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Finding it on the Web

Searching the Web has become a national pastime. Favorite techniques and sites are as individual as hairstyles. Finding a site you feel comfortable with and enjoy using is a challenge. I think it's important to understand the approach used to organize and access the Web's information when evaluating sites. We all know there is just too much information available for us to manage: web sites are like pebbles on a beach, each one looks great when the waves wash over it but there are too many to collect, and once they dry they're just ordinary rocks.

I'll end the watery comparison there and focus on two sites I think are useful and reputable. Both present themselves as "library" sites, and act as gateways to information. The first, [http://www.refdesk.com](http://www.refdesk.com) was created by the son of a librarian. I'm always suspicious of web sites developed by individuals, but this one strives to be accurate and objective. The ads included are unobtrusive; ads are a necessary evil, we know there must be money to support the site. Emphasis here is access to today's information organized by categories. There are great links to
newspapers, television and radio sites. The choices you face when you log on are overwhelming (again like glossy pebbles on the beach). The site offers access to much of the best that's available on the web.

The second site is a familiar one, the Internet Public Library [http://www.ipl.org](http://www.ipl.org). This is one of the first sites I searched several years ago when the Internet was still being defined as "a cloud." The site was established and is maintained by the School of Information and Library Studies at the University of Michigan, supported by grants and corporate sponsorship. This offers the advantage of a site free from advertising. Links are provided to bibliographic citations applauding the IPL, meant to reassure you that this site is legitimate. Not surprisingly the site is organized like a library. Using this site is like wandering into a library and having lots of help available without actually having to speak to anyone. There is online access to 2300 serial titles which is very impressive. At each step of the search the resources used are identified.

What conclusions did I reach about these two sites? They're both great. The instant information available with the click of a mouse at [www.refdesk.com](http://www.refdesk.com) is fantastic. The colors are bright and the choices are many. This site is like an almanac that's updated daily with a great bunch of categories to chose from. My allegiance to [www.ipl.org](http://www.ipl.org) hasn't wavered. It offers a different approach to finding information and allows you to make an informed choice: links to search engines are provided which include descriptions of each engine. I almost expect to hear some nice Paul Simon music crooning in the background. Both sites reaffirm a researcher's dream: getting there is half the fun.

-- Elizabeth Rogers, Head of Reference & ILL

**Youth Services Spring Conference Set for April 7**

"Family Matters: Inviting Ways for Families to Enjoy the Library" is the theme of the YSS Spring Conference which will be held on Friday, April 7 in Glens Falls. A full day of activities will include workshops such as "Discover Crafts and Activities for Summer Programs," "How to Put the Internet to Work for You," "Family Storytimes," and "Does Your Library Need a YA Summer Reading Program?"

William Sleator, author of *The Spirit Mouse*, *Oddballs*, *House of Stairs*, *Interstellar Pig*, and *Among the Dolls* will be the luncheon speaker and will be on hand to autograph books. This would be an ideal conference to attend with CEF continuing education scholarship help. A local car pool will be arranged as necessary. For information about the conference or scholarship help to help defray attendance costs, call Kathie LaBombard at 563-5190 ext. 21.
First Aid and Preventative Medicine for Public Access Computers: Highlights from the North Country 3R'S Workshop

What do you do when your public access computer acts up? Shut it down and put a sign on the monitor? Call your local, but extremely busy, computer guru? Library staff members learned some basic rescue skills on January 11, when they gathered at Clinton Community College to hear from veteran computer instructor Tricia Edgcomb.

One of the most interesting and useful things Tricia showed us was how to update a virus program. She then provided us with actual viruses to show what the computer would do when it encountered them! To round out the morning, we tested our Internet connections and got an inside look at how the web works. Using some simple commands we were able to test how quickly a remote computer responded, and also trace the route our message took to get to its destination.

The afternoon session was devoted to special software that can prevent users from tampering with the public access computer. Two such programs are Master Lock by Fortres Grand and Deep Freeze by Hyper Technologies. Librarians may be interested in trying free evaluation versions of these programs available at www.fortres.com and www.hypertec.com.

