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Conference Session/Activity      WEB TRIAGE

Date: 3/8/01    Time: 9-5    Total Hours: 7

Presenter:      Gail Junion Metz

Subject covered: Tips on how to search effectively

Summary/Notes:

She explained the pros and cons of using each of the two main web browsers and gave hints on how to save time, yet come up with exactly the needed information. I have 10 pages of notes from her session.

Ideas to put into practice:

I particularly appreciated the various ways she demonstrated how to change the screen display to make on-screen viewing easier for vision-impaired patrons. Since I work in offices that share space with the Talking Book Center, I will be passing these tips on to Pat Meek, the director of that program. She in turn can pass useful tips on to patrons in need of this type of assistance.

Also, I am often called upon to help train school library aides in basic use of computers and access to the Internet. I took 10 pages of notes because I appreciate the way Gail organizes her presentations (I've had the opportunity to attend her sessions before) and I wanted to use her presentation as a model for those I, myself, might offer in the future.

Of great interest to me was her system of organizing bookmarks. I plan to use her techniques to organize my own bookmarks and to prepare instructions I can pass on to others, especially school librarians whose job it is to establish useful bookmarks to assist students in finding age/interest appropriate information on a wide variety of topics, especially those related to the school curriculum.

The only thing I regretted about Gail's presentation was the fact that she had to present all that information all at one time – in a seven-hour block. In many ways, it was too much, too quickly – without time to try out the techniques in a way that would cement them into our memories. I plan to design some quick 10-20 minute Tech Tips sessions that could be delivered in once-per month sessions during a school year.

Conference Session/Activity: PRIME TIME FAMILY READS

Date: 3/9/01 Time: 11-12:30 Total Hours: 1.5

Presenter: Cory Hall

Subject covered: Family Reads Program from Louisiana

Summary/Notes:

Cory described the implementation of the Family Reads Program this past year in Kenai. The program targeted children ages 6-10 and their families. It involved bringing families to the library for shared reading, scholar-led discussions, and activities. Cory found that families from a good cross-section of the community attended and that these families have continued to show increased use of the library, even since the end of the Family Reads Program. She says the Alaska Humanities Forum is trying to organize a statewide opportunity for other libraries to become involved in this effort.

Ideas to put into practice:

Conference Session/Activity: YA/TEEN IDEA EXCHANGE

Date Time Total Hours

Presenters: Karen Cushman, Nicole Pease, a panel of real live Sitka teenagers - with a variety of input from other librarians

Subject covered: YA programming – how to lure them in and keep them coming back to the library

Summary/Notes:

Karen Cushman opened with some insights as to why her books are appealing to YA readers – her books deal with typical problems young adults face, but she is able to be basically optimistic in the way her characters work through difficulties.

The Sitka teens listened to some of the ideas implemented in other libraries to address teen needs. They responded positively to the idea of having a place of their own in the library – with their books not mixed in with books for either younger kids or adults. They also said they liked having a physical space sectioned off a bit from the main room of the library where they could read, but also chat with friends and just hang out a bit. They liked the idea of having access to computers and listening devices.

Librarians reported that staff members worry about the problems teens bring into the library when they come in groups. There seemed to be some interest in having a speaker come to an upcoming AkLA to address fears of library staff related to teen users, and how to allay those fears.

A variety of programs geared toward teens were outlined. There was universal agreement that food of the junk variety was a successful incentive.

Ideas to put into practice:

If I have the chance to work directly with teens again, I'd love to try some of the program ideas I heard discussed: Braiding hair and applying make-up, Tie-dying, Babysitting Workshop, Teen Mystery Night, Cartooning Workshop, Food and a Movie Night, A Workshop on Downloading Images, Photography, etc.

In the meantime, I plan to write an article for the Puffin newsletter, sharing some of these ideas with school librarians who did not have the opportunity to attend this very useful session.

Conference Session/Activity      FUNDRAISING

Date    3/10    Time    9-10:30      Total Hours    1.5

Presenters      Connie Christopher

Subject covered    Ways to solicit money beyond an established budget to support library programs

Summary/Notes

Connie discussed the need to understand the various motivations behind giving of such things as time, money, advice, etc. Some motivators were love, guilt, the ability to claim tax deductions, emulation, and gratitude. In my personal experience, gratitude and recognition rank the highest and that is good to remember whenever soliciting help of any kind.

Always have a wish list of a variety of projects that need funding. This will make it easier to match potential donors to projects that interest them. Don't forget to include such mundane things as utilities – power, electricity, heating bills – and supplies such as copier paper, toilet paper, etc. You never know what someone would be willing to contribute to fund.

Planned gifts:

Bequests – have a plan in place that would make it easy for someone to write library support into wills and as family requests - ie, instead of sending flowers, please make a contribution to the library in the deceased's name so that he will be remembered for years to come.

The AML libraries Friends of the Library page will probably add a section that describes ways to donate to the library.

[www.leavelegacy.org](http://www.leavelegacy.org) website was discussed. Librarians should take time to talk to attorneys, CPAs and financial planners about this option so they can make their customers aware of this option.

Surprising amounts can end up in the lap of a library, so be ready! For instance, Tanana may end up with a Vocational Technical Center due to the airline crash that caused the death of Robert? Morris.

