

Ferguson Libraries Serve Community in Turmoil

Libraries in the Ferguson, MO, area provided educational services and creative programs for children and families—and sanctuary for all ages—while the start of school was postponed for two weeks because of



Children play with LEGOs at the Florissant Valley Branch

local unrest. Since *Hotline* first reported on this (*Hotline*, 9/1/14), more details have emerged.

While the public schools were closed, Ferguson Library created an “ad hoc school on the fly,” in which children could be taught by both working and retired teachers, with volunteers helping them manage the

students. Grouped by grade level, children learned math and science in the morning and arts in the afternoon.

“We started the program Monday, August 18, people started hearing about it Tuesday, by Wednesday I had everyone in the world calling up trying to help,” said Scott Bonner, the library director. “This is a concrete example of the community coming together for the good of the community.”

Carrie Pace, an elementary school art teacher, came to Bonner with the notion of creating a temporary educational program with no idea of how many students would participate. Near the start there were about 40 students, and by Thursday, August 21, about 150 were involved. As a result, the library started using a church up the street to house some classes.

In addition, several community groups approached the library to provide special student programs, from teaching them how to create Tibetan prayer flags to presentations by scientists and artists.

Bonner said that this is the type of work that libraries were made to do,

Interview

Omar Poler

In the latest of our In-Depth Interviews with *Library Journal* Movers & Shakers from academic libraries, sponsored by SAGE, we caught up

with Omar Poler, associate outreach specialist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) and founder of the Tribal Libraries, Archives, and Museums (TLAM) Project.



Why did you create the TLAM Project?

We had this opportunity to work with the Red Cliff tribal community in northern Wisconsin to reopen [its] public library. [It] was an amazing revelation, that we can play an active and meaningful role in supporting the capacity and sovereignty of tribal communities and help students get a different perspective on the profession.

How can TLAM be a model for serving underserved populations?

We maintain relationships with the tribes and listen to what their needs are and try to respond. An integrated approach that allows for sustainability and for authenticity over time...is critical [to] working with all underserved communities.

Poler photo © 2014 by Michael Pilla.

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Librarian of the Year

Library Journal is seeking nominations for the 27th annual Librarian of the Year Award to honor a professional librarian for outstanding achievement and accomplishments reflecting the loftiest service goals of the library profession.

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providing continuing education, cultural enrichment, and meeting space for the community.

"This is totally, exactly, right in the wheelhouse of what any library does, what every library does. We have a dramatic moment, and a dramatic circumstance caught the nation's attention, but this is what libraries do every day," he said.

Bonner, who became the library's director only in July, stayed up until 2:30 a.m. each night scanning news outlets and Twitter feeds to make sure that the protests were far enough from the library that it was safe to keep it open. He wanted the library to be a "quiet oasis," separate from the demonstrations, where people could get water, charge their phones, and feel welcome regardless of their views on the issues.

Moreover, the library is accepting book donations through Powell's Books to help diversify its collection, which is difficult owing to the library's limited budget. The project was spearheaded by Angie Manfredi, a blogger who contacted Bonner about creating a list of desired books and crowdsourcing donors online. At press time, some 92 books had been purchased for the library, with only 24 titles remaining to be donated.

FLORISSANT VALLEY BRANCH

The Florissant Valley Branch (FVB) of the St. Louis County Library also provided family-oriented programs that started on August 19. Ac-

tivities included letting children and parents play with art supplies, board games, and LEGOs.

In partnership with Magic House, an interactive children's museum, the FVB was able to offer free lunches and make and take meals by extending its program with Operation Food Search.

"I think it's easy to get very caught up in, 'Oh, this awful thing has happened and what's going to bring us together?' Well, there are just so many people in our community who are working to make that a reality," said Laura Kasak, Florissant Valley branch manager.

Kasak hopes to be able to offer counseling services in the library "to help with the healing process" for members of the community. She is currently talking with potential partners such as Lutheran Child and Family Services to make that happen.

