



# MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

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**On the cover:** *Summertime*, by Nell Branch. Nell Branch, a native of the Goodman, Mississippi area, is librarian at Holmes Community College. She earned her MLS at the University of Southern Mississippi, MEd at Mississippi State University, and BS at Delta State University. This photograph was taken near the Appalachian Trail in North Carolina.

# MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

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For additional information and a list of committees and roundtables, see the Mississippi Library Association's Web site at <http://www.misslib.org/>.

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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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"Vote for Libraries" was once again the theme of the Thirty-fourth National Library Legislative Day program in Washington, DC, on May 11-12, 2009. Nine Mississippi representatives joined over 325 more library advocates from all fifty states to meet with U. S. Congressional members. Librarians, library trustees, friends members, and board members met to talk to their state's senators and representatives about library issues.



Jan Willis

In advance of our visits, the hard work by Deb Mitchell and Glenda Segars of our MLA Legislative Committee, along with the Mississippi Library Commission, prepared our delegation for our meetings. Representing Mississippi were Frances Coleman, Sharman Smith, Dee Tatum and I, as well as MLC Board Commissioners Russell Burns, Celia Fisher, Pamela Pridgen, and Glenda Segars.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding and E-rate services were two of the major topics discussed. LSTA is funded within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) budget for the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and LSTA funds for Mississippi are used to enhance public library services across the state. Since its inception in the 1950s, federal funding for libraries has been very effectively used in Mississippi to develop and advance library services. Our Mississippi Library Commission and public libraries use LSTA funds to ensure all Mississippians have access to quality library services; improve library services locally and on a statewide basis; supplement, not supplant, local library funding; meet identified needs; produce measurable

impact results; support local commitment to an LSTA project; and test new services and delivery methods.

The federal E-rate program (the telecommunications discount program for schools and public libraries) was designed to address connectivity issues in rural states such as Mississippi. Thanks to this program, all of Mississippi's 241 public libraries provide not only books and audiovisual materials to users,

but also high-speed Internet connectivity to our public. In many, many Mississippi communities, public libraries are the sole source of free access to the Internet. In fact, less than one-half of Mississippi households have access to the Internet at home, making computer access in public libraries critical. Public computers in Mississippi's public libraries have always been heavily used. In fiscal year 2007, for example, more than 2.6 million people used public computers in Mississippi public libraries. In 2009, with many families discontinuing Internet access at home to save money and with so many people looking for work, people are turning to the public library for a host of library services, including access to the Internet for job searches and training. Without E-rate discounts, the majority of Mississippi public libraries could not afford high-speed Internet connectivity. That would leave most Mississippians without access.

Mississippi's usage is part of our nation's library story. Released by ALA during this year's National Library Week, the 2009 *State of America's Libraries* report reconfirms the increasing importance of libraries. Over 68 percent of

(continued on page 31)

# Researching Mississippi Court Cases and Related Legal Information

William L. Bahr

## Introduction

The purpose of the article is to provide Mississippi librarians (and their patrons) with a guide for finding Mississippi's court cases and related legal information. To this end, the article will explain specific terms and identify different approaches to searching using case citations and names, as well as topics specific to Mississippi or issues that may be raised with respect to Mississippi. In addition, the article will provide varied reference sources, including Internet databases and Web sites, to accomplish the goal.

## General Case Law Research Guide

Researching judicial opinions (case law) and related legal information in Mississippi is a process that requires varied reference sources. Case law research involves the use of primary sources, such as case reporters and official legal documents, and secondary sources offering commentary and background information on primary sources. Various Internet databases and Web sites are useful as well.

The Web site <http://library.law.olemiss.edu/library/guides/msresearch.shtml>, maintained by the University of Mississippi Law Library (Scott, Jensen, and Murray 2005), can be used as a starting point for legal research. This research guide offers statutes, such as the Mississippi Code, session laws, bills and pending legislation, case law, court rules, administrative regulations and orders, jury instructions, and a variety of secondary sources.

Law reviews, such as the *Mississippi College Law Review*, *Mississippi Law Journal*, *Mississippi Law Week*, and *Mississippi Lawyer*, also constitute another import source for legal research. These reviews contain extensive articles and brief

essays written by legal scholars and practitioners. Equally useful is *LexisNexis Academic*, though few Mississippi libraries have a subscription to the online database due to its high price. LexisNexis Academic includes full-text law review articles that can be searched by the use of keywords, authors, titles, and/or case citations and case names (LexisNexis 2002). Other search options also exist to help a researcher find Mississippi court cases. The plaintiff's and defendant's names, the names of the prosecuting and defense attorneys, and searches in databases by topic can be used (Abts 2008).

## Case Citations and Case Reporters

The Web site of the Mississippi College School of Law (2005), <http://lawwin2k3.mc.edu/videoarchive/howto.htm>, notes that case citations present the full name of a case, along with an identification of the court hearing the case, its docket number, and its date. This citation may include any appellate court data relevant to the case. Using the case citation, the precise location of the full text of a case can be found easily in the published case reporters. Mississippi's official case reporter is the *Southern Reporter*.

*Nichols v. State*, 2000-KA-00807-SCT, 826 So. 2d 1288 (Miss. 2002) is an example of a Mississippi case citation. *Nichols v. State* is the name of the case. The first four digits give the year the case was placed on the docket, in this example, 2000. The "KA" reveals the case was a criminal appeal. The next five numbers are the case number assigned by the court, and the "SCT" indicates the Mississippi Supreme Court heard the arguments. Following the comma is the full case citation in the *Southern Reporter*. The "826" is the volume number, and the "So." and the "2d" are the abbreviations for the *Southern Reporter* and its second edition. The number 1288 indicates the beginning page number of the case. The "Miss." and the "2002" reveal the case was adjudicat-

ed in Mississippi state court and decided in 2002.

To understand how to cite and read a Mississippi case citation, the American Bar Association (2008) provides the Web site, <http://www.abanet.org/tech/ltrc/research/citation/uscourts.html>, the Georgetown Law Library (2008) maintains the Website, [http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/guides/bluebook4\\_7.cfm](http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/guides/bluebook4_7.cfm), and the Mississippi College School of Law (2005) explains the abbreviations used in the *Southern Reporter*. In addition, the University of Baltimore School of Law (2008) Web site, <http://law.ubalt.edu/template.cfm?page=366>, and the Belanger (2003) Web site, <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~nagel/reporter/>, offer a very complete list of case reporters used by state (and federal) courts.

Mississippi court cases, including Mississippi's Supreme Court cases from 1887 to the present, can be found in the *Southern Reporter*. The case reporter contains cases adjudicated in the state courts of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. However, West Publishing, the publisher of *Southern Reporter*, also publishes *Mississippi Cases Reported in the Southern Reporter*, which contains only the opinions and decisions issued by the state courts of Mississippi. The *Southern Reporter* also has a companion set, the *Southern Digest*, which contains the case headnotes (summaries) of the points of law decided in all these cases.

Every West digest covers a specific jurisdiction or geographical region and corresponds with the West case reporter for that jurisdiction or region. Researchers are able to read the case in the West reporter, identify relevant topics and key numbers in the headnotes, and then look up these items in an appropriate digest for the jurisdiction being considered, as well as other jurisdictions. Even without a specific case citation, West reporters and digests allow a researcher to search by topic.

Each West Digest is accompanied by a Descriptive Word Index, a Words and Phrases volume, and a Table of Cases volume. These search tools give researchers greater flexibility in conducting a search using a citation, a general case name, or the name of the plaintiff or defendant. Additionally, they make it possible to search by topic such as contract law, torts, and so forth. Researchers can use topic searches for general subject areas, as well. Many of these topics are likely to be covered in a variety of print publications that are available in law school libraries. They may be divided into such subject areas as labor law, criminal law, business law, constitutional law, military law, school law, and tax law. Using these materials makes it somewhat less challenging for the researcher to search for specific cases after identifying a range of relevant cases within a topic area.

Moreover, because *Mississippi Reports*, the official Mississippi reporter from 1818-1966, only contains Mississippi court cases, the use of the case citation will only produce Mississippi Supreme Court cases. (The cases in *Mississippi Reports* were also published unofficially in the *Southern Reporter*.) Furthermore, the *Mississippi Digest*, which contains the headnotes for Mississippi (and Mississippi-related federal) decisions from 1818 to the present, is another source in which the case citation can be used to search for the Mississippi court cases.

The topics in *Mississippi Digest* are alphabetized, which makes the source useful in finding a case on a particular topic. In addition, Barnes (2005) pointed out in the Finding Cases Without Citations section of the Web site, <http://guides.library.msstate.edu/content.php?pid=15>

507, *Mississippi Digest* provides volumes with tables of cases listed by the name of either the plaintiff or the defendant – in order, facilitating case research without having access to the complete citation for the case.

### Mississippi Court System-Related Web Sites

The Mississippi court system is more complex in its terminology than the federal courts. State court terminology tends to differ from state to state, resolving into a system of upper and lower courts in civil and criminal matters. In Mississippi, these courts are referred to as the Supreme and County courts. In criminal cases, the case is listed as the State of Mississippi versus the last name of the defendant. The state court system includes a variety of other courts, such as municipal courts, traffic courts, juvenile courts, and appellate courts.

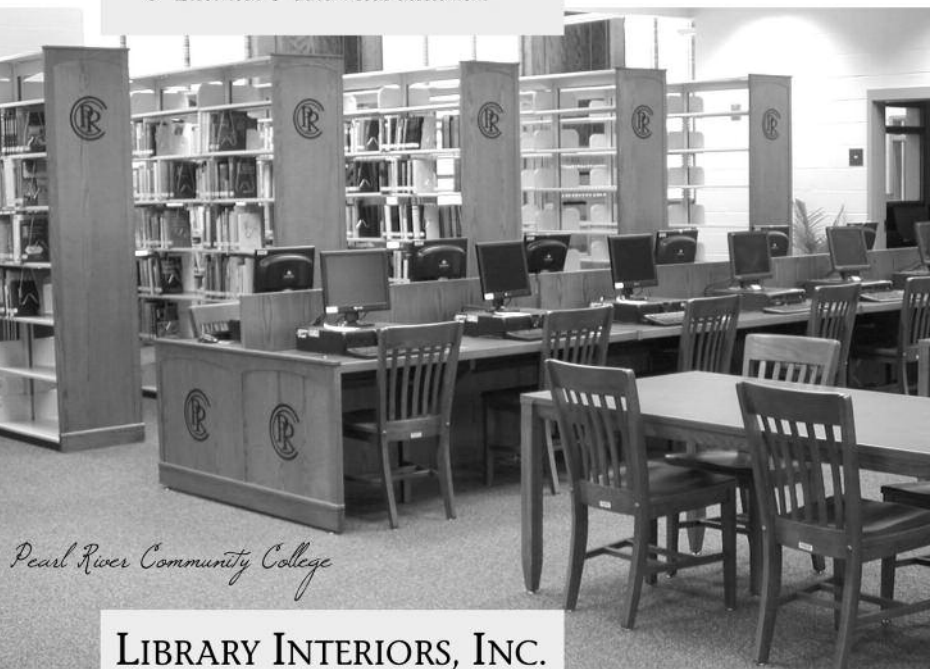
In the case of state records, most state higher and appellate courts provide free online database searches, but many lower and county courts are not fully documented online and must be accessed directly at the county facilities. To find county court research and county/state courts online, a simple Internet search using major search engines like Google or Yahoo and the keywords of the county name coupled with “county court” should be useful. Rominger Legal (2008) with the Web site, <http://www.romingerlegal.com/state/mississippi.html>, provides an Internet link that identifies a large variety of resources, including Mississippi laws and codes, data regarding the Mississippi judiciary, the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court, professional directories, Mississippi state government agencies, and case law.

The Mississippi trial court system consists of circuit courts, chancery courts, county courts, municipal courts, and justice courts (Northwest Location Services 2008). These court cases can be accessed at [www.courtreference.com/mississippi-courts.htm](http://www.courtreference.com/mississippi-courts.htm). To search this site, one enters the name of a Mississippi county to view a directory of all courts and links to court record resources for each court.

Alternately, one can search this database by town name or by zip code, resource category, or related court records in another

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state. This is an extensive database that is relevant to Mississippi and includes links to other public records, such as birth records, death records, and divorce proceedings. As previously noted, *LexisNexis Academic* offers a legal research link within the database that allows the researcher to locate the full text of cases by citation, party name of defendant and plaintiff, and keywords. The Legal Research section also has subsections for State Case Law (and Federal Case Law), and Area of Law by Topic (LexisNexis 2002).

Another source useful in searching for case law in Mississippi is the State of Mississippi Judiciary (2008) Web site, [www.mssc.state.ms.us](http://www.mssc.state.ms.us), which contains links to information about the courts, court locations, reports, news, and court proceedings. This can be an invaluable starting point for legal research that then goes on to include many of the sources discussed above. Mississippi Supreme Court decisions can be found on this site by searching the year of the decision and the last name of either party.

Still another Web site, [http://www.publicrecordcenter.com/mississippi\\_court\\_records.htm](http://www.publicrecordcenter.com/mississippi_court_records.htm), maintained by Public Record Center.com (2009), is useful for researching legal issues in Mississippi. This site contains public records from state and federal courts, bankruptcy records, business incorporation records, credit and criminal records, property records, sex offender records, and fictitious business name filings. It also allows for searching by county and city or by the name of an individual. This particular search facility is useful in providing basic information that may be helpful in directing a researcher to case law.

