# Alki

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# THE LIBRARY AS

# PLACE

# Up Front

The WLA President speaks

# Library as Physical Place

**by Cindy Cunningham, WLA President**

I am excited about this issue of *Alki*. In the midst of all the talk about the Internet and virtual space, I believe that we sometimes overlook the continuing importance of our physical space. This issue fills that gap.

Truly, within the library field and the community at large, many people wonder not only whether our buildings are serving us well, but whether we should continue to erect new library buildings at all. Design of libraries in the digital age is also a matter of some controversy. When the new San Francisco Public Library opened, some people reacted with horror: they felt that it was a building not designed for books. Still, what a statement that library made—a big, modern building, in the center of downtown next to the City Hall. And as it turns out, the new building is heavily used.

The library community knows that there is still a need for a place for people to come and learn how to use the Internet, and to gain access to digital resources they may not have available in their own homes or schools. Also in this digital age, there needs to be a place that serves the information needs of those on the down side of the digital divide, a place where "information have-nots" can be "information haves."

Libraries also serve other important community functions—storytelling, supplying community meeting space, providing homework support and study space, and tax form referrals, for example. These are all activities that have been dependent upon the physical space. So while we embrace the technological requirements of the late 20th century—more workstations, printers, and even scanners and color printers—we still need book shelves, magazine and newspaper browsing areas, and a separate space for kids' books and activities—space to support library activities that have been around since before the turn of this century.

I hope that as we move into the new millenium, we work creatively with the challenges of integrating and promoting our physical and online spaces. I hope we think carefully about how we design our Web sites, so that once our users leave the computer and explore our physical space in search of materials, there is correspondence—in signage, terminology, color, design—to guide them effectively. I hope we create unique Web sites that promote the aspects of our physical space—including our geographical location—that make us distinctive from all other libraries and information resources on the Web. Finally, I hope that library staff will be deeply involved in any planning for new space requirements. We should continue to test new, as well as old, ideas—from closed stacks to digitizing resources—in our effort to improve library service for all of our varied customers, within our physical space and beyond.

*Cindy Cunningham is Head of Catalog/Browse at Amazon.com. You can send her e-mail through the WLA listserv, or at her address: cindy@amazon.com.*

## INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTRIBUTORS

**ALKI** is published three times per year (March, July, and December). Each issue is centered on a theme relevant to Washington libraries. Unsolicited contributions are welcome and encouraged, but will be published based on the needs of specific issues. All submissions may be edited. The Editor and the ALKI Editorial Committee reserve the right to make the final decision on any submitted material.

**Deadlines** for submissions are January 15 for the March issue, June 9 for the July issue, and October 15 for the December issue.

**Format:** Submissions should be in electronic form, if possible. The preferred formats are any Word for Windows or ASCII text transmitted as an e-mail message or submitted on a PC-formatted 3.5-inch disc. Hard copy will be accepted if the author does not have other options. Photos should be black-and-white. The Editor should be contacted before submitting artwork. Photographic prints and artwork will be returned, if requested. Otherwise, they will not be returned.

**Articles** typically range in length from 1,000-5,000 words and need not conform to the issue's theme, although theme-related articles are more likely to be published in the corresponding issue. Unsolicited articles unrelated to the theme, if they are selected for publication, will be published on a space-available basis. Articles should be in-depth examinations of issues of importance to Washington libraries. **ALKI** publishes news and announcements in a column format.

**News** of personnel changes, professional organizations, awards, grants, elections, facility moves or construction, and/or establishment of newsworthy services can be submitted, and may be edited and included on a space available basis. Items that require a timely response should be submitted to **The WLA LINK**, instead. **Columns** appear regularly and cover specific areas of library service or operations. Columns typically are pre-assigned in advance, and may be written or administered by a designated person. Anyone interested in submitting material for a specific column should contact the Editor.

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# Contents

## Features



## Columns

# From the Editor

**Carolynne Myall**

# The Library as Place

All of us in libraries are aware of the current emphasis on the role of the library as a spot in "virtual space," a node in the electronic universe. But while libraries' presence in the virtual world is important, most libraries also continue to exist as physical places in their communities—places where library clients can gather, read, browse, study, search the Internet, ask questions, see a program, or just sit and think. In a world that is increasingly "virtual," is the library's role as a special physical place still important?

This issue, "The Library as Place," provides a variety of affirmative answers to that question. Some articles describe the development of new library facilities to reflect a community's distinctive character and serve its distinctive needs. Some articles discuss the development of the library as a community project, in which the library becomes a community center. Other articles consider the library's place as a commons, as a refuge—as a site for ritual, abundance, and discovery.

In fact, libraries have been pushing at the boundaries of their physical spaces since before the beginning of this century. We've used traveling libraries, bookmobiles, kiosks, visits to schools and nurseries, deliveries to the home-bound, deliveries by mail, and a host of other methods to take our services beyond the walls of our buildings. Long before the electronic revolution, we were not strictly place-bound. But as the articles in this issue indicate, as we prepare to enter a new century, we continue to be *place-centered* in many important ways, ways that influence and inform our service to our communities—geographic, institutional, and virtual. As revealed in "Bridget Clone's Library," our library humor column this issue, the real and the virtual meet and interact in the library!

In response to the theme, "The Library as Place," there was such an outpouring of thoughtful and moving contributions that we were unable to fit everything into this issue. Consequently, a few articles on the theme will appear in the March 2000 *Alki*. And as a continuing feature over the coming year, V. Louise Saylor, *Alki* Committee Chair, will submit material provided by many WLA members about specific Carnegie library buildings in their communities. So if you sent information about the Carnegie buildings of your area and don't see it in this issue, keep watching *Alki!*

*The Snohomish Library, built in 1910 with grant money from the Carnegie Foundation, was originally 2,160 square feet on each floor. By 1926, the Library was home to a 3,400-volume collection. The city added 4,500 feet to the building in 1968. Today, the Snohomish Library serves as the east Regional Reference Center for the Sno-Isle Regional Library system. Submitted by Mary Kelley. Photo courtesy of Sno-Isle Regional Library.*

**Coming Issues**

**March 2000: Intellectual Freedom Today.** The deadline for this issue is January 15, 2000.

**July 2000: Annual WLA Conference Issue.** Since the conference is scheduled for a later time than usual, the deadline for this issue will be extended to June 9, 2000. Please note that the delivery of the issue could be August, due to the issue's delayed deadline.

Please send your ideas for themes, articles, and columns. As always, I look forward to hearing from you. And thank you all for your contributions to this issue.

*Carolynne Myall is Head of Collection Services, Eastern Washington University Libraries.*

# Library as Place, Library as Commons

**by Cameron A. Johnson**

Urban public libraries have become noisy places, and it is time to do something about it.

Front-line librarians are coming into contact with a new class of patrons, a substantial minority of whom is unaware of—or hostile to—library rules of behavior. This class of patrons is small; but since they tend to linger for hours—or all day—their influence is large, and frequently disruptive. The rise in homelessness is partially responsible, but the offering of public Internet usage has been the catalyst for this influx of new users. One new group we are seeing is "Modern primitives," young people with symbolically pierced bodies and a fascination with technology. These folks are joined at the Internet stations by what a recent *New Republic* article calls "cranks, fetishists and monomaniacs." These non-traditional library users are as resistant to rules as they are fascinated with cyberculture (Chapman, p. 13). Most, but not all, are male. They tend to be in their teens or twenties, but older people are among their number. And they have made urban libraries their own.

They do not respect time limits designed to ration scarce computing resources. They bend or break usage rules, then shrug when called on it. Then an hour or day later, you see them doing the same thing. Librarians attempting to enforce rules have been cursed, threatened, and mocked. Because these bold jackanapes monopolize the stations, other would-be users take one look at the packed stations and walk away. I have talked to enough librarians within the state to know our experience is far from unique. Public libraries have a major problem saying "no" to anyone. We are philosophically allied to the underdog, the disenfranchised, and the information poor. We see ourselves as providing these folks with the means and attitudes to escape their demeaned state. We offer opportunity, and turn no one away. We make room for unpopular ideas and people. We see everyone as redeemable. We hate to interfere in people's business. We are the *de facto* urban commons. We are justly proud of filling this role in society. "Commons" is a notion that came down through British history, to describe lands not designated for use by the lord of the medieval manor. Such land was declared commons, and could be freely used by serfs for pasturage and firewood.

The notion of commons has since been extended to describe any free usage of limited resources, and has been claimed by economists, ecologists, sociologists, information scientists, and other professional groups in the social sciences. It has to do with that realm that no one can control, that everyone, no matter what his or her status, can lay equal claim to. The most notable example of commons in this country is Boston Common, which began as public pasturage and later evolved into a place for formal and informal public gatherings, fairs, marches and speeches, a play area for children, and a place for the homeless to linger relatively unmolested by authorities.

Another example of an American commons scheme did not survive, and is a more relevant example to libraries. The American West was treated as common grazing land until cattle concerns had to compete with farms and mines for scarce land. "Western property users developed a style of maneuvering that made them resemble drivers who plunge into intersections, uninterested in the presence or intentions of other drivers," writes historian Patricia Nelson Limerick (Limerick, p. 75). Range wars and other violent confrontations resulted. This competition for resources is implicit in all commons regimes.

Urban libraries offer public restrooms and comfortable chairs, and allow unlimited lingering indoors. We are the only urban institution that offers such amenities. Coffee houses and taverns expect purchases, and malls would exclude non-customers if they could. Only libraries have the philosophy that allows unstructured congregation. And social scientists tell us that provision of such undemanding, unstructured meeting places is vital for society's welfare. "The public realm is the connective tissue of our everyday world," writes James Howard Kunstler in his diatribe against tastelessness, *Home from Nowhere*. "It is made of those pieces of terrain left between private holdings ... [and] is that portion of our everyday world which belongs to everybody and to which everybody ought to have equal access most of the time" (Kunstler, p. 36).

A well-respected book of humane architectural design, *A Pattern Language,* says:

> The common land has two specific social functions. First, the land makes it possible for people to feel comfortable outside their buildings and their private territory, and therefore allows them to feel connected to the larger social system—though not necessarily to any specific neighbor. And second, common land acts as a meeting place for people (Alexander, p. 337).

In *The Great Good Place*, author Ray Oldenburg describes what he calls a "third place": a social place, away from home and work, that is neutral, inclusive, leveling, full of conversation, and where activity is "largely unplanned, unscheduled, unorganized, and unstructured" (Oldenburg, p. 33). I believe public libraries qualify as "third places." And I believe we should be proud of giving the same service to the rebellious and disenfranchised as we give to the mayor of the city. But it is time for libraries to realize that providing a space is not enough. We must be stewards of that space as well. As with all commons resources, library resources generate competition. In his classic paper, "The Tragedy of the Commons," Garrett Hardin postulates the central tendency of the unrestricted commons regime: "Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit, in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons" (Hardin). Urban public libraries have reached this stage in our stewardship

*(Continued on next page)*

*Cameron A. Johnson is a reference librarian at Everett Public Library.*

of the commons. We must make and enforce rules of behavior so people can read, study, meet, and discuss issues with each other without either being disturbed or disturbing others.

Author Sallie Tisdale complained recently in *Harper's* about disruptions she has encountered during library research. She says she has encountered people playing radios, crying babies, wildly running children, rollerblading teens, *a cappella* love songs, and loud and persistent cellular phone calls (Tisdale). I believe there are a lot of Ms. Tisdales out there. Most just walk away and say nothing about being frustrated and annoyed.

The shushing librarian is one of the most ridiculed symbols of our profession, but I believe it is time to bring her back. Quietness is one of the resources in the shortest supply in the urban library of 1999, and I call on leaders in the library profession to set about restoring it in some measure. The turmoil around the Internet stations is the first area that should get attention. People sign up for time on the Internet station, then hang out for hours in other areas of the library, eating, sleeping, laughing, wrestling, and disturbing people attempting to read or study. They also frequently steal Internet time that is not theirs.

Though I hate the notion, I advocate restricting Internet usage to people with library cards only, and then limiting them to a maximum time limit. The surest way of making this policy effective is by use of software—the machine shuts off when a user's time is up. And users may use only their own time. Such a scheme should be flexible enough to allow a librarian to override it—I would hate to deny travelers their opportunity to check their e-mail at our public terminals, for example.

An article in a 1998 issue of *Whole Earth* notes that rules for the commons are difficult to write because "the commons requires an open-endedness, receptiveness, and adaptability to the vagaries of local climate, personalities, consciousness, crafts and materials which written records cannot fully express." And "the key to success of commons regimes lies in the limits that its culture of shared responsibilities place upon the power of any one group or individual" ("Commons …," p. 8.) It is time to invoke this culture of shared responsibilities in our urban libraries.

I do not want to discriminate against Internet users. Curbing disruption around Internet terminals should only be the first step in curbing it everywhere in the library. We should take the lead in discouraging persistent loud talk, cellular phone usage, running, chain jingling, crap shooting, poker playing, drunkenness, necking, cursing, panhandling, intimidation, and other forms of disruption.

