

Florida Libraries

FIA
Florida Library
Association

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Volume 44, No.1

Spring 2001



*Changing Attitudes:
Building On The Past...
Embracing the Future*

ANNUAL CONFERENCE ISSUE



THE MOUNT DORANS

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Vivian W. Owens

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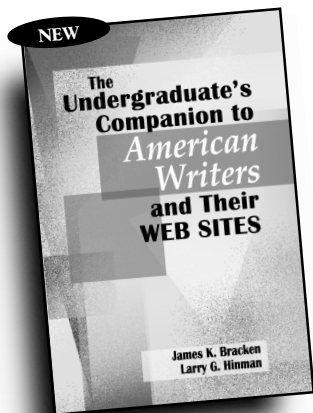
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Florida Libraries is published twice a year for the members of the Florida Library Association. It is indexed in *Library Literature*, and articles in the Fall issue of each year are juried.

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Send articles for Florida Libraries to Editor Gloria Colvin, State Library of Florida, R.A. Gray Bldg., Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250; gcolvin@mail.dos.state.fl.us; by January 15 for Spring issue; July 15 for Fall issue.

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear Colleagues:

This is an important time of year for the Association and for libraries in general. The elections are over, and we know who to welcome into office and to inform about the issues affecting libraries in Florida. You should have received the Library Day materials by now, and I hope each of you will support this effort through attendance at Library Days in Tallahassee on March 26th and 27th. However, the need for action begins now and continues throughout the legislative session. The legislative platform and fact



sheets provide you with the information you need to be educated advocates of libraries in Florida.

Following the legislative session we will all get a chance to redirect our thoughts and refresh ourselves through attendance at the Florida Library Association Annual Conference, April 10-13, at the Hyatt Orlando. Conference Planning and Scheduling has done a terrific job of creating a program schedule with something for everyone. The atmosphere is tropical and the dress is casual. Make plans now to attend!

Thank you for your continued support of the Florida Library Association and for the work you do in making Florida's libraries essential and valued resources.

Mary Brown
President, FLA

FLA 2001 Annual Conference



Join your colleagues April 10-13 as librarians from far-flung parts of Florida gather in Kissimmee for the annual conference of the Florida Library Association. As you can tell from the following descriptions of selected programs and events, this will be a time of learning, discussion, sharing, and fun. All programs will be held at the Hyatt Orlando in Kissimmee. A full program listing, registration form, and information on accommodations are available at the FLA Web site (<http://www.flalib.org>).

Program Highlights

Pre-conference

Using Managing for Results: Effective Resource Allocation for Public Libraries — Getting Down to the Nitty Gritty of Library Management

Tuesday April 10, 10:00 AM-4:30 PM

Co-sponsored by Public Libraries Section and Library Administration Interest Group

Ruth O'Donnell, independent consultant to public libraries and well-known trainer, will present this workshop using *Managing for Results (MFR)*, a companion volume to *Planning for Results*, the Public Library Association's guide to long-range planning. *MFR* provides the tools library managers and staff need to gather information about current resource allocation and to make those hard decisions about deploying/redeploying those resources to carry out a library's planned activities.

The workshop is appropriate for public library directors, branch and department managers, and frontline librarians who want to develop their management skills. Participants will learn the kinds of data that can be useful in making resource allocation decisions regarding staff, collections, facilities, and technology, as well as experience some of the methods recommended by the book for collecting that data. Participants will be able to return to their libraries and use this tool without further introduction or training.

Developing a Mentoring Program

Wednesday April 11, 8:30-9:30 AM

Sponsored by the Leadership Development Committee

The Leadership Development Committee will hold its inaugural program at this year's conference with a discussion on mentoring intended to help create a statewide program in this area. Carol Ann Borchert and Jana Futch from the University of South Florida will discuss their efforts to initiate a mentoring program at USF between the library and the library school.

General Session

Changing Attitudes: Moving from .Com to Community

Wednesday April 11, 9:45-11:30 AM

Library automation professional, recognized authority on library technology, and prolific author Walt Crawford will be the keynote speaker for this year's conference. His wide-ranging talk will touch on some defective assumptions about the .com era, library roles in real communities, and some encouraging possibilities for finding new ways that work. Currently an information architect at the Research Libraries Group, Inc. (RLG), Crawford has been involved in library



Walt Crawford

automation since 1968. At RLG he serves as the service manager and lead designer for Eureka, RLG's end-user search service. He has received numerous awards and written 14 books and more than 200 articles on libraries, technology, publishing, and personal computing. His most recent book is *Being Analog: Creating Tomorrow's Libraries*. With his wealth of experience, Crawford is frequently in demand as a speaker on the future of libraries and media and on technology-related topics.

Keeping Up — How Do You Keep Up With Everything? Developing a Personal e-Strategy for Professional Current Awareness

Wednesday, April 11, 2:00-3:45 PM

Sponsored by Academic Libraries Section

The number of new tools, techniques, and technologies with which they must stay current in order to maintain professional competency increasingly overwhelms librarians. The focus of this presentation will be developing strategies for keeping up. Steven Bell, Director of Gutman Library at Philadelphia University and adjunct faculty member at Drexel University's College of Information Science and Technology, will discuss the use of e-resources that "push" information to the individual, techniques for rapid review of new information, the use of e-mail technology to organize and review information, ways to help peers keep up, and other strategies.

Creating Inviting and Exciting Children's Environments

Wednesday April 11, 2:00-4:00 PM

Co-sponsored by Public Libraries Section and Library Services to Youth Interest Group

The Public Libraries Section joins forces with the Library Services to Youth Interest Group to bring the work of VITETTA to Florida librarians. The speakers' goal is to provide participants with new visions for creating or modifying spaces to support learning and development for children. Jim Keller, Architect, Kristin McKinnon, Manager of



Steven Bell

Furniture Services, and Don Morales, Project Designer, will “show and

tell” the creative design solutions from their portfolio of design for children’s spaces in public libraries. The presenters have designed about a hundred such spaces in libraries and other buildings. They will discuss innovative uses of color, pattern, and texture to achieve warm, inviting, welcoming spaces.

The presentation will describe how consensus building and consideration of universal issues can drive design. Pictures of several case studies will be shown to explain the importance of understanding the perceptions of the child when creating spaces or programs for children. The presentation will also provide some amusing anecdotes of design “faux pas” and lessons learned the hard way!

Grants and Other Funds for Rural Areas

Wednesday April 11, 2:00-4:00 PM

Sponsored by the Small and Rural Libraries Interest Group

The Small and Rural Libraries Interest Group is sponsoring a program that’s certain to be of interest to all small and rural libraries. Karen de Rosier from the Florida Rural Development Council will discuss ways to get grants and funding specifically aimed at the rural areas of Florida. Her talk will include many of the changes that have occurred since she spoke several years ago.

The State of Media Librarianship/ Notable Videos Screening

Wednesday April 11, 2:00-5:00 PM

Sponsored by the Media Services Interest Group

Lori Widzinski, Head of Computing and Multimedia Services, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo and Editor of *MC Journal: The Journal of Academic Media Librarianship*, will discuss the current state of media librarianship, including a brief history of media in libraries, current trends, and the future challenges of media for all librarians. A screening of selections from the ALA Video Round Table’s “Notable Videos for Adults” will follow this presentation.

Florida’s Best Kept Secret: The Center for the Book

Wednesday April 11, 4:00-5:15 PM

Sponsored by the Continuing Education Committee

Discover what the Florida Center for the Book can do for your library during this interactive presentation. Director Jean Trebbi details the Center’s history and its plans for the future. Bring your program ideas or requests to share during the question and answer session.

Discussion Groups

Wednesday April 11, 4:00-5:30 PM

Sponsored by the Small & Rural Libraries Interest Group

The Small and Rural Libraries Interest Group will host a group of discussions to allow librarians from small and rural areas to exchange information and to learn how other libraries have dealt with situations that are common to many of these libraries.

