MEDFORD, Ore. - A big, red “Closed” sign has been plastered across the front door of the library here since mid-April, when Jackson County ran out of money to keep its 15 branches open. In a few weeks, though, the sign will come down and the doors will be flung open again, now that the county has come up with an unusual cost-saving solution: outsourcing its libraries.

The average citizen, when he walks into the library, will see well-trained, well-educated, customer-service-oriented people working in the library. Users won’t know who is paying the salaries, and they won’t care. They care whether the library is open adequate hours, and if they are getting good service.

Complete article found at:

Comment by Teresa Hartman, MLS, who kindly agreed to reprint:

August 2007. Jackson County in Oregon closed all of its libraries at the start of summer due to lack of funding. The County has since been looking for ways to reopen them. Operation of the libraries was put up for bid, and two organizations responded. One was the local government employee union; the other was LSSI (Library Systems and Services), whose motto is “Partnering with communities to build better libraries” http://lssi.com/. An update of where this story stands can be read here: http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070816/NEWS/708160322

(Cont. on pg. 8)
LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

JANE FUERSTENAU

This is my final “Letter from the President” for NewsPoke. On February 29 at 2:30 p.m., I turn over my gavel to Mary Jo Joiner and assume the responsibilities of “Past President.” 2008 should be a great year for AkLA, and I look forward to serving on E-council with the new slate of officers and council members. Mary Jo has significant experience in library administration, having spent 16 years as the Director of the West Tisbury Public Library in Massachusetts, and more than 20 years total as a professional librarian. She also is well versed in the trials and tribulations of library association presidency, having served three terms as the President of Martha’s Vineyard Library Association. We are fortunate to have her share her wisdom and experience with AkLA in 2008.

Other new faces on AkLA E-council are Catherine Powers as Treasurer and Susan Mitchell as VP for Committees, Roundtables and Chapters. Both of these librarians are stepping into positions of significant responsibility. I hope that past and present E-council members will offer support to our new officers as they assume their new AkLA duties.

Joyce McCombs will serve another year as Secretary, Helen Hill will remain in her position as PNLA representative, and Charlotte Glover will continue as ALA representative. David Ongley moves from VP for Committees, Roundtables and Chapters to VP for Conference in preparation for our 2009 conference in Kodiak. We are grateful to have these council members back for an additional year.

Thank you to everyone who supported AkLA in 2007, and helped me move through my term with a minimum of stress. I would like to offer special thanks to Joe D’Elia for helping me stay on schedule with my Presidential duties. I have saved all of his emails and hope that I can use them to offer similar subtle support to the President who succeeds me.

Sincerely,
Jane Fuerstenau
PEG THOMPSON RETIRES

Peg Thompson, employed in Alaskan libraries for about 20 years, retired on Feb. 1, 2008. She came to Alaska in 1974, and over past decades has worked at the main Loussac library, at the Spenard and Dimond branches, and at University of Alaska, in Anchorage and Juneau. She was also one of the past editors of Newspoke. Peg plans to remain in Alaska and do some traveling after her husband retires. She’s been a dedicated and valued asset to the Alaska library system.

Peg is shown here at a retirement luncheon with Nola Andress, former librarian at Loussac’s first branch library, Spenard Community Library. Together, they have almost 50 years of employment and volunteer work in Alaska’s libraries.

We wish Peg much enjoyment, travel, and time to read in her retirement years...

CAN YOU CURL UP WITH A GOOD E-BOOK READER?

“When Amazon launched its new electronic-book reader, the Kindle, consumers snapped it up. (It sold out before the holidays.) And Sony has revamped its own e-book reader. Is it time for you to kick the hard-cover habit and go digital?”

*Consumer Reports*, February 2008: “...most people will still want to stick with paper.”

**BOOK BUZZ**

**BY PATIENCE FREDERIKSEN**

Christmas Gift Book Buzz

*Still Life with Devils*, by Deborah Grabien, 2007. I suppose this dark mystery would be classed as horror, and there are certainly plenty of chills for those of you who like that sort of thing, but it wasn’t too scary for this decidedly non-horror fan. Instead, the story was gripping with interesting and likable characters, including the heroine, sometime sketch artist Leo Chant, and her brother, San Francisco Lt. Cass Chant. Grabien has done series in the past, so while the story wraps up with a satisfying ending, I hope this is not the last we hear of the Chant clan. *(Freya Anderson, Alaska State Library)*

(Freya adds this disclaimer: *I have recently been hired as an editor by Drollerie Press, which published Still Life with Devils, but not until after I fell in love with this author’s work and this story.*)

