

Florida Libraries

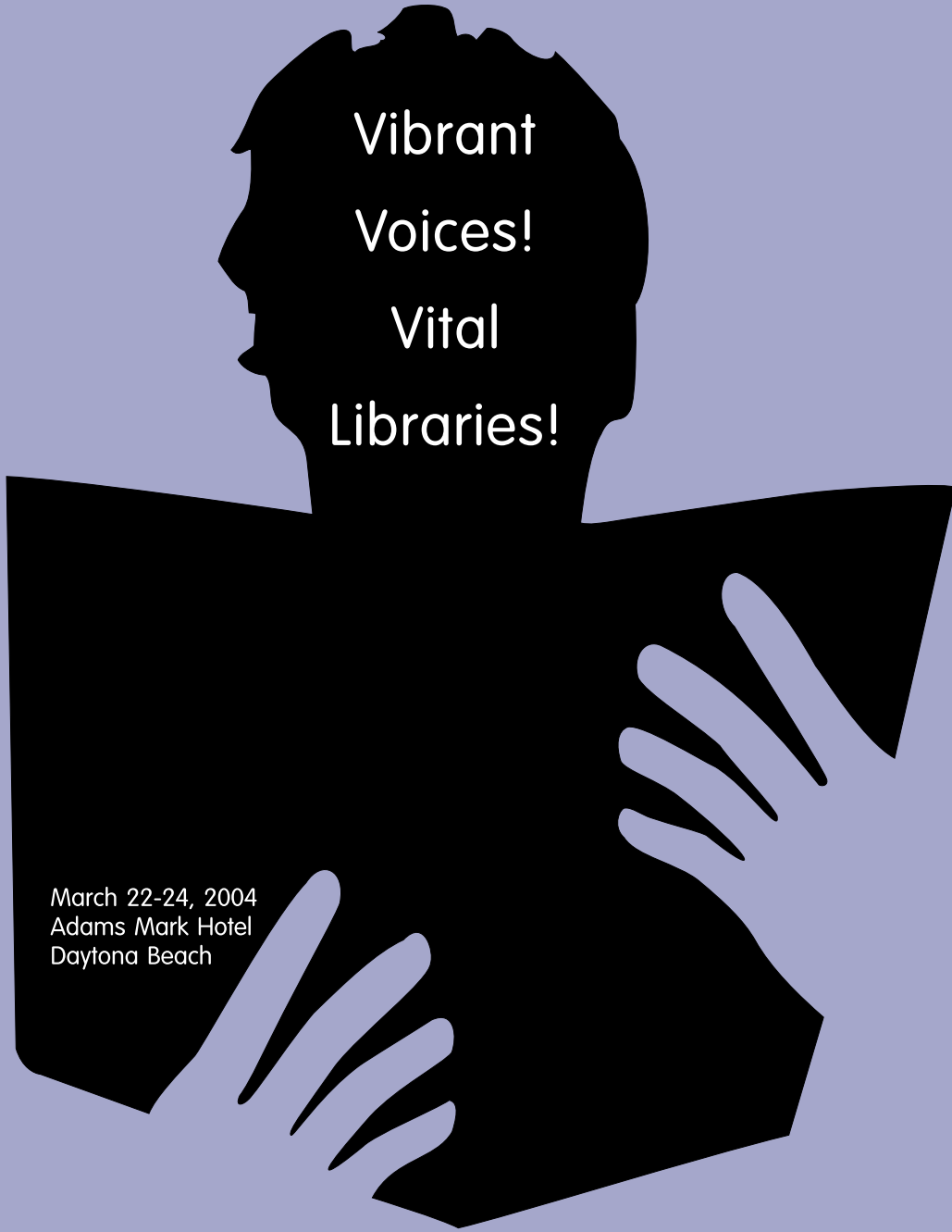


Florida Library
Association

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Volume 47, No.1

Spring 2004

A large black silhouette of a person's head and shoulders, facing left, holding an open book. The person's hands are visible on the pages of the book. The text is centered within the silhouette of the head.

Vibrant
Voices!
Vital
Libraries!

March 22-24, 2004
Adams Mark Hotel
Daytona Beach

ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

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Vibrant Voices! Vital Libraries!

By John Szabo

The importance and power of advocacy were clearly evident in last year's fight to save the State Library of Florida. During this struggle, FLA learned of many strong allies in the historical preservation and genealogy communities. But more importantly, we learned that our allies are not limited to one group or a coalition of groups. Our allies are the citizens of Florida.



John Szabo

FLA's message, although repeatedly attacked, resonated with citizens across the state. Those who love libraries and value our State Library's services and collections spoke up and conveyed the message with vibrant voices. And Tallahassee heard it. Let's hope they remembered...

This year's theme *Vibrant Voices! Vital Libraries!* speaks not only to the necessity of advocacy, but also the diversity of our membership and the diversity of libraries and disciplines within those libraries. My hope is that we can build a culture of advocacy within our diverse organization — that each FLA member will assume, however small or large, an advocacy role — even if it's only one e-mail to a legislator, one call to a local official, or the necessary thank-you note when our message has been heard and acted upon. There is tremendous strength and

surprising impact in simple, meaningful communications to elected officials. The upcoming legislative session will certainly require our best effort in speaking up for funding as well as issues important to libraries.

FLA is a wonderful, valuable organization that strengthens librarians through an impressive offering of professional activities and conference programs. We also strengthen libraries through an annual effort of legislative advocacy. Please let your vibrant voices be heard this year and communicate the powerful message of Florida's vital libraries!

Thank you for your support of FLA and all of Florida's libraries.

John F. Szabo
FLA President

Florida Library Association Legislative Platform 2003-2004

The Florida Library Association supports the following:

- The statewide Plan for Library Development and plans for the Florida Electronic Library.
- The continuation of high quality programs, services, and funding by the State Library of Florida. Any rewrite of Chapter 257, F.S. and other legislation, should include, but not be limited to, the continuation of services and grant programs that currently exist.
- A statewide library card.
- Just Read Florida!, Mentoring Initiative, Family Literacy and School Readiness that are also priorities of the Governor.
- Free access to library service.
- Protection of Floridians' right to the privacy of library records.
- Continued support and funding for the Florida Information Resource Network (FIRN).



- Continued support for statewide literacy initiatives.
- Funding of continuing education for library and information professionals.
- Requiring a Masters Degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association and at least two years professional experience as a minimum requirement for Florida Public Library Directors.
- A degree from a program accredited by the American Library Association

as the minimum educational requirement for professional librarians in Florida.

- Competitive salaries and benefits for all library personnel.
- Cooperation with other Florida advocacy groups on matters of mutual concern.
- Continued state funding of public access to law libraries.

The Florida Library Association opposes the following:

- Outsourcing the management of publicly supported libraries to a for-profit organization.
- Attempts to limit the fair-use provisions of the Copyright Law (Digital Millennium Copyright Act).

Visionary Floridians

By Nancy Pike

Many Floridians over the years have had the kind of vision it takes to make our state a fine place to live. If we asked people to name the greatest of those individuals, no two lists would be the same. In fact, several such lists have been developed; you can decide if you agree with them.

In 1997, Editor Lou Perez at the *Lakeland Ledger* brought together a group of fifty-six historians, educators and other experts in Floridiana to answer a challenge: name the fifty most important Floridians of the 20th century. It was a formidable task, but after a year's work, the group had made its decision. Many of those names were predictable: Henry Flagler and Marjorie Stoneman Douglas, for example. But did you know about Rosemary Barkett, a former nun, who was elected the first woman on the Florida Supreme Court and in 1993 became our Chief Justice? Or Dick Pope, the man who envisioned and then created Cypress Gardens, Florida's first theme park? The group started with nearly three hundred nominees. The four top vote getters were

Mary McLeod Bethune, Douglas, Flagler, and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. You can find the entire list, plus fifteen honorable mentions, complete with short biographies, at <http://www.theledger.com/static/top50/>.

A couple years later, as part of the Millennium celebration, the Florida Legislature and the Florida League of Cities developed a program to honor the 2,000 greatest Floridians. They invited cities to nominate people from their area. Plaques would be placed on the honorees' homes or the places where they worked in recognition of these individuals and their accomplishments. The project was a bit too ambitious though. Only a few hundred names were submitted. Some communities, however, embraced the idea with enthusiasm, submitting multiple nominations. The city of St. Augustine selected twenty-nine Great Floridians. Flagler College alone commemorated five of them. Their selections are listed in their press releases on the city Web site: <http://staugustinegovernment.com>. You can read about the original proposal at an old Web page. The program is over, but perhaps your town sent in names, too.

Of course, there are other compilations

of esteemed Floridians. The Florida Humanities Council (FHC) has a traveling exhibit called "Remember the Women: Forgotten Floridians." You can view the exhibit online and find out how to borrow it at <http://www.flahum.org>. In addition, FHC offers several Chautauqua portrayals of well-known residents through its Speakers Bureau. Choices include LeRoy Mitchell, Jr. as James Weldon Johnson, Betty Jean Steinshouer portraying Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Judy Gail presenting Ivy Stranahan.

The University of Florida offers a section on Famous Floridians at its education Web site: <http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons/lessons.htm>. Jacksonville Public Library started a Famous Floridians list on its Digital Library Collection Web site: <http://jpl.coj.net/DLC/Florida/FamousFloridians.html>. The Museum of Florida History offers a Great Floridians Film Series consisting of ten presentations. Subjects include LeRoy Collins and Claude Pepper. Four additional films are in progress. Each 28-minute videotape features live-action film clips and interviews. For information contact the Department of Education Instruction Television Office (850) 488-7101. Another resource designed for schools is the Famous Floridians list at <http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons/famous.htm>.

A slightly more popular culture selection of famous natives is given at <http://www.50states.com/bio/florida.htm> where you will find Cannonball Adderley, Pat Boone, and Faye Dunaway, among others, with their hometowns listed.

Any famous librarians, you ask? Indeed, our own Melvil Dewey is honored in Florida! Not because he invented the Dewey Decimal System at the age of 27, but because in 1928 he founded the town of Lake Placid, Florida. He died there in 1931. A series of murals in the town preserves local history and honors community leaders/visionaries. One of the murals features Dewey.

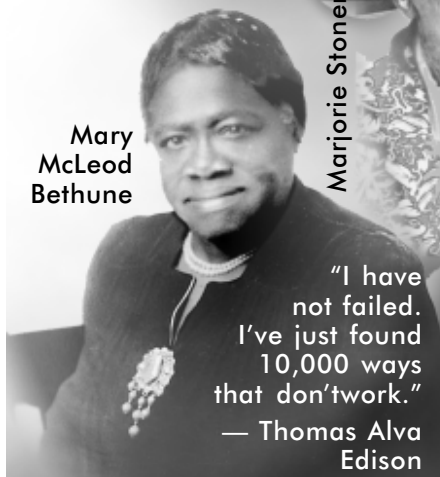
Nancy Pike is Director of the Sarasota County Libraries.

