Libraries Southwest recently held their annual Trustee workshop. Guest speaker was Rebecca Hamilton, State Librarian. Also in attendance was Dorothy White, Associate State Librarian.

Ms. Hamilton discussed the state of the State Library and the future.

Meetings were held in Oakdale and Lake Charles.
FIRST LOAN

Thousands of people are on the library's waiting lists to check out popular books and best sellers. Now you can help shorten those lists through the Fairfax County Public Library Foundation, Inc.'s First Loan program.

Library specialists have created a list of high-demand books that you can purchase through a special Amazon.com program. When you buy books on the library's Wish List, they'll be mailed directly to the library's book processing center, and you can be among the first to read them. You'll be notified by the foundation that your generous donation was received, and it will be tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

For important First Loan procedures, visit the foundation's Web site at www.FCPLfoundation.org. Click on "Donate Books Through the Amazon.com Wish List!"

— Free Events, Fairfax County (VA) Public Library, May 2007

ASIAN LIBRARIES SET TRENDS

Most impressive was the Singapore National Library. It is a combination Library of Congress and Public Library. There are 16 floors with 58,000 square meters and 630,000 items. It is beautiful and ultra modern with numerous gardens and lots of natural light. Materials are available in English (70 percent) and Malay, Tamil and Chinese. In addition to the National Library, there are 20 community libraries, three regional libraries and 20 children's libraries.

Singapore was the first library in the world to deploy RFID technology for self checkout and returns.

One of the most interesting experiments that Singapore is conducting is the development of a Do It Yourself (DIY) library (Sengkang Community Library). The library runs entirely without an information or circulation desk. Everything is self-service. You can register for a library card, borrow and return books, renew books, check library records, pay fines, access Internet computers (eLibraryHub), add money to your CashCard, and seek assistance on library items and other services through Cybrarian. Cybrarian is a virtual librarian that is available to answer questions and CashCard is a universal cash card used throughout Singapore to pay for lots of things. Conspicuously absent are children. The only regular staff person is a concierge. The concierge works as security guard and answers basic directional questions.

Another interesting approach is the Singapore concept of a Children's Library. These libraries are very small (2,000 to 3,000 square feet) and are geared to 4- to 10-year-olds. (It is assumed that by age 11 children can independently take public transit.) There are currently 20 of these libraries, and any community can have one. The target market is large housing complexes in lower socioeconomic areas. They represent a curious community partnership. The community provides the space and the volunteers to help operate the library. The library provides part-time staff for story times, library materials, self checkout and return machines, and maintenance of materials.

— Mollie Fein, in the Crab, Maryland Library Association, Spring 2007

Asian Libraries Set Trends

Libraries Southwest

Beauregard Parish Library recently had visitors at its branches:

- Evalina Smith, Registrar of Voters, visited in August to promote voter registration.
- Louisiana Works visited to offer employment services and assistance to those living in the outer areas of the parish.

FIRST LOAN

Cybrarian is a virtual librarian that is available to answer questions and CashCard is a universal cash card used throughout Singapore to pay for lots of things.
**Reading Graphically**

When I was a child, my spare nickels would go to candy, and my spare dimes would go to comic books. In these more sophisticated (and pricey) times, I imagine youthful money is going to some sort of sour, gummy things and something called graphic novels. The difference between the two forms of reading/viewing, besides the price, is the size of the tome and the completeness of the story. As its name implies, a graphic novel is a complete, extended story, often of a serious nature and no usually involving superheroes in capes. Something like Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* or Frank Miller’s *Sin City* can hardly be compared to *Archie* or the *Green Lantern*. This is serious stuff.

After some lessons in this new and brave world of illustrated literature, I have begun to order graphic novels for the library. You can find the latest *Sandman* as well as graphic realizations of such classics as *Treasure Island* and *War of the Worlds*. If you are fond of graphic novels, want to give them a try, or have never heard of such a thing but are still a bit curious, check them out or the new bookshelf. (Due to the catalogers at the Library of Congress partying down on the day the first graphic came across their desks, they are to be found in the non-fiction area, mostly under 741 - for drawing.)

The Heron’s Eye, Peabody (IN) Public Library
April, 2007

**Books for Sale on eBay**

Be sure to check out eBay for the rare and collectible books donated by patrons to help raise money for the library! To see our offerings, go to www.ebay.com, then click the "Advanced Search" tab (in the upper right hand corner), then click "Items by Seller" in the box on the left, enter "LeboBooks" where it asks you to "Enter seller's User ID." Make sure that the three small boxes under that are not checked! Then click "Search" to see what we are selling. (It’s really not as complicated as it sounds!)

Any Friend of the Library who purchases one of these books through eBay will get a 10 percent discount. Be sure to let us know that you are a Friend when you purchase. New items are listed weekly, so check back often!

