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MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES



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On the cover: *Hibiscus*, by Nell Branch. Nell Branch, a native of the Goodman, Mississippi area, is librarian at Holmes Community College. She earned her MLS at The University of Southern Mississippi, MEd at Mississippi State University, and BS at Delta State University. Photography is a recent hobby for Branch. This photograph was taken at the Dallas Arboretum.

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

It is a privilege to serve as president of the Mississippi Library Association. I look forward to a wide range of activities throughout the year and to building relationships that promote our association, profession, and libraries of all types.

Again, I'd like to thank all the sponsors, participants, and volunteers who made our recent conference a great success. In particular, let me mention the tireless preparation efforts and many hats worn by Joi Phillips and Jennifer Smith. Hurricane Katrina may have delayed our arrival in Vicksburg by a couple of years, but it couldn't diminish our association's enthusiasm with over 500 attendees. As I reflect back on the numerous programs and events, I'm struck by both the diversity and unified purpose of our organization and profession. Keynote speaker Pauline La Rooy serves as a perfect example. Despite the fact that she is based almost a world away at the National Library of New Zealand, she shares many of the same goals and challenges that we face here in Mississippi.

I think it's safe to say that all of us become overwhelmed at times by the daily demands of our jobs. Where is my next meeting? When is the report due? What needs to be done to finish the project? How will everything be completed? We are doing more with less, and at times we run the risk of losing sight of the big picture. Regardless if your emphasis is public, academic, school, or special libraries, we all



Jeff Slagell

share a common denominator. We exhibit a commitment to service and provide the opportunity for lifelong learning. Furthermore, we realize learning doesn't just magically occur in virtual spaces in this age of technology or brick and mortar spaces in more traditional forms. Learning takes place through the efforts of people. Learning happens through us.

Our expertise and resources are critical to the populations we serve and as your president I will strive to promote, support, and celebrate your accomplishments. However, the influence we maintain cannot be taken for granted. All of us can play an important role in enhancing public awareness of libraries, and the Mississippi Library Association provides an ideal vehicle. We all have something to contribute and I ask everyone to get involved because it does make a difference. It's not too late to serve on a committee or contribute your talents and leadership in other ways. Contact me (jslagell@deltastate.edu) or Executive Secretary Mary Julia Anderson (maryjulia@misslib.org) about your ideas and interests.

This *ML* issue is the inaugural one for our new editor, Tisha Zelner. I'd like to thank her and her staff for their commitment and excellence. Finally, it's never too early to mark your calendars for our annual conference. It will be held in Natchez on October 22-24, 2008. I hope to see you there! ■

Join MLA!

Fill out and return the membership form located on the inside back cover of this issue and be a part of the continuing promotion of libraries throughout Mississippi.

Mississippi Libraries Embrace Library 2.0

Tisha M. Zelner, Editor,
Mississippi Libraries

The theme for this, my first issue as editor of *Mississippi Libraries*, is Library 2.0. Library 2.0 is the result of the application of Web 2.0 technologies to library services. It's not simply new technology, it represents new ways of connecting with library users. Web 2.0 technologies include blogs, RSS, social networking sites, virtual worlds, and wikis. Library 2.0 tools provide libraries with new ways to communicate and interact with library users, regardless of whether or not those users physically visit the library building. One doesn't have to be a technology expert to use Web 2.0 tools, nor does a library require a large staff with a high level of computer expertise to implement some of these 2.0 technologies. Library 2.0 is for everyone.

The articles in this issue cover the most common Web 2.0 technologies and describe how they have been applied to create Library 2.0 services. Although written by academic librarians, the ideas presented are applicable to all types of libraries. Amanda Powers, June Schmidt, and Clay Hill discuss Mississippi State University Libraries' entrance into the world of online social networking through the creation of a Facebook identity. Maggie Moran's article describes a traditional book

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group turned 2.0 through the use of a blog. Virginia Williams' article describes how her library moved the traditional new books display into an online format using RSS feeds on the library Web site. Library school students Allison Iovino and Erin Boyd explore the use of Web 2.0 tools in library education in Mississippi. Finally, Barton Spencer introduces novices to the virtual reality world of Second Life and suggests some ways that libraries can make a place for themselves in Second Life. Hopefully, these articles will inspire librarians in all types of libraries across the state of Mississippi to implement 2.0 in their libraries.

Taking a cue from the theme of this issue, the *ML* editorial staff and the MLA Web committee will be working together this year to expand the online presence of *Mississippi Libraries*, perhaps incorporating some Library 2.0 concepts and technologies. The first component of *ML* to expand onto the MLA Web site will be the News Briefs section. This will allow for timelier sharing of information, not limited by the quarterly publication cycle of the paper *ML*. It is our sincere hope that MLA members will embrace this new opportunity to share local library news with colleagues throughout the state. Although the technical details have yet to be worked out, the new online edition of News Briefs may exist as a blog and allow readers to subscribe using RSS feeds. We at *Mississippi Libraries* are very excited about this and welcome your feedback as we intro-

duce some changes to the established format of *Mississippi Libraries*.

Volume 72 will continue the themed issue format of recent years. The *ML* summer issue will focus on public libraries, the unique challenges they face and the wonderful ways in which they serve their communities. The theme of the fall issue will be public services, a subject that encompasses all types of libraries. I encourage all MLA members to think about the things you are doing in your libraries every day and how your experiences could benefit others. If you've come up with a creative solution to a problem in your library, chances are good that some of your colleagues are facing the same problem and could benefit from your solution. Library directors and department heads, please encourage the librarians you work with to write for *ML*. If you've got something to say, we want to hear from you.

This year, the covers of *Mississippi Libraries* will feature artwork created by Mississippi librarians. A librarian's creative side may go unnoticed at work, so you may be surprised to find a colleague's work featured on an upcoming cover. This gives librarians an opportunity to exercise their creativity and contribute to *ML* in a non-written format.

So, keep your eye on *Mississippi Libraries* this year and be on the lookout for changes and for opportunities to share with your state association. ■

**Have an article or theme issue idea for
Mississippi Libraries?
Contact us!**

**E-mail suggestions and comments to editor
Tisha Zelner at tisha.zelner@usm.edu**

Why Can't We Be Friends? The MSU Libraries Find Friends on Facebook

*Amanda Clay Powers,
June Schmidt, and Clay Hill*

"Are you on Facebook? We Are!" This slogan greeted Mississippi State University (MSU) students, faculty, and staff as part of the fall 2007 welcome back program. Posters and ads on the campus shuttle buses invited members of the MSU community to join the libraries' Facebook group, an open group on the MSU network created in August 2007 by the MSU Libraries' Library 2.0 Committee. By December 2007 more than 180 MSU community members had joined the group. The group's Facebook page includes links to library services, library hours and an interactive discussion board and "wall" that library staff use to post news, information about workshops, bulletins about weather closings, and other information. Additionally, the library Facebook group allows for events to be created, and all members of the group can be invited easily. To date, members of the group have been invited to attend Collins Speaker Series events, library-sponsored readings, the Libraries' Ragtime Festival, and to take part in an inaugural digital video contest.

Facebook for Student Workers

What prompted the MSU Libraries to create an official Facebook group? In the summer of 2006 the libraries began investigating emerging technologies in an effort to get more "tools" in the library staff's "toolbox" for responding to the changing needs of the university population. In order to facilitate staff training and to incubate new projects within the libraries, the administration created the Library 2.0 Committee. By spring of 2007, the MSU Libraries

were offering staff training for instant messaging, wikis, blogs, RSS feeds, podcasting, and Facebook. Then, in June 2007 the MSU Libraries sponsored the MSU Library 2.0 Summit, with keynote speaker Michael Stephens. Patty Archer and Summer Mord, both from MSU Libraries, presented one of the nine concurrent "steal this idea" sessions on the experiences the library had in creating Facebook groups for student workers. During the session, aptly named "OVERDUE! It's time you were on Facebook," Archer and Mord described the development and results of the groups established for student workers.

Three of the libraries' public service departments had noted the difficulty of maintaining good communication with student workers regarding schedule changes and task assignments. It seemed students were so deluged by e-mail it had become less effective as an immediate mode of communication. At the same time, the coordinators in these departments noted the students' propensity to be on Facebook when they were not otherwise occupied. Encouraged by these observations, coordinators in the Instructional Media Center, Access Services and the Reference Department decided to experiment with closed Facebook groups for student workers in their respective departments. Moving cautiously into the new technology arena the coordinators created Facebook groups that could only be seen by those invited to the group. In this way the libraries were able to be "where their student workers were." Through the experiment, library staff came to realize student workers were more likely to communicate on Facebook than via e-mail. Not only was communication improved, but supervisors noted the groups had fostered a sense of community and collaboration among their student workers. Student workers began switching shifts using Facebook, as well as using the wall to post information about issues within the department.

Facebook for the University Community

The success of these closed groups prompted the Library 2.0 Committee to consider creating a public group for MSU libraries. EDUCAUSE released "7 Things You Should Know About Facebook" in September 2006. A subsequent update in May 2007 provided a positive assessment of the penetration of Facebook as the "preferred social network among college students."¹ Within the MSU community more than 20,000 members connected to the MSU Facebook network, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The National School Boards Association found that among nine- to seventeen-year-olds, 50 percent were using a social network while doing homework.² The Library 2.0 Committee within the MSU Libraries saw an opportunity in this emerging research to connect with students as they work – as a part of the student's world, rather than an external destination. Creating a Facebook group open to the larger MSU community represents an attempt to bring the libraries to the student.

The Library 2.0 Committee created the libraries' Facebook group and turned it over to the reference department for maintenance and upkeep. In creating the group the limitations of the Facebook format became clear. It was not possible to customize the look of the page because, unlike MySpace, the Facebook format would not accept HTML or other programming. The options for adding content included group info, recent news, a discussion board, and the wall. Working within the space constraints the libraries chose to put popular links in the recent news section with linking URLs, including (1) connecting to the Ask-A-Librarian reference department service, (2) connecting to the online catalog, (3) connecting to databases to search for journal articles (4) finding a research guide, (5) using interlibrary loan, (6) searching MSU's digital archive, (7) getting RSS feeds of recent news and new additions to the collections, and (8) finding the libraries' podcasts.

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Figure 1. The MSU Libraries Facebook Group

Continuing to modify the Facebook format to fit the libraries' needs, the wall has been used for postings that would ordinarily constitute "recent news" and features informative posts on the latest happenings or emergency information related to the library. We've posted amended hours due to ice storms or updates as hours change for holidays or exam periods. The discussion board is another feature of the Facebook group page. Pulling news items from the libraries' Web site, full articles on newsworthy events are posted. Only three discussion points can be seen on the page at a time, so it functions almost as a blog in reverse chronological order, spotlighting current library happenings.

