

INTERCHANGE

Journal of the Oregon Association of School Libraries

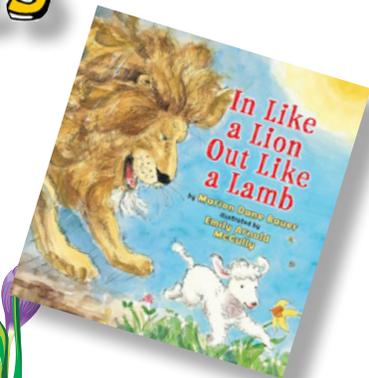
Spring 2011

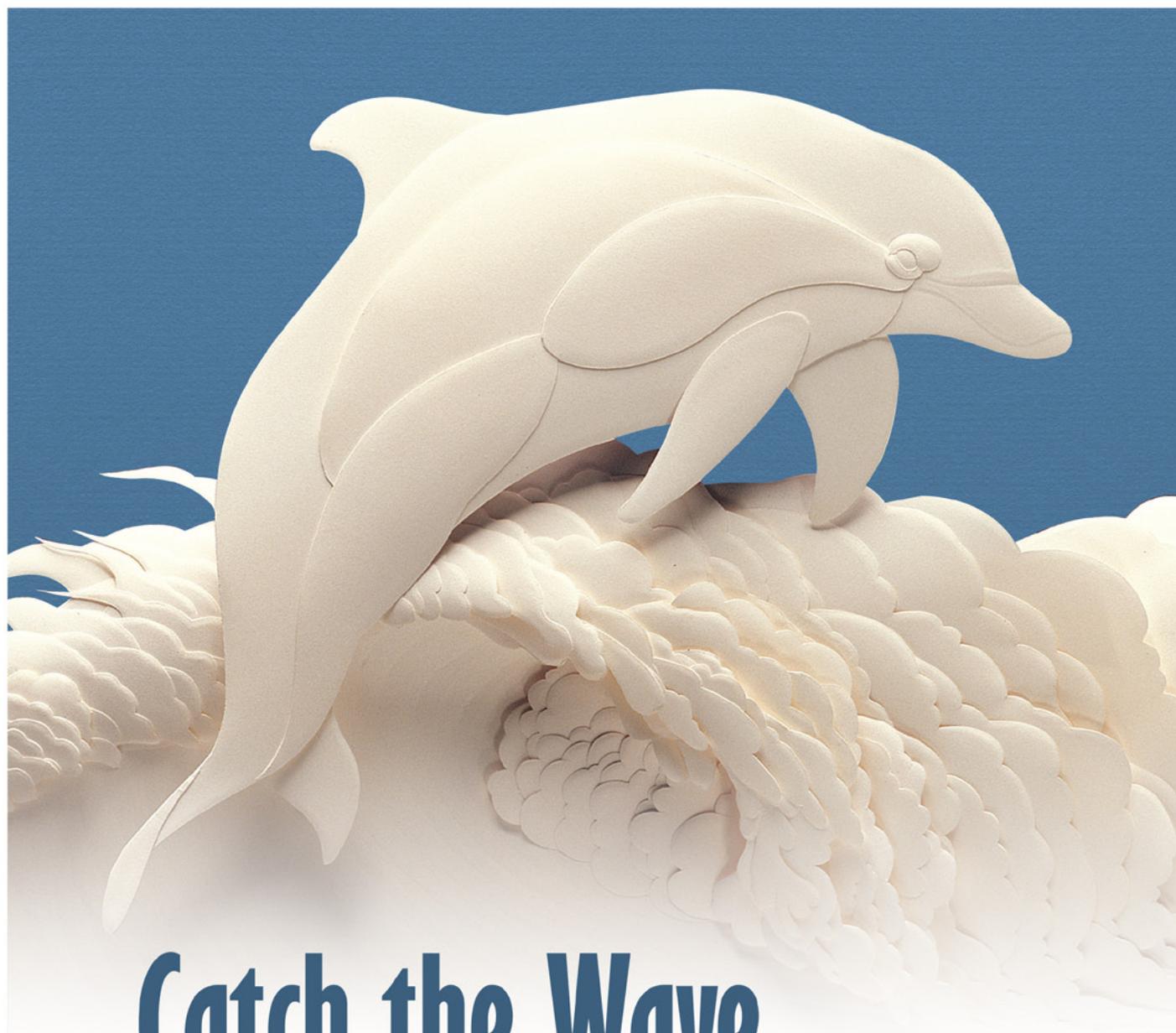


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- OASL provides progressive leadership to pursue excellence in school library media programs by:
- advocating information literacy for all students;
 - supporting the highest levels of library media services in schools;
 - supporting reading instruction and enjoyment of literature;
 - strengthening member professionalism through communication and educational opportunities;
 - promoting visibility in education, government and the community

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INTERCHANGE

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Spring is a time for Fresh Ideas!

From the Guest Editor, Ruth Murray



I have asked, for this issue, some of my amazing current and former students and acquaintances, to share a few of their good ideas. Most of the article authors, are new to the school library. I hope you enjoy reading their Fresh inspirations as they take on the busy world of libraries and students. The authors are veteran teachers or are brand new, some went into the library with their eyes open and others had a steep learning curve. I hope you will enjoy their perspectives and discover new hope for our profession in their enthusiasm.



From the... President's Desktop Laptop

By Ruth Murray,
OASL President

Things always do feel a little fresher in the spring. Something about the beginning of new life after the winter gives me a lift, even when the clouds are gray. The clouds are gray in Oregon libraryland right now; each week seems to bring a bit more bad news. Cuts and layoffs seem to be the report of the day. It's a time to stick together and help each other formulate new ideas of how to communicate with the school staff, administrations, public, and legislators about just how important we are to student learning. Now more than ever before, we must be advocates for libraries. We must face this crisis and do everything we can to prove our worth. We must not fall into gloom and accept the demise of our very important profession.

If the worst happens, we should keep our ideas and talents fresh, looking for the openings to reappear. Continue to advocate for strong library programs. Keep up on the latest and greatest technology. I keep reminding myself this economic crisis will end and we will be ready to step back into the libraries that have been vacated or suffered cuts.

In May, Carol Dinges and I will be traveling to Washington, DC, once again to meet with legislators. We will speak to them about the crisis in education we are undergoing. We will hold out hope that our words will be heard. We have a bit of an advantage this time. We are traveling with friends from OLA who will assist us in lobbying for libraries all over the state. In addition, the new president of ALA is Molly Raphael, former head of the Multnomah County library system and an Oregonian will be going with us to visit the legislators, which I think will give us a little extra clout. (<http://mollyraphael.org/>)

What can you do? Keep your spirits up, and when we ask you to email or call your legislators, please do so. It takes only a few minutes and it is so very important to help us move towards strong libraries again.

"At the moment that we persuade a child, any child, to cross that threshold, that magic threshold into a library, we change their lives forever, for the better."

-- President Barack Obama

Classified Memorandum:

For Paraprofessionals In School Libraries
By Meg Miranda

By the time you receive this issue of Interchange you will have voted for my replacement on the OASL Board of Directors. I have enjoyed serving as the paraprofessional representative for the past ten years, and it was a difficult decision to give up the position. In the end I decided that fresh ideas and perspective would be a good thing. What a coincidence that the theme of this issue of the Interchange is "fresh ideas." I hope that my successor brings lots of fresh ideas to the Board!

One of the traits of OASL members that I really appreciate is their willingness to share ideas. Over the years I have adapted for my library and students many ideas that I learned about at OASL conferences, in Interchange, the newsletter, and the list serve. Thanks to everyone who has put together a unique program or project for helping to keep my workdays fresh and exciting.

Last fall, I couldn't wait to get back to work after the fall conference in Bend so I could start putting together a "Read Alikes" wall-wisher thanks to the inspiration provided by Erin Fitzpatrick-Bjorn and Nancy Sullivan. In February, Erin came through with another terrific idea (this time on the listserv) for Read Across America that was simple, fun and different.

Not all of my fresh ideas come from OASL. I also pick-up ideas from the two professional journals that my school library subscribes to – LMC and School Library Journal. Did you know that LMC (Library Media Connection) pays \$25.00 for any tip you send in and they publish? Now you can make money by sharing your fresh ideas. And I found out that I can read some professional journals online for free (free is always good) through OSLIS provided Gale databases. I can even set it up so that I receive an email when the latest edition is available.

Fresh ideas are available everywhere. You just have to keep your eyes and ears open and your imagination on alert. After using the same tedious procedure my predecessor passed on to me 16 years ago for alerting students about very late overdue books, last week I discovered a much simpler and faster way to track overdue books. I feel so free! Of course, not all new ideas are good or right for your particular style. I once created clues for popular books and hid certificates for prizes in the books. Students were supposed to choose a clue, find the book and claim the prize. Students omitted the first step and just leafed through book after book to find the certificates. (And they did not put the books neatly back in their place!)