Friends Library News, Mt. Lebanon (PA) Public Library, April 2007

**American Press Newspaper Online**

The Beauregard Parish Library has added a staff-only electronic subscription to the American Press newspaper in addition to their print subscription. This new subscription allows the library staff to search the archives as far back as 1954.

**Movies at Beauregard**

Price It! Antiques & Collectibles Database has been added to the Beauregard Parish Library’s set of databases.

The database covers both expensive antiques and collectibles. The database can be accessed from the library or at home through the library’s database webpage. The records in this database come from many different sources including GoAntiques.com, eBay, TIAS, and various auction houses. More than 2 million new records are added to Price It! Every month to keep the data current.
A HIPPER CROWD OF SHUSSERS

By KARA JESELLA

ON a Sunday night last month at Daddy’s, a bar in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, more than a dozen people in their 20s and 30s gathered at a professional soiree, drinking frozen margaritas and nibbling store-bought cookies. With their thrift-store inspired clothes and abundant tattoos, they looked as if they could be filmmakers, Web designers, coffee shop purveyors or artists.

When talk turned to a dance party the group had recently given at a nearby restaurant, their profession became clearer.

―Did you try the special drinks?‖ Sarah Gentile, 29, asked Jennifer Yao, 31, referring to the colorfully named cocktails.

―I got the Joy of Sex,‖ Ms. Yao replied. ―I thought for sure it was French Women Don’t Get Fat.‖

Ms. Yao could be forgiven for being confused: the drink was numbered and the guests had to guess the name. “613.96 C,” said Ms. Yao, cryptically, then apologized: “Sorry if I talk in Dewey.”

That would be the Dewey Decimal System. The groups’ members were librarians. Or, in some cases, guybrarians.

―He hates being called that,‖ said Sarah Murphy, one of the evening’s organizers and a founder of the Desk Set, a social group for librarians and library students.

Ms. Murphy was speaking of Jeff Buckley, a reference librarian at a law firm, who had a tattoo of the logo from the Federal Depository Library Program peeking out of his black T-shirt sleeve.

Librarians? Aren’t they supposed to be bespectacled women with a love of classic books and a perpetual annoyance with talkative patrons — the ultimate humorless shushers?

Not any more. With so much of the job involving technology and with a focus now on finding and sharing information beyond just what is available in books, a new type of librarian is emerging — the kind that, according to the Web site Librarian Avengers, is “looking to put the ‘hep cat’ in cataloging.”

When the cult film “Party Girl” appeared in 1995, with Parker Posey as a nightlife impresario who finds happiness in the stacks, the idea that a librarian could be cool was a joke.

Now, there is a public librarian who writes dispatches for McSweeney’s Internet Tendency, a favored magazine of the young literati. “Unshelved,” a comic about librarians — yes, there is a comic about librarians — features a hipster librarian character. And, in real life, there are an increasing number of librarians who are notable not just for their pink-streaked hair but also for their passion for pop culture, activism and technology.

―We’re not the typical librarians anymore,‖ said Rick Block, an adjunct professor at the Long Island University Palmer School and at the Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science, both graduate schools for librarians, in New York City.

―When I was in library school in the early ‘80s, the students weren’t as interesting,‖ Mr. Block said.

Since then, however, library organizations have been trying to recruit a more diverse group of students and to mentor younger members of the profession.

―I think we’re getting more progressive and hipper,‖ said Carrie Ansell, a 28-year-old law librarian in Washington.

In the last few years, articles have decried the graying of the profession, noting a large percentage of librarians that would soon be retiring and a seemingly insurmountable demand for replacements. But worries
about a mass exodus appear to have been unfounded.

Michele Besant, the librarian at the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said the Association of Library and Information Science statistics show a steady increase in library information science enrollments over the last 10 years. Further, at hers and other schools there is a trend for students to be entering masters programs at a younger age.

The myth prevails that librarians are becoming obsolete. “There’s Google, no one needs us,” Ms. Gentile said, mockingly, over a drink at Daddy’s.

Still, these are high-tech times. Why are people getting into this profession when libraries seem as retro as the granny glasses so many of the members of the Desk Set wear?

“Because it’s cool,” said Ms. Gentile, who works at the Brooklyn Museum.

Ms. Murphy, 29, thinks so, too. An actress who had long considered library school, Ms. Murphy finally decided to sign up after meeting several librarians — in bars.

“People I, going in, would never have expected were from the library field,” she said. “Smart, well-read, interesting, funny people, who seemed to be happy with their jobs.”

Maria Falgoust, 31, is also a founder of Desk Set, which took its name from the 1957 Katharine Hepburn-Spencer Tracy romantic comedy. A student who works part time at the library at Saint Ann’s School, she was inspired to become a librarian by a friend, a public librarian who works with teenagers and goes to rock shows regularly.

