

The Washington Library  
Association Journal

November 2015

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# Alki



## Reimagine!

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## Reimagine Our Libraries

by Darcy Brixey

My son just bought his first drum set. He earned money by doing odd jobs on my husband's construction site like sweeping floors and picking up stray nails. He spent many hours looking at prices online and reading drum blogs about the best brands. He finally bought one and now my basement rattles with the beats of any rock band that has played on a radio since the '70s. We've had a fun time going through old music just so he can pick out the beats. It's been a great way to introduce him to The Who, Rolling Stones and of course, The Beatles.

"Imagine" has been a favorite song in my house these days. I've marveled that this song has lasted through many formats and still is as relevant as ever. It's been sold on vinyl, 8-track, cassette tape, CD, as a download and now re-released on vinyl. It has also been performed by choirs and orchestras, graced Olympic closing ceremonies and benefit concerts.

*It will last.*

Our libraries are much the same. A recent cartoon that circulated on social media sites shows the outside of a library with a person asking "why do we even need libraries anymore?" The cartoon also lists the number of people inside being helped for job searches, genealogy searches, teens at an after-school program (emphatically *not* getting into trouble), a family saving money by borrowing items instead of buying them and summer reading programs. As library staff, we know these benefits, but our profession has spent decades trying to define and redefine services in order to make ourselves relevant to our taxpaying public.

The American Library Association has launched a public awareness campaign called *Libraries Transform* that demonstrates the impact of libraries. It is designed to spread the

message that libraries transform lives which in turn shape our communities. Examples are job and career research, small business information and technology exploration.

This has been proven repeatedly in our own state of Washington through programming and advocacy. WLA was a recent sponsor at a food literacy event at The Seattle Public Library called *Cultivating Readers: Celebrating Food Literacy Month*. Governor Jay Inslee proclaimed September to be Food Literacy Month and acknowledged the role libraries, schools and booksellers play in the work to educate patrons on nutrition and other food related issues. WLA was able to

show attendees that our libraries provided rich instruction and support to our patrons with food programs that covered gardening, preserving, cooking, food donations, seed exchanges and community gardens.

We have managed to maintain a central role in our communities and the public is looking toward the library in new and surprising ways. I'm excited to see what new partnerships develop with our communities. Our libraries have been reimagined and we are maintaining our spot at the forefront of our communities in ways our predecessors never envisioned.

Imagine.

You may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one. 

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Darcy'.

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*Darcy Brixey is WLA president and the teen services librarian with the Bellevue Library at the King County Library System*

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"Alki," a Native American word meaning "by and by," was suggested by Nancy Pryor, Special Collections at Washington State Library, as the title for the Washington Library Association's journal. "Alki" is also the state motto, signifying a focus on the future.

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Alki's purpose is to communicate philosophical and substantive analyses of current and enduring issues for and about Washington libraries, personnel, and advocates, and to facilitate the exchange of research, opinion, and information.

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Cover Photo: Award-winning Vancouver Community Library, a branch of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District. Photography by Nic Leheux courtesy of The Miller Hull Partnership.



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# From the Editor



Frank Brasile

Libraries are consistently re-envisioning, reworking and re-thinking systems and environments to ensure that we're providing relevant resources to the 21st century library patron and community. My first-time task as this publication's new editor was to select a theme for this issue, and "reimagine" immediately resonated with me.

Reimagining a physical space can breathe new life into a library, no matter the physical size of the building or collections: Molly Allen outlines the collaborations that make the Academic Resource Center at the Central Washington University Library a success (p.6), and Diane Cowles (p. 8), Katy McLaughlin (p.10) and Julia Thompson (p. 12) write about big changes to libraries large (The Seattle Public Library), medium (Mid-Columbia Libraries) and small (Holocaust Center for Humanity), respectively. Tigh Bradley's observations on his experiences with the University of Washington's enormous Suzzallo library and Fort Vancouver Regional Library's tiny Yaclot Library Express (p. 18) is intriguing. Kit Ward-Crixell reimagines collection development using non-traditional sources (p.9) and Tony Wilson (p. 14) and Shardè Mills (p. 17) get to the root of it all by reimagining the role of the library and the librarian.

The Seattle Public Library took the "novel-in-residence" concept to a whole new level for NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month), and Linda Johns provides innovative programming ideas around this event (p. 20).

Partnerships are more important than ever, and Sharyn Merrigan and Morgen Larsen discuss how teacher-librarians can partner with science teachers in support of Next Generation Science Standards (p. 22), while Corie Jones gives teacher-librarians the tools to be strong advocates for school libraries (p. 23). Becky Ramsey-Leporati's experience as a librarian at a non-librarian conference highlights positive partnerships between librarians and academics (p. 24.) We'll also look at the career of former Washington State Librarian and Director of the Washington State Library, Dr. Rand Simmons, as he envisions his new role at the State Library (p. 25.).

Regular columns include important news at the state and federal level from Simmons and John Sheller in the Legislative Update (p.5); new ways to provide staff training in Learning Curve (p. 26); and David Wright recommends

a number of novels-in-stories in I'd Rather Be Reading (p. 29). Last but not least, celebrate the accomplishments of your colleagues throughout the state in Communi-que, including the gorgeous, award-winning Vancouver Community Library that graces this issue's cover.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I have putting it together. I'd love to hear your thoughts. During my tenure as editor, I look forward to providing library staff and supporters with relevant, informative and entertaining information through inspiring and thought-provoking articles. 📖

Frank



**Writing After Dark, one of the NaNoWriMo programs at The Seattle Public Library.**

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*Frank Brasile is a selection services librarian with The Seattle Public Library.*



## Legislative Update: Library Issues to Watch in the Upcoming Election and Legislative Session

by John Sheller

### Early Learning & public libraries

Our 2015 state legislative session resulted in a couple of significant library wins. SSB 5721 added a public library representative to the state Early Learning Opportunities Council. Our state's public library directors and WLA lobbyist Steve Duncan have been working behind the scenes for years to better position public libraries in the early learning conversation. Library users and supporter all know the value of story times and early literacy activities, but this has not always carried over into the legislative arena.

Governor Jay Inslee recently appointed former House budget architect Ross Hunter to the position of Director of the Department of Early Learning. Known as a tough negotiator and a shrewd fiscal analyst, Hunter may be just the right person to lead Washington out of its \$100,000 per day noncompliance with State Supreme Court school funding mandates.

Will Hunter have the wherewithal to increase the role of public libraries in public K-12 education?

### School libraries and certified teacher-librarians

Our second big victory last session was for WLMA in their ongoing efforts to increase the recognition of the unique role of certified teacher-librarians at providing information literacy education. A big step forward was recently celebrated when SB 5294 changed the name of School Library Media Programs to School Library Information and Technology Programs, and outlined ways teacher-librarians may collaborate with their schools to accomplish certain goals.

As our state's public schools continue their work to comply with state mandates, having strong statutory language may help reinvigorate efforts to include school library and information technology staffing and infrastructure to give our students the 21st century education they deserve.

### Eyman initiative 1366

Professional ballot initiative pitchman Tim Eyman is back with another tax related item. This election cycle's version, I-1366,

“As our state’s public schools continue their work to comply with state mandates, having strong statutory language may help reinvigorate efforts to include school library and information technology staffing and infrastructure to give our students the 21st century education they deserve.”

would force our state legislature to bring a ballot measure to Washington voters regarding future tax increases. 1366 is both complicated and convoluted in that, if enacted, it directs the legislature to run a ballot measure asking voters to decide if our state constitution should be amended to require either a 2/3 majority legislative or a 2/3 majority “yes” vote for all proposed tax increases.

As complicated as that component is, 1366 gets even more confusing as it purports to require a “penalty” decrease in the state sales tax, from 6.5 % to 5.5 %, beginning April 15, 2016 if the proposed super majority item does not appear on a statewide ballot by next April. While legal experts are having a heyday picking apart 1366’s constitutionality and lack of conformity to initiative guidelines, state budget watchers are concerned about the potential impact if enacted.

### Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Arguably the most important federal legislation affecting libraries is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education

# ARC to Success: A Campus-Wide Collaboration between Learning Support Services, Career Services, Information Services, and Research Services

By Molly Allen

Reimagining a space within a library comes in all forms. How can I better acquire a resource? How can we market our collection more effectively to our students? How can we continue to provide innovative spaces and technology within our library?

The planning for the Academic and Research Commons (ARC) at Central Washington University (CWU) began in 2012, with the reimagining of our Reference department. Traditional library spaces are no longer adequate for the interactive learners on college campuses today, and creating a free, open, and collaborative space in the form of a learning commons was proposed as the first step toward this transition.

The first floor of the James E. Brooks Library was redesigned to accommodate individual computer workstations, comfortable seating for group meetings, and a wide open space for collaboration, now utilized for a number of different programs and activities.

The ARC serves as the collaborative hub of the James E. Brooks Library and invites our partners to share the space with us. The CWU Learning Support Services program, providing drop-in and appointment-based writing and math tutoring, subject-specific tutoring, and peer assisted labs, is housed in the ARC. Large numbers of students visit regularly to work with tutors individually and in small groups on projects including the development of reading skills and peer reviews of their writing. Students participate in guided study sessions, reading groups, and other academic pursuits within this space, utilizing whiteboard tabletops, televisions, computers, and other equipment.

Another valued partner, CWU Career Services, provides



“A staff member shared the idea of hosting a Brooks Library Game Night, giving students a chance to take a break from their studies and enjoy snacks and a few rounds of their favorite games.”

student, faculty, or community member, with their research needs.

Presentation rooms and “media:scapes” provide students with the ability to create and practice solo and group presentations, offering a live view of their work. Each year, the ARC partners participate in a technology ‘petting zoo’ during Wildcat Welcome Weekend, showing off all of the incredible technology within the space. Media:scapes offer the ability to project up to six individual devices on a larger, dual-screen for ease of collaboration. The presentation rooms are open for reservation by all students and allow the ideal space for presentation practice, or even a room to play popular touch-screen games such as Fruit Ninja or Duck Hunt to orient students to the technology!

resources within the space on a weekly basis, allowing students to gain tips on writing cover letters and resumes. This partnership has paved the way for Career Services to host a number of career development and exploratory workshops in library classrooms. Two years after the opening of the ARC, Information Services joined the team, providing another location for their busy service desk. The Information Services desk provides technical assistance in the ARC from 5PM to 8PM on weekdays, offering another great resource to students.

Our Research Services team provides assistance in source and material researching, as well as material location. Research Services delivers 24/7 reference with the assistance of AskWA and looks forward to assisting our patrons, whether

Molly Allen is Secretary Senior with the James E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University.

Continued on next page



The ARC has turned into a perfect location for campus and community events and collaboration. This year, with the hiring of our new Student Engagement and Community Outreach Librarian, the number of events hosted within the library has increased significantly. A staff member shared the idea of hosting a Brooks Library Game Night, giving students a chance to take a break from their studies and enjoy snacks and a few rounds of their favorite games. We hosted our first successful Game Night in September and plan to continue to host themed Game Nights on a monthly basis. Having the open space with plenty of tables and chairs served as a great location for the event, showed students how fun hanging out in the library can be, and gave new and returning students a fun and casual way to make new friends. Other programming within the ARC has proven successful, such as our yearly participation in International Games Day @ Your Library, which invites students and community members to come to the ARC to play a variety of board games and video games. The Brooks Library has invited community poets into the ARC for National Poetry Month to read their works, inviting students, faculty, and staff to relax and enjoy a reading within the space. The addition of programming at the library, particularly within the ARC, shows students that it is a safe, inviting, and collaborative space.