PA Tweak to Seed Library Rules Ignites Debate

In tiny Mechanicsburg, PA, a pilot seed library in existence for all of four months is now the epicenter of a national discussion among seed traders, growers of organic food, and other agriculture experts after state officials wrote a list of regulations for the fledgling program.

At the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library in a village of some 9,000 people located about eight miles from state capital Harrisburg, the seed li-

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The Annual Architectural Issue

Library Journal's annual Year in Architecture roundup will be in the November 15 issue. The 2014 compilation covers library building projects (public and academic; new builds, remodels, additions) completed from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

Please submit your projects.

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brary launched this spring following a familiar model: participants could “borrow” packets of seeds, agreeing to “return” seeds harvested from their fully grown plants at a future date.

Yet it wasn’t long before Pennsylvania’s Department of Agriculture (DOA) took notice, alerting the Cumberland County Library System (CCLS), based in Carlisle, PA, that it was in violation of the state’s Seed Act of 2004, which covers sale and distribution of seeds.

“They were surprised we contacted them,” said James Howes, the DOA’s

deputy secretary for consumer protection, regulatory affairs, and dairy industry relations. He told *Hotline* the state’s goal was to “shield [the library] from a potential liability,” as well as protect the integrity of seeds.

Library and state DOA officials met on July 8 to iron out a solution. Howes described that session as “very cordial and productive,” and the state promised to set down a list of rules under which the Simpson Seed Library could continue operation.

On July 18, that “protocol,” as Howes described it, was delivered. Its five parts boil down to one main change: state officials do not want the library collecting harvested seeds. Patrons are welcome to continue checking out packets of seeds that are donated by companies, but returns of seeds from homegrown plants will no longer be accepted.

The main issue, Howes told *Hotline*, is the redistribution of seeds that may be incorrectly labeled. Without proper testing of collected seeds, he said, their integrity would be in question and problems could arise after their planting.

Jonelle Darr, CCLS executive director, said the Simpson Seed Library lacks the time and resources to test harvested seeds, and CCLS agreed to these stipulations. “We couldn’t store them unless we were willing to test them,” Darr said, “which is something we’re not prepared to do.” Instead, seed “swap days” can be held a handful of times per year at the Simpson branch, where seed library members can exchange saved seeds.

“We view this as a model, a template,” Howes said. “We’re not targeting other seed libraries around the state.”

A MEDIA SENSATION

However, that wasn’t the end of the story. Later in July, Darr reported on events surrounding the seed library at a morning meeting of the

Cumberland County Commissioners. The session was covered by a reporter from the *Carlisle Sentinel*, and her July 31 article was headlined “Department of Agriculture cracks down on seed libraries” and quoted one commissioner as saying the department’s action was necessary to combat “agri-terrorism.”

Coverage, several sources told *Hotline*, quickly went viral. Soon, in blogs and articles, established seed libraries around the country were commenting on the government’s need—and its right—to interfere with such programs and worrying that the action would cause seed libraries even outside of Pennsylvania to be shut down, or never established in the first place, out of concerns about their legality. Because these laws vary from state to state, Cumberland’s compromise may not work for everyone: California law, for instance, may be interpreted to prohibit seed swaps as well.

Darr said she hoped the summer-long swirl of controversy was finally starting to abate. But a *Wall Street Journal* article in late August reinvigorated the online conversation.

Darr said CCLS has “invested too much time” this summer on the seed library, describing it as only a small part of what her eight-facility system is able to offer patrons in Pennsylvania’s sixth-largest county. “The seed library is not a core mission of our public library service,” said Darr. She added that a much more pressing concern is several years of reduced state funding, roughly \$750,000 annually over the last six years. “That’s my state government battle,” she said.

SEED LIBRARIES RESPOND

CCLS and the Pennsylvania DOA arrived at the regulations as a cooperative venture, Darr said, but the idea of state interference definitely touched a nerve for the community of seed libraries.

People

Peter Brantley was named Director of Digital Library Applications at the New York Public Library. He was previously a Contributing Editor at *Publishers Weekly*.

Vanessa Cain was named Children’s Librarian at McIver’s Grant Public Library, Dyersburg, TN. She was previously a reporter for the *State Gazette* newspaper.

Molly Carver was appointed Executive Director of the Sandusky Library, OH. She previously held the same title at the Bellevue Public Library, OH.

Todd Fabian was named Director of Concord Public Library, MA. He previously held the same title at Woodbridge Town Library, CT.

Elise Petrarca was named Youth Services Librarian at William Hall Library, Cranston, RI. She was previously Information Services Librarian at West Warwick Public Library, RI.

Carmelita Pickett was appointed University Librarian, University of Iowa, Iowa City. She was previously Collection Development Officer at Texas A&M University Libraries, College Station.

Kathleen Pope was named Chief Executive Officer at Windsor Public Library, Ont., Canada, effective November 3. She currently holds the same title at Guelph Public Library, Ont.

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Rebecca Newburn, who founded and operates the Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library in California, told *Hotline* there are now roughly 300 seed libraries in 46 states, along with 90 more she knows of spread throughout 16 other countries.

Ken Greene, who runs the Hudson Valley Seed Library in Accord, NY, said of the Pennsylvania government's involvement, "I was kind of waiting for something like this to happen."

Greene claims credit for starting the nation's first seed library, in 2004, at the Gardiner Library in New York's Ulster County.

"What this moment is is figuring out how to have this balance," said Greene. "On the one hand, we shouldn't lose our right to share. We should be able to share our seeds with one another.... Seed libraries do bring in whole new groups of people. They're really awesome for libraries. But they need to be awesome for seeds also."

Newburn, for her part, said, "From the seed library perspective, we value those laws. They have their place. However, we are not a commercial industry. We are a public service."

David King, who chairs the Seed Library of Los Angeles, also weighed in. "I was shocked," he said, describing the Pennsylvania DOA's response as "excessive government supervision." Added King, "I understand their concern. It is, in my opinion, very much misplaced."

Arapahoe High School Unveils New Library, Park

Students at Arapahoe High School (AHS) in Littleton, CO, returned to school August 15 to a mostly renovated library (pictured on p. 6) and outdoor space, Clarity Commons Park, reported the *Denver Post*. Both spaces provide a chance for students and the community to heal following

Second Graders Aim To Restore School Library

Social media's waters are teeming with requests for money. Yet few have cherubic second graders Josephine Sinclair (pictured, l.) and Sarai Williams (r.), both age seven, leading their crowdfunding campaign. The fundraising effort "Dr. Seuss Wants You!" went live August 7 on the crowdfunding website Indiegogo.com, with the two girls hoping to raise enough money to restore the school library at Willow Creek Academy in Sausalito, CA.

With Josephine's mom, Kate Stohr, a cofounder of Architecture for Humanity and an experienced fundraiser herself, and Sarai's mother, Shanti Williams, a library assistant at the San Francisco Public Library's Richmond Branch, the girls had muscle behind them.

Crowdsourcing on Indiegogo wasn't the girls' first attempt at raising funds. Initially, they set up a lemonade stand—pricing their concoction at \$108 a glass, according to their Indiegogo video. Not making much of a dent toward the money they needed for books, furniture, computers—and even a school librarian—the two headed to cyberspace to try their luck there as one of the girls, Josephine, is an avid YouTuber, said her mother.

In videos that are live on their Indiegogo page, the two are shown shelving books and challenging their peers to read a book to parents—if parents pledge \$5 to the project.

Willow Creek Academy, a 13-year-old charter school, lost its library in 2013 when the school that shared its location merged with another institution, said Susan Newmeyer, president of the Willow Creek Foundation. Parents volunteered to help, donating books, rigging an Apple computer to check out titles, and kitting out the two-story space with furniture so the 350 K–8 students could come for tutoring and occasional reading.

The Sausalito Public Library, one mile away, is staffed with a "wonderful librarian," Erin Wilson, said Newmeyer. However, she also explained that both parents of many Willow Creek students work, so taking their children to the library in the afternoon isn't possible. "Parents don't have time to take kids after school to the library," she said. "That's why it's important to create a culture and an appreciation for literacy at school."

A goal of \$20,000 is set for phase one of the fundraiser—funds will go toward grade-specific materials, more computers, and the part-time salary of a school librarian, ten hours a week.

"But we'd like [the librarian] every day," said Royce Conner, now in his second year as head of school at Willow Creek, who'd learned about the campaign after the girls' parents started it.

To date, the campaign has raised north of \$4,800, about 24 percent of the goal—and approximately 11 percent of the \$54,000 the school believes it will need to restore the library completely. Many donation rewards remain unclaimed—from a personal thank you video (\$25) to a video chat from Josephine and Sarai as they read a favorite bedtime story (\$1,000). With the fundraiser live until October 6, the girls have a few more surprises they plan to launch, including books donated by author Isabel Allende.



Photo courtesy of Willow Creek Academy.

the tragic shooting that occurred at the school last December.

On December 13, 2013, a student, 18-year-old Karl Pierson, brought a gun to school after a disagreement with a teacher and shot 17-year-old student Claire Davis. After police pursuit, Pierson was found in the school library, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Davis died eight days later at Littleton Adventist Hospital.

Following the girl's death, Jason Dunkel, the hospital's director of business development, and the family came together, wanting to honor Davis's memory and help her friends to move on from the tragedy. The idea of an outdoor garden space came about and, according to Dunkel, the Littleton Public Schools (LPS) district felt the space would be a positive step for students and donated almost an acre of land to the AHS campus for the project. Dun-

kel tapped into his fundraising resources at Adventist Hospital, involving staff, board members, the hospital's own foundation, and the surrounding community.

In five months, Dunkel estimates Clarity Commons Park, named after Davis, raised \$125,000 in cash donations and nearly \$300,000 of in-kind contributions of material and time that were used to construct paved brick walkways, walls with garden seating, and granite pillars inscribed with inspirational sayings.

On August 16, which would have been Claire Davis's 18th birthday, a pillar was unveiled at the park, with AHS principal Natalie Pramenko and Colo-



rado governor John Hickenlooper in attendance, along with members of Davis's family, according to a local CBS news station. The intention for the space is to be a fun, relaxed environment for the students; the school will use it as an outdoor classroom as well.

While the school's library is open to students, it is still in the process of renovation. For the library's design and building process, school administrators gathered one student from each grade to form a design team. Addison Callahan, 18, who graduated last spring, told the *Denver Post* that the new library "was the last piece we really needed for students to get back to normal." The new library, once completed, will cost an estimated \$1.35 million and will be roughly double the size of the original facility. Donations from construction and engineering firms—and furniture companies—helped reduce costs. LPS established the Arapahoe High School Moving Forward Fund to assist the project. Approximately \$800,000 is still needed. Any monies raised will go toward the library remodel, book replacement, and facility repairs.

UK Laureate Blackman Will Not Be Silenced

Malorie Blackman, the UK's first black children's laureate (2013–15), recently found herself the focus of a

News in Brief

Upland Public Library, CA, is now being operated by **Library Systems & Services (LSSI)**, a private Maryland-based company. The library signed a five-year contract with LSSI.

The **Ulysses S. Grant Association** received a grant from the **National Historical Publications and Records Commission**. The money will fund the publication of the *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant*, Volumes 1 and 2.

The **Association of Research Libraries (ARL)/Digital Library Federation (DLF) Forum Fellowships for Underrepresented Groups** announced its five winners: **Celeste Â-Re**, Library of Congress; **George Apodaca**, University of Delaware; **Hannah Scates Kettler**, University of Iowa; **Iyanna Sims**, North Carolina A&T State University; and **Dorothy Terry**, Morgan State University, Baltimore. They will receive complimentary registration for the DLF Forum and paid travel and lodging.

The **Pittsylvania County History Research Center and Library**, a branch of the **Pittsylvania County Public Library System**, VA, received the 2014 Outstanding Service Innovation Award from the **Virginia Public Library Directors Association**. It was presented during the association's most recent meeting.

The **Rolland Township Library**, Blanchard, MI, has been renamed the **Tate Memorial Library** after local resident Dr. Merze Tate (1905–96), the first African American woman to get a doctorate in government and international relations from Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Oxford University Press (OUP) and **IHS, Inc.** have partnered to make engineering reference books from OUP available through the latter's **IHS Knowledge Collections**, a cloud-based technical research solution. The service is used by engineers, scientists, and researchers.

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racial firestorm following an interview she gave to *UK Sky News*. The headline of the original online article, published August 24, read, “Children’s Books ‘Have Too Many White Faces.’”

Following the article, Blackman found herself facing a “wave of racist attacks both on *Sky*’s website [in the comments section] and directed personally at [her] on Twitter,” she shared in the *Guardian*.

Additionally, she said the words from the *Sky News* headline “never passed her lips.” After Blackman complained to *Sky News*, the headline was changed to “Call for More Ethnic Diversity in Kids’ Books.”

The author, who was recognized with a prestigious Order of the British Empire for her services to children’s literature, has published more than 50 books, among them the award-winning “Noughts and Crosses” series, in which the dark-skinned Crosses rule the white-skinned Noughts. The first title in the series was originally published in the United States by Simon & Schuster in 2005 under the original title and later reissued as *Black & White* (2007).

In an August 25 tweet, Blackman wrote that she was taking a temporary break from Twitter following the racist vitriol that followed the *Sky News* article, but she was back on the social media site the next day to acknowledge the outpouring of support from her readers and fellow writers, such as Carnegie Medal winner Patrick Ness (“Chaos Walking” trilogy, Walker) and *Chocolat* author Joanne Harris (Penguin).

On Twitter, Blackman shared that she took a short break to author an article published in the *Guardian* on August 27, in which she told her side of the story, starting from the *Sky News* fallout. In her piece, she used the opportunity to emphasize her earlier message: there continues to be a need for more diversity in children’s literature.

“For those children’s publishers who may feel more diversity in the books they publish is no longer needed in the 21st century, I invite them

to read the comments under the *Sky* interview. They reinforce rather than detract from my arguments,” she wrote in the *Guardian*.

Branching Out



The renovated and expanded **Brook Park Branch** (pictured) of the Cuyahoga County Public Library (CCPL), OH, opened on August 28. Having gained 1,125 square feet and now measuring 13,775 square feet, the library features two meeting rooms, a glass entryway, 34 Internet-accessible computers, additional reader seats, a teen zone equipped with a gaming station and digital learning tools, and a remodeled children’s space with an interactive “art car.” The \$1.8 million project was designed by Richard Fleischman & Partners, Architects, with construction by Turner Construction, as part of CCPL’s ambitious Facilities Master Plan capital effort.

The entrance nave to the **Sterling Memorial Library**, Yale University, New Haven, CT, reopened on August 25, following a major restoration. The work on the 1931 building was supported by a \$20 million gift from Yale alum financier Richard Gilder and his wife, actress Lois Chiles, and took 15 months to complete. The bulk of the project involved the restoration of the space’s stained glass windows and the merging of three service desks into one. Absorbing the extra space are computer stations and seating. Helpem Architects of New York led the effort.

A five-week upgrade to the **St. Louis Park Library**, Hennepin County Library, MN, finished up on August 30. The library originally opened in 1968, and this current work involved expanding the teen space, adding study rooms, reconfiguring the periodicals area, and incorporating comfortable lounge seating. Also, carpeting and furniture were replaced, electrical outlets for patron access were added, and the children’s area gained interactive features for early literacy.

Things are not going swimmingly in Holyoke, MA. The **Holyoke Public Library**, which reopened in November 2013 following a \$14.5 million renovation (see *Hotline*, 12/2/13), seems to have sprung several leaks, according to Masslive.com. A memo from library leadership to the city councilors referred to “minor design errors that didn’t appear until severe weather, and have all been addressed.” The city’s Public Safety Committee was looking to meet with library officials, the Department of Public Works, and representatives of Fontaine Bros., General Contractors, the firm behind the project. Per Masslive.com, the warranty will cover roof-related repairs.

Photo courtesy of Cuyahoga County Public Library.

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