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Arkansas Libraries

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FROM THE ARLA PRESIDENT: Charting New Waters

Crystal Gates

2020 ArLA President

My journey to libraries began many years ago as a young girl in the rural hills of north Louisiana.

It was during these formative years that I began to understand what would later become my mantra: libraries are more than just books. Libraries are the access gateways to the wonders of technology, services, skills, knowledge, and things! They bridge the gap for families and individuals who are unable to access those resources otherwise. For me, money was the issue. My family couldn't afford to rent *The Hugga Bunch* every week for me to watch. But, you see, my parents were avid library visitors and users. They would take me and my sisters to get books and attend programs, and we would visit on a regular basis to borrow movies. This was their way of providing our family with the ability to see the same movies that other families were renting from the local movie rental stores. They could check it out for free at our local library, and I could watch it as many times as I desired. Once I was in college, the library was the place to go for quiet time, study time, and times for reflection. Again, the library changed in my mind to meet the need I had at that season of life. Once I was a parent, the library became my early childhood literacy resource. You can't get better!

And then. The magic happened. My mentor convinced me, after three years mind you, that



Gates



working at a library was going to be MY thing. Yet again, libraries and their definition evolved for me. They became a place for me to make a difference. A place where I could change the world one person, one book, one movie, one thing, one resource, one service at a time. It is here that I found MY Place. A place to continue to learn, learn from my past, but most of all, a place that I could chart new waters. I could envision how libraries could impact the lives in our communities. We could chart a new course for our institutions.

Imagine. We have seed libraries. We have military libraries. We have law libraries. We have toy libraries. Now imagine. There's a library for everyone. It meets whatever need for information or resource you have.

I want us to chart a course that looks at the people around us, analyzes the gaps that exist in society today, and find a new path to providing the very resources that will bridge those gaps. That's what we are. We are providers of the very resources that society needs in that moment. And we continue to chart new waters and find ways to evolve to continue meeting our original mission: to provide access to materials and services otherwise out of reach to some so that everyone stays on the same page, or at least in the same book, or hey, how about let's at least stay in the same library.

Crystal Gates is executive director of the William F. Laman Public Library in North Little Rock.

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FROM THE EDITOR: Changes

by *Britt Anne Murphy*

Library Director, Hendrix College

As someone who has been in libraries over 25 years, and been a manager for almost a decade, I've noticed something about libraries and change. Sometimes it's necessary to make somewhat drastic changes to keep traditional practices in place. While that sounds contradictory, I have the perfect example in front of you. We, more than anyone else, know how the world of publications have gone completely digital over the last few decades. You might be wondering why in the world this little publication remains stubbornly available in print? Library workers, more than anyone else, observe the habits of those who consume publications, and it's been my experience that people in my generation or older generally won't click through a link to read, say, *Arkansas Libraries*. But if presented with said title in print, they would begin the flip and pause method of perusal. I've noticed that Hendrix students, who fall between the ages of 18-22 years, also prefer to print out articles rather than screen-read them.

I know I'll probably hear from all the people in the state who do read publications exclusively online and love it! For the rest of us, and for those institutions that would prefer bound copies for preservation, we still offer print. You see, it's harder to ignore a print copy that arrives on the desk of a member of congress, a governor, or a mayor. Academic administrators tend to ignore most emails I send them, but given a print copy of our journal, they might just lean back in their chair and flip and pause. Part of our mission as a publication is to allow library professionals and paraprofessionals in Arkansas a place to get the word out about the amazing happenings in their libraries. We do this for each other, yes, but we also do this for the stakeholders of our libraries – for those who pay our salaries, and for those who pay taxes. We have an obligation to make an attractive publication with substantive content if we are to make the case for libraries, and not just be dismissed with a delete click.

The drawback to print is the cost – printing



Murphy

and mailing the journal costs a shocking amount of money, at times up to \$2,000 per issue. The irony is that we need a certain number of members to receive a print copy because if we drop below a predetermined threshold, the numbers skyrocket. As we all know, ArLA is trying to be as frugal as possible while we right the financial ship. Therefore, we suggested changes that will allow some things to remain the same. Beginning in 2020 we will go from three issues down to two. We'll combine Spring and Summer with an expected publishing date of early June. We'll keep our Fall/Winter combined issue the same, but push the publication date back to early December. To keep you informed about conference, we'll publish an online only conference issue that will come out about 4-6 weeks before conference. More information about changes to our editorial board will also be forthcoming in the next issue. For now, enjoy a look back at our fall conference, read up on fun strategies that academic librarians are using to educate students, and hear from our State Library on issues of intellectual freedom. And if change doesn't sit well with you, feel free to commiserate with your editor at murphyb@hendrix.edu.

Britt Anne Murphy, the managing editor of Arkansas Libraries, is the director of the Olin C. Bailey Library at Hendrix College.



Scholarship Chair Carol Coffey (right) awards the ArLA Scholarship to Alan Robinette. For more details, please see page 13.

ALA COUNCILOR'S REPORT

ALA's Plan for Reorganization

by *Lacy S. Wolfe*, ArLA's American Library Association Councilor

Forward Together: Are the SCOE recommendations the best for chapters?

In October, the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) released recommendations for the reorganization of the American Library Association (ALA). SCOE began work in 2018, and, with feedback from member surveys and interviews, prepared a model that strives to better align a future ALA with what members want most in their professional association. The new governance model will be presented at the ALA Midwinter conference in January 2020.

The goal of the proposed model is to facilitate more member engagement. In order to realize this goal, the ALA Council will be replaced with leadership assemblies.

Of particular relevance to ArLA members is the Chapter Leadership Assembly. Rather than ArLA having a seat on a 187-member Council that passes policy and procedures for ALA, we would have representation on this assembly. According to the recommendations, "members of the leadership assemblies will share information, influence priority setting, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors" (which will replace the Executive Committee). Rather than having a direct say in the passage of policy, Chapters can influence and make recommendations.

What this scenario also does is remove the Arkansas Chapter Councilor from the conversations that are being held by Division and Round Tables. Currently, the Chapter Councilors work side-by-side with the Division and Round Table Councilors on the Council. The breakup of the Council into leadership assemblies will effectively silo the Councilors into their respective groups.

While I applaud SCOE for their work and feel cautiously optimistic about the proposed changes, I feel that replacing a larger council with smaller groups of decision makers is contrary to the goals of the recommendations. I'm curious how more



Wolfe

members will feel they have a voice, when fewer members in decision making roles are passing policy and procedural changes. In the scenario provided on page 24 of the recommendations, a situation is presented that shows the process a round table member would need to take in order to raise an issue. In the current process, the issue goes through Council, the 187 governance body of ALA. In the new scenario, which is anticipated to be quicker, 36 members make the decision (21 members of the Round Table Leadership Assembly, 15 members of the Public Policy & Advocacy Committee). While the process might be quicker, fewer ALA members have input in the final decision, which gives me pause.

SCOE proposes moving work virtually to lower the barrier of attending conferences, which is a positive movement; however, ALA Connect is proposed as the repository and meeting space. ALA Connect has yet to be utilized to the best of its abilities. In ALA committees that I've served on with a working space on Connect, much of the work remains on email/listserv communications. A very conscious effort will be required in order to move the full conversation to Connect.

A number of changes to the Division and Round Table structure would standardize fees and eliminate redundancies throughout the organization. This positive move would enable members to more easily see where they would like to get involved. The emphasis on groups working together would further streamline the duplication of efforts across ALA. Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA), Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS), and Library Information Technology Association (LITA) are currently working through the process of joining forces to become CORE: Leadership, Infrastructure, Futures. This is the type of collaboration that is encouraged in the new model.

I look forward to further conversations at the upcoming ALA Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia. I would love to hear from ArLA members on the SCOE recommendations. What excites you about the proposed changes? What concerns you? As always, feel free to contact me at wolfel@hsu.edu.

Lacy Wolfe is the information literacy and reference services librarian at Henderson State University in Arkadelphia.

Virtual Recruiting and Engagement: *An ALA Emerging Leader Project*

by Philip C. Shackelford

2019 Emerging Leader

Earlier this year I had the incredible opportunity and honor to participate in the American Library Association (ALA) Emerging Leaders Program, which invites early career librarians to attend special leadership sessions during the ALA Midwinter and ALA Annual conferences, as well as work together with a team on a unique project that is assigned by one of ALA's various divisions. The Arkansas Library Association (ArLA) sponsors one Arkansas librarian per year to participate in this program, and I am very grateful to Rebecka Virden and the rest of the Emerging Leaders committee for awarding me this valuable opportunity. Participating in the ALA Emerging Leaders program provided not only the opportunity to work on a specific and important project, but also brought our class into contact with information about ALA and related opportunities and ALA leadership as well. I am honored by the opportunity and thankful to ArLA for the generous sponsorship. This is an incredible opportunity, and I highly recommend other Arkansas librarians to apply.

The following is an overview of our team project, which we completed at the request of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Instruction Section.

ACRL is the higher education association for academic libraries and library workers. Representing more than ten thousand individuals and libraries, ACRL develops programs, products, and services to help those working in college and research libraries learn, innovate, and lead within the academic community. Founded in 1940, ACRL is the largest division of ALA, and currently has a membership of more than ten thousand, which accounts for nearly 20% of the total ALA membership ("About ACRL," www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl).

The Instruction Section of ACRL (IS) enhances the ability of academic and research librarians to advance learning, teaching, and research with respect to information literacy in higher education. The section was founded as the Bibliographic Instruction Section in 1977 and renamed the Instruction Section in 1995. Beginning with ALA Annual 2018 in New Orleans, IS no longer holds in-person events at the ALA Annual Conference. This change does have some consequences, including losing the ability

to engage with and recruit recent library school graduates at in-person orientation events at ALA conferences. Membership is IS's greatest strength, and IS wanted to find a way to continue attracting new members in their new virtual reality ("Who We Are," acrl.ala.org/IS/about-is-2/whoweare).

We were "TEAM C," and our team makeup included two librarians from four-year universities and two from community colleges, all academic librarians. Specifically, our team included Sabrina Dyck, Ted Quiballo, Karna Younger, and myself. Our charge was to create an early member outreach and engagement toolkit to promote IS resources and to engage and recruit current or prospective library students. Specifically, IS wanted us to address these questions:

- What are the barriers to engaging prospective new members now that the Section has gone entirely virtual?
- What are the best strategies to recruit and engage current or prospective LIS students, when IS no longer offers in person orientation events and programs at ALA?
- What are new and recent library school graduates looking for in a professional membership like the Instruction Section?
- Is the Instruction Section providing the content and experiences that recent graduates want and need? If not, what changes can the Section make to appeal to current library school students and recent graduates?

