2008 AKLA AWARDS BANQUET

The banquet in Fairbanks got off to a great start with some superb entertainment arranged by Robert Michalove. Clarence Pate’s music was a great kickoff to the evening’s festivities, and The Creek Sisters (Marcia Trainor and Vicki Andrews) were a riot. Their “Day in the Life of a Reference Librarian” skit had everyone in stitches.

We then got down to the more serious business of handing out awards. The Outstanding Alaskana of the Year Award was given to The Alaska Pen: An Illustrated History of Unga. Compiler and Editor Peggy Arness was present to receive the award. Jude Baldwin has more information on this award elsewhere in this issue. The Publicity Contest Winners were announced by Patience Frederiksen, and she also provided a report on those winners in this issue of Newspoke.

There were two well deserving Library Advocacy Award winners this year: Nancy Lord from Homer and Lane Thompson from Fairbanks. The Honorary Life Membership Award went to Cathy Vitale. Recipients of AkLA Scholarships included Shannon Clouse, Katie Conover, Roxie Duckworth, Marcia Lee, and Sharon Vogel. And last, but by no means least, Nellie Sears and Gail Wong received AkLA Conference Attendance Awards.

At one time or another, the following folks helped me out in putting together the Awards Banquet and they certainly deserve a lot of credit for their hard work. So, in no particular order, my sincere thanks go out to: James Huesmann, Marit Vick, Lynne Krizek, Robert Michalove, Aja Razumny, Jane Fuerstenau, Georgine Olson, Jude Baldwin, Lisa Booch, Judith Leslie McQuerry, Robin Hanson, Helen Hill, Mary Jo Joiner, Mary Hacker, and the entertaining live auction team of Greg Hill and Dan Masoni.

I hope everyone had a good time at the banquet, and I hope to see you all again at the 2009 Awards Banquet in beautiful Kodiak, AK!

Joe D’Elia
A. Holmes Johnson Memorial Library
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mary Jo Joiner

Dear AkLA members,

It seems like a long time since February and our annual conference. Combining my first trip
to Fairbanks with being installed as President of AkLA made the conference one I won’t
soon forget. Kudos to all involved with that stellar event. The opportunity to meet with each
other, learn, interact with vendors and just have fun is invaluable.

What a year to take office! No sooner had I taken custody of the jade gavel and returned
from conference, than the library community was faced with:

• SB119 “An Act relating to grant programs to support libraries” and
• HB353 “An Act relating to the blocking or monitoring of certain Internet sites at public
  libraries and to library assistance grants.”

The Alaska library community rallied around these issues. Our ability to gather the facts and
pertinent information and convey that information not only aided in the debate, but highlighted
what we do for our customers every day when they need information and support docu-
ments. Thanks especially to those who testified, called, and/or wrote to voice their opinions
on the issues that these bills addressed. Who can deny the impact of the heart wrenching
testimony of the folks who staff and use the library in Tok? Or, the very learned and rea-
soned discourse by our University of Alaska library staff?

My first couple of months have included signing a number of ILC grant proposals to the
State Library that have the potential to benefit library staff all over the state. On behalf of our
Association I also wrote to Governor Palin recommending appointments to the Governor’s
Library Advisory Council. Thanks to all of the people who have volunteered on behalf of the
Association to write grants and serve on the council.

I am both excited and overwhelmed by my new commitment to our
Association. Thanks to everyone who has been helping me along the
way as I try to meet the requirements of my job description. Special
thanks to Jane Fuerstenau, Joe D’Elia and Kay Shelton for
their gentle guidance and advice. I encourage everyone to get
involved and always feel free to let me know what I should be doing
or if I am doing something I shouldn’t be doing. ♥

With the jade gavel goes the presidency from Jane Fuerstenau to Mary Jo Joiner
DATABASE: SMALL ENGINE REPAIR MANUALS

A great resource for fix-it folks in your communities is now available online through SLED: repair manuals for ATVs, generators & small engines, snow machines, boat motors, etc. Small Engine Repair Reference Center (SERRC) contains the full set of small engine repair manuals from Clymer (http://www.clymer.com/).

These manuals contain thousands of accurate and concise step-by-step maintenance and repair instructions for hundreds of small engine machines and their supporting components.

Find it online by going to http://sled.alaska.edu

Click on ‘Digital Pipeline: Information from magazines, journals, newspapers and selected reference sources’.

Click on ‘MORE’ under the list of ‘Categories’ and scroll down to ‘Small Engine Repair Reference Center’.

OR

from http://sled.alaska.edu, look at the ‘Resources A-Z’. Go directly to the titles beginning with ‘S’ and scroll down to ‘Small Engine Repair Reference Center’

Try it out. Get your motors humming! On the next page is a flyer you can print out and post to advertise that your library now offers this resource.

Aja Razumny
Alaska State Library

OCLC AND GOOGLE TO EXCHANGE DATA, LINK DIGITIZED BOOKS TO WORLDCAT

OCLC and Google Inc. have signed an agreement to exchange data that will facilitate the discovery of library collections through Google search services.

Under terms of the agreement, OCLC member libraries participating in the Google Book Search program, which makes the full text of more than one million books searchable, may share their WorldCat-derived MARC records with Google to better facilitate discovery of library collections through Google.

Google will link from Google Book Search to WorldCat.org, which will drive traffic to library OPACs and other library services.

For more information, visit www.oclc.org
In November 2007, I was honored to join a delegation of academic librarians on a nine day adventure to Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia. The trip offered the opportunity to learn first-hand differences and similarities in the world of college and research libraries of our quite different countries. The trip, arranged by the organization People to People International (PTPI), was one of their many professional exchange trips around the world (http://www.citizenambassadors.org/about.aspx). PTPI, formed in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, is today a non-profit headed by his grand-daughter Mary Eisenhower.

