



Utah Libraries News

FEBRUARY 2015

ULA President's Message

By Pamela Martin

Return on Investment

I have gotten a great deal out of my work with ULA. I've met colleagues from around the state who've inspired me to become a better librarian. I've gone to ULA sponsored workshops and conferences where I've not only received helpful tips about how to improve my daily work, but also renewed and refreshed my sense of librarian self. Thanks to ULA, I have a support network of librarians from across the state.

As the behind-the-scenes work to put together our annual Conference heats up, I am reminded that the Utah Library Association is an organization full of hard-working volunteers. It is your commitment and hard work that makes our organization great.

I am proud that so many of you have decided this organization is worthy of your time and energy. Whether you serve on the Conference Committee, the Program Board, or in one of our other positions, roundtables or committees, thank you for your investment in ULA. I hope you have found the return on your investment as fulfilling as I have.

IN THIS ISSUE

ULA Conference	2
Scarcity	3
Too Much Information	4
Teaching Online	5
CVLA Update	6
The Slump	8
Play to Your Strengths	9



ULA CONFERENCE 2015

AT THE CREATIVE CROSSROADS

2015 Utah Library Association Conference

2015 ULA Annual Conference

We are excited to announce that registration is now open for the ULA Conference 2015. Our theme for this year is, “**At the Creative Crossroads.**” With this theme, we are looking forward to coming together as librarians to share our research and projects and learn how to build more creative solutions in our work. Here are a few highlights of our program:

- Pre-conferences involve topics such library outreach, freedom of speech, leadership, and building literacy through storytime.
- 2nd Annual Silent Auction, proceeds help fund travel and registration for future ULA attendees
- Bonus! This year we have two key notes: Maureen Sullivan (also doing a pre-conference) and Lynne S. McNeill.

Please join us in St. George, Utah May 13th through 15th.



Maureen Sullivan

Photo Credit: <http://maureensullivan.org/>

[To register for this event click the link.](#)

For ULA membership information visit:

<http://www.ula.org/members>

Scarcity in the Library

The McRib. Pumpkin Spice. Candy Canes. No this is not a catalog of junk food, but there is a theme linking these things. Artificial Scarcity. Marketers have created this concept to heighten the desire and therefore the perceived “need” to purchase these things when they become available. It’s nearly impossible to escape the ubiquity of their roll-out. Starbucks released their special seasonal latte early this year to near hysterics and blanket media coverage. Seriously, a coffee flavor was a national headline. Clearly artificial scarcity works. It drums up sales, and views, and clicks, and all the other metrics of “success”.

Do libraries have this convenient marketing luxury? Obviously no. Would it be acceptable practice to make Harry Potter available in mid-summer for a short six month period? Limited time only, James Patterson novels!! Act fast before all the Divergent books are gone!!! But, in a way, libraries do have a form of artificial scarcity, maybe more a form of latent or rolling scarcity. We have a limited supply of certain items, and not everyone can have it at once. But, like the McRib, it’ll come back. This scarcity is clearly not created as a marketing ploy; it’s a natural result of budgets, space, and popularity. Now, excuse me, I need to run out and grab some Crème Eggs.

WHAT’S ON AT YOUR LIBRARY?

The staff of *Utah Libraries News* are happy to publish announcements of library-related exhibits, lectures, open houses, tours, and other events.

Send announcements to paul@northloganlibrary.org or zachary.allred@snow.edu. We publish issues in September, November, February, and April (Annual Conference Issue).

