

ARKANSAS LIBRARIES

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Arkansas Library Association

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Arkansas Library Association, 2013



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Arkansas Libraries is the official journal of the Arkansas Library Association. It contains articles of current interest, historical significance or literary value, concerning all aspects of librarianship, particularly items pertinent to Arkansas. It also includes official statements of and information provided by the Arkansas Library Association.

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Arkansas Libraries

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FROM THE ARLA PRESIDENT: The Exit

by *Trish Miller*
ArLA President

Gratitude seems to be the word that expresses how I feel about serving as President this year. There are so many people to thank. It would take the entire publication to name them all. So I decided I would send personal emails and note cards to many of those on my list. However, I do want to thank the Executive Board, our Executive Administrator, and the entire membership for your support over the last two years.



Miller

Board members worked hard this year to achieve their goals, and most if not all members were able to reach more than one. Several goals were completed during conference by Conference Chair, Nicole Stroud and her team, Awards Chair, Cathy Toney and her committee, and by those who presented sessions, worked in the Exhibit Hall, and at the Registration Desk. We hope you were able to stop by to see the PowerPoint we put together playing at the ArLA booth during conference. If not, there is a YouTube version at youtube.com/arkansaslibraries.

Little did I know when I accepted the Vice President/President Elect position that my life would go on an unforgettable professional and personal journey. Our conference was held in September of 2011 in Little Rock. In October I lost my youngest son. He was just thirty-three years old. I was devastated, but my husband encouraged me to continue my journey as Vice President/President Elect with the Association.



However, midway through my year as Vice President/President Elect in 2012 I lost my husband and biggest supporter to cancer. It was a highway with warning signs yet I kept hoping for a detour with a miracle. Before the year would end I had lost a sister-in-law and my Dad. Through all of this I could hear my husband's voice telling me to continue my journey as President. And now, I've come to the end of this road and I know he would want me to continue my journey as Past President.

What I found in this Association was a network of support from our members and their library staff. Professional support was there any time I had questions or needed help. All I had to do was ask. There was also personal support. Down every road someone in the library community reached out to me through cards, emails, phone calls, texts, or hugs. I have been surrounded by a tremendous abundance of support and I feel so fortunate. This organization has so much to offer its members. It's much more than a forum to network and learn. It is a true "community of libraries" and to me a kinship. The fees are nominal, the benefits priceless. I'm not sure where the road will take me next year, but I know wherever it leads I will continue making connections with those who share my passion for libraries and the communities we serve.

Trish Miller, the President of the Arkansas Library Association, is Learning Resource Manager III for Remington College.

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EDITORIAL WHIT: Serenity and Calmness?

by *Whitney Ivy*

Managing Editor

I just finished re-reading my fall column, and I couldn't help but to smirk at my "serenity and calmness" that I had at the beginning of the school year.

Why? Because I have recently returned to work after my twelve weeks of maternity leave, and I am in total crisis mode now. I am not sure why I thought that I would be able to return to work and not be stressed — I have been back at work for three weeks, and I still have not caught up with all of my work yet, plus I thought (pre-maternity leave) that this week would be a great week to have a book fair — can we say glutton for punishment? In all seriousness though, I have enjoyed being back at work, and I can see the light at the end of the tunnel known as Christmas Break.

When I returned to work, one of the first issues I faced was a teacher who was requiring students to check out books from the library on their Accelerated Reader levels, so when I saw the *Unshelved* cartoon on the opposite page in my inbox, I knew that it had to be in this issue of *Arkansas Libraries*. This topic is my soapbox, and I could literally go on for pages about it, but I will do my best to keep it short (this time). I know that I am preaching to the choir because we all know that children who are interested in a certain topic regardless of reading level will persevere with the book, but how do we make classroom teachers believe it? At least once a year, I have to gently remind teachers that students are allowed to check out whatever books they wish from the library unless I have a parental note instructing otherwise.

As annoying as this situation is for us as librarians, it is only scratching the surface of the major problem with Accelerated Reader and other reading programs like it — children/students are intrinsically rewarded when they read, but by attaching extrinsic rewards we are telling kids that they NEED extrinsic motivation in order to read, which is helping in the creation of a generation who



Ivy

thinks they should be rewarded for anything they do. Okay, enough ranting.

I want to share just a bit of Lucy's baby story with you. We were scheduled to be induced on August 29th; however, when I went to my 39 week check-up on the 23rd, I was dilated to a 2. Dr. Jay asked what I wanted to do, and of course, I replied that I was ready to have this baby. He instructed me to go walk for an hour and come back, so Grey and I headed to Wal-Mart. I know that we made a comical sight—I had Grey in a buggy and I was waddling/speed-walking in circuits around the store—but it paid off. When we returned to the doctor, he told me to be at the hospital at 6:00 p.m. At this point, I was elated but also super-stressed (can you sense that stress plays a big role in my life?) because I had Grey with me but no bag for the hospital, Henry was at daycare an hour away, and my husband was at work three hours away in a no-service area for cell phones! Enter the grandparents. My mom packed our bag for the hospital, and Morgan's parents got in touch with him, picked up Henry, and met me in Texarkana to pick up Grey. Morgan and my mom arrived at the hospital just as I was being admitted. After walking the halls for several hours and a failed epidural (!), Lucy Mae Ivy arrived on August 24, 2013 (my 30th birthday) at 4:30 a.m. She was and is perfect---sleeps through the night, never cries unless she is hungry, eats on a predictable schedule (all the things that my boys did not do); needless to say, we are all so smitten with her.

Whitney

Whitney Ivy, Managing Editor of Arkansas Libraries, is the K-12 Librarian for the Blevins School District.



‘I Can’t Find Room 204!’

The 2013 ArLA Conference as Experienced by a Newbie

by *D.J. Reece*

MLS Student, Texas Women’s University

Now for a quick peek into the mind of the Future

Library Professional on Sunday, October 6th, at 9:46 a.m.: “Name badge, check. Breakout schedule meticulously copied onto an index card, check. Business cards that make a statement, double check. Now, if I can only find room 204; it has to be somewhere in this seemingly never ending passageway...oh, here’s a bathroom, that’s good to know. Shoot! Did I forget my notebook? I did! I know I did! Oh, no, wait, here it is...I should really get a smaller bag.”

I joined the Arkansas Library Association (ArLA) just a few months before the conference, and after signing up, had given no immediate thought to what I might do with this newly acquired membership. “I am in school, have my job and family,” I told myself, “ArLA can wait.” And just like that, I pushed the Association to the back burner as a good resource that I definitely (might) pursue as time allowed. Not too long after this decision, however, I received an e-mail from Jim Robb, Chair of the New Member’s Round Table, which caused a flame to ignite under that back burner: There was going to be a conference, and I was invited!

What an opportunity! My first conference! I bet that will be so much fun...and think of the experience! And I have just used all the exclamation points left in the universe! The scheming began immediately. This is my one shot into a world which, until now, I was only able to view from a distance: the world of the Librarian. “Yes, this is going to be my day in the sun, but it has to be perfect, so I need to understand what I have to do to make it so. Keep calm”, I tell myself, “and think like a Librarian.” I began my research, Googling every suggestion, list, and blog I could find about how I can make the most of my first library conference. As with most Google consultations, there were many good suggestions, and many that were just downright terrible. There was a lot of information, and much of it did not



Reece

apply, so I began breaking it down to a usable facsimile, including only what would best work for me. I made a list, because I love lists. Here are a few of the suggestions derived from my investigations that I found the most useful:

- Get business cards that make a statement.
- Do some pre-networking, especially if you are going to the conference alone and don’t know anyone who will be there.
- Figure out what sessions to attend in advance, but allow yourself flexibility to change your mind.
- Wear professional attire that is also comfortable. You never know who might be giving you a job in the future, so leave the jeans and clever library statement tees for evening activities.