Back to the trip. Early November in New York’s busy LaGuardia airport, the trip’s dozen participants began to trickle into the flight waiting area. We recognized each other in that special way librarians do – books and curiosity. It became clear this was no group of shrinking violets. Our delegation’s professional leader was Camila Alire, a current candidate for ALA president and former president of the Academic College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Association. Also along were Bede Mitchell, current president of LAMA, and Pam Snelson, current ACRL president. Probing for additional connections was fruitful. One participant, Betty Gard, hired UAA’s librarian Ralph Courtney during his stint in North Dakota. Another participant, Helen Wykle, an archivist from University of North Carolina Asheville, knew retired Alaskan Martha Shephard who volunteers during her retirement time in Asheville. Connections went on from there.

During the eventual air transit, excitement soon fell way to slumber and exhaustion as we traveled the eight time zones from NY to Moscow via Frankfurt. Arriving at Shermetyevo 2, the international airport, we were met by our People to People country guide. We schlepped our bags and bodies onto our very own transport bus.

During the hour-long drive from the airport to Moscow city-center we got the beginning taste of gridlock traffic and never-ending housing as we passed a dark landscape with a population of 15 million people. Wow! Cyrillic ruled. Arriving at a high-end hotel in central Moscow, we immediately completed paperwork which involved relinquishing our passports overnight to the hotel staff. Presence in the country must be registered centrally--we were warned we could be asked by officials to show paperwork at any time on the street.

Day and night blurred together. Before heading on our first library visit, we had the chance to see the infamous Red Square and St. Basil’s cathedral, hear Russian Orthodox church bells ringing, and reflect on the complex history emanating from within the Kremlin walls. Alaskan Ann Symons, who...
We were treated with hospitality by our colleagues in an extraordinary fashion. For example, at the Moscow State University of Culture and Arts our delegation was greeted at 9am by costumed singers (students of traditional folk arts) offering token gifts of vodka and bread. Film students followed us for the day to document our visit. Group discussions always included a spread of tea, coffee and cookies.

At the Russian State University for the Humanities, we learned much about the professional training of librarians. Librarianship undergraduate degrees are available at over 30 institutions in Russia. Training consists of two years general instruction in the humanities, followed by two years specializing in one of following four areas: 1) Librarians, bibliographers and educators, 2) Management of information resources, 3) Analysts of information systems, and 4) Technologist and systems engineers.

There are 300,000 trained librarians in the country. Library Science students must meet professional and technical standards as well as a psychological qualification. It was suggested that Russian libraries are behind U.S. libraries in practical applications, but are perhaps ahead in the theory of librarianship. We did not extract additional details about the psychological qualification, although among us delegates we postulated the implications.

Sometimes our dignitary treatment meant we had less time to engage in professional questions with the library staff. Formalities such as deferring to the highest ranking university official meant we did not always learn what the library staff had to say. However, when we did, it was always fascinating. Tidbits such as:

* Interlibrary loan is problematic due to uncertainty of which library would be responsible if a book was lost.
* Salary of librarians ($250/mo) is such that only those young people living with parents would be able to afford to go into the profession.
* Most school libraries in Russia do not yet have Internet

(Russian Libraries - Cont. from pg. 5)
(Russian Libraries - Cont. from pg. 6)

Open stacks and circulation systems are not prevalent

Library support has been tumultuous since the fall of the Soviet Union with funding from enterprises like the Sorus Foundation waxing and waning.

we learned about, one had an ironic twist. The project was digitizing the 18th century materials deemed by the Censure Committee unfit to be released to the public. The Censure Committee withheld a single copy of each censured item. Now such material is being digitized and electronically available to the public—albeit somewhat dated.

Most astonishing was experience with the Russian Library Association (RLA). Before our meeting, we considered them a counterpart to the American Library Association. Upon learning they have a staff of four, it was apparent there must be significant differences. Formed in 1994, the RLA is comprised only of member groups (530), not individuals. Within RLA, 36 chapters of various interest groups exist. As they mature, there are many needs such as redesigning the chapters due to overlapping interests. RLA holds an annual conference with approximately 1500 participants. Creatively, the RLA sponsors an annual contest to choose a Russian city/town to be named Library Capital for the coming year. This is done to raise local awareness and funds for that library and is apparently very successful.

In summary, these notes represent a small fraction of my trip experience. The PTPI professional exchange was well-structured and made possible an experience I could not possibly do on my own. It was an incredible opportunity to increase global perspectives of the library profession and expand cultural awareness.

Kate Gordon
University of Alaska Anchorage

Information was, at times, challenging to interpret. Communication was slowed since everything required translation in both directions. What was clear was these libraries were the result of centuries of dedicated staff who professionally obligated themselves to preserve materials. At the Scientific Library of St. Petersburg State University, we learned how their University was founded in 1724 by Peter the Great. Staff were extremely proud that library service continued during the three-year Nazi siege of Leningrad during World War II.

Of the many digitization projects

Card Catalog

Moscow State University of Culture and Arts, singing welcome to the delegation
ENGAGING READING:
THE APU/UAA BOOKS OF THE YEAR

Now completing its second year, the joint University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA) and Alaska Pacific University’s (APU) Books of the Year program proves, just as the Anchorage Public Library’s highly successful Big Read 2008 program with Harper Lee’s acclaimed *To Kill a Mockingbird* did, book discussion on a community level is alive and well. APU and UAA have combined to bring great stories and discussions to their students, faculty and staff. Their many community partners have helped extend the reach of the books to other audiences in Anchorage and around the state.

What makes this Books of the Year project unique?
The UAA/APU Books of the Year project began in 2006 as part of an “Encountering Controversy” grant of $100,000. The UAA/APU partnership was one of 26 proposals awarded nationally by the Ford Foundation for their “Difficult Dialogues” initiative to support productive dialogue of contentious issues on college campuses. Thus, our Books are selected each year to provoke serious discussion about serious issues, rather than as an “introduction to college” exercise or as a freshman-class bonding experience as other university book-of-the-year programs may be.

