

Florida Libraries

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Libraries in Florida: Engaging Communities



In This Issue

Message from the President • Stopping Public Library Privatization: One Community's Successful Campaign • Beyond the Lens: Increasing Community Involvement through Book and Film Series at Bay County Public Library • Floridiana with a Twist: Florida Memories • Leisure Suits Us: Recreational Reading in Academic Libraries • Library as Publisher: 805 Lit + Art Journal • Florida Reads: A Straightforward Sentence • Visualizations: A Tool for Advocacy • Not Your Typical Library Program: Goat Storytime • Message from the Executive Director

A Message from the President: Why Did I Want to Run for President of FLA?.....3
By Gene Coppola

Stopping Public Library Privatization: One Community's Successful Campaign.....6
By Pamela Taudte



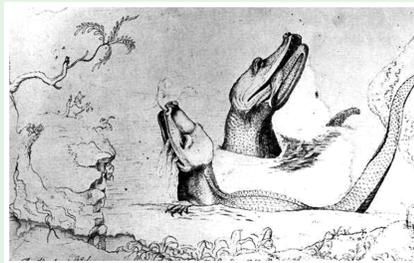
Read about how the Forest Public Library developed a “Save Our Library” campaign to increase awareness and eliminate the possibility of the privatization of their library.

Beyond the Lens: Increasing Community Involvement through Book and Film Series at Bay County Public Library.....10
By Sarah Burris



Find out how the Bay County Public Library initiated a film series with complementary programming that doubled attendance and created lively discussion.

Learn about Florida history through first-hand stories. The Federal Writer’s Project offers excellent resources and content.



Floridiana with a Twist: Florida Memories.....14
By Nancy Pike

Leisure Suits Us: Recreational Reading in Academic Libraries.....16
By Steve Rokusek and Jenna Enomoto

Explore how two librarians from Florida Gulf Coast University enhanced voluntary student reading through a new leisure reading collection and space.



**Volume 59, Issue 1
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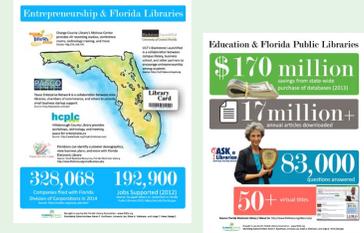
Library as Publisher: *805 Lit + Art Journal*.....19
By Stephanie Katz, Courtney DeSear, and Jyna Johnson

Check out how the Manatee County Public Library developed *805 Lit + Art* featuring original works of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and art. The library also created an issue of the online literary and arts journal just for teens.



Florida Reads: A Straightforward Sentence.....23
By Joyce Sparrow

Learn about two books from Florida authors that will help you become a better writer and editor with topics such as understanding your audience and X-ray reading. Plus, check out new Florida fiction with new books and a Q & A session with an author.



Data Visualizations: A Tool for Advocacy.....25
By Jorge E. Perez and Karen F. Kaufmann

Understand how to tell the story of your library through infographics that can also be easily posted to social media platforms.

Not Your Typical Library Program: Goat Storytime.....29
By Karen Malloy and Marlin Day

Find out how the Newberry Branch Library in Alachua County created a non-traditional storytime that quickly became a popular annual series.



Message from the Executive Director.....32
By Martina Brawer



Send articles for *Florida Libraries* to Editor Maria Gebhardt, Broward County Public Schools, mariagfla@gmail.com by January 7 for the Spring issue; July 15 for the Fall issue.

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Message from the President

Why Did I Want to Run for President of FLA?

Wow. Good question. Why would anyone? I was told there was a lot of work to do; you have to travel to foreign countries, balance a new check book and write stern letters to people who want to take books off the shelves, attend lots of meetings and beg for money throughout the year. On the bright side though, you get to throw a big party at the beach for all your friends! I like that part...

Well, some of that ended up being true (especially about the party) but I guess what motivated me initially, and I suspect the same may hold true for many of my predecessors is a love for the profession, an opportunity to move libraries forward and frankly to give something back to all those who gave something to me. To plagiarize myself, "One of my heroes is Robert Kennedy who stood for ideals that are still true today." He once said, ***"There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?"*** Yes, *there will be obstacles and moments of flailing at windmills. So, why not collaborate with your opposite? Why not take a field trip instead of a meeting? Why not imagine? Who's going to stop you? Why not try one more time?* I like to think that over the past year these words resonated with the FLA Board, Committees, Member Groups, individual Members and the FLA office achieving a higher awareness of what libraries can actually do. With that in mind, let's stroll down memory lane and see some of the things we did accomplish...

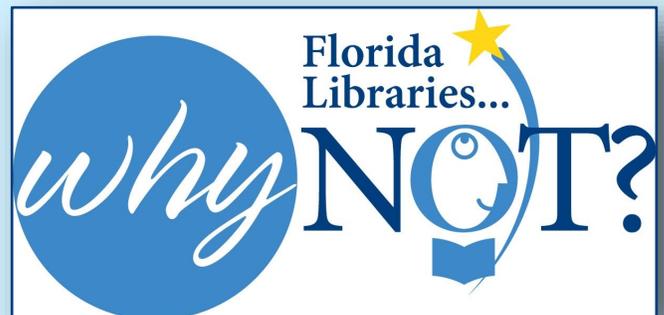
- Working through our Intellectual Freedom Committee, Chaired by Sara Gonzalez, FLA submitted a letter to the school Superintendent of the Collier County School Board not to remove four titles from the shelves, two of which were written by one of America's greatest writers, Nobel Prize/Pulitzer Prize winning author Toni Morrison. Another letter was sent to the Seminole County School Board regarding the possible exclusion of Caldecott Honor Book, *This One Summer* by Jillian and Mariko Tamakai from three Seminole County High Schools.
- To better prepare the library community for our annual "Library Day" trek to Tallahassee as well as for year-long local efforts, the Legislative Committee chaired by Charlie Parker held an online advocacy workshop that attracted over forty attendees. The feedback was quite positive so look for this again sometime next year.
- A unique program was made possible through the efforts of FLA Past Presidents Linda McCarthy and Gloria Colvin. We had the pleasure of a state-wide book tour by Wayne Wiegand, retired F. William Summers Professor of Library and Information Studies and Professor of American Studies at Florida State University, who was promoting his new book, *Part of Our Lives: A People's History of the American Public Library*. There was great attendance and much interest.

- On the Friends/Foundations/Boards front, a new online “Listen & Learn” seminar series has been developed. Topics scheduled and soon to come include “Advocacy,” “Marketing/Developing the Better Newsletter,” “Financials,” and “Fundraising”.
- The CE Committee developed two live webinars for paraprofessionals who deserve more of this type of support.
- The Planning Committee is in the process of reviewing and updating a new Strategic Plan. We should have a draft in place by the ALA Conference.
- The Public Library Outcomes and Standards Committee completed a monumental task updating a framework for achievement. We will be formally rolling out the new standards shortly so please be sure to check the FLA website and share it with your colleagues. We want to get the word out to all public libraries and staff about this new important tool.
- Probably one of the best moments this past year was the nomination of a real librarian to be the new Librarian of Congress, Dr. Carla Hayden. FLA sent letters of support to President Obama and members of Congress and also signed on with other library associations across the country to be part of an ALA initiative encouraging the confirmation of Dr. Hayden’s nomination.
- And of course we had that little beach excursion back in March. We expected 400 and about 500 of you showed up to hear General Dunwoody talk about leadership, attend great after hour events such as the Brew Tour (and the “Rest of

Us”), participate in some really wonderful programs, do the limbo with a guy in a grass skirt at the Wednesday night luau but perhaps most importantly, to come together as colleagues to learn from one another and to enjoy each other’s company. Once again, kudos to Sarah Deville and her remarkable Committee for making it all happen.

There’s more, lots more but overall I like to think that what we did best as a group this year was to further promote our profession to better serve our communities. With that said I’d like to take this last opportunity to publicly thank our excellent immediate Past President Linda McCarthy, our incoming President (Who is going to be terrific!) Elana Karshmer and of course our wonderful Executive Director Martina Brawer for all they have done.

I guess though, when all is said and done and I ask myself why I ran for President, I would have to say...



Gene Coppola
President
Florida Library Association



Stopping Public Library Privatization: One Community's Successful Campaign

By Pamela Taudte

Forest Public Library is the hub of Forest Corners, a small Marion County community located just east of the Ocklawaha Bridge in the middle of the Ocala National Forest. I've lived here with my husband for eight years. Our library, the Forest Public Library, is a social gathering place, a place where parents take their children for education and fun. Due to the economic hardships, the library serves as a vacation for some. The library offers adult and children's programming and is supported by the Friends group.

In early 2015, I was elected president of Friends of the Forest Public Library, a branch of the Marion County Public Library System (MCPLS). In Marion County, the main library is headquartered in the small city of Ocala. Seven branches are located throughout the county; each branch library has its own Friends group.

As president, I held my first official meeting in May, 2015. New ideas, activities and plans were gearing up. Then it all happened! We were hit with the devastating news, via the newly-formed Marion County Public Library Friends Advocacy Group, that our county commissioners were entertaining the idea of privatizing our libraries. They were considering outsourcing management of the library to a for-profit company. Not only that, but the commissioners were putting this issue on their July agenda as part of the budget for the next fiscal year to begin in October.

"Privatization," according to the Oxford 2015 Advanced Learners Dictionary, means "the transfer of a business, industry, or service from public to private ownership and control" [emphasis added]. We learned that Marion County's commissioners had been approached at a conference of the Florida Association of Counties by a representative from Library Systems and Services, LLC (LSSI). This is a for-profit company, controlled by a private equity firm, which provides management of the day-to-day operations of public libraries. This arrangement is called "outsourcing" or "privatization" of library service. MCPLS Friends Advocacy Group's research of LSSI background provided the reasons against library privatization: accountability (who is responsible); lack of transparency; no competitive bidding process; and loss of community control and support.

I became quite disturbed upon hearing that our county commissioners were considering library privatization, as I have prior experience of what privatization, outsourcing and consolidation can do to a community. The other Forest community members were equally upset. The situation made us stop and reflect on the valuable services our libraries provide, services that we take for granted. Our community realized how close it was to losing what it loved.