These are just a few of the suggestions I gleaned from others, which I utilized to make sure my conference experience was the very best it could be. These guidelines served me well, but now that the conference is over, I would like to add a few more to the list learned from personal experience:

- Don’t buy new “comfy” shoes and wear them for the first time at the conference, even if they complete your ensemble, because it’s not worth the blisters.
- Don’t stay in a session that is boring you for the following reasons: politeness, or “deer in the headlights” terror of other people judging you for leaving early. You came to learn; if you are not learning, then what is the point? If you are going to a session that you’re not sure about, sit towards the back in an aisle seat, so you’re less conspicuous as you sneak out.
- Clone yourself. Now, I understand this is most likely impossible for anyone but the few mad scientists among us, but if you have a twin, or even a few friends, you should make the most of this resource. Split up, because it makes choosing between multiple sessions that all catch your interest a little easier. Then compare notes and highlights later and if you include drinks and hors d’oeuvres, so much the better.
- Lastly, be inspired. That’s right, and let yourself dream too. Some of the suggestions and topics covered by the speakers may not apply right now, but you and perhaps your future library could benefit in untold ways by tucking away those little happenings at other libraries right now. You may not have an outstanding marketing budget,

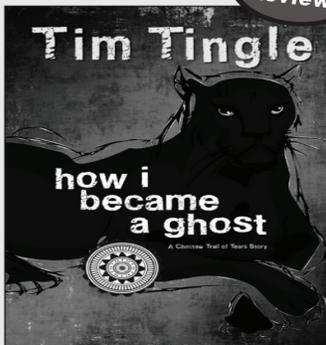
or the support of the community to hire goats to mow your weeds, but that doesn't mean it will never happen.

Everyone who has experienced the Arkansas Library Association conference has a different story to tell. Some have gone as students, some as teachers. There are professionals, paraprofessionals, scholars, and friends. There are even retirees who, though they may not wear the mantle of "Librarians" any longer, still refuse to miss out at the chance to let loose with their professional family. The reason I

attended for the first time is likely shared with many others: I wanted to discover what this Association and its members could teach me. I wanted a glimpse into my future. I entered this conference feeling wide-eyed and inexperienced, seeking encouragement and a sense of belonging. I gained all of this and more. This is my ArLA Conference story, what's yours?

Special thanks to Justus Bowman, Michael Strickland, Arian Story, Nico Tanenbaum, and, of course, Google.

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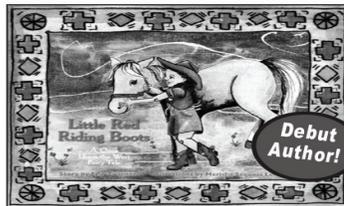


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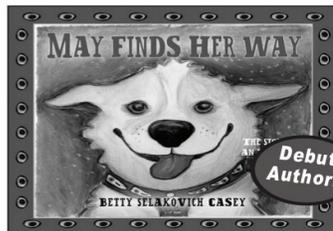
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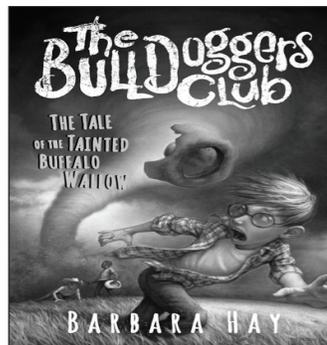


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ArLA 2013: Making Connections and Meeting Needs Down Every Road

by *Nicole Stroud*
Conference Chair

Two hundred and fifty library professionals from Arkansas and surrounding states travelled to Hot Springs this past October for the annual ArLA conference. Our venerable, 102 year-old association demonstrated that it remains vibrant and engaged in professional learning. 2013 ArLA president Trish Miller's theme, "Making Connections and Meeting Needs Down Every Road," served a dual purpose, describing the role our state conference strives to play for Arkansas librarians, as well as the role libraries strive to play in their communities.

The conference kicked off with a tour of the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences, and the Arts brand new library, replete with multimedia exhibits and a Google Glass demonstration. From the west down to the east, speakers came to Hot Springs. They flew and drove in from Washington, New York, Colorado, Massachusetts, Missouri, Florida, and all across Arkansas. A half-dozen Arkansas authors participated in the 2013 conference, including Camp Nine author Vivienne Schiffer, who spoke to a packed room during the last morning of the conference.

Other memorable moments included a lively discussion of the First Amendment, led by MAD Magazine senior editor Joe Raiola; an oral reading of ALA's "Declaration for the Right to Libraries"; an opening session with Mark Twain impersonator,



Mark Twain impersonator, Dave Ehlert.

Dave Ehlert; jazz and networking at the newly renovated Superior Bathhouse Brewery & Distillery; and Mountain View folk musician Charley Sandage's "Arkansas Stories" performance during the vendor lunch. Attendees were particularly captivated by Pam Sandlian Smith's inspirational tale of the worst-funded library district in Colorado, metamorphosed into one of the most cutting-edge systems in the nation, the "Anythink Library System." The ever-articulate Maureen Sullivan, ALA Past President, brought some national perspective to the conversation with her closing address.

The awards dinner highlighted some of our most distinguished librarians, authors, paraprofessionals, and library boards (read about them in this issue of *Arkansas Libraries*), and vendor bingo as well as an assortment of beautifully filled baskets drew library professionals to the exhibit hall. The Association's business was taken care of for another year, through the elections (see the results in the Nominations Committee report in this issue of *Arkansas Libraries*) and the general membership meeting.

Bob Razer, the self-named "Basket Boy," who organizes the basket auction each year, reports that we had one basket more than last year – 61, and all together they raised \$2,500, an increase of \$600 from the previous year. The highest-selling basket was contributed by Carroll/Madison County and featured the Doug Stowe wooden boxes: \$155. That basket was followed closely by the Government Documents Round Table/ProQuest basket that featured the Kindle Fire: \$135. Special mention should be made of Karen



ArLA President, Trish Miller (left) listens in on an introduction of Charley Sandage (seated on right) by Nicole Stroud, Conference Chair. Charley provided storytelling and music during the lunch with exhibitors.



During the Awards ceremony, Bob Razer (left) announces the winner of the Arkansiana adult fiction award, Vivienne Schiffer, for her book Camp Nine.

Russ's great contribution: fourteen baskets that sold for \$296. She proved that small baskets can add up. All proceeds from the basket auction support the LEAF (Library Education and Aid Fund) account, a pot of money that goes to support libraries which need funds quickly for projects, including libraries that have been through any kind of disaster.

Arkansas librarians sure know how to entertain! Back for the second year in a row were the singing librarians The Booktations, who crooned, "Give me a good book to soothe my soul, I wanna get lost in the stories told and drift away!" Conference goers were also treated to a spirited performance at the awards dinner by the Garland County Book Cart Drill Team, featuring a Michael Jackson-themed library card rumble. Visit arlib.org for conference videos, photos,



Anythink Library System Director Pam Sandlian Smith.

and speaker presentation files.

After four days, fifty plus programs, and countless steps between the Embassy Suites and the Convention Center, the 2013 conference came to a close. ArLA will return to Hot Springs in October 2014 under the leadership of ArLA President Devona Pendergrass and conference co-chairs Dr. Kay Bland and Nicole Stroud. Help shape this year's event by offering feedback about 2013, by suggesting presenters and activities, or by volunteering for the conference committee. Contact Nicole Stroud at info@literacyindependence.org, or 870-793-5912.



ArLA President Trish Miller (right) congratulates National Park Community College Library Director Sara Seaman (left) in her win of a mini-iPad after playing "Vendor Bingo."

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ALA COUNCILOR'S REPORT

ArLA Premiers Declaration for Libraries

by Hadi Dudley, Bentonville Public Library

In Hot Springs October, the Arkansas Library Association proudly presented the American Library Association's President Barbara Stripling's presidential initiative, Libraries Change Lives: Declaration for the Right to Libraries. The Declaration is a strong statement communicating all libraries' impact on our communities.



Dudley

It can serve as an advocacy mechanism to express the value of libraries, where people can stand up and say “yes, I believe in libraries; these tenets are important to me.”

A formal reading and “ringing in” of the Declaration at the Exhibit Grand Opening occurred. It was a lovely tribute showcasing the importance of libraries, the significance of the Declaration and a great way to open the exhibits.