SUS Overview: Update and Discussion

Wednesday April 11, 4:00-5:30 PM

Sponsored by SUS Interest Group

The State University System (SUS) Interest Group provides an opportunity for SUS colleagues to discuss issues of common interest. Updates from SUS Committees and a brief business meeting will be included.

Scholarship Fundraiser

Wednesday April 11, 5:30-9:00 PM

Curtis Aikens, renowned chef, host of Food Network’s “Pick of the Day” Show, and literacy advocate, will present a session on literacy, sign books, and perform a cooking demonstration. (See p. 19.)

What Serials Staff Need to Know, Now and For the Future

Thursday April 12, 8:00-10:00 AM

Co-Sponsored by Serials and Technical Services Interest Groups

The challenge of providing public access to serials is becoming ever more complex. Increasingly, staff members who manage serials

are also expected to assist patrons in finding them. How do people who have traditionally worked “behind the scenes” make the transition? What skills do they need to remain viable? Mary Page, Head of Acquisitions, Technical and Automated Services, Rutgers University Libraries, will discuss her experiences in reorganizing a large serials operation and overcoming resistance (including her own) to change. Among the lessons learned: complacency leads to irrelevance, the workplace should be fun, and good staff members eventually leave (and the world doesn’t fall apart). Hear how one library faced some of the challenges presented by the current environment.

Deciding Tomorrow Today: Libraries’ Role in Building Sustainable Communities

Thursday April 12, 8:00-10:00 AM

Sponsored by the Public Libraries and Friends & Trustees Sections

This interactive workshop will help library professionals, staff, and trustees explore the choices they are making and can make to contribute to healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable communities. Since the Earth Summit in Rio, sustainable community initiatives have taken root at all levels of community around the world. Developed by the ALA with the U.S. Agency for International Development, the workshop introduces the concept and meaning of “sustainable communities,” as well as a variety of roles and a range of activities that libraries can initiate to promote sustainability. The workshop will be presented by some of FLA’s most experienced and lively trainers. Professionally-designed materials developed by ALA and Global Learning, Inc. will be distributed to participants.

Before They Were Americans: Helping Patrons Find Their Immigrant Ancestors

Thursday April 12, 8:00-10:00 AM

Sponsored by the Genealogy and Local History Interest Group

Loretto D. Szucs of Ancestry.com provides step-by-step instructions for locating and using naturalization records, passenger lists, and

alternative sources for finding an ancestor's origin. A must-attend for all reference and special collections librarians! A short business meeting of the interest group will be conducted.

Research Showcase

Thursday April 12, 9:00-10:00 AM

Sponsored by Library Research Interest Group

Several Florida librarians will report on their recent research efforts in this program sponsored by the Research Interest Group. Anna Perrault (University of South Florida School of Library and Information Science) will speak on "Research In Resources Assessment." "Interlibrary Loan Requests for Locally-Held Items" is the topic to be addressed by Jane Anne Carey and Priscilla Williams of the University of Florida. Larry Nash White (Florida State University School of Information Studies and Library Director, Levy County Public Library System) will speak about "Performance Measures for Public Libraries."

Empowering Today's Information Professionals: Understanding the New Paradigm of Information & Knowledge Work

Thursday, April 12, 10:30-12:00

Sponsored by the Special and Institutional Libraries Section

Guy St. Clair, former President of SLA and current Fellow of SLA, is known and respected by all special librarians for his long-standing support and commitment to the association. An active and enthusiastic speaker and author of several books, his latest book is *Change Management in Action*. A new one, *Beyond Expectations: A New Paradigm for Information Professionals*, is in publication.

Library Paraprofessionals in Florida: Where Do We Go From Here?

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

Sponsored by Paraprofessional Interest Group

Several paraprofessionals, including Mary C. Brown, Library Director of the Union County Public Library, will present a program on ways to achieve "professional" status in the library

community without an MLS. They'll examine which careers are most attainable and what it takes to get there, including training and methods that work for job advancement.

Awards Luncheon

Thursday April 12, 12:15-1:45 PM

Sponsored by the Friends and Trustees Section

Jacksonville University Chancellor Emeritus, Dr. Frances Bartlett Kinne, will be the featured speaker for the Awards Luncheon. Dr. Kinne, a native Iowan, received her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Drake University and her Ph.D. from the University of Frankfurt (Germany), where she was the first American to be awarded a doctorate after WW II. Among other firsts in her career, she was the first woman to be named president of a university in Florida. Governor Bob Graham recognized her as a Florida treasure upon inducting her into the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. She has recently published a book, *Iowa Girl, The President Wears A Skirt*.

Exploring the World of the Disney Librarians Network

Thursday, April 12, 1:30-3:00 PM

Co-Sponsored by the Telephone Reference and Reference Interest Groups

Created over two years ago, the Disney Librarians Network serves the information needs of the users within the Disney libraries. Six librarians will discuss their unique collections and unusual questions. They represent telephone reference in Walt Disney World Library and Research center, Creative Costuming, Centers for Excellence, Information Services, Feature Animation, and IRC East.

Putting the Internet to Work in Your Library: How to Work Faster and Smarter in Today's Dynamic Information-Driven World

Thursday, April 12, 1:30-3:00 and 4:00-5:30 PM

Co-sponsored by the Special and Institutional Libraries Section & Internet Interest Group

Rita Vine, President of WorkingFaster.com (Toronto, Canada) will present a two-part program on using the Internet to work faster and smarter in today's dynamic information-

driven world. Rita is a former academic librarian turned president of her own company. She presents workshops displaying her searching savvy and expertise for SLA and other information-based organizations. Rita's presentation skills and knowledge of Internet searching are sure to appeal to all members of FLA who want to learn the latest and the best about mastering the secrets of searching the Internet.

Public Library Standards: Funding an Update — Let's Talk About It!

Thursday, April 12, 4:00-5:00 PM

Sponsored by Public Library Standards Interest Group

Calling all public library managers! The Public Library Standards Interest Group invites you to join them to discuss the future of the Association's 1995 publication *Standards for Florida Public Libraries: A Vision for the 21st Century*. Last year, the group decided to pursue a review and possible revision of the standards, and this year the program will be devoted to discussing methods for doing that and getting it funded. A good turnout is needed to gather lots of good ideas and to start the project off with a consensus among public library managers.

President's Dinner at Arabian Nights Dinner Theater

Thursday April 12, 7:30-10:00 PM

President Mary Brown will host the President's Dinner at the Arabian Nights Dinner Theater, a popular Orlando attraction featuring a show with horses from around the world. This free event is included in the registration fee. Certain to be an entertaining and memorable evening! (See p. 19.)

President's Breakfast and Business Meeting

Friday April 13, 8:00-10:00 AM

William R. Gordon, Executive Director of the American Library Association, will speak about @your library, ALA's new public relations campaign at the President's Breakfast and Business Meeting.

See p. 19 for more details on special events.

Say It With Pictures

By Nancy Pike

We all know that a picture is worth a thousand words. A high tech example is the digitized photographs found on the Internet that now allow us to easily view the past and imagine the future with just the click of a mouse. Exploring a single field, such as Florida history, online reveals a treasure chest of visual examples.

Start with the Library of Congress *American Memory* site (memory.loc.gov/). Over 90 collections of photos can be searched simultaneously by a single topic entry. "Florida" brings up hundreds of choices, from a picture of Zora Neale Hurston to a parade in St. Augustine. Recent additions to the Memory site include photos from the Farm Security Administration Collection documenting America from the Great Depression to World War II. New photos are being added every month.

Although not specifically Florida related, the National Archives (www.nara.gov/exhall) has a photo collection that offers some visual surprises, such as the meeting of President Nixon with Elvis Presley in 1970. The site also hosts a series of intriguing panoramic pictures.