The libraries have begun to take advantage of the photo album and video gallery options, which allow the group to post photos related to library events or services. The Templeton Ragtime Music Festival, sponsored by the MSU Libraries and the Templeton Museum, are showcased in a video prominently displayed on the group page. It is possible to allow any member to post videos or photographs, but currently the permissions restrict postings to administrators of the group. The university and the libraries are cautious about allowing group members outside the libraries to post images on the page, although it is possible for any member of the libraries' Facebook group to post or respond to messages on the discussion board or the wall. In fact, one of the first messages on the libraries' wall after the group was launched in fall 2007 was from a library patron.



Figure 2. An early comment on the MSU Libraries Facebook Wall

Since then, the staff of the library has used the wall to post updates on workshops, changes to the Web site, information about new databases, notices about downtime for the library catalog, and more.

Developing Facebook Applications

Initially created as an online social space to share news and keep in touch with friends, Facebook is now becoming part of the research process as well. On November 26, 2007, the MSU Libraries joined more than a dozen academic libraries that have created their own search tools for the social networking platform. Continuing the libraries' efforts to be "where they are, when they need us," these Facebook search tools were an obvious next step. By providing a search interface directly from a patron's Facebook page, the library enters into the user's space, offering point of need library services. Rather than visiting the libraries' Web site, the library patron can seamlessly use the library resources within the Web pages already in use on the desktop.

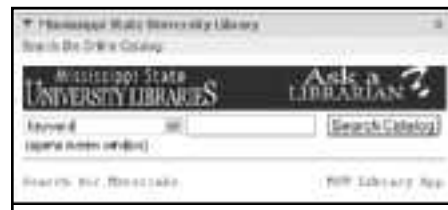


Figure 3. The MSU Libraries Facebook profile application

Development began with consideration of those services offered on the libraries' Web site that were highly used and would lend themselves to a social networking platform. The most appropriate services seemed to be OPAC searching, frequently used links, library news, and the Ask-A-Librarian reference service. The libraries' systems department, in conjunction with the Library 2.0 Committee, set out to learn

everything possible by reading and visiting other library Web sites and Facebook pages. They also studied the few library search applications that already existed, including one created by the University of Illinois Champagne-Urbana Undergraduate

Library. By sharing ideas with colleagues at institutions such as the College of Wooster, the systems department was able to develop an application that met the MSU Libraries' needs. The application the libraries eventually launched allows Facebook users to search the libraries' holdings and click through to the Ask-A-Librarian reference service page from their Facebook profiles. In addition to the front-end of the application, which can be seen from the user's Facebook profile page as a simple search interface, a direct link to the libraries' "Search for Materials" Web page appears under the search box. An expanded interface with more links to library resources is available through the "MSU Library App" hyperlink visible in figure 3. The expanded interface is shown in figure 4.



Figure 4. The MSU Libraries Facebook application expanded interface

To find the MSU Libraries' application, Facebook members can go directly to the installation page at <http://apps.facebook.com/msulibrary/index.php> or enter the terms **Mississippi State University Library** in Facebook's application directory search box to find the application. The Facebook application updates automatically using integrated XML feeds from the Web site content manager. The application

is self-sufficient, with news and library spotlights populating the application and keeping it fresh and relevant. After evaluation by a small test group, the application was released and quickly became a popular feature. Facebook's news feed feature allowed the "friends" of those installing the application to see that it was available, creating a natural viral marketing campaign. As of January 2008, 122 users had installed the application with the number growing daily. As part of collaboration with other institutions regarding the application, the code developed by the libraries' systems department has been shared with other libraries, such as the TED Ankara College Library in Turkey.

Continued Innovation

Aside from the usefulness to library patrons, involvement in the MSU Facebook network allows the libraries to stay connected to their users and remain relevant in the changing world of MSU information consumers. In an attempt to continue to innovate within the Facebook space, the libraries have recently used a new Facebook format to create a fan page. Introduced in November 2007, this format allows the creator to develop a page richer in content, including a news feed for the page and additional applications that are not available on a traditional Facebook group page. Additionally, the fan page format provides statistical data on page hits, which provides valuable data for assessment purposes. Created primarily for companies or organizations, the libraries have

used the fan page to promote the libraries' ragtime festival.

Aside from pursuing possibilities with fan pages, the inclusion of article and database search capabilities into the current Facebook application is under development. As the application itself is updated dynamically, the user will not have to reinstall the program to receive any future updates.

Conclusion

As the MSU Libraries continue to innovate and stay current with the MSU community, Facebook remains an excellent tool to have in our collective toolbox. Soliciting feedback from the community is critical to determining the effectiveness of the libraries' Facebook group, and plans

are being made to survey users for new ways of using the Facebook network to promote library services and events. ■

NOTES

1. Educause Learning Initiative. "7 Things You Should Know About Facebook 2." (2007: May). <http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7025.pdf> (accessed February 6, 2008).
2. National School Boards Association. "Creating and Connecting: Research and Guidelines on Online Social and Educational Networking." (2007: July). <http://www.nsba.org/site/docs/41400/41340.pdf>



Figure 5. The MSU Libraries Charles Templeton Ragtime Music Festival Facebook Fan Page

Recovery on the Gulf Coast

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Reading + Blogging = One Perfect Adult Summer Program

Maggie Moran

Abstract

This article gives readers the motivation, free tools, and usable knowledge to manage a successful summer reading program for adults utilizing the proven self-publishing weblog, Blogger, and a popular program among book bloggers, the reading challenge.

Introduction

As of January 2008 Technorati, a search engine for weblogs, tracked more than 112.8 million blogs. On the company's "About Page" it states, "The World Live Web is incredibly active, and according to Technorati data, there are over 175,000 new blogs (that's just blogs) every day. Bloggers update their blogs regularly to the tune of over 1.6 million posts per day, or over 18 updates a second." (Technorati)

It's about time librarians embraced this free technology as their own. We leave Library 2.0 demonstrations and classes eager to implement ideas; unfortunately, while we add content to our newly erected library weblogs, we lack patrons who actively participate in the discussion by posting comments. One of the best ways to connect to our patrons using Web 2.0 technologies is to teach them as we learn.

As librarians we have a history of teaching patrons new technologies, whether searching the Internet using Google, sending attachments through e-mail, or uploading photos from a digital camera. The patron observes us performing these tasks successfully on a routine basis and feels comfortable enough in our presence to ask for help. Nothing could be better for librarians than a program that combines our evolving Web skills, our teaching skills, and our patrons' love of books.

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Terms to Get You Started

The term blog is a shortened version of the word weblog; early participants used them as diaries to log their everyday activities. When one writes a daily, weekly, or monthly entry, he is blogging. The entries are called posts. If a blogger likes a subject, such as an idea, person, or place, about which another blogger has posted, it is proper to link back to the subject and give credit to the original blogger. The term link is used when one post is joined to another post via its Web address.

Posts appear on the blog in chronological order with the latest post on top. A sticky post occurs when you place a post on the top of the blog and allow newer posts to appear underneath it. Novices will not understand the sticky post, even if it is named "Sticky Post." Some bloggers use sticky posts for announcements, but most people do not scroll down on the assumption that material underneath is older.

A blogger can post about anything, but most blogs have a theme. A library's theme is obviously books. By nature of our theme, librarians are considered literature (lit) or book bloggers. Lit bloggers lean more to the professional style and are usually paid and book bloggers are generally enthusiasts.

A widget is a set of source code that appears on a blog as a small icon representing a useable interface between the blogger and his readers. Examples include a small icon that displays the weather and updates on the hour, the little orange RSS icon that when opened displays the embedded source code, and Mr. Linky, who appears as a post and allows users to insert their name and Web address for easy access.

In this article, the capitalized Blogger refers to the free weblog publishing application and not one who blogs.

Tools Needed

In order to achieve success in this program idea the following tools are needed:

- A functioning library blog
- A Rich Site Summary (RSS) feed

- A feed reader such as Bloglines
- Attractive gifts for prizes (enough said)
- Mr. Linky widget
- Comments enabled

Getting Started

It is important to have a strong and reliable library blog in place before announcing a new blog program. Participants and interested patrons will want to see posts as the program progresses, so be prepared to make that commitment. Stay away from sticky posts unless you explain them three times during Blogger training. It is also a good idea to publicize and post the rules on the blog prior to launching the challenge.

An RSS feed is extremely important for keeping up with participants. One can easily get a feed and widget from FeedBurner for free. Once the feed is installed on the library's weblog it becomes easier to track usage. It is up to the instructor whether he wants to teach RSS feeds in a Blogger class because Blogger automatically provides an ATOM feed. The ATOM feed makes an RSS feed redundant, although an RSS feed is the standard in Internet feeds and is accessible to more readers and hand-held devices such as Palm Pilots, BlackBerrys, and cell phones.

As participants begin to sign up via Mr. Linky, the host can copy and paste the blog address into their feed reader. This writer uses Bloglines because it is easy to set up a separate folder for challengers who can be checked individually as their posts arrive. It is important to comment on their posts as they arrive to encourage participation.

The Mr. Linky widget encourages challengers to visit other challenger's blogs. By leaving a post-specific Mr. Linky each month for each book read, blogging becomes more active and less passive. All one has to do to visit another challenger's post is click the link on Mr. Linky. For clarity, one would want to use Mr. Linky for a sign-up sheet, monthly book reviews, contests, and challenge wrap-ups. This prod-

uct also comes in handy for the weekly drawings. Just place the number of participants into a bowl and the winning number will correspond with the blogger on the sign-up sheet.

A note on Mr. Linky: his source code is invisible when the author is placing it in a Blogger post. One has to publish the post in order to see the final results; therefore, it is best to type in the message first and then drop the code into the post as a final step.

One of the reasons blogging is such a popular pastime is the comment feature. Internet interaction on an adult level is occurring when one reads a post and responds to it with a comment. This writer is under the opinion that all library weblogs should enable comments in order to spark discussion; otherwise, the weblog is one-sided. Concern about inappropriate comments should not prevent one from enabling comments. If a comment displeases the owner of the blog, it can be thrown out using the trashcan icon on the left corner of the comment.

History of an Idea

In less than thirty minutes on a cold December day in 2005, the Maggie Reads blog was set up using Blogger and Brad Hill's *Blogging for Dummies*. Using templates provided by Blogger, the finished product looked as professional as a simple Web site. Hill's book provided information on writing Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) within the Blogger source code to add links to the sidebar. Today's Blogger is simpler to use with pop-up text boxes in which one types in the Web site, so no HTML is required.