We took a multi-phase approach to researching ACRL IS's outreach and engagement with graduate students and early career librarians, collectively referred to as early members throughout this report. First, we initiated a planning phase. Beginning with the ALAEL Midwinter Meeting, this planning involved reviewing the project description and charge provided by sponsor Susanna Eng-Ziskin, determining questions to discuss with her later on, and discussing team roles for the project. After midwinter, the team virtually met with Eng-Ziskin. During the meeting, she clarified the project goals, particularly explaining that the team would not be expected to produce a formal "toolkit" or implementation plan but a number of recommendations for IS.

The next phase was our information gathering phase, centered on the following questions: What

do early members want? And how do we know they want that? We began with an environmental scan. To frame our research, we utilized the Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, and Threats (SPOT) analysis methodology. First, based on Eng-Ziskin's suggestion, we evaluated how ALA student chapters were engaging students to determine if there were any activities that ACRL IS could support and to understand the programming needs of these early career librarians. We considered what programming was occurring at the local level and if there were any opportunities for IS to support or partner with local student chapters. We divided the student chapters into regions and analyzed how student chapters utilized social media to communicate and what types of programming or specific events they held to support students' professional development, career services, and service opportunities, collecting and comparing our findings in a spreadsheet.

Next, we continued with our external scan and researched what other ACRL sections or committees are doing for early member outreach. We evaluated their websites and emailed select chairs about successful early member engagement techniques used by their unit.


Finally, we conducted an internal scan. To evaluate IS, we started with a review of the IS website, 2018 section annual report, the 2018 ALAEL report and recommendations for the section's transition to going virtual, the IS Building Virtual Community Task Force 2018 Annual Report, and the 2018 ACRL Instruction Section Education Needs and Interest Survey Report. We noted the ways the section had adapted to its virtual format, including webinars offered and social media use, as well as opportunities for face-to-face contact with membership, such as the awards ceremony at ACRL's conference.

Our understanding of IS was greatly informed by the Information Gathering and Exchange Committee's "2018 ACRL Instruction Section Education Needs and Interest Survey Report" and information provided by the chair of the IS Membership Committee, including a brief interview with its chair and access to its add/drop and membership reports.


We also disseminated an early member survey to student members of IS using a list provided by the Section. The survey was sent to approximately 229 members and approximately

ACRL-Instruction Section: Early Member Outreach and Engagement Toolkit




Emerging Leaders 2019 Team C Members




(Left to Right): Philip Shackelford, Library Director, Arkansas Community College, Ted Quiballo, Instructional Technologies Librarian, Northwestern University, Karna Younger, Open Pedagogy Librarian, University of Kansas, and Sabrina Dyck, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Lawson State Community College




Multi-stage approach to researching ACRL IS's outreach and engagement with graduate students and early career librarians.









Recommendations for early member outreach fit four major categories: the communication and activities of IS Advisory Committee, the IS website, providing direct early member engagement and service, assessing efforts.




IS Advisory should meet regularly to align IS committee activities and outreach to the benefit of early members as well as all members.



Targeted communication for early members to ensure effective communication between potential and current early members and IS through informal and formal communication channels. Includes updating website and creating new members webpage.



Form task force to provide direct and localized early member engagement and service opportunities in order for IS to stay current with early member trends and needs and provide greater opportunity for early Member involvement in IS and professional development.



Using Information Gathering and Exchange's annual survey, assess ongoing outreach activities to determine if early member outreach and engagement programming has been successful.

Project Summary – Early Member Outreach and Engagement Toolkit

The Instruction Section (IS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) enhances the ability of academic and research librarians to advance learning, teaching, and research with respect to information literacy in higher education.


The Instruction Section would like to charge a team of Emerging Leaders to promote IS resources and engage and recruit current or prospective library school students. Our membership is the Instruction Section's greatest strength, and we must find a way to continue attracting new members in our new virtual reality.

Align the work of the Emerging Leaders with our Membership Committee and our Building Virtual Community Task Force. We would incorporate the recommendations in order to better communicate with and reach out to our potential new members.

Susanna Eng-Ziskin - Vice Chair of the Instruction Section Proposal Submitter and Member Guide
Megan Griffin - ACRL Instruction Section (ACRL-IS) Staff Liaison


Key Findings

67.8%




Student members joined while still in their LIS program

81.48%




Student members joined for professional development reasons

75%




Did not participate in ANY professional development opportunities through IS in the past year

65.52%



Did not participate in section webinars offered in the past year

33.23%



Improvement in IS student membership from 2017

Conclusion:

While we offer many recommendations here, we believe that understanding the needs of early members will be an ongoing, ever-changing problem. Forming an early career task force to solidify ties with local ALA Student Chapters will help to strengthen ties between IS and early members at a crucial point when graduate students are entering the profession.

Team C poster:

31 individuals responded. Given the low response rate we understood that the results are not entirely representative of the student experience but could be at least indicative of some early member opinions and experiences.

Some key findings that came out of this survey included these highlights:

- 68% of student members joined while still in their LIS program
- 81% joined for professional development reasons
- 75% did not participate in ANY professional development opportunities though IS in the past year
- 66% did not participate in section webinars offered in the past year
- 33% improvement has occurred in IS student membership since 2017

This survey also provided student members an opportunity to offer narrative comments. A few examples are provided below.

- What would you most like to gain from participation in Instruction Section?
 - “More structure with how to get involved.”
 - “I would really like to be more involved – I’m just not sure how ... I joined ACRL in the hopes that I can fill the gaps I have found in my university’s programming, but it hasn’t been easy to figure out how to get involved.”
- What additional comments do you have about your experience with Instruction Section?
 - “The welcome email was great, but there is limited follow-up to it. ALA and its divisions and sections are big, which at times can make you feel that your participation is undervalued or even how best to contribute.”
 - “Needs to be easier for students to get involved. There’s either too much information to wade through or it’s inaccurate (the outdated website).”

Additionally, we compared the results of our student member survey to Information Gathering and Exchange’s “2018 ACRL Instruction Section Education Needs and Interest Survey Report.”

We found some commonalities that indicate the needs of early career members are not wholly unique from the rest of the membership or that IS is already capturing data that reflects the needs of early members. Information Gathering and Exchange recommend that “IS should engage in a focused promotion of IS publication and resources” because of a found lack of awareness of IS resources; that most members rely upon the IS listserv to communicate but a growing number are using social media; and that IS should partner with local library

organizations to meet member preferences for face-to-face professional development opportunities.

We recommended that the IS Advisory Committee take a stronger leadership role in the new virtual model, based on our conversations with our project sponsor and the chair of IS Membership, review of IS materials, such as the “2018 ACRL Instruction Section Educational Needs and Interest Survey Report” (2018 Needs Report), as well as our survey of early members. While the Executive Committee and its liaisons conduct much of this work now, we believe regular virtual meetings between the chairs and vice-chairs who belong to Advisory would better foster and expedite collaboration and communication between different committees to the benefit of early and all members. For instance, we understand from our early member survey and the 2018 Needs Report that members of all career stages wish to have more discussions around advanced teaching techniques but that some early career members suffer from the misperception that IS webinars and other professional development opportunities come with a cost. Various committees, such as Teaching Methods, host such webinars and IS Membership has also been charged with an online member orientation and online member engagement in the form of office hours. Through Advisory, the chairs and vice-chairs could coordinate and partner in organizing and advertising such outreach activities.

Based on our findings that many early career members learn about the section through its website and our own evaluation of the website and Information Gathering and Exchange’s observation that early members are concerned about the “use of



Team C group.

advanced jargon and the perception of exclusivity or ‘cliquishness in IS committees,’” we recommend some changes to IS communication practices. First, the Communication Committee could create a new member webpage in addition to some minor changes. Three of the four project team members are not involved with IS which provided us with the advantage of viewing the website as potential new members. We determined that the IS website is largely designed for current, not prospective, members. Creating a more inclusive space for prospective members should help combat against the perceived “cliquishness.” Likewise, IS could be more mindful of its language when formally and informally communicating. The IS Diversity and Inclusion Task Force would be a useful entity for providing recommended inclusive communication practices or to collaborate with and approve of the work of involved committees.

Outreach activities should be assessed to determine if early member outreach and engagement programming has been successful, i.e. if IS has attracted more and diverse members, if new membership includes marginalized peoples, and if they continuously kept abreast of and determined the evolving needs of early members. Assessing outreach and engagement practices for early members will assure that IS is fulfilling its goal of engaging early members in an efficient and effective manner.

Finally, we thought that the Section should provide direct and localized early member engagement and service opportunities in order to stay current with early member trends and needs and provide greater opportunity for early member involvement in IS and professional development. The project team determined that staying current with early members would be a problem that would recur and persist beyond our tenure, but that the ground may be fertile for early and student member involvement in IS. First, feedback from our early member survey indicated that early members want to become involved and serve in IS and greatly desire more professional development activities, but seem frustrated by the lack of opportunity to gain this through IS.

Meanwhile, the Information and Gathering Exchange Committee has found members prefer face-to-face professional development activities and recommended that IS partner with local organizations to provide such opportunities for members. Our review of Student ALA Chapters revealed lively local activities, including professional development activities, at various library schools.

These thriving local activities may provide IS fertile ground to partner with local organizations to promote IS and support the development of early career librarians. However, relationships between IS and these student chapters must be established and cultivated. We propose that the best way to establish these roots is by inviting student members to make those connections. The student members best know the culture, activities, and points of contact for these student associations, and would greatly benefit professionally from serving on an IS committee or task force. Below we detail some of the charges this committee or task force could tackle. While this group could partner for many local activities, they also could undertake virtual programming and outreach methods to maximize their efforts. For instance, understanding from our survey that many early members learn of IS from a colleague or professor and seek information from the IS website, the listserv, and social media, the task force could utilize these channels to communicate in addition to publications favored by early career librarians, such as *Hack Library School* or *I Need a Library Job*.

Overall, through external and internal evaluations of IS, our team determined that the Section already has many of the ingredients necessary for feeding the professional needs and interests of early members. Targeted communication appears to be the secret to ensuring early members fully understand how Instruction Section can be beneficial to their professional needs, development, and networks. Finally, understanding the needs of early members will be an ongoing, ever-changing and strategic priority. Forming an early member task force to solidify ties with local ALA Student Chapters will strengthen ties between IS and early members at the crucial point when graduate students are entering the profession, and together these things can help make IS a more impactful and compelling part of ACRL.

