



CTLS Newsletter

December 2010 No. 96

'Tis the Season for Giving Gifts

By Pat Tuohy

December is the season for gift giving and receiving. Public libraries all over Texas will be receiving gifts in memory of loved ones and from individuals who just want to thank their local library for the wonderful services they provide for free to all who walk through the door. Day after day, librarians help, encourage, read, and listen to patrons of all ages and from all walks of life without thought to personal gain. From time to time this good work that you all do is recognized in ways that are both unexpected and delightful. This is exactly what happened to the Taylor Public Library and the Moody Museum in Taylor Texas. Below is a short and wonderful story from Karen Ellis at the Taylor Public Library that is perfect for this holiday season.

"Mr. Louis K. Ned was a quiet, unassuming library patron, living in Taylor his whole life. He served in World War II as a tech sergeant in the Air Corps manning the nighttime radar. Louis worked for the post office for 25 years, and was active in the community. He never married, never had children, though he had nieces and nephews. Mr. Ned became very active in the local real estate market and was quietly quite successfully. He worked to get the Moody Museum recognized and thoroughly enjoyed the Taylor Public Library and reading, even when he couldn't come in himself in later years.

Mr. Ned passed away last spring. A couple of months ago his cousin Mr. Kim Ochs from Fort Worth came to the Library to use the free internet as they were in Taylor to see the attorney about Mr. Ned's estate. Kim mentioned that there would be a very nice bequest coming from his late cousin's estate for the Library and the Moody Museum. No figures were given, though it was implied that it would be "significant." The announcement of the bequests to the Library and Moody were to be announced in the afternoon after the reading of Mr. Ned's will here in Taylor. The Moody Museum was decked for the reception. Finally, the announcements were made for all to hear. The Moody Museum received a check for \$287,098.04 from Mr. Ned. The Taylor Public Library received a check for \$346,199.47. This was very, very unexpected because the family members and close friends of Mr. Ned kept the amounts of the gift a close secret.

Needless to say, the Moody Museum has numerous needs that this wonderful gift can address. The Library will use Mr. Ned's gift to continue to put great books on the shelf and update heavily used equipment—the whole community will benefit from Mr. Ned's generosity.

Be nice to your quiet, little patrons. They are your most solid supporters, your loyal defenders, and you never know when one might be a millionaire."



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Disaster Preparedness at the ARLS Conference

By Laurie Mahaffey

The recent Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference in Denver included a pre-conference on Disaster Preparedness. Central Texas is at the bottom of Tornado Alley and is 200 miles from the Texas Gulf Coast, with the possibility of occasional hurricane winds and rain. Ice storms sometimes paralyze our communities in the winter. Flash floods can come at any time of the year.

Because of all this impending meteorological doom, it is essential that every city, county, and library have a disaster plan. Talk to local officials and have a Disaster Planning meeting to clarify roles and responsibilities. After dialing 911, who would you call if the library had a fire? Are the telephone numbers of all your staff in your cell phone? Just as important, do all staff know the people to call if the director is away or unavailable?

Investigate your library's insurance, and find out what it covers. How high is your deductible? Is your city or county "self-insured"? Make sure your city or county officials know that your library materials are more valuable than an insurance adjuster may think. Be prepared with a collection count (call us if your annual report burned up!) so that there is a starting point for replacement costs. Keep a current inventory of all your furnishings and equipment off-site as well.

Think about disasters of two types: 1. a disaster confined to the library, such as a fire (heaven forbid!); 2. a regional disaster, like a flash flood, hurricane, ice storm, or tornado. Clearly, a library-only disaster, although a tragedy for the library, would be easier to get through than a region-wide disaster.

Consider what part of the library has the most valuable material, and what needs saving first. Draw a floor plan of your library and look with a critical eye at where you have those treasures stored. Are there back-up copies somewhere? If you had 5 minutes to save whatever you could carry out of your building, what would you grab first? Where would you take it? If your library has valuable art work, is it insured enough?