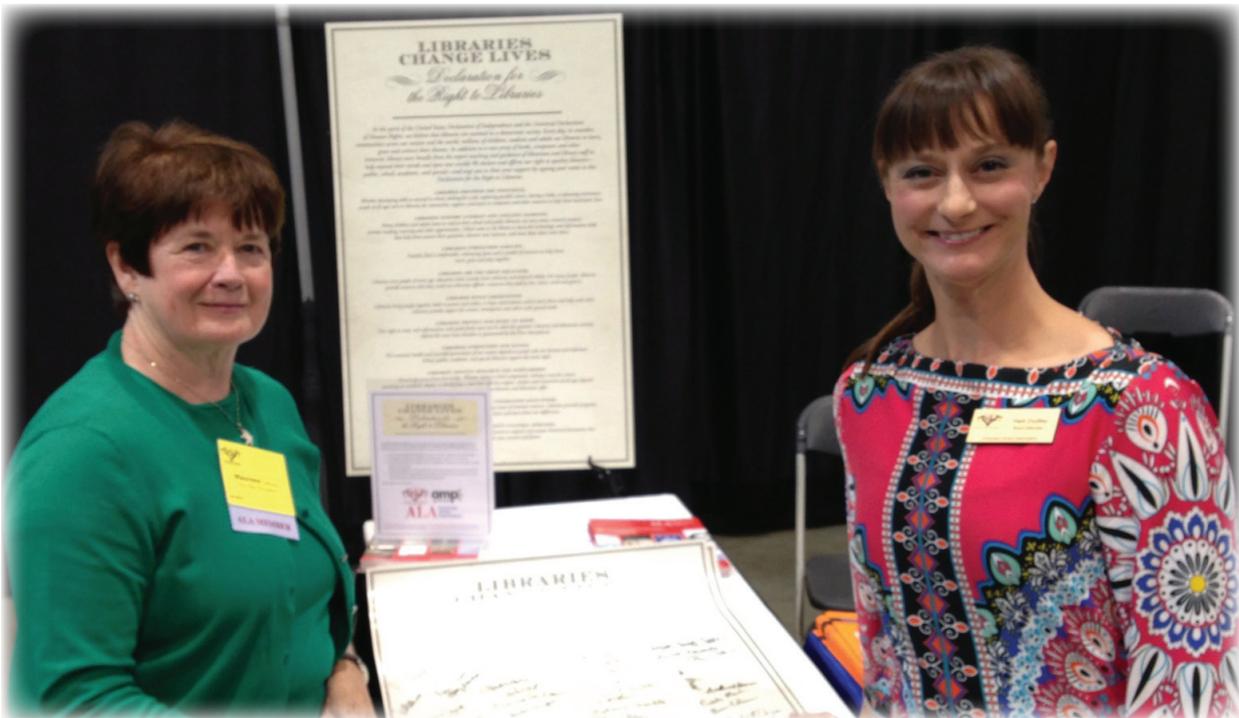
Thank you to our fourteen readers for participating in the ceremony!

Members, vendors, and guests were invited to show support by signing the Declaration at the 2013 Annual Conference. Signing opportunities were afforded at the ALA booth, and during other key events. I'm happy to report that we garnered 248 signatures on two large scrolls! These documents will be sent to ALA and presented to the Federal Legislature in 2014.

Hundreds of free copies of the Declaration were distributed to visitors to the ALA booth. Many conference attendees were pleased to be able to take the document back to their libraries. Special thanks to AMP Sign & Banner in Bentonville for donating copies, posters, and scrolls supporting ArLA's Declaration for the Right to Libraries campaign.

Arkansas Plans for the Declaration

Libraries across the United States are encouraged to support the Declaration by hosting signing ceremonies or other events centered on the touchstone document. ArLA formed an ad hoc committee to develop cohesive plans to promote the Declaration with all libraries in Arkansas. Committee members include: Hadi Dudley, Ashley



2012-2013 ALA President Maureen Sullivan signs the ArLA conference scroll, photographed here with Hadi Dudley, ALA Councilor. *Photo submitted by Hadi Dudley.*



ArLA executive board members Jamie Melson, Secretary, and Trish Miller, President, pose with “the bell.” These ladies played primary roles in the debut of the Declaration. Photo by Donnette Smith.

Parker-Graves, Erin Waller, Linda Evans, Britt Anne Murphy, Amber Gregory, Jessica McGrath, Michele Sterrett, Erin Shaw, Carolyn Ashcraft, and Trish Miller.

The committee met during the ArLA conference; here is a brief outline of plans with more details forthcoming. February is Love your Library Month. This was identified as an ideal time to promote the Declaration by hosting signing events or other programs. It gives our committee time to prepare, coordinate and communicate with all libraries in Arkansas.

Because ALA wants all of the signatures returned to Chicago in order to present at a special summit during National Legislative Day in D.C., there will be logistical instructions for participating libraries. Information will be distributed via the ArkLib listerv, on the ArLA website and through postal mail. Partner organizations, such as the Arkansas State Library, will provide another avenue for communication. Watch for more details to come very soon!

The ALA link to Declaration information is located here: tinyurl.com/lwbrouv. The website includes links to the document, a toolkit and online tools with digital signature opportunities. Log on to learn more and mark your calendars for February 2014 when Arkansans will be encouraged to “Declare Your Love for Libraries!”

Hadi Dudley, Library Director at Bentonville Public Library, is the Arkansas ALA Councilor.



Donna McDonald, Director of the Arkansas River Valley Regional Library System, is one of 248 conference attendees who signed the ArLA scrolls at the ALA booth in Hot Springs. Photo submitted by Hadi Dudley.

Arkansas Library Association Award Winners for 2013

by *Cathy Toney*

Awards Chair

Each year, the Arkansas Library Association presents awards to people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to promote or support the libraries of Arkansas. These awards were presented to the winners at the annual conference in October.

The Arkansiana Award is given to the author(s) of a book or other work which represents a significant contribution to Arkansas heritage and culture. The winner of the Juvenile or Young Adult category was Shelley Tougas for *Little Rock Girl, 1957: How a Photograph Changed the Fight for Integration*. She was unable to attend the awards banquet. Pictured left is the winner of the adult fiction category, Vivienne Schiffer, for her book *Camp Nine*, the winner of the adult non-fiction, Jeannie Whayne for *Delta Empire: Lee Wilson and the Transformation of Agriculture in the New South*, and Arkansiana Award presenter, Bob Razer.



The Ann Lightsey Children's Librarian Award is given to a person who has conducted programs directly with children in their library and has raised the level of children's programming in the state. The winner was Sharon Christian from the Springdale Public

Library. With Sharon are ArLA President Trish Miller and Marcia Ransom.



The Bessie B. Moore Trustee Award is given to an individual trustee or board of trustees who/which has made a significant contribution to the development of a library at the local, regional, or state level. The award was presented to the Ash Flat Library board of Trustees. Representing Ash Flat was Pene Hadley and Mary Hambry. Along with Pene and Mary are ArLA president, Trish Miller (left) and ArLA conference chair, Nicole Stroud (right).



The Distinguished Service Award is to recognize distinguished service in librarianship, for example, continuing service to the Arkansas Library Association, outstanding achievement in some area of librarianship, active participation in library affairs, or notable published

professional writing. Our distinguished service winner was Frances Hager from Arkansas Tech University's Library. ArLA president, Trish Miller (right) is presenting the award to Frances.



The Frances P. Neal Award is given to recognize a career of notable service in librarianship within the state of Arkansas. Our award was presented to Phyllis Burkett from Craighead County/Jonesboro Public Library. Along with Phyllis are ArLA President, Trish Miller (left), and State Librarian, Carolyn Ashcraft (right).



The Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional Award is to recognize distinguished paraprofessional



library service in Arkansas libraries. This year's winner was Melanie Allen from the Crawford County Library System main branch in Van Buren. ArLA president, Trish Miller (right) is presenting the award.

The Retta Patrick Award recognizes an individual member of the Arkansas library profession who has made an outstanding state or national contribution to school librarianship and school library development. Shirley Fetherolf from the Arkansas Department of Education was the winner but was unable to attend.

The Suzanne Spurrier Academic Librarian Award recognizes an outstanding academic librarian within the state of Arkansas. The winner was Ann Dixon, Director of Brackett Library at Harding University. ArLA President, Trish Miller (left) and Hannah Wood (right) are pictured with Ann.



Congratulations to all our outstanding winners, and be thinking whom you might nominate for next year's slate.



Arkansas Library Association

WHAT'S UP? DOCS. No Funding. No Information. *by Karen Russ, UALR*

As I write this column, the federal government is nearly silent due to the failure of Congress and the President to generate and pass a national budget. All but critical agencies have seen their staff furloughed and all activities stopped. By the time you read this, it is very possible that the situation will be the same. The latest idea out of Washington, D.C. is a short-term funding act that would require a new budget bill to be passed in January 2014.

The lack of federal funding has left researchers without access to critical information and no indication of when it will return. And for those of us serving as federal depository librarians, the challenge is as great, if not greater.

The last time this happened, under President Clinton, a large portion of the government publications were still in hard copy or being supplied both on paper and the Internet. When the online access was lost, we still had hard copies to turn to. It is not as easy this year.

