ESSENTIAL❷EDUCATION

Florida Libraries

In This Issue

T A B L E   O F   C O N T E N T S

ESSENTIAL 2 EDUCATION
Florida Libraries

Read how libraries are essential to every community with an array of services, programs, and materials for all ages.

Learn about how coaches make an incredible difference in the lives of people learning to speak and write English at the Alachua County Library.

Find out more about the origin, topics, and popularity of Japanese light novels.

**2017 Annual
Florida Library Conference**

Dates:

May 10 - 12, 2017

Location:

Caribe Royal

8101 World Center Drive

Orlando, FL 32821

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Message from the President

Whenever I talk about libraries with my librarian friends and colleagues I feel like I'm preaching to the choir. Regardless of the types of libraries in which we work, we all agree that the services and opportunities we offer go well beyond useful. We know that our library users, regardless of their status, need us to help them accomplish a wide variety of personal goals.

Because we care about our users we take the time to help them figure out what they need, often encouraging conversation that leads library users to share very personal information about themselves. In response we take that information, distill it down into a set of recommended actions, and in doing so, help our users locate and evaluate the information they need to move forward. Even those of us who work behind the scenes do the same thing; while we may not meet with users directly, we discuss our users' needs with our colleagues and collect feedback on our collections. This assessment process enables us to think about the ways in which we are helping our users find what they need, as well as considering how we might go further to ensure that all users are satisfied.

As budgets continue to be slashed and county services often operate on a shoestring, Florida libraries pick up the slack, becoming community centers that offer access to social events, safe places for children, teens, and retirees to congregate, and de facto county agencies that provide information on supplementary resources that citizens need in order to survive. Libraries respond to users in ways that have made libraries central to the lives of many Floridians.

Through all of these changes, librarians and library staff—regardless of the type of population they serve—teach themselves how to provide answers to the diverse array of questions that arise, anticipating the kinds of resources that will be needed, considering how best to help library users identify, locate, and evaluate information. To do this successfully, librarians must engage in the work of education. Perhaps not in the formal sense of teaching a class, although some librarians do, but all librarians in some form help their users learn.

The theme of the 2017 conference is "Florida Libraries…Essential 2 Education." Nelson Mandela once said "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."[1] Librarians and libraries are uniquely positioned to help people learn and grow, get the education they need, and change the world. In preparation for the conference, I ask librarians, paraprofessionals, and library friends to consider all of the ways they contribute to the education of library users. Whether we support learning or take on active teaching roles, when we help our users go beyond what they already know, we become part of the education process, and it is time that we acknowledge, respect, and celebrate that.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Caribe Royale in May 2017!

Elana Karshmer
President
Florida Library Association

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Florida Libraries:
Essential to Education

ESSENTIAL②EDUCATION
Florida Libraries

By Maria Gebhardt

Libraries are absolutely essential to education. Serving everyone from toddlers to seniors, libraries offer endless opportunities to learn, grow and develop at all stages of life. And libraries are everywhere, from rural locations to bustling metropolitan areas. According to the American Library Association, there are 119,487 academic, public, school, special, armed forces, and government libraries serving communities throughout the nation.[1] The United States has twice as many libraries as shopping centers and one hundred times as many libraries as enclosed shopping malls.[2] Most importantly, what libraries offer inside, outside, and online to their users is absolutely priceless to the entire community.

Developing Early Skills

Starting with the youngest users, libraries encourage early learning development through interactive and fun programs involving music, colors, and even motion through fingerplays. As children grow older, libraries offer them storytime programs that instill a lifelong love of reading. Children attending regular storytime programs improve their reading skills and are on the path to becoming avid readers, which will benefit them throughout their entire education. For children who have difficulty reading, many libraries partner with local animal shelters and community organizations to provide opportunities to read to specially trained dogs. These furry reading buddies allow children to read out loud without any judgment or criticism that can hinder advancement.[3] Reading programs at local libraries can help children improve their reading skills early on, increasing their overall literacy skills and learning gains.

Connecting with Tweens and Teens

As children reach their tween and teen years, the library services grow and adapt with them. Libraries offer specific materials to attract teens including comic books, manga, and anime. The value of libraries goes way beyond a selection of materials and helps teens to continue developing their education including advancing their vocabulary and comprehension. In addition, teens can volunteer in the library where they gain hands-on work experience that is useful for college applications and community service hours required for graduation. Many libraries offer Teen Advisory Boards providing teens an opportunity to share input and collaborate with others, skills that can be applied to group projects and teambuilding activities later in their education.

In Florida, the Pasco County Library System's Teen Computer Trainers for Seniors program gives teens a chance to volunteer and to make a difference for people who may be less than tech savvy. These teens have a chance to build communication

skills, to earn volunteer hours, and to help members of their community.[4] Teens in Pasco County not only earn volunteer hours, but they also learn how to close inter-generational gaps, an important advantage in higher education and the workplace.

The Miami-Dade Public Library System offers teens hands-on opportunities to create music, design video games, record podcasts, and even produce films.[5] Libraries in Miami-Dade serve as an innovation zone where students can express themselves while learning skills that prepare them for college and careers. Instead of just thinking about pursuing a career in audio-visual production, students in Miami-Dade can already be gaining necessary skills at their local library.

Learning commons and makerspaces are found in many academic and public libraries throughout the state. These areas encourage learning, flexible thinking, and new ideas. Through interactive projects including robotics, 3D printing, animation, and computer coding, students can increase their exposure to critical STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills. Learning commons and makerspaces are hands-on leadership laboratories where students can learn while testing and creating new items, experiences that can spark interest in a technology-based career.