The opening of the Academic and Research Commons within the Brooks Library has proven successful in bringing additional traffic flow to the library. It has shown the value in collaboration through partnerships across campus and has given our students a comfortable place to get together and accomplish their goals. The reimagining of this space within the Brooks Library has brought departments together and continues to evolve as we work in partnership towards achieving our student success, engagement, and outreach goals across campus. 📖

Act, previously known as No Child Left Behind. Washington's U.S. Senator Patty Murray, as co-Chair of the HELP (Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions), is a key player in this legislation.

On July 16, 2015 the U.S. Senate passed the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015 after amending ESEA to include the Reed-Cochran Amendment. The Amendment will help save and expand school libraries in every state in the nation by explicitly authorizing school districts to use federal funds to develop and foster effective school library programs.

Currently, the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate HELP Committee are working toward agreement on the reauthorization of ESEA.

Calls to action are posted to the WLMA listserv. All WLA members are encouraged to support this legislation.

Thanks to The American Library Association's Office of Government Relations (OGR) for providing text and tracking legislative progress. You can learn more at <http://www.ala.org/offices/ogr>.

### Has the time come for a year round legislature?

Our state elected officials are finding it more and more difficult to conduct the people's business in the months allotted annually. Last session required 2 additional "special sessions" to hammer out a final budget, and there is talk of reconvening to address shortfalls in education funding.

There's an old canard in business schools that states "Retail is easy – it's a simple matter of providing people with what they want, when they want it, at a price they are willing to pay, while turning a profit."

Similar irony could be used to describe the work of our state legislature. All they need to do is provide the levels of service Washington citizens demand, at a tax rate they are willing to commit, all while covering employee expenses and saving for a rainy day!

Could this be the year we begin to give our state elected officials more time and resources to negotiate their way through complicated and expensive issues such as education, transportation and public safety? Probably not, but it will be worth watching to see if this comes up as tax hawks continue to experience sticker shock over the cost of the multiple "special" sessions that are becoming the norm for Washington. 📖

# Tailor-Made for Rainier Beach

by Diane Cowles

The Rainier Beach community in southeast Seattle has a reputation for being crime ridden and scary. Like a much maligned friend that you're afraid of introducing your parents to, the neighborhood's standing is complicated. It is true that crime has always had a foothold there, gang rivalry is rife, and gunfire heard with increasing frequency is a way of life. But, make no mistake, there is love there, too.

One of the most diverse sections of Seattle, the Rainier Valley is home to African-American, Asian, Latino, North African, Caucasian, and mixed-race families. The area has a gem in Seward Park on the shores of Lake Washington and concerned neighborhood groups and activists working tirelessly on social issues and systemic problems.

Love pops up often within this complex picture of a neighborhood and The Seattle Public Library figures prominently in its commitment to Rainier Beach. Though a branch has been in various temporary locations in the neighborhood since 1912, the current Rainier Beach Branch has been a large presence since 1981 near the corner of Henderson and Rainier Avenue, a major cross street in the area. The library's investment has always been a big one. It anchored a 15,000 sq. ft. building there in 2004 as part of The Seattle Public Library's Libraries for All plan and now only 11 years later, will do a major refurbishment as part of the "Reimagined Spaces" strategic initiative under the leadership of City Librarian Marcellus Turner.

Turner felt genuine excitement the first time he laid eyes on the branch and saw its possibility as the third essential space in people's lives, after home and school/work. Immediately, he felt a wellspring of community support for big structural changes that will be tailored to them, rather than cling to an older building. His fervent hope is that "we create more library memories for them" as they enjoy the same staff, programs, and care with which the project was crafted.

To grasp the neighborhood's vision, the managers representing youth, information and instruction, and southeast Seattle all convened conversations with targeted groups. Teen conversations at the Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club honed in on emphasizing technology and their craving for spaces to just hang out. Adult conversations placed value on clean well lit spaces, free large and small meeting rooms, and both quiet and interactive places with comfortable seating arrangements. The trend toward non-use of a traditional reference desk was clearly evident in the survey when patrons indicated that the library is not the first place they go to learn something new. Often, it is the Internet that they tap first. But, they value the programming that libraries traditionally do and want the spaces to resonate with: computer instruction,



**Overhead view on interior changes to the Rainier Beach Branch as part of The Seattle Public Library's "Reimagined Spaces" service priority**

year-round programs for youth, homework help for kids, adult tutoring, book groups and author lectures. Again and again they emphasized that spaces when promoted properly can serve as a root connection to the community.

This philosophy of facilitating patron experiences through the use of space is a hallmark of The Seattle Public Library's Reimagine Spaces model. It acknowledges that public libraries have moved from facilitating access to knowledge to helping patrons discover the knowledge they seek in an information diffuse society, where ideas and stories are in both physical and virtual environments, and where engaging with and learning from each other is important. Wei Cai, regional manager, observed that in her interactions with patrons, that no one talked much about checking out books or picking up holds, but there was always talk of a free, safe, non-judgmental space. Children's librarian Kate Pappas recalled the space's role as a support center right after a shooting incident near the library. She girded herself for a small turnout to Story Time, only to find quite the opposite. Many came because Story Time was something positive to look forward to, especially in the aftermath of trauma.

The prototype of this new vision of library space will begin in the fall of 2015. The architectural plans show among other innovations: A charging bar in the lobby; one service desk will serve for both circulation and reference transactions; furnished children and teen areas that encourage individual and group collaborative learning; laptops and iPads for in-library use; new quiet zones and collaborative work spaces for adults; and a digital media room and business center to be outfitted with appropriate technology. The Rainier Beach branch will reopen to the public to much fanfare (and love) in January 2016. 📖

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*Diane Cowles is a children's librarian at the Beacon Hill Branch of the Seattle Public Library and the ALKI Editorial Committee Chair*

# Reimagining the Collection Development Toolbox

by Kit Ward-Crixell



## ShelfAWARENESS

daily enlightenment for the book trade

In collection development, it's safe to say that what you see is what you get - or in our case, what we see as librarians is what our patrons get in their collection. *Library Journal* and other respected collection development tools show us great choices every month. But just as there is an entire Internet that you can't get to with a web browser, there is a world of popular materials that are best found with unconventional collection development tools. Here is a roundup of free and easy to use tools to supercharge your collection.

[Shelf Awareness Pro](#) is an email newsletter for booksellers, librarians, and others in the book trade. It features coverage of smaller awards like the Indie Next and RITAs, news on upcoming film adaptations, and a daily roundup of author guests on radio and TV shows - which is great when a patron says, "I was in the car just now and I heard something about a book...." Sign up at [shelf-awareness.com](http://shelf-awareness.com).

[io9](#), a Gawker Media blog, covers science fact and science-fiction. The "Bookshelf Injection" column offers monthly sci-fi/fantasy reviews curated by author Charlie Jane Anders. io9's lively community of literate and thoughtful readers make the comments section of the blog as good a source for recommendations as the articles themselves.

If you want reviews via video, check out Geek and Sundry: Your Daily Dose of Geekiness & etc. at their [website](#)

**“But just as there is an entire Internet that you can't get to with a web browser, there is a world of popular materials that are best found with unconventional collection development tools.”**

or their [YouTube channel](#).

They host a weekly show called The Pull about comic books and comic-related culture. You can go right to "[The Pull's Pull List](#)" to find recommended comics from large and small publishers each week.

No roundup of online collection development tools would be complete without [Smart Bitches](#), [Trashy Books](#), the thoroughly literate, librarian-

friendly community led by Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan. Focusing on romance, the website features reviews, monthly new release lists, sales figures, and a podcast. (The October 2 podcast is an interview with Caryn Radick, a digital archivist at Rutgers University.) The recurring feature "Help a Bitch Out" calls on community members to suggest titles for people who vaguely remember a particular book they want to find again or are searching for specific types of romances.

Finally, search for anime and manga at [Kotaku](#), a sibling blog to io9. Because the tags include news as well as reviews, you will have to skim posts on topics like costume design and collectibles too. But if you don't mind immersion in anime culture in order to eventually find articles like "The Best Anime and Manga for Beginners," your time will be well spent.



What are your favorite online collection development tools? Please let me know. I would love to hear from you! 📖

Kit Ward-Crixell is the Youth Services Librarian/Manager with the Port Townsend Public Library. She can be contacted at [kwardcrixell@cityoft.us](mailto:kwardcrixell@cityoft.us).

# Up, Up and Away! Remodel of Branch Revitalizes Small-Town Library

by Katy McLaughlin

Six months after the reopening of our library, patrons still come up to staff astonished. “It’s beautiful. It looks like a completely different library,” we hear time and again. “I have to show my family when they visit.” People take pictures and complement the staff on how bright and welcoming the space is now, an unexpected pleasure in a town of not quite 6,000 people.

After a seven-month stay at a smaller, temporary location, Mid-Columbia Libraries (MCL) held the grand reopening celebration for the remodeled Prosser branch on May 2, 2015. An aggressive marketing strategy promoted the live music, food, and speeches from local officials and library staff; the celebration drew over 1,200 people. The huge crowd was managed by staff from all over the system, the Prosser Friends of the Library, and local volunteers who answered questions, gave tours and, of course, checked out books. Anyone walking out with a book also left with a red “I ♥ Mid-Columbia Libraries” book bag and a refrigerator magnet with the library’s hours. The following week featured daily programs for each age group, and 16,800 people inundated the branch throughout May.

A remodel was sorely needed. Much of the furniture and shelves were the same that residents saw on opening day in 1973. Over the decades, space among the stacks was carved out for a children’s area, teen study tables, and computers. Every year students from the schools nearby came in greater numbers to find a safe place after school—to study, read and hang out—filling the lobby, spilling into aisles, and unintentionally competing with families and other readers for the limited space. Programs and meetings fit awkwardly in the oversized, 60-person meeting room, which went unused during much of our open hours. Requests for computer training were difficult to answer with only 10 computers available. We struggled with constant waiting lists and no place for laptops to charge. Eight-foot shelves made browsing uncomfortable and were too close together for more than a single person. No longer simply a warehouse of books, the library has been used as a community hub by our residents for years. And now, finally, it reflects that need.

“graphic novel circulation nearly tripled from the previous year after we reopened, and our picture book circulation increased by 67%”

It is important to our Board of Trustees that MCL provides a welcoming appearance in our branches, so funding for the remodel came primarily from library capital funds. It was supplemented by two grants from local agencies, funding from the City for foundation improvements, and the Prosser Friends of the Library, who paid for new exterior signage.

Prior to the remodel, MCL conducted a customer survey which called for additional seating, tables, and computers; from the beginning we knew we needed a larger children’s area and a distinct teen section. We decided early on to knock out the meeting room walls and incorporate the space into the main floor of the library, using a smaller, glass-walled room as an 8-person conference room instead. For larger programs

we rely on the flexibility of wheeled shelves and lightweight furniture to create room for a crowd. We doubled the amount of children’s chairs to eight and replaced the single couch with three couches and a comfortable chair. Next to the teen books, we added a 4-person laptop bar, and

changed three 4-person tables to six 2-person tables for greater flexibility. Six additional chairs and end tables make the magazine section a comfortable reading nook, and 16 computers and one additional spot for a laptop along the back wall have reduced our waiting lists dramatically.

The overall collection size is largely unchanged, though individual collections were adjusted based on usage metrics. Children’s books and graphic novels are the areas that saw the most increase in size because of sustained checkout numbers; we suspect this is because they are the least likely to be read in eBook format. This was borne out in our first month open; graphic novel circulation nearly tripled from the previous year after we reopened, and our picture book circulation increased by 67%.

