

# Centennial State Libraries

May 16, 2003

## Challenging Developments @your library™

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### State Librarian's Report, May 17, Reduction in Regional Services

After 16 years in this job, people still ask me what a State Librarian does. Actually this happened just last week! I've been thinking for awhile that I should let the library community know about the projects I'm involved in. I started a few weeks ago submitting an article to Centennial Libraries every week or so, and now I'm willing to commit to it. So look for these missives fairly frequently.

- System Directors and Board Representatives Meeting

One of the consequences of the budget cuts is a reduction in System services. The Regional Library Service System budgets have been cut from \$2.4 million to \$600,000 and that hasn't been signed by the Governor yet as I write this.

System Boards have been talking to their members and to each other and to staff about what System services can be retained. On May 7, System directors and a representative from each board met in Denver with State Library staff to discuss individual and collective plans. The group discussed courier, automation networks, databases, continuing education and other plans for the future. To date, it seems as if six to ten System employees have been notified that there will not be a job for them next year.

To discover what your System is planning, call your System Director directly. The group will meet again on June 13 (Friday the 13th!) to continue our crisis planning.

- Chief Officers of State Library Agencies

Each spring the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) meets. These are State Librarians from all over the country. We meet in Washington in conjunction with ALA Legislative Day. Colorado had sponsored a study of standards for public libraries across the country. We presented these results that show a remarkable similarity among the states. Full access to the results of this study will be up soon if you want to see what other states are doing. We are considering undertaking a standards-setting process here in Colorado, but budget cuts have put a hold on that for now.

Colorado also participated with OCLC in the development of a technology portal called *WebJunction*. It's designed to help public libraries keep their computers up and running, train their staff, and solve other technology problems related to public access computing (that's the jargon term for the fact that the public swarms to your library to use your computers). The launch of *WebJunction* was at the Library of Congress, and all of COSLA and their delegates to ALA Legislative Day were invited. You can try this out for yourself at [WebJunction](#). Let me know what you think. More about this later.

- ALA Legislative Day

Every year for 16 years I've been attending ALA Legislative Day in Washington, DC. Our aim has been to have at least one constituent from every Congressional District join us on the trip. Over the last few years, CAL has offered a \$300 subsidy to one person from each district making the trip. This year, seven people attended from six Congressional Districts: Gene Hainer, John Wilkerson, Judy Casey, Nancy Tucker, Elena Rosenberg, Rochelle Logan, and I. We visited with all of our legislators (Gene and I were on vacation during this time). The major issues we discussed with them were:

- Reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA)
- Appropriation of \$250 million to fund LSTA
- Support of funding for school libraries through No Child Left Behind. Current recommendation is \$27.5 million. We asked for \$100 million so it could become a state-based program and more Colorado libraries could benefit.
- Review of the U.S. Patriot Act and a return to the requirement that a court-ordered subpoena be required to retrieve records from libraries

- A return to a balance between fair use and creator protection in copyright laws.

As always it was fun talking to our legislators.

- 3rd Congress on Professional Education (COPEIII)

ALA sponsored its 3rd Congress on Professional Education, better known as COPEIII. I was privileged to attend on behalf of the Western Council of State Librarians. The focus in this Congress was on education and staff development for para-professionals. At the conference the terminology was changed to library support staff. I'm writing a full report for Western Council but in general the major issues were:

- *A state, regional, or national voluntary certification program.* My questions are: Would Colorado librarians like to have this? My preliminary request for information seemed to indicate so.
- *More CE.* This also became a call for a uniform curriculum for education and more Library Technology Programs (LTA) around the country. I find this terminology somewhat confusing because it doesn't just deal with technology but all aspects of library services.
- *Life Cycle Education Program.* This was a call for the establishment of general titles for different levels of library work and a suggestion of what the work associated with those titles might include. The next step is a way to progress from one level to another. Probably the most controversial topic was whether or not you would need a master's degree to go from something like Library Associate to Professional Librarian.
- *Recognition and respect.* This theme prevailed throughout the two days. Library support staff did not feel recognized or respected for the work they contribute to quality library service
- *Benefits from ALA.* Much discussion surrounded how to get library support staff to join ALA. What could ALA offer them? The consensus seemed to be:
  - *Lower membership fees*
  - *More ways to participate*
  - *A certification program*

Western Council of State Librarians has applied for a \$500,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to work with para-professionals. We should hear this summer. If you want to overdose on documents from the [COPEIII](#), you can find them online.