Selecting the Books of the Year
The process starts with identifying a “theme,” a topic to organize the book selection and campus activities. Last year’s Books theme was “Integration and Assimilation,” to address the issues of immigration and “otherness” in America. UAA and APU jointly selected two titles: the nonfiction *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* by Anne Fadiman, and the novel *The Tortilla Curtain* by T.C. Boyle. With the help of the Alaska Humanities Forum, T.C. Boyle came to Anchorage last March for a series of public readings and discussions. The Books theme for 2007-2008 is “Religion and Politics” (i.e., religious fundamentalism or religious action in the political sphere) – a theme with obvious resonance in today’s world.

In October 2006 UAA and APU solicited faculty members willing to serve on the Books of the Year Selection Committee, and asked for their nominations for titles. The criteria for Books nominations were:
- Must pertain to the “Religion and Politics” theme
- Must be available in paperback
- Must be accessible to student readers
- Should be preferably a work of fiction or imaginative literature, rather than nonfiction

Our Books selection committee consisted of nine members from the two campuses, from English, Justice, Sociology, Journalism, and the Consortium Library. Fourteen books were nominated by this group that met the criteria. From these, the Committee selected six to read over the holiday break and discuss more fully in January. The six “finalists” were:
- *The Handmaid’s Tale* – Margaret Atwood
- *The Lemon Tree* – Sandy Tolan
- *The Plot Against America* – Philip Roth
- *The Swallows of Kabul* – Yasmina Khadra
- *Taras Bulba* – Nikolai Gogol
- *Under the Banner of Heaven* – Jon Krakauer

After discussion and deliberation, the Committee recommended either: *The Swallows of Kabul* and *The Handmaid’s Tale* (to be read as a set) or *The Swallows of Kabul* and *Under the Banner of Heaven* (to be read as a set).

(Cont. on pg. 9)
The database *NoveList* proved particularly helpful in the nomination and selection process. And *NoveList*’s book discussion guides and reviews for the selected titles were employed by instructors and readers throughout the year.

A Books of the Year Implementation Team actually selected the Books of the Year after considering the campus resources, additional learning opportunities, and opportunities for community partnerships. The Team was composed of high-level administrators in academics and campus life, as well as Steve Rollins, Dean of the Consortium Library, and Greg Kimura of the Alaska Humanities Forum. The Team selected *The Swallows of Kabul* and *The Handmaid’s Tale*.

These books, both relatively short, provide a strong set for discussion of both style and content. The pairing of these books provides a nuanced perspective of religious extremism. *The Swallows of Kabul* is a very human story of two couples living under the strict rule of the Taliban. Written by Yasmina Khadra—an Algerian army officer writing under female pseudonym to avoid censorship—it is an unrelentingly bleak portrayal of fundamentalist politics and society. *The Handmaid’s Tale*, written by Margaret Atwood, is a modern classic detailing a young woman’s life in a dystopian society. Both are works of fiction, from a male and a female author, respectively. One deals with Islamic fundamentalism, the other with Christian fundamentalism. One’s writing style is relatively lush (translated from French), the other relatively spare. Both books are accessible to readers from many backgrounds.

**Activities**

A Reader’s Guide was prepared for both *A Handmaid’s Tale* and *The Swallows of Kabul*, as well as one for the set. Multiple copies of the books were purchased from the Ford Foundation grant and were made available for check-out from the circulation desks of the Consortium Library, the Learning Resources Center, and on each floor of residence halls.

Throughout the year, the Books, supplemented with films, were used for discussions in classrooms and dormitories. “Blog posters” were placed around campus, with quotes from the Books at the top and plenty of blank space for people to write their own comments and thoughts. Books of the Year faculty associates helped promote the Books on campus and assisted faculty with incorporation of the readings into their courses.

This year’s Books also complemented a large-scale community education project entitled

(Cont. on pg. 10)
“Engaging Muslims: Religion, Cultures, Politics,” created by a generous gift to the Cardinal Newman Chair of Catholic Theology at APU from Larry and Wilma Carr. The project began last fall, with events and speakers scheduled throughout this spring, involving many community organizations (the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Anchorage Public Library, the Interfaith Council, the Alaska Humanities Forum, the World Affairs Council, and the Anchorage School District – in addition to UAA, APU, and Wayland Baptist University). Four nationally prominent Islamic scholars came to Anchorage to speak at APU, UAA, and at the Wilda Marston Theatre at Loussac Library. They were:

- Reza Aslan (author of *No God But God*) on Contemporary Issues in Islam
- Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi on Islam and Diversity
- Dr. Ingrid Mattson on Islamic Law and Life Past and Present
- Dr. John Esposito on Islam and the Future of Foreign Policy

What’s Next?
Next year will be an exciting time at APU, UAA, and in the community as we explore and discuss the interactions between Western and indigenous cultures. Another joint UAA/APU committee has chosen the Books for the theme: “Alaska Natives: A Call for Understanding.”

The 2008-2009 UAA/APU Books of the Year are:

*Growing up Native in Alaska* by A.J. McClanahan includes interviews with 27 young Alaska Native leaders about their lives, their futures, the impact of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and how they are “finding innovative and creative ways to live in two worlds.”

*Yuuyaraq: The Way of the Human Being* by Harold Napoleon outlines the initial effects and continuing impact of the epidemics that afflicted Alaska Natives from the 1770s through the 1940s. Napoleon’s premise is that this death on a massive scale wiped out the culture-bearers and left psychological and spiritual scars that continue today. Routes to healing are also discussed.

*Do Alaska Natives Get Free Medical Care? (and other frequently asked questions about Alaska Native issues)*, a book of readings prepared by UAA/APU faculty and Anchorage community members, is a companion volume to the Books of the Year.

APU and UAA are now national leaders in “difficult dialogues,” a role we take seriously. The Books of the Year are a perfect platform to continue these discussions and to help train our students to think critically about controversial issues.

For additional information about the Books of the Year program, 2006-2009 selections, Reader’s Guides to last year’s and this year’s Books, and the “Encountering Controversy” initiative, please visit [http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/communitypartnerships](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/communitypartnerships).