Beyond meeting practical needs, the branch also has a strikingly different atmosphere. Prosser is known for its Balloon Rally, which brings hot air balloon enthusiasts from all over the state to color the skies with a rainbow of drifting balloons. The hot air balloon in the children’s area, with sturdy construction and a reading bench in the gondola, was designed to be a storytime focal point as well as a whimsical invitation to parents and

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Katy McLaughlin is manager of the Prosser Branch with Mid-Columbia Libraries

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kids to relax with a book. During the opening, we also offered a balloon craft for kids, a reminder of the library's new look. The drop ceiling was removed to expose the rafters, then painted white, giving the impression of a much larger space. Along the front wall, kites featuring famous author pictures, with author quotes as kite tails, reiterate the feeling of breezy openness. Friendly owls peer over the gondolas of two smaller balloons, which are suspended over the picture books and the help desk.

After customers have goggled at the children's area, they are drawn further into the branch by the fascinating local history photo mural dominating the back walls, created from photos from our Washington State University agricultural extension and the Prosser Rural Heritage Project. We also discovered one of the photo subjects was related to one of the current staff! This prominent display of our community roots has been a source of appreciation and delight for both long-time residents and newcomers. A bit of the library's own history, former librarian Erma Fullerton visited during the grand reopening to inspect the new space. She had ushered the collection and her staff from the original Carnegie Library to the current branch in 1972 and reminisced about the amount of people it took to move all the books into what was, at that time, a spacious modern library.

Checkouts have remained high over the summer and starting into fall, with 20-30% increases each month compared to 2014, and averaging more than 11,000 visitors per month. Almost 80 new cards were issued during the day of the reopening, with an additional 120 throughout the rest of May. Computer use has increased, including more than 1,000 wireless sessions every month, with eliminated or reduced wait times. We saw a 50% increase in program attendance for our Summer Reading Challenge, to more than 1,500.

The most startling change in collection use has been in children's picture books and non-fiction; both received a collection refresh as well as a fundamental shift in placement. About half of our picture books are being shelved face-out, a change that initially horrified our pages but has proved to be stellar marketing for the glossy, appealing covers. Children's non-fiction had been separated from the rest of the children's materials due to space restrictions; kids are now able to roam between fiction and non-fiction within the same area, boosting circulation by more than double the previous year.

We look forward to the field trips from local schools in the coming year, the look of astonishment that fills newcomers' faces as they enter the doors, and bragging about our branch to those we meet in the community who have yet to visit. The amount of buzz this project has generated in our community has been nothing short of amazing, and we at MCL are proud that our thirst for excellence is on vivid display. 📖



**Opening Day**



**Children's Area**

# Discovering the Holocaust Center's Library

by Julia Thompson

While the Holocaust Center has operated for decades in Seattle, reaching thousands of students and community members each year, the opening of our new space in October has brought new opportunities for the community to engage with our resources. Many *Alki* readers may not realize that the Holocaust Center is located smack-dab in the middle of downtown Seattle. Even if you are familiar with the Holocaust Center or its programs, you may not know that we have moved into an incredible new location – and that the Center is more accessible to the public than ever before.

In June, the Holocaust Center hosted an event in our new building, a “lunch-and-learn” presentation by the grandchild of four Holocaust survivors (the odds of being such a grandchild are as slim as 1 in 900 million, he explained). Although the talk took place in the classroom, I noticed several people who made a beeline for our library when they arrived at the Center. One was a young girl, perhaps 12, who plunked herself down on one of the chairs and just stayed there, reading, throughout the event!

Adults too came by and browsed the shelves, looking with interest at the titles stacked high up the wall, some even requiring a high ladder to reach. When we welcomed a class from Puyallup for a visit, several students exclaimed that they wanted to come back soon – specifically to look at books and check them out.

As readers may acutely know and understand, there is something magnetic about libraries. You are pulled in, wooed by rows upon rows of books that are free for the taking. Libraries are also places of comfort and quiet coziness, featuring plush chairs or secluded desks at which you can settle and peruse whatever you've selected off the shelf. There is no denying that the library in a physical sense is special – that the spaces and buildings we designate as libraries also contribute to the magic of books and reading.

Just as surely as the library is this haven of coziness and welcome, it is also an institution of learning and literacy. What is a library if not a place to promote artistic and intellectual pursuits

of all varieties? Along this line of thinking, it is undoubtedly a drawback when an institution devoted to learning does not have a library. Thus, the fact that the organization that I work for, the Holocaust Center for Humanity – an organization devoted almost solely to education – has a very real library in its new building is something to be excited about.

Given our mission to inspire teaching and learning for humanity through the study of the Holocaust, books are an essential part of its fulfillment. One of the major ways that we promote knowledge of the Holocaust, other genocides, and human rights are through books and other media. Our teaching trunks, filled with books and accompanying curricula and activities travel among schools all over the Northwest, are a resource that thousands of teachers and students use each year.

Moreover, books frequently offer the first inroad to young people who become interested in the Holocaust. I recently attended a conference for teachers in order to share information and materials about the Holocaust Center. At least three people came to my table and mentioned themselves or relatives reading one book about the Holocaust (for many children, this starting place is Anne Frank's *The Diary of a Young Girl*) and quickly becoming fascinated, leading them to get their hands on whatever books they could find on the subject. Books are often the “hook” that get people interested in history in general. I know it worked for me. Besides the central role that books play in our organization and their importance in getting students excited to learn, the wealth of academia and literature on the Holocaust makes it especially valuable for us to have a functioning library.

And of course, we always want what we don't have: one of the elements of the Holocaust Center's previous office that left something to be desired was the library. Not long ago, the “library”

**“Just as surely as the library is this haven of coziness and welcome, it is also an institution of learning and literacy. What is a library if not a place to promote artistic and intellectual pursuits of all varieties?”**

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*Julia Thompson is the Education Outreach Associate for the Holocaust Center for Humanity.*



**The Henry and Sandra Friedman Holocaust Center for Humanity Library.**

featured prominently in a photo folder called “Why we need a new space.” In our previous office the “library” was not a library in the physical sense of the word. The concept of a library was merely hinted at with several floor-to-ceiling bookcases covering some of the office’s wall space. Shelves were squeezed behind desks and the only meeting table in the office. A few brave souls would make appointments to browse the full-to-bursting shelves, and sometimes we mailed library books as requested. But many of the familiar feelings and experiences people associate with libraries were absent.

During two summers off from college I worked as an intern at the

Holocaust Center. Intern stations were set up in between bookshelves, so I spent quite a bit of time “in the library.” At one point, we decided to formally digitize our library catalog. Amongst the books, I taught myself about rudimentary MARC and pulled hundreds of items off the shelves, since we had to enter them manually into the system. This long process is still not quite finished, reflecting the transitions that the Holocaust Center continues to go through. Working on this task made me feel some ownership and responsibility for the books, and I wanted them to have a better life, in a better home. I felt as though each book was special, and I wanted people to be able to look at them, read them!

Now, it is possible. The library features four comfy chairs, one small table, and two tall walls of shelves. The rows of books are visible through the windows to passersby on Second Avenue. Our collection includes not only mainstays of Holocaust literature, but new scholarship, books for young readers, and an entire wall of memoirs of Holocaust survivors. This is a testament to the broad impact we can have on future borrowers.

So, without further ado, I’d like to invite everyone to visit the new Holocaust Center. My ramblings here cannot do the Center justice, so just come see for yourself. Peruse our library’s collection, settle

down in an easy chair, check out books and DVDs, take a tour of the exhibit, or all of the above. If you are a teacher or school librarian, consider scheduling a field trip. We would be so thrilled to see you! 📖

*The Henry and Sandra Friedman Holocaust Center for Humanity is located at 2045 Second Ave in downtown Seattle. Open 10-4 every Wednesday, and first and third Sundays of each month. Field trips scheduled any day of the week. Visit our website at [www.HolocaustCenterSeattle.org](http://www.HolocaustCenterSeattle.org) to learn more and search our online library catalog, or call 206.582.3000.*

# Rethinking the Library: Do We Treasure Information Over Experience?

by Tony Wilson

## The Love of Books

We have a lot of warm sentiment about books, yet we know something has radically changed. We can chat with each other about how we choose what to read on our devices rather than in hard copy. We can write articles about format neutrality for our patrons. We can do all that without really experiencing the massive cultural shift involved. A few recent incidents gave me that gentle cultural jolt.

First, a friend, knowing my library background asked me to determine if any local libraries held what we both assumed to be a relatively obscure scientific cosmology book published in 1908<sup>1</sup>. Neither King County Library System nor The Seattle Public Library holds the title but WorldCat shows several nearby academic libraries that do, and I could email the answer to my friend from within WorldCat. I forwarded the email but went on to search Amazon. Some rare copies are available as are some newer printings, a reprint by Amazon itself, and a 99-cent version available in less than a minute in a Kindle version. The Kindle version won. Thus we lost the version of the story where the book rested in some academic library desideratum list, was finally located, brought across the mountain by mule, and carefully placed in a library tower to which my friend could trudge with his pencil and note cards.

A second friend recently returned from hiking in Arizona. I loaned him my copy of a book<sup>2</sup> detailing a hike through the length of the Grand Canyon, firmly assuring him that I wanted it back. To me, I guess, that book is still sort of a treasure. On the other hand, noting his interest in extreme outdoor activity, I gave him (to keep) my copy of a well illustrated book<sup>3</sup> about Mallory and others on Everest that included photos of Mallory's frozen remains discovered years later, etc. For my friend, I think that at least for a while, the book will be a treasure in the old fashioned sense, although a Kindle edition would likely be of only passing interest. This friend is still living in a world where a book on one's own shelf at home comes with full sentimental value.

A third example is what really jelled my sense of a cultural shift. I share many literary interests with my son. I've recently finished a new novel, a medium-small paperback that I'm sure he would enjoy. It was a library copy with almost a month left until its due date, and I urged him to take it on a short trip to the East Coast. His response was that he could hardly imagine taking hardcopy reading on a plane.

A *New Yorker* cartoon a while back showed an ancient scribe be-

ing shown an early codex. The scribe responds that it is nice but that "as long as there are readers, there will be scrolls." Yes, we still have warm fuzzies about our treasured books, but both our values and our behaviors have shifted significantly.

## The Information Professional

In my library school days there was talk of maintaining (or achieving) "bibliographic control" as part of our professional commitment. Well, ha ha!, it is both out of control and more accessible than ever before. We see phrases such as "seamless searching" and "ambient findability" in our recent literature. Teaching people to use the card catalog, which should be fairly simple but seldom worked, used to come with a sense of urgency. Now, when the catalog fails, as in single word titles, librarians search Amazon to collect enough keys to return to their catalogs effectively (in fact, for Chrome users at least, a library extension automatically checks your Amazon book searches against your list of favorite libraries and lets you get to them with a click). We may all have things to learn about Amazon searching or Wikipedia searching, but teaching people how to do these things is totally lacking in urgency. People do well enough on their own, a state of competence we used to think we had to teach.

## The Information Itself

We sometimes call ourselves "information professionals." We are very good at retrieving information. What a joy it used to be to teach Dialog searching. Comprehensively rational, technical, learnable. Library schools gave examples of thousands of dollars being spent on research because of inadequate information retrieval. For today's user, information retrieval is often no longer a problem.

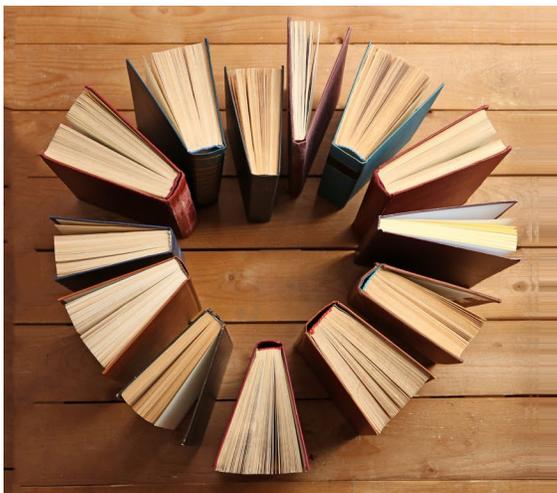
In my high school math class we had to buy a volume of mathematic tables<sup>4</sup>. Mine was 480 pages of formulas and mostly tables. Remember trying to calculate square roots with pencil and paper? Of the math topics I still understand, I still have a visceral sense of relief from the ten or so pages of "Squares, Cubes, and Roots." That whole book was replaced by the pocket calculator, which in turn has migrated to the iPhone in my pocket.