Something we all need to do more of that will help us raise money, volunteers, and support of all kinds – market the library! Make sure people KNOW what the library does, knows how many it serves, and know the many ways it beneficially impacts the community it serves. When a "good cause" is being sought, the library needs to be the first thought that comes to mind and the way to contribute needs to be already laid out.

Ideas to put into practice:

Check out the website [www.folusa.org](http://www.folusa.org) for fundraising ideas.

Conference Session/Activity      READING INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Date    3/10    Time    11-12:30      Total Hours    1.5

Presenters      Sue Sherif

Subject covered    Covered why and how to offer reading programs as well as info about a variety of programming ideas.

Summary/Notes:

Conference Session/Activity: CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN IDEA EXCHANGE

Date 3/10 Time 7:30-9 Total Hours 1.5

Presenters Sue Sherif

Subject covered: The wide variety of clever programming designed for our youngest readers

Summary/Notes Sherri Douglas talked about the AML Lapsit program that targets those 3 and under. This not only introduces the youngest children to great children's literature, but models good reading practices to new parents. The AML webpage has bookmarks and ready to use ideas.

To help students progress beyond favorite books, put out bibliographies such as "If you're a Harry Potter fan, try these..." or "If you love Captain Underpants, you'll want to read ..."

Other programs discussed included: Babies and Books Program that one library does each last Saturday of the month, Author Birthday Parties – those who read 2-3 books by the author are invited to the party, and one of the activities is the making of birthday cards that are then sent to the author (if he/she is still alive.)

The River Bank of Books for Young Readers – published by the Univ. of St. Thomas – is a great resource  
Several librarians said they got great ideas on the PUBYAC listserv

Barb Bryson told of a Battle of the Books Slumber Party Challenge during which they had a How to Eat Fried Worms competition. (This would make a good article for the fall issue of PUFFIN newsletter to spur school librarians into thinking up other types of activities to spur Battle of the Books reading.

Ideas to put into practice:

Although I don't have time to monitor PUBYAC on a regular basis, I will remember to check their archives when I need an idea related to children's programming.

Why – because people like/expect reading programs, because it provides good publicity for the library, and mostly because it promotes development of reading skills and prevents the loss of reading abilities over the summer months. For school librarians and children’s librarians – it’s what you’re paid to do/your job.

Programs are usually targeted to various age ranges – K-2, 3-5, 6-HS

This summer’s state-wide reading program is Reading Road Trip USA: 2001 A Reading Odyssey – Sue Sherif will do an audioconference later this spring to help people prepare their programs for implementation. You might want to use an odometer to keep track of reading progress. Question came up, what if your library isn’t large enough to have enough books on the summer reading program theme. Sue said even Fairbanks North Star Public Library allows students to read whatever they want to read, but the library will still put up displays related to the theme.

Liz Bunes from Wrangell found Book A Trip in the Upstart Catalog.  
Nicole Pease sponsored the Y2K reading program – Yes to Knowledge!  
Take a Bite Out of Reading – uses food/cookies to attract participants.  
One library does Cabin Fever Reading Program from Dec. 20- Jan. 26 – to get credit for reading a book, students give a short review and there is a prize drawing at the end.

Various ways to count progress in a reading program were discussed. You can decide to count number of books, minutes per day, pages, # of lbs., inches, etc. Whichever way you choose, always have them record the titles of the books they read so they will have a record of their progress as well as the books they’ve read.

What about kids that only read easy books – you want to encourage them to read for proficiency, but also for enjoyment.

Several people had developed reading programs around activities – ie. Choose a poem and read it aloud to at least 5 people, read a nature book for at least 15 minutes while sitting outdoors, etc.

One librarian reported that one hit of last year’s reading program included alien cut out dolls they could take home.

Another leftover from last year, an alien doll was named Koob (backwards for book) and it was hidden in a variety of places each week. From a very close up photo of the doll, the participants would have to determine where the doll was hidden.

Kids like to collect things and so designer bookmarks or any other “exclusive collectible” can be a strong incentive for the kids (and parents to push kids) to participate. (Only those who participate can get the item.)

Fill jars with jelly bellies (or pennies they can then donate to a cause) – one for each book read or each day of 15 minutes or more of reading, etc.

Put do-dads on the walls to demonstrate progress toward a reading goal – sled dogs per book in Iditaread Contest.

Ask businesses to sponsor the contest or sponsor a kid’s reading. Be sure to publicize their contributions.

Reading Bingo/Travel Bingo/Family Bingo - the card squares are covered with reading activities that kids can do and then cover.

Ideas to put into practice:

Talk to Tracy Swaim about putting a link on the ASL web page to the Nebraska State Library’s downloadable images that tie in with the Reading Road Trip theme.

Check the US Post Office for postcards that can be colored by children.

Develop a Travel Bingo game that will go along with this year’s Reading Road Trip USA reading program.

#### **CONFERENCE SUMMARY**

I went to many other sessions, including two on new requirements for public libraries in Alaska for which I was a co-presenter, and the Battle of the Books session during which time the title lists for next year were determined. This particular conference had a stronger than usual emphasis on practical, ready to use programs and activities, which I really appreciated, and I think everyone went home with some new ideas they'd like to try out in their own library settings.

While the sessions were very beneficial this year, the chance to meet new librarians and touch base with peers and conference friends, is always the best part for me.