

Amazon, Publishers Look to Subscription Services

Officials at Amazon believe subscription-based ebook consumption is an inevitability and will continue to invest in and build the company's Kindle Unlimited service as part of an effort to stay ahead of the trend, Russell Grandinetti, senior vice president, Kindle, at Amazon, explained during a candid general session interview on January 14 at the Digital Book World (DBW) 2015 Conference and Expo in New York.

"We can all observe...that in every single digital media category, subscriptions are playing an important role," Grandinetti said. "In music, in movies, in newspapers—you cannot find a digital medium where subscription isn't a model that succeeds at some level, and I don't think books will be immune to this."

"What we need to do," he said to an audience of mostly publishers and ebook technology vendors, "is think about how subscription could be a great value for the customers who participate but grow the business and [have subscription services] be incremental" to regular book and ebook sales.

One problem, he said, is that "à la carte" sales of ebooks are currently a

healthy and growing part of the publishing business. It is easy to take this growth for granted and assume that people will always be content to purchase ebooks this way.



Russell Grandinetti, senior VP, Kindle, at Amazon, speaking at last week's Digital Book World 2015 Conference and Expo in New York

As a cautionary example, he pointed to the music industry. Even streaming services such as Spotify compete with YouTube and outright piracy, he noted. Ebooks currently don't suffer from this problem to the same degree. Amazon's goal is to offer new, profitable ways to help customers access content, without damaging individual ebook sales, he explained.

Although Kindle Unlimited is just six months old, Grandinetti said that subscribers to the service continue to purchase ebooks and appear to read more in general.

He acknowledged that it is possible that some of this increase is ow-

ing to "share shift" from other forms of reading, such as print books or other subscription services, but "the amount of growth and triangulating [data] a few other ways make us feel like there's a significant amount of primary demand generation."

Library Journal's Patron Profiles surveys, conducted from 2011 through 2013 in conjunction with ProQuest/Bowker and the PubTrack Business Intelligence team, consistently reported comparable data. Essentially, the most voracious readers are more likely than average readers to consume content from multiple sources, and the more books they have access to, the more they read. These "power patrons" also rely on libraries as a discovery zone, in which they can explore new genres and check out authors with whom they are unfamiliar.

For Amazon and some publishers, ebook subscription services such as Kindle Unlimited, Scribd, and Oyster are being viewed as a comparable discovery solution that could generate revenue while introducing heavy readers to new content.

Although libraries were never purported to be a topic of conversation on this panel, it was perhaps notable that libraries were never mentioned as potential competitors for those platforms,

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or as alternate reader recommendation and discovery zones for publishers.

Hard Times Ahead for Library of Birmingham

After opening to great fanfare a little over a year ago, the UK's Library of Birmingham (LB) has been finding it hard to keep up with costs, citing a lack of private sponsorship and the

Birmingham City Council's (BCC) failure to raise promised money from land sales. At the end of 2014, the BCC announced a round of austerity measures that will cut some £72 million in funding for the arts, parks and recreation, care services, cemeteries, and children's care services for 2015–16. Approximately £1.5 million will be cut from LB's annual operating costs, meaning that 100 of the library's 188 staff could be eliminated and its hours reduced from 73 to 40 per week.

Located in Birmingham's Centenary Square, the LB was built in September 2013 to replace Birmingham's Central Library. The new structure was considered a flagship project for the city's redevelopment.

At 333,000 square feet and ten stories, the LB is the largest public library in the UK and the largest public cultural space in all of Europe. The metal filigree-clad building holds more than 400,000 circulating books, one of England's two most important Shakespeare collections, Birmingham's civic archives, and an extensive photography collection, as well as an art gallery, a multimedia center, two cafés, garden terraces, and a performance space shared with the adjacent Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Its grand opening in September 2013 was presided over by 16-year-old Malala Yousafzai (*I Am Malala*), who had been treated at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital after surviving a Taliban assassination attempt. More than a million people passed through the library during its first 100 days, with 2.7 million visitors in its first year.

The next chapter, however, may prove to be more challenging. In October 2104, the LB Development Trust announced that it anticipated a shortfall of some £713,000 on its £1,075,000 fundraising goal.