What started out as an easy way to write notes and quotes from books morphed into a full-blown passion, but something was askew. In the year 2006 I discovered a whole world of lit and book bloggers discussing books without the aid of a librarian. Although librarians were blogging in great numbers, only a few were crossing over to the lit and book blog world.

The book blogosphere was dominated by writers, reviewers, and enthusiasts, all expressing thoughts on the latest best-sellers, classics, and genre titles. These bloggers took part in online book discussions via the Reading Matters blog, genre

discussions via the Bookworms Carnival blog, weekly memos about books via the Booking Through Thursdays blog, and reading challenges via any blog willing to host.

Southern Reading Challenge

In the summer of 2007 I hosted my first reading challenge, "The Southern Reading Challenge." On April 8, the first post to announce the event appeared and over eighty bloggers left comments of interest. The challenge was scheduled to run June 1 through August 31, and a Mr. Linky widget was attached on May 31 with over fifty bloggers committing to the challenge. Twenty-seven bloggers completed the challenge by the August 31 end date.

For three months during the summer, Maggie Reads asked adults to read three southern books by three separate southern authors. During the months of June, July, and August, participants were to write posts on their reading. These posts included quotes from the books or authors, reviews of the books, Web sites for further reading, and a link back to Maggie Reads. Every Friday a drawing was held and one lucky participant received pecans from a Mississippi company. Two major prizes, signed copies of Martin Clark's *Plain Heathen Mischief* and *The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living*, were given away in special contest drawings: one for the "Sense of Place" contest which was held July 15, and one to a challenge completer at the end of the program.

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The Southern Reading Challenge is one example in a world of possibilities. Basically, a challenge can be any number of books read in a certain time period. It is the librarian's option to select length of challenge, number of books, and even the type of challenge. One could host thematic challenges such as "Book to Movie," "Seafaring," "Printz Winners," "Cozy Mystery," and so forth to infinity. An excellent list of completed challenge ideas can be found at A Novel Challenge blog.

Playing Host

It becomes the host's job to motivate challengers with informative and fun posts. For example, a month before the Southern Reading Challenge began there were reader's advisory posts to aid challengers in finding three books. First, the South had to be clearly defined. There were participants from England, Italy, and Norway who were unclear on the meaning of Southern Literature. An image of the United States with southern states colored red and a generic definition made for a lively post. Typical reader's advisory lists followed, such as selecting a state and listing authors and their works, choosing quotes from authors who explained southern writing, and southern humor for fun.

As host, one has the responsibility of posting, which can be time consuming. The library hosting a challenge may find it easier to accomplish this using a blogging team, especially during summer months that can be hectic with summer reading programs for children and employees taking vacations. Using the tag team approach, some bloggers may post during slow afternoon and night hours. To accomplish this task through Blogger, merely send an e-mail invitation from the **Permission** tab in **Settings**.

Teaching to Blog

One need not be a blogger to partici-

pate in a blog challenge, merely know how to type and have access to the Internet. During the Southern Reading Challenge there were two members who did not blog. One signed up and was never heard from again, but another faithfully left her reviews in the comments section of Maggie Reads. She also joined the different conversations surrounding the challenge.

The latest version of Blogger is the easiest for novices wanting to get involved in blogging. There are other products to choose from, such as LiveJournal, Movable Type, and WordPress. One can truly have a non-blogger blogging in thirty minutes using Blogger; it is just a matter of following Blogger's "three steps to getting started" menu.

As the instructor, ask bloggers to post about the challenge. Their first post can be about the three books they are reading. Go ahead and publish it and let them read over it for mistakes. Show them the edit button and let them make corrections. Before they leave be sure to have them download an image and place it in a post. This would be the perfect time to show them Google Images or explain Flickr. Finally, have the neo-blogger link back to the library's blog to learn how to accomplish the act. Don't get discouraged if the class seems a little befuddled; the real learning comes after class as the students begin to blog and leave comments on other blogs.

Conclusion

As librarians, we teach the latest Internet abilities and let the patrons do the rest. Unfortunately, when it comes to blogging, most people do not recognize a need to use this technology or, even worse, consider it a type of vanity press. Blogging is so much more, but patrons need an activity to get them started. Thus, a reading challenge sponsored by the library is the perfect opportunity to encourage patrons to

learn new a technology and then put their newfound abilities to use.

In conclusion, planning and implementation of this adult reading program takes time. Preparing for and teaching one class on blogging takes time. But the new community of book bloggers one attracts to the library blog is priceless.

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Maggie Reads
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Web Sites

Blogger
<https://www.blogger.com/start>

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FeedBurner
<http://www.feedburner.com/fb/a/home>

Flickr
<http://www.flickr.com/>

Mr. Linky
<http://www.blenza.com/linkies/>

RSS Feeds: Promoting New Materials at Mississippi State University

Virginia Kay Williams

Abstract

Most libraries promote new materials by displaying them together, but MSU Libraries also uses RSS feeds to promote recent arrivals to people who aren't in the library. This article describes how MSU Libraries developed a new materials Web page with RSS feeds. Visitors to the library's Web site can sign up for RSS feeds by subject, by library branch, or by special collection. When books are added to the library's catalog the titles are sent directly to RSS readers so the MSU community can learn about the libraries' new books in the same reader that delivers news from favorite Web sites.

Introduction

Every librarian knows how to promote the library's new books – just display them in a special area near the library entrance so anyone who comes in can browse through them easily. Mitchell Memorial Library at Mississippi State University has been displaying new books for years. But since our growing online collections have reduced the number of walk-in visitors, we wanted to promote new books to people who aren't in the library. I've often been enticed into visiting a library just to check out something listed on its new book Web page. Of course, Web pages can take lots of time to update, but I'd heard that some integrated library systems have reports that make updating their Web pages easy. I asked our systems staff if we could create a new book Web page that could be easily updated. They replied, "Sure! But have you considered RSS feeds?"

I wasn't sure what RSS feeds were, although I'd seen the RSS symbol on Web sites. Clay Hill and Bobby Goff in the systems department enlightened me. RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. It's a

way to format text on the Web so it can automatically be sent to another Web site or a handheld device. Suppose I visit a dozen Web sites every day for business news, favorite comic strips, political columns, and updates on library legislation. If I set up an RSS reader and subscribe to RSS feeds, the information I want will be collected in one place. I can save time by checking my RSS reader instead of visiting a dozen Web sites. I won't miss news because I forgot to check a site and my e-mail inbox won't be cluttered with e-mailed news articles. Best of all, the RSS feeds would be an extension of the Web page I asked about originally, so we could offer both options to appeal to users with different needs and preferences.

Creating the RSS Feed

The first step in the project was developing a script to get information about new materials out of our integrated library system, Unicorn by SirsiDynix, and into a spreadsheet. Anita Winger, in the systems department, and I discussed which fields in Unicorn would be useful to identify new materials. I wanted to include recently acquired books and media, as well as whether we'd purchased them or acquired them as gifts. We used the date an item was created to identify new materials. I didn't want journals on the list, so we eliminated materials with a bound journals location code. Winger developed a Perl script to extract titles and sent for my review a spreadsheet with materials added in the last four months. After I identified titles that shouldn't be included, like added volumes of the U.S. Code, Winger figured out how to revise the script to eliminate that type of material. We repeated the review and revise cycle several times until we were both satisfied that the script was identifying the new materials we wanted.

While Winger was tweaking the script to clean up the title data so the results list wouldn't list every volume of a new encyclopedia set separately, I decided on cate-

gories for the Web pages and RSS feeds. We wanted to give people the option to see all new materials or just new materials in broad subjects like engineering or life sciences, so I developed a subject list with the associated Library of Congress classifications. I also wanted to give people the option to see titles for specific shelving locations, such as books in the juvenile area or books and media at the Architecture Branch Library. Winger tweaked the scripts again to assign broad subjects based on LC classifications while exporting the new materials data from Unicorn to an Excel spreadsheet.

Next, Goff developed a Web page with drop-down menus to allow people to select subjects or collections of interest. When Goff, Winger, and I agreed on the selection page layout, Goff imported the title data into an SQL database and wrote an ASP script to create Web pages on the fly. People visiting the Web page select a subject or collection, then click the **View Results** or **View RSS** button. Figure 1 shows the selection page with the subject drop-down list open. By selecting **Physical Sciences** and clicking the **View Results** button, the user can see a Web page with titles added in the last thirty days, such as the page in figure 2. By clicking the **View RSS** button instead, the user displays RSS code, as shown in figure 3. To add the feed to one's RSS reader, simply paste the URL for the RSS page into the reader. Figure 4 shows my NewsGator Online reader; notice that the left pane lists my RSS feeds while the main area displays the feed I'm currently reading. The three figures show the selection page, the new materials page for physical sciences, and the RSS code for the same subject; the page can be accessed at <http://library.msstate.edu/newmaterials>. Goff also created a link to the online catalog, so clicking a title in the RSS feed or on the Web page opens the record in the online catalog, allowing users to see more information about the title and to place holds.

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Figure 1. The New Materials Web page allows users to select subjects, library branches, or collections. Users can view a Web page of items added in the last thirty days or set up an RSS feed so new titles show up in their RSS reader along with news they've selected from other Web sites.

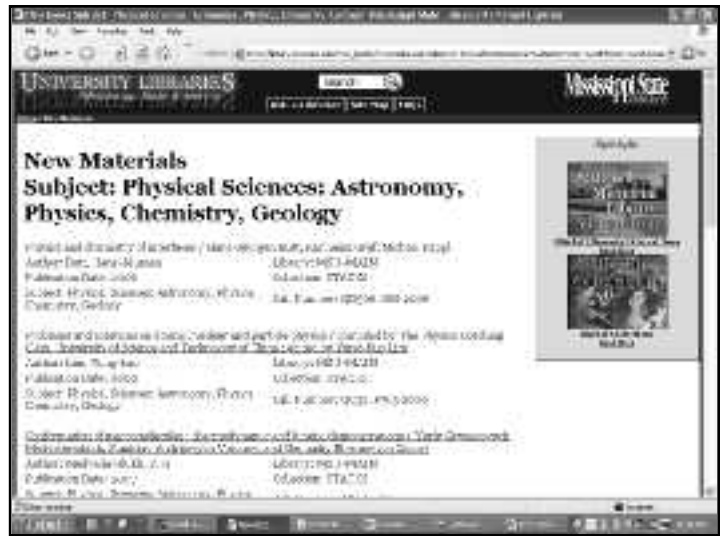


Figure 2. The Web page showing recently acquired titles gives users basic information. Clicking a title opens the online catalog where users can see more information and place holds on the title.



Figure 3. Clicking the View RSS link displays an intimidating page of XML code. By pasting the URL from the address bar into an RSS reader, a user can have new titles delivered to an RSS reader along with information selected from dozens of other Web sites.