See also:

Engaging Muslims Community Education Project  [http://engagingmuslims.alaskapacific.edu/](http://engagingmuslims.alaskapacific.edu/)


Trina Carter,
UAA/APU Consortium Library
John Dede,
UAA Office of Community Partnerships
Winner of AkLA’s Alaskana Award for an outstanding work about Alaska published in 2007 is *The Alaska Pen: An Illustrated History of Unga*. Accepting the award at the 2008 conference awards dinner was Peggy Arness.

The town of Unga was located in the Shumagin Islands, at the eastern end of the Aleutians — about halfway between Kodiak and Unalaska. The three editors of the award-winning book spent their young years in Unga. As older adults, they recognized how important the years in Unga had been for them and how they cherished that time in their lives.

Unga’s economy had declined with the dwindling of the cod fishery and closure of the gold mine, and gradually people had moved elsewhere for work. The last person left Unga in 1968. The community ceased to exist.

In the early 2000s, Ungaites realized it wouldn’t be long before no one would be left that had lived in the isolated little town. If the story of Unga was ever to be recorded, it should be soon. Lauritzen, Melseth, and Arness stepped forward, and so began their four years of planning and organizing and gathering information — made more difficult as one of them lived in Anchorage, one in Kenai, and one in Washington.

The foundation and the framework for the book is *The Alaska Pen* (TAP), the Unga School’s monthly newsletter. Published 1934-1951 (with a short lapse and a brief title change during WWII), the newsletter covered school, town, and regional news, and for a while was the only paper published in the Aleutians.

The book consists of excerpts from the newsletters supplemented with over 200 photos, archival materials, and memories gathered from conversations with former Ungaites.

The Alaska Pen: An Illustrated History of Unga is alive as few other history books are. Why this feeling of life? One reason is that young people – children and teens – are seen and heard; this is rare in historical non-fiction. Unga is described through the eyes of both the young and the adult.

There is an underlying innocence and acceptance in the student writing. They write about what is important to them — holiday celebrations, movies, dances, new babies in the community. They also write about searches for men lost at sea, about storms, about standing in line for doctor visits when the *Hygiene* (medical ship) was in port, and about waiting for the mail boats when their Christmas gifts were three months late. What were the students like? They had strong ties to their environment, and this is mirrored in their interests and their writing.

One teacher commented that when it was time for art class they would draw only boats and dories. They sensed the beauty around them. There is a poem entitled ‘Unga Seasons’ in a 1934 issue which describes the changes in the grass on the hills — going from

(Cont. on pg. 12)
gold and Scarlet, to green and misty, to bright blues, reds and greens, to dazzling, sparkling snow.

And they were practical, with both feet solidly planted in reality. When Esmeralda the pig was shipped in by a local family, there was great excitement among the school children about this exotic animal. A month later she was butchered. Her obituary reminisces about after-school walks to visit her when she was alive, but also mentions her smoked hams and bacon, her sausages and pork chops.

I found the editors’ treatment of time intriguing. The newsletter excerpts are in chronological order – the students write mainly about what is happening, the current news, the present. But interspersed with the articles, the editors – who know Unga’s past and what will happen in its future — have woven in stories of both. I found the jumps in time disconcerting at first, but became aware that this melding together of time adds a unique and non-linear dimension, a holistic view, to the book. The present, past and future are encapsulated together.

There are many memorable photos. One of the most enjoyable for me shows the entire student body of 1929-30. There they are, squinting into the sun, each one a sturdy individual, ready to greet any adventures that await them. A sad photo shows an 82 year old woman returning to visit the townsite in 1997, walking with a cane along the overgrown paths, visiting her memories, saying goodbye.

The students and their families have scattered and the physical remains of buildings and board-walks are deteriorating, but The Alaska Pen: An Illustrated History of Unga has documented Unga’s spirit for future generations. It is an important addition to both Aleutian and Alaskan historical writing.

The hope of the editors is that other small communities will see this book and record their own stories and histories.

The book’s index will be invaluable to those doing research on people and boat names. And thanks to the efforts of the editors, the State Library has been able to microfilm an almost complete run of The Alaska Pen newsletter. The missing issues are Jan. 1939, Dec. 1941, Sept. 1944 and Sept. 1947. Keep a watch out for them, and let asl@alaska.gov know if you find them!

For more information, see www.thealaskapen.com

Sylvia Burns
Fairbanks
The Fairbanks North Star Borough Department of Library Services has developed a great program that has an amazing effect on reluctantly reading boys. Called “Guys Read,” after Jon Scieszka’s website that promotes boys’ reading, our program targets 4th grade boys, those most likely to lose interest in reading for pleasure.

We’ve just completed the second year of our Guys Read program, presenting it at 16 of the 19 local public elementary schools, and it’s been a rousing success once again. A small grant from the Alaska State Library has allowed the publication of “The Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library’s Manual for Showing Young Guys That Books Can Be Fun.” We intend this as a guide to help other libraries and schools develop similar programs to duplicate or improve on our success.

The program is described in the introduction to the manual, which follows:

“In 2001 noted children’s author Jon Scieszka created a nonprofit literacy organization and website called Guys Read to promote boys’ reading. Greg Hill, the Director of the Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Libraries in Fairbanks, Alaska, was inspired by the website and expanded on some basic concepts presented there to develop a unique program, also called Guys Read, which is outlined in this manual. The program’s objective was to demonstrate to the most reluctant readers that:

- Books can be fun.
- Many men enjoy reading.
- Libraries can be fun places to visit.

The program emphasizes fun because reading for pleasure leads to improved reading skills, which in turn promotes better assimilation of knowledge and higher reading comprehension scores. Establishing male readers as role models helps to counter a widespread stereotyping of reading as a feminine activity. Showing reluctant readers that books can be fun will encourage them to read and use the library.

The approach outlined below is flexible and can work in a variety of settings. While the books, flyers, etc. produced for the FNSB Guys Read program concentrate specifically on reaching 4th grade guys, there is no reason why the basic strategy behind the program won’t work with many other grade levels and institutions. It can easily be adapted for use by school libraries, PTAs, literacy councils, and other organizations interested in child literacy.

