



KASL News

Vol. I No. 1

February 15, 2004

Advocate, or be “Left Behind”

Nancy McFarlin

KASL Advocacy Committee Chair
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The Kansas legislature has just convened, which means the season of opportunity is upon us. Yes, opportunity!

The governor’s State of the State address on January 12, was encouraging with the Education First Plan and all the things that it could do for Kansas kids and Kansas schools (read it at: http://www.ksgovernor.org/news/docs/education_first_plan.html). It put me in the frame of mind (imagine!) to encourage you to advocate for your library programs.

Instead of being skeptical, take this opportunity to tout the results of some of those great studies done by Keith Curry Lance and the Library Research Service (<http://www.lrs.org/>): put them in an email, a brochure or a letter, or write an editorial to your local newspaper about how school libraries make a difference to kids. Take advantage of the AASL Public Service Announcements (found on the AASL web page - <http://www.ala.org/aasl/>) or do some of your own! Use some of the new

AASL artwork to make posters for around school and your community. Send a packet of information to your board of education including research summaries, assignments that students have done in the library, the importance of continued strong library funding, or anything that will get their attention as to the importance of your program (like the *Calling All Parents* brochure at <http://www.cgrove417.org/cghs/kasl/adinit/graphics.html> or *Average Book Prices - School Library Journal*, March 2003, v49 (3), p. 11).

Share whatever ideas and activities you use with your KASL colleagues! Send me pictures, flyers, letters, or anything that you are doing to promote your program at the local or state level: we’ll include it on the KASL Advocacy Initiatives Web pages (<http://www.cgrove417.org/cghs/kasl/adinit/>).

In addition, you will soon have yet another tool with which to advocate your profession - the new KASL brochure. This publication is “at the printers” as this newsletter goes to press. You will definitely see them at Tri-Conference - come to the Advocacy Committee’s concurrent session and pick up a few!

This is an exciting time to be a school library media specialist. Remember, taking the “opportunity” to advocate for your program and your services can only yield good things: never underestimate the power of positive public relations! Have a great spring!

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From your KASL President.....

Welcome to KASL's first online newsletter. It is an exciting time for our organization. The newsletter will reach 646 KASL members, and I thank Joe Amos and Terri Snethen for undertaking this large responsibility as well as being the editors of the print journal that will be mailed later this summer.

Ann Schuster and I attended the AASL Affiliate Assembly meeting at the ALA Midwinter in San Diego in January. After listening to the reports from other states, I am very proud of our organization. We compare very favorably in that we offer scholarships; conduct summer institutes; have an impressive website; a listserv; publications of newsletters and a journal; district workshops; and a new brochure is coming out shortly from the Advocacy committee promoting our organization. I personally thank all committee chairs and members for giving of their time to provide all members with a viable organization.

I encourage you to read the article *A Golden Opportunity* in the January, 2004 issue of School Library Journal. The article discusses why the No Child Left Behind Act provides the opportunity for librarians to become indispensable in the schools, and reinforce how important our role is in the school's educational process.

I attended the Kansas Learning First Alliance meeting on Friday, January 23 in Topeka. Governor Sebelius was the featured speaker. She fully believes that Kansans are willing to pay more for education, if we can convince them that additional funding is needed. The Governor outlined her Education First Plan which includes an income tax education surcharge, a sales tax increase and a school mill levy increase. I urge you to write or call your representatives encouraging them to back this educational plan.

I hope to see many of you in Wichita at TriConference, March 31-April 2. Ann Schuster, KASL's Program Chairperson, has put together a program that will be worthwhile and beneficial for all levels to attend. Thank you also to the many presenters for giving of your time.

It is a sincere privilege to serve as the President of KASL, and please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns.

Susan Ryan

▲ Letter from your President–Elect . . .

First of all, thanks to Terri and Joe for sharing their talents to produce the KASL newsletter in this new electronic format.

