



REFERENCE SECTION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1 JAN/FEB 2010

[HTTP://NJLA.PBWORKS.COM/REFERENCE](http://njla.pbworks.com/reference)

A MESSAGE FROM THE SECTION PRESIDENT

Happy New Year!

Yes, it's February, but it's the first chance this year I have to wish you a great 2010. How are you doing with your New Year's Resolutions? Joan Frye Williams and George Needham have an entertaining podcast entitled, [George and Joan, Thinking Out Loud About New Year's Resolutions](#). You won't be disappointed by taking some time out to listen to their discussion of the **Top 10 resolutions** found at about.com. I hope you'll enjoy, as I did, their adaptations for librarians:

#1. Spend more time with family and friends. For librarians, be more customer-focused. Spend more time with your customers.

#2. Fit in fitness. Librarians, if you're going to change anything for the better, you need to practice. Schedule practice time. You don't have to try everything at once; start with one thing, then move to the next.

#3. Tame the bulge. Librarians, weed! And, get rid of the clutter. All that extra stuff around is distracting to customers as well as staff. Customers will often avoid a messy service desk because it is uninviting.

#4. Quit smoking. According to George Needham, "Fuming about what you used to have is probably not going to make you get any more attractive and successful and could make you the butt of numerous jokes. It's also hazardous to your health." (All puns intentional.) Dwelling on the 'good old days' is toxic; know when to move on.

#5. Enjoy life more. We librarians should ask ourselves, "What can we do to add levity to our libraries?" Library staff who look like they are enjoying their work creates a more welcoming environment for customers.

#6. Quit drinking. Joan says, "Escaping reality won't help. Acknowledge the new normal [for your library]."

#7. Get out of debt. According to George, we need to "build up some credit with our founders and communities by being where they need us to be and delivering service how and when they need it."

#8. Learn something new. Darwin's idea, "Survival of the most adaptable..." leads to the thought that adaptability is the key to survival. Joan adds, "Education is the alteration of expectation." (There's something to think about!)

#9. Help others. Isn't that one of the great joys of being a librarian? George and Joan encourage us to help others to be successful on their own terms instead of by defining it as we [librarians] have traditionally defined it. How can we set up the candy store—the library—so that people can feel like they can take advantage of the riches that are here without feeling like they have to go through library boot camp to be successful?

Finally, **#10. Get organized!** We organize stuff, not people. We need to make sure we are not organizing other people in spite of their wishes. I'm thinking about the customers' experience in the library; is it user friendly?

Needham, George and Williams, Joan Frye. "George and Joan, Thinking Out Loud About New Year's Resolutions." *Thinking Out Loud*. Infopeople, 31 December 2009. Web. 5 Feb 2010. MP3 file.

Is that enough to get you started - at least thinking about setting some new goals for yourself? And, why not let NJLA and the Reference Section assist you in achieving your goals? Doing it together with colleagues makes it a lot more fun!

And what better opportunity for getting together with colleagues than the annual **NJLA Conference, April 26 – 28!** The Reference Section is very pleased to sponsor several programs including a pre-conference program with Robert Lackie, "Exploring the Current Web Toolbox: Super Searcher Tips & Techniques." Other program offerings will include "R U a Real Person? Responding to student questions via chat and text messaging;" "The Best Graphic Novels of 2009;" and "On the Scene: Reference for Film, Music, Television and Video Games."

But why wait until the Conference? You're invited to join the Reference Section on February 19th when we will present a program on "Librarian by Appointment" at the Toms River branch of the Ocean County Library. Elizabeth Cronin, Coordinator of Information Services, will share how their library has been doing this for years successfully. RSVP to davidc@mtlaurel.lib.nj.us if possible, or simply join us. A flyer announcing the program at <http://njla.pbworks.com/f/refsectionfeb.pdf>.

David Calvanico
President, NJLA Reference Section

IN THIS ISSUE

2-3 — Marie Radford's remarks from the 2009 Adult Services Forum.

