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For additional information and a list of committees and roundtables, see the Mississippi Library Association's Web site at <http://www.misslib.org/>.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Can anyone working in Mississippi libraries today even remember life before MAGNOLIA? Yes, the MAGNOLIA Project is now ten years old – and is being celebrated across the state this year in a variety of special ways. The state legislature, which picks up the bulk of the tab for the MAGNOLIA Project, was given a piece of Magnolia Birthday Cake at this year's MLA Legislative Reception on February 6, 2007.

I have been privileged to serve as a member of the Project's Steering Committee, representing public library interests, since the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) assembled us and commissioned the committee to "work together" and to figure out the logistics of "how to make a statewide electronic library possible." Two librarians from each type of library – university, community college, public school (K-12) and public – were asked to serve. Although many of those pioneering librarians have either retired or moved on to jobs in other states, their contributions live on.

In 1997, there were only a handful of states that had the kind of consortia we could "pattern" ourselves after – and the vendors which offered the products we were considering were often "caught" without established pricing guidelines. To say that the steering committee helped push, drive and even determine some of the database marketplace at that moment would not be an understatement.

The original funding earmarked by the legislature to create MAGNOLIA came directly out of the IHL and community college boards' budgets. IHL became the pass-through agency for the payment of MAGNOLIA's bills for a number of years. Eventually, the Mississippi Library Commission agreed to take on that responsibility and has been processing the invoices for payment ever since – with the state legislature providing the funding for the purchase of the database access.



Catherine A. Nathan

The steering committee had to keep several things in mind as it began its work:

1. the consortium must work out a way to provide access to database information for all publicly-funded institutions – as per the state legislature;
 2. the consortium was to provide access to database information helpful to all types of publicly-funded libraries, including those supporting the K-12 institutions;
 3. the legislature wanted all of the money it had earmarked for this purpose to be used to purchase access to information – i.e., not to hire a director, a staff, or to maintain an office.
- To that end, librarians from the various types of libraries were recruited to serve on the many working sub-committees that were formed. These scores of volunteer committee members came together in Jackson – often meeting each other coming and going along our state's highways. Remember: these were the days before "virtual" meetings!

Some of the more important questions these sub-committees were asked to solve included which vendors to select while staying within the amount of money we had been "given," how to tame the technological issues, how to train folks and how to get the word out. Ultimately, the problems were solved, the databases selected, and the MAGNOLIA Project was born in 1997 – offering information from databases from a variety of vendors for FREE!

The MAGNOLIA Project has changed some over the past ten years, but its impact on the way in which we all provide library services within Mississippi has remained significant. For example, because of the MAGNOLIA Project, a young high school student in the Delta now has access to much of the same periodical information that is contained in the best college and university libraries anywhere in the nation. ■

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This month's cover is one half of the diptych *Highway 45* by Norma Sanders Bourdeaux. Bourdeaux received her Master of Fine Arts degree in painting from the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi. Her work was also featured on the Winter 2005 *Mississippi Libraries*. Bourdeaux has shown her paintings in various exhibits including the 2003 Mississippi Invitational in Jackson, Mississippi. Her work is in numerous collections, including the aircraft carrier *John C. Stennis*. She resides in Meridian, Mississippi. Bourdeaux can be reached at 601-482-2964 or 662-234-0022.

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

Mississippi Libraries is a publication of the Mississippi Library Association (MLA). The articles, reports, and features here represent the viewpoints of their respective authors and are not necessarily the official opinions of the Association.

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In order to assure the widest possible audience for the work published in *Mississippi Libraries*, that work is added in electronic form to the Mississippi Library Association Web site and, by contractual agreement, to one or more EBSCO Publishing databases. *Mississippi Libraries* is also indexed in *Library Literature and Information Sciences Abstracts*.

Dues must be paid by March 1 in order to receive the Spring issue of *Mississippi Libraries*.

Tackling Technology

Elizabeth Stephan
Editor, Mississippi Libraries
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Love it or hate it, technology is here to stay. It's been "here" for a long time; it's just been in different formats. As an undergrad I remember using the so-called "dummy terminals" in the library at Northwest Missouri State University to search the catalog. It seemed like such an advanced system at the time; now it seems like ancient technology.

When I started library school in 2001, we had MadCat, the university online catalog. I graduated with my B.A. shortly before my university changed to an online catalog, so when I began to work at the reference desk as a grad student, the only experience I had with an OPAC was the little bit of searching I had done at home (so that I wouldn't look like an idiot the first time someone asked me a question). I picked it up pretty quickly, though: while I don't always understand how different types of technology work, I can figure out how to use them fairly readily.

See, I'm one of those people who know just enough to be dangerous. I'm a mad clicker. My theory has always been: "They build these things so the user can't mess them up." I'm not sure how true that is since I've messed up a few things in my lifetime. Despite that, I keep on clicking. Madly.

This issue is dedicated to technology in today's library. "Technology" and "library" go hand in hand these days, and we are covering several different areas and several different levels of expertise. (If you read some of these articles and wonder what all the coding means, don't worry – it's pretty much a foreign language to me, too.) In this issue we'll look at technology and instruction, federated searching, RSS feeds, Web design, and thin-client comput-

ing. It's kind of a mixed bag, but technology has become synonymous with many aspects of librarianship, so an issue devoted to techie issues is bound to cover many topics.

Distance learning and distance education seem to be growing trends at many universities; the distance learning program at the University of Mississippi continues to grow every year. Paula Webb noticed the same trend at Delta State University. Librarians at Delta State teach a successful Library 101 course, and Webb began to wonder how she could reach students that were strictly off campus. In her article, "Library 101 & the Mississippi Delta: Reaching the Remote," Webb describes the process of developing and teaching an online version of Library 101.

Metasearch engines are no longer the newest thing, but a couple of years ago libraries all over the country were experimenting with federated searching. In fall 2004, Mississippi State University reviewed several metasearch engines, settling on ExLibris' MetaLib. In her article, "MSU Libraries Implementation of Federated Search Software," Marybeth Grimes, reference librarian at MSU, outlines how their system was set up and what challenges librarians faced with instruction and use. Grimes also provides an update of how MetaLib has been received, used, and changed since its implementation in fall 2005.

RSS (rich site summary) feeds are becoming more commonplace on library Web sites – both on main sites and on subject guides and similar pages that are updated frequently. How are RSS feeds being used by our own libraries? In his article, "Using RSS to Push Electronic Resources to the Patron: Giving Power to the Patron," Steve Turner, Library Web Services Manager at the University of Southern Mississippi, explains how RSS feeds have been implemented at USM. Turner also gives examples of RSS code –

from USM as well as other already-established feeds, like that of the *New York Times*.

The University of Mississippi is in the middle of a major redesign of its Web site. Trying to redesign an entire library Web site without restricting access or downtime is difficult. In her article, "Renovating the Library Web Site: A Case Study," Debra Riley-Huff, Web Services/Reference Librarian at the University of Mississippi, describes the project thus far. Phase I, which included the redesign of the home page, header, footer, and some secondary pages, was recently completed. Riley-Huff details the goals of the redesign as well as the timeline and process of the project.

We've covered Web design, federated searching, RSS feeds, and online instruction, and now we turn to networking. Five years ago, the Lamar County Library System switched to thin-client computing. Jeanne Crider, director, and Jaketha Farmer, training and technology specialist at the Lamar County Library System, describe issues they have had with thin-client computing in their article "Lamar County Library System's Experience with Thin-Client Computing." Crider and Farmer discuss the issues they faced as well as the pros and cons involved with using thin-client computing versus personal computers.

MLA elections are around the corner. Information on all candidates can be found in this issue.

The summer issue of *Mississippi Libraries* will be on collaboration. A couple of years ago we had an issue devoted to collaboration between different types of libraries. In the summer issue we want to look at the collaboration of libraries with non-library organizations or institutions. If you have an idea for an article for the summer issue, please contact me at estephan@olemiss.edu. The fall issue will be devoted to grant writing. Any tips? Suggestions? Let us know. ■

Library 101 Online & the Mississippi Delta: Reaching the Remote

Paula Webb
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Delta State University

Abstract

Natural barriers of rolling hills make the miles and miles of flatland appear as if the Mississippi Delta is another state entirely. Spotted with numerous towns and villages with populations as small as a few hundred people to over fifteen thousand, the Mississippi Delta does not boast large cities or metro areas. The Mississippi Delta and its people are in a land unto themselves. Technology and Internet access in homes are quickly changing the landscape. Library 101, along with other courses offered at Delta State University, are using technological advances to educate those students who live in the remote areas of the Delta.



Paula Webb designed an online instructional course, Library 101, to reach out to those unable to come to a classroom. Photo by Dianne Schattner.

Introduction

A significant problem in the Mississippi Delta is that in an area two hundred miles long and seventy miles wide (Cobb), an area larger than the state of New Jersey, there are only three community colleges, one university that teaches up to a master's degree level, and one that teaches up to a doctoral level. The community colleges located in the Mississippi Delta are Mississippi Delta Community College, Coahoma Community College, and Northwest Mississippi Community College. The one university that offers courses up to master's

degree level is Mississippi Valley State University and the one school that provides degrees at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels is Delta State University. These institutions, while scattered throughout the Delta, can prove to be too far away from potential students' homes to allow them to attain any form of college-level education.

Technology has changed this scenario in recent years. According to *Technology Use in the Mississippi Delta: A Summary Report from the 2003 Delta Rural Poll*:

Computers and the Internet can be valuable tools for rural families. Many rural residents must travel long distances to access necessary services, such as medical care, shopping, and education. Computers and Internet connections can provide rural families instant access to these and other services, as well as better communications with distant family, friends and colleagues. (Barton)

Despite the lag behind urban and suburban homes with computers, there is an increase in homes in the Delta that have computers. Delta residents are seeking higher education and one of the best ways is by attending classes at Delta State University online.

Background of the Project

In 2004, I noticed a drastic increase in students taking classes offered only online. While we have a very successful Library 101 course available to our students on campus, I realized we were not providing the same service to those students who were strictly off campus. I began to research what options were available to teach Library 101 in an online environment.

In the fall of 2004, Delta State University offered Winter Technology Institute Awards to train faculty to apply WebCT, an e-learning system for higher education institutions, in their instruction courses. I

applied and received the award, with an intensive week of training in January 2005.

During the training, Dr. Felix Rizvanov, the Director of the Technology Learning Center at Delta State University, and various other faculty experienced in the use of WebCT taught us how to use the instructional software to create online courses. We learned about setting up and designing our individual classes. We were taught how to give assignments and have classroom discussions using the tools provided by WebCT.

With the assistance of Dr. Rizvanov, the faculty assistants, and other award winners, I began the construction of the online Library 101 course. Since all participants in this session were faculty who instructed in the Mississippi Delta, I asked them what type of training the students would need and how Library 101 online could meet that need.

The English and nursing faculty were especially interested and advised that I provide good directions on how to access databases such as Academic Search Premier, CINAHL, and other EBSCOhost databases. I took their advice and incorporated this training into the class coursework.

Overview of the Library 101 Online Course

The concept of the Library 101 online instruction course took an entire year to research, develop, and apply. I met with members of the Delta State reference department, currently responsible for Library 101 instruction, numerous times. I sought from them advice on teaching methods, their patterns of instruction, and how best to communicate with the students.

In addition, I researched online library instruction coursework offered at other universities and publicly accessible through the Internet. Among the best Web sites I visited were the College of San Mateo Library's Library Studies 101 Course, Seattle Central Community College's

Introduction to Information Services, and Research Survival Online by Portland State University. I looked at these sites to get an idea of the best methods for teaching library instruction principles online.

I then took the information I gathered from our reference librarians and the data I gathered from the research of online information literacy courses and molded it into one Library 101 online course.

Course Collaboration

I wanted the online instructional course I was creating to be of the same caliber as what the reference librarians were offering. Their teaching methods were meeting the library instruction needs of students from the Delta and I wanted to do the same.

I did realize, however, that an online class could not be taught in the same way as a face-to-face class. If one of the reference librarians wanted to teach their class about the Library of Congress Classification System, all they needed to do was show them the books on a shelf at the Roberts-LaForge Library. I had to develop a different way of accomplishing this goal.

Developing a different instructional method was not my only concern. I had to decide the best method for one-on-one interaction with the students. I needed to develop assignments and quizzes to test their knowledge. I was concerned that the students would feel disconnected and not a part of the class. I wondered how I was going to communicate with them.

Course Development

I wanted the students to experience three distinct levels of library instruction. The first level was a general knowledge of how a library worked and was arranged. The second level was how the general knowledge of a library was applied to the Roberts-LaForge Library. Finally, the third level of library instruction existed in the weekly assignments. In these assignments, the students had to apply the knowledge they learned from the previous two levels.

If I was instructing this class in a face-to-face learning environment, I would have used general knowledge about libraries as a part of the in-class discussion. What could I use in place of this sort of interaction?

In researching other online Library 101 courses, I found that almost all of the coursework required either a textbook or extra reading of some sort. The College of San Mateo used *The College Student's Research Companion*, 3rd Edition by Arlene Rodda Quaratiello, and Seattle Central Community College librarians went so far as to create their own textbook titled *Research Methods and Strategies: A Textbook for Library 101 at SCCC*.

I looked at both of these textbooks and decided to use the publication by Quaratiello for my class as well. When evaluating the text, I thought it covered library instruction very well. I did not find it too wordy and felt the average college student could follow its principles.