In the Fall 2014 issue of *Florida Libraries*, Stetson University highlighted how the university library and the chemistry department partnered to offer 3D printers for students to develop hands-on learning projects. Students were able to create tangible molecular structures giving students a chance to learn across campus.[6]

3D projects created by Stetson University Students in the duPont–Ball Library.
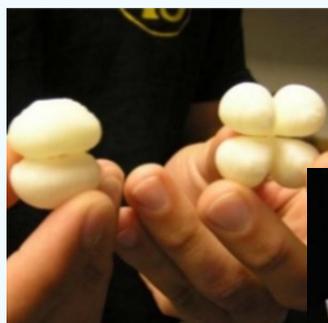

Students preparing for an array of college tests including the PSAT, SAT, and ACT can find practice guides at their libraries. These expensive-to-purchase books can help teens prepare for the math and English sections of tests, expand their vocabularies and learn to write essays. As they enter college, students can rely on their university library or their public library to find additional practice guides for tests such as the GRE®, GMAT®, LSAT, or MCAT®. No matter where students are in their educational journey, they can always get help at their local library.

At colleges and universities throughout Florida, academic libraries offer quiet places to study with late hours during the week and on weekends. Academic libraries help students to find the best resources for research and offer students assistance to help them achieve success.

Furthering Adult Education

For adults who did not finish high school, their library is one of the few places that re-opens the door to formal education. Libraries offer certification and exam preparation guides for dozens of fields from nursing to general contracting. Libraries not only offer materials to help adults take the GED®, but also provide online courses. Many are offering online high school diploma courses.[7] The Center for Adult

Learning at the Jacksonville Public Library offers GED® classes and a Career Online High School in addition to classes in adult literacy and English as a Second Language (ESOL).[8] In this issue of *Florida Libraries* on pages nine, the Alachua County Library District discusses their Conversational English Program and the vital role coaches play in achieving long-term success.

Adults use libraries in so many ways beyond picking up the latest fiction books and best sellers. They learn languages at their library and check out materials for DIY, cooking, travel, and craft projects. Libraries provide Internet access, computers, printing, scanning, and help with learning software programs. Libraries offer job searching help and résumé building tips. Libraries also offer online databases on business research and on what to read next as well as in-depth information on specific topics.

Ebooks have grown immensely popular with adults since it became possible to load an entire collection of books on a tablet. With the ability to place holds online, interactive ways to scroll through the latest collections, and automatic returns, ebooks help to keep even the busiest professionals reading.

Libraries even make finding programs and events easy. Many libraries highlight their programs in online community calendars. The Winter Park Library showcases dozens of events each month on its robust calendar including storytimes and book clubs. The calendar is searchable by event types including film and music, poetry and writing, and science and engineering, and age groups.[9]

Inspiring Community Arts and Culture

Libraries provide a place for art and culture to take place within the community, inspiring students and adults to share their creative side. Many academic and public libraries have galleries or areas dedicated to displaying artistic works and encourage students, alumni, or community members to develop their talents to be showcased. The Spanish River Library in Boca Raton offers the community the chance to enter their work for display.[10] The Louise and Arnold Kotler Art Gallery in the John F. Germany Public Library (part of the Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative) is the "oldest continuing art-

space in downtown Tampa" that also offers community members the chance to enter their artwork for public display.[11]

In the Spring 2016 issue of *Florida Libraries*, the Manatee County Public Library showcased their *805 Lit + Art* journal that showcases original works of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and art from artists from around the world.[12]

Sharing History and Researching Genealogy

Libraries offer incredible opportunities to research and record historically significant items and moments. Many offer oral history projects as well as opportunities for members of the community to conduct research. The Northwest Regional Library System serving the counties Bay, Gulf, and Liberty, gives residents a chance to use more than 3,900 books and 2,000 rolls of microfilm mainly focusing on local history.[13] In the Florida Room of the Leon County Public Library, researchers can use an array of historical documents including census materials, periodicals, and publications focusing on Florida.[14]

The Orange County Library System's EPOCH (Electronically Preserving Obituaries as Cultural Heritage) project provides families and friends with an online platform to submit a detailed obituary with a photo. This obituaries are searchable online by name, dates, and locations. EPOCH offers residents a chance to record tributes to their loved ones while creating an interactive historical database.[15]

The Alachua County Library District has more than 1,000 documents in photos in its online local history collection, The Heritage Collection. Users can search through photos and documents with detailed descriptions and even download a family chart as well as tips to start researching family history.[16]

Many libraries provide access to genealogical databases and appointments with librarians who can help amateur genealogist build their families trees. Materials obtained through inter-library loans, such as copies of obituaries, birth certificates, and articles unlocking family history, can help adults learn about their forebears.

Making a Difference

Whether researching the past or picking up holds, more than 90% of "Americans ages sixteen and older say libraries are important to their communities."[17] Libraries not only help students excel with projects by providing additional resources, they also provide pathways inspiring the next generation of lifelong learners. Whether a student picks up a book and becomes an avid reader, or a child looks forward to their favorite librarian offering a Saturday storytime, libraries make a lasting difference to their users. The impact of libraries is felt throughout the State of Florida. Libraries are indispensable to all communities and essential to education.

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Maria earned a MSLIS degree from Florida State University and a MBA degree from Florida Atlantic University. She received the President's Award from FLA in 2015.

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The Alachua County Library District's Conversational English Program Helps Adults Meet Personal and Professional Goals

By Patricia Carr

The Alachua County Library District (ACLD) won a National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in 2011, and that same year a new initiative, the Conversational English Program, was launched at the Tower Road Branch Library in Gainesville. From the beginning, adult volunteer coaches and foreign students have met at the library once or twice a week to practice the art of conversation and other English language skills. Retired librarian Al Martin said he and staff member Jin Lyons, a newly-minted United States citizen from China, established the Conversational English Program with the approval of Branch Manager Ike Welch and Library Director Shaney T. Livingston.

Since then, hundreds of people have participated and last year alone 175 people, coaches and students, benefitted from the program. Currently, fifty-three active coaches serve sixty-eight students, and most meet once a week for sixty to ninety minutes, but some meet twice a week in order to make more progress. On average, twenty-two people are on the waiting list.