For many users and libraries as well, Wikipedia has eliminated the need for the reference librarian. A smartphone or an iPad has done for information what the pocket calculator did for the math table compilations. To be sure, the information I get from Wikipedia and other online sources has not been vetted by the lady with the bun or by the National Association of Whatever,

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*Tony Wilson is retired from Highline College where he trained prospective library employees for forty years. He was WLA president 1981–1983. Currently he is president of the Des Moines/Woodmont Library Advisory Board (KCLS) and an emeritus member of WLA. He is currently spending his declining years doing amateur archaeology on the feral librarian movement.*

*Continued on next page*



“A *New Yorker* cartoon a while back showed an ancient scribe being shown an early codex. The scribe responds that it is nice but that ‘as long as there are readers, there will be scrolls.’ Yes, we still have warm fuzzies about our treasured books, but both our values and our behaviors have shifted significantly.”

but it may meet my needs. It may do better yet. I can get multiple answers. In Wikipedia I can view the arguments leading up to the latest revision (Britannica gives or gave only the dated, stuffy, and frozen fully vetted version).

A poet, Jane Shore, writing in a recent issue of *New Yorker* states:

Before we had our Encyclopaedia Britannica,  
everyone had opinions instead of facts,  
which they stuck to, uncorrected, unto death<sup>5</sup>.

Ms. Shore’s hardbound volumes are on the same trajectory as mine: to boxes, to the storage unit, to the library book sale, or to the green receptacle near the used-shoes receptacle in the WalMart parking lot.

What were we up to with our single vetted answer? Were we into providing certainty where none should exist? Were we becoming fundamentalists with a single correct answer? I hope not, but our defensive rhetoric on quality information sometimes overrides our responsibility to provide multiple viewpoints.

There are times when I neither want nor need the best answer. Maybe I want the worst answer. In keeping with the notion that we need to provide multiple viewpoints, I was having fun with some discussions of postmodernism. I thought I’d better get a definition. The dictionary tells me it is a school of architecture. I could find many more adequate sources online, but the one that best fit my needs was on a Christian website, written by someone who was quite upset with what he saw as postmodernism in society:

What is the lie? [postmodernism] It is the wholesale rejection of universal reason and absolute truth. It is the delusional mindset that there is no objective goodness and rightness. These prevailing opinions have led to the dismissal of an absolute deity<sup>6</sup>.

Steven W. Cornell

So, it turns out that providing multiple viewpoints can tweak someone’s belief. Oh, dear! Didn’t we post on the door a sign reading “Libraries Change Lives”? I approached the librarian and explained, “I believe for every drop of rain that falls, a flower grows.” She smiled, accommodatingly. Not so much so when I asked her what she did with all those flowers.

#### What Next, Then?

While it may be hard to imagine a human activity where the assistance of a librarian could not be relevant or even helpful, what do we do if there is reduced love for the books on our shelves, less need for our storehouse of information, and less need for our help in finding needed and relevant material?

I suggest that our highest purposes include providing experience and sanctuary. The human record as preserved in our libraries serves to expand our experience—beyond what we could personally and literally put into our own lives. It bothers me that we so often describe ourselves as information workers. Even though Melville, Hardy, Dickinson et al., may use the same symbol set that we use for information, I don’t think information is what is transmitted. They transmit experience. Experience gives us the tacit knowledge to deal meaningfully with what happens in our world. I suggest that readers of *Crime and Punishment* have a lessened need to experiment with violent robbery.

In undergraduate courses, I loved those plastic sheets that summarized a whole course in two pages. Trying to do philosophy or even a short paper on the basis of those sheets was a disaster (unlike using similar sheets for tips on how to format your spreadsheet). Similarly, maxims from your mother or from Ben Franklin are more effective as after-the-fact rationalization than as guides to satisfying life experience.

If libraries are to change lives, they need to serve people at their

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most interiorly vulnerable. (Should I tell Mom I'm gay? What if I don't know elementary math? Is what I did illegal or immoral?) To allow libraries to change lives, our confidentiality policies are a help. So should be our seating provisions—where have all the carrels gone? Where can I sit with my back to a wall? It is inspiring to be in a quiet room where everyone is reading or writing. It is disheartening to be vulnerable in a room designed to put one on display.

We need to set up environments that help people focus. Do you remember when we whimpered about the loss of serendipity when we got electronic catalogs? Whatever loss we were talking about then can't hold a candle to the serendipity provided by almost any interaction with our devices. Now, what people need most from us are the materials and environment that enhance focus.

To do this level of helping (focus enhancing) requires that we know our patrons. The patron needs to be able to distinguish between librarians, technicians, and pages and should know the name and status of who is providing service at the required level of intimacy. Anonymous McService is not what we keep the doors open for.

If libraries change lives, our users need at some point to get out of the book (or other media) and back to their lives—tell Mom, get rich, escape to Canada, or share a poem. If the librarians have shared themselves sufficiently, everyone comes out better. It seems consistent with the values and practices I discuss above to provide some self-exposure of how libraries or their content have made a difference in my life. The first example, whether I got it from the library or the theater, is a movie. It was a decade when experimenting with communes was appropriate, and we had been feebly dabbling in various arrangements when I saw the movie *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*<sup>7</sup>. It started with an idyllic—to my mind, then—communal society. Yet the seeming inevitability of the disastrous end gave me knowledge that ended my striving toward a commune.

A second example is Philip Pullman's trilogy, *His Dark Materials*<sup>8</sup>. I was so impressed with the articulation of personality formation and its relation to authority that I am happy to buy a set for every young girl in my circle of friends.

More recently, I've come to Mathew Crawford's *Shop Class as Soulcraft*<sup>9</sup>. Pullman puts the development of our ethical sense in the experience we get from literature (not scripture). Crawford finds ethics in the relationship we develop in touching the physical world, as in motorcycle repair. We need:

...a certain disposition toward the thing we are trying to fix. This disposition is at once both cognitive and moral. Getting it right demands that you be attentive in the way of a conversation rather than assertive in the way of a demonstration.

Maybe like we should treat our patrons. Anyhow, I'm thinking that in a profession that has lost many of its clerical and nearly mechanical duties (as in a Dialog search), we have some greater things to do, things that involve the ethical, the literary, and the poetic as well as our personal selves. 

**“What were we up to with our single vetted answer? Were we into providing certainty where none should exist? Were we becoming fundamentalists with a single correct answer? I hope not, but our defensive rhetoric on quality information sometimes overrides our responsibility to provide multiple viewpoints”**

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# Reimagining My Role as a Librarian

by *Shardé Mills*

For decades, libraries have been dealing with the perceived threats of technological innovation and social expectations. I can no longer count how many times I've told a person I'm a librarian and they say, "But isn't everything online?" or "Can't you just download a book on Amazon?" In response, I have developed a well-rehearsed speech, "Yes, but people take for granted their access to technology, education, and other resources. Many people can't use a computer and don't have access to much needed resources. Libraries are the great equalizer!"

This is a sentiment I still firmly believe and is very relevant to my position today. On a daily basis, I interact with customers who can't turn on a computer, can't open a browser, or don't know where to turn for assistance and essential resources. However, I work in Liberty Lake, a community where the large majority of the population are middle class millennials. My community embodies an increasingly common shift in library users: well-educated adults, who can afford to buy their own entertainment, recreation, and technology and have been raised to adapt and use that technology. Additionally, I am the Adult Services Librarian. Plenty of parents want to bring their kids for early literacy story times and after school programs. But what adult with a busy family and life has the time to come into the library, especially when they think they have access to everything they need at home?

**“My community embodies an increasingly common shift in library users: well-educated adults, who can afford to buy their own entertainment, recreation, and technology and have been raised to adapt and use that technology.... For this reason, I have had to ask myself some very difficult questions. How is the library still relevant to the population I'm trying to target? I became a librarian to provide much needed help and services to people. What is my purpose now?”**

For this reason, I have had to ask myself some very difficult questions. How is the library still relevant to the population I'm trying to target? I became a librarian to provide much needed help and services to people. What is my purpose now? Am I still fulfilling that role? Ultimately, my answer is yes, just not in the way I expected. I have realized a very tangible and real want for personal education and sense of community. This is a role the library can and does fulfill, as a hub of the community and place of personal growth, exploration, and education.

Right after I started my position, my library administered a survey asking customers what they wanted from the library. To our great surprise it wasn't more children activities or reading materials, but educational resources. They wanted access to knowledgeable experts, presenters, and opportunities to enrich their personal and educational lives, aside from formal educational opportunities. This is nothing new to libraries; we are pillars of education and library programming has always emphasized knowledge and personal growth. This is a service we provide in abundance! It is the classic library conundrum. How do I communicate our work and our



**Shardé Mills**

*Shardé Mills is an adult services and research librarian with the Liberty Lake Municipal Library.*

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# Reimagining Libraries Large and Small: The University of Washington Libraries and Yacolt Library Express

by Tigh Bradley

One thing worth reimagining is what kind of library will best serve a community. Reimagination of libraries is taking place all over Washington, but it can be exemplified in the very different yet equally inventive libraries at the University of Washington in Seattle and in the small rural community of Yacolt. Other than one being an academic and one being a public institution, the most obvious difference between these libraries is the size of the population they serve. At the University of Washington (UW) where there are 44,786 students enrolled, the massive Suzzallo-Allen Library building has five floors housing book collections, reference services, and subject specialists on a variety of academic topics. This building houses the general collection, administration, and technical services for the UW Libraries. Other branches hold special collections covering art, engineering, and health sciences, among other topics. I find it impossible to think of the Suzzallo-Allen as a branch of its library system; it is, if anything, the trunk instead.

This massive building, constructed by University president Henry Suzzallo as a ‘Cathedral of Learning’, with its generous coffee bar, vaulted ceilings, and opulent ‘Harry Potter Reading Room’ has all the facilities you would expect of a central university library, but it also has one new feature which will be discussed shortly.

Could you serve a population of 1,500 in rural Yacolt, Washington with such a facility like the Suzzallo-Allen Library? ‘Overkill’ is one word that comes to mind. The UW Library’s 350 student employees would account for about 23% of the inhabitants of the town.

Instead, the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District (FVRL) has reimagined an altogether ingenious solution for placing a library in such a community. The town of Yacolt boasts Fort Vancouver Regional Library’s first self-service library building.

Like a number of small town libraries, the Yacolt Library Express occupies the historic Town Hall. More unusually, the library is built into the space that used to be occupied by the local jail. The adjoining office has been retrofitted with plugin ports to support ‘Laptop Tuesdays’ run by the library’s single employee, who maintains office hours twice per week, processes holds, and

shelves the floating collection. The book collection itself is housed in the former police office. The walls are lined with well-stocked stacks packed with popular titles, a holds shelf, and featured item displays. ‘Lucky Day’ books—new popular titles which are not available to place on hold—encourage browsers to come in and see what’s new.

I am happy to report that the library was active at the time of my visit on an early Thursday evening in July, with three local kids browsing on the computer and checking out generous heaps of books. Overall, it appears that FVRL has been successful in transforming the old Town Hall into a place of learning and discovery for the community at a price it can afford. I would have liked to see one of the old jail cells converted into a mystery/crime fiction section, but one can’t have everything.