We can expect even more non-traditional library users in the commons in the near future. The passage of welfare reform sends the message that poor people will not be provided for after they exhaust their limited welfare benefits. Once welfare is ended, the unemployable will have to rely on charity and free space. While reports about the success or failure of welfare reform are at present sketchy and incomplete, I cannot but think that the end of welfare will mean an increase in dispossessed people who use the library as their day home. Many of our new clients have been cast off by other under-funded social institutions, so we cannot expect anyone to ride to our rescue. Our society has decreed that the alienated and disenfranchised are our live-in guests for now. These folks will have a lot of problems of their own and many will not understand that libraries are quiet areas.

These are hard times for librarians in public service. Our frequent interactions with people on the fringe of society make us more like social workers every day, and we will face the same burnout pressures they face. Serving the urban unserved sometimes seems a long way from promoting the love of reading and learning, and some librarians may be inclined to leave the field. That is a great loss, but we need people that have mental and emotional flexibility, or are willing to develop it. Along with our dedication to reading and life-long learning, we need a skin like a rhinoceros.

We need leadership from our directors and boards if we are to make libraries a more tranquil place. We need well-thought-out policies to encourage people while discouraging disruptive behavior. We need training in carrying these policies out. But most of all we need back-up and encouragement as we confront this vexing problem.

Most of us entered the library profession because we wanted to make a difference in people's lives, to help them achieve those epiphanies that can come from books and learning. I know the disenfranchised and alienated have the potential for such transforming events, if they can get past attitudes of hopelessness and nihilism. We can hardly fail to offer them opportunities, but we must not allow them to close off opportunity to others.

Every day I remind myself of what is important. I am proud to work for an institution that is inclusive and egalitarian, which offers a place for the disenfranchised, and defends unpopular ideas and people. We must try to engage the unengageable, but must insist on a degree of civility by everyone in the library.

Doing these things in the modern urban library will require commitment and courage on all our parts. But we must serve both as stewards and as bailiffs on the commons.

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# Little Boston Library: The Place to Be

**by Suzanne L. Jones**

Tucked away on a small county road, overlooking Port Gamble Bay on the Port Gamble S'Klallam Indian Reservation in rural North Kitsap, sits the Little Boston Branch of the Kitsap Regional Library. This small, obscure library is the recipient of the Public Library Association's 1999 Excellence in Small and/or Rural Public Library Service Award. You're not alone if you've never heard of us—some people living in our own service area don't even know that we exist.

The Little Boston Library was built on the reservation in 1974 as a result of a request by the Tribal Business Committee and a partnership between the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe and Kitsap Regional Library. This was the first full-service public library built on a reservation in Washington. The building was a tiny prefabricated chalet-style cabin with about 600 square feet of space on the first floor that served as the main part of the library, with a smaller loft area upstairs used for storytimes. The Tribe provided the building, its maintenance, heat, and lights. Kitsap Regional Library provided the staff and its training, materials, furnishings, and telephone service. In 1976, I was hired to manage the library. For several years I was the only staff member. At that time we were open only two days per week for a total of ten hours.

*The original building of Little Boston Library, in use from July 1974 through March 1989. Photo courtesy of Little Boston Branch, Kitsap Regional Library.*

During our first few years of operation, we mostly had customers from the local community on the reservation. They would come to read, check out materials, browse the magazine collection, ask reference questions, do homework, attend storytimes and craft programs, visit, or register to vote. As word began to get out that we were a regular public library open to everyone, customers from the surrounding communities of Hansville and Eglon began discovering our tiny facility. Increased usage enabled us to begin opening additional hours. We also added another part-time employee to our staff.

By 1987, the S'Klallam Tribe realized we were in desperate need of larger facilities and began looking for funding. In 1988, the Tribe was awarded an LSCA grant of $65,708 to construct a new library. Elliott Swanson, then Head of Branch Services for Kitsap Regional Library, wrote a successful grant to purchase materials for the collection. He also bid on new shelving for the new building. In April 1989, we moved into a beautiful, 1,500 square-foot, air-conditioned library with the new shelving and additional materials.

Immediately our circulation jumped dramatically. More and more new customers discovered us. Little Boston Library was becoming a focal point in the area, bringing tribal members and those from neighboring communities together in a neutral, warm, and inviting setting. The Tribe enthusiastically welcomed these customers and shared S'Klallam culture with them. It is a common sight to see many of these people at the local pow-wows, potlatches, and other Native American celebrations. Those who were at first reluctant to visit our library because of its location on the reservation have discovered a pleasant library, and are some of our best supporters.

In 1992, a customer survey was conducted throughout all 10 branches of Kitsap Regional Libray. The Little Boston Library was rated the best in friendliness, pleasant atmosphere, and ease in finding needed materials. And in 1996, our library was featured in the beautiful book by Deborah Svenson, *From Chalet to Cyberspace: The History of the Little Boston Library.*

By 1988 our staff had grown to four part-time employees, and our open hours increased to 28 per week. We're now open five days per week to meet the growing demand. Our library houses over 15,000 items. Circulation for 1998 was 37,942, compared to 3,566 for 1975, our first full year of operation.

Our local staff, the Tribe, our library system, and our customers were all pleasantly surprised and overwhelmed to learn in February 1999 that we were to receive the PLA Service Award. After a visit to our library, on March 24, 1999, U.S. Representative Jay Inslee announced to Congress that our library had won the award. Because of his announcement, we were honored to become part of the *Congressional Record* on that date.

It was with fear and pride that my husband Floyd (a member of the S'Klallam Tribe and a member of the Tribal Council) and I journeyed to New Orleans in June for the American Library Association conference to receive our award from PLA. EBSCO presented our library a $1,000 check. Our small library has come a long way from its humble beginnings in that little chalet!

In July 1999, we hosted an open house to

*(Continued on next page)*

*Suzanne L. Jones is Manager of Little Boston Library (Kitsap Regional Library).*

# Prison Libraries: A Light in the Darkness

**by Judy Pitchford**

When most people think about prison libraries (if they ever do), they probably picture something along the lines of the library depicted in the movie *Shawshank Redemption*—a 6 x 12-foot room full of old books and ancient issues of *National Geographic*. The books are delivered to inmates on a rickety rolling cart by a James Whitmore-like inmate along with a few bits of contraband. Acquisition of new books requires weekly letters to the legislature.

It may surprise some people to find out that Washington State prison libraries are run by the Washington State Library, staffed by Washington State Library employees (usually a librarian and a library assistant), and fully funded by the legislature. Some of the libraries may still resemble the one in *Shawshank Redemption* in size, but definitely not in content. Most are fairly attractive and closely resemble a small, but well stocked, public library.

What is our function inside the prison walls? Our mission states that we are there to provide informational, educational and recreational materials for the use of both staff and inmates. So how do we do this? And how important is our "place" within the prison?

For security reasons, virtual libraries are not within an inmate's reach. A connection to a remote CD-ROM tower with various informational discs is as "virtual" as it gets. There is no World Wide Web for inmates. We are their connection to needed information. For this reason, our collection contains many books to help them with their medical, religious and educational needs. Inmates tend to want to know about everything, and they have the time to research what they want to know about. We help inmates find information on topics as simple as the construction of a Plains Indian tipi, or as complex as questions in organic chemistry.

Inmates are required to "program"—to attend school or work—and some do both. The library tries to work in conjunction with the education department as much as possible by having appropriate materials available. Realizing the low reading levels of many inmates, the library has a collection of "high interest-low reading level" books and book/tape sets for inmate use. We also have a small collection of children's books. Some inmates read them for pleasure, while others record them onto a cassette tape for their children—a chance for them to do something for their children, and for the children to hear their parent's voice.

The library can also be a bit of a sanctuary. Not only do we provide recreational reading inmates can use to pass the time, but the room itself gives some inmates a place to be that isn't "like prison." The tiers tend to be very noisy and chaotic—the library isn't. It is quiet and calm. There is less of a chance to be hassled. Some inmates come to the library at every opportunity, just to sit at a table and look at a magazine. Some actually bring the books they have already checked out and sit at a table to read—carrying the same books back to their living quarters again. The library preserves the sanity of these inmates.

*(Continued on page 11)*

*Judy Pitchford is Senior Library Information Assistant, Washington State Library, Washington Corrections Center Branch.*

## *Little Boston Library*

*(Continued from page 7)*

celebrate our twenty-fifth anniversary as a library, our tenth anniversary in our present building, and the PLA award. Kitsap Regional Library Director Ellen Newberg and Tribal Chairman Ron Charles shared heartwarming stories about our library's past.

Today, we offer a full range of services to our customers, including free e-mail and Internet access; but we still face many challenges. As James May of the Cherokee Nation has said, "In Indian America we have two major information problems; others have little accurate information about us from our perspective, and we have poor access to information from others which could benefit us." We are trying to break down these barriers. One of the ways is through our children's summer programs, in which we use volunteers from the Tribe, volunteers from surrounding communities, and local authors. We have outgrown our facility, and once again the Tribe is trying to find funding to build a new library or a much-needed addition to our present one.

One of our customers once stated that our library was the best-kept secret in all of Kitsap County. We were flattered by her comment, but we are doing our best to make the Little Boston Library more visible and accessible to all the communities we serve.

*Little Boston Library's new facility, opened April 1989. Photo courtesy of Little Boston Branch, Kitsap Regional Library.*

# The Library as Magic Place

**By Vick Myers-Canfield**

The library of my childhood was THE magic place in my life, a place of excitement and wonder, from the moment I was told we were going to the library, to the moment we had to leave the building. Walking into that library, housed in a mansion donated to the town for use as a library facility, gave me a feeling of space, peace, cleanliness and quiet—all in short supply in the unhappy working-class home of my childhood. And there was abundance. Even as I write these words, I feel the power and poignancy of what that meant to me as a child from a poor family. My first, and only, experience of abundance in childhood came from walking into my library. There were more books there than I could ever read, or so I thought. I caught fire from the very idea of trying to read them all—and each time I saw those full library shelves I got excited again at the prospect. In my home were very few books, and almost none for entertainment, magic or gladness. My parents sacrificed to give us the *World Book Encyclopedia* and *Childcraft*. Other homes had shelves of books. I know. (I made a beeline for the bookcase at any house I entered!) Mine did not. But when I walked into the library, everyone was the same. All those books belonged to all of us—and we all stood equal in that place, that library. ALL THOSE BOOKS, all the wonderful, intoxicating, thrilling books. When I think back to those visits to the library, my heart expands with the abundance granted to me. I went there to read and to choose books to bring home. I could contentedly spend hours there.

My mother often left us at the library while she did her shopping. I'm sure she was glad to have a place to leave three pesky, active kids while she went to places like the grocery store where our pestering and begging would have been a hassle. My brothers and I were thrilled to be at the library instead. We savored each choice we made, each book we selected, either to take home or to read at the library while we waited. Sometimes I would check out a book, read it, check it back in and find another one to check out to take with me!

Memories flood in as I write this, memories of the library as a place that engaged all my senses. The mansion itself was beautiful, all brick with lovely, gleaming wood floors and paneling. The feel of the elaborately carved banister under my hand as I walked upstairs to the children's section...the smooth surface of the pages...the sound they made when turned...the sound of quiet voices in the library...the smell of books, library paste and furniture polish. The sight of ALL THOSE BOOKS! Kneeling on the floor to look at the bottom shelves and feeling the clean, smooth floor under my knees...sitting right there to sample a few paragraphs here and there...looking for thick books to check out to hold me over until our next trip to the library...discovering a favorite author had written a bazillion more books for me to read, then homing in on the shelves where my favorite authors were located and finding a title I hadn't read yet...sitting at the big round oak table in the children's section, or sitting in the sun on the wide front steps of the library, reading while I waited for my mom.

Such memories, such treasures, cannot be experienced by accessing library resources with a computer. The sensory impact just isn't there. I was fortunate beyond my ability to fully express here, to be able to see, touch, hear, smell, and even taste my library (if I got in the library paste when no one was looking!). And I experienced that place via my heart and mind as well. These memories will be with me forever, and they are full of magic—with the ability to evoke the strongest of emotions. Such positive experiences got me through some very tough times. They form the basis of my love and deep passion for libraries, and my unshakeable desire for libraries to be here forever as places—for some other lonely child to experience.

*Vick Myers-Canfield is a member of the Board of Trustees of Spokane County Library District.*

# Chehalis Free Public Library

*Opened in 1910, the Chehalis Free Public Library was built to plans approved by Andrew Carnegie, who provided $10,000 for construction. An April 1949 earthquake damaged the Library. It appears here in its remodeled exterior. The building remains the town's library to date, as part of the Timberland Regional Library System. Caption by V. Louise Saylor. Photo and information supplied by Kitty Schlitz, courtesy of Timberland Regional Library System.*

# Bainbridge Island Library: A Community Project

**by Eleanor Wheeler and Cynthia Harrison**

Bainbridge Island's library has always been a community project. The beloved former editor of the *Bainbridge Review*, Walt Woodward, penned the words on the bronze plaque: "Built by and for the people of Bainbridge Island." An all-volunteer Board of Directors oversees the management of the facility and property. The library was doubled in size and totally remodeled in 1996 with two million dollars, 90% of which came from private citizen donations. But the generous gifts for the expansion are only part of the story.