To all of you who share your fresh ideas – thank you. Let the sharing continue!





Building Influence and Support for School Libraries

By Leah Biado-Luis

School libraries, like many other libraries today, are faced with an increasing challenge to stay open. The economy and the ever-changing dynamics within education play a role in these challenging times. Therefore, it is more important now to utilize strategies to build influence and support for school libraries that are staffed by certified media specialists. One of the key strategies towards building influence is linking student achievement with school libraries. Librarians and library supporters have held tightly to the abundance of research, such as the Research Foundation Paper, “School Libraries Work!” (2008), that links student achievement with media centers staffed with certified librarians. Media specialists, however, must move beyond this body of research to show directly how their individual school library program affects student achievement at their school each year. Embedding 21ST century learner standards in state standards is one strategy that can assist with showing the link between student achievement and individual school library programs. Utilizing this strategy to show the missing link between school libraries and student achievement will not only build influence and support for school libraries but also assist in keeping them alive and thriving in these uncertain economic times.

State standards and high stakes testing are two driving forces behind teaching and measuring school success today. While for some this may be a controversial issue, for school librarians these two forces must be addressed and embedded into the library program. At the same time, information literacy skills, as addressed by the 21ST century learner standards, are the driving force behind school library programs today. In order to show a link to student achievement (measured with high stakes testing), school librarians must assist with the creation, teaching, and evaluation of standards based on lessons embedded with 21st century learner standards. “With its grounding in the concepts and processes of information literacy, the school library media program helps students and others within the learning community become information literate as they achieve their content learning goals” (American Association of School Librarians & Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1998, p. 60).

In order to create, teach, and assess standards-based lessons, school librarians must find ways to integrate the library program with units taught as part of the regular classroom (Woolls, 1994). Using grade-level curriculum maps is one strategy that allows school librarians to analyze units taught by grade level, which then determines entry points

for collaborating with teachers to create standards-based lessons. In addition, the following goals as written in Impact: Guidelines for Media and Technology Programs (2000) can assist school librarians with embedding 21ST century learner standards with state standards for teaching and learning:

- Being knowledgeable about the state standards for all subject areas and grade levels within the school.
- Working with teachers to infuse media and technology into instruction across all subject areas and grade levels.
- Serving on the school improvement team.
- Taking leadership roles on the Media and Technology Advisory Committee(s).
- Analyzing the school improvement plan for areas of instructional focus.
- Reflecting the school improvement plan in instruction and in the acquisition of resources.
- Analyzing test data with teachers to improve instructional focus.
- Participating in grade level/departmental meetings. (North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh Instructional Technologies Division, p.7)

Schools are in a precarious time where budgets will only allow for essential programs to remain in existence. Once the school library program is fully integrated with state standards across the curriculum, school librarians must assess student achievement and present data linking their achievement with the lessons taught in the library. In order to remain viable, school library programs must show quantifiable data connecting their programs to student achievement. The direct correlation between student achievement and standards-based lessons embedded with 21ST century learner standards must be tracked over time and analyzed alongside high stakes testing data in order to build the influence and support needed for school libraries.

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Leah Biado-Luis is a first grade teacher at Mill Park Elementary in the David Douglas School District. She is an aspiring librarian who will graduate in August 2011 with a MLS degree from Emporia State University and a Media Specialist Endorsement from Portland State University.



A Technology Evangelist's Guide for Librarians

By Colette Cassinelli

Having returned to the school library after spending the past ten years as a computer applications teacher, I now have a whole new set of tools and techniques in my back pocket. I am a huge believer in the power of networked learning—not only for our students but for us as well. This guide gives librarians some thoughts to consider, resources to use, and ideas for turning you into a 21ST Century Librarian.

Create a collaborative partnership with your school's Instructional Technology Coach or IT Department: Forming partnerships with your IT department creates a unified message in your school to promote understanding of 21ST century literacies: digital literacy, visual literacy, textual literacy, and technological literacy. When you focus on the 4 Cs (creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking), you keep the emphasis on the learning process and supporting the school's curriculum and not on the tools. Consider creating a shared document that indicates when key information and technology skills are taught and reinforced in various subject or grade levels. Promote each department's projects in the school community and share resources. Oftentimes these are the people who can be great advocates of your program.

Harness the power of social media to connect with other librarians: Librarians love to be helpful, and librarians who use social media can have a huge impact. You don't have to be on Twitter to see what everyone is talking about. Go to <http://search.twitter.com> and type in #tlchat - which stands for "Teacher Librarian chat". Better yet, sign up and start sharing your ideas. Use a hashtag (#) to tag your posts so others can easily follow them, such as: #librarians, #library, #yalit, #edchat. More Twitter/Hashtag resources can be found at: <http://www.cybraryman.com/edhashtags.html>

Prefer to converse with other librarians through a "webinar"? The TL Virtual Cafe (<http://tlvirtualcafe.wikispaces.com/>) offers *free* webinars on timely topics such as search techniques, copyright, eBooks, and Summer Reading programs. You attend the webinar using a program called Elluminate. The webinars are usually held once-a-month on Mondays 5PM (PST) and

are sponsored by LearnCentral <http://www.learncentral.org/>. The ISTE SIGMS also has webinars for Librarians: <http://sigms.iste.wikispaces.net/Webinars>

Another terrific way to connect and share is through social networking sites such as the Teacher Librarian Ning [://teacherlibrarian.ning.com/](http://teacherlibrarian.ning.com/) or Library 2.0 <http://www.library20.org/>. Make sure you stay connected locally through the OASL Facebook page and Listserv.

Use social bookmarking to keep track of resources: We love to create pathfinders to share all the fabulous resources we find online but it can be a bit daunting to keep track of it all or remember if you shared "this great site" with a certain teacher. Bookmark all your favorite websites with a social bookmarking tool like Diigo <http://www.diigo.com> or Delicious <http://www.delicious.com/>. Create subject lists and then invite your teachers to subscribe to your list. Whenever you come across a new resource and add it to the list, they automatically receive notification of the new entry.

I started collecting resources for our new STEM Academy and shared my Diigo STEM bookmarks as a webslide (similar to LiveBinders): <http://slides.diigo.com/list/ccassinelli/STEM>. Another option you might consider is to join a Diigo group to see what other Librarians are bookmarking online: http://groups.diigo.com/group/teacher_librarians

Use technology to promote books and library events: Reach your school library audience with creative ways that promote reading and literature using free or open-source technology tools. Create short book trailers using free video editing software (iMovie, MovieMaker, Photostory) to promote new books that are being released. Include images, titles, narration and audio music. Embed the movies on your library home page.

Set up a wallwisher page (www.wallwisher.com) to have students suggest books for read alikes. For example: If you liked *The Hunger Games* then read... Students can add their own suggestions and images of book cover to the wall. (Thanks to Erin Fitzpatrick-Bjorn and Nancy Sullivan for sharing this idea at the OASL conference!)

Continued next page

Using free photo editing software, make 5"x 7" photos of book covers and titles that say "recommended by ..." Select books with a theme (author studies, Graphic Novels, Banned Books, a specific genre) and display the photos of those books in a digital picture frame. Place on circulation desk for students to watch during check-out.

Set up a blog with another book club to discuss the novels they are reading or recommend new titles. Use free blog software like Blogger or EduBlogs—or even www.goodreads.com.

Entice teens to learn about new books in the library using QR codes (QR is short for Quick Response—they can be read quickly by a cell phone). Create fun posters and place them in the bathroom stalls or school hallways. Include a QR code on the poster. When the student scans the QR code with their mobile device, the code reveals information about the new book. Great for scavenger hunts too!

Don't be overwhelmed with all there is to know in using technology as a school librarian. Get online ... get involved ... help is only a "tweet" away.

Colette Cassinelli is teacher librarian at La Salle Catholic College Preparatory in Milwaukie, Oregon. She is a lover of YA literature and a technology evangelist! She blogs occasionally at <http://www.edtechvision.org>. Follow her on Twitter: @ccassinelli or email: ccassinelli@lsprep.org

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ALA Midwinter January 2011

By Deanna Draper

As I was in San Diego when ALA Midwinter Meeting occurred, I decided to attend the conference and visit the vendor exhibits, looking for the latest & greatest. The vendors weren't very impressive until I stopped by Gale where I saw the Gale Cengage smartphone app, "Access My Library." Using a smartphone (iPhone or Android), the user can easily access the Gale databases. This app is noteworthy because it is free, it does not ask for authentication and it enables the user to search the Gale databases easily & quickly from the smartphone. This app can be downloaded from iTunes or from the Android Market.