Robert Ward, a professor at Louisiana State University, studied the results of privatizing public library

management in two LSSI-run libraries: one in Fargo, North Dakota and one in Riverside, California. Ward concluded that privatization should be avoided. In the libraries studied, he found that:

- The library's budget increased.
- Circulation services decreased significantly.
- Unit cost for service delivery increased.
- Transparency was not required; for example, the budget was not disclosed to the public.
- Outsourcing did not help in retaining state certification.

More information came from an April, 2012 article by Heather Hill. She gives an excellent explanation of who is outsourcing, how this happens and what can be done. Hill states the best way to fight against library outsourcing is to understand the contract process, beginning with the Request for Proposal (RFP). She urges those who would resist outsourcing to “make sure that your library is a vocal organization in your community.” The article concludes: “The municipalities that have considered outsourcing their libraries in the last few years may have been looking for a monetary fix as the economy took an extreme downturn. Substantial savings have yet to be proven.”

We knew we had only a small window of time to convince our leaders that it is important to keep our libraries public and to block efforts at outsourcing.

The county-wide Friends Advocacy Group launched a “Save Our Libraries” campaign but recognized that Marion County communities can be vastly different in their communications to the public. Considering the individuality of each community, the Advocacy Group decided to let each branch develop its own plan to inform their community in whatever ways would be most efficient.

For consistency of information, the Friends Advocacy Group in Ocala provided all Friends groups with a series of three white papers; these reports provided authoritative information on the proposed budget cuts and on privatization. E-mail communications were sent to presidents of all branch Friends groups. The presidents then distributed the information to their membership. The MCPL Friends Advocacy Group solicited letters to the editor and op-ed articles for the Ocala Star Banner, created a Facebook presence, and appeared on radio and TV. In addition, they created a new public relations campaign called “Library Lovers” and distributed signs reading “Library Lover” for supporters to put in their yards.

The Friends of the Forest Public Library developed an entirely different strategy from the above. We decided to draw on our well-grounded relationship with local businesses and churches to develop community support.

Before we knew it, it was the second week of June, 2015. We needed to get the word out to our community prior to the September, 2015, Board of County Commissioners’ budget workshop. I quickly called our board together to brainstorm our strategy.



Friends' Secretary Barb Young and I took the lead with our local "Save Our Library" campaign. We searched the Internet for any articles we could locate about LSSI and any library privatization information available. After speaking with a local marketing professional, we quickly realized that the best way to reach our community was "face to face." Knowing that we would have only a few seconds of a person's time, we had to get to the point quickly. Armed with the facts, we put our plan into action.

Barb and I decided to create a half-page flier with bullet points on what privatization would mean to the library and with contact information for our county commissioners. We distributed these fliers to our local businesses and handed them out during our petition drive. The next phase was to create a tri-fold board showing pictures of our children's programs and other library services that would be in jeopardy if the budget were cut or if privatization took place. Our local community depends heavily on the Forest Library. This is where they can continue their education, use the internet to prepare resumes or apply for state services, and have a safe environment for their children who can look in the children's department for their next adventure.

The tri-fold was placed in our library lobby and caught the attention of every patron who walked in. We then drafted a petition to solicit signatures of community members and their respective zip codes. Petition in hand, we visited our local businesses. The reaction was all that we had hoped. Outraged at the very thought of privatization and how it would affect our community, business people talked with their friends, family and other business acquaintances. The word was spreading like wildfire.

Our community was shocked, angry and passionate. Our otherwise quiet rural townspeople did not

remain quiet when expressing their feelings for their library. They were glad to step forward in support of their library and simply asked, "How can I help?" and "Where do I sign?" Patrons told everyone they knew to stop by the library and sign the petition, to write letters and to call their district commissioner in support of their library.

Barb and I then met directly with our district county commissioner. We supplied him with a report containing bullet points about privatization and their respective references along with the signed petitions. We stressed the impact of privatization and the loss of opportunities we would face as a community if it happened. The American Library Association brochure, Keeping Public Libraries Public, gives a checklist for communities considering privatization of public libraries. This provided valuable information and presented a clearer picture of how privatization affects libraries. In hindsight, our report would have had an even greater impact if we had presented it to our county commissioners during a live session that was televised and recorded.

We then created a "Special Announcement" flier thanking our community for their efforts, updating them as to the status of the privatization issue, and urging their continued support. Our message was to keep the pressure on the commissioners.

Next, Barb and I decided to take a trip to see for ourselves the "bright, shining example" that our commissioners touted as a "successful, privatized library." We traveled to northern Sumter County on a Tuesday morning to visit a branch of a recently-privatized county system. We did not know what we would find; in reality, there may be some segment of truth with this privatization issue. Upon entering the library, however, the vast difference was immediately apparent. The building felt like an institution. Every-

thing about it seemed uninviting to us. The library was eerily quiet. We were never greeted or acknowledged by staff. There was a lack of available new materials and of the personalization to which we were accustomed. We spoke with a patron who confirmed that, if they requested a book, they may or may not get it. If they did get the book, the waiting time could be up to six months.

Returning home and gathering our material from our internet research and Sumter County visit, we met with our library advocacy group and related our findings to them. We shared our materials and our campaign results with the county-wide MCPL Friends Council in September.

Prior to September, we made plans to attend the Board of County Commissioners' budget workshop. Some of our members were concerned they would not have transportation to attend the meeting and show their support. We decided to organize a car-pool to make that happen for them. This effort worked very well and the Forest community made a strong showing at the public hearing.

To document all this information and to keep it in perspective, we created a binder that contained our research, newspaper articles, Internet information on privatization, and marketing material created by the Forest Friends group. This binder also contains a timeline of our day-by-day "Save our Library" campaign activities.

Because we had hit the ground running and knew our community, our efforts succeeded. Through the work of our local Friends group plus the efforts of the other Friends groups across the county, our commissioners heard their constituents loud and clear. The County Commission took library privatization off the table!

I truly believe that the combined efforts of the

MCPL Advocacy group and the branch library Friends group surprised the county commissioners by how quickly we organized, put an action plan together and alerted the public. In 2016 MCPL Friends will be even better prepared.

Looking back over our experience, we realized two strategies that were especially effective: face-to-face interaction with the general public, and quick-to-read bulleted information about what privatization would mean to a library and the community. These served as an instrumental wake-up call about what could be lost if the warnings were ignored.

Privatization is an issue still facing Florida's public libraries. As Heather Hill stated, "What seemed a stalled trend in early 2010 now appears to be a swiftly growing phenomenon." If this phenomenon continues to grow, a big effort will be needed in each community to educate the public on privatization and on how it would affect their libraries.

I stress this point: Knowing your community and taking the time to talk with the public was well worth the effort. The Marion County Library System, to this day, remains PUBLIC!

Pamela Taudte is president of Friends of the Forest Public Library and lives in Marion County, Florida.

NOTES:

1 - Ward, Robert C. (2007). The outsourcing of public library management: an analysis of the application of new public management theories from the principal-agent perspective. *Administration & Society*, v38, n6, 627-648.

2 - Hill, Heather. "A Look at Public Library Management Outsourcing, Public Libraries Online, May/June, 2012. <http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2013/04/a-look-at-public-library-management-out>.

3 - Hill, Heather. "A Look at Public Library Management Outsourcing."

4 - Hill, Heather. "A Look at Public Library Management Outsourcing."

5 - American Library Association. Keeping Public Libraries Public. "Keeping Public Libraries Public" -

http://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/outsourcing/REVISEDSEPT2011_ALAKeepingPublicLibraries%20PublicFINAL2.pdf [accessed 09 November 2015].

6 - Hill, Heather. "A Look at Public Library Management Outsourcing."

Beyond the Lens: Increasing Community Involvement through Book and Film Series at Bay County Public Library

By Sarah Burris

The Bay County Public Library in Panama City has hosted a book and film club for several years; however, room for improvement in both attendance and discussion existed. This past fall, we partnered with the PBS POV (Point-of-View) documentary series to launch Beyond the Lens: Book and Film Series. Books that are hand-selected align with the topic of each film. The series has been incredibly successful in doubling our attendance count, increasing educational programming, and engaging the community. A similar book/film program could be replicated at any Florida library whether it is a large system or small location. The program is beneficial, it is cost effective, and can be fine-tuned to fit each individual library's needs.

The award-winning PBS POV series just wrapped up its twenty-eighth season as the longest running documentary series on air promoting independent filmmakers. The lending library can be viewed at http://www.amdoc.org/outreach_filmlibrary.php to begin planning a community screening at your library. Over eighty titles are available to screen at absolutely no cost! PBS loans the films and pro-

vides online resources for facilitating an event. Every library that participates simply needs the space to house an audience and proper audio-visual equipment to project the DVD. Each film has supplemental online educational resources, including a discussion guide, lesson plan, and reading list. PBS POV requests libraries to submit audience evaluations and an event coordinator evaluation after the screening. I let my film attendees know that the evaluations are a huge thank you to PBS for lending the films. The evaluations also allow me to review how the program is going from the audience's perspective, and we have received very positive feedback. Friends of the Bay County Public Libraries has been extremely generous in providing funds for refreshments and popcorn.

Our previous book and film club was at risk of being cancelled due to low attendance numbers. A study of all libraries using PBS POV community screenings from 2008 - 2012 indicate the average number of attendees to be twenty-four individuals.¹ This aligns with our PBS POV screening attendance with an average of twenty-six individuals per pro-

gram, which has more than doubled our previous attendance average of ten individuals. Our attendance boost has been assisted by press releases, word-of-mouth advertising, and community experts pulling in others who share interest in the film subject. Several attendees had never been inside of our library prior to attending a film.