The State of Florida has its own *Florida Memory Project* (FloridaMemory.com). The contents, from the Florida State Archives, include a wide range of visual images from maps to photos. There are also teaching materials, images specially selected for kids, and an online exhibit of Florida historical documents. Other state sites of note are those of the Division of Historical Resources (www.flheritage.com) and within that, the Museum of Florida History (dhr.dos.state.fl.us/museum/) where you can take a look at the inaugural gowns of some of Florida's First Ladies, among a host of other fascinating topics.

Also, try the Institute of Science and Public Affairs site at Florida State University for



Captain Francis Asbury Hendry (center, standing) poses with a group of Seminole Indians, c. 1870. Photo courtesy of Florida Photographic Archives.

Technology Resource Center has designed *Digital Florida* (www.itrc.ucf.edu/df), which is a growing multimedia library of copyright-free images, movies, and sounds about Florida, past, present, and future. Designed for use by Florida teachers and students, you can search this site and contribute to it, as well.

Among other Web sites dedicated to Florida history are county or city pages that include historic photos, such as that of the Orlando Historic Preservation Society (www.ci.orlando.fl.us/departments/planning_and_development/historic_webpage/) or the Sarasota County Historical Resources (www.co.sarasota.fl.us/historical_resources/). Finally, an independent page called *Florida History Internet Center* offers photographs, maps, and texts to support online investigation of our state's development (www.floridahistory.org/).

Many of the sites discussed here offer organized help for students and teachers, plus lists of links to other resources. In addition, most sites provide a search engine, enabling the searcher to focus efforts on specific areas of interest.

Nancy Pike is Director of the Sarasota County Public Libraries.

"Digitized photographs found on the Internet now allow us to easily view the past and imagine the future with just the click of a mouse."

Florida's Historic Places (www.freac.fsu.edu/HistoricPlaces/Atlas.html). The collection is indexed by county. Just click on the map and find the pictures.

The wealth of historical and archival treasures held by libraries in the ten state universities can be seen in small part on the *Florida Heritage Collection* (susdl.fcla.edu/fh) Web site. The project includes digitized texts and pictures broadly representing Florida's history, culture, arts, literature, sciences, and social sciences. The site is searchable. The University of Central Florida's Instruction

The Latest News

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

Sun Shines on the eBook 24/7/365

By Jackie Zebos

Electronic books have been hovering around in the background for several years. For some technology junkies and gadget lovers they might even be considered old standbys, but it took a “bullet” fired by horror-meister Stephen King to bring eBooks crashing into the mainstream and shouldering their way into library collections everywhere. Just about everyone has heard something about Stephen King’s *Riding the Bullet*, which was published only as an eBook. Since its publication, it seems clear that eBooks are here to stay.

So, now that they are here, what are they anyway? An eBook is a book in electronic format, data stored in a file that can be downloaded, e-mailed, printed out, and read on a PC, laptop, or hand-held reader. A book that exists only digitally? A book without a spine, without a dust jacket or a date-due-stamp? Take a minute to think about circulating a book that you never “see” or label, which will never have to be shelved in the stacks that surround you. Where will it all lead? The idea probably shouldn’t be a revolutionary one, but for some librarians, it might be.

eBooks from netLibrary can be read on a computer screen. Image courtesy of netLibrary.

“Like most new technologies, eBooks are experiencing a standardization struggle.”

Libraries and eBooks

Just as libraries have embraced the Internet and all it has to offer, some are now harnessing eBook technology to offer new services to library users and just maybe solve some old problems, too. Since it exists only digitally, the eBook can’t be returned to the library covered with food stains. It can’t be returned to the school media center by accident. And the family’s beloved Fido can’t chew it up. What it can do is offer libraries a way to greatly expand access to information in the most convenient, economical, and space-saving way possible. Every librarian’s ideal right? Well, not so fast. Like most new technologies, eBooks are experiencing a standardization struggle. Some eBooks are “device dependent.” This means that they can only be read on certain kinds of readers and with particular software. That’s not so ideal. Remember the days of VHS and Beta? There are currently a variety of eBook vendors, software programs, and reading devices available. And like Beta, some of them are sure to wither and die.

Multiple Formats

EBooks are available in many formats: Rocketbooks, AportisDoc for personal digital assistants (PDAs) like Palm Pilots, Softbooks, and PDF to name a few. Some eBooks can be downloaded from vendors like BarnesandNoble.com

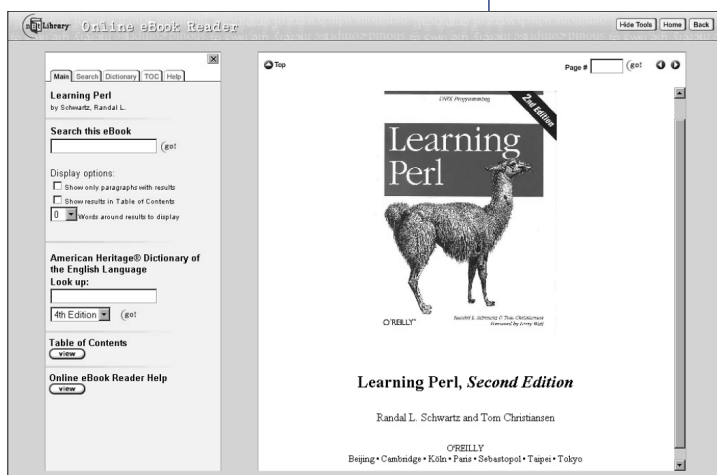
and read on hand-held readers. These types of eBooks can be purchased by individual title. Libraries that want to offer this type of service must first select a device type, a list of titles, and then decide which titles to load on which reader. These decisions can be very important because library users, who will almost certainly have to be on a waiting list for a reader, will need to reserve the correct reader in order to access the title they want. Furthermore, as technology changes, the devices may become obsolete as they are replaced by newer, more sophisticated versions.

Another eBook option is netLibrary, which claims to have the most comprehensive collection of eBooks available. According to its brochure, netLibrary offers two collections for users; the Library Collection, which contains titles purchased by the individual library, and the Public Collection, which includes titles in the public domain. Users register at their library and then access the netLibrary collection from any Internet-connected computer. netLibrary’s titles are not currently available for downloading to a PDA or hand-held reader. However, netLibrary has recently announced that through its acquisition of peanutpress, it will allow libraries with eBook collections to provide patrons the option of downloading titles to their hand-held devices.

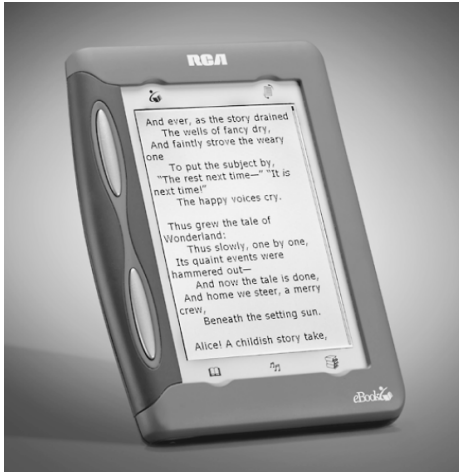
If this seems like a lot of detail to remember about eBooks, that’s because it is! How a library user can actually make use of an eBook will depend a lot on the library they go to and the hardware that is available to the user.

Introducing eBooks in Florida

So what’s happening with eBooks in Florida libraries? The answer is “a lot.” As with so many new technologies and services, the State Library of Florida and the multiple library cooperatives are leading the way. The State Library of Florida is expanding eBook availability through an LSTA-funded project. (See accompanying article.) Both the Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) and Southwest Florida Library Network (SFLN) have responded to the eBook phenomenon. According to Beth Watson, Assistant Director of the Tampa Bay Library Consortium, eBooks



This RCA eBook reader, a hand-held device used to read eBooks, is a successor to the Rocket eBook reader.



are a "very popular new format for libraries to try out." SFLN has recently purchased two eBook readers for testing and demonstration in their member libraries. TBLC is making eBooks available with the introduction of their LibrarE Project. LibrarE, which debuted in September 2000, is a collection of electronic books available through netLibrary. To access the eBooks, users at TBLC member libraries just have to register for an account. After the registration, users can access the eBooks from any Internet-connected computer anywhere.