"We are the people our parents warned us about."

— Jimmy Buffett

"One has the right to be wrong in a democracy."

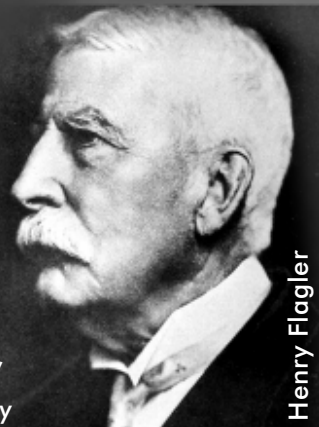
— Claude Pepper



"I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work."
— Thomas Alva Edison



"All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them."
— Walt Disney



The Research Revolution – Science@Your Library

By Maureen McCartney McGee

Imagine a diverse group of people – high school and college students, senior adults, married couples, and young adults of various backgrounds and ethnicities – gathered in a library busily discussing science. Science? As unlikely as it may sound, this scenario occurred all over the country in 2003 as libraries participated in an informal science education program called “The Research Revolution.”

Informal science education can be simply defined as learning that takes place outside a classroom or school setting. The National Science Foundation describes informal learning as “voluntary, self-directed, lifelong, and motivated mainly by intrinsic interests, curiosity, exploration, fantasy, task completion, and social interaction”; it is also frequently “visual- or object-oriented.”¹ For many years, informal science learning has been an important focus in schools, aquariums, zoos and museums, usually targeting children. Sadly though, the literature of the library field reveals that informal science education has not been a priority for libraries, and informal science education programs have seldom been aimed at adult audiences.

Lifelong Learning@Your Library

Now is a critical time for libraries to position themselves as lifelong-learning institutions. In a recent speech at the World Summit on the Information Society, Dr. Robert S. Martin, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), said, “Education, civic engagement, and economic prosperity are linked as never before, and there has never been a greater need for learning throughout the lifetime. Consequently, the triad where people learn—the school, the workplace, and the community—is becoming increasingly equalized.”² The Research Revolution” programs prove that science education programming for adults and families is an exciting possibility for libraries.

“The Research Revolution” Series

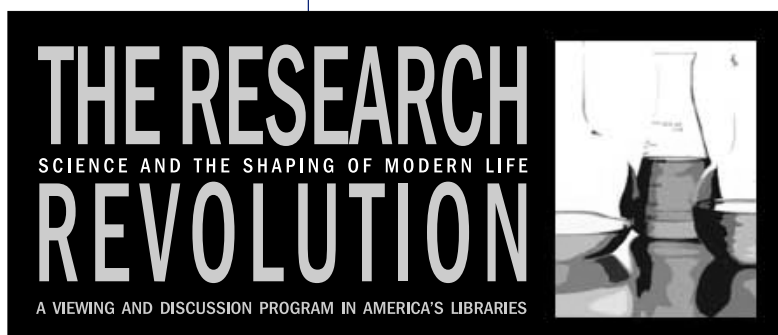
Fifty public and academic libraries across the country had the opportunity to participate in “The Research Revolution” film and discussion series in 2003. Three Florida libraries — Elsie Quirk Public Library in Englewood, Tampa’s Museum of Science and Industry Science (MOSI) Library, and the West Palm Beach Public Library — were chosen as host sites. “The Research Revolution: Science and the Shaping of Modern Life” was a project of National Video Resources in partnership with the American Library Association’s Public Programs Office. The National Science Foundation (NSF) provided major funding.

Each library received six documentaries on the following topics: the atomic age, robotics, genetics, forensics, global warming, and biodiversity, which were shown over several weeks. A local scholar began the programs with a short introduction to the topic and then moderated discussion after the video viewing. Essays about related issues and technology as well as suggested reading lists were also provided to attendees.

Opportunities for Discussion

One of the important aspects of “The Research Revolution” project was the discussion that occurred after watching the videos. Participants indicated on surveys that the videos were great catalysts for discussion. At the midpoint of the project, scholars and librarians reported that discussions were lively and aided in the learning, particularly as participants returned week after week. Lorri Robinson, Site Supervisor for MOSI Science Library in Tampa, pointed out that the American Library Association’s intent with “The Research Revolution” was to

position the library as a forum for community discussion on topics that affect everyday life, particularly targeting adult learners who are out of school. She saw how “The Research Revolution” helped people see the library “not only as a place to get information, but talk about it reasonably and openly and disagree.” The intergenerational aspects and diversity of attendees provided different perspectives. Robinson noted that during the discussion of the atomic age, participants included high school students on up to a seventy-seven year old woman who had worked for scientists



involved in the making of the atomic bomb.

Many of the scholars and librarians reported that new connections were made between universities and libraries, between libraries and non-users, and between scholars and librarians. Some of the librarians reported that the library seemed to gain respect from the community and non-users by offering quality science programming. The science scholars especially seemed to appreciate the opportunity to connect the public to science through discussions, since many working scientists do not get to do that in their daily work.

Interest in Scientific Topics

“The Research Revolution” program showed that adults can also benefit from learning about science in less formal ways, in this case through discussion and film viewing. Other research also attests to this fact. The National Science Foundation has been conducting surveys of adults’ attitudes towards science and technology since 1979. The most recent

Tampa's Museum of Science and Industry was one of the Florida sites for "The Research Revolution" program. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Science and Industry.

survey was published in 2001. These surveys reveal that adults have a very positive attitude toward learning about science. In fact, "approximately 9 out of every 10 adults interviewed by telephone report they are either very or moderately interested in new scientific discoveries and the use of new inventions and technologies."³ A large majority of those surveyed also agreed with positive statements like "Science and technology are making our lives healthier, easier, and more comfortable" and "Because of science and technology, there will be more opportunities for the next generation."⁴ In addition, a 1999 survey showed that over 60 percent of adults visited a science museum in the last year, and just less than 60 percent watched at least one science program on television per month.⁵

Building Science Literacy

In spite of these indications that people are interested in science, the surveys also indicate that adults are relatively uninformed about scientific topics. The respondents who said they were "well-informed about new scientific discoveries and the use of new inventions and technologies" numbered less than 15 percent.⁶ Many respondents failed to answer questions about basic science facts correctly. Also of concern is the fact that "only one-third could adequately explain what it means to study something scientifically. Understanding how ideas are investigated and analyzed is a sure sign of scientific literacy. Such critical thinking skills can also prove advantageous in making well-informed choices at the ballot box and in other daily living activities."⁷ Though these science skills are important, many adults do not appear to possess the scientific knowledge they should. The public's interest in and need for science education makes this a field ripe for harvest — by libraries.

Benefits of Informal Science Education

Another benefit of informal science education for adults is that libraries can provide educational opportunities that formal

With informal science education programs like "The Research Revolution," libraries can attract new, diverse groups of users as well as make connections with community science institutions, all while bringing vital knowledge to people who need it.

schooling has failed to provide. Dr. Martin, Director of IMLS, reminds us, "We recognize that, as agencies dedicated to education, museums and libraries can play a central role in the building of an information society. We believe, further, that we must be more than an information society; we must be a learning society."⁸ Schools are not the only institution for learning about science. For many years, science education in schools favored white males, giving them greater opportunities to pursue science at more advanced levels. This practice did not really start changing until the 1980s.⁹ Since many adults served by libraries attended school before science education became more equitable, libraries have an opportunity to offset this through informal science education. The 2001 NSF survey revealed that 68 percent of adults felt "the quality of science and mathematics education in American schools is inadequate,"¹⁰ indicating that they would be willing to seek science education elsewhere.

As mentioned above, librarians who participated in "The Research Revolution"



program reported that the audience was more diverse than usual for library programs. During a May 2003 meeting of expert readers' advisor librarians at Chicago Public Library, participants noted that "nonfiction discussion groups were more likely to attract a diverse male/female mix than fiction-only discussion groups."¹¹ Since men are more likely to be interested in science and technology issues,¹² informal science programming in libraries is likely to attract more males than other library programming. The midpoint summary for the Research Revolution indicated that 47.9 percent of participants were men and 52.1 percent were women.

Programming Ideas

For libraries looking to plan informal science education programming, the first step is to make some connections with the scientific community. Libraries can contact science teachers, scientists, and college or graduate students in the sciences. Librarians can visit a "local science or natural history museum, zoo or botanical garden, planetarium, or observatory" and make contact with "the people behind the scenes."¹³ These contacts may be willing to collaborate on a program, appear as guest speakers, or provide ideas for programs. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (<http://www.imls.gov/>) is



a good resource for libraries collaborating with museums.

Informal science programming can take cues from popular science in our society. Many libraries are familiar with fiction discussion groups. Informal science education can also occur with nonfiction science book discussion. Books like *The Future of Life* by Edward O. Wilson and *Genome: The Autobiography of a Species in 23 Chapters* by Matt Ridley are examples of science books that lend themselves to group discussion.¹⁴ Themed cable television stations are enjoying increased viewership. Libraries can take advantage of the popularity of science shows on the Discovery Channel, the Learning Channel, or the Weather Channel by planning related programs.¹⁵

Certainly, informal science education can be a creative, valuable, and rewarding adult programming opportunity for libraries. There are many good reasons for libraries to offer informal science education programs to adults. Studies show that while adults are interested in science, they lack scientific knowledge. With informal science education programs like “The Research Revolution,” libraries can attract new, diverse groups of users as well as make connections with community science institutions, all while bringing vital knowledge to people who

Informal science education programming for adults and families is an exciting educational programming possibility for libraries to explore.

need it. Overall, science in the library looks like a great idea.

Maureen McCartney McGee is a second-year student in the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida and a Reference Assistant at the Safety Harbor Public Library.

For more information on “The Research Revolution,” visit http://www.nvr.org/research_index.php?pro=research

Notes

- 1 National Science Foundation, “Elementary, Secondary, and Informal Education: Program Solicitation and Guidelines,” 2001, <<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2001/nsf0160/nsf0160.pdf>>, (October 14, 2003), 18.
- 2 Robert S. Martin, “Libraries, Museums, and Nations of Learners: New Opportunities for the Knowledge Society,” 9 December 2003, <<http://www.imls.gov/scripts/text.cgi?whatsnew/current/sp120903.htm>> (15 December 2003), par. 5.
- 3 National Science Board, “Chapter 7 Science and Technology: Public Attitudes and Public Understanding,” *Science and Engineering Indicators—2002*, 2002, <<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/seind02/pdf/co7.pdf>>, (December 1, 2003), 4.
- 4 National Science Board, “Chapter 7,” 2.

