



CTLS Newsletter

September 2010

No. 93

Five Years Old - A Look Back

By Pat Tuohy

September 1 of this year marks the 5 year anniversary of CTLS, Inc. as the manager and administrator for the System Operations and TANG grants which serve the public libraries in 30 central Texas counties. Between the 25th and 31st of August 2005, CTLS moved its furniture, collections, records, and personnel out of a City of Austin office building and into leased space secured under our new corporate name. Three Austin Public Library staff members made the move with the new corporation, and four stayed with APL. At that time, the System membership boasted 76 member public libraries and an annual budget of \$817,000.

This transition could not have been possible without the overwhelming support of the Advisory Council, Board of Directors, member librarians and staff, the lay representatives, and friends of the Central Texas Library System. Over \$7000 was raised in a 12 month period by the Friends of CTLS, Inc. (FOCTLS) for the Unallowable Reserve Fund, which was required by State Law for a nonprofit regional library system. Individual Friends groups of our member libraries made generous gifts for this purpose to the FOCTLS, as did several individual contributors.

The move into leased space required an upfront cash deposit of \$9000 to cover rent, installation of telecommunications, and corporation insurance. Without a generous loan of \$20,000 from the Tocker Foundation, CTLS, Inc. would not have had the money to make the move. This interest free loan from the Tockers was repaid in full at the Winter Membership Meeting in Temple the following January 2006.

Five Years Young - Looking Forward

Five years later we find a membership that is larger – 79 member libraries; a budget that is smaller - \$473,000; and a system culture that is collaborative and much more entrepreneurial than when we started. Although the annual System Operations Grant has decreased over time, the number of grants managed by CTLS, Inc. has increased. Since 2007, the corporation has pursued 5 grants from private foundations, 2 of which were successfully funded. We have submitted 7 competitive grant applications for federal or state grants and received funding for 6. Over 35 member libraries have participated in the Ready to Read project; 15 CTLS members in the Automation project; 18 libraries received Work Force computers; and 17 libraries completed the E-rate process for federally funded telecommunications discounts. Collaborations with other Texas library systems have strengthened the delivery of services to libraries all over the state.

The next five years as an independent nonprofit promise to be just as challenging and event-filled as the first 5 years. The CTLS Membership will consider changes to the Bylaws at the September 24th membership meeting that would allow other types of libraries to become CTLS members. This expansion has the potential to accelerate cooperation and collaboration between libraries within a community and across the entire region. It would open up opportunities for joint ventures that could benefit all residents in central Texas. The structural changes to the Bylaws could also give the directors of member libraries a vote in the election of corporation Directors and on other corporate business issues. Library staff would become eligible to serve on the Board of Directors for the first time ever.

It is an exciting time to be in the library business and to be involved in developing libraries. I hope that you, as a CTLS member, are as excited about the next 5 years as are the Board and staff. Together we look forward to a future filled with possibilities, challenges, and success.

Happy 5th Birthday CTLS, Inc.!

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CTLS Board of Directors:

Peggy Gibson	Chair
Larry Ringer	Vice Chair
Lyle Thormann	Secretary
Eileen Altmiller	Treasurer
Barbara Crossno	At Large
Muriel Jackson	At Large
Ruth Jennings	At Large
Dick Lavine	At Large
Betty Lowrance	At Large

The Way We Were

By Jennifer Patterson



For several weeks now, I've been thinking back through the five years I've been part of CTLS. So many of our services have changed over those five years! We relocated the CTLS office from the Austin Police Department Annex to our present 41st street office. It felt like heaven to be in our own space, close to shopping and restaurants and my favorite pharmacy. How good can it get? That was a pivotal time for CTLS - the beginning of a new biennium in which we no longer had funds to give members for collection development, but we had more freedom to make our own decisions. It was also the first year that CTLS operated as a nonprofit. We were suddenly responsible for our own payroll and our own withholding taxes. We had to hire an accounting firm, an auditor, set up new contractual agreements with vendors - on some level, everything was new.