Each year, a larger number of federal publications are released only in online form. On October first, many federal agencies froze their websites and posted messages indicating that the information would not be updated or expanded until federal funding was resumed. At least those agencies still offered access to what had been created up until that day. Others took their websites down entirely and indicated that they would be restored only when financing resumed.

In the past two weeks before this federal shutdown, I have provided bibliographic instruction to multiple courses in which the students were strongly encouraged to use government resources for their papers. Many students in history are expecting to explore the Library of Congress's American Memory database¹ for primary sources on the U.S. Civil War and American Indian tribes.

Students in two sections of Social Welfare Policy were given detailed instructions on locating federal policies on agency websites. Another social



Russ

work class was shown American FactFinder to locate population statistics to support their research on the need for various social programs in different cities across Arkansas.

Both of the aforementioned databases have been taken down completely. In an earlier decade, the Census materials would have been backed up with statistical volumes in the stacks. While the 2010 Census of Population and Housing is being distributed to depository libraries in hard copy, the Arkansas volume is at the bindery for preservation work. And, even if it were on the shelf, the content is greatly limited from those of previous decades. It is automatically assumed that detailed research will be done online.

While the primary sources of American Memory are not accessible in hard copy except via a visit to the Library of Congress (which is, of course, closed), ten years ago the courses were not required to use as many primary sources and students would have moved on without a thought. Today I am surfing various state agencies and museums to see if similar materials are accessible.

Congress has even limited our ability to follow their actions. As the House and Senate continue to argue, they generate numerous documents to show their actions. Unfortunately, we have only partial access to their hearings, debates, and other documents. Many committees have yet to create websites so there is no online point of entry to their materials.

While the Government Printing Office must continue to produce documentation for Congress, it is not being sent to the libraries. The Library Services and Content Management staff has been furloughed and the warehouse in Laurel, Maryland is closed. Even if the document is being printed, nothing is being shipped to the depositories.

Do not get me wrong. I love having online access to federal publications. It cuts down the time between its creation and public access. Unfortunately, solely offering online access cuts off accessibility completely when politics and finger-pointing enter into the federal budget issue. Because of this very problem, it is necessary for federal depositories to maintain hard copy archives of publications even if there is online access.

Karen Russ is the Government Documents Librarian at Ottenheimer Library at the University of Arkansas in Little Rock.

Becoming Green

by Susan Burks

*Public Services Librarian, Torreyson Library,
University of Central Arkansas*

“Becoming Green” isn’t always easy. Changing people’s perceptions about what the term means also can be a challenge. I work in an academic library where the faculty and staff aren’t as eager for change as one might think. Because we are a state academic library, we strive to be good stewards of what we have. In 2010 one of my colleagues partnered with a local non-profit who recycles books, magazines, and journals, to come to the college and collect what we have.

All we have to do is call them and set up a time. My colleague didn’t have much time to devote to recycling elsewhere in the library, so she asked me if I would be willing to do it. I said I would be glad to and started making phone calls and emailing various places on our campus and around town to see what already is being done. Little did I know that this would be the easy part of the project.

Finding out what kind of bags we have to use; where we have to take the bags and how often we need to pick them up are just a few of the questions for which I had to find answers. Once I had permission from our library’s Assistant Director, Kaye Talley, I knew I had cleared the first hurdle. She has been very supportive from the beginning and she still is. I wanted to start big and have new bins put all around the library for the students to use as well as the library staff. The Library Director wanted to begin with just the library staff to see how much recycling was done before opening it up to the entire library.

The library’s Assistant Director sent out an email to everyone in the library to see what kind of interest there was in recycling. Many people said they were interested, but in reality only three departments were really interested. Most people I talked to said they didn’t want to spend the extra time it takes to recycle. I tried to explain that it doesn’t really take any extra time, but most didn’t relent. As time has passed, many of these people do recycle, and I think it’s because they have seen how little effort it really takes.



I generally pick up the recycling from the participating offices two times a week, sometimes more if the need arises. After finding out the color of bags I need to use from the UCA Physical Plant, blue, I started making sure I used this color of bag. The people who pick up the regular trash at UCA will only recycle bags that are of a certain color. For over two years I picked up the recycling in blue bags but then, the UCA Physical Plant said I needed to use green bags. So, now I pick everything up in green bags. One of the easiest parts of the entire process is where the bags need to be taken. Right outside the library there is a big “pit” where all the trash for the library and some of the buildings nearby is taken. I can take the recycling to this same area. I have been assured by the physical plant workers that they recycle anything in the blue or green bags. For a while white paper couldn’t be included in the other recyclables, but now the university allows everything that is recyclable to be put in the same container. This has made things much easier. I believe this has made a difference in the amount of recycling being done. No longer do we need to worry about white paper getting mixed in with the rest of the recycling.

As a result, interest in recycling has grown, even among those who didn’t participate at first. UCA Housekeeping has even gotten involved.

When the library first started recycling, housekeeping was not responsible for recycling. Then, during the academic year 2012-2013 trash cans with signs indicating they were for recycling items and not waste started appearing in the library. Nothing had been said to anyone in the library about housekeeping picking up

recycling items, but apparently UCA's policy had changed, and upon inquiring I discovered that certain areas of the library were being taken care of, while others were not. After clarification from my supervisor and housekeeping, we agreed that I would continue the informal recycling in certain areas, but to let housekeeping take care of the rest. This cross-recycling has not, in my opinion, been as effective as it could be, which is frustrating to me. Some weeks the recycling is collected and some weeks it isn't in those particular areas. If that happens, I collect it. What was not a big deal became one. I certainly have learned to be more sensitive to other people's jobs and to what they consider their "turf."

Another frustration has been with the UCA campus in general. The faculty "green" committee only responded to me one time when I inquired about starting recycling in the library. I also contacted the UCA Student Government Association, and they said they are interested but are doing things slowly. I really expected the SGA to be more willing to offer suggestions or aid the library in beginning the process. Neither of these groups seems to be too invested in recycling on campus.

There is a law in Arkansas which requires colleges to recycle a certain amount. It is ACT 749 of 1991. As of July, 2013 this Act is still viable. The act outlines "Recycling by Governmental Entities" (A.C.A. 8-9-203, Recycling 1991). It would be interesting to know how many colleges, four-year or two-year, and other governmental entities are even aware of this act. Some of the information can be found on the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality website, tinyurl.com/mb5nm3u. (State of Recycling in Arkansas 2012). In 2011 UCA recycled 25,681 tons. This included: 436 trees, 179,767 gallons of water, 9,827.18 gallons of oil, 102,724 kilowatts of energy and 77 cubic yards of landfill space (University of Central Arkansas 2013). This is a start! Hopefully, each year UCA will recycle more and more resources.

I recently visited Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, and it was a beautiful campus and town. One of the first things I noticed was all of the recycling bins all over the campus and the town. I asked my niece about it, and she said people were frowned upon when they threw

away items that can be recycled into the regular trash bin. There were bins for both waste and recycling all over the town. It seemed like they were every few feet. They may not have been that prevalent but there were many more than what I see at UCA and in Conway. Faulkner County in 2010 received \$410,185.29 from the sale of recycled items according to the Arkansas State Department of Environmental Quality Recycling Division (Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality 2013). Again, this is a start but we can do much more.

Those of us who work in libraries are educators. Learning by example is often the easiest way to educate the public. Maybe if we all tried to think of the generations to come, we might be more interested in leaving this planet in better shape. Recycling does take a little extra time because we have to consciously think about it, but wouldn't it be better if we spent a little extra time than to leave this planet depleted?

A recent book, *Garbology: Our Dirty Love Affair With Trash* by Edward Humes offers some suggestions as to how we can reduce the amount of waste in our homes and businesses. The author details a family's experiment with recycling and reducing waste. Here are the suggestions:

1. Refuse – just say no to mail order catalogs, to recreational shopping excursions and to printed phone books
2. Go used and refurbished – computers, televisions, cars, books, etc. are all available and usually are cheaper
3. Stop buying bottled water – reusable bottles and tap water can replace this
4. No more plastic grocery bags – this is just one item that easily can be changed
5. Focus on cost of ownership – save for something that is more durable and won't end up in the land fill (Humes 2012).

Torreyson Library at UCA has been in the midst of a renovation project for the past several months. Refurbishing has been a huge part of the renovation. End panels from the stacks no longer needed have been made into tables and other items; paint left from other projects has been used, and pictures that have been utilized in other parts of the library have been moved and reused. The library has also replaced DVD covers with new covers and the old ones have been

donated to other departments on campus or put into recycling. Audio, video, DVD, and CD cases have been reused when donations are given. The library always is looking for ways to reuse items that are no longer absolutely necessary. Even the kind of printing paper that is bought is recycled paper. These are just a few ways Torreyson Library is trying to be more “green.”