- 5 National Science Foundation, “Figure 28. Public use of selected information sources,” *Science and Technology Pocket Data Book*, 2000, 2000, <<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/nsf00328/figures/fig28.gif>>, (December 1, 2003), 36.
- 6 National Science Board, “Chapter 7,” 2.
- 7 National Science Board, “Chapter 7,” 2.
- 8 Martin, par. 4.
- 9 Ellen Wahl, *A Discussion Paper about Informal Science Education and Inquiry*, 13 June 2002, <<http://www.deltasee.org/trainers/pdfs/Chapter%205%20A%20Discussion%20Paper%20about%20Informal%20Science%20Education.pdf>>, (17 November 2003), 18.
- 10 National Science Board, “Chapter 7,” 24.
- 11 Kathleen de la Peña McCook, “Beyond Taxonomies of Genre” in *Readers’ Advisory for Nonfiction* (Libraries Unlimited, 2004), par. 18.
- 12 National Science Board, “Chapter 7,” 9.
- 13 Wahl, *Discussion*, 22-23.
- 14 McCook, par. 17.
- 15 McCook, par. 19.



Mark your calendar

**Library Days
April 12-13
Tallahassee**

**See www.flalib.org
for Library Days
Information.**

- Registration form
- Schedule of events
- FLA Legislative Platform
- Library Fact Sheets

Florida's "Ask a Librarian" Service — A Collaborative Success

By Vince Mariner and
Lucy Harrison



Ask a Librarian," Florida's statewide live virtual-reference service, debuted on July 28, 2003. A collaborative venture between the College Center for Library Automation (CCLA) and the Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) — funded by a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant — "Ask a Librarian" was launched with fifteen libraries trained on the new service. From July through November, that number quickly swelled to forty-four active libraries.

On December 2, 2003, Florida's Secretary of State, Glenda Hood, formally introduced "Ask a Librarian" during the launch of the Florida Electronic Library, when she provided a live demonstration of the service's chat-reference capabilities. Since then, participation in "Ask a Librarian" has continued to grow, currently numbering sixty active libraries, with another thirteen libraries scheduled for training and activation by the end of March 2004.

How "Ask a Librarian" Works

"Ask a Librarian" provides Florida's sixteen million residents with free, convenient, real-time access to a librarian who can answer their reference questions, help them locate

and use information on the Web, and provide expert advice on using Web-based information. "Ask a Librarian" is a collaborative service comprised of academic, public, and special libraries across Florida. Participating libraries provide staffing for the service.

Utilizing Docutek's Virtual Reference Librarian Plus (VRLplus) chat and co-browsing software, "Ask a Librarian" enables the librarian and user to navigate the Web together to find useful information. Live help is available from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday to answer reference questions and offer assistance. The service will soon expand to include weekend hours. Questions may also be submitted via e-mail at any time, day or night.

Since "Ask a Librarian" is Web based, it doesn't matter where in Florida the information seeker is located. For example, an individual in Jacksonville might receive

assistance from a librarian who is staffing the service from a library in Miami. In addition to obtaining live help from a librarian, users can send questions via e-mail and search the Knowledge Base for answers to previously asked questions.

In order to prepare staff at participating libraries to provide online reference services, CCLA and TBLC go onsite to each new participating library to thoroughly train staff on the software and the unique aspects of offering non-traditional reference assistance. Once the library staff is trained, the library is activated and joins with the other participating libraries to deliver the service.

Meeting Users at their Point of Need

The primary advantage that "Ask a Librarian" offers is its ability to meet users at their point of need. This means providing service to users wherever they are and at a time when they need the assistance of a skilled librarian to help navigate the maze of Web-based library resources and sites on the open Web to find the answers to their questions.

During the time since its inception, the popularity of "Ask a Librarian" among students, public library patrons, and citizens taking advantage of its valuable offerings — and among the growing number of libraries participating in the service — has increased dramatically. Satisfying the growing demand for convenient, online reference service — a demand which, based on early usage statistics, is clearly on the rise — was among

The "Ask a Librarian" service was formally introduced at the launch of the Florida Electronic Library in December 2003. From left to right, Jennifer Hance Leon (Docutek Information System, Inc.), Nathan Vince (President and CEO, Docutek Information Systems, Inc.), Dr. Richard Madaus (Executive Director, CCLA), Dr. Susan Anderson (Director of Libraries, St. Petersburg College) Mark Flynn (Director, Florida Electronic Library), Judi Ring (State Librarian), and Vince Mariner (Statewide Coordinator, "Ask a Librarian").



To submit a question using "Ask a Librarian":

<http://www.askalibrarian.org>

To get:

- More information
- Service statistics
- List of participating libraries
- Information on joining:
<http://info.askalibrarian.org>
- Florida Electronic Library:
<http://www.flelibrary.org>



“Ask a Librarian” provides Florida’s 16 million residents with free, convenient access to a librarian who can answer their questions, help them locate information on the Web, and provide advice on using Web-based information.

the primary purposes for creating ‘Ask a Librarian.’

In the service’s five and one-half months of operation thus far, participating libraries have combined to provide 2,099 live virtual-reference sessions — a monthly average of more than 380 sessions. During October 2003, the service reached an all-time high of 525 sessions. The 500-session mark was eclipsed again in December 2003.

Satisfying Users

Feedback received from individuals using “Ask a Librarian” has been nothing less than outstanding. During a survey period, users had the option of completing a short survey form to rate their level of satisfaction with various components of the service. Over 90 percent of individuals completing the survey responded that they would use the “Ask a Librarian” service again. Nearly 70 percent indicated that their reference question was completely answered, while another 20 percent indicated that their answer was partially answered or may have required e-mail follow-up.

Among the best measures of the new service’s effectiveness are user satisfaction, increased demand (i.e., increasing number of sessions), and an increase in library

participation. “Ask a Librarian” enjoys overwhelming success in all three areas.

Extending The Reach of Libraries

A factor that has contributed to the increase in library participation in “Ask a Librarian” has been the success of CCLA and TBLC in introducing the new service’s primary delivery method — online chat — to the staff at participating libraries. Before joining ‘Ask a Librarian,’ most participating libraries had little or no previous experience offering online chat reference service. The opportunity to participate in a service that would not only offer virtual reference services to their local patrons, but also to individuals around the state, was a bold new venture for most, but a venture most were eager to take. Few libraries had the computing or staff resources to offer virtual reference by themselves, so the unique, collaborative nature of “Ask a Librarian” — requiring a small investment of time each month to help staff the service in exchange for their patrons having access to online reference services that draw upon the combined knowledge of more than 450 librarians statewide — was of great appeal.

Partnering libraries quickly realized that sharing online reference services between libraries is a “win-win” opportunity. Though a library may only staff the service for a few hours per week, the beauty of collaboration allows their users to enjoy live reference assistance for the entire sixty hours that the service is available, since other participating libraries are staffing the service at those times when their library is not.

Collaboration Plus

In addition to staffing the statewide service, partnering libraries have the opportunity to use the “Ask a Librarian” software to staff their own local live chat-reference desk. When a library staffs its local desk, it becomes the first in line for users who access the service via their library’s Web site. In addition to being the first in line to provide service to its users, the local desk can be utilized by participating libraries to staff the service during hours when the collaborative service is not available, to handle e-mail

reference questions, and to enter local information into the software’s Knowledge Base.

Ongoing Development

CCLA and TBLC, along with an advisory committee comprised of representatives from community colleges and TBLC member libraries, the State Library of Florida, and the Florida Library Network Council, continue to work to expand the service and assist participating libraries in promoting the service locally. The Advisory Committee has played an instrumental role in making decisions that guide and develop the “Ask a Librarian” service. Many critical decisions, such as the software to use for the service, the hours of service provided, and the qualifications of participants staffing the service, have been made by the Advisory Committee. Additionally, the Advisory Committee has continually provided valuable feedback and usability comments on the development of the software. Working groups have been initiated on behalf of the Advisory Committee that will focus on areas of quality assurance, policies and procedures, Knowledge Base, and promotion. “Ask a Librarian” practitioners representing libraries throughout the state are members of working groups.

The first six months of service have seen significant growth in the number of sessions and participating libraries. With an upcoming expansion in hours to include service on weekends, participating libraries will collaboratively provide well over sixty hours of live-reference services per week. By continuing to work with an effective and dedicated advisory committee and participating libraries throughout the State of Florida, the “Ask a Librarian” service can continue to offer outstanding services and meet the demands of providing live virtual reference services to the citizens of Florida.

Vince Mariner is Statewide Coordinator of the “Ask a Librarian” Service.

Lucy Harrison served as Interim Statewide Coordinator of the “Ask a Librarian” Service during its initial development.

Selecting Children's Books for a Multiracial Audience

By Madeline Kovarik

Multicultural literature has become a major influence in today's libraries. Through multicultural literature, children learn to understand and appreciate the sameness and differences of cultures while identifying with and valuing their own culture. But what about children who represent a blend of two cultures? Frequently, these students are overlooked in today's children's literature collections, but librarians serving diverse populations are becoming more aware of the need to include books with multiracial characters.

Cindy Heinig, Youth Librarian in the Brevard County Library System, offers this observation.

As a public library, we need to provide materials that address the needs of all members of our community. Since we live in a culturally diverse society, it is not surprising that biracial families exist everywhere. It is imperative that libraries have biracial literature available. Biracial literature reassures children in biracial families that they are not alone, and it exposes other children to biracial families. Reading about peoples who are different can lead to understanding others. It might cause children to recognize the similarities in all people and perhaps even celebrate their differences. This is a critical step towards peace and harmony in the world.¹

Demographic Changes

Racial categories have changed over time. The most recent census reflects the changing demographics with the inclusion of a multiracial category. Figures from Census 2000 indicate that 2.4 percent (6,826,228) of the U.S. population reported that they were two or more races, while 3 percent of Florida's population indicated that they were two or more races. It is predicted that this will greatly increase in the future. In an article in *Parade*, D. J. Nakazawa writes, "The rate of interracial marriages is skyrocketing. In some areas, one in six babies



born today is of two or more racial heritages — making multiracial youth one of the fastest-growing segments of our population."² Demographic data indicates that in 1960 there were 25,000 marriages of a black male to a white female. By 2000, this increased dramatically to 227,000 marriages. The largest percentage growth, however, has been documented in Hispanic to white marriages. In the 2000 census, over 824,000 of these unions were reported.³

Children from multiracial homes have a blend of cultures providing them a unique view of the world. These children need to be exposed to literature that celebrates their cultural diversity and connects to their real-world experiences. Librarian Sue Dunne points out, "As the ethnic make-up of American society is changing, so must our library collection. Our diverse population wants materials they can readily identify with both for enlightenment and enjoyment."⁴ Experts in the field agree. It is important, says J. Shiohita, to select books that "reflect the realities of the children."⁵ R. Anaya argues that "our challenge is to incorporate into the curriculum all of the voices of our country."⁶ If educators overlook the voices of children from multiracial families when selecting children's multicultural literature, then the need has not been fully met.