Our program would not have been as successful without the close cooperation and support of the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and the Literacy Council of Alaska. We are fortunate to have a tradition of strong working relationships with our local school district, but all libraries aren’t as lucky. Regardless of your situation vis-à-vis your school district, this Guys Read program should be acceptable since it doesn’t reduce instructional or recess time and it can potentially improve reading scores.”

Planning’s well underway for next school year’s version of Guys Read, including new elements intended to broaden and sustain the program’s positive effects to 4th grade girls and 5th grade boys.

The manual will be available for free in CD format for all Alaskan public and school libraries which can obtain a copy by writing or emailing me (Noel Wien Library, 1215 Cowles St., Fairbanks 99701, greg.hill@taos.fnsb.lib.ak.us). Any questions regarding this Guys Read program can be directed there as well.

The Guys Read manual is also available online at [http://library.fnsb.lib.ak.us/GuysRead.pdf](http://library.fnsb.lib.ak.us/GuysRead.pdf)

Greg Hill
Noel Wien Library
**BOOK BUZZ**

**BY PATIENCE FREDERIKSEN**

**Dreamers of the Day**, by Mary Doria Russell, 2008. Sometimes it’s easier to get your history lesson while reading a good novel. Middle East history during the early 1900s is dished up through the eyes of a school teacher turned librarian, who happens in on the 1921 Cairo Peace Conference when the nations of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan were created. Clearly, there are contemporary implications, though the action takes place nearly a century ago. You’ll need to be able to stretch (the narrator tells her tale from the grave), but if you’ve read Russell’s *The Sparrow*, you can do it. This title offers this sage advice… “Read to Children. Vote. And never buy anything from a man who is selling fear.” *Karen Keller, Anchorage Public Library*

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**People of the Book**, by Geraldine Brooks, 2008. An AkLA colleague recommended this book to me at Conference. It’s the story of the Haggadah of Sarajevo, a 15th century Hebrew manuscript, and the rare book expert employed to conserve it. The past and the present are woven together to present the history and travels of the book. The conservator becomes another in the line of people who have treasured and protected the book. An absorbing and exciting read. *Catherine Lemann, Alaska State Court Law Library*

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I have moved beyond parenting books! Yeah! I am reading *Windy City: A Novel of Politics*, by NPR’s Scott Simon, 2008. It’s a delightful Chicago tale and an easy read so far. I love all the local knowledge Simon adds to the storyline. The mayor is found murdered – and he had just finished a deep dish pizza with extra cheese… *Cathy Sherman, Cordova Public Library*

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**Small Favor**, by Jim Butcher, 2008. Wizard and private investigator Harry Dresden owes Queen Mab two more favors and she’s come to collect. This second favor seems straightforward enough—find out who kidnapped crime boss Gentleman Johnny Marcone and get him back—but things are never as they seem with the Sidhe. Once again, it’s up to our wise-cracking wizard to throw down with evil and save the day. *Robyn Russell, UAF Rasmuson Library*

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**Women and Money: Owning the Power to Control Your Destiny**, by Suze Orman, 2007. Typically clear, to-the-point and “wake you up” language from Suze about how to reach out and grab your own power financially, now and for the rest of your life! If you don’t have cable TV (and a lot of us don’t) but have been hiding or avoiding the money problems we all go through, check this title out post haste! Even if you’re in good shape}

(Cont. on pg. 15)
financially, this book can be useful. Suze uses many examples of well-educated women to show how they have control over everything except finances, which for some reason they abdicate. Owning your money is stepping into your power, regardless of whether you’re old or young, married or single. Jen Stutesman, UAF Rasmuson Library

I picked up Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions, by Dan Ariely, 2008, last week. It is written by a behavioral economist at MIT. Traditional economists assume that we are rational beings and that we make our purchases and live our lives in a way that maximizes the benefits to ourselves. Ariely sets out to prove experimentally that we are irrational, but that we are irrational the same way (thus predictably so) and for similar reasons. It is a fascinating look at the motives behind our behavior, and such an easy read. Nicole Maurice Roohi, Goldenview Middle School

The Giver, by Lois Lowry, 1993, is a very thought-provoking book. It has a futuristic setting. Everything for everyone was the same, people were like robots. They had no past memories of anything. Would this be a good or bad way to live? Why or why not? You think you have the plot figured out, but the author just drops one bomb after another throughout the book. It seems to me, though, that in the end the “human condition” prevails. That’s enough about it, without giving it away. Folks need to read The Giver and develop their own conclusions. It really is a haunting book that I still think about. When I finished it, I had to call up a friend to just talk about it and recommend that she read it. Linda Corbin, Seward

John Dies at the End, by David Wong, 2007. Mix together a couple of slackers, a parallel universe, disgusting monsters, and a levitating golden retriever and you have John Dies at the End. Not only is this book genuinely frightening, it is also gut-busting funny. I laughed out loud, and that’s saying something, given my dour nature. Highly recommended! Joe D’Elia, A. Holmes Johnson Memorial Library

I read Cormac McCarthy’s The Road, 2007, at my son’s instigation while traveling to the recent SIRSI user’s conference in Detroit. Detroit is an uber-depressing place (Lonely Planet says it looks like “a post-apocalyptic day after”) and a rotten place to read about the post-apocalyptic Midwest in a terribly depressing book which the New York Times review described as “pure misery if not for its stunning, savage beauty.” I failed to find anywhere near enough beauty to make up for the relentless misery, so I picked up Wee Free Men, by Terry Pratchett, 2004, at the airport to resurrect my mood before getting home. And it did. Greg Hill, Fairbanks NSB Public Library