TMI: Gossip & Confessions in the Library

By Flora Shrode, USU Merrill-Cazier Library

Recently, I've threatened to hold what I call an "in-the-middle intervention." I would invite a few of my coworkers to gather and ask them to say to each other the things they tell me that they've prefaced with, "Don't say anything but..." followed by some private information that they feel compelled to share. The experience makes me uncomfortable. It often feels as if I'm in the middle between others who may not get along. It's particularly awkward when one person mentions something about another that I know to be untrue, or when a comment, in my view, twists what the individual under discussion would say about themselves. Certainly, we don't fully understand all of our colleagues' intentions, difficulties, or choices. These moments remind me of an article called "Seven Tips to Give Up Gossip," published in the Summer 2006 edition of *Tricycle: the Buddhist Review*. The suggestions there struck me as profound though they are brief and quite obvious. One of the tips says: "Know that comparing yourself to others is useless. Everyone has their own talents. Give up jealousy and the wish to put others down." That point relates to gossip with a negative connotation, which is likely rooted in the gossipers' own feelings of uncertainty, unhappiness, or unworthiness.

With the idea of an intervention, I must acknowledge that other people don't "put me in the middle." Only I can determine how I respond to

comments couched in secrecy. If I am clear and truthful, I must accept that opinions I express may make some people unhappy with me. But they would know where I stand, and I think such behavior on my part would only encourage trust. Perversely, I like the idea that others can trust me to keep a secret, although mostly I want my coworkers to learn that I prefer not to know private information.

Secrets at work generally become public knowledge eventually. Sometimes I learn of good news via a secret comment, for example when a coworker is going to be promoted internally, a colleague gets a job offer they really want after a clandestine interview, or a woman is pregnant. While I want to be a supportive and compassionate confidant, I don't want to play that role if doing so will likely be hurtful to someone.

A few other points from the *Tricycle* article's guide to giving up gossip could help all of us to contribute to peaceful work environments. One is to have a sense of humor and laugh at the silly things that sentient beings do in our attempts to be happy. "If you see the humor in our human predicament, you'll be more patient." Finally, "Train your mind to see others' positive qualities and discuss them. This will make you much happier than gossip ever could."

Teaching Online

By Brian Peters, Weber State

Hello?

Can anyone help me?

In cyberspace, no one can hear you scream!

Online classes can be, to put it politely, a lonely place to both teach and learn. But it is becoming an unavoidable fact of higher education. According to a 2013 study by the Babson Survey Research Group and the College Board, more than 21 million college students, 33 percent, are taking or have taken at least one online class.

For librarians, this is nothing new as a number of colleges and universities have moved part of their information literacy classes online.

And because teaching an online class is different from the traditional in-person instruction, the question then becomes: What are some of the dos and don'ts of online instruction?

Here is a good example of a 'don't' that I experienced earning my MLIS degree. I took a number of online class while attending Rutgers University. And most were adequate, if uninspired. But probably the worst online teaching offense came with one particular professor who expected students to sit through some three hours of audio lectures each week. No visuals. Just the professor talking into a microphone.

Here is another example from Jay Jex, the Reference Service Coordinator at Stewart Library and an adjunct instructor, who also took a number of online course while working towards his MLIS degree.

“One of the biggest errors that instructors make is not interacting with their students. Discussion boards can be a great forum of interaction between instructors and students. However, if the instructor does not interact with the

students on the discussion board this can drastically hinder students. Not giving a quick response to email questions is also a great weakness.”

Possible solutions:

For my own online information literacy classes, I have created a number of short, five minutes or less, subject-targeted videos. The videos range from creating an APA citation to the pitfalls of using online resources like Wikipedia. A sample of these videos is available on YouTube by searching Brian Peters AND Stewart Library.

For Jay's online classes he emphasizes open communication between himself and his students.

“I really appreciate weekly discussion boards. Unlike weekly quizzes and assignments I feel that discussion boards make it easier to clarify items that are not clear. They can also help create a forum for finding where you need to strengthen your teaching material. If a lot of students have the same misconception that appears on discussion board, or the same question, it can create a great teaching opportunity.”

This is the first of an occasional series looking at transforming the online class from mono-toned narrative and static PowerPoints, to high-flying engagement and learning. I would love to hear what others, both academic librarians and non-academic librarians, are doing to liven up the online environment: brianpeters1@weber.edu.

Update on the Cache Valley Library Association

By Joseph N. Anderson, CVLA Past President



The Cache Valley Library Association is bigger and better than ever! Now numbering more than 100 members, this grassroots organization in northern Utah and southern Idaho continues to grow and develop while providing regular opportunities for networking, professional development, socializing with colleagues, and advocacy in our community.