Many libraries around the United States are doing a great deal to utilize recycled products and to rethink the kinds of products being used. For example, Purdue University-Indianapolis University Library is launching a small electronics recycling effort (IUPUI 2013). Hopefully, other academic libraries will read about this and want to do a project of their own.

I am not discouraging anyone from starting a recycling program in your library. However, be aware that it is not as easy as it would seem, at least in the beginning. There are many obstacles, political and otherwise, that will be encountered, but we all must persevere in order to have a better world for the generations to come. There are many rewards available with a little extra work. Let’s all strive to be a little more “green.”

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Display by Elizabeth DiPrince, Librarian at UCA’s Torreyson Library. Photo by Chris Springer, Librarian at UCA’s Torreyson Library.

Arkansas Librarians Volunteer for the University of Tennessee

by Hadi Dudley

Director, Bentonville Public Library

David Johnson, Executive Director of Fayetteville Public Library, Hadi Dudley, Library Director of Bentonville Public Library and Jordan Nielsen, Assistant Professor / Business Librarian at the University of Arkansas visited the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville, TN (UTK) this September to participate in the School of Information Sciences (SIS) Advisory Board.

According to the school's website, "distinguished information professionals who exemplify the library and information science professions from various backgrounds are invited to serve on the board by the school's Director." Board members are UTK SIS alumni and volunteer to serve a three-year term with the mission to "advise and support the school, its faculty and students."

SIS Director, Dr. Ed Cortez, is pleased with the advisory board's representation in Arkansas. "We are very proud of all our Arkansas alumni and students," says Dr. Cortez. "David, Hadi, and Jordan are excellent examples of SIS alumni who have realized their dreams and are positively impacting many within their communities. We are also grateful for their willingness to give back by serving on the SIS Advisory Board. Their wise

counsel will benefit our future Arkansas students as they work toward careers in the information sciences."

Johnson, Dudley, and Nielsen comment on their experience with the University of Tennessee School of Information Sciences. Johnson believes that it is important to give back and grow our profession by supporting student learning. He states, "I am impressed with the caliber of SIS faculty and diversity of information science pathways available." Dudley thinks that the SIS program offers a high-quality online learning environment. She says, "I worked full-time while earning my graduate degree in the evenings; I especially enjoyed the synchronous class meetings."

Students in the SIS program have the option of working in various information environments by participating in a practicum. Nielsen highlighted the importance of the practicum experience by saying, "The practicum program allowed me to gain hands-on experience with professionals in an academic library environment. I was able to demonstrate what I learned from my practicum experience during job interviews, and that definitely played a role in me being hired by the University of Arkansas."

UTK SIS is an ALA-accredited program that participates in the Academic Common Market offering Arkansas students in-state tuition rates. For more information, visit www.sis.utk.edu.



David Johnson, Hadi Dudley and Jordan Nielsen. *Photo submitted by Hadi Dudley.*

Farewell to a Friend, Greetings to a New Leader

by Hadi Dudley

Director, Bentonville Public Library

Jean Elderwind, Administrator of the Carroll and Madison County Library System, said farewell to colleagues of the Library Development District I during a meeting held on November 15 at the Donald W. Reynolds Library in Mountain Home.

Elderwind shared her gratitude for the support and friendship she has received over the years from LDDI members. The group expressed its best wishes for Jean by making a donation in her honor to the charity of her choice.

During the meeting, Elderwind also introduced her successor, Johnice Dominick. Dominick has served as the Green Forest Library Director since 2007. She earned her



master of library and information science degree at Louisiana State University in 2007. Dominick was selected as an Emerging Leader by the American Library Association in 2012.

Dominick begins her new leadership role January 3rd; Elderwind's last day is January 10th. Congratulations to both ladies as they embark on new beginnings!



Jean Elderwind (left) with Johnice Dominick, the incoming Administrator of the Carroll and Madison County Library System. *Photo submitted by Hadi Dudley.*

PUBLIC AND REFERENCE SERVICES

Fitting the Needs of Students:

The Torreyson Library Renovation

by Elizabeth DiPrince, University of Central Arkansas

For the past two years Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas has undertaken a major renovation project. The project began in the spring of 2011 and was funded in a large part through a student library fee.

Cosmetic changes, such as new paint and flooring, were an important part of the library renovation, but functional changes were also critical for both library faculty and students. The functional improvements important to the students were comfortable seating, easier access to electricity, and greater variety of study space. The main concerns of the library faculty were that the library remain functional both for research and study and that access be improved especially for non-traditional students and students with mobility challenges. With these goals in mind, major changes in the library were made to student workspace, study rooms, computer labs, library signage, and restrooms.

A major element of the renovation efforts has

involved the arrangement and enrichment of student workspace. The east wing of the library building, which includes the front entrance, the computer area, and access to the coffee shop, has always served as a more transitional and social space for students. With that in mind, we furnished the area with comfortable lounge seating, café tables, and booths. This area holds the new and popular book and DVD collections, as well as cell phone charging stations.

The focus for the renovation in the west wing of the first floor was to provide access to electricity and to better define study areas. The library building as it was originally constructed did not allow for electricity to be brought up from the floor. In the main area of the west wing, electricity could only be accessed from pillars that were generally blocked by book stacks. The only way to bring electricity out into the main area of the west wing was to reorganize the book collection and move book stacks away from the pillars. We then placed tables next to the pillars for improved electricity access. Reorganization also resulted in clear differentiation between quiet study zones and collaborative study zones. In the far west end students can enjoy a quiet, individual study zone with individual study carrels.

Closer to the center of the building larger groups can assemble; tables and chairs on wheels enable students to easily group and ungroup workspace depending on their needs.

The reorganization of space in the west wing created an opportunity to add additional study rooms on the first floor. A consistent student complaint before the renovations was that there were never enough study rooms, especially for groups studying together. To address this issue, we built seventeen new rooms in three different sizes. Smaller rooms accommodate one to two students, medium sized rooms are for groups of three to four students, while large rooms host groups of up to six people. Glass walls in the rooms permit greater



Colorful signs direct students to resources. Photo submitted by Elizabeth DiPrince.

visibility and safety during the library's overnight hours. New and old study rooms alike sport white board paint, allowing students to use the surface for their work and play. Two of the large study rooms contain projectors for student use. Students can check out projector remote controls and connection cables at the Circulation Desk.

Another important public area transformed by the renovation is the library computer labs. Before the renovation the library had three separate computer labs and printing stations. We combined those labs into one central location, which centralized printing and computer support services. In addition, we added a scanning area for public use, comprised of two flatbed scanners and one overhead scanner. Centralizing the computer labs also moved them away from the library's front entrance and the Reference Desk, making it a focal point for those entering the library.

To improve access for library patrons, we redesigned signage throughout the library. Signs before the renovation were difficult to read and often used confusing terminology, making it difficult for patrons to locate collections in the library. New ADA compliant signs with a black background and large white lettering provide a clearer path to resources. We matched the verbiage on the signs with location names found in the catalog to assist patrons looking for library materials. Additionally, a graphic artist on staff helped design a library directory. This large map differentiates public and administrative areas by color and utilizes labels that correspond with signage and location terms used in the catalog. Students will find the directory at the library's front and back entrances and at the top of the library's main staircase on the second floor. Printed in full color on poster paper and then placed



Group study room with white board painted wall. *Photo submitted by Elizabeth DiPrince.*

in a sign holder, the directory is easily updated with minimal cost. Patrons new to the library now have a clear navigational guide.

The last area addressed in the renovation was the public restrooms. Prior to renovation, library restrooms were outdated and lacked features needed to serve students with mobility challenges, students with small children, and transgender students. The main restrooms received updated tile and fixtures, but to meet the needs of UCA's diverse student population, we constructed two additional single bathroom units. These two bathrooms are gender neutral facilities large enough to accommodate persons with mobility challenges, and equipped with a changing table for parents with young children. By recognizing and providing for diverse customer needs, Torreyson Library has demonstrated its dedication to customer service in a powerful way.

We have learned through this renovation that it is important to be patient and flexible. Things we wanted generally cost more than anticipated, and all of the construction projects took longer than were predicted. We also learned that it is hard to know how the students will use the space created for them, and at times we had to go back and reconsider our choices. Response to the renovation has been very positive among students, faculty, and university administration. Students are taking full advantage of the redesigned spaces, and day and night during the semester the library is a full and very active place.