Bainbridge Island contracts with Kitsap Regional Library to provide access to over 400,000 collection items and KRL's internationally recognized Linknet electronic support system. KRL provides staff, materials, and computer support, which give the island library all the benefits of being part of a larger regional library while retaining its unique local identity.

In an era when many libraries are seeing a decline in circulation, the Bainbridge branch has shown a steady increase in circulation throughout the 1990s. Although Bainbridge is considered a bedroom community for Seattle, it is increasingly a haven for retirees, professional artists and authors, small business owners, and telecommuters. There is never an open hour when readers are not relaxing with the newspaper, using the computers, researching financial materials or just browsing in the stacks. With the growing number of young families on the island, the storytime programs are packed. From an island population of about 20,000 people, over 1,000 youngsters registered for the summer reading program.

The Young People's Library has a floor of its own with a steady stream of visitors. It is a family place with comfortable sofas, brightly colored puzzle-piece tables, and a saltwater aquarium that delights all ages. Children feel valued and at ease with child-sized furniture and special reading areas. Etched glass panels, created by a talented island teen, enclose the storyroom in a fantasy of forests, dragons, and elves. With staff guidance, older children happily select their own books in "their" library while parents browse upstairs.

Accessibility for all library users was a major goal for the expanded library. From the auto-assisted doors to the convenient elevator, the library is user-friendly to all. The library has a special partnership with the Visually Impaired Persons Support Group (VIP) which meets monthly at the library. Michael Schuyler, Head of Support Services for KRL and an island resident, used the funds from his MCI "Cybrarian of the Year" award to equip several branches with special tools to help visually impaired library users.

The library is fortunate to have a remarkable corps of volunteers who play a vital role in training the public in computer skills. Several of the Friends of the Library have been active volunteers for over a dozen years. Funds from their monthly booksales contribute to library shelving, equipment, art, and building maintenance. The Garden Club tends our indoor plants, and one special friend brings us fresh bouquets from spring to frost.

*The Bainbridge Island Library, from the Haiku Garden.*

With the addition of a new meeting space, the library is able to offer an exciting array of cultural events. A Speakers Forum, which offers specialists from artists to oceanographers, is fully subscribed. Inquiring Mind presentations and a local theater group's "Play Readings at the Library" are also well attended. The entire island is informed about library activities through the quarterly *Bainbridge Island Library News*. It is produced by volunteers, self-supported through local advertising, and eagerly followed by islanders for news about good reading and upcoming library events.

A local writers group and a library book discussion group have both taken up residence at the library. Each Tuesday morning the library opens its doors early for seniors to practice their computer skills with a crew of trained volunteer assistants.

Thanks to the wonderful "green thumbs" of Bainbridge Island, the library has become a part of the island's highly regarded garden tour. The Bainbridge Island Japanese-American Community donated a haiku garden with magnificent stone work, bonsai plantings, inscribed haiku plaques and a garden pond. The "Tidy Fridays"

*(Continued on next page)*

*Cynthia Harrison is Branch Manager of Bainbridge Island Library (Kitsap Regional Library). Eleanor Wheeler is Public Service Assistant, and is also a member of Kitsap Regional Library's Library Council.*

## *Bainbridge Island Library*

*(Continued from page 10)*

volunteers assemble each week to maintain this and other library landscaping under the tutelage of noted garden writer, Ann Lovejoy. Another respected landscape artist, John Vandenmeerendonk, combined his skill with funding from the Hardy Fern Society to create a fern display garden of about one hundred varieties amid winding paths and a meandering stream.

The Bainbridge Island Library is a refuge for life-long learning. It is a storytime place for toddlers, a haven for recreational readers, a resource center for students in nearby schools, a comfortable place to browse the local newspaper and a customer-friendly connection to the amazing information on the World Wide Web. It reflects the artistic profile of the community and provides a welcoming environment in the midst of a city coping with the challenges of growth and change.

# Spokane's First Carnegie Library

**by Nancy Compau**

Prominent city leaders contacted Andrew Carnegie in March, 1901, requesting a donation to build a much-needed new library. They promised to provide a site and an annual maintenance budget of $10,000, but Carnegie ignored the request until April 1903, when he offered the city $75,000. The cornerstone was laid on September 12, 1904. Architects were Preusse and Zittel of Spokane. The beautiful, classical building served Spokane as its main public library from its grand opening in November 1905, until 1963. After housing various firms and sitting vacant for a number of years, the building was completely renovated by and is the home of the architectural firm, Integrus. It is an excellent example of adaptive reuse of a historic building. At left is the building ca. 1930; at right is an interior shot today. Left photo courtesy of Northwest Room, Spokane Public Library. Right photo courtesy of Integrus.

## *Prison Libraries*

*(Continued from page 8)*

Since we are more like a small public library, we must supplement our collections through interlibrary loan. Using WLN/OCLC, we gain access to just about all the books inmates request. And if we can't find the exact title, we can let them know what is available on the chosen topic. ILL is a very important service in a prison library and widely used. A branch serving 600 inmates can easily receive over 80 ILL requests in a week. Once the inmates realize how to request the materials through ILL and see how often they actually receive the material, they can't wait to put in as many requests as allowed. Some inmates have such esoteric interests that if it weren't for ILL, we wouldn't be able to provide them the materials they want.

Since prisons are now in the rehabilitation mode, prison libraries typically provide materials to help. We have items on various mental disorders, drug addiction, alcoholism, stress and anger management, job skills, etc. Mental Health officials often refer inmates to the library for books on these topics and for fiction titles they find useful when using bibliotherapy. We also receive a lot of requests from inmates close to release for information on places to live, jobs and schools.

There is, of course, lots of information that we cannot give, too. We must be careful not to provide information that will violate the safety and security of the institution or the public. To me, this can be the most difficult aspect of a prison library job, though terribly necessary.

So is the prison library's "place" important? And, if so, why? My experience indicates that it is very important. The library helps inmates with their rehabilitation efforts and helps them further their educations. It helps them stay out of trouble and keep their sanity. I go home most days feeling like I have done something good. But I really feel great on the days an inmate says, "If it wasn't for the library, I don't know what I would do." For many, the prison library is truly "a light in the darkness."

# The Library As Place: The Mid-Columbia Library's New Buildings

**by Brian Soneda**

Those of you who toured the not-yet-open-to-the-public Kennewick Branch during the 1999 WLA Conference experienced a work in progress that was designed with the intention of creating a comfortable, accessible, evocative library that addressed the information needs of Kennewick and the surrounding communities. The City of Kennewick and representatives of community groups were involved at the very earliest stages, out of courtesy and out of necessity. Nothing substantive could happen until a city-wide bond issue, to raise $5.9 million needed to build the library, passed with a 60% vote. This was accomplished, on the second try, in the September, 1996 election.

During the design phase, other voices were brought in. As MCL Library Director Phelps Shepard put it, "Sometimes, it takes an outside set of eyes to see it best." Local color, light, hills and orchards in and around the future site of the library influenced the architects at Seattle-based Buffalo Design. Above all, their design incorporated the feel, the look and the theme of rivers, fitting for a library so near the Columbia, Yakima and Snake Rivers. In a marriage of practicality and thematic consistency, the concrete and stone "river" walkway that flows into and through the library will both stand up to heavy foot traffic *and* lead patrons to their reading, computer-accessing, listening, viewing, and lounging needs.

There were other innovative design elements. By using inexpensive, readily available materials, and a plan that emphasized walls and planes, a different, eye-catching look was achieved. One of the architects, Chris Carlson, commenting to the local newspaper on the sturdiness of the building in the face of the strong local winds, noted that the library was "...built like a Costco, even though it isn't shaped like a Costco."

Other interesting elements—the product of input from architects, staff members on the building committee, as well as some patron ideas—include the concept of an Information Center, a combined Reference/Children's Desk area that the "river" flows past, soon after entering the building. Light, from numerous ceiling to floor windows and a clerestory, washes through the library on a sunny day. A set of illuminated globes, each atop a spacious cabinet, leads into the Children's Section. The main Reading Lounge, located in the middle of new book, magazine and newspaper areas, features a freestanding fireplace.

*Taken about a month before opening, this outside shot captures the essence of the new Kennewick building. Photo by James F. Housel.*

Certainly the architects feel good about the way things turned out. Chris Carlson, speaking on behalf of co-architects Lisa Roberts and Lisa Scribante from Buffalo Design, had the following observations: "We . . . feel successful in creating a building that fits particularly well into its local environment, shaped by views, the weather and its neighbors. Maybe this is because the people that we worked with were, for the most part, longtime Tri-Cities residents who had a particularly good feel for their surroundings. Or perhaps it is because the colors, sun and wind are so strong, the rivers and bridges are ever present, and the horizons are so distant there that the environment is a more conscious part of people's lives.

"In any case, we think the new Kennewick Library has the qualities of naturally occurring element, and that its combination of bold forms and informality do a good job of reflecting the strength and casual demeanor of its users."

Carlson added, "We support the premise that in the face of nearly any technological changes that occur, people will still seek out a physical place to meet and exchange points of view. As Internet activity and e-mail correspondence have moved from novelty to becoming a common part of life, the need for social interaction and the desirability of the library as a physical destination has only grown stronger for most of us."

*Brian Soneda is Manager of West Richland Branch, Mid-Columbia Library District.*

This new flagship branch of the Mid-Columbia Library opened on May 19, 1999. Usage, as measured by circulation, has been well over 30% higher than it was in the old Kennewick Branch. Several months later, it is fair to ask: "Has this library, as a physical place, lived up to its promise?" The answer to that question varies, upon whom you ask, what aspect of the finished product is discussed, and how the respondents define the phrase, "lived up to its promise."

Karen Recher, MCL's Children's Coordinator and key member of the building committee, noted: "The north-facing windows define the Children's Area; they bring the outside into the library. At night, the 'clouds and stars' are truly a nice touch. The river rock pathway is both a bane and a blessing. Kids like to see it throughout a class tour of the library, but folks with walkers or canes sometimes have problems with it."

*Opening day at the new Kennewick Branch. You can just see the "river" on the far right of the photo. Photo by Jenny Wright.*

Marsha Bates, who spends a lot of time staffing the Information Center, had insights that are colored by her past employment at Barnes & Noble. "Today's library patrons are savvier consumers than in the past. They're used to excellent service and a comfortable ambience at their local retail bookseller. The new library is a better fit with the patron's expectations, instead of forcing the patron to conform to library expectations."

The great majority of patron comments have been positive. "What a beautiful building!" and "This sure is nicer than the old building" and "This has a lot more books than the old building" are common responses from patrons entering the building for the first time.

Linda Lunde, Kennewick Branch staff member noted that patrons often express "…satisfaction that Kennewick has such an urban, modern library."

The Mid-Columbia Library has had other experiences with new or heavily remodeled libraries, most notably the concurrent project at the Pasco Branch. A similar process of working closely with architects (Bellevue-based Lewis Architects), community groups, and the City of Pasco guided the major overhaul of the system's second biggest branch. This time the framework—an attractive, well-designed building that was showing its age—was retained. The branch's collection was split into a core collection that was available to the public at a temporary portable facility provided by the Pasco School District (which was set up in the library's parking lot), and an unavailable storage collection, housed in a nearby City building.

Major changes included a reduction in the size of the huge meeting room; the floor space gained was added to the previously cramped Children's Section. Other additions were a bright, sunlit reading lounge, numerous computer stations with full Internet access, and new carpeting, paint and shelving. The remodeled Pasco Branch opened on May 24; while the computers get heavy usage, circulation has yet to show any significant change.

Debbie Shrader, Circulation Supervisor at the Pasco Branch, commented favorably on the welcoming appearance. "I used to think that how a building looked was not very important, that it was the quality of the staff and of the service that mattered. Those are still the most important things, but I now feel that how a building looks is important. Patrons feel better about a new, clean-looking building. They just seem happier when they come into the library."

Longtime patron Virginia Devine, said, "I think it's great! It is very beautifully done and hugely improved."

Did all the planning, projecting and hard work make the new libraries perfect? Of course not. Karen Recher noted that the "river" walkway in the Kennewick Branch had its good and bad points. Similarly, several staff members and patrons noted that the bright, sunlit, open feel to the Kennewick Branch was great; but at certain periods of a dazzling summer day, in certain parts of the library, bright becomes blinding glare. (Methods of alleviating this condition are under consideration.) Virginia Devine, generally delighted with how things turned out at the Pasco Branch, would be happier still if the design had incorporated brighter colors.

Several staff members complained that the process of getting a new library up and running just took sooooo long, that it was frustrating. Perhaps that is a price that must be paid for getting it right, for creating a "library as place" that meets most of the needs and desires of the both the staff and public.