Users can search for information at any hour of the day, long after libraries are closed for the night. The text of eBooks can be previewed and searched, and if a user wants to check out an eBook, he or she gets exclusive access to the eBook for the check-out period. In TBLC's case, that is a four-hour period. Sounds good, but it probably isn't enough time to read *Riding the Bullet*. But that's o.k. since most of the items available through netLibrary are scholarly and reference materials, including the perennial favorite of the time-crunched everywhere, *Cliff's Notes*. The selection of titles available makes netLibrary very useful for students, researchers, and reference librarians. When the checkout period is over, users don't have to "return" the item as they would a book. eBooks can never be overdue! That means they can't generate any fine money. It's not too early for library administrators to start thinking about ways to replace that revenue stream.

Florida Libraries Acquire eBooks

The Citrus County Public Library made the netLibrary eBook service available to users in November of 2000. Melissa Walker, the

library's Communications Facilitator, says that within three weeks of publicizing the service, use of eBooks tripled. "EBooks allow me the convenience of doing research from home or business and finding information that is not normally available on the Internet," says Michael Harris, a patron of the Citrus County Library system.

In February of this year, Sarasota County Public Library is likely to become the first public library in Florida to circulate Rocket eBook readers. According to Jean Bocchino, the library's Support Services Manager, the library has purchased six Rocket eBook readers. Each of the readers has had fourteen titles loaded on it and all of the readers hold the same titles. This will prevent users from mistakenly reserving a reader that doesn't hold the desired title. The library has purchased the titles from Banesandnoble.com, and they are a mix of fiction and non-fiction. Bocchino predicts "Ideally, in the future, patrons will download what they want on the reader." She also says that the library will purchase more eBook readers if demand requires it. Additionally, Sarasota offers their users access to netLibrary.

At the Sanibel Public Library, Director Patricia Allen has plans to purchase two Rocket eBook readers for in-house use. The readers will be available as an educational resource for library users who "want to evaluate them and experiment with them so that they can make an informed decision before buying one of their own." The Sanibel Public Library also has plans to use netLibrary. In this way, they will be offering library users broad access to eBooks.

Libraries all over the state are rapidly integrating eBooks into their collections as they continue the tradition of using technology to enhance the services they provide to their communities. Books of all descriptions, including electronic, will continue to be a part of that service. The eBook evolution will continue. Stay tuned.

Jackie Zebos is grants coordinator for the Tampa Hillsborough Public Library System.

Editor's Note: According to a NuvoMedia spokesperson, the Rocket eBook reader is no longer being produced.

Grant Introduces eBooks to Florida Public Libraries

A grant funded by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and administered by the State Library is enabling public libraries in the state to offer eBook access to their patrons at no cost. "The purpose of this project," explains State Librarian Barratt Wilkins, "is to provide an opportunity for Florida public libraries to introduce eBook access as a new service to library patrons and to test the implementation and use of eBooks as a new information resource." By December 2000, 48 public libraries in the state had signed up for this service.

As of March 1, 2001 participating libraries will have access to over 20,000 titles in the SOLINET shared collection of netLibrary eBooks. This collection includes books in all subject areas, but it's particularly strong in business, history, health/medicine, sociology, literature, religion, and computer science. In addition to the titles in the shared collection, all libraries are able to access titles in the Public Collection, an extensive collection of public domain eBooks.

Patrons can access the books through the netLibrary Web site (<http://www.netlibrary.com>) from the library or from home or from some other remote location seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Books can be "checked out" for a maximum of two hours. When a patron of one library is using a book, it will not be available to anyone else in the participating libraries until the book is "returned." When the two-hour time period has expired the book is automatically released. If usage warrants, SOLINET may purchase multiple copies of a title. Libraries may also elect to supplement the SOLINET collection by purchasing additional titles for their own collections.

For more information contact Mark Flynn at the State Library (mflynn@mail.dos.state.fl.us).

Remote, Accessible, and On Call: Reference Librarians Go Live

By Gloria Colvin

There's no question that the Internet is having a tremendous impact on reference services. Many libraries are witnessing a decline in the number of in-person inquiries at the reference desk. At the same time commercial and library e-mail reference services have become increasingly popular, sometimes to the point where services are overwhelmed with questions. With more users working from home or office, librarians are looking for ways to reshape services, deliver them to the user, and make them more convenient.

The hottest topic on reference listservs and at professional conferences of late is interactive reference, also known as chat, live, or real-time reference. Using software that allows a reference librarian to talk with a user online, it has the advantages of immediacy, convenience, and accessibility from remote locations. Unlike e-mail, it allows a librarian to conduct a reference interview and clarify the question, to demonstrate or explain methods of searching a database or Web site, and to get feedback from the user.

Florida Universities Experiment with Live Reference

In Florida several of the university libraries are leading the way in testing and offering interactive reference services. The University of Florida (UF) pioneered its virtual reference service early in 2000. In April 2000 the Florida Distance Learning Reference and Referral Center (RRC) introduced its RRChat service (www.rrc.usf.edu/chat), and the University of South Florida (USF) initiated its Virtual Library Reference Chat service (www.lib.usf.edu/virtual/chat/index.html) this past fall. All of the services are available from the libraries' Web sites, and none of them require special software on the part of the user. With a click of the mouse and a few keystrokes, a student can initiate a conversation with reference librarians who will do their best to locate the needed information, assist with a search, or direct him or her to appropriate sources.

Conference Room Software

Both USF and the RRC use the Conference Room Professional Edition software by WebMaster. With this software reference librarians can communicate with people who log on to the site in much the same way that people "talk" using instant messaging systems. Librarians are able to conduct a reference interview by asking questions of an individual, to supply information or refer someone to particular sources, and to provide individual or group instruction in searching. When a URL is typed in a message it becomes a live link, so people are able to go directly to a Web site. Anyone logging on is in the same "chat room," although librarians have the ability to create additional chat rooms. The software can accommodate up to 1,000 simultaneous users, making it possible to offer library instruction to a group of people online.

MOO-Based Software

Librarians at the University of Florida's Smathers Library began experimenting with a MOO-based software last spring before

launching the *RefeXpress* service (smathersnt11.uflib.ufl.edu) in January 2001. Librarian Jana Ronan recommends the MOO software as an option for libraries with low budgets, but she warns that it requires additional programming for maximum benefits. The software UF used was telnet-based and required programming to create a Web interface, but other MOO programs, such as *encore Xpress*, have a built-in Web interface and allow programmers to add other features. This need for additional programming and other limitations of the software led to a search for software that would provide more functionality for an interactive reference service.

Call Center Software

UF's new service uses NetAgent, more sophisticated software initially developed for commercial use by call centers. NetAgent allows Web collaboration between librarians and users. Librarians are able to push Web pages to a student's browser, and a student can watch a librarian demonstrate database searches or navigate a Web site. Librarians also have the capability to observe someone

**"Librarians
are looking
for ways to
reshape
services,
deliver them
to the user,
and make
them more
convenient."**

*Librarian Carlene Jaworowski
responds to an online inquiry at
the Florida Distance Learning
Reference and Referral Center.*



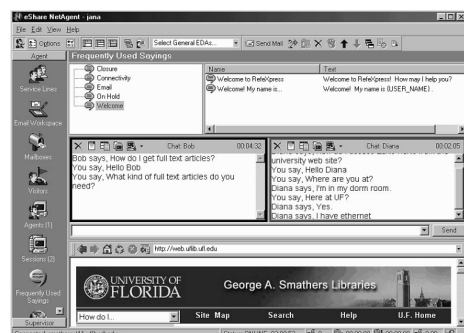
The screen seen by the librarian in UF's RefeXpress service has windows for frequently used statements, Web access, and the text of the reference conversation.

search, thus enabling them to provide assistance when needed. It has the capability of sending transcripts of the session via e-mail, collecting statistics, generating reports, and tracking information. The software has the potential of allowing librarians to work with up to six users at a time, but thus far at UF librarians work with only one or two users at a time. If more people try to access the system, a message informs them that they are in a queue and that a librarian will be with them shortly. Unlike the system in use at USF and at the RRC, the user is not aware of anyone else using the service at the same time and can only view his or her one-on-one exchange with the librarian.