3 — Build a Better Reference Department with Karen Parry

4 — What's on Your Wall? with Meg Ruisch

5 — Atlantic City Librarians: Bridging the Gap

6 — Consumer Health Literacy in Second Life and Beyond

7 — Social Workers Would Make Excellent Librarians

7 — A Reference Question You Can't Refuse

8 — VALE Conference Report

CHALLENGES FOR EXCELLENCE IN ADULT SERVICES A LOOK AT HYBRID SERVICE DESK MODELS

Dr. Marie Radford delivered the closing remarks at the 2009 Adult Services Forum.

It is exciting for me to be a part of the first Adult Services Forum, one that brings together NJLA's Reference, Administration & Management, and Information Technologies Sections as well as the Readers' Advisory Roundtable of NJLA and the NJ State Library. There is no doubt that this is a challenging time for all libraries. One critical complexity for adult services involves determining which mix of traditional and virtual reference, outreach initiatives, and programs is optimal for your particular range of users and what staffing model will work best at your institution. This task would have been a perplexing, even daunting, challenge in boom times, but is made even more bewildering during the economic free fall of the "Great

Recession" we are experiencing, perhaps in the NJ and NYC area a bit more keenly. We all know that human resources are frequently scarce in these times of shrinking funds, in which staff costs account for the largest proportion of the overall budget. So despite what librarians (and our sophisticated and demanding clients) might consider to be the "ideal" array of adult services, the reality is that there is a finite number of staff hours and energy. Burnout is a looming threat that is compounded when staff (who may be already stretched thin across different service points) may be pushed to multitask by juggling several services concurrently. We need to look at novel ways to leverage our precious human and monetary resources and I would like to focus the rest of my talk on some noteworthy hybrid solutions for designing user services.

I've recently finished researching and writing a book chapter: "An Exploration of the Hybrid Reference Service Model: Keeping What Works" for a book edited by Diane Zabel of Penn State University Libraries (<http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul.html>) to be published in 2010 by Libraries Unlimited. I actually resisted writing this chapter at first as I felt that I was not an expert in hybrid staffing models, although I have become increasingly aware that what once worked very well in the 1960s, 70s, 80s and even 90s was not working so well in this decade that is soon to come to a close, and surely to work even less well in the new dec-

ade to unfold. I decided to start by looking to the library literature for inspiration and something concrete to write about, only to find a distinctly disappointing lack of models that were working (and a really miniscule amount on what was not working). Also, in my travels in speaking here and there, I have had the privilege to share the stage with librarians who were reporting that they had successfully experimented with or implemented some very different and successful staffing models and I decided to do some poking around to ferret out some others.

I started with academic libraries and began with an interview with Scott Vine, who works at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I was so impressed with Scott's energy and knowledge of hybrid service that I soon invited him to co-author the chapter with me. We wound up interviewing reference librarians and department heads at two academic and two public libraries who reported successful hybrid service arrangements, which I will briefly describe below.

Franklin & Marshall College Library, Lancaster, PA (<http://library.fandm.edu/>) has instituted a "one desk model," which offers a combination of face-to-face and virtual reference at one public service point. Librarians also regularly make "house calls" to faculty offices and departments as a form of outreach that is

Continued on page 3

REFERENCE SECTION MEETING

**"Librarian by Appointment"
with Elizabeth Cronin**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH
1-4 PM**

**OCEAN COUNTY LIBRARY,
TOMS RIVER BRANCH**

For more details visit:

<http://njla.pbworks.com/f/refsectionfeb.pdf>

CHALLENGES FOR EXCELLENCE IN ADULT SERVICES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

growing in popularity with coupons for free coffees offered as enticement to use this reference service.

Since 2008, the Albert R. Mann Library of Cornell University, NY, (<http://www.mannlib.cornell.edu/>) has been using a two-tiered staffing model in which a highly trained group of four information assistants staff the central reference desk with librarians offering advertised walk-in research help during weekdays. The information assistants refer users to the librarians for complex research questions.