*The main reading lounge in the remodeled Pasco Branch. Photo by Jenny Wright.*

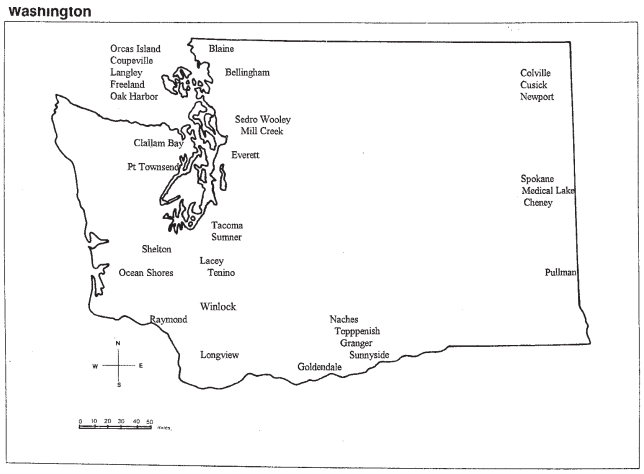
# To House the Books and the Readers: LSCA Title II Grants in Washington

**by Linda Frederiksen**

In 1988, the Washington State Library estimated that over $46 million was needed to build or remodel public libraries in our state. Despite continual efforts by the library community to expand services to unserved or underserved areas, many counties still lacked adequate facilities. For other communities, the structures built during the Carnegie program and after were overcrowded, outdated, or in need of extensive renovations.

The Library Services and Construction Act, introduced in Congress on November 22, 1963, and passed into law immediately following President Kennedy's funeral, included a provision for public library construction. Although not always clean, clear, or simple to administer, LSCA Title II changed the way states and the federal government viewed and funded public library construction projects during the remainder of this century. By the time the LSCA program ended in 1994, an estimated $267 million in Title II monies improved 1,530 libraries across the nation.

The impact of Title II is significant, of course, in terms of physical space. During the period from 1983-1994, thirty-three libraries in Washington State became more useable, energy efficient, ADA-accessible, and enjoyable because federal grant money was available. From small, rural communities with no county or regional library system, to metropolitan libraries with large tax bases, Title II monies were distributed as competitive grants by the Washington State Library. Over $5 million was used to build, remodel, or expand public libraries in 19 counties. Because Title II monies were given on a 50/50 matching basis, state legislators, community leaders, librarians, and the state's citizens were motivated and leveraged to consider, plan, and fund improved library facilities. Grants ranged from small ($2,903) to large ($813,600), but the beneficiaries in every case were the library users.




*Washington libraries receiving LSCA Title II funds.*

LSCA was the largest source of federal aid to public libraries in library development history. When the program ended in 1994, library supporters were left with an awareness of the continued need for improved federal and state support for these venerable but financially vulnerable institutions. Useable spaces could not be built or maintained without adequate funding sources. In the end, Title II was important not only for the mortar and stone that were laid, but as an example of what federal, state and local support was capable of accomplishing.

Although valued by the state's citizens, libraries also compete with other public service agencies for a piece of the budgetary pie. As a result, funding for library construction in Washington, as in the rest of the nation, has never been generous. Legislation written after statehood led to the founding of public libraries in Tacoma (1890), Seattle (1891) and Spokane (1893). Later, communities throughout the state organized to participate in the Carnegie library construction program. As an indication of the public's interest in these institutions, during the period from 1901-1916, forty-four new libraries were built around the state.

After the Carnegie building program ended, library construction continued but was based on local funding sources. Most large building projects lay dormant for over forty years. By mid-century, 18% of the state was still without library service; and a complaint first voiced in 1917 ("We are in need of more room, better light, better janitor service") was repeated with increasing frequency as libraries built during the first part of the century and used heavily since began to show their age.

Pressure on Congress by the library community to provide some kind of support, especially in rural areas, resulted in the Library Services Act and, later, the Library Services and Construction Act. By 1970, thanks to funding from these programs, outdated buildings were replaced and new spaces added, bringing the portion of the population still unserved in Washington down to less than 5%.

The Library Services and Construction Act, as amended in 1983, no longer focused on rural libraries. It still required matching local funds, but now allowed for the purchase of property, modification of existing or construction of new facilities, remodels for energy conservation and physically disabled accessibility, as well as additions for increased collection space and meeting rooms for library programs and community use.

During the first year of the program, five libraries in three counties applied for and received competitive grants. Later in the program, libraries within the large regional systems of Timberland,

*Linda Frederiksen is Access Services Librarian, Washington State University Vancouver.*

Sno-Isle, Yakima Valley, and Fort Vancouver received grants, as did small, independent libraries, such as Orcas Island and Port Townsend. In many cases, the amount of funding to improve facilities received by smaller libraries exceeded grants given to larger libraries. Funding was disbursed throughout the state, from Ocean Shores to Spokane, to libraries in the sparsely populated counties of the coast and eastern Washington as well as those along the I-5 corridor. The North Central region of Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, and Okanogan counties received no Title II monies during this period, although it was the first area in the state to unify as a multi-county district in 1958 under the then-new Library Services Act.

In the Yakima Valley Regional Library system, four Title II grants were used to renovate libraries in Naches, Granger, Toppenish, and Sunnyside. In these rural areas where at least 40% of the population was at or below poverty level, it was difficult for communities to accumulate a critical mass to support a reasonable level of public funding. Anne Haley, director of the YVRL system, says that Title II grants gave each district the power to make decisions about their own facilities, decisions that were appropriate to individual communities. Because, as Anne says, "there are as many different reasons to use public libraries as there are people who use them," it is appropriate for individual communities to make their own decisions about construction and funding.

Despite the detailed procedural mandates set forth by the federal government, the Title II program was a success. By 1997, the unserved population in Washington was reduced to 2.4 % in 7 counties and 47 towns. Although public library service is still not available to every citizen in the state, over 5 million people are within the service area of a public library. For the 33 Title II libraries in the state, previously inadequate facilities were replaced by improved physical spaces.

Although LSCA ended in 1994, to be replaced by the technology-driven LTSA, a bill introduced in Congress last summer may lead to restored federal funding for construction. The Andrew Carnegie Libraries for Lifelong Learning Act (S1223) calls for $1 billion over a five-year period for construction, renovation, and rehabilitation of public library facilities. It remains to be seen whether needed funding to improve 85% of America's 16,000 public libraries will become a reality or not.

Federal and state support for libraries is the point at which the ideals of universal library service in spaces that are "congenial homes to ideas, homes to be enjoyed, valued and used regularly" meets the reality of political economy. Title II program demonstrated that choices made by politicians, librarians, and ordinary citizens affected how and how much public libraries were valued in this country during the latter half of the twentieth century. Within the context of the library as place, the significance of LSCA and Title II was the potential for influencing a change in attitude and activity by libraries, legislators and the public.

Acknowledgements: many thanks to Jeff Martin, Grants Specialist/Washington State Library, and Anne Haley, Director/Yakima Valley Regional Library system.

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| Library | Grant Awarded | Total Grant Amount |
|---|---|---|
| Bellingham | 1983 | $297,809 |
| Naches | 1983 | $4,000 |
| Granger | 1983 | $100,152 |
| Newport | 1983 | $242,900 |
| Goldendale | 1983 | $462,359 |
| Oak Harbor | 1985 | $7,000 |
| Mill Creek | 1985 | $182,984 |
| | 1989 | |
| | 1993 | $107,118 |
| Colville | 1985 | $186,420 |
| Tenino | 1985 | $20,000 |
| Spokane | 1986 | $14,316 |
| Blaine | 1986 | $151,388 |
| | 1991 | |
| Longview | 1986 | $24,300 |
| | 1990 | |
| Cheney | 1987 | $240,000 |
| | 1990 | |
| | 1993 | $2,903 |
| Coupeville | 1987 | $62,840 |
| | 1990 | |
| Winlock | 1987 | $28,164 |
| | 1989 | |
| Shelton | 1987 | $285,000 |
| | 1991 | |
| Sedro Wooley | 1988 | $75,000 |
| Everett | 1988 | $75,000 |
| | 1993 | $162,196 |
| Clallam Bay | 1988 | $46,668 |
| Pt Townsend | 1988 | $813,600 |
| Ocean Shores | 1992 | $95,338 |
| Sumner | 1992 | $76,612 |
| Raymond | 1992 | $47,900 |
| Langley | 1993 | $177,000 |
| Tacoma | 1993 | $6,323 |
| Freeland | 1993 | $202,266 |
| Cusick | 1993 | $44,682 |
| Orcas Island | 1993 | $200,000 |
| Medical Lake | 1993 | $250,000 |
| Neill Public | 1993 | $96,778 |
| Lacey | 1993 | $242,292 |
| Sunnyside | 1994 | $9,119 |
| Toppenish | 1994 | $8,403 |
| **TOTAL GRANTS** | | **$5,136,026** |

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# New (Old?) Place in an Urban Space

**by Joan Norton, Brenda Philip, and Suzanne Klinger**

In the fall of 1990 when the University of Washington, Tacoma (UWT) opened its doors for place-bound south Puget Sound students, library staff had to struggle to convince students that we were indeed a "library." We appeared to have nothing but empty shelves. Although the UWT Campus Library occupied the entire fifth floor of the Perkins Building (temporary site of UWT from 1990-1997), we began our first year with about 30 books and no periodicals or indexes on site. We did have online catalog connections to UW Libraries and a Dialog account that we used heavily with students to identify sources and order materials from UW Seattle Libraries.

Almost a decade later and following a major move in 1997, the UWT Campus occupies a number of historic warehouse buildings, renovated and extended with some new construction. The 46-acre location, across Pacific Avenue from the new Washington Historical Museum and Union Station (also renovated and used as a federal courthouse), is at the heart of a downtown district slated for revitalization by the city of Tacoma. At the center of the campus, the library includes the 1902 Snoqualmie Falls Power Company Transformer House. The original Greek Revival architecture of that structure is echoed in the contemporary additions that constitute the rest of our building.

The increased visibility of the permanent campus provides us with a unique opportunity to establish new connections within our campus and the surrounding community. The Grand Opening on September 27, 1997, attended by over a thousand people, exemplified the possibilities for outreach. Most of the visitors were from the larger Tacoma/Pierce County area, and shared wonderful stories with the library staff about how they or their relatives had actually worked in the old warehouses and buildings that were now our campus. In one case, a personal story led to our obtaining a reproduction of a photographic portrait of the builder of the Snoqualmie Falls building from his grandson, a prominent Tacoma native.

To emphasize our links to the past, the library's lobby displays twenty historical photographs of the district that the campus now occupies. The originals are housed in collections at the UW Libraries, Washington State Historical Museum, and Tacoma Public Library. One photograph of note features the West Coast Grocery Building (now classrooms and program offices) and delivery trucks nearby displaying the West Coast Grocery Company's brand AMOCAT—that's "Tacoma" spelled backwards!

*Interior, Campus Library, University of Washington, Tacoma. Photo courtesy University of Washington, Tacoma.*

Dale Chihuly's 19-foot-long "Chinook Red Chandelier," installed in our library's tower on July 30, 1999, illustrates our links to contemporary Tacoma and the future. Made of 900 pieces of hand-blown glass shaped in balls, gourds, and swirling horns, the chandelier is the latest addition to a significant glass art collection in the area. In 2002, the International Glass Museum will open on the Thea Foss Waterway, directly east of our campus.

Even with the substantial attractions of our physical location, we must address less visible "connections" that increasingly link us to the region through our online catalog, full-text databases, electronic journals, and electronic reference service. Many students and faculty, and some of the public, appear to think of the library as a virtual resource first, and as a physical resource second. At a recent workshop of incoming students, 43 of 46 respondents to a survey indicated that they had a home computer. Students who search the Internet via modem may not share the sense of the library as place that the library staff are working to develop.

The intriguing tensions that emerge as we balance our "cyberplace" with our actual space are intensified by other growing pains related to our rapid expansion. No longer do we regularly see most of the faculty and staff at UWT, who now occupy buildings of their own. Cyberconnections are a thin substitute for the warmth of physical conversations, so library staff try to be involved in activities and committees on campus to maintain our links to the larger university.

But such adjustments can be stimulating, and as we settle into our new/old building and plan for future additions, we continue to discover how to make this place a "home" for UWT students, staff, and faculty. Today, as we enter the new millennium with our own building and over 30,000 titles on our shelves, the library has a high profile on campus and is the site of special occasions such as UWT's annual fundraising gala. It is now very easy for us to demonstrate to students and the community that we are, indeed, a library.

*Joan Norton, Brenda Philip, and Suzanne Klinger are Reference Librarians at UWT Campus Library.*

# Children and Teens Need Libraries

**by Eva-Maria Lusk**

Have you noticed that most people smile when they talk about their childhood library experiences? What a powerful impact libraries can have on us early on in our lives. Think back to your first library experience. Better yet, imagine this (real) scenario:

Carried in her mother's arms and surrounded by five older siblings, the newborn enters the library for the first time. She won't remember this visit, but we will. It's exciting when a library features so prominently in the lives of a family that it becomes the priority destination for an infant's first outing.

The older children and their mother have been promising us for weeks that the baby's first trip away from home would be to the library. Now they've brought her, pleased with themselves, the baby and with us. We can see the pleasure on their faces as they come in the door and head straight for the children's area. And we continue to see it as the older kids browse their favorite bookshelves, the mother gets out the list of books she wants for her children and herself, and we get down to business as usual.

Focus for a minute on the members of that family. They're coming to one of their favorite places and interacting with people who are important in their lives. As librarians, we're pleased that they like coming here, that it's a weekly treat for the children to attend storytimes, find homework support materials, and look at and choose books to take back home and read for the sheer pleasure of it. We're pleased that they want to introduce their new sister to us and start her regular round of library visits. What a treasure we've just been offered—the chance to welcome her to all the joys and benefits of libraries.