The program is popular and effective, students and coaches say, because it is a rewarding win/win experience. Volunteers and students focus on English language skills, but everyone benefits from a continuous cultural exchange. One-on-one lessons, small groups, social mixers, language resources and coach training all serve to benefit students who report positive and successful outcomes.

Librarian Patricia Carr, the current coordinator of the program, works in tandem with Literacy Coordinator Theresa Sterling, who offers three levels of English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) classes and one advanced conversation class at libraries throughout the county. "The Conversational English Program also serves as an advanced level," Carr said. "Students are expected to have some basic and advanced skills in order to participate and practice conversations in a meaningful way. Most applicants are immigrants or visiting scholars at the University of Florida, who need to improve their English in order to get or keep a job or pass an exam. Others want to make friends and increase their vocabulary."

One student from China, Feifan, and his coach, Drew Clay, have made significant progress. Feifan said, "Not only did this program help me with my English it also helped me to learn more about American culture. It helped me to speak more confidently, and my teacher helped me obtain my driver's license and apply for college."

"I have enjoyed watching Fei grow and flourish here in Gainesville," Clay said. "He is so brave to have come as far as he did. I like to think I learned as much from him as he ever did from me."

Coach Lola Haskins agrees and said that tutoring at the library has been wonderful.

"Not only have I been able to befriend people of all persuasions and cultures, but also I've learned a lot about my own language from what's come up in the process," Haskins said. "Even better, because our culture is often a mystery to my students, I've been able to show them how to make friends here and how to get things done."

Haskins's student, Alexandra, said one of her favorite things is to talk, "knowing that I will make mistakes and immediately receive a kind explanation regarding pronunciation, grammar, or synonyms."

Whether students are studying for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or pursuing other goals, each coach makes a difference. For
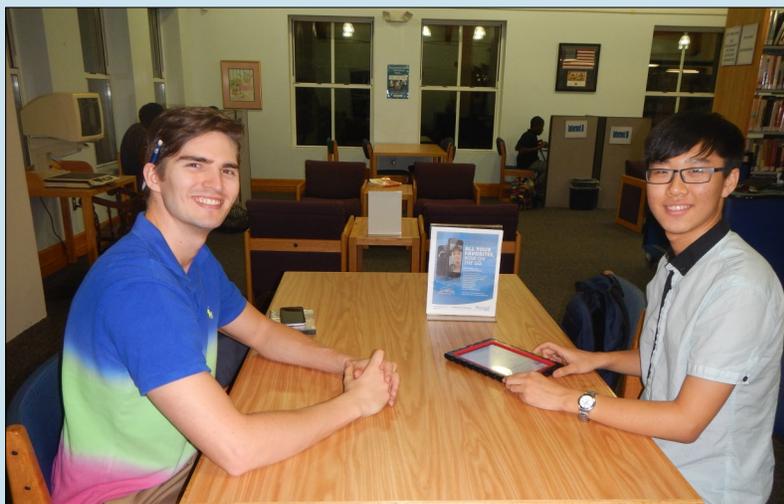
Coach Drew Clay and Feifan Hao (Harry).

example, Hankook asked a coach to proofread his dissertation and he returned home, triumphantly, with a doctorate in chemical engineering. Another student, Maria, is also celebrating because she recently passed the Naturalization Test for United States Citizenship. Another student, Gislaine, is working hard to pass an occupational exam. Her coach, Betty Roode, who happens to be a retired nurse, said, "What a good match! Each Saturday, Gislaine and I review sample test questions. Sometimes, she needs help with pronunciation. She will stop me and ask, 'Say that word again so I can hear it.' Sometimes, she doesn't understand the question, or the answer, and I explain the nursing implications. In a few weeks, Gislaine will take the state Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) exam. If she passes, we will have a big celebration!"

What makes this library program so effective and so popular? Perhaps it's the personal, individualized

attention students receive, the social mixers that bring everyone together, the on-going cultural exchange, the Literacy Office's Learning Conference, or a culmination of all these factors.

Sterling established the annual Learning Conference in 2014, and guest speakers have included experts in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) or Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). For example, last year's panel included Andrea DeCapua, Ed.D., Catherine Baucom, MA-TESOL, and Lena Shaqareq, MA-TESOL. This optional one-day training session is open to all volunteer coaches who participate in ACLD's Conversational English Program or ESOL classes.

One coach, Zelda Jones, said the free training was relevant, applicable, cost effective, and conven-ient. "The quality of the information we received is equivalent to that which is available at TESOL Conferences," Jones said. "Also, the small group of attendees provided the opportunity to converse with the speaker. . . I look forward to attending the next conference."

The Library District's Conversational English Program is just one way staff members are "thinking outside the book" today to bring collaboration, diversity, and innovation together to provide excel-lent patron and community services that help empower and transform patrons' lives.

Alexandra said, "It is more than a class, it is like a good conversation with a great teacher that helps me to improve my speaking and at the same time my writing. The program means everything to me."
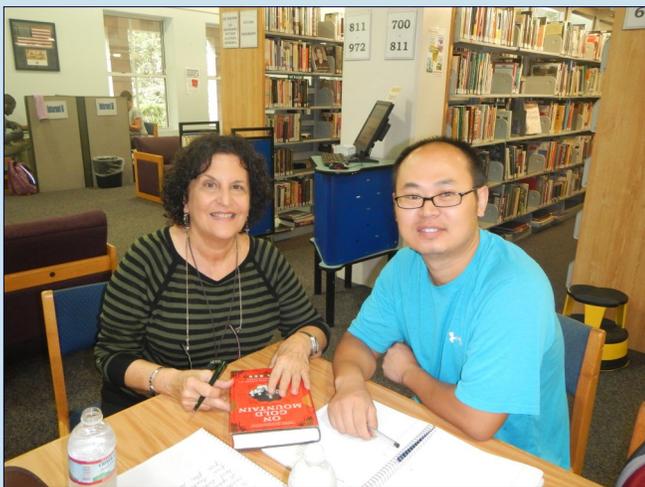
Coach Juanita Rizzo and Jie Liu Conversational English ACLD Tower Road Library.