Since matriculating to Palmer, Ms. Falgoust has met plenty of other like-minded librarians at places such as Brooklyn Label, a restaurant, and at Punk Rope, an exercise class. “They’re everywhere you go,” she said.

Especially in Greenpoint, where Ms. Murphy and Ms. Falgoust live about 10 blocks from each other and where there are, Ms. Falgoust said, about 13 other librarians in the neighborhood.

How did such a nerdy profession become cool — aside from the fact that a certain amount of nerdiness is now cool? Many young librarians and library professors said that the work is no longer just about books but also about organizing and connecting people with information, including music and movies.

And though many librarians say that they, like nurses or priests, are called to the profession, they also say the job is stable, intellectually stimulating and can have reasonable hours — perfect for creative types who want to pursue their passions outside of work and don’t want to finance their pursuits by waiting tables. (The median salary for librarians was about $51,000 in 2006, according to the American Library Association-Allied Professional Organization.)

“I wanted to do something different, something maybe more meaningful,” said Carrie Klein, 36, who used to be a publicist for a record label and for bands such as Radiohead and the Foo Fighters, but is now starting a new job in the library at Entertainment Weekly.

Michelle Campbell, 26, a librarian in Washington, said that librarianship is a haven for left-wing social engagement, which is particularly appealing to the young librarians she knows. “Especially those of us who graduated around the same time as the Patriot Act,” Ms. Campbell said. “We see what happens when information is restricted.”

Ms. Campbell added that she became a librarian because it “combined a geeky intellectualism with information technology skills and social activism.”

Jessamyn West, 38, an editor of “Revolting Librarians Redux: Radical Librarians Speak Out” a book that promotes social responsibility in librarianship, and the librarian behind the Web site librarian.net (its tagline is “putting the rarin’ back in librarian since 1999”) agreed that many new librarians are attracted to what they call the “Library 2.0” phenomenon. “It’s become a techie profession,” she said.

In a typical day, Ms. West might send instant and e-mail messages to patrons, many of who do their research online rather than in the library. She might also check Twitter, MySpace and other social networking sites, post to her various blogs and keep current through MetaFilter and RSS feeds. Some librarians also create Wikis or podcasts.

At the American Librarian Association’s annual conference last month in Washington, there were display tables of graphic novels, manga and comic books. In addition to a panel called “No Shushing Required,” there were sessions on social networking and zines and one called “Future Friends: Marketing Reference and User Services to Generation X.”

On a Saturday, after a day of panels, a group of librarians relaxed and danced at Selam Restaurant. Sarah Mercure nursed a blueberry vodka and cranberry juice and talked about deciding on her career after hearing a librarian who curated a zine collection speak. Pete Welsch, a D.J., spun records and talked about how his interest in social activism, film and music led him to library school.

But some librarians have found the job can be at odds with their outside cultural interests.

“I went to see a band a few weeks ago with old coworkers and turned to one and said, ‘Is it just me or is this really, really loud?’ ” said Ms. Klein, the former publicist. Her friend, she said, “laughed and said, ‘You have librarian ears now.’ ”

Fighting fires may sound taxing, chasing criminals demanding, but a new study says that working in a library is the most stressful job of all.

Librarians are the most unhappy with their workplace, often finding their job repetitive and unchallenging, according to psychologist Saqib Saddiq.

He will tell the British Psychological Society that one in three workers suffer from poor psychological health.

The study surveyed nearly 300 people drawn from five occupations.

They were firefighters, police officers, train operators, teachers and librarians and were intended to cover the spectrum, with the librarians first-thought to be the least stressful occupation.

Unchallenging, repetitive

The research, being presented at a society conference in Glasgow, looked at nine "stressors", such as how much control workers thought they had over their working day, their workload and how much they earned.

It also looked at absenteeism, job satisfaction and whether work stress spilled over into their private life.

Librarians complained about their physical environment, saying they were sick of being stuck between bookshelves all day, as well as claiming their skills were not used and how little control they felt they had over their career.

They were also more likely than other professions to be absent from work.

Mr. Saddiq urged all employers to tackle the problem of stress.

"Although these findings seem strange at first, they actually show how insidious stress can be, and how it can have an unhealthy impact in any organization," he said.

"Firefighters and police are trained to deal with the stresses that their jobs undoubtedly entail; librarians and school teachers are less likely to have these support systems in place.

"In addition, stress impacts different personalities in different ways, and different personalities may be drawn to different roles."

Story from BBC NEWS:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/1/hi/uk/4605476.stm
Published: 2006/01/12 © BBC

HAVE YOUR SAY
Stress is about control. The less control you have over your workload the more stressed you will become
Matt Munro, Bristol

Storytime at the Pitkin Branch of the Vernon Parish Library. Cheryl R. Smith, storyteller.
HURRICANE RITA CAN’T STOP READING PROGRAM

Because of the damage done to Cameron Parish Libraries during Hurricane Rita, the library has held its Summer Reading Programs in alternate locations recently repaired after the storm. One such occasion has been the popular Summer Reading Program performer, Harvey Rabbit and Friends.