In addition to using the textbook to cover general topics, I also used each chapter to define one week of work. For example, chapter three of the textbook was titled "Reading the Map: Library Organization." The chapter went over the basics of Library of Congress and Dewey Decimal classification systems. Week four of my online library instruction course, titled "Library Organization," covered the same material.

One chapter of work being equal to one week of work was acceptable for the most part. However, there were instances in which a week was not long enough to cover each chapter. In the case of chapter four's section on reference resources, I used it to cover week five and six of my class instruction. In breaking down the material, plenty of time was given to go over the materials without the students becoming overwhelmed.

The next level of library instruction was applying the general knowledge to the Roberts-LaForge Library specifically. I created PowerPoint presentations that took the

general information the student read and applied it to how the library works at Delta State University. For example, chapter three talks about library organization, and I needed to find some way of explaining how to find a book using the Library of Congress Classification System.

I worked to copy the process by using Microsoft PowerPoint and screen shots to do a step-by-step description of how to find a certain book in the catalog. I taught the students how to look at the call number to find its location at the Roberts-LaForge Library. Then, using a digital camera, I took photos of the call numbers on various books in the library, working my way toward the actual book. I finalized the search by taking a photo of the book at its shelf location. I pasted the screen shots and the photos in the proper order to give a virtual explication on how to find a book on the shelf using Library of Congress call numbers.

The coursework finally attained the third level of instruction by having students complete weekly hands-on assignments. One of my assignments required students to find two books using the Library of Congress Classification System and two books using the Dewey Decimal Classification System. In this assignment, they had to submit the title of the books, the call number of the books and tell me what type of call number it was.

Using WebCT, I was able to see if any of the PowerPoint presentations I created were viewed by the students. By giving the weekly assignments, I was able to tell if they were learning any of the material I was teaching. In an effort to make sure they were also reading the textbook, I created two quizzes in WebCT that were based completely on the textbook and worth more points than the individual assignments.

Communication

One of the largest problems with classes that are taught in an online-only envi-

ronment is that some feel they are not part of an actual class. In response to this, my goal for this course was to try to remove this barrier. I wanted the students to know they were a part of the entire class, know other people in the class, and not focus only on me.

For this class, I tried something different. I asked my class to meet and discuss topics at Facebook. If they did not have a Facebook page already created, then I asked them to create one. I created my own Facebook page and used a picture of one of the library rows as my photo. In addition, I told them some of my likes and dislikes, giving them an idea of who I was.

I created a Group page on Facebook titled "Library 101 at Delta State University." I asked all of my students to join this group page. As members of this group, they were able to see each other's Facebook profile and get better acquainted with each other. With this format, I could send all my students the same discussion assignment. Also, they could post their findings and talk to each other at the group site.

I originally had my doubts concerning the use of Facebook as a form of communication, but I quickly discovered that the advantages greatly outweighed the disadvantages. Not only was I able to get responses from many of my students more quickly than by e-mail, but I was also able to get to know them individually by their profiles on Facebook. In my opinion, using Facebook was the best route for group communication with a moderate number of students in an online course.

In the case of one of my students, she was not allowed to use Facebook at work, but she was permitted to use instant messaging, another great communication tool. The student knew my office hours and was able to reach me whenever she had a problem with the assignments or concepts I was teaching.

Despite the great use of Web 2.0 technology, a back up location is always needed to communicate. In our case, standard e-mail was the best system for sending files and assignments that didn't load properly into WebCT the first time or for when an urgent reply was not needed.

Lessons Learned

My experience instructing Library 101 in a completely online environment was invaluable. You can create the class and theoretically guess how students will respond to the lessons, but it is an entirely different matter to see the actual results. It did not take me long to discover those students who were very organized and those who were not. I also had to remember that many of my students had various life responsibilities, resulting in the need to be flexible with deadlines.

In regard to the syllabus and class expectations, I tried to be very detailed with directions for the work of each week. While you, as the instructor, may understand and present the material in one manner, the student will understand it from another perspective. I encountered this situation when I was setting up the class format. I didn't want to grade all of the assignments during the last few days of the semester, so when I set up the release schedule for the assignments in WebCT, I only made them accessible one week at a time. I thought this was self-explanatory, but quickly discovered it was not.

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In the syllabus, I implied that the assignments were available on a weekly basis, but I never actually put that down in writing. This caused confusion among some of the students, resulting in their assignments being turned in late or not at all. They assumed they had until the end of the semester to complete their assignments, like other online courses they took.

One of the greatest advantages to offering Library 101 online was that my students could read the lesson, watch the

PowerPoints, and do their homework anywhere in the Delta. Students attended my class from all locations in Mississippi including Greenville, Shaw and Benoit. In one case, I had a student turning in work when they were visiting family as far away as Memphis, Tennessee.


Conclusion

I believe that my attempt to provide Library 101 services to those students who could not attend class on campus

was successful. In fact, after viewing the advantages of an online version of this course, two of our reference librarians have agreed to create an online Library 101 course to be taught next year at Delta State University.


Creating and instructing Library 101 online for students in the Mississippi Delta has taught me an important principle. Technology is a viable pathway for expanding library research skills and it is never too late to explore this route. ■


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MSU Libraries' Implementation of Federated Search Software

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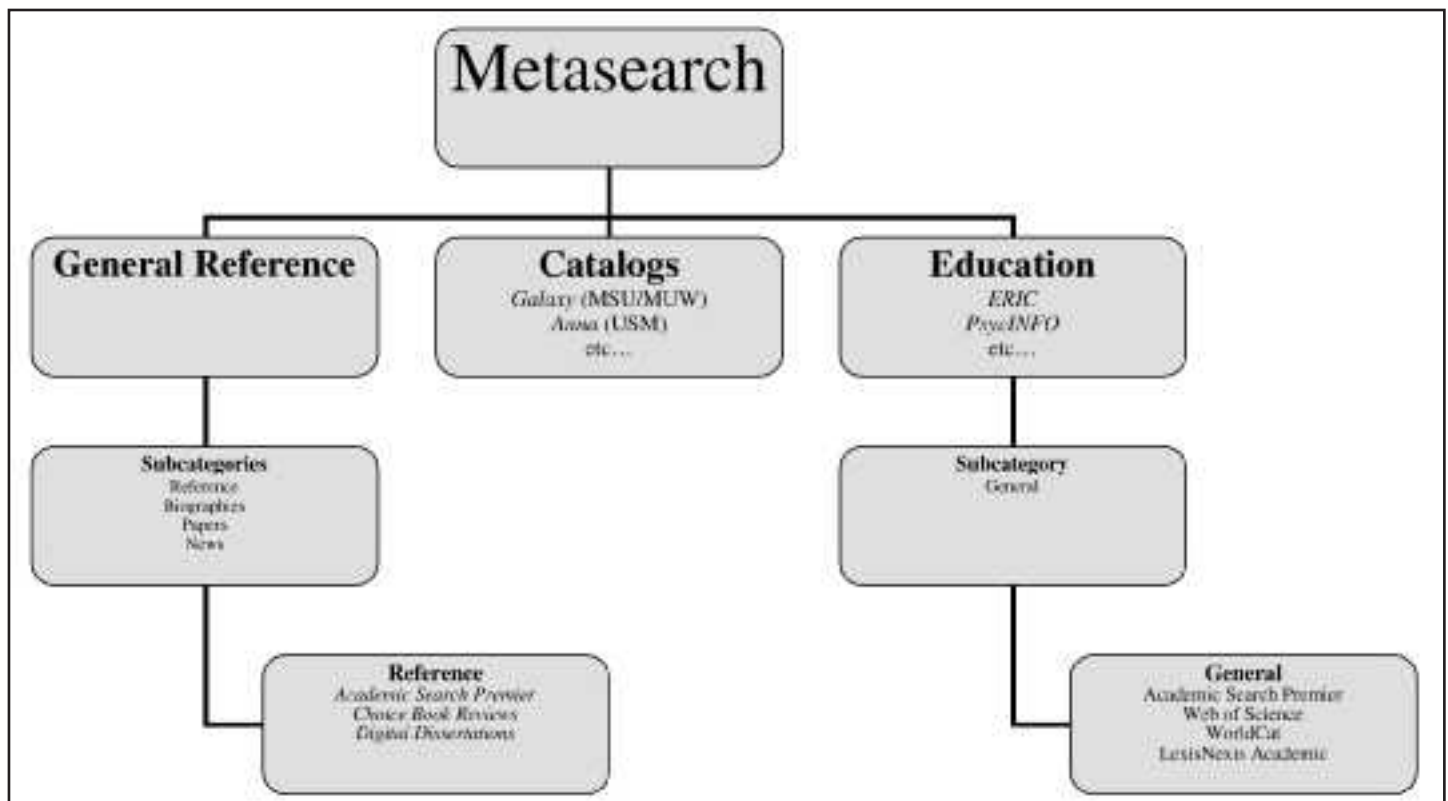
Abstract

Mississippi State University (MSU) Libraries wanted to provide its patrons with a way to simultaneously search multiple databases using one uniform interface; therefore, in the fall 2004 semester, librarians reviewed several federated search programs. The administration decided to purchase Ex Libris' MetaLib® and asked the head of systems administration and several librarians to form a task force to oversee this new metasearch engine.

Overview of MetaLib

MetaLib, Version 3, allows patrons to find journal and magazine articles, books, e-journals, and other material by searching any of five different modules. Each module may be customized by the institutions that license the software. While each module allows users to search multiple databases at once, two modules require librarians to organize products into categories, thus giving students and faculty the ability to search specific topics easily. QuickSearch is targeted for novice users; librarians have the option of creating several categories, and identifying databases to go within each category, to help patrons new to electronic searching with their information needs. For example, one category may be called, "Find information for Speech Class!" with Academic Search Premier and the online

catalog as the databases to search. With MetaSearch, not only can librarians identify categories, they can also create subcategories within as many categories as they need. MetaSearch allows advanced searchers to see easily what databases an institution has under a certain topic, or category, and what databases are useful for subtopics, or subcategories. For example, librarians can create a category called Liberal Arts and have many databases listed under that heading, and have a subcategory of Literature with two to five databases related to that subject listed. Patrons have the ability to select and search databases from the list under the main category, pick a subcategory, or pick both a subcategory and databases from within the category to search. "Find Databases" allows patrons to find their favorite database and search its



Flowchart outlining MetaSearch categories.

native interface, and patrons can find electronic journals through "E-Journals." Users who want to pick and choose their own databases to search can manage their own personal data with "My Space."

MSU Libraries assigned different committees to work with two of MetaLib's modules, "QuickSearch" and "MetaSearch." The associate dean of public services and other members of public services met to discuss how to organize "Quick Search" to meet our patrons' needs. The task force asked the Reference Electronic Evaluation Committee (REEC) to develop the "MetaSearch" module to serve the university community. This paper explains the process the committee underwent to create the categories and subcategories needed for this metasearch process.

History of REEC

The head of the reference department created REEC about ten years ago to evaluate the newest form of reference tools, electronic indexes and abstracts. Since, for the most part, these products directly replaced print indexes and abstracts, it made sense for all members of the reference department to belong to this committee. REEC established and followed policies and procedures to evaluate these products and made formal recommendations to the library administration. Over the years, electronic versions of more than just indexes and abstracts have become available; journals, reference books, government materials, and Web sites all needed to be tested and reviewed. Three years ago, REEC expanded its membership and its scope. Current membership includes all of the reference librarians and staff, librarians from government documents and library instruction, the head of serials, and the head of systems administration. The scope of REEC has become ambiguous. Some products, such as reference books in electronic form (i.e., *Mental Measurement Yearbook*), and those with library wide impact, such as electronic books (i.e., *NetLibrary*) are discussed by other

groups. REEC tests and evaluates electronic products, makes recommendations to the library administration, approves which free resources, generally Web sites, should be added to the list of indexes and databases, and keeps up-to-date with new software and upgraded versions of existing products.

MetaSearch Categories and Subcategories

In May 2005, the MetaLib task force charged REEC to identify the "MetaSearch" categories and to identify the databases/resources that should be included in each category within the module. The committee first had to understand how the "MetaSearch" process would work. Since the new software was not yet operational on site, the committee looked at several other university libraries that use this software to see how they organize their materials. Members had many questions, including the following: software compatibility amongst the different products, which patrons the libraries anticipated using this search feature, and how to organize a huge number of databases (over 150) into a small number of categories (less than 20).

REEC's first step was to agree on which patrons would be likely to use the "MetaSearch" function. The members believed that lower level college students (i.e., freshmen and sophomores) would use "QuickSearch." Upper level undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty would more likely use "MetaSearch," since it allows users to search multiple databases at once. Next, the committee focused on creating the categories within the module. Since it would be very difficult to change them at a later date, REEC needed to agree on the purpose and the name of each category. Members looked at the existing list of indexes and databases and agreed to use many current subject headings as future categories. The committee wanted the groupings to reflect both the academic programs offered at MSU

and the libraries' collections. Therefore, they initially came up with fifteen categories: General Reference, Catalogs, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Law, Government Documents, Business, Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Agriculture, Life Sciences, Architecture, and Veterinary Medicine.

MetaLib allows institutions to provide subcategories for each category. REEC had a hard time thinking of potential subcategories without knowing which databases would go into each category. As chair of REEC, I asked everyone to put all the electronic products (150+!) into whichever category or categories they thought each one belonged; I then compiled all the lists into a spreadsheet so the committee could see each other person's placements. Some products fit neatly into one category, many belonged in several places, a few seemed to go into every category, and a few were hard to place into any grouping.

