Executive Director's Column: Notes from a Binge Thinker
By Adam Wright, Executive Director, North Texas Library Partners
November, 2009

Happy November!

It is hard to believe that it is turkey month again, but here we are. This month I have added a subtitle to my column: Notes from a Binge Thinker. My staff gave me this idea last month on Boss's Day. A poster was made with my picture on it and the message, "Warning: Binge Thinker." The label fit me perfectly, at least according to my wife, mother, children, etc. Apparently, I spend a lot of my time thinking about life, libraries and laughter. These Executive Director's Columns are often the result of my contemplation so it just seemed fitting to subtitle them with the same label. I wonder if I should start a blog with the same title. Let me think about that and I will let you know.

This month, our theme is security. In our Librarian Live podcast, Jesse Ephraim, Director of the Roanoke Public Library, discusses things librarians can do to help ensure their patrons' security, anonymity, and privacy. Our article is written by Washoe County Library System's Internet Services Librarian Jami Haskell and provides information on how to implement social software technologies responsibly, fairly and without legal liability.

Before I did my binge thinking on our topic this month, I had just read another listserv message from the Texas Chapter of the Special Libraries Association. I have been a member of this fine association in the past and I like to keep up with what is going on with it. I do consider myself a special librarian because I do not work in a traditional library setting, but use the skills I learned in library school for my position here at the System office. I have always used the title Special Librarian with some pride. I worked hard to become a librarian and feel I should honor my profession by stating what I do proudly. I knew some in the special librarian field had some difficulty with the "librarian" aspect of our title, but apparently it is more widespread than I had thought.

The listserv message detailed the vote by the association to change its name from the Special Libraries Association to the Association for Strategic Knowledge Professionals. The main justification for this name change was the negative connotation that the label "Librarian" carried with it. I can relate to this as I have experienced it firsthand in a corporate environment. I have been the competitive information specialist and went out of my way to avoid using the word, "Librarian" to describe myself because as soon as I did, people would treat me differently. Management also seemed to treat us "Librarians" differently because of the stigma related to the librarian profession. With all this in mind, I can see why individuals in the corporate environment would shy away from a professional association with "libraries" in its name.

How much emphases do we as a society place in a name? How much security do we feel behind a name or title? Why do we assume so much from just a label attached to our persona? First impressions are significant and sometimes names and titles are the only information a person has about another. What people see on paper about us often means more than the real facts. People see that one is a librarian and then falsely assumes that their skill set is limited to shelving books and knowing everything about classic literature.

Why do we protect our patron's privacy? In part, we do it to protect their good name so people do not judge each other based on their reading habits, or what they look at on the Internet. In the same way a corporate executive will judge a person based on the label "librarian," a government can target a person based on the fact that they read a book twenty years ago on a divergent subject. The right to exist as a person rather than a label is inherent and we as librarians are doing our patrons a service by protecting this right. Let's keep up the good work, because very few even care today.

Now that I have gotten off my soap box, here are some of the things happening around the System.

November Workshops

Register for these workshops at http://www.ntrls.org/ce/. If the course is full, let us know if you want to be put on a waiting list.

- LP3 2009: What's Age Got to Do with It?, 11/12/2009, Lockheed Martin Recreation Area
- Certified Library Computer Technologist Program - Part 2 - FULL, 11/20/2009, NTRLS Office

Consulting

Here are some consulting activities that took place in September.

Consulting:
Region 1
Wichita Falls - Accessibility

Region 3

Krum – Cultural Interview for Podcast

Region 4
Saginaw – Cultural Interview for Podcast
Watauga – Cultural Interviews for Podcast

Region 5
Arlington – Accessibility Fair

Region 6
Fort Worth – Outreach
Benbrook – Salary Survey

Region 7
Stephenville – Criteria for New Director

Other:

- Attended Regional Meetings in Watauga, Wichita Falls, Joshua, Bowie and Weatherford
- Attended TLA District 7 Meeting in Denton
- Attended Get Motivated Seminar in Fort Worth
- Attended Library Expo in Plano
- Consulted with Gordon Public Library on securing their 501(c)3
- **Accessibility** – met with Fort Worth library's contact for their Accessibility Fair to review their plans, discuss options and suggest additional resources.
- **Programming** – consulted with several different library program presenters regarding topics such as the value of tying presentations to Texas Reading Club slogans, why pricing public library presentations must be different from pricing for school library presentations, resources available to presenters designing programs especially for libraries, what library staff look for when "shopping" for library presentations.

Website and Internet Support for NTRLS Programs and Services

- Regular updates to NTRLS.org website.
- Website and other support for LP3 and Library Supporters conferences.
- Administration for NTRLS-supported listservs.

Plinkit

- Support for existing Plinkit projects at 7 libraries, plus the North Texas Library Consortium Plinkit site.

Overdrive Consortium

- Regular updates to Overdrive barcodes for participating libraries.
- Assisted Saginaw with transition from 7-digit Athena barcodes to 14-digit Evergreen barcodes.

General

- Technical and administrative support for North Texas Library Consortium project.
- Support for Librarian Live project, including updating website with new information for FY2010.