I also attended the AASL pre-conference workshop on Collaborative Leadership, presented by Dr. Steve Baule, superintendent of the North Boone School district in Poplar Grove, Illinois. A former classroom teacher, school librarian, and principal, he has a pro-school librarian background.

The workshop focused on the need for school librarians to take a leadership role in advocating for the library program. They should collaborate with school administrators, teachers, and the school community to help all students achieve success and to tie that success to the library program. We must identify & publicize the ways that the library program directly impacts student achievement and instructional quality. School librarians need to show that we make a difference in the success of students. If we fail to do that, we may cease to exist.

Baule referred to the work done by Gary Hartzell on the "invisible librarian." According to Hartzell, school librarians have done a poor job of promoting themselves. We have to show the school community that we are not a peripheral resource that can be done without, but necessary for a quality and successful school.

We school librarians must link the library program's direct influence to positive student achievement. We must keep records of teacher/librarian collaboration, of books checked out and read by the students, and of student use of the subscription databases. In other words, count every interaction with the library program.

Give the principal and the school community regular reports that demonstrate how student success can be tied to the library program and collaboration of librarian and teachers, link the library program to school initiatives, be knowledgeable about "hot topics," involve others (teachers, students, staff) in library program decision making, ally with successful people and initiatives, and be seen as part of the solution, not part of the problem. Don't wait to be asked: be assertive.

The message from this workshop was that we must promote our library program because no one else will. It is worth it.

Deanna Draper is an instructor at Portland State and the Higher Ed representative on the OASL Board. She is a retired Librarian from Sunset H.S. in Beaverton. She is currently traveling in Portugal.

Year One In A Changing High School

By Betsy Fogelman Tighe

Roosevelt High School is in St. John's, the northern tip of Portland, which can almost feel like an island sometimes, with its own ecology and climate.

Roosevelt has been here for almost a hundred years, and has changed in its culture time and time again. For the four years prior to my hire, the library was staffed only by a library assistant who was responsible for textbooks too.

In the spring of 2010, as a result of its position as the poorest-performing high school in the state of Oregon, Roosevelt received an enormous School Improvement Grant from the Federal Department of Education. This commenced in the fall of 2010 and allowed Roosevelt to again staff its library with a certified media specialist.

I had moved here in the summer of 2008 and spent two years substituting. In the spring of 2010, I was lucky to work with Susan Stone in library services at the district level for PPS on another Federal grant which obviously morphed into the foot in the door I badly needed. I interviewed for the job at Roosevelt in August, was confident I'd gotten it, and disappointed when it went to another librarian who'd been cut elsewhere. But during the professional development week, he moved to another district, and I got to start on the first day of school. That first week was characterized by thrilling chaos in a library where there had been few systems in place and faculty who had possibly never worked with a librarian before.

What I learned quickly is that so much is new at Roosevelt: we are moving back towards being a comprehensive high school after some years as three small schools, our principal has been here only one year, our two vice-principals are new this year, and we have about 35 new teachers and staff. Staff is on fire with the intention to boost the achievement here. Change is the norm. We are the Rough Riders on the rise. Step back!

The library's condition will take some time to remediate. The reference collection, for instance, has been so heavily weeded that the AP literature teacher says he no longer brings students in to research. Additionally, the library space is shared with IT, and what was the bookroom has been converted into a computer lab. This leaves the assistant running up and down stairs to a textbook storage room. But because Roosevelt is also

among the top three schools that will be rebuilt if the bond measure passes, substantive changes have to stay on hold for now.

Meanwhile, I do what I can. It's been a whirlwind year. I've been juggling all the normal balls: classroom management, collection development, curriculum, and programming. Samples: the first week I got a computer dedicated to the catalog. Later, I bought four leather chairs to make a reading corner. I started a library club. I'm promoting reading by participating in the Oregon Reader's Choice Award with pizza and incentive prizes. Just this month, word has spread that I can offer valuable services, and I've pushed into a couple of classes every day, teaching research skills or performing book talks. I've had a half dozen TA's, but not enough of a curriculum for them. I'm working on a solid partnership with my youth librarian at Multnomah County Library who will teach a book arts workshop in our Saturday Academy next month. About 40 kids came earlier this year to hear Multnomah's presentation on banned books, "Feasting on Forbidden Fruit."

Our standout event was a reading by the poetry slam champ Patricia Smith, who had our kids rapt, and then gave more by teaching a creative writing workshop to several combined classes. One of my strengths is event production, and I want to bring it to being a community builder. I attended the new monthly Community Coffee event for my school, and I canvassed the parents on how I could serve them. I offered the idea of a mother-daughter book club in celebration of Mother's Day, and the mothers present were deeply touched and enthusiastic. During our parent-teacher conferences, rather than staying in the library, where I was afraid no one would find me, I asked my administrators for permission to set up in the cafeteria with the other teachers, so I could show any interested parents how to use the on-line library catalog. More than a handful of parents did give me the time to see all the resources their students could access.

I am taking seriously my role as educational leader, and am sharing articles for my administrators on the role of libraries in schools and the benefits of having a fully staffed library. Daily, I am taking steps to establish myself as a teaching partner in the school and to guarantee that the library plays a huge part in improving student improvement. Simply stated, I'm on a mission, and I'm so excited to be at this school, feverishly busy on the work of transformation.

Betsy Fogelman Tighe- Betsy is the Teacher Librarian at Roosevelt High School in Portland. You can reach her at bjftighe@hotmail.com.

Flexing the Library's Muscle

By Mary-Catherine McElroy

The relationship between a well-supported school library and student academic success is well documented, according to Anne McCracken in her article "School Library Media Specialists' Perceptions of Practice and Importance of Roles Described in Information Power." In fact, McCracken cites a 1994 research study by Lance, Welborn and Hamilton-Pennell which reports that the absence of poverty is the only factor more powerful than the library media specialist and sizable library in predicting academic success. Even with that mandate, however, there is some debate about how best a library media specialist should create the most effective learning environment for his or her school.

There are many strong arguments made which favor "flexible scheduling," or open scheduling, so that students and teachers can come and go as needed. McCracken also writes that "elementary school library media specialists who use flexible scheduling perceive they are able to practice more roles than library media specialists who use either combination or fixed scheduling." The American Association of School Librarians even endorses it.

According to educational consultant Doug Johnson, sometimes the message that professional library media specialists hear is that those who choose flexible programs are good and those who choose traditional programs are bad. This can feel like a judgment. My personal observance of the flexible scheduling at my local middle school, a school without a certified library media specialist, has been that it does not work well. Teachers are under so much pressure to have their classes perform well that they zealously guard every moment of their teaching time. Students run into the library between periods or during lunch but classes rarely come to work in the library. This means that students do almost all their research for projects with classroom resources or on the Internet. Periodicals and books are rarely referenced. It is also likely that some students will never visit the library during their middle school career. As Mr. Johnson so clearly points out, "You can't teach kids you don't see."

Our local elementary school uses a combination schedule, even though it creates a very hectic work atmosphere for the teacher-librarian. Each class in

the school has a scheduled library visit once a week. During that period, students are taught either library or computer skills as well given check out time. This library media specialist has also created PowerPoint presentations on different sections of the library to entice students to go outside their comfort zone. During lunches and after school, there are open library hours where students may check out books, read or use the computers. As I mentioned earlier, the library media specialist hardly has a moment to regroup, but the children benefit enormously.

As I began my library studies this past fall, I was very lucky to be able to visit two other elementary school libraries here in Portland. Those two libraries have varying levels of fixed scheduling. Both librarians liked it because it gave them a guaranteed opportunity to see every child regularly over a period of many years. In addition, one of those teacher-librarians was connected to the SUN program, an afterschool enrichment program, and offered open library time after school.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to see a very inflexible library system at a K-8 school in Massachusetts. Students were brought to the library twice a week for 20 minutes to check out books. The library, though brand-new, beautiful, well stocked and spacious, lost its certified librarian to budget cuts three months after the building opened. Educational assistants checked out books but students were only allowed to visit the library with their class during their set times. The students never felt truly welcome there and, in all my years there, I rarely saw a student explore all the library had to offer. There just was no opportunity. As always, the truth lies somewhere between all these examples. Perhaps Joy McGregor in her 2006 article, "Flexible Scheduling: Implementing an Innovation," put it best when she said, "There must be a reason to use a flexible schedule and that reason should relate to student learning." School library media specialists and administration must always be mindful to look at any change with an eye for what would be best for their learning community.

There are many strong arguments made which favor "flexible scheduling," or open scheduling, so that students and teachers can come and go as needed.

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Flexing the Library's Muscle

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Mary-Catherine McElroy has just begun her library media studies at Portland State University. In the past, she has worn many hats, e.g writer, preschool instructor, and camp director. She is looking forward to teaching kids about books and technology in a library setting.



