

UNT Backs Off Library Cuts For Now

Late last month, the announcement that the library of the University of North Texas (UNT) in Denton would have to cut \$1.7 million from its materials budget sent staff and students around the campus into an uproar, with students and faculty flocking to defend a library system that they see as key to their success as scholars. While UNT Provost Warren Burrgrren has walked those statements back and laid immediate concerns about budget cuts to rest, the controversy started a conversation on the campus about how the library should be funded that isn't dying down, even as cuts to the library budget are halted or postponed.

In late November, UNT dean of libraries Martin Halbert received an email informing him that the library would need to find \$1.7 million in its budget to cover the costs of employee benefits. Those costs, it was explained, would no longer be paid from UNT's general fund, but be the responsibility of the library, a decision that Halbert was informed would be retroactive to September 1 of this year. The email prompted Halbert to meet with faculty mem-

bers to explain why UNT's libraries—which had a budget of \$16.1 million in 2012—would have to make serious cuts to the materials budget to cover the new costs.

However, according to UNT Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Warren Burrgrren, the email was sent by a mid-level finance employee who didn't have the authority to make that determination. "Only the provost can add to or cut academic unit budgets," Burrgrren told *Hotline*. "This was an unauthorized communication. There has been no discussion to this point about any budget cuts to the library."

While the budget is safe for the time being, it doesn't mean that UNT's library will never be expected to take on the \$1.7 million in employee benefits that are at issue here—just that the conversation on how to make that happen—and how those cuts will affect the rest of the library budget—hasn't taken place yet.

Since UNT's library system is funded by a student library fee, though, its budget already shifts quite a bit from year to year, depending on what enrollment numbers look like. That instability makes a hit like the \$1.7 million proposed here—more than 10 percent of the library's budget last

Interview

Dr. Who and Librarianship



In honor of the 50th anniversary of the sci-fi serial *Doctor Who*, we asked librarian and author Susan Jane Bigelow how the show has affected her life and career.

How has *Dr. Who* influenced how you practice librarianship?

One of the things I love about the series is that it places such value on being creative and using whatever tools you have at your disposal to solve problems. If that isn't librarianship, I don't know what is.

What if anything about the show makes your inner librarian cringe?

The Doctor is basically a walking encyclopedia of the universe, plus he's the last of his incredibly ancient race, but he never writes any of his vast knowledge down. Plus the filing system on the TARDIS is rubbish.

What about the show do you think could inspire other librarians?

Any show that inspires that sense of wonder in people, that makes us want to get out there and learn more about the world, is a great thing. I believe libraries do that, too. It's not a coincidence that people have built small libraries that look just like the TARDIS.

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Paralibrarian of the Year

Library Journal will honor one support staffer with the 15th annual Paralibrarian of the Year award, sponsored by DEMCO, in its March 1, 2014, issue.

Learn more to submit your nominations at ow.ly/rprQf.

Postmark deadline: January 13, 2014

year—impossible to absorb without impacting the services it can provide.

The near-instantaneous reaction from students and faculty show how important those services are, Burr-gren said. Masood Raja, a UNT English professor, agrees on that point. The point person for the blog Save the UNT Library, Raja told *Hotline* that his work as a scholar would be severely impacted by cuts to, for example, the library's journal subscriptions. "I study postcolonialism," said Raja. "So I have to have access to journals published all over the world, and only the library can provide that access."

UNT students have set up a Facebook page that has so far garnered over 7,500 likes to raise awareness of the issues facing the library, and have staged protests over potential cuts on campus as well. One demonstrator, senior Kelsey Fryman, told the *Denton Record-Chronicle* that she had been considering UNT to continue her graduate studies, but that the possibility of a cash-strapped library made that prospect less attractive. "Why would I come here, though, if we aren't going to take care of our library?" she asked a reporter. "It's a pivotal part of our education."

Students have also created petitions, both on campus and online at Change.org, to raise the current student library fee of \$16.50 per credit hour, which hasn't seen an increase in nearly a decade. They're also trying to open debate on the topic of changing how the library budget is funded,

a prospect Burr-gren said was on the table. Where that money will come from, though—raised fees, tuition increases directed toward materials or staff for the library, or some other source, has yet to be worked out. Burr-gren said that conversations about what to do with the library's budget may begin as soon as this week, and he's hoping to make significant progress on the matter by the spring.

Fondulac Library Helps Save Damaged Photos

With the help of Operation Photo Rescue, a non-profit, volunteer network of photographers, image restoration artists, and graphic designers, Fondulac District Library (FDL), IL, recently launched "Saving Memories," a program to help community members digitize and restore photographs that were damaged when 24 tornadoes touched down in Illinois on the night of November 17.