Two of the most interesting papers are:

- *Library and Information Studies Education and Human Resource Utilization: A Statement of Policy*, which deals with career ladders and job definitions.
- *Library Support Staff: Ten Issues* by Kathleen Weibel. This was done in 1991 and it's still the clearest statement of all the issues.

- Nancy M. Bolt

## Paradox Charter Wins National Grant

Paradox Charter School in Paradox has won a \$5,000 grant from the [Laura Bush Foundation](#). Paradox is a partnership with Montrose Public Library, and started their 'branch' last year with an LSTA grant awarded FY02. Of the 132 schools in the nation receiving awards:

- 90 percent do not have sufficient funds to purchase one book per student, per year
- Most schools cited an average age of more than 15 years for books in their collections
- Some had books as old as 50 years in their collections
- 93 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced priced meals
- 65 percent are elementary schools
- 27 percent are secondary schools
- The balance are K-12 schools

## Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development: Lessons and Voices from the Field

The public library can be a community resource for teens, but few are set up to serve as community centers for large numbers of young people, and librarians are rarely trained as youth workers. This Forum for Youth Investment's report on the Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Libraries Initiative finds that transforming libraries to better serve young people takes time, deliberative effort, funding help and, most importantly, teen involvement. To see the study, go online to [Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development](#). (From "[Connect for Kids](#)," Benton Foundation)

## How School Librarians Improve Outcomes for Children: The New Mexico Study

The "[New Mexico Study](#)," by Keith Curry Lance, Marcia J. Rodney, and Christine Hamilton-Pennell, joins eight other state studies now reporting on a total of over 3,300 schools delivering the same message: **"School library media centers make a difference in academic achievement."**

This book contains the official report of the study under the auspices of the New Mexico State Library. According to the executive summary: "New Mexico achievement test scores rise with the development of school library programs." The relationship between school library development and text scores is not explained away by other school or community conditions at the high school level...New Mexico achievement test scores tend to rise with increases in: school librarian and total staff hours per 100 students; print volumes per student; periodical subscriptions, video materials, and

software packages per 100 students, and school library expenditures per student.

Completed in 2002, the study is now available in book form (ISBN: 0-931510-87-2). The volume contains several reproducible handouts for a quick summary of the study in addition to the research report. For price and information, contact Hi Willow Research & Publishing via e-mail [sales@lmcsource.com](mailto:sales@lmcsource.com); 1-800-873-3043.

## **Cherry Creek High School Library Media Center the Best**

The American Association of School Librarians recently recognized Cherry Creek High School with the School Library Media Program of the Year Award as the outstanding single school library program in the nation. Established in 1963; the award honors school library media programs practicing their commitment to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information, as well as exemplifying implementation of Information Power. The award of \$10,000 is one of three sponsored by Follett Library Resources. Congratulations to all. Previous Colorado Award winners include Smoky Hill High 1995, Cherry Creek High 1990, and Littleton Public Schools 1976.

## **Farewell to a Long-Time Library Friend**

The Colorado library community bids farewell to a long-time friend and advocate. Judy Zelenski left the Central Colorado Library System on May 15. She began at CCLS on Groundhog Day in 1981, first as Cooperative Program Development Librarian and then Assistant Director. She was most recently Acting Director of CCLS. All the best, Judy.

## **Colorado Public Library Stats Now Online**

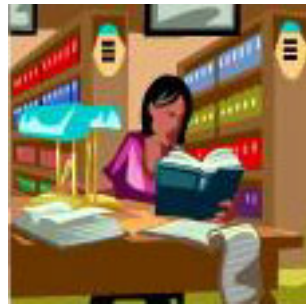
Looking for the latest Colorado public library statistics? The following public library data tables have been added by Library Research Service:

- [Preliminary 2002 Public Library Data.](#)

This spreadsheet includes data from the Colorado public libraries that submitted their annual report by April 29, 2003.