Seeing the library needed a large location for this show, the judicial system got to work, changed its schedule and offered the library the use of its only courtroom for the hour needed to entertain the children. The kids loved the alternate location, with its air conditioning and no mosquitoes, compared to a tent the other programs were held in. Some of the other locations housing Harvey Rabbit and Friends was the First Baptist Church of Johnson Bayou, The Hackberry Recreation Center on the side the roof was not blown off, and the Grand Lake Fireman’s Center.

Library Director Charlotte Trosclair is determined to bring the Summer Reading Program to all the children of the parish. She has had to make a few adjustments on locations each week with some of the shows having to be held in tents and under pavilions.

Ms. Trosclair is also working with the public to get some bookmobiles out to the devastated communities to replace four lost libraries. One bookmobile is already in service and two more are due to be placed in communities later this month. These bookmobiles were donated from all over the U.S. and the books on them were donated as well. The Cameron Parish Library is due to start rebuilding some of its libraries soon with a completion date of the main library in two to three years. Until that time, the bookmobiles, the tents, and port-a-potties are serving as the community’s libraries. For ways you can help, call Charlotte Trosclair at 337-598-5950 or 337-274-1095 or email her at ctroscia@state.lib.la.us.

TOT TECH: TOO MUCH TOO EARLY?

New blogs, plug-ins, and programming languages aim to reach children. Three years ago, British software engineer Ian Hayward pondered a problem echoed by parents around the world: how to introduce his young children to the Internet without exposing them to its threats? So with Willem-Jan Schutte he created Glubble (www.glubble.com), a free plug-in that turns Firefox into a secure Web browser for children under 12.

Attempts to give kids an early jump on computing are not rare. The next generation of programming languages for kids are Program (www .program. com) and MIT’s Scratch (scratch.mit.edu). And two grade-school teachers in the U.K. had their students blogging on behalf of their teddy bears (www.talkingteds.blogspot.com).

But educational psychologist Jane M. Healy, author of Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children’s Minds’ and What We Can Do About It, is appalled that children are being targeted for Internet use. In 1999 the American Academy of Pediatrics suggested no usage for kids under 2, and to 2 hours per day for older children. Healy, however, discourages any computer time before age 7.

“When between ages 5 and 7, there’s a huge surge of development in children’s systems,” Healy says. “These are language systems, thinking systems—not looking-at-screens systems.”

A recent study conducted by Elizabeth A. Vandewater, professor of human development at the University of Texas at Austin, found that 27% of U.S. 5- and 6-year-olds average 1 hour of use a day. Though she says an hour is a longtime, she stresses that what really matters is what they’re seeing.

“The way to make the Web ‘safer’ is to make sure the places kids are going are building the skills they need,” she says. “And there are tons of Web sites that do that.”

—Anton Galang
— PC Magazine, September 18, 2007: 16
SAF SUES LIBRARY SYSTEM OVER GUN WEBSITES

For Immediate Release: 11/16/2006

BELLEVUE, WA – The Second Amendment Foundation and three Washington State residents have filed a federal lawsuit against a north-central Washington regional library system for denying them access to websites that include information on firearms and publications dealing with guns.

The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington in Spokane. Joining SAF in the lawsuit are Sarah Bradburn of Republic, Ferry County; Pearl Cherrington of Twisp and Charles Heinlen of Okanogan, both towns in Okanogan County. They are represented by the Seattle firm of Rafel Manville, and the American Civil Liberties Union. The defendant is the North Central Regional Library District (NCRL) encompassing Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant and Okanogan counties.

SAF and its co-plaintiffs are challenging the constitutionality of the library district’s policy of using internet filters on publicly-available computer terminals to block access to constitutionally-protected speech, including publications such as Women & Guns magazine, which is owned by SAF. The library refuses to unblock such access even at the request of the plaintiffs.

“The NCRL’s policy of refusing to disable its Internet filters upon request is restricting the ability of speakers, content providers and patrons of the NCRL’s public library branches to access the contemporary marketplace of ideas,” the lawsuit states.

“We entered this lawsuit because citizens are being denied access to our website and information about our organization and publication,” said SAF founder Alan M. Gottlieb. “That clearly violates both the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the Washington State Constitution.”

The lawsuit seeks to permanently enjoin the library system from blocking adult access to information upon their request, even though the material they want to view or research is constitutionally protected.

“The library system should not have the authority to censor information a wide range of topics, including gun rights,” Gottlieb stated. “This lawsuit is a warning to other library systems around the country against doing the same thing.”

