

Libraries Show Value in Tough Times

Richard Callaghan, MLA President

As I am writing this article it is a cold Saturday in December after a big rain and ice storm that knocked out power to many communities. I noticed that the library was quite busy and all the study spaces full. While not unusual, one of our reference librarians remarked to me that a number of patrons were from local communities hit with the power outage. They needed Internet access and to an even greater extent a place where they could get out of the cold. Libraries are often seen as an anachronism, an extra expense in these tough times. But where would these residents be able to go to get warm or just check their email if the library was not open on a Saturday afternoon?

It is amazing to me that libraries, whose use increases in tough economic times, are often targeted first in budget cuts. How do we get the message across that libraries provide an incredible amount of services to the community on a shoestring budget? We can quote statistics until we are blue in the face but we really need to use concrete examples such as the monetary value of delivery or how much money patrons save by getting a free DVD from the library rather than from Netflix.

A speaker I heard at the Nelinet Public Library Symposium in early December reinforced my idea of the value of the library. Raymond Santiago, the Director of the Miami-Dade Public Library and former Library Journal librarian of the year, spoke about how he gets his local officials to value the library. He knows who makes the financial decisions and makes sure they know him. Politicians are invited to read to kids and get a photo op. He gets posters made of local politicians with their favorite books using the ALA graphics software. Awards are given out to local politicians for support of library programs. Is this politics rather than librarianship? You bet it is, but guess whom the decision makers remember at budget time? Raymond develops personal relationships with politicians to help his cause.

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Don't Miss the 2009 Legislative Breakfasts

Don't miss this opportunity to meet informally with local legislators and express the importance of libraries in our communities, especially in these difficult economic times.

CMRLS Legislative Breakfast

January 30, 2009 8:00AM Lunenburg Public Library
January 30, 2009 8:00AM Hopkinton Public Library
February 6, 2009 8:00AM Millbury Public Library
February 13, 2009 8:00AM Bellingham Public Library

MMRLS Legislative Breakfast

February 27, 2009 8:00AM Framingham Public Library

NMRLS Legislative Breakfast

March 6, 2009 8:00AM Beverly Public Library

SEMLS Legislative Breakfast

February 6, 2009 8:00AM Chateau in Norton

WMRLS Legislative Breakfast

February 13, 2009 8:00AM Monson Public Library
February 13, 2009 8:30AM Grace Hall Mem. Library
Montgomery
February 13, 2009 7:30AM Leverett Library
February 20, 2009 7:30AM Wilbraham Public Library
February 27, 2009 7:30AM Agawam Public Library
March 6, 2009 8:00AM Berkshire Athenaeum Pittsfield

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- Paralibrarian
- PR Awards

YSS/NERTCL Spring Program

Volume 96 Number 1
Winter 2009

News from the Massachusetts School Library Association: Veni, Vidi, Valerie!

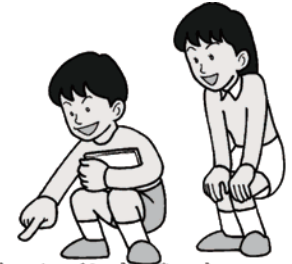
Linda Picceri, MSLA Public Relations Co-Chair

Kudos to Valerie Diggs, Chelmsford Public Schools Head of Libraries, for bringing the future to Chelmsford High School. She has been instrumental in transforming Chelmsford High School's traditional school library into a true learning commons. In an effort to become more relevant to the digital generation, Diggs has recognized the need to move away from the traditional school library. You know, the place where "silence is golden," to a place where 21st century learners, students and teachers alike, can meet, collaborate, and connect using new technologies. The books now share their space with areas for group work, digital team boards, computers, and a cafe where students can drink coffee, and talk about books.

An open house celebration of the new Chelmsford High School Learning Commons was held on Decem-

ber 5th. Library professionals, as well as state and community leaders, attended the event. Nationally renowned school library gurus, David Loertscher, Ross Todd, and Carol Gordon were also there to lead an insightful discussion.

Will this new design concept transform the way students learn? Only time will tell, but Chelmsford High's new Learning Commons seems to be attracting more students who want to spend time there for the experience of learning.