Our System Advisory Council morphed into a CTLS governing Board. While that has meant a lot more work for Pat, it has also proved to be an excellent system of checks & balances. The direction of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) began to shift toward multi-type library systems, and many meetings were devoted to discussing the importance of this change.

The policies of the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) also began to shape our training efforts; National priorities were considered more important than nuts-and-bolts library skills, and CTLS staff went through the uncomfortable process of finding trainers to address these priorities. I hope we've managed to meet that goal and still provide a rich array of training offerings. Thanks to Kam, Suzan, and Katelyn, we began using Eventbrite registration system which has greatly improved efficiency of training operations! It's all a blur of coffee, cookies, and stage fright mornings, but we've loved every minute of it.

Our website has been transformed from an off-the-shelf Microsoft product to a Content Management System, rich with photographs, documents, and useful links. Fabulous work, Kam! Thanks to some skillful money management we were able to save and even grow the Large Print Circuit Collection. Many members have taken advantage of our generous back stock of older titles to place collections in nursing homes and senior centers.

Last but not least, we began writing grants - the Every Child Ready to Read program was the first we received through TSLAC (supplemented by the Tocker Foundation). Suzan has done a great job of making this program available in central Texas communities, for the third year now! A grant for automating several 15 member libraries followed, with Laurie leading the charge. This past year, we've been working to improve the job seeking skills in member communities; Jennifer coordinated training and Holly installed workforce computers in communities without Texas Workforce offices. This new fiscal year will be devoted to finding trainers and providing computer skills training for member library patrons. This much-needed service will be coordinated by Laura.

Let's hear it for all the participants in the CTLS collective! We are all doing the best we can to survive the relentless pace of change and still serve our patrons. How good can it get?

What's Happening Around the System...

By Katelyn Patterson

- The **Cedar Park Public Library** has received another \$50,000 Dell Foundation's Literacy Community Grant for the next two years to implement programs for all ages which include the summer reading program, purchase replacement computers and more library materials. This is the 5th cycle that the library has received the grant with a cumulative total of \$250,000.
- Congratulations to our member libraries that recently got awarded the BTOP Grant— **Austin, Elgin, Fairfield, Gatesville, Hewitt, Goldthwaite, Belton, Groesbeck, Salado, Smithville & Valley Mills!**

Brag HERE!

Just contact Katelyn Patterson at

katelyn.patterson@ctls.net

We will include as much as we can fit in each newsletter.



How Storytimes for Preschool Children Can Incorporate Current Research

By Ellen Fader

Reprinted from the Ready to Read website.

Public libraries have been presenting fun and interactive storytimes for many years, engaging children and helping them love books and libraries. These programs typically include a combination of short and long books, music and action rhymes.

Children are surrounded with stimulating speech and interesting topics, creating a language and literacy experience beneficial to their development. These storytimes model for parents how to read enthusiastically and involve their children in books. Parents observe their children's interest and excitement and enjoy together what library staff presents. These programs have excelled in developing a child's print motivation, an important emergent literacy building block.

Recent research in the field of emergent literacy has led to the development of new best practices for public libraries that want to help parents and teachers of preschool children get ready to read. Storytimes that incorporate these practices differ in subtle ways from the storytimes described above; however, building in the early literacy information does not change the basic nature of these programs. Storytimes continue to present the quality characteristics listed above but also contain some additional information for parents and caregivers concerning the reasons and rewards for reading to children.

Library staff who present age-specific storytimes, from babies to preschoolers, can add short, instructive phrases to help adults who are present understand how children are benefiting from the activities and to show them ways they can facilitate children's literacy development. In this way, the library helps to increase parents' and caregivers' skills in developing narrative skills, vocabulary, letter knowledge and phonological sensitivity, in addition to print motivation.