### Citators

If the choice is to determine whether the case has been overruled or has precedential value, the researcher needs to consult a citator. Citators verify the validity of decisions previously issued, provide references to court cases citing these decisions, and provide notes whether citing cases overturned the original decisions (Bahr 2008). One of the most commonly used citators is *Shepard's Citations*, which provides state and regional citations, and federal citations. *Shepard's Southern Reporter Citations* covers cases cited in

the *Southern Reporter*, and the *Southern Reporter, Second Series*.

In Mississippi, it is possible to use the LexisNexis Web site, <http://lexisone.com/legalresearch/payasyougo/contentlistings/mississippi.html>, to search *Shepard's Citations* for state court case law specific to Mississippi, American Law Institute Restatements, law reviews, Matthew Bender Clauses, and States Pending Legislation: Bill Tracking. Mississippi court data can also be found via LexisNexis Helps: Guide, which includes *Shepard's* product guides, as well as various news materials (LexisNexis 2008).

### Summary and Conclusion

This guide should be helpful in assisting librarians (and their patrons) to find Mississippi's court cases and related legal information. It identifies a wide variety of resources, which facilitate searches either by citation, name of a party, or topic. For beginning legal researchers, it is likely that the wealth of information available could be overwhelming. Learning to navigate different Web sites and databases is challenging, but with practice this task can be simplified. Many of the resources discussed in this report are available online, but some must be physically accessed in law libraries or in municipal, state, or county courthouses or public agencies. ■

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# Large Print Collection and Services @ MLC

Indira Bhowal

## Abstract

*The large print collection is one of the vital services rendered by the Library Services Division, in collaboration with the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services Division, of the Mississippi Library Commission. Services are available to a wide range of patrons, including all kinds of libraries, state government employees, and the general public. This collection, made up of books with font sizes ranging from sixteen to twenty, is especially attractive to the aging population and also to people with reading disabilities.*

## Introduction

The Library Services Division of the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) provides a variety of services both directly and indirectly to a wide range of patrons, including all kinds of libraries, state government employees and the general public. Services include reference and research, patent and trademark research assistance, interlibrary loan, and access to the Primary Resource Library collection, professional library science collection, and large print collection.

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The large print collection is one of the most heavily used collections in the library and its services have become very popular among its patrons. The collection, with font sizes ranging from sixteen to twenty, is especially attractive to the aging population and people with visual impairments. This article aims to promote MLC's large print collection and its services to the library communities and other stakeholders in the state.



Large print collection at MLC.

## History

Information on the large print collection and its services first appeared in the *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Commission*, covering July 1972 to June 1973. The report stated that "Large print books are usually provided directly by local public libraries from books furnished by the Library Commission on a long term loan."<sup>1</sup> This statement was listed in the

Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped section of the report. The circulation statistics first appeared in the *Twenty-seventh Annual Report*, covering July 1973 to June 1974, which stated that the total number of large print circulation was 286.2 From its beginning, this special collection held a special attraction for patrons. Over time, the collection size and services have been changed and the popularity of this collection has grown significantly. Currently, there are more than 12,000 titles in the collection, with genres including romance, adventure, general fiction, Christian fiction, mystery, non-fiction, juvenile, and biography.

With the introduction of a computerized library information system, this collection and service has become easier to administer compared to its earlier days. In the 1990s, the library provided this service to its patrons through the branches of the public library systems of the state. But now the Commission's new library, located at 3881 Eastwood Drive in Jackson, is open to the residents of the state. Eligible patrons and any library system can use this collection directly if they are a registered member of the Mississippi Library Commission or the Blind and Physically Handicapped Library Services (BPHLS).

## The Collection

The large print collection is shelved in two different sections on the first floor,

Year	Adventure	Biography	Christian Fiction	General Fiction	Juvenile	Mystery	Non-fiction	Romance	Science Fiction	Thriller	Western	Young Adult Fiction	Young Adult Non-fiction
2001	93	72	36	437	283	701	84	872	57	33	941	34	1
2002	21	32	28	80	39	127	65	75	15	1	84	64	0
2003	7	37	33	140	52	173	71	154	16	24	123	45	0
2004	22	48	56	182	15	232	85	325	5	7	86	54	2
2005	6	30	40	109	122	149	49	234	0	6	98	36	0
2006	2	41	87	126	11	198	77	273	0	4	145	56	2
2007	2	37	81	138	7	169	42	206	1	19	132	45	0
2008	6	47	101	176	16	235	75	204	0	10	122	43	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>1388</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>2343</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>1731</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>9</b>

Table 1. Large print collection by genre and year acquired.

south wing of the Commission's new building. These two sections are separated into "new large print titles (LPNEW) for six weeks" and "large print titles (LP)." The layout helps patrons to find and select new large print titles easily and quickly when they are visiting the library in person.

Currently, MLC buys most of the large print titles released each month from Thorndike Press and the Center Point large print collection service. The technical services department places subscriptions for these titles with the publishers and the serials department of the Commission receives them each month. The table below provides the statistics on the current collection by genre and year added to MLC's SirsiDynix Unicorn system.

From Table 1, on prior page, the genres included in the collection can be ranked in descending order as follows: romance, mystery, Western, general fiction, non-fiction, juvenile, Christian fiction, young adult fiction, biography, adventure, thriller, science fiction, and young adult non-fiction. The table also indicates that most of the titles in the collection are no more than eight years old.

## Services

The Library Services Division provides large print services in three ways: direct mail service, extended loans, and membership service.

### Direct Mail Service

The large print direct mail service is offered to registered institutions and individual patrons of the Blind and Physically Handicapped Services (BPHLS) Division of the Commission. To qualify for this service, a person must be a Mississippi resident and unable to read conventional print due to visual or physical disability. The application form for large print direct mail services to individuals and institutions is available online at <http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us/ServicesToLibraries/BPHLSEligibility.htm#Applications>.

Upon receipt of the approved application, several recently published New Books Large Print Direct Mail Catalogs are mailed to new patrons. Catalogs and materials are mailed postage-free via the federal subsidized "Free matter for the Blind or Handicapped" designation. These month-

## NEW BOOKS Large Print Direct Mail Catalog

Volume 10, No. 6  
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Jackson, MS 39211  
[www.mlc.lib.ms.us](http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us)  
1-800-MISSLIB (647-7542)  
601-432-4111

Figure 2. Large print direct mail catalog of new books.

ly catalogs include: new large print items listed by genre, a brief summary of each title, a simple check off request form with author/titles arranged alphabetically under each genre, a listing of previously published catalogs (which may be requested in a similar manner), and an envelope with the Library Commission's address and the heading "Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped" designation.

Patrons mark the desired titles (they are requested to select several titles so that if one title is checked out, they can have the alternate titles for selection) and mail the completed form using the postage-free envelope provided. Upon arrival of the request, library staff retrieve the book(s) and mail each title in a separate mailing bag. This same bag must be used to return items. The loan period for each title is six weeks. An individual can borrow three titles at a time, although any number of titles may be borrowed by a registered institution.

The benefit of this mail service is that the registered patron does not have to come to the library to select or receive materials. The patron is notified about new titles through the catalog produced and distributed on a monthly basis. There are currently more than four hundred registered patrons for this service.

### Extended Loan Period

The extended loan period service is provided to any kind of library in the state, especially public library systems. Once registered for routine service, a library may

request to participate in this service. Benefits include, an extended loan period of six months, provides the borrowing library more books for their patrons for a longer period of time, and offers a changing collection of titles for the borrowing library's customers. Libraries should contact and work with the Interlibrary Loan Department of the Commission in order to participate in this program.

### Membership Service

Any eligible individual or any library or state agency employee in Mississippi can be a member of Library Commission's Resource Library and can enjoy the large print collection. Circulation policy criteria state that any library or individual can borrow large print titles for six weeks, any public library can check out an unlimited number of titles, and any state agency employee can check out up to twenty-five titles. Requests for these titles may be made in person, by mail, by fax, or over telephone. Libraries can submit their request through WebPAC, OCLC, or the VUC (Virtual Union Catalog) located at <http://mslc-agent.auto-graphics.com/agent/login.asp?cid=mslc&lid=MLC&mode=g>.

## Circulation Statistics

The table below shows the most recent five years of usage statistics for the large print collection.

Year	LP Usage	New LP Usage	Total Usage
2004	6,054	4,503	10,557
2005	5,298	5,402	10,700
2006	5,329	4,182	9,501
2007	7,039	5,189	12,228
2008	6,153	5,187	11,340

Table 2. Large print collection usage.

Statistics reveal that this collection is one of the more heavily used collections among the Commission's resource library.

## Processing

Each large print title is cataloged on the

OCLC WorldCat database for wider circulation among the library communities. The fiction titles are assigned the call number LP F followed by the author's Cutter number. The non-fiction collection call numbers also start with the two letters LP to separate them from the regular non-fiction collection. This call number structure also applies to large print Mississippi, biography, etc.

A summary statement is added to the MARC 520 field for each title cataloged in the local SirsiDynix Unicorn database. This summary helps patrons discern the exact contents of the book and it helps to create the New Books Catalog for the large print direct service patrons. Currently, the technical services department staff is participating in the *Expert Community Experiment* project conducted by OCLC and is planning to add the 520 summary fields to each title of the OCLC master record in the future to help serve wider library communities.

A "New 6 weeks" book sticker is added on the spine label of each new item in order to shelve them in **LPNEW** section.

After one year, the interlibrary loan department staff peels off the "New 6 weeks" book sticker from the new large print volumes and shelves them in the general LP collection area. At the same time, the home location of these titles is changed from LPNEW to LP in the local SirsiDynix Unicorn database.

#### **Blog on MLC's New Books per Month**

The technical services staff designed a blog dedicated to MLC's new books and it is available at <http://mlctech.blogspot.com/>. If you are interested in learning more about the new large print titles added to the collection each month, please visit our blog at the above address or find them through our online catalog at <http://opac.mlc.lib.ms.us/uhtbin/cgiirsi/x/0/0/49>.

MLC is looking forward to serving more patrons in the future. ■

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#### **PRESIDENT'S PAGE**

*(continued from page 25)*

Americans have a library card. Do you know that is the largest percentage recorded since ALA began measuring library card usage in 1990?

Nationwide, in the past year Americans visited their libraries almost 1.4 billion times. They checked out more than 2 billion items during the past year, an increase of over 10 percent in visits and checkouts from usage during the last economic downturn in 2001.

Children's materials account for 35 percent of all materials circulated. Attendance at library-based children's programs in 2008 was 57.8 million. Academic libraries nationwide continue to partner in scanning and digitizing print book collections and the potential for unprecedented access to millions of titles continues.

As we see our usage grow and grow, we can celebrate our state's long heritage of service to Mississippians this October. MLA vice president Ann Branton and her team are creating an unforgettable conference to be held in Hattiesburg, October 21-23, 2009, which will celebrate our association's one hundredth anniversary. Join us! ■

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# Creating an Exhibit in Special Collections and Using It to Promote Collections and Educate Users

Jennifer Brannock

## Abstract

*Promoting services and collections can be a difficult task for libraries. Exhibits can be a beneficial tool for exposing users to materials and research opportunities found in special collections or archives. In addition to publicizing materials, collections also serve to educate librarians, staff, students, researchers, and community members about the items on display. This article describes the basics of creating an exhibit and how exhibits can be used to promote collections and educate users.*

## Introduction

In special collections departments and archives, exhibits are an extremely important part of promoting materials held in the collection. While working in special collections (or any library for that matter), it quickly becomes apparent that most users are scared of doing research using primary sources in special collections departments. Some library users know the basics of research in a public or academic library, but are completely thrown off by the format of the materials found in special collections. How does a letter or a photograph help when writing a paper? This is where an exhibit can help. Not only do exhibits highlight materials found in the collections, but they also provide the library user with a way to see how materials like letters, photographs, invoices, or original illustrations can be used in research. Exhibits are an excellent way to expose reluctant researchers and others to subjects covered in a specific special collection.

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## Purpose of Exhibits

An exhibit is an effective way to publicize the materials found in special collections or archives. A theme is determined to tie the display items together. The items in the cases contribute to the theme and assist in telling the story of the topic. The basis of the exhibit is this topic, whether the subject is civil rights in Mississippi, southern writers, or printing techniques. All materials revolve around this idea.

After determining the theme, it is advisable to ascertain the audience of the exhibit. In university special collections or archives, most of the library users and exhibit attendees will be college students and faculty, researchers from out of town, and adult community members. With the typical user being an adult, there is more leeway in selecting the materials included in the exhibit. There is room to include materials that are more adult in nature, which may not be appropriate in other libraries serving a younger population. The exhibit audience has a significant influence on the purpose of the exhibit.

There are several purposes that an exhibit can fulfill: to highlight collections, to educate users and staff, and to inspire research topics for researchers.

## Highlighting Collections

Traditionally, exhibits are created to showcase items in the library. Exhibits are an effective way to highlight items from the collections that may be otherwise overlooked or difficult to access by users. Often, viewers are drawn to an exhibit by something eye-catching. Once something catches the viewer's eye, one may read the accompanying text, thereby drawing the person into the exhibit. By emphasizing the material, the viewer becomes more aware of the types of resources found in the library.

## Educating Library Patrons

Since each exhibit has a central theme,

the exhibit creator has the opportunity to educate visitors on a specific topic. The purpose of a university is to educate. Obviously, this carries over to university libraries. Entertainment is definitely important in an academic exhibit, but to educate the viewer is even more important. Visitors who leave the exhibit with knowledge about the topic are more likely to tell their friends and family about what they learned and saw, and that, in turn, will create more interest in the holdings of the library.

First-time special collections researchers have many questions about how to use primary sources in their research. Researchers will often ask how a letter can provide an insight into a topic. By having an exhibit on a specific topic, these researchers are able to see how information can be extracted from these resources and used for their papers. Exhibit labels can assist with explaining the importance of specific primary sources by abstracting the crucial information from the item.