Use of the Service

Thus far responses to these services has been "small, but enthusiastic," according to UF librarian Colleen Seale. During the initial trial questions totaled about 30 a month. So far this semester the RefeXpress service has logged about three questions a day. At USF numbers of people using the service have also been low, totaling about 30 for the fall semester. According to librarian Rachel Viggiano, the RRC gets about two to three visitors per day in its chat room. Reference staffs believe that the numbers will increase as word about the service spreads.

Who are the people using these systems, and what type of information are they seeking? The RRC already has a number of regular users, including one person who "stops by" almost daily. Lisa Nickel at USF reports that in addition to students and faculty there are "plenty of librarians checking us out." For the most part, she reports, the questions are just like those that you get on the telephone or in person at the reference desk. Some questions don't require instant answers, says USF's Ilene Frank, and could be handled via e-mail, but others are from people who need the information right then. During some of the initial trials of the service at UF, librarians volunteered to answer questions from their homes during evening hours. Jana Ronan recalls a query from a student who was in the library after regular reference hours and needed information on accounting standards. At home in her pajamas she was able to help



him locate a book in the library's online catalog, which he then was able to use. Other people working online from their home or office are finding it convenient to request information as they are working, rather than having to log off and call with a reference question.

Publicity will be key for generating use of the service at all of these libraries. Links are displayed on the libraries' Web sites, demonstrations of the systems are being incorporated into class presentations and bibliographic instruction, flyers and brochures describing the service are being distributed, and word is being circulated among campus-wide discussion lists.

At this point, access to these services is limited to certain designated hours. Students can use the RRC service anytime between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM Monday through Friday. USF staffs its service from 9:00-12:00 AM, but librarians hope to expand hours. Beginning in February RefeXpress will be available from 9:00 AM-9:00 PM Monday through Thursday and from 9:00 AM through 5:00 PM on Friday. Hours may be adjusted as patterns of usage emerge. For now both university libraries schedule one librarian at a time to staff the service for a one-hour shift at USF and one to two hours at UF. The RRC schedules two librarians in the chat room at all times. Librarians are scheduled for four-hour shifts. Audible cues alert the librarians that someone is logging on and sending a message.

Continued on page 11

Read On!

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www.lssi.com/virtual/livefromdc

LiveRef (sm): A Registry of Real-Time Digital Reference Services;
www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/LiveRef.htm

netAgent
www.eshare.com

University of Leicester ELITE Project - Compilation of libraries offering real-time reference services
www.le.ac.uk/li/distanceeliteproject/index.htm

WebMaster
www.webmaster.com

Remote, Accessible and On Call:

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Works in Progress

The services are so new that they are still works in progress. Training staff in the use of all of the features of the software is a challenge that UF is taking on gradually. One of the adjustments to an interactive system is that it takes longer to explain things in writing than it would if one were speaking directly to someone. UF librarians plan to use some of the timesaving features built in to the NetAgent software to make it easier and faster to answer questions. Frequently-used statements or Web addresses can be saved and inserted into responses, eliminating the need to type them repeatedly. They also are continuing to work on customizing the software to their institution. Librarians at USF anticipate the need to develop policies as usage increases, particularly to define the types

"The hottest topic on reference listservs and at professional conferences of late is interactive reference."

of questions that can and can't be answered during a session. Research questions, for example, are not answered, but people are directed to places where they can find articles or information needed for research.

Looking to the Future

Reference staff at all of these libraries see interactive reference, not as a replacement for other services, but as an additional way to reach people and to make their services available. Other libraries in the state, public

as well as academic, will undoubtedly consider adding this service in the future. UF's Jana Ronan sees the potential for collaborative efforts that would make reference service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Many envision that involving subject specialists and providing referrals to special collections will enhance the quality of reference services. People in branch libraries and small libraries will also benefit from expanded reference services and access to additional resources. Judging by the amount of interest in real-time, interactive reference and the degree of excitement surrounding it, there are many who believe that it will become a popular service for a new generation of online users.

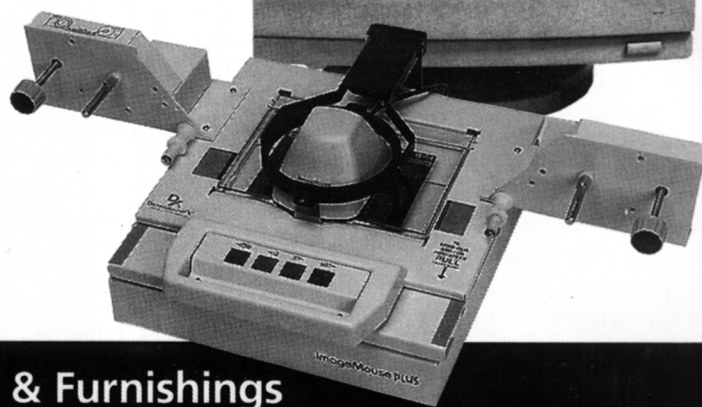
Gloria Colvin is a reference librarian at the State Library and editor of Florida Libraries

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Beyond Paper: Managing the State's Electronic Documents

By Cherie McCraw

For approximately the last six years the State Library of Florida has been actively locating and cataloging state agencies' electronic publications and Web sites, and for approximately the last two years we have been downloading the e-pubs to our server. Our vision was simply that electronic documents be treated just as paper documents are treated. They would be located, cataloged, and the records made available via our online catalog. Ultimately, the result will be continuous access to these publications for all of Florida's citizens, regardless of whether the publishing agency chooses to maintain them on its Web site.

We were compelled to develop an internal means to manage electronic state documents because of one primary factor: the State Library is required by Florida Statute (F.S. 257.05) to make state documents from all agencies readily available to the people of the state in a cost-effective and timely manner. The State Library manages the Florida State Documents Depository Program, which was established by the Legislature in 1967.

The primary means by which the library fulfills its responsibility is by placing state documents in depository libraries in all regions of the state. This mission has been complicated by the fact that the state of Florida has no centralized publishing agency as exists in some other states. Thus, there is no single point of contact with which we can arrange the deposit of the 35 copies of each publication required by statute. We deal with each agency individually, a monumental task.

The advent of Web-based publishing offers exciting opportunities to make the information from state agencies immediately and widely accessible. It also offers great challenges for the Depository Program in terms of a document's longevity on the Web and the use of a variety of file formats. On the positive side, Web-based publishing offers at least the possibility of locating and preserving e-docs since anyone can freely browse an agency's Web site and is not dependent on a limited system of notification.



Many state agencies are choosing to publish documents in electronic form only, which presents challenges for archival storage different from that of print publications.

Selecting the GILS Format

The task of identifying state agencies with a Web presence and mounting metadata describing information held by the agency occurred primarily in 1996. After researching and comparing various options for managing access to electronic state documents and Web sites, we opted to use the federal Global Information Locator Standard (GILS) model,

"Our vision was simply that electronic documents be treated just as paper documents are treated."

which has several very attractive features. It encourages common practice, but does not enforce any particular format. It specifies how to express a search and how to return results, but does not specify how network servers manage records or how clients use records. It incorporates the Z39.50 standard used by libraries around the world as a key component.

The GILS model specifies how information sources are described through locator records on network servers. The records provide descriptions of publicly-available information on almost anything, including documents, Web sites, files, artifacts, people, meetings, etc. Each GILS record presents a thorough description of the information resource, indicating what information is available and why it was created, how the information is made available for use, who to contact for further information, and a direct electronic link to the information itself if applicable. For information that is online, the record can include hyperlinks for access to the resource described or to related resources.