Save The Date! YSS/NERTCL Spring Program

The MLA Youth Services Section and the New England Roundtable of Teen and Children's Librarians present our first joint Spring Author Program, featuring Rick Riordan. The event will be held on April 3,

2009 at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. Registration forms, book order forms, and more information will be posted in early January 2009 on the MLA web site!

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Visit us online at: www.MLASolutions.com

Public Relations Award Application Form - 2009
Massachusetts Library Association
19th Biennial Public Relations Awards
Deadline: Entries must be received by March 6, 2009



All Massachusetts libraries are invited by the MLA PR Committee to submit your best PR materials to apply for the 2009 MLA PR Awards. All categories of PR materials are eligible from all types of libraries. We invite academic, public, school, and special libraries to participate. Awards will be presented on May 7, 2009 at the MLA Annual Conference in Springfield, MA.

Please submit one copy of this form with each entry. See other guidelines on reverse.

Library: _____

Library director: _____

Address: _____

Total budget to produce this PR project: \$ _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Cost per item (when applicable): \$ _____

Submitted by: _____

Funding source for project: _____

Submitter must be an MLA member. To join MLA visit www.masslib.org or call MLA (508) 428-5865

A professional consultant, professional designer, or company assisted the library with materials submitted with this entry. This applies to volunteers who are professional as well as paid professionals. *These entries may be judged separately (Please check if applicable).*

Position: _____

Size of population served
(population or student body): _____

Email: _____

Annual library budget: \$ _____

Phone: _____

Please list the name(s) of individuals who deserve recognition for this entry:

Library type: Academic Public School Special
Please circle one

Please check entry category. Use a separate form for each entry. See www.masslib.org for explanations of categories and judging criteria.

<input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Reading Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Logo	<input type="checkbox"/> Summer Reading Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinated Advocacy Campaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Media Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Web Site
<input type="checkbox"/> Booklist	<input type="checkbox"/> Event	<input type="checkbox"/> Merchandise	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Services Web Site
<input type="checkbox"/> Bookmark	<input type="checkbox"/> Flier/Poster	<input type="checkbox"/> News Coverage	<input type="checkbox"/> Teen Web Site
<input type="checkbox"/> Brochure	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Card	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> Social Networking Site/Project

ENTRY FEE: Please note that there is a **\$25 non-refundable fee for each entry.** A single check for the total may be written to cover multiple entries. Make checks payable to "Massachusetts Library Association."

ABSTRACT: In 100 words or fewer, please describe why and how your entry was produced, your goals, how it was distributed, and anything else that helped make it successful for your organization (use separate sheet if necessary):

To find out more visit the MLA web site at:
<http://www.masslib.org/paralibrarian/2009AwardNominationForm.html>

MLA Conference Scholarships Available

First Time Attendees to Conference and Pre-Conference Attendance

With the MLA Conference right around the corner, we are excited to announce that once again first time conference attendees will be eligible for the Kay Bader Scholarship. Conferences are a wonderful opportunity to meet with other professionals and gain new insights into best practices from around the state. This year's conference theme is "Renew, Refresh, Sustain" It is packed with programs to interest all types of librarians and paraprofessionals; public, school and academic. Attending an MLA conference is not only a great networking experience, but is a lot of fun too!

There are eight scholarships available. Six of the scholarships will be awarded to persons working in a library in Massachusetts and two scholarships will go to MLS candidates currently attending an ALA accredited Library Science program. The scholarships cover registration, lunch and dinner for all days attended, 1/2 of the cost of accommodations, and a year's membership to MLA. For more information or to apply, visit the MLA website: www.masslib.org to access the Conference brochure and the scholarship application form. Appli-

cations must be submitted online and are due by March 13, 2008. Scholarship recipients will be notified in early April 2008.

In addition to the Bader scholarship, this year there will also be scholarships available for the pre-conference on May 5. The pre-conference is sponsored by the MLA Legislative Committee and will revolve around the important subject of advocacy for our libraries. Look for the brochure early in the new year for more details on this opportunity.

If you are not eligible to apply for the Kay Bader Scholarship, but know someone who is, please encourage him or her to apply! The online application form can be found at: <http://www.masslib.org/conference/2009Conference/scholarship.htm>

Any questions, please contact Mary Behrle, 978.762.4433 x14 or Danielle Kovacs, 413-545-2784.

Please join us in thanking our Leadership Partner members for their generous support of MLA!



MLA 2009 Conference Highlights ~ See Springfield in May!

The 2009 Massachusetts Library Association Conference, May 5-8, will be held at the MassMutual Center located at 1277 Main Street in Springfield. Across the street from historic Court Square, it provides far more space and services than a hotel. The new light-filled MassMutual Center has elegant ballrooms, numerous meeting rooms, and 40,000 square feet of exhibit space. On site food service can offer concession items as well as complete meals for conference attendees. There are several parking lots and garages nearby. Rest assured that the MLA Conference Committee has planned three full days of programs and your favorite events including: the return of the book cart drill team competition, another action-packed gaming night, and the ever popular trivia & auction extravaganza. Members will receive a brochure in the new year with program details. The conference brochure will also be available on MLA's website: www.masslib.org

The outstanding Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts will be the setting for the Wednesday evening MLA dinner. Cocktails and appetizers, a sumptuous supper, coffee and dessert, will be served amidst glorious artwork. Our guest speaker will be Michael Cunningham, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Hours*.

Located on the scenic Connecticut River, Springfield holds many pleasant surprises for visitors. Our Italian Renaissance style Central Library sits prominently on State Street, on the Museum Quadrangle along with four world-class museums: the Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Museum, the Springfield Science Museum, and the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum. The Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden, a series of full-scale fanciful bronze sculptures, fills the rectangular gardenlike setting in the center of the "Quad." The adjoining Mattoon Street's brick Victorian row houses includes the former home of John Cotton Dana, Springfield librarian at the turn of the 20th century. Walk north on State Street a block, to see the new curved glass-front Springfield Federal Courthouse, designed by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie. Adjacent, lays the Springfield Armory National Historic Site, our nation's

first armory, with 22 original buildings dating to the early 1800's. Beautiful old Victorian "painted ladies" live on in the nearby McKnight, Maple Hill, and Forest Park Historic Districts. The city will be in bloom in May, so plan to visit 735-acre Forest Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of New York City's Central Park. The Zoo in Forest Park features exotic and domestic animals and offers educational programs. The modern Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, located in the city where basketball was invented, has much for the sports fan to see and do. See you in Springfield in May!

Jordan Miller Storytelling Program

Conference attendees will have a wonderful opportunity to hear nationally recognized storyteller, author and Grammy Award-winning artist, Bill Harley, at the Jordan Miller Storytelling Program. This multi-talented performer combines story, song and humor into an unforgettable presentation. In a workshop/concert, Bill will share his techniques for making the oral tradition a powerful tool in developing programs for children and families. Librarians seeking to revitalize their storytelling programs, those new to storytelling or anyone needing a reminder of how storytelling connects us to literature and each other, should attend.

Bill Harley has worked with public libraries as a performer and supporter. In 2005, he wrote a song for the "@ Your Library" campaign commissioned by the American Library Association to highlight its national effort to support local libraries. Over the years, he has shared his observations on NPR's "All Things Considered" program. He has been an Artist in Residence with the Massachusetts Arts Collaborative and the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. A playwright and children's book author, his most recent book is *Night of the Spadefoot Toads* (2008).



Advocacy Institute MLA's All Day Pre-Conference

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

Advocacy on the grass roots level made the difference in our most recent election—both state wide and nationally.

MLA's Legislative Committee has brought together local and national experts in political and library advocacy to lead our day long Advocacy Institute on May 5th. Participants will learn how to develop their library advocacy goals, craft and deliver their message, and build the coalitions that insure success.

Library Legislative Breakfasts have been hallmarks of our Massachusetts legislative campaigns for several years. A Legislative Breakfast featuring MA Board of Library Commissioners Director, Rob Maier, ALA Executive Director, Keith Michael Fiels, and area political leaders, will kick off our Advocacy Institute. MA librarians are encouraged to supply sample materials from successful advocacy campaigns they've waged.

Sharpening the focus on crucial library issues will be the charge of a mid-morning panel.

Panelists will include:

Tamson Ely, Director of Springfield Technical Community College

Barbara Garvey, former Springfield City Councilor and current member of the Springfield Library Foundation

Maureen Killoran, MA Board of Library Commissioners Government Liaison

Marci Merola, Director of ALA's Office of Library Advocacy

Judi Paradis, Library Teacher, Plympton Elementary School, Waltham and MA School Library Association Legislative/Advocacy Committee Co-chair

Timothy J. Plante, City of Springfield Chief Financial Officer and Legislative Director and Fiscal Policy Analyst to former state senators

Sally Reed, ALA's Trustees and Friends Division (ALTAFF)

From her vantage point as VP for the Americas and Global VP for Marketing at OCLC, luncheon speaker, Cathy DeRosa, will share her perspective on advocacy in the 21st century.

Marci Merola and Sally Reed will lead the afternoon sessions, based on the very successful ALA Advocacy Institutes, held throughout the country in the past year. Participants will be using the workbooks developed especially for these Institutes.

MLA Legislative Co-chairs, Jackie Rafferty and Krista McLeod, will demonstrate Capwiz and Project ALERT, and Keith Michael Fiels will present strategies for building coalitions and lobbying. End of the day breakout sessions will offer time to discuss the workshop's application to your own library.

Join us for a great day of learning and lobbying!

Comics & Curriculum are the Focus of MLA's Graphic Novels Mini-Conference!

Two tracks of programming will be running simultaneously during the day on Friday, one aimed at school librarians and one aimed at public librarians.

The school librarian track will feature programs on comics literacy and curriculum connections as well as examples of best practices from local educators and librarians using comics and graphic novels successfully in their schools. Our panels will include speakers Peter Gutierrez, a member of the Commis-

sion on Media of The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and Allyson Lyga, author of *Graphic Novels in Your Media Center*. Darla Strouse, Executive Director of the Office of Partnership Development, Maryland State Department of Education, will discuss how comics were integrated into the curriculum for the entire state of Maryland.

On the public library side of events, we will host a selection of programs including discussions of the basics and history of the comic format, a guide to

MLA Conference Poster Session

The MLA Conference Committee is seeking presentations for a poster session to be held during the 2009 MLA Annual Conference at the Mass Mutual Center, Springfield, May 6-8, 2008.

Poster session presentations should promote success, innovation and idea sharing. Poster presentation topics could include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Research Projects | Grant Projects |
| Literacy | Publicity |
| Cooperative Programming | Recruiting |
| Professional Development | |

Poster Session format guidelines include:

A graphic bulletin board-type display to fit on a table top in a space of approximately 4 ft. by 8 ft. A 3ft. x 8ft. table will be supplied for each poster presentation.

Presenters should come prepared to put up and take down displays.

Presenters must preside at displays set up in the conference exhibit area during poster session time slots at conference.

Displays may include photographs, illustrations, graphs, text explanations, etc.

Handouts are encouraged and appreciated by attendees.

Electricity will be available, but must be requested at the time of the application.

(The MLA Conference Committee will not be liable for any equipment used for display.) Displays need to be picked up by noon on Friday, May 8. If a display is not picked up by this time, it will be disposed of.

Deadline for receipt of poster applications is March 6, 2009. Selected presenters will be notified by March 27, 2009

Applications should include the following information, formatted as described:

Title: Applications should clearly state the title of the display.

Authors: The names of the author(s) of the project along with the institution the author(s) is associated with, should be listed clearly. Indicate which author(s) will also be presenters during the poster session.

Presentation Abstract: A concise description (150 words or less) of the program/project being presented should be supplied. Please proof-read your description, as the description supplied to us will be used in all promotional material published for the event!

Poster Session applications should be sent to:

Deborah Lang Froggatt, Director
Boston Arts Academy / Fenway High School
BSPO Education Resource Center
174 Ipswich Street
Boston, MA 02215

Phone: 617-635-6470, ext. 236

Fax: 617-635-9204

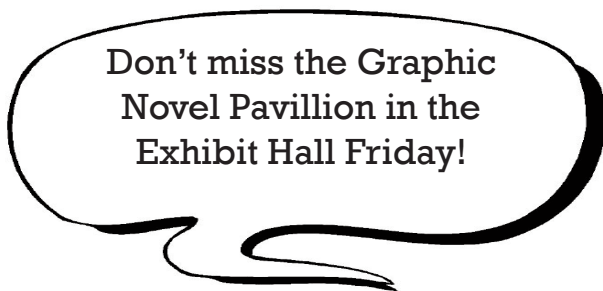
Email: dfroggatt@boston.k12.ma.us

For any additional questions about the Conference, please don't hesitate to contact your Conference Co-Chairs, Michael Colford, Gianna Gifford, or Ellen MJ Keane.

understanding and selecting Japanese manga, and a chance to interact with comics industry insiders.

The "state of the industry" panel features an array of representatives from comics publishers and commentators including Mark Seigel, editor at First Second, Ali T. Kokmen, Marketing Manager at Random House and Del Rey Manga, Brigid Alverson, the editor behind Mangablog and the School Library Journal blog Good Comics for Kids, and Dave Roman, comics creator and associate editor at Nickelodeon Magazine.

The afternoon will wrap up with a fantastic panel of high-profile comic creators including Gail Simone, writer of DC's "Wonder Woman."



Get your Library License Plate and a Chance To Win Conference Registration

Library enthusiasts across the state will soon have an opportunity to show their support for libraries. Advance applications for a new specialty license plate celebrating libraries in Massachusetts are now being accepted.

Proceeds will benefit public, academic, special and school libraries across the state that belong to a regional library system. Equitable shares of the proceeds will be made available to qualifying libraries through an open grant process. Funds will not be used to supplant library budgets.

The idea for the plate emerged during a 'promote libraries' brainstorming activity at a CMRLS Executive Board workshop. After a joint meeting with RMV officials, CMRLS decided to launch the drive to gather the required prepaid applications to produce the specialty plate.

The plate design process was a collaborative effort. Representatives from library boards across Massachusetts, as well as library patrons, were invited to offer design suggestions. The Library License Plate Task Force subcommittee formed by CMRLS included representa-

tives from: Friends of Libraries; Library Trustee Association; School Library Association; the six regional library systems; MLA; and the MBLC.

Once the concept was agreed upon, local illustrator David Desforges volunteered to turn the concept into reality.

At least 3,000 applications must be submitted before the RMV will begin production of the plate.



The initial cost of the plate is \$40 (\$28 goes to the Library Grant Fund; \$12 to the RMV for manufacturing costs).

There is an additional \$20 swap fee when the actual plate is picked up from the RMV. Renewals are \$81 every two years (\$41 RMV registration fee and \$40 for the specialty plate fee that continues to go to the Library Grant Fund). An application can be downloaded at: www.CMRLS.org/plates.htm.

As an extra incentive, MLA is offering a free conference registration to be raffled to an individual who submits an application by February 27th.

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Paralibrarian Section News

By Gerry Deyermund, Chairperson of the Paralibrarian Section

Did you know there are many, many talented people working in the Commonwealth's libraries? Every year the Paralibrarian Section has the privilege of reading many applications/nominations for the Outstanding Paralibrarian of the Year and Advocate of the Year. The section has been honored to award these recognitions for the last 5 years to some very dedicated, enthusiastic people.

They include;

Outstanding Paralibrarian of the Year:

- 2004 Lynne Riley formerly of Holy Cross Library, currently at the George C Gordon Library at WPI
- 2005 Kathleen Sweetish- Whelden Memorial Library, West Barnstable
- 2006 Denise Faucher- Worcester Public Library
- 2007 Laurie Christie- Morse Institute, Natick
- 2008 Melissa Caissie- Hudson Public Library

Advocate of the Year

- 2004 Allison DaSilva- Reading Public Library
- 2005 Deboarah Bockus- George C Gordon Library at WPI
- 2006 Gael Nappa- Haverhill Public Library
- 2007 Marjorie (Marnie) Oakes- Ruben Hoar Library, Littleton
- 2008 James Sutton, Memorial Hall Library, Andover

The Outstanding Paralibrarian of the Year would be someone who does not have a degree in Library Science and works in a library setting. It is someone who goes above and beyond the limits of their job title. They bring their passion outside of the walls of the building to the community and state level. They seek out educational opportunities, welcome leadership roles, inspire others and can think outside the box. Some examples of what outstanding paralibrarians have done are: organized a community book read, created board games for the summer reading program for young adults, head library branches, volunteer coordinator, human resources manager, develop literacy programs.

Did you know a paralibrarian can also be the director of a library? Our 2005 Paralibrarian of the Year is a director of a small library on the Cape. A person without an MLS can direct a library in a town in Massachusetts with a

population under 10,000. You do need to have the Basic Library Techniques (BLT) certification in order to qualify and also for your library to qualify for state aide. The BLT requires you to attend 4, 2 day workshops covering, administration, cataloging, reference, and collection development. Workshops are offered throughout the different regions. Information can be found at http://mblic.state.ma.us/grants/state_aid/certification/Resources/blt_information.php

The advocate of the year can be a trustee, director, librarian, paralibrarian or anyone who supports paralibrarians in their library. An advocate supports the paralibrarian's ideas, initiative, encourages workshop attendance and encourages involvement in state associations such as the Massachusetts Library Association and works to increase visibility and opportunities for non-MLS staff. Do you know someone who has supported and encouraged you? This is the perfect time to acknowledge them and say thank you!

Nominations for these two awards are due by March 6, 2009. Forms can be found and submitted electronically via the MLA website!

The Paralibrarian Section Wants You!

The MLA Paralibrarian Section would like to know who is out there and who would like information about the section, continuing education opportunities and to keep up on the latest news.

Contact Justin Termini, Vice Chair of Paralibrarian Section@termini@mhl.org to have your name added to the email list to receive information and news.

Paralibrarian Section Blog
<http://mlaparalibrarian.wordpress.com>

Libraries Show Value in Tough Times (cont.)

We can do this too, it doesn't matter how big your library is, knowing the decision makers in your city or town is important as is having them know you. Also, at the state level, attend the local legislative breakfasts to get to know your legislator. They want to hear from you and a personal interaction with them is very valuable. If they don't hear from you, don't expect them to do what you want.

The ability to have the library valued in your community will be even more important in the future. Budgets for the next several years will be very tight and we will probably experience no growth or a reduction in funding. The rationalization of your budget in front of the local finance committee or funding authority will be important to keep your library afloat. Emphasize the importance of your programs to the community and the value you provide for so little money.

Massachusetts libraries survived the threat of Question 1 due to the hard work of staff, trustees, Friends, MLA and patrons. What we are faced with now is a deteriorating economy which affects the governmental support libraries depend upon. Speaker of the House Sal DiMasi has predicted a 10-15% reduction of local aid to cities and towns. This will hit local governments and in

turn libraries. We will have to justify our existence more than ever. The MBLC's budget could be reduced also. This means a loss or reduction of services to the regions, databases, State Aid and other support.

There are some tough times ahead, but your library can help your community to weather the storm by providing the free services patrons need. Whether it is filling in an online job application or how to find a new place to live, librarians can point the way and help our fellow residents get back on their feet. Libraries are needed more than ever, so be prepared to show the decision makers in your community how you are making a difference.

Did you know?

MLA has produced a calculator to help you and your patrons determine the value that your local library provides in terms of savings on movie rentals, periodicals and so on. Librarians from across the US and now Canada have been contacting us to ask for permission to use our calculator! Congratulations to everyone who worked on this wonderful tool. The calculator can be found at:
<http://www.masslib.org/value-new/calculator.html>

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Blue Robin is pleased to support the Massachusetts Library Association.

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Blue Robin is the developer of **WebLibrary™**, a comprehensive web-portal content management system designed to be easy to use, yet powerful enough to provide all of the features and functions libraries need to fully support the needs of their constituents and patrons.

To learn more about how Blue Robin or WebLibrary™ could help you, please contact:

Nick Allen, CMO of Blue Robin Tel: 781-577-6015 or email: nick@bluerobin.com

IFC: Verdict in Myspace Suicide Trial Threatens Internet Users

By Melissa Andrews, *MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee*

The verdict of the "Myspace Suicide Trial" was decided last month with Lori Drew found guilty of three counts of illegally accessing computers. In 2006, Drew created a Myspace account for a fake teenage boy named Josh Evans. Drew/Evans befriended, and then over the course of several months, criticized and harassed a 13 year old girl named Megan Meier who was a former friend of Drew's daughter. Thirty minutes after receiving a message from Drew that said "the world would be a better place without you" Megan committed suicide.