List all the people who would need to be called in case of an emergency at the library: staff, of course; board chair; city manager; mayor; county judge; utility companies (to turn off what needed to be turned off); insurance agent; Friends of the Library president (to gather volunteers to help); neighboring librarians who may be able to take care of your patrons for a few days. Don't forget the system office; we can come out and be with you when the insurance adjuster comes, or help with sorting through materials.

Be prepared with something for the news media. Don't feel pressured to make a statement if the event is unfolding. If you are part of city or county government, make sure the lines are clear about who speaks to the media.

If your library is on more than one level, consider what might be susceptible to flooding. The lessons of Hurricane Ike should remain with us. If your library is called upon to be a storm refugee resource center, could you put cots in the meeting room? Who will monitor the building? What will happen to your staff?

Many of our libraries are in the middle of town (good location!) or right by the railroad tracks (not-so-good). Do you know what is going by in those tank cars? That's why having a chat with city and county officials is essential. One of our communities had a chemical spill this year that closed the library and had everyone "sheltering in place". What does that mean for people who have to pick up children from school?

Talk about disasters with your staff in a calm way. Discuss where you could huddle in case of a tornado. Develop a plan that spells out who is essential personnel (and needs to stay in case of emergency) and who can go home to tend to family in case of a regional disaster. Make sure you have a list of staff next-of-kin in the event of a medical emergency.

The best way to recover wet materials is to freeze-dry them. If there are just a few books (say, if a pipe burst and the damage was not widespread), they could be placed in a freezer so that the water would turn to vapor immediately with a minimum of swelling and damage to the books. Books with lots of photographs on clay-based paper are almost impossible to restore; the clay sticks to itself and the book becomes a brick. A few companies specialize in taking damaged library collections to freeze-dry. Munters (www.munters.com) and Blackmon Mooring (www.blackmonmooring.com) are two with library experience.

Every state in the U.S. has a regional consortium upon whom to call if there is a need for materials recovery. Amigos in Dallas, Texas is our regional resource.

An interesting demonstration of how to recover photographs sitting in water used Mylar (just like for book jacket covering) to bond to the photographs to get them out of the water. The photographs can then be placed on a flat surface with the corners held down with heavy washers so that they dry flatter. I was surprised that the water had not damaged the photographic emulsion. The presenter had Pellon™ as a non-reactive material on which to place the drying photographs.

Another demonstration was of how much water can be absorbed by books. The presenter stood several books upright in a plastic tub and poured water on them, allowing them to sit during the workshop, to be examined at the end of the day. It was a good lesson in why we don't want our best books to get wet.

- 2 I'll be sharing other tips from the conference in the next few newsletter articles. The CTLS Professional Collection has materials that can be borrowed to help you develop a disaster plan.



Mobile Reference and E-Readers for the Complete Idiot

By Jennifer Patterson

As a library branch manager, I was always wishing for a hand-held device that I could carry around the branch to check book donations against our holdings, to determine the date an item last circulated for weeding, or to help patrons find a book which matched their interests. At the time, such a thing didn't exist.

Being a really good example of a technology immigrant (a baby boomer not entirely comfortable with computers but excited by the possibilities), I decided it would be instructive to investigate e-readers and handheld devices for Internet access. We've been attending conferences for several years now on mobile reference and e-books, and CTLS has purchased a number of loanable devices for our members to try. I decided to play with several different pieces of hardware and reading software, see what I thought about the whole deal, and tell you what I think.

First, you have to ask yourself, "Why would the library get involved with e-books? Aren't we consorting with the enemy and contributing to our own demise?" My cousin made that remark when I told him I was thinking about switching over to digital books for recreational reading, and I really had to think about it. Why would we do it?