In 2014, we met for the first time in Preston, Idaho, selected a logo after a design contest and vote, appointed our first historian (Anne Hedrich, USU Merrill-Cazier Library), and held two fun social events (a biking tour of four local libraries and an activity at the American West Heritage Center corn maze), all in addition to our bimonthly programs which took place at locations around our valley.

At our most recent business meeting January 15, 2015, we had several exciting items on the agenda. First, we introduced the members of our newly-elected Executive Committee:

- President: Liz Woolcott (USU Merrill-Cazier Library)
- Vice President: JaDene Denniston (Mountainside Elementary Media Center)
- Past President: Joseph Anderson (Logan Library)
- Secretary: Karen Bowling (Smithfield Public Library)
- Member-at-Large (Academic): Dory Cochran (USU Merrill-Cazier Library)
- Member-at-Large (Public): Shawn Bliss (Cache/Rich Bookmobile)
- Member-at-Large (School): Shay Woodruff-Walton (Logan High Media Center)

Second, we presented our first-ever Library Hero award to the late Dr. Stephen W. Zsiray, Jr., a long-time local educator, school administrator, and school library advocate. The award was accepted by his wife, Paula, the current library media teacher at Mountain Crest High School in Hyrum. Third, we signed an agreement with the USU Merrill-Cazier Library to house our official archive there. Our historian will gather relevant items documenting the life of the association and deposit them in the archive annually.

Continued on next page . . .

. . . Continued from previous page

Personally, I've been excited for opportunities for CVLA and ULA to work together. I'm pleased to note that ULA's president is our own Pamela Martin (USU Merrill-Cazier Library) and that at least seven other Cache Valley residents are currently serving ULA in official capacities. By the time you read this, our members will have participated in a great professional development opportunity cosponsored by both associations: on January 29, members of the ULA Reference & Adult Services Round Table will present at the Logan Library on "The Reference Interview: Best Practices and Dealing with Difficult Situations." And in May, we'll return the favor when members of CVLA's first executive committee travel to the other end of the state to present at the ULA annual conference in St. George on "Local Connections: Creating a Community Librarians' Association."

The future looks bright for our library group up in the "hills of Bridger land."

To find out more about CVLA, visit us at facebook.com/cachevalleylibraryassociation.



The Slump

By Stacy Vincent, Salt Lake County Library

I have a dirty little secret. Sometimes, I just don't feel like reading. I know, I know, it's blasphemy coming from a librarian, but what can I say? It's the truth. I'm actually pulling out of a reading slump just now. I had high hopes of spending my holidays curled up with a pile of books I'd been salivating over for months, yet never seemed to have time for. Though when it came right down to it--snuggled up in my bathrobe, gently rocking in my Ikea POÄNG chair, steaming mug of tea at my side--I found myself reaching for my laptop instead of my pile of introvert gold. I'd tell myself that I would just check my email and the news, and then get to reading. Yet email and the news would turn into multiple email accounts, KSL, Yahoo News, Weather.com, CuteOverload, Youtube, Buzzfeed, and on and on until my eyes burned and it was time for bed. Sometimes I would actually start to read, but I couldn't get in to it. It was like going on a bad blind date and then sneaking out the bathroom window and into the Internet Wonderlands.

This continued for a few weeks. I felt like a doctor preaching healthy living to her patients, then breaking out the smokes and Jack after work. Not that there is anything wrong with watching Taylor Swift shake it off on Youtube,

or bouncing over to BuzzFeed to find out "Which 'SpongeBob' villain are you?". I just couldn't figure out why one of my favorite things suddenly held the appeal of an all-kale breakfast smoothie. At work I found myself playing the customer, asking my coworkers for suggestions, shopping our displays, and grilling my actual customers about what they were reading. The book that finally broke my slump is *The Doll* by Taylor Stevens. It's a gritty, heart pounding thriller, and definitely not my usual genre. Perhaps that's why it did the trick. Now please excuse me while I go snarf down the rest of this book on my 15 minute smoke book break!