Figure 4. In this free online RSS reader, the main area displays the feed I'm currently reading, while the left pane shows all my RSS feeds.

Next, we had to decide how often to update the new materials data. We decided to run the Perl script that extracts data from Unicorn weekly. The Web page displays titles with the newest titles first, so people see new additions first. Newly added titles are sent to RSS readers the same day they appear on the Web page.

We had a problem with blank Web pages being generated when no new materials had been added for a subject recently. We decided to turn this into an opportunity to showcase titles that had

been added in the last year. Goff modified the ASP script to offer visitors the option of seeing titles added in the last 60, 90, 180, or 365 days when no titles have been added in the last thirty days. He also created a page with these not-quite-so-recently-added selection options and linked it to the recently added materials page.

Results and Forward Planning

During the first six months the new materials page and RSS feeds were available, the page received over 13,900 hits.

We have no way to tell how many people have subscribed to the RSS feeds, although we've had a few people ask for books they saw in the RSS feeds. Several people have mentioned finding the page through the link Goff added in the online catalog.

Currently, the systems office is spending about thirty minutes a week running scripts to update the new materials database. Winger and Goff plan to automate

(continued on page 16)

Library 2.0: The Next Generation (of Librarians)

Erin Boyd and Allison Iovino

Abstract

This article examines how Library 2.0 tools are changing the way library schools conduct classes and teach students, specifically at the University of Southern Mississippi's School of Library and Information Science. Blogs, wikis, podcasts, and other new features are becoming more common in the online classroom environment and making it much easier for students to connect and collaborate with their peers. Instructors are recognizing the importance of featuring these technologies in a way that prepares students for careers as librarians. This article examines the perceptions that USM-SLIS faculty and students have of the tools that fall under the category of Library 2.0 and what they believe the future may bring.

Library 2.0 at USM's SLIS

Web 2.0, although a recent innovation, is everywhere you turn these days. This is certainly true in the field of library and information science, where this set of tools has become known as Library 2.0. Library schools charged with training the librarians of the future are taking notice of the need to embrace the possibilities offered by 2.0. The faculty is becoming more active in using 2.0 in classes and students are looking for real-world ways to put this technology to use upon graduation. In early 2007 the School of Information at the University of Michigan elected to create six new specializations for its program, one of which was "social computing." This was a huge step in validating the relevance of 2.0 technologies and looking ahead to their place in the future of librarianship. Other library

schools and library student groups are creating a presence for themselves on social sites like MySpace and Facebook. In fact, a Library 2.0 Interest group on Facebook is the largest group geared toward librarians on that site, with 4,798 members.

The School of Library and Information Science at the University of Southern Mississippi recently began implementing 2.0 in a variety of ways. As the only library school in Mississippi, USM's SLIS has always made distance education a priority in order to reach more students throughout the state. With the advent of Library 2.0 this has taken on a whole new meaning. In 2002 the school became among the first to offer its entire graduate program to students via the Internet, allowing applicants from other geographic areas to enroll in the program without having to visit campus. Currently, about half the students enrolled in the program reside outside Mississippi. This fact also illustrates the dichotomous nature of Library 2.0; it can build barriers between people because of the educational gap that exists whenever new technology is involved, while at the same time it can bring others together.

Faculty

We spoke with a few of the USM-SLIS faculty to find out their thoughts on the use of 2.0 technologies in the library school and what they believe the future may hold. Linda Ginn, catalog librarian and adjunct faculty member, remembers her very first encounter with what is known as Library 2.0 in September 2006. At the time, she was a catalog librarian at the Spartanburg County Public Library in Spartanburg, South Carolina. The demonstration was part of a South Carolina Tech Day event during which experts such as Michael Stephens (Dominican University/theweb.com), Jenny Levine (TheShiftedLibrarian.com), and Stephen Abram (SirsiDynix) introduced 2.0 Web tools to many eager librarians. For Ginn, Library 2.0 means a new way of using technology

that allows average people to put out content and allows other people to easily see it and respond to it, making connections and creating a sense of community among people who may never have had any contact otherwise.

Ginn said WebCT, the host site of many of the USM program's classes, has done a good job of including technologies that introduce students to 2.0 tools in a simple manner and often without the students realizing they are using 2.0 technology. Because online classes use discussion boards and chats, they are Library 2.0 by their very nature. WebCT has also made the process of building classes, adding content, and other functions very straightforward for instructors. As an instructor in cataloging, which is not typically conducive to group activity, Ginn is looking for ways to incorporate 2.0 into her classes. She feels library students and librarians will learn more from actually using it than just being taught about it.

Dr. Teresa Welsh, assistant professor, believes 2.0 tools are very important to teach and use in library schools because they are part of the future of librarianship and must be taught in order to achieve the school's mission of preparing qualified and competent librarians. For this reason, Welsh has been active in promoting the use of such technologies whenever possible. This includes requiring students to complete assignments with blogs or wikis and experimenting with podcasts in her classes. Welsh was also one of twelve faculty members at USM who participated in a podcasting pilot program, which she sees as the part of the not-so-distant future of 2.0 that will include "greater interactivity, mobility, and more multimedia."

The use of these technologies can seem intimidating to some students and current librarians who have never been exposed to them, even if they are interested in the prospects. At the recent Mississippi Library Association conference, Welsh and Melissa Wright, an instructor at

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USM, conducted workshops that taught participants how to create, alter, and maintain blogs, wikis, and audio podcasts. The feedback they received was overwhelmingly positive. Most participants found the experience was fun and easy, and intended to put their newfound knowledge into action in their own classes and libraries. Welsh and Wright plan to expand their efforts at next year's MLA conference.

Dr. Elizabeth Haynes, associate professor, spoke of the period of transition that many libraries and library schools are experiencing as they integrate 2.0 technologies. Since the tools are so new and many people are unfamiliar with them, it can be a challenge to move forward with the new ideas. Haynes has been pleasantly surprised that some of her students have taken the initiative to create blogs as their class journals or employ wikis to finish a group paper. Still, most students simply do not make use of the tools until they are required to for a specific class assignment. This could be due in part to intimidation, but could also stem from a lack of time when faced with all the other school requirements. In these situations, it can be hard for students to voluntarily spend time learning a new technology with everything else they have on their plates.

While Haynes recognizes the importance of learning the specific technologies necessary to be competent in Library 2.0, she also stresses there is an essential mindset involved as well—one that is not resistant to change. Haynes contends things are in a constant state of flux in the field of library and information science. Ideas, concepts, and the latest technologies will change regularly. Part of successfully mastering 2.0 is not only learning how to utilize the current hi-tech fad, but also having the ability to look ahead and embrace changes as they come. This is a quality she hopes to instill in her students.

Students

In conversations with a variety of students enrolled in the library science pro-

gram at USM, all of them indicated they had used 2.0 technologies without realizing it. Since the library program is completely online, the tools used to teach these courses encompass all the tools of 2.0 technologies. By using a chat room for class lectures, discussion boards for posting assignments and questions, a digital drop box for assignment submission, and an e-mail system within the course software, students have complete access to an entire online community.

All the students we spoke with felt the online nature of the program made it easier to connect with fellow students, but there is always some hesitation or skepticism when using these tools. One student stated, "In some ways this provides more interaction with classmates. Often in a face-to-face situation it is well past mid-term before the class gels and those who did not know one another prior to class truly begin to interact in- and outside the classroom." Having all of the classes online forces the students to make a strong effort to make connections with classmates. By having the teacher assign group projects, students have to plan times to meet, chat, and turn in their class assignments together. This, in turn, will help them in the future since most places where students will work will require long distance communication skills for project planning.

Most students are making an effort themselves to understand this new technology. Some instructors have required students to use wikis or blogs when assigning homework, while others let the students work out their own ways to do group assignments. A number of students have taken it upon themselves to try wikis in experimenting with doing group assignments. This way all students have access to and final say in the finished product.

Sites such as MySpace and Facebook have students using social networking tools in ways that can transfer to their daily work routine. It has also been a way to

connect the students to one another so they can "see" and interact with each other outside of class. These sites are fun tools students can use outside of class to build networking skills. Along with these sites, one student felt the use of WebCT or Coursesites was a good tool to use to prepare future librarians for Web technology. Using these tools subconsciously teaches students project planning and time management training.

All in all, the students felt the technology behind 2.0 will only progress as time goes on. The terms will change, but the effects and modes of action taken to bring patrons in will stay the same.

Connecting the Two

Our library school has several ways to connect to its current students. The program has a listserv all students are required to subscribe to. The list messages provide access to postings of current events, course offerings, social meetings and job prospects. The listserv is geared toward students in the program, but can also be used by USM alumni.

The student organization Library and Information Science Student Association (LISSA) also utilizes 2.0 technologies. LISSA has adopted a blog on LiveJournal to keep current and future students up to date with what is going on in the program or the planning of social events to bring students in the area together. Students registered with this site can join and post comments. With LiveJournal, posts can be made without membership by using the anonymous post link. The journal is available for anyone to read to stay current with what the organization is doing. You can add this blog to an aggregate reader or register with the site to receive updates of postings, as well as post questions and responses to be more connected to the organization and fellow students.

LISSA has also created a page on the social network MySpace to draw more people into the program. Anyone who has

created a page on MySpace can "friend" the site and get weekly updates of what is going on within the organization. Also, students, current or future, can connect with other people in the program for social purposes or as another medium to communicate about school-related topics. The creation of this site definitely brings a fun flair to what the program has to offer and serves as an entertaining way to get to know classmates.

Conclusion

The USM-SLIS has devoted itself to being a program of innovation and progress. As the first program at USM, and one of approximately thirteen LIS programs in the United States, to present a degree program completely online, the SLIS program demonstrates it is dedicated to making distance education and the use of new technology a priority. The faculty are using resources to introduce new Web technologies to students, as well as encouraging students to explore these options throughout their coursework. In turn, students are gaining knowledge that will not only benefit them during their schooling, but also will be knowledge they can carry with them as they become the next generation of librarians. ■

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Librarians in Second Life

Barton Spencer

Second Life 101

The online, virtual world known as Second Life is a game to some, a learning environment to others, and a complete mystery to a large segment of the population. Since its humble beginnings in 2003, Linden Lab, the creator of Second Life, has seen its virtual world explode with every kind of activity. Shops, discos, parks, galleries, brothels, schools, restaurants and, yes, libraries all appear in Second Life. If you can find it in the real world there is likely a virtual representation of it in Second Life.

The Second Life world is made up of a series of virtual islands, most of which are bought, "terraformed" and built upon by the owners and residents. Users access Second Life via a free client program that can be installed on any robust computer with a fast Internet connection. There is no cost to participate generally, but if you wish to own land within Second Life you must become a member and pay a subscription fee.