The Arlington Heights Memorial Library, IL, (<http://www.ahml.info/>) is trying out a combined hybrid and tiered model that has a "Welcome Desk," for simple requests,

covered by library assistants, and an Answer Center (Reference Desk) staffed by librarians, which handles more in-depth questions. Off-desk librarians pick up virtual reference sessions as they come in and answer overflow phone calls, which has reduced wait times and taken some pressure off the desk. The librarians are exploring opportunities to take on additional responsibilities, especially increasing outreach.

A hybrid model with roving reference is in place in the Orange County Library System (OCLS), Orlando, FL (<http://www.ocls.info/>) which uses a variety of methods to provide exceptional service at the user's point of need. Staff roves throughout the library, seeking opportunities to help people. Users can also pick up

phone handsets throughout the library to connect to staff members, who provide assistance via the phone. The OCLS has a call center, Questionline, which handles a variety of circulation questions and reference requests. The OCLS continually seeks out newer technological approaches to expand the ways in which reference queries are received and answered.

It is clear that more experimentation, as well as research, is needed to help library managers become better informed to make the critical decisions involved in considering staffing models. The kind of flexibility and variance in the provision of face-to-face and virtual services illustrated by the above exemplars shows the diversity of our users' needs and the willing-

ness of librarians to move well out of their comfort zones to risk unprecedented change in modes and methods of service delivery to better meet these needs. All those involved in adult services need to join together to seek collaborative solutions and find ways to leverage intergenerational knowledge, as well as individual subject specialties and abilities, so we can continue to meet present and future challenges. Today's Adult Services Forum has provided me with inspiration, new insights, and positive energy. I look forward to next year's event and thank you for giving me the opportunity to share in this inaugural event.

*Marie L. Radford
Associate Professor
Rutgers University*

BUILDING A BETTER REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

At the 2009 Adult Services Forum, Karen Parry, Manager of Information Services at the East Brunswick Public Library, led a discussion on "Recreating Reference and the Role of Librarians."

Librarians from all around the state listed the strengths and weaknesses they perceived in modern libraries, and worked together to design an ideal reference department. Some of the ideas they shared as future library innovators:

Hiring of people who are patient, tenacious, analytical, flexible, approachable, and empathetic.

The creation of a "culture of customer service," in which librarians speak first to let people know we're there to help.

Reference desks with practical innovations (e.g. dual screens for co-browsing)

Increased focus on computer skills and technical instruction.

Volunteer staff to assist with minor computer issues, filling out forms, and related tasks.

A "team approach" to reference work, incorporating the diverse strengths of reference librarians.

Development of a good relationship with patrons, schools, and community organizations.

A physical environment with fewer barriers; examples included creating reference desks where people can sit and removing negative signage.

Development and successful marketing of programs.

A sufficient number of people to staff the reference desk, to avoid overexposure and burnout.

Enough flexibility given to staff to allow them to use their judgment in bending policies.

Continuing access to, and training in, the use of online databases and search techniques.

Greater interdepartmental overlap and cooperation within the library.

These are just a few of the topics discussed at the Forum. What are your ideas? Send them to jlichtenwalner@scotlib.org or mmaziekien@bccls.org to have them included in the next Reference Section Quarterly.

*Michael Maziekien
Adult Services Librarian
Nutley Public Library*

WHAT'S ON YOUR WALL? ART IN LIBRARIES

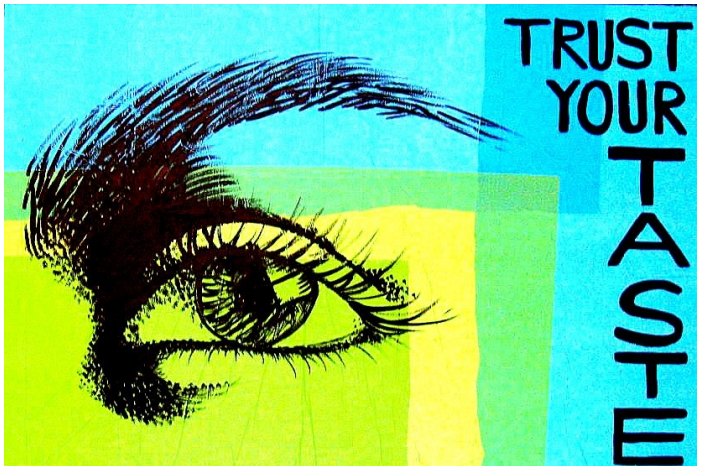
In an ideal world, all the ideal libraries would be fabulous visual showcases. Think of the possibilities—displays, murals, mosaics, digital slideshows, craft classes, posters and whatever else the creative soul can imagine.

