

## **Executive Director's Column**

By Adam Wright, Executive Director, North Texas Library Partners.  
September 2009.

Happy September!

This month our theme is Texshare databases. For our Librarian Live podcast, we have interviewed Carolyn Davidson Brewer, Texshare guru about the program. Our guest columnists this month is Mike Avila, Public Information Specialist at the Texas State Library. In his column, he writes about the Texshare program and all it has to offer.

Through our Texshare databases, we provide a wonderful service to all Texans because of the fine quality information we offer to them through the available information resources. As many of you know from my previous columns, I feel very strongly about our role as librarians in educating our communities on information literacy.

A few facts about the information landscape in today's society (all facts were researched using the Texshare databases):

- The internet has grown to over a trillion unique pages with over 1 billion people accessing it daily. ([New Scientist](#); 5/2/2009, Vol. 202)
- The amount of people using the Internet tripled between 1997 and 2007. The same study found that only 19 percent of people without a high school diploma use the internet. ([USA Today](#); 06/04/2009)
- A Pew Internet Study in December 2007 found that 58 percent of the 2700 surveyed go to the Internet to find answers to questions about health, school, careers, and government issues. ([Information Today](#); Feb2008, Vol. 25 Issue 2, p19-20)
- The same study said that only 13 percent of those surveyed use a Public Library for information answers. At the same time, most of those without Internet Access do not use the library to get answers, but instead get them from somewhere else like a friend's home that does have Internet access. ([Information Today](#); Feb2008, Vol. 25 Issue 2, p19-20)
- Users use search engines to find the answers to their questions. However, relevancy is still a big issue with most search engines. We are presented with a huge amount of hits, but studies have found that we only have the patience to go through the first page of results and visit the first few hits (and we only spend fifteen minutes per search). We are also very satisfied with our search engine results, no matter the quality of information. (Information Services & Use 28 (2008) 261-268)

- Search engines optimization (SEO), the practice of designing websites to allow for optimal placing in search engine results, is heavily practiced by businesses today. In fact, SEO is used so much that they are dramatically influencing what results appear at the top of search engine results. (Reference Librarian, 2009, Vol. 50 Issue 3, p234-247).
- Newspapers are moving their businesses online due to the decline in subscriptions. People are not reading the printed word as before and newspapers are evolving themselves to accommodate for peoples' new reading habits. ([BusinessWeek Online](#); 3/11/2009, p13-13, 1p).

Reading over the facts above, you can draw some pretty convincing conclusions. We have access to more information today than we ever have before. Most people are finding answers, and getting their news, online versus the more traditional fashion of going to the library or reading a newspaper. However, due to the crazy way that search engines prioritize their results, and the lack of understanding in searching for answers, people are exposed to a small percentage of what is available online. It is ironic that in a time where we have more information available to us than any other time in history, we are utilizing very little of it; even though we have the technological means to do so much more. Also, one has to question the worthiness and credibility of sites that search engines are offering to users. If a site is attempting to garner online business through the search engine, can it be trusted as a legitimate source if it appears at the top of search engine results?

Last week, at a committee meeting, I made the statement that I thought we had failed as a profession to let the information landscape get so out of whack. We should have been in the forefront of ensuring information remain accessible and credible. To say the least, it was not well-received by the other librarians at the meeting. I realize now that I was too bold in my proclamation. We had no control over the Internet and the tools we are currently using to find information. However, knowing what we do today, I think we need to step forward now and offer our assistance. We need to make information literacy a major priority in the years to come.

With all this in mind, I have decided public librarians need a manifesto when it comes to information literacy. Here is my first take at it. If you are interested in helping me develop this further, please contact me so we can work on it.

### Public Librarians Manifesto on Information Literacy

1. Public librarians will be more socially aware of issues important to individuals and provide objective information to those underserved who do not have access to needed information from other places.
2. Public librarians will help people understand how search engines work.

3. Public librarians will help people understand how to determine the validity and credibility of information.
4. Public librarians will teach people that not all information is free and public libraries have resources available to anyone.
5. Public librarians will teach good information seeking behavior to its community members.
6. Public librarians will work with Search Engine vendors to create a non-biased search engine option so that the public can expect results not determined by special interests.
7. Public librarians will help people eliminate information overload by teaching them about how to locate good credible information.
8. Public librarians will work with database vendors to make information as easily accessible as possible through simple interfaces employed by search engine companies today.

## **Now for some of the things happening around the System.**

### **September 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.

- **Online Resources for Job Seekers**, 9/15/2009, Online
- **Certified Library Computer Technologist Program - Part 1 - FULL**, 9/18/2009, NTRLS Office

### **Consulting**

Here are some consulting activities that took place in August.