Again, thank you very much to Rebecka Virden, the Emerging Leaders Committee, and ArLA. I am honored by your faith in me and by your commitment to investing in Arkansas’ early career librarians. Our team was fantastic to work with and we are certainly interested in seeing how our project is used or developed by the Instruction Section in the months and years to come!

Philip Shackelford directs the library at South Arkansas Community College and is 2020 president-elect of ArLA. To receive a copy of the entire project report with appendices, email pshackelford@southark.edu.

'Looking Back' at the ArLA Annual Conference

2019 ArLA Conference Report

by Crystal Gates and Carol Coffey

ArLA's annual conference was held September 27-29 in Hot Springs with the theme "Looking Back, Moving Forward." We were delighted to have the Southeastern Library Association (SELA) join us to host the 2019 ArLA/SELA Joint Conference. Due to that partnership, we enjoyed access to new ideas, sessions, and networking opportunities to enrich Arkansas libraries.

Preconferences

ArLA hosted two preconferences on Friday, September 27. "Privacy in Libraries," led by **Bryan Neil Jones**, systems librarian for Nashville Public Library, and a member of the Library Freedom Project, provided training on the ethical, legal, and technical issues of privacy in libraries. Attendees learned about surveillance threats, privacy rights and responsibilities, and digital tools to provide better privacy for libraries and the communities they serve. "Drama, Drama, Drama," led by **Fredonna Walker**, training specialist for the William F. Laman Public Library System in North Little Rock, provided insight into using Ernest Bormann's Symbolic Convergence Theory to help overcome negative messaging and turn every-day events and conversations into positive outcomes in employee engagement and workplace culture. In the interactive workshop, attendees participated in discussion, colored, and learned how to turn drama and dramatizing messages into the most valuable tool in their professional toolbox.

Keynote Speaker

ALA President **Wanda Brown**, director of library services at the C.G. O'Kelly Library at Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, delivered the keynote. Brown's



Wanda Brown.



message, "Taking the Lead," focused on sharing her experiences as a developing librarian and ideas and methods for leading where you are. Brown began by talking about her life story and how she grew in the profession. She presented a direct, no-nonsense approach to encourage attendees to look inside ourselves to find the real reason our careers may not be progressing as we would like rather than blaming those around us. She ended with a challenge for attendees to find "their ALA" and meet with her after the luncheon to share their story about how they interact with ALA.

Special Guest

Thanks to a partnership with the Central Arkansas Library System and support by the Arkansas State Library, ArLA conference attendees had the opportunity to participate in a live-stream author event with New York Times bestselling author **Susan Orlean**. Orlean's engaging talk focused on her latest work, *The Library Book*, an exploration of the history, power, and future of libraries. She detailed her quest to solve the notorious cold case of the 1986 Los Angeles Public Library fire. With lively descriptions of her process, to details not included in the book, Orlean captured the hearts and minds of attendees.

Session Highlights

The session, "Don't Judge a 'Book' by its Cover," included librarians and library staff from the University of Central Arkansas who discussed their experience holding a Human Library event. Pertinent details included successes such as recruiting "books" from on and off campus to things they wish they had done differently such as having a "book" liaison to help recognize burnout and provide care and protection for those participants in high demand.

Customer service is key, and what you say is not necessarily what your patron hears. **Phillip Carter**, director of the Lamar County Library System in Mississippi, in his session, “How Can I Help You? and Other Ways You’re Losing Patrons,” highlighted the four Ps: Promptness, Politeness, Professionalism, and Personalization. This energetic and engaging session expanded the typical greeting given to arriving patrons into eye contact, body language, and alternative phrasing to bring your customer service to the next level.

In “Lessons from Retail: Customer Service Assessment in Libraries,” Library Director **JB Hill** from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock discussed the use of secret shoppers. Secret shoppers have been utilized in the retail industry since the 1940s to assess customer service. In the 1970s both academic and public libraries began using secret shoppers to judge their customer service skills in their communities. Hill presented techniques and considerations when conducting secret shopper assessments in libraries, including his library’s experience preparing their shoppers, the scenarios they created, and their service-judging rubric, as well as the difficulties of collecting data in this manner.

You never know when an opportunity will present itself for you to talk up and about your library. In “How to Do an Elevator Speech,” **Tammie Evans** from the Springdale Public Library

shared tips and tricks to make your elevator speech smooth and polished. Evans covered the dos and don’ts of developing an elevator speech, focusing on the words to avoid (mission) and how to move it from a monologue to a discussion. In this interactive session, attendees practiced the methods with each other, which helped them focus their own talks by hearing others and practicing their own.

Performers’ Showcase

Back by popular demand, the Performers’ Showcase highlighted performers from around the state who would love to come to your library to share their talents. Please consider supporting these performers by booking them for future events. The presenters and their contact information are listed below. In the event you book one, or even talk details and dates with one, be sure to share that you appreciate their support of the ArLA conference. And, guess what? Many out-of-state performers can be scheduled with the standard discount available through the Arkansas Artist Registry.

Kindersongs, inc.

Brian and Terri Kinder

PO Box 165051

Little Rock, AR 72216

kinder@kindersongs.com

501-231-6802



Performers’ Showcase.



ArLA President Jil’Lana Heard.

Fish Magic

Steve Craig & Amy Short

fun@fishmagic.com

417-725-5800

Magic Mr. Nick or Wacky Science

MagicOfNicholas@hotmail.com

Booking 901-358-7258 (Kelly McDaniel)

Institute of Juggology

booking@juggology.com

479-966-9386

Animalogy

Robert Tarter (NHECM)

2464 Sowell Mill Pike

Columbia, TN 38401

www.animalogy.org

(800-788-0458)

Jacob Flores

Jacob.flores@jacobfloresmusic.com

General Membership Meeting

Jil'ana Heard, 2019 ArLA president, together with other members of the Executive Committee, led a discussion of the proposed restructuring of ArLA's governance, including the Executive Board. The proposed changes were designed based on feedback received through the Strategic Planning Committee's work and on other states facing similar



Interior view of ArLA conference at Embassy Suites.

organizational changes.

The 2019 election results were announced.

Philip Shackelford will be the 2020 President-Elect.

The results of the elections held at conference for various divisions and round tables are listed below:

- **ArASL** – Rachel Shankles, Chair; Quanta Wyatt, Chair-Elect
- **ALPS** – Becky Fischer, Chair; Stewart Fuell, Chair-Elect
- **Colleges & Universities** – Kristen Cooke, Chair; Brent Etzel, Chair-Elect; Tamela Smith, Secretary
- **Public Libraries and Trustees** – Carol Coffey, Chair; Joe Hudak, Chair-Elect
- **Reference and Instruction Services** – Allie Stevens, Chair; Janice Weddle, Vice-Chair; Shawna Thorpe, Secretary
- **Resources and Technical Services** – Autumn Mortenson, Chair; Allie Stevens, Chair-Elect; Janice Weddle, Secretary
- **Two Year Colleges** – Ron Russ, Chair
- **Youth Services** – Ruth Hyatt, Chair
- **Awards** – Mindy Farley, Chair

As part of his president-elect duties, Philip Shackelford will serve as the 2020 conference chair. At an earlier meeting, the Executive Board approved Ft. Smith for the 2020 conference location. Conference dates are October 16-18, 2020.



2019 ArLA President Lil'Lana Heard (left) passes the presidential gavel to 2020 ArLA President Crystal Gates.

Divisions, round tables, and committees made reports. An estimated 271 registered for conference, and 33 registered for pre-conferences. With expenses kept to a minimum, **Crystal Gates**, 2019 Conference Chair, expects ArLA to see a significant profit from the conference. Jil'Lana Heard presented the president's gavel to Crystal Gates, 2020 ArLA President, who then adjourned the meeting.

Attendees Contribute over \$2,600 in Fundraisers

The basket game was strong at the 2019 ArLA Conference. Creativity abounded in themes that highlighted fall, cats, chocolate, and even books such as *Where the Crawdads Sing*. Attendees donated 42 themed baskets that netted \$2,041 at silent auction to benefit the Scholarship account and LEAF. Several donors gave more than one basket and the last-minute bidding wars over especially popular baskets were fierce.

The 2nd annual Trivia Night was again a popular draw for conference attendees. The teams gathered at Core Public House in Hot Springs to test their trivia chops and enjoy good food and drink. **Amber Wilson** from UCA's Torreyson Library once again put the teams through their trivia paces and a great time was had by all. Between entry fees and the (large) number of donations to buy hints and request the playing of specific songs, \$594 was raised to support ArLA's causes. Plans are already being made for the 3rd annual Trivia Night event.

2019 Scholarship Recipient Announced

Each year the Arkansas Library Association has the pleasure of awarding a scholarship for graduate studies in librarianship. The 2019 scholarship recipient is Alan Robinette. Alan has over 30 years of experience in service-related fields, having managed a music store, served as district manager for a large

bookstore chain, and worked as regional circulation manager for a statewide newspaper. When it came time to move on to the next phase of his working life, Alan's lifelong love for libraries made a career as a librarian the obvious choice. While completing his undergraduate studies, Alan has worked in the library at National Park College in Hot Springs and is currently employed as Circulation Desk Coordinator at the Huie Library at Henderson State University. Alan will earn his MSLS degree from the University of North Texas in Denton.

Emerging Leader Recognized

Philip Shackelford, library director at South Arkansas Community College, was recognized as the 2019 Emerging Leader. The American Library Association (ALA) Emerging Leaders Program invites early career librarians to attend special leadership sessions during the ALA Midwinter and ALA Annual conferences, as well as work together with a team on a unique project that is assigned by one of ALA's various divisions. The Arkansas Library Association (ArLA) sponsors one Arkansas librarian per year to participate in this program. Philip's project was "Virtual Recruiting and Engagement," and he details his year as an Emerging Leader in this issue of *Arkansas Libraries*.

Crystal Gates is the executive director of Laman Library in North Little Rock and represents ArLA for the Southeast Library Association (SELA). She served as the ArLA president-elect and conference chair in 2019. Carol Coffey, patron experience and library analytics coordinator for the Central Arkansas Library System in Little Rock is the 2019 chair of scholarship committee and LEAF committee.



Trivia night!



Carolyn Ashcraft, basket winner.