At the October Adult Services Forum, Ref, Tech and Tango, Megan Ruisch offered thoughtful insight into the place of visual art in the library setting. She started by asking the participants to name their favorite kind of art and asked what is displayed currently in the represented individual libraries. She noted, “Art is what you like—that preference comes from your heart.” She further commented that “Being able to define what you don’t like helps you to move toward what you do.”

The Ocean County Library System, with its 21 branches,

19 galleries and 16 display cases, provides a beneficial starting place to examine the role of art in libraries. Megan displayed a map of New Jersey, highlighting how many other public libraries have art services listed on their websites and actively promote them. Visual art seems to be a challenge to most public libraries, particularly in regard to establishing standards and taste levels. It inspires strong opinions and may be seen as provocative politically or artistically. For example, a swastika for most of us is a negative image, but used in Chinese art it is a symbol of good luck. There may be times that a library might have to provide information with an exhibit in order to explain and enhance it.

Megan concluded that we do not have to fear the possible controversies but develop poli-



cies, perhaps in a committee approach. There are positive ways to achieve a balance and yet shape the landscape of art in our communities. Megan provided an excellent and colorful booklet which outlines how libraries can achieve successful art programs. She included a detailed timeline called “Anatomy of an Art Exhibit” along with practical forms developed by the Ocean County Library system.

Most importantly to remember, there is always risk in allowing free expression. Perhaps libraries need to make the effort despite the unknown variables. We, as public entities, can offer a whole new

reason for the community to visit. Art is a way to enhance the literary experience and may, unexpectedly, bring new people who have no idea of what else we offer.

Megan’s passion and enthusiasm is catching and you may want to catch her at mruisch@theoceancountylibrary.org or check out her blog at <http://whats-on-your-wall.blogspot.com> for more information.

*Cathy Prince
Reference Librarian
Summit Free Public Library*



ATLANTIC CITY LIBRARIANS: BRIDGING THE GAP

The Atlantic City Free Public Library's Reference Department has stepped up with new services to respond to our community's needs. Through a Career Center Online, a Personal Librarian Service and most recently a new blog, "Your Library, Your Life," librarians are finding new ways to connect to the community and to make electronic resources as easily accessible as possible.

The **Career Center** offers information on everything from researching a career change to starting the application process. This page features direct links to the Atlantic City Casinos' application pages and local employment classified ads. Directly below that are state and county resources, including NJ Get Help, the Department of Labor and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission. The Careers section of Tutor.com, Learning Express Library and the COIN Career Library are all highlighted on this page for their employment related services, including resume assistance, study help, practice tests, career descriptions and more. Patrons can find a quick link to the firefighter's application as well as practice exams to study online.

Library in Real Life: Life is full of questions, your library is full of answers... We just began writing a blog. The purpose of the blog is to take timely events that concern our community and show how the library can offer additional information or support on the topic. The topics vary based on current events. Posts in the past month have included: information on the tragedy in Haiti, casino revenue reports, firefighter & state police applications, safety of drinking water and more. We are hoping that these posts will increase the use of library resources. For example, a post on saving money by doing DIY home repairs links to the Gale Home Improvement Reference Center Database in our Online Research Library and the posts on job applications refer patrons with little computer skills to our Personal Librarian Service.