Technology and The Library – It's More Than Just About The Books

By Debbie Melnychenko

If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow. ~ John Dewey

The stereotypical role of the library, that space of pristine silence where books are reverently circulated, has been broadened to become the Learning Commons which now includes the crucial necessities for developing information skills. These can include web searches, computer collaboration, video game perusal, musical discoveries and creation. While this technological trend thrives, there remains the continued fervent quest for the next novel in the spectrum of dystopia and other popular genre series of young adult literature. Thus, reading physical books still has importance and value, especially in the realm of fiction, and the advancement of the online book reviews, catalog and circulation sites has allowed for even more frantic prospects of potential literary sources for absorbing information and seeking entertainment.

Keeping up with the latest technologies in hardware, software and Web 2.0 is a realm of infinite proportion, and my first year as a middle school teacher-librarian has been greatly relieved by my experience teaching multimedia within the same school. Facilitating the students' navigation through the confusion of new technology has led to a new confidence for the digital age student. With instruction, they can confidently find sources of information trustworthy enough to use in their projects. The opportunity to efficiently use programs such as Microsoft Office Suite, Creative Suites, iLife, Sketchup, Video Production, Photoshop, Powerpoint, Photostory and more, once gave the middle school student a definite academic advantage; alas, the program is no more due to budget cuts. Fortunately, I can continue to use my influence for

good as the teacher-librarian.



The role of the teacher-librarian includes professional development, where one is able to share with teachers and administrators technological trends that will enhance learning. Creating opportunities to incorporate web searches, blogs, podcasts, media casts, photo enhancement, video productions, and other enrichments spurs the students to raise the bar in the public performance of their work. When students are entertained, they are engaged, and though these endeavors may take valuable time, the motivation of using technology can greatly augment students' overall accomplishment.

Many students may be tech savvy, but there are a multitude of technological issues that crop up with demands that they feel are both importunate and vital to their academic lives. While this aspect may seem mundane, I believe it is imperative that the teacher-librarian responds to the plight of both student and/or teacher, dropping everything else in order to meet these needs quickly and efficiently so that he or she is able to move on to address the next issue. Situations can include everything from figuring out what went wrong with the creation of a graph from a table, to the printing of the graphic organizer so that it is not going to be spread over 14 pages, from the merging of two presentations into one, to the retrieval of files that the student thought had been saved to their home drive. Often students fail to recognize that they are but one of the many concerned scholars with a technological need, and the patience, adaptability and flexibility of the teacher-librarian are modeled as additional skills for those who are aided and assisted.

Real learning for the future must include things that don't even exist now; memorizing certain facts that can be quickly accessed, for example, is no longer a vital skill due to the ever-changing information that is available on the web. Preparing students to be innovative, collaborative problem-solvers, utilizing all of their prior skills, however, is essential to their education. Students must learn to work collaboratively while simultaneously becoming independent learners. Forging relationships with teachers and students, while assisting the development of this new and crucial skill set, will make it possible for teacher-librarians to mold and shape this miraculous process.

Debra Melnychenko is the Teacher-Librarian at Athey Creek Middle School. She received an MA in 1987 and will receive another in Educational Media in 2011. She has taught K-12 in most subjects in both Canada and the US.



The Genrefication of the Library

By Leigh Morlock

When it comes to libraries, I consider myself a devout Dewey-worshipping purist. My loyalty, however, was shaken a smidge when I visited a middle school in Portland, Maine, last May. There I met brilliant school librarian Kelley McDaniels, who had done something I hadn't actually seen in practice, though I'd heard whispered rumors in the stacks. Ms. McDaniels had organized her entire fiction collection based on genre, much like a bookstore. Each section was decorated with nifty posters, each book labeled with genre stickers available at your favorite library supply store.

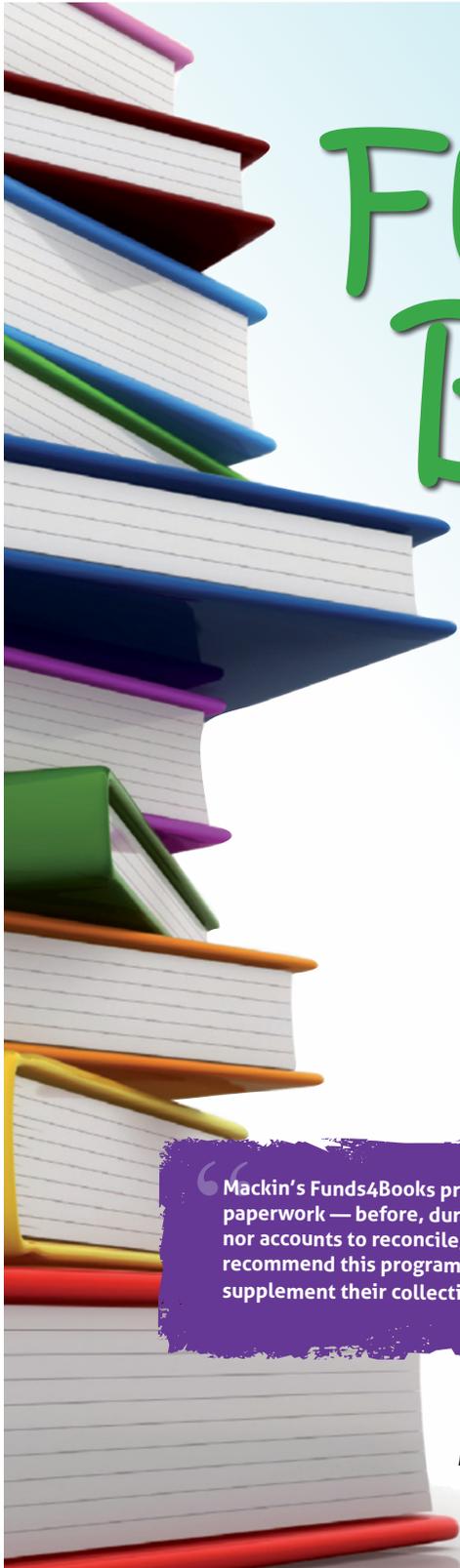
Initially, I was slightly appalled. I might have even sniffed snobbily once or twice, like a wine critic over a family-sized box of rosé. Libraries, I thought, are simply not bookstores. And who was I to mess with tradition? 1873, after all, was the very finest of vintages.

But the idea started to take root. It nagged at me as, for the first time, I noticed just how many students came in asking for the horror or mystery or sci-fi sections. ("I loved *The Hunger Games*. Where are the books like that?") I was suddenly aware of how many times per day I explained the alphabetical-by-author system. How many times I'd scramble to pull together a quick mini-selection of mysteries to present to a student. How many times I re-shelved the rejects.

So when Dawn Kimball enrolled in Portland State University's library program and was assigned to me as a practicum student, I tossed the idea out to her. What if we reorganized the fiction section according to genre as part of her practicum experience?

First, we did some research. This wasn't a new idea by any means, and we were able to find articles on the topic published in *School Library Journal*. We also contacted Ms. McDaniels for useful tidbits on how to move forward. Drawing from these resources, we created the following step-by-step guide to library genrefication:

Continued on page 13



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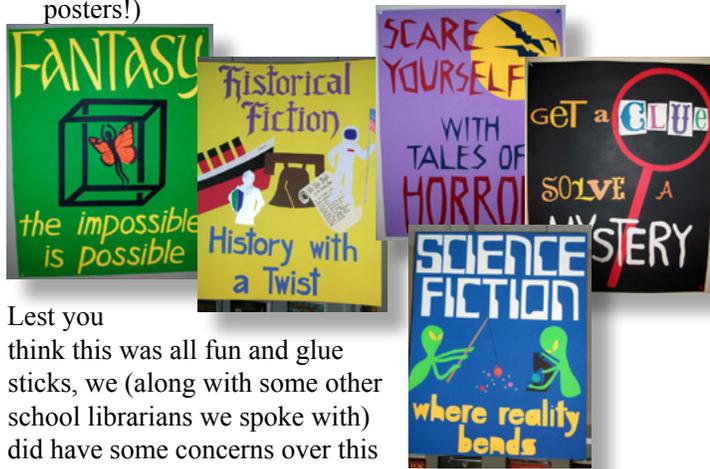
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1. First, which genres should we actually use? For our fiction collection of 2800 titles, we settled on tradition genres: science fiction, horror, humor, romance, sports, historical fiction, suspense, and general fiction. Some librarians use fewer genre labels and some get positively fine-toothed, perhaps adding vampire romance, chick lit, war, animals, or others.
2. Next we needed to decide which books went where, definitely the most time-consuming of our tasks. To determine a genre, Dawn looked up each fiction title in NoveList – an EBSCO database with over 150,000 fiction titles searchable by author, title, subject, and reading level. NoveList is available through both the Washington County and Multnomah County library systems.
3. Now it was time to physically reassign each book, first checking out the layout of the library to determine how the sections would fit together, moving books to make room as necessary. Working on one section at a time to minimize disruption, we made sure each title was truly a good fit in the genre before updating the OPAC and changing the call number and shelf tag to reflect the genre. We kept the collection code the same to remain consistent with the district (e.g. MYST FIC AAA).
4. Then, with the assistance of some terrific student and parent helpers, we applied our shiny new genre stickers to every spine. (We found super-cool stickers online to save us from having to apply completely new shelf tags.)
5. Finally, we asked an artistic parent volunteer to create spiffy signage for each genre. (Check out our gorgeous posters!)