How do we ensure that children have positive experiences in our libraries? Youth specialists who know about materials and who work easily and comfortably with children are important, of course. Materials collections need to be both appealing and useful. Buildings need to be functional—for children and teens as well as for adults.

The next time you enter your nearest library, try to see and experience everything from the perspective of a 5-year old, a 9-year old, a 13-year old, or a high school senior. In your changed size and outlook, would you perceive barriers that you don't notice as an adult? How far is it from the point where you enter the library to the area that has what you need? How do you know where the books for you are kept and how to get there? Are there signs? What if you don't read yet? Are there pictures on the signs as well as words? There are computers all over the place. What are they for and how are you supposed to use them? Or are you? Are they all the same? Can you play games on them? Send an e-mail message to your best friend? Is there a special desk you should go to for help? Can the people who work there see you if you stand at that desk waiting to ask a question? Do they look like they want to help you?

Perhaps we should all recall our own youthful impressions of the library occasionally. I remember a tiny room in a church basement that had shelves filled with books along all four walls. What I remember most, though, is the librarian who seemed to know all the books on those shelves. She walked right over and pulled off several that she thought I might like to read. She was right, I did like to read them; and I came back often for more until my family moved away. I was about seven that first visit, but I can still see the librarian and remember her name.

Fortunately, my family moved to Seattle where I had a choice of many libraries—school, downtown, neighborhood, and—best of all—the bookmobile that stopped two blocks away from my house every other week. As much as the books, what drew me into (and also kept me out of) these libraries was the people who worked there. My favorite of all the options was the bookmobile and the superb staff who inspired and guided my reading between 1953 and 1960. That staff shaped my concept of what libraries ought to provide for youth—the opportunity to connect children to books and information, to encourage them to read and appreciate the power and beauty of language, to explore their heritage as well as options for the future, to stimulate their natural curiosity, and to keep both their imagination and intellect alive and well.

Of course, a well-designed building with enough youth-oriented staff and materials is the ideal place in which to connect children with libraries. Most of us don't work in ideal libraries, yet we provide a variety of youth-oriented services, materials and programs. Some of us take materials and library services on the road, visiting hospitals, homeless shelters, crisis centers, child-care and juvenile detention facilities to reach children and teens who are unable to get to a library. In child-care centers, librarians often present storytimes and leave a box of books for the children to enjoy until the next visit. When you ask these kids to describe what a library is, they talk about the librarian who brings good stories and books.

"The library is here." Staff at the local juvenile detention center can see that the outreach van has arrived. Immediately inmates know that the folks from the library are here again with enough books so that everyone is sure to find something interesting to read. "Did you bring any new...? Did you bring me the book about...? Next time, can you bring...?" Questions come first; then it's time to pick a good book. According to a survey conducted recently, most of the teens in detention only read when they're behind bars. But for the duration of their stay, they are reading and focusing on something more positive than the activities that landed them here. For these teens, "library" means boxes of books set out in the lunchroom—and library staff who listen to them, make reading suggestions, and follow up by discussing books read since the last visit, and by bringing specially requested titles.

One of the local high schools has been under construction since early summer. The library collection is boxed up and in storage until the first of the year. An interim "library" just opened in a cramped room near the school office. The school librarian has stocked it with new materials ordered since the closure, plus anything else that she can get her hands on. Students are

*Eva-Maria Lusk is Youth Services Coordinator, Spokane County Library District.*

constantly coming to her to ask if there's anything they haven't read yet. I walked into this situation carrying a bag of new books for which I needed teen readers. I had barely set the books down when they were snatched up again to be checked over, checked out, and carried off. Even the prospect of reviewing them for an audience of adults didn't dampen the enthusiasm—thirteen students read books and gave excellent in-depth reviews at an adult workshop on teen reading. The hunger for books and reading is there—and the librarian continues to both encourage and feed it.

Do these students use the public library in their small town? When I asked that question, the answer was an embarrassed (after all, they knew I was a public librarian) but emphatic "no," followed by a variety of reasons that all suggested they felt neither comfortable nor particularly welcome there, and can't find what they need. Instead, if homework demands, they'll drive over to the next town to use a library with a "great" teen area, or they'll go into the city and visit bookstores. Stores full of new books are good for browsing, but money goes farther in used bookstores. They buy used books—mainly paperbacks—to read and pass along to friends. With library books, you have to worry about returning them in good condition. Being carried around in backpacks is hard on books.

Where do teens like to browse? Barnes & Noble is the momentary favorite here, and for valid reasons. Books are often piled on tables or shelved with the covers facing out. As one of the students points out, book spines are no competition for covers. Covers catch your attention and make you want to pick up the book to find out more about it. The store also has lots of copies of popular titles to look at, more people to help you than the library, shelving and signage to make it easy for teens to find what they want, music, and—a coffee shop where you can sit and read or talk with friends.

What happens to make the child who can't wait to get to the library turn into a high school student who avoids it except when homework needs are too pressing? The reasons can't all be physical and emotional changes, busy schedules, and other interests. If a bookstore can draw teens in, why shouldn't a library? Let's return once more to the front doors of our libraries, assume our teen perspective, enter and evaluate what's appealing or off-putting to us as we look around. Better yet, let's take some teens along and compare notes to make sure we're in sync. Let's talk to them, connect with them as individuals, and give them an active role in re-establishing the library as a place where they want to be.

If we do that, we ensure that the library has a vital and living presence in the lives of children and teens—as a place where they are valued, supported and encouraged to expand their intellect and imagination, and become adults who are well-prepared to live in the world.

# The Library as Place for Children

**by Cecilia P. McGowan**

What makes the library an ideal place for children? Is it the building itself, the books, or the people who work there?

To me, the people who work at the library are the most important part of making the library an ideal place for children. A library staff member may be an inviter, a teacher, a role model, a guide, a booster, a friend, not only for the child but also for the entire family. You're probably saying by this point, "But what about the books? Aren't the books important too?" Of course they are, but the majority of children wouldn't find the book that's right or best for them if they didn't have the librarian to guide them.

"What about the building, isn't that important too?" Yes, a comfortable, well-designed building is a great plus; but it's the staff that lights up a building, that welcomes children and their families back again and again. It's the staff that helps children realize that the library is a place of discovery, not only about the world, but also about themselves. Libraries for some children are a haven, a safe place to be, a place that is not their home, but safer than their home.

*Cecilia P. McGowan is Youth Services Coordinator, Spokane Public Library.*

# The Carnegie Library Century in Washington State

**by V. Louise Saylor**

Over 70 percent of the public libraries funded by the Andrew Carnegie library program were in small towns with fewer than 10,000 residents. These stone buildings, often the only large public building in a town, were *the* center of their communities—often serving then, as now, in many other capacities and purposes (Jones).

What better way to inaugurate a new series on Carnegie libraries in the state, then and now, than in the *Alki* issue celebrating the library as place? The first Carnegie-funded public library was built about a hundred years ago. Those in Washington State were built slightly later, into the new century. So as we approach another century, we will include pictures and updates on the Carnegie libraries of Washington in upcoming issues of *Alki*.

If you would like to see your favorite Carnegie library building featured in a future *Alki*, please contact Louise Saylor (71077.2772@compuserve.com) for details.

*V. Louise Saylor, now retired as Dean of Libraries, Eastern Washington University, is Chair of the* Alki *Committee.*

**Reference**

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy*. New York: J. Wiley & Sons, 1997, p. 3.

# The Libraries of Spokane County:

## The Extraordinary Building Boom of the Past Decade

**by Charles H. Baumann**

The April 1999 issue of *American Libraries* reminds us that the "Boom Goes On" when it comes to library construction and renovation. The article features the spectacular Kalamazoo, Michigan, Public Library (shown on the cover), and describes the grand restorations at the public libraries of Boston and New York, and at the Library of Congress. Spokane County is a microcosm of this boom affecting libraries across the country. Given the County's relatively small population (under 400,000) and the compressed time-frame of slightly over a decade, the extent of the library expansion is all the more remarkable.

The story actually begins with the Spokane County Library District's completion of the Valley Branch in 1986. It gained momentum with a group of Friends of the Cheney Public Library (another branch of the Spokane County system) in the winter of 1987. The Friends had gathered to discuss the merits of the architectural style proposed for a new building. The architect offered sketches of a pleasant building with dramatic, north-facing windows and a vaulted, cathedral ceiling. Up to this time, the library had occupied rented space in an old building in downtown Cheney. Some citizens were not ready for the grand concepts offered by the architect. Who would pay for such a structure? Wouldn't a simple concrete block building do just as well? Fortunately, the money did arrive, from a variety of sources; and the architect's concept prevailed. These two new buildings were the first of a wave of new construction in Spokane County that, over the next decade, affected almost every one of the twenty, or so, public and academic libraries.

*Spokane Public Library, Downtown Branch. Photo by Van Gundy Photography.*

*Charles H. Baumann is University Librarian Emeritus, Eastern Washington University.*

The library building boom has created a grand total of 665,000 square feet of new or substantially remodeled space at a cost exceeding $90,000,000. The money came from bond issues, private donations, and federal and state grants, and was used for equipment as well as construction. Each of these libraries acquired new computing gear, related software, other equipment and furniture, and in some cases, books and other materials.

*Argonne Branch and Administrative Offices, Spokane County Library District. Photo courtesy of SCLD.*

### Spokane County Library District

Spokane County Library District has made substantial progress during the decade of the 1990s. With a series of bond issues, LSCA grants, and other sources, square footage was more than doubled; and each facility that was enlarged received extensive remodeling. By the end of the decade, SCLD could boast of nearly 90,000 square feet of prime library space. It raised and spent $8.2 million between 1985 and 1999. Architects included Integrus, Heilman Associates, and Ron Tan and Associates. Consider the following list:

| Library | Square Feet | Date Completed |
|---|---|---|
| Airway Heights | 4,000 | 1997 |
| Argonne Branch & Offices | 20,000 | 1990 |
| Cheney | 5,200 | 1988/1997 |
| Deer Park | 7,300 | 1998 |
| Medical Lake | 4,120 | 1991 |
| North Spokane | 18,000 | 1990 |
| Otis Orchards | 6,000 | 1992 |
| Valley | 24,572 | 1986/1992 |

### Spokane Public Library

Perhaps the most difficult project involved the Spokane Public Library's "Main" or downtown branch. The decision was made to remove the old building but retain the site at a busy intersection in the heart of the city. The library had occupied the former Sears, Roebuck building for nearly 30 years. When it became known that the old building was about to be demolished, the local Historic Landmarks Commission nominated its placement on the National

Historic Register. Fearing delays, the Spokane *Spokesman-Review* chastised the Commission, and characterized the Sears building as a "faded, sagging, leaky, ugly old bunker." On the day the "bunker" came crashing down, however, it made a final statement of revenge, unexpectedly spewing bricks and rebar into Lincoln Street, and scattering a cluster of sidewalk superintendents.

The City system relied on a single bond issue of $28.8 million for everything from bricks and mortar, to computers and books. The effort began with a strategic plan, published in April 1990, followed by passage of the bonding proposal by the voters in September 1990, and completed with the closing of the bond account in August 1999. Architects for the Main building were Northwest Architectural and GHA. Ron Tan and Associates, ALSC, Integrus, and Northwest designed the branches. The following list suggests the scope of the project:

| Library | Square footage | Date Completed |
|---|---|---|
| Downtown or Main | 117,000 | 1994 |
| Eastside | 6,400 | 1995 |
| Hillyard | 8,234 | 1994 |
| Indian Trail | 10,600 | 1998 |
| Shadle | 17,847 | 1997 |
| South Hill | 14,984 | 1996 |

Like its sister institution in the County, space occupied by the Spokane Public Library and its branches more than doubled during the period, and the quality of the buildings, their contents and the services that they now provide improved markedly.

### Two College Libraries

*Whitworth College:* The original portion of the Harriet Cheney Cowles Memorial Library was completed in 1948 and included, as was customary at the time, a multi-tier bookstack. An addition, made in 1968, further complicated the project. Architect Ben Neilsen of the Northwest Architectural Co. and Whitworth personnel deserve credit for creating a beautiful, functional building from the ungainly original. The project included the addition of a large, new wing, followed by a thorough remodeling of the old portion of the building. The new facility features a climate-controlled area for archives and special collections, three computer laboratories and an audio-visual services area. Square footage was doubled, offering a capacity for nearly 270,000 volumes and seating for more than 500 scholars. The $4.9 million project was financed entirely from donations to the Whitworth Centennial Campaign.

