

# ARKANSAS LIBRARIES

FALL-WINTER 2018

VOLUME 75, NUMBERS 3-4



Arkansas Library Association

## IN THIS ISSUE...

ARLA CONFERENCE 2018 REPORT

•

SUMMER READING SUCCESS STORIES

•

KAREN RUSS MEMORIAL AWARD

# Arkansas Library Association, 2018



Arkansas Library Association

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This publication is mailed to members of the Association. Memberships may be obtained through the Arkansas Library Association: Executive Director, 3416 Primm Lane, Birmingham, AL 35216. Telephone number: 800-241-4590.

Additional individual issues are available for \$30 per copy.

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# Arkansas Libraries

Published by the Arkansas Library Association

<b>From the ArLA President: Meet the Incoming President</b>	
Jil' Lana Heard.....	2
<b>From the Editor: Representing All Voices</b>	
Britt Anne Murphy.....	3
<b>ArLA Conference 2018 Report</b>	
.....	4
<b>Arkansas Library Association 2018 Award Winners</b>	
Judy Calhoun.....	9
<b>SCL Summer Reading Program Success Stories</b>	
Jordan Reynolds.....	12
<b>Librarian of Congress Visits Arkansas</b>	
Carolyn Ashcraft.....	14
<b>The Luxury of a LibGuide</b>	
Dr. Kay J. Walter and Dr. Renée Chérie Clark.....	16
<b>Cathy Howser Retires from State Library</b>	
Carolyn Ashcraft.....	18
<b>Karen Russ Memorial Award for Excellence in Research</b>	
Carol Macheak.....	18
<b>Becoming a Preservation Steward</b>	
Dominique Hallett and Bill Sabin.....	19
<b>UAPB Librarians Present at Open Education Symposium</b>	
Shenise McGhee.....	20
<b>Around Arkansas</b>	
Heather Hays.....	22
<b>Mental Health Awareness for University Library Employees</b>	
Julia Conroy.....	24
<b>School Library Budgets</b>	
Ashley Cooksey.....	27
<b>Arkansas Books &amp; Authors</b>	
Timothy G. Nutt.....	29

**Cover:** Lights provide a winter scene at Harding University with Brackett Library in the background. *Submitted by Jean Waldrop, Director of Brackett Library at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas.*

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*Arkansas Libraries, Fall-Winter 2018*



## FROM THE ArLA PRESIDENT: Meet the Incoming President

*Jil'Lana Heard*

*2019 ArLA President*

I am truly honored to serve as the 2019 ArLA President and I am excited about the upcoming year. Innovative things are happening in libraries all across our state and I hope to highlight those outstanding contributions through this column each quarter.

Just so you can get to know me a little better, I was born and raised in Hot Springs, Arkansas and started my career as an elementary school teacher. In 2000, I decided to start my master's degree at Florida State University, which at the time was the only ALA-approved program that was available entirely online. I have been a school library media specialist for the past 18 years starting in middle school, moving to junior high and finally landing me in my current position at Lake Hamilton High School. I have served as President for the Arkansas Association of Instructional Media and as Chair for the Arkansas Association of School Librarians.

Fall conference just wrapped up, and I appreciate all the hard work Daniel Fouts and his conference committee put forth to make sure we had a great lineup of sessions. This year's conference committee went above and beyond to make sure this conference was a memorable one from the awards dinner to trivia night. Our closing session with Kat Robinson really gave us a "taste" of Arkansas with history and the pie auction. It really was a treat!

Plan now to attend next year's conference in Hot Springs on September 27-29, 2019. Our theme, "Looking Back ... Moving Forward," reminds us that our profession and our libraries are always changing. Our organization is also changing with our new strategic plan, which I know is going

to take us in a positive direction. I want to thank Dean Covington and Dan Boice for their leadership and dedication to the process of developing our strategic plan, and for all the work of the entire committee. The strategic plan is going to allow ArLA to focus our efforts on what is most important to our membership. Over the course of the next three years, our focus will be on improving professional development, increasing membership and participation, and strengthening the organization of the association. Many of the committees are looking for members who are willing to serve, so if you have not found your place, let us help you locate a place to volunteer. ArLA needs us all!

*Jil'Lana Heard is Library Media Specialist  
for Lake Hamilton High School.*



*A pie up for auction (please see article on page 4).*

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## FROM THE EDITOR: Representing All Voices

by **Britt Anne Murphy**

*Library Director, Hendrix College*

In libraries we often try to be everything to everyone, taking great pains to not leave out or ignore populations and viewpoints that often get excluded from our society. At my own institution, a small private college affiliated with the Methodist Church, I was confronted with these issues last spring during a discussion on religious diversity. A few faculty members representing non-Christian faiths complained that Hendrix's Christmas decorations, specifically a Christmas tree in the athletic center, were microaggressions. If you've been awake the last few years, you'll know that microaggressions are brief, commonplace, daily indignities that communicate insults to marginalized groups. My color rose as my mind went immediately to the 12-foot Christmas tree the library puts up every year in a very prominent spot of our rotunda. The purpose of the tree is to advertise new acquisitions through the book jacket "ornaments." I was a little horrified to think that the tree might insult anyone who walked through the door, but then immediately also became defensive. It wasn't hurting anyone, surely? And we are a Christian college, and Christmas trees aren't even Christian – they're Pagan.

I took a breath and directed myself towards my better nature – at the end of the discussion I approached the professors and talked about the library's Christmas tree, and how we might be more inclusive this Christmas. In November I contacted the leaders of several student groups, including our campus Jewish group (Hillel), an interfaith group, and the multicultural society. After an enthusiastic meeting, I put one of our Library Associates who is a religious studies major (and Pagan) in charge of putting up a display of resources representing Kwanzaa, Chanukah, Pagan, and worldwide Christian traditions resources. We ordered children's books, "lit" a Menorah during Chanukah, and created a gigantic banner with greetings for Kwanzaa, Chanukah, Pagan, and Christmas traditions in different languages. Can I tell you how much fun this exercise was? And how joyful and appreciative



*Murphy*

students and faculty were to be finally included?

This issue of *Arkansas Libraries* demonstrates how libraries are representing all voices in our communities. We constantly turn ourselves to our better natures, and the result is improving access to mental health care, providing joyful and diverse summer reading experiences for all ages, and opening up pathways to library resources for first generation college students. A look at the conference report will give you a taste of our priorities. From Felton Thomas advising us to tell stories of how libraries regularly save lives, to Robert Cochran literally bringing voice to stories of African-American prisoners, to Kat Robinson highlighting stories of individuals from tiny Arkansas hamlets who create pieces of artistry in the form of pie... these stories are transformative because in the telling they become our stories. Let's all try to turn to our better natures as librarians – perhaps you'll be inspired to put to voice a story that needs to be told in the next issue.

*Britt Anne Murphy, the Managing Editor of Arkansas Libraries, is the Director of the Olin C. Bailey Library at Hendrix College.*



*Opening Keynote Speaker Felton Thomas, Jr. at the ArLA Conference 2018 (please see article on the following page).*

# **“We Made It Happen!”**

## ***ArLA Conference 2018 Report***

***by Simone Kirk, Crystal Gates, Philip Shackleford, Tina Murdock, Dean Covington, David Eckert and Ashley Burris***

### **ALPS Conference**

2018 was a year loaded with changes for the Arkansas Library Paraprofessional Division (ALPS). The trend continued also in regards of the ALPS Annual Conference. For the first time, the ALPS division joined forces with ArLA to hold a combined annual conference instead of training separately in spring. Paraprofessionals from all over the state arrived early on Saturday, September 22 for an extra day of training, starting with a welcome reception at the Bentonville Public Library on Friday evening. After warm greetings from Library Director Hadi Dudley, the group toured the premises and enjoyed some much needed networking time over refreshments, generously provided by the Bentonville Public Library.

The next morning, over 40 ALPS members showed up for a conference training day loaded with sessions specially geared towards paraprofessionals. The ALPS Board had mindfully chosen session topics that were requested by its membership in a

prior conference planning survey. Topics in high demand included programming, circulation, and interlibrary loan, as well as the “usual suspect”: customer service training.

After a full day of learning, it was time for the traditional ALPS social event. Past ALPS conferences have been especially popular due to the extended networking opportunities and ALPS get-togethers that included everybody and promoted a tight-knit group feeling amongst its members. Instead of a formal banquet which always included some form of entertainment, ALPS chose to come together for “Canvas Painting with Heather & a Twist” this year. The event was organized by ALPS Chair Elect Dalene Schrier in collaboration with Heather Hays from the Bentonville Public Library. Heather volunteered her free time and artistic expertise to lead the group through the painting process and also provided all needed painting equipment. Thanks to the gracious sponsorship from Records Imaging Systems Inc., who covered the costs for canvases and paint, the fun event was free to all ALPS members.

A group dinner at a local Italian restaurant closed the conference day for ALPS. Members left reconnected, refreshed, and equipped with new knowledge, ready to put these skills to work at their



*ALPS hosted Heather Hays from Bentonville Public Library in a session “Canvas Painting with Heather & a Twist.”*



home libraries.