As mentioned earlier, reimagining has been done in the Suzzallo-Allen Library as well. In one of the first floor spaces which might once have held stacks and stacks (and some more stacks) of books there is now a thriving ‘Research Commons’, the library’s community workspace. Decorated in bold, primary colors and featuring an open floor plan, the Allen Research Commons is a place to come and work on group projects, watch presentations, or go over math problems together on the white boards. Students can be secure in working there at even the busiest times of the school year by reserving an alcove in advance at the front desk, which doubles as a circulation desk for the library books



**Suzzallo-Allen Research Commons**

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*Tigh Bradley is an MLIS Candidate at the University of Washington, and is serving as the Library Intern for the Templeton Radiology Library at the University of Washington Medical Center.*

*Continued on next page*

housed elsewhere in facility. The Research Commons model, with movable desks, tables, whiteboards, and audio-visual media centers, provides a model for work/maker spaces in libraries anywhere.

While the Yacolt Library Express and the Allen Research Commons are very different facilities, they embody the same principles of successful reimagining. They are the products of sensitivity to community service demands, prudent management of budgets, and above all willingness to step out of the comfort zone and create new library experiences for their patrons. Even though the Yacolt Library Express could fit under the walkway connecting the two halves of the Suzzallo-Allen Library, it is equally powerful as a representative of what a library can be.

I will even go so far as to say that each library, for all of their many differences, has something to teach the other. The Yacolt Library could make use of the Research Common's example of the use of bold color and movable furniture to create a dynamic and stimulating environment. Likewise, the UW Library could incorporate smaller self-service libraries for those departments which are not currently served by a fully staffed branch. Incorporating features from libraries in different settings will no doubt be vital in successfully reimagining all of our future libraries. 📖



**Fort Vancouver Regional Library's Yacolt Library Express branch, formerly the Town Hall**

relevancy in a way that resonates with my community? How do I tailor services to more efficiently meet their interests and make them recognize the role we can and do play in their lives?

I am at the beginning stages of addressing this very large and complex concept. I am certainly not the first and will not be the last! For now, the tools I use and the services I provide are not revolutionary but I am trying to rebrand and repurpose them to fit the wants of my community. In doing so, I've had to reimagine my role and, in a way, my purpose in being a librarian. I may not be serving underrepresented or disenfranchised populations, but I am still serving an essential role in building community by providing education and improving people's overall quality of life.

Working toward this vision of the library, I have slowly been revitalizing our adult services to include more speakers, workshops, and educational resources. I don't present our programs or activities as "library programs," which we all know means very little to people, but as "community events." These events offer a chance to connect with people in your local area, which can be a challenge. My community is small but rapidly growing. In fact, according to the 2014 Washington Public Library Statistical Report we have one of the fastest growing library population in Washington State.<sup>1</sup> As a result, I've tried to connect with new residents through resources they are most likely to use. This has taken many forms, particularly with the use of social media, which of course incorporates Facebook and Twitter. I also utilize groups such as Meetup.com and Eventbrite to connect with locals. While this is not revolutionary, it is very relevant to a generation of library users who are looking to make connections and are willing to actively participate in their new community. So far, the results are positive, if not a little slow. I never thought changing the perception of the library or finding and targeting the interests of my community would be a fast process!

This same idea is true of my role as a librarian. I will continue to provide the best service I know how. I will assist with research, technology, and outreach to local organizations and plan relevant events for my community. However, as these services evolve, change with time, as will the population I am serving, I know my purpose and vision in being a librarian will slowly evolve as well. 📖

1. "2014 Washington Public Library Statistical Report," Washington State Library, <https://www.sos.wa.gov/assets/library/libraries/libDev/2014stats.pdf>

# A Novel Performance at The Seattle Public Library

by Linda Johns

When Gabriela Frank contacted The Seattle Public Library about possibly writing her novel on site it took only seconds to see the opportunity this offered to connect with a larger community of writers. Sure, every day there are people quietly and inconspicuously writing at libraries across Washington state. But what Frank was proposing at Seattle Public Library's downtown Central Library was downright conspicuous: she planned to write her novel in full public view. Word by word, her work would face passersby, putting her creative process on full-frontal display.

Seattle Public Library (SPL) was in its second year of "Seattle Writes" in the fall of 2014. We'd offered creative writing classes around town and write-ins during National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) in November, and we continued to look for ways to support writers. Bringing attention to the progression of a novel and giving library patrons a chance to interact with a writer during that process was an exciting prospect. Now we just had to convince Frank that a high-traffic area in a public library was the place for her to bare her writing soul. You see, it turns out that she was initially just scoping out our space and inquiring about the possibility of working together on this literary and performance art installation.

Fast forward about two days, because that's all it took for this grant-funded fiction writer and our eager fiction-loving librarians to come up with a plan for "A Novel Performance." Frank would re-create her own living room (where she does most of her writing) in the middle of what's officially called the "Living Room" on the third floor of the Central Library. She planned to write at least 50,000 words during National Novel Writing Month, coming to work in the library every day in November. She'd invite the public into her work by having a large monitor facing out (gutsy!) and also documenting her word count in a graphic display on a streetside window.

## Camaraderie and support for writers

How to measure the success of a project like this? We have pages

and pages of comments and quotes from library patrons; we have photographs of "coffee shop chats" with the author where people informally talked about issues in their own work; and Frank has the 70,000-word draft she wrote in 30 days in a busy public library. Arts reporter Paul Constant wrote this in the weekly newspaper *The Stranger*:

"She had the idea to perform the writing of a novel during National Novel Writing Month, to bring the lonely act of writing out in the community, and she submitted a proposal to 4Culture. First she thought maybe she could write in a window at Nordstrom, but once she got in contact with the library, the plan immediately clicked. It gave Frank a steady audience, and it helped the library highlight the workshops and write-ins they host for Seattle-area NaNoWriMo participants ...

In general, when it comes to the lonely pursuit of writing, Frank says, "camaraderie and support are your best chance for success."

## Come write in

Gabriela Frank's "A Novel Performance" tied in with other programming already underway at The Seattle Public Library. Our "Seattle Writes" series supports local writers through programs, workshops, write-ins and by providing spaces to work throughout the city. Classes require a budget to pay the writing instructors, but write-ins can be done with zero budget and low-pressure planning.

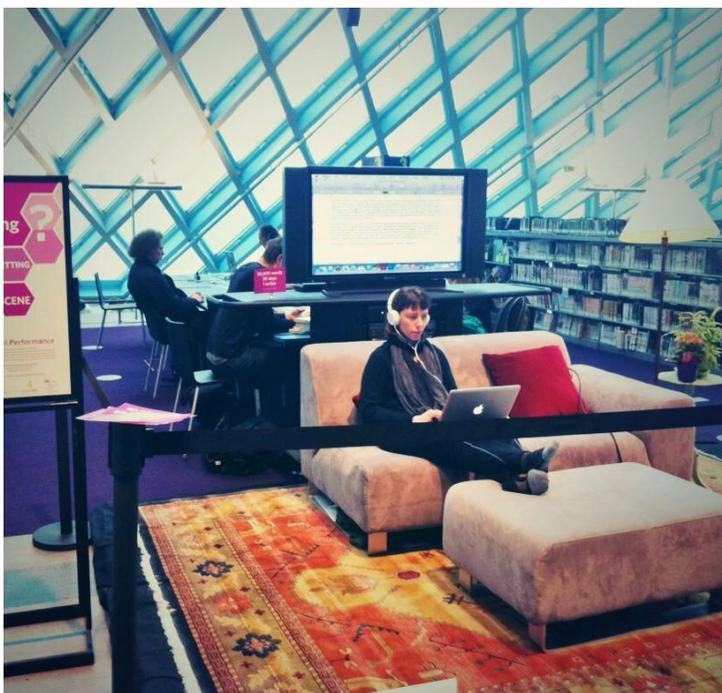
Many libraries have been hosting National Novel Writing Month write-ins during November for years. We were a little late on this and didn't start offering NaNoWriMo events until 2013. Hosting a write-in can be as simple as putting a sign that says "Reserved for Writers" on a table, or it might

mean opening up your conference room for an evening and making sure there are extra power cords for those hard-working laptops. Certainly you can do a write-in any time of the year, but

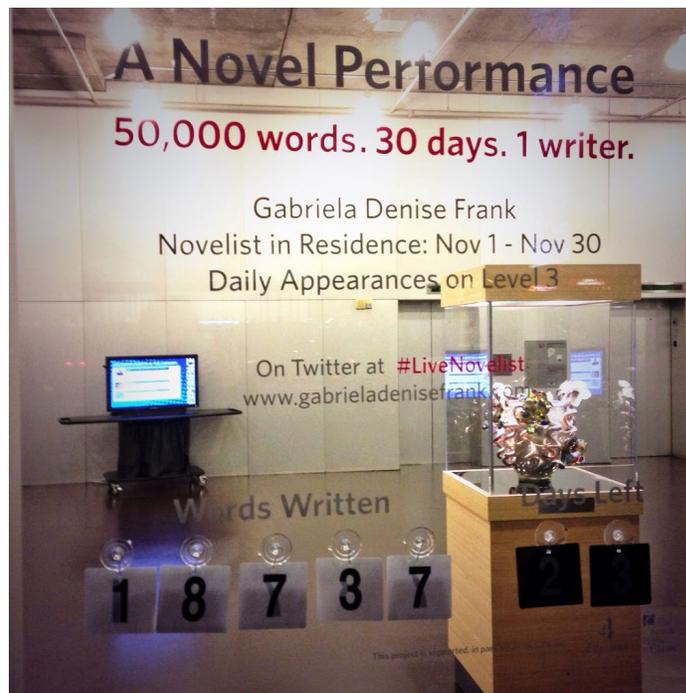
“Now we just had to convince Frank that a high-traffic area in a public library was the place for her to bare her writing soul.”

Linda Johns is a librarian in Reader Services at The Seattle Public Library. The Seattle Writes series is funded by The Seattle Public Library Foundation.

Continued on next page



**Gabriela Frank set up her living room inside SPL's Central Library during National Novel Writing Month to draft a novel in public.**



**A front window display showed the novelist-in-residence's daily word count.**

tying it to NaNoWriMo makes it easy to promote ([nanowrimo.org](http://nanowrimo.org) offers resources and tips for libraries in their "Come Write In" program) and there are writers who are actively looking for meet-up style writing events.

We held weekly "Writing after Dark" write-ins at our downtown location that first year, and it's now grown to 20 write-ins at nine locations in November 2015. Most people have come alone to our write-ins, confirming thoughts that although writing is an extremely solitary activity, writers crave a community and social outlet. In 2013 we turned the Central Library's Reading Room into a "Writing Room" and kept it open until midnight on November 30, the final countdown to writers trying to reach the 50,000-word goal. The importance of writing as a social act – writing alone, together – was especially true on the final night, where about every 15 minutes someone would "finish" and there would be applause and cheering. Writers were surrounded by people who knew what it meant to reach that impressive goal in 30 days. The sense of fellowship amongst a diverse group of writers was palpable.

In addition to appreciating community, writers can crave a bit of

structure. Many people told us they valued having a safe and absolutely free space with few distractions. "My main reason for going is because I can't write at home," one young man told us. "Being with other people keeps me motivated."

You don't have to wait until next November to host a write-in; you could start now and use word-of-mouth marketing through the online writing community; you could host one a month or one a quarter. And you certainly don't have to invite a novelist to put her living room inside your library for a month; you could invite a writer to facilitate a weekend afternoon chat with other writers who are just starting out. Writers are already in our spaces every week; perhaps their work will be in our spaces soon. Let's connect with them now and support them on their journey.

If you'd like any information on what we've learned hosting writing programs or if you'd like help setting up a write-in, please feel free to email [linda.johns@spl.org](mailto:linda.johns@spl.org). My colleagues Paige Chernow, Andrea Gough and I lead the Seattle Writes team at SPL; we're true advocates for the writer/library connection and we'd love to help in any way we can. 📖

# Teacher-Librarians and Next Generation Science Standards: A Natural Phenomenon

by Morgen Larsen and Sharyn Merrigan

At the beginning of last school year, a teacher excitedly approached one of us. She had changed her teaching assignment after years of teaching math and was looking forward to returning to 7th grade science. “Now that I am not teaching math,” she said, “does that mean I get to bring my students to the library to do some of that cool stuff I see going on in here?” She already knew that a partnership between the science classroom and the Library Information Technology program would benefit her students’ learning by integrating research and relevant texts. But such a connection can be difficult to develop and maintain, especially as science teachers in both elementary and secondary classrooms grapple with aligning their curriculum to new standards. These standards are known as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and they connect disciplinary core ideas, science and engineering practices and concepts that cut across all domains of science. It is a new way to look at the teaching and learning of science, one that encourages students to “do science” in a way that many never have. And teacher-librarians can and should be instructional supporters and collaborative partners as our science teachers make this shift.

In the summer of 2011 the National Science Council (NSC) began to develop a set of science standards for K-12 students in the United States. Science standards had not been revised in 15 years, during which time many advances had been made in science and science education and the global economy had experienced massive change. Scientists, engineers and educators from 26 states worked together to design this set of coherent K-12 standards that help teachers, students and parents understand not only what students should be learning in science, but also how that learning applies to other subject standards and future learning.

NGSS differs from previous standards in that standards are designed so that students take the central role in their own learning of science. No longer is science learned in the classical sense, with the teacher as the expert and strict boundaries among different fields of scientific inquiry. Through the application of core ideas, major practices, and cross-cutting concepts, the NGSS puts forth a view of science as both “a body of knowledge and an evidence-based, model and theory building enterprise that continually extends, refines, and revises knowledge.”<sup>1</sup>

Currently 17 states throughout the nation have adopted NGSS. In 2013, Washington state adopted and began building awareness of the standards. The Next Generation Science Standards are the Washington State Science Learning Standards (WSSLS). As the state continues the transition to



**TLC3 NGSS Advisory Group (Back row from left: Ron Wagner, Morgen Larsen, Mary Bannister; Front row from left: Sharyn Merrigan, Ann Warner)**

these standards, the current school year is one building statewide capacity and classroom transitions. In an effort to provide teacher-librarians with the tools to help implement and integrate these standards in their schools, Carolyn Petersen of the Washington State Library brought together an advisory group of WLMA member teacher-librarians. Through a partnership of the Washington State Library (WSL), the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and the Washington Library Media

Association (WLMA), an NGSS training has been developed and will be delivered in select locations around the state beginning this fall and winter. The Teacher Librarian Common Core Cadre for Next Generation Science Standards (TLC3 NGSS) is funded through Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant dollars administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). LSTA provides the only library specific funding in the federal budget.

The TLC3 NGSS trainings are designed for K-12 teacher-librarians and those in the public library sector who work with youth and educational outreach. These six-hour regional “day camps” will begin with a general overview of NGSS and how these standards directly affect student learning in Washington State. Next, attendees will dive in and unpack the standards while learning how and where NGSS connects with existing Common Core State Standards. Finally, participants will learn how to apply these standards in their libraries by participating in makerspace-inspired hands on-activities, while reviewing resources to refine collections and meet student learning needs.

TLC3 NGSS day camps are provided free to participants, along with free clock hours from OSPI. The trainings are currently being scheduled in locations around the state. Individuals may register for upcoming trainings at <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/trainingCalendar.aspx> Additional training locations and dates can be set up by contacting Carolyn Petersen at [carolyn.petersen@sos.wa.gov](mailto:carolyn.petersen@sos.wa.gov). 

1. NGSS Lead States, “Next Generation Science Standards: For States, By States: Three Dimensions,” Next Generation Science Standards, last modified 2013, accessed September 14, 2015, <http://www.nextgenscience.org/three-dimensions>.
2. OSPI, Transitioning to NGSS in WA, (Wash. 2015).

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*Sharyn Merrigan is the President of the Washington Library Media Association interest group and an instructional technology coach in the Olympia School District. Morgen Larsen is the WLA Continuing Education Committee Co-Chair, an NCEE board member, and a teacher-librarian in the Central Valley School District in Spokane Valley. Both are members of the WSL TLC3 NGSS Advisory Group.*

# Becoming Your Own Best Advocate: Strength in Numbers

by Corie Jones

Everyone knows your library is the hub and heart of your school, right? You are always busy helping students and teachers find the materials and services they need. Have you ever wondered how you could increase the support you get from teachers, administrators and parents? How you could help protect (or possibly even increase) your yearly budget because your principal is very aware of all you do and how it supports the learning goals of your school? How you can communicate with state lawmakers on the importance of our library programs?

Advocacy starts with YOU and your own school library. The strategies you put in place to educate your library community on the value of your program have far-reaching effects on the things that affect you directly: budget; scheduling; and in some cases, job security.

Can you do this all by yourself? Possibly. A better way is to work with your fellow teacher librarians in forming a plan that can help each of you.

## 1. Use Advocacy Toolkits

In most cases, the hard work has been done for you. There are a variety of toolkits from around the world posted online. Closest to home is the Advocacy Toolkit available on the WLMA website <http://www.wlma.org/wlma-advocacy>. There is a drop-down menu featuring links to many ideas for promoting yourself and your Library program. These are just a few ideas to get you started, and there are many more around the Internet.

## 2. Meet regularly with your Administrator

Many principals have limited knowledge about what we do...check out books? Read a story? Shelve those books? If at all possible, schedule a monthly meeting with your Administrator, and hold them to it. Be ready to share some of the wonderful things that are happening with your students. Invite them to be a part of one of your lessons, or arrange for a student demonstration at a staff meeting. Share the



**“It's not enough anymore just to be awesome at your job. You have to shine a light on what you do and how important it is to the success of all students. Be visible.”**

research that shows students in schools with a full-time certificated Teacher-Librarian score higher on standardized tests! Don't forget to emphasize the importance of purchasing BOOKS for the library. Many younger principals are excited to involve students in technology, which is wonderful. Just be careful that your book budget does not suffer in order to feed the technology pot. Bottom line—the more involved and informed your Administrator is, the more they will support what you do.

## 3. Know who your legislators are for both your school and home

A very important advocate for your program is often overlooked. The following suggestions are from Carolyn Logue, who lobbies and works closely with state legislators on WLMA's behalf:

- Be willing to call or email your legislators about WLMA's legislation.
- Call and invite your legislators to coffee. Get to know them in your district.
- Host a “Legislator in the Library Day” at your school.
- Invite your legislators to attend classes in your library (be sure to work with WLMA and your school administration when doing this). Show them what you do. Show them how you help students.
- Encourage your school's PTA and parents to help advance the needs of school libraries by getting them the information from WLMA and encouraging them to call legislators as well.

It's not enough anymore just to be awesome at your job. You have to shine a light on what you do and how important it is to the success of all students. Be visible. Offer to write a short paragraph or two in the school newsletter, invite parents for special reading celebrations—reading to pets, to stuffed animals, to Grandma—anything to make them aware of how important YOU and your program are to the intellectual growth of their children. 📖

*Corie Jones is the Chair of the WLMA Advocacy Committee. She recently retired from being the Teacher-Librarian at Elk Plain School of Choice in the Bethel School District in Spanaway. Before that she was a Curriculum Specialist at ESD 113 and a Teacher Librarian in the Everett School District. She can be reached at [cjmath@gmail.com](mailto:cjmath@gmail.com).*

# HASTAC 2015: What I Learned about Librarians from a Non-Library Conference

by *Becky Ramsey Leporati*

On a warm May evening this past spring, I arrived in East Lansing, Michigan, to attend the Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC) 2015 Annual Conference at Michigan State. My research partner, Susie Cummings, and I were there to discuss the Burt Porter Jazz Collection, a project we had been working on through the University of Washington Libraries. It was my first academic conference and I was excited to attend all the sessions, but nervous about presenting at the poster session. Over the course of the next two days, though, I found a welcoming and curious community that will forever color how I imagine what is possible in an academic library.

HASTAC, as I learned at the opening session, is the world's oldest online network of academics. Established in 2002, the organization seeks to promote and showcase innovative scholarship that utilizes technology. Interdisciplinary at its core, HASTAC actively encourages dialogue between academics in different fields. What can an English scholar learn from a computer scientist? How can a historical research benefit from global positioning software? On the HASTAC website and at conferences like the one I was attending, these different groups are encouraged to share with each other and even create partnerships.

Chatting with fellow attendees that first morning, I was struck by what an ambitious group I had found, but it also seemed like everyone was either a PhD student or a professor. Did we belong here, I wondered? It felt both strange to have such a different story, but also exciting to feel as though I were infiltrating new territory. As an aspiring academic librarian, I knew that these were the people I wanted to work with and couldn't help imagining future reference consultations I might conduct with those around me. In the first few lectures, I kept wondering what the library could do for the presenters.

Quickly though, I found that there were plenty of librarians sitting in on the sessions, asking questions, and making constructive comments. By lunchtime that first day, Susie and I had found a small cohort of librarians and library students, all of us drawn together by our unique perspective. In some ways, these connections made the conference feel more intimate and approachable. We learned about initiatives at libraries around the country. Given the audience, there was a special emphasis on ways for librarians to get involved in research and classroom activities. There were embedded librarians travelling abroad with special undergraduate courses. There were librarians helping to develop curriculum. There were librarians initiating digital humanities projects.

By the time the poster session rolled around, I was feeling confident and excited to talk about the work we had done and the ambitions we had for the collection. The Burt Porter collection comprises recordings

made by Seattle audio recording equipment salesman, Burt Porter, in the 1950s and 60s. The jewels of the collection are live tapes from local jazz clubs. We ended up having really great conversations with music scholars as well as librarians and archivists with their own audio collections. The free and easy flow of ideas, advice and questions made the poster session both exhausting and hugely inspiring.

On the final day of the conference, it was becoming clear where the interests of the different participants lay. I even heard people commenting, after looking around the room, that this must be the history group or the group interested in books and manuscripts. Interestingly, their members came from a wide variety of disciplines (always with a good mix of library professionals!). I definitely enjoyed feeling like part of these different groups, though I appreciated how fluid they could be. I also loved how many times in the question and answer session someone suggested a new resource—especially for younger scholars—and the commenter was asked what their specialty was, they inevitably said, “Oh, I’m a librarian.”

I’m really glad I had the opportunity to attend HASTAC 2015, thanks in large part to our research sponsor, John Vallier, with the University of Washington Libraries Media Center, and funding from the iSchool. HASTAC gave me a rich understanding of both the breadth and depth of academic endeavors. I discovered that so much about scholarship and innovation is about connections made between ideas as well as between experts in different areas. The most successful and the most innovative of the presenters I met were invariably the ones who were willing to look at their problems from different perspectives and allow their views to shift throughout their research process. I also learned unequivocally that, yes, librarians do have a place in non-library conferences. 📖



**Susie Cummings (left) and Becky Ramsey Leporati (right) at the HASTAC 2015 Annual Conference.**

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*Becky Ramsey Leporati is a 2016 MLIS Candidate at the iSchool and a reference assistant at the University of Washington Engineering Library. She is also the 2015-16 Press Fellow for the University of Washington Press and the Editor-in-Chief of Circulation.*

# A New Role for the State Librarian

by Frank Brasile

Dr. Rand Simmons has aptly filled the positions of Washington State Librarian and Director of the Washington State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State, with an extensive and well-rounded background and expertise. Now he's moving into a different role as Federal Collection Executive Manager with the State Library. Let's look at what he's accomplished and what we can look forward to.