2019 Awards Luncheon Recognizes Accomplishments of Arkansas Librarians

by Philip C. Shackelford

2019 ArLA Awards Chair

Each year the Arkansas Library Association recognizes the important work and accomplishments of Arkansas librarians through a variety of awards that are bestowed based on nominations from co-workers and colleagues. These awards are given during the Awards Ceremony that takes place at each annual conference. As you can see below, our fellow librarians across the State of Arkansas are doing wonderful things. We are privileged to have such talented and dedicated individuals working in our libraries to serve our communities and help our students, neighbors, colleagues, friends, cities, schools, and universities be the best that they can be.

The Awards Committee was blessed to have such a robust and illustrious slate of nominations to consider this year, and I would like to encourage everyone, always, to consider nominating your colleagues and co-workers to receive these awards. These awards are a way that we have, as an association and as a profession, to recognize the achievements, dedication and leadership that our colleagues bring to their jobs every single day. Libraries in Arkansas are alive and well, dynamic institutions, and that is due to the singular commitment and selflessness displayed by our Arkansas librarians. The following is a list of our 2019 award winners and a summary of the work that the awards are given to recognize.

Arkansiana Award

First awarded in 1979, the Arkansiana Award is given to the author of a book or other work which represents a significant contribution to Arkansas heritage and culture. This year's winner was Brooks Blevins, who received the award for the first volume of his series, *A*



Dean Covington (right) awards the Arkansiana Award to Brooks Blevins.

History of the Ozarks, published by the University of Illinois Press. Brooks Blevins is the Noel Boyd Professor of Ozark Studies at Missouri State University. He previously held positions at Lyon College as Assistant Professor of History and Director of Regional Studies. He has also taught at Ozarka College and Mississippi State University at Meridian. He received his Ph.D and M.A. in History from Auburn University after completing an undergraduate degree in History from Lyon College. He is the author of seven books and is considered to be the current leading scholar in Ozark Studies.

Arkansas Intellectual Freedom Award

Established in 1994, the Arkansas Intellectual Freedom Award is given to a person(s) or group(s) for notable contributions that have furthered the cause of intellectual freedom on behalf of a library in the State of Arkansas. This year's recipient is Shenise McGhee, Associate Librarian and Associate Professor at the University of Arkansas Pine Bluff John Brown Watson Memorial Library System. She has completed a Master of Science in Library Science and two graduate academic certificates in Advanced Management in Libraries and Information Agencies and Digital Content Management, a second Master of Science in Higher Education, and



Shenise L. McGee (right) accepts the Intellectual Freedom Award from LaQuita Dedmon.

is now completing courses towards a Doctorate in Higher Education with a specialization in Leadership and Management. Shenise actively serves and chairs on national committees such as the Legislation Representative for the American Library Association Association for Library Collections and Technical

Services-CMS Representatives, the ALA Intellectual Freedom committee, and the Arkansas Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Bessie D. Moore Trustee Award

Awarded annually to an individual trustee or board

of trustees that have made a significant contribution to the development of a library at the local, regional, or state level, this year's Bessie D. Moore Award was given to the Fayetteville Public Library Board of Trustees for their work preparing and managing the library's \$50 million expansion. The members of the Fayetteville Public Library Board have also made personal commitments themselves and are working with the Fayetteville Public Library Foundation on a \$23 million capital campaign for the remaining funds for this expansion. While the board is frugal with the increased millage funds allowed by taxpayers,



Fayetteville Public Library Director David Johnson (left) awards the Bessie D. Moore Trustee Award to board member Maylon Rice.

they are also prudent in asking those within our community to share their dollars with what will soon be a world-class library expansion. The board has shown a unity of purpose that is rare among public facility boards. They are dedicated to understanding the community's needs and the library's potential. Their service has created a legacy elevating and advancing the community.

Distinguished Service Award

The Arkansas Library Association Distinguished Service Award is awarded annually to recognize a librarian currently employed in a library for distinguished service or outstanding achievement in the profession. This year's recipient is Gwen Dobbs, Library Director at Northwest Arkansas Community College, in recognition of her work securing an understanding of Act 141 and its implications for Arkansas libraries. Act 141 covers digital product sales necessitating libraries to pay sales tax on online resources. Gwen successfully lobbied the Department of Finance and Administration to issue an opinion for her own library and identified and communicated the path for other Arkansas libraries to be issued institution-specific opinions about the Act's implementation.



NWACC librarian Shawna Thorup (right) accepts the Distinguished Service Award from Philip Shackelford on behalf of Gwen Dobbs.

Frances P. Neal Award

The Frances P. Neal Award is awarded annually to a recently retired librarian to recognize a career of notable service in librarianship or within the State of Arkansas, and this year's winner was Elizabeth



Mary Gilbertson (right) presents Elizabeth C. McKee with the Frances P. Neal Award.

Chadburn McKee, formerly of the University of Arkansas. She was instrumental in the transformation of the Arkansas Periodicals Index from card files to the database now available online as Index

Arkansas. Elizabeth and Andrea Cantrell received a grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council and produced a printed volume for 1981-1985 that was distributed to libraries around the state. Their work converting the index to a database was recognized by an American Library Association award in 1991. Coverage for the expanded online index included county history journals, state periodicals, and regionally focused articles up to the present time. Elizabeth's friendly and service-oriented nature while working in the University of Arkansas Libraries inspired several students to go on to gain their library science degrees. Elizabeth was a model librarian who loved reference work and faithfully served Arkansas libraries for years.

Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award

The Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award is awarded annually to recognize distinguished paraprofessional library services in Arkansas libraries, and this year's winner is Simone Kirk, Branch Manager of the Star City Public Library. Simone is past Chair of the Arkansas Library Paraprofessionals, a division of the Arkansas Library Association, and has served as a leader and active participant in the division for multiple years. Simone has demonstrated her dedication to library staff development through planning ALPS InfoBits free training sessions for 2018-2019 and earlier. Through her leadership and hard work, the ALPS InfoBits trainings have provided high-quality professional development and networking opportunities for library staff throughout the state. Simone is an enthusiastic, engaging, and thoughtful person who forms strong connections with any individuals or community organizations she works with. Due to these connections, she was able to provide ALPS InfoBits 2019 training free of charge. Simone goes above and beyond in her participation with ArLA – she presents frequently at ArLA conferences and has organized and facilitated many ALPS sessions. She is a strong advocate who shares her ideas and staff input in a thoughtful, respectful, and detailed way. Simone has created and helps sustain a sense of community in the ALPS division, as well as inspires new members to join the division.



Simone Kirk says a few words upon being awarded the Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award.

Rising Star Award

The Arkansas Library Association Rising Star Award is awarded annually to recognize a library worker who has worked in libraries less than five years and has provided exceptional service in their community. This year's winner is Sarah Beth Lesko, Youth Services Manager at the Saline County Library. Sarah Beth stands out for her dedication to



Sarah Beth Lesko (left) accepts the Rising Star Award from Jordan Reynolds.

being a voice for those who may not be able to speak out for themselves. Last year, representatives from the Cooper-Anthony Mercy Child Advocacy Center visited the library to

host mandatory reporter training. Touched by their mission, Sarah Beth went the extra mile to become a partner with CAMCAC to equip herself and her staff with the information and resources to help if a child was experiencing abuse. As a librarian, she recognizes the importance of literacy skills and reading as an escape from struggles children may be facing; books teach empathy and coping skills where they may have not been taught at home. Sarah Beth partnered with CAMCAC to start Library of Love, which seeks to provide all Child Advocacy Centers in Arkansas with little libraries full of books so that CAC patients can take a book for free. By the end of the year, Sarah Beth hopes to spread the word to all libraries in Arkansas about Library of Love.

Suzanne Spurrier Academic Librarian Award

Awarded annually, the Suzanne Spurrier Academic Librarian Award is given in memory of Suzanne Spurrier, former library director at Harding, to a currently employed academic librarian who exemplifies a spirit of outstanding service and dedicated professionalism to all library patrons, an attitude of devotion to the library profession



Jean Waldrop (left) accepts the Suzanne Spurrier Academic Librarian Award from Amy McGohan.

and fellow colleagues, and consistent activity in state, regional, and national associations. This year's winner is Jean Waldrop, Library Director at Brackett Library at Harding University. She has been working at Brackett Library since 2006, overseeing several areas of the library, including reference and electronic resources, before becoming director. Jean has served as secretary for ARKLink, was a board member for Amigos, and is currently serving on the White County Regional Library System Board as well as the Searcy Public Library Board. Jean has earned her Copyright Leadership certification and is the president-elect for Christian College Librarians. As the library director for the exact same library as the namesake of this award, Jean Waldrop exhibits so many of the same characteristics as Suzanne Spurrier. Jean is a compassionate and involved leader with a heart for libraries and Harding University. Under her directorship, she has made vast improvements towards the remodel of the library and personally visits each library employee's office every Monday to offer her support and guidance. Her hand of guidance has allowed the Brackett Library to flourish.

Arkansas Library Association President's Award

Established in 1993, the Arkansas Library Association President's Award is given at the discretion of the association president and awarded to someone who has provided extensive assistance to the president or to the association. The award was given to Lynn Valetutti by Arkansas Library Association President Jil' Lana Heard for her dedicated assistance in helping the organization transition to a self-management model. Lynn was instrumental in making sure the transition was



ArLA President Jil' Lana Heard (left) presents the President's Award to Lynn A. Valetutti.

smooth and the association would be set up to ensure future success. Lynn is the new library director at National Park College. Previously, she held the position of manager of digital services at the

Arkansas State Library. Prior to joining the Arkansas State Library in 2016, she worked at University of Arkansas in Monticello as the electronic resource and serials librarian for almost two years. Lynn also held the position of coordinator of instructional media at Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) from 2005-2010. Lynn is an active member of the Arkansas Library Association and has served as secretary/treasurer for over three years. In addition, she is a committee member on the American Library Association (ALA) Office of Information Technology Policy (OITP), which serves to address volatile issues that impact libraries.

Editor's Note: Some material for this article has been taken from the individual nominations sent to the Awards Committee recommending that these individuals and groups be recognized for their accomplishments.

Obituary: Larry Larson 1940-2019

Larry Larson died on Thursday, October 24, 2019. William Lawrence (Larry) Larson was born at Warner Brown Hospital in El Dorado, Arkansas in 1940, to Myrtle Elizabeth McMaster Larson and Willie Lee Larson. He lived in Norphlet, Arkansas with his family and one brother, Hugh Max Larson (wife Betty).