I found some goals in an article entitled "Mobile Reference: What Are the Questions?" By Joan K. Lippincott, January-March 2010 issue of *The Reference Librarian*. Joan is suggesting that we need to really investigate what our goals are for providing mobile access to the library's resources and services. Here are some possible answers:

- Enhance the convenience of reference service
- Win over individuals who usually don't use the library (like young adults)
- Enrich the library's basic computer instruction program
- Provide e-books and readers to patrons as an alternative to paper books
- Deliver easy-to-access information resources to patrons
- Provide access to local information & community services
- Educate users about the features and uses of mobile devices
- Raise the profile of the library, its staff, and its services

My husband and his nieces are much more tech-savvy than I am. He bought me an iPhone three years ago when he got one. I didn't really use many of its features until Kam asked me to demonstrate the iPhone at last year's Technology Conference. I downloaded some apps, added the Kindle reading software, bought a book to read, and found that I really enjoyed it. Using reading software on the phone really isn't bad. It loads a paragraph at a time, and the type size is fairly large. You turn pages with your thumb – it's pretty cool. Since then, I've tried a Kindle, a Nook, and an iPad (I liked the iPad so much that I bought one last week).

I don't really like single-use devices, like the e-readers. I'm sure there are people who have no interest in exploring the Internet on their phone or tablet, but that seems pretty much like putting locks on the refrigerator. There's so much interesting stuff to look at and listen to!

So my conclusion is: a tablet or notebook which can do lots of things, including function as a reader, is better. But if your customers are determined to get a reader, Borders has a little brochure called "*eReaders for everyone*", which you may want to look at. It compares six different readers in a very useful chart. Kam McEvoy has a similar handout which she will be glad to share.

Large Print News!

By Katelyn Patterson

Something we are very thankful for is new Large Print books! If you currently have a CTLS Large Print Circuit Collection (a collection of 50 newer titles) you will be getting 6 new books in the mail soon. Please just replace 6 of your oldest, most worn or least popular titles with these bright, shiny new books, and send the old ones back to us!

In other Large Print news, there will be a Circuit Rotation **Friday, January 7th!** Please send your books on time! Let me know if you have any questions!



Apps for Librarians

By Kam McEvoy

Thought I'd round up a few apps that might come in handy on a roving librarian's smart phone or iPad. Some are for you, some for the patrons, and some are just to get us thinking about how we can provide services to mobile users (like Ask-Wa). I didn't mention Facebook and Tweetie, but you can also access Facebook and Twitter via your mobile device and promote events, which is something to consider if your city allows this.



Ask-Wa reference (Virtual Reference Cooperative in the State of Washington) A live, interactive chat service that connects patrons in Washington to a librarian, 24/7. Pretty amazing!



WorldCat Mobile Users can search through Worldcat's collection of 1.5 billion items, find a nearby library, and map a route to a library through the WorldCat Mobile iPhone app.



Stanza Wonderful free ebook reader which gives you easy access to all the Project Gutenberg titles, as well as some other free ebook promos like "Try Harlequin". Has options to switch to white-on-black text for late night reading, quickly change font size, etc.



AccessMyLibrary This handy iPhone app from Gale uses GPS to find libraries within a 10-mile radius of your location. You can then select a library and access all its Gale electronic resources. You and your patrons have access to several of the Gale resources through TexShare.



Audiobooks You can use this iPhone app to listen to over 2,800 classic audiobooks for free. Many of the audiobook recordings are pulled from Librivox.



RedLaser Scan product barcodes to check prices in online stores. When you scan book barcodes it will also show you availability in all the libraries which have their holdings on WorldCat.



Local Books Find libraries and bookshops near you, anywhere in the world. Also shows local events (signings, etc), if they've been entered in LibraryThing.



MobileRSS Free ~ Google RSS News Reader Excellent free RSS reader which syncs live with your Google Reader account. Great for catching up on library blogs when you're on the go.



Google Mobile App Free suite of Google products, regularly updated with new stuff. Love the voice recognition web search.



Wikipedia Mobile It can be frustrating to use, but it does remember your search history.



For iPad, **MyCongress** is a portal to detailed information about your elected US Congressional officials. Contact information is available through this free app.

Pulled from the iTunes store and these sites:

- <http://www.apploicious.com/curated-apps/389-librarians-on-the-go>
- <http://musingsaboutlibrarianship.blogspot.com/p/iphone-for-librarians.html>



TANG Tech Tips: Housekeeping

By Holly Gordon



I am not a neat freak, as anyone who has been to my house can attest. However, it is very important to keep up with housekeeping on your computers.