The combined efforts of representatives from KASL, KLA and KAECT will bring you this year's Tri-Conference in Wichita from Wed., March 31st-Friday, April 2nd at the downtown Century II Convention Center. Several pre-conferences, including one on "Understanding by Design", will be held Wednesday as will the opening address/autographing session by author Ian Jukes. The first group of concurrent workshops will also be held beginning that afternoon, with the rest of the sessions continuing all day Thursday and Friday morning. Chris Crutcher will be the featured presenter at Thursday's General Session and Jean Marzollo will speak at the KASL luncheon on Friday. Autographing sessions by both these guests are on our program as well. Please don't forget to visit our vendor's exhibits as well and thank them for their support of Tri-Conference. In addition look for other special events sponsored by all three conference organizations on our web site and in the program coming soon. Registration and housing information will be found there as well.

If you had a chance to attend, the recent AASL conference in Kansas City was a great opportunity for professional development and to exchange ideas with other colleagues around the nation and the world! (Don't forget to plan ahead for the 2005 conference in Pittsburgh!) The kick-off of the "@ your school library" campaign at K.C.'s Union Station and the accompanying toolkit passed out at registration focused on extremely effective ways to showcase your library media center. Our Advocacy Committee Chair, Nancy McFarlin, will pass along more information on this initiative at Tri-Conference. In the face of continuing budget limitations, factors in maintaining a successful Library Media program include connecting the program to academic success and promoting what your library can offer to assist with student achievement.

Finally, it is with great excitement (and personal relief) that I announce four Kansas Library Media Specialists who recently received National Board Certification: Ronda Hassig, Natalie Lindsay, Rebecca Stith and myself. All four of us can testify to the wonderful support we have received on both the local and state levels. In addition to resources from the AASL and NBPTS web sites and communication with colleagues in other parts of the country, our KASL listserv and workshops, such as the one sponsored by Linda Hazel at ESU, provide real "lifelines" for those going through, or helping others with, this process, particularly if you may be the only candidate in your geographic area. In all areas of our jobs, there is no need to "go it alone" when there is a wealth of support within our own state.

Looking forward to seeing many of you in Wichita!

Ann Schuster

Did you know???

On March 15th the Governor will be signing a proclamation that April 2004 is School Library Media Month!

KASL Elections

Meet the candidates...

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Linda Roberts

Linda Roberts received a B.S.Ed. in Home Economics in 1972 from Pittsburg State University and a MLS in 1985 from Emporia State University. She has been active in KASL since 1985. She has presented at Fall District Workshops, Tri-Conferences, and AASL. Linda is a member of the following professional organizations: ALA; AASL; KASL; Phi Delta Kappa; and Delta Kappa Gamma. She has served on Northeast High School's Curriculum Committee and the QPA & NCA steering committees. Linda has been employed since 1985 as the library media specialist at Northeast High School, Arma, Kansas. Her professional involvement in KASL includes: Projects - Committee member, 1989-1990 and Committee chair, 1990-2003; Parliamentarian, 2003-2004; and District II Director, 1998-1999.



TREASURER: Teresa MacKay

Teresa MacKay received her B.A. in Elementary Education and LMS certification from Wichita State University. She is a member of ALA, AASL, and KASL. She was a classroom teacher for eleven years and has been a LMS for the past fifteen years. Teresa is currently the LMS at Seal Elementary School in Douglass, Kansas. She has served KASL as chair of the Professional Excellence committee, Director of District II, Secretary, and a presenter at Tri-Conference. Teresa is currently serving as Treasurer of KASL.

SECRETARY: Nora Jones

Nora Jones received a B.S. in Elementary Education in 1971 and her LMS certification in 2000 from Ft. Hays State University. She is active in the following organizations: KASL; KNEA; NEA; and McPherson Education Association. Nora has also participated in SCKLS sessions. She is currently employed as the library media specialist at Washington Elementary and Eisenhower Elementary in McPherson, Kansas. Nora is currently the Secretary of KASL.