## Educating Library Employees

In addition to educating library users, the exhibits also inform the curator who created the exhibit about materials available. During the process of creating the exhibit, the curator or librarian delves deeply into the collections. Prior to the exhibit, the librarian may be aware of the general nature of the collections, but not of the specific materials found there. By going through the collections item by item, the librarian gains more detailed knowledge of the collections and how they may help future patrons with their research.

Exhibits not only educate the librarian who created the exhibit, but also expose other library staff to the various types of information available in the library. In most archives or special collections, librarians and staff take turns working the reference desk. Exhibits can be a valuable tool for

staff by providing them with an opportunity to become more familiar with the collections. This familiarity allows for improved service at the reference desk, as reference desk staff will be able to recommend research topics to patrons using knowledge acquired from exhibits. It is hard for staff to know everything about the collections, but exhibits can help them learn more by providing some information about materials held in the collections.

### *Inspire Researchers*

Even without the assistance of librarians, patrons can be inspired by exhibits. For example, at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM), the special collections department is used heavily by students and faculty in the history department. The students in some of these classes are required to write research papers using primary sources. By having exhibits that showcase primary sources and other materials housed in special collections, students get ideas on topics for their papers. The convenience of having the resources available on campus pushes students towards using these materials. Through exhibits, students who may have been struggling to find a topic are exposed to both a topic and related resources to assist them with the assignment.

### **Creating exhibits**

From start to finish, creating an exhibit can easily take months. Here are five basic steps to creating an exhibit:

1. Determining the topic for the exhibit
2. Researching the topic
3. Selecting materials to display
4. Arranging the items
5. Writing labels and explanatory text

### *Determining the Topic*

Selecting a topic is the initial step in preparing an exhibit. The key to determining a topic is to verify the library has sufficient materials to create an entire exhibit on the subject. In some instances, a few fascinating items may be found that would be interesting include in an exhibit, but unfortunately there are too few items to make a coherent presentation.

To determine if there are enough resources to make an exhibit, use the online book catalog and other finding aids to locate materials that relate to and help explain the topic. On the homepage of the special collections department at the University of Southern Mississippi, there is a tool that allows the user to perform a keyword search of the finding aids in the collection. The result is a list of all collections that include the search word or phrase. From this point, it is up to the librarian to search through the archival boxes and folders to try and establish what materials are available. This can take some time, depending on how many boxes of materials one must sift through, but it is the only way to decide what materials are suitable for display.

### *Researching the Topic*

Once the topic is selected and the existence of plentiful materials to represent the topic is confirmed, it is time to move on to the research. Picking up some books or articles about the topic is always a good place to start. One of the best tools in the research phase is a bibliography of relevant books. Not only will this show the reader where the compiler got the sources, but it also provides a list of books to use for further research. Research can be the most time consuming aspect of creating an exhibit and may take several months.

### *Selecting Materials*

Faced with a large body of items that relate to the topic, further selection is based on appropriateness and contribution to the overall theme of the exhibit. This can be a difficult weeding process. There will be occasions when certain visually exciting materials do not fit the scope of the exhibit and must be left out. For these items, it is a good idea to create a list of the materials for consideration in future exhibits.

When looking through the collections, keep note of the items that could be used in the exhibit. When looking at books, keep note of the call number, title, author, and other vital information in a spreadsheet or other document. With archival materi-

als, list the collection name and box and folder numbers with a brief description of the item. Keeping a detailed list of materials to use can help in the labeling process. With a list of all materials used, the librarian can create labels from the list rather than looking to the items again when the time comes to generate labels. After the first run through all of the manuscript boxes, refer to the list created to determine if there are sub-themes that relate to the topic. These narrow themes are a great way to organize the materials, perhaps with one theme represented in each case of the exhibit.

Special attention should be given to the actual display cases. For example, the Cleanth Brooks Reading Room in Special Collections at USM has both flat and upright cases.



Figure 1. Flat and upright display cases.

Preservation concerns should be given special consideration when planning exhibits. Special care should be taken with items that could be damaged by inappropriate display practices. For instance, it is best to display fragile papers in a flat case. Attempting to display such an item upright increases the possibility of damaging the item. Gravity alone will pull on the item, possibly creating wrinkles and tears in a single sheet, such as a map. The types of display cases available may prohibit you from highlighting certain materials, but there is no reason to highlight an item that will be damaged from the display.

### *Arranging Items*

Generally, an exhibit includes an introduction case to provide the viewer with text about the topic and the materials on dis-

play. In this case, it is advisable to include a mix of items designed to draw the viewer into the exhibit. Selections may include photographs, a letter, and artifacts that illustrate the topic. The introductory case is a great place to use items that are worth displaying but do not quite fit into any of the cases that are arranged by subtopics.

In subsequent cases, try to divide the items by subtopic. For instance, if curating an exhibit on the anti-communism movement in Mississippi, exhibit cases may be divided by areas where anti-communism sentiments were present, such as education, the Civil Rights Movement, and politics. Not every exhibit lends itself to these types of divisions, but if possible, it provides more of a context and an easier way for visitors to navigate the exhibit.

### Writing Labels and Text

Once all of the items are in cases, it is time to work on exhibit labels. During the selection phase, a spreadsheet was created with a list of all materials that could be used in the exhibit. Review the list and highlight the items that are going to be used. This provides a list of materials to work from when creating labels.

There are several ways to approach writing text for labels. A label can provide bibliographic information about an item, such as the author, title, what collection it is from, date of creation, etc. This works well if the cases are divided into subtopics and if the viewer is aware of the importance of each item in relation to the topic. Depending on the exhibit, it may be necessary to include labels containing bibliographic information paired with separate text about the importance of the items in the case, such as writing about how all items in a particular case reflect different instances when anti-communism was used to thwart the Civil Rights Movement.

Another way to construct labels is to include a brief description about the importance of each item and how it relates to the theme along with the bibliographic informa-

tion about the item. This is an effective way to create labels if one wants to focus on the specific values of each item. This method anticipates and responds to questions about why a certain item is included in the exhibit. Also, in the case of a lengthy letter, the label can synthesize the information and allow the exhibit viewer to decide if the abstract is sufficient or if the complete letter must be read to completely understand the item.

### Promoting Exhibits

Promoting any activity at the library can be a difficult task. It can be a challenge to reach out to the community and find people who will value the services that the library offers. Promoting exhibits presents the same difficulties. Exhibits are in-house, so researchers and classes who visit special collections will be able to see the exhibits. The difficult task is reaching the people in the community and university who may value the exhibit.

At USM, there are several ways to get the word out about exhibits. Distributing announcements to electronic mailing lists on campus is the easiest way to publicize exhibits on the university level. Special Collections also has a link from the Special Collections Web page that announces exhibits on display. The link connects to the exhibit teaser, which provides a picture of an item in the exhibit and provides a brief overview of the presentation.



Figure 2. Exhibit announcement on Special Collections home page.



Figure 3. Exhibit teaser on Special Collections Web site.

To help us and our users keep up with past exhibits, we provide links to all past exhibits and teasers. These descriptions of old exhibits help potential and current researchers determine the various research topics that are available through our collections. It exposes them to collections that they may not have realized were available.



Figure 4. Special Collections Web page listing current and past exhibits.

### Conclusion

Exhibits are valuable for promoting materials and research opportunities found in special collections. In addition to promoting use of materials, the exhibits educate library users, staff, and librarians. In a time when we are looking for affordable ways to market our libraries, exhibits are a cheap and effective way to entice people into special collections. ■

# Toastmasters: Boost Your Resume without Breaking the Bank

Tracy Englert

## Abstract

*This article calls attention to Toastmasters, an international prestigious organization. The organization provides opportunities for librarians to develop and improve speaking skills in a supportive and encouraging environment. A typical meeting is described as well as the impact of the group for expanding professional development opportunities and networks.*

## Importance of Communication

Communication skills are essential for librarians. A crucial requirement in librarian job postings is effective interpersonal, collegial, and communication/presentation skills (both oral and written). This ability plays a fundamental role in making presentations, instructing students about finding and evaluating resources, and teaching effective research and citation skills. Verbal communication skills are not just for those librarians who interact with the public. A recent article in *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* (Hall-Ellis 2008) discussed employer's expectations for catalogers and technical services librarians. Communication and leadership skills were listed as skills and competencies that catalogers and technical services librarians must possess.

An often quoted fact is that speaking anxiety is one of the top ten fears in life. The following incident illustrates the extent to which this fear can cause havoc in one's life. I am acquainted with a situation involving a search committee at an academic library that required candidates to perform a presentation during the on-site interview process. In this particular circumstance, the plane tickets had been purchased and all arrangements made. When the candidate was given the agenda and realized

that a presentation was required as part of the job interview, the person withdrew from the job search. Another example reiterates the importance of communication for all types of librarians. The journal *Serials Librarian* recently published an account of MLA immediate past president Jeff Slagell's, "Verbal Bourbon: Speaking Secrets to Intoxicate Your Audience." (Slagell and Headley 2008) Slagell presented tips for making effective presentations and emphasized the importance of public speaking and communication. The fact that an article on public speaking was published in the journal *Serials Librarian* illustrates that such skills are not exclusive to librarians in the public services arena. It is important for all librarians to develop good public speaking skills.

## Non-traditional Professional Development

Professional development is essential to continued career success, but limited funds for professional opportunities are a fact of life. It seems everyone is dealing with decreased budgets, and this includes restricted funding for travel. Academic librarians are expected to present poster sessions or give presentations at professional meetings to achieve tenure and promotion. Many librarians shell out high fees for workshops to gain the skill and confidence necessary to face an audience, but professional development doesn't have to cost a fortune. There are ways to develop professional skills without spending a lot of money to attend expensive conferences or webinars. By looking outside the traditional library sector for opportunities, you may find less expensive and equally viable alternatives for professional development. The International Association of Toastmasters is one such example and the focus of the remainder of this article.

At the last Toastmasters meeting I attended, we inducted a new member, a senior management official from a local business who would be retiring soon. He

anticipated doing more public speaking in one year of retirement than during the thirty years he had spent as senior management at his business. He had been invited to be on various boards, guest at various events and had come to Toastmasters to work on his public speaking skills.

## About Toastmasters

Toastmasters is a non-profit international organization that has been around for more than eighty-four years and offers a proven way to practice and hone communication and leadership skills. This organization is collaborative, both international and local in scope, focused, and encouraging. Toastmasters membership provides the opportunity to serve in leadership roles and give presentations in an environment that is both competitive and supportive. In Toastmasters, members receive guidance while developing public speaking abilities and learn how to communicate more effectively at work.

In Toastmasters, one learns communication skills by working through the Competent Communication manual, a series of ten self-paced speaking assignments designed to instill a basic foundation in public speaking. Each of these projects is carefully crafted and participants learn skills related to use of humor, gestures, eye contact, speech organization, and overall delivery. When finished with this manual, members can choose from fifteen advanced manuals to develop skills related to specific interests.

For only \$5 a month, members receive the *Toastmasters* magazine, meet weekly with a diverse group of people, and are provided with a plethora of networking opportunities, and mentorship and mentee opportunities galore. Nowadays, I'm the personal librarian of my fellow Toastmasters and have formed personal relationships with several students (both undergraduate and graduate), professors at my institution, teachers in the community, military officers, retirees and senior citizens,

realtors, and other business people. These individuals are young and old, black and white, male and female. The diversity of Toastmasters' membership and the opportunity to network outside one's profession are two benefits of participation.

### Toastmasters Meetings

Most Toastmasters meetings are comprised of approximately twenty people who meet weekly for one hour. Participants practice and learn skills by fulfilling a meeting role, ranging from giving a prepared or impromptu speech to serving as timer, evaluator, or grammarian. Meetings follow a structured and focused agenda, striving to make the meeting last one hour in consideration for each member's valuable time. Meetings are offered various times to accommodate differing schedules. For example, in my area, there are three different chapters: one meets on Saturday, one in the evening, and one is an early bird meeting.

To give you a better sense of how the meetings are organized, I will describe a typical meeting. I arrive at the meeting place about ten minutes before the scheduled starting time. By the time most members arrive, the Sergeant of Arms has everyone's name placards set out for pick-up and light refreshments are available. Copies of the day's agenda and voting ballot are neatly arranged at each seat. The president of the chapter taps on the lectern and calls the meeting to order promptly at the scheduled start time. He calls on the invocation and pledge; we all stand together and bow our heads at the morning's reflection and then face the flag to recite the pledge of allegiance. Next any business is handled, such as the induction of new members. Then the toastmaster of the meeting is introduced. That person then introduces the ah-counter/grammarian, timer, joke master, and table topic master. Everyone has a role to fill, offering the opportunity to develop varied skills.

The ah-counter/grammarian is responsible for keeping track of the number of times a speaker says, "ah" or "um" and also staying alert for grammatical errors. At some Toastmasters groups, each member

who utters an uh or ah is charged five cents. The time keeper is responsible for monitoring the timing constraints of each speech using a box with three lights – amber, orange, and red. When the red light comes on, time is up. Don't you wish all the meetings you attended had such a box!

The joke master starts us laughing with several witty quotes and then introduces the word of the day. The word of the day is to be used in the three impromptu "table topic" short speeches. Quite often in life, one is expected to give off-the-cuff speeches and this is an excellent opportunity to enhance and practice this skill. The table topic master selects three speakers and they are each expected to give a one- to one and a half minute speech on a separate topic. Today, Hershel, a retiree, is selected to give a table topic speech about favorite gardening memories. He gives an enthralling account of falling asleep while plowing the fields with a mule as a young boy. He also discusses his enjoyment and love of canning and preserving the harvest of the gardens. It is quite interesting what is revealed in these short speeches.

