

Executive Director's Column

By Adam Wright, Executive Director, NTRLs
January 2008

Happy New Year!

This month's theme is about Library Revolution. Libraries are beginning to do things differently, and the ones who are not are thinking about it. On December 3 and 4, I was fortunate to be one of the people invited to serve on the Transforming Texas Libraries task force. This event brought together a 100 library stakeholders to discuss what Texas libraries need to do to be ready for the future. For two days, we heard and discussed how libraries can evolve to continue to add value to their communities. I believe the overwhelming sentiment of the gathering was the phrase, "No left turns."

What does this mean? When you are driving home from work and need to stop to pick up milk and sugar, do you go to the grocery store that is across the highway where you have to make a left turn, or do you take the easy road and turn right into the grocery store more conveniently located.

Libraries need to have this mentality. We need to provide "no left turns" to our patrons. We need to make it easy for them to do business with us as it with the other parts of our society. We need a revolution to change the way we are doing things. The "status quo" does not work any longer. If libraries do not revolt and change business as usual, we will only see them lose their relevancy.

If you are interested in learning more about the Transforming Texas Libraries movement, go to <http://www.txla.org/temp/Transform.html> and let your voice be heard. On the left hand side of the page, you can access information about the questions we addressed and read about how each small group responded to their assigned questions. After reading all this material, you can give feedback by clicking on the "Send Us a Message" at the bottom of the page.

Be sure to look around our website this month. We have a great article from Carolyn Davidson, NTRLs Assistant Director, and I interview Kerry McGeath, City Librarian from Southlake, on his revolutionary practices.

Workshops

We held the following workshops in December.

- **Dec. 6th** – Disaster Planning
- **Dec 7th** – Certified Library Computer Technologist Program
- **Dec 11th** – Dirty Rotten Numbers: How to use numbers to prove effectiveness
- **Dec 14th** – Plinkit
- **Dec 18th** – Choosing the Best Reference Sources
- **Dec 19th** – Creating Access Points: Cataloging Basics

January Workshops

- **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
- **Rules, Roles and the Coming Revolution: Rethinking Our Libraries**, 1/25/2008, Southlake Public Library

Consulting

NTRLS has made the following consultant visits.

- **Dec 7th** – New Director Orientation and Reference Weeding for Aledo
- **Dec 12th** – NTRLS @Your Library in Mineral Wells
- **Dec 20th** – Weeding with Decatur
- **Dec 27th** – True Colors and Weeding in Granbury
- **Dec 28th** – Weeding in Decatur

Shared Integrated Library System (SILS)

We had six vendors send in letters of intent to submit a quote to us. We will take the quotes and create some cost justification tools for each consortium member to utilize in defense of their next budget cycle. We will also recommend the consortium apply for the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Cooperation Grant, which funds projects that bring libraries together in a networked environment for the purpose of serving communities. Our next consortium meeting will be in January.

Libraries for Literacy

We have established the Libraries for Literacy Council to assist us with establishing and promoting literacy instruction programs in libraries. We have expanded the scope of this project to include all library settings. We do plan on applying for grants to help us in our endeavors. Our first council meeting will be in January so I will have more details on this project in the February column.

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

We have seven libraries signed up for this book discussion project. As a reminder, libraries will contract with Bookswim to rent books. Bookswim will send each library enough copies of a title for each member of the library's book discussion group. When the library is done with the books, it will send the copies back to Bookswim, who will then send the next month's selection. NTRLS plans to write a Tocker Grant to fund a majority of the project.

Special Needs Grant

NTRLs is researching library programs to assist the special needs sector. NTRLs plans on applying for a TSLAC competitive grant to fund a special needs program. If you have ideas on this project, please let me know.

NTRLs @ Your Library

The NTRLs staff visited the Boyce Ditto Public Library in Mineral Wells on December 12th. We weeded, dusted and cleaned all day. It was a wonderful experience. We will visit another library in March. You can sign up on ntrls.org at <http://www.ntrls2.org/default.asp?action=article&ID=274>.

NTRLs Long Range Plan

At the time I am writing this column, I had presented a first draft of NTRLs five-year plan to the NTRLs Ad-hoc Long Range Plan committee for their review. The five-year plan, along with the TSLAC required two-year plan, will be presented to the NTRLs Board of Directors at the January meeting for their consideration. The plan will be available for comment on ntrls.org starting in February 2008. The NTRLs lay representatives will be presented the plan at the April System Assembly meeting.

I would like to end my column this month with a tribute. Randy Shaeffer, NTRLs Board member, died suddenly in early December. Randy was the perfect gentleman who loved libraries and one of the best guys you can ever hope to meet. Randy also loved his hats so I can think of no better tribute to this inspirational man than to tip my own hat to him. Randy, you will be missed.