-- Betsy Brooks, Automation Librarian

Producing Catalog Cards with a PC

In the course of my travels, a number of librarians have asked me if I know of a good software program for producing catalog cards using a personal computer. Some librarians are typing the cards for donated and odd books, while some are still using the old Apples. The general feeling is that there must be a better way!

Automating circulation will eventually remove the need for cards altogether, but until that day comes you may want to consider purchasing a software program to automate this task. One program that is currently in use in at least one member library is Librarian's Helper: Version 5. This DOS-based program produces professional-looking cards and labels, and prints them to continuous feed card stock on a laser or tractor-fed dot matrix printer. The program costs about $150 and can be purchased from Scarecrow Press or the Highsmith Catalog.

A more expensive Windows program, which also prints to laser or dot-matrix printers, is available from Right On Programs. Called Catalog Card Creator, it costs $199. For more information, see www.rightonprograms.com or call (516) 424-7777.
One program that claims to print cards on inkjet printers using common card stock is PC Card Catalog from Diakon Systems. This program costs $189 and requires a Pentium computer with 16 MB of RAM to run. For information, write to DIAKON Systems, 3801 Glenmont Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76133-2955, or visit [www.diakonsystems.com](http://www.diakonsystems.com).

If anybody has had any experience to report regarding these programs, please call me at 1-800-221-1980, x35, and I'll be glad to share it in a future newsletter issue.

-- Betsy Brooks, Automation Librarian

**Celebrate National Library Week 2000**

April 9-15, 2000 has been set aside to celebrate the contributions of all types of libraries and librarians. Watch your van delivery for free posters and bookmarks sporting this year's theme: "Read! Learn! Connect @ the Library."

The ALA web site ([www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)) lists these celebratory ideas:

* Post a National Library Week message on your web site

* Answer the telephone with a cheery "Happy National Library Week!"

* Invite local officials and legislators for a special National Library Week tour or program that highlights the many ways your library serves its constituents. Invite library users to meet their elected representatives and share what the library means to them. Take plenty of pictures!

* Ask local businesses to display National Library Week posters and give away bookmarks. The dates can be trimmed off the poster for longer use.

For more information, visit the ALA web site at the address above or contact the Public Information Office, American Library Association. Telephone: 800-545-2433 ext. 5044/5041 FAX: (312)944-8520.

E-mail: [pio@ala.org](mailto:pio@ala.org) or [www.ala.org/nlw2000/](http://www.ala.org/nlw2000/)

**Jump On These Continuing Education Opportunities!**

Beat those winter blahs and plan to join your colleagues at one or more continuing education events. CEF now offers a scholarship program to support the attendance of member library staff and trustees at training workshops. A schedule of training opportunities on offer this spring is listed below. For more details about
receiving financial support through the scholarship program or to request an application, call Kathie LaBombard at 563-5190 ext. 21 or e-mail labombar@cefls.org.

April

3 NC3R's presents "Not Quite Introduction to Word" with Tricia Edgecomb; Canton College, Canton $15 (includes lunch).

4 NC3R's presents "Not Quite Introduction to Excel" with Tricia Edgecomb; Canton College, Canton $15 (includes lunch).

5 NC3R's presents PowerPoint training; Canton College, Canton $15 (includes lunch).

7 Youth Services Spring Conference, "Family Matters: Inviting Ways For Families to Enjoy the Library," Glens Falls, NYLA $60. YSS members, $65 all others before 3/10; $65 and $70 respectively after 3/10.

12 "What's New in Children's Literature and How to Use It In Your Program," Albany Bureau of Education and Research, $129.

13 "How to Design Eye-Catching Brochures, Newsletters, Ad, Reports," Burlington, VT., CareerTrack, $179.


MEMBER LIBRARY NEWS

Wells Memorial Library, Upper Jay

Stop by and check out the library's new selection of career and job search books. Up to date information is available on a wide range of topics from resume writing to civil service exam preparation.

On Saturday, March 18, the Children's Activity Hour will feature watercolor painting with Grace Potthast at 1:00 p.m. This program is made possible with funding from a DEA grant from the Arts Council for the Northern Adirondacks. On Tuesday, March 21, "Mom and Me" will feature show and tell at 1:00 p.m. On Saturday, March 26, the 1918 version of Charlie Chaplin's "The Immigrant" will be shown at 2:30.

On Saturday, April 8 and 29, the Arts Council for the Northern Adirondacks will sponsor an arts program for children by Grace Potthast at 1:00 p.m. Library
volunteers will be honored on Saturday, April 15 at 9:00 a.m. The library's third annual easter egg hunt will be held on Saturday, March 22 at 11:30 a.m. If you cannot attend one of these library activities, please stop by and say hello!

--Peggy Swartout, Director

Wilmington E.M. Cooper Memorial Library

The Wilmington Library now has a handicapped access ramp with a beautiful rod iron railing thanks to the successful fund raising of the "Friends of the Library" and all those who contributed to it. The basement is now a useable space after much renovation and cleanup and will soon be home to our childrens' corner. We are busy making furniture (child sized) and painting (bright colors) to make a child's world of books downstairs. Moving the children downstairs has freed up a space where we will have a section for Wilmington history and our Adirondack collection. We have received a grant from the Lake Placid Education Foundation to help establish a Wilmington Historical Section with displays of old photographs that document the early years of the town. The grant will also expand our collection of Adirondack literature.

Thanks to the New York State Council on the Arts Decentralization program, we have received a Developing Community Arts Grant administered locally by the Arts Council for the Northern Adirondacks. With this grant, we will provide a six week series of art lessons with a certified art teacher for children ages 7-14 during the summer. We are busy with a Saturday morning story hour for preschool children, a book group that meets here once a month to discuss a chosen book, and a quilting group that meet twice a month to sew and visit, as well as our library board meetings which are held at the library every month.

-- Meg Stone, Director

Publishers' Symbols Contest Winners

Drum roll, please. The following readers took part in Ann Garcia's symbol quiz featured in our last issue and have each won a mug of candy kisses.

Nancy Haley, Upper Jay

Kathy Cayea, PPL

CEF Technical Services Dept.

Jane Bouchard, Schroon Lake
Jane Ryan, West Chazy

Paine Memorial Library, Willsboro

Altona Reading Room

Waverly Public Library

And Now the Answers:

1. Pocket Books
2. Scribner
3. Bantam
4. Crown
5. Holt Rhinehart Winston
6. Warner Books
7. Knopf
8. Random House
9. Harcourt Brace Janovich
10. Avon
11. Berkely Prime Crime
12. Henry Holt
13. Viking
14. Harper Collins
15. New American Library
16. Crown
17. Simon & Schuster
18. Hutchinson
19. Morrow
20. Dove
21. Scribner
22. Poseidon Press
23. Pantheon
24. Donald I. Fine
25. A Modern Giant Library
26. Ballantine Books

Here are two fun sites for kids and parents.

www.pbs.org/wgbh/arthur
This is the site for Arthur the Aardvaark of book and PBS fame. The site has computer wallpaper, games and bookmarks of Arthur and his friends that can be printed out for children to color.

www.eduplace.com/tales

At this site, kids add words to make up lots of funny stories. There are also links for sites with activities for parents to do with kids and for parents who home school.

-- Kathie LaBombard, CEF Youth Services Librarian

Children's Book Awards for 2000 Announced at ALA Midwinter Meeting

The winners of the Newbery and Caldecott medals were announced at the ALA Midwinter meeting in San Antonio, Texas. I was thrilled to be present for the press conference! Announcements are made to gasps of surprise and much applause. The air in the room as the press conference starts is electric, especially among the representatives of the publishers of the nominated books. Winning an award can easily make a publisher's year! It can safely be compared to the Academy Awards of children's books and publishing. The presenters did a masterful job of building the suspense for each award, so I will try to do the same.

The winner of the Margaret A. Edwards award for lifetime achievement in writing for teens went to Chris Crutcher, author of such books as Staying Fat for Sarah Byrnes. The first Michael L. Printz award was given at the meeting to honor excellence in literature for ages 12 - 18. Honor books were: Hard Love by Ellen Wittlinger, Skellig by David Almond and Speak by Laurie Halse Anderson. And the Winner Was: Walter Dean Myers for Monster.

