

Adult Services Advisory Council
July 21, 2005 Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Jo-Ann Benedetti (UHLS), Maria Buhl (GUIL), Debbie Canzano (COHS), Barbara Goetschius (RCSC), Katie Quinn (APLM), Carol Trager (EGRN), Julie Zelman (BRUN)

Databases:

Jo-Ann started the database discussion with the results of an e-mail survey of librarians who used Books in Print. Of the 21 responses received, 15 did not use it or could live without it and 6 librarians used BIP. The group questioned the BIP database statistics and suggested we compare this year's BIP usage with last year's. Jo-Ann will follow up and email the group.

Jo-Ann announced that we have had a request for the Gale Literature and/or Biography databases which we looked at last year. At that time, the cost was prohibitive (\$58,500 for the Literature DB, down from their original quote of \$78,000). Katie Quinn mentioned that you can get a NYPL library card that gives you access to the Gale databases if you really need it. If we drop Books in Print, we still would not have enough money to purchase the Gale Literature DB. Facts on File has a Literature database that may be worth previewing. Jo-Ann will arrange a trial.

Many in the group indicated that the Ancestry Plus Database might be a good option if we want to replace Books in Print. Some of our libraries (GUIL, BETH, APLM and EGRN) purchase this database individually. They will send their stats to me so that I can bring them to the next meeting. Anecdotal evidence suggests patrons use it frequently. Debbie Canzano said it is easier to justify the purchase of a database that a lot of patrons use rather than a database that only a few librarians use.

The group then discussed what would take the place of Books in Print. It was suggested that IF we got rid of Books in Print, we should offer a class on other ways to find out information, such as OCLC, Library of Congress, Amazon and Masterfile.

The Big Read

The NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) is offering \$25,000 – \$35,000 for communities to successfully implement a community-wide read. Six cities will be chosen as part of the pilot project. They are giving a choice of 4 books: Fahrenheit 451, Their Eyes were Watching God, the Great Gatsby and To Kill a Mockingbird. Jo-Ann asked the group if they were interested and if so, would they be willing to plan the read as well as participate. The group liked the idea and thought it was a great idea to initiate a system-wide project.

Since this project will have to be approved by the directors, the group suggested they should recommend which book to do. To Kill a Mockingbird was chosen as the book because it had excellent themes: civil liberties, disabilities, single parent households, inter-racial relations and it is believed to be required reading in the schools. The directors will vote on this at their Aug 5th meeting.

Training Needs/Wants

It was suggested that we have an expert searcher (Tara Calaishan) come to show us new and little-known features of Google. The group thought this was not a bad idea if she could do it for free, but they did not think this is something we should pay for. Jo-Ann will follow up.

Cataloger/Reference Librarian joint training

Rob Carle suggested this group consider joint Horizon training with catalogers. The group agreed that many CD entries are “funky” and each expressed concerns about searches that do not work. The group concluded, “if librarians have problems, patrons will have problems.” It was decided that the members of this group will start documenting problems they have, and that it may be a good idea to have a meeting once the authority file clean up is complete.

Book Discussion Group

Suzanne Fisher wondered if we could get a group together sometime in November to discuss issues of interest to those who lead book discussion groups. Everyone agreed this would be a good idea, but wondered if people who do not lead book discussion groups, but who would like to, could come as well. Jo-Ann will follow up with Suzanne.

Next meeting

Thursday, August 18, 9:30 am.