Each meeting has three speakers. The toastmaster recites a short biography for each speaker and tells what project they are working on (from *Competent Communication* or one of the advanced manuals), its timing, and its title. On this day, the first speech presented is for project number four, "How to Say It." The purpose of this speech is to focus on language; the speech is to have a clear purpose and effective organization. Specific elements to be covered are the incorporation of rhetorical devices and avoidance of jargon. The speech is titled, "Cleft Palate." The speaker passes around a visual aid of children afflicted with cleft palate and, at the lectern, she presents various feeding bottles used by mothers to feed the afflicted children. This information is all new to me and very interesting. As the speaker is a professor of speech pathology, this speech conceptualizes tasks and duties that she performs daily with students studying speech pathology. If members have work-related presentations they are encouraged to use them at

Toastmasters. Usually the speeches are entertaining and expose a different slice of life than the usual library world. The speeches continue until all three speakers have taken a turn.

Then the toastmaster introduces the general evaluator for the meeting. Each speech has an individual evaluator who has been assigned to a speaker working on a specific award or manual. These evaluations are completed through written evaluation based on specific points and coverage aspects. Each evaluator stands to present an oral three-minute evaluation of their assigned speaker. The evaluators are expected to give positive feedback and support. They also give helpful criticism, such as needing to use specific eye contact or increase voice quality or volume. The general evaluator calls for these individual reports and then gives an overall evaluation of the meeting, with comments such as, the meeting flowed well or timing constraints were met consistently. At the conclusion of evaluations, control of the meeting is returned to the Toastmaster.

At the end of the table topics, speakers, and evaluations, a ballot is cast for best or most improved speaker. Ballots are counted and awards presented at the end of each meeting. The toastmaster presents these awards by calling the winner up to the podium to shake the toastmaster's hand and accept a ribbon. Both sides of this transaction create an opportunity to practice important skills, as librarians are often called upon to accept or give awards.



Tracy Englert receives award for best speech.

The toastmaster then returns control of the meeting back to the president. The president will thank guests for attending and allow them to stand up and comment if they desire. At this time, if the ah-count-er/grammarian's count is particularly high, the president will caution members to work on the use of filler words or correct other grammatical errors.

### Conclusion

Members learn leadership skills by taking on various meeting roles, serving as officers at the club and district levels, and working through the Competent Leadership manual and the High Performance Leadership program. Toastmasters has a learn-by-doing approach; it gives members responsibilities and asks them to lead. Members progress along each track by working through a series of manuals. Also, each project includes an evaluation guide, which gives club members an easy way to provide immediate feedback as the project is completed.

Just about everyone is sharpening up their professional development portfolio in the current environment of economic turmoil. In a review of librarian's resumes, receiving the Competent Toastmasters Award or the Distinguished Toastmaster award is frequently listed under the Awards and Honors section of vitas and resumes. Joining Toastmasters can provide an opportunity to improve public speaking skills and boost your resume without breaking the bank. ■

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## Remembering Jo

Judy McNeece

Jo Wilson was a friend of mine. We first met at meetings of the American Association of University Women, so I felt a kinship when we became colleagues at Delta State University. My first job after library school was as the director of the Instructional Resources Center and Jo was the long-time head of technical services at the W. B. Roberts Library. We worked together as department heads for seven years.

Jo taught me a lot about how to be a professional librarian. She was my mentor, though we never thought of that at the time. Talk to people; listen to people. Do the work; don't get bent out of shape if somebody else takes the credit. Always be open to new ideas, no matter how long it's been done "that way." She counseled me on dealing with my staff – it was the first time I was a supervisor.

The memories are multiple and varied. She was my companion and roommate at library conventions. With her, I met librarians from all over this state and many others in the southeast. I remember having dinner in convention cities with Jo and Mississippi State University's Dr. Lewis, Frances Coleman, and Betty Rice – particularly a young waiter's confusion at ALA in Philadelphia when he could not understand Betty's Southern accent. What could a 'saw sa' be? George and Betty have left us now, too.

Following her example, I learned to be more outgoing (believe it or not, I used to be shy). I found that I really enjoyed meeting people – there is so much to learn from others, "and, that sort of thing." I believe I am a better librarian because of Jo Wilson.

Jo was good-natured and easygoing most of the time – unless she was your supervisor and you gave her reason to show her red-headed temper.

---

*Judy McNeece is director of the Dixie Regional Library System; e-mail: jmcneece@dixie.lib.ms.us.*

Jo would do anything for a friend. Now, I am remembering the time she gave me a home permanent. Neither of us knew much about it and we thought, how hard can it be? Just follow directions. Well, we didn't know that if you used a blow dryer the hair would turn out straighter than when you started, only more like shredded wheat.

Jo loved Delta State sports; especially baseball. Through the years, she and Ray were the local "parents" to a multitude of team members.

Jo always wore heels and she loved to buy shoes. She might kick them off during the day, but they were there. She came home from many out-of-town meetings with new shoes stuffed in her bag.

I remember we spent the night at her sister Nita's big old rambling house before catching a plane to somewhere. Jo talked about her family often and was heartbroken when Nita came down with Alzheimer's. She was the first person that I knew to have it – maybe Jo was destined to succumb to the dreaded disease.

When Jo retired, she was fine. The next time I saw her was a February Legislative Reception at Eudora Welty. She talked about the family and what they were all doing, especially the grandchildren. She doted on them. Her hair was shorter, cut in a no-fuss style; her retirement liberation. She did not seem to have slowed down much. But then, I noticed the shoes. Instead of the heels or even fashionable flats, they were granny shoes, those lace-up sensible shoes that my mother wore. Those shoes made me worry. Not that there's anything wrong with sensible shoes – that is what most librarians wear – but not Jo; at a meeting it was heels, or stocking-feet if the night got too late.

I should have kept in closer touch. It seemed to happen so fast. Our paths had separated. I was busy raising my two boys on the other side of the state, and twenty years passed. I just missed it and I'm sorry I was not there to say "Goodbye."

Keep in touch before it's too late. ■

# Acquiring Practical Experience After Library School: A Case Study of Miami University, Ohio

Kwabena Sekyere

## Abstract

*Finding a job and working in the right department in a library after graduating from library school can be difficult without practical experience. Academic residency programs are a way of acquiring some valuable experience and also knowing and identifying the areas of librarianship in which you might be interested. Miami University of Ohio offers a library residency program which has been running for the past twenty years and has produced seasoned librarians in the profession. This article discusses the history and structure of Miami's program and shares the author's personal experience of the nature and uniqueness of the program.*

## Introduction

Each year, Miami University (Ohio) Libraries gives library school graduates the opportunity to experience real life academic librarianship through its residency program. Each of the residents works in a variety of environments, on different projects, and with different supervisors. Primarily, this residency program is designed to prepare the new librarians for continuing professional positions in academic libraries.

The program provides new graduates with skills and experience in a wide range of academic library activities, as well as opportunities to develop professionally and network with others in the profession. The residency program is symbiotic – academic residents learn from the library system and the library system, in return, takes advantage of the new ideas and views of these recent graduates, as well as benefits from any skills they may possess. Both parties benefit from the program.

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I had the opportunity to be part of the Miami Libraries residency program starting in September 2005. This article gives a personal account of the nature and uniqueness of Miami University Libraries' residency program with the intention of helping prospective residents learn more about the program before they apply and offering suggestions that could help make the residency program a better one.

## Brief History of the Miami Residency Program

Miami University Libraries instituted a one-year, with an opportunity for a second-year renewal, post-masters residency program in 1988. The program was established to provide full-time professional work experience to recent graduates of library schools, specifically graduates of underrepresented groups. The program was also a way to increase diversity on the staff by recruiting more people from minority groups.

In the mid 1990s, the program was opened to all new graduates of library school, irrespective of nationality or ethnic group. This is a successful and unique program which offers new librarians the professional experience necessary to penetrate a competitive job market. Following completion of their residency, all past participants have moved on to professional positions at Miami University Libraries or successful professional careers at other university libraries throughout the United States.

Miami University has a population of about 14,385 undergraduates and 1,341 graduate students on the Oxford (Ohio) campus. The Oxford campus is located thirty-five miles north of Cincinnati, with regional campuses in Hamilton and Middletown, Ohio and a European Center in Luxembourg.

## Structure of Residency Program

The Miami Residency Program is

unique in several respects. It is designed to provide recent graduates with professional experience in a competitive employment market and it adds significantly to the educational value of library school coursework.

Residents are given all the necessary tools to pursue their career development (computer, telephone, good working space, stationery, etc). The learning environment is positive and colleagues are supportive. These factors assist in strengthening the distinctiveness of a residency program.

Residents are allowed to work in their areas of interests, while simultaneously working to serve the libraries' needs. Projects could involve learning a new research area or collaborating with more experienced librarians to improve skills in a familiar area. In other words, the library identifies an assignment that matches both the resident's professional interest and the libraries' needs.

Routine updates or evaluations give the resident the opportunity to express his or her views about the program thus far and also allow the supervisor to address the needs of the resident. This helps in making sure that the content, methodology, and focus are in line with the objectives of the residency program.

There are good opportunities for professional development. In their 2006 article, Hu and Patrick emphasize that the administrators provide excellent support for professional development. The level of support and encouragement for a resident to attend workshops and conferences parallels that for the permanent librarians. (Hu and Patrick, 298)

## A Personal Experience

My experience as a resident at the Miami Libraries was a great one. At the beginning, I met with individual librarians who shared with me their responsibilities,

approaches to assisting students, and other information they deemed useful to my professional success. After these initial orientation sessions, I visited the various departments within the libraries, as well as the special libraries (Brill Science Library, Amos Music Library, and Wertz Art and Architecture Library) to familiarize myself with the staff and their duties. Learning about the responsibilities of each department and their roles in the libraries' operations was an enriching experience. This broad knowledge of the libraries helped me to know the right people to go to or direct patrons to in response to questions I received later in my residency. This also allowed me to identify areas in which I might have interest for later career choices.

I was then scheduled to observe at the research help desk to learn from the experienced librarians how they tackle questions in various ways. This experience was invaluable in that it allowed me direct communication with patrons and first-hand knowledge of their inquiries. I spent two semesters observing at the research desk before I was scheduled to work on my own. This gave me ample time to feel confident in the "hot seat." I gained valuable experience helping students with their research questions. I certainly improved my customer service skills. I learned about a wide range of resources – both print and electronic. I also shared responsibility with other librarians in providing virtual reference service. I did local chat, statewide chat, and instant messaging, all of which exposed me to some of the new trends in reference service in the digital age.

I expressed interest in working at the Center for Information Management (CIM), a cutting-edge multimedia laboratory, and was allowed to do so. This gave me the opportunity to learn some of the modern software used by students and faculty for their projects. I received training on software such as iMovie, a video editing software application which allows Mac users to edit their own home movies, SoundStudio 3 and Audacity, which are both digital audio recording and editing tools, and Adobe Indesign, for desktop publishing. As I spent several hours a week in CIM helping patrons with their problems, I learned more about scanning on different types of scanners and printing

complex posters with plotters. Working in the CIM lab was similar to sitting at the reference desk where people ask all kinds of questions from Archeology to Zoology. Patron questions concerning applications on the computers in the lab also provided additional opportunities to practice the skills learned during training. In the event I was unable to help a patron, the manager of the center was also available to assist. This is synonymous to referring a patron at the research desk to a subject specialist. Providing service at the research desk and the CIM lab were similar, however, CIM's questions were more technology-related whereas the research desk inquiries were typically research-related.

As a way of improving my instructional skills, I was encouraged to teach some technology workshops. A list of topics was given to me every semester. I selected the ones I would be comfortable teaching, and then I developed the content of the topics based on the scope and also planned for the sessions. Working at the CIM lab helped me develop more knowledge in some of the applications I used in my workshop sessions. Example of sessions I taught are "Introduction to Web Design Using Dreamweaver," "Audio Podcasting with Audacity," and "Making Home Movies with iMovie." I gained valuable experience teaching these technology workshops.

As part of my training, I was given two subject areas to manage. I was trained to do collection development and acquisition for Black World Studies and Multicultural Studies. There was not a department associated with Multicultural Studies, so that was solely collection development. I learned a lot as I served as a liaison to the Black World Studies department. Most importantly, I was able to perform some outreach services by promoting the libraries' resources and services to an academic department and its faculty. I visited the assigned department at least once a week to converse with the faculty and I attended their staff meetings. At the meetings, I shared with them new resources and services in the library and also shared with them what my responsibilities were as a liaison so that they could seek my help if they needed it. I arranged bibliographic instruction sessions with the faculty for their classes and seized the opportunity to

promote library resources and services to students. I also updated faculty about new things in the library through regular emails. I managed a subject page on the libraries' Web site for Black World Studies, where I carefully selected and listed resources for faculty and students. I used this page in instructional sessions and included the URL on any handouts.

Miami Libraries has a cluster system made up of four committee-like groups with different charges: collection development and management, information discovery and research, instructional services, and outreach and diversity. I was given the opportunity to be a member of the Diversity Cluster. The charge of this cluster is to promote diversity among library staff and possibly beyond. As expected, I learned about other cultures through my participation in this cluster. I also gained unanticipated skills in how to plan and organize events for the libraries and collaborate with departments outside of the libraries. As a member of the cluster, I was appointed to serve on a search committee charged with recruiting new academic residents. It was a great experience to partake in and learn about the processes of conducting a search for an employee. The invaluable experience I gained from serving on the diversity cluster has helped me serve effectively on other committees in and outside of the libraries.