He attended school in Norphlet where he graduated in 1958. Larry spent more than 45 years in libraries across Arkansas, beginning with his position as



Larson

library aid in high school. He attended Ouachita Baptist University and worked in the library earning 50 cents per hour toward paying tuition. He received his BSE degree in 1962. During that summer he served as a library intern at the Harrison Regional Library on the bookmobile and would deliver books to rural areas. It was after this summer that he determined his life ministry would be to serve people by working in libraries. It gave him great joy to help others learn by reading and understanding how to use information to better themselves that was offered free through a public library.

Larry worked on his MS in Library Science at Peabody University in Nashville, Tennessee, during the summers between 1964-67. His first real job was teaching speed-reading and audiovisual classes at Hall High School in Little Rock. He taught

there three years and then moved to Arkansas Tech University where he was an assistant librarian, then onto the University of Arkansas. That year was when he met his beautiful bride, Dorothy Bing. After a six month courtship, he asked her to marry him, and they were married for 53 years. The next stop on the library train was at Hendrix College where he was the government documents librarian. Next stop was at University of Arkansas at Monticello where he was the director from 1972-74. From there he was recruited to be the North Arkansas Regional Librarian where he served seven counties and helped to reach them with a new bookmobile. Nine years later he took a position as the director of the Fort Smith Public Library from 1985-2004. He was able to serve the people of Fort Smith by building four state-of-the-art library buildings that are still serving the area well. He was given the Distinguished Service Award for Librarianship and the Mayors

Appreciation Award. He also received the Frances P. Neal Award. He was a member of the Arkansas and American Library Associations.

Upon retirement, he and his wife moved to Heber Springs where they enjoyed the river and lake and some lifelong friends. From there, they moved on to Paragould to live by their only daughter, Larisa Wallace and husband Mason Wallace, and to be close to their grandkids, Eli and Ty. Larry was treasurer of the Greene County Retired Teachers organization and on the Greene County Library Board. He was Southern Baptist Church Deacon and loved God, family, and Arkansas Libraries. He enjoyed cooking, traveling (48 states), and various projects. He was also known as the “Banana Bread Man,” because he was always making and delivering goodies to widows, neighbors, businesses, and others. Lasting memorials may be made to the Soaring Wings Ranch, PO Box 1670, Conway, AR 72033.

Embrace You

Adapted from a University of North Texas 2015 Commencement Speech

by Lavis Martin

Associate Librarian, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

“If you understand that getting help isn’t a sign of weakness but a sign of strength, then I guarantee you that you will get what you need to succeed.” -- Michelle Obama.

As a first-generation college graduate, I do not take successful matriculating nor a career in librarianship for granted. So this is an opportunity to thank everyone who has been instrumental in the development of library professionals in the field of information and library science. We have received an excellent education, which has been a stepping stone, a springboard to our futures.

Fellow colleagues, we each have come to the many different places together and individually to learn, to share, and to grow. Though we are often separated by time and space, wherever our paths lead us, we will always be the future of librarianship. We have our ambitions and our dreams to pursue, wherever our separate paths take us. Today is a day of remembrance and celebration as we continue to embark on a journey of discovery and renewal. With our many different talents, different dreams, and different destinations, we all have the power to



Martin

make a new tomorrow. Over time, we have acquired understanding, knowledge, and alliances with each other and made career connections along the way. With the help of many, we have prepared to meet the new challenges of tomorrow. We do not fear what is forthcoming because of what we have accomplished and what we will accomplish.

As we consider years past, we pause to reflect upon our experiences of sharing information, attending conferences, and long nights of “What if?”, that sometimes caused us to think, but gave us great joy. I want to encourage everyone in this time of uncertainty to fight for diversity, equity, and inclusion to *embrace you*. Hold fast to your faith, and believe in yourself. Let no one define you. You have the skills and knowledge to conquer and do the impossible. *Embrace you*. Use your creativity and your imagination. As librarians, you are information professionals, the gateway to knowledge, and disseminator of unlimited physical and intellectual access to resources and the tools required for learning. We have the tools to develop and create new and innovative research, learning and teaching methodologies, whether by Kindle or pencil, one app at a time.

Embrace you as we embark on an errand of change and transformation. Let not your procrastination or the stagnation of others dampen your internal fire, your passion for finding, retrieving, sharing, discovering, and delivering of world-class resources and service to all, whether they be the president, the Pope, or your neighbor. As you *embrace you*, acknowledge that there will be obstacles and recognize that there will be failures.

We must learn from our failures and create and build bridges over the obstacles. *Embrace you...* by getting in the game, staying in the game, and playing the game. Let not merely getting by be your attitude. Look at every opportunity as a way to contribute to the success of your environment. Let not *you* be the cause of failure. We are not to set sail waiting for an opportunity to fall from the sky and be given to us. Utilize every opportunity as a way to create, innovate, or transform the world of librarianship.

Embrace you... for to this point everything you have learned in your life and career experiences, whether academic, private, special, or public, will continue to push you further, like an eagle in endless skies to heights you have never attained before. For that reason, I urge you to *embrace you* make sure that you are on that endless path of creativity.

Remember as you *embrace you*, your concept will become clear only when you can look into your own heart; you cannot fault others for your failed aspirations. So, today I remind you to *embrace you*, look into your heart, and make decisions that are not influenced by preconceived beliefs or by what others say or think. Our impact on the world of librarianship will not be measured by the salary we make or the awards we receive, but rather by how we impart our knowledge, and the services we provide.

Today, you set the standards for librarianship. *Embrace you*. Create a legacy, be known for being

a leader and for making a difference. Add to the legacy of success of those before you. You have an innovative perspective in which to view the world of librarianship. There is always an opportunity to improve or eliminate unnecessary steps, an opportunity to enhance something, or look at something in a different light. I hope that you will *embrace you*, use the knowledge and values you have gleaned from your environment to make an enormous and radiant impact. So go forth librarians, continue to gather and share information, get in the game, utilize the social networks available to you, reflect on your learning, and continue to learn and make your matchless contribution to the world of librarianship! *Embrace you!*

Author's Note: Often we never get the encouragement or recognition for the service we provided, so I wanted to encourage everyone and let them know that what they do is essential to the success of the communities they serve and that they are trailblazers and to continue to keep up the excellent work. Sometimes it good to hear that we are appreciated; this is why I want to share this.

Lavoris Martin is the director of Library Technical Services at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and chairs the ArLA Legislative Committee for 2020.

Emporia State University Expands MLS Program to Arkansas

The School of Library and Information Management (SLIM), Emporia State University (ESU) in Kansas is pleased to announce a new cohort in Conway, Arkansas, starting in fall 2020. This is the new addition to SLIM's current eight locations of hybrid instruction. The last additions were Las Vegas, Nevada, and Boise, Idaho, starting in fall 2019.

Many MLS programs are strictly online, meaning students participate in discussions, submit assignments, and communicate with professors and other students online only. What makes SLIM unique is its blended classroom approach. This hybrid program allows students the flexibility of the online component with an interactive, face-to-face, classroom experience.

While all courses are facilitated online for the full semester, our six core courses each have two Friday evening and all-day Saturday class weekends during the semester. Faculty teach these classes in person, allowing direct interaction between fellow students, instructors, and the regional director.

SLIM has a long history of commitment in the profession of librarianship since 1902,

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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and we believe we offer a great opportunity for future professional librarians in Arkansas and its surrounding areas. The Arkansas cohort's in-person classes will be held at Hendrix College in Conway.

For the upcoming cohort in Arkansas, we are actively recruiting a half-time regional director. The main duties include recruitment, enrollment, advising, practicum supervision, and placement assistance. For further details, please visit the following page: sites.google.com/g.emporia.edu/human-resources/faculty-staff-open-positions/20048-director-of-arkansas-mls-program

If you have any questions or would like to know more about the new cohort in Conway, contact our regional director, Elizabeth Hoffman, at ehoffma1@emporia.edu or 620-412-6453. You may also visit our website at www.emporia.edu/slim.

Happy Hunting, Old Sport!

Scavenger Hunts with Gatsby and Friends at UAM's Taylor Library

by **A. Blake Denton**

*Special Collections Librarian/Archivist,
University of Arkansas at Monticello*

Introduction

As a new academic librarian, the past few months have been very rewarding for me as I grow into my new profession. One of the most attractive features of my position is the diversity of responsibilities. As the Special Collections Librarian at the University of Arkansas at Monticello, I wear many hats, including serving as the liaison librarian for the School of Social & Behavioral Sciences and the College of Forestry, Agriculture & Natural Resources. As part of my liaison duties, I conduct informal sessions for professors where I teach their students the basics of information literacy and introduce them to our library and the wide array of services we offer. The method of instruction varies as I tailor each session to the preferences of the instructor. So far, most of my sessions have included a brief lecture about information literacy followed by a live demonstration showing the students how to navigate our website and search our catalogs and databases. On September 10th, however, I stepped outside of my comfort zone by employing a more interactive pedagogical strategy for two freshmen classes: a self-guided scavenger hunt. What follows is a detailed description of my experience with planning, organizing, and implementing this strategy at UAM.

“Good teachers borrow, but great teachers steal.”

In a former life, I was a history teacher. There is a popular saying among educators: “Good teachers borrow, but great teachers steal.” As catchy as it may sound, this statement is more than a slogan; it offers a real kernel of practical wisdom. Whenever a teacher recognizes an effective pedagogical strategy or technique, they should not be too proud to acknowledge it, adopt it, and make it their own. This maxim is just as applicable to the library profession as it is for school teachers, because many of us regularly provide some form of instruction to our patrons. It is a lesson that I have carried with me, even after I decided to transition into this new career path.

In the fall of 2017, I was enrolled in the University of Alabama's MLIS program and was employed at the Methodist Archives Center (MEC), located at Huntingdon College in Montgomery,

Alabama. The MEC is housed within the Houghton Memorial Library. While my work at Huntingdon was largely archival in nature, I had the opportunity to observe Professor Eric A. Kidwell, the longtime director, and his librarians in action on many occasions. A couple of these occasions included witnessing an intriguing approach to library instruction. In the past, the librarians relied on lecture to introduce the students to the library and its services. Starting in 2013, however, Professor Kidwell decided to try a new approach. When he learned about the scavenger hunt in place at North Carolina State University's library, he decided to adopt this strategy at Huntingdon. Every year, Professor Kidwell selects a theme to base all the library's activities around. When he and his team incorporated the scavenger hunt as part of their library instruction curriculum, they decided to adapt it to their annual schedule of activities. As a result, the scavenger hunt is modified every year to conform to the theme. During the fall semesters that I witnessed the scavenger hunt, the themes revolved around Harry Potter (2017) and Frankenstein (2018). While I was never directly involved with this event, I observed it as a bystander and was impressed with how engaged the students were as they completed their hunts.