## From college libraries to the Washington State Library

Dr. Simmons holds a Master of Library Science from the University of Oregon and a Ph.D. in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. His undergraduate studies were in religion and philosophy. During his early career, Dr. Simmons was a college librarian and worked in college and state libraries in Oregon, Illinois, Idaho and Washington.

In 1995 he changed directions and began working in state libraries, first in Idaho and then in Washington state since 2001. Simmons was named Acting State Librarian in 2010 and was appointed Washington State Librarian by Secretary Kim Wyman in 2013.

Among his achievements in state libraries:

- Bringing broadband connectivity to rural Washington communities as part of a collaboration of Washington anchor communities. The second of two successful broadband stimulus grants was matched by a \$1.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- A partnership between the State Library and Microsoft brought online training to the residents of Washington through public, two-year college and tribal libraries. Technology training through the Microsoft IT Academy is provided without charge to residents of Washington thanks to funding by the Washington Legislature.
- During his time at the Idaho State Library (now Idaho Commission for Libraries) Simmons led a team of librarians in developing a statewide network of libraries, Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) that purchased a statewide subscription to ProQuest about a year after Washington implemented the Statewide Database Licensing (SDL) project.
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"I have so appreciated all of Rand's participation in and longtime support of WLA" says Kate Laughlin, Conference Program Coordinator with WLA. "In the six years I have been coordinating WLA's annual

conference, I don't think one has passed without Rand participating as a presenter in multiple sessions and events. His tireless work while serving as WLA's Federal Relations Coordinator helped keep our Association strong and well informed during some pretty tough times, too. Our State Library has some big shoes to fill!"

## New assignment

In his current position Dr. Simmons works at a policy level with the State Library's Regional Documents Library that houses a comprehensive collection of federal publications dating back to territorial days. The Regional Library serves both Washington state and Alaska.

Simmons will be working at a policy level with the State Library's federal depository collection. High on the list of priorities is the State Library joining nationwide collaborative efforts to digitize the federal depository collection and creating a decentralized, shared approach to maintaining the federal depository library collection. His position will increase awareness of federal publications and their value through increased marketing and promotion throughout the state.

Darcy Brixey, WLA President, says "Rand is someone I've always looked up to. We will miss his collaborative spirit in working with WLA to ensure continuing education for all library staff."

Simmons' current interests are in the intersection of libraries and the STEM movement that emphasizes education, careers and learning in science, technology, engineering and math and incorporating open data into library services. 



# Learning Curve

## Staff Training Reimagined

by Gerie Ventura, Darlene Pearsall and Carolyn Petersen

Libraries are always looking for efficient and innovative ways to provide training to staff. The three libraries below - a community college library, a public library and the Washington State Library - are reimagining staff training to be more accessible and relevant.

### Highline College Library

Highline College uses the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) to deliver online courses, and the library is considering using Canvas for in-house safety and building evacuation training and Circulation Services department training. Having a library of training videos in Canvas would allow users to easily upload, organize and access information in a single location, instead of searching through email or folders.

In the next year, Highline will be moving with Cohort 1 from the Ex Libris Voyager integrated library system to Alma, Ex Libris's next generation library management service. Rather than creating a new wiki or web site, we will develop tailored, Highline-specific Alma Fulfillment (circulation procedures) training within Canvas.

It will be fairly easy to develop these training modules because our staff is familiar with the LMS. We'd love to hear ways that other community college libraries are using Canvas or any other method to deliver staff training.

### King County Library System

At KCLS we are working to make sure our staff have the information they need when they need it. As a result, we are moving a number of our classes to online, self-directed learning. We are in the process of moving both our new employee orientation and trainings our staff need within the first 90 days of either starting to work or starting in a new position to being available online or in library classes.

To begin, we are working to "chunk" the material - group related information and package it in 5 to 30 minute sections. This allows a staff member to cover the material in smaller, shorter sessions. They can complete one or two sections during their back room time. The knowledge can then be used as they go about doing their day-to-day duties.

We are also working to incorporate videos. For new staff orientation, they first listen to a short introduction by our library director. We then cover our mission statement and core values. To reinforce our mission statement, they are presented with the statement in separated puzzle pieces that they must put together.

For live presentations, we have a series of Quick Tips with Staff Development.

These are then recorded so staff can view them later if desired. Quick Tips cover just one topic, and are sometimes accompanied by a few slides to introduce the topic and then demonstrate the task if it is a computer related item. When practical, we stop and have staff perform the task and then reconvene to discuss how it went. These small exercises allow us to reuse the piece for a different class.

### Washington State Library

The Washington State Library's (WSL) mandate is to provide trainings for all libraries in the state to enhance libraries abilities to provide the best possible service to their customers.

WSL has been providing asynchronous webinars on wide ranging topics for over 8 years.

- First Tuesdays' webinars recently presented trainings on providing library security, service animals, and graphic novels. <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/firsttuesdays/>
- Orientation sessions for public library trustees are offered every other year as well as trainings on special subjects. <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/libDev/trustees.aspx>

The Microsoft IT academy allowed the State Library to partner with public and tribal libraries to provide individualized technology training. <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/ita/>

In-person trainings make use of a wide variety of individuals to provide a full slate of trainings:

- Washington State Library technology trainers are developing two distinct sessions as half-day workshops. One will be focused on how to help library patrons when they bring their new electronic devices into the Library after Christmas. The second session will feature STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) devices such as Lego Mindstorm robots, EggBot robots, and a Makey Makey device.
- WSL has supported teacher-librarians as they developed curriculum to present to help other teacher-librarians become building resources when the new next generation science standards are implemented in the fall of 2016.
- <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/training/> lists all current in person training opportunities.

Lastly, WSL provides funding for libraries to decide on what means and methods work best for them via professional development grants. <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/grants/professional-development.aspx> 

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*Gerie Ventura is Associate Library Director for Highline College and is chair of WALT Interest Group. Darlene Pearsall is the Computer Education Developer with King County Library System and the webmaster for WALT. Carolyn Petersen is Assistant Program Manager with the Washington State Library.*

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## People and Places

Stretch your training dollars! The **Washington State Library** offers Professional Development grants to qualifying libraries. Libraries can apply for two types of Professional Development (PD) grants:

- Training/conference attendance at specialized conferences for individual staff members, up to \$1,000 per person per year. The maximum per library is \$6,000 per year.
- In-house training at your library. The maximum is \$3,000 per library per year.

We can defray allowable costs for transportation, lodging and registration. We require both a narrative and a graphic report we can publish. Complete information is available at <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/grants/professional-development.aspx>.

Melinda Chesbro is **Pierce County Library System's** new deputy director. Chesbro, a DuPont resident, has served as the Library's reading and materials director since February, and transitioned to her new role in October. Chesbro worked previously for the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District for 13 years, serving first as IT manager, then content management director and, most recently, collection and technology services director. Chesbro earned her master's in library science from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her bachelor's in business administration from California State University, Stanislaus.

[Science to Go](#) is a free new learning program at **Pierce County Library System**. Each Science to Go backpack contains five themed books, a notebook for recording and sharing insights, and a hands-on activity. Backpacks are designed for three age groups: pre-school, grades K-2 and grades 2-5. Activities and books support STEM concepts (science, technology, engineering and math), Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Families return the backpacks after the checkout period, but keep the activity sheet. Pierce County Library created Science to Go with funding from the [Paul G. Allen Family Foundation](#) and the [Pierce County Library Foundation](#).

**Yakima Valley Libraries** welcomes the addition of the Foundation Center databases to serve the non profit organizations in our community. Now, nonprofit organizations and other grant seekers in Yakima County searching for funding sources have access to a valuable new collection of resources at the Yakima Central Library branch, which has become a Funding Information Network partner with the Foundation Center of New York. The Yakima Central Library (YCL) is the only library in Central Washington to offer this service, which makes it so important because Yakima County has the most non profits per capita in the state.

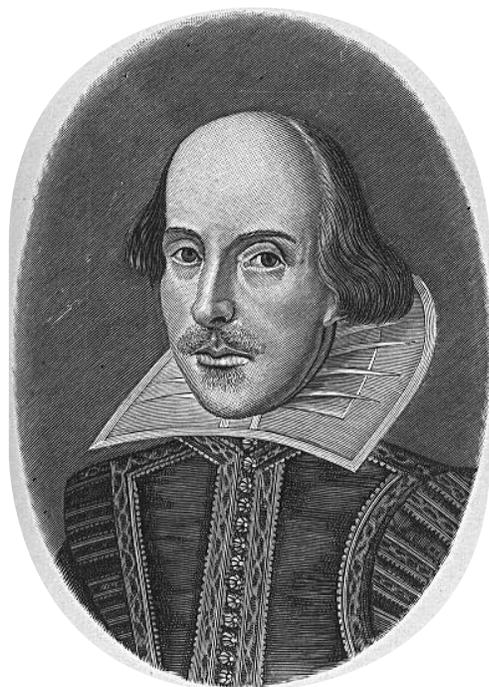


## Primary Source

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR LIBRARIES

Library-centric agency and WLA member, **Primary Source**, recently celebrated their first anniversary of providing innovative solutions for libraries. While Executive Director, Kate Laughlin, has been an independent library consultant and trainer since 2007, October marked her expanded agency's first year in business. Primary Source is also pleased to have recently hired Administrative Assistant, Emily Jones. Emily previously worked as a public librarian and as a medical reference librarian. Her experience helping start a private medical practice has proven a valuable addition to the organizational management of the agency. More information about Primary Source may be found at [www.primarysource.co](http://www.primarysource.co).

*Continued on page 28*



The **Seattle Public Library** is Washington state's host site for "First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare," on loan from the Folger Shakespeare Library and in partnership with the Cincinnati Museum Center and the American Library Association. This national traveling exhibition showcases Shakespeare's First Folio—one of the world's most treasured books—and marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. The First Folio was published in 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, and is the first collected edition of his plays. The Folio will be hosted at Seattle's Central Library from March 21 through April 17, 2016.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) Human Origins Program and the ALA Public Programs Office are pleased to announce that the North Spokane Library (**Spokane County Library District**) is one of 19 public libraries selected to participate in the tour of the traveling exhibition "Exploring Human Origins: What Does It Mean to Be Human?" This project was made possible through the support of a grant from the John Templeton Foundation. View the exhibition at the North Spokane Library (Spokane County Library District) from January 5 to February 3, 2016.

The **Fort Vancouver Regional Library District** has hired Amelia Shelley to lead the district. Shelley assumed her new duties as FVRL executive director on Monday, October 12th. Shelley took the helm of the Garfield Public Library District in December 2007 after voters approved funding for major capital improvement projects, producing six unique library facilities on time and under budget. She was previously the youth and outreach services manager at Laramie County Library in Wyoming. She earned her master's degree in library science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a bachelor of arts degree at the University of California at Davis.

The **West Valley Junior High Library** in Yakima received a grant from the West Valley Schools Foundation to promote summer reading. With the money, the library purchased multiple copies of popular YA books and series. Every student entering 7th or 8th grade was able to check out a book of their choice in June to read over the summer. The library was then open every Monday evening June-August from for students to check out books and connect with friends and staff. We had almost 250 circulations over the summer which averaged out to about 11 circulations each hour the library was open.

## Join WLA

The Washington Library Association includes some of the best and brightest members of the Washington library community.

We are united by our care for the well-being of Washington libraries. For more information, visit our website at [wla.org](http://wla.org). Explore the site and make our business your business.

Membership information is at [wla.org/membership](http://wla.org/membership).



**Wanda Alderman, recipient of The Washington State Genealogical Society Outstanding Volunteer Award.**

Wanda Alderman, Friend and volunteer for **Whitman County Library** recently received an Outstanding Volunteer Award from The Washington State Genealogical Society recognizing her efforts to preserve important historic images and records for a number of agencies including Washington Rural Heritage, a collection of local history collections hosted by Washington State Library. Volunteering for the library for nearly 7 years, Wanda has been the face of the local project, locating images, interviewing contributors, documenting critical cataloging information and providing community programs. Thanks in large part to Wanda's efforts, Whitman County's Rural Heritage collection contains nearly 4,000 images and averages 4,000 site visits per month.

The James E. Brooks Library of **Central Washington University** is now offering academic programs with courses in Library and Information Science! Officially launched in fall of 2014, the program has been running for a full year and is admitting students for the Library and Information Science Minor, Library and Information Science Type B Certificate, and School Library Media Studies Minor. These programs feature courses on a variety of LIS subjects, including information literacy, public service, leadership, archives, collection development, organization of knowledge, and research. Find out more at: <http://tinyurl.com/prntk9c>

*Library Journal* named Vancouver Community Library as one of 11 nationally notable libraries it has honored for 2015 with its New Landmark Library Award, presented every four years. The five-level, 83,000 square-foot, downtown Vancouver library is the largest branch of **Fort Vancouver Regional Library District**. It opened to the public July 17, 2011. The library district collaborated with architecture firm The Miller Hull Partnership of Seattle to compile the award submission, which included strong letters of support from Vancouver-area leaders. The library was previously honored by The American Institute of Architects (AIA) and ALA with a joint 2015 award for library design. 📖



**ALA-AIA Awards Ceremony held at the AIA San Francisco office on June 29, 2015. Left to right: American Institute of Architects President Elizabeth Chu Richter, FAIA; Former Fort Vancouver Regional Library District Executive Director Bruce Ziegman; Fort Vancouver Regional Library District Collection and Technical Services Assistant Director Lynne Caldwell; The Miller Hull Partnership Partner Ruth Baleiko; American Library Association 2014-2015 President Courtney Young.**

# I'd Rather Be Reading

## The Sum of Their Parts

by David Wright

It's a working habit of mine when getting to know a reader's tastes to sound them out on whether they prefer novels or short stories, or both. Just recently, I've noticed a lot of people expressing a preference for something in between. Call them novels-in-stories, linked or interconnected stories, these are cohesive works built out of non-linear parts that interrelate to each other in complementary and often revelatory ways.

While novels-in-stories are nothing new (Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* is a classic example), the recent critical and popular success of such titles as *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan, and *This is How You Lose Her* by Junot Diaz has many readers eager to find similar collections with that kind of subtle interplay of pieces. Here are some great recent examples.

Kate Walbert's introspective and elegiac *The Sunken Cathedral* is easily one of my favorite books of 2015, with its *mélange* of hopes, fears, longings and regrets wistfully refracted through the thoughts of Simone and Marie, two aging widows whose experiences as survivors of the Second World War in France are juxtaposed with the subtler and more irresistible challenges of facing

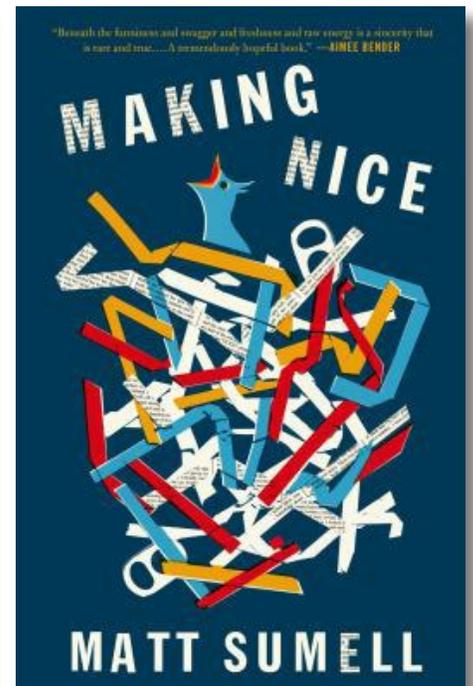
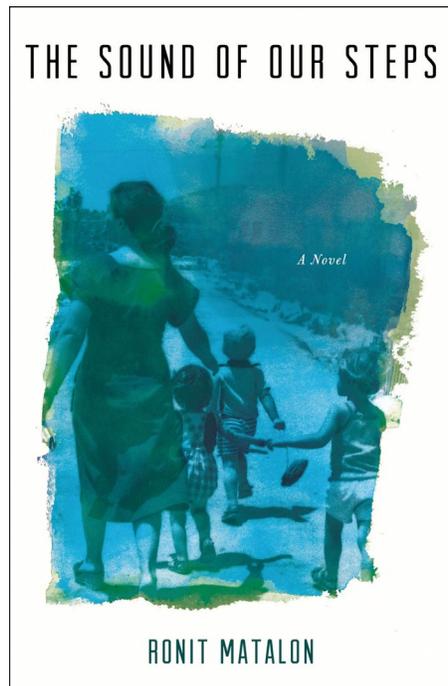
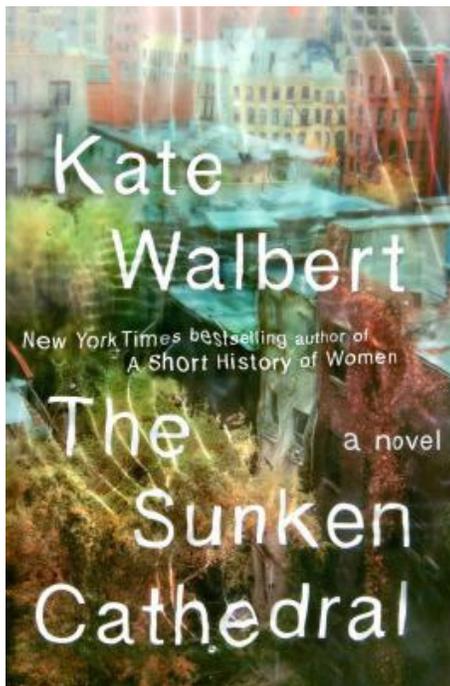
one's waning years under the ominous skies of a dangerous and dying planet. Readers who are as impressed as I was with Walbert's impressionistic feats should also pick up her 2004 title *Our Kind*, which has a similarly pleasing complexity, but a more bracing bitterness.

In Ronit Matalon's *The Sound of Our Steps*, the familial conflicts and strains of a Jewish family who have emigrated from their native Egypt to Tel Aviv in the mid-20th century are revealed through brief flashes and imagistic vignettes seen through the eyes of the family's youngest child. These sketchy and sometimes dreamy recollections prove to be a disarmingly effective approach to depicting not just the domestic struggles of poor, uprooted peoples and the courage of a particular mother, but also hints at the much greater conflicts happening in an outside world we barely see.

As seen in *Olive Kitteridge*, these kinds of aggregated narratives



David Wright



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can be a fascinating and fresh way to explore a character. Robert Thomas's *Bridge* depicts the life of a woman walking and teetering along a narrow mental balance, and thinking thoughts that feel as true as they feel irrational, and voicing – but only to herself, and to us – observations and insights that may pose a danger to herself and others. It is a rare journey into the mind of another that will not be hemmed into a tidy narrative, and that reminds me of a quote by Doris Lessing: “The novel is a story, but life isn't one. More of a sprawl of incidents.”

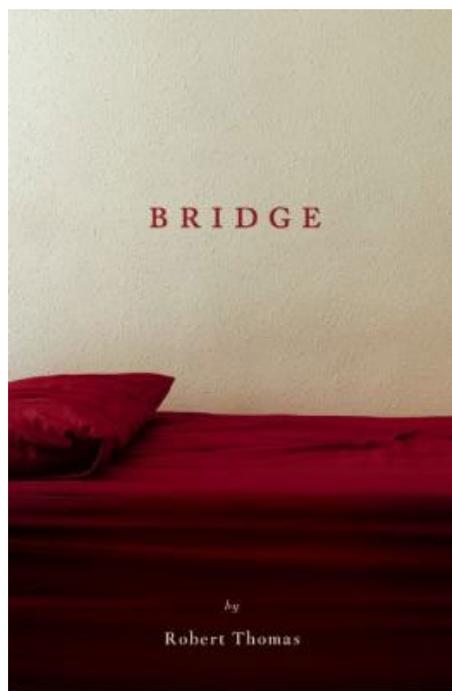
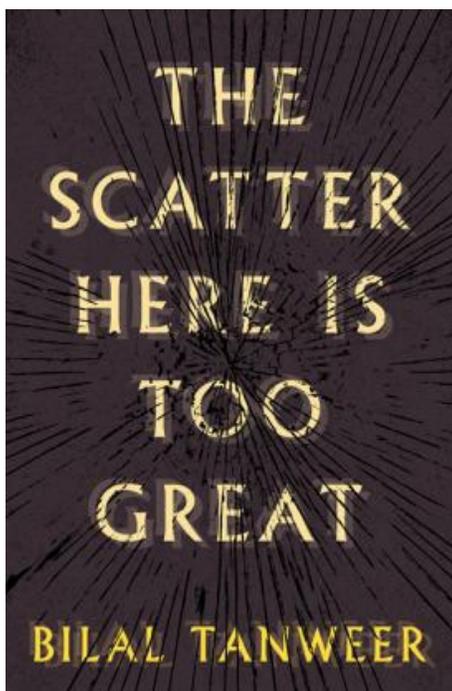
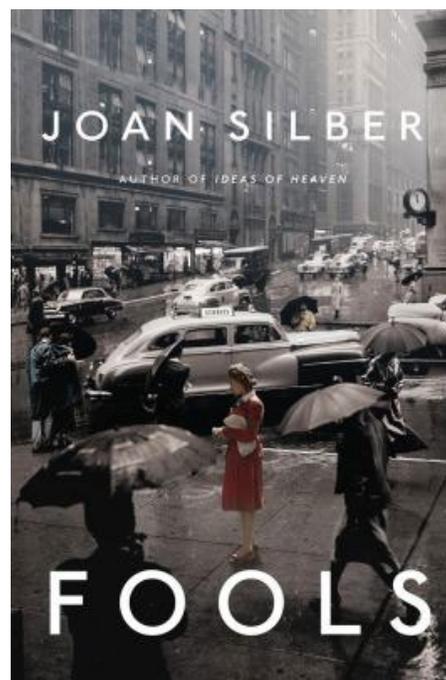
That we feel ambivalence toward the character of Alby in Matt Summell's *Making Nice* is a considerable achievement, given how objectively horrible he is as a human being. Violence prone, sarcastic, offensive and just plain nasty, Alby is the sort of guy who can't win for losing, and reminds me of some of the self-sabotaging characters I see around the library from time to time. Yet these episodes cast light on his humanity, and how in many ways his behavior is an expression of the unacted desires harbored in most of our hearts. Call him Mr. Id.

In addition to places and people, often stories will be refracted by a specific event. In Bilal Tanweer's powerful debut *The Scatter Here is Too Great*, a group of seemingly disparate lives unfolding in Karachi, Pakistan find a horrible common denominator when a bomb explodes at a train station. In *The Correction of Drift*, the Lindbergh kidnapping serves as the foci for Pamela Ryder's haunting imagistic prose poems touching on various aspects and effects

of this historic tragedy.

There are many other great recent novels-in-stories, including the frequently hilarious *If I Knew You Were Going to Be This Beautiful, I Never Would Have Let You Go* by Judy Chicurel, *Vacationland* by Sarah Stanich, *The Imperfectionists* by Tom Rachman, and Brando Skyhorse's *The Madonnas of Echo Park*, but perhaps the best of all is Joan Silber's *Fools*.

With generous and gentle wisdom, Silber depicts the lives, ideals and foibles of a tenuously interrelated array of characters from around the world, reaching back to a band of anarchists in 1920s New York and forward to the clarifying focus found in the devastation of 9/11, Silber subtly evokes the common strengths, weaknesses and strivings of our proud and fallible species. 📖



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