While working in the information service department, I expressed interest in learning how to code in Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) and was given a project to design a browsable database of Miami's video collection. I worked with a colleague in the technical services department on this project. The project was successfully completed and is available online at [http://gregson.lib.muohio.edu/~sekyerk/video\\_project/](http://gregson.lib.muohio.edu/~sekyerk/video_project/). By taking on this project, I learned how to write scripts in PHP language to the extent that I could take on other projects in PHP. In addition to the technical skills learned from this project, I learned more about collegiality, adding to what I learned from my cluster and other experiences. Another project I took part in was the Miami eScholar project which developed an online tutorial for academic integrity. My participation in both projects improved my PHP skills.

### Things to Consider

The program is great and beneficial. However, I think there are a few things which could be considered for its improvement. The short visits or tours to various departments are not enough for a person to determine whether he/she will find an interest anywhere. It would be more helpful to have an agenda for the residents where they would have a week or two in each department and partake in the activities of the department rather than a day's tour. For example, a resident should be made to do some of the things a cataloger does when he/she spends time at the cataloging department. This would give the resident some practical experience to add to the theoretical knowledge of an area and assist in choosing a focus within the broad field of librarianship. There may be some residents who come in already having in mind what they would like to concentrate

on, but it would help such people identify other areas of interest. Letting a resident work in all departments will indeed introduce new librarians to all aspects of librarianship. It can also help the resident in some ways when it comes to satisfying the needs of the libraries.

An exit interview for all residents after completion of their residency would provide the opportunity to express concerns and suggest ways of improving the program.

### Conclusion

The Miami University Libraries residency program is one program which offers new librarians successful potential for development. It allows new graduates the opportunity to explore their interests and prepares them for making important decisions about their professional futures. As a former resident, I recommend library school students and recent graduates apply

for this type of program to prepare them for the competitive field of librarianship. The administrators are very supportive, so it behooves the resident to take full advantage of this professional experience. The opportunity to collaborate with librarians and teaching faculty is also quite rewarding. ■

### NOTES

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## MLA Officers for 2010

The results are in for the election to fill three positions on the Mississippi Library Association Executive Board beginning in 2010. **Jennifer A. Smith** was elected to serve as vice president/president-elect, **Ruth Ann G. Gibson** was elected to serve as secretary, and **Molly Signs McManus** was elected to serve as treasurer. Congratulations to the incoming members of the MLA executive board!

### Vice President/President-elect

Jennifer A. Smith has been assistant director of the Warren County-Vicksburg Public Library since 2002. Prior to that, she served as branch coordinator and genealogy librarian for the Madison County Library System for seven years.



**Jennifer A. Smith**

Smith received her MLIS from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2007 and a BA in liberal arts/sociology from Louisiana Scholars' College at Northwestern State University.

Smith previously served as a member of the MLA executive board in the position of treasurer in 2003-2004.

### Secretary

Ruth Ann G. Gibson has been head of technical services at Leland Speed Library at Mississippi College since 2007. Prior to that, she served as technical services librarian and catalog librarian at Mississippi College, library consultant at the Mississippi Library Commission, acquisitions coordinator at the Jackson Metropolitan Library System, and assistant librarian/acquisitions librarian and instructor of library science at Lambuth College.



**Ruth Ann G. Gibson**

Gibson received her MLS from North Texas State University in 1974 and a BA from Lambuth College in Tennessee.

Gibson previously served as secretary of MLA in 1994 and 2000.

### Treasurer

Molly Signs McManus is associate librarian and coordinator of public services at Millsaps-Wilson Library at Millsaps College since 2008. Prior to that, she held various positions at Millsaps College, was a virtual reference librarian for Tutor.com, and grant program coordinator and public access computer trainer for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



**Molly S. McManus**

McManus received her MLIS from the University of Washington in 1998 and a BA in political science also from the University of Washington. ■

# News Briefs

Tina Harry, Editor

## Katrina Collection: Rebirth and Renewal Exhibit at Katrina Research Center

The Katrina Research Center is pleased to present a new exhibition, the Katrina Collection: Rebirth and Renewal, 3-D mixed media artwork by Bay St. Louis artist, Lori K. Gordon. After Hurricane Katrina destroyed her home and art gallery in Clermont Harbor, she immediately started collecting rubble and debris left by the storm to create an eclectic collection of work. Largely self taught, Gordon works in many media including graphite, acrylic, handmade paper, fabric, and polymer clay. Her work may be found in galleries along the Gulf Coast, in museums in South Dakota, and in public and private collections around the country.

The exhibit will run through July 31, 2009. The show is available for viewing by visitors during regular library hours.

For more information about the Katrina Research Center and Lori K. Gordon, visit <http://www.usm.edu/katrina> and <http://thekatrinacollectionbylorikgordon.blogspot.com/>.



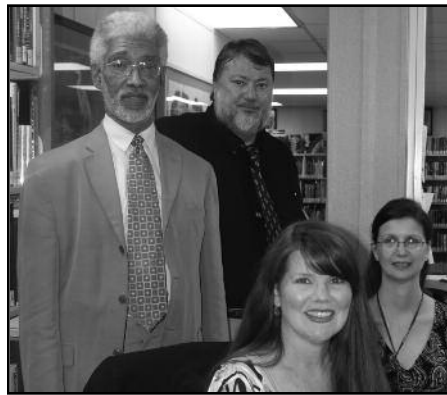
*Nicosia Saint 5, by Lori K. Gordon.*

– Submitted by Shugana Williams, librarian/clearinghouse coordinator and manuscript & digitization specialist, Katrina Research Center, University of Southern Mississippi

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## Hancock Library Reference Department Wins Award

The information services department at the Hancock County Library System (HCLS) recently placed first at the Virtual Union Catalog seminar. The Virtual Union Catalog is the program used for interlibrary loan services. When another library requests an item from HCLS, the staff always lets the requesting library know if the item is available or lost or already checked out to another customer. This is reported in the response column. HCLS received a zero in the response column, meaning they always let the requesting library know the status of items requested.



*Pictured, left to right: Metric Dockins and Patrick McKee, reference assistants; seated, Sue Prendergast, coordinator of information services; and Rhonda Hamrick, reference assistant. Photo by Mary Perkins.*

– Submitted by Mary M. Perkins, public affairs/development officer, Hancock County Library System

## Poster Celebrating Dr. Gordon Gunter on Display at Gunter Library

Gunter Library began its celebration of the life of Dr. Gordon Gunter, former director of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, by displaying a poster of a few of his many contributions to marine science. The poster will be on display in Gunter Library at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory until June.

Dr. Gordon Gunter (August 18, 1909–December 19, 1998) was the third director of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) and served from 1955 until 1970. In 1972, the library at GCRL was

named the Gunter Library by the Board of Trustees of the Institutes of Higher Learning for the State of Mississippi. Dr. Gunter wrote over three hundred scientific publications with nineteen of those appearing in the prestigious journal *Science*. He also founded two scientific journals (*Publications of the Marine Science Institute* and *Gulf Research Reports*) and coined the phrase “fertile fisheries crescent” to describe the abundance commercial sea life of the northern Gulf of Mexico. One of his publications, “Studies on Marine Fishes of Texas” (1945), has been cited over two hundred times in the literature.

The poster was on display at the February 2009 annual meeting of the Mississippi Academy of Sciences held in Olive Branch, Mississippi. Co-authors/creators are Madeline Trier-Rourke, a graduate library student at the University of Southern Mississippi, Jonathan Weaver, honors biology intern from the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College–Jackson County Campus, and Joyce M. Shaw, Gunter Library head librarian.

Other activities undertaken as part of the centennial include digitizing selected publications generated by Gunter, including quarterly reports he wrote from 1955 until 1970 detailing the activities of scientists, visitors to the campus, and changes to the physical plant. These reports are unique and not duplicated elsewhere in the state. Originally thought to have been lost when the Gunter Library received a foot and a half of Hurricane Katrina storm surge on August 29, 2005, they were among many boxes of hastily packed



*Dr. Gordon Gunter poster.*

library materials that had been stored for over three years. During the preliminary sorting of historical documents for this project, the reports were discovered in the last box opened. They are a treasure and an irreplaceable part of the history of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory.

– Submitted by Joyce M. Shaw, head librarian, Gunter Library, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, University of Southern Mississippi

### Luncheon for Officials at Hancock County Library System

The Hancock County Library System annually hosts a National Library Week luncheon for federal, state, county and city officials. At this luncheon officials are given an update on the library's circulation statistics, facilities, programs and services. The theme for 2009 was "Celebrating 75 Years of Service," since the library system's seventy-fifth birthday was March 12, 2009. Events will continue to honor the seventy-fifth birthday all year. More than fifty officials attended the luncheon this year, including U.S. Congressman Gene Taylor. The library's mascot, Louie St. Louis, was on hand to greet attendees.



U.S. Representative Gene Taylor visits with Louie the Alligator at the Hancock County Library System's annual national Library Week Officials' Luncheon. Photo by Mary Perkins

– Submitted by Mary M. Perkins, public affairs/development officer, Hancock County Library System

### Tail Wagging Tutors Program at Kiln Public Library

Tutor the Dog was on hand to kick off the Tail Wagging Tutors program at an open house Saturday, April 18, 2009, at the Kiln Public Library. Tail Wagging Tutors is sponsored by the library system and Visiting Pet Partners Pet Therapy Group.



Max the dog with his trainer John Louvier and Taylor Stockstill. Photo by Mary Perkins.

"The Tail Wagging Tutors program utilizes the assistance of registered therapy teams to encourage reading, improve literacy skills and build confidence in children," stated Patsy Thomas, Pet Partners Coordinator. "How?" Thomas continued, "By providing a relaxed, non-judgmental environment."

Research indicates that children with low self-esteem are often more willing to interact with an animal than with another person. Children are reading not to just any dog, but a registered therapy dog. These dogs are trained and volunteer with their handlers as a team. They are ideal reading companions, who listen attentively and are less intimidating than their peers. The petting and other loving interactions between the child and dog as they share a story are an additional therapeutic benefit.

Tail Wagging Tutors holds reading sessions for children every other Saturday from 1-3 p.m.

– Submitted by Mary M. Perkins, public affairs/development officer, Hancock County Library System

### Mississippi State University Libraries Receive Major Eudora Welty Collection

Had Eudora Welty lived until Monday, April 13, 2009, she would have been one hundred years old. The native Mississippian's legacy as a great American writer continues, however, through her critically acclaimed books, short stories, letters, and photographs.

Many of her works were left with Hunter Cole, a fellow Jacksonian who knew her well. Over forty years, Cole's collection of Welty memorabilia grew to measure more than thirty-five linear feet, one of the largest in private hands. "It's a great relief finally to have it placed somewhere safe," he said of the donation he recently made to Mississip-

pi State University's Mitchell Memorial Library. "This is one of the most impressive academic libraries in the state," he observed. "There was no Welty collection, though, so this seemed the right spot."

Cole credited Sandra Harpole, MSU's associate vice president for research, and Frances Coleman, dean of libraries, for making possible the donation. "The addition of this unique collection of materials encompassing Miss Welty's life and career will further strengthen our initiatives in support of scholarly research and teaching," Coleman said. "We are most fortunate to receive this comprehensive and well-preserved collection of materials."

Cole, former associate director for the University Press of Mississippi, said his years as a collector began while a student at Millsaps College in the late 1950s. While there, he served as Welty's host for a campus reading. "Meeting her and then discovering the superlative quality of her books motivated me," he said. "As any collector, I wanted to capture the essence of the person."

Among hundreds of pieces in the MSU collection are signed copies of "Why I Live at the PO," as well as "The Robber Bridegroom" and "The Ponder Heart." In addition, there are sound recordings of Welty reading "The Optimist's Daughter," along with a portfolio of her photographs.

For more information on the MSU Libraries' new Welty Collection, telephone 662-325-0812.

– Submitted by Angela M. Patton, library assistant, Mississippi State University Libraries

### Go Green Plant Swap at Waynesboro-Wayne County Library

Waynesboro-Wayne County Library had their first Go Green Plant Swap on Thursday, April 23, 2009, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Since it was such a success, they plan to make this an annual event.

A speaker from a local nursery presented a short talk on roses. Free brochures were provided by the Wayne County Extension Service and the library. The library also provided refreshments, door prizes, and displayed books on gardening.

These are some of the interesting plants that were swapped by participants: swamp sunflowers, Mexican petunias, walking iris, bearded iris, ginger, mint, striped cane,

cosmos, crinum lily, lamb's ear, fig tree, Rose of Sharon, running roses, phlox, Chinese evergreen, ivy, aloe vera, sheet shrub, dusty miller, succulent plants, a banana tree, daylilies, twentieth century plant, and a variety of seeds.



*Library patrons Billie Beard, Dale Walker, and Linda Touchstone examine plants to be swapped. Plants pictured include a banana tree, swamp sunflowers, Mexican petunias, and a bearded iris. Photo by Patsy C. Brewer.*

– Submitted by Patsy C. Brewer, library director, Waynesboro-Wayne County Library

### **Lucedale Library Receives Book Grant from Toyota**

Thanks to a generous grant from Toyota Motor Corporation, the Lucedale-George County Public Library is able to offer teens and other patrons fifty translated works of Japanese modern fiction and non-fiction books. The grant that totaled \$100,000 was awarded to two hundred public libraries by the American Library Association.

The translated work of award winning authors, through Vertical Publishing, provide a great sampling of popular works from Japan in many genres, including general fiction, fantasy, mystery, horror, historical fiction, Manga, and non-fiction. These books will add diversity to libraries looking to enhance their collections, introducing many readers to new authors and cultures.