For example, during storytime for babies, the storyteller might tell parents, "Did you know that hearing language actually changes the structure of babies' brains? Language builds more connections between neurons in the brain. So the more you talk with your baby, the more connections she will have in her brain." Also: "Sometimes reading looks like chewing. That's okay because he's learning to feel comfortable with books. Babies who play with book will find it easier to learn to read later on."

During a storytime for toddlers, the storyteller might add, "Toddlers are learning about nine new words a day; books are a wonderful source for this growing vocabulary!" Also: "Toddlers understand many more words than they say, so be sure to talk to them all day long about what you are doing and what they are doing."

In storytime, library staff will also demonstrate specific techniques that facilitate emergent literacy, since how adults read to preschoolers is as important as how frequently children listen to stories. For example, librarians will occasionally model dialogic reading by asking questions in a toddler group so that the child becomes the teller of the story. Because a central basis for learning to read is understanding that words are made up of smaller sounds, librarians will play language games in preschool storytime to demonstrate for parents how to encourage phonological or phonemic awareness. Parents and caregivers will learn how to have fun with phonemes by having children complete the rhymes in songs, such as "Down by the Bay". To encourage narrative skills and to help children learn sequence, the storyteller will occasionally recap a story: "First it started to rain, then the puppy played in the mud puddle, then she got all dirty, and had to get a bath!"

An important thing to remember is that storytime will still be fun if these techniques are used judiciously: some in every program but not every technique with every book. Researchers say that children learn more from books when they are actively involved. All children will benefit from the additional effort to incorporate early literacy information into all age-specific storytimes, but the changes will not be "directive" or "instructional" – just more fun!

Five Year Old Computers

By Holly Gordon

The theme for this newsletter is CTLS's five year anniversary as a non-profit, and five years happens to be a common PC lifespan. In other words, many businesses plan to replace PCs once they are 5 years old.

OK, stop laughing. Yes, I know many of you have PCs that are much older than 5 years. But five year old computers are unreliable and slow therefore wasting your staff and patrons' time. Also, with the advent of Microsoft Office 2007 and Microsoft Office 2010, we are all finding the need to upgrade to this software to keep pace with our patrons' and our staffs' needs. That software upgrade may also mean you need newer hardware.

Minimum requirements for Microsoft Office Professional 2010

These are pretty minimal requirements, and much lower than I would recommend if you were making a new purchase, but check to see how many of your PCs do not meet these requirements:

Computer and processor at least 500 MHz...the example below has about 3400 MHz

Memory (aka RAM) 512 MB recommended...the example below has 2000 MB

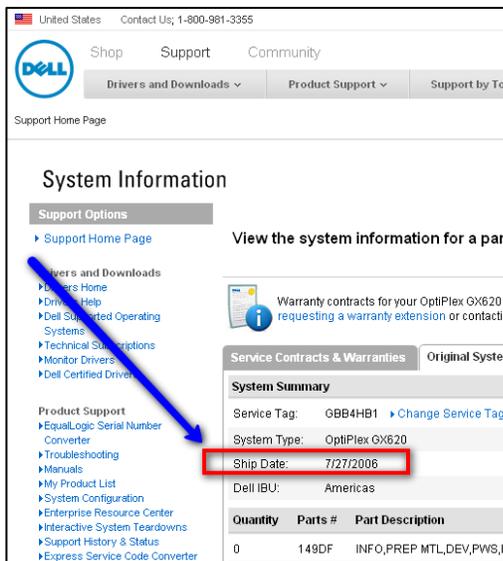
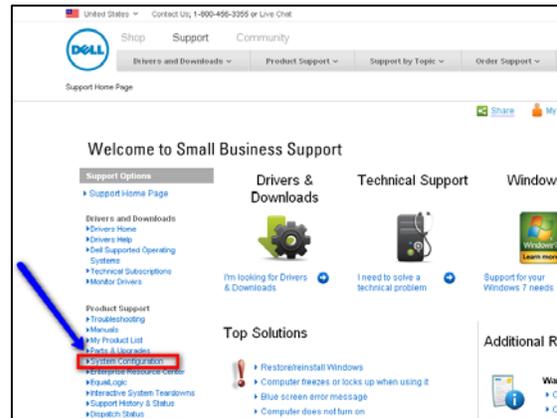
Operating system at least Windows XP with Service Pack 3, which this example has