Surge protectors

Check your surge protectors to make sure they are still working, though really all you can do is check that the indicator light is on, and that it looks OK generally. These things are pretty cheap, so replace any you have questions about. I found a 3000+ joules Belkin online for just \$14.50. Remember, an extension cord is NOT a surge protector, and computers should never be plugged directly into a wall socket or extension cord. Also, the only way to completely protect your equipment from lightning is to unplug everything. If you know your building or power source is susceptible to lightning strikes, don't hesitate to shutdown and unplug equipment in a storm.

Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS, aka battery backup)

If you have a UPS for your computer, check that only the things that need to stay up are plugged into it. When I looked around our office recently, I found lights and fans plugged into the battery side of our UPS units. If the power goes out, you are only expecting the UPS to keep the computer, and maybe the monitor, running just long enough for you to shut the computer down properly.

Test your UPS quarterly – shutdown your computer, unplug it from the UPS, and plug a light into the battery side of your UPS. Turn the light on and then unplug the UPS from the wall. You should hear an alarm, and the light should stay on. That means your UPS is working at least minimally. You can then try this test with your computer plugged into the UPS. If you have UPS monitoring software, it should tell you how much battery power the UPS has and if it is charging correctly. You need to replace your UPS if it is no longer keeping a full charge – and this too is relatively cheap protection, about \$60 for a small unit to support 1 or 2 PCs (check www.officedepot.com.) For a server, you want better protection.

Power cords

Check the condition of power cords, and look for power overloads. Avoid plugging extension cords into extension cords. Also avoid having cords run along the floor where people will walk or chairs will roll over them. There are cheap Velcro ties you can use to secure cords to the underside of desks, etc., and even packing tape is acceptable. If cords must be across traffic areas, get special covers for the cords like PowerBack Rubber Duct Protectors. While you are down there crawling on the floor, label your cords ("Circ CPU", "Circ Monitor", etc.) so you know what you are unplugging next time. You can use a fancy label maker...or just use masking tape and a sharpie.

Air flow

Check ventilation around your server especially, and around other computers as well. If the air flow is restricted, clear the space around the computer. If a computer gets too hot, parts will fail.

Cleaning

Also be sure to regularly (once every 3 months or so) power down each computer and clean out the dust. Denise Carter at Lake Whitney Public Library had this situation recently: She uses compressed air and a static-free vacuum (not a regular vacuum cleaner!) to clean out their PCs, but she realized that she didn't regularly clean out her server. So when she had to power down her server due to an error recently, she lugged the server outside and blew it out... and found 2 dead crickets inside! That was not what caused the problems with her server, but it isn't generally a good idea to have small dead animals in your server.

Be kind to your server and other computers, and at least once a quarter:

--run Windows updates (then restart)

--run Disk cleanup or CCleaner: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310312> for a how to for Windows XP <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/315246> to schedule it CCleanup (<http://www.piriform.com/>)

--then run Disk Defragmenter or Defraggler: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/314848> for a how to for Windows XP <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/555098> to schedule Disk Cleanup Defraggler (<http://www.piriform.com/>)

--shut down the server, unplug it, and have someone help you open it up and clean it out (with compressed air, and a static free vacuum if you are inside). Servers are often heavy, so get help moving it!

--also dust off the outside case

Fire!!

And since we are talking about safety, do you know where your fire extinguisher is? Once you have located it, make sure it is still charged, and see if it is a Class C extinguisher for computers and electronics – the label has a blue circle with a C in it or a symbol of a plug and cord on fire. And do you know where your breaker box is, and are the breakers labeled in case you have to turn something completely off?