"The response to the disaster in the community was almost immediate. Everybody wants to do something," said Genna M. Buhr, public services manager for FDL. Many local churches and other organizations were already processing donations of clothing and food, she explained, so FDL staff searched for other ways they could help.

Volunteer Heather Evans of Germantown Hills, IL suggested that the library could help community members digitize damaged photos, and of-

LibraryAware Community Award

The LibraryAware Community Award emphasizes the library's engagement with the community and will recognize a library or library system that has demonstrated its ability to make its community "aware" of what the library can do for it—and has delivered on that promise. The award will be given by *Library Journal* and funded by LibraryAware, a product of EBSCO Publishing's NoveList Division.

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ferred the use of her professional copy stand equipment for the project.

"[Evans] said, 'I just want to help anyway I can,'" Buhr explained. "We're a library, we have space, we have the abil-

ity to get the word out and to organize this into something a little bigger."

FDL began by reaching out for donations of USB flash drives for the project, and the response was over-

whelming. In addition to individual donations, local marketing and communications firm Simantel alone donated about 2,000 drives. Tech Logic, a developer of automated material handling systems for libraries, donated hundreds more.

Buhr connected with Operation Photo Rescue, which was founded by Dave Ellis and Rebecca Sell in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which devastated the Gulf Coast in 2005. The El Dorado, Kansas-based charity has grown into a worldwide network of thousands of digital photo restoration experts, who volunteer their time to help victims of fires and natural disasters.

"The library is taking some of the first steps of digitization, and then we're going to work with Operation Photo Rescue to have those pictures restored. They can digitally remove water damage, rips, tears," Buhr told *Hotline*. "The biggest thing right now is to capture them digitally before further damage occurs" from mold, for example.

Operation Photo Rescue regularly organizes "copy runs" like this one to disaster areas, where volunteers help with digitization efforts prior to performing restoration work. In many cases, "libraries are by far our best bet," for hosting these runs, said Operation Photo rescue president Margie Hayes. "For one, we're a non-profit, and they have no problem, as long as they have a room available, letting us come in. And they're really so helpful" with organizing the events.

However, these copy runs are funded by donations, and as a volunteer-based non-profit, they cannot respond immediately to every disaster. So FDL's in-house digitization efforts will be a significant help, said Hayes. In fact, this is the first time Operation Photo Rescue has had a partner organization conduct all of the digitization groundwork.

Arapahoe Library District Invests in Google Glass

When Colorado's Arapahoe Library District, which serves the Denver area, heard about the opportunity to purchase Google Glass before it was released to the public, the staff jumped on it.

It is a good thing they did, because as it turns out, the library staff heard about the Glass Explorer contest, in which you tweeted at Google what you would do with Google Glass using the hashtag #IIfIHadGlass, just one day before the deadline.

They quickly got to work, crafting a short video and linking to it in their tweet. In it, a librarian talks to the camera. "Public libraries aren't always known for embracing new technology, but we feel we're on our way there," he said, followed by, "You know what libraries are known for? Sweet glasses."

They won the contest, and Oli Sanidas, Arapahoe's director of digital services, flew out to San Francisco to pick up the glasses and get some training in how to use them.



Trying out Google Glass at the Arapahoe Library

"During training, they asked us what we were gonna do with it," Sanidas said. "We said, 'We're gonna take it back to the library and we're gonna let people play with it.'"

For Sanidas, the opportunity to showcase Google Glass at Arapahoe's libraries fit right into his larger goal of making the forward-thinking library district more technology-focused.

"We try to acquire technology that is just out of reach to the common person, just a little too new or risky for most people to purchase," Sanidas said.

This includes a 3D printer that patrons can use, as well as GoPro cameras, digital hard drives, and about 200 tablets available to check out. They also have several Oculus Rift devices, a new virtual-reality platform that's not yet available to most of the public.

"It's not just the specific technology—we are really trying to reinvent our image. Libraries are really around to expose you to ideas," Sanidas said. "We think it fits really nicely, because in the end, we're still checking out ideas. We're just bringing it in a different format."

Arapahoe paid \$1,500 for each of the three Google Glass devices, and sets aside part of its budget specifically for innovative technology purchases.

"We pay for all this stuff," Sanidas said. "It just takes a modest amount of investment" after he makes all the standard IT purchases, like public computers and Internet access, he said. He also said it helps because it attracts different kinds of people to the library.

Jean Duane, for one, was excited to try out Google Glass at the library.

"I'm definitely one of those kinds of people, I'll go get the first ones out there," Duane said. "When you do a demonstration of it, you won't stop thinking about ways that it could be used."

FDL plans to offer the digitization service for a few months, as a series of scheduled events, Buhr said.