Masoud Pourshabanian and Coach Cheryl A. Morton Conversational English ACLD Tower Road Library.

Patricia Carr is a librarian for youth and outreach services at the Tower Road Branch of the Alachua County Library District, and she serves as the coordinator for their Conversational English Program.

Behind Every Great Manga:
The Rising Popularity of Japanese Light Novels

By Suvi K. Manner

Most public librarians are aware of the publishing and pop culture powerhouse that is the comic book industry. Patrons regularly request books and movies based on the Avengers, the Justice League and all their individual members. Preceding this graphic novel boom there was an explosion of Western interest in manga. Naruto, Sailor Moon, Dragonball Z, One Piece, and Inuyasha invaded the airwaves and the imaginations of teens and tweens.

The question no one knew to ask was, what gave birth to these mega series? This is especially important now as the format from which these tales originated may just be the library's next hottest commodity.

Light novels arose from the serialized stories in Japanese pulp magazines of the 1970s. The increasing popularity of these stories led to the creation of short, book-length works collecting them. The topics included sci-fi, myths, everyday life, and western fantasy. The profitability of these books revitalized the pulp industry, transforming it into a glossy, more illustrated engine for producing the next hot serial stories. The books produced from these endeavors are lightly illustrated novellas or novelettes and are wildly popular with everyone from teens to suburban moms and businessmen. The bestsellers from this format, in turn, become the manga our teens and twenty-something patrons read today.

Light novels have spread from Japan to China and Korea, and America seems poised to be next. Hachette launched Yen Press with the stated purpose of bringing twenty-four light novels into print in the United States in 2014. Based on early press and pre-orders, they revised these estimates to over twice that number, committing to translating and publishing fifty light novel series for the American audience and including tie-in merchandise and promotional materials.

The market share of light novels in Japan is similar to that of comic books in the United States, making up over 20% of the country's paperback sales. Light novels make business sense, but why do they make sense for libraries?

These are books the patrons want to read. Think of the halo effect of adaptations. If a movie is made from a novel, the novel's popularity and circulation spikes. These light novels are the original source materials for some of the best-circulating items in public libraries. With familiar titles and more depth than the manga they spun off, these cannot help but appeal to the fans who are always asking for more. More Death Note? Check. More Fullmetal Alchemist? Check. More Naruto? Check.

With a view to the sizeable audience already in place and actively engaged, *Publishers Weekly* recommends capitalizing on their familiarity with these much loved series: "Because of the preexisting awareness built in with the manga fans and the fact that there are often companion manga series to so many of these light novel titles, we're advising stores to shelve the books with their manga for now, and that seems to be working quite well. I don't think it's a stretch to imagine that in the not too distant future light novels could command their own sections..."[1]

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Suvi K. Morales Manner is the Branch Manager of the Acreage Branch Library of the Palm Beach County Library System.

Truth and Fiction All Around Florida

By Joyce Sparrow

Juniper The Girl Who Was Born to Soon (2016) by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Tom French and his wife, Kelley, is a memoir describing their budding love affair that grew into marriage after many years, and the premature birth of their daughter, Juniper. The story centers on the stress, agony, joy, and relief the family experienced during Juniper's six-month stay in the neo-natal intensive care unit in All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg from April through October in 2011.

Alternating chapters offer Tom and Kelley's separate feelings during these long days. They write with crisp, journalistic detail providing readers, even those familiar with the 2012 *St. Petersburg Times* series about Juniper's first 196 days, an exceptional story of determination. The French's writing skills shine as they illustrate how Bruce Springsteen music and Harry Potter novels, along with loving friends, a dedicated family, and an ex-ceptional hospital staff enabled the family to endure.

Oh, Florida! How America's Weirdest State Influences the Rest of the County (2016) is a continuation of blog entries written by Craig Pittman, a *Tampa Bay Times* award-winning reporter and columnist who has a reputation based on his propensity to write about weird stuff. Pittman, a Florida native, offers comments on all things Florida, from hurricanes, natural disasters, traffic, road construction, police reports and organized crime or, in short: weather, geography, landscapes, history, government, greed, and people. Pittman traces Florida's past into today to illustrate how Florida has in attitude and culture, altered America. Funny, sad, and yet true is the best description for this lively book.

Caroline Zancan's novel *Local Girls* (2015) involves three nineteen year old friends who describe themselves as burnouts in a burnout town, otherwise known as an unnamed location on the outskirts of Orlando. Maggie, Lindsey, and Nina are working service jobs and spend their free time reading celebrity gossip and movie magazines. One evening at The Shamrock, dive bar without air conditioning where the young women drink without being carded, they meet actor Sam Decker who is in town for a reunion of the New Mickey Mouse Club. The plot involves each girl's personal history and what brings each of them to the bar where Decker is drinking alone. Full of catty comments, overdue teenage angst, ice queens, and mean girls, all masking true friendship.

Nine Island by Jane Alison (2016), an autobiographical novel, tells the story of J who is deciding if she should give up on her hope of finding a man with whom she can live happily ever after. Much of J's personal information is concealed from the readers, but her actions involving life around her twenty-first floor, circa 1980s, Miami condominium, her job translating stories by Ovid, her old, blind cat, Buster, and her relationship with her aging mother, show who J is. With a nod to John D. MacDonald, much of the plot centers on the politics of rebuilding the condominium complex's aging pool. Readers will identify with J as she struggles with the pleasures and challenges of being single again in Florida.

Jennifer L. Holm's chapter book, *Full of Beans* (2016), captures the lives of families in the Keys during the Depression. While fathers travel up the island chain and out of state to find work, mothers take in laundry and sewing to help pay for basic needs. The novel is told through the eyes of industrious ten year old Beans who spends his days collecting milk cans for cash and tending to his brothers. The dusty and barefoot pace of the life in the Keys changes when the federal government sends representatives to revitalize the Keys as a tour resort instead of a rundown town which Beans describes as a location in a black and white movie. The story is full of competing gangs of children, marble tournaments, and families living, out of necessity, on conch, lobster, sea turtle, and tropical fruit. Beans and his friends are easily recruited by swindlers to earn money which leads Beans to his firmest belief: grown-ups lie.

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Developing Responsive Library Web Sites

By Michael Rodriguez

In September, 2014, Hodges University's Terry P. McMahan Library moved its online presence to a mobile-responsive platform, LibGuides 2.0. Responsive Web pages automatically adjust to fit the viewport (usually the screen size) of the smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer with which users access the Web pages. Web sites using responsive design look good and work well regardless of the devices used to access them. In addition to documenting the need for responsive design and outlining how Hodges University developed a Web site optimized for mobile devices, this article provides guidance and resources for librarians looking to move forward with responsive design.

Survey of Florida Library Web Sites

In January, 2016, I conducted a quantitative study of Florida academic, public, and cooperative library Web sites listed by the State of Florida's Division of Library and Information Services.[1] In addition, I evaluated the Web sites of all special libraries and museums listed as members of Florida's five multi-type library cooperatives (MLCs).[2] Each site was tested using a 13-inch Macbook Air, an iPhone 5, and an iPad 2. My goal was to identify Florida library Web sites (1) using responsive design, (2) offering a mobile version or app separate from the main Web site, or (3) lacking significant optimization for mobile devices.

Survey results were revealing. Out of seventy-eight Florida academic library Web sites, twenty-nine were static, six had mobile versions, and forty-two exhibited responsive design. Out of 123 Florida public library Web sites, only forty-nine offered some form of mobile optimization, whereas seventy-four were static. Four out of five cooperatives did offer responsive design. Only twelve out of thirty-three special libraries listed as members of the five cooperatives exhibited responsive design. In short, 63% of special library Web sites, 60% of public library Web sites, and 38% of academic library Web sites were static, failing to support mobile devices. Added to this statistic are the libraries (six academic and five public) with separate mobile sites, which force users to learn two websites. Moreover, fourteen public and eleven academic Web sites were responsive but poorly designed; many of these have search boxes too big for my smartphone's viewport when it is held in vertical portrait mode.

The Importance of Mobile Design

Mobile device users form a massive and growing

demographic that libraries overlook at their peril. Two-thirds of American adults own smartphones, and 45% own tablet computers—a massive market share.[3] According to the Pew Research Center, 25% of Americans age sixteen or older visited a library Web site in 2013, while almost one in five Americans ages sixteen through twenty-nine used a mobile device to do so.[4]

In 2015, the Pew Research Center found that half of all visitors to public library Web sites in the previous year accessed them using mobile devices, up eleven points from 2014.[5] Already high, this figure would surely rise if libraries were to design more Web sites with mobile devices in mind. Mobile users are picky, often abandoning or curtailing usage of a page that is slow to load or hard to navigate.[6] What's more, mobile use is highest among millennials, minorities, and lower-income people. Fifteen percent of Americans aged eighteen through twenty-nine, 13% of Hispanics, 12% of African Americans, and 13% of lower-income adults are dependent on their smartphones for Internet access.[7] Thus, Florida libraries that implement responsive design would better serve mobile users and help close the digital divide. We would be acquiring insurance for the future of libraries, which rely on sustained use by young people, Hispanics, African Americans, and other populations seeing rapid growth in the use of mobile devices.

Going Mobile @ Hodges University

Going mobile was a priority at the Hodges University Library, in part because our students fit the mobile-only demographic. Our student body comprises mostly nontraditional adult students from underprivileged backgrounds; 42% are Hispanic, and 12% are African American.[8] Many cannot afford home computers or Internet access. We wanted to optimize our online presence for these students. Truth be told, our old Web site was a problem child—locked down by the university IT department,
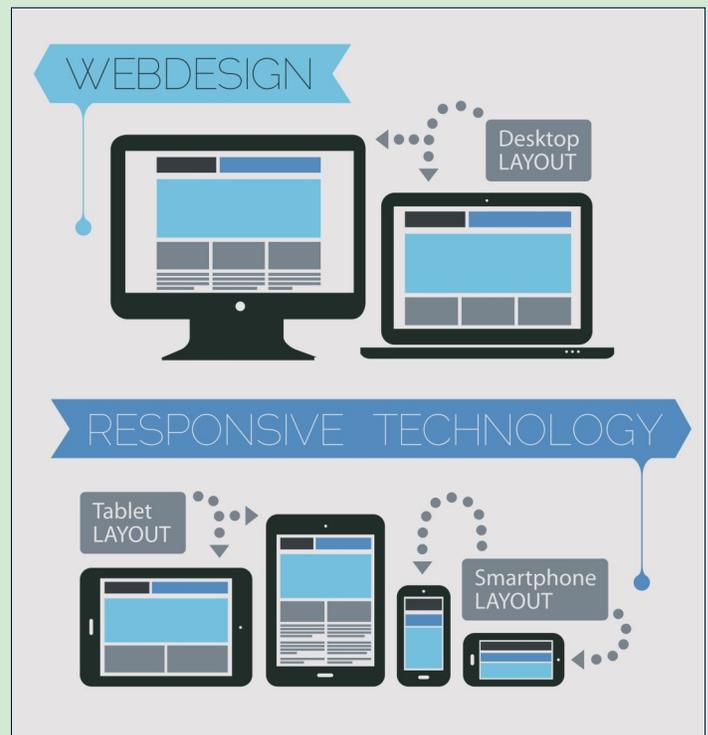
sealed behind a login wall, unattractive, and hard to navigate. In the summer of 2014 we began exploring cheap, leading-edge alternatives.