The Magician’s Assistant, by Ann Patchett, 1998. The main character in this book, Sabine, has for 20 years blindly loved and served as assistant to Parsifal, the magician. Their relationship is very close, but Parsifal is gay. When Parsifal’s lover dies of AIDS, he and Sabine get married so she will be his widow and entitled to his estate. Soon after their marriage, Parsifal dies and Sabine is surprised by things revealed in his will. Parsifal had told her his family was dead, but as the story unfolds Sabine meets the family that Parsifal was
estranged from more than twenty years ago, and they learn about the grown man they never knew. The plot is full of twists and surprises, and the characters are intricate. Ann Patchett is a gifted story weaver. Patty Christensen, Talkeetna Public Library

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On my nightstand is: The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community, by Ray Oldenburg, 1997. Oldenburg argues that ‘third places’ — places neither home nor work, that attract mostly local regulars, like the drug store soda fountain or the neighborhood tavern of old — benefit both the individual’s and the society’s social health. In third places, we can take off our uniforms of work, family, church, etc., and have a chance to be more fully ourselves. When we lose our neutral, local meeting grounds like neighborhood cafes, taverns, and drug stores — when all our social excursions are planned for places far from home — we diminish our social skills, rub elbows less with people different from us, and lose touch with the news of our neighborhoods. Paul Adasiak, UAF Rasmuson Library

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I just read an advance copy of The Tenth Gift: A Novel, by Jane Johnson, May 2008. It was a fun read, quite interesting as was the author’s connection to Cornwall and the Moorish raiders. She now splits her year between England and a Berber village in the mountains of Morocco. Who could resist a 17th century book of embroidery patterns which contained an original woman’s diary of her capture by Moorish pirates? Dumped by her lover and looking for adventure, The Tenth Gift chronicles a young woman’s life today as she researches and traces the life of a 17th century Cornish woman captured and sold into slavery. Based on an historical event, the author weaves a colorful tale perfect for an entertaining book club read. Candace Kopperud, Palmer Public Library

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For those who like history, I just finished Taj Mahal: Passion and Genius at the Heart of the Moghul Empire, by Diana and Michael Preston, 2007. Did you know a descendant of Ghenghis Khan had the Taj Mahal built and there is much speculation as to who the architect or architects were? This book is packed with the real history of Shah Jahan, who built this monument to honor Mumtaz, his wife of 19 years. Sheila Ring, Martin Monsen Regional Library, Naknek

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For those who like numbers, currently on my book stand is: Necessary Numbers: An Everyday Guide to Sizes, Measures, and More, by Mary Blocksma, 2002. Ever wanted to know the difference between a Mercalli Scale and Richter Scale, or how horsepower is measured? This book even breaks down the number system of an ISBN by showing an example of a book’s area of origin, publisher, book title and the check digit. Yes, I really do read this stuff! Sheila Ring, Martin Monsen Regional Library, Naknek

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(Book Buzz - Cont. from pg. 15)
Ironically, the first place winner in the miscellaneous category of entries in the third annual local library publicity contest held during the 2008 AkLA conference was not seen by anyone but the judges. Willow Public Library submitted an anniversary history of their library on a slide show that was displayed on a digital picture frame. Nicole Pease reports that she put the frame in a display case at her library and was gratified by the many patrons who stood and watched the entire slide show. Unfortunately, contest organizers could not provide the same level of security for this innovative use of a new technology to publicize a library. (For more information about this innovative publicity idea, see the following article by Nicole.)

Libraries entered 50 items into the third annual local library publicity contest, holding nearly steady with the 52 items entered in the 2007 contest. Libraries submitted items in four categories: flyers and bookmarks; brochures; serials, such as newsletters and annual reports; and miscellaneous publicity items.

First prize winners will receive $250 in books for their libraries, while second place winners will receive $125 in books. Amy Hartley, the Information Officer, and Melissa Guy, the Graphic Designer, at UAF’s Geophysical Institute, judged the entries on the basis of content, graphic design, originality, and presentation. Special thanks go to the Alaska State Library for its annual publicity contest grant to AkLA.

Winning entries include:

**Flyers and bookmarks category**: in first place, Jack Dalton Yupik Story Performer flyer, Juneau Public Libraries, and in second place, SLED brochure, Alaska State Library.

**Brochures category**: in first place, A Library Legacy brochure from Haines Borough Public Library, and tied in second place, the Welcome series of brochures from UAF Rasmuson and Biosciences Libraries and Using CBE Style, Name and Year System brochure from UAS Ketchikan Campus Library.

**Serials category**: in first place, State of the Library December 2007 from Anchorage Public Library and in second place, SWRS Book Nook newsletter from South West Regional School District in Dillingham.

**Miscellaneous category**: in first place, Library Anniversary slideshow on a digital picture frame from Willow Public Library, and a tie in second place, a packet of materials on the Mural Unveiling in the library from UAS Ketchikan Campus Library, and various publicity items, including a book bag, book plates, a magnet, and a pin from Cordova Public Library.

One conference attendee suggested that there should be separate awards for publicity from small and large libraries, so that the smaller libraries with fewer resources are not competing against large libraries with publicity or graphic designers on staff. An analysis of the 24 prize winners over the past three years shows that 13 awards went to libraries in towns over 10,000, while 11 awards went to libraries in towns with fewer than 10,000 population. However, if librarians think that they are at a disadvantage due to the size or budget of their library, they might not enter items into the contest. This idea is under serious consideration for the 2009 local library publicity contest in Kodiak.

(Cont. on pg. 18)
The four photos of publicity correspond to the four categories in which prizes were awarded:

Photo 1: Flyers and bookmarks  
Photo 2: Brochures  
Photo 3: Miscellaneous  
Photo 4: Serials

Sue Sherif (to the left under the clock) discusses summer reading program with Youth Services librarians during the State Library’s Talk Tables session at Conference.

State Librarian Kay Shelton gives her annual State of the State speech at the 2008 Conference.

Patience Frederiksen  
Alaska State Library  

(Cont. on pg. 19)
WHEN FLYERS NO LONGER DO THE TRICK

Last fall, the Willow Public Library celebrated a raft of anniversaries: 45 years for the library and lots of employee anniversaries for working at the library: 20 years for Ann Dixon, 10 years each for Vicki Herman and me, and 5 years for Nina Zwahlen. I decided to try something new for these many anniversaries, in addition to producing a paper flyer.