Every user in Second Life is provided with an avatar, which is a virtual representation of himself or herself. One may alter the avatar in any possible way, including making it into a non-human form or even a geometric design. The avatars of other users will be visible when one is using Second Life. Until recently, most communication between avatars was accomplished via text chat. Just like spoken words text chat only carried a certain distance before it could no longer be "heard" by people further away. One can instant message (IM) another avatar anywhere in Second Life, however, regardless of distance. Voice communication is now available in Second Life, but its adoption varies widely among different locations and users.

An avatar can move around Second Life in several ways. The arrow keys on the

keyboard allow one to walk in any direction, but flying is a more viable option to cover more ground more quickly. Keep in mind that the people who build buildings, fences, etc., have control over the physics of each environment. One may not be able to walk or fly through walls, in which case it takes a certain degree of precision to efficiently navigate an interior space such as a library or other building.

With this in mind, the more creative builders make decisions based not only upon how they want things to look, but also upon how easy or hard those spaces might be to navigate. Some builders opt to stay away from stairs, preferring to provide buttons on walls that teleport avatars from one floor of a building to another, similar to a virtual elevator.

Rather than "fly" from one Second Life island to another, the preferred method of travel is teleportation. There are several search and map tools that allow you to find the place you want to go and then instantly teleport to that location. You can also allow friends you make in Second Life to teleport you to their location. When examining different libraries in Second Life, it is easy, for example, to teleport from Eduisland 1 to Eduisland 4 in mere seconds.

The Land Rush

In 2006 and 2007 the media picked up on the Second Life phenomenon and the virtual world was featured in a host of newspaper and magazine articles as well as numerous news broadcasts. Many businesses set up presences in Second Life including IBM, Kraft, BMW, Sears, Toyota and Reebok, to name only a few. In the nonprofit world this publicity also helped stir up discussion among librarians regarding what virtual libraries might be able to offer. Some early entrants into virtual librarianship, as well as many who are entering this year, benefit from the pioneering efforts of the Alliance Library System.

The Alliance Library System (ALS), headquartered in Peoria, Ill., has been a leader in virtual librarianship in Second Life. The ALS played a key role in establishing the Second Life Library on Info

Island in October 2006. Along with collaborators worldwide, ALS strove to create a virtual presence in Second Life that would provide services in ways never envisioned before. However, ALS also provided traditional services such as directions for new users of Second Life, tours, presentations by authors and other important figures, book talks and book recommendations, help with scripting and building, and the facilitation of meetings. This last service may sound simple but serves a very important purpose for those in Second Life.

One useful service provided by the Alliance Library System has been low-cost leases for space on education-related islands. Yearly costs range from \$100-400 and this allows a library or education-related entity considerable control over a plot of virtual land, creating whatever structures they wish, along with whatever services they want to provide.

Over the years opportunities such as this have led to a land rush as libraries sought to gain a foothold in the new virtual environment. Libraries such as those on Cybrary City 1 and 2 were among the first to become involved, including ones from Charlotte and Mecklenberg County (an ALS partner from North Carolina), McMaster University (Canada), Topeka and Shawnee County (Kansas) and the South Carolina State Library, among many others. Many universities and education-related organizations have also gotten involved. Recent examples of the land rush may be seen on the relatively new Eduisland 3 and Eduisland 4 spaces that were purchased and rented out by the ALS.

Opportunities

There are many reasons that librarians become involved in Second Life. Some are there simply to experience a phenomenon they have read or heard about. Some have a gift for design and wish to help others design library and education-related spaces. Some are thrilled at the prospect of bringing in library users they would not normally encounter.

However, collegiality and cooperation among library professionals seem to be the

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most alluring parts of the experience. Second Life provides a simple way for interested professionals from across the globe to meet and collaborate at essentially no cost. On any given evening, a host of different library-friendly avatars will descend upon the various library-related locations in Second Life, perhaps focusing more upon the Second Life Library itself, and get to know one another. Specially scheduled events can bring dozens of interested colleagues together at once for innovative exchanges that branch into topics regarding the real world as well. Never before has the exchange of information among information professionals been so easy and so unhampered by geographic hindrances.

Another nice aspect of Second Life is that the participants (if they are given the needed permissions) are able to build and form their own surroundings. This ability allows one to build a true-to-life recreation of a present library, a pie-in-the-sky version of the library the staff wishes it had, or an updated library that is soon to be built in real life. For example, potential patrons of Santa Clara University's new library building were given several days to explore the inside of it via a 3-D model in Second Life, approximately a year before its completion date in real life. Several higher education institutions use Second Life to allow potential students to explore such places as residence halls and the general campus layout without setting foot on campus. Ohio University is deeply involved in recreating portions of its campus within Second Life. Higher education institutions are also teaching classes either partially or fully within Second Life, including the School of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University in California.

In addition to meetings and classes, galleries and exhibits are some of the more effective uses of Second Life by educators. Anything that involves 3-D activity can be accommodated in Second Life. Paintings and photos can be seen from the back as well as the front, and can be resized as large as needed and made available to anyone in the world. Note cards regarding the exhibited pieces can be read by avatars and

stored in their inventories. Counters can be placed at exhibit entrances to count how many avatars have visited. Three dimensional art objects have been especially popular in Second Life since they can be created at no cost and can be reconfigured or moved with little effort.

Challenges

There are potential challenges to becoming involved in Second Life and having an impact there. The population is limited, even though the client will tell you millions are subscribed. During any time of day there may be tens of thousands online simultaneously, but most of these are not in search of a library. There is a learning curve for any new user and it takes time to surmount. If that time is not granted at work, then the time to learn Second Life must be taken at home. In addition to your need for a robust computer and fast network connection, you must rely upon the Linden Lab servers to be running correctly along with all of the Internet connections in between. That is an important difference between providing programming in the real world and in the virtual world. Crashes of Second Life servers are not at all uncommon and components sometimes become unusable due to bugs after major upgrades. Though Linden Lab makes these issues a top priority for repair, the problems still occur.

When considering the use of Second Life on public computers in libraries, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, the software is upgraded on a regular basis. Sometimes the old version will suddenly become unusable and Second Life cannot be accessed until a new version is installed. Depending on how many public machines are available, this demand for upgrades can turn into a considerable chore. Also, there is much more to Second Life than libraries and galleries. The seedy side of Second Life is only clicks away and some of your patrons may venture into adult shops and virtual sex dens, leaving other patrons and administrators alike wondering about the value of such a resource. Lastly, in many public computer environments

DEFINITIONS

Avatar: the virtual representation of oneself in an online world. In Second Life the user has a wide variety of customizations built into the program but a user may also purchase such things as hair, eyes, body styles, shoes, clothes, glasses and walks among many other things. Other users can often tell how new someone is to Second Life by seeing how simple or attractive their avatar is.

Inventory: an avatar's collection of objects, textures, clothes, note cards, etc. that can be accessed while "in world" and travels with the avatar.

In world: logged on to Second Life; avatar is normally viewable by others

Linden dollar: the currency used within Second Life. A user can purchase Linden Dollars and utilize them in Second Life. Alternately, one may convert Linden Dollars into normal dollars to be used in real life. This is important because there are many things bought and sold within Second Life.

Teleport: the ability to transport an avatar instantly from one location in Second Life to another

Griever: a person/avatar that, for some reason, enjoys creating havoc for other avatars or groups in Second Life. They may create self-replicating trash, shoot particle bombs, use virtual "guns," or transform themselves into shapes that many might find offensive.

SLURL: a Second Life URL; a link that will take one directly to a location in Second Life when accessed from a computer with the Second Life client installed

RELATED LINKS

<http://www.infoisland.org/>
Blog for Second Life Library 2.0

<http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/>
Alliance Library System, a leader in Second Life

<http://www.secondlife.com>
This is where you download the Second Life client. Also, you may use the search box at the Second Life web site to find libraries and other entities.

<http://www.ohio.edu/outlook/06-07/February/299n-067.cfm>
Ohio University and their virtual campus

<http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/slisis/secondlife.htm>
San Jose State University's Second Life campus for their SLIS program

the hardware is not robust enough and the network may not easily carry the traffic of many users. Sometimes the use of Second Life on a machine may slow the machine down for the next user until the machine is rebooted. Before installing Second Life it would be a good idea to check the minimum requirements of the client software against the hardware within the computer. It is also a good idea to talk with your Internet provider or campus IT department before inviting the public to use such a bandwidth-hogging application. One way to get around a few of these problems is to make the Second Life client available on a select few computers in the public area.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the world of Second Life is an exciting development. The steps that some adventurous librarians and educators are taking there will be seen as baby steps as more useful and efficient methods of virtual hosting become available in the future. There are many libraries and organizations that do not want to wait to get their feet wet in this new virtual world, so they set up shop in Second Life. It is wise to gain an account, log in, learn your way around and assess for yourself what you find to be good and bad about the Second Life world. This could be simply the first version of something that will pervade our lives in coming years – immersive, virtual worlds used for educational purposes. It is a technology and trend that deserves to be watched and evaluated as the virtual opportunities begin to expand in the near future. ■



RSS Feeds...

(continued from page 10)

the updates so the RSS feeds and pages won't require any extra effort. We're also considering a few changes to the subject listings; for example, we need to separate cookbooks and other home-oriented materials from the engineering and technology category. We'd also like to include our government documents in the listings, although the SuDoc classification will require some thought to fit into our subject categories.

Adding RSS feeds to the new materials Web page lets us push information out to our community instead of waiting for them to come to us. After the initial development, updating the RSS feeds requires little time. MSU Libraries also use RSS feeds to share library news and advertise workshops.

If you're interested in more ideas for using RSS feeds in libraries, I highly recommend the SirsiDynix Institute podcast, "Free Your Content! RSS for Libraries," available at <http://www.sirsidyndynixinstitute.com/archive.php>. If you'd like more information on the technical details of this project, send an e-mail to Bobby Goff and he would be happy to share the scripts. ■

People in the News

Patrick Carr, coordinator of serials for Mississippi State University Libraries, received the American Chemical Society's 2007 Charleston Conference Scholarship, which provided him with \$1,500 to attend the Charleston Conference in Charleston, South Carolina in November 2007.



David Nolen joined the library faculty at Mississippi State University as reference librarian for the humanities. He is a recent graduate of the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Alabama, where he also earned a BA in Spanish and Latin American Studies. Nolen also has an MA in Spanish from the University of Florida. Nolen previously worked as a foreign language instructor at the high school and college levels.