The state of Missouri could not gather enough evidence to charge Drew with harassment, but Drew was charged in Los Angeles – where Myspace is headquartered- for violating Myspace's Terms of Service by creating a Myspace account that did not provide factual information representing who she was, and harassing a minor. Drew was charged under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA), which criminalizes unauthorized access to computer systems. The CFAA was created in 1986 and before had only been used in cases of computer hacking and fraud. The precedent of this case could allow the government to bring charges against anyone who uses the Internet, by charging that all users are essentially computer hackers if they don't follow the sites terms of use.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation and the Center for Democracy and Technology, along with Public Citizen and a group of 14 law professors, filed an amicus brief during the trial arguing that violating Myspace's term

of service isn't a criminal offense. The brief argues that the possible outcome of this case "would attach criminal penalties to minors under the age of 18 who use the Google search engine, as well as to many individuals who legitimately exercise their First Amendment rights to speak anonymously online."

Some worry that this precedent could make a felon out of everyone –or anyone who has clicked through a Terms of Service without reading the contract, which is nearly everyone who has ever used the web.

The Los Angeles district attorney who prosecuted this case, Thomas O'Brien, claims the precedent set by this case is the first step to creating a stronger law to protect children on the Internet. But in order protect children on the Internet is it ok to violate all Internet users right to free speech and privacy? With the Internet growing larger and more unmanageable by the second, how do we even begin to organize and police it? Is the loss of all Internet users' civil liberties the price to pay to stop the few who misuse the Internet?

This case was the first time this act was used to deal with social networking sites, and its use shows that regulations dealing with computer crime are growing.

Although anyone choosing to end their life, especially prompted by the harassment of others, is a tragedy, this judgement is not about the act of harassment, but instead about using a Terms of Service contract as a criminal prosecution tool. This judgement could seriously curtail the rights of the general public while doing nothing to prevent a similar tragedy in the future.



MLA PERSONNEL ISSUES COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

The MLA Personnel Issues Committee is a group of librarians that are concerned with the issues that affect your library career and employment.

In the past, we have updated the minimum salary recommendation for librarians and have presented conference programs on pay equity, job reclassifications, and unique job situations. At the May 2009 conference, we will be presenting "Black Belt Librarians: Dealing with our most "challenging" patrons." Mr. Warren Graham, a nationally recognized trainer and library consultant,

will be our speaker. Please plan on joining us in May. We need your input so that we can continue to work on topics and issues that concern you as a library employee. We want to know what is important to you. We have created a survey to gather this information. Please take a few minutes and complete this survey.

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/83157/mla-personnel-committee-survey-2008-2009> or click the link from the MLA web site.



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MLA Innovation Award

The Massachusetts Library Association encourages and recognizes the creative, and meaningful work that libraries do on a daily basis. This award honors libraries' exceptional, cutting-edge programs, services, products or projects that show innovation, leadership, and make a significant impact on the community of users.

All Massachusetts libraries, of any type and size, are eligible for this award, other than those with employees on the judging committee. The winning library must commit to having a representative(s) speak on the innovative work at a future MLA program.

Nomination Requirements

Nominations for the MLA Innovation Award may be made by library staff members, trustees, institution staff, or members of the community. Library staff members are encouraged to self-nominate the ground-breaking programs, services, products, projects in their libraries. All nominations must be signed by the library's director. The nomination form must describe

the library's innovative achievement and why it is significant to the library's clientele. The innovative program, service, product or project should be new and different; it may or may not involve technology. The impact should be measurable. Include anecdotal information and other comments. **Nominations must be received electronically by March 10, 2009.** Additionally, a paper copy of the nomination form should be mailed by March 10, 2009, if there are supporting materials that cannot be sent electronically. **Applicants must be current members of MLA.**

This is the second MLA Innovation Award. Only one library will receive this award per year. No award shall be given if nominees do not meet the criteria as determined by the judging committee.

Winners will be selected and notified prior to the MLA conference, May 6-8, 2009. The award will be presented at the annual meeting, May 8, 2008 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield.