

# Florida Libraries



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## In This Issue

Message from the President • A Pinellas Partnership: The Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County Collection in the USF St. Petersburg Digital Archive • In Their Footsteps: A Photographic Retrospective; an exhibit method • The Mysteries of Secret Shopping and Student Training! • Floridiana with a Twist: What's in Hemingway's Cuban World? • Get the Recognition You Deserve with an FLA Award! • FLA Conference Preview • Florida Reads: Dennis Lehane Does Not Live Here Anymore • Message from the Executive Director

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

A Message from the President.....3  
*By Linda McCarthy*

A Pinellas Partnership: The Juvenile Welfare Board of  
 Pinellas County Collection in the USF St. Petersburg Digital  
 Archive.....5  
*By Joyce Sparrow, Samantha Trinh, and James Anthony  
 Schnur*

In Their Footsteps: A Photographic Retrospective; an exhibit  
 method.....8  
*By Kevin Beach, Danny Bradley, and Ericka Dow*

The Mysteries of Secret Shopping and Student Training!.....14  
*By Sarah Hammill*

Floridiana with a Twist: What’s in Hemingway’s Cuban  
 World?.....24  
*By Nancy Pike*

Get the Recognition You Deserve with an FLA Award!.....26

FLA Conference Preview.....29

Florida Reads: Dennis Lehane Does Not Live Here  
 Anymore.....32  
*By Joyce Sparrow*

Message from the Executive Director.....34  
*By Martina Brawer*



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Editor & Designer  
 Maria Gebhardt, Broward County Public Schools  
[mariagfla@gmail.com](mailto:mariagfla@gmail.com)

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The Florida Library Association is in a time of rejuvenation as we move toward the future. I can't believe that my year as president is just about over. It has been a whirlwind of activity. When I started my term as president last May, our new Executive Director, Martina Brawer, had been on board for just a few months, and we spent the past year together learning the ins and outs of the Florida Library Association. We had lots of help along the way from an outstanding, hardworking Board; amazing, energetic committees; lots of great past presidents; our previous Executive Director, Faye Roberts; and our treasured members. Over the past year, FLA has accomplished quite a bit. We have:

- Created new mission and vision statements
- Updated the organization's bylaws
- Created new policies for privacy and support for other organizations
- Updated the FLA Manual
- Updated the Intellectual Freedom Manual
- Created a new online reporting form for challenges
- Updated the Florida Public Library Standards
- Added The Valuable Roles of Academic Libraries document to our advocacy suite
- ◆ Migrated from Capwiz to Engage software for advocacy

- Shifted the 2016 FLA conference to March to avoid conflict with ALA in Orlando
- Updated our awards to be more inclusive for all types of libraries
- Been selected to participate in ALA's Chapter Librarian Career Development Facilitator Program
- Joined the Florida Civics Advance group as a partner
- Initiated FLA meet-ups around the state
- Established a new member group for retirees
- Developed a new logo

The upcoming conference at the Caribe Royale Hotel in May is going to be thrilling. Our theme is Florida Libraries: Inspiring Innovation, and we have certainly planned some new things this year.

Attendees can look forward to events like yoga, a dine out, member group speed dating, Career 911, and two lightning rounds. We are also fortunate to have a really top-notch speaker lineup this year.

We're bringing in lots of talent, like:

- David Lankes, who was a hit at FLA in 2011, and will return to conduct a free preconference on user experience along with Florida's wonderful Michael Schofield
- Peggy Cadigan, New Jersey's Deputy State Librarian for Innovation & Outreach and creator of Snapshot Day, who will kick off the conference as our keynote speaker



- Eric Deggans, NPR television critic and author of *Race Baiter: How the Media Wields Dangerous Words to Divide a Nation*, who will discuss how libraries can fit into conversations about race
- Amy Dodson, winner of *Library Journal's* Best Small Library in America award, who will discuss library success
- ALA's Michael Dowling, who will conduct Kitchen Table Talks about the future of libraries
- Larra Clark and Charlie Wapner from ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy, who will cover hot topics including net neutrality

We'll also have lively discussion on lots of fascinating topics like library cooking programs, the new information literacy standards, Florida's new public library standards, and so many innovative programs I can't even mention all of them. Register now and get ready for the time of your life! It takes a village to put an event of this scale together, and many thanks go to the Conference Committee under the leadership of Stephen Grubb, and all of the other committees that worked so well together to offer this event.

But it really takes you, our members, to make all of this happen. Thank you for maintaining your membership and for supporting the Florida Library Association. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you for being creative and innovative, and for sharing your ideas in the library community. Thank you for supporting Florida's citizens through your libraries. It's great to be a part of the Florida library nation!



*Linda McCarthy*  
*President*  
*Florida Library Association*

A Pinellas Partnership:

## The Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County Collection in the USF St. Petersburg Digital Archive

By Joyce Sparrow, Samantha Trinh, and James Anthony Schnur

### Introduction

Archives and libraries frequently partner with other governmental organizations to offer services and access to collections, as well as to preserve historical materials. Similar to the ways that public libraries go far beyond providing tax forms and maintaining government records, archives and academic libraries are finding new ways to build bridges with other public agencies to benefit both entities and the larger community.

The Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, Florida (JWB) and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) share an interest in serving the educational needs of the community. The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library at USFSP includes a Special Collections reading room that, as part of its collection development policy, contains preserved publications of JWB and other community agencies. Conversations in late 2012 and early 2013 led to a June 2013 agreement that allows the Poynter Library to add digital versions of materials from the JWB's collections as an unrestricted gift through a non-exclusive license.

Under this arrangement, public access to meeting minutes, reports, and other materials from the JWB's archival collections is provided through the USFSP Digital Archive, while JWB maintains physical custody of the copies of record and assumes responsibility for any public records requests.

### Juvenile Welfare Board

In 1946, JWB became the first independent special taxing district in Florida and the United States dedicated to funding services for children and families. Forty-eight years of minutes beginning with the first Board meeting on May 14, 1947 sat in an antiquated fire-proof filing cabinet that has been moved from three different buildings throughout JWB's 69-year history.



Other printed minutes were stored in JWB's special library until it was closed in 2008. The binders were then moved to closets. Twice, the print minutes were threatened by broken water pipes and flooding in the building. Additional minutes were also scanned and stored electronically.

Perusing the earliest minutes from 1940-1970s showed that not only did the documents offer the official record of a government entity supported by tax dollars, but

also a rich cultural history of Pinellas County children and families. Through the partnership with USFSP, the effort was made to collect the agendas, minutes, budgets, reports and correspondence in various formats and make them available to everyone through the USFSP Digital Archive.

### **USFSP Digital Archive**

The Poynter Library serves USF St. Petersburg, a separately accredited institution within the University of South Florida system. The USFSP Digital Archive launched in April 2011 under the leadership of Carol G. Hixson, Dean of the Poynter Library. As a librarian and library administrator at other academic libraries in the United States and Canada, Hixson played an instrumental role in developing, launching, managing, and growing digital archives.

Working with key members of the USFSP Library Leadership Team, planning took place in early 2011 and DSpace software was selected as the platform for the digital archive. Off-site backup storage assures continuity of operations. As of January 2015, the USFSP Digital Archive contains nearly 12,500 items; there are 1,014 items in the JWB Collection.

### **The Workflow Process**

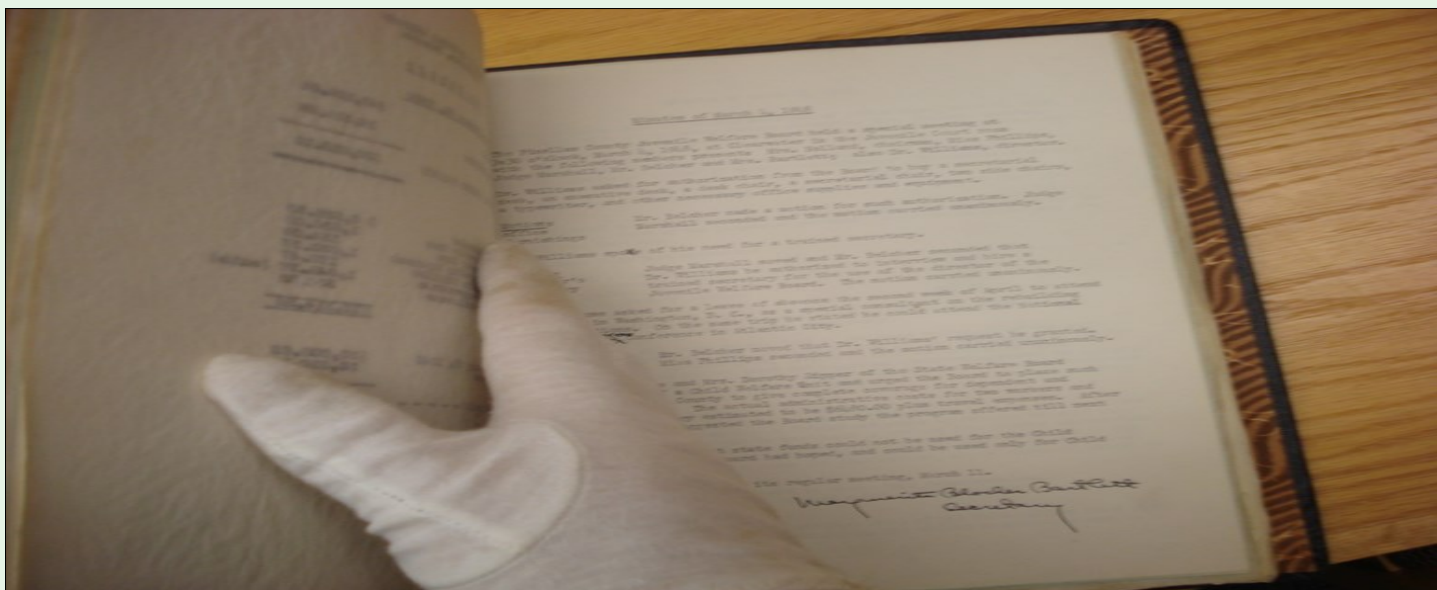
Accessioning of the JWB Collection began with several meetings and regular communication among the librarians to develop a plan of action based on best practices in digital archiving. A five-step process resulted; first selecting original material for inclusion, second transferring the material to the Nelson Poynter Library worksite, third processing the material, fourth uploading the prepared material to the USFSP Digital Archive, and fifth returning the original material to JWB. The workflow process is relatively simple, though we encountered a few interesting challenges.

File transfers and formatting needed consideration due to the variety of formats of the original material. Files are processed differently depending on the age and format of the original material. Electronic files from the most recent years are easily transferred via flash drive or disc. They are assigned a standardized file name and formatted for optimal digital storage and access.



Older electronic files posed more complications. The most common issue is assigning a standardized file name to correct prior inconsistent naming conventions and file specifications. There is also the need to extract data from floppy disks and convert file formats. In a few rare instances, files are incompatible or corrupt and original paper documents have to be scanned to create electronic files.

Other documents, including all meeting minutes prior to the mid-1990s, resided in paper format in physical binders and needed to be scanned page by page, collated, compressed, converted to computer-readable text using OCR (Optical Character Recognition), and assigned a standardized name. These files were the most time-consuming portion of the accessioning process.



As files are standardized they are uploaded to DSpace and submitted to the appropriate sub-community of the JWB Collection. The archives assistant under contract with JWB enters the metadata for each submission and attaches a Creative Commons license to each submission. The special collections librarian reviews each submission carefully before approving the content as part of the digitally archived JWB Collection.

Although templates within DSpace expedite the process, nuances within many of the documents require a careful review by the archives assistant. For example, while older sets of meeting minutes often serve as the only file for meeting minutes prior to the 1990s, board packets distributed during the last decade often include a dozen or more files as appendices. Each requires a unique file name.

Quality control is a priority at every stage during the technical process. Files are repeatedly assessed and documented to ensure that file names matched content, readability and optimal file formatting. Additionally, information gaps are identified and filled whenever possible. Accessioning of the JWB Collection is ongoing.

View the USFSP Digital Archive at

<http://dspace.nelson.usf.edu/xmlui/handle/10806/7813>

Joyce Sparrow is the Document Management Specialist at the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County. She received her Master of Science in Library Science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

Samantha Trinh is the Learning Resource Center Manager and Hybrid Coordinator at Fortis College in Largo, Florida. She received her Master of Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida.

James Anthony Schnur is a university librarian responsible for managing Special Collections and University Archives at USFSP's Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. He received his Master of Library and Information Science and Master of Arts in History from the University of South Florida.



## *In Their Footsteps: A Photographic Retrospective; an exhibit method*

By Kevin Beach, Danny Bradley, and Ericka Dow

On May 6, 2014, at the Public Library Director's Academy in Orlando, Melanie Huggins, executive director of the Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina, mentioned a dying library branch in an old historic neighborhood that had been revitalized by developing a series of strategies to engage the community. One of those strategies was the placement of oversized photographs of community members and leaders on the shelving end panels throughout the library branch. The result was inspiring and beautiful.

Kevin Beach, operations manager for the Manatee County Public Library System, could immediately envision something similar being done in our facilities. At the end of the conference, participants were asked to jot down three strategies to pursue in 2014, and the end panel photos were included as part of Kevin's three ideas. Sandy Newell of the State Library of Florida, coordinator of the Director's Academy, contacted him a few weeks later to tell him that his strategies had been chosen to track for the coming year to monitor how successful the



strategy-setting session had been. The end panel project was officially on the fast track!

Luckily our library system has a number of internal committees comprised of motivated staff members, and one of those long-standing committees is a grant review team. At the June grant meeting the



team discussed an opportunity through the Florida Humanities Council (FHC) that required the exploration of humanities and Florida history in an innovative way. We chose to connect that grant to the centennial celebration of our first Carnegie Library in Palmetto and the 50th anniversary of our incorporation as a county library system, all happening in 2014.

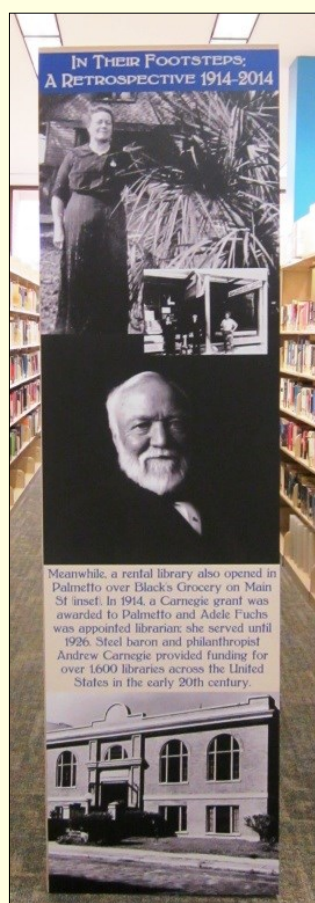
Our celebrations were scheduled to begin by October 1st. The grant was due July 1st – a matter of days! Award notification would be in early August, giving us less than two months to actually design and produce the exhibit. Could we pull it off?

Thus began a whirlwind process, or as we like to

call it, how to (try not to) go crazy in 90 days or less.

The FHC grant for which we wrote a proposal was the Community Project Mini Grant, which provides up to \$5,000 for a humanities-inspired project that meets the interests of the local community. In our case, the idea was a photographic retrospective that celebrated our library system's history, expressing gratitude to past organizers, staff, and support groups while also looking ahead to our future. The mini-grant process does not require a letter of intent, so we quickly started working out ideas for the proposal. The turnaround time was extremely fast, due to our decision to pursue the grant only weeks before the summer deadline. Like most public library staff, we are busy with many projects and with serving our patrons and community; grant writing is necessary to support enriching programs but not easy to accomplish in the midst of other activity. With less than two weeks before the deadline, Ericka Dow, Information Services Supervisor, made a plan to assign the parts of the grant that we could each contribute to. The grant was largely written by Kevin and Ericka, while Danny Bradley, Information Services librarian, arranged all of the meetings and estimates from sign shops. We also contacted Cathy Slusser, author and director of the Manatee County Historical Records Library, to ask for her participation as a contributing scholar, and she gladly accepted.