The Second Amendment Foundation (www.saf.org) is the nation’s oldest and largest tax-exempt education, research, publishing and legal action group focusing on the Constitutional right and heritage to privately own and possess firearms. Founded in 1974, The Foundation has grown to more than 600,000 members and supporters and conducts many programs designed to better inform the public about the consequences of gun control. SAF has previously funded successful firearms-related suits against the cities of Los Angeles; New Haven, CT; and San Francisco on behalf of American gun owners, a lawsuit against the cities suing gun makers and an amicus brief and fund for the Emerson case holding the Second Amendment as an individual right.

RELATED POLICIES

A new program geared to teens began in June at the Beauregard Parish Library. On June 26, a meeting was held for any youth interested in serving on the Youth Advisory Committee. The meeting was held at the DeRidder branch with Merryville participating by teleconference. The committee will help plan programs, activities, library material, etc. that will attract teens to the library.

SUMMERTIME DRESS AT THE LIBRARY

In the second summer of the library’s casual dress code, it’s time to clarify what’s okay to wear to work and what’s not.

- The Loose-legged, ankle-length culotte-type look with heeled sandals is okay; the tight-fitting capris and rubber-soled flip-flops are not.
- Tailored twill pants, loosely ending at the knee or ankle, and worn with heeled sandals, are fine; knee-length pants, rolled up denims and the strapped and zippered safari-look are not.
- Pages can wear jeans with flat shoes, as long as the jeans are not worn, faded or torn. Tennis shoes are okay, too, as long as they are dark with dark shoelaces.
- Fitted t-shirt tops are okay. Too casual and wrinkled t-shirts are never okay. Spaghetti-strapped tops are okay under a jacket or sweater, but not as a standalone.
- Tailored knee-length khaki shorts have been approved for delivery drivers; but not camouflage pants or overalls, jeans or plaid shorts.
- Short-sleeved tailored shirts in colors and tasteful plaids are okay for men, but save the Hawaiian and large prints for the beach.
- Conservative sandals look great, but not the flip-flop style, even with the cute sequins and jewels.

— Libewire, Springfield-Greene County Public Library District (MO), June 2007

CAMERON PARISH LIBRARY STORYTIME WITH TOMMIE TOWNSLEY

Tommie Townsley was born and reared in Sulphur, Louisiana, where she currently resides. She is a mother, wife, and student. Mrs. Townsley obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La., graduating with several honors and achieving Academic Excellence. She also served as President of Psi Chi (The National Honor Society of Psychology). Mrs. Townsley is presently working towards a Master of Arts Degree in English.

She enjoys exercising, painting, gardening, spending time with her family, and most of all, writing! Mrs. Townsley travels to schools, libraries, and museums, reading her books to the young and old.
The Archives is an important collection of the Vernon Parish Library. The Archives Collection contains many interesting and important documents regarding Vernon Parish and other items. Items in the Archives are cataloged, and processed using approved archival methods, and stored in archival boxes housed in a climate controlled room.

Two items of particular interest are two tables from the Franklin estate. Mrs. Franklin’s son, Ben, donated two tables in memory of his mother. The Franklins lived just outside of Leesville on Hwy. 117. She drove a black pickup truck and attended First Baptist Church. One of the tables is a round dining room table, and the other is a side table. The side table is made from Vernon Parish timber, hand milled, and crafted by Master Craftsman M. G. Foster for Mr. D. D. Franklin in 1928.

Other items in the Archives include a large collection of school yearbooks from Vernon Parish Schools and Northwestern University in Natchitoches. There are gaps, and the Library is always seeking additions to this important collection.

Other collections include the Alyce M. Haight Collection. Miss Haight taught school in Vernon Parish for many years, and kept a photograph of every child she taught. The Curtis Bradshaw Collection contains newspaper clippings and some photographs during his years as Superintendent of Vernon Parish Schools. Dolores B. Owen grew up in Leesville. The Dolores B. Owen Collection contains many items from her years in Leesville, including prom programs, old tax records, etc. The Archives also contains original governmental documents, including Leesville City Ordinances, beginning with number 1, Minutes from the City of Leesville and the Vernon Parish Police Jury. Old telephone books, autographed children’s books are other collections.

Recently, the Library has been reproducing some of these important documents and making them available to the public. The photos from
**ARCHIVES continued from page 10**

the Alyce M. Haight Collection have been published, and perhaps the most popular is the *Leghorn Times Herald* Newspaper, originally published in Simpson, Louisiana in the 1940's. Originally published for soldiers, it became so popular that local subscriptions were very popular. Mrs. Emma Ruth Parker donated this collection to the Library in memory of her husband, Mr. Robert L. “Bob” Parker. The library has issues from March 1944 thru Sept. 1, 1947. The Archives also contains records from the Enon Primitive Baptist Church.

