectly benefit your library. We've included some ideas at the end of this article to help get you started.
2. Review your library's mission and strategic goals. Match up Specific organizational or departmental objectives with association Resources that help you meet those goals.
3. Talk with your supervisor about why membership has been valuable to you, and go through the list of ways that association benefits 'match' your library's goals.
4. Ask your supervisor to cover all or part of your library Association dues as an investment in your own professional development, and as a benefit to the entire library.

Don't be shy. Remember, pennies a day in dues, your library gets a well-connected and informed staff member who is up-to-date on new trends around the library world and understands how the latest technology, legislative issues and new media affect your patrons. Plus, you get the personal bonus of an employer who understands and acknowledges this in a special way. You know how important your membership is. Here are a few facts about membership benefits to share with your employer: Your membership will help you stay up to date with the latest news focused on the work you do every day through members-only publications, e-lists, and special interest sections. There are members-only discounts on professional products and conference attendance. These discounts help the library stretch its budget for purchasing and continuing education.

Your association offers grants, scholarships, and awards that can directly subsidize the library budget for conferences, continuing education, and special programs. You are eligible to serve on committees and work groups that set the course for the future of libraries. Boards and community leadership are proud of, and find added value in, staff members who are recognized by their peers for outstanding service. Your own staff development goals can be enhanced through the continuing education, skills training, and mentoring programs offered by the association. Plus, you bring back new ideas to your coworkers from every outside training. Members have unique opportunities to contribute articles, propose New publications, become a reviewer and bring your library's best practices to a new audience. This brings recognition to your library in the wider community of professionals. ■

John Chrastka is ALA Manager for Membership Development. He can be reached at: jchrastka@ala.org

PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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