The Beyond the Lens: Book and Film Series involves a comparable investment to attending an educational workshop. While not mandatory, many of our attendees read the hand-selected book on a similar topic to begin learning about the subject of the film. Pre-film activities are a great way to develop interaction among attendees. Before watching Art and Craft about art forger Mark Landis, our pre-film activity was a “Fake-A-Van Gogh” drawing session led by a local community art organization. (See photos of the event to the right.) Our partnership with PBS POV has encouraged us to bring in a panel of local experts from the community on each book/film topic for post-film discussion. Organizing a panel of community experts takes planning to organize; however, it has proven to be the most beneficial addition to the book/film program.

The power of sharing documentary films is best summed up by the program’s first executive producer, Marc Weiss: “It’s not a question so much about giving the voiceless a voice as it is about giving the American Public an opportunity to hear.”² One of the most frequent post-film discussion leads is an attendee mentioning that, “I didn’t realize....” The



expert panelists are incredibly knowledgeable and can answer questions on the subject that the facilitating librarian might not know the answer to without prior research. For example, the first film our library screened was *Dance for Me* by Danish filmmaker Katrine Philp. This film features Russian teenage ballroom dancer, Egor, who leaves home to live in Denmark with his new dance partner, Mie, who shares his passion for competitive ballroom dancing. Our guest panelists included four dancers from Fred Astaire Dance Studio. Two of the guest dancers were from the Ukraine with life experiences similar to the dancers in the film. Their stories then

allowed for the documentary narrative to seamlessly continue off-screen. The dancers provided live ballroom dancing which brought in quite a crowd of all ages. The selected reading was *Mambo in Chinatown* by Jean Kwok which similarly dealt with coming-of-age and balancing cultural differences through a love of Latin dance. Additional community expert panels we have brought in for the events have included local gamers for *Web Junkie*, artists for *Art and Craft*, and educators for *The Light in Her Eyes*. Be creative in who you bring in. Guest panelists have been thrilled to share their knowledge. The events would not have been as successful without their

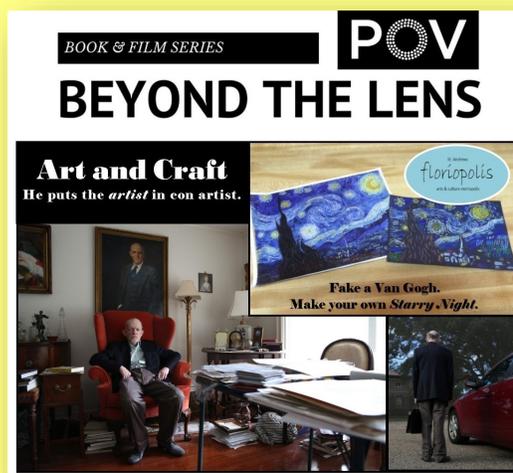


expertise and enthusiasm about the film subjects.

Many of the films are award-winning from film festivals across the globe. There is a diverse selection of subjects available, allowing each library to select the films that will best fit their audience. The documentary films provide a platform for the library to be actively involved in civic engagement and explore current social issues.³ Simon Kilmurry, former POV Executive Director, stated that "POV Films are not polemics; they can engage people across the spectrum of opinion. We want them to be seen by as many people as we possibly can... It all goes back to creating dialogue."⁴ The dialogue has been incredibly successful since the films allow the audience to experience different countries, cultures, and viewpoints. Our film attendees are eager to learn and actively engage in dialogue through asking questions and sharing stories. The conversation is continued with friends and family long after the event takes place, which has led to purchase requests of films shown for those who were unable to attend.

A similar program can be custom-tailored to your library. Our program has many components so it is easy to simplify down to the film screening and post-film discussion with a local community panel. Many of the films are geared for high school age and up, which is especially helpful for teen specific programs. A PBS POV film could complement a library program you already have in the works – from Black History Month to Adult Summer Reading Programs. Your library could even plan a mini-film festival.

The Beyond the Lens: Book and Film Series has been extremely rewarding. The key to success is building community connections and to actively promote the events. Showcasing PBS POV films has revitalized our book/film program by bringing the community into the library, doubling attendance, and highlighting the library as a place for education. Start planning to hold a PBS POV screening at your library today!



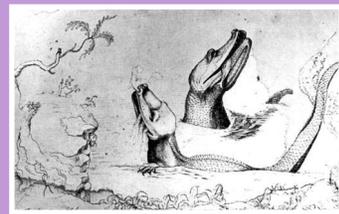
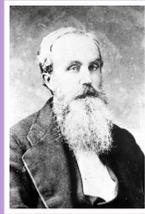
Sarah Burrell is a Reference Librarian at the Bay County Public Library in Panama City, FL. She received her Master of Library and Information Science degree from Kent State University (Kent, OH) in 2013. Sarah Burrell is a recent recipient of the Florida Libraries Association Outstanding New Librarian Award.

NOTES:

- 1 - Cocciolo, Anthony, "Public Libraries and PBS Partnering to Enhance Civic Engagement: A Study of a Nationwide Initiative," *Public Library Quarterly*, 32 (2013) : 10.
- 2 - Ibid., 3.
- 3 - Ibid., 7.
- 4 - Abrash, Barbara, "The View From the Top: P.O.V. Leaders on the Struggle to Create Truly Public Media," *American University Center for Social Media* (2007): 20.
<http://www.cmsimpact.org/sites/default/files/documents/pages/viewfromthetoppov.pdf>

FLORIDA MEMORIES

ETOBIDV WENOBIEZ



Most of us are eager to learn more about Florida. Sometimes, instead of fiction or history, we prefer to read or hear first-hand stories about our state. This can lead us to autobiographies, memoirs, travel narratives, and even songs. Although some early materials are out of print and not digitized, others are freely available – in a library, a bookstore, or even online.

One of the earliest written accounts is that of Hernando D'Escalante Fontaneda, a young Spaniard shipwrecked in Southwest Florida. He was only thirteen. Apparently, he was the only Spaniard from the vessel to survive captivity, he lived for seventeen years among the Calusa Indians, serving as an interpreter for the Calusa chief. Fontaneda was rescued in 1566 and wrote his memoirs in about 1575. One translation can be found at:

www.keyshistory.org/Fontaneda.html.

Much of what is known about the Calusas in the sixteenth century, comes from Fontaneda's record.

William Bartram was a naturalist, also the son of a naturalist, in Philadelphia. He sailed in March 1773, to explore the exotic southern wilderness. Georgia was first, then eastern Florida and later other parts of the south. Bartram collected samples, sketched flora and fauna, and described the Seminole Indians he encountered. When he was finally able to publish his observations in 1791, the account included not only scientific facts but also his personal experiences. His narrative is still in print. Among

By Nancy Pike

the several editions available is *William Bartram, Travels and other Writings* (Library of America, 1996).

An early nineteenth century settler, Mills Olcott Burnham, left us his interesting life story in *East Coast Florida Memoirs: 1837 – 1886* by Robert Ransom (T.J. Appleyard, 1926; reprinted by Florida Classics in 1988). Burnham was the first sheriff and a member of the Florida Territorial Legislature from what was then St. Lucie County, and finally, keeper of the Canaveral Lighthouse for thirty years, from 1853. One family story describes running low on the oil required to keep the special lens moving, whereupon he turned to resident snakes from which he extracted enough snake oil to save the light until the next delivery boat!

Of special interest are the accounts collected by the Federal Writers' Project during the Great Depression. Writers, journalists, librarians, and others travelled long miles, interviewing people, and recording their recollections. Collecting personal narratives through this agency began in four states (Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia) then ultimately included seventeen. These collections can be searched by state:

American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940, is online at:

<https://www.loc.gov/collection/federal-writers-project/about-this-collection/>.

Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938, is at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>.

Zora Neale Hurston was one of those hired for the Florida project, which inspired her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. (Numerous other writers drew upon the narratives for their work, too. Other FWP writers who went on to fame include Richard Wright, Saul Bellows, and Studs Terkel.)

Stetson Kennedy's essay on what it was like to be part of the Florida segment of the Federal Writers Project is at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/florida/ffpres01.html>.

Another feature of the FWP is its collection of folk tales and folk songs. This is available in print form as *A Treasury of American Folklore*, edited by B. A. Botkin (Crown, 1944 and many later editions). *Florida Folklife* is also online at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/florida/>.

The Florida Memory Project has continued to collect materials, including folksongs at <https://www.floridamemory.com/audio/>.

If first-hand Florida memories are your interest, these elements should get you started.



Portrait of Zora Neale Hurston - Eatonville, Florida.

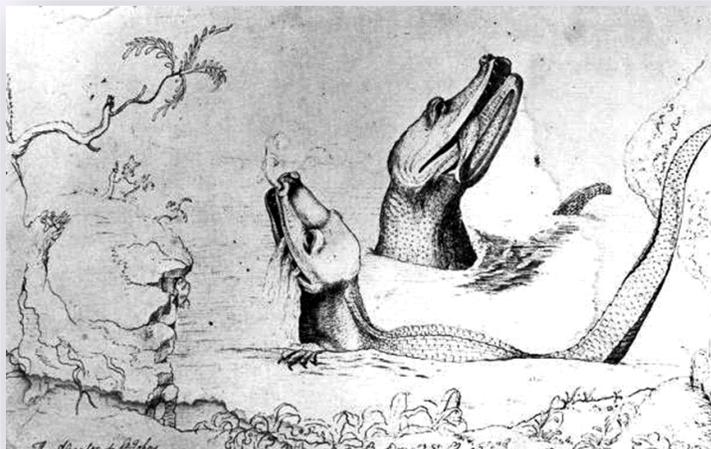
Black & white photoprint, 10 x 8 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/26314>, accessed 19 February, 2016.



Captain Mills Olcott Burnham- Cape Canaveral, Florida. Nineteenth century or early twentieth century. Black & white photoprint, 10 x 7 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/35164>, accessed 19 February, 2016.



Bartram, William, 1739-1823. Photograph of a drawing by William Bartram of two alligators in the St. Johns River. 1773 or 1774. Black & white photograph, 8 x 10 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/131>, accessed 19 February, 2016.

Nancy Pike is the former Director of the Sarasota County Library System and former President of the Florida Library Association.