Four newsletters “From the Archives...” have been published, and are available for sale for $2.00 each. Other publications, Historic buildings on the National Register; Students of Miss Alyce M. Haight; and *Dawn of a New Day* (the original was published ca. 1944 by the Vernon Chamber of Commerce). Each of these is available for $10 ea. The last is a 250 page collection of the *Leghorn Times Herald*. This publication is available for $40.

The Library has also compiled a newsletter showing new businesses and members of the Chamber of Commerce for the past two years.

Some of the archived photographs have been cataloged in the library’s catalog, and some have been uploaded to the Library’s Flickr.com site. A link is on the Library’s web page.

**BRANCHING OUT IN GENEALOGY SEMINAR**

*Branching Out in Genealogy Seminar* will be held Saturday, October 27 at the Lake Charles Civic Center, Contraband Room. A reception and *After Hours Research* at the Library will be held at the Carnegie Branch Friday from 5:30—8 p.m.

This program is sponsored by the Southwest Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Library (a branch of the Calcasieu Parish Library), Libraries Southwest, and the Southwest Louisiana Genealogical Society, Inc.

Registration is $25.00 and includes the reception and *After Hours Research* at the Library Friday evening, box lunch access to vendors and three seminar talks at the program on Saturday at the Civic Center.

John Sellers’ topic will be “History’s Role in Your Genealogical Pursuit.” Bennett Greenspan, or a representative of Family Tree DNA, will speak about the use of DNA in one’s genealogical search. Richard Hooverson’s topic is “Tricks of the Trade: Tried and True Research Techniques.”

**TEEN GAMING—MORE THAN JUST ENTERTAINMENT**

New research findings show games offer more than entertainment: they offer challenging learning experiences. This research covered the three categories of games: video games, those requiring consoles and television sets; computer games, those that require a PC only; and online games, those that require an Internet connection, typically for multiplayer interaction.

Professor James Paul Gee, author of *What Videogames Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, has been in the forefront of gaming research since 2000. Gee states that games teach in a motivating, stimulating, and collaborative way, fostering lifelong learning skills. Games give new words and techniques in the context of play, not as abstract definitions. This holds their interest and spurs them on to develop new skills, vocabularies, relationships and attitudes. Games make kids smarter when they play them proactively, meaning when they think about game design, how their styles of play interact with that, how different strategies work, and how games relate to other things like books, movies and the world.

The Davenport Public Library recognizes the value of games in relation to learning. It now offers Xbox, PlayStation, and GameCube video games available for checkout. The public computers also offer games to play. Finally, the library hosts an “eGames for Teens” pro-
D R E S S  C O D E

When traveling, I always make certain to visit the local library. On a recent honeymoon trip to Jamaica, my husband and I stopped by Montego Bay's St. James Parish Library. I made certain to ask the front desk for permission before snapping photos of their collection. Moving unobtrusively from one area to the next, I found interesting shots everywhere I looked. Signs were posted all over the place. "Ha," I thought, as I looked at the laminated dress-code, "who would wear hair curlers to the library?"

Just then I was approached by a security guard. Thinking my photo essay was causing the disturbance, I quickly put my camera away. Instead, he pointed to the dress code. Yes, I understood. No curlers, no bikinis, no naked or exposed body parts. "Ma'am," he said, and gestured to my denim mini-skirt, "I will have to ask you to leave. We have children at this library." Reading further down ... oh my. No short shorts/skirts. My husband will never let me forget the time the children's librarian got kicked out of the library - for indecent exposure.

— Sarah V. Lyon in Cross Reference, Fairfax County (VA) Public Library, June 2007

W A I T  A N D  R E A D

The Peabody Public Library, in partnership with several area businesses and organizations, makes your waiting time a bit easier thanks to our new program, Wait and Read. When you are forced to wait for a doctor's appointment, auto repairs or a court appearance, the times goes quicker when you have some reading material. The problem is, even magazine articles can get left unfinished when we are called to the office to "turn your head and cough." What if you were to start a book, found it interesting, and then had to leave it? With our Wait and Read, you can take it with you. You can bring it back (to any participating location or the Peabody Public Library), or decide to keep and pass it on to a friend. These are not cataloged library books, but rather some of the many donations we receive. They are relative current titles, in good condition, and you will never have to worry about fines if it takes you a little longer than you hoped to finish.

— The Heron’s Eye, Peabody Public Library (IN), July 2007

T H E  4 1 1

Think your job is tough? Try being a phone operator.

- **Caller:** "I've been dialing 700-1100 for two days and can't get through to a store salesman."
- **Operator:** "Where did you get that number?"
- **Caller:** "It was on the door."
- **Operator:** "Those are our hours."
- **Caller:** "I'd like the number of Argoed Fish Bar, please."
- **Operator:** "I'm sorry, there's no listing. Is the spelling correct?"
- **Caller:** "Well, it used to be Bargoed Fish Bar, but the 'B' fell off."