"Many of these titles are illustrated novels and are very popular with our teen and young adult readers," said Becky Wheeler, branch manager. "It's a neat coincidence that these books have arrived at the library just in time for the observance of Asian/Pacific American Month in May. The new books will also boost our collection of popular fiction and increase the non-fiction collection - and we're always happy to get new materials."

For book titles and availability, visit the

library Web site at [www.jgrls.org](http://www.jgrls.org) and click "search for library materials" at the top of the page. All items in the collection are available for checkout and may be reserved at any branch in the Jackson-George Regional Library System.

For more information contact Becky Wheeler, branch manager, at 601-947-2123 or Carol Hewlett, library director, at 228-769-3227.



*Lucedale Library staff Cindi Burgan and Elizabeth Anderson set up the new English-translated Japanese collection of books purchased with a grant from Toyota Motor Corporation. Photo by Rex Bridges.*

– Submitted by Rex Bridges, PR and marketing specialist, Jackson-George Regional Library

### **Grant Association Holds Annual Meetings at MSU Libraries**

For its annual meeting May 3-5, 2009, the Ulysses S. Grant Association visited Mississippi State University for the first time.

Mitchell Memorial Library – the recently named new home of the Presidential Papers of America's eighteenth president, Ulysses S. Grant – welcomed the association's members and directors, including association president and Rhode Island Chief Justice Frank J. Williams, for dinners, special presentations, business meetings, and more.

"The association's relocation to Mississippi State University has received coverage in newspapers around the nation," said executive director for the association, MSU's Dr. John Marszalek, "and we are moving forward to continue the mission of our organization."

At the association's Monday evening dinner, MSU president Dr. Mark Keenum shared his excitement about the Grant Col-

lection coming to reside at Mississippi State and said he has spoken about the collection's acquisition with numerous groups across the country over the past months. Chief Justice Williams expressed his appreciation to Dr. Keenum and to Mississippi State University and the Libraries for moving stridently forward with the collection to make it accessible to researchers and scholars here at MSU and beyond.

During the association's board meeting on Tuesday, MSU Libraries' dean Frances Coleman was elected to the U.S. Grant Association's Board of Directors. Dean Coleman extended an invitation for the association to continue meeting at MSU Libraries, which the group will do in 2010 and then, subsequently, every other year.

In addition to a trip to the Civil War Museum in Corinth, Mississippi, and to Shiloh Battlefield, the association's meeting featured Grant scholar Jean Edward Smith's lecture on myths and realities about Grant's presidency, MSU history professor Jason K. Phillips' presentation entitled "Confederate Rumors about Ulysses S. Grant," and a panel discussion and book signing with Grant and Civil War authors.

For more information about the Ulysses S. Grant Collection at Mississippi State University Libraries, please visit <http://library.msstate.edu/USGrant/> or contact Dr. John Marszalek at 662-325-4552.



*MSU President Dr. Mark Keenum (right) stands with U.S. Grant Association President and Rhode Island Chief Justice Frank J. Williams at a portrait of Grant during the association's annual meeting at MSU Libraries. Photo by Jim Tomlinson.*

– Submitted by Angela M. Patton, library assistant, Mississippi State University Libraries ■

# People in the News

Tina Harry, Editor

On June 30, 2009, two Dixie Regional Library System Branch Managers will finish their many years of service: **Jo Anne Blue** for thirty-three years at the Edmondson Memorial Library in Vardaman (Calhoun County) and **Gene Philpot** for twenty-eight and a half years at the Houston Carnegie Library (Chickasaw County).

"Although we will miss them, we wish them well as they adapt to their new 'free' lifestyle," said director Judy McNeece. Friends, coworkers, library patrons, and the general public celebrated the two retirements at a reception on May 19, 2009, at the Houston Carnegie Library. A proper ending to Philpot's library career will be the Centennial Celebration of the Houston Carnegie Library, the first Carnegie Library in Mississippi, on July 4.



Jo Anne Blue



Gene Philpot



**Frances Coleman**, dean of Mississippi State University Libraries, has been honored for her exemplary service and leadership by an organization representing one of Mississippi's most outstanding citizens.

During the April 23, 2009, G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery Leadership Awards Scholarship Presentation in Mitchell Memorial Library's John Grisham Room, Bob Bailey presented Dean Coleman with the Montgomery Foundation Board of

Directors Excellence in Leadership Award. In his presentation to Coleman, Bailey, president of the G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery Foundation, expressed the board's "gratitude for her strong friendship, her outstanding leadership, and her service for the foundation and for the Montgomery Collection at MSU Libraries."

"Dean Coleman exemplifies the kind of leadership we at the foundation like to recognize," said Bailey. "Time after time she has given credit to the libraries' faculty and staff for successful projects and events, and we just needed to honor her for that."

The G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery Foundation was established over ten years ago to carry forward Montgomery's legacy; to encourage leadership development, education, and excellence in scholarship; and to support various military and veteran projects and needs. Each year, the Montgomery Foundation awards a medallion and scholarship to an outstanding student in the Army ROTC, the Air Force ROTC, and the Appalachian Leadership Honor Society at Mississippi State University.

For more information on the G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery Leadership Awards Scholarship Presentation and on MSU Libraries, please visit <http://library.msstate.edu>.



Dr. Mark Keenum (left), Mississippi State University president, shares a photograph with honoree Frances Coleman, dean of MSU Libraries, and Bob Bailey, president of the Montgomery Foundation. Photo by Kristen Baker, University Relations.



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Bay St. Louis mayor **Eddie Favre** was presented a Plaque of Appreciation for his twenty years of commitment to library services in Bay St. Louis by the Hancock County Library System Board of Trustees at the library system's annual National Library Week Officials' Luncheon at the Leo Seal Community Center in Waveland on Monday, April 6, 2009.



Pictured left to right: HCLS trustee Suzi Lee, Eddie Favre, trustee chairman Toni Larroux, HCLS acting director Paul Eddy, and trustee Dolly Lundberg.



**Patty Furr** has been named executive director of the Hancock County Library System (HCLS). Furr replaces acting director Paul Eddy, who has taken a position as director of the Beaumont Public Library in Texas.

Furr comes to HCLS from William Carey University in Hattiesburg, where she served as director of libraries and learning resources for the past four years. Prior to that, she served as the coordinator of technical and automation services at HCLS from 2004 to 2005. During her time at HCLS, she was responsible for installing and implementing the new Horizon integrated library system and coauthored the library's new Web site. She also spent five years working in technical services at the Pearl River County Library System in Picayune.

Furr was director of libraries at William Carey when Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005, and was instrumental in the recovery of the two Carey libraries in Gulfport and New Orleans. She and her staff salvaged 8,000 books from the upper

shelves at the Gulfport library and setup the first temporary library on the Coast in April 2006. Furr was able to use publicity about the storm's losses to generate donations of over \$50,000 to purchase new computers and replacement books. She also authored several grants from the Andrew Mellon Foundation that brought in another \$45,000 to aid in the library system's recovery from the storm. During the past year Furr has also supervised the construction of a major addition to the Smith Rouse Library in Hattiesburg, as well as working with the administration in the construction of a replacement library in the new Carey campus at Tradition north of Gulfport.

Furr holds a Masters of Library and Information Science from the University of Southern Mississippi and a Bachelor of Music Education from Florida State University. She completed the Mississippi Library Commission's Librarianship 101 Institute for Public Library Directors; Harvard University Graduate School of Education's Leadership Institute in Library Management, and Homeland Security Administration's Community Emergency Response Training. She also completed the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) classes on Preservation of Library Materials, Dealing with Mold and Mildew in a Library Environment and Disaster Preparedness Training.

Furr is a member of Beta Phi Mu Library Honor Society; received the Mississippi Library Association's Peggy May Scholarship; the Award of Merit from the Mississippi Historical Society; and the Mississippi Municipal Association's "Making Mississippi Move" award. She is also a member of the Rotary Club of Petal, Mississippi, where she serves on the board as the literacy chairperson. Her work as a Rotarian has enabled Petal to become one of the first communities in Mississippi to host the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Project which provides a free library of sixty books to each newborn baby in the community. She has also worked with the Hattiesburg Area Development Partnership



**Patty Furr**

to develop the adult reading curriculum for the Festival of Swans project.

"The Library Board of Trustees is pleased to have Patty on board with her level of experience," said Toni Larroux, HCLS Board of Trustees chairman, "and we feel she will be a real asset to the library system, as we move forward with our Katrina recovery projects."

Furr is looking forward to the recovery work ahead as well. "I am absolutely delighted to be back in Hancock County, and I look forward to bringing my energy and experience to the important task of rebuilding the Hancock County Library System's facilities. Because the libraries are such an important factor to the quality of life here on the Coast and the long-term economic recovery of Hancock County, the staff and I will be moving 'full-speed ahead' to bring back the award-winning library facilities and services to the people of Hancock County."

Countywide public library services are provided by the Hancock County Board of Supervisors and the Cities of Bay St. Louis and Waveland. The library can be found on the Web at [www.hancocklibraries.info](http://www.hancocklibraries.info).



**Jason Kovari**, a graduate of SUNY-Binghamton and the State University of New York at Buffalo, began serving in the position of special collections digital initiatives librarian at the University of Mississippi on April 15, 2009.



### **Sherry Laughlin**

retired from the University of Southern Mississippi in June 2009 following twenty-five years of service with the University Libraries. The majority of that time, sixteen years, was spent as the head of the reference/information services department at Cook Library. Most recently, Laughlin served as the associate dean for McCain Library and Archives. The USM Libraries hosted a university-wide reception on June



**Sherry Laughlin**

3, 2009, to mark the occasion of Laughlin's retirement.

One of the highlights of Laughlin's career at Southern Miss was her participation on a five-member committee that guided the planning, design, and construction of the Cook Library renovation and addition project from 1990 to 1997. She was also elected to two consecutive terms to the USM Faculty Senate and was elected president of the Faculty Senate for 2000/01.

Laughlin is active in the Mississippi Library Association. She was editor of *Mississippi Libraries* for five years and, under her leadership, ML won the H. W. Wilson award for outstanding periodical from a local, state, or regional library organization. Laughlin was elected MLA president for 1993 and is currently serving as Mississippi chapter councilor to the American Library Association and as co-chair of the local arrangements committee for the MLA annual conference.

This retirement does not mark the end of Laughlin's career. On June 15, 2009, she began a new position as director of libraries and learning resources at William Carey University. She will oversee library operations at the Dumas L. Smith/I.E. Rouse Library on the William Carey University campus in Hattiesburg, at the McMullan Learning Resource Center on the Gulf Coast, and at the Learning Resources Center for the nursing program at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Asked to reflect on this transition, Laughlin said, "I will miss working with wonderful colleagues and friends at USM, but the nice thing about moving just across town is that I will still be able to see them frequently. The position at William Carey University is a great opportunity for me to develop new collegial relationships with librarians and library staff, faculty, and students. I'll have to hit the ground running, as later this summer we will be moving the Gulfport branch to its new facility on the William Carey campus at Tradition, we are facing a SACS reaffirmation visit in a few months, and the university has just broken ground on its proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine, so those collections and services will need to be developed."





*Pictured left to right: Lucedale library manager Becky Wheeler, board member Orell Hedgepeth, new board member Nancy Jo Maples, library director Carol Hewlett, and board chairman D. L. "Chic" Anderson.*

**Nancy Jo Maples**, a resident of Lucedale, Mississippi, will join the Jackson-George Regional Library Board as its newest member. Maples was appointed by George County supervisors to represent library interests on the seven-member board. The regional library board is the highest governing body of the eight-branch, two-county library system.

Maples has served on the city and county library board at the local level since 1994. She is an avid library supporter and loves to read. She studied journalism and communications at the University of Southern Mississippi.

"The library was one of the first stops I made back in 1988 when I first moved to Lucedale and worked for the Mississippi Press," said Maples. "That's where I collected information and made friends in the community. After my children were born, we visited the library for story-time until they reached school-age and we still visit regularly."

When talking about serving on the Regional Library Board, she said, "I feel a strong connection between Jackson and George counties. That observation is based in part because of my experience with the Mississippi Press. I also realized those ties when I served on the United Way board years ago. And being married to a lawyer, I see that connection in our circuit and chancery court districts. The Jackson-George Regional Library System is another good example of the two counties working together."

Her favorite books are suspense, legal thrillers, and classics. She also has a pas-

sion for juvenile fiction novels from sharing interests with her eighth grade daughter.

Maples is married to husband Mark and enjoys dividing her time among daughter Mollie and two sons, Gus and Ben. Her children are involved in many sports and that keeps her busy going to soccer, basketball, track and much more.

Maples is a Sunday school teacher at First United Methodist in Lucedale and has been active in many local organizations. She continues to do freelance writing.



**Ruth Mirtz**, currently an associate professor of English at Ferris State University, will soon be joining the University of Mississippi libraries as an education reference librarian. She earned her MLIS from Wayne State University, a PhD in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a MA in English from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and a BS in Education from Dana College.

Mirtz fills an opening in the reference department created by the retirement of **Sharon Schreiber** in December 2008. Schreiber got her MLS from the University of Mississippi in August 1982 and began her employment as a library assistant in the Chemistry Library, prior to the establishment of the Science Library. Schreiber was a reference librarian from 1984 until her retirement.



Mississippi State University Libraries announces four new faculty positions.

**Patricia Matthes** joined MSU Libraries as associate dean of technical services in July 2008. Prior to accepting this position, Matthes was serials librarian in the technical services department of MSU Libraries for ten years and retired as director of the library and professor emeritus from Mississippi University for Women in 2004. Matthes served as special projects librarian for the thirteen-library First Regional Library System in north Mississippi.