It became obvious that everyone thought certain databases transcended subject areas and needed to be in every category, so the committee created a subcategory, General, for every category except General Reference and Catalogs. Databases for this subcategory include: Academic Search Premier, Dissertation Abstracts, LexisNexis Academic, WorldCat, Newspaper Source, Web of Science, Galaxy (the online catalog), ArticleFirst, and Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Since REEC put all of these databases into "General Reference," and since it is not applicable to "Catalogs," there was no need for the General subcategory in these two modules.

Using the master list, members spent several days eliminating and adding resources to each category, and created subcategories for those groups that needed them. REEC recognized that the first category, General Reference, meant nothing to the majority of users, but needed to place several disparate databases together and call it something, and came up with that name. The committee also came up with

four subcategories: Reference, Biographies, Papers, and News; the resources, generally speaking, fell neatly into one of those areas.

Members created Catalogs to allow patrons to search multiple online catalogs; the next category, Arts and Humanities, proved more problematic. Since this module involved several different subject areas, REEC agreed that it needed seven subcategories: General, Literature, History, Fine Arts, Religion/Philosophy, Music, and Interdisciplinary. This way, a patron could find, for example, all the history databases easily without having to go through a list of twenty-six titles.

The next category, Social Sciences, proved to be the most difficult challenge. The committee spent a lot of time discussing the name, the subject areas, and the databases belonging to this category. REEC came up with ten subcategories to reflect the thirty-six resources: General, Psychology, Interdisciplinary, Communication, Library Science, Sociology/Anthropology/Social Work, Economics, Political Science, History, and Geography. The members had few problems with the next four categories: Education, Law, Government Documents, and Business. Only Government Documents, with Federal, State, and International, has more than just the General subcategory attached to it.

Committee members could not agree on how patrons would use the Science category. Some thought it should be a clearinghouse for all the science related databases, while others thought it should have the large, popular science/agriculture/engineering databases in it. In the end, the committee agreed this category would help those patrons in physics, chemistry, mathematics, geosciences, and other related fields. The thirteen databases in Sciences reflect this thought.

Almost everyone listed the same databases for the Engineering category; only one or two needed to be added to complete the list of seventeen titles. Some resources for the Health Sciences category

appeared to go in other groupings, but eventually everyone agreed to the list of forty-one electronic products.

After seeing that the next two categories, Agriculture and Life Sciences, shared all but three databases, it became obvious to combine them into one category, 'Agriculture and Life Sciences,' with the largest number of resources, fifty-two attached to it. The last two categories, Architecture and Veterinary Medicine, are designed to help faculty and students in those two schools.

Ultimately, the committee created fourteen categories, with four having more than one subcategory. Nine have only one, General, because members could not see the need for more. Only one, Catalogs, has no subcategories. While not everyone agreed where every database should go (or should not go), the committee always tried to anticipate the needs of the libraries' users. After much discussion, and debate, REEC created an excellent way for advanced users to find multiple related databases they may or may not have thought of on their own, and to search them in one easy step. As the final step before sending a report to the task force, I shared this list of categories, subcategories, and databases with the library faculty and asked for their suggestions, questions, and/or concerns. I received several thoughtful and helpful comments and the committee implemented many into the list. The libraries' implemented MetaLib, with all its search features, before the fall 2005 semester started.

Librarians and staff at MSU Libraries' anticipated the huge impact MetaLib would have on its users. Many departments, including reference, library instruction, and the branch libraries, experienced a change in how they help patrons find information. Every librarian had to discuss this new search engine with their assigned departments. Faculty and students had many opportunities to express their opinions on how the categories and databases were arranged.

Update

MetaLib has been available for our patrons for two years, and we've noticed several things about its use. One is that the undergraduates like the QuickSearch function. They have twelve categories to choose from, including Business, Biography, Education, Humanities/History, Term Paper Due, Current Events, Engineering, Science, Literature and More, Agriculture, Health/Medicine, and Social Sciences. Each category has one to six pre-selected databases in it; the students bullet whichever category they want, put in their search words, and enter. They don't know, or seem to care, which databases they are searching; they're just interested in the results. The second thing is that a few of our databases are not compatible with the federated software. This has proved challenging to us to remember when teaching classes and helping patrons. Finally, it may be that our faculty are not utilizing the categories and MySpace as effectively as possible. This spring, the REEC will evaluate MetaLib by looking at the usage statistics and sharing anecdotal information. It may be that we find some categories and subcategories are working better than others. ■

Members of REEC: Newkirk Barnes, Bradley Brazzeal, Jessica Buehring, Maria Collins, Ida Cunetto, Stephen Cunetto, Karen Davidson, Christine Fletcher, Cindy Harris, Marybeth Grimes (chair), Deborah Lee, and Gail Peyton. Harry Llull made significant contributions to this project as well.

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Using RSS to Push Electronic Resources to the Patron: Giving Power to the Patron

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Abstract

Steven Turner, Library Web Services Manager at the University of Southern Mississippi, explains RSS technology, its library applications, and details the process of implementing RSS feeds at USM Libraries. Turner includes online resources that proved helpful in this process. This is a useful article for those wanting to understand this technology and those wanting to offer the technology to patrons.

About RSS

Much has already been written about RSS, an XML language subset (or dialect) originally created by Netscape in the mid-nineties for the Netscape Browser's Channels environment (Celikbas 2004). Many libraries have taken advantage of this XML dialect to further their institution's reach, to provide more effective resource discovery and presentation to patrons, and to generally make their own lives easier as they attempt to discover, dissect and present salient information to their patrons. The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries is no different than any other library in our attempts to fulfill the aforementioned goals. This article will explain how we explored the advantages of RSS use as part of our attempt to meet those goals, and of our subsequent implementation of RSS with our e-resources and library news items.

The questions that beg asking, and that have already been extensively explored in numerous books and articles, are what is RSS and why is it important to my library?

At its most basic, RSS (an acronym for 'RDF or Rich Site Summary') is essentially a specialized markup language – a simplified version (subset, child or dialect) of XML that provides a simple list of tags to describe content from a Web site. This RSS-tagged content is usually called a 'feed,' as in 'RSS feed' or 'XML feed.' Content published or distributed by a Web site is often referred to as being 'syndicated' since "information is being shared with other sites at the same time" (Celikbas 2004). The type of content presented as an RSS feed is often transient or active in nature and generated from a dynamic source such as a database, e.g., newspaper articles, news items, news headlines, new items in a library catalog, and databases.

For example, if you were using RSS to serve news articles, then the RSS tags would mark up, delineate and identify specific sections of the feed such as the article title, the article content or an associated image. Tags can contain data elements further describing or more accurately describing the surrounded content (see Fig. 1).

[Fig. 1] *New York Times* feed example

```
<rss version="2.0">
<channel>
<title>NYT &gt; Art and
Design</title>
<link>http://www.nytimes.com/pag
es/arts/design/index.html?part-
ner=rssnyt</link>
<description/>
<language>en-us</language>
<copyright>Copyright 2007 The
New York Times Company</copy-
right>
<lastBuildDate>Thu, 4 Jan 2007
12:05:00 EST</lastBuildDate>
<image>
<title>NYT &gt; Art and Design
</title>
<url>http://graphics.nytimes.com
```

```
/images/section/NytSection Head-
er.gif</url>
<link>http://www.nytimes.com/page
s/arts/design/index.html</link>
</image>
<item>
<title>In China's New Revolu-
tion, Art Greet
Capitalism</title>
<link>http://www.nytimes.com/200
7/01/04/arts/design/04arti.html?
ex=1325566800&amp;en=bala6b8418c
78d5a&amp;ei=5088&amp;partner=rs
snyt&amp;emc=rss</link>
<description>Auction frenzy is
gripping the art world and in
response hundreds of new sellers
in big cities like Beijing and
Shanghai are putting contempo-
rary experimental artworks on
the block.</description>
<author>DAVID BARBOZA</author>
<guidisPermaLink="false">http://w
ww.nytimes.com/2007/01/04/arts/d
esign/04arti.html</guid>
<pubDate>Thu, 04 Jan 2007
12:01:17 EDT</pubDate>
</item>
</channel>
</rss>
```

The marked-up RSS feed can then be read by either RSS-capable browsers (such as the Mozilla Foundation's Firefox, Microsoft's Internet Explorer 7 or Apple's Safari browser) (see Fig. 2), or aggregated by a newsreader or feed readers, which are software programs built specifically to collect, organize and read RSS feeds. Feed readers can be desktop-based or Web-based; online blogging tools and sites (blogger.com, for example, or MySpace) often offer integration of a feed reader component into a user's blog which ostensibly allows the blogger to incorporate RSS feeds from other Web sites directly into their blog pages.

Just to muddy the waters a little, there happen to be several competing standards



An RSS feed using Apple's Safari browser.

of RSS – RSS 1.0, which offers more metadata tags, RSS 2.0, which offers the developer more leeway and flexibility (and is the semi-standard across the Web) and Atom, an extension of RSS 2.0 that offers the developer a more accurate programming model with a more flexible output (Yue and Greene 2006).

Why Use RSS?

A primary factor in RSS popularity is the fact that it is such a simple specification. The tags are easy for even non-XML programmers to parrot or understand; creation and implementation requires only a good grasp of how to pull your information from a database or other data source and present this content as RSS marked-up text – either to what programmers call the standard output or written to a text file. The other key is the willingness and recognition by various entities on the Web to understand the power inherent in such an easy-to-read, easy-to-use and standardized description language. Programmers simply create an RSS feed using various methods, and locate this feed somewhere on their Web site. At that point, the reading software simply needs to collect that URL,

parse the results of the requested page, and then present it to the user in some fashion. Consequently, information such as news headlines or link lists can be stored in the interface of a browser (as in Firefox's Live bookmarks) or a newsreader and accessed directly without ever visiting the Web site that created this content.

How Other Libraries Are Using RSS

We (USM Libraries) definitely had our ideas about what we wanted to do with RSS – present news and information and syndicate our e-resources. But, were we missing something? What were other libraries doing with RSS in these specific areas? How were they doing it, and were there other ideas that we hadn't thought of that might also be useful to implement? A review of the current literature discussing RSS revealed some interesting ideas and implementations.

First, the idea of pushing a library's news and events was common and straightforward; it seems that (almost without exception) libraries who use push RSS feeds include at least one news feed. Common examples include the University of Nevada Reno Libraries (Yue and Greene 2006) and Hennepin County Library in Minnesota (Library Technology Reports 2006). Some libraries use blogs to disseminate news while others use more typical news-type formats or newsletter tables of contents (TOCs). A complete list of examples from the literature is shown below:

- Offer “live hyperlinks to online resources” (Celikbas 2004)

- Present news and announcement items as a syndicated feed (Celikbas 2004)
- Offer lists of newly added items from the library catalog (Corrado and Moulaison 2006)
- Present reader's advisory recommendations (Stephens 2006)
- Broadcast podcasts (Huffman 2006)
- Serve images (Yue and Greene 2006)
- Create video media lists from the library catalog (Yue and Greene 2006)
- Provide current awareness or TOCs direct from publisher Web sites (Celikbas 2004)
- Provide current awareness of subject materials from the catalog (Corrado and Moulaison 2006)
- Build self-updating subject resource pages from the RSS feeds of other library, e-resource, internet sources and other blogs or RSS feed aggregation sites (Huffman 2006)
- Push library blog content (Yue and Greene 2006)

Most importantly, RSS gives the advantage to the patron. As mentioned before, library content can be “subscribed to and displayed everywhere, and users are no longer forced to remember to come to our site.” As a result, patrons are not forced to use our “proprietary interfaces” to discover and view content. Instead, resources are pushed to them and can be navigated and viewed in a single, consistent interface (Library Technology Reports 2006).

RSS at The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries

During the fall semester 2006, USM Libraries decided it wanted to push selected content to our users via RSS. We primarily wanted to push our electronic resources, but we were also keen to provide news, alerts and announcements via RSS feeds.

RSS Feeds: The Easy Way

Fortunately, the University of Southern Mississippi Libraries had just migrated its Web site to MODx, an open-source content management system (CMS) which allowed any grouping of pages within the Web site hierarchy to be syndicated as an RSS feed. Our news, events and alerts sec-

tions were logically organized as groups of folders within folders. Since each event announcement took the form of a page within each section folder, this hierarchical grouping allowed us to easily create RSS feeds from the pages contained within each section. Currently, USM Libraries have five current news and patron awareness areas available on the Web site:

1. Current Library News
2. What's New in Library Collections
3. Known Problems – Electronic Services
4. Exhibits and Events
5. Library Newsletters and Guides

The MODx CMS software allowed us to create an RSS feed from the contents of these five sections via a MODx RSS snippet (a small program that performs a specific function and then communicates the result with MODx using the MODx application programming interface). The snippet we used (NewsFeed) to create RSS feeds automatically lists the pages contained in a designated directory. The resulting feed's URL is then accessed by your chosen news- or feed reader as mentioned previously. And while we used it to simply create an RSS 2.0 valid feed, the News-

Feed snippet can also be customized in a variety of ways, such as setting copyright information, generating a link to the feed (rather than generating the feed itself), or truncating summary posts (among other options).

RSS Feeds: The Hard Way

However, our primary goal still remained – pushing our databases and e-resources to our patrons. Southern Mississippi Libraries stores their e-resource URLs, proxy information and e-resource metadata within a MySQL database; MODx provided no easy solution by which to retrieve this data so that it could be accessed by the NewsFeed snippet. So, as my major professor would say in library school, it was time to “roll our own” solution.