Showcase 2011 & Other Youth Services Tidbits

By Suzan Nyfeler

Scholastic Books Warehouse Sales – December 2010

Scholastic Books holds several warehouse sales each year. Some are at the warehouses, and some are at temporary locations. Public libraries can go, as can the public. Register as a representative of one of your local schools, and you're good to go. (Yes, Scholastic said this was OK, and no they don't check ID when you come in or anything). This is a great opportunity to advertise with your local schools, moms groups and homeschoolers. Full info – plus other locations – is at: http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs/events/warehouse/states.asp?st_abbrev=TX

December 15-17	Austin
December 15-17	Georgetown
December 14-15	San Marcos
December 3-18	Schertz
December 3-17	Waco

Showcase 2011 – December 10, 2010 at Georgetown Public Library

Register today at <http://showcase-2011-georgetown.eventbrite.com>

SEE the talent BEFORE you HIRE! It's time once again for Showcase, our annual preview of presenters just right for library programs. In every town, the public library is part of the cultural heartbeat. Libraries sponsor special presenters to educate and delight. Schools also have special presentations, as do community events and museums. Libraries - invite your school library friends, planners for your festivals, and museum directors to attend Showcase. We have NEW talent this year, including:

Presenter	Talent	Website
Mr. Puppet	ventriloquist	mripuppet.com
Christine Albert	musician	christinealbert.com
Emauelee Bean/Neo-KlazziK	spoken word	outspokenbean.com
Linda Berman	bubble show	dazzling-events.com
Dinosaur George	paleontologist	DinosaurGeorge.com
Theatre Action Project	live theater	theatreactionproject.org
Austin Reptile Service	reptiles	AustinReptileService.net
Kent Cummins	magic & reading	kentcummins.com
Mr. Leebot	musician	mrleebot.com
Xtreme Kidz Nertainment	costumed magic, stories & balloons	xkn.8k.com
Storybook Theatre	live theater	sbtheatre.com
Texas State Aquarium	science & aquatics	texasstateaquarium.org
Mad Science of Austin	science demonstrations	madscience.org/austin
Dan Gibson	storyteller & banjo player	dangibson.net
Puppets and Me	puppetry	puppetsandme.com
Tom McDermott	storyteller & musician	tommcdermott.com
Joe McDermott	musician	joemcdermottmusic.com
JayeFeathers	storyteller	tipitellers.org
Lucas Miller	singing zoologist	lucasmiller.net
Texas Commission on the Arts	grant funds for libraries	arts.state.tx.us
Bernadette Nason	storyteller	bernadettenason.com
Circus Chickendog	magician	chickendog.net
The Telephone Company	musician	telephonecompanymusic.com
Jiann Powers	storyteller, author, singer	jaanpowers.com
Indigenous Cultures Institute	Native cultures	indigenoucultures.org
Don Sanders	storytelling & song	donsanders.net
Schave & Reilly	vaudeville	schaveandreilly.com
Jan Seides	singer & songwriter	janseides.com
Sugar Free Allstars	funky organ/drum duo	sugarfreeallstars.com
Sue Young	bilingual storyteller	sueyoungmusic.com
Elizabeth Kahura	African storyteller	Safariprogram.com
John O'Bryant	magic & motivation	magicdork.com

Continued from previous page...

Summer Reading Program Registration Software

A few libraries have asked about summer reading program registration software. The top choice – actually the only choice I've found - is Evanced Solutions (<http://www.e-vancedsolutions.com/>). Their Summer Reader software allows for online & onsite registration, prints certificates, allows customers and library staff to manage each child's reading log, provides email confirmations, and more. Libraries using the software include Bedford, Georgetown, Hurst, New Braunfels, San Antonio and Galveston. Toll Free: (888) 519-5770

What to Purchase This Month

Take a look at these award winners, announced in December by School Library Journal, *Best Books of the Year*.

Unattended Children in the Library

Several of you have asked recently about how to deal with unattended children in the library. This perennial issue usually revolves around the safety and behavior of young children being sent to/dropped off at the library, or children not being picked up on time when the library closes.