- [Metro Public Library Survey.](#)

Previously called "The Jeffco Survey", this table includes statistics for selected public libraries with total operating income exceeding \$1.25 million.



## Fast Facts: School Library Budgets Down in Colorado, Print Collections Suffer

The March 31 issue of "[Fast Facts](#)," from Library Research Service, shows that annual operating expenditures in school libraries decreased in 2002. Expenditures-per-student benchmarks for the state were also down. This is a troubling trend in light of studies like Colorado's "*How School Librarians Help Kids Achieve Standards*" (2000) that have shown strong school libraries contribute measurably to student achievement. The information is based on the annual Colorado School Library Survey.

## Weld Library Re-opens After Renovation



The [Centennial Park Branch Library](#) of the Weld Library District recently held a celebration to re-open the facilities. Located at 2227 – 23rd Ave in Greeley, the facility now boasts more than 60,000 new books, a Homework Help Center, children's story time area designed to look like an apple, meeting room, and other amenities.

## The Ever-Shifting Internet Population: A new look at the digital divide

In a recent report from Pew Internet & American Life, the Pew Research Center, researchers found there is far more fluidity in the Internet population than most analysts imagine.

About a quarter of Americans live lives that are quite distant from the Internet – they have never been online, and don't know many others who use the Internet. At the same time, many Americans who do not use the Internet now were either users in the past or they live in homes with Internet connections.

Three new insights regarding patterns of Internet use and non-use emerge:

- 20% of non-Internet users live in wired homes and yet remain offline.
- 17% of the current group of non-users are online drop-outs. They formerly used the Internet but no longer do.
- Over a quarter of current Internet users report that at one time or another in their online lives, they dropped offline for an extended period.

Recent surveys by the Pew Internet Project show that about 80 million American adults – 42% of the adult population – say they do not use the Internet. But it turns out that the notion that people are either “online” or “offline” is not as simple as it seems. “The Internet population shows much greater churn than most realize – a lot of people are moving in and out of the online world pretty regularly,” said Amanda Lenhart, research specialist and author of “The Ever-Shifting Internet Population: A new look at Internet use and the digital divide.”

She continued: “It is too simple to talk about a digital divide based exclusively on problems with access when it is now clear that access issues change from month to month for lots of Americans. A surprisingly large number don't want to be connected even though they have tasted what online life is like or live with the Internet literally in the next room.”

Lenhart's report finds that 24% of Americans remain truly unconnected to the online world. They have never tried going online and are often quite removed from the connected population. Moreover, there are still pronounced gaps in Internet use along several demographic lines: Older Americans are much less wired than younger Americans; minorities are less connected than whites, those with modest amounts of income and education are less wired than those with college educations and household incomes over \$75,000, and rural Americans lag behind suburban and urban Americans in the online population.

There are social and psychological explanations why some Americans do not use the Internet. For instance, a person's sense of personal empowerment can make a difference in her decision to go online or not. Those who feel less in control of their lives are less likely to go online. Disabilities also keep some Americans from using the Internet. A portion of non-Internet users are socially disconnected from the Internet, with more than a quarter (27%) saying that they know almost no one who goes online. A similar group of non-users (22%) say they do not know of public Internet access points in their community [LIBRARIES, TAKE NOTE!].

The [entire report](#) is available online.

## Coloradan Starts to Bridge the Digital Divide

Among the recent participants in statewide training about how to teach computers to new users and Spanish-speakers was a woman from Montrose. Returning to her library, she offered a local class and reported great success the first day. The group had a turnout of over 20 people. However, the next day's class had only three. Having no adequate answer for the drop in attendance, library staff decided to put into action some of the advice they'd received in the workshop from Spanish outreach coordinator Larry Maynard. They decided to drive out to the fields where most of the many of the participants from the first class worked.

The entire agricultural field emptied toward them as the workers recognized the teachers. Turns out the entire group had WALKED two miles to the class and then back home the prior day, but because it suddenly got cold, most of them couldn't face the frigid long walk next day. The Montrose woman reported that without workshop training on community connections and culture, she never would have thought to make personal contact to discover what had prevented the students from attending OR that the transportation issue was something that they faced. She's now looking at ways to try to bring the class closer to where they are. "It's all about the relationship," she said.

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