Literature Selection

Selecting quality literature can be a daunting task. When analyzing children's literature for potential use, it is important to detect racism and sexism. The Council on Interracial Books for Children offers the

following suggestions when selecting appropriate literature.⁷

- Check illustrations for stereotypes or tokenism. Determine if the cultures presented are oversimplified ("blacks are the happy-go-lucky, watermelon-eating Sambo" or of "Chicanos, the sombrero-wearing peon or fiesta-loving macho bandito"). Determine if racial minority characters are stereotypically presented and if minorities play subservient or leadership roles.
- Check storyline focusing on the standard for success (Does it require "white" behavior for the minority character to succeed?), the resolution of the problem (Who solves the problem and how?), and the role of women (Do the woman succeed because of initiative and intelligence versus appearance?).
- Check lifestyles avoiding "cute-natives-in-costumes" syndrome.
- Check relationships between people determining who holds the power or takes a leadership role and focusing on family dynamics as appropriate.
- Check hero traits. Ask "Whose interest is a particular hero really serving?"
- Check effects on a child's self image. Determine if norms are established that hinder a child's aspirations or self-concept. Ask if there is at least one character with whom a child can easily identify that uses positive traits throughout the story.
- Check author's or illustrator's background by reading the biographical information on the book jacket. Determine their qualifications on the topic.
- Check author's perspective asking if the perspective is patriarchal or feminist and if minority cultural perspectives appear.
- Watch for loaded words (words with insulting overtones such as "savage", "crafty", "docile", or "backward") or sexist language (for example — chairperson versus chairman, firefighters

versus fireman, manufactured versus manmade).

- Check copyright date. Non-sexist books “were rarely published before 1973” while multiracial books that correctly represented multicultural realities did not appear until the early 1970s.

According to D. Mitchell,⁸ the purpose for selecting a book should include:

- Helping children learn about themselves and the world
- Sharing an experience that the child has not yet encountered in the real-world
- Identifying with characters and increasing self-esteem
- Recognizing that there are many unique people and cultures in the world
- Delighting in and loving language and writing
- Stimulating classroom discussion.

It is important that individuals involved in book selection be aware of personal cultural bias or lack of knowledge about a culture. Not all multicultural books are authentic, making it critical to choose books that are not racist and accurately portray a particular group.⁹

Literature Recommendations

Examples of books that highlight children of multiracial families are listed in the accompanying box. New literature is constantly emerging on the market and should also be considered based on the above recommended guidelines.

C. Mukhopadhyay and R. C. Henze write that we should “continue to support young people’s quest for knowledge about the history and struggles of their people, as well as those of other groups, so that students in the future will not be able to point ... and say ‘My people are not included in the curriculum.’”¹⁰ Incorporating multicultural literature that reflects today’s demographic diversity helps all children grow and develop in positive ways.

Black/White

- Adoff, A. (1973). *Black is brown is tan*. Harper.
- Adoff, A. (1991) *Hard to be six*. Lothrop.
- Bradman, T. (1987) *Through my window*. Silver Burdett. US Edition
- Crews, N. (1997). *Snowball*. Greenwillow
- Danzinger, P. (1985). *It’s an aardvark-eat-turtle world*. Delacorte
- Davol, M.W. (1993). *Black, white, just right!* Concept Books
- Garland, S. (1992). *Billy and Belle*. Viking: US Edition
- Heath, A. (1992). *Sofie’s role*. Four Winds.
- Hoffman, M. (1987). *Nancy no-size*. Oxford: US Edition
- Jonas, A. (1984). *Holes and peeks*. Greenwillow
- Jonas, A. (1986). *Now we can go*. Greenwillow
- Jonas, A. (1984). *The quilt*. Greenwillow
- Jonas, A. (1985). *The trek*. Greenwillow
- Jonas, A. (1985). *Where can it be?*. Greenwillow
- Koller, J. (1995). *A place to call home*. Atheneum.
- Machado, A. (2001). *Nina bonita*. Cranky Nell Books.
- Meyer, C. (1997). *Jubilee Journey*. Gulliver Books.
- Monk, I. (1998). *Hope*. Lerner Publishing Group.

- Spohn, D. (1993) *Home field*. Lothrop.
- Spohn, D. (1991) *Nate’s treasure*. Lothrop.
- Spohn, D. (1992) *Starry night*. Lothrop.
- Spohn, D. (1991) *Winter wood*. Lothrop.
- Sttraight, S. (1995). *Bear E. Bear*. Hyperion.
- Williams, V. B. (1990). *More, more, more said the baby: 3 love stories*. Greenwillow.
- Wyeth, S.D. (1991). *The world of daughter McGuire*. Delacorte Press

Hispanic/White

- Cisneros, S. (1994). *Hairs/pelitos*. Knopf.
- Torres, L. (1998). *Liliana’s grandmothers*. Farrar Straus & Giroux.

Asian/White

- Cheng, A. (2000). *Grandfather counts*. Lee & Low.
- Friedman, I. (1984) *How my parents learned to eat*. Houghton.
- Mills, C. (1992). *A visit to Amy-Claire*. Macmillan.
- Yep, L. (1995). *Thief of hearts*. Harper Collins.

Asian/African

- Igus, T. (1996). *Two Mrs. Gibsons*. Children’s Book Press.

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Notes

- 1 Cindy Heinig, personal communication, January 14, 2004.
- 2 D. J. Nakazawa, “A new generation is leading the way.” *Parade* (July 6, 2003)
- 3 U.S. Census Bureau. United States Census 2000. <http://www.census.gov>.
- 4 Sue Dunne, personal communication, January 13, 2004.
- 5 J. Shiohita, (1997). “Beyond good intentions: selecting multicultural literature,” *Children’s Advocate: Action Alliance for Children*, (September-October 1997).

- 6 R. Anaya, “The Censorship of Neglect,” *English Journal* 81:5 (1992): 18-20.
- 7 The Council on Interracial Books for Children, “10 quick ways to analyze children’s books for racism and sexism.” In B. Bigelow, L. Christensen, S. Karp, B. Miner & B. Peterson (eds.) *Rethinking our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice*, (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools Ltd., 1994): 14-15.
- 8 D. Mitchell, *Children’s literature: an invitation to the world*, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2003): 60.
- 9 J. Aldridge, “15 misconceptions about multicultural education,” *Focus on Elementary* (2000): 12(3).
- 10 C. Mukhopadhyay and R. C. Henze, “How real is race? Using anthropology to make sense of human diversity,” *Phi Delta Kappan* 84:9 (2003):669-678.

Subjects for Voters: Cataloging Voter Information

By Priscilla Williams and
Jimmie Lundgren

With the upcoming presidential election, the nation's attention will be focused on candidates and issues throughout the year. The large field of candidates vying for their party's nomination and the increasingly complex issues facing the nation can make evaluating the candidates and their positions a complicated and confusing process for many voters. Libraries can play a critical role in assisting voters to obtain thorough and objective information about candidates and issues needed to make choices on election ballots for national and local elections. Resources for doing this may range from traditional vertical files to free online databases.

Voters must contend with tiring media voices attempting to control their perceptions, and may sometimes be reluctant to approach the reference desk and admit they need assistance in finding basic facts about people and issues. What will they find if they go directly to their library catalog and search for this kind of information? If important resources are identified and cataloged, they will stand a better chance of getting what they need. What subject terms will be most useful for cataloging and retrieving information sources for voters?

Cataloging Voter Information

Attention to cataloging and using Library of Congress subject headings for voter information can help voters find information about candidates and political issues. Access to this kind of information is critical for voters preparing to make informed choices on election ballots and for ensuring the quality of our collective decisions.

The accompanying samples show examples of records and subject headings for voter information sources. These are intended to provide models for cataloging of voter information sources that may be available in libraries and as suggestions for search terms for identifying useful resources that may already be cataloged.

The following note is found on DemocracyNet's Web page:

DemocracyNet – DNet – is your premier public interest site for election information. Enter your zip code to find out who's running for offices on your ballot and where the candidates stand on issues you care about.

Including a record for this site in your catalog and using the suggested Library of Congress subject headings will improve users' likelihood of finding this source. After supplying a zip code or other information as requested, users of DemocracyNet have the capability to access election information for

many geographic areas and on many levels, but the federal level is more reliably covered than state or local. Even though this resource covers the entire U.S., it is still appropriate to include Florida in subject headings since local patrons will use it to study U.S. House Representatives who represent them specifically based on their zip code.

For clarity, fixed fields and tags are omitted from these sample records. Both of these works are subject to updating and therefore deserve treatment as integrating resources. As unpublished information, no place of publication or publisher name is needed for the vertical file. The vertical file record may continue to serve for many years as the contents of the folder changes, or separate folders may be made and cataloged separately for specific years.

Adding Library of Congress subject headings to resources for voters in the library's online catalog improves access to voter information and thus helps to prepare voters to make educated choices on election ballots.

Sample catalog record for Web site containing voter information:

League of Women Voters' DemocracyNet [electronic resource] : DNet / provided by the League of Women Voters Education Fund. — [United States]: League of Women Voters Education Fund, 1996-

Database available at: <http://www.dnet.org/>

Frequently updated.

1. Elections – United States — Databases.
2. United States – Politics and government – Databases.
3. Political candidates – United States — Databases. 4. Political candidates – Florida — Databases.
4. Voting – Florida — Databases. I. League of Women Voters (U.S.). Education Fund.

Sample catalog record of a hypothetical vertical file containing local municipal voter information (includes link to library voter Web page):

Voter information sources for Hogtown / compiled by Hogtown Public Library. 2003-

1 portfolio ; 30 cm. + 1 remotely accessed electronic resource.

Folder includes sample ballots, brochures, etc. from superintendent of elections and other sources and is updated as current information becomes available.

Additional information at: <http://www.libraryvoterWeb page.org>

1. Hogtown (Fla.) City Council — Elections.

2. Hogtown (Fla.) – Politics and government.

I. Hogtown Public Library.

II. Hogtown County (Fla.). Superintendent of Elections.

In house use only, ask staff for assistance.

Other LC Subject Headings

The key source for catalogers for information on providing subject access to these materials is the *Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual*: Subject headings, H1942 Politics and Government. After the instruction to assign appropriate specific headings to works on special political topics, is the observation, "Works on political topics are usually multifaceted, requiring an array of headings to bring out the important aspects of the material ... In most instances one of these should be a heading of the type "[place] — Politics and government." More subject headings and their related terms are provided in *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH), whether in the old red books or an online version. A few subject headings that may be useful are:

Elections – Florida

Florida. Legislature — Elections

Voting – Florida

Florida. Legislature – Voting

Primaries – Florida

Political candidates – Florida

Political campaigns – Florida

Governors – Florida – Elections

Florida. Senate – Elections

Politicians – Florida

Women in politics – Florida

Florida – Politics and government

Women political candidates – Florida

Women politicians – Florida

Note that those terms subdivided by "Florida" may be further subdivided by the name of the particular county or city as appropriate. Sources for a particular city or county should also include as a subject term the name of that city or county with the subheading "Politics and government," such as, "Hogtown (Fla.) – Politics and government."