“I really want to make sure we get a lot of awareness out for people that can benefit from it,” Buhr said. “In the first days after a tornado, they’re not going to be hearing about it. They’re preoccupied with a lot of other things and may not even have power yet.... It might be two months before someone is reunited with a picture that they want to save. I foresee it going into the spring [of 2014] at least.”

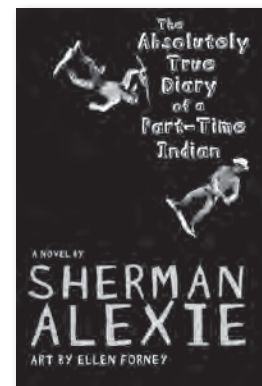
Parents, School Districts Resist Book Challenges

Local communities and school districts in recent weeks have rallied against challenges to Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* and Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*

of a *Part-Time Indian*—gathering support for these acclaimed novels to remain, at least temporarily, on school reading lists in Brunswick County, NC, and Billings, MT, respectively.

In the two communities, parents, students, and educators have spoken to school boards, demanding that the titles remain a part of the local high school curriculum—even as other community members object to the content, demanding more power over the books that can be presented to students.

“I think it’s playing into and against parental control and parental permission, which I think is a sticky situation for districts to get into,” said Acacia O’Connor, coordinator for the National Coalition Against Censorship’s (NCAC) Kids’ Right To Read



Project in New York. “If they’re going to afford parents to have the control of what they want taught, it’s going to get sticky.”

That’s certainly the case in Brunswick County, where an official challenge against *The Color Purple* was never declared. And yet, a relative of a high school junior—not the parent—raised issue with the book after the child had finished reading the title for his AP English class at West

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Brunswick High School in October. That concern worked its way to the school board where Catherine Cook, a school board member, then began to voice objections herself to language in the book.

Brunswick County Schools have clear parameters on how parents can raise concerns about content their children are assigned to read, Jessica Swencki, executive director of quality assurance and community engagement for Brunswick County Schools, told *Hotline*. However, at a board meeting on November 5, parents, teachers, and community members aired their support as well as concern.

The board has now requested a review of the policy on how books can be challenged and the rights parents hold in the choice of materials their students read. While a challenge has not yet been issued against Walker's famous novel, that door may still be open despite the apparent support among many.

"Parents have a tremendous amount of choice," said Swencki. "But at the same time...These books were chosen for a specific reason."

Meanwhile, in Montana, a heated battle over Alexie's novel actually went through a formal request for reconsideration before the school board—and won—when a parent of a sophomore student at Skyview High School raised an objection once the child had finished reading the book for class.

The challenge this fall was heard by the full Board of Trustees on November 18, who upheld the decision to keep the title on reading lists. The board did, however, request that a more standardized policy be created on how parents are informed of books their students read, potentially adding mailings in addition to the syllabus now sent home with students, Kim Anthony, executive director of curriculum and instruction with Billings Public Schools, told *Hotline*.

School Librarians Score Donated 3-D Printers

School librarians looking to launch a Maker space in their schools, but lacking the funds to purchase high-tech gadgets like a 3-D printer, should consider the recent MakerBot and DonorsChoose.org partnership, said Andy Plemmons, media specialist at David C. Barrow Elementary in Athens, GA. Plemmons recently took advantage of MakerBot Academy's initiative to put a 3-D desktop printer in every public school in the United States by December 31—and a 3-D printer is already on its way to his media center.

Earlier this month, MakerBot announced that it would provide a MakerBot Replicator 2 desktop printer, three spools of MakerBot PLA Filament, and a year's worth of the MakerBot MakerCare Protection Plan for \$2,000 (a discount of 25 percent off the retail price) to all schools who use the crowd-funding site DonorsChoose.org and are able to reach that funding goal.

Plemmons discovered the project on Twitter on November 12, the same day it was announced. Within a few hours, he had obtained his principal's approval and submitted an application. "I wanted to get a 3-D printer for our maker group for a long time," he told *Hotline*. "Our principal has been very supportive. Our school district was going to buy one for us, but because of funding issues, couldn't. That's why we're so thankful for this opportunity."

The media specialist shared the project on several social media accounts, including Twitter, his personal Facebook account, and the school media center's Facebook account. By the next day, he had received \$400 in donations from current and former students' families and fellow librarians from across the country. To

News in Brief

The **American Library Association** announced applications for the **John Cotton Dana Award**, which honors library public relations. Eight \$10,000 awards will be granted to the winners.

Catalogers at the **University of Rochester** completed the world's largest collection of AIDS posters, chronicling the history of the disease. The project, which began in 2011, contains more than 6,200 posters from 124 countries, and is free to access online.

Former **Congressman Ray Thornton** donated his personal and professional papers to the **University of Arkansas Libraries**, Fayetteville. The collection will be open to researchers in the university's Mullins Library.