*Harriet Cheney Cowles Library, Whitworth College. Photo courtesy of Whitworth College.*

*Spokane Community College:* Like the Cowles Library at Whitworth, the new Learning Resources Center at S.C.C. features an addition and thorough remodeling. From a small, cramped, single-level building, the L.R.C. expanded to a multi-level structure with a dramatic balcony and staircase. The architects made a special effort to relate the building to the adjacent mall area. The total cost was $6.2 million.

| Library | Square Footage | Date Completed |
|---|---|---|
| Harriet Cowles Memorial (Whitworth College) | 53,400 | 1993 |
| Learning Resource Center (Spokane Community College) | 50,000 (est.) | 1991 |

*Ralph E. and Helen Higgins Foley Center, Gonzaga University. Photo courtesy of Gonzaga University.*

### Two University Libraries

*Gonzaga University:* Perhaps the most spectacular change in library space and services was made at Gonzaga University, where the cramped, outdated Crosby Library gave way to the spacious Ralph E. and Helen Higgins Foley Center. The Foley Center is an all-new structure located near the heart of the campus and overlooking the Spokane River. The building was named for the parents of Thomas Foley, former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. It features electronic systems that serve several other libraries in the area. In addition to an impressive entry and staircase, the library features the Cowles Rare Book and Special Collections Area. The $20 million project was in the hands of Ron Tan and Associates.

*Eastern Washington University:* The original 86,000 square foot structure of the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library was dedicated in 1967. By the 1990s, the original dark green carpeting was worn and faded. The small windows, red brick and dark woodwork, popular three decades earlier, combined with years of heavy use, tended to give the building a somber feeling. Following a three-year expansion and remodel project, larger windows and glass walls, and light wood finishes are used throughout. Skylights, with related openings in the top floor, create a much cheerier atmosphere on the main floor and

*(Continued on page 24)*

# Libraries as Ritual Space

**by Tony Wilson**

Much of what we value about libraries cannot be experienced in the virtual realm; it does not transfer to cyberspace. People love books, not digital files. Patrons miss the card catalog. People miss the old Carnegie libraries. Should we conclude from these facts that people are irrational? No, we already know that they can be. Nevertheless, we often spend time trying to prove rationally that you can't curl up with a computer, that the card catalog was really faster for the user, that the OPAC has destroyed serendipity.[1] Why, then, is no one converted by the realization that you can download a couple of novels into a shirt pocket computer and read them in your sleeping bag in a darkened tent?

I hope that a description of our relationship to our libraries as a-rational, ritual behavior will add an element to our assumptions about libraries that tends to be overlooked in endless cycles of argument over the superiority of cyberized services in an information system.

Ritual, by its very nature, is not rational. Fingering prayer beads is not like putting coins in a pop machine. Not even the most ardent believer thinks that it is; but he is likely to believe that the ritual makes something better, if only himself.

Ritual doesn't actually require much in the way of belief. Superstitious gestures may imply beliefs, but the beliefs so implied are frequently explicitly denied. Often there is a bit of the obsessive-compulsive in ritual. Without the ritual, things just don't *feel* right. Finally, we may find ritual to be an important statement about reality. Consider graduations, funerals, or ship launchings. We can find those rituals to be important without the concept of belief being very relevant.

Let me list a few assertions, and then consider them in some typical library settings or activities:

- The physical, architectural library building is a ritual space.
- A virtual ritual is not ritual at all, Tibetan prayer wheels notwithstanding.
- We have to "go there and do that" to benefit.
- Going to libraries and doing what we do there confers a blessing on that activity.
- Ritual must be self-performed by the one to whom the ritual is important. I can write a program to buy and sell my stocks, but I cannot automate the prayer, the compulsive hand washing, or the lighting of candles for my rituals.
- The ultimate purpose in going to the library is the existential quest for self-creation or self-transformation. (The amount of change can be very small—gaining confidence in the spelling of a single word for example, but gaining that confidence can still be a source of satisfaction.)
- Knowledge and self are carnal concepts. They require flesh. A book does not know things. Knowing implies wetware. Moist tissue is required for knowing.
- By going to the library, we ritually open ourselves to transformation. The library, by being there for us, regardless of who we are, sanctifies our voluntary self-transformation.
- Blessing and sanctity are generally terms expressing religious values. Using them in a library context, however, does not imply a religious belief. Rather, it implies a set of library values—for example, that open, uncensored access to information allows and encourages a better world.
- It is this free, uncensored, unauthorized self-transformation that censorship targets. Censors may be motivated by a jealous fear that someone might go where they dared not, an attempt to feel relatively more free themselves by reducing freedom in others. Where censors condemn, librarians bless.

Let's assume that the ritual purpose of the library is not data, not information, not even just knowledge, but knowledge-based self-transformation. This transformation is, in part, a ritual process for which the library provides a blessing as well as relevant information. I go to the library because of what I want to do to myself. I cannot send someone else to do it.

## Rituals of Library Users

Let us look at some of our ritual behavior as library users. Several components come to mind: entering, using the card catalog, the reference interview, in-library reading, and overdue fines.

### *Entry as Ritual*

To consider the ritual of entering the library, I find it useful to think of three types of library buildings: the temple type, the grove-and-grotto type, and the industrial-park warehouse type.

The entrance of a typical Carnegie library is purposely designed to be the entering of a temple. You must ascend from the street up a wide expanse of steps, pass between stone columns and under an arch, open massive doors, and step into the stone-cooled interior. Clearly you have entered something important, something elevated, something that is intended to be there forever. Your entry has as much blessing as architecture can bestow.

The entry to the grove-and-grotto library is also significant. Many small suburban libraries fall into this category. The library is protected from the street and hidden in a grove of trees. You park in the trees and follow a path to the set of entrance doors. Here, the entry from the street viewpoint is nearly secret. Nevertheless, entry is crossing ritually into another realm. Where the Carnegie library looks as though it were elevated out of the rock of the earth's crust, the grove-and-grotto library seems almost part of the natural formation of the earth itself. Our entry is an approach to roots, to sources, to the places of creation.

The third type of library, a recent innovation, is the industrial-park library. The entrance is stuck on a wall facing the parking lot. You feel as though you should be pushing a Costco-style shopping cart (maybe to carry a week's worth of videotapes to stabilize the children). The industrial park style could be interpreted as a

*Tony Wilson is Coordinator of the Library Technician Program at Highline Community College.*

warehouse loft, except that the user gains little elevation. Living in a warehouse loft has been "cool" for several decades now. The existential problem is to supply the ritual materials. The loft is universal space. You bring your own accoutrements. To set up a bedroom or a kitchen or to hold a wedding in a loft, people know what to bring. I suggest that to have a library experience in a loft, people neither know what to bring nor expect, as participants, to bring it.

I suggest that the entering into our first two types of libraries reinforces a mood, enhances a library ambiance, and encourages appropriate library behavior. Since we haven't enforced library behavior for decades anyhow, the recent architecture, which encourages consumer behavior in a tailgate party atmosphere, may be appropriate.

Enough! I don't want to berate uninspired library construction. Rather, I want to elucidate real but ritual values supported by well-designed library facilities.

### *The Card Catalog As Ritual*

People miss the card catalog. People prefer the card catalog. Nicholson Baker sues to save the card catalog. Why?

I am a cataloger. I spent twenty years working on a card catalog; and while it was not without some emotion that I helped dump it in the trash, I know that the automated product is superior in almost every way.

But surely it is not stupidity or technophobia that explains nostalgia for the card catalog. Consider the nonrational things that have been lost—the components of catalog ritual experienced by the patron. First, there are many oak-faced drawers with arcane markings like "Af-Ake." Finding the right one of those permanent, serious-looking drawers and flipping through its contents are very different from just hitting the right keys.

Loss of the drawers is loss of the postures and physical gestures of using them, now replaced with keyboarding. It is the loss of their "oakness," a visual and tactile symbol of solidity and permanence.

The loss of the catalog is the loss of a large, solid, almost Stonehenge-like monument, a visible authority, reeking with antiquity. Which do you want to trust with your emotions—a seemingly timeless oak box of yellowed permanent cards or a flickering screen and sticking keyboard mounted a foot away from a reset button?

### *The Ritual Reference Interview*

For many of us, actually speaking to a librarian, especially about our needs, must be preceded by a bit of feebly surreptitious skulking around the building, pretending to be interested in this or that, until we sense a potentially favorable risk/reward ratio. We have to do this in the building—skulking in the bushes or dawdling in the creek outside only makes the ratio worse.

Our final act, at least if we are wise, before speaking with the librarian is to fondle the card catalog. This will save us from the question of whether we have checked, although not from the question of what we checked under. Having anointed ourselves by touching the catalog, we can approach the librarian.

Let us stop here and wallow happily a moment in the archetypical/stereotypical image of the librarian: slender if not scrawny, stern, hair in a bun, glasses, sensible shoes, and in her hair, a pencil with a little due date stamp curling off it.

This is the shush-and-glue librarian. She is not the goddess of the temple or the sprite of the grotto. It may be true, as movies sometimes point out, that if you take off her glasses, let down her hair and give her a pair of heels and martinis, she can take you places mortal women never dream of; but to do that, she has to step out of her building and her role as librarian.

No, we want to stay with the librarian in her librarian role. Dewey suggested that the librarian should remain single because the librarian's job was too demanding to allow a workable home life. If there is any rightness to Dewey's proscription, why might it be right? We can't really imagine that lettering a few spines and collecting $1.32 in fines across the day is very demanding. What is demanding is classifying all those books, which requires knowing what is in them. It is the carrying of that knowledge and dispersing it judiciously and neutrally that is the burden. We need the celibacy of the librarian the same way we need celibacy in religious orders. In this light, our librarian (bun and all) is not a minor civil servant, but the priestess of the temple or the witch of the grotto, different but still one of us.

To appear before the librarian is to appear as a penitent before the priestess. If you are lucky, she will give you a sign or a talisman or write the call number on your palm. Her gift will guide you to the doorway ordained for your future. We can't have that priestess spending her evenings with diapers and her weekends with station wagons and sno-cones.

A colleague[2] notes that the librarian archetype has long been fragmented and suggests that the "friendly rivalry" between catalogers and reference staff is a ritual dismemberment followed by a competition among the parts. The cataloger part has been driven from the building, leaving the librarian knowing where the books are but not what is in them. We could expect from this a lessening of the power to bless the user's endeavor. Full investigation of the dismembered librarian will have to wait for another article.

### *Ritual Fines*

"If you don't bring it back, the fine is three cents a day," says the librarian. She's serious, but what's with this three cents? It is not financially significant. It never was. Rather, the fine establishes a relationship and sets some priorities. The book you checked out is a doorway through which you are to pass on your quest. The library takes your quest seriously and will not punish you severely if it takes you an extra while; but you must finally take the step or not take the step, and then relinquish the doorway you are blocking.

While librarians have been known to become dependent on the income from fines, there are much better ways to raise money. Fines are there to create a relationship with the client. They assure the user that what is overdue is important. The fine becomes the user's admission of having deprived others of something that matters.

### *Ritual Reading*

We know the reading ritual space almost too well—the chair, the lamp, the table, maybe a window or even a fire—and we provide much of it, while envying bookstores their freedom to do it well and include espresso. Reading in silence and solitude is

*(Continued on next page)*

## *The Libraries of Spokane County*

*(Continued from page 21)*

throughout the building. Floor space was nearly doubled. The Library faces the University's central mall that was given a thorough make-over as part of a related project. The total cost of the Library expansion and remodeling was $22.1 million and was guided by Ron Sims, Principal Architect with ALSC Architects.

| Library | Square Footage | Date Completed |
|---|---|---|
| Foley Center (GonzagaUniversity) | 138,000 | 1992 |
| John F. Kennedy (Eastern Washington University) | 159,000 | 1998 |

To be sure, there are other libraries in the County, but they are small, specialized in purpose, and often occupy space in older buildings. The intent is not to slight these libraries, but they simply fall outside the scope of this article.

As the tables indicate, the buildings range in size from roughly 4,000 square feet in the warm and friendly Medical Lake branch of the county system, to the 159,000 square foot facility at Eastern Washington University. Some of these buildings represent additions to older structures, but in each case the original was heavily remodeled as well.

It should be obvious that these structures did not "just happen." A great deal of credit is due the librarians, architects, donors, legislators, and administrators who made it all possible.

### Sources

Clipping files, chiefly from the Spokane *Spokesman-Review* at the Spokane Public Library and Eastern Washington University, correspondence with library officials, personal visits and observations.

## *Libraries as Ritual Space*

*(Continued from page 23)*

the reading of self-transformation. The old-fashioned librarian was supposed to quiet people down. The temple or the grove she maintained was a sanctuary of self-transformation.

### Conclusion

On the journey from birth to death, there are points of choice and irretrievable departures that determine the route. When we knowingly come to one of these junctures, as we do with marriages, deaths, and graduations, we hold rituals. On the scale of the solitary individual, libraries and librarians are often ritually present in crucial personal transformations. It is part of our faith that we foster conditions for better decisions and more meaningful routes from the points of choice.

It is not only the data in our books or on our terminals that enhances lives, but the time and the freedom and the gravity and the silences we can incorporate in the blessing the library gives its users. Society has a plethora of mechanisms spewing forth information at a tremendous rate and volume. While we are experts at helping to manage that flow, we will remain dear to the hearts of the users only to the extent that we are able to provide the sanctuaries for the ritual blessings that mark the life enhancements our materials can foster.

### References

1 This claimed loss of serendipity is especially anomalous since the advent of the Web, or really since keyword searching in general. It is clear that Alta Vista has done for serendipity what the mouse has done for solitaire.