Ballots for the KASL Officer Election will be sent via the KASL-L by Past-President, Jane Barnard around March 2. If you are not accessing the KASL-L, Judy Eller will mail out printed ballots. If you do not receive a ballot by March 5, please contact either Jane Barnard or Judy Eller. Ballots are due back to Jane Barnard by March 19 -- either return mail the printed ballots or return e-mail your vote.

Proposed Constitution/Bylaw Change

The following proposed change in the KASL Constitution/Bylaws will be voted on at the KASL general business meeting at the KASL luncheon on Friday, April 2 during the 2004 TriConference. Please read and note the change. Be ready to vote at TriConference.

KASL By-Laws: Article IV: Elections

Section 1: A State Nominating committee composed of the Immediate Past President and two other members elected by the Council shall present **two** candidates for each of the following offices: President-Elect; Secretary; and Treasurer, to be elected by the general membership of the Kansas Association of School Librarians.

The proposal is to delete the word "two" in bold type above.

Kansas Learning First Alliance

Diane Leupold
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On your behalf, KASL has joined the Kansas Learning First Alliance (KLFA). This is a nonprofit coalition of 24 Kansas professional organizations representing school boards, administrators, teachers, teacher educators, parents, the Kansas Department of Education and others. The mission of KLFA is to make Kansas FIRST in the nation in teaching and learning by improving student achievement, strengthening professional development and engaging the public in public education and student achievement efforts.

Recent activities include co-facilitating the Kansas Mathematics Education Alignment Study and related follow-up activities, staging statewide and regional seminars that identify and promote quality professional development and hosting the Good to Great Conference (Wichita, September 2003) based on the "Community Conversation" model for public engagement.

Currently KASL representatives have participated in the "public engagement" work group and several members helped as moderators or reporters at the Good to Great Conference, at which the Governor spoke.

The KLFA member organizations represent major groups in Kansas that impact teaching and learning. This is a powerful coalition and furnishes a venue for interaction and support between organizations that has already proven useful.

Learn more about KLFA at their website: <http://www.teachkansas.org/>



Look for the Handy 5 at Tri-Conference '04

Betsy Losey
blosey@ruraltel.net

The Handy 5 Marketing Committee will be presenting a session on exploring ways of using the Handy 5 Model on a regular basis, not just for major research projects. We will also have copies of *The Handy 5 Problem Solving Model* book and *The Handy 5 Toolkit* CD ROM for sale. So if you haven't had a chance to purchase your copy of either item, look us up.

The toolkit contains black line masters of materials to supplement the use of the Handy 5: bookmarks and posters, visual aids for introducing the model, a flip book to facilitate planning between the teacher and LMS, a consumable student workbook and several pages of instructional strategies arranged by steps of the model. The cost of the CD is \$15.00

As your districts begin to look for program sessions for local in-service remember that members of the committee are available to introduce your staff to this problem solving model. Check out the Handy 5 link on the KASL webpage (<http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kasl/>) for contact information for the committee members or how to purchase the book direct from Scarecrow Press.

WSU School Library Licensure Program

Wichita State will be starting its third cohort for licensure in school library media this summer. Entrance requirements for the program include a bachelor's degree, a current Kansas teaching certification or application to obtain one, and 2 years of successful teaching experience.

The program requires 21 hours of coursework plus a practicum. In addition, children's and young adult literature classes are required if the student has not already completed them. The cohort completes 1-2 courses each summer and one course each semester, completing the practicum in the summer of 2006.

The program is specifically geared to the needs of school library media programs, with an emphasis on practical, hands-on learning. The instructors all have current or previous school library media experience.

The first course, CI 716 Introduction to Library Science, will be offered starting on July 5.

An informational meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 24 2004 in room 223 of Hubbard Hall on the main WSU campus to start the sign-up process and to answer questions about the program. If you know of good teachers who might be interested in becoming a library teacher, have them contact Richard Soash, Coordinator of School Library Media Licensure (316 729-6591 or Richard.Soash@wichita.edu).

Intellectual Freedom Manual

The Intellectual Freedom Manual is online at Blue Skyways. The manual can be accessed at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kasl/ifmanual.htm>.

Project Revisions Committee

The Projects Revision Committee met at the Manhattan High School East Campus Library on July 2, 2003 to begin the finalization work of the revision of the evaluation tool. Projects Revision Committee members included Amy Brownlee, Charlya Cooley, Linda Corey, Shanna Richards, Julie Fisher and Chairperson Linda Roberts. Julie Fisher agreed to serve as the new chairperson for the coming year.

The revised evaluation tool reflects the goals, status and progress of both the library media specialist and the program as defined in *Information Power : Guidelines for School Library Media Programs*. As library media specialists, our roles have changed drastically. It is very important, therefore, that the three roles and functions of the library media specialist be clearly defined. The criteria and indicators of this evaluation document were divided into the following three major areas; Information Specialist Role, Teacher Role, and Instructional Consultant.

The committee suggests that this instrument be incorporated with and/or used as an adjunct to the evaluation policies and instruments now in place in the district. The instrument allows for an essential part of the evaluation process, that of individual priority performance indicators. These indicators are to be designed by the library media specialist and/or principal to reflect current program and school needs and objectives. The committee suggests that an optional and/or additional assessment tool be a portfolio of documents that shows the library media specialist's efforts, program and accomplishments. This portfolio may include, but is not limited to lesson plans, photos, displays, statistics, list of meetings attended, copies of presentations, self-evaluations, annual and long-range plans, budgets, utilization charts and other products of activities not easily seen during formal observations. A portfolio format will allow the evaluation to be both formative and summative. The committee further suggests that peer observation and planning be a part of the evaluation process.

Too often, the library media specialist is the only person in the building with these specific duties and evaluation by a trained library media specialist observer can be especially valuable.

Media specialists are encouraged to let their administrators know this evaluation tool exists and consider adopting it (with adaptations

The evaluation tool may be accessed on-line from the KASL website <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/kasl/>

From the Editors :

Joe Amos and Terri Snethen
KASL News Editors
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Welcome to the new electronic version of the KASL Newsletter. Over the past few months members have been working to develop a plan to bring you a quarterly newsletter while reducing the printing and mailing costs. The use of an electronic format was developed and we agreed to serve as editors. It is our hope you find the information contained here useful and easily accessible. We welcome articles from KASL members, and have two columns especially designed with the members in mind, **Member News** (where individuals can let the other members know of important life changes, marriages, births, new jobs, etc.) and **Brainstorming** (quick ideas members would share related to lesson planning, library management, organization, etc.) We welcome your input and suggestions.



KASL Technology Committee

Richard Soash
Richard.Soash@wichita.edu

Tri-Conference

Several of the KASL Technology Committee members will be presenting at Tri-Conference in Wichita on March 31-April 2.

Richard Soash will be offering a day long pre-conference on Wednesday, March 31 on Understanding by Design. Understanding by Design is a lesson creation model that focuses on creating learning units to guide students to big understandings and concepts rather than just memorizing the facts.

He will also be offering at 3:00 on Thursday “Improving Reading Scores with Technology and Graphic Organizers.” At 4:00 on Thursday, he will be offering a session on creating Kansas State Reading Assessment look-alikes.



Graphic Organizers

Many schools across Kansas have graphic organizers as an improvement strategy. Using graphic organizers is a great way to enable students to collect data and then draw conclusions, encouraging higher order thinking.

For some pre-made graphic organizers, go to <http://www.cheney268.com/Learning/Organizers/GraphicOrganizers.htm>. Most of the organizers have a Word version that you can download and have students complete with Word or you can modify them to meet your needs. To download and save the Word version of the graphic organizers, select the **(Word)** hyperlink, download and save the document to your hard drive. Then open Word and open the document. If you want students to use

the document, it is always good to make the document “Read only” so they do not modify it. To make the document read only, right click on it and select Properties. At the bottom of the window, check the **Read-only** box.

You can easily create your own graphic organizers with Word. Use the Tables feature (see <http://www.cheney268.com/Training/Word/Tables/Tables.html> for a Tables guide) and then turn off the lines you do not want. This allows students to type directly into the cells of the table.

Some of the documents also have accompanying Inspiration templates. Download the template and save it to a location on the server where students can access it. To download and save the Inspiration version of the graphic organizers, select the **(Inspiration)** hyperlink, download and save the document to your hard drive on the C:\Program Files\Inspiration xx\Inspiration Templates folder. It will then appear with your other Inspiration templates. You must copy this file to every machine if you wish to use it with a class.

All templates are designed for Inspiration 7.0 or higher. You can change them to work with Inspiration 6.0 by changing the extension from **.ist** to **.ins**

For an Inspiration guide, go to <http://www.cheney268.com/Training/Inspiration/INSPIRATION.html>. You can create or modify your own templates.

To create a template, make the organizer. In Inspiration 6.0, go to **File** and **Save as Template** and save the template. In Inspiration 7.0, go to Utilities and Template Wizard.

After you have create a template, you can either just put it on the server where students can get to it (after making it read-only – see above) or copy it to **C:\Program Files\Inspiration xx\Inspiration Templates** folder on each machine.

Membership Committee

Peggy Golden, peggolden@hotmail.com

KASL NEEDS YOUR HELP!

As Chair of the Membership Committee, I would like to invite you to do what you can to help KASL expand its membership numbers. Do you know someone who is not a member? Become their mentor and encourage them to join. As a member you already know the peace of mind that comes from knowing there are many people out there who can give you whatever support you may need. Besides the networking available, there are many other benefits of being a member. Some of these include:

- [KASL News](#) (an online newsletter and print journal) to keep you up-to-date on Kansas happenings
- A membership directory to help you locate any school media specialist in the state of Kansas
- Opportunities for scholarships to attend library school and AASL conferences
- Fall District Workshops with opportunities for professional and technical growth
- Tri-Conference every Spring that offers more opportunities to learn and network
- Summer Institute for school library media specialists
- A web page (on Blue Skyways) that promotes school library activities and has valuable links to sites such as copyright laws, intellectual freedom concerns, etc.
- A List where you can share ideas and ask for help from other media specialists across the state
- A voice at ALA and AASL national conventions through KASL leadership
- An involvement with legislative issues that concern media centers: filtering, Internet software, censorship issues, budget concerns...
- Be an advocate for school library media centers and help promote the important role the media center has in the school setting.

Take advantage of the next few minutes to pick up the phone and call someone you know is not a member yet and encourage them to join.

District Workshop News

Mark your calendars now for Fall Workshops. The District Directors are busy planning fun, interesting, and useful programs. Be sure to attend for new ideas, helpful hints, networking with your colleagues, and door prizes. If you can't attend the Workshop in your own district then go to one of the others. In fact, why not attend more than one to learn even more, meet new people and have twice as much fun! Get even more out of the day by being a presenter. Contact the district director and volunteer to share your expertise. If you're asked to present or run for Assistant Director, SAY YES.

District Directors and Assistant Directors meet during KASL Council meetings to make sure the fall workshops provide you with the opportunity for professional growth.