*******

This year, I received the lovely *A Family Christmas*, edited by Caroline Kennedy, featuring short pieces and poems about the holiday from a wide assortment of writers. I gave my jazz loving husband: *Tony Bennett in the Studio: A Life of Art and Music*, by Tony Bennett and others, but he’ll really flip when he sees: *Playing the Changes: Milt Hinton’s Life in Stories and Photographs*, which is going to be published just in time for his February birthday. For our seven year old, we had to have a copy of: *The Star Wars Pop-Up*, which may be the coolest mechanical book ever made. He was thrilled. *(Charlotte Glover, Ketchikan Public Library)*

*******

Be sure you add “Read” to the book title: *Eat, Pray, Love*, a story of a single American woman (author Elizabeth Gilbert) experiencing language and food in Italy, praying in India, and finding love in Bali. After a painful divorce in New York, on her journey to other cultures,
ARRANGED

Synopsis

Ditmas Park, Brooklyn. A young Orthodox woman, ROCHEL MESHENBERG, is about to begin her first year as a special education teacher at the local public school. She is also about to embark on what her father and mother call the “most exciting time of her life” – the process of finding a husband via the time-tested method of using a “shadchen,” or matchmaker.

As the school year progresses, Rochel and Nasira realize they share much in common, not least of which is that they are both going through what the outside world would call “arranged marriages.” As their friendship deepens, they are exposed to their respective worlds. They prepare for school at one another’s houses, meet one another’s families, and discuss commonalities and differences.

Meanwhile they are also both meeting potential spouses. Rochel is having no luck. The shadchen is pairing her with men who, although they have good jobs or prospects, don’t match her in intellect, curiosity in the world, or humor. The men presented to Nasira by her family are also not her equal. Rochel begins to question whether this age-old practice is going to work. Nasira has greater faith, as she views her parents’ loving union as such a success.

With the family pressure too great, and the dates continuing to go badly, Rochel storms from the house. She visits an estranged cousin, who left the faith years ago, and is exposed to what a secular life might be. Meanwhile Nasira, concerned at her friend’s state, and having met a promising prospect herself, does the unthinkable. She manipulates the Orthodox matchmaking system on behalf of her friend. The gamble pays off.

As the school year draws to an end, these two women have found their future spouses. They have also developed a friendship that transcends their insular Brooklyn communities and the religions that seem so at odds in the broader world. They share a friendship that will endure as they move on to become wives and mothers, and continue to be modern women with deep religious convictions.

www.filmmovements.com

This is a lovely film, actually in English, and quite enjoyable.
POLAR LIBRARIES COLLOQUIY

The 22nd Polar Libraries Colloquy will be hosted jointly by the Canadian Circumpolar Institute and the University of Alberta Libraries in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada June 2-6, 2008.

Check out the website Polar Libraries Colloquy http://arcticcentre.ulapland.fi/polarweb/plc/evnt.asp and plan to attend. The call for papers has been extended to March 15.

With the International Polar Year, this is an exciting time for polar librarians to be convening. If you cannot attend the meeting, please consider joining to learn more about polar information and resources.

Julia H. Triplehorn
Keith B. Mather Library

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to AkLA for the generous scholarship I received two years ago to pursue my dream of becoming a certified librarian. I have now successfully completed the MLS program through Texas Woman’s University. Presently, my new skills are being put to use in the Galena Interior Learning Academy boarding school library, where I am beginning my 5th year.

AkLA’s help in this endeavor was pivotal, as was the support of fellow librarians around the state. I am proud to be part of such a dedicated team.

Sincerely yours,
Rosalie A. White
Billie Joyce Moore died Jan. 7, 2008, in Palmer surrounded by her family. Favorite passages were read that morning and, at her request, there will be no service.

Billie was born Oct. 24, 1927, in Missoula, Mont., to Sarah and Frank Thurber. She lived in Prineville, Ore., and later graduated from high school and nurses’ training in Spokane, Wash. In 1948, Billie married Vern Moore, a telephone lineman. In 1952, with two babies, they drove the Alaska Highway to Anchorage, arriving with $5 in their pockets, a nonexistent promised job and no home because the house contractor took off with their down payment. Billie pinched pennies and Vern shoveled snow until he got a job in telecommunications.

“Billie’s great love and devotion for God, her family and mankind was reflected in her very full and active life,” her family wrote. She was an avid reader, loved singing, helping people, camping, hiking, and skiing. She was active in the Anchorage Community Chorus and worked in the hospital. In 1959, her family moved to Eagle River. She was very involved in this growing community.