2 Bonnie Jo Jones, a poet and associate cataloger, who provided several useful suggestions for this paper.

## Bridget Clone's Library

*(continued from page 27)*

**Week 15:**
Odd rumors circulating about absence of Ass. Dir. What *is* memo-psychosis, anyway? Definitely *not* classified as disability under ADA.

**Week 16:**
Spent entire morning up to elbows in malfunctioning printer, against background of snarling patrons with apparent life-threatening needs for hard copy of visual aid to NCAA basketball playoffs. *So* glad have master's degree: something to wipe hands on when return to office.

**Week 17:**
Ass. Dir. still out. Am simply dating and filing all informational memos re: management problems. Acting Dir. says *absolutely no e-mail* allowed at clinic. Am considering making humanitarian visit to keep her in loop.

**Week 18:**
Shocked! Having new boss bad enough, but since when is so-many-years of volunteer experience proper preparation for being an ASSISTANT DIRECTOR? Has the world gone mad? (Re: official explanation, I fail to see what PUBLIC RELATIONS has to do with LIBRARIANSHIP. Inst. nowhere near as enlightened as represented to me in interview.)

**Week 19:**
Must say grudgingly impressed w/vol.1 of new Ass. Dir.'s comprehensive rulebook. And she was v. enthusiastic about my suggestion to color-code and Web-mount it! New office nice and quiet, if somewhat dark. Perhaps prospects not so bad after all.

**Week 20:**
Have downloaded screen-saver of Madonna of Cracow from Polish Tourist Bureau Web site and am practicing expression of beatific firmness in foil candy wrapper hidden under keyboard.

New fiscal year resolutions!

I WILL:

- Reorganize wardrobe according to cga graphic-design principles for added *oomph*.
- Eat only snacks that will not drop crumbs into keyboard.
- Get up early to...

# Who's On First?

## Free speech, censorship and the library

*Tom Reynolds*

# A Place to Explore, Think, and Grow: Will Libraries Meet the Intellectual Freedom Needs of Students and Young Adults in the 21st Century?

**by Tom Reynolds**

> Think about it. Once censors have been given the power to restrict what materials influence you, where are the boundaries? Every person's definition of appropriateness is different. How then can we allow one person to make this choice for us? How long until someone chooses the books society can and can't read? No one can make these decisions for us; to grow as humans it is vital that we make the choices on our own. Therefore, if I could change one thing about my school, I would make it punishable for librarians to restrict access to materials. After all, the greatest of human freedoms is choice, and it must be protected at all costs. —Matt Loy, student and participant, "Teens in the 21st Century," an ALA 1999 Preconference.

### Maintaining Youth Access Is Paramount Issue for 21st Century

Fourteen-year old Matt Loy is an avid reader, and often makes his opinions known on the YALSA-Book Listserv. Matt was one of fourteen teenagers participating in an ALA preconference, "Teens in the 21st Century: Access for the Future," prior to the 1999 conference in New Orleans. For the librarians who attended, the purpose of the preconference was to explore the access and intellectual freedom needs of young adults, and to develop advocacy skills and tools that we could use to better champion the information needs of this group into the 21st century.

Think about it. For what age group is access to information, in both print and electronic format, most under attack? The answer—whether it involves questions about the appropriateness of *Huckleberry Finn* to be on high school reading lists, or attacks on libraries that offer access to ALA's gateway site to the best Web sites for adolescents, *Teen Hoopla*—is teenagers. Take a look at ALA's list of the most frequently challenged or banned books for 1997-98. What do these eighty titles have in common? Most are either written for or are popular with teen readers, or are of such literary value that they regularly appear on high school reading lists (ALA, 1998).

As is often the case, when teens and librarians get together, the teens take center stage; and this was certainly true at the "Teens in the 21st Century" preconference. Three panels of teenagers gave their opinions on what kind of information teenagers need, what are barriers to getting this information, and what libraries can do to help teens meet their information needs. While they didn't have all the answers, this group of articulate teens certainly educated the librarians present about the depth and importance of their information needs.

All the panelists said teens needed access to a wide variety of information in both print and electronic format, in order to meet the demands placed on them as students and to help deal with issues they faced as young adults. All were concerned that a lack of resources, particularly in their school libraries, was reducing their access to important information. Most felt that adults were overly concerned about the propriety of what teenagers read and see, and not concerned enough about limits on the availability and access to information they needed. Librarians should treat all their requests seriously and with respect, was the message these teens brought to the preconference.

The Internet has created a paradoxical problem for many teens. Teachers expect them to use the Net to do homework and research. But often, especially in the case of school libraries, access to legitimate sites of electronic information is blocked by filters. As Snoqualmie, Washington, teen Jill Christian put it, "We can't find the information because of filters. Then we get bad grades for not being able to get, not having, that information" (Christian, 1999). The teen panelists said that some teachers had become so frustrated with the filtered access in their school libraries that they were actively trying to find ways around the filters. This, by the way, is a comment I've also heard from school librarians here in Washington.

Because many adults feel that teens' use of the Internet is frivolous and often dangerous because it provides easy access to pornography, hate speech, and other awful things, students are finding that their access to some of the best informational sites

*(Continued on next page)*

*Tom Reynolds is a librarian at the Edmonds Library.*

on the Net is restricted in the name of protection. The cries of the organized censorship community and such tragic incidents as the Columbine shooting have intensified the pressure to censor youth access.

Almost lost in the diatribes and hand-wringing is a growing body of research that shows that student use of the Net is "more purposeful than many of us believe." A study of 7th to 10th graders, by Duke University's John Lubans, Jr., found that "contrary to what some adults think, many teens do pretty well at finding good information on the Web." What Lubans' young adults told him is exactly what the teen panelists attending the preconference told attenders. When it comes to using the Net, they want—they need freedom and respect, with appropriate guidance (Lubans, 1999).

Librarians attending the preconference had to ask ourselves some hard questions. Are we abdicating our responsibility to provide first class information tools to our teenage patrons when we use filters? Don't we owe it to students to consider how their legitimate information needs will be affected *before* we install filters? Through their comments, the teens at the preconference implied that we do.

### *Go Ask Alice* Controversy Exemplifies Teen Access Under Attack

"If kids can't get information on drugs, sex, etc., at the library, where are they going to get it from?" (Griffin, 1999).

Teen panelist Jamie Griffin's question brought squarely into perspective an issue on the minds of many at conference. Hanging over the New Orleans meeting was the attack by radio-talk-show personality Dr. Laura Schlessinger on the Association and specifically on ALA's gateway Website for teens, *Teen Hoopla*. *Teen Hoopla* provides access to the best sites for teens, including *Go Ask Alice*. *Alice*, sponsored by Columbia University's Health Education Program, offers frank information on health concerns, including sexuality. Many teens badly need access to health information that is factual and nonjudgmental. But it is just such access, and specifically the availability of *Alice*, that led to Dr. Laura's initial attack.

This is a point *Alice* director Jordan Friedman made forcefully, at both the "Teens in the 21st Century" preconference and at an Intellectual Freedom Committee issues briefing later. Not surprisingly, all the furor has dramatically increased the use of *Alice*; and Friedman vowed to go on doing what *Alice* had been doing for the last six years—"to answer questions that are written in from all over the world because our mission is to provide information that helps our readers make healthy choices" ("ALA Keeps...," 1999).

Ideally, teens should be able to get factual answers to these questions from parents, teachers, and health-care providers. "Unfortunately," said Friedman, "we don't live in an ideal world, so for the time being young people go ask *Alice*" because the service is anonymous, factual, and nonjudgmental ("ALA Keeps....," 1999).

The need for such a site was powerfully dramatized by teenagers Jamie Griffin and Jacob Brogan, who read from recent queries by teens to *Alice*. These heart-wrenching questions are the best evidence that *Alice* is indeed just the type of electronic information that libraries should be providing for our teen patrons. *Library Journal* editor John Berry III said as much in his column on the question. After first criticizing ALA for making *Alice* available through *Teen Hoopla*, Berry took a close look at the site and pronounced himself "so impressed by the scope and authority of the site's information on sex and sexuality that he recommended it to his 14-year-old" (Berry, 1999).

So why is all this important—this battle to protect adolescents' access to information? Because the censors, the Family Friendly Libraries and the Dr. Lauras, are fundamentally wrong about the nature of adolescence. The nature of adolescence is growth. It's a training period leading to adulthood. It's a time when, rather than being protected and sheltered, young adults need to be exposed increasingly to the realities of life. Ideally, this is accomplished by parents, schools, and libraries working in partnership to create positive growth experiences. But it can never be done successfully simply by trying to control teenagers and what they see, hear, and think.

ALA is right: maintaining access to information for students and teenagers will be one of the most crucial issues facing libraries as we move into the 21st century. In the words of John Berry, there is a fundamental value ALA and most librarians share: "society works better when everyone, even kids, has access to all information they need" (Berry, 1999).

### WLA Wrestles With Revising Intellectual Freedom Statements

As I mentioned in my last column, WLA is in the process of rewriting and combining two fundamental statements of principle, the "Freedom to Read" statement originally passed in 1959 and the "Intellectual Freedom in Libraries" document passed in 1971. The new intellectual freedom statement will be presented at the Association's 2000 conference.

It is important that WLA get this revision right, since a weak statement by the association could prove worse than no revision at all. My reading is that board members are wrestling with the language to be used in this revised statement, trying to balance what is seen as the "practical side" of a "complicated issue" with the desire to take a "strong" stand on this fundamental principle ("Highlights...," 1999). Luckily, the WLA Board includes many strong IF advocates.

Watch your *WLA Link* and the WLA web page (www.wla.org/) for more on this very important process.

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# Bridget Clone's Library

## by Angelynn King

**Week 1:**
*So* excited about new high-tech job. Chance to start anew w/clean screen, apply all learned, polish new image, etc., in forward-thinking institution.
Resolutions!
I WILL:
- Remain calm.
- Explain even most obvious points to patrons in level-headed, non-patronizing manner.
- Dress professionally.
- Get up early to iron clothes, prepare nutritional snacks, meditate.

I WILL NOT:
- Lose temper.
- Make fun of patrons.
- Wear jeans or leggings to work.
- Patronize vending machine, sneak snacks at desk, etc.

**Week 2:**
Kickoff meeting with Assistant Director. (Apparently actual Director never physically on-site due to "community responsibilities.") Went v. well! Expecting great things of me, she said. Bringing library into 21st century, etc. Replied modestly that am trying to parcel out greatness to give consistency and good value for money.

**Week 3:**
Late for a.m. staff meeting after scorching skirt with iron that overheated while rinsing thumb wound sustained cutting up carrot sticks. Wonder if possible to order pre-cut vegetables over Internet?

**Week 4:**
Have downloaded Kamakura Buddha screen-saver from Japanese Travel Office Website and am perfecting look of serene omniscience. Must say quite pleased w/results so far.

**Week 5:**
Minor setback. Called into office of Assistant Director and told that Web-surfing at reference desk gives impression of "escapism." Suggested reading classics (i.e., old books) instead. Ass. Dir. actually had nerve to say, "There is no frigate like a book."

Must say not v. impressed w/technosavvy of mgmt.

**Week 6:**
Today patron marched up to ref. desk and asked, "Where are your self-help books?" Had already let out trill of musical laughter before realized patron *not* joking. Must remember: psych-section denizens usu. not possessed of sense of humor.

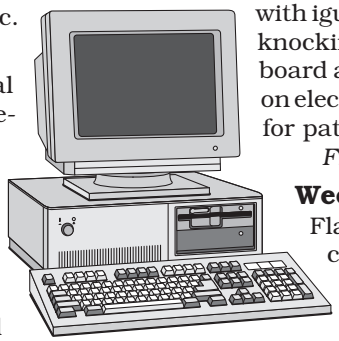
**Week 7:**
*Most* unusual day. Perfectly self-sufficient patron at reference computer all afternoon accompanied by small child who colored quietly and said nothing. Wanted to poke both to check if real, but afraid actually dreaming. Did not want to wake self up and lose beauty sleep, so remained perfectly still.

**Week 8:**
Called into Ass. Dir.'s office and accused of snarkiness. Well, IS there a diplomatic way to explain to suppurating patron camped on handicapped-entrance doorbell that hay fever is *not* a disability?

**Week 10:**
Lovely day of brilliant reference coups. "How can I EVER thank you?" gushed patron over words to Andorran national anthem circa 1872, magically produced in moments by *moi*. "Praise me to my boss," I said. Patron disappeared down stairs in trill of musical laughter. Why, why, why does everyone assume librarians have sense of humor?

**Week 11:**
HORRORS. Startled by approach of patron with iguana on head, bumped into computer knocking serenity-refining mirror onto keyboard and accidentally replying to everyone on electronic discussion list re: funny names for patrons.

*Frigate. Frigate. Frigate.*



**Week 12:**
Flaming has been stentorian and excruciating. Am now deleting everything w/subject line "Our Mission," "Professional Behavior," etc. etc. etc.

Perhaps could feign attack of marriage, divorce or radical feminism and change name as excuse for demanding new e-mail address.

Confronted Welcome Desk Volunteer re: reptilian headgear. Volunteer countered unaware of any regulation prohibiting such, as certainly not covered in training session. Must e-mail Ass. Dir. regarding this oversight.