Access to Local Information

The Web pages of Florida public libraries indicate that libraries are working in various ways to address the needs of their voting patrons. Frequently the library will include links to the Web pages of local Superintendents of Elections or to the Florida Division of Elections. The latter is a rich source for a variety of government information and includes links to each county's Superintendent of Elections. These in turn are good sources for city election information that is often not available from the national databases. Both Democracy.net



and Project Vote Smart request that local information be submitted by e-mail for posting to their Web sites. Here is a short list of these and a few other online resources for voters that patrons may find helpful:

- Alliance for Better Campaigns:
<http://www.bettercampaigns.org/>
- Common Cause:
<http://www.commoncause.org/>
- Democracy Net:
<http://www.dnet.org/>
- Florida Division of Elections:
<http://election.dos.state.fl.us/>
- Project Vote Smart:
<http://www.vote-smart.org/>
- Public Agenda Online:
<http://www.publicagenda.org/>

In compiling this list it was noted that some commercial sites unrelated to this topic have used voting-related terms inappropriately to trap searchers into viewing their sites, and also that some otherwise helpful sites include sadly outdated information.

Librarians as Information Providers

Libraries serve the information needs of their communities. Among the more important is the need to provide citizens with resources for obtaining unbiased information about political candidates and issues. Voters are often bombarded with information from paid political advertisements in the news media

continues on back cover

Florida's Libraries Help to Save the Everglades

By Gail Clement

In 2000, the State of Florida and the federal government launched the biggest environmental mitigation project in world history. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) is a thirty-year, \$8 billion effort aimed at repairing the deteriorating environments of southern and central Florida. CERP includes some forty projects covering an 18,000-square-mile area that extends from Kissimmee to the Keys. With the promise of preserving the quality of life for millions of Floridians and restoring a natural treasure valued internationally, CERP enjoys broad support at the federal, state and local levels. Contributing to the

effort are seven federal agencies, seven state agencies or commissions, sixteen county governments, scores of municipalities, and countless non-governmental organizations, businesses, community groups, and individuals.

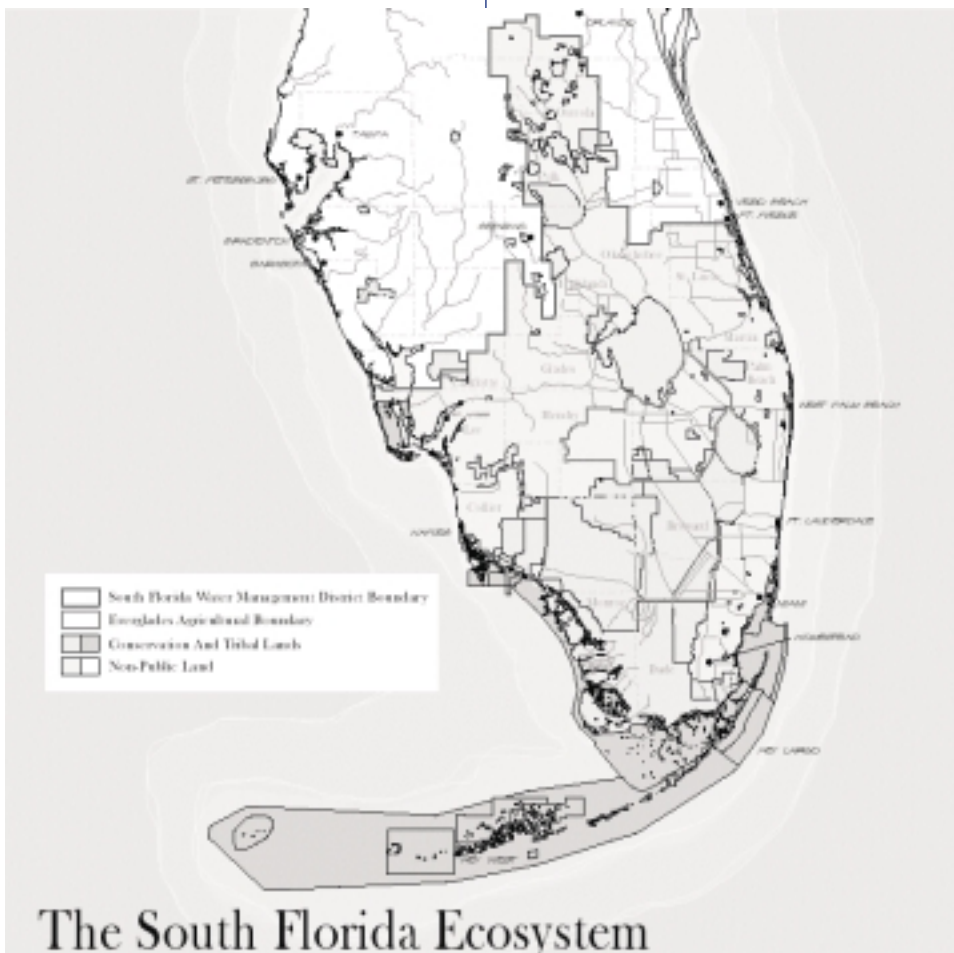
An undertaking of this scope and scale is certain to impact Floridians in every walk of life, and CERP is no exception. Policy makers must prioritize competing demands for limited resources. Resource managers struggle to preserve precious water, land and biological resources. Community organizations strive to balance the needs of individuals and businesses with the public's right to a healthy environment and a stable economy. Educators look for ways to bring the Everglades into the classroom, as

environmental education is a core requirement in Florida's standard curriculum. Citizens seek to protect their property and other individual rights. Each of these stakeholders may feel the impacts of the Everglades restoration effort differently, yet they share one circumstance — each Floridian needs a base of information upon which to make decisions, allocate resources and plan for the future. Timely, accurate and balanced information is a critical asset for meeting the complex challenges and opportunities presented by the Everglades restoration effort. And who is best poised to meet this critical community information need? Florida's libraries.

A survey of Florida libraries reveals a variety of approaches in providing Everglades-related information. From bibliographies and authority tools to digitization and virtual reference, librarians across the peninsula are applying their expertise to help Florida's communities meet this critical information need.

Everglades Information Network & Digital Library

The earliest and most focused effort to provide Everglades-related information is at Florida International University's (FIU) Green Library. Located on the eastern edge of today's Everglades, FIU established the Everglades Information Network & Digital Library in partnership with Everglades National Park in 1995. Initial efforts involved the digitization of fugitive documents — technical reports, maps and images that hold great research value but saw limited distribution in print. With additional support from other libraries and agencies, the Everglades Digital Library has evolved into a full-service virtual library, offering a growing collection, an extensive bibliography — "Everglades Online", and a virtual reference service — "Ask An Everglades Librarian". Megan Waters, head of FIU's Digital Library Center and Everglades project coordinator, believes the project brings "interested information seekers together on a national and international scale," as their chat service receives usage from all over the



“Timely, accurate, and balanced information is a critical asset for meeting the complex challenges and opportunities presented by the Everglades restoration effort.”

state, the country and the world. “Through our service, teachers in Ohio can learn what teachers in Florida are doing to bring the Everglades into the classroom.” Other users include Florida researchers, agency managers, interested citizens, students looking for homework help, and researchers and students from as far away as Japan and Africa. And the benefits to the Library? Sherry Mosley, Head of Government Documents at FIU and the co-manager of the LSTA-funded “Ask An Everglades Librarian” project observes, “a high profile service (such as the Everglades Digital Library) exposes our work to the world, bringing more eminence to the library and the university.”

Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Digitization and user outreach are also the focus of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, where librarian/archivist Becky Smith has been identifying rare or unique materials that reveal south Florida’s environmental history. “Our role is to be a resource,” she remarks. “We try to serve everybody (and to) present a balanced point of view”. The Historical Museum was one of three south Florida libraries that participated in the digitization project “Reclaiming the Everglades: South Florida’s Natural History 1884-1934” funded in 1997 by the Library of Congress through their American Memory competition (the other

libraries are FIU and University of Miami (see *Florida Libraries*, Jan./Feb. 1999 issue for details). This prestigious project spurred Smith and her staff to take a closer look at the museum’s Everglades-related collections, such as the papers of J. F. Jaudon, the Miami engineer responsible for promoting the building of the Tamiami Trail connecting the east and west coasts of Florida in the 1920s. As an outgrowth of “Reclaiming the Everglades”, the Museum created the exhibit “Everglades Conservation and Use” which has been traveling to libraries throughout Florida for the past three years and is also available online.

Other Digitization Projects

Digitization has also enabled other south Florida libraries to offer their valuable resources to an audience hungry for local environmental information. Anne Layton Rice, Library Administrator in Key West explains, “Our LSTA-funded project ‘Mile Markers: Linking Keys History’ web-delivers

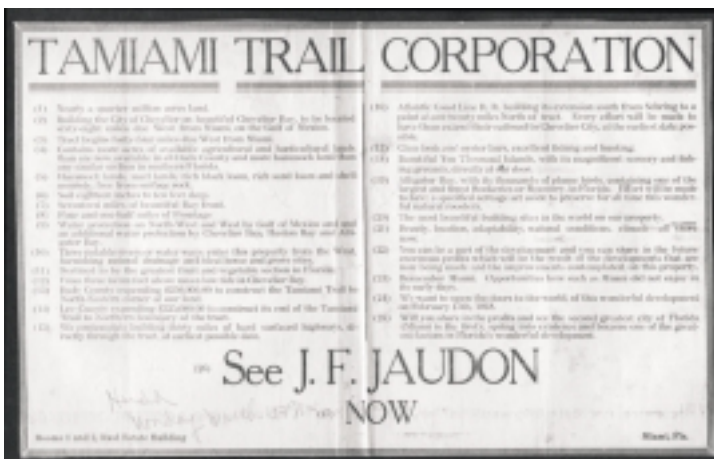
images from our wildly inaccessible vault... Images of dredge-and fill operations, building of the railroad, and impact of hurricanes document how our landscape has been altered....Images of sea-based industries, such as sponging and the harvesting of turtles, sharks and conch, provide a stark reminder of the

rich resources our coral reef once held and its current peril.” The project “Digitizing Southwest Florida’s Heritage,” managed by the Southwest Florida Library Network with support from an LSTA grant, has made digitally available two thousand slides from Big Cypress Natural Preserve (see *Florida Libraries* Spring 2003 issue for details). Historical information from these library projects provides a rare glimpse of the south Florida environment in an earlier, more natural state, before the harmful effects of human development.

Scientific and Technical Resources

Scientific and technical information is highly valuable to the Everglades restoration effort, and libraries with collections of technical reports, datasets, theses and other ‘grey literature’ offer unique contributions to the community’s information base. The NOAA Miami Regional Library, for example, is performing data rescue on scientific datasets through their CEDAR (Coastal and Estuarine Data/Document Archeology and Rescue) project. Library Director Linda Pikula, in cooperation with scientist Adriana Cantillo, has been “seeking out, restoring, evaluating, correcting, and interpreting data ... at risk of being lost to the science community.” To date they have rescued and digitally reproduced over one hundred documents relating to south Florida’s coasts and bays. St. Thomas University’s “Digital “Environmental Resource Library” (DERL) offers an online collection of reports provided by Miami-Dade Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM). The LSTA-funded project involved scanning, electronic cataloging, and Web development. In a similar effort, Florida Gulf Coast University Library developed the full-text digital Caloosahatchee Documents Collection by acquiring, annotating, cataloguing, and scanning several hundred documents provided (and funded by) the South Florida Water Management District.