In addition to payments on a con-

Interview

Brittany Dudek



In our latest In-Depth Interview with *Library Journal* 2014 Movers & Shakers from academic libraries, we spoke with Brittany Dudek, now instructional online librarian, Colorado Community Colleges Online.

What led you to community college librarianship?

I enjoyed youth services very much and was fortunate to have a variety of responsibilities that included programming, electronic resource management, website content development, collection management, and the support to try out new ideas. When [my former] position opened at Illinois Central College, it was a perfect fit for my interests and abilities, and the perfect hybrid of academia and public librarianship.

What was it like developing ForwardFocus, the professional development event for community college librarians?

ForwardFocus was a terrific learning experience that helped me hone and develop a new skill set. Since [Cathryne Kaufman and I] started it from scratch, we spent many hours researching, learning, decision-making, and acting out our vision. It was a really exciting and time-consuming process, but we made sure to make decisions that could translate year-to-year.

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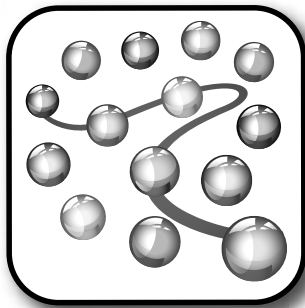
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struction loan of £12 million that helped cover its £188 million construction costs, the LB's operating costs run to some £10 million annually—more than the city's entire economic development and planning budget. Fuel and utility bills alone have come to £368,000 more than estimated during construction.

Members of the Friends of the Libraries of Birmingham told the *Birmingham Post* they believed that the budget had been agreed on without enough research into the projected costs or the fundraising potential of the trust. Former Tory council leader and member of the library's strategic board Lord Mike Whitby weighed in as well, saying that he felt that the Labour council had stifled investment and philanthropy.

The main culprit, however, has been the global financial crisis of 2008. Library Director Brian Gambles explained that the library project was approved 12 months before the crisis hit, and it took another

several years for the effects to work their way through the system.

While there is no easy solution, the LB is working to mitigate some of the recession's worst impact. Gambles hopes to position the library for eventual regrowth, in the form of fundraising, added-value programs, and partnerships with other institutions. Birmingham is home to five universities, hosting the campuses of several more, and Gambles feels that the LB hasn't yet explored all the opportunities for partnering with local academic libraries.

A suggestion was made by the BCC in January to make the LB a regional center for the British Library, which is a national library and thus not vulnerable to local cost-cutting. Gambles does not consider that a viable scenario but does feel that there is also potential there for collaboration.

Still, Gambles is extremely proud of what the LB has accomplished in a year and a half. He will be retiring at the end of February—a long-considered decision unrelated to the budget

cuts—but hopes to leave the library well positioned to emerge from the lean times ahead.

Delaware District Battles Over Permission Slips

Delaware's Appoquinimink School District (ASD) has had its fair share of attention lately, from the celebration of Appoquinimink High School (AHS) librarian Christine Payne for her win in the 2014 "I Love My Librarian" Awards to the more recent proposal for the district to implement parental permission slips for required and recreational reading (borrowed from the school library) presented at a December 9 school board meeting, drafted by the district's director of secondary education, Ray Gravuer.

At the board meeting, nine parents spoke up about the measure for permission slips, the majority speaking against the policy. The National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) also came out strongly against the measure in a letter addressed to President Norm Abrams of the Appoquinimink School District Board of Education, which states that the NCAC's "primary concern is the proposed adoption of a 'rating' system, under which certain books would be flagged for special attention and parental consent requirements."

According to a report from the *Middletown Transcript*, the slide into implementing permission slips had originated "from an incident that occurred [in November 2014], when a male student chose to partake in an extracurricular literature circle led by a female librarian at Appoquinimink High School."

The book group, run by AHS librarian Payne, was reading Ellen Hopkins's *Identical* (S. & S., 2008), a story about identical female twins, one of whom is sexually abused by her father. The student, the son of the senior pastor of the Friendship

People

Kevin Ayala, Assistant Director, Bay County Library System, MI, is now Interim Director, following the retirement of **Thomas Birch**.