GILS users can customize their records by selecting the elements they want to use from among the entire set available, and the core elements of a GILS record map to a MARC record. For any group of information resources, each implementing agency decides which common characteristics would be useful for patrons during a search. Typical characteristics are title, author, subject, date of publication, date last modified, time period of content, spatial domain, and use constraints.

An important consideration was that GILS would allow us to use existing technology and knowledge, resulting in considerable cost savings to the institution compared with some of the other models we examined. The GILS records would be fully searchable via a database accessible through our Web site, and we anticipated that the records could later be incorporated into our online catalog.

Formulating a Collections Policy

After deciding to go with the GILS model the first step was to create a collections policy to focus our efforts. Florida GILS (FLGILS) records are created primarily for material found on state government Web pages, but also include previously uncataloged, publicly-accessible collections housed in various state

agencies, such as the aerial photographs in the Dept. of Transportation and the archaeological site files in the Division of Historical Resources. Initially, we decided to catalog substantive material found on department, division, and bureau Web pages, such as descriptions of an agency's services; documents available in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) or in other file formats, such as .pdf or Microsoft Word; and databases that are searchable using Web-based forms interfaces. We decided not to catalog either records for ephemeral material, such as announcements of conferences, or links to information outside state government.

Florida Government Information Locator

Reference staff had already begun creating the State Library's Florida Government Information Locator Service (FGILS) Web site (<http://dliis.dos.state.fl.us/fgils/>), which was designed index-style to facilitate locating various types of information throughout state government. The FGILS Web site does not

Student assistant Felishe Littles enters records in the FLGILS database.



follow the GILS model, but it serves as a vehicle to access the GILS records that are contained in a subset of our online catalog. The GILS records can be accessed via a link from the FGILS Web site called "Search Florida Government." We refer to our GILS records as FLGILS to distinguish them from the Web site.

Creating Bibliographic Records

Another decision was to use the MARC format to create bibliographic records for the electronic information resources. We used the National Archives and Records Administration's "Guidelines for the Preparation of GILS Core Entries" to select the elements to include in our MARC records. We focused on those items listed as mandatory. In some cases, the element can be repeated as many times as necessary in the record, and in other cases, the data content is restricted.

We decided to use the Library of Congress Subject Headings since that is the tool used to describe the other collections in the State Library, and we decided to liberally use the Local Subject Headings.

After selecting the elements we wanted to use, we prepared a manual that described the purpose of each field and provided

examples of entries for each element/field. Student assistants do most of the data entry, and we wanted the manual to be as straightforward as possible so that our data entry employees could read it and use it to resolve any questions as independently as possible. Going through the lists of state agencies and commissions found on the FGILS Web site (<http://dliis.dos.state.fl.us/fgils/agencies.html> and <http://dliis.dos.state.fl.us/fgils/boards.html>) from A to Z and checking the agencies' Web sites, we have now cataloged over 3,000 Web pages and documents. All of the records are fully searchable by author or originator, title of the resource, subject terms or any keyword or phrase from the FLGILS search interface on the FGILS Web site.

Archiving Electronic Publications

Our plan at the outset also included downloading state agency electronic publications. There was not enough space on our server to store these publications, but in 1999 we began saving some of the electronic documents to experiment with the process and to begin to identify some of the issues involved. In an informal survey of 600+ electronic documents found on state agency Web pages, fewer than 30% had also been published in paper format. Additionally, a survey of state agency Webmasters indicated that most agencies had not yet determined what data on their Web sites would be permanently stored and had no plans for establishing agency-specific electronic libraries.

Downloading electronic documents became a priority for the State Library in 1999. A legislative budget request was approved for the electronic documents program that year, ensuring that it will be an ongoing process. The original request was for \$47,913, and includes a cataloger and a server with dual Pentium III-500Mhz processors, 1024 MB memory (1GB), 54GB of disk storage, and a DLT 40GB tape backup system. The server was up and running by February 2000, and we hired a cataloger.

Coincident with the approval of the budget request, we re-examined our FLGILS program and decided to split the Web pages and the e-pubs into two categories and to handle them

“The advent of Web-based publishing offers exciting opportunities to make the information from state agencies immediately and widely accessible.”

differently. We continued to catalog the agency Web pages using the GILS model. These records will continue to be accessible from the search interface from the FGILS Web page. Only the records of the electronic documents, however, will become part of our online catalog.

Participating in CORC

In reaching this milestone in the development of our program to manage the electronic information resources of state government, we decided to participate in the yearlong beta testing of OCLC's Web-based Cooperative Online Resource Catalog (CORC). CORC is a cooperative effort to create a high-quality, library-selected database of Web-based electronic resource descriptions. The State Library of Florida was one of seven state libraries that participated in the project, along with university, public, and special libraries around the world.

CORC's scope will evolve over time, but its current focus is creating descriptive records for WWW resources. The database was seeded with InterCat and NetFirst records. During the CORC founders' phase, institutions could contribute both additional resource records in either OCLC MARC or Dublin Core format and pathfinders, which are pages that serve as bibliographies of Web resources. Once created, resource records and pathfinders can either be exported for local use or accessed via the CORC database.

Several characteristics of the Dublin Core make it particularly attractive for the description of electronic resources. It is simple. The Dublin Core is intended to be usable by non-catalogers, as well as by resource description specialists, and most of the elements are about as complex as a library catalog card. As with the GILS standard, Dublin Core promotes a commonly understood set of descriptors, such as title, contributor, and creation date. Social scientists or biologists can use it as easily as librarians, increasing the possibility of interoperability across disciplines. It is internationally recognized and has active participants in some 20 countries in North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia. Also, the Dublin Core elements are mapped to GILS elements. For us, that meant that the students doing the

keying of the records wouldn't have to learn a new set of fields and their uses.

An exciting aspect of CORC is that it supports a multi-record creation feature that automatically creates records for all the links on an HTML page. In other words, users can supply a URL and direct that all links on a page be automatically harvested and resource records created. These records remain visible only to the creating institution until they are formally submitted for inclusion in the CORC database. This feature has increased the speed of creating records for state agency Web sites in CORC. However, it has not helped in the creation of records for the documents because the harvester does not read .pdf files or other specialized types of file formats. These must still be harvested manually.

Another exciting feature of CORC is that people can search CORC and WorldCat simultaneously in FirstSearch. The databases aren't merged per se, but the search of the two different databases will be transparent to the user. Thus, our state electronic documents cataloged under the program will be available to anyone searching this database.

We have embarked on a course of action that has left us in a good position. We have been able to demonstrate to the legislature with good, hard facts, the need for funding for our electronic documents program. Participating in CORC will improve on the work we have already accomplished. The harvesting feature of CORC will allow us to identify state agency e-pubs much more quickly than we have been able to identify them in the past using just visual inspection. But, we are not going to lose the human touch. "Electronic harvesting" alone is not the answer. Human interaction is just as important

here as it is with searches of online databases. Reference librarians need to massage the hit list resulting from any online search to cull out the relevant items and to eliminate duplications, just as we must do with the harvested records.

We are poised to offer broader access to Florida's state publications and to contribute to the information literacy of the public. While many people think that everything they need to know is online, we know this isn't true. Just as we have a responsibility to make available all the resources (both paper and electronic) our patrons need and to educate them in how to use these resources, so, too, do we have a responsibility to make these resources more accessible. We have done this with paper publications for years. Our participation in CORC and our continued improvement of our program will ensure that electronic publications are more accessible via an easily searchable catalog and that electronic documents will permanently hold a place "on the shelf" in our server.

Cherie McCraw is a Program Specialist in the Division of Library and Information Services. At the time this article was written she headed the State Library's public documents program.

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Book Discussion Suggestions for Winter Visitors

By Joyce Sparrow

Memoirs and novels set in Florida give readers a peek into the real or imagined life in the Sunshine State. Writers enable their characters to meander around the mangroves, strip malls, bars, trailer parks, condominiums, beaches, and waters that make up this haven for vacationers and retirees. Readers are given a thoughtful look under the palm trees and behind the front doors that are part of the ideal of Florida.