The Coretta Scott King award is given yearly for writing achievement by an African-American writer. The honor books this year were: Francie by Karen English, Black Hands, White Sails: The Story of African-American Whalers by Patricia and Frederick McKissack, and Monster by Walter Dean Myers. And the Winner Was: Bud, Not Buddy by Christopher Paul Curtis. The King award also honors illustrators. Honor books were: My Rows and Piles of Coins illustrated by E.B. Lewis and Black Cat illustrated by Christopher Myers. And the Winner Was: Jerry Pinkney for In the Time of the Drums.

After the suspense has built to unbearable levels, the Caldecott and Newbery books are finally announced. This year's Caldecott honor books for illustration are: Sector 7 illustrated by David Wiesner, The Ugly Duckling illustrated by Jerry Pinkney, When Sophie Gets Angry - Really, Really Angry illustrated by Molly Bang and A Child's
Calendar illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman. And the Winner Was: Simms Tayback for Joseph Had a Little Overcoat, based on a Yiddish story about a tailor who recreates his overcoat, as it wears out, into smaller and smaller garments. The Newbery honor books for literature for children were: Getting Near to Baby by Audrey Couloumbis, 26 Fairmount Avenue by Tomie dePaola, and Our Only May Amelia by Jennifer L. Holm. And the Winner Was: Christopher Paul Curtis for Bud, Not Buddy, which also won the Coretta Scott King award.

-- Kathie LaBombard, Youth Services Librarian, CEF

**Featured Library: Wells Memorial Library of Upper Jay**

The Wells Memorial Library, Upper Jay, lies along the AuSable River, surrounded by the majestic Adirondack Mountains. Like so many towns along the AuSable River, Upper Jay was a hub of industry at the turn of the century, with its own doctor, mortician, general store, wheelwright, and carding and grain mills. In 1901 Wells Memorial Library opened. The library was the result of generosity (the Wallis Craig Smiths donated the land and had the library built) and necessity. Because road conditions made travel difficult during many months of the year, the area had a need for a central place to hold social, educational and cultural functions, as well as to provide books and information to residents.

Although still a historic place, Wells Memorial Library has kept pace with changing times. The library offers computer access, fax and copying services, job search information, and audio and video rentals. Organizations such as the garden club continue to meet at the library and it remains the focal point of the community. The library hosts many events throughout the year, including Tea and Talk programs, Children's Activity Hour, periodic musical and other events, art exhibits, and seasonal events such as Christmas caroling.

**News and Notes**

Sara Lehman, Director of the Champlain Memorial Library, died at her home on February 3. Throughout her nine year tenure as director, Sara was interested in the effect her local library could have on the lives of community residents of all ages. This was reflected in her willingness to try new services for her patrons. Sara and her volunteers ran a very active children's program that included story hours, special events and summer reading activities. Her dedication will be sorely missed by the CEF library community.

Celebrate the Library of Congress Bicentennial!
The Library of Congress invites all public libraries to take part in the national celebration of the Library of Congress Bicentennial. On April 24, the first day of issue, the US Postal Service will release a commemorative postage stamp at the Library of Congress in Washington.

From April 21 through May 31, libraries around the country can hold their own ceremonies as "second day" issue sites. This is a great opportunity to invite your member of Congress, local dignitaries or celebrities to take part in a second day issue event. You might consider honoring a high-profile community member or collaborating with interested organizations to exemplify the ALA's year 2000 theme "Libraries Build Community." Consider using your second-day event to highlight an area celebration, or a programming series, to unveil new library equipment, dedicate a new collection, or to feature an element of your service that you would like to call attention to.

More information about the commemorative second day issue project, including an image of the stamp design can be found at: www.loc.gov/bicentennial/items_stamp.html. For a complete information kit, contact Kathy Woodrell at 800-707-7145.

North Hudson Opens Reading Center

The North Hudson Reading Center held an Opening Celebration on Sunday, February 27. Fifty visitors stopped by the Reading Center to check out an impressive collection of books and videos for all ages. The Reading Center, which is located in the Town Hall, is "open for business" with Mrs. Flora Ingalls as Director. Many volunteers have made the Reading Center possible. They include: Eleanor McKenzie, Pat Shoch, Jean McKee, Virginia Kugler, April and Brenda Bessey, Chris Gero, Lucille Paustian, Maureen and Donna Moses, Jim Ingalls, and Jeanette and George Trumbull.

Goff-Nelson Memorial Library Dedicates Children's Room

Goff-Nelson Memorial Library Director Chalice Dechene posed for a photo with Franklin County Legislator Paul Maroun and CEF Director Mary Brown in the Alberta Moody Memorial Room which was dedicated on Thursday, January 27. This generous addition to the library houses a reading room for children. To complete their new look, the library has recently installed new carpeting and a computer center which will go online in the near future. The center features five public access computers that will be networked directly to the local school.

First Central Library Members' Committee Meeting Held
Most readers are aware that the Plattsburgh Public Library is designated as the "Central Library" for the CEF Library System. However, many of you may not realize exactly what that means. As a "central library", PPL is tasked with augmenting the services of CEF's member libraries, and state funding is provided to PPL to help us fill your needs.

When you don't have the resources to provide a customer with an answer to a question, dial 1-800-347-5553! We have four librarians that have a wealth of "reference" knowledge and, as a central library, we have many more resources available to us than most member libraries do.

In order to perform our responsibilities as Central Library more effectively, PPL needs input from member libraries regarding our services. In an effort to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, a Central Library Members' Committee has been formed. The first meeting of this new committee was held on Monday, March 20th in the PPL Auditorium. The committee elected officers and covered a variety of issues such as: assistance from member libraries with central library collection development, the level of customer service expected from central library staff, a survey of member libraries regarding collection strengths and central library services.

Please contact one of the committee members in your area for more information: Jeanette Hotchkiss (Chateaugay Memorial Library), Maureen Johns (Black Watch Memorial Library, Ticonderoga), Edie Morelock (Mooers Free Library), Anne Minter O'Donnell (PPL), Lesley Paul (Keene Valley Library Assoc.), Jane Ryan (Dodge Library, West Chazy), and Betsy Whitefield (Saranac Lake Free Library).

-- Anne Minter O'Donnell, Director, PPL

Adult Literacy Funding Opportunity

Application packets for the FY 2000 Adult Literacy Grant will be coming your way soon. This state aid grant program funds library literacy activities offered in collaboration with another local literacy organization. Public libraries may apply for grants up to $20,000 to purchase books and AV materials, train adult education professionals, conduct family literacy programs, or offer computer assisted instruction. If you are interested in collaborating on a project with CEF and a local literacy provider, or for more information on project ideas, please call Julie Wever at 563-5190 x 18.

Adirondack Storyteller Encore
By popular demand, Bill Smith, our favorite folklorist, will present five programs in area libraries this spring. To book a presentation of songs and "tall tales" that will be enjoyed by the entire family, please call Julie Weyer at 563-5190 x. 18. These programs are offered at no charge to member libraries on a "first call, first booked basis" so call early!

From the Director's Desk

Are you looking for more money to improve your building? Do you need more technology resources? Come to Albany with us on May 14th. The Regents have picked libraries as one of their funding priorities this year and have asked the Legislature for significant increases in State Aid for library construction and access to technology. If we lobby hard, we have an excellent chance of seeing an increase this year. This means that libraries with expansion or modernization projects in mind or code issues to be addressed will be able to get more state aid. At present, CEF receives $18,000 system wide for library construction. This is a drop in the bucket compared to the needs of local libraries. The Regents propose $230,000 each year for five years for CEF. Now, that's more like it!

The Regents also are recommending increased funding for electronic access. If this portion of the bill is successful, CEF will get additional money to make technology and the Internet more affordable in your library. This also is important as we all struggle to purchase new computers and wiring, keep our skills up to date, and pay for Internet connections.

Please discuss these proposals with your Board and consider taking these steps:

* Come to Library Advocacy Day in Albany on Tuesday, March 14. When Kathie LaBombard calls your library to ask for some Trustees to join us in Albany, plan to join our delegation. Contact Kathie at 563-5190 ext. 21 for car pool information.

* Pass a Board resolution expressing your support of the Regents' proposals and send it to your Senator and Assembly representative. Visit your legislators here in your home district.

* Call your legislators and tell them you support library funding; follow up by asking for information on progress they have made to secure it.

* Get your community leaders to write letters of support for more library funding.

* Invite your legislators to a special program or event, or to meet with the staff and board members to review your needs.
The legislative "season" may be short this year (hey - I'm an optimist!) so we need to keep libraries in the forefront of decision makers' minds through June, or until the budget is adopted. We dream of legislators who will stand up in their party caucus and say, "Libraries are important to the people in my district; I would like to see these appropriations go forward." If we each keep after them a little bit, that will happen! Thank you for your help!

--Mary A. Brown, Director

Please register your support for library funding by visiting your local legislator in their home offices, or by writing, calling or emailing them!

Senator Ronald B. Stafford  
501 State Capitol Building  
Albany, New York 12249  
455-2811  
79 Hammond Lane  
Plattsburgh, New York 12901  
561-2430

Assemblyman Chris Ortloff  
LOB 450  
Albany, New York 12248  
455-5943  
112 U.S. Oval, Suite 1000  
Plattsburgh, New York 12903  
562-1986  
89 W. Main St.  
Malone, New York 12953  
483-9930  
email: ortloffc@assembly.state.ny.us

Assemblywoman Betty Little  
LOB 324  
Albany, New York 12248  
455-5565
NORPAC on the Net

The North Country is now online! The North Country 3R's unveiled its latest product, ICEPAC, with an address of [http://www.icepac.net](http://www.icepac.net). ICEPAC will allow anyone with Internet access to search holdings of the public, school and academic libraries in our region. This is the first time that this information has been available in a single site. There will be an interlibrary loan component to ICEPAC in the near future. ICEPAC is a project of the North Country 3R's Council and is funded by an LSTA grant.

Book Reviews

*The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy. "You just have to go with the flow on this one, and not worry about trying to keep the characters and plot straight from the beginning. It's one of those books where you learn what you need to know as you go along until it all becomes clear. I have a hard time not being "in" on the story from the start, but this one was worth sticking it out to the end as the plot is revealed slowly".

Kathie LaBombard, CEF

*Girl With a Pearl Earring* by Tracy Chevalier. "This book takes a fictionalized look behind the scenes of Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer's 17th century household. The painstakingly developed story is told from the perspective of Griet, a 16 year old girl who is hired as Vermeer's assistant and eventually poses for one of the painter's most fascinating works - Girl with a Pearl Earring. This was a real departure from my usual strict diet of English mysteries but I found the premise intriguing, gave it a try and was thoroughly rewarded."

Julie Wever, CEF

*Plainsong* by Kent Haruf. "Using a cast of unlikely companions, Haruf tells a tale of life in a small town on the Colorado plains. This is a story about the strength of family and the process of drawing people together into a family unit. Descriptions of the plains and the lifestyles of the characters make this a very nice read. It's a joy to watch the connections among these characters develop while the plains imagery adds a dimension to the story."

Elizabeth Rogers, CEF
*Hometown* by Tracey Kidder. "This story of Northampton, Mass. is told through the eyes of a police sergeant on his daily (or nightly) rounds. I listened to this story on a CEF audio tape and was swept away into the warmth and humor of a committed and caring cop looking after the community he grew up in. Anyone with affection for small towns or who participates in emergency services will enjoy this book.

Harry Potter has arrived on audio tape and the stories are great! I can't wait to get into my car for more adventures amidst an unlikely assortment of witches, wizards and unicorns. I'd like one of those disappearing cloaks for myself!"

Mary A. Brown, CEF

**Think Spring! Contribute to the Trailblazer!**

Thanks to all of this month's contributors - our newsletter is growing with each issue. If you have ideas or suggestions for articles to be included in future issues, please let us know.

Julie Wever, 563-5190 x 18  e-mail: wever@cefls.org

Barb Deyo, Typing/Layout