I created a 35 slide Power Point presentation for our celebration. This slide presentation incorporated slides with text and slides with photos that look back at the development of the library, different librarians, activities, donations, and fund raising. I even scanned the flyer for the event and put that into the Power Point file.

When I was done creating the Power Point file, I went to the File menu, selected Save As, and at the Save As Type selection at the bottom of the box, I selected JPEG File Interchange Format (*.jpg) from the drop down menu. Once I had my JPEG file created, I downloaded it to a USB port thumb drive. I also downloaded a music file for the song “Memories” onto the thumb drive. I inserted the thumb drive into the digital picture frame and programmed the frame to play the thumb drive continuously.

We put the digital frame in our hallway display case. Patrons who never looked at our displays were mesmerized. It was fun for them to look back at photos of the library to see if they knew anyone. We also got a lot of questions about digital picture frames. One person even suggested that we do a training session on digital picture frames.

This year, we are developing a digital frame presentation highlighting the different services we provide—faxing, MP3 players, copying, WiFi, monthly movie presentations, and so on. We will be updating the frame monthly with flyers on these different events at the library.

We really appreciate the local library publicity contest prize money. I am using it to complete the 2008-2009 Battle of the Books list without using any of our annual library budget.

Thanks!

For more information, try: http://www.consumerreports.org/, then search “digital picture frames” in the search box on the top right of the home page.

Nicole Pease
Willow Public Library

Nicole Pease, Willow librarian, won first place in the blue tarp division at the Carhartrs and Blue Tarp formal held in Willow May 3. Nicole’s lovely blue tarp frock was designed in the Disney Cinderella mode. This event raised funds for repairs to the Willow school.

Patience Frederiksen
Alaska State Library

(Cont. on pg. 19)
Three of Kodiak Island’s school librarians have been busy recently helping to turn the Old Harbor School’s loose collection of books into its first real library. An inter-library cooperation grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to the Old Harbor Tribal Council and Old Harbor School for acquisition of software, books and a computer helped their community library come closer to reality in mid-April 2008. Teacher Jennifer Simeonoff has been at the school for eight years and has been trying to organize a library there since she arrived.

Old Harbor is a village of about 250 people, on Kodiak Island located about 100 miles south of the city of Kodiak, and there are 50 students in the K-12 school. Simeonoff says a lot of work is going into organizing the 6,000 book collection, but she had help from Kodiak High School Librarian Laurie Madsen, Kodiak Middle School teacher Kaia Converse and Eleanor Werbe, the library aide at North Star Elementary. The grant paid for the air charter to get the three staff members to Old Harbor, and the District’s teacher-teacher staff development program allowed hiring substitute teachers so the three could be away from their schools. Converse, who teaches English but has a master’s degree in library science, said she is excited to be involved in the Old Harbor project. Simeonoff said the team worked all day and into the evening each of the four days they were in Old Harbor.

Their library wasn’t organized or cataloged when the grant-funded project began in the winter of 2006. Jennifer decided to link with the Interlibrary Cooperation grant that the town libraries had received that year, by purchasing Follett’s Destiny cataloging software to link into the rest of the district’s libraries. Laurie spent three days that December sorting and organizing this collection with Jennifer, who continued to catalog as often as she could, but being a full-time teacher slowed her progress a little bit.

Follett’s Destiny program gives students a wider base for selection. Since it connects them to all Kodiak libraries, they have access to more than 50,000 books. Simeonoff said students will request a book, and then frequently ask her whether it has arrived. Her students are very happy to receive a variety of titles that the inter-library loan allows. The system is a two-way street, and Simeonoff said she was gratified when a Kodiak High School student recently requested a book from the Old Harbor library.

When the cataloging and organization are finished, Simeonoff said she plans to have an open house (Cont. on pg. 21)
I WANT TO BE A LIBRARIAN

Who wouldn’t want to be a librarian? Not many can claim such a glamorous profession, and three winning examples are right here in Alaska. Having recently returned from an intense circuit of competitions, Ketchikan librarians Kathleen Wiechelman, Lisa Pearson and Judith McQuerry demonstrated grace under hot lights at Ketchikan’s 2008 Wearable Art Show.

McQuerry, Miss Directed 2008, floated down the runway in a skirt of nautical charts. Pearson, Miss Printed 2008, in an overdress of book covers, traipsed and shimmied in spite of the nine-titled train. And wearing the crown of Miss Shelved 2008, Wiechelman wowed the audience in her gown made from some sixty government document mailing envelopes. Judging from the response of nearly a thousand onlookers, circulation numbers are likely to be up this year.

The talented artist of all three costumes is Kathy Bolling Graham, Library Assistant II, UAS Ketchikan Campus Library.

Kathleen Wiechelman, UAS Ketchikan

DELTA READER

“Bigfoot was spotted recently at the Delta Library enjoying a quiet moment before all the excitement of the Library Open House and the Basket of Books Silent Auction Saturday, April 19. He reminds you that the Library truly is for everyone--even the foot challenged!”

Joyce McCombs
Libraries working to level playing field for non-English speakers

MINNEAPOLIS - About 21 million people in the United States speak limited or no English, 50 percent more than a decade ago. As our country’s demographics continue to change, U.S. public libraries continue their efforts to meet the demand for service to non-English users. Today the American Library Association (ALA) released “Serving Non-English Speakers in U.S. Public Libraries,” an unprecedented study on the range of specialized library services for non-English speakers.

“Serving Non-English Speakers in U.S. Public Libraries” is the first national study to consider the range of library services and programs developed for non-English speakers, including effectiveness of services, barriers to library use, most frequently used services and most successful library programs by language served. The study also analyzed library service area populations and patron proximity to local libraries that offer specialized services. The most frequently used services by non-English speakers were special language collections (68.9 percent) and special programming (39.6 percent), including language-specific story hours and cultural programming.