### ArASL Conference

The Arkansas Association of School Librarians (ArASL) joined up with ArLA as well to hold their conference on Saturday, September 22. ArASL featured young adult author C. J. Redwine as their speaker. C. J. Redwine is the New York Times bestselling author of YA fantasy novels, including the Ravenspire series and the Defiance trilogy. In her session, C.J. discussed her start as a published author and then delved into the ins and outs of fairy tale retellings. She described her methods of meticulous research, including going back to the oldest, most original telling of the fairy tale as possible, and a fierce desire to create characters for today's youth, especially young women. Her characters give readers a glimpse of themselves and who they can be all wrapped up in a fantasy world that captures the imagination. C.J. shared teasers of upcoming releases and took questions from the audience, including suggestions for fairy tales she's not yet retold.

### Guest Speakers

The opening keynote address was delivered by **Felton Thomas Jr.**, the Executive Director of the Cleveland Public Library in Cleveland, Ohio. Formerly Director of the Nevada Library Association, Thomas has been named a "Mover and Shaker" by *Library Journal* and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association and as a member of the Aspen Institute Task Force on Learning and the Internet. Thomas's address set a positive tone for the ArLA conference,



*YA author C.J. Redwine addresses ArASL conference attendees.*

tying into the conference theme "Make It Happen" and emphasizing how librarians should focus on telling their stories, on authentic and emergent leadership, and on equity, diversity, and inclusion. Thomas described authentic leadership as being composed of three parts – special knowledge, passion, and practical skills. He argued that librarians should create compelling narratives and incorporate their passions into their work – part of leadership is enjoying what you do! He incorporated engaging activities into his talk, including having session participants talk with their neighbors to tell a personal story about why they worked in libraries. Thomas's session was well received and set the stage for a wide variety of valuable sessions that continued throughout the conference.

Keynote speaker for the author luncheon was **Robert Cochran**, Professor of English at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Cochran offered a preview of a chapter he is writing for a future volume on the history of music in Arkansas. *So Much Truth in Some of Them* offers a new look at prison work songs collected by John and Alan Lomax, Harry Oster, and Bruce Jackson, focusing on songs recorded in Arkansas prison camps. Cochran's approach, while acknowledging the practical purpose of the songs in coordinating the efforts of prisoners involved in efforts such as cutting trees and laying rails, also recognizes the influence and artistry of the singers and their songs. A highlight of the presentation included archival audio recordings, photographs, and rare film footage that brought the work to life for conference attendees. Cochran is one



*Author luncheon speaker Robert Cochran.*



of the state's most popular writers and speakers on Arkansas history, and his session at ArLA made it clear why he is in such demand.

The American Library Association provided a guest speaker in the person of **Lindsey Simon** from ALA's Communications and Marketing Office. She is the Public Awareness Campaign Coordinator and in her presentation introduced ALA's "Libraries Transform" public awareness toolkit. She presented examples of how a variety of libraries and library associations were utilizing free ALA materials to provide focus for public awareness, fundraising, and advocacy campaigns. The messages and graphics used in this campaign address the value of libraries in a variety of ways. This campaign is highlighting the transformative nature of libraries and can help any library type deliver important messages to key constituencies in their communities. More than 10,000 library supporters worldwide have joined the campaign and this success led ALA to extend its commitment to the campaign through 2020. Ms. Simon challenged Arkansas librarians to look for opportunities to take advantage of this free resource.

Closing session speaker **Kat Robinson** delivered an enlightening and humorous presentation about pies in Arkansas. As the author of three books about pies and eateries in Arkansas, she kept the somewhat exhausted final day crowd enthralled with her stories about traveling Arkansas in search of the best pies. A great storyteller, Ms. Robinson shared stories about some of the great little, out-of-the-way restaurants that she has visited in her travels. Those familiar with her writing came prepared to be pleased, while those new to Ms. Robinson's storytelling could not leave without being encouraged to pursue her writings. As a special treat, a variety of pies from different bakeries throughout northwest Arkansas were sold as part of a silent auction at the end of the session. Many people went home from this conference with a satisfying purchase for their sweet tooth.



*ArLA President Dean Covington (right) introduces closing speaker Kat Robinson.*

## Performers' Showcase

On the last day of conference, ArLA hosted its first Performer's Showcase. Librarians from all types of libraries enjoyed the show - they were all fabulous presenters and would be enjoyed by people of all ages at your libraries. Please support these talented performers by considering booking them for future events. The presenters and their contact information are listed below. In the event you book one of these excellent performers, please let them know you saw them at the Performer's Showcase.

- Magic Mr. Nick (magic and hypnosis)  
[mrnick@magicmrnick.com](mailto:mrnick@magicmrnick.com)  
901-358-7258 (Kelly McDaniels, scheduler)
- George Reader (magic and juggling)  
[george@mysteriousone.com](mailto:george@mysteriousone.com)  
479-366-2442
- MOMandPOP Band (music)  
[1234momandpopgo@gmail.com](mailto:1234momandpopgo@gmail.com)  
901-825-0374
- Museum of Discovery (science)  
[bnelson@museumofdiscovery.com](mailto:bnelson@museumofdiscovery.com)
- Nitro Joe Science Show (science)  
[nitrojoescience@gmail.com](mailto:nitrojoescience@gmail.com)
- Scott Davis (magic and comedy)  
[Scottdavismagic@gmail.com](mailto:Scottdavismagic@gmail.com)  
501-517-7268



*The Nitro Joe Science Show.*

Go ahead, mark your calendars for next year's conference, and make plans to attend our next Showcase!

### General Membership Meeting

Dan Boice, chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, gave an overview of the proposed three-year Strategic Plan for ArLA. After discussion, the plan was approved by the membership.

David Eckert announced the 2018-2019 election results. Crystal Gates from the Laman Library in North Little Rock will serve as the new Vice-President/President-Elect, Lynn Valetutti will continue for another two years as our Secretary/Treasurer, and Lacy Wolfe will remain our ALA Counselor for another three years. The divisions and round tables also held their elections with the results listed below:

- ArASL – no new chair elected
- ALPS – Dalene Schrier, new chair
- Colleges & Universities – Autumn Mortenson, new chair
- Digital Services – Brenda Brazile, new chair
- Public Libraries – John McGraw, re-elected chair
- Reference & Instruction Services – Jessica Riedmueller, new chair
- Resources & Technical Services – Brian George, new chair
- Special Libraries – no new chair elected
- Two-Year Colleges – Ron Russ, new chair
- Youth Services – no new chair elected

Crystal Gates will chair the 2019 Conference

along with Richard Theilig. At its earlier meeting, the Executive Board discussed that the conference chair duty should be permanently assigned to the President-Elect.

Judy Calhoun reviewed the charge of the Logistics Task Force. She will serve as chair and they are charged with evaluating our current management company, examining other opportunities, and recommending what would be best for ArLA. Other members of the task force are Debbie Hall, Dwain Gordon, Lauren Robertson, Amy McGohan, and John McGraw.

Divisions, Round Tables, and Committees made reports and new Division and Round Table Chairs were announced. Conference Chair Daniel Fouts announced that we had 262 attendees. Discussion took place concerning conference income, which will be accurately determined in consultation with Prime Management after the conference.

Discussion took place concerning the future conference site. It was decided to accept the proposal from the Embassy Suites in Hot Springs. The conference dates will be September 27-29, 2019. Susie Kirk announced plans to implement a six-month advertising campaign for the 2019 conference. She is looking for assistance with marketing efforts.

It was announced that the Basket Auction made \$1,555. The money will be divided between the Leaf and Scholarship funds. A \$1,500 scholarship was awarded this year. Carol Coffey volunteered to rewrite scholarship guidelines.

The meeting was adjourned by new ArLA President Jil' Lana Heard.



*2018 ArLA Executive Committee.*



## Attendees Contribute Over \$2,500 in Fundraisers

43 baskets were donated by ArLA Conference attendees netting \$1,555 in support of the Scholarship and LEAF accounts. \$95 was the highest bid on a rainbow themed basket donated by the Foundation Grant. Several individuals and libraries donated multiple baskets so that we exceeded last year's total by seven baskets and \$340.

For the first time, a Trivia Night event was held at Ozark Beer Company for some healthy competition between a diverse group of teams. The beer flowed, as did the answers to tough questions put forth by emcee Amber Wilson from UCA's Torreyson Library. Each team put forth \$10 per person, and \$500 was raised towards ArLA's noble causes.

Special for this year's conference was an additional silent auction for pies. During Kat Robinson's closing session, conference participants bid on a variety of pies from local bakeries, including apple, blueberry, mockingbird, key lime, rhubarb, and raisin, raising \$450 for scholarships.



*The winning trivia team celebrates at Ozark Beer Co. in Rogers.*



*Magic Mr. Nick at Conference Performers' Showcase.*

Monies expended are for the annual scholarship (\$1,500), and LEAF offered support to Walnut Ridge Middle School in the amount of \$500 this year as they suffered smoke damage due to a transformer fire. It is a great privilege to be able to



*ArLA President Dean Covington victorious over his basket win!*



*ArLA SELA representative Crystal Gates (right) will chair the ArLA conference committee for a joint ArLA-SELA conference in September 2019.*



offer assistance to those of our profession who are in need. A special thanks to all members who are instrumental in making this possible.