If you have something public library related that you'd like to share, please contact me at svincent@slcolibrary.org. Seriously. Please do. No one ever has, so you'll be the Christopher Columbus of sending a public library related story to svincent@slcolibrary.org.

SEEKING SCHOOL LIBRARY SECTION EDITOR

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, CONTACT
EITHER GENERAL EDITOR THROUGH
CONTACTS ON FINAL PAGE OF THE
NEWSLETTER.**

Play to Your Strengths

By Natalie Gregory, Logan City Library

Ours is an interesting profession. We are information specialists, but sometimes those we serve believe our title means “expert in everything I don’t know.” The realm of everything our patrons do not know is vast; I know because the realm of everything I don’t know is equally vast. Luckily, because we know, or are learning, how to access information and technology, we can share a bit of the process with those who seek our assistance. But what can you do when faced with an unfamiliar problem that requires a solution? In the words of Alistair Moody (or at least a great pretender of him) “Play to your strengths.”

Perhaps you, like Harry Potter (to whom this was said), are thinking “I haven’t got any.” To which we can turn again to this enlightening conversation: “you’ve got strengths if I say you’ve got them.” Hopefully though, you thought of at least two or three things that you enjoy doing, or have a natural knack for. So how does that help? First of all, it gets you thinking about things you know you are good at. When you’ve had a verbal lashing from an angry patron, board member, parent, or really anyone, it’s good to remember that you are NOT the scum of the earth. Secondly, it helps to generate creativity and confidence. If you’re searching for your next program idea, play to your strengths. If you’re trying to improve a lesson plan, play to your strengths. If you’re having difficulty mastering a

complex skill, play to your strengths. When you focus on your strengths, you find what you’re solid in, and you also see more precisely where to ask for help.

Remember, Harry Potter looked to his friends for help in supplementing what he didn’t know. Hermione was his Google, Ron was his street smarts, and Neville, the most unlikely of helpers, was his specialist knowing precisely what Harry needed to complete the second task. Harry’s downfall (which isn’t highlighted in the movie) is that Harry didn’t ask for help from Neville, so Dobby had to step in and literally hand Harry what he needed. Don’t be dumb Harry; ask other people to help you with their strengths. You’ll find people love to do what they are good at.

Once you’ve thoroughly examined your personal strengths, the next step is to assess your library’s strengths. What are the things you collectively as a library staff are good at? What services are you proud you offer? What statistic or anecdotes are you happy to share? As you start to look at the overall strengths of where you work, the same process will repeat; you will see what you are strong in and good at, as well as maybe some areas you can strengthen. If you’re lucky, by assessing the personal strength of those you work with, you may find a way to build up your services by playing with the strengths you’ve just uncovered. (Please note: playing is an operative word; it connotes fun).

ABOUT THE UTAH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The mission of the Utah Library Association is to serve the professional development and educational needs of its members and to provide leadership and direction in developing and improving library and information services in the state. In order to accomplish these goals, ULA supports and provides continuing education programs for Utah librarians and library employees, especially at its annual spring conference. ULA also offers members a number of opportunities for library leadership, professional growth, networking, and community service. We hope you find the Utah Library Association to be an organization that makes a difference for you, for Utah librarians, for Utah Libraries, and for the citizens of Utah.



Utah Library
Association

www.ula.org

ULA PRESIDENT

Pamela Martin
pamela.martin@usu.edu

GENERAL EDITORS

Paul Daybell
paul@northloganlibrary.org

Zachary Allred
zachary.allred@snow.edu

SECTION EDITORS

Academic Libraries:
Brian Peters
brianpeters2@gmail.com

Public Libraries:
Stacy Vincent
svincent@slcolibrary.org

COLUMNISTS

Flora Shrode
flora.shrode@usu.edu

Natalie Gregory
natalie.gregory@loganutah.org

Joseph N. Anderson
joseph.anderson@loganutah.org