Shortly after I accepted my position as the Special Collections Librarian at UAM, I suggested the scavenger hunt strategy to my colleagues at Taylor Library. A few weeks later, Dr. Renée Chérie Clark (Acquisitions Librarian) and Dr. John Henris (Professor of History) approached me about providing instruction for their sections of the “Discovering Your Pathway to Success” course during the week of September 9th. This course is a credited college orientation class intended to help first semester freshmen adjust to life at UAM. Dr. Clark and Dr. Henris asked if I would be willing to lead a session for their respective groups as a means of introducing myself to our new students. They were particularly interested in the scavenger hunt suggestion I had mentioned previously as an interactive way for our freshmen to become acquainted with the library. I readily agreed as I was eager to test the scavenger hunt strategy at our library to see how well it would work for our students here at UAM.

The Structure of the Scavenger Hunt

Once my colleagues and I established the date

that I would lead these classes (September 10th), I planned a two-part library instruction session for these freshmen. For the first part, I created a brief “crash course” lecture on the basics of information literacy. This lecture provided a broad overview of important concepts I believed these students needed to know as they began researching and writing on a collegiate level. For the second part, I organized the scavenger hunt. Once I started planning my scavenger hunt, I realized that an activity such as this requires considerable thought, organization, and attention to detail. Fortunately, the theme had already been established. My colleagues were using F. Scott Fitzgerald’s classic, *The Great Gatsby*, as a required text of their classes, so I based my scavenger hunt on this great American novel.

Professor Kidwell was kind enough to let me review the different versions they used for the Fall 2018 semester, and I recognized the practical wisdom of devising multiple versions for mine. Much of my own scavenger hunt was influenced by theirs. I ultimately settled on four different versions, each inspired by a memorable character from the book: Jay Gatsby, Daisy Buchanan, Nick Callaway, and Dr. T. J. Eckleburg. In creating each version, I had some fun by writing the prompts in the style of the unique personalities they represented: Gatsby’s posh manner, Nick’s reserved nature, Daisy’s flair for the dramatic, and the imperiousness of Eckleburg. This was not done entirely for my own amusement, but with a very practical purpose in mind. Being familiar with Mellon’s (1986) groundbreaking research on “library anxiety,” I knew that there was a distinct possibility that some of our freshman, many of whom are first generation college students, could be grappling with this issue. By taking a slightly whimsical approach in writing my scavenger hunt, I hoped to calm any feelings of fear, apprehension, or self-doubt.

There was a host of considerations I had to keep in mind when creating this scavenger hunt. I wanted to expose our students to a range of materials and services, but I also knew that our time would be limited, and that I did not want these students feeling overwhelmed when they had finished and left. As a result, I designed this scavenger hunt as more of an introduction to using our library. Each version had ten questions. While I used some of the same questions in all four versions of the scavenger hunt, each version was also comprised of unique questions. As a former teacher, I knew that it was best to mix things up a little to ensure participation across the board.

Traffic flow, however, was by far my greatest concern. I arranged the questions for each version in different orders to avoid overcrowding or congestion in any part of the library during the scavenger hunt. Knowing that Dr. Clark had over twenty students enrolled in her section, I was concerned about computer availability for these participants and for our other users as well. To avoid a potential lack of access, I arranged each hunt in a specific order. Teams Gatsby and Daisy began on the first floor at the computers before making their way to the second floor for materials. Conversely, Teams Nick and Eckleburg began on the second floor and finished their hunt on the first floor. Furthermore, when half of the class was on the second floor, both versions were arranged in an order requiring each team to find different materials at different locations to avoid congestion.

Starting with Google

The first question for each version required students to either use a computer or their phones (for those students starting on the second floor) to conduct a quick Google search for the author of *The Great Gatsby*. Whether the students already knew the answer or needed to remind themselves with a simple search engine query, I decided to pitch an easy question for them to get started with. Knowing that there was a possibility that some of our freshmen could be struggling with library anxiety, I thought beginning with familiar territory was an additional method we could employ to alleviate potential fears or unease. Including the Google search question also reinforced an important point I covered in the “crash course” lecture before the scavenger hunt: as consumers of information, our students should take a balanced approach to using search engines. While they should not have a blind faith in them, they should not dogmatically shun them either. Whether they are using a library database or a search engine to find information, they must critically analyze the results/sources regardless of the method used to retrieve that information.

Navigating the Library Website

For the computer portion of the scavenger hunt, the freshmen were required to look up answers to practical questions directly from our website (hours of operation, identifying librarians with their liaison departments and our interlibrary loan services specialist, and locating where course reserves are kept in our facility). Students were also required to use Credo Reference and our catalog. To keep things simple for the participants, I created a special LibGuide, titled “Scavenger Hunt,” that included the

links for those resources. In keeping with our theme, students were instructed to search Credo Reference for the “Roaring Twenties,” select the topic page article, and use the text to answer the question. For the catalog, students were instructed to perform keyword searches for various 1920s-related subjects and write down the call numbers for specific books that appeared in their results.

Hitting the Stacks

In hunting through the stacks, participants were instructed to perform a couple of different tasks with materials in our physical collection. One question provided a call number, requested students to locate the book, and then write the titles of the works to the left and right of that particular monograph. The purpose of this was to demonstrate that they may find multiple resources on a subject in the same area of the stacks. In another question, the freshmen were instructed to locate a different book, take a selfie of themselves reading it, and then send that picture to our Ask-a-Librarian email account. This was yet another whimsical attempt to introduce our students to an additional service that we offer.

The historian in me took advantage of this opportunity to expose our students to the complexity of the 1920s. I personally loathe the fact that the “Jazz Age” is often simplistically portrayed as a glamorous time of music, dancing, and prosperity. Beneath this superficial surface, any researcher will find that prosperity was not enjoyed by all and that the era was rife with racism, nativism, and multiple culture wars. In conducting these sessions, I obviously did not have time to teach our freshmen about the complex legacy of the “Roaring Twenties,” nor was explaining this reality necessary for them to complete their scavenger hunt. That responsibility ultimately lies with our dedicated history faculty. Nevertheless, incorporating a variety of books concerning the more controversial aspects of the decade (such as the Scopes Trial, the Ku Klux Klan, Prohibition, and the Sacco and Vanzetti case) as part of our scavenger hunt was in keeping with our theme, given F. Scott Fitzgerald’s own portrayal of the darker side of the 1920s in his classic work.

In organizing our scavenger hunt, I made sure each version was assigned different books to locate and complete answers for. For each half of the class (Teams Nick and Eckleburg first, then Teams Gatsby & Daisy), I deliberately chose books for each team that were not within close proximity of the books that the other team had to locate. While they were in the stacks answering their respective questions, teams were usually several rows apart from each

other. This required considerably more work in creating the scavenger hunt, but I believed it was necessary to prevent congestion in one of the rows due to students needing to find and use the same book to complete a question.

Raising the Profile of the Special Collections

If there was anything original about my scavenger hunt strategy, it was incorporating the UAM Special Collections as part of the activity. One of the most challenging issues academic archivists and special collections librarians face is raising awareness about their department’s existence among their own faculty and student populations. When I was employed at previous academic archives, students (including seniors) often told me that they were unaware that their institution had an archives. As I have learned in interacting with others in the field, this is a pervasive problem, regardless of institutional size. When planning this activity, I believed it was important to include a question that required participants to enter the Special Collections Reading Room and examine a historic item to find the answer. In this case, students were instructed to ask about UAM’s old yearbooks so they could record what they were called (from the first issue in 1925 to the last in 2009, they were all titled, *The Boll Weevil*, after the school’s mascot). I believe that archivists and special collections librarians should take advantage of any and every opportunity to raise awareness about their repositories. Including a question in this scavenger hunt requiring these freshmen to find an answer in our Special Collections was a simple way for me to raise the profile of the university’s repository to our student body.

All Hands on Deck

One of the last steps of the planning process was ensuring that we had enough people strategically stationed at various locations to assist students with the scavenger hunt when the need arose. I knew that I could not be in all places simultaneously to help our participants. With our first session, there were thirteen students. Their instructor, Dr. Henris, graciously offered to assist with his class. For this group, I was confident that Dr. Clark, Dr. Henris, and myself could manage the first round without reinforcements. During the first hunt, Dr. Clark was stationed on the first floor at the computers, Dr. Henris supervised in the stacks, and I stood in the doorway of the Special Collections room so students would know where to go for the archival question. The logistics of the second wave required additional professionals to guide students along as needed. There were 24 present in Dr. Clark’s class that day.

Dr. Clark and I maintained the same positions as before, but Elizabeth Parish, our digital services librarian, and Amber Schober, one of our technicians, kindly agreed to monitor opposite ends of the stacks. Their involvement proved invaluable.

A Successful Hunt

I would be disingenuous if I claimed that I did not have my own concerns with how this activity would unfold leading up to the first session. While this was not my first time witnessing a library scavenger hunt, it was my first time planning, organizing, and implementing one. Prior to my sessions with these freshmen, I joked with some of my colleagues at Taylor Library that, "This scavenger hunt is either going to go really well or turn into a dumpster fire." My sardonic wit aside, I was apprehensive about trying a new approach. Yet I also knew from my time at Huntingdon that this strategy has a record of success at other institutions. In the end, I decided that the key to success lay in extensive planning and tossing my lingering doubts to the wind.

I am happy to report that my apprehensions were unfounded. By all accounts, the scavenger hunt was a success. Dr. Clark, Dr. Henris, and I were pleased with how smoothly this activity went. There were never any issues with overcrowding at the computers or up in the stacks. Our participants, either as groups or individually, went in the order of the questions of their respective versions as directed. During both sessions, students were engaged and seemed to genuinely enjoy this interactive approach to learning about their library. As one group finished up with their last question in the Special Collections, one student confidently stated, "That was easy!" As librarians, our primary goal is to connect people with information and provide them with the tools they need to find what they are looking for. Hearing that was very rewarding. That being said, I want to acknowledge that this was a team effort. Dr. Clark, Dr. Henris, Ms. Parish, and Ms. Schober were instrumental in assisting students at their respective stations and guiding them on to the next.