— Reader's Digest, Oct. 2007 : 66
**ASK IF JOB APPLICANT HAS LIBRARY CARD**

— Do you read for pleasure?

There. A free job interview question for employers who say they can’t find good help.

Or for managers who say too many questions they want to ask applicants are prohibited by anti-discrimination rules.

Ask job hunters if they have a library card. Ask what book they’re reading now.

In fact, Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, is convinced that people who read are more likely to be patrons of the arts and other community efforts. They’re more likely to volunteer. They’re more likely to know things beyond their specialized career field.

And they’re more likely to have the knowledge and the communication skills needed in most workplaces.

“Thirty-two percent of kids drop out of high school in the United States. As business leaders, you inherit that. People come to you for jobs who don’t have a basic level of skills.”

The nation, he said, is suffering from 25 to 30 years of budget cuts by local school districts, which decimated arts education in the high schools. In some communities, only the children of wealthy parents who can afford private lessons are being exposed to music and other fine arts, he said.

That could mean fewer artists, fewer musicians, fewer authors will discover their creative muses. But equally important to the nation is that “we are not producing the next generation of audiences and arts patrons.”

Nor the next generation of good workers. Nor the next generation of good citizens in a democracy.

So ask these job applicants if they read.

“The key is reading for pleasure,” Gioia said. “A person who reads is more likely to engage in every form of civic behavior we can measure.”

Reading exposes people to larger worlds than their own.

It sparks imagination. That’s reason enough to aim for a workplace full of readers.

There’s more.

“Reading requires focused, linear attention - the ability not to be distracted,” he said. “Reading teaches information, syntax, vocabulary. . . . It nourishes curiosity and rewards intellect.”

Employer surveys often rank lack of communication skills, written or oral, as the biggest workforce problem. They say their employees can’t follow directions, can’t write a memo, can’t express themselves well.

— Portland (ME) Press Herald, July 31, 2007

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**Librarians can usually help patrons find any book they want. Here are two requests I could do nothing about.**

- A book about Cleopatra: “Must have photos.”

— Abigail Goldberg

— Reader’s Digest, October 2007: 66

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**GRANTSMAHIP SESSIONS HELD**

The Beauregard Parish Library has hosted two grant workshops, one designed for non-profit organizations and the other for the individual grant seeker.

The non-profit session was led by Joanne Kepics of the Foundation Center’s Atlanta (GA) office. The individual hand-on-grant workshop was conducted by local library staff.

Total attendance for the workshop was 29.
Better alignment is needed between high school and college standards, panelists say

The Alliance for Excellent Education convened a panel yesterday to discuss a new issue brief highlighting the disconnect that exists between the way high school teachers prepare their students for the future and how students actually achieve success. An emphasis on college readiness, panelists said, is needed to inform, assess, and improve high school teaching for the 21st-century.

September 13, 2007

Students are taught to believe that earning a high school diploma means they are prepared to enter college, and many policy makers and school leaders still believe that multiple-choice assessments are adequate measures discussion convened by the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE) on Sept. 12, researchers and education professionals said this is too often not the case.

AEE held the event to discuss an issue brief it published on the same day. Sponsored by the MetLife Foundation, the report claims that a fundamental disconnect exists between the way high school teachers prepare their students for the future and how students truly achieve success and meet the demands of college.

"We consider this a timely report, as well as a relevant one, since the House Committee for Education and labor is currently looking at No Child Left Behind" said Bob Wise AEE president and former governor of West Virginia. Among other issues, House legislators are considering measures that would call for revised and different teaching methods for encouraging 21st-century learning in their reauthorization of NCLB.

The issue brief is also important because "recent studies have shown that the skills needed to succeed in college are similar to the skills needed for good-paying jobs," said Cyndie Schmeiser, president of the education division at ACT Inc., which administers the ACT college entrance exam.

Jane West, moderator of the panel discussion and vice president of government and external relations for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, agreed with Schmeiser. "Just look at the Ford Motor Company, which considered moving states because they said they wanted more qualified, college-educated workers," West said.

The issue brief, a collection of data from various news sources and studies conducted by organizations such as ACT, states that only 34% of students graduate from high school ready for college—and that number is smaller for minorities. Overall, it says, only 18% of high school freshmen graduate in four years, go on to college, and earn an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Also, one-third of those who make it to college must take remedial courses, costing the nation more than $1.4 billion every year at community colleges alone, according to the report.

The problem, panelists said, is that high school standards, assessments, and course requirements are not aligned with those of colleges. In a recent ACT poll, 65 percent of college professors said they do not believe high school standards prepare students for college. Many professors believe teachers are covering too many subjects too broadly, when only a few core subjects should be taught and basic skills should be well developed in all students.