Today’s libraries provide a wide range of opportunities for people with diverse needs and interests. Libraries reported the most successful library programs and services developed for non-English speakers were: English as a Second Language (ESL), language-specific materials and collections, computer use and computer classes, story time and special programs.

The study found that Spanish is the most supported non-English language in public libraries. Seventy-eight percent of libraries reported Spanish as the priority #1 language, after English, to which they develop services and programs. Asian languages ranked second in priority at 29 percent. Another 17.6 percent of libraries indicated Indo-European languages as a second priority.

Conventional wisdom predicted that the density of library service to non-English speakers would have been in larger, urban settings. The study data indicate quite the opposite. Public libraries in communities with fewer than 100,000 residents are the majority of libraries meeting the demands of non-English speaking residents. More than 53 percent of residents in these smaller communities traveled between 1-3 miles to reach a library, and another 21 percent traveled between 4-6 miles for library service. Although any distance may be a barrier when transportation is an issue, it was the lowest ranked barrier to use reported by libraries.

Literacy proved to be the most dominate barrier for non-English speaking library users. Literacy is both a barrier to using library services designed for non-English speakers and is what most libraries support in specially designed services and programs. Reading and library habits negatively impact use of the library by non-English speakers (76 percent). Knowledge of the services offered by the library was the second most frequent barrier to their participation (74.7 percent) identified by librarians. A lack of discretionary time was the third most common barrier (73.1 percent).

For more information, or to view the complete report, please visit www.ala.org/nonenglishspeakers.

Contact: Macey Morales, ALA Media Relations, 312-280-4393 or mmorales@ala.org

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To see this complete press release: www.librarystuff.net/2008/03/26/ala-releases-ground-breaking-study-on-library-service-to-new-americans/
(Book Buzz - Cont. from pg. 16)

Protecting the Gift: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe (and Parents Sane), by Gavin de Becker. 2000. A great book about asking questions, understanding our intuition and, most importantly, listening to it! This book is full of powerful statistics and great advice for everyone. A must read for people with children, thinking about having children, or concerned about the welfare of children. Katie Martin, Thorne Bay Public Library

I often say that Jennifer Donnelly’s A Northern Light, 2003, may be my favorite YA book of all time, so it was with great anticipation I recently read her two adult novels, A Tea Rose, 2002, and A Winter Rose, 2007. I was not disappointed. If you like sweeping romances with larger-than-life characters, epic plots and historical backdrops, you will love these two enormous novels set, initially, in 1880s London and moving to New York City, Africa and California. The books tell the rags to riches story of smart, strong Fiona Finnegan, who has an exceptional nose for tea, and her handsome beau Joe Bristow. Inspired by Barbara Taylor Bradford’s A Woman of Substance, Donnelly sought to create her own, rich fictional world and a third volume is planned. This is good, mindless, fun reading at its very, very best. Charlotte Glover, Ketchikan Public Library

I just finished an advance copy of The Big Both Ways, John Straley, May 2008. Straley departs from his current-day Cecil Younger series set in Sitka and trolls the waters of the Inside Passage. The year is 1935 and a woman who is a Communist labor organizer, her orphaned niece, the niece’s pet cockatoo Buddy, and a logger, try to escape a bad situation in Seattle by rowing a dory up the Inside Passage to Juneau, with a Seattle homicide detective and a trio of union goons in hot pursuit on a steamer. Now I want to read about labor history at the A-J Mine in Juneau! Straley used details in this book he learned from Bob DeArmond, who actually rowed a dory from Washington State to Juneau in the 1930s. Patience Frederiksen, Alaska State Library

General guidelines to publication in News pode, Alaska Library Association newsletter:

Not accepted: paid advertising; material intended to “sell; make a profit” rather than to “inform.” Submissions viewed as advertisements, unless item is of particular interest to Alaska, Alaskan patrons, libraries, or is submitted by an Alaka member.

Accepted: Alaskana—books, book reviews, or articles relating to, or of interest to, Alaskan librarians and/or their patrons. Informative material related to libraries and librarian-ship, especially in regard to Alaska. Most anything submitted by AkLA members—reasonably “tasteful and well-written,” of an appropriate length (much leeway here); author is willing to submit to possible editorial changes. This may include perhaps length, spellings, editing of convoluted sentences... (Editor will make every effort to let the author know of, and pre-approve, any significant changes before the material is published in News pode.)

Other—determined on an individual basis by “the committee” (defined as a group of at least three people, composed of AkLA members). If the News pode editor or the individual submitting has questions or concerns about any submission, the matter will be sent on to the News pode Committee.
ALASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PO Box 81084
Fairbanks, AK 99708

ALASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

President
Mary Jo Joiner
mjoiner@ci.kenai.ak.us

Vice President for Committees,
Roundtables and Chapters
Susan Mitchell
afsm1@uaa.alaska.edu

Vice President for Conference
David Ongley
david.ongley@tuzzy.org

Past-President
Jane Fuerstenau
iljef@uaa.alaska.edu
deltalibrary@wildak.net

Secretary
Joyce McCombs
catherine_powers@bethel.uaf.edu

Treasurer
Catherine Powers
charg@firstcitylibraries.org

ALA Representative
Charlotte Glover
hhill@ci.homer.ak.us

PNLA Representative
Helen Hill

Publications
* Alaska Library Directory
* News Brooke, Loretta Andress
Mary Jennings

Executive Officer
Mary Jennings
maryj@gci.net
akialist@akla.org
http://www.akla.org

CALENDAR

Annual Conference of the American Library Association, Anaheim, CA, USA
June 26-Jul. 2, 2008

99th Annual Meeting of the Special Libraries Association, Seattle, WA
July 26-31, 2008

Pacific Northwest Library Association Conf., Post Falls, ID
Aug. 6-9, 2008

7th Northwest ILL and Resource Sharing Conference, Portland, OR
Sep. 18-19, 2008

Alaska Historical Society Conference, Anchorage, AK
Oct. 16-18, 2008

Midwinter Meeting of the American Library Assn., Denver, CO
Jan. 23-28, 2009