Since September 10th, multiple professors/instructors have expressed an interest in bringing their classes to the library for this scavenger hunt. At this point, I am considering ways to revise my hunt to improve it for future sessions. I plan on revising my Special Collections question to require each team to examine a different artifact as a means of exposing our students to a broader range of our archival holdings. I also think that when I am providing instructions for the activity, it would be useful

to include a brief explanation of how to use call numbers to locate materials. Most of our freshmen are familiar with Dewey Decimal Classification because that was the system in place at their school libraries and public libraries. At UAM, we use the Library of Congress Classification, so providing these students with a brief introduction to how LC works will probably benefit those students when they are navigating the stacks for answers.

Having provided an account of our own experience at UAM, here are some tips that are worth considering when developing your own scavenger hunt strategy.

Tips for Implementing Your Own Scavenger Hunt:

- 1. Take a Risk:** Hesitant to try a new approach like this? That is understandable. I dealt with my own reservations. While it is easier to stick with what we are comfortable with instead of venturing into unfamiliar territory, you owe it to your students to test innovative pedagogical strategies. Worst case scenario? It does not work for you, and you either revise it for the second trial run or you try something else. In our case, it was a success. We would not know that now, however, if we had not taken a risk.
- 2. Pre-Scavenger Hunt Tour:** On the day before the scavenger hunt, Dr. Clark provided tours of the library to Dr. Henris' class and her own. During these tours, she showed them our facility, highlighted our services, and explained policies for using the library. In hindsight, I think a tour like this provides students with a sense of geography of the library, which may help alleviate some confusion when the students return to complete their scavenger hunts.
- 3. Keep it Simple:** College freshmen have a lot on their plates. They are adjusting to the rigors of higher education while trying to juggle their studies with extracurricular activities, work, and family obligations, not to mention struggling with information overload. If the purpose of your scavenger hunt is to introduce them to the library and its services, do not throw everything at them. Even if you do try to make this comprehensive, they are not going to remember it all. Be selective in what tasks you include in your hunt. They can always learn about everything else your library offers over time as they spend more time researching and studying there.
- 4. Explain the Purpose:** While it is good to expose your students to the services your library offers, explain the practical purpose as well. With every question, I included brief commentary describing why each exercise was useful for the student to

know. When I wrote the question requiring them to send a selfie to our Ask-a-Librarian account, for example, I explained that this is where they should send future emails in case they do not know who to ask at the library when they need help with something. That way, students will realize that this activity is not just a hoop to jump through, but hands-on training that will be useful throughout their collegiate career.

5. **Plan, Plan, Plan:** Success is far from guaranteed. Extensive planning is arguably the most crucial factor necessary for ensuring a successful experience for everyone involved. Do *not* try to throw this activity together the day before. Along these lines, anticipate failure. You know your facility and all the logistics involved. Think of ways that things could go wrong and come up with solutions that will prevent those malfunctions. For me, this was creating different versions of questions in different orders to prevent overcrowding at the computers or in the stacks and ensuring that we had enough professionals strategically stationed at various locations to assist students as needed throughout the scavenger hunt.
6. **Allow for Flexibility:** Some students will want to work in groups, others will want to work solo. Some will finish faster than others. Most of our freshmen finished in about 35 minutes, which is what I had aimed for. In each section, a couple of participants stayed past their designated class time to finish. This was not a problem because there was a two-hour time span between the end of Dr. Henris' class and the start of Dr. Clark's class. When planning multiple scavenger hunts in a day, it is best not to schedule them back to back since some students will require more time

to complete it. Give yourself and your students some wiggle room.

7. **Use the Scavenger Hunt as a Marketing Tool:** I used this activity as a way of marketing both the Special Collections and our new subscription to Credo Reference. Your faculty and staff can probably think of certain materials or services you want students using more. What better way than engaging the students directly with those through an activity like this?
8. **Have Fun:** While there is a lot of work involved, designing a scavenger hunt can be a lot of fun. Be whimsical with your characters and crack some jokes. There is plenty of room for creativity in this learning process! "Happy hunting, old sport!"

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A. Blake Denton holds a BA in History from Athens State University, an MA in History from the University of South Alabama, and an MLIS from the University of Alabama. Previously, he was a history teacher, an archives assistant at multiple academic institutions, and a communications/marketing assistant for the Alabama Bicentennial Commission. In July, Blake joined the faculty at the University of Arkansas at Monticello as the Special Collections Librarian. He can be reached at DentonA@uamont.edu.

Using Games to Engage Students in One Shot Library Instruction

by *Lavoris Martin*

Associate Librarian, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

*Adapted from the ArLA 2018 Presentation:
"Games and All: Innovative Techniques to
Integrate Technology into Education"*

With the rapid development and push to integrate technology into education, 21st-century learners must master more than the primary curriculum to succeed in the workplace and educational institutions. Today's learning environment is comprised of an extensive collection of multidimensional tools; the use of technology exposes learners to many sources of knowledge.

With the abundance of websites and learning materials, more meaningful integration of technology is crucial. However, technology should not be integrated into the learning environment just for the sake of integrating technology. One must consider learning objectives and how technology will enhance the overall learning experience before implementing it. Therefore, effective technology integration must occur throughout the curriculum in ways that extend and upgrade the learning process. When technology is used to support curricular goals, its use becomes more transparent.

Multiple strategies for training preservice and inservice teachers to integrate technology into their future classrooms require the use of various approaches. Designing games to use in the classroom

has the potential to facilitate successful pedagogical experiences (Akcaoglu & Kale, 2016). There is a massive collection of technological tools and apps used in education that focus on interactive learning strategies including online learning activities, gaming and games, wiki, digital storyboarding, apps, and e-portfolios. Now, more than ever, librarians are vital for demonstrating how to integrate these tools into the classroom. Games in the educational environment go beyond traditional gaming to include digital gaming concepts (Young, 2016). Gaming in education is identified as a strategy that assists learners' engagement and collaboration in problem-solving and critical thinking (Li, Lemieux, Vandermeiden, Nathoo, 2013). There are multiple proven strategies and techniques that are effective. Specifically, games in libraries have proven to be a successful endeavor beyond the standard instructional practices. There are practical ways to integrate and utilize games in library instruction effectively. Specific technology applications in information literacy are prevalent, being that 80-90% of library resources are accessed in digital format.

Integrating games in library one-shot instructional sessions has proven to be a successful venture beyond the standard instructional methods. Library instruction sessions are critical to helping facilitate the integration of technological innovations into the classroom environment. According to Margino (2013), within library instruction, research-based classroom activities and game-playing facilitate self-discovery of information, engagement in instructional content, and experimental learning through trial and error. As educators, what librarians are looking for are games that not only stimulate the learner but also teach content in a meaningful way that makes learning enjoyable and successful.

The librarians at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff utilize games to engage and reinforce information literacy instruction sessions. Information literacy instruction is based on the ACRL Information Literacy Framework for Higher Education. Common games used are Jeopardy, Kahoots, Wheel of Fortune, and Family Feud. The games are used to assess student knowledge and comprehension. Also, using the games provides an opportunity for librarians to evaluate and reflect on their teaching and make necessary changes to improve instruction. Games help students keep engaged and motivated throughout the learning and instructional process. Games, when used efficiently, incorporate the use of active learning, inquiry, and problem-solving, and fuel the competitiveness of students. Games are created using specific concepts, including database navigation and information retrieval, evaluating information, and identifying peer-reviewed sources. After the instructional session, students are divided into groups and allowed to play multiple rounds of the games with



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the librarian facilitating. In playing Family Feud, the instruction librarian can see how students answer questions and identify how to adjust future instruction. The use of games also allows students to use their mobile device to participate in gaming, meeting students where they are. Many apps and games, when used appropriately, can enhance the learning environment.

Conclusion

Games are a valuable tool for fostering critical thinking and problem solving, while allowing the librarian to evaluate student comprehension. Using games allows students to collaborate and feeds their competitiveness. If integrated into instruction properly, games can enhance the learning environment.

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Lavoris Martin is the director of Library Technical Services at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and chairs the ArLA Legislative Committee for 2020.

From the U.S. Census Bureau:

What Partners Can and Cannot Do to Support Self-Response in the 2020 Census

by *Michael Strickland*

Manager of Information Services,

Arkansas State Library

For the first time, people will be able to respond to the Census online from anywhere, anytime. We already have thousands of partners working to ensure a complete and accurate count, including 2020 Census partners as well as tribal, state, and local governments. The use of technology on the 2020 Census provides new opportunities to support people responding to the 2020 Census, including the ability to respond without a Census-provided identification code. The Census Bureau welcomes this support from our partners, including:

- Encouraging response to the Census in the mailed or hand-delivered materials from the Census Bureau;
- Providing secure links to 2020census.gov, where people can easily respond to the 2020 Census;
- Providing language assistance (e.g., helping a non-English speaking respondent log in to the Internet response questionnaire in the appropriate language);
- Helping disabled people (e.g., helping a visually-impaired individual dial the appropriate telephone number to provide their responses);
- Encouraging people to call the 2020 Census phone line to respond in English or in any of the other 12 languages available for self-response;
- Providing access to computers and tablets at kiosks, conferences, public events, community centers, healthcare facilities, places of worship, shopping areas, and other locations so that people can respond to the Census Bureau Internet Self-Response website on the spot;
- As always, helping people understand that responding to the 2020 Census is important and safe.

A key principle for the 2020 Census is our obligation to ensure we protect the public's answers

to the census. While we welcome assistance, for security and confidentiality reasons there are several things we do NOT want local partners, or tribal, state and local governments, to do.

No one other than Census Bureau employees, not even officials from tribal, state or municipal governments, **should go door-to-door to collect information** for the 2020 Census. Doing so could create confusion for households that have already responded or those who must be interviewed by census takers because they have not yet responded to the census. Although the majority of our census enumerators will be in the field beginning in mid-May for the Non-Response Follow-Up operation, we will have enumerators working on a variety of operations throughout the entire self-response period.

Door-to-door canvassing may actually discourage response because it elevates concerns by residents of a potential scam, intrusion or other nefarious activity. A key component of our communications effort is to raise awareness of how to identify an official census enumerator. If the public is not sure who is knocking on their door, they will not answer.

We also do NOT want partners to:

- Encourage anyone to respond to the census on behalf of a household that they are not part of (e.g., it is illegal to fill out a census response for your neighbor's house, even if you believe they did not respond);
- Create websites or apps designed to directly collect 2020 Census response data;
- Collect data over the phone or in person with the intention of submitting to the Census Bureau.