In terms of assessments, multiple-choice tests rarely ask students to explain their reasoning or apply knowledge to new situations. "High schools are increasingly boxed in by assessments," said Linda Darling-Hammond, professor of education at Stanford University's School of Education. "There's just a huge mess of expectations."

To help solve these problems, AEE and ACT have outlined definitions for college readiness. AEE defines it as "the knowledge and skills students need to succeed in entry-level college coursework without remediation." ACT's definition consists of four parts: habits of mind, key content knowledge, academic behaviors, and contextual skills.

"Habits of mind" refers to the skills that professors consistently identify as critical-thinking skills, such as analysis, interpretation, problem solving, and reasoning skills. Key content knowledge is the essential knowledge of each discipline that prepares students for advanced study, or study of the "big ideas" in each content area.

Academic behaviors include skills such as reading comprehension, time management, note-taking, and self-awareness of how one is thinking and learning. Contextual skills are skills needed to get into college, such as understanding the admissions process, placement testing, financial aid, and the expectations of college life.

To prepare students for success in college, panelists said, teachers must believe that all—and not just a few—students can succeed; make honors courses available as electives for all students; create rigorous work assignments using collaboration and problem-solving; teach reading comprehension and writing skills; and, most of all, motivate students to achieve.

"Currently, there's no universal standard for all students. All students should be able to accomplish and succeed," said Doug Wood, executive director of the National Academy for Excellent Teaching at the Teachers College of Columbia University.

Kim McClung, an English teacher at Kent-Meridian High School in Washington state, said most teachers teach to the "lowest common denominator, but they need
to expect the best from every single student." "Don't use a common-language version of a Shakespeare play because you think your students can't learn it. Take the time; teach them how to read it," McClung said.

But the panelists acknowledged that teachers must receive support to make this happen.

For example, teachers must be given more time to collaborate with colleagues and talk with individual students. They need time to give feedback and ask for work revisions," Darling-Hammond explained.

Teachers also must receive ongoing professional development to know their subject at a college level and to update their knowledge regularly, in order to incorporate critical-thinking skills into the classroom. For instance, a chemistry teacher not only must know the principles of chemistry, but also should encourage reading and writing skills for comprehending text, as well as preparing a lab report and analyzing results.

"If you're more efficacious, you're more likely to stay in your profession," said Darling-Hammond. Incentives and induction are also important. Schools need incentives to attract and retain good teachers, and new teachers should have a mentor, a first-year residency, or should partner with another teacher as they adapt to the classroom environment and learn their craft.

"Induction is so important," McClung said. "In California, there are lots of first-year residencies, and this has really helped put theory into practice."

Finally, teachers need helpful, longitudinal data and the skills to interpret this information as a tool to drive individual student instruction.

Panelists ended the discussion by listing two or three policies they'd like to see changed or enacted.

Darling-Hammond: Incentives for creating new, more productive assessments; a redesign of high schools so they are better able to support teachers; and programs that prepare teachers for college alignment.

Wood: More college-ready assessments, a comprehensive growth model that measures student growth over time, and more robust state data systems.

Schmeiser: Alignment among high schools, post-secondary education, and the workforce; and for states to have a uniform policy for what defines and constitutes a high school diploma.

McClung: Support programs for at-risk students and those with no home support, and open communication between universities and high schools.

"We know this information is nothing new," said Jeremy Ayers, policy and advocacy associate for AEE, "but we're trying to raise awareness on a policy level."

Woods agreed with Ayers, saying: "The most effective schools, boards, and councils need the support of their governor and other policy makers."

"With a sustained focus on college readiness, we hope to inform, assess, and improve high school teaching for the 21st-century," said Ayers. "We're trying to fundamentally change the culture and beliefs of high schools across the country."

— by Meris Stansbury, Assistant Editor, eSchool News 9/27/07

Don't use a common-language version of a Shakespeare play because you think your students can't learn it. Take the time; teach them how to read it.

CLASS UNCONSCIOUSNESS

After reading these actual comments from college students on CollegeHumor.com, we have one question: Who let them out of kindergarten?

Student: “So was Pearl Harbor retaliation for us dropping the atomic bombs on Japan?”

Art professor: “Today we are going to start self-portraits.”

Student: “Do we get to pick whose we do?”

A professor is explaining how to make an outline using Microsoft Word when he is interrupted. Student: “But my keyboard doesn’t have Roman numerals on it!”

— Reader’s Digest, Oct. 2007 : 157
FLAG DONATED

An American Flag has been donated to the Vernon Parish Library memorializing the Sept. 11 attack.

The Flag is signed by the artist, Dr. Otis D. Clark, Holly Beach, La.

NATIONAL DECORATIVE PAINTING MONTH

Members of the Central La. Decorative Painters group recently had their paintings on display at the Vernon Parish Library during October, National Decorative Painting Month.