Station NBC 5/KXAS-TV donated decades of historical news film to the **University of**

North Texas (UNT) Libraries, Denton. The reels span news stories from the 1950s to the 1970s. Additionally, **Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice Jackson Pope** donated his personal papers to the **UNT College of Law, Dallas**.

The **Anthony Quinn Library**, Los Angeles, received a \$6,000 grant from the **National Endowment for the Humanities** to fund a project to catalog and store the collection of memorabilia donated to the library by actor **Anthony Quinn** (1915–2001).

The **University of Toronto**, Ont., Canada, purchased the letters of **Major-General James Wolfe** (1727–1759) for \$1.5 million. Written from 1740–1759, the 233 letters are housed in the university's **Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library**.

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his surprise, MakerBot and an anonymous company made the final donation needed to reach the school's goal—all within a few days. "I think it's because they saw how I was actively promoting the project," Plemmons added.

Prior to the project's launch, Plemmons had begun fundraising for a 3-D printer by raising awareness at parent events and dedicating a portion of book fair proceeds to the purchasing one of the machines. Many of the teachers and parents were intrigued by the project, but didn't see how a 3-D printer could be educationally used by elementary students. "We're teaching kids skills for jobs that haven't even been created yet," Plemmons responded. "If this is the latest technology, why not let them start exploring now? With it, they will be better equipped for the job market."

Though the printer will live at the library, it will be accessible to all students and classes. "As a media specialist, my role is to listen in on what classes are doing and seeing how the 3-D printer can fit," Plemmons said. "The students and teachers can take projects even further than they ever thought they could. For me, it's not about turning the library into a Maker space, but giving kids access to as much technology and tools as possible to create."

Curriculet Customizes Ebook Lesson Plans

Curriculet (previously Gobstopper), a digital reading platform designed for teachers and stocked with interactive educational and social media features, has teamed up with HarperCollins to offer a flexible book buying program for schools.

The pilot endeavor, now offered to 256 schools, allows institutions to buy a portion of the HarperCol-

Anne Birchwell was promoted to Director of the Franklin County Library System, FL. She was previously Assistant Librarian at the Carrabelle Branch.

Karlen Chase was named Research Analyst of Educational Collaboration & Engagement at the University at Buffalo. She was previously Digital Services Librarian at Western New York Library Resources Council.

Laura Jacobs was appointed Interim Director of the Jim Dan Hill Library at the University of Wisconsin, Superior, following **Deb Nordgren's** retirement. She was previously an Archivist for the university.

Wei Jeng-Chu retired as Head Librarian at the Worcester Public Library, MA. She previously served as Interim Head Librarian for the library.

Omar Khan was named Teen Librarian at the Ridgefield Park Public Library, NJ.

Lee O'Brien retired as Associate Director of the Cecil County Public Library, Elkton, MD. She has worked in the field since 1972.

Lorraine Sandstrom retired as Manager of the Library Center Branch of the Springfield-Greene County Library District, MO. She has been in the position since 1999.

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lins backlist catalog through Curriculet for periods of three months or a year, said Curriculet CEO Jason Singer. Teachers can then use Curriculet's tools to embed the ebooks with quizzes, questions, and videos; add scaffolding material including Web links and annotations; and insert customized, Common-Core-based assessments. "We'll see more big publishers" joining Curriculet's program to in early 2014, Singer said, and the service will be publicly available by the summer.

The buying model frees schools to purchase and teach titles they might not otherwise choose, Singer told *Hotline*. When educators spend money on physical books or alternately-priced ebooks, they often feel obliged to select titles that will can be reused as curriculum staples or library borrows year after year, he believes. Curriculet's short-term formula, he maintains, allows teachers to cast a wider net and buy more contemporary titles that appeal to a wider array of students.

Teachers add their own features to popular HarperCollins titles

books, including title-specific "curriculets" supplied by the company that teachers can personalize and that include questions tied to Common Core State Standards, Singer said.

"When a student engages with the book, as they turn pages, they answer questions and interact with videos and images," he said. This means that students "know they're going to get immediate feedback that printed books and the first generation of ebooks didn't provide."

In addition, a "rich algorithm" created by Curriculet allows teachers to quickly scan student data: How long and when each student completed the reading; what percentage of questions relating to a specific Common Core standard a student got right; and other information. And the platform can work to enhance articles and documents as well as books.

Once teachers have designed their curriculum, the "layers of questions and enriched media are fully sharable" via social media, Singer added—providing support for his belief that "the best curriculum published every day is published by teachers."

Customer Profile #203



Name: Ivan Silva
Profession: Librarian
Employer: Belvedere Tiburon Library,
California
What do you love most about being a librarian?
Helping patrons with finding the information they need and solving tech issues.

Facebook or Twitter: Twitter.
Your library bucket list includes...
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