Melissa R. Dennis is the new outreach/reference librarian and assistant professor for the J.D. Williams Library at the University of Mississippi. Prior to returning to her alma mater, Dennis spent eighteen months as a reference/instructional services librarian at Delta State University. The Mount Olive native earned her MLIS from the University of Southern Mississippi.



Pam Rogers, administrative assistant, joined the University of Mississippi Libraries staff in November 2007. Rogers previously held secretarial and administrative assistant positions in the Telecommunications Department and Office of Information Technology at Mississippi State University. ■

MLA Officer Nominees for 2009



Ann Branton

ANN BRANTON – nominee for Vice President/President-elect

Education

MLS, University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, 1990; BA, Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, Texas, 1989; AA, University of Ohio-Lancaster, Lancaster, Ohio, 1987

Professional Experience

Head, Bibliographic Services, 2001-; Head, Cataloging, 1993-2001; Catalog Librarian, 1990-1993, University of Southern Mississippi

Professional Activities

American Library Association, member, 1990-2002; ACRL section, 1990-2002; ALCTS section, 1990-2002; New Members Roundtable, member and chair of Handbook committee, 1991-1993, and co-chair, Local Arrangements committee, 1995. Mississippi Library Association, member, 1990-present; ACRL section, 1990-present; Standing Committees: Membership, Handbook, Publicity, Audit, Nomination, and Election; Technical Services Roundtable, 1990-present; Conference committees: Hospitality, Local Arrangements, Registration, 1992-2004; *Mississippi Libraries*, editor, 2000-2002; column editor of "TechNotes," 1995-1999; ML indexer, 1991-1995.

Publications and Presentations

(selective listing)

Books

Laughlin, K., P. Frantz, and A. Branton, compilers. *The Children's Song Index*,

1978-1993. Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1995.

Book Chapters

Branton, A. "New Members Round Table: Gateway to Professional Growth and Development." In *Tenure and Promotion for Academic Librarians*. Carol Cubberley. Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing Co., 1996.

Branton, A. "Successfully Merging Workflows and Personnel in Technical Services: A Management Perspective." In *Innovative Redesign and Reorganization of Library Technical Services: Paths for the Future and Case Studies*. Ed. Bradford Lee Eden. Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004.

Articles, refereed

Branton, A. "MLA/ACRL Call for Papers: Teams, Units, and Paradigms: Building Bridges with Building Blocks." *Mississippi Libraries* 57, 4 (Winter 1993).

Branton, A. and T. Englert, co-authors, "Mandate for Change: Merging Acquisitions and Cataloging into a Single Workflow." *Library Collections, Acquisitions & Technical Services* 26, 4 (Fall 2002).

Branton, A. "Collaborative Partnerships: Expanding the Vendor/Librarian Relationship." *Against the Grain* 17, 4 (September 2005).

Jin, M. and A. Branton. "Online and Print Cataloging Tools Use Study." *Southeastern Librarian* 55, 3 (Fall 2007).

Electronic Resources

Branton, A., et al. *Bibliographic Services Homepage*. 1999, 2002 revised. http://www.lib.usm.edu/about/general/departments/#bibliographic_services

Branton, A. and A. Chen-Gaffey, co-creators. *MARC21: An Interactive MARC Tutorial*. 2000, 2004 revised. <http://www.lib.usm.edu/techserv/MAR>

[C21Tutorial/marcfr.htm](http://www.lib.usm.edu/techserv/C21Tutorial/marcfr.htm).

Branton, A., et al. *The Civil Rights in Mississippi Thesaurus*. 2001. http://www.lib.usm.edu/techserv/cat/tools/crm_index.htm

Presentations, national

"Pre-order Cataloging: Promises and Compromises," presented to ALA/ALCTS/CCS/Copy Cataloging Discussion Group, Washington, D.C., February 1997.

"The Lone Wolf Cataloger," presented with C. Godwin to OVGTSL, Bowling Green, KY, May 1998.

"USM Participation in the CORC Project," presentation at the SOLINET Annual Conference, April 2000.

"Successful Merger of Acquisitions and Cataloging Workflow in Sirsi Unicorn," presented juried poster session with T. Englert at ALA Annual Conference, June 2002.

"Making Every Dollar Count: Streamlining the Ordering/Binding Process for New Paperback Editions," juried poster session presented at ALA Annual Conference, June 2004.

Honors/Awards

ALA 3M/NMRT Professional Development Grant, 1992

MLA Past President's Award, 1993

USM 1996/97 Faculty Excellence Award for Professional Service, 1997

MLA Peggy May Award, 2003

USM Excellence in Librarianship Award, 2004

Beta Phi Mu, membership, 1990-2008



Stephen Cunetto

STEPHEN CUNETTO – nominee for Vice President/President-elect

Education

MLIS, University of Southern Mississippi, 2006; BA, Communication, Mississippi State University, 1990

Professional Experience

Administrator of Systems, Mississippi State University Libraries, 1990-present

Professional Activities

ALA, ACRL, and MLA, member; MAGNOLIA Technical Advisor, 1997-present. Other Professional Activities: Mississippi Theatre Association, Starkville Community Theatre and Starkville Area Arts Council, President; Mississippi Theatre Association, Executive Director, 1993-present.

Awards

MLA Peggy May Award Recipient, 1999



Marsha A. Case

MARSHA A. CASE – nominee for Secretary

Education

MLS, University of Southern Mississippi, 1994; BS, Mississippi State University, 1981; AA, Hinds Community College, 1977

Professional Experience

Assistant Director for Technical Services, Jackson/Hinds Library System, 2004-present; Coordinator of Technical Services Division, JHLS, 2004; Collection Development Coordinator, JHLS, 1995-2004; Northside Branch Manager, JHLS, 1994-95; South Hills Branch Professional Assistant, JHLS, Summer 1994; Clerk, Technical Services Dept., JHLS, 1986-1994; Clerk, Technical Services Dept., Jackson Metropolitan Library System, 1980-1986; Student Assistant, Technical Services Dept., Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, 1977-1979.

Professional Activities

Mississippi Library Association, 1994-present: National Legislative Week Committee; Public Relations Awards Committee Chair, 2002-04; Hospitality Committee Chair, 2005; Awards Committee, 2005-present; Awards Committee Chair, 2007-present; Author Awards Committee, 2007-present; Public Library Section Chair, 2007; Fiscal Management Committee, 2007-present. Other: Praeger/Greenwood Press Product Evaluation Group; Library Journal 100 Book Buying Survey Group.

Honors

Beta Phi Mu, Beta Psi Chapter, National Library Science Honor Society, 1995-present; Beta Phi Mu, Beta Psi Chapter, Secretary/Treasurer, 2003-present.



Melissa R. Dennis

MELISSA R. DENNIS – nominee for Secretary

Education

MLIS, University of Southern Mississippi, 2006; BA in English, University of Mississippi, 2002; AA, Jones County Junior College, 1999

Professional Experience

Outreach/Reference Librarian and Assistant Professor, University of Mississippi, 2008-present; Reference/Instructional Services Librarian and Assistant Professor of Library Services, Delta State University, 2006-2008; Circulation Manager, Belhaven College Library, 2003-2006.

Professional Activities

Central Mississippi Library Council, Secretary, 2003-2006; Mississippi Library Association, member 2006-present; American Library Association, member 2006-present

Publications

Dennis, M. (Winter 2007). Playing for Keeps: University Faculty and Staff Teaming up for an Effective Student Retention Program. *Mississippi Libraries*, 71:4, pp. 89-92.

Salinero, D. and Dennis, M. (Spring 2008). LIB 101 Meets Blackboard: Overcoming Challenges of Teaching Information Literacy as an Online Course. *LOEX Quarterly*, 34:1. Accepted for publication.

Presentations

Finding Fun in Orientations through the Multifaceted Scavenger Hunt, 2007 MLA Poster Session. ■



**Visit our Website:
www.misslib.org**

News Briefs

Free Books for Franklin Jr. High Library

The Franklin Jr. High library received approximately 1,092 free books from the "Back to School 2007" National Book Bank distribution. The books were given to the library by FirstBook.org and the U.S. Dept. of Education. Each junior high school student will receive three books to take home. Sixth and seventh grade reading teachers will use the books in classroom studies. Beta Club members and school library assistants helped distribute the books to the students. The school extends its thanks to Marshall Bankston and the Franklin County School Board for supporting the Franklin Jr. High library program.



Pictured: Kelsey Jackson, Amber Whittington, Diane Willard, Linda Williams, Gerald Nugent, Jane Anderson, Jada Williams, and Tyisha Starks

MSU Libraries Join Lockss E-journal Archiving Initiative

Mississippi State University Libraries recently joined LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe), an e-journal archiving initiative participated in by top research libraries across North America.

Developed by Stanford University in 2004, LOCKSS ensures that MSU Libraries will maintain perpetual online access to contents of the e-journals subscribed to from participating publishers. Participants in LOCKSS include over one hundred publishers and more than sixty

members of the Association of Research Libraries. A primary goal of LOCKSS is to enable libraries to utilize open source software to easily and inexpensively collect and maintain a permanent digital archive of e-journal subscriptions. In other words, LOCKSS enables a library to actually own e-journal content to which it subscribes. In doing so, this initiative relieves libraries from uncertainties regarding whether they would be able to provide patrons with perpetual access to subscribed e-journal content following such events as subscription cancellations, journal cessations, license agreement expirations, and publisher mergers.

"Our participation in LOCKSS reflects our ongoing commitment to preserving our journal holdings for future researchers at MSU," according to Francis Coleman, Dean of MSU Libraries. "As our collection of e-journals continues to grow, our participation in innovative archiving initiatives such as LOCKSS is key to successfully maintaining our role as a research library."

For additional information about the LOCKSS e-journal archiving initiative visit the LOCKSS Web site at <http://www.lockss.org>.

Ballard's New People's History of MSU now Hitting Bookstands

Mike Ballard has closed the book on Mississippi State University's more than six score years of institutional history. Now, it's the readers' turn to open it up.

Maroon and White, Mississippi State University, 1878-2003 is the much-published author's latest work. Named for the school's colors, the 402-page successor to John K. Betterworth's *The People's University* is being released by the University Press of Mississippi. Ballard is the land-grant institution's archivist and coordinator of the Congressional and Political Research Center in Mitchell Memorial Library.

Maroon and White tells the university's story from the beginning, adds some new material and extends the history to cover the periods from 1978-2003. Ballard said changes in the modern era have produced strong fields of study in architecture, the humanities, arts and sciences, business, and all the variations within those areas.

"While the dramatic additions in curricula are signs of changes, they also underscore the continuity of the university's mission to provide a broad spectrum of opportunities and choices to students," he observed. "Camaraderie among students, faculty, staff, and alumni has kept it so. "That same team concept has helped the university overcome many trials through the years, especially under-funding that has had wide-ranging ramifications."