Rachel Bomberger was promoted to Director of Marketing at Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. She was previously Editor of the company's blog EerdWord.

Carol Borzyskowski retired as a Librarian at Winona Public Library, MN. She worked for the library for 27 years.

Sharon Hancock retired as Executive Director of Library Marketing & Outreach at Can-

dlewick Press. She was with the company for ten years.

Chy Ross was named Managing Librarian at Sno-Isle Libraries' Edmonds Library, WA. He previously held the same title at Sno-Isle's Mountlake Terrace Library.

Ann M. Watson was appointed Associate State Librarian for Library Services at the State Library of Ohio, Columbus. She previously held the position of Dean, Scarborough Library, Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV.

In Memoriam

Nancy Johnson, former Head Law Librarian at Georgia State University, Atlanta, died on December 13, 2014. She was 65 years old.

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Baptist Church in Glasgow, DE, told his father about the book's content. "Soon after, [the pastor] began circulating a petition to require the school district to adopt a process for ensuring that all material was age appropriate," said the *Transcript*.

Upon discovery of the parental petition, AHS senior Rachel Wagner created a petition opposing it, which got 500 signatures in five days. She had planned, with other students, to present her petition at the November 2014 board meeting, but upon discovering that the parents who had circulated the petition were not going to present their petition to the board, decided against it at that time.

At the January 13 board meeting, Wagner, who spoke on behalf of herself and the students of Freedom To Read, thanked the "school district for changing their decision and developing a policy that simply raised awareness about the policies that were already in place."

The recommendations for the district's Book Procedure policy did not include any reference to permission slips; however, they did require (as is already the case at the high school level in the district) that parents sign off on the syllabus they have received and accept the terms of the syllabus.

For voluntary reading (books borrowed from the library), the following statement was recommended to be added to the policy:

"The district believes that it is every parent's right to parent based upon their personal values, the district believes that the onus for controlling the self-elected use of material must reside in the communication and relationship of the parent/guardian and child. Therefore, it is up to the parent to monitor the material that their minor child [voluntarily withdraws] from school/district."

The revised books policy will have its first reading at next month's February school board meeting.

OverDrive: Ebook Checkouts Up 33 Percent

Public and school libraries that are part of OverDrive's global network circulated 137 million ebooks, digital audiobooks, and other digital media in 2014—a 33 percent increase compared with 2013, according to statistics released by the company. Ebook circulation rose 32 percent, to 105 million, while digital audiobook

circulation grew 38 percent, to 32 million. The OverDrive network also recorded 401 million visits to public and school library websites powered by OverDrive, a 77 percent increase.

Mobile device ownership continued to mount steadily during 2014. Reflecting this trend, desktop computers accounted for 36 percent of all visits to OverDrive sites (down from 48 percent in 2013), while tablets and smartphones accounted for 64 percent

Fayetteville Free Library's Geek Girl Camp

The FFL Geek Girl Camp (GGC) was a big idea that sat in a binder at the Fayetteville Free Library (FFL), NY, for a while before library staff decided that the perfect time to launch the pilot was with their 2014 summer reading program. They understood the challenges for STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) programming for girls, which included a lack of clear, early pathways for girls in STEM fields and also a lack of access to female role models.



It was decided that the pilot would target girls entering grades three to five. Other STEM camps for girls in the area existed, but those focused on girls in middle and high school. By engaging the younger age group through hands-on activities, FFL wanted to show how much fun math and science can be when applied to the real world. It was important also to connect these young learners with women currently working in STEM fields.

STEM and Maker activities are already part of the mission at FFL; STEM and Maker budget lines are included in the library's operating budget, and much of the children's and teen programming has a root in introducing children to STEM. For example, the Creation Club is a STEM club for kids, and Little Makers is a program for five- to eight-year-olds in which they read a picture book and engage in an activity that goes along with the text.