Elizabeth DiPrince is the Access Services Librarian at the University of Central Arkansas.



The new computer lab area. *Photo submitted by Elizabeth DiPrince.*

Get to Know Your ArLA Board

Part 3

by *Jamie Melson*

Central Arkansas Library System

Well, here we are...the final installment of “Meet the Board 2013.” I hope you have enjoyed reading about and getting to know your ArLA Board this year as much as I have. I can truly say I have thoroughly enjoyed working with them.

Jon Goodell, Website Chair

Reference and Outreach Librarian, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Library

After living in Kansas City most of my life, I moved to Little Rock with my wife and two children in June 2005. While in Kansas City, I worked in a university grants administration office, had a part-time job doing group tutoring for an American History class, and went to graduate school for Library Science. I have worked in a law library, public library, two year college library, a virtual library service, and for the last four years an academic health sciences center library.

All my jobs have been interesting, but I really enjoy what I am doing now. I play violin in a local string quartet and sometimes play in the UALR Community Orchestra. The last few years we have gone on cruises to Central America and science camps in North Carolina and Minnesota. When the weather is not too hot or too cold I like to go on bike rides too. Between work and my kids’ various activities I seem to keep busy.

Freddy Hudson, Intellectual Freedom Committee Chair

Fletcher Branch Manager, Central Arkansas Library System

Hailing from Alabama, I enjoy sports and outdoor activities, including running and hiking.

Daniel Page, Scholarship Committee Chair

Some little known interests of his include a blog he recently started to help advocate for library issues at www.librarymasters.com (www.librarymasters.com). Also, he began his academic pursuits as a trumpet major at a highly selective music academy and was one of two freshmen selected for enrollment that year. But, his love for librarianship eventually took over and he pursued a different academic path. Daniel recently moved to neighboring Tennessee and



offers his time to the Tennessee Library Association.

Chrissy Karafit, Publications Committee Chair

Serials Librarian, University of Central Arkansas in Conway

Originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, I began my library career all the way back in middle school as a student school library aide, and worked as a shelver for the Tulsa City-County Library the summer before my senior year. I continued my employment in libraries as a shelver and circulation clerk while earning my undergraduate degree in English literature and communication, and after graduation I took a job at Domestic Violence Intervention Services in the public relations department. In this position I managed the agency’s donor database, assisted with fundraising events and learned how to write grants. In 2005, I took a grant writing position at the Salvation Army, managing private and federal grant contracts valuing over \$1 million.

But something was missing. After five years, I still missed the library: the book discussions, the information junkies, even the folks needing help with operating a computer mouse. So I went back to get my MLIS in 2008 and graduated in 2010. I met my husband online in 2009, an Ohio “farm boy” working as a visiting instructor at Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas. Our first date was on Friday the 13th! I moved to Conway after finishing my MLIS, and we got married the following year. I worked briefly as a Library Assistant in the Laman Library Children’s Department in North Little Rock before accepting my current position as Serials Librarian at

the University of Central Arkansas. From the card catalogs of my school libraries to today's OPAC, from story time finger puppets to digital rights management, I've greatly enjoyed all of the variety, innovation and challenges that librarianship has to offer.

Today I live with my husband, four ducks, six chickens and one dog in a beautiful patch of country just outside Conway. I love gardening and baking, and I'm trying to teach myself how to crochet. I can't quite explain it, but it seems that with all my trips to the library over the years, I somehow fell into a happily-ever-after of my own.

Nicole Stroud, Conference Committee Chair

Director of the Ozark Foothills Literacy

A love of languages, reading, and libraries led Nicole Stroud to her current position as Director of the Ozark Foothills Literacy Project in Batesville, AR. Her interest in books and reading began early on, fully blossoming when her older sister moved from Forrest City to San Diego in the mid-1980s. This resulted in a series of 25-hour family car trips through hundreds of miles of desert, with library books stuffed in every available corner of the Oldsmobile's back seat.

After studying English and French at Hendrix College, Nicole pursued an interest in computers and technology. This led to IT work at two different Arkansas law firms, where data collection and organization tasks set the stage for what followed. A move to Florida in 2004 rekindled an old passion, when Nicole discovered the many remarkable libraries of Palm Beach County. Next came graduate studies at Florida State University.

Armed with a masters in library and information studies, Nicole moved back to small town Arkansas in 2009 to find a library. Instead, she found a rewarding and challenging combination of nonprofit work and library consulting. Through the Ozark Foothills Literacy Project, Nicole is enjoying a multicultural experience in small town Arkansas. When not working, Nicole is probably surfing Reddit, doing community volunteer projects, cooking, studying Spanish, or playing butler to a clowder of cats.

Ashley Parker-Graves, Public Relations Committee Chair

Library Director, Mid-Arkansas Regional Library / Malvern-Hot Spring County Library

Ashley completed her undergraduate

work at Henderson State University and her MLS at Texas Woman's University. Prior to her library career Ashley held positions as a high school social studies teacher and as a corporate trainer. Ashley is in her sixth year as the Director of the Mid-Arkansas Regional Library / Malvern-Hot Spring County Library. She lives in Magnet Cove, AR with her husband, nephew, and her two dogs, Novella and Faraday. Ashley is active on local committees, civic organizations, and boards.

Ashley enjoys working to promote libraries and working within professional organizations. She is currently serving her second term as Chair of the Public Relations Committee of the Arkansas Library Association and previously held the position of Chair for the Public Libraries Division for two years. Ashley has served for several years as a reader for the Arkansas Teen Book Award. She has also served on the national level as part of the YALSA Books for Teens Jury and the Highsmith Innovation Award Jury. She is currently in her second term on the ALTCS Transforming Collections Task Force.

Ashley can be found on Twitter at [@ashleykparkers](https://twitter.com/ashleykparkers). She blogs at thenotsoshoelesslibrarian.blogspot.com. Her website is ashleykparkers.us.

Brent Nelson, Copy Editor

Assistant Librarian/Assistant Professor at University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Ottenheimer Library

Brent works in reference services at UALR's library and serves in an ex officio capacity as Copy Editor for *Arkansas Libraries*.



LIBRARY PROFILE

Public Library of Camden/Ouachita County

By David Sesser, Henderson State University

More than two years after a fire destroyed the Camden Library, things are beginning to look up for the organization.

Progress has been made towards constructing a new facility and the library is currently open in a temporary location. But the process has been difficult at times, and librarian Lisa Pickett says she will be glad when the new building is finally constructed.

The library was engulfed in flames during the 2011 Independence Day weekend. While the outer walls of the building survived, the fire spread into the ceiling and destroyed the roof. The water used in an effort to extinguish the fire destroyed much of the collection. Some materials were salvaged, including the bulk of the library's genealogy materials. Approximately 95 percent of the entire collection was lost. The fire was caused by an electronic shredder in the library office.

Immediately after the flames were extinguished, the library staff began to work on the materials that did survive. Utilizing the old jail near the site of the library in downtown Camden, the staff began to clean and catalog their remaining materials. The outpouring of support from around the state was immediate, and many libraries offered materials to the library so the collection could be rebuilt as quickly as possible.

A temporary location was found in a shopping center west of downtown, and with the newly donated materials from both patrons and other libraries, the Camden Library was



Sesser

soon open again. Southern Arkansas University Tech offered to allow patrons to utilize their collection, as did other libraries in nearby towns.

With library access restored to the community, Pickett and her staff now began to plan to rebuild. After selecting an architectural firm, the next step was selecting a location for the new structure. The former location was unsuitable for several reasons, as were other available locations downtown. Several existing structures were explored as possibilities, but were subsequently deemed to be less than ideal. Eventually, a location near the current, temporary library was selected. Located near the commercial district, the site where the new location will be constructed sees much more traffic than the former location downtown. Additionally, the new location will have a parking lot which will allow patrons to more easily access the library. Other differences from the old location include a meeting room that can be used for programs and possibly the use of geothermal energy to heat and cool the facility.

Construction of the new library is expected to soon begin. The library is currently in the midst of receiving bids, and the staff is hopeful that the process will be smooth. With a bit of luck and the continued support of libraries and librarians from across the state, the Camden/Ouachita County Public Library will soon have their new facility and will be able to once again offer a wide range of services to their community.

David Sesser is the Special Collections Curator/E-Resources Coordinator for Huie Library at Henderson State University.