#### **Region 1**

Henrietta – Programming

Wichita Falls – grant possibilities

#### **Region 2**

Newark Public Library – Fines

#### **Region 3**

Ponder – Met new library director

Krum- Fine information and Accessibility Station

### **Region 5**

Everman – Library Visit for Texshare  
Hurst - Programming

### **Region 6**

Met with Library Board concerning Collection Development  
Fort Worth Advocacy Team – Working on strategic plan

### **Region 7**

Grandview – Check on new library planning

### ***Meetings:***

Literacy Council  
Service Planning  
Librarian Live  
Supporters Conference

### ***Other:***

Reception for NT23  
Interviewed Literacy Coordinator Candidates  
NETLS Conference - Selecting the Right Stuff – Allen  
Present at Plano Staff Development Day  
Created NTLP Facebook Page

### **Website and Internet Support for NTRLS Programs and Services**

- Regular updates to NTRLS.org website.
- Website and other technology support for CYC, LP3, Supporters' and TechNet conferences.
- Administration for NTRLS-supported listservs.
- Continued work on web application for a consultants' directory.
- Began work on web application for Consortium Pricing Project.

### **Plinkit**

- Support for existing Plinkit projects at 3 libraries

### **General**

- Technical and administrative support for North Texas Library Consortium project.
- Consulting visits to Ponder and Krum (for NTLC).
- Support for Librarian Live project.
- Regular updates to Overdrive barcodes for participating libraries.
- Responded to technology questions from Bridgeport and Krum

### Libraries Served by the Technology Consultant

<i>City</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Project</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Project</i>
Alvarado	7	NTLC	Mineral Wells	6	NTLC
Aubrey	3	NTLC	Pilot Point	3	Plinkit
Benbrook	6	Plinkit, Overdrive	Ponder	3	NTLC
Bridgeport	2	NTLC, other	Roanoke	3	NTLC
Burleson	7	Overdrive	Saginaw	4	Overdrive, NTLC
Crowley	5	NTLC	Sanger	3	Plinkit, NTLC
Decatur	2	NTLC	Southlake	4	NTLC
Kennedale	5	NTLC	The Colony	3	Overdrive
Keller	4	Overdrive	Wichita Falls	1	Overdrive
Krum	3	NTLC, Other			
Lake Cities	3	NTLC			

### Special Interest Groups & Conferences

- North Texas 23: A Roundup of Web 2.0 Technology has really helped in our quest to bring together library personnel from all four types of libraries. Participants at CYC who are also participating in North Texas 23 were heard talking about the project and about people they've "met" through the blogs those other people have developed.  
<http://northtexas23.blogspot.com/>
- As of August 15, the date by which participants had to complete all 23 things in order to qualify for prize drawings, 71 of the 317 project participants had qualified for Gold certification by completing all 23 tasks. Many of the others have qualified for Silver certification (12 or more tasks completed) already and many of those are expected to actually qualify for Gold by Sept. 1, the official deadline for completion.
- LibraryYouthServicesNetwork SIG  
<http://www.libraryyouthservicesnetwork.com>

Approximately 175 people attended CYC 2009, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual conference focusing on Children and Youth Conference at North Texas Libraries. The addition of both a Wii Break Area to pull more people into the Exhibit Hall and a Speed-Geeking session to provide very brief introductions to certain Web 2.0 applications seemed to be very well received.

- LibraryPresentationsNetwork SIG <http://librarypresentationsnetwork.com>

Although LP3 2009, the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Conference for Library Program Planners and Presenters, hasn't been formally announced, we have already received paperwork and payment from two of last year's exhibitors plus five session proposals from people interested in serving as session leaders. The conference is scheduled for all-day Thursday Nov. 12 at the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area and is expected to attract about 200 participants and over 20 exhibitors.

- LibrarySupportersNetwork SIG <http://www.librarysupportersnetwork.com>

We also have some confirmed exhibitors and session leaders for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual North Texas Conference for Library Supporters, scheduled for Saturday February 14, 2010, at the Lockheed Martin Recreation Area. The Conference Planning Committee has determined the theme, *The Future of Libraries*, the keynote topic, *Predicting the Future of Libraries Using Sci-Fi*, and the keynote speakers, NTLP Executive Director Adam Wright and Benbrook Library District Director Mike Baldwin.

### **Expanding Accessibility Program**

- This project involves Eight Pilot Project Libraries: Arlington (Central), Bedford, Colleyville, Fort Worth (Central), Hurst, Krum, Watauga and Wichita Falls. Each scheduled a demonstration of Assistive Technology during the month of August and purchased community-specific accessibility tools in order to more inclusively serve all members of their communities. Each Pilot Project library also will host an Accessibility Fair in State Fiscal Year 2010, showcasing the new tools as well as existing services and programs for people with disabilities.
- Easter Seals continues to be a very accommodating partner in this project, for NTLP as well as for many of the libraries planning fairs.

### **O2U Projects Requested**

#### **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 5 requests Bookmarks, posters  
Frisco Public Library 1 request Bookmarks  
Justin Community Library 1 request Bookmarks  
Krum Public Library 3 requests Bookmarks, SRP flyer & poster  
Lake Cities Library 1 request Bookmarks, Banner  
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**

Bedford 2 requests Flyers  
Hurst 2 requests Flyers

**Region 5**

Birdville ISD 52 requests Bookmarks, posters  
Haltom City 2 requests Brochure, poster  
Mansfield 1 request Bookmarks  
Richland Hills 1 request SRP Flyers

**Region 6**

Fort Worth 3 requests Posters, bookmarks  
Gordon 2 requests Flyers, poster  
Weatherford 30 requests Flyers, posters

92 Requests completed.  
43,639 Materials distributed