As to the future, Ballard said, "The continued growth of the university will produce more challenges, and the lack of funding likely always will be a serious issue." Nevertheless, he said "this review of Mississippi State's journey through its first 125 years and counting shows clearly that the university will continue to be vibrant, visionary and progressive."

Music in the Air at MSU Libraries

Preparations are underway for the glorious sounds of ragtime music to fill the air on the Mississippi State University campus once again.

The 2nd Annual Charles Templeton Ragtime Music Festival will be held on the MSU campus March 28-30, 2008 in the John Grisham Room, the Charles Templeton Sr. Music Museum of Mitchell Memorial Library and in the newly renovated Lee Hall Auditorium. The festival will feature the talents of eight artists, informative guided tours of MSU Libraries' Templeton Museum, major and mini concerts, and seminars and interviews.

The festival revolves around and was inspired by the Charles H. Templeton Music Museum and Collection housed at Mitchell Library. By bringing ragtime and jazz musicians, scholars and enthusiasts to see the museum and collection the festival coordinators anticipate increasing attention to and use of these primary resources.

Earlier this semester, world-renowned musicologist and ragtime expert David A. Jasen met with festival planning chairs to work on scheduling, booking, and all ins and outs of the upcoming festival. "We are thrilled to bring such wonderful musicians and friends to the MSU and Starkville communities for the festival," said co-chair Stephen Cunetto. "The magic and excitement that these talented performers bring to our festival, museum, and campus are unlike that of any other event we host throughout the year. Having the help and direction of our friend David Jasen is simply invaluable. We cannot wait to celebrate this music again."

Artists performing and speaking at the 2nd annual festival include: the new Queen of Ragtime, Montreal's Mimi Blais; a veritable walking encyclopedia of ragtime and early jazz, Marty Eggers; the stride piano genius, Brian Holland; classic ragtime specialist, Norway's Morten Gunnar Larsen; the man hailed as America's greatest living boogie woogie pianist, Bob Seeley; West Coast ragtime music scene mainstay, Virginia Tichenor; and serving as master of ceremonies again this year, musicologist, collector, author and authority on all areas of American popular music, Jasen.

Jasen will be guiding tours of the Templeton Museum, which features the most complete collection of Victor Talking Machines from 1897 to 1930, a sheet music collection of close to 22,000 pieces, and over 15,000 playable items (paper rolls, wax cylinders, records, Regina music box discs, and more).

"The concept of having artifacts illustrate the 'business of music in the United

States' is unique and is not only important for serious students of popular music, but for history buffs, sociologists and everybody interested in knowing how music influenced this country during the entire 20th century and continuing into the 21st," Jasen said.

To find out more about the 2nd Annual Charles Templeton Ragtime Music Festival, please contact MSU Libraries' Lyle Tate at 662-325-2559 or ltate@library.msstate.edu. Visit <http://library.msstate.edu/templeton/festival> to read more about the artists and to see photos of the 2007 festival.



San Francisco's Virginia Tichenor, playing here in the 2007 festival, will return to the Charles Templeton Ragtime Music Festival in March of 2008 to play along with five other artists from across the country. Photo by Jim Tomlinson

Author and Actress Is Special Guest of MSU Libraries

"Is Drucilla really coming to the library?"

Students asked that question for weeks leading up to Victoria Rowell's visit with Mississippi State University Libraries on November 2, 2007. The Emmy-nominated actress and author – most well-known for her portrayal of "Drucilla Winters" on CBS' "The Young and the Restless" – was the special guest of MSU Libraries as she signed and read from her new book, *The Women Who Raised Me: A Memoir*, in Mitchell Memorial Library's John Grisham Room.

Winner of eleven NAACP Image Awards, Rowell has starred in numerous

theatrical and television productions. Raised in foster care for 18 years, Rowell is an active advocate for foster children. In 1990 she founded the Rowell Foster Children's Positive Plan (RFCPP), a program created to give aid to families and children in many areas, including fine arts, higher education and healthcare. Her memoir, *The Women Who Raised Me*, provides a unique, first-hand experience of the foster system. It is the story of a woman's rise out of the foster-care system to attain the American dream – and of the unlikely series of women who helped her along the way.

While at MSU Libraries, Rowell announced the kick-off of Loose Change for Change, a fundraising effort she's creating to benefit children interested in the arts. Loose Change for Change is a grassroots philanthropic effort to encourage students to support the arts with the thought that no matter how small the donation the outcome will be great and benefit everyone. This program places receptacles in schools and businesses to collect change to support the educational initiatives of the SonEdna Foundation, which strives to make an educational, cultural, and economic impact in the Mississippi Delta by promoting the literary arts. Created by the husband and wife team of Morgan Freeman and Myrna Colley-Lee, the SonEdna Foundation presents great literature by writers from across the country seeking to build on Mississippi's strong literary tradition in order to support literacy and



Victoria Rowell

enhance the cultural opportunities of the Delta region. Since its inception in 2006 the SonEdna Foundation has featured more than a dozen writers, attracting audience members from as far away as New Orleans and Atlanta.

MSU Libraries will be accepting donations to Loose Change for Change at least through March, which is Youth in the Arts Month.

Archivist's Civil War Book Receives Recognition

More than three hundred letters written by a University of Mississippi student who left the campus in 1861 to help the Confederate forces fight the Civil War are the basis of the recent book, *The Hour of Our Nation's Agony* (University of Tennessee Press, 2007) by Jennifer Ford. Ford is associate professor and director of archives and special collections in UM's J.D. Williams Library. She was inspired to write the book as she processed the letters, which were donated to the library in 2002.

The book follows a young Lt. William Cowper Nelson, a native of Holly Springs, as he is transformed from an idealistic young soldier to a battle-hardened veteran.

Ford said the University of Tennessee Press was "incredibly receptive" to the possibility of publishing the book. "I continued to work on it for over a year revising and then they accepted it." Special recognition for the book soon followed. The title is included in the *Voices of the Civil War Series*, edited by Peter Carmichael, a professor of Civil War studies at West Virginia University.

"Of the 35 titles that have been published in (the series), Jennifer Ford's *The Hour of Our Nation's Agony* is one of the most important volumes published to date," Carmichael said. "William Cowper Nelson, unlike so many of his peers, did not restage the war as a heroic event. He was very aware and very open as to how

the horrors of army life tore away at his humanity, but such reflections did not undermine his commitment to the Confederate cause."

Following the book's release in September, Ford was an invited presenter at the Southern Festival of Books in Nashville. Held annually in October, the event is a three-day literary festival attended by more than two hundred authors. "I got a great response from the crowd (at the festival)," Ford said. "Plus, I also got to see Will Nelson's family again, which was very nice."

Ford said she hopes those who read the book will better appreciate what it was like for a young man to leave everything and everyone behind in order to fight for a cause during a bloody time in America's past. "I hope that they will get an understanding that this is one person stuck in a very confusing and difficult time in our nation's history," she said. "It gives the perspective of a young man who was nineteen when he enlisted and had never been outside his home finding himself in the most incongruous places."

For Ford, researching the life of Will Nelson was a diversion from her specialty of women's history. "His humanity is what interested me," she said. "He had great flashes of humanity toward the enemy. (For example), he talks in some letters about going to fetch buckets of water after the Battle of Shapsburg for enemies captured during the conflict."

After graduating from Millsaps College with a degree in English, Ford completed her master's degree in history and master's of library science at the University of Southern Mississippi in 1997. She is enrolled in UM's doctoral program in history. A Jackson native, Ford began her work at the UM library in 1998 and was promoted to department head in 2005. The actual letters of William Cowper Nelson are available for viewing in the J.D. Williams Library. ■

National Library Week 2008

It's time to start planning for National Library Week, April 13-19, 2008.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of National Library Week and Julie Andrews has been named the honorary chair. This year's theme will be "Join the Circle of Knowledge @ Your Library."

More information and promotional materials can be found at the American Library Association Web site: <http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/natlibraryweek/nlw.htm>. ■



About Books

Baca, Keith A. *Native American Place Names in Mississippi: A Comprehensive Guide to the Translations and Tribal Origins of 500 Intriguing Designations.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. 143 pp. \$18.00 (paperback).

In this book, Keith A. Baca provides his readers with a thorough interpretation of Mississippi place names and their genesis. Instead of offering only the translation he believes to be the "true" origin of a name, Baca takes great pains to provide all feasible origins along with the historical context of each interpretation. He relies on the works of several historical experts on the region and on the languages of its Native American inhabitants. Also included is an overview of the works of the three scholars to whom Baca refers most often.

Most of the place names discussed in the text are of Choctaw or Chickasaw origin since the Mississippi region was once divided into territories of the two groups. A map of Mississippi located in the introduction denotes all of the state's counties as well as the border between lands traditionally held by these two peoples.

Each entry gives the local pronunciation of the place name and identifies the counties in which the geographical entity resides. Any roads or highways that intersect with a creek or river are also named in order to give the reader a better understanding of where these bodies of water are located. Sections titled "The Native American Connection" are scattered throughout the book; these sections provide historical anecdotes explaining the significance of specific locations where the Native Americans lived.

This book is authoritative and well-organized. The logical arrangement of entries contributes to readers' understanding of the subject. Baca's determination to provide his audience with every reasonable interpretation is admirable, but at times can frustrate readers who are looking for a single, definite translation. This book would be an excellent addition to an academic library or to a public library whose

patrons are interested in the history of the state.

Jessica Minihan
Electronic Resources Librarian
University of Mississippi



Crockett, James R. *Hands in the Till: Embezzlement of Public Monies in Mississippi.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. 240pp. \$40.00 (hardcover).

Hands in the Till: Embezzlement of Public Monies in Mississippi provides a glimpse into the unknown world of the Mississippi state auditor. "In God we trust, all others we audit." This saying was once found on the Web site of the Office of the State Auditor of Mississippi (OSA). According to the current Web site, the mission of the OSA "is to serve its customers and protect the public's trust by independently assessing state and local governmental and other entities to ensure that public funds are properly received, are legally, effectively and efficiently spent and are accounted for and reported accurately." James R. Crockett's book provides almost forty examples of the types of cases that come across the desks of officials in the state auditor's office.

The OSA oversees the use of public funds. *Hands in the Till* provides explanations of cases associated with chancery and circuit clerks, tax assessors/collectors, justice court clerks and sheriffs' employees, city clerks, schools, and other institutions. Four to nine cases are addressed in each category. Crockett's explanation of each case is approximately three to ten pages. In these narratives he describes how much money was stolen, how the individuals went about stealing the money, the motives behind the thefts, and the outcome of each case.