In 1961, the new state-operated Eagle River School opened. She volunteered for everything, including school nurse. When a fancy basketball scoreboard was purchased instead of library books, a fire was lit in her spirit. Cookie sales and many phone calls and letters later, the books poured in. Her next step was a public library for Eagle River. Then Billie and Polly Kallenberg, the volunteer librarian in Chugiak, pooled their books and established the Chugiak-Eagle River Library. With the help of her husband Vern and her children, the library was moved every year and sometimes twice in a year because of the demand.

And oh, the stories she could tell! She could engage an entire auditorium! This library became the center of the community, filled with love, books and happy faces. Billie had a smile and cheering words for everyone.

Billie is survived by her husband, Vern; children, Katie Mangelsdorf, Linda Kile and Dan Moore; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Sally Gwin, 69, a former longtime resident of Anchorage and Palmer, died peacefully in her sleep Jan. 5, 2008, at the home of her daughter and family in St. Louis, Mo. She was born Feb. 15, 1938, in Alliance, Neb., and came to Alaska in 1972. Sally left Alaska in 1998 to be near her family. Before she left, she retired from her position as director of the Palmer Public Library and she published a children’s novel about early colony days called “Mosquito Girl.”

Prior to living in Palmer, Sally Gwin was the children’s librarian at Loussac Library in Anchorage. She was an active and valued member of the Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship for many years and will be deeply missed by a multitude of friends from Alaska and elsewhere, as well as by her family. Her generous and adventurous spirit will continue to inspire all who knew her.

Sally is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Amy Gwin and Brad Nuccio, and two beloved grandchildren, Mia and Max, all of St. Louis; as well as her son, Lee Gwin of Billings, Mont.

Remembrances in her name may be sent to Heifer International (heifer.org) and condolences will reach the family at 6331 Waterman Ave., St. Louis, MO 63130.

By her express wish, Sally’s body was made available to cancer researchers at Washington University Medical School for study.

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My question: if it is so much cheaper to outsource the library, and the service remains the same or better, why doesn’t everyone do it to all county/city services? Why would a county/city even consider continuing to fund the cost of a fire department, police department, streets department, etc., if it could outsource for less money, yet maintain the same or better service?

From the newspaper story, it appears that the library bids submitted did meet the objectives specified by the county as far as services go. The librarian who was leading the effort to reopen the libraries has left or is leaving for a new job, so no librarian has reviewed the bids (as far as I know).

Will libraries of all kinds more likely be outsourced in the future, much as military base libraries were in the ‘80s and ‘90s? What exactly accounts for the difference in cost between a library that is run by an organization such as LSSI, and one that is run by a local government or even an academic unit? Does one cover more human resource-type costs than the other? For example, does one pay for retirement and health insurance, and the other not? Did the Jackson County library system really have so much sloppiness in its budget that LSSI is able to come in and offer the same level of service at 30 percent less cost, with only a three percent inflation rate over the next few years?

If so, where does that put all the other county and city library budgets? From what I have seen in the Midwest, there usually isn’t too much to cut in any library budget, particularly when facing staggering increases in electronic information resources and human resource-related costs. If LSSI is offering a cost-effective management service for libraries, and hires professional librarians to run operations, I say more power to them. Let them get in there and show folks how it should be done!

According to their Open Jobs list http://lssi.com/OpenJobs.cfm it appears that LSSI is doing well and looking to hire. If LSSI’s mission is to truly offer same or better service, a library director might well experience greater reception from higher-ups to new library programs, since LSSI would more likely understand library operation needs and innovations than would a city council or county board.

I haven’t seen a Special Interest Group in library associations for “contracted-out libraries,” but if you are a director or librarian in a contract library, I would really like to hear from you about your experiences! Just email teresa.hartman@gmail.com and let me know how things run in your world, and if you think this is the future for most libraries.

The author of this comment writes: “I have looked at your newsletter on your site - you have a wonderful group of librarians! Please let me know when the next issue is published, and I will list it, hopefully driving more readers your way. Good luck with your upcoming conference. We just had a Medical Library Association joint chapter meeting here in Omaha, and had a really good time (which was nice after the three years of planning). Take care, and please let your readers know that I look forward to comments.” http://libeducation.blogspot.com

Teresa Hartman, MLS
Education librarian, McGoogan
Library of Medicine
Gilbert learns life-balancing decisions in a very deep, personal way, and shares them with the reader. For the most part, a happy—and touching—book.
(Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau)


Award-winning illustrator and first-time author Nelson’s history of the Negro Leagues, told from the vantage point of an unnamed narrator, reads like an old-timer regaling his grandchildren with tales of baseball greats Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, and others who forged the path toward breaking the race barrier before Jackie Robinson made his historic debut. The narrative showcases the pride and camaraderie of the Negro Leagues, celebrates triumphing on one’s own terms and embracing adversity, even as it clearly shows the “us” and “them” mentality bred by segregation. If the story is the pitch, though, it’s the artwork that blasts the book into the stands. Nelson often works from a straight-on vantage point, as if the players took time out of the action to peer at the viewer from history, eyes leveled and challenging, before turning back to the field of play. With enormous blue skies and jam-packed grandstands backing them, these players look like the giants they are. The stories and artwork are a tribute to the spirit of the Negro Leaguers, who were much more than also-rans and deserve a more prominent place on baseball’s history shelves. For students and fans (and those even older than the suggested grade level), this is the book to accomplish just that.