Florida’s librarians have also addressed Everglades-information needs with the development of several unique resource



discovery tools. The Everglades Online database, the only comprehensive bibliography covering south Florida's environment, is searchable through the State University System's WebLuis system. Other, more narrowly focused bibliographies with environmental coverage include the Biscayne Bay Bibliography developed by University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and the Florida Bay Bibliography produced by the NOAA Miami Regional Library. The Key Names Gazetteer, developed by Islamorada librarian Jim Clupper, is a Web-searchable reference tool with historical and current names from the areas of Biscayne Bay, Florida Bay, and the Keys down to the Dry Tortugas. Finally, the South Florida Ecosystem Thesaurus, in preparation by the article's author, will provide a controlled vocabulary of Everglades-related terminology for use by catalogers and indexers as well as database searchers. The Thesaurus will be available in late Spring 2004 from the

US Geological Survey's South Florida Information Access (SOFIA) system.

Resources in Other Areas

It is clear from this article's survey that many libraries across south Florida are offering their resources and skills to meet the need for Everglades information. But even libraries outside the region have a role to play if they have the interest. For example, University of South Florida's "Floridiana on the Web" project offers numerous articles on Everglades history through the *Sunland Tribune* collection. One such article, in fact, provided an author with valuable information on Hamilton Disston, the first land developer of the Everglades in the late 1800s. Similarly, the online Florida Photographic Collection, part of the State Archives' Florida Memory Project, offers many extraordinary views of the pre-development Everglades, both in the general collection and in special collections such as those of botanist John K. Small.

Many collections of Floridiana, particularly those relating to agriculture, early exploration, Seminole Indians, fishing, or birdlife, invariably contain materials relevant to the south Florida environment.

The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration will proceed for the next three decades, and the need for quality Everglades-related information across Florida's communities is only going to expand. With a second look at one's services, collections and skills, and a desire to "save the Everglades", any library can play a role in meeting this critical community information need.

Gail Clement is Librarian Assistant Professor at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science in Miami, Florida. She is the founder of the Everglades Information Network & Digital Library at Florida International University and has also worked on the USGS SOFIA project.

Resources

Library Resources —

Digital Library Collections

- Caloosahatchee Documents Collection
Florida Gulf Coast University Library
& South Florida Water Management District
<http://www.sfwmd.gov/org/exo/cwmp/caloodsdocs/>
- Coastal and Estuarine Data/Document Archeology and Rescue
NOAA Miami Regional Library
<http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/general/lib/CEDAR.htm>
- Digital Environmental Resource Library
St. Thomas University Library
<http://library.stu.edu/dl/portal/derl.htm/>
- Everglades Exploration and Conservation
Historical Museum of Southern Florida
<http://www.historical-museum.org/exhibits/everglades/glades.htm>

- Everglades Information Network & Digital Library
Florida International University Library
<http://everglades.fiu.edu/>

- Florida Photographic Collection
Florida State Archives
<http://fpc.dos.state.fl.us/memory/PhotographicCollection/>

- Floridiana on the Web
University of South Florida
<http://www.lib.usf.edu/lds/digitalcollections/F03/html/index.html>

- Mile Markers
Monroe County Public Library System
<http://www.mile-markers.org/>

Library Resources — Access Tools

- Biscayne Bibliography
NOAA Miami Regional Library & UM Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science
<http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/general/lib/bddl.html>

- Key Names gazetteer
Monroe County Public Library System
<http://keys.fiu.edu/gazetteer/>

- Everglades Online
Florida International University Library
<http://everglades.fiu.edu/eol/>

- Florida Bay Bibliography
NOAA Miami Regional Library
<http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/general/lib/fddl.html>

Related Web sites

- Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP)
<http://www.evergladesplan.org/>
- South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Taskforce
<http://www.sfrestore.org/>
- USGS South Florida Information Access (SOFIA)
<http://sofia.usgs.gov/>
- Everglades National Park
<http://www.nps.gov/ever/>

Customer Data 24/7 Aids Library Planning and Decision Making

By Christie Koontz and
Dean K. Jue

At last count Florida has 474 public libraries. These libraries are located throughout the sixty-seven counties in rural and urban settings, serving traditional library users and burgeoning numbers of new immigrants and new online users. Florida's libraries are part of the new national Public Library Geographic Database (PLGDB) <www.geolib.org/PLGDB.cfm> developed by Florida State University's GeoLib Program to provide easily accessible consolidated information on public libraries nationwide over the Internet.¹ The database includes locations of 16,000 public libraries, data sets from the U.S. Census Bureau, and library-use statistics from the National Center for Educational Statistics. This article provides an introduction to this valuable new decision-making tool, the database, and presents a guided tour of its contents.

Geographic Data

Expertise in accessing spatial or geographic data is complex and new to many professions. Yet the need for public librarians to understand geographic data for optimal decision making is unequivocal. Geographic data is best described as information about locations, physical and human characteristics at or near those locations, and the geographic activities and conditions of the people who live in those places.² In a library environment this translates into information such as the geographic boundaries of the neighborhoods the library serves, characteristics of the people who live there (age, language spoken, level of income and education), and how far they live from the library. Library research indicates all these factors, which are geographic in nature, affect library use.³

Why do Public Librarians Need Geographic Data?

For public librarians, this neighborhood-level data is critical as approximately 80 percent of annual funding is received from local governments. This means local library

managers, in order to be effective, must know and understand the characteristics of the taxpayers and people in the community served in order to successfully provide and maintain optimal levels of materials and services.

Many public agencies such as schools, police and firefighters access geographic data with the support of local government through local planning offices or in-house expertise.

Local funders consider these agencies critical to all citizens, and support comes readily. By contrast, the perception of the public library as a customer-selected agency rather than one which must cover all citizens, often casts the library in a not-so-critical role. Yet the public library's mission remains providing information equally to all the people in the community. For the past century, the public library continues to be the premier and single public provider.

With lack of local support and without training in the use of geographic data, librarians are often forced to be less than equal players on community planning teams. This deficiency can limit the library's success in competing with other public agencies for funds, particularly when libraries face cutbacks, staff reduction or closure, in the face of the community reducing school capacities or fire and police protection.

Historically, the larger problem was the lack of accessible and relevant library data available to practicing librarians. Data was dispersed in various

print and online sources throughout the United States. In the late 1980s library use data began to be collected from the states at the federal level by the National Center for Education Statistics.

The geographic aspect of the data (location and population characteristics) problem has been largely solved by the development of the PLGDB. The PLGDB is supported by recent innovations in Internet-based mapping software for which geographic



information system software (GIS) still provides the structure and capabilities, but precludes the need for users to learn the intricacies of using desktop GIS. The new user can view a brief tutorial explaining icons and functionalities and begin operating the application in relatively less time. Also the user can create, print, and e-mail maps that provide powerful depiction of data that table format cannot (see Figure 1.) This new technology allows professionals to rely less on GIS personnel for utilizing spatial data.

What is the Value of the PLGDB to You?

Some everyday questions that library professionals might address using the PLGDB at the local level include:

- What are the relationships between library use and important user characteristics?⁴
- Is the library providing the right balance of library services in light of changing populations?
- What are the impacts of relocating library outlet A to a location three miles away?
- How should funding levels of local library service adjust to these changes?

At a regional or state level, library professionals might address questions such as the following:

- Are the state Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds being equitably distributed across all user groups in the state?
- Where are there population concentrations in our state that meet the federal granting criteria?

At a federal level, library professionals might need to determine:

- How can libraries bridge the digital divide through provision of equitable access to the Internet?
- How do libraries in similar population

ranges compare on various selected characteristics?

- What percentage of public libraries nationwide serve areas with greater than 25 percent poverty?

These are examples of questions that are critical to answer, in order for the public library to fulfill its mission and role as the premier agency in equitable information provision. These questions have been difficult to answer for most librarians and policymakers, due to lack of knowledge, lack of easily-accessible data, or lack of a consistent nationwide data set covering all libraries.

Now for the Tour!

With this article in hand, take a tour of the new Public Library Geographic Database.

Exercise 1: Locate a library

1. Go to <http://www.geolib.org/PLGDB.cfm> and click on GO TO THE MAP.
2. Think of an area of the U.S. that you know well geographically — perhaps the branch library in the town where you grew up. For example, San Marco Branch, Jacksonville Public Library System, Duval County, Florida.
3. Click on the QUICKSEARCH⁵ Quick Search tool to display a new pop-up





A view of a map of Jacksonville in the GeoLib Public Library database showing the location of the central library.

Figure 1
Table of geographic data



window. Access the pull-down menu of U.S. States by clicking on the down arrow to select the state of interest. If desired, you can also choose to limit your search to central or branch library or to a specific library name or county. A new window will pop up showing the libraries that meet your search criterion. Click on ZOOM and you should find yourself viewing the map of your selected library. Close the two windows so you have a full view of the map.

4. Alternatively you can select the LOCATE  tab, and type in the city/state name where the library is located OR the zip code.⁶ As you are familiar with the geography, you can use the PAN  tool to travel in any

The need for public librarians to understand geographic data for optimal decision making is unequivocal.

Christie Koontz is the Director of GeoLib and Dean K. Jue is Assistant Director.


Notes

- 1 GeoLib is partnering with the Florida State University (FSU) Information Institute on this project which is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- 2 National Geographic Research and Exploration, *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards*. Developed on behalf of the American Geographical Society, Association of American Geographers, National Council for Geographic Education and National Geographic Society. Washington, DC: National Geographic Research and Exploration, 1994, p. 42.
- 3 Koontz, C.M., *Library Facility Siting and Location Handbook*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997, pp. 31-61.
- 4 Some of the US census variables selected for inclusion in the PLGDB and relevant to library use include age, income, and education, housing characteristics of ownership or rental, race/ethnicity, travel time, language spoken. Library research indicates that e.g., juveniles, the elderly and those without the library 'habit' will travel less distance and spend less time acquiring library services.
- 5 The QUICKSEARCH is under development. Please use the Locate function.
- 6 Currently the zip code option only works if a library is located in the selected zip code. This is under development.
- 7 The layers which can be viewed thematically are population characteristics. When a population layer is CHECKED and highest on the order of layers it is the layer visible on the map. Imagine you can only see the map on top. You must un-check any higher layer if you want to view any other layer below it (and of course make that layer active and check it, to make it visible.) We are working to make this more user friendly.

The Latest News


Check out the FLA Web site www.flalib.org for library and association news and for information about FLA.






direction on the map to your desired location.