After evaluating options, we selected LibGuides, a robust, proprietary content management system (CMS). According to the product vendor, Springshare, there are 4,799 libraries worldwide that subscribe to LibGuides, mostly to develop subject guides and pathfinders. However, a growing number of libraries are adapting LibGuides to build their main Web sites as well. This is because LibGuides Version Two, which was released in 2015, features responsive design and deep customization capabilities. Libraries can customize LibGuides-based Web sites as thoroughly or minimally as talent and time permit, without sacrificing aesthetics, usability, or control. Any librarian can quickly learn to manage a LibGuides-based Web site because the interface is drop-and-drag, fill-in-the-box intuitive. Additionally, hosting with support costs the university $2,000 per year. LibGuides integrates with Florida's statewide Ask a Librarian service, which uses Springshare's LibAnswers, and with LibCal, which Hodges deploys for room and event management. We

did decide to acquire LibGuides CMS, which is slightly more expensive but offers greater customization capabilities than the regular LibGuides platform.

Once we selected LibGuides 2.0 CMS for our new Web platform, our first move was to migrate from LibGuides 1.0, which offers only static design. This upgrade was free and largely painless. We weeded much irrelevant or dated content and chose the time; Springshare handled the migration. Next, we built a home page and associated pages, integrating content from our old Microsoft SharePoint site. We rolled out our new site within two weeks of the migration, in September, 2014, to much fanfare from our university community. Over the course of the following year, we released several enhanced iterations. Amid positive feedback from users, mobile usage doubled from three percent in 2013 (the year prior to migration) to six percent in 2015 (the year after migration).

Going Mobile @ Your Library

Our library's positive experience notwithstanding, LibGuides is far from the only mobile-responsive platform available to libraries. Early in the process, we considered abandoning LibGuides, which is proprietary and relatively pricey, in favor of Word-Press, Joomla, or Drupal, which are free, open source, and widely used by libraries and other

service providers. But such platforms require the library to host, build, and maintain the site, which can require time and expertise that many smaller organizations simply do not have. If the time or talent are available, though, a library can run a fully developed WordPress site for less than $200 a year in external hosting and support fees. WordPress offers a WYSIWYG (what-you-see-is-what-you-get) page-builder, deep page-nesting capabilities, and thousands of free and customizable layouts called "themes." Another option is to use a hosted proprietary site such as Gale Pages, which comes free with some Gale Cengage database packages. Libraries can also hire developers to build the site, and then train regular staff to maintain it.

To ensure a consistent mobile experience, librarians should use CSS media queries and other code to ensure that the entire Web site is responsive. That includes search boxes, calendars, and tables. Users should not have to scroll sideways to view protruding content. Give thought to the placement of each item on a Web page, as items placed on the right of a responsive page appear at the bottom of the page when displayed on a mobile device.

Thinking mobile-first will help you weed nonessential content from your pages. Most users go only to the catalog, their account, the events calendar, or the hours/locations page, so why inundate users with content irrelevant to their needs? Program links so that they open in the same window, allowing users to click "Back" to return to previous pages. Almost 30% of responsive Florida public library Web sites, along with 23% of their academic counterparts, exhibited design flaws during testing. Happily, each of these issues is easy to eliminate with some basic coding.

Resources

New to coding? Codecademy, Udacity, Treehouse, and other online services, many of them free,

teach web design and development to beginners in a self-paced environment. Working with WordPress or another open source CMS? Visit Stack Overflow and community forums to ask questions or read solutions. Looking to get started? Github allows you to "fork" (copy) code that you can then adapt for your own site. In addition, other librarians or open-source web developers are usually happy to share code or suggestions. Using LibGuides? A quick e-mail to Springshare resolves most issues. Exploring the connections between usability and responsive design? Michael Schofield, a fellow Florida librarian, is an evangelist in these areas; his podcast and blog at libux.co are highly recommended. Frustrated or confused? Remember the mantra from avant-garde writer Samuel Beckett: "Try again. Fail again. Fail better."

Conclusion

Floridians need libraries that are responsive to user needs and preferences. Responsive Web design is high on the list. Yet this study has established that nearly half of Florida library Web sites do not adapt to mobile devices. With the experiences of Hodges University as impetus and guide, librarians across the state can move rapidly to responsive design, a project facilitated by use of LibGuides, WordPress, or another mobile-first content management system.

NOTES:

1 - Florida Division of Library and Information Services. *Florida Libraries.* http://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/research/florida-information/libraries/florida-libraries/

2 - The five MLCs are the Northeast Florida Library Association (NEFLIN), http://www.neflin.org/; the Panhandle Library Access Network (PLAN), http://www.plan.lib.fl.us/; the Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN), https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=SEFLIN; the Southwest Florida Library Network (SWFLN), http://www.swfln.org/; and the Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC), http://tblc.org/.

3 - Anderson, M. "Technology Device Ownership: 2015." (2015). http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/29/technology-device-ownership-2015/.

4 - Zickuhr, K., Rainie, L., and Purcell, K. "Library Services in the Digital Age." Pew Research Center. http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/01/22/library-services/.

5 - Horrigan, J. "Libraries at the Crossroads." Pew Research Center. (2015). http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/09/15/libraries-at-the-crossroads/.

6 - Schofield, M. "3 Numbers about Mobile Usage that Impact Libraries." *Public Libraries Online.* (2015). http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2015/10/3-numbers-about-mobile-usage-that-impact-libraries/.

7 - Anderson, M. "6 Facts about Americans and Their Smartphones." Pew Research Center. (2015). http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/01/6-facts-about-americans-and-their-smartphones/.

8 - Hodges University. "Institutional Effectiveness and Research." (2014). http://www.hodges.edu/about/ie.aspx.

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CELEBRATE!
## Floridiana with a Twist

By Nancy Pike

Countless celebrations of libraries, books, and reading take place not just in the U.S. but around the world.