As a library also, FFL had the ability to offer a camp of this quality for \$25, which provided a T-shirt and healthy snack and covered the cost for materials, including 200 pounds of cornstarch, dry ice, and the rental of a cement mixer. (For those in the community who could not afford the fee, FFL offered four scholarship opportunities.) The first GGC was run with a budget of \$1,075. In a matter of weeks, camp enrollment was full. Forty-four girls were selected, with 12 on the waiting list. One camper was awarded a scholarship.

A very important aspect of the GGC was to bring in local and national role models for the girls to meet, either in person or virtually via video conferencing software. Planners found nine women to serve as STEM role models, ranging from academics to Girls in Tech to members of the U.S. military. With funds from the budget, FFL was able to reimburse speakers for travel.

At the beginning of the weeklong event, each girl was asked what she wanted to be when she grew up. Many responded with teachers, actresses, and singers, but by the end of the five days, answers to that same question included computer scientist, pilot, and physicist, among others. These answers proved that GGC accomplished its goal of introducing girls to STEM in an effective way, boosting their confidence and level of interest for, one hopes, the rest of their lives.

of visits—doubling compared with last year—and 52 percent of all e-content checkouts. OverDrive officials said that the record growth for library ebook circulation was owing to factors such as improvements in app design and ease of use, enhanced compatibility with devices such as Google Chromebooks and Amazon Kindles, and the growth of OverDrive’s overall catalog, now that all of the Big Five publishers have agreed to license content to libraries.

The Toronto Public Library and the King County Library System, Issaquah, WA, each surpassed two million digital checkouts, leading all North American public libraries in digital circulation via OverDrive.

Several libraries also logged more than one million OverDrive e-content circs for the first time in 2014, including the Los Angeles Public Library, which saw its OverDrive circulation expand by 56 percent. The New York Public Library and the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton

County each saw 42 percent growth to top the one million loan mark. The Seattle Public Library; Hennepin County Library, MN; Cleveland Public Library; Calgary Public Library, Alta.; and Cuyahoga County Public Library, Parma, OH, each increased OverDrive checkouts between 25 percent and 35 percent to exceed one million loans.

OverDrive Read, the company’s browser-based ebook reader, also demonstrated substantial growth, accounting for 15 million checkouts—a 124 percent increase over 2013. The company has placed a significant focus on the HTML 5–based, platform-agnostic ereader during the past year. HTML 5, the most recent revision of the World Wide Web Consortium’s markup language for the Internet, includes features for incorporating audio and video within other content without requiring third-party browser plug-ins or software such as Adobe Flash. This has enabled the production of a new line of fixed-layout ebooks that display digital

pages as they were intended in the print version of the book, along with features such as embedded audio, which allows professional narration to accompany a text without the use of an app. These features have been particularly important to publishers of children’s books, where art and text must align.

Last month, OverDrive added 40 Dr. Seuss titles from Random House Children’s Books to its ebook catalog. The company has announced plans to enable use of audiobooks in OverDrive Read this year as well.

Youth Mentoring Program Takes National Award

Cheryl Eberly, principal librarian of young adult services at the Santa Ana Public Library (SAPL), CA, recently traveled to Washington, DC, to accept with 18-year-old Josue Rodriguez Espinoza the 2014 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program (NAHYP) Award for SAPL’s Circle of Mentoring (COM) program from First Lady Michelle Obama.

Espinoza, who moved to Santa Ana from Mexico when he was three and will graduate from high school this spring, is both a mentor and a mentee in SAPL’s COM program.

COM was recognized alongside 11 other programs for the nation’s highest honor in outstanding after-school and out-of-school arts and humanities programs helping underserved communities.

“It is a tremendous honor and a validation for all the hard work and dedication that youth, mentors, community, and staff have put into this rather nontraditional program,” said Eberly, adding that participants of COM have a “98 percent high school graduation rate.”

COM’s pedagogy is based on three core principles: providing a safe space, providing caring mentors (usually adults from the community or teens

News in Brief

Mariners’ Museum Library at Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA, received a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources. The money will fund the cataloging of 22 collections of photographic negatives that are currently in cold storage.

The **Andrews Air Force Base Library**, Washington DC, selected **The Library Corporation** to provide its automation services. The library serves approximately 3,000 military personnel and their family members.