5. A more labor-intensive navigation method is to use the ZOOM button  to move through the national map to the area of your choice, continuing to pan and zoom until you identify the library of your choice. (This is the last resort, but possible!)

Now that you have located a library in an area of geography with which you are familiar, you can fully explore the potential of what the database can offer in the way of information and decision support.



Exercise 2: Interacting with the Active Layer




Now that you are viewing the map of a library and the area in which it resides, go back and click on some layers of interest. Click on the LAYER tab , and you should see a MAP Layer interface on the right of the screen. You will be viewing the information folder on the right of your screen.

1. If you click on the  next to a map layer, the contents will become the active layer. The check beside it turns it off and on visibly. Click on the  and next to the Branch Library box. The screen should refresh, and all the branch libraries and their names will appear.
2. Click on the  tool. Now click on your branch on the map. A data window should pop up with the FSCS branch data.
3. If you click on this  icon beside a layer that is or both and , you can see the legend in the information panel. ONLY ONE LAYER CAN BE ACTIVE. A user can only interact with one layer at a time. You may SEE other data layers, such as congressional lines and libraries, but you will only see one set of thematic population data at a time.⁷

Exercise 3: Getting data about your library area

1. From the map layers, select population

characteristics for your next data layer that you wish to be active. Click on the yellow folder to the left of "population" . The folder should now look like this . The folder will open to show the total population layer.

2. Now click the box , and click on  next to the folder. You should now see population data on the map for your library area. (This is the same process for any other data layer.)
3. You may also use the SELECT BY RADIUS tool  first click on the SELECT BY RADIUS button. A window will appear in the information folder to the right, and you will identify how large you desire the radius to be (ranging between .5 miles or up to 15 miles.) Then click on a point at which you wish to draw a radius. The data results will pop up in a window to the left of the screen. There will be an EXPORT button  at the top left of the report window which you may click, and download the results onto your own desktop spreadsheet.

Feedback Needed

How the PLGDB will develop in the future depends on the input received from librarians across the country, including Floridians. The developers will be working closely with local librarians in the Tallahassee area, and colleagues at the State Library of Florida to make the PLGDB as useful as possible for daily decision-making. Please take a moment to visit the Web site, review the scenarios above, and then think about what you need and what you would desire in the future. For more information please contact Christie Koontz at ckoontz@admin.fsu.edu.

New Books from Small Presses

By Joyce Sparrow

Stigleman, M., Van Brunt, D. (2002). *Wheelchairs on the go: accessible fun in Florida*. Clearwater, FL: Access Travel Guide Publishing, Inc. 424 pgs.

ISBN: 966435656; Price: \$25.95. <http://www.wheelchairsonthego.com/>

This comprehensive travel book is a necessary addition to all Florida library travel collections. The authors have visited or contacted recreational sites throughout Florida to determine access to events for people who have limited mobility. The work cites no other sources for the information other than the personal visits or "... relying on owners, managers or staff to describe their operations and facilities."

While this point may slant the information, the valuable advantage is that detailed accessibility information can be found in one publication. The introduction urges readers to contact the

various sites prior to visiting to verify the details provided in the book. The book is first arranged by major population areas and then by attractions such as fishing, parasailing, diving, bowling, and performing arts. Notes on hotel accommodations are also included. For major theme parks accessibility is detailed for individual rides and restaurants. This work compares to traditional travel guides with the inclusion of maps, driving directions, phone numbers, and admission prices. Several appendices and indices provide easy-to-use tools to manage the wealth of information provided. Personal experience with a family member who is a quadriplegic was the motivation for the creation of this book.



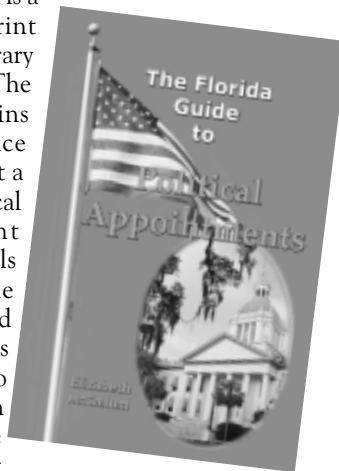
McCallum, E. (2003). *The Florida guide to political appointments*. Brandon, FL:

Hill House Books. 240 pgs. ISBN: 0974001503 Price: \$24.99

Citizens who wish to advise elected officials can apply for positions on one of the many advisory, supervisory or policy boards in Florida's system of government.

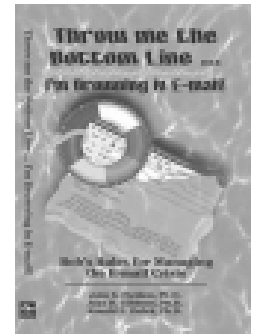
Although some information about appointments is available through the governor's Office of Appointments at http://www.oneflorida.org/myflorida/government/governorinitiatives/one_florida/appointments.html, this handy, indexed reference tool is a

valuable print source for library collections. The book begins with guidance on how to get a Florida political appointment with details about the footwork and connections needed to establish an effective appointment campaign with the appropriate officials. Phone numbers for Florida appointing authorities are included. The bulk of the book details various opportunities and outlines the qualifications for each position. Appendices include a sample questionnaire for gubernatorial appointments and a judicial appointments application form. This guide is a good resource for the ready-reference desk. The author is an expert in political project management.



Fielden, J., Gibbons, J., Dulek, R. (2003). *Throw me the bottom line I'm drowning in email!* Fort Pierce, FL: Pioneer River Press. 102 pgs. ISBN: 0974509809 \$14.95.

Everyday employees the world over receive complicated and confusing e-mail messages. This folksy book presents a scenario about Bob, an executive vice president, who is obsessed with demanding good writing skills from his colleagues. Bob hires consultants to train employees on the mechanics of good business writing. The theory presented is based on bottom-line writing, called BLing, and expanded to include BLPLUS for communicating sensitive information in the workplace. Throughout the book, Bob presents the consultants with various writing samples that show readers ways to improve written communication by directly and efficiently writing key points. As with many recently popular business books, a fictional setting is created in order to simplify the delivery of complex information. Overall, the tips presented in the book are helpful for anyone who wants to improve written communication skills. The storytelling aspect of the book may make it more attractive to some readers. This book is valuable for public and academic libraries. The authors are corporate writing consultants who are donating all the sale proceeds to the Indian River Scholarship Foundation in Fort Pierce, Florida to provide student scholarships.



"Florida Reads" is compiled by Joyce Sparrow, librarian at the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County. Contact her at jsparrow@jwbpinellas.org.

Vibrant Voices! Vital Libraries!

FLA Conference Preview

This year's FLA conference and tradeshow will return to the beautiful, oceanside Adam's Mark Hotel in Daytona Beach. The annual gathering of librarians, Friends and trustees gets off to a quick start with a pre-conference on Sunday evening, March 21 and four pre-conferences on Monday, March 22 and continues with programs, exhibits, meals, and meetings through Wednesday, March 24. Informative, stimulating, and sometimes entertaining programs have been planned to appeal to a wide range of interests. Attendees will also be able to see the latest in library resources and information technology displayed in the exhibit hall.

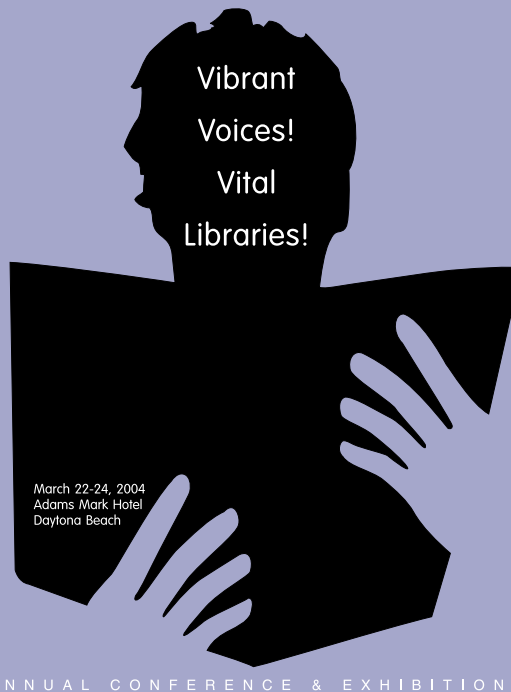
In addition to a slightly abbreviated schedule, there are several other changes to this year's conference. In place of the Scholarship Dinner, there will be a conference-wide President's Dinner on Tuesday evening at the Adam's Mark. The Silent Auction, a benefit for the FLA Scholarship Fund, will be held during the day on Tuesday, and the successful bidders will be announced at the dinner.

The conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet colleagues in an informal atmosphere, learn about the latest products and technology at the exhibits, and stay informed about the current issues and practices in the library profession. Detailed information about the conference and registration information is available online at <http://www.flalib.org>. Try the new online system for quick and easy registration.

Descriptions of selected programs are included below, but a full conference schedule is available at the FLA Web site.

Pre-conferences

21st Century Libraries for 21st Century Teens: Reaching Generation Next
Sunday, March 21, 5:00 – 8:00 PM



In 1997, Sherry Sherrod DuPree, Librarian and Professor of Student Development at Santa Fe Community College, created a Web site entitled "A Roadmap to African American Resources," reviewed in Choice in October 2002. Since 1997, she has upgraded the Web site, making it a portal to African-American history and a database of information on heritage issues of interest to all cultures. The site is a library directory of diverse Web resources, including links to more than seven hundred African-American museums and numerous historical exhibits. Sherry also serves as archivist for the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in Detroit and Chair of the Rosewood Forum. She has conducted numerous workshops for professional and civic associations and library networks throughout the country.

This program includes hands-on guided exploration of the "Roadmap to African American Resources" Web site, a tour of the Rosewood Heritage Foundation Traveling Exhibit, and an introduction to the inspirational legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune.

Census on the Net

Monday, March 22, 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Sponsors: Government Documents, Reference, Genealogy, and Local History Interest Groups

Location: Daytona Beach Community College Library Computer Lab
 Registration fee: \$35.

This hands-on workshop provides an in-depth look at the Census Bureau's Web site (<http://www.census.gov>). It describes the kinds of census data available on the Internet and demonstrates how to access the information. The main focus is on American FactFinder, a dynamic resource that helps

Monday, March 22, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Registration fee: No charge
 Award-winning young-adult author Walter Dean Myers will present the opening keynote address on Sunday evening. Monday will be a mix of general and breakout sessions on topics that include Storytelling for, with, and by Teens; Booktalking Basics; Developing Teen Advisory Boards and Junior Friends Groups, and 21st Century Books. The luncheon speaker will be Adrian Fogelin, author of *Crossing Jordan*, *My Brother's Hero*, and *Sister Spider Knows All*, all set in Florida. This pre-conference is funded by an LSTA grant.

