

Executive Director's Column

By Adam Wright, Executive Director, NTRLs.

Happy February!

The website theme for this month is Technology and Libraries: A Perfect Match. Adam Beatty, NTRLs' IT Specialist, has written a nice piece on how technology in libraries has changed in the nine years he has been with the System. Carolyn Davidson interviewed Jesse Ephraim from the Southlake Public Library about moving forward with technology. Jesse was also kind enough to share several of the online resources he utilizes to keep up with the technology scene.

As you all remember, I began my tenure at NTRLs as the Technology Consultant so technology is very close to my heart. My wife knows this and surprised me the other day with a nice big 65 inch HDTV for our anniversary, Valentine's Day, Birthday, Father's Day and every other gift opportunity for the year. I was most impressed with the television and love watching the big screen. However, I have been very disappointed with the High Definition programming available. I have this wonderful technological tool and at the moment, nothing much to show on it.

I believe there is a lesson in my HDTV experience for us when it comes to technology in a library. Technology is just a tool that we utilize to help us provide services to our communities. Technology is not an end in itself. In our rush to adopt technologies, I believe that we sometimes overlook the question, "How will this technology better serve my patrons?" Please understand. I am not endorsing a policy where technology is not used. I would never consider that. However, I believe there are enough patrons that still come to the library for our traditional services that we can still afford to be selective in our adoption of technology.

In our quest to evolve our libraries for the future, we have to consider how this will affect the patrons who still use the library for the same reason they used it ten, twenty or even thirty years ago. Here at the System, we offer a wide range of services for our libraries to we can make sure we add some value in some fashion to each of them. I believe libraries can do the same with their own communities. You cannot make everyone happy all the time, but you can sure try.

Here is an update on what we are doing at the System.

Workshops

We offered the following workshops in January.

- **Creating Access Points: Cataloging Basics and Beyond**, 1/4/2008, Lewisville Public Library
- **Certified Library Computer Technologist Program**, Midwestern, 1/18/2008, Midwestern State University

February Workshops

- **Designing Outreach Materials - FULL**, 2/8/2008, System Office
- **Designing Outreach Materials - FULL**, 2/15/2008, System Office
- **Texas Teens Read: Game On**, 2/21/2008, Colleyville Public Library
- **TRC Jubilee: 1958-2008**, 2/21/2008, Colleyville Public Library
- **Texas Teens Read: Game On**, 2/22/2008, Kennedale Public Library
- **TRC Jubilee: 1958-2008**, 2/22/2008, Kennedale Public Library
- **Conflict Management, 2/26/2008**, Fort Worth Library, Summerglenn Branch
- **Texas Teens Read: Game On**, 2/28/2008, Wichita Falls Public Library
- **TRC Jubilee: 1958-2008**, 2/28/2008, Wichita Falls Public Library

Consulting

NTRLs has made the following consultant visits.

- Aledo – Weeding and Annual Report
- Alvord - General consulting visit
- Bowie – New Director’s orientation
- Dublin - Image audit
- Granbury – Weeding

Shared Integrated Library System (SILS)

On January 15th, the seventeen libraries of SILS met at the System office to go over the 5 quotes received. As a reminder, SILS released a Request for Quote in December 2007 to get a better idea on a project budget. In the midst of the meeting, five of the libraries decided to back out of the project for various reasons. We have also had one other library back out of the project. We currently have eleven libraries in the consortium. A budget of \$159,000 was developed by the 11 consortium members for the first year and a budget of just under \$46,000 thereafter. The consortium members also decided to base the cost share on population served.

At present, the consortium is attempting to increase its numbers and we have 19 additional libraries considering the project. SILS next meeting is Wednesday, February 20th from 2 pm to 4 pm. At this meeting, the consortium will consider the different policies and procedures being created by subcommittees.

Libraries for Literacy

On January 14th, the Libraries for Literacy Council met for the first time. At this meeting, the conceptual paper was discussed and modified. It was decided to go forward with a grant application to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission for the amount of \$60,000. If acquired, the System will use these funds to create three literacy pilot projects in Alvarado, Saginaw and Seymour. The council advised the System to consider other grant opportunities.

Read, Enjoy and Discuss (R.E.A.D)

The System submitted a Tocker Foundation grant application on January 15 for this program. Let's hope that we can get some funds to create some book discussion clubs in our libraries.

Special Needs Grant

The System is going to apply for another TSLAC grant to help the System determine how to better serve the Special Needs sector and then develop programming to assist this underserved population. It is a three-year program that will begin with a series of Special Needs fairs in several of the library communities. For more information on this program, please contact dona weisman, NTRLS CE and Programming Consultant.

NTRLS @ Your Library

We are accepting applications for our next NTRLS@ Your Library. It will be March 12th. If you need assistance with a project, apply to this program. If selected, the NTRLS staff will come help.

NTRLS Regional Meetings

We will have regional meetings this month. Our main topic will be the Fiscal Year 2009 Plan of Service. As a reminder, this planning document outlines to TSLAC our FY 2009 projects. Please attend these meetings if you can as we rely heavily on input from our member libraries on how best to serve them.

Regional Meeting Dates and Locations

February 4, Monday	Region 7, Burleson – 10 Libraries
February 11, Monday	Region 1, Wichita Falls – 11 Libraries
February 12, Tuesday	Region 2, Olney – 11 Libraries
February 18, Monday	Region 6, Weatherford – 9 Libraries
February 19, Tuesday	Region 5, Hurst – 9 Libraries
February 21, Thursday	Region 3, Lewisville – 13 Libraries
February 29, Friday	Region 4, Bedford – 11 Libraries

All meetings will start at 10:00 am and end at 12:00 pm.

I would like to end my column this month with another tribute. Phyllis Herskowitz, wife of long time NTRLS Board member Philip Herskowitz, died in January after a long battle with cancer. Phyllis was instrumental in establishing a public library in Chico, Texas and

was a strong supporter of small rural libraries. Phyllis loved libraries and I will always remember her for her passion for life. She will be missed.