Arkansas Books & Authors

Compiled by Bob Razer

Butler Center for Arkansas Studies

***March, Book One.* John Lewis (story), Andrew Aydin (story), and Nate Powell (art).**

Congressman John Lewis is one of few people these days—and one of even fewer lawmakers—who could aptly be described as a “living legend.” The youngest speaker at the 1963 March on Washington (most famous for the “I Have a Dream” speech of Martin Luther King, Jr.), Lewis was one of the founding members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), was beaten for his participation in SNCC’s Freedom Rides, helped to coordinate the “Mississippi Freedom Summer” in 1964, and marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Since being elected to represent Georgia’s Fifth Congressional District in Congress in 1986, he has been a rare liberal in an otherwise deeply conservative state and region.

If the newspaper *The Hill* is to be believed, Lewis is now the first sitting member of Congress to have authored a graphic novel. The first volume of the autobiographical *March*—a planned trilogy written by Lewis and staff member Andrew Aydin, with art by Little Rock native Nate Powell—is framed by the January 20, 2009, inauguration of President Barack Obama, with Lewis in his office getting ready for the event, but taking a moment to tell a visiting family the story of his life, from his youth growing up on a farm in Pike County, Alabama, up to his early college years and his initial involvement in the civil rights struggle. In his recounting, young Lewis grows up with a love of his chickens and a love of the Bible, which come together in his preaching to—and baptizing of—the little chicks.

Slowly, Lewis’s consciousness becomes raised, first by a rare trip up north with an aunt and uncle, where he is astonished to see that they have “white people living next door to them. On *both* sides,” as well as by national happenings, such as the murder of Emmett Till and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. He turns down, because of the fears of his family, an opportunity to help desegregate Troy University from Martin Luther King, Jr. but becomes involved with the growing civil rights

movement at a Baptist seminary in Nashville, Tennessee, where he studies non-violence and participates in some of the era’s first lunch counter sit-ins, experiencing the first of more than forty arrests over his lifetime. By the time this first volume ends, Lewis and his fellow activists have succeeded in desegregating Nashville’s lunch counters, but the final few panels, with black customers looking across the counter at white wait staff and cooks, tells us that the struggle is by no means over and that Lewis’s own personal story is nowhere near complete.

March proves to be an odd mix of graphic novel genres, fusing the coming-of-age story so popular in independent comic books with the sort of comic non-fiction, once the staple of the “Big Books” published by the now-defunct Paradox Press. For the most part, this works, but at times the flood of narration needed to explain certain points (such as the principles of non-violence) or recount national events threatens to dilute Lewis’s own story, as well as giving it a rather uneven pacing.

This is an ambitious work, and one rather wishes that the creators had allowed themselves the space needed to fulfill their ambition more thoroughly rather than limiting themselves to an abbreviated 128 pages. Too, using the 2009 inauguration of President Obama as a frame for the events of Lewis’s life—and thereby suggesting that Obama’s presidency marks some culmination of all that people have fought for—strikes a false note these days now that the candidate of “change” has become an apologist for assassination (even of American citizens), a war of terrorism waged using unmanned drones, a network of surveillance that draws comparisons to the Stasi of East Germany, and continued inattention to the plight of the poor. Indeed, one might well say of the president what Lewis observed about many of the black political and religious leaders he encountered during the civil rights era: “[O]ur revolt was as much against the traditional black leadership structure as it was against segregation and discrimination” (111). Lewis does himself a disservice by framing his story with the Obama inauguration, making his own contribution to history seem that much

smaller by comparison.

Artist Nate Powell continues to exercise an uncanny ability to render complex emotions, such as fatigue after a long day of work, with a few spare lines, and not a person appears—not even a waitress who has only one or two panels to herself—without being infused with a tangible personality. However, Powell’s artwork for this book seems somewhat constrained by a narrative so unlike that of his previous works, such as *Swallow Me Whole* (2008) and *Any Empire* (2011), the former of which explores issues of mental instability and hallucination, while the latter highlights children and their dreams of violence. In both of those books, he makes the easy transition between the tedium or brutality of existence and the life of madness or daydream, complete with talking bugs or visions of tanks rolling across peaceful suburbs. Lewis’s life story, as presented here, with a good portion of the narrative consisting of speeches and workshops, seems a somewhat limited tapestry upon which Powell can showcase his true talents.

These criticisms aside, however, *March* will likely connect with younger audiences—and, indeed, would be an ideal book to include in the classroom. Lewis and his cohorts have succeeded in producing a visually appealing book which draws those lines between personal and collective struggles, telling the story of a vast and complex time in this nation’s history through the eyes of one of its most prominent eyewitnesses and reminding the nation, and the world, that the struggle for basic rights is not confined to times past but goes on even today.

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***The Maid’s Version*. Daniel Woodrell**

The Maid’s Version by Daniel Woodrell—author of the marvelous and suspenseful *Winter’s Bone*—starts in a classic way: an eccentric old woman, Alma, begins telling the story of a seminal event in the Ozarks town where she lives (in Missouri but not far from the Arkansas border) to her grandson, who is staying with her for the summer. The storytelling is how the two come to know each other and develop a relationship. And this long-past landmark event,

the 1929 explosion at a dance hall during a packed Saturday night dance, has become the central mythology of the town. Everyone still reels from it, even generations later, and no one has solved the mystery of why the hall exploded or figured out whose hands are stained by the blood of the dozens of victims.

But Alma, who lost her beloved younger sister Ruby in the explosion, believes that she knows the answer and wants to pass it on to her grandson—of course, if we’ve learned anything from popular culture over the years (most recently *Downton Abbey* and *The Help*), ask the maid if you want to see inside the inner workings of a household or a town or a tragedy: “It just started coming. The story poured from her in dollops and cascades and drips of known details, vintage innuendo and flat-out guesses.” Alma’s heartbreaker of a sister Ruby had a love affair with a prominent married man in town (whom Alma works for), perhaps providing a clue to the mystery of the explosion.

The following description of the explosion’s aftermath, mixing the horrific and the mundane, sums up both the town’s response to the tragedy (How much do we want to dig into how it happened? How and when can we clean up and move on?) and the structure of the book, which mentions the explosion only three pages in and circles around and back through time as the story progresses:

Throughout that summer human scraps and remains were discovered in gardens two streets, three streets, four streets away....That fall, when roof gutters were cleaned, so many horrid bits were come across that gutters became fearsome, hallowed, and homeowners let a few respectful leaks develop that winter rather than disturb the dead.

The explosion took away people and left only scraps, relics, mementos—some gruesome and others touching. As Alma’s grandson, the narrator, says: “I wore Ruby’s hat whenever I played Robin Hood.”

An unforgettable image from the book is Alma paying her highly personal respects equally to every single one of the twenty-eight coffins lined up in the high school gymnasium, as she does not know which one (or more than one) contains the remains of Ruby. In this day and age, as I’m sure Woodrell well knows, it is hard to look at this act of terrorism in a small Ozarks town and not be

reminded of the global terrorism we face today—still the explosions and the aftermath and the loss and the questions.

This is a short book, not much more than 150 pages, and best read in one big gulp, if possible. The threads of the story—the various people and relationships involved over many years—can be easy to lose if you walk away for too long. Woodrell is spare in his language and an old hand with Ozarks dialogue, being an Ozarks boy himself. In telling this southern story of tragedy and family and the secrets of a small town, Woodrell keeps some good literary company: I thought of Harper Lee and Toni Morrison and William Faulkner more than a few times. Woodrell's fine work, which this novel is a solid example of, is taking its place in an exciting new southern canon.

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Thanks to the above contributions from fellow members of “The Editorial Brotherhood,” we actually have some reviews of new books this issue, a feature absent from this column for a few seasons now. For my part, I'll contribute a mention of the best books I would have reviewed had I been writing reviews. Think of it as a year-end “best books” list.

Now that the history of black Arkansans has gotten some badly needed attention the last decade or two, the most neglected area of state history publishing currently is labor history and studies dealing with the overlooked Arkansas heritage of socialist political activity. It is a rich and colorful story that begs for monographs.

A fine beginning is Erik Gellman's and Jarod Roll's *The Gospel of the Working Class: Labor's Southern Prophets in New Deal America*, a joint study of the lives and work of Claude Williams and Owen Whitfield, one white and one black, both preachers of the Social Gospel, or working class gospel as the authors term it, and advocates for the poor and downtrodden regardless of race. Working separately and together, Williams and Whitfield were effective leaders and organizers. Williams' activity had an Arkansas focus in churches, the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, and as a later director of Commonwealth College.