**Week 13:**
Another nightmare. While children's room staff busy breaking up water-fountain spitting contest, small patron decided to liberate decorative guinea pig to park across street. Circ. desk staff heard high-pitched squeaking but thought coming from novel new furry-type juvenile pager. PLEASE. Since when do seven-year-olds take their calls outdoors?

**Week 14:**
Good news! Billington recaptured in community garden, pacing a two-foot-square patch of earth near fence. Sure there is lesson in there somewhere. E-mailed Ass. Dir. to cancel purchase order at Land o'Lemurs.

Confronted Welcome Desk Volunteer re: rodent liberation. Volunteer countered unaware of any regulation prohibiting removing animals *from* library. Spent rest of day on CAD/CAM shareware designing cage for volunteer.

*Angelynn King is Reference & Bibliographic Instruction Librarian at the University of Redlands in Redlands, CA.*

*(Continued on page 24)*

WLA Communiqué

# Ray Bradbury, MIT Futurist, and ALA Leadership Headline WLA 2000 Conference

**by David Domkoski, Tacoma Public Library**

Ready to take part in a **r/evolution**? For three days in May, 2000, library professionals, para-professionals, trustees, volunteers, and Friends from throughout the state will come together in Tacoma to be challenged by new ideas, share information, find inspiration, explore technology, fight inertia and complacency, and prepare themselves and their institutions for the inevitable next step in the information revolution. Although it's almost six months away, the Washington Library Association's Year 2000 conference in Tacoma, Washington—May 17 through May 20, 2000—is already promising to be one of the most dynamic conferences in years.

Why? Here's a quick look at the conference highlights:

- Ray Bradbury, the celebrated author of *Fahrenheit 451*, *The Martian Chronicles*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *Dandelion Wine*, and a host of other unforgettable stories and novels. For anyone who grew up in the '50s and '60s, Ray Bradbury invented the future. **Ray Bradbury will speak on Wednesday evening, May 17, at 7:00 p.m. Everyone registering for the conference by April 1, 2000, is guaranteed admission to the Bradbury lecture.**

- William J. Mitchell, Professor of Architecture and Media Arts and Sciences and Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His latest book, *-E-topia: Urban Life, Jim— But Not As We Know It*, is a dazzling survey of the cyberfuture and its impact on urban life. **William J. Mitchell will present the conference keynote address on Thursday evening, May 18.**
- Arnold Adoff, noted poet and anthologist, with more than 30 published books in 30 years for young people and their older allies. **Arnold Adoff will speak at the CAYAS breakfast on Friday, May 19.**
- Executive Director William Gordon and President Sarah Long, the leadership of the American Library Association. **William Gordon will speak at lunch on Thursday, May 18, while Sarah Long will speak at the ALA breakfast on Friday, May 19.**

Conference-goers can learn more about building community partnerships; developing innovative programs for teens, toddlers, young readers and families; managing access to the Internet; creating a digital reference library; coping with new issues of diversity; readers' advisory services; improving Web sites through more effectual writing; effective community advocacy; promoting positive change within library organizations; computerized library access for the visually impaired; legal reference; planning Library Capital Facilities Areas; developing and enhancing Internet searching skills; and much more.

Planned pre-conference programs include the following all-day sessions: Web building, training others how to teach Internet and electronic reference skills, understanding and using the upcoming 2000 census and the U.S. Census Web site, Multnomah County Library's innovative *team developer initiative*, creating and managing digital photography database collections, developing effective presentation skills, and staying employable in the 21st century.

In addition to a full slate of tempting conference and pre-conference workshops, the WLA conference team has planned something even more delectable—death by chocolate. The annual President's Reception, following the keynote program with Dean Mitchell, moves back to the exhibit area for chocolate. *Lots* of chocolate. And, as the conference's special guests, many of the Pacific Northwest's leading authors will be there, ready to sign their latest books for conference-goers.

In fact, authors are thoroughly integrated into the two-day conference, from Thursday morning's breakfast program with three of the most provocative writers of speculative fiction in the region to frequently scheduled autograph sessions in the exhibition area. A conference bookstore will be conveniently located adjacent to the exhibits.

Conference and pre-conference registration information is slated to be mailed to all association members (as well as most members of WLMA) on January 6, 2000. Advance registration closes on March 31. Non-members and other persons interested in attending the conference can download or request registration information at the WLA web site.

# RIG Conference 2000 Programs

**by Sarah Hunt, Des Moines Library, King County Library System**

RIG (WLA Reference Interest Group) is working like crazed monkeys to prepare some great programs for the WLA 2000 conference. Your interest group co-chairs would love to hear from you, and would especially like to have your thoughts on the directions the new, improved RIG should take. Contact David Menard (David.Menard@wwu.edu) or Sarah Hunt (seahunt@fqyvax.serv.net) to share your ideas.

# How to Stay Employable: WALE Pre-Conference

**by Martha Parsons, Washington State University Energy Library**

Start planning now to attend the pre-conference workshop entitled, "How to Stay Employable Into the 21st Century!" Pat Wagner, a trainer/educator/consultant from Denver, Colorado, will present this event, sponsored by the Washington Association of Library Employees (WALE) Interest Group.

As the demands of customers and employers change, credentials, age, tenure, and experience are no longer guarantees for career success. First, learn about ten sets of skills that can help keep you employable into the next century, and ways to apply them to create your own curriculum for workplace education. Then learn how to write a resume or professional brochure based on accomplishment, not just job function and chronology, and how to create a marketing plan for your career, both inside and outside of libraries. Finally, learn how to reposition your career so that you run it like a business and treat potential employers like customers. This program has been popular with library audiences at ALA and with library and academic audiences around the country. Individuals thinking about career advancement or a job change will find the information particularly useful.

Pat will also be provide two additional sessions at the conference: "Stop the Whining, Part One: How to Complain Effectively"; and "Stop the Whining, Part Two: How to Get THEM to Stop Whining."

# CAYAS Award for Visionary Library Service to Youth

**by Karen Recher, Mid-Columbia Library**

CAYAS (Children's and Young Adults Services Interest Group of the Washington Library Association) is seeking nominations of individuals who are dedicated to excellence in library service to youth—children and/or young adults. Please include library staff, board members and volunteers in soliciting suggestions for a qualified individual from your institution to nominate. The recipient will be recognized at the Washington Library Association Conference next spring.

The CAYAS Award for Visionary Library Service to Youth recognizes individuals who, through their practice and example, provide inspiration and leadership for others who serve children and young adults in libraries. Those eligible for nomination include staff or volunteers from public, school, or special libraries. The work that qualifies an individual for nomination may include cumulated efforts over several years, or may be a singular and exceptional effort that sets new standards for practice. The purpose of the award is not only to commend the individual who receives it, but also to appreciate and bring attention to the remarkable and tireless efforts of all individuals who work with young people in libraries.

Deadline for nominations is February 1, 2000. A copy of the nomination form is available on the WLA Web site or from Karen Recher. Please send completed nomination forms to Karen Recher, Mid-Columbia Library, 1620 S. Union, Kennewick, WA 99338-2264; phone (509) 783-7878, voicemail: ext. 121; email: karenr@galaxy.mcl-lib.org.

# WLA Nominations Committee Seeks Candidates

**by Linda Pierce, Foley Library, Gonzaga University**

Participate in WLA! The Nominations Committee is looking for candidates for next spring's elections. There are openings for the following positions: Secretary (2 years), Coordinator of Continuing Education (2 years), Coordinator of Communication (2 years), ALA Councilor (3 years), Conference Coordinator for the 2002 Joint WLA/OLA Conference (2 years). Job descriptions for all positions are posted at the WLA Web Site, www.wla.org. Please consider serving WLA in one of these positions: you can make a difference in the library profession in the state. For more information, contact Nominations Committee co-chairs, Linda Pierce, pierce@its.gonzaga.edu (phone: 509-323-3834), or Elsa Steele, elsas@kcls.org (phone: 206-326-7550).

# Goals for Grassroots

**by John Sheller, Sammamish Library**

Grassroots, the political interest group of WLA, is busy encouraging library directors, Friends, and trustees to invite state legislators to visit libraries. The I.G. set two goals for fall 1999:

1. To have every legislator visit a library in her or his district before the next legislative session begins;
2. To keep track of all visits and report this information to the Legislative Planning Committee.

Tracking library visits has not been attempted before.

Grassroots was formed by former WLA Legislative Day chairs Tom Moak, John Sheller, and Linda Fredericks. They realized that effective contacts should begin before the opening of the legislative session in Olympia. Grassroots will submit a formal report to the Legislative Planning Committee prior to Library Day—January 26, 2000.

# *I'd Rather Be Reading . . .*

# Acknowledgments: Thanks for a Reading Life!

**by Nancy Pearl**

There's a disturbing and rapidly growing trend in contemporary fiction that I've been noticing as I pick up new novels to read. I want to devote this month's column to exploring that trend—at least I think it's a trend. (I can't believe that I'm the only one to have noticed it.) But before I begin the column, I want to take some time to acknowledge and/or thank all the people who have made this column and, indeed, me, possible.

I first want to thank my mother, whose unreasoned and unreasonable hatred of *Roget's Thesaurus* forced me to look deep within myself to discover what words I wanted to use, when. Although I have unquestioningly respected her wisdom in all other areas of my life, I must admit that I do sneak a peek at *Roget's*. (Sorry, Mom.) I want to thank my elementary school art teacher, Miss Francesca LaFramboise, who pointed out, quite kindly, that I should not consider devoting myself to a career in the visual arts. I also must acknowledge Miss Ida Kittendon, my elementary school music teacher, who informed me that singing was not a career option available to me, and that while my clarinet playing was acceptable, I would never get higher than 14th chair in the district band, and I therefore might want to look elsewhere for a lifetime of work. I deeply thank Dimitri, my first boyfriend, who made clear that while I had many talents, cooking was not among them.

Although he is unaware of his great influence, I must acknowledge the important contribution Noam Chomsky made to my life, if only in a negative way—by showing me how unintellectual I actually was. I want to thank certain doctors who have made me what I am today: Dr. Leon Pollack, who saw that I was inoculated against childhood disease, Dr. Rosenthal, whose ministrations shall go unmentioned, and, of course, Dr. Adolph Dingman, the great Detroit obstetrician. And to Bernie Barstow, veterinarian par excellence. Thanks, guys!!!

I want to thank Al Mudfield, who introduced me to Dick Francis and especially, his best novel, hands down, *Odds Against*. Now there's a good librarian. Also, I think it's important to recognize Frances Whitehead, who brought J.R.R. Tolkien to my lasting attention, and Andrea Milstein, from whom I borrowed *Betsy and the Great World* and never returned it. I want to thank Frank Miller for first using the word "lacunae" in my presence and making me aware of its multiplicity of uses. Among the many lacunae in my vocabulary (pace *Roget's*), "lacunae" was one of them.

*Nancy Pearl*

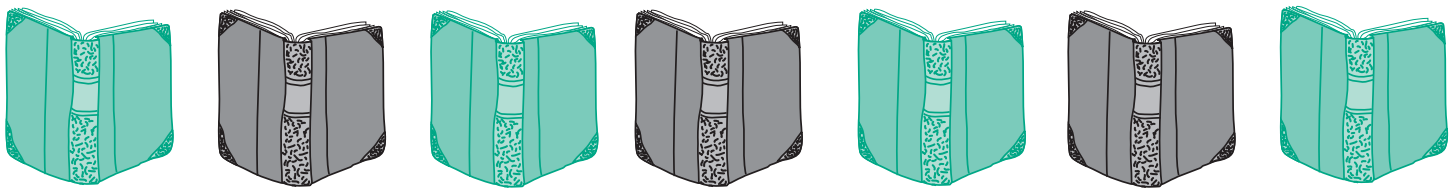
I would be doing a great disservice not to mention the gang of writers whose works mean so much to me, and from whom I draw inspiration daily: Rex Stout, Walker Percy, Dorothy Sayers, John Irving, Lois McMaster Bujold, Don DeLillo, Iris Murdoch, Elinor Lipman, Stephen McCauley, Philip Larkin, Philip Levine, Merle Miller, Ernest Gaines, David Lehman, John Banville, John Le Carre, Edwidge Danticat, Gerald McDermott, and Anne Tyler. You're the greatest!!!

Finally, to my first readers: my husband, Loretta Garcia, Annabelle Rodchenko, and Elizabeth Logan. And to my second readers, my husband, conscience and agent Glenda Price, Delilah Rubinstein, Timothy Rodchenko, Devra Dover. And to my first rewritten readers: my sister Susan, my cousin Stephen, my brothers-in-law, Arnie and Louis, my husband, Kathy Horne, Merlin Hardcastle, and the irrepressible twins, Merrilee and Terrilee Lithcombe. You're the best!!!

Lastly, to those whose names have been unintentionally (or intentionally, to be honest) omitted, I could never have done it without you, either, or depending on how you look at it, perhaps I shouldn't have done it at all.

Gosh, I guess this *Alki* column is going to have to be postponed due to lack of space. But at least I got everyone thanked. I think.

*Nancy Pearl directs the Washington Center for the Book at the Seattle Public Library.*



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