I have been justly accused of liking quirky fiction — books that are usually not bestsellers and lurk somewhere around that hazy category of “literary fiction.” Some Florida authors can easily fill my need for quirky books, but I have found I need to be careful when recommending such titles for a public library book discussion. Selecting a slightly off-center novel such as Harry Crews’ *Celebration*, or possibly Larry Baker’s *The Flamingo Rising* may send some wide-eyed, disappointed winter visitors running from the building! For example, a fascinating new novel, *The Return* by Mark T. Mustian (Pineapple Press, 2000), is a compelling story about the coming of a fraudulent messiah that is more suitable as a recommended book for individual readers.

Contemporary Bestsellers

Many contemporary best-selling Florida novels are pretty hard-hitting, if not quirky. Depending on the reading tastes of the discussion group members, the entertaining novels of Carl Hiassen may entice readers, as well as books by Lawrence Shames, Ed McBain, Lawrence Sanders and Elmore Leonard. There is always a concern that the adult language in the works of some of these



Book group members gather to discuss their current selection

“Discussing Florida novels and nonfiction does get the attention of winter visitors who are interested in joining a reading group.”

authors may become a factor when their titles are offered as a selection for a book discussion. The Miami mysteries by Edna Buchanan are also popular with readers.

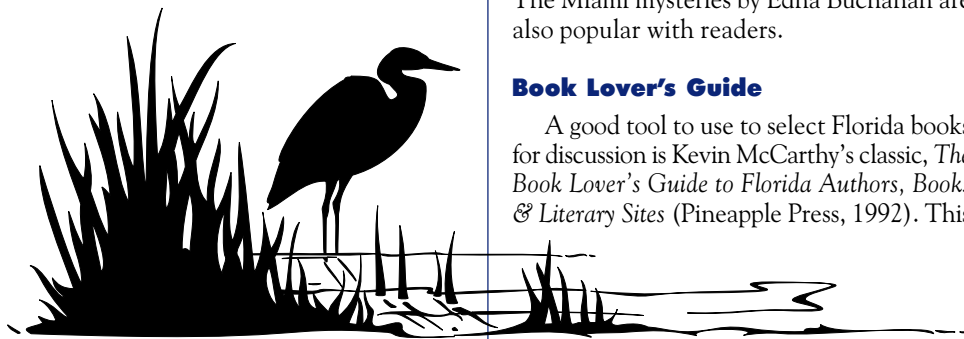
Book Lover’s Guide

A good tool to use to select Florida books for discussion is Kevin McCarthy’s classic, *The Book Lover’s Guide to Florida Authors, Books & Literary Sites* (Pineapple Press, 1992). This

is a comprehensive regional guide for library staff who choose Florida titles for book discussions, displays, bibliographies or pathfinders. McCarthy’s work guides the reader on a literary road trip around the peninsula. It includes all the well-known Florida authors such as Hemingway, Hurston, Hersey, and Douglas, but also many lesser-known writers who have come to Florida to polish their stories.

Mysteries

Orange Pulp Stories of Mayhem, Murder, and Mystery (University of Florida Press, 2000), a recently published collection edited by Maurice J. O’Sullivan and Steve Glassman, offers an overview of select Florida mystery writers. The work contains excerpts from books by the big names such as John D. MacDonald and a complete novel, *The Hated One*, by Don Tracy. This is a story that the editors parallel with Harper Lee’s *To Kill A Mockingbird*. I can’t say enough about the novels written by John D. MacDonald, an



author who had a keen understanding and strong opinions about all things Florida. Most readers are pleased after you introduce them to Travis McGee. A recently published biography about MacDonald, *The Red Hot Typewriter* by Hugh Merrill (St. Martin/Thomas Dunne, 2000), will bolster discussions about what has been called MacDonald's "ambivalent love affair with Florida".

Oprah-Style Selections

For book discussion groups that lean toward Oprah's choices, a recent novel by Janice Owens, *My Brother Michael* (Pineapple Press, 1997) tells the story of siblings in west Florida attempting to reconcile their family problems. Similarly, the novels of Connie Mae Fowler take readers all throughout Florida and examine the bittersweet obstacles everyday people work around to achieve satisfaction in life. Although not set in the Sunshine State, the stories and novels by Florida author Rita Ciresi can make readers laugh and cry. Her contemporary works chronicle growing up in an Italian-American family. Fans of the Ya-Ya Sisters will enjoy Ciresi's books. Jesse Lee Kercheval's book, *Space: A Memoir* (Workman, 1997), is the true coming-of-age story of a girl who relocates to Cocoa, Florida with her family in the 1960s. As the child matures, so do her views of her family. With the space race and subdivisions of modern Florida as the backdrop, this absorbing book touches on the optimism of a new beginning that so many people bring with them to the state.

Historical Fiction

Historical fiction weighs in heavily in the scope of Florida novels. Patrick D. Smith's novel, *A Land Remembered* (Pineapple Press, 1984) is a saga outlining three generations of the MacIvey family as they evolve from crackers to real estate developers. It is a good, fictional account of the growth of Florida. Peter Mathiessen's *Killing Mister Watson* (Random House, 1990), the story of Everglades outlaw, Edgar J. Watson, is a tale that will generate discussion. Another interesting novel is Theodore Pratt's *The*

"Memoirs and novels set in Florida give readers a peek into the real or imagined life in the Sunshine State."

Barefoot Mailman (Florida Classics Library, 1994), originally published in 1940. It tells the 19th century story of a pioneer mailman in Southeast Florida. "The Open Boat" by Stephen Crane offers a fictional account of the author's experience off the coast of Daytona Beach. *Space* by James Michener (Random House, 1982) is historical fiction about NASA, an additional piece of the Florida fiction puzzle.

And finally, I need to mention Marjorie Kinnan Rawling's *Cross Creek* (Simon & Schuster, 1996). I have luck using this classic book that was originally published in 1942, and its related titles such as *Cross Creek Cookery* (Simon & Schuster, 1996) for book talks and discussions. Readers who are unfamiliar with the book, its controversies, and recipes for Alligator Tail Steak, enjoy learning about Rawling's life and community.

I find that discussing Florida novels and nonfiction does get the attention of winter visitors who are interested in joining a reading group. It is fun when these readers rejoin the group each year. Many keep up with the group's summer reading list and often ask us about our discussion of a particular book. I have even had some winter visitors who have e-mailed me their thoughts and questions about a book prior to a discussion so I can share them with the group! There we are, readers, and now friends, who enjoy getting together to discuss a good book!

"Florida Reads" is compiled by Joyce Sparrow, librarian at Juvenile Welfare Board Library in Pinellas Park, FL. She can be contacted at jsparrow@jwbpinellas.org.

Sales Tax Exemptions for Foundations

Florida Friends of the Library organizations and foundations with current IRS 501(c) (3) status are now eligible to obtain exemptions from paying state sales tax on their purchases, thanks to legislation passed in 2000 that extends eligibility to all IRS 501(c) (3) organizations. The legislation leaves in place a current law (Florida Statutes 212.0821) that encourages library groups to make purchases through their library's county or city government, thus insuring that groups that are too small to have IRS 501(c) (3) status continue to have a way to make purchases without paying the tax. The law took effect January 1, 2001.

Those interested in obtaining this exemption should call the Florida Department of Revenue at (850) 922-4824 and request an Application for Consumer Certificate of Exemption (form DR5).

While the legislation allows organizations to obtain exemptions from paying Florida sales tax when they make purchases, it does not affect their tax status when they make sales. Florida's sales tax law (Florida Statutes 212.05) requires Florida friends organizations to collect and remit sales tax when they sell things to raise money to support public libraries. Rules of the Florida Department of Revenue (F.A.C. 3B12A-1.037) allow these organizations to have up to two sales annually without having to administer the tax.

Library friends groups and foundations are encouraged to contact the State Library's Bureau of Library Development (850-487-2651) for assistance and support.