For example, in September, the Netherlands Postal Service issued a sheet of stamps to commemorate "The Year of the Book." Ten books selected from their National Library are depicted in a kind of book landscape on the sheet. You can see it here: http://www.infodocket.com/2016/09/05/netherlands-year-of-the-book-honoured-with-book-landscape-on-postage-stamps/. The Netherlands and Flanders were just acclaimed joint guests of honor for the October 2016 Frankfort Book Fair.

Actually, there have been a lot of literary stamps over the years, honoring authors from Aesop to Zola.   For a list and some pictures, go to http://literarystamps.blogspot.com.

Last year, 2015 was declared "The Year of the Library" by the Government of Catalonia, which also established a single catalogue and a unified public library card policy at the same time. The Ministry of Culture agreed to support 160 municipal libraries. http://www.catalangovernment.eu/pres_gov/AppJava/government/news/278920/2015-year-library.html.
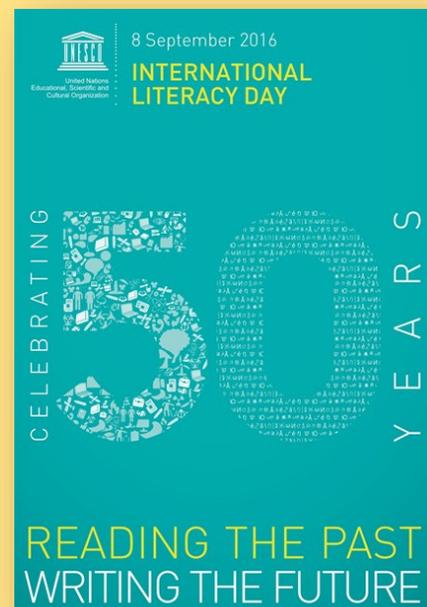
UNESCO celebrates an annual International Literacy Day "to promote literacy as an instrument to empower individuals, communities and societies." On September 8, their 50th anniversary, they awarded prizes for five worthy literacy projects around the world. One went to Nguyen Quang Thach, who established "Books for rural areas of Viet Nam," a program to offer educational opportunities to everyone, especially the disadvantaged and marginalized groups. He has enhanced his country's library system by raising awareness, using crowd funding to build libraries and offer support services. For a description of this effort and the other winners, check http://en.unesco.org/themes/literacy/prizes/.

UNESCO collects international literacy data which is also on their Web site. The data shows that global literacy rates have improved steadily over the past fifty years; however 758 million adults, fifteen years and older, remain illiterate. Two-thirds of them are women.

In the United States, we love celebrating libraries, books and reading! We have National Readathon Day, GLBT Book Month (June), Library Card Sign Up Month (September), Banned Books Week (last week of September), Teen Read Week, National Friends of Libraries Week, School Library Month, Drop Everything and Read Day (April 12 – Beverly Cleary's birthday), National Library Week (April), National Library Workers Day, and National Book-mobile Day, among others.

Even so, lots of Americans can't read or read so poorly it affects their ability to function in today's world. According to the Florida Literacy Coalition, the National Center for Education Statistics estimates that almost 20% of Florida adults, sixteen and older, lack basic literacy skills.

Although teaching reading falls under the Department of Education nationally and statewide, it takes more than government programs to make reading a universal skill. Studies show that reading proficiency by third grade is the most important predictor of high school graduation and career success. Yet every year, more than 80 percent of low-income children miss this crucial milestone. Thirteen Florida counties/communities have organized coalitions for a list and some pictures to address this issue by participating in The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading: http://gradelevelreading.net.

Florida libraries are helping by working with these local coalitions, by scheduling special programs for all ages that focus on books and reading, and by offering or supporting adult literacy classes and tutoring.

And now that a Librarian is running the Library of Congress, surely there will be even more to celebrate!

Nancy Pike is the former Director of the
Sarasota County Library
System and former
President of the Florida Library Association.
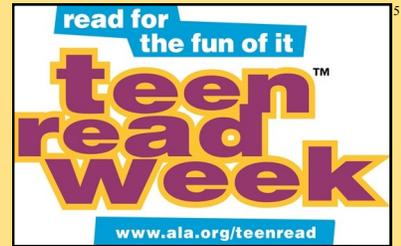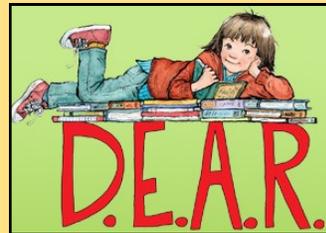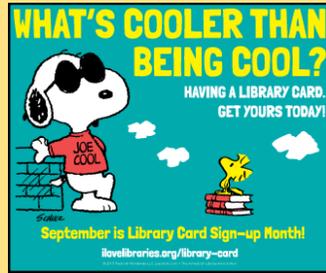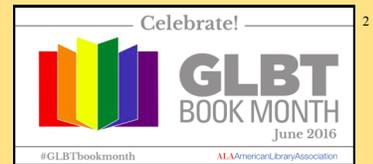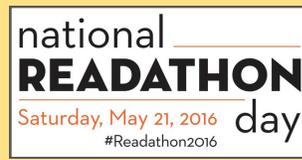
NOTES:

1 - National Readathon Day. http://www.readathonday.com/.

2 - GLBT Book Month. American Library Association. http://www.ala.org/glbtrt/glbt-book-month.

3 - September is Library Card Sign-up Month. American Library Association. http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/celebrationweeks/card.

4 - Banned Books Week. http://www.bannedbooksweek.org/.

5 - *School Library Journal*. http://www.slj.com/2016/04/industry-news/yalsas-2016-teen-read-week-to-focus-on-english-language-learners/.

6 - School Library Month. American Library Association. http://www.ala.org/aasl/slm.

7 - Drop Everything and Read. http://dropeverythingandread.com/resources.html.