Lest you think this was all fun and glue sticks, we (along with some other school librarians we spoke with) did have some concerns over this reorganization. First off, would students now be more likely to read only within their preferred genre? It's a valid concern, but I believe I will have the same, and perhaps better, opportunities as I did before to interact with the students. Gravitating toward science fiction? Maybe I can suggest the speculative fiction of Margaret Atwood. Sucked in by the latest

vampire yarn? Perhaps you'd enjoy spending time with Miss Havisham. A fun idea from Ms. McDaniels is to start a genre punchcard. Read a novel from every genre within the trimester and earn a bookish reward. That's almost better than a free sandwich.

But what about consistency? Shouldn't all libraries be organized the same way everywhere? After all, the public library adheres loyally to my old friend Dewey... or does it? Our beautiful downtown Multnomah County library actually has separate sections for mysteries and science fiction. I asked a research librarian when they decided to make that change. "Well," he replied, "I've been here for 32 years so I guess it was at some point before then." So much for being radicals.

I called another Multnomah County public branch and spoke with the librarian on duty to get her thoughts. "Yes, we separate into the same fiction genres, just like Central," she told me. "For readers who have a sense of what they want, it makes a lot of sense. Our picture books, of course, are kept alphabetical and are sometimes separated by age group at the bigger libraries... Younger children usually don't have a grasp of 'genre.'"

This second librarian helped me identify what we really needed to be asking—how can we best serve our particular reader population? Ms. McDaniels believes that "the important thing is to have a system. The specifics matter less than making sure your system adheres to the guiding principle of cataloging: to enable the patron to find a book. What does that mean? Well, there are basically two ways people look for books: 1) S/he knows what s/he wants (e.g. title, author, subject—The Researcher) and 2) S/he doesn't know or has only a vague sense of what s/he wants—The Browser). As long as every book has a clearly articulated system of labeling, the first kind of patron can look in the catalog, which will tell him/her exactly where the book can be found. The Browser, however, is better accommodated when all similar books are together, like we do with nonfiction."

While this may not be the best method for every library, I believe it will better meet our particular middle and high school readers' needs. So far, student feedback has been uniformly positive – our readers are excited to see their favorite genres celebrated and to find the types of books they love all in one spot. Once we have completed our entire reorganization, we will celebrate with a grand re-opening. And perhaps later that evening I'll toast my first and best love Dewey with a nice little glass of rosé.

Leigh Morlock is the librarian at the Health and Science School in Beaverton. She is also an instructor at Portland State and the current Intellectual Freedom chair for the OASL Board. When she's not reorganizing her library, she likes to practice her mortal superpower: skee-ball.

Why We Need Libraries

By Rita Ott Ramstad

In the February issue of *Educational Leadership*, Mark Bauerline explores a possible reason some 40% of college students graduate from high school unable to meet the reading demands of their courses: inexperience with reading complex, print-based text. One suggestion he offers for remedying this is occasionally assigning students to complete research without using any electronically-based sources of information—an idea I shared with my two children, both in the 7TH grade this year.

“But, Mom,” my son asked, genuinely puzzled, “can you do that? How can you do research without Google?”

His twin sister laughed as I smacked my forehead and otherwise expressed dismay.

“Really, Will—are you serious?” I asked. “Do you mean you’ve never done research without Google?”

He thought for a minute. “Oh!” he finally exclaimed, face lighting up. “Yeah, I have. Sometimes I use Wikipedia!”

Re-run my horror and his sister’s amusement.

This would be funny if he were joking, but he was serious. It might be understandable if he were a reluctant, under-achieving reader/student, or the product of a sub-standard school system, but he isn’t either of those things.

He is, in fact, a highly skilled reader and TAG student in a school that regularly receives satisfactory AYP ratings. Based upon his OAKS scores and classroom assessments, he is among the highest achieving students in his district.

What’s happening here? How can an accomplished student harbor such a fundamental misconception about finding information? I can point easily to two causes:

1. Will has not been required to do much research.
2. When Will has been required to do research, he’s received little instruction in research processes.

Underlying both of these, I see a deeper problem: Will has never attended a school with a certified librarian on staff.

As a literacy coach, I welcome and applaud the emphasis I see on basic literacy. Oregon’s new high school graduation requirements will ensure that a diploma means a student has achieved the essential

skill of reading (starting with the class of 2012). However, I fear that in the push to get all students over the basic literacy bar, we are neglecting information literacy. While it’s great that more students will be able to read at higher levels, I wonder what they will be reading—and how they will be evaluating and using the information they find.

Our school librarian (one of the few left in east Multnomah County) has shared with me that in our efforts to get all students over the literacy bar, our practices around teaching research have changed. Where we used to have a school-wide plan for teaching research skills, we now have none. Some teachers bring students to the library to do research, but not all do. When they do, the usual practice is to put them on computers and let them go.

It is my fervent hope that Oregon’s adoption of the new common core standards will bring about a needed change. Unlike Oregon’s current language arts standards, the new common core standards address literacy specific to content areas outside of language arts: history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Research is addressed specifically in the college and career readiness anchor standards for writing, which say that students will be expected to:

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

If these standards become implemented in any real way, students will likely be assigned more research projects than they currently are. However, I fear that simply assigning research isn’t enough. They also need educators who can teach them what they need to know about conducting research, and I’m worried that without certified media specialists in their schools, they won’t have them.

I came of age during the era of the *Reader’s Guide*—and I began teaching when the *Reader’s Guide* was still a necessary resource for research. As a student and new teacher, it was easy for me to keep up with what was available for finding information. I remember when it suddenly became difficult. And then, when I stopped trying. I knew how to find the kinds of things

I specifically needed, but I knew there were worlds of things out there that I didn't know about. One reason I didn't worry about it much was that I knew it wasn't my job to do so. It was the media specialist's job. I knew that when I needed more for my students, I could go to the media specialist for help.

Now, of course, many schools have no media specialist, which means our students are dependent upon generalists when it comes to their information literacy needs. Many teachers and administrators I know don't see a real problem with that. I do.

Older teachers (like me) have the same issues I do: So much of what students need to learn was not around when we were in school. We just don't know all we need to. But I also have concerns about younger teachers. At the risk of sounding like the kind of teacher I used to roll my eyes at when I was new to teaching, I have to say that I wonder about younger teachers who came of age with Google. Abundant "information" is all they know, and I wonder how that has shaped their thinking and understanding about information literacy.

For example, last year I sat in on a meeting of English teachers who questioned the idea that there really is a difference between fact and opinion. These are well-educated, thoughtful, smart educators; I respect each of them. However, there is a definite difference between fact and opinion, which our students need to know. Their discussion, I think, is a reflection of a world in which we no longer draw clear lines between news and opinion, in which we no longer strive, as we once did, for impartial or objective reporting of "facts." I think it is a reflection of people swimming in oceans of media. I think many believe we no longer have the need for librarians that we once did because everyone can access information so easily—but to my mind, we need them now more than we ever have. There are so many sources of information, and so much we need to know about how to evaluate the information we find. When we have an abundance of knowledge in any field, we have more need for specialists who can sift through and evaluate all of it—not less.

It's a discouraging time to be a student in a library media program. In my part of Oregon, many of the few who are left have already been told that their positions will be eliminated in the next round of budget cuts, which are about to begin. More than I am discouraged about my future job prospects, however, I am discouraged about what this trend means for the future of our world.

As I talked with my son, I couldn't help but think about a novel I used to assign my students, MT Anderson's *Feed*. Early in the book-- an account of a dystopian future in which most people have a "feed" implanted in their brains-- the narrator, Titus, tells readers about the advantages of the feed, an information and communication device that is like the Internet on steroids:

"That's one of the great things about the feed—that you can be supersmart without ever working. Everyone is supersmart now. You can look up things automatic, like science and history, like if you want to know which battles of the Civil War George Washington fought in..." Titus, like my son, is a smart kid. He questions, and wonders, and imagines. But he is sorely limited by the things he doesn't know, his inability to find answers, and a society filled with those who don't care about what they don't know. I don't want a world in which everyone is "supersmart" because all they have to do is go to Google or Wikipedia to learn all there is to know. I want to live in a world with school librarians, specialists who can help my son—and everyone's children—learn how to navigate the sea of information that surrounds him.

Source List:

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Rita Ott Ramstad, a student in PSU's library media specialist program, works as a Title I coordinator and literacy coach at Centennial High School in Gresham, Oregon. She previously taught English in the Gresham-Barlow School district, most recently at The Center for Advanced Learning.



Creating Powerful Literature Circles in the Classroom

By Shelly Buchanan

I started in the library at Stafford Primary last year with little in the way of formal library training. My background has instead been in teaching language arts at multiple levels. With this experience I was entrusted to reinvent the library as the learning commons with a focus on authentic, student-centered research and inquiry, as well as fiction and non-fiction literature promotion. I felt ready for the challenge but unsure of exactly where to begin.

Fortunately, I was almost immediately invited into Tina Allahverdian's fourth grade classroom to participate in a literature circle. Reading and discussing books was an area of comfortable knowledge and experience for me—this I could do! While it's true that I was well-read on lit circles, it is also true that I had never managed a lit circle in my own classes. I'm not really sure why. It's just how things happened. So, the opportunity to participate in a group with a seasoned teacher at the helm was an exciting proposition that I was eager to accept.

To begin our work together, Tina and I met first in the book room for the process of debating best books to offer her students. She wisely honed the list down to 8 or 9 selections for a total of 6 groups, wanting to be sure there was choice enough for all students. After the book talks, the student selection process, and our first organizational meeting, we started our reading together. With eager anticipation, I met with our first group. Students came with their "assigned roles" (illustrator, connector, questioner, etc.), and with their journals, and novels in hand. But, not surprisingly, most children immediately abandoned their assigned roles and couldn't help but exclaim about the opening chapters of their mystery story, *The Door Before Time*. The author, Ulysses Moore, ingeniously leaves the reader hanging in suspense at the end of each chapter, and so the kids in our group exclaimed with predictions right away.

Enthusiasm was quickly doused, however, by one earnest student's reminder, "We needed to go through our roles, you guys." And thus we began the ritualized turn-taking around the circle that is prescribed by the traditional lit circle methodology, with each student sharing what they wrote or drew. Almost immediately, the energy we started with dwindled, as each student politely "listened" to the others. Students shared what amounted to a listing out of thoughts and ideas, and not much more.

Over the course of the four weeks allocated for these circles, Tina and I met several times to track our experience with the students and revise our procedures. It was pretty clear to both of us that we needed to adjust the structure of the circles in order to loosen up the stilted discussion that seemed to result when students attempted to follow the prescribed procedures. We wondered how we could best support students in finding a more authentic and natural flow to their discussion—one that was purposeful, deep and dynamic, like the kinds of discussions we imagined successful adult book groups might have.

Serendipitously, as Tina and I were having these conversations at work, I was asked by a long-time neighborhood friend about starting a book club. I jumped at the opportunity and knew that Tina would be my first invitee. With eight other women, we launched our group late in the fall. So far, we have read and met to discuss three novels—Tina and I taking mental notes all the while to bring back to the classroom. Through this experience with a group of lively adults, we have learned some important lessons that we have applied to our fourth grade lit circles at Stafford. For example, we have been reminded of the need for participants to spend a measure of time socializing. We have learned as well the potential fruitfulness of some digression. We've also been reminded about the benefits of careful listening and thoughtful responses. And we have appreciated the power of expanding one's own perspective through the ideas of others.

In addition to using our own adult book group to guide our work with students' literature circles in the classroom, Tina and I have explored various professional models and strategies for teaching and supporting reading comprehension and discussion. Our sources include the Harvey and Goudvis Comprehension Toolkit, the Units of Study for Teaching Reading by Lucy Caulkins, as well as readings about the student-centered discussion method espoused in the "Harkness" method of discussion used at Philips Exeter Academy for the last 75 years.

From our readings, our observations, and our own book group experience, we know that students need to come to the circle prepared with observations, connections, questions, and predictions. We know that students need a strategy for collecting, keeping and organizing these thoughts. We also know that students need techniques for engaging in sustained meaningful and substantive discussions about literature.

In order to get to the children to the point where this all works for them over the course of a few weeks, we practiced with students a variety of reading strategies, including various thought-collecting and note-taking techniques. We watched and debriefed videotapes of dynamic, deep, and well-balanced student-led lit circle discussions where adults remained outside the circle. We also practiced the art of serious, in-depth discussions, reading short stories as a whole class and then observing and critiquing first circles of brave students held in a fishbowl. Then, we crossed our fingers and launched new book groups.

We asked our committed volunteer parents to only observe the student circles. We encouraged students to take the lead in guiding their own discussions, remaining sensitive to “sharing the floor,” listening deeply, responding to one another, and exhausting important ideas. Tina and I shared with the students our experiences in the adult book group outside of school, underscoring the importance of attentiveness to the content of the conversation and to the content of our own thoughtful contributions and questions. We also focused children’s attention on the importance of sensitivity to balanced sharing. We explained to our students that while this should be an enjoyable and stimulating experience, it is not intended to be simply a social hour.

Today, we are observing fourth grade groups of four to six students as they share impressions, observations, questions, connections and predictions about the text. We are routinely reminding students of the goals: to think, to listen, to share, to go as deep as possible. Tina has the goals and strategies for this work clearly written on anchor charts posted prominently in the classroom. And, for the most part, the discussions now feel authentic and kid-centered. We have noticed students nudge one another to get back on track and stay focused. More talkative students will draw quieter ones out. Together, students will turn to the text and read aloud for one another. Comparisons are made. Questions emerge. Disagreements occur. Perspectives expand.

Through our work with both the daytime class of fourth

graders and our occasional evening group of adult readers, we have learned the importance of giving the responsibility of the discussion over to the students. By removing the formal roles that we found limiting and putting students in charge of managing the conversation themselves in the moment, we have helped students discover the power and importance of their own thoughts and voices and to appreciate and genuinely consider the thoughts and voices of their peers.

Does it take longer for fourth graders to get to cover important issues? Sometimes. Do kids socialize and get off track? Yes, but not for long, if given lots of opportunity to practice and critique the art of discussion. Do students feel more ownership and interest in their work with literature students? I believe so. Do fourth graders go deep enough and discuss important themes in the book? Almost always. They do this naturally somehow—all in a fourth grade way, of course. And, is our work done here? No way! Tina and I very much look forward to our on-going reflection and revisions to the process of literary exploration. In order to do our best by our students, we will constantly refine our approach, re-teach strategies, organize fishbowls and videotape for larger group observation and critique, and coach on the spot by listening to the ideas and reflections of our students.

It’s an ongoing evolution, for Tina and me and our students. But our hope is that students are learning not only about the joys of reading and literature, but about the fruits of collaborative inquiry and deep thinking, and the benefits of stimulating, spirited, and respectful exchanges with each other. This important work dovetails perfectly with the mission of the library as learning commons.



Shelly Buchanan lives in Portland and teaches in West Linn. This is her second year as the teacher librarian at Stafford Primary School. She previously spent several years teaching language arts at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

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What's in a Name?

By Jennifer Scypinski

School Librarian.
Teacher-Librarian.

Library Media Specialist. Media-Technology Specialist. Media & Technology Teacher: all titles, all labels. So much stock is put into labels. In a world where tagging has become so important and proliferate it only makes sense. Our title is our tag and it helps people to identify, classify, and categorize us. When I initially landed this job, my first teaching job, I was so excited to jump in and show the community just what can be done in a library; I was adamant that I be called a librarian. After all, I had just spent three years of my life earning a Master's of Library Science degree while being dually enrolled in a graduate program for my teaching license. I was proud of that education and felt that I earned the title of school librarian, or teacher-librarian.

My elementary school has always been very tech-tool centered while the traditional "library" side was ignored. The library and computer lab, all in one big open space, has always been called The Hub. To me, this label spoke volumes of the school's former priority of tech-tools over literacy, or books. While I have never formally changed the name, I have always referred to this teaching and learning space as "the library." This name, this title, label, or tag was important to me; it illustrated the information literacy priority.

Now, more than six months into my dream job, I find that my drive to stick to the titles of teacher-librarian and library, and my attempts to educate people that librarians today are "Not Your Mother's Librarians", may have backfired.

So many pieces are written about the, "new 21ST century librarian," yet we are still seen as gate-keepers of books. The staff and families at my school get it. The teachers have welcomed co-planning and co-teaching various units with me. They are comfortable consulting with me on

literature, research, and technology. They trust in my abilities as both a teacher and an information, technology, literacy, and literature specialist (librarian). Students are being exposed to learning at a completely different level than they have ever known before. This is the level of education that teacher-librarians directly contribute to, and it simply cannot occur without us. Unfortunately, the people at the building level do not make the budget decisions. The people at the district level make these weighty budget decisions; perhaps all they see is a title - a label, a tag. To them does teacher-librarian = prep-time + book-checking?

Image matters. Librarians are still generally viewed as retro and funky at best, shushing book-checkers and archaic at worst. With looming budget-cuts, connecting to the technology side is crucial to the survival of our libraries. Libraries are the hub of learning, the hub of community, the hub of technology. Each of these pieces interconnects in an inseparable web.

Title matters. We must make our jobs transparent. We need to be visible and conspicuous in what we do. We need to continuously inform and demonstrate our direct, positive effect on student learning. Put it on the web, push it to the community.

Who am I? I am a library-technology teacher. I teach information literacy using cutting edge technology tools while connecting our students to the global community. We do this work in The Hub.

Our title is our tag and it helps people to identify, classify, and categorize us.

Jennifer received her MLS from Emporia State University and her teaching license and media endorsement from Portland State University. She is a first-year library-technology Teacher at Deer Creek Elementary School in Tigard.



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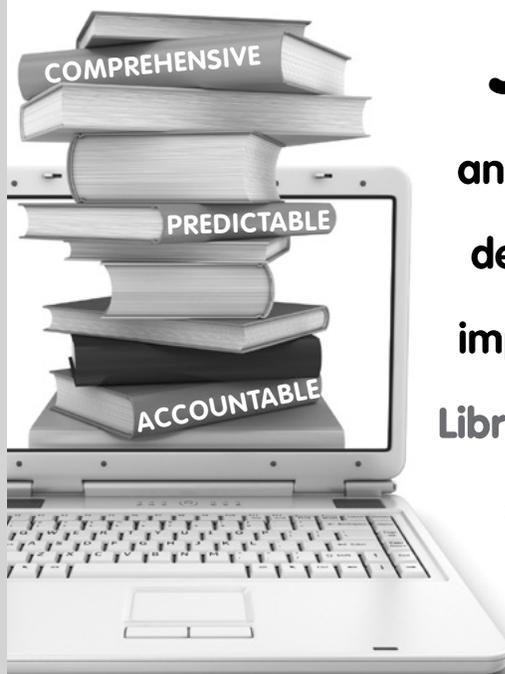
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 and commit to the development and implementation of **Library Information and Technology programs.**

Teacher-Librarian Highlights

TEACHER-LIBRARIAN SUMMIT

WEDNESDAY • MARCH 2 • 9 AM – 4 PM

Information and technology literacy for all students is too important to be hit-and-miss. Teacher-librarians must step up and commit to developing and implementing library information and technology programs that are

- Accountable (measured and reported)
- Comprehensive (reaching all users)
- Predictable (consistent over time)

WORKSHOPS – WEDNESDAY/THURSDAY

- Classrooms in the Cloud: Netbook & Google
- Creating Collages with Adobe Photoshop
- eAudiobooks Orientation
- Google Lit Trips Meet Library of Congress Maps
- Google Lit Trips? YEAH! Show me HOW!
- Library of Congress: Books as Hooks to Primary Sources
- Library of Congress: Creating Primary Source
- The Classroom Computing Cyber Circus

SESSIONS - THURSDAY/FRIDAY

- Access Denied! Blocked Sites or Blocked Opportunities?
- InfoQuest: A New Twist on Info Literacy
- Library of Congress: Advanced Searching
- Library of Congress: Literacy Tools for the Classroom
- Library of Congress: Professional Development Opportunities for Educators
- Library of Congress: Teacher Resources
- LIT Programs

To see more Teacher-Librarian presentations, visit www.ncce.org for the most up-to-date information. Early bird Summit registration deadline: January 31, 2011. After January 31, fee is \$225. *Workshops and Summits are optional and an additional registration cost is required.



Changing Perceptions of School Libraries from Nice to Necessary

By Donna Vandiver

“Retool, Rethink, and Reenergize!” has been the rallying cry for library media programs across the state over the last decade. It is now more important than ever to establish the relevance of library media resources within school curricula and focus on student learning. We need to ask how our school library programs are making a difference in achieving overall instructional goals within our schools.

Library teachers within Portland’s Archdiocese are working together with Dr. Julie Vogel, Director of Instructional Services and Accreditation for the Department of Catholic Schools, to create a common philosophy statement and a set of common goals for Catholic school library media programs. As a first step, we have formally adopted the *AASL Standards for the 21ST-Century Learner*. For the past six years, I have been the facilitator for the diocesan library media teachers and we meet monthly to share ideas, give support to each other, and to establish a shared strategy to integrate library media curriculum across core subjects.

We are fortunate to have the necessary support from district leaders and our principals to work on better integration of technology into core curriculum and to strengthen the collaboration between classroom teachers and library media programs. The diocesan library teachers are developing Library Media Curriculum Maps that include connections to enduring understandings and essential questions that directly support classroom curricula.

I urge you to take time to read the article *Six Steps to Saving Your School Library Program* by Allison Zmuda, published in the February 2011 issue of *School Library Monthly*. The author gives practical suggestions on how to redevelop your library media program with clarity of purpose that fosters connections across classrooms and content. She also includes a one page chart summarizing the action steps needed to implement change. Recognizing the difficulty in managing change, especially within

established classroom curricula, I have found success through establishing myself as a true partner with the classroom teachers—offering library resources to directly support their work with students. Both teachers and students benefit from this model of cooperative teaching through shared planning, implementation, and assessment. This model has established the Archbishop Howard School library media program as not just nice but necessary.

Working with fellow library teachers to establish and share best practices in our field, working with administrative staff as the champions of technology integration, and working with classroom teachers as true partners in education is a combination where the students are the ultimate winners. Success, however, also requires creating visibility and support within the school community. With this in mind, I set out to design what I hoped would be a visually appealing promotional brochure for my library media program. I turned to a tool that I have used with my students and created a Wordle™. I wanted to create a concise description of a library program that is an integral part of the curriculum, that reveals networking with classroom teachers to teach information literacy, and that motivates students to learn. To accomplish this I called on my library media peers in the Catholic Schools of Portland and asked them to send me three words that describe what we do as library teachers. Many replied with concern that three words were not enough to describe the importance of our role as educators; I assured them that the strength of their words would be combined with the wisdom of other library media teachers to create a quick glimpse into the nature of our jobs. In the Wordle, you’ll find the words research, conclusions, search, authors, hands-on, inspire, collaborate, connections, learning and so many more that apply to all the things we do every day. I feel blessed to be part of OASL and appreciate the opportunity to connect with other library media teachers throughout Oregon, to share ideas and resources, and to help all of us become more visible.



Donna Vandiver is the librarian at Archbishop Howard Catholic School in Portland.



Intellectual Freedom

by Leigh Morlock,
Intellectual Freedom Chair

Ammon is a six-year-old Egyptian boy, born during the Nile's flood season thousands of years before Christ. His mother calls him her little crocodile—just as she catches a glimpse of him, she says, he disappears again. Someday he will be a farmer, like his father. He helps now, walking the fields after the seeds are sown to grind them into the silty earth. But Ammon is a little crocodile. He knows how to glide silently into hiding spaces, like behind the temple wall with the big crack in it, where he can sit and watch the scribes record their magic on papyrus. For Ammon, the real magic is the papyrus itself, the red and black inks, and the scribes' fingers, which somehow know how to turn the airy nothing of a word into something as real as a stalk of wheat. For Ammon, who is not part of the tiny upper class, reading and writing will remain magic, an impenetrable mystery, all his life.

Thousands of years later, impassioned by the propaganda of their new Chancellor—a high-school dropout named Adolf Hitler—German university students gather around a bonfire and roast over 20,000 books, including works by Einstein, Hemingway, Wells, Freud, Marx, Gide, and dozens of others. Why would Hitler's New Order not include access to such books? Why was it especially important that students reject them? Hitler boasts, "In my castles of the Teutonic Order a youth will grow up before which the world will tremble. I want a brutal, domineering, fearless, cruel youth."

Sometimes access to information is denied us because of who we are or where we're born or how much we have, as it was for little Ammon, as it is for the Dalits of India, as it is for the girls and women of Afghanistan and the children of the poorest places in the United States and the world. And sometimes we pull intellectual slavery toward us, as Hitler's Youth did, and make the terrible choice of darkness over light. Regardless of how it happens, an immutable truth arises from the history of human beings: There never has been and never will be true freedom or true democracy without equal access to knowledge.

In light of the economic situation in the state of Oregon, and the budget shortfalls hitting every school district, school librarians and other educators are rightly fearful of the future. We know that libraries are a necessary

part of a democratic society. We know the library is sometimes the only place our students have access to both books and technology. As we close school libraries or remove trained professional librarians or reduce library budgets to zero, we are taking a perilous step, a step away from freedom and a step toward aristocracy, where only those with certain means have access to knowledge, where many students will suffer and fall behind.

Our school libraries are in a fragile position right now, even before we see the impact of these pending budget cuts. According to the Oregon Department of Education, in 2008 there were 1315 elementary, middle, and high schools in the state, and only 365 of them employed certified school librarians. Most of the schools with no library staff also have zero library budget, which means no new books and no new technologies are available to students. Can these children move into adulthood with the hope of competing with those who can afford to buy the access they need?

On the American Library Association Intellectual Freedom website under "Equality and Equity of Access: What's the Difference?" Nancy Kranich writes, "... [W]hen a society is stratified into poles of advantage and disadvantage, with the inevitable consequence of privilege and exclusion, the promise of equal access to the discourses necessary for democratic participation rings hollow."

True democratic participation means that our citizens may freely and equally find the information they need to become educated voters and community members. If this principle, one of our very foundations as Americans, is ringing hollow, it is because we are gradually approaching and then crossing a line that should never be crossed, a line held by libraries as symbols of our commitment to freedoms we often claim worth fighting for, even worth dying for. And because I know that librarians are every bit as passionate about freedom as any musket-toting revolutionary ever was, I am including a list of ways we can get involved in defending libraries, defending education, and, by doing so, defending the very best parts of our country.

Get inspired: <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/iftoolkits/toolkitrelatedlinks/equalityequity.cfm>

Write your congressperson: <https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

March on Washington: <http://www.saveourschoolsmarch.org/>



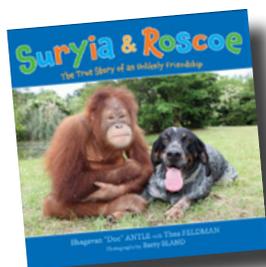
New Favorites

Book Reviews by Joann Lum



Rosenthal, Eileen. *I Must Have Bobo*. Illus. by Marc Rosenthal. 2011. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster. 40p. \$14.99. 978-1-4424-0377-2. Ages 4–7. In their first collaborative project and Eileen’s picture book debut, this talented couple has created

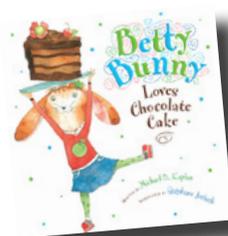
a very funny story of a boy, a sock monkey, and a very naughty cat. When toddler Willy wakes up, he realizes that his security sock monkey, Bobo, is missing! After reminiscing about how much the monkey gives him the courage to face life (e.g., going down the slide, walking past a big dog), he explodes in his need to have his Bobo after his persistent cat, Earl, repeatedly steals the monkey. Throughout the light yellow pages, the sepia-toned pencil drawings (with only Bobo, Earl, and Willy colored in retro colors of turquoise, brick red, gray, and mustard yellow) perfectly capture the impatience of a young child and his need for instant satisfaction. The illustrations paired with the text, printed in all capital letters, have a comic strip appearance. With no moralizing attitudes of trying to tame the toddler’s frustration, or perhaps make his attachment to the cat more important than his attachment to the sock monkey, this literary team presents a very realistic view of a child’s relationship to a cherished object and at times, a reactionary attitude toward a pet.



Antle, Bhagavan “Doc” & Thea Feldman. *Suryia & Roscoe: The True Story of an Unlikely Friendship*. Photographs by Barry Bland. 2011. Henry Holt. 32 p. \$16.99. 978-0-8050-9316-2. Ages 4–9. Specializing in

animal-based editorial features in newspapers and magazines around the world, newcomer children’s book photographer, Barry Bland, captures the unexpected intensity of love and friendship between an orangutan and a dog in this fascinating book. When a lost dog comes bursting out of the woods in an animal preserve, Suryia, the orangutan, immediately hugs Roscoe, the dog. Their reciprocal affection is documented in this

heart-warming story illuminating animals’ emotions. The book’s language and layout are perfect for the beginning/emergent reader. Most of the short sentences follow the subject/predicate pattern, which give predictability for the novice reader. Also, the multiple photographs displaying action directly correspond to the descriptions in the text: “Suryia hugged Roscoe and smiled. Roscoe’s tail wagged back and forth and back and forth. That was his way of smiling. Suryia and Roscoe acted just like long-lost friends.” Additional information in the author’s note explains the demise of orangutans in the wild and how this wildlife preserve in South Carolina, called T.I.G.E.R.S. (The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species), is helping to support the protection of endangered species.



Kaplan, Michael B. *Betty Bunny Loves Chocolate Cake*. Illus. by Stéphane Jorisch. 2011. Dial Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Penguin. 32p. \$16.99. 978-0-8037-3407-4. Ages 3–6. In Kaplan’s

splendidly illustrated first book for children, contemporary family culture is beautifully shown. “Betty Bunny was a handful. /She knew this because her mother always said, ‘Betty Bunny, you are a handful.’ And her father always said, ‘Your mother sure is right about that.’ Determined and picky Betty Bunny is reluctant to eat her mother’s chocolate cake, declaring it yucky before even trying it. After Betty Bunny tries it, she falls in love with the cake; all she thinks about and yearns for is chocolate cake. Jorisch’s endearing rabbit family members display unique characteristics that add depth to the plot-driven text, e.g., the older brother bunny’s clothing, facial expressions, and posture all reflect a typical teenager. The family dynamics add warmth to this story about patience, sibling angst, and childlike behavior. The colorful pencil, ink, watercolor, and gouache action-packed illustrations cleverly provide a lot of detail: the owl teacher’s shirt made of feathers, Betty’s striped stockings, the mother’s wide-legged pants, the brother’s plaid lounge pants. Readers will be surprised at the ending when Betty Bunny very carefully stuffs the piece of chocolate cake into her sock.



Ohora, Zachariah. *Stop Snoring, Bernard!* Illustrated. 2011. Henry Holt. 32p. \$16.99. 978-0-8050-9002-4. Ages 3-7. Bernard has a problem...he snores! Although he loves his life in the zoo, he keeps the other otters awake. When he tries to sleep at other locations, he always hears the same dreaded three words:

“STOP SNORING, BERNARD!” He tries sleeping in a lake, but the alligators get mad; he tries sleeping in a fountain, but the giraffes are miffed. Finally, he finds a place by himself: “Bernard was sad and lonely. He found a tucked-away place, curled up by himself, and drifted off to sleep.” At last, his otter friends come to him with apologies and invite him back home. The turquoise, mustard, red, and black tones permeate the large, close-up illustrations of beloved zoo animals that often continue off the page. “STOP SNORING, BERNARD!” repeatedly appears in large black writing in speech balloons which will induce the participation of young listeners. Painted in acrylic on paper, the clever artwork resembles woodcuts, but with a retro flair! Themes of tolerance and acceptance in a community will resonate with young children in this visually stimulating book that is sure to be read again and again.



Sternberg, Julie. *Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie*. Illus. Matthew Cordell. 2011. Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams. 128p. \$14.95. 978-0-8109-8424-0. Ages 9-12. Eight-year old Eleanor is not happy; her beloved babysitter is moving to Florida: “We had a going-away party for Bibi. / All of her

friends came. / Angela and Connie and Blossom and Dee. / Everyone gave her presents. / Except for me. / I could not make Bibi a good-bye present. / Or pick one out.” With the help of her new babysitter and her understanding, working parents, Eleanor begins to welcome the new changes in her life (e.g., summer absence of her best friend, a new sitter, a new school year) while simultaneously grieving her loss of her friend and babysitter, Bibi. In this time-ordered, yet reflective, story, children will see that time tends to soften grief and that friendship transcends time and distance. The abundant black and white and gray-scaled illustrations, similar in style to Bernard Waber, perfectly compliment the amusing running prose, showing her fun life in Brooklyn. This debut author’s bold use of free verse in a beginning chapter book allows her to consistently present Eleanor’s voice in this cute story that is filled with the kinds of detail that little girls will love. Reading all twenty-seven chapters is sure to boost the confidence of independent readers who will certainly clamor for more of these wholesome, yet contemporary books about this sweet and spunky third grader.

===== **NOTICE** =====

Important Information Regarding

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at the time of your renewal with your other fees.





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OASL/OEMA INTERCHANGE welcomes submissions of interest to OASL members. Successful activities, project ideas, and news from the field are all welcome. Share information and ideas by sending a contribution today. If you have questions, contact the people listed below and we will be happy to help you.

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