

Librarians React to Kindle Unlimited Launch

In a long-expected move, Amazon on July 18 announced the launch of Kindle Unlimited, a new subscription service that will give users unlimited access to a selection of 600,000 ebooks and more than 2,000 audiobooks on Amazon Kindle devices and any device with a Kindle app for \$9.99 per month. Amazon is not first to market with an “all you can read” commercial ebook subscription platform—it follows last year’s launch of Scribd and Oyster. But the online retailer’s financial resources, marketing clout, and massive base of users will doubtless raise consumer awareness of ebook subscription services while altering the competitive landscape for all providers of ebooks, including libraries.

“I’m enough of a realist to assume that consumers will gravitate to the cheapest, most convenient source of content, whether that’s Amazon or the public library,” said Jimmy Thomas, executive director of Colorado’s Marmot Library Network. “Amazon continues to set a high standard of convenience libraries should attend to. And every time this huge corporation does something on a massive

scale, libraries should be reminded to approach services differently. Competing with Amazon on its own terms is not a good direction for libraries. But thinking about how to complement Amazon is worthwhile.”

At launch, there are chinks in the armor of this new behemoth. While Amazon has publicized the availability of popular series including series such as Harry Potter, “The Lord of the Rings,” and “The Hunger Games,” as many as 500,000 of the titles currently available on Kindle Unlimited were self-published through Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) Select program, according to publishing industry newsletter *Publisher’s Lunch*. At least for now, the “big five” publishers—Penguin Random House, Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, Macmillan, and Hachette Book Group—are not part of the Kindle Unlimited offering. So, despite the size of this initial collection, many libraries still have access to plenty of popular ebooks that are unavailable through the service.

“From a library perspective, Kindle Unlimited seems unlikely to affect demand for library materials at all,” said Sarah Houghton, director of California’s San Rafael Public Library (SRPL), blogger at Librari-

Interview

Kim Werker

Kim Werker’s *Make It Mighty Ugly* (Sasquatch, 2014) is a how-to guide to overcoming creative blocks by facing the ugly parts of creative work head-on.



Why do you advocate making ugly things on purpose?

Ending up with something ugly is the thing that we consider to be a failure, and because we consider it to be a failure, it keeps us from trying to do anything. So screw it. Start with the goal of making something ugly.

What about people who don’t like making things?

A lot of us have had experiences in the past that have made us feel less than competent and less than confident and less than capable. I think we close a lot of doors on ourselves because of those experiences, and we don’t really look back.

Can people do the projects by themselves, or is it better as a group?

There is something special about doing it with other people. I love the conversations that happen and the stories that people tell in the end.

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anInBlack.net, and a 2009 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker. “Six hundred thousand titles is not a lot. Our library participates in Link+, a cooperative lending project that makes tens of millions of titles from libraries across California and Nevada available in print to our communities—at no charge to them.”

SRPL's ebook catalog also offers about 50,000 titles, Houghton added. In terms of raw numbers, that might seem insignificant by comparison, but Houghton contends that “our selection is also much better than what you'd find in Kindle Unlimited, including most best-selling titles from the Big Five publishers.”

Heather Teysko, director of innovation and development for the Califa Library Group, also noted the lack of goodwill that Amazon has with these publishers.

“I can't see the Big Five going to [Kindle Unlimited] any time soon because of the contract disputes, like with Hachette,” she told *Hotline*. Amazon's sheer size and influence over retail and publishing ensured significant media coverage. And some librarians found it vexing that the vast majority of reviewers and reporters failed to mention libraries as part of the modern ebook lending landscape. Or, less frequently, writers used the announcement as an opportunity to pen op-eds about the death of libraries.

“It's as much [a point of concern] about mindshare and relevance as it is about a new Amazon service,” said Gary Price, editor of *Library Journal's* infoDOCKET blog.

More competitors may soon follow. On July 22, the Book Industry Study Group (BISG) released the results of an extensive survey of 4,000 industry professionals including publishers, librarians, book sellers, and aggregators, and 80 percent of respondents said they believe that ebook publishing was inevitably moving to-

ward subscription-based models.

“For libraries, it just means that differentiating your collection and focusing on what makes the library collection unique is even more important,” said Teysko. “Offering the best sellers through vendors won't necessarily be as appealing if the Big Five come on board and patrons can borrow [those publishers' books] for \$10/month, but, at the same time, highlighting local authors, encouraging local authors, showcasing local history—these are all things that [libraries] can do to differentiate themselves.”

Linda Braun, youth services manager, Seattle Public Library, pointed out that as these subscription services emerge and become more popular, libraries will need to be prepared to provide access to content to users who cannot afford subscriptions and to help other patrons learn how to use these services, such as libraries continue to do with ereaders, tablets, and, more recently, streaming devices.

Jamie LaRue, principal of LaRue and Associates Consulting, noted that “even if [Kindle Unlimited is] multiplatform and authors approve, and [it has] all the best sellers, there will still be a place for libraries—children's services, sanctuary, meeting space, study space, Maker space. But for most public libraries, circulation is the driver—and this is clearly a shot across the bow.”

SC Libraries Seek To Override Trespass Veto

South Carolina's public library directors, confident they have the necessary votes in the state legislature locked up, plan to press ahead with efforts to see a library trespass bill adopted into law, even after a recent veto by Gov. Nikki Haley.

The bill, which permits a misdemeanor trespassing charge against

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any library patron returning to the premises before a written warning to stay away expires, probably won't be considered again until early 2015.

Meeting in mid-July in Columbia, South Carolina Association of Public Library Administrators (SCAPLA) members agreed to continue lobbying for the bill as a top legislative priority in 2015.

"We feel this is a very important piece of legislation for public libraries in South Carolina," Carl Coffin, president of SCAPLA, told *Hotline*. "As far as the House and Senate are concerned, we have a broad range of support."

Colleen Kaphengst, director of the five-branch York County library system and a leading proponent of the

trespass bill, said incidents that could lead to written evictions include stalking library personnel, adults approaching other people's children, and patrons who become loudly irate or personally abusive when informed they are violating library policy.

She denied allegations that the libraries are targeting homeless people, teenagers, or any particular group. She said amendments to the library trespass bill successfully address concerns about due process that arose during the legislative effort.

Kaphengst stated that the law would add legal muscle to existing regulations that bar patrons, with cause, for extended periods. People who violate previous written warnings to stay away from libraries could be arrested and subject to fines of up to \$200 or up to 30 days in jail.

Asked for a comment regarding the June veto, Governor Haley's office referred *Hotline* to her veto message, which read in part, "While I understand the problems libraries face, I have serious misgivings about the scope of authority this bill gives to unelected county library boards."

Kaphengst and State Senator Robert W. "Wes" Hayes, who introduced the legislation, said attempts to pass separate local ordinances would fail to address adequately a statewide problem that requires a uniform code.

In May, the legislation came out of committee with amendments designed to prevent library patrons from being unfairly singled out. The Senate approved the bill by 41-1, and the House adopted it by an 89-6 margin.

After Haley signed her veto on June 13, the Senate voted on June 19—the last day of an extended legislative session—to override the governor's action 39-3, a far greater margin than the two-thirds majority required.

Branching Out



The new **Aiea Public Library** (pictured), HI, opened on July 19, replacing a 50-year-old 10,724 square foot facility. The new 17,200 square foot structure was erected on the site of the former Aiea Sugar Mill. Designed by CDS International, the \$10.4 million building takes its lead from the mill, with its tall gabled roof lines and exposed mechanical structures. Targeting LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Gold certification, the library incorporates a high-efficiency air conditioning system and 6,000 square feet of photovoltaic solar panels. It has a collection capacity of 86,000 items and features high-speed Internet access and free Wi-Fi, 13 public access computers, two self-check stations, and 53 parking slots.