8 - National Library Week 2016 Press Kit. American Library Association. http://www.ala.org/news/mediapresscenter/presskits/nlw.

9 - National Library Workers Day. American Library Association. http://ala-apa.org/nlwd/

ESSENTIAL 2 EDUCATION

Florida Libraries

All librarians, and especially youth librarians, know that family interactions with infants and toddlers that focus on literacy, beyond what is offered at school, is critical to a child's success in later life. What I've learned from librarians is that they educate parents about the importance of such family interactions as well as guide them to books and resources. Family interaction is also a crucial part of the mission of the State of Florida's Early Learning Office, which is why they have reached out the Florida Library Association.

The Office of Early Learning called FLA to schedule a meeting to discuss ways to promote the library for family engagement to Voluntary Pre Kindergarten (VPK) teachers, child care providers and parents throughout the state of Florida. This office oversees Florida's 30 Early Learning Coalitions, assures that all programs that the state creates for early learning are properly implemented, and administers professional development for VPK providers and child care centers.

"As an educator, and a parent, I know about the abundant learning resources in libraries, but also there's the guidance and education that librarians provide," said Sunny Saunders, the Coordinator of Consumer Education and Family Engagement. Florida's Early Learning Office has always encouraged the Early Learning Coalitions to reach out to libraries; now they are asking that librarians reach out to the coalitions, for example, inviting them to visit the library to learn about the programs and resources that libraries offer. [To find the Early Learning Coalition that serves your area click here Early Learning Coalitions](#).

The Office of Early Learning also asked that FLA share two resources that might be of interest to librarians who provide early learning programs.

1. Early Learning and Developmental Standards

Birth to Five Standards. Librarians, VPK teachers, home school parents and guardians can access these standards to help them know what children should understand and be able to do as they move from birth to five. In particular youth librarians can use the standards to help them create their programs and they can also provide them to parents and teachers, along with materials that the parents and teachers can access at the library to help children meet the standards.

http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/parents/parent_resources/floridas_early_learning_and_development_standards_birth_to_five.aspx.

The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds. Created in 2011 these standards are specifically for four-year-olds and create a common framework and language for providers of both the School Readiness and VPK programs. Based on collaboration with a state panel of experts, national and state expert reviewers, and input from citizens across Florida, the Standards for Four-Year-Olds reflect the latest research on child development and developmentally appropriate practices for four-year-old children. Standards and benchmarks are organized into five domains, Physical Development, Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language, Communication and Emergent Literacy, Cognitive Development and General Knowledge.

Benchmarks are available for two domains–the domains of Language, Communication and Emergent Literacy, and the Mathematical Thinking section of Cognitive Development and General Knowledge–to help explain further what Florida's children should know and be able to do by the end of pre-kindergarten.

http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com/BT5_Uploads/feldsfyo.pdf.

2. Vroom

The Office of Early Learning would like to make librarians aware of Vroom – a new app that provides parents of young children daily suggestions, in the form of texts, on simple brain building activities. Parents can customize the app based on their child's

age. The app also provides the science and research that supports the activities. Vroom is funded by the Bezos Family Foundation and developed by a coalition of leading scientists and child development experts who specialize in neuroscience, psychology, behavioral economics, parenting and early childhood development. To learn more about Vroom go to www.joinvroom.org.

Another excellent resource for early literacy information is the Division of Library and Information Sciences Florida Libraries As- Early Learning Resouces portal. http://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/services-for-libraries/florida-libraries-as/early-learning/.

So…how do Florida public libraries get connected to their Early Learning Coalition? Susan Mankowski, Early Childhood Specialist at the Jacksonville Public Library and the winner of the United Way of Northeast Florida's 2016 Sherwood H. Smith Children's Champion Award for Advocacy has a three step recommendation.

1. Attend the Coalition's board meetings which are open to the public and be prepared to comment during the public comment period, then network with members afterwards.

2. Attend the meetings consistently and get to know the board members. Build relationships with them.

3. Offer to collaborate on projects to show the library's commitment to early learning services.

"An example of this is my work with the New Town Success Zone, a state/city funding project to help residents in the New Town neighborhood learn to maximize the resources in their community. I help by providing information about the library."

On another occasion she arranged for a group of librarians to evaluate and categorize a load of books that the Coalition received. The librarians determined the age appropriateness of the books and then set up a small library at the coalition office.

Through her work she's educating parents, teachers and administrators. "We are not a warehouse for books, we're access to information and we're here to serve people where ever they are in life," says Susan.

Finally, it is interesting that the Early Learning Office's outreach to FLA comes just a few months after the Public Library Association's announcement of its partnership with the Harvard Family Research Project which is designed to help public libraries identify successful family engagement strategies, and implement them, to help children of all ages succeed in school and life. According to PLA's website:

The 2016 project, entitled Libraries for the 21st Century: It's a Family Thing, is supported by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation through a grant to the Harvard Family Research Project. PLA and the Harvard Family Research Project will focus on the early childhood years to:

- Document existing practices and opportunities in family engagement. Data will be collected through a survey of public librarians, site visits to specific libraries, and suggestions from PLA members.

- Create a learning community. PLA members in the learning community will interact over the spring and summer of 2016 in order to learn from each other while also providing models and resources to the project.

- Create a toolkit or "ideabook" about family engagement in public libraries. Brief, relevant research about family engagement and best practices identified from the survey and learning community will be compiled into a toolkit. PLA will distribute the toolkit and hopes to develop additional publications and educational activities to support it.

Librarians who report to PLA about this initiative might have even more to report and contribute if they collaborate with their local Early Learning Coalitions! And, I look forward to seeing the results of PLA's documentation of practices and then promoting those results to legislators and policy makers. With about 600 babies being born in Florida each day, and the state having one million children who are under the age of 5, how exciting and inspiring that libraries are the nexus of early learning initiatives in Florida!

Martina Brawer
Executive Director
Florida Library Association

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