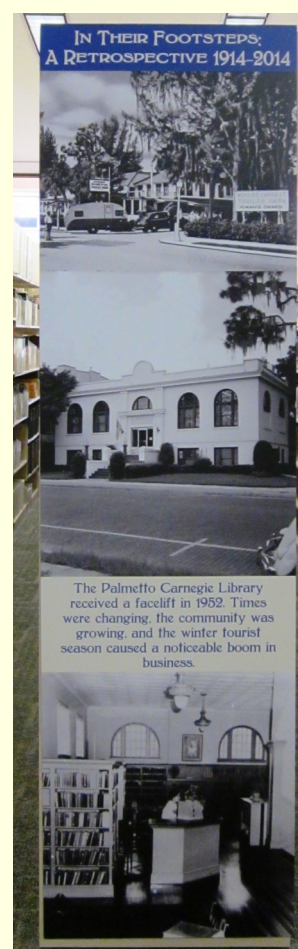
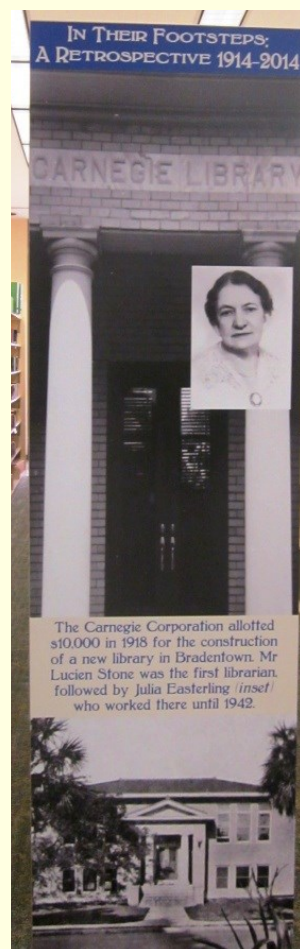
While writing the grant, we focused on the criteria required by FHC: including our mission, the humani-



ties content and timeline, how we planned to market the program, key staff involved in the project, and details of the budget. We needed to collect initial estimates from sign vendors so that we could determine how much the project might cost, to include with our grant application. We found it helpful to also include supporting documents such as our scholar's resume and an example of past success we have had hosting an exhibit. We named our project *In Their Footsteps: A Photographic Retrospective* to show respect for all the efforts to establish the Manatee County library system.

In early August, we received notification from FHC that we would be granted funds in the amount of \$4,000. What a terrific feeling to be selected as a grant recipient, but we literally had no time to celebrate! After 100 years of history leading up to the moment, we now had only six weeks to plan, produce, and install our display before the library's anniversary reception on September 29th.

We started our project by selecting photos based on the historical timeline that we had mapped out, with the expert help of our historical librarian and president of the Manatee County Historical Society, Pamela Gibson. This was the most important part of the process, and we went through many iterations before finalization. Thankfully, most of the photos were already indexed by Pam in our online Historic Image Digital Collection, and we were able to collect



others from our carefully preserved historical archives and from the branches' scrapbook collections. We first chose the themes for each panel (24 in total) which are organized chronologically, and then we set out to select the photos, being conscious that they must be demonstrative of the changes in Manatee libraries through the years. In addition, we took image size, orientation, and quality into consideration. All of the photos that are available in the digital collection were original negatives that were converted to TIFF format and stored on CDs.

After photo selection and writing the text, which was all fact-checked by Pam, each panel was designed to scale using a free open-source graphics

editor called Inkscape. Ericka and Danny were able to create a model of each panel before submitting any images to the sign company. Each model included font, colors, and filename for images that were to be included. This gave us a greater degree of control over the end product and drastically reduced the turnaround time when negotiating the finer details with the graphic designer at the sign company.

There were a few challenges as we searched for bids on the project--chiefly that of finding a sign vendor that could beat the low bids, but still offer high-quality and quick results. Initially, we began the

project gathering estimates for a display printed on a vinyl wrap which would be directly applied to the end panels of each shelving unit (like they do on vehicles). However, because our shelving units are metal with a grainy texture, we became concerned that the texture may show through the vinyl wrap and distort the image. We also decided that we preferred to select an option that could be easily removed and re-installed at branch locations. Our project vision shifted to portable laminated sign boards.

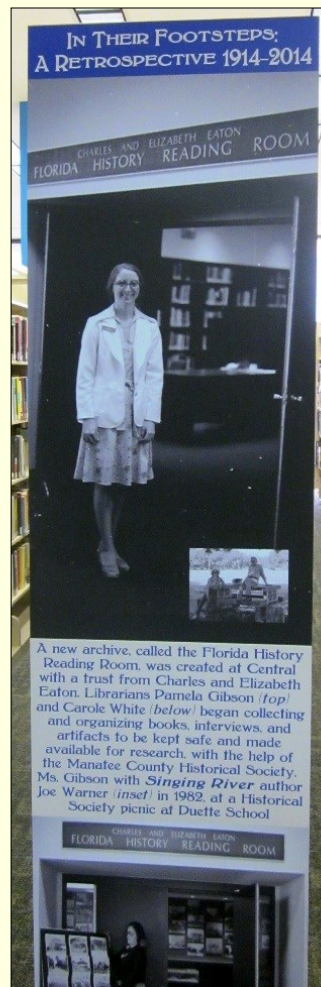
Fortunately, we were able to find a sign vendor that could produce these in a short amount of time for a reasonable price. The company printed 24 full-color matte laminate panels on 3mm black PVC sign board sized at 90" x 24.25". A majority of the images used for the panels were high resolution TIFF images (2,500 dpi) from our historic images database, stored on a USB drive which Danny personally delivered to the sign vendor. At such a large size, vector-based images would have been preferable as they can be resized without losing resolution. We had no choice but to use the compressed TIFF files, accepting the caveat that the images would become pixelated to some degree. We hoped that our images could be enlarged with an acceptable amount of resolution loss. On viewing a sample of the final product we felt that the pixelation was only noticeable upon close inspection and did not distract from the full picture.



The sign vendor, who also does the exhibits for South Florida Museum and Ringling Museum, did a fantastic job, but the process was a bit nerve-racking because we had so little time. By the time we finished our design and layout process and consulted with their graphic designer, they had less than a week to produce the panels. Because the coming Monday was our anniversary celebration, we were in such a hurry by Friday of that week that Kevin and Ericka hopped in the library van and headed to the sign shop to pick up the panels even though we had not received a call from the shop that they were ready. When we arrived, they were still working on the last few! They were very patient with us, though, and did not take long at all to finish. After loading the panels delicately into the van, we rushed back to the library to install them!

Since our intention was to make the display portable and limit the impact of installation on the shelving unit, we looked for a way to easily remove and reinstall each panel as they may be relocated to branch locations. We also wanted to save money by doing the installations ourselves, so we decided to go with a method we all felt comfortable with: tape.

We considered three possibilities: Velcro tape, heavy-duty double stick tape, and magnetic tape. The Velcro tape would have worked nicely for a series of interchangeable panels, but we decided it was not suitable for this project since it was not a perma-



nent installation. We also decided that double-stick tape would have been strong enough to hold the panels, but the panels would then be very challenging to remove and would leave behind residue. Fortunately our metallic shelving units allowed us to go with the magnetic tape. Once we had the panels, we were able to cut the magnetic tape into a series of strips and, in what was perhaps the fastest exhibit installation ever, three staff members were able to affix all 24 panels in less than one hour.

Once we were done, we stepped back to take a look. It turned out absolutely stunning. The picture quality was outstanding (much better than we antici-

pated), the panels were interesting and engaging, the colors and fonts worked great together. Staff from other departments came pouring out of their offices to take a look. A little bit of vision and a lot of teamwork got us to that point. It was a proud moment and there were a lot of high fives going around.

*In Their Footsteps* was promoted at the 50th Anniversary Celebration with tours and talks from historians and librarians. Pam and Cathy did a wonderful job speaking to the crowd about the history of the Central Library and the Bradenton Carnegie Library. Kevin had invited staff members of decades past and many of them attended, including some of the people who were featured on the panels. The exhibit was on display beginning the day we installed it on September 26th, and was shared on the library's website and Facebook. We also created an exhibit survey (in Google Forms) which was available from an iPad in a kiosk stand located near the exhibit.

We were pleased to have created an exhibit that was portable and could be displayed at other library and county locations. As long as the surface it is adhered to is metal, the magnet-backed panels can easily be installed in a variety of settings. Since the Central Library in Bradenton will be closed in the spring for renovations, we moved the exhibit to the Braden River Library in mid-January. They do not have as many end panels available so we were able

to remove some of them without disrupting the photographic narrative. Before we moved it, we applied additional magnetic tape to strengthen their hold. We discovered that we really had not used enough in our initial installation and they sometimes fell over. When we took them down, there were some that had footprints on the back!

In less than 90 days, we wrote and received a grant, became on-the-fly exhibit designers and installers, planned the programs, promotions, and grant compliance. And we are happy to report that we did not go crazy. This exhibit is visually striking, replicable, and, with proper handling and storage, will be employed for a long time to come.