Leisure Suits Us:

Recreational Reading in Academic Libraries

By Steve Rokusek and Jenna Enomoto

At the Florida Library Association's Annual Conference, two liaison librarians from Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) gave a well-received poster presentation on leisure reading collections (LRCs) in academic libraries, including the results of a survey of Florida academic libraries. Encouraged by its reception, we now present our findings for *Florida Libraries* to reach an even wider audience of Florida librarians.

Although the promotion of leisure reading (recreational reading, pleasure reading, etc.) is more commonly associated with public libraries, leisure reading collections and spaces can also be valuable components of academic libraries. Research shows that students who more frequently read for pleasure experience greater academic success. However, college students do not always have convenient access to novels and other popular reading material, especially if they live on campus and cannot easily visit their local public library. Given the benefits of leisure reading, as academic librarians, we strongly believe that university libraries should make efforts to facilitate this valuable activity.

In particular, we advocate the creation and maintenance of an LRC with a corresponding comfortable space for browsing and reading collection materials. Our overview of this topic will provide readers with the rationale for creating an LRC with accompanying space, important factors to consider when creating and maintaining this area, a look at FGCU's own LRC, and an analysis of the results of our survey of various Florida academic libraries regarding leisure reading areas.

Background and Rationale

We define leisure reading as reading that is voluntary (i.e., not assigned) and is engaged in for the

purpose of entertainment or personal gratification. Previous studies indicate that LRCs are fairly common in academic libraries. A survey of 45 public universities in the nearby states of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina found that 64% of the schools had a separate LRC in the library. The study also found that larger universities are more likely to have LRCs and that fiction is the most commonly read genre in these collections.

Additionally, a study by Morrisett found that among 85 academic libraries throughout twelve southeastern states, 45% offered an LRC. School size did not seem to influence whether or not such a collection was present, and fiction was again found to be the most popular genre.

Unfortunately, according to a National Endowment for the Arts report, recreational reading is declining among teenagers and young adults. Furthermore, this decline in reading frequency is occurring alongside diminishing literacy skills among older teens and adults. Yet, the report also finds that students who read more frequently are "more likely than infrequent or non-readers to demonstrate academic achievement" in reading and writing. Finally, the report indicates that higher reading rates are associated with greater civic and cultural involvement.

Besides the fact that LRCs in academic libraries represent a growing trend, and that leisure reading in general can boost student academic achievement levels, there are several other benefits that LRCs can provide an academic library. They give convenient access to recreational reading materials that may be difficult for students to obtain elsewhere, especially if they are confined to living on or near campus and do not have ready access to transportation to the nearest public

library or commercial bookstore. LRCs can also serve as an additional draw for students and other patrons to visit the library. Finally, an LRC in an academic library is simply a fun way to promote voluntary reading among student and faculty populations.

Key Considerations for Academic Libraries in Creating or Maintaining an LRC

Whether deciding to introduce an LRC into an academic library, or simply figuring out the best way of maintaining such a collection, here are six things to consider:

1. **Acquisition method** – How will materials for the LRC be acquired? The most common method among Florida academic libraries, according to the results of a brief survey we conducted, appears to be leasing the materials. However, some collections consisted entirely of purchased or donated titles, or a mixture of both.
2. **Bibliographic control** – How will patrons discover the LRC? If the collection is leased, should it appear in the library catalog among regular library holdings? Should there be a way for patrons to browse only LRC titles in the catalog, separate from regular holdings?
3. **Size of collection** – How large should the LRC be? Should this number grow over time? Should it be limited to single titles, or should multiple copies be ordered?
4. **Genres included** – Should the library focus exclusively on fiction or nonfiction titles? If a mixture of both is preferred, what should that mixture appear as? (Our survey discovered that most Florida academic libraries, including FGCU, opt for a mix of “mostly fiction” titles.) Does the LRC provide a variety of genres, such as historical-fiction, science-fiction, mystery, romance, thriller, etc., or should it include just what is currently popular according to lists such as *The New York Times* Best Sellers?
5. **Location, setting, and furniture** – Where should the LRC be placed? Is there space in the library to carve out a specific area for browsing an LRC? If

not, how effective would it be to house the collection with regular titles on the main shelves? Is there a budget to also provide comfortable seating arrangements in or near the LRC area?

6. **Current magazines and newspapers** – Should the LRC be combined with a browsing area housing current magazine and newspaper offerings?

How the Eagles Do It: The Leisure Reading Collection at FGCU Library

Early in 2015, under the direction of Chris Boyd, Head of Technical Services, the FGCU Library transitioned to a new leisure reading collection model with an accompanying browsing area, with books arriving in February 2015. Located near the main entrance of the library, across from a Starbucks® café, the LRC has proven to be a popular library feature, with students, faculty, and staff often stopping by to skim the titles. While there is no defined seating area for this collection, nearby comfortable chairs are available.

At just under three hundred books, the collection is relatively small. All books are acquired via a leasing plan, with most titles being generated automatically from *The New York Times* Best Seller list. However, popular young adult titles are also handpicked for the collection. The leasing plan selects approximately 70% fiction (all genres), and 30% nonfiction. The library has partial bibliographic records for these books, and they are discoverable through the online library catalog. Encouragingly, less than a year after its inception (as of December 14, 2015), 260 of the 294 books in the collection (88.4%) have circulated at least once. Several titles have circulated multiple times, bringing the total number of loans to 689.

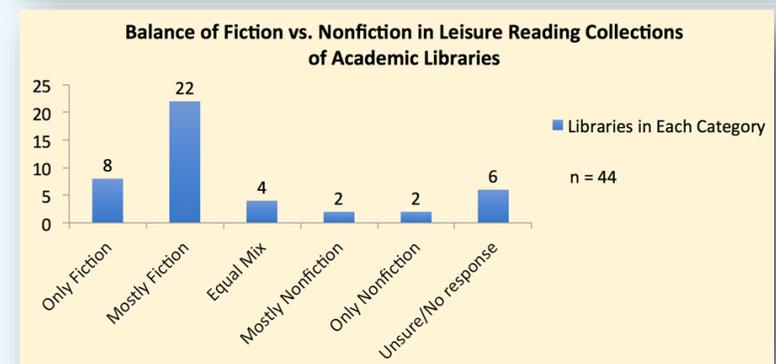
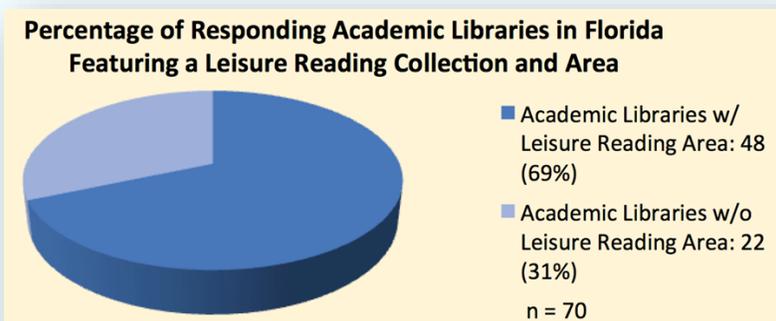
How Others Do It: Survey of LRCs at Various Academic Libraries in Florida

In order to get an idea of what other LRCs exist at other Florida academic libraries, we distributed a brief survey in March 2015 via three commonly used Florida listservs (FACRL, FLVC, and FLA) inviting academic librarians to respond. Altogether, we received 158 responses from private, public, and for-profit uni-

versity libraries, but had to discard 88 of them because of duplicate responses, responses that gave conflicting data for the same library, or responses that did not identify a specific college or university for the data given. This left us with a total of 70 valid responses, with the following limitation: results were skewed toward institutions where only one response was submitted, which tended to be smaller schools.

Based on these results, we learned that 69% of all Florida academic libraries do indeed have a separate leisure reading area within their library space.

Moreover, their LRCs included a mixture of mostly fiction, with some non-fiction titles.



In the future, our preliminary research of LRCs could be expanded upon in several ways, both through further examination of the present data and by conducting related studies. For instance, possible research directions include a more in-depth examination of LRCs at other universities and colleges, differentiating among the type of Institution (i.e., public, private, for-profit, four-year, two-year), or by a Carnegie residential character measure (i.e., primarily non-residential, primarily residential, highly residential). As time goes by,

we might also further examine the FGCU Library's LRC circulation data, including the total circulation of the collection, or circulation by genre of book to better determine patron preferences (i.e., fiction, nonfiction, etc.). Finally, we might conduct an opinion survey of FGCU Library patrons regarding the LRC, as well as inquiring about their leisure reading habits in general.

To LRC or Not to LRC: What We Learned

We conclude that leisure reading collections do indeed present a tremendous opportunity for academic libraries, and are a common feature of many Florida college and university libraries. Leisure reading provides not only recreational value to student lives, but can even enhance academic performance. LRCs provide a valuable service to students who may not always have ready access to public libraries, nor the funds for bookstore purchases. They may even inspire students to visit and use the library more often. But above all, reading for pleasure is just plain, old-fashioned fun!

NOTES:

- 1 - National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), *To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence*, Research Report #47 (Washington, DC, 2007), <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED499045>.
- 2 - Sanders, Mark. "Popular Reading Collections in Public University Libraries: A Survey of Three Southeastern States," *Public Services Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (2009): 174-183, doi:10.1080/15228950902976083.
- 3 - Morrisett, Linda A. "Leisure Reading Collections in Academic Libraries: A Survey," *North Carolina Libraries* 52, no. 3-4 (1994): 122-125, <http://www.ncl.ecu.edu/index.php/NCL/issue/current>.
- 4 - NEA, *To Read or Not to Read*.
- 5 - *Ibid.*, 21.
- 6 - Chris Boyd, e-mail message to Steve Rokusek, December 14, 2015.

Steve Rokusek has experience working in university, community college, and public libraries. He is currently the Social Sciences Librarian at FGCU.

Jenna Enomoto is the former Health Professions & Social Work Librarian at FGCU, and currently works as a social worker in Oregon. She maintains an interest in library-related topics, and serves as the human services subject editor for ARCL's College and Research Libraries: Career Resources.

Library as Publisher:

805 Lit + Art Journal



By Stephanie Katz, Courtney DeSear, and Jyna Johnson

In January 2015, Manatee County Public Library System (MCPLS) founded *805 Lit + Art*, an online literary and arts journal. According to our research, MCPLS was the first library to publish an online literary and arts journal featuring original works of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and art. We created the journal to showcase emerging authors and artists in our community as well as the rest of the world. *805* is run by a team of eight editors: six librarians who are current or former employees of MCPLS, a literature professor from State College of Florida, and an widely-published local fiction writer. Half of our editors are volunteers, and we have occasional guest art editors. We have nearly 300 subscribers and have had over 300 submissions from authors and artists locally, nationally, and internationally. We published two issues in 2015 and one issue so far in 2016. The first three issues featured 38 authors and artists—a third of whom had never been published before—from Florida, other states in the U.S., Italy, and the U.K.

Why a library? Why a journal?

Literary journals are typically sponsored by artist communities, private publishers, and cultural institutions like universities. As cultural institutions, libraries are poised

for publishing success because of patrons, librarians, and shifts that have occurred in libraries and the publishing industry.

Libraries, especially public libraries, have a built-in base of readers: their patrons. They are always hungry for new things to read and many people want to read content beyond what traditional publishers supply, such as flash fiction. People also love to see pieces by local authors and artists. Though we publish works from all over the world, 42% of our contributors were from Florida, mostly Manatee County and neighboring Sarasota County. The publishing industry has changed, and avenues such as indie, online, and self-publishing are now respectable and generate more materials for readers. The first three issues of *805* have received a lot of positive feedback from readers. One reader emailed us, “[I] read *Issue 1* and reviewed all the art in one sitting, it's THAT GOOD...Looking forward to more.”

In addition to readers, libraries have a built-in base of editors: their librarians. To run a journal, editors need to be able to read many submissions and select the best in terms of quality and reader appeal, to promote the journal and create partnerships in the community, and to utilize technology for publication and preservation.

Librarians are highly trained in all three of these areas. Librarians also have a solid understanding of copyright and freedom of speech, which is needed when running a publication.

Libraries are not mere repositories for books; libraries are at the forefront of innovation in all areas, especially publishing. Many academic libraries publish scholarly journals, public libraries have book review blogs, and a very small handful of public library run e-presses for e-books. Besides *805*, one other similar library-published journal exists, *Fourth & Sycamore*, which started as a book review blog. Publishing a literary and arts journal fits into libraries' missions to provide patrons with quality reading material and to provide authors and artists with the chance to be published. Many people make a successful career or side-business from their creativity, and getting published can help open doors to more opportunities. Every decision the editors make for *805* is based on the philosophy, ethics, and ideals of public libraries.

Zero, zip, zilch, nada.

We founded *805* with a budget of zero and the hopes of one day obtaining funding. We only used free software until we were able to make our case for paid software. Our first expenditure was to get a custom web address (www.805lit.org) and the next was to switch from the free Green Submissions to the paid-for Submittable, a much more robust and reliable submissions manager. Our current software budget is \$300 a year. We also have

hopes of subscribing to use Adobe InDesign layout software in the future. After our first year, we joined the Community of Literary Magazines and Presses for \$125, putting our yearly budget at \$425. Though we now spend money to publish our journal, we could easily switch back to our \$0 model if we lost our funding. With the small amount of money needed for paid software, we believe we could find sponsors for our journal, such as an art center or other cultural organization.

To print or not to print?

We decided to publish *805* online because of both money and access. Online publishing is free, but each printed issue would cost \$7 to \$15 depending on paper quality, binding, and total number of copies. Our quotes for 100 full-color copies ranged from \$700 to \$1,200 plus shipping. In order to print issues, we would have to charge readers for each issue to recoup the money. Not only did online publishing make more financial sense, it also made more philosophical sense. In addition to keeping our costs down, online publishing increased accessibility to *805*. Issues are available anywhere to anyone with access to the internet at no charge, and increased access means an increased readership. Since we accept submissions worldwide, it makes sense to make access to issues worldwide. Years ago, only printed periodicals were taken seriously, but the industry has shifted as readers demand digital access.

The infographic is set against a background of vertical green stripes. On the left, under the heading 'Free Software', a list of services is provided: Weebly- Free Version, Gmail, Google Drive, Green Submissions, Microsoft Publisher, and MailChimp. On the right, under the heading 'Paid Software', a list of services and their costs is provided: Weebly Starter- \$96/year, GoDaddy- \$18/year, and Submittable- \$180/year (after 50% literary journal discount). A central blue circular graphic with a ribbon contains the word 'versus'. At the bottom right, the total cost for the paid software is listed as \$294/year.

Category	Item	Cost
Free Software	Weebly- Free Version	Free
	Gmail	Free
	Google Drive	Free
	Green Submissions	Free
	Microsoft Publisher	Free
	MailChimp	Free
Paid Software	Weebly Starter	\$96/year
	GoDaddy	\$18/year
	Submittable	\$180/year (after 50% literary journal discount)
	Total	\$294/year

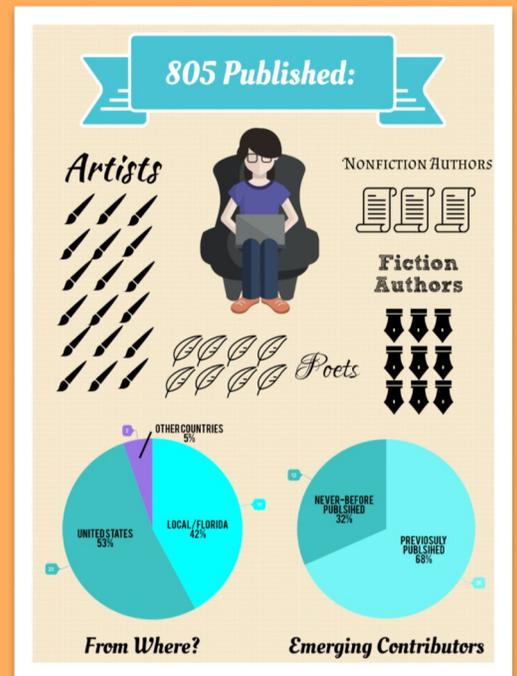
Despite the many pros of online publishing, many people do not read online, either because of preference or a lack of computer skills or internet access. Because of this, the Friends of the Central Library recently gave us \$500 to seed an annual printed anthology. The anthologies will be sold for cost or a little above cost, and the money will be used to publish the next anthology. Copies will also be available for check-out for readers who cannot afford to pay for an issue.

Wading through the slush pile

Our submissions process has morphed over *805*'s one-year lifespan. Recently, we switched to rolling submissions to encourage artists and authors to submit year-round and give our editors more time to read and vote on submissions. Of our eight editors, half are volunteers freely giving their time to *805* despite packed schedules. Since we are a small publication geared towards emerging authors and artists, we receive many prose submissions that need a final, small polish. Instead of declining these submissions like many journals do, we pair the writer with an editor who helps them get the piece publication-ready. For example, we've had a few submissions that were fantastic, but benefited from a few lines trimmed or reworded by authors. Working with authors to craft the best draft possible is very rewarding, and we know what a difference it makes to aspiring writers. One such writer told us, "I want to personally thank the two editors for doing such a great job at enhancing the story." *805* was the first journal to accept one of his submissions—a story that might have been tossed aside by a larger journal.

Many journals charge fees to subscribers and submitters, and though we understand why they do, we do not because we see it as a barrier to those who cannot afford the fees. We want as many people as possible to be able to submit, especially those who are not yet making a living on their craft. We accept simultaneous submissions, even though many larger journals do not, to give our submitters the best possible chance of being published. Also, since we are not able to pay our contrib-

utors, we do not want to charge them to submit. Whenever we have a decision to make about *805*, we come back to the fact that we were founded by a public library, and the mission of public libraries is to provide information and services for little to no cost.



Publishing rights are very complicated, so we crafted a straight-forward document that submitters agree to when they submit their work. Our agreement states that *805* has "first world electronic rights," which is the right to publish a piece online for the first time. We do not own their work and they are free to submit their work elsewhere even if we've published it. We also have the right to post the work on social media and in our Over-Drive e-book collection and to submit the work for prizes, such as the Pushcart Prize. See the entire agreement here: <http://bit.do/805agreement>.

B&N Hearts Our Tweet!

Writers and artists live online. This is where they go to show off their work, find new places to submit, learn about contests, and mingle with kindred spirits. We realized early on that a social media presence would be necessary for *805* to attract subscribers and provide a larger audience for our contributors. Our Facebook and Twitter likes increase daily. We post when new issues are available, the first lines of pieces, and opportunities to submit to other journals and contests. We tag our contributors to give them virtual fame and hashtag our posts to attract new followers. On Twitter, the hashtags #amwriting and #firstline are very popular, so we use these and other hashtags to promote *805*. In fact, one of our tweets was

“liked” by Barnes & Noble.

Pre-Registration Required

805 has opened other doors at the library for programming. We now host three short fiction writing workshops per year at two branches and plan to add more workshops to other branches. These workshops are taught by professional literature professors and are sponsored by our Friends. The four-week courses culminate in submitting to 805 for publishing consideration. The workshops help emerging writers hone their skills, provide the possibility of getting published, and put polished pieces in 805’s slush pile. One of the workshop participants was a runner-up for our flash fiction contest and said, “I am thrilled...I have never been published before and this is only the second piece I have ever completed. The first piece came as a result of being in the short story writing class...I learned so much about writing in a short amount of time.”

In addition to the writing workshops, this year the editors of 805 will host readings, receptions for contributors, special events, contests, and a rotating art gallery. This programming will help to publicize the journal and increase readership so the artists and authors we publish get maximum exposure in the community.

Teens Only

805 has been very fortunate to receive submissions from teen writers and artists since we first started. We decided to highlight these young voices by creating an issue devoted specifically to teens. Many teens create in their spare time and are eager for an opportunity to be published, and our team is passionate about giving these young adults that first step towards a lifelong commitment to writing and art. Since 805 is completely free for submitters and subscribers, the teen issue will provide young adults with an opportunity to view works created by their peers in an accessible way. Our first annual dedicated teen issue will be published in May 2016.

To advertise, we contacted the teen writers and artists who submitted early on and obtained their per-

mission to hold their work in order to publish it in a special issue. They were happy to agree to this. We also put a call out through schools and social media for submissions from anyone ages 13-19, and advertised heavily in our own libraries and in surrounding library systems. We also incorporated outreach events in our local community. For example, Bradenton has an annual art festival, called Art Slam, and this year one of our editors will be present to share information about the journal in general, highlight the teen issue, and do an interactive art project with festival attendees.

Promote With Us

In order to introduce our readers to other literary journals and to help our submitters further build their creative resumes, we will freely advertise other open-access literary journals in 805 for no cost if they cross-promote us. We will also advertise contests, workshops, and other cultural events. Contact the editors at 805lit@gmail.com and go to www.805lit.org to read our issues and submit to 805.

Courtney DeSear completed her MLIS at the University of South Florida and is the assistant supervisor of the Island Branch Library in Holmes Beach, Florida.

Jyna Johnson has a BS in Journalism from Cornell University and earned her MLIS at SUNY Albany. She is the Program Coordinator for the Manatee County Public Library System and sits on the editorial board of 805. Her hobbies, besides writing fiction, include playing musical instruments and drawing.

Stephanie Katz earned her BA in Creative Writing at the University of Central Florida and her MLIS at the University of South Florida. She is the Technology Trainer Librarian for MCPLS and the Editor-In-Chief of 805.

A Straightforward Sentence

By Joyce Sparrow

Readers interested in improving their writing skills will benefit from two new guides recently published by Florida authors. In today's world people are scrolling through memos, emails, and reports on four to five inch screens, so the need to know how to write a concise, direct, and professional document is more important than ever.

Wilma Davidson, Ed.D. of Longboat Key, an instructor, and the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, issued the third edition of *Business Writing What Works, What Won't*. The book is an excellent, friendly refresher on the ever-changing rules of writing. Davidson cuts through lofty writing and recognizes good writing that gets the job done by making succinct points. Rule number one: know your audience. The purpose of business writing is not to obscure the message, but to clearly explain the point for the reader.

Brevity is important to today's reader. Davidson's book is illustrated with multiple examples of how to revise over-written sentences.

Davidson offers a quick email guide. Topics include crafting informative and engaging subject lines and positioning the main point at the beginning of the email. Above all, Davidson reminds writers to proofread messages and wait a moment before pressing send.

Above all, Davidson promotes ruthless self-editing for vague language, pointless adverbs, do-little verbs, gratuitous clutter, confusing legalese, and unnecessary punctuation. These are the little blunders that cloud direct writing.

Similarly, Roy Peter Clark, Senior Scholar at the Poynter Institute in St. Petersburg, offers a thoughtful guide on becoming a better reader and writer. In each of the 25 chapters of *The Art of X-Ray Reading*, Clark dons his X-ray vision glasses and walks readers through literature, from Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series to illustrate successful writing techniques that are

applicable for business and creative writers.

X-ray reading is seeing below the surface of a text to what Clark calls "the moving parts" including grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling. As a result, the reader learns writing strategies to incorporate in his or her work.

Especially insightful is Clark's close study of E.L. James' *Fifty Shades of Grey* with Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. Clark explains how suggestion through symbolism rises above direct detail in literature. Clark clarifies how clues to understanding great works are often hiding in plain sight through a character's name, stormy weather, alliteration of hard consonants, or word repetition. He identifies literary choreography that thrives on indirection and original language.

Each chapter concludes with Writing Lessons, four to five points from the X-ray reading to apply to writing. Clark summarizes his objective through twelve steps that include "show stoppers" sentences and passages the reader wants to enjoy. Clark advises reading show stoppers out loud and ask "How did the writer do this?" Clark also recommends placing the most emphatic work at the end of the sentence or passage.

Although the focus on X-ray reading is illustrated with literary examples, Clark's theory applies to any well written documents, whether it is an email to a colleague, a memo from the executive director, or an annual report from a funder.

New in Florida Fiction

Florida fiction is overwhelmed with amateur sleuth mysteries series set in South Florida. *Veins of the Ocean*, written by Patricia Engel, a 2010 Florida Book Award winner for *Vida*, breaks free of the stereotypical Florida novel.

Twenty-three year old Reina Castillio's Columbian family is cursed with repeated history. Reina's brother, Carlito sits on Florida's death row for throwing his girlfriend's baby off Miami's Rickenbacker Bridge. Carlito, as a child,

was thrown off the same bridge by his father, yet Carlito survived only to repeat the crime.

Reina escapes to an island in the Keys where she finds a customer service job at a Dolphinarium. The backdrop of the captive dolphins mirror Reina's buried feelings about her family and their unfortunate history. The image and symbolism of the water, flows through the novel and its integrated themes of immigration, refugees, and the death penalty.

Engel refreshes the tongue-in-cheek references found in contemporary Florida literature about the state's reputation where, according to the Reina, ". . . all the world's crap seems to accumulate." While Engel's novel poses serious questions about human and animal rights, the quiet commentary about the Sunshine state provides a bit of biting humor.

How does Florida geography and atmosphere define and develop your characters?

My story is set in the Keys, and the geography is absolutely central to the story. The characters are very much defined by where they live, because it is a tiny, isolated town near the end of an island chain. There are few modern conveniences and many of the residents have never left the town, except for the men who fought in WWI. Heron Key is a low-lying area, with water on both sides, which makes the town extremely vulnerable. The weather plays a huge role too, that oppressive, humid heat that Floridians experience in the summer. It drains the characters' energy and shortens their tempers, making violence more likely. The book depicts the events around the 1935 Labor Day hurricane. I wanted the hurricane to be a character in its own right, with motives and personality. We talk about big storms like animals, we track them like animals. It's not a big leap to see them as creatures rather than physical phenomena.

What do you want readers to discover about Florida from your novel?

Florida is not just Disney and beaches, it is a fascinating place with a rich and largely unknown history. Places like Fort Jefferson and Indian Key rival Gettysburg and the Alamo in terms of historical interest, but get far fewer visitors. Although I was born and raised in Florida, I knew nothing of the events depicted in the book until I began my research. In school, we studied the history of New England, and the Western states, and the Deep South, but only touched on Florida's history—even though St. Augustine is the oldest settlement in the country. This baffles me.

How is your novel not quite like any other work of fiction set in Florida?

It is the only fictional depiction of the events around the Labor Day hurricane. There are quite a few excellent nonfiction accounts, which are referenced in the book, but no other dramatizations.

More information and a discussion guide is available at <https://vanessalafaye.wordpress.com/>.

Sunny Side Up

Jennifer L. Holm and her brother, Matthew Holm, are the creators of *Sunny Side Up*, a semi-autobiographical graphic novel illustrating one family's struggle with substance abuse. Ten-year old Sunny Lewin is unexpectedly spending her summer vacation with her grandfather at Pine Palms, a fifty-five plus retirement community near Fort Pierce. Sunny's parents sent her to Florida from Pennsylvania while her older brother Dale began substance. It is the summer of 1976 with dashed dreams of visiting Walt Disney World®, Sunny's days are filled with running one daily errand with her grandfather, until she befriends Buzz, son of the retirement center's groundskeeper. Buzz and Sunny collect golf balls from the course and rescue stray cats as a means to earn money to buy comic books. The storyline moves between Pennsylvania and Florida as Sunny learns to adapt to all the change in her life. The Holms' humor shines through the serious nature of the story with their depictions of the Palm Pines residents including the grouchy man who acts as the community's rule enforcer, the doting ladies who offer a ready supply of crocheted toilet paper covers, and the early bird buffet specials that are an opportunity to stuff purses and pockets with food for later. *Sunny Side Up* gives readers an amusing look at Florida through the eyes of a ten year old who is aware of the troubles her family is facing back in Pennsylvania. The Holms are authors of the *Babymouse and Squish* graphic series.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/sunny-side-0#cart/cleanup>.

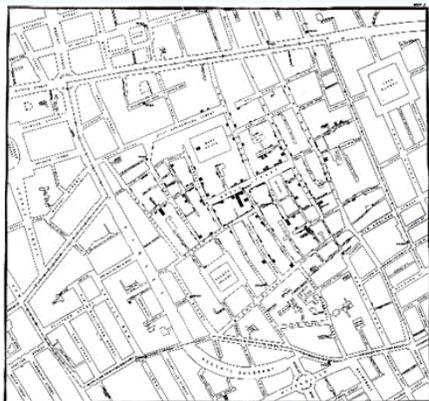
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Data Visualizations: A Tool for Advocacy



We have heard this idiom countless times, a picture is worth a thousand words. We challenge this by saying, a picture with data plus visuals is worth a gazillion words. Data visualizations, sometimes referred to as infographics, is a method that for effectively communicating with your stakeholders and communities; igniting interest in your libraries' story. Libraries in Florida hold a plethora of captivating stories and data can speak to how our presence changes communities. Take for instance, the nineteenth century case of Dr. John Snow and his attempts to control the large London cholera outbreak. Dr. Snow created a dot map and plotted each residential household affected by the disease. Visualizing the spread of dots on a map, Dr. Snow was able to show that water sources contaminated with sewage, was the cause of the spread. This debunked his original theory that cholera was airborne. This could not have been done with a spreadsheet containing a list of addresses. Or, take the example of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale, who journaled the causes of death of Crimean War soldiers under medical care during the 1850s. It was learned that the majority of deaths were due to unsanitary conditions. Nightingale was able, through her meticulous dedication to detailed data and visualizing the data on a coxcomb diagram, to receive funding to improve sanitation conditions in care units or hospitals. Both of these early examples illustrate how data visualizations can assist in decision-making and bring awareness to a cause.



Original map by John Snow showing the clusters of cholera cases in the London epidemic of 1854, drawn and lithographed by Charles Cheffins.

By Jorge E. Perez and Karen F. Kaufmann

Libraries are expected to communicate the importance of the role of libraries in communities and how they transform communities. Some form of advocacy touches all library-types. In public libraries it may be to preserve allocation of state monies for materials, staff, and services and even overturn de-professionalization.¹ In academia, it may be the justification of faculty status or show how libraries teach imperative skills needed in today's vast world of information and technology. And most importantly, illustrating how search engines, eBooks, or other technological advances have not affected the value of librarians place in the twenty-first century.

Data visualizations present complex data in an easy to understand format. This is of great help when explaining our stories to legislators or other policy makers who represent communities with diverse populations and priorities.

The 2015-2016 Florida Library Association (FLA) Annual Conference marketing sub-committee embarked on a quest to create advocacy infographics with the purpose of providing materials for advocacy. Specifically, the target was to create pieces to use on Library Day at the Florida Capitol on January 28, 2016. This project was an informal approach contributing to delivering the message of the significance, value, usefulness, and impact libraries have in the State of Florida. The idea to create infographics was

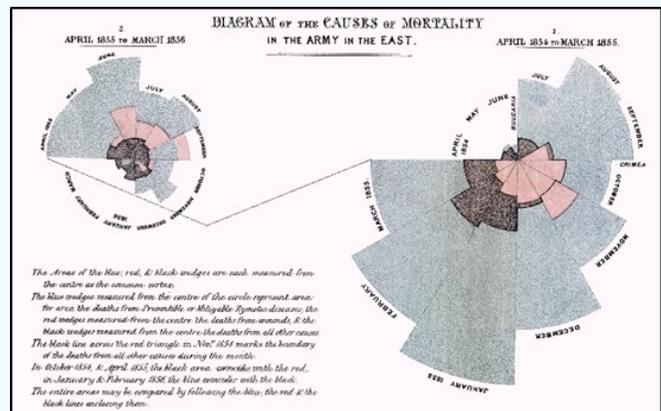


Diagram of the causes of mortality in the army in the East by Florence Nightingale.

floated in June 2015 during an FLA Annual Conference marketing committee meeting, as part of a conversation about creating a one to two minute video. In September 2015, the video project was confirmed and supported at the request of FLA president Gene Coppola. During the same September meeting, the infographic idea was mentioned; using the video as a conversation starter, the infographic would be a supplemental/complimentary follow-up piece for advocates to use as talking points to continue the conversation.

In late September 2015, a call for volunteers was issued via email to all marketing committee members. The infographic sub-committee was formed by Karen Kaufmann, Research & Instruction Faculty Librarian at Seminole State College of Florida, Blake Robinson, Florida Collection and Outreach Librarian for the State Library of Florida Division of Library and Information Services, Amanda Liss, Public Librarian at Prince William County Public Library System in Virginia, and Jorge Perez, Digital Learning and Information Technology Librarian for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at Florida International University.

The sub-committee identified three areas to target: education, employment, and entrepreneurship. They were suggested by Robinson because they are key areas of interest to legislators and other funding stakeholders. The teams' open discussions and communications uncovered essential and timely direction for this project. Members of the sub-committee volunteered for different tasks. Three members, Liss, Robinson, and Kaufmann, each took one of the target areas to research and provide statistics. The research members visited sites such as the Florida Electronic Library About Us² and Small Business Resources³ pages, Small Business Incubators page from the State of Florida Division of Library and Information Services,⁴ Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative Business and Entrepreneur Resources,⁵ College and University information from Florida Shines,⁶ iPAC Information Policy & Access Center⁷ and their Digital Inclusion Survey,⁸ Florida Department of State Division of Corporations, and Taxpayer Return on Investment in Florida Public Libraries 2013 Report.¹⁰ Organizations around the state contributing to small business training Pasco Enterprise Network,¹¹ University of Central Florida Launchpad,¹² and the Orange County Public Library System's Melrose Center.¹³ Even though national articles and resources were originally cited energies shift-

ed to collect statistics and information solely related to Florida libraries.

A Google spreadsheet was created for the team to lodge their findings. It was soon discovered that the possibility of expanding the statistics research was greatly needed in order to include academic, special libraries, school libraries, and others. Given the short time-frame, the members agreed that the research collected at the time proved the viability of the project to create infographics with Florida public library data only. It was agreed that infographics could be considered for academic, special and school libraries in the future To get started, Perez introduced the sub-committee to two types of visualizations, static or animated. Animated infographics may need more expertise in coding and design and, due to the short period, the group was confined to a static presentation.

Perez is familiar with and has used Adobe Photoshop in the past for similar projects, so he designed the infographics. It is important to note that data visualization can be constructed with any Microsoft item – PowerPoint, Word, Excel, or Publisher. Also, there are many free or low-cost tools online that are user friendly such as info.gram, Venngage, Piktochart, Popplet, Canva, Google Charts, Chart.JS, Easelly, Visme, and HighCharts. Creating data visualizations require a new language of communication. Similar to the art of writing, an infographic designer must be aware of basic design principles, such as the use of colors, fonts, space, etc., and know which charts or designs will send the message home to readers. Several monograph titles and online resources are of great help for the beginners. Perez recommends *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics*¹⁴ by Dona Wong, to begin to grasp the language of visual representation and impact. Perez has created a libguide¹⁵ for librarians that accompanied his infographic presentation at the 2016 FLA Annual Conference. For those who would like to forgo the designing stage or do not have the time, may share or embed infographics easily. Infographics can be shared from Daily Infographics,¹⁶ Center for Disease Control and Prevention,¹⁷ The Census,¹⁸ and even from The White House.¹⁹

Penny Johnson, Teen Specialist at the Baraboo Public Library in Wisconsin raises two important advantages of using infographics. One, imagery is easy to digest and may be more compact than a multipage

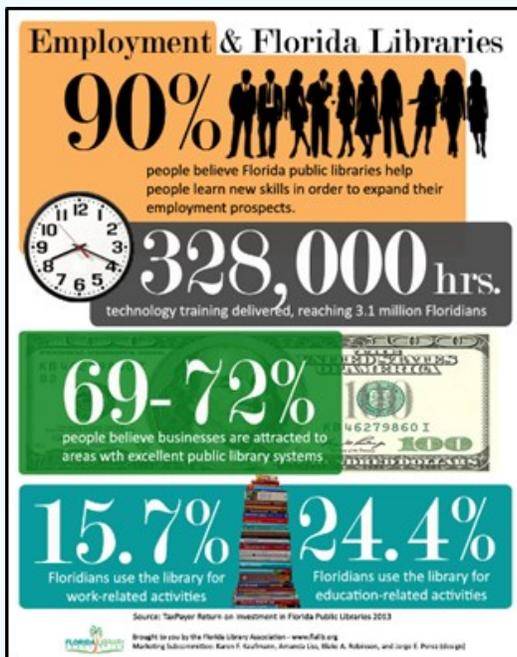
report. Two, the image can be shared through social media.²⁰ For example, the American Library Association created a Twitter campaign using Twitter with the hashtag #getESeright, to ask legislators to support SKILLS (Strengthening Student's Interest in Learning and Libraries) Act which would assist the continued presence of school libraries in elementary and secondary schools.²¹ The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Global Libraries initiative uses the Global Libraries Atlas tool which is a data visualization-type tool to locate where computers in public libraries are needed and where multi-year grants should be awarded.¹

In November 2015, FLA Infographic drafts were reviewed and discussed by the sub-committee team, and revisions were made. In December, the subcommittee shared progress of project with full marketing committee, and received feedback and edits. Delivery via web, social media and printing of 200 on 5x7 heavy cardstock of each infographic for Legislative Day were completed.

This project is a great example of collaborative, engaged and communicative members of the FLA community. The talent in the FLA member



2016 Infographic Posters:
Florida Library Association
<http://www.flalib.org/advocacy.php>
 (under 2016 Infographics heading).



constituency can be tapped to produce and communicate with our colleagues and projects of all kinds. In this case it was in infographic for communicating with our stakeholders the value and strength that libraries bring to our communities around the state.

Martina Brawer, Executive Director of the Florida Library Association reflected on the infographics and video as communication and advocacy tools:

“Policy makers want to see data with sources included, infographics present data in an efficient, creative way. In concert with a video titled “Florida Libraries at the Heart of our Communities” the infographic provided data for reflection and reference for legislators to use in funding decision making. Several legislators responded with surprise and appreciation after viewing the number of services that libraries provide that support employment”.

The FLA Marketing committee is comprised of public, special library and academic librarians and even a librarian from another state, who would like to relocate to Florida.



NOTES:

- 1 - Librarians with a terminal degree being replaced by less qualified paraprofessionals – Ann Dutton Ewbank, “Library Advocacy Through Twitter: A Social Media Analysis of #savelibraries and #getESEArigh,” *School Libraries Worldwide* 21, no. 2 (2015): 26-38.
- 2 - www.flelibrary.org/about.php.
- 3 - www.flelibrary.org/smallbusiness.php.
- 4 - [Dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/services-for-libraries/florida-libraries-as/small-business-incubator/](http://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/services-for-libraries/florida-libraries-as/small-business-incubator/).
- 5 - www.hcplc.org/hcplc/entrepreneurs/.
- 6 - www.floridashines.org/.
- 7 - <http://ipac.umd.edu/>.
- 8 - <http://digitalinclusion.umd.edu/>.
- 9 - http://sunbiz.org/corp_stat.html.
- 10 - <http://roi.info.florida.gov/>.
- 11 - <http://pascoedc.com/pen/>.
- 12 - <http://ucf.thelaunchpad.org/>.
- 13 - <http://tic.ocls.info/>.
- 14 - Wong, Donna M. 2013. *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics: The Dos and Don'ts of Presenting Data, Facts, and Figures*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- 15 - <http://libguides.medlib.fiu.edu/dataviz>.
- 16 - <http://www.dailyinfographic.com/>.
- 17 - <http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/infographics.html>.
- 18 - <http://www.census.gov/library/infographics.html>.
- 19 - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/share/infographics>.
- 20 - Priscille Dando. 2014. *Say It With Data: A Concise Guide to Making Your Case and Getting Results*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- 21 - Ann Dutton Ewbank, “Library Advocacy Through Twitter: A Social Media Analysis of #savelibraries and #getESEArigh,” *School Libraries Worldwide* 21, no. 2 (2015): 26-38.

Jorge E. Perez is currently the *Digital Learning and Information Technology Librarian* for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at Florida International University in Miami, FL. He is a contributor of an upcoming LITA Guide on Digital Visualization, LITA blog contributor, and greatly interested in topics within technology and mental health counseling. Mr. Perez holds a Masters in Counseling and Psychology from Troy University and a Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida.

Karen F. Kaufmann is currently a Research and Instruction Librarian at Seminole State College of Florida. Currently pursuing her PhD in Information Ecology, her research interests include information literacy, information fluency, the research process and user experience. Kaufmann holds a Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida, is library faculty, author and presenter at various conferences and workshops.

Not Your Typical Library Program: Goat Storytime

By Karen Malloy and Marlin Day

A Chinese Proverb that states, “Tell me, I’ll forget. Show me, I’ll remember. Involve me, I’ll understand.” Words to live by when planning programs as a librarian. Goat Storytime at the Newberry Branch Library in Alachua County Florida strives for understanding. It is a program that dates back many years when a local goat farmer contacted the library about a program idea. She wanted to bring her goats – kids less than a week old and female does – to the library to share with the children. The program is such a popular and well-attended program that it quickly became a bi-annual event. The program introduces children to farm animals they might not otherwise encounter. Children are able to interact with the animals, petting, feeding, and even milking the does. The program also aims to teach that milk does not just come from cows and our food does not actually come from the grocery store.

The Newberry Branch Library is located in the western part of Alachua County in the small town of Newberry. Part of the Alachua County Library District which serves Alachua County in North Central Florida, the branch’s service area encompasses Newberry and a five mile radius around the branch, serving a population of about 10,000. The area is rural, with a large farming community but also serves as a community for citizens who commute to nearby Gainesville and the University of Florida. Serving these two distinct groups allows the library to capitalize on our farming community and bring farm-type



programs to our non-farming community.

Programs through which children have a chance to learn about animals are almost always successful and have very good attendance.

Traditionally, the program begins indoors with a goat-themed storytime. This serves multiple functions. First, it brings everyone together to meet in a central location away from the goats. This allows for an introduction with minimal distractions. Second, it allows for an actual storytime where we can share stories about goats. We mix the traditional *Three Billy Goats Gruff* with other picture books like *Pumpkin Pie* by Harriet Ziefert and *Let's Count Goats* by Mem Fox. Finally, it allows us to discuss what is and is not appropriate behavior around the goats. Mostly, we want to remind the children and parents that this is meant to be a hands-on, interactive program. The children will have an opportunity to hold and carry the kid goats. Finally, we move outside to the designated area. We are lucky to have a large outdoor space suitable for such a program.

Our Goat Storytime is scheduled in the morning during regular school hours and most attendees are younger children between one through five years old.

Years ago, the first visit with the goats was scheduled in the afternoon and was geared towards school-aged children. Because of the age of the children and the environment, we found that it required more supervision than we were able to provide, and the children did not treat the goats as respectfully as we would have liked. Following this, a mutual deci-

sion was made to shift the focus of the program to preschoolers, and the results were much more fruitful. While the younger children may not grasp all the nuances of the program, we don't have to worry about the younger children's grasp.

Things to consider when planning a storytime with live goats:

- An outside grassy area between 300-900 square feet that is contained or fenced is ideal. This helps to keep the kids from wandering. While our grassy area is not contained, due to some hedges it is partially obstructed on one side and completely by a fence on a second side. We blocked off the third side, leaving only one way clear.
- We stretch out old blankets and sheets on the ground for the children to sit on so they are not in the dirt.
- Have a contingency in case of bad weather. On a particularly nasty day, the program was once moved inside to the library's meeting room. While tarps covered the entire floor to prevent damage, it was not the most convenient or ideal situation. During our most recently scheduled program, there was a chance of rain. We decided to put up several large canopies just in case. The weather turned out beautiful that day and the canopies provided shade. In a downpour, the canopy would not have provided sufficient coverage. Although it might cause some confusion and disappointment, it might be best to move the



program to another day if there is inclement weather. A herd of goats just don't do well in the library's meeting room.

- Provide hand sanitizer, a wash basin, and towels.

Finding a goat farmer willing to come to the library might be a challenge. Luckily, the farmer we use is a Newberry resident, a regular library patron, and an old friend of one of our former staff members in charge of children's programming. But if you don't know your local dairy goat farmer, the Florida Dairy Goat Association (www.fdga.org) provides a member listing and there are dairy goat farms located in every part of the state. A goat storytime can be a fun and successful children's program that can bring something whimsical to the library. Baby farm animals provide a fun learning experience that children will look forward to attending and will provide them with rich memories of the library.

Marlin Day graduated from the University of North Florida with a degree in history. After earning his MLS at Florida State University, he spent the first ten years of his career with the Jacksonville Public Library. He currently is the Library Manager at the Newberry Branch Library of the Alachua County Library District, a position he has held for more than three years.

Karen Malloy graduated from the University of Florida with degrees in history and education. She taught for six years before changing careers. She began working for the Alachua County Library District in 2012. She graduated from the University of South Florida with an MLIS and is a library specialist, in charge of children's programming, at the Newberry Branch Library.

Message from the Executive Director

Shelved, No Way, Check this Out – FLA Advocacy Efforts are Successful

The commentary by Steve Barker: *In the Age of Google, Librarians Get Shelved*, that appeared in the *Washington Post* in January of 2016 was not well received by many in the library community. In addition friends of mine who read the commentary forwarded it to me, concerned for my job security. I assured them not to worry, and to visit their local library. But, it did make me think.

The fact that the *Post* ran the commentary and the fact that my smart friends and likely millions of other people, as well, felt concern, sympathy or worse agreement as a result of reading it illustrates that the message of libraries transforming hasn't fully reached the public. And that includes Florida Legislators.

In this column I'll report on FLA's advocacy efforts lead by Charlie Parker FLA Legislative Chair, Chris Lyon FLA lobbyist, and the FLA Legislative committee. The work they are doing in collaboration with the FLA membership and other librarians and supporters across Florida is bridging the information gap that exists among Florida legislators and staff, some of whom have a perception of libraries that resembles Mr. Barker's.

Every summer, the Legislative committee holds a daylong meeting to discuss the State Aid budget line item and strategize. Other items on the lengthy agenda included: awards for legislators and advocates, messaging strategies for the platform and other documents, revising certain confidentiality statutes that govern Florida libraries, support for school library media specialists,

Federal funding and the Smart Horizons Career Online High School pilot project.

During the 2015 meeting, the committee also discussed how to get more librarians out to visit with their legislators in the district and then report back to FLA. We agreed that librarians are very good at mobilizing in the face of a crisis, as demonstrated in 2009 and 2010 when State Aid was cut or threatened, but that the number of librarians making visits throughout the year developing ongoing relationships with legislators might not be enough.

The committee decided to attempt to track the legislative visits that were made in 2015. Committee member Laura Spears created a spreadsheet in Google Documents that committee members and others could access to record their meetings. In addition, in December of 2015 I sent a request over the FLA Listserv asking members to report to me on their visits. While there were likely more visits than were reported, here's an overview of the visits that were made.

Advocates visited five of the nine members of the Senate Transportation and Economic Development committee(TED) and five of the eleven members of the House Transportation and Economic Development(TED) committee. This is the committee that allocates library State Aid funding. Advocates held fifteen meetings with legislators and or staff who are not on the TED committees, five of which occurred in conjunction with the legislator visiting the library and also including Senator Don Gates actually using one of the

Washington county libraries' meeting spaces for his own meeting. Additional advocacy work included, FLA President Gene Coppola sending a letter to every Florida legislator urging them to support libraries, FLA leadership visited with the Governor's appropriations staff to discuss library funding, approximately fifty advocates attended the 2015 Library Day, making visits at that time, and many, many calls made and emails sent to legislators during the 2015 session.

With the exception of money appearing in the budget or the passage of a specific piece of legislation, it's difficult to measure grassroots advocacy results, however we seem to have some evidence of success! Success being defined as a change in perception. After Secretary Detzner gave his 2016 budget request presentation to the Senate TED Appropriations committee three senators commented that libraries need more money. There were no librarians or other constituents in the committee chamber for whose benefit the comments were made; the purpose of the comment was to increase funding for libraries. The FLA grassroots advocacy effort successfully changed the perception of three important people that make decisions for libraries.

With baseline data of the FLA Advocacy effort captured, moving forward we'll track our progress and increase our efforts to bridge the perception gap that still exists in legislative offices and at the Florida Capitol.

Last year when I visited a friend and mentor who is the staff director for the House Education Committee to discuss the Smart Horizons Career Online High School pilot project she exclaimed, "This program will make libraries relevant!" I said excuse me, when was the last time you visited a library? She admitted it had been years and conceded that she didn't really know what was happening in libraries. The perception gap strikes again. Wealthy, busy legislative staff directors with



FLA 2015 Library Advocate Award presented to Rep. Clay Ingram, from left to right Robert Dugan, Dean of Libraries, University of West Florida; Robin Shader, Director, Northwest Regional Library System, Charles Mayberry, Executive Director, Panhandle Library Access Network; Representative Clay Ingram; and Todd Humble, Library Director, West Florida Public Libraries

grown children don't generally go to libraries, but, they have influence over them.

In addition to tracking our advocacy efforts, the FLA Marketing committee has joined the effort. They have created three information rich infographic cards that libraries can download from the FLA website or request from the FLA office to give to legislators and staff and we have a beautiful video that will run in the Capitol on Library Day 2017 and advocates it for their meetings with policy makers. The video brings the library to individuals who've not been in libraries, and don't know what they are mission, and who make the decisions. Stay tuned and join the advocacy effort in any way that you can, public and academic librarians can advocate, or they can foster Friends and Advisory Board member advocacy. Here at FLA we'll track the efforts and report back and see what happens.



Martina Brawer
Executive Director
Florida Library Association