Whitfield is best known for his work in the Missouri boot-heel with the STFU and as the leader of the 1939 roadside demonstration by displaced sharecroppers that was held along a Missouri highway in southeast Missouri after they were evicted from their homes, one of the highly visible protests of the 1930s against the treatment of sharecroppers and tenant farmers by plantation owners.

Gellman and Roll provide an informative look at this chapter of Arkansas' past and bring Claude Williams back into the narrative of Arkansas history. I am not alone in high regard for this book as it won the Southern Historical Association's book award as the year's best work on southern labor history.

An Arkansas native son who is far better known nationally and internationally than in his home state is theologian James H. Cone, father of Black Liberation theology and professor at Union Theological Seminary. His new book *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* is a very interesting and insightful analysis of two symbols – a lynching tree and the cross where Jesus was lynched – two symbols that resonate highly in African American religion and life.

“One is the universal symbol of Christian faith; the other the quintessential symbol of black oppression in America.” Other than some black poets and novelists, few “have explored the symbolic connections” between the two symbols and that is the purpose of Cone's book, to show the connections that are invisible to white Christianity. Cone references his Arkansas upbringing as personal testimony to living black in the South prior to the Civil Rights Movement.

Cone has combined disparate topics in other books, such as *The Spirituals & the Blues*, and in *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare?* I reviewed the first genealogy book for this column a few issues back, and this is the first religion book to be reviewed here though it is theology baptized in history and sociology.

Jeannie Whayne's *Delta Empire: Lee Wilson and the Transformation of Agriculture in the New South* won the Arkansas Library Association's Arkansiana Award for Non-fiction at the recent ArLA conference. As I said when presenting the award, you may think you know Arkansas history but your knowledge is lacking until you have read this book. Not only is it a

biography of Lee Wilson, a legendary figure in Arkansas delta history, it also tells the story of how the swampland of eastern Arkansas was transformed into rich agricultural production by men like Wilson. Arkansas delta history is still underrepresented in the canon, but Whyne's books, particularly this one, are doing much to correct that imbalance.

The Arkansiana Award for a Juvenile/Young Adult book was given to *Little Rock Girl 1957* written by Shelly Tougas. This book has an interesting approach. It is part of a series of books based on a photograph. The photograph in this instance is the well-known image of Elizabeth Eckford walking to the bus stop after being turned away from the school house door by the National Guard. Hazel Bryan is pictured walking behind her screaming invectives at

Eckford. That image is the best-known photograph related to the integration of the Little Rock schools in 1957.

Little Rock Girl does a good job reporting what would be expected in an account of that event, but it also includes some things not seen in other juvenile/young adult treatments. Tougas provides some historical background to black education in the South prior to 1957, and her book also includes later events such as President Clinton welcoming the Little Rock Nine back to Central in 1997. Practically every page of the book has a photograph or other illustration though the text is not slighted. UALR historian and civil rights authority John Kirk served as content advisor. With the new Common Core school standards placing more emphasis on non-fiction reading, *Little Rock Girl* is sure to have a place in school libraries not only in Arkansas but across the country.

Should you think I'm slighting the Arkansiana Fiction winning book, that winner was *Camp Nine*, a book that gave a fictional treatment to the Japanese-American internment in southeast Arkansas. I reviewed *Camp Nine* in an earlier column.

Two recent political biographies deserve mention. One is about a well-known Arkansas political figure, Wilbur Mills, the other about a politician who has had practically nothing written about her, Hattie Caraway. Nancy Hendricks' biography of Caraway is brief, scarcely 120 pages, but *Senator Hattie Caraway: An*

Arkansas Legacy fills a great need in Arkansas historiography, especially for students who may very well have never heard of the first woman elected to the United States Senate. She was also the first woman re-elected to the Senate. Even readers familiar with Caraway will find this book informative as it discusses legislative issues important to her and shows how Caraway's main concern as a Senator was to help Arkansans through difficult economic times in the 1930s and 1940s.

Kay Goss had a lot more to work with in her biography of Wilbur Mills, *Mr. Chairman:*

The Life and Legacy of Wilbur D. Mills.

Looking at Arkansas' Congressional delegation these days, it's hard to believe that the state used to send people like Mills, Fulbright, McClellan, Bumpers, and Pryor (senior) to Washington. In baseball terms, we've made a really bad trade.

Mills was a county judge at 25, a congressman at 29, a member of the highly influential House Ways & Means Committee at 34, and Chairman of that powerful committee at 48, a position he held for seventeen years. When the Democratic leadership was profiled in the late 1950s, four of the leaders were in their late 60s or early 70s; the fifth was Mills at 48.

Often referred to as even more influential than the House Speaker, Mills was so well-liked back in Arkansas he seldom had an opponent come re-election time. He was well-liked by his Congressional colleagues too, regardless of party. He was acknowledged as an authority on tax legislation and his efforts to always reach consensus in committee meant minority views got heard and compromise was the order of the day whenever possible, another oddity compared with Congress today. A committee vote was generally overwhelmingly favorable if a bill came out of committee since Mills felt if agreement didn't occur in committee, it would be impossible on the House floor.

A strong supporter of Social Security and its expansion, Mills was seen as fiscally conservative with liberal proclivities. The forerunner of Medicare was a bill sponsored by Mills. He favored the progressive income tax and was a strong believer in using budget surpluses to pay down national debt instead of giving tax cuts, particularly to the wealthy. Mills would not be a happy Congressman today given those views.

A draft-Mills presidential bid in the early 1970s seemed not to interest Mills much, but he allowed the effort to progress because he wanted to keep the South in the Democratic column and to negate George Wallace's influence in Arkansas and elsewhere in the South. Interestingly, he did let it be known that he would accept the vice-presidential nomination in 1972, but only if Edward Kennedy was the presidential nominee, showing some of those liberal proclivities with that position. Mills had enjoyed a close association with President Kennedy who often conferred with Mills.

Wilbur Mills did not seek re-election in 1976 even though polls showed him with 60% support after his battles with alcoholism and some highly publicized fountain visits. Mills wryly expressed belief in those polls because "if they would elect me drunk, they might elect me sober."

Enough time has passed that you have to be an Arkansan of a certain age to remember Wilbur Mills and his influence. It does us all good to remember it. Kay Goss spent years working on this book and Arkansas readers are the beneficiary of her diligence. At Mills' funeral in 1992 one speaker summed up the regard for Mills: "Mr. Chairman, the committee of your friends and supporters will never adjourn." Read this book if you want to remember a great Arkansan.

Elliott West is recognized as one of the leading historians of the American West. This University of Arkansas professor is the kind of history teacher students love to have, I imagine, based on the varied and sometimes unusual things he writes about. His books have dealt with childhood in the West, Indians, gold miners, and westward migration, just to mention some of his topics. His classroom lectures are sure to be interesting if the western history essays in the whimsically titled essay collection *The Essential West: Collected*

Essays are any indication.

Who would have thought of comparing the Lewis and Clark experience with the exploration experience of Mungo Park along Africa's Niger River in a discussion of medical problems encountered in "why it matters that the West's most famous explorers didn't get sick." Readers get a sample of West's groundbreaking studies of what childhood was like on the frontier. He writes about the symbolism and myth not only of the buffalo ("Bison R Us") but Jesse James too, only to be topped by the concluding essay "On the Trail with Gus and Call: *Lonesome Dove* and the Western Myth." Now there is history as "popular" history.

If you want to read history written by someone who writes for historians, students, and general readers alike, Elliott West is your man. Only Dee Brown comes to mind as a comparison of a writer of readable history for everyone.

"And in conclusion," to quote Bill Clinton, I offer you a book of poetry: Greg Brownderville's *Deep Down in the Delta: Folktales and Poems*. To me, Brownderville is heir apparent to Miller Williams's title of Mr. Arkansas Poet. Brownderville first came to my attention when he won the Porter Prize. At that presentation event, he accompanied his poetry reading with playing blues harmonica. A native of Pumpkin Bend – that's a real place, suburbs of Earle – Brownderville's poetry is "Arkansas" and particularly delta-influenced; much of Williams's work is "Halfway to Hoxie" and back again.

With *Deep Down in the Delta* you not only get Brownderville's poetry, but it is accompanied by paintings from Billy Moore, a Memphis resident. Words and folk art are all top-notch and give the reader a visual and literary treat in a glimpse of delta life. No CD of harmonica playing though; maybe that will come with the second edition.

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