### **2018 Scholarship Recipient Announced**

It is always one of the greatest pleasures of ArLA conference to be able to award a deserving member with financial support as they pursue further education in our chosen profession. This year, LaQuida Hobson of Fouke, who is obtaining her MLS from SAU in Magnolia, was selected by the Scholarship Committee as the 2018 ArLA scholarship recipient. With more than a decade in education, she is only in her second year as a Library Media Specialist at Paulette Smith Middle School in Fouke and only four classes away from obtaining her master's degree. Even though she had a sick child through part of her studies, Ms. Hobson has persevered in pursuing her degree. Congratulations LaQuida!

*Simone Kirk is the 2018 President of ALPS and works as Branch Manager at the Star City Public Library. Crystal Gates is the director of Laman Library in North Little Rock and represents ArLA for the Southeast Library Association (SELA). Philip Shackelford directs the South Arkansas Community College library and serves as the 2018 Two-Year Colleges chair. Tina Murdock is Assistant Director at Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas. Dean Covington is the 2018 President of ArLA and directs Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas. David Eckert is Library Director at Crowley Ridge Regional Library System and is the 2018 Past President of ArLA and chair of the Nominating Committee. Ashely Burris, Director of the Lawrence County Library, is the 2018 Chair of the Scholarship Committee and LEAF Committee.*

## **Arkansas Library Association 2018 Award Winners**

*by Judy Calhoun*

*Awards Committee Chair*

**E**ach year the Arkansas Library Association presents awards to recognize exceptional achievements in the library field. The 2018 awards were presented at the Awards Dinner held on Sunday, September 23 at the Rogers John Q. Hammons Convention Center during the annual conference. The 2018 award winners and a description of the awards follows.

### **Ann Lightsey Children's Librarian Award**

The Ann Lightsey Children's Librarian Award is presented to an individual who has contributed to the improvement of children's programs both in

their place of work and at the state level. This year the Ann Lightsey Children's Librarian Award was given to Marilyn Willis, presented by Crystal Gates. Marilyn has worked at William F. Laman Public Library as Children's Programming Coordinator for over 24 years. Marilyn also takes children's programs and activities "on the road," visiting schools, daycares, long term care facilities as well as rehabilitation centers such as United Cerebral Palsy and Easter Seals.

### **Bessie B. Moore Trustee Award**

The Bessie B. Moore award is given to an individual trustee or board of trustees who has made a significant contribution to the development of a library at the local, regional, or state level. This



*Crystal Gates (right) presents the Ann Lightsey Award to Marilyn Willis.*



*Eva White (right) presents Jami Balkman with the Bessie B. Moore Award.*

year's Bessie B. Moore award was given to Jami Anne Balkman and presented by Eva White. Jami Balkman was appointed to the Crawford County Library Board in January of 2015. Four months later, she was elected the Chairman of the Board. She has led the board through difficult tasks, including the construction of a new building for the Mountainburg community. She also volunteers as a member of the Alma Friends of the Library where she has served as president and treasurer. She currently is director of the Airedale Book Express, a summer bookmobile and nutrition program.

### **Distinguished Service Award**

The Distinguished Service Award is given to recognize a librarian currently employed for distinguished service in librarianship, continuing service to the Arkansas Library Association, and outstanding achievement in the profession. This year's Distinguished Service Award was given to Britt Anne Murphy and presented by Dwain Gordon. Britt Anne Murphy is the Director of the Bailey Library at Hendrix College in Conway. Britt is in her sixteenth year serving as an editor of *Arkansas Libraries*. As a long serving member of the ArLA Board, she serves as an advocate for librarians and the library profession.



*Dwain Gordon (left) presents Britt Anne Murphy with the Distinguished Service Award.*

### **Frances P. Neal Award**

The Frances P. Neal award is given to a recently retired librarian to recognize a career of notable service in librarianship within the state of Arkansas. Dwain Gordon was presented the Frances P. Neal award for his service and achievements during his tenure as the Deputy Director of the Arkansas State Library and other service in the state. Dwain has been an active member of the Arkansas Library Association, having served as President, Conference Chair, Exhibits Chair, and as a chair or member of

various other ArLA committees. State Librarian Carolyn Ashcraft presented the award.



*Carolyn Ashcraft (right) presents Dwain Gordon with the Frances P. Neal Award.*

### **LaNell Compton Prize**

The LaNell Compton Prize is given in even years to the author(s) of the best contribution to library literature published in *Arkansas Libraries* during the two calendar years preceding the Annual Conference. This year's LaNell Compton Prize was awarded to Philip C. Shackelford, Lauri T. Wilson, Mindy F. Farley, Jennifer O. Baine, and Cynthia J. Arnold. The group from South Arkansas Community College won the honor this year for their article *From Oils to Culture: South Arkansas Prepares for Inaugural Literary Festival*.



*Members of the Staff of South Arkansas Community College.*

### **Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award**

The Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award recognizes distinguished paraprofessional library service in Arkansas libraries. This year's paraprofessional award was presented to Karen Pruneda, Library Technician at UCA's Torreyson Library. Jessica Reidmueller and Amber Wilson



presented the award to Karen in recognition of her contribution to UCA, ALPS, and the library profession.



*Karen Pruneda.*

### **Rising Star Award**

The Rising Star Award was first awarded in 2017 and recognizes a library worker who has worked in libraries less than five years and provided exceptional service for their library community. This year's Rising Star Award was presented to Ronda Hughes, Library Media Specialist at Fountain Lake Middle School in Hot Springs. Among her many leadership skills, Ronda was one of the first in the country to offer coding classes with elementary library students.



*Ronda Hughes.*

### **Retta Patrick Award**

The Retta Patrick Award recognizes an individual member of the Arkansas library profession who has made an outstanding state or national contribution to school librarianship and school library development. This year's recipient was Ashley Cooksey. Ashley is an active member in several organizations including

the Arkansas Association of Instructional Media (AAIM) where she serves as the current President, the Arkansas Library Association (ArLA), and many other professional organizations. She has presented at numerous state and national conferences including the 2018 ISTE Conference and the 2018 Springdale Innovation Institute. She also teaches professional development to library media specialists in the state of Arkansas.



*Ashley Cooksey.*

### **Suzanne Spurrier Academic Librarian Award**

The award is presented annually to a currently employed academic librarian who exemplifies Suzanne Spurrier's attributes of a spirit of outstanding service to all library patrons; an attitude of devotion to the library profession and fellow colleagues; and consistent activity in state, regional, or national library associations. This year's winner is David Sesser, Collections Librarian at Huie Library, Henderson State University, where he holds the faculty rank of Associate Librarian and serves as the Director of Museum Studies. He is currently completing his dissertation for a doctoral degree in higher education at UA Little Rock.



*David Sesser.*



### Emerging Leader

Allie Stevens was recognized at the Awards Dinner as the ArLA representative for the 2018 Emerging Leader program for the American Library Association (ALA). ALA's Emerging Leader (EL) program was initiated in 1997 as a one-year program that fosters leadership skills and allows for professional networking. Allie was one of fifty participants who developed a project-plan for an ALA division. ArLA's ALA Councilor, Lacy Wolfe, presented the recognition.

*Judy Calhoun is the Director of the Southeast Arkansas Regional Library and can be reached at [director.searl@gmail.com](mailto:director.searl@gmail.com).*



*Lacy Wolfe (right) recognizes Emerging Leader Allie Stevens.*

## SCL Summer Reading Program Success Stories

*by Jordan Reynolds*

*Saline County Library*

Is it ever too early to think about summer programming? Here are success stories from the Saline County Library, which had an exciting summer at the Benton branch with the Summer Reading program and its very first "SCL Con." Both programs had activities for all ages, from babies to adults. The library staff, programmers, and special guests worked hard all summer to give the community enjoyable activities to escape the summer heat. Perhaps some of the programming will provide other libraries with ideas to warm up to in these cold winter days!

### Summer Reading Program

Starting in June, the Saline County Library hosted weekly programs for children, tweens, teens, and adults. Partnering with various entertainment organizations, they hosted unique programs every Monday at three different times to allow for as many



*One Man Circus.*

guests as possible.

The children's party company, Fancyful Fairytales, visited the library twice with Cinderella, Snow White, The Little Mermaid, Rapunzel, Beauty, and the Latin Princess. The Natural History Educational Company of the Midsouth (NHECM) also came with various animals such as a python and baby goats to teach us about the animals and their lifestyles. Other events included a One Man Circus with Jason D'Vaude, a magic show with Magic Mr. Nick and a science show with Nitro Joe.

Children's programs also included Play to Learn where they could participate in different activities every week such as building blocks and ball pits, and Baby and Me where parents could bring their babies and toddlers to a singalong session. Every Friday, the library hosted Out of the Box Storytime where children were able to listen to fun stories and do singalongs. They even learned a song in sign language this summer.

Tweens did different activities every week from Tween Art classes to a Tween Sensory Competition. They got to work in teams to meet goals and learn how to communicate in group settings, and they had fun while doing it! The tweens ended the summer with a talent show that featured singers, gymnasts, and a pianist.

The teens of the library spent the summer at Thistlebryt, a partner school of Hogwarts, and at Super Hero Camp. Thistlebryt students were sorted into their houses, visited Honeydukes (where they participated in a makeshift Potions class), and even learned Defense Against the Dark Arts (in escape room-form). The Super Hero Campers created their own superhero aliases, battled super villains, such as the Tailor, and made their own short film about their

experiences.

Adults were even able to enjoy the summer at the library. Aside from the library's usual Watercolor and Yoga classes, they were able to attend a Sports Card Trading Show and a Car Show. They also had the opportunity to learn the basics of guitar in a class and give back by giving blood when the Arkansas Blood Institute came.

Summer Reading was a huge hit for the library as 2,850 people signed up and participated in 140 programs during the two months. By the end of the eight weeks, 582 kids had completed their summer reading, which is really the greatest success of all!

### SCL Con

The Saline County Library ended the summer with "SCL Con," its very first comic con, on Saturday, July 28. The comic con featured activities for children, vendors, and cosplay, among many other attractions.

Families could participate in Harry Potter trivia early in the day, followed by adults-only fandom trivia with rounds based on Game of Thrones, DC comic history, Marvel cinematic history and Star Wars. ArkLUG set up a LEGO® display in the lower reading area for visitors to browse and even add in their own creations. Marty Boone, the Balloon Man, was also in attendance handing out balloon creations to kids and adults alike.

A superhero training course was set up in the children's area for children to work on their world-saving skills (and run out some energy). There were also arts and crafts available for everyone such as a superhero word scramble and masks to decorate.

Later in the day, attendees were able to see the premiere of the short film that the teens of Super Hero Camp made over the summer.

More than 850 attendees were able to shop locally as SCL Con featured vendors from all over Saline County who sold arts and crafts, comic books, and more. Vendors included Angel Bear Toys, Mallyjanks, Fangirl Flair, Mike Mowry, Cosplayer Chronicles, Rebirth Comic and Collectibles, Christian Williams, Archangel Gaming, and Screaming Toad.

HealthCARE Express Bryant helped out with the Platform 9 ¾ Selfie Station by providing props and taking photos with an app that allowed attendees to look like they were being featured in an actual edition of "The Daily Prophet." SCL Con also gave them the chance to get their photo taken in front of a green screen with the choice of three backgrounds: leading a robot army, lifting up a car, or flying through the city.

The day came to a close with a costume contest with six different categories and prizes of trophies and free movie passes for each winner. The winners included Iron Man as the best superhero, Catwoman as the best super villain, William Wallace as the best DIY costume, Clark Kent (or Superman) as the best in show, the Goddess of Love as the best original character, and the staff favorite was Kiki from Kiki's Delivery Service.

*Jordan Reynolds is Marketing Coordinator at the Saline County Public Library in Benton, Arkansas.*



*Library staff at SCL Con.*



## Librarian of Congress Visits Arkansas

by Carolyn Ashcraft

State Librarian

On June 29 close to 100 librarians and staff came to the Clinton Presidential Center in Little Rock to have lunch with Dr. Carla Hayden, at the invitation of Congressman French Hill. Also present were Mrs. Colleen Hayden (Mother of Dr. Hayden), Senator John Boozman, and Lt. Gov. Tim Griffin. Through the casual conversation we learned more about Dr. Hayden and the Library of Congress. Senator Boozman presented Dr. Hayden with the Arkansas Traveler Award.

The Library of Congress is the largest library in the world, with millions of books, recordings, photographs, newspapers, maps, and manuscripts in its collections. The Library is the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office.

The Library preserves and provides access to a rich, diverse and enduring source of knowledge to inform, inspire and engage citizens in their intellectual and creative endeavors. Find out more about the Library of Congress at <https://www.loc.gov/>.



Senator Boozman (left) presents Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden with the Arkansas Traveler Award. Congressman Hill (right) invited Dr. Hayden to Arkansas where she attended a luncheon for librarians in the state.

# LIBRARY

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

As a follow-up to the June 29 visit of Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden, Congressman French Hill sent a letter to remind us of the two Library of Congress programs that were mentioned during the luncheon at the Clinton Library. **The Veterans History Project** submits to the Library's collection the stories of our veterans and their families. If you are interested in receiving VHP field kits, they can be found at [www.loc.gov/vets](http://www.loc.gov/vets). **The Surplus Book Program** enables the Library of Congress to send all its surplus books and other media not needed for the Library's own uses to libraries, schools, and other non-profit organizations to become part of their permanent collections.

For more information on either program, reach out to the office of your Arkansas Congressional member. For those in Congressional District 2, reach out to Richard Maxwell at [richard.maxwell@mail.house.gov](mailto:richard.maxwell@mail.house.gov) for questions on **The Veterans History Project** and to Chloe Maxwell at [chloe.maxwell@mail.house.gov](mailto:chloe.maxwell@mail.house.gov) concerning **The Surplus Book Program**. They can both be reached in Little Rock at 501.324.5941.

Congressman Hill said, "Your work in our communities is essential for a connected and educated citizen-led republic. I am honored to serve Arkansas in the U.S. House of Representatives and to help you access these excellent Library of Congress resources."



Congressman French Hill leads a conversation with Dr. Carla Hayden at a luncheon that attracted over 100 librarians from around the state.



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# The Luxury of a LibGuide

by **Dr. Kay J. Walter**

*Professor of English*

and **Dr. Renée Chérie Clark**

*Reference Librarian*

**University of Arkansas at Monticello**

## The Instructor's Perspective (Dr. Kay J. Walter)

I should be more proficient with electronic transmission of information to my students than I am, but I resist the sort of learning which discourages face-to-face conversations. Luckily, I have help from my university's librarians. They know me, and they are friendly forces for good. Whenever I come to them with questions or ideas, they are always eager to find a way to help. When I asked them to collect some information to support my freshmen and assist with their success, they were eager to discuss ideas. The result was a LibGuide.

The new departmental textbook omitted some readings I felt were essential, and the librarians were able to locate an electronic version of these passages and provide me with a URL. At first, I thought I might have to email each student and provide the URL, leaving the collection of the document to the students. The librarian saved us from that confusing assignment by creating a LibGuide specifically for my freshman composition course. She had already created a LibGuide for English as a discipline and could include a link to that page, but this tool would be crafted specifically to meet the needs of the students enrolled in my course.

She and I met to discuss the possibility, and she was eager to hear and to share ideas. We spoke about the texts to which students would need electronic access and about other, supporting information that would enhance their study of the reading

assignments for the course. I asked her to include a link to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which my students will use as a source for a major paper assigned later in the term. Inevitably, someone mixes it up with a different dictionary and earns a low mark, so having it ready in this form will be a great benefit to student success.

We also talked about the arrangement of information on the page. I suggested a limit to the amount of text on each page because freshmen are so easily distracted. However, I was glad to leave the designing of the page to her, and when I got to see the first draft it was impressive—welcoming, easy to read, and intuitive to navigate. The friendly face smiling at them in the corner connected them to a person they could ask for when they visit the library. At that point it was time to arrange a visit.

I always take my students for a library visit during class, and I'd made arrangements to do so before their first writing assignment was due. Wouldn't it be wonderful for them to meet their librarian in person and have her demonstrate how to navigate their LibGuide? The librarian was enthusiastic about taking part in our library orientation lecture when I approached her with the idea. I've come to see that quality as one of the most priceless attributes of librarians: Give them a good idea, and they can find countless sources to support and ways to enact it. The results of our interaction model successful interdisciplinary collaboration and inevitably benefit my students.

## The Librarian's Perspective (Dr. Renée Chérie Clark)

In designing the LibGuide for Dr. Walter's class, I wanted to create what would be essentially a one-stop shopping experience for her students (librarian-style). Additionally, I wanted to keep in mind the students who would be using this



*Dr. Clark and Dr. Walter (seated) pose with Dr. Walter's freshman English class.*



LibGuide: the students in her class are freshmen, and while some of them are comfortable searching for materials in an academic library setting, many of our students are first-generation college students unfamiliar with library protocols, and some have never used a library before.

My goal was to design a LibGuide for optimal student success (what Elizabeth German refers to as “learning outcomes”). This meant that, aside from the introductory page, I wanted each page of the LibGuide to contain the same type of information and for that information to appear in the same place on each page, insofar as that was possible. Collaborating with the professor was so important. It meant that I knew what she would expect her students to prepare for their class discussions, as well as what kind of information she would expect her students to access.

I wanted to create a guide whose pages were interesting, directed to their learning experience, and uniform enough that using the LibGuide would become intuitive. Therefore, in addition to including the course material (syllabus, assignment texts, links to the library catalog, the online *Oxford English Dictionary*, and the main LibGuide that I designed for the English department as a whole), I also included other fun information that could, if the students chose to use it, round out their knowledge on the different authors they were studying in class. That said, I did not want to overwhelm them with information, so I kept each page of the LibGuide visible on one screen if the students were working from our library’s computers. The students may or may not use this extra material, but they will know it exists and can access it if they choose to. I have also asked the students to participate in the LibGuide by letting me know if there were anything they would like me to include, thus making them stakeholders in the process.

Student response to the class LibGuide has been positive thus far. They like the idea of being able to find everything they need for their class in one place. It also means that the students are viewing, reading, and studying the same versions of what the professor assigns, which can make class discussion more productive. I have noticed, too, that students who recognize me from the class LibGuide and from meeting me during their visit to the library are more likely to approach me for reference and research help, even for a different class. They even come to me for suggestions for leisure reading. Being able to work with a professor to create a LibGuide specifically for her class has ultimately made my



work as a reference librarian more successful since I develop a more in-depth relationship with both the professor and the students.

### References

German, Elizabeth. “Libguides for Instruction.” *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 3, Spring 2017, pp. 162-167. EBSCOhost, 0-search.ebscohost.com.uamlibrary.uamont.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lxh&AN=122320077&site=ehost-live.



Wendy Christy, Children's Librarian at Saline County Library, with Stephanie the Python (please see article on page 12).

## Cathy Howser Retires from State Library

by Carolyn Ashcraft

State Librarian

Cathy Howser retired from her position of Coordinator of Children's and Institutional Programs at the Arkansas State Library on December 1.

Cathy has served in her position for the past 29 years and 7 months (beginning on May 1, 1989). During that time she has overseen the annual Children's Services Workshop, participated in various Arkansas book award committees, and been Arkansas's primary contact/liaison with the Cooperative Summer Library Program (CSLP), which is a grassroots consortium of states working together to provide



Howser

high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries. In 2011 she was awarded the Ann Lightsey Children's Librarian Award by the Arkansas Library Association.

Prior to coming to the State Library, Cathy was employed at the Craighead County/Jonesboro Public Library as their children's librarian from October 1981 through April 1989. She earned a BSE degree at the University of Tennessee/Knoxville and an MLS at the University of Alabama.

Cathy comments, "I appreciate the opportunity to have worked with so many amazing people, within this agency and throughout the state and country. I have always felt that what we do makes a difference in the lives of the people we serve – both directly and indirectly. I am looking forward to spending time doing things of my own choosing – gardening, traveling, creating art, and even reading books with adults as the main characters!"

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## Karen Russ Memorial Award for Excellence in Research

by Carol Macheak

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

In memory of Karen Russ, the Ottenheimer Library at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has established the **Karen Russ Memorial Award for Excellence in Research**. The purpose of the award is to recognize a UA Little Rock student who uses government data in their research. This research will be presented at the Student Research and Creative Works Showcase that is held every spring semester. The winning student will receive \$500.

The Ottenheimer Library established the research award as a way to honor Karen's expertise as a government documents librarian. Karen was dedicated to assisting students in their research and enjoyed tracking down the hard-to-find government statistics that many needed.

Karen served on the Depository Library Council, an advisory committee to the Director of Government Printing Office (GPO). In honor of her service, the Council created a scholarship in Karen's name. The money raised for the scholarship and other contributions from librarians across Arkansas and the United States provided the initial funding for this award.

Donations are still being accepted and may be made at the UA Little Rock Office of Alumni



and Development website: <https://ualr.edu/giving/product/you-select/>. Donors should specify the award when prompted by the question: "Where would you like your donation to go?" You may also donate by check. Please make the check payable to "UA Foundation" and with "Karen Russ Memorial Scholarship" in the memo field. Please send your check to:

UA Little Rock Office of Development  
2801 S. University Ave.  
Little Rock, AR 72204

If you have questions about the award, please feel free to contact Carol Macheak at 501.569.8809 or [cimacheak@ualr.edu](mailto:cimacheak@ualr.edu).

*Carol Macheak is Research and Scholarly Communications Coordinator at UA Little Rock's Ottenheimer Library.*



# Becoming a Preservation Steward

by *Dominique Hallett*

and *Bill Sabin*

*Arkansas State University*

**W**hat is a Preservation Steward? The short version is this: Preservation Stewards make a commitment to retain specified depository resources for the length of the agreement. They also take on additional responsibilities for preserving depository materials that are preservation copies of record. Read more here: [www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/outreach/fdlp-partnerships/2844-preservation-stewards-frequently-asked-questions/file](http://www.fdlp.gov/file-repository/outreach/fdlp-partnerships/2844-preservation-stewards-frequently-asked-questions/file). What follows is our university's adventure of becoming a Preservation Steward.

One of the reasons I wanted our library to become a Preservation Steward is because of Karen Russ. Her library was the first in Arkansas to become one. She spoke so passionately about the honor of being a Steward that I decided I wanted to see every depository in Arkansas follow suit. I spoke to my supervisor and director and they loved the idea. I hope to encourage others in Arkansas to become Stewards as well.

I have been asked "why NASA?" The answer is multifaceted. First, I've always been a bit of a NASA geek. In addition, the Physics Department at the university has been working with weather balloons in conjunction with NASA for the eclipse and other things, so it seems a good fit. We had all but four of the 163 volumes on hand and they are in pristine condition. Some were still tied with the string they came bound in. Although it is an older collection, this was innovative information at the time it was published. It is pre-moon launch and it is wonderful to be able to look at how space exploration really started in the USA. These are technical reports that show the original math. It is an amazing collection.

I owe our Government Documents assistant Bill Sabin a huge thank you for helping streamline the process and making sure everything was completed quickly and efficiently. He will now give you an idea of the steps we went through.

"While going through and cataloging our NASA material, I came upon four string tied sets of documents. Dominique and I were both curious since they appeared to have never been touched more than twice in their lifespan. The collection contained



the math that led up to the moon landing in 1969 and both of us believed it was something worth preserving.

After obtaining the four missing volumes, cataloging them, and placing all 163 back on the shelf, we found out a month or so later that every volume needed stamping with 'Do Not Discard' or something similar. Likewise, every MARC record required a 590 local note saying 'Preservation Copy of this title. Do Not Discard.'

The steps of preparing the materials for preservation were fairly quick and painless. However had I known that touching them a second time was required, I may have left them in my office for easier access. Oh well, next time!"

The process was surprisingly easy and overall went very smoothly. We were a bit concerned at first because

we had to run the agreement through our legal department at the university, but that sailed through with just minor changes. That was it. Everything went smoothly throughout the process, and I would recommend any depository that can to please consider preserving even a small collection. All government information is important, no matter the agency or age.

I am thankful for having a supportive supervisor, April Sheppard, who happens to be the former Government Documents Librarian and a director, Jeff Bailey, who supports my crazy whims like becoming a Preservation Ateward. The university has also been supportive in this venture. If anyone has any questions about starting a stewardship in their library, please feel free to contact me.

*Dominique Hallett is Government Information and STEM Librarian and Bill Sabin is Government Information Specialist for Dean B. Ellis Library at Arkansas State University.*

# UAPB Librarians Present at Open Education Symposium

by *Shenise McGhee*

*University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff*

The inaugural Open Education Southern Symposium was held October 1-2, 2018 at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville's Donald W. Reynolds Center for Enterprise Development. The Open Education Southern Symposium is a chance for teaching faculty, staff, administrators, and others in the state and around the nation to share ideas and information how open education impacts student learning. Three Associate Librarians from the John Brown Watson Memorial Library, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, presented a panel, *Open Educational Resources and Tenure and Promotion*. Panel presenters were Maplean Donaldson, Associate Library Director; Shenise McGhee, Coordinator of Digital References and Learning Commons for Student Success; and Lavis Martin, Coordinator of Systems Administration and Digital Services.

Maplean Donaldson began the presentation by defining Open Education Resources (OER) as free online teaching, learning, and research materials. OER are usually identified by their open copyright licenses or are in the public domain, which provides free use, adaptation, and distribution of information. Some examples of OER include electronic theses, dissertations, course materials, textbooks, videos, assessments, software, lab and classroom activities, as well as games and simulations. One of the challenges in using OER is finding them. Currently OER may be created or deposited within the following types of repositories or programs: institutional repositories, OpenCourse Ware Initiative, MERLOT, Lumen Learning, OpenStax, and Teaching Commons.

Why do faculty and researchers seek non-traditional publishing options within OER and Open Access (OA)? Some positive benefits of publishing within OER and OA are broader peer recognition, promotion and raises (if recognized by a promotion and tenure committee), and broader audience reading their research. Knowing that students will not have to fork over hundreds to thousands of dollars every semester also motivate faculty to choose OA for distribution of their research. However, some concerns of publishing and depositing within OER and OA are copyright policies of publishers and repositories, time and effort to produce research and update documents when self-archiving, and recognition of OER and OA publishing by their research peers as well as by a tenure and promotion

committee. Standards of OER are not as rigorous or universally established, and there is a lack of prestige in how OER are regarded by the scholarly community. There can also be confusion as to where to make their research available and discoverable since there is no single recognized portal that serves as a distribution center for OERs.

Shenise McGhee presented on Open Educational Resource myths, licenses, and publishing OER. She addressed the top seven myths about OER, provided by the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) at <https://sparcopen.org/our-work/oer-mythbusting/>:

1. *Open simply means free.* Open means the permission to freely download, edit, and share materials to better serve all students.
2. *All OER are digital.* OER take many formats, including print, digital, etc.
3. *"You get what you pay for."* OER can be produced to the same quality standards as traditional textbooks.
4. *Copyright for OER is complicated.* Open licensing makes OER easy to freely and legally use.
5. *OER are not sustainable.* Models are evolving to support the sustainability and continuous improvement of OER.
6. *Open textbooks lack ancillaries.* Open textbooks often come with ancillaries and when they do not, existing OER can provide additional support.
7. *My institution is not ready for OER.* Any institution can start with small steps toward OER that make an impact for students.

Two organizations provide solid support for the Open Access movement and OER. The Open Education program at Creative Commons (CC) works to minimize the barriers to universal education that are increasingly established through restrictive copyright laws and incompatible technologies. This program supports the CC mission, maximizing the benefits of open educational resources through open policies, outreach and advocacy for using the right licenses, and publicly funded education resources for a return on investment. The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) contributes to the practice and theory of teaching and learning literature, including publications in peer-reviewed and professional journals, conference publications, book chapters, and textbooks. SPARC encourages the recognition of Open Educational Resources in tenure and promotion.





At the University of Pine Bluff, LibGuides connects to the criteria for tenure and promotion in various ways. LibGuides is an online content management system that can be used to organize and make available resources for students in a particular class or discipline. LibGuides can be integrated into courseware management systems such as Blackboard in curriculum courses for research, creative, or scholarly work. The creation of LibGuides as OER qualifies as scholarly publications. Librarians use a variety of vetted publications to research, compile, and design these online research guides, which then connect students to the highest quality of resources for their research papers.

Lavoris Martin's portion of the panel was "Open Educational Resources: Tips for Tenure and Promotion." This discussion examined various universities' tenure and promotion guidelines and provided tips for success on how tenure-track librarians and faculty may be using Open Educational Resources but have not defined the resources as OER. Tips for success included beginning to prepare for tenure and promotion at the onset of an appointment to a tenure track position, being familiar with university guidelines and timeline, and thinking of how activities, assignments,

services, and publications created will align with each tenure and promotion criteria. Lavoris identified how OER could be used to meet the requirements of the tenure and promotion guidelines for the typically evaluated areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. One critical aspect that could promote the use of OER and meet tenure guidelines is to collaborate with other tenure-track faculty – find other individuals to partner with at their university and outside of the university. Examples of OER that tenure-track personal have created and used in the past and continue to use include course syllabi, videos, LibGuides, blogs, web pages, Wikis, open courseware, and other innovations. There is a wealth of OER, open access journals, ebooks, and other material available for all in a simple web search. Finally, a significant asset that is available to academic professionals that are in tenure-track positions is their campus library; the library can connect faculty with a variety of resources, and can assist with finding OER, as well as explaining open licensing of materials. Many OER are peer-reviewed resources and can be an excellent incentive for authoring and essential to the success of tenure and promotion.

*Shenise McGhee is the Coordinator of Digital References and Learning Commons for Student Success at the University of Pine Bluff's John Brown Watson Memorial Library.*



*Trivia participants enjoy food and libations at Ozark Beer Co. in Rogers (please see article on page 4).*

## AROUND ARKANSAS

by Heather Hays, Associate Editor

**T**he Arkansas County Library/Stuttgart Public Library would like to announce that the groundbreaking for our new meeting room took place Wednesday, July 25, at 10 AM.

We are located at 2002 S. Buerkle, Stuttgart, AR 72160.

We are sad to mark the passing of Wanda Dole, Dean Emeritus, University of Arkansas at Little Rock Ottenheimer Library, on Friday, November 23. Wanda's professional life as an academic librarian included positions at the Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, Illinois, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas. In retirement, she served as a consultant to institutions around the world.

Arkansas has several new public library directors!

Michael O'Connell, MLIS, Catholic University of America, is director now at Barton Library in Union County. He replaces Interim Director Nancy Arn. [moconnell@bartonlibrary.org](mailto:moconnell@bartonlibrary.org)

Rene Myers, MLIS, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, is the director at Scott-Sebastian Regional Library. She replaces Judy Beth Clevenger, who retired in September. [rmyers@co.sebastian.ar.us](mailto:rmyers@co.sebastian.ar.us).

Suzanne Adams is the new director of the Bella Vista Public Library, effective November 5. [sadams@bellavistaar.gov](mailto:sadams@bellavistaar.gov). Suzanne received her Master of Science in Information and Library Science from Central Missouri State University.



*The library at Fouke High School.*

The high school library at Fouke High School has undergone a complete upgrade!

Previously, the high school library at Fouke had tiled floors, four large tables that would seat six, old rocker cushions, old curtains, and hand-me-down task chairs. Student computers were nonexistent. After receiving a generous budget for upgrades, they now have new carpet, curtains, tables, task chairs, rocker cushions, comfortable chairs with side tables, and a computer cart! The students LOVE all the changes, and library usage has increased.

Born prematurely in 1954, Anna Bates has been gaining weight steadily ever since! She holds a BS from UA Monticello, and an MLIS from Florida State University.



After working for the Southeast Arkansas Regional Library for 20 years, she was hired as Assistant Director of the Stuttgart Public Library in 2007, then promoted to Library Director in 2015.

*Bates*

As the daughter of a librarian, she was taught to cherish books, reading, and the local library. Her passion is to find ways to expand information access to her community and beyond. After retirement, she will continue to contribute to the library community at large including participation in the ArLA and ARSL organizations, and mentoring through the ALL\*In Institute.

Her retirement reception was held at the library on Thursday, August 30, 2018.

Jennifer Chilcoat joined the Arkansas State Library on July 30 as Deputy Director.

Since 1990, Jennifer has been employed at the Central Arkansas Library System. Over the years she has held various positions, including reference librarian, manager of the Fletcher Branch Library, special assistant to the Director, Head of the Main Library, Head of Human Resources, and Construction Coordinator.

Jennifer earned her Master's in Library Science at the University of Tennessee — Knoxville in 1989.

Jennifer is a good communicator, very approachable, organized, easy to work with, solution-oriented, friendly, and has a good sense of humor.





The Arkansas State Library welcomes Ruth Hyatt, currently the Manager of Library Development, to her new position as our Coordinator of Children's and Institutional Programs. Ruth replaces Cathy Howser, who retired in November after serving in that position for 28 years (*please see article on page 18*). Those who know Ruth well are aware of her experience in, and passion for, library service to youth. Before coming to the Arkansas State Library in 2008, Ruth served for nine years as the Children's Services Librarian and the Manager of Children's and Youth Services for the Saline County Library. We look forward to seeing Ruth apply her positive energy and focus toward the provision of

quality library services to the youth of Arkansas.

A story that Independence County Library Director Vanessa Adams helped co-write has received the Young Adult Library Services Association's writing award for best article.

Adams, along with co-writers Beth Brendler, Lindsay Beckman, Denice Adkins, Heather Moulaison Sandy and Natalia Wiggins-Prelas received the award and \$500 at the American Library Association conference in New Orleans.

The YALSA Writing Award recognizes authors who have written an article or blog post for the association's journals or blogs that is timely, original, relevant to YALSA members and well-written, according to the organization's website.

A reminder to Arkansas librarians: please submit news items to me for the next *Arkansas Libraries* issue! Births, deaths, new hires, retirements, funding, new buildings, and news that affects Arkansas libraries would be perfect fits for this column. Just jot me an email at [hhays@bentonvillear.com](mailto:hhays@bentonvillear.com), and you'll most likely see it published in our journal.

*Heather Hays is Senior Librarian for Bentonville Public Library.*



**ALPS Pre-Conference Networking.** On Friday evening, September 21, ALPS members attended a reception and open house at Bentonville Public Library. More than 20 people enjoyed yummy snacks and a private tour of the facility. Photo submitted by Bentonville Public Library.

# Mental Health Awareness for University Library Employees

by *Julia Conroy*

*Education Graduate Assistant,*

*University Libraries, University of Arkansas*

**T**he necessity of mental health awareness is becoming increasingly significant in culture today. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (2017), there were an estimated 44.7 million US adults diagnosed with a mental illness in 2016. As prevalence of mental health diagnoses increases in the US, stigma surrounding conditions with so much uncertainty and a resultant fear have also increased. It is essential to provide clarity through educational awareness to provide those with mental illness the support and resources they need. Libraries have a unique role to play in this awareness as they are viewed as informational hubs that attract a diverse range of people. Educating employees of libraries promotes a culture that values mental health sensitivity.

## Literature Review

Mental health awareness through employee training has been a frequent topic of literature within public libraries. At Bethlehem Area Public Library (Berk, 2014), adequate mental health training is emphasized so “library staff may also be a little more relaxed around patrons exhibiting signs of mental illness” (p. 37). This problem is viewed as being more prevalent in public libraries because of the diversity of patrons, especially with regard to the homeless population (Torrey, Esposito, & Geller, 2009). Another population public libraries have highlighted in the mental health literature are teenage patrons. Jensen (2015) recognizes the “need to educate our staff members, particularly our frontline staff, who interact with our teens on a daily basis” (p. 42). According to Throgmorton (2017), training public library employees has been shown to “defuse tense situations, provide needed resources, and most importantly, help patrons through crisis” (p. 22). Given the diversity amongst their patrons, public libraries prioritize mental health awareness among their employees to equip them for encountering various mental health concerns.

Noticeably absent from libraries’ literature on mental health is a university library perspective. Training for the traditional university demographic is especially important. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (2017), “young adults aged 18-25 years had the highest prevalence of any mental illness (22.1%)” as compared to any other

age range. Reavley & Jorm (2010) found “the age at which most young people are in higher education is also the age of peak onset for mental health problems” (p. 139). The prevalence of mental health issues experienced during the traditional collegiate years demonstrates the necessity of providing adequate mental health support systems at their institutions.

Much of the literature on university mental health has advocated for institutions to recognize the influential role they have in providing support for students. Kadison (2004) claims the promotion of emotional health “should be a part of the mission of all colleges and universities” (p. B20). Fernandez et. al (2016) argues “universities should invest in creating supportive physical, social and academic environments that promote student and staff mental wellbeing” (p. 797). Many universities have assumed their responsibility in their support of mental health by providing training for their employees. Margrove, Gustowska, & Grove (2014) indicates students often turn to staff and faculty for support, so it is important they are adequately equipped to provide support for students. According to Gulliver et. al (2018), “there is a critical need to provide and promote both formal mental health response training and explicit guidelines for staff on when, how, and where to refer students for help” (p. 247). University employees need to understand how to respond to the mental health concerns of students. Massey, Brooks, & Burrow (2014) found training for student affairs employees was shown to “increase knowledge of mental health, enhance sensitivity, and raise confidence to intervene and assist those with a mental health issue for student affairs staff” (p. 323). Because of the prevalence of mental health concerns within the typical age range of students in higher education, universities are equipping their faculty and staff to be utilized as resources by students.

Despite the strong research supporting training university employees in mental health, libraries have not been included. The library plays a unique role on campus in its appeal to a wide range of students. According to Walton (2018), “the university library is well placed to support student well-being as it is generally trusted across the campus” (p. 122). Ford (2002) explored mental health training for employees due to the abundance of mentally ill community users at an academic library. However, library training designed to equip employees for the mental health concerns of university students is lacking. It is important to utilize the unique platform the



library has in its appeal to a wide range of students to promote a culture of strong mental health.

One of the most influential ways to do so is training library employees in providing Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). MHFA is a program designed by the National Council for Behavioral Health as means of administering care for those experiencing a mental health issue. The training provides participants with the basic skills necessary to initially address concerns relating to mental health. Due to the prevalence of mental health concerns that emerge at the age of the traditional university student, a specific first aid program has been designed for higher education. The five step action plan makes the following recommendations:

- Assess for risk of suicide or harm
- Listen nonjudgmentally
- Give reassurance and information
- Encourage appropriate professional help
- Encourage self-help and other support strategies (MHFA, 2018)

By incorporating role-playing and simulations, participants are able to develop new skills in addressing common mental health concerns. The program provides a thorough understanding of mental health symptoms, so they can be identified by participants of the program. Participants are taught to assess risk and determine how to best provide support. MHFA ensures participants understand that their role does not include the help that should only be supplied by mental health professionals. A systematic review by Hadlaczky, Hokby, Mkrtchian, Carli, & Wasserman (2014) compared fifteen published papers on the program and concluded “MHFA increases participants’ knowledge regarding mental health, decreases their negative attitudes, and increases supportive behaviours toward individuals with mental health problems” (p. 467). MHFA promotes a climate that promotes mental health sensitivity across a variety of settings.

I designed a condensed hour-long seminar (the MHFA training is an 8-hour certification) that mirrored the core tenets of the curriculum. Given my thorough mental health background, I addressed common mental health concerns that occur within the academic library setting using research-based strategies. It focused on applying de-escalation techniques, addressing the stigma surrounding mental health, and identifying resources available to students. By incorporating psychoeducation and practical strategies in the seminar, I hoped to increase faculty and staff’s comfort levels and awareness of mental health concerns within an academic library setting.

## Method

To gauge the effectiveness of the mental health training, I created and administered identical pre-seminar and post-seminar surveys. Questions in the survey collected information on each participant’s current position in the library, prior mental health experiences in the library, comfort level with mental health issues in the workplace, and awareness of mental health techniques and resources. I administered the pre-survey on paper prior to the start of the session and collected after I informed participants of their rights as participants. Post-surveys were given out after the completion of the seminar and returned to me before participants left. Completing and returning the pre- and post-surveys was optional, and response data was not associated with participants’ personal data. Participants were informed that returning the completed surveys indicated their informed consent to participate in this study.

## Participants

Emails went out to library staff, advertising the seminar as a “presentation on mental health issues from a library perspective.” The staff completed 11 pre-seminar surveys. Three staff members arrived late to the seminar, resulting in 14 completed post-seminar surveys. Participants who attended represented a wide range of library departments including technical services, user services, cataloging, instructional services, serials, and research assistance.

## Results

According to the surveys, 93% percent of participants reported encountering a mental health concern in their current position in the library, and 21% percent of the participants reported having felt unsafe in the library due to a mental health concern. Participants were asked before the seminar to name three resources available to students, but only 18% were able to do so. Three participants were unable to name a single mental health resource for students. Some of the resources that were referenced are not consistently offered on campus, such as “police dog therapy” and “study breaks”, which occur during finals at the end of the semester. Campus resources were also referenced that do not specifically provide any form of mental health care, such as the university police department. 27% of participants were unable to name a single de-escalation technique. Most of the suggested techniques included adjusting tone and employing mindfulness or active listening.

Participants were asked to rate their comfort level addressing a mental health concern using a

Likert scale from “Not at all” to “Comfortable” to “Extremely comfortable”. The information from this question was converted to a 1 to 5 scale. The mean before the seminar was 2.41 ( $SD=.44$ ), indicating the participants overall were “Not very comfortable” in addressing a mental health concern in the workplace. The comfort level after the seminar was 3.15 ( $SD=.55$ ) indicating the participants overall were “Comfortable” with addressing these issues after attending the seminar. Every participant was able to name a mental health resource available to students after the seminar. 79% of participants were able to name three or more resources. Every resource listed referred to a consistent and available counseling or psychological service included in the seminar. All of the participants were able to recall a de-escalation technique that incorporated the co-regulation or stimuli reduction strategies covered in the presentation.

### Discussion

The surveys indicated mental health concerns are often encountered in the academic library setting, and at times, can be accompanied by a concern for safety. This information on the prevalence of mental health concerns indicates the significance of implementing mental health training to equip employees for issues they are already experiencing. Despite the prevalence of mental health concerns, the survey indicates library staff and faculty are not confident in their ability to handle these situations. This lack of confidence was affirmed by the inability to list de-escalation techniques and mental health resources. Faculty and staff feel ill-equipped to handle situations if they are unaware of techniques and resources they are able to employ and provide.

Reviewing mental health symptoms, addressing existing stigma of mental health, learning mental health first aid procedures, and identifying available resources on campus and in the community equipped faculty and employees with an increased comfort level in addressing mental health issues in the workplace. Overall, participants expressed greater competency for approaching mental health issues in a library context.

Limitations of this study include its small sample size, making the improvement in comfort level statistically insignificant. Because the study looked at a single academic library setting, we cannot assume the prevalence of mental health issues extends to other university libraries. The study also did not include a follow-up to ensure the retention of information of the participants of the study or any research into how the information was practically applied after the seminar. Areas for potential future

research would include a more specific examination of what mental health concerns look like in the academic library. An understanding of the specific nature of these concerns would provide for more tailored instruction for employees. It would also be interesting to consider the ways the library typically responds to these mental health concerns to address potential for bias or insensitivity towards those experiencing mental health issues.

The mental health first aid seminar was later incorporated into a user services training series, but it is vital to continue the conversation of mental health within the academic libraries. Mental health training needs integration into Library Science programs to provide a mental health foundation for future librarians. Providing employees with the support and resources they need to offer appropriate mental health first aid should be a priority across university campuses. Increasing the number of university library faculty and staff who receive mental health training increases the overall competence of the campus to provide adequate care for students.

### Conclusion

Appropriate training is becoming increasingly essential with the prevalence of mental health issues in today’s culture. Since traditional university students are more susceptible to experiencing mental health issues, it is especially important to equip university employees with the skills and knowledge to address them empathically and professionally. University libraries have a unique responsibility to create an accepting and safe culture because of the wide range of students they serve. Training employees in mental health first aid is an effective way to honor this responsibility.

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## School Library Budgets: *The Good, the Bad, and the Under-Funded*

*by Ashley J. Cooksey*  
*Batesville School District*

**I**n October, like most Arkansans, I paid my taxes. The receipt breaks down where all of my money went. My personal property taxes were dispersed by sending a little to county roads, a little to the highway department, a little to the public school system, and a little to our county library. My tax contribution to our county library this year was slightly over five dollars. While it may not be a substantial amount, it is funding. While it may not purchase a library book, when added to all other taxpayers, collectively we help keep our library operational.

Operational money for public schools comes mainly from state funds. Multiple categories of funds are earmarked for specific educational programs. Currently, there are no funds specifically earmarked for school libraries. We held tightly to the little support that was in the Arkansas Public School Accreditation Standards. The former standards stated that school libraries were to hold 3,000 volumes or eight books per student, whichever was greater. There was no guarantee of funds, but if you did not

meet the guidelines for minimum book requirement, schools would be out of compliance. Many school librarians would weed their collection to below the minimum number of volumes in order to receive library funding. However, funding from the district was not a guarantee. Librarians were, and continue to be, required to use Scholastic Book Fairs, grants, or fundraisers for funding.

Arkansas public schools are locally controlled, meaning that once funds are received, budget division is left to superintendents. Required guidelines set by the state are followed and funded, but budgets can vary drastically within the district. Once funding is handed down to principals, they are then responsible for dividing funds and ensuring requirements are met. Two school libraries within the same district can have different budgets.

In early May, the public school accreditation standards were revised. It had been many years since they were last revised, so the revision was much needed. The new standards say nothing about the components of a quality school library or funding. The Public School Accreditation Standards as posted on the Arkansas Department of Education's website read:

*Standard 2-D Media Center for Student Support*

*2-D.1 Each public school district shall annually budget and expend sufficient resources, to purchase and maintain an appropriate balance of print, non-print, and electronic media that is adequate in quality and quantity to meet the academic standards for all students. (D/C)*

*Standard 4-F Library Media Specialists*

*4-F.1 Each public school district shall employ library media specialists that meet the licensure requirements in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Department or are working under an approved waiver in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Department. (D/C)*

*4-F.2 Public schools with fewer than three hundred (300) students shall employ at least one half-time library media specialist. Public schools with three hundred (300) or more students shall employ at least one full-time library media specialist. Schools enrolling fifteen hundred (1,500) or more students shall employ at least two full-time library media specialists. (S/P)*

The underlined statement in the above accreditation standards is significant. According to the Arkansas Department of Education's website:

In Arkansas, there are two basic types of public charter schools. A conversion school is a public school converted to a public charter school. Conversion schools can only draw students from within the school district's boundaries.

An open-enrollment school is a public charter school run by a governmental entity, an institution of higher learning or a tax-exempt non-sectarian organization. Open enrollment schools can draw students from across district boundaries. Beyond the basic two types of charters, the concepts put in place by a public charter school are as broad as the imagination.<sup>1</sup>

If an open-enrollment public charter school is within school choice radius, non-charter public schools can apply for and possibly receive the same waivers as the public charter school. This has the potential to mean that a certified librarian at your local public school could be optional, not required. In a 2017 article, researcher and library consultant Keith Lance told the Herald Tribune, "You get what you pay for. If you staff your library with an aide, then you've got someone staffing your library, but

don't kid yourself that you've got a librarian. That's like confusing the people who stoke the furnace on the ship with its navigator."<sup>2</sup>

Arkansas is one of approximately 16 states to require a Master's level certification or equivalent coursework for school librarians. Approximately 22 states have no guidelines for qualification of a school librarian and several more states operate school libraries on a volunteer only basis. Our public school libraries are critical to personal and academic achievement.

The Arkansas Association of Instructional Media (AAIM) has assembled an ad hoc advocacy committee that met with Arkansas Commissioner of Education Johnny Key and his staff to discuss ways to promote school libraries and advocate for funding. Many practices were brought to light and more up-to-date evaluations are being developed. We are just getting started. There is so much more that can and should be done for our school libraries. Not only do we need funding, we need support for our programs, collaborations, and projects. According to the American Association of School Librarians National School Library Standards for Librarians, a quality library program includes:

- Resources that have been selected according to the principles of Intellectual Freedom
- Policies that ensure students and teachers have access to the school library and qualified staff throughout the school day
- An environment in which collaboration, innovation, and creative problem solving thrive
- Confidentiality of records and access to equipment
- The ability to supplement other school resources and connects the school with the global learning community
- The promotion of the ethical use and sharing of information with respect to copyright, Intellectual Freedom

Our Arkansas School Library programs cannot achieve this without support from administrators, stakeholders, teachers, parents, and students. You can show support for your local public school libraries by speaking to legislators, local school board members or administrators about funding school library programs. You have the right to know how a school budgets their funding. Collaborate with school libraries for events, interlibrary loan programs, book talk sessions, or guest read alouds.

In a June 2018 House Education Committee Meeting, survey results showed overall spending on library materials declined approximately 25%



between 2011 and 2017. The survey also showed that approximately 8% of principals and 12% of teachers said that their school library's reading material fail to meet the school's needs. Why, then, are we not receiving adequate funding for our school libraries?

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/charter-schools>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.heraldtribune.com/news/20171015/sarasota-one-of-only-few-school-districts-in-state-without-librarians>

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## Arkansas Books & Authors

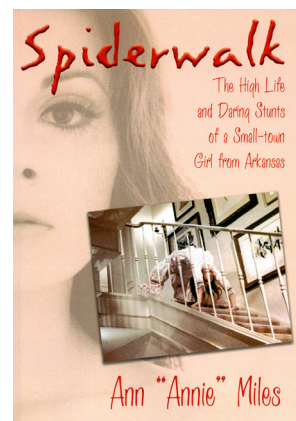
**Compiled by Tim Nutt**

*Historical Research Center, UAMS*

***Spiderwalk: The High Life and Daring Stunts of a Small-Town Girl from Arkansas.* Ann Miles. Butler Center Books, \$21.95.**

When a film director wants to ratchet up the terror in a horror movie, one of the methods employed is a jump scare – something that causes the audience to jump, gasp, or cover their respective eyes. One such method normally used is a character lunging or seeming to come at the audience. If the character is upside down on all fours with her head twisted around, the scene is even scarier. Some of the most iconic scenes in horror movies have employed this technique, such as the character Sadako crawling out of the television in the Japanese horror movie *Ringu* (1998) and Kayako eerily creeping down the staircase in *Ju-on* (2003). Even more recent movies, such as *Legion* (2010) and *Mama* (2013) have employed this sure-fire scare tactic. One of the first films, if not the most famous, to utilize the “spiderwalk” was William Friedkin’s *The Exorcist* in 1973. Arkansas native Ann “Annie” Miles performed that stunt and in her recent autobiography *Spiderwalk: The High Life and Daring Stunts of a Small-town Girl from Arkansas* describes her role in the aforementioned iconic horror movie, but her career goes far beyond that one stunt, and this book takes readers on Miles’s journey from Arkansas to the East Coast and to Hollywood.

In the late 1950s, Ann Miles left her home in Malvern in Hot Spring County for the glitz of Atlantic City, New Jersey. She didn’t come to compete in the Miss America pageant, for which the city was known, but to work at the Steel Pier—a landmark boardwalk and amusement park. The young Arkansas native had arrived to work with the famous diving horses in an act that featured a horse ridden by a young woman diving off a four-story high platform into a tank. Miles stayed with the act for ten years until she dove into a variety of other careers, including a Playboy Bunny stint, acrobatic work in a touring company of the musical *Carnival*, and Broadway and film and television stunt work. The latter is what she is best known for, working



on the iconic television show *Candid Camera*, commercials, and the horror classic *The Exorcist*, starring Linda Blair and Ellen Burstyn.

A lot of thrilling escapades are packed into the 145 pages of *Spiderwalk*. Miles’ retelling of being on the horse four-stories up is descriptive and one can almost feel the tower swaying and experience firsthand the exhilaration and terror when the horse dives into the tank. Each chapter of Miles’ life is recounted in the same descriptive style.

Miles’ work on the Steel Pier with the diving horses makes up the bulk of her book, but her “spiderwalk” experience on *The Exorcist* takes up more than a few pages. In the pantheon of horror movies, *The Exorcist* is considered tops. The story of a young girl possessed by a demon scared audiences when it was released in 1973. The “spiderwalk”, which involved Miles walking down a staircase while on her hands and knees and in a back bend was just one of the demonic acts in the movie. Miles showed up on the set and insisted she did not need support wires, but they were attached nonetheless. The wires, however, could be seen in the shot, and they ended up becoming the reason why the scene ended up being cut from the original released version of the movie. The scene, though, took on a life of its own, and the spiderwalk was put back into the film when *The Exorcist* was re-released in 2010.

Miles’ book is a testament to her independence, her can-do attitude, and never-quit personality. It is apparent while reading Miles’ autobiography that she has enjoyed every thrilling moment of her career, and readers will too.

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*Springdale Public Library with fall colors.* Photo by Tammie Evans, Marketing Director at Springdale Public Library.