Libraries Served by the Technology Consultant

City	*Region*	*Project*
Alvarado	7	NTLC
Aubrey	3	NTLC
Benbrook	6	Overdrive
Bowie	2	Plinkit
Bridgeport	2	NTLC
Burleson	7	Overdrive
Crowley	5	NTLC
Decatur	2	NTLC
Kennedale	5	NTLC, Plinkit
Keller	4	Overdrive

City	*Region*	*Project*
Krum	3	NTLC, Plinkit
Lake Cities	3	NTLC, Plinkit
Mineral Wells	6	NTLC, Plinkit
Ponder	3	NTLC
Roanoke	3	NTLC
Saginaw	4	Overdrive, NTLC
Sanger	3	NTLC, Plinkit
Seymour	1	Plinkit
The Colony	3	Overdrive, Plinkit
Wichita Falls	1	Overdrive

O2U REPORT			
Region 3	Aubrey Area Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Carrollton Pub. Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	William T. Cozby Public Library, Coppell	1 request	Bookmarks
	Denton Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Flower Mound Public Library	4 requests	Bookmarks, Posters
	Frisco Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Justin Community Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Krum Public Library	2 requests	Bookmarks, brochures

	Lake Cities Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Lewisville Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Little Elm Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Pilot Point Community Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Plano Public Library System	1 request	Bookmarks
	Betty Foster Public Library, Ponder	1 request	Bookmarks
	Roanoke Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	Sanger Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
	The Colony Public Library	1 request	Bookmarks
Region 4	Colleyville	1 requests	Flyer
	Saginaw	1 request	Brochure
Region 5	Haltom City	5 requests	Flyers, posters, bookmarks
	Richland Hills	1 request	Calendar
Region 6	Fort Worth	2 requests	Flyers, posters
	Mineral Wells	3 requests	Flyers, calendars, brochures
	Weatherford	13 requests	Posters, flyers, calendars
	29 Requests completed. **2,784 Materials Distributed**.		

Libraries for Literacy

- Literacy Program Toolkit in the process of being revised.
- Accepted proposals for the Literacy Program Seed Grant.

- Monthly online literacy lunches ready to be launched.
- Online class for literacy program administrators begins this month.

Special Interest Groups & Conferences

- The Assistant Director, Conference Coordinator and Libraries for Literacy Coordinator attended this year's Plano ISD/Richardson ISD Expo, an event similar to NTLP conferences.
- As participants of NTLP's North Texas 23: A Roundup of Web 2.0 Technology, all 13 members of Fort Worth Library's Wedgwood Branch earned certificates of completion. As a result, NTLP staff presented that library with a certificate of staff proficiency in Web 2.0 technology at a special ceremony Oct. 14. A framed certificate recognizing the accomplishment and each individual was provided for display in the public services area of the branch and another for display in the work area. http://northtexas23.blogspot.com/
- LibraryPresentationsNetwork SIG http://librarypresentationsnetwork.com **What's Age Got to Do with It?** *the 2nd annual Conference for Library Program Planners & Presenters, a.k.a. LP3 2009,* is set for Thurs. Nov. 12 at the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area has broken our previous record for number of exhibitors. LP3 2008 held that record, at 38 exhibits. Many of the exhibitors are new to NTLP libraries. LP3 2009 will have 42 exhibits – the maximum we can offer in that hall. The sessions will offer training not only for library personnel responsible for library programming for every age range, from infant to senior, but also for those who do library-related presentations away from the building.
- LibrarySupportersNetwork SIG http://www.librarysupportersnetwork.com **The Future of Libraries***, the 2nd Annual North Texas Conference for Library Supporters*, is set for Sat. Feb. 13, 2010, at the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area. Many of last year's attendees asked that the length of the session be extended and/or that it take place on more than one date. To test receptiveness to that concept, and to offer an alternative for people who attempt to register after we have reached full capacity, we will have a kick-off dinner and speaker event Fri. Feb. 12 for which people may register and pay separately. Friday's featured speaker will also lead a couple of sessions at the conference.

Expanding Accessibility Program

- Phase 2 of this program began Sept. 1, 2009. In that phase, an expert in universal access web design will meet twice with each of the SFY 2009 pilot project libraries to review their web presence and determine ways to broaden access.
- All eight SFY 2009 pilot project libraries, Arlington (Central), Bedford, Colleyville, Fort Worth (Central), Hurst, Krum, Watauga and Wichita Falls, have received the accessibility tools each ordered with funding assistance

under this grant and have put those items into use.

- Our Expanding Accessibility Coordinator attended Wichita Falls Public Library's *Hearing, Vision & Mobility Fair* Thurs. Oct. 8, 2009, and Watauga Public Library's *Everybody's Library* event Sat. Oct. 10; our Assistant Director attended Arlington Public Library System's *Low Vision Fair* Sat. Oct. 10. It has been interesting to see the variations in each of the library fairs and rewarding to know that each fair has been very well-attended and well-received by members of their communities.
- Upcoming Accessibility Fairs at other Pilot Project libraries include:
  * Sat. Jan. 23; 2010; 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Fort Worth Library's *Accessibility Tech Fair*
  * 2010 date TBD at the Colleyville Public Library's *Accessibility Fair*