Personal Librarian Service is a reference service that has thrived here in the past year. Patrons can make an appointment to spend an hour one-on-one with a librarian for the purpose of filling out a job application, creating an email address, filing a pension loan, using the library's electronic resources and so on. These appointments allow librarians to give patrons the undivided attention that they deserve and help to bridge a technical divide that is distancing many community members from the services that are essential to successfully functioning in today's society.

Aubrey Gerhardt
Reference Librarian and Web Coordinator
Atlantic City Free Public Library

CONSUMER HEALTH LITERACY ON HEALTHINFO ISLAND

Would you recognize the signs if you or someone else were having a stroke or heart attack? Do you understand common medical terminology?

The Trinitas Library is currently conducting a research study about the effectiveness of using interactive games to improve Consumer Health literacy about the signs and symptoms of heart attack, stroke and basic understanding of commonly used medical terms. The study is being conducted using traditional website outreach and the virtual world platform of Second Life.

In Second Life, the full exhibit is housed on HealthInfo Island at Exhibition Hall. <http://slurl.com/secondlife/Healthinfo%20Island/18/25/22>

Mini versions of the exhibit are also traveling around Second Life and are being hosted on a variety of sites in order to capture a broader customer base. Visitors from around the world can find these interactive health quizzes at Virtual Egypt, Virtual-e Business Park, University of Illinois School of Medicine's NewWorld Clinical Education, Montclair State University's Consumer Health Education sim and others places.

The virtual exhibit consists of 3 interactive quiz boards that test the participant's knowledge about stroke, heart attack and common medical terminology. The quizzes were developed by the librarian with a clinical nursing team of advisors from Cardiology, Neurology and Nursing Education. Answers

and additional information are provided in links and text format. The customer is then asked to take a short, anonymous survey to find out whether they have learned anything new to help them with their health care decisions.

If you are in Second Life, please take a few minutes of your time to participate in this study by taking one or all of the quizzes and completing the short post-quiz survey. If you are not in Second Life, you may take the quizzes and learn more by going to the Library's website http://www.trinitas.org/medical_library.htm

Health literacy is about being able to read, understand and act on health care information.

It can affect you on many levels, from understanding what the doctor has said, to reading a prescription label, being able to manage illness to filling out forms and more.

The quizzes will take less than 10 minutes of your time. Whether you participate through the library's website or virtually in Web 2.0, what you learn could possibly save a life--including your own!

*Elizabeth Marrapodi
Library Director
Trinitas Regional Medical
Center Library*



SOCIAL WORKERS WOULD MAKE EXCELLENT LIBRARIANS

I think social workers would make excellent librarians. It's not because I have an MSW with professional social work experience, with a second career in library work. Social workers are great at doing "community work." With the political and economic climate becoming increasingly unfriendly for public libraries, I think this is a crucial juncture where leaders in public librarianship must decide – where do we go from here?

I am an academic librarian but my heart is in public library service. I love to think about the potential of what public libraries can do for their communities. Townships everywhere in NJ are considering merging services. Why not become the frontrunner for merging public libraries with towns' various departments such as senior centers, recreation departments, and community centers with educational offerings for all ages? How about even including a limited social services component for the towns' needy? I can just picture lots of inter-generational programming, really good free entertainment (not just DVDs), excellent free and low-cost educational opportunities for customers of all

ages, bus trips for adults (especially the homebound), after-school homework sessions, resume workshops and interviewing skills classes for the adults as well as for youth, etc. This would mean a lot of work, especially for the directors who would be writing to get grant money. But reference librarians should be writing for grants too. I believe this is essential for the survival of public libraries—long-term survival. Library schools would have to start teaching students about grant writing, programming (not just computer programming), community service delivery, and a bit more about human behavior than information-seeking behavior.

Let's be at the forefront before we become obsolete. I don't think we should be competing with Google, Amazon, Netflix, and the likes. We should be expanding our scope of what defines public library service, which really should be based in community needs.

Susie Choi
Assistant Librarian
Saint Peter's College

A REFERENCE QUESTION YOU CAN'T REFUSE...

On very pretty pink paper, a lady from out of state was writing to our librarian, Ms. Natalie Del Greco, the author of a chapter in the "Sopranos Family Cookbook." She wanted a copy of the photo opposite the librarian's page, and we wrote the attached letter to her.

Dear Ms. _____:

Thank you for writing to The Newark Public Library about the picture in *The Sopranos Family Cookbook*. It is such a nicely produced volume that you naturally missed a certain tongue-in-cheek quality to it. If you look closely at the Table of Contents, though, you will notice that all the "authors" are fictitious. Nadine del Greco is not a real librarian but a figment of the imagination of the book's true authors, Allen Rucker and Michele Scicolone, just as the chapter authors come from the *Sopranos* cable television series of a few years ago, and of course, if you do

not subscribe to the HBO station, you may never have seen or heard of this program.

As for the lovely picture of those women, it was most likely included in this book by the publisher, not by the authors. The publisher is Warner Books, 466 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017; telephone, 1-212-364-1100. We dearly hope that the publisher can provide you with information about that illustration, but we do see that it is labeled as "Naples Market," so it seems to be from Italy, not from New Jersey or even Brooklyn. Perhaps your family came from the Naples area?

Respectfully,

The Reference Department

Leslie Kahn
Head of Reference
Newark Public Library

THE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE PRESENTS: MANAGING THE BUSINESS LIBRARY

MARCH 15-16, 2010

The Library Management Institute will host "Managing the Business Library" - two days devoted exclusively to the management and administration of academic business libraries and corporate libraries. The conference will feature three keynote speakers and over 20 different workshops covering all types of relevant topics. Registration includes all sessions and all meal functions. For a complete brochure and registration materials, please contact Bob Kieserman at kieserman@arcadia.edu.

**Don't want people at your event?
Don't advertise here!**

E-mail your event info to:

lichtenwalner@scotlib.org

or

mmaziekien@bccls.org



NJLA: REFERENCE SECTION

SECTION OFFICERS

David Calvanico, President

Mount Laurel Library
100 Walt Whitman Avenue
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
(856) 234-7319 | davidc@mtlaurel.lib.nj.us

Vice President

Michael Maziekien
Nutley Public Library

Past President

Lisa Coats
Monmouth University Library

Members at Large

Joseph Fanning
Columbia High School, Maplewood

Susan Lipstein
Hillside Public Library

Cathy Prince
Summit Public Library

Lisa Florio
New Providence Memorial Library

Library School Student Representative

Maureen Carroll
Rutgers, SC&I

Recording Secretary

Glynis Wray
Ocean County Library

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Jenny Lichtenwalner
jlichtenwalner@scotlib.org

Michael Maziekien
mmaziekien@bccls.org

Special Thanks to Maureen Carroll
Page 4 Artwork © 2009 Megan Ruisch

NJLA REFERENCE SECTION MISSION STATEMENT

The section fosters professional development and networking opportunities for reference librarians. Members plan continuing education programs, including a major workshop during the year, programs at the annual NJLA Conference, opportunities to interact with colleagues and tours of specialized libraries or collections.

It is the goal of this newsletter to provide a forum for New Jersey reference librarians, from public, academic and school libraries, to read and write about the issues that they face.

VALE / NJ ACRL/ NJLA CUS Eleventh Annual Users' Conference The Future Is Now: Meeting the Needs of Our Users



The VALE/NJ ACRL/NJLA CUS 11th Annual User's Conference was held on Friday January 8, 2010 at the Busch Campus Center of Rutgers University. This one-day academic library conference focused on user needs and what the future might hold for academic libraries in New Jersey. Entitled, "The Future is Now: Meeting the Needs of Our Users," the conference's keynote speaker was Alex Wright, who is currently Director of User Experience and Product Research at the *New York Times* and the author of *Glut: Mastering Information Through the Ages*. There were 20 break-out sessions presented in three segments and 20 posters displayed throughout the day. The VALE conference is always a great way to connect with other academic librarian colleagues in between semesters. For more information about VALE-NJ, please visit: <http://www.valenj.org/newvale/>

Lisa Coats
Reference and Instruction Librarian
Monmouth University Library