The **Ela Area Public Library**, Lake Zurich, IL, is looking toward a major interior redesign, beginning this fall, to the tune of \$1.75 million. Product Architecture + Design of Chicago, working with Pathmann Construction, will overhaul the 70,000 square foot structure for the 21st century. The ground floor will house

a Maker space lab with sewing machines, 3-D printers, video screens, design tools, and sliding walls and writable surfaces, according to the *Lake Zurich Courier*. A gaming spot and lounge area will also be on that level, along with the decked-

out children's space and the tech-equipped teen zone. The second floor will be reserved for open areas and quiet study. The project is funded through the library's general fund and special reserve fund.

August is a slow time of year, presenting a good opportunity for renovations at the **Bettendorf Public Library (BPL)**, IA. Originally opened in 1976, BPL began the first phase of its second major refurbishment in 2013, finishing up the children's space, the lobby, and the information area in January 2014, according to the *Quad-City Times*. Phase two of the \$1.5 million project, under the helm of Paragon Commercial Design and Friemel Construction, includes the installation of new carpeting, the reconfiguration of spaces for improved sight lines, the expansion of the lounge area, the addition of three study rooms, and the construction of new programming space. The project is funded through the library's general fund and contributions via the BPL Foundation.

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But there was no time left for House members to vote on an override before the summer adjournment. The House speaker could still call the body back into session, but sources told *Hotline* that is unlikely.

However, with such broad support in both sides of the legislature, Coffin is confident of success next year. Even another veto by Haley probably wouldn't derail the plan, he noted, as there would be sufficient time to conduct override votes.

Queens Trustees Who Backed CEO Dismissed

One month after the New York State legislature and Gov. Andrew Cuomo gave New York City's mayor and the Queens borough president the power to remove trustees from the Queens Library (QL) board, the officials exercised it. On July 23, the offices of New York City mayor Bill de Blasio and Queens Borough President Melinda Katz sent notifications of dismissal to eight QL trustees. The *Daily News* reported that six of these trustees were appointed by previous Queens borough presidents, while two had been appointed by previous mayors. One additional trustee was reported to have resigned.

According to the *News*, the letters sent to these trustees specifically cited their earlier votes to retain QL CEO Thomas Galante, whose financial dealings are under investigation by the city's Department of Investigation, the FBI, and the U.S. Attorney General, as the reason for their dismissal. Under the QL Board of Trustees bylaws, the ten remaining trustees are sufficient to constitute a quorum, and Katz told the *Daily News* that she hopes these remaining board members convene to fire Galante. As of press time, they had not yet done so.

In an email to *Hotline*, the mayor's office did not mention Galante, in-

"Soon To Be Famous Author" a School Librarian

Despite subzero temperatures and snow in Wheaton, IL, in January, Joanne Zienty (pictured) ventured out to her local library branch. She was hoping someone there could help her mail her book, *The Things We Save*, before the deadline passed for submissions to the "Soon To Be Famous Illinois Author Project."

"I didn't find out about the contest until it was two or three days before the deadline," she said. "I thought, 'I have to submit my book.'"

Although the library was open and had a copy of her self-published book, the woman who would have been in charge of submitting the piece—the contest rules dictated that the entries must come from a librarian—wasn't in that day and wasn't scheduled to work the following day, either. If Zienty waited any longer, it would be too late.

"I thought, 'You're a librarian. You can submit it,'" Zienty recalled. "I filled out the rest of the application and emailed it off with this huge explanation about self-nominating."

She had to wait for the results to see how her story compared with the other 102 manuscripts put forward, one round at a time. "I made the top 15, then the top three. One [of the trio] was a mystery novel and the other was contemporary women's fiction. I felt really good but didn't think I'd win because the mystery book would be easier to promote."

Although Zienty originally assumed that her fictional family drama would appeal to women more than men and to book groups more than casual readers, the 20 librarians from across the state who judged the works disagreed.

The Things We Save is the story of a woman named Claire who returns to Chicago for her grandmother's funeral and helps her father pack up items from her childhood home as he gets ready to sell it. In the process, she learns new truths and mends old relationships.

Though the story is fictional, it is sourced in autobiographical experience. "My older brother passed away when I was nine and he was 16," Zienty explained. "I put the emotions and memories from that experience into my writing."