1 - Manatee County requires that all grant applications and receipt of funds be consented to via the county commission. Our department further requires director approval of grants that we apply for. Once we had departmental approval, our consent agenda item was prepared with the assistance of our Neighborhood Services department compliance coordinator and was approved by Manatee County commissioners.

2 - A brief history of our library system can be found in the About the Library section on our website...[www.mymanatee.org/library](http://www.mymanatee.org/library)



The team from left to right:

Kevin Beach, Ericca Dow, Pamela Gibson  
and Danny Bradley

# The Mysteries of Secret Shopping and Student Training!



By Sarah Hammill

## Introduction

In 2011 the Reference Department at the Glenn Hubert Library (HL), Biscayne Bay Campus, Florida International University (FIU) moved to a joint service desk with the circulation desk. Shortly after the move reference librarians became concerned with the misinformation that the circulation department's work-study students sometimes provided to patrons. As a result, we felt a Secret Shopping program would be a good method to evaluate the information provided. Furthermore, it was seen as a method of improving customer service and comparing the self-perceptions of service to patrons' perceptions.

Initially we intended to do one round of secret shopping. However, in summer 2011 the Hubert Library reference department changed its service model. During the first round of secret shopping, the reference staff was seated beside the circulation staff at a joint desk area but the library adopted a reference consultation model of service in the summer of 2011.

Under the consultation model, nobody sat at the reference desk. The circulation work-study students were the first point of contact for all patrons. In addition to checking out library materials and helping with computer and printing issues, they now also had to evaluate patron questions, using critical thinking skills to determine the patron's information needs and answer the patron's questions whenever possible. When necessary, they were supposed to refer the patron to the reference librarian on duty in the consultation room. Referral was based on the question's level of difficulty.

As a result of the new service model, the second and third round of secret shopping changed its focus from customer service to the quality and type of information patrons received.

The second round of secret shopping showed that student employees were having difficulty answering basic known title questions using the library catalog. As a result, at the beginning of the fall semester (round 3), we developed a library instruction training program with an assessment of the students' information literacy skills. Consequently, round three not only served as a way to evaluate the type of information received, but also as a means to evaluate our student employee training program.

## Methodology

All library employees, including student workers, were notified about the program. It was explained that the secret shopping program was intended to see library customer service through the eyes of patrons. Employees were advised they did not need to prepare and that, as library employees, each should do his/her best to meet patrons' needs.

The secret shopping program was explained to the volunteer secret shoppers. Each secret shopper was given a question and asked if they would be comfortable asking it at one of the service desks in the library. Each volunteer was informed that the program was not intended to penalize anyone but as a means to improve library customer service. As a thank you for their service, they received a \$5 Starbucks gift card.

Secret Shoppers entered the library anonymously (or called the circulation desk) to ask their specific question. Once the shopping experience concluded, the shopper filled out a questionnaire (see Appendix A) noting any specific details about the experience. The program coordinator followed up with the shoppers for additional feedback.

## Results

This section will analyze each question asked as well as look at general themes across all secret shopping interactions.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) used a Likert-type scale where the shoppers specified how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. The questionnaire was meant to capture the intensity of the individual shopper's feelings.

Each shopper asked a unique question. See Appendix B for the list of questions.

### How many people helped you answer your question(s)?

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
1 person	1	6	5
2 people	7	2	0
More than 2 people	0	0	1

We asked patrons how many people assisted them in order to ascertain whether students and circulation staff are able to properly refer questions. In round one, of the seven questions that were not referred, three stated that the student at circulation tried to refer the question to reference but no one was available. Either the reference person was helping another patron or was not at the desk at the time of the transaction. This result does not reflect a positive shopping experience. It also clearly indicates that the reference staff is busy and it also stresses the importance of training students to know

easily answered by the students working at the circulation desk. However, a seemingly simple question like "Do you carry the *New York Times*?" requires more than a yes or no answer. The student answered the question correctly. She said yes and the shopper stated that the person was helpful but clearly a simple yes answer is not sufficient as we have the *New York Times* in print and online. Furthermore, with some digging it is likely the patron would want something specific from the paper.

The question, "How do I find an e-journal on the life stages of development?" was meant to be referred to a reference librarian. In round two, six questions were not referred. Of the six questions not referred, three should have been. The question, "Does the library have the video, "When I grow up?" was used because the library does not have the video but does have a book by the same title. The full-time employee searched the library catalog and told the patron, "No, we don't have the video." He did not offer alternatives and according to the patron, the employee stated that they could not find anyone else to help or answer the question. The results of this question clearly show that not only do students need to be trained but so do full-time staff. Yet the secret shopper commended the service and stated that the employee was knowledgeable about the information and that the answer was prompt and complete. The student employee actually showed the shopper how to search the catalog, which does include journal titles, but the patron would be looking for articles on the topic. Reference librarians are trained to delve deeper into the question and would have determined if the patron was actually asking for articles on the topic.

The shopper who asked, "Does the library have any books online about suicide?" mentioned that he was on hold for a while and was not taken through the steps of how to find online books. His comments included, "Kept me holding on for a while and I did not really get the answer I was looking for."

Two questions were not meant to be referred. One on Interlibrary Loan was referred to the reference

when to refer. Three questions should have been department when circulation staff could easily have answered it. The comment of the shopper on the question “How do I search for videos?” was enlightening in that she stated that the student showed her how to search for videos but did not tell her where the videos were located.

In round three, three of the shoppers who answered that only one person helped answer their question were referred to the librarian in the consulting room. Taking that into account, it appears that the intense training, role-playing, and testing of the students on when to refer paid off because all the correct questions were referred.

The work-study student on duty tried to refer the shopper with the question “I need to find nursing articles on high blood pressure” but unfortunately, a

reference librarian was not on duty. The student followed proper protocol and gave the shopper a librarian’s business card and the referral form we developed. Furthermore, the shopper commented that the student apologized for the inconvenience and not being able to assist the shopper better.

In round one, the shopper who rated the amount of time to get help as “a lot of time” called the library. She asked about the pros and cons of the SAT and ACT. The student who answered the telephone followed proper protocol. She did not attempt to answer the question. She told the patron that a librarian was not available and suggested the patron call back. The secret shopper commented, “Seemed like she did not know what she was doing. Was asked to call back when a librarian was present cause there was no one free at the time.”

**How visible was the library staff?**

	Not at all Visible - 1	Barely Visible - 2	Somewhat Visible - 3	Visible - 4	Easily Visible - 5
Round 1	0	1	1	2	5
Round 2*				1	1
Round 3*					5

\*In rounds 2 & 3 some shoppers called the circulation desk so the numbers do not add up to the total number of shoppers. It appears visibility is not an impediment to service.

**How enthusiastic was the staff?**

	Not at all Enthusiastic – 1	Barely Enthusiastic - 2	Somewhat Enthusiastic – 3	Enthusiastic – 4	Very Enthusiastic - 5
Round 1	0	1	2	3	3
Round 2	0	2	2	0	4
Round 3	0	0	0	3	3

**How much time did it take before you got the help you needed?**

	Too much time - 1	More time than warranted – 2	Some time - 3	Very little time – 4	No time at all - 5
Round 1	0	1	0	2	6
Round 2	0	3	1	2	2
Round 3	0	0	2	1	3



In comparison with round one, in round two, there is a decrease in staff enthusiasm and increased amount of time to receive assistance. In round one, six of the nine shoppers rated the staff as enthusiastic as opposed to only four in this round. In round one, eight of the shoppers rated the amount of time to get help as very little time to no time at all compared with four of eight in round two.

Round two of shopping had a number of unhappy shoppers. The shopper who expected help finding the videos commented that the library “needs better customer service”. The shopper who asked whether we had the video “When I grow up?” commented that it was “a horrible experience” and that she could not “really understand what he was saying.” The shopper who asked about books online on suicide gave staff enthusiasm a low rating. He commented that it was a poor experience and the staff member was not very helpful. He also mentioned that the employee needed to work on his phone etiquette.

The shopper who asked about information on Martin Luther King commented that the phone was answered promptly and she was referred to another person for help. Her comments indicate that the shopping experience was pleasant yet she rated the staff enthusiasm a three. She did give a higher rating on the time to receive assistance (very little time).

Comparing the answers to these questions to round one’s responses clearly indicates it is taking patrons more time to get the help they need than they would like for it to. Also, the staff enthusiasm is lower. More than likely it is because the circulation students are doing more without the assistance of the reference staff at the desk next to them. When the reference staff sat at the reference desk, they would answer the circulation phone and step in and help the student workers when needed.

The third round of secret shopping shows an increase in staff enthusiasm. It is highly possible that the shoppers rated staff enthusiasm based on their interaction with the reference librarian; four shoppers were referred. Furthermore, the increase in student training may have also led to better results.

One shopper reported that no one was available and received a business card from a reference librarian as well as a form to fill out. This person rated the amount of time it took to obtain the information needed as “no time at all”. Technically however, this shopper did not receive the information she needed.

One shopper rated the student employee who helped her as very enthusiastic and added the note, “professional” next to this question. She was extremely pleased that the employee went beyond searching and escorted her to the section where the books were located.

The shopper who called to ask how to renew books online rated the amount of time on the Likert-scale a three (average). However, in fact, the shopper did not really learn how to renew her books online and had to figure it out herself. The shopper might have been trying to emphasize the positive part of the experience. She gave the staff a rating of very enthusiastic but commented “The staff could not directly answer my question... I also had to ask for the website address; he did not automatically give it to me.”

One shopper rated the enthusiasm of the staff a three (average); however in the comments, he stated, “Librarian X was very enthusiastic.”

## How enthusiastic was the staff?

	Not at all Satisfied - 1	Barely Satisfied – 2	Somewhat Satisfied - 3	Satisfied - 4	Very Satisfied - 5
Round 1	1	0	0	1	7
Round 2	0	2	1	3	2
Round 3	0	0	3	1	2

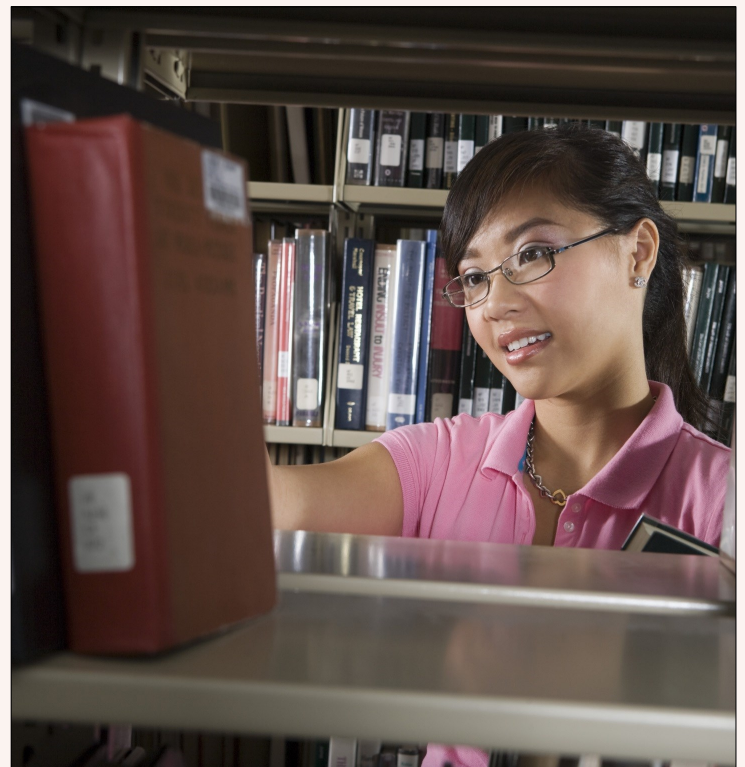
In round one, a shopper was extremely surprised that the librarian printed out the sources. In her comments, the shopper stated that librarian was very thorough and impressive. After helping her find some sources, the shopper was referred to the computers in the computer lab to search the library catalog and databases. The shopper stated, “All the information I obtained makes me wish I had to do a paper on *The Hilton*.”

However, there was one shopper who was not at all satisfied. This shopper was advised to call back because no one was available to answer his question. As a result of that interaction, the student training before round two of shopping focused on phone etiquette and when to refer and when to answer.

Unfortunately, the results in round two show that the training did not necessarily have the intended results. One shopper was informed there was not anyone around to help them answer the question. Another shopper mentioned that he did not really receive the answer he was expecting.

In round three, the three average ratings were from shoppers who did not get their question answered. One experienced a power outage during the referral consultation. Another one mentioned that the interaction with the librarian was very positive but the initial contact at the front desk was not very helpful.

The question, “Can you show me how to renew my books online?” is one that all circulation staff should know how to answer. However, the shopper commented, “The staff could not directly answer my question; instead he sent me to Research Help on the website. ... I also had to ask for the website address; he did not automatically give it to me.”



### How would you describe your experience at the library service desk?

	Not happy at all – 1	Barely Happy - 2	Somewhat Happy- 3	Happy – 4	Very Happy - 5
Round 1	1	0	0	1	7
Round 2	0	1	2	2	1
Round 3	0	0	0	4	1

In round 1, the shopper who was asked to call back was not happy. Another shopper commented, “There did not seem to be too many books on chronic depression.”

In round 2, two shoppers did not answer this question; both called the circulation desk. The question needs to be reworded to include the telephone. Surprisingly one shopper who was extremely frustrated because of a language barrier rated this question a three. The “not happy at all” rating came from a shopper who was left on hold for a while and did not get the answer he wanted. One shopper mentioned that the library could benefit from better customer service; the employee showed her where the videos were but did not help her retrieve them or refer her for more assistance.

In round three, even if the shopper did not receive a correct answer to his/her question, they rated his/her experience as happy or very happy. One shopper was told to come back when the power went out; another was informed the reference librarian was on break and a third did not get her question answered.

### How much information did you get?

	Way too much information – 1	2	3	4	Just enough information - 5
Round 1	0	0	0	1	8
Round 2	0	1	2	1	4
Round 3	0	0	1	1	4

### Did you experience information overload?

	Extremely overloaded – 1	2	3	4	No overload - 5
	0	0	1	1	7

In round one, nobody experienced information overload.

In round two, one shopper who was satisfied with her experience rated the amount of information as too much information. The shopper was referred to a librarian and said the following, “I was referred to a knowledgeable lady who answered all of my questions without hesitation. She walked me through accessing the online library and informed me of the e-books and journals available online. Overall, she was very helpful and told me to call back or come if I needed more assistance.” This interaction was the only one that was rated as receiving too much information.

In round three, the shopper who rated the amount of information received as a three was the shopper who was referred to a librarian but advised to come back due to a power outage. The same shopper mentioned that she borrows laptop computers on a regular basis and that the library staff is usually fast and professional.

## Did staff tell you to come back if you need more help?

	Yes	No
Round 1	4	5
Round 2	5	3
Round 3	4	2

In round one, the comments were all positive. However, in round two, the three who were not asked to come back for more help were the same three shoppers who rated their experience as not happy or neutral. Some of the comments included “Poor experience. Staff member was not helpful”, and “Horrible experience.”

In round three, the shopper who did not receive an answer to her question about renewing books online and the shopper who was told there was not a librarian available but handed a business card and research question form both indicated they were not told to come back or call again. However, the latter of the two commented that she was advised to contact a research librarian.

### Secret Shopping Program Assessment

Overall, we feel that using Secret Shopping to evaluate the library’s customer service provided valuable data. Initially, the program was used to evaluate customer service but when reference service changed from traditional desk service to a consulting service, the program was also critical in pointing out the need for in-depth student training.

We learned that there were key areas of training that needed additional attention so we implemented a formal training program that focused on ensuring student employees know when to refer the patron and when and how to answer the questions being asked.

This seemed to pay off. In the third round all four questions that should have been referred were. In

one case, the student did an excellent job of asking specifics of what the patron needed, such as “Would one book be enough?” When the shopper answered, “No, I need information”, the student immediately tried to refer the shopper but a reference librarian was not available.

As a result of the program we found that student employees were not adequately trained on what to do when a patron calls and there is not a reference librarian available to answer the question. For example, the student who took the question “What are the pros and cons of the SAT & the ACT?” followed proper protocol. She did not attempt to answer the question. She informed the patron that a librarian was not available and suggested the patron call back later. For obvious reasons, the shopper was dissatisfied with the service. Based on this, student workers are now trained to transfer calls to a reference librarian’s office phone if no one is available.

The program showed that we needed to increase our training efforts on proper phone etiquette. In fact, after intensive training sessions, the Dean of the Libraries called the circulation desk and the student employee answered the phone with a simple, “Hello” instead of the correct salutation of “Good Afternoon, Florida International University Library, this is John Doe, how can I help you?” This is unacceptable, and stressing the importance of proper phone etiquette might need to be more than a simple reminder. It might require appropriate disciplinary action if the telephone is not answered with the standard address.

With all of the positives of the Secret Shopping program, it is important to note that there is always the chance that shoppers will highlight the positive and deemphasize the negative. In fact, one shopper who did not receive an answer to her question still gave praise to the experience, "They did their best to help me even if they did not know the answer immediately."

### Conclusion

The Secret Shopping Program was successful in that it pointed out our strengths and perhaps more importantly our weaknesses. The student training program for work-study students has helped teach the students when to refer and when to answer. However it did not help with the issue of incorrectly answered questions. Reference librarians know that when a patron asks for a book, he/she often really wants information and not a book but articles. Reference librarians have a graduate degree in library science; work-study students cannot be expected to learn how to conduct the reference interview in three one-hour training sessions.

Backed up with data from the secret shopping program reference service at Hubert Library is once again provided at the reference desk. However, the emphasis on training students will continue. Not only are they earning a paycheck but they are learning valuable skills that they can implement when they become proud graduates of Florida International University and enter the professional working world.

Sarah J. Hammill is the Business & Online Learning Librarian at Florida International University. She is interested in exploring how to continually improve library services and resources specifically with online students. Throughout her career she has been interested in usability and online learning and how the two intersect.

### Appendix A Questionnaire for Secret Shoppers

1. What question did you ask?

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2. What day and time did you secret shop?

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3. What desk did you ask your question at?

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4. Were you referred to another person for help with your question?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many people helped you answer your question(s)?

1 person                      2 people                      More than 2 people

6. On a scale of 1 (not at all visible) to 5 (easily visible), how visible was library staff?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Not at all visible

Easily visible

7. On a scale of 1 (not at all enthusiastic) to 5 (very enthusiastic) how enthusiastic was the staff?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Not at all enthusiastic    Very enthusiastic

8. If the staff were talking when you approached the desk, did they immediately stop talking and attend to your question?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_                          No \_\_\_\_\_

9. On a scale of 1 (too much time) to 5 (no time at all), how much time did it take before you got the help you needed?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Too much time    No time at all

10. On a scale of 1 (not at all satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), how satisfied were you with the answer/information you got?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Not at all satisfied    Very satisfied

11. On a scale of 1 (not happy at all) to 5 (very happy), how would you describe your experience at the library service desk?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Not happy at all    Very happy

12. On a scale of 1 (way too much information) to 5 (just enough information), how much information did you get?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Way too much information    Just enough information

13. On a scale of 1 (extremely overloaded) to 5 (no overload), did you experience information overload?

1                  2                  3                  4                  5  
Extremely overloaded    No overload

14. Did staff tell you to come back if you need more help?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_                          No \_\_\_\_\_

Comments

\_\_\_\_\_

Please jot down the details of your interaction with library staff. What did the staff say? Where were you referred? What did the staff show you on the computer?

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**Appendix B – Questions asked during the 3 rounds of Secret Shopping**

Questions		
Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Do you carry the <i>New York Times</i> ?	Does the library have any books online about suicide?	Can you show me how to renew my books online?
I need to find an e-journal on alcohol abuse.	Where can I find information about Martin Luther King?	I need to find a book on mental illness.
Need information about the Hilton Hotel	If I want a book that FIU doesn't have, can I get it?	I need information on distance education.
I'm looking for information on anorexia.	Does the library have the video, "When I grow up?"	I need an article for my chemistry class about how chemical production contribute to the U.S. economy.
What are the pros and cons of the SAT & the ACT?	How do I search for videos?	I need to find a nursing article on high blood pressure.
Need information about chronic depression.	I need to find articles about birds. How do I do it?	I need to find information on diabetes.
I need information about student engagement and student success.	I need to do research on child abuse and neglect for my psychology development class.	
Need biography on Malcolm X or any other black leaders.	How do I find an e-journal on the life stages of development?	
Do you have the book <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> ?		

## What's in Hemingway's Cuban World?

By Nancy Pike

Doesn't it seem strange that many of us Florida librarians have little first hand knowledge of Cuba, a country less than 100 miles from Key West? Moreover, anyone who has driven to Key West expressly to see the Hemingway House, is surely keen to zip over to Havana for a look at the place where Ernest lived from 1939 to 1960 and penned seven books including *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Recent developments have raised fresh possibilities for Cuban travel. Most significantly, President Obama has put in place new rules easing travel restrictions for Americans visiting Cuba.

*The New York Times* and *Tampa Bay Times* explain more about it:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/21/travel/the-latest-on-travel-to-cuba.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/21/travel/the-latest-on-travel-to-cuba.html?_r=1)

[www.tampabay.com/news/politics/stateroundup/us-travel-trade-with-cuba-may-start-in-2015/2211197](http://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/stateroundup/us-travel-trade-with-cuba-may-start-in-2015/2211197)

The number of American tourists in Cuba is already increasing. Perhaps we should get better acquainted with our neighbor, just in case we decide to check it out. Is it true that visiting the country is like experiencing a 1950s time warp? (Ernest Hemingway's heyday!) We could not only visit Papa's house, still pretty much the way he left it in 1960, but experience other aspects of the culture of that era, like '57 Chevies rolling down the street and Son Cubano music.

If you want to go, numerous travel companies have put together people-to-people type tours to accommodate this burgeoning interest in exploring Cuba. Soon you will even be able to use your credit card there. To see what such a trip might be like, look at the offerings of travel companies like Friendly Planet, Road Scholar, or the Elderhostel program, that have been organizing trips for some time.

In preparation for a visit, you might want to explore some of the large trove of material available on Hemingway's Cuba and other features of the culture both in print and online.

The JFK Presidential Library has made available in print form thousands of digital scans of Ernest Hemingway materials from the author's former home in Cuba, the Finca Vigia. It is about nine miles from Havana, on the top of a hill in the town of San Francisco de Paula: [www.jfklibrary.org/About-Us/News-and-Press/Press-Releases/2014-Hemingway-Cuba-Documents.aspx](http://www.jfklibrary.org/About-Us/News-and-Press/Press-Releases/2014-Hemingway-Cuba-Documents.aspx)

Mary Hemingway, Ernest's widow, chose the Kennedy Library for his papers due to President Kennedy's role in helping her collect the materials after Hemingway's suicide. Digitization was accomplished through the efforts of the Finca Vigia Foundation under an agreement with the Cuban Council of National Heritage.



Boston's Finca Vigia Foundation has been working collaboratively with Cuban colleagues to restore and preserve Ernest Hemingway's home, its contents, and the fishing boat, Pilar. More information about the foundation dedicated to preserving the site and its contents is at the website:

[fincafoundation.org/](http://fincafoundation.org/)

PBS put together a travel special called Michael Palin's Hemingway Adventure. The episodes are divided among various periods, including a Cuba segment: [www.pbs.org/hemingwayadventure/](http://www.pbs.org/hemingwayadventure/)

Niece Hilary Hemingway's Hemingway in Cuba, with Carlene Brennen (Rugged Land, 2003) relates tales of the Cuba years, with many photos. American Public Television aired a video in 2004 with the same name, produced and directed by Hilary Hemingway, and based partly on the book. It can be viewed at <http://video.wgcu.org/video/1876923591/>

For a more recent summary, find Jeffrey Meyers' article in the February 7, 2015, issue of Commonweal called "A Good Place to Work: Ernest Hemingway's Cuba:"

[www.commonwealmagazine.org/good-place-work](http://www.commonwealmagazine.org/good-place-work) or "Ernest Hemingway's Havana Retreat" by Finn-Olaf Jones in the December 5, 2013, *Wall Street Journal*: [www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304439804579206022406525070](http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304439804579206022406525070)

If you want even more detail about the author's Cuba years, *Hemingway: the 1930s Through the Final Years* (Norton, 2012), is a combination of two titles from the definitive five-volume biography by Michael Reynolds. It is a movie tie-in edition published to coincide with the release of the 2012 HBO film *Hemingway and Gellhorn*, starring Nicole Kidman.

Finally, Larry Grimes and Bickford Sylvester examine the influence of Cuba on Hemingway's writing, in *Hemingway, Cuba, and the Cuban Works* (Kent State University, 2014).



### Some other Cuba-related resources of interest to librarians:

National Library of Cuba Jose Marti website:

[www.bnjm.cu](http://www.bnjm.cu)

*Roots and Flowers: The Life and Work of the Afro-Cuban Librarian Marta Terry Gonzalez* (Library Juice Press, 2015) by Abdul Alkalimat and Kate Williams.

Public school libraries in Cuba: [publiclibrarianonline.org/2013/05/a-visit-to-cubas-libraries/](http://publiclibrarianonline.org/2013/05/a-visit-to-cubas-libraries/)

University of Alabama School of Library and Information Studies Cuba Book Arts Program: <http://bookarts.ua.edu/resources/cuba-collaborative-book-projects/>

Cuban maps in the Perry Castaneda Map Collection at University of Texas:

[www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cuba.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cuba.html)

The Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami: [library.miami.edu/chc/](http://library.miami.edu/chc/)

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

## Get the Recognition You Deserve with an FLA Award!

The FLA winners are always announced at the Annual Conference.

### Congratulations to all our winners!



It's not too early to begin thinking about the 2016 FLA Awards. While there could be awards added or changed, our core awards generally stay the same year to year.

One change that was made for 2015 was splitting the Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Awards into two awards – one for children's services (ages 12 and under) and one for teen/young adult services (ages 13 through 18). Both awards will now be given each year.

We also added three new awards for 2015 (Library Research Award, Outstanding New Librarian, and Outstanding Paraprofessional) and updated the Exemplary Instructional Programs or Services Award.

Start thinking about who you can nominate – nominate yourself, your co-workers, or your library! Visit [FLA's award page](#) to find detailed criteria on each award. The call for applications will be sent out next fall, so get ready to be recognized!

#### **Awards for Overall Achievement:**

Do you know a member of FLA who has exhibited distinguished service to the Association? ([FLA Leader of the Year](#))

Do you know a librarian who has demonstrated outstanding and ongoing contributions to Florida librarianship? ([Librarian of the Year](#))

Do you know a librarian with a long-standing distinguished record of professional achievements and accomplishments? ([Lifetime Achievement Award](#))

Do you work for a Florida library that demonstrates outstanding service to the community it serves? ([Library of the Year](#))



*2014 Awards Ceremony*

Receiving the FLA Leader of the Year Award for having served as Executive Director of the Association was the culmination of my career in librarianship. I can't imagine a greater honor than being recognized simultaneously by both your colleagues and your employer.

Faye Roberts  
2014 Leader of the Year

If you think you know someone who should be recognized, don't hesitate to nominate them. It's such an honor to be selected, to be the one.

Carolynn Volz  
Hodges University

Do you know a Florida librarian who is new to the profession, has made significant contributions to their library and librarianship, and who demonstrates potential for professional development? ([Outstanding New Librarian](#))

Do you know a Florida paraprofessional or support staff member who has made a significant contribution to libraries in Florida? ([Outstanding Paraprofessional](#))

#### **Awards for Embodiment of Values and Ideals:**

Do you know an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to increasing or defending the right of access to the intellectual content of both print and nonprint media? ([Intellectual Freedom Award](#))

Do you work for a library that has displayed innovative methods, projects, products, or organizational enhancements, such as using current and emerging technologies for library processes or information service delivery? ([Library Innovation Award](#))

Do you know an individual library employee or group of employees who have made a demonstrably positive difference in the lives of Florida's library users? ([Maria Chavez-Hernandez "Libraries Change Peoples' Lives" Award](#))

#### **Awards for Excellence in a Field of Endeavor:**

Does your library provide excellent service via the World Wide Web? ([Library Web Presence Award](#))

Do you know a librarian or a team of librarians and staff members who planned and executed a continuing program or special project of library instruction? ([Exemplary Instructional Programs of Services Award](#))

Do you know one or more librarians who have published the best research within the past two years? ([Library Research Award](#))

Winning the FLA Library of the Year Award in 2013 led to positive recognition from community members and community leaders, including our county commissioners.

This recognition was instrumental to keeping our library fully funded.

Winning Library of the Year also strengthened employee morale and increased the sense of teamwork among the staff.

Adam Brooks  
Hernando County Public Library  
2013 Library of the Year



2014 Awards Ceremony

Do you work for a library that has provided noteworthy services to the business community?

([Libraries Mean Business Award](#))

Do you work for a library that has created an outstanding children's services program for youths ages 12 and under? ([Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award – Children's Services](#))

Do you work for a library that has created an outstanding teen/young adult services program for youths 13 through 18? ([Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award – Teen/Young Adult Services](#))

Do you work for a library who has conducted outstanding strategic marketing or public relations projects or campaigns that showed results? ([Excellence in Marketing and Public Relations Award](#))

#### **Awards for Citizen Recognition:**

Do you know of an individual who has advanced the stature of libraries in Florida? ([Outstanding Citizen Library Award](#))

Do you know a member of the Friends, library board, or library foundation who has provided outstanding service or achievement? ([Friends, Foundations and Boards Outstanding Member Award](#))

Do you know a company, business partner, or media agency who has made a significant contribution in support of library service? ([Outstanding Business/Media Partner Award](#))

Florida libraries are full of talented staff members who have innovative ideas for programs and services. Take a minute to pause, look around, and acknowledge all that has been accomplished in your library and make sure you and your library get the recognition you deserve!

Nothing means more than being honored by people you have taught and worked with over the years. They know your good side and your tired side, but when they choose to say it's been worthwhile...on quiet reflection it means more than any other recognition.

Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook  
2007 Lifetime Achievement Award



*2014 Awards Ceremony*



# 2015 Annual Conference Preview

Are you ready for inspiration? Located at the Caribe Royal in Orlando, the Florida Library Association's 2015 Annual Conference will take place on May 13 through May 15 with a preconference on May 12. This year's theme established by FLA President Linda McCarthy, Florida Libraries: Inspiring Innovation, ties together the array of more than 80 outstanding speakers and programs. [Click here to view detailed information about the programs.](#)



*Peggy Cadigan*

## Keynote Speaker

The Associate State Librarian for Innovation and Outreach Strategies at the New Jersey State Library, Peggy Cadigan will kick off the conference on Wednesday, May 13 as the keynote speaker.

Peggy will discuss strategies, tips for success and innovative methods for librarians from all types of libraries to learn and use. She will also explain how she inspired staff to innovate resulting in increases in funding as well as new programs.

Peggy is also just one of two librarians accepted into the Association of Professional Futurists. She is also the co-creator of Snapshot Day and she is leading one of only two pilot projects where adults in her community can earn their high school diplomas at their local library.

## Closing Session Speaker

If you are an avid listener of audiobooks, then you probably have heard Barbara Rosenblat many times before. As one of the nation's most sought after narrators of audiobooks, she has earned eight coveted Audie awards from the Audio Publishers Association.

Many others will know her as Ms. Rosa from the Netflix Original Series *Orange is the New Black*.

On Friday, May 15, take the time to hear inspirational information from Barbara at the FLA Conference Closing Session.



*Barbara Rosenblat*

## Leadership Voices

Take an opportunity to share your thoughts on leadership. On Thursday, May 14 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, you can record your insight. Wondering what to say? Get inspired from prior conferences:

2014: [http://www.flalib.org/leadership\\_voices\\_2014.php](http://www.flalib.org/leadership_voices_2014.php)

2013: [http://www.flalib.org/leadership\\_voices\\_2013.php](http://www.flalib.org/leadership_voices_2013.php)

2012: [http://www.flalib.org/leadership\\_voices\\_2012.php](http://www.flalib.org/leadership_voices_2012.php)

Make sure you note these great items so you don't miss them at the annual conference.

On Tuesday, May 12:  
Preconference  
Workshop from 1:00 p.m.  
to 5:00 p.m. & Meet Up  
at the Pool 6:00 p.m.

Keynote Speaker  
Wednesday, May 13  
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

President's Reception  
Thursday, May 14  
5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

General Closing Session  
with Keynote  
Barbara Rosenblat  
Friday, May 15  
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

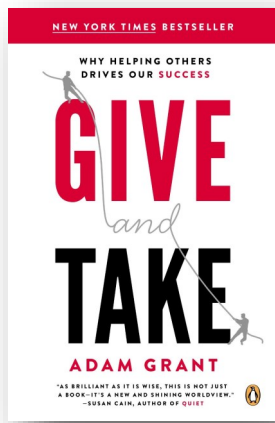
Leadership Voices  
Thursday, May 14  
10:30 a.m. to 12 noon  
Record thoughts on  
leadership!

Visit the exhibit hall!

Friends, Foundations &  
Boards Awards Pro-  
gram & Luncheon  
Thursday, May 14  
12 noon to 2:00 p.m.  
\*\*Ticketed Event\*\*

Use #flacon2015  
on Twitter

FLA Executive Board  
Meeting  
Friday, May 15  
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.



## FLA One Book, One State

On Wednesday, May 13, be part of the One Book, One State initiative. FLA President Linda McCarthy selected this book to be part of this year's conference. The author, Adam Grant, is the most highly rated professor at the Wharton School of Business.

Although prior conferences have had a discussion on the One Book, One State program, this year's program includes an interesting panel of past FLA Presidents.

## Join the 2015 FLA Pledge Drive!

Support Florida's future library leaders by contributing to the 2015 Scholarship Fundraisers. The silent auction and wine toss will take place at the FLA Annual Conference President's Reception on Thursday, May 14 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Want to check out the items to bid on? Click on the link below to see the virtual auction:

<https://floridalibraryfundraiser.afrogs.org/#/index>

# Professional Development Opportunities

**Retirement is Not Good-Bye**  
May 14, Thursday  
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Bonaire 4

**Put Your Virtual Self to Work**  
May 13, Wednesday  
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., Bonaire 5

**New Member & First Time Conference Attendee Orientation**  
May 13, Wednesday  
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., Curacao 7

**Making it Work: Online Project Management Techniques**  
May 13, Wednesday  
3:45 pm – 4:45pm, Curacao 2

**Member Group Speed Dating**  
May 14, Thursday  
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Curacao 5-6

**Career 911**  
May 15, Friday  
Part 1: 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.  
Part 2: 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.  
Bonaire 4

**Register Today!**



# DENNIS LEHANE DOES NOT LIVE HERE ANYMORE



By Joyce Sparrow

Bestselling author Dennis Lehane does not live in Florida anymore, but his novels do. His newest novel, *World Gone By* (2015), begins in Tampa in 1942. Joe Coughlin, a prince of Tampa's rum distribution during the Prohibition, and the main character in *Live By Night* (2012), is now the biggest charity supporter in West Central Florida. Libraries are included on Coughlin's donation list.

Lehane, who relocated from St. Petersburg, now lives in Los Angeles and Boston, has not forgotten Florida in his novels. His knack for describing Ybor City, Tampa and St. Petersburg tells readers he has researched the history of the metro area and knows his way around it. In *Live By Night*, Lehane describes the wall of heat Coughlin feels as he exits a train in Tampa in August 1929. Coughlin also notices the style of dress with local men in short sleeved shirts and gabardine trousers. He comments that Tampa's traffic moves "as slow as everything else in the August heat". Lehane uses "jungle humidity" and "a ball of steel wool dropped in a pot of oil" to describe the Florida summers.

In both novels, readers are taken on tours of the Port of Tampa and its cargo pits, and the under-

ground tunnels in Ybor City. Lehane identifies Tampa as a city swimming in corruption, but surrounded by the music of the Cuban rumba, swamps, and alligators. The chapters are rich with descriptions of Ybor City's Cuban and Italian heritage that is revealed in the restaurant food Coughlin eats while meeting with crime bosses, everything from *torta al cappuccino* to *ropa veja* with black beans and rice.

*Live By Night* introduces readers to Boston-Irish Coughlin, as the youngest son of a prominent police captain. Coughlin begins his life of crime by burning newspaper stands. He grows from a petty theft to a member of an organized crime mob. After spending time in jail, Coughlin emerges at a Tampa train station on that humid August day with big ideas to take over the rum distribution in half of Florida.

*World Gone By* reveals Coughlin as a successful 1940s business man who is rumored to have a criminal past. He lives in Ybor City with his nine-year old son, Tomas. Coughlin owns a sugar company, two distilleries, and a phosphate company, plus pieces of businesses in Boston, including a bank. Lehane includes an entertaining chapter where all the Tampa elective officials and crime bosses attend Sunday mass at Sacred Heart Church. There is a line



of traffic to get to the parking lot before the service and much conversation after the service to discuss the politics of local crime. Theresa Del Frisco, a Tampa florist by trade, who earns her real income from robbery and murder, tells Coughlin a bullet will soon arrive with his name on it. Coughlin spends sleepless nights trying to figure out if a business insider is going to take him out.

*Live By Night* is scheduled to be released as a Warner Brothers production, directed by Ben Affleck in 2016. The prerelease details indicate the movie is set in “Tampa’s Latin Quarter”.

Joyce can be reached at  
joycehopesparrow@gmail.com

### --More recent Tampa fiction--

Sterling Watson, Lehane’s colleague at the annual Writers in Paradise conference at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, has just published his sixth novel, *Suitcase City* (2015) that begins in Cedar Key in 1978. Jimmy Teach retired from his three-year professional football career at the age of twenty-four. After losing his earnings to bad business deals and a lavish lifestyle, Teach returns to Cedar Key to figure out what to do with the rest of his life. Teach becomes a bartender who “babysits tourists for \$10 an hour”. The plot moves to 1997 where James Teach is now the vice president of sales at a Tampa pharmaceutical company. In a bar after work, Teach is confronted by a young black man and, certain the young man has a weapon, Teach cold-cocks him. When the *Tampa Tribune* publishes the story, Teach’s life, once again, begins to fold. Like Lehane’s novels, Watson knows the area. *Suitcase City* is full of references to the Tampa Bay area. Watson zeroes in on Tampa’s underside and what happens when Teach’s past haunts his future.



On January 15th, I celebrated my one year anniversary with FLA and coincidentally our first membership renewal cycle has come to a close as well. As of April 15, FLA has 960 members and we expect a few more librarians and businesses to join Florida's Library nation. Those numbers are a little higher than last year and that's good, given funding cuts and other uncertainties that many Florida libraries face.

I'd like to take this opportunity to praise the FLA Membership Committee, led by Jessie Riggins and Melanie Higgins for the energetic, positive attitude that drove them to their phones and computers to ask our non renewed members to stay with us.

In addition to the membership numbers being up a tiny bit, we have evidence that librarians are engaging with, and through FLA at high numbers. There's strong interest in advocacy, the conference, the online trainings, dialogues on the listserv, and we've had plenty of award and scholarship nominations. I'm learning that FLA has lots of members, and it also has non-members and customers that benefit from FLA. Both libraries and associations of today have a greater variety of constituencies than they have had in the past and that's exciting. It's something that libraries and associations have in common – both need lots of people to value the services that are provided and to “join”: become a

patron or a member. But what do we do when the membership numbers slip? Of course, the traditional answer is: search for non dues revenue. I think a better approach is to: search for new customers and look at the big picture. Studies indicate that for associations and libraries alike there is a trend to looking beyond specifically defined patron or membership categories, and examining what other types of relationship options are available.

A recent trend report from Abila netForum, a company that provides membership and grant management solutions to non-profits, predicts that associations will continue to focus on member engagement, but will need to start focusing more on customers - individuals who don't want to pay for a membership, but, value the association's work, products and/ or services. These customers are willing to pay for those services in a different way than membership dues. “Customer retention will become more important than member retention. This is really an exciting time for associations,” Abila Senior Project Manager Darryl Hopkins said in a recent news release. “It's sort of funny to think that, after a year in which many for-profit companies tried to become more like associations by focusing heavily on membership offerings (and we looked on in fascination at their approach), we have an industry voice putting customers on the same plane as mem-

bers. It's an interesting turn of events."

Especially interesting, in that, David Lankes, professor and Dean's Scholar for the New Librarianship at Syracuse University's School of Information Studies and director of the Information Institute, in a recent lecture stated the libraries of the future may want to abandon the term patron or customer and use member!

Many factors influence whether a librarian becomes a member of FLA, and an important one is FLA's role. Here in Florida we have local library associations, multi library consortia and FLA, and associations for specific types of librarians. With so many options for library directors and librarians to choose from, how do they decide how they'd like to participate with their time and their resources? During my second year with FLA I want to learn more about the Florida library system to understand and even define each association's role and how we can collaborate to maximize resources and avoid duplication of services, like online trainings.

It's great that we have so many librarians in Florida joining and participating in FLA, and we love our members, but to stay viable we might want to reach out to non-members who might want to be customers.

Should FLA place a bit less emphasis on membership drives, (I'm sure there are a few people out there who'd like to receive fewer "join now" emails from us) and work to create new collaborative relationships with stakeholders for whom membership is not of interest or even an option?

Actually, we've already begun to do that. The FLA Scholarship committee, chaired by Kim Copenhaver, will launch FLA's first on-line silent action later this spring to allow *anyone* who wants to support FLA's scholarship program to bid on items. I'm so impressed that with committee! Watch for the announcement on the FLA Website and Listserv and make a bid, or forward the link to someone you know. Let's crowdsource our scholarship program! Let's see if we can engage beyond the membership (but keep them dear), form some new partnerships, get some new customers and keep FLA strong and sustainable.

*Martina Brawer*

Executive Director

Florida Library Association