African-American Heritage and History with Special Emphasis on Florida

Monday, March 22, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Location: Historic Bethune Cookman College

Sponsor: Black Caucus and the Museums & Cultural Heritage Interest Group

Registration fee: \$25

one locate Census 2000 data quickly and easily. Participants will learn how to create tables, create thematic maps and locate data by race, Hispanic origin and ancestry. Other data products such as the Economic Census, Equal Employment Opportunity File, American Community Survey, and Population Estimates will also be explored.

The instructor is Bea Piddock, Information Services Specialist from the Atlanta Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau. Instructional materials will be provided.

Library Building Projects: Real World Lessons

Monday, March 22, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Sponsor: Public Libraries Section

Registration fee: \$35

John Szabo, FLA President and Director of the Clearwater Public Library, and Catherine O'Connell, Director of the Boca Raton Public Library, will be joined by Jon Toppe and Ward Friszolowski of Harvard Jolly Clees Toppe Architects for this program designed to provide attendees with the tools needed to build a new library.

Staff Development

Minority Recruitment and Retention in Libraries: What Works, What Doesn't, and What Should We Do?

Tuesday, March 23, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Sponsor: Minority Librarian Recruitment Committee

There is a critical need to be creative in finding ways to recruit and maintain diversity within libraries. Join DeEtta Jones, ARL Director of Organizational Learning Services, for this presentation and discussion of effective approaches and techniques.

Skills for Future Information Service Professionals

Tuesday, March 23, 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Sponsor: Paraprofessional Interest Group

The introduction of technology, software

and instruction into the public library environment creates opportunities for all members of the paraprofessional staff. Opportunities in this environment are being driven by the public's requests for instruction, Web and information searching tools, and software instruction. Speaker James Flynn, Reference Librarian in the Broward County Library Division, will discuss the sets of skills that will position the paraprofessional staff.

Realizing the Leader Within Us

Tuesday, March 23, 1:30 – 2:30 PM

Sponsor: Leadership Development Committee

If libraries are going to survive and grow, they must not only be well managed, but provide dynamic leadership. Dr. Mark Winston, Professor of Library and Information Science at Rutgers University, will discuss the attributes of library leaders, how leaders can be developed, and how each of us can nurture and promote the leadership within us. His FLA Conference presentation will delineate the difference between management and leadership and will focus on how each of us can become a good (and maybe great) library leader. His book *Leadership in the Library and Information Professions: Theory and Practice* is recognized as a definitive work on the topic.

Paraprofessionals, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Tuesday, March 23, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Sponsor: Paraprofessional Interest Group

This session offers an overview of the efforts made by pioneering paraprofessionals in the library field, the current status of library paraprofessionals, the debate about their future role in libraries, and a discussion of salaries, education, and certification. Patricia Profeta, Head of Library Services at Indian River Community College, is the featured speaker.

Volunteers – Making the Most of a Valuable Resource

Wednesday, March 24, 2:00 –3:00 PM

Sponsor: Friends and Trustees

A well-managed volunteer program can expand and enrich library services. Katrina Evans and Faye Roberts from the Columbia County Public Library will present an overview of essential components for an effective volunteer program. A volunteer who has a positive experience is more likely to become a library advocate and even a contributor.

Information Literacy

Information Literacy for Undergraduates in the New Millennium

Wednesday March 24, 8:00 – 10:00 AM

Sponsor: Technology Training Interest Group.

Faculty librarians will speak about undergraduate information literacy needs for academic success and the manner in which these needs are addressed, both through the teaching of semester-long courses and in single session library instruction. Curriculum and assessment of the different types of instruction will be discussed.

Promoting Libraries

Marketing Is Your Library's Voice

Tuesday, March 23, 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Sponsor: Special and Institutional Library and Academic Libraries Sections

A panel presentation and discussion on marketing with time for questions and answers featuring independent consultant Lawrence Webster on "First Things First: Focus on Internal Communications to Gain Respect in your Parent Organization;" Jane Schillie, Head of Research & Educational Services at University of Miami's Richter Library, on "Marketing matters @ your library;" and Lexis/Nexis Information Professional Consultant Robyn Tolle on "Shameless Self-Promotion."

Vibrant Voices

Wednesday, March 24, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Sponsor: Paraprofessional Interest Group

A panel of speakers, including John Szabo, Bernadette Storck, Ann Williams and Susan Dillinger, will speak about advocacy and the importance of staying informed and involved.

Rural Ways and Means

Wednesday, March 24, 10:30 – 11:45 AM

Sponsor: Friends and Trustees

If you work in rural libraries or are just interested in the “other” Florida, don’t miss this session. Rural librarians and educators discuss the “Ways and Means” of obtaining funding and training through partnerships with schools, Workforce Development Boards, Department of Education, Florida Partnership for Family Involvement and others. Rita Shields Maupin, Library Director of Calhoun County Libraries, will be the featured speaker.

Promoting Wellness**A Stress-Management Primer**

Wednesday, March 24, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Sponsor: Technical Services Interest Group

This session is designed to help combat the daily stress faced by both managers and staff of today’s tech services departments. Linda J. Sutton, Head of Cataloging, University of Central Florida Library, will share ideas and creative solutions for dealing with the challenges of increased output and decreased budgets, technology overload, space planning and workflow designs. Kent Case, Licensed Massage Therapist and owner of Tech-Touch Inc., a health enhancement company, will present several strategies and techniques to recognize and counteract the negative effects of stress. Audience members will be led through various exercises during the session and handouts will be available for further practice either in the workplace or at home.

Stay Fit While You Sit

Tuesday, March 23, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Sponsor: Paraprofessional Interest Group

Dr. Bruce Maring, local chiropractor and instructor at Daytona Community College, presents the importance of ergonomics in the workplace. He will share exercises that library workers can perform to “Stay fit while they sit.”

Children’s Services**The FLYP Side: Promoting the Florida Library Youth Program**

Wednesday, March 24, 12:30 – 2:30 PM

Sponsor: School Libraries and Media Centers Section

Donarita Vocca, Branch Manager of the Azalea Public Library and Media Center in St. Petersburg, will share her long-established methods for promoting the FLYP summer reading program through school visitations. She will also demonstrate programming strategies that have attracted neighborhood kids to her library programs summer after summer. Dr. Pat Bauer, Assistant Professor at the University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science, will follow up with the flip side of school visitations by leading a discussion on the benefits of collaborative activities with school library media specialists. She will focus on the effects of providing seamless library service to children.

Outreach**No More Melting Pot: America’s “Mixed Salad” Culture**

Wednesday, March 24, 10:30 – 11:30 AM

Sponsors: Outreach and Library Services to the Spanish Speaking Interest Groups and Reforma de Florida

The focus of this panel presentation is outreach services to children of migrant and indigent people in both the Florida Panhandle and the rural Hillsborough County area.

Managing Public Computers**Software Solutions for Managing Public Access Computers**

Wednesday, March 24, 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Sponsor: Public Libraries Section

Vendors from several companies, including Envisionware and Comprise Technology, will offer solutions to security, user sign-up, timing out users, keeping statistics, interfacing with automation systems, and other public access issues.

Internet Resources**Future of Search: Search Engines’ Search for Success**

Tuesday March 23, 11 AM -12:30 PM

Sponsor: Internet Interest Group

After a year of major ownership changes in the search engine industry and huge profits from text ads. Google has become even more dominant, while other search engines offer interesting and compelling alternatives. Come to this presentation by Greg Notess, Internet columnist for *Online* (<http://www.searchengineshowdown.com>), to hear about the current state of the search engine industry, recent trends in search technology, the impact of the business of search, and some possible future scenarios.

Bonny Brown, Stop! You’re Killing Me! — Mysteries on the Internet

Wednesday March 24, 10:30 AM -12 PM

Sponsor: Internet Interest Group

Bonny Brown is the creator of one of the best mystery readers’ advisory sites on the Internet, Stop! You’re Killing Me (<http://www.stopyourekillingme.com>). Come meet Bonny and hear about how and where she does her research to keep her site updated and see her demonstrate some of her site’s best features.

All Media Guide — Movies & Music on the Internet

Wednesday March 24, 1:00 -2:30 PM

Sponsor: Internet Interest Group

All Media Guide (www.allmedia.com) is the

Conference:

continues from page 23

parent corporation of All Movie Guide (www.allmovies.com), All Music Guide (www.allmusic.com), and All Classical Guide (www.allclassical.com), three of the best and most heavily used viewer's and listener's advisory sites on the Internet. Come see a demonstration of some of the sites' coolest features & hear how and where AMG gets the information to keep the sites updated.

Special Events

President's Dinner

Tuesday, March 23, 7:30 – 9:15 PM

Tickets: \$20

Join conference attendees for a delicious meal, stimulating speaker and interesting conversation.

Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award Breakfast

Wednesday, March 24, 8:30 – 10:00 AM

Tickets: \$15

The Betty Davis Miller Award will be presented to a library for an outstanding children's program.

Friends and Trustees Awards Luncheon

Wednesday, March 24, 12:00 – 1:45 PM

Tickets: \$30

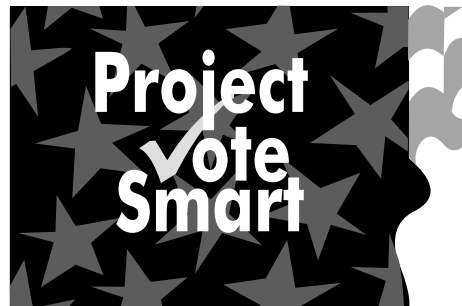
Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook, faculty member at the University of South Florida's School of Library and Information Studies, is the featured speaker. Her topic is "Friends and Trustees — The Tipping Points of Excellence." Awards will be presented to individual, libraries and Friends groups for outstanding service or programs.

Subjects for Voters: Cataloging Voter Information

continues from page 13

and must be careful to recognize attempts to control their opinions. Librarians recognize the importance of making objective factual information available to voters to help them make informed decisions on election ballots when choosing local community leaders, presidents, referenda, etc.

While reference librarians are frequently the ones who assist people with obtaining information on candidates and elections, catalogers also care about our society (though from a safer distance than the reference desk) and are dedicated to working together with public services staff



to accomplish mutual goals such as this. So, whether a cataloger or a reference librarian, do not be afraid to initiate projects and ask for help from your colleagues in providing voter information more readily for your patrons.

Adding Library of Congress subject headings to resources for voters in the library's online catalog improves access to voter information and thus helps to prepare voters to make educated choices on election ballots. This is most effective if done in conjunction with assembly of useful sources through library Web sites and/or

Catalogers also care about our society (though from a safer distance than the reference desk).

vertical files, but inclusion in the catalog should not be overlooked as part of our efforts to get needed sources in the hands of our patrons. To paraphrase the great Carl Rogers, if voters perceive clearly they will choose that which is best. Any efforts towards helping voters meet this challenge can only help in that direction.

Priscilla Williams and Jimmie Lundgren are heads of the Social Science and Science Cataloging Units of the George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida.