

# Florida Libraries



**THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

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The cover illustration is a grayscale collage. At the top, there's a stack of books. Below that, a large, ornate circular seal is visible, likely the seal of the Florida Library Association. In the background, a grand library building with many columns is shown. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair tied back is sitting and reading a book. The text 'Libraries?' is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font, and 'Priceless!' is written in a large, white, cursive font over the central part of the image.

**Libraries?**  
*Priceless!*

## **Annual Conference & Tradeshow**

April 22-25, 2003

Wyndham Palace Resort & Spa

Lake Buena Vista

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Volume 46, Number 1

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Discover treasure @ your library™

# The 10 Things I've Learned as FLA President

By Marta Westall

## 1. Friends

I have made an effort to visit with Friends of Libraries groups whenever possible to thank them for their support of libraries and encourage their advocacy efforts. We have an incredible resource in our Friends groups; they cannot be thanked often enough.

## 2. Term of Office

While it is undeniably a thrill to be elected to the Presidency, there is very little that can be done in a one-year term of office. Most Presidents select one or two things to accomplish; I would encourage future leaders to follow that example.

## 3. Click and Brick

Or, is the Internet killing off the need for libraries and intermediaries who can sift through mountains of information to find what is needed? I think the following quote sums it up well:

"With all due respect to the Web...the more information that's available online, the more valuable competent advisers and middlemen become... I'm saying [this] because there's a big difference between information and knowledge. Someone has to filter the information—much of which may not be true—and do something useful with it. The more information there is, the more choices there are, and the harder it is to make a decision."

Source: Sloan, Allan. "Long Live the Middleman." *Newsweek*, June 14 1999, v.133, 24, 46.

## 4. Pizza Delivery Model

I would like to see libraries adopt a model of pizza delivery or remote banking - as long as the service is delivered it doesn't matter where it comes from. Some good examples of this model are Books By Mail programs and 24/7 Reference service on the Internet.

## 5. Libraries ... Priceless

It seems obvious to me that you can't put a price on an educated population. Nor is there a price tag attached to opening a child's mind to the knowledge of the world or providing the setting for the development of a new idea. While I of course know that money is very



Marta Westall

important to libraries and librarians, it seems to me that what we do is a public good, valuable beyond measure.

## 6. Advocacy

Now more than ever with the restructuring in state government, it is important that we tell the library story to any who will listen and push for adequate funding to meet the needs of citizens of Florida.

## 7. Membership and Involvement

In the past two years, the Membership Committee has conducted focus groups around the state to determine membership desires and needs. Consensus seems to be that FLA offers an excellent annual conference and journal, but needs to offer more continuing education, increased communication amongst the membership, and more incentives for taking part in leadership activities. While there is still much work to be done, several steps have been taken, such as offering several continuing education opportunities outside of the annual conference; instituting one general membership and several special interest listservs; changing the term of office to reflect the conference year; and planning recognition activities for leaders and tools to make the job easier.

The continuation of the progress initiated this year is entirely dependent upon the participation of FLA members, and it is incumbent on us all to get and stay involved in Association activities!

## 8. The Retirement of State Librarian Barratt Wilkins

After twenty-six years as State Librarian Mr. Wilkins has decided to lay down the mantle and enjoy retirement. His years as State Librarian have resulted in significant accomplishments, including creating one of this country's premier State Library Agencies.

The State Library is structurally within the Department of State, reporting to the Secretary of State. Mr. Wilkins retirement at a time when the Secretary of State is changing from an elected to an appointed office means that this event is and will continue to be a seismic event for Florida's library community.

The Florida Library Association takes this opportunity to thank Barratt Wilkins, State Librarian of Florida, for his service to the libraries and the people of Florida.

## 9. The Wonderful Variety of Libraries

We are rich in the variety of libraries serving Florida's citizens – directly through public institutions, indirectly through institutes, private companies, and many others such as newspaper and hospital libraries. All flourish because of the high commitment of the librarians, cooperating with colleagues in other libraries regardless of type.

## 10. Need for Development and Recruitment

The looming shortage of librarians has spurred librarian and First Lady Laura Bush to spearhead a \$10 million initiative to educate and train librarians. Anticipating the loss of as many as 68 percent of current professional librarians by 2019, the initiative is designed to help recruit a new generation of librarians. The President's initiative recognizes the key role of libraries and librarians in maintaining the flow of information that is critical to support formal education; to guide intellectual, scientific, and commercial enterprise; to strengthen individual decisions; and to create the informed populace that lies at the core of democracy.

Now that I've learned 10 things and have some free time.... I'm going to Disney World! Come and join me at the Annual Conference in Orlando April 23-25 and you can, too!

# Two New Libraries Established in Broward County

## Nova Southeastern University and Broward County Collaborate on Joint-Use Library

By *Harriett MacDougall*

 On December 8, 2002, the staff at the Library, Research, and Information Technology Center at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) celebrated the one-year anniversary of the grand opening of the joint-use library. The new library is a joint-use facility between NSU and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners. Conceived by Don Riggs, Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian at NSU and Sam Morrison, Director of the Broward County Library, the 325,000 square foot building took sixteen months and \$44,000,000 to complete. With electronic compact shelving, it will house up to 1.4 million volumes at capacity. At five stories, the library features twenty electronic classrooms (with one designed specifically for children); twenty-two study and meeting rooms; a 500-seat performing arts center; an eighty-seat café serving coffee and light meals; a wireless network throughout the building; 1,000 users' seats with Internet access; a children's reading area and popular reading materials. The building and the services are

open to Broward County residents and NSU students, faculty, and staff alike.

### Cooperative Venture

The unique agreement between a private university and county government is not the first partnership for Broward County. Broward County Library has shown a strong commitment to outreach in the community, partnering with Broward Community College, Broward School Board and Florida Atlantic University to name a few. Nova Southeastern University also has a history of community outreach. The fifty-four-page agreement between Nova Southeastern University and the Broward County Board of County Commissioners took six months to craft, and it provided the details for the design, construction and operation of the joint-use library. NSU hired the architect (Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart of Atlanta) and the contractor (Miller and Solomon of Fort Lauderdale), and oversaw the planning and construction of the building. NSU administers the use of the building and all of the employees are NSU employees. Broward County funded one-half of the construction costs and funds

a portion of the operating expenses. The county also provides a portion of the acquisitions budget for the purchase of library materials.

### Benefits to Users

Each partner has gained from the alliance. Broward County residents have gained a high-tech research library with a well-trained staff. The new library is open one hundred hours a week, adding over twenty-five hours per week of library use by county residents. County residents who have registered for library cards have access to over one hundred premier research databases within the library and from remote locations. The new joint-use library provides residents with library services in a central location in Broward County, accessible from major highways and bus routes. Nova Southeastern University has gained a much larger library than originally planned. It has been able to expand services dramatically by adding: over forty new positions; public library services; extensive library materials; study and conference rooms; and a premier library providing opportunities and benefits to the citizens of Broward County and the students, faculty, and staff of Nova Southeastern University.

During the "first birthday" more than 170 library cards were issued, bringing the total number of library cards issued to Broward County residents in one year to over 12,500. Statistics show that public users check out over 54 percent of materials circulated, while academic users are checking out over three times what they checked out during the previous year. The library is receiving on average 2,700 visitors a day. It is gratifying to see the users, both academic and public, supporting their new library.

*Harriett MacDougall is Director, Library, Research, and Information Technology Center at Nova Southeastern University.*



## Broward County African-American Research Library and Cultural Center Opens for Service

By Julie V. Hunter

 On Saturday, October 26, 2002, the Broward County Commission held an impressive grand opening celebration to introduce its new African-American Research Library and Cultural Center. It was the culmination of many years of dreaming, campaigning, and fundraising on the part of Samuel F. Morrison, Director of the Broward County Libraries Division and the beginning of a new era for the citizens of Broward County, the southeastern United States and the Caribbean.

This \$14 million, 60,000 square-foot, two-story facility, steeped in its African symbolism, is the manifestation of Samuel Morrison's dream "to build a library which serves as a bridge to connect users to information technologically, geographically, historically, culturally, artistically, and educationally." He views the mission of the new library as a bridge connecting the past to the present and providing a ground swell of hope for a bright future; a bridge which provides information in a "world where knowledge is the true power."

The African-American Research Library

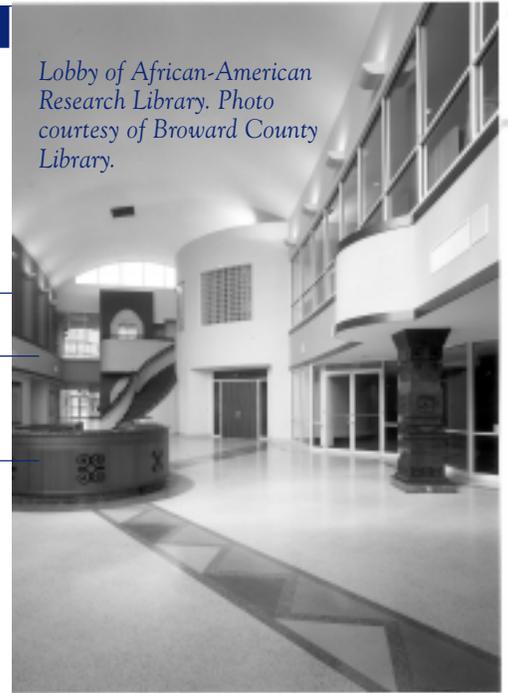
and Cultural Center (AARLCC) provides three avenues to learning and understanding the cultural heritage of the African Diaspora. It provides information in a traditional library. It provides resources for research. It provides for programming and exhibits. These three services are interrelated and must work in concert to successfully fulfill the mission of the new library.

### The Facility

The first level of the new facility includes a 5,000 square-foot exhibition hall for library-mounted exhibits, traveling exhibits and independent displays relating to the themes of Africans, African-Americans and the African Diaspora and a 300-seat auditorium with a state-of-the-art sound system for programs, lectures, theatrical productions and musical concerts. The auditorium is supported by a cast dressing room to accommodate actors/actresses and two star dressing rooms, all equipped with the technology to provide constant projection of events in the auditorium. In addition, there are two seminar rooms designed for dance training and to serve as multiple-purpose rooms for use by the public for meetings, programs, receptions, workshops, lectures and conferences.

The first level also includes a special room for meditation, called the Harambe Room, the walls of which are adorned with visions of early events in the racial struggle of Broward and Fort Lauderdale black communities. The Harambe Room's artistic presentation is the work of Gary Moore, a celebrated local

*Lobby of African-American Research Library. Photo courtesy of Broward County Library.*



artist who was commissioned to do the project. A Conference Room, Coffee Shop and Gift Store (to be opened in 2003) are also located on this first level.

One is immediately engulfed in the African tradition with the use of the Adinkra Symbol adorning a beautiful circular information desk made of teak wood and dressed with a marble surface. This desk is enhanced by two matching, beautifully designed columns with all the symbols of the Asante People of West Africa. In addition, the reception area provides an artistically designed stairwell to the second level.

### The Library as a General Information Service

A 75,000-volume, community-sized library is located on the second level of this facility, offering traditional reference, youth and circulation services. The collection of books, periodicals, videos, CDs, DVDs and other non-book materials is further enhanced by the availability of fifty-five computers for public access. Included in the total are ten computers in the Computer Technology Center where basic classes in computer skills and Internet access are offered. Children and youth also have access to ten computers for basic information, homework assistance and other electronic programs. Other youth services include access to children and teen resources, story time, special programs and outreach activities.

### The Library as a Research Center



*Exterior of African-American Research Library. Photo courtesy of Broward County Library.*

# Florida Flicks

The foundation of this library is its Special Collections of primary-source materials, including artifacts, photographs, plaques, art works, rare books and ephemera. There are fifteen archival collections that provide the backbone for the AARLCC research component. These comprise the special papers and personal items of individuals and groups that have contributed to Broward County's history and of individuals and groups that have served as leaders to those of the African Diaspora.

## The Library as a Cultural Center

Special Collections are further enhanced by the large growing collection of African artifacts that will serve as the foundation for continuing displays of items from the cradle of civilization - the continent of Africa. These items serve to undergird the library's programming and exhibits.

The Broward County African-American Research Library and Cultural Center is now a reality, and while it is a mere three-month-old facility, it has already provided a multitude of services to many individuals and groups, has sponsored and co-sponsored many programs for the community and has met the expectations of its users. The goal is to continue to provide the information needs of the public, serving as a bridge to connect people to issues that foster a greater understanding of the cultural experiences of all peoples of the African Diaspora.

*Julie V. Hunter is Executive Director, Broward County Libraries African American Research Library and Cultural Center.*



*Actress in 1916 movie made in Florida. Courtesy of the Museum of Florida History.*

By Nancy M. Pike

**T**he movie industry has a history in Florida. Even before World War I, Jacksonville was right up there with Hollywood as a destination for film producers until unfavorable state and local policies sent the companies scattering to California. Look at the Museum of Florida History's collection of memorabilia related to movies filmed in Florida and read more information at the Web site listed below.

There is something fascinating about seeing a movie made in our own home state. Just for fun, take a look at "Bouncing Baby," a silent movie short filmed in Jacksonville in 1916, with Oliver Hardy as the baby. You can view a clip from the film at the Bureau of Archives and Record Management's website listed below. Films listed there were produced by a variety of organizations, mostly for promotional purposes. Some are even home movies. According to the site, the earliest news film done in Florida was 1898 footage of troops in Tampa during the Spanish-American War.

The earliest movie listed on Jane Anderson Jones' Web site, "Florida On Film," is Sidney Olcott's "Florida Crackers" from 1908. According to the *Orlando Sentinel*, the first feature film made in the state was called "A Florida Feud: Or Love in the Everglades" by George Klein. "The Cocoanuts" (1929) was based on a George S. Kaufman play and starred the Marx Brothers running a hotel during the Florida land boom. Although it is set in Florida, this movie was filmed in Long Island!

On the other hand, the 1941 movie "Moon Over Miami" is a musical starring Betty Grable, Carole Landis, Don

Ameche, and Jack Haley. It is still fun to see glimpses of old Miami, where some of the filming was done, along with location shots in Cypress Gardens and Silver Springs. In 1932, "Prestige," set in French Indo-China, was filmed on the Myakka River in the Tampa/Sarasota region. It stars Ann Harding and Adolphe Menjou.

One of the best-known Florida movies is "The Yearling" (1947) from the book by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Clarence Brown directed stars Gregory Peck, Jane Wyman, and Claude Jarman Jr. Jarman won a special Oscar for his role as Jody. The movie was actually filmed in Marion County, where the book is set. The perfect follow-ups are "Gal Young 'Un" (1979) and "Cross Creek" (1983) where you can see more of the stunning beauty of the area that provided inspiration for the books. In "Cross Creek" Mary Steenburgen gives an exceptional performance as Rawlings on her quest to be a published writer in that rural Florida community.

Florida has been the location for many other Hollywood films over the years, including several Tarzan movies, some Esther Williams films, and, of course, "Creature From the Black Lagoon" (1954). The latter science-fiction classic was set in the Amazon but filmed on location at Wakulla Springs and Tarpon Springs. More recently, "Just Cause" (1995) with Sean Connery, "Great Expectations" (1998) featuring Gwyneth Paltrow and Ethan Hawke, "The Truman Show" (1998) with Jim Carrey, and "Out of Time" (2002) starring Denzel Washington have all been shot in Florida. Last year's "Sunshine State" starring Edie Falco, Jane Alexander, Angela Bassett, and Timothy Hutton was filmed entirely on Amelia Island.

Although the above-mentioned Florida-film-related Web sites are in place, the comprehensive online index of Florida films is apparently yet to come. The ideal index would include separate listings for movies that are set in or are about Florida, movies filmed in Florida, and films based on books by Florida authors. And for good measure, it should include a few movies about librarians in Florida. If there are any!

### Internet Sites

Museum of Florida History

<http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/museum/movie-posters/>

Bureau of Archives and Record Management

<http://dhs.dos.state.fl.us/barm/filmguide/filmguide.htm>

Jane Anderson Jones, "Florida On Film"

<http://www.mcfl.edu/Faculty/Jones/Hum2230/FLORIDAMOVIES.html>

Listing of twenty-three movies made in the Tampa/Sarasota region,

<http://www.simpliestsirey.com/MovieLocations.html>  
Nancy Pike is Director of the Sarasota County Public Libraries.

# Barratt Wilkins Leaves Sturdy Foundation and Visionary Blueprint

**F**lorida's longest-serving State Librarian, Barratt Wilkins, retired on January 6, after serving the State Library for thirty years. Wilkins came to Florida in 1973 as Assistant State Librarian and took the helm four years later. In 1977, the agency's budget was \$2.7 million; this past year it was \$55.5 million; in 1977, just forty-four of Florida's sixty-seven counties offered free library service to all; today they all do.



But these simple numbers, while eloquent, tell just a part of the story of the growth of library services in Florida during Wilkins' tenure. Today, families everywhere in

Florida can go to a public library and take advantage of a full array of services – checking out books and videos, story times, lecture series, Internet access, and interlibrary loan – all at no per-service cost. Students in Florida's community colleges and public universities have access to the holdings of all the libraries in the public higher education system as well as electronic resources that bring a full research library to their desktops. Government staff at every level has quick desktop access to information they need to make sound decisions. All Florida's learners – from the adult just learning to read to the post-doctoral physicist – have information resources and trained professionals to support them. And the Florida Electronic Library is poised for implementation.

The State Library's stamp is on all these programs – it has provided guidance, advice and counsel, prescient administration of federal and state grant programs, and state-level coordination of planning and evaluation. Wilkins, however, in a recent interview, was very quick to point to the vigorous spirit of cooperation among Florida's librarians and decision-makers as the key reason for the

strength and breadth of library services.

Today's embryonic Florida Electronic Library is the natural outgrowth of this cooperation, which began in the 70s with the participation of larger public and academic libraries in OCLC, the implementation of COMCAT, and the growth of a statewide interlibrary loan network. The first regional multi-type library cooperative developed in the early 1980s; there are now six that serve the state's hundreds of libraries, facilitating resource sharing, staff training, and technological innovation.

The State Library (technically the Florida Division of Library and Information Services, under the Department of State) has been at the table from the beginning as state government instituted new information technologies. Staff works closely with the State Technology Office on the citizens' Web site, "MyFlorida.com," and Wilkins says its public documents program is "probably the best in the world," incorporating electronic publications seamlessly into its collections. On the paper side, the Dorothy Dodd collection of Floridiana, contains thousands of unduplicated items of priceless research value.

Wilkins minced no words when he explained that governance changes will challenge libraries in new ways over the next years. As of January 6, 2003, the Florida Department of State is no longer under the direction of an independently elected Secretary of State. Instead, the Governor appoints the Secretary. This gubernatorial aegis will change drastically the visibility of state library programs and the Division's relationship to the legislature. Political involvement, knowledge, and activism at the local library level will have to grow significantly, warns Wilkins, if Florida's libraries are to continue to thrive.

It is easier to get Barratt Wilkins to talk about libraries than to talk about himself, but in addition to his leadership in Florida, he has provided national leadership through ALA and Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA). He was instrumental in the design and passage of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and helped formulate the FSCS program that collects and reports



public library data. He has participated in FLA's activities as an ex-officio board member and source of ready advice and counsel. His thirty years at the State Library include a stint as Acting Assistant Secretary of State and saw the incorporation of archives and records management functions into the Division. Before coming to Florida he served as Institutional Consultant at the Missouri State Library and Reference Librarian at the South Carolina State Library. He holds an M.A. in history from Georgia State University and a B.A. in History from Emory, as well as the M.A. in Library Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Wilkins' future plans are many, with a focus on his roots. "My family went everywhere the British Empire did," he remarked, and he expects to be a frequent patron of the genealogical resources of the Florida archives. He plans to write a biography of his grandfather, George Wilkins (1860-1919), [an Englishman who traveled the length and breadth of America before marrying and settling in Atlanta, where he was a successful businessman and leader in the cultural life of Georgia's capital city.]

When asked what he'd tell a new librarian today, Wilkins said, "You've made a great career choice. Keep looking for effectiveness and how best to serve the public. Get involved with professional associations. Meet the challenges and tests with imagination. And remember, anyone who stops learning, dies."

*Note: This article was written after an interview with Barratt Wilkins in December 2002, during his last weeks as State Librarian.*

# Distance Education and Library Education

By William M. Modrow

**F**or over one hundred years, education courses have been offered to distance learners in one form or another. Distance education has progressed from the early mail-order classes to television broadcasts to the online course with streaming video. Technological advancements have made it possible to reach remote locations and provide the closest thing to a face-to-face classroom setting and quality education with high academic standards and guidelines. Computers are replacing television and provide a means to interact with instructors and classmates and to access materials without having to leave one's chair.

Universities, colleges, and other instructional programs recruit distance-education students, and the distance-education field has greatly increased. Over 75 percent of American universities now offer some type of distance-learning courses. Acceptance of distance learning by colleges and universities has increased the demand for accredited programs. There are more than 5.5

million learners taking a course online, with nearly one-third of these students working toward some form of accredited degree.<sup>1</sup> In Florida's public universities during the 2000-2001 academic year there were 56,198 students who were enrolled in courses in which technology was the primary method of instructional delivery.<sup>2</sup>

## Who Are the Distance Learners?

The opportunity to obtain an accredited graduate degree from one's own computer has attracted a variety of remote learners. It not only enables many individuals to attend college — some many years after acquiring an undergraduate degree — but also makes it more convenient to get a degree without undergoing major lifestyles adjustments. Distance-education students come from all sectors of society and include those who are physically unable to attend classes in person and individuals living far from any type of school or university for whom commuting is not an option. Some are working professionals, while others are beginning students. Employees wanting to update or advance their

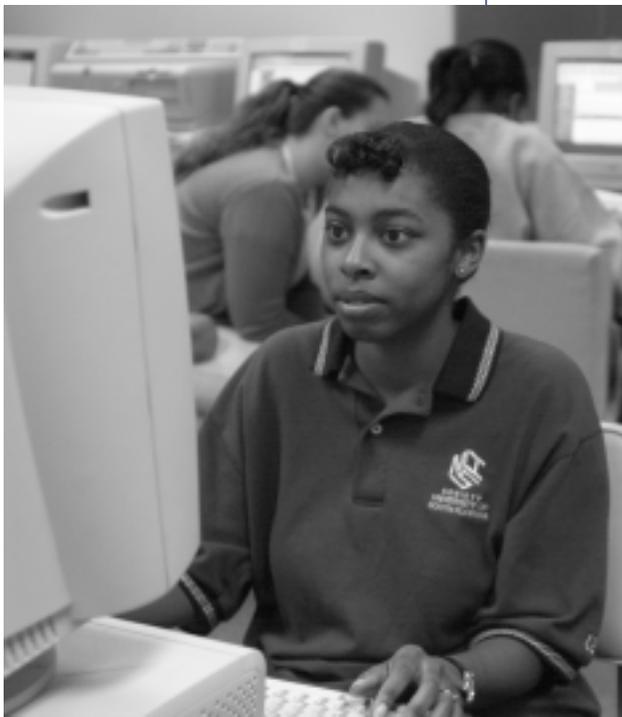
**"As distance education grows and as more is understood about the nature of online learning, it is having an impact on face-to-face instruction."**

knowledge who live a distance from an institution that offers programs in their fields of interest participate in online courses with hopes of improving their circumstances. Included are many non-traditional students, such as stay-at-home moms or dads.

## Library Schools Pioneer Online Education

Information Studies and Library Science programs have played an active role in distance-education programs, from offering recognized graduate degrees online to supporting online courses through technology instruction and access to resources. Many library schools opened the doors and pioneered the path for distance education, some as early as the 1940s. According to Dr. Jane Robbins, Dean of the School of Information Studies at Florida State University, library schools have been in the forefront of distance education because education in that field has been poorly distributed nationally, with many schools in some places and none in others. The primary group of interested participants is what Robbins calls "place-bound women" who are limited by mobility, yet willing to tackle the challenges of distance learning. Robbins admits, "I am innovation oriented, yet when it all started, I was not sure it was going to be successful. There were rocky times, but now I am a true convert."<sup>3</sup>

Distance education programs can reach



*Library and information studies programs have been in the forefront of distance education. Photo courtesy of University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science.*

# Earning an M.L.S. From 2,300 Miles Away

## FSU Program Makes Attending Library School a Virtual Reality

By Bob Bertoldi

those interested in attending library school from just about any location in the world. Of the sixty ALA-accredited schools in the United States and Canada, thirty-eight have some type of distance-education program. There are programs in the Northeast (11), Midwest (13), South (10), and Pacific Coast (4). Canada has none.<sup>4</sup> As library school programs improve and adapt to the changes in their structure to provide more opportunities, they are paving the way for other disciplines to offer courses online.

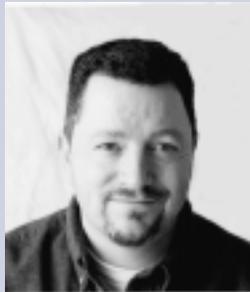
### Florida Programs

Two of the largest distance education programs in library and information studies are located at state universities in Florida. The University of South Florida (USF) School of Library and Information Science (<http://www.cas.usf.edu/lis>) and the Florida State University (FSU) School of Information Studies (<http://www.lis.fsu.edu>) offer accredited graduate degrees through the Internet. The two programs have grown significantly in distance education enrollment in the past six years. USF reported a total of 41.7 FTE students off campus in Fall 1997 and a total of 199 FTE in Fall 2001, an increase of almost 500%. FSU's figures for the same semesters increased from 53.6 in 1997 to 322.9 in 2001, an increase of about 600%.<sup>5</sup> These figures represent the number of full-time equivalents, so the actual numbers of students enrolled as distance learners, both part-time and full-time, are even larger. The recent focus has been to expand at the undergraduate level, and both schools have recently begun offering undergraduate courses online.

### Why Distance Courses?

There are a number of reasons why these programs offer distance-learning courses. Obviously, economics is a strong factor. A program can increase its enrollment with higher tuition rates for distance education courses. A student enrolled in a distance-education course pays a higher tuition than one attending a face-to-face course. Residency status can also affect one's tuition. Distance-education students may have in-state or out-

When I first decided to go to library school in early 2000, there seemed to be no question of where I would go. After all, the highly acclaimed University of Washington (UW)-which offers a Master's in Library and Information Studies-is



*Caption: Bob Bertoldi*

located in Seattle, less than thirty miles from where I live. However, it soon became clear that online courses would provide the greatest flexibility and convenience with respect to my family and work commitments. At the time I was working nearly full-time at an academic library and my wife had given birth to our first child a few months earlier. In addition, population growth in the Seattle area had resulted in very heavy traffic and rush-hour gridlock.

Therefore, despite its close proximity, UW was not my best option. At the time, the school did not offer an M.L.S. to distant students. After some initial research, I found only one school, Florida State University's (FSU) School of Library and Information Studies, that allowed students to complete their master's degree entirely at a distance and almost exclusively via the Web. Further research showed that FSU's Library and Information Studies (LIS) program was strong and had been fully accredited by the American Library Association for many years.

The prospect of having to invest significant travel time on Interstate-5 to attend on-campus courses at UW made my decision a no-brainer-commuting 2,300 miles electronically would be much less stressful than making the sixty-mile roundtrip to Seattle by car. I entered FSU's

**"All of this was a little daunting for someone who was relatively new to educational courseware and e-mail and who had never experienced a chat session before."**

program in August 2000 and graduated in December 2001.

Although I was unable to attend the then-required on-campus two-day orientation for new students in Tallahassee, I did attend virtually a weeklong series of online workshops for students new to the program. Prior to the online sessions, the school had sent instructions on how to download the I-chat client needed for participating in the weekly I-chat sessions. The school created simulated course Web sites for the online orientation, allowing students the chance to learn about and practice using I-chat. Essentially, these sessions were designed to help students to get a feel for attending synchronous classes via the Web. During the orientation, we were directed to the appropriate external Web sites to download software and applications that we would later use for our coursework, including RealPlayer, Acrobat(r), FTP, and WinZip(r). We also learned how to submit assignments via the course Web sites and to communicate effectively via e-mail with our instructors and fellow classmates. All of this was a little daunting for someone who was relatively new to educational

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## Beyond Paper,

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of-state status, with those out-of-state paying a higher tuition. Programs can increase their enrollments and use the extra tuition to cover additional instructors and technology, while not having overcrowded classrooms.

Another reason for offering online courses is to provide people who otherwise might never have the chance with an opportunity to attend classes. Dr. Vicki Gregory, Professor and Director of the USF School of Library and Information Science, explains that with the ever-increasing shortage of librarians to fill current and anticipated openings and the relatively small number of ALA-accredited programs, distance courses in library science remain extremely important.<sup>6</sup> Dean Robbins points out that the enrollment of minorities in FSU's graduate program has steadily increased over the past five years from 11 percent to over 17 percent (from 50 to 88 graduate students). This not only increases diversity in librarianship, but also increases the availability of ethnically diverse librarians for libraries in predominantly minority areas.

Librarians who take distance learning courses are also well positioned to help provide services to distance learners. Their experience in obtaining a degree via a distance-education program enables them to better understand the needs of distance learners and the complexities of online education and to become active partners in distance education. Online courses have greatly impacted library usage and led to new forms of technology with which to communicate with distance users. The librarian's role has become immeasurably important. Through training from library education courses, librarians can meet many of the challenges of the growing distance education programs.

### Advantages and Challenges

One of the primary advantages of distance education is its flexibility. It allows students to continue working or living at a distance with little interruption to their current style of life. Individuals can set their own schedules since the work is available online at any hour. Some feel more "extroverted," being able to communicate their thoughts and ideas through a computer, rather than feeling

**"To accommodate remote learners, library and information studies programs have had to undergo changes to their curriculum unparalleled in any academic discipline"**



*With Web-based instruction, students can "attend" library and information studies classes from a distance. Photo courtesy of University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science.*

embarrassed standing in front of a classroom of their peers. For these students, being "faceless" provides more of an opportunity to express themselves.

Discussions with current and former distance-learning students elicited comments on some of the challenges of distance learning. Many of these challenges facing online learners have remained constant. They must become familiar with using all types of new technology, submitting assignments over the Internet, participating in online chat, and sending e-mail. They must adjust to lack of

face-to-face contact with instructors and with putting faces to names. For those living in the different time zones, online deadlines require careful planning. Some students felt there were not enough comments from instructors regarding assignments or grades and believe it was a disadvantage face-to-face students do not incur. In addition, having only one telephone line did pose some problems when the line was being used for accessing the course Web site.

Support for distance learning goes beyond the actions of the departments offering distance courses. Libraries must make their collections accessible to distance users. Distance learners need access to the materials in the libraries and to the many databases available for research, course requirements, and academic enrichment. FSU Libraries provide special online forms for distance learners to receive library materials that are not available online. Library support should include technical support for continual access to the resources. Many university libraries now offer remote learners assistance with services such as: e-mail reference, virtual reference, and toll-free telephone numbers.

### Changes to the Curriculum

To adapt to accommodate remote learners, library and information studies programs have had to continue to undergo changes to their curriculum unparalleled in any academic discipline. Before making a course available online, says Dean Robbins, schools have to "study student outcomes and ask lots of questions," in order to make the "online courses more student centered versus instructor centered." Changing the curriculum, points out USF professor Dr. Tom Terrell, has allowed faculty to have much more interaction with students than they would have if they taught only face-to-face sessions.<sup>7</sup>

Included in the traditional library science program are courses that include several levels of Web design, development, and administration; network development; database design and management; electronic media production; electronic retrieval and usability. Offering courses such as these

## Earning an M.L.S. From 2,300 Miles Away , continues from p.9

requires careful planning, and now all are available online.

### Evaluations of Distance Education

As distance education grows and as more is understood about the nature of online learning, it is having an impact on face-to-face instruction. Many instructors in face-to-face courses are making some aspect of their course materials available online. The importance of interaction is getting increased emphasis. One study reported that distance education students did better and had higher comprehensive skills than face-to-face students attending a similar course. They attributed this to the need for logging on daily, recurring deadlines for submission of assignments, chat sessions and, responses to e-mail, whereas a face-to-face course measured student participation by requiring the typical three exams during the semester.<sup>8</sup> What this indicates is that distance students have to go online to access course information and hence will tend to stay in more contact using the course elements. As distance education continues to expand, more research is needed to measure outcomes and performance, while taking into account the availability of new technology and assessing the ability of students to use this technology. *William M. Modrow is a Reference Librarian at Florida State University.*

### Notes

- 1 Goodson
- 2 Florida Board of Education, Division of Colleges and Universities, Office of Academic and Student Affairs. April 2002. "An Overview of Distance and Technology Mediated Instruction in the State Universities of Florida." Duplicated.
- 3 Telephone Interview 2/3/03.
- 4 <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oa/lisdir.html#us>
- 5 Association for Library and Information Science Education, Library and Information Science Education Statistical Report 1998, Student Off-Campus, Table II-1-e, p. 108.  
<http://ils.unc.edu/ALISE/1998/Students/II-2-1e.html>  
Association for Library and Information Science Education, Library and Information Science Education Statistical Report 2002, Student Off-Campus, Fall 2001, Table II-1-e. <<http://ils.unc.edu/ALISE/2002/Students/Table%20H-1-e.htm>

6 e-mail discussion 1/20/03 8

courseware and e-mail and who had never experienced a chat session before.

As simulated in the online orientation sessions, each course in the Master's in LIS program has its own password-protected Web site. Students log in to the site to find the course syllabus, description, objectives, calendar, and assignments and to enter the I-chat-based synchronous discussions. Although most courses require students to purchase some print materials, such as a course packet or textbook, the majority of course readings are distributed via the Web through links on the calendar page of each course. Students have the option of downloading the readings to their computer, reading the documents on screen, or printing the document. I preferred the latter option over looking at a CRT screen for hours at a stretch. Weekly lectures are also made available on the calendar of each course Web site. Lectures consist of audio files played back via RealPlayer, and often include PowerPoint® slides and/or other graphics, such as topic outlines, photos, graphs, or illustrations.

The interface of the course Web sites is very user friendly, providing a clean layout with clearly marked, color-coded buttons for various features. I found I was able to navigate the sites fairly easily within a short time. Printing the readings and listening to the audio lectures did not present any real problems either. The use of I-chat proved to be the most challenging aspect of Web-based study for me. For those of us who had never seen a chat session of any kind, let alone participated in one, the process definitely required a bit of practice before it began to feel manageable.

Aside from the initial, general awkwardness of communicating in real-time with people I had never met, I ended

up having some technical problems with the I-chat server. Each time someone posted a message, the entire window would go blank, leaving literally nothing visible except the scroll bar to the right. This seemingly minor glitch became a major problem. Virtually every time I went to the keyboard to try and respond to a previous posting, or to simply ask a question, the next posted message would white out the entire window. The problem resulted from some incompatibility between the Mac I was using and the FSU server. Thanks to some useful tips from some fellow Mac users in Tallahassee and the Information School's

Web Development Team, I was able to begin using I-chat as it was intended within a few weeks.

Notwithstanding this initial technical hurdle as a Mac user, the Web-based program proved to be an extremely efficient and effective method of study. I believe that if I had opted for an on-campus program, I would still be taking classes toward my degree. Who knows, given the circumstances, I might have given up the idea of library school all together. As it is, since completing my degree a year ago, I have been working for FSU's School of Information Studies (at a distance) as a Regional Coordinator for Distance

Students. Also, I recently landed my first librarian job as a part-time Faculty Reference and Instruction Librarian at the local community college.

Whenever folks ask me about distance learning—especially those who are skeptical—I am glad to share my own experience with them. It is a pleasure to tell them that top-notch distance programs, such as FSU's, truly can deliver on their promise of high-quality learning experiences, "anytime, anywhere."

*Bob Bertoldi is Reference and Instruction Librarian and Library Acquisitions Technician at Everett Community College in Everett, Washington.*

**"Commuting 2,300 miles electronically would be much less stressful than making the sixty-mile roundtrip to Seattle by car."**

# Digitizing our Cultural Heritage



*Caption: Print shows fashions of the 1890s. Image courtesy of Broward County Library.*



*Caption: Image of an ancient Greek couple. Courtesy of Broward County Library*

## The Broward County Library WPA/MEP Digitization Project

By Guy G. Slack

**E**ver since modern technology began altering forever the physical and digital landscape around us, librarians across the country have taken the lead in preserving not only local history, but in many cases records of national significance. Librarians at Broward County Main Library in Fort Lauderdale, FL are quietly working on one such significant project whose gifts shall soon be bequeathed to the world.

In 2001 the Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded Broward County Library one of its prestigious National Leadership Grants to digitize a striking set of artifacts and objects known as the WPA/Museum Extension Project Collection. The items in this beautiful assortment of hand-colored costume plates and handcrafted architectural models, dioramas, and puppets were the labors of artists, craftsmen, and scholars employed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) from 1935 to 1943.

### A Legacy of the WPA

The WPA kicked off a remarkable social mission during one of our country's bleakest times, an attempt by Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration during the Great Depression to shift those on the public dole to relief work. To some, such as my paternal grandfather who owned a bank in the Oklahoma Panhandle,

the Federal experiment failed miserably. To others, such as my maternal grandfather living just a few miles away, a proud rancher struggling to survive the Dirty Thirties, the Project provided them with not only a paycheck, but with a sense of self-worth. This was a priceless gift to those who had lost everything to the choking dust storms that came sweeping across the Great Plains.

Like it or not, for better or for worse, the WPA put the unemployed to work. Its unskilled workers cleared roads, constructed bridges, built schools, and leveled ground for airfields. Under the various artistic projects comprising the WPA's Federal One, jobless actors, writers, musicians, dancers, and craftsmen practiced their professional skills and plied their vigorous talents all across America. And falling within the purview of the Women's and Professional Division, a few special programs known as the Museum Extension Projects (MEP) took shape, most notably in Pennsylvania.

### Museum Extension Project

The Museum Extension Project was created to satisfy a demand for educational products and visual aids in public schools and museums. Artifacts from the most prolific of these Projects, the Pennsylvania Museum Extension Project, are part of the Broward County Library collection. Housed in the Main Library's Bienes Special Collections and Rare Book Library, the Collection is extensive and contains hundreds of important pieces, including three-dimensional architectural models, puppets, marionettes, and costume plates. Each handcrafted piece is irreplaceable, and each is a unique creation. Together, their existence testifies to a critical trial our country faced and eventually surmounted, a national ordeal met in part by our citizens' sheer artistic expression and creation.

One cannot understate how important the events that led to the birth of the WPA were to the Americans who encountered them.

*Continues on page 22*

**"The WPA/MEP Collection was chosen as a digitization project because of its beauty and its sociological import and, importantly, because 'much of the work created during the WPA pioneered the study of cultural diversity.'"**

## Digitizing Southwest Florida's Heritage

By Vince Mariner, Barbara Stites,  
and Stephan Schonberg

**T**he goal of the "Digitizing Southwest Florida's Heritage" project is to provide public, online access to local historical photographs and documents which were previously unavailable or inaccessible. The Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN) has partnered with local libraries, museums, and historical societies to identify, aggregate, and digitize a collection of documents related to Southwest Florida.

SWFLN received a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to undertake the project. The digitized collections will be made available to the public as part of the Florida Heritage Collection, through grant partner, Florida Gulf Coast University and the State University System's (SUS) cooperative digital library initiative "Publication of Archival, Library and Museum Material" (PALMM). The PALMM collections are available online at <http://palmm.fcla.edu/>. These collections are important, high-quality virtual archives of historical documents and photos, available to the students, research community, and general citizenry of Florida.

The expected project results are twofold: first, documents detailing the history and heritage of Southwest Florida will become more readily available to the public and second, a solid foundation will be provided for further digitization projects as additional collections are identified. Providing documents online will increase their potential use. Furthermore, these additions to PALMM's collection will be searchable by Sunshine State Codes, enhancing the access and use of the materials in the K-12 environment.

### Limited Access to Original Materials

Currently, there is limited or no access to primary, Southwest Florida historical materials. Such materials are often housed in separate collections, poorly indexed, and non-digital - and thus are at risk of being lost,

damaged, or forgotten. Moreover, the inaccessible, un-indexed nature of these materials curtails their use in education and research fields.

Improved preservation and protection of these unique original documents and photographs is critical. A majority of the items in these collections show signs of age and deterioration and should no longer be handled by the public. While digitized materials are not a complete substitute for the original documents, this project will allow the public to view digitized versions of the historical materials without further damaging the originals. Not only will digitization help preserve these fragile collections for future generations, but also, it will provide access to documents, slides, and photographs which have rarely, or never been publicly available before.

### Technical Aspects

While the cost of high-end digitization equipment continues to decrease, the expense, knowledge, and time requirements for archival digital preservation of these materials remains beyond the scope of practicality for many organizations. Through grant funding, SWFLN is able to leverage the combination of technology experience and library science knowledge of its staff and members to make such digitization and cataloging feasible for participating organizations.

SWFLN has acquired several high-resolution scanning devices, including a duplexing document scanner, a 35mm slide

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*Captions: Cyrus Teed, leader of the Koreshans. Koreshans believed that the earth was a hollow sphere and that humans lived on the inside of the earth.*



*Captions: The "Brother's Log House," now demolished. Dennis J. Richards is seated in front.*

**"Not only will digitization help preserve these fragile collections for future generations, but also, it will provide access to documents, slides, and photographs which have rarely, or never been publicly available before."**

# Providing Access for All: Florida's Electronic Library

By Mark Flynn

**T**he time is ripe to build on the investment made in library networking in Florida to create a dramatic statewide shift toward Web-based library services. Since 1996, The Florida Division of Library and Information Services (the State Library) has contributed over \$60 million in federal, state, and foundation funding toward the development of Internet access, library automation, and the creation of digital collections. Today, the State Library is seeking to leverage this investment and reinvent the state's library resource-sharing programs.

The State Library has taken a phased and incremental approach to library network planning and resource-sharing since 1984, working in the context of a recurring cycle of long-range strategic planning. The new long-range plan for library development, "Gateway to Information through Florida Libraries," will seek to put in place a Florida Electronic Library that will be a unifying point of access for direct Web-based library services for all Floridians.

## A Tradition of Resource Sharing

The development of statewide library resource-sharing programs in Florida has been a grassroots effort involving all types of libraries with coordination provided at the state level. The State Library of Florida has assumed a leadership and coordinating role for many years, facilitating the growth of library networks, interlibrary loan, a statewide courier service, the development of multi-type library cooperatives, and Web-based library services. The State Library's contribution has been the facilitation of consensus-based planning for resource sharing, counsel, and funding. However, a challenge to sound library cooperative planning is to assure that the various libraries and stakeholder groups have opportunities to participate in the design, development, deployment, and governance of the planning process.

Planning for library resource-sharing programs in Florida is the responsibility of the State Library and an advisory council called

the Florida Library Network Council (FLNC). The Council's fourteen members represent pivotal agencies in Florida's library networking community. The State Librarian chairs the Council.

## Planning the Florida Electronic Library

This development of a robust library network infrastructure now makes possible the connection of Florida libraries into a dynamic "virtual library" providing access to a broader range of Web-based information resources than what is available to any single locality.

Librarians and their patrons in Florida have embraced this concept. The State Library contracted with the Information Use Management and Policy Institute to conduct a needs assessment for library development in early 2002. The research found widespread support and anticipation for a plan that would fuse Florida's network development over the next five years into an array of coordinated Web-based electronic information services and content. To meet the expectations of the Florida library community, this new plan, if successful, would integrate all of the following services into a Florida Electronic Library:

- Access to online full-text databases

- Linked access to all of Florida's Online Public Access Catalogs
- The ability to host and link to all of Florida's growing array of digital library collections
- Coordination of electronic library and resource-sharing efforts by all types of libraries
- Development of the Florida Library Information Network (Florida's statewide network for interlibrary loan) into a peer-to-peer networking topology that can also support the management of online patron requests and extended circulation features
- Development of a statewide library card
- Incorporation of the existing statewide interlibrary loan courier program
- Statewide multi-type online interactive reference services

Also, in the spring of 2002 the State Library contracted with RMG Consultants, Inc. of Chicago, to facilitate planning for a strategic plan for a Florida virtual library. The planning process included conducting an environmental assessment, a review of existing programs, services, regulations, resources and infrastructure, a review of best practice in

**"The Florida Electronic Library will offer an array of direct services to Florida residents that is almost unmatched by any comparable program nationwide."**



**“Through the use of Florida’s library cooperative network, all Florida residents can have access to an array of library services that no single community in Florida could afford to implement working alone.”**

other similar state programs, the development of a core-issues list on the basis of data collected through statewide focus groups, and development of a final strategic plan. After seven months of work, the Florida Library Network Council met on July 24, 2002 and voted to adopt the Florida Virtual Library plan and begin implementation.

The following is a summary of the vision and service components from the plan.

### **The Vision**

The Florida Electronic Library is a wide range of electronic information resources, digital content and online information services organized in a coherent and cohesive manner that can be searched by Florida residents through the World Wide Web. Users will be able to retrieve information from all libraries statewide through a single search. The Florida Electronic Library complements the print resources in Florida library collections and will serve as a gateway to all of Florida’s print resources.

#### Components of the Florida Virtual Library

##### **Library Portal**

The Florida Library Portal will serve as a gateway to information services offered by all of Florida’s libraries. A portal is a Web site that provides a “doorway” to Web-accessible information. It is a way of organizing Web-based information into a coherent information service. The Florida Library Portal will offer access to a search engine allowing a user to search keywords and retrieve relevant information held by Florida libraries that cannot be searched through commercial search engines like Google. The Florida Library Portal will support direct services to all Florida residents including the ability to identify pertinent information (electronic and print) and have it delivered (electronically or physically) to the user in a timely manner.

##### **Commercial Databases**

The Florida Electronic Library will offer access to a core collection of electronic databases for all Florida residents. The publishing world and information aggregators are delving into the world of electronic content delivery with an array of options and services for libraries.

In the process, procurement procedures, licensing terms and copyright have all become very complex issues. State-based collaborative purchasing of electronic information products is one way of addressing the complexity of the information marketplace. Not only does collaborative purchasing allow libraries to offer a standard and common array of resources across the state, it also allows beneficial cost savings to libraries and provides the opportunity to expand the number of resources available.

At the request of the Florida library community, the State Library of Florida has undertaken a facilitative role to assist libraries in building an alliance for establishing statewide access to electronic information resources. In October 2002, based on recommendations of representatives of Florida academic and public libraries, the State Library selected the Gale Group, a research and reference publisher, to give Florida residents access to fourteen databases through the Florida Electronic Library. These databases will provide a core collection of electronic resources for general periodical access, health, business, homework help, and reader’s advisory services. Access will be provided through Florida’s public libraries and will include remote access for users.

##### **A Virtual Online Catalog**

One of the primary requirements for the Florida Electronic Library is the linking of all Florida libraries into a Library network that can be used to identify library materials and indicates their location and availability. The Florida Electronic Library proposes the implementation of “library linking technology” to build a Florida Library network. Currently, there are 24 million location listings in the collected holdings of 298 Florida libraries. In addition, the Florida Electronic Library will also make accessible the database of the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) system. OCLC is a nonprofit membership organization serving 41,000 libraries in eighty-two countries and territories around the world. The OCLC database includes 839,185,592 location listings worldwide. Florida residents will be able to request materials from any location and have it delivered to them in a fast, efficient, economical manner.

Florida is one of two states that is currently partnering with OCLC in the deployment and testing of new database technology that will allow a Florida group view of WorldCat. This Group View will allow OCLC to host a statewide union catalog representing the holdings of all four hundred Florida libraries as set in OCLC WorldCat. Approximately twenty libraries throughout Florida will test a prototype of this state union catalog and provide input to OCLC and the Florida Library Network Council in developing this service..

##### **Virtual Library Card**

The Florida Virtual Library Card would ensure that all residents have borrowing privileges at any Florida library.

##### **Live, Online, Realtime, Help**

The Florida Electronic Library will be the only online service in Florida where a resident can get help in finding information from anywhere and anytime. Virtual Reference is a service employing “real-time” interaction with an information specialist and a computer user live via the Web. Using virtual reference, a librarian can help library patrons navigate through an array of Web-based research source material available to them via the Internet. A reference librarian can show a patron how to use a particular database, how to judge the relevance of information available on the Web, and how to evaluate information provided by a Web site. Librarians can co-browse the Web with users, showing them where to click, what to type and how to evaluate the resources once they are found. Once the user has found the information needed, the librarian can send a transcript of the live virtual-reference session to his or her e-mail address so that the user

has a copy of the relevant points that were discussed.

FLNC also voted to endorse a grant submitted by the Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) and the College Center for Library Automation (CCLA) in partnership to implement a pilot program to test the viability of a statewide virtual reference cooperative. As a result of this endorsement CCLA has been awarded a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to fund the development and delivery of live virtual online reference services for nearly three million library patrons throughout Florida. The goal of this new service is to ensure that library users have access to quality, live-help services in real time, regardless of the library they use. The project will provide online users with an all-important human element when trying to locate and use online databases and other electronic resources, and to offer that same high quality service regardless of whether the user comes from the academic or public library sector. Implementation of the live virtual reference service is anticipated for spring 2003.

#### **Building the Electronic Library**

Implementation efforts are currently underway for other aspects of Florida's Electronic Library.

At its meeting on November 1, 2002, FLNC took the following actions.

- Established a Digital Collections Working Group
- Established a Library Portal Issues Working Group
- Established an implementation timeline
- Provided authority to the Division Director to contract with a fiscal agent for developing an administrative infrastructure to support implementation including the hiring of a project director.

The Council also adopted a strategic marketing plan for the Florida Electronic Library. This plan calls for the implementation of a phased approach as each element of the Florida Virtual Library is made available to the public using a common logo, tag line, and theme. The marketing plan also calls for the development of collateral marketing materials that can be used by all libraries statewide to inform Florida residents of the availability of this new information resource.

#### **Benefits to Floridians**

Willing and reciprocal collaboration among libraries has always been the cornerstone of

sound library resource-sharing programs. The initial-year success of the Florida Electronic Library effort is indicative of the strong collaboration resulting from cooperative partnerships among all types of libraries throughout Florida. It is hoped that throughout implementation of the plan additional opportunities for cooperation and better service to Floridians will emerge as the reach of librarians and users extends to a broader and more comprehensive range of linked library services.

The promise of Florida's Electronic Library is an innovative service that also brings economies of scale to Florida library services. The Florida Electronic Library will, for the first time, offer an array of direct services to Florida residents that is almost unmatched by any comparable program nationwide. Through the use of Florida's library cooperative network, all Florida residents can have access to an array of library services that no single community in Florida could afford to implement working alone. It assures equity of information services for all Florida's residents, regardless of where they live.

*Mark Flynn is Project Coordinator for the Florida Electronic Library.*

## **Digitizing Southwest Florida's Heritage, from page 13**

scanner, and an oversize flatbed scanner capable of digitizing documents up to 12 by 17 inches. These purchases mean that SWFLN now can digitize photos, slides, film negatives, handwritten documents, and even oversize maps or newsletters up to A3 sheet size (16 1/2 by 11 1/2 inches).

#### **Contributing Institutions**

The original materials to be digitized for this project will come from four local agencies: Koreshan State Historical Site, Estero, FL; DeSoto County Library, Arcadia, FL; Sanibel Historical Village and Museum, Sanibel, FL; and the National Park Service - Big Cypress National Preserve, Ochopee, FL.

The Koreshan State Historical Site has photographs and historical documents about the Koreshan way of life. Located on the banks of the Estero River, is the site of the religious community established in 1894 when Cyrus Reed Teed and his followers, members of the Koreshan Unity, arrived from Chicago. The DeSoto County Library has photographs and documents

regarding the history of DeSoto County. The Sanibel Historical Village and Museum has photographs, historical documents, and oral histories related to the history and life on Sanibel Island. The National Park Service's Big Cypress National Preserve has a unique slide collection of the interior of the preserve. These slides include images of natural history, human history, and general scenic views of the Big Cypress National Preserve.

#### **Limited Materials Currently Available Online**

Out of the 951 items currently in the Florida Heritage collection (<http://palmm.fcla.edu/fh/>), only nine relate to Southwest Florida. Most Southwest Florida libraries do not have collections of photographs, documents, and artifacts related to Southwest Florida. Of the libraries that do, the collections are usually not made accessible to the public for fear of loss, damage, and destruction. Historical museums, societies, and other area agencies normally house these documents, however they, too, have problems providing access to the public. Library staff refers patrons to these

agencies, but museum hours are generally limited, and it is not unusual for the collections to be totally unavailable to the public. Few historical museums and libraries are located conveniently and most require private transportation, which may be impractical or impossible for potential users.

#### **Future Projects**

SWFLN hopes to continue to digitize materials pertinent to the history and culture of Southwest Florida in future years. With the digitization expertise acquired and hardware and software now in place, SWFLN will continue to seek to collaborate with local institutions to make available these rare, important original materials from Southwest Florida's history.

Vince Mariner is Assistant Director, Southwest Florida Library Network, Barbara Stites is Director, Southwest Florida Library Network, and Stephan Schonberg, is Technology Specialist, College of Arts and Sciences, Florida Gulf Coast University.

# Florida African-American Authors

By Joyce Sparrow

Tackling the task of finding recently published Florida novels by African-American authors was a surprising challenge. When asked to research new novels by Florida African-American authors, I did not expect too much difficulty. I began by searching library databases, bookstores and Web sites. Not happy with the results, I contacted reviewers, collection development librarians, African-American bookstore owners, and literary agents. Asking these people to name a few contemporary Florida African-American novelists resulted in a more than a few moments of hesitation. Additional conversations with this collection of interested parties revealed that many African-American authors are self-published, which limits their exposure through mainstream literary marketplaces and book review sources. I was led to a few writing groups for aspiring African-American authors, and finally, I was able to find a few relatively new romances and mysteries by Florida African-American authors.

Florida resident Timothy B. McCann's most recently published novel is *Emotions* (ISBN: 1575667851; 227 pgs.; Kensington Publishing Corporation, 2002) This spicy romance features Joi, a sitcom actress, her politically involved husband, Philip, and a young writer, Michael, whose lives cross in St. Petersburg, FL. Relationships develop and marriage vows are tested and the novel ends happily. Juicy escape reading!

In *From This Day Forward* (ISBN: 1583142754; 228 pgs.; BET Books, 2002) Bettye Griffin, a Jacksonville author, presents a family tale of a young woman named Hatch who becomes caregiver for a woman in her eighties and finds romance with the woman's grandson. This is just a good tale that readers can lose themselves in along with a few cups of flavored coffee on a chilly, rainy, Florida day. The plot offers no surprises, just comfort and optimism, if that is what suits the reader's mood. All readers can appreciate the universal theme of family support and personal triumph in this novel. Ms. Griffin has a new novel,

*Closer Than Before* (ISBN: 1583142762; 260 pgs.; Kensington Publishing, 2003) due in bookstores early this year.

Darryl Wimberly's *Strawman's Hammock* (ISBN: 0312271875; 228 pgs.; St. Martin's Press, 2001) is a solid, well written, police procedural novel that features Barrett Raines, a special agent for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and his wife, Laura Anne. Barrett is asked to run for a county sheriff's job and spends much of the novel deciding if he has a chance to win the election since he would be the first African American to seek this political office. Laura Anne is a dedicated mother, restaurant owner and substitute music teacher. When Agent Raines' investigation of a brutal murder reveals that his supporters are also his suspects, his wife patiently assists him in uncovering the crime and seeking justice. Wimberly's crisp writing takes readers into the woods of illegal immigrant worker camps to solve the atrocious crime.

While all the plots of these novels are different, each features African-American characters with strong family ties. In various settings, each main character relies on family for guidance when making life-changing decisions that are central to each plot. The advice of brothers, grandmothers and spouses all figures prominently in storylines. The novels I read had universal, human characters. That makes them just plain good reading.

"Florida Reads" is compiled by Joyce Sparrow, librarian at the Juvenile Welfare Board Library in Pinellas Park, FL. She can be contacted at [jsparrow@jwbtpinellas.org](mailto:jsparrow@jwbtpinellas.org).

NOTE: Please put the following in a text box at the end of the article.

For nonfiction readers, former Miami feature writer and novelist, Tananarive Due and her mother, Patricia Stephens Due, who has received the prestigious Ghandi Award, have published a memoir *Freedom in the Family A Mother-Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights* (ISBN: 0345447336; 389 pgs.; One World/Ballantine Books, 2003). This descriptive book tells of the younger Due's early family lessons that enabled her to realize her role in life was not as a trailblazer, but as a writer who could escape and teach through her works. This book embraces the concept of sharing the emotional struggles of the African American in Florida through the notes and memories of the mother and daughter. The family's story is presented in alternating chapters where mother and daughter tell of the disparities and triumphs in Florida's Civil Rights history. This book, which can read like a Florida's who's who, is essential for library collections.

# Taking Our Pulse: Using Electronic Polling to Gauge Customer Opinion

By Ruth Maddox Swan

**priceless** *adj.*

1. Of inestimable worth; beyond valuation; invaluable.

2. Highly amusing, absurd, or odd.<sup>1</sup>

**L**ibrarians, library managers and library boards would delight to have customers describe their libraries as “priceless,” using the term according to the first Webster definition, of course, rather than the second! We think of our rare collections, perhaps, as priceless, but are pleased, as well, when our assessments suggest that customers are satisfied with library service quality and that we are meeting our stated missions.

## Gauging Customer Satisfaction

Like its peers, Florida A&M University Libraries (<http://www.famu.edu/library>) staff keeps prescribed statistics and conducts various assessments of library services during the year. They are designed to guide planning, gauge organizational performance, and measure performance outcomes. Along with these formal and informal assessments, libraries should have efficient tools for gaining a realistic picture of how well customers are being served, focusing, of course, on satisfaction factors important to the customer.<sup>2</sup> Swan’s research modified the SERVQUAL<sup>3</sup> instrument for use in libraries and reports some of the factors customers rate critical to satisfaction with library services.<sup>4</sup> Customers basically want reliable access to adequate materials collections. In addition, customers want assistance with accessing information resources, quality collections, comfortable and convenient study environments, friendly courteous staff, and empowered front-line staff. Customer priorities change, however, as their academic classifications change,<sup>5</sup> indicating the need for continuous and diverse assessment. The results of the assessments are most valuable when used to make decisions about serving the customers. In the marketing world, this might describe the goals of marketing research.



*Caption: FAMU Library staffer Carissa Johnson invites student to take a poll at Coleman Library. Photo by Roland Pompey.*

## Conducting Marketing Research

Marketing research is defined by Kotler as “the planned acquisition and analysis of data measuring some aspect or aspects of the marketing systems for the purpose of improving an organization’s marketing decisions.”<sup>6</sup> Library and information agencies are now becoming more comfortable with the concept of engaging in marketing activities. Our users are customers who have other options for information service delivery. Kotler debunks “myths” that marketing should be reserved for major decision making, that only elaborate and costly surveys are useful, that marketers must have a high level of research sophistication, and that marketing research sometimes ends up unread or not utilized.<sup>7</sup>

One survey approach is opinion polling which is often used in commercial and political organizations. Polling can reveal customer perceptions regarding current operations, and, along with other assessment tools, can guide decision-making.

## Using Electronic Polling

Florida A&M University Libraries invested in electronic polling software<sup>8</sup> and a touchscreen portfolio computer to conduct electronic opinion polling as part of its assessment program. Surveys are constructed and written with logic, based on identified information needs. Using electronic polling software (electronic comment cards) participants “touch” their answer onto the



*Caption: Portable touchscreen device facilitates polling. Photo courtesy of Florida A&M University Libraries.*

actual computer monitor, or key them in using a regular keyboard. Data can be viewed immediately after conducting the poll or portions of the poll. A few keystrokes yield descriptive statistics including cross tabulations.

One of the simplest polls illustrates how Florida A&M Library staff primarily expects to use polling software. The poll consisted of only three questions and focused on customer access to information. A student worker asked persons (mainly students) leaving the main library to please participate in an exit survey of their library experience for that day. The three questions were as follows:

- Q1: Did you find what you came for today?
- Q2: What library resource did you need?
- Q3: Are you satisfied with the service you received today?

Of those surveyed, 94.92% (59) reported that they found what they came for that day. Over half of the respondents came to the library that day to use a computer. Reference assistance and use of books tied for second place; journals and newspapers followed in that order. A very large percentage of respondents (89.83%) were satisfied with library services on the day they were polled.

**“Polling is very easy to conduct, customers are more apt to participate in an electronic poll over a print survey, and the results are easily and immediately accessible.”**

### **Polling Faculty**

The Faculty Planning Conference poll was conducted August 14-16, 2002 and was much lengthier. The 32-question survey was adapted from a print survey created earlier. Questions were constructed to learn faculty perceptions of the adequacy of specific library services. The electronic survey took respondents approximately four minutes to complete, less than the completion time for the original print survey. Unlike the print version, each page presented only one question, which simplified reading. Surveys were administered in two ways: Printed surveys were included in information folders distributed from the library conference exhibit table, while staff manned the electronic polling station inviting passersby to participate. Out of sixty-four usable surveys, only three were print surveys.

A copy of the survey can be obtained from the library.

### **Poll Results**

Broad questions that were asked are listed along with some of the more frequent answers:

#### **Q.1 How do faculty rate the services of the Florida A&M University Libraries?**

Survey results indicate that faculty generally perceives Florida A&M University Library services to be adequate, especially the online catalog (WebLuis), library hours, and circulation services. Library services to be least adequate to poor were copy services, printing and facilities.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Q.2. What library services do faculty use most frequently?**

Faculty most frequently use library computers, the book collection, electronic databases, and the online library catalog, in that order.

#### **Q.3. Along with resources at FAMU Libraries, what other collections do faculty primarily use?**

Faculty report making wide primary use of Internet resources, followed in equal numbers by primary use of personal collections and collections in the libraries of Florida State University, the nearest research library.

#### **Q 4. How might promotional resources be targeted?**

Resources should be used to promote those services rated adequate. Generous resources must be allocated to improve and publicize those services rated inadequate to poor. Special promotions can be made to faculty groups in Schools and Colleges that report not using certain collections. Underutilized library collections were microforms, special collections, and government documents.

#### **Q.5. Are faculty generally satisfied with FAMU Library services?**

One indicator of satisfaction is willingness to recommend a service to others. Out of sixty-four respondents, fifty-one reported encouraging students to make use of Coleman Library. This one indicator alone cannot determine levels of satisfaction, but it does suggest general satisfaction.

### **Uses of Polling**

Software constraints limited responses to ten categories. This was restrictive for some questions in the demographic section of the survey. Also, this version of the TouchPoll software does not have the capability to receive comments.<sup>10</sup> An upcoming version will remedy this shortcoming.

The libraries will continue to conduct electronic polling and see it as an efficient method for gathering opinion data about specific services or specific customers. Experience has shown that each poll raises new questions and drives the content of the next poll. For instance, all customer groups report high use of library computers and the Internet, seemingly over other library resources. In light of that finding, do faculty draw distinctions between the Internet and library-provided electronic collections and databases? What uses do students make of library computers and what use do faculty make of the Internet? What does the word “library” mean in this electronic environment?

Constructing new polls and reconstructing others should not be intimidating. Flexibility is a benefit of electronic polling. Though it could be moderately difficult to program the first poll, successive polls should be fairly easy to construct or revise.

Polling is very easy to conduct, customers are more apt to participate in an electronic

poll over a print survey, and the results are easily and immediately accessible. Though the data is immediately available, sufficient time must still be devoted to making proper analysis of the data, distributing results, and making decisions. We are presently using results to guide some decisions such as where to allocate marketing dollars.

*Ruth Swan is Assistant Director, Florida A&M University Libraries.*

### **Notes**

- 1 “priceless”, Webster’s New College Dictionary, 1999 ed.
- 2 P. Herson, *Service Quality in Academic Libraries*, Ablex (Norwood, N. J.:1996) 92.
- 3 A. Parasuraman, L. Berry & V. Zeithaml. SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64 (Spring 1988) 12-37.
- 4 Swan, Ruth M. *Perceived Performance and Disconfirmation of Expectations as Measures of Customer Satisfaction with Information Services in the Academic Library*. Dissertation. Florida State University. Tallahassee, FL, 1998.
- 5 *Ibid*, 133.
- 6 P. Kotler, *Strategic Marketing for NonProfit Organizations*, 5th ed, Prentice Hall (Upper Saddle River, N. J. :1996) 212.
- 7 *Ibid*. 215.
- 8 The libraries purchased two licenses of TouchPoll software version 3.12.0000, (<http://www.touchpoll.com/>), and a PaceBook PaceBlade PB56 computer. One license is used on a laptop and provides similar portability to the PaceBlade. Other systems to consider might be the Survey System (<http://www.surveysystem.com/bro.htm>) and Infopoll (<http://www.infopoll.com/company/>).
- 9 As is common with academic libraries, the library does not control these services.
- 10 We were aware of this at the point of purchase, but concluded that the value in using the existing polls outweighed the benefit of waiting for a new software release.

# FLA 2003 Annual Conference Preview

**T**he 2003 Florida Library Association Annual Conference will be held April 22-25 at the Wyndham Palace Resort & Spa in the Walt Disney World® Resort at Lake Buena Vista, Orlando. In addition to many outstanding programs, there will be opportunities to take advantage of the many entertainment options the Disney area affords.

FLA will offer three pre-conferences free to attendees (two funded by LSTA grants and one by the Florida Center for the Book). On Friday, in addition to a full day of programming, extra exhibit hours have been added, plus a President's Luncheon. For the first time, all FLA leaders will begin their leadership year at the close of the conference, and there will be an installation ceremony for the Executive Board at the business meeting on Friday morning.

Descriptions of selected programs are included here. Check out the entire program on the FLA Web site (<http://www.flalib.org/conf/2003>) to see what this Conference has in store for you. All programs, forms, reservation and conference information are found on the site. Make plans now to attend!

## General Interest

### General Session

Wednesday, April 23, 9:45 - 11:30 am

Jacksonville Mayor John A. Delaney will be the keynote speaker.

### *Librarians? Priceless! "Campaign for America's Librarians: Educating Others and Working the System"*

Friday, April 25, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

*Sponsored by the Membership and Continuing Education Committees and all Sections*

"We must overcome the stereotype of the librarian as the selfless, devoted and dedicated worker who is in the profession to do good and who will accept any pittance of pay," (Maurice Freedman, ALA President). Presenters Susan Dillinger (Director, New Port Richey Public Library), Kathleen Imhoff (Broward County Libraries) and Derrie Perrez (Dean, University of South Florida Libraries) will help us explore the issue of how we can advocate for ourselves as librarians.



*Schlossburg*

### **Recruitment! Retention! Mentoring!**

Thursday, April 24, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

*Sponsored by the Minority Librarian Recruitment Committee*

RECRUITMENT! RETENTION! MENTORING! Sounds familiar? Librarians as role models today, should cater to each of these important arenas, while continuing to stay motivated as professionals during the process. Delatorro McNeal, motivational speaker, author, consultant and success coach, will be the featured speaker. Join us to find out how to cater to these important arenas and be greatly motivated personally in the process.

### **Cultural Heritage Education & Preservation: Strengthening Communities through Library-Museum Connections**

Wednesday, April 23, 8:00 - 9:30 AM

*Sponsored by Museums & Cultural Heritage Interest Group*

The new Museums & Cultural Heritage Interest Group will present a program exploring the historical, philosophical, and practical benefit aspects of library-museum connections with concrete examples from the field. The program is designed to encourage audience participation, stimulated by

presentations from speakers representing a variety of perspectives and backgrounds. Featured speakers include: Kathleen McCook (USF Library and Information Studies faculty), Sara Van Arsdel (Executive Director/Manager of the Orange County Historical Society and the Orange County Regional History Center), Carmine Bell, (Pasco Hernando Community College faculty), and P. Russell Nyberg (USF Library & Information Science graduate student).

### **Roundtable Discussions**

Wednesday, April 23, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Thursday, April 24, 8:30 - 10:00 AM

*Sponsored by Continuing Education Committee*

Back by popular demand! Topics for the roundtable discussion groups will be based on member suggestions.

### **Reference**

#### **Live Chat Reference Services in Florida Libraries**

Thursday, April 24, 10:30AM - 12:00PM

*Sponsored by the Telephone and E-mail Reference Interest Group*

A cross-section of librarians will discuss the "live" chat reference services implemented or planned for their respective libraries. Panelists include: Andrew Breidenbaugh (Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Libraries), Matt Loving (Winter Park Public Library), Lisa Manners (Broward County Public Libraries) Meredith Semones (University of Central Florida Libraries), and Beth Watson (Tampa Bay Library Consortium).

#### **What's Up? DOCS! Documents Reference for Non-Documents Librarians**

Thursday, April 24, 8:30 - 10:00 AM

*Sponsored by Government Documents Interest Group*

Uncomfortable with answering government documents questions? Don't have an idea where to start? Can you find government documents online? Join the Government Documents Interest Group for "What's Up? DOCS! Documents Reference for Non-

**Check out the entire program on the FLA Web site: [www.flalib.org/conf/2003](http://www.flalib.org/conf/2003)**

Documents Librarians." Documents Librarians Barbara Costello (Stetson University) and Richard Gause (UCF) will be demonstrating federal and state government WWW sites. Learn to locate a wide variety of government documents including Presidential papers, Census materials and current Legislative information.

**Readers' Advisory 101: Fiction Readers are People Too!**

Wednesday, April 23, 2:00 - 4:00 PM

*Sponsored by the Reference Interest Group*

Duncan Smith, creator and product manager of NoveList™, provides easy to use strategies for taking the fear out of the dreaded question... "What's a good book to read?" Using videotapes of readers talking about books they have read and enjoyed and taped simulations of readers' advisory transactions, Smith shows how to adapt basic reference skills to guide and support readers in their discovery of new authors and titles.

**A Novel Approach to Readers' Advisory: Demo of NoveList™**

Wednesday, April 23, 4:00 - 5:30 PM

*Sponsored by the Reference Interest Group*

*Library Journal* called NoveList "a reader's paradise and a reference librarian's dream." Duncan Smith, creator and product manager of NoveList, will guide participants through a demonstration of this product and discuss how electronic resources like this can be mainstreamed into work with readers. Smith will also discuss its evolution from a database to a service supporting library services to fiction readers.

**Technical Services**

**Electronic Resources Overload? Cataloging What Your Users Need**

Friday, April 25th 1:30-3:0 PM

*Sponsored by Technical Services Interest Group*

Want to catalog Web sites, reference databases or other electronic resources to help your users get to them? Marlee Dorn, Training and Support Librarian at SOLINET, will be

speaking about deciding which electronic resources to catalog when you have limited cataloging staff and about where to look for cataloging records for them. The program is planned with tech services staff in public libraries in mind, as well as those in other libraries.

**Children & Youth**

**Meet Young Adult Author Alex Flinn**

Thursday, April 24, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

*Sponsored by Library Services to Youth Interest Group*

Florida is a state rich in culture, nature and sunshine. When Alex Flinn put pen to paper to write her first young adult novel, *Breathing Underwater*, she joined the growing ranks of outstanding YA authors living in Florida, further enriching our state. Alex tackles real problems facing teens, including violence, abuse, and peer pressure, in a realistic and moving manner.

*Breathing Underwater* is a powerful novel dealing with violence and abuse, both received and delivered by teen protagonist, Nick. It was received with critical acclaim, becoming a Top-10 Best Book for Young Adults and a Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers. Alex's second novel, *Breaking Point*, published in Spring, 2002, deals with school violence and peer pressure. Her third book, *Nothing to Lose* will be published in Spring 2004, and she is currently working on a fourth book.

**Friends and Trustees**

**Two Counties Approach to Advocacy**

Thursday, April 24, 10:15 - 11:45AM

*Sponsored by the Friends & Trustees Section*

Patricia Dunford, President of The Broward County Libraries and Jennifer Blevins, President of Friends of the Columbia County Libraries, will present their current activities and plans to develop strong advocacy programs for different types of Friends and Trustee organizations – large to small, big city to rural. Don't miss this important presentation and discussion.

**Now What? A Lifelong Question**

Thursday, April 24, 12:00 - 1:45PM

*Friends & Trustees Section Annual Awards Luncheon*

Keynote speaker Nancy K. Schlossberg is an expert in the areas of adult transitions, career development, and intergenerational relationships. She is the author of seven books including "Going to Plan B: How You Can Cope, Regroup, and Start Your Life on a New Path." Dr. Schlossberg's 2003 publication by the American Psychological Association is "What's Next? Making Retirement the Time of Your Life."

**Why Have a Retreat? How Does it Work? What Can it Accomplish?**

Thursday, April 24, 2:00 - 3:00 PM

*Sponsored by the Friends & Trustees Section*

Ruth O'Donnell and Lawrence Webster, two experienced library consultants specializing in planning and facilitating retreats for Friends groups, will introduce the concept of a retreat, its purposes and benefits, how to define objectives, and how to organize a retreat. Pointe Vedra Beach Friends President, Carolee Bertisch, will describe that group's experiences and success. Practice session in small groups will focus on how to develop objectives and an agenda. This is a fine opportunity to learn what a retreat can accomplish for your organization.

**Administration**

**Insight and Inspiration for Leadership in Librarianship**

Wednesday, April 23, 2:00 - 4:00

*Sponsored by the Leadership Development Committee*

Dr. Joan V. Gallos, Professor, former Dean, and current Director of The Truman Center for the Healing Arts at the School of Education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, is a regular presenter at the Harvard Leadership Institute on Librarianship. Her presentation for FLA will explore the complex nature of leadership, and assist staff in all Library types to enhance their own skills and strengths. The sessions will be interactive

and multi-media. Attendees wishing to get the most from this session will want to read L. Bolman and T. Deal. "Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership." San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997 in advance of the conference. The Leadership Development Committee will present information on the FLA Mentor Program and new website at the business meeting during the last 20 minutes of the program time.

**How to Talk to Your City/County Project Manager and Architect Selection Team**

Thursday, April 24, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

*Sponsored by Public Libraries Interest Group*  
Ward Friszolowski and Jonathan R Toppe of Harvard Jolly Clees Toppe Architects, PA, AIA, will be presenting another program of

practical value "How to Talk to Your City/County Project Manager and Architect Selection Team."

**State Universities**

**SUS Overview: Update & Discussion**

Wednesday, April 23, 4:00 - 5:30 PM

*Sponsored by the State University System Interest Group*

The State University System Interest Group will have speakers from the Florida Center for Library Automation and reports from members of committees representing the state university libraries. A change in the Interest Group's name will also be discussed, as the State University System no longer exists as a body after the restructuring of higher education in Florida.

**Special Events**

**President's Reception**

Thursday, April 24, 6:00 - 7:30 PM  
Wyndham Palace Resort & Spa

**Scholarship Fundraiser and Silent Auction**

Wednesday, April 23 6:00 - 9:00 PM

"Glitter and Glamour" is the theme for this year's Scholarship dinner. Following the dinner a band will play big band/swing music. A silent auction will be held, with winners announced at 8:00.

**The Broward County Library  
WPA/MEP Digitization Project continues from p12**

They defined those who endured them and to this day they still play a central and vital role in much of our national policy and dialogue. For that reason Broward County Library chose to give the nameless professionals behind the WPA/MEP voice once again, and that voice shall once again bear witness to those who endured and those who created.

**A Diverse Collection**

According to James Findlay, Bienes Center Librarian, the WPA/MEP Collection was chosen as a digitization project because of its beauty and its sociological import and, importantly, because "much of the work created during the WPA pioneered the study of cultural diversity." Of its diversity there can be little doubt. Hand-colored costume plates abound, detailing beautifully executed scenes from wildly divergent cultures: the somber, flowing robes of Buddhist priests in China, the casual attire of a young couple in Greece's

Classical Period, the striking outfits of women swept up in the excitement of the Gay Nineties, the frightening ceremonial dress of the Lama-King of Muli. Many plates bear the tiniest of scars-pinholes-suggesting that a teacher had tacked them to a wall to provoke a discussion among his or her young students.

Others pieces are remarkable for their three-dimensional nature, their scale and authentic costumes, such as the Christopher Columbus doll dressed in historically accurate 15th Century tunic and robes or a scaled, plaster reproduction of Little Wenham Hall, cited by historians as the earliest example of a brick structure in England.

**The Digitization Process**

Already many of the Collection's objects, as well as the informed and scholarly descriptions that accompany them, have undergone digitization. Once a piece is selected, the process begins by scanning the object into a TIFF (Tagged Image File Format, the largest

of all the digital file formats that one initially scans). When ready, the collection of TIFFs will then be converted to a selection of viewable JPEG images (.jpg) that will be uploaded to Broward County Library's Web site for public viewing. When the project is complete, over twelve hundred images will be contained in a searchable image database, complete with scholarly notes and cataloging information, all available to patrons and researchers via the Internet. Under the guidance of curator James Findlay and the sure administrative hand of Digital Librarian Paul Lefrak, the principal librarian in charge of the digitization, the WPA/MEP Digitization Project unfolds on schedule, with an expected completion date of July 2003.

By virtue of its charm and historical import and through the efforts of Broward County librarians, the nearly forgotten efforts of those in the past will have been resurrected. At that time, patrons, students, and scholars from all

# FLA Responds to Bush Proposal to Dismantle State Library

The Board of Directors of the Florida Library Association have launched a campaign to **Save Your State Library**. Your participation and assistance in this effort is **critical**. Letters, emails, phone calls and visits to legislators are needed now. Letters to the editor of your local newspaper are also important now.

## THE FACTS under the current plan for dismantling of the State Library of Florida:

- The collections of the State Library of Florida, currently under the Bureau of Library and Network Services, will go...somewhere...somewhere other than the R.A. Gray Building where they are currently housed. The Administration is currently searching for a home(s).
- The State Archives, currently under the Bureau of Archives and Records Management, will be transferred to the Department of Environmental Protection.
- The Records Management function, currently under the Bureau of Archives and Records Management, will be transferred

to the Department of Management Services.

- The functions of the Bureau of Library Development will be reorganized and be part of an entity within the newly created Department of State and Community Partnerships.
- 55 full-time positions will be eliminated, yet the Administration suggests that all "salient functions" will continue.

## THE MESSAGE for supporters of the State Library of Florida:

- There is value in keeping these functions within the same administrative unit. The analogy to the Library of Congress made by many on the listserv is an excellent one — would the Library of Congress operate more efficiently by scattering its services across federal agencies and sending its collections to other libraries? No.
- Keeping the State Archives with other library functions of the State has **value**.

- Dismantling the State Library of Florida with the actions described above sends the scary message that...libraries, archives and historical records have **no value**.
- Suggesting that no services or collections are being eliminated, just sent to places where they can be more efficient just isn't true. Librarians, genealogists, historians, archivists, and the citizens of Florida understand this!
- The State Library of Florida has been awarded for its efficiencies and is known for being an outstanding steward of taxpayers' dollars.

Please act today! The response to this issue has been strong already—please put pen to paper, type an email, make a call. Let your voice be heard! **Save Your State Library!**

More information can be found on this issue at [http://www.flalib.org/state\\_library/state\\_library.html](http://www.flalib.org/state_library/state_library.html)

To contribute to the Campaign to Save Your State Library, send a check made out to the Florida Library Association and marked State Library campaign to Florida Library Association

1133 W. Morse Blvd., Suite 201  
Winter Park, FL 32789

For updated information on the Save Your State Library campaign, check the FLA Web site. [http://www.flalib.org/state\\_library/state\\_library.html](http://www.flalib.org/state_library/state_library.html)

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