**Mary Ann Jones** joined MSU Libraries in December 2008 as assistant professor and coordinator of electronic resources. Jones earned her BA in organi-

zational communication from the University of Central Florida and her MLIS from Florida State University.

**Judy Li** joined MSU Libraries in February 2009 as assistant professor and business reference librarian. Li earned her MLIS at the University of Western Ontario, Canada, and her MBA at Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

**Amanda Price** joined MSU Libraries as assistant professor and serials librarian in January 2009. Price earned both her BA in journalism and her MLIS from the University of Alabama.



**Dr. Glenda Segars** of Tupelo, director of learning resources at Itawamba Community College, has been reappointed by Mississippi Lieutenant Governor Phil Bryant to serve another four-year term on the Mississippi Council for Education Technology.

The Mississippi Senate confirmed her appointment on March 24, 2009, and she will serve as chair of the council for the next two years.

Segars earned graduate degrees from both the University of Mississippi and the Uni-



**Glenda Segars**

versity of Alabama. She is active in numerous professional organizations and serves on the Board of Commissioners of the Mississippi Library Commission and on the Lee-Itawamba Library Board of Trustees.

The Mississippi Council for Education Technology was established as the advisory group which, in cooperation with the Mississippi Department of Education, was charged with the responsibility of creating the Mississippi Master Plan for Educational Technology as mandated by Senate Bill 3350 in 1994. Membership in the council includes representatives from all public education agencies, as well as private business and industry.





*Stephen Cresswell presents award to Mona K. Vance.*

**Mona K. Vance**, archivist at Columbus-Lowndes Public Library, is this year's recipient of the Glover Moore Prize from the Mississippi Historical Society. The Glover Moore Prize, carrying a \$300 cash award, is given annually to the author of the best master's thesis on a topic in Mississippi history completed during the previous year.

Vance's thesis titled "Fighting the Wave of Change: Cultural Transformation and Coeducation at Mississippi University for Women, 1884 to 1982" explores the case of Joe Hogan v. Mississippi University for Women and its long term impact on the school. Hogan sued the university in 1979 when he was denied admission to the nursing department based on his gender. Eventually, the United States Supreme Court heard the case in 1982 and found in favor of Hogan. As a result, Mississippi University for Women officially opened its doors to men on July 15, 1982. The case ultimately determined the fate of coeducation at both The Citadel in South Carolina and the Virginia Military Institute ten years later.

Vance said, "I am incredibly honored to receive such a prestigious award. I hope this will lead to further understand of and research into the rich history of MUW and its impact on not only women but education and the state of Mississippi as well."

Vance received her MA in history from the University of North Carolina Wilmington in 2008 and her BS in communications from Mississippi University for Women in 2002.

Award ceremonies took place on March 7, 2009, during the Mississippi Historical Society's annual conference at the Old Capital Inn in Jackson.

The prize honors Dr. Glover Moore, a

professor of history at Mississippi State University and a longtime member of the Mississippi Historical Society.



**Mara Villa** graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi with a master's degree in library and information science in May 2009. Villa is the youth services supervisor at the Pearl



**Mara Villa**

Public Library and previously held positions at the Lafayette County & Oxford Public Library and the G. Chastaine Flynt Memorial Library (Flowood). She holds a BA in history from the University of Mississippi and has won numerous scholarships, including: 2007-2008 Mississippi Library Commission Public Librarian Scholarship, 2008 Central Mississippi Library Council Scholarship, and 2008 Mississippi Library Association's Virgia Brocks-Shedd Scholarship. In 2008, Villa was named the Rankin County Employee of the Year (Central MS Regional Library System). ■



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# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## MLA 2009 Annual Conference

**"Eco-Friendly  
Libraries:  
Green for the  
New Century"**

**October  
21-23, 2009**

**The University  
of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS**

# About Books

Jennifer Brannock, Editor

## FICTION

**Atkins, Ace.** *Wicked City*. New York: GP Putnam's Sons, 2008. 336 pp. \$24.95 (hardcover)

In *Wicked City*, Ace Atkins turns his journalist's eye toward Phenix City, Alabama, in the 1950s, a small backwater town overwhelmed by a sleazy and corrupt government under the collective thumb of gangsters known as The Machine. Called "the wickedest city in America" by *Look* magazine, Phenix City had an economy largely based on prostitution, gambling and moonshine. Atkins relates the story of how local citizens turned the tables on The Machine in 1954, returning Phenix City to its more law-abiding residents.

If you're familiar with Atkins' work, you know he has moved from music to city history, but he still creates some of the best historical fiction to be found. *Crossroad Blues* (1998), *Leavin' Trunk Blues* (2001), and *Dark End of the Street* (2002) are great tales based on the history of jazz and its early artists in the South. With *White Shadow* (2006), Atkins turned his attention to Tampa, Florida, and the unsolved murder in 1955 of Charlie Wall, known as the "white shadow."

*Wicked City* brings the author to Alabama and a city where the local law and the National Guard initially seem uninterested in solving the murder of a prominent lawyer who had been intent on reforming the city. Eventually, they are forced to face the facts by a local gas station manager and former boxer, Lamar Murphy, who is persuaded to serve as sheriff. Murphy points the Guard toward the town's most flagrant gangsters, but in the process he

uncovers even deeper layers of corruption of which he was unaware.

*Wicked City* is a well-told tale, based on the meticulous research common to Atkins' novels. They may be crime stories, but they are based on court records, deeds, maps, and correspondence from the time. Atkins' writing is based on the research and writing skills he honed as a reporter for the *Tampa Tribune*. His skillful writing puts the reader back in time and space, as if we were listening to the tale unfold at some distant kitchen table. Alabama is the author's home, and his fluency with the rhythm and tone of the language is apparent. Atkins is now a resident of Oxford, Mississippi.

Priscilla L. Stephenson  
Chief, Library Service  
G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery VA Medical Center

— ♦ —

**Barr, Nevada.** *Winter Study*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2008. 370 pp. \$24.95 (hardcover)

Nevada Barr's novel, *Winter Study*, follows Park Ranger Anna Pigeon as she studies wolves on the Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Soon after her arrival, strange and troubling events begin to disrupt the study; these events eventually culminate in the death of one of her colleagues. While trying to solve the mystery she finds herself embroiled in, Anna clings to her logic and scientific knowledge as fear and superstition threaten to dissolve the research group and turn them against each another. As Anna discovers who – and what – is responsible for the tragedies that plague the study, she learns that not all monsters are supernatural and that humans are the most vicious of predators.

*Winter Study* is the fourteenth novel in

Barr's Anna Pigeon mystery series. While Barr does allude occasionally to Anna's previous adventures, readers who have not read the other books in the series will not be inconvenienced by their lack of familiarity. Barr's descriptions of the harsh landscape, and even harsher weather, that Anna and her colleagues must contend with instantly pull the reader into the story. Similarly, her portrayal of the daily minutia of the researchers' lives as they strive to collect and analyze data about the island's wolf population is fascinating and helps the reader sympathize with characters that are often otherwise unlikeable.

Due to some graphic language and descriptions of violent and sexual acts, this book might not be suitable for some younger or more sensitive readers. The plot twist toward the end is especially disturbing. However, *Winter Study* is an enthralling mystery that would make an excellent addition to any public or university library.

Jessica Minihan  
Electronic Resources Librarian  
University of Mississippi

— ♦ —

**Jordan, Hillary.** *Mudbound*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2008. 328 pp. \$22.95 (hardcover)

In manuscript form, *Mudbound* won the Bellwether Prize for fiction in 2006. Awarded biennially to a budding writer who demonstrates social change, the prize was established in 2000 by author Barbara Kingsolver. On her Web site she explains the political genre she promotes through the prize with examples such as Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, David Guterson's *Snow Falling on Cedars*, and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Kingsolver stated, "Hillary Jordan

writes with the force of a Delta storm" and as the book opens we realize one has just blown through. The first chapter finds brothers Henry and Jamie McAllan taking turns digging a grave for their father, Pappy. They hurry before the next storm hits and the soil is described as, "so wet from all the rain it was like digging through raw meat." Around four feet, Henry strikes something hard. Slowly he begins to unearth a skull with a huge chunk missing from the back. He continues to dig and hand up bones to Jamie, including shackles still attached to one femur. Jamie smiles as he thinks Pappy would die again if he knew he was about to share eternity with a slave.

The story is told through six different characters with unique personalities. Jamie, a returning WWII veteran, still fights his irrational fears through alcohol. Ironically, his medals for bravery are a direct result of his fears, preferring to take flak from ground gunners than fly over water. Much older brother, Henry, served in WWI and tried to prepare Jamie for the horrors of war. Henry has control issues. He quits a profitable job as an engineer for the Corp in Memphis to take his wife and two offspring to a farm in the Delta to raise cotton, without consulting them. Laura, wife of Henry, is the connecting narrator from which the timeline moves. She is college educated and used to amenities such as indoor toilets and washing machines. When Henry is swindled out of his money for a house in downtown Greenville, it is off to the farm to live in one of the sharecropper's homes sans running water and electricity. Ronsel, another veteran who served under Patton as a tank driver in the Black Panthers, enjoyed his freedom in Germany by taking a white lover; unfortunately, Mississippi laws prevent him from bringing her home as his wife. Florence and Hap are the proud but cautious parents of Ronsel who returns to Mississippi to help on their tenant farm.

Pappy, full of pure evil, is not given a voice. He is a lazy old coot who lives with the family on the farm because other sib-

lings tired of his mouth. Openly hateful to all blacks and women, he has no redeeming value. This leaves readers wondering if a character can truly be this evil. Conflict occurs as Jamie and Ronsel become drinking buddies and Pappy gathers his clansmen to take care of the problem.

Through interviews with Jordan, one learns the book reflects stories told to her by relatives. She told blogger Kelly Hewitt her stories came from, "outside of Lake Village, Arkansas, just across the Mississippi River from Greenville. But I decided to set my story in the Mississippi Delta instead because it really is, as James Cobb says in the title of his excellent book about the Delta, 'the most Southern place on earth'."

*Mudbound* is packed with storm after storm and one cannot predict the damage to come. This character-driven novel is a worthy addition to any Mississippi library.

*Maggie Moran*

Public Services and Reference Librarian  
Northwest Mississippi Community College



## NONFICTION

**McAlexander, Hubert H.** *Strawberry Plains Audubon Center: Four Centuries of a Mississippi Landscape*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008. 181 pp. \$18.00 (paperback)

This outstanding monograph describes the history of the area in Mississippi where Strawberry Plains Audubon Center originated. An explanation of how the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center became a part of Holly Springs, Mississippi, is detailed in the last chapter. The interesting interior includes Contents, Foreword, Acknowledgments, 1. The Deep Past, 2. The Finleys, 3. The Davises, 4. Woodland and Strawberry Plains, 5. The Slaves, 6. War, 7. The Two Armies, 8. Devastation, 9. Hard Times, 10. The Freedmen and Strawberry Plains Baptist Church, 11. The

Next Generation, 12. A New Century, 13. Sharecropping in the Depression, 14. A Family's Values, 15. Audubon Center, Appendix A. Genealogical Charts, Appendix B. The Cemeteries, Notes, and an accurate index.

The backgrounds of Marshall County and Holly Springs are discussed, including settlers such as the Finley and the Greenlee families. The Davis were a tremendous money-making cotton family. The Davis House, the largest in Holly Springs, was called Strawberry Plains by Martha Greenlee Davis. Thomas Finley bought Strawberry Plains in 1927 when the Davis family hit hard times.

Thomas Finley's daughters, Ruth Finley and Margaret Finley Shackelford, sold Strawberry Plains to the Audubon Center in 1998. The Audubon Center maintains the land, history, and house of Strawberry Plains in honor of Ruth Finley and Margaret Finley Shackelford. The Center is used for the Mississippi Ornithological Society, the Mississippi Bluebird Society, and garden clubs. An Enchanted Forest Fall Festival delights students. The annual Hummingbird Migration Celebration held there is the biggest Audubon festival in the United States.

The book is a wonderful addition to all academic and public libraries. This excellent publication is a priceless asset with its superb details of the background of Holly Springs and the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center, a fabulous place to visit because of its beauty and abundance of lovely birds, gorgeous nature, and captivating history.

*Melinda F. Matthews*

Interlibrary Loan/Reference Librarian  
University of Louisiana at Monroe Library



**Morton, Clay.** *The Oral Character of American Southern Literature: Explaining the Distinctiveness of Regional Text*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008. 200 pp. \$109.95 (hardcover)

What is it that gives American Southern literature its unique charm? Clay Morton's book provides a possible answer. In *The Oral Character of American Southern Literature*, Morton examines how Southern folk heritage helped shape the Southern Literary Renaissance. Morton traces the development of oral traditions in the South and, as his title suggests, Morton believes that what gives Southern literature its character is its foundation in this oral culture. He applies this thesis through the literary analysis of works by William Faulkner, James Weldon Johnson, Eudora Welty, William Gilmore Simms, Donald Davidson, and Zora Neale Hurston. The application covers a range of ideas, going from college education to early African-American poetry to Faulkner's story structure. Morton's topics will appeal to a range of scholars. The book concludes with a look at Southern literature's place in a post-modern world.

The book is a survey text on Southern oral tradition. Morton's chapter topics are diverse in subject matter with the overarching theme being the influence of oratory tradition on literature. The variety of topics associated with the oral tradition in the South is the only thing that appears to bind the chapters together. Each chapter could be its own stand alone book.

The text is written for an academic audience, so readers with a general interest in the topic may find it hard to engage. Scholars of Southern culture, linguistics, education, and history will glean something from the text. The book would make a good addition to an academic library, especially in the field of regional or linguistic studies.