As the contest winner, Zienty will embark on a year of promotion at public libraries throughout Illinois. In addition to being a writer and observer, Zienty is a media specialist at the Forest Elementary School Library in Des Plaines. Though this year was her first at the school, she's been a media specialist for seven years and a teacher for a decade.

Her 400-page work is a bit too adult for her students, so when they ask about her work, she talks to them about the self-publishing process. At her first appearance after her win, at the Wheaton Library from which it all started, she put together a presentation about the important libraries in her life and the significance of each.

Zienty's next book will be more suitable for her students: she characterizes it as young adult fiction and an adventure. Set in the future, this book will deal with the idea of climate change and global warming. When water becomes controlled by a corporation, three teenagers go on a quest to change the system.

"I like being topical, and I think it's an important topic," Zienty said. "I kind of want to write a book that will offend both conservatives and liberals. Literature is meant to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."



stead contending that these trustees had been insufficiently transparent.

“We expect that individuals responsible for public funds ensure they are allocated wisely, act in a responsible manner, and protect the public interest. In this case, the job of the Board of Trustees is to safeguard the library’s resources for its educational mission, and some of them weren’t doing that up to the standards the public deserves,” wrote Marti Adams, deputy press secretary for the de Blasio administration. “That’s why the administration felt it was appropriate to remove these individuals from the Board of Trustees.”

QL officials continued to voice support for their board, including the dismissed members.

“Throughout the history of the Queens Borough Public Library, the people of Queens have benefitted enormously from a highly committed library Board of Trustees whose leadership has helped keep libraries open

and free,” QL spokesperson Joanne King said in a statement. “They have helped make Queens Library a recognized national model of excellence.” The Queens Library was selected as the *Library Journal* Library of the Year in 2009.

Greenburgh PL Installs Audio Induction Loop

Using funding provided by a local chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the Greenburgh Public Library (GPL), NY, this spring installed an audio frequency induction loop (AFIL) in its multipurpose room. AFILs enable public address systems and other AV equipment to send audio transmissions directly to hearing aids, eliminating background noise for hearing impaired library users.

“It’s a pretty significant increase in fidelity for the end user,” said Leo Garrison, president and senior integration specialist for Washington-

ville, NY-based Metro Sound Pros, the commercial AV company that installed Greenburgh’s loop.

AFILs bypass the hearing aid’s microphone/amplifier system, instead generating an electromagnetic field with a wire “loop” that encircles a room, transmitting audio information directly to the telecoil receiver installed in most hearing aids and cochlear implants. Although patrons may have to switch their hearing aids manually to “T-coil” mode to benefit from an AFIL system, no additional equipment is needed for users.

The new system “has worked well to serve everyone’s needs” and cut down on issues in which attendees at meetings, film screenings, and other events either could not hear or complained that the [public address] volume was too loud, said GPL director John Sexton.

“We knew we had a need, because we have a growing population of seniors—as do most communities—and they are definitely a target audience for our programs,” he said.

The local HLAA chapter, which also holds its board meetings in GPL’s multipurpose room, first approached the library about installing the system about two years ago. Since then, it has been a matter of securing financing for the loop, which cost about \$5,000 to install, Sexton said. The HLAA chapter ultimately donated the money using a portion of the proceeds from its annual Walk4Hearing fundraiser.

The technology is mainstream in Europe, particularly in the UK, which requires the installation of AFILs in public buildings as a provision of the Equality Act 2010. Although the United States has been slower to adopt AFILs, HLAA is working to raise awareness, and Garrison said that Metro Sound Pros had been seeing renewed interest in loops. In addition to GPL, several other librar-

News in Brief

EBSCO Information Services made titles from the **Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research** available on its ebooks and audiobooks platform. The deal provides library users with ebooks in Arabic and English, including titles on politics and economics.

Additionally, the **Open University of Cyprus**, Latsia, has selected **EBSCO’s Discovery Service** for its library. EBSCO fully supports Greek characters for the university.

Sacramento Public Library, CA, has partnered with **Gale**, part of Cengage Learning, to implement the latter’s **Career Online High School** program. Qualified community members will have the opportunity to earn accredited high school diplomas and credentialed career certificates.

The **University of New Mexico Libraries and Learning Sciences**, Albuquerque, switched to **OCLC’s WorldShare Management Services**. It was previously using **Innovative Interfaces’ Millennium**.

Singer and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 1999 inductee **Billy Joel** was announced as the next recipient of the **Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song**. The award will be presented during a ceremony in Washington, DC, in November.

Colorado College’s Tutt Library, Colorado Springs, has partnered with the **Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center** to catalog and integrate the art center’s library into the Tutt collection. It is estimated that **about 13,000 volumes** will be taken in by the academic institution.

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ies have adopted the technology in recent years, primarily with limited installations at service desks, enhancing one-on-one conversations with hearing-impaired patrons and library staff. This spring, for example, the Southwest Wisconsin Library System installed information desk loops at nine of its facilities using a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). In June, Louisiana's Lafayette Public Library System debuted a full meeting room loop installation similar to GPLs, in its South Region Library, using funding donated by the Lafayette Breakfast Sertoma Club, Lafayette Sertoma Club and Friends of the Lafayette Public Library.

Garrison said that Metro Sound has seen a lot of interest in the systems from libraries, particularly since 2011, when the *New York Times* ran a feature on the technology. But recession-impacted budgets have meant that few potential clients have been able to proceed immediately with an installation. He estimates that less than one percent of U.S. facilities are currently "looped."

Outfitting a multipurpose room such as GPLs typically costs between \$5,000 and \$8,000, Garrison said, and it's easiest—and least expensive—to install an AFIL when a room or building is having its carpeting replaced or undergoing a broader remodel.

Library Partners Offer Intellectual Freedom Course

From August 26 until October 10, the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) is teaming up with the Freedom To Read Foundation (FTRF) to offer an online course called "Intellectual Freedom and Censorship," through the foundation's Judith F. Krug Memorial Fund.

Stephen Bero, Executive Director of the Warren-Newport Public Library, Gurnee, IL, was named the Illinois Library Association's 2014 Librarian of the Year. The honor came just prior to his retirement, after ten years in the position.

Bruce Gay was appointed Director, Milwaukee County Federated Library System. He was previously Technical Services and Collections Director at Milwaukee Public Library.

Aman Kochar was named Executive Vice President at Baker & Taylor. He previously led product development at McGraw-Hill Education.

Ron McCabe announced his retirement as Director of McMillan Memorial Library, Wis-

consin Rapids, effective January 2015. He has been in the position for nearly 25 years.

Nate Oliver is now Chief Operating Officer, Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML), OH. He was previously CML's Public Services Director.

Sarah Pickle was named Social Sciences Data Curation Fellow at Pennsylvania State University Libraries, University Park. She was previously an Analyst at nonprofit company Ithaka S+R.

Bobbi Truesdell announced her retirement as Director, Schoolcraft Community Library, MI, effective September 30. She has been in the position for 12 years.

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This will be the first time that money from the fund will be used for an education-related project. The late Krug was longtime director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

Emily Knox is an associate professor at GSLIS who will be teaching the online course.

The class will cover topics including the historical roots of intellectual freedom, pro- and anticensorship arguments, access and privacy, and free speech versus hate speech. Students will also discuss policies and how to deal with patrons. Students will be required to build what Knox calls a "challenge portfolio," which includes a letter to the governing board, a community plan, and a short reflection paper, along with other documents.

"It really helps the student think through the importance of policy and how they will respond to a challenge in their institution," Knox said. "Members of the information profession are on the front lines of provid-

ing access to information to everyone. Supporting intellectual freedom is one of our core ethical principles. This course gives both a framework for understanding that support and a method for putting our values into practice."

Sixteen students are currently enrolled, though Knox is hopeful that the number will increase. The course is open to any student enrolled in a library and information science program. Students who don't attend the university can partake in the class as well.

"One of the hardest things about teaching is that it's sometimes difficult to know if a course has been successful," Knox said. "You hope that the students have achieved the learning objectives, but often you don't know that you've been successful until many years down the road. I hope to hear from one of my students in the future that going through the challenge portfolio exercise helped them successfully defend a challenge."

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