DISTRICT I - September 18, 2004 - Harmon High School
George Blume, District Director ; Joe Amos, Assistant Director

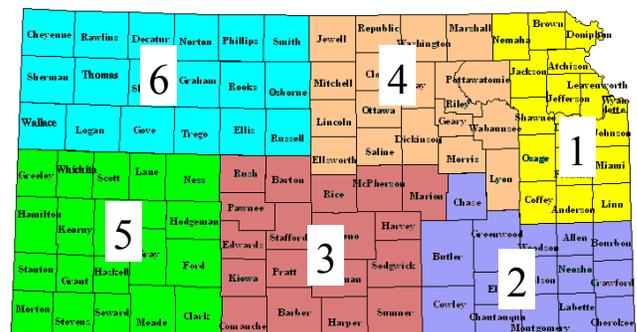
DISTRICT II - October 9, 2004 - Oswego High School
Shirley Douglas, District Director ; Anita Boese, Assistant Director

DISTRICT III - September 11, 2004 - Cunningham High School
Kaylyn Keating, District Director ; Laura Soash, Assistant Director

DISTRICT IV - September 25, 2004, Ft. Riley Middle School
Latane Kreiser, District Director ; Mary Harmon, Assistant Director

DISTRICT V - October 16, 2004, Satanta High School
Rita Shogren, District Director ; Beth Cook, Assistant Director

DISTRICT VI - September 25, Eisenhower Elementary
Jane Burton, District Director ; Kathleen Fulwider, Assistant Director



News from AASL

AFFILIATE ASSEMBLY

Affiliate Assembly is the “grass-roots” component of AASL with delegates from all the affiliated state organizations who bring their concerns and commendations to the attention of the AASL Board. Affiliate Assembly meetings are held at both ALA Midwinter and Annual Conferences. The Midwinter meeting this year was held in San Diego on Sunday, January 11. Kansas was well represented by current KASL President Susan Ryan and President-Elect Ann Schuster as well as Joanne Proctor, Region IX Director-Elect. Delegates discussed how the No Child Left Behind act is affecting school libraries, the retention of librarians, and involvement of members in professional organizations.

AASL KANSAS CITY

With almost 3500 attendees, including exhibitors, the 11th AASL Conference in Kansas City was a huge success with Kansas librarians the fourth largest group in attendance. Attendees laughed (and cried) along with the General Session keynote speaker Bertice Berry who spoke about how important librarians have been to her. The Exploratorium was well attended and provided an opportunity to view a wide variety of displays. The Taste of Kansas City gala held at Union Station was the kick-off for the @ your library school campaign.

AASL 12th CONFERENCE PITTSBURGH

Plan ahead to attend the next AASL Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania October 5th through October 9th, 2005. The theme of the conference will be “Every Student Succeeds @ Your Library.”

ALA ELECTION INFO

- ALA PRESIDENT : Did you know that a school librarian is running for ALA President? Barbara Strippling, former AASL president, is running against Michael Gorman. To learn more about the candidates visit <http://www.ala.org/ala/ourassociation/governanceb/electioninfo/alaelectioninfo.htm>
- This year ALA members will be able to vote on-line.
- In the past, AASL members have not voted in large numbers. Maybe this is the year to change that.
- AASL REGION IX DIRECTOR-ELECT : KASL’s own Janice Ostrom (former KASL President) is running for AASL Region IX (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado) Director-Elect against Colorado’s Betty Bankhead.

REMEMBER TO VOTE

Member News . . .

Janice Ostrom is a candidate for the American Association of School Librarians Region IX Director-Elect position. This position represents Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming on the AASL Board.

Congratulations to the following Blue Valley Librarians:

- **Ann Schuster** (Blue River Elementary), **Ronda Hassig** (Harmony Middle School), **Becca Stith** (Blue Valley West High School) and **Natalie Lindsay** (Mission Trail Elementary) obtained National Board Certification.
- **Nancy Driscoll** and students from Liberty View Elementary are featured on the cover of the newest World Almanac catalog.
- **Wendy Hardy** (Prairie Star Elementary) was selected as the Blue Valley elementary teacher nominee for Master Teacher.

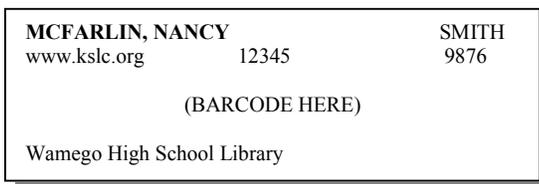
Susan McLeland (smcleland@usd273.k12.ko.us) will be retiring at the end of the school year after 30 years as Library Media Specialist at Beloit Elementary School in Beloit. She served as a K-12 librarian for six years in Otis, Colorado, before moving to Beloit. She wishes to thank the teachers and librarians for years of wonderful workshops, and the support they have provided through the years.

Brainstorming

Kansas Library Card

To ensure that all our students have home access to the great databases supported through the Kansas State Library and KAN-ED, we here at WHS-LMC have activated KSLC accounts for all the students (and faculty who ask). To make it easier for them (to keep track of) and for us (for renewals next fall), we have added the web address (www.kslc.org) and individual PIN number to their circulation patron record so that it prints out on their barcode. Here's how we did it:

1. We asked the HS administrative office staff to print off a list of students with their birth dates (if students did not include a middle name, we were "creative" - if there was no birth date, we waited until school began to ask those students)
2. We signed students up for KSLC accounts, keeping track of the PIN numbers on the office list.
3. We then used two of the user defined fields in the patron record (we use Spectrum) for
 - a) the web address, and
 - b) their PIN number
4. We then printed the student barcodes including the two user defined fields so that the barcode looked like this :



The name in the upper right corner is their Seminar teacher (user defined field 3); the number below is their patron barcode number (our food service also uses this for their automated lunch number!). The 12345 in the center is their PIN number (from user defined #2), the web address is from user defined #3.

Nancy McFarlin, Wamego High School Library
mcfarlinn@usd320.com

Brainstorming (continued on p. 12)

Brainstorming (continued from p. 12)

Table Threads

If you have frequent meetings in your library and struggle with getting the tables back in the right places, here's my idea. Position the tables exactly where you want them. Take a small stitch in the carpet by one table leg with heavy duty thread of a color that blends with the carpet but is noticeable. Tie a secure knot in the thread. Do this with all the tables. Then, when it's time to put the tables back, just look for the thread and you'll know where to put the tables. If you to a major rearrangement, you can remove the threads and position them where you need them.

Barbara Karlin, Heusner Elementary, Salina
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Faculty and Staff Art Show

We contacted the art department this fall and arranged to host a staff art show in the Library Media Center in December before the holidays. Then we emailed the staff and invited their participation. Some staff recommended their colleagues, and we contacted them personally. We submitted a requisition for several district (locked) art display cases to be brought over. The artists set up their own projects; some were for sale; others were not. People who wanted to purchase items contacted the artist personally. The opening day of the show we held a reception for the artists and invited the rest of the staff. It was a lot of fun, and we learned that some of our colleagues had hidden talents! The exhibit lasted one week, and everyone agreed that we should do it again next year!

Chris Larson, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village
ealarson@smsd.org



Hands Off!

When I do large group instruction in the computer lab and am starting with a demonstration, I have the students turn off their computer monitors. This eliminates the playing with the mouse and messing about with the keyboard-no visual stimulation except me up at the front of the room!

Becky Blick, Washburn Rural High School
Topeka
blickbec@usd437.net

Open Library Night

In response to a parent survey last spring, Prairie Star Elementary library media center has made some changes in their Open Library Night. Open Library had been a monthly offering of 2 hours where families from the PSE learning community could use the resources, computers and check out materials at their school library. Sometimes a special storytelling opportunity was planned. After several years of declining attendance, a patron survey revealed that students were so busy with outside activities that many were unable to take advantage of this evening. The format was changed for the 2003-2004 school year from once a month to a fall, winter and spring schedule. It was also decided to add special programs in an attempt to draw more students and their parents. The results have been great.

This fall, Prairie Star hosted students from Blue Valley West High School's Animal Outreach program. These students brought live animals including a snake, a ferret, and a tarantula and presented an interactive session on animal behavior, habitat, and care.

(Open Library Night continued on p. 14)

Brainstorming (continued from p. 13)

In January, the program focused on Lewis and Clark with two modern day explorers who have followed the Lewis and Clark Trail by bicycle. Rex Garrelts and Mark Viets discussed their trip, shared TV interviews that occurred along the way, and their interesting web site.

The spring program, in April, will feature a 14-year-old magician from Belton, MO.

Wendy Hardy, Prairie Star Elementary, Leawood, KS
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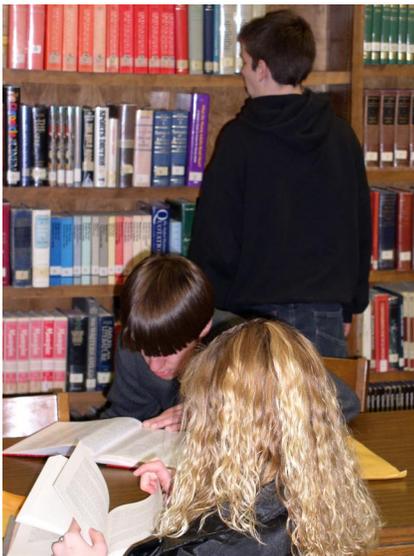
Teen Issues Freshman Research Project

Martha House
Council Grove High School
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Council Grove High School has a great new Freshman English teacher, Amber Helm, who developed the following research project for her students with a teeny tiny bit of input from me. We started talking about this two months ago so it took some time to develop, but now it is in place for as long as we want to use it.

Amber introduced the project by showing the video TEEN FILES: SURVIVING HIGH SCHOOL, which examines seven teen issues: suicide, self esteem, teen pregnancy, eating disorders, depression, drug or alcohol abuse, and cliques. The video immediately interested the students, and they each picked one of those issues and paired off, though we gave them the opportunity to work alone if they functioned better that way.

For the next three days, Ms. Helm's freshmen did various library activities built around their teen issue. I had developed worksheets on each of the issues. For example, if a student chose Drug Abuse as her topic, she began on the first day with a worksheet which walks her through finding a book on the library about drug abuse and finding reference sources in the library and online; she spent the second day taking a look at SIRS and InfoTrac resources on drug abuse; and the third day, she did a web quest that asked students to evaluate web pages on their teen issue.



Left: Students use print resources to research teen issues
Above: Students evaluate web sites used in research

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We were pleased with the results, though the activities took three days of class time. The first day took most students longer than a fifty-minute period, but the second day took about ten or fifteen minutes, so they were able to catch up. The third day's web quest activity, where the freshmen chose three web pages and evaluated them, would have gone better if I had gone over a sample evaluation with them before they started. Of course, then the activity would have gone into a fourth day.

When Ms. Helm's classes began to research their papers the following week, they knew exactly what they needed to do to find information on their teen issue in the library so that they could write a short research paper. The research paper itself was broken down into freshman size steps so that students could gain experience taking notes, putting together bibliography cards, outlining, and writing the paper itself.

Freshmen, by their very nature, have difficulty following precise instruction and they tend to insist that they can come up with an easier way to do things on their own. So, Miss Helm was rather frustrated with the experience at times. However, she had the assignment broken up into such tiny portions that it was both man-

ageable and impossible to

Students used a variety of online resources for this project

cheat. She

asked for everything, including copies of sources, to be handed in together with the paper in a manila envelope.

As for me, as the librarian, I feel confident that the majority of the freshman class now knows how to look up a book in the library, use reference sources, find an online magazine, and search the web more effectively. I even issued Kansas Library



Cards! The library activities were relevant; both to the students' own interest in teen issues, and to the research assignment they needed to complete. The teen issues activities built on the freshman library orientation we conducted at the beginning of the year, and better prepared the students for research activities they will need to do in the future.

Ms. Helm assists

Editors' note: Martha included many handouts, guides and other documents with her article. Due to space restrictions we could not include them all. Please contact Martha for more information.