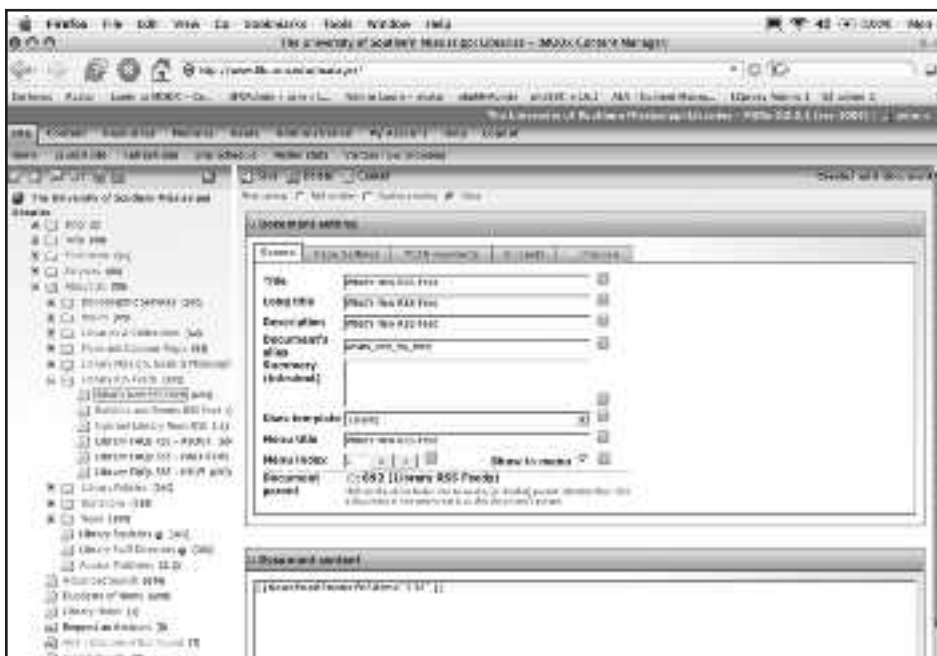
The first thing we did was decide our application parameters. We wanted to use RSS 2.0 as this was the de facto standard for most RSS feeds, and therefore the most accessible and usable for our patrons (Yue and Greene 2006). We would use the PHP Web programming language on which the library Web services had standardized to pull the data from the MySQL database. At this point I would write the

program to wrap the data in the appropriate RSS tags and push it to the standard output. The alternative consisted of having the program create a text file of the pushed RSS data. While viable and present in the literature, this method seemed cumbersome and required the extra step of creating the RSS-containing text file via a timed server operation every few hours or so, and was more suitable to an environment where one had less control of the data output (Corrado and Moulaison 2006).

Second, I had to research RSS 2.0, and find some valid examples of feeds. At its most basic level, an RSS feed is fairly easy to understand and parrot and can be created without a good understanding of all the specifics or background surrounding the specification. However, when you want the code to validate as a valid XML document, a decent grasp of the RSS specification and XML options available helps tremendously.

Much of my research kept pointing me towards one Web site – feed.validator.org, a non-profit Web site created by IBM programmer Sam Ruby that includes annotated specification of all RSS versions along with a Web-based validation program. The validation program will take your feed, parse it, and either output a successful result or output specific problems with your script along with line numbers.

Most good RSS feeds look the same, so I used a readily available feed from the *New York Times* as an example. Well-written, valid and simple, it provided me with enough of a framework to complete ninety percent of my work without performing any heavy lifting (that is, writing my own code) via a simplistic copying of their format. Unfortunately, when I started pulling data from the database and it failed to render as an RSS feed, I knew I needed more help. A few minutes of troubleshooting with Feed Validator indicated problems with the data in the title tag and in the URL tag. A little more Web research indicated that I might have odd characters in the data fields, and various interest group blog postings indicated that inclusion of an SGML CDATA token in the tags would tell the browsers and feed readers what to



USM uses the snippet NewsFeed to create RSS feeds that automatically list the pages contained in a designated directory.

expect and how to treat these characters. A quick trip over to the W3C Web site's HTML 4 section offered an explanation and description of the CDATA tag. The W3C defines CDATA thusly:

CDATA is a sequence of characters from the document character set and may include character entities. User agents should interpret attribute values as follows:

- Replace character entities with characters,
- Ignore line feeds,
- Replace each carriage return or tab with a single space.

User agents may ignore leading and trailing white space in

CDATA attribute values (e.g., " myval " may be interpreted as "myval"). Authors should not declare attribute values with leading or trailing white space.

The addition of the CDATA token to the title and URL tag solved the invalid feed error for those tags. However, the Feed Validator application still wouldn't validate my feed, and now indicated an issue with the description tag; based on the amount of text and non-standard ASCII entities within this datafield, I decided to simply escape the entire field by using the PHP functions of trim() and escapehtmlentities(). This last addition to the script solved the problems, and the feed finally validated.

The completed script looks like this (with numbered annotations):

```
<?
//include connection function

[1]
include_once("/avatar/httpd/html
/includes/db_connection2.php");
db_connect("library");

[2]
$sql = "select * from library.
odbs_new where shown = 'y' order by
name";

[3]
$results =mysql_query($sql) or
die (mysql_error());

[4]
$date = date("D, j F Y G:i:s A
T");

[5]
echo "<?xml version=\"1.0\"
encoding=\"iso-8859-1\"?>
<rss version=\"2.0\">\n";
echo "
<channel>
<title>Library Databases</title>
<link>http://www.lib.usm.edu/ind
ex.php?id=41</link>
<description>University Library
Databases</description>
<language>en-us</language>
<pubDate>[$date]</pubDate>
\n";

[6]
while ($row =
mysql_fetch_assoc($results)) {
echo "
\t\t\t<item>
\t\t\t\t<title><![CDATA[{$r
ow[name]}]></title>
\t\t\t\t<link><![CDATA[{$ro
w[url]}]></link>
\t\t\t\t<description>".
htmlentities(trim($row[de
scription])) .
" </description> \t\t\t</item>\n";
}

echo "

[7]
</channel>
</rss>";
?>
```

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1. Include a pre-written library for connecting to our MySQL databases.
2. Write the very simple SQL query.
3. The results are pulled from the database.
4. The publication date is formatted and placed in a variable.
5. The XML version is indicated, language encoding is indicated, RSS version indicated. The basic RSS container for the database data is created.
6. A simple loop is created to iterate through the results set, and print all of the databases to the screen.
7. The file is ended with the appropriate tags.

As you can see, the finished script is short and simple. Provided that the base data is easy to obtain in a manipulatable form, then the custom creation of an RSS feed is really very simple. Far more time was spent during this process researching the specifics of RSS 2.0 and learning its idiosyncrasies than was spent actually obtaining the data and writing the script. In fact, the title of this article section is a misnomer – creating this feed was not difficult, just more time-consuming than creating pages and clicking GUI interface buttons as was performed for the other feeds within the MODx CMS framework.

However, all was not complete; there was one more item of business – browser auto-discovery of the RSS feeds. A link tag is needed in head of the document to indicate to patron browsers that an RSS feed(s) exists; this tag, which indicates a link to the URL location of each feed, also creates the RSS icon in the URL bar. The RSS icon, which differs according to browser type, functions in two ways. First, it visually notifies the user that RSS feeds are available for the taking on pages being viewed; second, the RSS indicator becomes an interface element – the user clicks and holds on the icon to reveal a drop-down menu of available feeds.

Link Tag:

```
<link rel="alternate" type="application/rss+xml" title="Library Databases" href="http://www.lib.usm.edu/scripts/d_b_rss_feed.php" />
```

RSS feed result in browser:



Results in drop down from RSS icon:



Results And Future Use

The introduction of RSS at Southern Miss Libraries can be, I believe, characterized as successful inasmuch that: (a) their usage can be caveated by realizing that a relatively small number of the Web surfing population actually uses RSS in their daily surfing lives; (b) a cursory investigation of the Web site statistics shows steady usage of the RSS feed URLs; (c) anecdotal patron reporting indicates usefulness among faculty and students.

One thing is clear – RSS use will only increase as it becomes more commonplace and users lose their unfamiliarity with the technology and the tools used to harness it, especially in light of the many browsers that now support RSS discovery. As for Cook Library, we intend to expand our RSS offerings to include a complete RS directory/Linked TOC to our Help and Library FAQ documentation, to develop RSS feeds from the library catalog, and to eventually build subject resource pages almost entirely out of RSS feeds. The latter is the most exciting, because we'll be able to offer comprehensive patron tools that will auto-create by completely and programmatically supporting themselves from RSS feeds, requiring almost no intervention by a subject specialist. The University of Southern Mississippi Libraries looks forward to a long and useful relationship with RSS. In an era where academic libraries often struggle with the perception of rele-

vancy and subsequent usage, any tool that can provide the patron with more flexibility for discovering and utilizing our resources is a welcomed addition indeed. ■

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Renovating the Library Web Site: A Case Study

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Abstract:

The University of Mississippi Libraries Web site is undergoing a major refurbishing project. Site assessment leads to proposed major changes to the library Web site in the areas of infrastructure, design, accessibility, usability, and content upgrades in four phases. Riley-Huff discusses the motivation and goals for the overall project and details the processes involved in the now-complete Phase I, which involved integrating major upgrades to the current library "bridge" page, homepage and secondary level headers and footers.

Introduction

In the summer of 2006, librarians at the University of Mississippi made a decision to start a major library Web site refurbishing project. This decision was based upon several converging factors related to library users, library staff concerns, the campus Web environment and the technology needs of the Libraries' electronic infrastructure. While the changes would be significant, there would be little or no tolerance for Web site "down time." The University of Mississippi operates on the semester system with both winter and summer intersession schedules. A plan was needed that would provide for a minimum of inconvenience to the campus community.

The initial concern was the recognition that in order to accommodate future growth in Web and electronic services, the site needed to be upgraded to current Web standards. The underlying technical structural changes would be significant enough to allow the incorporation of full scale site design and navigational changes. This conveniently coincided with a campus-

wide push by the University administration to move towards a unified Web presence. New ideas regarding content, content presentation and user services have also been catalysts. The resulting project, currently well underway, is in the process of bringing the library Web site up to current Web standards by utilizing a phased focus process to address structural standards as well as design, usability, accessibility and content considerations.

Web site Assessment and Relevant Vision

Before embarking on any type of large scale Web site redesign or upgrade, it is necessary to completely understand your current site's strengths and weaknesses as well as how the Web site is accessed and navigated by your users. It is also necessary to have a clear picture and understanding of current Web standards and design principles. This is essentially the prerequisite for getting your organization from point A to point B and on to points C, D, E ... ad infinitum; ad infinitum because, unlike static information sources, Web sites are constantly evolving entities which, due to the concept of hyperlinks, do not exist in isolation to themselves or even of themselves. Rapidly changing technologies have already seriously impacted the way in which large Web sites can and should be maintained. While static HTML pages initially sufficed, Web sites which still rely heavily on them are at a serious disadvantage in terms of site maintenance and growth opportunities (Dahl 2005). Libraries, as vital information organizations, should show evidence of continual growth and change and this should certainly be reflected in the library Web site.

The first step in Web site assessment is to take a look at the site's current architectural elements with a goal of shifting from static format to dynamic formats. This can best be accomplished by maintaining an organizational commitment to adhering to

current Web standards. Understanding and keeping current with Web standards can be a daunting task, but it has been made much simpler by the leadership provided by the W3C. The W3C, or World Wide Web consortium, "develops interoperable technologies, specifications, guidelines, software and tools to lead the Web to its full potential" (W3C 2007). By modeling your Web site's infrastructure to the recommendations of the WC3, your organization will be able to quickly respond to Web changes and utilize new technologies as they become available.

Our initial assessment of the University of Mississippi's library Web site revealed several areas which would need improvement, along with components that made the site very useful. Basically the weakness in the site lay in the significant use of static HTML and its accompanying overuse of font tags and table-based layout. CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) was in minimal use and most often found in the difficult to maintain "embedded styles format." While this type of Web site architecture was fine in its day, the reality is that for most sites it has grown into a maintenance headache that ultimately shows up poorly on the user's screen, as well. The Web site also had some strong areas that gave us a good foundation to start with. The directory structure on the server was in very good order and the way SSI (Server Side Includes) had been incorporated into the headers and footers made the site switchover possible without inconveniencing our users. In terms of design and usability, while most of the homepage and navigation was somewhat dated, the site did have some key design features that had generated a fair amount of library branding and recognition. We also noted accessibility problems primarily related to images used as header fonts. Usability was a concern as well. The libraries had conducted usability studies of the site in recent years (Stephan et al 2006) and we knew, via our

public service librarians, which areas of the site were problematic or inaccessible. Out of this initial assessment came the decision to make major changes to the library Web site in the areas of infrastructure, design, accessibility, usability and content upgrades. The major goals in each area are as follows:

Infrastructure: We wanted to apply Web standards by upgrading the site to XHTML and fully integrated CSS and SSI. We also wanted to prepare the site for the eventual inclusion of data-driven components utilizing PHP, SQL, Python, Ajax and open source content management tools.

Design: Coincidentally, at the time we were assessing the site, the University Administration began moving toward a unified Web presence across all departments. This is an international professional trend with many benefits to both the organizational image and the user experience. We wanted to take advantage of this oppor-

tunity to redesign our homepage and navigation with an eye to balancing university expectations with access to the library's vast array of electronic resources.

Accessibility and Usability: We built a process of removing barriers to the Web site and incorporating some enhanced accessibility features. We made an early commitment to usability by seeking input from library faculty and staff. We also included our users in structured usability studies.

Content Upgrades: A commitment was made to examine and evaluate Library Web site content, department by department and to strive for uniformity and content excellence.

Team Formation, Project Planning and Goal Setting

It was decided early on that there would need to be a working committee whose charge would be to provide the primary

oversight for the upcoming and future changes to the library Web site. While the importance of having committee members with technical skills was obvious, there was also a significant amount of recognition by the library administration that Web services are indeed "public services." Recent literature regarding Web committee establishment and dynamics offered us valuable insights regarding what to expect from members and the group as a whole (Church et al, 2005). In formation of the group we sought to balance the team with members who expressed a real interest in the Web and members whose technical skills made them ideal members. To this end, a broad committee was formed of eight members whose skills represent both public service and technical service aspects of the organization. Two additional teams were also formed. A small Web site Graphics Team met regularly and worked out the major design elements of the site. This included color schemes, font choices, banner graphics and logo site branding images and locations. Additionally, a Usability Team was formed to test the site. Team members first completed training provided by our school's Institutional Review Board regarding the testing of human subjects. The team was charged with completing and interpreting two quality usability studies on the site's new homepage and navigational elements before the site went into production.

The University of Mississippi Libraries Web site, like most major University library Web sites, is large and complex. In order to meet our Web site renovation goals, it was necessary to create a project plan which would both break out tasks into manageable workflows and prioritize focus areas according to a logical schedule. We made a decision to set as a primary goal the implementation of a new homepage and navigational scheme (headers and footers) by the beginning of the spring semester. From this vantage point we were able to fragment the project initially into



The USM Library homepage as of July 2006.

three large focused phases as follows:

- Phase I: Consists of integrating major upgrades to the current library “bridge” page, homepage and secondary level headers and footers.
- Phase II: Consists of prioritizing departmental upgrades according to a predefined rubric and upgrading each library department to current Web standards.
- Phase III: consists of providing ongoing, dynamic database-driven Web capabilities and site management. (This also includes acquiring and setting up an Apache Web server in order to provide dynamic content. The current Library Web site is located on a campus server which offers limited possibilities for dynamic services and content management systems).

With our stated goal of having a new homepage and navigational scheme up before the start of the spring semester, we began focusing on Phase I of the project. Our timeline gave us roughly four and a half months to complete this section. Good project management was critical to this phase of the project due to the tight timeline and firm deadline involved. By breaking the phase into fairly granular components and then placing the summary elements and associated activities necessary for completion into a Gantt chart, it was clear where critical dependencies would be. This then allowed us to create an exacting, task-specific timeline to meet our goal.

Nuts and Bolts: Problem Solving and Completing Phase I

The core goal of Phase I was to create a new homepage, site-wide navigational scheme and prep the site for the transition to XHTML and CSS. Upgrading a large site’s code core while retaining original content can be a real challenge; however, a few temporary stages can make it possible. When we initially set out to redesign our homepage and navigational system we did not allow ourselves to be constrained at



New homepage as of December 2006.

all by the technical frailties of the existing site. In other words, we would bend and break the old site to accept the new rather than adapt the new site based upon any limitations imposed by the existing Web infrastructure. With the exception of some previously well-branded imagery (note the printer’s marks), the new homepage and navigational scheme is entirely fresh.

For our new homepage, we created a top banner with a five section dropdown navigational menu set. The dropdown navigation menu is entirely built with CSS and is fully accessible. Although Web forums abound with naysayers, pure CSS dropdown menus are possible by coding in conditional comments for Internet Explorer. We also wanted a fully accessible rotating news feature to keep the site alive and interesting. This was accomplished with a JavaScript routine which freezes with all panes open when JavaScript is disabled. Footers have become increasingly important on large sites as navigational tools. In our footer we placed an A-Z site index and

links to other areas of the University Web that we know our users need while they are still using our site.

An early mock up of the site design was built in Photoshop and presented to the library faculty and staff for input and comments. From here, a rapid prototype was built and tweaked until it was exactly how we wanted it to look. It was this prototype that was used in our formal usability studies. Coding the page and site navigation for total accessibility across all modern browsers took considerable time. We wanted the site to be fully expandable with enlarged text without any of the content overlapping that so often plagues CSS-styled sites. By utilizing concepts of “Bulletproof Web Design” (Cederholm, 2006), we were ultimately able to get everything we wanted in our design with full and even enhanced accessibility features.

A significant problem related to upgrading large Web sites that cannot be shut down is how to get new XHTML/CSS-based headers, footers and navigation into



Note the small "home" link at the top left.

older HTML pages. Or conversely, how can masses of content be migrated from HTML to XHTML (or PHP). Fortunately, at the UM Libraries, headers and footers were integrated throughout the site as server side includes. One file controlled the header and another file controlled the footer. Normally, it would be a simple matter of building new include files and giving them

content areas are not z-indexed, then overlapping or rearranging of the page occurs. Both render the page useless. Additionally, because our pages are of different lengths, it was necessary to have a floating footer. Pages that are not properly coded cannot accept a floating footer as it actually will rise to the top of the page and hide behind the header. We solved this problem by creating an interim header and leaving the old footer in place temporarily.

The interim header did not feature a drop down menu. Rather, the top menu levels led to a new set of pages which mimicked the links on the drop down menus. In this way the site was still fully navigable from the older pages.



Note the small "home" link at the top left.

the same names as the include files currently in use. This, however, is not often possible. In the case of UM Libraries, the static HTML pages could not accept the new header and footers for two reasons. The CSS dropdown menus in the header required that the pages they go into be XHTML and that the content areas are z-indexed. If

Over the course of the next month, every page on the library site was fitted into a template which replaced the Doctype to XHTML 1.0 Transitional, replaced the old SSI code, referenced appropriate style sheets and created style control with only two content div tags.

Conclusion

At UM Libraries we have now begun the work of Phase II: content upgrades and Phase III: dynamic content and long term maintenance. Looking to the future, for large scale library Web sites, major renovations like these should become a thing of the past. Commitments to Web standards, dynamic technologies and daily attention to content will make library Web sites the cutting edge information portals they can and should be. ■

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Lamar County Library System's Experience with Thin-Client Computing

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Abstract

Thin-client computing was implemented several years ago in the Lamar County Library System (LCLS) to accommodate a small IT staff. Since that time, the ways that libraries are used and how patrons store data have changed. Crider and Farmer have found that their once useful system is not able to accommodate their needs or their patrons' needs. While thin-client computing works for some systems, it has not been successful for the LCLS. In their article, the authors look at how their thin client system is not working and what they are now trying to do to accommodate their patrons' needs.

Introduction

When I came on board as the new director in May 2006, I spent most of my time gathering information from staff and patrons with the intent of evaluating every aspect of the library system. Very quickly I decided that customer service – in terms of providing a patron and staff-friendly environment – would be my first priority. From the beginning, I was bombarded with complaints about public access computing from both staff and patrons. Lamar County Library System is one of the few libraries in the state that utilizes thin-client computing. At this point in time, several major problems exist with our thin-client situation:

1. Patrons cannot use flash drives to save work because the thin-client terminals we own do not support USB 2.0. For the few newer terminals that do support USB 2.0, we can not configure the Citrix server to recognize those drives once plugged in.
2. If problems occur on the Citrix server and it unexpectedly shuts down, everyone connected, including staff and patrons, loses the connection to the server and thus all of their work. Branch managers often have to write notes on library letterhead to teachers explaining why students lost or could not finish presentations or reports.
3. Plug-ins, such as QuickTime, ActiveX, and Flash, cannot be downloaded onto the terminals to support many online activities. Only the system administrator can allow downloads to occur. This often requires that the server be rebooted, thus kicking everyone off the network. Even then, some plug-ins still will not open when a patron attempts to load a page.
4. With thin-client computing, network traffic must route through the host site; therefore, software, such as Internet Explorer and the Microsoft Office suite products, often runs very slowly. Even while typing in Microsoft Word, one experiences a latency that causes confusion and makes working in Word inefficient.
5. When problems occur, staff usually cannot troubleshoot and have to work around it until the IT consultant could be called in. Unfortunately, our IT consultant often cannot do a site visit on the same day (or week) that we call.

In December 2006, our Training and Technology Specialist, Jaketha Farmer, and I took part in the Rural Library Sustainability workshop at the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC). As we sat around the tables in our various small groups, the discussion focused on brainstorming ways to fund sustainable technology in a world of limited funds.

"At Lamar County Library System, we need to decide whether we want to upgrade our thin clients or move back to a PC environment," I said.

"Thin clients...only in our dreams," breathed one director.

"We wish we had thin clients; PCs are such a headache," another director stated.

Jaketha and I looked at them incredulously. Were Mississippi public librarians seriously dreaming of one day moving from PC-based environments to thin-client computing? Surely they had not experienced how thin-client computing works, or

Table 1. Active Workstations at LCLS

(as of 2/2/07)

	# of Thin Clients		# of PCs	
	Staff	Patrons	Circ	OPAC
Lumberton Library	1	3	1	–
Purvis Library	1	3	1	1
Oak Grove Library	3	10*	2	–
Sumrall Library	1	3	1	–
TOTAL				

*Two thin clients serve as OPACs.

in our case fails to work. The grass is always greener on the other side. While we do not believe that this form of networking is bad for every situation, it has not worked for Lamar County Library System.

We hope that by sharing our experience it will provide other librarians with the pros and cons surrounding thin-client computing. While some see thin clients as the answer to their network problems, Lamar County Library System is realizing that thin-client computing has its own set of problems and requires careful consideration.

Background

In July 1997, Lamar County Board of Supervisors voted to separate from Pine Forest Regional Library System and establish the Lamar County Library System (LCLS). Becoming official in October 1997, LCLS was composed of three branches: Sumrall, Lumberton, and Purvis Public Libraries. The LCLS headquarters was located in Purvis Library. At that time, we were one hundred percent PC-based and most of our active computers were Pentium processors running Windows 98. In anticipation of a fourth branch, there were several 386 and 486 PCs being kept in storage.

In the existing branches, each had at least three PCs for public use, one PC at the circulation desk, and one PC in each branch manager's office. The public workstations provided Internet Explorer and Microsoft Office. The branch manager and circulation workstations provided Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer and the library automation system (Sirsi's Unicorn).

At that time, all users had access to the floppy disk drives and CD-ROMs. Microsoft Office and Norton Antivirus were installed on each machine. Internet access was available through the MISSIN network and to gain entry, 56K lines ran from the two satellite branches to Purvis. A T-1 line connected Purvis to the wider MISSIN network through MLC and onto the Mississippi Department of Information Technology

Services (ITS) in Jackson. With the inception of thin clients, the 56K lines had to be

KEY TERMS

Application server: A networked server dedicated to running software applications, such as the Microsoft Office suite.

Domain Controller: Authenticates users to the network.

Fat server: Same as an application server.

Flash drive: Portable storage devices. Also known as memory sticks, thumb, jump, pen, or key drives.

File server: A server that centrally stores data files.

Mixed environment: Also known as hybrid environment, which runs both thin clients and PCs.

Terminal Services: A server program running on Windows NT 4.0 (or higher) operating system that provides the graphical user interface of the Windows desktop to user terminals that do not have this capability. (Terminal Services Product)

Thin client: A low-cost, centrally-managed computer devoid of CD-ROM players, diskette drives, and expansion slots. (Thin Client)

Thin-client computing: Relies heavily on the client-server model where the thin client provides a graphical display and the fat server houses all the software and performs all the processing.

upgraded to T-1 lines. When Oak Grove opened in late 2003, this added another T-1 line into Purvis, thus giving us three T-1 lines into Purvis and one going out to MLC onto ITS. On November 30 of last year, we migrated from MISSIN to Bell-south's MPLS network.

Sirsi's Unicorn was – and is – the library's automation system and it resides on its own server located in the administrative wing of the Purvis Library. With the inception of thin clients, two new storage servers were added: an application server and a domain controller/file server.

What Is Thin-Client Computing?

A thin client is "a low-cost, centrally-managed computer devoid of CD-ROM players, diskette drives, and expansion slots" (Thin Client). Thin-client computing relies heavily on the client-server model where the thin client provides a graphical display and the fat server houses all the software and performs all of the processing. In other words, thin-client computing provides an optical illusion. When patrons click on an icon locally, that software appears to be running locally as if it were installed on the machine itself.

At LCLS, we have three servers, two of which are required to handle thin-client computing. First, there is the application server that runs the thin-client server operating system, Citrix MetaFrame. This server houses all software used by patrons and staff. Second, we have the domain controller/file server, which authenticates machines to the LCLS domain as well as centrally stores our data files.

The Decision For Thin Clients

In the late 1990s, the idea for thin-client computing came about for several reasons. First, funds were limited and although an IT consultant was hired on an as-needed basis, LCLS simply could not afford to hire anyone internally to handle even the simplest computing issues. Therefore, the full-time Head of Technical

Services, Terry Lajaunie, volunteered to help.

Within a short time, this put him in the compromising position of performing not only acquisitions, cataloging, reports, and later serial control; but also constantly traveling to the branches to perform PC installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting. The anticipated growth and actual demand from the Oak Grove Library along with the wearing of many hats proved taxing for one person. After many meetings with vendors and at least one visit to another library system with thin clients, the decision was finally made. LCLS adopted the thin-client architecture as its first true network. This allowed the Head of Technical Services to deal with problems on the server in administration rather than traveling to the branches.

Why Return To Personal Computers?

Three of the greatest inconveniences with thin-client computing are (1) latency and bandwidth, (2) the inability to add or configure much-needed drives such as USB 2.0 ports, floppy and CD-ROM, and (3) the inability to run certain types of programs, including graphical games and online courseware.

Latency & Bandwidth

In plain English, latency is “wasted time” (Latency), which involves waiting longer than usual for a Web page to load or waiting on words that were just typed to appear on the screen. In terms of networking, it is “the amount of time it takes a packet to travel from source to destination. Together, latency and bandwidth define the speed and capacity of a network” (Latency).

To our understanding, T-1 lines are the minimum bandwidth for thin-client computing; therefore, we had to upgrade to T-1. During talks with hired consultants it was suggested that the move to the MPLS network would improve latency because the switches would be far more efficient

than the outdated hubs in use prior to the migration. However, this did not occur and our only recourse would be to take Administration up to a 3mbps line. Doing this would more than double our monthly telecommunications charge. We are one of only a handful of systems that run thin client, so when attending the MPLS forums last summer, Bellsouth consultants could not specify how MPLS would actually function for our environment.

Drives

Although most thin clients now come with two to four USB ports, that does not guarantee that your staff or patrons will be able to utilize those ports because they will need to be upgraded/configured to work (if possible). For LCLS, 83% of our active thin client terminals are out of warranty, so no upgrades exist that would allow the use of flash drives. To add even one external floppy drive at each branch, we would need to purchase four newer-model thin clients. At this point in time, thin clients are not much cheaper than PCs, so the savings in purchasing them rather than PCs is minimal.

Just as configuring USB ports poses a problem, so too does adding other external drives including floppy drives, which at this point are becoming obsolete. With that stated: how do patrons save their work? How do they save that PowerPoint presentation or that research paper? PowerPoint presentations most often exceed the 1.44 MB storage capacity of floppy drives, so what can we do?

Software & Internet Issues

Aside from hoping to offer computer classes to patrons, we would also like to offer WebJunction courses to library system employees. However, with thin-client computing, this is impossible. According to WebJunction’s technology requirements, purchasing and/or accessing an online course requires that cookies are enabled, pop-up blockers are turned off,

and the course be launched from a PC with Internet Explorer. All of these requirements simply cannot be met in our thin client environment.

Words of Wisdom

First and foremost, setting up a thin-client environment can be costly. Aside from the thin-client terminals, there are other costs, such as “dedicated servers to run the applications, possible network upgrades to handle the increased loads incurred by the thin client system, migration costs, and software licensing” (Chickowski, Thin Client).

When it comes to licensing, software companies will not be cheated. While a single license is needed on each PC that has the Microsoft Office suite installed, thin clients also need a license. The thin client license is called a client access license (CAL) that allows remote access to terminal services. Regardless, the equipment, software and other licenses will cost you dearly and any type of skimping when it comes to purchasing reliable and efficient hardware and software will result in the establishment of a poor back-end infrastructure. Instead of the thin-client computing environment offering stability, it slowly but surely becomes a costly liability.

Second, Windows updates are necessary. Our application server runs both Windows and Citrix MetaFrame operating systems. In 2005, sets of Windows Updates were installed that “knocked out” the entire network. Apparently, Citrix MetaFrame had “an allergic reaction” to one of the Windows updates and our entire network was down for several days. Since we had no network for staff or patrons, we had no other choice but to call the IT consultant who worked until the wee hours of the morning for several days to get things back up.

Third, thin-client computing was never meant to exceed more than 15% of a network. Currently, thin clients make up – to be exact – 86% of the active workstations

at LCLS. "While it would be nice to replace all of your PCs with more easily administrated thin-client terminals, that is rarely advisable or feasible. ... 85% to 95% of Citrix users work in a mixed environment" (Chickowski, Slimming Down).

Fourth, upgrades in equipment are necessary. Just because thin clients have a five-to-seven-year life span, this is nothing to get excited about as the warranty expires within three years. If something goes wrong after the warranty expires, and you don't have a large IT department, money is spent on an outside IT consultant. Our IT consultant recently found out that upgrades simply do not exist for terminals that are out of warranty. That seven year lifespan quickly becomes much less in reality. In actuality, you must purchase new thin clients and add external drives in hopes of configuring them to operate. Even then, there is the question of whether the server can be configured to recognize these external storage devices.

Fifth, with some commercial software and hardware, there are compatibility issues. For example, Dymo label printers, of which we have quite a few, do not work in a thin client environment. However, the vendor's Web site claims that they do and we purchased them with this understanding. We have learned that they must be attached locally to a PC to function on our network.

Lastly, thin-client computing will not mask an already poorly managed IT environment. If your library system is not designed to properly manage your existing PC network, then thin-client computing may not make things any easier. Instead, it could shine a spotlight on your various networking problems, which places you in the position of either dealing with those problems or ignoring them in hopes that they will go away on their own. Of course the problems will not go away and your patrons will wonder who is actually in control of your network.

Conclusion

Who could have known that in the five years since deploying thin-client computing at LCLS, patrons (and some staff) would be carrying high capacity storage devices on their key chains? Who would have foreseen that students in junior high would be required to prepare PowerPoint presentations that far exceed the storage capacity of a floppy disk? Few could have foreseen such drastic changes in technology or our patron needs.

Although there may be library systems throughout the state that find thin-client computing a viable alternative to PCs, Lamar County Library System has found thin clients to fall short of our needs and expectations. Patrons today are much more computer savvy than only a few years ago. Patron satisfaction is so important to the vitality of our library system and because of network problems we are simply falling short. Aside from patrons, frustrated staff cannot provide a high level of customer service without properly functioning equipment. In the coming months and years, Lamar County Library System will begin to add PCs to our thin client environment. Our hope is that we can function more efficiently in a more bal-

anced hybrid environment by routing patrons to the terminals that will fit their needs. Those who need to do large presentations and save them to flash drives can be put on PCs while those just checking email can be put on thin clients. After much research and consideration, we feel that this is the best decision for everyone involved. ■

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MLA Officer Nominees



Annie Payton

Vice President/President-elect

ANNIE PAYTON

Education: Ph.D. University of Mississippi (Psychology); M.L.S. University of Southern Mississippi; B.A. Tougaloo College (Psychology).

Professional Experience: Director, James Herbert White Library, Mississippi Valley State University.

Professional Activities: Member of ALA, MLA, ACRL, and Black Caucus of ALA.

Publications and Presentations: Co-host of the 2006 ACRL leadership institute at Harvard University.



Jan Willis

Vice President/President-elect

JAN WILLIS

Education: M.L.S. University of Southern Mississippi, 1998; B.A. University of Mississippi, 1979; A.A. Itawamba Community College, 1977.

Professional Experience: Director, Lee-Itawamba Library System, 2004-pres-

ent; Assistant Director, Dixie Regional Library System, 1987-2004.

Professional Activities: MLA, member: 1998-present; MLA Legislative Committee, member, 2006-present; MLA Exhibits Committee, Co-chair, 2006-present, MAGNOLIA Database Selection Committee, member, 2004-present.



Judy Card

Secretary

JUDY CARD

Education: M.L.S. University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1972

Professional Experience: Youth Services Coordinator, First Regional Library, April, 2006-present; Memphis/Shelby County Public Library & Information Center, 1975-2003. Positions included: Children's Librarian, South & Hollywood Branches; Manager, Main Library Children's Department; Director, Adult Literacy Project; Administrative Assistant to the Director; Administrative Liaison to Friends of the Library; Staff Development Officer.

Professional Activities: *Mississippi Library Association:* MLS Local Arrangement Chair, 2006. *Tennessee Library Association:* Chair, Staff Development Committee. *American Library Association:* Activities include: President, Continuing Library Education Network Exchange, 2005-2006; Congress on Professional Education Activity: COPE I-Steering Committee, COPE II, Presenter; COPE III, attendee and facilitator; ALA Conference Coordinating Team-Toronto. *Tennessee Storytelling Association*-Secretary.

Honors: Memphis Area Library Council Librarian of the Year 2004



Julia Rholes

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JULIA RHOLES

Education: M.L.S. Rutgers University, 1978; M.A. University of Texas (Austin), 1974 (Zoology); B.A. Mount Holyoke College, 1972 (Biology).

Professional Experience: Dean, University of Mississippi, 2003-present; Assistant Dean, University of Kansas 1998-2001, 2002-2003; Interim Dean, University of Kansas, 2001-2002; Head, Reference Division, Texas A&M University, 1990-1998; Acting Assistant Director, Texas A&M University, 1992-1994; Head, Maps & Microtext Depts., Texas A&M University, 1983-1990; Reference Librarian, Texas A&M University, 1978-1983; Information Scientist, American Cyanamid, 1974-1978.

Professional Activities: ALA, Member, 1980 to present; ALA councilor 2000-2003; Reference and User Services Association, secretary 1993-1995; MLA, 2003 to present; member, MLA Legislation Committee. ASERL, member, 2003 to present; Chair, ASERL Education Committee 2006 to present. EPSCOR Science Information Group, President 2006-2007.

Publications and Presentations: "Developing Partnerships to Create Electronic Reserves at the University of Kansas Libraries," (with Nancy J. Burich), *Journal of Access Services*, 1(4)59-70 (2003); "What Do the Patrons Think?"

Library Surveys: Old & New Approaches to Assessment," (with Kay Wall), SOLINET Workshop presentation, Starkville, December 5, 2003.

Honors: Frye Institute Fellow, 2002; Association of Former Students Outstanding Librarianship Award (Texas A&M University), 1994; Whitney-Carnegie Award (American Library Association), 1990.



Dee Horn

Treasurer

DEE HORN

Education: B.A. Delta State University, 1996 (English)

Professional Experience: George E. Allen Library, Booneville, 1998-present; Head Librarian, 2002-present.

Professional Activities: MLA member; Graduate of 2006 Librarianship 101 Institute; Attended Children's Librarians Retreat in 2003 and Youth Services Retreat in 2006.

Presentations: Learning programs for staff at 2006 Northeast Regional Library System staff meeting; Librarianship 101 Institute Alumni program at 2006 MLA conference.

Grants & Honors: Awarded grants from Ezra Jack Keats Foundation, the Wal-Mart Literacy Fund, Prentiss County Literacy Fund, and Libri Foundation.

Treasurer

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Amanda Powers

Professional Experience: Reference Services Librarian, MSU Mitchell Memorial Library Reference Department, 2005-present; Serials/Processing Staff, MIT's Dewey Library, 2001-2005; Marketing Manager, Chronos Asset Management, Cambridge, MA, 1999-2001; Assistant Editor, Bantam Books, 1996-1998.

Professional Activities: ALA RUSA CODES committee on Collection Development Policies and Assessment, and ASERL Virtual Reference Group; Mississippi State University's Faculty Advisory Committee for the Center for Teaching and Learning, Libraries' Podcasting Committee and Library 2.0 Group.



Billy Beale

ALA Councilor

BILLY BEALE

Education: M.S. (Library Science) Simmons College, 1976; A.B. Loyola University of Chicago, 1971; additional study Chicago State University; Northern Illinois University; The University of Southern Mississippi.

Professional Experience: At Meridian Community College: Dean of Learning Resources, 1992 - present; Head Librarian, 1991-1992; Computer Assisted

Instruction Supervisor, 1983-1991; Acquisitions Librarian 1982-83; Self Study Director 1979-1982; Circulation Librarian 1977-1979; Middle School Librarian Enrico Fermi Elementary School, Chicago, Illinois, 1973-1975.

Professional Activities: ALA member for 32 years; ACRL Copyright Committee, 1988-1990; Social Responsibilities Task Force, 1989; ACRL-Community and Jr. College Libraries Section Committees: Service to Special Needs Students, Chairperson 1987-1989; Computers in Community Colleges Application and Management, 1986; Integrating New Technologies with Learning Resource Centers, 1987-89; Conference Program Committee, 1982; Instruction and Use Committee, 1982. *MLA:* ALA Chapter Councilor, 2000-04; Executive Board Parliamentarian 1982, 2003; Legislative Committee, 1993; Junior Members Roundtable: Treasurer, 1979; Vice-Chair, 1980; MLA-ACRL nominating committee, 1984; Black Caucus Roundtable: Vice-Chair, 2003-04; chairperson 2005-06; MAGNOLIA board member. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools: On-site Evaluator of College Support Services, 1980-present.

Honors: MLA Past President's Award 1980; Stone Wall Book Awards Juror, 2005-2007;



Sherry Laughlin

ALA Councilor

SHERRY LAUGHLIN

Education: M.S.L.S The University of Tennessee, 1977; B.S. The University of Southern Mississippi, 1974.

Professional Experience: Associate University Librarian, 2006-present; Head, Information Services, 1996-2006; Head, Refer-

ence Department, 1990-1996; Government Documents Coordinator, 1986-1990, The University of Southern Mississippi; Medical Librarian 1980-1986; Veterans Administration Medical Center, Jackson; Reference Librarian 1977-1980, USM.

Teaching Experience: Government Publications 1987, 1989; Introduction to Reference Resources and Services 2001, School of Library and Information Science, USM; University 101, Division of Undergraduate Studies, 2002-2004; undergraduate advisor 2002-2006.

Professional Activities: ALA: ACRL, LAMA, Chapter Relations Committee, Chapter Editors Interest Group 1987-1990; RUSA Managers of Users Services Section Professional Development Committee.

MLA (selected): Association President 1993; Annual Conference Chair 1992; Conference Local Arrangements Chair 1999; ACRL President 1996; Mississippi Authors Awards Committee Chair 1989; Legislative Committee 1992-1995; **Mississippi Libraries** editor 1986-1990, 2005; Constitution, Bylaws & Organizational Review Committee Chair 1998. **USM (selected):** Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi President 1995-1996; President-elect/President, Faculty Senate 1999-2001; University Strategic Planning Committee 1999-2000; Campus Master Planning Committee 2000-2001; Presidential Search Advisory Committee 2002; Distributed Learning Committee/Intellectual Property Subcommittee 2002; University Assessment Committee 2005-present; Library Building Committee 1990-1997; Library Allocations/Acquisitions Committee Chair 1992, 2002-2006; Public Relations Work Group Chair 2004-present.

Publications and Presentations: "The Ready Reference Collection: Mississippi," *Tennessee Librarian*, vol. 30, Fall 1978; "Concept Paper for a Statewide Health Information Network," Mississippi Health Information Network organizational meeting, 1986; *Mississippi Library Automation Directory*, Jackson: MLA, 1987 (with E. A. Williams); "Challenges and Opportunities: Building Programs at MSU, UM, and USM," *Mississippi Libraries*, vol. 55, Summer 1991; "Chart-

ing Our Course: The Annual Conference of the Mississippi Library Association," *Mississippi Libraries*, vol. 56, Fall 1992; "Sailing Through: MLA Conference a Success," *Mississippi Libraries*, vol. 56, Winter 1992; *Children's Authors Speak*, Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1993 (with J. L. Porter).

Honors: MLA Outstanding Achievement Award 1991; H.W. Wilson Library Periodical Award for *Mississippi Libraries* 1991; Mississippi Legislature Higher Education Appreciation Day, Working for Academic Excellence nominee 1992.



Adrienne McPhaul

SELA Representative

ADRIENNE MCPHAUL

Education: M.L.I.S. University of Alabama, 2003; B.A. University of South Alabama, 2002 (English).

Professional Experience: Information Services, Cook Library, University of Southern Mississippi, 2003-present.

Professional Activities: Chair, MLA Library Instruction Roundtable.

Publications and Presentations: *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *The Southeastern Librarian* and *The Georgia Library Quarterly*.

SELA Representative

DEBORAH LEE

Education: Ph.D. Mississippi State University, 2005; M.S.B.A. Mississippi State University, 1998; M.S.L.I.S. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1990;



Deborah Lee

B.A. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1984.

Professional Experience: Associate Director, MSU Center for Teaching and Learning, 2006-present; Associate Professor/Coordinator, Library Instructional Services, Mississippi State University Libraries, 2003-present; Reference Librarian, MSU Libraries, 2000-2003; Coordinator of Serials, MSU Libraries, 1997-1999; Acquisitions Librarian, MSU Libraries, 1993-1997; Collection Development Librarian, Millsaps College, 1991-1993.

Professional Activities: MLA, SELA and ALA member; Past chair of MLA's Association of College and Research Libraries section and Automation and Networking Roundtable.

Publications: "The Union Relative Wage Effect for Academic Librarians" in *Industrial Relations*, "Research Consultations: Enhancing Library Research Skills" in *Reference Librarian*, "MAGNOLIA Resources for the Classroom" in the *Mississippi Reading Journal*, "iPod, You-Pod, We-Pod: Podcasting and Marketing Library Services" in *Library Administration & Management*, and "Mentoring the Untenured Librarian: The Research Committee" in *College & Research Libraries News*. ■



About Books

Iles, Greg. *True Evil*. New York: Scribner, 2006. [512 pp.] \$25.95 hardcover.

"True evil has a face you know and a voice you trust." Like an adoring husband or a beautiful wife, as you will come to believe in this latest of many books of mystery and intrigue by Natchez native, Greg Iles. Like most of his works in recent years, this mystery is set in Natchez and its environs. If you have visited its local shops and restaurants, such as Planet Thailand on N. Commerce Street, you will enjoy the local hometown feel of this thriller.

When Agent Alexandra Morse, a successful FBI negotiator in hostage situations, makes a fatal error on her last case, it ends with her partner's death and multiple lacerations to her face. But Alex is already a woman in crisis. Suffering from the loss of her father, a bystander in a hold-up gone badly, she must face an additional calamity as her mother is diagnosed with terminal cancer. With the sudden death of her sister, sorrow finally finds a breaking point; she is compelled to go solo as she focuses all her energies and resources to find some answers. A death bed plea from her sister Grace launches Alex into a murder investigation not sanctioned by the FBI. But her promise to protect her young nephew Jamie keeps her focused on what is most important as she goes it alone in her search for a killer – or killers – responsible for the all too natural, untimely death of her sister.

Unknown to Alex, a ruthless lawyer in Jackson, Mississippi offers an unusual service for wealthy clients intent on finding a way around divorce and prenuptial agreements that proves to be more lucrative than acrimonious settlements could ever be. His partnership with a ruthless medical genius named Dr. Eldon Tarver seals the deal in providing trusting victims for his diabolical medical experiments too heinous for the ordinary mind to comprehend.

When Alex begins to untangle the web that is designed to entrap its next victim, a small town doctor in Natchez, she takes a big chance by warning him that his perfect

life with a beautiful new wife is not to be believed. So begins a tense and uneasy struggle between Dr. Christopher Shepard and the rogue FBI agent. Together they are locked in a series of events that finally convince the reluctant Dr. Chris to take measures to protect himself and his young son.

Mystery thrillers set in familiar places take on a credibility that you might not expect. *True Evil* has just enough reality in its characters and settings to make it believable that something truly evil could even happen in a charming town on the Mississippi River. Highly recommended for a good weekend read.

Ann Branton

Head of Bibliographic Services
The University of Southern Mississippi



Kolin, Philip C. *Wailing Walls*. Wind and Water Press, 2006. [51 pp.] \$9.95 paperback.

Kolin, Philip C., and Susan Swartwout, eds. *Hurricane Blues: poems about Katrina and Rita*. Southeast Missouri State University Press, 2006. [181 pp.] \$17.00 paperback.

Two books of poetry on a similar theme associated with Philip C. Kolin seemed a natural pairing for review. In *Wailing Walls*, we get the deeply personal side of Kolin's poetry. He looks starkly at suffering in a multitude of forms, mostly described in the structure of a personal story. He uses images that are both expected and unexpected in his stories, and his perspective remains true to a Catholic heritage. The book begins and ends with poems that could be read as prayers, as might be expected by the book's title, and the last poem finally brings hope for redemption of all the described suffering. Some poems are too personal to carry a broad meaning, and rarely does he startle his reader with new insight. This book is recommended for libraries with strong literature and Mis-

issippi writer collections. The publishers can be contacted at timesing@zoominternet.net.

In *Hurricane Blues*, Kolin and Swartwout present the poems of many poets. Some are well-known in the poetry world, and others are new to publication. This collection is amazing in its variety of voices and styles. Most poems are first person experiences, and display how widely the damage was felt throughout the country. Many of the poems invoke Nature and God – even Gaia gets a mention – but the most moving stories are those that focus on the small details with large implications. Many of the poems express the anger and the pain of the experience; politicians are not considered favorably by these poets. The poems are grouped thematically from expectation to experience to recovery to resolution, with one entire section devoted to the flooding of New Orleans. This progressive organization does a good deal toward encouraging the hopefulness expressed in the editors' forward. Also, proceeds from the sale of this book will go towards hurricane relief. Since the poems are so personal and touching, it is disappointing that biographies are not included. The editors' intend this anthology to be a historical record of experience, and as such, this book is recommended for libraries keeping such records and for libraries with strong poetry collections.

Christina Torbert

Head of Serials
University of Mississippi



Herndon, Ernest and Williams, B. Scott. *Paddling the Pascagoula*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2005. [196 pp.] \$20.00 paperback.

I live in Petal, Mississippi and drive over the Leaf River daily. This book revealed the beauties and wonders of the river and how often we take for granted something that we cross every day. Now when I drive

over the bridge, I look down and pay attention to the boaters and the river. *Paddling the Pascagoula* gives a glimpse into the lives of people that live around the river and into a little known Mississippi treasure, the Pascagoula River.

Three rivers are covered in the book. The two authors present different perspectives of tributaries of the Pascagoula River. The first part by Herndon covers the Leaf River, part two is the Chickasawhay River by Williams, and then both Herndon and Williams take different parts of the Pascagoula River. The upper Pascagoula is covered by Herndon and the lower Pascagoula by Williams. The narrative of this work is very descriptive and gives interesting viewpoints of two narrators: Ernest Herndon and Scott B. Williams. Herndon is a traditional adventurer who uses a canoe and Williams a kayaker who is more unconventional. Both perspectives add a richness and added dimension to a remarkable account of floating down the Pascagoula. I especially enjoyed the accounts of meals that the adventurers enjoyed.

When I began to read the book, I was surprised when I realized that it was not a trail guide but a narrative diary. I was disappointed that the illustrations were not in color, but the authors explain they were unable to have color photographs due to budgetary constraints. The pictures in the book were taken by the authors and convey the beauty and wonders of the river such as a picturesque scene of dawn on the Chickasawhay River; a waterfall on the Leaf tributary and lagoons and cypress swamps. One weak point of this work is that it lacks a map of the Pascagoula River.

Paddling the Pascagoula is recommended for all Mississippi libraries.

Tracy Englert

Media Librarian

University of Southern Mississippi



Fraiser, Jim; photography by Rick Guy. *Vanished Mississippi Gulf Coast.* Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 2006. [104 pp.] \$22.95 hardcover.

Jim Fraiser, Tupelo lawyer and author of ten books, had a premonition in 2003 after finishing his novel titled, *Camille*. He stated, "Upon observing predictions that we were mired in a thirty-year-cycle of more frequent and destructive hurricanes, I became concerned that my beloved Mississippi coast was due another Camille-like hurricane that would devastate the region." In 2004 his own brother-in-law sustained three separate hurricanes in Punta Gorda, Florida.

Fraiser urgently approached his publisher with an idea to preserve the coast's history, architecture, and culture through text and photography. They agreed and he again teamed with award-winning photographer, Rick Guy. Guy provided the camera work in their 2004 Pelican release, *The Majesty of Eastern Mississippi and the Coast*. He currently works for *The Clarion-Ledger*, but his talent also appears in numerous news magazines such as *Newsweek*, *People Weekly*, and *Time*. It is with great luck Guy clicked his last frame days before Katrina struck.

Fraiser literally, and with clear, color photos by Guy, leads us down the coastal road of Katrina's destruction. Using *Vanished Mississippi Gulf Coast* as our guide, we begin the journey in the easternmost town of Ocean Springs. As if traveling on U.S. Highway 90, we pass through Pascagoula, Biloxi, Gulfport, Pass Christian, and terminate in Bay St. Louis.

Each coastal community is a chapter with three main sections: history, architecture, and culture. In the history section, we marvel at the Civil War "Bedsheet Surrender" in Pass Christian and the use of "Cassette Girls" to transport gentility into frontier Biloxi. My favorite section, architecture, surrounds the reader with Greek revival structures, French colonial houses, and Creole cottages. One will be exposed to terms such as "second-story accordion railing" on the Tullis-Toledano House of Biloxi and "three-bay façade" as exempli-

fied by the Widmer House of Ocean Springs. The terms, given without description, are easily recognizable through Guy's Edward Hopper-like photography. The culture section reads like a modern day chamber of commerce brochure. Museums, artist colonies, restaurants, Krewe events, and festivals were among the many activities one might have participated in prior to Katrina. Unfortunately, these events may find themselves in the history section if conditions remain harsh for inhabitants. Time will tell, as the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center in Gulfport and the Bay St. Louis Little Theater slowly rebuild, repair, and reopen.

Readers will enjoy Fraiser's narrative, non-fiction style and Guy's 142 color photographs. With every page turned, we read fun trivia such as, Long Beach once held the title of Radish Capital of the New South and Barq's Root Beer is an 1898 Biloxi original. Guy's before and after photographs are intriguing, especially Gulfport's The Chimneys; one glances back and forth trying to distinguish recognizable landmarks from the famous restaurant. Readers may also question, "What kind of animal is perched atop the Dantzler-Fabacher House roof on page 65?"

As a librarian, I feel this book lacks one necessity: an index. It is chock full of information well-informed researchers might pass over. In addition, when reprinting, I suggest the publisher fix minor, typographical errors, and include a map of the coast.

During William Faulkner's Nobel Prize acceptance speech, he said, "I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail." With this profound quote, Jim Fraiser ends his most recent book with hope. *Vanished Mississippi Gulf Coast* is a tour-de-force of coastal communities devastated by hurricane Katrina.

I recommend *Vanish* to public and academic libraries in Mississippi. It appeals to many readers, especially history buffs and Mississippi collectors.

Maggie Moran

Public Service & Reference Librarian
Northwest MS Community College ■

People in the News

Gabriel Morley has been named director of the Pike-Amite-Walthall Library System headquartered in McComb, effective Jan. 1, 2007. Prior to coming to PAWLS, Morley served as director of the Washington Parish Library System in Franklinton, Louisiana. He was a daily newspaper reporter for eight years before earning his MLIS from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Morley replaces long-time PAWLS director **Toni James**, who had been with the library for more than thirty-one years. James joined the PAWLS staff in 1975 and was named director in 1981. In 2000, she oversaw the construction of a state-of-the-art \$3.2 million, 21,410 square foot main library and headquarters.