To find this information for your PC go to "Start → Settings → Control Panel → System"...assuming you are using Windows XP it will look much like this image:



How to determine age of your equipment

The easiest way to check the age of your equipment is to use the service tag, usually on the top or back of the computer case. Using my Dell as an example, the service tag is on the top of the tower. Go here: <http://support.dell.com>, and click the green "Start Here" button below "Support for Small Businesses". On the next screen, click "System Configuration"



Then enter you Service tag, and you will see this information:

In other words, this PC was shipped 7/27/2006, is entering it's 5th year, and I should start looking to replace it. The service contract on it is also expired.

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Folks doing E-rate this year:

Please make sure you have completed your Form 486, and chosen your method of award, either refund through Form 472 (aka BEAR) or discount (aka SPI). If none of this makes any sense to you, please contact Holly Gordon so we can get you set up to receive your e-rate award.

Saving Money with E-Rate

Did you know that every public library is eligible to receive E-rate money? By filling out a few forms you can get as much as a 90% discount on your telephone and even internet bills! That's money that could be better spent building your collection or upgrading old equipment. The telephone companies and the federal government collect this money from every telephone customer, but unless you ask for it, it sits in Washington.

Please take the money!

Henry Stokes, Texas E-rate Coordinator at the Texas State Library, will be presenting this workshop for public libraries. He will provide an overview of the E-rate process, specific requirements for the upcoming funding year and a review of the key forms involved in claiming your discount. Register here: <http://e-rate-taylor.eventbrite.com/>

Tuesday, September 14, 2010
Taylor Public Library
801 Vance St.
Taylor, TX
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Need extra assistance with E-rate this coming year? The [CTLS E-Rate Project](#) helps libraries fill out their paperwork through an E-Rate consultant. To be one of the 20 member libraries we assist this year, contact Kam.McEvoy@ctls.net.



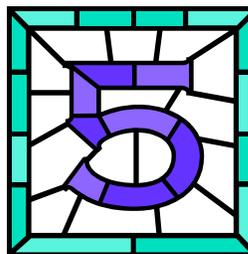
CTLS 990 Available Upon Request

Print copies of our 2009 990 are available on request from the system office. 990s are forms that non-profits file with the IRS – a “return of organization exempt from income tax”. Please contact us with any inquiries.

News You Can Use

By Laurie Mahaffey

Five Years In



It's hard to believe that CTLS has been a non-profit for 5 years already! We moved often in our last few years with the Austin Public Library. After many years in the basement of the Austin History Center (the old Austin Public Library Central building downtown) and spending 2 years in the Chase Bank Building across the street, we lived for one year in a city-owned building off Highway 183 near the intersection with Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. To be settled in one spot for 5 years is a luxury!

We were fortunate to be able to hire a former CTLS staff member (Suzan) and an Austin Public Library staffer (Jennifer) to start our new life as a non-profit. Their expertise and experience with system matters helped make the transition easier than it might have been. Some of our member librarians even remembered Suzan! Since then, we have added other staff members with great talent to assist our libraries. Thanks for your support through the years!

Austin Public Library Opens New Branch

On Saturday, August 21, the Austin Public Library opened the new free-standing Twin Oaks Branch Library. This is the last free-standing branch to replace a former store-front branch in a shopping center. The new branch is at 1800 South 5th Street and is a green building, with rainwater collection and a day lighting control system. Some of the bricks from the former post office on the site were re-used in building the branch. Anita Fudell is the branch manager.