The Gold Coast Information Specialists: Librarians Who Lunch

By Robert I. Davidsson

Along the southeastern coast of Florida there is an organization of professional librarians and information specialists with no mission statement, a clean (and blank) slate of officers, and no operating budget. It is minutes-less, lacks a long-range plan, and has no past-due membership fees.

You won't find this group of hard-working professionals listed with the Florida Division of Corporations, because legally it does not exist. Yet, as an informal group, it is very much alive and thriving.

"Who are these people?" is a question often asked of members by the uninitiated or by library school students or by the unemployed colleagues they assist. The answer is the "Gold Coast Information Specialists"—the infamous GCIS.

Before describing exactly what the GCIS is, it is best to mention what it is not. First of all, most Gold Coast Information specialists live on the Treasure Coast, not the Gold Coast. Meetings are generally held in the greater West Palm Beach area. Since this is an inclusive and accommodating group of professionals, the name "Gold Coast" was selected last year to make librarians from Broward and Dade counties feel welcome.

The GCIS is not affiliated with the SLA, ALA, AALL, nor with any other professional acronym usually associated with information specialists and managers of special library collections. However, many GCIS members are very active in these organizations.

GCIS members work in law, corporate, medical, news and government information centers. They also manage public or academic library special collections and school media centers. Both active and retired librarians attend

the group's gatherings.

Such a diverse group of professionals makes for interesting meetings. That is the secret of success for the Gold Coast Information Specialists. It is an informal, relaxed setting where information managers from different fields of librarianship and information studies can network, announce new employment opportunities, and share research ideas or the latest gossip.

The group is so informal that during its first ten years of existence it had no name. It was known simply as "The Librarians Who

In an informal, relaxed setting, information managers from different fields of librarianship and information studies can network, announce new employment opportunities, and share research ideas or the latest gossip.

Lunch," as in "Let's get together for lunch." Dining is the specialty of the group. Dinner meetings are held monthly. Traditionally they are held the last Thursday of each month at high noon.

While known for its luncheons, GCIS also sponsors educational tours of member libraries. Information service vendors and guest speakers occasionally address the group. An annual December holiday dinner has become a tradition.

Membership "standards" are high and initiation is rigorous. Librarians must attend a meeting, introduce themselves, and eat lunch. That's it! Active members number from 50 to 75 information specialists, but the total membership varies month to month. An e-mail list is used for group communications. Membership in the GCIS may sound simple, but it is not without risks. Recently the group had to change its meeting venue at the last minute after the Palm Beach County Health Department closed its restaurant of choice.

In 1999 the Gold Coast Information Specialists established a rest stop on the Information Highway for South Florida librarians (www.seflin.org/gcis). This Web site includes upcoming GCIS events and meetings, news items, a regional listing of special libraries and collections, membership contact list, and list of current career opportunities in south Florida provided by members.

GCIS meetings are always open to interested librarians and information specialists. Library school students are especially encouraged by members to attend. The "Librarians Who Lunch" will always pull an extra chair up to the table.



Bob Davidsson is the volunteer Webmaster for the Gold Coast Information Specialists. He is the manager of the Palm Beach County Library System's Government Information Service Section.

Treasurer's Report

The year 2000 was a successful year for the FLA budget. We under spent the 2000 budget by just over \$700. Although the official audit report has not been completed, it should reflect a net income of just over \$10,000, roughly \$860 over the amount projected.

Unfortunately, the total revenue from memberships that had been anticipated did not meet expectations. However, income from contributions, donations, and the scholarship fundraiser amounted to \$5,567 over expectations. Also, while the personal memberships did not meet budget expectations, organizational memberships were \$4,630 over the budgeted amount.

Expenses for publications exceeded the budgeted amount by \$4,623. This increase is due to an unexpectedly large number of members who opted for the print version of the News Digest over the electronic version. Average cost for printing and mailing is \$500 to \$600 per issue. The Board will be addressing publication costs in the coming year.

2001 Budget

The Executive Board approved the 2001 budget in early December. The total budgeted revenue is \$253,300 with expenditures of \$239,637. The net income for the year is projected to be \$13,663.

- Projected revenue from membership fees is \$83,300.
- The annual conference is budgeted to produce \$124,850 in revenue.
- The Board approved an "Exhibits Only" registration fee of \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members.

On the expense side, a number of categories have increased.

- FLA Management Office costs reflect an increase in the contract amount and in postage, supplies, and travel expenses.
- A 3 percent increase in the legislative advocate's fee was approved with an additional \$2,000 for expenses and travel.
- Projected costs of publication of the News

Articles Wanted

Articles are requested for the Fall 2001 issue of *Florida Libraries*. The issue's theme will be "Libraries Link Lifetime Learners." Proposals for articles should contain a brief description of the subject and how it relates to the theme, an approximate length, and the name, phone number, and e-mail address of the author.

Articles will be reviewed and selected by the FLA Publications Committee and by independent reviewers.

Proposals are due June 1, 2001. Articles are due July 15, 2001.

Proposals and articles should be sent via e-mail or mailed on a disk to:
 Gloria Colvin
 gcolvin@mail.dos.state.fl.us
 State Library of Florida
 500 S. Bronough St.
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Digest increased to more accurately reflect actual costs in the 2000 budget.

- The total budget for Sections, Interest/Discussion Groups was increased to \$20,570 to more accurately reflect anticipated expenses.

I am very pleased to serve as your Association Treasurer for the 2000-2002 term, and look forward to seeing you at the annual conference.
 -Sherry Carrillo

Special Conference Events

President's Reception

FLA President Mary Brown will host the President's Dinner at the Arabian Nights Dinner Theater Attraction on Thursday evening. This combined dinner and show is a "free" event, which is included in the registration fee. It is certain to be an entertaining and memorable evening!

Voted the #1 dinner show in Orlando, Arabian Nights is a magical tale of love and triumph that delights guests with its beautiful horses and continuous action. The show features 60 horses from around the world,

including Walter Farley's Black Stallion. It is performed nightly in the "Palace of Horses," an arena that seats 1200. State-of-the-art lighting and special effects add to the wonder and magic of this romantic tale on horseback.



Chef Aikens

Curtis Aikens, host of Food Networks "Pick of the Day" Show and literacy advocate, will appear at the FLA Conference's Scholarship Fundraiser on Wednesday evening. He will present a session on literacy, do book signings, and perform a cooking demonstration.

Now a nationally-recognized health food expert, cook, and consumer food advocate, Curtis Aikens has never forgotten his struggle to overcome adult illiteracy. Despite his busy schedule, he remains devoted to helping other adults learn to read. In addition, he donates a portion of his book royalties to literacy programs.

Curtis' books include *Curtis Aikens' Guide to the Harvest* (Peachtree, 1993) and *Curtis Cooks with Heart & Soul* (Hearst, 1995). He's also worked as a food consultant for many companies and events, including the U.S. Open tennis tournament, New York City Plaza Hotel, United Nations cafeteria,



McDonald's, Pillsbury, and Balducci's. He not only works in front of the camera, but behind the scenes, having supplied produce for the TV series "In the Heat of the Night" and the feature film "Glory."

FLORIDA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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FAX: (407) 629-2502
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Dated material – Deliver by March 13, 2001

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**ANNUAL CONFERENCE
& TRADESHOW**

*April 10-13, 2001
Hyatt Orlando, Kissimmee, Florida*

**Changing Attitudes:
Building On The Past...
Embracing the Future**



Curtis Aikens
Scholarship Fundraiser
Wednesday April 11,
5:30-9:00 PM



Walt Crawford
*Changing Attitudes:
Moving from
.Com to Community*
Wednesday April 11,
9:45-11:30 AM



**Arabian Nights
Dinner Theater**
President's Dinner
Thursday April 12, 7:30-
10:00 PM



Steven Bell
*How Do You Keep Up?
Developing a Personal
e-Strategy for
Professional Awareness*
Wednesday, April 11,
2:00-3:45 PM