— ◆ —

Melissa Moak, a former elementary school librarian in the McComb Public School System, has joined the PAWLS staff as the new reference librarian. She earned an MLIS and a bachelor's of science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi.

— ◆ —

Nan Moak has accepted a job offer as Librarian at McMorrhough Library on the Goodman campus of Holmes Community College. Ms. Moak, who has already assumed the position, received her BA in International Studies from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2003 and MLIS degree from Louisiana State University in 2005. Immediately before her new appointment, Ms. Moak worked as a cataloger with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in the Archives and Library Division. At her new station at Holmes Community College, Ms. Moak will work primarily with students in reference and on faculty outreach.

— ◆ —

Josie Roberts, Purvis Elementary School Library-Media Specialist, received the 2006 Carroon Apple Award, sponsored by the Mississippi Library Association. The MLA School Libraries Section selects and presents the Carroon Apple Award for the purpose of recognizing outstanding accomplishment in the field of school library media services. Mrs. Roberts was one of three from Mississippi to be added to the American Library Association and the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates 2005 National Advocacy Honor Roll that is awarded once every five years. With the leadership of former Senator Jim Bean, Mrs. Roberts lead a statewide effort to secure legislation for every child in Mississippi to receive the services of a certified public school librarian. Mrs. Roberts became a National Board Certified Teacher in Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Library Media in 2003.

— ◆ —

Maggie Moran, Public Service and Reference Librarian at Northwest Mississippi Community College, has accepted a two-year term on the American Library Association's Outstanding Books for the College Bound and Lifelong Learners Committee. Sponsored through the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), the fifteen members will meet at each ALA conference to compile lists. A book will result from their work.

— ◆ —



Josie Roberts

Hired in 1982 as Director at Blackmur Memorial Library in Water Valley and as Branch Head at Jesse Yancy Memorial Library in Bruce in 1984, **Ann Ivy King** has spent more than half her life in service to the library community of northeast Mississippi. She will be retiring March 31, 2007, with no concrete plans for her retirement.

"We never know what life will bring; I always said that if you had told me in 1981 (with my fresh BA in Biological Science) that I would spend the next twenty-five years as a librarian, I'd have laughed in your face! But God had plans for me, and I hope He still does," said King.

Those plans may include more time at her antique/gift store, Artifacts, on the town square, storytelling at local libraries and festivals, or graphic design and Web page design, all jobs she has juggled while serving as librarian.

— ◆ —

Prima Plauche has retired as Director of the Hancock County Library System after thirty-one years of service. During Plauche's tenure, library services in Hancock County grew from a single library to a system of facilities, programs and services that won numerous awards including the National Award for Library Services in 2001. The Board of Trustees has bestowed on Plauche the title of Director Emeritus, and she will continue to serve on the Library Foundation of Hancock County Board of Directors. She has served on numerous state and regional committees and organizations, including the Mississippi Statewide Telecommunications Taskforce and the Mississippi



Prima Plauche

Statewide Information Network Taskforce. She also served as President of the Mississippi Library Association in 2003.



David Woodburn

has been promoted to Executive Director of the Hancock County Library System (HCLS). He replaces retired director Prima Plauche. Woodburn has been with HCLS for ten years, serving as Public Services Coordinator, and Assistant/Deputy Director. Prior to coming to HCLS, he served as Executive Director of the Mississippi Library Commission and Director of the Jefferson Parish (Louisiana) Library Department. Woodburn has also been Director at libraries in Yazoo City and Greenville, Mississippi. "The Library Board of Trustees is pleased to have someone with his level of experience," said Mary Sinderson-Boutar, Board Chairman, "and we feel David is a real asset to the Library System."



David Woodburn



Candace Vance has joined the Rowland Medical Library faculty at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson in the capacity of Head of Lending Services. Prior to joining the Rowland faculty, Vance served as a reference librarian and ILL coordinator at Murray State in Murray, Kentucky. Vance has also worked at Aquinas College Library and at Vanderbilt's Eskind Biomedical Library, both in Nashville, Tennessee. ■

News Briefs

Guild Gives Check for Hurricane Relief

The Bay Oaks Quilt Guild presents a check to the Kiln Public Library for Hurricane Katrina relief. The Guild created a quilt from Katrina remnants and other fabric to be auctioned off for the benefit of the library. Dream World One, Inc. in Santa Rosa, California, auctioned the quilt off at a fundraiser. Pictured presenting the check are, from left, Quilt Guild members Kay Buccola, Mary Hanson, Gloria Burlette; Sandra Ladner, Kiln Public Library Branch Manager; and Guild members LouAda Hanson, Therese Springer and Xochitt Piper.



Quilt Guild members present check to Lander. Photo by Mary Perkins.

MLA Poster Shown to Bruce Rotary Club

Bruce Branch Librarian, Ann Ivy King, and Purvis Branch Manager, Donna Phelps Fite, were invited to present their 2006 MLA poster session, "Silence Speaks Volumes: Adoption Adds Atmosphere" in December for the Bruce Rotary Club, Bruce, Mississippi. The poster session displayed the cause and effect of the Bruce Friends' adoption of the Purvis Public Library following the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina. With a silent auction the friends raised and donated \$1,000 to the restoration and/or replacement of lost materials. Several members of the Friends of the Bruce Library were present for the presentation. Pictured from left to right are Fran Russell, President of Friends; Jo Ann Denley, Treasurer; Donna Phelps Fite; Ann Ivy King; Penny Nelson, Secretary; Tina Bennett, Vice President. ■



Silence Speaks Volumes: Adoption Adds Atmosphere poster presentation. Photo by Joel McNeece of the Calhoun County Journal.

MLA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

**December 15, 2006
10:00 A.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 A.M. by Susan Cassagne with the following present:

Susan Cassagne, President
Tracy Carr, Special Library Section
Deb Mitchell, Legislative Committee
Jennifer Smith, Outgoing Public Library Chair
Randy Sherard, Trustee
Otha Keys, Incoming Secretary
Catherine Nathan, VP/President-elect
Jackie Quinn, Secretary Black Caucus Round Table
Rob Lipscomb, ALA Counselor
John Whitlock, Special Library Section
Mary Julia Anderson, MLA
Marsha Case, JHLS
Jeff Slagell, VP-Elect
Carol Green, Treasurer
Margaret A. Bell, Vice Chair Elect Black Caucus
Diane B. Willard, School Section Chair

A quorum was declared and the minutes from the last meeting were handed out, read, and it was moved and seconded that the oral report of minutes be accepted.

There was also a recommendation of the bylaws committee which was set.

- **Carol Green** orally presented the treasury report and stated that copies will be given out later, because all expenses were not in. Therefore the report was not a complete and full accounting of 2006 and the total income amount listed was off. Catherine Nathan stated that as of Thursday, December 14, 2006, the budget was balanced, matched and the issue would be revisited after the new year at the next meeting. It was then moved and seconded to accept the financial report. It was approved unanimously.
- **Susan Cassagne** reported that it was a great conference and wanted to say thanks to everyone for the good time had by all. She also stated it had been a long year and wanted to thank everyone for staying on a second year and staying together.
- **Catherine Nathan** gave her VP report of the conference evaluation and seconded Susan's

comments of a great convention. She stated that 525 people came through and it was well attended. However, only fifty-seven evaluations were returned. She handed out an overview of comments. A special thanks was given to Glenda Segars and Jan Willis, who made the exhibits happen. Even though there were restrictions placed on us by the casino as far as refreshments, hotel rooms, etc. were concerned, overall things went very well. One hundred forty people attended the Presidential Bash and the pre-conference was a hit. There were more school librarians at this conference than ever before. Susan then had a conference related question dealing with the issue of reimbursement for someone who didn't attend the conference and wanted to know if they could get their money back because the board was being asked to reimburse them for the registration fee. It was not from an individual but from an institution. A vote was taken for the institution to get only the registration fee back, because the meals had already been paid for. Catherine said yes and Robert Lipscomb seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to refund the money.

- **Robert Lipscomb** gave his ALA report. He stated he would be attending ALA's Midwinter meeting in January, other than that there was nothing major to report, but will inform us when he returns of any late breaking news and items of interest.
- **Jennifer Smith** of the Public Libraries Section reported that they had elected new officers, who are as follows: Marsha Case, Chair; Madonna May, Vice-Chair; and Victoria Penny, Secretary.
- **Dianne Willard** of the School Section had no report to give.
- **Tracy Carr and John Whitlock** represented the Special Library Section and stated they give tours of great programs.
- **Randy Sherard**, trustee, had no report to give.
- **Margaret Bell** of the Black Caucus wanted to thank the local arrangements committee for all of their help during their luncheon.
- **Susan Cassagne** stated that Hester Plauche made a challenge to give \$1,000.00 to the

Black Caucus if they raised \$3,000.00, which will be put on the list serve and she wanted MLA to take a more active role in helping them raise funds.

- **Jennifer Smith** from the Fiscal Management Committee said she would present her findings later.
- **Deb Mitchell** of the Legislative Committee said she would present her report later.
- **Otha Keys** gave the membership report and presented the committee with a handout of her findings.
- **Jeff Slagell** gave some conference observations. He reiterated how much First Regional played a big part in this conference after bouncing back from Hurricane Katrina. He gave a special thanks to Catherine Nathan and all of her staff for all they did and she said thanks on behalf of all of her employees and helpers.

There was no old business.

There was no new business.

Susan Cassagne declared the 2006 Board Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m. and passed the gavel over to Catherine Nathan.

Susan later emailed me a copy of the 2006 Final Report of the Black Caucus Round Table from Billy Beal. ■

**December 15, 2006
10:45 A.M.**

The board meeting began at 10:45 a.m. with Catherine Nathan passing out a list of new officers. The following individuals were in attendance:

Susan Cassagne, President
Tracy Carr, Special Library Section
Deb Mitchell, Legislative Committee
Jennifer Smith, Outgoing Public Library Chair
Randy Sherard, Trustee
Otha Keys, Incoming Secretary
Catherine Nathan, VP/President-elect
Jackie Quinn, Secretary Black Caucus Round Table
Rob Lipscomb, ALA Counselor

John Whitlock, Special Library Section
 Mary Julia Anderson, MLA
 Marsha Case, JHLS
 Jeff Slagell, VP-Elect
 Carol Green, Treasurer
 Margaret A. Bell, Vice Chair Elect Black Caucus
 Diane B. Willard, School Section Chair

The next Executive Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., which is also MLA's Annual Legislative Day.

- **Deb Mitchell** reported that on Legislative Day all attendees will meet with Sharman Smith, Executive Director of Mississippi Library Commission, who will give everyone legislative high points at 4:00 p.m., with a reception beginning at 5:30 p.m. She stated that this year the function will be held at MLC instead of The Eudora Welty Library. Also, MAGNOLIA is 10 years old and they will be hosting a birthday reception for MAGNOLIA. She also brought up information concerning personnel grants and asked if we could have a representative present at the Mississippi Municipal Association and Mississippi Board of Supervisors Meetings. Deb presented the goals from the Legislative Committee. The committee developed 14 goals with number 14 - explore the possibility of obtaining First Responder Status for public libraries - being new and recently added. The goals will be posted on the list serve. National Library Legislative Day will be May 1, 2007 and May 2, 2007. Deb will be Co-Chair along with Glenda Segars. The recommendation was made to vote to adopt the legislative goals and it was unanimously voted upon and adopted. Jeff Slagell wanted to know how many went to D.C. last year and was told it was 12.
- **Jennifer Smith** of the Fiscal Management Committee passed out the 2007 Proposed Budget and the recommendations from her committee. She stated that Linda McKay made the spreadsheet that they use and it makes life easier. She then suggested and recommended that we meet and amend the budget 4 times a year. For Item 5570 - Convention Grant was added where speaker fees will go, but it is not as accurate because not all the expenses are in. We went down on membership dues because of Katrina and other issues. There also was not much done with the Legacy Club. Item 5520 will change and be more. Donations will also change and be

more. So for the February meeting we will be given an amended budget. Item 6700 dealt with program printing. Catharine Nathan stated that printing was donated for the pre-conference mail out. The question arose as to how convenient was that mailing? Susan suggested mailing out a very, abbreviated one and put on it for more information to go to the MLA website. For the recommendations to the Board from the Fiscal Management Committee, there was no discussion and we took a vote up or down. The vote was unanimous to accept the recommendations.

- The **nominating committee**, who is chaired by **Frances Coleman**, with **Paul Cartwright** being the **Chair of the Election Committee**, sent recommendations for upcoming candidates. The candidates are as follows:

VP Candidates - Annie Peyton & Jan Willis
 Secretary Candidates - Judy Card & Julia Rhoads
 Treasurer - Dee Horn & Amanda Powers
 ALA Counselor - Billy Beal & Sherry Laughlin
 SELA Counselor - Adrienne McPhaul & 1 person pending

Each candidate has confirmed to have their name in nomination and they will take over in December 2007. This was voted on in addition to approving the pending name. It was a unanimous vote.

- **Reports** - none

We will meet again on February 6, 2006 at 2 p.m.

- **Jeff Slagell** wanted to talk about Vicksburg and the upcoming conference there. He stated we have yet to sign a contract and he will meet with conference chairs as well after the new year. He also suggested we start thinking of a site for the 2008 conference. Randy Sherard suggested that before he goes to sign the contract that we meet to discuss the issues that arose in Tunica before the meeting with the representatives in Vicksburg to let them know exactly what we will need. Jeff agreed and also gave a big thanks to the MLC for all of their help.
- **Old business** - none
- **New business** - none

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m. ■

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