Each case summarization reads as though it were a script from a true crime television special. Through the relatively short descriptions of each case one is able to get a general overview of the many

types of cases the OSA has to handle.

This title is recommended for public and academic libraries.

Jennifer Brannock
Special Collections Librarian
University of Southern Mississippi



Ownby, Ted (editor). *Manners and Southern History.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007. 169 pp. \$50.00

This collection of essays edited by Ted Ownby, professor of history at the University of Mississippi, represents contributions to the 2004 Porter Fortune Jr. History Symposium at the University of Mississippi. The essays discuss various aspects of manners in relation to Southern history.

Six essays discuss such varied topics as definitions of womanhood in the South during the Civil War, race relations, dating in the early 20th Century at Alabama universities, debutantes and Mardi Gras in New Orleans, anti-miscegenation laws, and civil rights in Mississippi.

The last two essays of the book comment on the previous essays. Many of these essays point out that, historically, the enforcement of manners was made in an effort to maintain the status quo. This is not to say that all manners should be abandoned with the passage of time, but rather, certain unreasonable expectations in etiquette may have to be changed as society evolves.

The essays are interesting and cover a number of different periods in history, as well as a wide range of topics. Some of the essays deal with manners or etiquette in a direct fashion; in others, the discussion of manners is subordinate to the issues of power and politics.

Academic libraries and large public libraries should consider purchasing this book.

Sheryl Stump
Cataloger
Delta State University



Evans, Mary Anna. *Effigies*. Scottsdale, AZ: Poisoned Pen Press, 2006. 301 pp. \$24.95 (hardcover).

Intrigue and history intertwine as murder comes to Neshoba County, Mississippi when visiting archaeologists Faye Longchamp and Joe Wolf Mantooth join a team led by Dr. Sid Mailer, to investigate land wanted for a development. A surly, racist farmer, Carroll Calhoun, is found dead under unusual circumstances and the elderly, former Congressman Lawrence Johnson Judd falls suspiciously ill. Faye and Joe's investigations not only uncover the murder and the cause of the illness but also some deadly answers.

Mary Anna Evans introduced Faye Longchamp and Joe Wolf Mantooth in her debut novel, *Artifacts*, following up with a second mystery starring this heroine in *Relics*. *Effigies* is the third Longchamp mystery and meets reader expectations for a well-written, interesting storyline. Showing her strength as a storyteller, Evans uses Choctaw history and Indian lore to share interesting sidebars throughout the novel.

Effigies should definitely be considered by all Mississippi public, academic, and high school libraries. Evans includes a seven-page guide for teachers, students, and book clubs to be used in the study of this novel, as well as a two-page reference/recommended reading selection.

Donna Phelps Fite
Purvis Branch Manager
Purvis Public Library
Lamar County Library System



King, Larry L. *In Search of Willie Morris: The Mercurial Life of a Legendary Writer and Editor*. New York: Public Affairs, 2006. 353 pp. \$15.95 (paperback).

Larry L. King, playwright, colleague, and long-time friend, traces the life of

Willie Weaks Morris and has arranged this biography into nine aptly titled sections that outline key junctures in Morris' life. Anecdotes are drawn from his son, David Rae Morris, ex-wife, Dr. Celia B. Morris, widow, JoAnne Pritchard Morris, close friends, and other colleagues.

Willie Morris, a Yazoo City native, was an accomplished and prolific editor, essayist, and novelist. The former Rhodes Scholar became the youngest editor-in-chief at *Harper's Magazine* at age thirty-two. He enjoyed great success and notoriety in New York during the 1960s, until managerial differences with *Harper's* owner led to Morris' embittered resignation. Morris returned to Mississippi to spend a few years as writer-in-residence in the English department at Ole Miss, but he inevitably abandoned the classroom to focus on writing.

King recalls dozens of riotous stories of Morris' reckless spending, hopeless love affairs, and drinking binges; however, King is also careful to depict Morris' capacity for sentimentality, kindness, compassion, and exceptional skill for telling tales. Furthermore, Morris' caring and generosity of spirit led him to encourage and advise emerging writers, including Gay Talese, John Grisham, Larry Brown, and others.

Morris' personal correspondence and excerpts from his autobiographical writings, such as *North to Home*, *My Dog Skip*, *My Mississippi*, and *Taps* add further detail. Larry L. King's personal perspectives offer a frank, behind-the-scenes glimpse into Willie Morris' life. Often, there are instances of chronological shuffling of events, as King recalls past memories and then alludes to future, but they are all skillfully woven into the biography. *In Search of Willie Morris* is recommended for public libraries, academic libraries, and for general readers.

Melanie Thomas
Electronic Resources Librarian
Mississippi State University, Meridian Campus



Taulbert, Clifton L. *Eight Habits of the Heart for Educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2006. 129 pp. \$51.95 (paperback).

Mississippi writer Clifton L. Taulbert is the author of the award-winning *Once Upon a Time When We Were Colored* and the Pulitzer-nominated *The Last Train North*. In his latest book, Taulbert departs from his semi-autobiographical novels. Though he refers to the values he learned in childhood from his "front porch people," Taulbert's intent in this book is to provide an inspirational resource for educators. Taulbert believes that building community is the "heartbeat of education." He explains eight habits or values that create a nurturing community where children can reach their potential.

The writing style of this short guide is reader-friendly. The author's informative writing is eloquent but concisely expressed. He grabs our heart with his stories about the adults of his childhood who instinctively knew how to practice the eight habits, and he challenges our character as he calls us to action. The author offers practical, intentional strategies and applications to implement the eight habits in the classroom. He asks educators to reflect by answering insightful questions. The writing format also supports the reader-friendly style. The intentional strategies and questions are enclosed and bulleted in boxes to distinguish them from the rest of the text.

Eight Habits of the Heart for Educators is not telling educators anything new, but Clifton Taulbert's sincerity and descriptive examples shine through his writing to ignite educators for their enormous responsibility. This book is highly recommended for special libraries with an educational focus. School and college libraries should purchase as needed.

Diane Elliott
Cleveland High School Librarian
Cleveland, MS ■

MLA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 24, 2007
8:00 a.m.

Vicksburg Convention Center
Vicksburg, MS

A quorum was present and the meeting was called to order by President Catherine Nathan at 8:00 a.m. after which time roll was called by Otha Keys, MLA secretary. The following individuals were in attendance:

Catherine Nathan, *President*

Jeff Slagell, *Vice President/President-elect*

Susan Cassagne, *Past President*

Marsha Case, *Public Library Section Chair and Awards Committee Chair*

Jacqueline Quinn, *Black Caucus Roundtable*

Margaret Bell, *Black Caucus Roundtable*

Randy Sherard, *Trustee Section Chair*

Diane Willard, *School Section Chair*

Marybeth Grimes, *ACRL Vice-Chair*

Sharman B. Smith, *Mississippi Library Commission*

Sherry Laughlin, *ALA Councilor*

Carol Green, *Treasurer*

Molly McManus, *Parliamentarian*

Otha Keys, *Secretary*

Minutes from the last meeting were read with corrections noted. A motion was entertained by Susan Cassagne and seconded by Marsha Case to approve minutes from the meeting on August 23, 2007. The motion carried unanimously and permission was given to have Molly McManus post them on the MLA Web site as well as in *Mississippi Libraries*.

Carol Green reported on the finances, which included expenditures and expenses from September to the present. However, Green explained these figures would change as a result of the convention. Green reported an income of \$53,443.91 with expenses to date of \$38,628.54 leaving a net income of \$14,815.37. A motion was made by Cassagne to accept the report and it was seconded by Case. The treasurer's report was approved.

Susan Cassagne – No report.

Jeff Slagell gave a conference report and update. He reported that we have fewer booths than last year with about thirty-seven, but he hopes that the \$7,000.00 in sponsorships will make up for this. He also reported that we have eight new exhibitors this year. The conference numbers are changing minute by minute, but as of this meeting we had 450 attendees registered, which is up from last year. We have a total membership of 561, which is up from last year, as well.

Catherine Nathan presented the president's report. She stated that Prima Plauche, former MLA president, would be in attendance at the conference, but due to her family situation she would not be able to devote the time needed to her membership committee duties. Therefore, Nathan asked Victoria Penny to take over these duties. It was also reported that Nathan hadn't had the opportunity to discuss with SELA an upcoming joint conference in 2008. Nathan said she would contact Dr. Gordon Baker (her SELA contact) about the possibility of co-hosting the conference in 2009 or 2011.

Diane Willard, the school section chair, reported that several school librarians brought up the idea of a school section roundtable to help address various issues faced by school librarians. However, after much discussion, it was determined that all of their concerns, issues, program ideas, etc., could be done within the section.

Margaret Bell petitioned the board on behalf of the Black Caucus Roundtable. Her request concerned how money is allocated to the Black Caucus Scholarship Fund. The members of the roundtable would like to see it endowed like the Peggy May Scholarship with a specific account created for the fund. Slagell stated it was more of an accounting issue and that he supported the request wholeheartedly. He believed it would be a good starting point with the funds from the previous night's scholarship bash bringing in \$750.00 for each scholarship. A motion

was made by Cassagne and seconded by Slagell to accept the petition for endowment. The motion carried unanimously.

Sharman Smith from the Mississippi Library Commission reported that as of last week (October 15-19, 2007) Congress was passing the bill to fund LSTA and IMLS, which the president was expected to veto. Congress was to confer because the House allocation was less than the Senate. Nathan took the opportunity to thank Smith and her organization on behalf of all of us for providing MLA the opportunity to apply for and use LSTA funds to help defray speakers' fees, thus allowing MLA to put on the best conference possible.

Sherry Laughlin, ALA councilor, reported she would be attending the 2008 ALA Midwinter Meeting and would have information for us shortly thereafter.

Marybeth Grimes of ACRL had no report at this time.

Randy Sherard had no report at this time.

Marsha Case reported that Robert St. John will speak at their breakfast and that they received a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council to help defray his speaker's fee. She also reported that the awards luncheon on Friday was all set and all awards would be a surprise to the winners.

Ben Petersen was not in attendance but Nathan gave a report on his behalf for the archives committee. She reported the committee would be meeting with representatives from University of Southern Mississippi to explore the possibility of transferring MLA's archival materials to the university.

A motion was made by Case and seconded by Cassagne to adjourn with the next meeting to be held in December.

Respectfully Submitted,
Otha Keys, Secretary ■

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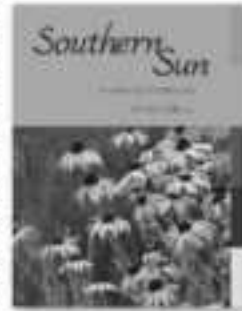


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