Jorge Brown  
Information Service Librarian  
University of Southern Mississippi-Gulf Coast ■

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# MLA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

**October 21, 2008 • 4:00 p.m.**  
**Mississippi Library Commission**  
**Natchez, MS**

## **Executive board members present:**

President: Jeff Slagell  
 Vice President: Jan Willis  
 Treasurer: Amanda Clay Powers  
 Secretary: Judy Card  
 ALA Councilor: Sherry Laughlin  
 MLA Executive Secretary: Mary Julia Anderson  
 (ex officio member)

## **Others present:**

Margaret Bell, Black Caucus chair  
 Ann Branton, vice president-elect  
 Madonna May, Public Library Section chair  
 Jill Nicholson, Mississippi Author Awards Committee  
 Jacqueline Quinn, Black Caucus vice chair  
 Shirlene Stogner  
 Dianne Willard, School Library Section chair

President Jeff Slagell called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Secretary Judy Card called the roll.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the August 7, 2008, meeting were read. Catherine Nathan moved that the minutes be approved with the correction of the spelling of McLaughlin to Laughlin's on page 2. Sherry Laughlin seconded. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Amanda Powers announced that she would be available at the registration desk throughout the conference to facilitate payment of conference related expenses. The treasurer's report was passed out. Amanda pointed out that there was an overage for SELA. Jeff will follow up. Catherine Nathan moved that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Diane Willard seconded. Motion passed.

**Vice President's Report:** Jan Willis announced that the Opening General Session is scheduled for Wednesday, 9:30 a.m. ALA President Jim Retting will give the keynote. Program changes are on the salmon sheet. Attendance at meal events is good. The location of the Richard Wright Literary landmark has been moved to the Memphis Room. The USM/ALA program will be in the Vicksburg Room.

**ALA Councilor** Sherry Laughlin spoke with

Jim Retting regarding concerns about program time changes.

**School Library Section:** Chair Dianne Willard hopes that a new section chair will be appointed to the 2010 MLA Board.

**Roundtable Reports:** None

**Committee Reports:** None

**Old Business:** None

## **New business:**

Jeff Slagell announced that SELA Councilor Deborah Lee contacted him to suggest that MLA and SELA host a joint conference in either 2011 or 2012. Jeff's concern is that revenue sharing may present a problem for MLA. A joint conference doesn't result in a significant increase in attendance. Jeff will contact Deborah to get further information.

Dr. Angela Rutherford, University of Mississippi, has contacted Jeff to ask MLA to partner with the University to sponsor a state-wide children's book award. There would be no cost to MLA. Kathy Buntin, Dianne Willard, Victoria Penny, and Judy Card will get further information such as the exact role of MLA, how would this award fit in with book awards at other universities, how would the awards be presented, etc. (Later Alice Shands volunteered to work with this group.)

Drexel University has offered to form an educational partnership with MLA. MLA members would be offered tuition discounts via the MLA Web site. Members participating in Drexel continuing education events would receive a 20% discount. This could be a positive membership benefit. There was some concern over maintaining our good relationship with USM. Jeff will get a copy of the agreement for further discussion at the December board meeting.

Jill Nicholson, of the Author Awards Committee, suggested that honored authors should have a public connection to Mississippi. For example, writers might have lived in Mississippi for five years, identify with Mississippi in their writings, or recognize Mississippi's role in their development as an author. This concern was raised because of the possibility of a Mississippi Author Award going to a writer who has no apparent connection to the state other than birth. It was

pointed out that committee members can use their discretion in selecting recipients. Jill will draft a suggested statement and send it to Jeff.

## **Announcements:**

It was announced that as of the beginning of the meeting, there were 390 registered for the conference. This number includes vendors and speakers.

The next MLA Board Meeting will be December 11, 2008, 10:30 a.m. at the Mississippi Library Commission in Jackson. This will be the last meeting for the 2008 Board and the first meeting for the 2009 Board. (Hooray!)

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Judy Card, Secretary*

Minutes approved at MLA Board meeting May 20, 2009.

— ♦ —

**December 11, 2008 • 10:30 a.m.**  
**Mississippi Library Commission**  
**Jackson, MS**

## **Executive board members present:**

President: Jeff Slagell  
 Vice President/President-elect: Jan Willis  
 Treasurer: Amanda Clay Powers  
 Secretary: Judy Card  
 MLA Executive Secretary: Mary Julia Anderson  
 (ex officio member)

## **Others present:**

Lynn Shurden, Fiscal Management Committee chair  
 Marsha Case, 2009 MLA Executive Board Secretary  
 Tracy Carr Seabold

President Jeff Slagell called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.

Secretary Judy Card called the roll.

A quorum was not present.

**Approval of Minutes:** President Jeff Slagell asked the board to read the minutes of the October 21, 2008, meeting in Natchez to check for corrections or additions. None were noted.

**President's Report:** Jeff Slagell has negotiated a contract for the annual conference to be held in Vicksburg, October 19-22, 2010.

**Treasurer's Report:** Amanda Powers passed out the MLA balance sheet as of November 30, 2008. She noted that next year MLA will move to electronic banking. The bookkeeper will report deposits to the treasurer who will then be better able to keep track of the account balances.

**Vice President's Report:** Jan Willis announced the following appointments to the 2009 Board. ACRL will be represented by Judy Hilkert. Melissa Moak will represent the Schools Section. Deb Mitchell has agreed to chair the Legislative Committee.

**Committee Reports:** None

#### Old Business:

**Joint SELA-MLA Conference:** Jeff Slagell has not heard from SELA Representative Deborah Lee regarding the issue of conference income sharing. As MLA is heavily dependent on conference income to support the work of the association, he sees few scenarios that would allow MLA to commit to a joint conference.

**Mississippi Children's Choice Book Award:** Kathy Buntin, Dianne Willard, Victoria Penny, Judy Card, and Alice Shands worked with Dr. Angela Rutherford of the University of Mississippi to consider the possibility of MLA co-sponsoring a state-wide Children's Book Award. Upon contacting Ellen Ruffin, Dr. Rutherford discovered that USM is currently working on a similar award. It appears that MLA and Ole Miss will have the opportunity to be involved. Lynn Shurden said that this could also possibly be helpful to MLA's Mississippi Author Awards.

**Drexel University Partnership:** President Slagell sent board members copies of the Drexel proposal to offer tuition discounts to MLA members. Many of those who responded to his e-mail expressed concern that MLA be mindful of maintaining a strong relationship with USM, which offers the only ALA-accredited degree in Mississippi. It was pointed out that USM does not offer a PhD in library and information science and that Drexel does. If there is further interest, this can be purposed by the 2009 Board.

#### New business:

**Fiscal Management Committee:** Lynn

Shurden presented fiscal recommendations offered by the committee for the next year.

President Slagell thanked Lynn Shurden for her leadership on the committee.

#### Announcements:

President Slagell thanked the board members for their service, along with all of the volunteers of the association during his tenure as president. He also wished Amanda a happy birthday.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Judy Card, Secretary*

Minutes approved at MLA Board meeting May 20, 2009.

— ♦ —

**December 11, 2008 • 11:15 a.m.**  
**Mississippi Library Commission**  
**Jackson, MS**

#### Executive board members present:

President: Jan Willis  
Immediate Past President: Jeff Slagell  
Treasurer: Amanda Clay Powers  
Secretary: Marsha Case  
MLA Executive Secretary: Mary Julia Anderson (ex officio member)

#### Others attending the meeting:

Judy Card, 2008 MLA Executive Board Secretary  
Lynn Shurden, Public Library Section chair

President Jan Willis called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m. and welcomed the new board.

Secretary Marsha Case called the roll.

A quorum was not present. No minutes or Treasurer's report were given.

**President's Report:** Jan Willis reiterated the success of the 2008 MLA Annual Conference in Natchez in October. He also stated that the 2010 MLA conference will be October 19-22.

#### Section Reports:

Public Library Section – Lynn Shurden, chair, discussed the possibility of having a speaker for MLA who would present a program on trends in libraries and not having an author to speak. She stated that public libraries can lead the way in trends.

#### Committee Reports:

Fiscal Management – Lynn Shurden, chair, presented the 2009 budget proposal and the following recommendations to the MLA executive board for consideration:

1. Approve an increase in salary for the Executive Secretary of 3% to \$15.45 per hour.
2. Increase bookkeeper's salary to \$3,708 per year which is a 3% increase.
3. Investigate possible increases for advertising in ML and Web.
4. Invest Virginia Brocks-Shedd Scholarship funds.
5. Hire Ann Richmond as bookkeeper to replace Missy Lee who is retiring.
6. Transition to electronic banking and executive board to decide who has access to account.
7. Approve the 2009 budget proposal.

With a lack of a quorum the Fiscal Management Committee's recommendations will have to be voted on at the next MLA executive board meeting. It was also suggested that a retirement plaque be presented to Missy Lee. Jeff Slagell and Mary Julia Anderson will work on acquiring the plaque.

#### New Business:

The Thad Cochran Center on campus at USM in Hattiesburg will charge \$3895 for the 2009 Annual Conference. Conference center charges for Vicksburg (2010) will be based on agreed-upon tiers of food and beverage expenditures.

Judy Card suggested exploring the use of teleconferencing, if needed, for MLA board meetings. Bylaws need to be checked to see if being present in person is mandatory. In the future, the board will explore if it is time to consider a mixture of teleconferencing and physical attendance at quarterly meetings.

#### Old Business:

There was discussion about the Authors' Awards and digitally recording authors' speeches. Could MLA use podcast to put on Web site? MSU has equipment, does USM? Would they let MLA borrow? Amanda Powers agreed to research.

With no announcements, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Marsha Case, Secretary*

Minutes approved at MLA Board meeting May 20, 2009. ■

# MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Year January-December 2009

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Position \_\_\_\_\_  
Library \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

One of the primary forms of communication between MLA and its members is the MLA listserv. As a member of the MLA listserv you will receive important announcements from MLA via email and be able to discuss library related issues with your peers. If you are not already a MLA listserv member, can we add your email address to the listserv?

☐ Sign me up! ☐ I decline

## A. MEMBERSHIP TYPES

**Membership** (Any person currently working in a library or information center. Mark by salary range.)

\$0 to \$9,999	\$15 per year	\$ _____
\$10,000 to \$19,999	\$25 per year	\$ _____
\$20,000 to \$29,999	\$35 per year	\$ _____
\$30,000 to \$39,999	\$45 per year	\$ _____
\$40,000 to \$49,999	\$50 per year	\$ _____
\$50,000 to \$59,999	\$55 per year	\$ _____
\$60,000 or above	\$60 per year	\$ _____
Student (2 Year Limit)		

Full or Part-time	\$10 per year	\$ _____
Retired	\$15 per year	\$ _____
Trustee	\$15 per year	\$ _____
Friend of Library	\$15 per year	\$ _____
Institutional Membership	\$45 per year	\$ _____
Vendor	\$40 per year	\$ _____

## Lifetime membership

One-time Payment	\$1000	\$ _____
Installment Plan		

(Payable in increments of a minimum of \$200 each year until paid in full)

A. MEMBERSHIP TYPES SUBTOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_



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## B. SECTIONS

Enter "FREE" for one section membership  
(Enter **\$6.00** for Additional Sections)

Academic (ACRL)	\$ _____
Public	\$ _____
School	\$ _____
Special	\$ _____
Trustee	\$ _____
<b>B. SECTIONS SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ _____

## C. ROUNDTABLES

Join one or more roundtables for opportunities in professional growth **\$3.00 EACH**.

<b>ANRT</b> (Automation and Networking)	\$ _____
<b>BLACK CAUCUS</b>	\$ _____
<b>ECTRT</b> (Educational Communication and Tech)	\$ _____
<b>GODORT</b> (Government Documents)	\$ _____
<b>LIRT</b> (Library Instruction)	\$ _____
<b>NMRT</b> (New Members)	\$ _____
<b>SCRT</b> (Special Collections)	\$ _____
<b>TSRT</b> (Technical Services)	\$ _____
<b>2YCRT</b> (2 Year College)	\$ _____
<b>YPSRT</b> (Young People's Services)	\$ _____
<b>C. ROUNDTABLES SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ _____

## D. SCHOLARSHIPS

Donation to Peggy May Scholarship	\$ _____
Donation to Virgia Brock-Shedd Scholarship	\$ _____
<b>D. SCHOLARSHIP SUBTOTAL</b>	\$ _____

## GRAND MLA TOTAL

(DUES GRAND TOTAL (A + B + C) AND SCHOLARSHIP D)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Check enclosed (Make payable to Mississippi Library Association and mail to MLA, P.O. Box 13687, Jackson MS 39236-3687). All dues include subscription to **Mississippi Libraries**.

\_\_\_\_ Please charge my MLA dues to my:  
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

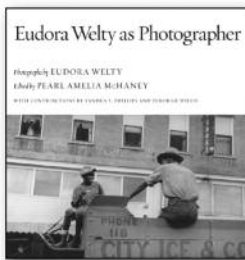
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Dues must be paid by **March 15** in order to receive the Spring issue of **Mississippi Libraries** and for annual election of officers. MLA may at times supply its membership list to professional organizations or library vendors.

☐ Check the box if you do not want your name included.

(Revised 12/07)

# Must-Have Titles for Mississippi Libraries



## EUDORA WELTY AS PHOTOGRAPHER

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## OCCASIONS

### SELECTED WRITINGS

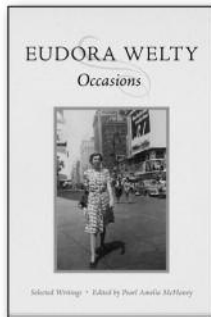
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MCHANEY

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