Data collected by census takers employed by the Census Bureau is protected under Title 13 of the US Code. Census employees take an oath to ensure that respondent information is used for statistical purposes only and not for any other reason. Census employees cannot share information with anyone else, including law enforcement – not the FBI, ICE, or even local police.

AROUND ARKANSAS

by *Heather Hays, Associate Editor*

Please congratulate Arkansas librarians **Nathalie DeFelice** (sponsored by REFORMA) and **Tonya Ryals** (sponsored by ArLA) as members of the 2020 Class of ALA Emerging Leaders!

This year is notable because 100% of participants received scholarships to help with costs.

The UAMS Library is pleased to announce that **Lisa Smith**, MLS, has accepted the position of Library Director for the UAMS Library. She will start as director on Jan. 13, 2020.

The current Library Director, **Jan Hart**, MLS, EdD is retired on Nov. 15, 2019 after more than 39 years at UAMS. Libby Ingram, MSIS, Head of Access Services, will serve as interim director until Lisa arrives in January.

Lisa brings more than 10 years of administrative experience within an academic health center

library (University of North Texas Health Science Center), an academic library (University of Texas at Arlington) and a hospital library (Baylor Health Sciences Library) to the UAMS Library. Since 2016, she has been serving as executive director for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, South Central Region, in Fort Worth, Texas. She earned her Master of Library Science degree from the University of North Texas.

Ashley Parker-Graves resigned her position as Library Director for the Clark County Library effective December 31, 2019. She enjoyed her time as Director, but is looking forward to spending more time with her family.

George “Bucky” Ellis of Benton passed away on November 24, 2019. The funeral was held at the Ashby Funeral Home in Benton the following Saturday. Bucky served 11 years on the State Library Board (appointed in 2008 by Gov. Beebe and reappointed by Gov. Hutchinson). He will be missed.

For those who can recall Arkansas public libraries in the 1980s and 1990s, you may remember **Katharine Keathley**. She passed away on Nov. 4, 2019 in Houston, Texas.

After receiving her Master of Library Science from the University of Oklahoma, Katharine became head librarian of Arkansas River Valley Regional Library in 1962. For 25 years, she worked with local citizens and county, state, and federal government to bring libraries out of courthouse basements and attics, establish programs to teach adults to read, provide quality programs for children, improve bookmobile routes, house local history, and connect the region with technology.

Following her retirement, Katharine found new purpose again in libraries. She became base librarian at Little Rock Air Force Base, served as librarian for Danville Elementary School, and accepted the invitation to develop the Family Services Library at Arkansas Children’s Hospital.

Following a private interment, a memorial service was held on Saturday, November 16, 2019, at Danville United Methodist Church, where Katharine was a lifelong member.

Please join ALA’s 2020 Census Library Outreach and Education Task Force in sharing an important new resource - the *Libraries’ Guide to the 2020 Census* (bit.ly/LibrariesGuideCensus). This new

ALA resource will assist library workers in all types of libraries in addressing the special demands and opportunities that will arise from next year’s U.S. Census.

The 2020 Census is also an opportunity to advocate for America’s libraries and demonstrate our positive impact in our communities. More than \$800 billion in federal funding is allocated annually based on Census population data. Libraries can help our communities receive their fair share of those resources by ensuring an accurate count.

The *Libraries’ Guide* is one of ALA’s efforts throughout the coming months to help libraries prepare for the start of the 2020 Census in March 2020. New information and resources will be posted at ala.org/census, where you can sign up for a newsletter to get monthly updates.

Carolyn Ashcraft will be retiring as State Librarian no later than September 1, 2020. She started her career in the elementary school library in the 6th grade. She has worked in school, academic, public, and special libraries across the last five decades, all in Arkansas. Carolyn is an amazing advocate for this agency, for libraries, and library workers. We will miss her!

The updated **ArLA Bylaws** have passed. Now the manual must be updated to reflect the new bylaws and spell out how our reorganized association is going to function going into the future.

If you are interested in forming or joining a Community of Interest, please contact others you know who are interested in the same ideas, functions, or purpose to find your initial group so that once we are ready to go live with these changes, you are ready! Thank you all for working toward a better future for Arkansas libraries!

Amber Gregory, coordinator of E-Rate Services at the Arkansas State Library, has been appointed to the Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors. The first meeting she will attend is on January 27 & 28 in Washington, DC. She is excited to represent not just Arkansas libraries, but all libraries, on the USAC board.

Bentonville Public Library staff welcomed a visit with “living librarian legend” **Peggy Sullivan**. Retired, but still active in the library profession, Ms. Sullivan has enjoyed a notable career. Highlights include president of American Library Association’s



(ALA) Children's Services Division, ALA president, and ALA executive director. Her work on special projects, including the Knapp School Libraries Project, made a national impact on bringing public awareness for the need of high-quality school library media programs.

The American Library Association's Peggy Sullivan Award for Public Library Administrators Supporting Services to Children was presented to BPL Children's Librarian Sue Ann Pekel this summer in Washington, D.C.

A reminder to Arkansas librarians: please submit news items to me for the next *Arkansas Libraries* issue! Births, deaths, new hires, retirements, funding, new buildings, and news that affects Arkansas libraries would be perfect fits for this column. Just jot me an email at hhays@bentonvillear.com, and you'll most likely see it published in our journal.

Heather Hays is senior librarian at the Bentonville Public Library.

ALPS AT WORK: Looking Back and Moving Forward to a New Decade

by *Simone Kirk and Judi King*

2019, the last year of this decade, has been a busy and very productive year for the ALPS Division of the Arkansas Library Association.

ALPS, under the leadership of Chair Dalene Schrier, has been working hard to keep up the valuable work and find additional ways to better serve paraprofessionals in the state. One of the main perks of being a member in the ALPS Division is having the opportunity to attend paraprofessional-relevant training events hosted by the group. In 2018, ALPS revamped its InfoBits event and decided to move it to springtime. This year, InfoBits was held on May 17 at the Garland County Library. We chose the date strategically for paraprofessionals: it is the week before Summer Reading kicks off at public libraries and after the semester testing period in academic libraries.

Around 70 division members attended the spring event. Garland County Library Director John Wells, a longtime supporter and friend of the ALPS Division, welcomed attendees. Many paras arrived the day before to attend the ALPS Board Meeting, and for an evening of fun and networking. Stewart Fuell led the group in exploring their creative sides with artwork that evening. The social aspect, making connections and developing relationships between paras across the library landscape, has always been ALPS's strongest feature, and is an important reason why the division has been extremely active and successful over the years.

A few of the sessions during InfoBits included training on using Narcan kits (one of the most

popular and important sessions). In addition, attendees had the option of attending "Getting to Know Yourself First to Better Serve Others," "Managing & Working with Student Workers," "That's Not My Job," "Penguin Random House Book Buzz," and "Google Suite Tips & Tricks."

After lunch, guest speaker Joe David Rice presented his book, *Arkansas Backstories*. Paras learned that several Arkansas librarians and paraprofessionals assisted him while conducting research for the publication and throughout his writing process. Attendees heard many little-known stories about Arkansas, and his talk was one of the day's highlights. All InfoBits sessions were very informative, and attendees were able to take some great ideas back to their libraries.

May 2019 was also a busy month for ALPS members Shawn Manis and Chelsea Young from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Ottenheimer Library. These library colleagues were invited to lead a session at the Memphis Area Circulation Conference in Tennessee. "The Art of Library War: Deploying Your Library Staff in the Circulation Battlefield" featured strategies to train student workers more efficiently and how to utilize their manpower in the circulation department of academic libraries.

Another positive development for ALPS and a milestone for the group was the involvement in the annual ArLA conference, held in Hot Springs September 28-29. For the first time, ALPS member and Chair Elect Becky Fischer had the chance to be part of the ArLA/SELA Joint Conference planning committee. This marked a positive direction for ArLA to work closely together with ALPS and other divisions, implementing the new strategic planning point of "being more inclusive" by offering a wider variety of sessions geared towards library support

staff. One of the sessions at the September joint conference was presented by ALPS members Shawn Manis and Chelsea Young, who gave an encore presentation of “The Art of Library War.” Other sessions regarded as useful to paraprofessionals were “How Can I Help You? And Other Ways to Lose Patrons,” “Go Gig or Go Home,” and “Academic Libraries and Their Communities: Two Approaches to Community Engagement.”

A conference highlight was the award ceremony in which former ALPS Chair Simone Kirk won the Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional award, an award given to an ALPS member who has given distinguished service in Arkansas libraries. This was a well-deserved award for Simone for her passionate involvement in the division’s activities. Simone has also been a participant in the All-In leadership Institute for the State of Arkansas, and has been an active member of ArLA for several years.

It was a great conference with a large variety of subjects covered and several ALPS members were able to attend. For future association conferences, ALPS plans to deepen its engagement by offering an ALPS sponsored pre-conference session to further extend its services to library employees. Hopefully, the close working relationship between ArLA and ALPS will continue in 2020.

ALPS members, too, were appreciative that Becky Fischer and ALPS Treasurer Clara Jane Timmerman were both active in various ArLA committees along with Chair Dalene Schrier. The Bylaws, Strategic Planning, Scholarship, and Conference committees all benefited from their participation this year. Becky has stated that by being involved with these committees, she learned so much about the Association.

Throughout the year, the ALPS Executive Council met to discuss the new bylaws for the Arkansas Library Association and all the changes that will occur in the future. With the ongoing restructuring of ArLA, ALPS will also work on making changes, streamlining the group, and finding the ideal format to function even more efficiently in the future.

The ALPS division is looking forward to beginning the new decade with new leadership in 2020.

Elections were held at the ArLA Conference amongst present members. Becky Fisher, Outreach User Experience Librarian at the Saline County Library, took over the ALPS leadership in November with Stewart Fuell, public relations/media specialist for CALS, as Chair-Elect. In former years, the new ALPS chair took the position in January, however, this past year the ALPS council voted to have the new chair and future chair begin their term in November after elections at the ArLA conference.

There will be much change coming to the Arkansas Library Association these next few years. ALPS will strive to make sure that paraprofessionals have all reasons to look forward to the restructuring of ArLA and experience it as a successful venture in 2020; with a positive mindset, ALPS is ready for the change!

Simone Kirk is the branch manager at Star City Public Library and Judi King is interlibrary loan technician at Arkansas State Library.



Craighead County staff members line up for Brookland Christmas Parade. Submitted by Tonya Ryals, assistant director of the Craighead County Public Library.

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Highland High School Cardboard Ginger House Contest. Submitted by Ashley Lewis, librarian at Highland High School.