Ian Chipman
ALA Booklist On-line

General guidelines to publication in Newspeoke, 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 AKLA 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 librarianship, 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, downsizing 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 Newspeoke.)

Other—determined on an individual basis by “the committee” (defined as a group of at least three people, composed of AKLA members). If the Newspeoke editor or the individual submitting has questions or concerns about any submission, the matter will be sent on to the Newspeoke Committee.
2008 NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR TRIBAL ARCHIVES, LIBRARIES, AND MUSEUMS

Information regarding the 2008 National Institutes for Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums to be held at the Cherokee Resort and Casino in Tulsa (Catoosa), Oklahoma is now available at [www.tribalconference.org](http://www.tribalconference.org). At the website you may submit a proposal to be a presenter, register, apply for a scholar stipend, and link to the hotel to make room reservations.

Each Institute has a day-long workshop associated with it. The schedule is:

- April 14 — How to Recognize and Prevent Threats to Your Collection ($50)
- April 15-17 — Skills and Strategies for Managing Tribal Records ($200)
- July 14 — Field Trips to Museums with Major American Indian Collections (Philbrook and Gilcrease) ($50)
- July 15-17 — Displaying and Caring for American Indian Objects ($200)
- August 11 — Digitization Projects From Planning to Implementation ($50)
- August 12-14 — Collection, Use, and Care of Photographs ($200)
- October 21-23 — Training for American Indian Library Services ($200)
- October 24 — Building and Managing Culturally Responsive Library Collections and Programs ($50)

Attendance at each Institute is limited to 175, so make your reservations early. The same applies to the hotel as we were only able to block 100 rooms at the $73 rate, so act quickly.

The deadline for submitting a program proposal is FEBRUARY 15, 2008. Registration fees are waived for primary presenters. After the proposals are reviewed, a final program for each workshop and institute will be posted on the website.

We thank the Institute of Museum and Library Services for its support of these Institutes. It is with IMLS support that the registration fees are kept to a minimum. As you may know, included in the fee is breakfast and lunch for all three days and extensive materials.

I hope to see you at one or more of the Institutes! I promise you they will be worth your time.

Susan Feller
405-522-3259
Alaska Library Association, Anchorage Chapter
Meeting and Program Schedule for 2008

Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, except for the month of the AkLA Conference, and December (we meet, but the day may vary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date and Time</th>
<th>Meeting Place and Address</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Hospitality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>February 2008</strong></td>
<td>No meeting; statewide AkLA conference in Fairbanks</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 13, 2008</td>
<td>Alaska Natural History Museum 201 N. Bragaw</td>
<td>Program: Small tour of the museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10, 2008</td>
<td>Alaska Botanical Garden Library</td>
<td>Program: Judy Green provides a tour of the Botanical Garden’s library.</td>
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<td>May 8, 2008</td>
<td>Consortium Library at UAA, Dean’s Conference Room</td>
<td>Kate Gordon presents her Academic Library tour to Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12, 2008</td>
<td>Loussac Library Fountain</td>
<td>Brown bag lunch for annual book sharing event!</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 10, 2008</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Visit to the AkLA-A sponsored Homewerx basket</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 14, 2008</td>
<td>Alaska State Library 344 West 3rd Avenue, Suite 125</td>
<td>Patience Frederiksen presents LibraryThings</td>
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ALASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PO Box 81084
Fairbanks, AK  99708

CALENDAR

- National Conference of the Public Library Association, Minneapolis, MN
  Mar. 25-29, 2008
- National Institutes for Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums,
  Tulsa (Catoosa), OK  (see pg. 10 this issue *Newspoke*)
- National Library Week of the American Library Association
  Apr. 13-19, 2008
- Annual Conference of the American Library Association -- Anaheim, CA
- Pacific Northwest Library Association Conference, Post Falls, ID
  Aug. 6-9, 2008
- 7th Northwest ILL and Resource Sharing Conference, Portland, OR
  Sep. 18-19, 2008

*Newspoke*