The original Twin Oaks Branch Library opened in 1956 in a shopping center at South Congress and Oltorf, just a short distance from downtown Austin south of the Colorado River. Congratulations to all the APL employees who worked so hard to make this new branch a reality!

Job Ads on CTLS-L, On the Website, In the Newsletter

If your library has a job opening, we will be glad to advertise it on our website, in our newsletter, and on our e-mail discussion list. Just let us know in plenty of time. The newsletter deadline is usually 8 days before the end of the month. Be sure to list a start date, hours, benefits, and a salary in your ad.

Work like a Patron Day

by Kam McEvoy

Brian Herzog, Swiss-Army Librarian, proposed "Work like a Patron Day" two years ago so that library staff could be more aware of what patrons experience when using the library. He came up with the idea after he used the public access computers to collaborate on a project with a volunteer; he discovered that some keys on the keyboard weren't working well, it was hard to concentrate while people were walking and talking around them, and they both forgot to bring a flash drive so didn't have anywhere to save their work.

This gave him the opportunity to think of ways that the library could better set their patrons up for success. There might be small things that would greatly improve your patrons' experiences at the library. Maybe that's swapping out an old keyboard, or offering a small selection of office supplies (cheap flash drives) for sale. Maybe it's getting a bigger trash can for the bathroom, so that paper doesn't overflow every day.

Seeing the library through your patrons' eyes can shift larger priorities as well. If your Internet connection on the public access computers is abominably slow, now might be a good time to put more resources into a better broadband connection (we're offering E-rate assistance again this year, just contact me if you're interested). What about providing laptops in the meeting room with wi-fi access, to be checked out for an hour or two at a time for study or work groups?

So, on October 13, 2010, encourage your staff and colleagues to "Work Like a Patron" as much as possible. This includes:

- entering and leaving the library through the public entrance (not the staff doors)
- using the public computers to do your work
- using only the patron interface for searching your catalog
- using the library website to locate information
- printing using the public printers
- using the public restrooms
- reserving public meeting rooms for meetings
- sitting in the chairs/use the furniture meant for the public
- paying your library fines (no waiving them the day before!)
- following all library policies

Brian says, "by experiencing the library from the point of view of our patrons, staff can hopefully both improve the services we offer as well as empathize with patron needs and expectations."

New Titles in Professional Collection...

By Katelyn Patterson

We recently got some new titles for our professional collection!

- Boomers and Beyond
- Building a Buzz- Libraries and Word of Mouth Marketing
- Copyright for Teachers & Librarians
- Creating the One Shot Library Workshop
- Family Centered Library Handbooks
- FRBR: Guide for the Perplexed
- Gamers in the Library?!
- Helping Homeschoolers in the Library
- Hipster Librarian's Guide to Teen Craft Projects
- Inside, Outside and Online
- Moving Your Library
- Power of BookTalking DVD
- Public Libraries Going Green
- Sex, Brains and Video Games
- Small Public Library Survival Guide
- Start to Finish YA Programs
- Teaching Generation M
- Telling Tales



We also recently acquired 3 iPads, 2 more Barnes & Noble Nooks and 2 more iPod Touch for you to check out!

Go to the CTLS catalog online at www.ctls.net. On the right hand side click the link to the Professional Collection to peruse the catalog and place holds. Have questions? Contact Katelyn Patterson! Enjoy!



CTLS Calendar of Events

September	6	Labor Day ~ CTLS Office Closed
	14	Saving Money with E-rate Workshop ~ Taylor, TX
	24	CTLS Membership Meeting ~ Cameron, TX
	28	What's the Big Idea? Science & Math in Storytime Workshop ~ Bryan, TX
October	16-17	Texas Book Festival ~ Austin, TX
	18	D3.Ten Technology Conference ~ Austin, TX
	21	CTLS 3rd Thursday Webinar ~ What's New in Audiobooks? ~ Online

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

CTLS Directory

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Happy 5th Birthday to Us!