The **State Library of Ohio board**, Columbus, awarded Ohio Library Services and Technology Act Digital Literacy Grants to the following: **Antwerp Local Schools**; **Auglaize County Public District Library**, Wapakoneta; **Dayton Metro Library**; **Kent State Uni-**

versity at Tuscarawas, New Philadelphia; **Louisville Public Library**; and **Wickliffe Public Library**.

Ireland’s Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT, received a donation from the Irish American Cultural Institute. Nearly 4,000 books of Irish interest were added to the school’s collection.

It was announced that civil rights leader and activist Bernard LaFayette Jr. (b. 1940) will appear at **Hartford Public Library** on February 5 to speak about the importance of nonviolent conflict reconciliation. The talk is free and open to the public.

Milton Public Library, Ont., Canada, selected **Innovative’s Sierra Library Services Platform**. It will migrate from a Horizon system provided by SirsiDynix.

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who graduated from the program), and giving opportunities for kids to do meaningful things in the community. All of SAPL's programs are "community responsive," said Eberly, and are geared toward providing participants with job and life skills, mentorship, and civic engagement.

The programming is funded through a series of grants. In 2009, Eberly received a \$60,000 grant from the Library Services and Technology Act that got her library early learning laptops, Kindles, and Zip cameras for every department. The same year, she got a \$50,000 ICMA [International City/County Management Association] Public Library Innovation grant that bought 20 new laptops for TeenSpace. In 2010, she garnered the Laura Bush 21st Century Library Grant for \$600,000 spread over three years—which went toward library student summer internships, library paraprofessional development, and library school scholarships—and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant for Libraries for \$550,000, which is funding the Memories of Migration project.

With this NAHYP prize of \$10,000, Eberly said, "We will continue focusing on digital media and STEM skills, but we are also adding a new focus on video game development, animation, a Teen Civic Leadership Institute, forming an e-gaming team for League of Legends, and going full scale on our Memories of Migration oral history project."

"The library can't be just a place where kids can hang out," said Eberly. "It has to be a place where it can help you."

Applications are welcome for the 2015 NAHYP Awards, presented by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and IMLS.



After a protracted renovation and expansion that began in 2010 and endured delays, legal action, and a change in contractors, the **Mitchell Park Library and Community Center (MPLCC)** (pictured), Palo Alto, CA, finally opened on December 6. The 9,478 square foot 1958 library gained an adjacent 10,400 square foot community center in 1967. The multiuse facility now measures 56,000 square feet, in a design by Group 4 Architecture and final construction management from Big D Pacific Builders; it cost roughly \$45 million. Funding came in part from the 2008 Measure N, which approved support for multiple library construction efforts throughout the city, in addition to \$1.4 million from the Palo Alto Library Foundation. MPLCC encompasses a large children's area, a dedicated teen space, a computer training room, a 100-person program room, and quiet reading spaces, along with a half-court basketball area and a café. The environmentally friendly library targeted Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification, the highest ranking awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council. By mid-December, legal issues with original contractor Flintco Pacific had been settled.

The **Waukegan Public Library (WPL)**, IL, has begun a major renovation to its main

floor. Established in 1902, WPL opened in its current location in 1965 and added 18,000 square feet of space during two subsequent construction efforts. The current rehab will add classrooms and collaborative study spaces to meet the demands of its constituency, especially with regard to basic functional and cultural literacy, according to a library press release. The \$2 million remodel, designed by Product Architecture + Design, as reported in the *News-Sun*, will include a digital media wall, a café, and permanent displays to honor native son author Ray Bradbury (1920–2012). The project is expected to be completed in June 2015.

February 24 will mark the "wall-breaking" ceremony at the **Main Library** of the **Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH**, launching the first renovation to the 1907 Carnegie building since 1991. As part of the city's major construction program to remodel or originate ten libraries within the next several years, the Main Library will add a reading room, enhance the children's department, connect the library to the adjacent Topiary Park to offer outdoor reading space, and update the front plaza. The architects on the project are GUND Partnership and Schooley Caldwell Associates, working with Turner Construction.

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