Every library needs a policy to address these issues. Library policies should be applied equally to everyone, regardless of age, and should focus on behavior, not the age of the customer. One exception is the age at which children can be in the library by themselves. There is no Texas law regarding unattended children. It is a situational issue, related to safety, not age. There is not even a standard age to point to. Your policy needs to fit your community. Before you make an unattended children policy, run the issue by your local law enforcement, schools and social service agency(s). I realize they may not have a dog in this fight but it's good for them to be aware that the library is thinking about this important issue, plus they may have dealt with the issue before and can offer guidance – or at least sympathy. Your board has final say.

Below are some suggestions from central Texas libraries. I think #3 below gives a good starting point on age policies. I'd add the age of the "adult in charge of a child in the building" and make it age 12 or 13. For a quick but thorough solution, I'd read the policies below, edit the West Texas template (link below), insert the ages that work best for me, sleep on it, talk to law enforcement & library board (they need to be behind you), and be done.

Question: What do you do about unattended children in your library? Is it even a problem at your library? Is it something that needs to be written into the library policy? If so, is there an age cut-off?
Answers:

1. We have a written policy stating that children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. While we don't check ID at the door or anything, if a parent asks if they can leave their child or if the child is just dropped off or comes in by themselves and is not exhibiting acceptable behavior we have something to back us up.
2. We really didn't want to write a policy, but had a very bad summer in 2009. We had young kids (5 yr, 8 yr) being dropped off at the library during the summer ALL DAY without meals or adults. Bad, very bad. And some parents would just send their small children off to the Children's Area while they were glued to computer screens, ignoring their children's bad behavior and crying. There were a lot of complaints (one letter of complaint was published in the local newspaper) and I got quizzed by City Council. When we wrote our Unattended Children policy, City Council approved unanimously.
3. Yes, I think it is definitely something that should be included in library policy. I can't imagine a public library not having this problem. Our policy is that children under 6 years have to have someone (parent or adult caretaker) with them at all times, and children 6-10 years must have someone in the building at all times, but they do not have to be right there with them. So children 11 years and older can be in the library by themselves. Also check with your local police department. They probably have an age at which they consider children old enough to be on their own.

A lot about this type of policy needs to be based on local issues and conditions. Look around the community. Do 12 year olds go to the mall on their own? Do 10 year olds go the skate park without a parent? When I've spoken with child welfare staff they say that from a safety standpoint there is not really a minimum age for a child to be unsupervised. It's situational based. So some of this becomes more of a behavior issue. People of ANY age are not welcome in the library if they misbehave. Few people would say that it's okay for a 5 year old to be left unsupervised in any public location. It's less clear whether a 10 year old is okay (as long as he or she is behaving appropriately). For this reason some libraries, like Waco, have both a child safety policy and an unattended children policy (or address them in combination).

Sample Unattended Children Policies:

Boerne: <http://www.ci.boerne.tx.us/index.aspx?NID=352>

Temple: <http://www.ci.temple.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=788>

Val Verde: <http://www.youseemore.com/vvcl/about.asp?loc=20>

New Braunfels: <http://www.nbtexas.org/FAQ.aspx?QID=75>

Austin: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/policies.htm>

West Texas Library System Unattended Children policy template: <http://wtls.tsl.state.tx.us/wtls/consulting/disruptive-unattended-children-policy-template.html>

Statewide responses to this question: <http://www.mail-archive.com/ctls-l@ctls.net/msg06433.html>



CTLS Calendar of Events



December	2-3	Digital Literacy Corps Training ~ Austin, TX
	6-7	Small Library Management ~ Waco, TX
	10	2011 Showcase ~ Georgetown, TX
	16	3rd Thursday ~ Graphic Novels ~ Online
	23-24	CTLS Office Closed for Holidays
	31	CTLS Office Closed for Holidays
January	17	CTLS Office Closed for MLK Holiday
	20	3rd Thursday ~ Books for Texas Reading Club ~ Online
	21	Adult Readers Advisory ~ Burnet, TX
	28	Winter Membership Meeting & Best Books for Beginning Readers Workshop ~ Belton, TX
	28	CTLS Board of Directors Meeting ~ Belton, TX

Register for CTLS workshops and events online at www.ctls.net!

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May Your Days be Merry & Bright...